

**The social construction of Jenolan
Caves: multiple meanings of a cave
tourist site**

Thesis submitted by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the relationships and resultant meanings that people have for the place of Jenolan Caves, the most visited cave tourist site in Australia. The aim of the research project was to:

further our understanding of the social dimensions of caves tourism in order to comment on issues and practices related to sustainability.

The question was approached from a constructionist perspective, which assumes that the world of human perception is not real in an absolute sense but is made up and shaped by cultural and linguistic constructs; it is a constructing of knowledge about reality not constructing reality itself.

The findings are based on interviews with staff, visitors and other people who regularly associate with the place of Jenolan Caves. The highlight, and perhaps the most exciting finding, was the rich depth of meaning that Jenolan is given by a broad range of people. Staff and visitors articulated a sense of passion, care and physical engagement.

The obvious emotion of place reflects the embodied nature of place experience, other facets of which include the active and sensual ways we interact, and make sense of places we visit. Although sight dominates the experience the sound, touch and smell in a cave are also essential ingredients of the experience.

It was clear that emotion is a response we have to place; emotion is also central in the construction of Jenolan as a tourism place. In particular passion and enthusiasm oscillates between visitors and staff, creating a connection between the two and becoming a central facet of Jenolan.

Emotions relating to place are also negative and there was a clear tension for many people in close association with Jenolan between protecting place and selling or using place. Two dominant discourses that people draw on to make sense of Jenolan are stewardship and commodification, these are ways of making sense of Jenolan that have different primary goals but in practice are woven together. The tension exists as a very real, expressed frustration, disillusionment, and at times anger for those that work at Jenolan. It is time this tension is acknowledged, if for no other reason than it will inevitably have an impact on the interdependent relationships that exist between staff,

visitors and others. That is, a satisfactory visitor experience is vulnerable to negative changes in staff relationship to place.

Within the managing organisation, and across a portion of the relevant disciplines, the embodied nature of place experience and interdependence between peoples and place is not fully recognised. It is not fully articulated within the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, and in likelihood is not articulated in other protected area agencies. The implications of these findings for the ongoing sustainability of protected area tourist sites, such as Jenolan Caves, is that discourses and approaches are required that open the management system to the sensual, emotional, and interdependent nature of place.

A systematic monitoring approach of Visitor Impact Management has been adopted by Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust. On reflection the aim of such an approach is to enable the organisation to identify when strategies need to be altered, that is to learn. The findings indicate that much about the visitor experience is emotional and relates to discourses or ways of seeing that aren't fully articulated in the organisation. The findings also indicate strong links between place interpretations of visitors, staff, the organisation and others. It is possible that frameworks such as Visitor Impact Management, which examine a component of place meaning in a systematic way, will facilitate solutions to many visitor related issues, but when the issues relate to tacit processes in the organisation or arise from unfamiliar discourses will not be recognised and/or dealt with. Visitor Impact Management located in the broader context of organisational learning may provide a process that opens the organisation to the full depth of place meaning, and provide tools for engaging with a broader variety of meaning-making discourses.

Qualitative methodology was adopted to answer these explorative questions. Specifically ethnographic methods of data collection were used: interviews, observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 79 staff and locals, and 140 visitors. These were recorded through note taking, returned to respondents for inspection (not to visitors), and then coded for items that provided insight into the relationship and meaning that Jenolan had inspired.

Principle conclusions

The findings suggest that:

1. The experience of relating to Jenolan is multi-sensual, emotional and cognitive. The full depth of the experience of place at Jenolan, including touch, sound and smell, should not be underestimated, partly because it is the fully sensual nature of the experience that provides an emotional response. Emotion is a significant part of Jenolan place meaning as it is the passion held by staff that facilitates the interdependent relationship between people(s) and place.
2. All persons were active in the process of meaning construction, for themselves and for others. Undoubtedly staffs were key players in the visitor experience, but so too were visitors in the staff experience. This web of interdependence suggests that an analysis of any one component can offer a limited understanding, indicating the need for ongoing wholistic awareness of place and relationship.
3. The third dimension that is explored in the thesis is tension and frustration expressed by those who work and interact closely with Jenolan. Staff at all levels within the organisation, and in the formal documents, used both stewardship and commodification discourses to make sense of Jenolan. The stewardship discourse portrayed place as requiring care and protection, whereas the commodification discourse represented place as a resource available to be transferred into product and financial exchange. At times the task of trying to both care for and sell place required incompatible strategies and resulted in considerable frustration and tension. It is these discourses that are used in the language of management and the formal documents pertaining to Jenolan. The discourses of stewardship and commodification are dominant in their use; consequently points of view will be listened to, acknowledged and considered most valid if expressed in the discourse of commodification and stewardship.

Statement of the Contribution of Others

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of others in the design, development, support and critical thinking associated with this work.

The research has been funded by the Australian Postgraduate Award (Industry) in conjunction with Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust. Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust has also provided considerable in-kind support including accommodation on-site and staff time.

The broad conceptual framework for the research was originally drawn up by my supervisors, Peter Valentine and David Gillieson (James Cook University) and Ernst Holland (Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust). The detail of the project aims and method was developed in collaboration with Peter Valentine and David Gillieson.

Associated outcomes of the thesis were two reports jointly undertaken by staff at Jenolan Caves, and members of the Social and Environmental Monitoring Committee. These reports are referred to in the thesis and appropriately referenced.

My involvement with this project would not have been possible without the support from Charles Sturt University in the form of leave, and ongoing encouragement.

Some of the illustrative material originated from my own photographs, however others have been kindly provided by Jenny Whitby (Newcastle and Hunter Valley Speleological Society), Kent Henderson (ACKMA) and the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust website.

I would also like to acknowledge the editorial assistance of Greg Kelly, and Marty Greig in the critique of logic and style.

Declaration on Ethics

The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted within the guidelines for research ethics outlined in the *National Statement on Ethics Conduct in Research Involving Human* (1999), the *Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* (1997), the *James Cook University Policy on Experimentation Ethics: Standard Practices and Guidelines* (2001), and the *James Cook University Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* (2001). The proposed research methodology received clearance from the James Cook University Experimentation Ethics Review Committee (approval number H1110).

Penny Davidson

(Date)

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Whilst many life journeys are intensely personal experiences they are often only made possible by the many people who provide support, encouragement, evaluation and even distraction. I would therefore like to acknowledge and offer sincere thanks to the many people who made my journey possible. I want to specifically acknowledge the direction, encouragement and support of Peter Valentine and Dave Gillieson – my supervisors. Many thanks to Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust for the opportunity to undertake this work, and the provision of the tangible resources that made the project possible. And also thanks to the staff, visitors, management, and many people associated with Jenolan Caves for their time, support and willingness to share their experiences. I would love to provide a name to you all, but I dare not for fear that I would leave someone out. A special thankyou to Ramona, Liz, Chiem and Mehtap for not only supporting me in my journey but also sharing theirs with me. And I should also acknowledge the warmth and refuge that the Dalrymple Squash community provided me – keeping me sane as well as fit.

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In loving memory of my brother Colin who passed away in the middle of this journey.

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Statement of sources

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

Signature

Date

Preface

This preface is written mostly for the visitors, staff, and management of Jenolan Caves. When you read this interpretation of your experiences I fully expect that either the environment has altered or your own experiences have altered and so the particular view expressed here may no longer resonate with you. After all, three years have passed since I did the interviews (2001). However, I hope that I have captured some essence of your experiences, and that some of the key themes and interpretations explored here have some relevance and possibly provide a new window for looking at those experiences.

If this is not the case, I have either erred (terribly) or it is time to again re-examine the relationships that people have with an environment and landscape such as Jenolan Caves.

A member of the Australasian Caves and Karst Management Association, David Williams (1982) presents the human relationship with caves as interactive, that we impact on the caves, and they impact on us. He says:

So in a tourist cave man (sic) is an integral component of the environment influencing and being influenced by the other components.

The structure of the thesis is not a single flow or theme. In adopting a qualitative and ethnographic approach I left myself open to the multitude of messages that could emerge from the data. And many 'messages' or insights did emerge, not all of which, you will be relieved to know, I attempt to cover here. But rather than selecting one theme I have chosen several. Why? Because they all constitute invaluable insights regarding the relationship between people and place, and have some implications for the task of 'management'. The themes I have chosen are connected by underlying theory and initial question. The thesis follows the route taken during the research; the arguments emerge from the data not as clear, singular findings but as particular viewpoints or interpretations. In reading it through you will be following the path, and struggle, of my own ponderings and interpretations. I present the document in this way because I believe that the process of research, the transparency of research (which surely must be the basis of 'validity or reliability' or is that believability) is more apparent if you are given the whole story. That is, the research is not treated as if the researcher was able to look at the world behind a glass wall – unseen and unfeeling, or that the emergence of results

was as clear a process as counting up the number of eggs that might have been hatched from a laboratory hen. The process of sorting and thinking about the results was exactly that: a process. It was not a linear path; it was convoluted, rugged and dark in parts. The thesis outlines this path – omitting the convolutions and darkness – mapping the development and synthesis of ideas, so that you, the reader, can see where I have come from and how I have got there, but also so that it may, in the end, be more believable to you.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Places are fusions of human and natural order and are the significant centres of our immediate experiences of the world. They are defined less by unique locations, landscape, and communities than by the focusing of experiences and intentions onto particular settings. Places are not abstractions or concepts, but are directly experienced phenomena of the lived world and hence are full with meanings, with real objects, and with ongoing activities. (Relph 1976: 40)

Purpose

In this thesis the author explores the tourist site of Jenolan Caves, NSW, one of four karst reserves that are managed by Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust (JCRT). The embodied and interdependent nature of place meaning arises from an ethnographic exploration of the ways people interact with Jenolan Caves and make sense of Jenolan. The inclusion of emotion and sensuousness in the visitor and staff experience implicates an all-encompassing management approach such as organisational learning.

The project was originally drawn up by two members of the Social and Environmental Monitoring Committee (SEM) (my supervisors) and the Karst Resources Manager, and as such it was driven by the agenda of contributing to the ongoing sustainability of Jenolan Caves through the development of a systematic monitoring process. The focus of the project was to be determined by the skills and desires of the student who took up the task, so what might have been a project on the development of indicators for water quality, or soil erosion became an exploration of the social construction of Jenolan Caves as a tourist site.

It can be argued that the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust performs at a high level of effectiveness given the difficult conditions in which they operate. I am referring here to:

- a lack of information and understanding about human interaction with natural resources in a recreation and tourism context;
- a lack of proven methods of transforming policy and intention into practice, particularly with respect to sustainable practices; and,

- particularly relevant to Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, a lack of information regarding human interaction with a karst landscape.

It seemed appropriate therefore that the study should aim to address the gaps in natural resource management and karst management knowledge by taking a wholistic perspective which incorporates the social dimensions operating at Jenolan Caves. Before management policies or strategies could be devised there needed to be a clearer understanding of the people/place relationship and meanings.

The aim of the project was expressed as intending to:

 further our understanding of the social dimensions of karst tourism in order to comment on issues and practices related to sustainability.

There were two subsidiary aims of:

- investigating the bounded social world of Jenolan Caves, as a case study for karst landscape, leading to an understanding of the breadth and depth of interactions and meanings of the social and physical worlds of Jenolan Caves; and
- formulating indicators that represent and measure the sustainability of these interactions and meanings.

These two aims were further divided into the following objectives:

- 1) to define the boundary and membership of the Jenolan Caves social system;
- 2) to discover and describe the range of interactions that occur between people, and the physical world;
- 3) to identify the significance and meanings of these interactions;
- 4) to identify threats to these meanings and relationships;
- 5) to identify key issues and management goals in the development of indicators and monitoring process; and
- 6) to develop indicators representing the sustainability of the social dimensions and an ongoing monitoring process of Jenolan Caves.

The thesis is an empirical inquiry into the phenomenon of how people (visitor, staff, researchers, cavers, coach drivers to name a few) relate to the place of Jenolan Caves.

The quest matches Yin's (1994:) explanation of a case study as an empirical inquiry investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. Yin goes on to say 'you would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions' (1994: 13). As such, this approach allows for the exploration of the interactions within the experience and the elements that are essential to an understanding of this form of tourist/visitor experience. The unfolding of the case study, the answers to the questions above, and how the answers were found are explained in this thesis.

Background

Jenolan Caves is located in a steep valley approximately three hours drive west of Sydney, just beyond the Blue Mountains (see Figure 1). Access to the caves is currently via one of two narrow, winding roads, with only one kilometre of road on the valley floor. The infrastructure at the base of the valley is a mix of housing, administration and services. Scattered on the roads leading away from the valley are staff houses, and closer to the top, visitor cabins. People travel to Jenolan Caves daily for work, live permanently at Jenolan Caves (for months at a time), travel for one-off day trips, and have stays of one to several nights. In this sense then Jenolan Caves has an associated community which is focussed on the caves themselves and is, to some extent, physically isolated from other communities.

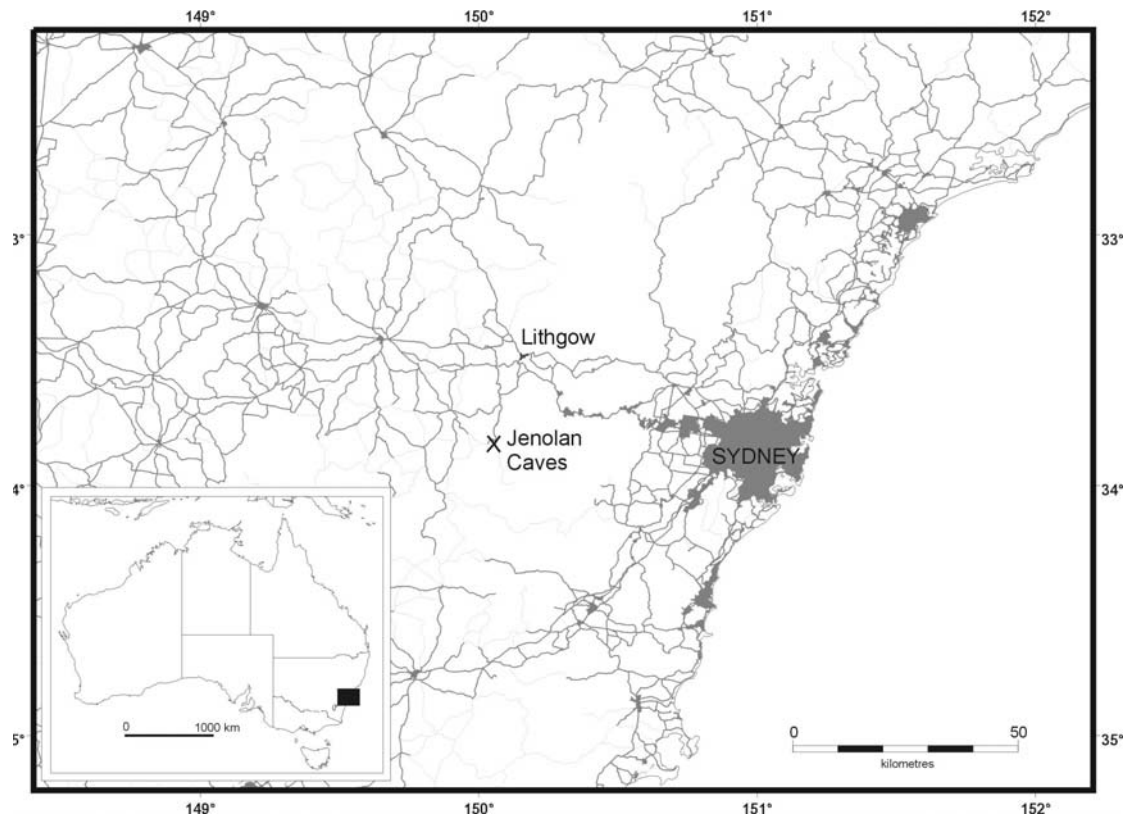


Figure 1: Location of Jenolan Caves

Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, the management body of the caves, intends to establish a system of management that will ensure the long term sustainability of the physical site and social dimensions of this popular tourist venue. The concern to achieve ‘sustainability’ mirrors rhetoric and action at international and national levels of tourism, natural resource management, and local and national governments. The Australian government has adopted the sustainability agenda and in 1991, published a series of reports on strategies for the implementation of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) in the context of specific sectors of Australia’s economy. One such report focused on strategies for the development of an ecologically and culturally sustainable tourism sector (Ecologically Sustainable Development Working Group 1991). Hence, at a national and international level¹ various guidelines and principles have been produced providing direction for achieving sustainability.

¹ For example, World Commission on Environment and Development, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) – to name a few.

Communities and governments are now asking the question: how can we ensure that activities such as tourism and outdoor recreation become ‘sustainable’? In the context of Jenolan Caves, and other karst tourism sites, the question becomes how can we ensure that damage to decorations, and crowding on surface areas for example, do not occur at levels that irrevocably harm the resources and human benefits?

These questions would be relatively easy to answer if we could simplistically prioritise all the factors and components. This, however, is not the case. The questions relate to complex ecological and chemical processes, but also to complex human emotions and activities. The complexity of desire and behaviour is not limited to visitors; it includes the myriad of emotions and interactions from staff, and together they combine to produce a complex and dynamic system of relationship to place. This thesis argues that the complexity of this system, including the emotional and sensual, needs to have a role in our understanding of place and our attempts to manage place.

This research occurs in the context of a very particular landscape: that of karst and caves. While the concept of ‘cave’ is familiar to most I soon found out that the term ‘karst’ is not a concept in general usage. Karst is a terrain and its defining landforms have been formed principally by the solution of the rock, most commonly limestone (Gillieson 1996). The result is a landscape that is characterised by caverns, tunnels, underground river channels, and frequently, the delights of cave decorations. A cave is a feature of the karst landscape, ‘a natural cavity in a rock which acts as a conduit for water flow’ or more simply defined as a natural cavity in a rock which is enterable by people (Gillieson 1996: 1, 2). Globally the human relationship with this landscape type would be a fascinating history, and story, if told. As with much of the world’s landscape modern technology has made access and activities possible that were hitherto considered impossible. And so it is that the 19th and 20th centuries have resulted in greatly increased access to these places. The history of colonial interaction with Jenolan Caves provides an example of how this relationship developed, and at risk of over simplifying what can only be a complex story, an outline of Jenolan Caves colonial history follows to provide some sense of context for the questions and story that follow.

A clear and uncontested history of ‘discovery’ does not exist for Jenolan Caves, but it seems that Charles Whalan was the first European who took an interest in exploring the caves and quickly developed a reputation as being a guide for others (Horne 1994) (Figure 2). From the 1840s Jenolan Caves had a reputation as a site of adventure,

exploration and geological learning; its reputation as an aesthetic experience continued to grow. The popularity of the site in the 19th century is evidenced by the construction of a dance platform in the Grand Arch, which was also the principle camping place for visitors at that time. Charles Whalan and his family regularly hosted visitors to the caves. As public interest continued to grow in 1866 the local member, John Lucas MLA, had Jenolan Caves reserved from sale; henceforth the land would always be public property. John Lucas was a strong advocate for the protection of Jenolan and lobbied the government to appoint Jeremiah Wilson as caretaker of the caves, and then later in 1872 lobbied for the site to be preserved so that legal action would ensue for those mutilating or destroying the decorations. Jeremiah Wilson built an accommodation house on the site, a precursor to current Caves House, and had visions of developing the caves to allow greater access but also of providing greater protection to the caves themselves. Slowly development did occur in the form of paths, steps, passageways and electrification, beginning with the Imperial Cave in 1887.

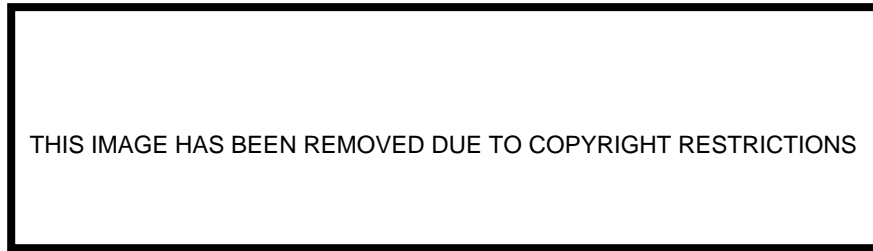


Figure 2: Section of Jenolan tourist caves (from Kent Henderson 1990)

The state government has always retained some control over Jenolan Caves: shifting from leases of the services to more direct caretakership. In 1990 the management of Jenolan Caves took yet another turn with the birth of the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust. The government of the day was following the principles of liberal government in divesting responsibility for ‘business operations’ to bodies other than government. The new management body for Jenolan Caves was the Trust (as it tends to be known). This change in management body also signalled a separation of the cave tours, food services and accommodation services. No longer were Caves House, kiosk and caves run by the one organisation. This history of development and changes provides a very important context for understanding the current human relationships to the place of Jenolan. The reserve remains under government care, through the statutory authority Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, answerable directly to the Minister for the Environment, NSW (currently The Hon. (Bob) Robert John Debus, MP). The Trust is responsible for the care of four karst areas, including Jenolan Caves, and was given the agenda of protection, tourism management and financial sustainability.

At the time of the research project the Trust had 42 permanent positions whose work spans across tour guiding, maintenance, administration and management. This workforce is mostly located at Jenolan Caves but a small percentage works at other karst tourism sites. In addition there is a sizable casual staff – mostly tour guides – of 70 people (Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust 2002a). The personal histories of people working at Jenolan Caves ranges from a thirty year career, to part-time work in order to raise money whilst on holidays from university. As will be evident in later interview excerpts, many people who work at Jenolan Caves are passionate about the place and the job that they do.

This study becomes a snapshot of Jenolan at the turn of the millennium. In the year 2001 Jenolan was a place of tourism, speleological leisure activities, home for many staff, site for bushwalking, trail bike riding (illegally), historical icon, general leisure place, workplace, research site, place of cultural significance for traditional owners, passageway and site for corporate development programs.

Structure of thesis

A brief moment in Jenolan Caves is outlined in the thesis, explaining the socially constructed meanings as a tourist site and the implications of these meanings to management.

Chapter 2

Chapter Two provides the context for the study. It explores the existing body of knowledge in the fields of natural resource management, tourism, karst management, and sustainability. What began as a challenge, to balance the protection of natural areas whilst providing satisfying opportunities of access, remains a challenge. Landscape managers continue to struggle to get the balance right, to find the perfect 'formula'. Australian landscape or natural resource managers have tended to follow the developments made in North America and so have adopted processes such as the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, Limits of Acceptable Change, Visitor Impact Management and so forth. One of these approaches had been adopted by Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust and is explored in detail in Chapter Two.

The task of exploring a cave tourism site began with a very obvious gap in knowledge of how people relate to, and value, caves. The karst literature has to date focused on pursuing the scientific knowledge of cave chemistry and geology. Relatively little has been said about the human dimensions of people and how they interact with cave and karst.

Chapter Two begins by reviewing the development of concern for the environment and achieving a balance between protection and use. It also overviews the different disciplinary contributions to understanding karst tourism: karst science, human geography, tourism studies and protected area management approaches. These bodies of work are vast and encompass both positivistic and interpretive paradigms. Whilst human geography, tourism and protected area management have articulated human relationships to place there is relatively little work that overtly describes staff (and other close associates) relationship and experience as related to place. One example is Dydia DeLyser's (1999) qualitative exploration of how visitors and staff engage with the notion of authenticity in the ways they experience the ghost town of Bodie in California This

work begins the process, but there continues to be a call for further exploration of the social dimensions of protected area.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two reflected what was thought to be the most relevant information at the time. However, as the project progressed, the complexity of relationship to place unfolded, and the complexity of the monitoring process suggested the need for a process whereby management could adequately incorporate new information. As a result the study field of *organisational learning* was explored after the research data collection had begun. I have included an analysis of this literature, and its implications, in Chapter Two as it occurred prior to data analysis and alongside data collection. The discussion chapters however introduce a considerable amount of new literature, reflecting the developing theoretical construction. I present the additional perspectives much as I began to utilise them so that the reader is able to follow my theory building and interpretation in the same order that it occurred. I do this with the intention of being as open as possible, making my arguments transparent, and hopefully also making the thesis more readable and possibly exciting, because it was very much a journey of discovery for me the researcher.

Chapter 3

Having explained the question and the context for the central question Chapter Three outlines how this question was answered. As such it explains the principle paradigm of constructionism that drives the research project, and how this paradigm, plus the question itself recommend a qualitative approach. The exploratory nature of the question – seeking to understand what interactions, relationships and meanings occur in this particular setting, and seeking to capture the complexity of the whole – is well suited to an open-ended approach available with qualitative methods. Ethnography, which is designed to examine what people say and do, was adopted as the methodology. Ethnography is a study of people, their interactions, stories, rituals and artefacts culminating in a description, analysis and interpretation of the culture of the social group (Creswell 1998). The interview questions are outlined, and the analytical process is described. The chapter concludes with a brief exploration of the challenges and inconsistencies in the research process as a result of the very personal nature of researching the intimate relationships between people and place. It is intended that this

discussion be seen as an attempt to honestly explore and make overt the challenges and tensions of the ethnographic research process itself.

Chapter 4

The remaining chapters present the data and interpretations culminating in the final 'conclusion' in Chapter Nine.

Chapter Four is primarily a summary of the visitor experience using the frameworks that have been adopted by previous researchers. The words of the visitors very easily fit into the traditional categories of 'getting away', 'novelty', 'personal development', and so on. Previous leisure and tourism studies have derived experiential categories, which while having common elements to each other, are varied to suit the idiosyncrasies of the study and/or the researcher's approach. Jenolan as a leisure and tourism experience is characterised by relaxation, hospitality, socialness, novelty / difference and pleasure. Visitors come to Jenolan to experience leisure and their experience as tourists at Jenolan matches the defining characteristics of leisure and tourism. Jenolan is talked about as being relaxing and contributing to the individual's personal well-being. At a general level, and also at Jenolan, relaxation is possible because much of the work done in creating the experience is done by someone else, hence hospitality and service are important elements of the experience. The experience is also discernible by characteristics of novelty and difference in the landscape, interactions and personal challenges. Ultimately it is a highly personal and rewarding experience, not just for the conventional visitor but also for staff, and other people who regularly associate with Jenolan Caves.

Chapter 5

Having explored the data in a fairly traditional way, that is exploring the repetitive themes that define the tourism and leisure experience, I looked for a way to examine people's experiences in a more intimate way as the data so obviously demonstrated the corporeal nature of the human relationship to the space of Jenolan Caves. I follow Urry's (1999) approach in drawing on the work of Paul Rodaway and Yi Fu Tuan who present the sensuous geographies and describe the way people physically relate to landscape. Their work takes up the call for the inclusion of the body in social theory which arises from a critique of Cartesian dualisms and rationalism (Turner). The work of Rodaway and Tuan, along with others such as Grosz (1994); Williams and Bendelow (1998), provided

me with a different kind of framework, and yet also a very obvious framework that enabled me to explore the ways people sensed the landscape. In this chapter there is an exposition of how people see, touch, hear and smell Jenolan; the sense of taste is not explored. Using this framework in a cave environment opened up novel, but at the same time, quite obvious insights. The strength of this chapter is perhaps not so much the new insights it offers as how it serves to remind us of what we already knew, and reinforces the work of David Crouch, John Urry, Betsy Wearing and others who argue that the leisure/tourism experience is an embodied experience.

Chapter 6

In acknowledging the embodied nature of place experience and place construction then one is also acknowledging the emotional facets of that experience and that place construction arises from *interaction* with place and others. Chapter Six explores the dimensions of emotion and interdependence in greater detail. Emotion is part of place construction, emotion is part of the Jenolan product, and emotion is a central component of organisational functioning. The emotion that staff hold for place, their passion and care, is vital to the relationship that is built with visitors, but also the emotional response from visitors to place and staff is fundamental to staff experience of place.

Chapter 7

Part of the central meaning of Jenolan is a very real tension that is experienced in the lives of people who closely associate with Jenolan as place. There are many ways this tension might be explored but it seemed to me that it was not so much an individual or site-peculiar phenomenon, but rather a tension that is symptomatic (or more generalised) of the challenge presented by the sometimes contradictory goals of protecting and using our cultural and natural environments.

The dominant discourses, that is, those used by the decision makers, and majority of staff and visitors, are commodification and stewardship. These discourses have incompatible goals that create considerable tension for people who engage with them. The incompatibility and tension is interpreted by some members of the Jenolan community as an 'us and them' situation, and it seems that tools and techniques for negotiation are either not available or not being used.

Seeing place as in need of stewardship was common for staff, management, visitors and others. Stewardship is quite a 'fashionable', although not uncontested, concept used in the expression of concern for environmental and cultural heritage. Stewardship is explored in Chapter Seven as a powerful and influential discourse. The analytical focus shifts to the language that is used in interviews or written documents and the possibilities of sense making it provides. The discourses that are used at Jenolan are not Jenolan specific; we make sense of Jenolan by drawing on discourses that are available to the broader society.

Where the stewardship discourse embodies the agenda of protection the commodification discourse embodies use of protected areas. Commodification is a discourse that constructs Jenolan as a product or commodity: Jenolan is produced and sold to customers or clients. Commodification has become a very powerful discourse in the Western world because whilst it emanated from the commercial world, the language and underpinning philosophies have been adopted by non-commercial organisations such as governments and non-government organisations. The language of commodification, customers and clients, productivity, and so forth no longer belongs just to the commercial world.

There is a need to recognise that the currently global or generalised challenge of protection and use results in tension at a personal level, but this is not a personal problem. We need to adopt approaches that do not assume that staff working in protected areas can somehow easily resolve the contradiction of protecting and selling place. Instead, it is argued, this tension needs to be acknowledged, named and explored.

Chapter 8

The social construction of Jenolan at the decision making level is not drawing on the perspectives that articulate emotion, embodiment (the multi-sensual nature of experience) and other ways of understanding place. Jenolan is constructed by a myriad of discourses, including those that articulate emotion and embodiment, but these latter discourses have relatively little influence at management level: suggesting that management engages with a limited range of meanings of Jenolan and that management might benefit from opening to a broader range of discourses, particularly those that are able to articulate the emotional and embodied dimensions of Jenolan.

One author who examines the meaning of place, Betsy Wearing, says:

Those who give social value to place, ... those who practice place, who use it, [and] experience it, give it social meaning ... The danger is that places will be promoted as images ... as part of the 'tourist gaze', objects to be looked at and admired ... (Wearing 1998: 134-135) [rather than places of practice]

Chapter Eight returns to the management agenda of using the findings to inform the issue of sustainability, and the possibility of establishing a monitoring programme that provides feedback on the effectiveness of strategies and processes. One way of utilising the findings of this thesis could be to construct an ongoing survey that would include multi-sensual and emotional dimensions in order to monitor how effectively the organisation is maintaining these meanings for visitors. Part of the monitoring process might include a survey of staff satisfaction and levels of passion as these have been clearly shown to be instrumental in the overall meaning making of Jenolan as place.

However, this approach by itself would not open the organisation to alternative perspectives or provide a mechanism to negotiate the contrasting goals of commodification and stewardship. It wouldn't provide the tools for recognising, articulating or negotiating the multitude of issues surrounding the construction of Jenolan as a tourist place. Management requires a mechanism that will enable the organisation to be more inclusive of:

- the sensuality and emotion that constitute place;
- visitor agency; and
- staff/ visitor/ place interdependency.

An expanded interpretation of monitoring broadens the 'management' discourse and increases the strategies available. If we examine the purpose of monitoring and understand it to be that of 'learning', then we can redefine the agenda of the organisation to be to establish organisational learning processes. This broader agenda increases the options available to the organisation to those beyond systematic monitoring processes, drawing on the existing body of knowledge around adaptive management, but more usefully organisational and community learning.

Developed by organisational theorists over the past twenty years organisational learning provides a mechanism that might enable Jenolan management to be open to multiple perspectives, to take a wholistic approach and to acknowledge the interdependence between components of place.

Organisational learning provides a mechanism that opens up the organisation to more postmodern approaches, allowing it to include a broader range of perspectives and discourses. If Jenolan is able to achieve this then it will have not just an effective monitoring system, but also a process that fosters an ongoing awareness of individual and organisational relationship to the place of Jenolan.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter reviews what is known or understood about the human relationship to the karst environment, particularly in the context of tourism. It explores a range of study fields and disciplines, identifying gaps and querying existing interpretations. Later in the thesis a broader range of literature has been drawn upon to make sense of the data.

The Karst landscape: natural resource, leisure site and home

Jenolan Caves in geological terms is defined as a karst landscape: a very particular geomorphologic and ecological terrain, distinguished from other places by its rock type, topography, water movement, soil chemistry and so forth. This is a scientific way of understanding the place of Jenolan: the landscape is an object to be examined and explored, to be considered and evaluated in an unemotional, detached and logical way: or as Urry (1999) phrases it, the human relationship to landscape is one of ‘scientisation’.

Jenolan Caves is a very particular ‘natural resource’ where the key management goal is to manage the resource for human pleasure whilst maintaining the ecological integrity of the landscape (Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust 2002a). Jenolan Caves was first protected by the governing body of Australia in the late 19th century. The process of preserving natural landscapes for recreation and protection occurred across the developed nations over the last 150 years and there now exists a growing body of knowledge explicating ‘how to manage’ these sites. North America has led the field (in the English speaking world) with the development of frameworks such as Visitor Impact Management, Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, and Visitor Activity Management Process. The desire to develop appropriate management strategies has resulted in a considerable body of research into the visitor experience and user behaviour at natural resource sites.

A related field of study to protected area management is that of leisure and tourism. These two phenomena are sometimes considered as separate fields (McKercher 1996), sometimes considered one and the same (Crouch 1999). The approach taken here is that Jenolan Caves is both a leisure site, and tourism site, and that at the level of human experience leisure and tourism overlap to a very large extent. The leisure and tourism fields of literature provide an insight into not just people’s relationship with natural resources, but also their broader intentions and values associated with leisure and travel.

In addition to being a place of leisure Jenolan Caves is the home and workplace for a significant number of people; mostly staff who work either for the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, Caves House, or Trails Bistro. The diversity of relationships and meanings associated with Jenolan Caves are therefore not just of leisure and recreation, but also of work and home. On this question the literature is less forthcoming. We can glean some information from tourism and community studies, but there is little exploration or explanation of the place meanings that derive from living, caring for and selling place. Organisational and management literature investigates the human dynamics of organisations and institutions and offers some insight into how these institutions colour and contribute to the meaning making of Jenolan.

I will use the field of human geography as a framework to pull the diverse ideas and understanding together. It is a field that intersects and overlays with much of the previous literature, but also offers a distinctive perspective and set of tools in understanding the human relationship with Jenolan Caves.

History

Colonial Australia began a process of establishing reserves and protected areas in the late 1800s and Jenolan was declared a reserve in 1866, and was the first to be placed under conservation regulations (Hamilton-Smith 2000). Events such as the publication of *Man and Nature* by George Marsh in 1864 were instrumental in coalescing an interest and concern for the protection of the ‘natural’ environment away from one of human-directed change or removal (Worboys *et al.* 2001). The new environment of Australia (and other ‘new’ worlds) perhaps inspired a particular interest and care in flora and fauna and prior to the catalyst of publications such as *Man and Nature* there was already a growing number of groups formed to protect some elements of the environment. For example the Royal Society of South Australia was formed in 1853 which established a section of field naturalist and was instrumental in having numerous reserves declared (Worboys *et al.* 2001). Many bushwalking clubs, for example the Ramblers Walking Club (The Ramblers Walking Club Inc. 2003), were formed around the early 1900’s and were often motivated by concern for the environment. The establishment of parks and reserves was instigated for both recreation and conservation purposes but it wasn’t until the 1900s that general public interest, often voiced through bushwalking clubs, pushed

for additional 'national parks' and eventually a 'National Park Act' (Worboys *et al.* 2001: 31).

This concern for the environment was an articulation of the tension between place use and place preservation (Wearing and Neil 1999). The early debate presented 'use' as destructive and therefore exclusion zones or reserves were established where 'use' was prohibited or restricted. For example the establishment of Morton National Park in NSW, Australia was driven by one particular person, the state politician Mark Morton, who argues in a letter to the Minister for Lands in 1937:

In putting the whole area under one Trust, the only purpose in view is not only to protect what is left of our native fauna and flora but also to provide a sanctuary for their protection and their increase. The ruthless destruction which is so constantly going on all over the State is so diminishing the number of these birds and animals, that they will soon be extinct ... (Stanley no date: 6).

Morton National Park was established to protect species and scenic beauty, and provide for public recreation. And yet even after declaration of protection there remained considerable pressure from the timber industry to log within the park. The timber industry argued that 'beauty spots and natural wonders should be preserved though not huge areas involving economic waste to the extent of millions of pounds' (Stanley no date: 17). In this case the Trustees were adamant that the National Park retain its ecological integrity and it was noted that they were supported by the Sydney Bush Walkers Club, The Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia and the local press. The state was developing a stewardship approach to landscape aiming to preserve sites from exploitation and assuming recreational use to be benign.

Institutionalisation of environmental stewardship - Recognition of the need for a balance

Such concern was occurring internationally with agencies, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (founded: 1945) and its associated Protected Areas Programme (World Heritage Sites), and International Union for the Conservation of Nature (founded: 1948) (now The World Conservation Union),

developed with the aim of understanding and protecting the 'environment'. The institutionalisation of stewardship, as evidenced by the large number of organisations, agencies, individuals, and government departments participating, coincided, and was often embedded, in an overall rational and bureaucratic approach (Dryzek 1997; Brosius 1999). The rhetoric used by many environmentalists evolved into a discourse of sustainability where protection and conservation were rationalised as part of a balanced and sustainable approach to resource use. By the 1990's an agenda of conservation and protection had become an 'assumed truth' within some areas of resource management, and had become a set of unquestioned goals for the management agencies. Ralph Buckley's book 'Perspective in environmental management' is one such example. In this text Ralph Buckley assumes that concern for the health of the environment has primacy:

Multiple-use management in parks and reserves should be restricted to uses that do not compromise the primary objective of conservation.
(Buckley 1991: 254)

It was within this context that the current management authority for Jenolan Caves, the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, was established as a semi-autonomous body to manage one of the prime nature-based tourism locations in NSW. In the 1990's no longer was nature or the environment simply a resource to be mined, or a site of luxury and privilege; we had shifted into the era of 'ecotourism' and the mass opportunity (for the developed world) to participate in nature-based tourism (Wearing and Neil 1999). Popular media and local advertising groups promote the possibility of adventure and the potential to 'escape' to sites such as Jenolan Caves (Blue Mountain Tourist 2001; MacKenzie 2001).

Different approaches – management frameworks

A declaration of reserve or protected status does not automatically result in guaranteed preservation of a particular resource. There remain challenges from other interested parties such as logging companies as given in the example above. It was over twenty years ago that Hendee, Stankey and Lucas (1978) argued that the task of natural resource management is primarily about management of people, recognising that recreational use is not the benign activity that we perhaps first thought it was, and that protected areas might need to be 'saved' from those who use them for their scenic values and ecological integrity.

As a result numerous management frameworks have been developed in the field of protected area management to assist the task of 'balancing diverse values related to preservation and use' (Graefe, Kuss and Vaske 1990: 5). These include:

- Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (Clark and Stankey 1979);
- Limits of Acceptable Change (Stankey, Cole, Lucas, Peterson, and Frissell 1985);
- Visitor Impact Management (Graefe, Kuss and Vaske 1990);
- Visitor Activity Management Process (Graham, Nilsen and Payne 1988; Tayler 1990; Pigram and Jenkins 1999);
- Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (U.S. Department of the Interior 1997), and
- Tourism Optimisation Management Model (McArthur 1996; Hall & McArthur 1998).

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) was designed to create a diversity of recreation experiences and a framework of provision that allows visitors to match their desires with an opportunity provided for by the managing organisation (Clark and Stankey 1979). This system does not have a formal indicator and feedback system in the way that the later approaches do. Its implementation has been limited to policy and inventories with little application to decision making at the operational level (McArthur 2000).

Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC), is a management framework that identifies acceptable changes to the resource and the points where these changes no longer become acceptable to the visitor or resource. LAC draws on general guidelines regarding indicator development; it looks for indicators that are feasible to implement, responsive to change and managerial intervention and can be incorporated into a relatively simple set (Stankey *et al.* 1985). The standards applied to these indicators are derived from legal mandates, agency policy, historical precedents and previous experience (McArthur 2000). One of the criticisms of LAC was just how to determine which indicator to use, and at what point is an unacceptable standard reached. It was originally intended that the community would be involved in the development of each LAC, and yet none of the prescribed steps include community input.

Visitor Impact Management (VIM) was developed as a way of focusing management concerns on impacts and recognising that a management model needs to be able to respond to changing physical, ecological, social and economic situations (McArthur 2000). Little is known how organisations applying this model determined their indicators or standards that triggered management concern.

As a result of a shift in concern toward an emphasis on the physical resource and relatively little concern for the visitor experience the Visitor Activity Management Process (VAMP) model introduced a market driven approach to management, as opposed to product driven (Graham *et al.* 1988). The model incorporates a monitoring and feedback system but little direction is provided as to how to design the monitoring process. This approach was never really adopted outside the originating Canada, and even there, has since been less frequently used (McArthur 2000).

Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP) attempts to integrate the two agendas of visitor management and resource management – in a sense it is a combination of VAMP, ROS, LAC and VIM. It incorporates a formal feedback loop. The relatively few applications of VERP have used public participation and visitor research to identify the working standards (McArthur 2000).

The Tourism Optimisation Management Model (TOMM) was developed more specifically for the broader tourism industry, aiming to foster a sustainable industry and based on the assumptions that sustainable tourism relies on a sustainable resource and consistent quality of visitor experience (Manidis Roberts 1996). The three main components of TOMM are context analysis, a monitoring program and a management response system (McArthur 2000). Indicators and management response are drawn up based on a series of stakeholder consultation steps, and as Simon McArthur notes in his evaluation of these frameworks one of the model's limitations is the issue of selecting the 'right' indicators.

All the frameworks are versions of quality management approaches (Hamilton-Smith 2000) specifically designed for protected areas. The management frameworks mentioned above utilise similar processes. They all incorporate:

- Description of desired future conditions
- Indicators

- Standards
- Monitoring process
- Management actions, and an
- Iterative process.

The process of devising the indicators and standards occur variously across these approaches. Even though these approaches intend to use feedback mechanisms in order to refine and update their content a common weakness found by Simon McArthur (2000) in his evaluation of these frameworks is that they typically fail to perform this function. The intention of feedback systems is to incorporate an iterative process, expecting that there will be no one, final solution, rather, there will be continual learning and a shift to better practice. The frameworks were also written to fit into broader or other management processes; it is not expected that they deal with all the issues that the organisation would face. Whilst they offer similar strategies they take slightly different perspectives and may focus on different aspects during the task of finding a balance between use and preservation. Visitor Impact Management (VIM), for example, is a management framework primarily concerned with the issues of visitation, and the impacts that visitation produces. It assumes that a specific site and activity will produce unique impact interrelationships (Graefe, Kuss and Vaske 1990: 5). The task for management is to identify these unique impacts and determine which are unacceptable changes; the strategy then recommends the operation of these as management objectives and the implementation of a monitoring program. Visitor Activity Management Process (VAMP), on the other hand, is visitor activity or visitor experience focused (Graham, Nilsen and Payne 1988; Tayler 1990; Pigram and Jenkins 1999).

There has been variable adoption of these models by agencies across Americas, Australasia and Europe – predominantly in North America and Australia. The models are frequently piloted or begun (McArthur 2000), but not continued – Jenolan Caves is an example case. Simon McArthur (2000) reviews the process and reasons for effective implementation of these approaches. Drawing on Hogwood and Gunn's (1984) analysis of implementation failure McArthur explains that the difficulties of implementation arise from:

1. crippling constraints from external influences

2. inadequate time and resourcing
3. inadequate combination of resources
4. poor policy framework
5. too many indirect links between cause and effects
6. too many dependency relationships
7. misunderstanding and lack of agreement on model objectives
8. poor task definition
9. poor communication and coordination
10. non-compliance among stakeholders.
11. (McArthur 2000: 86-87)

For the most part these explanations identify problems with external and tangible components of the implementation process (points 1, 2 and 3), or difficulties with the organisational framework (points 4, 8 and 9), inadequate understanding of issues (points 5, 6 and 7), and only one explanation that incorporates some sense of emotion and the human element (point 10, although poor communication and coordination might also be an emotive human response).

A more recent approach to protected area and natural resource management is that of adaptive management. Adaptive management has been attracting growing attention since the 1970s as a management approach (Stankey *et al.* 2003). I will return to adaptive management and Visitor Impact Management later in the chapter in the context of *organisational learning*.

All these frameworks aspire to provide an iterative and wholistic approach to negotiating the conflict between conservation of resource and its utilisation, in the context of visitor use. They present themselves as rational and scientific approaches to management, and incorporate or draw on scientific research related to the environment, visitation, and human relationship to the environment. This body of knowledge cuts across numerous fields of study and disciplines, many of which are relevant to the question of understanding the multiple meanings that people hold for, and ways they interact with, a protected area site such as Jenolan Caves.

Call for greater integration of social issues

In recognition of the web of components that form part of the management of a natural landscape Worboys, Lockwood and De Lacy (2001: 95-96) list six considerations in the process of decision making for these areas:

- Environmental / ecological
- Economic
- Social (referring to outside community)
- Political (state political processes)
- Legal (legislative requirements)
- Managerial (organisational components: structure, processes, personnel)

However their text takes a traditional management perspective in the sense that they follow the template of management texts before them, exploring the processes of planning, administration, economics, visitor management, and threats. Whilst there has been much significant work done on human interaction and relationship with the natural environment, there is still much that we don't understand. The current management and community concern with sustainability focuses on environmental (flora, fauna, geology etc) facets, sometimes avoiding or forgetting the social dimensions (Ritchie 1998; Steins and Edwards 1999; Sharpley 2000). The interest in social dimensions is particularly pertinent to karst areas and karst tourism because questions of human interaction with this resource from a leisure / tourism perspective have only recently been asked and explored (See Doorne 2000; Kiernan 1989a; White, N. 1994; Pavlovich 1998). Likewise the tourism literature is critiqued for being disinterested in resource, host community and cultural issues (Nash 1996; Carter, Baxter and Hocking 2001). Another facet that has received relatively little examination is the *interaction* between the physical and social worlds; recently articulated in the work of human geographers (Whatmore 1999; Crouch 2000), environmentalists (Dryzek 1997) and some tourism researchers (Veijola and Jokinen 1994; Markwell 2001a).

The gap in knowledge about social dimensions is being addressed. Many authors are concerned with the human dimension of natural resource management but their focus is

on visitors or community, and often considers the protected area to be an isolated entity: the human dimension of the people working on the ground, that is, as employees is ignored except in so-called third world countries, or where the employees are self-employed such as in fisheries or farms. It seems that we think the human or social dimensions of natural resource management are extremely important as long as those human dimensions are outside the management agency. The management agency is assumed to be a homogenous, integrated whole perhaps with responsible, dedicated personnel enacting policies and procedures just as they are written.

As a result of the implementation and trials of the management frameworks, such as VIM, greater recognition of the complexity and ambiguities of visitor's needs and behaviours has been provided. But what of the on-ground workforce? Do these people leave behind their human idiosyncrasies? Their passions and frustrations? Their beliefs and desires when they come to work? How does staff relationship to place, visitors and other staff contribute to the overall complexity of place meaning? How does a management system accommodate the complexity of the full breadth of the human dimensions of a natural resource? These questions are unasked and unanswered in either the modern or postmodern approaches to landscape and place. We do not come to these questions with empty pages, social theory from tourism studies, human geography, and natural resource management can make significant contributions. In some ways these questions are about human resource management in the contemporary organisation, but they go beyond that, seeking an integration of management theory with human geography. Chapter Two introduces the contributions of these fields of study, which are then drawn on later in the development of the thesis, and lead into an exploration of the merit of organisational learning in bridging the gap between the rational world of resource and tourism management and the emotional / physical / cognitive relationship that visitors and staff develop to place.

Related research

Human interaction in karst landscape

Human relationships with the karst environment will have many similarities to human relationships in other natural environments, but there may also be many significant differences necessitating research specific to karst regions. There is limited published

literature (literature in English) on karst tourism that has focussed on how best to manage human activity in a karst environment: options such as gating (Henderson 1998; Jeffries 1998), interpretation (Hamilton-Smith 1995; White S. 1999), classification systems (Taylor, N. 1994; White, S. 1994) and visitor monitoring systems (Bunting 1998a; de Freitas 1998) have been offered. Much of the general discussion on karst tourism has drawn on the conceptual and empirical work of other outdoor recreation and protected area literature. Management staff, however, has been operating in a partial knowledge vacuum as very little work or discussion has specifically examined the visitors and users of karst environments. In Australasia completed works include:

- Doorne's (1998, 2000) study of the perceived levels of crowding;
- Kiernan's (1995) discussion of the religious use of caves;
- White's (White N. 1994) analysis of visitors to the Buchan Caves;
- Veldman's (1997) study of coach travellers at Jenolan Caves;
- Campbell's (1998) study of the experiences, perceptions and preferences of Jenolan Caves visitors;
- Pavlovich's (1997, 2001) study of the networks of social exchange at the Waitomo Caves village; and
- Sunkar's study of sustainable resource management in tropical karsts in rural Java (Sustainability in karst: the case of the Gunung Sewu in Java) (ongoing).

Both Kathryn Pavlovich and Arzyana Sunkar's studies begin with the assumption that the socially expressed meanings and relationships to the physical world occur as part of a network of actions and interactions. To understand one part of that network one needs to have a sense of the interconnectedness to other parts. Pavlovich (2001) did an ethnographical study of the independent stakeholders in the Waitomo tourism community examining their engagement with the Waitomo Landcare group. She unpicks the group or network's behaviour highlighting the implications of network density, organisational nodes, and group aggregations for tourism managers and network coordinators. This body of work answers many questions regarding human interaction with the physical environment but leaves unanswered the network processes and relations that pertain to non-independent stakeholders such as staff.

The karst specific work reflects the experiences and values that people are seeking in the broader range of natural tourism sites. For example, Masberg and Silverman's (1996) work found that in a park setting visitor outcomes were increased knowledge, and personalised and emotional outcomes such as learning, social benefits and aesthetic experiences. That is, people relate to parks as a combination of setting, landscape, ritual, routine, social, and personal experiences. The karst specific literature reflects these facets, with issues such as perceived crowding (Veldman 1997; Doorne 1998; Campbell 1998), level of hospitality, novelty, accessing knowledge about the many aspects of the landscape and a sense of escape (Veldman 1997; Campbell 1998) being important to the karst experience. Very little attention has been paid to human interaction with a karst environment outside the tourism context although Kiernan (1995) explored the religious significance of karst in Asia, and White S. (1994) assessed the numbers of recreational cavers in Australia. Both these works are significant because they remind us that tourist visitation is not the only manner in which we interact with caves, and focusing on the tourist provides a partial representation or understanding of the human relationship to this landscape.

Tourism

Natural resource tourism, nature tourism, or 'ecotourism' – forms of tourism that focus on the natural environment – have an exponentially increasing body of literature associated with them. In the broader context of tourism of all types, and the nature-based tourism, the majority of the literature focuses on two facets of the tourism social system: the motives and experiences of the tourist (e.g. Madrigal 1995; Botterill and Crompton 1996; Silverberg, Backman and Backman 1996; Higham 1997; Blamey and Hatch 1998) or the experiences and impacts of tourism on hosts (e.g. Ap and Crompton 1993; Boissevain 1996; Pearce, Moscardo and Ross 1996). Nash (1996) in his review of anthropological work in tourism, calls for the adoption of a bigger picture approach to tourism study, one which will include the producers of tourism in the developed world and take note of the full range of transactions that occur in the tourism 'system'. Pearce, Moscardo and Ross (1996) begin to address the lived experience of the actors (or producers) through 'social representations' but they have so far used the perspective to explore impacts on communities more than exploring the whole web of relationships. Pearce and Greenwood (1999) analyse the visitor experience on the Great Barrier Reef concluding that the visitor experience is indeed complex and much can be gained from a

mix of qualitative and quantitative research tools. Whilst it is useful to understand the issues related to visitors, or hosts, independently, there is also a need to understand the relationships and interactions of the whole, including the relationship with the resource itself. Delyser's (1999) work goes some way to addressing this question in her exploration of how authenticity is constructed, experienced and employed by both visitors and staff in a Californian ghost town. It should also be acknowledged that considerable work has been done examining the 'tourism system'; work such as Mill and Morrison (1998) and La Lopa and Marecki (1999), and yet this work focuses on the economic goals of tourism activity, and as Wearing and Wearing (2001) observe, fails to include the human or personal elements of the tourism experience.

There is also a growing body of literature, and understanding of human interaction with place, frequently in the tourism context. Martin Young's doctoral thesis (1997) examined the meanings that visitors attributed to their holiday in Queensland's tropical rainforest. He concluded that domestic visitors were more likely to be aware of the natural and cultural values of the place; people who frequently holidayed in natural environments had more strongly held values regarding the natural and aesthetic factors than others; visitors who had not previously visited a rainforest area scored higher on the cultural values; and visitors who participated in a guided tour attributed greater natural and cultural meaning to the area. Young concludes that place meaning was for the most part constructed prior to destination choice as a result of personal interest and activity, and previous destination experience. The brochures used on site had little influence on place meaning. He goes on to say that the motivations and expectations of place may have greater influence on meaning construction than the actual experience, even where experience contradicts motivation.

An interesting development in the tourism literature is its critique of the visual hegemony evident in tourism practice and theory. Graburn (2001) picks up on Jokinen and Veilola's (1994²) criticism that tourism theory over emphasises the visual, and this comes about because the visual is the goal of the educated class to which tourism theorists themselves belong. The bias towards the visual is also discussed and presented in the works of Lefebvre (1993), Veijola and Jokinen (1994), Urry (1999) and Markwell (2001a). In practice, there is some effort to shift from a visual emphasis by including a broader

² Original article is in French.

range of senses, that is the body, for example, in the presentation of interpretation material that incorporates touch, sound, and smell (Hamilton-Smith 1995; Dept. of Conservation and Land Management 1996; Moscardo 1999; Wearing and Neil 1999). Associated with the critique of the visual is the notion that tourism is an embodied experience. Wearing, B. and Wearing, S. (1996) suggest that the current sociological analysis of tourism is one dimensional and that the interactive space of tourism needs to be recognised. Supporting this critique and further exploring the interactive nature of the tourism experience is the work of David Crouch (2002), Kevin Markwell (2001b) and John Urry (2001). This work draws upon human geographers such as Edward Relph and Edward Soja and philosophers Elizabeth Grosz and Henri Lefebvre.

Human geography

A significant body of literature that explores human relationship to the physical world is that of human geography (Peet 1998), particularly that which takes postmodern and poststructuralist perspectives such as James Duncan or Trevor Barnes work. It has been the postmodern and poststructuralist theorists that have opened a new phase in geography and the conceptualisation of space, place and landscape. Duncan and Ley (1993: 5) argue that geography had previously taken an empiricist view of landscape providing descriptions that failed to recognise their own cultural construction. Barnes and Duncan (1992) argue that human geographers need to pay attention to how they write about the world, that writing is not simply reflective, rather writing is constitutive. These authors then acknowledged the limitations and power of their own language, and have sought to broaden and expand the interpretations available to them.

The notions of space and place have become important terms in conceptualising how we relate to the physical world and it is these terms that have been challenged. Lefebvre (1993) argues for a reconnection of the subject and the object, the body and the world and Soja, based on Lefebvre's reworking of Lacan's ideas, distinguishes three types of space: perceived (space of material practice), conceived (representations of space) and lived (spaces of representation) in what he calls the trialectics of spatiality (1996, 1999). For others the differentiation between space and place is central to our relationship; space becomes the more meaningful place 'as we get to know it better' (Tuan 1977: 6) and 'place' portrays the sense of relationship between people and the physical world (Relph 1976). The work of these 'place-makers' emphasises the multiplicity and socially

constructed nature of place; that there will be no fixed, final or uncontested meaning or set of values.

Those that take a postmodern approach emphasise the interactive nature of the construction of place meaning. Getting to know a space better requires that we engage with place, it is not just a backdrop to our experiences and if we engage with it then quite possibly it engages with us. Leisure theorists have noted that the interaction with space that occurs through the leisure activity often transforms space into place (Wearing 1998; Nielsen 1999). 'It follows that a place is not in space, but is a means by which space is produced as a *plenitude of different relations*.' (Thrift 1999: 310). That is, what makes place is the network of relations that dwell there. For Thrift places are dynamic and take shape only in their passing; places haunt us, and we haunt them.

We are reminded that place meaning is not only dependent on the physical engagement that occurs but also the social context and discursive tools we have available to us to articulate meaning. That is we are sensing the world around us in two ways: sensing is a physical relationship to the world and sensing is a conceptual structuring of space and defining of place (Rodaway 1994). Rodaway, drawing on Merleau-Ponty, points out that sense has two meanings: sense as in sensation, and sense as in meaning. Therefore, he argues, one must go beyond describing the sensations of the geographical experience and include some understanding of the person-environment relationships 'and what constitutes a geographical reality for a given society (or culture) at a given moment in time and space.' (Rodaway 1994: 6). Perception also has this double meaning: 'Perception is therefore a relationship to the world and a decision making process with respect to that world.' (Rodaway 1994: 11). These authors emphasise that our understanding of place emanates from the experience and the social tools available to us to make sense of the experience.

The sensuous geography of Rodaway, and social construction of landscape are teased out in *Leisure/Tourism Geographies* in which Urry (1999) writes about sensing leisure spaces. Interestingly Urry identifies just four categories of interaction with the leisure landscape:

1. stewardship
2. exploitation
3. scientisation

4. consumption

These are conceptualisations that I have drawn upon later and found very useful in understanding the relationship between people and place at Jenolan. One of the insights that is offered by Urry's categories is that they all present landscape as Other, and uni-directional; the relationships are approaches that reflect what humans do to or in the landscape, they are not part of the landscape. Urry shifts to a more interactive interpretation in his later work 'Transports of Delight' (2001) where he examines the implications of the active, corporeal, technologically extended and mobile nature of human interaction with nature states. For the most part however a humanistic perspective that people act on place dominates in academia and popular understanding.

The conceptualising of Jenolan as a landscape shifts the research into human geography. The analytical process required a frame of reference that incorporated notions of space, place and aesthetics and also upheld the following ontological positions:

- 1) that Jenolan Caves as a tourist site is both physically and culturally constructed and contested: Jenolan is a physical entity but the meanings that it holds for people arise from the culturally influenced interaction between people and place.
- 2) this construction occurs as a result of interaction between place and peoples. In this sense then I am assuming that Jenolan rock, soil, vegetation and animal life are not objects to be viewed and acted upon by people but are also 'actors' in the meaning making or space/place making of Jenolan
- 3) there will be multiple meanings, or as Soja might argue, a multitude of spaces.

This is a shift away from the assumption that there is a single, or set of final and correct meanings or definitions. Jenolan Caves could not be defined as X, or even Y for visitors and Z for staff. There are many ways of interacting in this space, and many spaces that are created. It is also a shift away from seeing the human form as the sole actor in the landscape; that the soil and limestone of Jenolan Caves are inanimate objects subject to the desires and whims of visitors, managers, and residents. Instead, the soil and limestone also act on the visitors, managers and residents.

The science of caves and karsts

This thesis does not explore the impact of people on the soil condition, flora or fauna of Jenolan Caves but in order to make sense of the level of concern and passion that is presented and also to provide a background of a very particular way of making sense of this landscape – through science – an exploration of the science of karst needs to be given.

The scientisation of caves and karst has produced a very particular kind of knowledge and way of relating to places such as Jenolan Caves. Jenolan has been an object of study since its discovery by European descendents in Australia, particularly in the 20th century and the last 20 years of the 20th century. I suggest (and this will be explored in later chapters) that this approach, whilst based on a relationship of objectivity, is often undertaken by people who have a strong personal interest or passion in the karst environment. The science of caves and karst reflects both an intellectual and objective relationship as well as a strong sense of connection to this landscape. The body of knowledge and understanding that emerges from the scientific work is presented in a detached way, free from the emotional overtones of the authors. This knowledge, and the way it is presented, produces a particular understanding of the karst landscape, its components, and the relationship of people to the landscape.

This literature explains that many cave systems are relatively ‘closed’, that is, there is normally little disruption to the microclimate inside the cave, and just small changes can have relatively large and permanent effects. Human activity associated with agriculture, urban development or mining causes a vast array of destructive impacts on the fragile karst terrains, including loss of biota, chemical wastes, water table lowering, rock and mineral removal and so forth (Williams 1993a). More specifically recreation and tourist activity, even though often undertaken by careful and concerned individuals, can lead to direct and indirect impacts that severely harm the caves (Spate 1991; Hunter 1995; Bunting 1998a, 1998b; Jeffries 1998). Tourist activity usually involves large numbers of people visiting a cave at any one time. Unless the surfaces of the cave paths are hardened then significant erosion will occur. Cave decorations are vulnerable to the human touch. Many of the formations can easily be broken, but also even a gentle touch of the hand onto the limestone causes discolouration and damage. The substance from human perspiration and oils that reside on the skin react with the minerals in the limestone rock resulting in black colouration of crystal that might have been pure white.

In addition to the impacts of erosion and damage to formations, groups of tourists can produce changes to the microclimate (increased temperature and decreased humidity) (Kiernan 1989a) raise CO₂ levels, and introduce dust and lint (Huppert, Burri, Forti and Cigna 1993; Williams 1993b; Michie 1999). Tourism development also produces above ground impacts such as hardened surfaces, water pollution, and disruption to flora and fauna (Kiernan 1989b; Gillieson 1996). It is clear then that leisure-based human activity is very likely to result in distinct and significant physical changes to the karst landscape.

The scientific knowledge of the landscape is available for use in the tourist industry either as the basis of interpretive material offered to visitors, or in the development of management guidelines to minimise changes. For example, the understanding that airflows need to be kept to a minimum, or that dust levels need to be reduced in order to preserve crystal growth and attractiveness results in management actions such as the construction of airlocks and 'cave cleaning'. These kinds of issues and decisions are significant components of karst management. Management, along with the scientific approach, values a rational interpretation and relationship with place, and it is this rationalism that will be explored later in the thesis.

Visitor Impact Management (VIM)

The research project included an agenda of contributing to the Visitor Impact Management (VIM) process that had been adopted by Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust. The remainder of the literature review explores VIM, its underlying purpose and how it compares with the broader management approach of organisational learning. Whilst protected area and natural resource management have been designing area specific management frameworks the broader corporate and bureaucratic governance community has been developing the approach of organisational learning. The process of analysing the underlying intention of frameworks such as VIM led to notions of learning and organisational learning. Organisational learning as a body of knowledge provides a context and understanding for processes such as monitoring, which is the key learning component of VIM. Indeed organisational learning highlights the potential hazards and problem areas of the learning process within organisations and suggests that strategies such as VIM are only likely to work effectively in routine situations. In addition organisational learning provides a means of connecting management strategies to the human dimensions of the organisation.

Visitor Impact Management (VIM) is a management framework concerned with the issues of visitation in areas visited primarily for their natural resource values. VIM is a structured feedback mechanism that collects information pertaining to sustainability goals or objectives. The overall process has eight steps incorporating an explicit monitoring loop: the first five steps establish what the desired state is and identifies and documents problem conditions (Graefe, Kuss and Vaske 1990). These steps overlap with a four-step feedback or monitoring loop (Figure 3). The approach is based on the development of objectives, indicators, and standards. The process identifies a discrepancy between the desired state articulated by the organisation's objectives and the actual state, providing information to decision makers that a change in strategy or behaviour might be required. A simple example might be a discrepancy between a desired state of no litter at a tourist site and an actual state of a littered landscape. The discrepancy signals the need to pursue this issue and possibly revise management strategies. In this example the organisation will have identified a possible need to change its behaviour associated with litter management; that is, it will have learnt that its current strategies are not working in the desired way.

Learning occurs, say Probst and Büchel (1997) when the organisation has either a conflict (obvious discrepancy) or as a result of slack has time to reflect and identify less obvious and/or immediate 'conflicts'. Based on Kolb's work, Daniels and Walker (2001) highlight that learning is motivated by conflict; that internal cognitive dissonance (that is a disagreement in perceptions of the world or a gap between aspirations and reality) motivates our perceived need to learn; learning can be characterised as a series of conflicts between different ways of knowing (p. 91). Using this notion the process of setting up a monitoring system is a way of systematically collecting information that identifies occurrence of a 'conflict', where the conflict is some measure of difference between desired outcomes and actual outcomes. Monitoring is a strategy to facilitate learning. In effect, VIM is a particular strategy that can be used to facilitate organisational learning, that is, it matches the organisational learning agenda of enabling "the institution as a whole to discover errors and correct them" (Probst and Büchel 1997: 167).



Figure 3: Visitor Impact Management Process, adapted from Graefe and Vaske 1987

The purpose of monitoring is to systematically collect information that can be used in future decision making. It is a process that has no inherent value, it is not done for its own sake, but to facilitate management, and decision making related to the resource. Information is collected and reflected on in order that the organisation can decide whether a change in strategy is warranted. Organisations, agencies and individuals monitor progress in order to ‘learn’ whether or not they need to change their behaviour. VIM provides a trigger for organisational learning:

Organisational learning is triggered when a discrepancy becomes apparent between currently professed principles (espoused theories) and actual action (theories in use). (Probst and Büchel 1997: 24)

Even though it is not referred to as such VIM is essentially an organisational learning strategy.

Organisational learning strategies and principles are currently credited as contributing to the success of many organisations that have adopted them (Hodgett and Luthans 2000).

Placed in this context then, we can ask: how adequate is the tool of VIM in achieving organisational learning? An examination of the principles and processes advocated by organisational learning theorists provides criteria with which to evaluate the potential effectiveness of VIM in achieving organisational learning. The next section discusses the organisational learning process and evaluates VIM in this context.

There are three ways that the management literature can help elucidate issues around monitoring. First, it is useful to include the insights gained from the general task of organisational learning in the design and implementation of the monitoring process. Second, a monitoring strategy is drawn up with a specific and limited management agenda and there are, of course, other management tasks that will need to be performed within an organisation or agency. It makes sense that the specific strategy of 'monitoring' is constructed in consideration of the 'whole' management agenda. A monitoring plan or process should not be offered as an independent strategy, but as an interdependent process.

Third, closely overlapping with one and two, is the view that the organisation is a network or system of individuals, groups and smaller organisations. As such, a management strategy cannot be designed without also considering the consequences of its implementation.

Organisational learning – principles and purpose

There is a growing body of knowledge associated with organisational learning and increasing adoption of these processes (see Senge 1990; Argyris and Schon 1996; Probst and Büchel 1997; Dixon 1999), although some would argue that learning is something done by the individual and that it is erroneous to suggest an organisation can learn (Argyris 1999). Organisational learning theorists argue that an organisation learns through its members and that no organisation learns without the precursor of the individual learning first (Dixon 1999). Organisational learning requires that new information and meaning acquired by an individual must be shared through discussion and negotiation so that it becomes a collectively constructed view of reality, or new 'organisational knowledge'.

Organisational learning, argue its proponents, is presented as a mechanism necessary for organisations to learn to deal with uncertainty and is argued to be a process that is critical

for their survival (Probst and Büchel 1997). It is a way of discovering errors and correcting them, changing the organisation's knowledge base and values, generating new problem-solving skills and developing a new capacity for action (Probst and Büchel 1997: 167). A learning organisation is able to transform itself by anticipating change and discovering new ways of creating products and services; it has learned how to learn (Hodgetts and Luthans 2000). If an organisation is unable to learn it is unlikely to survive.

There are a number of approaches to organisational learning:

- systems approach used by Senge,
- micro approach of Argyris and Schon, and the
- macro approach of Probst and Büchel and others (focusing on the organisational structures and characteristics).

The point that all organisational learning theorists make is that knowledge is tacit or subconscious as well as explicit and conscious. For example an organisation will have explicit guidelines and rules such as stated work hours, explicit lines of communication and so on, but each organisation will also have tacit rules, indeed the 'organisational culture' is essentially a tacit system (Baumard 1999: 27). Tacit meanings and knowledge are important forms of knowledge and are very powerful in affecting our behaviour (Baumard 1999). Whilst we might state that we are following explicit principles or rules our behaviour can be in direct contradiction because we are more strongly influenced by our tacit principles than explicit rules. It is also harder to alter our tacit understandings and knowledge structures than to alter our explicit knowledge (Baumard 1999).

For Argyris and Schon implicit or tacit knowledge contributes to behaviour where people attempt to suppress ideas and information that they think might be unfavourable to the intended outcome. This behaviour, which they label Model 1 behaviour, is characterised by inconsistent messages, unstated and hidden views, attempts to soften or ease an unfavourable message, and belief that explicit statements will harm the goal achievement (Argyris 1999: 57). Whilst Model 1 behaviour is based on the premises of rationality and self-benefit, it is behaviour driven by tacit knowledge and views and leads to mistrust, mis-communication, defensiveness and ineffectiveness. In contrast Model 2 behaviour attempts to make explicit all assumptions, logic and rationale, and to develop a pattern of

communication that is constantly uncovering tacit beliefs. That is, Argyris and Schon (1978, 1996) attempt to make obvious and include tacit knowledge, and the emotion that may underpin it, in the organisational processes. Not to do so, they argue, results in learning blocks.

Organisational learning points out that if our existing meaning, or way of seeing the world, is explicit any new and discrepant information will be recognised as different and result in altered meaning and understanding. If, however, the held meaning is tacit we are not likely to recognise the dissonance between the new information and our existing understanding. Instead, we will fit new and discrepant information into existing meaning rather than see it as refuting the existing meaning (Dixon 1999: 29). Consequently we will have failed to learn, because to learn, we need to recognise difference and be able to hold it in our minds long enough to make sense of it (Dixon 1999). This understanding of learning is important when we come to explore the process of monitoring.

The underlying principles of organisational learning, which are advocated by management theorists such as Yeatman (1997), Dixon (1999) and Probst and Büchel (1997) are:

- A focus on process – the aim is for iterative learning, not one final solution, and there is recognition of the constantly changing environment, circumstances, and meanings, or as Yeatman (1997) puts it a ‘knowing how rather than a knowing what’.
- An invitation and valuing of multiple perspectives, based on the assumption that there is no single reality
- A democratic and inclusive approach to sharing information and power, intending to achieve integrated thinking and acting at all levels
- Recognition of both explicit and tacit knowledge, and provision of strategies for questioning or uncovering both. As such, learning organisations perceive themselves as systems of rational and emotional interactions.

As Argyris (1999) notes, organisational learning is a process that should not be automatically labelled ‘good’ or ‘bad’. As critics of organisational learning have pointed out the ability to learn from, and adapt to, the changing environment arguably occurs in

'bad' groups such as religious cults or at a broader scale of Nazism, as well as in 'good' community development groups, or corporations.

Organisational learning seeks multiple perspectives not as a consultative process but as a knowledge sharing process, which inputs into the decision making processes. The rationale for the collection of multiple perspectives in organisational learning, and collaborative learning, is the notion that effective learning results from bringing the 'best available knowledge' to the learning situation (Dixon 1999: 189).

If, however, learning is the construction of meaning, then the more diversity available, the more likely both individuals and the collective are to escape the tacit assumptions that limit their understanding. (Dixon 1999: 213)

Nancy Dixon (1999, 2000) argues that each member of an organisation needs to function as a co-participant in the creation, maintenance and transformation of the organisation. Variations of organisational learning approaches applied specifically to environmental management or natural resource management are collaborative learning and adaptive management. Proponents of collaborative learning, Daniels and Walker note the emphasis on the sharing of knowledge, decision making and responsibility, and ensuring that people have meaningful opportunities to voice their perspectives (2001: 57). Adaptive management in contrast focuses on the learning that occurs within the organisation and using management policies as a source of learning (Stankey *et al.* 2003).

Benefits of placing VIM in an organisational learning framework

In summary, by examining what is understood about organisational learning and placing VIM in this particular context it is possible to argue that:

- VIM is a component of an overall organisational learning approach
- Organisational learning suggests that VIM will best work with simple and routine issues

- VIM is an approach that monitors what is occurring outside the organisation, but it is often the ideas and systems inside the organisation that need to change
- The use of tools such as VIM might be most effective if their limitations are articulated and situated within an overall organisational learning approach.

VIM provides a process for monitoring the explicit agenda of an organisation. It doesn't, however, provide the tools for negotiating the tacit processes and goals that are so often instrumental in facilitating or impeding organisational change. Organisational learning theory presents clear information showing that organisations and individuals have explicit *and tacit* meaning structures that influence behaviour and the interpretation of new information. If useful learning is to occur, and learning blocks be avoided, tacit 'knowledge mechanisms' need to be available for questioning. If they are not discrepant information is likely to be 'squeezed' into an existing framework of understanding and new meaning fails to develop. Effective organisational learning requires an ability to question the tacit norms and values within the organisation as well as explicit knowledge structures. Frameworks such as VIM, therefore, need to be embedded in broader approaches such as organisational learning in order to be effective.

The multiple fields of study that currently inform natural resource management, are exemplified in the peak journal of this field Society and Natural Resources (<http://iasnr.hass.usu.edu/journal.htm>) and include political ecology, community conservation, sustainability but relatively little organisational theory. This literature review suggests that we need to be even more multi-disciplinary, making our task even bigger, perhaps even harder; but if we're not prepared to acknowledge the full dimensions of issues associated with our protected areas then we may never achieve sustainable protection of these important places.

Chapter 3: Methodology: Moving from question to answer

The gendered, multiculturally situated researcher approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that he or she then examines in specific ways (methodology, analysis). Denzin and Lincoln (2000: 18)

This chapter explains how I moved from my 'quest/ion' to my answer, where and how I gathered my information, and evidence that substantiates the findings and conclusion. I trust the reader can follow the logic of methodology that leads to the conclusion derived in the thesis. I acknowledge that there are unanswered components to my initial questions, and that in hindsight a slightly different approach might have been taken. I hope, however, that after reading my conclusion the reader thinks 'yes this could be so', or 'yes, this makes sense and I can see how she got there'.

What information do I need?

Finding the answer, or designing the research project can begin with the identification of the research question(s) followed by selection of the most appropriate method for finding the answer(s) (Sarantakos 1993; Creswell 1998; Crotty 1998). In contrast Guba and Lincoln (1994) argue that questions of method are secondary to questions of paradigms because ones' paradigm guides or defines the question. The approach taken here is that both question and paradigm influence the research strategy. My quest to understand the social construction and relationships associated with karst tourism in order to comment on Jenolan Caves' sustainability as a tourism site influences strategy, but so too, does my theoretical position. That is, my understanding of the relationship between the knower and known (Dooley 2001) influences the selection of method. My theoretical perspective, which guides the methodology and interpretation of the findings, is that of constructionism.

Constructionism is the view that:

all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context (Crotty 1998: 42).

It is important to point out that constructionism (and constructivism) is not an ontological position; it does not affirm or deny the ‘world out there’. It makes no claim that a tree is not a distinct physical entity, but it does assume that the sense individuals make of that tree is influenced by their social practices, context and linguistic practices (Patton 2002). Meaningful reality – what we take to be meaningful, what we take to be reality – is relative to culture, situation, language and other social conditions. That is, our perceptions and our understandings of the world, because our knowledge is just that, are socially constructed. In Bauerlein’s (2001) critique of constructionism he distinguishes discovery from justification arguing that ‘truth’ is discovery that has been justified. By way of clarifying my own position I wish to answer Bauerlein’s comment by stating that the more an object or phenomenon under ‘study’ is independent from human action the more possible it might be to reach a consistent interpretation and conclusion. An individual’s conclusion remains, however, an interpretation and as history has shown even what appears to be ‘black and white’ events (uninfluenced by the social context) can be interpreted in very many different ways. Margarit Eichler (1988) provides numerous examples in her discussion of sexist research: examples of how a dominant masculine discourse provides a very particular interpretation of the phenomenon under study. She demonstrates that there are many more interpretations available than the one accepted as ‘truth’. Whilst Eichler might well be arguing for the possibility of a gender neutral and real truth the constructionist viewpoint advocates that the interpretation is always made within a particular social context. It may well be that the interpretation is given the status of truth through social consensus, but the possibility of other interpretations always remains. The task then is to offer a persuasive interpretation, one that possibly achieves social consensus in a particular time and space.

Constructionism offers two insights: first that the researcher can only offer one interpretation, hopefully supported by persuasive rhetoric and data; and second, that the

experience that is under scrutiny needs to be understood in the social context in which it occurs.

As I am shifting more toward the theoretical position of human geography I should acknowledge the intellectual debate around a constructionist perspective of Nature versus 'natural realism' that continues to be waged (Whatmore 1999). The constructionist perspective is critiqued as representing nature as an artefact of the social imagination, a product of human interpretation (Soper 1995). In adopting constructionism I am not denying that there is a nature, this is a position that I very much support. As Edwards, Ashmore and Potter (1995) argue the constructionist arguments are not aimed at denying the existence of nature (or in their argument tables) but at exploring the ways in which reality is constructed. People's perceptions or understanding of their worlds are 'constructed'; constructed as a result of the constant interaction with the physical and social world around them. People's perceptions develop over time as a consequence of experience and interaction, where that interaction is a two-way flow of energy, whether it is with a physical 'inanimate' object or another living being.

Constructionism, as an approach, is interested in discovering the ways social reality and social phenomena are constructed. This is understood to be an on-going and dynamic process, where reality is re-produced by people acting on their interpretation and their knowledge of it. It is an approach that sees language and history as central to the sociology of knowledge (Berger and Luckmann 1966), that is, it is through language that meaning is told and made. Whilst this perspective makes available a range of methods that might examine the ways social phenomena are created and institutionalised the method chosen here is an examination of narratives and what they reveal about meaning and sense making. The focus on verbal is an inclusion of the poststructuralist stance where language is considered to be the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested' (Weedon 1987:21). That is, an examination of the language or verbal accounts of experiences with place will uncover how people make sense of themselves being in the place of Jenolan Caves, and the meanings that this place might have for them. Consideration was given to additional methods of observation but placed at risk the development of trust from some interviewees (see discussion under *Trust*). In addition, it was possible to collect interview data from the majority of people who were associated

with Jenolan Caves, be they staff, researchers, visitors, or cavers. This provided the methodology with some consistency in data collected, and analytical approach.

That is, meaning is not discovered, it does not exist ‘out there’ waiting to be found and understood; rather it is constructed in the process of our interaction with the ‘object’ (to which we attribute some meaning). Two people can live in the same world and yet have different meanings and understandings of, say, a tree. To borrow Crotty’s (1998) example it is likely that the meanings of a tree for someone who lives in a logging town compared to someone who lives in a treeless slum are quite different. And so I assume that the meanings that one visitor might have of Jenolan Caves will differ from the meanings held by another visitor, and that the meanings held by staff will be different to the meanings held by visitors. I also assume that these different perceptions are equally valid and all are real experiences for the interviewees. The two key implications are:

- First, that the object and subject are linked in this perspective – you cannot have one without the other (Heron 1996). The object exists even without an interpretation being made of it, but it requires interaction with the subject in order for meaning to be given to it. Jenolan Caves exist, they are ‘out there’, but their ‘meaning’ is something that is given to them after some level of interaction with them (not necessarily on-site).
- Second, there are multiple meanings or interpretations that are possible, and the meaning that is attributed to the object is a consequence of our learned interpretive strategies, as a consequence of our own experiences; that is, any interpretation is culturally influenced (Crotty 1998). The task of the researcher is not to find ‘reality’ or to find the range of definitive impacts on Jenolan Caves and their indubitable causes. Rather, the task is to find the ‘useful’ interpretation(s).

‘Jenolan Caves’ therefore can have multiple meanings, each of which is constructed as a consequence of the individual’s interaction with the resource and the interpretive tools that they have available to them to construct this meaning. The purpose then of this research is to uncover those meanings and relationships in order to develop a clearer understanding of the social system (network) and relationships with the caves. One

would expect therefore, to uncover the construction of Jenolan Caves as a tourist site, as a place of work, place of recreation, place of spiritual meaning, place of residence and more. The end result will be an interpretation of the available meanings of Jenolan Caves, not a concrete 'real' list.

This approach requires the researcher to engage in self-reflection, to acknowledge that she/he does not stand outside the process of research but is an actor in it. That is, I have a subjectivist epistemology as defined by Lincoln and Guba (2000: 165). Research findings are an interpretation, a particular meaning construction that is jointly defined by researcher and respondent (Crotty 1998). Crotty argues that we need to actively debate and exchange points of view with our informants.

It means placing our ideas on a par with theirs, testing them not against predetermined standards of rationality but against the immediate exigencies of life (Crotty 1998: 250).

Following this theoretical approach naturalistic methods are appropriate here. Lincoln and Guba described 'naturalistic methods' in their book 'Naturalistic Inquiry', referring to inquiry made in the natural setting in contrast to an experimental or laboratory setting (Denzin and Lincoln 2000: 3) and using methods appropriate to the site. Strategies for data collection are intended to be non-intrusive but able to provide a relatively detailed insight into the facet of interest, implicating qualitative methods such as interviewing and observation.

This discussion has so far focused on the theoretical position of this thesis and its influence on choice of methodology; concluding that constructionism advocates naturalistic and qualitative methods. Human and cultural geography, a discipline that is closely aligned to this research, accepts both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and includes a wide variety of methods (Anderson 1999: 15). Discipline and theoretical position influence methodology selection, as does the research question itself. The question is exploratory in nature; seeking to understand the interactions, relationships and meanings that occur in this particular setting, and aiming to understand this in the context of the whole. Creswell (1998) outlines a set of criteria indicating when a question can be best answered with a qualitative approach. He argues that qualitative methods are suited to questions that:

- ask how or what;
- aim to explore, or provide exploratory theory building – it is not testing previously proposed concepts or theoretical constructs;
- seek a detailed view – in this case of the interactions and relationships;
and
- require an examination of the natural setting, that is, this understanding cannot be found in an experimental setting.

If my research question sought to test a theory, and/or identify a causal relationship between components in the research study, then a more quantitative approach would have been called for (Sarantakos 1993). Due to the lack of knowledge regarding human interaction and relationship with karst landscape and the theoretical approach adopted makes the wholistic and open-ended nature of qualitative methodology more appropriate.

So to achieve the specific objective:

to understand the breadth and depth of interactions and meanings of the social and physical worlds of Jenolan Caves

I need in-depth and contextual information that is best provided through qualitative and naturalistic methods.

How to get that information

Ethnography is the selected methodological approach because of its aims and available tools. It is an approach that has provided a considerable range of insights for the tourism field (Graburn and Moore 1994). Ethnography examines what people say and do, producing an understanding of the way everyday routines constitute and reconstitute organisational and societal structures (Schwartzman 1993). It is a study of people, their interaction, stories, rituals and artefacts culminating in a description, analysis and interpretation of the culture of the social group (Creswell 1998); traditionally, ethnographers ask 'how do participants see things?' (Gubrium and Holstein 2000: 497). As such, it is a methodology well suited to uncovering the social construction of Jenolan Caves.

Historically, ethnography has been located in a diverse array of genres from classical, modernist, postmodernist and poststructuralist (Tedlock 2000: 459). Over this time it has shifted to an intensely reflexive approach or as Tedlock describes it: a shift from participant observation to observation of participation. This shift is epitomised in the recent approach of Richardson (2000), Patton (2002), Denzin (2000), Tedlock (2000) and their advocacy of autoethnography, where the subjective nature of the research process is openly explored and the lived experience of the researcher is part of the context required to understand the whole (or understand the participant's experience). Thomas (1993: 41) is careful to point out that ethnography has available a variety of methods and any one method or approach is neither good or bad, but does need to be appropriate for the task, employed with competence and supplemented by other methodological tools.

Ethnographers aim to produce historically, politically and personally situated accounts, descriptions, interpretations, and representations of human lives (Tedlock 2000: 455). A feature of ethnography is a close and relatively prolonged interaction between researcher and people. These characteristics of ethnography as a methodology indicate its use in this research. The methodology of grounded theory was initially considered but its post-positivist approach and emphasis on theory construction was not considered best suited to the exploratory nature of the task. Phenomenology was also considered, and in many ways is well suited to the task of seeking to understand the meaning of an experience. Ethnography was selected in preference, however, because of its focus on the cultural nature of meaning making as distinct to individual meaning making. That is, the question seeks to understand the web of interactions and relationships; to understand them in the context of other interactions and relationships.

The specific methods used in ethnographic fieldwork are interviews, observations, and document analysis, which are then inductively analysed for themes and patterned regularities (Creswell 1998). The major tasks of data collection, analysis and interpretation are repeated over and over again in a cyclical or iterative research process (Schwartzman 1993: 48). Initial fieldwork is often open-ended and relatively unstructured but as analysis is concurrent or cyclical with data collection the process becomes more selective particularly with respect to time, context and people (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Wolcott 1994).

In this research an intensive ten-month period was spent in the field doing interviews, observations, and document analysis. The researcher was living on site and in the

Jenolan Caves community. Table 1 summarises the methods used and their relationship to stated objectives.

Table 1: Overview of research objectives and method

Objective	Method				
	Preliminary Discussion with key actors	Past research document analysis	Observation	Interviews	Promotional brochures
1. to define the boundary and membership of the Jenolan Caves social system	X	X			
2. to discover and describe the range of interactions that occur between people, and the physical world		x	X	X	X
3. to identify the significance and meanings these interactions produce		x	X	X	X
4. to identify threats to these meanings and relationships		x	X	X	
5. to identify key issues and management goals		x	x	X	
6. to develop indicators representing the sustainability of the social dimensions and an ongoing monitoring process of Jenolan Caves					

Key

- X** Major relevance to objective
x Minor relevance to objective

Objective six of the project, ‘to develop indicators representing the sustainability of the social dimensions and an ongoing monitoring process of Jenolan Caves’, was jointly achieved with the Social and Environmental Monitoring Committee and Jenolan Cave staff. The process was required to occur before completion of the case study, and so it was undertaken based on existing data and through a staff consultation process. The process has not been described here in detail because the thesis focuses on the answers for the preceding objectives, and assumes that the findings articulated here will then inform the monitoring process and indicator set that has been described in the document *Visitor Monitoring Process* (Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust 2002b).

Selecting who to interview – setting the boundaries

This is otherwise known as ‘participant recruitment’ (Arcury and Quandt 1999) or ‘sampling procedure’ (Sarantakos 1993). Whilst it might be fair to say that this is a more important issue for quantitative research, which requires a competent sampling procedure to ensure that the statistical results are meaningful, it is also true that participant recruitment is an important procedure in qualitative research. If it is not possible to study whole populations (and in most cases it will not be) then the researcher must find an appropriate sample. In qualitative research the sample should be constructed to provide information-rich cases, that is, purposeful sampling.

The rationale for selecting specific participants must reflect the purpose or goals of the study, allowing the investigator to find representative individuals who have the characteristics being considered by the investigation. (Arcury and Quandt 1999)

The purpose of this research was to:

further our understanding of the social dimensions of caves tourism in order to comment on issues and practices related to sustainability.

This required defining the membership of this social system: who/what was interacting in this ‘place’? And then to recruit or access the experiences and meanings held by these people and attributed to Jenolan Caves. Arcury and Quandt (1999) refer to this as ‘specifying the characteristics [of the population] relevant to sampling’; or setting the

boundaries of the research population, or maximum variation sampling (Patton 2002: 234).

Typical of purposive sampling it was not possible to a priori specify the defining characteristics of the sample that would provide maximum variation (Lincoln and Guba 1985). The research task was essentially a process of gaining a clearer picture of Jenolan Caves as a whole: who visits or lives there? What do they do there? Who would be 'useful' people to talk to? As reflected in Table 1 the intention was to gain this information from discussions with key stakeholders, and existing documents. Much of my first field trip and the early days of my extended stay in the field were spent in finding out who to talk to. This was also an activity that continued throughout the data collection process as people continued to inform me that 'so-and-so would be good to talk to, they have lots of knowledge ...'.

After discussion with key people, such as long term staff members and management, asking them 'who visits here? Who are the different 'players'?' I 'sectioned' the social system into specific 'user' groups. My groups were: visitors, current Jenolan staff, associated employees to Jenolan (ex-staff, coach drivers, etc), cavers, and members of associated groups such as the Trust Board, and Scientific Committee.

As a result of my 'reconnaissance' of Jenolan's social world the list of potential informants, and their variant characteristics, was as described in Table 2. Appendix 1 provides an overview of interviewees according to these characteristics.

Following the research design principles explained earlier the intention was to have open-ended interviews with representatives of all these groups. This was possible and worked well with most people although slightly different interview strategies were used with tourists than with Jenolan Caves staff. The primary data source was the openly expressed stories and opinions of people associated with Jenolan Caves, obtained through semi-structured interviews. I label these 'semi-structured' because the interviews asked a set of pre-determined questions of all informants but the intention was that informants provided answers that opened up other directions not foreseen by the researcher. Patton (2002: 342) refers to this as the 'general interview guide approach'.

Table 2: Potential interviewees for understanding the social construction of Jenolan Caves

Broad association with Jenolan Caves	Specific association / role with Jenolan Caves
Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust Staff	Current / ex-staff Permanent / casual / temporary Recent appointment / long term Guide / maintenance / administrative / management Experience at show caves / adventure caves / cave cleaning
Associated employees	Caves House staff / manager Bistro staff / manager Private tour operators Coach company drivers / managers
Associated committees	Social and Environmental Monitoring committee Scientific Advisory Committee Trust Board Speleological Advisory Committee Jenolan Caves Historical and Preservation Society
Locals	Residents of Oberon Mayor of Oberon or other regional urban centres Indigenous peoples
Visitors	Visitors travelling by car / coach / foot / other Visitors for whom it was first / infrequent / regular activity Domestic visitors / international visitors Group visitors: corporate / schools / Show cave visitors / adventure cave visitors / non-cave visitors Speleologists (cavers)

Staff

The list above describes the characteristics of my intended informants, but the method of actually ‘recruiting’ them was snowballing as quite often during the interview process other potential informants were recommended to me. The intention was that my sample would contain maximum variation across the characteristics identified above. This is a combination of purposive and snowball sampling.

I deliberately delayed interviewing staff until I had lived on-site for a month after which time I began my interviews with casual staff; I waited longer before I approached permanent staff. My intention was to establish trust and rapport between staff and myself. Many staff felt either that I was a stooge for management or that the whole exercise was rather pointless anyway. They were deeply sceptical as a result of the low level of attention that results of past research had been given.

Because I was living on-site and communicated regularly with staff I was able to ask all permanent staff whether or not they would agree to be interviewed, and all regular casual employees. Most people happily agreed to the interview, although there are a couple of people where interviews could not be arranged due to the circumstances at the time. I did not expect, or intend, to talk to all staff. However, my sample comes very close to representing the full staff population. This occurred because my invitation was to all, and all accepted. I interviewed everyone who agreed because:

- 1) I believed and wanted to demonstrate that all member's experience was important in making sense of Jenolan Caves
- 2) I wanted to tangibly demonstrate that I had no 'bias' regarding who had 'valid' information or not – I wanted to talk to casual staff, and maintenance staff as well as management
- 3) And I felt that whilst it might be more work, I would end up with richer data in the end, and as 'stakeholders' staff are central to other people's experience of the site (i.e. visitors)

The result is that I have a huge body of data from one stakeholder group: staff. My specific question was to understand the breadth and depth of interactions and meanings related to Jenolan Caves. The large volume of data that I have from one particular 'group' associated with Jenolan Caves was unintended and has resulted in an emphasis on their experiences. I have decided to continue with the privileging of information provided by Trust staff because:

- 1) their experience is central to the experiences of others; and
- 2) it is an identifiable gap in our understanding of tourism and protected area management.

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Plate 1: Jenolan Caves staff

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Plate 2: Visitors and guide at Jenolan Caves (JCRT website:
http://www.jenolancaves.org.au/information.asp?tb=j_theme)

These interviews with staff were made up of a series of semi-structured questions (see Appendix 2). The majority of interviews occurred during the work day, at times convenient to staff, and either outside the office in a quiet location, in an office that wasn't being used at the time for any other purpose, in my office or for one interview the only way the informant had time to talk to me was for me to join him during his work out in the field. The interviews varied in length from forty minutes to three hours, although mostly the interviews took approximately fifty minutes. The interviews were recorded by note taking occurring concurrently with the interview.

I felt this was no more or less obtrusive than a tape recorder, provided me with an immediate transcript, and allowed people the opportunity to check what was being recorded if they so wished. In many interview situations, such as the field interview, I would not have been able to obtain a clear tape recording. One disadvantage of the note-taking was that I have not recorded my own questions and utterances, another is that I was less able to pick up on interesting points the informant made that might have deserved further probing. There were advantages, however, which I explore in the discussion on member checks. Staff have been identified as guides and associates in this thesis. 'Guide' is a term used to represent all staff that frequently interacted face-to-face with visitors. Forty guides were interviewed. Other staff, such as administrators, managers and technical people, are identified as associates, along with cavers, researchers, local community and coach drivers.

Cavers, researchers, locals

Various other people who have regular association with Jenolan Caves were interviewed using much the same process as described above for the guides and ticket office staff. This group of people includes other Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust staff whose job does not take them into contact with visitors, such as administration and maintenance staff, cavers, researchers and locals. An overview of the roles undertaken by staff and other people who closely associate with Jenolan is given in Appendix 3. As with staff the interview occurred at a time and place convenient for the interviewee, and usually at their office or home. I was able to interview several speleologists (or cavers) and also joined them on a number of their caving trips. I met with several researchers who had both long and short associations with Jenolan Caves. I also met with a representative of Wiradjuri community; descendent from the traditional owners of the landscape. I met

with the Mayor of the nearby town, Oberon. Thirty-nine associates of Jenolan were interviewed.

Tourists

Up to 250,000 people visit Jenolan Caves each year; people from a wide range of backgrounds. My intention was to attempt to obtain as full a spectrum of responses as possible from 'tourists'. My preference was to interview people on site in a manner that allowed them to express their response and 'relationship' to Jenolan Caves in their own words.

I found that this was achievable as long as I could accept that the interviews, in most cases, would be relatively brief. And so it was that 140 interviews were done, on site, as a result of approaching people immediately after their cave tour, at their lunch spot or in the car parks. The interviews were sometimes as brief as five minutes, or as long as 30 minutes. A copy of the question sheet is given in Appendix 4. Each visitor was approached by myself, or associate interviewer, and invited to participate. If they agreed their answers were recorded on a pre-structured question sheet by the interviewer. The interviewer noted the date, time, location, and weather. The interviews were given an identifying code at the end of each day, and recorded in an interview logbook.

Whilst my goal was to obtain a full spectrum of responses, the most effective way I had of knowing whether or not I had achieved this was by comparing characteristics of my 'sample' with known characteristics of the visitor population. The only data regarding visitor characteristics available for comparison is place of origin and cave tour undertaken by visitors. Table 3³ provides a comparison between the interviewees and place of origin (2001) with origin of all cave tour participants in 2000.

³ Access database: Alldata2000 / queries/ Interviewee origin

Table 3: Comparison of interviewee place of origin to Cave tour population place of origin

Place of origin	My sample		Jenolan 2000 ticket sales %
	N	%	
Sydney	68	49	39
Other Aust	47	33	23
Overseas	14	10	18
Unknown	11	8	20
	140		

Whilst the proportions between sample and ticket sales are not identical, neither are they wildly disparate, and the large proportion of unknown origin in the Jenolan statistics hinders more accurate comparisons. I am therefore satisfied that the sample of visitors that I interviewed includes the full range of visitor experiences. The experience of non-English speakers, however, is unfortunately omitted and partly explains the smaller proportion of overseas visitors. There is no other recent demographic data available for Jenolan visitors, however Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust does have a record of cave tour numbers.

Table 4 provides a comparison of cave tours undertaken by interviewees with those undertaken by all cave tour participants in 2000. This table also includes the interviewees from whom I was unable to collect the name of the tour undertaken (people would say that they intended to do another tour but did not know which) and those people who did not undertake a tour. These latter statistics were not counted in the Jenolan Caves data and so there are no comparative figures available.

Table 4⁴: Comparison of interviewee cave tours with overall cave tour participation

Name of Cave Tour	Number of cave tours	Total cave tours	Proportion of cave tours undertaken in my interview sample	Jenolan 2000 ticket sales
Lucas	65	188	35%	42%
Imperial	24	188	13%	18%
Orient	21	188	11%	9%
Baal	19	188	10%	7%
Chifley	15	188	8%	17%
River	11	188	6%	4.5%
Plughole	4	188	2%	1.5%
Jubilee	4	188	2%	0.6%
Ghost/theme	4	188	2%	
Diamond	2	188	1%	0.4%
Cerberus	2	188	1%	0.3%
Ribbon	1	188	0.5%	0.2%
Unknown	13	188	7%	
No cave tour	3	188	1.5%	
	188 ⁵			

My intention was to talk to people from all cave tours, and in similar proportion to the actual numbers of people on the tours. My sample has a slightly higher proportion of people who have done the Plughole, and the sample has relatively few people who have

⁴ Access database: alldata2000/queries/count of cave tours

⁵ Note that many people would do more than one cave tour and so the number of cave tours does not equal the number of interviewees.

done the Chifley cave tour. But again, the overall pattern of cave tour participation of interviewees is broadly similar to the pattern of cave tours sold. This similarity suggests that, at least by this criterion, the interviewees represent the broad spectrum of experiences for visitors, and therefore will provide the maximum variation of responses.

There are, however, two glaring gaps in this data:

- very few interviewees have travelled on coaches whereas 2001 ticket sales data suggests that 15.8% have travelled on coaches (Davidson 2002)
- Jenolan Caves has a significant proportion of inbound (overseas) tourists, who do not necessarily speak English. The interview process was not able to gather data from non-English speakers (although a couple of empathetic tourists did attempt to give me information). Many, although not all, non-English speakers travel on the coaches.

Interview questions

Questions to visitors, staff and other associates were aimed at eliciting information about the multiple meanings and ways of interacting with Jenolan Caves. This required questions about history of interaction; values, highlights and disappointments; activities; roles; benefits; and ways in which these meanings might be at risk. The questions needed to be worded slightly differently for different groups. They also needed to be worded in language relevant or familiar to each group and included prompts or probes to encourage detailed answers. The questions asked were:

- 1) Who did you meet and interact with as a part of being a caves visitor/caves staff/local residents etc?
- 2) What kinds of interactions were these?
- 3) Was anything memorable about these meetings / interactions? What feelings do they leave you with?
- 4) How long have you been at Jenolan for?
- 5) What did you do while you were here?
- 6) What did the experience mean to you? What did you get from it?

- 7) What aspects might interfere or spoil this meaning?
- 8) Would you visit Jenolan Caves again or recommend to others to visit the caves?
- 9) Why or why not?

See appendices 2, 4 and 5 for the full question schedules used.

Appendix 2 – Questions asked of staff

Appendix 4 – Questions asked of visitors

Appendix 5 – Questions asked of associates

Recording statements

I chose to record the interviews by writing notes as the interviews proceeded. This was a somewhat unconventional approach, a rejection of the use of tape recorder or note taking following the interview. The primary reason for this method was to maintain flexibility in selecting the site for the interview. Visitor interviews were always conducted outside, and very many of the staff interviews were also done seated outside. In this situation, with the probability of a high level of background noise it was going to be difficult to achieve a clear tape recording. There were also times when I did a group interview, for example with the speleology clubs, and again I chose note taking. This was partly to retain a consistent approach to data collection, but also because past experience has shown that tape recording in a group situation often results in a large amount of background noise, some clear text and a significant proportion of unclear text. I therefore made the decision to compromise some level of engagement with the interviewees in order to produce reliable transcripts. This process had the added advantage of producing, immediately, a hard copy of the interview for early analysis.

The process of note taking worked well for visitors because:

- 1) The process of note taking is part of the conventional visitor-interview process and readily accepted by the visitors who were interviewed.

- 2) It minimised the effort that was required from them in the sense that they did not have to complete or return any forms, merely answer the questions in as much detail as they felt was comfortable.

Staff and other interviewees were also comfortable with the note taking process and it had added advantages later in the checking process. Transcripts were produced and sent to interviewees (other than visitors) to check the content and to clarify their answers. My data collection process occurred in a particular time and space; there must be a point where data collection ceases, and therefore analysis is of data accumulated prior to this end-point. However, it is important that I have not misconstrued people's meaning and that informants have the opportunity of rescinding their contribution if they so wish, whether because they no longer feel or behave in these ways or because I have erred in my recording. Interviewees were mailed or emailed their transcript and asked to make amendments or note material that they did not wish to be used. Many interviewees returned the transcript with corrections, clarification or additional information. This is in comparison to past research that has sought amendments from interviewees on their taped transcripts but has failed to elicit many comments. I was left with the sense that the process of note taking was seen as fallible enough by the interviewees to encourage informant correction and comment.

My data is very rich in staff experiences and perspectives, but also includes a diverse range of perspectives from other people such as Trust Board members, coach drivers, cavers, teachers, Caves House staff, Bistro manager, and 'locals'.

Sorting and making sense of data

Analysis of the data is a process of looking for discrepancies (Thomas 1993) between the expected or assumed and what is; a process of questioning the taken-for-granted. This might entail discarding notions of normalcy 'that it is because it is'. Thomas (1993) calls this defamiliarisation, others call it disruption (Kincheloe and McLaren 2000): it is a distancing ourselves from the 'taken-for-granted' in order to view it more critically. Although Thomas is referring to critical ethnography this task is common to all ethnography.

Ethnographers unearth what the group takes for granted, and thereby reveal the knowledge and meaning structures that provide the blueprint for social action. (Herbert 2000: 551)

The interview transcripts provide a large volume of data that is both directly relevant, and not relevant, to the research question. The task of analysis is to sieve and sort the data in order to reduce its bulk, to sift trivia from significant information, to begin to order it so that patterns and themes may be more visible, and to begin structuring the findings for effective communication (Patton 2002). This goal was achieved through coding, a process of looking for patterns and themes.

More specifically coding is a process of giving a single word or phrase to represent a particular dimension or facet of the interviewee's story. The code is a mnemonic device (Ryan and Bernard 2000) useful to order but also assist the memory in the coding process. The process of coding uses indigenous concepts and sensitising concepts. Indigenous concepts are identifying words (codes) that were drawn directly from the interview transcripts, at other times sensitising concepts were given, which are terms unlikely to be used by the informants but were drawn from the literature to help give the analyst direction and begin linking the data to existing theories (Patton 2002). For example indigenous concepts or codes used in the analysis of this work included: caretaker, spiritual, community, day out, and unchanging. Sensitising concepts, terms that were not used by people interviewed but helped me to make sense and organise the data included: aesthetics, nostalgia, oppressive, lifestyle, and appreciation.

Patton (2002) distinguishes individual case analysis from cross-case analysis. I have primarily used cross-case analysis: the grouping of answers from 'different people to common questions or analysing different perspectives on central issues' (Patton 2002: 440). I was able to code my material directly from the notes that I had taken, and then enter these coded 'fragments' into a Microsoft Access database. Table 5 provides an example of data base organisation. Each fragment, for example fragment 234:

- 1) has an individual identifier (this is obligatory in Microsoft Access);
- 2) is labelled with the originating interview code, eg G73 represents Guide 73;
- 3) is represented by both a code word and a code number. This was done because during the data entry process it is easy to mis-spell words, which

then causes problems when you later search the database for all the occurrences of, for example, aesthetics. It is easier to check that the code number has been entered correctly and then do a search using the code number; it is then a relatively simple process to check that all the code words have been written correctly;

- 4) is written as a verbatim quote (as much as possible from notes taken) from the notes. Many times this fragment revealed a number of themes and so was entered more than once into the database alongside different codes.

Table 5: Example of data organisation and filing

Individual identifier	Interview number	Code	Code number	Interview 'fragment' from guide 73
234	G73	caretaker	G2	This is such a unique and beautiful place, and its my job to help visitors understand its values, and to show them how to care for it
235	G73	aesthetics	M1	This is such a unique and beautiful place, and its my job to help visitors understand its values, and to show them how to care for it
236	G73	income	M10	I came here because I desperately needed a job
237	G73	vision	G27	What we need to do is to improve the vehicle movements, and to provide more activities for children to do – more above ground activities

A separate table contains an explanation for each code, and another table records the details of the interviewee and a record of administrative tasks associated with that interview. I chose to store the data in Microsoft Access rather than a specialist database such as The Ethnograph, NUD*IST or NVivo because I wanted to remain as close to the data as possible, and had found in the past that, even though to a minor extent, every step that is not done manually is equivalent to conceptual distance from the data. I wanted to use the computer as a filing system only, an electronic version of filing cards.

The codes then become triggers and 'file names' for all references to identified dimensions of members' experiences. For example, it was then possible to look at all references where the informant adopted a 'caretaker' position in order to examine it for fuller meaning, and at a later stage to select appropriate quotes to include in the thesis.

The process of coding was also a process of creating a skeleton for a story and it is both useful and restricting. The development of the codes was a dynamic process in that it took numerous 'draft' sets of codes before a final set was used; codes provide a preformed set of ideas or interpretation of the data. For example, the task of coding some parts of interviews as 'caretaker' was a process equivalent to putting the interviewee's thoughts into a neat box. The danger of this process is that my choice of word might limit my interpretation. For example, I might see stewardship as a related attribute to caretakership, and explore this dimension in positive terms. In so doing I can miss the negative nuances associated with caretaker that are more about an attempt to control and dominate the resource.

Fontana and Frey (2000) warn against trying to present a 'clean' account of the research process. The research process is rarely without its contradictory data and rarely produces a neat, cohesive data set. It is more usual that there will be contradictions, excesses, irrelevances, and information that cannot be understood, and yet we still attempt to present the research process and the interview process as smooth and transparent. We want to, and there is an expectation that we should, present the analysis as unproblematic and complete, and yet as Patton quotes from Halcolm: 'the moment you begin analysis it will become perfectly clear to you that you're missing the most important pieces of information ... know, then, this: *The complete analysis isn't.*' (2002: 431, emphasis in Patton).

Therefore, results are never final and always subject to rethinking (Thomas 1993).

Why you would take this research seriously: Validity

This research is not looking for generalisations or to produce statistical evidence that enables me to say that 50% people think 'this'. Rather, I am able to say that the range of experiences and meanings include 'this' and that the inter-relationships include 'this', or that one way of making sense of this information is ..., and the implications are ... The research findings are the various realities that are constructed as a result of interaction between human beings and their world.

My work and arguments need to be convincing. What will make them convincing? Quantitative research or positivist research uses the criteria of validity, reliability and replicability in the findings and interpretations. As an alternative, Lincoln and Guba's

notion of trustworthiness is now commonly referred to as a criterion of research worth for qualitative studies (see Patton 2002; Scheurich 1997). For Lincoln and Guba (2000) validity is derived from community consensus regarding what is real, what is useful and what has meaning.

Patton (2002) presents 3 steps in the process of ‘enhancing the quality and credibility’ of qualitative research. These are to establish:

- That you have used rigorous methods
- The credibility of the researcher
- A philosophical belief in qualitative inquiry

Patton offers a number of approaches as mechanisms of rigorous methods. The strategy that I have utilized is looking for negative cases to the identified theme. Looking for negative cases involves the conscious re-examination of the data for cases that do not fit within the identified pattern. Evidence that contrasts with the interpretation does not necessarily lead to a rejection of the interpretation (although it might), but it does enhance the complexity and usefulness of the interpretation. I re-examined my data for evidence that:

- people did not engage with ideas of stewardship
- people did not engage with ideas of commodification
- expressed tension was not a result of a clash between ideals of stewardship and commodification.

Credibility of the researcher is established through the reporting of any personal and professional information that may have affected data collection, analysis and interpretation. For this reason I have attempted to be open about my own involvement, concerns and influence in the research process. I reflect on my role as researcher at the end of this chapter, and then at various points throughout the thesis.

The aim of the research is to provide a comprehensive interpretation, describing the social processes, that ‘fits’; ‘something that works cognitively, that fits together and handles new cases, that may implement further inquiry and invention (Schwandt 1998: 239). The new knowledge needs to have a functional fit, that is, it will achieve the research goal. And so in this case, the new knowledge will fit the needs of best practice

management, adequately but not conclusively, ultimately leading to further inquiry. Note, however, that the focus ‘is not on the meaning-making of the individual mind but on the collective generation of meaning as shaped by conventions of language and other social processes.’ (Schwandt 1998: 240).

Member check

Member check is a process where members of the research process, in this case people I have been calling interviewees, are asked to check the accuracy of the information that has been recorded. Member check was done with staff and other associates of Jenolan, but not with visitors. Information provided by visitors could not be verified or checked, because their participation was anonymous. Transcripts of the staff interviews and other more regular members of Jenolan system were returned to the informants. This was a process where interviewees could also revise and adjust their account of their relationship with Jenolan. There is no ‘truth’ about what Jenolan Caves is or is not, rather there are multiple meanings; meanings which are constructed in, and out of, interaction with others and the physical world. The meanings themselves are dynamic; as one experiences new events or relationships the meanings are subject to change. Being interviewed about one’s relationship with a leisure site or workplace can alter the meaning of the experience. The simple act of asking questions may add status to the place and/or one’s own viewpoint; it may detract from the leisure experience; it may threaten your sense of security; it may lead to a questioning of one’s own thoughts that previously seemed so clear. There was not the intention to uncover ‘reality’ as such, but the multiple realities or ‘parts of the whole’ and therefore understand the whole in terms of its parts. Having said this, interviewees did not greatly alter their transcripts but they did make corrections to dates and names, indicate sections that they felt should not be used publicly and provide updates on their life at Jenolan.

Self-reflection

The principle in establishing the credibility of the researcher is to:

... report any personal and professional information that may have affected data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Patton 2002: 566).

He adds later that the researcher should avoid overestimating or underestimating the effect of their presence and involvement but that they have a responsibility to describe and study what those effects are. Constructivist analysts should deal with these issues through a conscious and committed reflexivity (Patton 2002: 569).

Trust

The following is a reflection on the effect my presence had on the research, and the effect of doing the research had on me. I was initially treated with suspicion, this is what I was told later, and even though I had always been welcomed I could sense cynicism and suspicion regarding my motives, and what I was doing. The suspicion influenced the data that I collected as I initially thought I might make some observations of staff. However, when I was on-site, I felt that staff would not agree to being observed, and perhaps more importantly, I felt that it would be an intrusive activity. Subsequently, I made it clear that the only data I was gathering from them was what they said to me in interview, they were not under 'scrutiny' in any other way. I was confident that the interviews would give me adequate information. I felt it was very important that I kept my word, and gave them as much control over 'their' data as I could. The easiest way I could see to do that was to be very explicit as to what I was going to use as data. I chose to limit data to the interview process as described earlier. Interviewees were given the opportunity to review their story to make corrections and changes, and indicate what was not available to be quoted.

The intensity and length of time that I spent with the staff, and volume of data almost shifted the focus of the research on to them. The intention had been to take a wholistic perspective of the 'social dimensions', and therefore include the voice of staff. The staff's voice is indeed heard, and perhaps more strongly than the other visitors, but the issue remains for me to ensure that all voices are there.

Griffiths (1995: 19) talks about 'defending values' of participants and how by taking a feminist perspective she chose to 'accord primacy' to the girls' values (in her study) in her attempt to understand them. However she distinguishes this from 'defending' the values. This is an important point for me, that I do not go down the path of defending the staff values, but rather 'accord them primacy' and understand them, give them a voice but let them argue for themselves, I do not intervene on their behalf. I am not sure that I personally agree with this perspective. If I was studying a community under apartheid

would it not be valid for me to defend the values of people who were oppressed? I think giving them a voice is tantamount to saying that these values, these experiences hold credibility, and should be heard.

Perhaps a crucial question is: When my values match those of some of the staff and visitors how do I not 'side' with them? By giving voice to others, and this I work very hard at.

I should also acknowledge that I come to this work as a feminist. I am not looking just at women's lives but that does not mean that I lose my feminist perspective. What does this perspective mean to this research project? Feminism is a perspective (see Stanley and Wise 1993) which influences how I do the research, which voices I listen to, and what I do with the data.

Griffiths explains that feminist work:

- Starts from the perspective of women
- Breaks down researcher-researched divisions
- Creates a sociology for women.

My feminist perspective emerges in the research when I portray all voices as valid, including women's, but I acknowledge that the dominant social practice might silence women's voices at times and their voices will therefore need to be sought and encouraged. By the same token, it is not only women's voices that sometimes need to be encouraged.

My story must give voice to women, and to all others. I cannot be blind to the patriarchal establishment that is Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, the dominance of men numerically and in decision making positions, and culture of the organisation, but neither does it need to be a central part of my story. In this sense I have adopted a critical approach to my ethnography. That is, I am attempting to engage in critical thinking (as it is used in sociology): to challenge the 'truth' in ways that subvert taken-for-granted ways of thinking (Thomas 1993: 18).

I should point out that I took a very structured approach to my interviews: the same set of questions usually in the same order. Interestingly my informants gave me the information that they wanted to tell me. Many times, I wanted to say 'but that is not

what I asked' or 'why can't you just answer this question?' This occurred so many times that I began to seriously doubt my skills as an interviewer, but then I realised that they were telling me *what they wanted me to hear* about their relationship to Jenolan, what they thought was important – which is exactly what I wanted to know. I realized that they were answering my questions, but not with information that I expected to hear.

Scheurich (1997) argues this point, that of course power asymmetries do exist in the research process but that the 'subject' is negotiating their own meaning, has their own agency which influences the situation of interviewing.

Scheurich adds (1997: 71)

Interviewees do not simply go along with the researcher's program, even if it is a structured rather than open one. I find that interviewees carve out space of their own, that they can often control some or part of the interview, that they push against or resist my goals, my intentions, my questions, my meanings. Many times I have asked a question which the respondent has turned into a different question that she or he wants to answer.

Sometimes, he adds, this is a result of a misunderstanding, but at other times it is a result of the interviewee asserting their control of the interview, giving the information that *they* want to give. I see the role of researcher as one of collecting other people's views and expressing them in places and spaces where they would otherwise not be heard. I do not see the researcher as an uncoverer of 'new' knowledge so much as the facilitator or giving a voice to a particular perspective.

Conclusion

As Scheurich (1997) points out, gender, age, race, class (and so much more) impact on the relationship that is established between researcher and interviewee. Who I develop friendships with, my perceived status, my trustworthiness – these will all influence the way people respond to my questions, and therefore influence the way I ask questions and my interpretation of their answers. What was evident from the staff interviews was a strong concern to demonstrate the value and worth of Jenolan as place, and possibly to recruit me to a particular way of valuing Jenolan. This intent reveals much about their

relationship to place. What was evident with visitor interviews was the multiplicity and agency in their relationship to place.

Chapter 4: Jenolan as a leisure site - An overview of the multiple meanings

Introduction

This chapter will principally explore Jenolan Caves, the place and the experience, as a leisure and tourism phenomena. The discussion interweaves analysis with data presentation; as such the voices of interviewees are extensively presented. The quotations attempt to capture the wide range of views that were given.

One of the central themes of this thesis is to explore the various meanings of the place 'Jenolan'. By place I take Tuan (1977) and Taylor's (1999) position that space and place are distinct conceptualisations that can only be understood in relation to one another. For Tuan (1977), and Taylor (1999), space is the abstract concept, place is the lived experience. 'When space feels thoroughly familiar to us, it has become place' states Tuan (1977: 73). The place 'Jenolan' is therefore the set of meanings that are attributed to the constituent space, time and energy of Jenolan.

The chapter begins by placing Jenolan in the context of a leisure or tourism experience. The terms 'leisure' and 'tourism' are outlined. There are multiple dimensions or meanings associated with leisure and tourism experiences at Jenolan; meanings that stretch from peacefulness to adventure, personal development to socialisation. At first glance leisure and tourism might be thought of as relatively simple phenomena characterised by pleasure, free time, and in the case of tourism, travel. A cursory examination across history – Middle Ages compared to 21st Century for example – and across cultures – middle class Australian compared to middle class Thai – reveals that leisure is many different things to many different people, and that issues of power, space and time are also embedded in the experience. Leisure, in the Western world, has been defined in terms of time, activity or attitude (Lynch and Veal 1996); a well-used definition of leisure is '... relatively freely undertaken non-work activity' (Lynch and Veal 1996: 23). One specific leisure activity is that of travel or tourism, although some authors distinguish between leisure and tourism (eg McKercher 1996) others do not. In this document I assume that a tourism experience is also a leisure experience. Whilst there are many conceptual and experiential overlaps between leisure and tourism, they can also be

distinct activities, and are supported by distinct institutions (ie Tourism School, vs. Leisure Studies School, Tourism Journal vs. Leisure Journal). Tourism, is classically defined as where

a person ... undertakes travel, for any reason, involving a stay away from his or her usual place of residence for at least one night; or a person who undertakes a pleasure trip involving a stay away from home for at least four hours during daylight, and involving a round distance of at least 50 km; however, for trips to national parks, state forest reserves, museum, historical parks, animal parks or other man-made attractions the distance limitation does not apply (Hall 1991: 7).

Visiting Jenolan can be constructed as both a leisure and tourism experience. It is also much more for those that work and live there. This next section will describe the visitor's interpretation of the Jenolan experience, that is, the various meanings and experiences that derive from being at and interacting with Jenolan Caves. The majority of visitors to Jenolan Caves travel independently in their own vehicle and as a family group. Whilst there is accommodation on site and nearby most visitors will travel to and from Jenolan Caves on the one day, and during that time undertake one cave tour. Given that the site is 175 km (or 125 km from the western edge) from Sydney the majority of visitors arrive late morning and will either select a cave tour and then have lunch, or have lunch and then undertake a cave tour. There are twelve cave tours available to visitors, ranging from the Lucas Cave which can accommodate up to eighty visitors to the incredibly spectacular tour of the Orient Cave with approximately thirty visitors, and the more specialised adventure cave tours limited to ten participants (depending on which cave is visited) (see Appendix 6 for the standard off-peak program of cave tours).

Whilst there are twelve commercial cave tours available to visitors there are over a hundred caves at this site. Some of the caves are named after significant persons at the time of their discovery, such as Lucas Cave named after the member of Parliament who was instrumental in achieving reserve status for this area, or the Chifley Cave named in honour of one of Australia's Prime Ministers who was also the local member for this area. Other caves were named more imaginatively reflecting the images that the landscape of the cave inspired in its visitors. Hence, the Orient Cave reflects the jewels

and riches of the Orient, and the Temple of Baal cave was so named after the Biblical reference to Baal. The Plughole Adventure tour has been recently named to be more representative of the small plughole-like squeeze that cavers have to pass through on the tour.

There are different ways to 'be a visitor', that is, there are different ways of understanding, and constructing, our relationship between the world and ourselves when we are visitors. The result is multiple subject positions: multiple ways of being a visitor, multiple experiences and multiple meanings. It is a challenge for management to facilitate the diversity and multiplicity of experiences that visitors have, and wish to have, at this site. It is a challenge to attempt to 'record' or document such diversity! The following account therefore is preceded by a qualification that what is recorded here is a spectrum of experiences that not all individual people experience but that are all experienced in aggregation.

As a mechanism of organising, and therefore simplifying and making sense of the data visitor experiences are organised into the following categories:

- Social experience
- Pleasure / personal development
- Relaxation and well-being
- Hospitality / service
- Novelty / difference
- Naturalness (discussed in Chapter Five)

That is, the dimensions of Jenolan that were remembered and valued include the relaxation that was experienced, the overall pleasure that was attained, the socialisation, hospitality, novelty and the naturalness of the site.

In drawing up these six groups I have assumed that there is an overlap of specific meanings. That is, the experience of hospitality is associated with Jenolan as a place of relaxation and social experience, and the naturalness quite often interlinks with novelty. Whilst these meaning can be understood in the context of a leisure experience, many are also aesthetic experiences. The detail of the aesthetic will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Social experience

One dimension of the leisure experience at Jenolan Caves was the opportunity for socialising, either with new people or significant others. The tourism literature refers to travel or the holiday as being an opportunity to enhance kinship bonds (Crompton 1979). The notion of holiday as an experience of connection has been explored in the work of Graburn (1977) and Redfoot (1984), but has primarily been acknowledged through motivational studies that include social interaction and kinship amongst other motivational factors such as escape, education and excitement (eg Crompton 1979). In addition, feminist work has highlighted the centrality of sociability, relationships and cooperation in the leisure experience (Bella 1989; Henderson and Allen 1991; Wearing 1998). Tuan (1977) discusses the 'intimate experiences of place', the places of the heart that take shape as a result of an emotional connection. And so it is that 'trees are planted for aesthetic effect, deliberately, but their real value may lie as stations for poignant, unplanned human encounters.' (Tuan 1977: 142-3). Jenolan offers many of these intimate experiences. That is, particular physical environments, such as Jenolan Caves, provide the context for an experience of companionship and sharing; or as Urry points out the consumption of tourism is a social activity and embedded in complex social relations (1995).

I was bringing family to see the caves. (V21⁶)

We are not seeing the caves because we came 3 or 4 months ago. We just wanted a place to picnic with water that would be good for kids. (V46)

We came to show the kids with the voucher while it was cheap. (V63)

I brought a friend for their birthday. (V112)

I always bring up friends and relatives. (V34)

I came here because it's close, different. I wanted to show my partner, and to do the walking tracks. (V509)

I brought friends to see the caves. We have seen three caves at other times, but we have not been able to get onto the one we wanted [on this trip], so only our friends are doing a tour. (V72)

I like to show a special bit of Australia to visitors. (V87)

The best bit was spending time with Isobella. (V522)

A benefit for me is the memories of the formations and having plenty to tell my friends.

(V120)

I have experienced the 7th wonder, and been able to show the caves to Dad. (V155)

I will be able to tell my daughter, who is a rock climber, about the caves. (V95)

It is a family place with things to do. (V486)

Many of these visitors reveal a past connection to Jenolan Caves. Perhaps there is a history of grandparents or parents visiting with their children, who later return as adults and bring their own children. Quite often then people's first perceptions and memories are of 'being shown' something that is thought to be special by others. Imagination is brought to bear, both during the experience and after the visit, the sense of what Jenolan Caves 'is' continues to be crafted. As a leisure site Jenolan Caves is a place to show others and to share with others. Joyful experiences are things we want to share with others; in bringing friends and family visitors want to share the joy that they themselves have experienced.

For many people Jenolan is a place to be with others, as such it is an experience that is partly defined by kinship experience or relationship enhancement. People look for spaces away from the intrusions of everyday responsibilities such as phone calls, household tasks and chores, paid work responsibilities, other familial or community responsibilities to create an experience of relationship. An effective way of doing this is to travel to a site where one is physically and mentally away from these obligations. Jenolan is such a place. It facilitates a sharing of activity and emotions during the activities of cave tour, walking, and eating (café or picnic). Jenolan is also used by larger groups as a place of sharing. Several weddings are held there each year, as well as concerts, and the more occasional Mason's Lodge meeting (Henderson 1995).

Pleasure / personal development

Overall the experience at Jenolan was defined by visitors in terms of personal pleasure. This is consistent with tourism theory, which defines tourists as visitors travelling for pleasure (Lynch and Veal 1996: 20). It is also consistent with leisure theory where enjoyment has core associations with leisure experiences (Shaw 1985; Argyle 1987).

⁶ V21 alongside a quote from the interviews indicates that the quote was made by visitor number 21.

Visitors' inclusion of pleasure and enjoyment as key dimensions of their Jenolan experience therefore validates the notion that Jenolan is indeed socially constructed as a tourist and leisure site.

Interestingly though, the term 'pleasure', is not always articulated as a distinct experience by other authors examining similar natural tourism sites. For example, Scherl *et al.* (1997) refer to 'positive emotions'; Crompton (1979) does not distinguish pleasure as a separate category as his six categories assume some element of pleasure: exploration of the self; relaxation; prestige; regression; enhancement of kinship relationships and facilitation of social interaction. The concept *pleasure* has been articulated in the work of Chris Rojek (1985) as a political process, that is, there are quite distinct rules as to what is legitimate or illegitimate pleasure. Indeed, the concept of pleasure can be quite complex, but it is the more straightforward use of the term – enjoyment or satisfaction derived from what is to one's liking (Macquarie Dictionary 1987) – that is employed here.

The common features that have been identified by visitors and staff are linked by the experience of pleasure: learning is a pleasure, relaxing is a pleasure, sharing is a pleasure, having pleasant memories to take away, enjoying the environment, the spectacle, and the excitement of something new, as well as the indulgence of serviced accommodation (for those who had it). Whilst at times the pleasure and enjoyment is specifically attributed to a particular activity or outcome, at other times pleasure was more generally presented as the outcome or experience found at Jenolan. The meanings revealed by Jenolan Cave's visitors emerge from statements such as:

The day has been nice, good. It was relaxing, fresh air, quiet, no McDonalds, you can breathe well. It was exhilarating, just beautiful. I would like to stay longer and see more caves.
(V30)

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Plate 3: Pleasure of caving (Jenny Whitby)

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Plate 4: Hospitality and sharing times at Jenolan

Jenolan - gives adventure – I thought it would just be relaxing. (V45)

It was relaxing and enjoyable. (V83)

We came to see the caves, to camp, to learn and because we enjoyed a previous visit. It has been on the 'to do list'. We had time available so we did it. (V16)

Apart from great enjoyment, I have the benefit of an education on the geology and history of the area. It's always easier to be told than to read about things. (V118)

The Orient has been exciting. A chance to learn new things. It was humorous, beautiful, overcrowded when we crossed with another group, but generally enjoyable, good value for money. (V15)

I enjoyed being told how they were formed, it is all unbelievable, I am amazed. (V24)

It is beautiful, excellent. I would like to have done more. I enjoyed the whole area - the huge caverns and thinking about the first group coming in. I got a big high, and wished I was the first person. (V41)

It is great, a totally wonderful time – my eyes were sparkling the whole time. (V43)

I was so proud of myself. (V45)

I feel enriched because I have a greater awareness of Australian landscape. (V9)

Staff and other people associated with Jenolan also experience pleasure. The following accounts remind us that Jenolan is both a physical and social world; the meanings that people construct about their experience and relationship with Jenolan derive from the full breadth of interactions that occur. Whilst staff have different motives to those of visitors, and undertake different activities, enjoyment and pleasure is an important part of the meanings they attribute to Jenolan.

I love working here, the people are fantastic. (A50⁷)

I was initially stunned by the beauty of the caves, and I still get a buzz from Lucinda cavern in Chifley, and enjoy the Orient. (G20⁸)

I always enjoy being and working here, and we can do climbing and caving here. (G21)

It is a pleasure to be inside the caves, by self or with a group. (G22)

I love interacting with people, talking to them - people from different walks of life. (G10)

⁷ Interview excerpts labelled A are from an 'associate' of Jenolan. An associate may be, or was, employed by the Trust in capacity other than guide or other face-to-face role, for example administrator, coach driver, caver, or member of the local community.

⁸ Interview excerpts labelled G are derived from staff who work in a face-to-face capacity at Jenolan Caves

I enjoy doing the adventure tours, interacting with people – helping people. (G29)

I enjoy working with and around other people, and enjoy the caves and physical activity in the job. (G25)

I got a lot of enjoyment out of working there – I love working with people, interacting. I got a buzz out of that. (G52)

I love driving down to work, it doesn't feel like work, and I don't get up and not want to come. (G32)

I enjoy the way people react and enjoy the beauty of the caves. (G54)

I like working in the environment, in the valley, it's a beautiful valley with herringbone fern. (A29)

I enjoy everything I do here, it's the best job I ever had. (A35)

It is really good going back – it is always a good feeling to get back there – I love the valley, I enjoy it as a place to work because people are supportive, and it's a nice place. (A37)

Coach drivers, recreation cavers and researchers also emphasise the pleasure that Jenolan represents for them.

Personally I love the drive down and up to Jenolan. My first visit was in 1994 with overseas students. I remember seeing the tunnel, we stopped the bus and looked thinking 'that is incredible'. (A41)

Today it was fun because I took a new crowd caving, there was lots of communication about the cave, pointing out formations and explanations of caving. (A5)

Jenolan has remarkable beauty and peace, I have got a great deal of pleasure from it. (A31)

Relaxation and well being

The experience of visiting Jenolan Caves was one of 'getting away' from the normal routine and landscape to a place that makes possible relaxation and a greater sense of well-being. Visitors achieved this through exercise, relief from extreme heat (in summer), a rest from daily chores, time spent with family and friends, and experiences of sharing, humour, and self-affirmation that occurs within these relationships. Getting away, the absence of work and increased well-being reflects the classic characteristics of leisure: the absence of obligation and re-creation (or rejuvenation).

Leisure theory presents leisure and/or tourism as getting away, an escape from the mundane, and a getting away from the responsibilities of work (Crompton 1979; Pearce 1982; Krippendorf 1984; Lounsbury and Hoopes 1985; Hamilton-Smith 1987; Mannell and Iso-Ahola 1987). The following quotes from visitors exemplify the experiences of relaxation and the contribution to personal well-being that are constructed whilst at Jenolan Caves.

The visit was a getting away from routine. (V76)

It [Jenolan] offers a good weekend, relaxing, and escape – I will do adventure tours next time. (V91)

One of the benefits was that I got out and about, got some fresh air. (V484)

I felt relaxed and stress free. (V100)

I felt relaxed, healthy. (V472)

It was relaxing, no stress, and rejuvenating to get away from Sydney. (V91)

We have got some physical exercise, especially for my husband. (V42)

It's been good exercise. (V68)

It's picturesque, tranquil, being in the countryside. (V51)

We don't experience caves at home, or the river walk with fish in the river. It is peaceful, not rushed, and gives a feeling of how insignificant we are - puts us in perspective. (V514)

The walking track between the top car park and the cave area was daunting, particularly at the end of the cave tour when we felt nice and cool, but then we had to walk up the steep hill and get hot, when we were already tired. (V15)

We are worried about getting back to the car park, it's difficult getting to and from the car park, and we will have to leave mother at the bottom. (V497)

Many people explicitly identified relaxation as one of the meanings or experiences that they associated with Jenolan, and some of the criticisms of Jenolan suggest that relaxation was an implicit goal of their visit. People commented on, and were displeased with, the high levels of noise, congestion, exertion and feeling of 'pressure' during their visit. This was not how they wanted their visit to be. Rather, visitors wanted an experience that was tranquil, un-crowded, and easy-going.

The noise from the kids (on the tour) disrupted the spiritual nature of the experience. (V9)

The group had too many people and so took ages for everyone to move platforms, we didn't have time to look or photograph. (V25)

I didn't like the stairs. (V484) [that is, not a relaxing experience]

I was disappointed at the price of the car park, and the price to the caves. It was congested in the caves, and noise in the caves because of kids. It was hard to hear the guide. The length of the tour was too short, and there was a lack of information on the caves, and a disappointing quality of information. The size of groups is too large. (V19)

I didn't like the low levels in the caves. (V475)

When you walk in you don't understand the timing, people pressure, and car pressure – we didn't know what cave to do – we needed more information. (V35)

The issue of crowding at tourist venues, particularly natural sites, is well documented and discussed (Doorne 2000; McIntyre and Boag 1995). The perception of crowding is one of the key issues in the development of management frameworks such as the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and the Visitor Management Process (Tayler 1990; Pigram and Jenkins 1999). Doorne's work on the Waitomo Caves in New Zealand highlights the influence of a person's cultural background on their perception of crowding. When local New Zealanders felt crowded visitors from northern Asia were less likely to define the same experience as such (Doorne 2000). A significant proportion of visitors at Jenolan Caves are from overseas (15% or more), and at least 4%⁹ of the visitors are from Asian countries. The issue of crowding at Jenolan is therefore quite complex but irrefutably it does have a negative effect on the ability of most visitors to achieve a relaxing experience.

Staff also experienced Jenolan as a place of relaxation, tranquillity and enhanced well-being.

It's a relaxing break [being here]. This has always been the case – I look forward to coming back. (G26)

It is so different to everything in Sydney; it's an oasis away from everything. (G10)

There is peace, tranquillity [at Jenolan], a different world, close but far enough away to be in its own world. (G38)

I have increased my fitness ... since working here, and I make an effort to stay fit for the next time I work here, it might have extended my life. (G13)

We moved here to get out of Sydney and what Sydney means. (A35)

When I came back to work I thought it was magnificent and magical because it is so far away, a whole world of its own. It is like escaping everything else. In the caves too, but the buildings and isolation means that you can feel like you're just away, it's isolated. (A46)

Jenolan is a place to get rid of stress, especially when you're working elsewhere. I used to come here and go into show cave as a visitor, or do an after hours caving trip. (G19)

I love coming up here – I see it as a holiday, it is not draining [to work here]. (G10)

Recreational cavers also experience this facet of Jenolan:

I kept caving because I needed a place to hide (from work) - it was a high pressure role, and I couldn't spend my weekends at home because people would ring, but when you're caving you can't take the phone or work with you – you have to be focused on the caves (G25)

You have to forget about everything else so it's a getting away, and you get to go on a little adventure. (A5)

Urry (1990) points out that part of the leisure/tourism discourse is that 'getting away' is necessary for one's physical and mental health. The total absorption in an activity has a positive effect on one's well-being and this has been effectively demonstrated by Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) research and concept of 'flow'. However, little occurs without some effort and organisation, and the corollary of being able to get away from responsibilities is that someone else will be doing much of the work required in making the experience possible. Someone else has organised the lighting and access through the cave, the food preparation (or it is done prior to the experience), empties the garbage bins and cleans the toilets; so for the moment there is little for the visitor to do.

Hospitality, service and access

Tourism and hospitality are two terms that are often used in conjunction with one another. Hospitality is defined as 'the reception and entertainment of guests or strangers with liberality and kindness' (Macquarie Dictionary 1987: 845). Pragmatically this involves meeting guests' most basic requirements (Dittmer 2002: 5), through the provision of food and shelter (Powers 1995). The travel or tourism experience makes

⁹ Estimate from May to December 2001 cave tour ticket sales.

extensive use of the hospitality industry with added dimensions of entertainment and travel services. In several ways the Jenolan experience is one of hospitality and service. The visitor arrives as a stranger to the place and its procedures, often in need of food, beverage and lodging provision.

Whilst hospitality and service might not be the reason for travel the quality of service is critical to the success and survival of hospitality businesses (Dittmer 2002: 13) and the tourism industry. The following quotes from visitors reflect the desire to be treated as 'guests' at Jenolan, and as a guest they want to experience service and attention.

Perhaps there should be fewer people per guided tour just so questions could be asked more easily. (V102)

The group inside the cave was too large, it would have been more pleasant if it had been split. (V104)

The group had too many people, and so took ages for everyone to move platforms, we didn't have time to look or photograph. (V25)

I like the smaller groups, it is more personal, more information, more attention and you can see special things. (V31)

It's better when there are not too many people, too many people ruin the experience. (V82)

There were too many people on the tour – it was difficult to see the features, it was more comfortable and pleasant on the other tour where there were less people. (V77)

We had to wait while buying a ticket, and we weren't very happy with that. We couldn't get on the tour we had picked out and that was disappointing. (V15)

Eighty-two percent of the comments suggesting that the cave tours were crowded were made by people who did the Lucas Cave tour (33 out of 40 comments on crowding). This cave is able to accommodate the largest group size of all the Jenolan tours; it is currently restricted to 85 people at one time. Visitors' comments indicate that they would have preferred greater access to the guide, more time to look and take photos, and a more intimate experience. In a survey of Jenolan coach visitors, high proportion of whom also do the Lucas Cave tour, 72% of respondents felt that there were too many people on the cave tour and the most frequent open-ended suggestion was to have smaller cave tour groups (Davidson 2002). Increased visitor numbers diminishes the attention that can be given to any one visitor thereby potentially reducing the level of hospitality and service.

The lack of familiarity with place, dependency upon hosts for infrastructure and supply of basic needs are characteristics of the tourism experience. Visitors are not responsible for the full organisation of activities or day-to-day needs, and in some ways are constrained from taking full responsibility. Instead they are dependent on the service providers for an experience that is accessible, safe and meets their standards of hygiene or cleanliness.

The access is good - the walkways in the caves make it easy to get into and around the caves. (V56)

The caves are well lit and organised. (V487)

The area is beautifully kept and a pleasure to visit - I hope it continues to be so well preserved and protected. (V102)

I enjoyed it, and it's clean, and nice to see somewhere not full of garbage. (V28)

There were no bad bits – the guides were really helpful, they seem to have a passion and we had absolute trust in them. (V43)

It's beautiful the way it was all lit up. (V111)

I liked the guide, he was good at keeping people calm when there was an incident. (V490)

I was disappointed and annoyed because the barbecue in the first car park had run out of gas, it was dirty and the area was dirty with rubbish and leaf litter. It has never been like that before, we had to use another barbecue (other location). (V55)

They should fix the pedestrian access through the arch - all 3 parties – cars, people, and buses – it's chaos. They need traffic control on busy days. (V489)

They should widen the roads, and have a place to buy essentials like bread and milk etc, and sell fire wood (for the campers). (V493)

The new rails were slippery, and it was too cold in the caves for one of the children. (V65)

The small groups are good, large groups would ruin the experience. (V82)

They should have smaller groups so we don't have to wait for people to catch up. We would learn a lot more because it would improve the opportunity to explain. (V92)

The place looks not organised, it doesn't look maintained. Look at the chairs, and table tops – there is rust, and the cleanliness of the eating area isn't very good. (V45)

We had to wait from 12.30 to 1.30 for a car park, which meant it is difficult to plan the rest of the day. (V515)

They should have more restaurants. (V89)

It's pretty far, so it's a place that I would only come to once or twice. (V21)

Visitors are particularly dependent on management and other service providers for many safety and security facets such as slippery rails and hazardous traffic. These caused consternation and were presented as areas in need of improvement by visitors, although some aspects of concern were considered exciting by others!

The worst bit was the road in. (V16)

They need to upgrade the road. (V491)

The road coming in was the worst bit - although it was a bit exciting. (V26)

The drive was amazing, spectacular and scary. (V38)

Hospitality and service includes the provision of infrastructure that enables people to self-cater. Unfortunately, unless there is something remarkable about these services visitors are less likely to make comment, and frequently it is only a negative experience that prompts the visitor's comment.

We brought our own food but the picnic seating (top car park) is frustrating because there are only two seats provided at each table, so two of us have to sit over here and the other two either sit way over there or here on the ground. (V11)

I have [the woman had] spent one hour trying to find the water tap at the barbecue area, it's been very annoying. I'd rate the visit 4.5/10, partly because it's such a long journey and I don't enjoy it. (V12)

There wasn't any toilet paper in the loos, and that was a bit frustrating. The actual food and service was fine. (V15)

They could have a courtesy bus from the temporary car park at the top, but for us it was OK, we expect this on busy weekends. (V489)

The last comment reflects the visitor's vision of improved hospitality for Jenolan, even though they felt comfortable traversing the hillside between car park and caves. The visitor who made this comment was unaware that Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust does offer a courtesy bus to transport visitors between the ticket office and top car park. Their misconception regarding the services available emphasises that the reception of strangers with 'liberality and kindness' needs to include the provision of adequate information, which will allow them to negotiate the surroundings and activities. Many visitors felt they did not have adequate information to orient themselves to place, as

Suvantola (2002: 45) remarks 'Travel to an alien place removes familiarity'. I highlight this point here not as a criticism to Jenolan but to emphasise that being a stranger is a significant component of the visitor relationship to tourist places.

We had difficulty finding the ticket office – we had walked down to the Arch and saw people with a ticket and asked them, they had also had difficulty finding the office. (V10)

We walked up to Carlotta's Arch and it was confusing finding the right path. (V105)

I didn't feel that we had adequate information on the caves to select tours until we got our ticket. We hadn't looked at the brochure (given when car parking) in detail. I would have liked more information on the walks and make it more readily available. (V17)

When you walk in you don't understand the timing, people pressure, and car pressure – and you don't know what cave to do – we need more information. (V35)

They should let people know there is problem with parking and that you should book the cave tours in advance. (V490)

We couldn't find information on the walking trails. We looked everywhere and finally found some. (V70)

A new visitor, by definition, is a novice or newcomer to an area or site. A new visitor has not visited the site before, will not know where facilities are located, who performs which roles, at what time services operate and so forth. Visitors are people who *don't know*, and who therefore need information. One couple who had camped at Jenolan, and whom I met on the walking track between the camping ground and the caves precinct stopped to ask me how much further the track went as no information had been available at the camping site, and they had not yet visited the Jenolan Cave offices. Information to negotiate new sites is important to the visitor's experience.

It was difficult getting information, and finding out where to get the tickets, and finding out where to stay. I don't think we knew enough before we arrived, it's not promoted enough – we'd only heard about it through people at work. (V10)

I would have liked more information to decide which tour to take. [did you get the brochure when you parked your car?] We did get the brochure and it might contain the information we wanted but we haven't read it in that much detail. (V11)

I can't remember seeing it advertised in Queensland but I used to live in Bathurst so I knew it was there, they should increase their level of promotion. (V81)

Jenolan should have more advertisement. (V89)

I couldn't find information on the walking trails – I looked everywhere and finally found some. (V70)

They need more information about the caves to help us make a choice, perhaps have the same information as is available on the internet on site (they hadn't picked up the brochure) and it should be free because the cave tour is expensive enough. There needs to be information about the packages, and they (the packages) should include the more expensive caves. (V91)

I felt that people should be told that they can book in advance, for example when you arrive at the cabins, perhaps even warn people that they should do so. (V13)

Lack of information comes across as a significant issue, in the sense that many people mentioned it and it produced a tangible sense of frustration.

Visitors can only come to Jenolan if it is accessible, physically and emotionally. The leisure literature explores accessibility in part through the debate around leisure constraints, sometimes contextualised as objective and subjective constraints (Harrington, Dawson and Bolla 1992) but also through the discussion around power (see Rojek 1985). The tourism industry acknowledges the distance factor where the greater the distance the less prepared people are to travel to a tourist site (Mill and Morrison 1998). To visit Jenolan Caves one must be able to physically get there: to have means of transportation. This is not a simple endeavour, as transportation requires financial resources to either own a car and pay for the petrol, or purchase a ticket on a bus. It also requires the physical ability to drive the car or get to, and use, the bus. People in wheelchairs, with vision impairments, or some other physical 'disorder' may well not have access to these facilities. On arrival at Jenolan Caves access to the caves requires further financial resources, but also a certain level of physical ability. The following are some examples of physical or conceptual constraints on accessibility¹⁰:

There are not many facilities for wheelchair, we couldn't find a toilet that had wheelchair access, and I didn't know if a wheelchair could go in the caves. (V55)

We are unhappy about the price of parking on top of the tour price and thought the tour price was a bit dear but worth it – we were very happy with the staff. (V20)

The caves are a bit pricey, we will only do one more [even though staying for 5 days]. (V42)

¹⁰ Note, these excerpts were taken from people who had visited Jenolan, there are no excerpts from people who were prevented from visiting.

The food seems overpriced eg icecreams, and the cost of a tiny cup of coffee, and we didn't have to pay last time for parking. (V66)

I had to lean low in the cave, and there was nowhere to put my hands – that was a bit hard. (V27)

It would be good if there were easier caves because Mum couldn't go. She just took a quick look, she was worried she wouldn't make it, and didn't want to hold up the tour. (V491)

Accessing Jenolan Caves requires not only tangible resources and an awareness of their existence but also an attitude that Jenolan Caves is an appropriate or possible activity. Many people will not do the daily adventure tour because they are not aware of it, or because it costs more than the other tours but also because they think that it would be too difficult for them. However, on site, when they see others of the same age, or similar looking fitness emerging from the cave in miner's helmet and overalls their sense of what is possible can change.

The perception of difficulty, and by association safety or security extends to all caves and to the access roads. I am aware of one person who visited Jenolan Caves when they were a young adult and has vowed never to return if visiting requires travelling on the '5-mile' or '2-mile' roads (names given to the only access roads into Jenolan). The narrow road, with its tight, steep drops was an extremely frightening experience for her.

One of the staff in the Trails Bistro noted:

We don't make it easy for people to come here. Once here they enjoy themselves immensely but by about 3 pm customers in here, with anxiety in their voice, say 'better be going now'. [in expectation of the challenging drive out]. (A45)

Jenolan Caves seems to sit in that middle space of 'out of the way and difficult to get to' versus 'close and accessible'. Just two-and-a-half hours from Sydney it is an appropriate day journey, although it is quite a long day, especially for the driver. When people travel by coach they will be picked up at 8.00 am or earlier in Sydney and not dropped off until 6 or 7 pm. Most visitors who thought that Jenolan Caves was close, and therefore an appropriate choice for that day, had been staying in the Blue Mountains region or Oberon area; although some people staying in Sydney also noted that it was only a short drive and 'too short to miss'.

We were prompted to visit because we were staying in the area. (V11)

We were visiting our nephew at Richmond and staying at the Blue Mountains. (V497)

We came because we were staying in the area and I had enjoyed a previous visit. (V9)

We only live 1.5 hrs away. (V478)

We came on a whim – we were on a journey and saw a sign to Jenolan, it wasn't out of the way. (V470)

Quite often the convenience or accessibility of Jenolan Caves arises because people were on a longer tour that passed relatively close to Jenolan Caves. In this sense then Jenolan Caves, the meanings that it has, is tied to the meaning of the larger journey. One doesn't exist without the other. The larger journey is made up of smaller parts, for example a side trip to Jenolan Caves and the smaller parts were made possible by the larger agenda. Jenolan Caves is part of the larger entity of the Blue Mountains, or central western NSW, or a family visit.

We are visiting here as part of exploring Sydney. (V109)

We hadn't been for years, we were having a weekend away (Oberon) and wanted to come back to Jenolan because our first impression was so good. (V110)

This is the third trip we've made recently bringing up friends. Our friends are from Melbourne and were keen to see the view from the mountains, and we persuaded them to make the trip all the way around to the caves. We didn't see the caves today though. (V12)

I had been to Oberon for a drive with the boys, and the boys saw the sign – it was a spur of moment decision to come here. (V48)

My father told me about them, and I always thought to visit, I am now visiting my brother at Leura. (V490)

We have been in the Blue Mountains for three days, and this is one of the spots to see. (V62)

I wanted to do canyoning in Kanangra Walls, we're coming here to make the family happy – a bit of a compromise – I get to go canyoning if we also come here. (V86)

In this sense then 'seeing Sydney' or for others 'seeing the Blue Mountains' also involves seeing Jenolan Caves. They are parts that fit together and make sense together and are facilitated by relatively close proximity. This meaning is not necessarily premeditated or predetermined, although sometimes it is expressed as such, for example V62's view that the Blue Mountains and Jenolan Caves are an essential package. But for others, for

example V490, the visit to her brother is the stepping point for visiting Jenolan Caves but the two motives are not irrevocably linked.

Novelty and difference

The marketing of new products often aims to emphasise the ‘difference’ between the new product and the old, or distinguish one product from a competitor’s product. Venues that provide a space away from work, supported by a hospitable and sociable environment are many; domestic or overseas visitors do not have to travel to Jenolan to find such opportunities. It is possible that the quality of tranquillity, hospitality and social opportunities that Jenolan offers surpasses alternatives and that this differentiates Jenolan from its competitors. But visitors identified other factors that differentiate Jenolan, thereby providing the ‘pull’ or motives for the visit. These ‘pull’ factors are central to the meanings that then constitute ‘Jenolan’ and are described here as novelty, learning and challenge.

Novelty and learning have been presented by Crompton (1979) as site-specific ‘pull’ motives. Both novelty and learning are marks of difference, whether they are new experiences or new knowledge and skills, and are reasons for travelling to sites such as Jenolan Caves. Crompton’s ‘pull factors’ have gained credence and continue to underpin the conceptualisation of the tourism experience, although the concepts have been given various labels. Urry’s (1995) reference to novelty is explained in terms of the tourist gaze which is directed to features of landscape or townscape that are distinctive and in contrast to everyday experiences. The concepts of novelty and learning have been named ‘emotional arousal’ and ‘mind stimulation’ in the work of Scherl *et al.* (1997) which explores the experiences of people visiting the Great Barrier Reef, Australia. Manfredo *et al.* (1996) use the specific category of learning, and new people but otherwise novelty is embedded in experiences such as excitement and risk taking. Novelty and difference in the Jenolan interviews have been sorted into three groups: difference, learning and challenge. All three concepts are based on some level of novelty but result in different kinds of experiences.

Difference

Many visitors and others spoke specifically in terms of ‘difference’ or something ‘new’.

I see something new in the caves even if I've been in that cave before. (V59)

I have been to other caves, and they seem to have more caverns here, different sizes, and different formations. (V78)

The tour was full of original sights and experiences. (V120)

It's extraordinary - something different. (V21)

It's such a unique area, and I love the Grand Arch. (V26)

The adventure cave is something you don't normally do, more fun, more exciting (the plughole) - the abseiling was pretty good, although I have done that before. (V36)

I have never seen a formation before, that was new for me. (V95)

I thought the caves were awesome, beautiful, timeless, spiritual and unique. (V9)

The lake and caves are different to things that you see elsewhere. (V65)

There are always other places, always something different, incredible caving resource – it's tiny on world scale ... it is interesting, there is variety here. (G23)

Visitors get a holiday environment, a new experience seeing something they have never seen before, so foreign, it's not a buzz that you would get from a bridge climb. (G24)

Jenolan has a different atmosphere to other areas – I have done some trips here and some elsewhere. (A5)

If you stand on the ridge you can see 3 arches: Carlotta, Grand Arch, and the Devil's Coachhouse plus you can see up into Nettle Arch. It gives you the impression of being in a modern art thing. The atmosphere is unique, different to Abercrombie and Wombeyan, just the fact that the road goes through a cave, that's unusual. (A17)

It was different from anything I was used to, it has a different character to the soft rock caves in SA, Chevalier is one of the most beautiful caves, in the top 10 today. (A31)

To be able to live somewhere this unique, the fact that I am living in an area that is mostly untouched. No hustle and bustle of township life. The feeling of belonging. I live in an area where I belong, with people I care about and interact with. (G46)

Jenolan's difference is significant to tourist, staff, residents, researchers and cavers. The difference is seen or constructed in different ways by different people. For a cave scientist Jenolan's difference arose from the inexplicability of the structures and formations that were seen:

When I began to work on there scientifically it was mysterious - I was struck by how little we know about them – it was hard to believe the level of ignorance, most work is from the

show cave path. I started with the Ribbon Cave when I was at the Museum and found all these things that no one knew was there – it was very peculiar. When I saw what was there I couldn't make sense of it, I couldn't see a pattern – it didn't seem to make a great deal of sense. (A36)

Jenolan provides the pull factor of difference across the spectrum of visitors, staff as well as researchers.

Learning

One of the important meanings associated with Jenolan Caves is the opportunity to learn (this was one of Crompton's pull factors). Learning, state Probst and Büchel (1997), is a process where there is a change in one's cognitive structures or understanding making possible behavioural change. If there is no change in understanding there is no learning. That is, without recognizing something as new or different it is not possible for learning to occur. Learning occurs at Jenolan in a formal and structured manner as well as informally. Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust offers structured learning experiences through the interpretive mediums available: the cave tour, walking-trail signage, leaflets, and information display in the ticket office. Interpretation and the provision of interpretative material have a significant impact on the visitor's experience at Jenolan.

The coach driver's tales and insights were fascinating and entertaining. It was great to learn more about the Blue Mountains. (V102)

Apart from getting great enjoyment, we were educated on the geology and history of the area. It's always easier to be told than to read about things. (V118)

The best bit was the information and knowledge of our guide. (V486)

We often come to this area to learn about our back yard. (V478)

We feel enriched because we've got a greater awareness of the Australian landscape. (V9)

We've got a better understanding of how the caves are formed. (V70)

The guided tour is a forum for learning and sharing information. Guides and staff intend that visitors will finish their tour with a greater understanding and appreciation of the cave system.

My aim is for people to understand what we've got – that they learn to appreciate it – these days guides try to be more factual. (G26)

People love the chatty history [on the cave tours]. (G23)

Visitors want education. (A8)

Visitors get more knowledge, if only a little history and geology, they gain an appreciation for this part of the country and its heritage. (G45)

The importance of learning and information delivery in the Jenolan Caves experience was reinforced in the dissatisfaction expressed by visitors. That is, the inadequate supply of information was a facet of criticism.

The guide talked a bit fast to clearly hear and understand. (V45)

The information centre should have more information. (V51)

Some of the displays in the visitors centre were old, I expected it to be more modern, and expected more biology and geology. (V23)

I would like more information on the Indigenous relationship with the region. (V490)

I would like a book with information on the caves. (V510)

We heard similar information on both tours, we would have liked more science and history, the tours were oriented to kids. (V9)

I expected Aboriginal history but it was only white history. (V93)

The learning event is not restricted to paying visitors. Staff, management and recreation cavers also highlighted learning as an important part of the Jenolan experience. Again, this learning occurs formally and informally, either as a requirement of staff roles or activities, or a secondary outcome that is now seen as a benefit.

When I first started I had done a bit of caving, and it was interesting to get to know the caves and know more about them, about their history. The history has got a lot to do with my interest. (G27)

It took a couple of meetings and then I began to understand the processes they were using and was able to participate. I had to read up about karst, and speleology etc but I could understand the legal issues because of my training as a barrister. (A23)

Jenolan is a learning place for people – self-learning. The caves are waiting while people behave in much the same way as occurred 100-150 years ago - it is still about status, ego of discovery, learning about the caves is secondary. (G41)

I have definitely developed an appreciation of the sensitivity of the karst, formations and caves. I don't kill spiders anymore in my house! I have gained a sensitivity for the environment, greater awareness and knowledge of karst and reserves. (A25)

I have learnt an enormous amount of new skills, and keep decent health and fitness, and have some wonderful and close friends with workmates and tourists. (G45)

I can identify features and understand them now, that is enjoyable, the learning process, learning about caves - the surface, subsurface, karst system - understanding the mechanics. (G51)

I have got self-confidence from interacting with so many people and organisations. (G33)

I have learnt lots about the caves, different types of people. (G10)

I have gained the experience of meeting so many different people, from all walks of life, I have worked with different people, and gained a lot of skills. (G28)

A characteristic of Jenolan that comprises a significant part of the learning material as well as differentiating Jenolan from other places and spaces is the sense of history that permeates the experience.

The place is great, excellent township, a bit like an alpine village with the stone wall and green lake. It is charming and has a sense of history. (V111)

I think they should try to keep the old world charm – I don't expect anything to change, like the caves. (V48)

One of the benefits of the visit is that I have a greater understanding of the courage of the original explorers and sense of history about the formations. (V120)

You can feel the history of the place. (V23)

The history is special. (V68)

The historical aspects were interesting: the buildings, the photos, things to read, finding out about the Blue Mountains. (V35)

It is beautiful, excellent. I would like to have done more. I enjoyed the whole area - the huge caverns and thinking about the first group coming in. I got a big high wishing I was the first person in the caves. (V41)

I would like to see it remain as an historic site, even the old light fittings, and architecture. I'd like to see it kept maintained better, it is easy for it to get rundown. (V74)

There is something different about caving at Jenolan Caves - the history, and that I know the history including knowing the people: Steve, Chris, Callaghan, Barry etc - they all caved together. (G21)

History is both a process of learning and a mark of difference, a getting away from the modern world, reflected in portrayal of Jenolan's contrast to the modern world. As a

historical place Jenolan is different to the urban and modern world from which most visitors originate. This difference adds to the sense of 'getting away', the possibility of relaxation and re-creation; it is a metaphorical 'step back in time' to a world of rugged untamed landscape, buildings constructed of hand-cut limestone blocks and a host-guest relationship that focuses on face-to-face interaction with limited technology.

History is an important component of the interpretive or educative experience. The stories of cave exploration comprise a major part of the interpretation offered by the guides during the cave tour, and can also be found in some of the interpretation signs. Visitors are told a story of other people's lives, people just like themselves, so that they can imagine exploring the caves with nothing but candlelight. Soja (1996) suggests that history and social relations dominate our understanding of the social world; that is, an important part of understanding Jenolan is its history, or perhaps more accurately its heritage, which provides a context for understanding current practice. Where history is an inquiry into the past and an effort to know what actually happened, heritage is a celebration of the past that is tailored to present-day purposes (Lowenthal 1998: x). But the two are not separate or independent of each other; there is history in heritage and heritage in history. History is the scientific version of heritage, that is, a visage of the 'true' past reality (Lowenthal 1998). Tales that link to our own heritage provide tags from which we can make very particular sense of Jenolan, and as such are frequently used by guides.

The sense of history that Caves House and other buildings provide and the history given in the cave interpretation ensures that history is a significant component of the Jenolan Caves experience. The history offered though is a very specific history; it is a masculine history of colonial exploration, development and science. The relationship of the traditional owners, whose history with the place far exceeds the colonial relationship, is barely mentioned, and the lives of women associated with Jenolan Caves are also minor contributions to the history in the majority of accounts.

The history that is presented at Jenolan is a dominant history; a history that reflects contemporary power relationships and those that existed at the time of Australia's colonisation. It is a history that has relevance to some people but not to others. Drivers of buses carrying Chinese tourists indicated that Chinese visitors primarily wanted to take photos and tell others about their visit, they weren't interested in hearing about the history. This is unsurprising given that these stories had little relevance to their own

lives, but also the guided tours are presented in English, which many visitors from China would not understand.

Jenolan history is both a tangible facet of what visitors see, feel and hear as they stroll around the precinct and through the caves. It is also part of their learning experience.

I wouldn't like to have been a pioneer of caves, it would have been a bit frightening and difficult. (V11)

It's important to teach about heritage (V488)

I now have more of an understanding about our history. (V110)

Visitors get more knowledge, if only a little history and geology. They gain an appreciation for this part of the country and its heritage (G45)

Challenge

Challenges frequently, but not always, arise from new and different experiences. Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) seminal work demonstrates whether an experience is boring or anxiety-ridden is dependent on the level of challenge required and personal skill available.

Challenges at Jenolan Caves arise in a number of ways:

- Driving either the two-mile or five-mile road into Jenolan Caves
- Walking into underground chambers that are dark, damp and in some places quite confined; with respect to the lit (or developed caves) visitors are dependent on the tour guide to provide direction and light and ensure the overall safety of each individual.
- Entering and travelling through non-lit caves, for example the Plughole, with only a personal head light as a light source, having to climb steep areas in contrast to using a ladder, or having to squeeze through tight openings in contrast to having them widened for easy passage.

The challenge and sense of personal achievement will make Jenolan a memorable experience for many people.

I did it for the adventure. I learnt I could get through small gaps, it was about challenges. (V18 - Plughole)

The Plughole was just wonderful. I enjoyed going up – it's easier to climb than drop. I felt exhilarated at getting through the S-bend, though it was shorter than I thought. It tested my confidence level, and it felt great to get through. (V45)

I enjoyed the Lucas and Orient because they were more physically challenging (than some other tours) but still easy enough for the kids. (V58)

I chose this tour because I wanted a two hour tour, and a more challenging tour. (V60 – River Cave)

It was a personal challenge, something different. I chose this tour because it was more challenging. (V80 – Plughole)

It was challenging - walking through the caves. (V88 – Jubilee Cave)

I did it for the adventure, I learnt I could get through small gaps. It was about challenges. (V36 - Plughole)

I was smiling after doing the Plughole – satisfied. I had learnt something about myself because I had never been in a claustrophobic or complete and utter pitch black for that long. I wouldn't ever have climbed or dropped 95m as I did there. (V45)

Meeting personal challenges, feeling a sense of achievement and being aware of one's own self-development are also parts of staff and recreation caver's experience of Jenolan:

I have done four caving trips, and this time I am becoming aware of the environment. It is a challenge to get from A to B. Before the challenge took all my focus, now I am beginning to pay attention to where I am going. (A5)

Working here has increased my personal confidence - yes I can handle one hundred people, and I know I can fix it. I have no hesitation in doing anything. (G19)

I have learnt skills that I previously didn't have - sewerage works, boiler operator, general building. I wouldn't have come across these if I'd [not come here]. (G29)

I am more at ease now talking to a group of adults and started to overcome a fear of heights. (G13)

It is a big surprise what you can fit through, another member was smaller than me and found it harder. People are surprised when they can get through – their limits are now higher. We do activities to challenge each other, and to share. Activities like getting through a coathanger, stacking the telephone books, crawling under the stool, and comparing the worst experiences of the day. (A5)

I have definitely gained confidence. I didn't think I would work again. I don't like computers, but I can do things that I never thought I could do, so I have gained some computer literacy and skill at public speaking. (G41)

I have developed more responsibility, developed more skills and knowledge regarding management responsibilities. I have really grown. (A25)

The students are exposed to adventure – it is their first time caving, abseiling, even bushwalking. For some it is the first time away from parents, and the longest time away from a computer. We see each kid lift their own personal self-esteem, and some personal development. (A47)

Even though it might be relatively common for Australians to visit caves if they are nearby, 'caving' and the 'karst landscape' are not common terms in the Australian language. As a natural feature they are an unknown, an exotic in comparison to beach, surf, mountains, rivers, and even the underwater world. Only 4% of the Australian land mass is identified as karst (Gillieson and Spate 1998) compared to 12% globally (Yuqi 1998). There are 62 SCUBA diving schools and suppliers in Sydney (Sydney Yellow Pages 2003). In comparison there are 34 caving clubs in Australia and the only commercial instructors are those that operate from show caves and are usually show cave guides. Jenolan Caves offers an experience that is different to the everyday, but also different to other tourist sites. Jenolan Caves is different because it is a karst site: it has caves, formations, arches, a lake, all in a hidden valley. Even as a karst site, for those that are experienced in this area, Jenolan is unique. The geology and history, which are markers of difference, offer opportunities of learning and the development of a new understanding about this particular place. At an individual level the difference can pose personal challenges: challenges associated with the road into Jenolan, accessing the lit caves, or entering the non-lit caves. Jenolan Caves, as a place of novelty, encompasses numerous facets relating to difference; it is a getting away to somewhere new, different, and leaving the routine behind. The scenery, caves, people, activities during the day will all be 'different' to those normally experienced.

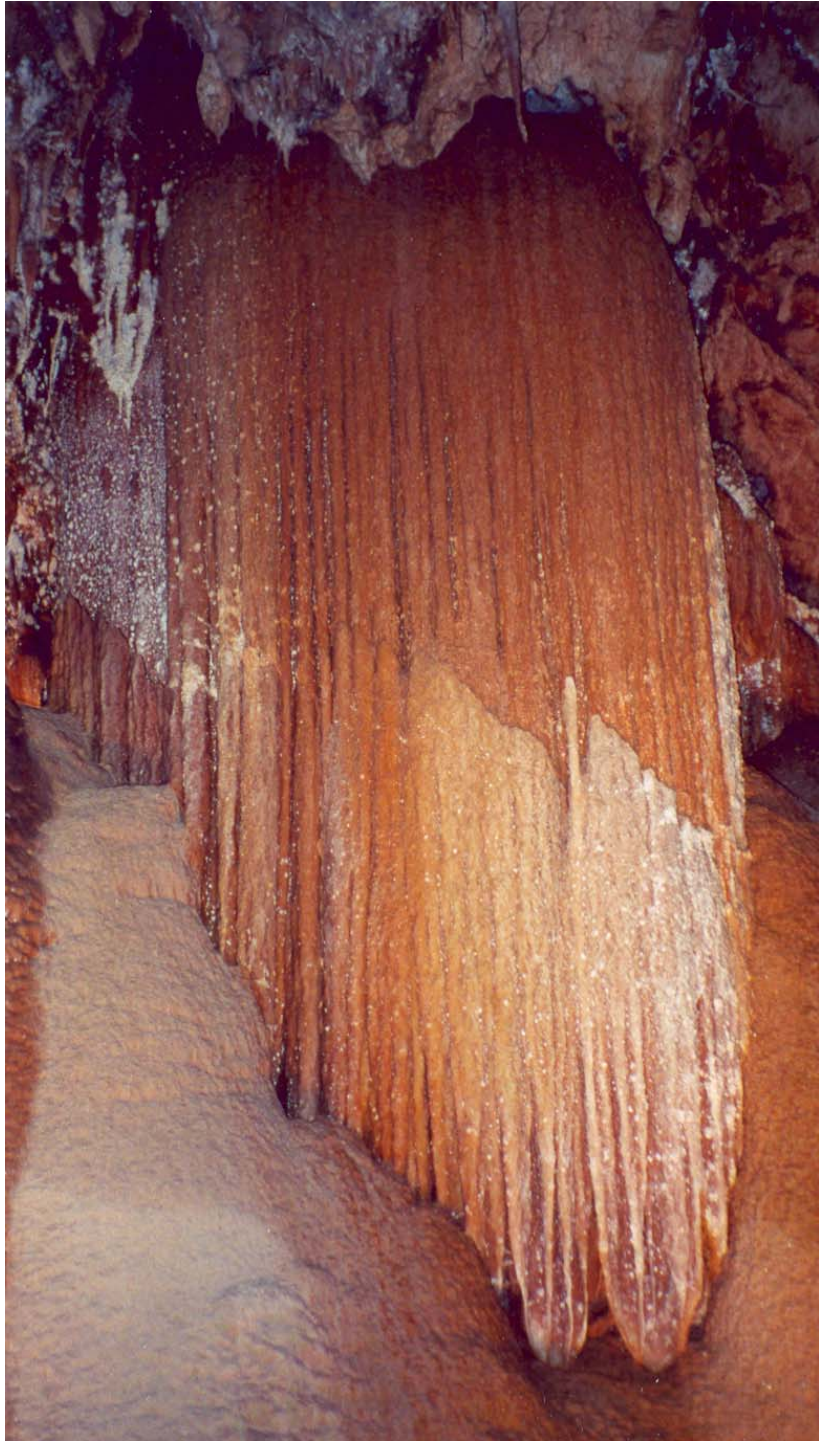


Plate 5: Flowstone at Jenolan

Conclusion

Jenolan as a leisure and tourism experience is characterised by relaxation, hospitality, socialness, novelty / difference and pleasure. Visitors come to Jenolan to experience leisure and as tourists; their experience at Jenolan matches the defining characteristics of these phenomena. As a leisure experience Jenolan is talked about as being relaxing and contributing to the individual's personal well-being. Also inherent in the leisure experience is the notion that much of the work done in creating the experience is done by someone else. The experience is discernible by characteristics of novelty and difference in the landscape, interactions and personal challenges. Ultimately it is a highly personal and rewarding experience, not just for the conventional visitor but also for staff, and other people who regularly associate with Jenolan Caves.

Chapter 5: Sensing place

Interpreters are well aware that learning is enhanced if one is able to provoke all the visitor's senses (Knudson *et al.* 1999), and along with metaphor the great authors ensnare us with their ability to conjure responses from *all* our senses:

A well established society in Woodhouse, full of fine shades, ranging from the dark of coal-dust to grit of stone-mason and sawdust of timber-merchant, through the lustre of lard and butter and meat, to the perfume of the chemist and the disinfectant of the doctor, on to the serene gold-tarnish of bank-managers, cashiers for the firm, clergymen and such like, as far as the automobile refulgence of the general-manager of all the collieries. (D.H. Lawrence *The Lost Girl* 1950: 11)

This chapter examines the multi-sensual nature of experiencing place. It explores the ways in which the visitor and staff relationship is built upon the embodied experience; the subtle smelling of Jenolan, the palpable feel of the rock, and the pleasure in the silence. It is from the realm of geography and the concepts of place and place meaning that this analysis is derived.

Place

Geography, which is the study of relations between society and the natural environment (Peet 1998: 1), when applied to Jenolan provides a vehicle for examining the relationship between people and Jenolan Caves. This relationship is contextualised in the concept of 'place', that is, 'a series of locales in which people find themselves, live, have experiences, interpret, understand, and find meaning' (Peet 1998: 48). Tuan (1977: 6) expresses it well: 'What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value.' For Thrift (1999: 310) place is a 'means by which space is produced as a *plenitude of different relations*.' It is this plenitude of different relations that I am trying to uncover at Jenolan Caves in a leisure and work context, although leisure perhaps is particularly open to place construction.

Leisure provides the possibility of changing space into place through a multiple sensory range of experiences and through seeking, deliberately or not, certain landscapes and places, creating and appropriating them by moving and perceiving in them. (Nielsen 1999: 279)

Place, following Relph's (1976) seminal work, is the term or concept that portrays a sense of connection between the human world and the physical world. As Nielsen (1999) summarises, it is the emotional link between people and the physical world as a result of living in it that leads to the construction of place. Tuan (1990) uses the term *topophilia* to represent the affective bond between people and place. Interest in the emotional connection arose when Tuan and Relph (as examples) recognized their own passion for place, and passion in others so profound that great wars, poetry and literature would result.

Just as Tuan and Relph have described the connection between people and place, the concept of 'placelessness' or inauthentic place-making is possible. For Relph (1976), inauthentic place-making is not necessarily better than authentic place-making but differs in the resultant sense of connection that one has to place. Augé (1995) argues that whether a place or non-place, both are ceaselessly rewritten. Where authentic sense of place is a full awareness of place, belonging and knowing one belongs in an unselfconscious way, inauthentic place-making derives from a more repetitive and imitative style of interaction.

Inauthentic attitudes, directly or indirectly transmitted through diverse media (mass communications, mass culture, big business, central authority, and the economic system that embraces all of these) encourage 'placelessness' – that is, 'a weakening of the identity of places to the point where they not only look alike, but feel alike and offer the same bland possibilities for experience' (Relph 1976: 90).

Meaning arises, argues Heidegger (1993), within the context of the practical engagement with an organism's or individual's surroundings. Consequently places are dynamic, that is, their meaning is gained from the forever changing practice that occurs. Borrowing Schatzki's example (Thrift 1999: 311): 'When a tree is understood as something to climb, that is, it becomes a place at which climbing is intelligible'; but a tree can also be

understood as something to fell, to acquire, to examine, to prune, to provide shade, to sketch and so on. These multiple meanings arise from the many forms of practical engagement with place and demonstrate that there will always be contested meanings of place.

It is the practical engagement, body and mind with environment, which is explored in greater depth in this chapter; the sensing of Jenolan and the multiple meanings of place that are subsequently constructed. So far the account in this thesis has listed and sorted the emotions, feelings, and thoughts that various people have had as a result of their interaction with Jenolan. These accounts have largely been presented within a broad leisure and tourism framework. Following Tuan (1990), the task of this chapter is to provide greater depth to our emergent understanding of the place 'Jenolan'; to describe the detail of the 'practical engagement' of the body, through the senses that are the portals for these interactions, and mind with the physical world.

Sensing Jenolan

Our meaning of place is derived from our practical engagement with that place, which is preceded by the way we 'sense' the place. This chapter draws extensively on the work of Rodaway, most particularly his work '*Sensuous Geographies*' and I use, as does Rodaway, the dual meaning of 'sense': as in making sense and sensation or feeling. Making sense is contingent on the act of sensing, which is itself a highly variable and subjective process because 'the senses are not merely passive receptors of particular kinds of environmental stimuli but are actively involved in the structuring of that information ...' (Rodaway 1994: 2). Urry (2001) points out that the process of sensing is active, technologically extended and a consequence of human mobility. He argues that while technology has made possible virtual mobility, corporeal mobility and the resultant physical proximity continues to be significant, if not necessary, in producing a satisfying leisure and tourism experience.

The engagement with the physical world includes the aesthetics of that world, where *aesthetics* is 'the perception of the beautiful in nature and art' (Porteous 1996: 19); this definition has moved somewhat from its original and etymological derivation of 'knowledge derived from the senses' (Porteous 1996: 19). Porteous (1996) points out that contemporary aesthetics involves discrimination or the making of judgements, the

ability to distinguish good taste from bad; aesthetics is now based on values. A further point to make is that aesthetic activity is concerned with objects as they appear to the senses and not concerned with their origin or purpose (Porteous 1996: 21). A distinction is made between sensory, formal, and symbolic aesthetics; here we are concerned with sensory (the pleasure of the sensations) and symbolic aesthetics (the appreciation of the meanings of the environments) that give people pleasure (Porteous 1996: 22).

Continuing to follow Porteous' approach there are two modes of perception: autocentric and allocentric¹¹. Autocentric sensing, or subject-centred, combines the sense with pleasure and is concerned with how people feel. Allocentric sensing, object-centred, is concerned with objectification and knowledge. Children are primarily autocentric and then, at least in the studies done in industrial cultures, they learn to develop allocentric modes. Vision, apart from sensing colour, and speech sounds are allocentric modes of perception. Other sounds and other forms of sensing are autocentric (Porteous 1996: 31).

The following account is my impression of Jenolan. It includes both allocentric and autocentric modes of perception, and I present it here to provide some kind of 'overall' sensory benchmark of Jenolan before the sensing of visitors and residents is presented.

The natural (i.e. not constructed by human endeavours) landscape and built environment at Jenolan Caves is as much a novel experience as is the underground cave system. The main access to Jenolan Caves is a road from Hampton that winds down into the Jenolan Valley, travels along the base of the valley for approximately one kilometre before retreating up the other side toward Oberon. The rugged and steep valley gives a sense of distance and isolation from the 'developed' world, which in real terms is only a matter of kilometres. Upon opening the car windows the call of the birds, currawongs, bellbirds, bowerbirds and lyrebirds, can be heard.

¹¹ Porteous is referring to perception in comparison to Plog's psychographics of tourism experiences

Cars weave down the sides of the hills on a roadway that barely has enough space for one car, let alone a coach and car. The safety rails, old sleepers from the Sydney Harbour Bridge tramway, lean uneasily toward the slope of the hill, and bitumen crumbles at the edges. At the bottom of the hill the road turns a sharp bend to the right and emerges adjacent to a small constructed lake, a glistening blue when the sun shines (and algal growth is minimal). The road then passes through a large and natural rock archway; first-time visitors have no idea where they are going, the arch is dark, cold and narrow and drivers negotiate past pedestrians and give-way to on-coming traffic. Visitors pass through the darkness of the arch to emerge into a relatively small 'precinct' or village.

This small area is visually dominated by Caves House, a hotel built at the turn of the century, distinguished by its limestone walls and shingle roof; and weather-board extensions out the back. The narrow street is paved; there is a small weather-board building housing the guides office and ticket office on the right; on the left is an un-walled shelter and seating area. The steep walls of the valley leave little space for pedestrians and cars; in quiet times the space is shared amicably but when visitor numbers begin to rise to 1000 plus per day walking the precinct is less relaxed and more like Pitt St, Sydney.

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Plate 6: The Jenolan Caves precinct



Plate 7: View of Jenolan Caves House, track from Carlotta Arch

In summer the heat of the sun can accumulate in the valley, enticing people into the cooler archways or the constant 16 degree temperature of the caves. The picnickers struggle to find places away from the heat; those who get in early can claim the seats near the Blue Lake and take respite from the cooler air drifting from the water. Those who arrive later, or who desire to use the barbecues, remain on the narrow concrete strip adjacent to the car parks, using the tables and benches provided. Others wander further down the river and claim patches of ground under the shade of trees, forgoing the utilitarian comfort of bench and table. In summer the flies get to your food before you do, but they also make no distinction between food and body. They stick to people's skin and eyes and buzz close, as if attempting to enter the mouth. Trees on the sides of the valley are the vibrant green of the sycamore, but further away from the tourist precinct the green turns to the sparser olive green of the eucalyptus. The long days of summer illuminate the valley for the length of most of the day-visitor's stay.

This is in contrast to winter, when the shadow stays in the valley until near eleven, and only then do the sun's rays hit the floor of the valley and those in it begin to feel the warming of the air. The light and warmth is brief, leaving the valley by the early afternoon. The task for visitors quite often is to find shelter from the wind or rain, but there is the possibility of enjoying the short periods of sunshine as they sit at the tables and gaze up the valley walls at the bare trees – the sycamore left bare from their deciduous leaves. Now the visitor is enticed into the caves with the promise of warmer and calmer air – a peacefulness and stability along with majestic vision and creativity.

These are my words, my perceptions, portraying the sense that I have made from my engagement. I am going to recount the allocentric and autocentric sensing of Jenolan by others using the type of sense that was used; hence I present what was *seen*, what was *felt*, followed by the *smelling* of Jenolan, and then the *bearing* of Jenolan.

Dominance of visual and rational

Jenolan is often described in terms of its visual appeal, as an above-ground and below-ground spectacle. Such descriptions reflect a predisposition to understand the world through our visual experiences. Vision provides more information than the other senses combined, up to 75% of our received information (Knudson *et al.* 1999), and we tend to believe what we see over what we hear, feel or smell (Porteous 1996). Vision is possible from great distances; indeed, some distance between object and eye is required for an object to be seen. Where smell and sound require a closer level of proximity (usually), and touch requires contact, vision occurs from a distance. Vision does not evoke emotional responses in the way that smell, sound and touch can – such as the smell of a rotting carcass, the cry of a baby, the touch of silk or a caress (Tuan 1990; Rodaway 1994). There is some ambiguity as to whether ‘seeing’ is an active or passive sense. Whilst one might actively ‘look’ the writings of Tuan and Rodaway point out the cultural assumption that the distance between viewer and object seen enables the viewer to be ‘objective’ in what they perceive.

Whilst we undoubtedly use all our senses in making sense of our experiences, our cultural and biological emphasis is on the visual, resulting in a hegemony of vision (Porteous 1996; Urry 1999: 35). The English language reflects this visual dominance: ‘seeing is believing’, the significance of an ‘eyewitness’ account as opposed to ‘hearsay’¹². Visual hegemony is particularly true in the sciences where reality and objectivity depend upon an event being seen or measured where measurement uses visual cues (Urry 1999). The dominance of the visual is also true for the personal experiences of the tourist, where visual records are ‘proof’ that one was there, or that something exists. One of Suvantola’s (2002: 182) informants makes this point: ‘If I told this, they wouldn’t believe me at home, but I have a picture to show, so they have to (Denise, 22)’.

The visual appropriation of nature offers a particular interpretation of the external world: it defines the external world as scenery and offers a different social construct than that presented in the literature (Green 1990: 3). Green draws on Foucault’s approach, in arguing that the images or pictorial presentation of landscape needs to be considered in the context of the historically specific languages and forms of knowledge, that is ‘the

¹² The rationale supporting this view is that whatever is sensed first-hand is given greater validity, as such either seeing or hearing an event might be equally valid, but the point being made here is that our language uses the visual metaphor to represent the first-hand and greater value knowledge.

discourse on nature has to be analysed in terms of its *systematic relations* rather than the properties and characteristics of any particular text or image. That is, in acknowledgement of the dominance of the visual requires understanding the historical context and related discourse practices.

We are now more aware of our emphasis on the visual, and more critical of the ways in which this emphasis ‘colours’ our thoughts and actions. Urry gives an example with respect to heritage tourism:

What does need to be emphasised is that heritage history is distorted because of the predominant emphasis on visualisation, on presenting visitors with an array of artefacts, including buildings (either ‘real’ or ‘manufactured’), and then trying to visualise the patterns of life that would have emerged around them. This is an essentially ‘artefactual’ history, in which a whole variety of social experiences are necessarily ignored or trivialised, such as war, exploitation, hunger, disease, the law, and so on (Urry 1990: 112).

Urry (1999) argues that it was in the nineteenth century that nature became increasingly valued as scenery and spectacle. Nicholas Green (1990) however, points out that consumption of the picturesque was applied earlier to the visual consumption of private gardens. From gardens, to monuments, it then became fashionable to observe and examine nature and its value was reflected in the terms ‘countryside, landscape and scenery’ (Green 1990; Tuan 1990: 125, 133). Romantic interpretations of nature were counterposed with the increasing fashion of scientific travels and observations of the natural environment, where again the eye dominated and visual recordings made. The shift to pleasure travel, as opposed to study travel, maintained an emphasis on visual pleasure and the collection of sights. ‘Seeing the sights’, ‘capturing the view’, ‘eye-catching scenery’ are just some of the expressions that reflected the emphasis of the eye in the act of travel (Crawshaw and Urry 1997). Crawshaw and Urry point out the dominance but also the ambivalence of vision to the traveller, that to be just ‘sightseer’ is a superficial way of travelling, more appropriate is travel in which all of the senses are used (Crawshaw and Urry 1997). Recognition of the importance of the visual to the tourist experience has resulted in an emphasis on the visual or tourist gaze and rendering

of the tourist body, and their other senses, invisible or irrelevant to the tourist's experience of place (Markwell 2001a; Crouch 2002).

Sight-seeing and scientific observation, both of which imply distant observation, continue to retain considerable significance in social practice. The possibility of 'objective observation' has long been questioned in the social and natural sciences (Creswell 1998; Crotty 1998; Stanley and Wise 1993). For example Evelyn Fox Keller suggests that the 'biological gaze' may not be as 'distant' as it seems; the distant look implies an innocent desire to understand but touching implies intervention, manipulation and control (Fox Keller 1996: 107). She notes that even looking has an impact, at the very least a metaphorical impact on us the looker, but goes on to remind us of the manipulation and intervention that is required to make the scientific observations: the preparation to be put on a microscope slide, the killing and/or pulling apart of an organism prior to detailed examination and recording. Looking, in these conditions, is hardly a distant and non-intervening activity.

Given that our visual senses collect up to 75% of the information we process it is perhaps little wonder that Tuan (1990: 93-5) suggests that we need respite from the task of visual appreciation; that unless some human incident or scientific curiosity holds our focus, our eye tires of looking at any landscape or vision. So, for example, unless we are highly knowledgeable about Picasso's work, or it triggers an empathetic response, we become satiated and indifferent to the detail and intricacy of the visual sights in front of us.

Hence we examine the 'seeing' of Jenolan aware that:

Vision is a dominant sense

Vision is commonly attributed emotional detachment and passivity between observer and observed

Vision extends near and far from the observer

Seeing

A huge number of visitors travel through Jenolan's scenic vistas with camera in hand wanting to record the visual delights that 'are' Jenolan. As a spectacle Jenolan Caves certainly meets or surpasses most people's expectations. The dramatic arrival to Jenolan

Caves through the steep valley and narrow twisted road, the physical size of many of the caves, the level of intricacy of the crystal formations, the size of the crystal formations, and the colour of the formation all demonstrate that Jenolan Caves IS a spectacle. In many accounts told by visitors and the community Jenolan is 'seen' and the beauty and spectacle are emphasized in visitor's words.

The scenery is stunning and the caves top it off. I was amazed by them as we approached such incredible natural beauty. (V102)

It's beautiful, the natural environment, the river was gorgeous and the cave was very pretty. (V42)

It was great, beautiful. The caves are spectacular. (V90)

The caves were awesome, mind-boggling, being underground, it looks so incredible, and knowing there's so much more! (V20)

The drive down was spectacular. (V38)

The Lucas was magnificent, its grandeur, height, size, something wonderful to behold. (V485)

Mother had known about the caves for years but hadn't visited before, it was something she had always wanted to see. (V76)

Initially I was stunned by the beauty of the caves, and I still get a buzz from the Lucinda cavern in Chifley, and enjoy Orient. (G20)

I came down through the Coachhouse at night - very black, faint misty rain - hanging low. It was something special to come to the Coachhouse, there were no lights then - the blackness, sense of something over you. (A3)

It is a good photogenic place - around the Grand Arch, there are interesting views, natural scenic sights that you wouldn't get anywhere else. (A17)

If you stand on the ridge you can see 3 arches: Carlotta, Grand Arch, and the Devil's Coachhouse plus you can see up into Nettle Arch – it gives the impression of being in a modern art thing. (A17)

It is beautiful, spectacular – you're out in the middle of nowhere and you come across this. (G55)

So now it's home, there are not too many people can say they live somewhere as beautiful as this. (G40)

Jenolan is unique, absolutely beautiful, people who don't see this are missing something. You don't see this everyday in your lives. (A25)

Coming to work in the morning when the sun is rising is pretty good – it looks like you're on top of the world when cloud is underneath you, everywhere I look is cloud. (A35)

I had heard of the place and remember driving through the arch. I stopped and reversed back. It was a shock and then a bigger shock going through and seeing the precinct. (A45)

Jenolan is promoted as a place of renowned beauty. The promotional brochures make reference to 'beautiful formations', the 'most beautiful caves', 'large and well decorated', 'stunning views', a visual impact that will leave you breathless, 'exquisitely beautiful helictites', 'great beauty' and so on. You are promised an experience where your visual senses will be deluged with unique and astoundingly beautiful sights. You are invited to 'inspect', 'see' and visit the 'superb *show* caves'.

Caves are particularly interesting visual phenomena. Sensing with ones eyes and seeing, in the below ground portions of Jenolan (dark caves), is only possible through the use of lighting technology. As the tour guides are keen to demonstrate, the darkness within the caves is so complete that the human eye can see *nothing* of the environment without the aid of some form of artificial light. The natural state of darkness, and the dependence on introduced light sources highlights two aspects of Jenolan. First, seeing Jenolan caves should perhaps be understood as a limited seeing, even with all the lights turned on in a cave there are places that one doesn't see but rather feels, hears, smells, or is imagined. The remaining darkness and what you don't see is as central to the experience as what you do see. Second, the act of seeing below-ground Jenolan is an historical event. Little is known about Indigenous people's relationship to Jenolan (Horne 1994) but certainly the European colonisers were excited by the possibility of unknown, untouched and natural spectacles. They entered with burning candles and first saw the cave passages and decorations with this light. European discovery marked a new era for Jenolan caves, and the continued technological developments continue the dynamic nature of human interaction with this landscape.



Plate 8: Crystal formation – stalagmites, stalactites and ‘cave mysteries’

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Plate 9: Colour enhanced cave crystal (JCRT website:
<http://www.jenolancaves.org.au/imggal/pub/images.asp?gallery=Cave+Images>)

The quotes selected above demonstrate that Jenolan provides a rewarding spectacle to many who visit or work there. Undoubtedly in the relationship between people and place the sense of sight is very significant; the dominance of the visual is demonstrated yet again. Or is it?

Examining visitors and staff's accounts demonstrates the predominance of the visual to the Jenolan experience, but they also demonstrate that other senses are also significant. The words visitors use to describe the Jenolan experience evoke feelings, touch, odours, sounds as well as sights. How people interact with the Jenolan space, and construct the place of Jenolan is a multi-sensual process. Urry (1990), in *The Tourist Gaze*, makes the point that tourist consumption emphasises the visual experience. Urry (1990) refers to the effort to reconstruct or manufacture 'heritage buildings' or to keep the façades but not the whole 'real' thing, as if, because we focus on the visual, the façade is enough. However, why go to the bother of reconstructing a building for visual satisfaction, when surely this can be achieved through photographs or some other, simpler, representation. Perhaps the effort of reconstructing an entire building is to create a physical entity that can not only be seen but also felt, by being bodily present? That is, tourists are consuming not just visual spectacles but also physical environments; they are feeling as well as seeing.

Haptic/ touching

Having made the point that even though, biologically and culturally, visual information is given greater significance than information obtained through smell or touch it will be made clear that the other senses are also important in constructing and understanding Jenolan. Smell, touch and sound are part of the Jenolan experience as independent sensations and in concert with each other. Touch, or haptic sensing, is an intimate and often taken for granted interaction. Porteous (1996) presents touch as the most primitive and sensuous of all the senses; it cannot be switched off, 'we are always in touch with our environment' (Porteous 1996: 38). Certain parts of our body, for example our fingertips, are extremely sensitive to minute changes in a tactile surface. But as Porteous points out, much of our experience of touch and texture comes through the feet, as we experience the tactility of various surfaces: the concrete path, carpeted room, tiled passage, grassy lawn and so on. Kinaesthesia and the sense of temperature and air

movement are subsidiary senses of tactility (Porteous 1996) and will be included as part of the haptic sensing of Jenolan.

The language that people use to describe their reaction to Jenolan shows that the interaction, and therefore meaning, is more than a visual experience. People do more than 'see' Jenolan. A simple example of the haptic nature of a cave experience is the constant temperature and atmosphere that it provides; the whole body is immersed in, and touches, the constant temperature and humidity of the caves. The environment provides a physical sensation that is very welcome in the hotter months.

Jenolan is lovely, it's nice and cool, spectacular, and the deepest part is relatively untouched - historically. The formations are interesting and beautiful. My son is keen on chemistry, physics and biology so it's interesting for him. The colours in shawls ... (V31)

They're nice and cool. (V66)

Jenolan is a good place to come to get out of Sydney when it's hot. (V72)

One of the promotional strategies used by Jenolan management played on the concept of 'cool', promoting the caves to families over the summer holidays as being a 'cool' place to be, both literally and fashionably. Staff noted that when it is foggy and bad weather in the Blue Mountains visitors will often make the decision to travel through to Jenolan. At Jenolan, the attraction (the caves) is sheltered from inclement weather. The promotional material invites visitors to sense the physicality of Jenolan, to feel and engage actively with the structures that constitute Jenolan. Visitors are beckoned to engage in 'climbing, muddy, slippery' slopes, to go through squeezes, to 'slide to the cave floor', to walk through the mountain, 'follow the footsteps of the discoverers (sic¹³)', 'climb and crawl', 'enter another world', 'squeeze through tiny passageways of 'wild' caves', 'mix with the local currawongs', 'encounter wombats, wallabies ...', experience the 'thrill of discovery'. In these ways visitors are invited to be bodily present, physically active and 'in touch' with Jenolan, not just a set of eyes looking at what Jenolan has to behold. There is a distinction though between the levels of touch desired in undeveloped caves and the touch permitted in developed caves. In the developed caves, or show caves, one is invited to *become breathless* over the spectacle before them, and to *pass through* the

¹³ Visitors are invited to imagine they are the first to experience that place, imagining themselves to be the European discoverers; this version of history neglects indigenous engagement with Jenolan.

mountain, following the footsteps¹⁴ of the first discoverers. Jenolan, as do other tourist caves, strongly impress upon visitors not to touch the limestone formations because of the discolouration that would result. The undeveloped caves, however, require a much closer physical negotiation, crawling through tiny tunnels, climbing over the limestone and sludging through muddy sections. The cave is available to be touched, in fact it is a necessity to touch the cave in order to get through it; one has to feel the slippery mud, the cool rock, at times with every part of your body as you pass through the squeezes. Above ground visitors are also encouraged to physically 'touch' Jenolan through use of the walking tracks, to mix with the currawongs, experience unspoilt bush, encounter wombats, wallabies, and possums, to picnic, swim or fish.

The physicality, body interacting with place, is particularly evident in the challenges that some visitors voiced. Squeezing through small gaps in the rocks during an adventure tour for example.

I did it for the adventure, I learnt I could get through small gaps. It was about challenges.
(V36)

The plughole was just wonderful, I did enjoy going up - easier to climb than drop. I felt exhilarated at getting through the S-bend, though it was shorter than I thought - it tested my confidence level, and it felt great to get through. (V45)

It was fabulous having to manoeuvre, an adventure, and I was a bit freaked out. (V476)

For some visitors the show caves also presented physical challenges.

It was challenging - walking through caves. (V88)

I was daunted by the first long flight of steps, but the walk got easier. (V119)

I had to lean low, and there was nowhere to put my hands – that was a bit hard. (V27)

I didn't like the stairs. (V484)

Clearly, the visit to Jenolan is not just about looking but also doing and being there, being in another place, feeling another place. Touch is an intimate sense (Rodaway 1994), it cannot occur remotely, it requires the closeness of body and object whether it be the fingers, feet, or torso that is connecting with the rock, or environment.

¹⁴ This with the idea of 'leaving only footprints' as an environmentally responsible action and assumes that footprints are ephemeral in nature.

Touching is a reciprocal sensation; to touch means also to be touched (Rodaway 1994). Unlike sight, sounds or smell where one can see the other without being seen/heard/smelt touch involves both 'parties' in an active sense. To touch the limestone rock is to be touched by the limestone rock, or to put it another way, the touching of skin and limestone has an impact on both skin and limestone. The skin senses the cool, smoothness of the rock, and the rock absorbs some of the acids and oils of the skin producing its own set of reactions. Herein rests many of the issues of 'impact' that require much of management's attention.

Rodaway (1994) suggests that touch is a kind of communication and emotional bond between person and world. The intimacy of touch provides a level of knowledge that invokes trust and closeness about the other. Touch with inanimate materials can either be simple contact or exploratory contact, the difference between the two being the intention and level of consciousness of the 'toucher' (Rodaway 1994). Both forms occur for the visitor, but management encourages visitors to be aware or conscious of their touch and thereby restrict where that touch falls; to limit touch to the fall of the feet on the concrete pathways, or stainless steel handrails. The management body requests that the limestone rock, especially the decorations, is not touched for fear of the chemical changes that will result to the rock. But touch is an action, or relationship that is desired by many, and although 'forbidden', enacted by many.

I was disappointed because I wanted to touch the water and climb the rock. (V106)

I was frustrated with the number of people that touched the rocks. (V93)

My role is protector -that is why the tour is guided - to keep an eye on people [to ensure they don't touch the limestone], we need to protect the outside as well. (G19)

My role is protecting caves from visitors, stopping them from breaking and touching. (G10)

I am upset if people touch, so I reprimand and then the group takes over and tells people not to touch – the visitor might think that the guides are too finicky. They say 'why can't we touch?' They can see that the early explorers damaged the caves but they [some] were hard choices, but today things are done differently - maybe in the future we will look back with horror on what we've done. (G47)

The opening of the Chifley as a self guided tour concerns me. There is no way you can trust the public to comprehend the significance of the cave and not to touch, to understand its lifetime compared to ours. I am not a greeny though but I want the catchment and caves to be preserved. (G50)

It is a formidable request to invite people into an unfamiliar environment with the intention that they derive pleasure and develop some awareness or knowledge of that environment but at the same time severely limit their opportunity to touch. Touch is the dominant sense of the young child, exploring a hitherto unknown world (Montague 1971 cited in Rodaway 1994), or as Wearing (1998: 135) notes, children do not make very good *flâneurs* as they are not content with just looking, they want activity and interaction. It remains a significant sense in the way that we understand the world. The request 'not to touch' requires the visitor (be they staff or tourist) to understand the consequences of touch and therefore be self-disciplined enough to limit their physical encounters with the rock surfaces. The ongoing reaching out to touch the precious limestone is proof of the strength of the desire to sense through touch.

This is perhaps understandable because the cave environment, even in well lit show caves, is only ever partially lit and might be described as semi-darkness. In show caves specific crystal formations are well lit, the pathway is lit to some extent but there is much in the space that exists but cannot be seen. Rodaway recounts Hull's experience of losing his sight and the subsequent greater use of his other senses to become familiar, and communicate, with the world. In a darkened environment it is perhaps 'natural' to draw to a greater extent on other senses such as smell, hearing and touch.



Plate 10: Cave crystal protected from visitor's touch with wire mesh

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Plate 11: The haptic experience of adventure caving (Jenny Whitby)

The haptic sensing of the below-ground regions of Jenolan is expected to be limited and controlled. For staff, both guides and maintenance staff, as well as researchers and speleologists their roles involve a considerable level of physical touch. They become, through their regular presence within the caves exploring, redesigning and maintaining infrastructure, more intimately aware of Jenolan. Their roles require them to touch the stone, soil, water, and in some cases living organisms within the caves.

Tuan (1990) refers to the intimacy that the small farmer or peasant has with the land and provides the example of the young American farmer who did not want to move to the city because he would miss the farm, he would miss watching the sun go down, ‘flicker out, like a candle that’s lost its wax and is going away, disappearing’” (Coles 1971 quoted in Tuan 1990: 97). The guides and maintenance staff at Jenolan also have this intimacy of labour as a consequence of the constant walking through and showing of the landscape, the building, improving and maintaining the infrastructure. They are required to carry loads of cement by hand into the caves, to examine the topography and design lighting systems, to examine the caves and decorations for damage, and to do the same for the above-ground landscape. Such constant touching, and consideration of the physical place creates an intimacy that in many ways is interpreted as privilege.

I've built lots of footpaths and bridges, it was an honour being at Jenolan at the right-time.
(G52)

It is still a place of mystery, and I still think people who cave here are the most privileged people in the world. (G36)

We do cave cleaning - that is incredible stuff, it's the lucky few that get permission, who get to clean the cave, I've cleaned the Baal, Imperial, and almost finished the Orient. (G36)

I have a sense of privilege working somewhere as magnificent as Jenolan, it's a very enjoyable job. (G42)

I still have a passion for the caves and it's a fantastic experience to work close with the caves. Nowadays my passion is less for sport caving. I have grown over the years to be more aware of the environment of caves and reserve. (G51)

I have been involved in maintaining the caves, pulling out the wiring, re-laying concrete.
(G14)

We've done some analysis on moon milk, and have cleaned above Oolite. (A5)

On wet days we worked in the caves. We built the waterfall with John Norris and crew.
(A32)

It is rewarding especially when I am doing maintenance, lessening the damage, and improving things. (G46)

The physical touch that is required in a tourism experience introduces us to further dimensions of the embodied experience. Being a tourist is not just a seeing, it is also a feeling and a broad range of sensing.

Imagined touch

The touch of Jenolan is found in the language people use, describing what they feel rather than what they see: the feeling of the bird in one's hand, the feeling of climbing on rocks, or being in the landscape by way of the imagination. Imagination is an important part of being bodily present and making sense of the touch. Rodaway lists four kinds of touch¹⁵ one of which is imagined touch (1994: 53). Imagined touch 'permits us to experience an intimacy with people and places which may be a great distance from our present location, in time and/or space, or which we have never actually experienced' (Rodaway 1994: 54).

Imagination is an important part of being present and making sense of Jenolan. Both staff and visitors engage with the physical place partly through imagination. The significance of imagination is exemplified in Tuan's (1977) excerpt from Niels Bohr's, the physicist, account after he visited Kronberg Castle in Denmark:

Isn't it strange how this castle changes as soon as one imagines that Hamlet lived here? As scientists we believe that a castle consists only of stones, and admire the way the architect put them together. The stones, the green roof with its patina ... none of this should be changed by the fact that Hamlet lived here, and yet it is changed completely. Suddenly the walls and the ramparts speak a quite different language. (cited in Tuan 1977: 4)

¹⁵ The others are extended touch (through the use of tools), reach touch (touch from the limbs, feet, hands), global touch (touch of the whole body).

Tour guides imaginatively tell stories of the explorers and early cave visitors encouraging contemporary visitors to imagine what it would have been like to be the first people in the caves.

I wouldn't like to have been a pioneer of caves, it would have been a bit frightening or difficult. (V11)

It is beautiful, excellent. I would like to have done more. I enjoyed the whole area - the huge caverns and thinking about the first group coming in – I got a big high wishing I was the 1st person. (V41)

I enjoyed the history, hearing about the first people with candles. (V60)

The little stories are good fun -the most interesting were the early day stories, and explanations. (V44)

When the tour guides explain how the first visitors in the Lucas Cave would move from one chamber to another by sliding down limestone flowstone ('The slide') on hessian bags, one can't help but imagine one's own body cascading through the cave. The imagined body and its connection to the physical world can have a strong emotional impact: a classic example might be the horror and fear we feel after hearing about torture and deprivation used in wartime. A more pleasant example might be the sense of wonder that would be experienced by the 'first' person to see the shores of an unknown land. The lure of being the first, or imagining to be the first (because how can you ever know), is still a significant component of imagined touch at Jenolan. Visitors, although fully aware that they are more likely the ten millionth person visiting the caves, still imagine what it would be like to be the first. The possibility of being the 'first' is more likely however for speleologists, be they staff or caving club members. Staff and cavers, in their exploration of unknown chambers or passageways, desire and imagine themselves as being the first person to enter particular chambers.

I found 15-20 caves at Wombeyan. It was a real thrill to find new caves; I love the caves and the undiscovered bits. Caves are things to be found, they hold secrets, things unknown. (G44)

I want to discover a cave – that would be the ultimate mark, to be part of history, I wouldn't be forgotten. (G21)

I also like the challenge – caves are one of the last unexplored territories, there are places people have never been before. (G25)

I've done some cave exploration, its motivating to find a new passage or new cave (I haven't done that here but have overseas), it's fantastic because you're the 1st person to go through the passage, 1st person to see it. (A17)

You get to look for new caves because a really big thing is that there is undiscovered stuff here, once you've discovered something you're hooked. (A17)

We know that there are a lot more caves to be discovered. (G35)

Years ago we went in one particular cave and discovered a new chamber. There was some loose stuff, we moved it, poked our head in the hole and inside it was white. We were covered in mud so one of us got volunteered to strip down and go in. When he got out, after he'd had a look around we plugged up the hole again. I don't know, now, where it is. (G47)

The whole valley is special, not just the caves. I still really enjoy the drive down, the steepness of the valley, and I can imagine that there are places that people have never been. (G32)

In Jenolan (and other karst areas) there are many caves that have not been sighted by the human eye or felt the human presence. The possibility of discovery is very real, as is clearly evident from the excerpts above. But it is only with the imagination that exploration and discovery becomes real. There is no way of being completely certain that no other person has ever visited a particular area before. Research will help establish evidence of prior visitation but proving the negative is difficult. Speleologists experience a strong emotional connection to the image of being the first. This imbues 'their' cave with meanings far beyond the physical properties of the caves.

Imagination has an important part to play in touching the landscape and understanding the place, even when history and the presence of others are not relevant. People place themselves, imaginatively, in the landscape. The narrow, winding road that visitors travel to get to Jenolan provokes fear and anxiety in many people. I personally know of one person who refuses to visit Jenolan because the road causes her such anxiety. Others report:

I didn't like the narrow road. (V471)

People are scared stiff coming down that road – it's very narrow and they freak out if they come across a bus and stop their car, they won't go near the guard rail. (G47)

They are scared of the drive down the hill - 90% of visitors are scared, on the way back they feel better because they are on the other side of the road. (A4) (referring to coach travellers)

The road was dangerous, it is hard to get two cars in different directions. (V10)

The drive down was a disconcerting adrenalin surge – completely unexpected and stands out for emotional impact! (V120)

I didn't like the drive in, we had to squeeze past a bus. (V42)

They should have better lighting on the road – I was afraid of the road. (V68)

Not everyone is fearful of the steep roadway:

The drive here is fantastic – I have heard people say it getting out of their car. The drive is half of the experience, people feel how out of the way it is, the terrain, the steepness add to the charm of place. (A35)

"to travel is better than to arrive", getting here is part of the experience. (A3)

On my first ever cave experience down here I remember the scary drive down, I think the road was bad then, but it's not so bad now. (A5)

The drive was amazing, spectacular and scary. (V38)

The fear of the roadway arises when visitors, who are firmly located on the horizontal surface of the road, imagine themselves elsewhere in the landscape. They can feel, in their minds, their body careening from the narrow roadway down the steep edges of the hills. Their body is fragile and vulnerable in contrast to the ruggedness and longevity of the steep valleys. In this example imagined touch can overwhelm the experience of actual touch discouraging people from ever visiting Jenolan again, or it might eventually diminish as a result of an experience that is in contrast to the imagination.

Smelling Jenolan

Olfactory geographies are like haptic geographies, both are quite intimate and immediate yet ordinarily much neglected as our attention is drawn to the geographical knowledge generated by the eyes and ears. (Rodaway 1994: 61)

There are four facets of the olfactory experience that have some relevance to our understanding of the place of Jenolan. The first is that we tend to ignore, forget or discount any information that is gathered from our nose, as the quote from Rodaway suggests, smell is overpowered by sight and sound. Having said this, I am sure that you

can think of examples where the opposite is true: where smell permeated your experience of place and dominated the experience: perhaps walking down the street there was a pervading smell of sewerage or petrol fumes discouraging you from any long stay there. The second point is that olfactory experiences are most often noted when the smell is unpleasant; the term 'odour' is frequently used in a negative sense, and in these situations the sense of smell can then take precedence (Tuan 1977; Rodaway 1994).

The third facet is that smelling is an intimate interaction. One needs to be in close proximity to the source of the smell, or at the very least in actual proximity with particles from the source of the smell (occasionally travelling reasonable distances when carried by wind). Fourth, smell can evoke emotionally-charged memories of events and scenes in a way that sight is unable to (Tuan 1990: 10). In my own case the smell of a particular soap can take me back to my grandmother's bathroom; my other senses are triggered and I can see, feel and hear the place again. The power of smell does not always have a negative affect, indeed smells can be 'security blankets': the smell of home, a pet, a cuddly toy, and of course, smell is important in sexual attraction (Porteous 1996: 36). In summary, smells are information poor and emotion rich (Porteous 1996).

In the case of Jenolan the smells and odours seem to be most notably marked by an absence; an absence of smells that might be associated with other places.

One of the benefits is that we have got out and about, got fresh air (V 484)

The day had been nice, good. It was relaxing, fresh air quiet, no McDonald's, can breathe well here. (V30)

Smell, then, is most commonly referred to as 'fresh air', or the absence of the urban and industrial. Promotional material asks visitors to come to the place of 'fresh, cool mountain air'. In most cases people do not mention smell when they are talking about their experiences at Jenolan. Each person would have been absorbing the odours of the caves and bush, however, they were seemingly unremarkable against the unique and diverse visual spectacle. In rarer cases people did note the smell of Jenolan:

It is still an exciting place, I love the smell of the place, the dank wet smell, and beautiful eucalyptus smell outside, it is a wonderful perfume. (G57)

In reviewing the contents of this chapter one Jenolan associate¹⁶ noted that:

On hot summer days the smell of cars (both exhaust fumes and overheated tires or brake pads) can be overwhelming in the Grand Arch. But on good days, you can get Eucalyptus and other bush scents, particularly on the walking tracks but also the visitor precinct. What does tend to be missing is the very real scent of cave earth which has been pretty much processed out of existence in the show caves; in most caves in their natural condition, it provides a changing experience as one enters the twilight zone, moves through it and then enters the dark zone. I think the issue is not just the compression of cave floors, but the fact the very odour arises from bacterial action within the soil – and years of invasive influences have probably exterminated much of the endemic bacteria in the caves. (A31)

For some people then, the smell of Jenolan is quite a complex and powerful component of the experience. For others smelling Jenolan rescinds behind the blatancy of the visual and physical.

Auditory Jenolan

The most commented on sound at Jenolan are the stories and information told by tour guides to visitors. In contrast to the visual, which offers a complete representation of the world, ‘the auditory world unfolds like a tune’; listening is a process (Rodaway 1994: 82). Sounds are transitory and less precise in terms of orientation and location, less capturable than the visual (Porteous 1996). We have less control over what we hear, or as Porteous puts it we cannot ‘close our ear lids’ and are perhaps therefore more vulnerable to intrusive or undesired sounds. Whilst we have a limited hearing range, compared to other animals, and therefore able to receive limited information through this sense, hearing is ‘exceptionally emotion-rich’ and can arouse, annoy or sooth us (Porteous 1996: 35).

The coach driver's tales and insights were fascinating and entertaining. It was great to learn more about the Blue Mountains. (V102)

I enjoyed being told how they were formed, all unbelievable, I am amazed. (V24)

¹⁶ I use the term ‘associate’ to describe those people who have some kind of regular association with Jenolan but are not staff, eg cavers, coach drivers or researchers.

It is very good: a combination of natural scenic attributes with lighting. Lovely. I liked the explanation given by the guide, and liked the interpretation of the formations, that adds poetry and colour. (V32)

The information was excellent from Daniel, our guide, and the noticeboards. (V514)

The guide explained in a way that we could understand, and responded to questions. There was no rush. (V8)

The sounds of Jenolan are anticipated in the promotional literature: ‘hear about Miss Chisolm ...’ ‘hear the delicate tinkling of the bellbirds’, enjoy the ‘quiet beauty’, ‘the still of night’, tranquillity, and ‘listen to the chorus of birds’. In the Cathedral Chamber in the Lucas Cave a sound system has been installed and with each tour the guide selects a music track to play. The acoustics are deemed to be excellent and it is in this chamber that several of the musical events are held each year. One event is promoted as ‘music made for the heavens and sure to open the heart’. For some people, the music played on the cave tour was a key part of the experience.

I liked the music in the caves. (V305)

I enjoyed the Cathedral – the chamber with the lights, coloured lights, and music - there were lots of oohs and ahs. (V492)

They used to have a guitarist, Warren Targett, playing in the dining room, people would have dinner and then go to the bar. It would be packed out. He wrote couple of songs about Jenolan, staff would get sick of the songs, but he was there for the visitors and they loved it. (A14)

The music of the bush is also part of the Jenolan experience, but infrequently mentioned. The River walk is renown for its colony of bellbirds that produce constant notes filling the valley and the bush. One accommodation cottage, Bellbird Cottage, is located just above the bellbird colony and provides its visitors with the delightful music. Many other birds inhabit the Jenolan reserve and visitors are invited in the promotion material to ‘hear a lyrebird’, listen to the ‘tinkling of the bellbirds’.

Receipt of auditory information is remarked upon not just as a positive experience, but also as a negative experience. Hearing the stories and understanding the information offered by the tour guides was an important part of the experience. Any interference in this auditory channel was frustrating and disappointing:

It was hard to hear the announcements in the main arch. (V481)

I didn't like other people who spoke other languages over the guides. (V476)

I was disappointed with the size of the tour, the waiting. We were at the end and trapped around the corners so we missed what the guide said - but he was good. (V490)

I didn't like the screaming kids. (V510)

Absence of sound

The other senses, sight-touch-smell, provide information that contrasts Jenolan to the urban, industrial and modern. Sound also provides this contrast and places Jenolan as the Other to the 'normal' pace and pattern of life. The background noise of urbanisation dominates cities and towns in a way that is frequently evident only when one is away from them. The urban 'soundscape' (as it is called by Schafer, see Rodaway 1994) dominates the space with repetitive and often mechanistic sounds. In contrast, environments such as Jenolan make available a different kind of auditory experience.

The noise from the kids disrupted the spiritual nature of the experience. (V9)

I enjoyed the tranquillity. (V21)

It's picturesque and tranquil being in the countryside. (V51)

It is peaceful and quiet – the car park was full but we could still find a quiet place for lunch. (V514)

It has been peaceful, and I got rid of a feeling of stress. (V76)

The reserve is brilliant – it is peaceful away from precinct, it's a great environment. (G28)

There is peace and tranquillity, a different world, close but far enough away to be in our own world. (G38)

What I've got back from Jenolan is grey hair, but also peace and tranquillity, happiness and I am more at ease because of the physical environment, so much more relaxed. (A46)

I love the peace and quiet. (A44)

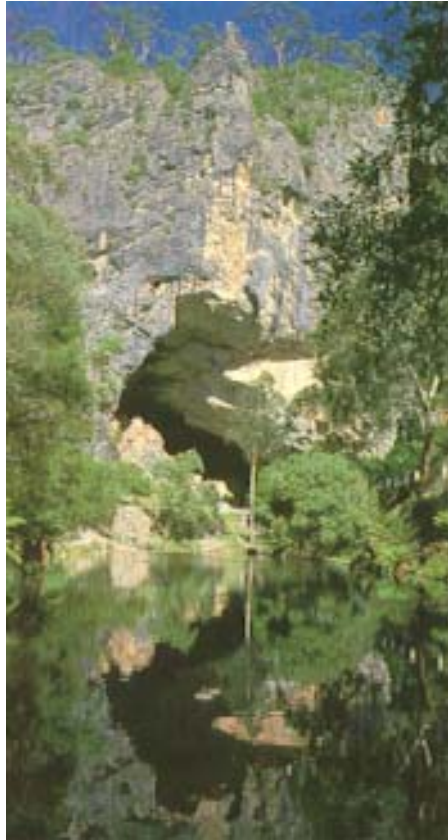


Plate 12: The tranquility of the Blue Lake and The Grand Arch



Plate 13: Accommodation nestled in the bush environment

Interactive audio experience

Sound, perhaps like touch, is an interactive sense. Hearing is quite often a core component of the communication process, an important part of conversation. Listening is part of the interactive process between people. Even listening to the tour guide's stories and explanations is interactive in that if people do not respond by *listening* the tour guide would feel that it was pointless to produce the words. Learning arises as a result of an interactive process between place, staff, and visitor. The visitors are active in receiving new information, in sifting the information, in making sense of it, and then in constructing their own new understanding. As any teacher will testify, learning is not a passive process but is inherently dependent upon the learner being active. People can also interact via sound with the physical landscape. For example, many above ground trails are available to the visitor, one of which winds through the Devil's Coachhouse, a collapsed cave, and then up the hillside to the 'lookdown' and Carlotta's Arch lookout (see Figure 2). From these points the visitor can look down into the caverns of the Coachhouse. It is in these spaces that visitors often want to interact with their voice and their ears, yelling and yodelling in order to explore how the landscape reacts to their voice.

Further Analysis

This chapter has uncovered some additional detail of the ways in which Jenolan is an aesthetic experience, that is, how it is 'known' based on the information derived from the senses (Porteous 1996: 19). In contemporary terms aesthetics is often used to mean 'the perception of the beautiful in nature and art' (Porteous 1996: 19). The original definition, which focuses on how something is sensed, provides a language for understanding the experience of Jenolan. The experiences of seeing, smelling, touching and hearing Jenolan Caves, the engagement of the body with place, is captured in the aesthetics and sense making around Jenolan Caves. Such a concept highlights that the experience is highly diverse – different people will be open to different sensory experiences – and linked to emotional experiences.

Counter to the intention of the Trust body to construct Jenolan as a non-tactile experience at some levels the Jenolan experience is quite clearly a multi-sensory experience, and especially haptic experience. Sensing is an active and interactive process,

of which visitors and residents are aware, and in some cases concerned. An understanding of the sensual nature of Jenolan reinforces the now almost universally accepted interpretation that what marks a tourist site from other tourist places and non-tourist places is its 'difference'. The chapter concludes by briefly elucidating three points in further detail:

- The experience and meaning making of Jenolan is multi-sensual and emotional
- Participants are active and interdependent in constructing their experience of Jenolan
- The meaning making of Jenolan draws its construction as other.

Jenolan is a multi-sensory and emotional experience

Jenolan is sensed in many ways. People experience Jenolan through sight but also touch, smell and sound. One staff member tells us:

I have intense emotions in the cave, turning the corner and seeing a new place, so sensual, it assaults every sense, I want to sit and soak it all up. (A49)

The visitor can see, smell, feel the air, touch the formations, and hear the silence. The naturalness of Jenolan is not just something that visitors see, it is also something that they sense in numerous ways. Whilst vision has dominated popular and scientific discourses (Tuan 1990; Porteous 1996; Macnaghten and Urry 1998) more recently there has been a shift in academic writing that recognises the hegemony of vision and begins to reinstate the value of our other senses (Markwell 2001a; Veijola and Jokinen 1994). It is not so much that we have failed to use senses other than our eyes, rather we gather most of our cognitive information from the visual sense but also the *discourse* of understanding and sensing has been dominated by the ocular, that is we value the visual and express our knowledge in ocular terms. We cannot turn off our other senses (Macnaghten and Urry 1998) but their more emotive dimensions have lessened their legitimacy in the modern and rational world. Recognition of the body in the tourism experience is now being recognised with the work of Markwell (2001a), and Veijola and Jokinen (1994).

... the tourist experience is not only an ocular one, but truly corporeal.
(Markwell 2001a: 55)

When visitors described their experience and their response to Jenolan they did so with reference to many senses. Jenolan is spectacular and evokes tremendous applause regarding its beauty and visual interest, but it is also an aesthetic experience employing other senses and producing other responses. In this sense Jenolan is truly an aesthetic experience. The following quotes from visitors reinforce that the experience is a multi-sensual experience:

One of the benefits of coming here is to actually experience it rather than see it through media. (V476)

Korean caves are very, very beautiful, but the bush here is very nice to feel, to be in a natural place. (V14)

Being here gave me a spiritual feeling. (V489)

It is picturesque and tranquil being in the countryside. (V51)

It has been peaceful, got rid of stress. (V76)

The trip was awesome because it was out of my own world, some other territory, not your own domain, like SCUBA diving. There was the wonderment of the journey and wonderment being in those places such as caving or SCUBA diving. (V45)

One benefit is being closer to nature. (V79)

They make one feel very small. (V93)

What makes it special is the aura, how the caves and the environment feel. (V72)

Jenolan has its own atmosphere. (V81)

I like the 'feel' of the place - hard to describe. (V89)

I benefited from the casual atmosphere, it was relaxing. (V57)

I really enjoyed it – especially the friendliness. (V80)

The fully sensual nature of the experience ensures that it is an emotional as well as cognitive experience. Bourassa (1991) draws on the ideas of Dewey (1934) who refers to the aesthetic experience as emotional rather than intellectual and practical. We now understand that music, colour and the senses of touch and smell are autocentric (subject-centred); they contribute to how we feel rather than what we know (Porteous 1996: 31).

Freeman Tilden (1977), a founding father of interpretation, strongly argued that emotion and a sensuous contact with the landscape are precisely the experiences that guides should be facilitating for their visitors, drawing on the guide's own 'priceless' ingredient of passion. Tilden states:

We should not attempt to describe that which is only – or better – to be apprehended by feeling. (Tilden 1977: 86)

The interpretation field of study still has a strong emphasis on learning but also argues that interpretation should stimulate an emotional response from the visitor (Wearing and Neil 1999, 70). So whilst it might be true that cognitive sense-making is primarily based on visual and verbal information emotional sense-making is based on touch, sound, smell, taste and colour. The excerpts from visitors and community, I believe, reveal that the experience is valued for its cognitive and affective experiences: the history and greater understanding of geological process that are available on-site provide cognitive satisfaction but the colour, touch, and sound ensure that the experience is truly memorable because of its emotional impact.

Jenolan sensing is an active and interactive process

Much of the 'sensing' of Jenolan is of its 'natural' characteristics: the size of the caves, the countryside or bush, feeling closer to nature. Several of the quotes presented above talk of being, doing and experiencing: 'to actually experience', 'to be in a natural place', 'being closer to nature'. Visitors, then, see themselves as actors in the experience and portray the benefits of making the trip to the caves as a lived experience in contrast to 'seeing it through the media'. The experience was not just 'sensing' but also doing, an interacting and feeling a part of the environment. For these people, or in these moments, Jenolan is not on display as if on a screen to be looked at and examined but is an environment in which to be and interact. Coleman and Crang refer to the performativity of tourism; 'where space is an eventful and unique happening, more to do with doing rather than knowing' (2002: 10).

The experience of Jenolan is that of actively sensing, but it is also active in that visitors contribute smell, sound, touch and visual object. Previous authors have acknowledged the reciprocity of the human encounter in the environment noting that it relates to the kinaesthetic activity, or mobility, of people within their environment (Wearing, B. and Wearing, S. 1996; Urry 2001). Through their presence and actions visitors become part

of the landscape, and part of the processes constructing that landscape. One example of this interaction is visitor interest and interaction with wildlife. Here visitors desire to have contact with the wildlife but also desire the wildlife to acknowledge and welcome their presence. Jenolan Caves Reserve has abundant wildlife: water dragons, rosellas, currawongs, bower birds, lyrebirds, wallabies and wombats to name a few. Some of the birds have become quite aware of the lunch practices and locations of visitors and will approach people eating outside the Bistro and at picnic tables. Many people get great pleasure out of this proximity and encourage the interaction by offering food to the animals. Other people, however, see the birds as intrusive and their request for food as suicidal because the chips, sugar, and cake are ultimately harmful to their health.

I watched the water dragon- he swam in the lake! (V106)

I enjoyed watching lizards near Carlotta's Arch. (V119)

The birds were beautiful. (V48)

The lake was enchanting with the lizards and blue water. (V99)

Other places (parks) have food to feed birds - that would be preferable to them being fed sweet and greasy stuff from bistro, because they're going to be fed anyway – they could have food that would be suitable for possums too. (V45)

In many ways people are active in the construction of the many meanings that emerge from Jenolan, in particular the social experience is constructed by visitors themselves, Jenolan and its managing agency provide the backdrop to this, the bulk of the 'social' work is done by the visitors themselves. Visitors are part of the landscape and actors in the production of place. Visitors therefore have some power in determining what kind of place Jenolan is. Jenolan on a day when the roads are closed and free of visitors is a different place and experience to Jenolan on a public holiday with close to 1000 visitors taking cave tours.

I was disappointed with the size of the tour, the waiting, we were at the end of the group and trapped around corners so we missed what the guide said - but he was good. (V490)

The congestion in the caves meant that we weren't able to take the photos we wanted to. (V10)

I like the smaller groups, they are more personal and you get more information, more attention and can see special things. (V31)

I wouldn't come back on a public holiday [because of the number of visitors]. (V490)

The presence of tourists also has a positive effect. Two of the following comments refer to the ambience that is created by a race run between Katoomba and Jenolan Caves along the Six Foot Track. This one-day event brings a large crowd of runners and onlookers that have different motives and behaviours to the usual visitors.

The visitors give a flavour to the place - when Aussies are here it is a different atmosphere to a mixed group. The March Six Foot Track marathon is an example. During the Six Foot Track race the whole area is jammed pack full of sporty people. Visitors lend what they bring to the place eg there was a bus of Greek people and they had their own music and food and were entertaining for others. (G13)

The people contribute to the group dynamics. The tour groups make the tour, they can contribute humour even on tours that don't go quite right. (G14)

The visitors give it the atmosphere, they give it a mess as well. I don't think everyone gets what I'd like them to. (G32)

I hate going down during the marathon - there are too many people who are not interested in the place – for them it is just a marathon. And seeing the rubbish left there, the amount of alcohol drunk on the day. Those people have no value for the place. (A23)

Jenolan gets a character from people. There is nothing better than people sitting around enjoying themselves, seeing cavers walking through the arch. If there were no people it wouldn't evoke such happy memories, it would be more of a ghost tour. (G36)

The number of visitors generates energy with staff, and staff react to the number of visitors, and people take back from that, it works in a circular way to raise the standard of tours. (G45)

Not only are visitors active in constructing their experience but they also contribute to, or are active in producing, the experience of others (and arguably of the place). At one level this contribution is made through presence:

Part of what people buy is in effect a particular social composition of other consumers, and this is difficult for the providers of the services to ensure. It is this that creates the 'ambience' of a particular cosmopolitan city, a stylish hotel, a lively nightclub and so on. The satisfaction is derived not from the individual act of consumption but from the fact that all sorts of other people are also consumers of the service and these people are deemed appropriate to the particular consumption in question (Urry 1995: 131)

Interestingly the presence of visitors can be read as a negative or positive effect for other people, but nearly always as a negative effect for the environment itself:

I was concerned about the number of people in the cave, and the impact that it is having on the caves. (V78)

There is nothing better than people sitting around enjoying themselves. (G36)

The group inside the cave was too large, it would have been more pleasant if it have been split. (V104)

I felt we damaged the caves. (V45)

Tourist places are public places and the presence of people is therefore part of what the place is or means (Tuan 1977; Urry 1995). The reciprocity can be extremely significant, and nowhere is this more obvious than in the reciprocity that exists between visitors and staff. Reference and praise of the guide's skill is frequently (60/140) mentioned by visitors without prompting. As has been expressed by those writing in the interpretation field the visitor-guide interaction and relationship is a very important part of the visit (Holloway 1981; Pearce 1984; Geva and Goldman 1991; Weiler 1993). Just as the guide is the 'culture-broker' to foreign cultures (Holloway 1981) in a cave setting the guide is the link or the human access point to the environment of the cave. They are the interpreters, in the sense of explaining to people what they see but don't understand. The guide is also the human face for the organisation and the site overall, as such they are the face behind, and in front of, the infrastructure, the provider of information, the human element of welcome. The interaction with the guide on the tour is an exchange of energy where either party can feel energised and invigorated by the excitement of exploring the cave, and seeing it anew.

The guides make such a difference - the quality, the training, attitude - they were fantastic. (V45)

The guide explained in a way that we could understand, and responded to our questions, there was no rush. (V8)

Everyone is friendly, that's why I love coming here. (V80)

Our bus driver John was brilliant - adding volumes to our enjoyment. He was entertaining, and informative and an excellent driver, which I greatly appreciated his skills on that infamous descent. (V120)

The guide added to the trip. (V488)

The importance of guides to the tourist's experience is substantiated by relatively little research even though considerable effort has gone into strategies to improve guiding. The importance of a tour guide is reflected in statements that delegate responsibility for achieving customer satisfaction to the tour guide but rarely is this relationship explored (Pearce 1984; Geva and Goldman 1991: 178; Weiler *et al.* 1992). Geva and Goldman (1991) go beyond assumption and find evidence that guides are central to visitor satisfaction but that satisfaction with guides is not equivalent to satisfaction with tour company. Weiler also demonstrates the significant role of the guide or tour leader concluding that 'the tour leader plays a very important role, and may indeed be one of the key ingredients that makes special interest tourism special' (1993: 689). Mossberg (1995) did a study that in part looked at the tour guide's performance related to visitor perception (satisfaction) of the whole trip. Mossberg concluded that on the bus tour visitor satisfaction related most to the tour leader and experience at the destination was secondary. Weiler (1993) summarises that tour organisers of nature-based tours in Australia felt that the skill of a tour leader was important or very important to the success of a trip / tour. Similarly research has shown that tourists also perceive that the roles filled by guides are important to the tourist experience (Haig and McIntyre 2002).

Urry (1990) discusses the relationship between service provider and customer in considerable depth, referring to Hochschild's work on the emotional work done by airline stewards and the 'moments of truth' coined by Jan Carlzon, President of the Scandinavian airline in late 1980s. The face-to-face contact between provider and consumer is a crucial point of contact that can make the difference between a 'satisfied customer' and a disgruntled customer. Urry surmises 'The service product is predominantly *intangible*. So although there are certain tangible elements, such as the food, or journey or drink, the crucial elements are intangible.' (Urry 1990: 72).

It is not just the visitors who receive, and the guides who give in this relationship. The interdependence between staff and visitors is quite explicit in the experiences described by the staff.

I would rather communicate with the general public - seeing their eyes light up - it is like performing on stage – you get instant feedback, get a buzz from it. (G22)

Visitors who enjoy are giving back because it's pleasurable for the tour guide, positive feedback. (G10)

Visitors give a sense of satisfaction. (G13)

I like people, they bring opportunities, bring professional satisfaction, they bring a good reason to keep it all new and fresh, and not to go stale. (G16)

I got a lot of enjoyment – I love working with people, interacting, I got a buzz out of that. (G52)

I have got an increase in self esteem, especially on cave tours where you get instant feedback from the group, people thank you, and it is genuine. (G35)

If you interact on a personal level you feel more satisfied and have achieved a little bit more, rather than just entertaining, they're (visitors) going to ask more questions if they feel that you're approachable. (G42)

I get personal satisfaction and reward from people's (visitors) satisfaction. (G46)

Visitor enthusiasm gives you energy, there is nothing better for people to say 'wasn't that terrific', it puts you way up there. (G56)

Mancini (2001: 22) notes that the advantages of guiding include: an opportunity to be centre of attention, (performer) and an authority. The disadvantages: the potential for boredom, having to provide the same information and answer the same questions; sometimes a need to do several things at once; and the threat of being replaced by technology. But Mancini adds, "Tour guides, though, will never disappear entirely, for they personalise a visit in a way no machine can. You can't, after all, ask a tape recorder a question." The interpretive and guiding literature is more persuasive about the interdependence between guide and visitor (Pearce 1984; Geva and Goldman 1991; Weiler 1993). Uzzell and Ballantyne's (1998: 164) paper states that '... all the evidence suggests that when it comes to interpretive media the public prefer historical re-enactments, first-person interpretation and demonstrations'.

Returning to the theory that meanings arise from an individual's practical engagement with their surroundings (Thrift 1999), it seems logical to find that a central meaning of the place 'Jenolan' is embedded in the relationship between guides and visitors. The experience of the cave is mediated by the organisation, and very particularly by the tour guide during the guided tour. This interaction would logically influence the experiences and meanings for all parties.

The interaction between guide and visitor is just one way that visitors can be interpreted as being active in the construction of Jenolan, of contributing to the multiple meanings that exist for themselves and others. Visitors were asked what they thought they

contributed to Jenolan (a difficult question because it does not fit into the normal discourse of what it means to be a visitor) and their responses included:

a) Financial support and patronage. Some visitors made a comment that they hoped that their money was going to the preservation of the caves and adequate care.

b) Telling other people about the site and recommending them to visit.

c) Bringing children – many people emphasized this contribution.

d) Most people liked to think that their behaviour was not harmful to the site – some visitors mentioned specific things that they did:

“I ripped a thistle out”

“I told a tourist off for touching the rock”

e) Visitor contribution to ambience as an option was generally met with blank looks. This was not a question that people were used to being asked. Some visitors said that at times visitors contributed in a positive way, and other times visitors contributed in negative way.

f) Very few visitors said that they would bring other people, and yet this is something that people commonly do. For example when asked why they came it was ‘to show my friend, children, or visitors’.

g) People said that they would visit again. Some people come regularly or often because they like the area, others visit and find that they don’t have enough time to see or do all the activities they wanted so they hope that they will get back to see and do more.

h) Some visitors went as far as to say that they would lobby on behalf of Jenolan if it seemed Jenolan needed public support; they would be prepared to sign a petition, or write a letter.

i) A few people said that they would volunteer, but for most people it wasn’t a practical option because they lived too far away, or their lives were too busy or they were just not interested.

An awareness of being a part of the landscape and contributing to its ‘construction’ is reflected in visitor concern about their own impact on the landscape. Many visitors

recognised that they were not simply voyeurs, dissociated from the rock, vegetation and wildlife but were also part of that landscape and inevitably having their own role or impact.

The caves were great, attractive, but they look like they're suffering from the number of people going through. The maintenance looks like a huge task, eg the weeds on the hills. (V23)

I felt we damaged caves, we should never do adventure caving in something that is really important. It seemed colourful and fragile - we influence it so much, I felt very protective of it. (V45)

It is hard to stop people touching. (V496)

I was concerned about the number of people in the cave, and the impact that it is having on the caves. (V78)

As tourists, they place their trust in the managing agency that their own safety and welfare, as well as that of the place and other peoples, is being adequately considered. Jenolan Caves is promoted for its natural qualities and subsequently visitors assume and desire that these natural qualities will be protected and maintained by the managing body. If visitors saw evidence of erosion of natural integrity they expressed concern in support of ongoing maintenance and management. 'Naturalness' is therefore expected to be controlled. What is 'natural' of course, depends on the visitor's own values and experience: where one person will see a wonderful bushland and ducks gliding happily on the lake others will see a hill covered in exotic trees, and water-way dotted with blackberry, morning glory and other introduced species.

Keep it preserved. (V482)

We enjoyed it because they (managers) really care about the conservation of the caves and ecology, it is not just a tourist place. (V81)

It's a pity they've (caves) been modified – and good they took the coloured lights out – they were tacky. (V84)

I had wondered if the place was run by volunteers because of the large scale weed infestation, and lack of modern interpretation facility. (V23)

I was surprised by the change and proliferation of weeds. I was shocked from coming here 10-15 years ago. It used to be an Eden, now it is full of weeds, and dry - and where they have sprayed and the berry has died is a fire hazard. (V46)

I would like to come back in 20 years to see if it is still like it is, I hope it hasn't changed too much. (V90)

The quotes from the visitors demonstrate an expectation that the role of management is to maintain the 'naturalness' of the site. This means both working to remove undesirable changes, such as weeds, and not changing the defining characteristics of the visit. The defining characteristics of Jenolan as 'other' are discussed in the next section.

The depth of the active role of tourist in construction of their experience is not satisfactorily articulated in the tourism literature. Geva and Goldman (1991) explain that the quality of a tour depends in part on visitor motivation, initiative, ability and effort. Visitor agency has implications for the management of tours and tourist sites. Wearing (1998), in recognition of the significance of interaction, and the active role of participant/visitor in the leisure/tourism experience warns us 'the danger is that they will be promoted as images' (p 135) rather than exist as places which are practiced; places available to be used, experienced and thereby given social meaning. That is, the meaning of place arises from the interaction and yet the tourism machinery promotes the image and the 'gaze' (from Urry 1990), and if this comes to represent the totality of a person's experience of place then it is voyeuristic and ephemeral and lacking in social value.

Jenolan is constructed as the 'other'

The meanings that are made of Jenolan as a tourist site, and in some ways as workplace and residence, are of a site that is 'different'. The difference enunciated by visitors and residents, the way they relate to the place, is quite clearly a marker that distinguishes Jenolan from other tourist and residential sites. Suvantola's explains the perceived differences associated with tourism as constructions of the Other (Suvantola 2002: 5). We distinguish ourselves, Suvantola argues, from the rest of the world by interpreting those who are not ourselves, or like ourselves, as Other. The power relationship in this dualism is typified by the dominance of Us over Other. We posit ourselves as normal and comprehensible, the Other as unfamiliar; we attempt to understand the Other using our own terms of reference, which is foreign to the internal sense-making of the Other (Suvantola 2002).

The perception of difference, as already discussed in Chapter Four, is a key characteristic of the tourist experience where place and behaviour are distinguished from the place of

origin. Urry (1990) argues that whilst the tourist gaze will be characterised by its own historical context it will always be constructed in relationship to its opposite, non-tourist forms of social experience and consciousness. As a result the temporary escape from the norm is often romanticised and extolled in the tourist context (Urry 1990, 1999). Jenolan's difference is its antithesis to the urban, industrial and modern; a difference that appeals to visitors and residents alike. Whilst it is relatively close, a two or three hour journey, to Australia's largest metropolitan area the journey to the caves and the landscape on arrival give a sense of isolation from the developed world and feeling of being encompassed by the natural terrain. In this sense nature, and by association Jenolan Caves, is the Other in contrast to the city, urban life and modernity. It is an experience of separation, travelling away from normality to arrive at the natural wonder where the bodily senses distinguish between home and this new place.

Nature is romanticised and as the Other holds status of appeal but not the power or influence that can be found in urban, modern and industrial (productive) sites (both physical and metaphysical or discursive power). The romanticising of nature has a long history: manifest in the poetry of the Roman poet Horace, living in 65 BC, to Tao Yuan-ming a Chinese poet of the fourth century AD, to the English poets of the 18th Century (Tuan 1990). For example, Horace contrasted the peaceful life in his secluded valley with Rome's polluted air, ostentatious wealth, aggressive business, and violent pleasures (Highet 1957 cited in Tuan 1990: 107). The words of Jenolan staff – many of whom have moved from the city to the Jenolan area for lifestyle reasons – and visitors reflect these same views: cleaner air, peacefulness, and getting away from the extremes of the city.

It was a wonderful experience living on the reserve, wonderful for the kids. It is so peaceful, enjoyable, the kids used to go exploring in bush, it was safe and comfortable. (G38)

I like working in this environment, I don't want to work in a city office, I like living in the country area, close to the bush. (G44)

We moved to get out of Sydney and what Sydney means. It suits me being outdoors, in a bush environment and doing a variety of work, being environmentally friendly. It's good to be out, not caged in a workshop, and the landscape is still really important [to the experience]. (A35)

Here there is the appeal of working in the environment - stepping out of the rat race, being here increases my understanding and appreciation, we've got to look after what we've got. (A49)

I love the peace and quiet ... (G44)

We came to get away from Sydney. (V70)

A journey to Jenolan is an experience of fresh air, vistas not dominated by human constructions, sounds and smells that contrast to urban living.

The visit was a getting away from routine. (V76)

We come back (to Jenolan Caves) for the surrounding environment, and occasionally do a cave when its raining, we camp here, and sometimes at Dingo Flat where it doesn't cost anything. (V51)

The infrastructure at Jenolan is limited to guide and maintenance staff facilities, some basic visitor amenities and the largest building, Caves House Resort. The steep slopes and difficult access have discouraged the management agencies from countenancing further development. The character of this infrastructure and its limited nature provides another feature of distinction for Jenolan Caves. Visitors' descriptions of Jenolan Caves present its ambience or character as located by a sense of the historical and a *lack* of features that represent modernity and development. When asked whether or not they had any suggestions many visitors replied 'keep as it is', 'do not change'.

It is good the way it is – I wouldn't change anything. (V84)

The day had been nice, good. It was relaxing, fresh air, quiet, no McDonalds, I can breathe well. It was exhilarating, just beautiful. I would like to stay longer and see more caves. (V30)

No suggestions, just to stay as is. (V61)

Keep it rustic and the historical atmosphere - (but maintain it better). (V74)

I try to avoid commercial places - should keep it (Jenolan Caves) the way it is, do not commercialise. (V476)

It has an old style, removed from the city, and should be kept that way. (V39)

I think they should try to keep the old world charm – I don't expect anything to change, just like the caves. (V48)

The valley is quaint - very nice, and minimal impact, I like that it hasn't gone too touristy.
(V493)

The request to 'keep as is' focuses on the 'naturalness' of the site and the European history or heritage. In a world of changeability and uncertainty the constancy or stability of Jenolan Caves is seen as a positive experience, a contrast and relief to the 'other' world that visitors have escaped from. People do not want to make the three-hour trip to find themselves at a site that could just as easily be found within the city. The 'old world charm' and absence of 'touristy' or 'commercial' features distinguish Jenolan from other places.

It is therefore disconcerting if changes are made to the site that disrupt the sense of heritage, and naturalness. People, argues Urry (1990: 125), expect to find buildings that are appropriate to place and which mark that place off from others. He goes on to say, following Relph¹⁷ (1976), that one of the objections to modernism is the uniformity or placelessness it created. This relates to Porteous's (1996) critique that modern society is homogenous, offering a limited range of smell, sight (architecture as referred to above), sound (dominance of monotonous traffic noise), and touch (dominance of concrete flooring and paths). Whilst the notion that modern landscapes are more homogenous than their predecessors is contentious the point highlighted here is that for people who visit or work at Jenolan, the loss of heritage and naturalness would be tantamount to a loss of 'place'; a loss of the markers that distinguish Jenolan from other places. The construction of a new visitor shelter provides an example of how easy it is to erode the sense of place. Whilst some visitors spoke positively about this developed area others indicated that they thought the development was inappropriate as it was out of character with the other buildings, and the image that they held of Jenolan:

The picnic shelter area structure seems unattractive and doesn't enhance the unique look of other buildings. (V120)

My first reaction when I arrived was 'who built that monstrosity' (referring to the bus shelter) – it is very well designed but out of character, who gave the person the brief and approved it? (V45)

Blow up the shelter. The restaurant and bistro area looks run down, and you need to keep the rustic style. (V74)

¹⁷ See also Nielsen's (1999) discussion of 'non-places'

The main street, the archway was good, and the street, lined, tidy and clean as soon as you came in. (V40)

The place is great, excellent township, a bit like an alpine village with a stone wall and green lake. It is charming, has a sense of history. (V111)

When visitors speak in terms of old-world charm, and natural wonder they are contrasting Jenolan to the urban, modern and industrial features that characterise 'normal' and dominant life. Consequently staff, for whom life at Jenolan is 'normal', are also able to characterise Jenolan as Other, except in their case it is 'other' to a cultural norm as distinct from their personal norm. In this sense then, Jenolan offers a contrast to the 'depthlessness' of the world beyond Jenolan, and that an important part of the perceived depth is the historicity of place. Frederic Jameson (2000) argues that depthlessness, or a new kind of flatness, is a characteristic of the postmodern. Recognising Jenolan in contrast to the modern and industrial provides additional guidelines as to how Jenolan might maintain its sense of heritage and naturalness, remembering that the latter concepts are fluid and changeable. The ire that was voiced about the new visitor shelter for example may have been avoided if the shelter was designed and constructed to reflect the heritage values and natural values of the place. Any future changes and developments therefore, if Jenolan is to maintain the current sense of place, should consider the impact on these values.

Conclusion

This chapter delves deeper into the detail of the physicality of the Jenolan experience for staff and visitors. It draws on place theory recognising that meaning arises from engagement or interaction between people and place, and that this meaning has emotional as well as cognitive dimensions – it is an embodied experience. Interaction with place is a sensing of place both in as sensation and sense making. The chapter therefore explores the seeing, feeling, smelling and hearing of Jenolan.

It is explained that vision is a dominant sense for humans both biologically and culturally and there is no shortage of examples where the vision of Jenolan inspires and impresses. The seeing of Jenolan is limited and perhaps serves to emphasise the other senses; it is also a cultural or historical occurrence as 'seeing' the caves began with the light technology introduced by European colonisers. The touching of Jenolan, whilst

restricted in show caves, is an extremely important interaction ranging from sensing the cool temperatures, physically squeezing through rocks, or facing the challenge of walking through a network of rock enclosed tunnels. Touch is such an appealing sense that even when it is prohibited visitors apparently regularly touch the limestone.

Whilst smell can be an intimate and pervading dimension it is also often unremarkable, or rather, remarkable as an absence of smell such as 'fresh air'. As such, smell is indeed an important part of Jenolan. In addition, for those who get access to the undeveloped caves the caving experience offers a very distinct smell. Sound also is significant in terms of the positive effect, negative effect and absence. The absence of 'smell' or 'sound' marks Jenolan as different.

Visitors and staff reveal that each of these senses have been stimulated. They are also used in the promotional literature to beckon visitors to Jenolan. The chapter then reinforces that the Jenolan experience had multi-sensory and emotional dimensions. In achieving these meanings it should be noted that visitors are active and interdependent in the meaning making; they are actors in constructing their own and others experience. They are also aware that they have an impact on the site but assume that their impact is being managed by the Trust.

Place meaning is established through interaction with a site (Relph 1976; Peet 1998; Wearing 1998; Thrift 1999) and as such the meaning of place is partly derived from its aesthetics, the knowledge of place derived from the senses (Porteous 1996: 19). The web of interactions locates Jenolan as different to the urban, modern and industrial; it is Other to normal urban life.

The highly interactive and sensual nature of place experience alerts us to the danger of focusing on the learning or cognitive experience for tourists. In the guides' words 'visitors don't want masses of science ...'.

Chapter 6: Emotion and interdependence

This chapter highlights the interdependence and agency of people in constructing place meaning. Of particular interest is the interdependence between visitors and staff. The link between visitor satisfaction and staff is well recognised in much of the tourism literature (Holloway 1981; Pearce 1984; Beck and Cable 1998; Dierking 1998; Haig and McIntyre 2002) but less recognised is staff dependence on visitors in the construction of staff meanings. The process of constructing place meaning is active and occurs as a result of physical interaction with place as well as emotional and cognitive engagement. The impact of looking at massive and ornate decorations can be awe-inspiring, and squeezing through an eighty-centimetre tunnel in the earth can be thrilling. But emotion at Jenolan goes beyond emotion for place and includes emotion and care between people. Emotion is a vital component of the management and presentation of Jenolan. Part of what is sold to visitors are particular emotional states – pleasure, excitement and so forth – and it is the relationship between staff and visitor that contributes to the visitor’s emotional state and visitor’s construction of place. The relationship between staff and visitors also plays a significant role in staff emotions and staff construction of place.

Emotion in place construction

The first part of this chapter points out the significant emotional dimension of the relationship between staff and place, and explores the implications of emotion in the ongoing management process. It seems reasonable, even expected, that sense of place is an emotional response to landscape. Sense of place arises from the interaction and experience with place (Tuan 1977), as such sense of place is embedded in a historical context. The longer and more involved the interaction with place, the potentially stronger meaning it can have (Carr 2002). We expect, and find, that visitors and staff have an emotional association with place as a result of the powerful aesthetic experience, and the sense of belonging that is associated with place. There is no doubt that attachment to place is an emotional experience, with many people explicitly proclaiming their love or passion for Jenolan.

I have never regretted loving Jenolan Caves, and met my wife here, and my son met his wife here, I have family associations here. (G57)

Jenolan was and is a spiritual place. It was a wonderful experience and now wonderful memories, and I can go back to refresh my memories. I have got a strong cultural association, spiritual not religious with the place. Memories are important and I can't think of any bad memories. (G56)

The passion and emotion that develop for place is partly attributable to the aesthetics of the experience. The aesthetic knowing that arises from multi-sensory experiences requires is linked to the more contemporary usage of aesthetics as the perception of what is beautiful in nature and art. Defining something as having aesthetic qualities requires the discernment and judgement of 'beauty', and disassociation from the object's origin or purpose (Porteous 1996: 19), where beauty might be derived from sound, taste or touch as much as sight. The aesthetic experience is an assessment based on personal and cultural values of knowledge attained through all sensory modes. As was demonstrated in Chapter Five Jenolan is very much an aesthetic experience. The colour and spectacle of the visual experience is judged as beautiful along with the positive assessments of the physical touch of rocks, smell of damp earth or tranquillity of the cave. These sensual and emotionally charged evaluations are part of the construction of place, the transformation of the abstract concept of space, into a meaningful place (Tuan 1977: 73). When visitors and community members define their experience in aesthetic terms they are doing so based on their values, and emotions inspired by those values.

Meaningfulness and Belonging

Emotional connection to place goes beyond the powerful corporeal and aesthetic experiences. Association with Jenolan is also an emotional experience because of a sense of belonging to community and the relevance or meaningfulness the place has in people's lives.

Community

In recent years Jenolan, as an organisation and place, has taken up some of the practices adopted by larger institutions such as NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service or commercial enterprises: it has begun a process of modernisation. Jenolan began as a small enterprise so isolated from other communities that staff had to live on site. In the 19th and most of the 20th centuries there was no other feasible situation. A small community developed with its own services such as public school, post office, small

store and at one stage, police station. Over the last thirty years improved communication and transport technology meant that it was possible for people to live off-site in nearby communities and commute to Jenolan for work; or some staff chose to have their permanent residences in Sydney (or further away) and take up temporary residence at Jenolan for the duration of their work period. This is one of the ways that Jenolan has been 'modernised'; Jenolan has become a workplace rather than workplace, home and community. As a consequence of its distance from other urban communities and government intervention it has retained practices that are counter to modernist development. At Jenolan the worth of the bureaucracy and managerialism continues to be countered by the strong sense of community and sense of isolation. The rationale for action at Jenolan has not always been the task and merit focus of managerialism (see Trosa 1997 for a discussion of managerialism); rather a strong sense of loyalty and cohesiveness has characterised the community of people who have lived and worked at Jenolan. These are features that are both celebrated and condemned. The positive side of community is the sense of belonging with a shared emotional connection and the possibility for individuals to influence the broader group (Carr 2002: 19). As members of a community people are given emotional support, assistance and loyalty. But as Carr points out, the highly desirable features of community often run side-by-side with symptoms of exclusion, elitism, polarisation, and cliques (Carr 2002: 18). These symptoms can also be found at Jenolan:

As a result of those two visits I realised a down side [to Jenolan]: the isolated community. It was very isolated, including a number of people who were in refuge from the mainstream. I started to recognise that and somewhat bizarre behaviour. (A31)

People used to be community minded. (G29)

It is such an isolated place it needs a community to keep staff here. (G26)

There used to be an 'active' community at Jenolan - lots of social events. (G28)

It's very cliquey, us and them: Caves House and the Trust. But the clique-ness doesn't affect the work, but it does something to the atmosphere. (A6)

The strong sense of community is a double-edged sword – a strong community has facets of 'insularity' but has its benefits. I see it as more positive than negative. My best friends are Jenolan Caves guides or ex Jenolan Caves guides. (G45)

I have seen big changes in my short time. There have been knocks to the community aspect of Jenolan, they took away the township feel and that is bad. For example they took

away the selling of stamps here, which has helped take away the township feel and the community spirit is being knocked by management practice and that's sad because community sells the place. When I started here we would have yearly repeat visitors and would have dinner with them. (G46)

The necessity for a physical community no longer exists but there is considerable nostalgia for the community that once was at Jenolan, even though the community has probably always been a 'double-edged' sword.

It was an important place when we were there, and a safe place to bring up kids. It was a good place socially, to interact, and security. It was easy to be there. We were able to mind each other's kids, to organise rosters, to take each other's kids to the doctor. It was an extended family. Over the times it was family oriented. People got the job because they had children. They were probably thinking of the school's survival - but the school closed before my kids went to school. We had never intended for our kids to go to school there, but we get blamed for the school closure. There was friction between parents, and I didn't want the kids in the middle of it. And if they had a bad teacher they would have him or her for many years. We weren't the 1st ones though - other parents didn't send their children for example the Catholic children went into Oberon. (A14)

There has been a lot of social activity down here, always something happening – fundraising for school etc we didn't have to go. There would be Halloween parties, barbecues and all that kind of thing, but all the social people have gone. It wasn't a very good place for children, because it was too isolated and now the Jenolan school is closed. There used to be a lot of camaraderie around the school. That has gone for the kids, and the sense of togetherness. People don't have respect for each other down here anymore. There is something wrong. (A44)

The need to work together to maintain a viable school, to create a satisfying social life and the common bond of caring for the caves created a strong sense of community, but not without a certain sense of claustrophobia and the possibility of cliques. And even though the sense of community is arguably diminished it remains a significant feature of Jenolan. Indeed, any workplace can, and more recently desires to, establish a sense of community (Mauro 2002).

The social fabric, the social scene is under threat, there is a little clique developing, an in and out crowd. It has got more pronounced in the last two or three years. It's harmful because it tears friendships apart. (G40)

This is still a place I enjoy working. I get social interaction with people I work with, I don't want to spend everyday on my own. (A34)

I am outside the clique - this can be emotionally draining. (G41)

The emotional bonds of the Jenolan community remain powerful and can be positive or negative in their effect on individuals, and certainly have some impact on place and organisation. Is Jenolan embarking on a delayed modernist project whilst still engaged with traditional and bureaucratic processes, struggling to shift to a corporate, rational world? Those that have a vision of the modern and rational Jenolan seek to change it to a rationally functioning organisation where emotion is controlled and directed to bureaucratic ends. The processes of bureaucratisation and corporatisation are intended to prevail over the emotional dimensions of Jenolan; the goal is for Jenolan to be the epitome of scientific and corporate efficiency.

At Jenolan, community is referred to as a feature of the current day as well as the amorphous 'past'. At a broader social level community has become a feature of the learning organisation, an entity that represents the postmodern world better than any other. Organisations now aspire to building a community where there is a sense of working together and caring, a collective responsibility and ownership, and provision of a safe environment in which citizens can participate (Mauro 2002). It is through 'community' that emotions and personalities are not only acknowledged but have a role to play, and in this sense community acts as a counterpoint to the rationalisation and scientism that drives much of the commodification process.

Meaningfulness

Connection to place is an emotional experience derived from the meaningfulness and relevance that place cultivates in one's life because it is a place of community or because interaction with that place connects with aspects of who one might be (their subject position). Jenolan fosters feelings of affection, spirituality and an opportunity to enact what people see as relevant in their lives:

Cavers are very territorial - they have a sense of ownership through discovery, same as fossil people believe. This causes unbelievable problems from land management perspective. And there are the 'rights of discovery' if you discover a cave. It has caused a lot of tension like 'what right does he have [to control the cave] - we found the cave'. ... One

of the big things in caving is secrecy - maps are hard to attain even if they do exist, so we make our own maps as we go. (A36)

It's really good going back. I always have a good feeling to get back there. I love the valley, and enjoy it as a place to work because the people are supportive. It's a nice place. I went there yesterday, and they were all friends - the guides - greeting me and asking after my health. (A37)

Jenolan has fed into my eternal curiosity, its special qualities, values, it raises questions about the world, and is an intellectual challenge. (A31)

I bring visitors and relatives down here so they can see the place where I work and how good a place it is - the cave inside the mountains. You don't realise they're there and how amazing they are. Money is and isn't important. It is not the main reason for being here because I enjoy doing what I do down here. (A33)

I am able to walk around on my days off. I do some walking on Harry's River junction to Cox's River, or the Six Foot Track. I have done every track around here and have gone off track. I used to do a hell of a lot of walking. (A32)

I have a strange fascination with caves, caves get hold and they won't let go. (G11)

My wife and I were married in the Cathedral Chamber of the Lucas Cave in September 1995 – to me this place is the holy of the holys and I always want it to remain so. (A34)

I am passionate about the biophysical environment, and at Jenolan there is the juxtaposition of built and biophysical environment. (G16)

The staff and other Jenolan associates speak about Jenolan passionately. The place conjures emotions of possessiveness, belonging, commitment, and fascination to the extent that 'they won't let go!' On entering the place of Jenolan each person begins to interact with the physicality of that space and with other people; it is an embodied experience where each individual makes sense of their own experience in the context of past experience and present moment. Crouch states 'We "know" places bodily and through an active intersubjectivity.' (2002: 214). The bodily knowing has dimensions of sensuality, imagination, and feeling (Crouch 2002) as well as the more cognitive process of sense making. That is, the feelings, the emotions are central to the sense-making of place.

Emotion in the organisation

There have been recent calls to recognise the significance of emotions in our daily lives and meaning making. Betsy Wearing (1998), in her book 'Leisure and feminist theory', explores the emotion associated with leisure in body and space, and quotes the editor of the *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* (1996):

No social relations are carried out in the absence of either thought or emotion. It immediately follows that the sociology of emotions is not so much a nascent, exotic sub-discipline as it is a level of analysis that must be carried out if meaning is to be found in any system, any social process, or in any social relationship of the everyday world. (Tenhouten, 1996:1 in Wearing 1998: 114-5).

People that work at Jenolan Caves have varied levels of affection for the place. At an individual level emotion is a pervasive and powerful component in the construction of place and therefore, in the day-to-day activities of the organisation itself, emotion is central. For the most part, however, emotion is a tacit phenomenon, not talked about or acknowledged. At a group level, such as staff meetings or informal staff get-togethers, some emotions emerge, but at an organisational level emotion and passion toward place are absent or hidden. For example, in communication arising from the Trust and at levels of formal representation of the organisation the discourse around Jenolan is objectified; emotion is absent. Recognition of the role of emotion in the construction of Jenolan is also absent, apart from, interestingly, the language used in the promotional material.

My argument, however, is that in the Trust, as with other contemporary organisations, emotions are an essential, although hidden, component (Hochschild 1983; Putnam and Mumby 1993; Gabriel and Griffiths 2002). Hochschild (1983) points out that the word 'emotion' is not used by organisations even though they often have quite overt requests for staff to manage their emotions. Emotions serve relational needs, provide a foundation for creativity, moral and spiritual development, and they contribute to the development of community, commitment, and collective morality (Putnam and Mumby 1993). Organisations aspire to rational processes and rational ideas but it is not possible to separate feelings from ideas as 'cognition and emotions intertwine; ideas are laden with feelings, feelings contain ideas' (Fineman 1993a: 16). In addition, feeling is central to the 'glue' of an organisation because it is feeling that makes control possible. Not only

does the sense of reward and satisfaction motivate and foster commitment, but also feelings of embarrassment, shame and guilt encourage us to 'perform' (Fineman 1993a). In summary: 'Emotion is not simply an adjunct to work; rather it is the process through which members constitute their work environment by negotiating a shared reality' (Putnam and Mumby 1993: 36). Following the work of Fineman (1993) and Hochschild (1983) I found evidence of emotion within Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust across several dimensions:

- 1) emotion constructs the meanings of the organisation, it is through emotion that various players make sense of what the organisation is, and their own relationship to it.
- 2) emotion is part of the product, visitors are sold a particular emotional state, although nowhere throughout the organisation will the product be referred to as emotion¹⁸.
- 3) management discourse includes the task of emotion management, defining what are valid and productive emotions through a mix of overt and tacit rule making around feelings. There are places in the organisation where emotions are legitimate eg promotional material, and illegitimate eg staff meetings.
- 4) following from the last point, emotions within organisations are embedded in relationships of power. Hochschild explains that, with respect to the emotional work undertaken by women, 'the more she seems natural at it, the more her labor does not show as labor' (1983: 169). The invisibility of emotion work makes it easier to ignore, continue to devalue, and interpret as irrelevant to decision making processes.

The significance of emotion in constructing the meaning of the organisation and place is evident in the commitment and loyalty that motivates staff and associates to perform tasks over and beyond what is formally required of them:

We're all here as a team, we sometimes stay back to seven pm to get things done, everyone willingly does it bar one, this causes animosity (G31)

¹⁸ Further development on this theme is provided by Hochschild 1983: 91 when she discusses different terms used by organisations in lieu of the work 'emotion'.

I devised a phototag system where you hold placard in front of the cave and take a number of photos of the placard and cave - this is a backup in case people remove the tags. I have also made wire rope ladders to facilitate access and exploration. (A3)

I set to walking every gully and every ridge - just day trips and then later on I did overnight trips, I wrote letters, and did research because it was a big issue. (G23)

I did the Chifley backward by torch light and found things that I didn't know existed in tour. (G47)

I am here looking at cave invertebrates, I'm into amateur entomology, I take notes and write a trip report. (A17)

Last year I felt I needed to do more training so I took 8-9 months off [from work] to do the outdoor guiding course – I make an effort to always learn something when doing a tour. (G14)

It is a break from being in the city for two and a half years. So I trained up, off my own bat. That was July 1999. They have brought in a more formal program since then. I enjoyed it being so informal. Really suits the way I work. You tell them when you're ready. (G50)

A huge amount of work is done to the benefit of the organisation as a consequence of strong emotional bonds to the place of Jenolan. Jenolan is a team-place, a place to be explored and cared for, a place that inspires voluntary training to improve one's work skills in order to better share the place with visitors. Emotional connection drives much of the extra effort and every day effort and yet this emotional energy is taken for granted or ignored. It is not articulated, or explored as being a part of the organisational processes. The dominant discourses at Jenolan are rational, ignoring or devaluing emotion, even though emotion is central to what Jenolan is. Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, from many of its actions and language, aspires to be a rational organisation keeping emotion as a tacit dimension.

At a global level 'emotion' is becoming a more overt part of the management discourse. Recognition that organisational life is saturated with emotion, and that effective leadership and innovation, for example, depend on emotion have resulted in a push for the organisational manager to 'manage emotion' to the organisation's benefit (Gabriel and Griffiths 2002). The following staff member recognises love of place in other staff and has attempted to 'manage emotion' to meet organisational ends.

So I tried to develop a relationship with the staff who interacted with visitors and was struck by their dedicated approach. They love it, so the trick was to get information to them to

fine-tune their appreciation at a more detailed level, to empower them, give them more information, and increase their understanding of what I am doing. My relationship with staff has improved and it is a real joy when they come up and show me what they've found and want to know what it is. And interacting with the research people and to have a part in a workforce willing to learn more – that is a great pleasure. (A49)

The guides are generally tremendous with visitors; we get very few complaints. They are able to establish a rapport with visitors. (A8)

There are individuals then, within the organisation, who engage in alternative discourses to the highly rationalised such as a discourse where passion and emotion are valued dimensions of the work place. Even in the instance quoted above, however, the emotion was something to be 'fine tuned' to better suit the organisation's goals, and the passion for place is presented as the more palatable, in a rational organisation, 'dedicated approach'.

At Jenolan emotions, such as loyalty, frustration, and fear contribute to the sense of community and organisational processes; in addition, emotions are an essential part of the work that forms the core of Jenolan's business: showing caves. Emotion is not just the glue in an organisation, for some organisations, such as Jenolan, it is also one of the products. Hochschild (1983: 7) refers to this as emotional labour: the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display that is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value. The tasks of guiding, and arguably other work, are only effectively achieved when they are done in a particular emotional state. 'Emotional labour' is an instrumental part of the organisation's business. Arlie Hochschild was one of the first to explore the emotion work that is done in the workplace, and describes how emotional labour becomes a rationalised product of the organisation. Her account, based primarily on the work of flight attendants summarises how the organisation asks employees to manage their emotions and present themselves as being in a prescribed emotional state (Hochschild 1983).

The task of guiding has many similarities to the flight attendant. They are both hospitality roles that focus on serving the visitor or customer. The flight attendant makes visitors physically and emotionally comfortable in a relatively novel environment – the aeroplane flight; the guide makes visitors physically and emotionally comfortable whilst providing an entertaining and informative experience in a novel environment – the cave.

Emotion work at Jenolan Caves, the constructing of a particular emotional experience for the visitor, is based on:

- Staff's empathy for visitor
- Staff's own passion for place, and
- Staff's control of their own emotions.

The words of the guides and other staff expose the emotion work involved in their jobs.

It is important to make people feel at ease, to give them information and to work out their needs. I work out the day for people, we look at what they can do so my role is to quickly organise their day in a friendly, useful and enjoyable way. (G53)

I always try to be nice and helpful and do little extra things for people if you can. My role is to serve people and I enjoy that, especially when they come back again. (G55)

I was friendly and warned them to book ahead. My job is to make sure that visitors get the most enjoyable tour, that they know where the barbecues are, and not to worry about the road - a lot of people freak about the road. (G38)

I have only really worked in reception on the phone or in the ticket office. You must be enthusiastic and never let the public think that they're nuisances. Why would they know about Jenolan? You have to give the visitor a feeling that they will see something special. (G41)

I always try to help people more, see them as individuals, not as a group of sheep going from one spot to another. (G47)

In the peak season I walk up to the notice board and invite questions. That helps to make their visit good -- that's important. (G50)

You have to be able to read the group within the first ten or fifteen minutes, you have got to know what you're going to tell them, and how, and you can't treat all groups the same. ... I remember a group of old pensioners, there just to gossip and giggle, they didn't listen to a word I said, they were worse than primary school kids, so I told them very little. They wanted to look at pretty things, wander along and have a natter. If possible it is good to relate to their time scale – makes the visitors feel more welcome. (G52)

It is good if you can talk to each person, with a big group I talk to everyone at the gate as they pass me. It is important to have personal contact somewhere along the line, in some groups you can remember people quite easily – that's important to the visitor. As a guide you sum up the group - aim at the middle - and also try to give each individual

something special. You need to establish a good rapport for tours to work. I think about if I go to somewhere new, I am going to feel uncomfortable, and want straightforward information. (G33)

The work done by staff incorporates empathy as to what it is like to be somewhere new. They provide information and a welcome that will help new visitors negotiate the landscape and daily timetable. Their work includes reading the nuances of personality and group dynamics so that they can alter 'the tour depending on the group'.

This emotional work, at a formal and institutional level, is described and prescribed in the task of interpretation. Guides are the human face of interpretation, the sharing of current scientific and historical understanding of place in a way that is safe and secure for the visitor, often in the form of an experiential learning opportunity. At a formal and institutional level the role of emotion in interpretation has long been recognised. Authorities on interpretation state that passion is an essential ingredient for a powerful and effective interpretation: passion for the resource and passion for the people who visit (Beck and Cable 1998: 189). Tilden, who is recognised as the 'father' of interpretation, is explicit about the emotional element of the experience and argues that the priceless ingredient for effective interpretation is love of what you interpret and love of people (Tilden 1977).

Having recognised that guides are required to perform emotional work the discussion now takes up Tilden's argument that 'love of what you interpret' is a priceless ingredient for effective interpretation. Guide's passion for place, which is a component of emotional work, is essential for the overall meaning and success of Jenolan as a tourist site. Haig and McIntyre (2002) review the factors that make guiding effective and note that face-to-face interpretation, with all its opportunities for emotional exchange, may be more effective than other sources of knowledge. They summarise that the guide is central to the visitor experience in terms of enjoyment, education, access to destination, impact on destination, and management of those impacts. The guided tour is a coalescing of emotion and intellect where the passion and care revealed by the guide colours the intellectual content and creates a shared experience as opposed to a pedagogical tutorship. The work of Cockrell, Bange and Roggenbuck (1984) indicates that guides, as opposed to visitor centres, are a more frequently used source of information and also have considerable influence in the development of norms and beliefs in visitors. It is also clear from previous work that the personal interaction

between guide and visitor increases the visitor's enjoyment (Roggenbuck and Williams 1991). The adaptability of the guide to address the group's interests, abilities and personalities pays off in the form of visitor enjoyment and appreciation, often sowing the seed of fascination and care for the place. By engaging in an emotional way a guide not only facilitates the interaction with the physical environment but is also instrumental to the social experience for the visitor; the guide becomes a central component of the experience as a provider of information and host. For example, Jenolan visitors reported:

The guided tour was excellent, again the combination of fact and fairytale added to my appreciation and enjoyment. (V102)

We had a nice tour guide – he was very good, made it enjoyable. (V305)

The guides were so professional, one of the better places in the world for that. (V36)

The guide was wonderful. (V37)

The woman in the ticket office was really good at the desk, she explained all the options to the fellow ahead of us. (V45)

The guide was a big part of the trip – he put us at ease, and told us all about the geology and geography, history, lots of laughs thanks to the guide. (V517)

The tour guide makes it interesting. (V69)

Everything was perfect, the guide was great. (V79)

The tour guide was good and entertaining. (V111)

The ticket sales person was excellent in the information they provided - very helpful, and we didn't have to wait long for the tour itself. (V15)

The woman in the ticket office was really good, she explained all the options to the fellow ahead of us. (V45)

Everyone is friendly, that's why I love coming here (V80)

Many people volunteered comments, which were all positive, about their experience with the guides. The guided tour was characterised by both receiving interesting information but also being in an atmosphere that was relaxed enough to be able to laugh; this 'made the trip enjoyable'. Previous visitor surveys at Jenolan also highlight the significance of the guide in contributing to visitor satisfaction. The response from one survey revealed

that the largest proportion of unsolicited positive comments was made about the quality of the guides and visitor appreciation for the role of the guide in creating a satisfying experience (Davidson *et al.* 2001). There can be no doubt that for a large proportion of visitors the personal interaction between visitor and guide constitutes a central part of the experience and contributes to the place meaning constructed by visitors.

Personal control of emotions that is required to facilitate the desired visitor experience. The following quote from an ex-guide suggests that this emotional labour was done with very little cost in the past, but as later quotes reveal this is no longer the case.

The guide makes the visitors feel more than welcome, and some guides make visitors feel like they're a burden. I would get out of a cave and natter with people. ... I would make a cup of coffee and go outside and people would come over and I would talk with people, but these days the guides hide inside. Being accessible, being around so that visitors can ask questions – that is important. Staff should be quite visible, should be outside all the time, in busy times we would still do it. We used to stick a guide in the Grand Arch, wandering around talking to people. (G52)

Whilst much about guiding has remained the same at Jenolan some of the culture and processes have changed. Interviewee G52 speaks with frustration and sadness about some of these changes, mourning the loss of the informal interaction with visitors. This account describes a way of being a guide where the emotion work of relating to visitors was part of the culture and process, and seemingly not felt as draining. Talking and interacting with visitors 'wasn't on the duty statement' (A14 transcript) but never-the-less was a behaviour engaged in by most. 'But these days the guides hide inside'. The guide-visitor interaction, whilst still providing a powerful positive emotional experience, is now more likely to be felt as emotion work and consequently staff regularly utilise the space that is free from visitor interaction in the staff tearoom.

It is a shame that they have lost the staff-visitor interaction, and staff wanting to interact. They have lost that part of it. They didn't do it deliberately; it was never on the duty statement, it was part of the culture. (A14)

My other role is as adventure cave guide - that is the best job in the world. I am paid to go caving and have fun with people, and if I don't have fun people won't have fun. It is hard if you feel like crap – you have to turn on the smile. (G36)

There is nothing worse than if the guide is grumpy, it makes the experience of the visitor quite different. The rule is that it doesn't matter what is happening to you, you have to

'put on a show of being positive, and happy about being in a cave', you present a positive easy-going attitude. (G33)

You feel like you never really leave the job behind - not ever escaping - that's a down side, but that's also a positive to have the depth and emotion associated with work. Because when people find out where you work they inevitably want to stop and talk about it. (G42)

The visitor-guide relationship is at times felt as emotion work, with costs equivalent to those felt by people in other 'emotion-work' roles such as flight attendants, restaurant service, receptionist and so on. Staff who interact with visitors feel the need to present an enthusiastic and welcoming manner, and have a certain amount of pride that they achieve this successfully. But they also recognise that some days their dominant emotion is not enthusiasm and that it requires considerable effort to put on a 'happy face' for the visitor. Hochschild (1983) discusses the internal conflict that incongruence between internal state and outward appearance can create for staff, and suggests that the adjustment of self to role is aggravated by the worker's lack of control over the conditions of work, and the level of 'acting' required. The passion and care for place held by staff may act to minimise this incongruence, so that the alienation that staff at Jenolan have from their own feelings is relatively low compared to other service industries.

Visitor-guide relationship and interdependence

It is clear then that staff develop considerable emotion and passion for place, and that this passion is a vital ingredient in the work that they do caring for place and sharing the place with others. What emerged from the interviews with visitors and staff was a strong sense of relationship between visitors and staff and that this interdependence is a key ingredient in the construction of meaning of place, and meaning of Jenolan. As was discussed in Chapter Five the relationship between visitor and staff is not one-way. Just as the visitor experience is contingent on the relationship established with the guide, so too is the guide's experience of place contingent on the relationship that is constructed with visitors. Feedback that guides receive from visitors contributes to their sense of value and purpose:

Visitors get to see the caves, what they give back depends on their experience, they give a lot of energy back if they have a good experience from the wowness of the place, this gives

energy back to the guide, their enthusiasm gives you energy, there's nothing better for people to say 'wasn't that terrific', it puts you way up there. (G56)

They come with expectations and worries, it's great to convince people to keep going, convince them to go the extra fifty metres, and they usually keep going if they're not claustrophobic. (G57)

I aim to get visitors to ask questions, I enjoy the intellectual part of interacting with people. (G16)

I would rather communicate with the general public - seeing their eyes light up - it is like performing on stage - you get instant feedback, get a buzz from it, but you also get 'dead' groups with no response but you learn to cope with these. (G22)

The expression on people's faces, seeing them meet the challenge - it's personally rewarding - a buzz. (G25)

They give back a sense of wonder about the cave - it rejuvenate guides (G47)

I get good feedback from my tours. Tours are where you get positive feedback, that is when the job is worth it; people do get something from being here. (G33)

As G22 notes, feedback is not always positive, and sometimes the energy between guide and visitors is more negative or draining than rewarding. Explicit statements of criticism can be devastating.

I grew to appreciate the caves - when you're a guide showing people, telling them information they have no idea about and seeing them being blown away by the drabest part - you get a sense of 'I've got all this information!' They get so enthused and I feel that I made it a good tour for them so I become more infatuated about the caves, they get excited I get excited. The more I guide the more I get excited about the caves. I was devastated by the negative comment from a visitor. I really appreciate positive comments. (G38)

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Plate 14: Queue for tickets extending into the Jenolan precinct

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Plate 15: Cavers resting after an experience of discovery and team effort
(Jenny Whitby)

Whereas for some guides a fascination and connection with caves and caving activities motivated them to work at Jenolan in the first place, for others guiding was a convenient job, and it just so happened to involve showing and telling people about caves. As G38 says 'to begin with they were just holes in the ground' but regular contact with the environment and interpreting the place for others fosters enthusiasm in most employees. The enthrallment of the guests is contagious, and staff become passionate about place as well as captivated by the satisfaction of facilitating excitement for place in others.

Another guide says:

Visitors give back a sense of wonder about the cave, they rejuvenate the guides, especially with kids, and it's great fun teaching them. We're not allowed to carry people and one day this gentleman in a wheelchair asked to get up, he wanted to make his own way up, he had no legs, he bummed it all the way up, he sat on top of the rail in the Persian chamber, he had tears on his face. The guide sees the cave for the first time again. (G47)

Guides bring to their work not just information and a secure environment in which to explore the Jenolan Caves but also a considerable amount of passion that visitors find rewarding; this passion is fed by the enthusiasm and emotion of the visitors. The positive feedback from visitors, in the form of oohs or ahhs, in stated thanks, written letters, and visible emotion reassures guides and other staff that they are doing well at their job.

I have a lot of fun with visitors - that's why I go to work. I have got a hell of a lot of letters from visitors from overseas. Schools have sent lots of banners and letters and cards of thankyou. I see them come back again as grown ups, with their own families. That's good. People come and ask for me, ... I used to have a big head for a while. (G49)

I have been told that I was a better guide than the previous one, that is, I've had good feedback. I have got a sense of satisfaction - to take a tour and see people's eyes widening, their breathlessness - I have a sense of being a proud parent. Their big grins, thanking you for a wonderful tour - that is a good feeling. (G42)

The visitor interaction with the guides is a positive experience, something that they give to the guides. By and large this interaction is very good and the guides benefit, this makes it an enjoyable place to work. (G51)

Visitors give guides a sense of appreciation for what they're doing, and stop us getting stale because they point out what we're doing, they contribute money to keep us going - they are the major stakeholder. The number of visitors generates energy with staff, and staff

are influenced by how many visitors there are, and people take back from that, it works in circular way to raise the standard of the tour. (G45)

Visitors make the job rewarding - none of us would be working here if it wasn't for the public - we're here to look after them. Other wise there'd be a fence and no one going near it, or it'd be mined. Without the public we wouldn't have a cave system. (G46)

Of foremost importance is that this passion, the response to aesthetics and other facets of the lived experience, is a key component of the visitor-guide relationship on which is built a more complex relationship of sharing and feedback. This chapter demonstrates that whilst the staff play a central part in the visitor experience, as mediator, facilitator and guide, the visitor also plays a central part in the staff experiences. At a personal and professional level the visitor-staff interaction has the potential to provide fulfilling or frustrating experiences. The visitor's reactions can leave the guide flat and disenchanted with their role, or energised and beaming with pride. This interdependence should not be ignored: visitor satisfaction is linked to guide passion and guide satisfaction.

The passion and commitment demonstrated by Jenolan staff is not unique. Urry (1990) refers to work by Marshall (1986) who examined why staff in one particular restaurant accepted poor wages, worked long hours, and had to be completely flexible in contrast to an obviously very wealthy owner. Marshall found that the lives of the staff were intertwined with the workplace; it was both their leisure and work. Customers were friends or relatives, staff were encouraged to participate in the leisure activities in the restaurant (if workload permitted), punctuality was not an issue and staff organized their own routines of work. The Jenolan situation has similar elements, and in particular the nostalgia of previous work eras reflects the intertwining of work and leisure. Jenolan offers not so much a workplace as a lifestyle.

I enjoy the lifestyle (G29)

To be able to live somewhere this unique, the fact that I am living in an area that is mostly untouched. No hustle and bustle of township life. The feeling of belonging. I live in an area where I belong, with people I care about and interact with. (G46)

When I came back to work I thought it was magnificent and magical because it is so far away, a whole world of its own. It is like escaping everything else. In the caves too, but the buildings, isolation can make you feel like you're just away, it's isolated. (A46)

The extent that living and working at Jenolan represents a lifestyle has diminished. In previous years customers became friends; chatting to and relating to the customers was encouraged; and although punctuality and appearance was strongly controlled staff regularly worked beyond the allotted hours. There was strong recognition of the value of relating in a personal way to customers and strong pride in being able to do this.

Many decisions within an organisation, such as personnel selection, appraisals, layoffs, even though rationalised and systematised are full of emotions; they are made in the context of hunches, uneasiness, fear and so on (Fineman 1993b: 216). An organisation and corporate culture supports particular emotions and emotional decision making processes in what Fineman calls the 'feeling rules'. Although not without resistance, it is those in power that get to define which emotions are valid and allowable (Hochschild 1983). These feeling rules are part of the implicit or tacit knowledge (Probst and Büchel 1997) embedded in organisational processes.

The invisibility, and the denial of the potency of feelings and emotions in an organisation, makes them even more powerful as an invisible instrument. One of the points that Hochschild makes is that as a consequence of women's lower status their feelings are accorded less weight than the feelings of men. The same might be true of any social group that has lower status than another, be that based on class, race, gender, organisational position and so on.

Here we discover the corollary of the 'doctrine of feelings': the lower our status, the more our manner of seeing and feeling is subject to being discredited, and the less believable it becomes. An 'irrational' feeling is the twin of an invalidated perception. A person of lower status has a weaker claim to the right to define what is going on; less trust is placed in her judgements; and less respect is accorded to what she feels. Relatively speaking, it more often becomes the burden of women, as with other lower-status persons, to uphold a minority viewpoint, a discredited opinion. (Hochschild 1983: 173).

Emotions exist and play a central part in any organisation but usually not in an explicit way. Emotional rules, and whose emotions are allowable, are unstated facets of an organisation and therefore harder to contest. Excerpts of staff transcripts reveal some

sense of upholding a minority view and of not being heard, and subsequently being discredited.

It makes me cranky because we're not being listened to, other staff disagree that closing is the best way to protect the place, people say ahh yes I've heard about you. The caves are being damaged. There is not enough protection - not really protected at all. There is more pressure on the guide to take more people, but you can't supervise that many. There should be a guide at the front and guide at back, visitors regularly urinate in the caves. (G49)

We can submit suggestions ... but it seems to go nowhere. (G19)

Ideas put forward by staff get documented but always get filed. (G20)

The negatives of being here is that management tends not to listen to people who may be involved in things, who take an interest. It puts you on a wrong foot with management and they put you down, or drop the thing, management don't work for you - they tend to put you down. (G27)

The significance of the emotional dimensions, and the potential power relations associated with them, is supported by poststructural and postmodern thinking which has attempted to deconstruct the rational/emotional dichotomy. Poststructural analysts argue that the valorization of rationality at the expense of the body and emotions is a consequence of male dominance that has 'served to deny men's existence as bodily, emotional and spiritual selves' (Wearing 1998: 125). Rodaway's task for the sensuous to be considered 'an integral part of the cultural definition of geographical knowledge (Rodaway 1994: 9). As such, the male voices of Rodaway and Porteous contribute to the articulation of body, emotion and spirituality in the construction of place.

In uncovering the emotional dimensions of place we've become aware that emotions are negative as well as positive, and that relationships of power will be embedded in the emotional rules of an organisation. Evidence of emotion associated with place does not, however, coincide with explicit or formal recognition in either organisational understanding of place or the tourism literature. The implications of tacit knowledge and feelings in the organisation are discussed in the final chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the emotional dimensions of Jenolan. Emotion is central to the functioning of the organisation, it is part of what is sold to visitors and it is part of the interdependence between visitors and staff. In this sense then the construction of place arises from a network of interactions that consists of intellectual, physical, sensual and emotional experiences. Whilst emotion is not an overt part of the management discourse it is nonetheless a significant part of place meaning, the organisation and the social construction of Jenolan Caves.

A common compliment is that 'you're very passionate'. Everyone is passionate – it's not just a job, we finish work, then go for a drink and talk about work, we live and breath it.'
(G30)

I would work here even if they didn't pay me. (G7)

Whilst the Jenolan experience is corporeal and cognitive it is also emotional. Williams *et al.* (1992) began to explore the emotional dimensions of place attachment as part of understanding wilderness use. This notion has been extended by Crouch (2002), who argues tourism is an active and embodied experience, it endows space with meaning as a consequence our mediation of that space – the practices undertaken in that space. Tourists are agents in the creation of tourist places, and they are agents in the construction of their own tourist meaning. Following from Crouch, the mediation of tourist space, or construction of meaning, arises from 'feeling, imagination, and sensuous and expressive qualities' (Crouch 2002: 207). The human subject has emotional responses to place and other people that go beyond 'knowing and doing' (as Crouch puts it). Crouch explores:

Ways in which space as a mediation of embodied subjectivity may be understood in terms of tourism. This includes an attention to tourism practices that may be considered typical of everyday life in many ways: speech, movement, sensuality and sensuousness, imagination, human relatedness and social interactions, feeling, turning, touching and 'doing'. ... Embodiment presented as only a physical phenomenon is incomplete. It is necessary to relate that physicality to imagination, to social contexts and to 'making sense' of practice and of space.'
(Crouch 2002: 209)

Indeed, in a tacit way, emotion and feeling management are central to the Jenolan product – the guided tour. The centrality of emotion to the tourism experience is recognised by the organisations that produce tourism, but its significance is, as in the case of Jenolan, often constrained to promotional material, but otherwise remains a dimension that is expected but not clearly articulated in organisational processes.

Meaning is constituted through the practice of space and our bodily mediation of it: it therefore arises from our movement through caves, bumping into other tourists, or chatting with guides. The same is true for any person in that space, be they visitor, staff, speleologist or researcher. There is an interdependent relationship between visitor and staff in the meanings that they are able to make. Whilst the staff work at providing the emotional context for the visitor, which is recognised as having significant influence on the visitor's experience, so too, does the visitor have a significant influence on the staff's experience and meaning making.

The central role of emotion for the most part is not overtly recognised by the managing organisation, and yet emotion is an incredibly vital part of the organisational functioning and construction of Jenolan as a tourist place. One of the consequences of not articulating the emotional dimensions is that as a tacit phenomenon it is less able to be contested by those that disagree with the emotional rules, or emotional consequences. In addition, failure to acknowledge the emotional dimensions results in a narrow understanding of what is being offered and how it is being offered. Finally, whilst emotion remains a tacit component of the organisation there is the possibility of failing to recognise and know how to deal with issues that are of an emotional nature. This latter point will be explored further in the final chapter.

Chapter 7: Tension between stewardship and commodification

Introduction

The previous chapter has explored the primacy of emotion in the social construction of Jenolan: for example excitement and passion, but emotions that have a negative hue are also significant in place construction. There was frustration and disappointment, primarily expressed by staff and management, with ways in which Jenolan was 'being constructed' and subsequent challenges to subject positions that people adopted. The critical point of this chapter is that the publicly acknowledged tension between stewardship and commodification has an impact for the individuals associated with place, and this has the potential to alter the meanings of place for others. This tension can be read in numerous ways, for example, at a personal and individual performance level the tension might demonstrate evidence of inappropriate management, or cynical and complaining staff. One, or both of these interpretations might be true, but this perspective doesn't help understand how Jenolan, the place, is constructed. Whether manager or staff, each person is negotiating the subject positions available to them to the best of their ability. They are engaging differentially with existing discourses in order to make sense of their own positions and of their experiences. This analysis will not explore the competency of either staff or management but shall explore one of the reasons for this tension: the negotiation of commodification and stewardship discourses.

The discussion therefore turns to how people *make sense* of the place of Jenolan by examining the appropriation of discursive practices and exploring how these contribute to the social construction of Jenolan Caves. Just as the nature of Borneo is defined through discursive practices of the media, scientists and protected area agencies (Markwell 2001b) so too is Jenolan Caves. It is argued that two discourses that are drawn on significantly in the sense-making of people associated with Jenolan are stewardship and commodification. The explicit assumptions or values of these two discourses produce contradictory goals when they are applied to places such as a protected area tourist site: one gives primacy to commodification or use of place, the other gives primacy to protection of place.

Arturo Escobar (1996) and tourism researchers such as Hollinshead and Jamal's (2001) suggest that modern forms of knowledge and their objects of knowledge must be analysed discursively; to understand what Jenolan is we need to understand how it is talked about. Meaning is negotiated, it is not a truth to uncover, and it is informed by our practice and use of space (Crouch 2002). Hollinshead and Jamal (2001) call for a closer examination of the discourses of tourism, to go beyond the 'site-level managerialisms of individual places' (p 71) in such a way that we become aware of how our various discourses influence and construct tourist sites, and how power relations underpin the uptake of competing discourses.

We have noted that perceiving Jenolan is a multi-sensing process: we see, hear, touch and smell as part of the process of interacting with it. We gather information through our senses and then order this information cognitively and emotionally to make sense of the experience. This process of making sense does not occur in isolation, rather it occurs in the context of previous experiences and knowledges: our past history, cultural norms, ideologies, practices, as well as previous engagements with place (Peet 1998: 234). Demerit (2002) calls the approach where 'nature and other things-in-the-world are disclosed to us as objects through practical and embodied engagements that materially configure them in ways that are recognizable *for* us and ontologically transforming *of* us' "discursive constructionism" (Demerit 2002: 775). Escobar (1996) adopts this approach acknowledging the role of language in the construction of social reality. Discursive constructionism has similarities to poststructuralism and both perspectives are used here to explore the sense-making of Jenolan. A brief explanation of the poststructural approach and discourse follows.

Poststructuralism and discourse

Poststructuralism offers a way of understanding how people interact with, and make sense of, the world around them. It presents the individual as a 'subject' (as opposed to object) who engages bodily with their surrounding world in part through the sense making offered by language. However, neither the language nor the subject is fixed but are in a state of constantly becoming (Hubbard *et al.* 2002: 84). In poststructuralism there is no such thing as the 'essential human subject'. There is no essence of the human being, the mind and body are not juxtaposed, because the subject is not understood as a thing but a process (Walkerdine 2002).

Understanding subjectivity as constituted in the complex imaginary realm where mind and body interact enables us to conceive of bodies always in the process of becoming and always able to reimagine and reconstitute themselves. While discourses are played out through the embodied subject, the subject always has the potential to resist through contesting these discourses in its process of becoming, to reimagine herself and write her own discourse. (Walsh and Bahnisch 2002: 34-35)

We each take up multiple and sometimes contradictory discourses in the process of constituting ourselves as a subject, and in understanding ourselves as a person. It is as 'multiply inscribed' individuals that we make sense of our world and experiences such as those we might have at Jenolan.

In explaining 'discourse' Foucault has written that each society has

its regimes of truth, its general policies of truth: that is the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true, the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the technologies and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth, the status of those who are charged with saying what is true (Foucault 1977: 131).

And so it is, in the social world of Jenolan there are regimes of truth comprising of discourses. Individuals engage with discourses positioning some as truth and others as false.

Discourse is a way of talking about particular phenomena that does not just describe or represent the phenomena but 'makes things'. A discourse is a framework that embraces 'particular combinations of narratives, concepts, ideologies and signifying practices, each relevant to a particular realm of social action.' (Barnes and Duncan 1992: 8). That is, meaning is not inherent in the language or words, rather meaning is found in the differing social and institutional practices in which the words are used (Macdonell 1986). Dryzek (1997: 8), who uses a discourse approach in his analysis of the politics of the earth, defines discourse as 'a shared way of apprehending the world.' A discourse has a set of shared terms that makes particular sense of the world, it also has particular assumptions and contentions that influences our sense-making, or as Foucault would

have it, enables us to know the world or see the truth of the world. Discourses provide guidelines for defining, interpreting and acting. However, the discursive positions that we adopt are not neutral, or singular.

Discursive fields consist of competing ways of giving meaning to the world and of organizing social institutions and processes. They offer the individual a range of modes of subjectivity. Within a discursive field, for instance, that of the law or the family, not all discourses will carry equal weight or power. (Weedon 1987: 35)

Segments of language are often referred to as discourses, where a discourse is a subset of language that embraces particular combinations of narratives, concepts, ideologies and signifying practices (Barnes and Duncan 1992: 8). The production and reproduction of discourses is linked to institutions, that is, 'discourses shape the positioning of individuals in an institution, and the discourses so adopted, in turn, depend upon an individuals' position there.' (Barnes and Duncan 1992: 8). That is, for individuals associated with Jenolan, their role within the organisation partly determines the discourse they engage with, but it is also the individual that constructs and articulates the substance of the discourse.

The impact of discourses can be felt at levels of government policy and institutional structures as well as a personal level (Dryzek 1997). Discourses therefore are powerful instruments, but not all-powerful (Dryzek 1997; Davies 1993). Their hegemony can be disrupted and overturned when individuals choose (consciously or sub-consciously) with which discourses they will engage. Individuals can, and do, choose alternative discourses to those presented by the 'norm' and thereby disrupt the norm (Davies 2003). Just as meanings of words are not homogenous (Macdonnell 1986: 1) nor are discourses. They change from one institution to another, from one discipline to another, from one time to another. Discourses are neither singularly interpreted nor static, so whilst discourses offer us alternative meanings, so too do we have alternative interpretations of the discourses themselves. As Macdonnell states 'Discourse is social' and is set up historically and socially (1986: 1-2). As individuals we are constantly negotiating the mire of discourses in conjunction with our own experiences, drawing on the discourses to construct our own subject position. This can be an uncomfortable process filled with the tension of competing positions. But it is through the multiple discursive positions available to us

that we make sense of the world around us, and our various experiences such as leisure and tourism.

A place is transformed into a tourism site through a system of symbolic and structural processes which follow the direction marked by the dominant discourse. The latter influences the way tourists 'read', 'appropriate', and 'exploit' the areas they visit. (Galani-Moutafi 2000: 211)

That is, we engage with and construct to various extents the discourses that describe and construct the world around us. Multiple and contradictory discourses exist for similar phenomena and we often engage with contradictory positions. This engagement may manifest as a personal tension between statements and behaviour, or it may manifest as a tension between individuals and/or groups. For example many Jenolan staff strongly engage with an environmental discourse but reject the label of 'greenie' which is commonly, and derogatorily, applied to environmental activists; so whilst staff (and other people associated with Jenolan) might use the same language and adhere to the same principles as those advocated by elements of the environmental movement (I am assuming that 'greenie' is equated to environmental movement) they do not necessarily see themselves as being part of that movement. The subject position that they construct engages in a particular and negotiated way with the environmental discourse. That is, engagement with a particular discourse provides the tools of sense making which can be at odds to the sense making of another discourse, and at odds to their behaviour as perceived by others. Each person's sense making is vitally important in the process of how they see themselves, understand their own position in the social world, and understand place.

Two discourses are dominant at Jenolan: stewardship and commodification. It is from these discourses that terms and ideas and values are drawn to make sense of Jenolan. I describe them as dominant because:

- A high proportion of people associated with Jenolan used these discourses – all staff except nine drew on the discourse of stewardship¹⁹, 50% of visitors²⁰, and 67% of interviewees²¹ drew on commodification

¹⁹ Access: guides2000/queries/non-stewards

- The people and institutions that use them have considerable influence and power in decision making related to Jenolan
- At a broader social level commodification and stewardship are powerful discourses.

The quotes are presented as evidence that tension exists, and the analysis of this tension follows. As explained in the introduction there are many ways this tension could be read. This thesis evaluates the discursive tools people use to make sense of Jenolan and explores how these contribute to the frustration.

Environmental stewardship

Stewardship is a particular form of environmentalism. Environmentalism as a discourse arose, it is argued by Frank *et al.* (1999), in conjunction with an increasingly rationalised approach to nature and the environment. Anna Carr (2002) defines environmental stewardship as the care, desire to maintain the well-being, vigilance, sense of responsibility and accountability for a variety of landscapes: farms, national parks and urban parks; for Jenolan stewardship relates to the care of the natural and historical landscape. Similar to Thompson's (1995) agrarian stewardship, along with a duty of care is a duty, or right, of production, that is, stewardship is a discourse that supports and assumes a human right to utilise the resource for human benefit. The desire to care for Jenolan, does not override the desire and right to use Jenolan.

There is no single environmental discourse associated with Jenolan Caves; various environmental discourses are entered into and contribute to the social construction of Jenolan Caves. There is a coherence and consistency, however, around notions of care and responsibility for the landscape voiced by people associated with Jenolan. This particular environmentalism I am calling stewardship and I define it as a way of talking about Jenolan that demonstrates:

- concern for and value of the 'environment' (perceived in various ways), and
- a sense of responsibility for the 'well-being' of the environment.

²⁰ Access: alldata2000/queries/interviewee concern for place minus duplicates

²¹ Access: guides2000/queries/economic rationalism - number who presented (includes staff and associates)

'Stewardship' is a term commonly associated with environmental care (Thompson 1995; Howell 1997; Lowenthal 1998; Van Huylenbroeck and Whitby 1999). The specific word 'stewardship' was not used by informants, instead they used the word 'caretaker'. Many guides referred to themselves as caretakers as a way of demonstrating their concern and responsibility.

I am a caretaker, making sure visitors look after it [Jenolan], and that management looks after it. (G34)

Whilst stewardship is a concept used to refer to human care for a variety of landscapes, for instance farms, national parks and urban parks in the context of Jenolan stewardship focuses primarily on the natural and historical landscape. The institution and staff make explicit statements about care and responsibility for the environmental integrity and cultural heritage of Jenolan.

The staff at Jenolan are passionate about their role of caretaker. Stewardship is a manifestation of the indispensable emotional dimension of Jenolan that was discussed in Chapter Six. Whilst all tour guides see themselves as having an individualised approach to guiding they consistently incorporate the roles of guardian, along with facilitator of a greater understanding of Jenolan (be that geology, history or other), and entertainer (facilitating pleasurable experience).

I try to instil respect for Jenolan, as well as the environment, I show people what we've got here, and that it needs looking after. (G19)

I'm a keeper of the caves – I'm there to protect the caves, and I'm a show-er of treasures. (G14)

We need an attitude shift, 'we as Australians own this place'. Bathurst and the Blue Mountains are unique, quite rare, and they need a committed and quality attitude, it needs people who are committed because it is not just a tourist destination. The tourists are co-managers - everyone has a part to play in the preservation of this place. I want people to go away thinking that the place is special and needs protection. ... it needs looking after by all of us, the world is being damaged, and we can educate through interpretation. I like being able to get people aware that their actions and impact on other parts of the ecosystem. (G16)

My job is to take care of it ... my role is to get people to come back, and bring a friend, to fall in love and want to protect the place, to be advocates if the place is in danger. (G36)

We all see ourselves as caretakers, if we feel something needs to be done, even if the Trust hasn't thought of it or asked, or provided the budget! We'll probably get out and do it. (G42)

We are guardians of the resource, guides are caretakers - if they [guides] don't care we don't have a resource. (G46)

The guide's main function at Jenolan, irrespective of position, is to maintain and protect the resource, that is the number one priority, and the number two priority is to make sure that people get what they want. I was able to point the [environment] in the right direction ... that was satisfying. (G52)

I think Jenolan Caves is beautiful and should be maintained as it is. I love working here ... The area itself is beautiful, and it should be preserved. We need to keep it nice for people in 50 years time. ... The visitors provide money that can be put to preservation - I hope. (G55)

Others, not just permanent guiding staff revealed a relationship of care and responsibility in their description of what they do, and how they interact with Jenolan. Not only on-ground staff identified themselves as 'caretakers' but also speleologists, researchers, administrative personnel and tourists. These people who have a much more distant, in terms of time and space, relationship with Jenolan also demonstrated a relationship of stewardship with the Jenolan environment. That is, they cared and accepted responsibility for Jenolan's well being and were active in fulfilling this care.

We generally keep up-to-date, keep an eye on things - even safety things on the tourist tracks. For example on Carlotta Arch track there was a piece of mesh on the platform that was missing and a little kid could squeeze through to a sheer drop. (A3)

It is good to share knowledge, making sure that people aren't just following but also taking notice of where they are going. We would usually give a talk to newcomers about how the caves were formed, and the principles and ethics of how to behave. If someone was behaving inappropriately they wouldn't be allowed to come again and they would probably choose not to come anyway, because they wouldn't 'fit in'. We give back to the cave and Trust by doing these things, ... and the best way is to leave it as you found it or to do some cave cleaning and restoration. We feel privileged to get access to Jenolan and we like to assist the Trust. (A5)

So my role has been to provide an understanding of the belief systems and ... responsibility to protect the story and the place. ... when I go there and take my family down I don't encourage them to enter the cave system, I don't discourage them, and there's a reason

behind that, but I tell them the story of the caves. My role ... was to protect the heritage and culture within the immediate area. There are art-works and sites which we must never let be destroyed. I remember as a child seeing things on display that should never have been there for display. I don't want to stop tourism but it is important that history isn't destroyed for the sake of tourism. (A23)

I really liked the attitude then, it was 'you're here for the environment, to look after it, to preserve it for future generations', ... I am looking after the environment, I know all about this ... (A29)

I thoroughly approve of tourist caves because this is the way to save the caves from miners and forestry. (A37)

The fact that it's a special place tends to inspire and drive you to preserve the essential qualities of what's there - trying to undo things done in the past and problems and practices from past management. I am more aware of people's inherent interest in the environment and nature and derive satisfaction, despite the problems, from being involved in a team that is helping to preserve these places. (A43)

I've definitely got worries about the caves not being polluted, for example by the lint in the caves. There's probably a limit to the number of people who can visit the caves - in the past this has been limited by the number of cars and buses that get in, but now I am worried about the volume of visitors. (A19)

These statements were made by a range of people associated with Jenolan: speleologists, maintenance staff, office staff, board members and researchers. Clearly, a sense of responsibility and concern is not the preserve of the guides only. All these people have an on-going relationship and interaction with the place of Jenolan, and for some their formal or institutional role is one of 'guardianship'; that is, they are expected to care for Jenolan whether they personally agree with this approach or not. The quotes presented above, however, are imbued with passion and care that does not depend on a formally articulated role. It is clear that engagement with an environmentalist discourse is not just the prerogative of the guides for whom the title of 'caretaker' seems to come so naturally. Visitors and other people also care about the environment of Jenolan and see themselves as acting in ways that care for this environment.

I hope we're not polluting whilst we're here – we are trying to care for the environment. (V43)

I would come and weed during a volunteer day if I lived closer. (V45)

We only leave 'footprints', and care for it as if it was our backyard. (V51)

For many visitors engagement with an environmental discourse, or stewardship, is not particular to Jenolan but rather an ongoing interest in environmental issues; for instance, they may be people who identify themselves as environmentalists or conservationists, or who in some way have been engaged in management and care of natural resources. For others though the engagement with a discourse of stewardship will be ignited or fuelled by the care that is shown by the guides.

I enjoy it because they [guides] really care about the conservation of the caves, and the ecology, and it's not just a tourist place. (V81)

These comments arise from visitor's personal experience of Jenolan, a crucial part of which is the interaction with the guides. The guides engage in a discourse of stewardship when presenting Jenolan and because the guide is the central, and perhaps the only, interpersonal contact that visitors might have at Jenolan, the discourse of stewardship may be uncontested in the visitor's eyes. For visitors, Jenolan is a place that is cared for.

Not all visitors left with an image of a place that was cared for and protected. Some visitor's reading of the landscape provided a contradiction to the discourse of care offered by the guides.

We had wondered if the place was run by volunteers because of the large scale weed infestation and lack of modern interpretation facility. (V23)

This couple, travelling with their two children from Queensland, had recognised the caring discourse offered by the guide of the Lucas Cave tour but as this discourse seemed to be incongruent to the level of care they saw in the landscape they made sense of the guide's position by locating them as 'volunteer': dedicated and committed but under-resourced. The couple from Queensland were able to 'read' the landscape in that they could recognise non-indigenous plants, and from past experiences expected that a professionally run nature-based tourist site would include an infrastructure dedicated to interpretation. The contradictions of weeds and lack of interpretive facilities led them to conclude that volunteers ran Jenolan Caves. Most visitors, however, do not comment on the proliferation of weeds at Jenolan possibly because they are not aware of which plants constitute 'weeds'.

Visitors have been told that Jenolan is cared for, they have witnessed the care of the guides and have had signs of care pointed out to them. I would argue that all visitors to the site assume, or desire, that the management agency is appropriately caring for

Jenolan. If, as visitor, they cannot be confident that their 'host' is caring for the site then as visitor they might have to take greater responsibility for their own actions. It is a preferable position to trust in the care and ability of the host organisation than to be required to develop one's own level of awareness and knowledge, and control one's own impact. Visitors who celebrate the obvious efforts at protection such as the construction of wire cages around the decorations or who 'hope we're not polluting while we're here' demonstrate concern and a tentative trust that the management body is ensuring that the valued aspects of Jenolan Caves are protected. These comments also demonstrate an engagement in the discourse of resource protection and stewardship that has grown from the environmental movement and from successful national park campaigns to minimise impact in protected areas. At a broad level then, there is a community of people at Jenolan with common ideals and approaches to the physical environment; an approach that positions the care of Jenolan as an essential responsibility.

Absence of stewardship

Not all interviewees revealed a sense of stewardship, although it was prevalent for guides and clearly evident in associates and visitors. The majority of guides revealed a sense of stewardship but there were six²² for whom care and affinity emerged as a dimension of the relationship with Jenolan but did not have a strong sense of responsibility, which was the second defining dimension of stewardship. The guides who did not engage with both dimensions of stewardship had a strong sense of care but attributed responsibility to the organisation rather than seeing themselves as having the authority to perform the actions required. For example, the following permanent guide cares about the physical and ecological integrity of Jenolan but considers the responsibility of care to be located with particular staff in the organisation and the Road Transport Authority (in this instance):

Jenolan as a whole, inside and outside, and the animal life, is vulnerable. The ivy was sprayed on the corner and the road collapsed. RTA has big responsibility and they are not maintaining the road. It [Jenolan] will be threatened if we don't start to take care of the place. (G38)

Another group of non-stewards were associates of Jenolan, for example coach drivers, school teachers, or members of associated committees. Their concern focused on the

²² Access: guides2000/queries/non-stewards

achievement of their own objectives rather than an overt concern for the Jenolan environment:

Personally I love the drive down and up. ... The cave tours must get out on time. There have been a number of times we have got away 25 minutes late, so we don't get to do other aspects of the tour. I don't want the tour to be push-push. I want it to be relaxing. I make the effort to enjoy the trip and be enthusiastic. Another driver mentioned the possibility of a chair lift going in. We would have to pull out – our passengers wouldn't pay for a Gondola. (A41)

Overall the guides and a high proportion of people who regularly associate with Jenolan used the stewardship discourse. As such stewardship is an influential discourse, and is particularly drawn on by those people who interact at a face-to-face level with visitors and whose formal role is that of steward.

Institution

There is a glaring omission in my discussion of environmental care; the presence and voice of the institution as environmental carers has not yet been discussed. At an institutional, national and international level protected area and tourism institutions engage in the discourses of stewardship. I have presented a management voice as part of the group of individuals that I have talked to, that is, individual managers engage in the stewardship discourses. As an institution, the organisation also engages in an environmental discourse producing a voice that is not identified with any one individual but attributed to the impersonal body of the organisation itself in the form of goals, policies and promotional material.

The formal mission and goals of Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust (at the time of data collection) as presented in the documents of Annual Report, and brochure of the Corporate Plan 1999-2002 describes an agenda of care and stewardship of the environmental, Anglo-Celtic cultural heritage and Aboriginal cultural heritage (Table 6). Excerpts from the corporate plan brochure state (*italics are mine*):

Table 6: Stewardship excerpts from Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust Corporate Plan brochure

Vision	Excellence in karst <i>conservation</i> management
Mission	To <i>conserve</i> , interpret and promote the <i>natural and cultural heritage</i> of the Abercrombie, Borenore, Jenolan and Wombeyan karst conservation reserves in a manner which is <i>environmentally</i> , socially and commercially sustainable.
Visitor goal	To communicate an informative and interesting <i>conservation</i> message which enhances understanding and <i>appreciation of natural and cultural heritage values</i>
Organisation target	Increase in resources for <i>conservation</i>
Resource management and conservation	To <i>protect, conserve and where possible restore the natural processes</i>
	To <i>conserve the Aboriginal and historical cultural heritage</i>
	To <i>maintain natural biodiversity and geodiversity</i>
	To provide visitor services in an <i>environmentally responsible manner</i>
	To develop and <i>promote a wider knowledge of karst conservation</i> issues

(Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust no date)

The institution aims to ‘protect’, ‘conserve’ and be ‘environmentally responsible’, which I have interpreted to mean that the institution cares and has a sense of responsibility for the natural and cultural environment; that is, it is engaged in a stewardship discourse.

Historically Jenolan management has held preservation as one of its major aims manifest in the appointment of Jeremiah Wilson as Keeper of the Caves in the late 1860s (Horne 1994); this agenda has continued and is now embedded in the modern rationalist conservation approach. The agenda of conservation and protection is presented not only in formal mission statements but also in the promotional literature produced by Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust and associated tourism organisations. The promotional literature, in various ways, uses a discourse of stewardship to portray a caring and responsible organisation, suggesting that a visit to Jenolan Caves will be one of harmony with the environment. The promotion publications can be explicit about this intention but at other times the literature has an ‘implied care’ or implied ‘we’re not doing anything to harm the environment’ message. For example, frequently the promotional material refers to the abundance of flora and fauna, to the opportunities for seeing wallabies,

wombats or birds, and reference to the 'Reserve'. The term 'reserve' is an explicit statement that 'we are caring for this place', whilst reference to the opportunities to be close to flora and fauna has an implied message that 'our management ensures that the flora and fauna continue to be here' and that the organisation is operating 'in harmony with the wildlife'. Examples from the promotional literature are given below:

The cottages are constructed of timber to blend in with their environment.

(<http://www.jenolancaves.org.au/information.asp?tb=iaccommodation>)

... Offers a wonderful opportunity for bird watching with a large number of species residing in the area. (<http://www.jenolancaves.org.au/information.asp?tb=iactivities>)

Jenolan Caves Reserve – embracing some 2200 hectares of flora and fauna sanctuary – offers guided cave tours, wildlife spotting, bird watching and adventure caving. (Blue Mountains Wonderland)

Because of the cabins bush setting it is likely that you will see Red-necked Wallabies, Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Wombats, Possums and Echidnas. (JCRT Information flyer (yellow))

This is a rare chance to experience the unspoilt bush. (JCRT Experience the splendour!)

Cabins and cottages are surrounded by the fresh, cool mountain air and blend in harmony with the wildlife reserves that extends from their doorstep. (JCRT Experience the splendour!)

The richly decorated Jenolan Caves are the most spectacular caves in Australia and are part of the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains. (JCRT Caves are Cool)

This is a rare chance to experience the unspoilt bush. Wander along tracks bordered with wildflowers, where you may encounter wombats, kangaroos, colourful birds and other native animals. Swim or fish in the natural river pools on the way. (JCRT Caves are Cool)

You can mix with the local currawongs, crimson rosellas, king parrots and the ever-hungry ducks. There may even be a wombat or echidna taking a stroll. If it's hot, you can swim in one of the natural pools or sit beneath the many shady trees. (JCRT Jenolan Caves brochure)

What better way to finish an active caving and walking day than to lay in the clearing watching the stars, before heading off to sleep, surrounded by the fresh and cool mountain air. The cabins are surrounded by forest that is home to red-necked wallabies, eastern grey kangaroo, possums, wombats, echidnas, and many species of birds. You might even hear a lyrebird during the night! (JCRT Jenolan Caves brochure)

Why we don't feed wildlife at the Caves: help keep our wildlife wild and healthy. (JCRT brochure)

Terms such as 'reserve', 'sanctuary', and 'natural and cultural heritage' all imply a mix of natural or non-human environment with some measure of human control and management to preserve these values. Explicit statements of stewardship are also made in the brochures:

We can assist in developing superior world class and sustainable natural attractions. ... Let us help find that delicate balance between commercialisation and conservation. (JCRT: Jenolan consulting brochure)

The Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust is charged with the care, control and management of Jenolan Caves Reserve. ... These funds are primarily used to conserve the caves, conservation of flora and fauna and public recreation. (JCRT: Jenolan Caves booklet)

The institution adopts a discourse of care and responsibility for the environment and uses this discourse to promote and encourage visitors. Use of the environmental stewardship discourse is a way of publicly stating 'We are an environmentally concerned and responsible organisation'.

Historical Stewardship

I have so far demonstrated that the discourse of stewardship and its subsidiary notions of concern for the environment and sense of responsibility for its well-being are central to the socially constructed meaning of Jenolan Caves. Individuals and the primary management organisation engage in this discourse. Concern and sense of responsibility was also evident with respect to Jenolan Caves cultural heritage, both colonial heritage and Indigenous heritage.

The three strands (environmental, colonial and Indigenous heritage) of stewardship are differentially heard and enacted; some are more powerful than others. Poststructural discourse theory, explain Barnes and Duncan (1992: 8), assumes that the 'truths' constructed by discourses varies among cultural groups and among classes, races, gender-based or other groups whose interests may clash. That is, discourses can have variants produced by various cultural groupings. That a power differential exists between competing discourses has been clearly argued by Foucault, and subsequent authors (Barnes and Duncan 1992: 9). When discourses are associated with dominant

institutions those discourses can come to represent 'truth'; this is a largely hidden process and consequently hegemonic power is wielded in association with the discourse use (Weedon 1987). Of the three stewardship strands environmental discourse is the most powerfully heard although colonial Euro-centric heritage discourse is also abundantly used. Indigenous heritage however, whilst adopted by the institution has not been taken up by many people associated with Jenolan, that is, is not part of their social construction of Jenolan.

Euro-centric History

Statements that construct Jenolan as a place of historical significance are frequent in the interviews of visitors and community, and the institutional documents.

I enjoy the romance and history rather than having a fascination with the science of the place. (G36)

JC Wiburd had integrity, high standards. He was an excellent stonemason and built many of the walls. These should be protected - those that remain. ... I have devoted a lot of attention to history and learnt a great deal about it. I have talked with one of the guides about how to assemble the history of Jenolan using a hypertext system on CD-ROM in order to get different levels of information. One day I might do it. Most bits of information are available, it is the integration that is the big task. (A31)

It is a job, but it is stimulating and fun, pays well. It is a way of passing on history and knowledge, helping people learn about the geology and history - that is a big part, I love caving and love passing on knowledge, and helping people understand something different about caving at Jenolan Caves - the history. And I know the history including knowing the people: Steve Opper, John Callaghan, Barry Richards etc; they all caved together. The new casuals know the history of the show caves but I know the history of the Mammoth, and history of place. It is extra knowledge that I can pass on in the caves, like in the Lucas I can tell the past guide's stories, their caving trips. This would maintain the history. And I have a comprehension and knowledge of each guide's careers (different knowledge about caves, people stories, caving experience), people like Bill Buckley had met James Wiburd. The loss of Peter Culley, Steve Opper, Barry Richards and John Callaghan (when it happens) will also be a losing of knowledge. There will be a generation of casuals that know only the bare essentials, the history is vulnerable, and we should incorporate more recent history, not just discovery. (G21)

I am disappointed that we're losing people with so much of history of caves - no one has made an effort to record this knowledge. (G13)

If Jenolan Caves doesn't hold onto staff they've got are going to lose lots of information, eg John Callaghan and Barry Richards - they know so much. There are different versions of historical events in caves and we are in danger of losing information. (G14)

But recreation caving is a pace that I can enjoy and is the same (or similar) experience to the original cavers, you're not on the footpath with lights, and steps. We should not change the appearance of the buildings, we need to preserve the history – the era. To maintain the valley like it was 100 years ago. (A5)

Not a week goes by when I don't mention the excitement of the first guides – it's a sort of a discovery. (G35)

I have had a very enjoyable time here, it's a lovely area. Jenolan was the first cave I ever did, I enjoy the caves and it's a nice quiet area. There is an opportunity to explore places. That is a major attraction. And the landscape – the Arch, valley, Devil's Coachhouse. This place strikes you because it's historical. (A17)

Visitors also remarked upon the historical nature of Jenolan, and it was obviously one of the attributes that influenced how they made sense of Jenolan Caves as place.

The history of the place is special but it requires maintenance. (V74)

I enjoyed the immense history of the place. (V81)

You can feel the history of the place. (V23)

One of the benefits was getting a greater understanding of the courage of original explorers and a sense of history at the formations. (V120)

I was impressed by the history ... on arrival it is beautiful, the streetscape and Caves House, all kept wonderfully. (A18)

Just as stewardship of a wondrous ecosystem is institutionalised through the promotional material of Jenolan, so too is the historical stewardship institutionalised. Concern and responsibility for the protection of history is implied in the constant reference to the history of Jenolan and in the obvious efforts to keep the history 'alive':

Nothing can surpass a stay in the old world charm of Jenolan Caves House (Webpage)

http://www.jenolancaves.org.au/information.asp?tb=j_accomodation (JCRT,

Accommodation at Jenolan Caves, accessed 24 Jan 04.

You could stay at the historic and romantic Caves House at Jenolan Caves. (JCRT Experience the splendour! Flyer)

The Reserve was declared in 1866. This was before the creation of the world's first National Park. Jenolan Caves was first used by visitors in 1838, which makes Jenolan the first tourist attraction in Australia. (JCRT Jenolan Caves booklet)

For twenty years the pool was crossed by an eight-man flat bottomed wooden punt which was abandoned in 1923. (JCRT Jenolan Caves booklet)

Nicholas Irwin and George Whiting discovered the cave in 1860 and it was originally known as the 'New Cave'. (JCRT Jenolan Caves booklet)

The Chifley is reported to be the first cave in the world to have been lit with electric light. Jeremiah Wilson discovered this cave in 1880 entering through the Madonna chamber. (JCRT Jenolan Caves booklet)

The Jubilee Cave was discovered in 1893 by Jeremiah Wilson. You can still follow the footsteps of the discoverers' today. (JCRT Jenolan Caves booklet)

Take an interesting walk through some of Jenolan's history along the River Track. (JCRT Jenolan Caves the natural choice)

So named due to its use by early visitors for recreation and a cricket match played by an English eleven against a local side. The concrete pitch can still be found today. (JCRT Jenolan Caves the natural choice)

The history that is referred to in the majority of interviews and documents is that of colonial history, the tales of European explorers, colonisers and developers. It also tends to be a masculinized history as little is told of the roles and efforts that women might have played in the transformation of Jenolan from Aboriginal place to its current incarnation as State tourist icon. If we take Lowenthal's (1998) view of history and heritage, then what is portrayed here is an element of Jenolan's cultural heritage, not history. Jenolan heritage is represented in the stories of Charles Whalan, the 'discoverer' of the caves, and Jeremiah Wilson, the first keeper of the caves, as well as the extraordinary stories of exploration and development. Indeed, what is being re-told and re-constructed is the colonial heritage of Jenolan Caves. Lowenthal's words are appropriate:

In domesticating the past we enlist it for present causes. Legends of endurance, of victory or calamity, project the present back, the past forward; they align us with forebears whose virtues we share and vices we shun. We are apt to call such communion history, but it is actually heritage ... heritage, no less than history, is essential to knowing and acting. (Lowenthal 1998: xv)

The 'history' that is presented at Jenolan is partisan and for the few histories that are told there are many more that are not told, or are not so easily heard.

Indigenous history

One such 'missing' history is that of Indigenous people. Indigenous cultural heritage discourse might be considered a stewardship discourse because of the care and sense of responsibility incorporated. It arises, however, from a different ontological and epistemological base to that of the environmental stewardship, and arguably it is a discourse that is not based on the binary of culture/nature. Few interviewees mentioned the protection of Aboriginal history and the contemporary relationships between Indigenous peoples and Jenolan.

I don't know a lot about Aboriginal people, it's hard to imagine that this didn't have lot of meaning for them. It seems they kept well away from the Grand Arch and cave openings. Perhaps they saw it as frightening, avoided it, [and they've lost] continuity, but it's all part of place, of history. We've lost a lot of early history, for example women cavers we have lost information which might never be retrieved. (A49)

It is a very special place. It means a lot to me because of the dreaming story which incorporates the three caves systems and if you follow the story it finishes at Jenolan. Dreaming stories are creation stories - telling how the cave system was created; a bit like Bethlehem, a special place like that, Bethlehem relates to Christian belief, Jenolan is part of our creation story. Other people see the creation story as fairy tales but they're not - they represent our spiritual connection. So my role has been to provide an understanding of the belief systems and also the job of protecting it. This knowledge gives me responsibility to protect the story and the place. I do the same when I go to other places for example Wollemi. I always try to ensure that it is protected, and to pass it [understanding] on. I was vocal, trying to find what happened to artefacts that used to be on display in the Sydney Museum. It is important that they are returned back to where they belong, to have a safe place for them - a keeping place. I remember as a

child the things on display that should never have been, It is important to acknowledge that it's a special site for Aboriginal people. I feel that there's a need to do more, perhaps employ Aboriginal people. For longer than six years the Trust hasn't employed Aboriginal people. There are some Aboriginal people at Abercrombie on traineeships. (A23)

Now at the end of the day I am still left with a question about Aboriginal people, their presence. There was no public [notice] board, acknowledgement of 'whatever' people, no information. That's quite extraordinary compared to other places and the current era of awareness. (A18)

Jenolan as an institution has relatively little to say about Indigenous relationships to the place, particularly at the level of visitor information as noted by A18. At a more formal level the organisation does engage with Indigenous cultural heritage (Table 7).

Table 7: Indigenous history excerpts from Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust Corporate Plan brochure

Visitor goal	To communicate an informative and interesting <i>conservation</i> message which enhances understanding and <i>appreciation of natural and cultural heritage values</i>
Resource management and conservation	To <i>conserve the Aboriginal and historical cultural heritage</i>

(Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust no date)

However, this engagement occurs at a superficial level because it is not a text that is picked up by personnel in the organisation, other than one person who represented those interests. It would be unfair to say that people associated with Jenolan denied or totally ignored the existence and issues surrounding the original Indigenous landholders; during the course of unrecorded conversations there was acknowledgement of Jenolan as an important site for Indigenous people, and the need to protect many sites of particular significance. But this was part of the discourse used by relatively few; the voice of Aboriginal interests, of stewardship of Indigenous relationships and heritage with the place of Jenolan is barely heard and therefore less accessible as a discourse to be drawn on in making sense of Jenolan.

Commodification

I have suggested that environmentalism, in the form of stewardship, is a dominant discourse that pervades the social construction of Jenolan. Another dominant discourse, and one that produces considerable tension with environmentalism, is that of commodification. The commodification discourse is a way of talking and thinking about Jenolan as a 'product' or commodity; terms such as market segment, customer service, product range, and being a business are used. There are, no doubt, other ways of thinking and talking about Jenolan, other discourses that are used to construct Jenolan. Commodification is explored here because, I argue, it is a very powerful discourse and plays a major role in the considerable tension that is experienced by many people in close association with the place of Jenolan.

Since Charles Whalan brought the first visitor to Jenolan in the early 1800s (Horne 1994) Jenolan has operated as a 'commercial' enterprise where visitors have paid for the privilege of guided access into the caves. Indeed, the Jenolan Caves tourist brochures identify Jenolan as the first tourist attraction in Australia. As with many other early national parks, justification of reserve proclamation was made to protect the caves in order to ensure their ongoing availability as a recreation and tourist venue (Wearing and Neil 1999; Worboys *et al.* 2001). In the 19th century access to Jenolan Caves, for a paid guide mediated the majority of people, subsequently, as far as modern colonial Australia is concerned Jenolan has always been a tourism commodity.

The commodification of Jenolan intertwines with processes of corporatisation, managerialism and scientism, all of which are identifiable systems of change that have developed since industrialisation and most especially since the second world war (Gabriel and Lang 1995). According to Marx commodification is the production of goods or services and their exchange based on their use and exchange values (Edwards 2000: 17). Underpinning this process is the notion that consumption is an inherently democratic process where goods and service production and their relative valuation arises from the expression of consumer demands, and the consumer is assumed to be an autonomous and self-directed individual. This is, however, a simplistic view of commodification as the process of consumption is inherently more complex and socially meaningful than a direct exchange process (Edwards 2000). Consumption practices, and by association commodification, in affluent Western societies are socially, economically and politically

patterned; that is, who and how people participate correlates to social, economic and political distinctions (Edwards 2000: 50).

The activity of tourism is frequently referred to as a process of production, packaging and consumption (Watson and Kopachevsky 1994; Boissevain 1996; Lynch and Veal 1996; Craik 1997; Markwell 1998; Crouch 1999b; MacCannell 2001). Across the tourism literature the discourse of commodification is sometimes used uncritically where the authors present the production and consumption of tourism as normalised positions (eg Bartos 1982; Wight 1996) or critically where the social implications and nuances of the framework and commodification process is itself critiqued (eg Watson and Kopachevsky 1994; Urry 1995; Wearing, S. and Wearing, M. 1999; Halewood and Hannan 2001). Wearing, S. and Wearing, M. (1999), for example, argue that it is possible to decommodify at least one area of tourism, that of ecotourism.

Part of the commodification of tourism is the commodification and consumption of place (Relph 2000). John Urry (1995), for example, examines the ways in which the Lakes District of the United Kingdom is consumed by the tourist gaze. Tourism consumption often includes the consumption not only of tangible goods and services but also consumption of the visual experience. The gaze of the tourist is an act of consuming the natural or cultural spectacle before them. John Urry proposes this relationship between place and person in his text 'Consuming Places', and Crang, P. (1997) further develops the notion that the tourist gaze, the tangible and intangible products of representation are part of the construction and practice of tourism.

In these cases, consumption is the visual 'devouring' rather than commodity exchange and follows from Baudrillard's view that what individuals are consuming is not so much material products and services but 'signs' (Campbell 1995). The process of production is a cultural process as well as an industrial process and financial exchange may be absent. The process can still be described as one of consumption; the tourist 'ingests' the view, takes it in, or consumes the spectacle of the traditional dance. Money may not always be exchanged, but the principle remains that the consumer will somehow absorb or take something. Consumption is often imagined as a unidirectional flow of energy; the producer is the actor or agent in producing the good and the consumer's only role is to consume. However, as Wearing (1998) and others (Thrift 1999; Crouch 2002) have argued this limited view of commodification denies the agency of people in the construction of place meaning and experience.

The notion of the 'tourism product' is well developed; it is engaged with at a popular level as well as used as a theoretical framework and point of analysis in the academic domain. It is a discourse that is used by those that visit Jenolan to make sense of their experience, and it is a discourse that is used by those that work at, and manage, Jenolan. Philosophical and political changes over the last twenty years have resulted in a push for a greater role for the private sector in the management of protected areas (Figgis 1999), and consequently a greater engagement with a discourse of commodification. Jenolan the commodity is produced by management and staff and consumed by the visitor, also known as tourist.

Use of commodification at Jenolan

When asked about the visitor-Jenolan relationship in terms of what the visitor contributes to the place of Jenolan the prevailing view was to locate the visitor as financial benefactor or consumer. In a sense the question is problematic because it is unusual to present the tourist's relationship to place as two-way. The far more common question is to establish what the visitor gains from place, or to discuss the impacts of visitation. When asked what visitors positively contribute to Jenolan visitors and staff have to draw on the existing discourses that articulate some form of visitor contribution. It is therefore unsurprising that a majority of responses from both visitor and staff express visitor contribution in terms of financial returns, that is, they construct Jenolan as a commodity:

Visitors give financial benefits to maintain the place, to protect the environment, if we didn't have this government control it wouldn't be protected. (G54)

Visitors give money, but also if they've enjoyed the place they tell other people, and pass on that joy, that's positive stuff. (A46)

Visitors keep it going with dollars - as long as people want to see caves guides will want to show them. (G21)

It comes back to the mission statement: to conserve and make available for visitors, we get revenue to conserve the cave and reserve and that's a positive thing, it's a symbiotic relationship. They rely on us for their experiences and we rely on their revenue. (G51)

We're competing here with a lot of other magic facilities, and tourists are getting far more scientific and educated but there is only so much tourism dollars to go around and only so much time, getting them here is perhaps the hardest thing. (G24)

Jenolan Caves is a place of cultural heritage value that needs to be conserved in line with its financial obligations. Conservation and commercialisation are both equally important to ensure the stability of the Karst conservation reserve. (A49)

Most visitors when asked this question agreed that the visitor contribution was one of financial exchange. Seventy-nine percent of visitors²³ who were interviewed felt that they made a financial contribution. Visitors 'give money', 'keep it going with dollars'; they provide the 'tourism dollars'. That is, visitors are engaging in the final stage of commodification of Jenolan, the consumption phase.

The next most frequently identified contribution was bringing children, mentioned by forty-nine percent of visitors, and forty-five percent of visitors thought they made a contribution by being protective of the Jenolan environment. Visitors also added that their relationship extended to providing feedback to staff (forty-two percent), promoting Jenolan to other people (thirty-nine percent), visiting again (twenty-eight percent) and contributing to the ambience of Jenolan (sixteen percent). Recognition of their own role as promoter continues to construct Jenolan as a product to be sold; Jenolan the commodity benefits through word-of-mouth promotion and the introduction of others to Jenolan Caves. The interviews reveal that the relationship between visitor and Jenolan extends beyond financial reward to include caring for place, potential lobbyists and volunteer contributions but nonetheless Jenolan the commodity remains a primary construct.

From a management perspective there is no doubt that Jenolan *is* a product to be sold. This meaning is certainly significant to the managing body, Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, whose management staff states that Jenolan is in the business of producing 'entertainment and education'.

[The challenge is] to convert Jenolan from a public sector industry to private sector reality. ... Being a successful business is the be all and end all from a conservation and commercial view point. The condition of the caves, the products made available to visitors, the work undertaken, the training - are all centred on the caves and the whole karst area. Central to the business is not the 'product' but seeing the caves as an asset to be utilised by the business, a way of producing the product and service; which is entertainment and education. (A8)

²³ Access database: all2000/reports/ interviewee contribution

This is not to say that other dimensions of Jenolan are not also considered significant by the management body, but the task of making and selling the Jenolan product is considered central to achieving overall longevity. The organisation that is technically responsible for producing 'Jenolan' is the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, a body corporate answerable directly to the NSW Minister for the Environment. The Trust engages with the discourse of commodification at a number of levels: their formal management documents and plans, their planned and deliberate public image presented in the promotional literature, and in the on-site delivery of the product itself.

The formal management documents state that the aims are to not only conserve the natural and cultural resources of Jenolan (and other karst reserves) but to also promote the reserves as 'leading visitor destinations' (Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust 2002a), where people will be able to consume the product of 'entertainment and education'. For example, the first objective listed in the Annual Report 2001-2002 for Jenolan Caves is to 'continue to expand adventure activities *product* range.' (my emphasis) In the Annual Report under the subtitle of 'New Product' is written:

Consolidation of newly developed above and below ground adventure activity *products* (eg bushwalking, orienteering, corporate team building activities) continued. Repeat visitation and word of mouth has provided increased uptake of these *products* by social, corporate, and in particular school groups. (Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust 2002a)

The concept of product is regularly mentioned along with 'corporate resources' and 'consumer response'. That is a 'corporation' operates Jenolan the commodity for the benefit of 'consumers'. The management body locates itself firmly in the corporate world drawing up corporate plans, discussing business development and marketing strategies and constructing Plans of Management. Budgets, appointment of a Business Development Manager, new products, marketing strategies, and staff training and development programs are key concepts used in the way Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust portrays itself.

The discourses of stewardship and commodification have incompatible goals creating considerable tension for people who necessarily engage with them. The stewardship discourse portrays place as requiring care and protection, where as commodification represents place as a resource available to be transformed into product for financial

exchange. These are discourses that most people engaged in, some engaging more in one than another, and they both offer ways of making sense of Jenolan. At times the task of trying to both care for, and sell place required incompatible strategies and results in considerable frustration and tension. The following discussion explores these tensions using constructivist and poststructuralist frameworks. The final chapter will place these tensions in the context of management goals.

Conflicting agendas

I have argued that Jenolan is ‘made sense of’ through two dominant and distinct discourses: one of environmentalism or stewardship and the other of commodification. These two discourses have Commodification constructs Jenolan as a set of goods and service for exchange, whereas stewardship presents Jenolan as a heritage that needs to be cared for. These two discourses represent and construct the tension between resource protection and resource utilisation, which is one of the dominant issues in the westernised world and certainly one that has attracted considerable attention from the field of tourism (Mathieson and Wall 1982; Cooper and Wanhill 1997; Hunter 1997; Inskip 1998; Wearing and Neil 1999) and resource management (Graefe *et al.* 1990; Eagles *et al.* 2002; Stankey *et al.* 1985). Valene Smith (2001) succinctly summarises the tension of use and preservation, and its consequences, in tourism in her chapter on sustainability noting that a herd of elephants in Africa is worth US\$615,000 income per year as a consequence of tourism, and quotes one park superintendent as saying ‘even the lion has no privacy’. The practice of tourism leads to deterioration of that which it commodifies.

The tension between stewardship and commodification discourses, as indicated in Chapter Two, has existed since the establishment of protected areas and National Parks. The early rationale for establishing parks in Australia seems to be not so much for their ecological conservation values but more for their recreational use, provision of public open space for health and wellbeing, and other use values such as spaces to facilitate acclimatisation (Hamilton-Smith 1998). Through the late 19th and 20th centuries conservation values of protected areas increased in ascendancy as land continued to be reserved for the protection of bio- and geological diversity (Worboys *et al.* 2001). What exists then is an ongoing tension that arises from public ownership of land with state control that allows a limited range of economic uses, and ongoing tension between

competitors for the use of the land (Belshaw 2003). Outdoor recreation and tourism are considered appropriate use of this land where logging, mining, or agriculture are not (Stankey 1980). The public ownership of land in national parks is in contrast to the ideals of capitalism and liberal philosophy which aspire to the free individual, able to live their life without state control (Sheil 2000).

Approaches such as sustainable development and ecotourism attempt to achieve stewardship and commodification outcomes without compromising one or both goals. Jenolan needs a continuous maintenance and development regime to ensure that the caves and decorations are not harmed by the presence of visitors. The current major source of funds is through the sale of cave tour tickets to visitors and so increased funding might be achieved through increased visitation or increased fees. But an increase in visitation has the potential of altering the experience socially and aesthetically. The tension is well recognised as a planning and management dilemma, but less well recognised as a personal dilemma for those that work and care for place. This next section seeks to articulate the tension that arises from the contested versions of Jenolan for those people most intimately connected with it, personnel of Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust and other frequent associates such as researchers, committee members.

Personal tension

The negative emotions and conflict that are described can be read in terms of the broader cultural changes and contradictory discourses that each person must negotiate every day. The neo-liberal approach and process of commodification, with their push for economic efficiency and individual sovereignty have created a context and circumstance that affects staff relationship with resource and visitors. The 'trimming' of fat from the rosters and cutting back of maintenance staff has resulted in a more time-dominated workforce and work schedule. Guides can find themselves racing from one cave tour to another, with little time in-between to catch their breath let alone chat to the visitors.

I have a sense of frustration with management and the way the place is run because it is such an important place physically. I don't like to see it treated badly. If things get bad in the office I can go outside and pick up litter around the lake or sit in the playing fields for security and solace. (G42)

I have seen cutbacks – the electrician now has to do lots of paper work. Five years ago there were four electricians, now there are two, there were two rangers now one, and they are not replacing the fitter. (G29)

I was rostered to do 12.45 to 1.45 and didn't get out until 2.10 because a woman fainted, but my next caves was the 2.00 Lucas, and I had to get this Lucas group out on time because many were on buses, so their tour was shortened. The rostering doesn't leave room for error, for issues that might occur. And the phone wasn't working in the cave to get another guide organised for the Lucas tour. They are getting as much from casuals as possible, it doesn't leave latitude if things go wrong, especially if the phone equipment doesn't work. There is an incidence book - but what's the point of filling this in - nothing gets done. (G29)

The efficiency driven changes to staff schedules and rosters can result in a feeling of being on a treadmill, running from one tour to another, with the frustrating effect of not being able to give the quality of work that staff think is appropriate. Their love of place and desire to perform a high quality job contrasts with a push for time efficiency. At a broader level the task of constructing a sustainable and satisfying tourism experience relates to notions of protection and preservation (as well as other discourses around work roles), and the push for efficiency relates to the construction of Jenolan as a commodity or product (and a myriad of associated discourses). The tension between protection and commodification, with a perceived dominance of commodification, leads to cynicism for some and mistrust that the managerial arm of the organisation either has the will or ability to care for place. In a group where everyone has developed some level of passion and care for place it is unsurprising that decisions which prioritise commodification over stewardship result in disagreement and cynicism.

There is also a personal frustration that career opportunities are diminished, partly as a result of a trimmed workforce, but also because of a managerial approach that advocates the introduction of new blood as opposed to an assumed natural progression of 'working your way up'. The career frustration is accentuated by a shift to 'professionalisation', the development of a formal qualification process and expectation that all future staff will hold these qualifications, and that it will become the criteria for further promotion. These changes are not peculiar to Jenolan Caves, rather they mirror changes that have, or are occurring, across most workplaces in Australia as part of the broader changes associated with neo-liberalism, managerialism and the 'information age' (Figgis 1999).

The expectation that the professional guide will provide the 'truth' to visitors can place staff in further states of uncertainty and tension.

And now Armstrong Osborne is saying that the caves are formed a different way to the way we learnt – I don't know what to tell people. (G38)

What is happening here is that staff feel as though they are being asked to make sure they are efficient and productive, to put the visitor first and to care for the resource, but at the same time staff do not see the organisation behaving with efficiency and care for visitors and the resource. Staff are part of an organisation that engages in two contradictory discourses, and as a result they experience a dilemma in their day-to-day work. They see visitor dissatisfaction, destruction of the resource and erosion of staff morale. It is this that produces much of the tension and frustration. This frustration is clear in G33's words.

When I worked as a casual, conservation seemed to be the priority, to keep caves up to standard. When I became temporary and permanent there was a huge change. It went from a permanent to a casual based workforce; there were lots of cutbacks. People didn't have the same sense of responsibility, or pride. It was so casual – people were just working a day here and there. You can see the flow on effect that is difficult to take. We're letting a very important resource slip. There is a balance between keeping people coming, but if the resource is not kept up to scratch what's the point? I am concerned about what might happen to the caves. I might lose my job if the resource is not looked after - the caves will fall apart, and we'll lose pride. I am very angry about it. ... I have a connection with the place, but not a connection with the job – the job satisfaction is not very high because of decisions that seem to be harmful to the place and staff. (G33)

People associated with Jenolan acknowledge the tension that exists there attributing it to the different goals held by different sectors of the organisation. One management staff identifies the different goals between the management body and staff as an issue:

The Trust now makes goals and priorities which often are at odds to what Jenolan people [staff] see as the goals and aspirations, their [staff] goals are more personal to Jenolan. (A8)

Other managers talk not so much in terms of differing goals but in terms of lack of financial resources; they place visitor service and resource maintenance as the central purpose of the organisation:

I am only a cog in the system especially with respect to industrial matters, some of management policies regarding changes and the way we employ people are very economic rationalist approach and have a negative impact on staff. I have got to tell staff to do more with less; it's hard economic times. [Before I took this position] money wasn't a concern, there wasn't the pressure to cut back on expenditure and maximise profit like there is pressure for me to do. There are plenty of ideas, but no resources for implementing them and then I have to field criticism for not implementing them, that's frustrating. (G44)

I would like people to walk away saying 'this is a good place'. It's hard because of staffing and dollars, if I had five staff it would be ideal. The hold up is staffing and money. I want visitors to be happy and I like to present Jenolan as best as possible. I would love to be able to get rid of the feral trees – the sycamore, ivy, and holly – there are so many different weeds, but also a lack of resources, we've only got one person for 3000ha as well as [having to maintain] the other reserves. (A32)

It is frustrating that the Karst Resources Department did not have time, support, or the money to do more work. (A49)

As managers responsible for their own budget lines their language reveals frustration but also an acceptance of the economic constraints. Staff and associates that are more removed from management express this tension as overt criticism or anger.

Management seems to be doing the very things that will reduce visitor numbers. (G9)

I am concerned about what might happen to the caves. If Jenolan is not maintained the caves will fall apart, a resource will be depleted, I am very angry about it. (G33)

The Karst Resources Manager's job seems to be sidelined out of the whole process – this is weird. ... There is no environmental management but Jenolan has spent hundreds and thousands on consulting companies - Manidis Roberts got a huge amount of money – and now Jenolan is paralysed because of a lack of decision about the Gondola - no one can do anything (A36)

Others do not apportion blame but are frustrated nonetheless by the lack of finances and the seeming prioritisation of the economic agenda.

During the excavation for the car park above Chifley, there was a collapse and landslide. They revegetated with exotic grass because it was cheaper. (G20)

You can't just do something once, you've got to keep at it, there is no magic chemical to get rid of the problem that's been there for 60 years, we've never followed up on anything, it's frustrating. I know how to do it but I don't get time to do it. (A29)

I can see things that need doing, and in some ways I'm in a position to influence those but I'm not in a direct role. And these things are not as high a priority to other people as you think they are. I can see the potential, I am frustrated that we don't have the resources to realise the potential. I am frustrated in that what we can do is very much dependent on income derived from the caves and that there's not the capital readily available to make significant changes and improvements that need to be done to realise this vision. I often come away feeling quite depressed because of a sense of frustration because I can see things to do but can't do it. (A43)

Disillusionment, frustration, cynicism are common feelings experienced by staff; they have a vision of a better Jenolan Caves. Guides see themselves as caretakers but this role is coloured by a sense of inadequacy and ineffectiveness with regard to adequately caring for Jenolan. One way of reconciling this tension is to critique the approach that is taken by management and to construct an 'us and them' situation. The distinction is fixed and immutable for some but most staff believe their responsibility is to provide feedback to managers and the more removed decision makers; to protect Jenolan from visitors and management. Their frustration is reinforced, however, when the organisation is unable or chooses not to take action on their feedback or ideas.

I am a caretaker, making sure visitors look after it, and that management looks after it. (G34)

The frustration of lack of financial resources is no doubt experienced by many people in different fields of work, higher education is just one example, and would be as significant for many of them as it is for people associated with Jenolan. The staff have adopted the organisation's agenda of achieving 'excellence in karst conservation management', understand the limitations of financial resources but are still beset by the tension between conservation and commercialisation. In trying to come to terms with this tension it is probable that people will adopt contradictory positions, because as subjects we are not rational wholes but are changing and contradictory sites (Wearing 1998: 139).

The two discourses of stewardship and commodification whilst having common ideologies of rationalism and scientism remain in conflict over what should be given priority. Quite clearly the discordance between these approaches results in negative emotional responses expressed as frustration and anger by staff and other associates of

Jenolan. That is, the tension has a substantial impact on the lives of the people associated with the place, potentially harming the relationship they have to place and eroding the passion they feel able to share with others. As a consequence some staff are looking for other work or are looking forward to leaving at the end of their career.

'They're ruining the workplace so I don't care about this place. (G49)

By the time we left it wasn't that hard to leave. I couldn't get out quick enough. (A14)

In Jenolan it is management's job to make decisions about the distribution of resources and development of strategies, staff is the specialised unit that put into place the vision of management. The organisational structure of Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust is similar to many organisations with a distinct managerial layer and role segmented groups underneath. This structure is reflected in the perceived separation between management and staff: The quotes above and below are presented as demonstration of the perceived separation between management and staff; they also quite clearly demonstrate a tension and dissatisfaction between these groups. They are engaging differentially with existing discourses and two discourses that they both engage with, and which present overt clashes are stewardship and commodification.

The Karst Resource Office is an 'also-ran', scrabbling for resources. They are more interested in paying for senior management and non-working computers. The Karst Resources Manager and weed manager are the only full-time environment people but we should have a Ranger. This position should be replaced because there is a serious rabbit and fox problem. It would be a tragedy for the wildlife, particularly the brush tailed rock wallabies in McKeown valley - which supposedly Jenolan Caves is managing. (G20)

I am frustrated because you can see so much opportunity - and so many mistakes - they don't listen to anyone else who can comment. It would be nice if people sat down with other people and listened and considered what others can and could contribute. (G25)

Why have the bare minimum number of caves with full tours? They are aiming for full - capacity tours. This is not what the original cave explorer had in mind. You can't do caves in one hour - not properly. We are all being squeezed by people that don't even work here. It is sad because the so called efficiencies by head office are degrading the whole resource and resort. (G26)

I have a sense of frustration with management and the way the place is run because it is such an important place physically, I don't like to see it treated badly. ... Another source of frustration is that it depends on management as to how much you're allowed to do.

Everyone takes on board the full gamut of responsibilities. We want to give whatever we can to preserve it, to keep the absolutely best standard, to do it justice. (G42)

But at another level, that of management, many of them have an appreciation but get so caught up in the commercial side of things. There is almost a total focus on commercial activity. This is not positive. Appreciation has to have a balance, I don't feel there is a balance with conservation. We're moving away from appreciating this place to how can we increase revenue. It is my greatest sorrow to see less and less being put into looking after the place. Because we're the custodians, our purpose is to protect the natural and cultural heritage. If money doesn't go into protecting it and promoting its values we will lose irreplaceable things that will never come back. (A49)

It concerns me that there isn't personal attention - and there's a contradiction between the words 'we're a business' and not paying attention to the reason for existence - the visitors. (G28)

Staff, management, and associates all reveal a tone of frustration. The facets that they found frustrating emerged in response to being asked a question about their relationship to Jenolan. As a researcher I was initially surprised by the focus on, what seemed to me, workplace relationships rather than place. I began to realise, however, that workplace relationships, workplace roles and perceived success, are part of what constitutes 'place'. Relationship with place is highly interactive; physical place cannot be separated from the cultural context in which it is experienced. Hence the tension between protecting, displaying and selling place emerges as part of what 'is' Jenolan. Whilst many sources have seeded the frustration the quotations above demonstrate a tension that exists between the two dominant and explicit discourses associated with Jenolan Caves, namely stewardship and commodification. The global issue of utilisation versus protection is a very personal issue for the many people whose livelihoods and lifestyles are associated with place, especially it seems, in an organisation where staff feels passion but not a sense of control over the resource.

These situations of contradictory agendas, coloured by nuances of personality, past experience (be it bitterness or success) and relationship with Jenolan (the place) materialize as conflict and tension. The conflict, between stewardship and commodification, which is one that exists at industry, regional, national and international levels, is the focus for ongoing debate, located currently in discourses of economics and environmentalism. This debate rarely, if ever, acknowledges the more personal tension and dilemmas of those that have to both conserve and use the resource.

Stewardship is concerned about the condition of the resource and accepts responsibility, to some level, of ensuring that the resource remains intact as a legacy for those who succeed the current generation of visitors to Jenolan, whereas Jenolan as commodity places care as a subset of the primary economic goals. Both discourses have a rational basis: the ‘sustainability’ of the resource and/or project, but the former presents the care of the resource as primary and precursor to all other conditions, whilst the latter presents the economic sustainability as precursor to environmental care. It is possible therefore that a workplace strategy meets the stewardship set of conditions but not that of commodification, or vice versa. For example, decreasing tour group size might achieve stewardship motives but not economic motives.

A note should be made here about a third discourse: that of sustainability. The sustainability discourse has arisen as a means of mediating the preservation of the environment and economic growth, a discussion of its potential in achieving this aim has been presented elsewhere (Escobar 1996). For the most part ‘sustainability’ has not been a prevalent discourse at Jenolan (although this may have altered since the period of data collection). Its absence from Jenolan is perhaps to no great disadvantage because it has been argued by others that sustainability serves to accept the economic agenda by defending nature in economic terms (Escobar 1996).

When the explicit and rational goals of commodification and stewardship are in conflict with one another parties on either side become frustrated with the perceived obstruction or irrelevance of the other. Those that hold the environmental rationale most strongly are frustrated with the dominant economic policies and strategies. When they voice their frustration the blame is apportioned to those that hold the economic rationale most strongly.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the tension between environmental protection and development that is expressed at numerous levels in the literature and across various industries and nations, is also a lived tension for people who ‘work at the coalface’. The discourse of stewardship helps negotiate the values and intentions of commodification (and vice-versa) but there remain conflicting agendas in visiting, managing and living at Jenolan. Stewardship of place reflects a concern to protect place and sense of responsibility to undertake this care.

Commodification is the process of making place available for commercial exchange, in this case sale to tourists. The discourses of stewardship and commodification repeatedly present contrasting positions or ways of understanding Jenolan that result in expressed opposition and tension. The ongoing engagement with these discourses, particularly institutional engagement, helps legitimise them and encourages others to take them up (Weedon 1987).

There are three strands of stewardship discourse: environmental, colonial heritage and Indigenous heritage that are engaged by various community members and the institution. Stewardship is defined here as an attitude of care toward, and sense of responsibility for the well-being of, place or attribute of place. At an institutional level if judged by the explicitness of statements of responsibility and care, environmental stewardship must be judged to be a significant influence. Reference to the colonial exploration of Jenolan Caves is prominent in the promotion of Jenolan Caves although less so in statements of management responsibility. Very few references are made to Indigenous history, and therefore Indigenous heritage is underrepresented. The promotional literature makes some small references to the Indigenous history and contemporary relationship to place. The website mentions that Jenolan Caves were known to local Indigenous population for many thousands of years as Binoomea, 'Dark places', but no other information is given. That is, there is greater effort put into constructing an environmental heritage, particularly at the institutional level of Jenolan Caves than of constructing a colonial heritage, or an Indigenous heritage. The discourses that individuals used, be they visitors, staff or associates, revealed that environmental care and responsibility was dominant in frequency (that is, most people engaged in the discourse).

Chapters Six and Seven have demonstrated that the social construction of Jenolan as place is an emotional experience in numerous ways, and that the emotion staff hold for place is pivotal to the successful ongoing stewardship and commodification of Jenolan. The everyday experience of Jenolan holds emotion as diverse as fulfilment, frustration, and anger. Staff experience and relationship to place is not an isolated phenomenon. Chapter Six demonstrated clear relationships between staff and visitors, and the centrality of positive emotions, such as passion, to the visitor and staff experiences. It is of concern, therefore, if tools are not found and used to ameliorate strong negative emotions associated with place.

Chapter 8: Management as a learning process

The points that I have made thus far articulate the particular ways of understanding the space and place of Jenolan and have implications for people's ongoing relationship with that place. The very specific and special meanings attributed to place are a result of the active engagement with space and other people. These meanings are voiced through various discourses that also act as frameworks or guidelines for how we might interact with place. That is, the meaning of place is interactively and interdependently derived, and both expressed and constructed by the sets of language that we have available to make sense of our experiences. Specifically the experience and meaning constructed of Jenolan fits into the leisure framework. A closer examination of people's interaction with space reinforces Crouch (2002), Wearing (1998), Urry's (1999, 2001) and others call to recognise the active and embodied nature of human place making. Part of the embodied construction are the positive and negative emotions that are evoked during the experience leading to implications for the ongoing place making of others, and possible negative impact on tourist and staff experience. Acknowledgement of an escalating negative effect highlights the importance of these dimensions in the management sites such as Jenolan Caves.

The management of protected areas, such as Jenolan Caves, has made use of systematic monitoring as part of their management strategies; strategies such as Visitor Impact Management, Visitor Activity Management Process, and Visitor Experience and Resource Protection framework, all of which focus on the visitor experience. Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust has specifically adopted a process of Visitor Impact Management as its primary mechanism of sustaining a satisfactory visitor experience. In Chapter Two I reviewed the process of VIM and concluded that the monitoring framework is an excellent method of identifying issues that arise from explicit and routine procedures and goals.

The interpretation offered in this thesis, however, is that there are a range of tacit and emotional relationships to place that connect the visitor experience to place, staff and the organisation, and the mechanism of VIM is unlikely to be able to deal with issues that arise from these. In addition, a framework is required that will be more inclusive of alternative perspectives. An approach is needed that will:

- draw on a broader range of discourses and begin to disrupt the discursive dominance of stewardship and commodification
- include discourses that acknowledge emotion and sensuality
- acknowledge the interdependence between peoples and place, and
- as part of the above points, but worth highlighting, acknowledge the emotion within organisational processes.

Such a task is tantamount to a shift to a postmodern organisation. This chapter will explain the relevance of an approach such as organisational learning to the issues that have been articulated in this thesis, and thereby joins the voices of Daniels and Walker (2001), Bellamy *et al.* (2001), Pavlovich (2001), Bossel (1999), and Belsky (2002) who advocate a similar approach. This approach is along the same vein as adaptive management but perhaps goes further than adaptive management allows. Whilst adaptive management is no doubt exposing resource management agencies to new options (see Pulwarty and Melis 2001) it may not provide the same opportunities to learn at a tacit as well as explicit level.

Organisational learning

My discussion in Chapter Two explored the potential of organisational learning. I argue now that the organisational learning framework can disrupt the discursive dominance of stewardship and commodification, and can make space for multiple voices and perspectives. I argue that organisational learning has elements of the postmodern position; it is a mechanism where theory and practice can meld in a way that remains open to the next step, to the next deconstruction and reconstruction. Organisational learning provides management with a mechanism to shift to iterative and wholistic learning, to move beyond systematic monitoring, to be constantly open to visitors and other's voices, to develop processes that recognise an organisation's sensuality and emotion.

The shift to an iterative and collaborative learning approach entails a focus on the *process* of resolution rather than an expectation that a grand and final solution will be found. This shift is occurring within a range of theories and practices: organisational theory (post bureaucratic approach, organisational learning), adaptive management (Stankey *et al.*

2003) environmental conflict theory (Daniels and Walker 2001; Gare 1995), sustainability theory (Meadows 1998; Bossel 1999; Bell and Morse 1999) community development (community learning- Vanclay and Mesiti 1997) and many other areas of social development. The management frameworks - VIM, VAMP VERP - all advocate an iterative and learning approach but the frameworks are presented in isolation of other processes within the organisation. As was argued in Chapter Two if the broader culture of the organisation is not iterative or adaptive the 'learning' process is likely to stall. An organisation's focus on rationality, and blindness to cultural and emotional dimensions can only ever result in systematic and limited learning when broader organisational learning will at times be required.

Whether it be in the environmental management arena and other adaptive management approaches (see Daniels and Walker 2001, or Stankey *et al.* 2003) or within the management / organisation discourse, the shift to a postmodern position is occurring. I use postmodernism here to refer to a theoretical approach used to understand society that rejects modernist assumptions of progress located in knowledge, reason, technology, and economic growth (Gare 1995). It is a rejection of the possibility of a grand theory which reveals universal truths and meaning; instead postmodernism argues that there is 'no one form of knowledge that is necessarily superior or dominant to another' and that no one's voice should therefore be excluded from dialogue (Hubbard *et al.* 2002: 75). Postmodernism thus offers 'readings' not 'observations', 'interpretations' not 'findings', and seeks intertextual relations rather than causality (Hubbard *et al.* 2002: 76). Or, as Daniels and Walker (2001) state with respect to managing conflict: there is no one solution, rather, we are in a constant process of working toward better solutions and strategies.

The poststructuralist interpretation understands that individuals take up multiple, and sometimes contradictory, subject positions and discourses. We are not necessarily consistent in how we understand or make sense of places such as Jenolan Caves, indeed our constructions can only be expected to be dynamic. In recognising that there is, and will be, no final truth or solution, rather there will be an ongoing set of readings, interpretations and explanations that form the basis for action, the intention, and attention, must surely be given to process. In this sense, I suggest, postmodernism does advocate process rather than outcome and thereby matches the agenda of learning organisations. That is, the postmodern organisation is required to engage in the ongoing

collection of multiple interpretations embedded in processes of reflexivity and negotiation.

How then is postmodernism relevant to Jenolan Caves? The postmodern Jenolan is required to recognise that different perspectives or world-views exist, and that these perspectives are not fixed but highly changeable 'sets of interpretations'. It is an approach that recognises the possibility of emotional and sensual dimensions of Jenolan Caves, and expects an ongoing contestation between different perspectives such as stewardship and commodification (to name just two discourses because there are others that have not been discussed in this thesis). How you deal with or negotiate these multiple positions must itself be an ongoing process, and I argue that this is what is advocated in the concepts of reflexivity, iterative analysis or learning, and the more institutionalised process of 'organisational learning'.

Organisational learning, and its various guises – organisational development, the learning organisation – emanated in the business community over twenty years ago (eg Argyris and Schon 1978) and the natural resource management arena began a similar path through the adoption of 'adaptive management'. Whilst the shift has begun within nature-based tourism and resource management the rational, scientific approaches still dominate, interwoven with threads of more reflexive, interpretive positions (Stankey *et al.* 2003). The voices and approaches of Daniels and Walker (2001), Pavlovich (2001) and Belsky (2002) are part of this change. Adaptive management, for example, advocates an experimental and risk desirable approach, which ultimately produces new knowledge that becomes incorporated into the organisation and its systems of management (Stankey *et al.* 2003). The approach whilst being welcomed and supported by the natural resource industry is struggling to be successful because people continue to behave in a way that 'is rational and appropriate in a world in which the burden of proof has shifted to land managers to provide rigorous evidence that any proposed action will not lead to adverse consequences' (Stankey *et al.* 2003: 43). I am suggesting that the difficulty in achieving adaptive management lies in the chasm between the ideologies and strategies of postmodern management approaches and the rationalist and scientific approaches which dominate our cultural and organisational lives, serving to exclude multiple voices and positions. I suggest that organisational learning provides a context and mechanism for better recognising the full dimensions of place experience, for hearing alternative perspectives; and providing a mechanism that acknowledges and utilises staff experience,

knowledge and emotion. Organisational learning offers an approach that potentially recognises and articulates a comprehensive sense of place, and mechanism for the ongoing negotiation of discursive tensions. Developed by organisational theorists over the past twenty years organisational learning provides a mechanism that might enable Jenolan management to be open to multiple perspectives, to take a wholistic approach and to acknowledge the interdependence between components.

That is, organisational learning provides a mechanism that opens up the organisation to more postmodern approaches, allowing it to disrupt the commodification/stewardship positions that currently dominate. And if Jenolan is able to achieve this then it will not just have an effective monitoring system, but it will have a process that fosters an ongoing awareness of individual and organisational relationship to the place of Jenolan.

Recapping from Chapter Two organisational learning simply defined is a way of discovering errors and correcting them, changing the organisation's knowledge base and values, generating new problem-solving skills and developing a new capacity for action (Probst and Büchel 1997: 167). Underpinning organisational learning is the premise that knowledge is tacit as well as explicit, that is, subconscious as well as conscious. Tacit knowledge includes subjective insights and intuitions, and is embedded in ideals, values and emotions (Bordum 2002). We are more strongly influenced by our tacit principles than explicit rules and it is harder to alter these tacit systems (Baumard 1999). In addition the organisational learning literature indicates that learning is mostly likely to occur within the organisation when process is characterised by: Organisational learning is most likely to occur in an organisation where:

- individuals learn in the act of working
- the opportunity to make sense of what occurs is available
- the perspective of others is incorporated
- individuals are able to act upon their learning
- knowledge is distributed, not localised with specific work groups
- the collective has the ability to understand
- changeable and malleable

(Argyris 1999)

That is, the process and characteristics associated with organisational learning appear to answer the issues raised in this case study.

- A focus on process – the aim is for iterative learning, not one final solution, and there is recognition of the constantly changing environment, circumstances, and meanings, or as Yeatman (1997) puts it a ‘knowing how rather than a knowing what’.
- An invitation and valuing of multiple perspectives, based on the assumption that there is no single reality
- A democratic and inclusive approach to sharing information and power, intending to achieve integrated thinking and acting at all levels
- Recognition of both explicit and tacit knowledge, and provision of strategies for questioning or uncovering both. As such, learning organisations perceive themselves as systems of rational and emotional interactions. (Argyris 1999)

The principles and strategies of organisational learning have the potential to provide a path for an organisation such as Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust to migrate through the ongoing emergence of issues and the changing meanings of place. I argue that organisational learning provides mechanisms to accommodate the issues raised in this thesis. Organisational learning is an approach that can address:

- the lived tension and the need for continued negotiation between discourses of stewardship and commodification,
- the need for alternative discourses that are more inclusive of other perspectives; challenging the dominance of stewardship and commodification discourses
- the inclusion and recognition of the embodied nature of the visitor and staff experience of place;
- the need to recognise the vital role and interdependency that staff’s relationship with place has to the success of the overall activity, and the emotional connection that is central to this relationship; the network of relationships, and active role of visitors.

Experiencing landscape and place is interactive, interdependent and multi-dimensional (emotional, cognitive, embodied) and the nature of the contesting discourses results in a potentially destructive tension for the permanent members of the social network.

A tension arises between the two dominant discourses of stewardship and commodification and what is required are processes that maximise or allow alternative discourses, to disrupt or challenge these dominant discourses (Davies (1993) uses the term ‘trouble’ as she sees this as more accurate). The organisational learning process can achieve this because it invites multiple perspectives, values experiences and interpretations from across the organisation and/or community, seeks ‘creative’ perspectives, and advocates a forum where these perspectives enter the ‘negotiation’ with equal status. Senge (1990), for example, argues that there are no ‘truths’, our mental models (way of making sense of the world) are never complete, and he is able to give an example of an organisation that accepts multiple and incongruent mental models. The ambiguity associated with the possibility of multiple interpretations, is considered a positive situation: multiple mental models are not simply the collection of additional data, or the first stage to inevitable conflict, rather, the collection of multiple interpretations is the precipitant to an exchange of views, shared knowledge and new joint models (Dixon 1999: 212).

Applied to Jenolan it would seek the multiple perspectives from Jenolan staff, visitors, cavers, staff of associated organisations, local community members and so on. Dixon (2000) goes further to talk of organisational members sharing more fully in the governance of the organisation. Peter Senge (1999: 311), an advocate of organisational learning and systems thinking, believes that the old model, where ‘the top thinks and the local acts’, must now give way to integrated thinking and acting at all levels. Multiple perspectives are not just collected but are also shared and incorporated in decision making; the aim is the sharing of knowledge to enable more effective decision making.

Organisational learning advocates contribution from multiple players and treats the learning process as something that the whole organisation will participate in, not just sections of it such as managers or professionals. In this sense organisational learning sees the organisation as a whole with interconnected and interdependent parts. Because the learning process involves full participation it opens up the organisation to the ideas and experiences of multiple players, and the possibility of questioning the dominant views, such as commodification and stewardship. This requires transparency across the

organisation, making individual knowledge and learning processes transparent to all and part of the organisation in order that all organisational members can reflect on this knowledge (Probst and Büchel 1997: 19).

Argyris argues that organisational learning will be enabled by “flat, decentralised organisational structures; information systems that provide fast, public feedback on the performance of the organisation as a whole and of its various components; and ideologies associated with such measures, such as total quality, continuous learning, excellence, openness, and boundary-crossing” (Argyris 1999: 6). A system that is open, shares alternative views and able to reflect on these new knowledges will be able to overtly challenge the discourses of commodification and stewardship.

It is problematic to present and manage place without recognising that it is emotionally and sensually constructed and to also assume that the management organisation is without sensual and emotional dimensions. Organisational learning whilst it is a rationalised and structured approach it also, in its various guises, recognises the organisation as having emotional dimensions and seeks to include these in the learning process.

A common distinction in the organisational learning literature is made between tacit and explicit knowledge- where tacit knowledge is unstated or hidden knowledge, and likely to be influenced by emotions rather than logic or knowledge. For Argyris and Schon (1996) learning blocks are most likely to arise from failing to deal with tacit (or theories-in-use) knowledge. Implicit or tacit processes and knowledge are extremely powerful in guiding the direction and processes within the organisation. Senge (1990: 85) says that very often in management the goals are implicit rather than explicit, which means the organisation needs to uncover its ‘intrinsic’ (implicit) purpose in order to move from the current position. Other organisational learning theorists present the explicit and tacit as key features of organisational behaviour and that distinguishing between the two is critical to organisational learning.

The organisational learning approach is not one that necessarily values emotional input but it is an approach that acknowledges that emotion is a central part of individual or organisational activity (Argyris and Schon 1996; Dixon 2000). For Argyris and Schon, in policy and action, the task is to make explicit the motivators of action whether they are

logic driven or emotion driven. The push for being more inclusive and understanding of our own human nature is demonstrated by the CEO of Hanover Insurance Company:

The ferment in management will continue until we find models that are more congruent with human nature ... we have been on a long journey away from a traditional hierarchical culture. We discovered that people have a real need to feel that they're part of an ennobling mission. ... the next basic stage in our progression was coming to understand inquiry and advocacy. We learned that real openness is rooted in people's ability to continually inquire into their own thinking. This requires exposing yourself to being wrong- not something that most managers are rewarded for. But learning is very difficult if you cannot look for errors or incompleteness in your own ideas. (William O'Brien, CEO, Hanover Insurance, quoted in Senge 1999: 312-3)

Chapter 9: Conclusion

An analysis of the meanings attributed to Jenolan Caves has highlighted the embodied nature of the experience, the interdependent relationships in attributing meaning to that experience and that staff construction of place, along with associated emotional responses is part of the overall social construction of Jenolan Caves. This interpretation then informs the concept of sustainability of Jenolan as a tourist site, calling for a broader articulation of place meaning (staff and visitor) and adoption of a management framework that allows dynamic and interdependent place construction to be accommodated. This might best be achieved by a learning organisation.

Exploring the multiple meanings that people hold for Jenolan Caves has been an amazing privilege. The depth of information that is unveiled by an open-ended approach to research is astonishing: my own perception of the question was extended, dimensions of sensuality and emotion, facets I didn't expect to play such a crucial role, became impossible to ignore. The embodied nature of so many other places has not yet been explored, nor has the caretaker relationship to place and organisation, and the possible shift to postmodern protected area management are all exciting questions and opportunities.

Jenolan as a place makes possible leisure, sensuous experiences, emotional highs and lows. Through physical, emotional and sensual interaction with caves, walking tracks, buildings, people and wildlife we experience Jenolan. Our experiences are made sense of through the language and sets of language that are available to us. Having spent the several years collecting and looking at the various Jenolan experiences the conclusion to this thesis seems so obvious, and yet I feel the nature of place experience and management is yet to be fully explored and articulated.

There is much more that could be explored of the embodied experiences of tourists, staff and others, particularly in the application of a multi-sensual approach to visitor and staff experience. Here is a reminder not to forget the sensuousness and pleasure-seeking agenda of all people with place. Interpretive skills, awareness raising and information sharing may be enhanced, but the embodied leisure experience cannot be forgotten as a primary place experience. There is more that can be done to explore the spatial and embodied tourism experience. Another possibility is to explore Soja's (1999) comment

that the geographical imagination, or in this case the touristic imagination, has been confined by the dualisms or binary logic such as objectivity versus subjectivity, or real versus imagined.

How do staff deal with the dilemma of commodification and preservation? What strategies do they use to minimise the impact of this tension on their lives?

In this thesis I have argued that the full depth of social meanings associated with Jenolan Caves are not recognised by the management institution, and that ongoing accommodation of broader meanings might best be achieved by a 'learning organisation'. This thesis explores the socially constructed meanings of Jenolan Caves, the most visited cave tourist site in Australia. The aim was to further our understanding of the multiple meanings of Jenolan in order to comment on issues and practices related to sustainability. This question is asked from a constructionist perspective, which assumes that our understanding and perception of the world is made up and shaped by cultural and linguistic constructs. That is, our knowledge of the world is always contextual, always constructed from our experiences, history and linguistic tools. This perspective informed both questions asked and analytical approach taken.

A qualitative approach was used, specifically interviews with staff, visitors, researchers, cavers, coach drivers and other people who had an ongoing connection to Jenolan Caves. I lived at Jenolan Caves for ten months undertaking the interviews with visitors and staff, and assisting with other ongoing visitor survey work. The analytical process identified the repetitive dimensions or themes in the interviews, and these were interpreted as dimensions of the leisure experience, an embodied spatial experience and influenced by the available discursive positions relating to tourism and protected areas.

It is useful to place the outcomes or conclusion of the thesis in the originating context of an institutional (Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust) desire to establish an effective monitoring system. Initial investigation of existing knowledge revealed that there was only a partial understanding of the visitor experience, and almost no interpretation of other players' relationship to place. The research task therefore became an exploration of the social construction of Jenolan. That is, what are the multiple meanings and how do the different players relate to the place of Jenolan? Such knowledge would then inform the content of a monitoring system. Further into the investigation, as a result of clarifying the characteristics and process required of an effective monitoring system, a broader

perspective was adopted as to what would indeed achieve the learning goals that underpin a monitoring process, and organisational learning was implicated.

There are a number of conclusions that have been derived from this research project. These conclusions are not only relevant to the case study site, but also to caves tourism in general and to the tourism industry as a whole. This chapter overviews the findings of the case study, concluding that the strategic direction of organisational learning is a mechanism that has the potential to open the management process to a broader range of place meanings and would provide an appropriate context for frameworks such as Visitor Impact Management.

Three central dimensions of place meaning emerged from the interviews and documents, and were explored in this thesis.

1. The experience of relating to Jenolan is multi-sensual, emotional and cognitive. The full depth of experience of place at Jenolan, including touch, sound and smell, should not be underestimated, partly because it is the fully sensual nature of the experience that provokes an emotional response. Emotion is a significant part of Jenolan place meaning as it is the passion held by staff that facilitates the interdependent relationship between people(s) and place.
2. All persons were active in the process of meaning construction, for themselves and for others. Undoubtedly staff were key players in the visitor experience, but so too were visitors in the staff experience. This web of interdependence suggests that an analysis of any one component can only offer a limited understanding, indicating the need for ongoing wholistic awareness of place and relationships.
3. The third dimension that is explored in the thesis is tension and frustration expressed by those who work and interact closely with Jenolan. Staff at all levels within the organisation, and in the formal documents, used both stewardship and commodification discourses to make sense of Jenolan. The stewardship discourse portrayed place as requiring care and protection, whereas the commodification discourse represented place as a resource available to be transformed into product and financial exchange. At times the task of trying to both care for and sell place required incompatible strategies and resulted in considerable frustration and tension. It is these discourses that are used in the language of management and the formal documents pertaining to Jenolan. The discourses of stewardship and

commodification are dominant in their use; consequently points of view will be listened to, acknowledged and considered most valid if expressed in the discourse of commodification or stewardship.

These conclusions are derived from the data and discussion presented in Chapters Four to Eight. I will briefly overview these discussions.

In Chapter One I introduced the research project and place of Jenolan Caves. The Chapter briefly outlines the content of the thesis.

Chapter Two reviews the existing knowledge pertaining to cave and karst tourism, and tourism in protected areas. There have been numerous calls for greater integration of the human dimensions in protected area management considerations; these calls have certainly been answered through a growing body of work such as that offered by (Graefe *et al.* 1984; Scherl *et al.* 1997; Ritchie 1998; Belsky 2002; Eagles *et al.* 2002).

I introduce human geography, which has made, and continues to make an extensive contribution to tourism and our understanding of human relationship with physical space. It is this body of work that explores the human relationship to space and has pushed tourism to recognise the embodied character of the tourist experience, perhaps more than any other discipline. In addition to this work a considerable contribution to natural resource management and protected area management has been informed by numerous management frameworks that incorporate elements of the human dimensions: frameworks such as Visitor Impact Management which was adopted by Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust.

I introduce modern management practices with particular emphasis on the concept of a learning organisation as a management system. The organisational analysis offered by organisational learning theory suggests that systematic monitoring approaches have limited uses, and are likely to be unresponsive to issues originating in tacit goals or intentions.

Chapter Three outlines the methods used in collecting and analysing data. Interviews with staff, visitors and other regular associates of Jenolan Caves were the principle data source. These were analysed through a process of coding, application of a leisure/tourism framework and theoretical approach of discursive constructionism and poststructuralism.

Jenolan as leisure site – multiple perspectives

In Chapter Four Jenolan, particularly from the visitor perspective, is presented as a place of leisure opportunities. The experiences described by visitors are defined by well-known and accepted leisure characteristics. Being at Jenolan provides a sense of improved well-being and relaxation. The natural environment, the absence of the normal work routine, the peacefulness and to a lesser extent the physical activity, were identified as making Jenolan a place of relaxation. Central to this experience is the hospitality and service that is provided at Jenolan, that is, it is a place where the work is done by others and it is possible to arrive with very little knowledge of place, or preparation, and still engage with place in a satisfactory manner. The experience has other features associated with leisure and tourism such as socialising, novelty, pleasure and personal development. Jenolan is a social experience not only because of the shared experience with family and friends but also as a result of the interaction with staff. For many people visiting Jenolan is a novel experience, perhaps the one and only time that they will visit a limestone cave, but for all it is an experience different to the everyday place and routine. The sensing of Jenolan and words that are employed to describe the experience highlight what people see as ‘different’ about the place of Jenolan, and constitute its place markers. Jenolan’s naturalness and historicity; its lack of the modern and industrial mark Jenolan the place. It is these characteristics that attract both visitors and many staff and it is the perceived corrosion of these characteristics that earns the wrath of many visitors and staff. The Jenolan experience was also one of pleasure and enjoyment, often in association with some level of personal learning or challenge. The management organisation focuses on the learning component of the experience through their interpretation program and facilitates the personal challenge through the adventure cave tours. Over and beyond these constructed experiences though, Jenolan offers learning and challenge at a broader level as for some people simply accepting and negotiating the confined spaces many metres under the ground was a challenge.

Recognising the embodied nature of place meaning

Chapter Five examines the ways in which people ‘sense’ or physically experienced Jenolan, and in a highly visual, objective and rational world we are reminded of the richness and depth of experiences that are afforded to us through all our senses. This exposé follows from the work of Tuan (1977, 1993), Porteous (1996), Crouch (2002) and

Rodaway (1994), and from tourism's Betsy Wearing and Stephen Wearing (1996), John Urry (1999), Macnaghten and Urry (1998) and Graburn (2001). The chapter is:

- an attempt to understand the aesthetic experience in place construction,
- the emotional, physical as well as the intellectual experience in meaning making.

The interview transcripts revealed that cognitive, emotional and sensual experiences were derived from the visual splendour of cave decorations and rugged landscape, from the bodily immersion into constant temperature and humidity, from the silence of rock walls, or music of bellbirds, and the fresh air of bushland. Interaction with place can be examined in terms of the five senses used to interact with place: sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. The interaction and experience of Jenolan involved all senses, although taste isn't discussed here because it is a sense that we predominantly use in the specific context of eating. Strangely the multiplicity of the experience is omitted in the management construction of Jenolan, and somewhat overpowered by the cognitive dimensions in interpretation strategies. Acknowledgement of the emotional and sensual dimensions of Jenolan at a formal written level is present only in promotional material; otherwise the processes and language of management construct Jenolan as being devoid of emotion and sensuality. Yet if we are open to the multi-sensual nature of the Jenolan experience we are offered an insight into its complexity: the significance of emotion, the active and interactive roles of people and place.

Interdependence between place, staff and visitors

The highly sensual and emotional nature of experiencing Jenolan and the active role that people have in constructing this experience is explored in Chapter Six highlighting the interdependence between place and people. There is a dynamic between place, staff and visitors such that the passion for place held by staff is a vital ingredient in their relationship with visitors, and subsequently, for many visitors, a fundamental part of the visitor experience and place meaning. Chapter Six articulates the emotional experience of place and explores how staff passion and visitor enthusiasm work as positive feedback mechanisms; staff passion encourages enthusiasm in the visitor, but in return the visitor's sense of awe encourages and renews passion of place for staff.

The personal interaction and the receipt of positive feedback is a crucial part of the job for staff. For many staff the majority of their time is spent in face-to-face interaction and information exchange with visitors; it is in these exchanges in which success, and fulfilment or sense of failure is found. These relationships are part of what it means to be staff (or visitor) at Jenolan Caves and subsequently, part of how people interact with and relate to Jenolan as place. Clearly, the visitor is as active in the construction of Jenolan, as is staff, not just for their own place meaning but also for others. They are engaged in more than an act of consumption, they are also engaged in production of place and social meaning. The interdependence of place, staff and visitors reinforces the point that gaining an understanding of a tourist place should incorporate embodied dimensions of place, including feeling, sensuality, sensuousness and imagination (Crouch 2002).

The interdependence is as true between people and place as it is between people and people. It is evident that sensing place is an interactive process; for example, the feeling-experience is as much an experience of touching as it is of being touched. A very obvious example of interaction is that between visitors and wildlife which most frequently occurs at Jenolan when visitors feed the Rosellas and Currawongs. It is impossible not to see visitors as both agent and recipient as they both give to and respond to the birds. Visitors are also actors in the landscape, the inanimate components of place; they create or contribute to sounds, smells, and sights that they and others experience. Visitors walk through the archway of the Devil's Coachhouse yelling and yodelling, waiting for the rock walls to respond. They scamper over the fallen boulders, and toss pebbles in the lake. For these people, or in these moments, Jenolan is not on display as if on a screen to be looked at and examined but is an environment in which to be and interact. The experience of Jenolan is that of actively sensing, but it is also active in that visitors contribute smell, sound, touch and visual object. Through their presence and actions visitors become part of the landscape, and part of the processes constructing that landscape.

Multiple discourses and ongoing negotiation

Emotions are therefore a central part of place construction, negative as well as positive, and the negative emotion of tension or frustration at Jenolan was clearly evident. The tension of balancing protection and use has always been part of the challenge of

protected area management and nature tourism. Whilst there are countless discourses that are employed by individuals in the social construction of Jenolan the expressed frustration and tension that was evident for many people closely associated with place can be understood as the result of the ongoing contestation between the two dominant discourses of stewardship (preservation) and commodification (use). These discourses were described in Chapter Seven; outlining how in their efforts to make sense of place individuals contradictorily engaged with one or more discourses resulting in considerable personal tension.

This tension is evident in the way people talk about Jenolan and their relationship to it. The interpretation shifts to a more post-structural approach where it is assumed that social reality is constituted by the language we use, that is language is not just the reflection of reality but, through the various discourses employed, is the mechanism through which social reality comes into being (Escobar 1996). Language and the meaning of words, however, is never fixed; the meaning of language is unstable, and 'is constantly becoming' (Hubbard *et al.* 2002: 84) and therefore social reality is also 'constantly becoming'. The articulation of tension between use and preservation is both a reflection of reality and a construction of reality.

The first discourse that was discussed, which I have called stewardship, was that of environmental concern. Individuals did not use the term 'stewardship' or 'steward', rather they used the concept 'caretaker'. Stewardship as a term has been taken up by others relating to the care of land and nature. Stewardship is a discourse that draws on the ideals of protection and care for place. Staff, management, speleologists, researchers and visitors demonstrate a sense of responsibility and care for Jenolan. The stewardship discourse presents Jenolan as a natural and cultural place whose values are vulnerable to human activity and therefore human activity needs to be controlled to some extent.

The second dominant discourse is that of commodification. This discourse, embedded primarily within a broader economic discourse, presents Jenolan as a commodity for exchange, which is Jenolan's dominant form of 'use'. It presents Jenolan as a resource amenable to manipulation and management in order to produce a service and product for gain. The visitor's role, as an individual with autonomy and choice, is to consume the product or service in exchange for financial payment. The underlying premise is that after assessing needs and desires visitors will choose to purchase the Jenolan experience as a means of satisfying those needs.

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Plate 16: Staff communicating, sharing and learning during a workshop
(Peter Valentine, Grant Commins, Graham Cummings)

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Plate 17: Staff and members of the SEM committee (Grant Commins,
Domino Houlbrook-Cave, Dave Smith, Andy Spate, Grant Hose)

Eventually decisions and actions are required that are incongruent with one or other of these discourse positions. For example staff may be asked to perform a 'commodification' task that clashes with their role as steward of Jenolan. If staff relate more strongly to the ideals of stewardship than commodification, prioritising stewardship acts over those associated with commodification, they are likely to feel frustration and tension, often directed toward those who are seen to be emphasising and demanding the construction of Jenolan as a commodity.

The emergence of feelings of frustration highlights two points:

- 1) The two dominant discourses result in considerable tension in the lived experience for staff, and
- 2) Because of the interdependence between people and place, and people and people, the frustration will have an effect beyond the individual experience.

Implications to the sustainability of Jenolan Caves as a tourist site

Earlier, and elsewhere (Davidson 2002), I have argued that management models developed within natural resource management, such as Visitor Impact Management and VAMP constitute a single component of an overall organisational learning approach but do not in themselves facilitate the development of a learning organisation. These models outline how an organisation can systematically engage in monitoring the effectiveness of their actions. So for example, the management body could use my interpretation about multi-sensual and emotional experiences to construct an ongoing survey that would monitor the effectiveness of maintaining visitor values. This survey might include indicators for staff satisfaction and levels of passion. However, this approach by itself wouldn't open the organisation to alternative perspectives or provide a mechanism to negotiate the contrasting goals of commodification and stewardship, and it wouldn't acknowledge the staff/visitor/place interdependency or dynamics.

What is required at Jenolan then is a process that makes overt the multiplicity of discursive positions, or multiple perspectives and invites additional, contrasting views. This would be especially useful at Jenolan if the tension between commodification and stewardship became overt, that is, not necessarily seen as a problem or issue needing to

be 'solved', but rather a dichotomy that would be ongoing, and would continue to need to be negotiated. Organisational learning could achieve this and also open up this discursive debate to other perspectives; it would, for example invite Indigenous environmentalism to influence decision-making, and would articulate the emotional and embodied elements that constitute Jenolan as place.

An expanded interpretation of monitoring does open the 'management' discourse and strategies. If we examine the purpose of monitoring and understand it to be that of 'learning', then the options available to the organisation are increased to include the process and practices of organisational and community learning.

Visitors give back a sense of wonder about the cave – they rejuvenate the guides, especially kids. We're not allowed to carry people and one day this gentleman in a wheelchair asked to get up, he wanted to make his own way up, and he had no legs, so he bummed it all the way up. He sat on top of the rail in the Persian chamber; he had tears on his face. The guide sees the cave for the first time again (staff)

This quote contains the emotion, interdependence, and elements of the rational rules. It offers an insight into a place and complex relationships that isn't expressed in the dominant discourses of commodification and stewardship.

I suggest that we need to challenge these discourses. Or rather we need to continue to challenge these discourses because this is not a new insight, it has been offered by various cultural geographers, organisational theorists, interpreters and practitioners already, but still seems to get lost in narrow concepts of managerialism.

Conclusion

The case study began with the agenda of informing the quest for a viable Jenolan Caves, whose main use is tourism, quite possibly through the development of a systematic monitoring process. A precursor of this task was to establish a clear understanding of the people and place relationship and meanings. The focus on visitors or human dimensions broadened the question to seek to understand the social construction of Jenolan. That is, what are the multiple meanings and how do the different players relate? Such knowledge would then inform the content of a monitoring system, and as it has eventuated also the process.

The multiple meanings that construct Jenolan as place reflect meanings that have been found in other tourism and natural recreation sites. Analysis also revealed strong physical and emotional dimensions, that people were active in creating those meanings and that there was a strong interdependency between people and place. Relationship with place, be it to a farm, forest, coast, or main street is physical, emotional and sensual. If we want to manage these places we need discourses and language that incorporate and acknowledge these experiences and meanings.

What also emerged from the data was a prevailing tension between the stewardship of Jenolan and its commodification. The discourse and application of stewardship was often in contrast to the agenda of commodification and the end result was considerable tension in the lives of people closely associated with Jenolan. Both the organisation and individuals adopted the discourses of stewardship and commodification. Interestingly both discourses neglect or under value the emotional and sensual dimensions of place.

Inevitably those that interact with place, and are given the role of caretaker, will develop strong bonds and relationship to place. Our organisations to date expect that their staff will be 'dedicated and passionate' in their job. The Ranger at Kakadu, the guide showing tourists the Great Barrier Reef, the owner/tour operator of Olsen's Capricorn Caves just north of Rockhampton are all passionate about place. I argue that at an explicit level organisations ignore the emotion and care of their members because they are intent on presenting a highly rational(ised) façade, and they do not have the tools to engage with or articulate emotion in their organisation. And yet to fail to do so ignores the essential nature of their very purpose (facilitating relationship with place) and means they are likely to stumble against considerable learning blocks, which arise from emotional and tacit reactions of organisational members. It is not possible to take the emotion out of an individual, or out of the decision making process; nor would we want to, because in the end the employment process is about people.

Negotiating this tension may be achieved through an organisational learning approach. Organisational learning has the same, but broader agenda, as monitoring and provides a mechanism for the organisation to explore contradictions and tensions, and to value multiplicity; organisational learning facilitates a postmodern organisation.

Jenolan Caves is a very beautiful and magical place, tucked away behind the Blue Mountains so close you can see the lights of Sydney glow at night. The 'issues' that are

discussed here are likely to be found at other place-based facilities; the tension of selling and protecting places such as the Great Barrier Reef, or Kakadu. The dominance of a rationalist agenda that diminishes and avoids hearing or recognising the emotional and sensual natures of experience, the devaluing of perspectives that do not speak with a scientific voice, and a reluctance to consider the experiences of staff in the social dimensions of place are issues faced by many, many places. And are issues that may be best addressed through models of organisational learning.

Glossary

JCRT	Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust
SEM	Social and Environmental Monitoring Committee
The Trust	Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust
VAMP	Visitor Activity Management Process
VERP	Visitor Experience and Resource Protection
VIM	Visitor Impact Management

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Characteristics of interviewees

Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust Staff	
Current / ex-staff	48 / 4
Permanent / casual / temporary	31 / 19 / 2
Guide / administrative Jenolan / maintenance / administrative Bathurst / management	33 / 5 / 6 / 2 / 6
Experience at show caves / adventure caves / cave cleaning	
Associated employees	
Caves House staff / manager	1/1
Bistro staff / manager	0/1
Private tour operators	
Coach company drivers / managers	7
Associated committees	
Social and Environmental Monitoring committee	2
Scientific Advisory Committee	3
Trust Board	2
Speleological Advisory Committee	1
Jenolan Caves Historical and Preservation Society	1
Locals	
Residents of Oberon	
Mayor of Oberon or other regional urban centres	1
Indigenous peoples	1
Visitors	
Visitors travelling by car / coach / foot / other	142 / 2 / 1 / 2 / 3 (unknown)

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Visitors for whom it was first / infrequent / regular activity	43 / 62 / 35
Domestic visitors / international visitors	120 / 16 / 14 (unknown)
Group visitors: corporate / schools /	1
Show cave visitors / adventure cave visitors / both show and adventure cave / non-cave visitors	128 / 2 / 3 / 8 / 9 (unknown)
Speleologists	5

Appendix 2

Questions asked of staff

- 1) What importance or significance do the Jenolan Caves have to you personally and in the roles that you generally fill? What kind of place is it? What do you value about it? How does it make you feel? How would you describe it to others?
- 2) What kind of association do you have with Jenolan Caves as a tourist venue? What role do you see yourself as having at Jenolan Caves as a tourist venue? (Who are the other people that you interact with?)
- 3) Do you have particular strategies that have helped you to fulfil these roles?
- 4) What do you think you give, or what contribution do you think you make to the Caves?
- 5) What have you gained from your association? Or what have the good things been?
- 6) What have the negative 'gains' been?
- 7) What do you think visitors gain from, and give to, Jenolan Caves?
- 8) What do you think are the key facets / features of Jenolan Caves and most vulnerable facets that need to be considered in sustaining Jenolan Caves?
- 9) Do you have other concerns or points to make about Jenolan Caves

Appendix 3

Interviewee roles associated with Jenolan

Visitors	Visiting for a number of hours to days if staying on-site at Caves House, camping ground or nearby cabins
Permanent tour guides	Rostered on a five day week, takes guided tours through show caves and unlit caves, some ticket office duty, cave cleaning, administrative tasks
Casual tour guides	Same as above, rostered when required, may be a number of hours or days, or over peak periods, weeks
Trades Officer (s)	Constructs and maintains buildings
Electricians	Oversees and manages electrical system in caves, hydroelectric facility, offices, Caves House, housing on the reserve
Coach drivers	Originating from Sydney, Blue Mountains or less frequently Melbourne/Canberra. Their rosters often bring them regularly to Jenolan.
Ranger(s)	Oversees flora and fauna on reserve, considerable time is given to pest control
Cave and site managers	Positions that oversee the running of the tours, cave maintenance and other reserve activities
Administration	Several positions that respond to inquiries, management of information
Business Development Manager	Responsible for the development and implementation of a marketing plan including: marketing research, promotional activities, new product options, promotional material
Systems administrator and Finance officer	Oversees the management of computer systems, programs, website and associated databases
Senior Finance Officer	Oversees financial processes
General Manager	Oversees the functioning of the whole, and directly relates to the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust Board
Senior Environment Manager	Oversees issues relating to the ecological integrity of the karst site
Trust Board	Oversee the policy development and strategic direction
Ticket sellers	Located on site, selling tickets and providing information to visitors
Receptionist	Information management and visitor inquiries
Maintenance labourer(s)	Assist construction, maintenance and field work
Social and Environmental Monitoring Committee	Advises and oversees development of monitoring and other strategies to ensure sustainability of site
Scientific Advisory Committee	Advises and undertakes an overseeing role of scientific research pertaining to Jenolan Caves, Wombeyan Caves, Borenore Caves and Abercrombie Caves

Appendix 4

Questions asked of visitors

1. What activities have you done while you were here?
2. What did you think of the caves, and your experiences here? (rational and emotional response). *What is your reaction to the caves? What is your reaction to the place as a whole? What is special about Jenolan?*
3. What benefits have you gained from your time here? Or what have the good things been?
4. Overall, what was the high point or best bit of your visit?
5. Has there been an unpleasant or 'worst' bit? If so what?
6. Which of these benefits does Jenolan get from your visit?
 - a) buying tickets or services;
 - b) telling other people about the caves;
 - c) bringing children so they learn about caves;
 - d) lobbying on behalf of Jenolan when needed;
 - e) contributing to the ambience of Jenolan;
 - f) providing feedback to staff/management
 - g) being careful not to damage or litter the environment
 - h) providing volunteer assistance
 - i) visiting again
 - j) other
7. Have you visited the caves before? Other cave experience?
8. What brought you here on this trip? Why do you keep coming back? *Why did you select this (these) tour(s)?*
9. Transport:

Car	<input type="checkbox"/>	coach	<input type="checkbox"/>
motor bike	<input type="checkbox"/>	walking	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Group characteristics?

Number: _____

Age range: _____

Other language: _____

Aust. Tourist

Residency:

Sydney Other
11. Have you any recommendations, or changes you would like to see at Jenolan Caves?

Appendix 5

Questions asked of associates of Jenolan Caves

- 1) What importance or significance do the Jenolan Caves have to you personally and in the roles that you generally fill? What kind of place is it? What do you value about it? How does it make you feel? How would you describe it to others?
- 2) What kind of association do you have with Jenolan Caves as a tourist venue? (Who are the other people that you interact with?)
- 3) Do you have particular strategies that have helped you to fulfil these roles?
- 4) What do you think you give, or what contribution do you think you make to the Caves?
- 5) What have you gained from your association? Or what have the good things been?
- 6) What have the negative 'gains' been?
- 7) What do you think are the key facets / features of Jenolan Caves and most vulnerable facets that need to be considered in sustaining Jenolan Caves?
- 8) Do you have other concerns or points to make about Jenolan Caves?

Appendix 6

Standard Off-peak cave tour program at Jenolan Caves

Time	Monday to Friday	Saturday	Sunday
00:00			
09:30		Orient	Orient
09:45	Orient		
10:00		River	River
10:15		Temple of Baal	Temple of Baal
10:30		Lucas	Lucas
10:45		Pool of Cerberus	Ribbon
11:00	Imperial	Imperial	Imperial
11:15		Orient	Orient
11:30		Lucas	Lucas
11:45	Lucas		
12:30	Chifley	Imperial or Temple of Baal	Imperial or Temple of Baal
13:00		Lucas	Lucas
13:15			Plughole or River
13:15	Plughole or River	Plughole or River	
13:30	Lucas or Orient	Lucas or Orient	Lucas or Orient
14:00	Lucas	Lucas	Lucas
14:30	Imperial		Imperial
14:30		Imperial or Orient	
15:00		Lucas	Lucas
15:30	Chifley		
15:45		Imperial-Diamond	Imperial-Diamond
16:00	Temple Of Baal	Temple Of Baal	Temple Of Baal
16:30		Chifley	Chifley
17:00	Imperial		
17:30		Imperial	Imperial
20:00		Legends, Mysteries & Ghosts	