Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION
Winter 2010, 22(2)

ISSN: 0840-8114

Pathways

COEO

Formed in 1972, the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that promotes safe, quality outdoor education experiences for people of all ages. We achieve this by publishing the *Pathways* journal, running an annual conference and regional workshops, maintaining a website, and working with kindred organizations as well as government agencies. Members of COEO receive a subscription to *Pathways*, as well as admittance to workshops, courses and conferences. A membership application form is included on the inside back cover of this issue of *Pathways*.

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario
3 Concorde Gate
Toronto, ON M3C 3N7
www.coeo.org

Pathways

Pathways is published four times a year for members of the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO).

Pathways is always looking for contributions. Please refer to page 36 for submission guidelines.

Opinions expressed in *Pathways* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the *Pathways* Editorial Board or COEO.

ISSN: 0840-8114
Pathways is printed on FSC recycled paper.

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario Board of Directors

Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Winter 2010, 22(2)

Features

Columns

Editor's Log

The beginning of a new year is a time for resolutions, renovations and renewal. It is a great time to start new projects or pick up old ones. Planning is somehow more exciting and engaging than it was back in November. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, this winter issue of *Pathways* has a distinct "do-it-yourself" theme.

New ideas abound within these pages. From way up in Nunavut, Scott Caspell shares a Backpocket column on Inuit games. Blair Niblett and Leigh Potvin describe how they used the initiative "Colour Blind" to uncover privilege. They share a great activity in their article, and suggest ways outdoor educators may use it to further students' learning in a number of different subject areas. Similarly, Julia Lane describes a clowning activity that can be used to foster well-being. Finally, if your organization has an underused climbing wall, Sandy Wilkes offers suggestions for integrating it into your curriculum to meet the needs of students and teachers alike.

For those looking for something deeper to ponder, Bruce Pardy, keynote speaker at COEO's 2009 conference, delves into what Ontario's Policy Framework for Environmental Education might mean for outdoor education. Grant Linney, COEO volunteer extraordinaire, has taken time off from his retirement to muse about the benefits of decoupling outdoor education from less-than-local environments.

The new year is about planning. Those of you considering your conference options will find Doug Wigood's article about the Association for Experiential Education Conference enlightening. This issue also introduces a new *Pathways* column: "From an Old Hand" contains wisdom and advice from a seasoned outdoor educator to those starting out in the profession. In this case Jay Blackwood has some advice for outdoor educators who find themselves without an outdoor education position during the winter months.

For those seeking out a new perspective, stalwart contributor Linda Leckie has begun a series on classic outdoor education books — one for each of the COEO values. In this issue she reviews a book that has helped outdoor educators build character for over 30 years. Gisele Winton Sarvis explores the impact chickadees can have on elementary school students while Kathy MacDonald (after years of encouragement and prodding) finally shares her experiences of working with students with developmental disabilities. Thank you all for your thoughtful contributions.

Over the past three years I have tried to leave the writing side of *Pathways* to individuals not enmeshed in the soliciting, formatting, editing or proofing of articles. But at the end of a long phone call last spring, COEO president Zabe MacEachren asked me to write something about the ins and outs of risk management. The article in this issue is my attempt to encapsulate that conversation and the subsequent presentation I made at the 2009 COEO conference.

Guest editors will be at the helm of *Pathways* for awhile. The spring issue, a tribute to Mike Elrick, is already well underway. Come summer you'll be enjoying Bryan Grimwood and Jessica Dunkin's special theme issue about the canoe in outdoor education. Then in the fall, Bob Henderson will guest edit an issue on urban outdoor education.

Finally, this is my last issue as editor of *Pathways*. With a year to go, a number of people have expressed interest in the editor position; details are sure to follow in future issues. I have enjoyed my work — especially meeting some great people in person and virtually. In leaving *Pathways*, I hope to have more time for my own writing and other volunteer work. I look forward to seeing you in my travels and at the conference next fall.

Kathy Haras

President's View

The opening assembly at Queen's Faculty of Education involves a pep talk about how to deal positively with glitches. This past fall has been full of glitches for me. First there was the loss of my classroom due to an infestation of mice and mould. From this I got exercise walking back and forth to my temporary classroom space. Then there was my infestation of computer woes to which my response has been to meet our new IT technician and adopt a "fix it yourself" programming ideology.

The hardest "glitch" to deal with was the loss of my winter camping buddy, Mike Elrick, to cancer. My way of dealing with this reality has been to imagine I have just encountered a heavy snow load and to trudge on. Many little steps, even with laden snowshoes, can result in movement, even though at the time it feels as if no progress is being made. As I trudge in the deep snow of my thoughts about Mike I think about his love of journaling. Journal reflections enable exploration of the smallest detail and the transformation of one little thought into many pages of prose. Daily, as I think about Mike and all he has taught me, I slowly start to feel better. Mike's passing has reminded me to live each day and each small encounter with another to its fullest. These numerous small reflections may seem insignificant, but they add up and I appreciate that I am much more conscious now about making them. This new journeying on with a positive outlook is reflected in Mike's approach to taking all in one's life journey to a natural full outcome.

Lots of new ideas are spreading throughout the COEO executive to make this upcoming year a good one. Two board members are actively working on improving our web page. Another two are working on next year's conference. Two other COEO board members and a general COEO member attended an interesting workshop at the Association for Experiential Education (AEE) conference that examined how influential leaders can encourage positive environmental leadership and ultimately spread change with a sense of hope. The result is that one COEO board member is looking into ways to bring this workshop to Ontario for COEO members and the youth they work with to "Be the Change." More COEO executives and members attended and helped out with COEO's booth at the Science Teachers' Association of Ontario (STAO) conference. And I have received numerous e-mails concerning events and workshops that COEO members are in the midst of organizing. I hope many of you will be able to take advantage of at least one of these opportunities. If you would like to do a little more for COEO, please feel free to contact me or perhaps spend a winter evening drafting an article for *Pathways*.

As I write this column I occasionally glance out my window to watch snow whirl around some trees. I am also aware that as I write activists and delegates have met in Copenhagen concerning climate change policy. I can't help hoping that my love of snow blizzards can radiate out into others and energize them. We need a love of winter to warm our hearts this time of year.

Zabe MacEachren

Sketch Pad – Most of the art for this issue was generously provided by Charles Trickey. Charles grew up in Perth Road, Ontario, where he acquired a love for the outdoors. This love is expressed through time spent whitewater canoeing, whitewater kayaking and rock climbing all over Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia.

Charlotte Jacklein provided the art on page 33. She is an environmental educator currently working in Nunavut.

Exploring Gender Norms Through the "Colour Blind" Initiative

By Blair Niblett and Leigh Potvin

Recently we've been collecting data for a research project entitled "Masculinity Goes to Class" that explores secondary school boys' perceptions of masculinity. We hypothesized that these perceptions are significantly influenced by a "fag discourse" (Pascoe, 2007) that polices boys' socialization, and marginalizes boys who fall outside of the ideal norm, as well as girls who don't fall in love with boys who strive for an "alpha male" identity.

We spent a week in Leigh's grade 11 philosophy class discussing gender while observing and video recording students' perceptions for analysis. The research was guided by critical ethnographic and teacher-research methodologies (Anderson, 1989; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Each of us took a different role in the data collection. Leigh served primarily as a participant-observer, occasionally stepping out of this role to facilitate and guide discussion, while Blair mainly facilitated initiative activities and discussion that would help to reveal students' perceptions of gender, specifically masculinity. This research and our partnership are a part of Leigh's master's degree thesis research, and the project was approved by the Research Ethics Board at Lakehead University, and by the Lakehead District School Board.

Leigh planned four sessions to explore the nature of gender and gender differences, as well as gender performance and gender policing. Part way through the sessions, because the discussion was so rich, we added an additional session in order to delve deeper into the concepts discussed in the initial workshops. We discovered that the students were hungry to explore these issues, and it took more time than we expected for students to start talking about gender issues beyond a surface "boy/girl" level. For example, students had a hard time moving from thinking about gender as a male/female binary toward thinking about gender as a continuum of behaviours from masculine to feminine. They also had difficulty conceptualizing that gender is imbued with power dynamics. To illustrate these ideas, we wanted to do an initiative with the class that might demonstrate that masculine traits are sometimes attributed to females and vice versa. One night when Blair was swimming lengths in the pool, it occurred to him that "Colour Blind" was probably the right activity to demonstrate these ideas. In retrospect, the initiative didn't disappoint.

Colour Blind

Colour Blind is a group initiative task that involves a blindfold for each participant and a structured array of coloured shapes. Somewhere between 30 and 36 pieces is probably the right number. For example, your set might have five shapes (pine trees, teddy bears, eggs, triangles and bats) each in one of six different colours (red, blue, purple, green, orange, and pink). Essentially you need one shape in every colour. Adding a shape or colour to the set increases the challenge while removing a shape or colour simplifies it.

Before the activity begins, the facilitator removes any two of the coloured shapes from the set. For example, the facilitator could take out the red pine tree and the blue teddy bear. This is a critical step since forgetting to remove two pieces ruins the initiative and can make for frustrated and agitated participants (Blair has learned this the hard way). Once participants have closed their eyes or been blindfolded, the facilitator distributes the remaining pieces. Each participant should receive one piece and some participants may get more than one. If the group is large, it can also be effective to have some people act as observers so that players can hold more than one shape each. The task is for the participants to discover which two pieces have been removed from the set. A typical framing for

the activity will help readers to understand the rules:

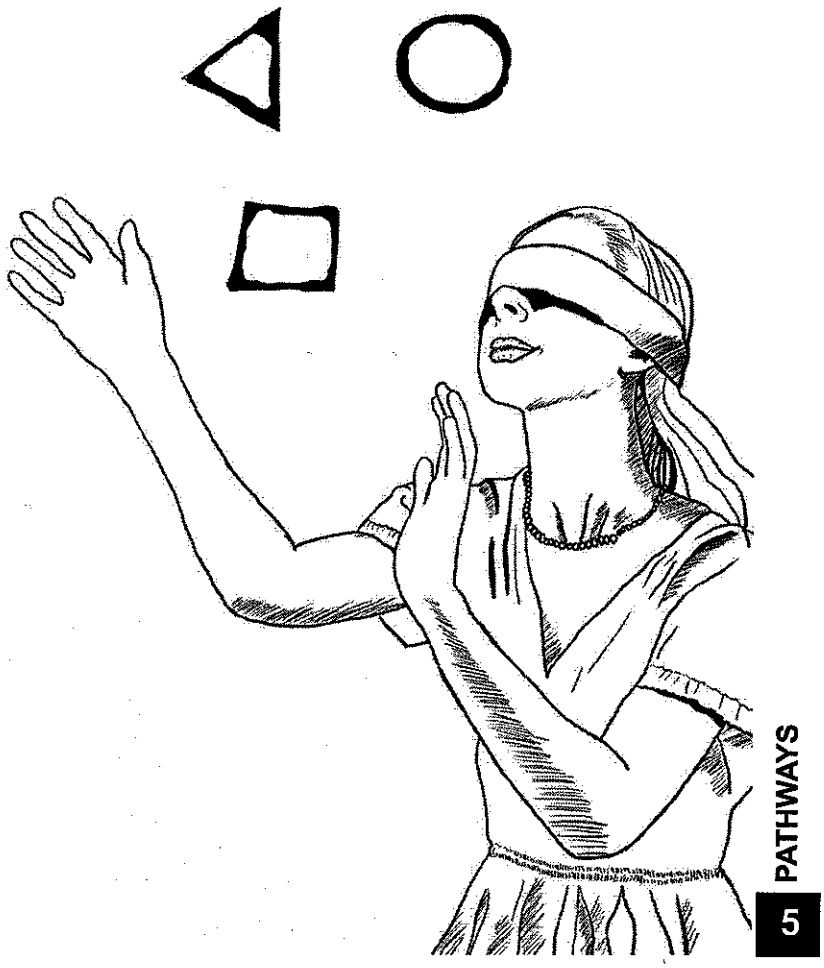
> *This activity is called "Colour Blind," and once we get started I think you'll all see why. The central focus of the activity is a set of coloured shapes; the shapes come in an array of colours, but there is only one of each shape in each colour. A few moments ago, I removed two shapes from the set. The group's task is to discover which two shapes are missing, and what colour they are. In a moment, I'll ask everyone to put a blindfold over their eyes and then I'll pass out the shapes. Each person will be given one or two shapes, and they will need to hang on to their own shapes during the entire activity — you can't give any of your shapes to anyone else nor may anyone touch any of your shapes. Everyone will be blindfolded, so nobody will be able to see what coloured shapes they are holding. Once we begin, you may all talk as much as you like, but I will only answer the question "What colour is this?" If anyone has questions about the activity, please ask them now.*

The initiative generally takes between 15 and 40 minutes depending on the group. Typically, the first few minutes of the activity look and sound a bit chaotic. The degree of the chaos will depend on a number of factors: group maturity, experience working together, stage of the program when the initiative is introduced, and the clarity of the instructions given. Depending on the desired challenge level for the activity, the facilitator can adjust the degree of detail provided in the briefing, as long as all the rules are clear. For example, if the group is functioning at a high level, it may not be necessary to spell out that the pieces form a patterned set; it may simply be enough to tell them that there are pieces missing and they need to figure out which ones.

Colour Blind and Gender Norms

After completing the blindfolded problem-solving task, our group was able to make a list of typically masculine leadership strategies (loud voices, commanding presence, sarcasm and so on) that they attributed to the "dominant voices" that emerged during the activity. They also identified traditionally feminine traits that resulted in some people being "passive participants" (behaviours like being cooperative, staying quiet so as not to rock the boat, not interrupting and so on).

Immediately following the activity, the students had a hard time understanding the significance of what had played out during the Colour Blind activity — they resisted the notion that the initiative might be a metaphor that parallels how gender relations play out in wider society. The next day, however, the discussion about the activity was much deeper as students started to reconsider their thinking about gender norms; some acknowledged that an individual's capacity to engage in traditionally masculine social



behaviours gave him or her an advantage during the initiative. A few students even admitted that the social relations that played out during the activity mirrored the social relations they experience in their social networks at school. We propose that, as time goes by, the Colour Blind experience may help these students to name and challenge dominant gender norms that would otherwise go unquestioned.

Conclusion

In our research, we used Colour Blind as a vehicle for unearthing students' perceptions about masculinity. This, however, is only one possible direction that the Colour Blind initiative could take. The initiative can be used as an innovative experiential approach for exploring concrete or abstract concepts across the Ontario K–12 curriculum. For example, in Kindergarten, small groups of students using smaller shape sets could work on understanding words for talking about shapes and colours (Visual Arts, Expectation 4). Grade 7 students might undertake the initiative and debrief around strategies they used for sorting and organizing information and ideas (Language — Writing, Expectation 1.4). Students in a senior data management course might complete the activity, and use it as a springboard for discussing combinations and permutations (Mathematics Grade 11 and 12, MDM4U, Counting and Probability, Expectation 2.3).

Very nice shapes for a colour blind set can be cut from wood and painted or dyed, but a functional shape set can also be cut out of craft foam. Foam sets aren't quite as tactile, but they are light and compact for taking on trail. This activity has been conducted equally well in a classroom on a snowy day, or outside under the shade of a tree on a warm fall afternoon.

References

Anderson, G. L. (1989). Critical ethnography in education: Origins, current status, and new directions. *Review of Educational Research*, 59(3), 249–270.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. L. (1999). The teacher research movement: A decade later. *Educational Researcher*, 28(7), 15–25.

Pascoe, C. J. (2007). *Dude, you're a fag: Masculinity and sexuality in high school.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Blair Niblett is a PhD student and contract lecturer at Lakehead University's Faculty of Education, and a Senior Consultant at Adventureworks! Associates, Inc.

Leigh Potvin is pursing a master's degree at Lakehead University's Faculty of Education and is a high school teacher with Lakehead Public Schools.

My Life as an Edventurer

By Sandy Wilkes

I started my training in adventure education around 1986 when Mike Laurence introduced the concept to Brock University. At the time, I was employed by Niagara College working in its Futures Program. The "heads of state" thought it would be a good idea to apply Project Adventure's adventure-based counselling paradigm when working with at-risk clientele. The idea was a good one. A number of us risk-taking types volunteered to participate in the train-the-trainer session facilitated by Jim Schoel. To me the theory behind adventure-based programs seemed a coalescence of my yen for sociology, psychology, existential philosophy and physical and health education. Over the next two years, I was able to facilitate a number of youth groups in adventure education and always enjoyed it.

I left Niagara College to pursue a teaching career with the Lincoln County Board of Education. By September 1989, I was posted to South Lincoln High School in Smithville, Ontario. Here I met a physical education colleague, Andrew Yap, who loved to listen to my ideas surrounding the potential of adventure programming. With financial assistance from the board's physical education consultant, Harvie Hagerty, Andrew and I participated in a number of Project Adventure workshops, including Advanced Adventure Based Counselling. At South Lincoln we developed a specialty course called Adventure Based Education. The credit course was a quasi-physical education course offered under the auspices of the special education department. Andrew and I volunteered many hours writing curriculum and developing and delivering the program, as well as constructing low ropes initiatives out behind the school. At one point, we had 21 different initiatives available to our students.

In addition to the course work here at school, Andrew and I instigated an annual four-day adventure based leadership program for our student council. Our accessibility to Cave Springs Camp allowed us the opportunity to not only use low ropes but high ropes as well. For grade 12 physical education students we developed a special one-week adventure based program that was held at Bark Lake. Ironically, we were doing adventure programming at Bark Lake before it was a Project Adventure training site. We continued to use Bark Lake to the day of its closure as a provincial government facility.

Each of the various adventure programs provided worthwhile experiences for staff and students alike, but it was only at Bark Lake and Cave Springs that we could offer our students the pinnacle of the adventure wave — the high ropes experience — where our youth could really test themselves. Nonetheless, adventure programming was the cornerstone of our physical and health education courses here at South Lincoln.

In 1998, our school was finally approved for our long-awaited addition. A major component of this addition was a new, full-sized gymnasium. As the new Head of Physical Education, I had the opportunity to provide input into the design of the new facility. My first request was to include a climbing wall. After consulting with Brian Lisson of Adventureworks! Associates, Inc., his meeting with the architects, and the support of then-principal Pete Mitchell, the new District School Board of Niagara approved my request. The plan was to develop four routes, all with interchangeable holds. The wall would allow us to add a meaningful culminating activity to the two- to three-week adventure education unit implemented at the beginning of every semester for every grade.

The adventure based curriculum in general, and the climbing wall in particular, offer our students the opportunity to explore such concepts as physical and emotional safety, self-esteem, trust building, goal setting, positive risk taking, community building, problem solving and decision making. All the aforementioned are essential concepts

underpinning any worthwhile educational experience. With regard to the Ministry of Education's health and physical education guidelines, our climbing wall activities meet very specific criteria with regard to the overall expectations in the strand of physical activity: "Demonstrate competence in applying movement skills and principles" and "apply their knowledge of guidelines and strategies that can enhance their participation in recreational and sports activities." (One of our original students, William Meinen, became a world-class rock climber after his start here at South Lincoln.) In the strand of active living, students "demonstrate improved physical fitness" and "demonstrate responsibility for their safety and the safety of others." Finally, in the strand of Living Skills, students "use decision-making and goal-setting skills to promote healthy active living" and "demonstrate the social skills required to work effectively in groups and develop positive relationships with their peers."

An integral component of our program is choosing 12 grade ten students who demonstrate the physical, mental and emotional skills required to be a caring and responsible belayer in the grade nine physical education class. These students participate in a 20-hour workshop delivered by trainers from Adventureworks! Associates, Inc. that covers many of the major tenets of the climbing wall instructor course. Typically, they learn how to set up climbing routes that are challenging but not overwhelming, knots, climbing wall physics, belaying techniques, climbing wall safety, care and inspection of climbing equipment, climbing wall communication skills, and climbing and facilitation techniques.

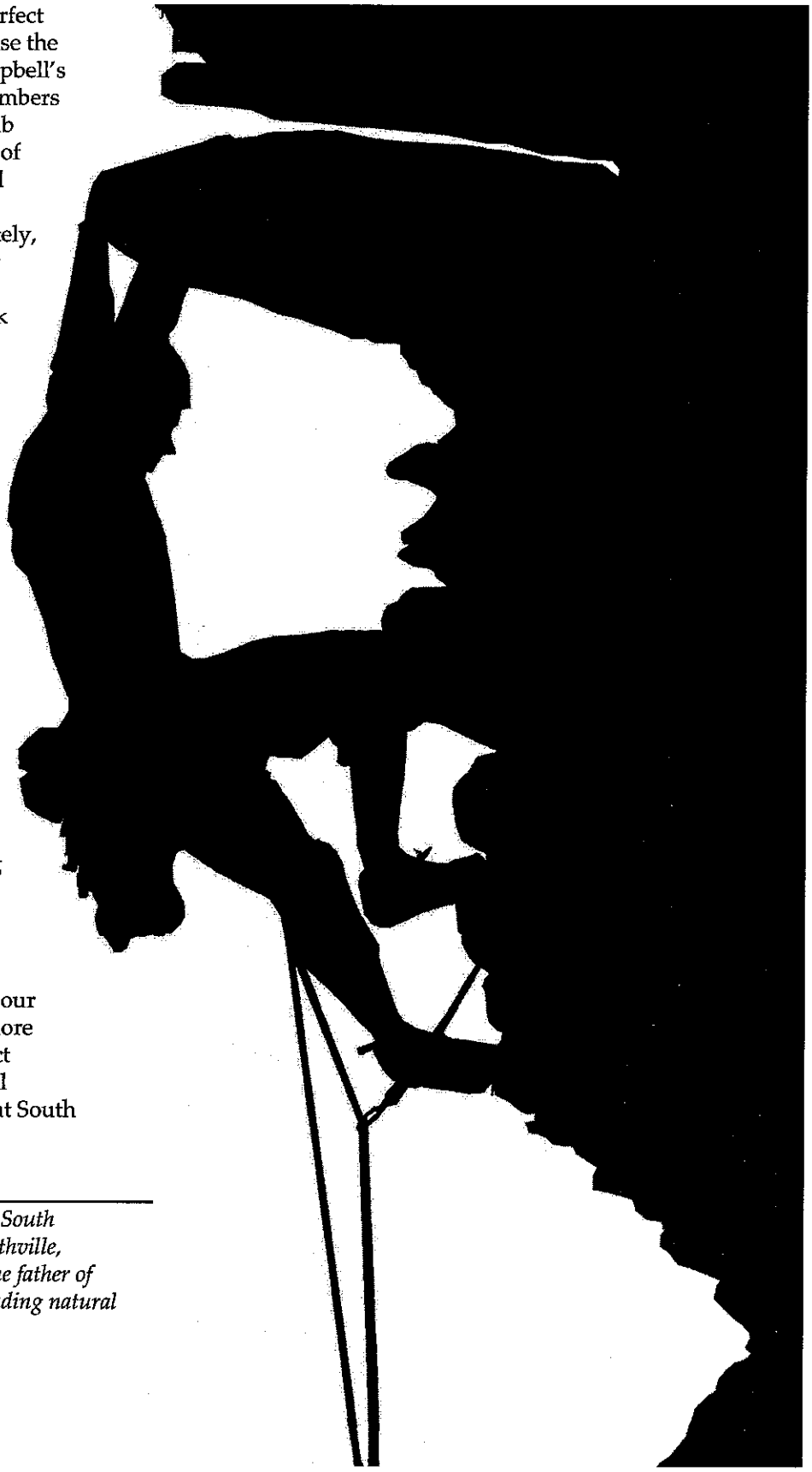
Our grade nine and ten climbing wall unit is four days in duration. During day one, the student belayers teach their peers how to put on the seat and chest harnesses making sure that all aspects of safety are very closely observed. The second half of this first class is spent explaining negative and positive holds, reviewing safe practices while on the wall, and introducing climbing techniques. The student belayers then instruct the students in several bouldering exercises emphasizing spotting techniques and the communication sequence. The next three days are spent principally on climbing with the student belayers using the technical and facilitation skills they learned during their training workshop. The belayers must also teach non-climbing students how to "anchor" the belayer; "smile" as back-up belayer and "bag" the rope.

There are as many benefits to being a student belayer as there are individuals who belay. Probably the most important benefit to the students is the opportunity to learn, practice and hone leadership skills. I have had many of my belayers ask me to be a reference for them when they are applying for part-time employment, college or even university. Their esteem needs are met by the recognition they receive from students and staff alike. We often call upon these students to help with various clubs in the school and in the community. The student belayers also get to understand and appreciate a little more of the teaching profession.

My role in the adventure process at South Lincoln is multi-faceted. In consultation with our special education resource teacher, I recruit the selected students at the end of their grade nine year. I arrange for Adventureworks! to come to our school for a September weekend in order to train our belay team. During training, I act as host, making sure the logistics of facilities, equipment and lunch are all organized. As a result of my years of experience, I am also able to provide the students with feedback on their skills while they are in training. Most importantly, I schedule the climbing wall days and organize my belayers to minimize their loss of class time. Finally, I am the last "check" before climber and belayer are off on their symbiotic relationship of triumph. I personally debrief each student once they have made their attempt at climbing the wall. Some climbers come off the wall in tears of elation; others come off with the widest possible grins. Still others come off asking if they could try it blindfolded. Always, I try to make the climber realize the accomplishment

of their "going for the perfect try." Often I am able to use the paradigm of Joseph Campbell's hero's journey to help climbers understand how the climb is very much an analogy of life with its triumphs and tragedies, its helpers and villains, and that, ultimately, the most important thing is the courage of the individual to take the risk and overcome fears.

In the past, we have had a number of elementary and secondary schools in our school board come to South Lincoln to experience the climbing wall firsthand. During our grade eight open house we have the climbing wall set up in hopes of encouraging students to come to South Lincoln to experience the unique physical education opportunity our climbing wall presents. It works! Our hope for the future is to acquire funding to expand our bouldering facility. In the meantime, our climbing wall has been more than a worthwhile adjunct to our health and physical education program here at South Lincoln High School.



Sandy Wilkes has taught at South Lincoln High School in Smithville, Ontario since 1989. He is the father of four beautiful children including natural triplets.

Winter Chickadees

By Gisele Winton Sarvis

Hiking between the farmer's field and the deciduous forest at Scanlon Creek Nature Centre near Bradford, Ontario, a grade 3 class and I were studying different types of soils. As soil explorers we were hiking to different locations to see, touch and smell clay, silt and humus soils. (Students usually balk at having to smell soil, but it smells surprising fresh, especially the humus.)

I always like to bring a sense of discovery and adventure to all the outdoor education programs I offer, so to this end I am always on the lookout for the presence of wildlife. This, however, was a late November day and there was a scarcity of wildlife in the open. Most of the insects were hibernating, the summer birds had departed and common mammals in the area were mostly nocturnal.

Walking along a trail cut between evergreen trees, I spotted some black-capped chickadees. I shushed the line of students behind me, told them about the birds ahead and asked them to walk quietly with eyes wide open.

While the first few students in the line were quiet, the rest were noisy and I'm not sure how many actually saw any chickadees. I stopped again and gathered the students around to tell them about how chickadees are well adapted to life in central Ontario.

Just then an eight-year-old girl said, "What's a chickadee?"

My jaw dropped. She had to be joking. Everyone knows what a chickadee is, do they not? I can't remember when I didn't know. I looked at the teacher in horror. She just stared back at me blankly — no help. I wanted to say "Well, if you'd ever spent any time outside in your life kid, you'd know." What I think I said was, "You need to spend more time outside." And what I should have said is "Sweetie, they are the most plentiful bird overwintering in central Ontario."

Just then a chickadee came onto a branch overhanging the path. I didn't have any seeds but I put my hand out to see if the chickadee would land anyway. It didn't. But I knew it wouldn't be long until those tiny beautiful birds would fearlessly join us.

It was a great opportunity to talk to the children about how these well-dressed puff balls will land on a human hand for seeds in the winter when their food supply is diminished.

Everyone should experience the pure thrill of having a chickadee land on their hand. If it's happened to you, you'll never forget. In a brilliant instant a wild animal touches your hand and your heart. Such wild animal and human contact is rare, which is why winter programs offering this experience are so valuable.

Chickadees are marvels at behavioural adaptation. While they feed predominately on insects and fruit in the summer, they switch their food source to seeds in the winter. Their beaks are adapted to accommodate different menus in different seasons.

Physically they are small, which is a disadvantage in the winter as they cannot store fat. They must eat continuously during the short daylight hours to be able to survive through long cold nights.

For such small birds, they have an amazing brain, caching away seeds, insects and other food into tree bark in the fall and later remembering where they put it.

Curiously, while chickadees pair off in the spring, in the fall they form flocks numbering four to 14. Perhaps they huddle for warmth on winter nights.

If you are interested in feeding chickadees, they thrive on black oil sunflower seeds. Research has shown that birds that are well

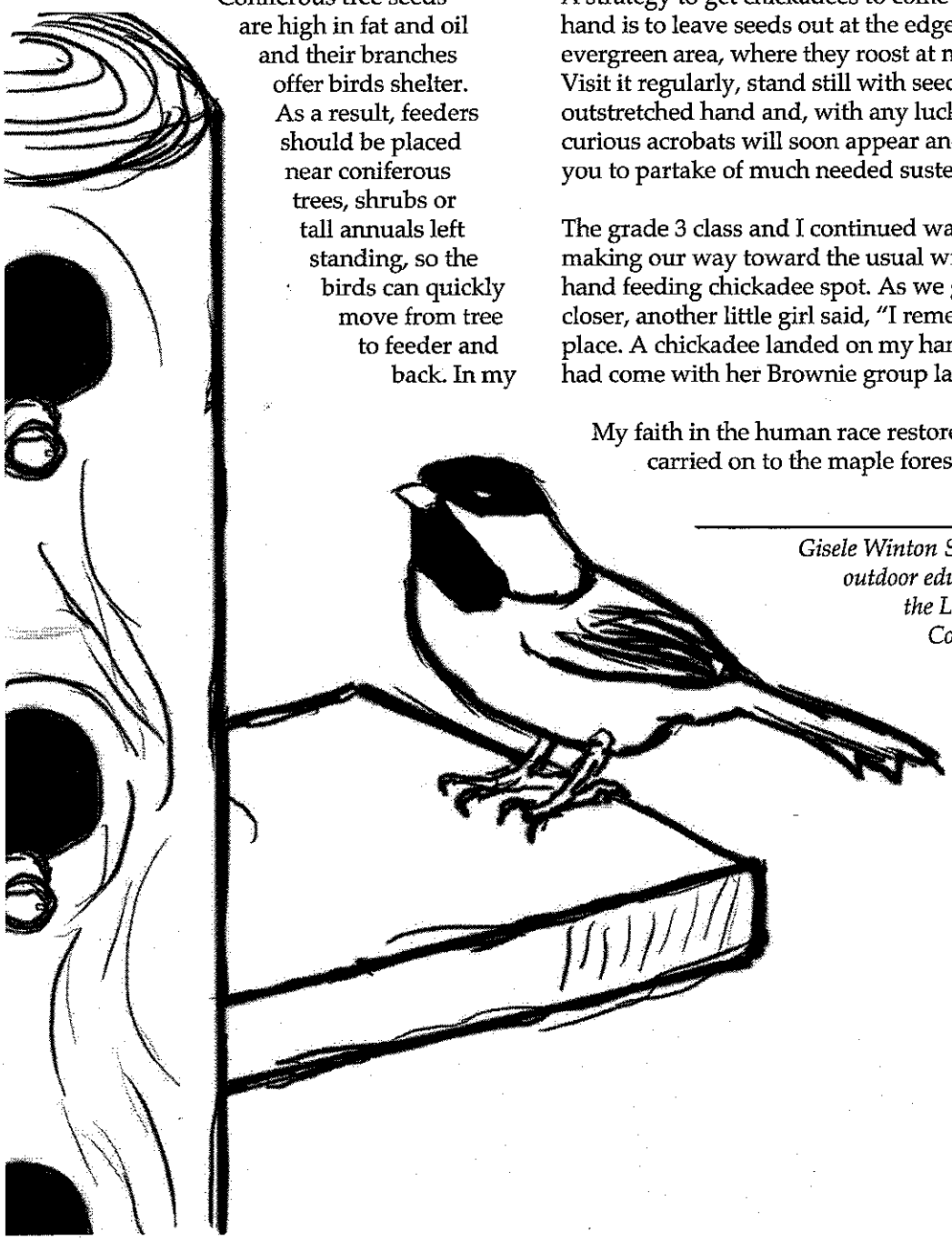
fed not only survive the winter but have more successful clutches in the spring. Remember to clear snow away from feeders and offer more than one feeding location, as chickadees are territorial.

Coniferous tree seeds are high in fat and oil and their branches offer birds shelter. As a result, feeders should be placed near coniferous trees, shrubs or tall annuals left standing, so the birds can quickly move from tree to feeder and back. In my garden I allowed goldenrod to grow, thinking it was something I'd planted. By the time I figured out my mistake, bees, wasps and chickadees were feeding from the flowers, so I didn't pull them out.

A strategy to get chickadees to come to your hand is to leave seeds out at the edge of an evergreen area, where they roost at night. Visit it regularly, stand still with seeds in your outstretched hand and, with any luck, the curious acrobats will soon appear and land on you to partake of much needed sustenance.

The grade 3 class and I continued walking, making our way toward the usual winter hand feeding chickadee spot. As we got closer, another little girl said, "I remember this place. A chickadee landed on my hand." She had come with her Brownie group last winter.

My faith in the human race restored, we carried on to the maple forest.



Gisele Winton Sarvis is an outdoor educator with the Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority at its Scanlon Creek Nature Centre.

Embodying Environments: Walking Through Your Body

By Julia Lane

> Theatre has taught me about art, music, dance, performance, acting, character building, how far we've come as a people, how far we have to go, how good we are, how evil we can become, how generous and open hearted we are and can be, how hard a heart becomes when love and kindness are absent from life. (Slotkin, 2003, p. 105)

I come to outdoor education from a background in theatre training. I was recently fortunate enough to combine these two passions on Manitoulin Island where I was studying and working as an apprentice of the Pochinko style of clown training with celebrated Canadian clown John Turner. Although this program is not explicitly "outdoor education," it is easy to make connections between creative learning experiences and the natural world when you spend a solid month sleeping in a tent, bathing by a hose and keeping warm by a fire.

Richard Pochinko developed the foundational components of this style of clown training in the 1970s and 1980s. An important aspect of this training is the experience of walking through your body. I will not go into details about how this process is used in clowning, as this needs to be experienced to be understood. I will, however, share an environmental activity that I devised based on that experience. I will begin by framing and explaining the exercise itself and will then articulate the ways that I see it connecting to students' well-being.

It is a cold and snowy Monday morning, and both students and teachers would rather be relaxing by the fire than gathering in the classroom. Or, it is sunny and unseasonably warm and everyone would rather be playing outside than sitting in the classroom. Perhaps everyone is tired from the weekend past. Maybe they are just looking forward to the weekend coming. In just such situations it is important to engage the body — so frequently overlooked or forgotten in educational practice — in our learning activities.

In the theatrical world we know that the body remembers what the mind does not, or cannot. There are thus entire theatrical programs dedicated to developing the senses and training the body to engage beyond the facility of the mind alone. Anyone who has ever smelled a familiar scent and been "transported" to a different time and place knows about the power of the body's sensations to trigger thoughts and memories that the mind had previously forgotten or tuned out.

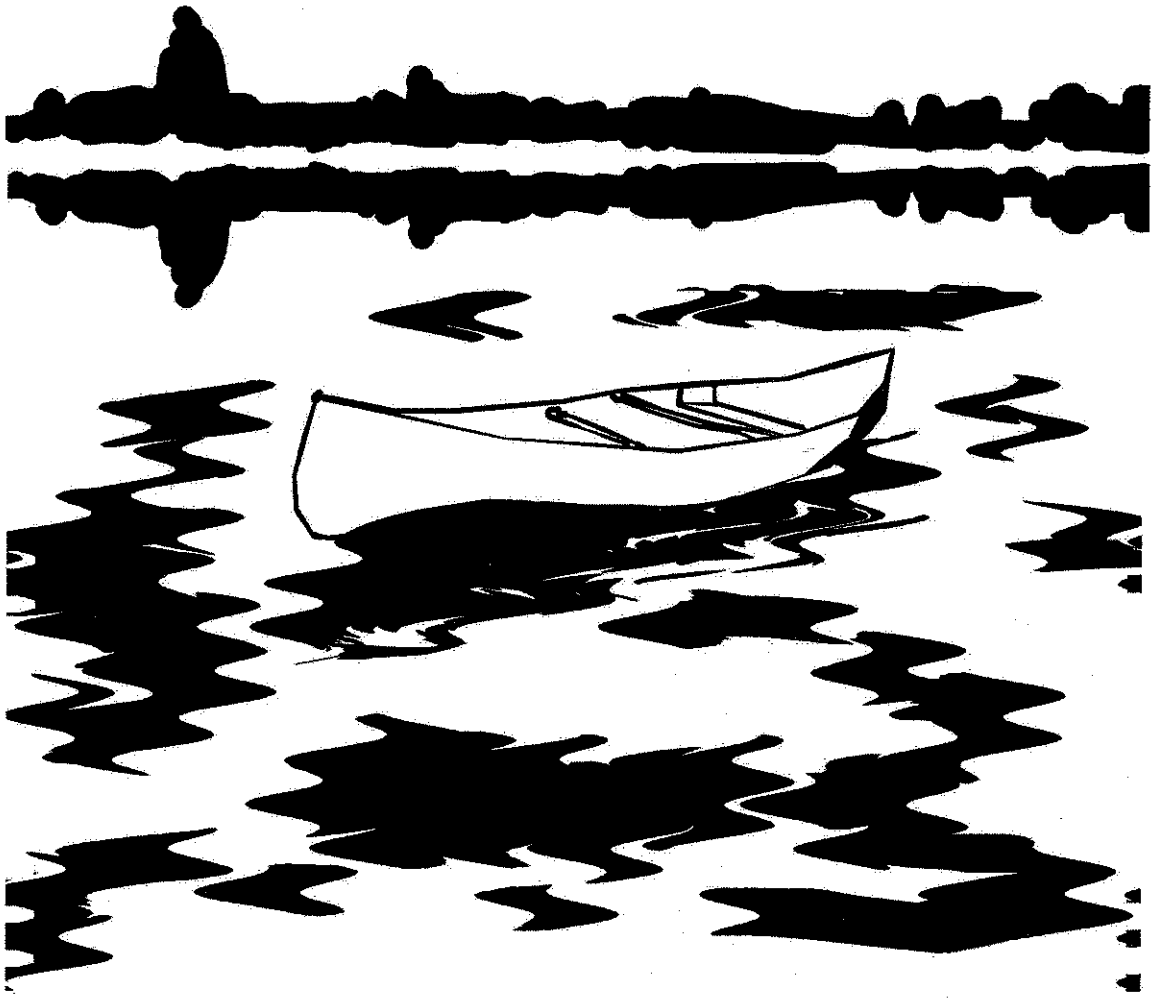
The activity I am proposing for the sometimes-dreaded Monday morning engages the unique capacity of the body to experience learning in new ways and also to retain this learning beyond the scope of the thinking mind alone. According to Burch (2002), these two components — learning that is experienced and that is remembered — define "lived experience." What is particularly amazing about this activity is that it is relevant for students from K–12 at almost all levels of development. Additionally, though it is a physical exercise, it can be easily modified for use with students with a variety of physical limitations. Though this activity can be done in any space where desks can be pushed aside to create an open space for movement, as an advocate of outdoor education, I believe it to be a completely different experience when taken outside.

To begin, invite each student to find a special, individual place. I frequently ask students to find a place that they think is beautiful. It would be interesting to do the activity both inside and outside to see how long it takes students to find something beautiful in both

contexts. A meaningful conversation about beauty in the natural world may develop out of such an experience. If conflicts arise when students are looking for their individual place, remind them that if someone is already in a chosen special spot, they can find another, equally beautiful, place to be.

Once all students have found themselves an individual place, ask them to focus on one aspect of it. The most beautiful part of it for them may be one petal on a flower or the bark of a tree. Encourage students to experience this aspect of their place with as many senses as they can without causing damage. They can smell, gently touch, listen to, observe from all angles, and perhaps even taste. After they have learned about their place using their senses, ask them to feel the sound of the chosen aspect rising out of their bellies into their throats and out of their mouths. This is not the sound that the place itself makes, but rather the sound that they feel compelled to make as a result of their sensory experiences. They are to make these sounds out loud. It may be helpful if the teacher provides an example of a sound to ease students' fears about "sounding silly."

Now ask students to walk while repeating their sound. Have the students breathe their sound into each part of their body. They can do this by physically directing the sound to each body part (for example, by looking directly at a foot and directing their sound there) or by visualizing the sound entering each part of their body. I find that it is most effective if students physicalize and visualize. As the teacher you become the coach for this experience. Encourage students to continue with their own work as you call out directions and questions. Some questions that the



students may find helpful: How does this sound make you want to move? How does making and hearing this sound change the way that you walk? What is the rhythm of the sound? Can you walk with this rhythm and against this rhythm?

Depending on the ages of the students you can alter the instructions for this part of the activity. For younger students perhaps they move about the room with their sound, changing their physicality as they wish. Older students can be asked to isolate parts of their body and feel (not think about, but feel) how this sound makes that part of the body want to move. Regardless of age remind students to keep breathing as they walk around in the space. If students are feeling disconnected from the activity, ask them to return to their special place and breathe there for a while. Does this cause their sound to change? Continue to coach students from the sidelines and, if they are having a hard time getting into the activity, surprise them with your cues. You can ask them how their sound and their body would move low through the room, how it might jump, how it could travel quickly or slowly. Keep the students on their toes!

Depending on the time available you can invite students to come into a circle and share their sound and movements with each other. If you do this it is beneficial to have the group repeat each student's sound and movement. This repetition encourages acceptance and can help to put students at ease with the experience of "performing" their personal sound and movement in front of others.

Make some time at the end of the exercise to allow students to share anything about the experience that they learned, enjoyed or found unpleasant. You might ask: What was that experience like? Do you feel you learned anything new about your object or place? Did your sound or the way it made you move bring to mind a particular character or experience? What was the rhythm of your sound or your movement like? It is important that you do not judge the students' answers.

The lessons students learn from this activity may not be the kinds of directed learning objectives we frequently expect in the school setting, but this is precisely the point.

One of the most impactful ways this kind of exercise can contribute to well-being is also one of the simplest: In this activity students exercise their freedom of choice and are (it is hoped) liberated by the fact there are no right or wrong answers. I am aware that in outdoor education there are frequently clear right or wrong choices (or at least very clear wrong choices!) and that these often have drastic impacts. This is true whether the outdoor education in question emphasizes tripping and survival skills or the science of climate change and biodiversity. I believe it is important for students to learn these things and to be able to distinguish between problems and solutions, a warm shelter and . . . well . . . no warm shelter. However, I also believe that there is a huge environmental weight currently being shifted onto students and, without the proper outlets for expression, this weight might lead students into disconnection, apathy, fear or, as David Sobel has argued, "ecophobia."

So what can this exercise contribute to well-being? To begin, it encourages students to connect with a place in the absence of right or wrong — there is only the student's individual experiences, reactions and expressions. Just as passionately motivated outdoor educators sometimes experience burnout and need to find ways of reconnecting with their original motivations, I believe that this activity can help students to, subconsciously, (re)connect with what they see as the beautiful aspects of the Earth.

This exercise engages the body, the senses, sound and movement, while encouraging the intellectual mind to take a backseat to the experience. I also believe that it can serve to reconnect us to ourselves as learning beings. According to David Wright, "This overt attention to embodied consciousness ensures drama, theatre and performance are remarkably appropriate laboratories for

research into the relationship between bodies, minds, communication and learning" (2005, p. 90). In reflecting on the activity afterwards, the intellectual mind is once again invited in, if only to marvel at what can be learned by and through the body. In this way, the activity can facilitate a shift in understanding that encourages us to see ourselves as beings that learn through our bodies, emotions and relationships as well as minds.

Finally, I would like to suggest three other simple ways in which I believe this activity facilitates well-being. To begin, it gets students outside. As outdoor educators we feel the value of having students outside as much as possible, even if we cannot always articulate why this is important. Significantly, this activity puts students in the schoolyard during a non-recess time. Frequently the schoolyard is not a place that is considered part of "the natural world." Paved basketball courts, gravel or sand, playground structures and flat grassy fields dominate many schoolyards. The schoolyard also seems designated for recess or "non-learning" time, a distinction that may cause some students to (subconsciously) discount their experiences in this outdoor space. Reclaiming the schoolyard as a natural learning place by changing the physical space with school gardens — as many schools are now doing — and by shifting how and when this space is used is important. The reinvention of the schoolyard contributes to the well-being of this place. It can also facilitate the well-being of students who may feel more connected to nature when it is conceived as an accessible, everyday place of learning and fun.

Fun is the next point. This activity is fun — especially once students are able to get beyond their initial self-consciousness about making sounds and walking in silly ways. I understand well-being to be a physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual state and I believe that having fun has positive implications for each of these aspects of well-being. If students perceive that learning is fun, they are more willing to challenge themselves intellectually and enjoy their learning experiences; when students have fun engaging their bodies in a learning experience they can become more aware of and in tune with their own physicality; having fun in a way that is deeply personal and embodied like this activity can put us in touch with our spiritual desires; and it is easy to emphasize the positive in our emotions when we are having fun!

My final comment about well-being is that this activity allows students to explore their physicality in a personal way. Schools can sometimes be places where students are shut down physically both because of the demands to be seated during class time and because of the pressure of being around other students who collectively define a normative physicality. This activity asks students to focus only on themselves and their relationship with their chosen place. The more that teachers create a safe space for this activity in which students are encouraged to work personally and be silly, the more potentially free each student's physicality will be. I believe that this (re)connection with the range of movement available to the body supports physical well-being as it allows students to experience physicality previously unavailable to them.

As I write these suggestions and re-read them for clarity I am keenly aware that what makes sense to me from my previous theatrical experiences may be incomprehensible to others. And yet, I feel as though these kinds of activities provide meaningful and valuable learning opportunities for students, perhaps especially the students who are not always engaged in typically conventional educational situations. I would thus invite anyone interested in understanding more about this specific activity, or other ways in which the body might be brought into outdoor education through theatrical experiences, to contact me for clarification or expansion of these ideas. Until then, Happy Monday!

References

Burch, R. (2002). Phenomenology, lived experience: Taking a measure of the topic. *Phenomenology and Pedagogy*, 8, 130–160.

Slotkin, L. (2003). Confessions of a theatre addict. In K. Gallagher & D. Booth (Eds.) *How theatre educates: Convergences & counterpoints.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Wright, D. (2005). Embodying, emotioning, expressing learning. *Reflective Practice,* 6(1), 85–93.

Information about John Turner's Clown Training is available at www.theclownfarm.com

Julia Lane has a BA in Theatre Studies from York University and is currently pursuing an MA in Trent University's Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies program. When she is not working on her thesis or applying to PhD programs, she enjoys watching the ducks that frequent the creek in her yard and going for bike rides with her partner. She can be contacted at julialane@trentu.ca

Five Tips for Surviving Winter: Off-Season Advice for the First Time Outdoor Educator

By Jay Blackwood

Dear first-time outdoor educator,

I hope you enjoyed your first fall season. It was vest weather, every middle school wanted to come and climb, paddle or frolic in the forest, and every day was a new adventure! Sadly fall has ended. Vests, though stylish, aren't warm enough, the middle school students seem sassier, and few, it seems, want to climb, paddle or frolic in the snow. For many of you, likely your first seasonal contract has ended.

Like animals of the forest, outdoor educators must prepare to survive the long, harsh stretch between fall and spring. The youngest and least experienced of us will find it the most difficult. I, being young and inexperienced, made many missteps in my first off-season. As such, I would like to offer the following tips, learned the hard way, for maintaining health and sanity in the face of your first winter:

1. **Get off your partner's/parent's couch.** You have now worked full-time from September to November for what may be the first time in your life, and you may think you've earned a break. Enjoy the holiday season, climb indoors, sit back and catch up on missed episodes of *Lost* . . . this is a trap! Come March it may be too late to help your strained relationships (though, you'll have some interesting theories about what "The Island" really is).

2. **Learn to ski or snowboard.** In fact, learn to do this so well that you can teach others and be employed to do so. Without this skill winter can become a time of plumping and malaise. I missed out on a great opportunity to be outdoors. Don't make the same mistake.

3. **Get a second, third or fourth job.** For some, the best idea is to look for that local outdoor store and put your retail pants on. For those of us lucky enough to be vertically minded: 1. Find a local climbing gym. 2. Climb everyday. 3. Slip in the casual "So, what qualifications do you need to work here?" question. Two hours later you'll be belaying for every birthday party in town.

4. This may seem like obvious advice, but **work somewhere without seasons from December to April.** Following this tip will also give you the opportunity to see new places, meet new people and broaden your experiences in the outdoor education field. Bonus!

5. **Ignore tips 1–4 and travel for pleasure.** With any luck, you have managed to save a chunk of change from your first fall season. Winter is a great time to catch a flight somewhere, relax, explore and gain a new perspective on things. The important point is to get off that couch.

I hope you are smarter than I was and are successfully avoiding boredom, angry partners/parents, empty bank accounts, lapsing skills, a narrowing mind and a ballooning body. In fact, I hope you are flourishing in the snow. The winter off-season can be a great time to develop new skills (check out the professional development section of the COEO newsletter), read new books or journals (wink) and reassess your perceptions. I wish you all the best in your hibernation and hope to see you again, unscathed and reinvigorated, when we all re-emerge in the spring.

Sincerely,
Jay

Jay Blackwood is now successfully surviving winter with sanity and good health as an outdoor educator at Upper Canada College's Norval Outdoor School. Previously survived winters have included work with Adventureworks! Associates, Inc., Canterbury Hills Camp and the YMCA of Greater Vancouver.

Reflections on the International Association for Experiential Education Conference

By Doug Wigood

At the end of October I was signed up to attend the International Association for Experiential Education (AEE) Conference in Montreal. I packed my bags and left on Wednesday, October 28, 2009 at 7:30 am. The road trip was scheduled to take about six hours, including the stops for coffee and gas along the way.

This conference came at a very important time in my life, as I was in the midst of trying to make some influential career choices. I chose to go to the conference with a couple of fellow students, with little idea of what we were going to experience. As we drove into Quebec, I started thinking, "What should I expect from this conference?" I was at a loss; nothing I came up with seemed to make sense.

We managed to make it to our hotel and check in, with time to gather our thoughts before registering for the conference. Once at the conference, we received material that told us everything we wanted to know about where we were going to be spending the next few days, the presenters that would be speaking and special events being offered.

At the conference more than 700 participants had the chance to sit in on a possible 200 different workshops. Workshop topics ranged from adventure-based programming and social justice and ethics to research and evaluation and adventure therapy. Since this conference was international, participants and presenters were in attendance from all over the world, sharing stories, teaching strategies and distributing professional contacts for anyone who cared to embrace them.

One of the workshops I attended was led by some of the senior members of AEE. It was interesting to hear how the industry had changed over their years of involvement and how they saw such change continuing into the future. At another workshop, one of my own professors was presenting alongside a graduate student, so I wanted to show some support. My professor told me that I should try and experience something new, listen to someone else, but I am glad I didn't heed her advice as the workshop included engaging facilitation and intriguing new information on social justice and pedagogy.

A third workshop I attended focused on taking children in the school system outside and the challenges that accompany that way of thinking. Taking students outside to experience the natural world enables them to make connections to environmental settings.

At this conference I was able to make some networking connections with people in the professional world and identify new areas of employment that interest me. After the conference, I was left with an appreciation and greater understanding of the bigger picture. I had no idea that experiential education was of such immense interest to so many people. It certainly changed my outlook, and has the power to change the way we educate people.

Next year the conference is in Las Vegas, and I am already thinking of what I will pack in my bag.

Doug Wigood is a fourth year student at Brock University, studying Recreation and Leisure Studies and specializing in Outdoor Recreation. Before coming to university he completed a two-year diploma program at Mohawk College in Recreation and Leisure Services. He has a love for the outdoors and facilitating programs.

IMBYs and the Future of Outdoor Experiential Education: Redefining the Meaning of "Up Close and Personal"

By Grant Linney

If you ask outdoor educators what a group of learners looks like when they're "up close and personal," the following quickly surfaces:

You see it in the eyes, the look. It's one of total focus, of fascination and connection.

Yeah, and it's in their bodies too. They're leaning forward. They're physically close together, bonded by something that's immediate and real and totally engaging. They're directly participating in something as one, as a community of hands-on explorers who are not sure where they're going. They're part of an adventure, a narrative whose middle and ending are not yet known.

And, if you could read their minds, the last thing you would find is any association with formal classroom learning. They're thinking that they are out of school, not anywhere near it.

If you ask these same outdoor educators what "up close and personal" looks like in terms of activities, you get an impressive and inclusive array of responses:

They're sharing hot chocolate about halfway along a 20-kilometre cross-country ski loop. They're in the middle of a hardwood forest that is blanketed with the silent beauty of fresh powder snow.

They've found this female crayfish in a pond or stream, and she's laden with eggs under her tail. There's this instinctive fascination with the crusty skin, the clump of dark reddish-brown eggs and the searching chelipeds (claws). The desire to reach out and touch is tempered with the fear of a pinch as well as a dash of the unknown.

The class is in two lines, facing each other and with overlapping open palms. All eyes are on one brave soul above them and at one

end of the line. After a series of back-and-forth communications, this person falls backwards, tin-soldier style, into their waiting arms.

It's early spring, and they're drilling holes into grand sugar maples with brace and bit, then attaching spiles, buckets and lids for collection of the sap. They're hauling the sap to fire-stoked evaporators where clouds of steam billow into the air and an increasingly sweet smell permeates the air. Then, they are eagerly awaiting a delectable taste of the finished product.

Outdoor experiential education (OEE) is about hands-on, direct experience; it's about a community of learners; it's about rapt attention and total engagement; it's about

discovering oneself, one's peers and one's surroundings (frequently, but not necessarily, natural surroundings). Unfortunately, it has also all too often been about the following largely unquestioned and widely practiced tenets:

- To experience the outdoors, one must travel *away* from one's home community and into more natural settings.
- To safely and effectively experience the outdoors, one must have the security of designated outdoor education properties.

Let's now look at these assumptions more closely.

Don't get me wrong. There is considerable merit to travelling away for OEE, to attempting our modest version of the mythical hero's journey of adventure, challenge and growth before returning home. I have experienced many extended and remote wilderness trips. I have spent most of my teaching career at a dozen day and residential outdoor education centres and I appreciate that their settings offer a range of geographies and habitats that can be effectively used for a wide variety of programs at different times of year. With the continuous use of these settings under the direction of trained outdoor educators, issues of safety, program development and resources become much easier to handle. And, for students at a residential centre, "away" acquires a whole new dimension: it can become a powerful retreat, an opportunity to get away from the multiple and often disconnected fragments of their days at home and to instead experience sustained focus within the same community of learners . . . powerful stuff indeed.

However, the time is past due for us to consider the downside of travelling away for OEE and I see at least four factors to consider here:

- **The financial cost of transportation:** Bussing is a significant expense for OEE, so much so that it limits who can come and how often.
- **The environmental cost of transportation:** The single most important value of OEE in these times is surely *education for environment*. We need to show that OEE can walk its talk.
- **The grade levels covered and the frequency of OEE experiences:** The few school boards with significant OEE programs strive for universality by mandating that all classes at one or perhaps two grade levels have these experiences. The Toronto District School Board, with one of the largest board budgets in the country, provides 4.5 days worth of OEE between Grades 1 and 12, including 2.5 days of residential programming at the Grade 6 or 7 level. This, to the best of my knowledge, is the largest amount of OEE for any public board in the country. But we must realize that even this allocation is not nearly enough to realize the kind of multiple and lasting benefits of OEE that are outlined in COEO's 2007 summary of research into the values of OEE (Foster & Linney, 2007).
- **The potential for a limited transfer of learning:** There is considerable evidence in brain-based research that making connections to "home" is more difficult when learning happens "away," and my own experiences over some four decades provide a personal conviction about this potential weak link. However, this does not need to be the case. A good outdoor educator will always strive to complete the experiential learning cycle, to process, reflect upon and debrief an experience so that its learnings can be brought home.

When these four factors are taken into account, one can be left with the strong impression that the potential widespread and lasting impacts of OEE too frequently remain just that: unrealized potential.

An Alternative Approach

Many years ago, I read an article with a title something like "In Praise of NIMBYs." Remember them? The "Not in My Back Yard" types we frequently dismiss because we presume that they oppose anything that could impact their immediate neighbourhood in an adverse fashion? Well, the article's author praised NIMBYs for their passion and for lines of argument that were frequently very well thought out.

With reference to OEE, my proposal is that we move from *NIMBY* to *"IMBY."* We need OEE *"In My Back Yard,"* i.e., in our home communities, within walking (or perhaps public transit) distance of our schools. I am not saying that we should close existing outdoor education centres, but let's face it: we're not about to get many more of these relatively expensive facilities. So, let's get our outdoor educators to assume more of a resource role for classroom teachers. Let's support our elementary teachers through a gradual progression of outdoor experiences and the supervisory assistance of well-prepped parents to take their students outdoors at least six times a year. Let's get our students to realize that the life support systems of this planet are all around them and that *up close and personal* can occur locally, repeatedly, relatively inexpensively, and in powerful ways that really bring home connections with themselves, their classmates, and their natural surroundings.

As for secondary teachers, one need only look at Michael Elrick in Guelph and the extraordinary things he and his colleagues accomplished with two four-credit integrated course packages, one in Grade 10 (Community Environmental Leadership Program (CELP)), and the other at the Grade 12 level (Headwaters). Yes, he took his students away on remote trips, but he also based the bulk of programming within his local community. There will be much more said about this outstanding educator in our forthcoming Spring issue of *Pathways*.

For the pedagogically inclined, IMBY education is more commonly referred to as *place-based education*. American educator David Sobel (2008) is an articulate proponent of this approach:

> Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum. Emphasizing hands-on, real-world learning experiences, this approach to education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties to their community, enhances students' appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens. (p. 131)

In *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow*, the Ontario government makes a few scattered references to the value of local outdoor experiences for purpose of environmental education but it inexplicably limits these experiences to the confines of the schoolyard. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009). We can do so much better than this! With proper scouting and supervision, one can usually find and make repeated use of a piece of "untended" land nearby . . . an uncut strip along the edge of a playing field, a "vacant" piece of land that teems with life. And, such local forays can even contain the element of adventure.

Whatever we call it – "IMBY Education," "Place-based Education," or perhaps "One Kilometre Education" (i.e., OEE within one km of the school), one thing is very clear to me: if we really want OEE to have the widespread, varied and lasting impacts research shows it can have, we need to bring it "home" so that students are repeatedly exposed to its magic.

References

Foster, A. & Linney, G. (2007). *Reconnecting children through outdoor education: A research summary*. Toronto, ON: Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009). *Acting today, shaping tomorrow: A policy framework for environmental education in Ontario schools*. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Sobel, D. (2008). *Childhood and nature: Design principles for educators*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Grant Linney is currently contracted with Lakehead University to write a course outline for the new Teachers' Additional Qualification Course in Outdoor Experiential Education.

Ontario's Policy Framework for Environmental Education: Indoctrination and Integration

By Bruce Pardy

Outdoor educators should find little to like in the Ontario government's new policy framework for environmental education. Released in February 2009, the document, titled *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow*, relies heavily on the 2007 Report of the Working Group on Environmental Education in Ontario, *Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future*, also known as "The Bondar Report."

The policy framework has two main flaws: The first is its plan to program children to believe in a particular version of environmental stewardship, and the second is its intent to integrate environmental education into existing curriculum.

Environmental Indoctrination

Back in 1968, George Leonard wrote, "To learn is to change. Education is a process that changes the learner. . . . The task of preventing the new generation from changing in any deep or significant way is precisely what most societies require of their educators" (p. 7). As originally conceived, public schools sought to produce conformity rather than independence.

According to Alvin Toffler,

> Built on the factory model, mass education taught basic reading, writing, and arithmetic, a bit of history and other subjects. This was the "overt curriculum." But beneath it lay an invisible or "covert curriculum" that was far more basic. It consisted — and still does in most industrial nations — of three courses: one in punctuality, one in obedience, and one in rote, repetitive work. (1980, p. 29)

It is difficult to find many modern examples of genuine divergence from this pattern. Ontario's new policy framework for environmental education is not one of them.

Rather than seeking to develop independent thinking about environmental issues, the framework's primary objective is to instil orthodox environmental values. *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow* states, "Ontario's education system will prepare students with the knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices they need to be environmentally responsible citizens" (p. 4). It does not acknowledge that the meaning of environmental responsibility is a matter of opinion and debate. Instead of teaching skills and perspectives that would equip students to critically assess environmental claims and work out their own conclusions, the document promises that the curriculum will "[i]ncrease student knowledge and develop skills and perspectives that foster environmental stewardship" (p. 12). It adopts the view that the solution to environmental problems lies within the realm of individual activism.

> The policy framework seeks to move beyond a focus on symptoms — air and water pollution, for example — to encompass the underlying causes of environmental stresses, which are rooted in personal and social values . . . . It seeks to promote changes in personal behaviour. (p. 4)

Schools will do this by having students "take a message home and teach his or her family about recycling," "by getting involved in water conservation in the community," and by integrating "environmental education across the curriculum . . . such as recycled-art shows" (p. 9).

This approach reflects a trite, simplistic, unsophisticated treatment of environmental issues that makes children into morally righteous robots wedded to platitudes. Genuine environmental education requires scepticism and hard questions. Instead of developing analytical skills to distinguish between genuine environmental problems and moralistic hand-wringing, the framework seeks to condition children to believe in the version of environmental stewardship that society currently endorses.

Integration

The policy framework seeks to "integrate environmental education into subject-specific training activities" (p. 13). In other words, environmental education is to be inserted into existing classes. Grant Clarke, an assistant deputy minister in the Ministry's strategic planning and elementary/secondary programs, has explained: "In math, a teacher can use problems related to environmental issues such as water flow or pollution measurement . . . . And in English, one does not have to look far to find stories and poems with environmental themes" (p. 37). Reading stories and doing math problems is the government's new vision for environmental education.

The document defines environmental education as "education for the environment, about the environment and in the environment . . . ." (p. 4). This sentence is as banal as they come. It is interesting only for what it omits: environmental education, apparently, is not education from the environment, which is the business that outdoor educators are in. Instead, environmental education is a "deliverable," to be provided within the four square walls of a classroom, an environment that teaches a covert curriculum: children belong inside, sitting down, being still. The students' role is to respond to instructions, not to explore but to receive what is delivered to them. The policy framework does not apply the values of outdoor education. It does not say, "Turn off the computer and go outside." Under the framework, environmental education means merely tweaking the subject of student activity rather than its substance.

The policy framework reflects a shallow vision of environmental education. It provides curriculum about environmental topics in place of direct immersion in the natural world. Ivan Illich diagnosed a similar pattern 40 years ago, when he wrote about confusing institutional programs with genuine experience:

> The pupil is "schooled" to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is "schooled" to accept service in place of value. Medical treatment is mistaken for health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for safety, military poise for national security, the rat race for productive work. (1973, p. 9)

Public education is compulsory. In Ontario, section 21(1) of the Education Act provides that every child between the ages of six and 18 shall attend elementary or secondary school on every school day of the year. Even children who attend private school or are home schooled require the approval of the Ministry of Education. In a compulsory system, educational policy is the government's statement of what children will learn. It is both coercive and political. Educational policy is not merely a statement of preference or recommendation, but a command to its teachers and a message to the public. The message of this policy framework is that schools will imbue children with conformist environmental beliefs and keep curriculum basically the same.

References

Benedict, M. (2009). Environmental education. *Professionally Speaking, 13(3).* Retrieved from http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally_speaking/june_2009/

Illich, I. (1973). *Deschooling society*. London: Calder & Boyars.

Leonard, G. (1968). *Education and ecstasy*. New York: Viking.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009). *Acting today, shaping tomorrow: A policy framework for environmental education in Ontario schools* Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario. Retrieved from http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/curriculumcouncil/ShapeTomorrow.pdf

Toffler, A. (1980). *The third wave*. New York: William Morrow.

Bruce Pardy is a professor in the Faculty of Law at Queen's University.

An Old Married Woman

By Kathy MacDonald

A few years ago, I had a request from a teacher who works with developmentally challenged (DC) students at a local high school. He was inquiring if I had any programs designed specifically for his kind of kids. Without hesitation I replied, "Yes, of course I do!" I offered to send him off an e-mail by the end of the day with a program description.

Now, to be honest, I did not have programs specifically for DC students. But what I did have was the determination, imagination and problem solving skills (and perhaps a dash of stubbornness) to adapt one of my existing programs to meet the needs of these students. At 40ish years of age, I have yet to master the art of using that simple word "no." Nor did I accept that there wasn't something I could do to get these kids out to my environmental education centre for a day of learning and fun that would meet their specific curriculum requirements.

Fast forward to 2009. Thanks to that phone call, I now have five full-day outdoor education programs available for elementary and high school DC classes. Adapting my existing programs was easy to do. With a little imagination, modifying worksheets, tweaking identification keys and creating more visual teaching aids, it was done. Whether engaged in orienteering, forestry, pond studies or snowshoeing, each student is actively engaged, learning the terminology and skills in that particular program. As with all classes that attend outdoor centres, the "behind the scene lessons" are as important as the official content. Experiencing and learning to communicate, listening to others' opinions and ideas, sharing and working together, feeling exhilaration and contentment when having successfully accomplished a challenge, gaining new skills and knowledge, and being physically active in a natural setting are all valuable learnings.

Teachers and school principals who participate in these programs are grateful and excited to encounter opportunities beyond the usual recycling and maintenance type programs typically offered to their DC students. They have experienced firsthand how successful their students have been in developing new skills and learning new material as a result of these experiences. They have seen in their students an increased ability to retain knowledge after having participated in one of these programs.

For me, the most important feedback comes from the students themselves as they review the information that was taught, use new terminology correctly, talk amongst themselves about what they learned that day, or excitedly describe the desire to come back with family members to share what they have learned and experienced.

The most memorable moment came from a student in a high school DC class who attended a day of snowshoeing and winter survival skills. We had stopped to roast hotdogs over a fire for lunch. Bradley, a student with Down Syndrome, looked across the fire and asked me: "Katherine, are you married?"

"Yes, Bradley, I am," I answered.

"Damn," he replied looking down at the snow. "I was gonna marry ya."

"But, Bradley, not only am I married, I am also a lot older than you," I stated.

With this he turned to both his dad and teacher, each standing on either side of him, and replied, "There ain't nothin' better than an old married woman, like Kath. She's taught me to love the outdoors and science and stuff. Been the best learning I've ever had!"

Kathy MacDonald runs the Vansittart Woods Environmental Education Centre for the Thames Valley District School Board, located near Woodstock, Ontario.

Overcoming Fear: Helping Decision Makers Understand Risk in Outdoor Education

By Kathy Haras

The long history of outdoor education does little to alleviate the fears of many parents, teachers, principals and superintendents who believe that outdoor education is too risky. These decision makers often lack both the knowledge to make informed decisions and the time and resources to investigate their assumptions. Pair these circumstances with a fear of making the wrong decision and the popular media's focus on tragic events, and it is no wonder that decision makers' first instinct might be to say "no" to outdoor education experiences.

Outdoor educators understand the benefits of taking students outside and view risk as a product of the probability and magnitude (risk = probability x magnitude) of an event (Gardner, 2008). Based on their experience, they know that outdoor education incidents aren't that frequent and most aren't that serious. As a result, outdoor educators are perplexed when decision makers say outdoor education is too risky.

Decision makers, on the other hand, are responding to a moral–emotional data set

rather than a technical one. For them, the amount of risk depends to a large extent on the amount of outrage (risk = [probability x magnitude] + outrage) an event generates (Sandman cited in Levitt & Dubner, 2005). They are concerned with whether people will feel angry, resentful, insulted or violated if something goes wrong during an outdoor education experience.

Public reaction to Strathcona–Tweedsmuir (seven students killed by an avalanche while backcountry skiing in Rogers Pass in 2003), Timiskaming (12 students and an adult leader from St. John's School drowned on a canoe trip in 1978), and Lyme Bay (four students drowned kayaking in Lyme Bay, UK in 1993) tells us that outdoor education incidents produce high levels of outrage. Slovic (cited in Gardner, 2008) identified factors that generate outrage: catastrophic potential where many people could be seriously injured in one event; unfamiliar or novel activities with unclear benefits; an acute, immediate threat rather than a long-term one; a previous bad event; circumstances that are outside personal control; the involvement of children; and media attention. Outdoor education has the ability to generate outrage so decision makers are understandably wary.

Helping decision makers overcome their fear of outdoor education consists of four steps: increasing their familiarity with outdoor education; sharing responsibility for risk management; developing credibility; and communicating effectively. This article will outline the steps and techniques that will enable individuals to reach informed decisions about outdoor education experiences.

Making Outdoor Education Familiar

Increasing decision makers' familiarity with outdoor education requires describing its approach to learning, explaining the hazards, and differentiating the delivery mechanisms that outdoor educators take for granted. If outdoor educators lack clarity in this area, they are unlikely to convince others of the benefits of outdoor education.

What is outdoor education?

Outdoor education is the deliberate use of the outdoors to develop character, enhance the curriculum, promote the environment and strengthen well-being (Foster & Linney, 2007). It is an organized method of teaching that emphasizes direct, multi-sensory experiences. Outdoor education uses an integrated approach to engage students in learning that is not possible in a classroom setting (Bunting, 2006).

Risk is central to outdoor education. Simply defined, risk is the uncertainty of outcome. While the insurance industry sees risk as something to be avoided, outdoor education views risk as a neutral state — risk is the simultaneous potential to lose or gain something of value. Without risk there is no potential for learning and growth.

What are the hazards of outdoor education?

Outdoor education experiences have the potential for numerous positive outcomes. Responsible outdoor educators carefully consider the possible gains and losses associated with an experience and take action to ensure that the benefits will outweigh the harm. Limiting harm requires understanding the two different types of hazards: *Generic hazards* are common to all activities in a similar venue and include aspects such as the weather, plants, animals, and insects, remoteness and group dynamics. *Specific hazards* describe the particulars of the venue along with an activity's inherent risks. These risks are integral to the character of an activity and its environment and cannot be removed without changing the basic nature of that activity. Imagine, for example, whitewater kayaking without the whitewater. Clearly, inherent risks can be desirable and undesirable at the same time.

As the whitewater kayaking example points out, outdoor education engages participants in specialized activities that use distinct equipment and unusual venues. These activities depend on the practitioner's skill, knowledge and experience to manage the inherent risks. Unskilled participants, therefore, require instruction and direct supervision by competent personnel.

How are outdoor activities delivered?

Specialized outdoor activities occur across a continuum of delivery modes. As a result, an outdoor pursuit may look similar but differ significantly in terms of practice and purpose depending on whether it is a self-directed activity, an open to the public experience, or a custom program.

Self-directed activities. As the name implies, there is no formal leadership in self-directed activities. The group often consists of friends and family who participate as equals. There are no waivers and no registration fees. The activity occurs during leisure time and participants develop expertise through apprenticeship. When my father took my sister and I rock climbing, it was a self-directed activity.

Open-to-the-public experiences. When consumers pay a commercial provider to participate in an outdoor activity, they have engaged in an open to the public experience. The activity generally has mass appeal that encompasses a wide age range and limited qualifications to take part. While the activity occurs during leisure time, the exchange of money often brings with it waivers and formal supervision or leadership. The approach to managing risk is buyer beware (Jackson & Pineau, 2009).

Open to the public experiences exist in a number of flavours. Participants may pay to play at a drop-in facility with established operating hours such as a climbing gym. Although group rates may be available, it is essentially the same experience for all. Participants may choose to sign up for an advanced climbing course or workshop. While it takes place at a pre-arranged time and individuals may need to meet certain qualifications to participate, it too is open to the public because anyone can sign up. Similarly, hiring a climbing guide falls into this mode of delivery. Members of the public are able to hire an expert to ensure a positive experience and any client input is at the guide's discretion.

Custom programs. Participants in custom programs engage in direct experiences that may look like self-directed activities or open to the public experiences. Appearances aside, the opportunity has been deliberately designed to achieve a specific outcome — such as character development, curriculum enrichment, or enhanced well-being — and hence the reason why it is occurring outside leisure time. Thus, a custom rock climbing program might create an opportunity for Mr. Smith's grade 10 physical education class to explore body movement. Whether or not money changes hands, risk tolerance and informed consent are used to manage risk (Jackson & Pineau, 2009).

Custom programs may be delivered by regular classroom teachers or specialized teachers in the school. Because they lack the in-house expertise required to deliver custom programs, many schools contract with third-party providers for these services. Along with trained staff, third-party providers often have an available venue, specialized equipment, and the expertise for delivering a specific experience to large numbers of participants. With third-party providers the school signs the contract for services, not individual students. Finally, custom programs may be delivered by a mix of school staff and third-party providers (Wiley, 2007).

Self-directed activities, open to the public experiences, and custom programs are not distinct categories but locations on a continuum of outdoor education delivery modes. The level of personal responsibility is high in self-directed activities but low in custom programs. Conversely, formal risk management is a minor concern in self-directed activities but a major concern in custom programs. As an example, rock climbing provides different experiences, achieves different outcomes, and employs different risk management strategies based on its mode of delivery. The goal is to pick the right mode of delivery for a specific situation.

Ideas for making outdoor education familiar

Outdoor educators can use tours, displays and curriculum materials to familiarize decision makers with outdoor education. The focus should be on the outcomes of the

experience rather than the activity itself. Finally, outdoor educators must describe the hazards and the inherent risks of an experience in relationship to the expected outcomes.

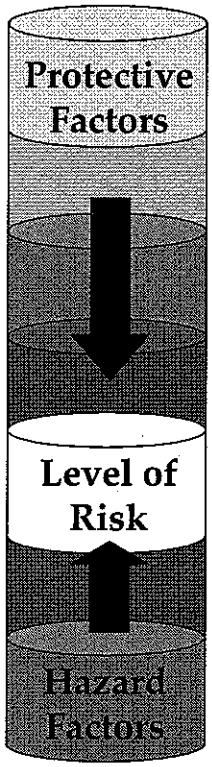
Sharing Responsibility for Risk Management

Outdoor education is not "perfectly safe" — there are hazards. As a result, many decision makers feel that offering outdoor experiences is negligent and exposes them to legal liability. This legalistic perspective is a bit narrow. Negligence is the failure to act as a reasonable person would be expected to act in similar circumstances. Proving negligence requires the presence of four elements: injury or loss, a duty of care, a breach of that duty, and a proximate cause between the breach of the duty of care and the injury or loss. These same principles apply to all types of activities, indoor or outdoor. In short, liability is the result of *conduct*, not the activity itself.

Open-to-the-public experiences frequently use waivers to limit the provider's legal liability. By signing a waiver a participant gives up (waives) his or her right to sue the provider in the event of negligence. This approach is inappropriate for custom outdoor education programs for several reasons. First, minors cannot enter into legal contracts and parents cannot waive a child's right to sue (Leckie, 2008). Second, a waiver works on the premise that the participant understood the risks but willingly chose to participate anyway (Leckie, 2008). There would likely be some question about the enforceability of a waiver for a required class trip or mandatory corporate training program. Finally, the waiver protects the provider, not the participant.

In contrast to the legalistic approach, participant-centred risk management shares the responsibility for a successful experience. The intent is to further program outcomes in ways that also maintain and improve participant well-being. Organizational policies, procedures and guidelines are used to manage activities that involve inherent risks.

Participant-centred risk management pays attention to both hazard factors and protective factors. *Hazard factors* are negative causal agents. Thus, one way to ensure loss potential is kept to an acceptable level is to remove the hazard factors. *Protective factors*, on the other hand, are actions or items that counterbalance the hazard factors. Thus, another way to reduce loss potential is to add more protective factors. The Risk Assessment and Safety Management (RASM) model (Curtis, 2008) indicates that risk management involves both neutralizing hazard factors and increasing protective factors.



The RASM model nicely illustrates a program's level of risk tolerance — the amount of risk stakeholders are willing to accept in pursuit of a desired goal — and includes individuals' willingness and capability (including monetary) to be exposed to potential hazards. The availability of activities in self-directed and open-to-the-public delivery modes influences the risk tolerance in custom outdoor education programs (Cloutier, 2007).

Ideas for sharing responsibility

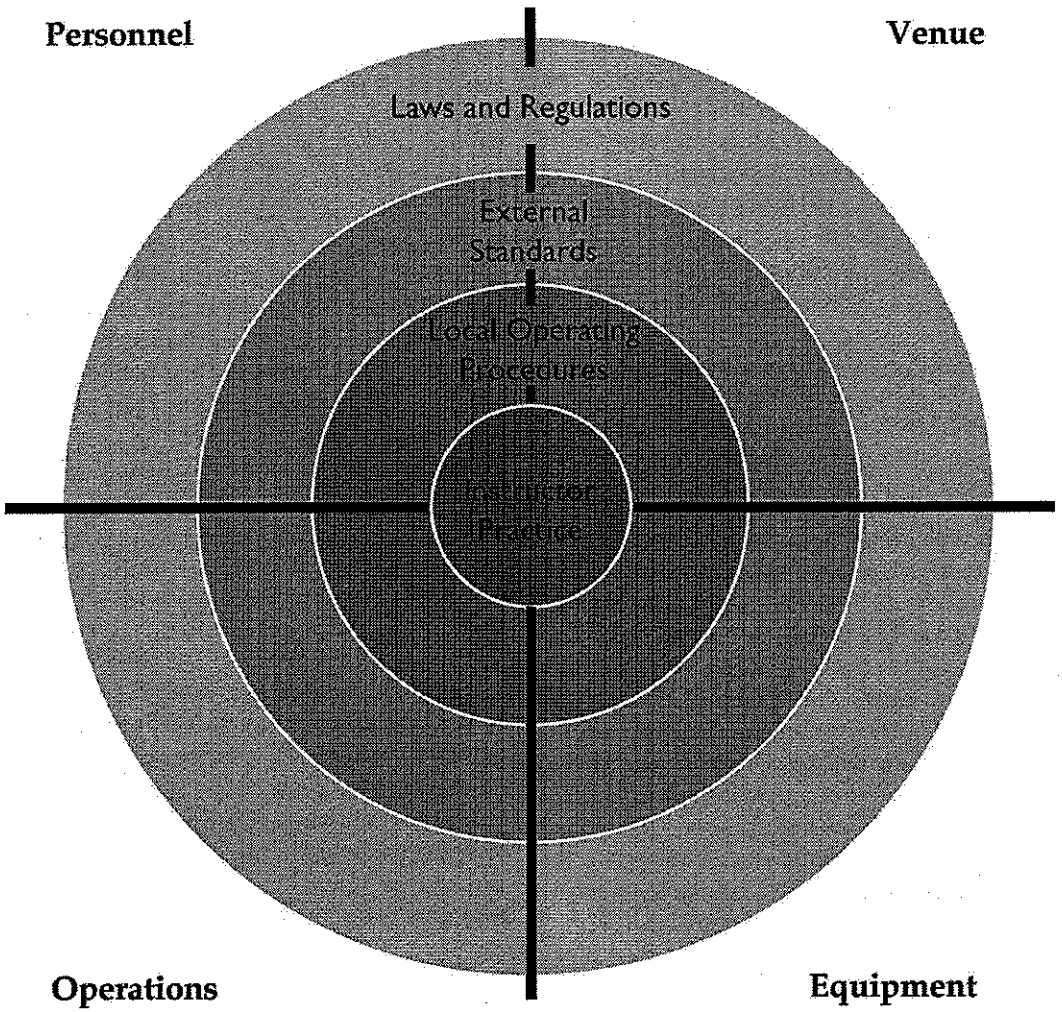
Outdoor educators need to involve all stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, principals, superintendents and members of school council) in determining the level of risk tolerance through meetings, advisory panels or third-party audits such as accreditation visits. When outdoor educators ask permission and notify stakeholders so they can give "informed consent," they send the message that risk management is a shared responsibility.

Developing Credibility

Matching the amount of risk with the level of risk tolerance requires an integrated approach. A custom outdoor education program is an opportunity deliberately designed to provide a particular outdoor learning experience. It encompasses the venue, the equipment, the personnel and the operations associated with a specific program (Lisson & Haras, 2007). A change in one part of the system has an effect in other areas of the system. Developing credibility with decision makers requires the ability to both describe and implement an effective risk management system.

Venue

The location of the outdoor education program influences the level of risk. On-campus activities remain on school property while frontcountry areas are easily accessible by vehicles (even public transportation) and often provide amenities such as flush toilets, pay phones and a visitor centre within a 20–30



minute walk. Emergency services and cell phone reception are readily available at many frontcountry venues.

Backcountry venues are large undeveloped areas lacking human infrastructure. Support services and facilities are limited or absent. There may be no direct road access; travel is often human- or animal-powered. Backcountry areas are characterized by unreliable communication and require a large degree of self-sufficiency. A prolonged emergency response means these locations may meet criteria for wilderness medicine field protocols.

Equipment

Whereas a venue is a natural or built facility used to deliver a custom program, equipment refers to reusable items needed to perform a specific task. A pool, a climbing wall and a walking trail would be considered venues while canoes, paddles, packs and sleeping bags would be considered equipment. Much attention is often paid to the venue — how it was built, when it was inspected, where it is located. Equipment generally receives less attention despite the fact that it may be specialized as with personal protective equipment (PPE) such as life jackets, climbing harnesses and helmets of various types. Regardless of the amount of use it receives, equipment does not have an infinite lifespan and must be integrated into the risk management system.

Personnel

Custom outdoor education programs need to be delivered by personnel who are competent — they possess a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience that enable them to perform a role in a particular context. With regard to custom outdoor education programs, competence consists of four parts: skill in the activity; familiarity with the venue, ability to deliver the program and an understanding of participant needs. The competence required to facilitate a schoolyard-based experience differs from an overnight winter camping trip. A competent canoe trip leader may not be competent to teach a belay lesson.

In addition to delivering the custom program, competent leaders are able to manage themselves, the victim(s), and the group during a crisis. As such, there is a huge difference between a competent leader and a responsible adult. Experience, formal training and activity certifications all play a part. While formal training and certification does not guarantee student safety, it does provide a verification of skills and knowledge at a specific point in time.

Operations

Program operations are the ongoing, re-occurring activities that achieve outcomes. Among the most important aspects of program operations are supervision and crisis response.

Supervision. A supervisor who systematically oversees an area and is immediately accessible is providing *general supervision*. The supervisor's function is to manage behaviour, enforce rules, monitor situations and conditions, ensure security and implement emergency procedures. To a large extent, this describes the schoolyard supervision teachers perform at recess or lunch times. In contrast, a supervisor who is within such close physical proximity to the student that the supervisor could directly intervene if necessary is providing *specific supervision*. The supervisor's functions are to provide adequate instruction and coaching, oversee the use of specialized equipment, direct practices and procedures, and explain and interpret risks. Specific supervision most resembles the actions of a parent whose child is just learning to ride a bicycle without training wheels.

Crisis response. When something goes wrong, crisis response deals with the immediate aftermath of the incident and longer-term resources such as insurance. Individual teachers who have the competence to lead students on outdoor education experiences often lack the support of an adequate crisis response system. Response protocols may be poorly developed and support personnel may be unaware of or unprepared for their role. If a student is injured during a weekend outdoor education

experience, will the teacher be able to contact school leadership? Will members of the school leadership team know how to respond?

Cell phones can mask the adequacy of a crisis response system. A cell phone enables individuals to communicate from the field. It does not, however, replace satisfactory planning, risk assessment and reduction, decision making or crisis response. Furthermore, cell phones may not function due to terrain, atmospheric conditions and other variables. Thus, cell phones should be considered only as an additional layer of risk management.

A risk management framework

Layered upon the program venue, equipment, personnel and operations is a nested set of rules that guides risk management decisions. Effective risk management is a matter of integrating all of these layers of guidelines into all aspects of a custom outdoor education program.

Laws and regulations. A law is a rule enacted by the government that directs or prohibits certain actions. Laws address the big picture while regulations provide details related to compliance with the law. Failure to follow laws and regulations can lead to penalties such as fines, jail time or loss of a licence. Unlike in the United Kingdom, there are no specific laws or regulations that govern outdoor education program providers in Ontario. There are, however, the Education Act and activity-specific regulations — the boating and the recent zip line regulations come to mind.

External standards and guidelines. External professional organizations provide a myriad of suggested practices for outdoor education activities. Whether they are called standards, guidelines, or best practices, these recommendations do not hold the same force as a law or regulation. Because different professional organizations serve different interests, there are multiple standards for the same activity. For example, the Ontario Camps Association (OCA), the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT), and the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) offer different judgments on the provision of ropes course programs.

Local operating procedures. The next layer in the risk management system is the local operating procedures (LOPs) — site specific expectations for performing tasks that reflect local conditions, programming and resources. These guidelines communicate an organization's level of risk tolerance and identify protective factors that reduce loss. One outdoor education centre may allow students to belay while another may reserve this role for staff.

Scope of instructor practice. The final layer is the scope of instructor practice that describes an individual's possible range of duties. The scope of an instructor's practice will depend on an individual's level of skill, knowledge, ability, training, certification, job description and other factors as determined by LOPs, external standards and laws and regulations.

Ideas for developing credibility

Outdoor educators need to tell decision makers about accreditation, the standards and LOPs that they follow, and staff qualifications including any certifications. They need to be prepared to discuss their track record and crisis response plan, and to provide references from other clients.

Communicating Effectively

Effective communication is at the core of overcoming decision makers' fear of outdoor education and requires sensitivity to both values and data. It requires that all parties both speak and truly listen to one another.

A responsive process will smooth communication. Outdoor educators will need to acknowledge and validate

decision makers' views and treat them with courtesy. Outdoor educators need to take all stakeholders' complaints seriously — even those of doubtful validity and those that may be fuelled by a hidden agenda. Outdoor educators will also need to be prepared to adjust to the cultural norms of stakeholders.

Outdoor educators need to ask themselves these questions: Do I help decision makers reach informed decisions or do I try to convince them to accept my proposal? Do I discuss both outrage and hazard? Do I bracket risk by presenting higher and lower risk examples? Do I argue against my position? How do I feel about my audience (and does it show)? Do I expect to learn anything from the discussion?

Finally, outdoor educators need to put themselves in the decision maker's shoes. Imagine an issue (unrelated to outdoor education) about which you are passionate. Imagine the message developed from the other side. What messages and actions would demonstrate respect to you? Does your communication do this?

References

Bunting, C. J. (2006). *Interdisciplinary teaching through outdoor education*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Cloutier, R. (2007). Staying safe, not sorry: Risk management, outdoor education philosophy and organizational behaviour. *Dialogue for Canada's Independent Educators*, Spring, 20–23, 72.

Curtis, R. (2008). *Are we safe? Balancing the 'good stuff' against the 'bad stuff.' The Risk Assessment & Safety Management Model*. Retrieved from http://www.outdoored.com/Community/media/p/2447.aspx

Foster, A. & Linney, G. (2007). *Reconnecting children through outdoor education: A research summary*. Toronto, ON: Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario.

Gardner, D. (2008). *Risk: The science and politics of fear*. Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart.

Jackson, J. & Pineau, I. (2009). The evolution of risk management in outdoor education: Decoupling the adventure industry and outdoor education. *Pathways*, 21(2), 24–26.

Leckie, L. (with Parry, M. & McGee, H.). (2008). Education law 101: Legal liability and the standard of care. *Pathways*, 20(2), 17–24.

Levitt, S. D. & Dubner, S. J. (2005). *Freakonomics*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Lisson, B. & Haras, K. (2007). *Assistant ropes course instructor training manual* (8th ed.). Dundas, ON: Adventureworks! Associates.

Wiley, S. (2007). Forging a new way: Tragedy transforms the landscape of outdoor education. *Dialogue for Canada's Independent Educators*, Spring, 52–58.

Kathy Haras is Vice-President of Adventureworks! Associates, Inc. and the outgoing editor of Pathways. *She uses her Ph.D. in Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences to design, deliver and evaluate adventure-based learning experiences.*

Traditional Inuit Games

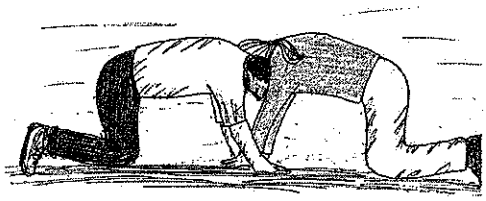
By Scott Caspell

Games have long been, and continue to be, an important part of the Inuit way of life. Integrating Inuit and other aboriginal games into classrooms and outdoor programs can enrich students' learning experience in a variety of ways. These games can provide a tangible bridge that allows exploration of aboriginal cultures, which could in turn contribute to cross-cultural learning. And, of course, games can also be fun and help students develop strength, flexibility, self-confidence and determination, as well as promote physical fitness and fair play.

Musk-Ox Push

Objective: To push your opponent out of the playing circle.
Set Up: A level, open playing area, preferably with a defined boundary (e.g., taped circle on the floor).
Instructions:

a. Two people get on their hands and knees and face each other.
b. They tuck their heads under each other's collarbone so their shoulders are in contact.
c. 1-2-3-GO! Opponents try to push each other out of the playing circle.



One-Foot High Kick

Objective: To jump and kick a suspended object as high as possible, then land on the kicking foot.
Set Up: Hang a soft object (such as a tennis ball or rolled up sock) several feet above a flat, clear area on the ground.
Instructions:

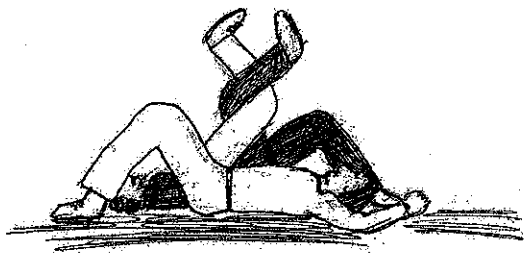
a. The participant runs or walks up to the target, jumps with two feet, kicks the target with one foot and then lands only on the kicking foot.

Note: This game can be used as a non-competitive activity, where participants challenge their personal best. With a little practice, athletic people can kick objects suspended more than six feet high. Similar games are the two-foot high kick and the Alaskan high kick.

Leg Wrestle

Objective: To use your legs to pull your opponent's back off the ground.
Set Up: A flat, open space.
Instructions:

a. Two people lay side-by-side on their backs, facing opposite directions.
b. They lock arms with one another at the elbow.
c. On the count of three, each raises their inside leg to lock with the opponent's leg behind the knee. The outside leg is kept straight.
d. Participants try to use their upright leg to twist or pull their opponent's leg and lift their back off the ground.



Kneeling Jump

Objective: Starting from a kneeling position, the player jumps forward as far as possible.
Set Up: Establish a starting line and a way of marking how far each participant has jumped.
Instructions:

a. Participant kneels behind the starting line.
b. Participant swing arms back.
c. Participant swings arms forward to launch body forward as far as possible, landing on both feet.
d. The closest part of the foot to the starting line marks the distance jumped

These four activities are only a small selection of traditional Inuit games. An online search will yield many more examples.

Scott Caspell is currently teaching high school Northern Studies, Social Studies, and Physical Education in Gjoa Haven, Nunavut.

Dog-Eared and Trail-Worn Favourites from My Bookshelves

By Linda Leckie

> *Give me food to keep me strong, wood to keep me warm, good friends to talk to me, fine books to read, and I have all I need.*
>
> John Rowlands,
> Cache Lake Country

There are countless "fine books" for outdoor educators to read and most of the new hot-off-the-press ones are reviewed for Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) members in *Pathways*. However, there also exists a great number of definitive works from the field of outdoor education that, despite having been written years ago, are as relevant and important now, and perhaps even more so, as when they were first published. The idea of revisiting timeless writings is not a new one and in the past year I have noticed several book reviewers that have brought to light some of the classics of outdoor literature.

In the 2008 Fall/Winter issue of *Taproot*, a publication of Coalition for Education in the Outdoors, Charles Yaple reviewed John Rowland's *Cache Lake Country: A Life in the North Woods*. First published in 1947 by W.W. Norton and Company, Rowland's chronicle of life in the north woods was reprinted in 1998 by Countryman Press and a year later it won a National Outdoor Book Award in the classic category. *Cache Lake Country* is a storehouse of valuable information on woodcraft and nature. However, as Yaple states, *Cache Lake Country* is "more than a guide to meeting one's physical needs in the backcountry. It is also one man's testimony to the mental and spiritual tonics to be found in natural landscapes" (2008, p. 27).

In the Spring 2009 issue of *Che-Mun: The Journal of Canadian Wilderness Canoeing*, Michael Peake revisits a true classic of outdoor travel literature — *The Dangerous River* by R.M. Patterson. Often referred to as the foundation book of all things Nahanni, a recent edition by TouchWood Editions contains a new chapter to provide novel angles and more insight into this vintage tale. Further, as Peake writes, "if that is not enough to go out and purchase a copy there is also a hand drawn map of the area by R.M. himself" (2009, p. 8). According to Peake, *The Dangerous River* is "always a great book to read, one you can return to again and again over the years" (p. 8). He is quite right.

In the book review section of the Saturday *Globe and Mail* there is a column titled "Buried Treasures" where readers can learn about books that have long been off the bestseller list. In this same spirit of rediscovering buried treasure, as Peake and Yaple have recently done, I provide here a review of some classic outdoor education writing. To do this I turned to my own bookshelves to find the dog-eared and trail-worn volumes that would share knowledge in the four cornerstones of COEO: Education for Character, Education for Curriculum, Education for Environment and Education for Well-being. Like a Neil Young song, these books are timeless, immortal and ageless.

Part One: Education for Character

Cowstails and Cobras: A Guide to Ropes Courses, Initiative Games, and Other Adventure Activities was one of the first books I bought as a newly certified teacher in 1985. I first encountered it while working at an outdoor education centre, where I had also been introduced to the Project Adventure curriculum. Almost 25 years later I still find myself looking for the green and white binding when planning physical education classes. When you have been teaching as long as I have, you find out that everything old is NEW again!

Cowstails and Cobras was written by Karl Rohnke and first published in 1977 by Project Adventure. While outdoor educators know what Project Adventure is and what they do, some may not know that it was started to bring aspects of Outward Bound into grade 10 physical and health education classes. The author's intent was for readers to use the book in any of the following three ways: as a curriculum document, as a construction manual and as a starting point to innovation. As a manual and guideline for ropes course construction the book would not meet current standards and should not be used as such. Its approach to physical activity (so that students enjoy physical education as much as a child engaged in active play) is a widely accepted curriculum aim. Similarly, the program goals (build confidence, create mutual support in groups, develop agility and coordination, increase joy in the physical self and being in others, and enable students to become more familiar with the natural world) are extremely relevant for students of today.

With this focus, outdoor educators will be most interested in Chapters One, Three, Four and Five. Chapter One, "Getting Started," explains fun, innovative and creative ways to begin a physical education class that move far beyond the traditional warm-up exercises. Chapter Three focuses on both outdoor group initiatives and indoor group discussions. Here you will find fantastic guidelines for presenting initiative problems. Chapter Four highlights games and non-games with minimal equipment and rules yet maximum fun. When I realized last year that none of my Grade 9 students had ever played Add-on Tag, but quickly came to love it, these games became a staple in my repertoire. Lastly, Chapter Five, "Winter Skills and Activities," provides the impetus to get outside and enjoy winter with vigorous movement and an abundance of fun.

There are a number of other books by Karl Rohnke (*Silver Bullets, Quicksilver, The Bottomless Bag*) but this was the one that really started it all. *Cowstails and Cobras* truly deserves a spot on every outdoor educator's bookshelf as a classic in the field of adventure education. Stay tuned in the next issue of *Pathways* for a review of a book classic in the Education for Curriculum category — that of COEO member Bert Horwood, *Experience and the Curriculum.*

References

Yaple, C. (2008). Review: Cache Lake Country. *Taproot*, 18(2), 127–128.

Rowlands, J. (1997). *Cache Lake Country: A life in the north woods.* Woodstock, VT: Countryman Press.

Peake, M. (2009). Review: A dangerous river. *Che-Mun: The Journal of Canadian Wilderness Canoeing*, 136(8).

Patterson, R. M. (2009). *A dangerous river: Adventure on the Nahanni.* Victoria, BC: TouchWood Editions.

Rohnke, K. (1977). *Cowstails and cobras: A guide to ropes courses, initiative games, and other adventure activities.* Hamilton, MA: Project Adventure.

Linda Leckie is the Director of Outdoor Education at The Bishop Strachan School in Toronto.

For more information about the Coalition for the Outdoors visit www.outdooredcoalition.org

To subscribe to Che-Mun: The Journal of Canadian Wilderness Canoeing, *e-mail che-mun@rogers.com*

Information about Project Adventure is available at www.pa.org

Karl Rohnke's books can be ordered from www.adventureworks.org

Submission Guidelines

Information for Authors and Artists

Purpose

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

Submitting Material

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

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

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

Formatting

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

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

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

Pathways contains approximately 500 words per page. Article length should reflect full page multiples to avoid partially blank pages.

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

Each piece of artwork should consist of a single black and white drawing (cross-hatching but no shading) on 8½ by 11 paper.

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

Submission Deadlines

Volume 1	Fall	September 15
Volume 2	Winter	December 15
Volume 3	Spring	February 15
Volume 4	Summer	April 15

Complimentary Copies

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

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario

Membership Application/Renewal Form

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

Please print and fully complete each line below.

Name (Mr./Mrs./Ms/Miss) _____

Street Address _____

City/Town _____ **Province/State** _____ **Postal/Zip Code** _____

Telephone Home ( ) _____ **Business (**) _____

E-mail _____

Type of Membership *(Check one box)*

- ☐ Regular $50.00
- ☐ Student/Retiree $35.00
- ☐ Family $60.00
- ☐ Library $60.00 (Subscription to *Pathways* only)
- ☐ Organization $125.00

United States orders please add $4.00
International orders please add $12.00

Journal Format *(Check one box)*

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

- ☐ **PDF version** through password access to the COEO website
- ☐ **Printed copy** through postal mail
- ☐ **Both a digital and a printed version** (an additional fee of $5.00 applies).

COEO Membership is from September 1 to August 31 of the following year.

Every ***Ontario member*** of COEO will be assigned to a region of the province according to the county where (s)he lives.

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

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

Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario

3 Concorde Gate, Toronto, ON M3C 3N7