PROFOUND TIES: NATURE- ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY- EDUCATION

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Abstract

Over the past four decades, the increasing interest in nature and environment protection has raised many scientific, social, philosophical and psychological problems. Psychologists proved that positive attitudes and selfless nature-conserving actions are far more likely to be generated by personal experiences, instead of the so-called “second hand” information provided by the mass-media or the experts in this particular field. Over the last 13 years, at the beginning of every academic year, we have been unconventionally trying to get to know the students participating in the courses and seminars provided over a two-year period by the Environmental Geography specialization, within the Faculty of Geography of the University of Bucharest. The first Environmental Pollution course is dedicated to a free and open discussion about the motivation behind choosing this particular specialization, what sparked the interest and concern for the environment, as well as the students’ love for nature. Looking at the responses received from hundreds of students (on average, 80-100 students choose to study each year Environmental Geography) over the past 13 years, we reached the conclusion that there are several major factors involved in converting people into nature lovers and passionate nature problem-solving militants. These factors act mainly during childhood and adolescence, with a significantly lower influence in adulthood.

Keywords: Environmental psychology, education, students, nature