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**Title: Learning outcomes of leisure travel : explorations towards the development of educational programs**

Burton-Smith, Deborah (1999) *Learning outcomes of leisure travel : explorations towards the development of educational programs*. Masters thesis, Concordia University.



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### Abstract

This thesis explores the learning outcomes, potential benefits and related learning needs of "baby boomer" women to gain an understanding of the impact of leisure travel from a woman's perspective and to gain insights into strategic educational applications. Qualitative research, based on the philosophy of phenomenology, was used. Eight women from the baby boomer generation with some travel experience were interviewed in depth over a three month period. Each woman's travel experiences were unique, ranging from Caribbean sun vacations to European excursions to safaris through Africa. Study participants were all affected by the tumultuous times in

which they were born. They were eager to speak about their travels because it afforded them an opportunity to reflect and to reminisce about their lives as they remembered them, their reality. Several common themes emerged, including the effects of early socialisation and their current family situation; their ideas of the ideal travel companion and their thoughts on group travel. Leisure travel as a priority and as an opportunity for liberation and escape were two other common themes. The perceived learning outcomes of the participants included empowerment, a boost to self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as practical knowledge and a change in attitudes and behaviours. The literature, combined with the candid interviews of the study participants, offered insights into how to enhance the outcome of the travel experience through a travel program. Pre-travel preparation, the actual journey and post travel reflection, as well as recognising the peculiarities of the adult learner are essential. Last, but certainly not least, the experience must be fun. The study confirmed that although motives for travel varied there was one common outcome--they learned.

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