Pathways

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Northern cardinal nest.

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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

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Pathways is always looking for contributions. Please contact the Chair for submission guidelines.

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THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION

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Features

Columns

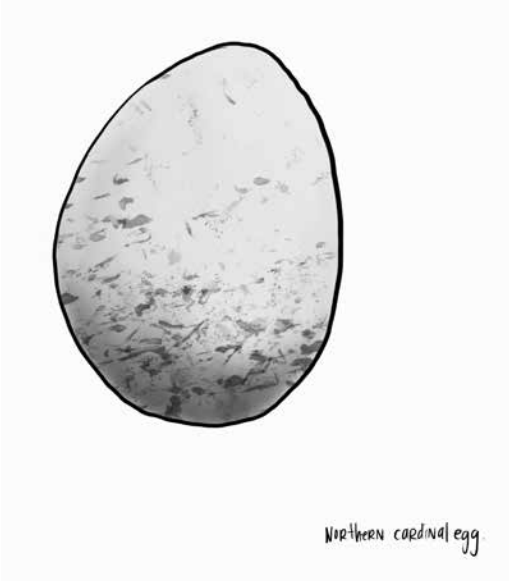
Editor's Log

This issue of *Pathways* begins with an important article reporting on the results of a nation-wide study of outdoor education in Canada. This study, conducted by Morten Asfeldt of the University of Alberta, was designed to identify the guiding philosophies, central goals, and distinguishing characteristics of OE in Canada. The results, relayed by Asfeldt, provide a foundation for a deeper understanding of Canadian OE, as well as identify several key takeaways, which his research team hopes can enhance the delivery of OE.

The article which follows this is by Simon Priest, and within it he prompts readers to reflect upon and consider their own current outlook on risk. Priest, an authority on outdoor adventure leadership, speaks directly to the Canadian context and discusses the impact that culture creep from the United States is having on increased costs of insurance and patterns in litigation in Canada. He urges us to think about harm caused to society by risk aversion on children's physical and psychosocial development. Staying on the topic of risk, in the next article, Chris Peters shares his thoughts on risk and decision making in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, as he takes us on a paddling trip towards the Maw. Then, graduate student Jack Reed introduces (most) readers to the postdigital condition and what it means for outdoor experiential education, while *Pathways* Resource Editor, Bob Henderson, provides a review of a recent publication entitled *The Politics of the Canoe,* edited by Bruce Erickson and Sarah Wylie-Krotz.

Jennifer Stevens shares an announcement of a new resource from L*earning for a Sustainable Future, Empowering Learners in a Warming World*—a guide for grades 7 to 12 educators to support students as they direct the path of their own climate learning. And finally, this issue closes with a poetic contribution from the piquant and curious xavier o. datura.

Kyle Clarke
Editor



Sketch Pad – Artist, Marlisha Lewis (@marlishalew), resides in Barrie, Ontario with her husband and three kids. She has a passion for collecting, photographing, painting and printmaking. She has spent time studying as a printmaker, implementing thesis work that explored art expression for Alzheimer's, and teaching overseas. Her interest in memory, past-story, details in nature, light and focus are some of the inspirational themes that reappear throughout her creative process. Six years ago, Mar followed a dream to open a community art space that was accessible to all and began co-developing Art in House, which opened in 2014. As the needs of the community evolved, in the fall of 2019, the space naturally transitioned into a shared artist studio/gallery space called Spare Room (@spareroombarrie). Spare Room is nestled in the heart of Barrie at 12 Lakeshore Mews. If you are walking along the Barrie waterfront, you may notice Mar's birds on a larger scale, brightly painted on the garage door of Spare Room. You might also find Mar here, working alongside other local artists and makers, or in the forest where she is most inspired, immersed in the natural world around her.

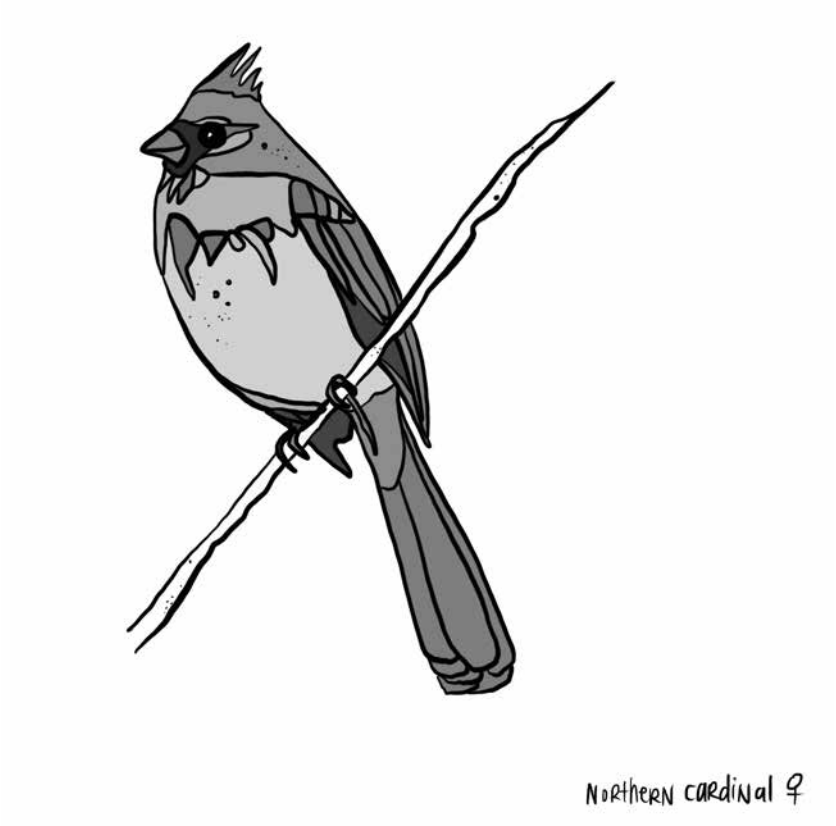
President's View

This January I greatly missed being able to gather with our incredible community of outdoor educators for COEO's Make Peace With Winter conference, but I hope that you have all found ways to enjoy the season. While our adventures may need to stay closer to home this year, especially as we find ourselves in another lockdown, there are still lots of opportunities for us to get outside. I have been doing lots of winter birding, getting out for local hikes and neighbourhood walks, and making the most of the snow for as long as it lasts.

On December 30th COEO hosted a successful free webinar, "*Engaging Students in Nature-Based Programming Online*". A big thank you to Barbara Sheridan for sharing her knowledge and facilitating some great learning. I would also like to extend thanks to everyone who attended this webinar, allowing for some awesome discussion and thoughtful Q&A. If you missed out on the webinar, a recording is now available to be viewed on the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario YouTube channel.

After the success of the December webinar, we have plans underway for a monthly webinar series that will happen from February until June. Each month will feature different presenters, covering topics that have been heavily requested by folks in the COEO community: Forest schools, OPHEA guidelines, and virtual summer camps are just a few of the great topics we will cover in the coming months. The format for these webinars will be an hour-long presentation, followed by an opportunity for questions and discussion. Each of these webinars will be available to members at no cost and can be attended by non-members for a small fee. More information will be shared as details become finalized, so please make sure you are reading the monthly e-newsletter and following us on social media.

I am also thrilled to announce that planning is underway for the 2021 Ontario Wilderness Leadership Symposium (OWLS), which will take place in a virtual format this year on April 30th and May 1st.



We are excited to partner with Canadian Outdoor Professionals Association (CANOPA) and Project Canoe for this year's event. We are also grateful to have generous financial support from the Cabela's Canada Outdoor Fund for this year's OWLS, which will allow us to gather some incredible speakers while still keeping the cost very low for attendees. While there will certainly still be epic adventure stories and learning about backcountry skills, many of this year's workshops will be themed around anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and anti-oppression. There will be more information shared soon on the COEO website, including presenters and registration details, so please stay tuned. It is bound to be a wonderful opportunity for learning and coming together as a community!

Natalie Kemp
COEO President

A Beautiful Messy Process: Outdoor Education in Canada

By Morten Asfeldt

Outdoor education saved my life. Okay, that is a bit of an overstatement. However, saying that outdoor education (OE) changed and inspired my life is pretty accurate. My first OE course was a month-long course in May 1981. I really had no idea what I was getting myself into. I needed three credits to finish high-school and at the time I was attending Camrose Lutheran College which offered Grade 12 and the first two years of university. Physical Education 30 and university OE courses were taught by Dr. Garry "Gibber" Gibson and he offered me Physical Education 30 credits for completing this month-long university OE course. This sounded like a great deal to me and, as they say, the rest is history. By the end of May 1981–inspired by a remarkable group experience, new insights and perspectives on the natural world, and a great sense of confidence–my personal and professional OE journey had begun. In the past 40 years I have seen and felt the many benefits of OE as both a student and instructor.

During my nearly 30-year academic career, I have watched as universities have "discovered" active and innovative teaching where students actually get involved in the learning process and where instructors try to make connections between the content of a particular course and the students' everyday lives. In some cases, instructors are even taking students out of the classroom and into the world and asking them to work collaboratively with each other and community members. (My apologies for the sarcasm here; I couldn't resist.) As I have watched the trend for improved teaching and learning in universities unfold, I have often wondered how it could be that an instructor is only now "discovering" that an active classroom where students are interacting and engaged is a new and innovative idea? As outdoor educators—and many educators before us—active engaged learning has always been our modus operandi and my guess is that most outdoor educators have never considered their practice new or innovative. Rather, I imagine most have known deep in their teaching souls that the traditions and practices of OE are just plain-old-good-teaching.

This observation coupled with my professional struggle of justifying my OE teaching practices and wrestling for resources to support my OE courses—which, ironically, are very well aligned with the emerging priorities and stated goals of universities and colleges in terms of these new active and innovative pedagogical practices and learning outcomes—led a colleague and I to conduct a nation-wide study of OE in Canada. The goals of this study were to identify the guiding philosophies, central goals, and distinguishing characteristics of OE in Canada with the hope of providing a foundation for a deeper understanding of Canadian OE in order to enhance the delivery of OE. We have published findings from our study in Purc-Stephenson, et al., (2019) and Asfeldt et al., (2020) and a few other articles are in progress.

In a nutshell, the findings of our study demonstrate that outdoor educators are a committed and passionate group who—guided by well-grounded pedagogical practices—are educating and inspiring students. In Asfeldt et al., 2020, we write: "OE in Canada is grounded in experiential learning outdoors that link academic disciplines, and includes the added benefit of helping students make connections with the land, its people, and our past" (p. 11). In many ways, OE is ahead of the emerging pedagogical trend that is promoting the discovery of active and innovative learning. In this paper, I will share our findings and hope that these findings affirm for each of you that you are doing great work! In addition, I hope that these findings can give you words and evidence to help you

explain to colleagues and administrators what it is that we outdoor educators do and how we can help camps, K-12 schools, and colleges and universities achieve their educational visions and prepare students to live purposeful and ethical lives.

Overview of the Study

If you are interested in the details of our methodology and research process, please read Asfeldt et al., 2020. Here, I will provide the basics. First, we wanted to sample programs from across Canada. One of our goals was to see if a distinctly "Canadian Way" or "Ways" of OE might emerge. Second, we knew we had to limit our study or it would have become unmanageable. Therefore, we choose to focus on summer camps, K-12, and post-secondary OE programs. Third, we wanted to include some site-visits and in-person interviews knowing that they would provide the rich kind of data that a survey just can't provide. Fourth, while we wanted to include site-visits and interviews, we also wanted much broader participation than site-visits and interviews allowed. Therefore, after a thorough literature review of the Canadian OE literature (Purc-Stephenson, et al., 2019) we conducted 22 site visits and interviews (six summer camps, ten K-12 programs, five post-secondary programs, and one CEGEP) (see Asfeldt et al., 2020). Based on these interviews, we created an online survey that resulted in 93 responses from summer camps, 100 responses from K-12 programs, and 22 responses from post-secondary programs for a total of 215 completed surveys. The site-visits and interviews as well as the surveys focused on three specific aspects of each program: (1) the underlying program values and philosophies, (2) the central goals of the program, and (3) the common activities included in each program.

What We Learned

Site Visits and Interviews

The findings from our site visits and interviews point to OE being a method of teaching that addresses some important educational, environmental, and social challenges and issues that Canada and the world face today. In 1972, John Passmore conducted a nation-wide study of OE in Canada and he concluded that:

> Outdoor environmental education is certainly not the answer to all our educational problems. But there is growing recognition that it is a method of teaching that can add that other important "R" to every subject on the curriculum - *relevance in what we teach about the world in which our young people live* (p. 61).

Our findings point to Passmore's insights being as true today as they were in 1972: OE continues to be a sound educational practice that is guided by robust pedagogical philosophies and results in valuable and relevant learning outcomes. Let me explain.

Philosophies

Based on our site visits and interviews, we identified five themes that represent the most common philosophies that drive OE programs in Canada. We titled these themes: Influential Founders, Hands-On Experiential Learning, Holistic and Integrated Learning, Journey Through the Land, and Religion and Spirituality.

OE programs in Canada are often initiated by influential founders such as an inspired and passionate teacher (or group of teachers) who have experienced the benefits of OE and recognized that many of those benefits aren't being realized within the limits of traditional disciplines, classrooms, and school schedules. Now, having said that, I want to be clear that there are *many* inspired and passionate teachers that are doing great work within these limits and in *no way* are we suggesting that OE is the *only* solution to the challenges of education. Nevertheless, OE does address many challenges of education and the influential founders that people described during the interviews used their experience and visions for OE to make a

unique contribution to lighting a learning fire in their students. Often, the people we interviewed spoke of how an influential founder was once their teacher or mentor and that they were so inspired by their work that they have now devoted their teaching life to carrying on that founder's vision. Dr. Garry "Gibber" Gibson is this person for me. Sadly, in many cases, once a founder retired, OE programs were often discontinued because there was no one in place to carry on the program. This points to a difference between OE programs and those of traditional disciplines such as math, biology, or English, which are well-established in schools and universities and when a teacher or faculty member retires, it is relatively easy to hire a replacement. However, because OE sits on the margins of many school and post-secondary curricula, without a passionate and inspired advocate, OE is more likely to be set adrift.

Interestingly, during our site visits, we consistently observed that most OE programs at K-12 and post-secondary institutions worked from basement rooms, repurposed closets, and old garages and sheds in far corners of school property. Not once did we observe a purpose-built OE space. This lack of dedicated space suggests that OE continues to exist on the margins of Canadian K-12 and post-secondary education.

Not surprisingly, the theme of hands-on experiential learning was one of the dominant themes describing the underlying philosophies of OE programs. Just about all the people we interviewed talked about the importance of hands-on experiential learning which they described as getting students out of the classroom and engaged in an active form of learning. In addition, those we interviewed spoke of their strong belief that hands-on learning was central to their program because it promoted deeper understanding of the course content and aided in making the content interesting and relevant. A notable observation was that not very many teachers or OE leaders connected hands-on experiential learning to any particular educational philosopher or theoretical foundation such as that of John Dewey (Experiential Education) or Jack Mezirow (Transformational Learning). Generally, we came away from our interviews with the impression that teachers and leaders knew intuitively that hands-on experiential learning just made sense; it was an obvious way of teaching that didn't require an identifiable or articulated academic educational philosophy or theoretical foundation to implement. This was a bit surprising and makes us wonder what OE and other educational practices might look like if teachers and leaders had a greater understanding of some of the philosophies and theories that are often linked with OE.

The notion of OE as a means of facilitating holistic and integrated learning was also a well-defined theme. In essence, teachers and leaders believe that one of the strengths of OE is that it blurs the boundaries of traditional academic disciplines and helps students recognize the interconnected nature of life and the world. For example, OE programs can help students link knowledge from physics and physical education by using knowledge from both disciplines as they learn to paddle a canoe. Students can also link knowledge from history and literature to enrich a river or snowshoe journey by bringing the stories of the past and present alive in the land, the trees, and the water. And, the knowledge of biology, chemistry, and environmental studies can be linked with social studies as students study the impact of pollution and environmental reclamation by visiting local spaces as well as during remote travel experiences. One of our interviewees said it eloquently when they described their program as a process "where academics matter, relationships matter, the environment matters, and it's all tied together in this beautiful experience".

Journeying through the land emerged as an important element of many programs. That is, teachers and leaders believed that self-propelled small group travel experiences provide rich learning. It is easy to see that a travel experience in remote or even

local space, is a natural form of hands-on experiential holistic integrated learning. It is a beautiful synergy. Further, teachers and leaders felt that just spending time in nature was itself an important experience that in some ways needed no further structure or facilitation by the teacher: nature itself is a great teacher. However, the travel experience was linked to facilitating many of the learning outcomes that we will describe later but include personal and social development and as a means for learning about Canadian history and culture and particularly about Indigenous people. Some felt that the self-propelled travel experience is a quintessential Canadian experience.

Philosophies and values rooted in religious and spiritual traditions also shape OE in Canada. For some, traditional Christian values drive programs yet for most programs, the term "spirituality" was used to describe the idea of the world and life having a mysterious element that isn't rooted in a defined spiritual tradition. Regardless, this again points to OE being a form of holistic integrated learning where many forms of knowing are encouraged. In contrast, traditional education is too often siloed into distinct disciplines in a manner that doesn't reflect the complex (yet sometimes simple) and messy (but also beautiful) interconnections and realities of a student's life and the world as they experience it.

Learning Goals

It is no surprise that OE programs have a variety of learning goals. OE is more than learning to paddle a canoe or light a fire or identify a specific bird song. These can all be important skills to learn but for the most part, they are not important on their own or in isolation. Rather, they are important activities that reflect the philosophies that guide OE programs and are a means of achieving specific program learning goals. Again, there is a purpose to what might appear to be messy madness or aimless recreational learning.

After considering all the learning goals described by our interviewees, we boiled them down into five themes: Building Community, Personal Growth, People and Place Consciousness, Environmental Stewardship, and Employability and Skill Development. Here again we see the diverse interwoven nature of OE.

Building community emerged as one of the primary goals of OE. The people we interviewed spoke passionately about the goal of promoting teamwork and fostering relationships within the groups they work with. Often, teachers and leaders expressed that they sense students today lack opportunities for genuine experiences of teamwork and honest relationships and that OE is one avenue for sharing the joy of community with students. It is easy to imagine a clear link between building community and the practice of self-propelled remote travel. That is, remote travel facilitates a sense of community as students are required to work collaboratively in most aspects of the travel experience as they work towards a common goal or in many cases, a variety of shared goals as reflected in the diverse range of learning goals linked to OE.

Using OE as a means for promoting personal growth is just as common as building community and there is a natural relationship between personal growth and being a part of a genuine community. Awareness of personal strengths and shortcomings often bubble to the surface when we are engaged in relevant and interesting mental and physical group challenges. This link between building community and personal growth through OE was acknowledged by many interviewees and point to some common roots of Canadian OE such as the Ontario summer camp tradition (Wall, 2009) which aimed to develop character as did the British tradition of Scouting and Outward Bound which have also both influenced OE in Canada. These early influences reflect the notion that "education is essentially a social process" (Dewey, 1938, p. 58) which is revealed today in the themes of building

community and personal growth.

Enhancing people and place consciousness reflects the goal of teaching about a specific location, people, and their historical significance. As long time COEO member Bob Henderson has so often said: "Every trail has a story" (Henderson, 2005). Henderson's point is that when we paddle a river or hike a trail, we are paddling a particular river and hiking a particular trail. These are not just anonymous undiscovered rivers and trails. Rather, these rivers and trails have unique and particular pasts and stories. Central to Henderson's idea of "every trail has a story" is that to know these pasts and stories provides a much richer river and trail experience which presents an opportunity to understand Canadian history and culture, which is sometimes deeply troubling. However, understanding our troubled past that has resulted in generations of harm and broken relationships with Indigenous Canadians and resulted in many environmental abuses is an opportunity for deep learning. As Meerts-Brandsma et al., (2020) point out, OE is well-positioned to address many such issues of privilege that need urgent attention.

Environmental stewardship also emerged as an important learning goal. Interviewees spoke particularly about the importance of educating students for sustainable futures and giving students the knowledge and skills for implementing sustainable practices in their daily lives. During expeditions, sustainable environmental camping and travel practices were commonly taught. The environmental concerns of the 1960s and 70s were a significant influence on the emergence of OE in Canada. OE continues to be a means for educating students about lingering concerns of the 1960s and 70s but also current issues particularly as we wrestle with accelerating climate change.

The final learning goal addressed issues related to preparing students for employment in outdoor related fields. This generally included a focus on skill development leading to certification in outdoor skills such as canoeing as well as safety training such as first-aid.

Activities

As a part of our interviews and site visits, we were interested in getting a sense of activities that are commonly included in OE programs. There is a long list. After combining all the activities that are included in summer camps, K-12, and post-secondary programs, we had a list of 33 different activities. To better understand these activities, we funneled them into seven broad categories: outdoor-living skills (e.g., cooking and fire-building); sport and recreation activities (e.g., canoeing and kayaking); work experience and certification (e.g., job shadowing and first aid training); environmental education activities (e.g., nature walks and birdwatching); games (e.g., group games for fun and to promote personal and social development); reflection (e.g., journaling and group discussions); and arts and crafts (e.g., paddle and moccasin making). On average, programs offer 14 different activities. The most common activities were those from the outdoor-living skills and sport and recreation categories.

What the Surveys Revealed

As mentioned earlier, once we completed the literature review and interview stages of this project, we created three unique surveys: one for summer camps, one for K-12 programs, and one for post-secondary programs. The goal of the surveys was to see how well our findings and themes from the interview stage mapped across Canada and across our three target sectors. While each survey collected data specific to each sector, they also collected data regarding guiding philosophies, central goals, and distinguishing activities. This allowed us to present data specific to each sector. Here I will present an overview. More in-depth research articles for each of the three sectors are in the process of being published.

Philosophies

Figure 1 displays how summer camps, K-12, and post-secondary programs rated the influence of seven underlying philosophies

and values. You will notice there are seven themes here rather than five as in the interviews. This is because we subdivided some of the original five themes in order to obtain a more nuanced understanding (i.e., we added educational philosophy, renamed journey through the land to self-propelled wilderness travel, and split religion and spirituality into two distinct themes). Respondents were asked to rate how much they agreed or disagreed that a specific philosophy or value influences their programs. That is, the higher the mean rating of a particular philosophy or value, the more that philosophy shapes a program: or example, a low influence (0.00 to 2.5), neutral influence (2.6-3.5), and strong influence (3.6-5.0).

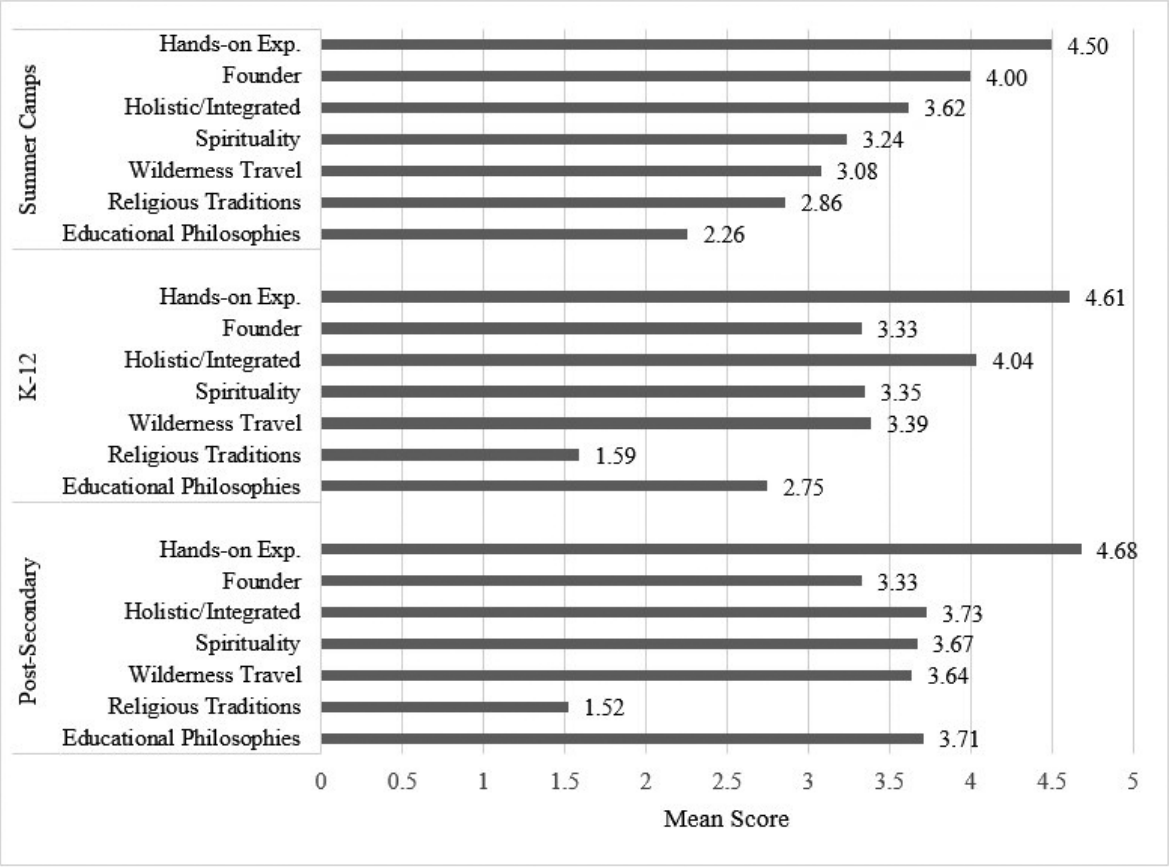


Figure 1: Importance of philosophies and values.

Overall, the pattern of influence remained much the same as that revealed through the interview study. For example, hands-on experiential learning, holistic integrated learning, and the impact of influential founders remain dominant. However, there are some sector differences. For example, summer camps are the least influenced by educational philosophies and have the strongest religious tradition influence. Given that many summer camps are supported by churches and other religious organizations, this finding makes sense. Religious traditions have just about no influence in K-12 and post-secondary programs yet spirituality does influence K-12 and post-secondary programs. This likely points to the fact that K-12 and post-secondary are often publicly funded and therefore have a broader spirituality approach versus a specific denominational approach. Holistic integrated learning has the strongest influence in K-12 programs which supports the notion that OE is a common means for blurring the boundaries of traditional academic disciplines. The influence of ideas directly linked to specific educational

philosophies is greatest in post-secondary programs. This is not surprising given that academics are typically more immersed in the academic literature where educational philosophies are more commonly discussed and examined.

After asking respondents to rate the influence of these seven philosophies and values on their programs, we asked respondents to identify which two philosophies are most essential to their program philosophy (Figure 2). There is greater variation between sectors in this data. However, hands-on experiential learning is clearly the most influential philosophy that drives programs across all three sectors. Given the recent push for more experiential learning in K-12 and particularly post-secondary education in Canada, this finding points to OE being ahead of emerging pedagogical trends; OE is a leader of the pack, one might say. Other notable findings include affirmation of the strong influence of religious traditions in summer camps and holistic integrated learning in K-12 programs. Self-propelled travel was most influential in post-secondary programs where influential founders had the least influence.

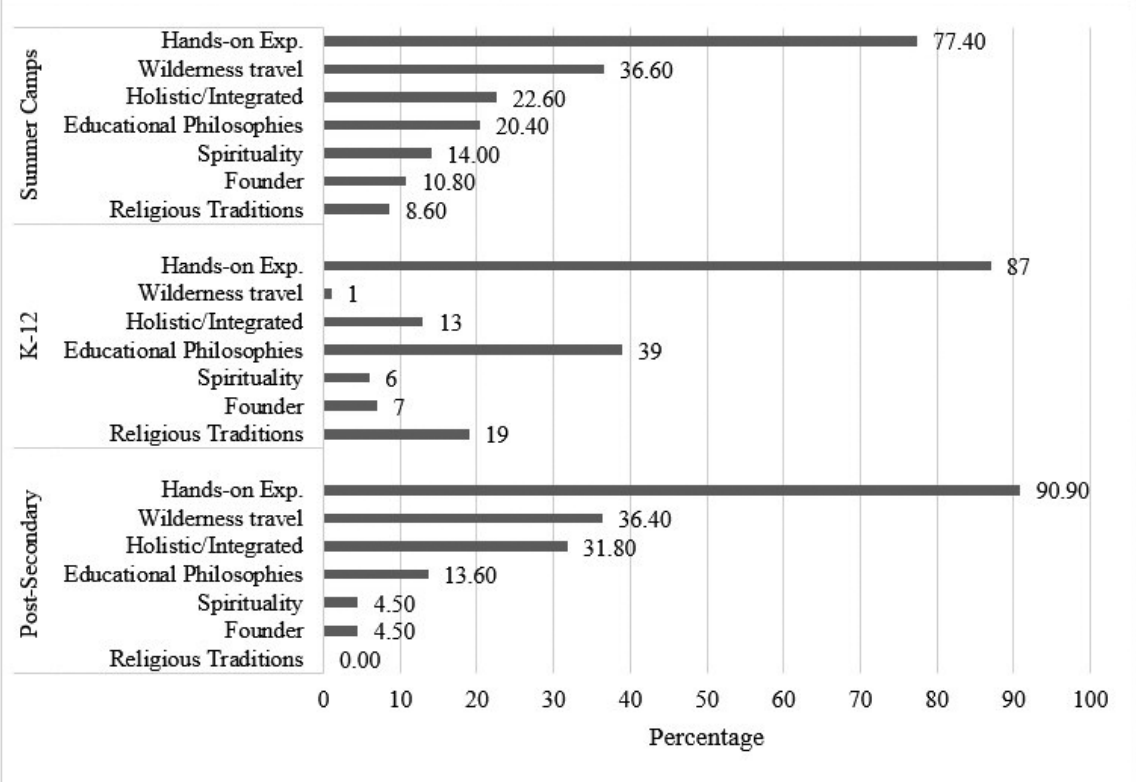


Figure 2: Most essential program philosophies and values.

The data regarding learning goals reveals that OE programs generally include a number of important goals. The inclusion of a range of learning goals makes sense given the importance of OE as a holistic integrated form of learning (Figure 3) where the boundaries of traditional disciplines are blurred in order to enable connections between these disciplines that reflect the reality of life as students experience it. This is well-aligned with the Deweyian idea that "education, [...], is a process of living and not preparation for future living" (Dewey, 1981, p. 445) which is one of Dewey's key ideas that shapes his educational philosophy of experiential education. Dewey was a leader of progressive education movement in North America in the early 20th century and, in the academic world, is often seen as one of the founders of experiential education which has shaped modern day outdoor and adventure education.

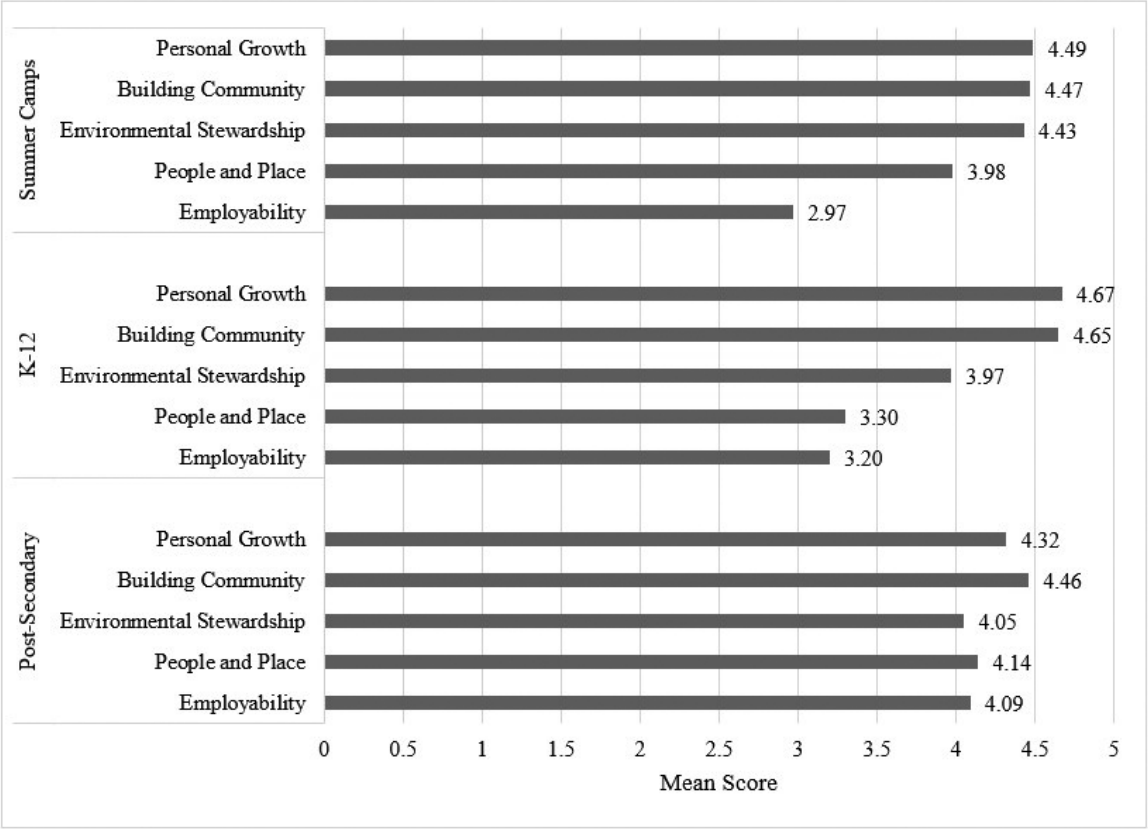


Figure 3: Importance of learning goals.

As we did with philosophies and values, we asked respondents to identify the two most important learning goals from our list (Figure 4). Again, there is some variance between sectors but overall, the two most important OE learning goals are personal growth and building community. This may point to outdoor educators recognizing that the social process of learning is critical to effective education. That is, as my mentor Dr. Garry "Gibber" Gibson often said: "You aren't teaching outdoor education; you are teaching people." From this perspective, these findings may point to outdoor educators recognizing that a critical role of education is to help students learn about themselves and that creating a safe and affirming community setting facilitates not only learning about themselves but also provides a foundation for learning about, in this case, environmental stewardship and people and place consciousness. For certain, it appears that outdoor educators are more likely to see education as a transformational process versus a transactional process of knowledge transfer. A transactional process of knowledge transfer is one where the primary goal is to have students learn specific disciplinary content (e.g., numerical literacy) and little attention is paid to how that knowledge might impact, or transform, the students. In contrast, a transformational perspective aims to not only have students learn specific disciplinary knowledge but equally, to have the process of learning that knowledge change, or transform, the students' understanding and perspective of themselves, others, and the world in which they live. One might say that a transactional approach is a clean and neat efficient process while a transformational approach embraces the messy and unpredictable nature of learning that embraces effectiveness over efficiency (Asfeldt & Beames, 2017). From this perspective, OE is a beautiful, messy process.

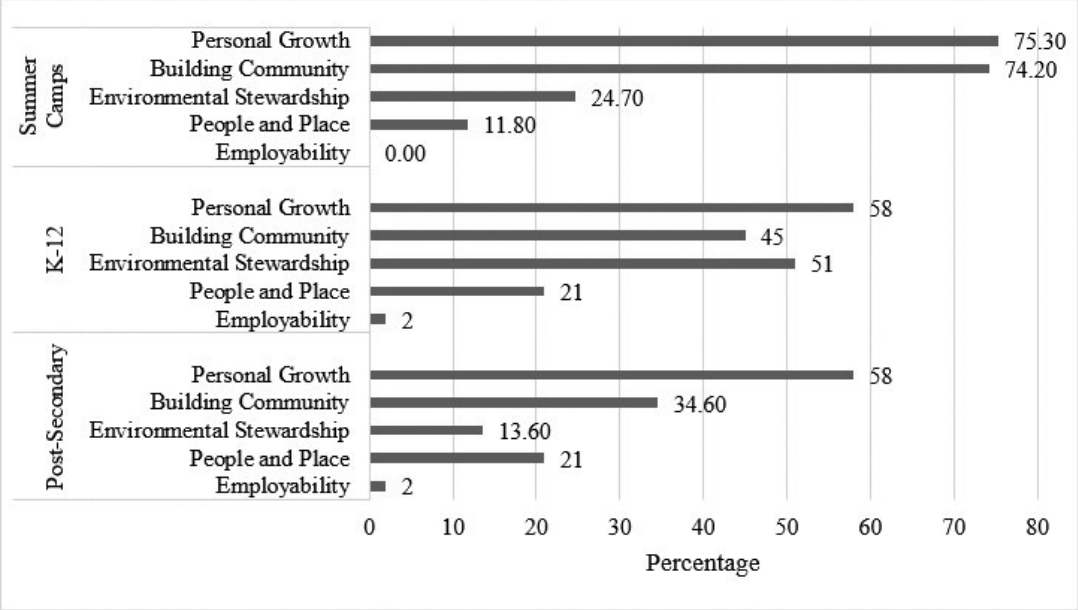


Figure 4: Most essential learning goals.

Activities

In order to understand the breadth and frequency of activities offered as a part of OE programs, we asked two questions. First, we asked respondents to identify all the activities that are offered in their programs. Second, we asked respondents to identify the three most common activities in their programs. Here is what we found.

Table 1 shows the number of programs and percentage of the sector that offer each of the 33 activities from our list which was developed based on the interviews and site visits. That is, 86 of 93 summer camps (92.5%) include campfires, 79 of 100 K-12 programs (79%) involve camping, and 20 of 22 post-secondary programs (90.9) offer camping.

%	Activities					
	Summer Camps n=93 (%)		K-12 n=100 (%)		Post-Secondary n=22 (%)	
80-100	Campfires Games	86 (92.5) 82 (88.2)	No activities reported.		Camping Campfires Canoeing Hiking	20 (90.9) 19 (86.4) 19 (86.4) 19 (86.4)

60-79	Canoeing Camping Archery Hiking Nature Studies Orienteering Swimming	76 (81.7) 70 (75.3) 69 (74.2) 67 (72) 66 (71) 66 (71) 66 (71)	Camping Games Campfires Nature Studies Orienteering Hiking Cooking Snowshoeing Canoeing	79 (79) 77 (77) 77 (77) 70 (70) 70 (70) 69 (69) 65 (65) 62 (62) 61 (61)	Journal Writing Safety Training Orienteering Nature Studies Cooking Snowshoeing Certification Courses Climbing Skiing	17 (77.3) 16 (72.7) 16 (72.7) 16 (72.7) 15 (68.2) 15 (68.2) 14 (63.6) 13 (59.1) 13 (59.1)
40-59	Climbing Ropes Service Learning Kayaking Cooking	59 (63.4) 57 (61.3) 54 (58.1) 48 (51.6) 42 (45.2)	Journal Writing Skiing Climbing	52 (52) 50 (50) 43 (43)	Kayaking Games Biking Solos Service Learning Work Experience	12 (54.5) 11 (50) 11 (50) 10 (45.5) 10 (45.5) 10 (45.5)
20-39	Journal Writing Biking Work Experience Safety Training Snowshoeing Certification Courses Fishing Gardening Horse Riding	36 (38.7) 35 (37.6) 35 (37.6) 32 (34.4) 28 (30.1) 25 (26.9) 23 (24.7) 19 (20.4) 19 (20.4)	Archery Safety Training Certification Courses Service Learning Biking Swimming Ropes Fishing Kayaking Gardening Skating Winter Tenting	37 (37) 36 (36) 36 (36) 35 (35) 32 (32) 31 (31) 30 (30) 29 (29) 24 (24) 24 (24) 21 (21) 20 (20)	Ropes Winter Tenting Fishing	8 (31.8) 6 (27.3) 5 (22.7)
0-19	Skiing Skating Yoga Solos Rafting Caving Winter Tenting Dogsledding Hunting Indigenous Activities	17 (18.3) 14 (15.1) 14 (15.1) 13 (14) 8 (8.6) 6 (6.5) 2 (2.2) (1) 1.1 (1) 1.1 0 (0)	Work Experience Yoga Solos Horse Riding Hunting Rafting Dogsledding Caving Indigenous Activities	19 (19) 17 (17) 13 (13) 8 (8) 8 (8) 7 (7) 6 (6) 5 (5) 0 (0) (0)	Rafting Swimming Dogsledding Gardening Hunting Skating Yoga Horse Riding Caving Archery Indigenous Activities	4 (18.2) 4 (18.2) 3 (13.6) 3 (13.6) 2 (9.1) 1 (4.5) 1 (4.5) 0 (0) 0 (0) 0 (0) 0 (0)

Table 1: Number and percentage of providers offering specific OE activities.

Activity	n(%)
Summer Camps n=93 (%)	
Ropes Course	27 (29)
Canoeing	25 (26.9)
Swimming	24 (25.8)
Climbing	20 (21.5)
Archery	18 (19.4)
K-12 n=100(%)	
Hiking	40 (40)
Canoeing	27 (27)
Camping	24 (24)
Nature Studies	23 (23)
Games	18 (18)
Post-Secondary n=22(%)	
Canoeing	10 (45.5)
Camping	7 (31.8)
Hiking	5 (22.7)
Skiing	4 (18.5)
Kayaking	3 (13.6)

Table 2: Most common activities in each sector.

One particularly interesting finding regarding activities is that no respondents identified including Indigenous activities in their programs. This needs further investigation to understand. We added Indigenous activities to our list of activities because many programs identified Indigenous learning as a program learning goal in the interview stage. One explanation for this finding may be that Indigenous learning is an emerging learning goal and not yet tied to a particular activity. Alternatively, it could be that our expectation that Indigenous learning goals would be directly tied to an activity is incorrect. Rather, it could be that the Indigenous learning goal is woven throughout all aspects of the program and therefore not linked to a particular activity.

What Does All This Mean?

While these findings are interesting on their own, our primary goal for this project is to deepen the understanding of OE in Canada so that we might enhance the delivery of OE. Therefore, here are some key takeaways that we hope are helpful in achieving that goal. Those of you from different sectors and unique political and cultural settings may have additional and perhaps different takeaways. If you do, I encourage you to share them in order to continue the development and understanding of OE in Canada.

Undervalued and Misunderstood

Dyment and Potter (2021), writing about post-secondary OE internationally, claim that one reason that OE programs are often abandoned and poorly supported is that OE is undervalued and misunderstood. In addition, they suggest that OE is often seen as lacking pedagogic rigor by non-OE colleagues and administrators. One of our interviewees described the educational philosophy of their program as "a mess of

stuff". Their point was that OE is not just one philosophy or one value or aimed at achieving one learning goal. Rather, OE is more akin to a synthesizing discipline and method that provides a more organic form of education that is messy and difficult to neatly describe and define but at the same time beautiful.

As K-12 and post-secondary institutions continue the never-ending quest to improve student learning, the messy integrated interdisciplinary hands-on nature of OE that makes it so difficult to describe, define, and neatly package may, ironically, be one of OE's primary strengths. This strength can be an important model for how to educate our children and youth. However, it is much easier for administrators and governments to neatly package education into tidy disciplinary units with precisely identified learning outcomes that present well in vision and funding documents but perhaps don't reflect the reality of how students learn best or how to prepare students for the challenges and complexities of the lives that they are living. Therefore, one strength of this research is that it provides evidence of OE having well-grounded pedagogic roots in hands-on experiential learning that is holistic and integrated in nature and highlights that many OE programs are designed to achieve a variety of interdisciplinary learning goals. These philosophies and goals are well-aligned with emerging pedagogies that aim to be more experiential and interdisciplinary, to develop social and emotional skills, and prepare students to creatively address pressing environmental and social issues.

One suggestion for outdoor educators is to review the goals and missions of your provincial education ministries, local school boards, and individual schools and use this data to provide evidence for how OE can help these bodies achieve their stated goals and missions.

It is easy to imagine that some colleagues and administrators might perceive OE as pedagogically adrift because of the recreational nature of the primary activities associated with OE such as outdoor-living skills and sport and recreational activities. This perception is likely heightened because OE is not a well-established discipline such as English or History or other core disciplines. However, I hope that this research demonstrates that OE activities are more than enjoyable recreational activities but activities that are intentionally used to achieve specific and important learning goals using active methods that enhance student engagement.

Discipline vs Method

There has been an ongoing debate in some OE circles about whether OE is a discipline or a method of teaching (Dyment and Potter, 2015; Potter and Dyment, 2016). On the one hand, it doesn't matter. On the other hand, maybe it is critical. My sense is that outdoor educators have been trying for decades to distinguish OE as a discipline similar to traditional well-established disciplines. If the most important outcome of this debate is to provide children and youth with the types of learning opportunities that OE affords, perhaps we should consider framing OE as a method of teaching where we can achieve the goals of a wide variety of emerging and traditional disciplines. In this way, we are promoting an active innovative pedagogy that aligns with emerging trends, rather than continuing the battle to establish OE as a stand-alone discipline. This strategy has and is working in some places such as integrated high-school programs and a number of university programs.

As these findings reveal, there is no one template of OE in Canada. While there are similarities and common philosophies, learning goals, and activities, there is also great diversity. The notion of OE as a synthesizing method that is molded to each unique camp, K-12, and post-secondary setting (e.g., geographical, cultural, historical) may be a "Canadian Way". That is, the "Canadian Way" is guided by the philosophies, learning goals, and activities identified in the study but at the same time, this "Canadian Way" is shaped and molded to local geographies, histories, and cultures which results in not one specific "Canadian Way" of OE but many "Canadian Ways".

From this perspective, to the untrained eye, OE might look like a messy process while to the trained eye, it is a "beautiful messy process" with purpose. Therefore, it may be more accurate to situate OE as a method rather than a discipline as Passmore did in 1972.

Reconciliation, Racism, and Privilege

Canada and Canadians have made a commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Canadians as reflected in the recent Truth and Reconciliation Report (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015). Considering the philosophies and values that drive OE coupled with OE's common learning goals, OE is well positioned to address reconciliation as well as racism and privilege more generally. For example, having students work together in diverse groups during self-propelled remote travel experiences on traditional lands while learning about the history and culture of the travel route or local spaces is already contributing to the process of reconciliation. Engaging students in such hands-on experiences of diverse people and places can be a powerful learning experience. While this can be intimidating and challenging work, there are increasing resources being developed and available to assist us in this task. Here are four references to readings that have been helpful for me (Erickson & Wylie Krotz, 2021; Lowen-Trudeau, 2014; Lowen-Trudeau, 2019; Meerts-Brandsma et al., 2020).

Humility

Dyment and Potter (2021) encourage outdoor educators to be less humble. We need to believe in what we do and we need to be willing to advocate for support of our OE programs. This can be exhausting work. However, one clear observation from our interviews and site visits is that outdoor educators are an innovative and passionate group of teachers and leaders who are providing profoundly meaningful experiences for students and campers. And, as we all know, there are easier ways to keep our jobs as teachers and faculty members than taking students on off-campus learning journeys.

Furthermore, as I hope you have recognized, while some colleagues and administrators may undervalue our work and question the pedagogical substance of OE, this data tells a very different story. We are doing great work and many schools and universities are playing pedagogical catch-up as they aim to implement more experiential integrated learning that achieves interdisciplinary learning objectives. Of course, there is room for OE to improve, but we have been and continue to be on a good path!

Finally, I encourage you all to support organizations such as COEO in order to continue the development of an informed and united voice for OE. It is important that we are able to articulate the many benefits of OE and to demonstrate how OE can contribute to the achievement of the goals and mission of our camps, schools, and universities. There are many benefits beyond those revealed in this research. However, I do hope this research has given you additional words and evidence to support your program, inspire your teaching, and encourage you to remember that you are doing great work. Outdoor education is not the magic bullet that will solve all our educational challenges or address all our environmental or social issues. However, it has many strengths and benefits that can make an important contribution towards those goals.

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CANADA: A Nation Not Risk Taking

By Simon Priest

Risk has been clearly defined as the potential to lose something of value (Priest & Baillie, 1987; Priest & Gass, 2018). That loss can manifest as harm: physical (broken bones), mental (embarrassment), social (publicly shared secrets) or financial (monetary decline). The word comes from the ancient Greek terms: rhizikon and rhiza (Sandoval, 2016). These were used to describe a navigation "difficulty to avoid at sea" such as exposed rocks, roots, reefs, anything cut from the land, and sea monsters (Skyjong, 2005).

Perhaps the two of the most famous sea monsters in Greek mythology were Scylla and Charybdis from the Odyssey poem by Homer (Johnson, 2019). Scylla was a submerged shoal with six exposed heads, while Charybdis was a whirlpool. These two risks lay on either side of the narrow Strait of Messina between Calabria and Sicily. Sailing between them during a storm was the challenge of every navigator and losing a few sailors to Scylla was thought to be better than losing the whole ship to Charybdis. This is where the modern sayings "between a rock and a hard spot" and "the lesser of two evils" come from.

Regarding risk, Canadian society is facing our own Scylla and Charybdis. However, in an attempt to avoid one, we are falling victim to the other. Before considering our risky dilemma, we must reflect on recent risk-related events taken from outdoor-oriented school field trips.

In the summer of 1978, 27 students (ages ranging from 12 to 14) and four "Masters" from a religious school in Ontario were paddling on Lac Timiskaming, on the boundary of Quebec and Ontario. Four modified and heavily laden canoes capsized in high winds and everyone ended up spending 12 hours in 4°C water. Twelve students and one instructor succumbed to hypothermia, while 15 students and three instructors survived the ordeal to be rescued by helicopter. The school was criticized for its grueling "macho" philosophy and record of near-misses from past trips. The accident caused a re-examination of youth canoe tripping guidelines and brought an eventual financial closure to the school (Raffan, 2002).

In winter of 2003, seven 10th grade teenagers were killed by a massive snow avalanche in Glacier Park, British Columbia, while on a field trip from an Albertan private school. Even with taking the appropriate precautions, the group of 14 was overwhelmed by the enormity of the avalanche that swept down from the mountains, across the open valley, and up the other side to the slope where the school group was skiing (Doty, 2013). After review, the valley was reclassified by the National Parks as unsuitable for school groups and the school trips carried on with more stringent safety procedures (Cloutier, 2003).

In the summer of 2017, a 15-year-old non-swimmer drowned while in the water without a PFD or adult supervision, while on a high school field trip in Algonquin Park, Ontario. The tragedy of this death notwithstanding, the teacher in charge of the excursion was charged with criminal negligence. Field trips were drastically re-evaluated and those with any risks were heavily restricted (Henderson, 2020).

In the summer of 2019, a 14-year-old student drowned while swimming with about 20 others in the Assomption River near Saint Come, Quebec, on a school field trip (Canadian Press, 2019). That same month, a 13-year-old was killed by a falling tree, displaced during 80 km/hr winds, in Sooke, British Columbia (Weichel & Scott, 2019). Programmatic consequences were undecided at the time of writing.

Some of these heartbreaking losses of life led to greater constraints. Many field

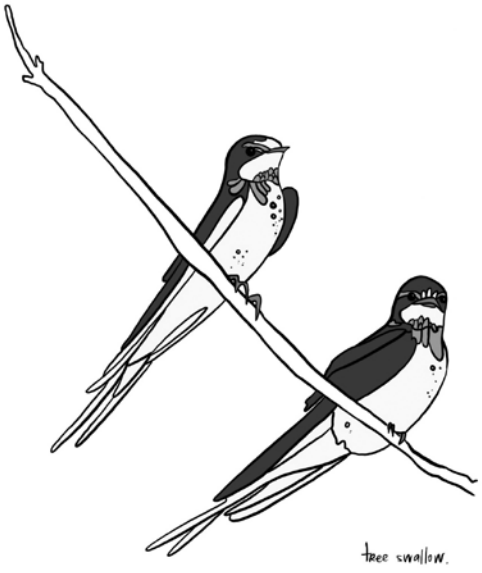
trips were canceled all together, while others were so severely controlled that the element of adventure disappeared. This pattern is repeating in Canadian wilderness camping (Callan, 2018), Ontario canoe tripping (Henderson & Howard, 2018), Quebec nature tourism (Grenier, 2020), and BC outdoor play (Brussoni, 2021). While this might seem like appropriate avoidance of risks (Scylla), it represents another concern (Charybdis).

Canada is becoming more like the United States every day. Our society is experiencing increased gang violence (Public Safety Canada, 2018), decreased physical and mental health (Varin, Palladino, Lary & Baker, 2020), and increased sedentary time spent watching a screen (Prince, Roberts, Melvin , Butler & Thompson, 2020). Similarly, we are trending like Americans in terms of our on-demand consumer behaviors and immediate desire for digital conveniences (BDC, 2021).

One area where we are fast catching up to our southern neighbours is through increased litigation and rapidly enlarging numbers of lawyers (Olson, 1997; Levin & Alkoby, 2021). Another is the climbing costs of insurance due to swollen claims from natural disasters caused by climate collapse and other issues (Aligned Insurance, 2021). Patterns of litigation lead directly to new legislation, indirectly to regulation, and impact insurance markets in most industries (Viscusi, 2002). So we can reasonably assume that the public risk anxiety is partly driven by a growing legal profession and partly by rising insurance premiums.

Either way, Canadians are simply becoming risk averse (RSA, 2010). For example, we are already known for being risk-averse in business (Carmichael, 2021), technology (Anjos, 2021), innovation (digital, 2014), and research and development (Naylor, 2017). Eventually, we will be unable to take risks in daily living.

Until then, some citizens pursue risk in



their leisure time by gambling, investing/trading, car racing, jet boating, and roller coaster riding. One subset of this is adventurous leisure. We are all no doubt familiar with adventure tourism experiences such as commercial bungee jumping, guided mountain climbing, and outfitted wildlife watching. Until COVID-19, this industry was growing 60% annually in Canada (EhCanada, 2019), where we have an abundance of pristine wilderness and outdoor beauty. Furthermore, adventure tourism and outdoor travel are expected to be the fastest recovering tourism after COVID-19 (Borko, Geerts & Wang, 2020). So, why the great interest in leisure-based risk taking?

Research suggests that individuals living in functional situations are seeking the brief exposure to fear and thrills that come from a perception of maximum risk, while in reality, actual risks are minimized (Cater, 2006). However, people living under dysfunctional circumstances are likely to seek escape or pain relief through substance abuse, crime, gang affiliation, suicide, unsafe sex, and toxic relationships that they interpret as equivalent forms of risk taking (Osgood, Foster & Courtney, 2010). Both needs may be partly attributed to experiencing a childhood without sufficient risky play (Little & Wyver, 2008).

Some researchers believe that children not

taking risks early in their lives become at-risk adolescents later on. A lack of risky play has detrimental impacts on self-esteem, confidence, and problem solving abilities (Gill, 2007), diminishes the development of optimal health and fitness (Greenfield, 2004), and drastically restricts motor development (Waters & Begley, 2007). Nevertheless, today's society has high anxiety toward risky play and so children's play is restricted in the name of safety (Stephenson, 2003). Essentially, too much risk and we endanger our offspring, too little and they grow up unprepared for life.

dark-eyed junco

To grow up without risk is to risk not growing up (Druckerman, 2012). Risk taking is a very necessary element of normal human development that helps build required personal resilience against adversity (Rutter, 2001). Risk taking teaches children how to fit in and that they can be competent, capable, confident, and conscientious: requirements for transitioning into adulthood (Alexander, Entwisle & Olson, 2014). Children must be able to take sensible risks to develop sound judgment and learn their reasonable limits. To deny them this opportunity means to prevent the gain of a clear "Risk-taker's Advantage" that asserts independence and learns directly from natural consequences (Ungar, 2010).

So parents must gain the ability to balance their children's safety and psychosocial growth. However, nowadays, too many parents are overprotective, partly from a fear of being accused of criminal neglect (Pimental, 2012) and partly from their own aversion to risks (Ungar, 2010). While they are correctly motivated by love, their efforts are misguided and likely to do more harm than foster growth.

Recently, researchers called for a return to risky play for children (ages 3-12 years). In particular, their evidence-informed position statement reads: "Access to active play in nature and outdoors—with its risks— is essential for healthy child development. We recommend increasing children's opportunities for self-directed play outdoors in all settings—at home, at school, in child care, the community and nature." (Tremblay, Gray, Babcock, Barnes, Bradstreet, Carr, Chabot, Choquette, Chorney, Collyer, Herrington, Janson, Janssen, Larouche, Pickett, Power, Sandseter, Simon & Brussoni, 2015, p.6475).

By depriving children of risks, in order to keep them safe and without injury (Scylla), we are harming their ongoing development as adolescents (Charybdis). Subjected to bullying, unrealistic images on social media, and abuse or neglect, youth are unable to cope and turn to dysfunctional risk taking such as drugs, crime, or suicide. When they find themselves in these circumstances and mainstream therapy has failed them, they are often prescribed risk taking forms of therapy: adventure and wilderness.

Adventure therapy can be defined as the prescriptive use of challenge experiences by mental health professionals, conducted in natural settings that kinesthetically engage clients on cognitive, affective and behavioral levels (Gass, Gillis & Russell, 2020). Wilderness therapy is a subset of adventure, where the challenges take place in remote and wild locations away from urban life and the rush of civilization.

Unlike the school trips described at the start of this writing, the best therapy programs are run by professionals: competent outdoor leaders or qualified facilitators working alongside licensed mental health clinicians or graduate trained therapists. Expectedly, these programs tend to be expensive. Do not be swayed by the pretender program that only delivers the activity without the learning and change.

Such outdoor therapeutic programs deliver treatments that develop coping strategies, resolve trauma, transform behavior, and reduce resistance to change by combining experiential learning methods and healing and restorative interventions with adventures in nature, wilderness and other environments. Elements contributing to their mechanism of change include: countering situational risk with personal competence, working together in small groups, immersing in nature, engaging with therapy, facilitating discussion, continuing support, and connecting by metaphor. Clients directly benefit by improving their health: physical, emotional, mental, cognitive, behavioral, social, and spiritual well-being.

So, in summary, if we take all the risks out of growing up, then children are stifled and ill equipped to deal with the risks of adolescence. On the one hand, we want our children to be safe, so we protect them and sometimes over-protect them, in order to avoid harm (Scylla). However, overdoing this protection can lead to poorly prepared citizens who don't understand real dangers, crave artificial risks, and adopt destructive behaviors later in life (Charybdis). To counter both, we must navigate a prudent route between too much safety and too little risk. If we can't chart a careful course and don't strike a steady balance, we may avoid the rocks, but we will surely be sucked down into the massive whirlpool of troubled youth in desperate need of therapy. Only time will tell how well we steer through the strait.

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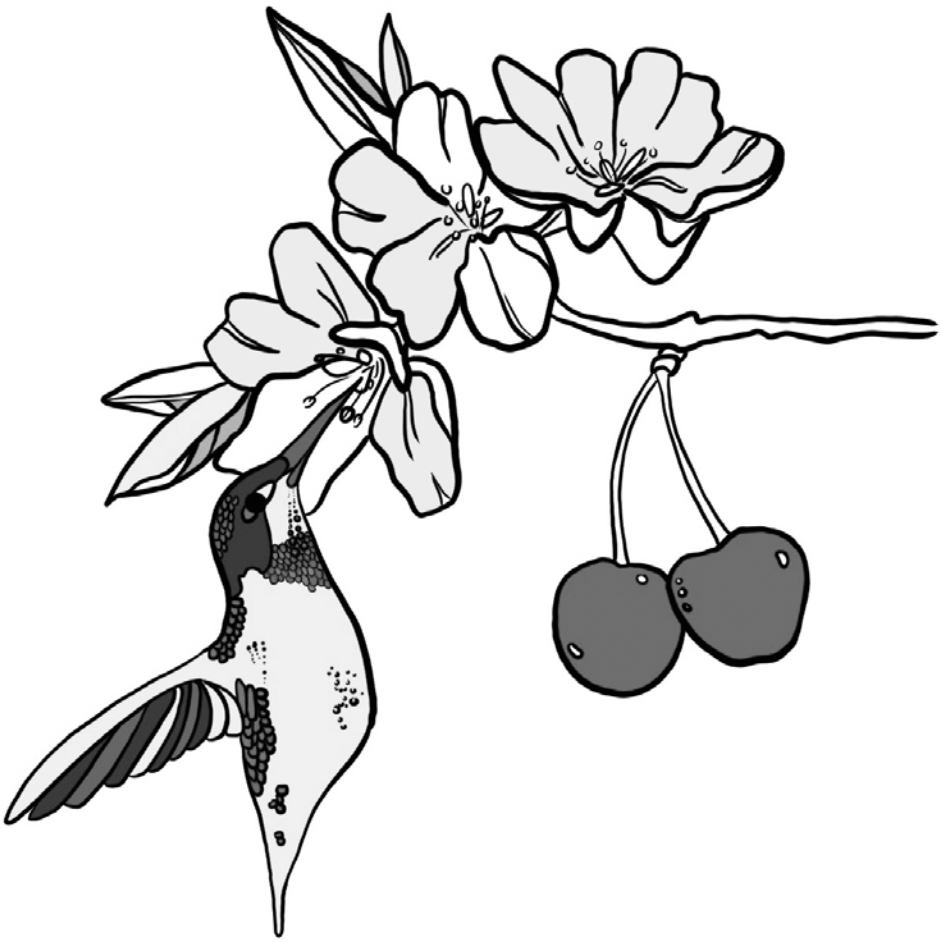

Ruby-throated hummingbird.

Into the Maw: Lessons taken from a Paddle and the Lockdowns

By Chris Peters

"*I hope we all survive what is coming*."
—Barry Lopez, *Horizon* (2018)

In the shadowed lee of the Coronavirus pandemic, we four of us planned a daylong paddle out of Aquaforte, nestled along the craggy, creviced Southern Shore. Restrictions had been reduced to their lowest level, allowing for some freedom of movement. Schedules and family commitments were sorted, another kayak sourced. Finally, at a quarter to eight on a Sunday morning we drove down the rocky, rutted road crowded over by alder thickets to our putin opposite the community wharf.

The day before the wind had howled out of the east, and I had watched with some trepidation while walking the dog the foaming arm of waves crashing against The Narrows. But the winds had died back overnight. By morning the skies were scoured clear. The sun bright in a pale blue sky.

The harbour waters in Aquaforte follows the contours of a fjord leftover from the last Ice Age five kilometres to the restless maw of the North Atlantic. The waters were grey, cool, calm.

At least when we started.

We began by hugging the southern shoreline. The sun full on our faces. We talked about work, the local geography, spun yarns of paddles past before settling into the day. Michael, who had circumnavigated the island entire by kayak in his early twenties set the pace and we followed his wake. An hour passed. But it became harder to ignore the waters mood. The heave of the ocean could be felt as we neared the mouth of the fjord. We paddled up and down long, rolling waves amplified by the rocky shorelines. We could now feel the wind rushing in out of the east, fresh and cold off the ocean.

At the same time, we were suddenly surrounded by wildlife. The last of the Arctic terns chittered and cried, and cormorants creaked past. Michael saw an otter. Loons called, one after the other-unseen but close by. A seal popped up, took us in. Disappeared.

We gathered behind the rocky lee of Aquaforte Harbour, just behind the convergence of the fjord and ocean. The seas roiled here, particularly between Spurwink Island and beyond. Michael yelled that there was a natural stone archway on the other side of the island. He would lead. I nodded, so did Aaron. Jeremy demurred, said he'd wait where he was.

This gave me pause. The what ifs of group dynamics and safety suddenly came to mind. But only for a moment. Jeremy smiled, claimed he needed a breather. We'd be back in a moment. I asked again if he was alright, he waved me off.

Michael was already rounding the point into the waves. I followed, Aaron close behind.

I came around into a wall of noise. The crash of the waves against the rock reverberated in the narrow confines between Spurwink and the cliffside shoreline. There was no pattern. I was suddenly very aware of a gnawing unease.

I made to call to Michael, *Are you sure*?

He was beyond me, already into the maw. I watched him get lifted a full story on a wave, then plunge into the sudden foaming trough and lost him. I swore, indecisive.

After the first Covid-19 lockdown, the K-12 school where I work made two commitments.

First, outdoor education would be a priority. Learning outdoors had obvious health benefits. At the same time, the acreage of the school campus - the trees, school garden, birds in season, and more besides- offered myriad learning opportunities. Over the summer a team of volunteers had build two outdoor learning spaces. Birch stump seats circled whiteboards.

At the same time, we were asked to continue our online presence. This would become our homework portal, where students and parents could access work from home. Importantly, if we needed to shift back online we would already have the infrastructure ready to go.

Predictably, by October the weather had turned wet and windy. The older students rebelled at mandatory outside time. At the same time there were rumblings from my fellow teachers, too.

Outside is okay for the younger *students*, went the consensus. *But it isn't relevant for the older students and their work*.

Consequently, the drive for learning outside for older students was largely dropped. Indeed, most classes in all grades retreated before the approaching swirl of inclement weather by November. Our online learning portals became the *de facto* focus. When the second lockdown restrictions were imposed on Newfoundland in February 2021 this reinforced our online portals. Otherwise, teaching and learning could not have moved to virtual delivery.

As a species, Homo sapiens is very conservative. We will (and do) perpetuate the known status quo even when it hurts our everyday well-being. Our embrace of technology, of the Internet means we are willing to ignore Zoom fatigue and the towering requirements of shifting online in the name of continuing work and schooling. We spent over 90% of its time inside *before* the lockdown. We have, mostly defaulted to the Great Indoors. Our

move as a province, as a society to want more technology, more Internet shouldn't be surprising.

In a societal moment of decision there was little choice. The Internet and technology won the day. We have been, for some time living with the consequences of a society swept over by the possibilities- good, bad, entertaining, informative, democratic, distracting- of the Internet and smartphone. The quiet time reprieve for parents and teachers won by an hour (or three) on screens may be harmless enough. The consequences of suggesting school, sport training, communication, entertaining and everything else be done online are unknown.

Watching Michael emerge from the trough, I knew what I had to do. I slammed my paddle hard into the foaming waters and turned away from the roil and roll.

"I'm not going through!" I called to Aaron, unnecessarily. He nodded, and I thought he said he'd follow me. He actually attempted to go on, then came to the same decision and turned around. He told me later that the water's pull was tremendous. He had to work hard to paddle clear. When I could see Jeremy I called to him and we began the paddle across the mouth of the fjord. The sun shone on the rollers coming in from the Atlantic, and I angled my bow

to crest them. I watched a bald eagle float across the ocean, then spread its wings wide to land in a spruce tree. Its white head gleamed amid the black -green foliage of the windswept boreal. Halfway across three loons cried out, their cries radiating out hauntingly on top of each other. It was a strangely affirming Canadian moment.

Michael paddled out from behind Spurwink Island, the rollers pushing him along to the north side. They were big enough that there was a momentary thrill in feeling the power of the ocean beneath you, confirming that events were not wholly in your control. Yet the waves were regular enough that I never felt beyond my depth or ability.
We met in the sun. A seal rose up again, curious.

Just as quickly fell away.

Michael allowed that it had been hairy between the island and cliffs, that he had hoped no one followed him. He had no idea how we'd rescue anyone. This put a pause in our conversation as we digested that. Then we pointed our bows back towards Aquaforte and began the paddle back.

There is a temptation to draw meanings from such immersions in the natural world. To apply lessons-learned broadly to the ills of modern life. I'm not sure that a daylong paddle offers deep insights.

What I do know is that in a moment of indecision on that paddle I made a choice within my abilities and comfort level. I recognized my capabilities but also my limits, and worked within them. I felt comfortable, and enjoyed a day with friends immersed in the world. It was challenging. For the rest of that week I felt restored and invigorated.

No one can argue against the necessity to shut down society in a time of pandemic. This is hardly the first such shutdown in history.

What *is* unique is the way our society responded. Much has been made of the lockdowns as a chance for us all to slow-down, to breath. I would suggest the opposite. In shifting everything online, in prioritizing technology we are caught again in the paralysis of action. We have cut ourselves off at the knees, refusing the myriad options available to us concerning learning, working, living in such a moment because of a refusal to stop.

Breath.

Assess.

This pandemic is a harbinger of what is coming. The Climate Crisis continues to unravel in ways that both predicted but at a speed beyond our reckoning. Modern economics has been exposed by the Covid-19 virus, our long supply lines and insatiable appetites laid bare. Our shift inside and online has consequences that spill out into the natural world, individually but also ecologically. If we aren't working within our capabilities and limits- as individuals, *and* as communities- and aren't nurturing and supporting the natural world we are in trouble.

The importance of talking stock of the situation. To just breath. To together find our way forward. That could be taking a walk outside, to hear the birds and feel the season. Or build some snowforts with students. Sliding down a pole line in the late winter sun. Or even just play Monkey Business on a slushy, muddy field in March with a Grade 8 class. This is what I take away from that paddle, of finding my comfort within the situation.

Stepping into the maw.

Chris Peters lives and works in St. John's, Newfoundland with his wife and daughters. He is committed to bringing his students outside—be it on the water, in the garden or on the trail.

What is the Postdigital? Why Might it Matter for Outdoor Experiential Education?

By Jack Reed

Into the Postdigital

In outdoor experiential education (OEE), the place and use of technology remains a contentious and divisive topic for discussion. In recent times the postdigital has emerged as a lens through which educators the world over have begun to ask deeper questions which extend beyond thinking about gadgets and devices, and begins to 'get at' the underlying algorithms, data, and sociotechnical systems which increasingly permeate educational endeavours. As I discuss, we do not have to look too far to see that OEE is already affected by what we might call the postdigital condition.

In March 2018, Petar Jandrić and colleagues (2018) published a paper titled "Postdigital science and education" in the journal *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. Eight months later the inaugural volume of the new journal '*Postdigital science and education*' was published and, to the date of writing, now has over 200 published articles covering an array of topics in education including the Covid-19 pandemic (Coeckelbergh, 2020), postdigital ecopedagogies (Jandrić & Ford, 2020), and feminism (Deepwell, 2020). Within this flood of articles, very little (if any) applies such a concept to OEE and, in the context of my PhD study which is investigating the influence(s) of social media on residential outdoor learning experiences, it seemed reasonable to ask: why might the postdigital condition matter for OEE?

I do not intend for this short piece to provide an overarching metanarrative on postdigital and its applicability or inapplicability for learning outside the classroom, but I hope it does offer a space for thought and reflection on how young people's experiences of OEE may be influenced when thinking through this lens. I begin by turning to the literature to define the postdigital, including addressing why 'digital' in and of itself may be an aging concept, and then I apply the concept to OEE to ask why it might matter for the field.

Defining the Postdigital

As Jandrić et al. (2018, p. 895) state, "the postdigital is hard to define" but can be considered "a rupture in our existing theories and their continuation". Further, Cramer (2015, p. 13) goes so far to say that ultimately the postdigital is a "term that sucks but is useful". As we shall see, that is not to say I cannot define postdigital here and that it is not important within the context of OEE. To do this I turn to Knox (2019), who shows how the postdigital is concerned with assessing how technology is entangled and rooted within contemporary social life. It is attempting to understand the interactions which exist between us as humans and technology and what the impact may or may not be. Of course, the 'post' in postdigital makes likely links to a general trend which incorporates 'post' to mean something 'posterior to' (e.g., Grenz 1996; Negra, 2009; Nayar, 2014), but bear with me! Whilst discussing topics such as postmodernism, postfeminism, or posthumanism is beyond the scope of this paper, bundling the postdigital into the 'post' theorising camp does not quite capture the essence of the term. As Cramer and Jandrić (2021) discuss, we no longer call a 'digital camera' a 'digital camera', it is just a camera. We no longer call a 'digital computer' a 'digital computer', it is just a computer. The postdigital may be considered an ironic opposite to what the term actually says. Instead, the postdigital encourages us to think of the term 'digital' as forming a binary where if we have the digital then we must also have the non-digital. As I will show, this is increasingly problematic in contemporary society and, potentially, for OEE.

So, where to form an oxymoronic term such as the postdigital? Well, Knox (2019, p. 368) suggests we may no longer need to get so

caught up in "a tendency to understand technology in terms of tangible devices and gadgets" in education. The postdigital instead encourages us to look beyond to the *sociotechnical systems* which more and more frequently pervade, influence, and sustain the contemporary educational endeavour. This frames a significant point of conversation for educational spaces where the physical and digital become increasingly blurred, hybridized, and entangled (and more so during the Covid-19 pandemic). Bayne et al's. (2020) book, *The Manifesto for Teaching Online*, gets at some of this complexity and consolidates the perspective that 21st century spaces for teaching and learning form a small part of what van Es and Schäfer (2014) call the datafied society. For example, how do algorithms and big data intertwine with education? How does social media permeate the once impermeable walls of the educational institution? To what extent do sociotechnical architectures frame what it means to be a young person experiencing education? In summary, the postdigital has gained notable traction within the educational literature and recognises that the place of 'digital' in education during the third decade of the 21st century may no longer be considered binary 'other' but instead may be considered indistinguishable from the physical realities of educators and students. As Jandrić et al. (2018, p. 893) comment, "(w)e are increasingly no longer in a world where digital technology and media is separate, virtual, 'other' to a 'natural' human and social life".

Postdigital in Outdoor and Experiential Education

So, what might the postdigital offer OEE? This is a complex and shifting field of thought and, whilst I do not have *the* answer, perhaps I have something with which to get started. It is worth mentioning that I do not wish to sketch out the literature on the place(s) of technology in OEE. Many papers discuss this including the works of Beames (2017), Thomas and Munge (2017), and Hills and Thomas (2020). However, Leather and Gibson's (2019) paper on the consumption and hyperreality of nature is particularly helpful when they acknowledge how physical and virtual realities are increasingly blurred in the framing of how young people engage with nature. What I would like to do is build upon these conversations a little through the postdigital lens.

One theme coming out of literature concerned with tech in outdoor learning is the 'for and against' argument, the binary or, as Cuthbertson et al. (2004) describe, the 'double-edged sword'. To simplify, the use of technology in OEE can be divisive and absolutely remains a much-needed topic for discussion. In relation to the digital in OEE and returning to the postdigital, how helpful this binary remains is yet to be seen and, I think, asks the sector two key questions:

1. In a fluid and 'hyper-networked' society where technology increasingly (and more so in the case of the pandemic) sustains and entangles the everyday lives of young people, how might OEE respond in order to remain relevant and credible?

2. Given the permeating nature of algorithms and data, how might we begin to understand how these factors enter and influence the contemporary experiences of young people in OEE?

In relation to question one, the postdigital adds a layer of complexity to the binary of tech/digital in OEE. Irrespective of whether we use technology in OEE practice or not, young people will arrive and leave as part of a networked backchannel that the outdoor experiential educator cannot even see. In essence, this turns me to social media and how platforms such as Snapchat, WhatsApp, or TikTok create underpinning networked spaces and places which collapse the notion of the bounded OEE experience. I am unconvinced that the sector has a choice here, we may ban phones or turn off the Wi-Fi, but the fact remains that after an OEE experience, or even during off-task time, young people will return to their networked bubbles. For question two, whilst we may

not be able to see networked backchannels, the sociotechnical systems which flood in and out of an OEE experience need to be explored. Think of a spider web—its intricacies, links, fragility—OEE is one small part in a web where innumerable other sociotechnical factors influence young people's lives before, during, and after an OEE experience.

All of this is, of course, an abstract representation of how the postdigital collides with OEE. An example is therefore necessary to contextualise the postdigital in practice. Dunn and Reed (2020) produced a short film called "Dear Oak"[1] which unpacks what we may begin to think of as a postdigital OEE experience. We first visited the oak in 2018 as part of the Outdoor and Environmental Education master's degree programmes at the University of Edinburgh. The initial experience I had at the oak tree was profound and personal. However, if I look deeper, phones took photos, social media offered a space to share and reminisce (even nearly three years later), and FaceTime allowed a chat with friends back home to tell them all about an oak in Kingussie, Scotland. The ways in which technology and networks permeated this space was not so obvious at the time. However, when lifting the postdigital lid on this experience we see that algorithms and data are not as far away as we first thought.

But let's return to the film! It was shot and edited nearly a year after the initial visit to the oak and was developed in conjunction with both students and staff on the University of Edinburgh's Outdoor and Environmental Education programmes. What the film captures is the realisation that even here, in a forest in the Highlands of Scotland, sociotechnical systems permeate and sustain the OEE experience. From the initial line of 'Dear Oak' at the tree, to a video on YouTube that is immediately sharable and viewable globally, to the pixels and speakers in your hardware; algorithms and data have continued this experience without us blinking twice. Of course, this is not all that surprising in the context of a fluid and hyper-networked society. What remains interesting however, is the ways in which learning and educating in outdoor spaces and places are influenced by what we might begin to think of as the place of the postdigital in contemporary OEE.

Summary

What I am seeking to demonstrate here is that the postdigital may offer a lens to think critically about how networked spaces, sociotechnical systems, and associated algorithms and data permeate OEE. We may not have invited the big tech companies into OEE, but they are here, likely influencing how young people experience, relate, and sustain the journey of an OEE experience. What the postdigital offers OEE researchers and practitioners is a lens through which to think beyond the binary of '*technology, to be, or not to be?*'. As we respond to and recover from the pandemic, young people are likely to have relied on their social networks and sociotechnical architectures more so than ever. As I have discussed, we may choose to not incorporate technology in our practice, but irrespective of this we can be confident that algorithms, data, and networks are never far away. This raises significant questions for OEE and, I believe, the postdigital is well-placed to begin answering them.

Notes

1. You can find the film on YouTube here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHTuY8UBCCE

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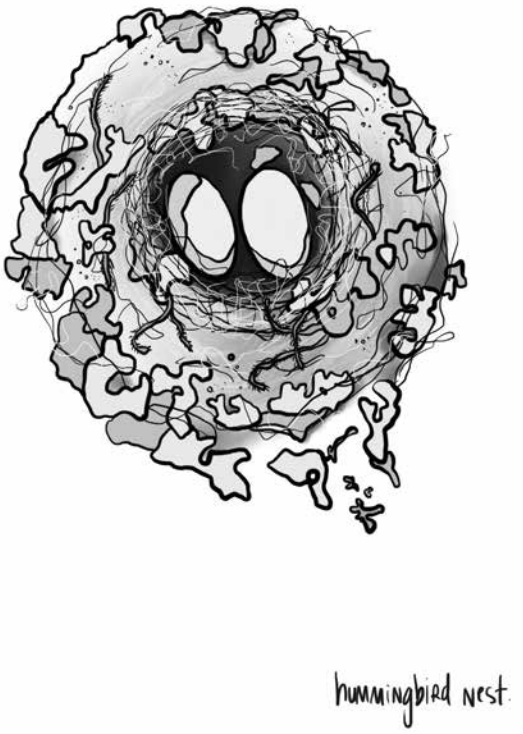
The Politics of the Canoe

By Bob Henderson

A Review of Erickson, B. & Wylie-Krotz, S., *The Politics of the Canoe.* University of Manitoba Press.

About ten years ago now, I was asked to give a talk at a meeting of a paddling organization on the history of canoe travel in Canada. I thought I'd rock the boat a bit, so to speak, by spending a majority of the allotted time talking about what I knew of pre-contact and early contact Indigenous canoe travel. The idea being, of course, that if one is working from a time frame perspective, then clearly pre-contact canoe travel is much more expansive, than the "exploration" history, fur trade and geological survey post-contact periods, as well as the time of early canoe building centers and community clubs:the regatta history, and the dawn of recreational canoeing from work to play into the present. In my presentation, I only briefly touched on all of that. It is a sweeping topic, but I'd turn the tide with due attention paid to the movement of pre-contact trade goods (copper from the western Great Lakes and buffalo hides from the Prairies, all found in Northern Quebec, for example) and the sophistication of Indigenous canoe and kayak designs given local material availability, and the particularity of Canadian diverse waterway terrain.

After reading *The Politics of the Canoe* collection of essays, I now realize a glaring omission in my once emphasis on inverting the canoe history logic. I had fallen into a colonial psychological trap and hadn't known it. That is, I spoke to the Indigenous past and canoe history, BUT I neglected any mention of an Indigenous present in terms of canoe travel as a means of revitalization of cultural identity and for healing. The canoe as a political vehicle continues with attention towards asserting sovereignty as expressed both in a resurgence of established tribal journeys/ routes and traditional building techniques. My goodness, how I could have benefited from this collection of essays back then, but then again, would the younger me have recognized the omission? Am I, and so many others in our Canadian canoe culture, only moving forward swept up in whatever is the current of the time. In short, I thought I was the lead canoe in the river charting a good route, seeking out friendly lines and wary of strong back eddies and obstacles, but really I was caught in the main current following along, romanticizing the First Nations past and forgetting or ignorant to a present and future. Be it canoeing or in a multitude of fashions, this neglect of the Indigenous present is subliminally ingrained in our colonial Canadian psyche.



I suspect it is this factor that spurred on the conference gathering that ultimately led to this collection of essays. There are personal essays calling for an unpacking and repacking of our colonial history (using the Trent-Severn Waterway as a backdrop). There is a rich description of the modern challenges in harvesting birch

bark in depleted forests east and north of Algonquin Park. There are powerful essays describing the political canoe as a reconnector to land and heritage in the Pacific coast, and on the heritage trail between Yellowknife, Great Slave Lake and a ć Tłı̨chǫǫn of northern communities towards Great Bear Lake. Here, since 1995, for the Dene Nation, the canoe has served to energize the lifeways of the peoples, particularly their cultural stories and travel practices. It has helped bring the communities together. It is good for all of the Canadian canoe culture to know these traditions and practices (tribal journeys) are strong as inspirational journeys and touchstones to the resiliency of oppressed cultures reclaiming the canoe in a vibrant present.

There is also a section of the book titled "Telling Histories." Here, essays feel a bit out of sorts to the dominant Indigenous themes, but that said, there are compelling essays, political essays, here as well. Not sure Don Starkell and son's epic canoe journey to the mouth of the Amazon is a fit, for example, but I remind myself this telling looks at class issues and other political issues left unaddressed with other treatments. The politics of canoeing is at the forefront of the "once" planned Petawawa River Dam. Ontario canoeists should know this story as a winning strategy in maintaining waterway integrity.

A favourite paper for me concerns Baron de Lahonton's 1688 epic western trip up the Missouri River. Thought to be a hoax in its day, he was discredited, a position I had grown up with as a lover of this period of French canoe wanderings. Now author Peter Wood suggests a hoax no more. Lahonton's map illustrations showcase canoe designs unique to the Missouri River area. This knowledge of the region's canoe designs are suggested as solid evidence he was a legit traveller into the areas as he'd claimed. Politics here as well.

So, in all, *The Politics of the Canoe* is an apt title and this is the sort of politics the outdoor educator/canoeist can embrace. No book forward from Doug Ford or the next crackpot politician: just well-researched, well-told inspirational accounts of tribal journeys, adventures in traditional canoe design and construction, and politics in the telling of canoe histories old and new. I'd call it an important book in any Canadians canoe library and I trust there are many who have such a household coveted nook.

Bob Henderson works and plays in a variety of Outdoor Education and Canoeing settings since retiring from McMaster University.

Empowering Learners in a Warming World: New Climate Change Resource for 7-12 Teachers

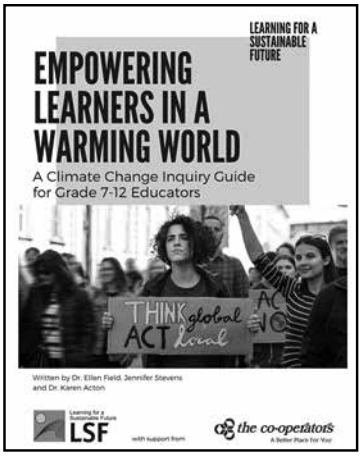
By Jennifer Stevens

The youth of today are the future change-makers in the global climate crisis. As solutionaries, they will need to be prepared to face this mounting challenge, and education is a key tool in their empowerment.

A recent study underlines the importance of high-quality climate change resources and the supports to teach climate for educators. Dr. Ellen Field, Faculty of Education at Lakehead University and Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF) collaborated on a national survey, Canada, Climate Change and Education (2018), and the results confirm that educators need *supports* to teach climate change, while students need *agency*.

For almost 20 years, LSF has been working to integrate climate education into school systems across Canada. LSF has hosted over 35 climate change professional development sessions for educators since 2017, providing much-needed quality climate education tools and resources.

LSF's newest resource, Empowering Learners in a Warming World, provides a powerful tool for grades 7 to 12 educators to support students as they direct the path of their own climate learning. Empowering Learners in a Warming World is a cross-curricular, inquiry-based guide. Each of the nine guided inquiries examines climate change through a different lens, considering Indigenous perspectives, the economic impacts, national and global policy, mental and physical health, and more. They are designed to reflect the non-linear nature of inquiry-based learning. Each chapter covers background information, provides provocations for students, then guides classes through generating questions, building knowledge, determining understanding, pursuing learning, and consolidation. The inquiries also contain ideas for assessment and for taking action.



What Makes this Guide Unique?

The transformative teaching strategies used throughout this guide are important to tackling the complex issues surrounding climate change. Educators take the role of facilitators and co-learners as the class works together to learn, critically reflect, and take action, while honouring the complexity of these topics and the natural emotional responses to them. These strategies are collected in the Active Learning Strategy bank, a useful tool on its own, designed to make each strategy accessible for teachers to take away and incorporate into their own teaching practice.

By connecting educators to strategies that allow for students' perspectives and voices, directing them to current climate change science and research and action solutions, this guide provides the critical tools to allow students to contribute to climate action solutions in their schools, homes, and communities.

Explore the full guide at climatelearning.ca.

Jennifer Stevens is the Manager of Learning Research and Communication at Learning for a Sustainable Future and holds a Masters of Child Study and Education from OISE, University of Toronto.

that tea exists

By xavier o. datura

451. (One says the ordinary thing—
with the wrong gesture.)
—Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel*

that tea exists
that cells can sit by the fire
discussing existentialism &
warm their hands.

that fallen trees
make back eddies for salmon
& you could spend your day
building birdhouses.

that old jeans
can be stitched back together &
all that cast-iron really needs
is a good rub.

that patterns of sand
patiently wait for us
like a letter on the kitchen table
from abroad.

that you can drink kombucha
instead of soda & delight
in coconut ice cream
& worship cows.

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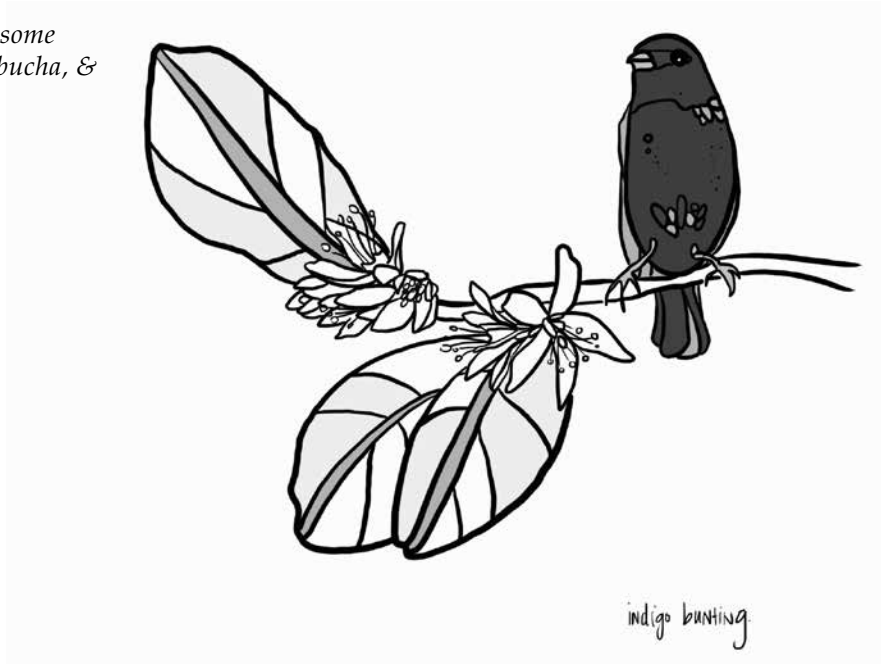
xavier o. datura is just another loathsome flâneur with a penchant for tea, kombucha, & stronger drink.



Information for Authors and Artists

Purpose

Pathways furthers knowledge, enthusiasm, and vision for outdoor experiential education in Ontario. Reflecting the interests of outdoor educators, classroom teachers, students, and academics, the journal focuses on the practice of outdoor experiential education from elementary to post-secondary levels, from wilderness to urban settings. *Pathways* highlights the value of outdoor experiential education in educating for curriculum, character, well-being, and environment.

Submitting Material

The *Pathways* editorial board gladly considers a full range of materials related to outdoor experiential education. We welcome lesson outlines, drawings, articles, book reviews, poetry, fiction, student work, and more. We will take your contribution in any form and will work with you to publish it. If you have an idea about a written submission, piece of artwork, or topic for a theme issue, please send an email outlining your potential contribution to the chair of the editorial board, pathways@coeo.org

We prefer a natural writing style that is conversational, easy to read and to the point. It is important for you to use your style to tell your own story. There is no formula for being creative, having fun, and sharing your ideas. In general, written submissions should fit the framework of one of *Pathways* 20 established columns. Descriptions of these columns may be found at www.coeo.org by clicking on the publications tab.

Whenever possible, artwork should complement either specific articles or specific themes outlined in a particular journal issue. Please contact the chair of the editorial board if you are interested in providing some or all of the artwork for an issue.

Formatting

Use 12 point, Times New Roman font with 1.25 inch (3.125 cm) margins all around. Text should be left justified and single spaced. Place a blank line between paragraphs but do not indent. Please use Canadian spelling and APA referencing.

Include the title (in bold) and the names of all authors (in italics) at the beginning of the article. Close the article with a brief 1–2 sentence biography of each author (in italics).

Do not include any extraneous information such as page numbers, word counts, headers or footers, and running heads.

Pathways contains approximately 600 words per page. Article length should reflect full page multiples to avoid partially blank pages.

Submit articles to the Chair of the Editorial Board or issue Guest Editor, preferably as a Microsoft Word email attachment.

Each piece of artwork should consist of a single black and white drawing (crosshatching but no shading) scanned at 300 dpi.

Submit artwork to the Chair of the Editorial Board or issue Guest Editor as a digital file (jpeg is preferred.)

Submission Deadlines

Volume 1	Fall	September 1
Volume 2	Winter	December 1
Volume 3	Spring	March 1
Volume 4	Summer	June 1

Complimentary Copies

The lead author receives one copy of the issue in which the article appears and one copy for each co-author. Lead authors are responsible for distributing copies to their coauthors.

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario
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Please visit our website at www.coeo.org/membership.htm for more detailed descriptions of the benefits of each membership category.

Please print and fully complete each line below.

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Please select the format in which you wish to receive your four ***Pathways*** journals:

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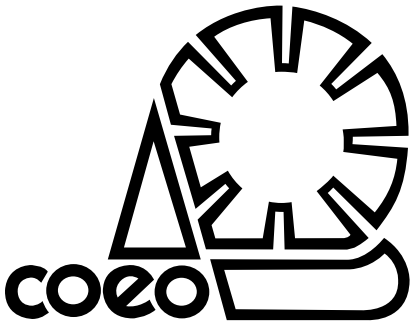

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