Chapter 1

Sea-ing Young People's Identity Development: An Introduction

1.1 Preamble

In the 1960s when Bob Dylan sang 'the times, they are a changing' who could have imagined where we would be today in the early decades of the twenty-first century? Certainly not me! Now life appears more complex than ever. We live in a dynamic, evolving system based on a 'high-tech global economy' (Elliot 2007, p. 138) that affects people in many ways. The effect of the economic crash of 2008 originating in the United States of America is just one example felt by many across the globe, demonstrating the inter-connected, co-dependent, reflexive, networked, dynamic and complex nature of contemporary life (Dennis & Haynes 2007). Developing technologies are also increasingly affecting people's lives in many ways. For example, computers, screen readers, scanners and more now allow me as a middle aged female with a vision impairment to independently undertake this study on youth development and write this book!

However, while contemporary life is enabling, accompanying it are also new and challenging experiences. For young Australian people aged in their teens through to their twenties, a life span associated with them transitioning to adulthood, there is much to consider. Indeed, as the dynamic system has evolved, their experiences are both similar to and yet different from their parents. As their parents did, they live in a time beyond the certainty of tradition when pasts were definite and futures predictable (Giddens 1990) and like them, they still experience life as unstable, flexible, fragmented, individualised, opportunistic, and risky (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Simply, away from the veil of tradition they are individuals espoused to have freedom to choose and expected to negotiate their own life course (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). But their experiences differ from their parents in many ways, particularly exemplified when considering the advancement and influence of technology

(Turner 2001). One glaring difference is how they acquire and access knowledge (Dwyer & Wyn 2001; Harris 2004; Aapola & Ketokivi 2005; Higgins & Nairn 2006) as well as how they interact using social networking sites; sites such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, Tagged, LinkedIn, Window Live Spaces (Thierer 2007) and others in addition to instant messaging and online chat rooms (Sengupta & Chaudhuri 2010). These activities are certainly becoming increasingly popular among today's teenagers (Mishna, Saini & Solomon 2009) as well as older teenagers sometimes referred to as emerging adults (Subrahmanyam, Reich, Waechter & Espinoza 2008) and as such, exemplifies one way how young people's lives today are starkly distinct from the (nostalgically remembered) youth of today's adults (Livingstone 2008).

Indeed, as vast and varied layers of relations continue to expand over time, young people's experiences raise additional implications for their identity development in the twenty-first century (Livingston 2008). Meredith's (aged sixteen) contribution to the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008 survey for instance raises the issue of education, training and employment equating to knowledge and power. In fact, she goes as far to say that it is a young person's right to be empowered. Daniel (aged fifteen) goes further and considers mental health – he thinks many young people suffer depression because they are lonely and pressured (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008). His belief is certainly confirmed by trends identifying one in four young people in Australia have a mental health disorder with anxiety topping the list (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010). Stress, abuse, depression, body image and suicide are other indicators of increased challenges they face as they transition into adulthood in contemporary life (Mission Australia 2008). Clearly, what Meredith, Daniel and these statistics describe is synonymous with a life made up of multiple layers of vast and varied relations (Denis & Hayes 2007) and while it is a life that can aspire

audacity, courage, and hope, it can also be capable of provoking feelings of anxiety, fear and despair (Bauman 2001).

Thus, while statistics such as the incidents of suicide provide the numbers of young people who have died, unfortunately they do not convey their experience. In addition, they do not provide an explanation why they decided to end their life, or convey the impact felt by those who they leave behind. In 2003, Matthew, who was my eldest son's best mate and cherished part of our family, was eighteen years old when he tragically became one of those statistics. For me his memory conjures up an image of him struggling with his demons; a relationship with wider society filled with anxiety, fear and despair that eventually overwhelmed him. I wonder why life didn't inspire him with audacity, courage, and hope like his peers? But his death extended my thoughts also; it made me wonder about how we can better understand young people's identity development, their sense of self and adulthood in contemporary social contexts like Australia.

Hence, my aim is to explore young people's relationship between their personal development and social structure in the emerging years of the twenty-first century. Subsequently, when I was given an opportunity to undertake a study on young people's participation in a Western Australian outdoor ocean adventure program on the Leeuwin II tall ship, I gladly accepted the challenge. That is, to conduct a study with the intent to better understand the relationship between the young people who sail on board, known as trainees, and their identity development through participating in this social field and how and why it works in light of their development in their everyday lives. While the perspectives of many including Leeuwin II Board members, workers and volunteers and what I contribute form part of this study, it is the knowledge shared by the trainees that contributes most. Clearly, putting the trainees of the Leeuwin II at

the helm means they are the experts and can inform us of their experiences and perspectives on board in a way other generations would not be able to in quite the same way.

This research journey is unchartered; the destination is unknown. But it has potential to contribute to better understanding young people's personal development in contemporary life in many ways and on many levels. While this chapter begins that journey, before launching into it, I pause and think about Matthew. Will his legacy be one of informing about young people and their identity development in the twenty-first century? As I envisage the wind in her sails as she journeys along the Western Australian coastline with her young sailors on board, I am again reminded of the words of Bob Dylan. This time, I wonder, '(is) the answer my friend… blowing in the wind… (is) the answer… blowing in the wind'?

1.2 Young People's Relationship with an Individualised Society

The West's caravan moves on calling out:

come with us. We know the way. We know the goal. We don't know any way. We don't know any goal. What is certain is that everything's uncertain, precarious. Enjoy our lack of ties as freedom (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002, p. 1).

These words describe the journey of individualisation. In Australia, individual freedom is integral to the majority of young people's everyday lives; the overwhelming message is a desire for them to lead a life of their own (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Accompanying this journey is a highly efficient, densely woven, institutional society. It demands, controls, and constrains,

imposing rules and regulations, provisos, on them through conditions of the labour market, the welfare state, the education system and other social institutions (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). As individuals, they become increasingly self-sufficient, they become accustomed to considering themselves in isolation and they freely imagine their destiny entirely in their own hands (Lukes 2006).

Underlying this process is the framework of individualism where increasing social mobility, the continuity of the generation is dismantled and as classes become fused, members become indifferent, even as strangers to each other (Lukes 2006). As a value system, individualism is central to classical liberalism and capitalism that upholds personal freedom, freedom of choice, and self-orientation (Schwartz 2000). An economic and political philosophy, classical liberalism emerged along with the growth of capitalism where the central belief is that unregulated markets are the best way to allocate productive resources and distribute services and goods and that government intervention should ideally be minimal (Drislane & Parkinson 2009). Thus, the neoliberal revolution in economics has produced societies that rather than only depending on social capital and trust also depend on market mechanisms, giving pronounced emphasis to individualism and choice over collective solutions to social issues (Turner 2007).

However, beyond being released from the certainty of tradition into the risk of industrial society, the procession of the journey of individualisation is more recently accompanied by the turbulence of a new global 'risk society'. Now young people are expected to live with, and indeed respond to simultaneously, a range of different, mutually contradictory, personal and global risks (Beck 1994; Beck & Lau 2005). These include threats of transnational terror networks most explicitly realised in the September 11th terrorist attacks of 2001 (Beck 2002),

environmental impacts such as destruction of forests, polluted and dying bodies of water, and new types of disease (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Young people today are certainly placed in the midst of a cloud of possibilities to be thought about and negotiated, while experiencing insecurity at nearly every level (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002).

The term 'risk', coincidentally originating from a Spanish nautical term that means to run into danger or to go against a rock (Giddens 1990) is thus synonymous with an individualised life and impacts in many ways. Threats to the future produce preventative actions; people become active today in order to prevent or take precautions against problems and crises of tomorrow and the next day (Beck 1992). In turn, the social sense of security is challenged and can become a problem for young people in the area of political activity and decision-making (Beck 2003). It is also argued that this occurs in relation to social legislation and the criminal justice system producing rules and regula- tions to control perceived dangers relating to minority or marginalised social groups like young people (Edginton, Kowalski & Randall 2005). Still there is another layer of risk that relates to their behaviour – risk-taking behaviour that can be attributed to rapid social change or acculturation (Dasen 2000). When young people's behaviour is discussed it is more often agreed than not they take higher risks than most individuals to commit crimes, abuse alcohol and drugs, drive dangerously, and even commit suicide (Edginton et al 2005).

Yet someone who views the world as risk can also become incapable of action; this can translate to young people exhibiting avoidance behaviour as well (Beck 1994). Contributing to this is the direct and/or indirect influence of the 'new technologies' (Sennett 2006) such as video and multi-user games on the Internet that alters actual experience (Anderson 2002). Images have become more and more visually explicit in their treatment of violence and horror; their

increasing realism is regarded as giving rise to not only the contaminating effect of violent images but also the issue of media-induced trauma (Garbarino 2006). For some young people this means their experience is simultaneously overpowered by unmanageable negative feelings and having their idea of the world blown away by horror. Studies indicate these images are provoking more emotional disconnection, what psychologists and psychiatrists call dissociation (Garbarino 2006). The combination of aggressive role models and traumatic imagery in the mass media is thus another perspective demonstrating a powerful cultural force at work that has important psychological ramifications for their identity development (Garbarino 2006).

1.3 Young People's Contemporary Transitions into Adulthood

When I think about Matthew and how he must have struggled internally before he ended his life, I agree that there is one thing certain in the twenty-first century, and that is that identity development is more puzzling than ever (Sennett 2006). Indeed, in a life with no privileged order of succession, one that is now amenable to endless reshuffling (Bauman 2001), there is also an unpredictability of life courses (Pollock 1997). This raises the dilemma of whether to view identity development and a sense of adulthood in a state of crisis or not. Whatever the situation at the very least, identity can be understood as a 'never-ending, always incomplete, unfinished and open-ended activity in which we all, by choice or by necessity, are engaged' (Bauman 2001). Clearly when Margaret, a twenty-five year old female contemplates her adult identity her words supports this sentiment:

> *I don't think anyone can ever say they have reached a stable sense of adult identity. I believe the sense of identity will change, depending on the*

different situations you face throughout life. Therefore, without ever reaching a stable identity, you can't say you have an adult identity. I'm always reassessing values and beliefs (cited in Kroger 2005, p. 5).

Thus, relationships with an individualised society have altered traditional transitions to adulthood (Furstenberg 2000). No longer do young people follow a linear progression to adulthood by leaving school, starting a full-time job, leaving the home, getting married, and becoming a parent (Shanahan 2000; Wyn 2004), or being specifically initiated into it through ceremonial rites of passage as previous generations experienced. Rather, it is more commonly being recognised that they acquire a subjective sense of adulthood from an individualistic quality of character, such as accepting responsibility for oneself and making independent decisions (Shanahan 2000). The belief is that an individual reaches adulthood when they believe they are a self-sufficient person (Arnett 1998). In other words, they believe that they can accept responsibility for themselves and make independent decisions; two qualities desirable in a globalised society character-ised by capitalism, individualism, regulation, freedom of choice, risk and technology. Furthermore, this shift away from traditional notions based on demographics to the subjective sense of it fits well with the notion that identity in contemporary life is more often than not 'self-placed and self-ascribed; it's something left to the individual to worry about' (Bauman 2005, p. 31).

Subsequently, today it is understood that successful transitions are influenced in part by young people's active efforts to shape biographies and the structured set of limitations and opportunities that define pathways into it (Shanahan 2000). Many young people are choosing to remain in education for longer, acquiring economic independence later in life, and are forming long-term relationships at older ages (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2003, 2006, 2011) than previous generations. As such, it is becoming more accepted that transitions are increas-

ingly extended in virtually every post-industrialised society (Arnett, 1998, 2000, 2004; Shanahan, 2000). One of the consequences of this is that what was once considered a brief life stage between childhood and adulthood known as adolescence is now a period of time that lasts anywhere from the late teens to at least the mid-twenties (Schwartz, Côté & Arnett 2005).

However, rather than recognizing adolescence as a single life stage between childhood and adulthood, where they are on hold or arrested in relation to their development (Côté 2000), or even their transitions are extended (Jones & Wallace 1992), it is being recognised as potentially a new and distinct life-stage. Often this is referred to as emerging adulthood (Arnett 2000, 2004) or as a pre-adult category known as post adolescence (Ball, Maguire & Macrae 2000). In this book, I use the term post adolescence simply because it best describes this life stage when understanding adulthood cannot really be assumed or guaranteed. It is clearly something that did not follow for Matthew. But whatever term is used, they both describe a distinct life stage of frequent change as young people explore numerous possibilities in love, work and worldviews (Erikson 1968; Rindfuss 1991; Arnett 2000). This is well described by Kristen aged twenty-two when she says:

When our mothers were our age, they were engaged… They at least had some idea what they were going to do with their lives… I, on the other hand, will have a dual degree in majors that are ambiguous at best and impractical at worst (English and political science), no ring on my finger and no idea who I am, much less what I want to do… Under duress, I will admit that this is a pretty exciting time. Sometimes, when I look out across the wide expanse that is my future, I can see beyond the void. I realise that having nothing ahead to count on means I now have to count on myself;

that having no direction means forging one of my own (cited in Arnett 2000, p. 469).

1.4 Female Contemporary Transitions into Adulthood

Clearly, the previous comments highlight the fact that females face similar quandaries to young males in their search for a secure identity in an uncertain world (Beck 1992). But what Kristen says also highlights her sense of self and womanhood developing in a further complex context that is sprinkled with more ambiguity and contradiction (Van Newkirk 2006) than those of her male counterparts. In essence, in contemporary society females are no longer tied to marital support that was the material cornerstone of a traditional housewife's existence (Beck 1992); they are separated from previous tradition that identified female roles to a homemaker being supported by an employed husband in a marriage that lasted for a life time (Mortimer & Larson 2002).

One contribution to shifting gender roles is the influence of emerging technology. Indeed, thirty years ago, effects of television violence in stimulating aggression was mostly confined to boys. Now the effects are equally apparent for females and males being equated to images present in popular culture such as TV, as well as video games, movies and music. In the twenty-first century females' identities are less limited to the traditional ones commonly thought of as nurturing, dependent and passive (Garbarino 2006). Yet despite this traditional power imbalance between the masculine and the feminine being displaced and trans-formed (Garbarino 2006), they still do not always experience equal opportunities to that of their male counterparts (Irwin 2003). Inequalities based on gender relations and roles (Poole 1997) influence their choice in education (Gill, Mills, Franzway & Sharp 2008), employment (Butler & Ferrier 2006) and leisure

(Brown 2008). This indicates dominant male power within gender relations in other social institutions are still lingering (Elliott 2007, p. 140).

1.5 Indigenous Young People's Contemporary Transitions into Adulthood

Still, not all young Australian people's lives are influenced by contemporary society in the same way. For example, individualisation ignores the 'crucial underpinnings of security and identity among remote Indigenous peoples' (Tonkinson 2007, p. 41). For them, a breakdown in Indigenous traditional culture often sees them successfully ignoring their parent's wishes about traditional arranged marriages and sexual behaviour in general (Tonkinson 2007). Adolescent pregnancy and the number of low birth weight babies have dramatically increased, and young males are marrying much earlier than they used to (Tonkinson 2007). With little parental or communal control over their behaviour (Tonkinson 2007), young Indigenous people are reported roaming the community or watching late night movies at night then smoking gunja (marijuana) early in the day (Ogilvie & Van Zyl 2001). They do this because there is little to do; they are bored and unchallenged (Ogilvie & Van Zyl 2001). Further, their confidence levels are low and they construct a limited set of expectations and aspirations for their future (Alloway, Gilbert, Gilbert & Muspratt 2004). Subsequently, rather than experiencing a distinct life stage of post adolescence as their western counterparts do, young Indigenous people can have quite a different perception of the process. This is because post adolescence is associated with a high level of education and training, the postponement of marriage and parenthood that are linked to opportunities available to the majority culture, the social middle class or above, and those living in urban areas (Arnett 2000). Instead, these young Indigenous Australians

often experience disadvantage and lack of opportunity for many reasons in education (Bourke, Rigby & Burden 2000), employment (Tonkinson 2007), and the Criminal Justice system (Cunneen & McDonald 1997; White & Wyn 2004).

In fact, there is a high rate of young Indigenous people in criminal detention centres compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts (Bareja & Charlton 2003). While there is no basis to substantiate this way of thinking, accompanying young Indigenous people's incarceration is the view that young males use it as an initiation process or rite of passage to adulthood (Ogilvie & Van Zyl 2001). This idea is based on Van Gennep's (1960) classic anthropological three-stage rite of passage model. The first stage describes preliminal rites (rites of separation), the second liminal rites (rites of transition), and the final stage postliminal rites (rites of incorporation) (Van Gennep 1960). Victor Turner's (1969) ideas of liminality and communitas are also bound to this understanding. This raises the idea that as initiates or liminal entities their incarceration removes them to a place he calls communitas, where they are betwixt and between their everyday lives (Turner 1969). Described as a place where they are neither here nor there, communitas is associated with death, being in the womb, being invisible, being in the darkness, being eclipsed by the sun or moon, and being in the wilderness (Turner 1969).

However, while agreeing there is no credibility between Indigenous incarceration and a rite of passage to adulthood, when considering young peoples' contemporary transitions into adulthood and their relationship with the Leeuwin II tall ship, the idea of a rite of passage, liminality and communitas is an interesting one. This is because rather than simply entertaining the idea that young trainees' experience on board is just a high-spirited adventure for them, it contemplates the idea whether being separated from their everyday lives, sailing out to sea to a place beyond what they know, might create communitas and contribute to their

personal development. Indeed, perhaps it's a relationship potentially holding certain implications to their success and failure in an individualised life also?

1.6 Young People's Success and Failure in an Individualised Life

In this system, young people need actively participate. But not only is their participation permitted, it is demanded (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002) so they can constantly adapt to conditions of the labour market, the welfare state, and the education system. Failure to do so becomes personal failure and goes hand in hand with forms of self-responsibility (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). As they negotiate their own lives, they need to co-ordinate, adjust, and integrate a widening range of options that increase their many choices; if they are not to fail to fully negotiate opportunities, they need to be able to adapt to change and plan for the long term. According to Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, p. 4) to be successful they need to 'organize and improvise, set goals, recognize obstacles, accept defeats and attempt new starts. They need initiative, tenacity, flexibility and tolerance of frustration'. In short, they need creativity to take advantage of what the system has to offer (White & Wyn 2006).

What this means is that young people need to be active participants to extensively deliberate, stimulate, and pursue alternatives and opportunities available to them (Schwartz, Côté & Arnett 2005). Developmental individualisation is a term denoting this, a life course of continual and deliberate growth (Côté 2000). Juxtaposing this idea is one of agentic capabilities or the idea that they are free agents who intentionally make things happen by their actions (Bandura 2001). In this way, they are prepared and have control over decisions and problems they might have to address as they enter into adult roles (Schwartz, Côté & Arnett 2005). Alternatively, a life course based on impulse described as reactive rather

than proactive, such as following the latest music trends or fashion of contemporary youth culture such as Internet social networking to the exclusion of more demanding activities for example, can be associated to a lack of agentic assertion (Côté 2000). This pathway refers to default individualisation and describes a failure to create opportunities for self-improvement in areas such as acquiring credentials and competencies, and social and human skills; a situation potentially leaving young people unprepared to make decisions and address important issues in their adult lives (Schwartz, 2000).

Relevant to this understanding are young people's interpretations and meanings of their world such as attitudes, feelings, organic drives, motives, internalised social factors, or psychological components, which includes their sense of self and identity. As Bauman (2005, p. 17) says, in an individualised society, feelings are the very epitome of 'uniqueness'. Therefore, to be successful in negotiating their lives it makes sense to consider their preparedness and the issue of confidence in their power of thought and action (Bauman 2001). This is well demonstrated by Alain Peyrefitte who says:

The remarkable, unprecedented and unique dynamism of our modern capitalist society, all the spectacular advances made by Western civilization over the last two or three centuries, would be unthinkable without such confidence: the triple trust - in oneself, in others, and in the jointly built, durable institutions in which one can confidently inscribe one's long-term plans and actions (cited in Bauman 2001, p. 151).

1.7 Young People's Identity Development and Outdoor Adventure

In many respects, exploring the developmental outcomes of the trainees on board the Leeuwin II tall ship outdoor adventure program is not new. From ancient times to modern times – from Plato (427 BCE - 347 BCE) to the establishment of Outward Bound by Kurt Hahn (1886–1974), there has been a value of and belief in outdoor adventure relating to personal growth. This continues today evidenced by the overwhelming identification of beneficial outcomes for those who participate in it (Sibthorp, Paisley & Gookin 2007). These outcomes are associated for instance with a change in behaviour, thinking, and feelings through direction and reflection (Priest & Gass 1998). Relating to young people they include, sense of self such as a feeling of confidence, developing personal responsibility and acquiring coping and communication skills (Neill 2000), increase in self-esteem (Sibthorp 2003), sense of personal control (Friese, Taylor Pittman & Hendee 1995), leadership (Hattie, Marsh, Neill & Richards 1997; Sibthorp, Paisley & Gookin 2007), and maturity (Hattie et al 1997).

However, while recognising these benefits, not much is known about how or why they occur (McKenzie 2000, 2003; Paisley, Furnam, Sibthorp & Gookin 2008 & many more). Is it the environment? The activities? The group? The relationships developed with leaders and others? Or as part of their identity development to adulthood, does it act as a rite of passage to it? Is the field likened enough to the structural similarities of Arnold Van Gennep's three-stage rites of passage model (Neill 2003)? Liminality, too, the idea of Victor Turner might also be useful to expand upon particularly with reference to the notion of communitas – ideas that are discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

Whatever the combination, this research aims to contribute to further understanding the relationship between trainee's identity development and the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship. But rather than restricting it to sail training as such, the field is primarily understood as representing the characteristics of outdoor adventure associated to the wilderness in light of their development in their everyday lives. In other words, dedicated to Matthew, this study considers the difference between the outdoor environment and the milieu, or the social, political and legislative aspects of it (Scherer, Sax, Vanbiervliet, Cushman & Scherer 2005).

1.8 Young People's Identity Development: A Theoretical Perspective

To help understand young people's relationship between their personal development in their everyday lives that implicates outdoor adventure, this research creatively builds a theoretical platform. Essentially based on an age-old conundrum, the discourse enters into an agency/structure problematic providing a novel way of understanding trainee's development on board the Leeuwin II tall ship in the twenty-first century. Underpinning this relationship is the understanding that their identity development, and their success and/or failure to relate with their everyday lives, is framed by the idea of being a free agent while recognising their action is determined in some way by their past experience. As such, it builds upon the inconsistencies between the perspectives of Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's (2002) theory of individualisation and two of three concepts, namely habitus and social fields put forward by Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1993). Simply put, the conflict relates to the idea of how free agency can actually exist if action is pre-determined by experience. Addressing

this disparity, the view is that free agency is possible when habitus thinks and feels in a certain way (Lehmann 2004).

Internalisation of the tenets of individualism in young people's everyday lives through media for example, is certainly one way this can be illustrated as them being able to envision their agency set free from structure (Lash 1994). Further, their belief and confidence in themselves arguably underlies their sense of agency also. However, the certainty is that not all is effectively internalised in their everyday lives and thus, opens up the possibility of it being activated in fields that are removed from it. In this way, the idea of outdoor adventure, like that of the Leeuwin II tall ship, a rites of passage and tenets of communitas are included in this discourse. This is not only an exciting research prospect; there is also value in exploring this perspective. Put simply, this is because there is potential to enrich and expand the social constructions available to practitioners and others (Marshall & Rosman 2006). In other words, there is praxis between building upon this theoretical knowledge that has potential to enable an explanation and prediction of young people's behaviour (Glaser & Strauss 1967).

1.9 Conceptualising the Research

Now I imagine myself sitting in a crow's nest looking down toward the social environment of the Leeuwin II beneath me. I wonder about the relationship between a trainee's personal development and this environment. Indeed, what will occur for the young sailors who participate in its program? Will the environment itself, the activities, the groups – relationships with peers/watch leaders or crew and volunteers influence the way they feel about themselves? Will there be a sense of excitement, challenge, achievement, risk, the unknown? I wonder does this vessel act as a rite of passage to adulthood? Will a trainee feel a sense of adulthood because of their participation? Indeed, what will they

feel about themselves when they complete their voyage? Will this carry through to their everyday lives? I turn my gaze back toward the shore and I think about them in this individualised milieu, I recognise that they need to navigate their course to adulthood through it. Vessels need sails, rudders, maps and more though if they are to successfully negotiate this individualised society. I continue to wonder if participating in an outdoor adventure such as on the Leeuwin II tall ship provides them with such tools – sense of self like that of confidence and a sense of adulthood - that prepare them to take on this life journey? Finally, my attention shifts again and I wonder about what research question will answer all this. After a period of intense contemplation, I ask, "What is the relationship between trainees' personal development and outdoor adventure through their participation in the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship in light of their development in contemporary Australia?"

Descending from my conceptual crow's nest, I will take the plunge to join a voyage as a trainee to explore and answer this question. I will feel the wind and sun on my face, the motion of the vessel as it responds to the sea beneath my feet, the sea spray as it blows onto the deck and hopefully do not experience the discomfort and humiliation of vomiting overboard through seasickness! I will participate in the different activities such as climbing the rigging and setting the sails. However, I expect that my experience will be similar yet also different from other participants on many levels. Different because I am a middle aged female but the difference continues because of my vision impairment. Rather than visually observing, I will observe through what I hear, do and feel. Being vision impaired – perceiving light and dark – for many years prepares me well to understand through communication, participation, and intuition. This experience will be enhanced through discussions with my teenage niece who accompanies me while on board and who can fill in any gaps by describing events and activities.

1.10 Methodology

But more importantly for me, setting sail as a trainee is an essential part of this research because my own experiences on board will give me an invaluable insight into the experiences of the trainees. Really, would I be able to effectively interpret what trainees discuss if I didn't? Thus, this study is an ethnographic one. Without doubt this approach is key to this research, it is important because through me living the experience I build a closeness to the trainees who will take part in this research – observing, interviewing, and building rich descriptions (Corbin & Strauss 2008). This is within an interpretivist paradigm (Kellehear 1993); an approach that produces the most authentic and valid type of qualitative data of any type of social research method (McNeill & Chapman 2005).

Furthermore, while similar, my experiences are different in other ways because not only am I trainee participating on board, I am also a researcher and as such, even if an unconventional one, am an observer (McNeill & Chapman 2005). As a trainee – an insider – and a researcher – an outsider (McNeill & Chapman 2005), I am able to first gain insight into trainees' experiences, but will be able to better understand what other Leeuwin workers/volunteers say also. In essence, this creates an opportunity to explore explicit knowledge or what is known and spoken about, as well as tacit knowledge or what is rarely acknowledged (Newman 2006). In other words, the lens is wide and focused on capturing how the Leeuwin II culture ticks (Goldbart & Hustler 2005; Somekh & Lewin 2005).

So, through an ethnographic approach, the research participants are the 'meaning-makers', with an emphasis on how they interpret their world, while also capturing the culture of the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship. Part of the

success of this approach is to maintain a balance between being detached and connected (McNeill & Chapman 2005). This extends from me monitoring my own actions through self-awareness on my voyage. In fact, this is one reason for me writing and including my journal that is subsequently featured in a later chapter. But I also include it because it provides an exclusive understanding about what trainees experience day-to-day while they're on board their Leeuwin II voyage (McNeill & Chapman 2005).

This is clearly a complex research project I am undertaking, and being creative is an essential part of it. Using an ethnographic approach will strengthen it by giving me insight into a multitude of issues such as, the interactions between participants, leaders, program elements, program goals, the field of adventure and more. Thus, there is a wider breadth and depth of understanding through engagement with multiple constructed realities. These include perspectives of trainees, Leeuwin II Board members, Leeuwin II workers and volunteers, as well as my own experiences as a trainee. These perspectives enhance understanding based on a qualitative approach, the approach recognising the value of interpreting meaning rather than quantitative statistical data (Hallberg 2006).

In addition, because the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship is understood in light of everyday life, a grounded theory approach is also employed. This allows me to analytically explore the identity of trainees as it relates to the field of this vessel as well as developing theory through conceptual categories that are applied to a wider context. A strength of using a grounded theory approach is that it contributes to an in-depth depiction true to trainees and others by uncovering their experiences and perspectives (Nelson 2006). But it is important, too because it encourages a closeness to the Leeuwin II phenomenon as it develops an integrated set of theoretical concepts from the empirical

materials that not only synthesizes and interprets but shows processual relationships (Charmaz 2005).

Put simply, the underlying feature of grounded theory is that of a theory-generating research methodology based on actual data, gathered through qualitative research (Corbin & Holt 2005). It does this through employing a range of comparative conceptual categories that develop ideas about meanings, actions, and worlds through their specific data (Charmaz 2005). As such, it is a term more often than not used to refer to a specific mode of analysis. Essentially, this is because flexible analytic guidelines enable the researcher to focus data collection and to build inductive middle-range theories through conceptual development and successive levels of data analysis (Charmaz 2005).

From a practical sense a grounded theory approach details the overall design, and the specific method for gathering and analysing the data (Marshall & Rosman 2006), it also has the ability to generate basic concepts providing the stepping stones required to develop and update a disciplinary body of knowledge (Corbin & Holt 2005). It is an approach that aims to genuinely increase social scientific knowledge that is produced through systematic comparison of a wide range of empirical examples against a background of more general theoretical issues. The processual emphasis in grounded theory extends its analysis to overall relationships, for example between agency and structure, a focus of this research that poses theoretical and practical concerns (Charmaz 2005).

Thus, combining ethnographic and grounded theory approaches strengthens the ability of this research to explain the relationship between trainees' personal development and their participation on the Leeuwin II tall ship in light of their everyday lives. In essence, the methodology employed in this research considers the ethnographic approach as a tool conducive to analytical themes that are

often 'concerned with developing theoretical ideas' (Somekh & Lewin 2005, p. 18) of which a grounded theory method organizes and analyses data to give flexibility and focus (Charmaz 2006). Drawing upon these two approaches is an important attribute of this research as they provide potential to generate different ways of understanding, knowing, and responding to relations between a trainee's identity and the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship.

Moreover, it's an approach that provides a way of understanding this complex research project in an area of adventure research that has not yet adequately provided a methodology to achieve this. Indeed, while many over time have attempted to explain the relationship between young people's personal development and their participation in adventure programs, there is still no universally accepted model adequately addressing this complexity (Paisley, Furnam, Sibthorp & Gookin 2008). In fact, until recently, the discourse has been predominantly rhetoric; there have been few quality studies available to guide practice that remain largely an enigmatic process based on past experience, gut instinct, and untested or borrowed philosophical understanding or belief (Sibthorp 2003). Often much of the research has been complicated and reported in non-peer reviewed avenues that can include "grey" literature, with less in serialised professional outlets and scientific journals leading to a lack of rigor apparent in the data on which the findings are based, a lack of comparative studies as the principle research method used and few long term studies (Barret & Greenaway 1995; Friese, Pittman & Hendee 1995). Further, not much attention has been given to hearing the voice of the participant living the experience (Barret & Greenaway's 1995). In essence, until recently it has been said that, "the scientific research paradigm employed in most of the research reviewed has been shown to be ill-suited to the task of studying the complex phenomena which constitute the experience of outdoor adventure" (Barrett & Greenaway 1995, p. 53).

Subsequently, the methodology undertaken in this study addresses many of these gaps. In fact, the approach continues to fill gaps that remain. This is even despite in more recent times, since 1996 when an increased trend toward research published in peer-reviewed journals, with hundreds of empirical studies conducted that attempt to better understand impacts of outdoor adventure began to emerge (Neill 2006). As such, the trend is toward the improvement in research methodologies and a growing recognition by the scientific community in the quality of research in this field (Moore & Russell 2002). Indeed, the methodological approach employed in this research continues to contribute to this trend by giving more attention to young people's own perspectives and accounts (Neill 1997), increasing inductive qualitative research (McKenzie 2003), exploring the relationships between what different stakeholders, for example participants and staff, say about a programme's value and other characteristics of programme effectiveness (Neill 2006), and, testing the claims of organisations of enabling self-fulfilment with the aim to increase what is known about the impact of these expeditions on the young people themselves (Pikea & Beamesb 2007).

Primarily, this study seeks the views of the trainees to better understand their relationship between their personal development and the Leeuwin II tall ship in light of their everyday lives. Clearly, it makes sense to put them at the helm of this research because for one reason, their transitions back home are understood as happening in an environment where their futures are uncertain rather than predictable (Giddens 1990). But more importantly, because this is a time in their lives not experienced by previous generations in quite the same way, they are experts of their own experience. Thus, what they say can provide a vital insight; their views can enlighten and inform in many ways. First, in what outcomes they experience and second, how and why they relate them to their experience on board. Moreover, their views can shed light on the notion of

adulthood and identity development, particularly relevant in a new and changing world where identity is now more often understood rather than just simply accepted (Willmott & Nelson 2005).

Indeed, having participant voices heard is a move away from more passive approaches where research on young people tended to be based on adult interpretations and observations of them (Calvert 2008). In fact, there's a notable shift from an era where the views of young people themselves have been commonly absent from research and policy programs (Dwyer & Wynn 2001). In the current Australian political environment for example, there is a shift toward the belief in the right of young people to participate in and have a say about their lives relating to the changing political, economic and social structures (Evans, Ellis, Fetherston, Smith, Goodwin, Haddid & Gazzard 2008). Underpinning this sentiment is the belief that if interventions that target them are going to be accepted by them and salient to them, their viewpoint must be investigated (Blum & Nelson-Mmari 2004). Similarly, underpinning this research is the sentiment that understanding what trainees say about their identity development and how and why they think this happens in relation to their experiences on board the Leeuwin II tall ship are a valuable insight. In addition, what they say has potential to be applied to life outside this recreational program (Sibthorp & Arthur-Banning 2004). Yet while there is scope to extend what they say to a wider context, I am also aware that it cannot be strictly or automatically generalisable to all young people's everyday lives either. Simply this is because the small number of trainees taking part in this research cannot be representative of all young Australian people.

1.11 Research Design

Given this research involves human participants, ethical approval is obtained from Deakin University - Human Research Ethics Committee (DUHREC) before potential research participants are recruited. All recruitment is conducted by the Leeuwin Marketing and Development officer who contacts board members, workers/volunteers, and trainees who have sailed no longer than six months prior. Ensuring no harm comes to them, all are fully informed – without deception - about this research so they can make a choice as to whether they participate or not. This includes their right to withdraw from the research at any time. In the case of participants aged younger than eighteen years of age, consent is gained also from their parent/guardian. They receive a plain language statement explaining the research and my contact details if they wish to proceed to participate in the research.

In total there are forty-two research participants made up of two board members, twelve Leeuwin workers, and twenty-eight trainees who agreed to participate. Face-to-face one-on-one semi-structured interviews – see appendix 1 (Lindlof & Taylor 2002) are conducted with Leeuwin II workers/volunteers while I sail with them in November 2008. All other interviews, including board members, trainees and Leeuwin II workers/volunteers, except one Leeuwin II worker that is via email, I conduct with each individually by telephone between 2009 and 2010. To ensure their privacy and confidentiality, guarding them from any potential harm from identity exposure, they are given codes. Interviews are recorded and transcribed verbatim and they are given the option to have their interviews emailed to them for further comment. Finally, all interview transcripts are held at Deakin University at least six years after the research is complete (McNeill & Chapman 2005).

Semi-structured interviews are considered a strength of this study, indeed they are fundamental to a qualitative approach because they allow the perspectives of the research participants to unfold from their own views. The grounded theoretical approach then organises this data through categorical aggregation (Stake, 1995) that identifies key emergent themes. Forming the basis of this comparison are three categories of trainees. The first is 'Adolescents' - trainees who are aged younger than eighteen years of age, the second is 'Post Adolescents' – those who are aged eighteen years old through to their twenties, and the third is, 'Past Trainees' - trainees who were aged in their teens and twenties when they sailed years ago. Rather than form a separate category for gender, this focus becomes an integral part of the analysis. It was hoped that a category of Indigenous trainees would be created and be a part of this study but unfortunately, no Indigenous trainees volunteered to partake in the research so their views cannot be included. However, one adolescent trainee discloses having Asperger's syndrome, potentially giving further depth to the discussion from a disability perspective. This is certainly a strength of a grounded theoretical approach, that is, while it is not burdened by too many strict rules, it is strict enough to allow exploration of the content and meaning in the data (Hallberg 2006).

In addition, views of board members, Leeuwin II workers/volunteers, my own experiences sailing on board, literature, and theory also form part of this analysis. Interpretation of the meaning in the data is based on my own experience; this is a non-neutral position that is understood to further contribute to the strength of this study as it amplifies and enriches my interpretation of it (Corbin & Strauss 2008). In the first instance, my experience as trainee enables me to better connect to the meaning of Leeuwin II personnel, trainees and adventure literature. But it allows me to be critical also. For instance, going beyond this understanding through my own experience includes relating my

experiences as a person perceived as disabled similar, but not exactly, to the experiences of young people relating to everyday Australian life. This not only provides me greater insight into what the adolescent with Asperger's syndrome experiences, but it underpins the theoretical perspective proposed in this book. Moreover, rather than relying on analytical software, the analysis is a constant comparison by me. While this makes it a laborious, line-by-line process, in-depth way to scrutinise (Ryan & Bernard 2003a), it allows me to become more and more connected and 'grounded' in the data that in turn develops increasingly richer models and concepts of how the phenomenon being studied really works (Ryan & Bernard 2003b).

This research design is indeed beneficial in a complex area of research like this because it creates a fluid, evolving, and dynamic nature accommodating serendipity and discovery (Corbin & Strauss 2008). It opens up endless opportunities to learn more about the perspectives of the research participants and to connect it at a human level in their world. This creates an opportunity to capture actions and events that result from various factors flowing together and interacting in complex – and often unexpected – ways (Corbin & Strauss 2008). This includes the theoretical understanding that incorporates a relationship of the individual and society, the subjective and objective, also understood in terms of agency and structure being proposed in this research that also provides possibility for future analysis (Kvale 2003; Charmaz 2005). Thus the importance of capturing as much of this complexity as possible through concept, theory, and process is understood in this research. Yet at the same time, it is understood that capturing it all will be nearly impossible (Corbin & Strauss 2008).

1.12 Charting the Chapters

Exploring the relationship between trainees' identity development and their experience on board the Leeuwin II tall ship in light of their everyday lives is an exciting research adventure. It is an opportunity that is both innovative and challenging. Most of all, in memory of Matthew, conducting this research is an opportunity to build a positive outcome from a tragedy. That is, his death has motivated me to better understand trainees' identity development as it relates with their experiences sailing on board the Leeuwin II tall ship with young people's identity development in their everyday lives. His memory and spirit are with me; he is indeed the wind beneath these research sails.

In many ways, while it is a common cliché, this research is a journey that will be travelled. The journey entails holism, uncertainty and subjectivity (Bogg & Geyer 2007). Not simply resembling a straightforward or linear process, the adventure is a unique one; an innovative research project shrouded by creativity. The next chapter begins this journey by reviewing the adventure literature. In it attention is given to young people's developmental outcomes and how and why adventure works. In Chapter Three I propose my theoretical understanding of young people's identity development relating to contemporary social milieu; it is the basis for this study and a rationale for young people's participation in outdoor adventure, represented by trainees' participation in the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship. Chapter Four introduces the Leeuwin II field through its Board members, workers/volunteers and my own journal as trainee. The following three chapters analyse themes raised by the categories of the trainee research participants. Chapter Five is devoted to Category One, 'Adolescents', Chapter Six contains Category Two 'Post Adolescents' and Chapter Seven is the final Category Three of 'Past Trainees'. Finally, in Chapter Eight 'Conclusions and Beginnings,' I climb back up the rigging into my conceptual

crow's nest. From this vantage point I look behind and review the research. From this understanding, I discuss what trainees and others reveal about the relationship between their personal development and the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship in light of their everyday lives. The chapter concludes by proposing, or perhaps better put in nautical terms, charts a course for both practical application and possible future research.

1.13 Anchors Away

With a bottle of sparkling – symbolic of course – I now launch this study. It is an explorative journey into the wild blue yonder; one that is 'sea-ing' Young People's Identity Development in the twenty-first century as it relates to the field of the Leeuwin II tall ship.