

Regular Paper

The Power of Campfire Spaces for Diversity Education: A Case Study Analysis of a Diversity-Focused Outdoor Adventure Program

Nathan Williams
North Carolina State University

Abstract

Diversity interventions on college campuses provide engagement opportunities for students to interact across lines of difference. Despite these efforts, hate crimes, racial and cultural insensitivity, and a lack of engagement with diverse peers are prevalent. This qualitative case study used an embedded single-case design to explore a new type of intervention: diversity-focused outdoor adventure trips. These trips draw participants from diverse campus communities and create bridges across student populations who might not interact otherwise. Findings from this study suggest that students experience meaningful experiential learning about diversity on outdoor adventure trips. Students are then able to create connections with diverse peers that impact their views of the campus and diverse peers in their community. These findings have implications for extending campus diversity education beyond the traditional classroom or workshop environment and demonstrates the potential for outdoor recreation and education contexts to be opportunities for powerful personal connections among diverse participants. These connections among individuals illustrate the potential for outdoor recreation experiences to forge new bonds between across disparate communities.

KEYWORDS: *Outdoor recreation, community impacts, outdoor education, diversity, college students, diversity education*

Introduction

Racial and cultural unrest in the United States (U.S.) has been punctuated by acts of violence and intolerance in society at large and on college campuses (Garcia & Johnston-Guerrero, 2015). The homicides of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and resulting nationwide protests in the summer of 2020 underscore continued structural racism and discrimination that persists for people of color in the U.S. Meanwhile, on college campuses around the country, large-scale student protests due to racial tensions have become frequent (New, 2014; Phillips, 2018; Spencer & Stolberg, 2017; Trachtenberg, 2018). Reports of hate crimes on campuses have increased in frequency as well, with reported incidents increasing by 25% from 2015 and 2016 (Bauman, 2018).

Undergirding these conflicts is an atmosphere of fear and misunderstanding demonstrated by discriminatory behavior that has become all-too-common: a White student called the police on a Black student who was napping in a university common space (Mangan, 2018); two Native American teenagers were reported to the police while attending a campus tour because they seemingly looked out of place (Chappell, 2018); and a Black professional staff member who was walking to work faced questioning by police after an anonymous tip was called in because he seemed “agitated” (Andrade, 2018).

To address this intolerance and violence, colleges and universities provide a wide array of interventions to help students engage with diverse peers (Alimo, 2012; Hudson, 2018). Diversity workshops, intergroup dialogue, incoming student diversity programs, and other initiatives have been offered to students, but hate crimes, discrimination, and a lack of engagement across lines of diversity persist on campuses (Garcia & Johnston-Guerrero, 2015). Previous quantitative studies have investigated the effectiveness of these diversity programs (e.g., Bowman, 2010; Bowman et al., 2016), but less is known from a qualitative lens about how students experience diversity interventions (Shim & Perez, 2018). Additionally, this body of research has largely focused on campus-based, classroom programs rather than outdoor experiential education-based adventure program diversity interventions. This qualitative case study investigated a diversity-focused college outdoor adventure program using an embedded single-case design to explore a novel program type and uncover participant experiences engaging with diversity.

This diversity-focused college outdoor adventure program is offered at a large, research-intensive, public university in the Southeastern U.S. The program annually takes a group of 9-12 student participants on a spring break trip with a focus on bringing together students from diverse backgrounds to learn about diversity and social justice issues. These trips have included outdoor recreation components, such as backpacking, canoeing, and camping, but these activities have primarily served as a vehicle for diversity outcomes and group processes that are designed to occur throughout the trip. This program is a type of campus diversity intervention that has not been studied previously and represents a unique approach to diversity education. The following research questions guided this case study:

1. What are the experiences of college students who participate in a diversity-focused outdoor adventure program?
2. Which aspects of the diversity-focused outdoor adventure program do participants, trip leaders, and program administrators perceive as most valuable for shaping openness to diverse attitudes and behaviors?

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Higher education has become a diverse environment across racial, ethnic, gender, and other identities of students, since its origination in the colonial era when it was an enterprise exclusively for the advancement of White men (Thelin, 2011). Indeed, higher education was illegal or highly restrictive for women and people of color until relatively recently in this country's history (Chesler et al., 2005). Recently, American higher education has seen a very large increase in

students who are women, students of color, and international students. In 2015 (the most recent year with available data), female students comprised the majority of students enrolled in postsecondary institutions at 56% of the total student population. The percentage of students of color in higher education has grown from 15% of the total student population in 1976 to 40% in 2015. More recently, the percentage of international students grew from 2% to 5% (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). While equity in degree attainment remains problematic, these statistics indicate that campus communities have a high degree of diversity.

Campus administrators have initiated diversity interventions to help students interact across these diverse groups, not only because of the increased representation of diverse groups but also for the benefits that diversity in higher education brings. These benefits include increased academic engagement, increased academic self-confidence, and increased citizenship engagement (Bowman, 2010; Gurin et al., 2002; Hurtado et al., 2012; Jayakumar, 2015). Institutions and employers have also stressed the importance of preparing students for a diverse world and workplace (Hart Research Associates, 2018). In addition to interventions discussed here, campuses offer academic programs that educate students about diverse groups and cultures; stress the value of study abroad and service-learning; and support multicultural student organizations and centers (Cuyjet et al., 2016; Mayhew et al., 2016).

Campus Diversity Interventions

Among the many diversity interventions put in place on college campuses, intergroup dialogue is possibly the best-known (Gurin et al., 2013). Intergroup dialogue courses are typically for-credit courses that are offered to bring together students of different identity groups for curricular content to learn about social justice and diversity, as well as to engage in facilitated discussions led by a trained faculty or staff member (Gurin et al., 2013). Typically, these programs bring together students from two different identity groups, based on gender, race, or religion (e.g., Black and White students, Christians and Muslims). These courses are designed for students to gain knowledge of the other group, as well as systemic privilege and oppression, but they also seek to forge personal relationships between individuals from these groups.

Diversity workshops are offered on many campuses, providing a co-curricular setting where small groups can engage in discussion topics and may be as short as a single 45-minute session or occur in multiple sessions over a full semester. These workshops have been shown to increase civic behaviors such as community leadership and socializing with individuals of other racial identities (Bowman et al., 2016). Although not solely focused on promoting interaction between diverse campus populations, service-learning represents another intervention where students can interact with peers of different backgrounds and races/ethnicities (Engberg, 2004; Hurtado, 2005). Bowman and Brandenberger (2012) studied a service-learning course that included an immersion experience trip. The researchers found that, while diversity content knowledge was helpful, it was informal interactions and novel experiences that provided the greatest support for participant diversity attitude change.

At some college and university campuses (e.g., Duke University Student Affairs, n.d.), policies require new students to be paired with random roommates (rather than allowing students to select who they share their room with) in an effort to help students engage with those different from themselves (Hudson, 2018). While some studies indicate positive results from these initiatives (Camargo et al., 2010; Martin et al., 2014; Stearns et al., 2009), simply placing students from different backgrounds in the same living situation does not ensure they will have positive interactions (Hudson, 2018).

College Outdoor Adventure Programs

Diversity-focused outdoor adventure trips are unique within the realm of campus diversity interventions, but many universities offer outdoor adventure programs (OAPs) to students in some capacity (Poff & Webb, 2007). Although quantifying the total number of college OAPs is difficult, due to the wide variety of program designs, one survey (Poff & Webb, 2007) found 236 programs within college and university settings, which outnumbered the 51 other types of nonprofit OAPs (i.e., municipal, military, and independent nonprofit organizations). This suggests that higher education accounts for a large percentage of the organized outdoor recreation that occurs within the U.S. Programs represent a wide variety of institution types, ranging from large, public, research-intensive institutions (like the university in this case study, the University of Wisconsin–Madison, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, or the University of Georgia, for example) to small, private, liberal arts colleges (such as Davidson College, Whitman College, or Lewis and Clark College; Poff & Webb, 2007).

College OAPs vary widely depending on the size of the university, the physical location of the campus, and the campus organization in which the program is housed. Certain OAPs offer greater opportunity for social interactions among diverse students by the nature of the activity. For example, students climbing at an indoor climbing wall in a campus recreation facility may only interact with a few pre-existing friends during their time at the wall. Conversely, students participating in a week-long, spring break backpacking trip who only know one or two other people on the trip may be forced to interact with the other 10-12 participants, student trip leaders, and professional staff (Pate et al., 2015).

While there is very little research into diversity experiences on college OAPs, there are studies that support the effectiveness of outdoor education as a diversity intervention. A few studies (Breunig et al., 2010; Cooley et al., 2016; Seaman et al., 2010) have identified group contact-related outcomes of outdoor adventure, which highlights the potential of these types of programs to be used for diversity interventions. Considering the potential for diversity learning through outdoor recreation activities is inherently problematic, due to the continued exclusion of minoritized populations from these settings as a result of white supremacy and colonialism (Ho & Chang, 2021; Mowatt, 2009, 2020). Rather than seeking to assimilate minoritized students to white recreation spaces, this program has attempted to increase the accessibility of these activities, while also creating space for the voices and perspectives of underrepresented students. Through this programmatic approach and this study's use of qualitative inquiry, this study sought to bring better awareness to the ways in which recreation settings can be more equitably experienced and to advance social justice (Floyd, 2014).

Theoretical Frameworks

Two theoretical frameworks were used to conceptually guide this study, as well as inform the interview protocols used. Gurin et al.'s (2002) theory of campus diversity experiences explains that students who engage in informal interactional diversity and classroom diversity may experience cognitive disequilibrium. The growth in diversity skills that results from these diversity experiences can then be measured through observable learning outcomes. The extent to which this growth occurs varies based on the frequency and quality of these diverse interactions, in addition to student background with diversity and the structural diversity and institutional characteristics of the college the student is attending. Gurin et al.'s (2002) theory of campus diversity experiences proposes that structural diversity is a necessary precondition for student cognitive growth to occur, but students simply being put in the same place as diverse others is not sufficient to ensure they will interact outside of their familiar identity groups.

Kolb's theory of experiential learning (1984, 2015) provided the second conceptual lens for this study. Experiential learning theorizes that participants do not automatically learn from

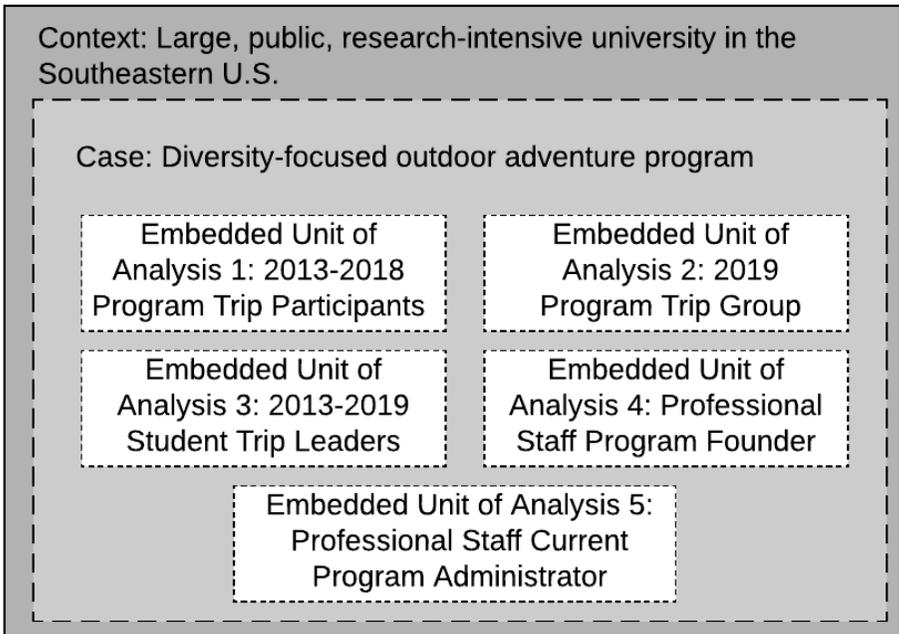
direct experiences they have. Rather, following the experience, individuals must have an opportunity to reflect on it. This reflective observation may then lead to abstract conceptualization, where the learner recognizes that what they learned from the experience can apply in other contexts. Lastly, the individual ideally uses this learning to undertake active experimentation with their new knowledge. In a campus diversity intervention example, a college student attends one multicultural student event, reflects on the intercultural learning and friendly peer interactions, recognizes that this positive intergroup contact could occur in other settings or events, and actively experiments by attending other types of multicultural events or student organizations.

Method

An embedded single-case study design (Yin, 2017) was used to investigate a diversity-focused outdoor adventure program as the primary unit of analysis, with five subunits of analysis: 23 previous program participants from the 2013-2018 trip year groups, 10 participants from the 2019 trip year group, four previous student trip leaders, the program founder, and the current program administrator (see Figure 1). These subunits provided triangulation of different realities experienced by individuals with the program intervention (Stake, 2005). Single-case design was used for this study as this program represents an “unusual case” (Yin, 2017, p. 50) and there is only one program of this type. Despite it being unique currently, there are many universities pursuing diversity strategies and that also provide OAPs, making it a program design that could be implemented to foster diversity and inclusion on other college campuses.

Figure 1

Embedded Single-Case Study Design



The context for this case was a large, public, research-intensive university in the Southeastern U.S. During the period of the outdoor trips under study (2013-2019), the university population showed little variance in overall enrollment from 24,833 undergraduates and 9,507 graduate students (34,340 total) in academic year 2012-2013 (North Carolina State University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, n.d.-a) to 24,150 undergraduates and 10,282 graduate students (34,432) in academic year 2017-2018 (North Carolina State University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, n.d.-b). As part of the university's division of student affairs, the campus recreation department contains an OAP that offers outdoor trips for students, outdoor gear rental, an indoor climbing wall, a challenge course, and the program in this study. The diversity-focused OAP was started by a professional staff member in 2013. The program was originally funded by a university diversity and inclusion grant. In addition to grant funds, hiking boots were donated by a local outdoor recreation gear store and jackets were purchased by the OAP (so that a lack of proper gear was not an impediment for potential participants). The campus recreation department funded the remainder of expenses for the trip and personnel costs for student trip leaders.

All students are invited to apply to the program and, after being selected, trip participants attend two pre-trip meetings prior to the 9-day trip over spring break. On the trip itself, participants engage in outdoor adventure activities as well as diversity curriculum and discussions with other participants about social justice, identity, and diversity issues at the university. During the first days of the trip, participants discuss aspects of their own identity that are important to them and hear about the identities of other participants to gain an understanding of identity salience and intersectionality. Later in the trip, the curriculum turns to more challenging topics, such as systemic oppression, privilege, and (in)equity in education. Near the end of the trip, students are encouraged to discuss diversity issues specific to their university and how participants can be active in building and sustaining inclusive campus communities.

During the first three years of the program, each trip was led by the program founder as well as two student trip leaders. All three of these trips used backpacking and rock climbing in the Appalachian Mountains as the primary outdoor activities. In the fourth year of the program, the current program administrator assumed management of the university's OAP and has been the primary trip leader during the subsequent five years of the program. During the fourth through eighth year of the program, trips have still included diversity curriculum and discussions, but outdoor activities were changed to canoeing and kayaking (the fourth year in the Florida Everglades and the fifth through eighth years on the Gulf Coast of Louisiana). Additionally, in the fifth, sixth, and eighth year of the program, the program administrator was joined by a student trip leader and also an accompanying university professional staff member from a campus unit outside of campus recreation (the Office of Student Conduct, the College of Natural Resources, and the Department of Wellness and Recreation, respectively). Although the changes in program leadership, destination, and activities could be seen as a limitation of this study, it may also be a strength: if participants experienced similar themes across these years, then it is more likely due to overall program design, curriculum, and interaction with diverse peers rather than factors associated with a particular destination or trip leadership.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews with past participants, trip leaders, and the program founder were the primary data collection methods used for this study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This approach allowed for inductive data generation (Jones et al., 2013), in which participants were able to share themes and anecdotes that were most relevant to them. A focus group was also used for the most recent trip group for a number of reasons. The perspectives on the program provided by this group provided a point of comparison for the individual participant, trip leaders, and program founder interviews (Stake, 2005). Additionally, while I sought to conduct all

interviews in a way that prioritized the voices of participants over that of my own, one benefit of focus groups is that they can create environments where the researcher holds less of a presence and power than in individual interviews (Mertens, 2015). This hopefully made it easier for participants to share what they experienced on the trip and not “sugarcoat” what they wanted to say. Lastly, the group dynamic of the focus group itself elicited discoveries and connections that individuals alone might not have recognized on their own (Mertens, 2015). Interview and focus group protocols were created using the theoretical frameworks for this study (full study details are published in Williams, 2020). Participants were invited to participate by email and received a \$20 Amazon gift card as an incentive to participate. Participants from every trip year were interviewed, ranging from two to six participants from each trip year (see Table 1). An interview was held with one participant from the 2019 trip year who was unable to participate in the 2019 trip group focus group due to availability. A diversity of gender and racial/ethnic identities among participants was represented (see Table 2).

Table 1

Program Destinations and Participants Interviewed by Trip Year

Program Year	Location of Trip - Primary Activity	# of Participants	Participants Interviewed
2013	Western North Carolina - Backpacking	10	4
2014	Western North Carolina - Backpacking	11	6
2015	Western North Carolina - Backpacking	11	2
2016	Florida Everglades - Canoeing	9	2
2017	Louisiana Gulf Coast - Canoeing	9	4
2018	Louisiana Gulf Coast - Canoeing	12	5
2019	Louisiana Gulf Coast - Canoeing	10	10
Total	7 Trips	72 Participants	33 Participants

Of the 72 students who participated in this program between 2013 and 2019, 24 students were individually interviewed for this study, and 9 participants (from the 2019 trip) engaged in a focus group, making a total of 33 program participants represented in this study. Given that this is a small group in general, and each trip year is only 9-12 students, results will be reported in a way that protects the identities of research participants. Rather than associating participant pseudonyms with trip year participated, only demographic characteristics will be linked to pseudonyms (see Table 2). This will demonstrate that a diversity of perspectives is represented but will not compromise the confidentiality of participants.

Of the 10 previous student trip leaders in the program, four participated in individual phone interviews. Additionally, two previous student participants involved in the study were also student trip leaders in the year following their participation, so six out of 10 previous trip leaders from the program were interviewed in total. A semi-structured in-person interview with the professional staff program founder provided the history of the program's founding as well as their experiences leading three years of the program and interacting with trip participants and student trip leaders. The final piece of data collection was an interview with the current program administrator who was also the trip leader for the past five years of the program.

Table 2*Pseudonyms and Demographic Information for Interview and Focus Group Participants*

Pseudonym	Year in School	Gender*	Race/Ethnicity
Alexis	Junior	Female	Dominican-American
Amanda	Freshman	Female	White/Black/Native American
Amelia	Junior	Female	White
Andrew	Junior	Nonbinary	African American/ Latin American/Creole
Brandy	Freshman	Female	Asian
Brianna	Freshman	Female	African American
Bryan	Freshman	Male	African American
Camille	Junior	Female	Middle Eastern
Carla	Senior	Female	Hispanic
Damon	Junior	Male	White
Darius	Senior	Male	Latino
Deanna	Junior	Female	Hispanic/Latino
Derek	Sophomore	Male	Caucasian
Devin	Junior	Male	White/Middle Eastern
Ethan	Sophomore	Male	White
Jack	Junior	Male	African American
James	Sophomore	Man	Black
Jasmine	Junior	Female	African American/Multiracial
June	Junior	Female	White
Lilly	Freshman	Female	Hispanic/Latino
Madeline	Second-year Grad Student	Female	White
Melissa	Junior	Female	African American
Michael	Sophomore	Male	Black
Miranda	Junior	Female	Caucasian
Paul	Sophomore	Man	White
Rebecca	First-year Grad Student	Female	White/Latinx
Regina	Junior	Female	South Asian
Richard	First-year Grad Student	Male	Indian
Sara	Senior	Female	Native American
Thomas	Junior	Male	White
Tonya	Senior	Female	White
Trina	Junior	Female	African American
Veronica	Sophomore	Female	African American

* For both Gender and Race/Ethnicity, participants were given the ability to write in their own personal definitions of how they identify.

Interview protocols included questions guided by both theoretical frameworks used in this study: Gurin et al.'s (2002) theory of campus diversity experiences and Kolb's (1984, 2015) experiential learning theory. Due to the often complex nature of individual experiences with diversity, narrative questions provided an opportunity for participants to share how they experienced interactions with individuals of different backgrounds and identities, in addition to formal diversity education (if applicable). Accordingly, previous participants were asked questions related to their experiences on the program under study, but also questions related to their previous

experiences with diversity programs and diverse interactions (given the importance of student background characteristics and previous diversity experiences).

As Gurin et al. (2002) identified structural diversity, informal interaction diversity, and classroom diversity as components that lead to cognitive disequilibrium and growth, the interviews then turned to these aspects of participants' college experiences as well as their experiences in the outdoor trip program. Questions were asked related to participant interactions with others on the trip, their engagement with activities and curriculum, and any reflection they had on the trip or subsequent diversity experiences. The protocol also included questions that were related to participants experiences with campus diversity outside of the outdoor trip (i.e., if a student had a wide array of experiences with multicultural student organizations, diversity town halls, ethnic studies courses, or other campus diversity experiences, they likely would have a different experience on their trip than a student who did not have these other experiences with diversity).

As mentioned previously, the interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner and I asked follow-up questions to try to obtain stories and program details that were most important to participants and their experience with the program under study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Interviews were completed between July 15 and August 14, 2019. The interviews ranged in time from 24-66 minutes in length and were held either over the phone (21 interviews), in person on campus (two interviews), or online via Skype (one interview) at the choosing of the interview participant and a day and time that were convenient for them. The focus group with the most recent trip group was 90 minutes in duration and was held in person at an on-campus meeting room.

After each participant interview or focus group was finished, I immediately wrote a summary of the participant's trip experience to attempt to capture the overall intent of what I perceived the participant was trying to convey (the important points they were trying to make). This served as one form of memoing to ensure the trustworthiness of the data (Jones et al., 2013). Interview data analysis followed the Corbin and Strauss (2008) approach to reading interviews, coding them to find concepts, identifying broad categories or themes, and finally looking for axial codes amongst the data that indicated relationships and patterns. Throughout each of these steps, I engaged in writing memos to develop a dialogue with the data and also to assess the extent to which my own personal experience with outdoor adventure and diversity might influence my analysis of participant and trip leader experiences (Jones et al., 2013). Codes related to experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984, 2015) and the theory of campus diversity experiences (Gurin et al., 2002) were considered *a priori*, but simply provided an additional lens through which to view the data, rather than limiting concepts and codes that emerged (Jones et al., 2013). Specifically, I reviewed interview codes and concepts to analyze whether the phases of each theory were present or there were information-rich units of analysis which fit one, or both, of the theoretical frameworks holistically.

After interviews were coded for these dimensions, I compared each interview to the summary I created to identify whether the coded interview was consistent with the overall intent of the research participant in conveying their experiences. I then emailed each participant the narrative summary created of their program experience, along with the interview transcript and asked participants whether these were an accurate reflection of their perspective on the program. This served as a form of member checking to aid in providing greater internal validity for this study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Lastly, numeric counts of concepts were tallied using Atlas.ti to identify any prevalent themes that did not emerge previously.

Researcher Positionality

In addition to my role as the primary investigator for this study, I have also served as an administrator for the outdoor recreation unit in which the program is housed and was the program trip leader for the past four years. My experience on these trips has given me a unique vantage

point to ask questions and analyze participant responses with an informed view of program activities and curriculum. Particularly for the years of the program which I have experienced, I know what participants experienced on long van rides to faraway destinations; I remember the colder days of the trip or when mishaps occurred along the way; and I have developed personal connections with participants which I believe allowed them to be more open with me than they would have with another researcher.

There is certainly the risk that participants have “sugar-coated” their responses due to my position as the program administrator and trip leader. I have accounted for this possibility with a few strategies. The interview protocol I used included an opening statement encouraging participants to be honest about their experience and not be fearful of providing negative recollections or opinions about the trip. I arranged for a colleague to interview me early on in the data collection process to identify the biases I hold that could potentially be projected onto participant experiences. Throughout data collection and analysis, I engaged in memoing (Jones et al., 2013) to capture both the salient aspects of participant experiences and also the emotions I was experiencing related to my positionality with the trip, participants, and data being collected. For example, early on in my interviews, one participant referred to the trip as a life-changing experience. Upon reflection in memoing after this interview, I recognized that it would be important for me to not use this initial interview as a catalyst to go in search of every participant experience being life-changing. It was a good reminder that some participants had more meaningful experiences and post-trip reflections than others (and, indeed, participants that I interviewed throughout this study had a wide range of experiences with the trip and their ensuing reflections on it).

Limitations

The focus of the program on diversity represents the primary limitation of this study: since students self-selected to participate in this trip and its curriculum is focused on diversity topics, how is the perspective of these participants and trip leaders different than other college students? While the unique perspective of these individuals should certainly be considered, their involvement with the program makes them informed research participants who can best provide insight into the details of the program for this case study. Given that the primary unit of analysis in this study is the program itself and experiences participants have on these trips, this makes the participation of these individuals ideal and necessary.

Findings

There were four primary themes in the findings of this study: trying something new; group bonding through challenge and adversity; campfire spaces creating context for discussions and connections; and powerful personal connections (see Table 3). Findings presented are organized based on the experiential journey of participants through the program. The first primary theme, “trying something new,” recognizes the motivations of participants prior to coming on their trip. Most participants interviewed were new to the outdoors and encountered peers with whom they had not previously interacted—both conditions that led to their trip experience being a novel and meaningful growth experience. The second primary theme, “group bonding through challenge and adversity,” illustrates participants having concrete experiences with trip conditions that surprised them and lead them to form tighter connections with their trip peers. The third primary theme, “campfire spaces creating context for discussions and connections,” uncovers salient times when participants came together to engage in group conversation with each other. These spaces were also the first times that participants engaged in reflective observation (Kolb, 1984, 2015) on the trip itself as they debriefed the day and discussed connections between the trip experience and broader diversity topics. The fourth primary theme, “powerful personal connections,” shows that participants reflected on their trip experience and learned about diver-

sity from fellow participants in their trip groups. For some, these personal connections led to abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984, 2015) as well as cognitive disequilibrium and growth (Gurin et al., 2002).

Table 3

Themes and Subthemes of Findings

Theme	Subtheme
Trying something new	A. New to the outdoors B. Seeing new places C. Something to do over break
Group bonding through challenge and adversity	A. Overcoming physical discomfort and weather B. Emotional discomfort of learning about structural inequities
Campfire spaces creating context for discussions and connections	A. Facilitated discussions and activities leading to deeper conversation B. Conversations during unstructured time and camp routines C. Outdoor activities providing settings for connections
Powerful personal connections	A. Learning about personal backgrounds B. Assumptions challenged C. Interactions with locals and subject matter experts

Trying Something New

Almost all of the participants interviewed for this study attended the trip to try something new. While the majority of participants had little or no outdoors experience, there were also participants who came on the trip to try new activities, visit new destinations, or meet others of different backgrounds and perspectives they would not have otherwise met. This theme of trying something new included the following subthemes: new to the outdoors, seeing new places, and something to do over break. For some participants, all of these themes were present.

Participants were generally not experienced in outdoor or diversity activities and attended the trip for a new experience. The majority of participants decided to attend the trip because they were new to outdoor activities and wanted to stretch themselves. Of the participants I interviewed individually, 17 had little or no outdoor experience while seven had previous experience with camping and other outdoor activities. Despite having little outdoor experience, most participants said they came on the trip due to the outdoor nature of it and often mentioned going out of their comfort zone as a reason for attending the trip. This was the case for Camille, who was a junior when attending her trip and identifies as female and Middle Eastern,

I decided that I needed to do something that terrified me, because I think I spent a lot of time growing up in a comfort zone. I had never gone camping. Like I had never spent an extended period of time outdoors. I knew I wanted to, but it just wasn't something my family ever did. Really. It wasn't something culturally that's very familiar to me. So, I definitely wanted to try something new. And I'm very glad that I did (Camille, Interview).

While most participants expressed a desire to venture outdoors, visit new destinations, or had other motivations related to the content of the trip, some participants also just needed something to do over spring break. This was frequently combined with the affordability of the trip and not having money to go anywhere else, as well as a lack of other plans for break (or the somewhat-dreaded alternative of going home for break).

Group Bonding through Challenge and Adversity

Challenge and adversity of some kind came up for almost every participant in this study. The challenge of weather and camping every night were common, but for some trip years the emotional challenges of learning about societal inequities and hardships were more prevalent. For 14 of the participants I interviewed, challenges encountered by the group led to increased group bonding. Participants noted that these challenges also made group members quicker to open up with each other and be vulnerable with their group. This is reflected in the subthemes of overcoming physical discomfort and weather and emotional discomfort of learning about structural inequities.

Weather conditions and the discomfort of being new to camping and backcountry travel were part of the majority of participants' experiences. In particular, participants in the inaugural year of the trip in 2013 experienced snow and ice on their backpacking trip to Western North Carolina and the 2018 trip year to Louisiana experienced cold temperatures and wind while camping on a sandy beach on Grand Isle. Jasmine remembered that the first hike of the trip "was very steep and very difficult. And then the first night it snowed and it was very, very cold." (Jasmine, Interview). Despite these challenges, she had meaningful moments with other group members and was appreciative for the trip experience later in life.

Although cold and physical discomfort were challenging, a number of participants thought that the conditions of the trip brought their group closer together. This theme was present across both the Western North Carolina and Louisiana years of the trip, as well as the singular Florida trip. While it was warmer on her trip, Miranda noted that spending so much time outside and hearing strange noises at night (one of the campsites where the group stayed was frequented by feral pigs) led to a sense of discomfort but this challenge led to the group "leaning on each other a little bit more." (Miranda, Interview).

Participants spoke about physical challenges as something they overcame or survived, but the emotional challenges participants had on the trips were more nuanced. Nine participants recalled being emotionally affected by learning about coastal land loss and the impacts of Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana. In these interviews, some participants seemed to still be working through the emotions they experienced on their trip, rather than treating them completely as a past event in distant memory. Carla, a female-identified Hispanic student who was a senior on her trip to Louisiana, worked through the emotions of learning about coastal land loss and its disproportionate impact on communities with less privilege. She struggled with "the sad reality that you have to accept that not everyone's as fortunate as you are." (Carla, Interview).

Participants recognized not only the direct learning about how Hurricane Katrina impacted communities in New Orleans, but also transferred this learning to other examples, a type of abstract conceptualization from the lens of Kolb's (1984; 2015) experiential learning theory. Brianna saw the ways in which environmental justice played out in Louisiana and, following the trip, noticed similar dynamics in her home city. After explaining an environmental justice issue that she learned about in a college course following her trip, she went on to compare it to the themes she learned about in Louisiana. Comparing areas of New Orleans during Katrina where "predominately Black communities were hurt the most," she generalized this to environmental injustices in her home city and elsewhere, "How come the predominately Black area is the worst off? How come that's consistent with a lot of cities?" (Brianna, Interview).

Trip leaders I interviewed also recognized that the group overcoming the challenges of their trip was a facet of their bonding together. Alayna, who identifies as a cis-woman of mixed race and Latinx ethnicity, was a junior student trip leader during her backpacking trip and relayed that her group “felt really accomplished and felt really strong and felt like they worked together as a group to achieve [the goals of the trip].” (Alayna, Interview). Rachel, a female-identified Indian student who was a junior trip leader during the program, also noted this same sense of accomplishment, including the notion that challenge and discomfort created a chance for growth. “If you put someone way out of their comfort zone in the outdoors,” she said, “they step up and grow a lot more than if you try to do the same thing with a group in the front country [i.e., a non-wilderness context].” (Rachel, Interview).

Campfire Spaces Creating Context for Discussions and Connections

Participants engaged with diverse peers in facilitated discussions led by trip leaders and program staff, but these activities were not self-contained: participants recalled spaces for important interactions that were not informal but also not completely structured. While the specific context varied, these “campfire spaces” brought together participants as a whole group or subgroups to engage with each other beyond formal discussion. Campfire spaces were literal campfires at the end of the day, but were also informal settings in the van between destinations; boiling water and cutting vegetables for meals; and canoeing through the salt marsh.

Each campfire space on the program trips depended on a number of pre-existing conditions that were designed by trip leaders: the group had been taught skills for living in the outdoors for their week together; they had practiced interacting with civility about sensitive topics (through establishing ground rules and participating in activities that role modeled discussion of diversity and identities); and they were gathered in a space because leaders had brought them together. Although the campfire space was designed by leaders, it was self-directed by participants at certain points. For example, while debriefing the day in a group discussion or reflection activity, participants were free to decide how much to share about themselves and what to discuss; they chose whether to stay in the campfire space or opt out; and they decided how long to keep the conversation going as a group before putting the campfire out.

Every trip year included daily evening discussions that generally started with formal debrief questions facilitated by trip leaders, but then led to informal conversations amongst the group after trip leaders and staff went to bed. As Ethan noted succinctly, “The more formal conversations served as a decent foundation and then I found a lot of the really meaningful parts to be followed up by the informal conversations.” (Ethan, Interview). Thomas, who participated during the Louisiana years of the trip, recalled that these conversations created a chance to learn about other participants’ personal backgrounds and “hear everybody else’s perspectives on the things that we had learned that day.” (Thomas, Interview). Rather than limiting the topic of discussion to the day’s activities, trip groups often used these topics as entry points into sharing personal backgrounds. Camille learned about another participant’s adoption story, which was “super eye-opening and also heartbreaking.” (Camille, Interview). Brianna recalled that campfire chats let participants share thoughts on “issues that were below the surface” and gave her a chance to interact with a group of “people that weren’t all like me.” (Brianna, Interview).

In addition to whole group discussions, unstructured time and conversations during camping routines (e.g., cleaning up after dinner, setting up tents, traveling in the van) were times that participants remembered developing closer connections in one-on-one conversations. Although these were not literal campfires, the conditions of campfire spaces were still present through many of these interactions. Many participants remembered interactions from their trip, which included conversations for some participants that had occurred seven years earlier.

Unstructured times were also periods that participants mentioned they might normally revert to being on their phones if they were back on campus, but being on the trip led them to disconnect and create conversation. This came up more so in conversations with participants from the Louisiana years of the trip, when van rides were longer and there was access to cell service (i.e., they could have used their cell phones but intentionally chose not to). “It was really nice to not be on my phone all the time and not have to worry about what’s going on, not have to worry about school,” Amanda (Interview) recalled. Another participant from a different trip year (but also during the Louisiana era of the program) spoke about this same dynamic of choosing not to use technology, but noted conversations in the van as an environment that “makes you kind of grow closer” (Veronica, Interview). Brandy and Thomas, also from the Louisiana years of the trip, remembered the van as a valuable time to connect with peers as well. In contrast, Western North Carolina trips were often out of cell service range with less time in the van, so using a cell phone was less of an individual choice and more so a built-in condition of the trip.

Rather than participants recalling how much they enjoyed specific outdoor activities, they often prioritized meaningful conversations they had with individuals and small groups in canoes, tents, and on the backpacking trail. In contrast to group discussions where participants reflected on the day, outdoor activities were settings where participants engaged in the concrete experiences (Kolb, 1984, 2015) of learning about each other’s lives and views. Brandy remembered talking with her fellow tentmates late into the night and recalled that despite having “pretty different experiences among the three of us, we were able to connect with each other.” (Brandy, Interview). Thomas learned more about the backgrounds of his two tentmates, who both opened up about their experiences as gay men in a way that was “eye-opening.” (Interview). This interaction occurred in their tent, but Thomas remembered that sexual orientation came up in the end-of-day discussion creating an opportunity to discuss it further with his tentmates. Devin also recalled that conversation topics would begin around the campfire and “then the deeper conversations would happen in your tents at night. That’s when you get to explore a little bit more about the beliefs and asking questions like ‘What do you believe?’” (Devin, Interview).

Trip leaders and staff also spoke about the trip providing a chance for groups to interact with each other in an outdoor environment and outside of the routine of daily life. In contrast to participants, trip leaders and staff were more apt to associate group outcomes with the nature setting and outdoor activities. Alayna, a trip leader during the backpacking years of the trip, recalled rock climbing as an impactful experience for her group, but this was not mentioned very often by participants. Rachel, one of the student trip leaders in the later years of the program, spoke about the group coming together and attributed some of it to being outdoors and also to the “conversations we were having and putting everybody on the same level with outdoor skills and addressing difficult topics.” (Rachel, Interview). In this quote and later in our conversation, Rachel made a connection between the participants learning new skills and how they came together as a group. This newness of experience created opportunities for cognitive disequilibrium and growth (Gurin et al., 2002) as participants were not only engaging with diverse peers but also encountering outdoor skills and settings they had not previously experienced.

Trip leaders also recognized that it was often the conversation that occurred during unstructured time that was a time when group members got to know each other and share personal backgrounds. Scott, a trip leader from the Louisiana years of the trip, remembered “cooking dinner or hanging around camp” (Scott, Interview) as the time when the group interactions were meaningful, in addition to conversations in the van. Wade, also a trip leader during the Louisiana years, remembered meals as an important time for conversation and a chance for participants to “shoot the breeze” (Wade, Interview), while sharing about their lives and personal backgrounds.

During my conversation with Ashley, the program founder, we discussed aspects of the trip that we thought were valuable for participants and the different philosophies of outdoor education. Ashley and I have somewhat similar professional backgrounds of instructing for Outward Bound, completing graduate assistantships in campus outdoor recreation, and working as pro-

fessional staff in similar campus outdoor recreation positions, but the design of the trip in her years of administering the program was different than my design. The primary differences were the activities (backpacking vs. canoeing), location (Western North Carolina vs. Louisiana), and remoteness of the experience (backcountry travel in a wilderness setting vs. car camping in a front-country setting). In addition, the Louisiana years of the trip added an environmental justice component that was not part of the initial program design (and cut out some of the diversity curriculum that was facilitated in the initial years).

Powerful Personal Connections

The majority of participants wanted to come on their trip for outdoor destinations and new experiences, but personal connections with diverse peers became more meaningful than outdoor experiences. Outdoor activities were mentioned by participants as a context for conversations, rather than the primary focus of their memories. Madeline, who participated in the Louisiana years of the trip, thought nature was important for her experience, but it was the “really close connections” (Madeline, Interview) she made that stood out more strongly. Darius (who primarily wanted to go on a free backpacking trip) saw the trip as an opportunity to learn about others’ beliefs, in particular fellow participants of different faiths and sexual orientations. “I enjoyed that because it allowed us to really appreciate each other’s beliefs and gain an understanding of each other,” he said (Darius, Interview). Richard recalled that “getting to interact with all those people and learn their stories was pretty amazing. That’s one thing that stands out more than the outdoors part is the people and their backgrounds.” (Richard, Interview).

Some participants learned about peers’ religious and cultural identities, including Jasmine who remembered having a “very in-depth conversation with [another participant] about religion” (Jasmine, Interview) and learning more about the prayer practices of her fellow participant who was Muslim. Deanna, also a participant from the backpacking years of the program, related her previous experiences “where a lot of Middle Eastern men don’t like to talk to women” and was challenged by a fellow participant of Middle Eastern descent who “broke all the stereotypes that I had.” (Deanna, Interview). In addition to Deanna, 12 other participants had assumptions challenged when interacting with peers of diverse identities. Derek, who participated in the backpacking years of the program and identifies as a White male, learned about the experiences of a fellow participant who was gay. Learning about the struggles of this fellow participant led him to question his beliefs and the following year, when he was a trip leader, he “did not identify as a Christian [any longer]” and the trip experience made him question his “belief structure for the better.” (Derek, Interview).

Discussion

This study illustrates the potential for outdoor adventures programs and outdoor recreation activities and environments to be used as effective tools in diversity education experiences. The power of campfire spaces to bring together students from diverse backgrounds and facilitate deep interpersonal connections is a new contribution of this study. Participants in this study developed personal connections with fellow participants that challenged their assumptions of diverse identities. This illustrates the potential for outdoor recreation professionals, higher education faculty and staff, and policy makers to bridge gaps between diverse communities on campus with focused interventions such as this one. This particular program was a week-long adventure, but there are lessons from this study that point to the potential for shorter experiences that create similar conditions for effective diversity learning. While outdoor experiences were memorable for many participants, it was more so the novelty of the intervention, the challenges encountered, and the participant-led interactions that impacted their perspectives of diverse peers.

When compared to other campus diversity interventions, the experiences of program participants indicate outcomes which impact the ways that students interact with their broader

communities. Sense of commonality to other groups and perspective-taking, both previously researched outcomes of intergroup dialogue (Dessel & Rogge, 2008; Gurin et al., 2004), were supported by this study. Another facet of intergroup dialogue outcomes that was supported by this study were the themes of student identity development and student perception of campus as a whole following a diversity intervention (Ford & Malaney, 2012), as participants spoke about questioning their beliefs and previously held assumptions about identity groups following their trip.

Findings from this study support the importance of frequency, duration, and quality of diverse interactions, similar to findings related to diversity workshops (Cole & Zhou, 2014). Although the diversity curriculum and activities on the trip was limited in their impact on diversity attitudes and beliefs, the structure of the trip and the introduction of diversity topics was crucial for participants. Effective contexts need to be created for diverse interactions within campus communities, rather than simply putting diverse students together and relying on chance to bring them closer (i.e., requiring random roommates without helping facilitate positive interactions; Hudson, 2018). The effectiveness of novelty and the unexpected (Bowman & Brandenberger, 2012) were reinforced by this study also: most participants knew they would be going camping, but only had a vague idea of what this (and other activities) would entail. Participants were often surprised by how close they became with their group and the challenges the group overcame together.

Findings from this study support the efficacy of the outdoor environment for group outcomes and fills some of this gap in the outdoor recreation literature (Andre et al., 2017). In particular, this study supports the sense of community and enhanced group work of outdoor recreation found in previous studies (Breunig et al., 2010; Cooley et al., 2016) and strengthens this connection by providing evidence based on a group of largely beginner outdoor participants, not outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Additionally, this study adds to the literature (Seaman et al., 2010) of outdoor recreation encouraging increased comfort with differences with a college student population, but with groups of diverse student identities.

Conclusion and Implications

This exploratory case study uncovered important themes that students experienced during this diversity-focused outdoor trip adventure program and following this meaningful experience. These findings contribute to the literature on how students experience diversity interventions, complementing existing quantitative studies, but suggest a broader impact on how students perceive their campus communities. With these elements of the program distilled into fundamental components (i.e., the conditions that created campfire spaces), future research is needed that replicates these conditions, both in outdoor recreation settings as well as classroom, on-campus, and virtual environments. If an instructor uses the experiential education-based strategies discussed here in the classroom and students experience similar results as this program, this could provide guidance for implementing this design more widely. This program has taken small groups of 9-11 students on these trips, but possibly the concept of campfire spaces could be scaled to reach a wider audience of students who need this type of diversity programming, if experiences are offered in local environments.

Educators should consider ways to provide students opportunities for diverse peer engagement in semi-structured environments, where students can communicate informally with defined learning outcomes and ground rules. For example, outdoor trip leaders could engage participants in diversity discussions prior to the unstructured time of meals or campsite setup with tent groups of different identity characteristics.

To investigate these conditions in varying environments, both qualitative and quantitative research is needed to further explore diverse interactions of students and resulting outcomes and reflections. Future researchers could create an instrument that measures diverse interactions in

experiential education-based diversity interventions and whether there are resulting quantitative outcomes of these interventions. This type of instrument could also help illuminate the aspects of frequency and quality of diverse interactions that are necessary for student attitude change to occur. Does a student need to be engaged with diverse peers for a few hours, a few days, or a full semester for greater openness to diversity to be facilitated? Mixed-methods research in this area would also help determine individual experiences associated with growth outcomes. Beyond the growth of individuals, research is also needed into the community impacts of similar diversity experiences beyond the intervention itself. Do longitudinal impacts of interventions lead to positive diverse peer interactions beyond a program like this one?

This study fills a gap in the diversity and outdoor literature by revealing how students experience diversity and diversity education from a qualitative lens. Findings from this study support using experiential education-based outdoor adventure programs to facilitate interactions between peers from different backgrounds and identities. Students who participated in this program were from a diversity of genders, races, ethnicities, and outdoor experience levels, but all found value in group interactions and diversity learning in outdoor recreation settings. College outdoor adventure programs provide a promising vehicle for facilitating meaningful interactions across diverse campus communities.

References

- Alimo, C. (2012). From dialogue to action: The impact of cross-race intergroup dialogue on the development of white college students as racial allies. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 45*(1), 36–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2012.643182>
- Andrade, R. (2018, October 10). *I was reported to police as an 'agitated black male' - for simply walking to work*. American Civil Liberties Union. <https://www.aclu.org>
- Andre, E. K., Williams, N., Schwartz, F., & Bullard, C. (2017). Benefits of campus outdoor recreation programs: A review of the literature. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership, 9*(1), 15–25. <https://doi.org/10.18666/JOREL-2017-V9-I1-7491>
- Bauman, D. (2018, February 16). After 2016 election, campus hate crimes seemed to jump. Here's what the data tell us. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. <https://www.chronicle.com>
- Bowman, N. A. (2010). College diversity experiences and cognitive development: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research, 80*, 4–33. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654309352495>
- Bowman, N. A., & Brandenberger, J. W. (2012). Experiencing the unexpected: Toward a model of college diversity experiences and attitude change. *The Review of Higher Education, 35*(2), 179–205. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/458134>
- Bowman, N. A., Denson, N., & Park, J. J. (2016). Racial/cultural awareness workshops and post-college civic engagement: A propensity score matching approach. *American Educational Research Journal, 53*(6), 1556–1587. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831216670510>
- Breunig, M. C., O'Connell, T. S., Todd, S., Anderson, L., & Young, A. (2010). The impact of outdoor pursuits on college students' perceived sense of community. *Journal of Leisure Research, 42*(4), 551–572. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2010.11950218>
- Camargo, B., Stinebrickner, R., & Stinebrickner, T. (2010). Interracial friendships in college. *Journal of Labor Economics, 28*, 861–892. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/653831>
- Chappell, B. (2018, May 4). *College apologizes after Native American students' visit is sidelined by police*. National Public Radio. <https://www.npr.org>
- Chesler, M., Lewis, A. E., & Crowfoot, J. E. (2005). *Challenging racism in higher education: Promoting justice*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Cole, D., & Zhou, J. (2014). Do diversity experiences help college students become more civically minded? Applying Banks' multicultural education framework. *Innovative Higher Education, 39*, 109–121. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-013-9268-x>

- Cooley, S. J., Burns, V. E., & Cumming, J. (2016). Using outdoor adventure education to develop students' groupwork skills: A quantitative exploration of reaction and learning. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 39(4), 329–354. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1053825916668899>
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Cuyjet, M. J., Linder, C., Howard-Hamilton, M. F., & Cooper, D. L. (Eds.). (2016). *Multiculturalism on campus: Theory, models, and practices for understanding diversity and creating inclusion*. Stylus.
- Dessel, A., & Rogge, M. E. (2008). Evaluation of intergroup dialogue: A review of the empirical literature. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 26(2), 199–238. <https://doi.org/10.1002/crq.230>
- Duke University Student Affairs. (n.d.). *First-year roommates*. <https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/hdrl/first-year-residential-experience/east-campus-housing/first-year-roommates>
- Engberg, M. E. (2004). Improving intergroup relations in higher education: A critical examination of the influence of educational interventions on racial bias. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(4), 473–524. <https://doi.org/10.3102%2F00346543074004473>
- Floyd, M. F. (2014). Social justice as an integrating force for leisure research. *Leisure Sciences*, 36(4), 379–387. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2014.917002>
- Ford, K. A., & Malaney, V. K. (2012). “I now harbor more pride in my race”: The educational benefits of inter- and intraracial dialogues on the experiences of students of color and multiracial students. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(1), 14–35.
- Garcia, G. A., & Johnston-Guerrero, M. P. (2015). Challenging the utility of a racial microaggressions framework through a systematic review of racially biased incidents on campus. *Journal of Critical Scholarship on Higher Education and Student Affairs*, 2(1), 50–66. <https://ecommons.luc.edu/jcshesa/vol2/iss1/4>
- Gurin, P., Dey, E. L., Hurtado, S., & Gurin, G. (2002). Diversity and higher education: Theory and impact on educational outcomes. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72, 330–366. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9f77t8j3>
- Gurin, P., Lehman, J. S., Lewis, E., Lewis, P. E., Dey, E. L., Hurtado, S., & Gurin, G. (2004). *Defending diversity: Affirmative action at the University of Michigan*. University of Michigan Press.
- Gurin, P., Nagda, B. R. A., & Zúñiga, X. (2013). *Dialogue across difference: Practice, theory, and research on intergroup dialogue*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Hart Research Associates. (2018). *Fulfilling the American dream: Liberal education and the future of work*. <http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/473448>
- Ho, Y. C. J., & Chang, D. (2021). To whom does this place belong? Whiteness and diversity in outdoor recreation and education. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/011745398.2020.1859389>
- Hudson, T. D. (2018). Random roommates: Supporting our students in developing friendships across difference. *About Campus*, 23(3), 13–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086482218804252>
- Hurtado, S. (2005). The next generation of diversity and intergroup relations research. *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(3), 595–610. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2005.00422.x>
- Hurtado, S., Alvarez, C. L., Guillermo-Wann, C., Cuellar, M., & Arellano, L. (2012). A model for diverse learning environments: The scholarship on creating and assessing conditions for student success. In J. C. Smart & M. B. Paulsen (Eds.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 27, pp. 41–122). Springer.
- Jayakumar, U. M. (2015). *Why are all the Black students still sitting together in the proverbial college cafeteria? A look at research informing the figurative question being taken by the Supreme Court in Fisher*. HERI Research Brief. Higher Education Research Institute. <http://www.heri.ucla.edu/PDFs/Why-Are-All-the-Black-Students-Still-Sitting-Together-in-the-Proverbial-College-Cafeteria.pdf>

- Jones, S. R., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. (2013). *Negotiating the complexities of qualitative research in higher education: Fundamental elements and issues* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Prentice-Hall.
- Kolb, D. A. (2015). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development* (2nd ed.). Person Education.
- Floyd, M. F. (2014). Social justice as an integrating force for leisure research. *Leisure Sciences*, 36(4), 379–387. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2014.917002>
- Ford, K. A., & Malaney, V. K. (2012). “I now harbor more pride in my race”: The educational benefits of inter and intraracial dialogues on the experiences of students of color and multiracial students. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(1), 14–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2012.643180>
- Mangan, K. (2018, May 10). A White student called the police on a Black student who was napping. Yale says it’s ‘deeply troubled.’ *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. <https://www.chronicle.com>
- Martin, N. D., Tobin, W., & Spenner, K. I. (2014). Interracial friendships across the college years: Evidence from a longitudinal case study. *Journal of College Student Development*, 55, 720–725. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/558258>
- Mayhew, M. J., Rockenbach, A. N., Bowman, N. A., Seifert, T. A., Wolniak, G. C., Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2016). *How college affects students: Volume 3, 21st century evidence that higher education works*. Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Mertens, D. M. (2015). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Mowatt, R. A. (2009). Notes from a leisure son: Expanding an understanding of whiteness in leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 41(4), 511–528. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2009.11950188>
- Mowatt, R. (2020). Revised notes from a leisure son: expanding an understanding of White supremacy in leisure. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2020.1768876>
- New, J. (2014, September 24). “Can you hear us now?” *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com>
- North Carolina State University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning. (n.d.-a). *Common data set 2012-2013*. <https://oirp.ncsu.edu/facts-figures/external-reports/common-data-set/>
- North Carolina State University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning. (n.d.-b). *Common data set 2017-2018*. <https://oirp.ncsu.edu/facts-figures/external-reports/common-data-set/>
- Pate, J., Anderson, M., Williams, N. (2015). Benefits of outdoor adventure experiences on student learning and transformation. In P. A. Sasso, J. L. DeVitis (Eds.), *Today’s college students: A reader* (pp. 385–398). Peter Lang Publishing.
- Phillips, K. (2018, August 25). Protesters clash, arrests mount after toppling of Confederate statue at UNC-Chapel Hill. *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/>
- Poff, R. A., & Webb, D. J. (2007). *Outdoor recreation program directory and data/resource guide* (4th ed.). Western Kentucky University.
- Seaman, J., Beightol, J., Shirilla, P., & Crawford, B. (2010). Contact theory as a framework for experiential activities as diversity education: An exploratory study. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 32(3), 207–225. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105382590903200303>

- Shim, W., & Perez, R. J. (2018). A multi-level examination of first-year students' openness to diversity and challenge. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 89(4), 453–477. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2018.1434277>
- Spencer, H., & Stolberg, S. G. (2017, August 11). White nationalists march on University of Virginia. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com>
- Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 443–466). SAGE Publications.
- Stearns, E., Buchmann, C., & Bonneau, K. (2009). Interracial friendships and the transition to college: Do birds of a feather flock together once they leave the nest? *Sociology of Education*, 82, 173–195. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40376044>
- Thelin, J. R. (2011). *A history of American higher education*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Trachtenberg, B. (2018). *The 2015 University of Missouri protests and their lessons for higher education policy and administration*. Kentucky Law Journal, forthcoming. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3217199>
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). *Digest of education statistics, 2016* (NCES 2017-094), Chapter 3. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/ch_3.asp
- Williams, N. (2020). *The power of campfire spaces for diversity education: A case study analysis of the Diversity and Inclusion adVenture Experience program*. [Doctoral dissertation, North Carolina State University]. NC State Theses and Dissertations.
- Yin, R. K. (2017). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.