

Comments & Letters

A big THANK YOU from the Coyote team to all of those who sent us their feedback to issue # 0. We were happy to receive so many positive reactions and congratulations from people from many countries all over Europe.

A number of readers also followed our call for comments on specific articles and suggestions for the further development of Coyote. Here are some.

"I've read the article on the Albatross Intercultural game that we performed during the European Youth Forum meeting in Antwerp and I disagree with the author. Instead of stating the intercultural strengths of the game, the article criticises the aggressiveness of the game. I don't know the position of the European Youth Forum regarding this game but I'd like to point out that AFS has been using this game when orienting our participants going abroad with a tremendously good success for many years."

Jaime Martinez-Esparza, Spain

"Welcome to the land of Albatross..."

I was reading Mark's article in Coyote's first issue and was really concerned about the comments about Albatross. It was said that this game, which has been for me the basis of intercultural learning, was starting not to be so effective any longer. Time passes by and society changes fast, globalisation is coming through the media and multicultural societies. So in a way it is true that an activity like Albatross could not be understood as it is meant to be and might not be accepted so easily.

This summer, I was a trainer in the Peace Cruise, a big training activity that gathered participants from different Mediterranean countries on a sailing boat to train them in conflict management and conflict resolution. The starting point of the training process was communication; then we played Albatross to explore cultural diversity. I had participants from many different cultures, and this meant richness. But it was also a challenge to see how to deal with the debriefing of the activity.

The discussion was really fruitful, and it was interesting to see how some people who believed that they had the "good answers", because they assumed that they knew what was right and what was wrong, found themselves in the situation of explaining why something was good or bad, and this was not always easy. I found it interesting to see how important the different roles that men and women played in each participant's society were in this discussion, and how some details of the role-playing were considered rational or irrational for different participants. But the good point of it was, how surprised and shocked everybody was when they got to know the values of the Albatrossian culture.

I think it is still a good activity to play, but it is true that we need to see the group beforehand and make sure that the participants are not

going to walk out of the room, as that is something that might happen. But then again, I think that even this is not too bad as long as we gather everybody for the debriefing afterwards."

Conchi Gallego Garcia, Spain

"What about creating an online literature list (commented and conceived as a "work in progress", which is growing and specially keeps an eye on "European" training publications which are available for free or for little money)..."

Apart from the 2 "Roma" articles (excellent idea), I'm also still missing racism and xenophobia on the agenda (I know, even the best coyote can't do everything at once), or multiculturalism including the fact that more and more participants/trainers should come from the second or third generation immigrants' cultures and not just be selected because of cosmetic reasons ("we are so tolerant": some of my black friends feel like in a zoo in such a surrounding)...

By the way, I find this first coyote issue excellent and I have put it on my literature list I give to participants after trainings with a warm recommendation."

Georges Wagner, Luxembourg

"I would most like to read about subjects on useful methods to increase youth participation and reasons that make young people take an active part in projects."

Eugen Ghergha, Romania

"The magazine would gain a lot if there is a little more structure added to it so that the reader finds it easier to orientate him- or herself in the magazine and therefore in the world of intercultural learning. ... And another little comment... I think one of the main goals for Coyote should be to establish a two-way communication between the editors and the readers. Interactivity is what it should all be about... My suggestion is that you add contact addresses (e-mail and snail-mail) at the end of all articles, or at least at the end of those whose authors would like to get feedback (which should be all in my view)."

Guido Keel, Switzerland

Create "online discussions on topics at the end of articles [and an] information base on future training courses".

Claus-Bernhard Pakleppa, Germany

