



Getting More In and Out of the Quicksand

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Introduction

Even though past studies have examined quicksand over the years, there remains a void of research into the meaning and value of quicksand in the lives of those of individuals dubbed “sinkers.” Sinkers are quicksand enthusiasts that crave the sensation of being trapped in deep mud while being sucked downward. The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine if “sinking” can contribute to a participant’s understanding of history and natural resources at state parks.

Methodology

In order to obtain a better understanding of the effects, a qualitative study was conducted in the summer of 2016 at Stephen C. Foster State Park. Located in Charlton County, Georgia, Stephen C. Foster State Park is a primary gateway into the legendary Okefenokee Swamp, which is a gigantic peat bog.

Four quicksand enthusiasts, who self-identified as experienced sinkers, were recruited for on-site, semi-structured interviews. The researchers exercised grounded theory techniques and inductive content analysis to analyze interview data and compile coded text.

Findings & Discussion

The researchers identified four main categories: learning, enjoyment, traveling, and economic impact. Findings suggest that participants believed their knowledge of park history and natural resources increased through a recreational pursuit of quicksand.