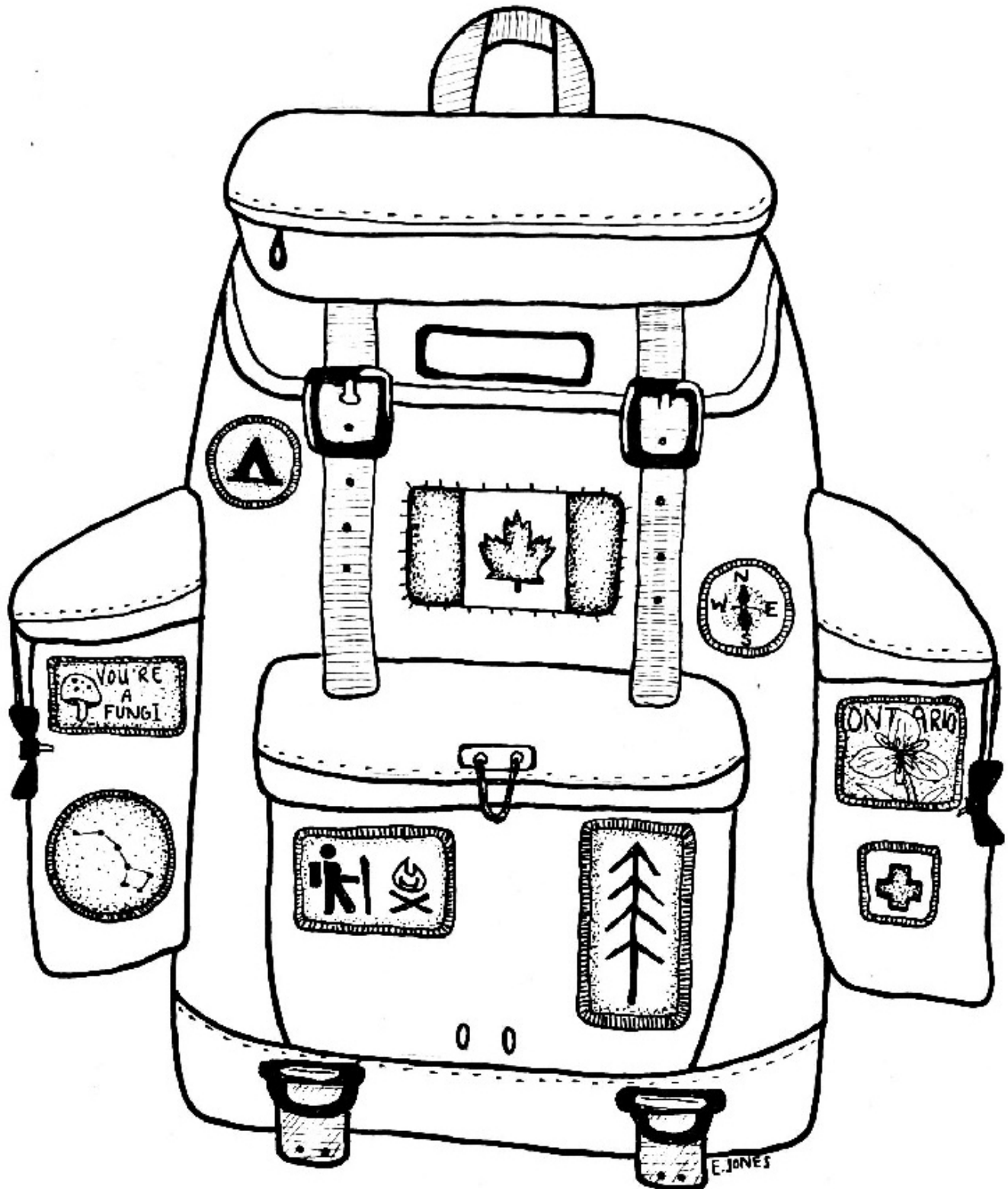


Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION
Summer 2017, 29(4)



Pathways

COEO

Formed in 1972, the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that promotes safe, quality outdoor education experiences for people of all ages. We achieve this by publishing the *Pathways* journal, running an annual conference and regional workshops, maintaining a website, and working with kindred organizations as well as government agencies. Members of COEO receive a subscription to *Pathways*, as well as admittance to workshops, courses and conferences. A membership application form is included on the inside back cover of this issue of *Pathways*.

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Kingston, Ontario K7L 4V6
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Pathways

Pathways is published four times a year for members of the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO).

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ISSN: 0840-8114

Pathways is printed on FSC recycled paper.



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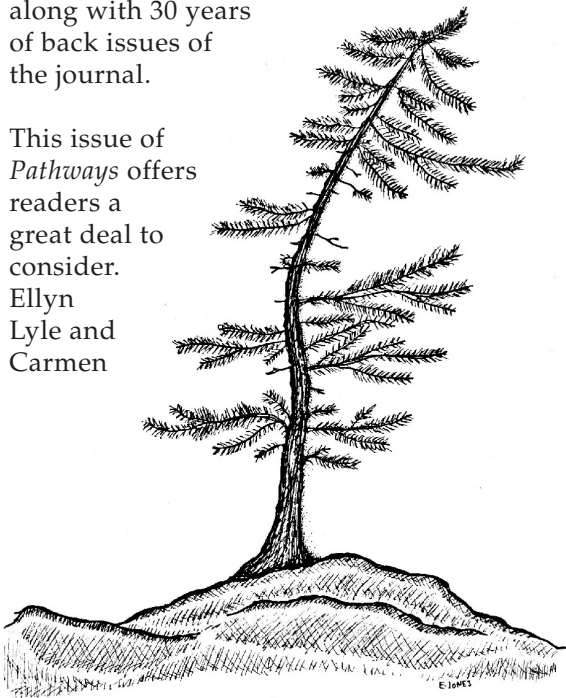
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Attention *Pathways* readers: we want to hear from you!

Have you ever thought about writing an article for *Pathways*? Well, now is your chance. There are many ways to contribute to the content of our journal. *Pathways* is the perfect place to share your program ideas, leadership tips, instructional tricks and research results or to simply voice your opinion. Perhaps there has been an article or issue you thoroughly enjoyed this year and you want to tell us about it, or a piece you disagreed with and wanted to respond to, or maybe a topic you felt was deserving of further discussion? The *Pathways* Editorial Board welcomes *Letters to the Editor*, as well as traditional articles from all our readers. Potential authors can find the journal's writing guidelines on the *Pathways* webpage within the COEO website, along with 30 years of back issues of the journal.

This issue of *Pathways* offers readers a great deal to consider.
Ellyn
Lyle and
Carmen



Schlamb propose *Leadership of Another Kind* in the lead article. They consider the value of experiential learning and relationships in leadership development, and utilize the specific context of equine-partnered experience through which to frame their inquiry. Longtime contributor to *Pathways*, Bob Henderson, shares some of the inspiration that lead to his recent publication, *Ecophilosophy Fragments*, which celebrates the life and work of Sigmund Kvaløy Setreng. Kristen Bennett mobilizes a recent research project that explores a sampling of Ontario school board policies, along with school trip regulations, to investigate the policy-based barriers preventing the implementation of outdoor education programs. Zabe MacEachren and Peter Vooy are back with the third installment of *150 Innovations and Innovators in Outdoor Education*. In celebration of Canada's bicentennial, these two authors share more of the influencers that have shaped the field of Outdoor Education in Canada. And before embarking on the forth, and final article in this series, Zabe and Peter would like to hear from you. Do you have nominations for the innovations and innovators list? What about the names of summer camps or outdoor centres with a contributing legacy to the field? Please email your suggestions to maceache@queensu.ca. In our *Beyond our Borders* article, Chris Peters, a Newfoundlander and now a regular contributor to *Pathways*, reflects on connection to place and the natural world. And finally, special thanks to Lee Beavington, who provides some *Wild Words* to conclude this summer issue.

Kyle Clarke
Editor

Sketch Pad – The art for this issue of *Pathways* was generously contributed by Emily Jones (the cover and pages 2, 7, 21, 22, 24, 26, 29, 30, 34 and 36). Emily recently graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree from the Queen's University Outdoor and Experiential Education Program (OEE). She strives to ignite a passion for the outdoors and artistic expression in her students. As well as drawing, Emily enjoys painting and photography, and is also an avid gardener. Sigmund Kvaløy Setreng's artwork appears on pages 15–16 and 19.

In the midst of the summer months, our collective thoughts have turned to paddling routes, campsites, trails and adventures yet to come. But from dockside to vista top, COEO board and committee members are also turning their thoughts and efforts to the business of keeping initiatives going for our members.

One of the projects we are most excited about is the commencement of work on our second, and yet to be named, research project and summary report. This spring, COEO hired Dr. Chloe Humphreys, and she has already begun her initial survey of the research. Chloe completed her PhD at Simon Fraser University in Curriculum Theory and has researched experiential education. She is currently working on her post-doctoral research while also raising her children. She has previously worked as a youth worker, outdoor guide and environmental teacher. We are anticipating we may be able to present at least a preliminary summary of Chloe's work at this year's fall conference. Stay tuned for further updates.

For several months now, board members Liz Kirk and Jamie Innes have been following up on discussions from our annual general meeting in 2015, encouraging COEO to continue to form relationships with those in First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) communities who may inform our practice and decisions as a COEO board. The conversations continue with the invaluable guidance of Doug Jacques, and together this core group is endeavouring to have COEO's value statements and mission/vision, as stated in our Constitution, become more formally aligned with FNMI values. We will have more for you on this at our upcoming Annual General Meeting at Camp Couchiching in September.

Registration for the fall conference is now open, and we could not be more thrilled with the roster of presenters and ideas for this year's event. Information can always be found on COEO's website. Please join us!

The Bursary Fund continues to grow thanks to donations from members like you and

other COEO initiatives. Our ultimate goal is to grow this fund to a \$20,000 base that can then be disbursed and replenished as needed. Towards this goal, COEO will be holding two fundraisers in November. Both will involve return visits by our most recent Make Peace With Winter keynote, Adam Shoalts. As many of you know, Adam is currently travelling solo across Canada in celebration of Canada's 150th. Adam will return to COEO post-expedition to share the tales of the north with us—first at an informal gathering in Owen Sound, and then later in November at a more formal dinner and presentation in Toronto. Tickets for both events will be on sale soon; watch the e-newsletter and Facebook page for details!

As usual, summer marks our membership renewal drive. COEO's membership continues to grow, and we are now up to over 400 members! You will notice a slight increase in membership fees this year. After remaining the same for many years, and in light of increasing expenses for insurance, maintaining our website, and our desire to support the bursary and many other COEO initiatives, our Board of Directors felt a slight increase was in order.

As my time as President comes to a close, I want to extend a heartfelt expression of gratitude to everyone I have worked with on COEO's Board of Directors, various committees, and behind the scenes on projects that are continually brought to fruition by the efforts of volunteers from our membership. I have so valued everything COEO has offered me throughout my career in outdoor education thus far. It has been an absolute pleasure to serve membership to the best of my abilities. This organization is full of talented, creative, wise and knowledgeable people. I encourage you as a member to tap into all that COEO has to offer at every chance you get.

Deborah Diebel
COEO President

Leadership of Another Kind: What Equine-partnered Experience Can Teach Us About Leading

By Ellyn Lyle & Carmen Schlamb

Leadership journeys are generally bookended by two markers: a starting point and a desired destination. In between these two markers, our ways of practicing leadership can take form in countless ways. Questions related to how we lead, what we value as leaders, and who and what guides us in our development are often reflected on in this liminal space. It is at this interval of the “in-between” where we as researchers pause and wish to consider that part of the journey where our actions and interactions have deep and lasting effects on the people and places within our leadership purview. In so focusing, we hope to shed light on a different conceptualization of leadership—one that values the role played by the unexpected and unsolicited experience in leadership development, and one with a view of leadership as relationship that resides in collaborative learning and equitable interactions.

Our starting point comes from Kelly (2014) who offers the provocation that “leadership” has no substantive definition, content or meaning in and of itself; rather, “it is a linguistic and symbolic container for other things: for our hopes, dreams, aspirations, fears, and desires” (p. 217). As such, he says, leadership can stand for anything. What matters is the effect we have on others. Drawing on the impossibility of knowing fully what others are thinking or feeling, we present in this paper the human–horse relationship as a creative exemplar that teaches us to be attentive to behaviours, needs, actions and reactions of those with whom we engage. By shifting away from operational outcomes, we aim to foster a collectivism in which all participants in the leader–follower relationship are involved and invested (Hiam, 2002; Kelly, 2014).

Being both involved and invested implies a certain mutuality that is too often subjugated by the pursuit of power and dominance commonplace in organizational hierarchy.

Seeking to explore this mutuality as a means of fostering leadership as relationship, we searched our histories for experiences that could guide us. We found ourselves in barns, on trails, on beaches, along rivers and in the mountains—often on horseback. It occurred to us, then, that our experiences working with horses have provided a unique context in which we might consider what it means to lead.

Learning from Leaders of Another Kind

Regular interaction with animals exposes human reliance on verbal communication and its limitations. People tend to compensate for these limits by anthropomorphizing animals and then attributing to them qualities that are familiar and recognizable to humans (Horowitz & Bekoff, 2015). This attribution, which allows us to maintain control of the relationship at the expense of authenticity, is more easily executed with some animals than with others. Small animals historically domesticated, like dogs, fit well into this practice. Not only are they a manageable size and reside with us in our own domiciles, they also share with us a predatory predilection that predisposes us to a more intuitive understanding of each other. Think for a moment about our relationships with dogs. They run and play and wag their tails when greeting us. When we return the affection, they roll over on their backs and put their feet in the air. When a dog shows her belly this way, she is saying, “here are my vulnerable areas, and I’m going to trust you to play nice.” She can do this because she is also a predator. Because a dog is a predator, it is hard-wired to protect itself and therefore can choose to be submissive. Our dogs, like us, think, assess, act, react, calculate and plan to persevere based on their instincts.

By comparison, a horse is a prey animal and is naturally predisposed to flight for self-preservation. In short, we are natural

enemies of horses. Overcoming such a starting point is integral to building a relationship. Having no frontal cortex in their brains, horses do not separate how they feel and how they behave (Grandin & Johnson, 2005). They have no hidden agendas and harbour no judgments. In the words of Irwin, “[t]hey are deep but transparent” (2007, p. 12). Interactions with horses represent a unique opportunity to explore leadership critically and creatively (Gehrke, 2009). Our learning experiences with horses, supported by our backgrounds in leadership theory and practice, prompted us to consider how much more horses may have to teach us about equitable interactions with each other and the development of leadership as relationship outside a hierarchical-based system.

Equine-partnered Experience: In Theory

While people have been relying on horses for thousands of years, a scholarly examination of the human–horse bond is still emerging. As such, the field of study is yet to develop a standardized diction that can aptly help scholars and practitioners more readily determine where one approach ends and another begins. That acknowledged, there tends to be three main human–horse approaches relevant to leadership discussions: equine assisted learning, equine guided learning and equine-partnered experience. While proponents of each of these fields claim partnership with horses to improve human learning outcomes, there are some significant differences.

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL), the most common expression of human–horse learning approaches, is taught on the ground and requires no prerequisite knowledge of horses (Duff, 2010). Somewhat glibly coined by avid horsepersons as “the pool noodle approach to leadership” (Jones, 2015), EAL uses props to have leadership participants navigate horses through a series of obstacles and activities while noting the horses’ responses to participants’ feelings and behaviours. Rather than equal participant in the

learning, the horse is an objectified tool in the training process. While EAL claims to support the development of relationship-based leadership, it is heavily criticized in horsemanship for perpetuating command and control approaches. More specifically, it is condemned for claiming to teach communication skills and effective team leadership when its approach negates the experiences of fully half of the participants (Jones, 2015).

Equine Guided Education (similarly referred to as equine facilitated learning and equine guided learning) also involves the use of experiential learning but includes reflection as a part of the process. Specifically, this approach posits that the horse has an innate ability to mirror participant intentions and, in doing so, enables deeper self-awareness (Duff, 2010). Drawing on the pioneering work of Ariana Strozzi (2004), it maintains that leadership is about relationships and, thus, focuses on using horses to help participants develop insight regarding how they relate to others. While this approach understands that relationships are central to the development of equitable, effective and sustainable leadership, it still positions the horse as a tool. Further, it is undergirded by the assumption that horses instinctively mirror human behaviour, arguably an impossibility given that human–horse instincts are in direct opposition to one another. More accurate, perhaps, would be a claim that horses react to human behaviour providing stimuli on which participants can critically reflect.

Differing from the previous two approaches, practitioners of *Equine-partnered Experience* (EPE) recognize horses as sentient beings and respect them as participants in concomitant leadership development. They understand that horses not only respond to emotional energy, but also assist in exposing the consequences of emotion-driven behaviours (Gehrke, 2009; McCraty, 2006). Further, they acknowledge that this energetic connection is the foundation on which effective and sustainable relationships are built. When considered in the context of leadership, EPE challenges

traditional models that are based in analytical conditioning and, thus, objectify followers. Further, EPE resists prioritization of quantitative analysis in favour of qualitative observation as it endeavours to foster trust-based approaches to leadership development in which relationships are integral (Cain & Roberts-Loucks, 2015; Goleman, 2006).

Equine-partnered Experience: In Practice—Ellyn

I had a beautiful Appaloosa mare, named Navajo, who taught me about choice. She was stubborn and independent and free-spirited and, because I shared those qualities, I never had the heart to discourage them in her. I often received criticism from other trainers because Navajo was reputed to be impossible. She ran when she wanted, stopped when she chose, and cut her own path. I loved her for it. Of course, no one else would ride her because they didn't understand her. If you asked her to do something, she would choose to concede almost unfailingly. If you demanded something of her, you'd better hold on tight because she was set to teach you some manners. I learned these things about her over the course of several years but the most memorable lesson came one day as I repaired a fence. As I pulled my bright yellow truck inside the field and then reclosed the gate, Nav jogged around with her head held high, inspecting the truck and assessing its threat. I chatted away with her, sparing her the occasional rub between the eyes, as I rounded up my fencing tools and headed to the south side of the pasture. The pasture spilled down a grassy knoll toward the bay that skirted the south and east boundaries of my property. At the far corner, I began the ritual well known to me: I slipped on my leather gloves, secured my tool belt, took care not to drop any hazards when loading my belt with spikes and insulators, grabbed my hammer and fence puller, and set off toward the eastern corner.

Muscles tense from exertion, I stopped to grab a drink when I finished the first boundary. Back at the truck, Nav was still curiously circling around, flicking her ears and blowing. Had I paid more attention to her and less to fencing, the outcome might have been different. But I did not. I returned to fencing and began another

boundary. As I made the corner, I heard a horrible crunching that I couldn't identify. I stopped hammering and listened. The sound stopped momentarily then persisted. That's when it dawned on me: her curiosity as she looked between my truck and me; her ear flicking toward one and then the other as she circled considering her choices. I dropped my tools and loped up the crest of hill toward my truck. I felt humour and horror in equal parts as I came upon my mare eating the hood of my pick-up. Having been ignored by me, Nav explored other options. She saw herself in my metallic yellow hood as she communicated her desire to expand her herd. The reflection mirrored her own thereby engaging her and winning her trust. Amazement aside, I had to stop my mare from eating my truck. Counting on our bond, I hopped in the truck and laid on the horn. She reared, turned her back on the vehicle and, as I removed it from the field, she pranced nervously awaiting my return. Because our bond was solid, and she recognised me as part of her herd, the blaring of the horn she presumably understood as the truck's sudden aggression. My removal of the truck confirmed for her that I was safe and she chose me once more as part of her herd. It was a valuable lesson about sustainable relationships to have only cost me a new hood (Lyle, 2012, pp. 63–64).

Viewing Leadership as Relationship Through a Deweyian Lens of Experience: In Theory

If we assume the Deweyian perspective that the “meaningful nature of the informal” supports the “intentional planning and learning goals of the formal” (Wojcikiewicz & Mural, 2010, p. 107), then authentic leadership begins in the act of experience for both participant and leader. Dewey's (1938) theory of experience purports that meaningful education is born from both the continuity of personal experience (the past informs the future) and the realization of experience as teacher. This theory advocates for active learning as a continuous process and places emphasis on a democratic learning environment where the learner's motivations for taking part are clear (Dewey, 1916/2005, 1938). Ballard, Shellman and Hayashi (2006),

in their research focused on outdoor leadership, a field “by nature experiential,” identify three overarching themes integral to the development of the outdoor leader grounded in both shared and individual experiences: intrapersonal relationship development; interpersonal relationship development; and development of a relationship to the natural environment (p. 6). This emphasis on the importance of understanding relationships in a variety of contexts demonstrates the necessity of “direct experience” (Ballard, Shellman & Hayashi, 2006, p. 5) in advancing the holistic development of the leader.

Relationships are dynamic and, as such, leadership driven by relationships is in constant reflexivity. To support this notion of constant change, Warren (2007) encourages a more encompassing definition of leadership that goes beyond a simple focus on the role of the “expert” and “the static nature of competencies” (p. 434). An expanded view of leadership that considers the integral role of relationships allows

a more inclusive leadership practice to emerge. Leadership based in relationships where trust, adept communication, accountability and humility are paramount allow for a multiplicity of voices to be heard that were once silent (Greene, 1994).

This act of inclusion not only creates a more authentic learning environment, it also creates a “climate for learning” (Stoltz, 1992, p. 371). If we do what Warren (2007) suggests and broaden the interpretation of what leadership is (go beyond the concept of mastery), then the act itself of experiencing what it means to lead “can have inherent meaning” (Ballard, Shellman, & Hayashi, 2006, p. 12). This is what Dewey called the “educative experience,” the act of doing combined with an openness to experience more (Dewey, 1916/2005, 1938). As Wojcikiewicz and Mural (2010) state, Dewey’s focus on growth and a search for “an increase in connection with the world” was the ultimate goal of life and education (p. 109). Active participation by all participants is



necessary in a leadership-as-relationship model as is exposure to experiences that challenge our notion of what it means to lead. As Propst and Koesler (1998) state, “the more one participates, the more likely the opportunities for leadership growth will avail themselves” (p. 320). These opportunities may come from planned or unplanned experiences and may include the help of participants previously unconsidered.

Viewing Leadership as Relationship Through a Deweyian Lens of Experience: In Practice—Carmen

I grew up a country girl on the Canadian prairies but my family never kept horses. Perhaps it was their size that was intimidating to me, or the way the local riders talked about having to “break” this one or that one, but horses always commanded from me a silent respect and, as a result, I admired them at a distance. As a child, my connection with other animals was strong and I cared for a multitude of dogs, cats, rabbits and birds on our large country property. My role in those relationships was clear and satisfying: I was their caregiver and trainer. As an adult, my career as an environmental educator brought me in constant contact with wild species; I observed them quantitatively through the eyes of science and, occasionally, qualitatively through the eyes of art. My role as observer and analyst was clear and informative.

I’m not sure what prompted me last summer (and several decades beyond my childhood) to seek the company of horses. I had ridden horses on several occasions before, through one-hour trail rides, fairs and resort activities, but I had never engaged with them in an authentic way. Perhaps it was the urging of my trusted friend who sought horseback riding opportunities like an avid collector scours antique malls, or maybe it was the positive development I had noticed recently in my young daughter who took riding lessons once a week, but whatever the catalyst, I committed on that summer day to what I thought would be a casual and entertaining event.

I wasn’t prepared for the learning experience I would have with Dallas, a school horse from one of the local stables with a reputation for being good with beginners. Upon my arrival, the trainer insisted my relationship with Dallas begin with me grooming and tacking him myself and, as I climbed on his back and clung to his reins for security, I regarded him with that familiar respect of being on his turf. He must have sensed my lack of commitment to building an equitable relationship because he quickly made his way out of the riding arena to munch on hay in the corner of the paddock. After regaining what I thought was “control” over Dallas, I used uncertain and clumsy hand and body movements to direct his trot. At one point he stopped dead in his tracks and turned to eyeball me over his shoulder as if to say “I’m fine with you taking the lead for now but I have to trust you know our direction.” Dallas reminded me on that day what it took me years to learn as an environmental/educator—that meaningful leadership is based in relationships rooted in shared experiences, equality, respect and mutual discovery.

Authentic Ways of Being in Leadership

Intrigued by the human–horse bond and its potential to inform a new approach of leading others, we surveyed the literature in equine-partnered experience and leadership. What we uncovered is the centrality of relationship to the development of sustainable leadership and how relationship is supported by particular ways of being: trust; adept communication; accountability; humility; and courage to change.

Trust

Not surprisingly, trust emerged repeatedly as integral to success in join-up and equitable, effective and sustainable leadership (Brannaman, 2006; Cain and Roberts–Loucks, 2015; Covey, 2006; Irwin, 2007; Klausner, 2012; Kouzes & Posner, 2003; Lencioni, 2013; Rashid, 2014; Rickards, 2000; Roberts, 1997, 2001, 2002, 2004). Defined as a willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of another party (Cain and Roberts–Loucks, 2015), trust is revealed as more often expected than offered and experts say this balance must

shift if leaders aim to create more equitable workplaces (Rashid, 2014).

In an effort to develop an understanding of its centrality, Covey (2006) articulates trust as either relating to self, or self in relation to others. Exploring self-trust, Covey identifies credibility as the foundation on which all trust relationships are built. He also pinpoints four cores of credibility, the first two of which have implications for character, and the latter two of which point to competence: integrity (having to do with congruence); intent (having to do with agenda); capabilities (having to do with relevance); and results (having to do with past performance). Exploring trust in relation with others, Covey focuses primarily on behaviours that advance trust building.

As researched by Shooter, Paisley and Sibthorp (2010), trust development is a major component of successful leadership. Factors such as honesty, crisis management, knowledge of direction and expectation, demonstration of respect and effective communication are all considered important in building trust and positive relationships between participants and leaders.

Of special note is the influential role a leader's technical and interpersonal skills play in developing trust among participants (Shooter, Paisley, & Sibthorp, 2010). Dallas, the school horse mentioned earlier, did not perceive technical and interpersonal skill in Carmen's riding abilities and, due to a lack of effective communication, decided to do what horses enjoy most—eat hay. His willingness to return to the riding arena without much coaxing, though, indicates a readiness on his part to try again in the relationship, speaking much of his character, a highly influential factor in participant trust (Shooter, Paisley, & Sibthorp, 2010). Both horse and rider made attempts at leading in this initial experience resulting in a greater understanding of each other's needs. In this way, we can see that the opportunity to lead is, in itself, imperative to leadership development (Medina, 2015). How we approach communication and accountability in leadership is examined next.

Adept Communication

Boies, Fiset and Gill (2015) rank adept communication equally important as trust. Most frequently, skilled communication calls to mind clarity and consistency in sharing vision, detailing expectations and providing feedback (Hiam, 2002; Irwin, 2007). Generally speaking, leaders are pretty good at these outgoing messages. But, as Stahl-Wert and Jennings (2007) remind us, communication is far more nuanced than simply talking; it involves “daily, disciplined, and consistent actions” (p. 23). The most important of these actions is deep and committed listening (Brannaman, 2006; Hiam, 2002; Irwin, 2007; Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Looking more closely at deep listening, the literature indicates that this process is at least twofold: first, leaders must learn to *listen to other*—to ask instead of tell and, in doing so, engage others in creating a shared vision and strategy; second, leaders must learn to *listen to self*—to be attentive to the inner wisdom of body and intuition to guide them in making sound, ethical decisions (Covey, 2006; Irwin, 2007; Rashid, 2014).

Learning to listen requires a special kind of awareness and emotional intelligence. Horses are excellent teachers here. As prey animals, they live in a constant state of 360 degrees of awareness; their survival depends on it. Being sentient rather than cerebral, horses rely on their emotional responses to cue flight responses as necessary. They also use their emotional intelligence to assess the risk posed by anyone or anything entering their environment. Said another way, horses use emotional signals as information. Kohanov (2013, p. 236) goes so far as to say that “horses are models of emotional sanity” and, partnering with them, leaders can learn to deconstruct emotional triggers in self and others thereby creating a more stable and safe workplace.

In 1987, Priest performed a meta-analysis of an international study of experiential education experts that revealed effective communication as an important inclusion

in the 12 “critical core competencies” essential to effective leadership (Priest & Gass, 2005, p. 3). Defined as “information exchange between two or more people resulting in behavioral change,” effective communication includes the transmission of actions, emotions or ideas through tactile, visual or auditory means (Priest & Gass, 2005, p. 5). Leaders need to rely on skills involved in generating, decoding, interpreting and receiving messages and use clarification and feedback wherever necessary to ensure the message that was sent was the same one they received (Priest & Gass, 2005). Horses provide us with an excellent opportunity to hone these communication skills and to develop more intuitive skills by moving us beyond the dominant verbal method of communication. First Nations have long considered horses as “tellers of the truth,” who innately desire to be good and who will “lead individuals in the ‘right direction’” and “assist others in understanding their place in the circle of life (Dell, Chalmers, Dell, Sauvé, & MacKinnon, 2008, p. 88).

Accountability

Having emerged powerfully alongside communication in Covey’s (2006) discussion of trust, accountability is a recurring theme in both equine-partnered experience and leadership. Lack of accountability, warns Irwin (2007), most often manifests as blame: “Be on guard against blame. Every time you hear yourself blaming someone else, you are in denial” (p. 74). The ability to inform a different path forward resides within each of us and the failure to do so is solely our responsibility. Similarly, Kohanov (2013) advises leaders to avoid shame and guilt. Both, she says, “are indicators that we are not holding ourselves accountable” (p. 248). Further, they fall within traditional and oppressive approaches to leadership that are coercive and emotionally manipulative. Accountability, evidenced by an internal locus of control, better equips leaders to foster a sense of agency and maintain forward momentum (Irwin, 2007).

Humility

Avoiding blame and accepting accountability can be challenging for some, as it requires the courage to admit to personal failures and commit to learning from them. This ability is closely connected to another theme that emerges in both leadership and equine-based literature: humility (Brannaman, 2006; Hiam, 20020; Irwin, 2007; Nahavandi, 2015). Leaders are generally expected to project confidence and competence. But, as Starkey (n.d.) warns, this attitude leads to only two possible outcomes: leaders can pretend they have all the answers, often fearing that any demonstration of uncertainty will be detrimental to their careers; or they can actually believe they have all the answers and reside in arrogance until such a time when they are faced with irrefutable evidence to the contrary. Citing a conversation with the Dean of Harvard Business School, Nitin Nohria, Starkey argues that leaders need to demonstrate moral humility and shift their focus from purely operational and economic concerns to include humanism and critical reflection. A leader who is motivated by humility and service to others, says Nahavandi (2015), fosters those relationships integral to trust-based leadership. If a leader surveys the workplace context and recognizes that the relationships are not healthy and beneficial for all parties, that leader must have the courage to change.

Courage to Change

Several scholars of both equine-partnered experience and leadership indicate that the courage to change is essential (Brannaman, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2003; Irwin, 2007). Specifically, this requires that leaders are critically conscious of the current reality of their workplaces and honest about their observations. It requires that they celebrate positive practices with their employees and accept accountability for any failures, looking for opportunities for improved practice. It often requires embracing periods of chaos. Jayne (2009) describes this chaos as the breakdown of existing relationships or the failure of existing relationships to yield desired results. When confronted

with this state, he says, leaders have four choices: they can reside in the chaos and allow its ineffectiveness to become the new baseline; they can terminate the problematic relationship without necessarily addressing the issue; they can retreat from the opportunity to change and revert to how things were; or they can dig in and pursue change. Kouzes & Posner (2003) remind us that challenging existing processes and creating healthier relationships is the only leadership option that provides advancement of all. It requires a commitment to the collective and, with that, a tireless pursuit of equitable, effective, and sustainable practice.

Courage to change can be seen as the product of transformative learning. Transformative learning, or the process of effecting change within what Mezirow (1997) calls our “frames of reference” (what we value, how we feel, what we associate together), allows the learner to accept possible new realities within “a frame of reference that is more inclusive, discriminating, self-reflective, and integrative of experience” (p. 5). Transformative learning can often be the result of educative experiences, where events (whether planned or unplanned) can trigger an individual to become aware of an assumption or limitation she holds, and with that awareness may come opportunity to reflect critically and consider alternatives previously unimagined (Cranton, 2002). This process may transform the way she sees the world and how she makes sense of it (Cranton, 2002), allowing for change to become possible. Courage to initiate that change may be supported by a relationship that “provides an ever-changing balance of challenge, support, and learner empowerment” (Cranton, 2002, p. 70). Working with horses opens the door for transformative learning to enter. With their help, we take risks and show our vulnerability, and this creates a space in which our conventions and mindsets may be challenged and transformed (Nwei, n.d.).

Thoughts as We Part Company

Drawing from the reflections of Federman (n.d.), we offer the reminder that

contemporary leadership is not about leading so much as it is about providing a safe space for others to succeed and then getting out of their way. This means that relationship-based leadership resides in the achievement of intended effects more than the attainment of specified goals. “The world,” Federman reminds us, “has become far too complex, and therefore, far too unpredictable, volatile, and ambiguous for any fixed objectives to remain relevant for long” (n.p.). The fluid contexts in which we lead require trust-based approaches undergirded by adept communication, accountability, humility and courage to change.

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Ecophilosophy Fragments

By Bob Henderson

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From the Introduction

ELVETID (*River Time*) is an exquisite book in Norwegian honouring the life and work (meaningful work) in text and drawings of Sigmund Kvaløy Setreng. We (Bob Henderson and Aage Jensen) knew of this pending publication following the death of Sigmund, May 27, 2014. We had discussed collecting together Sigmund's English writings and selecting choice excerpts to accompany many fine, and related drawings from Sigmund's body of work. We would add to this, testimonies from an array of Sigmund's friends and colleagues; and we are happy to consider ourselves part of that friendship world - Ecophilosophy Fragments is the result.

We particularly cherish the memory of being present at Sigmund's 75th birthday celebration in Lom, Norway. It is fitting that Aage, myself and preface writer (and good friend to us both) Bob Jickling are central to this book project. Together we worked as servers for the 75th birthday occasion. Indeed, Aage was a main organizer and menu planner and the two Bob's were happy sidekicks. Here in 2009, we learned first hand the adoration felt by so many. We were surrounded by Sigmund's family and many close friends. The mood was celebratory and charmed. In the next room was an art exhibition of Sigmund's drawings. Personally, I felt (still do) like a privileged Canadian kid amongst brilliance. Aage and Bob Jickling must have shared in the sense of "brilliance". Why? Because, here we are reviewing this English manuscript meant to celebrate, we hope in a charmed way, just some of the life's work of Sigmund Kvaløy Setreng.

With these pages, we hope to introduce Sigmund to many new folks and share in his memory with others who knew him. We hope this English language treatment is a fitting compliment to ELVETID (*River Time*). We hope there is an audience of learners ready to be challenged/

excited/informed, and certainly inspired, by Sigmund, as so readily portrayed in the collection of testimonies. Thank you to all those who have shared their memories and inspiration.

From pages 31–32

Inspiration from Gandhi, Buddhism and Norwegian Folk Tales

a) Influence from Buddhism

"It proved necessary for us, the 'academically prepared' group members to spend several years de-learning our 'off-the-ground' language ... I gradually came to use a lot of visual illustrations."

Several of the group members, [Ecophilosophy Group] had a university background, but we learned quickly that going into ecophilosophy required of us that we spend much time talking and listening to people with no academic training. But to have fruitful exchanges in this direction it proved necessary for us, the 'academically prepared' group members, to spend several years de-learning our "off-the-ground" language. As part of that, I gradually came to use a lot of visual illustrations, like cartoons telling stories, and as symbols, also under inspiration from Buddhist culture. If we are looking for a new, universal paradigm, a new basic pattern for understanding, new glasses to reveal a new "reality", something that will replace the mechanistic, analytical approach – still the vehicle in which the West travels – it is essential to speak a language so that the effort, step-by-step, is shared by the world community at large.⁴

b) Buddhism Selfless Action

"Having acted – with all our care and strength – was our success! And slowly the politicians and the broader public began seeing the light".

We also read about and were inspired by Buddhist "non-attachment" and the "homeless life". Being fond of aimless wandering in the mountains, we were of course happy to find 2,500 years-old support, when the Buddha says: "I thought that life was oppressive in a house full of dust. Living in a house it is not easy to lead a full, pure and polished spiritual life, but the open air is better" (Majjhima Nikaya). So we thought: "Let us use our love for the open air and for wild nature, and go up into the mountains and do politics there!"

So that is part of the background for the decision both to philosophize and be politically active simultaneously and to fight for nature in nature. Actually, quite a bit of our ecophilosophy was conceptualized during direct, nonviolent actions in the mountains, the forests, the fields, along the coast, in the villages, and on the streets of the cities. Throughout, we were trying to protect rivers, fertile soil, fishing grounds, open-air kindergartens, etc., against heedless onslaughts by single-minded industrialism. And, as it turned out, our most successful campaigns were those in which we were able to go beyond just protesting and to build positive, constructive actions in the classical Gandhian sense, (i.e., Actions by which we were able to demonstrate our alternative, the kind of society

we wanted instead of the disintegrated state resulting from competitive industrial growth.)

First, and foremost, the Bhagavad Gita's "norm of selfless action" was our guiding star. The norm says: "Act, but do not strive for the fruit for the action!" This sounds crazy to the West, attached as it is to results that enhance individual permanency, but our step-by-step discovery was that this is the central key to everything. The norm says that the road is important, not your personal reaping of the harvest of your toil. And it is an illusion



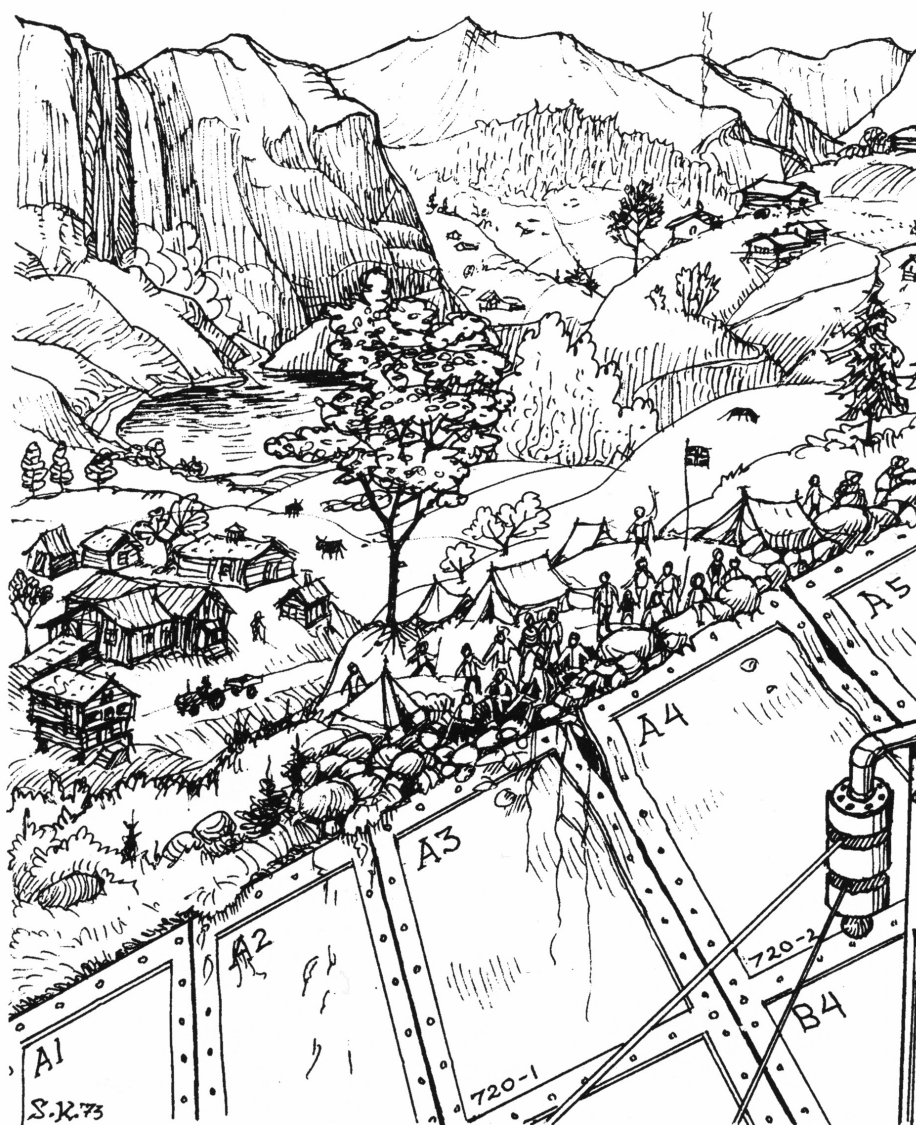
that the road has an end. At the deepest level, Buddhism teaches us that even our own toiling selves are illusory. Accepting this means a complete turn-about of lifestyle compared to the normal “means-to-end” practices of the West. And following the norm, we experienced something unexpected – invulnerability! Even if we lost a kindergarten to a four-lane road or a fishing ground to oil drilling, we didn’t feel beaten down and we didn’t stop acting. Having acted – with all our care and strength – was our success! And slowly the politicians and the broader public began seeing the light.⁵

From pages 39–43

b) Definition of Ecophilosopher

“...it [ecophilosophy] should strive to be as wide in scope as the attack upon the life-strength of the eco-system and of human society is today.”

As a starting point, I will go back sixteen years when we were more academic than we are now, and I will just state the definition of “ecophilosopher” that we made at that time. It runs as follows: An ecophilosopher is one who occupies himself or herself with the following



four kinds of pursuit, never forgetting their interrelatedness:

- *Studies of the global ecosocial system and local subsystems, and of man and human groups as dynamic entities at various depths of complex integration with that system; the latter conceived of as a self-regulating macro-organism in inter-play with matter and energy, awareness focused particularly upon relationships of process, communication and structural shifts.*
- *In this study it is attempted to use all human faculties – of intellect, sensitivity, feeling, intuition and practical experience – to grasp and integrate consciously as much as possible of the total network of interdependencies and the dynamisms of the life process, so that these insights and sensibilities are, among other things, directed towards.*
- *A critical evaluation of relevant scientific, technological and economic-political views and regimes, their basic assumptions and their impact on human attitudes and activities as well as on their relation to nature and to human society; and towards.*

The formulation of values, norms and strategies pertinent to human activities aiming at the strengthening of the dynamic steady state or ‘homeorhesis’ of the life process as well as the continuing growth of the ‘organic complexity’ of that process and the formulation of criticism of values, norms, and procedures that tend to weaken homeorhesis and to stunt that growth.

To this definition we added a commentary from which I will just quote a part:

“Ecophilosophy is here conceived of as something more than an academic discipline in the traditional sense. It is thought of as a total engagement. It should strive to be as wide in scope as the attack upon the life-strength of the ecosystem and of human society today. Ecophilosophy is a form of activity and a direction of thought that appears as something not freely chosen but as a necessity – a response required by the

total system crisis we are experiencing in the world, challenging us to attempt a deep level revision of the basic notions of our Euro-American civilization. In such an extra-ordinary situation, the limitations of the academic tradition – values-neutral and strictly intellectual – must, at least for the present, be broken out of ...”.

This was our starting point, and it was not just a definition, but a program that we subsequently tried to follow as a gradually expanding string of groups. But of course, we did not start in an historical vacuum. It has been said that the movement got off the ground earlier in Norway than elsewhere in Europe. In some respects, I think that observation is correct, and one hypothesis to explain that is the very late industrialization of Norway, coupled with the fact that Norwegians were always travelling around the world like mad, eagerly gaping at what people elsewhere were doing; and that again coupled with a strange labour movement, where half its members were small farmers. Then, when industrialization finally came, it happened as an explosion, but was met with quite a bit of awareness and suspicion. It actually all occurred during my life-time. I grew up on a mountain farm, with practices still but little removed from the Middle Ages, and at twenty-two I was an electric systems specialist on jet fighters in the Norwegian Air Force!

That collision between the old and the new cultures and its endless range of interdependent effects has gradually occupied more and more of my attention since the founding of the ecophilosophy group. It has structured a lot of projects. Right now, for instance, I have a Buddhist Sherpa friend – Tashi Tsangbo, from a remote Himalayan village – visiting at my farm in Norway. Together we are comparing the Sherpa tradition of semi-nomadic farming and cattle-herding and the similar tradition in Norway, and we are finding that these traditions are so close in vital human and social aspects that the difference is greater between my little Norwegian mountain community and Oslo, than between that community and Tashi’s village.¹⁴

From pages 54–55

Complexity versus Complication (1974)

“...the planners are wrong, or at least that talk about the ‘complexity of modern living’ is misleading.”

The planners of our present-day society very often speak about the necessity of creating human environments that are ‘colourful’, ‘rich in variety’, ‘manifold’, ‘complex’ – and often refer to findings and theories in psychology, sociology, and ecology when doing so. At the same time, they talk about modern big cities as representing an increase in diversity and complexity over the rural or small town environments they have replaced. We think that in most cases the planners are wrong, or at least that talk about the ‘complexity of modern living’ is misleading. Furthermore, we feel that such pronouncements may even serve as an especially refined way of weaving a curtain of artificial beads and glitter hiding from the public what the planners are really contributing to – a steadily increasing simplification and disruption of ecological and social complexity. Through non-ecological reasoning, modern city planners and experts of various categories in the service of industrialism give their decisions an air of unquestionable authority referring to ecology – the science that “everybody knows” is designed to give the answers to the most posing dangers facing mankind today.

In an attempt to clear our thoughts in this area, we have split up the old notion of complexity into two concepts; ‘complexity’ for ecological complexity and ‘complication’ for that kind of multifactored set of entities - relationships that can be expressed through quantification. A person who is busy solving a routine problem in calculation, finding a statistical expression for proportions of this or that within a nation’s economy, or operating some piece of machinery in a modern factory, may find the task difficult and demanding (the term ‘complication’ usually has an air associating it with stressful activity). He is, however, all the time operating on the same qualitative level - it is always a question of putting the same kind of quantities together into different patterns according to

a few (but very ingenious and productive!) standard rules and definitions that he has been taught. What he confronts is complication, not complexity.

Ecological complexity – in the wide sense needed to understand intellectually and grasp intuitively the workings of nature and human society – operates on many qualitative levels, besides the level of complication. Complication was introduced into the world by the human mind, and refers to the special cluster of difficulties and, finally, impossibilities inherent in the attempt to express complexity through quantification. Of course, looking at the world as patterns of measurable and comparable quantities has proved a useful tool for man in the attempt to master his environment; it is even useful and necessary for the future task of recreating complexity in the world – for the protection of a maximum of possibilities for continued complex growth and evolution.

What is happening today, however, is that this one level of theorizing and organizing which has given man his industrial might – the level of quantities – pushes out of serious consideration all human capacities of other levels; intuition, sensitivity, love, direct integration of body and mind in rhythmic movement with nature and fellow beings, aesthetic judgement as a force in practical matters. A person’s or group’s attachment to a specific home environment, the inner strength and self-reliance gained through such attachment, etc. Nature and its child – the human being – are continuously working on such levels, in areas of function and relationships that do not yield to ready-made, measurable entities. Neither the ecosystem nor the human being can do without them on this side of disaster. One of the obvious examples from human society is the relationship of love that binds parents and children together; a quantitative treatment of this relation would only lead to pseudo-descriptions – expressions corresponding to no real-world phenomena – but without this relationship in fresh bloom, human society could not survive.

The vast human faculty of intuition – which operates and guides our myriad minor and major decisions and movements every minute of this day – is likewise beyond quantification.

Yet our 'social engineers' are busy refining methods of understanding and control that are unsuited to the consequential consideration of any part of this faculty.

Aiding this development is the almost systematic confusion of complexity with complication. Even many leading bio-ecologists are propagating this confusion, forgetting their scientific caution as soon as they lift their eyes from grass and beetles and start talking about their own closest connecting link with nature, the human society.¹⁹

My Pal Sigmund – pages 99-100

Douglas Tompkins

I first met Sigmund Kvaløy Setreng sometime in the late 1980's when I attended some Ecoropa meetings in various places in Europe. I had already been friends with Arne Naess so I was quite prepared to listen to other Norwegian voices in the eco-philosophical circles. Immediately Sigmund and I hit it off and of course as anyone who knew Sigmund understands, he was not a difficult fellow to get to know and get to like. In the ensuing years, our paths crossed often and it could have been at his home in the Budal in middle Norway talking late into the night, climbing peaks to place plaques for Peter Wessel Zapffe, attending rallies to keep Norway out of the EU, or in London, or in the United States or he and Kirsten visiting my wife and myself at our home in Chile. Or it might have been to know Sigmund through his writings, his illustrations, his speeches and talks, or even through other colleagues who used or expanded on his ideas: As environmentalists, political activists, anti-globalists/pro-localists, mountain climbers, jazz fans and deep thinking minded types we had lots in common. It was natural that we became good friends. Above all I think we liked each other for we admired many things we found in each



other. I count myself, as at least, president of Sigmund's South American Fan Club!

For many of us who have spent years as thinkers, writers, conservationists, or eco-social activists Sigmund had a profound impact. I can say for myself that he was indeed a "guru" of mine, a great teacher and if I had to get down to just a handful of great books and essays I would put in the top 4-5 of my extensive reading collection, Sigmund's essay and Schumacher lecture, "Complexity and Time: Breaking the Pyramid's Reign". This is a masterpiece and his distinctions of complex and complicated are forever etched in my mind and my thinking. "Gaia Versus Servoglobe" is also one of the very best technology critiques and in the league with the greats like Ellul, Mumford, Ilich, Mander or Winner. Re-reading that today is

to clearly understand how advanced Sigmund's thinking was. I rank him as one of the absolute greats of the last hundred years. Unfortunately, his ideas, his writing and thinking has not been well enough distributed outside the Norwegian/Nordic world, and hopefully this will be redressed with such publications as this.

Like all vanguard thinkers, they are always ahead of their time and there is a "cultural lag" that takes a while for society to come to understand the leading-edge philosophers, thinkers and writers and for events to play out in real life for their ideas to be well appreciated. What I see is that it is only a matter of time before the world will really "hear from" Sigmund Kvaløy Setreng, that this "cultural lag" is in fact catching up and catching up fast. Recently I was to give a talk in New York City at the Mega-Tech Teach-in at Cooper Union and was pondering on just what to speak about. I procrastinated for months in preparing my talk and as I got more and more anxious wondering what to speak on I re-read Gaia Versus Servoglobe and had a kind of reawakening to just how far out ahead of all of us Sigmund really was. I contemplated not delivering my own talk but to simply address the audience with a brief introduction saying that there was not much need to labor over what would surely be a second-rate speech when I should enlighten the audience by simply reading this essay by Sigmund. After all, it was all there in that one essay what has happened within the techno-industrial culture since and Sigmund articulated it with brilliance nearly thirty years before. What use would it be to try to even improve on it now?! That essay was like good wine, it improved with age.

My recommendation for anyone interested in leading edge thinking is to do a modicum of research and come up with all the writing and recorded speeches of Sigmund's and do the scholarship that I assure will become the basis for a rich and rewarding intellectual leap forward in one own thinking. I can guarantee it from personal experience that the time it takes to find and read Sigmund's writing will be the best time investment one can make: A life changing experience, for it will forever change the way one looks at the world. Right here in this book is a good place to start.

Douglas Tompkins – One-time businessman, conservationist and conservation philanthropist, farmer, untitled architect/designer, environmental activist, climber, skier, kayaker, foil fencer, art collector, photographer and broad generalist of the Sigmund Kvaløy Setreng description.

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Bob Henderson retired from McMaster University in 2010, however still enjoys spending time teaching within a variety of outdoor education programs and settings. If interested in purchasing a copy of the book, contact author Bob Henderson at bhender@mcmaster.ca.



Policy Barriers to Outdoor Education in Ontario

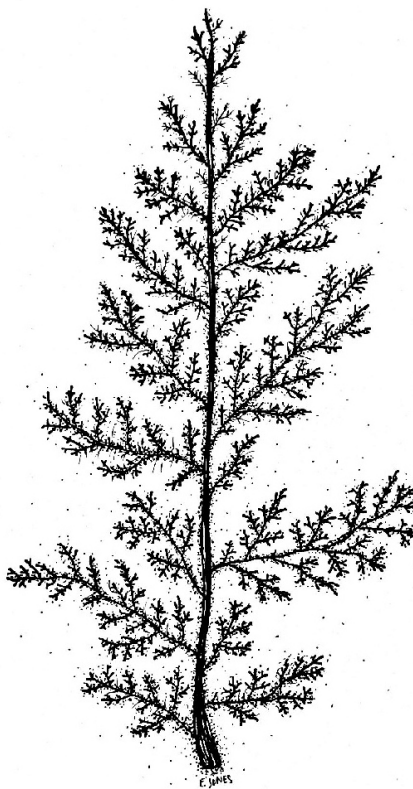
By Kristen Bennett

The Ontario Ministry of Education defines environmental education as “education about the environment, for the environment, and *in* the environment” (emphasis added) (Ontario Working Group on Environmental Education, 2007). Despite this definition, and a 2007 ministry plan to increase environmental education initiatives across the province, there is a lack of policy-based support for outdoor, experiential learning in Ontario schools. Despite the vast body of research that shows the benefits of outdoor experiences, each successive generation is spending less and less time outside and more and more time indoors, engaged with a myriad of technological devices and screens (see for example, Blanchet-Cohen & Elliot, 2011; Louv, 2008; MacEachren, 2013). It would seem obvious, then, that there is a need to get our youth outside and engaged in learning through the environment, so that they may develop a lifelong commitment to environmental awareness (Clarke & Mcphie, 2014; Preston, 2012) and reap the rewards that learning in nature has to offer.

The 2009 *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow* policy framework mandated Ontario school boards to implement environmental education policies with an aim to ensure that students will become informed, active citizens who will play a critical role in the future development of our society and global environment (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009). This paper explores a sample of such Ontario school board policies, along with school trip regulations, to investigate the policy-based barriers preventing the implementation of outdoor education (OE) programs.

In the 1970s and 1980s, there was an emphasis on OE in Canada, with many OE centres opening, and funding for teachers to participate in related professional development (Potter & Henderson, 2004). Unfortunately, today’s Ontario educators face many challenges in planning and implementing OE programs, such as

teacher knowledge and comfort, resources and administrative support, liability concerns, and connecting the activities to the curriculum (New, 2016). They are also challenged by a lack of clear policies on which they may ground their practices.



Approach

My overall approach for this study was to conduct a document analysis of policies, procedures and other articles that were easily accessible through Ontario school board websites. I randomly selected one Catholic school board and one public district school board from each of six geographic regions loosely based on the Ontario Secondary School Teacher’s Federation’s geographic regions (Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation, 2017) (see Table 1). I visited each selected board’s website to locate their policies and procedures and then downloaded

Table 1: Regional School Board Distribution for Sampling

OSSTF Regions	New Region Designations	Number of Boards	
		Catholic	Public
1	North West (NW)	5	4
2	North East (NE)	7	6
3 / 4	Central (C)	6	6
	South Central (SC)	5	5
	South West (SW)	7	6
5	East (E)	7	8
Total (72)		37	35

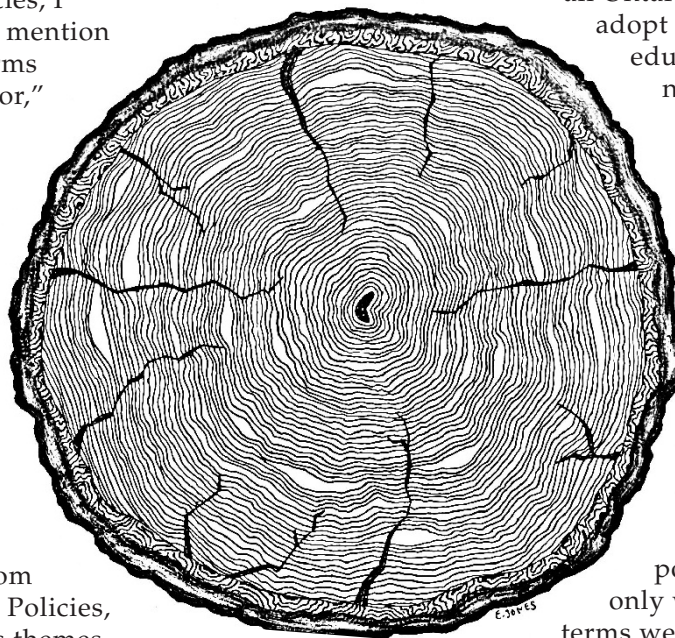
their respective environmental education and school trip policies, along with any additional information related to outdoor and environmental education (such as descriptions of outdoor education centres or special programs).

In reading the environmental education policies, I sought specific mention of OE using terms such as “outdoor,” “out of class,” “in the environment” or “experiential.” I also completed a second, broader scan that included terms relating to participation within the community. From the School Trip Policies, I coded various themes relating to support for trips, trip approval procedures, and any direct references to OE activities. Lastly, the “other” information I collected included programs relating to environmental or outdoor education such as Specialist High Skills Major (Ontario Ministry of

Education, 2016) focusing on environment, partnerships with OE centres, or any other relevant programs.

Findings

Despite nearly a decade having passed since the government mandated all Ontario school boards to adopt an environmental education policy, only nine of the 12 boards had such policies available. Four boards had policies specifically for environmental education; the others presented broad policies that included environmental practices beyond the curriculum. Within the nine policies examined, only when the broadest terms were considered did the majority of school boards reflect OE in their environmental education policies. It was disappointing, yet unsurprising, that only five environmental education policies showed direct references to outdoor or experiential learning, including four that simply quoted the



Ontario Ministry of Environment definition of environmental education (“in the environment”).

Geographically, boards from the northern regions had fewer policies and OE programs in place. Despite ample access to natural settings, I expect the more scattered population and lower financial resources are key factors here. Unexpectedly, public boards showed more policy-based support for OE, and were also home to 10 of the 11 outdoor education centres, and six of the eight Environment Specialist High School Majors. It is likely that there is an overarching difference in the mandates of the Catholic school boards, which do not allow for as much room to incorporate OE in their curriculum, or perhaps simply a difference in ideology of the board administrators who may not value OE as highly as administrators in the public boards. Since Catholic boards make up half of the board population, this is clearly an area where improvement is needed moving forward.

Several themes emerged from the review of the school trip policies, including general statements of support for activities and trips outside the classroom; a requirement that trips have relevance to curricular material; a value for trips to be accessible to all students; and descriptions of the administrative procedures for planning and gaining approval for the trips. With regards to explicit OE references, many boards included them as examples of school trips although only two directly stated support for all ages and grades to have opportunities to learn about, appreciate and respect nature and to increase environmental stewardship. Despite a general recognition of OE as an activity option, many barriers were also presented in the form of additional planning and forms, approval from the board instead of just the principal, and in one case even an outright ban on wilderness and winter camping activities. The rationale given for these separate requirements was that these activities were deemed to hold a higher risk to the students. These challenges

were expected, as reports from teacher interviews have previously revealed that board and ministry policies are the biggest challenge teachers face in implementing OE programming (New, 2016). While the boards often discussed ensuring that school trips be accessible to all students, this may in fact be an additional barrier to the implementation of outdoor activities for students with disabilities.

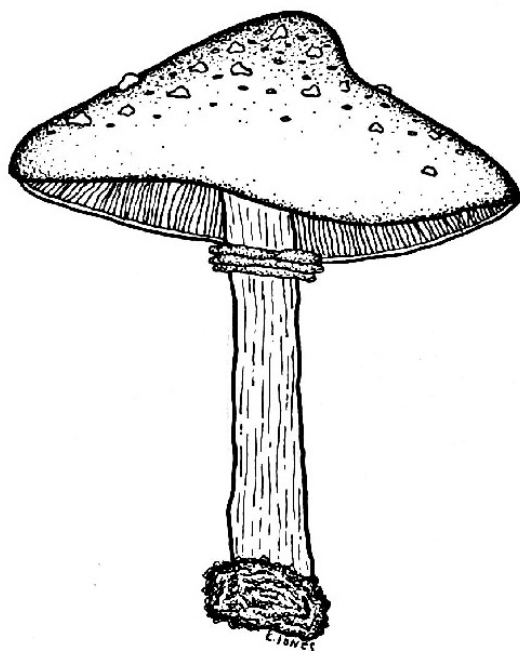
Final Thoughts

Due to the many policy-based barriers teachers currently face, it takes a committed educator to pursue OE in their teaching practice. Thanks to a generational shift that now sees less outdoor engagement, teacher candidates and new teachers alike have fewer firsthand experiences in nature and should therefore be provided with more training on how to integrate the outdoors into the curriculum. The vast benefits of OE should outweigh the liability concerns of administrators, and, beyond teacher training, Ontario school boards must shoulder the responsibility of creating policies and procedures to provide clear direction and support for this type of learning. Unfortunately, the 2007 mandate to increase education *in* the environment has not led to a fulfillment of this obligation. If we are to move forward with hopes of our children being engaged with and caring for the natural world, our educational policies and teacher training practices must return to the levels of support they received in earlier decades. This is critical for the sustainability, enjoyment and educational potential that the great outdoors in Ontario has to offer.

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150 Innovations and Innovators in Outdoor Education: Part 3

by Zabe MacEachren & Peter Vooys

In this, the third instalment of “Innovations and Innovators,” we continue our look at those landmarks that influenced and shaped the field of outdoor education (OE). In the spirit of national anniversaries and retrospects, in each of the 2017 *Pathways* issues, we are considering our collective past, generating a list that celebrates milestones, pivotal experiences and influential people that have shaped the OE field in Canada. Everything has been categorized in the following areas: T for Technology, A for Arts, O for Organizations, B for Books and publications, P for People, and E for Events. Check out the previous 2017 issues of *Pathways* for the first two instalments of the list.

We would like to hear from you! Do you have nominations for the innovators list? What about the names of summer camps or outdoor centres with a contributing legacy to the field? Please email your suggestions to maceache@queensu.ca

T — Dogsledding

Today dog sledding is a recreational activity in Canada, but in the past, particularly in the far north, dogs were working creatures. Dogs were the pack and draft animals most suited to travel in cold northern landscapes. North America’s oldest and rarest purebred is the Inuit sled dog. Inuit sled dogs were admired for their dense thick coat, loyalty, toughness, intelligence and the affectionate deep bond created with their owner. The introduction of snowmobiles in 1960s and some canine diseases contributed to today’s low population of sled dogs, but the biggest impact on numbers was the dog killings that occurred in the 1950s and 1970s by the RCMP as a way of influencing the settlement patterns of Inuit people. Reading classic novels like *Mrs. Mike* and Jack London’s *Call of the Wild*

or watching the documentary film *Okpik’s Dream* are all attempts to keep alive the traditions associated with this four-legged loyal companion that once delivered our mail before the introduction of rail in the late 1800s and planes in the 1920s. Many dogsled races held today are based on the routes dogs traveled as they aided the speedy delivery of medication over mountainous passes to heal diphtheria outbreaks in remote communities. Whether you ever get the opportunity to experience the fan tail hitch of an Inuit team racing across the tundra or see a line of wagging tails snake through a frozen forest trail, appreciate the way this four-legged creature has agreed to befriend us humans and work on our behalf to travel this icy landscape of intermittent water and rocky hilltops.

O — Alpine Club of Canada (1906)

In 1906, Elizabeth Parker stood her ground and refused to have Canada become just a chapter of the recently founded American Alpine Association. She felt that Canada deserved its own organization that would respond to the unique geographic regions and recreation opportunities of this country. So, despite living in Winnipeg, Manitoba—decidedly *not* an alpine region—Parker, A.O. Wheeler and several others founded the Alpine Club of Canada. The first mountaineering camp was held that summer of 1906 at Lake O’Hara in Yoho National Park. The organization is famous for its system of backcountry huts available to hikers, mountaineers and adventurers. The hut in Yoho is named after Parker. Today, the 22 local chapters across Canada fight to protect and preserve mountain environments for future generations, while at the same time supporting experienced alpinists and novice hikers alike to experience the joys of mountain life.

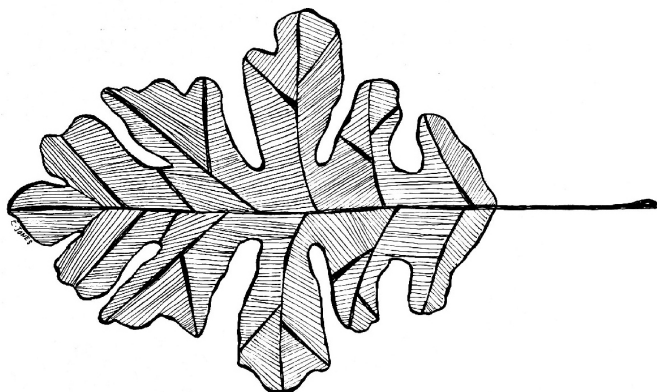
T — Water Bottle

Water, water everywhere, but what is the best container to transport it in? Today, the common wide mouth, plastic Nalgene bottle is a big gulp away from its ancestral vessels of animal bellies or clay pots. There have always been concerns about how we transport water. Leather skins bulging with liquids are hard to clean and therefore unhygienic. Heavy clay pots came with a concern that if the vessel were dropped and cracked you might not be going far. The metal canteen designed for hikers, campers and soldiers conceal what's inside them and usually alter the taste of the water, not to mention the winter sting of soft warm lips touching the icy cold metal rim. Today, Nalgene no longer uses nasty bisphenol-A (BPA) in their bottles (the BPA is resting in all the millions of bottles leaching into landfill site across the continent), but other "bottling" concerns have replaced the BPA scare. Should a company like Nestlé be allowed to collect local water before a local community can secure water rights for its own needs? Maybe it was not fire that altered us humans and the ability to impact the land; maybe it was the container that allowed us to carry water around with us. Some Canadians still take for granted lake water because they have fond memory of drinking it off the paddle, but forget your water bottle on a hiking trip and you won't be getting far before dehydration preoccupies your thoughts.

P — Emily Carr (1871–1945)

Carr was one of the first Canadian painters to combine an impressionist art style with images from the life of West Coast First Nations people. She began this work in 1898 at age 27, recalling this time with these people as having "a lasting impression." Carr was inspired by the tall trees from the West Coast and the Native peoples' use of them in totem poles to create similar work and move others through her own paintings. Carr met members of the Group of Seven in 1927 and was influenced by Lauren Harris' belief in theosophy. Carr herself had

struggled to reconcile any conception of a God and held a "distrust for institutional religion." Later in her life, a series of heart attacks resulted in Carr's shift from painting to writing, with the last decade of paintings revealing her growing anxiety about logging and other environmental degradation of the West Coast. Her painting *Odds and Ends* was about the cleared land and tree stumps rising amidst a majestic forest scape that first lured Europeans to the West Coast. Carr's writing revealed an independent woman who had a fondness for Indigenous people and West Coast ecosystems. Much of her artistic work reflected her carefree spirit that preferred to roll in the morning dew as an alternative to taking a morning bath.



O — RCMP and Other Enforcement Organizations for the Wilderness

Imagine a wilderness full of bootleggers, poachers on every lake and prospectors running amok on others' mining claims. The reason we can travel relatively safely through vast chains of lakes and trails today is due to the early establishment in 1873 of an organization designed to bring law and order to the newly acquired territory of Canada's north west. Whether dealing with stampeding gold seekers, trapline poachers or overhunting, the RCMP developed a reputation for always getting their man. This was made apparent in 1932 during the longest manhunt in RCMP history, covering 240 km of Yukon mountains and tundra to catch the Mad Trapper of Rat River. In a truly

unbelievable story of fugitive survival and police determination, the month-long chase made international headlines, involved dynamite, dogsled, snowshoes and the first use of aviation tracking, and ended in a shootout. The RCMP got their man, but to this day the Mad Trapper has yet to be definitively identified. Whether dealing with provincial police officers, park wardens, conservation or Ministry of Fisheries officers, a great deal is owed to these brave people. The next time you see a badge identifying an enforcement organization, thank the person wearing it for their service in keeping the areas we travel and camp in peaceful from human turmoil, yet still wild and free for the more-than-human world.

T — Motor Boats (1900s)

It was 1886 when the first fuel-driven motor boat with an engine that used kerosene instead of wood plied some water. By 1893, paddle wheelers were common on many river systems in North America, but it was the outboard motor with its smaller size and therefore portability that made many a boater and paddler give up their oars and paddles in exchange for twisting a wrist on a throttle. In 1909, the Norwegian-American inventor Ole Evinrude began to make popular three-horse units sold around the world with a two-cylinder motor. Drawbacks included increased water pollution, due to the high volume of unburned gasoline and oil in the exhaust, and noise pollution on once quiet lakefronts. Only when the four-stroke and injected motor came along did efficiency improve from 10 to 80 percent. Today, jet boats are the rage and can run without the use of propellers, thus avoiding the risk of hitting underwater rocks. Generally speaking, classic motor boats with propellers are more efficient when run at lower speeds, but as speed increases waterjets are the better option. The fuel efficiency of a jet boat can be affected by simple things like a plastic bag sucked into the intake grill, which begs the question whether jet boat users will soon be lobbying to get plastic out of

our waterways and oceans. Whether you are a fan of developing paddling muscles and sticking with only human-powered water propulsion or you value motor boats because you know how many canoeists have been saved by their speed and ability to handle bigger waves, the motorboat is useful and has offered a new standard of practice when it comes to water rescue.

T — Outhouse, Cathole, Kybo, Thunder Box, Dry Composting Toilet

"I'm not going if I have to use an outhouse!" The fear of having "to go" in the wilderness has resulted in many blocked-up individuals on a camping trip trying to ignore the call of nature. To the camper who knows outhouse evolution it is interesting that trying to find the cause of many illnesses is what has resulted in new innovations all so we can keep our "sh*t" out of our drinking water. Let's blame the ancient Greek and Roman people who first started adding water to our waste so that everything could easily flow and be flushed away to an ocean or local river. Once it was discovered that it was better to put the cathole out back and the well pump out front of a homestead, the cathole became a more permanent building referred to as the outhouse, complete with a moon representing "for women" and a star indicating "for men." For those who lobbied to stay indoors when conducting their business, the pail closet system was invented. In Europe, the pails were all dumped outside on the streets, so the follow up invention was heels and cobblestones allowing the liquid (and stench) to once again flow away and downstream.

If you have wondered where the term Kybo comes from it was the name of a coffee brand whose tin was later used to fill with powdered lime to sprinkle in the facility to alleviate odour. And thunder boxes—half-size outhouses that allow a lid to be lifted for upper half privacy—are simply the more permanent wooden structure many a canoeist has discovered at the back of the campsite that alleviated the work for

some poor park staff of hauling in bigger-sized boards. Next time you are visiting an outhouse or trenching up a cathole, be sure to take in the experience with all your senses; it will allow you to truly appreciate the way we have finally discovered an efficient system that does not add water or require remembering to flush, and that truly eats our toilet paper. Check out the dry composting toilets systems being installed at many isolated campgrounds and national or provincial parks.

P — Robert Bell (1841–1917)

Robert Bell explored more of Canada than any other person of his day. He was an employee of the Geological Survey of Canada as well as other private ventures. From his numerous travels across and around Canada he collected details on geology, history, forestry, linguistics and ethnography. His main focus was the rivers flowing into Hudson Bay and James Bay. He named over 3,000 geographic features of Canada! His work was fundamental in the establishment of a suitable route for many railway connections and he personally lobbied for the rail route between Winnipeg and Churchill. He was given the name “Great Stone Chief” by the Inuit of Ungava Peninsula. Bell is a little known Canadian whose work has greatly influenced Canada. A book on him will be coming out this year to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Canada and the 175th anniversary of the Geological Survey of Canada.

P — Kirk Wipper (1923–2011)

Wipper is considered a pioneer in outdoor education in Canada. Wipper spent his childhood in a log cabin in a Manitoban forest with local trappers and Native people as teachers. This early influence is reflected in Wipper’s list of accomplishments and is telling of the power of mentorship in the bush. Kirk went on to become a faculty member of the physical education department at the University of Toronto in 1950, which allowed to spend his summers running

Camp Kandalore near Dorset, ON. This boy’s camp was known for setting the bar high and influencing many young men to become outdoor leaders later in life. Kirk was best known for his collection of canoes which formed the core installations and reason for establishing the Canadian canoe museum. His other lists of other accomplishments are also impressive and long. (E.g. Director of Duke of Edinburgh Award, President of Royal Life Saving Society of Canada, Co-founder of Canadian Recreational Canoe Association . . . etc.) He clearly deserved his Order of Canada as well as recognition as one of Canada’s founding outdoor educators.

O — Canadian Canoe Museum (est. 1997)

With over 600 canoes, kayaks and paddled watercraft in its collection, the Canadian Canoe Museum explores the significance of such craft to the peoples of Canada. The collection spans from coast to coast to coast and represent the diverse ways people used watercraft to explore, trade and live within the Canadian landscape. Started as the personal collection of canoes of Kirk Wipper and originally housed at Camp Kandalore, the museum proper officially opened its doors in Peterborough, Ontario in 1997. More than just static galleries and displays, the museum offers hands on workshops and classes in paddle carving, bead work, moccasin sewing and of course how to paddle a canoe. The Canadian Canoe Museum is currently in the process of relocating once again to the shore of the Trent-Severn Waterway, alongside the Peterborough Lift Lock. The new location and expanded facility will surely allow the museum to continue its work in promoting paddling and canoe culture in Canada.

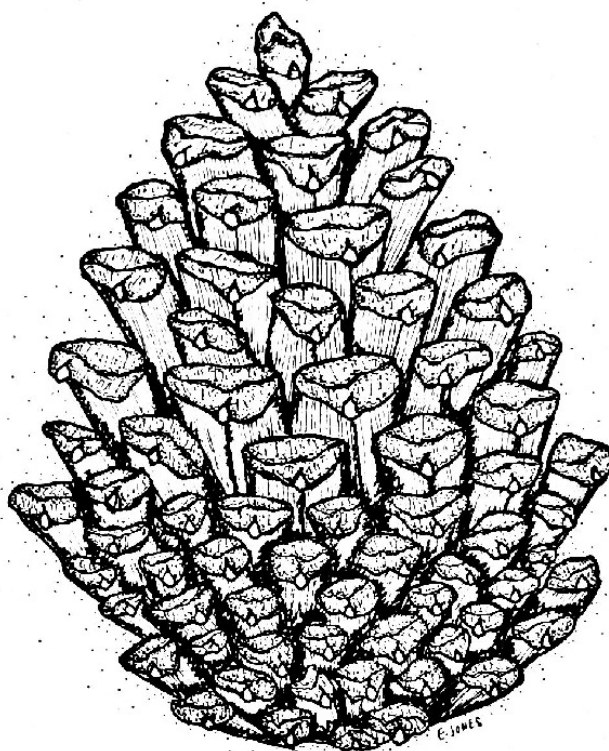
T — Tumpline

In an open savannah in Africa or India it is better to carry weight on the top of your head allowing you to keep an upright stance and your back in good alignment. In the dense forest region a trail is canopied with branches that will topple a high load.

The solution was the tumpline, a long leather strap, widening in the middle, that allowed a load to be wrapped up and carried behind a person but still using the top of the head to hold weight and keep the spine aligned. The tumpline is a great invention once widely used in Canada, but fell out of practice when shoulder straps and waist bands started getting sewn into canoe packs. The advantages to this top of the head load bearing technology is making a revival as Patagonia's founder Yvon Chouinard uses one to carry anything over 20 lbs. He has made it possible to purchase a nylon tumpline through his company equipment catalogue. Tumplines do require a bit more leaning forward to keep a load balanced, but some back specialists say this is still better than many other body postures our vehicles and office chairs are conditioning us into (See Gokhale Method). Once a person's back of the neck muscles are conditioned by a tumpline it is hard to go back to using just shoulder and waist straps.

A — Farley Mowat (1921–2014)

Outspoken, controversial, and passionate, Mowat was a prolific author who made the Canadian wilderness and landscape central characters in his work rather than settings. A decorated World War II veteran, tried his hand at zoology before turning full time to writing, where he also became highly decorated. Books like *Never Cry Wolf*, *Owls in the Family*, *People of the Deer*, *Lost in the Barrens* and the *Boat who Wouldn't Float* all explore the intimate relationship between people, animals and the landscape across the diversity of the Canadian experience. Mowat was a committed environmental activist, who declared that he would “never let facts get in the way of truth”, and was consistently vocal on how Canada could be doing better with its environmental protection laws, treatment of aboriginal peoples, and animals rights. Mowat's last interview with the CBC came in 2014 when he called in to protest the decision of Parks Canada to install wi-fi in national parks.



O — Canadian Camps Association (est. 1936)

A national organization of over 800 residential and day camps in Canada. The CCA is made up of membership from the provincial camp accreditation bodies. CCA sets safety and conduct standards for camps in accordance with provincial laws. It supports and advocates for issues that affect the summer camp industry such as the boat transport regulations, and temporary foreign worker laws. The organization's strength is its networking of camp professionals offering resources and support to those in the industry. In the age of declining camper enrolment, and reinvention by the summer camp industry, it would be nice to see the CCA become a stronger advocacy group for the importance of outdoor experiences for youth on the national stage.

T — Waterproofing and Synthetic Clothing (1970s)

Imagine wearing a robe of birch bark over your head like a hood that draped down

your back. That was one of the ancient techniques used to keep woodland Natives dry when traveling during a downpour. Waterfowl hides with feathers still attached were once used to create a water-resistant boot liner. The Inuit made waterproof jackets for kayaking forays that required walrus intestines to be cleaned, blown up like giant long balloons and then cut to form long pieces of waterproof cloth like material that could be sewn together with incredibly fine stitches to ensure a paddler stay dry. Imagine the beauty of discovering oiled cotton cloth which came in large waterproof sheets that could be cut! Of course, some readers might also remember the weight and smell of those old tarps and tents made out of treated canvas.

Today, waterproofing is obtained by taking a fabric and either laminating or coating it with one of a variety of materials, ranging from rubber, wax, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), polyurethane or other chemical mixtures. In the early 2000s, health and environmental concerns were raised regarding the application of C8 fluorocarbon-based finishes leading to new solvent-free process utilizing on-surface polymerization chains. But it needs to be remembered that even if the fabric layer is hidden once the plastic coating starts to break down it is all adding to the proliferation of plastic microorganisms accumulating in the oceans. Every tiny bit of plastic, even those coming off all our cozy fleece garments in the wash is being eaten by little organisms whose digestive tracks can't break them down. Water proofing our gear or using synthetic fabric like fleece to insulate ourselves from the world is a pretty important aspect of keeping hypothermia away, but it comes

at a cost. By shielding ourselves from rain we are ultimately harming the oceans—the mother of all downpours.

O — Duke of Edinburgh's Award (est. 1956, est. in Canada 1963)

The Award was founded in the UK in 1956 by Prince Philip (the Duke of Edinburgh), educator Kurt Hahn (founder of Outward Bound) and Lord Hunt (leader of the first successful ascent of Mount

Everest). The four pillars of the Award: Rescue and Public

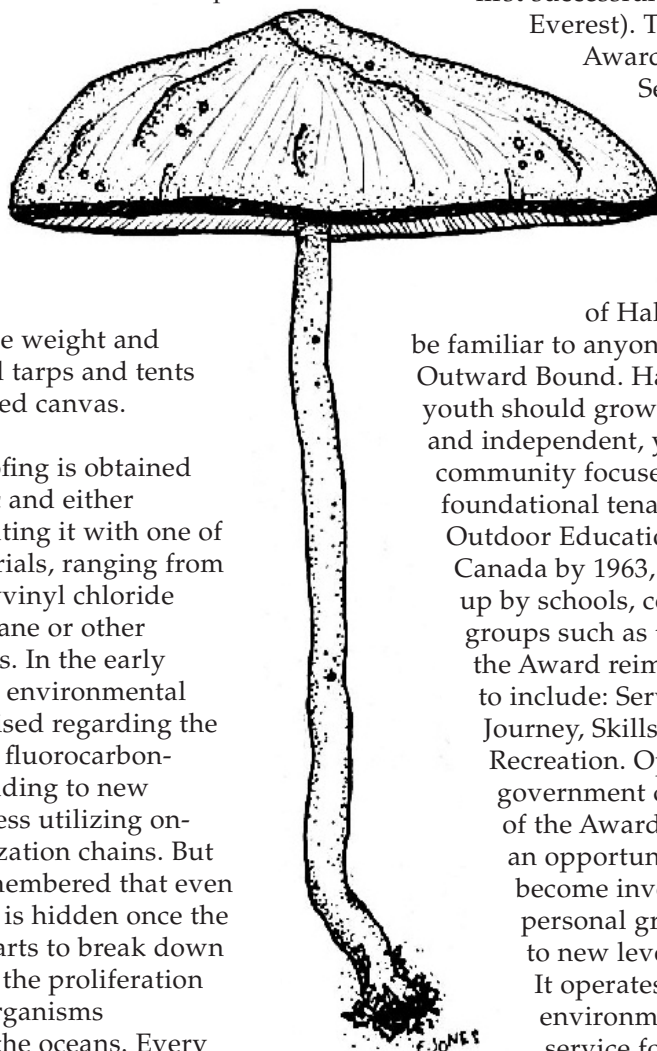
Service Training, the Expedition, Pursuits and Projects, and Fitness were a direct expansion of the philosophy

of Hahn, and should

be familiar to anyone associated with Outward Bound. Hahn's desire that youth should grow to be strong and independent, yet service and community focused are some of the foundational tenants in the modern Outdoor Education field. Spreading to Canada by 1963, the Award was taken up by schools, colleges and youth groups such as the YMCA. By 1980, the Award reimaged its four pillars to include: Service, Adventurous Journey, Skills and Physical Recreation. Operating outside of government curriculum, the power of the Award is to allow youth an opportunity or an excuse to become involved with their own personal growth and push them to new levels of confidence.

It operates with a strong environmental and community service focus, bringing outdoor education pedagogy to a

wide range of youth. Today, over 500,000 Canadian youth have participated in the voluntary experiential program. Prince Philip once remarked to the parents of Gold level award winners that, "I hope it has made them aware of a lot of valuable things they can do in their spare time."



P — Bill Mason (1929–1988)

The Waterwalker himself, Mason has been called a “true wilderness artist,” and “the patron saint of canoeing”. An accomplished artist, author, filmmaker, naturalist, conservationist, and canoeist, Mason’s work was much like the man himself – a blend of poetic artistry and bold technical skill. He is most often pictured in his beloved 16ft Chestnut Prospector cedar canvas canoe, which he called “the most versatile canoe ever built”. Mason’s popular “Path of the Paddle” canoe instructional book and video series taught generations of paddlers how to maneuver their boats with ease. He was tireless in his work, often taking great personal risks to capture footage, and innovating new wilderness camera techniques. In 1966, his film “Paddle to the Sea” was nominated for an Oscar, in which Mason attended the ceremony. Never one to miss a paddling opportunity, Mason drove to L.A. with a canoe on his roof, stopping to paddle in the rivers he passed on his way. Mason died of cancer before his time in 1988, but his children Becky and Paul continue their father’s legacy of blending art with wilderness adventure.

T — Railways and transportation transition (1850s onwards)

Modes of transportation are an ever-changing medium that have a direct impact on our relationship to the land, how we conduct business, take vacation, and view the nature of time. Distance is said to be measured by time, and with faster modes of transportation, the distance between locations is shortened.

Consider the first large scale transportation disruption of the industrial age, the railroad. The rail cut down travel times, opened new industry, and allowed people to visit inland locations previously accessible only by canoe or horse. The construction of railways reshaped the land itself, cutting forests, flattening hills, filling in wetlands for causeways, and dynamiting mountains for tunnels. The rail eliminated the fading canoe trade of the voyagers, pushing canoe culture and vocation into the

realm of sport and recreation. It changed adventure and art tourism, as voyeurs could push further west and north in their search for empty wilds, changing our perception of ‘north’ and ‘west’. definitions of what constituted as No longer would one have to paddle or ride horseback to the interior, the rail would take you there in a fraction of the time and effort. By the 1930s, the arrival of the family automobile and the construction of highways again changed who could travel, what they could bring, where they were going, and how fast they would get there. Road infrastructure construction would continue to blast away, and fill in the landscape just as the railway had done. When affordable air travel arrived, perceptions of distance, time and possibility again changed, leading to the idea that Ontario children’s summer camps could send canoe trips to Yellowknife. With each new transportation model, our vision and expectation of our country changes – it shrinks, it is altered, and it becomes accessible.

T — Rail Trails (1990s onwards)

When the tracks are pulled up on un-used railways, the altered landscape of the railbed remains. Fiscally impossible and politically improbable to reverse the change to eco-systems that were necessary to lay the track in the first place, governments, communities and organizations are re-purposing the old railbeds as recreation trails. Rail Trails are typically long and flat, connect communities to one another, and often run through areas of scenic beauty or historical interest. These qualities make them ideal for hiking, biking, horseback riding and snowmobile trails. There are many examples of these recreation reclamation projects around Canada. There’s the Kettle Valley Rail Trail in BC, the 200km Le P’tit Train du Nord in Quebec, the tip-to-tip Confederation Trail in PEI, or the old Victoria Railline that runs from Lindsay to Haliburton in Ontario. Toronto boasts two rail trails – the Beltline and the West Toronto Railpath. But the longest in Canada goes to the Newfoundland T’Railway, that runs from Channel-Port aux Basques to St.

John's with several branches connecting communities along the way. In total, it covers a distance of 883km! Rail Trails are a great example of recreational opportunities arising from industrial infrastructure.

O — Trans-Canada Trail (est. 1992)

If the trans-continental railway was the national dream of the 19th century, the Trans-Canada Trail is the dream of national dream of the 21st century. Advertised as the longest connected trail network in the world, the TCT is set to be 24,000km when it is completed. Reaching coast to coast to coast, the TCT takes advantage of existing community trails like the Cataraqui Trail, steer through existing parks such as Gatineau Park, and utilizes many sections of rail trails. Depending on the section the TCT welcomes hiking, biking, horseback, cross-country skiing and snowmobile travel. There are even water portions of the trail to include the paddlers among us. As the TCT does not own or operate any of the trails in its network, its construction and maintenance is the largest volunteer project in Canada. Critics will point that the TCT includes thousands of kilometers along highway shoulders and that over 400 gaps in the trail still remain. Not to mention the planned shelters and fresh water stations are a long way from being at regular intervals. But the idea of a national trail that weaves its way through the communities and landscapes of Canada is a refreshing take on our national desire for travel. Perhaps the completed TCT will inspire more people to try a human powered summer road trip.

T — Insect Repellent (1900s)

There is an art to getting in and out of a tent without opening the door that outdoor educators truly understand. The reason? Bugs. Becoming a human pincushion for the swarms of malicious biting insects is almost a backcountry right of passage. Just as we all catch the "biggest fish", we have all experienced the "most bugs". Incessant buzzing accompanied by the occasional slap is the soundtrack to summers. In Canada,

there is no shortage to the blackflies, mosquitos, horseflies, deerflies, midges, stable flies, and no-see-ums as a source of frustration. Not to mention the winner of 2017's Most Feared Bug – the black-legged tick. For some, insects pose the most problematic aspect of the Canadian outdoors.

Dealing with the insect issue in Canada is as old as human habitation. Each person has their own special "trust me" remedy for bugs whether it be physical methods such as smoke or mud; plant based methods such as mint; chemical methods such as DEET; technological such as ultrasonic emitters; or just straight up meditation and prayer. There are strategies that involve clothing choices, food choices, scent choices and the non-choice of your blood type.

It is interesting to trace the development of insect repellent through the ages, but we have selected the 1900s as a time stamp. Citronella oil was discovered in 1901 and was the most popular method of insect repellent well into the 1940s. In 1956, DEET became commercially available and is still the most widely used and arguably the most efficacious repellent to date. Natural methods are again on the rise, as people today are more aware and cautious of the harmful effects of putting chemicals on skin. For the most part in Canada, the seriousness of biting insects is a matter of comfort and mild allergic reactions. We are relatively free of the more serious diseases insects can spread such as malaria or Ross River Fever. However, how will climate change affect the amount or types of insects in Canada and what potential diseases they might carry?

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Surviving

By Chris Peters

I was walking in the rain with the refrain from Cake's version of *I Will Survive* playing like background music in my head when it all came back to me. A sudden rush of memory so real and vivid I was transported from a boreal fringed trail in St. John's, Newfoundland to a treeplanting block somewhere outside Horsefly, British Columbia.

But no. I wasn't walking. I was trudging.

My boots were slipping for purchase in the sodden snow, great tongues of ice exposed and treacherous, hauling a homemade komatik behind me. On it my two daughters were half lying, half pushing us onward.

Late February rains, the world shrouded in the white swirl of fog. There were birds singing and flitting, suddenly, with a startle of tree branches. And the rains were coming down, changing only in the ferocity. My daughters' laughter belied the weather, playing a game I was both party to and outside of. All the while I trudged. One foot in front of the other. A burning coursing through my shoulders and thighs, an ache through my hips. The rope dripping, soaking my woolen mitts.

"...I'm not that stupid little person that you thought you knew...da da da... I will survive, I willlllllll SUR-vive..."

I half sang, half hummed the song. But it came out flat, carried none of the drama of the tune in my head. The lyrics kept getting jumbled and garbled, like a record hitting a nick and repeating itself. I've never had much of a head for music. But on trudges a song will lodge itself like a brain worm and I am compelled to sing. However badly.

In my mind's eye I was 21 again. Dripping wet. My hands scraped, scabbed and curled into *The Claw*. Trudging with 30 lbs of tree saplings around my waist in planting bags. Probably more in that sodden mess of a day. I looked up, vertical rods of rain obscuring

my view of the treeline. In my first weeks of planting I had been terrified of a mountain lion lying in wait for me there, unseen. But not that day. Shivering, sore, hours to go before the vans came to collect us, I almost welcomed the thought of a wildcat attack. If only to break up the dull, grinding monotony of it all.



My eyes ventured out, looking miles away beyond to the Coastals, still sheathed in snow and ice. I could see the startle of sunshine, the green of the trees where the golden light and warmth kissed the needles into luminosity. I could see the storm clouds break and veer by some unseen thermals, or an updraft off the mountains perhaps. Dark clouds trailing long lines of wet, snow in the higher altitudes and rain further down. All this I could see. How I longed to be standing in the sun, if only for a spell. I wished with a desire beyond anything in my experience for the clouds, dark, ominous, to break above me into sunshine. But the rain carried on. So I stepped forward, sank my shovel into the ground and got back to it. Singing, *"I will SUR-vive..."*

Memory is a fickle thing. There is no linear progression. I can recall with alarming clarity being three, my shoulders blistered with sunburn, feverish. Yet all those sleepless nights with my daughters, the frustrations of new parenthood? They blur away to nothing.

I stood outside a Tesco in Waltham Abbey, UK when the smell of watered cedar caught me on the way out. In a second of sensory extrapolation I found myself back along the foggy Fundy shoreline where I grew up. The jumbled roar of crashing waves is like a balm to cure all that ails. In the foaming white cascade of water, the crescendo of wind and water, I am again a child, a laughing smile festooned on my face.

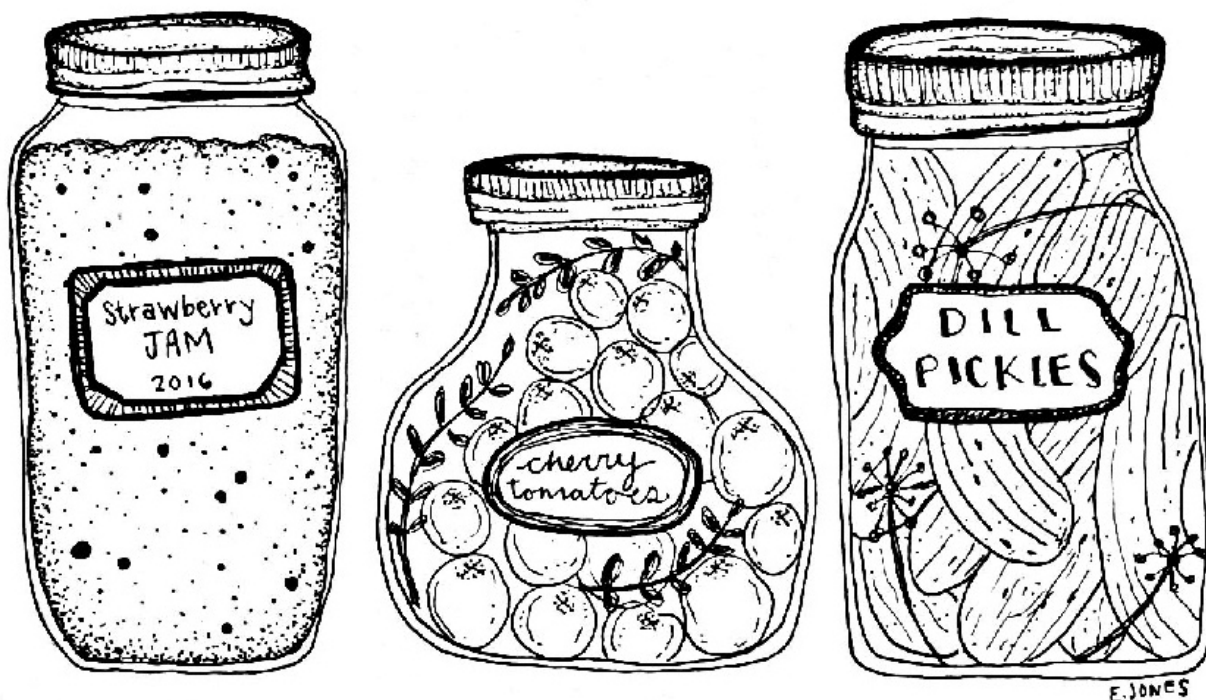
Planting trees was one of the hardest things I ever did. It grounded me physically to the world. I knew the contortion of muscles I hadn't realized I had. I felt the pain of insect bites and stings that left me swollen, bloody and, in one instance, paralyzed for a long quarter hour after stepping on a ground hornet's nest. I knew sleep so deep and sudden that a tangible curtain fell between day and night. I was attuned to the physicality of the world in a way I still search to reclaim. I knew mental perseverance. The mere act of waking and knowing what the day promised required a fortitude I still draw from.

Treeplanting also nourished my soul in a way that is hard to articulate. The way a golden eagle soared out from behind me along the winds that funnelled between the mountains. The play of light on a hillside at dusk. Cold hands wrapped round a coffee mug, steaming in a frosty white world. All of these. But what they express and meant is easily lost. Poetry comes closest to describing this connection with the wild within, this coursing of the spirit. For example, this excerpt from Robinson Jeffers' "Carmel Point" (2002):

Meanwhile the image of the pristine beauty
Lives in the very grain of the granite
Safe as the endless ocean that climbs our
cliff.

—As for us:

We must uncenter our minds from
ourselves;
We must unhumanise our views a little,
and become confident
As the rock and ocean that we were made
from.



My memory of treeplanting lurks just below the surface, though it happened all those years ago. It informs me, bodily. Those experiences, those extraordinary long days arise again in the play of shadows in the forest, the rush of winter melt in a stream bulging into a sudden torrent, the smell of rain in the air. Those memories connect me, tangibly to the wild world we live in.

That experience, itself a culmination of experiences — from engaging a bear in a one-sided dialogue, discovering a wolf spider lurking in my planting bags, howling with demented rage at the blind instinct that drove mosquitoes to descend in a buzzing horde as I raced down a mountainside and away, away, *away* — reminds me of this eternal truth: that *we* are wild. That as wild beings we must protect *wilderness*.

I built the komatik from a repurposed wood pallet and old cross country skis. That too is a reminder of our wild ingenuity as a species. Anthropologists have connected the use of tools to language. The basis of human languages and cultures is built on our capacity to hew, shape and transform.

I have gotten far more use out of that komatik than I would have imagined. Upwards of four children have held onto it at one time. I have learned its capabilities and limitations. I have rebuilt it several times over. In powder snow it plows through, akin to a whale lumbering through shallow waters. But on crusty snow it runs like the devil possessed, a whispered hiss just audible as it gains speed. On the Avalon Peninsula, where snowstorms often are followed by rains and then a quick freeze, the komatik has found a home. But it corners poorly, so that I haul and curse, sweat dripping, muscles straining.

As I run my daughters, and sometimes their friends, I wonder what makes this fun for them. It is fun for me because I enjoy the exertion. The tremble of muscles,

the clarity of thought that follows. Years of mountain biking, trail running and seakayaking have skewed my sense of fun.

Do they enjoy the sensation of the glide? There is an inevitable game of hide and seek where they drop off the sled into the tangle of the boreal and I pretend I can't see their pink snowsuits. Is that why they like the sled? I could ask.

But honestly, all that matters is that they are laughing in the rain on a slippery, foggy morning in February, half on the sled and half pushing it along as it hisses, quietly down the hill. It doesn't matter what makes it fun. It is enough that it is fun. It is enough that they can find joy in their surroundings, in this moment.

Because that's where the wildness of the soul lives. This is what I seek to provide for my students as a teacher — moments where they connect with the natural world. It's often hard to measure success by any standardized criteria. But I think I can safely say that my daughters embrace their surroundings. Are open to the experience of the world. But on their terms.

So, I lift my head to the rains and croon, "*I willlllllll SUR-vive...da da da...*"

References

Hunt, T. (Ed.). (2002). *The Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Chris Peters is a social studies teacher in St. John's, Newfoundland with a commitment to outdoor experiences. He lives, gardens and explores the boreal surroundings with his wife and two young daughters.

Mountain Stream

By Lee Beavington

the slither of trail disappears
whispers of mosquito
rise to my breath

seduced by cedar
I wind down the mountainside
pathless

at first a faint trickle
water sirens drum up
a thousand gravity spirits
awaken my numbed senses

river currents stretch
as umbilical cords
from cloud to expectant sea

I pause on the shore
whitecap thresholds
roar in a slender ravine
beyond the boulder
water limbs claw
at my synthetic shell

Who is this self
that I always meet here?

I am trapped
between rapids and cliff
virgin maidenhair fern
every crevice wet

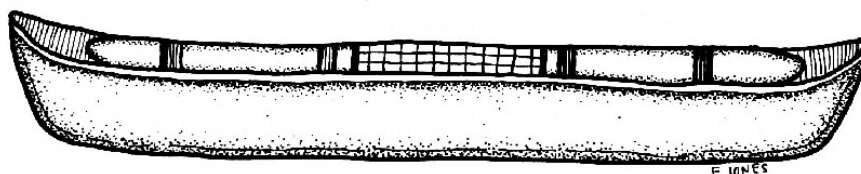
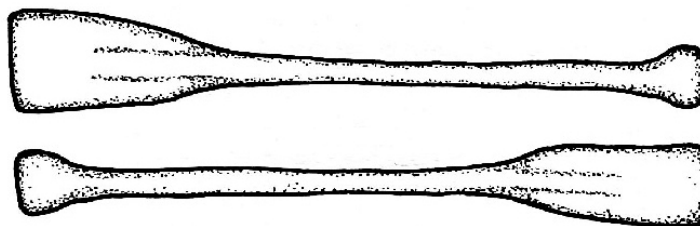
I cannot tell
if this pulsating wall of rock
is my spine
or the water

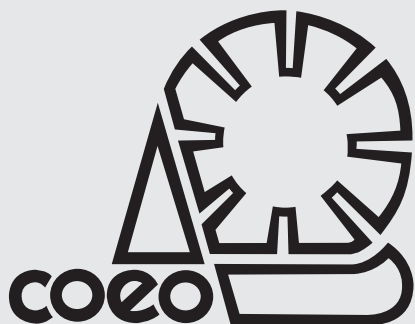
my only path—
the algae-slick stones
my ankle twists
on a rock's fur
foot thrust
to earth's riverfloor

I reach for a stem
fifty spines needle my hand
the bite of devil's club
releases my blood
into the mountain's heart

the river tugs at my thighs
a place no civilized man
should steep in
ridged spruce
taller than the sun
I will all trails
to be washed away
in a moment
of animal surrender
I will my veins
to open
the way this forest
and all that is living here
opens in me

Lee Beavington is an educator, biologist, author, photographer and traveler in search of truth, creativity and conversations that matter. He writes fiction, nonfiction and poetry, and is currently pursuing a PhD in Philosophy of Education at Simon Fraser University.





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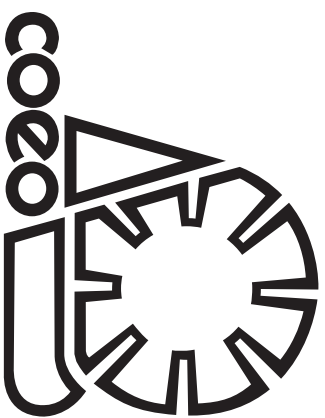
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