

"Inside/outside the Western 'Bubble': The nexus of adventure, adventure sports and perceptions of risk in UK and Mauritius",

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## **Inside/outside the Western ‘Bubble’: The nexus of adventure, adventure sports and perceptions of risk in UK and Mauritius.**

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### **Introduction**

Globalization can be thought of as the widening, deepening and quickening of the worldwide interconnections in social, cultural, political and economic life (Held et al., 1999). For adventure sports enthusiasts from the West, this has opened up the world for them to pursue their activities in more ‘exotic’ natural locations. Marketing of adventure holidays has increased with the greater ease of travelling to suitable geographical locations, providing apparently ‘authentic’ adventure experiences<sup>1</sup>.

Whilst adventure sports and the notion of risk in ‘exotic’ locations have been explored in some ‘visitor expectation’ literature (Swarbrooke, et al.,2003), little or no research has examined the nexus of local cultural understandings and practice of adventure, and Western perceptions of adventure risk. In this paper, I consider the ways in which adventure and risk are perceived and understood from educational and sociological Western perspectives. Critiques of adventure education and activities provision are made highlighting concerns around the ‘packaging’ of these experiences through the notion of MacDonaldisation. This is further developed through attention to the commodification of adventure sports and adventure holidays, drawing attention to the ways in which consumers are encouraged to ‘buy into’ the product without fully understanding the skills and experience needed to participate with, on occasions, dire consequences. The paper then goes on to explore different cultural understandings of risk through an auto/ethnography of the Mauritian experience as both University lecturer and a recreational windsurfer at a world renowned European managed wind surfing centre.

## Adventure and 'life style' sport

Recent literature on 'high-risk' leisure or adventure activities, identified in the early 1990s by Lyng (1990) in his analysis of 'edgework', such as skydiving, hang-gliding, rock climbing and downhill skiing now include surfing, skate boarding and windsurfing and these largely individual so called 'extreme', 'alternative', or 'new' sport are frequently referred to as 'life style' or 'extreme' sport (cf. Wheaton, 2004b; Rinehart and Sydor, 2003). The diversity between, and within, these adventure 'sport' forms is highlighted by range of academic and popular debates, concerning their meanings, values, statuses, forms and identities. One major feature running throughout all of these forms and within different analytical frameworks is the conceptualisation and perception of risk-taking, frequently drawing upon the discourse of 'adventure'. The notion of adventure is considered by a number of analysts in a variety of ways. Simmel (1965) saw adventure as an escape from the routine of everyday life, a new experience, 'something alien, untouchable, out of the ordinary... an island of life which determines its beginning and end according to its own formative powers'. (Simmel, 1965: p. 248) For Simmel, the adventurer sets the challenge from which success brings satisfaction and a sense of purpose which continues through re-imagining into everyday life. Emotional excitement is central to the adventurous experience and transcendence of the every-day a major condition. A number of social analysts have pointed to Simmel's work as providing the basis from which further analysis is sprung. Stranger (1999), for example, draws upon this notion of transcendence to examine the connections between risk and aesthetics in surfing. Surfing, he argues, 'involves an experience of transcendence that is shared via the interaction of local participants and mediated through the global dissemination of the sublime' (Stranger, 1999: p. 273). He suggests that this post-modern theoretical framework is applicable to other risk-orientated activities. Lewis (2004) writing on 'sustainable' adventure, highlighting the contradictions and contrasts between adventure climbing and sport climbing refers to Simmel's (1971) ambivalent critique of the then 'new' Alpine journeys emerging in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century which at that time had become opened up to the masses and 'packaged'. This was the beginnings of the packaged holiday in which large numbers of people could experience through being organised what in the past had been for the few affluent young people with time to travel. The 'packaging' of adventure experiences is also a concern of some Western critically minded educators who perceive 'adventure' in nature as a significant educational medium for children and young people.

Educationalists and youth workers in the West focusing on adventure have for some time emphasised the importance that adventurous activities and adventurous play can have in the personal/social, health and well-being of young people and society. Yet recently, UK society is seen as over protecting its young children, metaphorically attempting to 'wrap them in cotton'<sup>2</sup>. A recent survey for Play England sets out the apparent changes in the way young children play over a generation (Greateox, 2008). Asthana (2008) reports that

The tendency to wrap children in cotton wool has transformed how they experience childhood. According to the research, 70 per cent of adults had their biggest childhood adventures in outdoor spaces among trees, rivers and woods,

compared with only 29 per cent of children today. The majority of young people questioned said that their biggest adventures took place in playgrounds.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/aug/03/schools.children>

Play England argues for greater opportunities for young children to play out of doors and in more adventurous situations than seems currently available to them today. Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Europe various calls, for a variety of ideological and practical reasons, have been made for providing opportunities for young people and children to experience adventure out of doors (Cook, 1999; Loynes, 2007).

Mortlock's (1984) classic functionalist approach to 'adventure' as an educational media philosophically explores the notion of the developmental use of 'risk' through young people's skill development and decision-making in such activities as canoeing, climbing and journeying. Whilst more recently Becker (2007) argues that, 'Adventure is a playful activity, where children and youths can experience this threshold between reality and possibility....' (Becker, 2007: p. 85). This notion of adventure as play in an adult context is also suggested by Stranger (1999) and Howe (2003). Becker (2007) further draws out the possibilities in the unpredictability of such adventures, noting that the adventurer must continually make decisions about what to do next additionally and significantly emphasising the sensuous nature of the situation in which all senses are stimulated through the sound and feel of the natural 'elements'. The human-nature connection and human beings' embodied actions and emotions within a maelstrom of 'natural' elements are aspects of adventure that are rarely considered<sup>3</sup>. These dimensions are found as minor mentions in some analyses of adventure, but the significance of emotions other than fear and of the senses have been largely ignored. However, Annie Digan (2004) raises the sensuousness embedded in adventure in nature in her research on 'feeling bodies'.

#### *Adventure and commercialisation*

The mass consumption Simmel alludes to in his dialogue on the opening up of the Alps, a century ago is seen as a feature of the current condition of 'adventure'. Loynes (1996) argues that within the provision of much current adventure experience there is a tendency towards the 'McDonaldisation' of the experience. The experience according to Loynes becomes packaged 'an Adventure in a Bun', a commercial enterprise. In Ritzer's (1993) theory of 'the McDonaldisation of Society', McDonaldisation symbolises the commodification of standardised products in an impersonal society. Ritzer usefully draws a parallel with the McDonald burger bars which he sees epitomising contemporary Western society. Its principal processes include: efficiency and calculability which are based on quantitative indicators, predictability which ensures that standard products are delivered in predictable ways, and control through 'robotic' technologies. For Loynes, the participant client or young person is provided with an 'adventure' experience which is 'packaged' so that elements of actual risk are removed and the experience is assumed to be predictable whilst the participants themselves perceive an image of risk without the skills to manage the conditions of a risk situation in the ever changing unpredictability. Decisions are made for the participant by the instructor or leader and little or no responsibility is taken by the participant and little or no learning or skills development

take place. Participants rely on the providers to make decisions regarding the suitability, safety, and procedures of the activity. They are 'passengers' rather than competent 'partners' (Brown 2000) and consequently are, it is asserted, unable to develop the skills needed to make decisions quickly or appropriately.

These types of packaged adventure in UK are present in some commercial operations. For example a particular organisation advertising its adventure on the web emphasises in its marketing that safety is covered for the participant and they will experience the thrills of an assault course. This is illustrated by a section of a letter to a parent who had booked the experience for their offspring:

GoApe! is an arial assault course comprising extreme rope bridges, Tarzan swings and zip slides that take you on an adventure through the forest...you will receive comprehensive safety instructions from trained instructors..... Information by GoAPe (nodate)

The potential dangers of certain packaged adventure are exemplified by Palmer (2004) through an analysis of two case studies in which tourism organisations provide adventures to largely inexperienced young people. Palmer analyses the 1996 ill-fated Mount Everest ascent and the 1998 Interlaken canyoning disaster in which clients were killed in accidents which could have been foreseen with experienced safety management. In both these situations the weather and other important conditions were not taken into account by the guides. The young people were merely 'passengers' on the adventure experience relying on the 'expertise' of their guides, having little skill to be able to assess the situation for themselves. Whilst climbers involved in the recent K2 mountaineering disaster may have had some experience, Reinhold Messner was reported to have 'noted with evident disgust in an interview with a German news station that, "People today are booking these K2 package deals almost as if they were buying some all inclusive trip to Bangkok."' (Bowley, 2008). Why then is it that people are willing to 'buy into' these packages which are clearly demand hard physical work and advanced competences and are evidently frequently dangerous?

### **Why adventure?**

From the history of climbing perspective, Lewis (2000, 2004) argues that Western men's (sic) <sup>4</sup> search for adventure is partly a consequence of society's ever increasing rationalization and bureaucratization which over 100years ago Weber visualised as an 'iron cage' within which individuals feel trapped. For Becker (2003):

The command of an instrumental rationality has led to cognitive and emotional structures of self-discipline and self-control. At the same time and parallel to it a need begins to grow, that justice must also be done in those areas of subjectivity which instrumental rationale has suppressed more and more in the process of civilisation. Individuals consequently look for situations from which they expect that their structural conditions would allow the experience of an authentic subjectivity. In this context, the adventurous contests with the sublime; this side

of nature takes over an important function in the way individuals manage their feelings. ...Since this adventurous search for authenticity is not only hard but also perilous...individuals willingly buy the products of outdoor and culture industries. However, they don't use these implements to go out for adventures, but as aesthetic signs which allow them to present an identity which seems to be authentic and up to date. (Becker, 2003: p. 91)

Nevertheless, it is clear that not only the signs of adventure are bought into but also sometimes the actual experience itself. Consumer expectations equate the buying of the packaged adventure with the experiencing of authenticity but frequently without consideration of the bodily expression and practice needed for knowledgeable, skillful participation. Commercial ventures frequently sell their operations in a manner which is particularly attractive to relative novices without the necessary individual knowledge, skill and experience (cf Palmer, 2004).

The preceding discussion draws attention to the ambiguities around notions, images and practices of adventure and adventure sport. It highlights some educational and social discourses around adventure provision. Briefly touching upon discourses associated with personal and social development, the aesthetic, human-nature, and the consumption of adventure. The next section examines the relationship between globalization, the local and adventure.

### **Globalization and adventure**

It is claimed the world is getting smaller in scale as economic and other relations become larger in scale. One consequence of this Globalization for largely 'wealthy' westerners is their ability to travel to 'exotic' places in search of 'authentic' adventure and in particular experience activities which require specific geographical landscape, for example snow based or water based adventure sports. Adventure sports have increased across the world as largely wealthy peoples can more easily travel to seek out varied and exotic places to participate in their chosen adventure sport. Adventure sports tourism literature exults 'exotic' locations for their special natural environments and the opportunity it provides for the consumer to engage with nature and the sublime. For example, Mauritius as a venue for windsurfing is presented by the first sentence in a water-sports brochure :

Now is the time to dream of the far-away island paradise of Mauritius...a luxuriant hue of verdant tints covering the flat plains and volcanic pinnacles surrounded by the turquoise lagoons fringed by ribbons of white lacy surf before subjecting itself to the deep blue of the Indian Ocean. (Sportif, 2008)

However, this tourism discourse puts a gloss on or hides aspects of local culture and environment. The tourist may be unaware of local concerns and issues which are exacerbated by the tourist influx. How the local culture interfaces with the global, if it does, is considered by Robertson through the notion of Glocalization. The term was created by Robertson (1992) to describe this nexus of the global and local cultures sometimes mixing to create something unique in a locale. Glocalization is more in tune

with postmodern social theory (see Best and Kellner, 1997; Ritzer 1997). According to Ritzer globalization tends to create something, there may be unique or positive creations from this meeting. There is little empirical research that explores or uncovers this interface in adventure sport.

The term globalization was created by Ritzer (2003) and refers to the nexus of unfettered capitalism with the local, with the desire and ability of corporations and nations to impose themselves in places around the world. Theories like those associated with Marxian and Weberian traditions, concerned with the effects and ideologies of capitalism, see unfettered capitalism as unsustainable. These are closely linked with the notion of globalization, which Ritzer suggests, promotes the growth of nothing. Arguably, non Western cultural perspectives of risk are different from those of industrialised countries as the notion of faith may still be very strongly held: that is, that the future is 'in the hands of the gods'. The notion of western values around consumption imported into a non-western culture, along with neo-liberal ideologies have yet to be explored empirically. However, Andrews and Ritzer (2007) do explore the way in which global sporting corporations impact at a local level, arguing that nothing of value is created.

The practice of adventure sports by Westerners in less industrialised countries raises a number of issues in relation to globalization theorising. Whilst adventure sports are rarely associated with large corporations, they are products which are consumed by 'clients' (passenger or partners) from advanced industrialised nations.

The remainder of this paper will explore adventure, adventure sport and the global focusing upon the Island of Mauritius as the case. I will take an 'auto/ethnographic' approach. Through such an autobiographical methodology of writing and researching connections are uncovered between the personal to the cultural (Ellis & Bochner 2000). Further, auto/ethnography, as Rowe (2006: p. 424) argues, is 'a critically self-reflexive approach that simultaneously analyses the world external to the critical subject and the critical subject's own reconstruction of it. It is well suited to the analysis of globalization, including its relationship with leisure'.

### **A case study - Mauritius**

The Republic of Mauritius is a group of islands in the Indian Ocean, Mauritius being the largest some 900km off the coast of Madagascar. It has a coast line of 177 km which is largely protected by coral reefs. The island has a central plateau with the highest peak, Piton de la petite Noire, in the southwest located within the Black River Gorges National Park. Mauritius was settled first by the Dutch, then colonised by the French and then the English, becoming a Republic in 1968. Slaves, who were brought from Africa to work the sugar industry, first developed by the French, gained their freedom around the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century; these were the ancestors of the Creole ethnic group. Indentured servants were also brought from India to work for the colonising Europeans. Now, the Mauritian people are a diverse mix of ethnicity and religions. Of the estimated 1,227,078 population reported 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2007 68% is Indo-Mauritian, 27% Creole, 3% Sino-

Mauritian and 2% Franco-Mauritian<sup>5</sup>. Whilst English, along with French is the official language, Mauritian Creole is the most widely spoken language. Hinduism is the main religion of the Island adopted by half the population, Christianity is adopted by just over a quarter of the population and Islam has a following of around 16%. The life of Mauritians of all ethnic grouping revolves around the extended family and this is particularly evident during the numerous religious festivals. Family values are upheld strongly by the different groups depending upon their particular cultural inheritances.

The economy has developed from largely agriculturally based to one constituted by textiles, fish processing and a rapidly expanding tourist industry. Most of the population is engaged in blue collar and service industries with tourism employing around a fifth of labour force. The majority of Mauritian people appear poorly paid and those in work, there is estimated unemployment of around 8.8%<sup>6</sup>, and the majority of these in work are appear poorly paid.

This 'case-study' of adventure and risk perspectives centred on the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean, is based upon two different connections I have with Mauritius. On the one hand, I visited Mauritius on a number of occasions to windsurf at the renowned windsurfing site at the South Western corner, La Morne. On the other hand, I have been privileged to be invited to the University of Mauritius to teach a block module outdoor recreation education to students on the leisure and tourism management degree and to engage with qualitative research in the faculty of Law and Management studies. Consequently, in a sense I have both an 'insider' perspective of Mauritius from my involvement with Mauritian staff and students at the University and an 'outsider' perspective from my participation as a recreational windsurfer at the windsurfing centre.

### **The University: an insider perspective**

I spent three blocks of two to three weeks at the University during 2006 and 2007 engaging with Mauritian students and staff. The vast majority of students and staff at the University were Indo-Mauritian with a small number of Creole and Chinese. The students I taught reflected this ethnic grouping, with women in the ratio of three to one male student on the last two of my visits and the reverse for my first visit in which I taught part-time mature students in employment. This change in ratio of women to men students reflects the strong family values held by most Mauritians, where in the Indo-Mauritian culture it is generally expected that women will be home-makers rather than wage earners. The cohorts were made up between 18 (the part-time student cohort) and 34 (full-time) students who were studying for a degree in leisure and tourism management. The module I delivered provided a theoretical and practical basis for outdoor recreation education. All of the degree modules were classroom based except for a six month span when the students spent time in work related experience. There were little or no opportunities for the students to develop skills in outdoor recreation or risk assessment management of adventurous activities through their degree or in the short time period over which this particular module was delivered. However, as part of the module programme, I encouraged the different groups to plan a short (half day) trip or 'expedition' using the input they had had from the module and also arranged for them to



visit the windsurfing school to gain an understanding of a European managed water centre.

On the first occasion that I visited the University, I taught the module to part-time mature students who were employed in a variety of jobs in the tourism and leisure sectors. A number of these students were employed by the government leisure department and a few were involved in making available leisure experiences to local young people and families. On further occasions, I taught the module to fulltime undergraduates who had largely come straight from school. Few of these students were engaged in participating in 'adventurous' activities, most of the students' leisure experiences were with their families and often involved leisure with the whole family such as taking a meal down to the beach. This is particularly so during a number of Hindu religious festivals when whole family groups descend upon the public beaches to feast and bath in the sea<sup>7</sup>. This dominance of and enjoyment in family-oriented leisure was evident from focus group interviews with students and from our discussions during the lectures.

However, a number of the young male students would occasionally camp over night by the beach, going fishing for their meal without family. I became aware during my teaching of the students that there seemed to be a taken for granted connection with nature. There was a significant connection as might be expected with the sea and one University non academic member of staff talked of his wife's family whose members were traditional fisher people. He proudly elaborated on the expertise and knowledge his in-laws had of the sea, emphasising their ability to locate exactly where a fish basket would have been moved to by the changing currents on the sea bottom. He was also keen to encourage 'tourist' to come and visit his family and experience what he felt was the 'real' culture of Mauritius

### **Windsurfing school: an outsider perspective**

In order to give the students an understanding of how providers of adventurous activities manage the risk of such activities, I arranged for the students also to visit the windsurfing school which was owned by a German company with centres across the world, managed on site initially by a German and then an English manager. On all visit occasions, the managers spent sometime explaining and showing how the centre operated and how 'clients' were briefed regarding the dangers of the location. The windsurfing school managed the environmental risks; the strong currents whisking boards and windsurfers away into the Indian Ocean at the drop of a sail through a variety of measures which including emphasising to the 'clients' their responsibility to observe the conditions. I had spent time windsurfing from the school and so was familiar with the inherent environmental risks of this part of the coast.

Most of Mauritius is surrounded by a coral reef protecting the coast line; the beach is around 500m to a kilometre from the reef. At La Morne site, the ocean rolls onto the coral reef providing excellent surf for wave riding at the inner reef and the outer reef a further distance out. It also provides a relatively safe lagoon area for a windsurfer like me to enjoy good winds, the visual beauty of the coast and the sensuousness of water and

wind. However, at high seas more water breaks into the coral lagoon creating good surfing waves but also creating a rapid, up to 7 knots, current flowing out of the break in the reef. In extreme conditions a windsurfer out of control could be whisked out of the lagoon and beach rescue with a safety boat would be impossible.

The manager explained to the students the conditions of the centre, pointing out the map of the area which clients are shown and the ways in which the centre informs windsurfers of specific conditions; when and where not to sail. Also recounted was the story of a private windsurfer from Eastern Europe who had had his own kit and decided to sail against the information available and the clearly visible dangerous conditions. He and his board were never seen again. In another story a school client had been eventually rescued some six kilometres away. None of the over 70 students from Mauritius University I taught had themselves windsurfed, except for two exchange male students from western Europe who had done so in Europe.

In my own experience of the school, there were few women and rarely if ever Mauritians of Creole or Indian ethnicity windsurfing, although, it is highly likely that many of the Caucasian windsurfers sailing from the adjacent public beach were Franco-Mauritians or of British origins. I can not recall seeing Creole or Indo-Mauritian windsurfers sailing out of the public beach or the windsurfing centre. There were Creole young men from local villages trained by the windsurfing school as either instructor or riggers. A number of these had developed considerable windsurfing skills and during their breaks or when requested by clients would windsurf the waves. However, whilst listening to the manager speaking to students, my feelings were of being in a 'western bubble' into which the students had stepped briefly and would later step out. I knew that the windsurfing school had 'adopted' the local primary school and invited its Western visitors to contribute material to it but this seemed to add to the Western bubble in which the centre appeared to operate in isolation from the locals. The reasons for the lack of interest from Creole or Indian Mauritians are varied but the most significant is the cost of equipment or the cost of hiring. But also I suspect that that windsurfing is not a part of Creole or Indo-Mauritian cultural identity<sup>8</sup>.

### **Risk and cultural contradictions**

This separation and isolation of West from the local highlighted cultural perspectives of adventure and risk and was further emphasised in a different way when my professional experience of adventure provision was jolted during a short 'trip' organised by some of the part-time students who worked for the leisure department. The short trip was organised in the Black River Gorges National Park which is located in the Southern central region of a tree covered high plateau with a number of ridges and river valleys. The students organised a walk on a muddy track, sometimes steep in places, which ran along side a small river. After some 45 minutes the trees gave way to an opening on to a flat rock surface over which the river cascaded vertically some 500ft. The students scampered around on the flat rock. My self and an outdoor educator colleague from UK were taken aback and I sat at the edge of the flat surface facing inwards ensuring I could see all the twenty students, extremely concerned for their safety. 'They might slip and fall

over the edge if they got too close', I thought. Talking with the 'leader' student about the situation, he said that in his job he frequently guided local families often in groups of more than 15 to this place. 'How do you manage the risk?', I asked, 'Youngster might get excited and perhaps fall over the edge. Shouldn't you be setting a rope up to identify the danger?' The leader student responded with some distain, 'they are with their families and it would be wrong to frighten them unnecessarily.' At that point, I was brought into an understanding or a jolt in thinking, seeing risk from a different cultural perspective. It appeared here there was a greater confidence in parental control and common understanding of danger than I was accustomed to. For me, it highlighted the way in which in the UK, risk limitation is central and inhibiting to provision of adventurous activities for young people. Whereas for Mauritians risk is perceived differently with greater trust in family and individual responsibility.

Whilst this incident highlighted my own acculturation to perhaps the (over)management of risk activities for young people, it also highlighted the local difference in perceptions of potential risk and safety in adventurous activities. On a number of occasions I heard from tourism lecturing colleagues about their concerns over views expressed by 'unskilled' tourists suggesting they felt there had been insufficient attention to safety issues and had felt endangered in some water based situations in various hotels which were managed by locals. No comment of this sort was made about the European windsurf centre.

### **Concluding Remarks**

This paper has examined adventure sports and the notion of risk through exploring the nexus of local cultural understandings and practice of adventure, and Western perceptions of adventure risk through an auto/biographical case study of Mauritius. I have considered a number of analytical concepts of adventure and adventure sports, highlighting much ambiguity. It is suggested that adventure can be a significant transcendent or sensuous experience but can also, when packaged for mass consumption, be an 'unexpectedly' life threatening event.

Perceptions of the conditions of risk associated with adventure forms and how they are managed in reality are diverse and evidently culturally and locale specific. The Western 'bubble' takes its practices, values and understandings with it into diverse cultures. These 'other' cultures may already have significant understandings of and respect for nature and the environment. Local notions of 'risk', perceived through particular social, economic and cultural conditions, set into relief current popular Western understandings, uncovering different more complex inter-related notions of risk and its implications. Arguably in attending to the 'search for adventure' in different locales, the concepts of glocalization and globalization do not readily provide a useful framework for making sense of this complex nexus without drawing upon interpretative research and local cultural understandings.

### **Notes**

1. Here I refer to the notion of authenticity as the 'real' experience, as it, "tends to be defined around the performance of the activity, around 'doing it' (Wheaton and Beal 2003)"(Wheaton, 2004b: p.9). See also Beal and Wilson (2004).
2. Furedi (1997, 2001, 2006) pays particular attention to the 'risk averse' society and its potential implications.
3. Martin (2005) is amongst those who have explored the human-nature connections within outdoor education, an educational form which promotes adventurous activities.
4. Gender, women's experiences and windsurfing are explored in Wheaton and Tomlinson (1998), Wheaton (2004a) and Woodward (2000).
5. [http://www.intute.ac.uk/sciences/worldguide/html/956\\_people.html](http://www.intute.ac.uk/sciences/worldguide/html/956_people.html) -accessed 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008.
6. [http://www.intute.ac.uk/sciences/worldguide/html/956\\_economic.html](http://www.intute.ac.uk/sciences/worldguide/html/956_economic.html)- accessed 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008.
7. There has been a considerable reduction in public beaches available to locals as tourism has been encouraged as a major economic source for Mauritius and hotels have capture much of the coast line.
8. Whilst the discourse in tourist literature of Mauritius is that of harmony between the different ethnic groups, I was told by apartment owners who rent to Europeans that this was not the case. The owners are a Creole Mauritian woman and her Swedish husband. The latter explained how his wife is often excluded from 'white' social clubs/events until he intervenes on her behalf. He also recounted an event on the surf beach, Tamarin, in which a Black visitor was physically attacked by 'white' local youths when he attempted to surf with his son on 'their' set of waves.

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