Chapter 3

Theorising Young People's Identity Development and Outdoor Adventure in an Individualised Society

3.1 Preamble

…research without theory is blind, and theory without research is empty (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 160).

This chapter theorises young Australian people's relationship between their identity development and social fields as they transition to adulthood in the twenty-first century. Not only does it focus on their relationship with fields in their everyday lives, but also extends to include those that are removed from it. In this respect, the analysis goes beyond just contextualising them in their everyday lives that simply entertains a dualism between their identity development on one hand and contemporary social structure on the other (Irwin 2003).

As discussed briefly in the introductory chapter, underpinning this approach are two theoretical perspectives. First is the ideological significance of Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim's (2002) theory of individualisation understood in the Australian context. This perspective explains how young people ideally need to develop as individuals; described as agents who are free to participate in paid employment, education and domestic formations. It's a life Woodman (2009) describes as one of choice biographies. However only focusing on their agency neglects the influence of social structure on young people's opportunities and limitations in this individualised life. So two of three concepts of which are considered relevant in regards to young people's development, put forward by Pierre Bourdieu (1984, 1990) namely social field and habitus are included as a critical component of this theoretical perspective. They are critical because they provide a way to understand the relationship between young people's development as free agents and social structure, both in their everyday lives and beyond it. Essentially, this relationship includes capturing their sense of self and identity through them thinking and feeling a

certain way (Lehmann 2004) and subsequently their transition to and identities as adults. But further to this, the relationship between social fields and habitus implicates a rite of passage to adulthood that includes the relevance of communitas in young people's identity development in the twenty-first century.

While this is certainly considered a creative and novel approach to understand young people's development in contemporary life, it is considered beneficial for many reasons. Not only does it aim to shed light on trainee's relationship between their personal development and their experiences on board the Leeuwin II vessel in sight of their everyday lives, it has potential to provide scope for a wider focus for future inquiry. In other words, this is an innovative approach that sets the scene for this research analysis, with potential to offer a new approach to understand young people's development in a complex research area of outdoor adventure that has not yet adequately addressed this research inquiry (Paisley, Furnam, Sibthorp & Gookin 2008). As such, while the approach being undertaken in this book agrees with the underlying sentiment that research without theory is blind, and theory without research is empty (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 160), it goes one step further believing theory and research without creativity and or novelty surely inhibits vision. In fact, the approach being undertaken is indeed, considered strength of this inquiry.

Subsequently, what follows is a discussion resembling a dialogue surrounding the dilemma between agency and structure. While this is a topic of great significance, for example, contributed to by authors such as, Bourdieu (1977, 1990), Archer (1982, 1988), Giddens 1984), Schwartz, Côté & Arnett (2005), Turner (2007) and many more, I do not intend this as a direct correspondence to this problematic. Indeed, I acknowledge it far exceeds my expertise. Rather, the approach I undertake within this limited space is predominantly intended to contribute to better understand the relationship between trainee's identity

development and their participation on the Leeuwin II tall ship outdoor ocean adventure. However, because their development on board is understood in light of their everyday lives, it not only demands attention to their relationship with this wider social context, it raises the relevance of outdoor adventure for young Australian people's personal development in a contemporary individualised milieu.

Hence, given that in this book the organisation of Australian society is understood in terms of individualisation, it makes sense to start to unravel this theoretical perspective in what is best described as a series of steps beginning with the concept of agency.

3.2 Agency

Interestingly, while it is agreed a crucial element of an individualised life, agency is a concept not universally agreed upon. Over time much has been written on it, the concept evokes perspectives like a psychological social cognitive one (Bandura 2006), a liberal model of socio-political organisation (Meyer & Jepperson 2000), and economic opportunism (Shapiro 2005) to make sense of it. Consequently, the idea of agency is accompanied by confusion and strain within social thought. Indeed, over time it has been defended, buried, attacked, resuscitated and is presented in contradictive and overlapping ways. Essentially, while it is associated by terms like freedom, choice, intentionality, initiative, motivation, creativity, will, and selfhood, it is often portrayed as elusive, vague and seldom inspiring systematic analysis (Emirbayer & Mische 1998).

Nonetheless, while there is debate on how to understand it, common to the idea of agency is 'active citizenship'. Also receiving much attention, essentially it implies meaningful and significant engagement in and with key social

institutions (White &Wyn 1998). This perspective certainly makes sense when relating young people and their success in their lifestyles and everyday situations that demands them to be the centre of their own life plans and actions (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). In a contemporary Australian environment, this is true for them in the field of education for example, where young people are credentialised based on individual performance (Marginson 1996) as well as in the labour market where there is increasing demand for and expectation of their mobility and competition (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Indeed, given the popularity of the online environment in their lives, where social network sites now provide them with exciting opportunities to communicate with ever-widening circles of contacts (Livingstone 2008) but one that also has potential for risky and destructive behaviours to occur (Duncan 2008) this perspective is undeniably crucial.

Yet when generalising this idea of agency to young people it is also problematic. Simply this is because it is based on a theoretical understanding of free agency that is fused with a political view that sees the idea that they are more powerful social actors than they really are (White & Wyn 1998). In today's life that increasingly presents them with complex and diverse sequences (Shanahan 2000), the idea of agency as automatic for them needs to be challenged. Not all are proactive, nor are they all prepared to automatically take on opportunities that are available to them. In other words, this is a situation of purposive intervention where they need to manoeuvre back and forth between different social networks as well as cultural or social settings (Emirbayer & Mische 1998). For young people to do this they need to be able to take action, to be willing to engage in collective action in the interests of the group and, importantly, to possess knowledge and be willing to challenge existing structures (White & Wyn 1998, 318). They need to have a conscious, goal-directed activity and a level of analysis that is generally pitched at personal or

individual choices about things over which they have some measure of control (White & Wyn 1998). In fact, to be successful they need be able to take control of a situation rather than it taking control of them (Thoman 1999).

Still, while this is true, the constraints on the choices available to them also need be considered (Riele 2004). In essence, while their agency need be fully realised and unfettered, they pursue their goals within an institutional system that presents them with certain incentives but also constraints (Meyer & Jepperson 2000). Thus, young people may ideally aspire to opportunity for social mobility that is echoed in the language of individual choice, control and agency but it also needs to be understood that the rhetoric only translates for some into requisite opportunities and resources (Thomson, Bell, Holland, Henderson, McGrellis & Sharpe 2002). Interestingly, what this demonstrates is that their lack of success is not necessarily their fault if it is understood they are agents who have differential access to structures of opportunity and risk (Riele & Crump 2003). Certainly, in many ways, their relationship with contemporary society must also be understood as them having choice within limits (Riele 2004).

Hence, it is recognised that theories of agency are most important when understanding young people relating to this contemporary social milieu. Particularly as one of the core properties of individualism is that individuals are required to be unique in their power to shape their own life circumstances and the life courses they take (Bandura 2006). Agency supports and promotes the notion that developed agentic capabilities are essential and relevant components for their successful engagement in an individualised society. In other words, being proactive to negotiate their life-course when and where they choose. Failure then can be tied up with a lack of agency or an undeveloped agentic orientation (Côté 2000; Bandura 2001) resulting in them disengaging from social structures. However, not only is their relationship with this individualised

society dependent on varying degrees of reflective choice, inventiveness, and manoeuvrability shown by them, it is in relation to contexts that not always enable action but constrain it as well (Emirbayer & Mische 1998). In short, agency is about knowledge, power and the ability to activate resources, but in reality social divisions and inequalities can also have an impact on the extent to which individuals have accesses to each of these aspects of effective agency (White & Wyn 1998).

As such, only focusing on agency fails to account for the contexts, including the educational, and labour market contexts, and for many young people, the ever-increasing influence of technological and virtual contexts in which they need to make their choices, and it cannot identify the different structural limits (Roberts 2009). Indeed, as in the case of agency, the notion of structure is more of a kind of founding or epistemic metaphor of social scientific-and scientific-discourse rather than a precise concept (Sewell 1992) so it demands further exploration into other dimensions of its social existence, including its relation-ship with young people. This includes a deeper understanding of what institu-tions and organisations are and how they make up social structure.

3.3 Social Structure

When social structure is understood in terms of institutions and organisations made up of overt or implicit rules and regulations that regulate social activity and interaction, it is easily understood as an integral element of contemporary life (Hodgson 2006). However, while true, this social arrangement can evoke different responses to it, too. For example, for some young people it can translate into an image that is hard, primary and immutable. Aptly described, the picture they paint of it can be likened to "the girders of a building" (Sewell 1992, p. 2). Subsequently, when understood in terms of institutions and

organisations, their relationship with social structures can sometimes be experienced as an objective reality, one that explains them distancing themselves from, or avoiding it for different reasons (Mortimer & Larson 2002; White & Wyn 2004; Edginton et al 2005). Berger & Luckmann (1966) believe their perception and reaction to this social arrangement occurs because its organisation precedes their birth and is therefore not accessible to their biographical recollection. In other words, it was there before they were born and they are external to this institutional life. Therefore, whether they like it or not, it persists in their reality and they cannot wish it away. But if young people are to be successful negotiators in their adult lives, they cannot understand institutions and organisations by introspection. Simply, they must 'go out' and learn about them and be a part of them (Berger & Luckmann 1966).

In fact, in contemporary society rather than rules and regulations just being rigid, the antithesis of freedom can be its ally, too (Hodgson 2006). Or put another way, while there are constraints accompanying contemporary life, there are also possibilities that enable young people's choices, actions and even their personal development that otherwise would not exist (Giddens 1990). As such, it is important to understand the internal nature of institutions and organisations. For example, it explains how social interactions are structured and rules and regulations are normalised. In this respect, rules and regulations can be regarded as socially or culturally transmitted dispositions, with actual or potential normative content (Hodgson 2006). What this highlights is a network of mutual beliefs based on reciprocal relationships (Tuomela 1995) that can influence young people's everyday lives. There is not always a conscious awareness of these relationships either; they can certainly occur on a subconscious level. In other words, while they are engaging in them, patterns of relations are being reproduced, even when they are unaware of any patterns (Hardy 2008). Nonetheless, while the nature of the institutional social world, however massive

it may appear to some, can be understood in many ways as a humanly produced, social construction. But in no way does this minimize the objectivity for those like young people who perceive them as such. Indeed, the process still describes how the externalised products of human activity can manifest the character of objectivity as objectivation for them (Calhoun et al 2007). Still, only focusing on social structure as an institutional world experienced as an objective reality, neglects the different ways in which agency can actually shape social action, too (Emirbayer & Mische 1998)!

3.4 Social Dimensions

Clearly, explaining young people's relationships with social context as they develop into adults is complex. The complication continues when it is also understood as more than a perspective of just the individual (agent) or from that of the whole (society, state, class, the common good, group or organisation. In fact, Pierre Bourdieu believes the idea that social dimension is naively understood this way. According to him, this relationship is understood in terms of social continuity (Woodman 2007) through the relating concepts of habitus, social fields and capital. While these concepts are also not easy to comprehend, they are certainly considered a successful and significant attempt to making sense of the 'relationship between objective social structures (institutions, discourses, fields, ideologies) and everyday practices (what people do, and why they do it)' (Webb, Schirato & Danaher 2002, p. 21).

Nonetheless, the ideas of social structure or as Bourdieu refers to it, social fields and subsequently, habitus that also implicates agency are two of his concepts considered most relevant to this research. This is because this research views young people as not yet fully engaged with key social institutions and thus their participation in society is not automatically assumed (White & Wyn

1998). In other words, their agentic capabilities (Côté 2000) are not yet fully realised and they are not understood as powerful social actors (White & Wyn 1998) contributing to society's capital, for example in economic terms. Thus rather than including the mutually constitutive parts of capital, or as Bourdieu (1985, p. 248) describes it, "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" in the analysis, it is the social dimensions of habitus and social fields that contribute to it. These two concepts are certainly relevant to and indeed, are a critical part of understanding trainee's personal development as it relates to social fields both in and beyond their contemporary lives.

3.5 Social Fields

For Bourdieu, social fields are inherently bound with society's structure and the ideas of institutions and organisations (Bourdieu 1990). As a process of constructing properties, indicators, or principles of divisions, he understands this social arrangement in part of inter-relational terms, where the concept of 'organisational field' typically refers to a set of organisations active in what is sometimes referred to as, an area of institutional life (DiMaggio & Powell 1991). This idea encapsulates organisation populations such as the car manufacturing industry, book publishing, prison system, real estate, and education. However, this does not only relate to the analysis of clusters of organisations, he also adds to the analysis of the social configurations in which organisational fields are themselves embedded. This includes configurations designated by terms although at times vague, such as 'the economy' or 'the political sphere' (analysed in detail by him as a system of semi-autonomous fields) (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008).

According to Bourdieu, these different social structures play a role in the production, dissemination and authorisation of different versions of social reality. But what he insists is that first and foremost they are informed and motivated by internal competition and self-interest (Bourdieu 1993). In this way, fields can be described as a space of struggle for organisational power that refers to a sort of 'internal field of power' within an organisation (Swartz 2008, p. 49). He also describes them as a temporary state of power relations within what is an ongoing struggle for domination over them (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008, p. 7). Sometimes he uses an analogy of a playing field to describe these relationships. Aptly, the idea is understood then in the way different players strive to achieve different ends and how each player possesses different levels of power enabling them to have influence over the rules of the game (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). But whatever way they are described, it is clear internal processes can explain how this space becomes a locus of struggle that determines the criteria and the conditions of legitimate membership within it (Bourdieu 1988). In essence, this means the field – or those controlling it (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002) can effectively act as 'the dividing-line between those who belong and those who do not (Bourdieu 1984, 1988). From this understanding, these social boundaries are capable of enabling membership but membership can also be excluded for many reasons. It is a situation as he says where, 'in every field we shall find a struggle, the specific forms of which have to be looked for each time, between the newcomer who tries to break through the entry barrier and the dominant agent who will try to defend the monopoly and keep out competition' (Bourdieu 1993, p. 79).

What Bourdieu describes has particular meaning for young Australian people's individualised contemporary lives in relation to bridging social networks in the field of education, the labour market or even the online environ-ment. In essence, perception and construction are not only constrained but are

animated by structures as well (Bourdieu 1990). Thus, there is meaning to internal processes where reciprocal connections among individuals, peers, and/or colleagues, (Putnam 2000) occur. As people need to relate to others on many levels and in many ways, these relationships will contribute to the way they perceive and construct their social world. In them is encapsulated the basis of their position in social space which incorporates their identity development as being part of their relationship with these social structures. Bourdieu argues it is the internal processes of these fields that also contribute to explaining the relationships with each space and other spaces, and relational struggles over capital and position among people in each space that is bound to their identity emerging through intersection and combination as well as through conflict with other identities (Bourdieu 1990).

Thus reiterating, for Bourdieu an important part of understanding the relations of social fields refers to the properties or principles within their boundaries. This includes experiences being influenced by the internal nature - processes and practices of these fields; it is an aspect that uncovers so much more, particularly between the relationships of its members. Understanding this means drawing on the concept of habitus; a concept that is intermeshed with the nature of the field and in fact without it would make no sense (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008).

Habitus is indeed an integral part of understanding young Australian people's identity development as it relates with social fields.

3.6 Habitus

Habitus is an idea that refers to the set of internalised - learned and shared - dispositions and tastes that guide perception and action within the structural

situations, or fields, that compose society (Meisenhelder 2006). Simply put, the idea of habitus describes the relatively durable principles of judgment and practice generated by people's early life experiences and modified later in their lives. In this way, it can be thought of in terms of socialisation. However, there are further dimensions to its nature. While it resides within the individual, it also "mediates society and the individual through its ties to the conditions of (early) socialisation that form it, the social situations or fields that confront it, and the practices it generates" (Meisenhelder 2006, p 58). This suggests that even the subjective structures of consciousness are social things. Subsequently in society, habitus explains social continuity as it acts as a mechanism that links individual action and the structural settings in which future action occurs (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008).

When explaining this in terms of social organization, or the social fields that compose it, habitus can be understood as social clusters; patterns showing subjectivity as being characterised by the presence of shared dispositions within commonly situated individuals (Meisenhelder 2006). Or put another way, society and structural location as an organised subjectivity of generative and durable dispositional character sets resulting in patterned perceptions, understandable feelings, and regular and meaningful actions that are all more or less shared within similarly positioned social groupings (Meisenhelder 2006). In this way, it can be understood by portraying the person as possessing a subjectivity that flows from a shared location within a social structure. Often being related to the idea of culture this idea can also be well represented, for example, in the notion of social fields such as those associated with education and employment being understood as a "procession of constructing properties, indicators, or principles of divisions" (Bourdieu 1984, p. 77, 1988). Thus, the nature of habitus explains the acceptance or denial of new membership permeating from the powerful within social fields. Similarly, it explains

individual behaviour associated with feelings of being accepted or excluded from them. In effect, habitus explains how negotiation or even attempting to cross boundaries within this milieu can either occur or be limited.

But in an individualised context such as Australia, the idea of habitus can be problematic also. This is because ideally, in this context habitus needs be linked through its past fields to present ones as individual actors move from one social field to the next. In short this illustrates a juxtaposition of individualisation where young people need to become members of an organization or social field and bring to it a habitus formed under specific past conditions, some of which will be shared with other members and some of which will differ from them substantially (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008). Thus in an individualised society to be successful negotiators in social fields, young people's habitus needs to interact with a diversity of habitus. In other words, it is a situation where a division of labour in organisations is consistent with the interaction of a variety of habitus (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008). The problem is that from the idea of habitus, particularly when understood in terms of socialization, if it is linked to past experience it can be accused of being deterministic. Indeed, sometimes it is even regarded as having an excessively deterministic tendency (Lamont 1992; Halle 1993; Alexander 1994; Widick 2003). Simply, in a system based on individualisation, habitus is often scrutinised sceptically in relation to the theorisation of social change because rather than promoting change through social mobility and interaction as the basis for identities, it emphasises the continuity of established social differences (Adams 2006, p. 513).

Thus, from this perspective, the concept of habitus is problematic in an individualised milieu because it cannot really be reduced to the individual. In other words, it only allows an actor to become an individual through how it is used in relation to the subjective presence of the collective (Meisenhelder 2006).

Or put another way, agency and autonomy can be embodied in the concept of it, but they are qualified by the caveat of accumulated history, both personal and collective, which imprint themselves as pre-reflective action-orientations (McNay 1999). Therefore, habitus gives practice a relative autonomy only in respect to the external determinants of the immediate present while simultaneously ensuring that it is objectively adapted to its outcomes (McNay 1999). This creates a dilemma in a contemporary milieu and that is, according to the idea of it, if one cannot step outside it, how can decision-making really be context-free (Hogkinson & Sparkes 1997)? But perhaps more importantly, it challenges the idea of 'free agency', a core attribute of an individualised milieu, actually existing.

3.7 Habitus and Free Agency

However, if habitus is understood as interpreting experiences and creating dispositions to act, the idea of it can also embrace thinking and feeling in a certain way (Lehmann 2004). This highlights the importance of understanding young people's interpretations and meanings of their world such as their attitudes, feelings, organic drives, motives, internalised social factors, or psychological components which includes capturing their sense of self and identity. Particularly relevant in regard to their success or failure relating to an individualised society, this understanding provides an explanation for their imagined distancing from social structures, it also supports an agentic orientation and sense of freedom to negotiate one's own life course. Thus, from this understanding habitus exists as subjectivity where their feelings are inseparable from their uniqueness (Bauman 2005). Indeed, from this perspective it is the idea of the imagined rather than the imaginary (Jenkins 2004) that is important to young people's development as free agents. Essential to this is a belief and confidence in the self, that in turn in an

individualised society creates the situation where there is interaction of a variety of habitus (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008).

3.8 Social Fields and Free Agency

One way this development can occur is through an internalisation of the social configurations referred by Bourdieu as the system of semi-autonomous fields (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008). Translated, for some this can be understood to happen through the internalisation of individualism that permeates throughout society. The message conveyed results in the need to be increasingly self-sufficient, and freely imagining that their destiny is in their own hands (Lukes 2006). In Australia, given the encroaching influence of technology on young people's lives, this can occur for many of them through their exposure to the semi-autonomous field that is based on communication technologies (Heelas, 1996). In this way, habitus can be referred to as a set of internalised – learned and shared – dispositions and tastes that guide perception and action within the structural situations that not only compose but also expose society to the unique individual through the media, education and Internet. This extends the idea of it to fully acknowledge an individualised society where life patterns, attitudes, and priorities can be a response to the world in which they live (Wyn 2004). Indeed, it is a milieu where thoughts and actions can be formed at the deepest level where people are hardly or not at all aware of it. It demonstrates how it can be an internalised, pre-conscious or semi-conscious routine and the indispensable role it plays in enabling them to lead their lives and discover their identities within their social milieu (Beck and Beck- Gernsheim 2002). Hence, subconsciously individualism that is ingrained and permeates throughout this contemporary life can then also be enacted unthinkingly and is part of the definition of habitus as habitual. On one level it becomes the sense of ease in our surroundings – 'le sens

pratique' (or a feel for the game) (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 52); it develops as an unconscious competence and becomes "a modus operandi of which he or she is not the producer and has no conscious mastery" (Bourdieu 1977, p. 79).

What is important from this understanding is that it is possible for habitus to be understood to unconsciously internalise the idea of individualism, exemplifying how it is possible young people can believe themselves to be the central character of their time and the choosing, deciding, shaping human being who aspires to be the author of their own life, and the creator of their individual identity (Beck & Beck-Germsheim 2002). In other words, they are able to take an active role in shaping their own futures in contemporary society (White & Wyn 1998). Thus rather than only understanding habitus as a strategic response or reaction to relationships of structural constraint and limitation, when individualism is internalised, it extends the way it is understood to include that of a sense of freedom to choose. As such, individualisation that manifests as unconsciousness can also translate as free agency and can be understood as part of habitus. In this way, it is tied to individualised, reflexive decision-making (Lehmann 2004); it gives credence to agentic capabilities, or having the ability to, as agents, intentionally make things happen by their actions (Bandura 2001).

Similarly, social fields other than semi-autonomous ones can contribute to young people's sense of agency also. Indeed, arguably they have a certain role in the production, dissemination and authorisation of different versions of young people's social reality (Bourdieu 1993). In the educative field for example, this is idealised where the intention is to furnish them with a capacity for self-reflective knowledge (Marginson 1996). Based on the issue of confidence in their power of thought and action (Bauman 2001) this field can prepare them to have control over decisions and problems they might encounter in the labour market for example, particularly as they enter into adult roles' (Schwartz, Côté & Arnett

2005). As such, not only is there opportunities for self-improvement in areas such as acquiring credentials, competencies and skills, they can emerge as free agents capable in making decisions and addressing important issues in their adult lives (Schwartz, 2000). Thus, other social fields such as the educative one are capable of building their confidence in themselves, too giving them a sense of control over their lives. In other words, their relationship with these fields can set their habitus free from social structure (Lash 1994).

Indeed, living in a context that espouses their ability to explore and negotiate the range of alternative courses of action that have opened up for them, young people's ultimate decisions need to be understood to be ones of informed, individual choice, and not as predetermined (Lehmann 2004). As such, they need a belief and confidence in self that gives them a sense of control over their lives so they can effectively envision themselves where agency is set free from structure (Lash 1994). However, rather than thinking in terms of assumptions of automatic aspirations for upward mobility, it means for example, those from working-class backgrounds can enter training for a career in manual work with the same conviction and confidence as academic-track students from well-educated families who were planning to attend university. This might be considered as a perpetuation of inequality (Lehmann 2004) or a lack of one's power to direct their life (Frost & Hoggett 2008). But if their sense of agency is understood in regards to them being able to have confidence to choose and select, to question and challenge, and the ability to be conscious about what is going on around them and not be passive and therefore, vulnerable, it can be seen as a situation whereby they are actually taking control of a situation (Thoman 1999) in whatever life course they choose.

However, while individualism is ubiquitous, and social fields have potential to develop their sense of self there is an inconsistency, as it does not automatically

translate into a sense of free agency for everyone. Indeed, in contemporary life, this phenomenon occurs all the time; clearly, there are plenty of perceptions, thoughts and actions consistent with the reproduction of existing social patterns that fail to occur (Sewell 1992). Thus one certainty is that while it is possible for free agency to occur through internalising individualism or through developing self-reflective knowledge in other social fields like the educative one (Marginson 1996), it is not a given for everyone. In fact, for some young people, their relationships with social configurations defined for example by fields of education and labour, can indeed be deterministic. Put simply, it is unrealistic, and would simply be both myopic and foolish to ignore the fact that established social differences do form and reproduce the basis of identities (Adams 2006).

3.9 Social Fields as Initiation

Yet, they should not be always conceptualised as a barrier to action either (Giddens 1979b) particularly when the different elements of internal processes of social fields are understood to contribute to developing their individual identity. Indeed, from this perspective, it introduces the idea that they even have potential to initiate or contingently activate it (Brubaker and Cooper 2000). Essentially underlying this way of thinking, is that when every process of action is understood as a production of something new, all action existing in continuity with the past, can also be understood as supplying the means of initiation (Giddens 1990). But while there is no guarantee this personal growth will occur in their everyday lives, it raises the idea of the physical location of a social field contributing to it. In other words, what is not effectively internalised or activated in their contemporary lives might be possible when habitus is removed from it.

This is certainly an idea explored in the previous chapter when literature contemplates how and why adventure works. For example, being part of the

wilderness that is away from technological advances (McKenzie 2000 and more) is one contrast understood as contributing to young people's personal growth. Being removed to a place in the wilderness away from their everyday lives and being exposed to a new experience, one of new relationships where they meet new people and participate in new activities that bring with them challenge and risk is another. In addition, being removed to a field beyond their everyday lives extends this discussion to include the essence of traditional life, thus also contributing to this theoretical perspective.

Indeed, practices of Indigenous people like Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia where the traditional transition to adulthood followed initiation rights and ceremonies that severed the young person's connections with their childhood to pass into adulthood exemplifies this tradition. This understanding is based on Van Gennep's (1873 - 1957) observations with different 'civilisations'. In fact, his 1960 rite of passage model is commonly recognised by many to describe various transitions. As raised in the previous chapter, separation, transition and incorporation where separation or rites of the 'preliminal', is associated with the detachment of the individual or group either or from their everyday lives. During the intervening 'liminal' period, or transition stage, the characteristics of the ritual subject (the 'passenger') are ambiguous; they pass through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state. In the final stage of reincorporation or the 'postliminal', the passage is consummated. The ritual subject, individual or group, return in a relatively stable state once more and, by virtue of this, has rights and obligations vis-à-vis others of a clearly defined and 'structural' type. In some cultures, this tradition expects certain behaviour in accordance with certain standards and norms that bind 'incumbents of social position in that system's positions' (Turner 1969, p. 95). Each stage though, according to Van Gennep (1960) differs in its development by peoples or

ceremonial pattern. For example, rites of separation might be prominent in funeral ceremonies, rites of incorporation in marriages, and transition rites may play an important part, for instance, in initiation (Van Gennep 1960).

3.10 Habitus and Communitas

Clearly, the idea of transition rites has certain intrigue in and value for understanding young people's identity development as it relates to habitus and social structure being proposed in this research. Based on Van Gennep's rites of passage model, Victor Turner (1969) explains this in terms of liminality and communitas. The attributes of liminality or of liminal personae that he describes as "threshold people" are necessarily ambiguous, because this condition and these persons slip through or elude the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space. This places liminal entities neither here nor there; aptly expressed, they are betwixt and between the positions assigned by custom, law, convention, and ceremony (Turner 1969, p. 95). As liminal entities experiencing initiation or puberty rites, they are represented as possessing nothing; having no status, no property, nor insignia, even no secular clothing that indicates role, rank or position in a kinship system. In essence, there is nothing that distinguishes them from the others who are with them. They normally behave in a passive or humble way; they must implicitly obey their instructors, and accept their punishment without complaining. What happens among them is that they tend to develop egalitarianism and an intense comradeship in a place where secular distinctions of status and rank disappear or are homogenised (Turner 1969). When putting this in terms of habitus and its relationship with social structure, as Turner (1969) says, it is as though young people's habitus is "being reduced or ground down to a uniform condition to be

fashioned anew and endowed with additional powers to enable them to cope
with their new station in life".

Hence, what Turner (1969) believes is important for young people's personal
growth or initiation to occur, is a social field described as a distinguished
modality of social relationships away from an "area of common living" referred
to as communitas - a Latin term he likens to but differentiates from the term
'community'. As previously described, these fields are understood as a moment
in and out of time bringing them and as such, their habitus together bonding it
only momentarily (Turner 1969). Transformation occurs through them
experiencing an extension to the root of their being, and such profound sharing
is understood as communal. In communitas, the transition that is acquired is by
the incumbents of positions through which young peoples' habitus change
positions. This occurs in the levelling experience of liminality where the "high
could not be high unless the low existed, and he (*sic*) … who is high must
experience what it is like to be low" (Turner 1969, p. 97). Interestingly, this way
of thinking is not only considered in relation to young people's personal
development and outdoor adventure, but many years ago, it can be understood
to lay behind Prince Philip's decision to send his son Charles, the heir apparent
to the British throne, to a bush school in Australia for some time, where he
could learn how to rough it (Turner (1969).

3.11 Habitus, Tradition and Contemporary Milieu

So does understanding the nature of habitus being removed from contemporary
life implicate the relevance of a trainee's participation on the Leeuwin II outdoor
adventure in relation to their personal development? This is relevant not only for
developing their confidence and subsequent agency in an individualised milieu
but as their identities as adults also even though the program is not strictly

focused on a rite of passage to adulthood for their young sailors. As such, on one level, it provides an additional opportunity to explore this relationship, but it also is an opportunity to explore a connection between tradition and the contemporary, and subsequently, how and why adventure works. Indeed, the link between outdoor adventure and a rite of passage is often raised (for example, Bell 2003; Neill 2003). Curiously, some believe this is because in western culture, at least on the surface, it contributes to young people's personal development where there is a disturbing lack of distinct rites of passage (Neill 2000; Neill 2003). But considering habitus being removed from everyday life to a field outside it contributing to their identity development provides a different explanation as to how and why this might occur. In fact, this is an idea not yet considered in outdoor adventure literature, despite the many attempts to understand how and why it does benefit their identity development.

Indeed, when contemplating the nature of habitus and social fields, it is not unreasonable to wonder if it will fill gaps in how young people's personal development is understood in the twenty-first century. This includes how habitus might link the traditional to the contemporary through fields like outdoor adventure that are removed from their everyday lives. Additionally, it opens up a discourse pertaining to the relationship between their personal development and social fields within their everyday lives. Clearly, there is much written on young people's development in contemporary milieu. Indeed, it is a discourse that produces a dense and lively debate, one where different ideas are shared but where views are not always agreed on (for example, Erikson 1968; White & Wyn 1998; Bendle 2002; Wyn 2004). Incorporating the idea of habitus being removed from everyday life, to a field understood as communitas certainly adds another dimension and depth to this discussion. First, will the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship be associated to the idea of how habitus relates to a field characterised as communitas? Second, could it possibly raise the

relevance of tradition for young people's identity development in the twenty-first century?

This theoretical approach certainly contributes to a creative and novel way to understand the relationship between young peoples' personal development in their everyday lives implicating outdoor adventure.

3.12 The Sutra of the Elephant and the Blind Men

Subsequently, when thinking about what trainee's might reveal about their personal development and how and why they think this happens, I contemplate the possibility that it might contribute to how their development can be understood in contemporary individualised society such as Australia. As such, I also wonder if any gaps in the way their development is understood will be filled. When I think about this, it conjures up an image in my mind of an ancient Buddhist sutra of the elephant and the blind men.

In this sutra, the Buddha asked his disciples to get a large magnificent elephant and six blind men. He then brought the blind men to the elephant and asked them to describe what an elephant looks like. They responded like this:

The first blind man touched the elephant's leg and reported that it "looked" like a tree trunk.

The second blind man touched the elephant's stomach and said that the elephant was a wall.

The third blind man touched the elephant's ear and said that it was a fan.

The fourth blind man touched the elephant's tail and described the elephant as a piece of rope.

The fifth blind man felt the elephant's tusk and described it as a spear.

And the sixth blind man rubbed the elephant's snout and got very scared because he thought it was a snake.

All of them got into a big argument about the "appearance" of an elephant.

The Buddha asked the citizens: "Each blind man had touched the elephant but each of them gives a different description of the animal. Which answer is right?"

"All of them are right," was the reply. "Why? Because everyone can see only one part of the elephant. They are not able to see the whole animal." (Sample Stories 2003).

The image stirs my imagination and I wonder about habitus and social fields and if what trainee's say about their identity development and participation on the Leeuwin II tall ship will shed any light on this symbolic pachyderm? Is it possible that some gaps will be filled in communicating a description of it not considered previously? The blind men, will they gain any vision in any degree? This is certainly an image that provides conceptual scaffolding; one where further exploration into the relationship between young people's participation in outdoor adventure and how and why it works has potential to shed light on areas not yet considered. Indeed, it is an image I take with me as this research unfolds.

3.13 Concluding Remarks

Not only is there evidence that participation in outdoor adventure promotes a positive sense of self and sense of adulthood, there is an emerging discussion

into how and why it does. Perhaps, as some indicate, this is because it draws on a tradition of a rites of passage or initiation that contrasts the practices, or lack of practices, associated to their development in the twenty-first century. However, it is certainly possible there are other ways to understand this also. As Shotter and Gergen (1989), and Gergen (1991) posit, while it is possible for habitus to change when one changes context, it is also possible it changes with their experiences in the same physical setting. As such, exploring the nature of habitus and how it relates to social fields in and beyond everyday life is a valuable way to understand the relationship between a trainee's identity development and the Leeuwin II tall ship particularly as it is in light of their everyday lives.

Young Australian people live in a contemporary milieu where their identity development is complex and is indeed understood from many perspectives. In fact, it is elucidated through the work of many writers (Kroger 2005). For example, there are some who believe their identities are stalled, with traditional rites of passage to adulthood failing and crucial transitions not being made (Bendle 2002). Others even believe that they are at a point of crisis (Erikson 1968). However, given the relationship between habitus and social fields being proposed in this book it is more likely they can be considered being at an important turning point in their identity development (Erikson 1968). Essentially this means that drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and social fields is an important perspective because it potentially provides a possible insight into trainees' identity development through their participation on the Leeuwin II tall ship in light of their development in the Australian individualised society. Put simply, these ideas provide a way of making sense about the relationship between social structures and young people's identity development. It is an important perspective because it proposes an explanation of what they do, and why they do it (Webb et al 2002). But perhaps more

importantly this means that there is potential to expand the scope of their human agency (White & Wyn 1998), a concept argued to be linked to their success and failure in this individualised life.

Surely, this theoretical perspective is one that warrants further exploration? This is a worthwhile question in the twenty-first century, particularly when understanding young Australian people live in a milieu where:

Anxiety and audacity, fear and courage, despair and hope are born together. But the proportion in which they are mixed depends on the resources in one's possession. Owners of fool proof vessels and skilled navigators view the sea as the site of exciting adventure; those condemned to unsound and hazardous dinghies would rather hide behind breakwaters and think of sailing with trepidation (Bauman 2001, p. 161).

The next chapter introduces the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship through the views of two Board members and twelve Leeuwin workers/volunteers, and my journal as trainee when I sailed on board. Not only do these perspectives introduce the culture of this vessel and how it ticks (Goldbart & Hustler 2005), they also introduce, even if this is only speculation, what developmental outcomes trainees might experience and how and why they think this occurs.