Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION
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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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Pathways is always looking for contributions. Please contact the Chair for submission guidelines.

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Features

Columns

Editor's Log

On March 11, 2020 WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. Since then, communities and countries around the world have continued to try to navigate the situation, seeking the light at the end of the tunnel to help us endure this new reality and move into a post-pandemic world. Since March, scientists have noticed a temporary decrease in greenhouse gas emissions, increased wildlife in urban areas, and examples of the resiliency and flexibility of humans. The pandemic; however, has also caused increased use of single use plastics, an increased fear of being in public and outdoor spaces, and an anticipated rise in greenhouse gases as the economy continues to move forward.

During these challenging times, we are excited to present a special edition of *Pathways*. This issue focuses on the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on climate change, our environment and outdoor education. Throughout this issue, there are themes of using the pandemic as a warning sign for future global catastrophes and shifting our ways of living and mindsets to become more sustainable moving forward. This issue also goes into depth about the importance of getting outside and learning from and about the natural areas surrounding us.

Hannah Howard writes a fascinating article about how the increased cleanliness standards caused by the pandemic have decreased the rate of COVID-19's spread at the cost of increased environmental waste. Tobin Day writes a touching memoir about her childhood and how her exciting experiences in nature prepared her for a new "normal" during the pandemic. Rhys Drummond writes a powerful piece about our slow but effective response to COVID-19 and its parallels with climate change.

Shannon Boolson-Vorster, Gillis O'Gorman, Amy Tenbult and Katie Vincent are currently completing their Bachelor of Education degrees at Queen's University in the Outdoor and Experiential Education (OEE) program. Upon completion of this guest editing issue, everyone agreed it was a great experience. Megan Tucker is the OEE teaching assistant and is completing her Masters of Education and was a great help in finding the graduate students who contributed to this issue. Zabe MacEachren is the coordinator of Queen's Outdoor and Experiential Education and can't believe she is teaching outdoor education online through Zoom. Together we make up the OEE Pathways 2020 team. We are all avid outdoor adventurers who enjoy going for long, quiet hikes in green spaces close to where we are all social distancing.

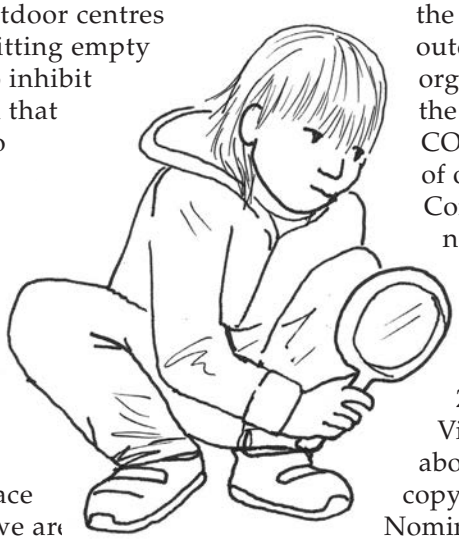
OEE 2021 Pathways Special Issue Team

Sketch Pad – Katie Vincent works in a room shared with her computer screen for Zoom classes and a large beautiful picture of a wolf hanging on her wall that inspires her visual musings. She enlisted the help of a young friend to contribute a few illustrations for this issue. Her art appears on the cover, and pages 9, 17, 19, 22, 25, 28 and 30. Zabe MacEachren wishes she had more time to draw outside. Her homework excuse comic was inspired by the reason Katie's illustrations were 'late' in making it to the last meeting of the OEE Pathways Team. Her art appears on pages 5, 19, 22, 25, and 32–33. Exploring nature is a life-long influence in M. Nowick's art practice, from painting, photography, even crochet. Inspired by Art Hives, they believe in promoting diversity, inclusion, and the mental health and wellbeing of creative expression through community arts. M has completed a B.Ed. from Lakehead University and is currently in Orillia, working with Bass Lake Farms cultivating garden-based learning programs. Their art appears on pages 2–3, 6–7, 11–15, 20-, 23, 26, 34 and 36.

President's View

I want to start by acknowledging that there is work to be done, both within COEO and the broader field of outdoor education, to ensure that everyone feels safe and welcome in the outdoors. It is crucial that we acknowledge the anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism and the systems of oppression that have prevented so many from enjoying the outdoors and joining our ranks as outdoor professionals. It is also vital that we acknowledge the work being done by so many incredible BIPOC outdoor educators, including many who are currently sharing their stories and experiences. I hope that you will join me in continuing to learn, in amplifying voices from oppressed communities, and in fighting for changes that will make COEO a more welcoming and supportive organization.

With the arrival of the warm weather it is strange to see so many outdoor centres and summer camps still sitting empty as COVID-19 continues to inhibit our ability to gather. With that in mind, I am saddened to announce that we have decided to cancel in-person Annual Fall Conference scheduled to take place at RKY Camp and instead plan some virtual events for September. While we know that virtual events cannot perfectly replicate the magic of our face-to-face Annual Fall Conference, we are excited to be able to see you, even if it is through a screen this year. Our plan is to host a workshop on Saturday afternoon so that we can continue to learn together, followed by an open mic event later on in the evening to have a chance to socialize and share our talents. While this decision was difficult, we know it is necessary for everyone's safety and we hope to see you there. Please continue to check our website and social media accounts for more information as the planning unfolds.



Our General Meeting will also be virtual this year, taking place on Sunday, September 27th at 10:00am. Please join us from the comfort of your home to find out all that's been happening over the past year and vote to approve the incoming Board of Directors. We ask that you register through the website if you plan to attend so that we can ensure that you are sent the link for the meeting, along with copies of all the annual reports. If you are thinking about getting more involved with COEO by serving on the 2020-2021 Board of Directors and you have any questions about any of the positions on the Board, please reach out to me or any of the current Board members.

This is usually the time of year when we do our call for nominations for COEO's five awards, which provide an important opportunity to recognize individual and group efforts, as well as to celebrate the varied expression of outdoor education within our organization and throughout the province of Ontario. Due to COVID-19 and the cancellation of our in-person Annual Fall Conference for 2020, award nomination forms will be received on an ongoing basis in advance of our next in-person awards ceremony in September 2021 at Camp Couchiching. Visit our website for details about the five awards and a copy of the nomination form. Nominations should be sent to Liz Kirk, Past President of COEO (owls@coeo.org). Please consider nomination a deserving colleague or outstanding organization.

I hope this summer season allows you opportunities to explore your local trails, adventure close to home, or connect with nature in whatever way feels safe for you.

Natalie Kemp
COEO President

Asking Yourself Who Benefits: A Post-Pandemic Lesson

By Bob Henderson and Shannon Boolsen-Vorster

Here is the story!

Back in 1995/96, an Independent Commission on Environmental Education was established to help us poor educators sift through the plethora of environmental education textbooks, curriculum teaching guides and manuals: essentially all environmental educator teacher resources. Think 'Project Wild' and 'Project Learning Tree' back in the 90's or 'Coyote's Guide to Connecting with Nature' today. The issue was the unevenness in quality of materials; the perception that educational materials may oversimplify complex science and economic concepts while making unsupported appeals for activism and an observed bias against industry. There was also a concern for outdated information. Which of these criteria do YOU think were primary and which took a secondary role or served as a smoke screen?

Wait, we are getting ahead of ourselves. The Commission, in short, was to "advocate" for certain teacher resources at the expense of others being "deleted" (as we might say in today's vernacular) so that teachers were relieved of the burden of so much choice. Sounds good right?

The Commission had support from the North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE) and was administered by the George C. Marshall Institute with some identified and one anonymous foundation. The "independent" Commission claimed to have no ties—formal or informal—to any organization other than the Marshall Institute, a not-for-profit science and public policy research group. Trouble is, the Commission working group, in the words of one observer, Zygmunt Plater, an Environmental Law Professor at the time, was underwritten by anti-environmental foundations and corporations. Teaching about environmental degradation and endangered species for example, was called "environmental hysteria". Basically, and we know you know where we are going, teacher resources that had environmental advocacy built into their curriculum were not included on their final list of recommended resources. You could talk about the Monarch butterfly life cycle and migration patterns but not the depleted habitat threatening the butterflies' survival. Zygmunt Plater concludes; "we must not retreat from perceptive analytics to innocuousness. We must continue to serve society". (1996, 23) This is a far cry from the opposite; society [read: status quo] serving education. If memory serves us well (1), there was some embarrassment experienced by the NAAEE, and much name calling with the net result being the Commission had moderate impact. The tobacco industry tried the same, on a much grander scale. That is, to undermine the health issues of smoking cigarettes and climate change by creating doubt about the accuracy of the science (Oreskes & Conway, 2010). Today there are similar issues with Facebook/Google to which we should be paying more attention.

Post-Pandemic Thinking

Our point. We should be asking ourselves WHO BENEFITS? Is there a hidden agenda, insidious or not, driving an initiative? Another point: Environmental/Outdoor Education is political, always, by what we choose to teach and choose not to teach (or are told/encouraged not to).

In a post-pandemic global era of the Anthropocene (an epoch that acknowledges humanities altering impact of the earth) we need to be aware of efforts that will be made to return to a normalcy that perpetuate a less healthy, less ecologically sound "status quo". We, a big collective "we" here, have an opportunity to advance a healthier/ecologically wiser

status quo into being/into becoming. Outdoor Education is well positioned to be a player for change. Zygmunt Plater was right back in 1996. We must be aware of our role to serve society and not to have society dictating all the terms to education. That requires a big shift and perhaps we are in shifting times. If it is a top-down flow of policy making, ask yourself: who benefits? We don't want education to be rendered towards innocuousness in a post-pandemic time. We've learned too much about life energy (call it what you will) for outdoor life in our everyday lives. In Australia, there is a new buzz word, Outdoor Healthcare.

Indeed, there is a rallying of educators and health professionals around Outdoor Healthcare. In the 1990's, also out of Australia (we're not clear if this is a coincidence) there was a push to distinguish between an Ecopolitical Education and an Outdoor Environmental Education. The 1995/96 "Independent" Commission on Environmental Education story presented here showcases the need for an eco-political attention always to be at attention in outdoor/environmental education. The commission, after all, was masking (or trying to) a corporate railing against eco-political inroads to Outdoor Environmental Education. Today, or in a post-pandemic future, it should come as no surprise that one of the first anthology textbooks in ecology was titled 'The Subversive Science" (1969).

"For those raised on striving for excellence, on giving a hundred percent, on always doing their best, on doing well at anything worth doing, wu wei asks that they consider easing back on the need for perfection" (Simpson, 2003, p. 51). Steven Simpson, professor of Recreation Management at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, sets a great path for educators in a post-pandemic period with this line from his book *The Leader Who is Hardly Known* (2003). Wu wei, a Chinese concept of inaction or more specifically preventative action, sets realistic expectations by asking leaders to consider taking a step back from perfection (Simpson, 2003). Top-down policy-making flow may look perfect on paper; however, it may jeopardize the authenticity and validity of outdoor and environmental teachings. Taking an "inaction or effortless action" approach to funneling resources may in fact lead to a more efficient system; instead of prioritizing resources, it might

be worthy to prioritize values and concepts. Although, this means less direction for educators, it provides a higher quality filtration. Attempting to avoid eco-politics in the world of outdoor education is the unrealistic mirage of perfectionism trying to compartmentalize education for students and learners who are global and multi-dynamic citizens.

There is an opportunity for educators to acknowledge the overlapping world of the outdoors and politics, especially eco-politics. Listening to a principal speak recently on the current climate of education in Ontario, Canada, her words rang true: "Education is political." Although the exclusion of topics such as ecosystem depletion may have kept the sphere of outdoor education "clean," it is necessary for us educators to confront rather than avoid politics this time around–to question what is being included versus excluded in education.

Understanding and teaching with the mindset that if everything must be excellent, we will never recognize what needs to change or how to change it, is critical; this will allow for the sector of outdoor and environmental education to become active in its future rather than passive.

Prior to the pandemic, and even now, the avoidance of eco-politics in the teaching of outdoors has left holes in the story educators are telling. For example, speaking of butterfly migration but not about the effects of climate change on these creatures. Eco-politics and outdoor and environmental education are the ying and yang Simpson speaks of in his book; too much of either is not helpful, but equal parts of both is required to gain a full understanding (2003). Educators are the leaders that must remember that maintaining perfection is less important than working towards a better ecopolitical environment in this post-pandemic period.

Educating in or towards a post-pandemic world can create an opportune teaching occasion for leaders. We have had our time to reflect on our practices, our "normal." Many are calling this period a "wake-up call" from Mother Nature, from the universe–that our ways of being, doing, and teaching need to change. From the wise words of Eustace Conway, an American naturalist from the 60s, educators need to "break out of the box!" (Gilbert, 2002, p. 19).

Author of the novel *The Last American Man*, Elizabeth Gilbert, quotes Conway saying, "you don't have to live like this because people tell you it's the only way" (2002, p.19). In this way, Conway saw the 60's "modern" life as various boxes: they lived in a box, ate from a box, and woke up to an alarm box. This could be also said for teaching environmental education in our current times. Our educational reach and resources have been confined to a box for a while now; a box separate from the impact of our modern world. Conway saw how we were separating ourselves in a box divided from nature as if we did not affect it; he was trying to encourage others to break out of their human bubble that led them to the impression that the worlds of modern humans and nature did not, and could not, coexist (Gilbert, 2002). I believe his words still ring true, notably in our present climate. If educators can have those tough conversations that involve breaking down

the walls that have held devastating truths of our beloved outdoor classroom up, like a dam holding back water, progress and change may flow our way.

Gilbert recounts in her novel a story that Conway read as a child. The story was a typical children's book on forest depletion. In the book, the animals lose their homes which teaches the devastation of city expansion. However, in the end, the animals find new homes in another forest. Here, Gilbert records Conway's good point that someone needs to talk about what happens when there are no more forests for the animals to retreat to and what this means for Earth and all its beings (2002).

If anything, the pandemic has highlighted the need for environmental and outdoor educators to embrace ecopolitics and bring this conversation forward. Educators are not only teaching the leaders of tomorrow, but they are now preparing a generation for an unprecedented future that they will shape and live in. However, we must also strive to educate those who are shaping this future now; this is a time for breaking down walls and having hard, honest conversations that lead to the letting go of inhibiting habits and embracing tough alterations to ultimately form a more ecologically sound society.

It is not sufficient to simply show up and educate out of habit; educating with purpose and intent will bring the discipline of environmental education to the forefront of an emerging shift in thinking that the pandemic has accelerated. Educators must be careful not to fade into an innocuous, comfortable background when advocacy is vital now more than ever. Top-down policy may have been a gift to help simplify a long list of complex topics, but it now falls on those at the bottom of policy, the teachers, to choose with intent their tools and to employ them wisely.

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Bob Henderson is currently involved in a wide array of Outdoor Education initiatives. He is the Resource Editor for Pathways.

Shannon Boolsen-Vorster is currently studying Outdoor and Experiential Education as a specialization in her Bachelor of Education at Queen's University.

The Impacts of COVID-19 on Fast Fashion

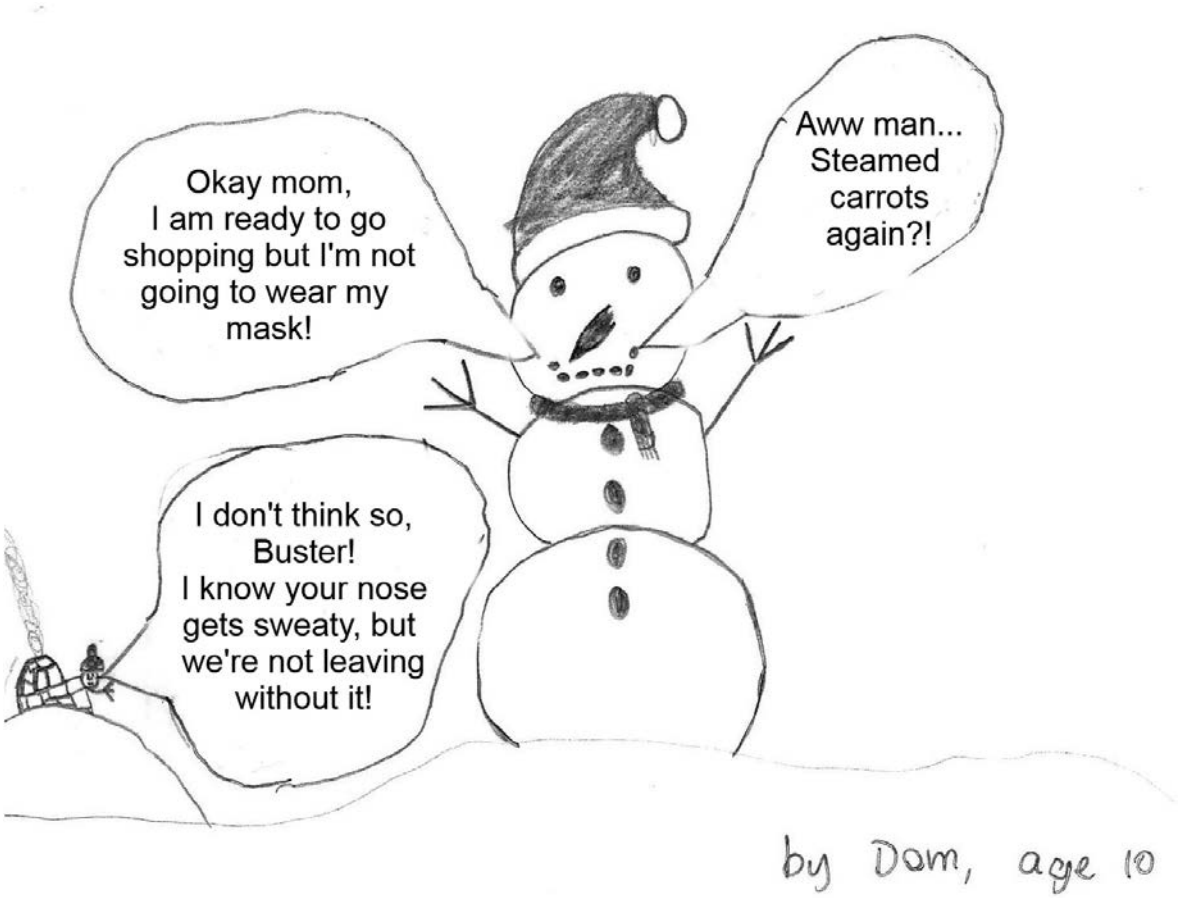
By Tayler Payson

The phrase "fast fashion" has been circulating the internet and other media platforms lately, and with various definitions going around with the term, it is important to define "fast fashion" moving forward in this column (Stanton, 2020). In general terms, fast fashion can be defined as an approach to design, and marketing of inexpensive clothing that can be made in mass production to circulate the fashion industry quickly (Stanton, 2020). Since big brand clothing retailers are following the fast fashion industry, it is creating a significant negative toll on the environment. Most of these effects can be seen in our landfills and our water systems.

Currently, the modern consumer is consuming more textiles than ever before (McFall-Johnsen, 2019). When comparing data taken from the year 2000, fashion companies went from offering two collections per year to five collections per year in 2011 (McFall-Johnsen, 2019). This trend of increasing production also correlates to the increasing consumption of textiles which increased 60% from 2000 to 2014, with consumers keeping their items for half the time they would have in 2000 (McFall-Johnsen, 2019). This means consumers are also contributing more to textile waste. While people may be donating their disposable fashion in order to purchase more, thinking they are giving to the needy, they are not (CBC Marketplace, 2018). This notion of the "clothing deficit" comes from people thinking that if they donate their older, dated clothes they can keep buying new (CBC Marketplace, 2018). Currently 85% of our fast fashion products will end up in a landfill, even when they are donated to the "needy" at the local thrift shop (CBC Marketplace, 2018). When the items do not get sold at the thrift shop, they are sold to other companies to be reused in a different way or sold to third world countries to be sold at their local markets (CBC Marketplace, 2018). However, these items which are sold at third world markets are usually thrown in the landfill because of the cheap quality, and unwearable conditions (CBC Marketplace, 2018).

Another option for fashion disposal that fashion brands, like H&M, are now offering is a clothing recycling program, where people can bring in their old clothes in exchange for a coupon on their next purchase (CBC Marketplace, 2018). Through these programs, the brand says they will recycle your clothes and turn them into new ones to be sold (CBC Marketplace, 2018). This may be true for some products, less than 1%, but the majority of these "recycled" clothes will end up being sold somewhere else (CBC Marketplace, 2018). Currently, many textiles are made out of many synthetic materials or blends of fibres, those of which impact the potentiality of creating new garments, and contribute to water pollution and carbon emissions (CBC Marketplace, 2018). When producing fashion, many gallons of water are needed to make certain items because of their fibre composition (CBC Marketplace, 2018). Clothing which has a high volume of cotton will require more water use since the fibre is classified as being highly water-intensive (McFall-Johnsen, 2019). Cotton farming near the Aral Sea used up all of the water source in approximately 50 years because cotton needs an absurd amount of water to be processed (McFall-Johnsen, 2019). The Levi's jeans that you love, needed 2000 gallons of water to make one pair of jeans, which is equivalent to someone being able to drink at least eight cups of water per day for 10 years! (McFall-Johnsen, 2019).

When diving deeper into other fibres used to make clothing, it is shown that the quality of the most widely used fibres are less than optimal and are usually combined to make wearable blends (CBC Marketplace, 2018). So, in order to break down donated clothing to be recycled,



brands would need a lot more material to produce a similar quality item than what it started with because of the original poor quality (CBC Marketplace, 2018).

The fibres in most of our current textiles are made from synthetic fibres, like polyester, which contain microplastics (CBC Marketplace, 2018). When washing clothes, these articles leak microplastics into the ocean and contribute to 31% of the ocean's plastic pollution (CBC Marketplace, 2018). Therefore, a combined effort between the producer and the consumer of fast fashion are to blame for the environmental impacts it has caused over the past decade. Luckily, we as consumers are in control of our buying habits, and the current economic struggles because of COVID-19 should spark an interest in ways to save money and our environment.

COVID-19 and Fast Fashion

As the world becomes united by the devastating health, economic and other burdens caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed many industries closing their physical doors to open online or closing indefinitely (Fashion Revolution, 2020). COVID-19 has had a negative effect on the fashion industry, but positive effects on the environment. Some of the more popular fashion brands have online platforms where consumers can still shop until they drop despite the current economic hardships many people, including front-end retail workers and the production workers are currently facing (Fashion Revolution, 2020; Huet, 2020).

Since the pandemic started, many of the world's leading fashion brands have either donated to pandemic relief or started to cancel preplaced orders from producers (Fashion Revolution &

Chatterjee, Chatterjee, Esther, & Kaninica Sengupta, 2020). The brands that have been cancelling orders are causing many clothing producers in various countries, like Bangladesh, to shut down over 1,000 factories (Fashion Revolution, 2020). Since many of these items were previously made, they are now being thrown into the local garbage system, destroying the overabundance of unwanted merchandise (Fashion Revolution, 2020).
The shut down of the mass clothing producers has a positive effect on the environment yet many negative effects for the workers, their families and their communities that rely on these manufacturing jobs to sustain their families' needs (Chatterjee et al., 2020).

Manufacturers aware of increased textile waste have considered ways to re-use and recycle the garments which are already made: turning old items into new by stripping the fabric to bring it back to its original fibres (Huet, 2020). The problem is that less than 1% of these items will provide quality fibres to re-use in the future (CBC Marketplace, 2018). A suggestion to the fashion industry would be to sell the pre-made items to consumers and start to press their "reset button" on the way they are manufacturing items (Newmark, 2020). This act of "resetting" fashion brands' business mindsets can allow the opportunity to shift from the traditional wholesale model towards focusing on the more sustainable notion of quality over quantity (Newmark, 2020).

Another potential outcome the fashion industry may see due to COVID-19 could be an abundance of clothing surplus stores due to a steady overproduction of clothing before the pandemic (Newmark, 2020 & Fashion Revolution, 2020). These stores would be similar to the military surplus stores which arose following the cessation of World War II, when the military had an overabundance of military equipment which was no longer needed (Newmark, 2020).

Allowing for the sales of previously made items would prevent the pollution which arises when countries, like Bangladesh, would be disposing of the unwanted goods.

On the contrary, some fashion brands have been seeing a decline in their sales since the pandemic has started, but brands like H&M, Topshop and Lululemon are barely being affected (Chatterjee et al., 2020). Since these brands are deemed to be affordable fashion, who have also conveniently "greenwashed" their brand, many people are still purchasing from them over their competitors like Zara (Chatterjee et al., 2020). When a brand "greenwashes" itself it means that they advertise as being more sustainable than they actually are (Chatterjee et al., 2020). For example, H&M's clothing recycling program mentioned earlier, wherein the brand tells consumers that they take their old clothing and turn it into something brand new for their brand. When in reality they can only use about 1% of what is donated and they sell the rest (CBC Marketplace, 2018). Most consumers do not know this, therefore by shopping with H&M and donating to their old clothing they feel as though they are not contributing to climate change, when they actually are (Chatterjee et al., 2020).

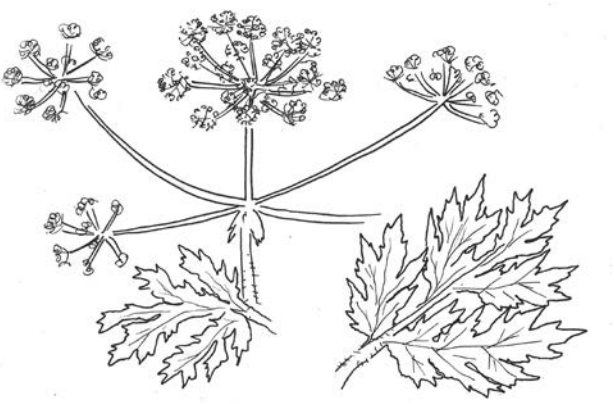
Conclusion

The fashion industry as we know it will be drastically different in a post-COVID-19 world in all fashion sectors: designer, supplier, retailer and consumer (Huet, 2020). Although as consumers we can not change the other levels on the chain, we are responsible for our own actions when it comes to fast fashion and the environment. Being a smart, educated consumer will allow ourselves to make environmentally friendly decisions when the world goes back to a new "normal".

Use this paper as a gateway to open your mind to the impact's consumers make on a daily basis which in turn negatively impacts the environment, and remember this:

"Well, the planet is enjoying the perks of manufacturing coming to a halt and less cars on the road, in the form of reduced global warming, but we need to revive economic activity as soon as possible or a bleak future awaits us!" (Chatterjee et al., 2020)

It is possible to contribute to a thriving economy without constantly purchasing fast fashion. Let's think of our environment, and the future population who will endure it if we do not make a change.



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Tayler Payson is a recent B.Ed graduate from Queen's University where she studied Primary/Junior education and specialized in exceptional learners. After completing a class on environmental education, Tayler became increasingly interested in reducing her fast fashion consumption. She did some research and has made it a goal of hers to only purchase "new" items that come from consignment stores, from friends, or from "mainstream" stores using gift cards. She wanted to know how COVID-19 has impacted the fast fashion industry, in hopes that it would have people reducing their unnecessary spending.

Public for Who? The Politics of Communal Space

By Sara Deris Crouthers

Amy Cooper probably voted for Obama. She probably gave money to Hillary's campaign. She probably made jokes about being a Canadian: how Canadians are so polite and how Canada is such a multicultural country. She might even have posted a black square on June 2nd, 'Blackout Tuesday', to her social media accounts if not just days before the racism lurking beneath the surface was laid bare for all to see.

Amy Cooper did not make a mistake. She was not a well-meaning liberal woman caught up in the moment. What Amy Cooper did was call upon hundreds of years of white woman tears, and call a hit on a Black man, Christian, who was birdwatching in a public park. Imagine what he felt. Imagine going out in the morning, hoping to see a new-for-you species, maybe record a heard bird, and instead wondering if today is the day you will die at the hands of the NYPD. This is racism—racism is not just the "n" word or blatant acts of discrimination. Racism is holding the power to decide who lives and who dies, who belongs and who does not. What Amy Cooper did was make a calculated decision that those police officers would agree with her that a Black man does not belong in the park; a Black man does not get to innocently birdwatch; a Black man does not belong in nature.

Public space is public, right? It's for all to enjoy. Except for when it isn't. At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it started to become very clear who was welcome in public space and who was not. This was not an isolated event; the 'outdoors' industry is overwhelmingly white, and overwhelmingly exclusive. In an Instagram post on June 15th, 2020, Colour the Trails founder Juju Milay posted a statement about the exclusivity of outdoors culture:

"Last year (January 2019) I reached out to Destination BC, pointing out that there's a lack of diversity in terms of how they advertise BC tourism. I was willing to work with them to produce more diverse content...The person I was corresponding with basically told me I wasn't what BC needed…"Right now, I can't think of anything where you'd be a natural fit" (Milay, 2020)

A *natural* fit. Natural. This is the natural world we are talking about, and Juju Milay is a hiker, camper, skier, and trail runner. She is the founder of an outdoors group that leads hikes and other excursions in British Columbia and Alberta. What about her wasn't natural? How did she not fit into the outdoors, where arguably

we are all a 'natural fit'? This staffer, who may also have posted their black square and felt good about their contribution to anti-racism, acted as a gatekeeper to Juju and those who look like her. "You do not belong here," is the message.

A little later, as Ontario moved through reopening phases, outcries from 'locals' of Cobourg, Prince Edward County, and other scenic destinations ricocheted through social media. City people, stay home. Countless complaints about trails and beaches dirtied, filled to bursting, long lines of cars on country roads waiting to get into provincial parks. Funnily enough, complaints were not focused on general good behaviour or enforcing capacities that would make social distancing feasible. Complaints centered around Torontonians invading these spaces; the mess must be from Torontonians. Bike to the Borough, a cycling blog focusing on the Kawartha Lakes region, had this to say:

> "In the Age of the Pandemic however, camping touring is off the table for us...Provincial Parks, and possibly (probably) private ones as well, are jam-packed with Torontonians doing their best to be their worst. DO. NOT. WANT." (Bike to the Borough, 2020)

They are keeping *us* out of *our* spaces. These are public spaces, are they not? Open to anyone, within reason. How can you tell who is from Toronto and who is from Bancroft? To me, this is a dog whistle to non-white people. You are not from here, go back to where you came from. So achingly similar to, "You're so exotic! Where are you from? No, where are you *really* from?", a common refrain heard by Black people and POC that serves to reinforce that you do not belong here, your face is not the face of Canada, you must be an outsider.

Fear of a pandemic has stripped away some of that Canadian politeness, and neatly allowed us to see this for what it is: racism. Xenophobia.

The natural world is for all of us to enjoy, learn from, and take care of. Communal space is just that: for the commons. The next time you are enjoying your local fishing pond, trail, or bike path and you see someone that does not belong, I would encourage you to interrogate that reaction. Why are they not a natural fit? Amy Cooper might not have been able to explain why she felt that way that May morning, but it is now crystal clear.

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Thoughts about Outdoor Education: Post COVID-19

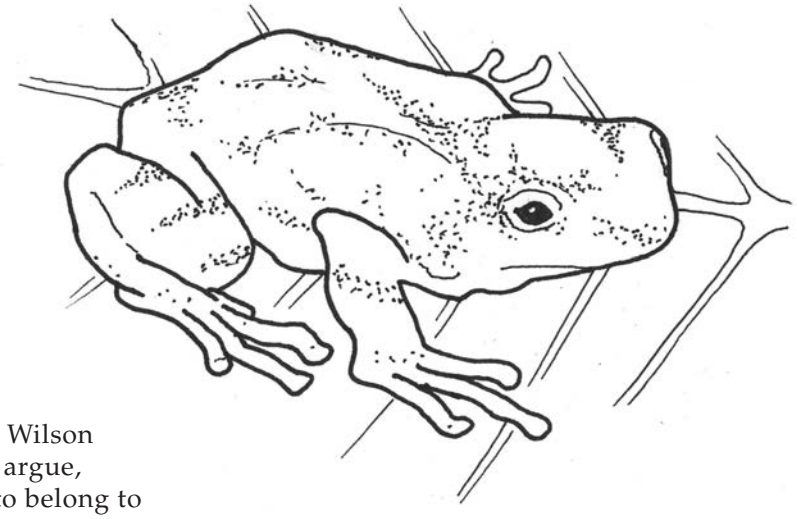
By Jacob Rodenburg

These are strange times. People, ever more fearful of contracting the COVID-19 virus and/or spreading it (and rightfully so), are hunkered in their houses—staring at screens and terrified of the outside world. And yes—this too shall pass.

But the aftermath will be hard on our sector. I can see a time when parents, administrators and city officials convey the message that the outdoors is dangerous. By default, it is just safer to keep kids inside. After all, the outdoors is a place where you might contract a virus, you might get Lyme disease or you might contract poison ivy. As outdoor educators we need to be ambassadors and champions of the outdoors as restorative places. We need to speak loudly about the other side of the risk/benefit equation; how being in the outdoors and the nature world improves our physical health and even our mental health. More and more studies have shown that time spent in greenspaces boosts our immune system, increases our serotonin levels and makes us feel better.

Here is the thing: we all yearn to belong. We are social creatures and we need family, friends and community around us. But we are also born, as E.O. Wilson suggests, biophilic. We, I would argue, have an equally powerful need to belong to nature. Strong feelings of being connected to a special place, whether a small patch of forest, a special meadow or lake, help us to feel that we are part of something bigger—that we are embedded in the natural systems that nurture and sustain us all. In this way, we feel less alone and perhaps more complete.

Outdoor educators are needed now more than ever. Instead of thinking about the outdoors as a place to recreate, to play in, to romp and test ourselves physically as many of us have done in the past, it is time to think about each of us engaging in acts of regeneration and encouraging others to do the same. We can all help to create a more vibrant and ecologically diverse outdoors. We can do this by allowing spaces near where we live to re-wild. We can train teachers how to teach kids outside, and how to use citizen science to know more and to report on what is growing right there in our own backyards. We can create nature-rich spaces by planting pollinator gardens, by installing bird feeders, and bat, butterfly and toad houses. We can research the story of the land we are situated on to find out how to care for the space we occupy. How can we leave this space even more diverse than when we found it?



It is also important for outdoor educators to continue to take kids to wild places—to teach them the skills to enjoy the outdoors. But even more crucial these days is to teach kids who are their natural neighbours. Not in an encyclopedic way—but one steeped in stories, mystery, wonder and awe. That dragonfly—as a baby—it was an underwater, jet-propelled, jaw-thrusting bug snatcher. How cool is that? Dragonflies as nymphs live underwater. They take water in through their mouth and expel it out their rear end,

helping them to surge forward. They have a folding lower jaw called a labium with sharp pincers that can reach out and snatch bits of food, including bugs and even small minnows. For every one of these stories, there are thousands more. It is up to us to arm ourselves with accurate natural history knowledge and to use hands-on games, activities, exploration and stories to help kids become aware of what lives in their own *"Neighbourwood."*

Outdoor education centres can also become showpieces for sustainable and regenerative design. We can demonstrate how nature can be integrated into our living spaces—we can create buildings that are non-toxic, zero carbon, zero waste and are net energy producers—that even store carbon instead of producing carbon. Our youth are hungry for solutions to the climate crisis and we could take a lead in collaborating with them, and explore with them how this might be accomplished.

As outdoor educators, we can:

- Continue to offer outdoor education programming at our centres.
- Expand programs to include more about natural history.
- Promote sustainable living. Activate and empower youth to advocate for a zero-carbon future.
- Engage in acts of regeneration. Re-wild our centres, our schoolyards, and our backyards
- Promote citizen science. Teach children to become ambassadors of green spaces and to make this place more biodiverse and more nature-rich.
- Train teachers and parents how to take kids outside and what to do there through all seasons of the year.
- Advocate to teachers, administrators and parents the health benefits of regular contact with nature and outdoor time.

Collaborate with fellow outdoor centres about an integrated approach to stewardship. See Camp Kawartha's Pathway to Stewardship and Kinship Document www.pathwayproject.ca. This is a call for all sectors to jointly provide stewardship opportunities for children throughout every age and stage of their development.

Become familiar with the story of land we are situated on. Honour those who came before—think about those coming after. Give thanks daily.

Become familiar with Indigenous Ways of Knowing. Make connections with the traditional First Peoples of the land you are situated on and strive to know more about their story, their perspectives, their challenges and their gifts.

Here is hoping we can create empowered and motivated youth who love, care for and advocate for this beautiful planet earth. And here is hoping we can help them find a better, cleaner and greener way forward.

Jacob Rodenburg is the Executive Director of Camp Kawartha, an award-winning summer camp and outdoor education centre which uses music, drama, hands-on exploration, games and activities to inspire awe and wonder for the local environment.

With Gratitude—In Memory of Bob Day (1942-2019)

By Tobin Day

Childhood memories sometimes blur together, especially when you move a lot. I am not always sure where or when something took place. One day, however, stands out. Fairly close to my twelfth birthday, I walked from the park superintendent's house on Beausoliel Island to the dock with my father and brother. At the last minute, I decided I did not want to sail and started to walk back to the house. My father and brother spent the day sailing. My mother spent the day at home. I spent the day lost in the woods.

I've been reflecting on how those summers spent in either Georgian Bay Island National Park (GBI)—or what is now Bruce Peninsula National Park (BPNP)—prepared me well for the physical and social distancing required in 2020. My mother, brother and I spent most of our weekends and holidays in whatever part of GBI my father was working in (until 1987 GBI included both islands near Midland and the islands near Tobermory). During the summer, we often lived on Beausoliel Island in the superintendent's house that has since been torn down. Campers briefly passed through, but most of the time we spent together as a family or by ourselves. My brother and I had permission to roam as far as we felt comfortable and I remember spending hours on the beach, playing short games of tennis that ended when the ball rolled into poison ivy and taking long wanders through the fields and forests. Those summers and weekends taught me to be happy when alone. They forged a deep relationship between nature and me.

I also learned how to be comfortable and resilient when challenged. I had a moment of panic that day when I was almost twelve. I tried to take a shortcut home and it did not lead me in the right direction. I kept walking, increasingly confused about where I was headed. At one point, I stopped and screamed for help. I fell into panic for a minute, and then calmly (and rather grumpily by the end) retraced my steps until I was back at the dock and the familiar, if slightly longer, way home.

Today, day 60 of our pandemic isolation, I am finding myself leaning heavily on the lessons I learned as a child. I live by myself at a rural intersection. Of the four directions I can take when I leave my house, three of them quickly lead me to natural places—a wetland, a forest and a Great Lake. I am incredibly grateful to be able to be happy alone, to feel connected to nature and to be resilient when faced with the challenges this pandemic brings. I have found such joy in being home and watching spring arrive more closely than I have done in years. This week I watched a bald eagle fish, sighted my first oriole of the season and watched in awe as a couple of crows chased away a fisher.

I have also felt chained to my computer. I am learning to teach online and trying to ensure students have opportunities to learn outdoors. My grade 9 ecology and astronomy lessons included observation tasks such as tracking the moon. Unbeknownst to me, one of my students and her grandfather would take night drives out to less forested areas in order to get a clearer horizon and better view of the night sky. In Emma's words,

> May 1st: Today at 10:00 pm my grandfather and I went outside and saw the moon southwest in the sky. It was a clear night; you could see a very bright moon and multiple stars. The moon was a little over the first quarter but not quite to waxing gibbous. When we drove to the lot, we saw 2 deer in the field, and heard frogs singing.

I would like to think that these drives with her grandfather will remain a positive and lasting memory of Emma's time in physical isolation. Unlike Emma, most students used the internet to look up a moon calendar and transfer their findings onto

the required form. I am finding that I can suggest going outside but have no ability to make it happen. When we are at school, I can tell a class we are going out and out we go—despite rain or bugs or any of the other challenges that discourage people from taking that first crucial step outdoors. Now, it feels as though I have tapped out and must rely on students and their families to create outdoor opportunities for themselves.

During what feel like my happiest semesters, I teach an integrated outdoor education program. I guide students on a three-day winter camp, three-day backpacking trip (in BPNP—the park my father helped create) and eight-day canoe trip. Through leader-of-the-day activities, I try to give my students the same opportunity to develop comfort and confidence in wilderness settings that I developed as a child. Sometimes I wonder at the authenticity of these experiences; I cannot give my seventeen-to nineteen-year-old students the same freedom that I had as a 12-year-old. I am still struggling with my school board's decision to ban swimming on canoe trips. I placate myself with the idea that some outdoor education is better than no outdoor education.

Unfortunately, there is no promise of outdoor education in my upcoming school year. Despite 14-years seniority, I am still struggling to find stability, and have been surplus to school more times than I care to count. This year marks the first in several when I already know what schools I will be teaching in next year (I am still split between two). It makes it difficult to maintain a program while I shuffle around my school board. Add in cuts to education and COVID-19 restrictions and I feel even more uncertainty about when I will teach outdoor education again.

While I am not certain when I will teach outdoor education again, I do feel resolved to fight for the opportunity. I believe in the benefits of getting students outside—helping them build community, resilience, and find their voices to fight for what they wish to protect. It feels like now is a time for reflection about what we value, and to develop long-term vision that will sustain us through this notable period in history. We will lose things during this pandemic, but I deeply believe that with patience we will rebuild.

For now, I will take some time to appreciate the opportunities that were given to me as a child, which lead to an adventurous, unconventional and beauty-filled adulthood. For now, looking forward to sharing nature with youth will have to be enough.

Tobin Day lives and teaches in the Grey/ Bruce area, despite her firm teenage belief she would do neither when she was "old." Two of her daily pleasures are living at the boundary of a dark sky preserve and close enough to a waterfall to hear it from home.

The Environmental Impact of COVID-19: Effects of Increasing Cleanliness Standards

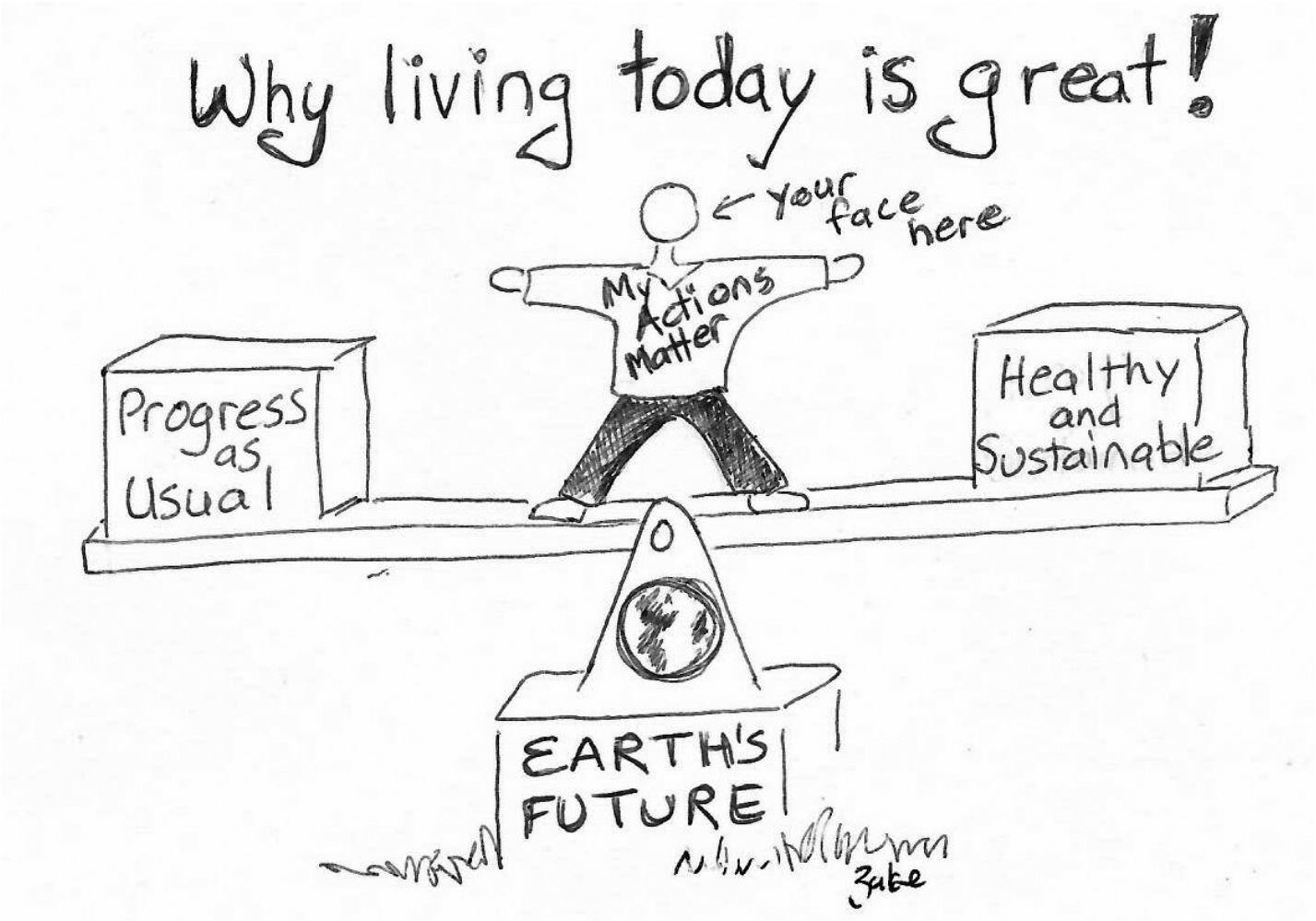
By Hannah Howard

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we think about and approach our day-to-day lives. Whether it has meant having to work from home, helping children with online schooling, physically distancing at the grocery store, or not being able to hug loved ones, we've all had to adapt in some way or another. On the one hand, the changes we've been forced to make have proven beneficial. By working from home, many have been able to 'slow-down,' get closer to nature, and spend more time with family. On the other hand, the fear of catching and spreading COVID-19 has resulted in dramatic societal shifts that emphasize the importance of adhering to cleanliness standards and physical distancing—both of which can, and likely will, have detrimental effects on the environment in the future.

Cleaning has many benefits; cleaning products remove dirt, may kill germs, and can prevent the spread of disease (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2020). However, since the emergence of COVID-19, being 'clean' has meant something slightly different. The increase in cleanliness standards has meant using pre-made disinfectants rather than natural cleaning products, avoiding the use of reusable dishware and towels in public places, and physically distancing from others, which means refraining from public transportation and carpooling, when possible. These changes have supposedly helped to decrease the spread of the virus; however, the environmental effects could be severe if these practices become the new normal.

As businesses—including retail stores, restaurants, and sports facilities—begin to reopen, the focus remains on maintaining proper sanitation and enabling physical distancing. With increased caution comes the use of stronger cleaning agents, a rise in single-use plastic production, and, ultimately, more garbage and waste. The first issue that should be discussed is the increased use of antimicrobials. There are many studies, including a research project I conducted during my undergraduate degree, suggesting that antimicrobials are no more effective than regular soap and water at removing disease-causing germs. Although this depends mainly on how thoroughly areas are washed with regular soap and water. The misconception that antimicrobials are better at protecting us against disease has resulted in society discontinuing the use of natural cleaning solutions. This practice poses various environmental concerns, such as reducing healthy bacteria on the skin, the potential for antimicrobial resistance, and water contamination. Additionally, single-use disinfectant wipes, masks, and gloves, which have become a societal norm, are—for some reason—being flushed down toilets causing clogging and damage of sewage systems (Rasmussen, 2020).

Another issue that should be discussed is the return of single-use plastics. Concerns about safety and cross-contamination during the COVID-19 pandemic have encouraged several repeals of single-use plastic bans. As a result, many grocery stores, for example, have banned shoppers from bringing reusable bags and are distributing single-use plastic bags instead. Additionally, customers are given single-use coffee mugs at coffee shops because of the refusal of personal coffee mugs. At the same time, customers of fast-food restaurants are given their ketchup in little plastic pouches because of the closure of condiment stations. Besides the typical environmental problems associated with single-use plastics, a further consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic is that recycling services in many cities have been minimal. For the past few months, only 75% of materials arriving at recycling facilities in Edmonton have been sold to recycling



companies, while 25% have been sent to the landfill (St-Onge, 2020). Thus, even if you try to recycle your single-use plastics, there is an increased chance they will end up in the landfill.

The final topic I want to touch upon is the environmental issues associated with physical distancing. While trying to obey physical distancing guidelines, many people have been avoiding public transportation and carpooling. Although these precautions may reduce the spread of the virus, the long-term environmental effects could be significant if this becomes the norm. Especially in large urban cities, the less people use public transportation or carpooling, the more they drive their own vehicles to work or to run errands. Since the emergence of COVID-19, nitrogen dioxide emissions have decreased; however, this is assumed to be because of the lockdown restrictions, including the reduced ability to go into work (NASA, 2020). Unfortunately, air pollution levels are expected to spike as cities begin to reopen their doors because physical distancing guidelines and fears will remain. Of course, it would be nice to believe that most people are willing to ride their bicycles everywhere they go, but we know this is not the reality of today's society.

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly changed our day-to-day lives, but as we slowly return to reality, the long-term impacts on societal normalcy remain somewhat unknown. However, increased cleanliness standards and physical distancing guidelines don't seem to be disappearing anytime soon. Therefore,

it is imperative to address our choices, identify the potential negative impacts they will have on the environment, and, when possible, reconsider our options.

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Hannah Howard is a teacher candidate within the Faculty of Education at Queen's University. She is passionate about educational leadership and mental wellness and since the emergence of COVID-19, has found herself reconnecting with nature and spending more time outdoors. She aspires to incorporate environmental education into her future classrooms to prioritize student health and wellness and to encourage students to become stewards of the earth.

Parallel Pandemics: Environmental Lessons of the COVID-19 Pandemic

By Rhys Dumond

Climate change. Global warming. Greenhouse gas emissions. The environmental impact of humankind has various titles, but only one outcome: the death of our planet. As the deadliest global pandemic in over a century has swept across the globe, countries have implemented countless mitigation efforts only to realize that a lack of necessary resources proves deadly. On top of the millions sick and hundreds of thousands who have succumbed to the COVID-19 virus, the global response has delivered a worrying sign that the human race is unwilling to counteract a threat until it is attacked. Analyzing the contrasting reactions to COVID-19 and climate change offers insight into this claim. In addition, it is important to highlight the opportunity humans have to right their wrongs as the planet rises from its current misfortune.

Scientists have discussed the impending dangers of climate change since the early nineties. These warnings have long been met by skepticism of both the science and calls for change. Dating back nearly thirty years, politicians have denounced claims by experts, refusing to accept humans as a danger to their planet. Despite this criticism, we now have evidence that cannot be refuted. Severe flooding of coastal areas, frequent wildfires, droughts, and stronger tropical storms all point to a truth that has been denied for decades—the planet is sounding the alarm.

This same negligence hindered the response to the Coronavirus pandemic. As early as January, the world was receiving warning signs from the case numbers in China, yet global leaders hesitated to initiate countermeasures. With what seemed the flick of a switch, the globe became engulfed in illness, seeking for answers to slow the spread and limit loss. In the weeks that followed, leaders parred the course. Borders closed, populations isolated, and the world waited. The counteractive measures proved useful, as countless lives were saved by flattening the curve. However, history has offered yet another piece of evidence of humanity's inability to be proactive.

The counteractive measures employed by countries across the world were only enforced after the virus reached their borders. Why has this not yet happened in response to the climate crisis? Our oceans are warming, glaciers melting, and wildlife dying. Where is the planet's vaccine? Global leaders remain hesitant to enforce preventative measures against climate change due to its gradual growth. The COVID-19 pandemic became an immediate threat, which required an immediate response. However, these safety measures drew a clear line between actions and consequences. As citizens around the world began washing their hands, physical distancing, and isolating from crowds we witnessed the slow of the spread. The deaths were more direct, as was the response.

On the other hand, lockdowns that were implemented in response to the virus also showed humankind what it was capable of. A decrease in global travel and emissions gave us witness to what the healing of the planet might look like. Smog lifted, waters cleared, and the Earth finally took a much-needed deep breath. The Director of the Council on Foreign Relations' Energy, Security and Climate Change Program, Amy Myers Jaffe, sent out a plea for this to be the moment of much-needed change in society: "suppose you were a policymaker, and you were thinking about what you would do to lower emissions—you just got a pretty good instruction." Keeping the current lockdowns is not the answer, but it is evidence that perpetual economic slowdowns are possible.

WHAT ACTIONS GO INTO MAKING A VACCINE FOR EARTH?

Such a shift would require much more structural change in order to support those most impacted. Implementing clean job guarantees, free public transit, and low-carbon-low-cost public housing systems could harm millions, but sustainability does not need to mean a loss of jobs. Instead, with the implementation of effective social programs, it could mean a more intentional, quality-driven economy.

Nobel prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz outlined how the COVID-19 response could, and should, be the changing of the tide in terms of the climate crisis. Published in the *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Stiglitz and his team highlighted the everlasting effects investing in a green recovery from the pandemic could have on the global economy. Upon surveying 231 key G20 figures, asking about twenty-five different stimulus packages, the experts believe worldwide recovery measures should be in line with climate goals. Furthermore, these methods offered "better economic outcomes than 'business-as-usual' models" (Hepburn et al., 2020). Lastly, Stiglitz concluded recovery packages will "reshape the economy for the longer-term, representing life and death decisions about future generations, including through their impact on the climate" (Hepburn et al., 2020). Change is possible through international collaboration and a focus on Stiglitz's five key policy items: low-carbon infrastructure investments; retrofitting building for energy efficiency; training and education investments to alleviate unemployment caused by COVID-19 and decarbonization; natural capital investment for ecosystem regeneration; and investment in green research and design (Hepburn et al., 2020).

As we move forward, we can look back at this pandemic as an important lesson. For decades, experts have been calling for change and the COVID-19 response has shown the world that science and policy can work together. This is something needed now more than ever as we can no longer turn a blind eye to the impending dangers of climate change. The devastation caused by this virus is unparalleled, but the climate crisis poses an even larger threat.

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Rhys Dumond is a recent graduate of the Teacher Education Program within the Faculty of Education at Queen's University.

COVID-19: The Climate Change Crisis' Canary in the Coalmine

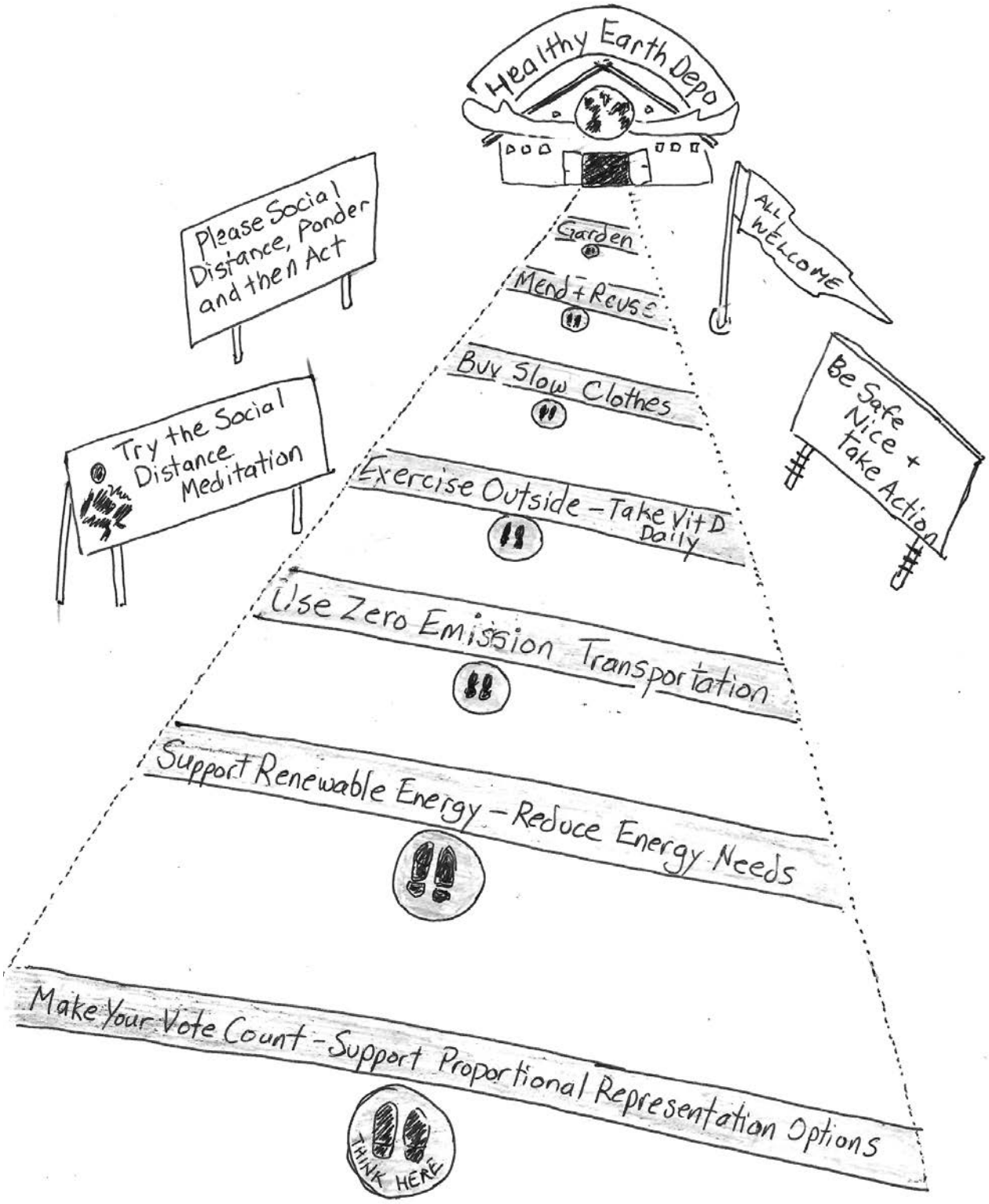
By Oshynne Lee Loy

One of the most notable positive outcomes that has presented itself in the wake of the COVID-19 era is the resurgence of natural life in areas that were once dominated by human activities. All over social media, it is easy to find images of wildlife entering urban spaces where it had never been seen before. Wild turkeys are being seen making their way through residential areas in Baton Rouge (Chakrabarty, 2020), and penguins have been spotted in a South African neighbourhood (Storyful Rights Management, 2020). Furthermore, there are positive environmental changes in many places that have occurred due to social distancing practices, as human traffic has slowed. Italy has seen air quality improvements (Srikanth, 2020), and pollution levels in many Canadian cities have dropped (Semple, 2020). Many like to think of this social distancing period as a positive for the environment; without as much human interference, it seems that there is time for nature to repair itself.

Others, however, have been quick to point out that the world seems better off without the presence of human life. This pandemic brings about other pressing questions with regard to how far we have come in destroying the environment in which we live. Though the environment has been improving since the onset of the Coronavirus, we should not be reliant on a pandemic to improve the state of our world. COVID-19 and its impacts are unavoidably present, and they are but the cherry on top of an enormous number of natural hazards that have become increasingly recurring in the years that have passed. Now, we cannot do anything but contemplate our current reality, as we sit in front of our screens, thinking of how much longer we have until we can return to "normal" life.

This notion of "normal" is perhaps something that we should reconsider, as it seems that our complacency in an ever-evolving and ever-consuming world has resulted in a multitude of problems that seem almost impossible to solve. With all this time, now seems like a perfect opportunity to rethink how we wish to move forward as a species. Will we return to a haphazard semblance of normalcy, or will we instead choose to reform and promote changes that will hopefully prevent further pandemics? It is the latter that we must choose if we wish to survive as a species. In order to meet the requirements for global improvement, there is a lot more that needs to be done in terms of change. We cannot hope for nature to force us into change in the way that COVID-19 has; it is only through proactivity that we can begin to imagine a sustainable future for the generations to come.

It is clear that the future holds several challenges to overcome for the global citizens of tomorrow. They will need to tackle food insecurity, climate change, pandemic prevention, among many other issues that are not as directly correlated with the environment. As George Monbiot aptly states, "This coronavirus reminds us that we belong to the material world." (Monbiot, 2020) We have gotten to a point where we have become comfortable in ignoring the state of the world around us; the destruction of natural ecosystems and the natural disasters that have been increasing in frequency and intensity have become commonplace. Many are able to distance themselves from these problems and can easily continue to live their lives as if it is entirely out of their control. To some degree, this lack of control is true. No matter how much control we appear to have over nature, it will undoubtedly have the


Healthy Earth Depo
Please Social Distance, Ponder and then Act
ALL WELCOME
Garden
Mend + Reuse
Buy Slow Clothes
Try the Social Distance Meditation
Be Safe Nice + Take Action
Exercise Outside - Take Vit D Daily
Use Zero Emission Transportation
Support Renewable Energy - Reduce Energy Needs
Make Your Vote Count - Support Proportional Representation Options
THINK HERE

upper hand in the end. We cannot stop these disasters once they happen, much like we cannot stop this virus from spreading. What we can do, however, is attempt to slow them down, and to eventually, hopefully, minimize their frequency and intensity to a manageable level.

This pandemic that we are all in is providing us with an opportunity to reform the ways that we do things on a daily basis. Many were quick to adhere to the new guidelines and regulations that dictated how we would make a slow return to daily routines. This era offers us a unique chance to introduce similar changes into our routines, as now is a time that many will be more accepting of deviations from what was once considered "normal". If we can make changes to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, it is almost certain that we can make these changes to prevent the worsening of climate change.

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Oshynne Lee Loy is a graduate from Queen's University's Faculty of Education who is passionate about including topics of social justice in her teaching. As a graduated Aboriginal Teacher Education Program student, she recognizes the link between social and environmental justice. She hopes to inspire her students to advocate and take action for the issues that speak to them.

Life Pre and Post-Pandemic: Navigating a Greener Future to Reform Culture

By Andrea Hill

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11th, 2020. As each country has its own version of social isolation and stay-at-home orders, several issues have arisen affecting climate change and our environment that perhaps existed before but are amplified now. As educators, we always strive to teach our students the best practices as they pertain to the environment, but as global citizens, an unprecedented worldwide pandemic is a demonstration of when certain issues take priority.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an emphasis in the world about limiting single-use plastics and reusing as much as possible so as to eliminate waste. For example, there has been a movement to replace plastic straws with reusable or biodegradable paper straws. Great strides were being made as society began to support the reduction of single-use plastics, however amidst the global shift that came with the pandemic, we have reverted back to single-use items again in a conscious effort to be hygienic and limit the spread of the infection. While this has been effective and a great way to flatten the curve of the spread of the virus, it will have detrimental effects on the environment if life continues on this way for some years to come.

When discussing the large quantities of waste that have continued to rise, most people consider medical waste to be the only culprit, such as masks and gloves. While this is a huge component during this time and is likely the major contributor, there has been an increase on all levels of the amount of waste being produced. Cultural shifts that have come as a by-product of the pandemic have mostly consisted of creative ways to adapt the ways of life from "before." Some examples of these adaptations include designated takeout days and curbside pickup of grocery items or anything businesses come up with. This is a great way to sustain the economy and keep small businesses afloat, but the repercussions on the environment could be unfavourable. Grocery stores have banned reusable bags for groceries and produce in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19 from being transferred from people's homes to the bags to the stores. While there is no denying the necessity of this decision, it is setting society back in terms of attempting to eliminate plastic waste and normalizing the use of reusable products.

Although there is an emphasis on disinfecting surfaces and improving hygienic practices, there is more plastic waste included in takeout meals than would be present if people were to eat at a sit-down restaurant. For years, Canada has had a recycling program in place and children are taught in kindergarten how to separate their food waste and other items for garbage, compost and recycling. In this instance though, we are quick to dispose of items coming into our homes because they are not so easily sanitized. Groceries are unpacked and washed, and the bags go into the trash out of an abundance of caution. Our children have been taught to reuse plastic bags at least twice and are getting mixed messages when they see us throwing them away. Besides this, while households may still be recycling items, if they are not washed first what is the implication for those working in recycling plants? How is waste being handled in municipalities during this pandemic and for years to come?

COVID-19 is unlike anything the world has seen before in terms of the effects of the virus and how little is known about it. There will no doubt be modifications to how we teach our children to care for the environment in terms of plastic waste and proper sanitization, at least until there is a vaccine developed and the virus is less of

a concern. As schools reopen and routines develop again, what will the recycling programs look like? The world has shown that under desperate circumstances, it is capable of taking action and creating change. 2020 has been a time for immense reflection and change and it is up to educators to keep implementing positive change in their classrooms and in their communities as global citizens.

Andrea Hill is a current Master of Education student at Queen's University, where she completed her Bachelor of Education in 2020. Andrea is interested in the positive aspects of environmental education on children's mental and physical health. Andrea grew up living and playing by Lake Ontario, which instilled a deep appreciation for the calming effects of nature and inspired her to lead a more sustainable lifestyle.

COVID-19 and Climate Change

By Julia Lawrence

The earth has an equilibrium; a state at which it can maintain homoeostasis and effectively support all life. While there is no way to concretely measure sustainability, the human species is unequivocally existing in an unsustainable fashion, and COVID-19 is merely another symptom—a warning sign—of this unsustainability. From an optimistic standpoint, COVID-19 may be the warning sign the world has needed to recognize its unsustainable ways; to take a moment to step back, slow down, and recognize the global effort and global acknowledgment that is required to tackle a complex global issue like the virus, and by extent, climate change.

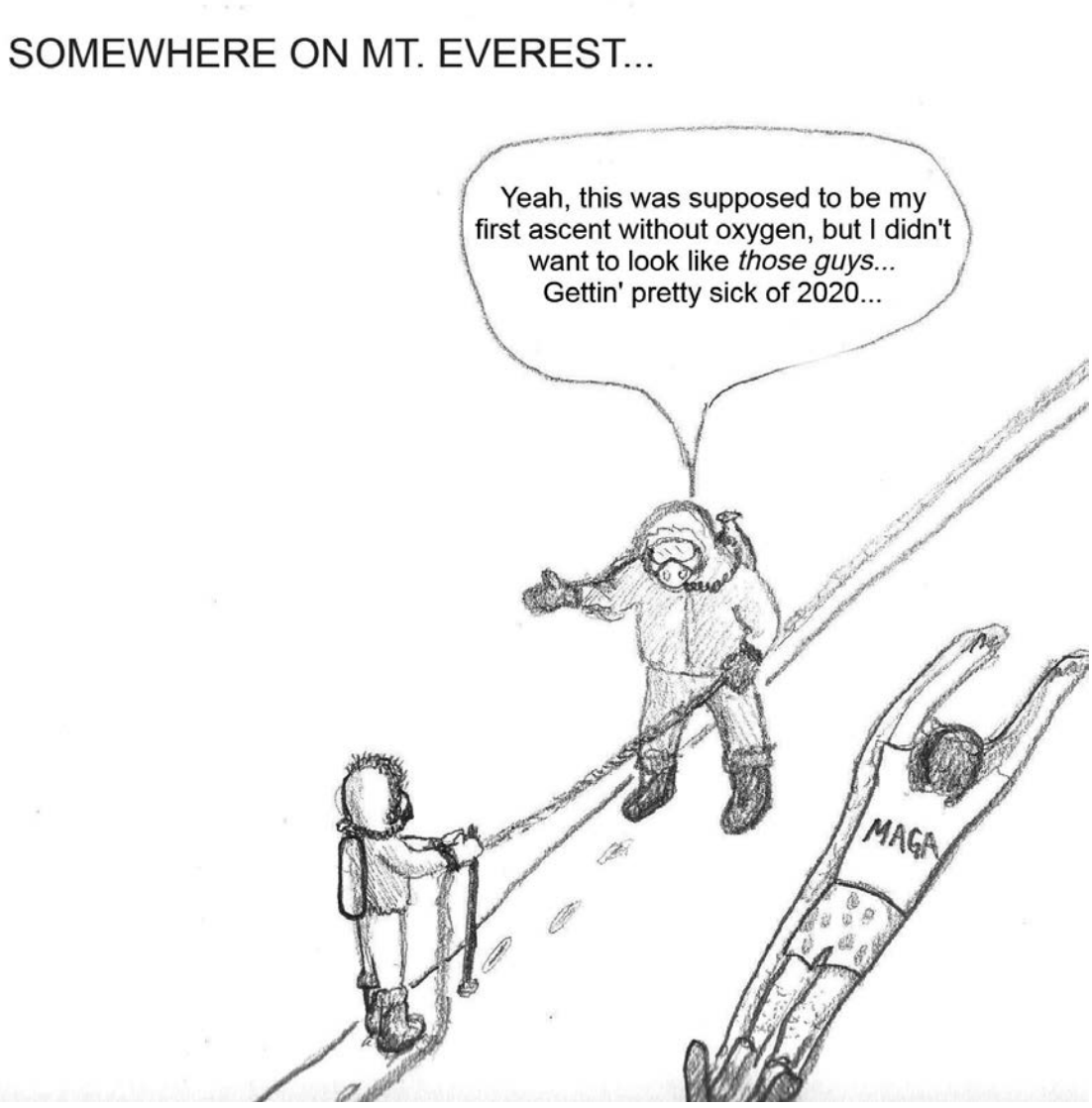
In this fashion, COVID-19 has worked as an excellent warning to alert all individuals, but especially those who feel they do not need to comply with global efforts because they think that the issues do not directly affect them so are not worthy of their concern. COVID-19 has acted as an excellent, but failed, test to this point. The efforts of the American government to blatantly ignore the virus and vehemently deny its potential catastrophic effects on the American population has resulted in over 115,000 American deaths at the time of writing—this unfortunate death data demonstrates the effects of denial and what results from an attitude of invincibility. An exhibited ignorance associated with the symptoms of the larger climate change issue could forecast even more lives touched in similar ways. Moreover, the lack of American participation in the global fight against COVID-19, as well as the domestic lack of American cooperation and leadership from the White House, exhibits the need for a coordinated, multinational approach to combat issues that affect all countries, and thus has demonstrated the need for a coordinated global effort to combat the climate crisis. A global effort and global belief in the need for climate action is and will continue to be one of the biggest obstacles to climate action and must be overcome in order to properly address the climate emergency and move into a state of global sustainability.

Perhaps the greatest lesson to come out of COVID-19 is both the equalizing effect (to a certain extent) it has had on the world, and the inequalities it has highlighted. COVID-19 has affected all individuals, rich or poor, however it has had a far worse effect on those who belong to minority populations, developing nations, all while highlighting the ease with which the rich move through the world. In America, professional sports organizations like the National Hockey League are discussing return to play scenarios where the league would test every player every single evening. This contrasts strongly with the thousands of Americans who cannot, or who have not been able to, secure testing for illnesses they are certain are COVID-19. This discrepancy highlights the ability of the wealthy to quite literally buy their way out of issues, while those without money are left to fend for themselves. This situation provides a stark mirror for the climate crisis, as it demonstrates both the equalities and inequalities that accompany the climate crisis. Much like COVID-19, climate change both equally and unequally affects all individuals across the globe. While climate change will and does affect everyone to some extent, it disproportionately affects low-income communities and developing nations.

Climate justice is an issue that will need to feature prominently in any sustainable climate change solution in order to ensure that it actually ends up being sustainable. Environmental and global sustainability must address issues such as food insecurity, food deserts, climate refugees, and those living in areas with infrastructure and policy that cannot address and support climate change as a result of a lack of economic and social viability.

While the wealthy in the world will not simply be able to buy their way out of climate change, they will be able to delay feeling its effects long after it has displaced and fundamentally altered the lives of those less fortunate. While COVID-19 may be the earth sending us a warning sign to prevent future catastrophic events, if not heeded, it may also be indicative of destruction and extinction of the human species. We as a human species need the earth to survive, the earth doesn't need us.

Julia Lawrence is a graduate of the 2020 Queen's B.Ed OEE program. She is completing her Master's in Environmental and Sustainability Education at Lakehead University, where her current research focuses on the intersections between outdoor/ adventure-based education, environmentalism, and climate change. Her passion for OEE and environmental education stems from her appreciation of the relationship between humans and the environment that sustains us. That is to say, she is grateful for the moments that she is humbled by nature. Luckily, her big passion is rock climbing, so she frequently gets to experience that humbling.



The Fabric of Our COVID Masks

By Zabe MacEachren

Weaving, felt-making, knitting, and hide tanning are all forms of technology developed by humans to protect themselves, creating the shields and mini-homes required to keep our body safe from variable weather conditions. With everyone wearing masks made out a fabric during this COVID pandemic, it is appropriate to review a book that is focused on an incredible piece of technology—fabric, the tool we use to improve our lives and stay safe.

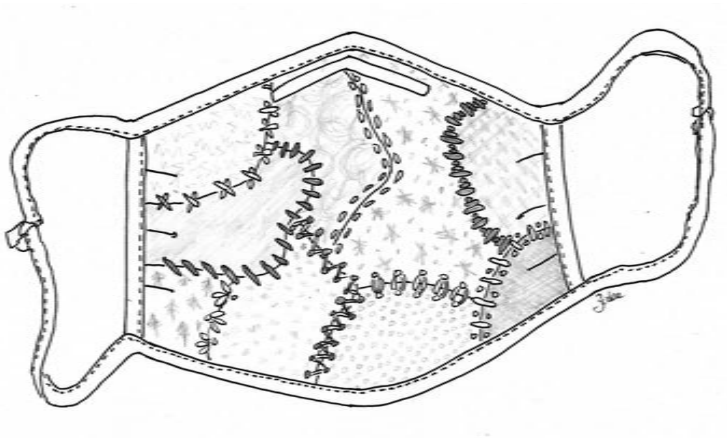
The Golden Thread: How Fabric Changed History by Kassia St Clair should be required reading for those of us who like to wear clothes. It covers the history of the development of spinning and weaving, and the initial search for suitable materials that could be processed into ever more comfortable and luxuriant coverings for our delicate skin. Following an initial exploration of the complexity of preparing fibres for spinning initially using flax (linen), followed closely by silk, wool and cotton, the book goes on to explore the time required by hosts of people (predominantly women) to make fabric and how exchanging fabric for other goods established the fundamental pattern of the trade market economy and the capitalist system that persists to this day.

The author gives us quotes taken throughout recorded history, and from cultures around the world which she weaves through the text mimicking the warp and weft of fabric itself. If you pay attention to the role played by the thread count in your mask you will realize that tight weaves are critical to keeping out microscopic size droplets 'moistly' exhaled when we speak and breath. The thread count woven into most of our homemade masks today is acceptable for the task, but it falls short in comparison to the tight weaves found in the fabrics of past cultures (e.g., the linens of the Greeks, the historical silks of Asia or the woolen sail cloth made by the Vikings). It is also important to note that prior to the industrial revolution, all of the thin strands used to craft linen, silk or wool fabric was first tightly spun using a laborious process before weaving could even begin. The manual skill required to produce fine strands (threads and yarns) is easily recognized by outdoor educators who have taught campers how to make bass or cedar cordage fine and strong enough to use as survival fishing line. The author's descriptions of the hand-crafted fabrics created by diverse cultures throughout history firmly establishes the critical role hand skills played, not only for survival but for improving the general quality of life.

This book will inspire you to appreciate not just sewing but the material processing that is required to produce the wide variety of fabric offered in today's fabric and clothing stores. *The Golden Thread* is well researched and historically expansive. Beginning with the first spinning of thread all the way through to the development of the synthetic fabrics used in sports clothing, space suits, and unique fabrics such as fully organic and recyclable woven spider silk.

For educators who teach social justice and related subjects, the description of activities experienced by those working in the synthetic fabric industry or sweat shops producing T-shirts and jeans can be an emotional experience; one that draws attention to the critical need for change in work conditions. St Clair's descriptions are often direct: "Environmentally, synthetic fabrics are a disaster. Polyester, one of the cheapest synthetics, is essentially a plastic derived from crude oil. . . fibres are among the most abundant environmental debris in the world" (p.219). She describes the water quality of rivers downstream from a Viscose plant, a habitat where fish cannot survive for longer than ten minutes and one in which the pollutants are so concentrated that it is severely corrosive to metal machinery.

My primary criticism of the book, and it is a more of wishlist than a criticism, is that there is only one chapter that explores the direct links between fabric and the clothing industry and its overwhelmingly negative environmental impacts. Readers seeking that content are referred to *Workers in the Factory: Rayon's Dark Past.*



As an avid seamstress and designer, I found the chapter titled, Under Pressure—which details the development of 'Suits Suitable for Space'— to be full of interesting facts. In this chapter the author is bold enough to touch on subjects such as the misinformation that NASA disseminated to the public regarding innovations in spacesuit construction in the effort to justify ongoing research funding. At the same time the author emphasizes that space suits are all that stands "between the little soft pink body of the astronaut and the hard vacuum of space" (p.226). To this day, spacesuit development and design still requires a huge investment of resources with limitations in their function constituting a main stumbling block in the planning of future space missions. The importance of these suits to any space travel is reflected in the costs and collaboration necessary for the early Apollo missions to succeed. The 1960s Apollo astronauts priced out their suits as if they were equivalent to steaks and determined the cost based upon weight. Each pound cost approximately a thousand dollars and the suits weighted in at 189 pounds complete with portable life support systems.

The 1960s spacesuits were a product of a collaboration between NASA researchers and the experienced seamstresses who worked at the Playtex company's diaper assembly-line. These women were highly skilled at the production of tight fitting, yet moveable underwear, bras, and girdles (p.234). Their skills allowed them to overcome the challenge presented by the need to sew without puncturing the fabric with pins. Not surprisingly, the astronauts who were unfamiliar with sewing considered the spacesuits to be "high-tech marvels of modern engineering." (p. 236). Further, NASA propagated the myth that the suit's innovative developments would constitute a contribution to the wider public good.

The author reminds us that the Dupont corporation invented Teflon prior to its participation in space clothing research. During the early days of the space program, the goal of safely clothing astronauts was achieved by the integration of "rigorous engineering with a touch of anatomy and anthropology" (p. 237).

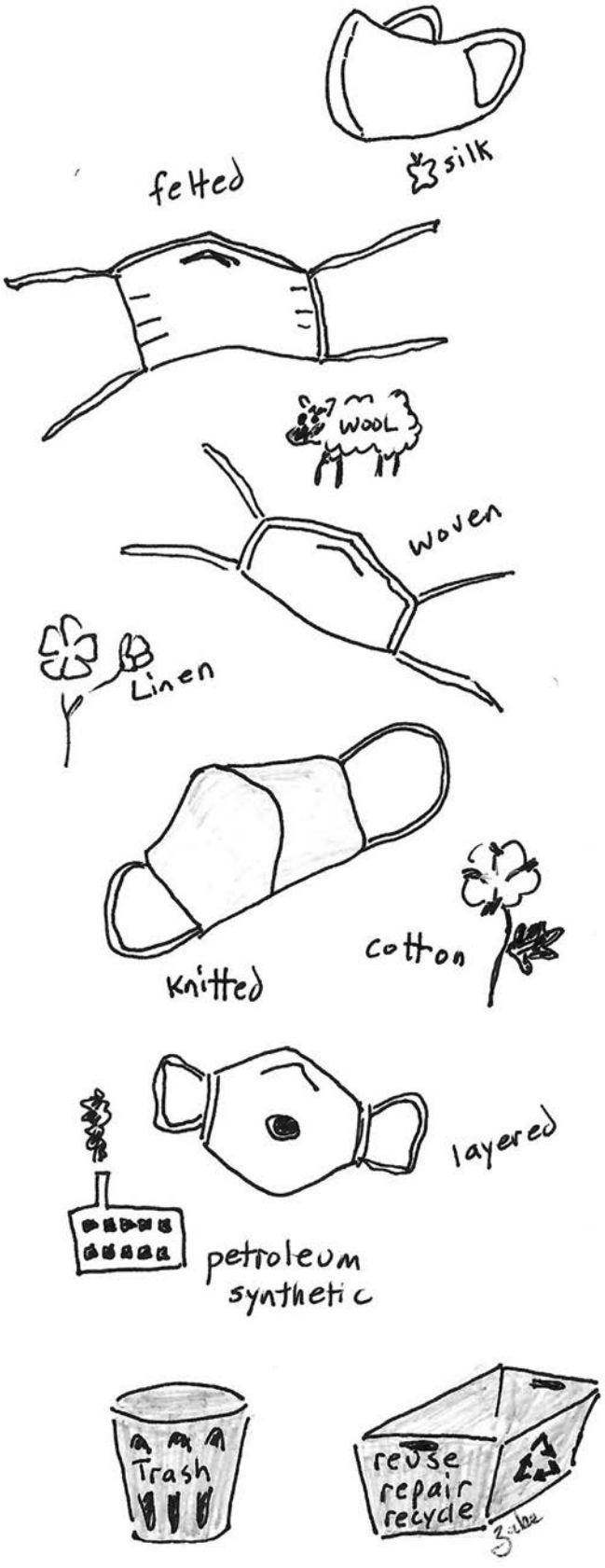
From a broader perspective it is readily apparent that the development of spacesuits are another step in the long evolution of textiles and clothing development. St Clair, in a previous chapter, describes the industry-wide transition from rayon, (a fabric made from plant cellulose), to the new varieties of fabrics created from synthetic petroleum-based ingredients. Reading St Clair's chapter on synthetic fabrics and the toxic by-products that result from their production, and her description of why our best spacesuits are still highly problematic, caused me to ask myself the following question: why do we commit so much of our resources to leaving our planet rather than addressing our immediate threats to our planetary ecosystem, especially our current climate crisis?

The chapter on swimsuits illustrates how biomimicry is employed for sports enthusiasts by mimicking water creatures aerodynamic properties and why the

resulting designs are followed by ethical issues. For example, recent swimsuit innovations have proven to be capable of allowing good swimmers to shed seconds off their swim times and in so doing break world records. These fabric-based milestones raise debates in sports arenas concerning when technology should be allowed to influence the records set by the limitations of the human body (e.g., race times.) Running shoes are also used as an example of a fabric-based technology that influences the recording of what well-conditioned human bodies are capable of achieving. The book outlines how each innovation in sports equipment raises ethical issues and edges us towards becoming cyborgs.

Canadian outdoor educators will be interested in the chapter on polar explorations as it conveys the challenges cold weather adventurers have long-experienced and the slow occurrence of adopting the attire of Indigenous groups whose clothing has stood the test of time in cold climates. The chapter *Layering in Extremis* provides educators with interesting lore and trivia to share when huddled in a snowbank waiting for your Quinzhee to set so you can hollow it out and survive another night of below zero temperatures.

The final chapter, *The Golden Cape-Harvesting Spider Silk,* deals with the fascinating quest to duplicate the strength per weight of spider silk in cloth. For many, cocooning one's self in the thin stretchy strands of spider's silk is a long-awaited dream. In 2012, a cape made of spider silk was exhibited at a museum in London England (p.271). Producing this cape came at an exorbitant cost: half a million dollars, five years of craftsmanship work and the silk spun of 1.2 million spiders—not a method easily repeatable for general public use. Closing the book by outlining this one garment works well to highlight the earlier references made of the exploitative and horrendous conditions experienced by many of those working in the textile industry today. The subtle last line of



the book, "a little more attention to detail shouldn't be too much to ask" emphasizes the extreme hypocrisy of human attention and resources that accompany the making of this everyday substance we so often take for granted.

Similar to the transformation of straw into gold that the fairy tale Rumpelstiltskin describes, the book uses fabric as a metaphor for outlining historically significant events in the history of human development. Considered overall, the author does a great job of helping the reader appreciate the varied components—historical and contemporary—that comprise the clothes they wear. Educators who read the book will come away with a myriad of interesting facts and ideas that they can use in creating hands-on activities which allow students to further expand their understanding of what makes up the clothes they wear. Whether you might be knitting at the next COEO conference or putting on a mask the pandemic necessitates we all need wear today, *The Golden Thread* will help you to understand the important role of fabric in our lives. *The Golden Thread* reminds me of the gifts the world has provided us with and the role we humans must play not just in protecting ourselves and each other but in protecting the planet and the community of all living things. I would add—and I think St Clair might agree with me—that we would be well-served to spend a little time pondering the special skills of spinning, weaving and knitting.

References

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Zabe MacEachren sewed herself a COVID mask to wear that used 100% cotton fabric with a blackfly print. Her aim was to self-isolate in the Northwoods camouflaged with the spring insect season. Her winter mask plans include a mask with 100% plant-dyed felted wool and home-tanned leather straps.

The Maple in my Social Bubble

By Megan Tucker

"When did I stop hugging trees on a regular basis?" A few weeks into the COVID-19 lockdown had passed, and I was beginning to accept the new norm and recognize it as an opportunity for reconnecting with what I had lost touch with over the years. My past seven years in higher education and my current graduate research is leading me to question: why I am spending so much time reading, writing, and talking about the more-than-human, and not enough time speaking and listening to the more-than-human?

Given the restrictions brought on by the present pandemic, I have been forced to self-isolate in the place where I spent my childhood—a former hobby farm, apple orchard in the charming South Bay of Prince Edward County. My gran is still there, listening to the sound of waves on the shore, walking through her gardens, and attending to her birdfeeders. It is both her favourite place and mine. This unprecedented time has led me to reflect upon the changes in my relationship with the more-than-human. In particular the maples and willows on her land, that I admired and displayed affection for in the same way I showed affection for my gran.

Blenkinsop and Piersol (2013) write from the assumptions that the more-than-human is literally able to speak and listen. I remember as a child talking to the Manitoba Maple on the farm, but I have not done so for many years while in school. What is it about social distancing that recognizes the need for human touch that also reminds me that I need to touch the trees in my life? Three degrees, a lot of reading, and I am finally returning to experiencing a relationship with my beloved Maple similar to when I was child. Has all my schooling made me smarter?

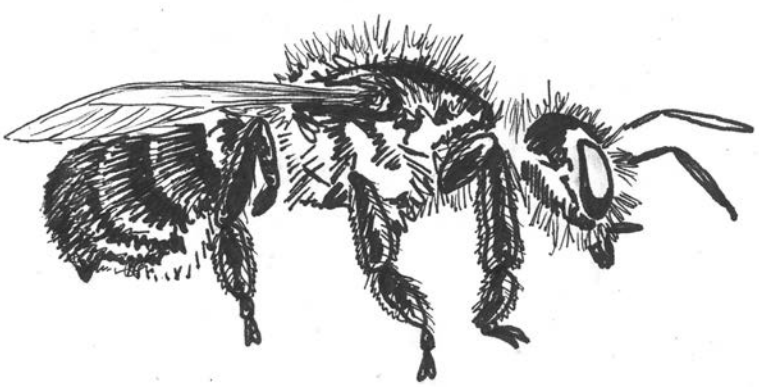
As a child, I spent a lot of time with my gran who frequently walked me through our orchard to hug trees. I remember her words clearly as though this occurred yesterday: "The trees have feelings as you and I do!" or "when we pollute the earth, the trees, the animals, the air and the ground hurt." I remember my gran pleasantly greeting the trees as if they were friends she ran into on the street. My gran's relationship with the more-than-human greatly influenced my own.

Presently, as part of my graduate research, I have been exploring the human and more-than-human relationship through the stories of environmentalists. Prior to the pandemic I was mindful of my relationship to the more-than-human. In fact, I would say that I have a quite strong awareness and kinship with the more-than-human community. However, reflecting back prior to the pandemic, I rarely took the time to act on and put into practice what I have been reading, studying, and discussing, regarding the relationship between human and more-than-human. Beyond humans, higher education hadn't encouraged me to be present with any animate forms of life. The need to social distance aided my decision to spend time each day being present with Maple.

"Hello, old friend, I am sorry it has been a while since I last spent time with you." My pressed cheek against Maple's bark, felt rough yet comforting. My arms stretched out as far as they could go around my tree friend's girth. Maple, I forgot how energizing your hugs feel to me.

In their paper *Listening to the literal: Orientation towards how nature communicates*, Blenkinsop and Piersol (2013) claim that each day, on some level, humans are engaged in communication with the more-than-human world. An example they provide is the "dwindling leaves on trees" which communicates that winter is near (p. 42), or the ripening of an apple on an apple tree which sends the message that the fruit is ready to be eaten. I read; I remember how full my senses are when with Maple. This leads me to wonder, has my schooling dampened

my ways of knowing? Abram (1997) draws attention to the fact that since the beginning of our species existence, we have negotiated relationships with the sensuous world. The sensory capabilities of human "binds" us to the more-than-human (Abram, 1997). It is through acknowledging our sensory abilities that we can shift our perception and focus on the more-than-human.



I often reflect on my childhood perception of the more-than-human, and how my current relationship with the animate earth has evolved. Aldo Leopold (1949) suggested we "think like a mountain." Thinking like a mountain, or in my instance, thinking like a tree, is part of understanding how to develop an ecological consciousness. In the first few pages of her book *To Speak for the Trees*, Diana Beresford-Kroeger (2019) writes "trees offer us the solution to nearly every problem facing humanity today…and they are eager to share those answers" (p. 3). She follows that trees share these answers even when we cannot or will not hear them speak. Similar to the remarks made by Abram (1997), Beresford-Kroeger (2019) writes that at one time humans knew how to listen to their more-than-human relations, yet today we need to reclaim our ability to listen (p. 3). As previously mentioned, I spend a considerable amount of time each day, reading about the more-than-human, forming intellectual questions, and then reading again and writing in order to find suitable answers—all in the name of good research. I cannot help but wonder if turning to trees, such as my dear friend Maple, could become not simply a co-teacher but co-researcher in my graduate work.

Scholars have suggested that the present pandemic is a 'canary in a coalmine' to an even more devasting disaster: the climate crisis. To address whatever our future requires, humans will need to improve their communication with the more-than-human world. This is the time for humans to re-think, re-negotiate and re-define the human and more-than-human relationship. To address my own quandary, I plan to ensure my graduate work involves the theoretical ideas that guide me to wandering and sauntering through the huggable forests of my youth.

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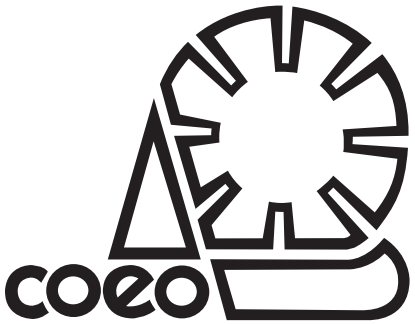

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