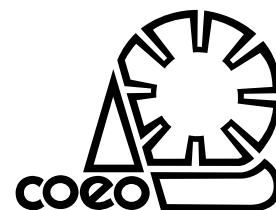


Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF
Fall 2010, 23(1)

OUTDOOR EDUCATION



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*.

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Pathways

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

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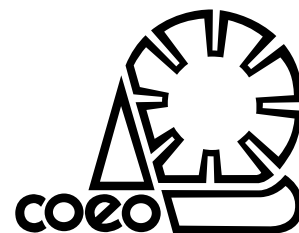
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THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION
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Features

Education for Curriculum	4
<i>Outdoor Journeys</i> Simon Beames	
Education for Character	6
<i>Learning and Healing in Everyday Places</i> Jeanette Eby	
Education for Environment	10
<i>The Generative Paradigm and Related Concepts</i> Alec Lemaire	
Education for Well-Being	18
<i>The Spirit of Algonquin</i> Linda Leckie	

Columns

Editor's Log	2
Bob Henderson	
President's View	3
Kyle Clarke	
Backpocket	22
<i>What Does "Connecting to a Place" Really Mean?</i> Cliff Knapp	
Backpocket	23
<i>Sensational Activities — Ideas for Engaging the Senses</i> Charlotte Jacklein	
Trail Blazers	24
<i>Ode to HB</i> Shane Kramer	
In the Field	26
<i>A Mathematician Carves a Paddle</i> Eamon Kavanagh	
Reading the Trail	30
<i>Dog-Eared and Trail-Worn Favourites from My Book Shelves</i> Linda Leckie	
Prospect Point	32
<i>Hunting as Environmental Education</i> Adam Macht	
Prospect Point	34
<i>Dandelions or Database: Putting Nature Words Back into the Children's Dictionary</i> Bob Henderson and Nicole Parisien	
Tracking	35
Submission Guidelines	36
<i>Information for Authors and Artists</i>	

It is a pleasure to edit an open submissions issue of *Pathways* again. It has been a few years for me personally. I have greatly enjoyed reading the issues so thoughtfully put together by Kathy Haras over the last few years.

Pathways' new formula (until we secure a new Chair to the Editorial Board) will be to seek guest editors for both theme issues and open submission issues. I trust there will be two of each per year. So keep the submissions coming, and if you would like to take on a theme issue let us know. Inquiries and submissions can come to me, Bob Henderson (bhender@mcmaster.ca), as the interim/short-term coordinator and long-term *Pathways* archivist. The following is the upcoming schedule as it stands:

- Winter Issue: Conference theme, Conference Committee
- Spring Issue: Place, Space and Learning theme, Ryan Howard, Brock University

- Summer Issue: Open theme
- Fall Issue: Integrated Curriculum Program theme, Bob Henderson

The *Pathways* Chair of the Editorial Board has a coordinating responsibility and can build a support team to divide up the work and the sharing of ideas. It is a fun job with the potential for lots of support.

This issue is weighted towards "place-based" community education, a theme that has organically emerged from the submissions received. It perhaps is no surprise that recent submissions have been focused on this theme. In the last few years there has been a clear directional movement towards local outdoor teachings within education and teacher training. Local attentions in our field are broadening our scope. Jeanette Eby, Cliff Knapp and Simon Beames are among the folks who attend to such local attention in this current issue of *Pathways*.

Bob Henderson

The following Letter to the Editor was received in June following the publication of the Spring 2010, 22(3) issue of *Pathways*, which was a tribute to Mike Elrick.

Letter to the Editor

I almost went into tears while reading the last issue of Pathways. Even though I don't know Mike [Elrick], through the articles I got a feeling I knew him for ages and could share so much from all of you. I feel sorry for his early leaving.

It is a great issue, and even with such a personal message I was happy to read it. So congratulations to all contributors and editors for their job, very decent and with honour.

*Lucie Frišová
A Pathways reader from the Czech Republic*

Thanks to Lucie of the International Youth Nature Friends (IYNF) organization for this submission.

It is with much excitement that I look forward to the year ahead. Great things are happening within our organization and they are due in large part to the extended efforts of many enthusiastic and active COEO members. In the months to come, we will see the launch of a new COEO website — a hub for all things outdoor education! Thanks to the efforts of Grant Linney and Kate Humphrys, our place in the Internet will have an updated look, be a cinch to navigate and will contain loads of valuable information. In addition, COEO's archives (our many journals and reports of years past) are in the midst of being converted to a digital format. This will allow outdoor education/experiential education professionals, students and researchers from around the world access to a new storehouse of knowledge, which up until this point was not accessible electronically over the Web. In addition, big plans are already underway for next fall's conference — an adventure you will not want to miss!

Although I am excited for the future, I am also extremely proud of the accomplishments of this past year and the efforts put forth by so many. The *Pathways* editorial team, guest editors and managing editor have done an excellent job again this year producing quality issues and contributing to the journal's terrific reputation. The 2010 conference committee also did an amazing job organizing a thoughtful and transformative weekend and I would like to thank them and the staff of the Kinark Outdoor Centre on behalf of

our membership for a job well done. This past year also saw the implementation of additional qualification (AQ) courses for classroom teachers in outdoor and experiential education. COEO members had a hand in developing the curriculum for this new basic AQ and also took the lead in organizing and instructing several of the courses.

Finally, I would like to thank all board members from the past year who have taken time out of their busy schedules to help support and grow our organization. These folks need to be commended, as they are the ones who put your ideas into action and have contributed a great deal of their own time in the process of doing so. While I am on the topic of personal contributions, it is with much appreciation that I also say thank you and bid a big Board of Directors farewell to Shane Kramer and Ron Williamson. Both of these individuals have given a great deal of themselves to the COEO board over the past six years. This has been very much appreciated and will certainly be missed. Although this will be a strange time for both Shane and Ron, we hope that they can support each other as they transition back to lives free of COEO Board of Directors type responsibilities. In closing, I would also like to extend a very special thank you to our new Past President, Zabe MacEachren, for her dedication and energy over the past two years in the role of COEO President.

Kyle Clarke
COEO President

Sketch Pad – The art for this issue of *Pathways* was generously contributed by Andrea Lossing (cover and pages 7, 12, 22, 24-25, 27, 28-29, 33) and Chris Anderson (page 31).

Outdoor Journeys

By Simon Beames

What is the name of that white tree and why is its bark peeling?

What was on this land before the school was built?

These are two examples of questions asked by Scottish students on educational journeys in their school grounds and local neighbourhoods. The students were taking part in a program called Outdoor Journeys, which is an approach for learning outside the classroom that involves teachers and students venturing outdoors as a means of “bringing curricula alive.”

Outdoor Journeys enables students to learn about the people with whom and places in which they live. By planning and undertaking local journeys, students are able to learn across the curriculum in a manner that is personally relevant, experiential, holistic and contextualised. The main focus of the approach involves students generating and answering questions about the socio-cultural and ecological “story” of the land.

The Outdoor Journeys approach is informed by three areas: Empirical research, critical outdoor learning literature and Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence*. First, we aimed to surmount the barriers to learning outside the classroom, as reported by Scottish teachers. These include the high cost of transportation, overwhelming bureaucracy and paperwork, the need for specialist training and equipment, and the disruption to the timetable (Ross, Higgins, & Nicol, 2007). Second, our program design had to address critiques of current outdoor education practice. This meant moving away from programs characterised by highly prescribed, fragmented sessions that offer participants few opportunities to exercise power and responsibility, and which ignore the importance of “place” (Beames, 2006). Finally,

we drew support from *Curriculum for Excellence* (2004), which encourages cross-curricular programs that are hallmarked by challenges and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance.

Furthermore, the recently launched Scottish framework for outdoor learning boldly states that, “The journey through education for any child in Scotland must include opportunities for a series of planned quality outdoor learning experiences” (LTS, 2010, p. 5). So, certainly in Scotland, schools have government support to learn outside the classroom. The attention is now turning to the question of how outdoor learning can be integrated into mainstream teaching. What follows is a description of one approach.

Outdoor Journeys is structured into three phases: First, *Questioning* involves focusing on students exploring their school grounds and neighbourhoods and asking questions about their stories. Second, through *Researching*, pairs or groups of students examine a topic of common interest (e.g., trees, architecture, maps, stone walls) through books, the Internet or by interviewing people. Finally, *Sharing* involves students creatively sharing what they have learned with their classmates and other members of the community through writing, drama, video, photography, art and music. These three phases can exist in a perpetual spiral, in that the learning can continue and develop through subsequent journeys. Indeed, we have found that researching the answers for questions inevitably elicits further questions.

Throughout the journeys, students generate and answer questions about

- *The human story of the land.* Who lived and/or worked here 50 years ago? 200

years ago? 2,000 years ago? How have they shaped the land? What is their story? Who is “using” the land and for what purposes?

- *The ecological story of the land.* What plants, flowers, trees and moss are present? Why? What evidence of bugs and birds can be found? Why have these living things chosen to live here, as opposed to somewhere else?

Although journeys within the school grounds are relatively straightforward (and can continue for weeks), things do become a little more complicated once the journeys venture beyond the gates. For this, two important tools are employed to assist students’ preparations for their outings: the Journey Plan and the Hazard Assessment. The Journey Plan includes vital information about the route and the participants, and includes a checklist of items to consider bringing. Journey Plans are completed as a class and a copy is always left with the school office. The Hazard Assessment entails identifying hazards and deciding as a group how these hazards will be managed. Both are downloadable from the Outdoor Journeys website.

Over the last two years, we have found that a number things work well in practice:

- Doing Outdoor Journeys over several weeks or a term
- Having individual roles during journeys (e.g., lookers, listeners, photographers) and during researching (e.g., Internet searchers, scribes, explainers)
- Letting theme groups emerge (e.g., flowers, trees, mini-beasts, railways)
- Having an evolving, “living” Outdoor Journeys wall in the classroom (e.g., posting questions and knowledge gained from sharing sessions)
- Being as creative as possible with the sharing phase (e.g., podcasts, poetry, drama, art)
- Drawing on community partnerships and parental involvement
- Being comfortable with releasing some power!

Meaningful learning outside the classroom does not require students to be bussed to far-away locations in order to take part in adrenaline-filled activities run by specially trained instructors. On the contrary, cross-curricular, place-based educational initiatives that involve students taking responsibility for planning and undertaking journeys from their school grounds can be a crucial way of learning about socio-cultural and ecological elements of the local landscape. Ultimately, this is not about “indoors” or “outdoors” — this is about good teaching!

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Simon Beames teaches outdoor education at the School of Education, University of Edinburgh. He has been a regular contributor to Pathways over the years. He can be reached at simon.beames@ed.ac.uk. More information on the topics discussed here can be found at www.outdoorjourneys.org.uk and www.education.ed.ac.uk/outdoored.

Learning and Healing in Everyday Places

By Jeanette Eby

Over the past couple of years I have learned a great deal about place-making and outdoor education. I have come to appreciate the world and education in new ways. For me, learning that is placed in a local context and in a community is the most influential and transformative kind of learning. Most of my deepest learning and growing has occurred outside of the school and university, in communities I have become a part of. Being part of something that is larger than myself, where I know I have gifts to contribute and where I can recognize and receive the gifts of others, is what I need to live well each day, wherever I am, and whatever I happen to be doing.

Last year in my “Geography of Public and Community Health” course, I learned about the concept of therapeutic landscapes. Therapeutic landscapes are places that promote healing. They can be places of natural beauty, places of religious or historical significance, places of leisure and rest. Ordinary, everyday landscapes, such as the places we live, work and play, can also have healing qualities. The same place can be therapeutic for one person and harmful for another, and can have qualities that both contribute to and take away from our well-being. I would say that living in Hamilton contributes to my health (in its broadest definition) because it is a place that I love, that I care about, and that I feel connected to. My own sense of place in Hamilton has a lot to do with my attachment to the people and the landscape (built and natural) of my downtown neighbourhood, a neighbourhood filled with diversity and creativity, a neighbourhood rich in history that has seen more than its fair share of struggles. I love the energy and passion that flows between people from different walks of life; I love the beautiful old buildings, the parks full of kids, and the gritty, graffiti-covered alleyways. I can count on running into many people I know throughout the day. It only takes me ten minutes on my bike to get down to the waterfront and ride the trail, and less than a half-hour to a waterfall.

I am grateful that I can integrate my love for Hamilton and my connection to different places into my work. I work as a relief community mental health worker in two homes in the lower-city of Hamilton, part of the mental health services of a local community agency. These homes provide housing and supports for individuals who have been formerly homeless and who are living with a serious mental illness. The tenants I work with live independently, with their own apartment rooms and their own schedules, but they are surrounded by a community support system including staff in their building 24/7. Community mental health workers play a variety of roles: we help tenants complete various tasks, support them through crises, engage them in different activities, encourage them in pursuing their goals, and simply hang out with them and affirm their personal value.

What does place-based education mean for people living on the margins of society? For people living with a serious mental illness, their mental health impacts their lives each and every day, and often inhibits them from participating and socializing in the community in the way that most of us are able to. My rosy picture of Hamilton has been challenged by some of the tenants I work with and others who I have met in the community. Not everyone loves this little big city. A lot of the tenants I work with would get out of here in a heartbeat, because the city is filled with bad memories from their past and from being unwell, which they associate with specific places. A lot of people in the inner-city are suffering from mental health issues, addictions and homelessness. People who are dealing with their own problems do not necessarily want to be involved in the negative feedback from other struggling individuals, which tenants openly share with me. I have chosen to live in downtown Hamilton, but if I were to change my mind, I could easily move to the more pristine west side of the city. Many people have no choice but to live in a cheap



downtown apartment, where social services and transportation are accessible.

One home, which I will call H1, is located right in the middle of the downtown core between two busy, multiple-laned one-way streets. It is a big, beautiful old house where ten men live. The house is close to a discount store, an Italian bakery, a food bank and clothing warehouse and other social services,

small businesses, bus routes and parking lots. There is a big park just a couple of blocks away, one of the few green spaces in the area.

The other home, which I will call H2, is a four-storey apartment building located west of downtown, right on one of the busiest one-way streets that heads east. The constant passing of cars and buses can make it hard

to be motivated to go for a walk, but the tenants get used to it. They are right on a bus route and there are several parks close by. The home is around the corner from one of the more walkable, interesting streets filled by cafes, specialty shops and a small library. In the back of the apartment there is a quiet oasis with picnic tables, some plants and lots of shade from trees. Tenants are always out back smoking, relaxing and visiting with each other.

One of my favourite things to do at work is to go on outings. We have a van that staff drive to run errands and take tenants to appointments and various venues. I've been all over the city in that van, and there are certain outing destinations that are the usual favourites both for me and the tenants. Sometimes we go down to Bayfront Park, watch the sunset and then have coffee by the water. Or, we drive down to Princess Point just to sit on the dock and enjoy the sun, the trees and the water. Sometimes outings are as simple as walking to the Dundurn plaza to get a coffee, or playing Frisbee in the park. Pretty much every outing involves a Tim Horton's coffee on the way home. Place-based experiences are important in nurturing a sense of connection to the community and to each other, and if that means connecting over a Tim's coffee (which is a Hamilton trademark), then that's what we do.

We have a great time out and about, enjoying different places, both scenic and social, out in the community. It can be harder, however, to engage the tenants right where they live, in their own buildings. In the spring, my manager asked me if I would be able to coordinate some gardening for both of the homes. I agreed to take up the task immediately, even though I had never planted a garden in my life. I planted flowers and weeded here and there in my parent's garden growing up, and I've helped out at some gardening events in Hamilton, but that's about it. I am fortunate to know some great gardeners in Hamilton, and I contacted one of those for advice. This friend created a full front and backyard urban garden in the

inner city, and she came to visit both sites and gave me some pointers.

Jason is a tenant of H1 who looks like a tough biker with his bandanas, rock band t-shirts and leather jacket. He has lived in institutions most of his life and isn't used to having the freedom he has now, but he is embracing it and getting involved in whatever opportunity presents itself. He is one of the most peaceful, friendly, easygoing people I know. Jason helped out quite a bit planting seeds, leaving from time to time to take small smoke breaks. When our lettuce, peas, beans and herbs began sprouting, he was the first to point this out to me, and with much enthusiasm.

Don is another tenant at H1 who has been my main gardening partner. Don was hospitalized last year because his illness got the best of him, and he couldn't cope in his current environment. A few months ago, Don came home and has been recovering, and still struggling, since then. Don's voices are a major force that he is constantly fighting against, voices that inhibit him from going outside, spending time with people and doing the things he enjoys doing. Don is a pleasure to be around, with his gentle personality and shy but full smile. Despite his refusal to participate in many activities because of his voices, Don decided to resist them (with some encouragement) and participate in planting the garden. He helped dig up and mix the ground with good soil, held the tiny seeds in his hands and assisted in planting them, and continuously waters them. When I asked how he felt after gardening he said, "Great!" and gave me an enormous smile.

Then there is Adam, who lives over at H2. He loves going on outings and is usually pretty game for any kind of adventure. He came with me to purchase the initial seeds and flowers for both gardens. He was such a trooper and helped me plant in the pouring rain. He was especially excited by the radishes beginning to grow.

Janice and Sarah are two wonderful women and tenants of H2 who accompanied me to buy more flowers after the first planting. Janice is a strong, sarcastic, matter-of-fact woman who is quite fond of plants, especially tomatoes. She has proudly told me about her work in community gardens and growing tomatoes in the backyard, and made sure that I was planting everything properly. Sarah often neglects participating in activities and going out in the community, but to my pleasant surprise she went out with Janice and I to purchase plants at a Portuguese convenient store on James Street North. Sarah helped me pick out flowers for the backyard garden and was very informative when it came to knowing the names of different plants and making decisions for the building.

David is another tenant at H2 who is always telling stories and jokes. He grew up in many group homes, experienced a lot of violence, and has lived in prison. He spent a good part of his childhood on a farm and he unexpectedly stepped in to help garden one night when I was freaked out by all of the earwigs crawling around in the compost. He gently flicked away the bugs and showed Adam how to place the tomato seedlings in the soil.

Adam, Janice, Sarah and David are a most unlikely combo of gardeners who have made this process completely worthwhile, regardless of the outcome.

People living with serious mental health issues are probably some of the most feared, ignored, marginalized people in our society. They are also some of the most insightful, intelligent, caring, humorous people I have ever met, and they continue to teach me so much. Outdoor education can and should be accessible to all people in all places, and it need not be an exotic adventure. It can happen in our own backyard and nurture our connection to home. Through gardening with the tenants, we were encouraging life and

growth in the earth but also within and with each other. Something about digging into the soil, planting flowers and tiny seeds, was able to pull Don from H1 away from his voices, and he could fully appreciate the outdoors, the here and now.

My work with these tenants is one of the most rewarding and challenging jobs I have ever held. The tenants are hilarious, resilient, intelligent, caring individuals who continue to impact me in different ways. They have changed the way I see my community and the way I choose to relate to people. They have pushed me to be more aware and critical of my own judgments, wants, and the things I take for granted. They have even converted me (somewhat) from turning my nose at Tim Horton's to appreciating it for its comfort and familiarity.

In working with the tenants, I have experienced everyday places in new ways, and I believe that they have, too. These positive, practical home-based experiences have the potential to contribute to healing (mentally, physically and emotionally) and to strengthen relationships. Place-based education can happen right where we live and work. It involves mutual learning, discovery and inspiration. Neighbourliness, love and being at home are part of developing a sense of place and living well. "Place" can bring people together from all different backgrounds who may not usually be in dialogue. Whether we are gardening, going to Williams at the bayfront, sitting out back and watching the sky, or having a Tim's coffee, we are able to connect with each other and with the world that has so much pegged against us. In these moments, I believe we move a little bit closer to justice.

Jeanette Eby has travelled widely doing community-based work in the Hamilton, Ontario community and in South America. She is in graduate school at McMaster University working in the area of community health.

The Generative Paradigm and Related Concepts

By Alec Lemaire

The volume of education . . . continues to increase, yet so do pollution, exhaustion of resources, and the dangers of ecological catastrophe. If still more education is to save us, it would have to be education of a different kind: an education that takes us into the depth of things.

E. F. Schumacher

Through the development of an undergraduate course promoting citizenship and sustainable living, several pedagogical approaches and environmental concepts were researched that will prove valuable to the outdoor educator. This article begins with a summary of the generative paradigm, a highly anticipated and strongly articulated approach to outdoor education, and follows with an introduction to several environmental concepts. Undoubtedly, many of these ideas will be familiar to the reader; others, however, may well be new and may offer fresh insights into and added motivation to the reader's outdoor education journey.

The Generative Paradigm

The generative paradigm has recently emerged as a solution to problems recognized in mainstream outdoor education programs. Critics describe these programs as predetermined, commodified, militaristic, embodying a positivist scientific rational, disconnected from "place," and hierarchical in practice. These off-the-shelf experiences have become known as "Adventure in a Bun" programs — relating them to McDonalds' meals — and are characterised as carefully choreographed through funnelling, framing and frontloading to steer the group towards predetermined, predicable and measureable outcomes (Priest & Grass, 1997; Loynes, 1998; Beames, 2006; Norris, 2009). Hovelynck (2001) questions the experiential value of these courses stating, "if the lessons to be learned from an experience can be listed before the experience has taken place, and thus independently of the

learner's experience, it seems misleading to call the learning "experiential."

Contrastingly, the generative paradigm is described as valuing intuition instead of rationale exclusively, honouring creative outcomes over predictability, using spiritual metaphors rather than those taken from positivist science and business, favouring egalitarian over hierarchical approaches and focusing on the experience of the journey without preset goals. Generative learning is rooted in community; it replaces ego-centricism with eco-centricism and is politically engaging (Loynes, 2002). The facilitator-centered approach, where the facilitator is regarded as all knowing, is replaced by a participant-centered approach, where "meaning and value emerge through the experience rather than being represented or defined by the program structure or facilitator" (Beames, 2006). It allows individuals the opportunity to discover and address issues within themselves as opposed to meeting goals set by the programmer.

However, it has not been until recently that the generative paradigm has had a thorough, descriptive and unifying framework. Julian Norris' (2009) Ph.D. dissertation provides just this, and what follows here is a summary.

Norris describes this pedagogical approach as one that is participatory, transformational and deeply experiential; it requires that people be fully engaged in learning about themselves and the world, and in learning how to be in the world in a different way. Furthermore, it is based on a relational context in which the learners themselves are actively setting and naming the educational goals.

The model of the generative paradigm supports two distinct arcs within the student (Figure 1). The inward arc describes a progressively deeper journey of discovering the authentic self, which

leads to personal transformation and a new way of being in the world. The outward arc represents a greater capacity to engage ethically, sustainably and creatively in transforming the world.

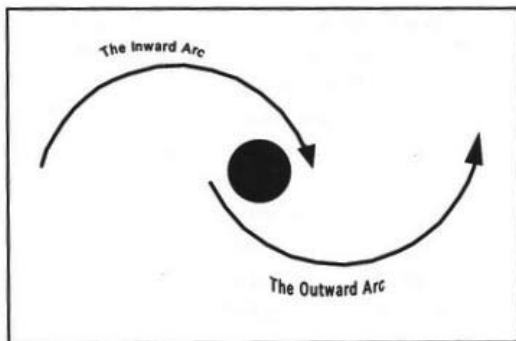


Figure 1. A model of generative practice

To develop the inward arc and facilitate transformation and a deep connection with oneself and nature, Norris suggests practices such as wilderness solos and journeys as well as ritual, therapeutic and cultural practices. Other approaches with more explicit transformational or spiritual goals include meditation, vision questing, nature-based soul work and sensory-based education.

Norris offers detailed explanations of how practitioners can support the inward arc:

- *Process-oriented facilitation skills*
This avoids the practitioner imposing their own agenda in a pre-determined manner. Norris describes this as a facilitator whose goal is not in facilitating change but rather in encouraging people to have the deepest possible conversations with themselves and the world.
- *Choreographing a deeper engagement or communion with nature*
To receive the teachings of nature, one must be in a certain state of mind and heart and it is the practitioner's work to support people into such a state. Some ways that this can be achieved are journeys into wild landscapes and

significant places, reduction of physical barriers between people and nature, instruction in natural living skills, cultivation of deeper awareness (e.g., sit spots, wandering, journaling, meditation, sensory opening) and connection with emotions.

- *Solo wilderness experiences*
- *Generative dialogue*
Mirroring, revering and deep listening.
- *Ritual*
- *Oral culture and the arts*
- *Working with non-ordinary states of consciousness*
These include such processes as meditation and Qi Gong, and moments of insight and awakening to support transformative experiences.

Supporting the outward arc is often more difficult because students re-enter old structures of society and lack community. Norris stresses the importance for the practitioner of developing means to overcome these challenges and thus effectively impact the everyday world. He suggests eight ways of doing so:

1. Using a congruent transformation meta-narrative with a clear message around social change

This consists of two elements — a clear and unambiguous message around social change and a congruent delivery — to create a climate in which the kind of engagement represented by the outward arc is not only supported but is encouraged, facilitated, networked, role-modeled and even expected.

2. Extending (from leader to mentor) the relationship with participants

This extends past the traditional role of outdoor educator as a temporary leader and takes the form of the leader becoming more of a mentor. This can be further developed through establishing a post-program community or support network, cultivating alliances with like-minded partners who can provide ongoing support to the participants

and working with established groups and existing communities.

3. Working in the community

This involves resituating the teaching from the classic activity centre to the community, being actively engaged in participatory community-planning processes and developing extended relationships.

4. Working upstream: Engaging systems thinking

This involves the practitioner's focus changing from supporting solely individual change to supporting systems change. This is a clear intention to find ways to strategically engage broader systems at a deeper level — whether that be the family and school of a youth at risk, the political systems that shape the delivery of youth services, the communities and regions where young people live, or the cultural systems that shape their development.

5. Focusing on target audience

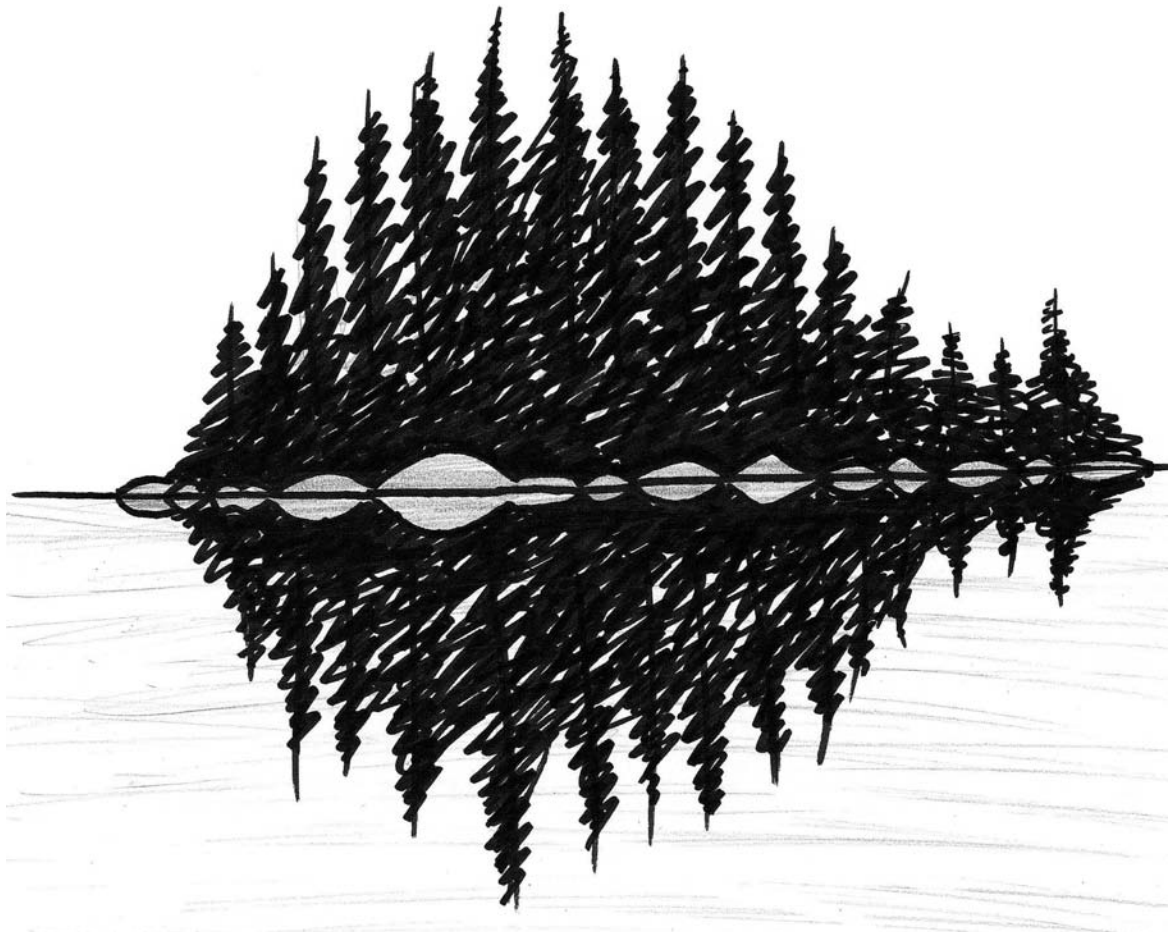
Practitioners should be intentional about working with people who are not only motivated to work on themselves but who also have the capacity to become agents of change.

6. Running extended programs

Program length is an indicator of success and many practitioners have chosen to affiliate themselves with organizations that work over extended periods with people, where they can create long-term training and mentorship programs.

7. Adopting systematic approaches to integration

This involves developing strategies that assist with understanding, transferring and incorporating outdoor experiences into everyday life after a program. This can include sharing the story of the experience with the whole group, feedback from program guides, an interview and



counselling session with program leaders, creation of art pieces, dreamwork sessions, deep imagery sessions and meditative hikes.

8. Teaching ongoing practices for development

Teaching participants practices that they can do by themselves, with regularity, is seen as a critical element in anchoring experiences and integrating them into a new stage of development. This can include a wide range of mind/body, contemplative and ritual practices such as meditation, mindfulness training, journaling, tai chi, Qi Gong, martial arts and yoga. (p. 292)

Norris concludes his thesis stating that by sustaining generative learning contexts where people can connect and embody their own creativity and natural resilience, which are valid in any learning situation and at any scale, they are best prepared to embrace the problems currently facing society.

This overview of the generative paradigm provides the proper mindset and appropriate pedagogical platform to explore and introduce the following environmental concepts, including biophilia, eco-psychology, eco-therapy, deep ecology, friluftsliv, bio-regionalism, sense of place, nature deficit disorder, ecological feminism, and indigenous knowledge and culture. These ideas will assist students in understanding their place within nature while guiding them towards an environmental ethic.

Summary of Environmental Concepts

Before undertaking a summary of the aforementioned environmental concepts it is worth remembering that none of these ideas exist in isolation. These ideas are not exclusive to any one particular grouping and instead should be recognized as a web or continuum of various approaches and perspectives that complement and strengthen each other.

Biophilia is a concept popularized by prominent Harvard scientist Edward O. Wilson. Literally translated, biophilia means

“love of life or living systems.” Wilson uses this term to describe an instinctive bond he believes exists between humans and living systems. Stephen Kellert, who co-authored *The Biophilia Hypothesis* (1995) with Wilson, states that these connections are rooted in our biological evolution, and believes our human identity and personal fulfillment are dependent on this relationship with nature. Kellert continues that our need for nature extends beyond the material and includes emotional, cognitive, aesthetic and spiritual dependence. Wilson argues that an ethical responsibility exists to protect nature, if not out of compassion, then out of a profound self-interest for people to experience a satisfying and meaningful existence. Wilson continues that even if biophilia lacked evidence, it would still be compelling to pure evolutionary logic: humans evolved millions of years ago, surrounded by and dependent on other species and an affinity for natural history. It is this similar grounding in evolutionary thought that has inspired the field of eco-psychology.

Eco-psychology, with a premise that an ecological perspective enhances our understanding of the human mind, attempts to unite the fields of psychology and ecology. Eco-psychology is influenced by fields as diverse as Buddhism, with its grounding in direct lived experiences and actualizing an identity with others and the world, humanistic and transpersonal psychology, phenomenology, Gaia theory, and the spiritual practices of various indigenous groups. Similar to biophilia, eco-psychologists believe that the evolution of our minds in a natural context is significant. This suggests that exploring social relations alone provides inadequate explanations of mental health (Winter, 1996). Eco-psychology therefore attempts to find connections between human behaviour, consciousness, and our current environmental attitudes (Roszak, 1995). A goal of eco-psychology is to utilize the psychological determinants of human behaviour to decrease our negative impact on the Earth.

A practical benefit of eco-psychology is eco-therapy, which takes psychotherapy

out of the office and into natural spaces, where clients are encouraged to embrace the emotional aspects of these areas (Howe-Murphy, 1987). Richard Louv, in his book *Last Child in the Woods* (2005), attracted popular culture to the benefits of eco-therapy, especially through early childhood exposure to nature. Eco-psychologists are also interested in the study of how other cultures interpret nature (Dunn & McGuigan, 1994). Another concept rooted in an ecological approach to human knowing is deep ecology.

Deep ecology is a philosophical movement emphasizing the equal value of both human and non-human life, and the importance of ecosystem and natural processes. Deep ecology recognizes humans as just one part of the ecosphere, and avoids the anthropocentric view of environmental conservation solely in terms of maintaining material goods for human consumption. Arne Næss developed the concept of deep ecology in 1973, recognizing that facts and logic alone do not provide ethical guidance in how we should live on the Earth. Næss developed deep ecology's eight core philosophical arguments to guide an environmental ethic or ecosophy (Næss, 1989):

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital human needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.

5. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.
7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.
8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.

Through its eight principles, deep experience, deep questioning and deep commitment, deep ecology guides one in how to learn, think and act in the world; Næss calls this ecosophy. This raised consciousness develops political and spiritual elements and ultimately develops a bio-centric perspective or non-anthropocentric viewpoint, which leads to living in a more ethical way with nature. An earlier concept, which influenced and guided the ideas of deep ecology, is *friluftsliv*.

Like deep ecology, *friluftsliv* finds its roots in Norway and embodies a harmonious way of living with nature. Literally translated, it means "free-air life," which is commonly interpreted as "outdoor life." *Friluftsliv* living began as a protest movement against the Age of Enlightenment and specifically René Descartes, who reduced nature to having only measurable dimensions and no intrinsic value (Watson et al., 2005). Truly learning the *friluftsliv* tradition requires "feeling" the joy and identification of the natural world, which is experienced by immersion in nature; it is often described as an awakening (Haslestad, 2000). Loeng (2005) describes *friluftsliv* living as a means to find silence and peace, for meeting the

soul of nature and its mysticism; he stresses that the “feeling” is central to the practice. It is cultivation of this feeling that provides the inner motivation to seek natural knowledge and sustainable ways of living with the world, while challenging the values and lifestyles imposed by modernity. Instead of dominion over nature, or its sportification, friluftsliv living is to exist with nature, and encourages a balance among all living things (Dahle & Jenson, 2007; Henderson, 2007).

Faarlund (2002) adds that friluftsliv living entails forming cultural connections with the land, enjoying being outside with others, and avoiding reliance on expensive equipment. Dahle and Jenson (2007) state that an important consideration for friluftsliv living is that it should take place close to one’s home, meaning that characteristics for the local community should be preferred; this draws parallels to the concept of bioregionalism.

Bioregionalism is the concept that political, cultural and environmental systems should be contained within naturally defined areas called bioregions such as watersheds, similar plant and animal ecosystems, and other identifiable landforms such as coastal zones and mountain ranges. Bioregionalism argues against a global, consumer culture with apparent disregard towards the environment, and instead supports living within one’s bioregion. It argues for local sustainability, including growing one’s own food and using native plants, using local materials, and living with the natural ecology (Snyder, 1995). The bioregionalism approach suggests a means of living by deep understanding of, respect for, and ultimately care of one’s immediate surroundings (McGinnis, 1999). Snyder continues stating that “a mutually sustainable future for humans and other life-forms . . . can best be achieved by means of a spatial framework in which people live as rooted, active, citizens of a reasonably scaled, ecologically defined territory.” This implies that by maintaining residence in a particular place people will care for it more deeply and are more likely to act responsibly towards it. These ideas resonate with the concept of “sense of place” (Thayer, 2003).

Sense of place refers to finding meaning and experience in a particular area. A central task of human geography is determining the factors that give space to authentic human attachment, belonging or meaning. Defining what factors constitute a “sense of place” is difficult, but defining “placelessness” or identifying a locale that lacks a sense of place seems easier (Cresswell, 2004). These places are characterised as inauthentic and include areas such as shopping malls, gas stations, convenience stores and parking lots. Sense of place resonates strongly among many environmentalists who feel particular attachment to wilderness areas and parks (Faarlund, 2002; Snyder, 1995; Næss, 1989). Richard Louv (2005) argues that it is exactly this disengagement with these natural areas that has led to symptoms characterized as nature deficit disorder.

Nature deficit disorder is a term made popular in the book *Last Child in the Woods* (Louv, 2005), which argues that a broad range of child behavioural problems are linked to a lack of time outdoors. Louv believes that attraction of technological alternatives, parental fears of the outdoors and limitations of access to natural areas are factors preventing children from experiencing the natural world in ways similar to previous generations. Some behavioural effects include children showing reduced respect towards their natural surroundings, increased childhood obesity, and attention deficit disorders (Kahn et al., 2002). Louv believes that exposure to nature can improve children’s creativity, fitness, cognitive development, attention span, psychological well being and sense of connection with the Earth.

Another powerful concept is ecological feminism, which as a philosophy believes that the same social mentality that has led to the oppression of women is responsible for Western culture’s dominion over nature. Ecological feminism advocates the importance of interrelationship between all living things, including the Earth. Eco-feminists believe that our patriarchal society has led to ownership of land, food export, over-grazing, the tragedy of the commons,

and an abusive land ethic where value is limited to terms of economic gain (Warren, 2000; Vandana & Maria, 1993). A similar matriarchal perspective is characteristic of various traditional indigenous cultures. Indigenous cultures are characterised by a pedagogy of learning through observation, authentic experience, individualized instruction, and learning through enjoyment. Indigenous knowledge is both empirical based on experience and normative based on social values (Barriste, 2002). Aboriginal education views the individual as a whole person with intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical dimensions and aims to balance all of these aspects; this approach to education is congruent with many of the principles of holistic education. Aboriginal epistemology is grounded in the self, the spirit and the unknown. Furthermore, indigenous learning is inherently

environmental, emphasising the need to live in harmony with the natural world, which extends past the Western construct of the environment to include our ancestors and eventual predecessors (Cajete, 1994). Through this brief synopsis of environmental ideas one can identify several unifying themes, including values of care and environmental ethic; embracement of the affective, cognitive, emotional and spiritual domains; an emphasis on direct formative experiences in nature; challenges to fundamental assumptions of Western philosophy and education; and an understanding that humans are a part of the Earth, not separate from it. It is my hope that a broader review of these concepts, in conjunction with the teachings of the generative paradigm, will provide powerful tools to assist the outdoor educator in the quest towards transformative learning and systems level change.

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The Spirit of Algonquin

By Linda Leckie

*Algonquin Park, so wild and free,
You've got a lariat on me.*

Millar cited in Garland, 1989, p. 109

John W. Millar has been referred to as the Poet-Superintendent for sharing his admiration for the beauty of the landscape as a writer of prose. (Garland, 1989) In his poem, *Algonquin Park*, he provides a powerful metaphorical image of “rugged hills, lakes, and towering pines” encircling him like a rope and securing him to what he called a “mystic land.” An emotional bond that ties people to a place, like the lariat hold Algonquin had on Superintendent Millar, is known as a “sense of place” (Garland, 1989).

The concept of sense of place has roots in the Deep Ecology movement and the work of the Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss, who applied skills as a philosopher to understand the ecological crisis. Næss loved to spend his time observing and climbing the Hallingskarvet Mountains of Norway. From the simple cabin that he built there in 1937 he created a model of ecological wisdom to resolve the environmental crisis that was based on developing a loving and intimate relationship with natural space — a sense of place.

My sense of place in Algonquin developed over time and evolved from not only spending time there, but from learning about the natural and cultural history of the place. Learning that others share the same deep affection for a place, through a variety of media, has assisted me in the ability to articulate my own feelings about Algonquin and at the same time strengthen my strong sense of belonging and attachment to this place. My story, *The Spirit of Algonquin*, explores my continuous personal relationship with this place — Algonquin.

Lecko's “Algonquin Story”

Algonquin has something magical to offer for anyone who visits for a day or stays a lifetime.

Pigeon cited in Standfield, 1993, p. 187

My Algonquin story begins at a cottage on Cache Lake. My aunt's simple cabin nestled in the woods on an island holds fond memories of swimming in the lake, drying my hair by the wood stove, and watching the deer eat their breakfast of cedar sprigs while I enjoyed a steaming hot bowl of oatmeal smothered with brown sugar. I was just five years old when my ears first caught the beautiful sound of singing and the steady beat of paddles on a wooden gunwale from somewhere down the lake. I would drop everything and run down the winding path from the cottage to the dock. I would stand there motionless with my eyes fixed on a canoe trip of girls.

Those girls must have known that I had a trace of Voyageur blood somewhere deep inside me because they would always wave in such a way that made me feel completely connected to them. I would wave back, watching intently until their canoes were long out of sight. The spirit of adventure combined with the idea of traveling with other girls to new and faraway places by wood-canvas canoe was all I wanted and the rest of the day would be spent driving my parents crazy with questions about going to camp. It didn't take my family long to realize that I was serious about spending my summers under canvas and exploring Algonquin beyond the islands and bays of Cache Lake.

We tried to get into the camp on the adjoining lake but were told that I was still too young, even though I was going to be six in September. A friend of my parents mentioned another girls camp in the park and the following summer I boarded a train at Union Station along with hundreds of other campers bound for Algonquin. I soon found myself in a cabin with five other campers and began a relationship with a special place and the very remarkable people I found there.

Canoeing lessons were a big part of our preparation for our first canoe trip. Our engaging and cheerful canoe instructor was part kid himself, despite being over 50 years old. As a “grandfather” of canoeing and one of the great exponents of the Canadian style of paddling, Omer Stringer relished in getting us little campers all riled up and then sending us back to our counsellor to settle down. He

told us that canoeing was like stirring coffee, for the paddle, like the spoon, should never come out of the liquid in which it is being swirled around. Canoe lessons with Omer were always held in the “chippy pool,” a section of the lake boomed off with logs. Omer would be paddling his trademark red Chestnut canoe and each of us six year olds would be the master of our own craft — a 12-foot Chestnut sports car. We paddled, played, splashed and laughed while Omer glided effortlessly among his students, all the while reminding us to feel the paddle and keep our eyes on the bow of our canoe and the beauty of Algonquin beyond. Omer was awarded the Friends of Algonquin Park Directors Award in 1988 for his significant contribution to the appreciation of Algonquin Park. For the same reason he was our friend too.

We did go out on a canoe trip, and, although it was just to the Joe Lake portage, we all thought that maybe we had paddled to the other side of the world. It was absolutely everything that I had already imagined it would be. We swam in our lifejackets when we arrived at the campsite. We cooked all our food on an open fire and baked goodies with a reflector oven — it all tasted delicious. We listened to our counsellor tell stories and we squealed when we lost marshmallows to the red-hot coals. We slept side-by-side like sardines in a canvas tent that kept us warm and dry. We woke up to our guide sticking his head in the door and telling us to come quietly outside and see a moose. We had a morning dip and then warmed up beside the fire where bacon and eggs were cooking.

I fell completely in love with the whole process. Here I was living my adventure — paddling in wooden canoes with a bunch of girls and singing as we travelled down the lake. I didn’t realize that this first summer was the beginning of a number of very special relationships that would include lifelong friendships, meaningful alliances with significant mentors and guides, a lasting personal emotional bond with a place, professional partnerships, and a deep abiding connection with the spirit of Algonquin.

For ten more years I lived for my summers of camping and canoe tripping in Algonquin

Park. Each July, when I returned to camp, the canoe trips became longer and my cabin mates and I ventured further and deeper into the heart of Algonquin. I became familiar with the park, knowing my way along the well-traveled routes leading north and south from the camp. Winter months would be spent studying the map and wondering where the next summer of canoe travel would take me. I was drawn to the black lines on the canoe route map that designated low maintenance portages — those not fully developed that would take us off the beaten path. When the map claimed low water, difficult travel, or rough terrain it only made me want to go there more.

While others earned awards in camp for demonstrating their canoeing prowess, and painted stripes on their paddles to recognize their achievements, I was perfecting my draws on the twists and turns of the Nipissing River and learning to paddle in head winds with short quick strokes, in time with my canoe mates, and using the muscles of my back to keep a steady rhythm all day long. I learned to paddle close to shore and together, to trim the canoe, to read the wind and waves, to use the islands to make crossings on the big lakes and to negotiate the swift currents on the rivers. My badges of honour were the names of rites of passage canoe routes and challenging portages.

When the time came to say farewell to Algonquin at the end of every summer, the smells that lingered on my skin and clothes, sights etched in my mind or recorded in photo albums, and the memorable tastes, sounds and senses of a canoe trip would nourish me for the year. Algonquin was the smell of woodsmoke, canvas, linseed oil and leather. It was the sight of a small patch of blue between the trees letting me know that the long carry was almost over. Algonquin was the taste of fresh-picked raspberries eaten right out of our hands or baked into pies and bannock. Algonquin was the feel of ribs under my knees, the itch of mosquito bites, and the bracing freshness of the northwest wind. And Algonquin was the sound of what started it all — the echo of wooden paddles on the wooden gunwales.

In addition to these sensory experiences and lasting impressions of the natural environment, there were also many memories of the people with whom I shared the trail and the Algonquin landscape. One of the more notorious full-time residents of Algonquin Park was “Smiling” Gerry McGaughie, who ran the store at Brent. We had dreamed of the legendary wilderness shop keeper who would greet us with soda pop, candy bars and a friendly grin as wide as the lake itself, so when our canoes finally hit the beach at Cedar Lake, we all raced to the store expecting to find Smiling Gerry ready to greet us with open arms. “Three against the wall while the other three pick out what they want,” barked the not-so-congenial clerk behind the cash register. “Once you have paid, leave the store,” he added. We still loved the gruff and grizzled character for, although not sugar-coated himself, he satisfied our sweet tooth nonetheless. Thirty years later I learned that Gerry really was an affable fellow who carried out the disagreeable facade to keep canoe trippers and campers in line. This revelation only meant that I loved him more.

I had traveled extensively throughout the park by canoe and, with this freedom to roam, I had connected to this special place and learned about it simply by being there. However, when Audrey Saunders’ book, *Algonquin Story*, fell into my hands, it transformed my relationship with Algonquin Park. In 1946, Audrey Saunders was commissioned by the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests to collect material from every available source to write the story of how Algonquin came to be and, as Selwyn Dewdney wrote in the book’s introduction, “out of this conscientious study has come a character as well as a story: the character, if one may speak so, of the Park itself” (Saunders, 1947). Algonquin’s character, a total impression that Saunders herself described as the park’s flow of activity, came from the beauty of the landscape, the vital energy of the wildlife, the warm humanity of old Park residents and rangers, the big ideas of the lumber kings, and the casual activities of the summer visitors.

There were other books that furthered my Algonquin education and the more I read about Algonquin the more interested I became in the human history of the region. The land was coming alive for me and I now traveled with the early rangers, farmers, lumbermen and trappers; it was through their diaries and journals that I came to learn of Algonquin’s character and her characters! I wanted to get to know the people who knew this place intimately, and so it was with a great deal of anticipation that I first traveled south down Smoke Lake to meet the legendary Esther Keyser.

I had heard so much about this woman and it seemed that we were predestined to meet and share our similar Algonquin stories generations apart. Day trips with Esther made me slow down. Like a young Esther, I would have wanted to spend the day paddling and portaging through several lakes to see as much of the beauty of Algonquin as possible. However, my wise 80 years-plus companion led me slowly around the shoreline of Ragged Lake and in doing so showed me a deeper meaning in looking more intently at one lake. She would delight at seeing the details of every plant, rock and tree. We would sit at lunch under the shade of a big pine and she would share stories of a life well spent here in Algonquin Park. She was a mentor who shared her many experiences and learned wisdoms, helping to shape my own canoe trip guiding practices. She was a spiritual guide who modeled how to live simply and to find sacred places in the natural world that would give me strength, confidence, good health and closeness to the spirit.

Traveling by canoe within a wilderness landscape continues to be an important part of my personal life and I am fortunate to have also made it my career. I loved canoe trip, so it seemed like a natural progression to become a trip leader to continue to paddle and share my knowledge and skills with others. As an outdoor educator, what I share with my students has a direct correlation with my own life journey and personal connections to Algonquin. I tell my students the stories of my youth that are meaningful to me. On some trips we paddle by the island

cottage site where it all started almost 50 years ago. I show them the island where I attended summer camp, the place where my tent was pitched on my first canoe trip, and the spot where I caught my first fish. Most importantly, Algonquin is where my students come into direct contact with the natural world — seeing, learning, feeling, smelling, hearing, loving and developing a relationship with the land.

The Trail of the White Wolf

A lone traveller, camped on Wolf Lake in Algonquin Park, felt the presence of a powerful being. From the shadows a pair of glittering eyes took on the shape of a wolf, however, this was no ordinary wolf. Formidable in size and presence, and all white in colour, this wolf had been appointed by the Spirit of Algonquin to patrol all the lakes and rivers and to guard the lakes, streams, forests, fish, birds animals, flowers, ferns, plants and myriad of secret hidden places throughout this park. The blowing wind was a signal from the Spirit of Algonquin for the wolf to be on the move and since the wolf travelled across the water his tracks left a trail of white foam on a blustery day. The traveller asked the wolf, "How is such a big responsibility managed and such an enormous mission undertaken by just one individual?" The wolf explained that he was ably assisted by a number of men and women specially selected by the Spirit of Algonquin, for their strong spiritual bonds to Algonquin and their sense of commitment to protect their sacred place in the natural world. The wolf then invited the traveller to join the cause and follow the trails of white foam on the lakes and rivers of Algonquin Park to preserve this beautiful land and all of its treasures for future generations.

Esther Sessions Keyser

The patterns of foam appearing on lakes during windy days captured the interest and sense of wonder of Esther Keyser ever since early days as a camper at Northway Lodge. Her imagination stimulated the creation of "The Trail of the White Wolf," which became a standard campfire story she told her clients on guided trips. One windy day while we paddled on Ragged Lake and the white foam swirled around our paddle blades, Esther shared with me her legendary tale.

Her message, the moral of the story, is as far reaching and important today as it was when she first told the story almost 70 years ago.

Encounters with the natural landscape with minimal distraction for commerce, industry and civilization enable children to have a personal experience with the land and create an emotional bond through that direct experience. When these experiences are shaped and guided by those who are intensely mindful of the land, the potential exists for there to be more people that the spirits can call upon to patrol and guard these special places. However, in this high-tech, media-focused world with computers, networks and video machines, less time is being spent outdoors. This has significant implications for today's youth, the decision makers of the future. Where will all the future environmentalists, scientists, foresters, conservationists, park managers and other stewards come from without direct formative experiences in the outdoors? Will we all continue to follow the tracks of the white wolf and remind ourselves, whenever we see the trails of white foam on Algonquin's waterways, to educate and inspire others to join us on our mission?

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Linda Leckie is the Director of Outdoor Education at The Bishop Strachan School in Toronto. The complete version of "The Spirit of Algonquin" appears as Chapter Ten in Algonquin Park: The Human Impact edited by Dave Euler and Mike Wilton. To learn more about the book go to www.Ojgraphix.com/ecowatch/. Esther Sessions Keyser's "Algonquin Story" is published in Paddling My Own Canoe: The Story of Algonquin's First Female Guide.

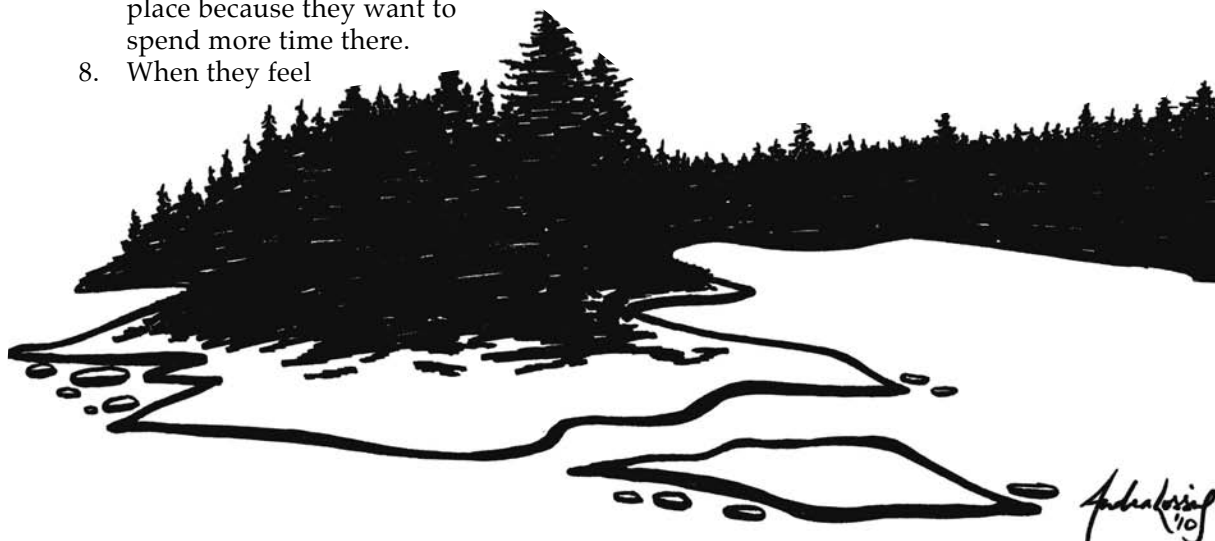
What Does “Connecting to a Place” Really Mean?

By Cliff Knapp

Environmental and place-based educators frequently refer to a goal they set for their students — connecting or reconnecting them to a place. What does this really mean? How will I know when my students are connected to that place? What kinds of behaviours should I look for to determine if my students have reached that goal? The following observable outcomes will serve to indicate that my students have connected or reconnected to a particular place:

1. When they can orient themselves in that place according to the four cardinal directions and the elevations above sea level.
2. When they can tell a short story about the history of that place.
3. When they can identify and call some of the human and non-human residents of that place by name and know something about their life histories.
4. When they know which plants and animals found there are native to that place and which ones humans have introduced.
5. When they know which animals stay there all year round and which migrate in and out of that place.
6. When they can name some of the natural resources in that place that are useful to humans.
7. When they frequently return to that place because they want to spend more time there.
8. When they feel
9. inspired to write poems, essays or stories about the benefits they receive by being in that place.
10. When they know the origins of some of the human-made objects found in that place.
11. When they can comfortably spend time in that place using healthy and safe practices.
12. When they know what kinds of rocks and soil are found in that place.
13. When they know where a drop of rain would travel over the land surface as it joins a body of water.
14. When they can describe some of the weather and climate patterns that affect that place.
15. When they know some of the problems and issues faced by the people who occupy that place.
16. When they can describe some of the movements and changes of the sun, moon, stars and planets throughout the year.

Cliff Knapp has been involved with COEO since the 1980s running graduate courses through Northern Illinois University. He is a long-serving member of the Association for Experiential Education and author of many books and articles on a wide array of outdoor education topics centering on community and nature themes.



Sensational Activities — Ideas for Engaging the Senses

By Charlotte Jacklein

Many people comment that their senses seem stronger while spending time in natural spaces. The rustle of a chipmunk at night, the touch of soft moss on a boulder, the scent of a forest after rain — all send vivid signals to our senses. Perhaps simply being outside intensifies our senses as we seek to understand the shifting nuances of our surroundings. Alternately, perhaps the experience of being in nature allows us to be more in tune with our senses than we could be on a busy city street. Whether in remote or urban wilderness settings, the following sensory activities can be used with participants of all ages.

Hug a Tree

This time-proven and fun activity challenges participants to use their senses and develop greater awareness of their surroundings. In addition, this activity also encourages participants to trust and take care of each other. Choose a location with a variety of trees and safe footing.

1. Each participant finds or is assigned a partner and one person in each pair is blindfolded.
2. The seeing person carefully leads their blindfolded partner to a tree (by as long or short a route as they wish!).
3. At the chosen tree, the blindfolded person uses their senses in as many ways as possible to explore the tree (e.g., touching the bark, smelling the needles, listening to the branches in the wind, and so on).
4. After having explored their tree as closely as possible, the blindfolded person is guided back to the starting point and, once all participants have returned, the blindfolds are removed.
5. Without help from their partners, the formerly blindfolded participants try to identify “their” tree by walking around, using their senses to find the right tree

6. After everyone has rediscovered their trees (often with some funny moments), the previously sighted partners are blindfolded and the activity is repeated.

Debrief: This activity can lead into good discussions on trust, ways we perceive our world, how we use our senses and more.

Sensational Spots

1. Each participant is assigned or picks a spot to sit. Participants should be encouraged to sit far enough apart so they won’t distract each other.
2. While sitting in their spot, each participant looks for five sensory things that are unique about their spot: one smell, one sight, one sound, one touch and one taste (if you are comfortable that the participants won’t try eating questionable things).
3. Call the participants back together and do a group tour of each site, with each participant presenting what was unique about their location. Alternately, participants can verbally share their five unique sensations (or just one or two favourite ones) in a group circle.

Debrief: This activity can be used as part of journaling or writing activities, as a stepping stone towards longer solo activities, as an introduction to biodiversity and more.

These two activities are only a sampling of the numerous sensory-related activities that can be used by outdoor educators. As we learn to listen, touch, taste, smell and see, we become more aware of messages and meaning in the world around us.

Charlotte Jacklein has worked as an outdoor educator and guide in Canada and abroad.

Ode to HB

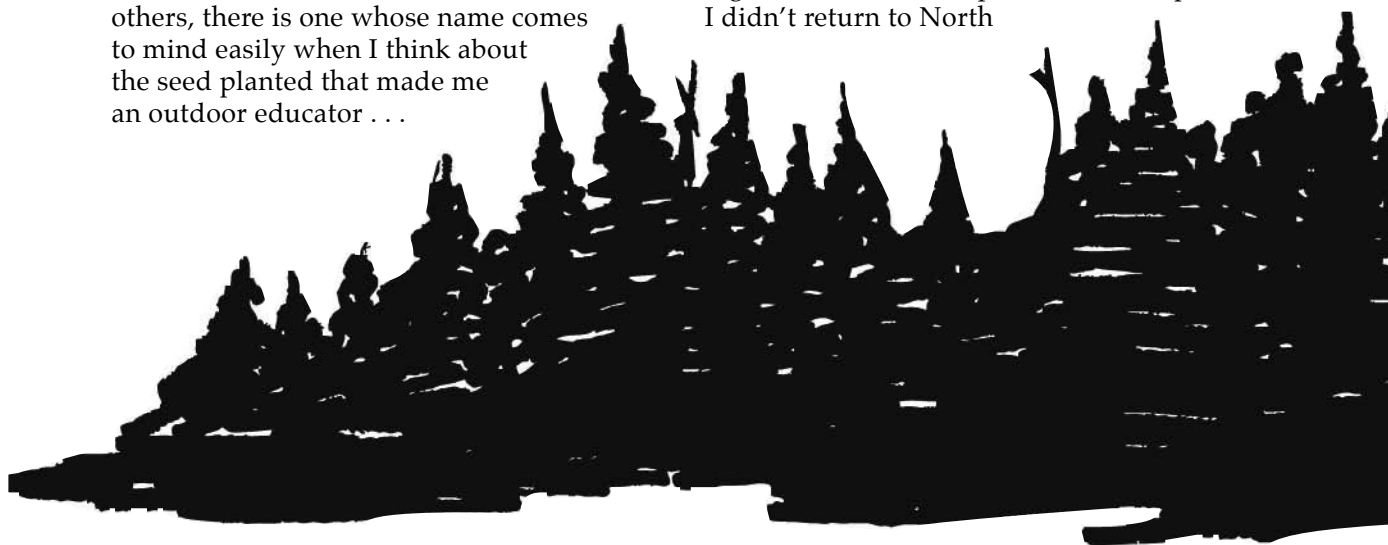
By Shane Kramer

I am very pleased and honoured to be able to write the first article for this new column in *Pathways*. I think it's great for practitioners to have a chance to publicly thank those who have inspired them and helped shape the career they have enjoyed. This column allows us to honour not just the "biggies" of outdoor education, those whose influence has been broadly felt across our field, but also those who have had an impact on us personally, individually, and who may not be known by many others within or without our field.

In preparing to write this article I could have chosen from a number of people who have influenced me in my own career, guiding me in the decisions I have made and the paths I have followed, advised on opportunities that have been presented to me or affected the way I interact with my students. A short list of those influences could include Clare Magee, a great mentor to me both in my time in the Seneca College ORT program and for many years since. Barb Weeden and Scott Wood, also at Seneca, were great role models in my early days of developing my skills. Norm Frost at the Boyne River Natural Sciences School lent a wonderful guiding hand during my time there. Looking further back I can thank my uncle, Howard Badham, an outdoorsman by nature if not profession, and one of those who first introduced me to forests, lakes and rivers. However, as indebted as I am to these and a number of others, there is one whose name comes to mind easily when I think about the seed planted that made me an outdoor educator . . .

I attended North Grenville District High School (NGDHS) in Kemptville from 1982–89, grade 7 to 13/OAC. For a number of those years I had Heather Burns (or HB as she was also known) as one of my teachers for any of the physical education classes I was a student in. What made her such a great teacher, in my opinion, was that she seemed to make an effort to connect with each of her students, whether they were naturally inclined to athletics or not, or somewhere in between (which is probably where I would have fit). She taught physical education, coached many teams and was very involved as a mentor to student council. However, like a number of students, some of my strongest connections to Mrs. Burns were made with a canoe, either through the grade 12 outdoor education course she taught or through a number of outers clubs trips I participated in. When I drive back to Kemptville these days I often end up driving by a number of the "put-in" spots where these trips began, and I always smile. They are some of the markers I use to know I'm getting close to home.

I remember talking to Mrs. Burns back then about careers and the future, and asking her advice, as at the time I intended to become a high school teacher and, like she had, hoped to return to NGDHS to teach in the same school I had attended as a student. As life and plans changed and evolved after high school, I ended up on a different path. I didn't return to North



Grenville nor become a classroom high school teacher. However HB had an impact on my career path nonetheless: I've taught outdoor education for most of the last 16 years, all over the province to students from all over the world, from kindergarten age to senior high school and beyond.

There have been moments over those years when I have often thought back to those days in one of HB's classes, or on one of those trips. For instance, when I'm teaching cross country skiing my mind often goes back to a day in grade seven with me in the field behind the school, on skis that were much too long for me that I had borrowed from a neighbour, and the patience Heather showed with me then. I try to show the same patience and encouragement to those now under my tutelage. My mind also goes back to the afore-mentioned outdoor education class in high school playing the "instincts for survival/web of life" game in the G. Howard Ferguson forest, while my students play the same game at the field centre where I work today. When the small fleet of canoes of young people I was guiding one time rounded a bend to spot an osprey soaring over the bay I could feel myself back with HB's own red canoe, walking it through some stony rapids, managing to avoid having to do the portage. I remember she encouraged me to smile more.

Over the years of my career I have had many teachers who have helped me along

my journeys and have influenced the way I've taught the thousands of participants in my own classes. One of the first, and most fondly remembered ones, was Heather Burns. I know my story is similar to that of many students who have had the pleasure of having her at one time as a teacher, a mentor, or a friend in the outdoors, for a class or on a sports team. But like the others none of these roles she held for me are diminished by the fact that mine is a story shared by so many others. In June of 2009 HB retired after a long and satisfying career. The parameters of that career are almost unheard of today: she taught at the same school for her entire career, the same school she herself had attended as a student, and in all those years I'm not aware of one student having anything to say against her. When she retired last year a "book of memories" was being put together as a gift for her at her celebration. Much of this article was part of a submission I made to that undertaking. I'm glad I was able to share these thoughts with her then and with you now.

Shane Kramer has been active in COEO for a number of years on the Board of Directors, on conference committees and in various workshops. He is currently an outdoor/environmental educator with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority at Scanlon Creek near Bradford. He's happy when his former students have fond memories of him too.



A Mathematician Carves a Paddle

By Eamon Kavanagh

I am a student of mathematics. Since my first year in high school I enrolled in accelerated mathematics courses, engrossing myself in the subject that caused most students total misery. I loved the concrete and timeless aspect of it. Something proved thousands of years ago (Pythagoras' ideas on right triangles, for example) is still true and taught today. There's no change in ideology because it was shown, beyond a doubt, to be fact. In contrast, just a brief glimpse at history, English, or even science courses reveals how fluid the subjects are: People once believed in manifest destiny, Shakespearian comedy is certainly not the humour of the day, and Hooke's model of the cell is long discarded.

As a student I also loved that mathematics seemed to be the basis for most things in the physical world, whether architecture, geometry, space or disease outbreak; its applications were limitless.

As the years passed I became increasingly estranged from my peers' interests. I took the most difficult math classes offered at my high school and considered majoring in pure mathematics.

McMaster University led me further down this stream. By my second year I had enrolled in 21 units of math for the year. I can clearly remember each time I met someone outside of my program; I received the same baffled look as I remarked on my major. It was probably very similar to the look Dr. Henderson receives when he details to other professors that his undergraduate students attend a nine-day experiential canoe trip for course credit. The expression reflects a tinge of confusion mixed with a complete lack of understanding.

I was encased in a shell of assignments, tests and lectures. It was a course load devoid of subjectivity. Deviation was not frowned upon, it was patently false. Many people shy away from this type of subject material. You can only be right or wrong; there is no room for argument. Math is a science of entirely black and white ideas. There's nothing quite like the satisfaction of writing down a mathematically

bulletproof statement and knowing it's correct. I loved this form of grading. When I properly solved a problem it was no longer in the hands of the professor to judge my work. Every mark I earned myself; marks were not at the whim of a sympathetic judge. It's a matter of utter pride. I couldn't stand receiving a paper and having no concept of how I garnered the mark. It contradicted my rational sensibilities that I had acquired throughout my education.

I enrolled in outdoor education as a fun and interesting change from the chalkboard walls. The idea of a canoe trip thrilled me; the fact that I could get credit was an added bonus. I never considered that the course would open my mind up to a new form of experimental teaching.

The field trip was the first step. Still drowsy on an early Saturday morning, I found myself on a bus shuttled to a place of which I only knew the name — Temagami. The trip just seemed like an extension of my summer, the final hurrah before 12 weeks of hard work. It didn't dawn on me until a few days later that this was the core of the course, where the groundwork for outdoor education ideology was laid. Each activity had a point. The activities built cohesion among the group, taught us both hard and soft skills, and engaged us in an emergent way of learning. None of it seemed like university schooling. All of the work I had done in the past two years required a certain amount of perseverance and determination. Where was the work, the stress, the *suffering*? Granted, not all of university was dry and boring, but not all of it was this much fun.

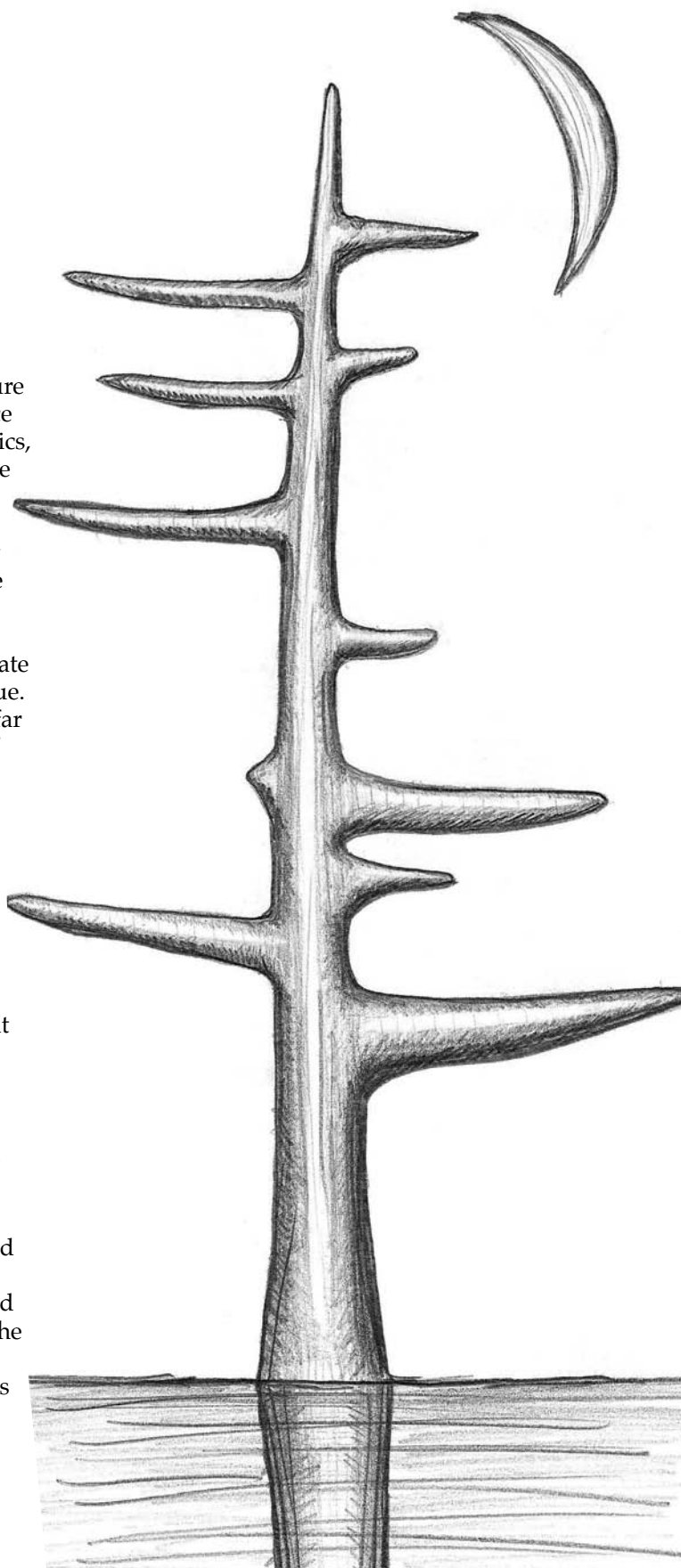
It was difficult for me to accept outdoor education as a rigorous academic class. In one lecture of outdoor education I prepared a raw fish in front of an audience while in a lecture of real analysis I studied Fourier series approximations of 2π continuous functions. From my academic background one of these two was clearly more "faithful" to a university curriculum. Admittedly, the outdoor education course didn't seem to

compare in terms of my past high-status lectures (Bowers, 1997).

The curriculum appeared sparse and unplanned. Every date was marked "tentative." Some of the course was self directed, other parts involved games and skits. We watched clips, listened to quotes, traveled around Hamilton, and had literature read to us. I hadn't had a class like this since elementary school. In university mathematics, all non-traditional methods of education are discarded in favour of standard lecturing. I felt as if I was six years old learning material taught to adults. Coming from my educational background it was hard to take the class seriously.

It took me some time to accept and appreciate this new pedagogy and see its intrinsic value. I never took notes and was never tested, a far cry from math. Despite this, I found myself retaining a wealth of knowledge. I began to realize that outdoor education wasn't a skill-based discipline; it isn't necessary to know how to perfectly T-rescue a canoe or to execute a level six cross-bow pry. There existed valuable skill sets that weren't quantifiable. Not every fact had to be absorbed word for word; the concepts and the lessons were the important aspect. An assignment *could* ask how you felt about a passage and did not have to evaluate your ability to analyze text and produce an argument. I began to appreciate the deviation from traditional theorem-proof-example based learning and dove headfirst into this new experiential course. I enjoyed learning from my peers as opposed to just the professor, seeing each student's spin and idea in the classroom. I loved getting my hands on a compass and using it as opposed to reading the theory behind magnetism. The myriad of mediums presented diversified my understanding of the material and I was able to retain different information from each piece.

For me, the culmination of experiential learning in outdoor education was the fateful Saturday morning I woke up early



to carve a paddle. This was the date of my true appreciation for the enigmatic subject. I had never done something so seemingly low-status for a course (Bowers, 1997). Subconsciously, I didn't even associate it as a graded project. There was going to be no scrutiny of how smooth and symmetric my paddle was, no "real" measurable analysis of my work. The point was the process as a whole, not just the end product. This, along with a beautiful, cherry paddle, was the message I left with that day.

Carving a paddle was not about finishing first or having a perfect tool. It was about using your hands and doing something tangible; it was about the knowledge that followed as a result of having done this. From this one instance I now know how to properly use a spokeshave, I know how wood tans with sun exposure, and I can accurately guess how difficult it must have been to do this 400 years ago. I would have never been able to

learn this just from reading about it; I had to get out there and experience the difficulty myself. There are certain skills that are better taught through experiential learning than in a classroom. Hands-on education works, as I realized on that day, and not just for children. There's a reason why places like the Ontario Science Centre exist — they help people understand concepts in a way they can relate to. Getting personally involved is key and is at the core of the outdoor education philosophy.

Comparing educational techniques used in mathematics with those used in outdoor education is hard to imagine. The two subjects contrast too fundamentally. Outdoor education is too prominently experience oriented, with people taking away messages and insights instead of theory. Mathematics, at a university level, is far too abstract to be taught experientially. I find it astounding that I am able to appreciate both styles and see



their place in high-status schooling (Bowers, 1997). Nothing quite replaces a good field experience to enrich a student's mind, yet rigor in the classroom is also necessary. Carving a paddle allowed me to learn not only about the labour itself but also about experiential learning as a whole, and its valuable aspects.

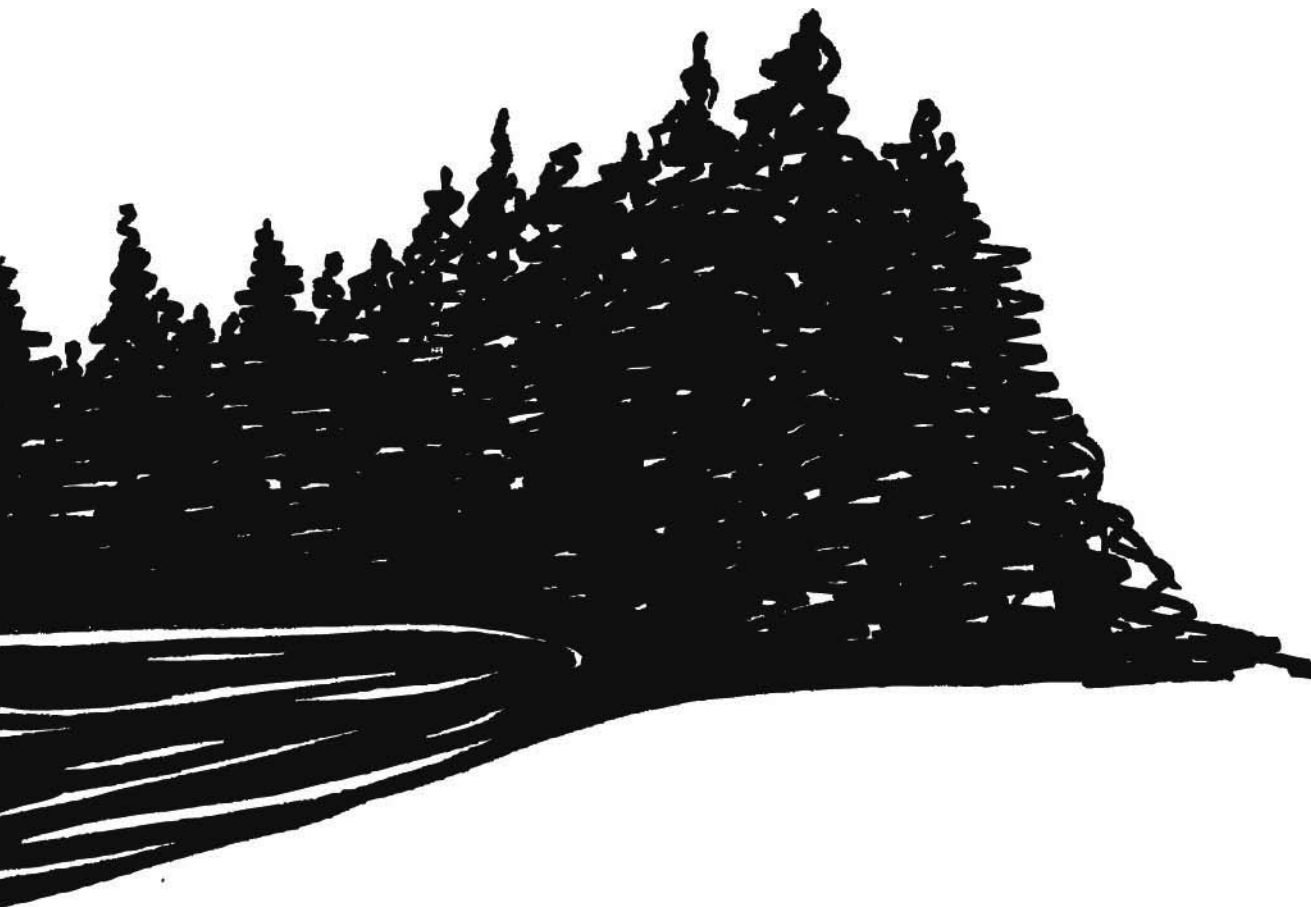
The dichotomy of education, between high and low status, now seems arbitrary and pointless (Bowers, 1997). Valuable knowledge is not specifically reserved for subjects that can be lectured. Experiential teaching is an exceptional way to have a student feel growth and knowledge. Outdoor education eroded all prejudices I had against experiential learning. Carving a canoe paddle seemingly blindsided me in terms of how much I gained from the experience. The Friday prior I assumed I would wind up with a nice piece of smooth wood, but I never expected to come away with an appreciation for knowledge through

experience. My view on university-level course work changed over a period of six hours, from that of pen and paper to that of firsthand experience. Every mathematician should get their hands bruised and carve a paddle — it might do the community some good.

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Eamon Kavanagh recently completed a paddle carving workshop with Roger Foster of the Carlisle Canoe Company in Freelon, Ontario as part of a course assignment at McMaster University. Roger Foster can be reached at 905-659-0883, 482 Concession 11 East, Freelon, Ontario L0R 1K0.



Dog-Eared and Trail-Worn Favourites from My Book Shelves

By Linda Leckie

A review of Horwood, B. (Ed.). (1995). *Experience and the curriculum*. Dubuque, IA: AEE Kendall Hunt.

Fifteen years ago, Bert Horwood wanted to edit a book that would illustrate best practices in experiential education, offer encouragement to teachers everywhere, and point the way to the future of experiential education in schools. To do this he collected a set of essays written by teachers that reflect both the power and dilemmas of their practice. Today, those same stories can be told once again to share with others what experiential educators have always known — the value of experience in education.

The stories, like the stones Bert collected on the Horton River, are small gems that originally caught his attention for their uniqueness. Upon closer inspection, however, it was revealed that they also share many common features. All of the stories in the book are written by practicing teachers, and while some authors stress practice and others theory, all the stories are written to affirm and validate the teachers' craft, to inspire and encourage other educators, and to point to the challenges in this field. These teachers' voices serve as a window to their teaching practices, practices that are also informed by scholarship, as literature is often cited to link the stories to a body of academic and professional knowledge.

Lyn Shulha and Jeffry Piker tell the story of the rise and fall of a service learning program and provide a positive opportunity for learning. Karne Kozolanka shares the value of apprenticeships, internships and cooperative education as experiential learning opportunities in technological education to reflect the realities of real life in the world beyond school. Deborah Millan's chapter, "Field Trips," puts forth a list of guiding principles for a successful trip from her perspective as a classroom teacher based on her experiences leading them. Bert Horwood partners with Bill Patterson from the Tamarack program in Deep River to

relate how an interface between school and community can enrich student experience. Gary Schultz shares his story of developing programs at heritage sites to move beyond walk through, listen and don't touch and to bring the magic of music, drama and historical simulations to life.

Ed Raiola, in his chapter "Beyond Hahn and Dewey," and in keeping with the spirit of this book, gives voice to two unknown philosopher practitioners — Dr. Earl C. Kelly and Jiddu Krishnamurti. Rena Upitis, Gary William Raspberry, and Tom Herbert provide personal narratives of their journeys to make sense of their own practice as teachers. Outdoor educators will find a strong connection to Herbert's quest to expand the notion of adventure beyond wilderness travel and ropes courses.

My favourite story in the collection comes from high school English teacher Gail Simmons. In her chapter, titled "Experiential Education in the English Classroom," she tells the story of how she discovered how to implement experiential learning with her students.

Referring to experiential education as a "neglected aspect of teaching," Gail Simmons came to realize that her role as a teacher was to "instill confidence in students who are about to embark on risky ventures into the unknown." Her story of the young woman who wanted to understand aging by reading a novel about an elderly woman who had been institutionalized, and then taking a part-time job in a local nursing home demonstrates experiential learning at its finest. In Simmons' words, her student was "naturally taking control of her own learning and, in doing so, learning became exciting, energizing, and pertinent because she could make her own insightful connections between real life and literature" (as cited in Horwood, 1995, p. 9)

The ancient Greeks raised concerns during the transition from an oral to a written culture. According to Plato, Socrates cautioned people against learning to read. He believed that literacy and the permanence of writing would make young people believe what they read rather than seeking to learn what was truth through their own experiences. When Gail's student wheeled herself to school in a wheelchair, in character as Ethel Sherman, one of her own classmates walked by her, ignoring the old woman who needed help at the curb. When the same elderly woman finished her presentation to the English class she took off her hat and peeled off her mask. In that moment, the truth about Ethel was revealed and the reality of aging that was learned through experience was shared.

In the final chapter of the book Bert provides a broad curriculum context to pull the stories together and share the emerging issues in research and teacher education. The common practices at the very heart of the stories in *Experience and the Curriculum* are a commitment to engaging the emotions, intellects and bodies of students and teachers and to employing a student-centered approach to learning. These same practices are at the forefront of curriculum review processes today to ensure that Ontario's curriculum adapts to the changing world around us, reflects advances in our knowledge of teaching, learning and child development, and continues to meet the needs of all students. The implications for the role of reflection and narrative in both teacher education and educational research to which Bert makes reference are front and centre in these fields today.

Experience and the Curriculum was written to reflect the turmoil and transition of its times. Now in the year 2010, the midpoint of the United Nations Decade for Sustainable Development (2005–2014), the world continues to face complex environmental and social issues. In June 2009, the cover story of *Professionally Speaking*, the magazine of the Ontario College of Teachers, highlighted the monumental change that considers environmental education a new basic of education for the 21st century and places it on par with the curriculum's commitment to numeracy and literacy. Outdoor education

is seen as a distinct and critical component of environmental education, concerned with providing experiential learning in the environment to foster a connection to local places, develop a greater understanding of ecosystems, and provide a unique context for learning. Perhaps it's time to share some more stories with Bert.

Linda Leckie is the Director of Outdoor Education at The Bishop Strachan School in Toronto. This past November at the AEE conference in Montreal she had the pleasure of sharing a Guinness and lamb stew dinner with Bert. As usual it was one of those hands-on learning experiences that was integrated and transdisciplinary and readily transferable to her everyday life.



Hunting as Environmental Education

By Adam Macht

The value of hunting is often debated among environmental educators. Some view hunting as the senseless killing of fellow sentient beings as a form of recreation. Others see it as a viable way to become one with nature. Both perspectives argue their case with specific examples, noting either hunters who hunt solely for blood or hunters who open their minds to the lessons of nature taught through the hunt.

For those morally opposed to hunting, it may be difficult to think of hunting as a form of education. They see only death and cruelty. However, for those who can see the value in hunting, there is far more to it than simply killing the animal. There are educational opportunities, and this article is a short, personal discussion of this point of view. Jose Ortega y Gasset (1972) said it best in his *Meditations on Hunting*:

One does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted. If one were to present the sportsman with the death of the animal as a gift he would refuse it. What he is after is having to win it, to conquer the surly brute through his own effort and skill with all the extras that this carries with it: the immersion in the countryside, the healthfulness of the exercise, the distraction from his job. (p. 96)

Hunting Immerses the Individual in Nature

Hunting is an ancient art where we are part of the canvas, rather than the painter. To be successful, the hunter must become fully integrated into the natural world. He or she must blend into the environment and hone his or her senses to detect the subtlest of clues that indicate the approach of game. To do this effectively, the hunter must become so immersed, so intensely connected with the natural world that he or she truly becomes part of it. This connection — this oneness — with nature teaches the hunter to respect his or her place as part of the natural world rather than being superior to it.

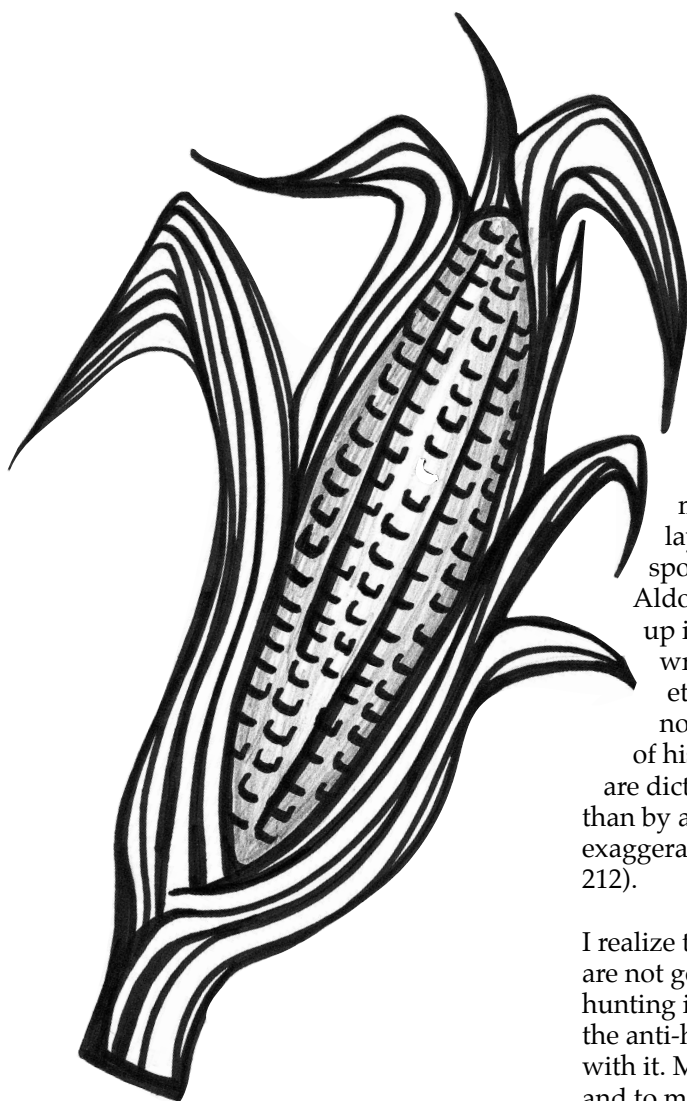
Hunting Builds Family Values

Hunting teaches about the importance of family. In my own family, my dad and his brothers have a small hunting cabin in Central Wisconsin where my dad, uncles, cousins, and I gather the day before deer season in anticipation of the hunt. The night is filled with stories, cards and brothers catching up on lost time. For my uncles and older cousins, this is a chance to revisit the past. Often, the conversations are about previous hunts, childhood memories and my grandfather who passed before I was able to meet him. At these gatherings, I, the youngest in the group, get a taste of my family's past. Hunting has not only helped me connect with my family, but it has also taught me the importance of a strong family life. Each year, I wait with growing anticipation for those nights in the cabin with my family.

Furthermore, hunting has provided me with the opportunity to spend quality time with my father. It is through hunting that he taught me about the importance of nature, patience and conservation, among other valuable lessons. I hope to someday teach my children these lessons the same way my father taught me. Some of my fondest childhood memories happened in the deer stand with my father.

Hunting Fosters a Sense of Community

The time sitting in a tree stand is certainly an opportunity for contemplation and personal connection with nature, but another important aspect of hunting is the sense of community that it builds. With hunting comes camaraderie between hunters. Go to any local establishment during deer hunting season and you will witness a sea of blaze orange bustling with stories about the day's hunt. Hunters young and old, experienced and inexperienced, join together and share the day's hunt. There is a stereotype that hunters drink too much before and after the hunt, but this has not been my personal experience. Hunters may share a beer or two as they socialize, but the hunters I know



value the hunt too much to diminish it by overindulging.

In conjunction with this communal gathering, hunting teaches us to take care of those in our community. Ancient peoples hunted to provide sustenance for their tribes. Without the hunt, the community would go hungry. Though few would argue these days that they would starve without hunting, the idea of community is still taught. A good hunter who does not need the meat can donate it to those in need in the community.

Hunting Teaches Sportsmanship

Finally, hunting teaches sportsmanship. Though hunting is regulated by the government, it would be impossible for law enforcement officials to oversee all of the

hunters all of the time. This means that the hunter has the opportunity to either obey or disobey the law with few or no repercussions. But the hunter's "moral law" may be even stricter than the government's laws. For example, a hunter may not shoot a spike buck even if it is legal, simply because he wants to give the deer a chance to mature. Consequently, ethical hunting lays the foundation of honesty and sportsmanship for future generations. Aldo Leopold (1949) summed this idea up in *A Sand County Almanac* when he wrote, "A peculiar virtue in wildlife ethics is that the hunter ordinarily has no gallery to applaud or disapprove of his conduct. Whatever his acts, they are dictated by his own conscience, rather than by a mob of onlookers. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this fact" (p. 212).

I realize that a few paragraphs in *Pathways* are not going to convince anti-hunters that hunting is beneficial. And while I appreciate the anti-hunting sentiment, I do not agree with it. My personal connection to nature and to my family owes much to hunting, and I feel that I am a stronger and deeper environmentalist because I hunt. With that in mind, I will continue to teach others to hunt. It is one of the best ways to connect with nature and to be part of a unique community. The art of hunting need not be feared, but embraced as an environmental education tool.

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Dandelions or Database: Putting Nature Words Back into the Children's Dictionary

By Bob Henderson and Nicole Parisien

Picture this . . . A mother is walking her young daughter home from school. On the way, the little girl bends down to blow the white fluff from a dandelion gone to seed. (A typical image of childhood, wouldn't you say?) Once home, the mother heads straight to the bookshelf, pulls out the children's dictionary and says, "Let's look up dandelion!" (Though this may seem banal and unrealistic, bear with me for a moment. This story is about to go wrong.) The mother and daughter flip to the "D" section and, to the mother's surprise, dandelion is not listed, though "database" is.

According to the article "Children's Dictionary Dumps Nature Words," the Oxford Junior Dictionary has "opted to drop terms pertaining to old nature" (Mensvoort, 2009) and replaced them with more technological terms. Words such as acorn, dandelion, fern, heron and willow have been removed and replaced with words such as blog, MP3 player, chatroom and database. According to Vineeta Gupta, from the Oxford University Press, "changes in the world are responsible for changes in the book" (Mensvoort, 2009). Clearly society is becoming increasingly removed from nature, at least psychologically and relationally. We have entered a new era of urban/suburban life, becoming an electronically focused culture that both restricts outdoor play and draws children indoors.

Pathways over many issues ran a column titled Wild Words. Here words from other languages were introduced in a fun effort to bolster our (perhaps) feeble English language for outdoor educators. It could not have been imagined (well, maybe it could) that our language might be further impoverished by the actual deletion of nature words. Hmm, best to start with a children's dictionary.

I doubt that the decision makers assigned to the Oxford Junior Dictionary undervalue the importance of language, but perhaps on a cultural level language is all-too-easily taken for granted. Language simply put is a system of communication. Many have noted that language is not controlled by our thoughts

but rather it controls them. There is a chicken-or-egg argument to be had here, which philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein put best: "The limits of my language means the limits of my world."¹ Perhaps the argument can be made that the Oxford Junior Dictionary group should help advance our culture rather than simply respond to it. We appreciate the decision makers likely believe they are contributing to such advancement.

In his CBC Massey Lecture, Wade Davis (2009) considered "why ancient wisdom matters in the modern world." As an anthropologist he spoke of language with a sense of loss, a sense of loss that outdoor educators should begin to acknowledge and challenge in our time:

A language, of course, is not merely a set of grammatical rules or a vocabulary. It is a flash of the human spirit, the vehicle by which the soul of each particular culture comes into the material world. Every language is an old-growth forest of the mind, and watershed of thought, an ecosystem of spiritual possibilities . . . On average, every fortnight an elder dies and carries with him or her into the grave the last syllables of an ancient tongue. What this really means is that within a generation or two, we will be witnessing the loss of fully half of humanity's social, cultural and intellectual legacy. This is the hidden backdrop of our age.

And here we learn of a hidden backdrop within the, apparently, emerging evolution of our English language. Dandelion out, database in — hardly a cornucopia of spiritual possibilities. Or perhaps we're missing the boat, oops the network. Heron is out — it is "old nature." Chatroom is in — it must be new nature. Call us nostalgic, but we don't think this speaks to an advancement of humanity.

We'd like to revive the "Wild Words" idea. The Cree word, "miyupimaatisiun" first

came into my (Bob's) life by way of an academic Aboriginal health journal article, where it was translated as "being alive well." As defined, there was a direct connection to being on land to foster good identity and good health. In 2009, I had an opportunity to talk with Cree Elder Joseph Naytowhow on the shores of the south Saskatchewan River about this word among other things. Joseph agreed with the above translation, and added that miyupimaatisiun is a "life force" word and most simply means "a good life." The word is used often in marriage prayers offering a "life giving energy." To outdoor educators this word can resonate with great meaning. In respect for Cree peoples and in acknowledgement of our good work, we might want to add miyupimaatisiun to our vocabulary. At the very least we should realize that language is an important realm in which we work to (and we are uncomfortable saying this) "bring nature to people."

Culturally, we might have lost dandelion to database in the Oxford Junior Dictionary, and as authors we cannot argue against the logic that "changes in the world are responsible for changes in [that particular] book." But we can fight back. And introducing culturally

rich wild words into our language might be a way to do just that. In time, maybe we can put "the nature words" back into the Oxford Children's Dictionary.

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Nicole Parisien and Bob Henderson shared a "Foundation of Outdoor Experiential Education" university course together in 2010. This reflection grew out of one of Nicole's assignments.

¹ Thanks to Alexandra Del Bell Belluz for her insight on language.

Tracking

In 2010, the Mike Elrick Tribute under the COEO banner raised funds via three donors to launch a partnership with the On the Tip of the Toes Foundation. On the Tip of the Toes Foundation is a non-profit foundation organized out of Chicoutimi, Quebec to send youth living with cancer on Canadian outdoor expeditions.

Specifically we sponsored one youth, Jahriah Herault from Ottawa, to travel with On the Tip of the Toes Foundation. The trip was a nine-day canoe trip of 415 kms down the Yukon River finishing at Dawson City.

Thanks to COEO donors and to David and Mei-Fei Elrick for their contributions in 2010.

In 2011, there will be two expeditions. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation in support of these trips. Depending on the expedition, the cost is approximately \$3,000.00 per youth.

Send your donation, made payable to On the Tip of the Toes Foundation and with "The Mike Elrick Tribute" specifically marked on your cheque, to



Hélène Longpré
On the Tip of the Toes Foundation
240, rue Bossé
Chicoutimi, Québec, G7J 1L9

To learn more about the foundation and its expeditions, go to www.tipoftoes.com or contact the Director of Operations, Hélène Longpré, hlongpre@pointedespieds.com or bhender@mcmaster.ca.

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 600 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.

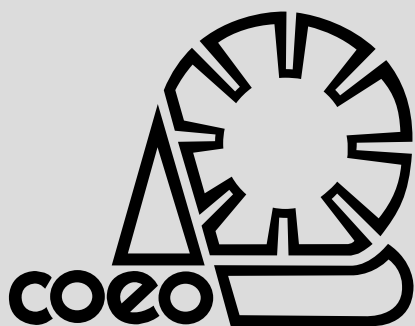
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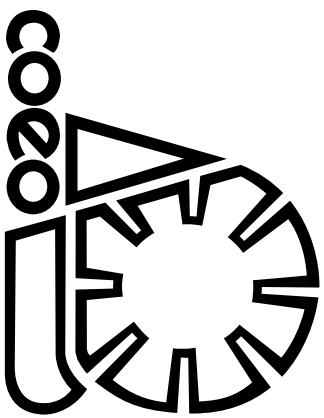
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