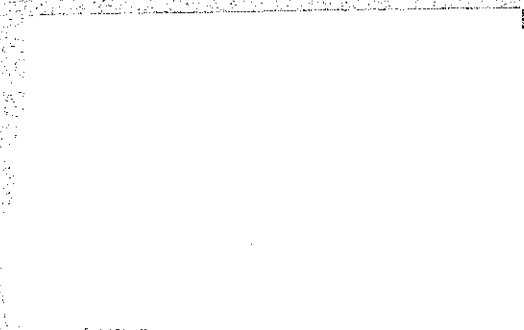
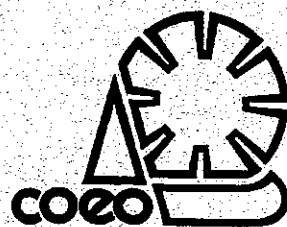


Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF
Volume 12, No. 4, Summer 2000

OUTDOOR EDUCATION



Pathways

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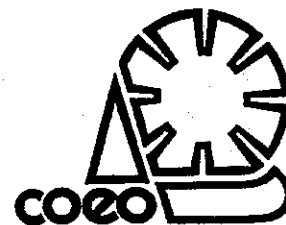
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OUTDOOR EDUCATION



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Many paths have converged and intersected over time to bring me to guest editing the issue on Adventure Education for Pathways. When Clare invited me to take on this challenge, I had no idea where it would lead me and into what direction I would head. As I sit at my desk at Crocker Lake, en route to Thunder Bay, It is hard to imagine that in a few days time we will be immersed in a month of 'adventure' activity, here at Outward Bound. For me, both Seneca College and Outward Bound have been a space that has had a fundamental role in re/informing my thinking, my philosophies, and perspectives about adventure education. It has been a pleasure working with those that have contributed to this issue and they have all provided me with some useful tools to apply within the adventure education context.

It has been my intention, with this issue on Adventure Education, to provide readers with a balance between current research interests and practical tools. I am sure, as is often the case, that this issue reflects the bias of this editor—with a touch more emphasis on the cerebral rather than the practical side. As is often the case with editing either one's own work or others, sometimes some stories are told and others remain untold. I am aware that there is a lot that has not been included and that these contributors represent only a portion of those who do neat things in this field.

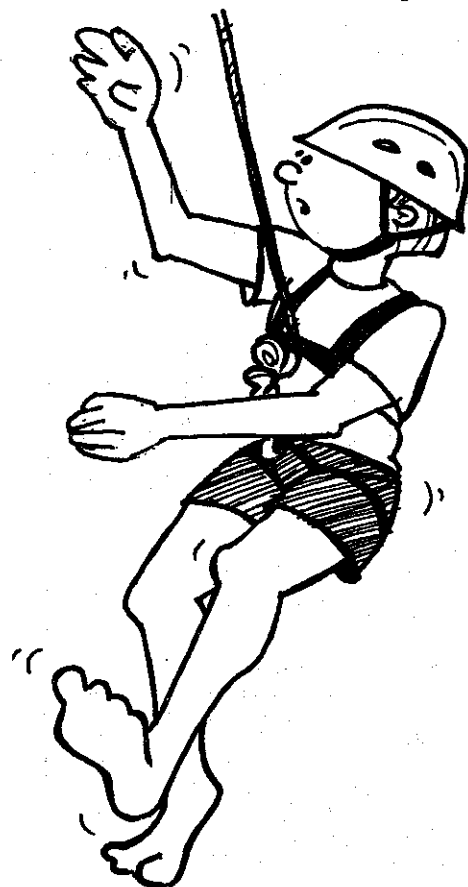
The feature articles by Loeffler, Papadopolous, Newbery, and Lissen represent the breadth and depth of research that is connected with the theme of adventure education. These articles are helpful maps for readers to ponder issues around gender; assumptions about common practices in the adventure field and the need for adventure training.

Later on Steve and I provide diverse perspectives about trying to define the term adventure education. Sean offers a critical analysis and review of *Contemporary Issues In Adventure Education* that opens up dialogue around pedagogy and adventure education that I think is most relevant for us who work in this field.

Although I feel that theory can help inform our practice and potentially provide us with new lenses with which to examine what we do, it is equally important to build up our in the field repertoires. The practical hands on activities by Zabe & Jessie provide practitioners with new and innovative ideas for practical application.

I would like to thank Helena Hovevar a senior student in the *Kinesiology program at McMaster University* for her art work. I would also specially like to thank Clare Magee, Connie Russell, and Bob Henderson for their huge support and effort to help me get this issue published.

Happy trails for the summer.....
Julie Morch



The Bark Lake 2000 Conference is nearly upon us. The committee members wish to stress the importance of registering in advance so that they are able to make firm commitments to the speakers and workshop leaders. They have addressed the issues suggested by our members in the hope that this may encourage folks to sign up earlier. There is an exciting, varied programme, a site that allows for some choice in accommodation, and awesome guest speakers. What more could one ask for? Join your colleagues and friends and celebrate 30 years of COEO. For more information, see page 35 or contact Glen Hester, Conference Co@Chair.

The office has been officially closed. This was the first step in reducing unnecessary expenses for COEO. The decision was made because: 1) there were very few phone calls directed to the office line and the response time was poor since the office was not regularly visited; 2) all mail was redirected to the Secretary's home address at an additional cost (this will continue as the Board has chosen to maintain the mailing address at 1185 Eglinton Ave. East for a nominal fee); 3) the space itself was used mostly to store archival materials which have found their way to the basement of our present Secretary, Glen Hester. (If you need access to them or have some COEO files in your basement, please make arrangements with Glen. We need to consolidate all of our files and cull some of the duplicates.)

The Board of Directors wishes to thank Lisa Primavesi for acting as our Far North Regional Representative. She has now tendered her resignation as she will be travelling a great deal and feels that she will no longer be able to fulfill those duties. Thanks, Lisa, for your many years of service to the organization.

The COEO constitution states that no person can serve for more than three consecutive years in any one position on the Board of Directors. We have a large Board and this allows us to be flexible enough to meet the busy schedules of those who volunteer their time to act on your behalf. The size also allows us to carefully make decisions on behalf of the

membership by permitting voting on issues only once quorum (of half plus one) is reached. A number of positions become available each year and I welcome all interested parties to submit their intention to run for a position to Linda McKenzie, our past President.

Three awards are presented at the Annual Conference. (Details are on the bottom of page 28.) Nominations for these should also be forwarded to Linda.

COEO membership rates have remained the same for almost a decade. Although our membership has remained at approximately 225, the cost of operating the organization has increased. A motion will be brought to the floor at the Annual General Meeting to increase the membership fees. I am announcing this now so that you will have time to consider the implications of raising the fees or not raising them. Financial details should be available for you to review at the AGM, in order to help us make this decision.

Best wishes to all for the rest of the summer and I hope you have time to enjoy the outdoors. I look forward to seeing all of you at Bark Lake.

Mary Gyemi-Schulze

THE SEASONS OF COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN

By T.A. Loeffler

Introduction

Have you ever had the experience of working with a woman in your outdoor program who had trouble recognizing her abilities or who lacked confidence in her outdoor skills despite the fact that she was one of the most skilled participants on the course? Have you listened to one of your female co-leaders express doubts in her ability to lead a particular climb or paddle a section of river that you knew was well within her ability? Have you ever wondered why this discrepancy occurs? You are not alone in observing this critical moment in competency development. This article provides you with a theoretical foundation for understanding competency development for women and it suggests leadership and instructional strategies for facilitating competency development in outdoor education.

Theoretical Foundations

In discussing competency development, it is critical to differentiate between actual competence and sense of competence (Mulqueen, 1995). Actual competence refers to the ability to perform a task or skill such as lighting a stove, pitching a tent, or navigating by compass. For most outdoor skills, there is a continuum of actual competence from beginner through expert. For example, a beginner may be able to navigate by compass through level treeless terrain while an expert may be able to navigate by compass through mountainous terrain in whiteout conditions.

Sense of competence is a fundamental component of self-esteem. In essence, sense of competence is a participant's self-assessment of her actual competence. It is the active perception a participant holds of herself acting within the environment (White, 1976). White (1976) theorized that the subjective self-assessment of

one's competence tends to be more important to self-esteem than the objective display of competence. To build on the previous navigation example, sense of competence relates to the participant's assessment of her ability to navigate by compass. The participant may or may not hold an accurate perception of her navigation abilities. We, as outdoor instructors, may place her actual navigation competency on one part of the continuum while the participant may place it on an entirely different portion of the continuum.

The ability of a outdoor education participant to form an accurate sense of competence is influenced by many factors. Women may face a conflict between an innate desire for competence and the female gender role which demands femininity and/or incompetence (Courtts, 1987). Baruch (1974) described this dilemma:

competence is apparently viewed as a masculine trait and our society values achievement and competence highly. Thus women are caught in a double bind: if they develop their competence, they are masculine; if they do not, they are not socially valued and learn to devalue themselves (p. 286).

Thus, this existing pattern of gender-role socialization can limit the expression of women's competence to spheres devalued by society such as housework and parenting (Mulqueen, 1995). Additionally, women, as a result of gender-role socialization, tend to view their personal competence through a filter composed of society's perceptions and responses. These perceptions, in turn, influence women's self-perceptions of their competence (Sternberg & Kolligan, 1990). Consequently, a woman's sense of competence and her actual competence may not be congruent resulting in her perceiving that she is less competent than she is in reality (Mulqueen, 1995). Mulqueen (1995) proposes that it may not be that women's actual level of

competence that needs to change; rather the missing link may be between what women do and how they assess what they do. Again, furthering the navigation example, it may not be that the woman needs to learn anymore about compass navigation, it may be that she needs assistance in recognizing and claiming the competency she already possesses.

The Competency Development Process

Competence development is a not purely an internal process, but rather a multi-dimensional interaction between the individual and their environment. Figure One illustrates the competency development cycle. White (1976) hypothesized that all people have an innate drive or

urge towards competency. This drive creates the impetus for action attempts or learning. When a participant attempts to perform a skill, there is an outcome. The participant will view the outcome through a variety of external and internal filters such as the instructor's reaction, peers' reactions, past experience, gender role expectations, etc.). These filters will influence the participant's assessment of the outcome and the action attempt, and as a result, her sense of competence may increase or decrease. If sense of competence increases, the innate drive towards competency is strengthened and further action attempts are likely. If sense of competence decreases, the innate drive towards competency may be dampened and further action attempts may be constrained or reduced. As a result, sense of competence becomes an ever-increasing force in women's lives as it dictates what activities women will or will not attempt.

Competency Development Cycle

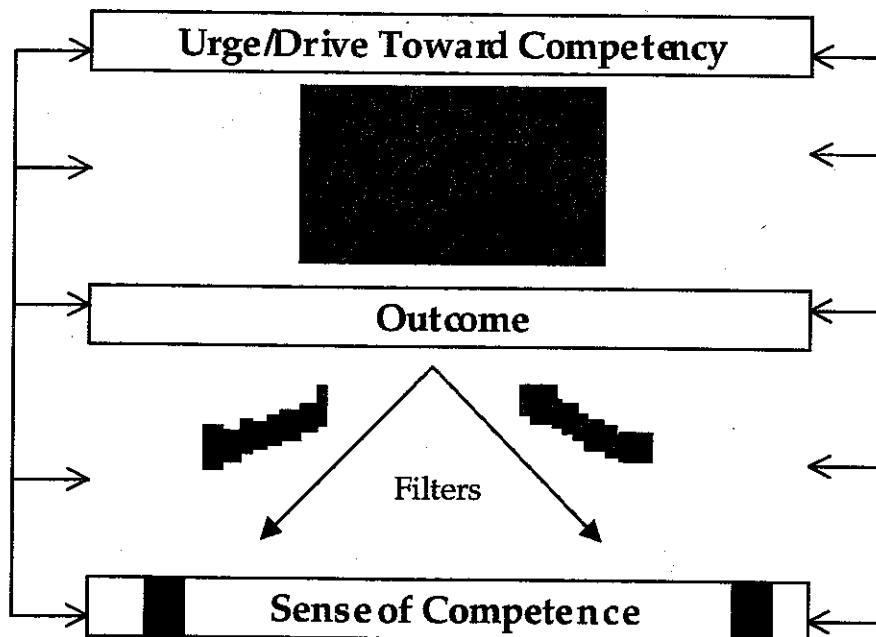


Table One: The Competency Development Cycle

The Seasons as Metaphor

Outdoor educators frequently draw upon the use of metaphors when working with program participants. For the remainder of this article, competency development for women in outdoor education is discussed utilizing the seasons as a guiding metaphor. The seasonal metaphor offers both practitioners and participants the opportunity to gain a deeper and intuitive understanding of the underlying processes and dynamics of competency development.

Like the seasons, competency development is a cyclical process. Participants may come to outdoor programs at any point in the competency development "year" or process. It is important to gain an understanding of where each participant is in the process so that we can utilize appropriate leadership and instructional strategies with her. Participants may cycle through the competency seasons many times and in different orders. As well, participants will have different competency development processes for different types of activities or skills.

Spring

Spring is the season often associated with birth and with beginning anew. Spring represents the beginning of the competency development cycle where a participant is beginning to learn a new activity or where she is learning a new level of an activity. This season of development is marked by excitement, fear, nervousness and some tentativeness. Extending the navigation example, this is the stage where the participant is learning to use the compass; where she is beginning to develop actual competence in both boxing the magnetic needle and using the orienting lines to determine a field bearing. With participants in the "spring" stage, it is useful to utilize cooperative learning experiences that offer opportunities to learn in multiple styles and in multiple group sizes. As well, it is critical to provide frequent non-threatening practice situations in which the challenge level is raised in appropriate steps for each participant.

These two strategies provide a greater opportunity for women to develop actual competency. Without ample practice opportunities, women will frequently hold themselves back and as a result, will lack actual competence. Likewise, if only high stress practice situations are provided or if the challenge level is raised too quickly, skill development will suffer.

Given the limiting influences of gender-role socialization, providing single-gender learning environments can assist women in developing actual competency in outdoor skills. Since many outdoor skills require women to act outside of traditional gender-roles, a single-gender group can provide support and opportunity to push beyond previously held limits. Additionally, single-gender environments remove the socialization that women should be less competent than men. Mulqueen (1995) states "that women are socialized not to outperform men and thus inhibit themselves, rather than emasculating a man." As a result, some women may not demonstrate their competence within a mixed-gender group for fear it would disempower the men in the group. In a study of women's outdoor career development, Loeffler (1995) found that providing single-gender outdoor learning environments allow women to gain actual competence in a safe and nurturing environment and was a major instructional strategy generated by the study. Spring is a critical season in competency development because this is when initial action attempts are being made and when the seeds of actual competence are sowed.

Summer

Summer is the season that is associated with growth. Summer represents continued growth of actual competence coupled with the beginning of self-assessment of competence. This stage of development is marked by engagement, enthusiasm, and connection with the learning process. Continuing with the our participant who is learning to navigate with the compass, in this stage she would be learning to make allowances for declination and to convert field bearings to grid bearings. Along with this

continued building of actual competence in navigation, she would be starting to assess and evaluate her competence in this skill. She is beginning to form her sense of competence in navigating.

With participants in the "summer" season, it is recommended that outdoor instructors give participants as much feedback as they need to feel comfortable with the competency development process recognizing individual differences in this need. It is also key for instructors to continue to support women at all points on the skill acquisition/actual competency continuum. Instructors can easily gravitate to those participants who have grasped a skill easily and who are clamoring for more and greater challenges rather than provide encouragement and support to those who may be struggling. It is important for instructors to balance "being" affirmations ("I'm glad you are here") with "doing" affirmations ("you are doing a great job with those field bearings") during the summer stage of development. Being affirmations assist the participant in knowing her worth separately from her performance.

Finally, instructors can share the competency development process with participants by teaching them to "GRAC." GRAC is an acronym for gain, recognize, assess, and claim. These words refer to challenging stages in the competency development process. Participants must first gain actual competence in an activity. Then, they must recognize that they possess that competency and learn to assess it accurately despite the filters of gender-role socialization. Finally, they must claim or internalize the competence. The GRAC process provides participants with a model and a vocabulary for understanding their maturing competence and their developing sense of competence.

Fall

Fall is the season that is associated with the transition from growth to dormancy. Fall is the time of the year when leaves fall from the trees. Fall represents the stage in the competency development process when sense of competence challenges begin. This stage of development is

marked by self-doubt, anxiety, fear and lack of confidence. It is a stage in the process where a participant's sense of competence and actual competence are out of balance. There is an inverse relationship between sense of competence and anxiety; as sense of competency decreases, anxiety increases (White, 1976).

Loeffler (1995) generated a list of constraints that women face in pursuing an outdoor career. One of the major constraints identified in the study was that "women outdoor leaders tend to perceive themselves as less qualified or competent (p. 88)." Eighty-four percent of the women interviewed in the study described how a lack of self-confidence in their abilities limited them in pursuing their outdoor leadership careers. This finding indicates that even professional outdoor leaders may struggle with the fall stage of competency development and that this is a critical stage in development for both female staff and participants.

During this stage, it is imperative that instructors provide participants with information about how gender-role socialization can hinder the development of a sense of competence. Instructors should continue to support the GRAC process for each participant through role-modeling and mentoring. It is also critical to offer support and utmost confidence in the participant's abilities. Alongside receiving support and feedback, participants may benefit from the opportunity to perform a task without assistance. For example, the participant who is learning compass navigation may be having difficulty claiming her competence in this skill area. Her instructors could design a compass navigation exercise that was within her abilities that she would perform alone. When she successfully completes the exercise, she could fully claim her competence because she could not give away or attribute her navigation competence to her peers. Her sense of competence in navigation would increase through participation in the solo exercise. With careful instruction and facilitation, outdoor instructors can assist women in overcoming the challenges to sense of competence that are a part of the fall season.

Winter

Winter is the season that is associated with cold barren landscapes and hibernation. It represents the stage in which the competency development process stops or stalls. This stage of development is marked by withdrawal, low self-esteem, low sense of competence, grieving, an unwillingness to try or to take risks, fear, and anxiety. Winter is the stage where a participant withdraws from the learning process because she can no longer bear the pressure of a low sense of competence. She loses the ability or motivation to make action attempts towards gaining competency and as a result, becomes mired in the "deep snow" of low self-confidence. If she reached this stage, the compass navigation student would stop trying to navigate or she would refuse to participate in any activities having to do with a compass. This withdrawal could also spill over into other activities besides navigation such as stove repair or fly-pitching. Instructors working with participants in the winter stage can offer gentle invitations to enter or re-enter the competency development process. They can also help her to identify and value the competency she has in other areas of her life. It can be useful to reframe outdoor competency development, not as a problem, but as an act of personal revolution in which the participant can gain a sense of competence that may transfer into other areas of her life.

Conclusion

Gloria Steinem (1992) in the preface of her book about self-esteem made this observation: even I, who had spent the previous dozen years working on external barriers to women's equality, had to admit there were internal ones too. Wherever I traveled, I saw women who were smart, courageous, and valuable, who didn't think they were smart, courageous, or valuable....It was as if the female spirit were a garden that had grown beneath the shadows of barriers so long that it kept growing in the same pattern, even after some of the barriers were gone.

Steinem identifies that women's competency development barriers are not unique to the outdoor environment and that because of gender-role socialization, some women are unable to recognize or claim their competence (or intelligence or courage or value). In assisting women to develop both actual competence and a sense of that competence in outdoor activities, outdoor instructors must be very thoughtful in working with participants. Instructors need to identify which stage of competency development their participants are in and provide appropriate and supportive learning environments and challenges. Instructors must design outdoor experiences that allow (or convince) women to know their competence.

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BUILDING A HOUSE FROM THE FOUNDATION UP: ADVENTURE THERAPY TRAINING IN CANADA

By Janine Papadopoulos

As I sit here over looking the Swiss Alps it's hard for me to think about adventure therapy training in Canada. What does remind me of adventure therapy, though, is a house being built just down the road. The foundation is laid, the frame is up and the walls are being added. Researchers, writers and practitioners in the field of adventure therapy have laid the foundation. The framework has just been completed with the identification of competencies for entry-level adventure therapy employees. The construction, however, is not complete. The development of training material must form the next step of construction. Then someone must operate and maintain the completed building. Over the years the house will need to be renovated but at the present moment let's concentrate on getting the house built.

Over the last year I have been working on identifying competencies needed for entry-level adventure therapy workers. This started by learning more about the adventure therapy field in general. I would like to share these findings with you so that you may have a better understanding of the field of adventure therapy in Canada. More importantly I would like to emphasize what is needed in the way of adventure therapy training.

The Foundation

Researchers and practitioners alike have struggled to create a recognized field called adventure therapy. One of the main issues is defining the field. After exploring international models of best practices in wilderness and adventure therapy, Crisp (1998) brings clarity to certain terms within this field. He states that adventure therapy implies the use of some sort of...

...therapeutic interventions, which use

contrived activities of an experiential, risk taking and challenging nature in the treatment of an individual or group. This is done indoors or within an urban environment (i.e., not isolated from other man-made resources), and does not involve living in an outdoor environment (e.g., participants do not cook their own meals or sleep overnight). The emphasis is on the selection and design of the activity to match targeted therapeutic issues and the framing and processing of the activity (Crisp, 1998, p. 58).

Contrived activities can include group trust initiatives and problem solving activities (Rohnke, 1984, 1991; Rohnke & Butler, 1995), ropes and challenge courses, and indoor climbing walls. The emphasis is on the activity which the therapist contrives. The practitioner sets the rules, goals and criteria for success or failure. The outcomes are usually planned through careful framing prior to the activity. Practitioners often use metaphoric, strategic, and solution-oriented paradigms to address specific behaviours such as impulsiveness, assertiveness, substance abuse relapse, etc.

The planned change tends to be based on the concept of introducing disequilibrium followed by a period of introducing the new behaviour, followed by re-establishing a new equilibrium (Crisp, 1998; Gass, 1993a, 1995; Nadler, 1993; Nadler & Luckner, 1992). Nadler describes disequilibrium as an "internal conflict between cognitive processes, a psychological tension or pressure that each individual attempts to lessen" (Nadler, 1993, p. 62). In order to lessen emotional discomfort in adventure experiences, individuals often use new behaviours and in the process change an attitude or belief. The effectiveness of adventure therapy relies on the transfer of change in attitude or belief to other settings.

Wilderness therapy is a variation of adventure therapy which emphasizes the impact of an isolated natural environment on the clients. Therapeutic paradigms used in wilderness therapy usually involve group therapy, based on group systems models or interpersonal behavioural methods. The outcomes are usually related to change in social roles, relationships and social and environmental adaptation. The process of change is "often seen (but not always) to be holistic, coupled with personal and interpersonal insight, and to emerge from a social process over time" (Crisp, 1998, p.59). In the simplest terms, wilderness therapy integrates modified group psychotherapy and wilderness settings.

Wilderness-adventure therapy is another variation of adventure therapy which uses natural settings for adventure type activities. Examples include activities that are no longer than one day in length, such as rock climbing, caving, day hikes, etc. The adventure activity is not usually done over an extended period. Crisp (1998) believes for research purposes this type of therapy should be differentiated from both wilderness and adventure therapy.

It is important to note the difference between the terms therapeutic and therapy. If practitioners are purposeful and conscious in the application of an activity to remedy a specific behaviour or problem, then they are using therapy. If they choose to use a series of activities to take a group in a desired direction, then they are using therapeutic processes. Change may happen as a result of a therapeutic process, but that is not the primary intent of the practitioner. For example, therapy is being applied when the purpose of using the "balance beam" on a ropes course is to help recovering alcoholics address issues of "letting go" and a belief in self and/or a higher power. If the same activity is being used to provide a challenge experience that activity then becomes a therapeutic intervention (Itin, 1993).

Adventure therapy is a field that continues to grow internationally (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994; Gray & Yerkes, 1995). Although adventure therapy has been practised for over

fifty years, it is only now beginning to be recognized as a profession within the experiential education and psychotherapy fields. Much of the delay in recognition relates to the lack of empirical data and theoretical models, and of an established system for recognizing practitioners (Gass, 1993b). Since 1992, the foundation of this field has been laid in the form of annotated bibliographies; resource books, research publications and directories of practitioners have been published, adding to the validity of this field.

The Framework

The next step of construction involved the identification of competencies. Adventure therapy workers competencies will vary depending on the goals of the adventure program, the clients being served, and the level of risk involved. Papadopoulos (2000) identified 38 core competencies needed by entry-level adventure therapy workers through a two-stage process. The first stage involved the development of a set of competencies to be used to design a curriculum for a graduate level program for adventure therapists. This set of competencies was identified by using the DACUM (Developing A Curriculum) process described by Norton (1992). The second stage involved the validation of the set of competencies developed in the first stage. This was done through a survey completed by adventure therapy professionals.

The data gathered identified 38 competencies sub-divided into five components: personal, adventure, programming, therapy, and operational. After the validation process, the list was re-arranged and wording changed slightly, however, 38 competencies remained (see Chart 1).

Chart 1: Competencies for Entry-Level Adventure Therapists

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A. Personal Component	Is adaptable and flexible.	Understands importance of and is able to communicate effectively.	Has an awareness of personal strengths and challenges.	Has good interpersonal skills.	Understands decision-making process.	Demonstrates first aid competency as it relates to any adventure program provided.	Understands theories of leadership and is aware of personal leadership style.	Is committed to lifelong learning.	
B. Adventure Component	Understands and adheres to environmental ethics	Demonstrates competency in at least two adventure fields, e.g., canoeing & rock climbing.	Understands and applies concepts of risk management and assessment in context of adventure programs.	Understands foundational theories and principles of experiential learning.	Can identify and assess adventure opportunities and options.	Understands and demonstrates expedition planning and management as it relates to any adventure program.			
C. Programming Component	Can facilitate group process.	Can establish and monitor goals with clients and self.	Understands and applies reflective processes and transfer of learning.	Can integrate therapeutic interventions and adventure-based activities.	Can assess client needs.	Understands theories, principles and practices of programming.	Understands different client populations.	Can prepare and deliver adventure therapy programs.	Can conduct Program Evaluation.
D. Therapy Component	Understands theories of counselling and therapy and their applications.	Understands contexts and structures/ systems within which clients may be involved.	Understands and applies best practices of intervention related to adventure activities.	Understands applications of various styles, techniques and protocols related to therapeutic interventions.	Understands full range of client populations, their behaviours and abilities.	Understands theories, principles, and foundations of social psychology and their applications.	Understands theories and principles of good pedagogical practices and their applications.		
E. Operational Component	Understands and adheres to professional and community standards and ethics.	Can develop and understands applications of emergency procedures.	Can write clear and concise reports, logs, proposals, protocols and treatment plans.	Understands operational contexts of adventure therapy.	Understands legal implications of working in the adventure therapy field.	Understands principles of management and marketing in the field of adventure therapy.	Understands issues and concerns of staff hiring, training, and supervision.	Understands basic budget preparation and management.	

Although the above competencies can be used to design curriculum (form the frame), it was found that the competencies could also be used by: those seeking employment in the field; those hiring individuals in the field and those developing standards within the field.

The Completed House:

Adventure therapy has grown in popularity over the last two decades and a need for qualified adventure therapists has emerged. As the field continues to grow, avenues for training professionals need to be established. At present, no post-graduate programs offering training in

adventure therapy exists in Canada. The literature suggests individuals seeking employment in this field must acquire their training through many avenues and usually from more than one institution.

The foundation for the house came in the form of existing research and programming within the field of adventure therapy. The framework for the house was established in an identified list of competencies. Finishing the house involves using the competencies to develop curriculum. Professional training opportunities must be developed to ensure a high quality of services for future clients.

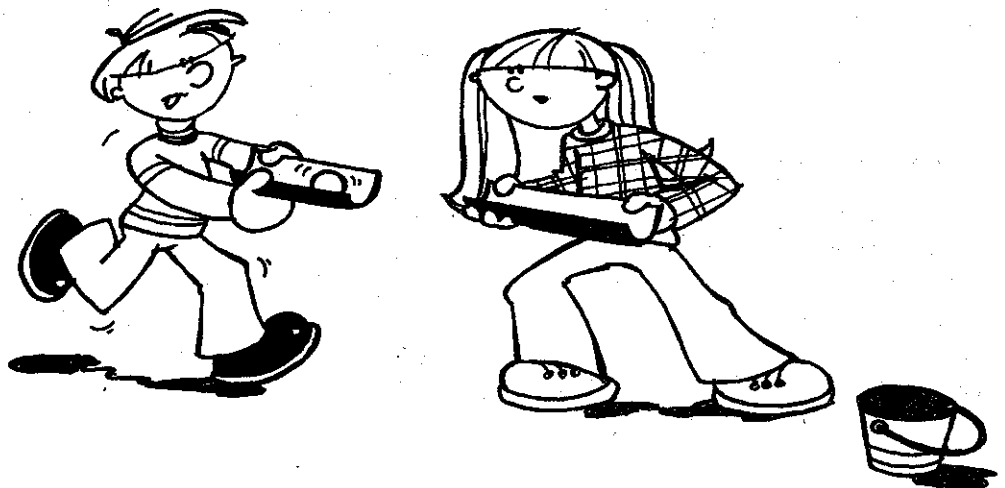
Before the house can be completed, how-

ever, it must find a good operator and maintenance person (institution or organization) so that those seeking employment in adventure therapy have a place where they can be trained. The question remains who will develop the curriculum (finish the house) and who will be in charge of maintaining it?

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Unpacking Adventure

By Liz Newbery

Lessons from fishermen

Alastair Reid writes for the *New Yorker* but rarely goes to New York.

He prefers to live on a remote beach in the Dominican Republic. Christopher Columbus landed on this beach several centuries ago on one of his excursions to Japan, and nothing has changed since.

From time to time, the postman appears among the trees. The postman arrives staggering under his load. Alistair receives mountains of correspondence. From the U.S., he is bombarded with commercial offers, leaflets, catalogues, luxurious temptations from the consumer civilization that exhorts him to buy.

On one occasion, he found in the mass of paper an advertisement for a rowing machine. Alistair showed it to his neighbours, the fishermen.

"Indoors? They use it indoors?"

The fishermen couldn't believe it:

"Without water? They row without water?"

They couldn't believe it, they couldn't comprehend it:

"And without fish? And without the sun? And without the sky?"

The fishermen told Alastair that they got up every night long before dawn and put out to sea and cast their nets as the sun rose over the horizon, and that this was their life and that this life pleased them, but that rowing was the one infernal aspect of the whole business:

"Rowing is the one thing we hate," said the fishermen.

Then Alastair explained to them that the rowing machine was for exercise.

"For what?"

"Exercise."

"Ah. And exercise-what's that?"

(Galeano 1989, p.162-163).

I first read this anecdote on a cold day in the desert. In a 25 year old VW van without heat, in fact. Driving down the interstate, wearing a tuck and a parka to ward off the wind blowing through the unsealed vehicle, I read a book on what I'd thought was Latin American history. In a way, it turned out to be about myself, about my life and work in Canada, and about the many ways in which my culture is infused in me. I suppose all books, are, in the end, about the reader.

I often revel in the truly epic day in the bush. The kind of day that finds me bush crashing to look for portages, carrying canoes over impossible terrain, sharing gummy worms of jubilation with my compatriots, camping long after dark, long after I thought I could no longer hold my paddle, all of the time laughing at the complete madness of it all. These are the days I feel most alive, and certainly the days I remember the most. Surely the more you pack into a day and the more of the unknown that you dive into, the more full and rich your life is? I love stretching myself, facing the improbable and the impossible, and feeling strong in my body in the sun and the rain. I love going to bed feeling my muscles tired from a long day. Now I question, why do I love it?

I've begun to realize how culturally specific the lure of adventure is. How many different connotations this word must have around the world! Several years ago, I worked with a group of Indonesian and Canadian youth on a cultural exchange project that took place in both Canada and Indonesia. While living in Tudu Aog, a village in North Sulawesi, Indonesia, several of the Canadian youth would go jogging during the early mornings. They were looked at as a curiosity by our hosts, and this jogging behaviour was put down to another strange thing that Canadians do. Of the several great challenges of this job, one was learning to walk slow enough to walk with my Indonesian colleagues. The Indonesian participants were extremely playful, and given to snow-creature building, snow-ball fights, and skating, but I never once saw them rise two hours early to run or swim with their Canadian counterparts.

I recognize that there are vast individual differences and perspectives within a culture and that my experiences do not "speak" for all Indonesian or Canadian people. But it seemed that, in general, I was encountering a fundamentally different approach and attitude towards recreational physical activity and physical challenge than the one I'd grown up with. As always, spending time immersed in another

culture allowed me to learn about my own, to make visible those things that I assumed. I started connecting my experience in this cultural exchange to my life as an Outward Bound instructor. What was laid most bare in the juxtaposition was the *Euro-western ethos of contrived challenge, the purpose of which was ostensibly to build character, to feel the satisfaction and self-esteem from "making it through," and perhaps to gain some glory out of the whole thing.* Some other cultures just may have a more sensible approach of: "If it's not fun and we don't have to do it for survival, why do it?" Maybe different cultures have also come to find fun in different places.

Traditions in Adventure and Wilderness

I've begun to question more and more the assumed values embedded in adventure education processes. What would the fishermen think of our beautiful new ropes course? There are cultural values and attitudes in *everything* we do as outdoor experiential educators, and through educational process, as well as content, we can unwittingly transmit cultural values in a hegemonic way. Simply, what are the effects of running programs for diverse populations based on philosophies that are imbued with Euro-western, middle class values? Furthermore, how are the very concepts of risk, challenge, adventure and physical fitness interpreted, understood, or experienced cross-culturally? (Or cross-gender, cross-ability...) We had better know, because we are building programs around these concepts, programs that involve multi-cultural participants.

What lies in *adventure*? I know what I immediately think of:

rugged individualism / unknown and exciting / strength of character / climbing the mountain to see if I can do it / the heroic quest, send on the dragons! / finding myself, self-discovery / seeking challenge in wilderness / working as a team (in the face of adversity?) / testing my metal ??

Is adventure physical, emotional, spiritual? How do we define adventure education? Furthermore, who defines it and who is it for?

I'm starting to notice how, for me, "adven-

ture" invokes a liberal humanist way of thinking and feeling, a way of being and knowing that privileges individual accomplishment and places the responsibility for one's lot in life on one's own inner strength and determination. This is a very common way of being, thinking, feeling and knowing that I recognize as highly political. It generally serves the interests of those who already have a pretty good lot in life. I'm starting to be wary of *adventure*.

Yet there is something, too, that is alluring about adventure. It rocks me out of complacency, out of the comfort of my everyday life, and into the angst and excitement of the unknown. I think, though, that my orientation to both wilderness and adventure reflects my own privilege. Certain myths of wilderness have long been stitched together with economic privilege:

Ever since the nineteenth century, celebrating wilderness has been an activity mainly for well-to-do city folks. Country people generally know far too much about working the land to regard *unworked* land as their ideal. In contrast, elite urban tourists and wealthy sportsmen projected their leisure-time frontier fantasies onto the American landscape and so created wilderness in their own image (Cronon 1995, 78).

My wanderings have led me to many questions without easy answers. Would I seek outdoor adventure if my everyday life held more risk, struggle and uncertainty or more hard outdoor work? "Tea in armchair with foot massage" fantasies might be more persistent than frontier fantasies! Furthermore, if outdoor adventure is a classed and raced concept, how does the use of adventure in education impact current systems of privilege?

At some point in an Outward Bound course, I will probably talk about the learning that can occur when we step out of our comfort zones, take a risk, or as Nadler and Luckner (1992) would say, achieve S+1. I am now wondering if this is a Euro-western, masculine and liberal-humanist way of viewing learning itself.

What are the sub-texts of educational wilderness journeys? Notions of the heroic in Euro-western traditions of the journey have

long been critiqued: "a survey of literature that gives rise to the heroic journey metaphor reveals a distinct focus on male experience, and where women do emerge, they tend to either take on traditional "male" qualities...or alternatively they take on supportive roles such as wives, lovers, assistants, and whores" (Beale 1988, 9). The "heroic quest" is a metaphor often employed both explicitly and implicitly (and consciously and unconsciously) in adventure programs. In this metaphor, "the student hears a call to adventure, leaves home, encounters dragons along the way and slays them, reflects on his conquest, and returns home as a hero with a clearer understanding of himself" (Warren 1996, 16). The masculine subtext of such journeys has been well critiqued; I suggest that such journeys may also have a Euro-western colonial sub-text ("discovering" the "empty" wilderness en route).

Warren and Beale point out that women may participate in the heroic journey, but they do so within a predetermined masculine discourse of wilderness travel. Yet there seems to be some essentialism at work here. By defining the ethos of this journey as male, how are we defining and limiting both "male" and "female?" I struggle with the construct of the heroic journey, and I also struggle with its deconstruction. I, at times, revel in this journey, slaying, as well as "making alliances" (Warren 1996) with the dragons along the way. Warren and Beale write with an implicit assumption that a woman's nature is not given to such a journey. In another related example, Moon Joyce (1988) reflects on the use of river metaphors by educators: "Like the river, I believe women do not, by nature or conditioning, seek adversity and resistance" (p. 25). Yet I am a woman who loves the epic mud-slogging day as much as the day spent with watercolours on a warm rock. A myriad of river and journey metaphors resonate with me. Who am I by nature? A 'woman's nature,' like the metaphors themselves, is a socially constructed entity.

What is of practical importance to our teaching is to begin asking the questions: do such heroic journeys and notions of adventure always or ever resonate with women, with inner-city Toronto youth, with youth in the

Outward Bound native program, with new Canadians, with all Euro-western males, or with fishermen from the Dominican Republic?

Stories and learning's from the field

As part of my masters research, I've been listening to stories about identity and the outdoors from several women outdoor instructors. This story came out of an experience Sue had during a challenging hiking expedition with the South African Outward Bound school:

...they're carrying highly uncomfortable packs. They're probably wearing their only clothes, the same clothes they wear at home....and we're hauling them through this environment. And the one kid starts to question me about why the hell are we doing this. And I gave him some sort of pat answer about like, this is about exploring and really working through stuff. You know, the same stuff we try and believe here and he said, "I walk every day. I don't have a car. This is how I get from place to place. I put stuff on my back and I go. You tell me why this is any different."

You know, like, the difference is that it's not my reality, right? Like, this is something different for me. I have the ability, economically...and because in South Africa, whites only had cars for a very very long time, so the whites would be driving and the blacks would be walking from place to place. And they would be carrying everything that they had. And so he's like "....is this is like a forced intern camp, right? You're just telling me to do more of the same. This is not doing stuff for me. I do this every day."

I was totally flabbergasted. I thought, "what the hell are we doing? Like, we're totally imposing!" We talk about this at Cobwebs as well. *We're imposing what we think the value of this experience is.* I mean there it's not even questioned. It's like this cookie-cutter of like, "Thou shalt go to the outdoors in this capacity and do this." And I thought, like, we just went. Like there was no room for looking at why or how we might do it or what might be a valid experience or what these kids coming from a totally different cultural context might want from it.

You know, or, what might be valuable for them. It's totally ours. White. The whole management structure and the instructing team is white. They come from an international background, but a Western-biased context. White-biased context. I thought: "This is ridiculous!" Made me feel so despondent, like, "what are we !? *!?!? doing here?"

It's tempting to dismiss this story as far removed from, and therefore irrelevant to a Canadian context. But I think I have much to learn from it; Sue's experience beautifully ruptures many of my assumptions about my work. Does the educational value of what I think I'm doing necessarily match what I'm actually doing as an educator? A white, international staff team working with black South African students may not be so far removed from mostly white, Canadian instructors working with multi-cultural school groups from Toronto. I wonder how much my students politely humour me instead of asking, "why the hell are we doing this?"

I think, too, about how "challenge" has played out for some of my students. On a seven day trip, one woman interrogated me again and again about the group's safety from the occasional fisher-folk (men) that we encountered. On a youth course, two athletic and spirited young leaders encountered their challenge in standing up to another student who was sexually harassing them. I'm not sure that these are the adventures that adventure education has in mind. And then there are those students who just don't see the point in climbing up a rock face. They are difficult for me, because they remind me that there just may not be a point, or that the point exists in only some contexts for some people.

Sue's words "*we're imposing what we think the value of this experience is*" speak to the work of some experiential educators who have called into question several assumed practices of the field (Estrellas 1996; Mack 1996; Rhode 1996; Warren 1996; Warren 1998). It's well past time to throw out the cookie-cutters, much as I know how much easier it is to hang onto them. But what I want to call into question here are not the specific practices of adventure education, but entire ways of thinking about adventure. What

are the many meanings and effects of "adventure," "self-reliance," and "determination," cornerstones of the field? I don't want to make pedagogical prescriptions (I've none to make), but I want to begin to make the simple, complex. Because it is very, very complex.

I also don't want to throw out any babies with this bathwater. I do notice positive benefits of hard physical journeys and of exploring risk-taking for myself and my students. I certainly have a general feeling that through work with ropes courses, rockclimbing, whitewater paddling, long journeys and (most of all) group cooking adventures, many people have found, for themselves, a sense of surety, confidence and pride. On a personal level, I can't and won't let go of my love for the epic and the ways that I sometimes enjoy traveling through land. But the educator in me sees a need to temper these things with a critical perspective and a willingness to explore other ways of reading the wilderness journey and time spent "out on trail."

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Liz Newbery is an outdoor adventurer and an armchair tea drinker. Sections of this article have been previously published in her masters thesis.

B backpocket

THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR IN ADVENTURE AND EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Heidi Mack (Credit also goes to Sean Blankensop & Scot Caldwell)

THE ACTIVITY:

The central goal of this simple activity is to generate class discuss around the role of a facilitator during an adventure activity. The activity can take place both indoors and outdoors. Before you bring a group to the site, you will need to hide 15 foreign objects along the route, of a short 5 minute walk. On an indoor walk "outdoor" items such as pinecones, birchbark, and feathers can be hidden. On an outdoor walk, "indoor" items such as thumb tacks, staplers, paper, and tape can be hidden. The items should be placed just outside of normal scanning zone-tape a feather to the ceiling. In other words, participants shouldn't need to dig around for the items.

Now you are ready to begin

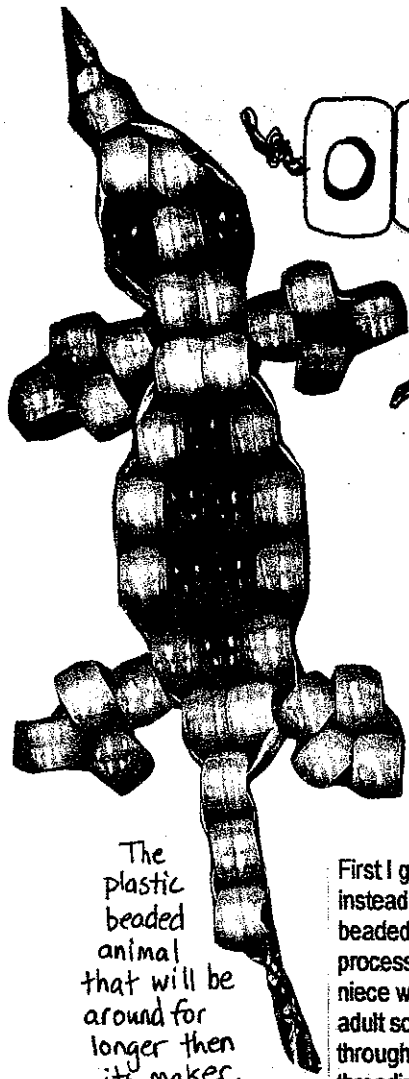
You will begin by taking your group for three walks. Do not tell them this. Introduce the activity the first time by saying "we are going on a walk". Away you go around the circuit where you have hidden things. Stop at the other end. At this point in time you might want them to write down a few notes about their walk in their journals or on a piece of paper about their walk.

Now, you start again. Act as if you are walking for the first time and say "we are going for a walk". I'd like you to be aware of your surroundings". And away you go on the same circuit (except you will be going in the other direction). Again, at the end have them collect some ideas in the journal.

And finally, introduce the group to the activity. A walk. This time the instructions are:

"we are going for a walk. I'd like for you to be aware of your surroundings. By the time we get to the end of the walk you will have passed 15 items from the outdoors (or indoors). I would like you to make a list of them as you see them in your journals.

And the rest, as they say, is the debrief.



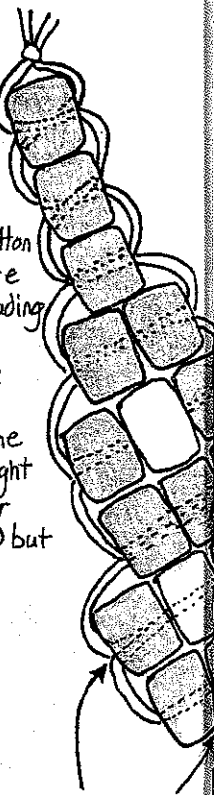
The plastic beaded animal that will be around for longer than its maker.

ORGANIC BEADWORK

My loathing of plastic gimp and plastic beads has a long history. I used the stuff as a child in many camp programs, but once as I was old enough to comprehend the environmental impact of the plastic industry, I began to question the use of this material in an environmental program? How did expressing myself with plastic supplies for an art and craft project encourage me to live harmoniously in nature? I hate to think about how many hundreds of years each plastic bead I used in my childhood projects will take to decompose. Last spring I ventured into my niece's bedroom to discover that the popular craft now among her age group was plastic beaded animal key chains. Yuck! Hasn't anything changed over all these years of teaching concepts of ecology? I had to do something! So, I challenged myself to make something similar but out of organic material.

First I gave some wooden beads to my niece and asked her to use them instead of plastic ones to make me a key chain. I watched her make this beaded animal so that I would better understand what was involved in the process. By watching I learned what bead characteristics worked best and my niece was empowered, as she now became an expert able to teach me, the adult something. I learned that using a firm string that would insert easily through the holes was important and that large holes in the beads also made threading easier. The next step was for me to figure out how to make my own beads.

Sinew or very strong waxed cotton thread are good threading material. Thin wire will help keep some shapes tight and together (see turtle) but it is not as organic.



Add or subtract beads to the next row in a manner to give a larger smaller or wiggling effect.



I knew that the long beads presently used in chokers and breast plates (associated with First Nations ceremonial outfits) traditionally used birds' legs or bones as beads. The bone ends were sawed off and the nutritious marrow was sucked out and eaten. But I didn't have enough time or interest in eating chicken to make bone beads. (It might have been an interesting learning experiment, however, in witnessing the signs of deteriorating health of factory-raised chickens confined in small pens, which limits the development of strong legs and bones.)



Peel off the bark or use a bead from a different species of plant to create new coloured patterns and shade.

Try different sizes.

I decided to try and make wooden beads instead of beads of shells or bones. I simply went for a walk with a pair of pruners in my hand. I then had to train my observational or gathering skills as I first had to find suitable plants and then choose among the variety I found. Where did the plant grow, what height was the plant, how did it branch out, what colour and shade was it, what thickness were the stems? I even had to take a good look at the plants interior make-up was it solid, pithy or hollow? Would it readily flatten in my hands with a bit of pressure? Bring a few field guides with you and this makes an excellent opportunity to learn the names and more about some of the shrubby plants we often pass by seldom noticing. As actually collecting material directly from the land is something that few people ever experience in our consumer world today it is important to give some guidance to students about this act. Role model how to harvest appropriately. I often make the comparison to how I would want someone to harvest or operate on my own body. Would you want a limb quickly and neatly cut off or torn off? I collected a variety of long stems in the least harmful manner I knew, the whole time wishing I had a granny next to me telling me stories and techniques for how to harvest sustainably. I try to pick the stems that looked weaker or seemed to be growing in a crowded area that might benefit with more sunlight if I harvest a few plants.

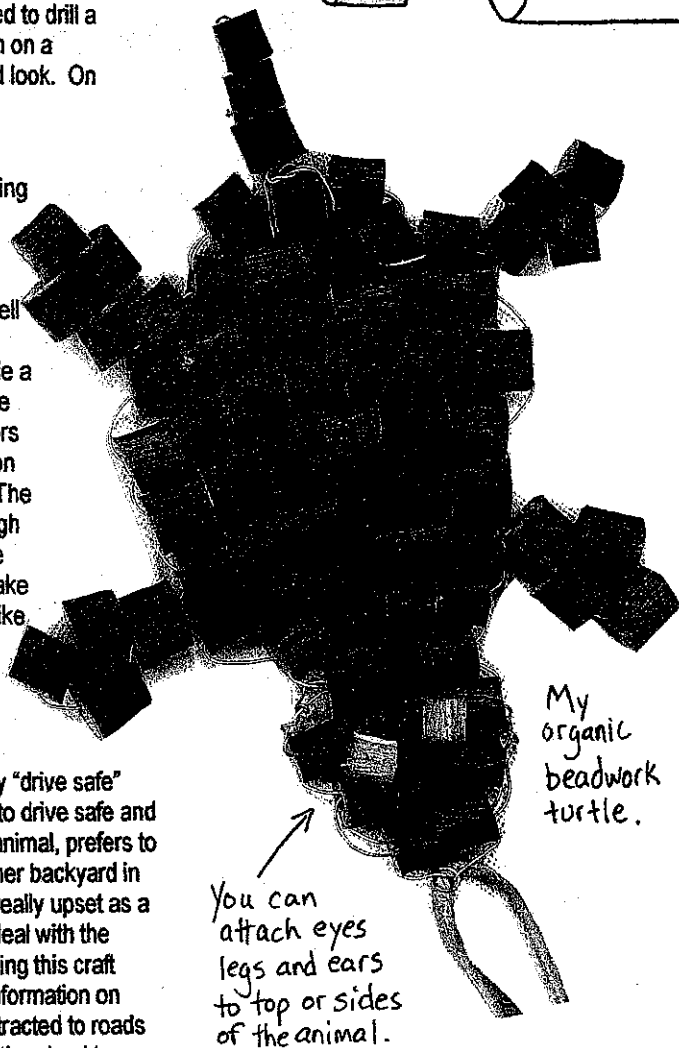
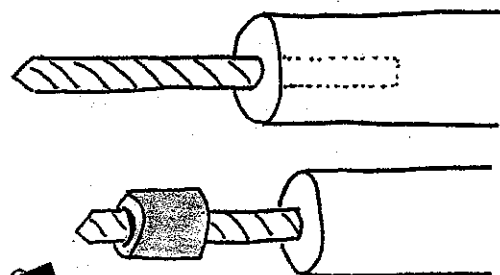
Start by looping so over leather or a ke. Measure the thread the length of animal created.

To help make the holes I made a few simple hand drills. These drills were to aid the making of holes in the stems with solid interiors. To make the drills I simply used another drill to make a hole in the end of a piece of doweling or a dry stick I had sawed off. I then glued the drill bit into the hole.

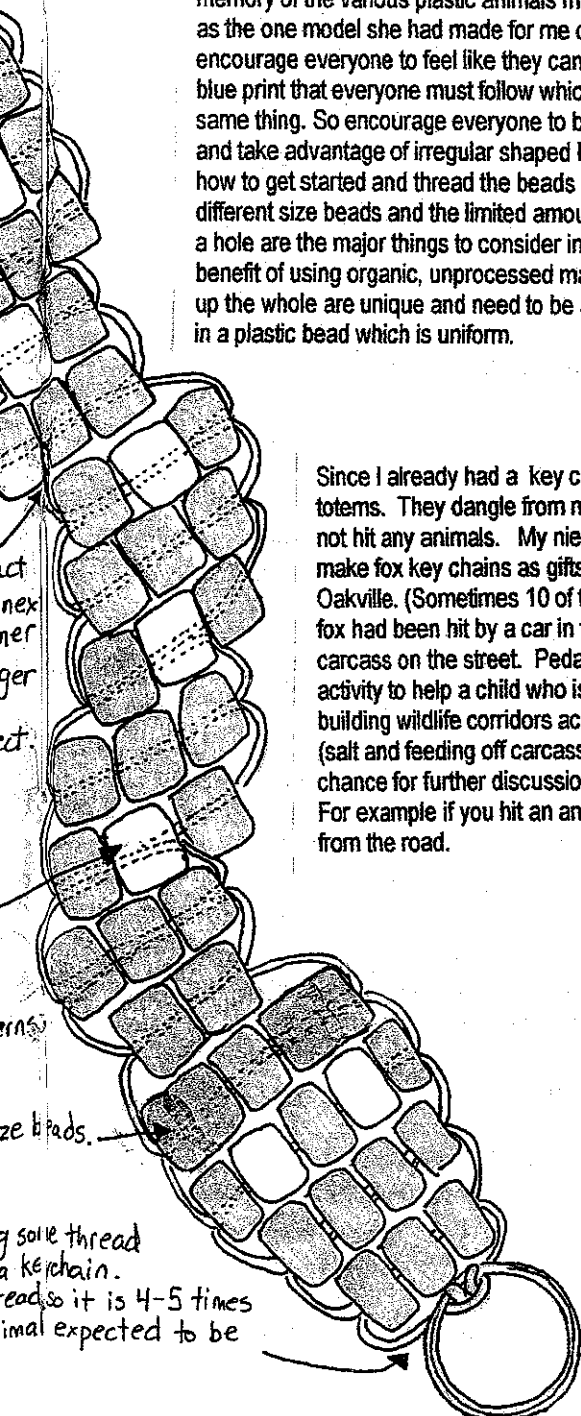
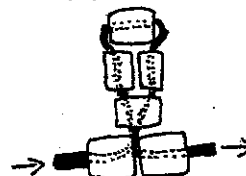
Next I again used my pruners to cut stems of various thickness and different lengths. I followed this step by quickly drilling holes in the centre of each cut stem to make a bead. As the beads dried quickly, I soon learned that I had to soak them or they would crack when I later tried to drill a hole in them. I used linseed or walnut oil to prevent the cracking and then drained them on a cotton cloth before continuing to drill holes. The oil gave them a nice finished or polished look. On a few stems I peeled off the outer bark. This served to give me a lighter colour bead.

I then figured out the basic animal shape I wanted to make and set to stringing the beads together. (Graph paper may help this stage if your beads are relatively uniform in size.) My niece had a variety of paper diagrams for patterns that she got when she bought her plastic beads and I had the memory of the various plastic animals my niece had made in my head as well as the one model she had made for me out of wooden beads. I try to encourage everyone to feel like they can be a designer so I try not to provide a blue print that everyone must follow which results in everyone having the same thing. So encourage everyone to be creative and learn from their errors and take advantage of irregular shaped beads. I have provided some tips on how to get started and thread the beads with the example snake diagram. The different size beads and the limited amount of times a string can pass through a hole are the major things to consider in designing each animal. To me the benefit of using organic, unprocessed material, is that all the pieces that make up the whole are unique and need to be accounted for in their own way, unlike in a plastic bead which is uniform.

Since I already had a key chain my beaded animal become my "drive safe" totems. They dangle from my rear view mirror and remind me to drive safe and not hit any animals. My niece who made me my first beaded animal, prefers to make fox key chains as gifts because foxes frequently play in her backyard in Oakville. (Sometimes 10 of them at once!) One day she was really upset as a fox had been hit by a car in front of her house and she had to deal with the carcass on the street. Pedagogically, then, I could imagine using this craft activity to help a child who is dealing with the death of a pet. Information on building wildlife corridors across highways, why animals are attracted to roads (salt and feeding off carcasses of other hit animals etc.) could then lead to a chance for further discussion on what to do to help wildlife and keep pets safe. For example if you hit an animal while driving, stop and move its remain away from the road.



You can attach eyes legs and ears to top or sides of the animal.



...the practice of leaving a token, perhaps tobacco, where you had taken from Nature something that you required. One of the students asked, "Sir, are you suggesting that we really do that?" I told himI wanted him to think about it. I wanted him to decide whether he really needed what he was taking. I wanted him to consider the circular nature of gifts and giving. Most of all, I wanted him to think about his participation in an ultimately mysterious world. The tobacco, I told him, seemed to me a symbol for an invaluable attitude that had stood the test of millennia." (Wayland Drew "Green Teacher" Issue #28 May/June 1992 p16)

Is there choice in challenge by choice?

By Brian Lissen

Since the term *challenge by choice* was coined by Karl Rohnke in the mid-eighties (Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe, 1988) this concept has not only become a foundational principle in most adventure based programs but has also become a standard operating procedure for many outdoor adventure programs. In many cases this philosophy is clearly articulated in staff manuals and explained to participants as a mandatory part of the program briefing. While this principle is talked about, explained, and honoured, its very essence is often forgotten, or worse misapplied.

At a recent conference presentation I asked the participants to define challenge by choice. Predictably, a college student responded that "challenge by choice meant that students didn't have to do the activities if they didn't want to". In many ways, this example illustrates, how participants, instructors and other users simplify the meaning of this term to equate with a way out of the adventure experience rather than a way into an adventure experience.

Challenge by choice, as a concept is much more than an exit strategy for those who are scared, overwhelmed, confused, or ill informed about the potential for learning that exists in the adventure experience. In its early origins was designed as a strategy to promote challenge, risk taking and learning. Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe (1988) suggest that *challenge by choice* offer a student:

- A chance to try a potentially difficult or frightening challenge in an atmosphere of support and caring.
- The opportunity to "back off" when performance pressures or self-doubt becomes too strong, knowing that an opportunity for a future attempt will always be available.
- A chance to try difficult tasks, recognising that the attempt is more significant than performance results.
- Respect for individual ideas and choices (p.131).

Priest & Gass (1997) suggest that "challenge by choice strives to empower clients by proactively informing them that they, not you as the outdoor leader, control a major part of determining the degree of challenge, risk, and competence with which they will engage in the adventure experience". Similarly, Henton (1996) suggests that challenge by choice rest on the premises that challenge or healthy risk taking promotes growth. That an individual's basic need for competence and efficacy is positive motivation for learning. And finally, individuals possess the ability to determine their potential success in new situations.

All three definitions recognise that challenge and risk taking are the choice of the client, and that success in these endeavours requires a supportive atmosphere, rather than one of coercion. The ability for clients to choose their level of risk taking implies that they are being presented with a range of challenge opportunity. In adventure practices, much of the emphasis is placed on the participant's ability to choose the level of challenge. But, often little time is spent actually creating or providing varied challenge opportunities within the adventure experience. In many cases, the actual practice of this philosophy means that participants are relegated to secondary roles and are therefore not provided with the opportunity to examine critically what their choices really are. The application of this concept in a generic method often leads to both the practitioners and clients applying this concept with out interrogating it. Relegating participants to lesser roles doesn't provide for adequate opportunities for challenge, learning, and growth. Holding the rope bag, spotting, and belaying, may be important tasks in the context of a challenge course experience, but often they don't match the action opportunity presented by the climbing and full participation in high ropes course elements. This is particularly true when these other roles are presented as second place alternatives to the experience of climbing.

In the past decade, one trend in adventure programming has been that adventure education, experience based training and development, and adventure therapy programs are accessible to a wider range of clients. Challenge by choice can be an important program design strategy that invites broader participation. However, adventure based programs, and programmers need to be aware of different clients needs, goals and perceptions of adventure effect their understanding of the term challenge by choice.

A fuller application of challenge by choice as a design and planning approach provides an opportunity for us to provide meaningful challenge course experiences for all members of our groups regardless of their ability. The intentional application of challenge by choice principles in both the planning and delivery of the adventure experience can create greater inclusion, and create more meaningful learning opportunities for participants. This means ensuring that each challenge course experience provides a range of action opportunities that are intentionally designed within the scope of the primary activity. That there are equal rewards and value placed on different kinds of participation and levels of challenge. This also, means taking the focus off "getting to the top" or a single role for participation in an activity.

A simple example of restructuring an activity in this way can be seen in the Spider's Web (Rohnke, 1984). Traditionally, group members attempt to move from one side to the other by passing one another through holes in the web. Usually, a hole can be used only once, and group members are not permitted to touch the web at any time. Those who are uncomfortable with this kind of physical contact, suffer from feelings of poor body image, or simply fear being lifted and thus are left with few choices with regards to their participation.

In a newer version, shown to me recently by Karl Rohnke, the group's objective is to pass a rope through all of the holes, without the rope or anyone else touching the web. In this version, some group members need to be passed through holes in order to place people on the

other side of the web. Other group members are involved in passing and holding the rope. This version provides a wider range of choice and challenge opportunity. The person who might be uncomfortable with being passed through the web can self select another meaningful role, without pressure or undo attention. The activity changes the focus of the objective from physical performance to group problem solving, and creates varied roles for participation. This simple adjustment to a traditional activity invites participation from more participants.

When planning for broader participation and a broader implementation of challenge by choice as a design strategy, the following should be considered.

- Clarify client goals/objectives.
- Does the activity have an objective that opens the way to varied roles for participation?
- Do all roles create a meaningful challenge opportunity?
- Do all roles provide the opportunity for equal contribution to the task?
- Are participants invited to make choices consistently throughout the program?
- Be aware of the way that language implies expectations.

As participation in adventure programs continues to grow, we need to do more than talk about challenge by choice. Successful programs that truly promote the goals of inclusion and participation actively utilise the challenge by choice philosophy as a design principle. Challenge by choice should not just offer a way out of the adventure experience, but ought to be the primary way of inviting people in!

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- Henton, M. (1996). *Adventure in the Classroom*. Hamilton, MA: Project Adventure.
- Priest, S. & Gass, M. (1997). *Effective Leadership in Adventure Programming*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Schoel, J., Prouty, D., & Radcliffe, P. (1988). *Islands of Healing*. Hamilton, MA: Project Adventure.

Brian Lissen is the owner of AdventureWorks Inc.

UPDATE ON INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

BY M.J. BARRETT

During the spring, the Integrated Program's Research team met to discuss key issues regarding integrated curriculums. The following outlines some of the key points discussed in this meeting as well as potential action plans to mitigate some of these issues. We hope to meet again on June 29/2000 to continue talks around environmental courses.

KEY ISSUES

- Pressures of a four year program and need to graduate
- The need to sell programs as containing the essentials that students would need
- Staffing and teacher timetable difficulties
- Competition with other programs such as Phys. Ed. and leadership courses
- Dual offerings of the same courses (Geography and Resource Management)
- Funding-will there be restrictions placed on course fees?

INTEGRATED CURRICULUMS

½ credits in courses such as Phys. Ed. drawing from Healthy Active Living English (Grade 11)

Canadian & World Studies (Environment and Resource Management Grade 12)

A locally designed Environmental Science Course

OTHER POSSIBLE COURSES TO CONSIDER

Grade 11 Phys. Ed. -*Health for Life*

Grade 12 Social Science & Humanities-*Challenge & Change in Society*

Grade 12 Social Sciences-*Food & Nutrition Science*

ADDITIONAL WEBSITE INFORMATION

<http://www.osee.org> (Ontario Society for Environmental Educators)

<http://www.headwaters.com/COEO> (Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario)

<http://www.seer.org> (State Education and Environment Round Table)

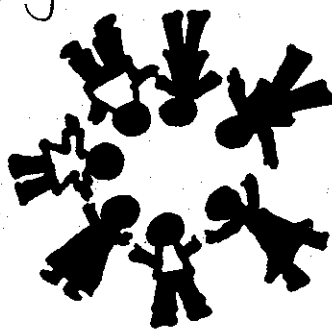


"In the Field" Debriefing Techniques

by Jesse Pierce

Clothes pin Activity

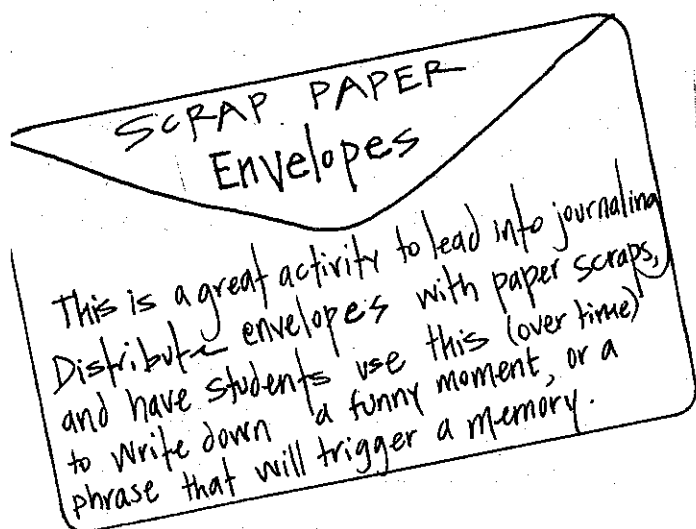
Write down special things on the clothespins such as "You're neat" or "Thanks for being you" Pin them onto people (inconspicuously) and then have them pass on the FUN!



★ Pinwheel Circle

I Like You Because:

Tape a sheet of paper to every student's back and have each member mingle and write something Positive



M+M activity

Distribute M+M's to every student and have each colour represent a category:

- Red: Things you love
- Brown: Things that make you angry
- Green: People you admire
- Yellow: A goal or Dream

Campfire Ceremony



this is an excellent transference activity by using birchbark and jackpine cones as metaphors.

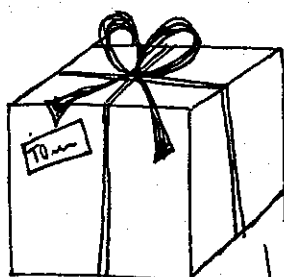
Birchbark - burns quickly.
it represents something that you want to leave behind (eg. habit)

Jackpine cone - the seeds open in fire
it represents a new beginning (eg. a goal, or starting something new)

String/ Web connection Metaphor

Pass a ball of string (in a spider web formation) from person to person recognizing their individual contribution to the group. Discuss the support of the group in conjunction to the web. Cut each member a piece of string for keepsake.

Bead + Bracelet Activity



★ UNWRAP A PRESENT

Memory for the Day:
- @ - Each person writes down a memory of the day and puts it in a stuffsac which are read at the

In the Field Debriefing techniques - Explanations

★ Pinwheel Circle - This is an excellent debrief to use at the end of a trip. Have the group members lay down on the ground so that their heads are in the middle of the circle. Have them think of a word that describes their experiences together. Have the group share their words in a circle, and keep the words circulating until they dwindle.

★ Bead + Bracelet Activity - This is a great activity for accomplishing goals. Distribute a piece of string for each student to tie around his/her wrist. The string can represent something such as unity or anything else that may be particular to the group that you are working with. Buy or make four or five beads of different colours for each person in the group, and have each bead represent a group or individual goal. Once all of the goals have been accomplished and the students have received all of their beads, distribute a unique bead to each student and have it represent a positive characteristic of that individual.

★ Unwrap the Present - Wrap a treat up in layers with a question posed on each one. Have the students pass the present to the person who fits the description. The next student will pass the gift on to the next person by answering the question on the next layer. The treat is shared at the end (include extra layers so that everyone receives the gift at least once).

Possible questions:

- ♦ Someone who made you laugh
- ♦ Someone you would like to know better
- ♦ Someone you can trust
- ♦ Someone who has challenged your way of thinking
- ♦ Someone who was very helpful
- ♦ Someone who makes you feel comfortable
- ♦ Someone who taught you something
- ♦ Someone who made you smile
- ♦ Someone who really heard you
- ♦ Someone with a positive attitude
- ♦ Someone who exerted a lot of effort

★ Give yourself a Hand - Have students trace their hands on paper and have them write appreciations inside the outline of each others hands.

Jesse Pierce is a graduate of Lakehead University with an Honours Bachelor of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism and a Bachelor of Natural Science. She is an instructor at the Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School.

Defining The Adventure Leader

By Julia March

Duration: 1.5 hour

Materials: Chart paper, colored markers, crayons, glue, tape, scissors and pictures from outdoor magazines

Location: A place large enough for groups to discuss and create

Introduction and framing: I have used the following activity in several of the classes I teach to provide students with a chance to reflect and explore assumptions about what makes an outdoor adventure leader and to display this in a creative format. I usually begin with a trick where I place a plastic water bottle filled with water in an area so they can all see. I ask them to tell me what they see. After a few students have answered I turn it upside down or put it on its side. I ask again what they see. After this round I talk about perspectives using the water bottle to illustrate that just as there are many ways to view a water bottle that our perspectives of adventure leaders can be varied. This helps to frame the activity.

Give the following instructions for the first part of the activity: Form groups of 3-5 members. Each group may use the craft supplies provided to bring to life the ideal adventure leader. Consider all qualities, education, experience, background, & skills this leader will have. Give your leader a name and a brief history focusing on what has contributed to their development. This will be used for the groups to introduce the leader to the rest of the students. Once the students have had a chance to create this image have them present to the rest of the class. Have all of the adventure leaders visible.

Set of instructions for the second part of the activity: After the groups have presented their leader I begin the second part by taking out an onion and a knife. I start peeling back the layers of skin and talk about how easy it is for us to take at face value some of the things we see. I tell a story about how I began to peel my own layers of skin as an adventure educator in coming to understand how the outdoors is a gendered space. This metaphor works to help frame this section of the class aimed at exploring our assumptions about what constitutes an adventure leader.

Give the following instructions for the second part of the class: Place around the space a series of pre set questions on a chart paper. Ask students to take the next 10 minutes to walk around and review the images and then record their reflections on them. The questions I choose to include depend vary much on the relationship I have with a group, their relationship and my own level of comfort with being able to facilitate potential issues that might be raised during our discussion.

Potential Questions: How do these portraits reflect women and men's roles in the outdoors? What are the advertising messages? How do these messages keep people in boxes or limit us? Who is included and who is excluded in these images? Where are you in these images? What are some of the assumptions we have about our adventure leaders? How does this affect our role as educators?

Debrief: I spend the last part of the class facilitating a discussion around the perspectives written on the chart papers. I try to summarize, to clarify and to expand on topics as necessary. In my experience some of the common themes that emerge might have to do with gender stereotypes, the myth of leaders as the expert or "superwoman or superman", the notion that the outdoors is a level playing field.

Alternatives: Slides taken of images or advertisements in outdoor magazines and presented instead of the group creating an image. Time spent on strategies for interrupting common sense notions about what constitutes an adventure leader. Just having the first section without the later part.

References that might help in thinking about this activity

Newbery, L. (2000). "Unpacking Adventure". *Pathways: The Ontario Journal of Outdoor Education*, Summer.

Warren, Karen. (1985). "Women's outdoor adventure. Myth and Reality". *Journal of Experiential Education*, 8(2), 10-14.

Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre: Diversity in Outdoor Education

By Rob Hemming

...in the very distant past...

Remnants from the lakeshores where two great glacial lakes converged- Algonquin and Nipissing - can still be found on the hillsides in the valley. The Wye Marsh was formed about 4000 years ago as water levels dropped and the earth rebounded. A wealth of human history begun by native peoples was later recorded by the first European. The Wye Valley was formed thousands of years ago following the last great ice age. community in Upper Canada at nearby Ste. Marie among the Hurons. The Wye Marsh was the final staging point for water from the Wye River that flowed into Georgian Bay and Severn Sound. It was greatly influenced by the 30 year cycles of high and low water natural to the Great Lakes. The Marsh teamed with wildlife and was a favourite migratory and nesting destination for waterfowl including North America's largest...the Trumpeter Swan

...in the not so distant past...

As with many wetlands, farming, lumbering and industrial development saw the area around the Wye Marsh alter drastically in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Trumpeter Swan was extirpated from the Wye Marsh and indeed eastern North America by the mid- 19th century as the Marsh became a favourite spot for hunting. At the start of the 20th century, the Wye Marsh became a private hunting and fishing reserve for the Playfair Family until they donated it to the province in the early 1960's.

...more recently...

Against this significant historical backdrop, in the mid-1960's, the Canadian Wildlife Service began seeking bio-regionally significant sites across Canada to build interpretive centres to educate the public about Canada's natural heritage. The CWS bought 150 acres at the north end of the Wye Marsh from the Province of Ontario and in 1969 officially opened the Wye Marsh Wildlife Interpretive Centre. The goal was to research, interpret and educate the public about the importance of wetland diversity. The Centre grew in popularity and its outdoor education programs flourished. By

1984, however, government downsizing became the norm and Wye Marsh was slated for closure. A massive campaign in the local community of Midland and Penetanguishene, led by the recently incorporated Friends of Wye Marsh and then director Bob Whittam, saved the centre from closure. In April 1985, the centre re-opened under the management of the Friends of Wye Marsh, Inc.

... and today...

Open year round, Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre facilities include: a large interpretive centre with multimedia and auditorium classrooms, interactive display hall, library, bee house, accessible interpretive trails, discovery areas, initiative course, residential outbuildings, boardwalks/bridges through the Marsh and observation tower.

Different than many school board owned and operated centres the Wye Marsh is first and foremost a day centre. Secondly, unlike many school board centres, the Wye Marsh exists on revenues generated from visitation and fundraising. There are no subsidies from any area to offset operating costs. As a result, outdoor education programming serves a vastly different client base than just students. There are three general programming areas geared to distinct market niches.

The Nature Tourism Market

Approximately 10,000 eco-tourism oriented visitors from around the world visit in summer and off-season fall and spring tours. Programming is self-interpretive or guided by trained naturalists with lots of tools available for the visitor to enjoy the environment.

The Nature Recreation Market

Approximately 10,000 adults, families and community groups from Southern and Central Ontario visit anytime of the year taking advantage of our specialty event programming on weekends such as Sweetwater Harvest and the Wye Marsh Festival. As well, visitors involve

themselves in interpretive summer programs such as Marsh Canoe and Kayak, Guided Walks, Birds of Prey, Edible Wild Banquets and more. In other seasons there are bi-weekly Parent and Tot programs to excite kids under 6 years about nature, theme months to fit in with national events like National Wildlife Week and Earth Day. Of course there is XC Skiing all winter long.

On spring and fall weekends, Guides and Scouts utilize the residential outbuildings and tent area for badge programs.

The Environmental Education Market

Approximately 15,000 students and teachers utilize education programs that provide specific learning outcomes based on the current Ministry of Education guidelines. There are over 20 programs on the Marsh educational menu, geared primarily to Grades 1-8, covering aspects of the Science and Technology, Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Geography, History, Health & Physical Education curriculum areas. Programs have also been organized by individual strands within the various areas of the curriculum, including strands such as: Life Systems, Matter & Materials, Music, Heritage & Citizenship, Migration, and Natural Resources etc..

Programs, led by trained naturalists, interpretive staff and teaching volunteers, are customized and may be full day, half day or even one hour in length.

There are a few unique programs and partnerships that differentiate the Wye Marsh from school board owned centres. The first is the new Heritage Canoe Program done in partnership with Ste. Marie among the Hurons. This program takes the students back in time to when Ste. Marie was a European Community in the 1600's. Students experience life in that era, paddling 26' native canoes down the Wye River and cooking lunch as the first Europeans did. Along the way, students learn all about the river, its systems and how vital it was to the community. Organizationally, Ste. Marie markets and books the program and Wye Marsh delivers it, with a % of revenues shared between the two operations. Over 1200 students participated last year.

Simcoe County District School Board contracts Wye Marsh (as well as other centres

such as Tiffin and Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority) to provide environmental education programs for their elementary students. The Wye Marsh staff liaise closely with Board consultants to ensure consistency and quality in programming. Finally, Wye Marsh is home to the Trumpeter Swan Program, a unique species re-introduction program started in 1988 with two Swans and now is slowly growing with over 75 in the region. A priceless educational tool!

...then there's tomorrow...community linking

In an unique effort to provide quality nature excursions to its membership, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists have teamed up with Wye Marsh to offer a new, province wide, nature trip program called *Cygnus Nature Trips*. Under the directorship of Bob Bowles the trips will bring people a wonderful series of day and weekend excursions exploring nature in Ontario. Why? To broaden our outdoor education community!

In partnership with Ducks Unlimited and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Friends of Wye Marsh has recently taken custodianship of the Wye Marsh Provincial Wildlife Area...a 2,500-acre reserve adjacent to the Centre that effectively envelops the entire Wye Valley. The educational potential is tremendous but then so are the issues. Used by all recreational sectors of the community including naturalists, hunters, snowmobilers, bikers, hikers and other vested interests, and bordered by 26 different landowners and industries, it is an oasis of nature that requires care and concern. Why are we going there too?

Wye Marsh is a community resource first and foremost. This is unlike many school board owned facilities that, due to a variety of issues, tend to separate themselves from the community that surround them. If support for centres such as Wye Marsh is to continue, our true job of the future is first to learn as much as we can about the natural oasis we occupy. Then, we must integrate that knowledge into the local community that supports it. The community feels proud of its resource and many benefits result. Yet, if the resource is threatened, so is the community and communities fight hard for what is theirs. ...it's natural!

*Rob Heming is the Executive Director of
Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.*

Controversial Issues in Adventure Education: A Critical Examination.

Eds. Scott Wurdinger and Tom Potter.
Kendall/Hunt Pub., Dubuque Iowa. 1999.
Review by Sean Blenkinsop

Controversial Issues in Adventure Education: A Critical Examination has set itself out a huge task which is well worth the effort. The attempt is to bring issues to readers by sketching in the supposed "opposing" yes/no arguments for the "intention of outlining the arguments to promote critical thinking". As a result, the editors have selected 15 issues that they have found to be controversial and have found individuals who are willing to advocate a position of either yes or no to specific issues. The issues presented are diverse and range from whether or not there should be communication free wilderness, to ethical fee scales for corporate groups, to whether the group or the individual is central within the experience or the justification of ecological "value-laden" and on to gender specific programs. The format of all of the chapters are similar with a question posed in such a way as to create a yes/no position. An example of of a question might look like this one: Are single gender course beneficial? Individual experts from the field of adventure education are then asked to write from the position they select.

Now, in my mind, there are two immediate problems with this set-up. The first is that yes/no is a dualistic situation and rarely do we come across "controversial issues", that encourage critical thinking, that fall as cleanly as this divide suggests. However, this is corrected by almost every writer as they bend the questions to fit their discussion. For example, Simon Priest starts his article which is the "no" position for the question "Should Challenge Course Instructors Be Certified?" by saying, "By NO, I really mean YES". Now, this is one of the more obvious examples but, many of the authors use a similar technique. This is actually very wonderful, since it allows the topics to flourish much more than the framing would suggest. However,

there is a more serious difficulty with the framing and that is that "opinions presented may not necessarily reflect the personal opinions of the authors". So, in fact, we may in any article have someone presenting a position that is not their own and as such, sketching in positions they assume would act as support. Now I don't have trouble with this as a rhetorical method for learning other

ways of thinking. However, I do have more trouble, ethically, if people are writing positions that they do not support since these positions can then be taken by others, quoted, and used to build arguments that the initial author may completely disavow. In *Three Guineas*, Virginia Woolf (1993) refers to this as "intellectual adultery". Also, if you can't find somebody who personally takes one of the opposing positions and everybody supports one position then, what controversy? Controversy suggests people disagreeing and discussing their differing positions not discussions of differing positions that don't exist but, one could conceive of in one's imagination.

In spite of this difficulty, professors Wurdinger and Potter have been able to ask several provocative questions that have led to interesting and challenging position papers that have proved fruitful in creating discussions in my classes. Wurdinger and Potter definitely raise key controversial issues relevant in the adventure field today. As such, selecting specific topics of interest to the reader or the groups with which the reader is working can help to foster fertile ground upon which to build useful discussions. With the presence of thoughtful facilitation these discussions can be used to promote the critical thinking that the editors wish to achieve. The topics are disparate enough to make it possible for any reader to find something of interest. The levels of the conversation varies amongst the topics and as such there are times when the reader may be disappointed depending upon their own experience. To sum up, *Controversial Issues in Adventure Education* has a useful place within the literature of the field. It can create the groundwork for

future discussion amongst practitioners throughout the field. It has certainly made me raise some. It would be wonderful if it could lead to even deeper exploration that it itself misses. Finally, I just want to sign off thanking all those who have contributed to this book, the list of authors is extensive, and the hope for further fruitful and beneficial discussion.

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Woolf, V. *Three Guineas*. The Hogarth Press, London, 1938

Wurdinger, S. "Is the Process of Experiential Learning (Outside the Classroom) Practical in Higher Education Settings?" *In Controversial Issues in Adventure Education: A Critical Examination*. Wurdinger and Potter eds. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1999. pp. 187-192.

Sean continues his work in the outdoor field as an instructor and graduate student at Harvard University.

Call for Nominations

COEO Awards

Every year COEO chooses to honour its membership and the field of outdoor education throughout the province by presenting three awards.

The "Robin Dennis Award" is presented to an individual or outdoor education programme or facility that has made an outstanding contribution to the promotion and development of outdoor education in the province. The award was created in tribute to Robin Dennis, one of the founders of Ontario outdoor education in the 1950s and 1960s, and is presented annually by the Boyne River Natural Science School and the Toronto Island Natural Science School.

The "President's Award" is presented annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the development of COEO and to outdoor education in Ontario.

The "Dorothy Walter Award for Leadership" was created in 1986 to give recognition to an individual who, like Dorothy Walter herself,

has shown an outstanding commitment to the development of leadership qualities in Ontario youth. The individual will have demonstrated a commitment to and innovation in leadership development, to learning outdoors, to personal growth in their own life, and service to an organization or community.

COEO Board of Directors

Nominations (and/or volunteers) are invited to run for the COEO Board of Directors for the year 2000-2001. Any member in good standing may submit a nomination. A list of the Board of Director positions can be found inside the front cover of *Pathways*.

Nominations must be received, in writing, at least 14 days prior to the Annual General Meeting, to be held at the conference.

Nominations Committee
c/o Linda McKenzie
Box 324, South River, Ontario
Phone: 705-386-0503 Fax: 705-386-2345

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NOVEMBER 3 & 4, 2000

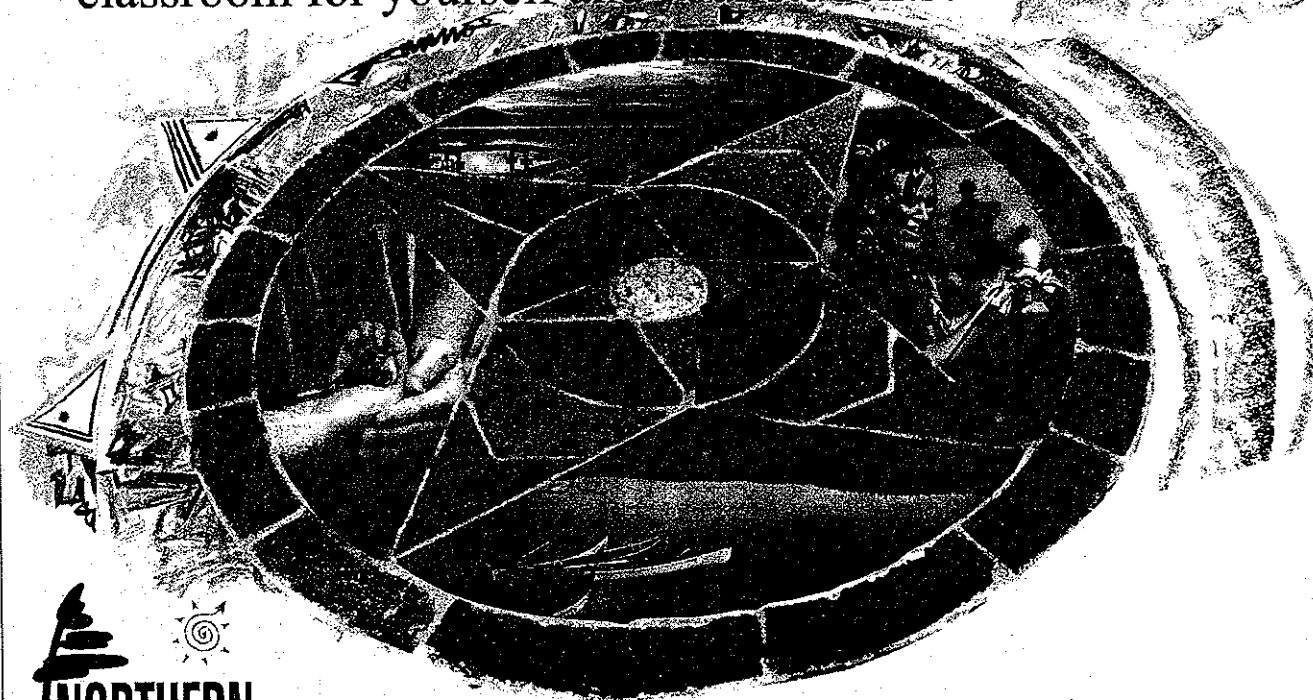
Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario

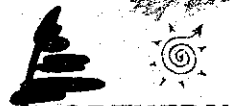
A two-day conference of workshops, demonstrations, scientific presentations and guest speakers. Our tentative program includes Alexandra and Garret Conover, authors of *A Snow Walkers Companion*, George Luste, Craig McDonald and others.

Price: \$70 Includes fabulous food and free accommodations in our tent village set up in the gymnasium. Vendors are welcome.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Allan Brown 905.648.2139 Ext. 4221

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ADVENTURES IN EDUCATION

By Steve Robinson

How many different ways are there for us to learn about the world around us? How many different ways are there to learn about ourselves? How many ways are there to discover different things about others? Of the many alternative pedagogical strategies, which might be more effective? For anyone who has taught and who continues to teach others, these are only a few questions that might arise as we begin to reflect upon our education approaches. Although there are a variety of answers, it is necessary for an educator to make informed choices concerning the selections of methods, lest the means obscure the end instead of supporting it. One of the many options available is Adventure Education that, although not practical for all subject matter, can be effective in many circumstances.

But, what is Adventure Education? How can students and teachers benefit from this style of learning? Based on my experience as a student in a programme that utilizes an adventure approach to learning, there are two aspects that serve to make this style unique. Firstly, it is *experiential*. As learners, we are not merely passive observers of canned theory and concept. Rather it is we who discover the concepts and develop the theory for ourselves based on our first hand experience. Secondly, it is *holistic*. Due to its very personal nature, as students and teachers we find ourselves utilizing and developing mental, physical, social, and spiritual facets of humanity.

Cognitively, as a student I learned new skills such as paddling, climbing, hiking and exercised rational, logical thinking to assimilate the new knowledge into existing frameworks. From these basic skills, I was able to then utilize them on new expeditions, further emphasizing their practical application. These practical experiences can sometimes introduce risks, perceived or real. As a result, as a student who has embarked on many unknown journeys in the past year, focus, perseverance, and discipline have been mental exercises that have helped me to overcome some of the challenges. These may all be relevant areas of learning, depending on

the intensity, complexity, and novelty of the experience.

Increased intensity or duration of an experience may also develop physical aspects of a student since greater strength or endurance may be required for some expeditions. But even activities requiring only moderate physical conditioning can provide a great deal because they increase precision and co-ordination, heighten lesser used senses, and provide a forum for a simple joy of using our bodies in a healthy way. These are some of the potential benefits for the adventurer.

As a student in very hands on programme, most of our informal and formal education is a collaborative process. In the past year, I have often discovered or re-discovered the pleasure of healthy, positive social interaction with others. Because our class or group size was relatively small, openness and trust were more easily fostered and learning because it was more personal became more transformative. For me, the group can also act as an excellent support system. For students in the midst of learning about him- or herself, sharing of trials and tribulations are common. In all, there are many positive individual results arising from the development of groups. Bonding and socializing nurtures the spirit. Personal limits are often stretched beyond what we think and personal growth experiences tend to increase self-confidence and satisfaction. Regularly overcoming new risks and challenges is an essential part of human spiritual growth and an informed instructor will tailor adventure education to suit any needs or desires. But, simply being outside enjoying communion with nature may re-energize many people, allowing them a chance to connect with the inherent beauty of the world and their place in it.

Through its experiential nature, adventure education can touch every part of a student's life. Learning, in this context therefore, becomes far more than only a pretty stone to be preserved in a display case; it becomes fully a part of oneself.

What is Adventure Education Anyway?

By Julia Morch

About a month ago, after teaching one of my classes I returned to my office to reflect on the lesson. As I sat there, one of my female students came to chat with me about her independent study on adventure education. After talking through some of her ideas she asked me "By the ways, Julia, what is exactly is adventure education"? In retrospect, I had no idea that this invitation to share my thoughts, feelings would set me off again on a personal journey to articulate my understand adventure education. I remember sitting there fumbling for words to express my working definition of this concept.

What is adventure education? How can I explain the journey that has transpired to bring me to this point in juncture? My story, like any other is "untidy, cluttered with moments of clarity and simplicity as well as curiously unfinished or incomplete thoughts" (Marino, 1990, p.20). As I reflect on the terrain I have traveled physically, mentally and emotionally it hard to believe I am where I am, namely an educator. The following reflections about adventure and education are partial, incomplete—a work in progress:

Creating one set of adventure maps

For as long as I can recall, I have always had an affinity with the outdoors. As a young girl growing up in rural Ontario, I would spend hours roaming around the countryside. With my brothers in tow we would set off on our adventures to ride icebergs in the spring thaw, to build a raft out of flotsam from the shore, and to sleep out in our tree fort. These halcyon days ended as I headed off to my first summer at camp. For the most part, this experience was challenging for a homesick kid. In hindsight, I think what I loved best about camp was not the routine structure but rather the freedom that accompanied our camping trips out under the stars. As an adolescent, adventure came in the form of heading off with my father on our small sailboat *Tenacity* to explore Lake Ontario and the

surrounding environment. I can still remember the feeling of exhilaration as I stood near the bow, the waves crashing over me. It was here, under his guidance that adventure was accompanied with learning how to plot a course, how to take a bearing and how to use a sextant. Years later, these memories still inform my understanding of adventure.

The first time I ever heard the term 'adventure education' in the same sentence was the summer I had graduated from high school. Uninspired by the thought of heading off to spend more time studying inside I began arming myself with ammunition to convince my parents that I would not be wasting my mind if I went on an Outward Bound course. That fall, feeling anxious and scared I headed off to Colorado for a semester of adventure learning. For a 19 year old, who had never experienced hiking in the deserts of Utah, or climbing the highest peak in Colorado or spending three nights alone on a city solo, or living with a bunch of stranger, my every day world was an adventure. Terms like comfort zone, dissonance and perceived risk were practically lived rather than theoretically understood as part of an adventure education paradigm. My experience as an Outward Bound student has impacted me on a number of levels. Perhaps, the most significant learning for me was that I had been introduced to the idea that it was possible to have a career as an outdoor educator. 15 years later, the wilderness has become my classroom and the students with whom I work with as an instructor in the Outdoor Recreation Department has at Seneca and at Outward Bound are as diverse as the landscape through which we travel. When people ask me what I do, I measure my response because I am not sure everyone wants to hear my tales, my passions my and my beliefs about what I do and why I do it. Most of the time I struggle to express to people that "yes this is a real job", that "yes I am a teacher". How do I describe what it feels like to paddle 30 km across Lake Nipigon by moonlight? How do I describe my feelings of watching a group of women re/discover how to play? How do I describe the joy on students faces as they cook their first meal

over a fire, complete their first over night solo experience and plan their own extended trip? How do I begin to describe my own struggles as a woman working in the outdoors? These are only a few things I try to convey.

Uncharted territory

As I reflect on my journey over the past decade, I realize how much I have changed from the young girl who thought nothing of being called a 'tomboy' to the woman I am becoming. Superficially there have been changes in dress, hairstyle, and body shape. At times I have conformed to the social conventions of society and on other occasions I have resisted. However, where I think the deepest changes have occurred are below the surface. These are the invisible trace of hours, days and years struggling to understand the peculiarities and contradictions of being a woman working in adventure education. It is hard to pinpoint the exact moment that resulted in my journey to question the 'common sense' meaning of adventure education that had become a normal part of my every day vocabulary. It might have been hearing a woman say "I did not know I could say no, or that I had a choice" where there was a tacit assumption of challenge by choice. It might have been on an all women's Outward Bound course that portaging a canoe meant singing, laughing and the collaboration of eight women carrying each canoe over one by one. It might have occurred when an Inuit woman shared with me in a private moment that she felt uncomfortable sharing her thoughts in a large group format.

I teach because I believe that education is one avenue for social change. I teach adventure education, not just because I have a passion for the outdoors, but also because I believe that this classroom provides students with alternatives lenses to understand themselves. I teach from a critical feminist perspective because I believe that learning, even in the outdoors, is not neutral. My understanding of 'adventure education' has been influenced by my experiences working in this context, and informed by my experience as a graduate student. I have no doubt, that adventure/experiential based programs can have a profound impact on individuals. But, I now wonder how do social

markers such as race; class, sexual orientation and gender inform our understanding of adventure, or education, of adventure education? How is adventure socially and culturally constituted? What is adventure education?

A compass in hand

I have always asked questions. I know one never stops asking them, but in the journey towards finding the "answers" what has become apparent to me is that there are many ways of understanding the term adventure education. When I first began this journey I had a limited set of maps to guide me. At times I felt a certain sense of uncertainty about traveling in this adventure wilderness. I have searched for a map and a compass with a set of clear coordinates that would point me to 'true north' to an exact destination. However, I have come to realize that trying to define adventure education is problematic because the ways that each of us views this concept are at best an interpretation contingent upon many variables. My interpretations of adventure are filtered through the blue eyes of white, middle class, able-bodied woman. Each time I re/enter the outdoor adventure classroom each trip is unique, contextual and specific to the particularities of the participants. And so, the 'answer' to the question "what is adventure education anyway" is simply that I am a traveler whose thoughts, words, and interpretations are unfinished.

References:

- Marino, D. (1997). *Wild Garden. Art, education and the culture of resistance*. Toronto, Ontario: Between the Lines Publishers.
- Morch, J. (1997). *Women and Outward Bound. Voices of Wilderness Travelers*. Unpublished Master's thesis, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

Julia Morch continues to work in the outdoor and adventure field with the Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School. This fall she will be teaching and acting as a Program Coordinator for the Ecotourism & Outdoor Leadership Program at Medicine Hat College, Alberta.

T

he Gathering



September 29 – October 1
Bark Lake

For the past 30 years the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario has led the way in Outdoor and Environmental Education in the province of Ontario. The field of outdoor education is constantly evolving in response to the needs of the provincial curriculum, Boards of Education, teachers and students. Providing children with opportunities to learn about the natural world and to experience the joy of learning outdoors are as important today as they have been in the past. Sessions at this year's conference cover a wide range of topics relating to the curriculum, communication and evaluation techniques, team building, leadership and personal growth. Come join us as we celebrate our accomplishments over the years, expand our educational horizons and look towards the future.

LOCATION

The Bark Lake Leadership and Conference centre offers 650 acres of unspoiled wilderness in the Haliburton Highlands. Since 1948, Bark Lake has provided high quality leadership training for students and adults alike. Accommodation options include a variety of rustic, heated, yet comfortable cabins with shared accommodation and attached or nearby washroom/shower facilities. Participants are responsible for providing their own linens or sleeping bag. For an additional \$100.00 the "Oak Centre" offers 20 rooms, each with 2 single beds and a private bathroom with linens provided.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER – DR. JIM CAIN

Dr. Jim Cain is the author of the award winning adventure-based text *Teamwork and Teamplay*. For the past 20 years he has worked extensively to develop challenge and adventure programs for a broad spectrum of interests and groups including NASA. He has created a multitude of portable, ground level initiatives and challenges to share with his workshop participants.

FEATURED GUEST SPEAKER SKID CREASE

Skid Crease had been involved with outdoor and environmental education for most of his life. He is an inspirational thinker, the author of a children's book, and an internationally known lecturer specializing in Environmental Education issues.

Both Dr. Cain and Skid Crease will be presenting workshop sessions at the conference.

AUCTION

We will be holding another fundraising auction at this year's conference. Participants are encouraged to bring an item to donate to the auction or as a door prize. Special thanks goes to Mr. Clare Magee who has generously donated a solo Kevlar canoe for the auction. Any item large or small will be gratefully received.

PHOTO CONTEST

Entries for this year's photo contest may be brought to the conference or submitted to Leslie Hoyle.

This year's conference promises to continue the high standard that COEO conferences have come to represent. **Please register early (Sept. 15th) by contacting Dennis Eaton**

The Conference Team

For more information contact:

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REGISTRATION INFORMATION FORM

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Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

e-mail: _____ Fax: _____

COEO Membership Number: _____

Emergency Phone Contact: _____

Name

Phone Number

May we share your name and phone number for car pooling purposes? Yes _____ No _____

Do you wish to receive vegetarian only meals? Yes _____ No _____

Please indicate any other special dietary concerns? _____

CONFERENCE FEES

		TOTAL
REGULAR CONFERENCE (Fri& Sat night: Fri D, Sat B,L, D, Sun B,L)	\$225.00	
STUDENT CONFERENCE (Fri& Sat night: Fri D, Sat B,L, D, Sun B,L)	\$185.00	
SATURDAY ONLY (B, L, D)	\$100.00	
COEO MEMBERSHIP (\$30.00 Student, \$40.00 Regular, \$52.00 Family)		
NON-MEMBER SURCHARGE	\$50.00	
OAK CENTRE ACCOMMODATION (\$50.00pp/night)	\$100.00	
LATE REGISTRATION FEE (Received after 4:00 p.m. September 15)	\$25.00	
TOTAL OWING		
LESS DEPOSIT (Cancellation Policy: After Sept. 15, 2000 Deposit is forfeit)	\$50.00	
BALANCE OWING		

Please make funds payable to: **COEO Conference 2000**

Cheque Enclosed: \$ _____ Money Order Enclosed: \$ _____

Payment is the responsibility of the Registrant. Full payment is due upon registration at the conference. Institutional memberships do not qualify for the member's conference rate. A \$25.00 service fee will be applied to all NSF cheques. No credit cards may be used for payment at this conference.

Please submit form and payment to: Dennis Eaton R. R. # 1 Lindsay, Ontario K9V 4R1
Phone and Fax (705) 324-4210
e-mail deaton@lindsay.igs.net

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR REGISTRATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

In order for the conference to run it is imperative that we have 60 registrants by September 15th.