

GeogEd

An electronic journal supporting the development of the Geography Education community

Title of Paper: Fieldwork in the Far, Far Away: Exotic Experiences and Geographical Understanding

What did you like about this paper?

This is a thorough and thoughtful paper that sets out to challenge some of the current orthodoxy regarding residential fieldwork. Exploring alternatives to the positivist approach to A-level fieldwork encourages us to rethink 'hypothesis testing', that can turn so many students off the coursework aspect of their learning.

I really like the student voices in this paper - they could perhaps be used within the paper rather than as footnotes as this tends to immediately marginalise the student perspective. Perhaps considering how to capture these as sources that demonstrate the potential of a more affective approach to learning would be useful – what do they tell us?

The paper begins to touch upon the potential for students if we reconceptualise fieldwork and considers the consequences for geographical understanding and personal reflection by doing so.

What would you like to see more of in the paper? Are there any issues that you would like the author to consider?

- I think I would like to have seen more discussion regarding what constitutes affective learning/emotional learning in geography. Emotional Geographies is growing and this may be a potential source for thinking with. David Job's text (referenced in the article) could have supported the discussion more.
- There is a lot of data to get to grips with, which feels very positivist in nature... possibly at the expense of the students' journals and what they really said about the overall students' experience. Analysing the journals this way (as included in the article) may have lost some of the detail and joined-up thinking that the students were doing through their journals. In a sense the journals themselves have been 'objectified'.
- The analysis of 'results' and 'essays' says something about the power of the 'experience' for these students - I feel that some discussion about the journal as a process of learning - relating theory and practice - would be valuable.

Do you have any additional references that you would like to see included?

- Emotional Geographies: Liz Bondi, Mick Smith, Joyce Davidson (eds)
- Nayak, A. (2003) Race place and globalisation. Oxford: New York (or other writing by Nayak)... really gets underneath how to unpack what young people have to say - excellent examples on ethnographic research
- Crang, M. and Cook, I. (2007) Doing ethnographies. Sage: London. These may help to take a different approach to unwrapping the journals, or set the scene for using the journals in the future.

Where would you recommend the author should consider for publication of this article?

Education Studies, The Curriculum Journal