

Dropping Out Peradventure

Abstract

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From Steve Bowles

Dropping Out Peradventure.

At the Stockholm conference I presented my lecture face-to-face with many people attending. I had before written my abstract which was to briefly give my subject and approach.

After many years of both observation and experience, and this mixed with a fairly wide research of various texts (1), I would try and say that much of the adventure activity, both past and present, is often a kind of dropping-out from certain mainstream cultures or social orders. My main examples come from mountaineering and skateboarding although many more examples might be reasonably put forward.

I suggest that this dropping out peradventure is also a positive thing and perhaps a necessary thing. The skateboarders are, like climbers in the past, rather close to a kind of social anarchy. They refuse mainstream orders but remain friendly and act in a club-type small society. They are quite the opposite to mainstream sporting celebrities. Skateboarding is not a sport, it is, like past mountaineering anarchists found, a way of life.

In this we may view a participative democracy in the making. Also an alienating representative democracy critiqued. In this we might find some kind of educational value in terms of democracy itself. We will certainly find food for thought when so much of this outdoor adventure work wants to find funding through the satisfaction of various ideological systems whereby a mainstream social order is supported rather than any local activist and informal club.

I will also bring out, in this paper-discussion, just how we can appreciate these skateboarders and climbers in terms of non-violent protest. In fact I will go on to claim that skateboarders and climbers have a special code of ethics which might shame big sporting celebrities. If I get a chance I might even relate this to casino capitalism. But if I do this I will not equate "risk"

with skateboarders of climbers. Risk can remain for big business concerns. I will not equate risk with adventure at all. In fact safety and well-being goes better with adventure in skateboarding ways.

Footnote

1. Considering that my presentation is a variable rainbow of themes and concepts it is quite understandable that questions will arise concerning the methodology of such a presentation. I have said already that observation, both participative and from a distance, is one personal source of that which informs this presentation. However I will make no big claims to any scientific validity vis-a-vis the methods of testing a climbing rope or a knot or the fastest route down a wild water rapid. I will not make any claims towards a scientific sports testing or problem solving approach. Indeed one of my claims is that this kind of adventure activity is not a "sport" in the scientific business sense of contemporary society.

Furthermore my personal history throws me into a more phenomenological and hermeneutical atmosphere where, at the end of the day, I act as a kind of postman delivering a message rather than an answer. My domain assumptions are critical and imaginative. I am not strictly "Against Methodology" but I do tend towards a more dialogical approach. My reason-for-being is attached to a presentation that will try to reasonably make the possible into a probable although it will take cooperative dialogue to get to that probable stage.

But this is not all. I confess willingly to presenting a kind of patchwork quilt or a tapestry. There are times when I will use a dialectic and there are times when I will need to define, as a working definition, my terms. Alienation and social anarchy, for example. Finally I will use well established texts, written in the public domain, to serve as evidence for the up and coming debate as presented. In this I will be seen as more formal.

In this confessional I take less guilt due to the increase in biographical and even poetic evidence in the social sciences generally. However my presentation is not about subjectivity and the methodological issues as such. What you see and read or hear, from me, is what you get. Until, that is we might discuss it again and again.

Any validity zone my presented "text" might enter will find itself through an emerging and ongoing opening up of possibilities that may or may not be

considered as probable towards future orientations. But even here there is always so much "coming-before". Here ends my confession on my lack of methodological discipline for any one way. Yet I have tried to stay "true" to that which is presented as the "thing" itself.

However, at the time of the lecture, it was clear that not everything that I had said in the abstract could be spoken and discussed. So I needed to select a few of my themes and then try to speak them out thereby ignoring other themes. I selected two main themes to speak with. First the kinds of critical natures of skateboarding and mountaineering were brought out and I used the "Raw Meat" term to make clear that I was not talking about any adventure inside of the culture industry. Second I talked of "Being" and even (god bless me) the "being of being" vis-a-vis authentic aspects of a lived-life where alienation is so powerful and demands a counter-culture. Here I also linked a theological debate within.

However I smiled as a new theological spiritual-self might be heavily involved in adventure itself. Here and now I can only say this. There is a book publication being prepared and there I can try, yet again, to say more and to say what really can be said.

Steve Bowles