UiT
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Safe adventures

An ethnographic study of safety and adventure guides in Arctic Norway

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Mats Hoel Johannessen

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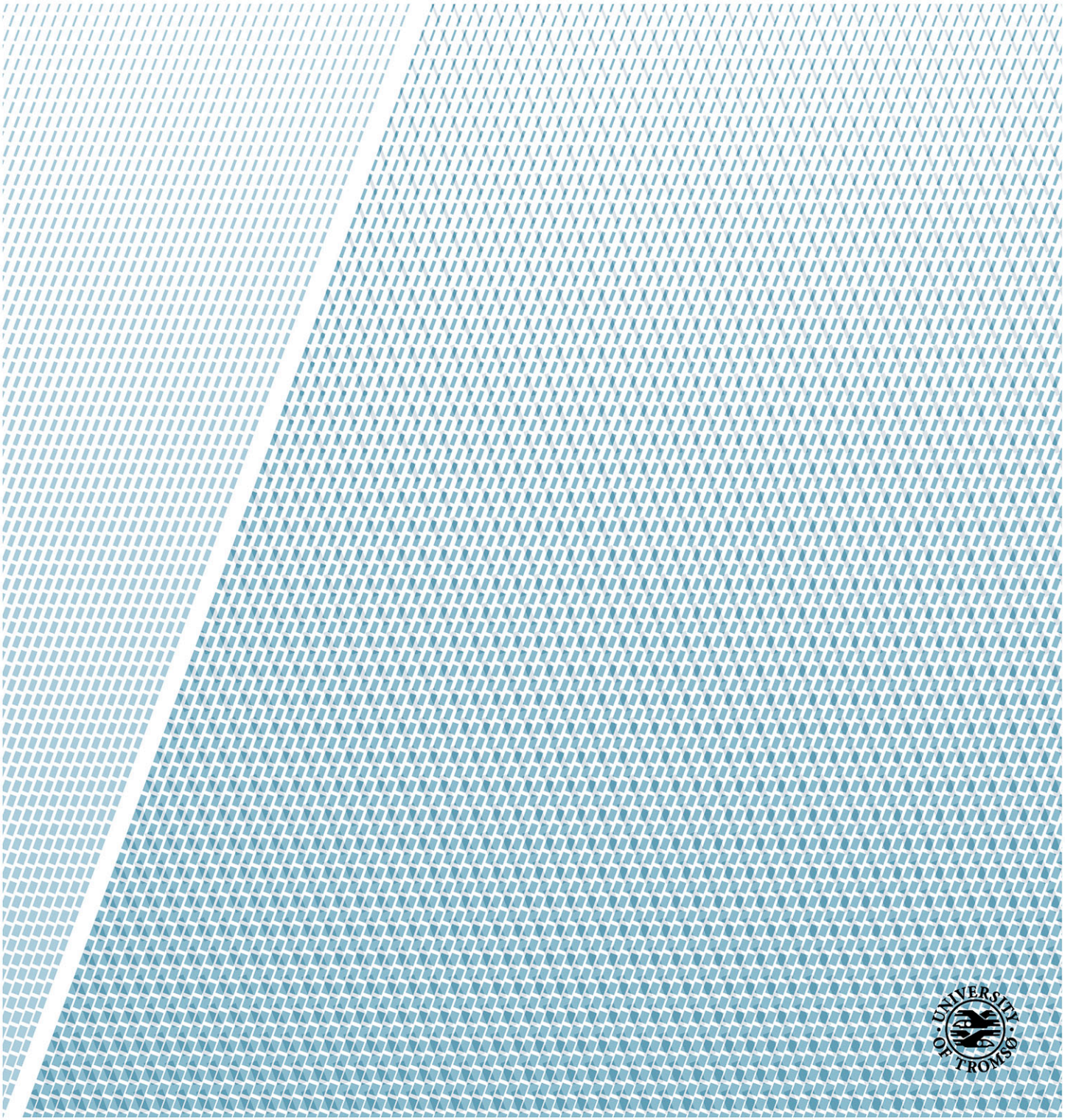

ABSTRACT

With numerous entrepreneurs already established within the area, adventure tourism is a growing industry within Arctic Norway. The continuously expanding interest for the phenomenon has gained universities' attention with recent education programs for guides being established. A cultural change involving a more professionalized approach to adventure tourism has also been noticed. At the forefront of ensuring tourists' safety are the guides, who work in the area.

In former research on safety in adventure tourism, scholars have focused on how aspects, such as guides' working conditions, communication along with diversity of guests and cultural differences influence safety in adventure tourism products. This thesis focuses on adventure tourism and safety based on an ethnographic study of guides in Arctic Norway. The thesis contributes to reflections and discussions on the topic of safety in adventure tourism. It also opens up new understandings of safety in a Norwegian context, through the close relationship it has with the tradition of *friluftsliv*. The findings in this thesis offer the reader insight into how the complex role of adventure tourism guiding, and guides working environment influence safety issues.

Keywords: Arctic Norway, adventure tourism, safety, guides, *friluftsliv*, ethnography

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… and Sunniva, now I am ready for that trip I promised!

Mats Hoel Johannessen
May 2016, Alta.

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

An intense scream from a female voice interrupts the sound of 36 wildly barking Alaskan huskies. The guide breaks his sled and offers a small prayer that the grainy snow will hold the anchor and keep his dogs from running away into the desolated mountains. While running in deep snow, wearing heavy clothing, with a rifle on his back and a flare gun in his belt, the surveillance of his terrified guests and the -30 degrees of Longyearbyen in almost pitch dark February make him feel like sitting in an overcrowded sauna reaching its maximum. "Damn it, no cell phone coverage, what did the teacher say again? Something about that your performance will be observed by the guests, any mistakes or dubious acts now could potentially make the rest of the guests even more stressed and worried than they already are?" A dislocated shoulder, she is in obvious agony and hard to communicate with. Should he call for help? The satellite phone is in the emergency kit, but the camp is only 30 minutes away, he decides to pack her up in warm materials and go back with all the guests, hopefully the rest will tolerate that their departure day will be postponed. He hates this situation, and, of course, such a thing had to happen on his second trip alone.

This short narrative stems from a personally experienced situation while I was working as a dogsled guide some years ago. At that time, I was well experienced with respect to dogsledding and other typical activities within the adventure tourism field, but I lacked competence and experience as a guide. Since then, I have taken a university diploma in Arctic nature guiding and worked frequently as a dogsledding, skiing, glacier, kayaking and canoe guide on Svalbard[1] and on the Norwegian mainland. While planning new trips with guests, or even private excursions with friends, I frequently reflect upon this episode and it keeps reminding me of how fragile the borderline between nice, unpleasant, dangerous and even fatal experiences are in many of the activities performed within the continuously growing adventure tourism market in Arctic Norway[2] (NRK, 2014).

[1] Norwegian archipelago
[2] Counties of Nordland, Troms, Finnmark and the archipelago of Svalbard.

Even though accidents within adventure tourism in Arctic Norway are not well documented, tragic incidents of human beings getting killed in adventure tourism products have gained increasingly more attention from both local and national media. Accidents related to alpine skiing have especially gained substantial attention (Dommerud et al., 2012; Stav & Antonsen, 2013), but also other activities that are considered less dangerous have resulted in fatal accidents and reached the media's spotlight (Greiner, 2012). In the aftermath of such tragic episodes, the guides' performance is often heavily debated within the guide community, as well as in social and commercial media. Realizing that other guides' and my reflections potentially had an interest beyond business contexts made fertile ground for questions, such as: how do other guides think about safety? Can their reflections be used to enlighten our understanding of safety as a phenomenon, and potentially improve adventure tourism products in respect of safety? I will come back to these questions in later chapters; first I will contextualize the adventure tourism business in Arctic Norway.

1.2 Adventure tourism in Arctic Norway

Since there is no consensus regarding a definition of adventure tourism among scholars, it is quite a challenging task to pinpoint what products fall beneath the term adventure tourism (Buckley, 2010a). Additionally, there is also little research regarding the size of the adventure tourism business market in Arctic Norway. However, the closely connected field of nature-based tourism has gained a lot more attention. In the extant literature, nature-based tourism is often used as an umbrella term to cover a wide variety of adventure tourism products (Rantala et al, forthcoming). Subsequently, in my study I will draw upon Stensland et al.'s (2014) research on nature-based tourism entrepreneurs in Norway to understand parts of adventure tourism in Arctic Norway.

For entrepreneurs within nature-based tourism businesses, the rural nature and typographical differences within Arctic Norway are undoubtedly an interesting fundamental within which to produce high quality tourism experiences (Daugstad, 2008). According to a study by Stensland et al. (2014), the counties of Arctic Norway have one of the largest densities of entrepreneurs within nature-based tourism business despite the fact that these counties are some of the least populated counties in the entire country. That being said, Svalbard is one of the least represented in terms of entrepreneurial activity, however, this must be considered in terms of the sparse population in the Archipelago (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2016). In fact, when

compared with other municipalities, Longyearbyen is represented within the top three with nine active entrepreneurs. However, within their study Stensland et al. (2014) did not divide between nature-based and adventure tourism products (Stensland et al., 2014). In this regard, Buckley (2006) argues that adventure tourism products are guided, exciting, physically challenging and performed with special equipment (Buckley, 2006). As we will see many of the products offered in Arctic Norway are covered by this definition, and also identified among the most profitable (Stensland et al., 2014).

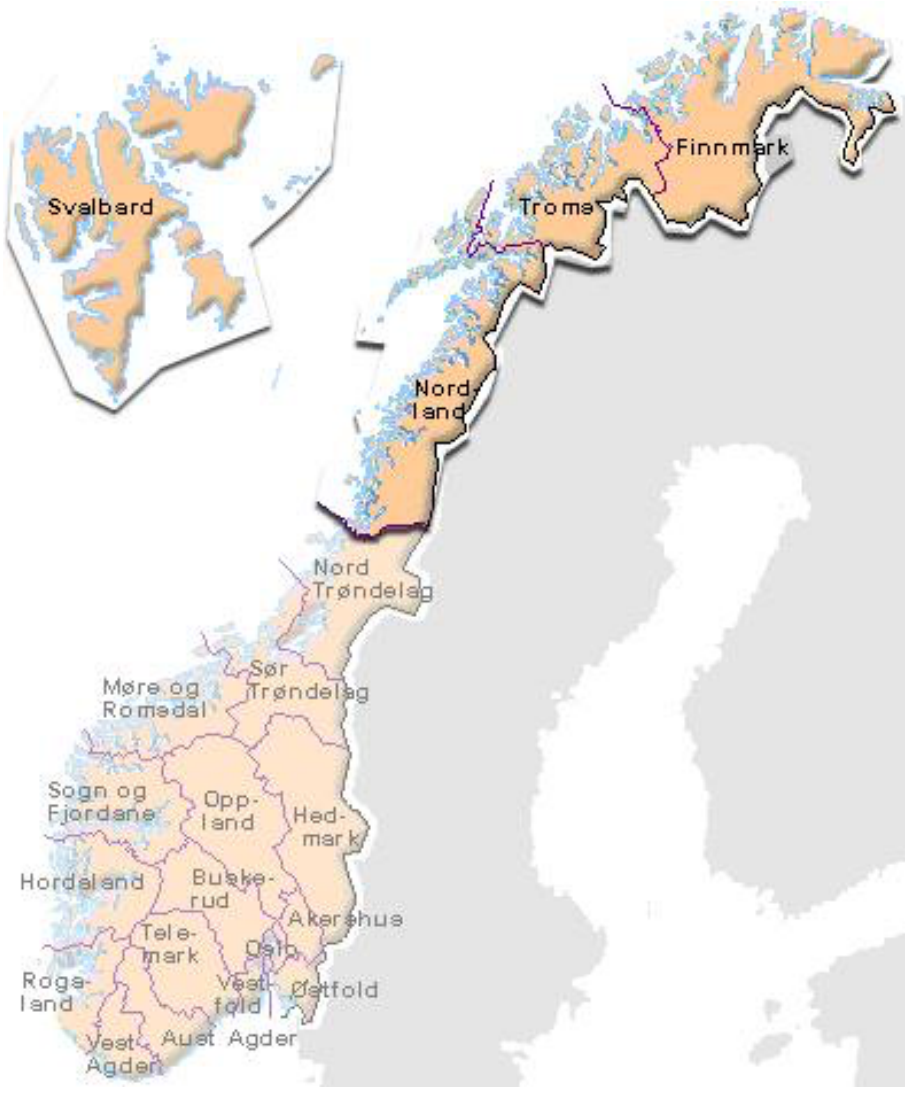
Arctic Norway consists of the three counties Nordland (38481km2), Troms (25863km2), Finnmark (48631km2) and the archipelago of Svalbard (61022km2) (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2015). Common adventure tourism products within the area include mountaineering, climbing, alpine skiing, ski tours, glacier walking, ski expeditions, dogsledding, kayaking, canoeing, dogsledding and mountain biking. According to Stensland et al. (2014), 62% of the interviewees on a national scale delivered hiking and mountaineering products and this was identified as the second most important products in terms of economic benefits. Their research also concluded that with the exception of boat sightseeing, "more physical demanding activities such as hiking, horse riding, water based activities, and dogsledding" were the most important (Stensland et al. 2014:22).

Nordland, and especially the areas of Lofoten are famous for its climbing, mountaineering and alpine skiing possibilities and have attracted the establishment of companies of both international and Norwegian entrepreneurs. Especially within the segments of climbing, alpine skiing and mountaineering, there seems to be a tendency of using IFMGA[3] (Nortind, n. d-a) certified guides (Nordnorskklatreskole, n.d; alpineguides n.d). Other adventure products that are offered include kayaking. In contrast to the mountain-based products, entrepreneurs providing these other products do not highlight the use of certified guides, instead they emphasize the guides' sport merits and experience within the activity (Lofotenadventure, n.d). Hiking and alpine skiing products are also popular products within Troms, and especially the areas of Lyngen are known in this regard. In comparison with Nordland, the companies delivering such products emphasize the use of IFMGA guides (Lyngenlodge n.d; Lyngenguide, n.d). Such products are not that common for Finnmark and Svalbard, however,

[3] IFMGA – International Federation of Mountain Guide Associations (Nortind, n.d)

there are entrepreneurs delivering such products (Breogvandring, n.d) in Finnmark and on Svalbard as well (Spitsbergentravel, n.d).

Other activities connected with adventure tourism are dogsledding, kayaking, canoeing, glacier walking, alpine skiing, mountain biking, and climbing and expedition products. All of these products were ranked within the top 15 most profitable, excepting expedition products in 17th place (Stensland et al., 2014). Knowing that all the aforementioned products are common within the Arctic Norway, it is highly likely that the role of adventure tourism products in this area is significant, as reflected in media's attention towards such products within the area. Albeit that these products are not unique to the area. They are also delivered elsewhere and some smaller companies have a dynamic relationship towards geography as they move their businesses depending on seasonality (Stensland et al., 2014). The picture below shows the Arctic region in Norway.



(Edited map of Arctic Norway from: http://tinyurl.com/hjjpyzq)

1.3 Research question

In my thesis, I explore how guides working within the adventure tourism business in Arctic Norway relate to the topic of safety. In the research which informs this thesis, my focus was to interview guides working within the Arctic Norway geographical area. To ensure broadness and relevance, I interviewed both Norwegian and non-Norwegian guides of both genders who worked in different adventure tourism activities common to the area. Hence, my research question was: *how do adventure tourism guides in Arctic Norway narrate safety?*

My empirical data in this thesis was collected using an ethnographic approach. One part of the data stems from six semi-structured interviews with guides working in the field. Along with the interviews, I generated data through autoethnographical methods, specifically, writing a diary on my work as a guide within Arctic Norway. The aim of this thesis is to contribute to and enlighten both scientific and commercial understanding of the topic of safety within adventure tourism as a phenomenon.

The term, adventure tourism, as used in this thesis is based upon Buckley (2006) and his definition of adventure tourism. Further, in this thesis, adventure tourists are defined as tourists taking part in nature-based guided activities that necessitate special equipment in search for excitement. Common activities in Arctic Norway covered by this definition are: alpine skiing, (ice-)climbing, cross-country skiing and dogsledding among others (Buckley, 2006).

2. Commercial tourism experiences in traditional landscapes

2.1 From *friluftsliv* to guided commercial tourism

In this, my theory chapter, I introduce the reader to the historical development of adventure tourism and guiding in Norway. This is followed by an overview of important academic contributions concerning the main theoretical approaches associated with adventure tourism and safety. With respect to adventure tourism and safety, I start with broader theory, and gradually narrow down to more recent and precise approaches towards the topics.

Adventure tourism as a global phenomenon and in Norway has a rather short history, however, the roots of the phenomenon can be traced back centuries in time to famous explorers, such as Da Gama, and Columbus (Swarbrooke et al., 2003). In a Norwegian context, one must look back to the earlier stages of the middle ages to find famous explorers, for example, the Norse Explorer Leiv Eriksson (Erlingsen, 2000). Historically, many quests and explorations have been motivated by financial, religious, and scientific reasons, however, in recent times hedonistic motivational aspects have become important factors (Swarbrooke et al., 2003).

It might be the northern geographical placing of Norway that has led to a natural interest in the extreme climates of the Arctic and Antarctica. However, what is certain is that exploration and adventurous activities have been performed throughout history and made fertile ground for tourism products today (Swarbrooke et al., 2003). The Greenlandic crossing of the Norwegian scientist and explorer, Fridtjof Nansen in 1888 (Jølle, 2011) is a good example of historical performances that have led to commercial tourism products (Moen, 2014).

Adventure tourism in Norway as we know it today, is closely connected to the non-commercial culture of Norwegian *friluftsliv*[4] and more modern sport activities. *Friluftsliv* is a tradition built on the appreciation of the natural environment, where "expensive equipment, long approaches, arenas and indoor training are not needed. It is about touching and being touched by free Nature and thus the threshold for taking part is low" (Faarlund et al., 2007:3). *Friluftsliv* as the tradition we know it today projects in many ways from two different

[4] *Friluftsliv* (Pedersen, 1999) – Outdoor life (literal translation)

traditions. The first tradition stems from the pre-industrial times where natural skills (sailing, hunting, fishing, harvesting and gathering) where pursued within the society because of a necessity to survive in the natural habitat. In more modern times, these skills have evolved into spare time activities, performed for hedonistic reasons outside of everyday activities (Pedersen, 1999). As with many other aspects of daily life around the turn of century 1700-1800´s, the appearance of industrialization also changed Norwegian society's relationship towards *friluftsliv*. As the reader will see, changes in the community made fertile ground for the second projection of the modern *friluftsliv* tradition, through *sportification* of *friluftsliv* (Goksøyr, 1994; Pedersen, 1999; Gelter, 2010).

The era of industrialization led many people away from rural areas and into towns. Industrialization was about exploiting natural elements for production; hence, society gradually distanced itself from its natural origins. This detachment led to a rising romantic era criticizing the modern industrial society, instead nature and the natural were emphasized. Along with industrialization new social classes also developed, the new bourgeois class challenged the noble class´ hegemony and became the society's trendsetters. Because of their economic benefits, the bourgeois class had the opportunity to involve themselves in leisure activities. In this regard, Englishmen especially marked themselves through their pursuit of hedonistic activities, such as fishing salmon in the rivers, and climbing non-ascended mountain peaks. Such activities among others became prescriptive for the outdoor life culture of the rising Norwegian middle-class (Bischoff & Mytting, 2008). Most people where obviously not skilled within this new activity. This led to the establishment of a Norwegian Tourist Association, and the first guides in Norway (DNT, n.d).

Within the same period, the young Norwegian national state blossomed. Independent from the Swedish and Danish sovereignty, the national identity was built upon traditional farming culture; the beauty of our mountains and heroic quests performed by the polar conquers. In this regard, Fridtof Nansen especially played an important role; his polar expeditions on Greenland and the North Pole created substantial interest in Norway (Goksøyr, 1994; Jølle, 2011). In many ways, Nansen is a good example of the two types of *friluftsliv* traditions. He represented the traditional form of *friluftsliv* through his emphasis on the natural, when he travelled with Sami people on his Greenland expedition because of their inherited knowledge of cold climates. Simultaneously, he represented the sportification culture through his participation in an explorer's race within the Arctic (Goksøyr, 1994; Jølle, 2011).

Throughout the 20th century, a process called *sportification* divided the former unity of sports and *friluftsliv* (Bischoff & Mytting, 2008). Sports became gradually distanced from the natural terrain and into artificially made arenas with an emphasis on competitive goals (Goksøyr, 1994). *Friluftsliv,* however, does not emphasize the result-oriented approach of sports, instead being in nature and the interplay between man and nature are the most important aspects (Goksøyr, 1994; Pedersen, 1999; Gelter, 2010; Varley & Semple, 2015). However, as we will soon see, modern forms of *friluftsliv* still have certain aspects of sports within it and create an interesting link to adventure tourism.

Norwegian adventurers have continued to execute remarkable performances at both poles and in high altitude mountaineering activities since Nansen's days. Among these is the successful and record-breaking ascent of Mount Everest in 1985, which created substantial media interest (Everesthistory, n. d.). Led by the famous business man, Arne Næss Jr, the expedition was the first Norwegian expedition reaching "the third pole". Their return was covered live by the national television, and later the Norwegian king invited the team to dinner. In more recent times, some participants have made a career within adventure tourism. Both Bjørn Myrer Lund and Ola Einang represent an interesting, obvious link between adventure recreation and adventure tourism. Both come from a highly adventurous *friluftsliv* culture coupled with competitive sport aspects, and in later years they have both presented adventure tourism scenery as internationally certified mountain guides as well as held title to important commissions in national guiding associations (Hvitserk, n. d; Nortind, n. d-b; Norgesguideforbund, n. d).

Many of the same things refer to the Norwegian adventurer, Børge Ousland, who has set multiple expedition records in both the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Ousland later became an influential entrepreneur who has made it possible for adventure tourists to perform many of his own expeditions (Ousland, n. d). None of these characters are, however, unique; a multitude of famous adventurers have turned their lifestyles into tourism products. Cecilie Skog (Cecilieskog, n. d) and Jarle Trå (Trå, 2010) are two of many representing the connection between "sportified" *friluftsliv* and adventure tourism. In more recent times, the sportified version of *friluftsliv* has become evident through events like Expedition Amundsen (Xtremeidfjord, n. d). The name of the event refers to Roald Amundsen, the first person in the

world to lead an expedition to the south pole, and the area where the pulk[5] race is held is located at his famous training ground on Hardangervidda where he and his brother almost died when he was practicing for his upcoming expedition to the south pole. The use of famous polar conquerers' names is also something we find in sport organizations, such as Skinansen and il-nansen (Skinansen, n. d; Il-nansen, n. d). The new and sportified friluftsliv have also been identified by other scholars, who note a trend in the practice of more diverse ways of friluftsliv (Amundsen, 2014).

Norwegian adventure recreationists have strongly contributed to the modern guiding scene. Guiding in Norway can be traced back to the industrialization era and a rising interest for mountain activities. As mentioned, the romantic era led to an increased interest in nature. Back then, people did not have much competence in terms of mountaineering skills, and because of this The Norwegian Tourists Association trained patent guides in the 1900´s. In the main, these guides where mountain farmers, and were the first contributors to the development of Norwegian mountain sports. In 1962, the tourist association established an interest group for glacier travel and since then they have gradually developed and trained guides within mountain sports in Norway (DNT, n. d). However, importantly, the term "guide" as used in the English language is somewhat misleading in a Norwegian context. The term guide has traditionally not been used in this context, instead emphasize has been on pursuing competence through courses. As we will soon see, universities have only used the term guide in recent times (Andersen et al., n. d). I will refer to the term guide in the rest of this thesis, and guide should then be understood as a commercial working guide.

In difference from the Central-European countries, nature or adventure guides in Norway do not need any formal certifications. However, there have been ongoing discussions in Norway as to whether this should be mandatory for guides operating in steep and exposed terrain. NORTIND represents IFMGA in Norway, and is the only international guiding certification within the country (Nortind, n. d-a). Within the last few years, an ongoing professionalization of the field has taken place. Since 2009, each year, the Arctic University of Norway has educated between 15-25 students in Arctic Nature Guide study on Svalbard. Along with a recent established guiding education at the College University in Volda (Rasmussen, 2015),

[5] Small sled used on snow to drag personal equipment

and the former mentioned NORTIND, this is the only formal competence pinpointed towards nature guiding in Norway (arcticnatureguide, n. d; Vold, 2015).

2.2 Risk in adventure tourism and adventure recreation research

When you enter a scholarly society and start reading articles concerning adventure tourism, you realize quite early that it is quite a complex field and phenomenon. One of the challenges of studying adventure tourism is that many blurred connections constitute the phenomenon. The term adventure tourism is used differently within countries and societies. Besides this, adventure tourism shares many similarities with nature-based tourism and one of the outcomes is that it complicates national economic analyses (Buckley, 2006; Stensland et al., 2014; Rantala et al., forthcoming). In respect of marketing the word adventure tourism is freely used by marketers in order to attract customers (Varley, 2006), resulting in seemingly similar products are marketed as both adventurous and non-adventurous from one place to another (Rantala et al., forthcoming). Some of these issues may stem from the fact that adventure tourism lacks any generally agreed definition within both research and commercial societies (Buckley, 2006; Rantala et al., forthcoming). Buckley (2010a) identified three historical phases within the development of adventure tourism. First, he identified an increase of highly adventurous individuals, as with the Norwegian Everest ascenders mentioned earlier. In the second phase, he identified a growing tendency of less adventurous, but more numerous mass tourists. Finally, in the third phase, he identified a highly structured market recognized by economical possibilities (Buckley, 2010a).

The first academic contributions to the phenomena of adventures concentrated around the topic of risk. One of the early scholars looking at the relationship between boredom and anxiety in activities was Csikszentmihalyi through his works on *flow* and *peak experiences* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). His model along with other contributors has opened up sophisticated debates on risk (Bloch, 2000; Weber; 2001; Gyimóthy & Mykletun, 2004; Varley, 2006). Even though the model itself has been criticized for not fully enlightening adventure as a phenomenon, it is still recognized as an important contribution in the understanding of adventure experiences (Varley, 2006). The model underlines that volunteerism is an important ingredient in order to experience flow, and this explains why it has been popularly adopted in research on adventure tourism (Cater, 2006).

However, Csikszentmihalyi is not the only one whose work has fueled debates. *The adventure model* published by Ewert and Hollenhorst (1989) opened up debates of risk as a motivational factor in adventure activities. In their study, they studied homogenous groups of adventure recreationists during three different phases. The first phase was the introduction phase, it consisted of less skilled people and the risks they encountered were of a perceived nature instead of real. In terms of climbing, one could think of the example of an introductory course on an indoor climbing wall where participants are supervised. Secondly, they identified a development phase where the natural settings are more unpredictable, and participants have some previous skills. However, their skills are still not fully developed and supervision is required in order to ensure safety. To exemplify, one could think of our aforementioned climbers. They have moved outdoors in a natural setting and are instructed in climbing on natural anchors[4] where risk is a present factor. In the last phase, the commitment phase, participants' skill level is well developed and they seek challenges with substantial risk as in climbing steep and high natural walls, or climbing challenging mountain routes. In this model, risk is explained as a motivational factor that drives participants further (Ewert & Hollenhorst, 1989).

An opposing understanding of risk as motivation has been argued by Walle (1997), who purported that "such models seem to argue that all people and cultures will value the experience of risk" (Walle, 1997:265). In his article, Walle put forward an understanding of adventure, without necessarily involving the aspect of risk. Instead he emphasized the insight model, where self-actualization is the main factor of outdoors adventures and risks a side effect. He exemplified this with regard to recreationists performing fly fishing and argued that their deep involvement within the practice, must be considered as being adventurous equal to riskier activities, such as rock climbing because of the learning and insight embedded in the practice (Walle, 1997).

According to Weber (2001), there is a fundamental problem in understanding adventures from Walle's (1997) point of view. Weber argues that understanding adventure from Walle´s insight model means neglecting important aspects of adventures. She argues, "Suggesting that insight seeking could replace risk to refer to adventure appears to be in clear contrast to its historic meaning" (Weber, 2001:363). However, she underlines that both risk and insight seeking must be present in order to have adventure experiences (Weber, 2001). Further, Weber argues that previous understanding of the phenomenon has neglected an individual's

apprehension of the adventure, hence it is argued that adventure must be understood from an individual point of view. She emphasizes that characteristics, such as personality and previous experience must be considered in order to gain sufficient understanding of adventure tourists (Weber, 2001)

In their article from 2003 on tourists trekking on Svalbard, Gyimóthy and Mykletun built further on the notions of insight seeking and risk as important factors within adventure tourism through utilizing theory of play. They argue that adventure tourism is far more complex than other tourism products. The authors state that adventure tourism products are multifaceted because the involve aspects of "deep play, risk-seeking, purposeless negativist games, and fictive narratives" (Gyimóthy & Mykletun, 2003:874), and the subjects constantly move in and out between this various phases. However, the researchers identify an interesting aspect not concentrated on risk as a primary motive, instead they emphasize that "the goal is to lose oneself in ludic activity, while simultaneously mastering the conditions that enable this transition or transcendence" (Gyimóthy & Mykletun, 2003:874).

Pomfret (2006) argues that it is important for adventure tourism providers to understand the heterogeneous nature of tourists. In her research, she utilized traditional ways of understanding motivational aspects of recreational mountaineers, and combined this with research on touristic motivation. Pomfret argued that since adventure recreation and tourism mountaineering are becoming blurred, these provide an appropriate way of studying the adventure tourism phenomenon. In her findings, she identifies that experience of subjective (perceived risk) or objective (earlier accidents) risk are a key motivational factor in regard to participation. In her research, she also indicated that there exists a correlation between earlier experience and perceived risk. Tourists with more experience will both tolerate and enjoy the feeling of control within objectively dangerous environments. On the other hand, would a mismatch between competence level and perceived risk result in negative experiences? The last situation is essential in situations where tourists are motivated to take part in specially challenging activities for ego-oriented reasons, such as fame. She concluded that dividing between "soft" and "hard" adventures could facilitate and ensure positive experiences. In this regard, "soft" adventures are understood as products involving less perceived risk, and with a lesser need for personal competence. "Hard" adventures are riskier activities, with the need for greater personal competence (Pomfret, 2006).

Another scholar that took interest in adventure tourism from a risk and uncertainty perspective is Varley (2006). This scholar emphasized that risk and uncertainty are required factors within an adventure context. Further, he brings light upon the external factors within tourism, such as guides. He argues that in order to experience something adventurous, the person must interact as little as possible with external supporting elements (e.g. guides) in order to obtain self-mastery, and peak experiences through flow. In his article, he presents *the adventure commodification continuum* model, which explains the relationship between adventure experiences, and the commercial need for control. He argues that the greater a product is controlled, the less is the person's potential for deep-end adventures (Varley, 2006).

Based on the previous mentioned authors, we understand that risk is a term that must be understood from an individual perspective (Weber, 2001; Gyimóthy & Mykletun, 2003; Pomfret, 2006; Varley, 2006). However, in respect to adventure tourism and motivational aspects, other authors call for a motivational understanding, totally excluding risk as a motivational factor. Cater (2006) argued that tourists long for successful completion of activities in situations with which they are not familiar. Hence, his argument is that tourists do not seek risks, and we should therefore understand touristic motivation from their wish to explore thrill and excitement. Risk he argues is "the false idea of a gaze involving rational calculation of the "pros" versus "cons" of the activity in question" (Cater, 2006:321). However, Cater (2006) underlines that risk is important in an adventure tourism context. He argues that the providers and tourists' relationship towards risk differs significantly. Hence, providers must understand that they are dealing with a paradoxical task of delivering safe products on one side, and ensuring thrilling experiences on the other (Cater, 2006).

More recent studies have also supported Cater´s (2006) understanding of thrill as a more precise way of understanding adventure tourism experiences. Buckley (2012), for example, emphasizes understanding adventure tourism experiences from this point of view. In addition to thrill, he also argues for including flow in the understanding, leading to a new understanding of adventure tourism through the concept of rush. He underlines that "Rush indeed can be defined formally, as a combination of thrill and flow. This is not, however, how an individual experience it. From the participant perspective, rush is a unified, intense and emotional psychological experience" (Buckley, 2012:967).

Buckley (2012) argues that the possibility of experiencing situations leading to rush is the prime motivation for adventure tourists. However, in a natural context he argues, rush is highly dependent on external factors, for example, weather and snow-conditions, which is nigh impossible for producers to control. In accordance with Cater (2006) arguments, Buckley (2012) argues that the involvement of risk in adventure tourism is known by participants, hence, it must be understood as a part of the experience, and not an attraction in itself (Cater, 2006; Buckley, 2012). Knowing this, Buckley also highlights that rush is very often just a small part of the entire experience, however, when it occurs it can be experienced for minutes, and even hours. Another interesting aspect of rush is that there exists a correlation between rush and experience, meaning that in order to experience rush, participants will gradually aspire to perform harder activities to experience the same psychological experience (Buckley, 2012).

As shown throughout this part of the chapter, adventure tourism is easily connected to the part of *friluftsliv* that stems from sport, where often thrill seeking activities involving risk are emphasized. However, a recent study (Varley & Semple, 2015) commented that potentially a great possibility lies within the traditional *friluftsliv*. Specifically, instead of focusing on risk, thrill or any other form of activities situated between catastrophic and adventures, more emphasize should be placed on the journey of reaching a destination (Varley & Semple, 2015). In particular, Varley & Semple (2015) argue that we live in a society constrained by technological inventions, detached from nature and our traditional cultures. According to them, large parts of society do not have the possibility to experience free nature, which most Nordic countries and citizens take for granted. Hence, they identify a great potential for Nordic countries to enhance their tourism portfolio with products based upon the ideas of *slow adventures.* Producers should embrace the journey itself within their products, and arrange for comfortable physical encounters by drawing on traditional knowledge. However, they underline that *slow adventure* must not be understood as sky-gazing activities; it involves physical encounters with the natural habitat and gives tourists the possibility to detach themselves from the stressful schedule set by hypermodernity (Varley & Semple, 2015).

2.3 Safety and guiding in tourism research

Tourism combines national interests of culture and economic benefits, hence, the industry is important for various destinations and numerous stakeholders. Crime related incidents, and re-occurring incidents resulting in damage to important sights or humans will attract substantial media attention and hurt the reputation of a destination. Traditionally, much research has focused on how external factors, such as war, crime, terrorism and epidemics affect the destination, and even neighboring or close lying destinations (Cavlek, 2002; Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006).

According to Cavlek (2002), the tourist experience of a destination as a safe alternative to spend their holidays is fundamental in order to attract tourists to a destination (Cavlek, 2002). However, a focus on external factors has received criticism because of putting too much emphasize on how to avoid such incidents through strategies, information flow and other preventive actions (Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006). Incidents happening on a more personal level have also been noted; typical and familiar examples of this are tourists entering unfamiliar territory when visiting foreign countries and the possibility of being exposed to occurrences, such as food poisoning due to a lack of precaution when consuming local cuisines (Page & Wilks, 2003). In adventure tourism, it has been argued that managers have a responsibility for communicating, and ensuring participants' safety (Morgan & Fluker, 2006). However, it is argued that more often, it is the guides who have the practical responsibility for safety. Their skills and knowledge are fertile grounds for enlightenment of the issues concerning safety within businesses (Rantala & Valkonen, 2011).

In order to study issues concerning safety in nature-based and adventure tourism research, a holistic approach towards the topic is required, and recognition that tourists themselves do not possess the right competence in order to evaluate the safety of a performed activity (Rantala & Valkonen, 2011; Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2012). Various authors have underlined the important role guides have in respect of safety in adventure tourism products (Buckley, 2010b; Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2012, 2013a, 2013b) and the special skills they need to possess in order to perform their job (Valkonen, 2009). Taking this into account, it is somewhat paradoxical that guides often work under stressful conditions (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013a) in seasonal jobs with mainly little income (Valkonen, 2009), and on the other hand, play a crucial role representing the façade of the company (Cater, 2006). Throughout the rest of this chapter, I will present to the reader various academic contributions concerned

with guiding and safety in both nature-based and adventure tourism. It is upon this theoretical framework that the thesis is based on.

One of the authors studying safety within adventure tourism is Buckley (2010b), who investigated the topic of communication in order to enlighten the understanding of this topic in such products (Buckley, 2010b). In his study, he identified that a very small portion of the ongoing communication considered the topics of health and safety. Through his study on the adventure tourism product of kayaking, the author identified that the guides gave a safety briefing before the trip, and simultaneously gave instructions on how to use various equipment in different situations. In doing this, the author commented that guides must communicate information that is relevant, in a non-embarrassing and unambiguous manner (Buckley, 2010b). According to Buckley, communication is highly dependent on the situation in which the guide and his/her clients are situated. In circumstances with potential fatal consequences, tourists can accept emotions, such as anger, or even anxiety. On the other hand, such emotions are inappropriate in situations where such consequences are not present. Obviously language barriers can make communication more difficult, however, the author also emphasized that cultural differences can be harder to grasp. Such differences can lead to clients actually not telling they have not understood the very important health and safety instructions that are communicated in adventure tourism products (Buckley, 2010b).

In 2012, Houge Mackenzie & Kerr (2012) published an article focusing on the internal experiences of tourists in adventure tourism. They argued that former research on the topic have to a great extent focused on external factors within adventure recreation. Hence, they argue that the great focus on external factors (e.g. risk) within adventure recreation has led to academics neglecting the touristic experiences within this commercialized setting (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2012). Within their autoethnographic study on mountaineering tourism in Bolivia, the authors collected data through participant observation and later examined this through a psychological framework of reversal theory. This was emphasized to enlighten our understanding of the various experiences tourists encounter during adventure products. An interesting finding within their research was that bad equipment, or even lack of necessary equipment interfered with their experiences, and led to frustration among the participants. However, the single-handedly most influential factor in terms of determining experience quality was the guides. As Houge Mackenzie & Kerr argue “the guides´ apparent lack of concern, organization, and effective communication destroyed my confidence in their ability

to protect me or my climbing partner" (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2012:136). According to the authors, operators within adventure tourism could gain great benefits from understanding how the emotional fluctuations of tourists interfere with their experience. In their example, the participants emphasized a protective frame, instead of factors, such as risk or thrill, for which were argued in earlier research (Cater, 2006). Hence, they argue that guides and operators within the business should focus on "improving cross-cultural communication skills; gaining a better understanding of clients diverse abilities, background, and expectations prior to the trip, providing sufficient skills training and safety information throughout the trip; demonstrating genuine concern and caring for clients; improving logistical organization; providing quality equipment; and ensuring challenges can be met, or exceeded, by clients skill level" (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2012:140).

The same authors have also utilized many of the same psychological methods in order to investigate emotional experiences among adventure tourism guides. They argue that it is important to have knowledge about this because of the guides' well-being. Alternately, it is important to prevent guides from burning out and eventually delivering poor service within products. Further, they emphasize that earlier research has focused too much on the interactions between guides and employers, hence, they focus on interactions between guides and clients (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013b). The authors argue that the nature of working as an adventure guide is likely to cause stress and emotions. Much of the work that is done is dependent on seasons, because of this many guides move around during different seasons between countries, continents and globally. Since many of the guides within adventure tourism business work in small companies, they also have to cover a multitude of roles (e.g. guiding, marketing, logistics, sales among others), which also generate potential stress sources. The authors argue that it is important for operators to understand the emotional aspect of adventure tourism guiding, because ultimately, it will positively or negatively influence the product, for example, in terms of safety. In order to establish a working environment suitable for coping with challenges leading to potential stress, tension and anxiety producers; the authors emphasize that operators support new guides through a mentor relationship with more experienced guides within a company. Along with mentoring, they also argue that social support networks would highly benefit both new and non-national guides in the process of fitting into new environments (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013b).

Alternatively from the previous mentioned authors arguments on safety within research, Williams & Baláž (2015) calls for a deeper consideration of which theoretical position a researcher uses to investigate safety within tourism research. They argue "our critical reflections on the limitations of our research sometimes tell us more than our substantive findings" (Williams & Baláž: 2015:13). The authors argue that both research with positivistic and constructivists' approaches are important in research on safety. However, the latter will render possibilities for "research on how individuals understand risk and uncertainty, and indeed how performance contributes to these blurred and shifting understandings" (Williams & Baláž, 2015:13). In respect of this thesis, I apply a constructivists approach towards my topic, and I will explain this more thoroughly in the following methodology chapter.

3. Ethnography on Arctic guides

3.1 Paradigms and background philosophy

My philosophical background for this study relates to a constructivist framework, and this approach has governed the way with which ontological and epistemological questions are dealt. However, in order to explain the different approaches, I provide an introduction to the topic of paradigms.

In his famous work, *Structures of Scientific Revolutions,* published in 1962*,* Thomas Kuhn argued that most scientists work beneath a commonly shared belief on what methodologies, practices and theoretical frameworks should be used within science. He argued that scientists where not as open-minded as they aspired to be. He called this shared belief of understanding a paradigm, and popularized the term, which is still used within the philosophy of science (Kuhn, 1962, 1970). Almost half a century after Kuhn´s essay, Guba & Lincoln (1994) defined a paradigm as "the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:105). As I briefly hinted in the last chapter, in my methodology chapter, I introduce the reader to constructivism, which is the paradigm governing this thesis. I also give a brief introduction towards the divergent paradigm of positivism to show the difference between the two. This is mainly based on the book of Moses and Knutsen (2012), who debate different approaches towards social science. However, it is important to understand that these two paradigms have no black/white relationship, as there are also internal debates within the different communities on the differences as will soon be mentioned (Moses & Knutsen, 2012).

According to Moses and Knutsen (2012), social science is mainly understood from two different paradigms, positivism and constructivism. Other researchers, such as Guba and Lincoln (1994) have identified four competing paradigms within social science. These are the two aforementioned, in addition to post-positivism and critical theory (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). However, I will explain the differences between paradigms in the way Moses and Knutsen (2012) approach the topic. The latter mentioned authors argue that there are mainly three questions that differentiate the two paradigms. These are ontological, epistemological and methodological questions. The ontological difference is constructivists' skepticism

towards the positivist belief that a *real world* exists. What this indicates is the positivists believe that a (unveiled) real world is open for researchers to directly observe and extract knowledge, or as the authors put it "a belief that the world exists independently of our senses" (Moses & Knutsen, 2012:199). Constructivists, on the other hand, believe that the world is a place, which is socially constructed by each individual, meaning that the social world has (and is) gradually shaped by human interaction and language through time. Though it is important to differ between the physical and social world, most constructivists agree that the physical world is real. Hence, their argument is that the social world consists of multiple socially constructed pluralities. More simply, multiple worlds are constructed by human beings. Based on this belief, constructivists believe that alternative methods than used in natural studies are needed in order to obtain knowledge of these socially constructed worlds. Which leads us to the second question of epistemology (Moses & Knutsen, 2012).

One basic difference between constructivism and positivism is that positivists are eager to bring absolute truths to the table. Constructivists are not so concerned about finding objective truths; instead they emphasize gaining a deeper understanding of the phenomena they are studying. Based on this latter argument of understanding the social world, constructivists believe that a different approach than sensual perception and reason is necessary in order to gain sufficient knowledge about the world. Moses & Knutsen elegantly explain a constructivist's relation towards epistemology (knowledge) stating, "the truth isn´t just out there. Knowledge about the social world is always knowledge-in-context; it is socially situated and has consequences" (Moses & Knutsen, 2012:201). Awareness that knowledge is embedded with power, constructivists argue for approaching knowledge critically, and they utilize a multitude of methods in order to understand the phenomena they are investigating (Moses & Knutsen, 2012). However, when it comes to methods used to gather data, constructivists and positivists use many of the same methods, the differences lie in the way they use them and towards what goal (Moses & Knutsen, 2012). This is also emphasized by Guba and Lincoln (1994), who state that both qualitative and quantitative methods can be utilized with success within both positivistic and constructivism paradigms.

The third question separating the two approaches is methodology, which is also the main topic of this chapter. Constructivists understand the world from a social construction point of view. In order to unveil the socially constructed patterns of which the world consists, researchers of this paradigm use approaches that render possibilities of discovering these

patterns (Moses & Knutsen, 2012). As in my research, where I have utilized a narrative approach in my interviews in order to unveil the socially constructed patterns that are embedded in such narrative representations (Elsrud, 2001; Noy, 2004). However, according to Moses & Knutsen (2012) the methods used by constructivists and positivists (spoken of as naturalists) is often similar, and they argue that "thus the focus of their inquiry (constructivists) is just as often the inquirer as it is the particular object of inquiry – because it is here that the roots of these patterns lie buried" (Moses & Knutsen, 2012:201).

3.2 Ethnographic data

My thesis is informed by a qualitative research study. In this study, I utilized different methods in order to gather data and enlighten broader aspects of the phenomenon I was studying. During my research, I worked as a guide and this gave me an excellent opportunity to gather data concerned with my topic. I choose to do an ethnographic study of my topic. From my work, I gathered data through autoethnographic methods. However, in order to broaden my understanding of adventure tourism guides' relation to safety, I also collected other data in addition to my autoethnographic diary. Along with working in Arctic Norway, I conducted six semi-structured interviews of experienced, and, at the time, working guides of both genders, and from different nationalities.

As already mentioned, I utilized an ethnographic approach towards my research. According to Fabian and De Rooij (2008), anthropologists and a few sociologists have traditionally utilized ethnography. However, in more recent times ethnography has been adopted by a multitude of fields (Fabian & De Rooij, 2008) and among those are studies on nature-based tourism (Rantala, 2011). Fabian & De Rooij state "knowledge of other peoples by description has been produced for millennia" (Fabian & De Rooij: 2008:614). Hence, an interest for themes connected to ethnography can be traced back to historical persons as Herodotus and his *histories*. However, the person most often referred to as the founding father of ethnography is the Polish anthropologist, Bronislaw Malinowski (Fabian & De Rooij: 2008).

My approach to the use of ethnography has an obvious link towards ethnography of work, and work environments. According to Smith (2001), there are several different ways of speaking of ethnography of work, however, regardless of what one chooses to call it, the fact is that ethnography has been shown to be utterly effective in uncovering aspects, such as workers

tacit skills and knowledge. Or as Smith argued "the direct experiences, the sustained observations, or the immersion–has allowed a degree of penetration in the inner working of an occupation or a work setting that is not easily attained by other approaches" (Smith, 2001:223). However, aspects such as time and access to phenomena often hinder ethnographers. Undoubtedly, such a study is time-consuming, however, in my case I was granted access after asking for permission, but many employers avoid allowing ethnographic fieldwork on the job as they are afraid of negative outcomes. In my study, this was not a particular problem, since I already was working as a guide and had great possibilities of combining the two. However, I found it important to use more than my diary based on Smith's (2001) arguments. Smith stated that even though one is granted access to do fieldwork, researchers should endeavor to complement their findings with external data. Cross-checking ethnographic findings with external data avoids a partial representation of phenomenon (Smith, 2001).

In Frohlick & Harrisons' (2008) article on engaging ethnography in tourism research, they argue that there is no specific ethnographic approach that is better than others, instead they emphasize that in a complex tourism setting ethnographers must be flexible. The way, I chose to undertake my ethnography was marked by my mandatory working tasks and schedule. The authors argue that I needed to be aware of that even though it was productive, the data would be colored by the way I designed my study. The scholars also underline that ethnographers must understand that they co-create experiences with the people they encounter. During my research, this involved recognizing that my presence and the way I acted shaped my data collection and analyses both positively and negatively. A practical example, the Arctic tourism scene in Norway is quite small. Because of this, my interview objects and I had knowledge of each other from before. This led to positive advantages of easier access to their private sphere, but simultaneously I was aware that during my interviews they left some details unspoken, since they thought that I would fill in the gaps myself. Because of this, I stressed to them to speak of practical decisions when guiding in detail, and not to skip such parts just because it was me to whom they were talking (Frohlick & Harrison, 2008). Since the goal of my thesis was to study the guides' point of view, I used applicable methods to do research myself as a working guide, and this brings me to the topic of autoethnography.

During my work as a guide in Arctic Norway, I have written diaries and taken vocal field notes of my work as a guide, especially concerning topics regarding safety. Quite early, I

found that doing field notes while working was not the most appropriate method, in respect of the job I was doing since it interrupted my work. Because of this, I used a recorder and spoke to myself before and just after the work I had been doing. The notes that I made is closely connect to Ellis' (2004) definition of autoethnography: "writing about the personal and its relationship to culture. It is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness" (Ellis, 2004:37). Ellis emphasizes that autoethnographic texts are usually written in first-person voice, presented in a variety of different forms as stories, personal essays and more traditional social science prose. My notes can easily be understood as personal stories told through a first-person voice. In general, the notes relate to a kind of ethnography where I, as a researcher, am at the center of the research, and when making notes, I have referred to my experience of the situation (Ellis, 2004).

In my situation, I have undertaken autoethnography in a field to which I am strongly connected. For some five years, I have worked as a guide within Arctic Norway, and in many ways, this made me a member of a society of guides. In such situations, where the researcher is a member of a group/setting, Anderson (2006) argues for what he calls analytic autoethnography. According to Anderson, my membership of the society opened up deep explorations of the social life. Simultaneously, it gave me methodological advantages in terms of data availability and time-efficiency. Though Anderson also stresses that as with all methodological approaches, autoethnography has its limitations. When doing such research, he argues for what he calls five key features of analytic autoethnography "(1) complete member researcher (CMR) status, (2) analytic reflexivity, (3) narrative visibility of the researchers' self, (4) dialogue with informants beyond the self, and (5) commitment to theoretical analysis" (Anderson, 2006:378).

My previous and current work as a guide in Norway, and, the education I have taken make me a complete member of a guide society. However, there are no labor union or similar structure that connects us in terms of membership. According to Anderson (2006), I am an opportunistic CMR, which means that I acquired my membership through, for example, occupational reasons. Simultaneously, Anderson stressed that being both a researcher, and in this example a guide, could potentially separate the researcher from the rest of the group in settings where research is performed (Anderson, 2006).

When it comes to analytic autoethnography and reflexivity, Anderson (2006) argues that research expresses a reflexive view of the personal self. Based upon Anderson's (2006) arguments, I have been aware that my data stems from the experiences I had as a guide, and that these experiences and representations were co-created and visible in conversations, actions and my gathered material. In contrast to participant observers with less personal connection to phenomenon, the high personal attachment of CMR´s in combination with personal reflexivity might lead to a change in the researchers' relationship towards the researched, and could also lead to behavioral change. This fits very well with my experience of my research, as it gave me new knowledge and also led me to change some of my practices in the process (Anderson, 2006). In differing from more traditional viewpoints on academic writing, the author argues that autoethnographic texts can beneficially be written with a language that welcomes the nonacademic readers, and simultaneously maintains its academic gravity. This is an argument that I have taken into consideration and have tried to make use of with regard to my written language (Anderson, 2006). As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, I used a multitude of data. Information regarding the various data used and my interviewees can be found in Table 1. The names presented in Table 1 are pseudonyms I have given to my interviewees in order to ensure their anonymity.

Data	
Autoethnography	
15.08.15 - 01.04.16	- Guiding various products, such as canoeing (3 trips), kayaking (2 trips), hiking trips (3 trips) and fat-biking (1 trip) from August to October. - From September to March, I guided autumn/winter trips, such as Hunting Northern Lights (> 10 trips), one-day ski or snowshoe trips (3), ice-fishing trips (> 10 trips) and multi-day skiing trips (2). - In my earlier career, I had established and guided skiing trips on Svalbard and worked as a dogsled guide at the same destination.
Semi-structured interviews	
	- Interviewing six guides who were currently working or until very recently had worked as guides in Arctic Norway. Every interview lasted between 1,5-2 hours and contained over 120 pages of transcribed material.
	Interviewees
	George (25-30) Non-Norwegian guide with guiding education at a University level. Entrepreneurial and guiding experience from snowmobile, skiing, alpine skiing, hiking and glacier trips in Arctic Norway and other Nordic countries since 2011. **Isabell (25-30)** Norwegian guide with a specific guide education and a higher degree within tourism both at University level. Started her guiding career in 2013 as a snowmobile, canoe and hiking guide in Arctic Norway. **Marianne (25-30)** Had been working full time as a guide since 2010. Guiding education from a University level, and experience from Arctic Norway, southern parts of Norway and countries outside of Europe. Guiding experience in snowmobiling, skiing, hiking, kayaking and alpine skiing. **Brian (40-45)** Non-Norwegian guide and tourism entrepreneur with 12 years of guiding experience from Arctic Norway and other Nordic countries. Working as a kayaking, skiing, canoeing, hiking, cycling and snowmobile guide. University degree in sports science. **Kristoffer (25-30)** Guiding education at a University level with seven years of experience in the field. Experience in Arctic Norway and various other destinations in both Arctic and Antarctica. Worked as a skiing, dogsledding, hiking, snowmobiling and cruise-boat guide. **Anders (25-30)** Norwegian guide with guiding and outdoor recreation education at University level. Had his early career in the military and search and rescue companies. Has been working as a guide for three years in Arctic Norway for various operators, also running his own company. Experience from skiing, dogsledding, snowmobiling, hiking and kayaking.

Table 1 – Methods and interviewees

According to Dalen (2004), interviews as a data-gathering method builds upon the idea that human beings create their own reality. Meaning that the real world is not a static reality similar for everyone. Each individual experiences their own reality differently, and gives meanings to this reality (Dalen, 2004). In my research, I used the method of semi-structured interview as my second data gathering method. According to Dalen (2004), interviews can both function as a main source for data gathering, but also as a bi-method when most applicable (Dalen, 2004). My first idea was to interview people in both groups and separately, but due to practical reasons the interviews had to be done separately.

Earlier research in tourism has successfully used a narrative interview approach when studying how risk and adventures are socially and culturally constructed (Elsrud, 2001). It has also been argued that personal narratives constitute stories representing peoples' experiences of identity and biography (Noy, 2004). Based on these arguments, my interviews were conducted with the intention that the interviewees presented their socially and culturally constructed worldview through narratives. When I chose my informants I emphasized that they should represent as many of the products that were delivered in the area. Simultaneously, I wanted a heterogeneous group in terms of gender and cultural background. My informants were what Thagaard (2011) refers to as a strategically chosen group of informants, meaning that the informants held title to competences and practical experiences suitable to my research question (Thagaard, 2011).

Before the interview process, I spent several days working out questions concerning safety and guiding in general. These questions were based upon theory presented in chapter 2 of this thesis, personal observations and reading through old diaries written by me and a former college when guiding ski trips on Svalbard together. Since I had little experience in performing such interviews, and wanted to see how my questions worked, I arranged a pilot-interview. The interview was implemented as a standard interview, with a person, who at the time of the research was working as a guide in Arctic Norway. My intentions were to use this person as a test, but the successful outcome of the interview made me decide to use the persons' contributions in my data set.

Based on the arguments of Dalen (2004) emphasizing the use of interview plans, I worked out an interview plan[6] ahead of my pilot-interview. Dalen further emphasizes that the researcher should stress to use distinct open-ended questions that are easy to understand for the interviewee. I choose to use a semi-structured interview because of my lack of experience in interview processes, based on the arguments that this would give me greater control of the interview (Dalen, 2004).

3.3 Applying content analysis

Content analysis can be undertaken both empirically and subjectively (Smith, 2010), it is also commonly used in qualitative tourism research (Camprubí & Coromina, 2016). In my qualitative research, I utilized an empirical approach. After transcribing a total of 120 pages of interviews and diaries, I followed Smith's (2010) arguments and divided my material into themes to make it more manageable with which to work. After reading, and re-reading my material I ended up with six themes. In phase one, I needed to make it easy with which to work so I gave each theme a color within my text, in order that I could locate it easier in the analysis process. The six themes were: "predicting safety", "testing safety", "different attitudes", "communication", "work environment" and "education". The themes emerged as the factors that were mentioned the most times. However, I felt that my material needed some revision in order to be more precise. Hence, in phase two, I started to read through the data material one more time. I reflected on my six themes and my theoretical framework, and I ended up dividing my data into three categories: "diverse tourists' groups and nature", "stress and seasonal work" and "communication and roles". This was further analyzed in detail and is presented in chapter 4.

Analyzing my own data and reading through former academic contributions to the field made me realize that more gaps needed to be filled in this complex topic. In my research, it became evident that my interviewees and I had encountered seemingly similar situations, however, we experienced it differently. That being said, not only the subjective experience is of the essence, the degree of consciousness regarding safety or safety related issues also differed a lot depending on what kind of product and activity was being guided. In this matter, weather was also a variable factor influencing safety. Even though I found correlation between earlier

[6] Interview plan can be found in Appendix

contributions to the field and my own findings, I realized there was an academic lack of studies concerning intimate long span interactions between nature guides and guests that happen on multiday skiing trips and similar. Earlier contributions have focused on how guides affect the guests' experiences, but the guides' experience of being situated in this intimate social enclave for a long time are less documented. Other interesting findings were how the connection of the tradition *friluftsliv* colored adventure tourism practices.

In my writing process during the analysis, first, I made note of regularities in my data, and the findings that were similar to earlier theory. I constantly looked for "hubs" that connected my data together when I wrote the analysis chapter. An example of a "hub" in this regard was weather, the word itself or words that have something to do with weather were constantly mentioned during my interviews. When noticing such hubs, in this example, I started to look deeper into what specifically weather had to do with the situation about which the guides were talking. However, on several occasions, I had to go back and read through my material to see if I had missed something important out.

3.4 Ethical questions

In my research, I have needed to take many considerations into account in order to fulfil my promise of keeping my informants anonymous. The guiding community up here in the high north is a small community, with relatively few operators and many of the guides know each other personally or have knowledge of each other through common relationships. This means that I as well as giving my informants pseudonyms, also omitted mentioning their nationality.

According to Murphy & Dingwall (2001), the ontological and epistemological fundamentals are inextricably linked towards ethical issues related to ethnographic research. They present two different approaches towards ethical considerations, the consequentialist and deontological approach. The former refer to the outcome of research, and the latter then focus more on the rights of participants. The authors underline that these two approaches do not necessarily have to be understood from a competitive point of view, if anything they are more used in combination leading into a set of research practice principles. These principles are "*Non-maleficence:* researchers should avoid harming participants. *"Beneficence:* That research on human subjects should produce some positive and identifiable benefit rather than

simply carried out for its own sake. *Autonomy or self-determination:* that the values and decisions of research participants should be respected. *Justice:* that people who are equal in relevant respects should be treated equally" (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001:340). The first two approaches refer to the consequentialist approach, and the other two to the deontological approach (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001).

It is argued by Murphy & Dingwall (2001) that the better part of discussions regarding ethics in ethnography have been situated at a practice level and not a principal level. Researchers performing ethnography have a potentially harmful influence on causing stress and anxiety in the subjects whom they are investigating. Knowing this, I wanted to use everyday gadgets, such as my iPhone and iPad to record the interviews, instead of the more unusual sight of a voice recorder. In my first interview, I noted that my interview subject acted a bit stressed by the situation she was in. This led me to change my physical location for my upcoming interviews to more everyday settings, such as cafes and restaurants. Murphy and Dingwall (2001) also highlight that it is important in an interview setting for the researcher to emphasize to interviewees that they should not feel embarrassed about their opinions, or if they lack an opinion about any questions the interviewer asks. Because of this, I started my interviews by ensuring my interviewees that there is no such thing as a wrong answer, and I emphasized to them to talk freely about what they thought about a question asked and not what they thought I would want to hear. However, in general, the authors underline that ethnographic research would in most situations lead to indirect harm, rather than direct and these such situations are most-often debatable. Risk-related issues concerning ethnographic research are most often in the period after the research is published. The researcher has little or no control of how the research is used, and the power of knowledge that is opened for the public domain might lead to manipulative behavior from those familiar with enlightened understanding of certain topics (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001). The quotations and details I have used in my text are chosen deliberately, in order not to harm anyone involved.

Researchers have various tools they can use in order to keep their interviewees and other informants anonymous. Though, it is argued that this anonymity can never be absolutely guaranteed. As within my research, I was investigating a quite large area in geographical terms, however, the small-sized guiding community where many people know each other made ensuring anonymity more complex. However, I made several considerations, such as giving pseudonyms, not mentioning nationality, not mentioning exact ages of the interview

subjects as well as not mentioning names of companies and other persons of whom the interviewees spoke (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001). But, it must be stated that I cannot guarantee for total anonymity. Another issue concerning publications of ethnographic research is the commonly held understanding of a positivistic worldview. As mentioned earlier, knowledge produced within ethnographic settings is not concerned with creating absolute facts, and people novice to such an understanding might generate negative responses if they are looking for definitions of reality (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001).

In ethnographic research, as well as in many other methodologies, it is commonly known that a power-relation exists between the researcher and the researched. Meaning that the researcher with his or her presence is likely to have a degree of influence on the person being interviewed. However, in ethnographic research such power-relations are not always clear. Hence, participants within these research settings can use the presence of the researcher to their own benefit (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001). Many of the aforementioned ethical considerations have opened up a growing interest in autoethnographic fieldwork. However, autoethnography is not cut off from ethical challenges as mentioned earlier in this chapter and I had to undergo similar considerations, for example, when I spoke of colleagues, guests and the like in my diary. Before doing autoethnography research, I also asked for permission from my working place, highlighting that my research would not harm the company economically or have me pay less attention to my work because of it (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001; Anderson, 2006).

4. Safety in specific, complex and low status labor

4.1 Stress and seasonal work

Through earlier studies it has become evident that the seasonal work of guiding is for many a stressful situation in which to be situated (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013a, 2013b). However, the notion of seasons gives a certain understanding of the boundaries in which you are working. When working, I realized that it was really stressful to have little knowledge regarding your day-to-day working schedule. Planning private excursions and other arrangements become harder when you do not know how much you are going to work and this leads to frustration. The theme stress and seasonal work originated in both of my data. During my interviews, the topic working environment led to emotional answers framed in both positive and critical tones. But most often, a critical and frustrating tone governed the interviewees' answers. After transcribing my own diaries, it became even clearer that this topic was essential to my study.

When I started working as a guide again after one and a half seasons of very little guiding, my guiding confidence was a bit rusty. However, I did not get stressed as I knew that my educational and practical background provided me with a fundamental understanding of how the products should be delivered. I started writing my diary right away, and it follows the first seven months of my new job. For me, it was a rather rough start being introduced to a slightly different culture to which I was previously used. I guided some short kayaking trips in places I had only been to once more than six years ago. I had not been kayaking in a while either, so I was really stressed and uptight when I went out with my friendly guests. Dealing with different cultures and local ways of conducting guiding were as Houge Mackenzie & Kerr note a strong influencer in respect to stress at work (2013a). In my diary, this becomes obvious as I quote: "I have been so ridiculously stressed during this trip and I really disliked it, should have done this trip before I guided it!" (05.09.15). This quote is one out of several that demonstrate my frustration of not having a total understanding of how things should be solved. This also links to the importance of using mentors (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013a).

Since I was not sure of how routines where solved at my new working place as well as being quickly introduced to a multitude of various new products, I felt that I never got control over the situation when working. Houge Mackenzie & Kerr (2013a) argue that mentoring is a

suitable way of introducing guides to their new working cultures. I felt that in some products I was not properly mentored, while in others I had a good introduction and could treat them with more ease. However, in total, this was insufficient for me at that moment. I found myself continuously unsure of what to do and my confidence decreased. I started to stress over simple situations and used a lot of time in my spare time visualizing the next evening's work in order to get control. At the start of this period, I wanted to impress my new employer, and became frustrated when my experience failed to do so. Houge Mackenzie & Kerr (2012) argue that guides are by far the most influencing factor when it comes to guests' perceived notion of safety, and general satisfaction. Hence, it is likely to believe that my experience of untenable amounts of stress while working could have muddled my guests' experiences (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2012).

However, a turn in confidence was obvious when I operated in familiar territory when I was out skiing on the 1th November, 2015 with a couple of women. I focused on ensuring that they did not fall when skiing, I taught them the right techniques and told them how to treat the equipment without getting hurt. Although I had never been in that ski area before, the competence I had in the activity itself overrode the fact that I had no experience of the place itself. After having the opportunity to do all the various activities multiple times, my diary let me know that my confidence and eventually efficiency had risen. This indicates the importance of having routines while working, with good routines it is also easier to deal with unpredictable happenings. Additionally, during this time I was working a lot at school, so external work might have influenced this process. However, what became evident during that period when I was stressing a lot, I forgot many details in my work, and could potentially have jeopardized issues concerning safety as outlined by Houge Mackenzie & Kerr (2013a).

As demonstrated above, there is a connection between how guides are introduced to their work and the amount of stress they experience during that phase. From my experience, as a working guide in adventure tourism companies in Arctic Norway, it makes a huge difference as to how you are introduced to your work. During my interviews, this notion became even clearer. How guides are introduced to their work varies widely. You find differences from country to country, and even from company to company within the same destination. Some guides had had an experience of a safe and thorough introduction with mentors, where they were gradually given more responsibility over a longer period of time. Others had multiple occasions where they had to guide in unknown territory, and some were even guiding

activities they had never performed themselves before. Something that, according to my interviewees, was jeopardizing the safety of such products. The guides all stated that the latter situation was not preferable, including "Anders":

...The first day as a dogsled guide, what kind of introduction did you get? (me)

...My first day as a dogsled guide… that was in <company>… that was the first time I tried dogsledding ever… I got a team of six dogs, and suddenly there were two guests sitting there… then they just released the sled and said goodbye… that was the first time I tried dogsledding, and the first time I guided it… (Anders)

...What if something had happened (accident)? (me)

...That wouldn't end well (Anders)

...What do you think about handling it this way? (me)

...Not good at all (Anders).

As with the introduction of new employees, issues concerning safety are also highly dependent on the reigning culture within the company itself. There are few laws controlling the practicalities of safety. Some companies have more rigorous systems to ensure that safety breaches are recorded after each trip, while others have less controlled regimes. Guides with experience from non-Norwegian countries highlight that in those countries they are much more controlled, or they have standardized ways of doing practicalities, such as crevasse rescues on glaciers and mentoring. While this occurs in Arctic Norway as well, it is more irregular than the other approach from the experience of my interviewees:

...My girlfriend was working for <company> so I was driving with them a lot, because they didn't have any standardization, <company> does, and <company> does, they make you do a specific training course, you know, they are much more like harsh on this, and they show you this and they take you out on training missions and they train you up… like my girlfriend had never driven a snowmobile in her life really, and they just let her out on her own on a huge touring machine with a sled behind and a passenger… first tracks! (George)

… it is much more regulated in <country>… it's the same as Norway, where you don't have to have courses... but there's much more standardization… they tell that this is how you build an anchor for our company… every single guide has the same things in their backpack… I was really surprised, because I came from Norway and I was like trained… but it's really like obvious how cowboy Norway is… (George)

Knowing that the culture within the company itself governs such issues opens up for an interesting, and less studied topic within adventure tourism in Arctic Norway. How does the relationship between the Norwegian culture of *friluftsliv* color the practices in adventure tourism? The relation between the culture and the touristic phenomena are obvious. The practices we perform in *friluftsliv* is, according to Gelter (2010), a result of our previous experiences. Or as he put it: "*friluftsliv* is about outdoor experiences, as in the Latin meaning of *experiential*, meaning *"knowledge gained by repeated trials"* (Gelter, 2010:12). Hence, the experiences and skills of guides are a result of multiple personal encounters with nature, and through learning from other more experienced people (Gelter, 2010). As in the case of "George", here he describes safety precautions while driving snowmobiles with guests. It shows how *friluftsliv* practices are pursued between people, and used later on as a guide:

...always driving with… you know throw ropes, and always the same procedure… the second person has to be a hundred meters behind the next person so that if one goes through then there is time for the another one to turn and stop… all this kind of like… precautions… (George)

Where have you learned this? (Me)

… probably from <name of a person>… I went out with <name of a person> a lot… (George)

The experience is then a fundament for how risk and safety is been dealt with in *friluftsliv*. How safety and risk is dealt with in *friluftsliv* has its basis in the Norwegian expression "*tur etter evne".* Meaning that the individual chooses a trip, and activity based on his or her skills (Mytting & Bischoff, 2008). In other words, how safety is dealt with in *friluftsliv* is based on the individual skills of the person. During my data gathering the same individualistic

approach towards safety became obvious. Whether guides are given an introduction, and later routines to ensure safety is dependent on the culture within the specific company. The same culture is also the basis for what is transmitted to the new employee:

…I didn't get any introduction, but that was especially in dogsledding, that is where <my boss> is different, he gives you routines, checks that you understand them in the aftermath, shows you everything you need to know, he takes you on a trip, I mean, you are on a trip with your boss, and then you learn to do as your boss does…

During my data collection, it became noticeable how different safety and risk assessment issues were solved within companies in Norway. When creating adventure tourism products, companies do not have to send any safety or risk assessment plan to a government institution. In other words, whether the company chooses to have such a plan or not is dependent on the company itself. If there is an existing plan on safety and risk management in the various products delivered; it is most likely that it has its basis in the operators' personal *friluftsliv* experience. However, it should be noted here that products in Svalbard have to be approved by the government (Sysselmannen, 2012). Nevertheless, my data demonstrates that an individualistic approach is obvious in products. Some companies have guidelines for their guides, though most often there are few guidelines, and the practices guides choose to execute in order to ensure safety is highly dependent on his or her individual skills. The individuality of solving safety issues in Arctic Norway was critiqued by one of my interviewees, who argues that there is a culture of not putting enough emphasize on safety issues among operators:

…that's one of the things I find annoying in Norway, to be a guide in Norway, is that any person can start their own company, you do not need any background or any type of paper on anything, so you can have your own private teaching in your company, you don't have to send in reports on accidents or nothing… in the company I am working now, we do statistics on injuries, because we do not want it to happen again… I have a feeling that they don't care that much in Norway, it is much stricter in other countries, like England and Canada… (Marianne)

This was also an issue noted by one of my non-Norwegian interviewees. While working as a guide in Norway he had experienced that the culture of handling safety and risk management was quite different from his previous experiences:

In <another country> they think that everything that can happen, will happen. While in Norway they know what can happen, but they believe it is not likely that it will happen. And the approach towards how they deal with safety issues is therefore not similar… I can give you one example last year we had some, somewhere we had to use snowmobiles (transportation)... and there were no helmets and <my boss> just said that we are driving illegally anyway so we do not need the helmets, kind of, okay? What does illegal means? That it is not related to any risks? (Brian)

"Brian" noted that he became stressed from working in an environment without a written safety plan, but instead treated with an individual approach. He exemplified this with a story of a cruise ship landing, here and in other products he had guided, safety was not dealt with or planned in advance. Such issues were instead solved with the same individuality, and he argued that safety and risk assessment should be treated differently in this and other products:

...I think that companies should have that kind of written safety plan… example like the cruise ship… everyone should know their role if something happens… because now it was totally unclear if something should happen, what I should do… what... <person´s name> or... < person´s name>, or < person´s name> or < person´s name> should do….

...is it stressful when it is like that? (Me)

...yeah it is a bit for me… (Brian)

As highlighted in the previous pages, many of the guides that I interviewed were skeptical about the lack of guidelines in the adventure tourism business in Arctic Norway. However, it should be stated that positive experiences were also shared during my data collection. In my research, all of the guides had university education, and all except one had specific guiding education from a university. As mentioned earlier, guiding as a university education in Norway has only been recently established (Vevang, 2015; Andersen et al, n. d.) This indicates a cultural change within the industry, adventure tourism was earlier a phenomenon

that stemmed from peoples' hobbies. Now, the industry is experiencing a professionalization through the introduction of university educations, and this might be the reason for new critical thought on the industry that is represented in my data. However, this transition from the traditional adventure tourism in Arctic Norway to a new professionalized context is an interesting and little discussed topic within research. Nevertheless, a new way of thinking about the business, and the ongoing practices had also been observed by "Marianne":

<Person´s name>, <Person´s name>, <Person´s name> (colleagues) and all of those, they have massive amounts of experience, on things you encounter on a daily basis I mean, they have done the same things for 15 years, while those coming from the universities, they are new and they look at things in a different way, they have updated knowledge on things, even though the others have 15 years of experience, they still do things the same way they did it 15 years ago… (Marianne)

A topic that drew attention to itself was the unpredictability of adventure tourism guiding, and the stress connected to this topic. Houge Mackenzie & Kerr (2013a, 2013b) argue that stressed, and eventually burned out guides can jeopardize issues concerning safety (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013a, 2013b). It becomes evident throughout my diary that from the outset of my work I missed some predictability in my work as well as time to adjust to the situation. During my work as a guide, I very often did not know what my upcoming days or weeks would look like. My work was based upon the amount of bookings for that period. I often got frustrated, especially the unpredictability made it hard to combine work, school and leisure time. In periods with a lot of stress, this was also something that my colleagues often mentioned.

My interviewees talk about the challenges of being a guide. However, it is argued that it is a fun job and that is just how it is to be a guide. The nature of tourism work and the difficulties of combing this with family and leisure time is highlighted in Veijola (2010), and other (Moen, 2010) studies on tourism as work. The unpredictability surrounding such an occupation can complicate family situations, and eventually cause stress that can in turn complicate safety issues (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013a). The interviewees believed that it would be hard to combine such work with having a family. Actually, the only interviewee having a family stated that he recently had to quit working as a guide because the stress made it too hard to combine with his family life:

…it is great job when you don't have family, but when you have family that causes a lot of stress, the working times are many times that you should be home with the kids… so... and then lots of evening and night working, and kids don't understand that in the mornings they don't understand that dad wants to sleep... (Brian)

Unpredictability also stems from the various types of work guides do. It is not always the case that guides are specialized, working, for example, just as snowmobile guides. There are multiple differing work environments in which nature guides work. This is often dependent upon the nature of the product, for example, people working on a ship will stay in that social enclave for a longer period of time. While guides working day-to-day will have their own social place outside of work. Due to this, I will argue that one must scrutinize stressing factors from product to product. "Kristoffer" had been working various cruise ships all over the Arctic and Antarctic and talked about very long days, often working for 16 hours with constant role changes between traditional guiding, entertainer and the role as a friend during these hours. Another example from cruise tourism came from an interview subject working as an expedition leader on a newly established boat within the Arctic. This example underlines the paradox between responsibility and salary (Valkonen, 2009):

…you have no idea what they promised us, it was going to be the best working place ever and we would become a family on board. I was so skeptical to working on that boat, but I thought that I'll take it as a challenge. I came on board the boat and all of the cabins where sold to people, the ones we got where full of mold, above the engines and at the size of a mitten you know… that's where all the guides where supposed to live, you hardly can sleep at night, people get sick, you have no place to sit, no place to have your luggage, because there's not even a locker in the rooms, the room I got had a flood the first day, I mean I am the expedition leader and I work 18 hours a day for 7,5 weeks… I had three days on land…I did the math after the trip and found out that I had earned approximately 140 kroners per hour if I had been working 13 hours that day, that's the salary for being responsible for 120 passengers and 8 guides…

When I asked if this kind of payment was more common on board boats than on a skiing trips the answer was that during skiing trips they are paid day-by-day. But, the most important part was that skiing trips "gave the person more" than being on board a boat. Having the

responsibility for multiple persons and their safety seemed to be a crucial factor causing stress and eventually tiredness. “Kristoffer” did not have any responsibility in respect of safety on the trips in Arctic and Antarctica while sailing. Because of this, he found that it was less tiring than skiing trips where he had all the responsibility in respect of safety.

...Skiing trips for me is a much more complex role than being a guide on a ship, on a skiing trip then you know very well that when you reach camp your fingers are freezing and you just want to eat and go inside the sleeping bag, you can multiply that by 1,000 and you know how your guests feel, on a ship however the guests always have more energy than yourself...

The two female guides that I interviewed highlighted a concern for lack of external education within their guiding companies. However, this was not underlined by the male guides. Even though the companies encouraged the female guides to do activities in their spare time or take small courses; they felt that too much focus was put towards activities giving short term economic benefits. One of the female guides also highlighted that external courses were often scheduled in the high season, and since they do not get any economic compensation for doing such courses, they had to choose between spending and earning money.

Another challenge with having nature guiding as a profession is that you are quite vulnerable to injuries. Even though Svalbard is governed by the Norwegian government, the laws are different and this might lead to problems if you are unaware. Since you work seasons, it is normal to move away after the main season is over. One of my interviewees experienced the vulnerability of working this way when she got injured;

...I thought that since you live in Norway, you will be taken care of. That showed to be utterly wrong, I lost all my savings and was left with nothing… if I had gone to NAV [7] on Svalbard and continued to live there, then I would, I would have been helped, but since I was living on the mainland none of this counted and I got help from NAV based upon that I had been living here on the mainland, which was nothing… I cannot start working again since it is a quite physical job and they don’t want me back before I am healthy again… it is a job that I love, but simultaneously you feel a bit worthless in it as well… (Marianne)

[7] Norwegian Labour and Welfare Organisation

Throughout this chapter it has been highlighted how factors such as seasonality, unpredictable working hours and lack of information affect the guides everyday lives. The blurriness of the occupation makes it hard to fully control their social life, and all of these factors stress and potentially burn out guides, which again jeopardizes the safety of the products they are guiding. Guiding is a low-status occupation with little income, and paradoxically a lot of responsibility. Guides in Arctic Norway are vulnerable to injuries because the welfare system is not designed for the seasonality of the occupation. Using mentors is a good way to introduce guides to their occupation as it equips guides with routines that make them less stressed, and again leads to a greater possibility of delivering safe products. How the various companies choose to introduce their guides, do risk assessment in their products and deal with safety is dependent on the culture within the company. Here the data show an interesting relationship between *friluftsliv* and adventure tourism. This relationship opened up a study of how *friluftsliv* color practices within the industry issues concerning safety in adventure tourism products. To a large extent, operators choose themselves how they want to deal with safety, and this traditional individualistic approach is criticized through my data, by both guides from Norway and non-Norwegian countries. However, lately guiding has become a university education and this opens up a new critical tone stemming from professionalization of the industry.

4.2 Diverse tourist groups and nature

From the data collected it became clear that the products themselves were not the only factor about which guides talked the most. Some products, such as snowmobiling and dogsledding were partially mentioned as being more frequently involved with accidents. However, the most mentioned factors where guide management of the constantly changing factors associated with tourists and nature and how these influenced the various products they were to guide:

"It was… supposed to be like that, they have done similar types of trips in Chile, and Australia, New Zealand and I thought that they had experience, but when we basically packed stuff into the canoes, and then I started to realize that shit they… they have just told stories about what they have done…" (Brian)

Cultural differences between guides and their guests have earlier been highlighted as a communicational barrier in guides' experiences (Buckley, 2010b). Issues with transitioning to new climates and areas has also be identified in earlier studies (Bentley & Page, 2001). The previous short narrative was one out of many examples of how important the customers are for the product itself. The Arctic conditions especially led to challenges for the guides, the huge climate difference makes it hard for guests to evaluate their skills in such conditions. In "Brian's" previous recollection, the product was a canoe trip. Based on what the guests had been communicating to "Brian", he had an impression that they were experienced paddlers from doing trips on several other continents. However, he quickly noticed that they were total novices and he had to rethink how the trip should be conducted. "Marianne" also underscored that tourists' unwillingness to inform guides about medical challenges or similar also caused accidental situations that were hard to predict without this information.

In his recently published doctoral thesis on working guides in Svalbard, Vold (2015) noticed that guides start to gather information about their guests long before they physically encounter each other. This was mirrored in the methods that my interviewees mentioned, prejudices were used in order to get a feeling of what type of guests guides would encounter. Both in my diary and in interviews with guides, it became evident that guides talk about "people from Italy, people from the Middle East or people from Singapore". This happens before trips, and also when reflecting on experiences with previous tourists. Using earlier experiences and constructed prejudices create what I describe as a certain comfort zone, which gives a guide a certain understanding of any upcoming trip. When guest information is lacking, guides treat their customers differently. Some guides require a greater need for guest information than others. One of my interviewees had tried various methods in order to get the amount of information he felt was sufficient for his personal comfort:

When I´m with the group, I first try to gather information from the people. I try to discuss quite a lot in the beginning, but I have noticed that many people are lying, they kind of over evaluate their experiences, especially in the wintertime… I have tried to gather information beforehand, but it is challenging, so then I tried to, kind of Skype interview, but people felt that it's, they are not used to it… I had two times that people came back on the next year, and then it was easier because you know, I knew the people and how they react, what they do when they are tired, what kind of people they might like to grouped up with and stuff like that... (Brian)

Gathering information by communicating with guests was repeatedly mentioned during interviews. When I asked "Anders" what he talks about, he answered similarly to "Brian" that "you try to make them talk about trips, talk about equipment with them, because it is very easy for me or you to find out if a person doesn't know what he or she is talking about…". Vold (2015) calls the gathering of information from guests as a type of mapping, performed with the intention of understanding what type of people with whom the guides will have to deal (Vold, 2015). Buckley (2010b) identified in his research that safety kayaker guides held safety briefings before their trips (Buckley, 2010b). In Vold's (2015) research, similar briefings were used by guides in Svalbard. Before trips lasting more than 24 hours, my interviewees and I also use a similar type of mapping. On these trips, guides have what is called "safety meetings" or "safety briefings". The meetings are used to map the guests' skill level, clarify information regarding the trip, how they travel in various terrain, expectations and test crucial equipment, such as tents and stoves.

As highlighted by Vold (2015), an important goal of getting such information is through the creation of genial, social settings. Thereafter, a trip can be adjusted to guests' skill levels. My interviewees all emphasized that they adjusted trips to the skill level of their guests. Besides gathering information beforehand and having safety briefings (Buckley, 2010b; Vold, 2015) to map the guests; throughout trips, guides engage in continuous evaluation of guest skill levels as well as trip and guest safety. Such evaluation is difficult as it occurs concurrently for guides as they engage in their guiding work. Evaluation receives limited discussion by scholars. When I guided skiing trips I always had a moving routine, meaning that we had a 5-10 minute break every hour. The guests gave positive feedback on this as they enjoyed having control over time and distance. However, the personal reason behind this was based on my experience of guests not always informing you if they had any personal needs. This predetermined travelling routine made it easier for guests to plan their personal needs. When I guide on skis, I continuously look the guests in their eyes and talk to them to evaluate how they are feeling. Lack of a smile or avoidance of eye contact are often signs that let me know that I should lower the pace a bit. During one of my ski trips, I failed to take notice that one of my guests could not cope with the routine we had set. The guest, a retired Norwegian lady, bashfully mentioned to my second guide and I that she needed longer breaks. She did not want the rest of the group to hear her.

My interviewees mentioned that they used similar methods in order to evaluate safety in the situations in which they were guiding. “George” drove snowmobiles with his guests as a measure to ensure that his guests felt safe, and that they were having a good time. In doing this, “George” refers to a personal feeling of boredom. The nature of the two products, skiing and snowmobiling are obviously different. In my case, I was more concerned about physical strain during my trip. But, I was constantly looking for a similar feeling of “boredom”, instead of having to ask my guests in order to create positive experiences. Evaluating a situation externally from feelings and signals indicates how difficult it is to evaluate safety in adventure tourism products. The main reason why I was not always asking guests questions was because I did not want to interrupt the silent atmosphere about which they had expressed positive feelings. In this latter case, as Varley & Semple (2015) found in their research, I had responded to an emphasis of my guests on travelling itself, instead of reaching the destination as the motivation for the travel (Varley & Semple, 2015). These ideas are thoughts adopted from the culture of *friluftsliv*, and show the close relationship between adventure tourism and the Norwegian tradition of *friluftsliv* (Faarlund et al., 2007).

The intimacy of spending long days with guests in small, social enclaves was something that made me especially tired when guiding multiday skiing trips. The number of people, time spent with them, and the intimacy of living in the same room or tent, made me long for my own social space. A combination of these factors, and especially the number of people made me exhausted. This is a topic also highlighted by other scholars (Wong & Wang, 2009). However, when guiding such trips, you are often situated within intimate, social enclaves, often, completely separated from interaction with other human beings. The social intimacy of guiding adventure tourism products, and how this affects guides is hardly mentioned in extant research. On a multiday skiing trip, I was much more stressed about the various factors that could influence safety than in any other products.

Tourists and the size of the group are not the only unpredictable variables with which guides have to deal. According to Valkonen (2009), it is important to understand that natural environments and the constantly changing weather interfere with how guides problem solve on the job (Valkonen, 2009). During a six-day skiing trip that I was guiding, we spent large parts of the day in very poor visibility. Even though these days where the shortest in terms of kilometers, my diary let me know that on days with bad weather, and, especially, poor visibility I was most tired. “Marianne”, who had become physically ill from guiding in

whiteout[8] last season, also underlined this. During such trips, the weather was also my biggest concern; I use a lot of time to get weather updates from friends and colleagues while working. "George" also stated that the complexity of natural settings, and especially, rapidly changing weather in potential avalanche terrain were things that "George" and the other interviewees found challenging. In extreme conditions, this responsibility could even be deemed frightening.

Weather and the natural elements come up as a vital element in adventure tourism guiding in the Arctic. In my data gathering, difficulty in guest transitions from their everyday lives to Arctic conditions was noticeable. It was not always foreign guests who experienced this, as I also had Norwegian guests from other parts of the country who had problems with acclimatizing to the Arctic conditions. Varley & Semple commented that modern day humans are to a large extent more separated from nature than before (2015). One of my interviewees argued that this was a big challenge for the industry in the future—guests becoming gradually more novice with respect to travelling in the wilderness. This will require industry providers to take greater care of their guests in all parts of the product.

The personal competence of guides themselves is also another important factor in respect of safety. In their study, Houge Mackenzie & Kerr (2012) concluded that guides were the biggest influencer on guests' feelings of safety. In other words, the personal competence and experience that guides conveyed was critical. For example, "Marianne" had three rather big injuries in one week, in her first season working as a guide. She believes that this partly happened because of her lack of working experience, which led to her not being able to set up the group sufficiently with respect to the weather. On the other hand, according to "Marianne", such accidents will happen now and then anyway as she commented:

"…he tried to set the scooter by putting his foot down, the footboard fell upon his ankle, that's a very usual accident, it happens frequently in a way, there's nothing to do about in a way, except telling them about it before the trip…" (Marianne)

However, guests are not always looked upon as a challenge that you need to address. Several of the guides that I interviewed included their guests in practical tasks, for example,

[8] Weather phenomenon where visibility is drastically reduced

navigating. If there is a whiteout it is very helpful to have them helping you with ensuring you are on the right compass course. Both mentally and physically, it is very tiring for a guide to navigate in such conditions, and it can even make them nauseous. Before setting out on trips when I have guided alone, I have always informed my guests about the possibility for such situations. Just to ensure that they will not be unnecessarily stressed if I ask them to participate in navigation. On trips where I walk outside of marked tracks, I write up the entire trip beforehand. Putting down coordinates, compass courses and landmarks for which to look while walking to ensure we stay on track. In wintertime, I also mark places suitable for making bivouacs[9] in case of bad weather during any present or later trips.

A couple of my interviewees had entrepreneurial experiences, and we talked about what processes they used in establishing new adventure tourism products. Their products had a lot of different elements, such as sailing and skiing. "Brian", for example, in the beginning, theoretically approached the establishment of the product. Different scenarios were constructed, and later performed in realistic conditions. Such performances show that the skills and knowledge of guides can be used to enhance the way safety is dealt with in business (Valtonen, 2009):

…We trained two years in <name of country> usually in the autumn when there is rough climate, and rough weather, we trained in conditions as hard as they could be… we broke something on the boat, just on purpose, and when there was a rough water, we pushed someone overboard, of course we had a plan b... we put alot of different scenarious down on paper that could happen, I think we had 5 or 6 scenarios that could happen, and of course, it was a lot of gear testing… (Brian)

This section of chapter has dealt with how guides constantly have to conduct themselves with respect to external factors, such as weather and the diversity of the tourists that they encounter. Weather was identified as a remarkable influencer on guides' feeling of safety. Additionally, the duration of products, social intimacy and numbers of guests were all factors that served to complicate safety issues. Guides have a varying amount of information about their guests, before they meet them for the first time. In order to gain an understanding of whom they will be guiding in the demanding Arctic climate, guides build their knowledge on

[9] A shelter made in the terrain to protect from harsh weather.

prejudices, stemming from earlier experiences. Constructing such images of their future guests provides guides with a comfort zone. When guides encounter their guests for the first time, they constantly evaluate their guests based on how they talk, what clothing they wear and how they perform tasks. Guides also use visuals signs and evaluations of their own experience in order to ensure guests experience a feeling of safety during guiding. However, sometimes the cultural differences between guides and their guests leads to guests not fully reporting their need and wishes. Additionally, guides also use their guests as a tool to ensure safety, and before commencing trips, guides conduct safety briefings to make sure that guests will know what they will encounter during their trip.

4.3 Playing with roles

I think it's very often things that are challenging, if you think of situations regarding safety, because things can change so unbelievably fast. It can start with just tiny things that one person is a bit cold, and you get a frostbite, for example… just to mention some of the absolute simplest things… (Marianne)

The quote above highlights the need for guides to be constantly aware of the situations in which they find themselves. Very often guests are brought out into elements in which they have little experience. Subsequently, the guides that I interviewed talked a lot about how they constantly had to change their roles to suit various contexts. In my research, both direct and indirect communication was reported as used by guides; directly through the use of signs or talking and indirectly through the use of clothing, symbols and similar.

According to Vold (2015), guides use clothing to give an impression of an experienced and tough guide. Guides also look for similar signs when they meet their guests during the earlier mentioned mapping strategy (Vold, 2015). I also mentioned this in my diary. When I first encounter my guests, I look for obvious signs on their clothing or symbols that can provide me with a clue of what their interests are. A practical example of this is a guy from California who wore a Philadelphia Eagles hat. The year before, I had watched them play live in Philadelphia, and suddenly we had something to talk about for the rest of the night. Since this was one of my first trips alone, it was really comforting knowing that I had something to talk about during the trip.

In the same kind of situations, "Brian" said that he tries to match the guests' level. He emphasized creating an atmosphere among the guests to make them interact with each other, instead of him being in the middle of conversation all the time.

With regard to clothing, my own clothing represents the company for which I work. However, what type of clothing I choose to wear depends a bit on the product that I am guiding. On shorter day-trips more distanced from nature, I can wear more formal clothing, but always typical outdoor clothing. When I am meeting people coming for skiing trips, my clothing is more often worn and has a more practical look. Using clothing and visible signs is something that Elsrud (2001) highlights in her research as a way of narrating an adventurous identity: "These markers of both difference (to non-experienced and non-adventurous) and of identification (with the adventure identity) work as story tellers. By adopting the right aesthetic appearance, a story of experience can be told (Elsrud, 2001:612)."

As partly mentioned above, guides have a dynamic relationship towards how they communicate and how they position themselves within a group. There are various factors that influence how a guide chooses to execute this. In dogsledding, "Anders" said that; "…You can stand and scream to your guest <censored> because he has done something to the dog that he shouldn't, and the guest accept it…". This way of communicating is similar to what Buckley (2010b) noticed—in dangerous situations such ways of communicating are accepted among tourists. Working guides need to be ready to change their role within a group. A practical example is in situations where weather, animal life or other factors create potentially dangerous situations. In such situations, the guides change from being more of a group member, to taking control over the group and being a direct leader as told by "Kristoffer":

I was the last guide on land and got a message on the radio that a polar bear was spotted, it is a big pile of walruses' north of us, maybe 500 meters or so and I have been in land half an hour before the first tourists arrive, walking in big circles, because we know there is a polar bear, it is always polar bears on <censored>… suddenly I hear on the radio "polar bear, polar bear north of us…" it is our expedition leader… we start to move the tourists and luckily there are ten boats ready who have room for everyone… we get the tourists on board and bring them back to safety… but then the expedition leader talks in the radio and says "Kristoffer, that polar bear is yours"… I know his way of communicating and his point of

view on safety, you only need one rifle to kill a bear, I guess he takes me because he feels that I have the best control on safety issues, so I leave the beach and walk straight towards the polar bear…

How I have been acting in front of my guests is really dependent on a lot more factors than just the physical situation in which we were situated. When I first meet my guests, I always have a formal tone; I find it safer to encounter them in this manner. In the first encounter, I evaluate my guests by looking at them, I make them speak to each other and try to listen to what they are saying in order to get a feeling for the dynamics within the group. When I feel that I can use a humoristic approach, I use it, however, this is not always suitable and then I try to adjust my approach to something more appropriate to the group. In bigger groups, I find myself more often choosing a more neutral behavior, to ensure that I do not step on anyone's toes.

However, for me personally it is hard to keep up with the formal approach and on such days I get much more tired than my natural way of approaching people. During my studies, I guided two skiing trips, one with two guests and another one with eight guests. The trips lasted between 4-6 days, and I noticed multiple times during these trips a need for being alone and not having to interact with my guests. According to Wong & Wang (2009), guests expect that their tour fulfils certain emotional expectations, and that any emotional response outside of their expectations could greatly influence their experience in a negative manner. And, as I noticed while working, Wong and Wang (2009) also concluded that the emotional burden gradually becomes heavier as the time and number of participants expand. Wong & Wang (2009) also highlight that in many cases tour leaders have to suppress emotional feelings, which also was the case for Kristoffer when he was working as a dogsled guide:

...at one time I crashed the sled while working as a guide, my breaks were stuck… in a trunk that was cut off… the dogs stop, but I go straight through the sled, smash the entire upper part of it, the sled is absolutely flat afterwards, I land in the middle of the nearest dogs, entangled in all the ropes, if the breaks would have released I would have been dragged further by the dogs, entangled in this steel wire… when I came home I showed my boss this bruise, almost as thick as my hand going down my ribs… I never showed my guests the bruises and went on the trip with them the day after… its been some situations like this…hmmm…

However, guides in the Arctic do not always work alone. Depending on the product that they are guiding, there is always a critical point regarding how many tourists are in a group before another guide is added to the group. When I asked my interviewees about their experience and opinions regarding having more than one guide present on a trip the answers were quite similar. They were all positive with regard to cooperating with another guide, however, as "George" put it when I asked him, the other person must "think the same way". He emphasized that guides who had received the same type of education worked better with each other. Although, he was the only one to use these precise words. The other interviewees stressed more that the guide should be experienced. Relatedly, they also emphasized the importance of having clearly defined roles and used known words, such as "first and second guide" or "A and B guide". Here, the guides were referring to the common fundamental agreement on how to perform a job. This notion was recently argued as critical by Houge Mackenzie & Kerr (2013b), who suggested the following actions:

"Negative team guiding experiences might be minimized by establishing a formalized pre-season guide training program that incorporates team building and discussion of motivations and expectations with all guides… This would enable guides of various backgrounds and experience levels to understand the expectations and guiding styles of their co-guides from potentially diverse backgrounds prior to leading trips together" (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013b:91)

During my work as a guide, an incident occurred where my partner and I had not clarified the roles that we were supposed to fulfil. In this incident, first, just a couple of hours before people arrived, I was advised that I was to be the lead guide for more than 10 people going out on a brand new product. I did not know that the product had never been delivered before we left. Since our roles were not sufficiently clarified, I felt that we ended up looking at each other hoping that the other person knew what to do when we felt insecure. Due to a lot of misunderstanding and bad communication, the entire product was more or less a disaster, and we ended up with a guest being partly injured and others being strongly annoyed by the experience.

During my data collection, when I was guiding skiing trips, I did in general feel good about having all of the responsibility to myself. However, when the weather gets rough and you start to partly question in which direction you should choose to go, you sometimes miss a

colleague or someone with whom to discuss it. This was especially so for my interviewees who emphasized that in rough weather, or exposed terrain they would like to share the responsibility with someone.

Due to my education and former working experience, I have a certain mindset and understanding of how safety procedures should be performed. I have standardized practices that have become routines throughout the years, such as how to properly put up a tent, and organize a winter camp. "George" also emphasized the word standardization. He had experience of other Nordic countries, which aspired to have a standardized way of solving issues concerning safety within a company. Mostly, this was not the case in companies for which he had been working in Arctic Norway. Such a tendency dominated among the rest of the companies mentioned by my interviewees. To a greater extent, in Arctic Norway, procedures in companies, such as what kind of equipment you should bring, and how you choose to use the equipment is left for the guide to decide.

One of the interviewees worked for one of the biggest companies within the region. Every season, they have a big training mission where realistic scenes are created, including cooperation with the local police and government. Before the training, they go through different scenarios, check that everyone is up to date on safety procedures and talk about how to solve them. The next day, the guides travel to a spot where the rest of the company has prepared a scene. The interviewee mentioning this said that being the lead guide on such missions was almost scary. There were a lot of people watching, and you had the main responsibility. However, she underlined that the learning outcome was really good. Especially, since in the aftermath, they evaluated what had happened, and what they could have done differently.

When working, another factor that influences, which role a guide has is gender. "Marianne" let me know that there is hardly a day at work when she has not had to face skepticism based on her gender. Or as she put it herself;

"It takes a lot of effort to get past their first impression, especially if you have company groups with men who expect to have a super-wicked trip and they meet me in the door and it is not a girl that they want to guide them… they would rather see a rough adventure guide in a way… almost every day is like the first hour they test my boundaries all the time, trying to go fast, try to push me to go faster…"

This was also identified by “Isabell” who believes that some people might look upon women as weaker guides than men. Gender as an issue in Arctic guiding has been highlighted in earlier research (Moen, 2010). However, it is not just the female interviewees who have experienced skepticism based upon gender. “Anders” lightened up in a moment of anger when he told me about how some, especially people from foreign cultures, totally ignored his girlfriend when she gave them instructions before they were going out dogsledding. “Marianne” also noted that she more often not had to prove her skills, and argue her way to respect. Or as she putted it: “They always want to know what previous experience I have, it’s like I almost have to flex my muscles in front of them some times”.

In this chapter, the narratives and discussions have highlighted how guiding in adventure tourism is a type of work where situations change rapidly, and guides have to change their role according to new situations. Training on missions beforehand has proved to be effective in order to prepare guides for such situations. However, few companies make use of training missions as a part of their safety procedures. Guiding is an emotional labor, and guides use clothing and other types of signs to communicate safety when they meet their guests. However, guides hide emotions from their guests when they get hurt. Most often guides work alone in adventure tourism products, when working with other guides they desire to work with guides who possess similar skills and routines as themselves. Guiding is looked upon as a masculine occupation. Hence, to a greater extent, female guides have to show their skills when encountering tourists more than their male colleagues. The lack of respect some tourists have of female guides can potentially lead to unwanted, and dangerous situations.

5. Conclusion

My research question asked how guides narrate safety. During my research, I realized that safety was constructed through the guides' stories. Hence, having a constructivists approach proved to be fruitful. However, the interview protocol I created was also made with the intention that this should occur. When I first started dealing with the topic of safety, I believed that my data would focus on the practicalities of guiding, and how the presence of guests complicated the work of guiding. What was surprising being that instead of talking about specific elements within the topic of safety, it became evident that my research was dealing with issues concerning the work and quality of work for guides in Arctic Norway. This conclusion chapter contains my main findings, an evaluation of data and method, and suggestions for the industry, before ending with suggestions for further studies.

As evidenced in my research, adventure tourism guiding is a very specific type of work. Adventure tourism guides have a job that is closely connected to their hobbies. Hence, the borderline between work and hobby is often blurred (Veijola, 2010). This blurred context can often lead to an experience of not being on the job, and just performing your hobby. The blurriness of guiding as an occupation is also highlighted through their working hours. Guides often have fluctuating working hours, meaning that they often work either more or less than the standardized 7-5 hour day, which also impacts on family circumstances. Very often guides do a lot of work outside of paid hours. Preparing equipment and keeping themselves updated on weather are common examples of this. Traditionally, guiding is looked upon as a temporary occupation, and not a career option. However, guides themselves take their job seriously and many look upon guiding as their career path.

How guides work is most often decided by bookings completed in advance, and bookings made at much shorter notice. In some cases, the guides only know whether they are going to work or not just a few hours before. There is little tradition for economic compensations for guides working disadvantageous working hours, when doing preparations, and the income is low. This is similar to earlier findings that studied the occupation (Rantala & Valkonen, 2011). In total, all of these different variables are potential stress factors that could jeopardize the safety of trips for which guides have the practical responsibility (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013a, 2013b; Valtonen, 2009).

The working conditions for guides in Arctic Norway are dependent upon the company, and even the product in which they work. Similar to other places, guides in the Arctic also work seasons, and often physically tough work with much responsibility (Rantala & Valkonen, 2011). Tough work renders the possibility of getting injured and the inability to work, the seasonality of guiding involves changing locations within countries, and even having to move to other countries to be able to work. The nature of this work makes guides vulnerable to healthcare systems not designed for such labor. Hence, guides can potentially suffer economically if injuries occur. In total, all of the mentioned characteristics of adventure tourism guiding are variations that identify that potentially guiding makes for stressful working conditions, and that these conditions could potentially jeopardize the safety of products (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013a, 2013b).

How guides in Arctic Norway are introduced to their work varies a lot depending on the culture within the company for whom they work. All of the guides who participated in my research called for a thorough and what they called more professional approach including the use of mentors. The differences among companies was remarkable, where some were given no introduction at all. The working environment in which guides work is punctuated by unpredictable working times that generate stress and are hard to combine with family, and other social activities outside of work. While working, guides are often situated within an intimate social context with their guests, and sometimes living in poorer conditions than the people for whom they are responsible. Having huge responsibilities, and simultaneously being situated within an intimate social enclave for long periods exacerbates stress. According to recent studies, stressed, and eventually burned out guides can complicate issues concerning safety (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013a, 2013b).

An interesting outcome of my research is how a close connection between the Norwegian culture of *friluftsliv* and adventure tourism influences practices. In my study, it became apparent that the connection between the culture of *friluftsliv* and adventure tourism is a fertile starting point to understand practices and how companies deal with issues concerning safety. Operators within the industry use their own *friluftsliv* experience and interests when creating adventure tourism products. In combination with little governmental restrictions, this opens up for a highly individualistic approach towards how preventive actions, and other issues concerning safety are solved. The same individuality is also shown within products, as guides are in most products given few guidelines, it is mostly up to themselves to utilize their

own *friluftsliv* skills to execute the product in a safe manner. Guides criticize these loose guidelines. First, they feel that there are too little restrictions in respect of hosting, and producing adventure tourism products in both Arctic Norway, and in the country in general. This is exemplified in that all training delivered in a company, is a result of the operators own (*friluftsliv)* experiences. Hence, the lack of a systematic approach towards safety jeopardizes such issues. Second, guides became less stressed when working within a systematic approach, and standardized routine. Such routines make it easier to cooperate with colleagues, and enhance the chance of dealing with safety issues in a more adequate way (Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013b). Throughout my data gathering, it has clear that operators within the industry could benefit from dealing with safety issues more systematically, including products that are thought of as less risky.

Some of the criticism that guides expressed towards part of the culture in Arctic may stem from the obvious cultural change within the industry. Quite recently, specific guiding education (arcticnatureguide, n. d.) has been established. The introduction of specific university education in the industry is a strong influencing factor with regard to changing this culture. However, it should also be seen in light of the growing interest for adventure tourism (Stensland et al., 2014). All of my interviewees had higher education, and the better part had specific university education in guiding. All indicators of the field of adventure tourism in Arctic Norway is that it is becoming more professionalized.

There is a tendency that guides are less concerned about the nature of the product itself when they are working. Instead the focus is directed towards the complex social arena in which they are situated. Customers are treated as guests, and the guide is often situated within a context where it is anticipated that (s)he is acting as a friend (Wong & Wang, 2009). Often guides find themselves within social contexts where they have to dim or fake emotions for a long period. The latter statement is most common in products where the guides spend multiple consecutive days with their guests, suppressing feelings over a long period of time is often experienced as tiring, and a stressful factor (Wong & Wang, 2009; Houge Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013a). When guides encounter their guests for the very first time, they most often have very little information about the guests and for some this is a stressful situation in which to be. The cultural differences among guides and their guests can potentially lead to dangerous situations, for example, when they fail to communicate their level of skill in products where this is important (Buckley, 2010b).

Guides gather information about their guests both before and during their encounters with guests. Before they met their guests, the impressions they have made are based on earlier experiences (Vold, 2015). However, in adventure tourism in Arctic Norway, guides solve safety issues using what Elsrud (2001) calls identity narration. Guides convey a story of safety to the guests whom they encounter using clothing and signs. Simultaneously, clothing and signs is used the other way around. By looking at clothing, or the equipment guests have with them, guides gather information that provides them with an impression of their guests' skill levels (Elsrud, 2001). In products lasting over a longer time, the guides check guests' competence through practical tasks, and ensure that the guests have some knowledge by having safety briefings and training. Similar observations were highlighted in earlier research by Vold (2015).

When guides are working they have to be ready to shift between a multitude of roles, depending on a variety of changing variables, such as weather and guests' needs. Guides mostly have the responsibility for multiple guests; this makes it more complicated to spot every individual. Because of cultural differences, the guests sometimes do not inform a guide about their needs, or any lack of understanding (Buckley, 2010b). Consequently, guides have to constantly evaluate situations using unspecific signs, such as their own feelings or by evaluating expressions given by guests.

My findings indicate that the natural conditions in Arctic Norway to a large extent complicate a guide's relationship to safety in products. It is especially challenging for tourists to acclimatize to the climate, and products delivered in this area. My data show that weather is a very important factor when guides work, especially, on longer trips were they are more exposed to changing weather. Changing conditions necessitate that guides have the ability to rapidly change their role, since acclimatizing to Arctic conditions is hard for guests. The guides have an even greater responsibility in order to "fill the gaps" between their own and their guests' competence, in order to ensure safety and pleasurable experiences. Knowing that people live in societies that are distanced from nature (Varley & Semple, 2015) makes this transition even greater. Similar to earlier findings by Bentley & Page (2001), my data show that it is hard for tourists to evaluate their own competence in regard to the climate where Arctic adventure tourism products are delivered. However, an interesting observation is that this is relevant for both domestic and international tourists. It is likely that a big difference

between peoples' everyday life, and the climate they encounter on adventure tourism trips in the Arctic will be even more prevalent in the future. Therefore, I advocate that suppliers in the area become more concerned about this transition, including domestic guests.

How safety and issues concerning safety are experienced varied a lot between guides. Hence, I believe that my constructivist approach, which provided for multiple realities was the most applicable for this research. When doing my ethnographic research, I benefited strongly from being a guide myself. My access to large parts of the industry in the area provided me with data from various disciplines associated with adventure tourism. This access would be challenging for people outside of the industry to obtain. In addition, by incorporating an autoethnographic approach, my research was enhanced with very specific data concerning the topic. My working notes were made outside working hours by talking into my own cell phone, and writing hand notes. I discovered that making vocal notes enhanced me with much more thorough notes than when writing. On the other side, in respect of my job, I took notes before and after work and some details might have been left out because of this. During my research, I had to consider a variety of ethical dilemmas. It is a small community and I approach it as an insider. This has provided me with very detailed and personal stories from the interviewees. That being said, I cannot promise and ensure total anonymity when doing research in such a small community. I also had to make some considerations regarding how to treat delicate parts of my data. I have left out some of the data that could have been considered relevant in order to prevent the study from harming the people involved.

The accessibility I had to the community enhanced me with possibilities of collecting a lot of data. I wanted to use this opportunity and decided to collect data from various parts of the industry, in order to cast a broad light upon the topic. I had little experience in both interview technique and writing field notes. Because of this I organized a pilot interview, and choose to use a semi-structured interview in order to have some control over the situation. When I speak to guiding colleagues, we often concentrate our talk around personal narratives. Because of this and the embedded information upon which narratives are based (Elsrud, 2001; Noy, 2004), I wanted to emphasize to my interviewees that they use narratives in their answers. The pilot interview was very helpful as it made me realize some challenges about which I had not thought in advance. I did not have the same opportunity to test making field notes, because of this, I tested a couple of field note methods before I found the most applicable.

I choose to use content analysis because I found it applicable to follow Smith's (2010) argument of dividing my material into themes, and because it is popularly used within qualitative tourism research (Camprubí & Coromina, 2016). Being a part of the guiding community for quite a few years, made it easy for me to identify themes in my findings. Many of the themes that first came up had been discussed in previous settings, but I had never given it any deeper consideration. Subsequently, it was appropriate to start by dividing my material into six different themes, and then to start comparing it to my theoretical framework. The substantial amount of data I had also provided the potential to look deeper into other themes regarding the topic. However, in order to ensure preciseness in my research, I chose to narrow down and concentrate my work around three themes.

Adventure tourism is a growing industry within Arctic Norway. My suggestion for future studies is to go deeper into the connection between *friluftsliv* and adventure tourism. Comparing how adventure tourism is performed in Norway with similar countries could be interesting in this regard. On a national scale, I would suggest looking at the difference between how risk assessment is solved in small and big companies. For those interested in doing studies on guides, I would suggest to look deeper into how guides experience being in an intimate social enclave for a long period of time.

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Appendix

I. Interview guide

Interview guide

Introduction.

- Presentation of my project and myself.
- Information regarding the interview (e.g. anonymity of interviewee, time schedule and the data process)

Interview protocol.

Intro	**Introduction**
	Personal background
	• Name, age, where you live, where you are born, family status. • Tell a story of your own from your guiding experience: either a typical day/excursion or a situation that you will remember forever.
	Story
Question 1)	• How did you learn to interact the way you did (e.g. first aid...?) • Evaluation (personal/company) in the aftermath of the episode?

Theme 1	**Cultural background**
Question 1)	**Outdoor recreation in spare time?**
	• What outdoor activities did you do when growing up? • What kind of outdoor activities do you when not working as a guide? • What are the differences between guiding activities, and doing activities you do in your spare time?
Question 2)	**Cultural background**

	• Why did you want to become a guide? • What kind of activities do you guide today? • Where do you guide? • If an international guide, what challenges did you meet when starting to guide in Norway? (If worked in other places) What are the differences between guiding in Norway and <other place>? • Gender role in guiding? • In what way does your cultural background influence the way you work?

Theme	**Education and guiding profession**
Question 1)	**Education**
	• Do you have any guiding education? • Had you worked before you started to work as a guide? • How did it change your perspective as a guide? • If educated, to what degree does your guiding education influence the way you work? • What do you think about the arguments for requiring that guides should have certain certifications?
Question 2)	**Preparations**
	• If you had the opportunity to choose, what kind of training would like to have more of (e.g. cross-cultural communication, practical..)?
Question 3)	**Guiding**
	• What is your main concern as a guide? • What kind of products would you like to guide, that you are not guiding today? • How do you look upon guiding as a profession?

	• What do you think about participating in a guided trip yourself (e.g. multiday mountain trekking in Himalaya, crossing of the Greenland icecap or similar)?

Theme	**Working environment**
Question 1)	**Company**
	• How did the company you are working for prepare you for the work / products you were supposed to guide? • What makes you insecure when working, social/practical? • What kind of training does the company you work for provide (e.g. first aid)? • What kind of preparations do you do before guiding <product>? • What kind of information on your guests' background do you normally have before you meet them? • To what degree do you feel that the information you have got from your company is sufficient?
Question 2)	**Colleagues**
	• What is the difference between your acting when working with colleges (two or more guides) and alone? • How do you divide yourselves? Who is responsible for what and how do you communicate this to your guests?
Question 3)	**Safety**
	• What kind of risk management system has your present company, or earlier companies had? • To what degree have you as a guide contributed to evolve or improve such systems? • What situations in the products that you are guiding do you find most difficult to handle (e.g. terrain hazards, customer-related)? • What kind of accidents do your guests normally experience? • What are the most challenging situations with tourists? • How do you involve your tourists in your products (based on background information etc.)?

	• In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges in nature-based/adventure guiding will face in the future?

End of interview.

- Say thanks to the interviewee
- If you have anything you forgot to tell, or have thought about in the aftermath please let me know.

II. Information and consent letter

Information and consent letter

An inquiry on your participation in the research project

"Adventure tourism and safety in Arctic Norway – a narrative approach"

Background and interest.

My Master's thesis is motivated by the continuously growing academic and commercial interest in adventure tourism products in Arctic Norway. It is also motivated in combination with my personal experiences as present and former working guide within this area. Mostly, my personal experiences are of a positive nature, however, this is not always the case. The occupation itself, and the nature of many of the activities within the business involve a natural element of risk. In my thesis at UiT the Arctic University of Norway, my goal is to enlighten academic and commercial knowledge regarding the guides' perspectives on safety.

I have chosen my interviewees based upon their experience as guides in Arctic Norway. Beside this, the interviewees are chosen with an emphasis on covering as many products as possible delivered within this area.

What does participating in this research involve?

Participating in the study involves the participant in a 1.5-2-hour long interview. The interview will be recorded, and notes will be taken during the interview. External sources will not be used to gather data about the interview participant. The questions within the interview will mainly deal with questions regarding working as a guide, and safety. Personal information, such as name, age and residence will be gathered. However, this will be kept anonymous and depersonalized so the person cannot be identified.

What will happen with the information about you?

All personal information will be treated confidentially. It is the student, who performs the interviews, and his supervisors who have access to the data. Data will be stored behind

encryption and locked storage. The project is planned to end at the 1st of June 2016, subsequently, all data will be destroyed/deleted. Participants will not be identifiable.

Voluntarily participation

Participating in this study is voluntarily, and the participant can at any time withdraw from participating without giving any specific reason. In case you choose to withdraw, all personal information will be depersonalized and anonymous.

In case you want to participate, or have any other questions regarding the study you can contact Mats Hoel Johannessen on his cell phone number (+47)913 111 75 or by sending an email to Mats@projectspitsbergen.com

The study is reported to Data Protection for Official for Research

Approval to participate in this study

I have received information regarding the study, and approve my participation.

(Signed by participant, date)