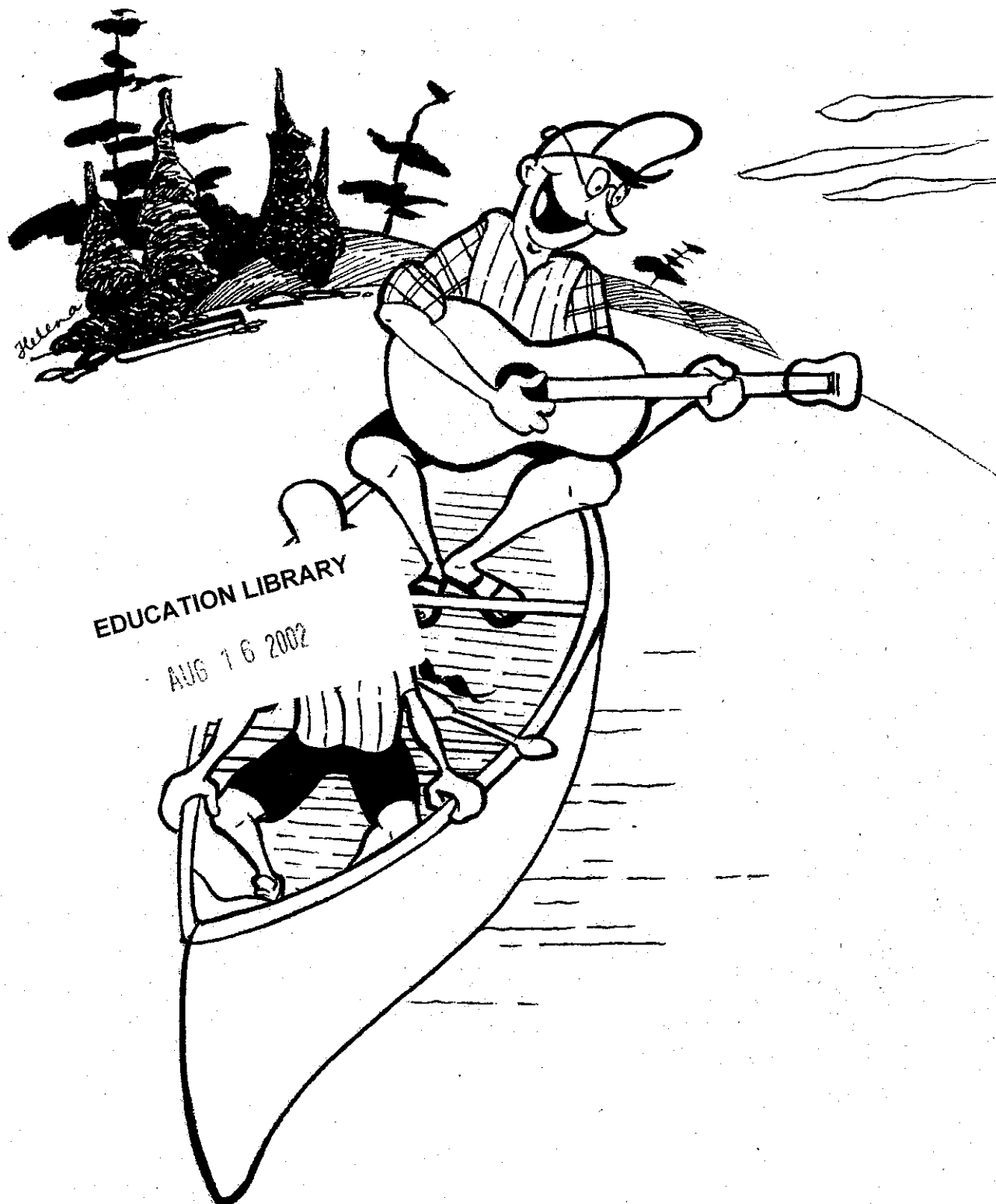
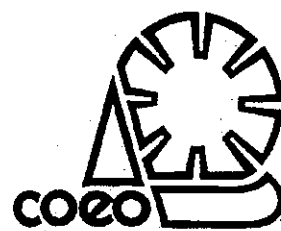


# Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Summer 2002, 14 (3)



# Pathways

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*Pathways* is always looking for contributions. If you are interested in making a submission, of either a written or illustrative nature, we would be happy to hear from you. For a copy of our submission guidelines, please contact Randee Holmes, Managing Editor.

If you are interested in being a guest editor of an issue of *Pathways*, please request a copy of our guidelines for guest editors from Randee Holmes, Managing Editor.

If you have any questions regarding *Pathways*, please direct them to either of the *Pathways* Editorial Board Co-Chairs, Bob Henderson or Connie Russell. If you'd like more information about COEO and joining the organization, please refer to the inside back cover of this issue or contact a Board of Directors' member.

## Submission deadlines:

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August 15  
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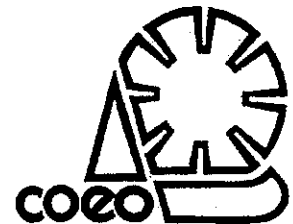
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*Pathways* is published five times a year for the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) and distributed to COEO members. Membership fees include a subscription to *Pathways*, as well as admittance to workshops, courses and conferences. A membership application form is included on the inside back cover of this issue of *Pathways*.

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# Editors' Log Book

Summer 2002 sees the departure of Jillian Herfurth (nee Henderson) and Adam Guzkowski from the *Pathways* Editorial Board. Both have had exciting career (and life!) changes since they first joined the board. Jillian has a new job in sales and Adam's graduate school commitments are mounting. It has been a pleasure working with them both and all of us have benefited from their contributions appearing within the pages *Pathways*. Jillian hopes to remain involved in *Pathways* to some extent by ensuring the "Keepers of the Trail" column stays alive. We welcome Carolyn Finlayson back to the board now that she has more time to devote to us, and will gladly make use of her fine editorial skills.

We are now looking to add another member to our working group and are particularly keen on someone interested in taking on tasks related to promotions, focusing on ways to increase COEO's membership through *Pathways*. The need for this position is further highlighted by recent inquiries received by the board from libraries, other publications and individuals outside Ontario and Canada.

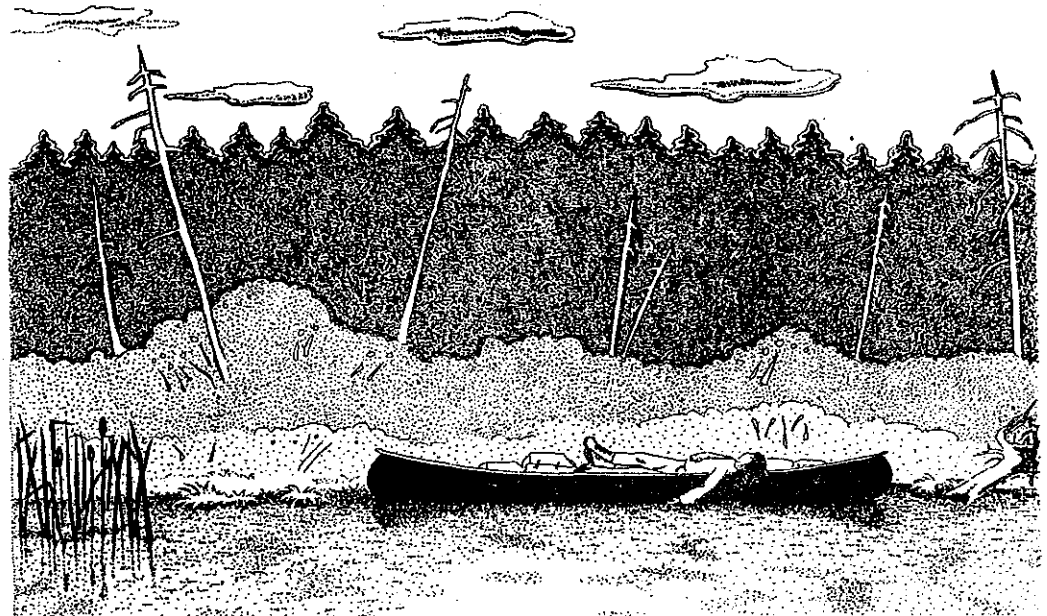
The theme of many articles in this issue follows that of last summer — "Friluftsliv" — and is

aimed at introducing Scandinavian approaches to the conceptualization of outdoor education. We were encouraged to further develop this theme based on both comments received at the COEO Bark Lake conference in September 2001, and positive feedback conveyed from overseas in response to last year's issue of the same theme (Summer 2001, Volume 13 (3)), extra copies of which were printed and circulated in Scandinavia.

So this year, as last, the summer issue is intended as a "sit back" philosophical read on a quiet holiday afternoon, exploring ways of understanding our work as Outdoor Educators. And like last year, we recognize that some of the Norwegian writing may seem slightly off-kilter to the North American reader. We wished to retain the Norwegian flavour of communication and hope that the little extra effort that may be required to read it will be well worth it, to get an accurate understanding of friluftsliv.

Thanks to all contributors, Canadian and Scandinavian.

*Bob Henderson and Connie Russell*



# Outlook

We have come to that time in the year when, as President, I encourage participation in the COEO Board of Directors from the membership at large. I can assure you that working with such a varied and fine group of people is always enjoyable.

We hold a series of meetings and conference calls throughout the year, ending with the Annual General Meeting. We discuss the operation of the organization, challenges we think the membership might like to take on, constitutional issues, and, of course, ways we can best serve the membership.

Our constitution states that a member of the executive may hold a particular position for three years. At the end of their post, they may move to another position on the executive or may choose to step down. This year there are a number of positions that will become vacant due time limits and resignations.

If you have ever wanted to become more involved in COEO, now is the time. Please submit your letter of intent to Linda McKenzie by August 15th. This, of course, applies to returning executive as well.

The AGM is also the time we choose to honour selected members with awards, of which there are three:

- *The Robin Dennis Award* is presented to an individual or outdoor program or facility that has promoted Outdoor Education in the province.
- *The President's Award* is presented to an individual who has made an outstanding

contribution to the development of COEO and to outdoor education.

- *The Dorothy Walter Award of Leadership* is presented to an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to and innovation in leadership development, personal growth in their own life, and service to an organization or community.

The Awards Dinner at the AGM is always a special event. If you know of someone who deserves recognition though any of these awards, please forward their name and information about them to Linda McKenzie by August 15th. These deadlines allow for selection and preparation of the awards.

Many thanks go out to those members who have already shared their additional copy of *Pathways*, Volume 14 (1). The reprint was suggested by Grant Linney and the COEO Board of Directors ran with the idea. If you still have your extra copy, we encourage you to please share it where you feel it will have the most effect.

Finally, the survey is out regarding our status as a Provider of Professional Learning Programs. At this point, responses indicate that we should maintain this status. The final tally is still to come. Thank you to those who responded.

I hope your summer is filled with many outdoor adventures and I look forward to seeing all of you "By the Rocks of Tobermory" in the fall.

*Yours in the outdoors,  
Mary Gyemi-Schulze  
COEO President*

## Board of Directors Meetings and Locations for 2001/2002

Date	Location	Time	Host	Focus
Thursday, September 12	Adventureworks	6:30 pm	Brian	Budget
Sunday, September 28	AGM	TBA		Agenda

Meetings will be potluck, unless otherwise stated. Please inform the host of your contribution ahead of time. Bring your own mug, planner and ideas.

Meetings are open to all members, so please encourage others to participate. It may be necessary on some occasions to hold a session "in camera" in the interest of privacy.

Grant Linney  
6 George St.  
Georgetown, ON L7G 2K3

The Honourable Ernie Eves, Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

May 16, 2002

Dear Premier Eves,

I am writing to you on behalf of the following Environmental Education organizations: The Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON); EECOM: The Canadian Network of Environmental Education and Communication; Environmental Education Ontario (EEON); Green Teacher magazine; and The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO).

We ask for a meeting with you at your earliest convenience.

We would very much like to discuss with you the following items:

- 1) A significantly increased profile for education towards ecological literacy in the elementary curricula of this province.
- 2) In addition to its current integration throughout various subject areas and grade levels, the reinstatement of Environmental/Ecological Education as a discrete and comprehensive 'subject area' in the secondary curricula of Ontario.
- 3) The reinstatement of Environmental/Ecological Education as a teachable subject area within the Faculties of Education of this province.
- 4) Provincial funding for the aforementioned initiatives, as well as for mandated opportunities for Ontario school children to have direct, hands-on contact with the natural environment through the provision of teacher-led experiences at Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres operated by our school boards.

I am enclosing a copy of the recently published Volume 14 Number 1 of *Pathways*, which is published by COEO and is the professional journal for outdoor educators in Ontario. This issue is of particular value because its authors are mainly from outside the teaching profession. They represent a variety of prominent and articulate individuals from across the country. They work in a variety of professions in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. They all share a passion for the natural environment, and for children continuing to have publicly funded, teacher-led educational experiences in the outdoors.

From the private sector, you will find the reflections of Michael MacMillan, the Chairman and CEO of Alliance Atlantis Communications; Rob Bicevskis, the Chief Technology Officer for Genesis Microchip; Ted Leew, the former Vice President of Norcen Energy Resources in Alberta; and Dr. Stephen Johnson, the Head of the Preparatory School at Upper Canada College. From the public sector, you will find the words of Gordon Miller, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario; Tom Andrews, the Territorial Archaeologist of the NWT; and Carolyn O'Neill, a Senior Planner from the Ontario region of Environment Canada. From the non-profit sector, you will find the thoughts of Dr. David Suzuki, Scientist, Broadcaster and Author; and Gareth Thomson, the Education Director of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

This issue of *Pathways* is but one more expression of a growing movement to ensure that Outdoor and Environmental/Ecological Education is integrated into all grade levels of the Ontario curriculum. I refer to the concerted efforts of all the organizations that support this letter. I also refer to the efforts of individuals such as your own Environmental Commissioner and Dr. Tom Puk of Lakehead University (who recently made a submission to the Walkerton inquiry that included similar recommendations).

Mr. Eves, as you re-set the priorities for your government, we urge you and your staff to read these articles. We urge you to carefully consider the clear implications of what these people — as well as many other individuals and organizations — are saying. Public education must fund this crucial part of education for our future. Public education must ensure that Environmental/Ecological Education is a mandatory part of the curricula at all grade levels, and it must provide opportunities for direct, hands-on, teacher-led experiences in the natural environment.

On a personal note, I am fortunate to have been able to pursue my passion for Outdoor and Environmental Education within the public education system for more than 25 years. But now, due to ongoing cutbacks to provincial funding and due to the lack of a provincial commitment to this highly relevant, hands-on, unique and compelling form of education, I have moved on to the private sector. I find the contrast to be quite striking. At a time when the few remaining public boards in the province that still have Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres are being forced to plan for their closure, Upper Canada College (my new employer and one of the most respected private schools in the country) is actually expanding its programs. At a time when there is no provincial mandating of ecological literacy, Upper Canada College is on the verge of making this an integral part of curricula at all grade levels. At a time when public boards lack the human and financial resources to make the concept of a green school more than about blue boxes and occasional schoolyard landscaping, Upper Canada College is considering a major initiative that would create a Centre for Environmental Learning and that would infuse a "learn it by living it" green school philosophy into all aspects of student life at the college (e.g., curricular, co-curricular, operational).

Mr. Eves, as I contribute to reports for Upper Canada College that point to the crucial need for humanity to address pressing global environmental issues with an ecologically literate and committed citizenry, I am more convinced than ever that now is the time for your government to re-examine its educational priorities, particularly with regards to Outdoor and Environmental Education.

We all look forward to meeting with you in the near future.

Yours truly,

Grant Linney

The following individuals and organizations have approved this letter:

- Jim Faught, Executive Director, The Federation of Ontario Naturalists
- Jane Wadden, Environmental Education Ontario
- Mary Gyemi-Schulze, President, The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario
- Tim Grant, Co-editor, Green Teacher magazine
- Ann Jarret, EECOM: The Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication
- Dr. Tom Puk, Professor and Chair, Department of Lifelong Learning, Lakehead University

This letter is also being brought before the Executive Council of the Ontario Public School Board's Association (OPSBA) at its May 24th meeting. The organization approved the following motion in support of Environmental Education at a February 2002 meeting:

*That the Ontario Public School Board's Association actively lobby the Ontario Ministry of Education, requesting the reinstatement of Environmental Education as a credit within the secondary school curriculum and further, the inclusion of Environmental Studies as a teachable subject in the faculties of education.*

The Ontario Society for Environmental Education (OSEE) is also reviewing this letter for endorsement in the near future.

CC: The Honourable Elizabeth Witmer, Minister of Education  
CC: The Honourable Chris Stockwell, Minister of Energy and Environment  
CC: The Honourable Janet Ecker, Minister of Finance

Mailed by Express Post on May 16, 2002:

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Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

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The Honourable Chris Stockwell, Minister of  
Energy and Environment  
Ontario Ministry of Energy and Environment  
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Toronto, ON M7V 1P5

The Honourable Janet Ecker, Minister of Finance  
7 Queen's Park Crescent, 7th Floor  
Frost Building South  
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y7

## Why Do Some Teachers in Sweden Use Outdoor Education?

by Gunilla Ericsson

### Introduction

Sweden is a country with a unique legal right of access to private land. There are therefore many opportunities for schools to use both their own grounds and the local surroundings as sites for outdoor education. Despite such free access, however, most teachers in Sweden do not engage in outdoor education, and the classroom with its four walls remains the place where most learning at school occurs. Still, there are some teachers who are moving learning from the indoor classroom to the outdoors, and it is this group that is of most interest to me. So I conducted a study to find out more about these teachers.

My research project focused on the following questions:

- *Why do teachers use outdoor education?*
- *Are these teachers a special group in some way?*
- *Do teachers that use outdoor education have something in common?*
- *Is there something that distinguishes them from other teachers, and if so, what?*

### Sample and Methodology

I decided to choose a sample of primary school teachers who perform outdoor education. I wanted to have ordinary teachers of differing ages and backgrounds who shared a common interest in outdoor education. I picked ten participants from different communities and different schools. Some worked in small rural schools, others in larger urban schools. All of the respondents were taking part in a university course in outdoor education and all were women.

I decided that this would be a qualitative research study and aimed to explore the common traits that connected the teachers as persons by gathering some of their life stories. Working with a small sample size, my goal was to probe

deeply and to conduct an intensive analysis of the responses.

### Results from Interviews

#### *Definition of Outdoor Education*

When asked to define outdoor education, the answers the teachers gave were very personal. They typically defined outdoor education by giving concrete examples from their own teaching. There was a wide variation in the subjects that they described as the content of their teaching, but all described working with one's senses or the nature experience itself.

In the definitions, two perspectives were represented: the experience of the child in the outdoor education experience, and the role and involvement of the teacher in that experience. From the teaching perspective they mention their opportunity to observe and work with social training by helping children to enjoy being outdoors and in nature.

I noticed that the teachers' definitions of outdoor education seemed to become broader over time. The teachers report that in the beginning they thought of outdoor education as one or two subjects. As they became more experienced, they realized it to be so much more. Some respondents discovered the formal concept of "outdoor education" only recently, even though they may have worked outdoors for many years.

None of the respondents offered general definitions of outdoor education derived from reference literature or theory. For the teachers in my sample, outdoor education is related to their own further development as teachers. One teacher described herself as "much more permitting now than earlier concerning my own teaching outdoors." Another teacher expressed it like this: "It has become a classroom outdoors, larger and wider than before."



When I asked the teachers to describe their outdoor education practices of five years ago, their answers were of one of four types:

- a focus on species and facts
- no reflection at all
- no outdoor education
- the same as today

There were also differences between answers that focused on the teacher's personal experience, or on what to teach. One respondent said, "It was very much facts, biology, but today I think it is much more than that." Another respondent reported of her earlier teaching experiences: "I did not reflect. I did not really know what I was doing."

### *Value of Outdoor Education*

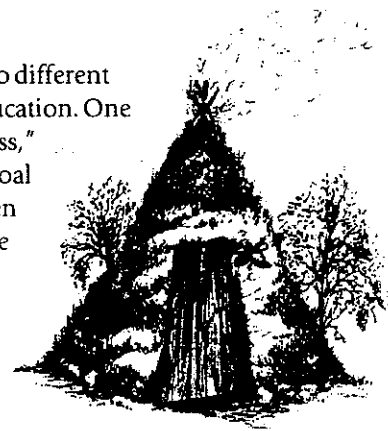
I wanted to explore the purpose of the teachers for teaching outdoors. When asked, most of their responses fell into one of three categories:

- social training
- personal development
- different learning environment with more space

This question turned out to be the one to which the respondents gave the longest answers. One category of answers had to do with dynamics both between the pupils and between the teacher and pupils, and the advantage of altering the roles and relations that usually exist within the classroom setting. One teacher remarked "if a pupil has a hard time in the classroom, he is often good enough outdoors." The teachers have a different type of contact with the children when learning outdoors — "you look at them in another way."

In another category of answers, the teachers discussed the need for space and the different learning environment outside. One respondent indicated that the "classroom is cramped." But some respondents noted that it is not always natural and comfortable for children to leave the tarmac. These teachers also pointed out the possibilities for the children make their own discoveries, and find their own knowledge. One teacher said that when learning out-of-doors the children develop "new eyes." Finally, the respondents answered that simply the experience of being outdoors and in a natural setting was in itself of great value.

The teachers expressed two different goals in using outdoor education. One goal was to "get a good class," "a good group." Another goal was to develop the children and their attitude to nature both as children and as adults. One teacher expressed the hope that "when they are twenty they will like to be in the forest."



To sum up, there were no answers that offered a definition of outdoor education based on traditional school subjects or the factual content of the learning. The main purpose seems to be the social training and the possibilities to develop a social competence with personal development including self-confidence. I did ask about what content they taught in outdoor education, and most teachers responded by providing examples of what they had done that day or the day before. There were three different types of answers: subject studies, combining outdoors with what is going on in the classroom, or practical activities.

### *To Be an Outdoor Teacher*

I asked questions about the teachers' self-perceptions relating to outdoor education. The most frequent answer was that they feel very relaxed and comfortable outdoors. One teacher expressed it like this: "I can be a teacher in a different way." The teachers had practiced outdoor teaching for many years and had developed their techniques mostly by themselves. There were a few answers mentioning colleagues at the same school, but most of these teachers have not followed a tradition. Rather, they have developed experience through their own initiative. There were no answers concerning a special subject competence or in-service training for outdoor teaching. I therefore asked if they had taken any related courses and most of them had undertaken at least one.

### *The Swedish Tradition and the Legal Right of Access to Private Land*

The level of access to natural surroundings near a school can be a factor in determining the importance given to outdoor education at that

school. The teachers' answers to questions relating to the importance of local access ranged between "It is very important" to "I would have done it anyway." The respondents' answers did not clearly address the influence that the Swedish tradition may have had on the fact that they teach outdoors, indicating that this was not a focus for them.

### *The Teacher's Role*

I asked if there was a difference in the teacher's role in the classroom compared to outdoors. I received two types of answers. In the first category of answers, the role of an outdoor teacher was described as freer, more relaxed, and more open-minded than a teacher who operates only in the classroom. The second category is pedagogical; the outdoor teacher, as compared to the classroom teacher, was described as having a role that places more emphasis on guiding than performing. For example, one teacher said, "Outdoors I do not have to be the one that organizes, I can stay in the background, with full respect and authority; indoors I must be more leading." Another reported, "I am much more free, much more happy outdoors. I have better structure, I have a quite different leadership. I am in the background, [the students] are active."

The teachers also noticed that the children are more relaxed and happier in the outdoor settings. None of the teachers indicated that the role of the outdoor educator is the same as teaching in the classroom.

### *The Qualities of Teachers that Use Outdoor Education*

In the interviews this question was used to try to draw the various strands of discussion together. All ten respondents mentioned a number of factors that they viewed as relevant to why some educators are drawn to teach outdoors. These responses fell into three general categories. The first was courage and safety. The teachers observed that being an outdoor person is not enough — one must be safe as a teacher. These teachers believe that the fear of losing control is one of the biggest obstacles for not teaching outdoors. They also think that the wish to have control is related to the tradition of a school as a "room with four walls." One must have the "courage to take the step out of the classroom

into another learning environment." Another said that teachers needed "to have the courage to break the timetable and the tradition. It is not enough to rely on personal outdoor experience."

The second main reason that they identified is that outdoor teaching is more demanding. Outdoor educators cannot be lazy, and have to be prepared to teach in all kinds of weather. One respondent expressed that "it is hard to go out."

The third reason from these teachers was that outdoor education offered a different type of interaction with their pupils. These teachers want to get to know their pupils very well, and they want to build close relationships based more on interpersonal than pedagogical foundations. In order to achieve this goal, they want to create different learning environments. Said one, "I get a different contact with my children that I can not get indoors, the feeling for the children."

## Analysis of Results

### *Outdoor and Nature Experience*

One result of this study that is not found clearly in the literature is the teachers' emphasis on the importance of simply getting the children to enjoy being outdoors. These teachers note that today's children are not used to leaving the urban environment, and are not used to being in nature. This was not discussed in the literature that I reviewed concerning outdoor education in other countries. Maybe the Swedish tradition and the legal right of access to private land creates a philosophy that every Swede should love nature and forests. As part of our cultural background we have the tradition of staying in close contact with nature in our daily lives. In other countries this is not possible and is therefore not the starting point and purpose for outdoor education in the same way that it is in Sweden. Some of the respondents mentioned that they often think of this Swedish tradition of access to nature.

One might have expected that the teachers I interviewed would have described themselves as "outdoor people." Some did, but not all. One feels herself lost in the forest, and two were brought up in apartments, one of them in the

capital city of Stockholm. This suggests different motivations for developing an outdoor education profile. Most of the teachers feel both relaxed and safe outdoors, even while teaching, and are familiar with outdoor life. But even those teachers not familiar with outdoor life and activities seemed to have an open-minded attitude, desiring to learn with their pupils, and to offer safe outdoor teaching. None of the teachers focused on environmental studies or other related subject studies in their answers, and none said that they teach outside because of a personal subject competence.

*The School, the Classroom, Knowledge and the Teacher*

Most of the respondents had no in-service training in biology or environmental issues. Ten years ago, when I held courses, teachers often said to me that they wanted to teach outdoors but that they could not because they lacked a particular subject competence. The results of this study suggest that this attitude is changing. Respondents expressed that the goal for outdoor education is not primarily pedagogical, but social. To do well as a child in the classroom is not the same as to do well outdoors, which means that the roles change, not only for the teacher, but also for the pupils. Another goal is to help the children develop a feeling for nature, so that they will want to learn more, and love being in natural spaces.

The content in outdoor education varies between studying a subject, playing, learning to use all of the senses and some combination of what they do in the classroom and what they do outdoors. I want to look at outdoor education as a concrete example of constructivism where the



learning situation is the meeting between nature and the child, the conflict between earlier experience and new experience where senses, facts, climate, and weather create a new situation out of every outdoor occasion. It is hard to say whether these teachers act and think in this way. One teacher said in the interview that she lets things happen and then she builds her teaching on that. This could be an example of this principle.

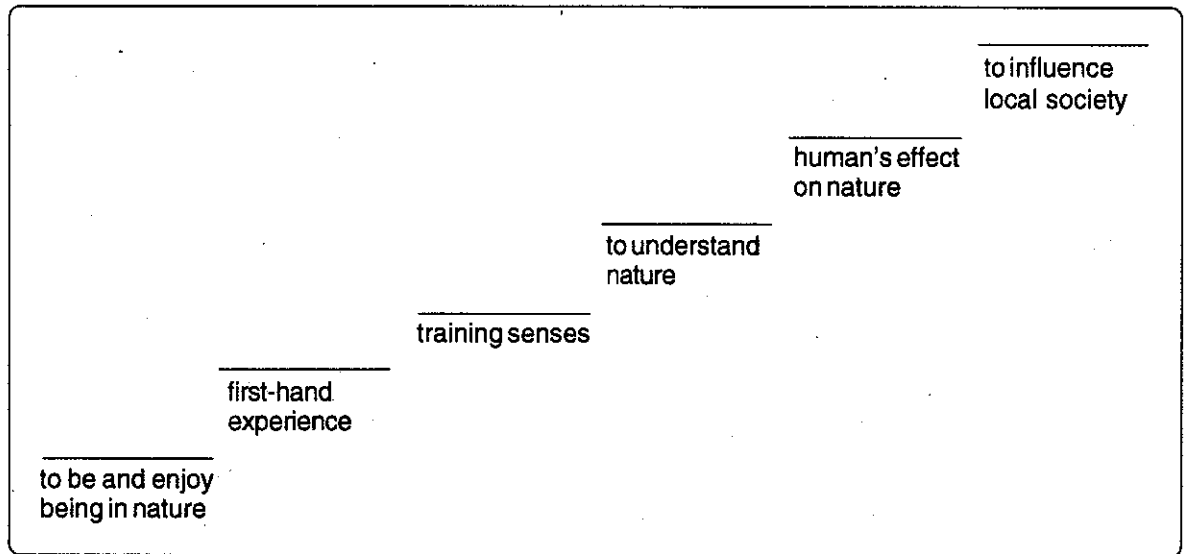
When I asked my key question — Why do some teachers engage in outdoor teaching while most do not? — these teachers provided simple and direct answers. They think one of the key factors is that teachers are afraid of losing control. What is control then? Is it when every child is sitting on a chair, or is it when pupils are working with topics with which you are familiar? Could it be some kind of fear of the unpredictable questions that can come out of real experiences in outdoor situations? Could it be a fear that someone is going to disappear in the forest?

What demands lie on schools in the future? I myself believe that the school must be a more active and obvious part of the whole environment and the whole society. One cannot work with isolated subjects or strategies within four walls; one must integrate school with life, and school must involve and concern the child. How do we keep experiencing joy in learning from childhood to adulthood?

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

This study looked at a special group of teachers and a specialized area of teaching. However, this group represented a range of ages, education, teaching and outdoor experience. The results showed no difference between small and big schools, urban or rural environments. The respondents use the local surroundings that they have near the school — not special parks or centres.

To return to the four questions posed at the beginning of the article, the study results can be summarized as follows:



### *Why do teachers use outdoor education?*

The respondents are keen to get to know the pupils very well, and outdoor education is an important strategy to interact with the pupils in different situations. They think the group dynamics are important and that outdoor education is a way to develop the group climate. Many of them strive for a more relaxed and tutorial teacher role.

### *Are these teachers a special group in some way?*

They are safe as teachers and safe within themselves, and they have the curiosity and courage to try new ways of teaching. They do not seem to focus on following a prescriptive teaching approach, but rather on creating different learning situations and allowing the dialogue that arises out of real experience to guide the learning process.

### *Do teachers that use outdoor education have something in common?*

They feel comfortable outdoors and do not think that it is troublesome. They are interested in knowing their students very well. They do not feel that they need to be experts on nature to do outdoor teaching.

### *Is there something that distinguishes them from other teachers? If yes, what?*

Because the study sample included only outdoor teachers, it does not provide an answer to that question. It would be interesting to compare this

group of respondents with another group of teachers that do not do outdoor teaching. It would also be of great interest to compare outdoor teachers in Sweden with outdoor teachers in other countries.

Referring to the Swedish staircase model below, one result of this study could be the addition of a first step or platform focused on the outcome of learning to be and to enjoy being in nature. One final conclusion of this study is that, even though Swedish people have a unique opportunity to reach and stay in contact with nature all year around — and it is free, so far — it cannot be taken for granted that children in Sweden are familiar with outdoor experience.

For my professional work it has been of great value to do this survey and the results and findings are of great interest for further development of outdoor education courses. The results stress the question of content and approach in a definition of outdoor education. This survey shows that outdoor education is about teaching approaches and the role of the teacher, as much as about knowledge of nature and outdoor competence.

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*This work is a synopsis of Gunilla's M.A. thesis in Education, completed in December 1999, School of Education, University of Greenwich. Gunilla can be contacted at [gunilla.ericsson@kau.se](mailto:gunilla.ericsson@kau.se).*

## Teaching the Storied Landscape: A Case Study of the Wendell K. Beckwith Site in Wabakimi Provincial Park

by Janet Dymont, Lee Watson and Beth Kuiper

An exciting and important component of many outdoor and experiential education programs in Ontario involves extended expeditions in "free nature." Be it a hiking trip in Killarney, a flat water canoe trip in Quetico, a whitewater canoe trip down the Missinabi, or dogsledding on Lake Nipigon, many students cherish these opportunities to "get away from the city."

Some remarkable experiences occur on such trips for individuals and groups. Often students will attribute the intensity, beauty, and splendour to the fact that the trip has happened so far away from the clutter and confines of the city and the formal educational environment. This cognitive separation of city and nature is evident in the often repeated sentiments that "this never could have happened in the city" and "it is so nice to get away from civilization." How often do you hear students remark that it is so nice to be "away" from all the people? Undoubtedly, these sentiments refer to getting away from humans in the city, but too often students and instructors fail to recognize an important component of journeying through these spaces in Ontario — namely, the fact that people have been travelling through these exact same spaces for years. Many wilderness travellers, in search of solitude and wilderness, fail to recognize that the areas used for tripping today have a rich history associated with them. In fact, many areas of Ontario currently perceived as remote and free of human influence are home territories for First Nations communities and were once vital travel routes for Voyageurs.

Many travel routes used by outdoor programs in Ontario are *storied landscapes*. As Gary Snyder (1990) acknowledges, "there has been no wilderness without some kind of human presence for several hundred years" (p. 7). As such, it seems that a perfect opportunity exists for outdoor educators in Ontario to design course elements to facilitate students' connections to the landscape through understanding the tripping area beyond their own experiences with the place.

With a view to understanding that humans are an important part of the landscape's story (both currently and historically), it is important that educators encourage students to appreciate and respect Ontario's rich heritages by exploring the historic context of landscape-human interaction in the area. For example, students flatwater canoeing in Quetico can learn how the routes they travel on were once important 'highways' connecting Eastern and Western Canada. Students canoeing down the Missinabi can learn how Native people used to fish, hunt, and trap along the shores of the river.

But why do so many programs fail to explicitly take advantage of this tremendous learning opportunity? We suspect that the failure to recognize the important role that humans have played in "storying" the landscape stems from the dominant Euro-North American view of perceiving wilderness or naturalness as a place that is "without human influence." Yet to define "wilderness" or "natural" to mean "without humans" challenges the foundations of modern conservation movements. Indeed, many influential writers, such as Aldo Leopold (land ethic), Sessions and Devall (deep ecology), Edward Grumbine (ecosystem management), James Lovelock (Gaia hypothesis), and Edward Wilson (biophilia), have recognized the need to minimize this constructed duality between perceived human and more-than-human realms. Perhaps Leopold puts it most simply when he urges humans to become a "plain member and citizen" of the biotic community.

### Case Study

We believe that educators in Ontario can play an active role in encouraging students to become aware of the storied landscape. With a view to illustrating the educational benefits that emerge when the storied landscape becomes an explicit focus for a journey, we offer the following case study.

We describe the experiences of a group of third-year Lakehead University students on a thirteen-

day whitewater canoe trip in Wabakimi Provincial Park. The students were involved in all aspects of planning the trip, including choosing the route and studying the cultural significance of this area. This particular group of students specifically chose their route with a view to seeing the Wendell K. Beckwith site on Best Island in Whitewater Lake. In the months before the expedition, they studied the historical significance of the site, became familiar with the life of Wendell Beckwith, and discussed the current options that park managers are addressing with respect to management of the site.

In the following section of this article, we describe the life and work of Wendell K. Beckwith. We also include personal reflections from one of the participants (*in italics*). We conclude by summarizing the educational benefits that emerge through actively exploring Ontario's storied landscapes.

*The water licked the bow of our canoe as we made our way across Whitewater Lake in Wabakimi Provincial Park. Our group was on a thirteen-day journey and our main goal was only hours away from being reached. It was the day we were to reach Wendell Beckwith's cabins at Best Island. After reading and talking about Wendell Beckwith for over five months, our group was eager to attach a visual experience to the legend that had been etched into our minds. For up to this point, it had been only legends and hearsay that told us anything about this intriguing man, and we wanted more.*

Wendell K. Beckwith arrived in this area in the early 1960s to start a new life for himself. Leaving his family and career behind, he set out to pursue what he called "pure research" that could only be done in complete solitude. This departure from his former life eventually found him working odd jobs for a businessman named Harry Wirth, whose interests would change Beckwith's life forever.

Wirth had heard of Beckwith and wanted him to be the caretaker/foreman of a wilderness retreat he wished to build in northern Ontario. This proposition suited Beckwith well, as he was looking for a suitable spot to pursue his research. And so, with the help of Wirth and the local native people, construction of three truly



fascinating cabins began.

The cabins were built to Wendell's specifications, for he was a scientist and an engineer, whose dedication and passion for the unknown is reflected in the daily journals he kept while living on the island. His journal writings reveal that at the beginning of each day he would put a blank piece of paper in front of him and begin research on whatever topic came into his mind. Pure research in a pure environment. Since his death in 1980, Wendell's cabins have sat unattended, frequented only by canoeists and anglers.

*Hearts raced with excitement as we approached the site. Our canoes touched down on the curiously inviting rock beach, and we sprinted our way to the cabins like a group of kids on their first trip to Disney World. Across the rock, up the path, around the bend, and there they were. Three cabins nestled within the woods in perfect harmony with their surroundings. What a treat it was to see such wonderful creations in a vastly remote environment.*

The main lodge was the first of the three cabins to be built. From ceiling to floor, it is a true work of art. Utilizing traditional bush cabin-building techniques, the cabin is low to the ground and has few openings in order to maximize heat efficiency during the winter months. Beckwith built all the furniture within the cabin himself, which consisted of an enormous fire place, beds, table, curious little three-legged chairs, a full kitchen, and, most interestingly, a wooden refrigerator box that lowered into the ground to keep perishable food items fresh. The lodge was given the name "the Museum" due to the large collection of native crafts and artefacts that Beckwith had assembled over the years and

proudly displayed within the cabin. While the majority of these relics have since been removed from the building, a large birch bark canoe still remains, looming within the cabin's rafters as a reminder of the spirit and inspiration that the interior used to hold.

The second of these remarkable dwellings was built in 1964 adjacent to the Museum, and served initially as a workshop for Wendell. Smaller than the Museum, this building has a colourful and vibrant history, and remains the most remodelled cabin on the site. The cabin was previously adorned with many of Beckwith's scientific instruments. All were handmade, and consisted of film processors and printers, planetariums, scales to predict lunar cycles, and many other items whose functions are unknown. In 1973, an addition was added to accommodate a close friend of Beckwith's, Rose Chaltry, who wished to spend more time on the Island. This addition (which led to the cabin now being called "Rose's cabin") was not large, but served its purpose well as an area for sewing, reading, and beadwork.

In 1976, Beckwith began planning the third cabin that would complete his site. Concerned about his physical ability to survive the harsh northern winters, his new construction was designed to allow him to live in a much warmer environment than the older cabins (where temperatures would often drop below zero at night). The plan he eventually devised was radically different from that of the pre-existing cabins, and would come to serve as a model dwelling that offered a new dimension to bush habitation. The building he named "Snail" was designed to fulfill four specific requirements: to be energy efficient so as to reduce fuel consumption; to be built primarily of local materials readily available at the site; to allow construction by a relatively unskilled labourer, and, to be of such a design that it could be built by one person in the course of one construction season.

The building was named Snail due to its spiral shape and the fact it is recessed into a hillside with a roof of moss and weeds; it appears as if it is taken straight out of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. The exposed portion of the cabin faces south to allow for maximum sunlight, and is insulated by the thermal mass of the earth in which it is encased. Through these building techniques, as well as a fire pit in the centre of the cabin that

heated the rock beneath, Wendell was able to keep the temperature of the Snail above freezing throughout the year.

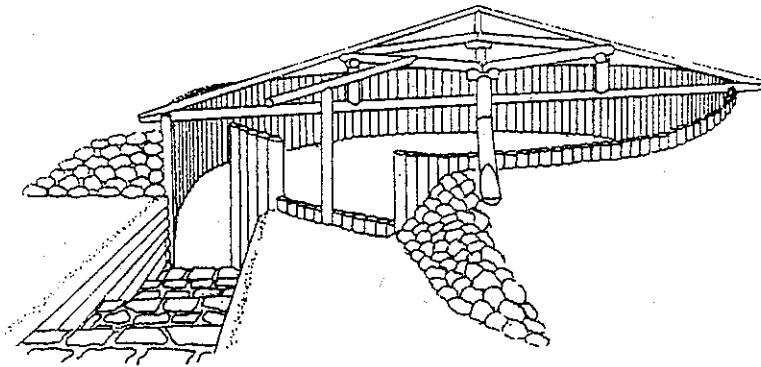
*Our canoe group spent time at the site fishing, reading, and exploring the secret world of Wendell Beckwith. It bothered me to notice that there no longer remains any of the original furniture that Wendell had so meticulously constructed, or any of the native arts and crafts that had been collected over the years. All are gone. Some have been taken to museums and some have likely been stolen or destroyed.*

The student's reflections on potential vandalism and theft shed light on some of the significant challenges park managers face with respect to managing the cabins. For years now the buildings have sat relatively unattended and unmanaged. And time and weather are beginning to take their toll. Many of the cabins have small leaks in the roofs and some are suffering from serious mildew problems.

What should happen with this site? Studies by the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture have identified various options for what to do with these resources, but no action has been taken. However, with the recent expansion of the Wabakimi Provincial Park boundary to include the site, a new glimmer of hope exists that something may still be done.

In 2002, the Wabakimi Provincial Park Management Plan is to be completed. The plan outlines that a space is to be reserved for Wendell and his cabins. On-going research is being performed to identify options for the management of the site. Should they be left to return to the earth from which they came? Should they be repaired to endure another fifty years of northern Ontario winters? What role could the local aboriginal community play in managing the site? Some light may be shed on these important questions through the completion of the Management Plan.

*Thank you Wendell for having us all, teaching us of your remarkable lifestyle, and renewing our imaginations. It was an experience like no other, and left me with a new sense of direction. Wendell followed his dreams to live life the way he wanted. If Wendell did it, so can I.*



## Benefits of Teaching the Storied Landscape

When the storied landscape becomes an explicit focus for an expedition, as in the case of the students from Lakehead University, numerous benefits emerge:

1. *Reduction of nature–human separation:* As mentioned earlier in this article, when students are encouraged to shift away from perceiving a travel route as being free of human influence towards embracing the historical significance of travel routes, then they begin to understand that humans have played an important role in shaping the current landscape. This shift reduces the constructed duality between humans and nature and invites active exploration of the storied landscape.
2. *Opportunity for intra- and inter-personal growth:* When students are able to study and learn about historical cultures, they often learn a great deal about themselves as well as the group with whom they are interacting. In the case of the Beckwith Site, students learned about the value of dedication, persistence, attention to detail, motivation, and craft. These values are easily transferable to their homes in the city.
3. *Integration of subjects:* When the history of a tripping area is studied, educators are able to make interconnections with a number of subjects taught in schools. In preparing for an expedition, the curriculum could integrate subjects such as history, geography, art, language arts, and physical education. In history and English classes, for example, students could prepare for the expedition by studying journal entries of early European explorers and story telling from First Nations oral traditions.
4. *Opportunity to study current affairs:* Contemporary political issues confronting

the management of the storied landscape can also be woven into the discussions throughout all phases of the expedition. Many of the stories that make up the storied landscape are far from being finished. In the case of the Beckwith site, for example, park managers are currently being forced to decide how to manage the cabins. In other protected areas in Ontario, First Nations are actively involved in determining how significant sites should be managed. These continuing storylines provide an important way for students to see the relationships between the past, present, and future of these storied landscapes.

5. *Opportunities for interpretation:* At Lakehead University, an important component of the curriculum is interpretation. Students on these expeditions are encouraged to think about ways that the story of the landscape could be communicated to the public in effective, yet sensitive, ways. Often, follow-up projects involve the creation of interpretive plans.
6. *Opportunity for research:* Numerous opportunities for research exist within these storied landscapes. For example, one of the students who visited the Beckwith site became extremely interested in the management options that exist for the site. He decided to do his thesis project on this topic, and spent twelve months preparing a report that it is hoped will guide park managers in making management decisions about the site.

## Conclusion

We believe that many educational benefits emerge when the storied landscape becomes an explicit focus for educational programs. By encouraging students to understand that people have used tripping areas for many centuries, we allow them to gain a rich understanding of the history of Ontario and encourage them to reduce the separation between humans and nature. We encourage educators in Ontario to learn the exciting and fascinating stories that comprise Ontario's storied landscape.

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### Friluftsliv

by Borge Dahle

Excerpt from *"Friluftsliv—Life-long learning—experiences—reflection—acknowledgement"*

What characterizes the cultural phenomenon of "friluftsliv" and what separates it from an international leisure-time culture in nature is, among other things:

- that experiencing nature is key
- that practicing friluftsliv is not dependent on large costs for travelling and equipment
- that the nature and cultural landscape used is easily accessible from permanent residences and holiday cabins
- that the passing of tradition is strongly anchored in natural social groups such as family and friends (Dahle, 1989)
- that friluftsliv is not dependant on organizations. It is possible for individuals to choose their own time and place for practicing it.

In addition to the Norwegian tradition of friluftsliv, we also see that the international leisure activity culture in nature has spread in Norway. International outdoor activities are first and foremost activity-motivated and tied to facilities in nature. The activities are most often organized through commercial interests or institutions that run education programs or short courses. The leisure activity culture is often a part of the commercial travel industry and is organized as long trips, expeditions, or adventures sold as experience packages.

The international activity culture has gained much of its inspiration from well-known persons who have made expeditions. Central in Norway are the role models of Nansen and Amundsen on their Polar expeditions, climbing expeditions to Mount Everest, Asheim, Ausland Ulvang and Dæhli. They have also gained inspiration from military survival and from travel writings of canoe expeditions through, for example, Canada's deep wilderness areas.

It is unfortunate but understandable that universities and colleges that have a special responsibility for arranging individual Norwegian day trips and celebrating friluftsliv have let themselves be overtaken by the international

leisure activity culture. Leisure activity culture and "expeditions" through the education of teachers have been further taken into the state school system. Under the theme of friluftsliv, ski days are arranged with Telemark skiing and snowboarding, along with expeditions with canoes and sleeping in snow caves in the mountains. Is this the way to learn the key elements of the Norwegian friluftsliv tradition?

What is worrying the institutions protecting friluftsliv is that young people to a greater degree than previously are missing traditional friluftsliv and are participating more in the international leisure activity culture. To what degree this concern is based on qualified research results or only on a feeling of the situation is somewhat unclear. The leisure time patterns of youth must be mapped.

What is possible to assert is that children socialized in Norwegian friluftsliv return to this tradition when they themselves establish families (Dahle, 1989). This is true even when they were only partly or not at all engaged in friluftsliv during their youth.

Perhaps there is no basis for worry about the leisure time patterns of young people seen in relation to maintaining our friluftsliv. This can be described as a pedagogic error of linkage if we mean that friluftsliv must adjust to the modern youth culture such that the basic values of these cultures are to be recognized in new variations of the Norwegian friluftsliv. The effect of such a strategy will most likely be the opposite of what is desired — the Norwegian friluftsliv tradition will be weakened.

"Let youth be allowed to have their own activity culture, they do not forget mother's milk so fast." In order to maintain the Norwegian friluftsliv tradition, the most effective way will be to ensure that children are socialized within traditional friluftsliv while they are at an age when their leisure time is spent with their parents.

Traditional friluftsliv is open for all and can be practiced throughout one's lifetime. The patterns of friluftsliv by the Norwegian people have been

constant and are still relatively stable. It is still the simple foot tour and ski trip based on motives of enjoying nature, health, camaraderie and developing nature interests that are strongly dominant. "The people's friluftsliv" is still highly alive but a lifestyle with stress has meant that some people's practice of friluftsliv is substantially reduced.

Pressure on the traditional patterns of friluftsliv has been great in past decades. The general change in society and new and varied leisure time are some of the more important reasons for this. But pedagogical institutions have also worked to create new forms of friluftsliv activities. A "sportification" of friluftsliv has occurred. In the competition for students, colleges, folk colleges,

and sports institutes have needed to target youth groups and they have chosen to emphasize trends in outdoor activities and adventure tours, even to foreign countries.

Still, the pattern of friluftsliv has shown itself to be relatively stable. This can be explained by the fact that the youth groups have never been and are not currently a decisive factor for Norwegian friluftsliv. While friluftsliv is an activity form that is practiced from birth to the grave, it is the age groups before and after adolescence that are dominant and decisive in friluftsliv.

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## Voices from Norway

### Understanding Friluftsliv

by Petter Erik Leirhaug

Excerpt from "An Extra-ordinary Afternoon in Angedalen." A paper-sketch presented at Hæverstolen, 12-14 April 2002.

In and through friluftsliv we need to take care of, and sometimes even restore, our abilities to sense, distinguish, suspect and image. We need to story our experiences, seek to bring new elements into the sphere of consciousness and find ways to relate and correlate our own experiences with those of others.

I: I am rethinking the first thing you said. The experience is not only a personal issue, it is impossible to develop a reasonable understanding of experience without focusing on "the experienced." Maybe it is the concept of friluftsliv that makes it so difficult to clarify what it is to "be experienced." I mean, an experienced car-driver is a person who has driven a lot. To be more accurate you can add the qualifier, without serious accidents, and whom you have watched in action and judged to be a good driver. As I see it, the case is just the same for an experienced sea-kayaker, climber, skier or trespasser.

Me: I both agree and disagree. To some extent your statement is correct, but it has at least two weaknesses. You simplify the examples to cover only more or less skill-demanding activities. It is easy to see if the sea-kayaker has proper technique. You can have perfect paddle-technique without being an experienced sea-kayaker. It is first by entering a complex, often critical, situation that the experienced is distinguished from those who are not. To be short, I just ask you to dwell a few seconds on each of these three questions: What does it mean to be an experienced trespasser? Is there such a thing as an experienced way of experiencing nature? Can you be experienced in friluftsliv if you have a lot of experience packing a little sack with a milk bottle and lunch and going on small trips like a picnic in the woods or picking berries?

I: I follow. "Being experienced" is to some extent relative to concrete situations, different aims and contexts. . . . The other weakness was . . . ?

Me: Before we leave the field of berries, I must share with you two quotations I have used in my paper. Both deal with the taste of berries. The first is from Chapter 9 of Thoreau's *Walden*:

*The fruits do not yield their true flavour to the purchaser of them, nor to him [sic] who raises them for the market. There is but one way to obtain it, yet few take that way. If you would know the flavour of huckleberries, ask the cowboy or the partridge. It is a vulgar error to suppose that you have tasted huckleberries who never plucked them.*

The second is from the theoretical work of Christopher Alexander, an architect with a wish to build ourselves with our tools "into a piece of nature":

*We are having strawberries for tea, and I noticed that she sliced the strawberries very, very fine, almost like paper. Of course, it took longer than usual, and I asked her why she did it. When you eat strawberry, she said, the taste of it comes from the open surfaces you touch. The more surfaces there are, the more it tastes. The finer I slice the strawberry, the more surfaces there are... To live like that, it is the easiest thing in the world; but for a man [sic] whose head is full of images, it is the hardest.* (Quoted in Rothenberg 1993: 209)

I: Not to be impatient or rude, but what about the other weakness?

Me: In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer (1989) emphasized that the experienced person is not a person who knows everything and knows better than anyone else. On the contrary "being experienced" proves to be a radically undogmatic position: "Experience stands in an ineluctable opposition to knowledge and to the kind of instruction that follows from general theoretical or technical experience. That is why a person who is called experienced has become so not only through experiences but is also open to new experiences" (p. 355). It is "because of the many experiences he has had and the knowledge he [sic] has drawn from them that he is particularly well equipped to have

new experiences and to learn from them" (ibid).

I: Being experienced is, in other words, a person who knows himself or herself and is capable of evaluating his or her own limitations.

Me: This is how Gadamer puts it: "Real experience is that whereby a man [sic] becomes aware of his finiteness. In it are discovered the limits of the power and the self-knowledge of his planning reason" (p. 357). He also says that hermeneutical experience is concerned with *tradition* (p. 358).

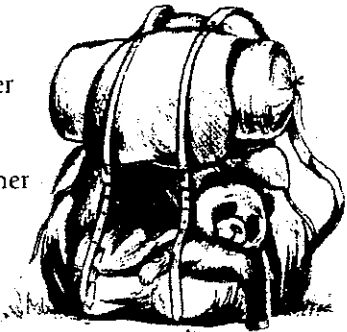
I: Tradition is interpreted very differently with different approaches to friluftsliv. In a recent paper Bjorn Tordsson (2001) concluded that friluftsliv "in fact never has been especially traditional. Rather, it has continuously, on the contrary, been connected to the main questions of the period: the question of the identity of nation, the question of social welfare, the ecological. ..."

Me: I know, and some get very provoked by such statements. To get provoked, I think you have to misunderstand it.

I: I agree. I believe the concept — not the phenomena — friluftsliv is a way of contextualizing what I am doing, marking out that I have a certain type of attitude and reflection. By subscribing what I am doing to "friluftsliv" I tell something, both to myself and to others, about how I relate to tradition, history, nature, culture, society and lifestyles. A new moment emerges: The experience is a person who has a reflected approach to his or her (work with) friluftsliv.

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## Defining Friluftsliv

by Nils Faarland

From an encounter at Hæverstølen / Norway April 2002 to study modernity and the Norwegian tradition of friluftsliv.

### What

*Friluftsliv*: a Norwegian tradition for seeking the joy of identification with free Nature.

### Why

Identification with free Nature in accord with the Norwegian tradition of friluftsliv has intrinsic value, as well as an approach to challenging the patterns of thought, values and lifestyles imposed by modernity.

### How

*Conwayorship*: Sharing the experiences of free Nature in accord with the patterns of thought and values of the Norwegian tradition of friluftsliv in smaller groups for the joy of identification, as well as for finding in modernity routes towards lifestyles where Nature is the home of culture. What follows are key terms chosen to explain in English the what, why and how of the Norwegian tradition of *friluftsliv*.

### Free Nature

When we speak about identification with Nature as the essence of the Norwegian friluftsliv tradition, we need to define the term "Nature" as meaning the home of our ancestors at the time of the birth of this tradition as well as humankind's home through the ages.

For ages, the lifestyles of humankind were inspired by a "touch the Earth" philosophy. The natural rhythms of the plants — seasons, diurnal rhythms, growth rhythms — were not gravely abused until the onset of the Industrial Revolution. Thus humankind grew up on a planet with free natural rhythms, which obviously left deeply rooted patterns in us. As the terms "untouched Nature" or "wilderness" imply, Nature is not the home of culture. The term that best complies with the friluftsliv tradition is *free Nature*.



### Paradigm

Patterns of thought — the paradigm spelled out in the 16th century by René Descartes, reducing Nature to a mechanistic system (*res extensa*) by use of instrumental thinking and the natural science approach based on a fundamental doubt rooted in the maxim *cogito, ergo sum*, giving sovereignty to abstract thinking.

### Modernity/Post-Modernity

The breakthrough of the natural scientific paradigm led to Descartes' *l'homme est maitre et possesseur de la Nature* and Bacon's *knowledge is power* (over free Nature) mentality. In retrospect, this turned out to be a divide in human cultural traditions.

The aggressive use of instrumental thinking led to the success of the so-called Industrial Revolution. This accordingly led to a belief in an ever better future, which was followed by traditions more obsolete, leaving us in the desperate situation of producing an ever-changing conspicuous identity to match the frenetic changes of modern culture — modernity/post-modernity.

### Tradition

Whereas *tradition* in the paradigm of modernity represents the obsolete solutions and useless rituals of cultures of the past, experiences made in the mountains, the woods or at sea, where the natural rhythms are still free, ensure that free Nature never becomes obsolete. On the contrary, only by paying attention to the experience of generations past may we eventually develop our abilities to familiarize ourselves with Nature.

### Identification

Instrumental thinking, making up the basis of the paradigm of modernity, "has the bad habit" of describing reality in such a way that "it leads away from concrete content towards abstract structure" (Arne Naess). Through the imperative of not "getting in touch," we are resigned to the role of the observer. Identification is made impossible. Modernity knows many diagnoses for crises, which arise from the lack of ability to identify, feel at home, create friendship. Identification is *the* basic condition to meet the existential urge for confidence.

### Values

The instrumental thinking of modernity denies free Nature intrinsic values due to the reductionist paradigm view as *res extensa*. As friluftsliv in the Norwegian tradition originates from the 18th century protest movement towards modernity, the basic values of friluftsliv are the core values of the European deep romantic movement.

### Joy

Conwaying includes finding words to share the many aspects of identification with free Nature, e.g., to qualify experience into *connaissance* of weather, snow birds, etc., contrasting the natural sciences, meteorology and ornithology.

Although *joy* must be said to be the driving force of friluftsliv according to the Norwegian tradition, it isn't possible to adequately spell out its meaning in words. Whereas we may exchange *connaissance* of snow after having agreed on the adequate words when sharing the experience of snow, joy belongs to the intangible, which hardly may be shared out of context. We certainly have to rely on artistic skills. What we may comment on are the obvious basic conditions for joy in the friluftsliv experience — free Nature, confidence and awareness.

Daring to comment on joy, it must be pointed out that we try to speak of a quality of life that is archetypical to humankind. It is not related to modernity's shallow "fun" or "high sensation seeking" and thus exposed to being pulled down in the turmoil of modern life. Joy is an all embracing experience, absorbing, deeply moving (Spinoza). In the language of Bergson, we have to

do with *les données immédiates* — that which is immediately given, that which is not conveyed by a medium (from Latin *medius*). Although joy in friluftsliv might result from great efforts, it is an experience of tranquillity. This tranquillity is not a passive attitude. It inspires serendipity and the confidence to act in accord with personal values, even when the initiative might be against mainstream thinking.

### Serendipity

Studying pre-modernity Norway we come upon the strange character of Espen, The Ash Lad — the hero of the fairy tails of "the noble savages." His brothers Per and Paul did not appreciate "the good helpers" whom the Ash Lad made his conwayors. These were the wise animals represented by the bear and the fox (symbols for the teachings of free Nature) and elderly people (symbols for the teachings of traditional culture). When the brothers were put to the test, only Espen had the awareness, confidence and creativity to pass. What he had in common with the three princesses of Serendip was serendipity.

Serendipity, as understood by modernity (i.e., Per and Paul) is the ability by good luck to stumble over the solution to unsolvable problems. In keeping with "what computers can (still) not do," Espen was thinking by patterns; in contrast, Per and Paul limited themselves to thinking by rules and thus were unable to master the situation (a master relies on extensive *connaissance*, feeding a creativeness, which is not controlling but complying).

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*Nils Faarlund has been described as a foundational figure to the evolution and meaning of Norwegian friluftsliv. He has served as the Managing Editor of the Norwegian Outdoor Journal, Mestra Fjelle, since the early 1970s and has run an outdoor mountain guiding school for over 30 years. Translations of his writings can be found in Peter Reed and David Rothenberg's (Eds.), Wisdom in the Open Air, University of Minnesota Press, 1993. Nils presented the above definitional exercise at an international gathering (encounter) with the intention of clarifying the meaning of the "classic Norwegian friluftsliv" to the English language.*

## The Value and Necessity of Tumbling and Fumbling!

by Aage Jensen

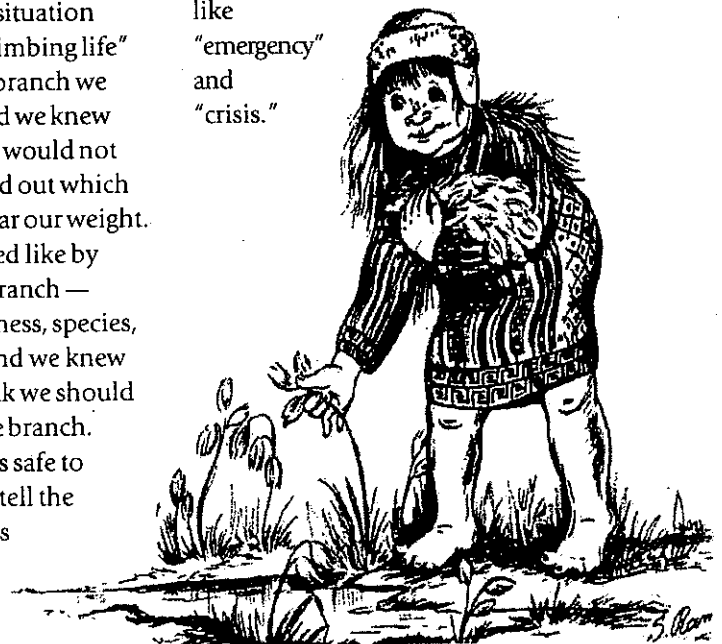
Excerpt from *"The Value and Necessity of Tumbling and Fumbling!"*, a paper presented at Perspectives of the Outdoors as a Learning Room, St. Andrews, Scotland, May, 2000.

Among a lot of different activities, we also loved climbing in trees. It is difficult to say actually why we loved it but the best answer is perhaps that it was just a natural part of our life. But this raises a new question: Why was it a natural part of our life? It is difficult to come up with a definitive answer to that question, but I do think this activity was very important in our discovery of ourselves — to find out who we were and what qualities we had. We did not do it just to seek a special kind of adventure. (It is very important for me to say that we did not look upon this as a dangerous project.)

Another day — and I remember it as if it has been yesterday — I was climbing around in a Rowan tree close to my home and I suddenly started to think, "What would happen if the branch I was standing on or grasping suddenly broke?" It is similarly not easy to answer this question in a simple way. Because normally this situation should never occur. During our "climbing life" we found out exactly what kind of branch we could place our foot on or grasp and we knew without hesitation that this branch would not break. In our climbing life we found out which branches were strong enough to bear our weight. We knew what such a branch looked like by observing various qualities of the branch — colour, angle from the trunk, thickness, species, whether it was wet or dry, etc. — and we knew for sure how far or close to the trunk we should place our foot to avoid breaking the branch. Sometimes we could tell why it was safe to stand on; sometimes we could not tell the reason why, but we just knew it was safe. And we developed this kind of wisdom because we had been tumbling and fumbling around in many trees in our lives.

What I have described so far is a bit about how we were playing or, better, how we were living. We did not talk so much about playing at that time. We would say we were playing when we were busy with a special activity, such as football or soccer. But when we were roving around in the woods, wandering in the mountains, skiing or skating, this was our way of living. Today I would say that we were tumbling and fumbling through life.

It is easy to look upon tumbling and fumbling and trial and error as two synonymous concepts, but this is not the fact. When you are tumbling and fumbling, you are near to making a mistake but you can always find a way to go back before you end up in a dangerous situation or have an accident. There is always (and I want to emphasize this), always an aspect of security built into tumbling and fumbling. That fact leads us to another important part of conwaying leadership — security and safety. That point of view gives meaning to the slogan we often use: "A tour according to your abilities." That is why we dislike words like "emergency" and "crisis."



These should never arise in friluftsliv where the ultimate purpose is to yield to nature instead of opposing it. But you need to be an experienced conwayor (leader) to handle such a situation.

Tumbling and fumbling is the beginning of the conwaying process but also a continuation of the playing process we practiced as children or, as I like to look at it, a continuation of the free life we were living as youngsters. I guess that today there are a small number of children in the industrialized world living the way we did. All normal children are, of course, playing and I look upon it as a good thing to take care of and give children the possibility to play. I have tried to explain that we were also playing as young boys and girls, but we did not only play; we did something more. We must differentiate a bit between playing and the free life we were living in close relation with nature. That life is more or less disappearing in the industrialized world and, as I look at it, it is more important than ever to get the opportunity to live like this; through friluftsliv — a way of living — we still have that opportunity.

It is impossible to talk about tumbling and fumbling without mentioning the Norwegian word *kjennskap*.<sup>1</sup> *Kjennskap* is the kind of wisdom you get through tumbling and fumbling, and it is one of the most important keywords in conwaying.

The result of tumbling and fumbling is that you acquire more and more *kjennskap* and are developing the ability called serendipity. *Kjennskap* is a way to recognize, come close to, get used to, look and listen, touch and taste — using all your senses. *Kjennskap* is a way to understand life, and that wisdom can only be

obtained by “being in reality.” It is that kind of wisdom which characterizes the Ash Lad character known from the Norwegian fairy tales. Through his tumbling and fumbling, he becomes able to solve questions without obvious answers.

When we were climbing trees we participated in another important and typical respect of *kjennskap* — we shared our experiences. It is relatively difficult to climb a birch trunk without any branches to help you. But we managed it and discussed different techniques of how to do it. We shared our *kjennskap*.

The connection between tumbling and fumbling and *kjennskap* teaches us to take care not only for ourselves, but even more importantly, for nature. We develop a unique awareness of nature that gives us attitudes and norms. This wisdom is normative and “tells” us how to live with nature. It is through this process that we develop new patterns of thought and find out what patterns we have gathered earlier.

It is more important today than ever before to give people (young or old), through friluftsliv, the possibility to tumble and fumble. To connect this with the subtitle of this seminar “Perspectives of the Outdoors as a Learning Room,” I have described for you a bit of my own “learning room.”

Conwayors (outdoor educators) today have to find or help participants to find “learning rooms” —rooms where they can be given the possibility to tumble and fumble. That is because people need to discover themselves and at least develop their relations and attitudes to nature. The ultimate purpose of conwayorship is to change our way of living to a lifestyle of harmony between us and nature. To my mind, it is more important than ever to do this.

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<sup>1</sup> *Kjennskap* (definite form is *Kjennskapen*) is very difficult to translate into English. It is made up of two words: *å kjenne*, which means to feel, to know, to experience, etc. and *skap*, which is a wholeness or a gestalt. A possible word to use is perhaps “acquaintedness” or the French *connaissance*.

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*Aage Jensen is a teacher in Norway and a member of the Editorial Board for Mestres Fjelle, a Norwegian Outdoor Education publication.*

## The Benefit of Experiencing Risk in Addition to Friluftsliv

by Andrew Cusack

Nils Faarlund (1993) says that the best way to reach Self-realisation, an ever-widening identification with the whole of nature, is to spend time in "free nature." Faarlund terms this "non-aggressive, environmentally sensitive approach to being in nature — friluftsliv: . . . a rejection of a paradigm that sees man [sic] as a vacationer, in favour of one that presents free nature as man's true home" (p. 156–157). It is this author's perspective that a more effective means of arriving at Self-realisation is to combine friluftsliv with some element of perceived risk. Friendship with nature requires the same conditions for growth as human friendships; we must be willing to accept our friends completely and be able to identify with them. If nature is truly to be free, as Faarlund claims, we must perceive it to be for Self-realisation to occur, we must meet it on its own terms. According to Faarlund (1993), an inherent part of nature is risk. Therefore, spending time in free nature while at the same time trying to insulate one's self from its power and the challenges it offers does nothing to develop a sense of belonging to the land (Dustin, 1999). A sense of cooperation with nature's awesome power is equally as important as a sense of joy from being in nature (Faarlund, 1993). Accepting these challenges means to be pulled out of the role of spectator and into the process of participation (Faarlund, 1993). This paper will go on to show how risk helps an individual in achieving Self-realisation, how reliance on "safe" technology serves to maintain our isolation from nature and how important it is that risk be associated with friluftsliv and not be a goal on its own.

### Defining Risk

For many, the word "risk" carries with it a foreboding sense of doom. Risk, as it is used in this paper, simply means the potential for loss, be it emotional, social or physical; it serves to characterize activities with uncertain outcomes (Rohnke, 1999). Consequences go hand in hand with risks; they are the logical results of the risky actions. Why experience risk? Reasonable risk

feels good, and reasonable risk ordinarily results in reasonable consequence. What risks are reasonable is determined by a variety of things: skill level, experience, knowledge, and responsibility to self are a few. How much one should risk is dependant on how much one wants to gain, or perhaps how much one can afford to lose.

### Accepting Risk in Nature

Since a risk is an inherent part of nature, how then can we claim to be experiencing it if we are not embracing it in its totality (Faarlund, 1993)? Western culture's current perception of nature is that its existence is controlled by our use of it, which perpetuates the idea that it is separate from us (Duenkel, 1999). By keeping only the parts of nature that we like (beauty, solitude, peacefulness) and rejecting those parts that are not as appealing (risk, challenge), we are buffering ourselves from what nature really is (Dustin, 1999). We are also potentially keeping many of the egocentric ideas that serve to keep us separated from nature. It is by combining perceived risk and appropriate real risk in the context of nature that begets an ideal context for achieving Self-realisation. The perception of being at risk in nature leads to a voluntary loss of the illusion of control held by Western society. The feeling of insignificance and challenge caused by risk can lead to an understanding that nature is now in control of the situation, that we are in free nature and open to the idea we can interact with it without controlling it (Walle, 1997). By consciously gaining a sense of risk, we change our frame of mind from one of overcoming and controlling nature, to becoming a part of it and thus subject to its laws. Self-realisation cannot occur without developing humility towards nature, dispelling the myth of dualism and developing a sense of place within the natural world (Duenkel, 1999; Faarlund, 1993). A feeling of vulnerability is important to remind us that we are not invincible and serves to humble the previously pretentious view of nature in an effort to gain Self-realisation (Duenkel, 1999).



Risk is characterized by an unknown outcome; by perceiving ourselves to be at risk, we are becoming aware of something new. A new, risky experience forces us outside of our comfort zone, and thereby forces us out of what we know and are familiar with, which is the domination of nature. This venture into the unknown in a free nature setting allows for the formation of new ecological insights and ideas (Walle, 1997).

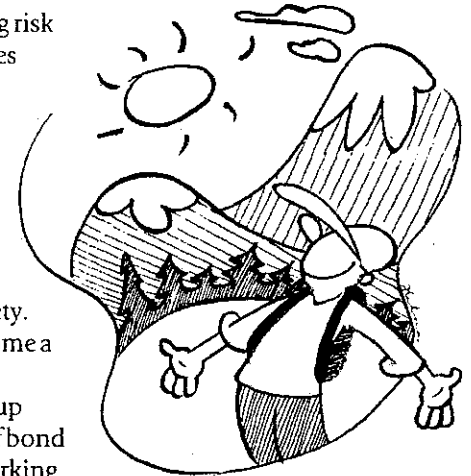
The benefits of perceived risk in helping people to develop a sense of Self-realisation can be applied to persons of all skill levels, since it is the perceived level of risk and not the actual level of risk that is important (Walle, 1997). A first time backpacker can, in theory, experience the same level of constructive anxiety as an experienced mountaineer on an alpine climb. An important characteristic of risk is that, as our skill level and experience increase with a situation, our perception of risk is likely to decrease (McAvoy & Dustin, 1984). We must therefore continually seek out situations with increasing levels of risk to continually remind us of our place within the natural world (Dustin, 1999). That is, of course, not to say that we should start taking stupid risks, but rather that we should feel perpetually challenged in the natural world.

### How Risk Develops Self-Realisation

Risk created by environmental challenges is important because it causes participants to experience a constructive level of anxiety. McKenzie (2000) cites Nadler as saying that it is by overcoming this anxiety that the persons involved are believed to experience positive benefits such as enhanced self-concept. An unfamiliar situation is also credited with providing participants the freedom to experiment with new psychological ideas or a fresh sense of identity (McKenzie, 2000). The development of skills and understanding required to overcome this state of constructive anxiety creates a new level of comfort and understanding of nature. Challenge is believed to set in motion a series of reactions leading ultimately to the growth of participants. The growth that we outdoor educators speak of can be Self-realisation.

We can examine the importance of risk in creating a sense of identification by using an example from experiential education. According to Hattie, Marsh, Neil and Richards (1997), the

most compelling reason for using risk is that it requires certain responses that are of value. These responses are not demanded by the environment, but rather result from the manner in which people interact with the environment. Trust type games allow people to experience a certain level of constructive anxiety. Students strive together to overcome a goal they perceive as risky; by overcoming their anxieties, a group bond is created. This same type of bond can be formed with nature by working with the surrounding natural environment to overcome anxieties. It is recognized that the two items involved in this analogy require striving against different entities: the first usually involves working with a team to overcome a physical obstacle that is perceived to offer some form of social, emotional or physical risk. The latter involves working with the natural environment to overcome the constructive anxieties created as a result of perceiving risk in nature. What is required for this parallel is a mind shift — from the traditionally perceived interpersonal benefits of social interaction through group initiatives to overcome overtly physical barriers, to the intrapersonal benefits of personal discovery through overcoming inner anxieties in a wilderness setting. The formation of this nature-human bond results in a greater likelihood that participants will re-examine and explore their own values (McKenzie, 2000). A few examples of positive responses to constructive anxiety caused by a perceived level of risk are an increase in participants' ability to relate to others, an increase in cooperation, trust and listening, and an increased sensitivity to others (Hattie et al., 1997). The conclusion can therefore be drawn that if people experience these benefits in a group setting, they would also be able to achieve the same benefits from perceived risk in free nature. By increasing one's ability to relate to nature, a better understanding of natural processes can develop. An increase in a person's cooperation, trust and listening to nature will help to create a more intimate sense of place in nature through communication — communication with one's own ideas, with others involved in ecological thought and even with nature itself. Lastly, an increased sensitivity to nature would definitely contribute to Self-



realisation by increasing a person's awareness of the natural processes surrounding them.

## Technology

There has been a plethora of technological developments in the wilderness recreation industry recently. Technological paraphernalia like satellite phones, new materials for clothing and new plastics for boats, have reduced the perceived and real level of risk inherent in nature to such an extent that persons ignorant of many important skills are now entering wilderness (Dustin, 1999; McAvoy, 1999; McAvoy & Dustin, 1984). Many persons using this technologically advanced gear are so caught up with mastering the skills required to use and maintain their gear that they forget about the environment around them (Duenkel, 1999). This technology thus serves as a barrier to the formation of an ecological identity and even creates a pseudo-wilderness environment because we are importing so much of what is familiar to us in the city into nature (McAvoy & Dustin, 1984). If a participant's experience within free nature is unchanged as the result of the extra technologies, the scenario is not too safe; the perceived risk is intact (Rohnke, 1999). If the experience has been diminished by the plethora of gear, obviously reducing the perceived risk, the event has become too safe for the participant (Rohnke, 1999). Perception of risk must remain or the natural environment degrades to a carnival ride, and the participant is void of any growth of Self-realisation. The use of technology must be appropriate if free nature experience is to remain intact (Faarlund, 1993).

## The Importance of Combining Risk with Friluftsliv

Research has often focussed on risk taking in a natural setting as an entity unto itself (Ewart, 1989). However, risk as the goal of an activity, separated from the goal of connection to nature, often leads to a conquering mentality that serves primarily to contribute to our emotional and spiritual distancing from nature (Duenkel, 1999). In order to allow for the development of Self-realisation, the goal of the experience must not be to seek risk alone, but simply to allow it to happen in conjunction with a presence in free nature (Faarlund, 1993; Walle, 1997). Friluftsliv activities show a respect for natural processes and for identification with all life. They take place without the use of highly technical means

of transport and present a diverse range of challenges to the total person, with risk as an integral part of these challenges presented by nature (Faarlund, 1993). To participate in friluftsliv is to go out for the purpose of rediscovering free nature; there are no other explicit goals involved.

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*Andrew Cusack is a recent graduate of the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism, Lakehead University. This paper was written under the course direction of Dr. Brent Cuthbertson. In 2001/2002, Andrew worked with Project Dare.*

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## Lessons from Norway: Language and Outdoor Life II

by Bob Henderson

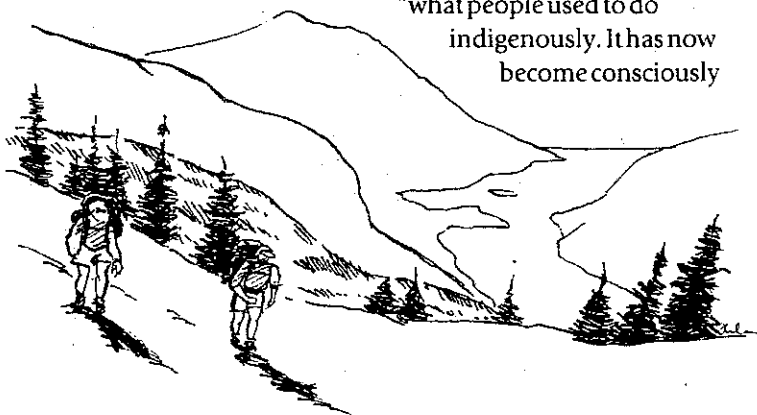
Friluftsliv is the dominant word/idea for which one must gather all the meanings and nuances one can to understand the conceptualization of outdoor education linked to Norwegian tradition and identity. While challenging, the effort bears rich fruit for Canadian outdoor educators, helping us to gain a "Canadian" perspective from looking into the ways of others less familiar to us than American and British traditions. Friluftsliv traditions of outdoor life (familiar daily outings, weekend or extended excursions, via self-propelled travel) match well the Norwegian and Canadian landscape. Still, friluftsliv in Norway is more strongly connected to one's daily routines. This is true both within a formalized schooling context as well as with respect to personal habits. I argue that for the Canadian outdoor educator, there is a certain inspiration to be had from looking into Norwegian ways and patterns of thought and activity.

It is important to note that although we must try to express this concept in words, they cannot be pinned down and boxed in time. Words move along with culture. Meanings of old words evolve and new words are introduced. Personally, I think there is much to gain in Canada by developing our own read on friluftsliv — a way home to the open air — so it is important to examine the collection of words that support the method, the tradition and the philosophy that is friluftsliv. (See Pathways, Summer 2001, Volume 13 (3) for a friluftsliv theme issue that included an English friluftsliv bibliography.)

Participating in a gathering of outdoor educators from Norway, Scotland, South Africa, Japan and Australia, I had the time and patience to discuss words between ski outings in April 2002 in

Haeverstolen, Norway. What follows are some efforts at translations from this group with interpretations from my notes at the time. It is hoped that this Wild Words column complements the Summer 2001 instalment as an ongoing exploration of Nordic words and meanings. Ideally, they should be read together.

Many in our group had a hand in developing our foreigner understanding of friluftsliv, a word saturated both in values and mystical energy, says Nils Faarland. As method, tradition and philosophy, the word is complex. Whether you are speaking traditionally, in a modern and/or popular sense, ruminating on international interpretations or emphasizing the internal, the word is confusing. Through all the messiness of language and meanings, certain gems emerged. Nils Faarland himself had said earlier in our meeting that playwright Henrik Ibsen, in coining the word, named what people were doing and it then became incorporated into the Norwegian national identity. In Norway, many people wished to preserve their daily contact with nature in simple (uncomplicated) and richly meaningful (complex) ways. In certain Norwegian circles, there is a fear that modern life threatens friluftsliv as tied to traditions and national identity. Takako Takano, a fine listener, concluded after several days that friluftsliv is "what people used to do indigenously. It has now become consciously



conceptualized. "Friluftsliv is about seeking a deeper relationship between people and nature by going into nature in simple and self-sufficient ways, and it is linked to cultural practice and identity. It denotes outdoor activity that is both informal and appropriately unfolding. Takano's understanding seemed to me to well represent a group summary.

For me, Scottish educator Robbie M. Nicol put it wonderfully: "friluftsliv is a song word." It is a word of celebration of human/nature rapport, identity and belonging to the land, spirited simple learning through the joy of being in the open air. In Norway this is understood to be connected to well being and health. Here in Canada, no connections between outdoor education and wellness are made in education circles. Rather, outdoor education courses continue to be deleted.

Associated words help us understand friluftsliv. In Scandinavia, two words are used for experience. "Erfaring" represents one's normal day-to-day realities. Erfaring as experiences are mundane and routine. "Opplevelse" refers to more profound experiences, perhaps sublime, perhaps frightening, but always insightful. The difference is, in part, one of intensity. This distinction can be misinterpreted in North America, however. For example, often on camping trips, one can observe that seemingly routine mundane activities of campfire cooking or long lazy afternoon paddles or toboggan hauling across a long lake begin to take on a special unexpected significance. As one discovers one's natural rhythm to be in a flow or harmony with one's expectations/purpose/cares and in synch with the natural conditions of land and travel, the experience can shift from erfaring to opplevelse. Too often, we outdoor educators equate the intense moment of whitewater paddling or portage trials as the main moment of intense lived experience. But sometimes it is one's calmer moments that can take on heightened experience — opplevelse! Having more nuanced understandings and multiple meanings of experience might greatly help us.

Kjennskap is another experience-centered word. A loose consensus of our April group decided upon a meaning of recognition, familiarity, a

bond. Kjennskap involves a closeness of relationship issuing from one's "perceptiveness," a heightened sense of knowing and feeling. It is a level of awareness before wisdom, and beyond basic recognition. Friluftsliv has been described as "a wisdom to the open air," and kjennskap is that feeling and knowledge of closeness which warmly informs one's being.

*Mestre Fjellet* is the name of a long-running outdoor journal in Norway. We might translate the term as "Mastering the Mountain." The term would imply, in English, control over the mountain as in mastery. However, there is another meaning to mastering. In Norway, *mestre* means not control in overcoming risk and challenges, but rather openness to the experience (of the mountain) fully and humbly. With mastery (*mestre*) one comes to understand the mountain via patterns and adopts natural ways best suited to the terrain rather than imposing rules suiting a human context only. Mastery is being able to react and see limitations in creative and harmonious ways. *Mestre* is inspired by the joy of being receptive to mountain, river, and city. So, mastering is not about learning how to look down at the mountain but rather how to look up at and up to the mountain.

Exploring the meaning of such words in translation forces us, in the English-speaking world, to chew on our own meanings. Bringing them into conversation and slowly gaining comfort in explaining/teaching their meaning (because if you are genuinely communicating at all, you will be asked for explanation) forces others to not assume they understand your meaning. I know that as I speak of friluftsliv-based outdoor education, I am compelled to slow down and clarify meanings resulting in less misrepresentations and more confidence in the communication process. An explained, friluftsliv outdoor education is much more than teaching paddling skills. Rather, it forces a consideration of the relationality of humans and nature. It forces a consideration beyond the quickly and shallowly assumed.

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# Beyond Our Borders

## The Snow Walkers' Rendezvous 2001

by Tomiko Robson

Every year, come mid-November, a group of people who love being outdoors in the winter gather together near the small town of Fairlee, Vermont. In 2001, I had the opportunity to join this gathering at the Hulbert Outdoors Centre for the Snow Walkers' Rendezvous conference. The focus of the Snow Walkers' Rendezvous is traditional winter travel and this makes it a unique and wonderful outdoor educational experience. The conference proved to be a great opportunity to learn about traditional travel techniques and technologies, winter living skills and crafts, and the stories and cultures related to winter travel.

Throughout the conference I felt a sense of collective appreciation for the functional. Like any group of outdoors people, this group was fascinated by gear. But, this fascination did not translate to simply having the "latest and greatest." In fact, I have never seen so many woollen items in one place before! I think that this celebration of traditional technologies runs deeper than simple nostalgia. These technologies are still used because they are functional: they work. And they work well.

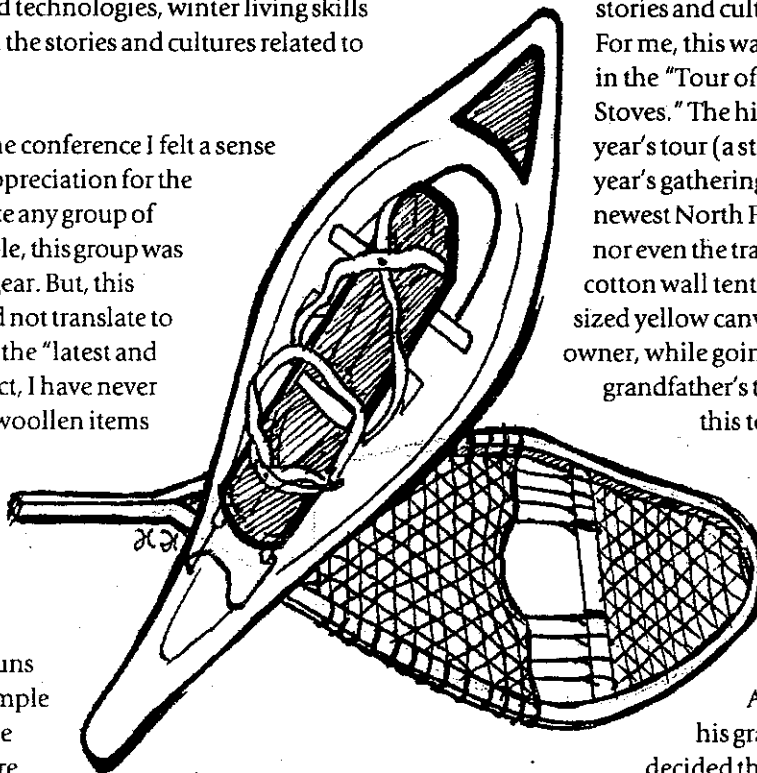
I am a student of Outdoor Education and I have yet to go winter camping. Admittedly, I've had my doubts about going out in sub-freezing temperatures. However, after touring the "five-star" wall tent at the Snow Walkers' Rendezvous, my fears were dispelled! All of these traditional tents were roomy and warm. The five-star was an

enormous tent with plenty of space for a cooking area. And, complete with woodstove, the tent was warmer inside than the buildings at the Hulbert's centre. Traditional winter campers don't get out there to eke out a miserable existence in freezing weather; they celebrate the winter season in comfort and warmth!

Moreover, unlike the warm, fuzzy and too-good-to-be-true stories of nostalgia, the equipment at this conference often had real stories and culture attached to it. For me, this was best exemplified in the "Tour of the Tents and Stoves." The highlight of this year's tour (a staple of every year's gathering) was not the newest North Face dome tent, nor even the traditional Egyptian cotton wall tent. It was a medium-sized yellow canvas tent. The owner, while going through his grandfather's trunk, had found this tent carefully

folded up at the bottom. His grandfather had used this tent in the 1920s when he went hunting.

As it turned out, his grandfather quickly decided that the hunting spot he had chosen was so good he would build a cabin there. Consequently, the tent was only used over one season. So, here it was, 80 years later, set up at the Snow Walkers' Rendezvous together with the very same stove used by the grandfather that first hunting season. As the grandson told the story of his grandfather's tent, he beamed with a soft pride that touched everyone. This tent and stove did not have the latest design, nor were they the lightest of items,



but they did have what most modern equipment completely lacks: a story and culture. And, both tent and stove still worked. Together they would function as well as any new equipment to keep dwellers warm and dry.

Another highlight of the Rendezvous was the emphasis on interactions with the land. So often on trips we are extraordinarily careful to avoid interacting with the land. We take little from our immediate surroundings and leave nothing. For many reasons, low (or displaced) impact camping is useful, but it comes at the cost of seeing how humans necessarily interact with the land. We often assume that we are outside of natural systems. Thus, we behave as tourists — people travelling through a place, observing something outside of ourselves. Traditional winter camping allows for human travellers to reinsert themselves into natural systems, to become (if only for a short period) residents rather than tourists. In traditional winter camping, interaction with the land is necessary; the tents need tent poles and the stoves need firewood.

*This tent and stove did not have the latest design, nor were they the lightest of items, but they did have what most modern equipment completely lacks: a story and culture. And, both tent and stove still worked.*

Campers have the opportunity to understand their need to take from the land in order to live. The Snow Walkers' Rendezvous, with its focus on traditional transportation, highlighted this alternative way of travelling in the more-than-human world.

To interact with the land also requires wisdom and skill. The Rendezvous presented both in

abundance. The workshops and presentations gave participants ample opportunity to learn about traditional winter travel techniques and technologies. The presentations ranged from travel tales to land preservation to "academicizing" winter wilderness travel as pedagogy. The workshops included axe handling and care, toboggan making, and brain tanning hides.

In the workshops, there was a particular focus on bush skills. Since this was a meeting for anyone who enjoys being outdoors in the winter, the presenters included craftspeople as well as outdoor travellers. For some presenters, their topic was not just a skill, but a lifelong study. In the workshops I met people who brained tanned hides for a living, people who were tent smiths, canoe builders and wannigan makers. I learned from a Cree couple from Ouje Bougoumou in Northern Quebec how to prepare a beaver for roasting. And we all got to try it. There was a wealth of knowledge and skill surrounding me all weekend.

The Hulbert Outdoor Centre's Snow Walkers' Rendezvous is a unique opportunity to learn about traditional winter travel. With its emphasis on traditional modes of travel and living in a winter environment, it presents a good occasion for outdoors people to learn new and perhaps more engaged ways of celebrating winter. There is a tremendous wealth of human wisdom and skill at this conference. Best of all, presenters do not come only to offer their expertise; they stay for the entire weekend as participants to learn from everybody else.

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*Tomiko Robson is from Vernon, B.C. She recently graduated from McMaster University, Hamilton.*

*The Snow Walkers' Rendezvous is held every November. For more information about the Snow Walkers' Rendezvous and the Hulbert Centre, contact Deb Williams at Hulbert Outdoor Centre, 2968 Lake Morey Road, Fairlee, Vermont, USA 05045-940; Tel. 802-333-3405.*

## A Wild(er)ness Dialogue Across Disciplines

by Ingrid Urberg

*Playing the Wild Card: Un/disciplined Thoughts on Wild(er)ness* was the title of a thought-provoking and well-received conference held at the Banff Centre in Banff National Park from May 9–12, 2002. This event, hosted by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in the Liberal Arts (CIRLA) at Augustana University College, brought together more than 100 participants from North America and Europe to explore and reflect on the concept of the “wilderness” and the “wild” in its many meanings and usages. Session topics included travel and exploration accounts, the impact of globalization on nature, marketing the wild, mountains and gendered wilderness. The highly interdisciplinary nature of the conference was reflected in the diversity of plenary speakers, among whom were George Blondin, a Dene elder from the North West Territories, Max Oelschlaeger, known for his work in the field of environmental philosophy, and poet Don McKay. Throughout the four days of the conference, the examination of the construction of the wild in literature — fiction, non-fiction and poetry — and the visual arts was complemented by perspectives from such fields as philosophy, environmental science, education, and geography, challenging participants to think across disciplinary boundaries.

Reflecting on the conference as both a participant and presenter, I was struck by the following:

- While numerous presentations focused on the desire by many to “return to the wild” in a romantic sense and to restore wilderness areas — in the words of Max Oelschlaeger “trying to recover a forgotten language” — George Blondin spoke of the need and desire of many Aboriginal people in the north to have access to the means and education to more effectively utilize their natural resources in order to share in economic prosperity.
- Interpretations and linguistic constructions of wilderness vary dramatically across cultures and eras. To provide an extreme example, while the ideal in Scandinavia is to live within nature, the Chinese, as pointed out by Bronwen Geddes of the University of British Columbia, have traditionally viewed wilderness as an undesirable place to which people have no physical or psychological

connection. It is a place in which people are outsiders.

- There is a tension between the way we use language to construct and describe wilderness, and the inadequacy of language in describing wilderness experiences. As the poet Jeannette Lynes stated in a plenary discussion entitled *Wild Poetics*, “Language is totally a human construct. It is only a tiny door to wilderness. Wilderness lives in silence.”
- There is a lack of balance between theory and activism. In the wrap-up roundtable session, led by CIRLA Chair Bruce Janz, several participants pointed out the danger of failing to apply ideas and theories about sustainability and recovery of wilderness.

It is important to note the role that cultural, disciplinary and linguistic diversity plays not only in creating these tensions, but also in providing us with the tools to deal with them in a creative and constructive fashion. The widely varying interpretations and views of wilderness across cultures are a source of tension, but they also provide enrichment and enlightenment. One of my goals as a teacher of language and culture is to make my students aware that learning other languages and about other cultures equips them with a variety of lenses through which they can view the world. The Wild Card conference provided participants with such an opportunity, allowing us to learn from a variety of cultural and disciplinary constructions of wild(er)ness, and encouraging us to think across cultural, gender and disciplinary boundaries.

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*Ingrid Urberg is an Associate Professor of Scandinavian Studies at Augustana University College in Camrose, Alberta. One of her research interests is polar literature, and she is currently working with personal narratives by women who have lived and worked on Svalbard.*

*Information about CIRLA, as well as paper abstracts from The Wild Card conference, may be found at [www.augustana.ca/departments/cirla](http://www.augustana.ca/departments/cirla). Papers from this conference will form the basis of a volume on wild(er)ness.*

## Summer Circle and The School House

by Emily Root

This is a story about Summer Circle, a camp that has a unique relationship with an alternative elementary school in Toronto, The School House. Mike and Laura Schein, Directors of Summer Circle and Principals of The School House, love to share the rich history of both places through stories. Outdoor educators who strive to create deep meaningful relationships amongst their students, themselves and the natural world will no doubt find inspiration from the story of Summer Circle and the School House.

Summer Circle is different from a typical summer camp. The main difference is the community of people who live, work and play there. There are only 24 campers and 12 staff during each of the two three-week sessions. Campers ranging in age from 5 to 14 attend camp at the same time. The small size of Summer Circle allows for elaborate activities that might be difficult to offer to larger groups. Campers and staff make pasta together outside on picnic tables, bake fresh bread outside on the porch every morning, carve paddles for a voyageur canoe trip, and create beautiful crafts such as a long batik dragon to hang in the dining hall.

Summer Circle is situated on the property of a large outdoor centre — The Kinark Outdoor Centre — in Haliburton Ontario, so campers also have access to a wide range of activities not always available to such small camps, including rock climbing, high ropes, kayaking and canoeing. Night hikes, evening campfires, special theme breakfasts, day trips and special awards add to the magic of the Summer Circle program. Campers also value the special, unprogrammed time during which they spend time with their camp friends and counsellors.

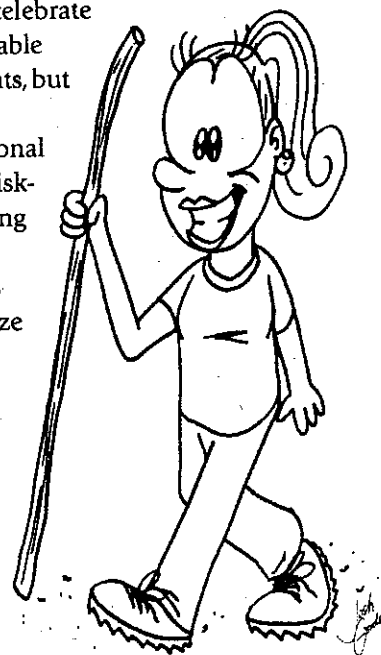
At Summer Circle, traditions are passed on easily to the new, younger campers by those folks who have been around for a while. Older campers who have attended Summer Circle for many

years find new meaning in the traditions as they grow and take on new roles within the community. Campers learn to interact with people of all ages. They are encouraged to try new activities and set goals for themselves. For older campers, the goal becomes not only to challenge themselves, but also to learn how to participate in an activity in a way that includes campers of all ages and abilities. A great example of this phenomenon is the regular nightly baseball game. Moments to celebrate in a typical evening on the baseball field might include a five-year-old hitting the ball for the first time, a ten-year-old hitting her first home run, and a thirteen-year-old taking an "extra couple of seconds" to get the ball to home plate (gracefully of course) so that the six-year-old can score a run. Baseball games wouldn't be complete without the arrival of Mike's ice cream truck to serve cones to everyone (large and extra-large only!).

At Summer Circle, people celebrate each other publicly before each meal. Celebrations are enthusiastic and genuine.

Some campers celebrate obvious measurable accomplishments, but others celebrate generosity, personal growth, social risk-taking or amazing moments in nature. Campers grow to recognize the value of developing positive relationships with others.

As outdoor educators, we often strive to meet two goals: to create





community and a sense of social responsibility amongst our students, and to help foster a love for and appreciation of the natural world around us. What's exciting about Summer Circle is that it is truly an example of a caring, supportive community of people who share an appreciation for nature through the rhythms and routines of daily life. What makes it stand out from other camps is the sense of belonging and ownership that the School House students feel towards the place.

The School House, located at Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue in Toronto, is a small alternative school for students in Kindergarten to Grade 6. The school promotes motivation and excellence in learning within the comfortable environment of a home. Students are active learners and independent thinkers. Global issues, student issues and themes from literature are integrated into an experiential curriculum. Students learn to form their own opinions and are encouraged to articulate their thoughts during regular group discussions.

There is a strong community feel at the School House. Students learn in mixed age groups: the "Little Kids" (JK-SK), the "Middle Kids" (Gr. 1-3), and the "Big Kids" (Gr. 4-6). Older children help younger children learn and understand the important traditions that take place throughout the year. Younger students bake the daily snack for all the students. The whole school gathers once a day to sing meaningful songs related to the current theme. The whole school plays together outside at the local park for an hour each day. People of all ages learn, work and play together.

Traditions at the School House are unique and have grown and evolved as the community has evolved over more than 25 years. Special days of celebration include Friendship Day on February 14th, Solstice in mid-December, and the Spring Festival at the end of June. To finish the year, students perform a play that they have helped write and produce. The play is an incredible integrated curriculum project that provides the opportunity for reflection on the entire school year.

Throughout the rhythms and seasons of the year there are opportunities for students to go to Summer Circle (also called Autumn Circle and Winter Circle depending on the time of year). In September families gather there to celebrate the School House community and to welcome new students and their families. The weekend includes hikes, folk dancing on the beach, waterfront time and a community circle around the campfire.

The Big Kids' class visits camp twice during the school year. During those trips, students plant friendship gardens that hold wishes for their friends. They help plan and prepare a special feast during which they celebrate each others' strengths and hard work through "toasts" that they write in advance. These outdoor trips also include a typical array of outdoor education activities, but the students would agree that it's the other special rituals that help to foster a sense of connectedness and belonging to this special place and to each other.

Throughout the seasons, Summer Circle provides a place for staff and students to live, work and play together. Teachers, students and parents get to know each other on a more personal level and develop and deepen friendships. It is a safe place where everyone can feel confident to be themselves, away from the pressures and influences of the rest of society. Students develop and maintain a special connection to Summer Circle over many years.

Outdoor educators often seek ways to create transformational experiences for their students — experiences that lead students to ask questions about themselves and about life in general. The integration of the Summer Circle and School House programs provides a unique experience that seems to truly transform all of the people who find a connection there.

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*Emily Root taught at Camp Tawingo school in 2001/2002. This summer Emily is working as a travel guide for Outward Bound.*

## The Gathering 2002

by Clive Card

"We must find our touchstones where we can."  
John Berryman

For centuries, the philosopher's stone has represented a search for quality. As we left Bark Lake in September of last fall, there was a tangible feeling of expectation and excitement for the conference that would follow in the footsteps of two very successful years at the site.

Inspired by David Archibald, *The Rocks of Tobermory: A Touchstone* was chosen as the name of COEQ's annual gathering for 2002. It was within this frame of mind that the planning began. Home base would be the Tobermory Lodge, and workshops would range from outdoor watercolours to "rattlesnake" mountain bike tours, aboriginal culture, daytime astronomy, and digital photography. Outbound locations would include Cyprus Lake, Cabot Head, and Flowerpot Island. Transportation would be easier for our members in the north (via the Chi-Cheemaun) and there could be a choice for members who wished to camp. For those who were organizing the event, there was a tremendous sense of tradition that had to be honoured, but at the same time, there seemed to be a wonderful opportunity to make the 2002 conference a unique and meaningful experience on its own.

Early in the planning, it was felt that because the Bruce Peninsula had so much to offer, the land should speak for itself, much like it had at Tamakwa. With this in mind, the workshop facilitators have been specially chosen for their connection with the local flora, fauna and the geological foundation upon which it all exists. From local outdoor educators and native elders to renowned amateur enthusiasts and researchers from afar, all are specialists in their field, and all are looking forward to meeting you this coming September on "the Bruce."

The workshops this year are categorized according to four major themes:

- **Outdoor Activities** (enjoying the physical and scenic side of the Bruce Peninsula)
- **Outdoor Education** (taking students to the "Outdoor Classroom")
- **Human and Natural History** (appreciating the natural world and how we have related to it)

- **Issues and Ideas** (discussing key issues with colleagues)

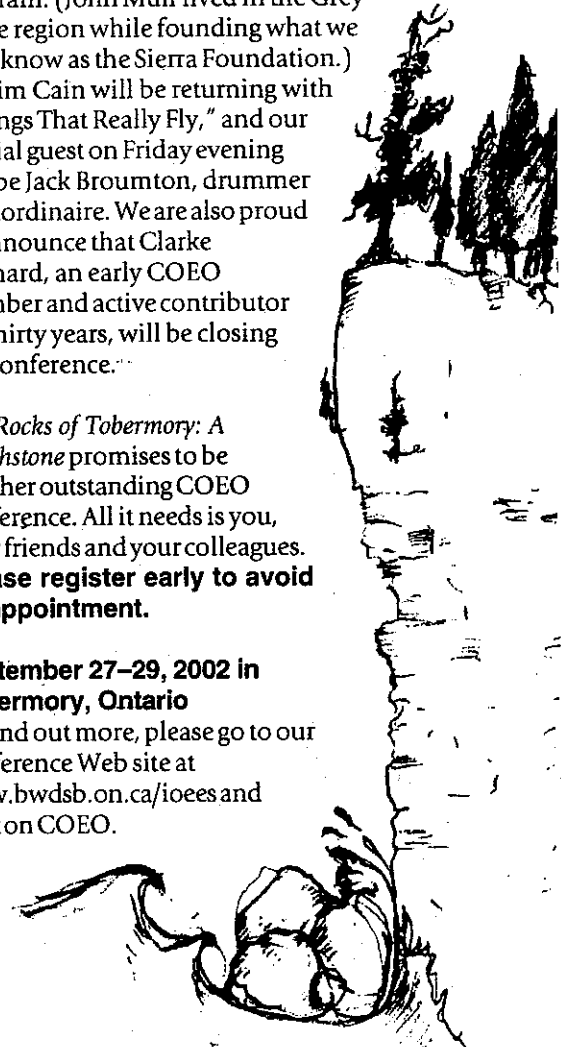
In addition, workshops from each of the four themes will be offered in each of the three major time slots, so that conference attendees can follow a theme or mix and match as they choose. **Please note that activities will require early registration to facilitate final arrangements with service providers. Early payment of certain fees will also apply.**

*The Rocks of Tobermory: A Touchstone* will also feature a keynote address by Dr. Doug Larson, cliff-face ecologist from the University of Guelph, and a special visit by Dr. Graham White of the University of Edinburgh, who is visiting Canada in support of the John Muir Society Awards Program. (John Muir lived in the Grey-Bruce region while founding what we now know as the Sierra Foundation.) Dr. Jim Cain will be returning with "Things That Really Fly," and our special guest on Friday evening will be Jack Broumton, drummer extraordinaire. We are also proud to announce that Clarke Birchard, an early COEO member and active contributor for thirty years, will be closing the conference.

*The Rocks of Tobermory: A Touchstone* promises to be another outstanding COEO conference. All it needs is you, your friends and your colleagues. **Please register early to avoid disappointment.**

**September 27-29, 2002 in Tobermory, Ontario**

To find out more, please go to our conference Web site at [www.bwdsb.on.ca/ioees](http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/ioees) and click on COEO.



**The Rocks of Tobermory: A Touchstone**

COEO CONFERENCE 2002 REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete this registration form and send with a cheque or money order, payable to COEO, to COEO Conference 2002 Committee, c/o Institute for Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies RR # 3, Wiarton, ON, NOH 2T0

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Box #: \_\_\_\_\_ Apartment #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Preferred Roommate(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do You Require Pick-Up from the Ferry Dock? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
 Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION FEES**

Fee Item	Fee (GST incl)	Amount
1A – Conference, all meals, accommodations at Tobermory Lodge 1B – Same as above, but with vegan meals (add \$10.00)	Early Bird \$235.00 Regular \$250.00 Student \$200.00 Vegan Option add \$10.00	
2A – Conference, lunch and supper each day, no accommodations 2B – Same as above, but with vegan meals (add \$10.00)	Early Bird \$185.00 Regular \$200.00 Student \$150.00 Vegan Option add \$10.00	
COEO Annual Membership Fee (Family – Regular – Student – Institutional) (International + \$10.00, American + \$4.00)	\$62.00 – \$50.00 – \$30.00 – \$48.00	
Non-member Surcharge	\$60.00	
Late Surcharge (after September 13, 2002)	\$25.00	
A1 – Scuba Incidental Fees (gear rental paid upon arrival at activity) B6 – CHA MAO ZAH Materials (First Nation Craft Making)	\$40.00 Drum \$95.00 Dream Catcher \$12.00 Carving \$10.00	
<b>Total Payable:</b> Cheque Money Order Please make cheques payable to Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario. A \$35.00 service fee will be applied to all NSF cheques.		

**SEMINAR SELECTION** — Go to [www.bwdsb.on.ca/ioees](http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/ioees) and click on COEO Conference 2002 for an overview of the schedule and seminar list (also refer to the conference brochure), then circle your choices below:

Seminar	Circle First Choice	Circle Second Choice	Circle Third Choice
Saturday – F	1	1	1
Saturday – A	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Saturday – B	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Sunday – C	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**Registration Information**

Early registration ends **June 21, 2002**. A \$25.00 late fee will apply to those who register after **September 13, 2002**. Refund requests must be made in writing and postmarked by **August 31, 2002**. Refunds will be subject to a ten percent (10%) administration fee. **Memberships can be purchased for \$62.00, \$50.00, \$30.00, and \$48.00** plus a surcharge for out of Canada members as indicated above. A \$60.00 surcharge applies to non-members wishing to participate in the conference.

## BIOCAP Soon to Have a National Public Education Program

The BIOCAP Canada Foundation and the federal government have recently joined in a multi-million dollar research partnership to learn how Canada's forests and farmlands can be used as biological "sinks" for greenhouse gases, as well as provide renewable sources of energy and materials.

The three-year, \$6 million agreement is part of a longer-term, university-based research initiative, also supported by industry, provincial governments and non-governmental organizations, to fight climate change while improving economic opportunities for rural Canadians.

This unique research partnership between BIOCAP and three federal departments — Environment Canada, Natural Resources

Canada and Agri-Food Canada — will pave the way for a national BIOCAP public education initiative to tell Canadians about the importance of crops, trees and soils in addressing both the challenge of climate change and the transition to a sustainable future based on renewable resources.

Founded in 1998 by biologist David Layzell, who now serves as Executive Research Director, BIOCAP is a national not-for-profit research and outreach foundation based at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

You may obtain further information at 613-533-2315 or [www.biocap.ca](http://www.biocap.ca).

Source: EECOM: The Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication April 2002.

## Attention Queen's Outdoor Education Alumni

Zabe MacEachren has received a small grant to do some research with Queen's Outdoor Education Alumni as the 35th Anniversary of this program approaches in 2003. This is the longest-running outdoor education program at a Faculty of Education in Canada.

Zabe is combining the efforts to reach alumni of the program to attend an Alumni Gathering with finding participants for her research project.

If you are a graduate of any of the Queen's Education Outdoor courses, please contact [oealum@educ.queensu.ca](mailto:oealum@educ.queensu.ca)

People who contact this address will be notified of the alumni gathering and given the opportunity to participate in the research to track outdoor education in Ontario and Canada.

## Ethical and Quality Practice in Adventure Therapy: Defining Commonality While Honouring Diversity

3rd International Adventure Therapy Conference 2003  
Victoria, British Columbia  
April 20-24, 2003

For more information, contact:  
910 Herlihy Place  
Victoria, BC V9C 4G3  
Tel: 800-375-2363; 250-478-0161  
Co-sponsored by Power to be Adaptive Outdoor Recreation Ltd. and Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

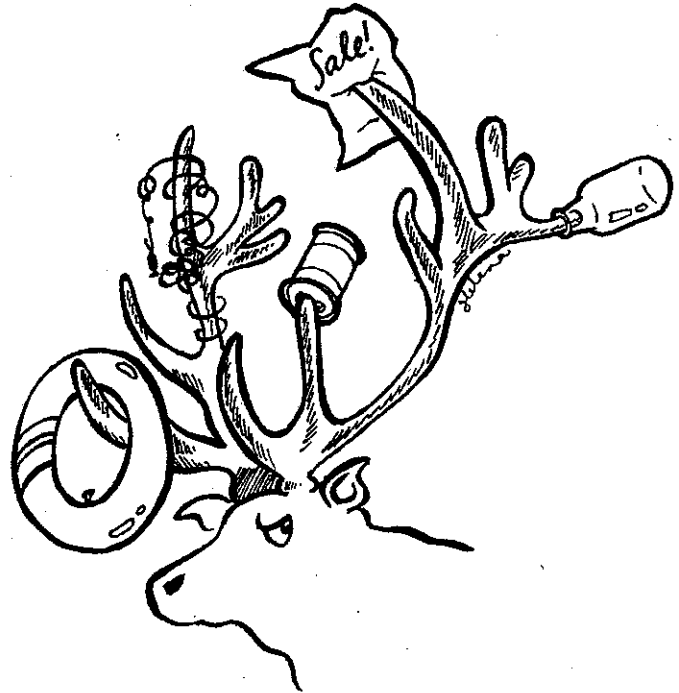
### Watch for a special issue of CJEE

This summer, there will be two issues of Volume 7 of *The Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* (CJEE) appearing in print. The first will highlight papers related to the cultural aspects of environmental education. The second features selected papers from the inspiring 2001 EECOM Conference held in the Yukon. The conference theme, *Telling Our Stories*, focused on narratives, stories and narrative research.

For more information about CJEE and to subscribe, contact: CJEE, c/o Yukon College, Box 2799, Whitehorse, YK1A 5K4;

Tel: 867-668-8778;

e-mail: [cjee@yukoncollege.yk.ca](mailto:cjee@yukoncollege.yk.ca).



### People and Place: Fragile Tension Sustainable Development in Rural and Remote Communities

3rd Annual Rural Studies Conference  
University of Guelph  
October 4, 2002

There is a heightened awareness of the need for people to renew their ties to place and to nature; the status quo is no longer a viable option. This calls for fundamental transformations in human understanding, institutional change, a stronger civil society and new forms of governance. People are part of nature, and part of built communities and communities of interest. Place is not empty space but an imagined and lived-in physical environment that connects people to each other and to future generations, highlighting the need for sustainability, justice and equity. In rural and remote communities, the ties of people and place give definition to the economic, political and social systems that must evolve if the human-nature project is to endure. Tension is ever-present between both natural systems and the ones we create, including ecosystems and resource

management, science and indigenous knowledge, change and adaptation, conflict and dependency, power and justice, sustainable development and growth, self-reliance and interdependence, cultural tradition and innovation. They are tensions that bind us to each other, to nature, and to past and future. Today's compressed dimensions of space and time and heightened sense of insecurity give rise to the notion of "fragile tensions." Fragile tensions may be strained to the point of breaking when human-kind skews the balance in favour of narrowly defined interests and short-term gain.

For information, contact:  
Erica McMillan  
University of Guelph  
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1  
Tel: 519-824-1212 ext. 8901

## Friluftsliv: Would You Like Fries With That?

by Simon Beames

*Ropes course at 9am, stream study at 11am, lunch at noon, orienteering at 1pm, friluftsliv at 2pm...*

There is a danger that accompanies our increasing understanding of *friluftsliv*. This danger lies in society's propensity to package everything into neat and manageable pieces that are easily replicated. I am concerned that as we learn more about *friluftsliv*, we will be tempted to deconstruct its ideals and place them into pre-fabricated, educational nuggets. This eventually would drain *friluftsliv* of that magical and elusive essence we found so attractive in the first place.

In 1993 George Ritzer wrote a book called the *McDonaldization of Society*. Ritzer's thesis was that many of life's experiences were becoming standard, dependable, and safe — just like a McDonald's hamburger. Outdoor education has not escaped this fate, according to Englishman Chris Loynes. In his essay, *Adventure in a Bun* (*Journal of Experiential Educators* 1998), he argues that the field of outdoor education has lost its way (and the very values that it espoused) and become caught up in the commodified world we live in. He held up a mirror to the outdoor adventure industry, showing a reflection of outdoor centers running cookie-cutter programmes all over Britain (indeed the world) and questioned the premise behind this.

Is it possible that *friluftsliv*, an informal Norwegian tradition that centers on living a richer inner life and a more simple outer



life, could become outdoor education's equivalent of a Chicken McNugget? Or, will outdoor education go beyond McDonaldization and enter a phase of post-modernism? Apart from its attractive primary concept of helping confirm cultural and personal identity, *friluftsliv* also fits the requirements of today's ethically responsible consumer: it's a fair trade product, organic, and 100% free range. Why wouldn't we as educators want to package and distribute this product? As readers of *Pathways*, we all are likely to support educational objectives that focus on developing stewardship for the natural world, personal responsibility, and one's ability to cooperate with others — all through experiencing the joy of "free nature."

So what will be *friluftsliv*'s fate in Canada? Shall we have a committee write a white paper on it? Or how about designing a *friluftsliv* unit to be disseminated across school boards, full of learner outcomes, lesson plans, a teacher's handbook, and of course, the CD-Rom for the classroom-based virtual *friluftsliv* experience?

I propose that we talk and write of *friluftsliv* in order to gain a greater understanding of it, but resist the temptation to package it — to put it in a bun. The moment *friluftsliv*'s lore becomes packaged, its soul will be lost, for its beauty, strength, and longevity lie within our difficulty to articulate just what it is. *Friluftsliv* is not a bound unit of curriculum, but a way of living that can have a deep and positive affect on the behaviour of the young people we influence. Perhaps if we keep this in mind, the ideals of *friluftsliv* will slowly and steadily spread into our lives and the lives of the people we touch through our work.

---

*Hailing from Montreal, but with exceptionally strong ties to Ontario, Simon is currently working on a Ph.D in adventure education at University College Chichester in England.*



# Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario

## Membership Application Form (Please Print)

Name: (Mr./Mrs./Ms/Miss) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Home ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Business ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Type of Membership

- Renewal                       New Member
- Subscription to *Pathways* (Available to libraries and resource centres only)
- Regular \$50.00     Student \$30.00
- Family \$62.00     Subscription \$48.00
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Supporting Member (Membership plus donation to Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario)

United States orders please add \$4.00

International Orders please add \$10.00

COEO Membership is from September 1 - August 31 of any given year

Please send this form with a cheque or money order payable to:

**The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario**

1185 Eglinton Ave. East, Toronto, ON M3C 3C6

Each member of COEO will be assigned to a region of the province according to the county in which they live.

Central (CE)	Niagara South, Lincoln, Hamilton-Wentworth, Halton, Peel, York, Simcoe, Metro Toronto
Eastern (EA)	Victoria, Durham, Peterborough, Northumberland, Hastings, Prince Edward, Renfrew, Lennox and Addington, Frontenac, Leeds, Grenville, Ottawa-Canton, Lanark, Prescott, Russell, Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry
Far North (FN)	Patricia, Kenora, Thunder Bay, Algoma, Cochrane, Sudbury, Rainy River, Timiskaming
Northern (NO)	Parry Sound, Nipissing, Muskoka, Haliburton, North Bay
Western (WE)	Essex, Kent, Elgin, Lambton, Middlesex, Huron, Bruce, Grey, Dufferin,