Understanding Climbers' Motivations: A Bugaboo Case Study

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Abstract

While there have been studies done that examine various motivations in relation to climbing, this study aimed to better understand climber's motivations in the Bugaboos by looking at them holistically. Participants were encouraged to describe their motivations with few prompts. Thirty participants were selected using purposive sampling. Participant observation and semi-structured interviews, utilizing open-ended questions, were used to collect the data from the participants. Qualitative analysis (open coding, cross-sectional indexing, and concept mapping) was performed on the data collected. While the results of this study were similar to some of the previous findings, it was also found that with time climbers tended to look for more of an all encompassing experience, which was also shown in the motivation model developed to describe the key findings of this study. Future research could potentially look into applicability of the findings of this study by doing a temporal study on climber's motivation changes.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Background

People have been climbing mountains for a long time for many different reasons: to get places, find new resources, or seek shelter. However, it was only in the last hundred years or so that mountain climbing emerged as a sport (Davidson, 2002). Davidson suggested that the scientific revolution and the rise of romanticism created an atmosphere in which it was possible for people to start climbing mountains for purely sporting or recreational reasons. The romantic era idealized the notion of climbing as a noble activity, despite having few tangible economic or scientific benefits. Climbing became a way for modern men to imagine themselves as important men of their times, and getting to the summit a worthy spiritual goal that removed them from the pressures of civilization (Rak, 2007).

Motivations for climbing frequently drew upon some of the reasons why climbing was popularized during the Romantic Era. The question often put to climbers about why they would *ever* want to climb a mountain pointed to the unproductive and dangerous nature of the activity (Mitchell, 1983). Romantic ideas made climbing a creative act that returned people to their "primal" selves that they possessed before civilization changed them through socialization (Mitchell, 1983). Moreover, some of the climbers who started climbing in the 1970s and the 1980s were known to be countercultural. For example, Mark Twight, a famous American alpinist, in his book *Kiss or Kill*, referred to a time period in social and musical history that fuelled his desire to climb.

> My language and attitude come from a specific period in musical and social history: I am a Punk, and Punk rock fuelled my rebellious nature and its expression for years (Twight, 2001, p.10).

Twight even suggested that being countercultural was a common denominator for most climbers. According to Twight, risk played a big role in why people climb and it was this

risk that separated them from societal norms. He talked about risk and its role in his life as an alpinist in one of his articles entitled *A Lifetime Before Death*.

> I used to think it a great thing to be this alive and aware, to be doing something that made my nerves so raw... Death plays a huge role in why men climb, in the way they climb and why some of them eventually quit climbing in the high mountains. Alpinism often means high risk and the loss of life... Alpinism is the story of men and the risks men take, the ones they are equal to, the ones they barely get away with, and those that kill them (Twight, 2001, p.105).

While many studies examined why people climb, they could not find a simple answer to this question, as most of them found that motivations are constantly changing (Fave et al., 2003; Kiewa, 2002; Johnston and Edwards, 1994; Ewert, 1985). Part of the problem might have been due to what Beedie and Hudson (2003a) call "the emergence of mountain-based adventure tourism".

> Mountains in particular have long been sought after as tourism destinations but have, hitherto, remained predominantly in the preserve of mountaineers: people who actively and independently seek adventure and who would not consider themselves to be tourists. Tourism, however, has expanded to embrace adventure settings, and mountains feature prominently in such development. Mountaineering holidays make up just one part of the adventure tourism business, but are indicative of the way boundaries between mountaineering and tourism have become blurred (Beedie and Hudson, 2003a, p. 625-626).

Beedie and Hudson (2003a) would probably argue that it could no longer be assumed that the likes of Mark Twight are dominant in the climbing realm. Because of the "emergence of mountain-based adventure tourism" and therefore the increase in number of people participating in climbing, we can no longer assume that climbing is driven by a countercultural attitude. It is not unusual to have to wait for a climb on a busy weekend, or even to see young families with children climbing. Over the last couple of decades

climbing has become an umbrella term for many different activities such as alpinism, mountaineering, sport climbing, traditional climbing, and bouldering (wikipedia.org, 2008)[1]. In his article entitled *Voice of Dissent – Competition Ruins the Free-For-All*, Mark Twight voiced his concern about the changes that were taking place:

> The popularity of so-called extreme sports has both helped and hurt climbing. Climbing is coming of age. Like all sports at this stage, climbing and climbers are ripe for exploitation. Our sport is being redefined... Sales of gear and instruction services, of magazines and stunts to feed the maw of advertising, are booming... We've invented an aspect of the sport where risk is eliminated altogether, making it accessible to more people. (Twight, 2001,p. 175)

With more and more people climbing and as the activity becomes more popular through commodification, understanding why people climb has become more challenging (Beedie and Hudson, 2003a, Beedie, 2003b, Johnston and Edwards, 1994). Old explanations and theories of why people climb potentially covered only a small percentage of the climbing population, and as the sport grew in popularity new motivations emerged. The rapid development of indoor walls, availability of guidebooks, improved equipment and outdoor education programmes have greatly contributed to popularization of climbing (Heywood, 1994). For example, the number of people who have successfully reached the summit of Everest has changed significantly since Ewert (1985) first examined motivations of mountaineers. Between 1980 and 1985 there were 205 successful summits (Everesthistory.com, 2008). In 1996 alone there were 98 successful summits and between 2000 and 2006 the number of successful summits was 1861 (Adventurestats.com, 2008).

Despite the popularization of the activity and all the improvements made in the equipment and guiding programmes, climbing still remains a relatively high-risk recreational activity. In fact, The Canadian Tourism Commission, which divided outdoor recreation activities into soft and hard adventure, considers mountaineering and other

[1] See Appendix B for explanation of climbing terms.

types of climbing to be hard adventure (CanadaTourism.com, 2007), as hard adventure activities are known by both the participant and the service provider to have a high risk level (Newsome et al., 2002).

Purpose of the Study and Methods Overview

The purpose of this study was to describe self-reported motivations of climbers in the Bugaboos. A case study approach was undertaken during the high season in Bugaboo Provincial Park, which is considered to be "a magical alpine playground of wild weather, pristine wilderness towering granite spires that are the home of alpine rock climbs as good as the best in the world" (Atkinson and Piche, 2003, p.8). Semi-structured interviews with both closed-ended and open-ended questions, as well as participant-observation were utilized to profile climbers in the Bugaboos and describe why they climb. Descriptive statistics were performed on quantitative data, while NVivo was used for qualitative analysis of open-ended questions. Data were first categorized using the principles of open coding. Thematic analysis was then used to interpret the results of coding. Finally, as the new patterns emerged, concept mapping was used to determine their interrelations.

Statement of Research Problem

As climbing grows in popularity, with more and more people participating in the activity, the number of reasons for why people climb is also growing. An old Serbian proverb states: "You have as many minds as you have people". According to this proverb it can be assumed that there are as many different reasons for climbing as there are people climbing. If this is true, then answering the question, "Why do people climb?" seems like a daunting if not impossible task. While it might be true that everyone has a unique set of reasons for why they climb, there are also some common motivations between people (Gnoth, 1997, Dann, 1981, Grandall, 1980).

This study aimed to better understand climber's motivations by describing self-reported motivations of climbers in the Bugaboos. The first objective was to encourage

participants to describe their motivations with few prompts. In addition, as a second objective, several important themes that appear in climbing and leisure literature were also explored in the interviews and they included:

- Profiling climbers in the Bugaboos;
- Describing their climbing careers;
- Understanding the relationship between motivations and experience (Ewert, 1985);
- Understanding the role that risk plays in motivating climbers (Demirhan, 2005; Fave et al., 2003; Ewert, 1994b);
- Understanding the role that influential figures play in climbers' motivations (Beedie, 2003b); and
- Understanding the relationship between climbing motivations and identity construction (Kiewa, 2002).

These themes were asked explicitly in the interview questions in order to provide a basis for relating the results to previous studies. These specific themes were intended to support, not displace, an open-ended approach that allowed climbers to self-report motivation.

Significance

Just as the social boundaries between mountaineers and tourists became blurry through commodification of mountaineering (Johnston & Edwards, 1993), so have the motives for climbing. There have been a few studies conducted that examined motivations for climbing or mountaineering, and even developed motivational theories. Mitchell's book entitled *Mountain Experience* covered a wide range of topics from "What is a mountain climber?" to "Why do people climb mountains?". However, this book was written in 1983 and did not include the recent boom in mountain-based tourism. Since then new disciplines in climbing have emerged, such as bouldering and scrambling, with their own definitive guidebooks (Beedie & Hudson, 2003a). Similarly, Ewert's study on "Why people climb?" was written over two decades ago, in 1985.

More recent studies on people's motivations for climbing have mainly focused on particular aspects or motives for climbing. For example, Beedie (2003b) examined how mountain guides choreograph the experience for their clients, Della Fave et al. (2003) look at risk related motives, and Kiewa (2002) explored motives in terms of resistance to social values. However, none of these studies explored the world of climbing to uncover any new motivations as a result of changes in the climbing world, or looked at the motivations holistically.

As Beedie and Hudson (2003a) noted, as the new disciplines in climbing emerged, it was becoming harder, if not impossible, to generalize the motivations for climbing across all disciplines. By selecting an area, the Bugaboos, that mainly attracts alpine climbers and mountaineers, this study narrowed its focus to those disciplines. This means that the findings from this study cannot be generalized to all alpine climbers or mountaineers. This study's aim was to identify "patterns of interrelationship between many categories rather than the sharply delineated relationship between a limited set of them" (McCracken, 1988, p. 16).

Chapter Summary

Chapter one provided a broad overview of background information for this study, including the description of the purpose of the study and a rationale for its significance. The purpose of this research was to describe self-reported motivations of climbers in the Bugaboos. The two objectives that would help answer the research question were also described:

- To encourage participants to describe their motivations with few prompts; and
- To explicitly ask questions related to relevant themes appearing in climbing and leisure literature.

Finally, a brief overview of the qualitative methodology used to conduct this study was outlined in Chapter one.

Chapter two will focus on synthesis and analysis related to the study thorough a literature review. This chapter will provide dimensions of the problem area and define the extent

to which answers already exist by examining previous studies. Well-supported theories, will be identified in the literature and used to substantiate the research topic and research objectives, along with the qualitative methodology used in this study.

Chapter three will provide a detailed description of the methods used, outlining all the aspects of the design and procedures used in this study. The overall mixed methods paradigm and rationale for using this paradigm will be described. Criterions used for selecting the study site as well as for selecting the participants for the study will be described in this chapter. The choice of semi-structured interviews for collecting data will also be outlined in this chapter, as well as analysis techniques used.

Results of the study are presented in chapter four. Descriptive data including demographic information about participants will be presented first, followed by results organized according to research objectives. Finally, new emerging themes and unexpected results will be presented.

Chapter five will discuss the findings and relate them to existing literature. Implications and recommendations will be drawn from these conclusions, including ideas about new research questions and potential methodologies, for the studies to be done in the future.

Chapter 2 – Review of Literature

Since the emergence of mountain climbing as a sport (Davidson, 2002), many different aspects of climbing have been studied in order to better understand the activity, including: risks and safety in mountain climbing, climbing accidents, participants' experiences, climbing identity, environmental concerns surrounding mountain climbing, the effects of high-altitude climbing on human physiology, and psychological factors behind mountaineering.

With the recent boom in climbing, the strain on the natural resources and the environment have become significant enough to instigate studies concerning environmental and social problems as a result of climbing (Nepal, 2003; Nepal et al., 2002; Parker & Avant, 2000; Allan, 1995). As Nepal (2003) pointed out, mountain climbing out of all other recreational activities was of particular concern, as high-altitude places and fragile alpine environments were considered to be very sensitive to ecological disturbances. However, when it comes to climbing, the environment was not the only thing at risk. Climbing was also considered to be a risk activity by many (Demihran, 2005; Fave, 2003; Ewert, 1994), which, when combined with high altitude could have negative physiological side effects on climbers exposed to such environments (Graydon & Hanson, 1997; Jason et al., 1989; Clark et al., 1983). Given all the risk, the physiological side effects and environmental concerns, it is hard to understand why people climb.

This chapter will review the literature pertinent to climbing and understanding why people climb. The history and rise of mountain climbing will be briefly examined to provide the context for why people climb for recreation. Literature on climbers' motivations will be reviewed as well as topics relevant to these motivations such as: demographic characteristics of climbers, experience and motivation, the role of risk, the role of influential figures, and climbing identity. Finally, after all these topics related to motivations for climbing have been explored, the methodology used by the studies investigating these topics will be discussed.

A Brief History and Rise of Mountain Climbing

Davidson (2002) pointed out that the advent of mountain climbing as recreation is a relatively recent phenomenon.

> The Scientific Revolution, however, and the rise of Romanticism, created an atmosphere in which it was possible for people to become interested in climbing mountains for purely sporting or recreational reasons. To an eighteenth century observer, mountains were sadly incongruous with the rest of nature, an in popular mythology they were the lairs of dragons and the haunts of devils... Subsequent advances in scientific thought, however, led to the gradual erosion of much of the superstition and fear associated with mountains (Davidson, 2002, p.45).

Ewert (1989) noted that as all unexplored regions were explored and all major summits climbed, the reasons for adventuring shifted from searching for scientific knowledge to satisfying one's own desires, or climbing for pleasure. He further explained that climbing for pleasure coincided with the growing dissatisfaction with the social beliefs, which were heavily influenced by religious dogma and empirical reality. Consequently, mountain climbing was seen as a pleasure activity, as it provided escape from these societal norms.

"The Golden Age" of mountaineering began in the mid nineteenth century with a number of major first ascents being done in the European Alps between 1850 and 1880 (Davidson, 2002; Ewert, 1989). In 1857 the British formed the first mountaineering club (Davidson, 2002). Mountain climbing, along with other mountain adventures had another significant peak period after the Second World War.

> In mountain regions, as elsewhere, the period since the Second World War has been marked by the growth of mass tourism (Allan, 1995, p.201).

This post World War II boom is also evident from the ascent data in the Himalayas. All of the Himalayan summits over 8000m, with the exception of Dhaulagiri and Shisha Pangma, were climbed in the 1950s (Sale & Cleare, 2000).

Allan (1995) explained that accessibility and new means of access were primary reasons for the growth of tourism, including mountain climbing, in mountain areas. Another reason for the climbing boom was due to the improvements in the safety equipment (Beedie & Hudson, 2003a; Mitchell, 1983). In their examination of mountain and rock climbing trends, Kelly and Warnick (1999) noted that mountain climbing rates increased from 2.9 percent in 1993 to 4.4 percent in 1996.

> For adults, this is an evolving niche activity. SMRB (Simmons Market Research Bureau) data indicates about 7 to 8 million climbers and up to 200 million participation days (p.111).

Their analysis concluded that participation rates in the activity of mountain climbing have not yet peaked. A decade later participation rates continue to grow, as more and more people attempt to climb high peaks around the world. For example, the number of people who successfully reached the summit of Mt. Everest gradually increased from 98 in 1996 to 330 in 2004 (EverestHistory.com, 2008).

Who Are Mountain Climbers?

Demographic profiles of mountain climbers have changed over the years. Rak (2007) pointed out that mountain climbing used to be a very male dominant activity.

> Climbing, particularly before the 1970s, has proven to be a key way for modern men, and especially middle-class and upper-class white men associated with imperial and colonial regimes, to imagine themselves as important men of their times because they are engaged in what is essentially an unproductive activity. As early as 1760, Horace Benedict de Saussure, the first man to summit Mont Blanc

> in the Alps, made this connection. His *Voyages dans les Alpes* of 1779 contains the Romantic ideology of masculinity that would fuel the dreams of mountain climbers thereafter (Rak, 2007).

Since then, with the improvements in climbing equipment and development of climbing clubs and guiding services, climbing became available to the general public and the demographic profile of climbers diversified (Beedie & Hudson, 2003a; Beedie, 2003b; Johnston & Edwards, 1994).

Mountain climbing was also identified by Ewert (1989) as one of the fastest growing sports, as it had one of the highest percentage gains (47.1%) between 1984 and 1985. More recent studies show that the demographic profiles of mountain climbers have diversified.

> Gender rates are about 55 percent male. This is an age-graded activity with the 8 percent rate for those 18 to 24 falling to 4 percent for age 25 to 44, 3 percent for 45 to 54, and 1 percent for those 55 and older. The rate for singles is double that for the married. High income climbers have 5.3 percent rate compared with 2.9 percent for moderate incomes (Kelly & Warnick, 1999, p.112).

Consequently, it appears that climbing is no longer a male dominated activity and is pursued by younger people with adequate incomes.

Female participation in the activity continued to grow over the last decade. For example, in their study on outdoor recreation trends, Australia's Queensland Government found considerable increase in participation for females compared to males when it comes to climbing. Between 2001 and 2007 female participation increased by 130%, while male participation increased by 15% (Queensland Government, 2008).

Climbing Motivations

The majority of tourism literature agrees that understanding motivations is essential for explaining tourist's behaviour and reasons for travel (Ryan, 1998; Gnoth, 1997; Fodness, 1994; Mansfield, 1992; Ajzen, 1991; Beard & Ragheeb, 1983; Dann, 1981; Grandall, 1980; Crompton, 1979). One of the difficulties that past studies encountered with studying motivation was that "motivation is a changing process, and therefore not readily encapsulated in a single enquiry" (Dann, 1981, p.211). The implication of this was that two mountaineers could be climbing for very different reasons, and also that the same mountaineer could be climbing for very different reasons at different times during his mountaineering career.

Gnoth (1997) would argue that while the motivations might be different, the underlying drives, or motives as he calls them, might be the same. He distinguishes between motives and motivations:

> Motives are here distinguished from motivations, whereby, the former refer to the generic energizer of the behaviour. Although motives imply a direction and a target, only motivations actually include such targets or objects and refer to an interaction between motives and situations (Gnoth, 1997, p.291).

Therefore climbers' motivations would likely change given different contexts or different situations, but their motives could remain the same throughout these motivation changes.

Pearce's idea of the travel career ladder to tourist motivation (Pearce, 1988) provided a conceptual model that dealt with this dynamic nature of motivation. Pearce's model postulated a career goal held by tourists, who as they gained experience, sought to satisfy increasingly higher needs. Ryan (1998), in his appraisal of Pearce's Travel Career Ladder, pointed out that the theoretical framework provided by the Travel Career Ladder was "developmental and dynamic, for as people acquire touristic experiences (a career), so their motivations change" (Ryan, 1998, p. 938) – see Figure 1 - The Travel Career Ladder.

Fulfillment	
Fulfill a Dream	
Understand Myself More	
Experience Inner Peace, Harmony	
Self-Esteem and Development	
(Self Directed)	(Other Directed)
Development of Skills	External Rewards, Prestige
Special Interests	Glamour of Travelling
Competence, Mastery	Connoisseur Self-Esteem
Relationship	
(Self Directed)	(Other Directed)
Giving Love, Affection	Receiving Affection
Maintaining Relationships	To be with Group
	Membership
	Initiating Relationship
Stimulation	
(Self Directed)	(Other Directed)
A Concern for Own Safety	A Concern for Others Safety
Relaxation	
(Self Directed)	(Other Directed)
Need for Bodily Reconstitution	
Relaxation	

Figure 1 - The Travel Career Ladder (Pearce, 1988)

There are a couple of ways in which we could view climbing careers with regards to Pearce's Travel Career Ladder. We could view climbing as a stage in a traveler's career. According to Pearce's Travel Career Ladder, travelers' motivations change toward a goal of self-actualization. Travelers start out their careers looking for relaxation, followed by stimulation, relationship, self-esteem and development, only to find fulfillment at the end of their career. Climbing could fit the self-esteem and development phase, as people develop special interests and seek to develop specific skills. It could also fit the fulfillment phase, as some people might have a life-long dream to climb Mount Everest, or seek the experience of inner peace and harmony. In either case, according to this idea, climbing is just one of the phases in the person's travel career.

Alternatively, the steps on the ladder may coincide with one's climbing career and evolving motivations to climb. This would be interesting to examine with climbers today, and potentially support what other researchers have found (i.e. Ewert). Both approaches could help us better understand the motivations for climbing. The first approach could help explain how and why people start climbing, while the second approach could provide better understanding of the changes that take place during the development of a climbing career.

Beedie and Hudson (2003a) examined the emergence of mountain-based adventure tourism and changes that come with it. Their paper looked at the ways mountain climbing and tourism seemed to be merging in that adventure is being taken out of mountain climbing. They saw mountain climbing as a type of holiday that undergoes similar processes that other tourist destinations do. However, according to Beedie and Hudson, climbing could not lead to fulfillment because of its increased popularity. They suggested that "adventure by numbers" could not exist, as adventure was broadly accepted to be about the uncertainty of the outcome, and with growing number of participants most of the uncertainties got eliminated. For example, on more popular summits such as Mt. Blanc, there can be up to a 100 people attempting the same route on any given day. Route finding becomes nothing more than following a well worn trail, and sometimes even climbing is trivialized to cater to the masses with fixed lines and other permanent fixtures. All these factors reduce the uncertainty of the outcome, and hence from adventure as defined by Beedie and Hudson (2003a). However, adventure as perceived by people climbing mountains could still be a motivating factor, whether it is a "true" sense of adventure as defined by Beedie and Hudson (2003a), or sense of adventure created by guides taking their clients up a mountain. Johnston and Edwards (1993) argued that the commodification of mountaineering has become a reality, where an ever-growing number of adventure travelers were being guided up the mountains with corporate companies shaping their mountain experience, and even the fantasy of a mountain experience. As Beedie and Hudson pointed out, "there exists something of a paradox whereby the more detailed, planned, and logistically smooth an itinerary

becomes the more removed the experience is from the notion of adventure" (Beedie & Hudson, 2003a, p. 627).

However, while guiding and technological advances have contributed to reduction of risk and uncertainty, they have not necessarily reduced the sense of adventure perceived by the participants. In his paper on mountain guiding and choreography of the experience, Beedie (2003b) pointed out that it is the pivotal role of the guide to choreograph the adventure. According to findings of Beedie's study, it was the perceived or subjective nature of adventure that attracted people to mountain climbing. Mountain guiding, better planning and technological advances reduced the objective risks associated with climbing and sense of adventure examined from the objective standpoint. However, they did not seem to reduce the subjective risks or adventure as perceived by the participants.

The Role of Risk

Mountain climbing is considered to be a form of risk recreation in many studies, and risk is often examined as a motivating factor (Demirhan, 2005; Fave, 2003; Ewert, 1994b). Ewert defined risk recreation as a recreational activity that contains the elements of risk and danger that takes place in the natural environment, in which the participant's actions play an important element in the final outcome of the experience (Ewert, 1994b). According to Ewert's study, risk recreation involves a deliberative process on the part of a climber, where skills and abilities are weighed against the task at hand and possible negative outcomes. As risk taking involved a deliberative process, Ewert saw it as playing less of a central role in explaining why people chose to participate in it. Fave et al. (2003) came to similar conclusions as they examined risk from the climber's perspective. Demirhan's study (2005) also looked at risk-perception of climbers and found that perceived risk decreased as skill and experience level increased.

While subjective risk might not have played a central role in why people climb, Fave et al. (2003) found that risk taking was a means for climbers to experience flow, a mental state in which a person is fully immersed by a feeling of energized focus (Fave et al.,

2003, p. 94). Based on their study, risk was a necessary element in achieving flow, as it helped the person get fully immersed in climbing with a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and success in the process of the activity. Their study further explained the process of flow in which risk served as a vehicle:

> The more the climbers face expedition challenges, the more they sharpen their skills, and subsequently look for more complex challenges in a dynamic process that fosters personal growth and development of individual life themes (Fave et al., 2003, p.94).

Their observation seems to point out the important role risk plays in climbers` careers as they gain more experience. And while risk taking might not directly motivate climbers, it might be the reduction in risk through improved skills and climbing experience that constitutes a motivating force.

Climbing Motivations and Experience

In his study on why people climb, Ewert (1985) looked at motivational changes that occurred, as the experience level of the climber increased. He found that as the climber's career progressed, his or her experience level increased. He was also able to correlate motivational changes to experience and skill level:

> As an individual develops greater skill and experience in a specific recreational activity, their motivations for participation change from extrinsic (i.e. "bagging a peak") to more intrinsic rewards (i.e. doing the activity for its own sake or seeking a 'quality experience') (Ewert, 1985, p.242).

He identified six underlying motivational dimensions for climbing (challenge, catharsis, recognition, creative opportunities, locus of control, and physical setting), and found that these motivations varied with respect to level of climbing experience.

> As suggested in this study and supported by earlier works (Schreyer, et al., 1984), individuals who are relatively inexperienced in a particular outdoor recreation activity often have different motives for participation than those of greater experience. For the inexperienced mountain climber items such as Recognition, Escape, and Social Activities, appeared to be more important. Items of less external reward orientation such as Exhilaration, Challenge, Personal Testing, Making Decisions, and Locus of Control are more descriptive of the experienced climber (Ewert, 1985, p.249).

He concluded:

> It would seem that an individual often begins mountain climbing for extrinsic reasons such as recognition, escape, or socialization. If they continue in the activity, these motivations change to a more intrinsic, personally rewarding basis such as exhilaration, personal testing, and being able to make decisions. (Ewert, 1985, p.249)

Ewert's findings directly correlate to what Ryan (1998) called Pearce's major contribution to an understanding of tourist motivation, which was the notion that there existed a developmental or progressive motivation of tourists as a result of past tourism experiences. According to Ewert, climbing motivations developed by moving from extrinsic motivations towards intrinsic motivations. In other words, as climbers gained experience they were more self-driven than driven by external factors such as external rewards, prestige, social relationships.

Mountain Climbing and the Role of Guiding and Influential Figures

Beedie (2003b) examined mountain guiding and adventure tourism from the perspective of guides choreographing the experience for their clients. Beedie established a

continuum of mountaineers, where on the left side he positioned clients and beginners who aspire to be mountaineers, and at the right end of the continuum were the 'real' mountaineers including guides. He argued that people construct their identity as mountaineers as they move from the left side towards the right side of the continuum. He saw identity as a pattern of appropriate conduct and adopted Jenkins' (1996) thinking whereby identity formation resulted from "the internal-external dialectic of identification" (Jenkins, 1996, p.20).

> Jenkins suggests that the reflexive nature of social relations creates social identity which is about meaning. Furthermore, he continues, because meanings are innovated, agreed and shared in the social world, identity becomes negotiable to a certain extent (Beedie, 2003b, p.149).

As clients emulated their guides, Beedie argued that they were learning the rules, conducts and behaviours of real mountaineers and in that way were constructing their own identity, the identity of a mountaineer. As such guides had an important role in positioning the clients who employ them:

> Guides encourage a movement from left to right across the continuum although once minimum standards of competence are achieved, clients can then determine whether to be proactive in seeking out further knowledge and expertise to move themselves further rightwards (Beedie, 2003b, p.164).

Beedie suggested that guides were viewed, at least in the eyes of their clients, to be representative of a state of self-actualization. Beedie's argument was consistent with self-discrepancy theory, which was defined as:

> The theory that we become distressed when our sense of who we truly are – our actual self – is discrepant from our personal standards or desired self-conceptions (Aronson et al., 2004, p. 178).

In a guide-client relationship, guides, who are positioned on the right end of the continuum, could be seen as the ideal-self that clients aspired to achieve. Discrepancy between clients' real-self and the ideal-self was what drove the clients to move from left to right across the continuum. However, Beedie argued that guides were not just representative of the ideal-self that clients aspired to, but they were also responsible for providing direction to their clients when it came to reducing the discrepancy. As "choreographers of the experience" for their clients, guides were largely responsible for shaping their clients' mountaineering identity by motivating them through different goal setting exercises, such as skill development.

Consequently Beedie's use of discrepancy theory provided a good explanation for motivation formation, as people tried to reduce the gap between themselves and their perception of the ideal mountaineer. The client-guide relationship provided by Beedie was an example of this motivation formation process. From Beedie`s study it became apparent that guides, and mentors in general, play an important role in climber`s motivations.

Climbing Identity Construction

In her paper on traditional climbing, Kiewa (2002) examined the way in which climbers negotiated their activity within a social context. In particular, she examined how climbers' motivations can be formed in opposition to rationalized society. As a result of her examination she uncovered a possible pattern that climbers' careers could follow. She suggested that a "wider social context was one of rationalized society, whereby efficiency and growth have become ends in themselves" (Kiewa, 2002, p.145). Like many other researchers, Kiewa agreed that climbing was an activity where relative freedom from the encroachment of the rationalized society could be achieved. She further argued that "our identity, or true self, could best be discovered by somehow placing ourselves outside society" (Kiewa, 2002, p.146).

The metaphor of resistance to rationalized society, as she referred to it, clearly explained how people engaged in the activity. She argued that displacement from rationalized society allowed people to search for their identity, or true self, which was different from the norms imposed by the society itself. This could ultimately lead to self-actualization. However, Kiewa also pointed to the paradox that defining one's identity in opposition to rationalized society can lead to.

> In other words, the rules of climbing, originally designed to protect the activity from the encroachment of rationalized society, have mutated to become both inflexible and oppressive (Kiewa, 2002, p.156).

Furthermore, she viewed climbers as a "neotribe", or grouping of people who were bound together through a set of commonalities. As she described, traditional climbers, in their attempt to differentiate themselves, have built a strict code of ethics that guarded them against rational and consumerist society. For example, traditional climbers insisted that all climbs should be climbed from the ground up without previously practicing any part of the climb on a top-rope. As the strict rules and code of ethics were introduced, traditional climbing moved towards its rational transformation and in essence completed a full circle. What initially started as a motivation to escape from the mundane everyday life also became the source of oppression and something to be escaped (Kiewa, 2002).

Kiewa's study suggests that rather than having a definitive beginning and end, a climber's career could circulate through phases. For example, climbers might have started their careers as Kiewa suggested in order to escape the predictability of their everyday life. As they moved through their careers, they constructed their identity by trying to bridge the gap between their real-self and the ideal-self that they set out to reach at the beginning of their career. As they neared the ideal-self, they entered a new cycle by pushing the concept of the ideal-self in some other direction, which allowed them to go through the same discrepancy reduction process again. A further exploration of climbers' motivational changes could provide more insight into all the processes that take place and cause the changes in motivation.

There seems to be sufficient evidence suggesting that motivational processes surrounding climbing are dynamic and always changing. If examined from the Western standpoint[2], climbing encourages the flow from extrinsic motivations towards intrinsic motivations, as shown in Ewert's study (1985). Furthermore this shift can be viewed as movement towards self-fulfillment stage as described by Pearce's Travel Career Ladder. Beedie's study (2003b) suggested that the process of self-actualization was guided by discrepancy reduction between the ideal-self and the real-self. Kiewa's study (2002) hinted that as climbers neared their goal of reaching the ideal-self, they re-entered the cycle with a new goal that created a bigger gap between their real and ideal-self. In conclusion, all these studies point to the fact that self-actualization is a driving force behind climbers' motivations.

Qualitative vs. Quantitative Paradigm

Various methodologies have been applied to the study of motivations in mountaineering. Quantitative approaches taken in Ewert's studies (Ewert & Hollenhorst, 1994a; Ewert 1994b; Ewert 1985) have been successful in establishing a correlation between mountaineer's experience level and the change from extrinsic to intrinsic motivations. Similarly in their study on individual and setting attributes (1994a), Ewert and Hollenhorst used quantitative methods to identify the relationship between multiple setting and individual variables commonly associated with adventure. Moreover, using principle components analysis, Ewert (1994b) was also able to establish a relationship between the experience level of the participant and their different patterns of motivations followed. However, while Ewert's studies were successful at identifying different relationships among variables and motivational patterns from the concepts he examined, his quantitative methods limited the amount of new concepts and patterns from emerging (Beedie, 2003b).

[2] An independent self-view is predominant in the Western world (Aronson et al., 2004).

A quantitative approach was also taken by the studies that examined different ways to measure leisure motivation (Fodness, 1994; Beard & Ragheb, 1983). Beard and Ragheb (1983) started out with a list of 150 items, which they later narrowed down to major dimensions of leisure motivation. While quantitative methodologies seem to be appropriate for measurement purposes, they are not always the best when it comes to determining what is to be measured (Bernard, 2000). For example, a measurement of leisure motivation was only possible after the list of 150 items to be measured was developed by Beard and Ragheb (1983). Qualitative methodologies often provided good tools for development of such lists that precede measurements undertaken by quantitative approaches (Beedie, 2003b).

Fodness' (1994) research demonstrated this pattern of qualitative research preceding quantitative research, as he recognized that there was a "lack of a universally agreed-upon conceptualization of the tourist motivation construct" (Fodness, 1994, p.556). His research consisted of three different studies. His first study was an exploratory study:

> Qualitative techniques were used to explore the reasons individuals travel. This study was designed to develop rather than to test hypotheses because the tourist motivation literature lacks established theory suggesting formal relationships among variables. Instead, the study sought insights by collecting and analyzing observations about personal travel motivations from leisure travelers (Fodness, 1994, p. 559).

His subsequent two studies tried to quantify and test an objective approach to measuring leisure motivations. Sometimes no significant results were found through the measurement of quantifiable concepts, at which time it was appropriate to do another exploratory study, in order to uncover new possible relationship among different variables (Bernard, 2000).

Despite many applications of quantitative techniques, qualitative methodology has also been applied to the study of motivation in mountain climbing. As a participant observer,

Beedie (2003b) was able to get the insider's perspective on the issue he studied – the role of guides in choreographing the experience for their clients. Fave et al. (2003) also made use of qualitative methodology as they monitored six climbers during their expedition in the Himalaya. Participants in this study filled out an on-line self-report which utilized open-ended questions in order to assess the quality of experience and risk perception of high-altitude rock climbing.

The selection of methods to be used is highly dependent on what is being studied (Bernard, 2000). A descriptive approach, also considered a major purpose of many social scientific studies, aims at describing situations and events (Babbie, 2004, p.89). As the purpose of this study was to describe the motivations of a specific set of climbers (experienced alpine climbers) in a specific context (the Bugaboos), a descriptive approach was considered appropriate for this topic.

Literature Review Summary

After briefly exploring the history of climbing and the evolution of climbers from romantic explorers to climbers with more diverse demographic profiles, literature with topics relevant to motivations for climbing was reviewed. Motivations of climbers were explored in relation to other tourism theories such Pearce's (1988) Travel Career Ladder in order to see if climbers' motivations could be understood in terms of the already existing motivation models. Furthermore, the role of risk, experience, influential figures, and identity construction were examined in the existing literature in relation to motivations for climbing. Finally, both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms were reviewed, and a descriptive approach utilizing qualitative methods was suggested for this study. Chapter 3 further discusses the methodology used for this study.

Chapter 3 – Methods

Through the literature review it became apparent that climbing is growing in popularity and that the demographic characteristics of climbers is changing. In order to study their motivations, this study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative inquiry, to describe the motivations of climbers through a case study conducted in Bugaboo Provincial Park. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 climbers over the course of three weeks, during the high climbing season in 2006. Closed-ended questions were used to collect demographic information, while the open-ended questions were utilized to better understand climbers' motivations and relevant topics, such as climbing careers, motivation and experience, the role of risk, the role of influential figures, and identity construction. Statistical analysis was performed on closed-ended questions to develop a profile of respondents, while open-ended questions were coded and analyzed using NVivo.

A mixed methods approach was used to help describe the participants of the study and their motivations for climbing including several important themes that appear in climbing and leisure literature. According to Patton (1990), different methods could be appropriate for different situations. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the participants of this study, while qualitative questions were used to ensure that informants' perspectives on their motivations for climbing were heard (Veal, 2006).

Research Design and Rationale

This research has been designed as a case study for the following reasons:

- To bound the study geographically and temporally, so that it is more manageable (Veal, 2006);

- To narrow down the study population – that is emphasize or narrow down the research question by looking at the specific type of climber (alpine climbers and mountaineers) (Veal, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998);
- To seek patterns of data to develop issues (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998);

Considering the case study approach, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to mountain climbing on the whole. The findings of the study are limited to the scope of the study, which includes the Bugaboos during the month of August in 2006. However, Veal (2006) argues that case studies have implications beyond their particular case:

> Case study conclusions can, however, present general propositions relating to theory and policy issues and to possibilities, so they might be in the form: 'this explains the behaviour organisation X, which is contrary to theoretical expectations, suggesting the possible need for some modification to the theory', or 'this explains the behaviour of organisation X, suggesting the other types or organisation might be examined to see whether the explanation applies more widely' (Veal, 2006, p. 109).

As per Veal's argument, this study described the self-reported motivations of climbers in the Bugaboos and explored their relationship with existing theories on the motivations of climbers. While this case study was unlikely to be definitive, it may have pointed in certain theoretical or empirical directions (Veal, 2006, p.110).

Even though this research was of a descriptive nature, it was important to develop a conceptual framework for it. According to Veal (2006) the development of a conceptual framework is the most important part of any research project. Veal also pointed out that conceptual framework seemed inconsistent with the more open-ended approaches and other more flexible approaches in qualitative research such as this one. However, Miles and Huberman (1994) indicated that conceptual frameworks were just as vital for qualitative research as they were for quantitative, if not more so. According to them, no research could start with an absolutely blank conceptual framework. At the very least the

research would have to start with some literature review and identification of knowledge gaps. Furthermore, the conceptual framework, as was the case with this study, could be developed as the study goes on.

Miles and Huberman described conceptual frameworks in the following way:

> A conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied – the key factors, constructs or variables – and the presumed relationships among them. Frameworks can be rudimentary or elaborate, theory driven or commonsensical, descriptive or causal (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.18).

Participants and Site

Both Patton (1990) and Yin (1989) emphasized the importance of choosing the appropriate case study region. As the motivations of climbers were the phenomenon that this study explored, it was important that a large population of hypothetical cases was recognized, as well as a small population of accessible cases that were studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

As a world famous alpine climbing playground, the Bugaboos were an ideal place for this case study. Geographically, the Bugaboos are a cluster of high granite spires that are located in the Purcell Mountain Range in the southeast of the Province of British Columbia (see Figure 2 - Bugaboo Glacier Provincial Park (BC Parks, 2008)). The Purcells run parallel to the Rockies, which are just to the East, and they extend from the USA border all the way to Rogers Pass.

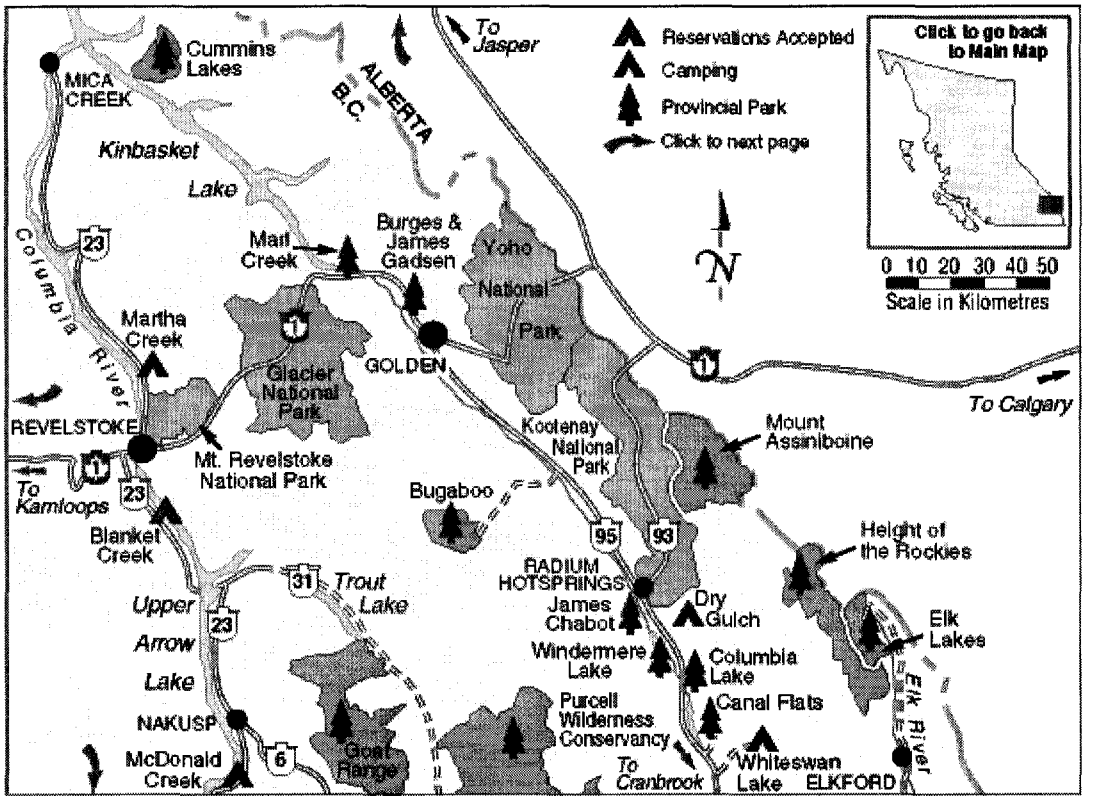

Figure 2 - Bugaboo Glacier Provincial Park (BC Parks, 2008)

The Bugaboos guidebook described the area in the following way:

> The Bugaboos is a magical alpine playground of wild weather, pristine wilderness, and towering granite spires that are the home of alpine rock climbs as good as the best in the world. Beyond the four major summits of Bugaboo, Snowpatch, Pigeon and the Howser Towers are fine moderate mountaineering objectives, superb scrambles and rarely visited technical peaks that offer a superb experience for all climbers who travel beyond crags… This is truly an inspiring place. But be aware, the Bugaboos are a heavily glaciated, intricate alpine environment that requires experience and mountain savvy to travel safely through (Atkinson & Piche, 2003, p.8).

Due to its setting and the style of climbing, the Bugaboos mainly attract alpine climbers. Climbing in the Bugaboos is different from modern day cragging, where most of the

routes are one pitch long with pre-placed gear and anchors. It involves multi-pitch climbing in a traditional style (placing gear as you go up), and it almost always involves glacier travel to get to the climb.

Climbers that went to the Bugaboos were allowed to stay in one of two places: Conrad Kain Hut or Applebee campground. Conrad Kain Hut was run by the Alpine Club of Canada and it could sleep up to 40 people. Applebee campground was a no frills campground that was located 30-40 minutes above the Conrad Kain Hut. Although climbers tended to stay in both places, Conrad Kain Hut saw a fair number of hikers and people who came for reasons other than climbing. As climbers were the unit of analysis for this research project, surveying took place at the Applebee campground, which almost exclusively catered to climbers.

Participants for the survey were chosen using a purposive or judgment sampling technique.

> In judgment sampling, you decide the purpose you want informants (or communities) to serve, and you go out to find some. This is somewhat like quota sampling, except that there is no overall sampling design that tells you how many of each type of informant you need for a study... Purposive samples are also used in the selection of a few cases for intensive study... Researchers don't usually pull research sites – communities, hospitals, school systems – out of a hat. They rely on their judgment to find one that reflects the things they are interested in (Bernard, 2000, p.176).

The field research took place until repetition from multiple participants was obtained, which provided concurring and confirming data, as well as ensured saturation (Morse, 1994). To further ensure trustworthiness of the study, the themes which emerged from the interviews were taken back and presented to the participants through informal conversations during the field season. They were then able to confirm the accuracy and

validity of these themes and in some cases provided additional supporting information, which was recorded as part of the observation notes (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

As the purpose of the interviews was to create a better understanding of climbers' motivations in the Bugaboos, informants were selected to cover a wide range of abilities and backgrounds. The following criteria were used to select participants for the study:

- Inclusion of both first time visitors and repeat visitors;
- A range of skills from beginners to professionals like guides; and
- A range of demographic characteristics: age, gender, and nationality.

By covering the above-mentioned criteria, this study included a wide range of criteria that some of the previous studies used for selecting their participants (Beedie & Hudson, 2003a; Beedie, 2003b; Fave et al., 2003; Ewert, 1994a; Ewert, 1994b; Heywood, 1994; Johnston & Edwards, 1994; Ewert, 1985). Because of the wide range of the criteria used, it was possible to contrast the results of this study to previous studies.

Informants other than the ones participating in the interviews were used in this study through participant observation. Participant observation involved going out and immersing myself in the phenomenon being studied and experiencing the life of people in a natural setting (Bernard, 2000, p.319). I tried talking to most of the people who stayed at Applebee campground. Furthermore, I climbed with 10 different participants while there. This was particularly useful as I was able to get closer to their perspective, as they were often able to practically show me aspects of climbing that they were attracted to. For example, the phrase "this is why I climb" came out more than once from more than one participant.

Data Collection

Two different methods were used for data collection: semi-structured interviews utilizing both closed-ended and open-ended questions and participant observation.

Interview questions were designed to be conducive to inductive research (see Appendix A for interview questions).

> Inductive research is what you do when you're in the exploratory or discovery phase of any research project, no matter what kind of data you have (Bernard, 2000, p.444).

Whereas researchers working from deductive theories could have the key variables laid out in advance (Babbie, 2004, p. 88), one of the tasks of this study was to identify any emergent aspects related to motivations. Semi-structured interviews were used as they had much of the freewheeling quality of the unstructured interviewing by utilising open-ended questions, but were also based on the interview guide. The interview guide ensured that all of the objectives were sufficiently covered, including how people first got involved with climbing, their favourite trips, their future plans, the role of risk, influential figures, and identity building.

In addition to semi-structured interviews, researcher observations were recorded in a diary on a daily bases. Most observations were recorded as a narrative.

> The greatest advantage of the field research method is the presence of an observing, thinking researcher on the scene of the action (Babbie, 2004, p.303).

Observation notes included both empirical observations and researcher's interpretation of them. In the case of this study, I assumed the role of a participant-observer.

> In field research, observers can play any of several roles, including participating in what they want to observe (Babbie, 2004, p.285).

As a participant-observer I was a participant in the activities, but respondents were also aware of my role as a researcher. Most observations were made about informants who participated in the interviews. Most commonly informants were recruited for an interview after a day of climbing together and learning a bit more about their climbing history, as this was part of the process of purposive sampling. Their behaviour was also

observed after the interview in order to compare it to the answers provided during the interview. Furthermore, as new themes emerged they were noted down and presented to interviewees for verification. Additional notes were taken from these informal conversations, which were then used in construction of the conceptual model. Recording all participant-observation data in the form of narrative descriptions was an important part of code development (Bakeman & Gottman, 1997).

Interviews

In total 30 climbers were interviewed. Out of those 30 climbers, 27 were male and 3 were female. Out of the 30 climbers, 1 was under the age of 20, 17 were between ages 20 and 30, 10 were between ages 30 and 40 and 2 were between ages 40 and 50. Of the 30 climbers, 10 were from Canada, 14 from the United States, 3 from Europe, 1 from Australia, 1 from South America and 1 from Central America. Out of the 30 climbers 10 had been to the Bugaboos before. Although the sample size used for interviews was not big enough to be representative of the overall population of climbers in the Bugaboos, saturation was achieved in respondent's answers to some of the questions. This meant that similar answers were being given to the same question, which was an indication of a trend that could be examined by future studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Interviews lasted anywhere between 30 minutes to an hour.

> Contrasted with survey interviewing, the qualitative interview is based on a set of topics to be discussed in depth rather than based on the use of standardized questions (Babbie, 2004, p.300).

To make sure all topics were covered sufficiently different probes were prepared for each of the questions.

> Probing is a technique employed in interviewing to solicit a more complete answer to a question. It is a nondirective phrase or a question used to encourage a respondent to elaborate on an answer (Babbie, 2004, p. 266).

For example, when asked about how they first got involved with mountaineering, informants were probed to provide the place, time and who they went with. This ensured consistency of the data for comparison across units of analysis. However, respondents still had the freedom to express any other things they might have found important in the connection with their first mountaineering trip.

Data Analysis

Demographic data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the intent to describe the population being studied. Performing further statistical analysis on a small data sample, which was not representative of any greater population, was not appropriate. Qualitative analysis, "the non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships" (Babbie, 2004, p. 370), was performed on all the qualitative data collected. This helped to discover patterns (Babbie, 2004; Bernard, 2000), which was one of the objectives of this study.

All the interviews were transcribed first, which made the data available in a text format. Open coding, where researcher suggests the codes, was used to classify and categorize data (Babbie, 2004), and NVivo was used to create a retrieval system for coded data.
One of the first tasks was careful analysis of the data, which helped determine appropriate codes to aid description of different research objectives. Recurrent words and phrases were selected as codes. If different words or phrases were used to describe the same phenomenon, then their respective sections were coded under the same heading, represented by a node in Nvivo. These codes were then presented to participants through informal conversation for confirmation of their meaning.

Once the codes were established cross-sectional indexing was used to organize and sort the data and make its retrieval easy. "Cross-sectional indexing of data involved devising a consistent system for indexing the whole of a data set according to a set of common principles and measures." (Mason, 1996, p. 111)

> The most frequent criticism of content analysis is that the fetish for frequency makes the technique atomistic. This means that it breaks data into small, decontextualized and hence meaningless fragments, and then reassembles them using the researcher's own framework (Kellehear, 1997, p. 37-38).

This study used thematic analysis to overcome this problem. Thematic analysis was more subjective and interpretative and it looked for ideas in the text and narrative being examined. Data itself was used as the orienting stimulus in an attempt to overcome etic problems of interpretation by staying close to the emic view of the world (Kellehear, 1997). In NVivo each of the codes was represented as a node, which was the bucket holder for all the transcripts and ideas associated with that code. Therefore, for each node you could count or look for recurring events and themes, note patterns and differences, make metaphors and see if these patterns in the data resemble existing theories.

All of the qualitative data was analysed using NVivo software package. With NVivo it was possible to index and coordinate the analysis of text stored as computer files (Veal, 2006, p.214). As the important variables emerged, which were represented as nodes in NVivo, concept mapping was used to determine their interrelations. Concept mapping was also helpful in uncovering patterns, as relationships between variables became clearer (Bernard, 2000).

In conclusion, with the use of mixed methods it was possible to see how this study's data resembled the existing theories on the motivations of climbers. As the description of climbers' motivations in the Bugaboos was one of the main objectives of this study, a full and rounded understanding of the motivations of climbers participating in this case study

was more of a priority, rather than a limited understanding of a larger more representative group (Veal, 2006, p.40).

Study Limitations and Delimitations

There were a few delimitations, restrictions or bounds imposed by the researcher prior to the inception of this study to narrow the scope (Babbie, 2004). While this study examined motivations of climbers, it was also bound to the specific region – the Bugaboos. It is very likely that the Bugaboos attract certain type of climber, people who love alpine setting and endless granite cracks. Furthermore, all of the respondents interviewed stayed at the Applebee campground. They might have differed from the climbers staying at the Cain hut, at least in terms of the accommodation comfort. Besides being bound by the place, this study was also bound by a certain time period. The study was conducted in August, which was considered to be a high season for climbing in the Bugaboos. Climbers that went during the high season are probably very different from climbers who like to be challenged in the winter conditions.

Choosing the case study as the overall approach further allowed me to have control over what information to present. As the case researcher, I entered the scene expecting, even knowing, that certain events, problems, and relationships will be important (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p.98). Furthermore, as I belonged to the climbing community that was being studied, it was very likely that certain expectations have influenced interpretation of the findings or emphasized some findings over others.

> It is not uncommon for the qualitative case researchers to call for letting the case tell its own story. We cannot be sure that a case telling its own story will tell all or tell well, but the ethnographic ethos of interpretative study, seeking out emic meanings held by the people within the case, is strong (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p.93).

However, it was up to me as the researcher to decide what the case's story was, or at least what parts of the story I would report. As Denzin and Lincoln note, more was pursued

than was volunteered and less was reported than was learned. As a researcher, through probing, I pursued information that I was interested in, such as comparing climbing to Zen-like activities. Someone else might have chosen to pursue different themes. Similarly, after data analysis, I had to decide which results were the most relevant to the purpose of this study and present them accordingly.

Data gathering methods chosen further restricted this study. Semi-structured interviewing and participant observation were chosen and due to this delimitation, the results of this study could not be generalized to the greater population of climbers. However, this was not the purpose of this study. The purpose of this study was to take a glimpse into the complicated cultural phenomenon surrounding climbing. Quantitative research would have been necessary in order to determine the distribution and frequency of the phenomenon that has come to light (McCracken, 1988).

Besides the abovementioned delimitations there were a few limitations to the study, or conditions that restricted the scope of the study or may have affected the outcome and could not be controlled by the researcher (Babbie, 2004). As this research was the result of the personal interest, I might have introduced certain bias. As Veal (2006) noted, using personal interest as a focus for research had both advantages and disadvantages. Some of the advantages were outlined in the significance section of this chapter.

> The disadvantage is that the researcher may be unduly biased and may not be able to view the situation 'objectively'; familiarity with the subject of the research may result in too much being taken for granted so that the researcher cannot 'see the wood for the trees' (Veal, 2006, p.48).

As participant observer, both climber and researcher, it was easy to develop a preconceived idea of what the participant's motivations might be, often trying to compare them to my own. Therefore data collected through open-ended questions was often about topics that affected me as a climber or were of interest to me, even though participants might not have assigned it the same importance I did. In order to minimize this bias and

reduce the likelihood of leading the participant to specific answers, a pre-developed set of standard probe questions was used in all interviews. Furthermore, during the data analysis I was looking for patterns that made sense to me as a climber. In other words I was relating participants' experiences to my own and in that way what most of the common emerging themes have in common is that they are also my views on the topic confirmed by the participants of the study.

The time frame during which data was collected was partly a limitation, as the permit for the study was issued by the Provincial Park for the three weeks in August. One of the major limitations during data collection was that participants might not have answered all the questions accurately or truthfully. There were two concerns with this limitation: in case of the questions that asked them to recollect their experience and feelings and questions with sensitive topics.

People might not have always accurately remembered how they felt at some particular moment in time. However, if that moment in time was significant, like their first climb, or the moment at which they decided that they like climbing, there was a good chance that they would have remembered something about it. Also, when asked about their most memorable climbing experience, the worry was that people might have had a tendency to remember the most recent ones. However, in the case of this study, the most memorable experiences seemed to have been evenly distributed from the current trip to trips decades ago.

The second concern with truthfulness of answers revolved around sensitive topics. For example, when asked if it was important for them to be identified as climbers, people were reluctant to say "yes" at first, even if it was important for them. Part of the reason for this was that people wanted to come across as modest. Half way through the interviews, the question was re-worded to ask climbers if climbing was a big part of their identity, which then led into asking them if it was important for them that this part of their identity was recognized. There was a noticeable difference in response.

Methods Summary

This study relied on qualitative techniques in order to better understand the motivations of climbers, in conjunction with closed-ended questions that examined their demographic characteristics. Case study approach was chosen in order to bound the study, both geographically and temporally. It also made it easier to relate the results to some of the previous studies. Purposive sampling was used for the selection of the participants in the study in order to make sure that it was reflective of the population of climbers in the Bugaboos during the three weeks that the research was conducted that summer. Semi-structured interviews and participant observation were used to collect the data, which was coded and analyzed using NVivo.

Chapter 4 – Results

The results of analysis are presented in this chapter. Demographic information, such as age, gender, occupation, and background, are presented first. Following this are the results of the thematic analysis of in-depth interviews. Finally, unexpected results that emerged during open coding are presented at the end of the chapter.

Demographic Information

Age

When it comes to age distribution, climbers in the Bugaboos reflected the findings of the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) study done in 2003 on the Canadian Hard Outdoor Adventure Enthusiasts (CTC, 2003). This was somewhat expected as Canadian Tourism Commission considered rock climbing to be a hard outdoor adventure activity.

The great majority of participants (over 90%) in the Bugaboos were between the ages of 18 and 40, with no participants over the age of 50. Only 2 out of 30 participants (approximately 7%) were over the age of 40 (See *Figure 3 - Age distribution* for more details).

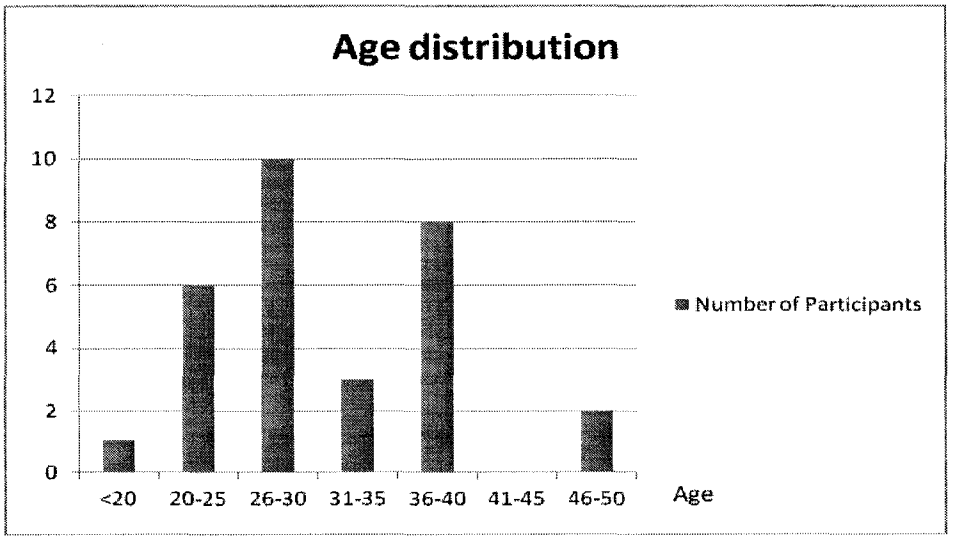

Figure 3 - Age distribution of participants

As there were similarities in age distribution between the Bugaboos' climbers and Hard Outdoor Enthusiasts from the CTC (2003) study, there were also differences from the overall leisure traveller population studied by the CTC (2003) which was in general older (see Table 1 - Age distribution of leisure travellers in Canada for more details).

	RECENT LEISURE TRAVELLERS IN CANADA		
	Total (all leisure travellers in Canada)[3]	*Hard Outdoor Enthusiasts*[4]	*Bugaboos' Climbers*
18 – 34 years	33%	58%	65%
35 – 44 years	24%	29%	28%
45 – 54 years	19%	10%	7%
55 – 64 years	12%	3%	0%
65+ years	13%	1%	0%
Average age	43.4	33.4	30.9

Table 1 - Age distribution of leisure travellers in Canada

Gender

Out of 30 climbers that were interviewed, 27 climbers were men and 3 climbers were women. A random sampling method was not used for this study, however this gender distribution was representative for climbers in the Bugaboos during the time of the study, as participant observation was used to keep track of total numbers for both men and women that climbed during the field season. In total 52 men and 7 women were observed. This translated to approximately 88% men and 12% women that were observed climbing during the field season. Thus, the gender distribution of the climbers in the Bugaboos was a lot more male dominant, as opposed to a more evenly distributed (55% male) general climbing population identified by Kelly and Warnick (1999). The gender distribution in the Bugaboos was also more male dominant than for the rest of the Hard

[3] (CTC, 2003)
[4] (CTC, 2003)

Outdoor Enthusiasts (67%), and far more than the balanced gender distribution of overall leisure travellers in Canada (48%).

	RECENT LEISURE TRAVELLERS IN CANADA		
	Total (all leisure travellers in Canada)[5]	*Hard Outdoor Enthusiasts*[6]	*Bugaboos' Climbers*
Men	48%	67%	90%
Women	52%	33%	10%

Table 2 - Gender distribution of leisure travellers in Canada

Education

According to Beedie and Hudson (2003a), hard adventure tourists were more likely to be college educated with 82% having some sort of post secondary education. Similar results were found among climbers in the Bugaboos, as 83% of them had some sort of post secondary education (see Figure 4 - Education distribution for Bugaboos' climbers). It was also interesting to note a relatively high number (a third of all participants in the study) that have completed a post graduate degree, either Masters or PhD.

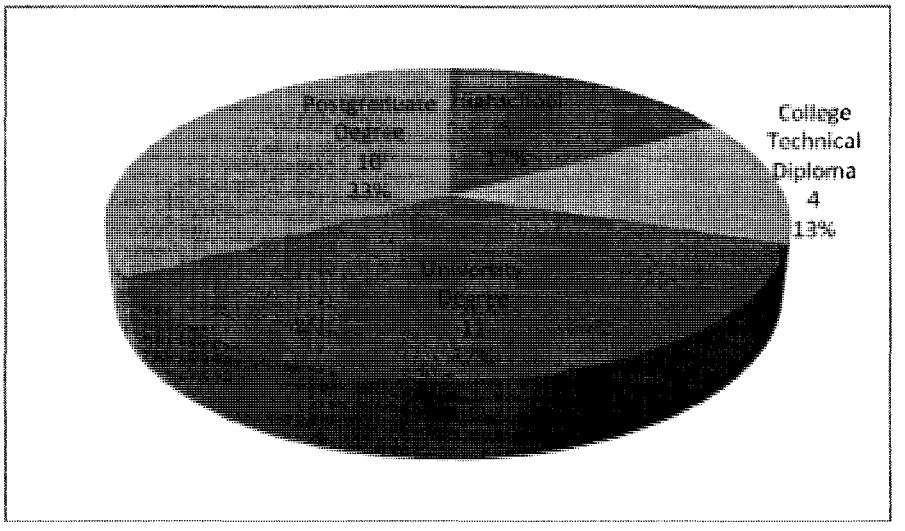

Figure 4 - Education distribution for Bugaboos' climbers

[5] (CTC, 2003)
[6] (CTC, 2003)

Occupation

The greatest number of climbers (n=9) were employed in the outdoor industry (see Figure 5 - Occupation of climbers in the Bugaboos). Out of those employed in the outdoor industry, the majority were guides (n=5), while a few others also had jobs related to climbing (n=4), such as running the climbing school or climbing shop. Although there seemed to have been a high number of guides in the Bugaboos, there were not many guided groups. Only one of the five guides interviewed was actually guiding clients, while the rest of them were enjoying personal trips.

The age distribution showed a relatively young population among Bugaboo climbers and education levels indicated their tendency to seek higher education. Approximately 15% of the participants were students. Another 18% were tradesmen, such as carpenters and drywallers. Furthermore 10% of climbers (n=3) interviewed in the Bugaboos were taking time off from work in order to climb. In the meantime they lived a transient life style, travelling from one climbing destination to another, depending on the season. In order to accommodate their life style, they would pick up, what they called, "random jobs" from time to time. All of participants falling under this category were under the age of 30.

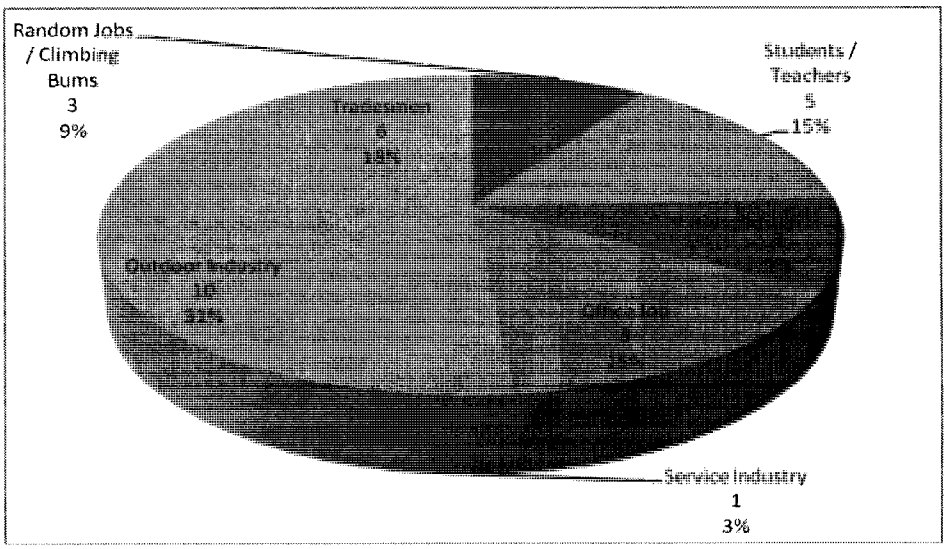

Figure 5 - Occupation of climbers in the Bugaboos

Where do climbers come from?

Upon examination of where participants in the study came from, Canadians accounted for only one third of all the participants interviewed (n=10) and there were more participants from the US (n=13) than Canada. Furthermore, with the exception of Africa, all continents were represented in the study, with climbers from Australia, Denmark, UK, Russia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Chile. By further examining where Canadian participants came from it also became apparent that local population was not the most represented population of climbers. As the Bugaboos are located in the Eastern British Columbia, it was not surprising to see somewhat higher numbers of Albertans. However, it was surprising to see more climbers from Eastern Canada than Western Canada. The US distribution of climbers included a majority from the North Western US. A particularly high number of climbers (20%) came from Washington.

Climbing experience

Climbers in the Bugaboos were all experienced climbers, and 3 years of climbing experience was the minimum encountered (see Figure 6 - Years of climbing experience). A number of guides and people employed in the climbing-related industry had higher experience levels, including one who had as much as 37 years experience. Most of the climbers in the study had between 3 and 8 years of experience and as that number got higher, there were fewer and fewer participants. It was found that older people had more years of climbing experience, which indicates that participants didn't tend to pick up climbing at older age.

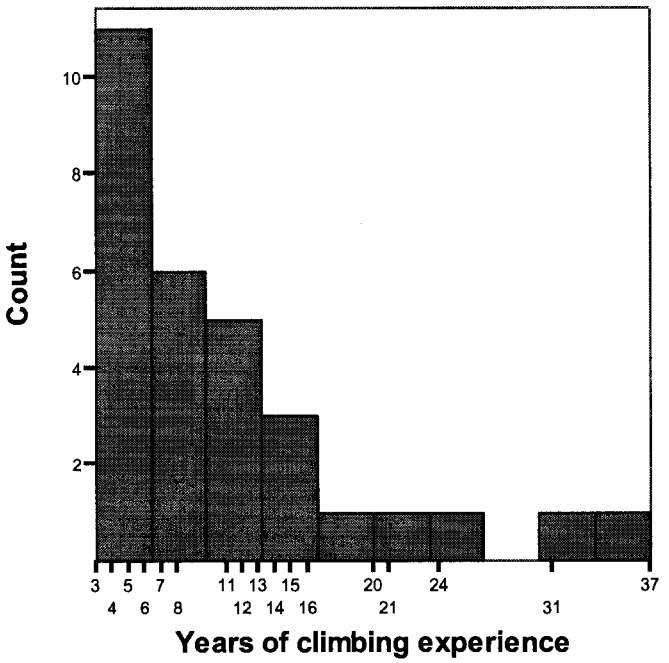

Figure 6 - Years of climbing experience

Results of the In-depth Interviews

One of the objectives of this study was to explore how previous theories and findings of why people climb could apply to the Bugaboos Case Study. The in-depth interview was designed to cover some of the major topics from the literature including:

- How participants first got involved with climbing;
- Climbing careers and future goals of climbers;
- The Relationship between motivations and experience;
- The role of risk;
- The role that influential figures played in climbers' careers; and
- The role of climbing in identity construction.

These topics were then used in topic coding of the interviews. The results of the topic coding analysis are presented below under topic headings.

How did people get involved with climbing?

In order to determine what motivated people to try mountaineering, two topics were explored:

- Their life before mountaineering – this included their hobbies, living situation, and other sports they might have done.
- Their first mountaineering trip – recollecting the whole experience from the preparation for the trip to post trip reflection.

While everyone had their own unique story of how they started mountaineering, there was a common theme among interview participants that mountaineering was a process of natural progression of skills and experience. Two main progression paths were identified: a progression from hiking into mountaineering and then into more technical climbing; and a progression from technical rock climbing into mountain climbing.

Participants that followed the first progression path, described shifts from hiking into mountain climbing and more technical rock climbing, were mostly soft outdoor adventure enthusiasts as defined by Canadian Tourism Commission study done in 2003. Prior to mountaineering they participated in the activities such as camping, hiking, backpacking and canoeing, all of which are considered to be soft outdoor adventures (CTC, 2003).

> *"I was always hiking. I am really into long distance stuff. And also my goal when I was in high school was to be a professional snow boarder... Then I realized that I enjoyed climbing up the best way up a mountain."*

> *"We did a lot of backpacking as kids and hiking. That led to winter backpacking trips. And that led to mountaineering."*

"Like on a backpacking trip, you realize you want to do more and more."

"My wife has done quite a bit of hiking, so we did some hikes, and then we slowly started..."

"I guess I started doing your basic, backpacking, and camping and that kind of thing. And I got interested in climbing."

"As a family we did a lot of hiking when I was younger... We went on a backpacking trip and I wandered off and did my own little trip. I got more into climbing."

On the other hand, participants that followed the second progression path, from technical rock climbing to mountain climbing, had more extreme hobbies even prior to climbing. A lot of them were also attracted to risk inherent in climbing. Below are some responses from this group of participants when asked about their life prior to mountain climbing and how they got involved with it.

"I did a lot of skateboarding. Big one was mountain biking."

"I raced corvettes in Toronto."

"I loved cars and motor sports. I raced cars when I was 18 and 19."

"Always liked to do risky adventures and I always wanted to do stuff that is not too safe."

"I grew up climbing in Australia. It's pretty much all rock climbing. When I moved to New Zealand, the majority of good climbing is alpine climbing, so it was just a progression I suppose."

A common theme between both groups of participants was that a lot of them started climbing out of boredom. Climbing and the social atmosphere surrounding the climbing community was their vehicle for fighting that boredom.

> *"It was the matter of being bored. I started in indoor gym. I wanted to experience different challenges... It was just progression."*

> *"I started climbing in Ontario out of boredom on water treatment plant near my house."*

> *"I had all this time and nothing to do and I started rock climbing. I was living in Kingston and there is nothing to do in Kingston. I used to paddle (white water) a lot and there are no rivers in Kingston. So, I started rock climbing in a gym 3-4 times per week. Gym was boring after a while I guess. When I moved to Canmore last fall I started getting into outdoor rock climbing. It's such a wicked social atmosphere."*
>
> *"It's more than climbing. It's almost a life style. People here are not just climbing. I like it. It's cool."*

This "climbing life style" was something that many participants referred to as being the attractant to the sport. However, most of them had different ideas of what that life style was. To some it was a "dirt bag" climber who lived in a van travelling between different climbing areas. To others it was a healthy, balanced life style. And to some, such as mountain guides, professionalism and stewardship played a big part of that life style. One thing that they all had in common was that they all liked talking about climbing and what it meant to them.

The first mountaineering experience played a big role in participants' decisions to climb. Participants who got involved with mountain climbing through technical rock climbing were more likely to start climbing out of boredom, while the participants who got

involved with mountain climbing through hiking were more likely to be introduced to the activity through some organized program, such as National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), summer camp, or a university club. These programs played a big role in skill building process for most of the participants, and more importantly they left them with a sense of achievement, which was the predominant factor for their decision to pursue climbing after that first trip. Many of them stated that that sense of achievement gave them a new outlook not just in the climbing world, but also in the rest of their lives. When asked how they felt after that first trip, most participants seemed to have a good recollection of it, even if it was long time ago.

> *"I felt pretty tired obviously, but I also felt a huge sense of reward, like I accomplished something. I came home with this new skill base and new sense of self. I don't know how to say it – new sense of drive and inspiration."*

> *"It was really nice. The whole meaning of the camp was to be happy when doing something hard. It doesn't translate well into English. Whenever you do something that was hard, you feel that happiness after. I remember thinking, I want to bail and this is all not worth it, but I really liked it in the end."*

> *"After the trip there was a good sense of achievement, which carried through in my work and made everything else seem easy."*

First mountaineering trips played a crucial role in participants' decisions to continue mountain climbing. While there seemed to be two main paths that lead people to mountain climbing, one being through technical rock climbing and the other through hiking and backpacking, the reason for why they decided to mountaineer after that first trip was the same for most of them and it was the sense of achievement that that first trip gave them.

Exploring climbing careers: climbing trips, memorable moments and future plans

In order to determine what sort of role mountain climbing played in their lives and what aspects of it were attractive to them, participants were asked to summarize their climbing career. They were also asked to describe their most memorable trip and with it the aspects of climbing that made that trip memorable. They were also asked about their future plans, which hinted at their current aspirations and therefore their current motivations.

Climbing trips

There was a great variation in the number of climbing trips participants took in a year. It ranged from once or twice per year, to being a full time guide or "dirt bag" climber and doing it year round.

> *"I don't do it that often. Maybe two times per year."*

> *"Year round. I take a bit of time off in the fall. October is a slow month, but November is a big month. I go to the Himalayas and live there for three months. I've done that now for five years."*

> *"I spent a year and a half living out of my car and climbed everywhere in the western US and BC."*

One of the reasons for this great variation in the number of mountaineering trips may have been the diverse home base of participants in the study. Participants that lived closer to the mountains were taking more frequent, twice a month on average, shorter and local mountaineering trips, while participants living further away from the mountains took fewer, one or two, longer trips per year. Furthermore, some of the participants would alternate their home base between mountains and their "real" home. In particular, participants living in the Eastern Canada, who considered Ontario, Quebec or Newfoundland their home, would spend a few months of the year in the Canadian

Rockies. This is how some participants responded to the question of how often they climb.

> *"As often as possible. It takes time that you need to get off work and you need to find a partner that's competent and you won't die with." (Living further away from the mountains)*

> *"I still climb generally in the summer every weekend, both mountaineering and rock climbing. Spring and fall I climb every other weekend. In the winter I try to go every other weekend, either skiing or climbing, depending on the conditions." (Living close to the mountains)*

> *"Newfoundland born and raised, and I really love it back there and I go back to work... I just go home and I work and I build up energy for my next trip."*

The great variation in the number of climbing trips taken per year was also due to the fact that there was a clear distinction between participants who considered themselves rock climbers and those who considered themselves alpine climbers or mountaineers. Those who consider themselves rock climbers would not go on as many mountaineering trips, or at least what they would consider mountaineering trips. The Bugaboos attracted both groups of climbers, as they provided a great variety of climbing opportunities in the alpine setting, which made it difficult to define what activity was being undertaken.

> *"I am more of a rock climber."*

> *"I've done a lot more rock climbing than mountaineering. But I guess when I think mountaineering, I think more of alpine ice and snow."*

From these responses it seemed as if those participants who considered themselves rock climbers took fewer mountain climbing or mountaineering trips. However, this was not necessarily the case, as participants who considered themselves rock climbers took as

many trips, often long and in mountainous terrain, but they just did not consider it mountain climbing or mountaineering.

The locations of their past trips were also good indicators of whether people considered themselves mountain climbers or rock climbers. Those who considered themselves mountain climbers were more attracted to alpine ice and snow locations, such as the Himalayas, Cordillera Blanca in Peru, Ecuador volcanoes, Mt. Rainier, Mt McKinley, and Pico de Orizaba in Mexico, while those who considered themselves rock climbers were more attracted to areas such as Yosemite, Red Rocks, and Squamish, all well known rock climbing destinations. Although those who considered themselves rock climbers were still climbing mountains, but they were mountains where rock climbing was the only skill necessary to scale them.

The different locations listed by the participants also directly correlated to the progression path they took to becoming mountain climbers. Those who got involved with mountaineering through technical rock climbing had all the rock climbing destinations in their list of previous climbing trips, while those that got involved with mountaineering through hiking and general mountaineering had more ice and snow peaks listed under their previous trips.

Most memorable trips and future plans

While there might have been differences in the preferred location for these two distinct groups of climbers, their most memorable trips had very similar aspects of climbing that made those trips memorable. The participants identified three major factors that made their trips memorable: a sense of achievement or reward, exotic environments, and relationships with partners.

Having a sense of achievement or accomplishment, and being rewarded for hard work, was a very important aspect for over two thirds of the participants. In fact, very often the answer to the question of why the particular trip was the most memorable could have also been the answer to the question of what their greatest accomplishment was. Interestingly,

how they measured accomplishment varied among the participants. Some used the well established climbing grades, while others stuck to the romantic idea of being the first ascentionists, and for some, accomplishment was measured in the amount of suffering before achieving the goal.

> *"And why [is this the most memorable trip], because I was able to do a lot of the grade 4s [alpine grade]. We did a grade 4 almost every day for a week."*

> *"Going into the mountains and then going and doing the first ascent of Kyazo-Ri... That was the most challenging technical climbing I've done at that altitude and at that setting... It was super rewarding."*

> *"It was memorable as we went through some real suffering."*

Being in a pristine environment or remote setting was an aspect that made trips memorable. Mountaineers tended to remember the scenery, whilst rock climbers had easier time recollecting the aesthetics of the climb itself. In both cases it was those mental images that created a craving for future climbing trips.

> *"We went and did Pigeon Spire in the moonlight. It was just beautiful. It was one of the most amazing climbs I've ever done. Setting was just surreal with all the light on the surrounding peaks. That was just one of the most beautiful routes I've ever done. And it's only 5.4. It's a hike."*

> *"It's the aesthetics that I really enjoy. I really enjoy, on the North East Ridge on the 6th pitch, there is a splitter hand crack, right on the arête. You can take the 5.4 chimney or 5.9/5.10 crack system. And that was gorgeous, just stunning. Sort of endless hand jams."*

Having someone to share the experience with, was another important aspect of most memorable trips. For some climbers it was important to share that experience with close

friends, while others didn't mind meeting new people and getting a new outlook on climbing.

> *"It was with a couple of friends who didn't know each other. That was the best part of the trip."*

> *"That's another thing with rock climbing, you get to go to so many different places and meet so many different people, you know."*

It was also interesting to note that female climbers found a greater satisfaction in sharing their climbing experience with another woman.

> *"The reason why - it was the first trip with just a girlfriend. There is something about climbing with just another woman without any guys around. It's awesome. It's fun. It's liberating. It's empowering. I don't know. It's great."*

Overall, location did not appear to play a significant role in recalling the most memorable experience. The Bugaboos were an exception, as seven participants mentioned them. This result might have been biased due to the survey location. However, the Bugaboos were a particularly popular location due to their remote and scenic setting and good quality of rock climbing. Climbers who listed their trip to the Bugaboos as their most memorable trip also found location to play an important role of the overall climbing experience.

> *"This one. [referring to the current trip] It's so huge all around, I can't explain it. You really enjoy when you finish something. You are more satisfied." [sense of reward]*

> *"Bugaboos. Everything here fits the image I have of climbing. This would be my spot. Cool place to camp, lots of climbing around, safe hut – rescue, and not a lot*

of people here. I like extreme weather, so that doesn't bother me. Spectacular views, and glacier travel is better than scrambling scree for approaches."

This was also evident in their plans for the future trips, as they were seeking similar locations that had granite spires in the remote alpine setting, such as Patagonia, Karakoram, and Cirque of the Unclimbables.

Understanding climbing careers by examining the most memorable trips and future climbing plans emphasized the two different progression paths in climbing. It also uncovered some of the more important aspects that attract people to climbing, such as the sense of achievement or reward, aesthetics of the climb or the environment, and relationships with climbing partners.

Why do people climb and do these motivations change with experience?

After talking about their climbing careers in the interview, participants were asked to explain why they climb and if they thought their motivations for climbing had changed throughout their careers. They were also asked to explain whether their experiences might have affected their motivations for climbing.

Participants listed many reasons for climbing. Most common motivations mentioned included sense of achievement or reward through different challenges and learning new things (n=23), aesthetics and scenery (n=27), and all encompassing experience (n=20). Participants seeking the all encompassing experience were motivated by a combination of factors, all of which they considered necessary part of climbing. For example, they were seeking aesthetic climbs and environments to climb in, as well as a good social atmosphere, and different physical and mental challenges. Some other motivations that commonly got mentioned included adventure and exploration, prestige, social reasons, getting away from things (people included), and for the life style.

A sense of achievement or reward, which was one of the most important aspects of participants' most memorable trips, was also one of the main reasons why people climb. People had different ways of expressing their drive towards reward or sense of achievement, but one thing was common among all the participants – they all felt a great reward from learning. Once again, different people enjoyed learning about different things, but it was the learning process that was important for their motivation to climb.

> *"I really enjoy building my skill base and watching my progression. I find it really rewarding."*

> *"Every time I learn something different – it can be technique or something about my partners or something about my fear." [on what's the most enjoyable part of climbing]*

> *"I like doing activities where I am learning a lot all the time. Doing things where I have a steep learning curve. That's why rock climbing, I do it all the time, and now that I got to a point where I have to put in a lot of effort to get better I am not really learning anything new any more. I know how to place gear, I know how to climb safe, that's why I am interested in mountaineering, where I know nothing and there is so much to learn. You know what I am saying."*

Participants, especially those that considered themselves mountain climbers, rather than rock climbers, also climbed for aesthetic reasons. However, they further defined what aesthetic meant to them. Aesthetics included the sense of style in which one climbs a peak. Alpine style was the preferred style, where the mountain was climbed in a single push.

> Interviewer: *"When picking these peaks, what are the most important aspects you consider"?*
> Participant: *"Aesthetics of the line and climb. Beauty of the peak and style in which we think we can do it."*

Interviewer: *"What style is preferred?"*
Participant: *"Alpine – trying to do in a push."*

Remoteness and quietness also added to the aesthetics of the whole experience.

Interviewer: "*Why do you mountaineer?"*
Participant: *"One reason is because of the places and the environment it puts you in... Remoteness. Some of it is the aesthetic nature and vastness."*

Remoteness and quietness, which contribute to the aesthetics of the whole experience, often stemmed from one's desire to get away from the crowds.

Interviewer: *"When picking these peaks, what are the most important aspects you consider?"*
Participant: *"Remoteness and quietness. I don't like crowds."*

However, this was not contradictory to participants' motives to climb for social reasons. In fact, some of the participants that listed getting away from the crowds as one of the important motivation factors for climbing, also stressed the importance of climbing relationships in their decision to climb.

Participants of this study also felt the need to separate themselves from the everyday crowd, but at the same time they needed an audience, somebody on their level, who they could share these "amazing experiences" with.

"It's really like high self-esteem thing... It's so impressive and I get to see something that most people are not privileged to see. That is something that only select few will ever see. That's really interesting, just seeing places, and also meeting people too. There is just that bond you establish when you are climbing with them."

Whether people got involved with climbing through social circumstances, or for aesthetic reasons or because they wanted to feel a sense of accomplishment, they all seemed to follow similar motivation patterns. Once fully involved with climbing, most participants (n=25) wanted to challenge themselves. When speaking of challenges that motivate them, most of the participants referred to physical or technical challenges. They wanted to improve their skill base so that they could climb at the higher level.

> Interviewer: *"Now that you've tried mountaineering, do you think you want to do more and why?"*
> Participant: *"Oh, yeah. I would like to. I would like to do some more classic routes. Do some higher level. I have to train hard. I always wanted to climb at the higher grade anyway. I have this problem where I have been climbing 5.10, 5.11 when I am in good shape, and I would really like to reach that 5.12."*

Some motivational changes were also detected through interviews, especially with climbers who have been climbing for longer (more than 5 years). It was noticeable that most of the participants underwent change from purely climbing for challenge and improving their skill base, to climbing for a greater variety of reasons, or what they called an "all encompassing experience". For different participants, an all encompassing experience had a different meaning.

> *"I was more driven for stupid reasons. I don't have any more goals as far as climbing goes. If it happens it happens. I don't have a tick list. I don't have a type A personality for mountaineering or rock climbing."*

> *"I think I was climbing for the wrong reasons. I tried to push the grade and get stronger and climb harder. That definitely has its benefits, but it's just one piece of the puzzle. It's a dead end street."*

> *"It has changed. I am a lot pickier now with experience. It's a cross between scenery, people and the sense of achievement."*

The motivational stage that participants were in was also evident when they were asked how experience has affected their motivation, and whether their motivation has changed with experience. Those who were still motivated by different physical and technical challenges stated that they didn't experience any motivational changes, but rather that their climbing experience has enabled them to climb at the higher level.

> *"The stronger you get the more you want to challenge yourself. Life is boring without a challenge."*

On the other hand, some climbers acknowledged the change from climbing for the challenge to being motivated by more personal and all encompassing reasons.

> *"Yeah. I would say it changes for everyone, but it definitely changed for myself. Originally, when I started climbing and I took a course and had to do so many climbs to get certification and so on. And now I just do it for personal reasons, for enjoyment of the mountain experience and enjoying the people I climb with too."*

By examining participants' motivations this study uncovered many different reasons for why people climb. Furthermore, while people got into climbing for a variety of reasons, they all went through the phase where the challenge was the main motivating factor as it brought the sense of achievement or reward, before their motivation changed to a desire for more encompassing experience. Seeking challenging experiences to develop the necessary skills and master the activity can be viewed as a Self-Esteem and Development stage in Pierce's Travel Career Ladder, whereas desire for a more encompassing experience can be seen as movement toward Fulfillment stage where participants climbed for personal reasons with a goal of better understanding themselves and achieving inner peace and harmony.

Understanding the role of risk

This study examined the role of risk from the insider's, climber's, perspective, by asking climbers whether risk played a role in their decision to climb. The results of this study show that the participants liked to minimize the risk as much as possible, and this was something that was common to all the participants in the study. This is how most participants responded:

> *"I prefer to minimize risk. I like safety."*

> *"Yeah. Not attracted because of risk, but I am attracted in spite of risk. Trying to minimize the risk."*

However, this is not to say that climbers had no personal connection with risk. In fact, most of them enjoyed elements of risk as they found it exciting. For most of them risk was an integral part of climbing that made climbing what it was.

> *"I don't see dangerous rock, but certainly part of the excitement is connected with risk and the fact that there is risk."*

> *"Certain risks are exciting. Yeah, I probably wouldn't climb if there was no risk."*

> *"It's definitely part of the deal... It's exciting man."*

> *"I don't think you can possibly alpine rock climb if you didn't enjoy certain level of risk. You would golf or something. It's a continuum, I mean. I find acceptable what other people won't and there are other people who would do what I wouldn't."*

All of the participants emphasized the importance of being in control of the situation they were in. They also made a clear distinction between managed and unmanaged risk.

Managed risk was viewed as a type of risk that was within the climber's control, whereas unmanaged risk was viewed as a type of risk that was beyond the climber's control. So, when they referred to "certain risks" being exciting, they were referring to controlled risk and being able to harness it.

> *"This risk part is actually, I like the challenge, but I don't like the uncontrolled risk in mountaineering."*

> *"Influences what I choose to climb. I'm crazy, not stupid... If I enjoyed risk [referring to unmanaged risk] I would be bungee jumping, so I don't enjoy pure unmanaged risk."*

Participants went further to explain the relativity of risk, whereby an activity that the general public perceived as risky was not necessarily risky to them.

> *"I don't consider it risk." (referring to climbing)*

> *"I prefer not to think of it [climbing] as risk. I think the word risk implies certain amount of, oh like role of dice. That's what word risk means to me. That part, I don't prefer to think of it in that way."*

Participants observed how the different risk perceptions of climbers and non-climbers often led to misunderstandings. Climbing was often perceived as a selfish activity and climbers as inconsiderate towards others, especially the close ones. In her book *Where the Mountain Casts Its Shadow: The Dark Side of Extreme Adventure*, Maria Coffey (2003) offered those voices of people left behind as a result of climbing accidents of their loved ones. However, while most participants in this study did not disagree that climbing was a selfish activity, they also acknowledged that they were considerate towards others when weighing their risk.

"Climbing is really selfish, because you climb for yourself. Most of the pleasure is for you."

"It [risk] probably also has an unspoken effect on my relationships, because I am constantly travelling. I sometimes will not necessarily, maybe protect myself by not getting too attached or not let others attach themselves to me. I've been sheltering myself a bit from that."

"You are responsible for yourself and your partner, people like your family. You have to take all that into consideration."

Some participants were able to separate the selfish aspect of climbing, where they were the only ones enjoying the benefits of climbing, from the responsibility towards others when they calculated risk.

So, what is it that attracts climbers to risk? According to the participants of this study, it was the satisfaction or reward of decision making that mitigated that risk.

"But you are in control of that risk. You can turn around and you can come down. I guess what I like about it is making decisions. The decision making process."

"I feel like I want to get into that yellow zone of being in danger and having to make good decisions at that point to be able to get out of there. For some reason, that's fun."

The outcome of this decision making process was what created the controversy with the public (Coffey, 2003), as the results of it could have life altering consequences. But this was what participants of this study found exciting. In their words, it made them feel alive.

"I like that feeling when I have to make life related decisions. I feel like I am living... In normal life we don't have to make those decisions – everything is safe. Somebody is cooking for us; somebody is making our clothes... When I climb every decision is related to my life."

"If I didn't have any of that risk in my life, I wouldn't enjoy my life as much. I don't know why. Maybe it's like the obvious realization of mortality. Makes you feel more alive, almost motivating factor to go and do more. Man, I am mortal, I could die. Life is important. You have to make your life what you want it to be. And you realize that when you are out there."

That sense of being alive was very important to the participants in the study. It didn't just fuel their drive to climb, but it translated into the other parts of their life. A few of the climbers pointed out the importance of problem solving skills in climbing and how they translated into real life situations.

"But, it transposes into all these other situations in life and it gives you this strength, like nothing else has given me... Climbing is, holy crap I am going to die, you know. And so you get this instantaneous reality breakaway. You went from everything is comfortable and I am on the ground, to I have potential for serious injury, and what's your mind state going to be like when it hits you. Are you going to be comfortable? Are you going to be able to relax and breathe through it, or are you going to withdraw and have no fight in you? You get in a car wreck and you have to pay doctor and bills. All of a sudden your life is changed and what are you going to do? All you need to do is the next step. Relax and enjoy the ride. And climbing just gives me that next step to do that."

"I've been scared plenty of times [referring to situations outside of climbing too] and when you come through it, it's OK. For me, I look at it, what's next. I try to take it step by step."

Consequently, risk was an integral part of climbing and it played an important role in participants' decision to climb. To them risk was a challenge that could be overcome through decision making processes and this in turn formed the exciting part of climbing. Risk made them feel alive and gave them strength to deal with other difficult situations in life.

What role do influential figures play in climbers' motivations?

All the climbers interviewed in this study admitted to having someone that has influenced their motivation to climb. Very often, one of the most influential figures they recalled was the person that introduced them to climbing, their first mentor or their first climbing partner (n=18). Other influential figures mentioned were their teachers at the school or college, or family members, or just famous climbers they admired. The reasons as to how that person influenced their motivations varied. The following predominant themes emerged from the question on how influential figures affected participants' motivations for climbing: encouragement and support, respect and admiration, and pushing physical and technical limits.

Influential figures were also the people who instilled the values for them including the style of climbing and how they approached climbing.

> *"He had experience and different vision. Go to mountains in simple way and don't carry much and move fast. I like sacrificing comfort for speed."*

> *"He clearly has just as much fun climbing. It doesn't matter what grade he is climbing. That attitude is just interesting to see. That made me realize that climbing – you've got to be out there for the love of it."*

> *"Barry Blanchard. I always loved his approach. He takes kind of comedic approach on climbing and I like his attitude."*

"And there is my friend Jen, who is always excited to go climbing no matter what you are climbing. And always has a blast and is influential in a sense that it reminds me that it's always good to have fun and have a good time."

As mentioned earlier, family members were also influential in the way they showed their support and encouragement and also for introducing them to the outdoors. School teachers and first mentors were also influential in the way they showed their support and encouragement, as well as in the way they pushed them to improve while instilling certain values in them.

"I would say that one of the most influential people was a teacher that I had in high school. His name is Rogers Briggs, and he basically pioneered most of the hard routes on the Diamond... Being a good positive influence. Go and try that or do this. Lots of enthusiasm and someone who had the time to talk to you. Not like when you go to a local climbing store and you ask a question and they blow you off."

"My parents were very supportive when I was a teenager and climbing and they continued to be supportive as I got older."

"My father and mom for sure. They both like outdoors a lot. They always took us out to the outdoors and camping and easy hikes when we were kids."

"My first mentor, Sergei, was Korean but he grew up in Russia. He was an orphan. He taught me a lot about friendship and caring about people, including mountaineering skills."

Climbing was not seen as a competitive sport in a typical sense, as there was no direct competition against another person or team as in other sports such as tennis, soccer, or other team sports. However, this is not to say that participants did not have competitive spirit. In fact, progression on the climbing grading scale was mentioned by most of the

participants at some point during the interview. Participants who were motivated by this grade progression listed their climbing partners who helped them push these grades as influential figures.

> *"[He] is a good training partner. We climb in the same range [referring to grades] and we push each other that way. Actually with other partners we push each other. I think it's the beauty of having many partners. They all push different aspects of your climbing."*

> *"French friend who is very good at what he does. It pushed me to climb at a higher level."*

To some climbers, famous climbers were also influential in a sense that they were respected and admired, and provided inspiration and motivation for some to emulate them and accept their approach to climbing.

> *"Yeah, Peter Croft – never going after grades, just wanting to be free and doing his own thing. It inspired me to think about things to do."*

> *"Some all around climbers, like Chris Sharma. They are not my idols, but climbers that inspire me."*

> *"Messner's solo on Nanga Parbat. Mountaineering is more about journey. It's a vehicle to explore within yourself. I saw a real connection with him as an author. It's a purifying experience that connects to beauty."*

Climbing identity

In order to determine what and how important of a role climbing played in their identity construction, participants were asked to compare the public's perception of a typical climber to their own, and whether it was important for them to be identified as one.

There was a clear difference between how participants thought the general public perceived climbers and how they viewed themselves. According to most of the participants in the study, the general public just did not understand climbing and mountaineering. In their eyes, the general public viewed climbers as crazy, risk takers and adrenaline junkies:

"I think that general public doesn't understand. They think that it's too risky."

"Crazy person, really out there, not too sane. Adrenaline rush sport."

"Probably a risk taker or adrenaline junkie. They just think of us as extremists."

Participants attributed this misunderstanding of climbers by public to media and bad press. According to them, the only time public heard about mountaineering was when the accidents happened, or when it was an "ego based" news, like climbing Mt. Everest. To them, the media did not capture the essence of climbing, which led to misunderstandings by public.

"Media has no relationship with what climbing is and why we do it."

"It's mainly coming from the media. They think we are pretty crazy, adrenaline junkies. Everest is highly publicized – very rich people, walking past dieing people. They are missing out on the whole thing."

"I don't like media. They portray it as this bad ass thing, and once you start doing it, you realize that this doesn't mean anything to anyone... You have to come to terms with why you climb."

Because of these misunderstanding, climbers very often defined themselves in opposition to "traditional society". They defined themselves as being counter cultural. Some of the

older climbers could even recall this being the case when they first started climbing in the 1960s and 1970s.

> *"Back in the 60s and 70s it was just pioneers and people were thinking what the heck is going on. They didn't know much about it. You hear of John Long and people hanging out at Joshua Tree for months at the time eating whatever. People definitely get the perception – unemployed, vagabondish and somewhat hooligans."*

> *"Kind of like an anarchist group in a sense. That's how I look at myself. Define general public or society by not following the classic path of going to school, having a 9-5 job, having steady income, not having tons of time off, classic North America job type and life style. I am pretty much the exact opposite. What I don't get paid in money, I get paid in personal time and experience. But I don't think that general public has any idea of what's that worth, because they don't have it."*

Besides having an identity that was clearly defined in opposition to the view of general public, climbers also recognized that there was no such thing as a typical climber, and individuality was an important part of their identity.

> *"I found that people are so different and climb for different reasons. It's hard to describe one typical mountaineer."*

> *"There is definitely a lot of different types of mountaineer."*

> *"There is a whole spectrum of mountaineers, and the more extreme you get the more those characteristics come into play."*

However, when prompted, the participants identified some common characteristics for all climbers. These included intelligence, which was necessary for problem solving they had to do to mitigate risk. They also described climbers as determined and self-driven, which

was necessary for them to overcome all the hard work and suffering that was inherent in climbing. Finally, climbers were described as environmentalists.

> *"I think they have to be calm and in good control. I think they have to be smart, because when you are in a dangerous situation, you have to do the right thing to deal with it."*

> *"Driven, I think. Very driven to do the things they do."*

> *"I thought they had common sense of goals, respect for mountains and environment. Environmentalist point of view."*

While for most participants climbing was a hobby, it still played a major role in their identity construction. For most of them it was the biggest part of their identity even if majority of their time was spent doing something else, like their work.

> *"It's significant [part of the identity]. Look at my web page for example. It says that I am an attorney and I am a climber and it's really clear on my page that those are related."*

> *"It's more than a hobby. It's part of my life. It's good for me, as it is big part of my life."*

Whilst climbing formed a part of these people's own inward sense of identity, it was not important for these people to be visible as climbers. It was important that their close friends and family recognized their passion and in that sense identified them as climbers, but it was not important for them to be viewed as climbers by the general public. Indeed, some stated that it was not worth the effort trying to explain to the general public what climbing was about, as it was so misunderstood.

"Uhm, maybe amongst my friends it's nice to be recognized how I am spending my time. In terms of meeting people, everyone has their hobbies. Mine is climbing, whereas someone else's might be knitting. It's definitely a huge part of who I am, even though it's just a hobby."

"From climber's perspective, they [other climbing friends] would understand me more. They would understand the part of me that general public wouldn't."

"It's like trying to explain sex to someone. They will never understand it until they do it. And climbing is so based on experience that even if you climb in a gym, you will never understand what it's like climbing crack. I remember when I climbed sport and went to climb a crack and I was wow, now I understand why people are obsessed with this. So interesting you know."

Other Emerging Themes

While topic analysis was used to explore the questions set out before the data was collected, analytical coding was implemented to determine new emerging themes from the data. New emerging themes as a result of analytical coding are presented below.

Defining climbing, mountaineering and alpinism

One of the initial difficulties this project faced was defining the unit of analysis. The purpose of the project was to explore the motivations of climbers. However, *climbing* proved to be a general umbrella term that covered wide range of activities such as bouldering, sport climbing, alpine climbing, ice climbing, mountaineering, etc. Rather than defining the type of climber, the general term climber was used for the purpose of this research and the unit of analysis was defined as people climbing in the Bugaboos. For further discussion on how participants viewed the activity they participated in, please see Appendix C – Defining Climbing, Mountaineering and Alpinism.

Ego

An additional theme which emerged from the analytical coding was the role of ego in participants' motivations for climbing. This was noticed and recorded in my notes.

> *"He seems really passionate about climbing, but maybe a bit ego-driven."*

> *"There is definitely a bit of ego-climbing he does, as one of his stories points out how he was pissed off when one of the locals passed him on Murchison Falls."*

> *"Ego certainly exists among climbers here. While all of them are very pleasant and approachable, most of them make sure that you know if they are climbing at a higher level."*

There also seems to be a connection between the years of climbing experience and how climbers viewed ego. For the most part, the older, more experienced climbers saw ego as a necessary positive driving force that they embraced in order to help their self-esteem. On the other hand, less experienced climbers had more extreme views on ego-driven climbing and often associated it with prestige. Because of that, ego was either important in that it made them stand out, or they tried to appear more humble and suppress their egos.

The role of ego as motivation for climbing was also evident within the interviews, confirming the researcher's observations:

> *"But you definitely get that from some climbers. You start talking to them and generally if they are good climbers, they want you to know right away that they are good climbers. And they won't be, oh I am a good climber. They'll say, I climbed this route yesterday and they know that you know what the route is and you know that's really hard. They might be a bit egotistical."*

"Personal proudness", as one climber put it, was the driving force for some of the climbers, including him. He also acknowledged that the sense of achievement they felt was very ego boosting, which made it feel a lot more rewarding.

While most climbers acknowledged that ego plays an important role in their sport, they were divided as to whether it was a positive or a negative influence on their sport. One of the participants made a suggestion that ego was a way for climbers to justify an otherwise meaningless activity.

> *"I know that it [climbing] doesn't mean anything to anybody. It's not that important. I think that a lot of people [climbers] think it is. I think it is very ego driven, the whole sport."*

Others tried to separate themselves from ego-driven climbing, while also blaming media for portraying climbing in such a light. When describing how the public might perceive climbers, one of the informants responded in the following way:

> *"Ego based. Summitteers, usually the people that public knows, because media has no relationship with what climbing is and why we do it."*

Some even perceived ego drive as the wrong motivation for climbing. In that way, they tried to express their motivations for climbing, by defining them in opposition from the ego based climbers.

> *"Some climb exclusively for their ego, trying to prove something to somebody or themselves without actually liking the mountains and the people. I've seen that."*

This same respondent defined natural places, mountains, and social atmosphere, as his main motivations for climbing.

Some even expressed their opinion on ego climbing by describing some of the characteristics their influential figures had that they also aspired to.

> *"Other climber I like is Peter Croft. He climbs for the love of it. There is no other reason or other motivations other than that he loves it. He has no attitude or no ego. He is very humble."*

It was very clear from this informant's response that he too aspired to be more like Peter Croft, as he tried to suppress his ego and climb for the "right" reasons.

More experienced climbers and older climbers had a slightly different outlook on ego's role in climbing. They saw it as inevitable part of climbing and life in general, and tried to see it in a positive light as a motivational force, and not as a negative attitude. One of the sponsored climbers responded in the following way:

> *"Having recognition is a lot of fun. We all have a bit of an ego and like to be respected."*

Ego was also seen as a defining feature of one's personality. It was what made people unique.

> *"You need to be a bit of an individual. You need to have a certain amount of ego I think."*

Through more in-depth analysis of the interviews it became apparent that ego played an important role in climbers' motivations. However, depending on climbers' view of ego drive, climbers were either motivated to suppress their egos, or acknowledge them and enjoy the reward. Those who associated ego to prestige seem to fit Pearce's Self-Esteem and Development stage, while those more experienced climbers who embraced their egos in order to better understand themselves seem to better fit in the Fulfillment stage.

Climbing - a Zen-like activity

While analyzing climbers' motivations for participating in the activity it was interesting to note that many of them referred to climbing as a "Zen-like" activity. When climbers were asked to elaborate on this "Zen-like" feeling, they responded:

> *"I don't know why. [I climb] ... I think it's a Zen activity. When you climb, you just think of climbing, this very moment. You are not thinking about your job, your girlfriend, what you will find in your fridge. I don't know. That's a nice moment."*

> *"Lately I am just trying to have fun. Sort of like Zen. I am not like I need to be doing this or I need to be doing that. You don't need to do anything."*

This "Zen-like" activity provided people with an opportunity to escape everyday problems, such as those at work, or relationship problems. These problems seemed to be looming over their heads in everyday life, no matter what they were doing. They sought escape through climbing, as it allowed them to entirely focus on one thing and enjoy it, while forgetting all other problems. Indeed, *focus* was the key word they used to describe why climbing felt like Zen. This is also very similar to Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) idea of flow, which is a state of complete concentration or absorption, which he also calls an optimal state of intrinsic motivation. In this state people are completely immersed in the activity, and their skills perfectly match the challenge of the task ahead of them.

> *"I like the focus part of it. It draws your attention like nothing else."*

> *"Also, maybe this is a little bit cheesy, but I'll say it. I think I don't know of any other activity where there is so much instant focus. In your normal life you are distracted by everything, but when you are mountaineering, all your attention and all your focus is on that one thing. I don't find other activities do that nearly as much. That's probably not the only reason [why he climbs], but it's a nice feeling."*

The reward of that instant focus was something that many participants mentioned. Some (n=8) of them elaborated that instant focus felt rewarding because they had a short attention span or attention deficit disorder (ADD). Interestingly, none of the climbers were prompted for this, but rather it came as a result of their own self-reflection.

> *"It's a bit of an ADD thing I think."* [On why he climbs]

> *"As far as other places I want to go. I sort of have a short attention span. I don't like hiking. I like climbing."* [On other mountaineering destinations]

Climbing, environmentalism and connection to the natural environment

Some of the climbers (n=10) that participated in this study identified themselves as environmentalists. When asked what all climbers had in common, many of the participants expressed that it was an environmental point of view.

> *"They [climbers] tend to be, although not necessarily, but they tend to respect the environment and lean towards environmentalism."*

> *"If they survive they are patient, environmentally aware, easy going, eco-friendly. Longer term – build relationship with the environment."*

It was noticeable that most of the participants wanted to emphasize their values when describing a typical mountaineer. They were even keener to emphasize their environmental values when describing what they identified with. Some of them went into great details to explain how their work or school stood behind these values.

"My personal view is the environmental view. There is garbage everywhere [referring to all of the natural areas – not specific to the Bugaboos] and I can't believe it. A person respectful of the environment is what I identify with. Some people just don't care. Their values are different from mine. Otherwise it is not important at all for me to be identified as a climber. I climb for personal reasons."

"I studied Natural Resource Management, glacier monitoring. I worked for one of the Glacier geologists."

Further analysis showed that these strongly defined environmental values were also correlated to participants' motivations for climbing. Even participants who did not necessarily consider themselves environmentalists showed a strong connection to environment that climbing puts them in.

Interviewer: *"Why do you climb?"*
Participant: *"Because of the places and the environment that it puts you in. You are in nature as opposed to something that is in control of people."*

"I think that mountains are fantastic. When you mountaineer you are outside in the nature."

Although not all participating climbers suggested that they were more environmentally friendly than the general public, it is possible that their stronger attachment to the natural environment, or their eco-centric view of the world, makes them behave in more environmentally friendly ways. And this experience of the physical environment was something that they thought separated them from general public.

"It was amazing – environment that these activities put you in is unbelievable. People don't realize it. A lot of people don't see what we see."

Some climbers also explained why they believed that climbers were more environmentally friendly, and once again physical connection to the place played an important role.

> Participant: *"Part of who I am is because I am a climber, especially environmentally wise. That's a huge reason. I think climbers are more environmentally friendly."*
> Interviewer: *"Why is that?"*
> Participant: "*Because they want to keep places as they found them. It's like an ethic. People don't get it what these places mean. You don't want to see this place trashed."*

> *"After the Alps, I really appreciate wilderness aspect in Canada. I like to be in untouched nature. We haven't ruined it yet."*

Summary of Results

For the most part, demographic profiles of the Bugaboo's climbers fit that of the more general climbing population described by the CTC (2003). However, while the CTC (2003) study found even gender split among climbing participant, this study found that Bugaboo's climbers were predominantly male.

This study found two different ways in which people got involved with mountain climbing: through hiking in the mountains or through more technical activities such as rock climbing. Although many reasons for climbing were listed by the participants, the most common ones included: for the challenge, for the aesthetic reasons and because of the social scene. Furthermore their motivations diversified as they gained more experience. A common theme was that with more experience, an all encompassing experience was desired, rather than a single focus motivation, such as overcoming a challenge. Although the pure adrenalin of risk taking was not found to be a motivating factor, risk played an important role, as mitigating risk and problem solving was what participants found to be enjoyable.

The results also indicated that climbing mentors and first partners were influential figures who had the most impact on participants' motivations; especially in the way they influenced participants' climbing style and ethics. Climbing was found to be a big part of participants' identities, but most of them only shared that part of their identity with other climbers and close friends who could relate to climbing.

Some unexpected results also emerged from this study. Most participants were struggling with terminology and had the need to define what they were doing. The results also revealed a possible correlation between how people got involved with mountain climbing and how they described themselves. Those that worked on their rock climbing skills first, called climbing in the Bugaboos rock climbing, whereas those that started mountain climbing by hiking up peaks, called climbing in the Bugaboos mountaineering. Finally, some other emergent themes included the role that ego plays in motivating climbers, comparison of climbing to Zen-like activities, and interconnectedness between climbing and environmentalism.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

This study described people's motivations for climbing in the Bugaboos through investigation of the topics already discussed in the literature, such as:

- Profiling of climbers;
- Significance of the first climbing experience;
- The influence of experience on motivations;
- The role of risk;
- The role of influential figures; and
- The relationship between climbing motivations and identity construction.

While previous studies have examined these individual topics and looked at specific motivational factors, such as the reasons for getting involved with climbing (Beedie and Hudson, 2003a), influential people (Beedie, 2003b), the relationship of motives to experience (Ewert, 1985), risk (Fave et al., 2003; Ewert, 1994), climbing culture and values (Kiewa, 2002; Parker and Avant, 2000; Heywood, 1994; Johnston and Edwards, 1994), this study took a holistic approach. My purpose was to explore alpine climbing in the Bugaboos to uncover possible new motivations that developed as a result of changes in the climbing experience.

By employing open-ended questions to probe climbers' motivations within semi-structured interviews, topics previously discussed in the climbing literature were explored in more depth and described within the Bugaboos' context. The Bugaboos were selected as the case study due to their diverse characteristics – mountainous terrain, world-renowned status, and complexity of the climbing terrain (glaciers, rock, and ice). They were also selected as the case study area in order to simplify defining some of the study parameters, such as the units of analysis. A person climbing in the Bugaboos, regardless of whether he or she was considered a mountaineer or a rock climber or an alpine climber, was chosen as the unit of analysis.

This chapter describes the findings of the study by elaborating on the results and how they relate to current literature. It proposes a conceptual model that describes climbers' motivations, and discusses the implications of the study, possible improvements to the study and directions for the future research.

Climbers' demographics

Although data was not collected to be representative of the overall population of climbers, for the most part climbers interviewed in the Bugaboos reflected the profile of climbers found in other studies. Bugaboo climbers were predominantly younger people, as 65% were between the ages of 18 and 34. They were also mostly well educated single people. However, while other studies, such as that one done by Kelly & Warnick (1999), suggested that climbing has become a more gender balanced sport, with 45% of the climbers being females, the Bugaboos case study found more old-fashioned gender proportions, with 90% of the climbers being male. One of the reasons for this could be due to the remoteness of the Bugaboos and the fact that it was mostly single people who went there. Some of the factors that might have balanced out the gender participation in the sport of climbing such as increased popularity due to improvements in safety equipment and more accessible climbing to general public (Beedie & Hudson, 2003; Mitchell, 1983), were not necessarily present in the Bugaboos. The Bugaboos remained a remote location with most of the climbs having high commitment grades.

Climbing careers

All of the climbers interviewed in the Bugaboos had at least three years of climbing experience, which was probably due to the higher levels of commitment and technical ability required to climb in the Bugaboos. An examination of their climbing careers showed that they were very comparable to different stages of Pearce's (1988) travel career ladder (TCL). For example, participants got involved with mountain climbing as part of natural progression from other activities, such as hiking or rock climbing. Although risk was not necessarily a motivating factor, it provided a stimulus for the participants, as mitigating risks was seen as an attractive challenge. This was very

similar to Pearce's stimulation stage, where the traveller was concerned for one's own safety. Participants also climbed for different reasons, mostly related to self-esteem and development, as they tried to get better in the sport and climbed harder routes. However, as they gained more experience, they were looking for a more encompassing experience, as their motivations diversified. A lot of them experienced the feeling of Zen at this stage of their climbing career, which is very similar to Pearce's final stage of self-fulfilment, whereby travelers fulfill a dream, better understand themselves, and experience inner peace and harmony.

Motivations for climbing and climbing experience

This study also found that motivations for climbing varied with climbing experience. However, this study did not find a direct correlation between experience and the six motivations that Ewert listed as extrinsic and intrinsic. In fact there were some obvious discrepancies between Ewert's study and this study. While Ewert suggested that challenge was more of an intrinsic motivation and therefore more likely to be found in more experienced climbers, this study found that personal challenge was one of the very first motivations for most of the participants (see section on motivations and experience in the Results of the In-depth Interviews), and therefore found during the early stages of their climbing careers.

However, the results of this study were consistent with Ewert's observation that with climbing experience, motivations tend to shift from extrinsic towards intrinsic, as most of the participants of this study admitted that as they got more experience they started climbing for more personal reasons.

> *"Yeah, I would say it changes for everyone, but it definitely changed for me. Originally, when I started climbing and I took a course and had to do so many climbs to get certification and so on. And now I just do it for personal reasons, for enjoyment of the mountain experience and enjoying the people I climb with too."*

I would also like to suggest that this study found support for Ewert's suggestion that more experienced climbers have more diverse motivations, and with greater emphasis on intrinsic motivations. Just like Ewert's study, this study found a range of motivations that were related to both experienced and inexperienced climbers. In fact some of the same motivations were found to be present in both more experienced and less experienced climbers. This study also found that depending on their interpretation of the motivation in question, the motivation could be viewed as either intrinsic or extrinsic.

Furthermore, this study found that as participants gained more climbing experience, their motivations changed from single dimensional motivations, such as climbing to improve the grade at which they were climbing, to a more encompassing experience, involving more dimensions such as aesthetics of the climb and the environment, the social aspect, locus of control, challenge, etc. In his paper on Motivations and Risk Taking, where Ewert (1994b) compared three different groups of climbers (beginner, intermediate and experienced), he found that the highly experienced group reported the greatest number of motivational factors. Ewert had the lowest amount of explained variance (76%) for the highly experienced group of climbers. He explained this in the following way:

> One explanation for this difference is that there are more unidentified items left out of the analysis of the highly experienced group. In sum, it would appear that the highly experienced group developed a more comprehensive set of factors that could describe motivations for participation than either other group (Ewert, 1994b, p.15).

The results of this study are similar to Ewert's speculation on this matter, as it was found that more experienced climbers climbed for a variety of reasons, as they were looking for a more encompassing experience.

Risk as motivation

Risk played an important role in participants' motivation to climb, but it was not expressed as a motivating factor. It was simply viewed as a challenge to be overcome, and the general goal was to minimize risk. This is consistent with Ewert and Hollenhorst's (1994) and Beedie and Hudson's (2003a) findings.

> Mountain adventure tourism will also continue to grow, and the risks inherent in the activities are likely to appear to diminish as knowledge, experience, and technical capacity increases. In fact, Ewert and Hollenhorst found that although such tourists seek out increasingly difficult and challenging opportunities, they paradoxically do not necessarily search for higher levels of risk (Beedie and Hudson, 2003a, p.649).

Furthermore, Ewert and Hollenhorst (1994) speculated that this might have been due to adventure tourists' implicit belief that they were in control of the experience. This study showed similar results, as participants enjoyed the feeling of managing the risk, but were not necessarily attracted to the unknown or unmanaged risk. Participants of this study also perceived less risk as their sense of control grew.

Similar to the findings of Fave et al. (2003) and Ewert (1994b) it was observed that risk taking was a way for climbers to experience flow.

> As suggested by Mitchell (1988), transcendental states such as flow are only possible when real, meaningful and fateful outcomes are contingent upon the skills and actions of the participants (Ewert, 1994b, p.6).

Many participants in the study claimed that by managing the risk, they felt alive, as their lives were directly dependent on their skills. They also viewed risk as a measure of their knowledge, which was consistent with cognitive development theory (O'Keefe, 1990; Williams et al., 1990; Moore, 1976) which states that "as people gain knowledge about a

particular activity, their level of understanding about that activity becomes more comprehensive and complex" (Ewert, 1994b).

> As concerns risk, most researchers generally agree that there is a discrepancy between objective risk and its subjective perception (Ewert, 1994; Fave & Bassi, 1999). What is perceived as risk and danger by one group of people can have different connotations for others, on the basis of personal skills and past experience (Fave et al., 2003, p. 94).

Participants of this study identified the level of risk which they were willing to undertake as subjective risk, and it was directly correlated to the knowledge and understanding they had about the conditions of the climb, skill level necessary, etc. These findings are similar to those found by previous studies (Demirhan, 2005; Fave et al., 2003; Ewert, 1994b). Participants viewed objective risk as the risk which was not manageable or involved conditions beyond their knowledge.

Although participants were not motivated to experience risk, the role of risk was significant in that it was seen as a challenge to be overcome with knowledge and skill. Being good at managing risk was something that all participants identified with. This was not surprising as managing risk was a big part of alpine climbing in the Bugaboos, and what people chose to do in their leisure time had much to do with how they saw themselves as individuals and as members of groups (Jenkins, 1996; Kelly, 1987; Goffman, 1959).

Influential figures

Influential figures, and in particular the people who introduced participants to climbing, played a very important role in participants' progression and motivation, as they acted as mentors, both with technical skills and mountaineering values. This was very similar to Beedie's findings about mountain guiding and choreography of the experience (Beedie, 2003b). He argued that guides were essential in clients' movement along the

mountaineering continuum from the left to the right or from the guide dependent mountain tourists to a more independent mountaineer.

> Not all clients who buy adventure holidays will have the same expectations of their experiences. Some will want to remain close to their comfort zones and allow themselves to be guided through the mountains but others, further right again, will aspire towards greater independence. At the right end of the continuum are 'real' mountaineers... Guides encourage movement from left to right across the continuum although once the minimum standards of competence are achieved clients can then determine whether to be proactive in seeking out further knowledge and expertise to move themselves further rightwards (Beedie, 2003b, p.164).

According to Beedie it was the skill and experience, and being able to perform independently in a complex mountainous terrain that defined a mountaineer. Based on this mountaineering continuum, all of the climbers in the Bugaboos who participated in the study were closer to the right side, or to 'real' mountaineers, due to their independence, expertise and skill level. Furthermore, influential figures played an important role in motivating them to move from the left to the right side of the continuum by helping them understand and adhere to the rules, ethics and the preferred style of climbing.

According to Beedie and Hudson a true mountaineer was the one who remained close to the ideals of historical explorers. Participants of this study identified with this image of a mountaineer as they defined themselves as counter cultural, or in opposition to traditional society, with a free roving life style, and with a touch of exploratory spirit, as many of them look to climb new routes, or old classic routes in a new style. It is important to note here that while these ideals remained close to the ideals of historical explorers, they were manifested in a different context, as the place and objectives, along with motivations have changed over time. Influential figures, especially mentors, played an important role in motivating climbers to adhere to these ideals.

Climbing identity – a motivating factor?

Being identified as a climber was an important motivating factor for most of the participants in the study, although it was interesting to note that for them it was only important to be identified as a climber around other climbers, as they claimed that other people could not understand them as climbers. "Goffman (1959) suggests that, when facing other people in a social setting people perform as actors, responding to hints, cues and gestures in order to gain knowledge (and therefore advantage) to enhance their performance." (Goffman in Beedie, 2003b, p.149) Therefore it seems logical, that when facing people who do not know much about climbing, those hints, cues and gestures were not present which was probably the reason why climbers did not identify as climbers around non climbers. This also suggests that for the participants of this study, being seen as a climber to the outside world was not one of the motivations for participating in the activity. In other words, they were not extrinsically driven.

However, participants of this study admitted to emulating or replicating the behaviour of their mentors and other influential figures in the world of alpine climbing. In a way, they were motivated to follow a pattern of conduct in order to acquire an identity of being a climber. This is similar to Beedie's (2003b) assertion that "for some clients, their desire to develop an identity as mountaineer was shown by conscious replication of the guide's behaviour in the mountains" (Beedie, 2003b, p.159).

Summary

Consequently, the findings of the Bugaboos Case Study were mostly consistent with current literature. Some of the key findings include:

- For the most part the Bugaboos climbers reflected demographic profile of climbers in the other studies, as they were well educated young people. One difference from the more recent studies which are showing more balanced gender participation in the activity is that the Bugaboos climbers were predominantly male.

- While climbing did not seem to fit a particular stage in Pearce's (1988) travel career ladder (TCL), it could be compared to the TCL. People's motivations did not necessarily change as they gained more experience in the way Ewert (1985) suggested, but they rather changed from one dimensional motivation to a desire for an all encompassing experience. Consistent with Ewert's (1985) findings, participants of this study were more intrinsically driven as they gained more experience.
- Higher levels of risk was not something that climbers actively sought (Ewert 1994b; Beedie and Hudson, 2003a; Fave, 2003). Rather, risk played an important role in that it was used to measure progress, as climbers became more competent to manage higher levels of risk.
- Influential figures played an important role in that they shaped participants' climbing identities through a set of values and patterns of appropriate conduct.
- While there was no external motivation for the participants to be viewed as climbers, it was important to them to be accepted within the climbing community.

Motivation Model – Describing Bugaboo Climbers' Motivations

The motivations of climbers who participated in this study can be described with the following model (see Figure 7 – Motivation model -Describing Bugaboo climbers' motivations).

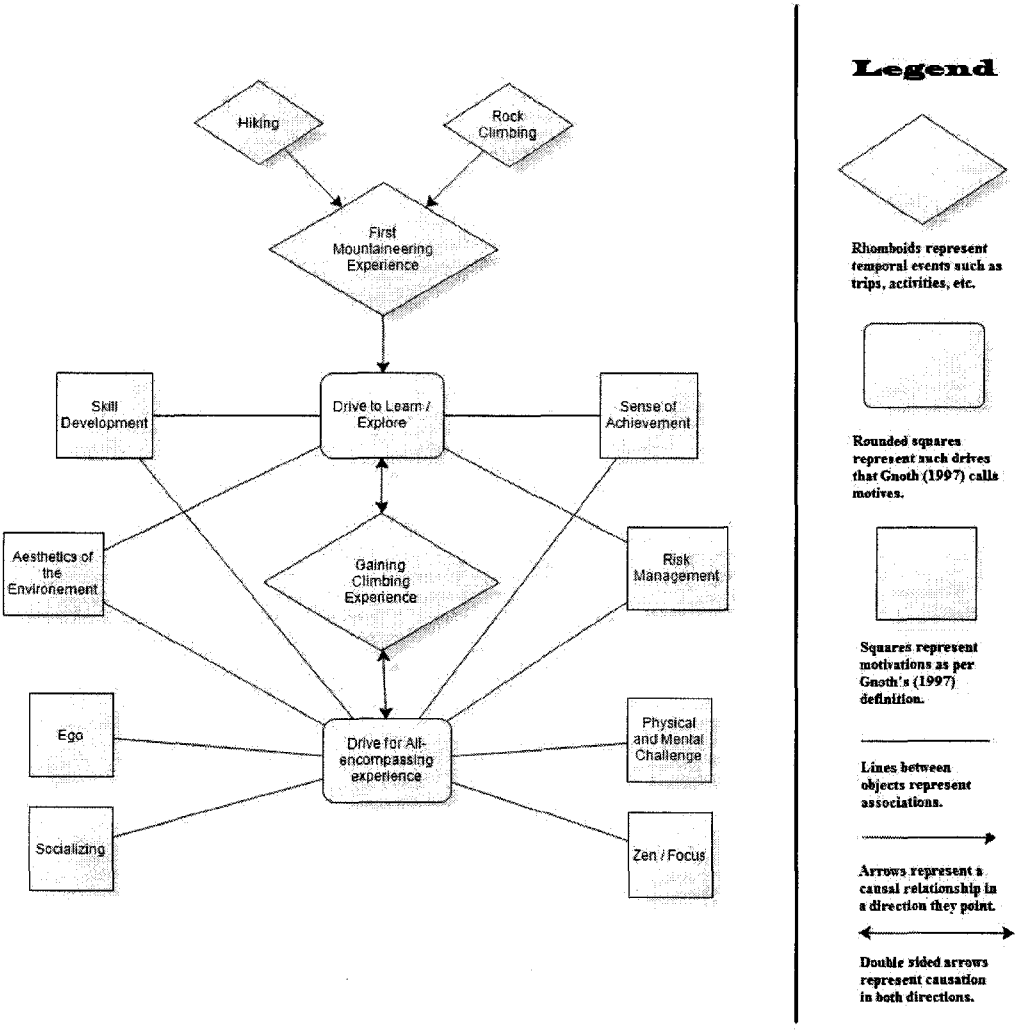

Figure 7 – Motivation model -Describing Bugaboo climbers' motivations

This study found that people got involved with alpine climbing, or their first "real" mountaineering experience, through two different paths. Some first developed general mountaineering skills through hiking and backpacking, and then wanted to push their

technical abilities, while others developed their technical skills, such as ice and rock climbing and then tried to take them to more committing situations in the mountains.

After that first experience, participants of the study were left with a desire to learn more. They had a drive for exploration and learning. Gnoth (1997) calls them motives.

> Motives are here distinguished from motivations, whereby, the former refer to the generic energizer of the behaviour. Although motives imply a direction and a target, only motivations actually include such targets or objects and refer to an interaction between motives and situations (Gnoth, 1997, p.291).

Based on this understanding of motives and motivations, it became clear that the participants' drive or motive after the first trip was to learn more about the activity. Given the situation or the opportunity, different participants had different motivations. Some wanted to learn how to manage risk, others wanted to improve their technical skill and feel the sense of achievement, while others were attracted to climbing by the environments it put them in. Although different participants might have had different motivations at the early stages of their careers, this study found that their underlying motive was the same, namely their drive to learn or explore.

This study found that after gaining more experience, the participants' motivations might not change, but rather the motive will change from a drive to learn, to a need to have an all encompassing experience. The same motivations could stem out from two different motives (motive to learn and motive to have an all encompassing experience).

In summary, participants of this study got involved with alpine climbing through two main channels: hiking and technical climbing. After their first experience they were driven by a desire to learn more. After gaining more experience, they were more and more looking for an all encompassing experience. While their motives changed as they gained more experience, some of the motivations might have remained the same.

Study Implications and Recommendations

The model developed above was based on the Bugaboos case study. Bugaboo Provincial Park is a very unique place that attracts climbers seeking big alpine walls. These climbers tended to be more experienced, self-reliant and independent. Because of that, one of the limitations of the model presented above is that early stages of the model were based on climbers' recollection, such as the recollection of their first mountaineering trip. Recollection is not always the most reliable way of accessing information. Further research could test the applicability of the model in the area that attracts less experienced climbers.

Although this study used mixed methods, it was mainly focussed on gaining rich information through open-ended questions, while closed-ended questions helped develop respondents' profiles. In order to draw more generally applicable conclusions, a study with a more representative sample of the climbing population, in conjunction with rich data on their motivations, would be necessary.

For the most part the Bugaboos climbers were seeking an all encompassing experience where aesthetics of the environment, physical and mental challenge combined with risks, good social balance with peace and solitude were some of the important motivational factors mentioned. All these motivations are consistent with the last two stages in Pearce's travel career ladder, Self-Esteem and Development and Fulfillment. Furthermore, all these motivations were self-driven, which suggests that participants of this study were intrinsically driven, just as Ewert (1985) found with the more experienced climbers in his study.

Protected areas such as Bugaboo Provincial Park play an important role in providing the key ingredients, such as an aesthetic environment, for a positive visitor experience. Understanding of all the different motivational factors could help with management of the other attributes contributing to positive visitor experience. In the Bugaboos case study it was found that while people enjoyed the social aspect of the campground, they

did not enjoy crowding and they preferred minimal facilities, which would keep the park as close to the original state as possible.

The results of this research may also contribute to better management of Bugaboo Provincial Park. This study identified some of the climbing motivations, which can provide a better insight on the visitors to the Bugaboos and their expectations. For example, the participants of the study identified aesthetics of the environment, as well as the peace and solitude as some of the important motivations for coming to the Bugaboos. Preserving these attributes through proper park management methods would ensure a high quality of experience for the Bugaboos climbers.

Future research

This research also identified a few potential issues for future investigation. The Bugaboos climbers considered themselves to be alpine climbers, and they strongly identified with a minimalist approach and environmentalism. It would be interesting to find out if values and motivations of alpine climbers differed from other types of climbers (i.e. boulderers, sport climbers, etc.), as well as find out how they perceived different types of climbers. This understanding of differences could help with management of different climbing areas.

While participants of the study were not motivated by risk to climb, they still viewed risk as an important element. Some of them saw risk as a challenge to be overcome. Future research could go more in depth to develop a better understanding of the role of risk in alpine climbing. Some interesting research questions could include: How do climbers perceive risk? Can you manage risk and how?

One of the unexpected results was that a lot of the participants started climbing out of boredom. A lot of them pointed out the importance of climbing being a Zen like activity that required all their attention as one of the main motivating factors. Furthermore some participants claimed to have a short attention span and some even an attention deficit disorder. Due to the nature of this study, this finding could not be generalized to greater

population. It would be interesting to find out how this applies across a more general climbing population.

Finally, one of the main findings of this study was that as people gained more experience they became less motivated to learn specific skills, and more motivated to climb in order to achieve an all encompassing experience that might include both an aesthetic line, good company, challenging enough climbing, both mentally and physically, etc. Doing a longitudinal study, one which would follow mountaineers from their first mountaineering trip until they gained more mountaineering experience would be a good way to confirm this finding. It would also be interesting to find out if boredom or some other factor might be behind what drives people to seek out an all encompassing experience.

Conclusion

This study has been conceived as a result of a question that's been around for as long as the activity of climbing itself – Why do people climb? Ever since climbing emerged as a sport, many have tried to discover what motivates people to participate in an activity that seemed pointless, and also very dangerous. When asked why he wanted to climb Everest, George Mallory responded: 'because it's there'. Many studies since then have tried to better understand people's motivations for climbing. Trying to generalize these motivations across the globe or even across many climbing disciplines that exist today seems like a daunting task, if not impossible.

This study attempts to further contribute to our understanding of climbing motivations by narrowing the scope down to a specific location and time period - the Bugaboos during August, 2006 season. Guided by the already existing theories on motivations, and past results on motivations of climbers, this study found that specific motivations vary greatly between individuals, as well as between different studies. This is probably what makes motivations so difficult to study. However, the results of this study also point to some common ground between different participants, as well as to some similarities in findings with other studies.

In particular, using Gnoth's (1997) understanding of motivations and motives, this study found that while there was a great diversity in motivations among participants, most of them had similar motives or drives, which when put in a specific context resulted in different motivations. Maybe the answer to why people climb can then be found in the exploration and better understanding of the motives, as per Gnoth's definition. Furthermore, Gnoth (1997) argues that it's these motives, and not motivations, that are generic energizers of the behaviour. Therefore, understanding the motives for climbing could also help us predict or better understand climbers' behaviour.

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Appendix A – Interview questions

First I would like to find out a bit more about you.

1. Please tell me briefly about yourself, who you are climbing with, where you are from, etc.

- *Retired/working – what kind of work if working?*
- *Education, income*
- *Sex, age*

2. When it comes to your first mountaineering trip, why did you decide to try the activity?

3. Please tell me how you first started mountaineering.

- *Tell me everything about your first experience*
- *Why?*
- *Where?*
- *When?*
- *With whom?*

4. Thinking back to your first mountaineering trip, what were the feelings and emotions that you experienced? Describe what the whole experience felt like?

- *Prior to the trip*
- *During the trip*
- *Post trip*

5. Thinking back to your life before mountaineering, can you tell me what you were doing, what your interests were, etc.

- *What type of sports did you do?*
- *Where did you work?*
- *What were your hobbies?*
- *What was your living situation?*

Now I have a few questions about your climbing career.

6. Please tell me briefly about your mountaineering career since that first trip.

- *How often do you mountaineer?*
- *Where have you been mountaineering?*
- *Why do you mountaineer?*

7. What is your most memorable trip and why?

- *Where was it?*
- *Who did you go with?*
- *When did it happen?*

That brings us to this trip.

8. Tell me a bit about this mountaineering trip.

- *Why did you decide to come to the Bugaboos?*
- *Who are you here with?*
- *Have you been here before?*
- *How did you decide to come here? Where did you hear about Bugaboos?*

9. Please tell me a bit about your future mountaineering plans.

- *Do you have any trips planned? Tell me more about them.*
- *What are the most important aspects you consider when planning a trip?*

Now I have a few questions about your motivation for mountaineering.

10. You mentioned a few minutes ago that your first started mountaineering because... Is this why you still mountaineer?

- *Have you ever mountaineered for different reasons?*

11. Have your motivations changed as you gained more experience?

12. Have there been any influential figures that affected your motivations for climbing?

13. What role does risk play in your decision to mountaineer?

Finally, I would like to talk to you about image surrounding mountaineering.

14. How do you think general public would describe mountaineers?

- *What are some characteristics they would attribute to mountaineers?*

15. How would you describe a typical mountaineer?

16. Do you identify with either description of the mountaineer?

- *Why/why not?*
- *How important is it for you to be identified as a mountaineer?*

Appendix B – Climbing Terminology

Climbing – Climbing is the activity of using one's hands or feet to ascend a steep object. Climbing activities include: mountain climbing (mountaineering), rock climbing, and ice climbing (Wikipedia.org, 2008). For the purpose of this study, the term climbing will be used according to Mitchell's definition of climbing, and it will encompass "the scaling of steep ice, snow and rock" (Mitchell, 1983, p.62). In other words, throughout this paper climbing is used as a general blanket term to cover all the disciplines of climbing.

Mountaineering - What is mountaineering?

> The expedition members scaling such lofty giants as Mount Everest are clearly engaged in climbing a mountain, but in other instances the distinction is not always clear. Is the ascent of 6,800-foot Strawberry Peak in the San Gabriel range near Los Angeles mountain climbing? Are the winter-time skiers who ascend Mount Whitney, California's highest peak, mountain climbing? Are the rock gymnasts inching their way up some vertical face in Yosemite Valley mountain climbing? (Mitchell, 1983, p.1)

Mountaineering is a term that encompasses many activities, and in order to avoid confusion and definitional arguments, Mitchell suggests that mountaineering should be viewed as having seven separate but interdependent parts. "The seven components of mountaineering endeavours are: planning, equipment, companions, conditioning, travel, technical climbing, talk and debriefing" (Mitchell, 1983, p.1).

In the section on Mountain Climbing on About.com, Brown defines mountaineering:

> Mountaineering is the age-old activity of climbing up the steep slopes of a mountainside in hopes of reaching the summit. Mountain climbing encompasses numerous activities including snow, ice and rock climbing as well as backpacking and snow camping. Basic mountaineering generally entails climbing steep snow

> slopes with the aid of crampons and an ice axe. A majority of introductory mountaineering is comprised mostly of hiking. (About.com, 2006)

In their book, *Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills*, Graydon and Hanson (1997) provide their own definition:

> Mountaineering is more than climbing, panoramic views, and wilderness experience. It is also challenge, risk, and hardship. And it is not for everyone. Those drawn to the mountains can find them exhilarating and irresistible, as well as frustrating and sometimes even deadly. There are qualities to mountaineering that bring inspiration and joy in a pursuit that is more than a pastime, more than a sport – a passion, certainly, and sometimes a compulsion (Graydon & Hanson, 1997, p.15).

While all these definitions seem rather different, they all acknowledge the division of mountaineering into several components. Also, they all acknowledge the technical component of mountaineering, which will be referred to as climbing throughout this proposal.

However, this is not to say that climbing is the main part of mountaineering. As Mitchell points out:

> The uninitiated may see mountaineering narrowly, as only a technical climbing experience. This emphasis is out of proportion to the amount of technical climbing which in fact goes on in the mountaineering process. Like sex in a relationship between two people, technical climbing provides more spice than actual substance to the venture. (Mitchell, 1983, p.1).

For the purpose of this research, it is important to acknowledge the other components of mountaineering, such as planning, conditioning, travel, and companions, as they can all potentially contribute towards mountaineers' motivations. Throughout this research

mountaineering is used to describe the activity of climbing a mountain where extensive planning and preparation are necessary and the main goal is reaching the summit of a mountain.

Alpinism - How is alpinism different from mountaineering? According to Graydon and Hanson (1997) alpine climbing is a form of mountaineering that involves a mix of hiking, scrambling, route finding, snow and ice climbing, and rock climbing. However, depending on whom you ask, alpinism can be very different from mountaineering. One of the main differences between mountaineering and alpinism is that alpinism is not summit oriented. Mark Twight, author of the book ***Extreme Alpinism*** notes the following:

> What is the goal of alpine climbing? Is it climbing and the psycho-physical experience of same? Or reaching the "most essential point", the goal traditionally perceived as the point of climbing mountains? Then ticking the summits off a list? If, as Scott Backes says, "The whole experience of climbing is important, not one specific point or moment," then why would anyone care about the topographic apogee when it is merely one component – essential or not – of the trip itself? For me, the point is not to climb the peak but to climb new ground both internally and externally. The judges and patron saints of mountaineering find this abstraction difficult to lay their hands on and categorize, so they condemn it. Happily, I am climbing for myself, not them. I can easily quantify my experiences and what they contribute or subtract from me (Twight, 2001, p. 162).

This quotation demonstrates that besides there being a different objective between mountaineering and alpinism, there also seems to be a difference in attitude between the people that participate in these two activities. These differences in attitude can play an important role in why people climb. For the purpose of this research study, alpine climbing or alpine rock climbing are included in the general term climbing that is used to describe the activity being studied.

Rock climbing – Rock climbing is the act of ascending steep rock formations. Normally, climbers use gear and safety equipment specifically designed for this purpose. Strength, endurance, and mental control, as well as agility and balance, are required to cope with tough, dangerous physical challenges. Knowledge of climbing techniques and the use of essential pieces of gear and equipment are crucial (Graydon & Hanson, 1997). Rock climbing is big part of what goes on in the Bugaboos, but because of the environment in which it takes place it's called alpine rock climbing or simply alpine climbing.

Bouldering – Bouldering is a style of rock climbing undertaken without a rope and normally limited to very short climbs so that a fall will not result in serious injury. It is typically practiced on large boulders or artificial man-made boulders. However, it may also be practiced at the base of larger rock faces, or even on buildings or public architecture, also know as buildering (Graydon & Hanson, 1997, wikipedia.org, 2008).

Cragging – Crag is a rock-climbers' term for a cliff or group of cliffs, in any location, which is or may be suitable for climbing. Access to crags is relatively easy and commitment levels are low (Graydon & Hanson, 1997).

Sport climbing – Sport climbing is a style of rock climbing that relies on permanent anchors fixed to the rock, especially bolts, for protection. Sport climbing places an emphasis on gymnastic ability, strength and endurance, while virtually eliminating the need to place protection while climbing (Graydon & Hanson, 1997).

Trad climbing (Traditional climbing) – Traditional climbing, or Trad climbing, is a style of climbing that emphasizes the skills necessary for establishing routes in an exploratory fashion. Trad climbing usually involves the leader ascending a section of rock while placing their protective devices as he/she climbs (Graydon & Hanson, 1997).

Appendix C – Defining Climbing, Mountaineering and Alpinism

When interviewing participants, the interchangeable use of the terms also became evident. Study informants, who participated in the same activity, at least in as far as they climbed some of the same routes, used different terminology to describe what they were doing. Some called it rock climbing, others called it mountaineering, and yet others called it alpine climbing.

> *"I consider myself a climber. I don't consider myself a mountaineer. If I was a mountaineer, I feel I would be deep out there. I feel like I scratch the surface."*

> *"When you say mountaineer, I think of The Mountaineer, the club in Seattle who go in huge groups with heavy packs. But I would say, probably when you say mountaineering you mean alpine rock climbing."*

> *"I would say the route we did yesterday would be mountaineering. Other than that it's just straight rock climbing."*

Despite this confusion over the terminology, most participants used term climbing as an all encompassing term.

> *"Yeah, it's still climbing [on alpine climbing], but different style of climbing. When I go to different places I get to do different styles of climbing."*

> *"When you ask, are you a climber, to mean it means, do you climb everything."*

Most participants saw rock climbing as one of the mountaineering skills, rather than something outside of the mountaineering realm. While you could be rock climbing and not mountaineering, rock climbing was also a skill frequently used in mountaineering.

"I think I like mountaineering better than rock climbing, because it's more varied. It's more diverse... But mountaineering, it's a little bit of snow, little rock, little ice, lots of decision making."

"And then as I got older, I was able to take my rock climbing skills and then transfer them into mountaineering."

"Mountaineering is in the mountains, so I guess we don't count ice climbing and rock climbing."

"When you sport climb [rock climbing with pre-placed protection – usually bolts] it's all about the movement. It's not so much about the place you are at. On hard mountaineering routes it's really cool to have both: really aesthetic movement and really fine scenery."

What seemed to separate mountaineering from rock climbing, in the minds of participants, was the diversity of terrain and the skills necessary to travel in that terrain. Rock climbing was just one of the skills that enabled them to mountaineer.

Some of the confusion might have come from the fact that most of the climbing in the Bugaboos was on the rock, with very short approaches involving glacier travel. Most participants preferred to call this type of climbing alpine rock climbing.

"I've never been to the Bugaboos and I know that there is good alpine rock climbing here."

"Thing I want to do is go places that have rock climbing in the mountains, alpine rock climbing."

It is important to note that in this context, "alpine" was simply used as an adjective to describe the mountain environment above the tree line. It is not to be confused with alpinism or alpine climbing.

The difference between hiking and mountaineering

Multiple meanings of the term *alpine* might have added further confusion, when trying to understand the difference between alpinism and mountaineering. Before exploring possible differences between alpine climber and a mountaineer, it is important to note that participants identified a wide range of mountaineers.

> *"I know so many people who go scrambling peaks and then I know people who only climb technical routes. And so, the typical mountaineer lies somewhere in between and climbs moderately technical routes and peaks."*

Where mountaineering starts and hiking ends, was not always obvious, even to the participants of this study.

> *"I did Mt. Washington, but I don't even consider it mountaineering, because you walk up it, in the summer at least. In the winter it's a bit burlier."*

It seems that mountaineering required more than a physical challenge of hiking. In fact, what separated mountaineering from hiking, were the skills you had to use to achieve a certain goal. Glacier or snow travel could provide sufficient complexity to turn hiking into mountaineering. Most participants called this level of mountaineering "general mountaineering", and regarded it as the entry level. Mountaineering levels then went higher as the terrain became more complex, the weather more severe and the climbing more technical.

> *"So, we went there and climbed Orizaba. It's not the technical mountaineering. I think its many people's first mountaineering experience."*

"I don't really go hiking any more or do general mountaineering."

"I've done a lot of walking and cragging. Mountaineering is the ultimate combination of the two."

Alpinism versus mountaineering

Many participants identified alpinism to be on the higher end of mountaineering: more physically and mentally demanding, as well as more technically oriented. There was also a certain level of toughness associated with alpinism that was not necessarily involved in mountaineering.

"All rock climbing that I am doing now is to put towards alpine climbing. I want to get a good base and I just want to be tough."

"Because often a general mountaineer is not efficient with the systems, because they are out weekend warrior kind of style and they are not able to fine tune or learn from people who really know their systems." [Comparing alpinist to general mountaineer]

There was a certain sense of style and attitude attached to alpine climbing that further separated it from mountaineering. One of the mountain guides interviewed for the study best described this difference in style and attitude.

"Whereas alpinism is being like moving as fast and as efficiently as you can up the most aesthetic line, even if that line does not go up to the true summit. Doesn't matter, as long as you can climb that route, whereas mountaineering is all summit based. I try to separate myself from that. I see a lot of summiteers and I think that's a really ugly attitude, where you see it all the time. You get into this mindset and they are all so caught up in getting to the summit that they don't stop and get to enjoy the whole trip. Summit is only a couple, or 30 minutes at most and then you are going down and it's back in the work mode. And so many

people get caught up in that or it's always in the back of their head and they never stop to enjoy their surroundings. I don't like to associate myself with that attitude. It's great to get to the top, but it's great to be in the landscape."

"I approach it with a different style, maybe different sorts of equipment and different technical levels. I don't feel like I am setting a standard in any way, but rather meet standards that are set in climbing."

The alpine style of climbing was seen as new philosophy applied to mountaineering according to the climbing magazines and participants of this study. Whereas before applying siege tactics was the common practice in mountaineering, with big expeditions slowly moving up the mountain stocking up camps, the alpine style philosophy typically used smaller teams moving quickly carrying the minimal gear and climbing their objective in a single push. This new trend was also apparent in the climbing magazines, one of which is called the *Alpinist (Vol. 19)*. One of the articles read: "No one had ever opened a grade VI in the Canadian Rockies all free in a push until now." This article also emphasized the new ethics and philosophy of alpine climbing.

This recent change in the way climbers approached mountains was also observed among participants. Older participants recalled how they got involved with expedition style of mountaineering, while younger ones referred to the new philosophy that attracted them to climbing.

"Will Unsoeld was a professor I met in college, a famous mountain climber, exciting speaker and charming guy, who got me interested in doing more expeditions style stuff and was responsible for me loosing interest in rock climbing in the middle of my career." [Older climber]

"It's not just me. It's been the whole philosophy in the mountaineering world of travelling light and fast." [Younger climber commenting on his style of climbing]

Based on the participants' responses, *climbing* was a general term applied to all different types of climbing and in that sense everyone interview qualified as a climber. However, there was more discrepancy among participants when trying to qualify different types of climbing, or even when trying to describe the type of climbing in the Bugaboos. In general, rock climbing was considered a skill that was just one element of mountaineering or alpinism. There was more confusion as to what the difference between alpinism and mountaineering was, but certain attributes such as style, philosophy and technical level seemed to be the main factors in differentiating between the two.

Climbing Terminology Hierarchy

The analysis of participants' responses regarding climbing terminology showed that characteristics assigned to each term were consistent with currently accepted definitions of these terms (please see ***Appendix B – Climbing Terminology***). Furthermore, hierarchical organization of the terms was consistent across all participants' responses. Below is a graphical representation of the terminology hierarchy based on the results of analytical coding, which is also consistent with currently accepted classification of climbing terminology (Wikipedia.org, 2008).

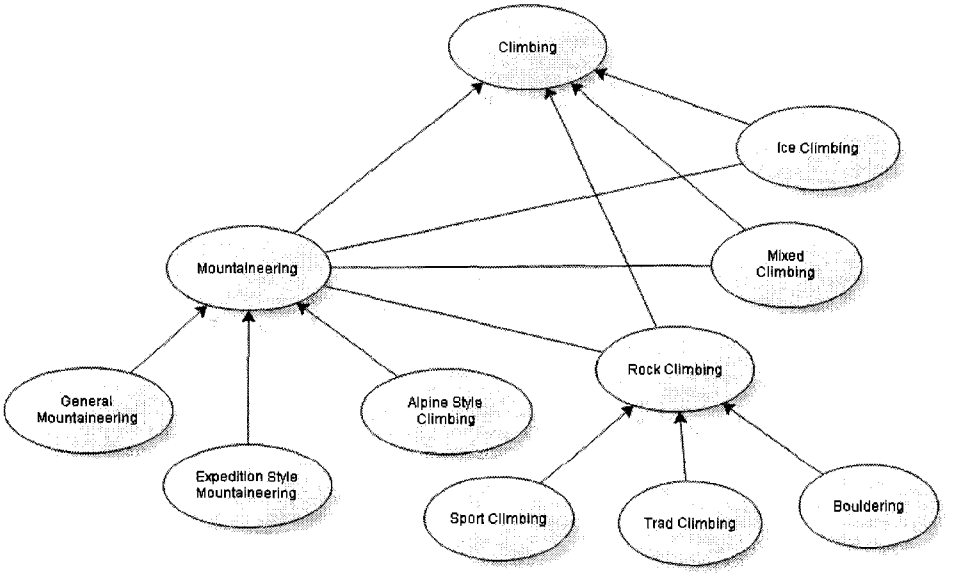

Figure 8 - Climbing terminology hierarchy

For example, sport climbing, traditional (trad) climbing and bouldering were all considered to be forms of rock climbing, which was also referred to as climbing. Similarly, general mountaineering, expedition style mountaineering, and alpine style climbing were all considered to be forms of mountaineering, which was also referred to as climbing. Mountaineering and ice climbing were associated in a sense that ice climbing can be one of the skills needed for mountaineering.

In the above model, climbing was the most general term that covered all of the activities. Ice climbing, rock climbing and mixed climbing were the activities that were easily recognizable based on the medium being climbed – rock, ice or both. A further breakdown of these activities was possible, based on style. For example, sport climbing was the style of rock climbing where one clipped the bolts for protection on the way up, whereas in trad climbing, one would place "natural" gear for protection and only crash mats were used for bouldering.

Mountaineering was different from the other climbing activities in as far as it involved climbing a mountain. It was however, associated with other climbing activities since the same skills, such as rock climbing or ice climbing, could be required to climb a mountain or part of a mountain. Mountaineering could also be broken down based on the style with which it was approached. General mountaineering was therefore seen as a type of mountaineering that did not involve much technical skills. It could involve snow travel or even glacier travel, but there would be no ice or rock climbing involved. Expedition style mountaineering was a style of mountaineering where a team of climbers set up camps as they climbed a mountain, stocking them with supplies as they moved up and down the mountain. Alpine style climbing was opposite in that it utilized light and fast philosophy, where a smaller team, usually of two people, sacrificed the weight of the gear and food for the speed of the ascent and tried to climb the mountain in a single push. Alpine style of climbing usually involved technical climbing. Most of the participants in the study thought that alpine style climbing was the best way to describe the type of

climbing in the Bugaboos. Furthermore, alpine style climbing was viewed as the result of a natural progression from either general mountaineering or technical rock climbing.