

Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Autumn 2004, 16(4)



Pathways

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COEO

Formed in 1972, the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that promotes safe, quality outdoor education experiences for people of all ages. This is achieved through publishing the *Pathways* journal, running an annual conference and regional workshops, maintaining a Web site, and working with kindred organizations as well as government agencies.

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 Bob Henderson, Chair of the *Pathways* Editorial Board. 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.

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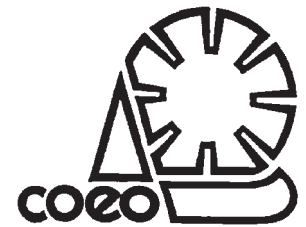
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Pathways is published five times a year for the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) and distributed to COEO members. Membership fees include a subscription to *Pathways*, as well as admittance to workshops, courses and conferences. A membership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

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Last March, we spent four days at The Sedbergh School in Montebello, Quebec with colleagues from K–12 schools, colleges, and universities, as well as a number of other outdoor programs. This gathering of outdoor professionals represented the first ever Wilderness Risk Management Conference for Educators in Canada. This event reminded us of a number of important factors about issues of risk management in Canada:

- There is a need for ongoing discussion and research of issues related to outdoor program safety, risk management, and legal liability in school-based outdoor programs across Canada.
- There is a need for outdoor programs to continue to develop risk management policies and procedures that specifically address the needs of individual outdoor programs while reflecting due diligence within the broader outdoor profession.
- As outdoor professionals, we need to continue to be proactive rather than reactive about developing risk management policies and procedures within our programs.
- As outdoor professionals, we need to continue to be attentive to trends within the broader profession; we need to continue to collect data on near misses, incidents, accidents, and deaths within the outdoor profession as a means to better inform our professional practice.

This issue is devoted to the topic of risk management. It will attempt, in part, to begin to try and respond to some of the above issues of safety and risk. In "Thinking Risk on the World's Highest Mountain," Paul Berger and

Helle Moeller provide some insight into one man's quest to climb the world's seven summits and his perception of the related risks. In "Boundless' Risk Management Journey," Steven Gottlieb takes you on a thought-provoking and entertaining journey across the 21-year history of the evolution of Boundless' risk management plan. Renowned climber and high-angle safety expert, Rob Chisnall talks about the role of the public and the media in "Upsetting the Applecart." A model for personal risk-taking is presented by Andrew Welch. "Access-ability," by David VanderBurgh, discusses issues of risk management as they relate to canoe trips and youth with physical disabilities. The final feature departs from the risk management focus with Holly McIntyre presenting "English in the Wilderness," a discussion of an integrated Outward Bound course.

We would like to thank all of the people who have contributed to this issue. We are grateful to Bob Henderson and Connie Russell for their editorial guidance. We wish to thank our colleagues in the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks & Tourism at Lakehead University for their support of our ongoing writing and research related to issues of risk management. We are particularly grateful to Margaret Johnston, Brent Cuthbertson, Rodney Swatton, and Tom Potter.

As we start this new academic year, we wish to extend our heartfelt thoughts to you; we hope that you and your program enjoy a safe and successful year!

Mary Breunig and Tim O'Connell
Guest Editors

Sketch Pad — Art for this issue of *Pathways* is generously provided by Steve Tourney (cover and pages 7, 9, 13 and 26), Josh Gordon (page 28) and Corinna Fetter (page 33).

Top Ten Reasons for Being a Member of COEO

As we begin a new year with a re-energized Board of Directors (see the inside cover), be proud that your membership in COEO promotes outdoor education in many ways:

1. Pathways: Our Editorial Board continues to produce an excellent Ontario journal of outdoor education. While *Pathways* will publish five issues this current membership year, it is expected to become a quarterly publication by next September. This is due to the exceptionally heavy workload placed upon a few volunteers. The printing and mailing costs saved will be directed into many of the new services listed below.

2. Annual Conference: Over 100 COEO members gathered at Tim Horton Onondaga Farms near Cambridge to celebrate and learn more about outdoor education. Conference proceedings will be published in the next issue of *Pathways*. And, go to www.coeo.org/conference.htm for details about our 2005 joint conference with EECOM and OSEE, and how you can help out.

3. Regional Workshops: For the first time in many years, COEO held three successful regional events, one each in the Eastern, Central and Northern Regions. Our electronic newsletter will advertise events for the coming year.

4. New Web site: A significantly expanded and updated Web site (www.coeo.org), full of a great variety of captivating images of outdoor education, was launched in September. It is hoped that this site will not only be of benefit to COEO members, but will also play a significant role in promoting outdoor education to others. This site remains a work in progress. It will remain valuable only as long as it experiences regular updates as well as new additions.

5. COEO Poster: More than 130 copies of a brand new and very attractive 17 x 22" poster promoting outdoor education in general and COEO in particular were picked up at our annual conference and are now posted in prominent locations (e.g., universities, community colleges, outdoor education centres, teacher lounges, libraries) across the province. It is not enough to reassure ourselves about the great and enduring value of outdoor education. We must be much more assertive in conveying our message to others, including policy makers and those who control purse strings. For more

information on this poster, go to www.coeo.org/publication.htm.

6. Environmental Bill of Rights Initiative:

COEO is an active part of a multi-organization initiative to have the Ontario Ministry of Education prescribed under the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights. Such a move would oblige the ministry to come up with a statement of environmental values, and this could have a far-reaching impact upon provincial curricula.

7. Renewed Liaison with the Provincial Government and Professional Teaching Organizations:

COEO is once again representing outdoor education on the Ontario Teachers Curriculum Forum. It is also in contact with officials from the Ontario Ministry of Education.

8. Constitutional Revisions: Last month's AGM approved a number of revisions to our constitution, including the addition of two goals for the organization and a clear statement of four great values of outdoor education. For a closer look, go to www.coeo.org/aboutus.htm.

9. Electronic Newsletter: COEO members signing up for this service receive regular updates on the organization (e.g., upcoming regional events) and on outdoor education in general. Others have the option of signing up for a "Friends of COEO" version of this letter that does not include occasional job offers and other benefits available only to members. The "Friends of COEO" newsletter is also posted on our new Web site.

10. Advocacy: In addition to a statement regarding advocacy and collaboration found on our Web site (www.coeo.org/aboutus.htm), COEO is actively supporting efforts to re-open the Leslie Frost Natural Resources Centre in Dorset. For further information on this issue, go to www.savethefrost.ca.

In closing, I offer hearty thanks to the dedication and talent of outgoing Board members as well as many others who have stepped forward to help our organization in countless ways. Thanks to your efforts and support, COEO is an active and effective organization.

Grant Linney

Upsetting the Apples: The Public and the Media

by Robert Chisnall

Some say the future of adventure education is in crisis. However, the problems have been persistent and ongoing, changing with the fiscal, political, and social trends of our time. The purpose of my presentation at The Wilderness Risk Management Conference for Educators in Canada (March 28, 2004) was to address prevalent dilemmas facing adventure educators—primarily those working in eastern Canada. Many of these issues are widespread and are, therefore, of broader concern.

Risk and safety-related issues pertaining to rock climbing, artificial climbing walls, and challenge courses were the focus of my session. The goals were to identify current and future issues, raise some thorny philosophical and technical questions, and stimulate discussion toward solutions. The purpose of this follow-up paper is to pose a number of questions as a means to explore some issues that relate to the public and the media. This paper represents Part I of a series of articles that examines issue germane to other stakeholders, including program instructors, facilitators, planners, managers, overseers, and gatekeepers.

The Public and the Media

The chief problems faced by many outdoor educators may involve the public's general perception of risk and, conversely, its ignorance of actual risk. How popular media nurture and feed off such attitudes is also critical. Additionally, there may be a lack of sufficient mainstream entrenchment in the public perception regarding adventure pursuits. Four areas of challenge are considered:

1. The Challenge of Public Perception

Relative risk is often a matter of perception. As an example, consider the differences between rock climbing and snowmobiling. There are more than 30 snowmobiling deaths (and many more non-fatal accidents) in Ontario each year, and there is roughly one climbing death every five to ten years in this province. According to a recent Canadian Institute for Health Information study, snowmobiling has the highest frequency of accidents and deaths compared to any other pursuit in Canada (Moore, 2003). This statistic raises a number of questions:

- Why is climbing perceived as dangerous and extreme while snowmobiling is not?
- Is snowmobiling more culturally entrenched?
- Do demographics and economics affect public perception of risk?
- Are people who snowmobile older, more mature, and more financially stable than those who rock climb?
- Are rock climbers typically young, rebellious, irresponsible thrill-seekers?

If a student breaks an arm playing contact sports, it is considered par for the course. But if a similar injury occurs on a climbing wall or ropes course, the activity immediately falls under a legal and administrative microscope. Why?

- Are team and contact sports more culturally entrenched?
- What role do tradition and the media play in this perception?
- Are team sports safer than climbing?

Risk management systems analyses and insurance calculations typically view risk as a function of

- exposure (frequency and duration)
- the likelihood of something bad happening ("the odds")
- the consequences of an accident.

2. The Challenge of Reliable and Valid Risk Statistics

Collecting, processing and interpreting data to make global conclusions about relative risk is problematic—especially when it comes to adventure activities as compared to more mainstream pastimes. Although dated, the following statistics offer a rough idea of the comparative risk of certain activities. It is worth noting that it is difficult, if not impossible, to arithmetically link or combine these figures. The units and categories utilized and the methods of data collection are disparate.

- So, why do perceived high-risk activities have a lower number of accidents?
- Why is climbing apparently safer than ropes courses?

Activity	Number of Injuries Per 11,624 Participant/Days
Climbing	1
Ropes Courses	25
Backpacking	50

Here are some more figures to consider:

Program Exposure	Accident Rate Per Million Hours
Project Adventure (15-year study)	3.67
Project Adventure (10-year study)	5.13
Physical Education Classes (National Safety Council Study)	9.6
Outward Bound (L. Higgins article)	37.5
Automobile Driving (L. Higgins article)	60

(Project Adventure, 1986)

According to this study, ropes courses are significantly safer than physical education activities and automobile travel.

- Is the figure quoted for Outward Bound activities informative or misleading?
- How could these figures be compared with those in the previous chart?

Another way of looking at outdoor risk is based on work done by Ewert (1987).

Most Frequent Locations	Most Frequent Types of Injuries (Percent)	
1. Moving water	1. Illness	30%
	2. Lacerations/punctures	21%
	3. Sprains	12%
	4. Frostbite	9%
2. Mountaineering/expeditioning	5. Fractures	6%
	6. Burns	4%
	7. Sunstroke/heat exhaustion	3%
	8. Contusions	3%
	9. Hypothermia	1%
3. Rock climbing/ropes courses	10. Other	11%

According to this source, moving water is more dangerous than climbing, and general illness is the most frequently occurring emergency medical condition while on trip.

- Do you think these activities and location-specific results are accurate and representative?
- What do the injury results say about relative risk in different types of programs?
- To what extent do various professional and technical standards cause drastic variations in accident statistics?

- Could regional and organizational differences in procedures and equipment cause disagreement in risk study results?

Beyond questions of measurable risk, the public holds and nurtures popular beliefs, often to the detriment of outdoor education as a whole. What sorts of popular beliefs do people have about adventure activities these days? There are young people who might believe that adventure activities are cool. There are those who believe that people who participate in adventure activities are thrill seekers and adrenaline junkies.

- Are they justified in these beliefs?
- Are these popular beliefs?
- In today's competitive atmosphere, do you have to take outrageous risks to get noticed and be respected?

These questions lead to issues concerning consumer responsibility. In terms of accepting responsibility for risk-taking, what do adventure consumers, clients, participants, and students think is fair and right?

- Does the public believe adventure experiences are nothing more than things to be purchased and consumed?
- Are people willing to accept the actual risks associated with the adventure activity they wish to try?

Psychologist Paul Slovic (1994) stated, "It's my sense people desire a risk-free environment. They believe we shouldn't spare effort or money to attain that. Because of our technological advances, we are healthier and safer and our expectations have grown apace. . . . As a result, society is starting to stigmatize people, products or systems which engage in high-risk behaviour."

- What has caused these attitudes?
- What can adventure leaders do about them?

3. The Challenge of Bad Press

One source of public attitude might be the popular media and its attention to clichés and superlatives, the negative, the tragic, the morbid and the sensationalistic. Popular television, film and magazine coverage of climbing and mountaineering promulgate an overblown and unrealistic perspective

regarding risk, reinforcing innate societal fears and phobias.

As intimated in an article from *Explore* magazine (2000), ". . . Hollywood flicks still can't get the climbing right." In most movies, climbing is used to create dangerous situations in the plot or to kill someone off. In very few cases are these depictions even remotely accurate, and the degree of sensationalism and lack of veracity has increased with later films. There are many more television shows that have featured climbing or other forms of mobility at height as incidental plot elements or easy ways of introducing danger and death into the story. Invariably, these depictions are either partially or totally inaccurate.

Public confusion and misperception may also stem from mixed messages. One women's magazine contained the following inconsistencies: "If you have to get away from it all to get closer to yourself, climb a rock. Growing numbers of enthusiasts are claiming this sport as their own for its utterly absorbing and soul-purifying benefits" (Harrington, 1990). In the same issue, a full-page advertisement for Dare perfume featured Lynn Hill at her peak, including a picture of her climbing a difficult route (captioned, "Anything is possible if you dare") and another of her attired in evening gown and rope, captioned "Lynn Hill, Daring Woman."

The male perspective is predictably characterized by sensationalism, sexism, and voyeuristic curiosity regarding the macabre. In a *Maxim* article, entitled "Blood Sports" (2001), the following cut line appeared: "Risk your life on a 3,000-foot stone slab—for no reason!" In the same issue, a picture of the late Alex Lowe climbing appeared with the caption: "You know what? I'm an idiot." The magazine then proceeded to detail everything that can kill or maim climbers. But what about articles with a positive bent? From *Abilities, Canada's Lifestyle Magazine for People With Disabilities*: "It's the first time in many years where I am in total control, leaving my chair behind. . . . Adventure therapy has once more put me where I want to be: outdoors, enjoying life to the fullest" (2003). It is unfortunate that this is a very specialized,

low-circulation periodical. The good messages are not widely distributed.

What do magazines devoted to adventure sports have to say? The article "Sell It on the Mountain" in *Rock & Ice* (2003) indicts the popular media for being exploitive and posits this question: "This spring, Global Extremes promises to bring lights, cameras and five relatively inexperienced climbers to a summit attempt on Mount Everest—broadcast live on national television. Has "reality TV" gone over the brink?" But that periodical played the same game in a later issue: "Dangerous Games—Epic Tales of Ropeless Ascents" (2003). Here is a cover caption from *Climbing*, a rival magazine: "Epics—double issue: Tragedy on Rainier, Marooned in the Arctic, K2 catastrophe, plus 27 other true tales" (2000).

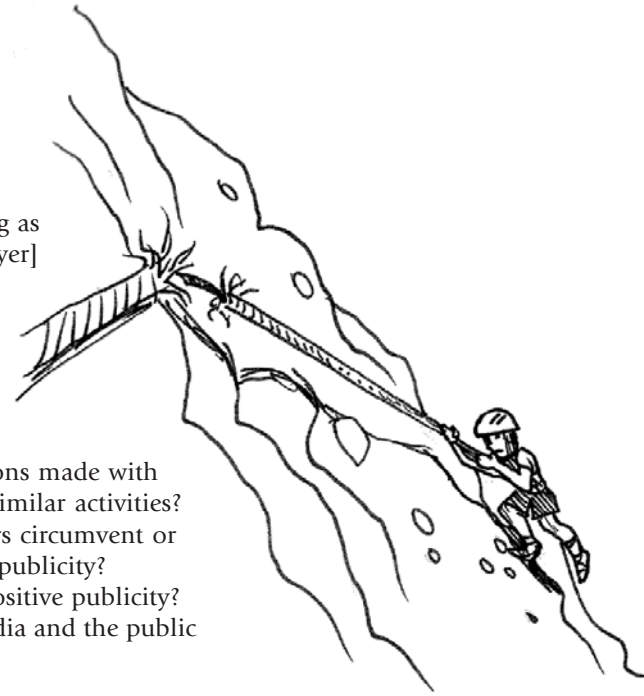
- Are climbing devotees and armchair "wannabes" guilty of the same "prurient" interest propounded by popular media and consumed by non-climbers?
- How does this form of exposure affect adventure education and challenge course programming?

Let's look at some typical examples of front-page and feature coverage regarding adventure sports, like climbing. The *Gazette* (1987) carried these headlines: "Climbers Risk Icy Death on the World's Roof" and "Risking Icy Death on the Roof of the World." Reading these captions always makes me wonder, how would it be if a newspaper ran the following piece: "Teenagers Risk Academic Failure, Bullying, Ostracism, Illegal Drug Use, and Suicide as They Enter High School This Fall"? It seems that newspapers automatically build failure and tragedy into their coverage to sell papers.

Often, "positive" coverage is inaccurate or emphasizes the wrong things. "It's all in the legs" (*The Toronto Star*, 2003) highlighted climbing at The Toronto Climbing Academy. The reporter talked about looking at people's posteriors in Lycra, and she also dwells a lot on the pain and discomfort of climbing shoes, the need to trim finger nails, and the physical effort required. The technical descriptions are equally laughable: "The good news is we are lead climbing, not top-roping.

The difference is we are using ropes attached to fulcrums on the floor and ceiling, which means as long as Heather [the reporter's belayer] holds on to the end, I won't leave with any bruises."

- What is the fallout of impressions cultivated by popular media on educational climbing programs and associations made with challenge courses and similar activities?
- Can adventure educators circumvent or ameliorate this kind of publicity?
- How can we increase positive publicity?
- Can we educate the media and the public more effectively?



4. The Challenge of Commodification

Savvy consumers expect and often demand quality, performance, bargain prices, and guarantees. When it comes to new experiences, especially adventure or "extreme" sports and "exotic" courses or outings, they want a safe experience. But they insist on having an exhilarating time. They want the sensation of risk without risk.

- What is it exactly they are buying? Bragging rights?
- Has adventure become commodified?
- Are the media and general public poorly informed and biased about these "products"?
- Is sensationalism part of the advertising and hype, even in educational venues?

Some Closing Thoughts

This is just the tip of the iceberg. For outdoor leaders and adventure educators in the new millennium, massive challenges have emerged and are developing with regard to insurance, site access, staff training, standards conflicts, curriculum justification and so on. I believe all of these dilemmas are intricately linked and must be treated in a holistic manner with a collective and concerted effort. Is that effort worthwhile, and are we up to the challenge?

continued on page 11

Boundless' Risk Management Journey

by Steven Gottlieb

I have met a lot of folks who aspire to create their own outdoor companies or who are students of risk management. I thought it would be beneficial for these readers to hear the Boundless Adventure risk management story, and to examine the evolution of our policies and philosophies from our "yahoo" stage to being among the industry leaders in safety.

Boundless is a 21-year old therapeutic adventure program in Ontario. We serve the widest array of population groups of any program in the world. These include people with physical and mental disabilities, youth at risk, people with brain injuries, people with hearing impairments psychiatric patients, aboriginal people with fetal alcohol syndrome, young families at risk, teenagers with substance abuse problems and "street kids."

If this list makes you dizzy, imagine how Boundless staff feel when they shoulder the safety responsibilities of taking these groups into whitewater, on eco-challenge/climbing adventures and on wilderness river journeys. I'd like to chart the course of our risk management system, starting from our earliest stage, and then outline some of the most salient risk management principles we use today.

The "Yahoo" Stage, 1983–1987

I remember with great consternation the early days when our clients would "off road" with us on the roof racks of our vans, or do summersaults off 60-foot eskers. Who needed helmets? They weren't industry standard at the time. We served just one population—youth at risk. We did not have a 600-acre basecamp as we do today. Things were simpler.

These were the days of flexing our youthful leadership muscles, relying on common sense to guide our clients down the Madawaska and Petawawa rivers. Using ignorance as our shield against the unknown, we forged a

rudimentary risk management system that was based on trial and error. This is not to suggest we were careless. With great diligence and to the best of our neophyte abilities, we looked after the safety interests of our clients. We had no serious injuries (at least if you don't count that client who broke his leg on the esker). We felt that our excellent safety record was our own doing.

Looking back now, we were naive, and certainly lucky.

Whoa! Let's Take a Step Back Stage, 1988–1993

New generations of Boundless staff that graduated from credible outdoor programs brought with them a wealth of technical information that spawned our first major evolution in risk management. Questions like, "What are other programs doing?" were pervasive. We felt the urge to write our policies down, and our program manual blossomed from ten pages to over 100 by 1993. We researched. We did our diligence. As the program and numbers of participants we served grew, we brought in our community partners to train us. We freely confessed our ignorance. We claimed to need help. We got it. Our safety record remained excellent.

Yet we felt sluggish and uncertain. This stage was marked by a feeling that we were always looking over our shoulders wondering if what we were doing was "industry standard." What did industry standard suggest about taking ex-psychiatric patients down rivers, replete with a bread box filled with anti-psychotic medication of which our staff had no clue? We were on our own, and out on a limb. This was an era that saw striking leaps into new programming territory as we reached out to our ever-expanding line-up of populations. We acquired a basecamp in 1987 with a square mile of wilderness to patrol. We transitioned to a year-round program. Things grew complicated.

And we didn't fool ourselves into thinking that we could actually rely on our 100-page risk management manual to keep clients safe. We knew staff didn't have the threshold to memorize all that stuff. Nothing took the need away from exhibiting common sense. I kept citing the management credo—à la Tom Peters—who touted the virtue of a one-sentence policy manual that stated, "Use your best judgment at all times." I sensed a mushrooming safety bureaucracy within Boundless, an ethos that I would soon grow to abhor.

The Rigidity State, 1994–1997

This stage was typified by our utter dedication to the printed word. The ubiquitous policy manual guided every decision. One could observe staff walking around camp studying the manual before making any judgment call. We would even make staff take a written exam on the manual to ensure they were "ready" to implement safety policy.

I remember one evening on the Dumoine when a staff member, sweaty from a hard day, and a lifeguard herself, was unable to take a dip in the calm river because there was no other staff available to guard her. Imagine a lifeguard unable to take a dip to cool off. We were shackled by our inane swimming policy. I recall a staff member denying the freedom to clients to stroll an obstacle-free pure sandy beach because of our "always wear shoes" policy.

Clients were not permitted to contribute to the team effort by loading luggage onto our van roof rack because clients were "never allowed on top of vans." Countless opportunities,

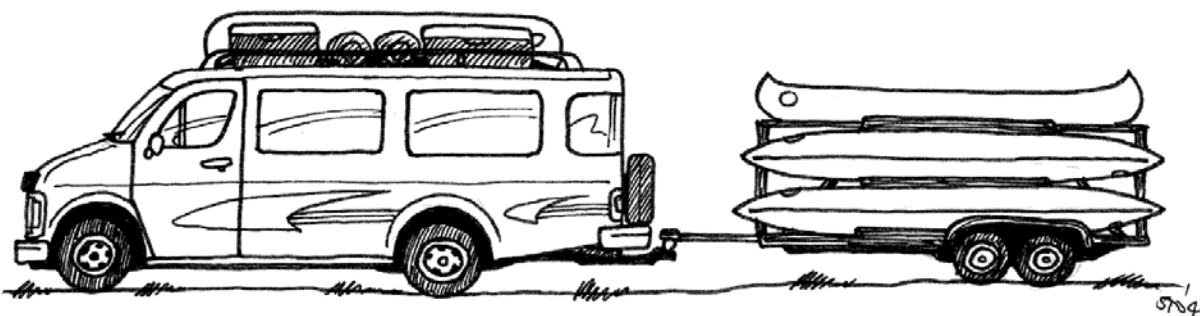
symbols, gestures and metaphors for clients to chip in were disallowed because of our thoughtless and automaton-like dedication to a policy manual that stripped our staff from the opportunity to make good judgement calls.

It was as if the manual was predicated on the poor judgement of all the staff. It was based on an honest effort to cover our butts from a liability perspective. It led to bizarre decision making reminiscent of a school board tearing down millions of dollars of perfectly sound playground equipment, citing liability concerns. The irony here is that I ended up resenting the safety bureaucracy that I had a large role in creating.

Emerging-As-Leaders Stage, 1998–Present

This stage is exemplified by the evolution from a set of policies designed to cover our own butts to a set of policies geared towards protecting our clients' butts. The distinction here is paramount.

The first approach is about mitigating liability at all costs. All risks are lumped together as one common enemy in order to reduce the likelihood of them occurring. It's reminiscent of a customs official body-searching an infirm elderly couple under the guise of fighting terrorism. The approach blankets everything. It assumes staff and clients are all nincompoops, and incapable of acting in their own best interests. The second approach aims to enable people to make decisions. It captures all the diligence and pragmatic calculations of the first approach, but it is free from the encumbering standardization of safety models that stymie effective and sensitive decision making.



Protecting our clients' butts goes way beyond using a program manual as the bible of safety interventions. We never rely on the manual to relay safety information and techniques to our staff. We rely on exhaustive staff training to teach staff safe approaches to serving clients. We hire staff based on their innate capacity to make sagacious and sensitive decisions. We empower staff to use their own judgement. They have a license to deviate from established policy if it is in the best interest of the client. Staff are taught to problem solve with the comradeship and good judgment of their colleagues. This approach, we believe, is the essence of protecting client's butts, as opposed to worrying incessantly about whether we meet "industry standards," a term that is rife with ambiguity and open to any interpretation under the sun.

Our safety record here at Boundless continues to be superb (knock on wood), and we are widely perceived to be among the industry leaders in safety. The next section outlines what our dearest values are as they relate to conducting risk management.

"It's in the DNA"—Recruiting the Best in Character

An organization could spend fortunes in staff training, but it wouldn't mean a darn thing if it failed to hire people with the innate problem solving, decision making and work ethic characteristics necessary to capitalize on this training investment. These character traits, I humbly submit, would support the theory that some leaders are born, not made. It behooves a program to find staff that bring these abilities to the organization on day one.

Boundless carefully screens for these traits during the interview process. We look at past success as the most reliable indicator of future success. We would rather hire a person with an uninterrupted history of success in other fields than we would a person with a spotty history in the outdoor field. We tend not to hire the "hall monitor" or "attendance taker" types. Our most successful safety coordinators tend to be risk takers. But, and

this is a big but, they must also have a solid history of demonstrating accountability in a team context. These folks tend to toe the line in safety, but are not afraid to make critical decisions when necessary.

Training, Training, Training

If we have done our homework during the hiring process, and are able to woo the folks with the character traits just described, then investing thousands in training feels good and more than pays for itself. Each staff in a typical summer contract spends one-third of their total experience at Boundless in training and in professional development initiatives. We spend 18% of our total operating budget on training. For some, this could be perceived as an expensive pill to swallow. I can assure you, however, it yields excellence. Our eternal struggle to fend off mediocrity is based on training, training and more training.

Good Equipment Costs a Bundle

It's true that leadership, creativity and efficient resource management are the pillars of any effective risk management system. What's also true is that Boundless must spend a wad of cash on the best equipment available to ensure the highest safety standards. There is no short cut here. It costs . . . big time! Yet, like training, I can assure you that this investment pays for itself many times over. Bringing clients home safely—all the time—is the biggest testament to an organization's credibility.

Hire a Gadfly to Keep Your Safety System Honest

Socrates likened himself to a gadfly, perpetually annoying the horse—ancient Athens in this case—challenging it to stay on its toes and keep asking itself questions in the pursuit of truth and excellence. Boundless hires a risk manager to serve as its safety gadfly. The current risk manager, Adrian Meisner, spearheads an examination that continually assesses and adapts our risk management protocols on an hourly, daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis.

Recording

Everything must be written down. This includes training regimes, policies, maintenance checks, staff certifications, accident/incident reports . . . the works.

In summary, our risk management philosophy, premised on protecting our clients as opposed to ourselves, depends on the following: effective hiring, intensive training, maintaining top quality equipment, engaging a watchdog to keep the system in a state of perpetual re-assessment and recording everything. It is predicated on empowering trusted staff members to be free thinkers, licensed to make their own calls according to the needs at hand. It assumes that the term "industry standard" is inherently a nebulous term, and that we at Boundless do have the power to define our own standards as long as they make sense and are backed up by intensive training and the best safety resources available.

But more than these valued principles, risk management needs effective leadership. In my opinion, an effective safety system depends on creating an organizational ethos where it's okay to experiment, even if there are a few mistakes or screw ups. I'm not referring to the kind of mistakes where a staff leaves the lights on in a van, loses the emergency credit card, or forgets to ensure his/her paddling partner has a lifejacket on—these mistakes are severely frowned upon at Boundless. I'm talking about encouraging and celebrating the kind of projects where an experiment with a protocol in a property search, or trying a better approach to belaying a ropes course is totally okay in Boundless culture. This requires great sensitivity and leadership. It presumes that no one is an expert and that we are learning the best practices together as a team, covering each other's back.

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English in the Wilderness: An Integrated Outward Bound Academic Course

by Holly McIntyre

This July, the first “English in the Wilderness” course ran at Outward Bound Canada (OBC). The three-week course combined the traditional OBC curriculum with ENG 3U, a grade 11 English credit. This is the first time an academic, university preparation course has been integrated with the core OBC summer program. This article will discuss how the expectations for ENG 3U were integrated with OBC curriculum, the literature and other resources that were used, and how the English component and the OBC curriculum complemented one another.

Overview of Outward Bound and ENG 3U

Outward Bound Canada is a non-profit educational organization that promotes personal growth through shared wilderness experiences. The core summer program at OBC is the 21-day youth adventure course for 15–16-year-old students. This course incorporates an extended wilderness expedition with high-impact activity days such as rock climbing, high ropes and whitewater kayaking. Another important component of the course is service to the community; the students typically spend a day doing volunteer work outside of OBC. Integrating ENG 3U with the adventure program seemed a natural fit—who isn’t inspired to write and explore literature when travelling through the incredible northern Ontario wilderness and testing personal limits?

ENG 3U is an academic, university preparation course that focuses on literature, poetry, and essay writing. To cover all course expectations, the students completed several assignments at home. Before arriving, they read the novel *Halfway Man* by Wayland Drew (1989), and answered questions to explore its themes and symbols. Because the credit requires work on the computer (such as media studies and Internet research), one of the assignments

was to choose an environmental issue that had seen limited media coverage, and to summarize an article on this subject, examining the bias evident in the article. Another pre-course assignment had the students researching Kurt Hahn, the founder of Outward Bound, on the Internet. By completing these assignments before arriving at OBC, the students were prepared for discussion of the novel, and several curriculum expectations were covered that otherwise couldn’t have been out on the trail. It required, however, that the students possessed a certain amount of self-motivation. This was also important after the course, for part of their culminating assignment was a literary essay on *Halfway Man*, which they wrote after returning home, and sent in for grading.

Literature, Resources and Curriculum

The main resource was the novel *Halfway Man*, which is set in the very wilderness in which the students were traveling—“on the shore of Lake Superior and in the Shield beyond” (Drew, 1989). This book is full of symbolism and themes that are easy for students to pick out on their own, making it ideal for a course as self-directed as this one.

Other literature studied included poetry by Canadian poets Archibald Lampman, A.J.M. Smith, and Earle Birney, all of which included wilderness themes. A resource manual was provided for each student that incorporated handouts as well as several relevant poems, short stories, articles and essays. Around the campfire at night the group would often discuss the literature or read short stories aloud, such as *A Coyote Columbus Story* by Thomas King (1992). There was also a group reading of the poem *David* by Earle Birney (1942), in which each student was responsible for reading aloud and interpreting six stanzas.

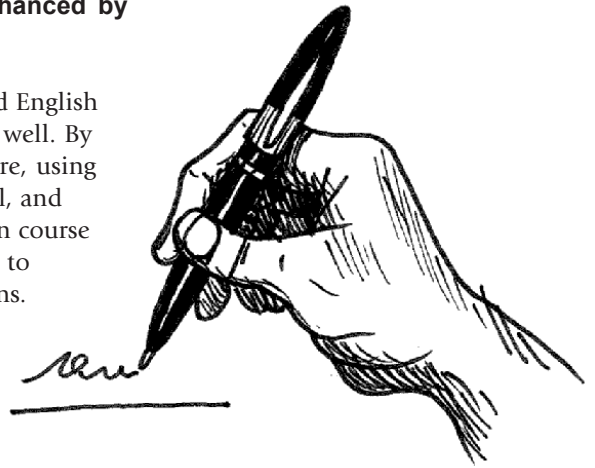
The students were asked to bring a hardcover journal with them to write in, and at the end of the course submitted their journals for grading. Submitting completed journals was one of their culminating tasks and worth 15% of their final grade. During the course we provided ample time for journaling. Some of their entries were structured, that is, we asked them to complete an activity in their journals such as freewriting or creating proverbs based on what they learned during the course. Most of their journaling was unstructured. However, they were given guidelines about what should be included, such as thoughts on group living, their changing role in the group, goals and challenges, and what/how they were learning. They were encouraged to be creative in their journals, by including maps, poems, quotes, drawings, etc.

We brought a “library” with us in a drybag. In the library were several books ranging from poetry to nature interpretation, magazines on current events, a dictionary/thesaurus, the students’ journals, novels and resource manuals. It was important to have a wide range of materials, because the students used the library to research and give oral presentations on topics of their choice. It was a fun break in the day when a student would announce that it was an appropriate time for them to give their presentation, and it was refreshing to be the ones listening instead of talking (probably refreshing for the students too). Presentation topics included thunder and lightning, Aikido, deep breathing techniques, and the freshwater crisis.

We also brought along a bug tent, which proved invaluable. It would have been impossible to cover lessons in the evenings without it. It also provided a refuge from the bugs during the day when students were hard at work on their journals or other assignments. Another item that proved to be indispensable to the instructors were “Crazy Creek”-style chairs. Lots of time grading and sitting around in circles was made much more bearable with some back support. The chairs with pockets are great; we referred to them as our “briefcases” because we’d tote all our papers and books around in them.

English Curriculum Enhanced by Outdoor Education

We found that the OB and English curricula fit together very well. By choosing relevant literature, using reflection as a writing tool, and using journaling as a main course component, we were able to cover all of the expectations. The two curricula had an almost symbiotic relationship—each was enhanced by the other.



We traveled south along the west shore of Lake Nipigon, from the Kopka River all the way back to our base, Homeplace, on Black Sturgeon Lake. This reflected the route taken by the two main characters in *Halfway Man* who traveled south to their home on Lake Superior. The novel’s setting and theme made it easy for students to find relevancy in what they were reading. The story is about a small, Native community that is being threatened by development. In the story, the hero takes the president of the development corporation on a long canoe trip north of Superior, hoping that he might be inspired to change his mind about developing the area. As it would on an Outward Bound course, the wilderness plays a central role in the education of this man, and helps him on his personal journey. The students were able to share in and experience the descriptions of arduous portages, exhilarating whitewater, and the beauty and spirituality of the North. The novel served as a hub for the rest of the course, with links to other literature that was studied, as well as to the students’ experiences.

To cover the Outward Bound curriculum as well as that of the English credit, we often incorporated the two together, using reflection as the primary vehicle. An activity that worked particularly well was a “poetry debrief.” At the end of the day, each student said one word that came into their head when they thought about the day. We compiled a list of these words, and then each student wrote a poem about the day, the only requirement being that all of the words on the list appeared in the poem. When the

poems were read aloud it was easy for the students to see how different moods and feelings can be conveyed with language, even though they were all talking about the same day and had to use many of the same words. We also used the poems as a debriefing tool, by having each student talk about how their poem related to their interpretation of the day. Three “reflection papers” were also written, allowing the students to process what they learned from different course components, and to transfer their learning to their home environment, while practicing writing, editing and revising skills.

Challenges

On a wilderness trip you can never be sure how much “free” time you are going to have, so we chose a route that was short for the number of days we had. Some days we would arrive at our campsite at lunchtime, and spend the rest of the afternoon hard at work. One day we stayed over at the same campsite, which was a welcome break for the students, and a great day of productive work! We were lucky in that the weather cooperated with us, and we were able to make the distance we had planned. However we always felt like we needed more time to work on English! Towards the end of the course, when instructors usually step back and allow the students to be in control, we were unable to do this completely because we had to ensure that we had time to cover curriculum.

It was challenging to work on essay-writing skills out on the trail. Without computers, writing and revising became a very time-consuming task. We had the students practice various parts of essay writing by using other assignments. For example, they practiced writing outlines for their oral presentations, and did peer and self-editing for each of their three reflection papers. They also participated in a debate, in which they adopted a character from the novel and argued from his or her perspective on one of the novel’s main issues. In this way they explored the main themes of the book, and worked on persuasion. We included lots of handouts in their resource manuals dealing with essay-writing, such as an MLA style guide, how to structure an

essay, the components of a thesis statement, different ways to persuade, etc. We feel that they were adequately prepared to write their literary essays upon returning home. However, it would be beneficial for the students to get constructive feedback on their essays so that they are better prepared for grade 12 English and college or university.

Overall Impressions

Overall, it seemed that OB and ENG 3U were a natural fit. There is a plethora of relevant literature available, making it easy for students to “buy into” the course. We were able to explore topics such as conservation, Native land claims, language, and media, all through the English curriculum. The students really enjoyed learning English in this way, often asking us, “Can we work on English today?” Sometimes they didn’t even know that they were covering curriculum, as we were able to sneak in lessons in disguise (e.g., working on persuasion by having them find “natural toilet paper” and convince the group that theirs was the best)!

While the course worked well, it is one that required careful planning and preparation for it to run smoothly. With less motivated students, or less cooperative weather, it may have been difficult to address all the expectations. However, we were blessed with a little bit of beginner’s luck, and hope to carry forward what we learned to next year’s course!

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Thinking Risk on the World's Highest Mountain

by Paul Berger and Helle Moeller

On July 30th we interviewed Werner Berger, a 67-year-old management consultant, about his motivation for climbing Mt. Everest in 2005, and the risk involved in climbing. We present edited excerpts, and comment on factors important in thinking about risk on Everest, and by extension in other activities. The initial interview transcript and this analysis were returned to Werner for comments and approval before submission for publication.

Motivation: Joy or Recognition?

P: Climbing Mt. Everest is dangerous and expensive. What motivates you as a 67-year-old to climb it?

W: Probably just part of my dream of climbing the Seven Summits, wanting to experience it, wanting to challenge myself on it. When I'm on a mountain I live almost completely in the present, which results in a heightened sense of awareness, a feeling of joy, a feeling of exuberance, a feeling of appreciation, and a feeling of humility that I don't have in my everyday life. At least not to that extent.

P: I wonder if it has to be the highest mountains?

W: I wouldn't be quite as interested in climbing lower mountains because at the same time I want to have a sense of true accomplishment, not just experiencing being on a mountain. Highest certainly has an ego element associated with it as well.

P: Will you consider the climb successful if something stops you from getting to the top?

W: If the experience to that point is the way it was on Denali when we got to the Kahiltna Horn, 200 vertical feet from the top, the

answer is absolutely yes. Just being on Everest is so attractive. I think back to the first time you and I went to Nepal. . . It's rather interesting, because even thinking about it I become teary again. And especially flying away and seeing the mountain from the plane in the distance, just being so emotionally linked to that experience. Coming off Denali the first time, as far as I was concerned, the climb was phenomenal and I had no regrets about not having summited.

P: And yet you want to go back for a third time to actually get to the summit?

W: (laughing) Yeah, because I do want to get to the top. I have not stood on the roof of North America, and that was the initial intent.

P: Are there any early experiences that have an impact on the decision to climb Mt. Everest?

W: Absolutely (laughing). As a kid I always had to prove myself. I had to always do things that other people couldn't do or wouldn't do, and I've often thought that maybe my climbing is related to that. (Later) I'm also just thinking of a pipe crossing a very deep rock-filled trench and everybody walked around that and I had to walk over the pipe, which was only about three inches in diameter. Everything would have been fine if the pipe hadn't started swinging.

H: So you do things to be noticed?

W: There's no question that there is some element of that in the whole equation. I don't know how substantial a part, but it's definitely there. The pipe was absolutely to prove to myself that I was okay. Totally.

And hopefully everybody would see it as well. (Laughs) The thing is, nobody cared.

P: What happened when the pipe started swinging? You fell off into the trench?

W: (Laughing) And I got back up and walked again—but this time got across. Everybody was 100 yards away and didn't even know that I'd crossed it. I had to do it for myself. I had to prove to myself that I could do this.

Motivation may always include enjoyment of the activity and wanting to be noticed—noticed by our parents, our friends, strangers—and ourselves. When the need to be noticed is too strong, risk skyrockets. This need pushed Don Starkell to lose his fingers paddling in the Arctic, it pushes climbers to continue when they should turn back, and it leads people to street race.

It may have complex roots, including parents' overuse of praise, total lack of praise, or the lack of acceptance of children for who they are instead of what they can do. Helping young people choose to participate in activities for enjoyment rather than the need for recognition may therefore not be easy. Still, we encourage educators to help students become aware of what motivates their choices. The decision to accept risk should be a conscious one.

Self-Assessment of Risk: How Much to Accept, and is the Assessment Accurate?

W: If you asked me if I would be interested in climbing K2, my answer would be absolutely no. I'm not interested in putting myself at extreme risk by going to something that's tough or beyond my capabilities. What I believe I'm doing is within my capabilities. I have control to a large extent over that. Being adequately prepared is really the key.

P: How do you perceive the risk involved in the climb of Mt. Everest?

W: I see it as reasonably low. The biggest danger is of course on the Khumbu icefield, where the glacier is moving and something could come tumbling down. Now the likelihood of that is very slight. The other risk of course is weather conditions changing dramatically, but if one is fairly conscious, and knows one's limits, I believe that can be minimized.

P: Were there times on previous climbs when you felt more at risk than at others?

W: Absolutely. On Aconcagua the risk of having to sleep out at night, but I don't think that was life threatening. And on Elbrus the discombobulation—but with the guide knowing the mountain as well as she did, I'm not sure the risk was very high.

P: And when you were in the storm on Denali the second time, that wasn't risky?

W: No. Because we had dug ourselves in properly. Fortunately the weather broke just enough for us to get down once our food ran out after nine days, but again, I didn't perceive that as much of a risk.

P: What do you think of the 2% figure for Mt. Everest—that 2% of those who go to climb the mountain actually die on the mountain?

W: I would need to know the causes of death. Is it because of overexertion where they pushed past their limits? Is it because they pushed past turnaround times? Is it because of very adverse weather kicking in?

P: How will you be certain to respect your turnaround time and not end up in the category of very high risk because you really want to get to the summit and you've spent a year training to get there?

W: Tough question to answer from this position. There are many things that would enter into that decision. First of all, what are the weather conditions like, and is there a possibility that the weather is stable enough to allow another hour's

climb? If there's any question about that, the answer would have to be 'down.'

P: What else will you do to ensure that you return safely?

W: Certainly going to the mountain as fit as I possibly can be . . . having the right equipment . . . being in a very healthy condition, and also being keenly aware who I'm climbing with.

P: Many accidents on Mt. Everest happen on the way down from the summit. How will you be thinking about that as you're climbing?

W: On Elbrus I really experienced some extreme physical fatigue, rested for a bit and ate some stuff, and felt strong again. Now if I'm in that physical condition at a point on Everest, I would definitely have to turn back. Exhaustion on the way down is the prime killer.

When analysing the interview we thought of a number of factors that make Werner's assessment of risk optimistic. Excellent equipment and top physical form are certainly prerequisites, but knowledge and judgement are also critical. On guided climbs involving roped teams on lower mountains, these may become the responsibility of the guides. On Everest things are different. On summit day climbers are seldom roped and often not clipped to fixed lines. Guides become spread out, and many have themselves never climbed on Everest before. The best have made fatal errors high on Everest. Altitude works to cloud judgement, and can itself cause death through cerebral or pulmonary oedema. All climbers, and especially those without extensive high altitude experience, must accept sharply increased risk up high on Everest. Recent history suggests that clients climbing Everest guided are probably the most at-risk group on the mountain.

We feel that it's important for people engaging in risk activities to consider the level of risk

that they are comfortable taking. But how then to honestly assess the risk? The tendency to attribute accidents to mistakes, the belief that we ourselves won't make the same mistakes, and the inability to consider factors that our experience does not let us see, cloud our assessment of risk. Increasing difficulty of our activities in small increments to gain the experience necessary for sound judgement makes sense. Otherwise, through every means possible we need to vicariously gain experience. If we hope to avoid others' errors, concrete strategies like setting an absolute turnaround time might help—though others have done so, ignored them, and died. Without a gradual apprenticeship, we must accept that we cannot accurately assess the risk, and take that into consideration.

Invincibility: What if You Think You Are, But You're Not?

P: It doesn't sound like you really see yourself as possibly dying on a climb. Is that accurate?

W: The perception of dying is very, very low. I'm aware that it definitely is a possibility.

P: I think people can intellectually conceptualize death, but they really don't think that it'll be them.

W: Correct, it won't be me (laughs). If I thought that I would die, I would not go.

H: When you were on Aconcagua and you slipped and it was dark?

W: What occurred to me more than anything else is that we would be trapped where we were for the night, and that it would be extremely uncomfortable, especially since we had run out of water and were really thirsty, and very, very fatigued. But the idea of death—I did not think that I would die there; it wasn't cold enough.

P: That stream at the bottom? You said to me that if you missed that jump, that was it.

W: Well, that came across to me much more

as a challenge than anything else, because I really, really had the sense that I could make it. I knew it was a stretch, but again, if I hadn't been so confident I would have dumped my pack and said to him, you throw me this thing. I jumped with my pack, which of course was very limiting, and yet really had the sense, 'I can do this.'

H: It sounds like you think you're invincible.

W: No, that's not quite accurate. But there are certain things that I'm fairly sure that I can do, and there are other things that I'm not that good at doing. I've had many experiences that were really on the edge during my youth, and I suspect that there is a perception of 'I can get through this.' I might get hurt, but I can get through this.

P: What ones are you thinking of?

W: Almost slipping into the Augrabis Falls in South Africa. Daring myself to walk on the edge of an open pit mine when everyone was on the path, and I'm on the edge and slipping, and thinking that I'm going to plunge about a hundred feet down, and at the last minute jumping to a little ledge and saving myself. Testing myself on a motorcycle a little bit ridiculously. Now, I believe that greater balance exists in my life. If I think back to that scree slope in the Himalayas, over Kongma La, and how afraid and cautious I was—I was really scared, no question about it. And very cautious. And grateful when I fell, started sliding, and that rock jammed into my bum. It hurt like hell, but I stopped (laughing).

P: I wonder if an experience like that is in fact very helpful, or if it leaves you feeling like you will always make it through?

W: What it reminds me of is being on the Kahiltna Horn on Denali, and knowing

that the summit was only 20 minutes away, and not tough climbing. Yet internally I was so clear that the right thing was to go down, given the circumstances, and that was okay. I really expected to have summit fever, and I did not.

It is generally accepted that many young people feel invincible, immortal. Paul used to believe that if the plane he was on crashed, he would surely be the sole survivor. Feeling at some level invincible might make the intellectual calculation of risk meaningless. If you don't think you can die, you really believe the risk is zero. Encouraging students to be conscious of their fear and to pay attention to what they know may help. Sometimes we may need iron fast rules to help our intellects win out and appropriately manage risk. Rules like a non-negotiable turnaround time, a decision to never drive a car after even just one beer, or a decision not to climb more than two metres off the ground without a rope.

Conclusion

Helping students to be aware of their motivation, and to be honest in their assessment of risk, will help them act more consciously. Being able to identify when something is done for recognition more than enjoyment, when enough experience is not present to fully assess the risk, and when feelings of invincibility may cloud good judgement may be first steps in protecting against their unconscious effects.

Paul Berger teaches at the Faculty of Education, Lakehead University. Helle Moeller is a nurse, and is finishing her Master of Anthropology degree at the University of Copenhagen. In activities together their assessment of risk is not always in agreement!

Access-ability: Risk Management for Canoe Tripping with Youth with Physical Disabilities

by David VanderBurgh

Going on a canoe trip with youth with physical disabilities challenges concepts of access and ability, and explores boundaries in a wilderness setting. This summer, I experienced the challenges and rewards of these trips, working as a canoe trip leader for an Easter Seals Camp outside of Perth, Ontario. On our trips, we usually had five temporarily able-bodied staff, and seven campers aged ten to eighteen with physical disabilities including, but not limited to, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and muscular dystrophy. Some campers could walk and could get in and out of canoes themselves. Others used wheelchairs, and were lifted in and out of canoes by staff. Besides special canoe chairs made to provide back support for our campers, the equipment on our trips was not uniquely adapted. We traveled in 17-foot fiberglass canoes and used similar paddles and tents to other camps tripping in Ontario. I think what was unique about these trips was the amount of determination, patience and attention to safety shown by both campers and staff.

In this article I will draw from my personal experience and focus on three specific ways to address the question, "How do we manage risk differently with youth from a mainstream population when canoe tripping than we might with youth with physical disabilities?" When I trip with youth with physical disabilities, my safety systems for the most part go unchanged. But, my attention to these systems is heightened as the implications of each decision—good and bad—are magnified when tripping with this population. There is a great deal of thought put into safety on these trips by the organization, the director, the nurses, and other staff. I manage risk differently on a trip with youth with physical disabilities than I would on a trip with a mainstream population.

Paddling as a group and close to shore seem like simple and obvious risk management practices. But when leading a trip for youth with physical disabilities, a common sense route along a shoreline shifts from a good idea to a safety necessity. On our trips, our boats are usually packed well above the gunnels, overflowing with packs, people and tied-in, folded up wheelchairs. These brimming boats, coupled with novice paddlers who do not have complete control over their muscle function, heightened the possibility of tipping.

For me as a leader, it was not the act of tipping that I was most worried about. Many of the kids would have loved the adventure and stories that would have resulted from an unexpected swim. Rather, I was most worried about how we would recover and rescue a swamped canoe, and its paddlers. When boats are loaded above the gunnels with wheelchairs, and your swimmers may be unable to help themselves back into a boat, a canoe-over-canoe rescue in deep water is a tricky maneuver at best. From a safety perspective, we hand-railed the shoreline at every possibility, aware that in the event of a dump (which thankfully never happened), we could tow people quickly to shore, and use solid ground to recover a canoe and help or lift campers safely back into the righted boat.

While on trip with kids with physical disabilities, I looked at the shoreline differently, critiquing campsites and choosing them for their accessibility. Once at a campsite, I looked at three things in particular: the access at the water; the distance from the water to the actual site; and the terrain around the fire and tent sites. The terrain at a takeout is pivotal for safe transfers in and out of the canoes. Ideal: beach. Not ideal: slippery, sloping rock. To load or unload gear and eight campers into or out of canoes took

anywhere from one to two hours. This was mainly determined by the campsite access at the water. A tricky access point would lead to lifts being taken a couple steps at a time and up to four staff working with one camper to ensure safety.

The distance from the water to the actual site was an important safety consideration for both campers and staff. The further a site was from the lake, the more chance of an accident, either from a camper falling when walking over tricky terrain, or from a complication in a camper's lift. One evening this summer, one of my groups was forced to stay at an inaccessible site. The campsite was about 100 metres from the shore, up a sloping rock face (remember: not ideal!). From a risk management perspective, the site posed safety concerns not only for campers, but also for staff due to the physical demand of assisting and carrying campers up this slab. We were able to camp safely at this site, but its inaccessibility was a concern that we managed by being slow, methodic and careful while moving campers to and from the water.

Accessibility around tent and fire sites was also important when choosing where to sleep. On our trips, we promoted and encouraged independence in the campers. A flat, rootless, rockless site meant maneuverability and independence. Although more room to walk or wheel around may lead to the possibility of an accident, I found this less of a concern than the emotional impacts of being trapped between a rock and a root, and immobilized on a campsite. Thus, when looking for an ideal, safe site for youth with physical disabilities, I was looking for one that was flat and smooth around the tent and fire sites.

My final example of how risk management differs when working with youth with physical disabilities on a canoe trip is how leaders deal with health concerns. With this population, the consequences surrounding health complications are heightened. As a leader, I must therefore consider each first aid situation seriously. One night this summer, a girl was complaining of a severe headache. She had a history of migraines, but to her

this headache was worse than those she'd had before, and it was focused directly on her shunt—a surgically implanted one-way valve that channels water off her brain, down a catheter into her stomach. A blocked shunt can exhibit itself in many ways, including severe pain, and can lead to brain damage and death. Was her headache a blocked shunt? Was she nervous on her first night of the trip and seeking attention? Using a satellite phone, I was able to call the camp to ask for advice. The camp nurse, director, and the girl's mother discussed the situation and decided that the girl's symptoms were consistent with her migraine headaches and a desire for attention. She was able to stay on trip; her headache cleared up and she enjoyed the remainder of her experience. When tripping with youth with physical disabilities, I have a heightened sense of precaution around health concerns because the possibility of serious consequences is magnified. Therefore, we carry a satellite phone—something I would not do on a mainstream population trip—and use it to check-in with the nurses at camp. We also treat each health situation with scrutiny and seriousness, never assuming that a headache is just a headache.

Thankfully, we did not have any major accidents or incidents on canoe trip this summer. I believe this record is at least partially due to strong attention paid to risk management. Although we were diligent about safety, in no way was the spirit of a canoe trip lost. We paddled, portaged and cooked as any other group might. In some ways, my canoe trips from this summer were unlike any other I had led before. I learned to challenge conventional concepts about accessibility and ability. But, in other ways, my trips were like any other canoe trip with first-timers: the kids complained about the rain and wanted to hear ghost stories.

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Technical Standards

by Robert Chisnall

Standards and practices are industry-created and driven by practitioners. They are eventually accepted as normal peer practices and almost everyone conforms. However, if you carefully compare the multiple standards that apply to a variety of rope access activities, there is considerable variation, and even disagreement and inconsistency. Many of these guidelines and regulations are regionally developed and, therefore, can be self-serving and biased. But all of these standards, fundamentally, describe some sort of safety framework to protect people at height using rope.

All standards share common threads, and it is important for outdoor leaders and practitioners to be aware of these standards and guidelines. Hence, here is a resource list, a sample of the companies, associations, standards, and regulatory authorities whose work directly or indirectly applies to outdoor and adventure education, or could be referenced in a court of law.

Associations, Labels and Institutions

- ACC (Alpine Club of Canada, Manitoba Section; www.alpine-club.mb.ca)—climbing instructor certification
- ACC (Alpine Club of Canada, Thunder Bay Section; www.acctbay.ca)
- ACCT (Association for Challenge Course Technology; www.acctinfo.org)—aerial and ropes courses
- ACMG (Association of Canadian Mountain Guides; www.acmg.ca)—mountaineering and guiding certification
- AMGA (American Mountain Guides Association; www.amga.com)—mountaineering and guiding certification
- ANSI (American National Standards Institute; www.webstore.ansi.org)—equipment standards
- ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers; www.asme.org)—window cleaning safety standards
- ASTM (formerly, American Society for Testing and Materials; www.astm.org)—indoor gym wall standards, which are in development
- Canadian federal laws regarding fall protection (www.fedpubs.com)
- Canadian provincial laws regarding fall protection (Refer to the “Occupational Health and Safety Act;” www.gov.on.ca)
- CE/CEN/EN (Communauté Européenne; www.cenorm.be)—climbing equipment standards (see UIAA)
- CNS (Climb Nova Scotia; www.climbnovascotia.ca)—rock climbing instructor certification
- CSA (Canadian Standards Association; www.csa.ca)—fall protection equipment standards
- CUSSCO (College, University and School Safety Council of Ontario; see www.onla.on.ca, the Web site of the Legislative Assembly, for more information about this and other associations)
- DIN (Deutsche Industrie Norm)—equipment standards and testing (safety equipment often bears the DIN label)
- FQME (Fédération Québécoise de la Montagne et de l’Escalade; www.fqme.qc.ca)—access and climbing instructor certification in Quebec
- ISO (International Organization for Standardization; www.iso.ch)—technology standards
- IRATA (International Rope Access Trades Association; www.irata.org)—rope access procedures and certification
- OCA (Ontario Camping Association; www.ontcamp.on.ca)—camp climbing and challenge course standards
- OPHEA (Outdoor Physical and Health Education Association; www.ophea.org)—physical education safety standards; challenge courses, climbing walls, rock climbing
- ORCA (Outdoor Recreation Council of America)—commercial gym standards (associated with the CGA, the Climbing Gym Association)
- ORCA (Ontario Rock Climbing Association)—rock climbing instructor certification (the current state of this association is uncertain; see the Web sites for Multi-Trek Climbing and Rescue and Equinox Adventures for commercial schools claiming to offer ORCA certification courses)
- NFPA (National Fire Protection Association; www.nfpa.org)—rescue procedures and equipment
- PEP (Provincial Emergency Program, British Columbia; www.pep.bc.ca)—rescue training
- MSA (Mountain Rescue Association; www.mra.org)
- NSS (National Speleological Society; www.caves.org)—caving practices
- SPRAT (Society of Professional Rope Access Technicians; www.cprat.org)—rope access procedures and certification
- UI (Underwriters Laboratories Inc.)—testing and certifying safety equipment (safety equipment often bears the UI label)
- UIAA (Union Internationale des Associations d’Alpinisme; www.uiiaa.ch)—climbing equipment standards (see CE/CEN/EN)

Spiritual Development through Play in the Outdoors: A Look at the Scout Movement

by François Gravelle and Gervais Deschênes

Outdoor education is a constantly evolving field with a broad spectrum of opportunities and challenges for participants. Miles and Priest (1999) suggest that outdoor education has in the past been conceived of as a learning place (natural environment), a subject to be learnt (ecological processes) and a reason for learning (resource stewardship). These same authors suggest that outdoor education should exceed these elements as it can also take place indoors during trip preparation. They insist, as well, that outdoor education must be more than simply bringing a group of students together in a natural environment to study an ecological environment, in the hope, for example, of the students becoming park rangers. It is our understanding that an outdoor education experience needs to be perceived holistically to fully appreciate its pedagogical significance. In considering the impact of outdoor education experiences, in addition to formal learning objectives, one must include informal and even accidental learning.

Miles and Priest (1999) define outdoor education as “an experiential method of learning with the use of all senses. It takes place primarily, but not exclusively, through exposure to the natural environment. In outdoor education the emphasis for the subject of learning is placed on a relationship concerning people and natural resources” (p. 111). As part of this learning experience the intent of this paper is to explore outdoor education as an opportunity for participants to experience spiritual development through play within or in relation to the natural environment.

The term spirituality comes from the Greek word “pneuma” and “spiritus” in the Latin

language. Etymologically the term “spiritual” is associated with “breath of life” and the concept of “vitality” with an “awakening of the conscience of self.” Consequently, for the purpose of our paper we will consider spirituality as an “inner-person” experience leading to a better understanding and ongoing transformation of oneself in relation with the unconditional (i.e., with nature) wherein the transcendence of self and nature through the spirit is considered an important element (Waaijman, 1939).

As it is obviously difficult to measure objectively when and how spiritual development will take place with the individual, it is our belief that participants should be provided with the best possible conditions for this type of learning to take place. Bearing this in mind, we now turn to “play” as possibly being conducive to the spiritual development of the inner-person.

According to Ellis (1973) play is based on freedom, creativity and personal evaluation. Play is an activity where players can be freer, more creative and not subject to formal evaluation such as in the structured settings of school or work (Ellis, 1973). In essence, play has an element of culture, which allows individuals to be themselves or, according to Huizinga (1955), to learn to be different while exploring fun and pleasure.

Socrates suggested that learning was in many instances about finding oneself. Play is therefore a prominent learning tool. But for play to do its magic we need to provide participants with the richest possible learning environment, one that allows for freedom, creativity and self-assessment, and where the outdoors or natural environment

will not only offer the physical space and liberty for play to take its course, but can also offer a liberating environment for spiritual development as it allows participants the freedom to explore their inner-person. Play has many advantages to offer participants in this regard:

- Play can provide participants with varied learning experiences, as it can be informal and spontaneous. Lites (1992) suggests that play is a process in which an individual progresses by making decisions and being constantly “surprised” by an ever-changing environment, thus allowing players to evolve towards what they are supposed to be or become.
- Play is a place for imagination, creativity and authenticity, implying a joy of being.
- Play requires taking time to be oneself, discovering new ways of doing things, giving way to grace, gratuity and freedom, and providing an opportunity to develop personal judgment by inventing rules and adhering to them.
- Play provides an opportunity to explore personal possibilities and limits while interacting with friends, realizing that together they can build and accomplish even bigger projects.

It is therefore our belief that spiritual development gained through play in an outdoor environment will help players become more conscious of the potential within their inner-person. It will not necessarily lead players to become more religious in any formal sense, but rather will help them understand the depth of their own spiritual potential.

Spirituality through play will also provide participants with the realization on a daily basis of the importance of others. Play, therefore, favours deep and transcendent experiences allowing for the development of creativity and helping participants to touch base with their true self through their past, present and even future realities.

Now how can one apply this vision to the real world? To illustrate our perspective let us take a quick look at an existing outdoor education program aimed at promoting spiritual development through interaction with nature. The Scout Movement of Canada is presently a part of life for over 100,000 young people and 30,000 volunteers (www.Scouts.ca). Since 1908 scouting has been an integral part of the Canadian culture providing meaningful experiences to youngsters across the country. In its mission this organization incorporates play in the outdoors as key experiences leading to spiritual development (www.Scouts.ca).

The Scout Movement is defined as “a voluntary non-political educational movement for young people, open to all without distinction of origin, race or creed, in accordance with the purpose, principles and method conceived by the founder Baden-Powell” (World Scout Bureau, 1992). Thus, the purpose of the Scout Movement is to contribute to the holistic development of young people towards achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential as responsible citizens in their own community (World Scout Bureau, 1992).

The Scout Movement is formally structured, as it leads youngsters through a series of stages before becoming full members of this community. Following a probation period, young candidates will choose to make a “Scout’s Promise” leading to a commitment based on personal honour. This “promise” is lived everyday through the scout’s duty to God, to others and to self (www.Scouts.ca).

In essence the Scout Movement is perceived as a school of life widely open to play as a pedagogical tool that allows youngsters to progressively develop into their holistic being (inner-person). The dynamic relationships taking place between youngsters and the outdoors offer opportunities viewed as cornerstones in the Scout Movement, or, as



stated by Baden-Powell, a way to discover their soul.

Inspired by Shackleton, Baden-Powell stated in 1922 that play led to the development of spiritual thinking not solely concerning one's religion, but rather with the total person, both at play and at work. According to Baden-Powell, the purpose of outdoor education is mainly to help participants discover the beauty and greatness of nature. To lose sight of nature is to lose half of the pleasure of life. Life should be considered a game, and teamwork as the great game.

The Scouting approach is focused upon action in natural settings, providing youngsters with a series of clear objectives while leaving room for their imagination to develop their sense of the inner-person. It is designed to be a challenge that is self-chosen, motivated, conducted and celebrated by the scouts themselves. It envisions a pooling of energy from all members and provides both the individual and the group a chance to grow physically, socially, intellectually and spiritually.

The Scout Movement embraces a pedagogical tool aimed at activating young scouts. The emerging process, one that aspires to meet the needs and expectations of young scouts, is in itself a real life adventure. At the root of this adventure lies a dream growing from the scout's imagination. Dreams are the basis of visions leading to actions.

Imagination will transform dreams into concrete projects. By accomplishing these projects, one often exceeds what is originally

expected. Dreams will often materialize within the structures of serious play where the imaginary constitutes social learning. The experience often evolves into reality, helping young scouts build a community among themselves. In essence youngsters are getting, through their imagination, closer to nature, to reality, gaining significant social learning in line with real life situations. At camp, scouts might decide for example to form a council and meet around a large oak tree to discuss the day's crisis or next day's strategy. Independently from its form or shape, play within the outdoors offers the possibility of "freedom of becoming" (Kelly, 1987 p. 17) and is related to a process rather than the final result. Through play activities, action will focus on each scout developing a stronger inner-person within a community setting. Play allows for creativity and social interaction leading to enhanced community living through spiritual development in the outdoors.

Conclusion

In a nutshell it is our firm belief that outdoor education greatly exceeds formal and pre-planned learning objectives. One must consider the importance of informal yet often accidental learning as contributing greatly to the holistic development of the participants. As mentioned earlier, spiritual development is difficult to objectively measure. Therefore specific attention should be devoted to planning an environment and conditions conducive to spiritual development.

Play has many qualities favourable to the development of spirituality. Through flexible, creative and less evaluative activities, play constitutes an ideal setting favouring spiritual/holistic development of participants.

The Scout Movement is a great example of a well-structured community that is helping young Canadians pursue their spiritual development in a structured and yet playful

outdoor setting. Through the concept of the Scouts' "project" it was demonstrated that youngsters could significantly develop socially and personally, and, more importantly, could pursue their spiritual development, leading to the attainment of their personal autonomy.

It is obvious that the use of technology in scout activities is definitely an added value as far as spiritual development and outdoor education is concerned, whether to enhance pre-trip preparation, help maintain a sense of community between scouts locally and around the world, or enhance youngsters' dreams at the root of their projects.

Within an outdoor education program spiritual development can be enhanced in many ways. To set the scene for success in this matter we recommend the following:

- Play is an extraordinary pedagogical tool. To enhance chances of success in relation to spiritual development, one should leave room for imagination, helping participants develop their own story lines as they progress through their outdoor experience. Learning is greatly enhanced if participants engage in a "learning project," making new knowledge alive in their mind.
- Play allows participants to develop a sense of mastery and control within a safe environment. Play activities should be structured in a flexible manner allowing participants to use their creative potential in building their own limitations, rules and sense of success within these activities.
- The learning project should include technology, as it is an extraordinary tool to trigger and sustain imagination, viewed here as an essential ingredient of spiritual development. Through the use of the Internet, participants can for example better prepare themselves for an outdoor activity, discover new techniques or chat with friends and colleagues sharing similar interests.
- To assess outdoor learning experience, consideration should be put on measuring progress of spiritual development. Questions such as "How did you feel during the activity?" "Did you have fun during the activity?" and "What did you learn about yourself during the activity?" could trigger self-evaluation and self-assessment among participants.

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“Risk? Risk!”[©]—A Model for Risk-taking

by Andrew Welch

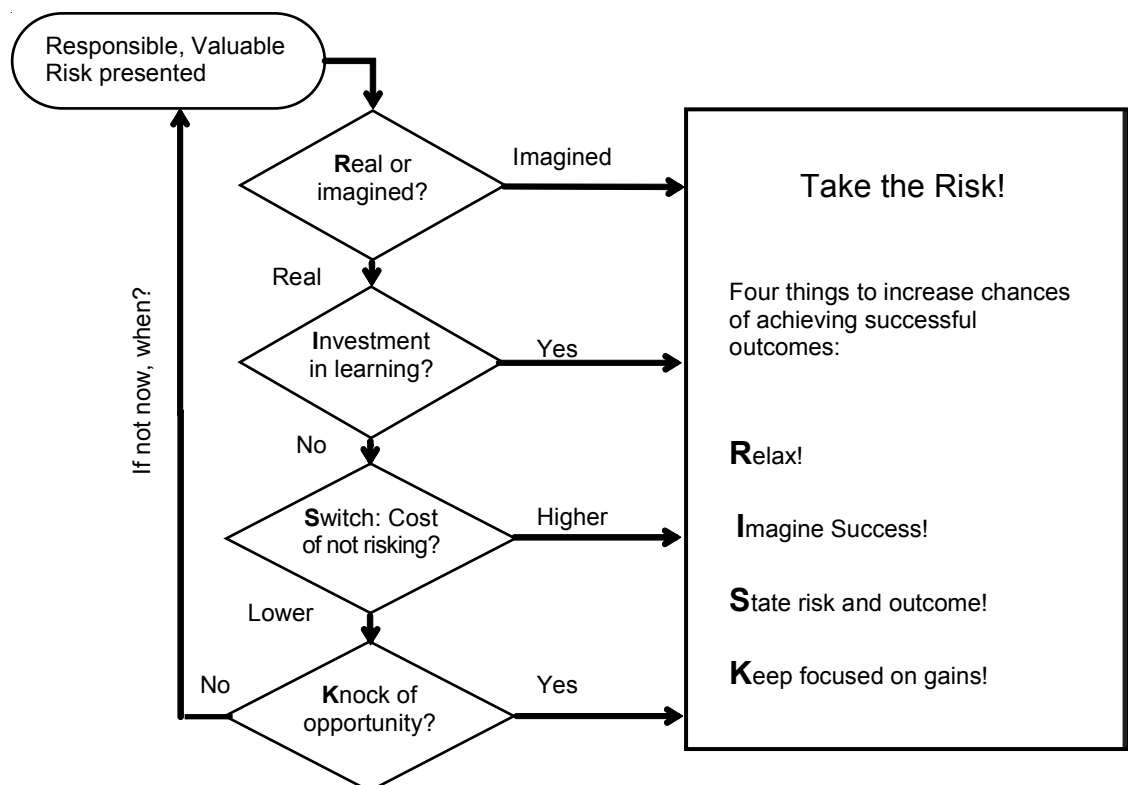
The outdoor and experiential education industries typically deal with two kinds of risk: the risk management inherent in running a safe program, and risk-taking as a learning goal. In creating programs that addressed the second of these topics—personal risk-taking—we at **intellact** had two objectives for our clients:

1. Provide a decision tree approach that would encourage positive risk-taking.
2. Develop tips that would increase the likelihood of positive outcomes from those risks.

We began with a definition of risk “Where the outcome is not known and the potential

for the loss of something of value exists” (Challenges Unlimited, Incorporated, 1999). Then we developed a simple model that addressed both objectives with an easy-to-remember acronym: the “RISK? RISK!”[®] model. The first part of the model is a simple decision tree, to be used by an individual when faced with a risk that has already been partially vetted as a “good” risk. In other words, for simplicity, the model assumes that the individual recognizes some soundness and potential benefit to the risk, but is unclear on her or his commitment or is unwilling to take it. There are four steps to the decision tree, and four tips for positive outcomes. The full model is diagrammed in Figure A.

Figure A. “Risk? Risk!” model (Copyright 2002, 2004 Andrew Welch, intellact).



Real or Imagined?

The loss potential from an “apparent” risk seems just as real as one from an actual risk, when in fact no loss potential may exist. The loss potential is why we fear taking personal risks. When evaluating a risk, we (quite rightly) imagine the worst case scenario. But, we might then look for evidence to support that outcome more than any other. Our fear becomes False Evidence Appearing Real. Is it “fear of the potential cost” or “fear of the unknown”?

Investment in Learning?

It is very easy for personal risks, such as challenging others, acknowledging errors, or questioning the status quo, to have a negative feel. The outcome of risk is, by definition, unknown. However the alternative to “success” need not be as negative as “failure.” The loss may simply be a necessary cost of the lessons learned. A toddler will not learn to walk without falling—many times. That risk, even with the certain outcome of a few falls, is worth it, based on the learning gained.

Switch: What is the Cost of NOT Taking the Risk?

After evaluating potential costs and gains of a risk, it is often very useful to consider the other alternative: NOT taking the risk. Is the cost of avoidance higher than the potential cost of the risk?

Knock of Opportunity?

Risks often have a small window of opportunity—an opportunity that may not come again. In such cases, either you take the risk when it is offered, or the potential gains are gone, never to be claimed. If the risk represents a unique opportunity, don’t put it off. Take the risk.

Once the decision has been made to take the risk, there are four things you can do to encourage a positive outcome:

1. Relax!— Deciding whether to take a personal risk can be stressful. Once you have decided to take the risk, take a deep breath and *relax*. There should be *less* stress once the choice is made. You made the right choice.

2. Imagine Success!— Envision the best outcome you could possibly get from your risk, and suppress dwelling on the potential negatives. You often have more influence on that outcome than you are aware—make sure you are steering everything in the right direction. When you need help, people will support risks that are expected as successes, not disappointments.

3. State Risk and Desired Outcome!— It often helps if you let others know that you are taking a risk. It engages their understanding, support, and even admiration—taking a risk is something to be proud of. You can also let them know what your desired outcome is. If you are hoping for a particular positive outcome, telling others what that is allows them to help make it happen.

4. Keep Focused on Gains!— With personal risks, the biggest determinant of success is YOU, your attitude and your focus. Don’t focus on “Why I Can’t.” Focus on “How I Can,” and then commit to “How I Will.” An optimistic approach is often fundamental to achieving the potential gains, as well as being critical to taking the next risk. Successful risk taking requires practice, repetition, and a high level of optimism, even in the face of “failure.” Don’t give up!

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Interpretive Scavenger Hunt

by Linda MacKenzie

You and your partner must try to find something to fit each category below. Each item can only be used once and you must explain how it fits the criteria listed. (Pairs of students are given a list, pencil and a bag to carry their treasures in). The list can be adopted for any age group.

Find something that

- is older than you
- is brand new
- is changing
- is an energy producer
- reminds you of the season (spring/ summer/ fall/ winter)
- is unique to this area
- is out of place

- is useless
- is recycled
- is edible
- is warm/cold
- has an unusual texture
- is beautiful
- reminds you of your partner
- is red, blue, yellow (could have colour chips to match)
- contains water
- is related to another item (find the two items)
- is recyclable
- is of value to you personally

Linda MacKenzie teaches at Project Dare, South River.



A Look at Canadian Waterway Place-names

by Bob Henderson

Recently I heard an anthropologist make an insightful comment. He suggested that while once word and label association games (i.e., matching the letters of the alphabet in sequence to a label) likely used geographical place-names as the theme, nowadays kids would more likely use movie titles or celebrity names. The intended point was that something has been lost in this change. Place-names encode an important cultural memory. They provide a story for the particular place. The story might be one of indigenous origins, in which case the naming likely relates directly to the land in terms of perhaps shape, event, or spirit. The story might also be one of renaming by European or other immigrant cultures, sometimes with little relation to the land. Finally the story might be one of mistranslation, misnomers or mispronouncing between “old world” and “new world” North America.

Whatever the case, a place-name is often more than just a name. It tells a story and to completely lose the story is to lose something from our Canadian culture and move us further toward a kind of landlessness that American conservationist, Aldo Leopold, so feared. Canadian travel literature scholar IS MacLaren put it this way: “With the loss of cultural history, we have no choice but to learn from technological history. Will its deep ironies prompt us to realize that the first lesson it has to teach is repentance?”

He was talking about the loss of Boat Encampment—the western terminus of the Athabasca Pass—to the Mica Dam flooding of the Upper Columbia River. The old “pivotal rendezvous point on the Pacific slope” called La Montagne de la Grande Traverse (Athabasca Pass) in the fur trade era is now under water. Kinbasket Lake has a surface area of 450 km². As MacLaren states succinctly, “Many cultures have not lost places so storied.” Sometimes what is lost is not just geographical cultural memory through place-name losses, but the geography itself.

Certainly, First Nations peoples should maintain a centrality in Canadian waterway place-names. Their “named” Canada involves ancient trails and waterways. It was and is a fully named place. It was a very interestingly named place too. The Nepisquit River (Winpegigewig in Mi’kmag) in New Brunswick means troubled river, or rough flowing water in Mi’kmag. The Nepisquit is a major white water river in New Brunswick relative to all other New Brunswick rivers. All in a name, as the expression goes.

Tadoussac at the mouth of the Saguenay River in Quebec means “breasts” in the Innu language. From a distance it is a recognizable landmark. A particularly favourite place-name is “Tooguya,” Ojibway for “bending over river,” crudely translated as “open ass river” for a particular branch of the South Lady Evelyn. Apparently this branch of the river was laden in shoreline overhangs and tree limbs filling in the passage such that the bow paddle is bent over clearing a passage—plumbers butt, one might say. Another favourite is the La Chine rapids, just west of Montreal. La Salle named this site in the mid-1600s thinking he was enroute to China. Opengo Lake in Algonquin Park, Ontario means “sandy narrows,” which correctly tells you this is a fine place to camp on the big lake. Manitou Lake in the Temagami region of north-eastern Ontario should really translate into the English as “Roaring Spirit Lake,” for the loose boulders that fall in the spring on the lake’s east side. This is something for campers to remember for sure. There are lessons to be learned in exploring place-name meanings. Back to New Brunswick.

I have a real love affair with New Brunswick (and Maine) place-names. Favourites in New Brunswick include the Upsalquitch River, which is corrupted from Absetquetch meaning “small river” (when compared to the Restigouche River). In part, I love just

saying the word, but I've also stood at Popple Depot and planned for a future trip that would see me traveling the "troubled" Nepisquit to get to "small river" Upsalquitch to access the "river that divides like the hand" Restigouche. Presumably I'd be traveling into this final river via one of its fingers.

Interestingly there is another possible original of meaning for the Restigouche. Father Richard in the Jesuit Relations, 1642, includes a story of an unsuccessful Mohawk raid into this region of the Mi'kmag. The Mi'kmag leader, Tonel, shouted at the young Mohawk leader at the moment of his execution, "Listo Gotj" which means, "Disobedience to your father." According to Mi'kmag elders, Tonel changed the name of the region to listo gotj in commemoration of this battle. From listo gotj we eventually get Restigouche in English. It was a special treat to hear a fuller version of the listo gotj Mohawk-Mi'kmag conflict as told to me by Mi'kmag story teller, Gilbert Sewell.

In the excellent book *Ancient Land, Ancient Sky: Following Canada's Native Canoe Routes* (1999) written from a native perspective, it becomes clear that: "Everything about the Old Order—medical knowledge, religious beliefs, artistic achievements, industry, commercial relations—has been distorted or dismissed. . . . From Cartier's time to ours . . . it's twistory." Let's explore something of this twistory in examining Canadian waterway place-names. One could easily teach a university course entitled Canadian Place-name Studies. I'll keep it to an outdoor educator's interest.

In English most place-names appear to be named for people in a general commemorative way. Much of Canada has been re-named in this manner. In native dialects, naming was based on some specific quality. These qualities might be divided into categories. There are **shape**-based namings such as Matagamasi Lake (lake divided in two waters coming together); **event**-based namings such as Jumping Caribou Lake (a translation for where the caribou went into the water or a hunting spot), or Hanging Shit Lake for a passing where the intestines of an animal were left hanging from a tree; **vegetation**-

based namings such as Katherine Lake (which was originally Kaw-Baw-Zips-Kitay-Be-Gaw standing for "the noise made when your canoe passes over lily pads or scraping lake;"; **spirit**-based namings include Chis-kon-abikong for conjuring rock. There are also **look-alike** and **sounds-like** namings such as Sitting Rabbit and Beaver Chewing Lakes respectively.

Sadly there are also many native sounding words that have been corrupted over time to be meaningless. Chiniguichi is one such example. "Chini" doesn't make sense, but "guichi" means "the outlet." Also, we have lost the original meanings for Lake of Bays, Canoe, Smoke and Burnt Island Lakes all in the Algonquin Park area, but this shouldn't take away from possible interesting stories to renamed place-names. Canoe Lake in Algonquin Park is so named because, during the 1853 geological expedition lead by Alexander Murray, the party was "delayed several days to construct a new canoe" for the upriver headwaters travel. The fragility of our cultural memory is shown in learning that a cabin fire meant the loss of an old timer's journal. He had recorded place-name meanings for the Algonquin Muskoka region.

I really like the place-names that explain the geography itself with the naming. Examples of this are Traverse, Cross or Oxtonge Lakes (generally Kameejeegami in Ojibway), which means, "there are river outlets across from each other." Annamanipissing Lake means, "where it leaves from the headwaters for Nipissing waters." I, for one, would take Hanging Shit Lake over Bob's Creek/Pilgrim Creek any day. Same goes for Labrador's Kogaluk River rather than its other name—Frank's Brook. I'm grateful for the preservation of place-names coast to coast, such as the Notokwanon and Naskoupi Rivers in Labrador, and Ninstints (rather than Anthony Island) in Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands).

The misses in terms of translations, pronunciation and misnomers generally are interesting too. "Canada," of course, is our country's great mistranslation. Cartier confused the Iroquoian word "kanata" meaning

village, for the name of the country overall. Similarly, Baie St. Laurent named after that saint's particular day marks a non-descript bay Cartier had visited and noted on his map/charts. Problem was, he was short on space so the notation was placed more on the open area away from the coast. Back in France, the mapmaker misunderstood and named the whole gulf St. Lawrence. Lake of the Woods in north-western Ontario was known to the Cree as Min-es-tic, or Lake of the Islands. The French mistook the Cree word mis-tic (wood). With fourteen thousand islands, this mistake is most glaring. Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island is a classic misnomer. When the Nuu-Chah-Nulth people met Cook's men in 1778, they were shouting, "Nootka it cheme." This actually means "go around to the harbour." The people became the Nootka Indians and the place Nootka Sound. Wayne Haimila has referred to such errors as "death by cartography."

Native writer, Louise Erdrich is equally poignant. Writing about "Devil's Bay" in Lake of the Woods, she writes:

"Squaw Rock. Devil's This and Devil's That. Indian or Tomahawk Anything. There's no use railing. . . . Some day, when there is nothing more important to do, the Anishinaabeg will demand that all the names be changed. For it was obviously the rock painting at the entrance to the bay that inspired the name. It is not a devil, of course, but a spirit in communication with the unknowable."

One just has to think back to Manitou Lake in Temagami, which really means "Roaring Spirit Lake" for another example to rail about.

Part of the misrepresentations can be explained by the acute difference between English and Native dialects. Ojibwemowin in fact is entered in the Guinness Book of World Records as one of the world's most difficult languages to learn. English, compared to Ojibway dialects, is a noun-based language. As Louise Erdrich points out, "Ojibwemowin is a language of action. . . . how many things,

From Ancient Land, Ancient Skies

The neighbouring Mi'kmag called the island (of Newfoundland) Wee-soc-kadao, or "leftovers". They believed that the Creator had formed it after he had made the rest of North America by unceremoniously dumping the remaining jagged rocks, runt trees and bog land into the North Atlantic. Hmm, now we simply say, The Rock: a noted tourist destination site.

nouns, could anyone carry around . . . two-thirds of the words are verbs." This is true of many native languages generally. So when I think the bear paw snowshoe is so called because it looks like a bear paw, the correct understanding would be that it is so called because you walk like a bear when wearing that shoe. This "verbness" quality to language also influences place-names. Naming places for people seems an arrogant gesture to native peoples, as I understand it. My goodness, Euro-Canadians are certainly comfortable with it. I wonder what Mt. Logan, almost changed to Mt. Pierre Trudeau, was first called.

This "look" at place-names merely scratches the surface. It does suggest that there are many lessons and stories linked to cultural memory dating back to pre-European contact time and naming into the present. Perhaps if we all, culturally speaking, began to take the time to explore the taken-for-granted nature to our canoe-tripping place-name destinations, we might be someday able to play a word or letter association game sitting out a wet day in the tent or during a long group paddle. And in this exploration and playing a place-name game, rather than a celebrity, movie titles, or music bands labels game, we would be returning to the land in a meaningful and well-storied way. It is good to return to these stories of place-names.

Acknowledgements

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understanding the Canadian Shield native dialects. Thanks also to Gilbert Sewell and Rod O'Connell for their information concerning New Brunswick place-names.

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Note: A different version of this paper was printed as "Naming the Waters" in Kanawa, Spring 2004.

History of Lake

Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

by Bob Henderson

From the days when the big lake with the longest name in the United States was a central gathering place for the Nipmuc Indians and their friends, the great pond—divided by narrow channels into three bodies of water—has been famed throughout the area.

The Indians had several different names for the great body of water, as can be learned from early maps and old historical records. However, all of these were similar and had almost the same translation, according to Indian language. Among early names were Chabanaguncamogue, Chabanagogum, and Chauunagungamaug, the latter now incorporated in the long name.

One of the tribes on the other side of the lake was the Monuhchogoks, which was corrupted to the name Manchaug. A map of 1795, showing the town of Dudley, indicated the lake name as "Chargoggagoggmanchoggagogg." In 1831, field maps from both Dudley and Oxford, which adjoined the lake, listed the name of the pond as Chargoggagoggmanchoggagogg, but a survey of the lake completed in 1830 lists the name as Chaubaunagungamaugg, the ancient name.

Authorities have indicated that the development of the name to the present long form stems from the time Samuel Slater began his mills near the lake, which was nearer the Manchaug village. Hence the Indian designation Chargoggagoggmanchauggagogg meaning,

"Englishmen at entire designation" becomes "Englishmen at Manchaug at the fishing Place at the boundary"—or Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg.

Despite this official knowledge, the lake—now descending too often to the designation of Webster Lake—is known the world over by the humorous translation, "You Fish on Your Side, I Fish on My side, Nobody Fish in the Middle."

As far as is known, the great publicity attained by this translation and the length of the name stems from a story once written by Larry Daly, editor of the Webster TIMES, and widely picked up by other papers and magazines. In his humorous article about the lake and the Nipmucs, and the disagreement over the translation, he submitted his own translation—which is now more freely accepted than the authentic meaning.

In the days of the Indians, the lake was a noted fishing place. The tribes gathered there for pow-wows. The coming of the white man changed that kind of gathering, but, throughout the years, the lake with the long name has continued to attract thousands of people to its shores each summer.

Bob Henderson teaches Outdoor Education at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

Celestial Paddle

by Tom Potter

I sat on a rock and gazed into the sky
Remembering when I was but a small fry
Way overhead stood the mighty Big Dipper
It reminded me of my Dad's Old Town Tripper
The curve of its handle forming its prow
The joy of paddling it gazing over the bow

Imagine paddling the Dipper across the black night
I can only imagine the fantastic sight
To chase Cassiopeia around the pole star
Each night we'd have to paddle quite far
The clouds below would be our whitewater
Back ferries, eddies—what fun for my daughter

The moon would beckon us to follow its beam
The eddies, hydraulics; ahh what a dream
Through the night sky we would paddle with glee
The vistas and inspiring perspectives we'd see!
Then looking way down to the earth far below
We'd begin our descent where we knew we must go

*Tom Potter teaches Outdoor Education within The
Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism
Programme at Lakehead University.*



Compiled by David Arthur

Frost Centre Closure — This July the Ontario government announced the immediate closing of the Leslie Frost Centre. This centre, operated by the Ministry of Natural Resources for many decades, was recognized as one of Canada's leading centres for outdoor education and training for government personnel, businesses, students, and the public. Re-focusing on core priorities and economics were given as the reasons for closure. Please read the article in the latest issue of *Interactions* that provides more background information, what is being done to try to save the Frost Centre, and what you can do to help.

OSEE 2005 — Planning is underway for the Ontario Society for Environmental Education's (OSEE) spring conference. Following several successful conferences at Paradise Lake near Waterloo and this year's conference at Sir Sanford Fleming College in Lindsay, OSEE will hold its 2005 conference in the Toronto area. A major focus will be on urban environmental issues. More details will be available soon. If you would like to join the conference planning committee, please contact conference chair Vera Bigall at Vera.Bigall@osee.org.

EECOM 2005 — The 2005 Conference of the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EECOM) promises to be the signature environmental and outdoor education conference in Ontario. It is scheduled for September 30 to October 2, 2005 at Bark Lake Leadership Centre, 2½ hours northeast of Toronto. It will attract academics, teachers, park interpreters and other practitioners from across Canada, along with a healthy contingent of American and overseas educators. This conference will offer a rare opportunity for English- and French-speaking educators to learn from one another. OSEE, COEO and EECOM are co-hosting this event. Watch for more information in the coming months.

If you would be willing to help with any of the many tasks in planning EECOM 2005, please contact OSEE co-chair Dave Arthur at david.arthur@osee.org.

Canadian Journal of Environmental Education, Volume 9 — The 2004 edition of the *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* (CJEE) has been published. The CJEE has moved to Lakehead University and is co-edited by Bob Jickling and Connie Russell. This issue focuses on ethics and asks the question "How can we take ethics, and its demanding questions, and make them a part of everyday activities—a part of normal behaviour?" The articles include papers on cultural myths and where the field of EE conceptually stands (or doesn't stand) and how it might move forward.

CJEE is included as part of the regular EECOM membership and is available to associate EECOM members and others by contacting cjeesub@lakeheadu.ca.

EEON Moving Ahead — Environmental Education Ontario (EEON) is continuing to meet with a number of ministries, including Education, Energy, Health, Environment and the Energy Conservation Action Committee to encourage adopting the strategies outlined for 17 audiences of Ontarians in *Greening the Way Ontario Learns: A Public Strategic Plan for Environmental and Sustainability Education*.

Each ministry is receiving a set of priorities that focuses on the major strategies from the plan that are within that ministry's locus of control. All educators can access the plan at www.eeon.org. There are outcomes, needs and strategies for each audience. These include many suggestions that may be undertaken by teachers, schools, school boards, and community groups.

Environmental Education in New Zealand Schools Report — A report on current practices in environmental education in New Zealand schools using a range of methods (e.g., a literature review of national and international practice, a national survey of schools, and eight case studies looking at schools/kura where environmental education is a strong focus) is available. Included are key findings from each research component. Visit <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=9102&data=l> for more information.

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Outdoor Risk Management, UK Style

by Simon Beames

Living in Britain for the last three years has shown me that the Brits are serious about safety, whether it's on a construction site or guiding clients in the mountains. In outdoor education, much of this rigour was born out of a sea kayaking tragedy in 1993 and the government's inquiries that followed. Mention Lyme Bay to any outdoor educator in the UK and eyebrows will be raised along with a knowing nod. The disaster, which took the lives of four young people, resulted in the first jail sentence for an outdoor centre manager. Since 1996, the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) has regulated the risk management of all professional outdoor education organizations. Oddly enough, volunteers such as teachers and scout leaders do not fall under AALA jurisdiction, though they are expected to have documented risk management plans.

So what does outdoor education risk management comprise in the UK? The first requirement is that the leaders are competent. In most cases this means possessing climbing, hiking, paddling, and first aid qualifications. This formal recognition of competency is not legally required if one can demonstrate adequate experience—not easy to do, as I found out. In practice, most organisations simply find it easier and cheaper to hire instructors with the right piece of paper, than to exercise some degree of judgment and assessment of their own.

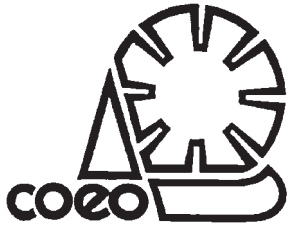
The second element required by course providers involves having written policies. Policies include items such as instructor/student ratios, equipment set-up, and specific ways in which activities are delivered. No more than a page long, a laminated copy of these "safe operating procedures" kept in an equipment box can be a quick and useful reference for instructors.

The third element, the risk assessment itself, most often comes in the form of a grid that highlights each hazard (objects falling from climbers), who is affected (people on the ground), and how the risk is managed (anyone in the climbing zone wears a helmet). A risk management plan is complete once a detailed maintenance log of all "personal protection equipment" (e.g., ropes, lifejackets, etc.) has been added to the file.

As society becomes increasingly litigious, fear of personal injury could drive all judgment out of risk management, leaving us with prescriptive instructions for every aspect of outdoor education programming. The way forward surely lies in finding a middle ground where the major hazards have been considered, experienced staff are in charge, and the equipment is good condition—but the adventurous nature of the program has not been overly constrained.

For many of us working outdoors with young people, the words risk and management can represent the tedious, administrator-appealing office work that takes us away from important frontline work. Indeed, in my younger days, I thought the senior staff were borderline obsessive about issues of risk, safety, danger, and hazards. Today, as someone who has developed some risk management plans, I have come to appreciate that having a sound and simple plan such as the British four-point approach is not only good practice, but helps programs run more smoothly. I sleep better, too.

Simon Beames is a Canadian who runs outdoor education programmes for the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.



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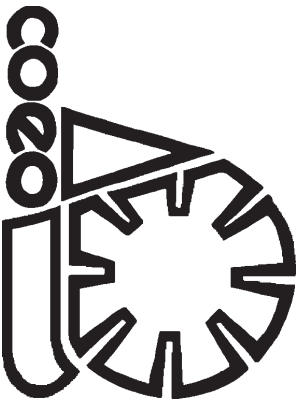
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