

WRMC 2011 – Boston, MA

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**Outdoor Adventure Risk Management
Millennials and the Car Camping Generation**

Overview of session

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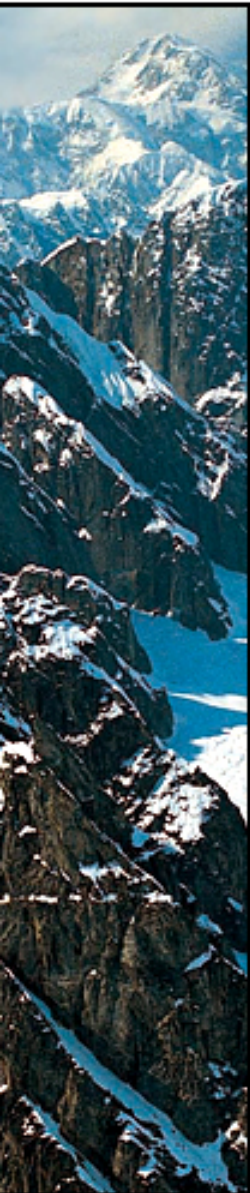
1. What does this title/topic mean?
2. Why was this topic chosen?
3. Discussion on the characteristics of this “generation”.
4. What we have experienced and learned?.
5. What we are doing about it?
6. Take Away.
7. Questions.



What qualifies us to talk about this

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- Twenty continuous years of skill based programs
- Continuous observations; some of us have been around since day one
- We have students full-time for one or two years and part-time up to 6-8 years
- We cover most adventure disciplines/sports
- We do intro courses/programs up to fully certified e.g.
 - Intro mountain/ski/rock to full IFMGA Mountain Guide
 - Intro ww kayaking to senior ww kayaking instructor
- We are still learning (right...)
- We always think we have seen it all (wrong...)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLm5C8tmlBI&feature=related>



Millennials and the car camping generation

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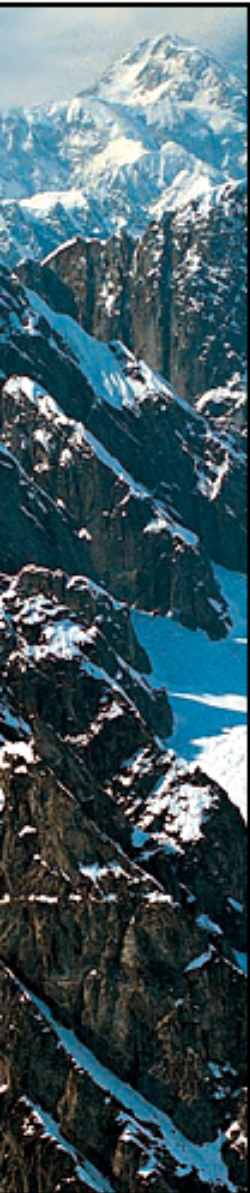
- Who are they?
 - Born between 1982 and 2001
 - Also known as:
 - Generation Y
 - The Net Generation
 - The Boomerang Generation
 - The Peter Pan Generation
 - The Trophy Generation
 - The Entitlement generation
 - Generation Me



Why this topic

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- We have seen a gradual change that has become quite evident in the last few years
- We have seen more and different incidents and close calls
- We have had to adapt, and still are
- We have had to question what we do and why, and still are
- Its happening now and its our reality
- We can share our experiences and learn from yours



Characteristics of this “generation”

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What we have noticed (1)

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- Huge difference between older and younger students
- Students come with skills but no experience (mileage)
- Skills are often high but limited to very specific areas
- Mostly day trips, car access and roofed accom.
- Unrealistic assessment of self (experience, capabilities)
- Not used to adversity or not being told they are the best
- Want instant achievement and recognition
- Interested in stunts and tricks which they view as skills and experience



What we have noticed (2)

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- They put the responsibility for gaining experience on others
- Believe courses alone will provide enough experience
- Fitness and endurance levels are down
- They are well informed: they know the players, the lingo, the gear, the moves, the stunts
- Lots of virtual knowledge
- Not interested in “boring stuff”
- Tone of entitlement
- Can do a Triple McTwisty Daddy in the park but can’t do a multi day trip without getting blisters



What we have noticed (3)

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- Subjective and gravity assisted sports are worse
- The media has lowered the bar for what is considered adventure
- Resumes and logs full of activities that were not considered adventure not too long ago



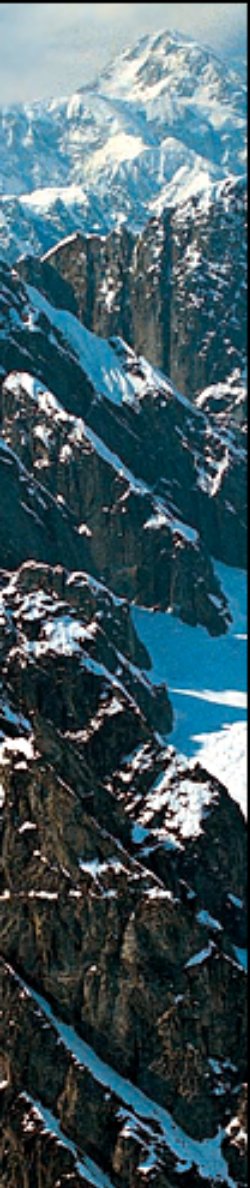
The influence of social media

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- Instant fame and stardom
- Can choose to only show the parts that have value or that they have mastered
- Trying to keep up with the Jones
- Its all about numbers: 5.18, class V...
- Head cams.....
- Its about the feedback and recognition not the risks
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFVvmet9L3Y>



How these characteristics relate and interact with adventure sports and risk (1)



- What risks?
- Short term view
- When something goes wrong its someone else's fault
- A long as we get a good photo
- Will use the risk angle only when appropriate (story to come)
- We can manage the students on courses but not on their own time
- Their benchmarks are not based on reality
- Like the rest of their lives; its going to be fine

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How these characteristics relate and interact with adventure sports and risk (2)

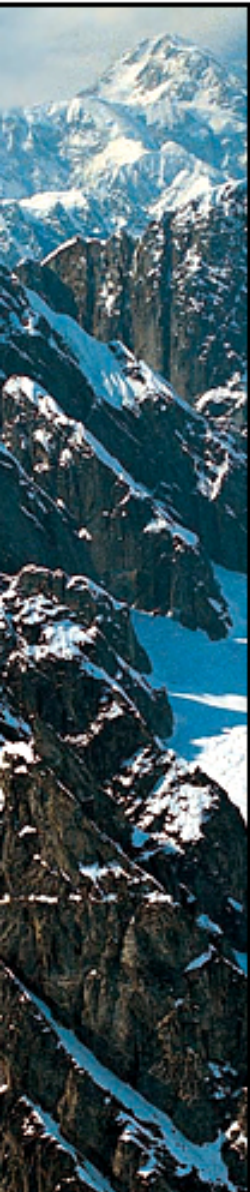


- Extrapolation issues
 - 5.12 in the gym to alpine climbing
 - I paddled one grade IV therefore I am a grade IV paddler
 - I can ski steeps really fast so I can be a ski guide or do a multi-day big terrain traverse
 - I have an avalanche certification therefore I am an expert and can go anywhere
 - Lead falls on bolts ok, so lead falls on gear ok, so lead falls on ice ok, so...

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Accidents and close calls

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- All major incidents occurred off course
- Most if not all incidents on day trips in car accessed area
- The incidents decrease in proportion to an increase in difficulty of access and remoteness
- Intro courses (the least skilled are sometimes the least careful)
- The Kettle (1, 2, 3 and.....)
- Waterfalls
- Terrain Parks
- <http://vimeo.com/28370001>

Case 1

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- Spring 2011 creek paddling incident
 - Late start, creek in flood, darkness, canyon
 - Risk assessment: decision to not run last rapid
 - Overnight in canyon, SAR initiated from the outside
 - SAR commented on national news that students made right decision and were prepared



Case 2

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- Spring 2011 Ski Guide Exam
 - All candidates fail
 - Full review of the exam reveals:
 - Disconnect between risk assessment and field decisions relating to the assessment
 - Divergence of opinions on conditions and actual risks
 - Divergence of opinions on perceived and actual experience
 - Generational characteristics apparent



What to do

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- Recognize it's happening
- Adjust and adapt
- You cannot change a generation
- Staff need to be educated
- Need to make an impact
- Recognize trends and patterns
- Educate rather than punish



What we have done (1)

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- We have fallen into the trap
- Risk awareness continuum
- Pre program risk info package
- “Over the top” waiver process
- Student handbook
- Smart risk talk on day 1
- Pre and post course talks
- Concussion management program



What we have done (2)

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- High impact and group interventions
- Course pre requisites
- Equipment use contracts
- Analysis of trends
- Student reflective essays
- Presentation to peers



Kayaking Incident Analysis

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#	Course	Location and Class of Water	Water Level	Injury	Mechanism of Injury	Student Ability (relative to the course)	Time of day, Number of days in the course	Potential Cause of Incident
1	Kayak 1	Clearwater-3 Fingers III	Low	Laceration to the head No stitches required. Glued shut	Seal Launch onto Rocks	Intermediate	12:45 pm at the put in day 4 of 5	Poor student judgement, Shallow water, Improper fit of helmet
2	Kayak 1	Clearwater-Pink Mountain II	Low	Laceration to the hand Hypothermia Psychological	Flipping in Shallow water Cold water	Beginner	4:30 pm end of day. Day 4 of 5	Shallow water Improper clothing Student uninterested in kayaking
3	Kayak 3	Clearwater-The Wall III	Low	Dislocated shoulder	Bracing in Shallow water	Intermediate	3:15 Beginning of the day	Shallow water Improper bracing technique
4	Kayak 1	Clearwater-3 Fingers III	Low	Dislocated Shoulder	Bracing	Intermediate	1:05 Beginning of the day. Day 4 of 5	Previous injury Improper Bracing technique
5	Kayak 4	Elaho-Fear Canyon IV	Mid	Near Miss-Undercut	N/A	Advanced	3:00 Middle of the day. Day 3 of 3. Exam	Poor Communication Read and Run
6	Kayak 2	Skycomish-Boulder Drop IV	Mid/Low	Concussion	Hit head on bottom	Advanced	1:30 pm Middle of the day. Day 4 of 5	Student had poor head space Shallow water Poor helmet design
7	Kayak 4	Green River- Mercury III/IV	Mid/Low	Dislocated Shoulder	Roll/ Brace	Advanced	3:30 pm Middle of the day. Day 4 of 5	Previous Injury Poor stroke mechanics
8	SRT 3	Chilliwack-Above Allison Pools II	Low	Broken Foot (foot entrapment)	Caught foot on rock	Beginner	3:40 End of Day-but beginning of time o the water. Day 1 of 5	Foot entrapment Poor swimming/listen technique
9	Kayak 4	Gordon River-Lower Canyon III/IV	Low	Concussion	Hit head on bottom	Intermediate	1:30 pm Beginning of the day. Day 3 of 8	Student had poor head space Shallow water Poor helmet design
10	Rafting 2	Chilliwack Exam Site II	Low	Dislocated Finger	Caught finger on a rock	Expert (staff)	2:30 pm Middle of the day. Day 10 of 11	Poor positioning in boat Shallow water
11	Kayak 1	Checkamus- Paradise Valley I	Low	Cut Lip	Paddle to the Face	Expert (staff)	5:30 pm End of the day. Day 4 of 5	Poor river postioning
12	Kayak 1	Chilliwack- Above Alison Pools II	Low	Suspected Spinal	Hit head and shoulder on a rock	Beginner	12:00pm beginning of the day. Day 5 of 5.	Shallow water Poor boat control

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Example of Kayak Program Changes Made

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- Better medical screening because of declining fitness and issues such as dislocated shoulders
- Certain rapids are only run with instructor approval
- Revised water program Emergency Action Plan
- Higher Instructor ratio and division of Level 2 and Level 3 Instructors on exams
- More pre and post information on risks and reality

Take away

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- Don't ignore the signs
- You might long for the good old days but.....
- We can make a difference
- Education works
- It might be your only opportunity to make an impact



Questions-Comments

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