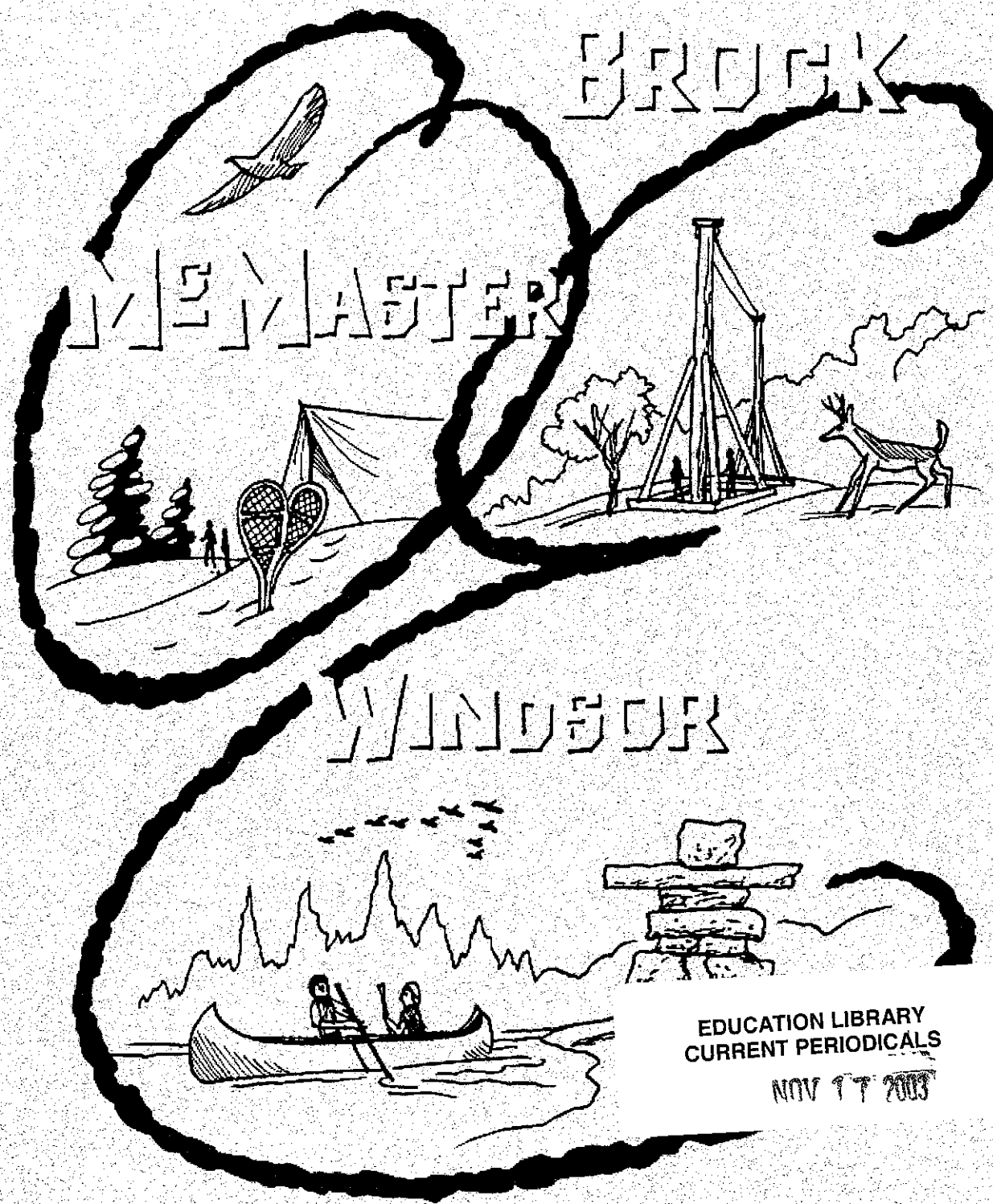
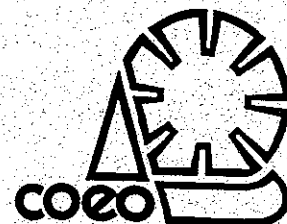


# Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Autumn 2003, 15(4)



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# Pathways

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## CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

*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 the *Pathways* Editorial Board Chair, Bob Henderson. 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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April 15  
June 15  
August 15  
October 15

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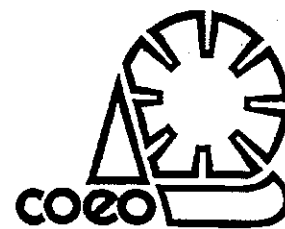
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# Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION

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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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This issue of *Pathways* is a continuation of our thematic series featuring university and college programs with outdoor experiential education (OEE) offerings.

We began running these theme issues in the late 1990s. To date we have featured the Outdoor Experiential Education Programme at Queen's University, the undergraduate and graduate Environmental Studies programs at York University, the Outdoor Technicians Programme at Seneca College, and the Outdoor Adventure Leadership program at Laurentian University.

In this issue we feature three other universities — Brock University, McMaster University, and University of Windsor — that offer OEE courses within Kinesiology (formerly Physical Education) and Recreation programs. Unlike previously featured universities, these three institutes each offer a collection of course offerings, rather than a fully developed curriculum of study.

It is possible that, as a result, these programs don't make it onto the radar screens of either guidance counsellors or secondary school students when they consider OEE options. This is a shame.

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With this issue we are pleased to welcome new members to the *Pathways*' Editorial Board — Allan Foster, Director of the Kortright Centre; Allison Carrier, a graduate student at OISE; and Heather Bates, Camp Director at Tim Horton Onondaga Farms.

Departing the board after many years of active service are MJ Barrett, who is enjoying her PhD studies at the University of Regina, and Carolyn Finlayson, who first joined the board during her final year of high school and is now working for a non-profit government organization in Ottawa. Thanks MJ and Carolyn for your years with *Pathways*. And thanks, too, to Connie Russell, Tom Potter, Zabe MacEachren and Mike Morris who are maintaining their involvement on the Editorial Board.

We encourage you to contact any of the current board members to offer feedback on *Pathways*, suggest topics for individual articles, regular columns or theme issues, or to make a contribution as either a writer or a guest editor.

Our hope in 2004/2005 is to encourage more COEO members to contribute to *Pathways* — in the form of text, art, or ideas regarding both direction and content. Next spring 2004 we hope to launch for *Pathways* a year-long focus on OEE survival strategies for centres, courses, classes, field trips, etc. We need your stories to inspire and guide others.

Finally you will note many new names on the COEO Executive Board. Please contact them as well concerning COEO initiatives and directions, and to offer your contributions, ideas, and aspirations, as well as feedback regarding *Pathways*.

Bob Henderson  
Editor

## Sketch Pad

Art for this issue of *Pathways* is generously provided by Steve Tourney (cover and pages 4, 14 and 17), Katie Schlegel (pages 7, 11, 31 and 36) and Josh Gordon (page 26).

The Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting were a wonderful success as always. Kudos go to the conference committee for all the time they put into organizing the event. As a result of today's climate and current beliefs about the value of outdoor and environmental programs, we, as an organization, have been slowly moving towards some significant changes. I remember the Eco-Ed Conference and the days when our membership was over 800. Today we are around 200 members. We need to continue to spend time reminding people of the value and necessity of OE/EE. We have a new and energetic Board of Directors — 14 people who, with your support, can start to put into action the ideas that came from Conference 2003. I look forward to supporting COEO as it continues to grow through the involvement of its members. A special thank you to the outgoing executive members. They were there holding down the fort until the next team was ready to step in.

Wishing you success and many outdoor adventures.

*Mary Gyemi-Schulze*  
Past President — COEO

I would like to join Mary in thanking the outgoing board for its dedicated service to COEO. Thanks also to the hard-working conference committee for a most excellent Conference 2003. See the next issue of *Pathways* for more about this gathering.

At our Annual General Meeting, two motions were passed for the immediate consideration of the new board, and for fleshing out as constitutional amendments at our next AGM. The first urges COEO **"to promote the many and lasting values of outdoor education, both within and beyond our profession."** (It is time for us to more actively promote the many and great values of outdoor education.) The second asks COEO **"to promote an active environmental ethic as a core value of education."** (It is time for us to more actively recognize this moral obligation of anyone who calls herself or himself an outdoor educator.) As your new President, and as part of a diverse and dedicated new board, I will ensure that both these motions become an integral part of our planning for the next year.

Please note the schedule of board meetings below. Our first meeting will establish an action plan for the year, one that will seek to be both doable and of tangible benefit to COEO. As always, the scope and success of this plan will depend upon the passion and talent of our membership, both within and beyond the Board of Directors. If you are interested in joining us for this first full day of planning and/or in helping out with specific projects that will be announced in the next *Pathways*, please contact me at [glinney1@cogeco.ca](mailto:glinney1@cogeco.ca).

*Grant Linney*  
President — COEO

### COEO Board of Directors' Meetings 2003–2004

| Date                                     | Major Topic                                           | Host/Location                                       |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Sat. Nov. 15, 2003<br>9 a.m. to 7 p.m.   | Action plan for next year<br>Other business as needed | Grant Linney<br>Norval Outdoor School<br>Georgetown |
| Thurs. Jan. 15, 2004<br>7:30 p.m.        | Reports and check-in re.<br>action plan               | Teleconference (one hour)                           |
| Tues. Mar. 2, 2004<br>7:30 p.m.          | Reports and check-in re.<br>action plan               | Teleconference (one hour)                           |
| Sat. Apr. 17, 2004<br>9 a.m. to 4 p.m.   | Progress re. action plan<br>Other business as needed  | TBA                                                 |
| Sat. May 15, 2004<br>9 a.m. to 4 p.m.    | Progress re. action plan<br>Other business as needed  | TBA                                                 |
| Sat. Sept. 18, 2004<br>12 p.m. to 4 p.m. | Budget meeting                                        | Deana Grieg (Treasurer)<br>Warton                   |

## Outdoor Recreation

Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies

by Erin Sharpe

Outdoor recreation at Brock University is housed within the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, which is a broad-based program including therapeutic recreation, inclusive recreation, administration, and tourism studies. Although the department had a thriving outdoor experiential learning component under the direction of Simon Priest from the 1980s through the mid-1990s, the present-day program has taken on a different form. The department now offers an outdoor recreation concentration that encompasses ecotourism, resource management, adventure, parks management, outdoor education, wilderness philosophy, and wilderness leadership. The aim of our concentration is to prepare students to facilitate outdoor experiences following a conservation ethic.

Within our department, we have three faculty members who describe themselves as "outdoor recreationists" and teach the majority of the outdoor recreation courses. Dr. Ryan Plummer teaches RECL 1P96: Introduction to Outdoor Recreation; RECL 2P16: Fundamentals of Wildland Recreation; RECL 3P06: Recreation Resource Management; and RECL 4P06: Senior Seminar in Outdoor Recreation. Dr. Dave Fennell is presently teaching RECL 3P66: Ecotourism, and RECL 4P16: Advanced Wilderness Program Planning. Dr. Erin Sharpe teaches RECL 3P26: Outdoor Education and Interpretation, and RECL 3P36: Adventure Recreation.

These courses align closely with faculty members' personal research interests.

We also have the good fortune of having recently hired Dr. Paul Heintzman, an additional faculty member with a personal and academic interest in the outdoors, most notably in the area of wilderness and spirituality. This year Paul is teaching RECL 2P96: Parks Management.

Compared to some of the "old kids on the block" within the spectrum of university outdoor experiential education, our concentration is quite new (we like to think of it as "fresh"). Some of our courses have been taught in their new format only once, and we will graduate our first outdoor recreation concentration students this coming spring. Although we have big plans for the future, we are also very pleased with the developments we have made so far, most notably our efforts to successfully incorporate a field experience into four of our courses, so that we have a field component associated with one course at each year of our program. These courses with field experiences are described below:

**RECL 1P96: Introduction to Outdoor Recreation.** This is the course where students get a "sampler" of the different aspects of outdoor recreation studies that will be expanded upon in upper-year courses. Integrated into the course is a "camp experience" at an outdoor



centre, which students relate to one of the aspects of the course (i.e., resource management, outdoor education, adventure programming).

**RECL 2P16: Fundamentals of Wildland Recreation.** This course combines wilderness camping techniques with wilderness philosophy. Students learn the basics of backpacking, test them out on a four-day backpacking trip, and then apply a variety of historical and contemporary wilderness philosophies to their developing understanding of wilderness.

**RECL 3P26: Outdoor Education and Interpretation.** This course is a theoretical and practical investigation of the outdoors as a setting to develop an environmental awareness and connection to place. A four-day winter camping trip serves as the experiential and pedagogical guidepost from and through which students can explore place using the elements of story, art, craft, and environmental interpretation.

**RECL 4P16: Advanced Wilderness Program Planning.** This is our capstone field course for outdoor recreation students. Students take leadership roles in planning and executing a seven-day canoe trip in the Temagami region prior to the beginning of fall semester. They then spend the fall developing their own wilderness/ecotourism program plan, which encompasses elements from all of their previous courses, including issues of sustainability, risk management, leadership training, and interpretation.

Though our history is short, we have already noticed the growth of an outdoor recreation culture within the departmental student body. We have a dedicated and expanding collection of students who describe themselves as "outdoor recreation majors," and who revel in both classroom and field experiences. The emergence of an outdoor recreation cohort has given us the luxury of

some stability during unpredictable times. Having students we can count on, so to speak, has helped us manage some of our present struggles, such as securing a substantial budget to run field trips, and maintaining appropriate risk management practices.

Although we are pleased with the developments we have made so far, there is more we would like to do. Some of our future directions include the following:

- Making room in the curriculum for one-off special topics courses with extended field trips; e.g., a "Gender in the Outdoors" course or an "Ecotourism Ethics" course, where students and instructors can further explore specialized topics in greater depth, and where there is a strong experiential component.
- A stronger link to outdoor recreation opportunities housed within student services. An Outers' Club that sponsors trips for the student body at large would be a marvelous addition to our campus, as well as a great link for the students who wish to develop their outdoor or group leadership skills.
- Brock still has one major legacy of Simon Priest: the Community Adventure Training Institute (CATI), which is now operated through Conference Services. We hope to strengthen the link between CATI and our program, by incorporating CATI into course curriculum and fostering fieldwork placements for our students.

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*For more information on Outdoor Education at Brock University, please contact Erin Sharpe at the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Brock University, 500 Glenridge Ave., St. Catharines, Ontario, L2S 3A1.  
Phone: 905-688-5550 x 3989;  
e-mail: erin.sharpe@brocku.ca.*

## Chipping Away at History

by Caroline Bertola

I found myself one day sitting in my solarium workshop chipping away at a block of soapstone, the way the Inuit do. The sun was blazing through the transparent walls. I could hear the wind howling and the tiny snowflakes ticking and tacking on the glass, but inside I was warm and protected. For a few hours that afternoon, the character I began sculpting brought me to the world of the Labrador coast, home of the Inuit. As I chipped, forming the shape of a bundled up little man, the small figure introduced me to many of his cultural and ancestral mores.

As I started with his caribou hide boots, he brought me along on the travels his people took in search of food for the upcoming cold deadly winter. Hiding behind a boulder, we watched and hoped a grazing muskox would catch our scent and move down the large valley where my Inuit's friend was waiting, bow and arrow in hand. Instead, the muskox ran off. We had missed our chance this time, and considering the hunger we were feeling at the time, we knew that the next opportunity available we could not afford to miss catching a beast.

We walked an hour north of our initial location and luckily encountered a herd of caribou. Quickly, my Inuit friend and his companion strung up their bows and departed in opposite directions, circling the herd. Moments later, I heard a scream — not the scream of a human, but that of a caribou calf receiving a sharp jab in the ribs, right near the heart. I watched it struggle and holler as arrows flew through the air, striking the animal again and again. By then the other members of the herd were long gone, seeking refuge and shelter in the nearby woods.

We all walked toward the slain animal, converging at the corpse. The strong, well-

built men pulled out a rope and tied the hooves of the animal together. They planned to drag the great beast back to camp, since it was too heavy to carry. The early fall snow was not yet thick enough for the men to use dogs and sleds, therefore each step was slow and calculated so as not to exhaust them before reaching the tribe.

As I chipped my way up to the Inuit's right hand, he showed me how to build his winter home. I followed him cautiously onto the thick, snow-covered ice. I wondered whether the ice would support the snow's weight and ours. My friend saw my anguish, let out a little laugh, and pulled out his *pana*, which is his snowknife. Held together by a sealskin lashing, he grasped the antler handle of the knife and slid the copper blade through the snow in the shape of a large circle.

He cut the snow into large rectangular slabs that he had me remove from the circle. As much as possible he cut the slabs from the inside of the circle for this would become the floor to the snow house he was building. The lower the floor would be, the lower the roof could be too, thus protecting the inhabitants from violent winter winds.

He then placed the snow slabs on the border of the circle standing upward to form the base of a wall. He started off by placing the first slabs low to the ground, which determined the diameter of the house. Then, the slabs were placed in the shape of a spiral, working its way upward and inward toward the sky, forming the walls and roof. He carefully overlapped the blocks to ensure that none would cave in on his family and visiting friends (winter was a time of great socializing). The final positioning of the snow blocks was critical for, if the Inuit's roof was too flat, it was more likely to collapse under the weight



of the snow. My friend then dug out a tunnel for his entrance and welcomed me into his new home. With my help, the little man had completed the house in less than an hour!

I chipped on, this time shaping the left hand of my Inuit as he transported me to the late days of summer, to the tent of an Inuit seamstress. With a wide smile, the seamstress invited me in and had me sit at her side. She held the most important tool of her work, an *ulu*, in her hand. She used the *ulu*, with a crescent-shaped copper blade and an antler handle, to cut the skins of caribou, fox (red, black, blue, cross and white), muskox, seal, marten, mink, weasel, lynx, wolverine and wolf brought back by the hunting men of her tribe. Summer's end was an especially crucial time for the seamstress, for she had to get winter clothes ready for tribe members before the vicious darkness and cold would settle over the region.

Though her hands were coarse and solid, the agility she demonstrated was astounding. She was making a pair of mittens for a child. She raised the piece of sealskin to her mouth and began to chew the edge of it. She did this to soften the skin so she could feed the sinew threads through the normally tough skin. The sinew threads were made of caribou hide, since they are practically unbreakable.



Once she was done, she handed me the mitten to try on. Though it was too small for my thick hand, the seal fur lining of the mitten instantly warmed the tips of my fingers. With mittens like this one I would love to be an Inuit child! I could tell she appreciated my visit, and gave me a gift, the gift of a caribou hide coat, the lightest and warmest coat an Inuit could have. Though I knew I could not take the coat back to my world, I accepted her gift, thanked her graciously, and continued on my way. My Inuit friend was waiting for me outside.

I carved my way up to the parka hood of the Inuit, and my friend transported to me his thoughts on the creation of the world, thunder and lightning, and how they came to be. He told me that in the beginning,

there was nothing but water. No mountains, no valleys, no trees, no light. I

magically found myself floating above this gigantic mass of water when, suddenly, rocks and stones fell from the sky, splashed on the water, and then sunk. Moments later I could see mountains growing out of the body of water forming rifts and valleys, plains and fields. "That's how the planet was created in the minds of the Inuit," my friend told me.

It was a dark time too, a time where people and animals interacted most frequently. As words began to exist,

magic appeared too. I spied on a fox as he encountered a snow hare in a field. To my amazement the fox spoke to the hare, saying the word "dark" three times. "Dark! Dark! Dark!" he said. He wanted the world to stay dark so he could steal food from the humans without being caught. The snow hare, on the other hand, repeated to the fox the word "light" three times. "Light! Light! Light!" said the snow hare. As he spoke, the sky lit up. He could at last see the food he had been longing for in the grass. And so were created night and day, alternating back and forth.

Moments later I stood in the darkness again, but this time not the darkness of night. I began to see flashes of lightning followed by roars of thunder. I asked the Inuit, "How were lightning and thunder born?" He told me that once, long ago, lightning and thunder were twins who had been abandoned by their tribe. The tribe had left camp one night while the two were still sleeping. The children went a long time without food, nearly starving to death. One day, the two found a piece of dried sealskin and flint stone. They began to play with the two materials when suddenly, while rubbing the two together, they created a spark. They kept playing with the sparks and made crashing sounds after each one. The first twin said he would like to be like the flash of the spark, and the other said he wanted to be the roar after each one, and together they could punish the tribe that left them behind. Though they did not know what lightning and thunder were, they were instantly transported to the sky to become lightning and thunder so they could, in fact, punish those who abandoned them and all those who caused evil in the world. I closed my eyes and, to my surprise, saw another flash of light.

When I opened my eyes again I found myself back in my workshop with my sculpture complete. I looked into the eyes of the small figure I carved and all I could see was fog. In that fog I could make out the silhouette of a man holding a baby, but could not make out

its face. The Inuit told me that the baby was his future, and then he disappeared. I did not have the time to thank him for showing me his past, but I was very grateful for the experience.

I placed my tools on the table and began polishing the stone carefully, making it shine, still wondering the identity of the man and baby and why the future in his eyes was unclear. When I finished I looked into his eyes again, and noticed that I could see my own reflection. It was then, at that very moment, that I realized I was the baby. My Inuit friend had showed me the lives and beliefs of my ancestors, my family, my past. Now, I was the future.

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*Caroline Bertola graduated with an Honours degree from the Recreation and Leisure Studies program at Brock University in June 2003. Currently she is taking some time off from her studies to work abroad and travel before pursuing further studies in outdoor recreation and park management. She wrote this story for a class assignment in a course on Interpretation and Outdoor Education.*

## Environmental Responsibility

Is it Really a Benefit of Participating in Wilderness Recreation?

by Bryan Grimwood

*Sipping from my frequently used travellers' mug, I wash down three bites of a donut with a large black coffee. Until now, this regular experience has left a pleasant and satisfied taste in my mouth. Yet for some reason, I am slightly disgusted — slightly repelled. Could my nausea be a result of the 17 unused napkins that accompany my donut in the apparently unused brown paper bag?*

*Perhaps I am sickened by the fact that the drive-through virtually handed me an empty paper cup with my refilled mug of coffee so that I could enjoy the heartbreak of 'R-R-Rolling Up the R-R-Rim' to lose, again. Or maybe my ailment can be attributed to my realization that I am contributing further to highway traffic and the global warming crisis by driving alone in my automobile. Quite possibly, my distaste is linked to my anticipated destination: a downhill ski resort where an altered natural environment provides me with opportunities for speed, bumps, and excitement. I am really unsure. What is pestering my belly today?*

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*Forest fires can be devastating. They can advance unmercifully to ravage natural environments and developed communities. When forest fires occur naturally, however, nature demonstrates her ability to heal herself and generate new life. Forest fires are symbolic of the cycles and interconnectedness of living and non-living elements of the Earth. I was awed by this connection to the Earth on a summer canoe trip along a Quebec river. On our second to last day, our group rounded a bend in the river and was overwhelmed by 'Bald-Eagle' cliff — a sheer rock face towering above the water. Among the thick brush that highlighted the top and sides of the cliff, a few patches of flame and smoke wandered into the wind. The elaborate magnificence of the natural environment was enthralling. The current of the river, the dominance of the cliff*

*face, the mysterious land beyond the shoreline, and the spark of the small forest fires collaborated into a song of wilderness that inspired feelings of joy, reverence, humbleness, and gratitude. Experiencing these moments in this place affirmed my union to the landscape, the environment, the Earth.*

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The opening passages of this paper depict many different images. The first anecdote describes a situation where the narrator is clearly disturbed by the waste, pollution, and impacts created by his actions. Within this excerpt there is an element of concern and responsibility assumed by the writer for how his behaviours contribute to common environmental problems that confront Western society. In the second passage, the same individual identifies how a backcountry travelling experience encourages a fondness for and connection to the natural environment. The narrator's second tale reinforces the wonders and grandeur of the Earth's wilderness. At first glance, the two excerpts are loaded with clashing differences that portray scenes and experiences that are mostly unrelated. The obvious factor coupling the anecdotes is the environment.

A more meaningful connection between the two passages, however, can be rationalized. In both accounts there exists an element of the writer's environmental responsibility and, certainly, both experiences contribute, in some capacity, to understanding the writer's feelings for the natural environment. As Martin (1999) notes, "the direct connection between lived experience and environmental concern is to be expected" (p. 463). But what exactly is this connection? How are experiences in natural environments connected to

environmental concerns and environmentally responsible behaviours? More specifically, how do wilderness recreation experiences relate to the environmental considerations and actions of individuals in their home communities? What role do outdoor recreation leaders play in encouraging this connection?

Among environmental education, adventure, outdoor pursuit, and wilderness recreation programs, different environmental responsibility outcomes for the participants emerge. This should be of little surprise to those who are familiar with the goals of each program type. For the purpose of this paper, particular attention has been granted to wilderness recreation trips.

Do individuals that engage in wilderness canoe trips, for example, develop an appreciation for natural settings? Do they feel connected to the natural environment that they visited and advocate on its behalf? The academic literature concerning this subject suggests an uncertainty as to the positive environmental outcomes of wilderness recreation programs.

*“How are experiences in natural environments connected to environmental concerns and environmentally responsible behaviours?”*

### **Factors Obstructing Positive Environmental Responsibility Outcomes**

The assumed benefits of wilderness experience are illustrated by Miles (1991) as he suggests that many educators consider exposure to natural environments as the best strategy for student learning and understanding of nature and of the problems associated with human interactions in relation to it. Miles contends that “to understand a wild and natural place,

one must travel there and watch the sun rise, listen to the silence, and gaze over nature largely unaffected by human enterprise” (p. 5). Similarly, Haluza-Delay (1999b) asserts

*In an increasingly urbanized world, one could reasonably expect that encounter with the natural world becomes important in the development of an environmental ethic, and that wilderness tripping would be a place for participants to consider their relations with the planet. (p. 129).*

Indeed, the notion that wilderness recreation trip experiences contribute to participants’ environmental responsibility is often accepted without question by many programmers and authors. Haluza-Delay (1999a) continues, however, that “wilderness program leaders can point to anecdotal evidence of the power of program participation, but little systematic investigation has considered the phenomenon of the ‘relationship with nature’ or developing environmental concern on an adventure program” (p. 129). Before positive environmental responsibility outcomes can be considered an outcome of wilderness experience, more research and investigation into these claims must be conducted. At this time, individuals that sponsor wilderness experiences must recognize that there are reasons for being cautious in our acceptance of positive environmental responsibility outcomes through such outdoor experiences.

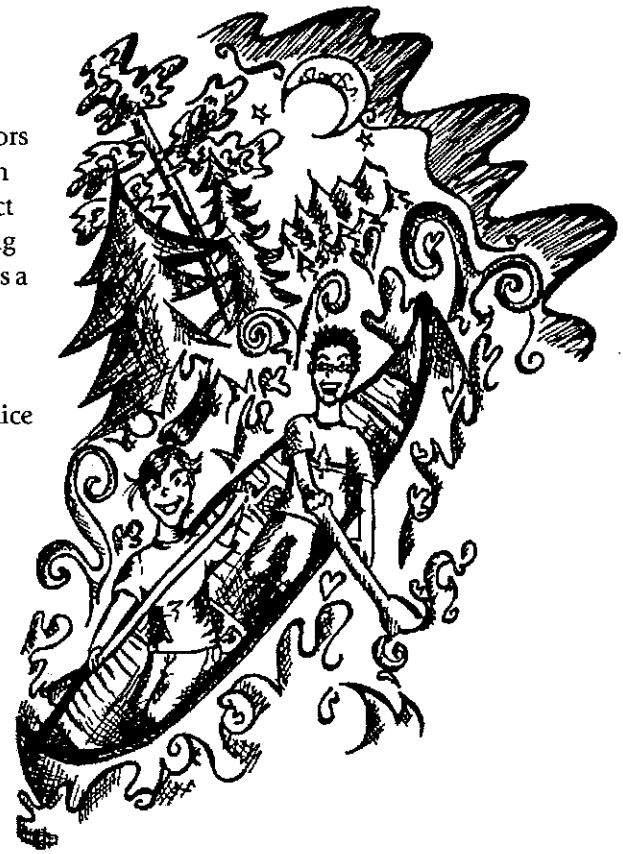
The various characteristics and styles of trips in wilderness settings, for instance, can limit the positive relationship between wilderness experience and environmental responsibility (Brookes, 2001; Haluza-Delay, 1999a; Weiler, 1996). Wilderness recreation trips frequently involve elements of adventure programming in which participants and leaders recognize nature as an opponent (Haluza-Delay, 1999b). In other words, river rapids, uphill climbs, or fierce thunderstorms are viewed as obstacles

to completing the day's journey. In turn, wilderness recreationists may assume a conquering mentality over nature and experience "an adversarial relationship with the natural world as a place against which to test oneself" (Haluza-Delay, 1999b, p. 130). This relationship forms the foundation of wilderness programs that have central goals of personal growth and group development rather than the nature-human relationship. For example, McIntyre and Roggenbuck (1998) describe the study results discovered by Scherl during an Outward Bound course in the Australian wilderness. As a typical outdoor adventure program, the course aimed to foster personal growth through programmed group activities. Scherl's study "found that participants focused principally on self in terms of activities and emotions and on the social setting rather than on the natural environment. Only on the solo day was the physical environment uppermost in people's minds" (McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998, pp. 405-406). Similarly, in a study of extended rafting trips, Arnould and Price (1993) found that the development of a sense of community was the most meaningful aspect of trip for the participants. To highlight, Arnould and Price state that "what drove their emergent sense of identity was shared recognition of a common problem: their fear of the river, including shampooing their hair in it" (p. 35). Not only does this quote reflect poor environmental behaviour and feelings for natural environments, it also suggests that the emergence of community within extended trips may actually promote this poor relationship with the wilderness (Haluza-Delay, 1999b). Certainly, the frequent focus on conquering nature, personal growth, and group development during adventure programs in wilderness settings can overshadow or even inhibit the development of an environmental ethic.

Furthermore, wilderness trip experiences can lead participants towards views that humans and nature are detached — that nature is 'out

there' (Brookes, 2001; Haluza, 1999a). Interestingly, these authors suspect that the common focus on minimal-impact camping strategies during wilderness experiences is a key factor in separating humans from nature (Brookes, 2001; Haluza-Delay, 1999a). The practice of minimum-impact techniques is frequently the extent to which wilderness users behave responsibly. Consideration of the individual's impacts in home environments or in reaching wilderness destinations (e.g., driving) are rare, suggesting that only in wilderness must people be mindful (Haluza-Delay, 1999a). By maintaining this mind set, humans establish themselves as visitors to natural environments, fail to rely on nature for any of their needs, and interact with the wilderness on their own terms (Haluza-Delay, 1999a).

The role of the wilderness trip leader is also important to the promotion of environmental responsibility among participants. To illustrate, technically trained leaders often fail to involve participants in learning about natural environment features that are necessary for navigating the wilderness journey. For example, "having a guide on the Franklin [river] removes the necessity for rafters to read the water or to have particular knowledge of the river" (Brookes, 2001, p. 16). Participants simply need to perform a skill to descend the river; leaders do the rest. In these situations, the natural environment is just the setting or playing field for the adventure (Hogan, 1992). If leadership training had



more focus on education theory and less emphasis on technical skill development, participants could be encouraged to engage more with the natural environment (Haluzadelay, 1999a; Hogan, 1992). Brookes (2001) notes that "tourism of this kind is not an antidote to the estrangement from nature of modern life, but something much more ambiguous which contains much of the estrangement it purports to transcend" (p. 17).

## Summary

The uncertainty as to whether environmental responsibility is encouraged and developed during wilderness recreation trips is troubling. Many wilderness- and adventure-focused programs concentrate on achieving human-focused goals (e.g., personal growth and group development), encourage the mentality of conquering nature, and uphold the notion that nature is not present in home communities. There is something inherently wrong with this situation. Perhaps the commitments involved with environmental responsibility (e.g., learning, advocating, and modifying behaviour) are work-like practices that wilderness recreation participants do not expect or desire when travelling in wilderness settings (Weiler, 1996). Nevertheless, recreation programs venturing into wilderness areas — areas that are constantly described as depleting, degrading, and vanishing — should involve a substantial focus on the environment, our appreciation and love for it, our relationship to it, and ways we can sponsor its conservation, preservation, and rejuvenation. Leaders of wilderness recreation trips have a responsibility to develop, implement, practice, and achieve programmatic strategies that consider these goals.

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## Outdoor Experiential Education

Department of Kinesiology

by Bob Henderson

Outdoor Experiential Education (OEE) at McMaster University is housed within the Department of Kinesiology Programme, which is a broad-based program including dance, exercise physiology, coaching, sport and health administration, and biomechanics. The idea to add an outdoor education emphasis was kindled in 1980 when no fewer than eight senior students elected to complete their fourth and final year at the University of Alberta to take the outdoor education courses offered there. A grassroots effort to offer OEE courses led to my hiring in 1981; twenty-two years later, I'm still at it.

Currently courses offered cater to "general interest" students, the majority of whom have an interest in teaching. Each year there are a small number of students specifically keen on OEE. Many of these students bring to the program a healthy background in camping and/or community services. Courses are offered to third and fourth year students, after they have completed a core required kinesiology curriculum in their first and second years. OEE courses are also open to a limited number of non-kinesiology students.

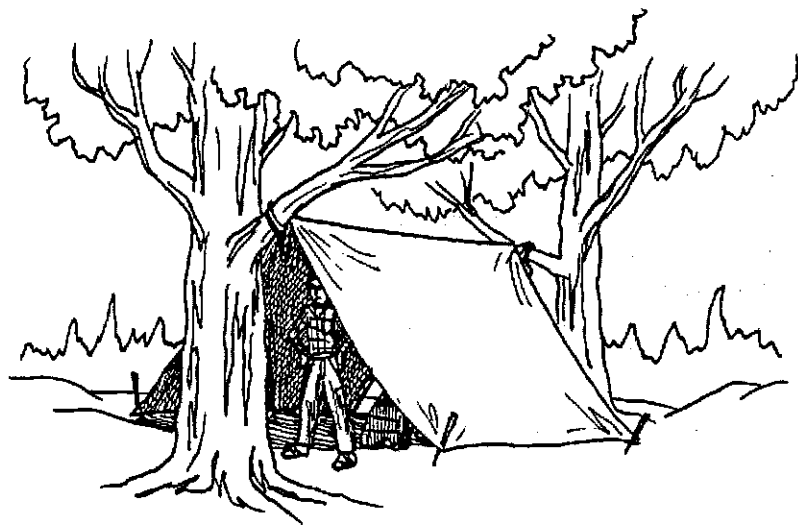
Specific course offerings are as follows:

**3DD3 Foundations of OEE (40–60 students).** This course introduces students to many differing sub-categories of OEE. Specific units for lecture and experiential workshops include ecotourism, bioregional education, environment and ecopolitical education, earth education, ecopsychology, popular education, and expeditionary learning.

**4U03 Adventure-based Learning (30–50 students).** Over the years this course has been taught by Brian Lisson, Liz Newbery and Kathy Haras. The focus here is on programming for various client/student groups preceded by an introduction to adventure-based pedagogy. 4U03 has a weekend field component. There is also an urban adventure field outing.

**4D03 Outdoor Education (25–45 students).** Outdoor Education involves a nine-day field trip before September classes commence. Two days at an outpost base to teach canoe travel skills and bush lore are followed by a canoe trip in small groups. We travel in an area northeast of Sudbury. Subsequent classes draw on the interests of the class as generated from the trip. Students lead group presentations and have an individual assignment that often involves learning/doing something new and can be craft-based. For example, each year we run a popular canoe paddle making workshop. In all cases, there is a written research or creative writing component.

**4G03 Winter Travel: Place, Story and Technology (10–20 students).** This course begins with an examination of the role of Place, Story and Technology/Technique in OEE. As one class grouping, we spend five days in Algonquin Park. The trip is designed to be a celebration of winter and involves living in a cabin/winter home, dog sledding, and snowshoeing. It also includes a three-day traditional wall tent, wood stove, hand hauling snowshoe trip (i.e., warm winter camping). The trip is meant to expose students to many possible winter camping styles. Outdoor shelters and snow shelters are



also experienced. Assignments include sharing a Canadian winter heritage story as a "storyteller," and a detailed piece of winter natural heritage as a "field interpreter."

There are also two additional courses: 4EE3 Advanced Student Placement and 4R3/4RR6 Directed Study/Thesis. Each year there is a small number of students registered in these supervisory-based, individual study courses.

Placements are usually within alternative schools or at outdoor education centers. Thesis projects over the years have included

- The Representation and Appropriation of Indigenous Cultures at Ontario Summer Camps
- The Crafting of a Hunting Bow in an Indigenous Manner
- Outdoor Education and the Visual Arts
- Understanding OEE within the Ontario Educational Curricular Guidelines.

The OEE program is well supported on campus by the student outdoors club, which hosts events and recreational activities, and by the Department of Athletics and Recreation, which, throughout the year, provides

employment opportunities at campus field day camps as well as local and distance trip opportunities. In 2003, this department has brought an Alpine Tower Climbing/Ropes Initiative Structure to our campus, which will further offer opportunities to our OEE students' lives.

My own research interests concern Canadian travel heritage. I like to link historical, literary and anthropological themes of Canadian Studies into course work and field experience, as suitable. I am also interested in ecophilosophy and pedagogical practice for both the classroom and wilderness travel setting. For close to ten years, I have worked with a colleague whose focus has been adventure-based learning, which helps provide a good mix of attentions to our McMaster course work.

Kinesiology faculty in a number of the sub-disciplines and those who are "professionally based" and not involved with a McMaster Graduate Programme would do well to note a statement that appeared in recent university-issued human resources document: "Your area will not be replaced when you retire or leave." The Department of Kinesiology has a Bio-science Graduate offering but not a Socio-Cultural offering and hence the broad-based orientation to the Kinesiology Undergraduate Programme is threatened. Members of the Socio-Cultural Stream are in communications with Health Sciences and Gerontology within Social Science to explore a partnership for Graduate Studies. This will be a good fit for OEE and constitutes a dominate initiative in the years ahead.

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## Ursa Major Rotation

by Louis-Philippe Plante

The stars that make up the constellations have fascinated humankind since, well, the existence of humankind. First simply gazed upon with wonder, then used to mark the passage of time, next relied on as a schedule for agriculture, and later applied as an aid to navigation, the stars became an integral part of many cultures. While stargazing over the centuries, people began to attribute certain properties to these stars, and eventually the constellations were born. Records of highly similar constellations, and their associated stories, that exist across geographically isolated cultures suggest that these myths emerged before human migration to separate continents occurred, rather than through interchange and dialogue afterwards.

### Earth's Orbit

To fully understand the disappearance and reappearance of certain constellations at certain times throughout the year, an understanding of the motion of the Earth is required. Most people know that the Earth, tilted on an angle of  $23.5^\circ$ , rotates on its axis every 24 hours. One full rotation is the measure of a day. It takes the Earth 365.25 days to orbit the sun, which gives rise to an extra day every four years. While the orbit of the Earth around the sun is not exactly spherical, it is not the distance between the sun and the Earth which gives rise to the seasons. The time when the Earth is *furthest* from the sun — the "aphelion" — occurs during the first few days of July. The time when the Earth is *closest* to the sun — the "perihelion" — occurs in the early days of January.

The changes in season are due to the  $23.5^\circ$  tilt in the Earth's north-south axis. While the "top half" of the Earth is tilted towards the sun, the "bottom half" is tilted away from the sun. This is why winter and summer occur at

opposite times in the northern and southern hemispheres. When the northern hemisphere is tilted towards the sun, the angle of incoming sunlight is reduced, and thus heats up a smaller surface area. The result is the warm weather we experience in summer. After a half-rotation around the sun, the northern hemisphere is now tilted away from the Earth. Now, the sun's rays are spread out over a larger surface area. This means the sun cannot heat the Earth as much. The result is the cold weather we experience in winter. The same phenomenon occurs in the southern hemisphere, except that the timing is opposite. Autumn and spring occur when the Earth is neither tilted towards the sun nor away from it, but is tilted "sideways."

### The Constellations

As the Earth moves around the sun, and as the Earth rotates on its axis, different constellations become visible at different times of the year. In fact, the only constellation that remains consistently in the same place is the North Star: Polaris.

[On a side note, for accuracy sake, I will mention a phenomenon called the precession of the equinoxes. This is due to the anomalous whirling, or wobbling, of the Earth, one cycle of which takes 26,000 years to complete. In actual fact, the North Star will be closest to facing True North in the year 2100. Ignoring this complication for the moment, many cultures noticed that all other stars seemed to spin around Polaris.]

Many cultures came up with stories to address why stars moved along a regular path in the sky, and repeated the cycle each year. One of these stories concerns Ursa Major, which, literally, means "Great Bear."

### Ursa Major

Also commonly known as the Big Dipper, and the Plough, this constellation is the most commonly known and most easily recognizable. It is also unique in that it points the way to the North Star, and, consequently, Ursa Minor (the Little Dipper) as well. To find the North Star, first locate Ursa Major (which is prominent and easily located). Then, draw a line extending through the two stars furthest from the handle. This line points directly to the North Star, which, as suggested by its name, is in the northern part of the sky (unless you're standing on the North Pole, in which case it points straight up).

Many cultures throughout the world have interpreted Ursa Major as a bear. Aristotle held that this was so because only the bear was thought to be bold enough to tempt solitude and cold by venturing into the frozen regions of the north. Many other interpretations, however, are also common. These include describing the constellation as a wagon, plough, and coffin.

### The Story of the Great Bear

In the North American Native tradition, there is a story common to Micmacs, Algonquians and Iroquois. In this story, seven avian hunters pursue the Bear, who is represented by the square of the constellation. The first star of the "handle" is the Robin, who is followed by a Chickadee (who carries a pan), a Cowbird, a Pigeon, a Blue Jay, an Owl, and a Saw-whet Owl. The Chickadee is said to be carrying a pan, because the position of this "star" is actually two stars. The larger represents the Chickadee, and the smaller the pan. In fact, this was purportedly used as an ancient eye exam, where only those with exceptional vision could see that this point of light was, in fact, two points. Appearance of some of the other stars also led to their naming. The star representing the Robin has a red reflection, as does the star representing the Saw-whet Owl (these Owls

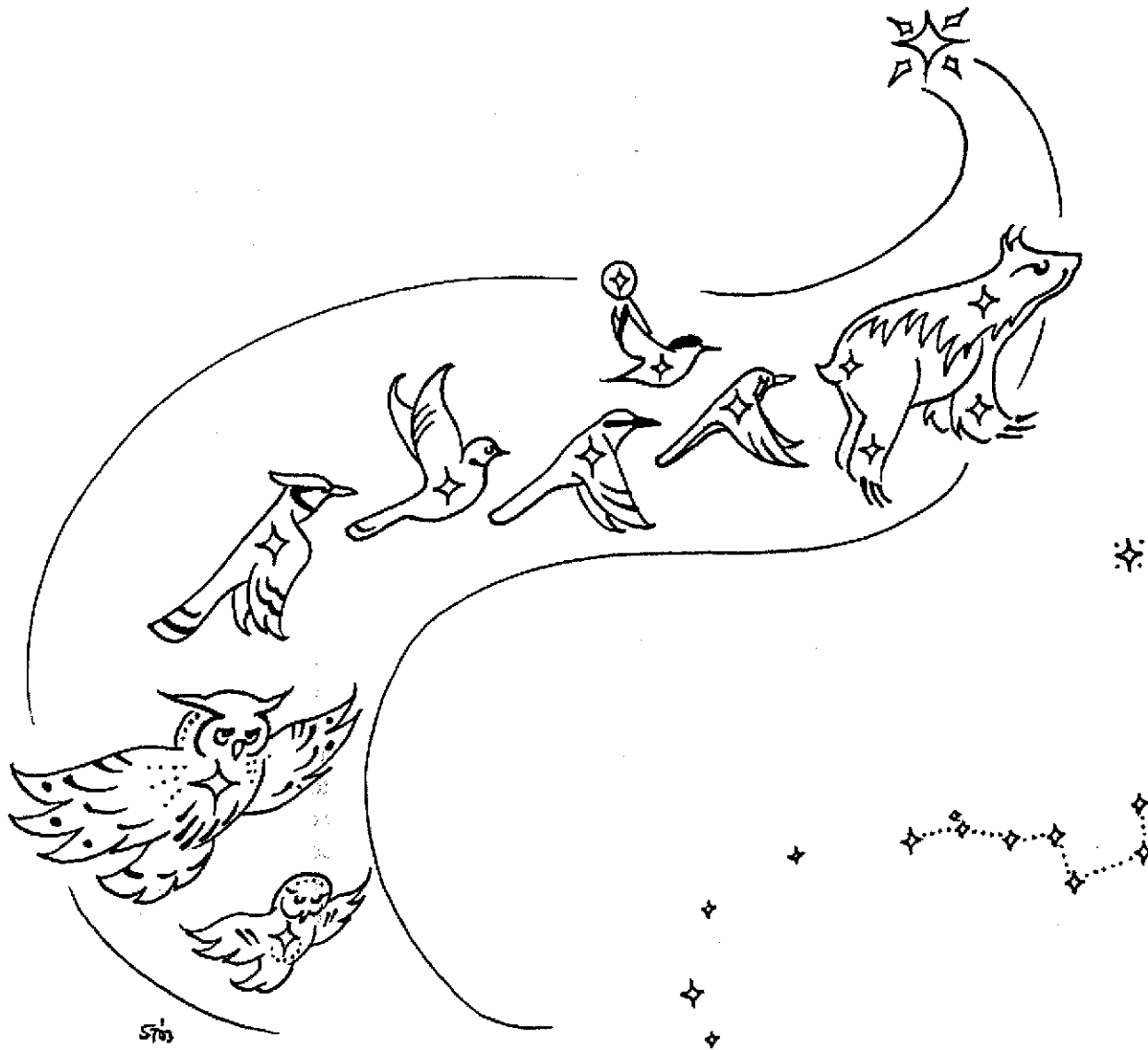
have heads covered with red feathers). The third star is blue, and was thus named the Blue Jay. The Chickadee is the smallest of the stars, and the Owl is the largest.

*"Many cultures came up with stories to address why stars moved along a regular path in the sky. . ."*

The story of the Great Bear is interesting, in that it follows the events of the paths of the stars. In late spring, the bear awakes from hibernation, and is immediately pursued by the hunters. The bear flees from them all through summer. This corresponds to the path of these stars through the night sky. Eventually, in the fall, the Owls, then Blue Jay, then Pigeon lose his tracks and fall behind. This corresponds to the appropriate stars falling out of view during this time of year (early October). Cornered by the remaining hunters, the bear rears up on her hind legs to protect herself, but is shot by the Robin, thus falling onto her back (again the position of the stars matches the story). Covered with blood, the Robin attempts to fly up and shake itself clean. All but a little patch of blood that remains on the Robin sprinkles onto the trees and gives them their colour in autumn. Eventually, the Chickadee and Cowbird catch up and share in the meal. Meanwhile, the bear's skeleton appears upside down (i.e., dead) throughout the winter months, where it remains until spring when its spirit, having been in hibernation, reunites with the body, and the saga begins anew.

### Activity

Choose seven volunteers to be the Big Dipper — four to be the Great Bear, and three to be the Robin, the Chickadee, (an additional one for the pan, if you like), and the Cowbird. If you are feeling especially ambitious, you can have four additional students act out the part



of the Pigeon, the Blue Jay, the Owl, and the Saw-whet Owl.

Have the rest of the group stand around in a large circle. They represent the edge of the visible sky, and also serve as the trees that gain their colour in the autumn from the Robin. Here, it is helpful to have the narrator act as Polaris, the North Star. The narrator stands slightly off-centre to the circle. Once you get everyone in proper position, you can have someone try to "find" the narrator, based on the position of the Great Bear. Everyone now knows how to find north on a clear night. Begin the narration of the story in spring. Note here that, with the "trees" in a circle, the bear

will only appear in proper position to about half of the group. To avoid this, you can explain that this representation works best if everyone imagines the actors being far above everyone else. Now, based on the position of the "legs" we can see which way is "down." As the story continues, the bear moves around the circle, while being "chased" by the other birds. Here, the actors must keep their relative position, both to each other, and to the North Star (you can see now why it helps to have the narrator act as the North Star).

If you are incorporating the Pigeon, Blue Jay, Owl, and Saw-whet Owl, they exit the circle, one by one, as they no longer "fit" inside the

circle, starting with the Saw-whet Owl, and ending with the Pigeon. Now the bear rears on her hind legs to scare away or fight off the birds (a good time for artistic licence).

The Robin, unafraid, shoots the Great Bear. Splattered with blood, the Robin shakes, and gives colour to the trees. The other birds come to share in the feast. Note here that the stars don't actually meet anywhere; this requires imagination. These stories were, after all, created long before the idea of television even existed.

Finally, the Great Bear is reduced to a skeleton, lying on its back during the winter. The bear's spirit awaits rebirth in the spring, when the story will unfold again, repeating itself forever.

### Bonus Activity

If your setting lends itself to contact with the same group for an extended period of time, you can incorporate this activity, to "show" how the stars rotate in the real world. This activity can be combined with any other astronomy-type activity (studying the cycles of the moon, for example, or learning to identify various constellations).

Choose one particular spot from which to work, with an easily distinguishable visible landmark (e.g., a lone tree in the middle of a field). Draw a large circle on a sheet of paper: this will represent the visible sky. Be sure to be standing in the same place, and facing the same landmark each time you do this. Also remember to note the direction of the landmark on the paper.

Now look up, and draw the Great Bear. Use it to find Polaris, and draw that as well. You can also draw in the Little Dipper (Polaris is the last star on its handle), and any other constellations that are visible, such as Draco, which can be found between the two. You may also suggest "season specific" constellations to be drawn, such as Orion, who is most prominent during the winter months.

Repeat this activity no less than once per season (to track the direction of rotation), and no more than every two to three weeks (to ensure there is a notable difference in rotation). Once every one or two months is fine. The great thing about this activity is that if you can't go out one day, due to clouds, waiting a few days (or weeks) is no big deal.

Whenever you have created enough pictures (ideally, at least two seasons), you can have everyone lay them out in order, and discuss what is happening. There may be temptation to orient the stars the "same way," but be sure to orient everything based on the landmark that was used.

This activity will show the progression of the constellations. If you have been making pictures for a whole year, you can track the progression of the stars throughout the year. If you have been making pictures for a shorter period of time, you can see the progress of the stars, and predict where they will move to next. By this time, everyone will be able to locate north, and, it is hoped, have an appreciation for the path the Earth takes while hurtling through the universe.

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## Adventure Education

by Meridith Sones

On a warm summer evening three years ago, sixteen island castaways invaded living rooms across North America for the first time in history — and the life of the average couch potato was changed forever. With one click of the television remote, your living room is filled with swimsuit-model *Survivors* and Sprite-selling snowboarders. Just one click and the Extreme couch potato is born. In single action packed evening, you can single-handedly starve with investment bankers and shoe designers in the *Outback*, eavesdrop on a houseful of professional surfers on the *North Shore*, and watch Eco-challenge Playboy bunnies trekking in Borneo. The Extreme couch potato can cover the globe, and all without leaving the comfort of their La-Z-Boy® chair. As long as you don't mind a few interruptions here and there by Marlboro-smoking mountain bikers driving tent-equipped sport utility vehicles, the experience can truly be an adventure to remember. And as you yawn and sink further down into that perfectly molded chair, you can be sure to always be left with one final souvenir before heading to dreamland: three simple words plastered on a hollow black television screen — JUST DO IT.

These carefully constructed media images of adventure are unavoidable. They are on our television screens, in our magazines, in our bathroom stalls and on our park benches. Each and every morning thousands of people are joined at the breakfast table by the slogan "Eat or Be Eaten" plastered across their cereal box. What was once considered to be an alternative subculture has been engulfed by mass media and regurgitated as mainstream. The concept of adventure in popular culture has been objectified into what Chris Loynes (1996) referred to as "adventure in a bun" — the cookie-cutter production of adventure into a marketable and consumable form (p. 52). And it's available to you in three exciting new flavours: rivers, rocks and ropes.

In the context of adventure education however, this narrow and manufactured presentation of high-risk recreation is heavily problematic. Evidently, the field has been cast under the stereotype of being solely about ropes courses and rafting trips, which are in fact merely a few tools in the giant tickle-trunk used by adventure educators. But how did this popular notion of adventure come to be? And, perhaps more importantly, what are the implications for the field of adventure education as a whole?

Many factors have influenced the construction of the adventure-education stereotype. Whether it is the rising popularity of extreme sports, the commercialization of high-risk leisure, or the growing perception of humans against nature, all are socially constructed through history, highly political and highly complex. In their study of skydivers, Celsi, Rose and Leigh (1993) produced a model for high-risk leisure consumption within Western culture. Central to their model is the concept of the "Western imagination," which refers to the way in which an individual's understanding of reality is powerfully mediated through culture. According to Celsi et al. (1993), the Western imagination acts as a "fundamental cultural lens through which individuals frame their perceptions and seek their self-identities" (p. 3). These dramatic rituals are traced back to the theatre of Ancient Greece, in which the staging of antagonist vs. protagonist manifests itself in such dichotomies as good vs. evil and human vs. nature.

These relationships are still heavily embedded into the cultural norms of the present day. The concept of human vs. nature draws particular concern from an outdoor educator's standpoint, due to its potential as both an environmental and educational hazard. According to Celsi et al. (1993), these norms and rituals are under the influence of macroenvironmental factors such as mass media, social specialization and technology

(p. 3). Each element combines to form a socially constructed hyper-reality, whereby the imaginative becomes perceived reality. For example, with respect to mass media, society adopts cultural images from movies and television and substitutes these perceptions as having realistic application. In the context of adventure, the public watches a glamorized portrayal of a K2 expedition in Vertical Limit and the dramatized life of a whitewater guide in River Wild and fails to recognize their viewing experience as fictitious. A narrow understanding of "adventure" is therefore constructed through the Hollywood lens.

Another factor contributing to the rise of high-risk recreation is the concept of social specialization. Characteristic of post-industrial capitalist society, it refers to the modern workplace in which individuals lose "autonomy and are distanced from the products of their labor, resulting in loss of self-efficacy" (Celsi et al., 1993, p. 5). The relationship of workplace and identity is cyclical: the workplace strips the individual of autonomy, causing tension and stress, and yet provides the resources for the same individual to relieve this stress by seeking leisure activity through which the self can be characterized. Such pursuits, in combination with material possession and property, became the dominant means of measuring social status and defining the self. Evidently this trend has escalated well beyond the capitalist revolution. The times have changed since the days of Sir Edmund; adventure has become fashionable, and it is no coincidence that the world's highest peak has retrogressed from a forum for serious mountain climbers into an amusement park for wealthy adrenaline junkies.

Along with identifying the construction of the stereotype itself, it is important to reflect on the implication of such notions for the field of adventure education. Is the role of adventure education as a means of positive and transformative education at risk? Henderson (1996) explored the impact of a human vs. nature approach to the adventure experience. He identifies this dichotomy as underlying mainstream conceptions of nature and the environment, and calls for a shift in paradigm that denies this *opposition to nature*, and

instead recognizes our organic *connection with nature* (Henderson, 1996, p. 139). Considering the goal of environmental awareness is often incorporated into adventure education programs, problems arise when participants approach the experience with intentions to "conquer the rock face," or "tackle the portage."

Haluza-DeLay (1999) explored the retrogressive impact of the human vs. nature notion in an adventure program setting by observing the participants of a 12-day wilderness adventure trip. Despite highlighting appreciation of the environment as a central program goal, in light of growing social interaction, this objective progressively lost priority throughout the trip. After the trip, one participant even commented that, after returning to the city, "nature doesn't really have much to do with me now" (Haluza-DeLay, 1999, p. 134).

This notion of detachment from nature is further reinforced through media, given its apparent reluctance to document adventure narratives that demonstrate harmony instead of hardship (Henderson, 1996, p. 141). How many books are written documenting successful expeditions on Everest versus those recounting the several fatal attempts to summit the mountain? Evidently, the unfortunate conception of human vs. nature as integral to "epic" adventure, and its reinforcement through advertising and media, has serious implications for the effectiveness of adventure education programs.

Just as the culturally constructed notions of adventure threaten the awareness of the connection between humanity and nature, they also serve to commodify the adventure experience itself. Holyfield (1999) identified manufactured adventure as the packaging of experience to meet the needs of a market economy (p. 6). Subsequently, the spontaneity inherent in the roots of adventure education is stripped away to leave a predictable experience of "adventure" composed of fabricated outcomes (albeit unknown to the participant).

Emphasizing this point is the dominant rivers-rocks-ropes public conception of adventure education and rise in corporate development

programs. The rise of manufactured adventure is a topic of much controversy. When the experience is served up on a carefully constructed platter, can it still be considered adventure education (Loynes, 1996, p. 52)? Attempting to package and objectify experience, which is inherently personal and subjective in nature, is complex and problematic.

Perhaps what is needed is a greater distinction between *education* and *recreation*. When someone attempts to climb a portable rock wall at an amusement park on auto-belay, the existence of experience cannot be denied. However, the learning inherent in the participant's experience is much different than if they were engaging in a climbing experience where mutual trust was required between belayer and climber, and specific skill and technique was being learned and demonstrated. The former experience is likely closer to that of a roller-coaster ride where simple enjoyment is the focus and goal (a *recreative* experience), while the latter example has goals beyond just enjoyment, such as cohesion, trust, cooperation and perseverance (an *educative* experience).

The list of possible negative consequences that a narrow and misguided understanding of adventure could instill upon adventure education does not stop there. It raises issues of gender, affects the perceived accessibility of adventure education for special populations, impacts the environment and forces preconceived notions upon participants before they even enter the adventure arena. Has it changed our concept of adventure for good?

Not likely, since, although the understanding of adventure may be changing, in the dynamism of today's culture, nothing is permanent and fixed. As media and other culturally constructed forces continue to evolve, the importance of identifying and questioning meaning and stereotypes within society becomes more and more immediate. We have reached a point in history which one theorist deemed "the end of innocence"—a time when media and mass culture fill our lives with images and ideas that need to be deconstructed, instead of accepted as truth (Jackson, 1993, p. 42). And

what better way to confront and challenge these images than through the very medium from which they originate—via movies, television and literature. Dr. Seuss anyone? So sit back and enjoy. JUST DO IT.

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**Adventure Ed!**

*by Meridith Sones*

*[An adaptation of Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss]*

I am Outdoor Fred . . .  
Expert in Adventure Ed!

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That Outdoor Fred,  
That Outdoor Fred,  
I do not like that Outdoor Fred!

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But do you like Adventure Ed?

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I do not like it Outdoor Fred.  
I do not like Adventure Ed.

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But you can do it here or there!

---

You cannot do it here or there!  
You can barely do it anywhere!  
I've seen the movies, I've watched t.v!  
Rivers, rocks and ropes just aren't for me.  
I do not like Adventure Ed,  
I do not like it Outdoor Fred.

---

But you don't have to paddle and climb!  
See, you can do it anytime!  
It's more than just risk, the challenge or  
hardship:  
It's about you and nature forming a  
relationship!

---

But Outdoor Fred, can't you see!  
Extreme sports are just not for me.  
I'm an old man now, and afraid of heights!  
I'd rather just play chess or fly kites.  
You cannot do it here or there,  
You can hardly do it anywhere!  
I do not like Adventure Ed.  
I do not like it Outdoor Fred!

---

But don't believe what you hear in the press.  
There are many adventures I can suggest!  
It doesn't have to be a physical chore:  
How about taking a stroll in the urban  
core?  
You see, Adventure Ed is open to all,  
Both young and old, short and tall!

---

Roaming around the downtown core?  
What for?

I drive through there often and it's  
such a bore.  
Besides, what on Earth is there to see?  
I don't know anyone and they don't  
know me!  
And anyway, that's not Adventure Ed.  
Where's the mountaintop or riverbed?

---

But that's just it! That is the key:  
The unsure outcome and spontaneity!  
It's about taking risk and the experience,  
Learning by doing — it will make a  
difference!  
It doesn't have to be about rocks and rivers.  
Those crazy rapids would give many  
people the jitters!

---

You can do it here or there —  
In the classroom or anywhere!  
You can challenge yourself in anyway  
you please.  
You can build and grow, just like the trees!  
Would you, could you, join me for a day?  
You may like it, what do you say?

---

I would not, could not, give up a day,  
And miss those hours of work and pay!  
I would rather put my feet up and rest,  
Than jump out of a plane or climb Everest.  
Adventure Ed is for adrenaline seekers,  
Who own climbing gear and fancy  
sneakers!

---



You mustn't believe all that you hear  
 and read,  
 An open mind is all you need!  
 No Gortex jacket, fancy shoes or gri gri!  
 Just give it a chance and you will see,  
 Whatever the challenge, you get  
 to choose.  
 You've got so much potential and nothing  
 to lose!  
 Adventure is all around — just outside your  
 front door!  
 Are you up for a game? Perhaps a  
 thumb war?

---

No songs! No games! No silly thumb war!  
 No venture into the urban core!  
 AE in the classroom — there's just  
 no way!  
 Where's the adventure in that anyway?

---

You can't do it here!  
 You can't do it there!  
 You can hardly do it anywhere!  
 AE belongs by the rivers and rocks,  
 And is only for big, strong, daring jocks!  
 I have to go — Survivor is on t.v.  
 Watching adventure on screen is enough  
 for me.  
 Be on your way, Outdoor Fred.  
 I just don't fit the mold of Adventure Ed.

---

But it's just a stereotype, can't you see!  
 You mustn't believe all you see on t.v!  
 Adventure Ed is universal and has so  
 many forms.

You have to look past all those  
 cultural norms!  
 Say . . . in the dark? Out there in the dark!  
 A night expedition — we'll head to the  
 park!

---

Outdoor Fred — this is goodbye!  
 Adventure and I — we're just not gonna fly!  
 I do not like Adventure Ed!  
 I do not like it Outdoor Fred!

---

You do not like it,  
 So you say.  
 Try it! Try it!  
 The park is five minutes away!  
 Try it and you may like it I say!

---

Fred!  
 If you will let me be,  
 I will try it.  
 You will see!

---

Say . . . I like Adventure Ed!  
 I do! I like it Outdoor Fred!  
 I would do it in the urban core,  
 The classroom too — it's not a bore!  
 I would try it in the dark,  
 Forget t.v. — let's head to the park!  
 I've grown so much — just like a tree.  
 It is so fun, this thing called AE!

---

And I did it too, without rivers and rock,  
 Even though I'm not a daredevil or jock!  
 I've learned so much, and made a  
 new friend.  
 It's about the process — the means  
 to the end.  
 What they say in the papers — it just  
 isn't true!  
 I've looked past the stereotype  
 thanks to you!  
 You can do it here! You can do it there!  
 You can do it just about anywhere!  
 I do so like Adventure Ed.  
 Thank you! Thank you Outdoor Fred!

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*Editor's note: Meridith Sones wrote these  
 two submissions originally for KIN 4U03:  
 Adventure-based Learning. This course  
 emphasizes critically examining issues in  
 outdoor education.*

## It's All About Relationships

Principle-centred Growth through Outdoor Recreation

by Victoria Paraschak and students

Outdoor recreation has been part of the physical education curriculum at the University of Windsor since the program began in 1965. Our first students entered their final year of classes with a nine-day outdoor experience as rich then as it was this past August. Dr. Margery Holman, a student in that first course and a long time professor on our faculty, recalls the inaugural outdoor recreation course.

This course became a ritual, with two professors facilitating a nine-day adventure that would energize students entering the last year of their Kinesiology program. I took over in 1985, using, as had been done in the year before I began, volunteer leaders as my staff. I conceptualized and taught the course with a

volunteer — Gerry Pfaff — who had already taken the course as a student and served as a volunteer leader. He has continued to work with me since that time, even as he became a firefighter and began his own family. His vision for, and contribution to this program has been equal to my own. Gerry has served in a volunteer capacity throughout the past twenty years.

That first year, we continued the practice of operating an in-camp program out of the Bark Lake Leadership Centre. For the out-trip, however, we shifted from the Haliburton area to Algonquin Park, incorporating a strong focus on no-trace camping. After two years of beginning our out-trip on Canoe Lake, and rushing daily to beat other Labour Day

### In the Beginning . . .

by Dr. Margery Holman (1968 student; mid-1970s to early 1980s co-professor)

The outdoor recreation course was first offered in the fall of 1968. It was a required course for students entering the fourth year of the Bachelor of Physical and Health Education program, which meant a class enrolment of 15. The group went to Bark Lake for this experience. The students, being such a small group, knew each other and one of the two faculty members quite well. A new faculty member was the exception to this pattern, but by the end of the week this was no longer the case.

The trip up to Bark Lake was a bus ride. There were no planned activities, just lots of socializing and sleeping. Once there, the outdoor activities, including things such as swimming, canoeing, orienteering and campfires, were non-stop. Students were prepared for a one night camp-out, which was the culmination of the trip. This

included a day of paddling with one portage, setting up camp, preparing a dinner of steak and baked potatoes and a campfire before pretending to go to sleep. Next day, the camp was restored to its natural state and, as campers, we paddled back to Bark Lake and prepared for the return trek to Windsor.

Even though this particular group was very cohesive prior to the course, the experience served to strengthen relationships. The trip was a critical part of the program, providing a focal point for memories and for merging the experiences of the previous three years. It set the tone for our final year of the program, knowing that we could survive the difficult times buoyed by friendships and support. Even as we reminisce thirty plus years later, this course emerges as one of the most memorable of our experiences together.

campers for evening sites, we moved our program to the less travelled northwest corner of the park. For the next several years, we were able to borrow canoes, paddles and personal flotation devices (PFDs) from the DARE program, and head in through the Kawawaymog Access Point for a five-day out-trip experience.

A number of shifts have occurred in the program over the past 18 years. Initially I was encouraged by the previous faculty instructor to schedule the course like a summer camp, with activities from dawn until well past dark. In-camp activities were tightly scheduled, with students sprinting between activities to keep "on schedule." We travelled to a different site each day on the out-trip, with lots of portaging both in number and distance. Students enjoyed the challenge of this approach, but in evaluations they consistently noted their wish for a bit more time to themselves.

The course was initially a requirement for those in the Teaching and Coaching stream. Our academic program changed in the early 1990s and this course became optional, with students responsible for all program costs except the instructor's salary. At the same time, Bark Lake went through some renovations and raised their prices, making that option financially untenable for us.

We needed a new location, and fortunately Martha and Todd Lucier, a couple who had been former volunteer leaders in our program, had just purchased a property on Kawawaymog Lake that subsequently became the Northern Edge Retreat Centre. We remained at this site, running our in-camp program on their property and the out-trip program in Algonquin

Park, for a number of years. For the first several years, we would do an extended loop, where students broke camp every day and paddled to a new site by evening. There were a number of longer portages, and the "down time" was the last day, where we could set up camp by

early afternoon, followed by informal time and a group campfire on adjoining sites. Students often felt physically sore as we made our way through this route, but finished with a sense of having "made it"

through the tough challenges. We now refer to this approach as our "grunt trip" — one that reinforced rather than challenged the physically demanding, competitive challenge over nature so prevalent in our society.

Watching and listening to our students, we continued to hear that they loved being outdoors, and enjoyed the time together, but that they wished for more free time. As staff, we knew what they meant; we also loved our time on the trip, but often found ourselves drained by the end, with little time for reflection about the beauty we were travelling through. An important philosophical shift occurred — we decided to shorten the trip, and have a layover day where students could take time to appreciate their surroundings more fully. In the mid-1990s we banned watches for students and staff during the trip, and sorted out how to offer teaching sessions, camp activities, group gatherings and four-hour solos without the benefit of mechanical time. Despite the increased course fee, our student numbers continued to grow. (They hit an all-time high in 1998 with 75 people.) It was in 1997, when we had 54 students and staff, that we had to move to a different site that could accommodate our large numbers.



This time we went to Camp Madawaska, a Salvation Army Camp on Lake Victoria. From this location, we could paddle in to the Shall Lake Access Point in the south-central part of Algonquin Park.

In 2000, returning after a year's hiatus from the program while in northern Canada, I experienced the course for the first time without having taken part in the initial meetings that prepared students, philosophically and practically, for the nine-day trip. The group was down to 25 students and six staff — a great ratio for us as leaders. But the philosophical underpinning of the program felt underdeveloped, and I re-sensed the importance of the groundwork we needed to lay before stepping on the bus in August. That winter, I formally drew up the course principles that had evolved over the years we had run this program, and established a series of early morning meetings to lay out the various elements of the program to new students. I also gave them an opportunity to contribute to this process; in 2002, our final course principle was recommended by a student who planned to take the course that August. After having come back to Northern Edge for two years, our numbers had begun to grow again (50 students and staff in 2002 and 57 in 2003) and we headed once more to the larger quarters of Camp Madawaska.

Each year, after students returned from the outdoor recreation course, their enthusiasm for being in the outdoors was greatly enhanced. At the same time, they often voiced disappointment that they were "stuck" in Windsor so far from natural areas. To address their perceived dilemma, I created a new course in 1994 called Urban Outdoor Recreation. This experience-based course had as its objective to explore the concept of

wilderness in the urban area around our university — that is, in Essex County. Students got outside in-line skating on local trails, riding bikes, and visiting local, provincial and national parks in the area. They reflected on the relationship between themselves, natural urban areas and outdoor recreation. We held classes outside and at different times of the day and night. The students carried out solo and small group experiences and wrote about them. I am teaching the course again this fall, and asking students to write about a significant outdoor place in their life — where it is, why it is significant, and what it tells them about their own values. This senior-level course complements the experiences outdoor recreation students have had, and prepares those who will be taking the course next August. It extends their knowledge of the outdoors in a way that incorporates it into their everyday life while at school. These two courses together comprise our outdoor recreation offerings at the University of Windsor.



## **Major Elements of the Outdoor Recreation Course**

**Volunteer Leaders:** Leaders are selected from among individuals who, when taking the course, exhibited a grasp of the philosophical values that undergird the course. These individuals volunteer their time over the nine days of the course, and also assist with course preparation, including readying food and equipment.

**Initial Student Preparation:** We hold five one-hour meetings in the winter term to cover physical and philosophical underpinnings, food and first aid, a swim test, and an outdoor activity. Some students assist us in packing the food prior to the trip, and all students bring their gear and assignments for a pre-trip packing session the day before we leave.

**Book Reviews:** Students select two books from a list that has included *The Tao of Pooh* and *Slowing down to the Speed of Life*, as well as various books by Tom Brown Jr. For each book review, students provide a two-page reflection and identify a personal course objective tied to the book. These reviews are completed prior to the trip, and are discussed on the trip as appropriate.

**Campfire Topic:** Students each select a topic (e.g., astronomy, leeches and bloodsuckers, the history of Algonquin Park) and prepare notes in their logbook so that they can provide the group with information at a "teachable moment" on the trip.

**Logbook:** Students each have a logbook, where they note their objectives for the course, and ongoing physical and psychological reflections during the trip. Creativity is encouraged, and the journal is checked by an instructor but not read.

**In-camp Preparation:** We focus on providing students with the skills needed for personal safety and equipment care prior to heading

out on the out-trip. This year preparation activities included canoeing strokes and rescues, compass use, first aid, equipment and food distribution, camp equipment use (e.g., stoves, water pumps, food hangs, tarps), and initiative tasks for group cohesion.

**Group Cohesion:** We provide a number of large group campfires, but I also assign paddling partners, and pre-plan group activities for maximum mixing. As well, we have "secret buddies," where each person sends a note daily to someone whose name they drew on the bus trip up to Camp Madawaska. Individuals can also send notes to others; these notes, which are distributed nightly, grow astronomically in number by the end of the course.

**Four-hour Solo:** Students are placed in a shoreline location of their choice part way through the course, apart from all others, for a four-hour period. This provides them with a time for reflection, and they are also able to work on their Council for all Beings talk and/or their Creative Project.

**Council for all Beings:** As a large group, we become the Council of Humans. One at a time, students and staff each speak to this Council from the perspective of a non-human entity (e.g., mosquito, water, rock), providing a message they feel might be important for humans to hear. This can be spoken informally, read from notes, or offered as a poem.

**Creative Project:** We encourage student creativity throughout the trip, but at the end of the course each student and staff member shows the group a creative project they have made, and explains the significance of that project as a personal expression of their trip.

## **Outdoor Recreation Course Principles**

We provide new students with a list of eight course principles, as well as accompanying quotes to help them reflect on the meaning behind the principles. To include student

insights as part of this article, I asked a number of current and former students/leaders if they would comment about one of the eight principles, explaining how it related to their experiences of the course. Their responses are included below each principle and the accompanying quotes.

**1. Experience: Teach and learn experientially — none of us need to be experts.**

*Our worst fear is not that we are inadequate; our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.*

Nelson Mandela

*I am still learning.*

Michelangelo

**I Just Need to be Me**

*by Collette Mercer (1997 student, 1998 to 2001 volunteer leader)*

I can remember my first leadership opportunity with great clarity. It was August 1998. I felt blessed to be returning to the magic of the Algonquin experience as an esteemed group leader. I knew I had a great deal of responsibility on my hands and had expectations to live up to, as defined by previous leaders.

Truth be told, I was not an expert outdoorswoman. I had never participated in a trip like Algonquin prior to my attendance as a student the year previous. I knew the canoeing basics and had been reminded of the guidelines to follow while setting up camp. But I was the last person you'd come to inquire about the proper protocol in knot tying, inventive food hang installation, canoe soloing, or the mechanics of water pump and stove management.

Despite my apparent lack of technical expertise, Vicky and Gerry had chosen me as a leader for a reason. As a student participant, Vicky had told me I was like a ray of sunshine and had the ability to make people smile. Gerry told me I

had an amazing energy about me as well as a strong spirit. It was with these powerful reminders, forever locked as proof in my journal, that I entered my role as a leader with a sense of balance and confidence. Vicky and Gerry had empowered me to lead through the belief I had in myself.

Teaching, learning and doing happened every day of the trip, by every group participant, in many different ways. That was the beauty of the trip. What individuals learned about themselves they shared, and what they got from camp they gave back in ways unique unto themselves. In many ways I believe my non-expert leadership approach to camp encouraged my group participants to attempt and learn new skills without the fear of "doing them wrong." We embraced trying new ways of doing things together as a unit. This promoted a sense of family cohesiveness, which in turn allowed people to share things of a personal nature, free from judgement, in the cocoon of trust we had built.

The Outdoor Recreation Course Principles have since been woven into the fabric of who I am as a person. I have incorporated the lessons I learned from Algonquin into my approach as an educator, and as a new wife married to the man I met on the very first course that altered both of our lives. Embracing the unknown with the right attitude defines your life and how you choose to live it. Vicky and Gerry embody the spirit of Algonquin. Collectively, they have taught me that I don't need to be an expert, I just need to be me.

**2. Perspective: See days as silver or gold, not good or bad — go with the weather whatever it is.**

*Undoubtedly, we become what we envisage.*

Claude M. Bristol

*The difference between a flower and a weed is a judgement.*

Unknown

**New Perspectives on the Familiar and the Unconscious**

by Gerry Pfaff (1983 student, 1984 to 2003 volunteer leader)

...and this I humbly ask of you humans. Let me be a reminder to you of another way, of a different possibility. "The difference between a weed and a wildflower is judgement." And so on behalf of all your judgements, let dandelion, my people, offer you a signpost to the conscious, to a world where humans exist within a web of life and not standing alone above life. Wherever you find us blossoming before you remember our discussion and feel our life force as one of beauty, adaptability, nourishment, as one with your own creation. Observation is not judgement and judgement is not observation. Be well people of the Earth and let us walk together in peace.

This quote is an excerpt from my sharing at the 2003 Council for all Beings, a gathering and circle where the students identify with and take on the life of something that is non-human. It can be an element, plant, animal, or any essence that the student feels compelled to share about. This simple yet powerful exercise allows the students to move outside their cultural roles and creatively and intuitively be other-than-human. Each sharing offers new perspectives on familiar and unconscious pieces of our human existence. Water becomes alive and flowing and delicious, while air finds its place back as an essential life force and not just a dumping ground for advancement. The sacredness of life and all processes and parts are revisited and restated in often a profound and blessed way, leaving room in peoples' hearts and souls for another possibility and another way.

**3. Interconnection: Treat yourself, others and the environment with dignity, recognizing the interconnectedness of all things.**

*This we know: all things are connected like the blood which unites one family. All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life. He is merely a strand of it. Whatever he does to the web He does to himself.*

Chief Seattle

**The Interconnectedness of our World**

by Jared Ginter (2003 student)

We talk of ecosystems in nature and that is perhaps the best way to describe the Earth. We are one giant ecosystem. Everything we do has an impact elsewhere in our world; it may be on another person, another being or another object, but it has an impact. That is why it is so important for us to keep this in mind in our everyday life. Whenever we do something it is important to remember the consequences: we are changing the course of someone or something else's existence by our actions. Each decision we make has consequences riding on it, most of which we cannot see. Therefore, it is too difficult to consider all that we must consider. The only way to remedy this problem is to treat everything with dignity and respect, that includes people, animals, elements of nature and all other things that we come in contact with.

As a devout Christian, I believe that God's word and creation exemplify this interconnection. In Genesis, we read about the creation of the Earth: God created everything, he created all that exists for a purpose. The key, however, is the responsibility that we have been given:

Then God said, let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. (Genesis 1:26)

This means that as human beings we have the extra responsibility of taking care of this interconnectedness. The dignity and respect that is required for this to be facilitated is also taught by our Lord: "Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honour the king." "Everyone" might intuitively mean just human beings but I think that, because God has created all, and because in Genesis we hear continually after each creation "and God thought it was good," dignity and respect is required for all of His creation.

The ecosystem that is Earth is interconnected because we were all created by the ONE. God created us to fill a role and purpose in His world and that requires us to respect the roles and purposes of all other things in His world. Treading carefully with dignity and respect will allow the world to live in the peace and harmony that is best for us all.

The philosophical and practical groundings of our Outdoor Recreation course provide an incredible opportunity for the participants to experience the interconnectedness of our world. By spending a week in a new environment with other people and with the rest of the natural world, a common bond can be developed between all of those involved. We begin to understand each other as we see each other at our most vulnerable moments; we are doing things for which we have no prior expertise and this allows us to expose our insecurities and our innermost selves. We can then understand much better the very basics of our connection to other people and the impact that we have on them. Our connection to the rest of the natural world is also highlighted because we spend a week finding out what else exists in the world. Under normal circumstances we do not see nature in its untouched state. Being there, we can see how it is supposed to exist. As we interact with it we can better understand the impact of our presence and actions.

As a part of the course, we convene one night at a Council for all Beings. Each of us writes from the perspective of a different element of nature, describing what that element would say if it had the opportunity to speak to us.

This is a very personal way to understand the connection that we have. That same day we spend a couple of hours away from any other people, giving us an opportunity to reflect on what our chosen element would say. Spending four hours on a rock without any human contact would appear to be lonely at first glance, but it is far from lonely. This experience can truly allow you to appreciate all of the other beings and elements present around us. They too have an important place in this world but we rarely get to see them; understanding them is therefore difficult. After spending ten days with many others — people, non-human beings, and elements of nature — we can more clearly see the connection that we all share in this world. In other words, we get a more accurate picture of God's world.

#### 4. *Pacing: Go at the pace of the consciousness of creation.* (Grandfather)

*We're afraid of feelings. We rush through our lives searching yet not living. For those who have the interest to look closely, life becomes art.*

Diane Mariechild

*Do not be desirous of having things done quickly. Do not look at small advantages. Desire to have things done quickly prevents their being done thoroughly. Looking at small advantages prevents great affairs from being accomplished.*

Confucius

#### Enjoying Life as a Process by Miguel Gonzalez (2000 student, 2001 to 2003 volunteer leader)

As a student and a leader of the Outdoor Recreation program, I've been fortunate enough to experience four years of Algonquin Park and the magic that it offers the mind and spirit. In doing so, I've exposed myself to the eight course principles and have been able to share these principles with many students. For me, Outdoor Recreation has provided a means



of appreciating the simpler things in life as well as rejuvenating my mind and soul. In doing so, I have found that the principle of *pacing* has played an integral role in my Outdoor Recreation experiences as well as in my life in general.

In my first year, as a student, I found myself uncomfortable with not having a set schedule on the trip. My "eager beaver" attitude had me looking for things to do, places to go, and nature to see at a frantic pace. I was used to my regular lifestyle of schedules, deadlines, and the inherent need to do, do, do! It was normal for me. However, the importance of slowing down and pacing myself to a point where life just flowed did not really get to me until the day of our four-hour solo. I had never gone four hours without talking to someone, let alone spent that much time completely alone. Sitting on a rock in the wonder of Algonquin Park, surrounded by only pristine water and beautiful vegetation, was enough to initiate a thinking process that would ultimately alter who I am and how I live my life.

I found myself slowing down to enjoy the process of being me; the process of living, seeing, and simply being. Throughout the week I paid more attention to myself and others, including thoughts and feelings. I found that I was unconsciously pacing myself to a speed of life that was just more enjoyable. I was still conscious of things that had to be done, but also took the time to enjoy the things that had yet to be accomplished. In many cases I found it more enjoyable to sit back and watch others do things that typically I'd jump into and do myself. In fact I was learning more, in many cases, just by pacing myself instead of frantically pursuing completion. To this day, I make a concentrated effort to reflect on myself and my experiences as well as to remember the importance of enjoying life as a process, instead of as an end product.

Because of my incredible experience, I have volunteered myself as a leader for the past three years to the Outdoor Recreation course. In doing so, I've been able to share my experiences as well as expose many students to the principle of *pacing*. In my role as a leader I have found it

very beneficial to express this principle simply by my actions. In fact, I would venture to say that the principle of *pacing* is contagious — it can be shared and enjoyed by many.

Perhaps the best example that comes to mind is one that occurred just this year. It happened on one of our group paddling travel days. Typically, these days commence with people frantically paddling canoes with the sole determination to arrive and set up camp. However, as the lead paddling group, I chose to slow the pace of paddling and encouraged my fellow paddlers to enjoy the experience, the scenery, and the company of fellow classmates. As it turned out, people had more time to observe, admire, and relish an incredible environment — so much so that several people witnessed a black bear bathing on the shore of the lake we were crossing. It was incredible. The truth is that the majority of people had never seen a bear at all, let alone one several yards away. For a few, seeing the bear was a truly memorable experience but for many simply enjoying the day, the company, and the pace of life was the *true joy*.

Overall, the Outdoor Recreation experience has influenced me in many ways; my spirits, my thoughts, and how I see myself have been shaped by all the principles of the course. But, more important to me is the fact that I've been able to *pace* myself to a life-rate that I can experience, reflect on, and truly enjoy.



**5. Creativity: Creative expression is a gift we give to ourselves and to others.**

*Why should we all use our creative power. . .? Because there is nothing that makes people so generous, joyful, lively, bold and compassionate, so indifferent to fighting and the accumulation of objects and money.*

Brenda Ueland

*Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.*

Pablo Picasso

**Expressions of Individuality and Uniqueness**  
by Paul Sperduh (2001 student, 2002 and 2003 volunteer leader)

As humans, creativity is an attribute we are born with. To paraphrase Pablo Picasso, "every child is an artist, the key is remaining an artist once he or she becomes an adult." Correspondingly, what could, in one light, be interpreted as a mass of scribbles on a wall or an annoying ruckus caused by the banging of a wooden spoon on pots and pans may actually be a painter or percussionist at work.

Though being creative is often associated with art or music, creativity can, in fact, take many forms. It can be heard in a dramatic poetry reading or seen in the movements of a ballerina. It can be seen in an inventive approach to an unsolved mathematical equation, in the blueprints of an engineering design plan, in the original style of a platform diver or in an abstract food hang configuration of a camper.

Creativity is also an expression of individuality and uniqueness. This expression may vary from helping humans understand the world around them (e.g., Einstein's Theory of Relativity), to something as subtle as a charcoal sketch of a landscape. Both expressions have value and meaning.

Creativity often goes unnoticed in today's society, although it is ever present. It is those individuals able to break from the norm with a

new idea or approach to a problem who are often leaders in commerce, community and culture.

It is therefore by encouraging creativity in childhood and continuing its development throughout one's life that it can be a truly positive and beneficial attribute to the advancement of humankind. Examples of creativity can be seen on our outdoor recreation trips each year — food hangs, creative yearly theme songs, camp set-ups, tarp set-ups, and serendipitous games to name only a few. Our leaders take a facilitative rather than an instructive approach to almost all aspects of the trip; this allows for students' creative energy to be expressed in a variety of ways, greatly enhancing the experience for all.

**6. Healthiness: Healthiness — physical, mental and emotional/spiritual — should be at the base of all our activities.**

*The snow goose need not bathe to make itself white. Neither need you do anything but be yourself.*

Lao-Tse

**A Sense of Focus and Balance**  
by Sally Moulton (1997 student, 1998 to 2001 volunteer leader)

Healthiness is the principle that resonates through all others. To most deeply connect to the course, the participants and the principles it offers, one must realize that healthiness of body, mind and spirit are at the foundation. It only takes one blister to change the opportunity to enjoy a walk on a portage into something focussed on pain or discomfort. That moment may have held so many other possibilities.

As a leader, it is easy to lose the balance between caring for yourself, the well being of others and tasks requiring attention. The body feels fatigue and facilitating becomes exhausting. In one instance, following a series of cold, wet days and a stormy night, spirits were down. Soon enough, bellies were warm

and full, wet items were hung and healthy people were ready for the day. However, I was tired; the soggy clothes clinging to me were cold and uncomfortable, and another "hot spot" on my foot was irritated by my wet sock. My spirits remained down. I snuck off with a bucket of water and soap and proceeded to scrub myself from head to toe (completely eschewing the tradition of "who can go ten days without washing their hair?") Donning cleaner, dry clothes and a refreshed spirit, this little ritual of self care was just the thing to bring me back to a sense of focus and balance.



**7. Community: We operate as a community, trusting ourselves and each other.**

*We do not believe in ourselves until someone reveals that deep inside us something is valuable, worth listening to, worthy of our trust, sacred to our touch. Once we believe in ourselves, we can risk curiosity, spontaneous delight or any experience that reveals the human spirit.*

e.e. cummings

**A Miasma of Warmth and Caring**  
by Zaheera Denath (2002 student, 2003 volunteer leader)

The sense of community is prevalent from the onset of the course. It manifests throughout the group gatherings several months prior to the out-trip, where pertinent aspects of the course are discussed amongst the students. Their input is essential to the success of the group bond, which develops and continues to grow over the course of the trip.

Within the Muslim community as a whole, the word "Ummah" is used to describe the community feeling. The word is a derivative of the word "Ummi," meaning "mother" in Arabic. It feeds into the idea of Mother Nature, and the familial concept within the boundaries that are our surroundings. Our group has adopted the word "Namaste," which means "that place within you where we become one." This term

encompasses the role that each individual plays within our community. Each individual brings his or her own unique qualities or capabilities to the group. I believe that this can only enhance the experience for others.

What makes this trip such a unique experience is the realization that for nine days you are in constant contact with at least six or seven other people at any given time, with the exception of the four hours of your solo experience. The amazing knowledge that the majority of the people you are with are not people you've known prior to this trip is a new dimension. You can virtually watch the development of friendships and the breaking down of barriers as the days pass until all you see is a miasma of warmth and caring. Consideration of others is also key to the experience; you can see the impact when someone offers another person help and that person accepts graciously. The entire set-up of a campsite is a team effort and when everyone fulfills a role there is a collective sense of accomplishment. What occurs is a gradual, but intimate connection to the people around you that you unconsciously recognize can, and most likely will, stand the test of time.

Upon returning to the reality of day-to-day life, we can always look back and reflect on how much we have gained both individually and as a small, but inspiring community. It is exceptionally glorious to realize that, although you have inhabited a place for a moment in time, there is no trace of your existence when you leave, except in your own and other members of the community's memories.

### 8. *Preparation: Always prepare for the best.*

*We make ourselves miserable or make ourselves strong. And the amount of work is the same.*

#### **Experiences as Silver and Gold** *by Karen Hastings (2003 student)*

Principles can be defined as comprehensive and fundamental laws, doctrines or assumptions, rules or a code of conduct. Although principles may be underlying assumptions, this does not mean we shouldn't take the time to reflect on them. This type of reflection is one of the things that helps make the Outdoor Recreation course so meaningful to the students. One of the basic principles that we reflect on is preparation. We prepare not only for the trip in its physical nature, but also in a spiritual way. Although it is important to have all the equipment and skills that are needed, an arguably more important type of groundwork is mental preparation.

What does it mean to mentally prepare? In our principles we say, "Always prepare for the best." This means to bring yourself on the trip with the intention of always putting your best foot forward and keeping a positive attitude. One of the ideas that the group promotes is that there is never a bad day; we rate our experiences as silver and gold. On our trip this year many of us woke up very wet under our tarp during a thunderstorm; this did not deter us from pressing on and having a great day. Some people in this situation may have chosen to pity their poor luck in weather and waste an opportunity to enjoy their day because they were moping. Not our group though; everyone seemed to lend a hand and offer their dry clothes and turn what may have been a silver day to gold.

The Outdoor Recreation course has been a huge success for many years and there are many reasons why. One of the fundamental reasons is that we always prepare for the best. There is a saying that goes "We make ourselves miserable or make ourselves strong

And the amount of work is the same." Well, in our group we definitely made ourselves strong with positive attitudes and open minds, and these attitudes will not end with the course but will be with us for years to come.

#### **To Be Continued . . .**

As a concluding reflection, I'd like to comment on how the course has changed the ways that I look at moving in the outdoors — whether by myself or with as many as 74 others. The students and leaders I have been blessed to work with have taught me to slow down, and attend to the day and its gifts more so than the schedule. I have become a better listener, one who doesn't wear a watch so I remember to focus more on the experience of the moment and less on mechanical time and upcoming commitments. I have become clearer in my ability to stress philosophical principles as the basis for action, while clarifying to others that this is only one way of many to experience the outdoors. I am challenged to facilitate small group interaction and personal growth even as the group continues to increase in numbers each year. I find new ways to save money and keep costs to a minimum, appreciating the businesses and individuals who help us along the way. I ponder over the traits needed in a volunteer leader for our program, and how I can best prepare individuals for that experience. I generate a large number of new friendships each year, and further deepen old friendships as well. And I am more deeply convinced about the exciting, challenging, healing, contemplative opportunities offered by the outdoors, and inspired to bring that message to my students, whether they be in Algonquin Park or in the (not so) wilds of Windsor!

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*Victoria Paraschak has been teaching Outdoor Education and Sport History at the University of Windsor, with a particular interest in First Nations, since the 1980s.*

*The Sedbergh School presents*

## **Risk Management Conference for Canadian Educators**

**March 26–28, Montebello, Quebec**

In a time when risk management issues are so much at the forefront of many people's minds, we hope that a risk management conference on these issues will bring to light all of the practices we have as school-based outdoor programs, and will allow us to improve our own standards as a collective group. We should be part of setting the standards for our field as we know them best.

A recent article about the Strathcona-Tweedsmuir incident suggested: "The standard of care applied by commercial outdoor operators is inappropriate for schools because the tolerance for risk is much higher in a commercial trip than most parents would accept for a school trip." This is primarily what we hope will come out of this time at the conference — a better understanding of the standards that apply to school-based programs.

What is acceptable risk for outdoor education verses adventure education?

From all of these collective thoughts and discussions, it is the goal of the conference to create a Best Practices Manual for school-based programs in both the public and private setting. If we do not become part of the process then there is the danger that those who do not understand the real benefits will dilute and perhaps even debilitate the advantages of school-based outdoor programming.

If you are interested in helping to lead a workshop please submit some ideas or contact us to get information on topics we hope to have covered. Please submit a 50-word description of the session you propose to lead, including a title. These will be used in Web-based promotions and in the conference registration materials. If you lead a workshop, your conference fee will be waived.

For more information on the conference, please visit [www.sedbergh.com](http://www.sedbergh.com) and click on Risk Management. Inquiries about the conference can be sent to [riskmanagement@sedbergh.com](mailto:riskmanagement@sedbergh.com).

This is an important and timely conference. Please seriously consider being part of it.

Thanks in advance,

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## Outdoor Education Degree = Outdoor Educator?

by Simon Beames

More and more universities in North America and the UK are offering bachelor's degrees in outdoor education. I'm not convinced this is entirely a good thing.

Sure, these university degrees lend credibility to a field longing for it; graduates go on to run professional courses while academics increase the pool of research. Still, I am wary of programmes based on the principals of experiential education that reward test performance over personal experience. Will universities become like outdoor centres that turn out instructors with reproducible skills, but little work and life experience? Ours is a field that values knowledge, skills, and judgment gained through experience.

I also wonder about an inevitable shift towards instructor homogeneity, which is a potential by-product of dedicated outdoor education degrees. Are we creating a world of outdoor educators who can recite Priest and Gass, but can't explain the water cycle to a nine-year-old, identify deer tracks, tell a fable from another culture, resolve a conflict between inner-city teenagers, bake bread on an open fire, or play guitar?

While I believe that producing instructors with a grounding in risk management and learning theories is commendable, I would be disappointed to hear of any outdoor program provider excluding prospective employees because they didn't have a degree in outdoor education. Half of the finest instructors I've ever worked with did undergraduate degrees in disciplines far-

removed from outdoor education. Their practice was made unique by the knowledge specific to the diverse fields they had studied as undergraduates. The other half of these instructors never even went to university. They were educated from years of travelling, living and working with people from all kinds of cultures.

So what advice would I give 18-year-olds who wanted to work as outdoor educators? I'd tell them to save the money they'd spend on tuition and travel the world, volunteering along the way in the areas that interested them. If they wanted to work using outdoor activities, then I'd tell them to get basic

certification in wilderness first aid

and one or two skills that really interested them (e.g.,

canoeing and cross-country skiing). This way they could work as apprentices for an expedition provider or outdoor centre. If, after some time working in the field, they were convinced that university was definitely for them, I believe the decision should then centre on "what field of study?" before "what outdoor education program?"

I haven't resolved this point of view with my position as a researcher at a university. If I don't write for the next issue of *Pathways*, you can assume I've been lynched by my colleagues. . .



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*Simon Beames is completing a PhD in outdoor education at University College Chichester in the south of England. His thesis focuses on the overseas expedition experience. He can be reached at s.beames@ucc.ac.uk.*