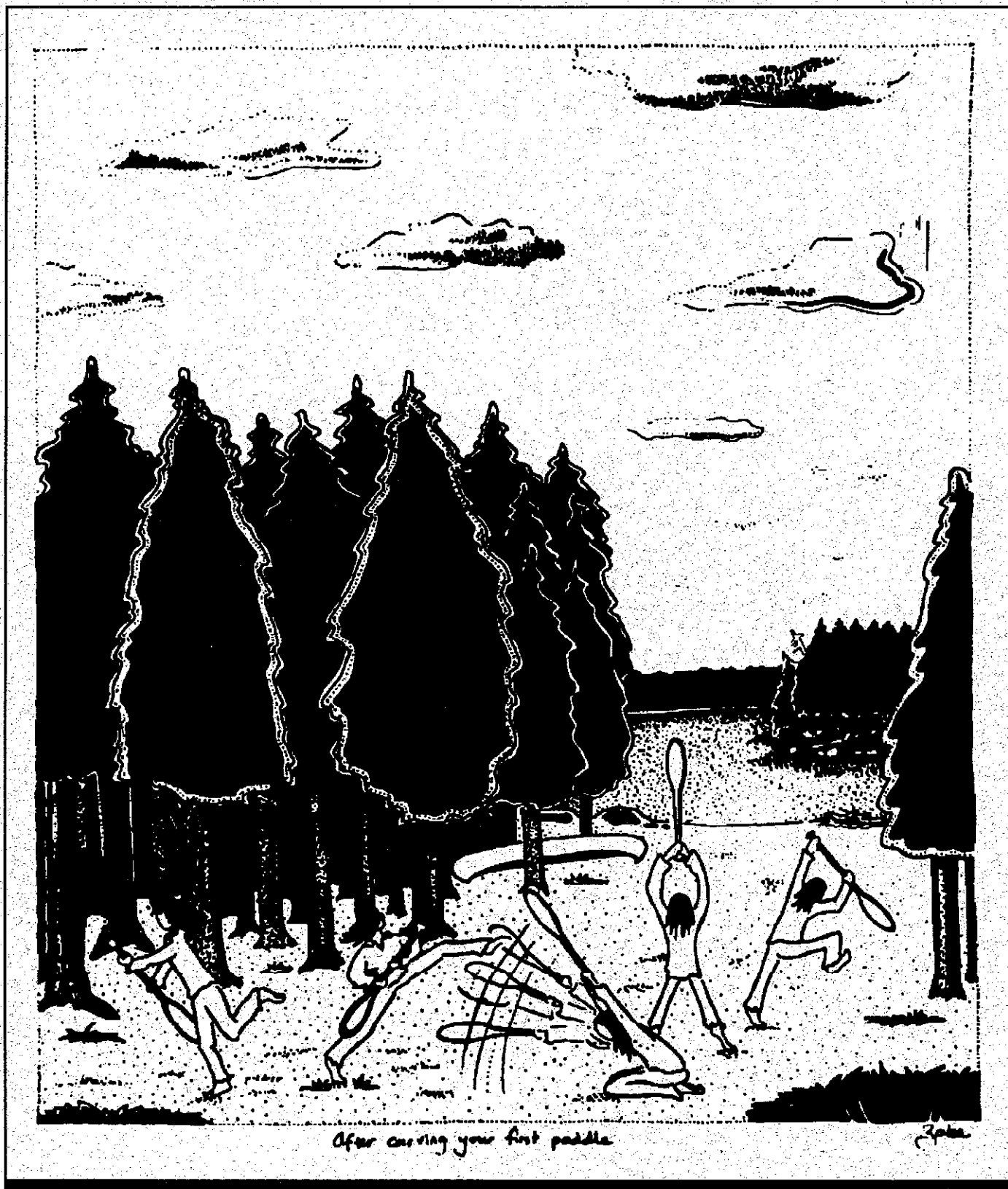


Pathways

Volume 6, No. 5
Summer, 1994

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION



Pathways

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FEATURED ARTISTS

The art in this issue is thanks to a collection of contributors. The cover is by Zabe MacEachern, a regular *Pathways* contributor, and a keynote storytelling presenter at this fall's conference. Sue Kettle's cartoons are a familiar entry. W. J. (Jack) Eastaugh's summer sketches from Canoe Lake, Algonquin Park were featured in the Summer 1991 issue. Steve Tourney, on request, has provided interpretations of Cathy Graham's poems. Thanks to all.

Following the APRIL issue, with its intense look at Outdoor Education in transition, and the thoughtful student issue in June, we would like to offer a varied broad spectrum of content and style. Story, poetry, parables, prose, personal narrative; it's all here to serve as a relaxed summer read by the lake or in a quiet breezy woods. For many of the features and columns, we have tried to think about what makes good 'summer' reading. We hope the content is inspirational, refreshing, and informative. Enjoy. We will continue the Trail Blazers column in the September issue.

The summer and fall are typically times when we receive few submissions. Please consider contributing your ideas for the 1994/1995 issues.

See you at the annual conference at Camp Arowhon! (The Gathering Column provides details.)

SKETCHPAD

Our cover artist, Zabe MacEarchern writes this about her illustration: "The idea for this picture came one day while I was teaching my class how to carve paddles. I kept glancing at one student in particular as she kept admiring and holding her paddle. The next time I saw her she was dancing up and down a path nearby. She looked up and saw me watching her. She just kept on dancing and called back, "Ms. Mac, I just feel like dancing with my paddle."

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear Fellow COEO Members:

Thank you for letting me down once again. For a few weeks I actually began believing that I was going to attend a COEO sponsored event, The Central Region's Spring Gathering. As the date drew nearer, I was beginning to look forward to participating in the high ropes course and kayaking. I even took a chance and invited a few friends of mine to join me. Yet, once again, due to a lack of interest demonstrated by the membership, the event has been cancelled.

In the past, you, the members, managed to force the cancellation of the Cross-Country Skiing Day, the Spring Celebration, and even the Annual Meeting in Peterborough. I send all of my sympathy to those people who spent their valuable time planning these events, to all of those people who faced disappointment when they were cancelled, and to the general membership. Whenever an event is cancelled due to a lack of participation, it sends a subtle message that all is not well with an organization.

I wonder how many members are out there now who have planned on attending an event, only to have it cancelled. I also wonder how many of those same members are now reluctant to commit their time and enthusiasm to another event for fear it, too, will be cancelled. Please excuse me while I phone some friends telling them to make some other plans for June 16, The Spring Gathering will not be.

A disappointed member,
Gerry Schulze

Outlook

This has been a unique year for COEO. It has been a year of non-participation by the majority of the membership. All three major conferences and two Central Region events had to be cancelled because the number of registrants were not sufficient to meet minimum requirements. This has never been a problem in the past but for some reason or a number of reasons, it was this year. The Board of Directors have spent a considerable amount of time discussing this problem but we are only thirteen people out of three hundred and fifty. We need your input to function effectively.

Have the traditional conferences and workshops run their course? What kind of events do you want to see organized? How far are you willing to travel to a COEO event? How much are you willing to spend? Do you want a major conference (or more) every year? How much time are you willing to invest in supporting a COEO event as a participant? Are you willing to organize an event in your local area of the province? Will there be a Conference '95 and if so, who is willing to organize it?

These questions and others like them must be answered by **you** the member. It is imperative that we receive ideas from you about the future direction that you want to see the organization take. In the two years that I have been President I have asked for your input on several occasions and have only received three letters in reply. The Regional Representatives report the same response to their requests for suggestions. It is this indifference which is most damaging to the organization.

I believe that Conference '94 will be the most critical one in the history of the organization. If you care about the future of COEO, then I believe that you must attend this conference. While 100 people have registered already, this is a critical time for COEO members to reconnect and revitalize our organization, as we can not survive another year like the one just past. For those of you planning to attend the conference come prepared with some answers to the questions asked earlier. More importantly come committed to volunteer to organize and run an event in your area. If you cannot see yourself doing this, at the very least make a resolution to support and attend a COEO event this year.

COEO has always been an organization of enthusiastic people ready to learn about Outdoor Education and to develop fellowships with other members. We need that enthusiasm back, we need your ideas and support. See you in Algonquin!

Glen Hester
COEO President

COEO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nominations (and/or volunteers) are invited for the COEO Board of Directors for the year 1994-1995. Any member in good standing may stand for election and any member in good standing may submit a nomination. A list of the Board of Director positions can be found inside the front cover of this issue of *Pathways*. Nominations, in writing, must be received by the nominating committee at least 14 days prior to the annual general meeting. Nominations should be sent to:

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c/o Kathy Reid
R.R. #1, Norwood, ON K0L 2V0
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H (705) 639-5392
Fax (705) 745-7488

COEO AWARDS

Every year the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario chooses to honour its membership and Outdoor Education throughout the province by presenting three awards.

The **Robin Dennis Award** is presented to an individual or outdoor education programme or facility having made an outstanding contribution to the promotion and development of Outdoor Education in the province of Ontario. The award was created in tribute to Robin Dennis, one of the founders of outdoor education in Ontario in the 1950s and 1960s, and is presented annually by the Boyne River Natural Science School and the Toronto Island Natural Science School.

The **President's Award** is presented annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the development of the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) and to outdoor education in Ontario.

The **Dorothy Walter Award** for Leadership was created in 1986 to give recognition to an individual who, like Dorothy Walker herself, has shown outstanding commitment to the development of leadership qualities in Ontario youth. The individual should have demonstrated a commitment and innovation in leadership development, to learning in the out-of-doors, to personal growth in their own life and service to an organization or community.

Send nominations to:

Awards Committee
c/o Glen Hester, 20 Linn Cres., R.R. #3
Caledon East, ON L0N 1E0
(905) 880-0862

THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO KNOW ABOUT THE EARTH

(PROBABLY NOT WHAT YOU THINK)

It's been four years since *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth* blasted to the top of the best-seller list, easily becoming the biggest selling environmental book in history. Almost immediately after its release, its younger cousin, *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do...*, snuggled into the number two spot on the list, and a publishing phenomenon was born.

Imagine yourself the writer of those books. Your publisher calls, asking you to pen another sequel, this time titled, *50 Simple Things Kids Should Know About the Earth*. You eagerly accept the assignment (how could you pass up the hefty advance?), put on a fresh pot of coffee, and ponder a very obvious question: On the list of 50 simple things kids should know, what's item number one? Is there a single most important thing a kid or anyone should know about the earth?

If we posed this question to a random sample of environmental educators, typical responses might be:

'Humans can profoundly alter ecological systems.'

'All of us need to take swift and immediate action to restore the environment to health.'

'The Earth is in trouble, and all people must rally to save her.'

Or perhaps one would choose the immortal closing lines of Dr. Seuss', 'The Lorax': 'Unless each of us cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better, it's not.'

Though I agree with each of these sentiments, none would be my choice for the first thing a child should know about the Earth. Not even close. In fact, what tops my list is perhaps the polar opposite:

'There will always be an Earth, the Earth will always have life, and that life will always

have an ecology.'

It is time to teach our children well, and remind them that the Earth has permanence.

As an educator who has talked with thousands of children in hundreds of schools, I have come to believe that, at this stage in the evolution of environmentalism, this is the most profound truth we can and must share with our children. For both educational programming and popular culture--movies, TV shows, the news, books--have successfully taught millions of children that Earth's ecological systems are hopelessly out of whack. From Barney to Captain Planet to the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, children are consistently remanded and reminded to save the Earth.

And surfing atop the tidal wave of genuine interest kids have in environmental concerns, book publishers grind out eco-kiddie lit like cheap sausage. *The Kid's Environmental Book: What's Awry and Why*, for example, begins like this: 'Our home, the planet Earth, is in trouble.'

I'll tell you what's really awry, and it's not the Earth. Our children are convinced that the ozone hole will soon fry them, global warming flood them, garbage bury them alive, and rainforest fires suffocate them as oxygen vanishes. They believe they will inhabit a planet devoid of pandas, gorillas, whales, condors, tigers, and just about any creature of majesty or mystery. In fact, many kids are convinced they won't even reach adulthood, for there won't even be an Earth by then.

When children should be celebrating the beauty of life, they are instead told to mourn its loss. Just as they are being introduced to nature, they are told to bid it farewell. Even worse, they are told to hate themselves for wreaking this ecological apocalypse, and even revile us, their parents. Time after time, well-

There will always be an Earth, the Earth will always have life, and that life will always have an ecology.

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intentioned environmental educators address school groups with words like this: 'Our generation blew it, kids, so it's now up to you to save the Earth.'

This is an unspeakable tragedy, not to mention shallow-minded, scientifically suspect, and in direct opposition to good teaching. Wielding fear as a weapon to motivate children into taking actions about the environment is an egregious error with huge repercussions. While it is true that Earth's ecological systems are, in fact, in rapid, seemingly permanent decay, and instilling a deep-seated environmental ethic in our children is one of the most important solutions, such an ethic will not evolve from an atmosphere of fear, crisis, and doom.

More importantly, by focusing on the negative, we are stealing from children their most sacred possession: childhood. We should be uplifting them with "awe-full" about the Earth; instead, we are miring them in the awful. We are scaring an entire generation.

If ecosystems are endangered--and I believe they are--and if children are to mature into adults who can nurture and protect them--and I think they should--then children must first know how the Earth's systems are supposed to function. In Chinese mythology, the forces of yin and yang conspired to create the cosmos and all of life. While we have been wildly successful in teaching the cold, dark yin of environmental devastation to the point where every American child understands that ecology is in trouble, we have paid scant attention to the warmth and light of yang, to teaching how the Earth works.

Information about the death of the environment is ubiquitous. Information about the life of the environment is as rare as a black rhinoceros. We tell children that Spaceship Earth's life support systems are failing, yet give them a tool box of irrelevant actions. Write your Senator [MP]. Clean a roadside. Plant a tree. Big deal. Perhaps 100 species are vanishing from our Spaceship every single day--writing a Senator will not get them back!

Deeper actions will. And deeper actions

can only spring from deeper teachings.

To erect an edifice of environmental literacy on an unshakeable foundation that lasts a lifetime--isn't that our goal?--we must begin with this simple act--the Earth is permanent.

To fix environmental ills, people need to know how nature works. To fix environmental ills, students need tools designed to do the job. Big tools. Unbreakable tools.

And the first one is the firm reassurance that our 4.5 billion-year-old planet will always be here. We must provide children--already reeling from a world filled with abuse, violence, and war; drug problems and the AIDS epidemic; poverty, homelessness, and starvation--with the ultimate security: the deep understanding that you do not have to save the Earth, because there always will be an Earth.

Stephen Jay Gould, Harvard professor of geology and famed essayist, wrote of our 'ultimate impotence.' He thinks humans 'are virtually powerless over the Earth at our planet's own geological timescale.' And he's right. The ozone hole's opening--and consequent closing perhaps 50 or even 100 years from now--will prove to be a miniscule blip in the Earth's geological history. Its significance to us is transcendent. For the Earth, however, it is minute.

Alaska was once an Australia-like island. Millions of years ago, it bumped into Baja, California, rolled up the Pacific coast, raised the Rocky Mountains, depositing massive chunks of itself behind--the chunks becoming California, Oregon, British Columbia--finally cementing itself into place in its current position. This is our Earth.

Italy rams Europe to form the Alps while India slides against Asia to raise the Himalayas. The stoop-shouldered and ancient Appalachians, once angular and Alpine in form, slowly wash into the Atlantic, grain by inevitable grain. As these mountains grow smaller, the Atlantic grows larger, widening at about the same rate as a human being's fingernails grow. This is also our Earth.

Gould is not saying we cannot alter or ruin the functioning of habitats from wetlands to woodlands, that we cannot cause species to vanish. He is saying that 'nature does not exist for us, had no idea we were coming, and doesn't give a damn about us.' Long after humankind is gone, Earth--and evolution--will continue.

We need to embrace and teach the ecological understanding known intimately to author Thomas Wolfe. In 1934, he wrote in, *You Can't Go Home Again*:

'All things belonging to the Earth will never change--the leaf, the blade, the flower, the wind that cries and sleeps and wakes again, the trees whose stiff arms clash and tremble in the dark, and the dust of lovers long since buried in the earth--all things proceeding from the earth to seasons, all things that lapse and change and come again upon the earth--these things will always be the same, for they come up from the earth that never changes, they go back into the earth that lasts forever. Only the earth endures, but it endures forever.'

Providing children with a sense of permanence is not the only thing to teach. But it's the first and the most important thing, for permanence becomes the anchor which firmly holds in place all future understandings of the Earth. We need to construct environmental education curricula as we would build a model of the Earth itself.

Permanence--the geological perspective of how the Earth works from the Earth's point of view--is the core of the curriculum, the inner truth underpinning all of our understandings. Nature study and ecology form the mantle resting upon and surrounding this core, where we teach about cycles and adaptations and communities and pollination. Environmental issues--how humans impact the biosphere--become the crust, since the crust is the place on Earth we call home, and since the crust, like these issues, is dynamic, constantly in flux.

Accepting Gould's 'ultimate impotence' does not mean humankind has no impact or

that humankind is not powerful. It just means that looking at the bigger picture, Homo sapiens is neither the center nor the savior of the universe. We must learn to appreciate paradox. The biosphere is in trouble, but it is forever. The biosphere that is dissembling before our eyes will 10 million years from now--a mere geological whimper away--again be rich, varied, and as diverse as ever.

Two years ago, I argued for restoring nature study to its rightful role as centerpiece of environmental education. Allow me to introduce another quaint Victorian idea into the agenda. It is time once again for adults to remember how to talk to children.

This skill, so under-appreciated, is clearly and decisively demonstrated by Rachel Carson, the scientist-writer whose *Silent Spring* ignited modern environmentalism. Carson's sharpened pen was aimed squarely at adult targets when she wrote:

'As crude a weapon as the cave man's club, the chemical barrage (of agricultural pesticides) has been hurled against the fabric of life--a fabric on the one hand delicate and indestructible, on the other miraculously tough and resilient, and capable of striking back in unexpected ways.'

Here's the midwife of modern environmentalism alluding to the yin-and-yang contradictions of it all. Ironically, she herself died of cancer before she could finish a book that many educators cherish even more than *Silent Spring*, the extraordinary piece inspired by her 20-month-old nephew Roger, *A Sense of Wonder*. This is a very different Rachel Carson.

'A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood.'

Later in that work, she continued, 'There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature--the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.'

Carson reminds us of the critical skill of talking in parallel, of having one conversation

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with adults and decision-makers and another one—separate, yet equal—with kids. She gave her yin to adults, her yang to children. She took Roger on long sunset walks, then filled her pen with venom to rail at the injustice of agribusiness gone man. Scold adults, reassure children.

Childhood is fleeting and fragile, and children have urgent business of their own. It's called play, the process through which children figure out how the world works. The mission of adults is simple—to protect children, to let them play, and to slowly bring them into adult conversations as they master their world, step by step.

Though environmental doom seems so imminent, we still must afford children the luxury of time. Children are given 13 years before kindergarten and the prom, and in that sweep of time, we must allow environmental education programming to slowly and richly unfold. We must allow time for the roots to grow. To everything, there is a season.

Remember the publisher's original assignment? To compile a list of 50 simple things kids should know. After number one, 'The Earth is permanent,' you've still got 49 more arrows in your sling. Number two might be, 'Nature is everywhere.' Number three might be, 'Every living thing is wholly unique.' By about item 25, you'll get to, 'All of us can affect the quality of Earth's ecological systems.' And look, you've still got 25 arrows left!

Turn, turn, turn. First, a time to watch ants, to grow peas, to feed winter birds, to wander through goldenrod fields, to stare at a resplendent Monarch emerging from its chrysalis. Then a time for repairing ozone holes, cooling the climate, buying a section of the Amazon rainforest, adopting a whale, and voting that ecologically lazy Senator out of office.

Teach time with time, and perspective. A first grader cannot—and should not!—think she must save an entire planet. It is an unbearable burden to place on a child. Can she improve the planet? Of course. Save it? No. Our job is not to save the Earth, but rather to save ourselves, and the millions of species that inhabit this place and time with us.

To accomplish that, each student must graduate with a complete set of green tools and be given the full sweep of childhood to practice with, and master those tools. Let's agree to behave like adults again, and give children back their childhood, and their sense of wonder.

And always remember the book of environmental education is as long as life itself, extends a full lifetime, and must be read page by page, starting at the beginning.

The book begins with permanence.

MIKE WEILBACHER is an environmental educator and host/producer of an environmental news program on Philadelphia public radio. The winner of the Pennsylvania Environmental Education Association's 1991 Environmental Educator of the Year Award, Mike is well-known for his entertaining, informative Science on Stage program. This article, in its original form, first appeared in the PAEE (Pennsylvania Environmental Education Association) Journal.

Pathways has reprinted a version from Taproot: The Coalition for Education in the Outdoors. Spring 1994

TWO PARABLES ABOUT EDUCATION

THE PARABLE OF ED

CAST

- Ed - Education
- Abel - Adventure Based Learning
- Percy - Outdoor Pursuits
- Edna - Environmental Education
- Dee - Deep Ecology

Once upon a time in a place very much like this one there was a man named Ed. Ed was a very important, yet unspectacular member of his community. He did his job just as his predecessors had and was equally successful. Some days he was an over-achiever, other days, a definite under-achiever. On a certain day, Ed found himself wondering many things. They were ancient questions but Ed had never truly asked them before. He wondered, 'What is my purpose? Why do I do what I do in the way I do it? Do I do what I do in the best way to do it, or do I do what I do in a way that does not do what I do want to do? What is worth doing? Ed was troubled by these questions and he wasn't sure how to answer them.

With all these do's running around in his mind, Ed decided he needed some fresh air so he set out for a walk. He hadn't gone far (and was still a trifle confused by all those do's) when he met a man named Percy. Percy was here in the woods running around and having a wonderful time. Ed asked Percy, 'What are you doing out here in the woods that is such wonderful fun?' 'I'm playing' said Percy, 'I'm running and jumping and climbing and swimming and rolling and sliding and dancing and sweating and laughing and singing and doing all sorts of things that are wonderful. Do you want to join me?' Now what Ed wanted to do was to ask Percy why he was doing what he was doing in the way he was doing it and those other 'do' related questions, but what he did was say 'Yes.' Before long, Ed and Percy

were having a wonderful time together doing all the things Percy had said and more. Ed had so much fun he totally forgot to ask why they were doing what they were doing the way they were doing it. All those do's done for their own sake had provided a swell of well being in doing what is precisely what all Percy's do's were for. Before he knew it, he and Percy collapsed to the ground in a sweating, laughing, out-of-breath heap. This was the sight that Abel saw when he came into the clearing.

Abel called out to Ed and Percy, 'Hello, my name is Abel. Would you like to play some games with me?' Ed and Percy leaped to their feet, eager to see what games Abel knew. Abel's games were very strange. Most of them were make-believe and used ordinary things in extraordinary ways. Ed and Percy had to solve puzzles, walk on logs, swing from ropes, crawl through tunnels, and roll tennis balls back and forth and many other things, some of which were very familiar to Percy, but not Ed. They even had to fall off a stump backwards so the others could catch them. After each game Abel, Ed, and Percy sat down and talked about the game, what they did, how it worked, and even how what they learned could help them 'do' at home and work! Ed was very excited by all of this. He learned many things and had fun doing it. Percy didn't seem quite as enthused. 'Why can't we just play the games?' Percy asked. 'We could,' answered Abel, 'but by structuring the activities in certain ways and talking about them we can learn more things.' We use the games and activities to approach certain learning objectives. We use the games for something else, as a means to a 'do.' That may be fine and good,' said Percy, 'but I would rather just play and do for fun.' Abel and Percy agreed to disagree agreeably and the three friends went on their way together. Ed had wanted more from their discussion, but was still spinning with all that doing. Suddenly and sadly, they noticed that the sun was going

Nature is more than just things we do things to, nature is a who we can relate with and do with.

down. Ed knew he must return home, but he promised his new friends that he would meet them in the woods again very soon.

When the next day dawned bright and clear Ed returned to the woods. He was walking along a path beside a swamp when he nearly tripped over Edna. Edna had a knapsack full of gadgets and gizmos, she even had some thingamajigs hanging off the sides. Ed asked her what she was doing and Edna said, 'I'm learning all about this swamp and its water, plants, insects, fish, birds, and animals. The more I'm able to learn, the better I'll be able to do in and do for it.' Ed soon found himself up to his knees in the slimy muck, having the time of his life, and studying many things. It had been several hours (but seemed like only seconds), when it occurred to Ed to ask Edna, 'Why do you want to 'do' for this old swamp anyway?' (Why one would want to do 'in' seemed obvious now.) 'Well,' Edna replied, 'I've learned that I need this swamp to keep my world and myself healthy for a long, long time. And perhaps some day I can use this swamp in some doing if I understand it. But there is another reason. Would you like to meet my friend Dee?' Ed was only too pleased and they took a short trail to Dee's favourite place in which Dee was quite immersed in 'do.'

Dee was sitting by himself, looking around, thinking and smiling. Edna introduced Ed and Ed asked why Dee would want to save the swamp. 'It's not just the swamp,' said Dee, 'To do, I want to save all of nature because in saving nature I am really allowing nature to save me.' Nature is more than just things we do things to, nature is a who we can relate with and do with. I want to relate to all of nature as well as I possibly can do.' This seemed very confusing to Ed but he listened and talked and learned to communicate and do with all his senses all afternoon while nature, through Dee, taught him many things.

Ed did a lot of thinking that night. He thought about all his new friends, and all the fun he'd had, and all the things he'd learned. He decided that the very next day he would

find Percy, Abel, Edna and Dee so he could invite them to come and stay with him and help him do his job.

It took a long time the next day to find all his friends because while they do in the same nature they do not often do together. Ed was sure his friends would want to help him. He said to them, 'I want you all to come with me and live inside in my house. I want you all to help me do what I do the way you do it. You do what I do, but you do what I do in the way I want to do what I do.' 'We can't,' the four replied. 'We want to help you do what you do the way we do what you do and the way you want to do what you do, but what we do we can't do where you do what you do.' This made Ed very sad. 'I'll never be able to do what I do the way you do, the way I want to do it!' He cried, 'I do not want to do what I do the way I do it anymore. What can I do?' He cried, 'I do not want to do what I do the way I do it anymore. What can I do?' Everyone's heads were slightly spinning after all those do's but eventually they untangled it all and had a great talk. That's when they had the enormous, stupendous, wonderful, magical, Gee-why-didn't-I-think-of-it-before idea! 'I know!' exclaimed Ed, 'I'll do what I do, but I'll do it where you do it. That way, I can do what I do the way you do it, the way I want to do it, and you can all help me do it!' And that's just what they did. And they did it together and called it Outdoor Education. Because, after all, that's what they do and where they do it.

REFERENCES

Later that day; Abel ordered the new adventure-based learning text, *Adventure Therapy* (Kendall Hunt, 1993) by Michael Gass; Percy relaxed with a collection of guide books and adventure travel magazines, including the new magazine, *Eco Traveller* (Skiers America, 7730 S.W. Mohawk, Tualatin, OR., 97062, USA); Dee was excited about the latest issue of *The Trumpeter: Journal of Ecosophy* (Lightstar, P.O. Box 5853, Stn. B., Victoria, B.C. V8R 6S8) and was struggling with the difference be-

tween deep ecology, ecosophy, and transpersonal psychology; Edna, realizing that her field studies and sensory activities need the rigours of programme evaluation in these days of cutbacks, began her read from the new book, *Alternative Paradigms in Environmental Education Research* (Ed.) Rick Mrazek (The North American Association for Environmental Education, P.O. Box 400, Troy, Ohio 45373, USA), and Ed, wondering how he might incorporate all he had learned into his outside and inside worlds, sought out two suitable titles, *Wisdom in the Open Air* (Ed.) Peter Reed and David Rothenberg (University of Minnesota Press, 1993), and *Don't Tell Us It Can't Be Done: Alternative Classrooms in Canada and Abroad* (Ed.) Chuck Chamberlin (Our Schools/Our Selves 1994, ISBN 0-921908-18-0).

CHRIS WIGNALL AND BOB HENDERSON
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A PARABLE ABOUT THAT WHICH CANNOT BE TAUGHT

An exasperated father sent his daughter to live with an enlightened Master. The daughter eventually became one of the Master's most learned and skilled pupils. After several years she graduated and it was time for her to return home. Her father was in the office, when he saw his daughter returning. His daughter walked with an assertive stride, head held high, indicative of great learning and many solutions. The father was worried, however, by what he saw. This is how he had walked the earth in his youth. And so, around the TV in the evening, he gently asked, 'Has the Master taught you that which cannot be taught?' The daughter was at first puzzled, but then after some thought, she replied, 'Of course not, how could she teach me that which cannot be taught?' The father said, 'Masters are able to create situations in which this can be learned.'

Then he said to his daughter, 'Go back to the Master and ask her to teach you that which cannot be taught.' The daughter returned and asked the Master why she had not been taught, 'that which cannot be taught.' The Master replied, 'One must recognize some potential, have the curiosity, then it can be approached, not before.' And so she said to the daughter, 'You take 400 of my animals and go far into the forest where there are few humans. Stay there with the forest and animals until the animals number 1,000, then you may return.' The daughter did as she was told. At first she lectured the animals on all that she knew. She recited great texts and conducted sophisticated experiments. She philosophized to them. But as they paid no attention to these things, she soon stopped such activities. Before long her walk began to change. She began to feel things she had forgotten how to feel. She experienced as fleeting moments a general allurements for all things, strangely not unfamiliar to her, but not readily familiar either. Soon she lost all track of time and years passed. One day she realized that the animals were a bit jumpy, and noted that they now numbered over 1,000. It was time to return to the Master's land. She brought the animals back from the forest and then she began dancing as she went towards the Master's door. The Master saw her coming and went to greet her. The Master said, 'I see you now have learned that which cannot be taught.' And the daughter replied, 'Yes, I knew you would know, but I have come to thank you just the same, and have come to dance my gratitude before I head to the home of my exasperated father who wanted so much for me.'

Adapted from Rajneesh, B. Vedanta: Seven Years to Samadhi. Poona, India: Rajneesh Foundation. 1976 pp. 102-106, and Drengrson, Alan. Being With and Learning From Animals: Morita Therapy and Natural Harmony. International Bulletin of Morita Therapy. Fall, 1990, p. 96.

BY BOB HENDERSON

'Has the Master taught you that which cannot be taught?'

SILENCE AND THE NOTION OF THE COMMONS

The following is a condensation by Gayle Young of the talk given by Ursula Franklin at the Banff Centre, August 11, 1993, as part of 'The Tuning of the World,' the first international conference on acoustic ecology. It has been further revised for *Pathways* by Carolyn Finlayson.

What I really want to do is see how our concept, as well as our practice, of silence has been influenced by all the other things that have changed as our world has become what Jacques Ellul calls a "technological milieu," a world that is increasingly mediated in all its facets by technology. I hope to be able to show you that we are faced with two domains in which silence is important and I want, as I describe how those two domains in a sense impinge upon each other, to talk about the notion of the commons, common needs, and our common heritage.

Before we had a technologically mediated society, before we had electronics and electromagnetic devices, sound was rightly seen as being ephemeral, sound was coupled to its source, and lasted only a very short time. This is very different from what we see in a landscape, however much we feel that the landscape might be modified, however much we feel that there is a horrible building somewhere in front of a beautiful mountain. On the scale of the soundscape, the landscape is permanent. What is put up is there. That's very different from the soundscape. However, what modern technology has brought to sound is the possibility of doing two things: to separate the sound from its source and to make the sound permanent. In addition to that, of course, modern devices make it possible to decompose, recombine, analyze, and mix sounds and to change the initial magnitude and sustainability of sound, to change all the characteristics that link the sound with its source. Murray Schafer calls this "schizophonia."

But then there is not only sound, there is also silence. And silence is affected by the same technological developments, the same factors that make it possible to separate the sound and the source and to overcome the ephemeral nature of any soundscape. One comes to the root of the meaning and practice of silence only when one asks: *why is it that we address, that we value, that we try to establish, silence?* Absence of sound is a necessary but it is not a sufficient condition to define what we mean by silence. The second attribute, the second parameter, from my point of view, comes out of the question: *why is it that we talk, that we worry, about silence?* Because silence is an enabling environment. When one thinks about the concept of silence, one notices the fact that there has to be somebody there who listens before you can say there is silence. Silence, that is, the absence of sound is defined, by a listener, by hearing. In this way the modern soundscape and the modern understanding of silence divides itself into two domains. It divides itself into the domain that we traditionally associate with silence, the enabling condition in which unprogrammed and unprogrammable events can take place. That is the silence of contemplation; that is the silence where people get in touch with themselves; that is the silence of meditation and worship. And what makes this distinct is that it is a silence that is an enabling condition, that opens up the possibility of unprogrammed, unplanned and unprogrammable happenings.

There is another silence. There is the silence that enables a programmed, a planned, event to take place. There is the silence in which you courteously engage so that I might be heard: in order for one to be heard all the others have to be silent. And in many cases the silence is not taken on voluntarily. This is the form of forced silence that I am afraid of. It is not only the silence of the padded cell, the silence of solitary confinement, but it is also

the silencing that comes when there is the megaphone, the boom box, the PA system, and any variation in which sound and voices are silenced so that a planned event can take place.

There is a critical juncture that I hope you will keep in mind, between the planned and the unplanned, the programmed and the unplanable. I feel very strongly that our present technological trends drive us toward a decrease in the space--be it in the soundscape, in the landscape, and in the mindscape--for the unplanned and unplanable to happen. Yet silence has to remain available in the soundscape, in the landscape, and in the mindscape. Allowing openness to the unplanable, to the unprogrammed, is the core of strength of silence. It is also the core of our sanity, not only individually, but collectively. I extend these considerations to the collectivity because as a community, as a people, we are just as threatened by the impingement of the programmed over the silent, over the enabling of the unprogrammed. I think much of the impingement happens unnoticed, uncommented upon, and in some ways much less obviously than an intrusion of a structure into the landscape. While we may not win a battle at city hall to preserve our trees, at least there is now a semi-consciousness that this is important.

How can one get away from the dangers of even the gentle presence of programmed music in public buildings? There are two aspects that I want to stress. One is that the elimination of silence is done without anybody's consent. The second is that one really has to stop, think and analyse to see how manipulative these interventions are. In any case, who on earth has given anybody the right to manipulate the sound environment?

Here I want to come back to the definition of silence and introduce the notion of the commons because the soundscape essentially doesn't belong to anybody. What we are hearing, I feel, is very much to privatisation of the soundscape in the same manner in which, in Britain, the enclosure laws destroyed the

commons. Silence is being taken out of common availability. By the use to which modern technology is put, societies have come into a position where something that had been normal becomes rare and precious and something that was abnormal becomes normal. The soundscape is not only polluted by noise, so that one has to look for laws relating to noise abatement, but has also become increasingly polluted by the private use of sound in the manipulative dimension of setting programming moods and conditions. There is a desperate need to be aware of this situation in terms of the collectivity rather than only in terms of individual needs. I feel very much that this is a time for civic anger. This is a time when one has to say: *town planning knows the constraints of land use, density and scale, but what does town planning have to say about silence?*

What would I suggest? Just this; the insistence that as human beings in a society we have a right to silence. Just as we feel we have the right to walk down the street without being physically assaulted, without being assaulted by ugly outdoor advertising, we also have the right not to be assaulted by sound, and in particular, not to be assaulted by sound that is there solely for the purpose of profit. Now is the time for civic rage, as well as civic education, but also the time for some action.

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THE VISITOR WHO KNOCKS

I walked down the darkening street as the rising wind moaned in off the frozen arctic sea. All the houses were the same, painted a sick robin's egg blue; square little boxes. You could identify whose house it was more by what sort of clutter was in their yards, a broken down snowmobile here, a particular dog chained there. These were the things they owned. The houses were owned by the government.

I came to Anaija's house and knocked at the door. By now I knew this would alert the occupants that it was a Qablunaq who had come calling and not an Inuq. Inuit never knocked when they came to visit, they just walked in. It was an unsettling practice for many of the whites who lived here but you got used to it.

Anaija, a wizened old man with glasses and a cigarette hanging out of his mouth, opened the door. A cloud of warm moist air engulfed me as it rolled out from the open doorway and froze into an ice fog.

Auqpaluqtuq eeheerit.'

I did as I was bade and entered. Inside, the house had a predictability like the exteriors along the street. There was no furniture to speak of with the exception of a dining room set of tubular steel type, no curtains on the windows, they were covered in frost. There was an oil burning cookstove that also served to heat the house. On it was a pot of water boiling for the making of tea. It also gave the interior of the house its steamy quality.

'Teetoojumavit Auqpaluqtuq?'

I didn't mind being called the blood-faced one. It was better than some of their own names for each other. They named you as they saw you. My face always burned red during the first spring seal hunts on the sea ice.

'Eee,' I replied in the affirmative. This was all ritual, part of the politeness of the culture, of which I had little understanding. A guest who entered your house was always offered

tea, as many cups as he could possibly drink. I wondered what they had offered strangers at their door before the Qablunait had come to this ice locked land and there was no tea.

I sat down at the table opposite my host and a mug was placed in front of me. I poured from a glass carafe, with at least ten tea bags floating in it, a thick black liquid. No doubt it had been boiling away on the oil stove all day with various additions of tea bags and water as the need arose. It was no use to ask for milk, no one used it here. It was too expensive. The only addition possible would be sugar of which Anaija was spooning copious amounts into his cup. I, on the other hand, took my tea without sugar, and it would be bitterly strong. I wondered if I could get through more than one cup.

I watched my host. He must have been in his middle seventies. Certainly, he had no more idea of his age than had I. He was born in a time before the Qablunait had come to control his land with their notions of empirical time. His hair was white and unkempt, framing a nut brown, weather-creased face. He wore a T-shirt and a baggy pair of pants. On his feet were caribou skin qamiqs.

His hand's long elegance was spoiled by twisted broken nails. They were stained with nicotine on the left, and several fingers were missing on the right, no doubt the result of some hunting accident years ago.

We sat in silence and occasionally exchanged reassuring smiles. This was the ritual of visiting. At first I thought this silence was awkward and the result of a foreign stranger in their midst. But as I became more adept at visits, I noticed that talking even among the Inuit was unnecessary. They were a race of men who spoke only when there were things to be spoken of, not incessant chatterers like the Qablunait.

I surveyed the room at my leisure. There was no furniture. On the floor lay the rear end

of a frozen caribou carcass on some cardboard. A trickle of blood had run off the cardboard and stopped just short of the base of the stove where it had dried up from the heat. If I had been hungry, I could have taken a knife and cut myself a chunk to eat without asking the permission of my host. Food was for everyone.

As appalling as this might sound, it didn't taste too bad. I ate what they ate, slept where they slept, and hunted with them. I wanted to fit in, to not be a stranger in their midst.

There were two small rooms partitioned off from the main room that served as bedrooms, the doorways had blankets tacked up as privacy screens.

Although the surroundings seemed stark, many of the older Inuit saw no need for furniture of any sort, sitting on the floor was something they had always done whether in tent or in igloos.

Seated on the floor was one of Anaija's granddaughters, a girl of 12 or 13. She was sewing on a hand-cranked sewing machine what looked to be canvas uppers for a pair of qamiqs. She smiled shyly in our direction. I was glad of her presence since she would be able to translate for me. I had business to conduct with the old man and my Inuqtitut was rudimentary, despite my attempts to master its intricate grammar and vocabulary.

I had poured myself a second cup of tea. I was stalling for time, but I knew I couldn't drink a third cup. This was the difficult part; how to begin.

I turned to the girl on the floor.
'Qinauooovit?'

'Lydia,' she replied in the flat expressionless tone that most of the children used. They were proficient in the language having used it in school but spoke it there only. Her true thoughts and inflection were only to be found in Inuqtitut.

'Would you ask your grandfather a question for me?'

'Yes,' she replied looking to the old man, who nodded.

'I have heard people say that Anaija has a nulaq that is very old, one that was given to him by his father. I would like to look at it.'

In a rapid and fluent burst of Inuqtitut that took somewhat longer than my original request, she put the question to the old man.

'Eee,' he replied and got to his feet and shuffled to the door to the cold room between the interior and exterior of the house. When he opened the door, another cloud of cold air rolled into the room temporarily obscuring my sight of him. He rummaged about for a few minutes and returned.

He lay the small piece of brass on the table in front of me. It immediately frosted over as the warm air from the house condensed on it and froze. I picked it up and turned it over in my hand. It burned my palm it was so cold. The harpoon head was made of brass with a piece of steel inset at the tip as the cutting edge. The steel has been riveted in place with another smaller piece of brass. The base of the head had been drilled out to accommodate the shaft of the harpoon itself and the tail of the harpoon head had been split into two pieces and bent upward. Each of these in turn had been notched with a file.

I admired the workmanship. Whoever had made this thing had spent days working with no more tools than a file and perhaps a stone lamp to heat the metal and bend it. How they had drilled the holes and cut the inset slot for the cutting edge, I had no idea.

It was perfectly crafted for the job of killing; a whale, a seal, a walrus. It would be stabbed in and stay. The shaft of the harpoon would be withdrawn and a rope of seal hide would hold the creature attached to a floating, sealskin bladder until it was dispatched with more lances, or, in later times, a rifle. The purpose of the harpoon was to keep the quarry from sinking in death or escaping in life.

What interested me even more was that I was sure the brass and steel, in this primitive weapon, had in all probability come from the brass instruments on Sir John Franklin's ship, the *Victory*. I was certain I was holding in my

hand one of the last remaining artifacts from that doomed ship of more than a hundred years ago. The first of the Qablunait to penetrate this far into the frozen land of the Inuit, never to be released from its grasp.

Searchers for the Franklin expedition had found Inuit who told them of a season when they had encountered many starving Qablunait. Also these Inuit were said to have in their possession tools made from brass and iron taken from the ship's ice beset hull. It wasn't hard to imagine what a bonanza this malleable metal would have been for a people who had only bone and stone to fashion for tools. The brass was the most highly prized by them since it was relatively easy to work.

For me, this frosted lump of metal was a tangible link with the past and the fate of Franklin's men. I wanted it for my own collection of artifacts.

Now came the most difficult part. Could I convince the old man, Anaija, to part with it for a price.

'Lydia, ask your grandfather where he got this from.'

There followed a three-minute exchange between the pair.

'Grandfather says it was given to him by his father and it was given to him by his and it was given to him by his uncle. It was a long time ago. Taimana marialuk, marialuk,' she added in Inuqtitut.

'Grandfather asks why you are interested in such an old piece of junk.'

The old man eyed me with a mirthful curiosity through his glasses as he rolled himself another cigarette. It was evident that he and I understood each other on at least the most basic level. He knew I wanted the naulaq.

'I was interested in it because it is very old,' I replied, hedging a bit.

'Perhaps it came from some of the first Qablunait to come here,' I added weakly. I knew this would not impress him.

Anaija turned and spoke to Lydia. She looked at me with her large brown eyes and laughed.

'He says why would Auqpaluqtuq be interested in an old piece of junk, when the Qablunait has so many more valuable things he can buy at the Bay Store.'

'Thumacongeetug,' I replied and pointed my finger at my head and made a few rapid circles with it. Lydia covered her mouth with her hand and giggled. My joke got only a smile from Anaija.

'How much does your grandfather want for the naulaq if I wanted to buy it?' I said trying to appear as disinterested as possible.

The old man spoke to her briefly.

'He asks how much would Auqpaluqtuq give him for the naulaq.'

The old man smiled innocently at me. He wanted to see how bad I wanted it. The next move was crucial. I wanted the naulaq but I didn't have much money, and in truth, the thing was nothing more than old junk. I could never prove that it came from the Victory.

'Tell him I'll give him \$10 for it,' I said.

'\$60,' replied the old man not waiting for translation. It appeared he understood numbers spoken in English quite well.

'\$20,' I replied.

'\$60,' he countered with a smile shaking his head and blowing a cloud of smoke.

I turned to Lydia.

'Tell your grandfather that for \$60 I can buy a new rifle,' I said with a smile.

As she translated, the old man laughed and then launched into a three-minute speech.

'Grandfather says that when he was a young man this was a rifle. He says he has killed many seals and nanuit. He says it is as good as a rifle and is worth \$60. He says he is glad the Qablunait brought the rifle to the Inuit because it was hard to kill the nanuq with the naulaq but he says he could still do it, if he wasn't so old.'

I couldn't believe it. The old man was telling me he had killed polar bears with this thing. Bullshit, I thought. Going up against a 1,500 pound polar bear with a piece of brass and steel mounted on a stick was surely an elaborate form of suicide.

'How many bears has Anaija killed with this naulaq Lydia?'

'Four,' said Lydia.

'\$60,' chimed in Anaija.

This was hopeless. I wasn't going to pay \$60 for the harpoon head, and it didn't look like he was going to drop his price.

'Lydia, tell Anaija I can't pay him \$60 for the naulaq. Thank him for the tea. I have to go now.'

She translated, and Anaija replied briefly.

'He says that's okay. You are young and a Qablunaq, he says he understands.'

I was used to this tacit insult. All faux pas and foolishness could be attributed to these two shortcomings. In my case, I was doubly cursed. It frustrated me to no end. I had lived in this village for two years, but I knew today that I would always be the stranger.

Aiyournamat. It could not be helped.

I understood too, that if I had asked to borrow the harpoon head, the old man would have gladly lent it. But in wanting to possess this thing, I had transgressed some boundary and shown myself to be in ignorance.

I got up to leave.

'Lydia, do you think Anaija really killed four bears with this naulaq?'

'Oh yes,' she replied, her eyes widening in disbelief that I would question her grandfather's story.

'Grandfather never lies,' she smiled at me.

As I walked to the door, Anaija picked up the harpoon head and put it back in its place on the shelf in the cold room.

'Aqagooptauq, Anaija,' I said.

'Aqagooptauq, Auqpaluqtuq,' he said.

I walked out into the street. It was only three in the afternoon and was already pitch black. The wind had picked up in speed and was howling among the houses.

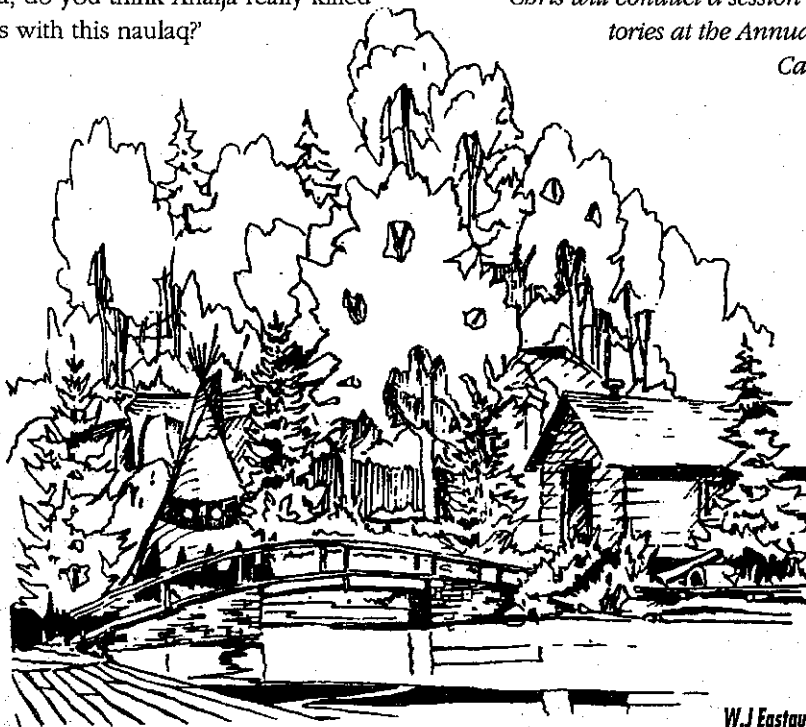
What kind of people were these, I wondered, who would go out to kill a giant white bear with a piece of brass mounted on a stick. It seemed I would never know.

I walked home.

CHRIS BLYTHE

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Chris will conduct a session on site inventories at the Annual Conference, Camp Arowhon.



W.J. Eastaugh

THREE POEMS

The Deer Fly Bite

Fifteen and I am walking home from school.
The grasshoppers itch in the fields,
and up ahead, by the abandoned railroad
tracks,
killdeers cry like whistling tea-kettles
steaming the sky. Inside the scroggy ditch,
paper bits float into what looks like
a torn letter; my reminder to write
my grandmother to thank her
for the blue-knit sweater.

The grass is springing green
as I turn up the driveway.
Puddled potholes are murky,
gray, and muddy. A crawling
white and red caterpillar
catches my eye. And oh,
my shoelace is undone.

It is while I am bending back up
I see a deer, circle-framed in green.

Its delicate head facing me-
brown eyes to blue. My heart
demanding more blood pumps
furiously.
Does the deer's heart do the
same?

Staring in this pool of stillness
time sinks underneath the
puddles.
All of the world is in this mo-
ment.

It is a female deer, a doe,
with a twitching right ear. ZZZZZZ.
Do I hear the buzz of the deer-fly?

Then it is I who is bitten.
And with reflex slap my neck.
This cracks the mirror.
But not a shatter as glass to concrete,
a softness instead, like the caress
of a cat against skin.

The does gracefully trails
into another frame of green,
into the bush ever so slowly,
until its white-tail flicks,
out of sight, like the caterpillar
that is no longer there,
while the grasshoppers twitch,
itching in the distance.

Undercurrents

The bees wasp around the garden
making scribbles in the air.
The petunias (pink and white)
are dry in need of watering.
On the cedar-brown dock
a mother sits smoking in the midday sun,
watching her daughter swim to the floating
raft.

Her strokes are clear and strong,
as her legs kick making splashes
into a trail of mini-fountains.
The mother flicks her pink-stained cigarette
until the ashes fall in front of an ant,
carrying a crumb from the daughter's sand-
wich.

The ant's path is only temporarily blocked,
as the cylinder rolls between the cracks.
If her daughter were to begin to drown
the mother knows she can barely swim,
especially when she is unable to touch the
ground.

But all is well as the daughter ascends the
steps
of the raft making footprints and drips
on the dry wooden craft.
The mother exhales a sail of smoke in the
wind
as her daughter springs into the air diving in.



Snails and Trilobites

I picked a stone from Portmuck Harbour,
 dry, it radiated coolness like my grandmother's
 cellar.
 It was heavier than the others sitting in my
 pocket,
 and I liked it more.
 Stamped with a snail shell it fossiled me back
 to my eleventh summer.
 When a few months after my Mother's first
 operation
 we moved to Fort Erie to a house on a quarry.
 Like a bathtub, a buried faucet transformed
 this
 empty pit into a water pit, the decade before
 my mother's birth. All due to dynamite.
 I walked these edges peeping down drilled
 holes,
 concrete echoes of a working past, and
 bending further, examining the limestone,
 I touched the leftover lives of little animals
 with my fingers. Dry, they radiated coolness
 like my grandmother's cellar.



*CATHY GRAHAM is a COEO member
 currently living in Ireland where
 she is studying poetry.*

*ARTIST
 STEVE TOURNEY was commissioned to
 render these interpretations of Cathy's work.
 Steve lives in Hamilton. His specialty is
 drawing airplanes for which he has
 won a national award.*

HALFWAY MAN

by Wayland Drew

In *Halfway Man*, Wayland Drew weaves a fictional account of a clash between two value systems. Aspen Corporation plans to build a resort on land occupied by the members of Neyashing, a small aboriginal community in Northern Ontario. The novel recounts the efforts of Travis Niskigwun and his family to halt the project. This plot line provides the frame within which Wayland Drew pulls the materialist and reductionist values which inform our economy into conflict with the spiritual and holistic values of the aboriginal culture.

However, the two value systems are not antithetically represented. In creating characters who are exposed to and influenced by both western and aboriginal values, Wayland Drew suggests that this is not just friction between distinct paradigms and cultures—it is a struggle which also occurs on an individual level. Travis Niskigwun, the narrator of the story, is intelligent, has a university education, and chose to return to his community. His partner, Jenny, is an environmental activist and teacher who blends a deep commitment to the environment with distrust in the 'spirits' to whom Travis speaks. Michael Gardner, the president of the Aspen Corporation, has a background in wilderness travel and arrives at Neyashing deeply troubled by, and only partially aware of, the tension between his societal role and personal values. Michael's affinity with the wilderness and Travis' educational background create an equality of understanding between the two that fuels this relationship and adds credibility to the novel's resolution.

Halfway Man is set in memory and aware of its construction as a story. Travis suggests various point of beginning, and although he narrates, at one point he suggests that the story belongs to Michael Gardner. Instead of following a linear narrative line, Drew entwines the past with the present, mixing mythical tribal stories told to Travis by his family, biographies of incidental characters such as a German pilot and a Vietnam war

veteran, Michael Gardner's story, and Travis' childhood memories and adolescent experiences with the events surrounding the Aspen crisis. The result is a richly layered examination of various cultural and personal value systems within the context of attitudes towards and relationships with the wilderness.

Neyashing is part of the identity Travis offers to readers when they begin the novel. 'I belong in the North,' he states in his second sentence. His spirituality is linked to the lake, and land, and his ancestors. 'I can't tell the difference between me and this lake, those sounds, that moon. It's because I don't know where I end and the wilderness begins,' Travis states. Michael Gardner lacks this sense of belonging and seems desperate to comprehend Travis' strong connection to a 'place'. Perhaps Drew offers Gardner as an example of a western culture that is troubled, yet unaware of a spiritual void and unable to create a sense of 'belonging.'

The many tensions within the novel remain at the end. Although on a personal level resolution is reached within most characters, the friction between values and cultures remains. Drew's tale shows the differences between the aboriginal and western ways of assigned value and ownership, and although he avoids creating a distinct opposition between the two paradigms, his narration suggests that 'belonging,' a 'sense of place,' and spiritual awareness and health is linked to community and the land. The ending to the Aspen/Neyashing conflict is hopeful, yet almost unbelievable. However the emphasis in this novel is on the characters and their personal turmoil as they search for balance between two ways of understanding their surroundings. Drew creates an entertaining, thought provoking, subtle, and at times troubling novel fuelled by this obvious belief in the necessity of such a discussion of values.

DREW, WAYLAND. *Halfway Man*.

Oberon Press, 1989. *Halfway Man* is available at some independent book stores or can be ordered from the publishers.

Wayland Drew
pulls the
materialist and
reductionist
values which
inform our
economy into
conflict with the
spiritual and
holistic values
of the
aboriginal
culture.

CAROLYN FINLAYSON is a member of the *Pathways* editorial board. She is currently a student at Wilfred Laurier University.

PLANNING FOR SEVEN GENERATIONS: MIKE NICKERSON

Guideposts Projects

P.O. Box 374, Merrickville, ON N0G 1N0

In the play *Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen, the protagonist, Dr. Stockman, realizes that the recreational Baths in his town, which are a major source of income, are being fatally polluted by leather tanneries, the other major economic force in the town. As a rational and ethical man, he realizes that he is obliged to report the news to the town council. He firmly believes that once the town council receives his findings they will realize that cleaning up the Baths is the only rational course. But those in charge of the town are influenced by other forces—namely the pressures of the large financiers who do not want to pay to clean up the Baths. As a result, Dr. Stockman's discoveries are perverted and discredited in spite of their obvious truth, and Dr. Stockman is labelled an 'Enemy of the People' and is left stunned by peoples' ability to ignore reality in favour of the 'path of least resistance.'

Mike Nickerson, the author of *Planning for Seven Generations: Guideposts for a Sustainable Future*, is indeed a true 'enemy of the people.' His small book argues the necessity for a more sustainable mode of living, offers some options to our present lifestyle, and offers eight 'guideposts' by which we can judge whether or not an activity is sustainable. Like Dr. Stockman, Nickerson has an unshakable optimism that a more sustainable mode of living will prevail if the facts regarding options to our environmentally destructive lifestyles are brought to the public's attention. 'We only need to bring the option to [the public's] attention,' writes Nickerson. 'When they think about it, the reality of the situation will speak louder than anything we can say' (p. 74).

However, he ignores the 'schizophrenia' (the ability to recognize, and yet ignore

reality), which plagues our society. I found his book at times refreshing, yet at times it was overly zealous, even utopic. 'Sustainability would result in a whole new attitude towards being human,' writes Nickerson. A sustainable world would be a more humane world, in which we might implement a three-day week so that, 'we would have enough time to give our children all the love they need to grow up good and strong, and [have] time left over to give ourselves the opportunity to explore the greater potentials available to us as human beings' (p. 97).

Although I think he expects too much from discussion and implementation of sustainability, Nickerson puts forward many sound ideas that are simple yet true. It is easy to criticize his vision as being naive, or overly optimistic, because no-one has yet tried his ideas. We should remember that the main focus of *Planning for Seven Generations* is discussion, and I believe that he is aware that his vision (or hope) may not bear much resemblance to the financial situation. The cynical (realist?) critic is playing it safe, and perpetuating the status quo, by avoiding the challenge put forward by Nickerson. *Planning for Seven Generations* expresses the kind of simple truths that are easily mocked by some, yet cannot be easily dismissed.

CHARLES O'HARA

Charles is a 4th year student in Arts and Science at McMaster University.

ECO-MUSIC VIDEO

The well-crafted, 28-minute video, *No Small Wonder*, introduces six ecosongs (including 'I Am a River,' 'Use it Again,' and 'If the Earth Were Only') sung by Heather Griffin and three school choirs. Between the rousing songs are profiles of exemplary ecoactivities of young students across Newfoundland and Labrador. A teacher's guide/songbook includes the music and additional ideas for activities. Highly motivational for Grades 2 to 6, the video and guide cost \$49.95 from Atlantic Centre for the Environment, Box 3, Nagles Place, St. John's, NF A1B 2Z2; phone (709) 754-5948.

Nickerson has an unshakable optimism that a more sustainable mode of living will prevail if the facts regarding options to our environmentally destructive lifestyles are brought to the public's attention.

THE DE TROYES EXPEDITION RE-ENACTMENT 1995

Iroquois Falls Canoe and Kayak Club
P.O. Box 1178, Iroquois Falls, ON P0K 1G0
(705) 258-3851

*Remembering
the voyageur
history of
his northern
homeland, he
entertained the
idea of bringing
De Troyes'
expedition route
to prominent
attention.*

Some individuals, mindful of Canadian history and heritage, struggle to reunite Canadians with their past. One such individual is Tim McDonagh, President of the Iroquois Falls Canoe and Kayak Club. Currently, McDonagh is organizing a re-enactment of part of the De Troyes Expedition route, from Mattawa to Iroquois Falls.

McDonagh's prime objective is to have the Mattawa to James Bay passage designated as a Canadian Heritage Route. This is a long, tedious process involving the elicitation of community, provincial and federal support.

Iroquois Falls, McDonagh's home community, lies on the northern leg of the expedition route. Street names—namely, De Troyes, D'Iberville and Ste. Helene, leading members of the original expedition—serve as reminders of the region's history. McDonagh learned this history during his youth.

The idea of re-enacting the expedition route occurred to McDonagh when he met Don Meany at Canoe Expo in Etobicoke, Ontario, two years ago. Meany had been part of a canoe expedition from Vancouver to Montreal marked to coincide with the opening ceremonies of Expo 67. McDonagh was enthralled by Meany's tales of adventure. Remembering the voyageur history of his northern homeland, he entertained the idea of bringing De Troyes' expedition route to prominent attention.

McDonagh discussed the feasibility of a re-enactment with friends and associates. Six months later, the idea turned to action. He began to plan, organize, and seek sponsorship.

The re-enactment is scheduled in August, 1995. It will start at the Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park, west of Mattawa, and will

finish at Iroquois Falls. The course, covering about 700 kilometres, will be broken into three sections: from Mattawa to New Liskeard, from new Liskeard to Lake Abitibi, and from Lake Abitibi to Iroquois Falls. These divisions will allow canoeists to complete segments of the expedition. Public information stopovers are being negotiated in Temiskaming, Ville Marie, Haileybury, New Liskeard and Matheson.

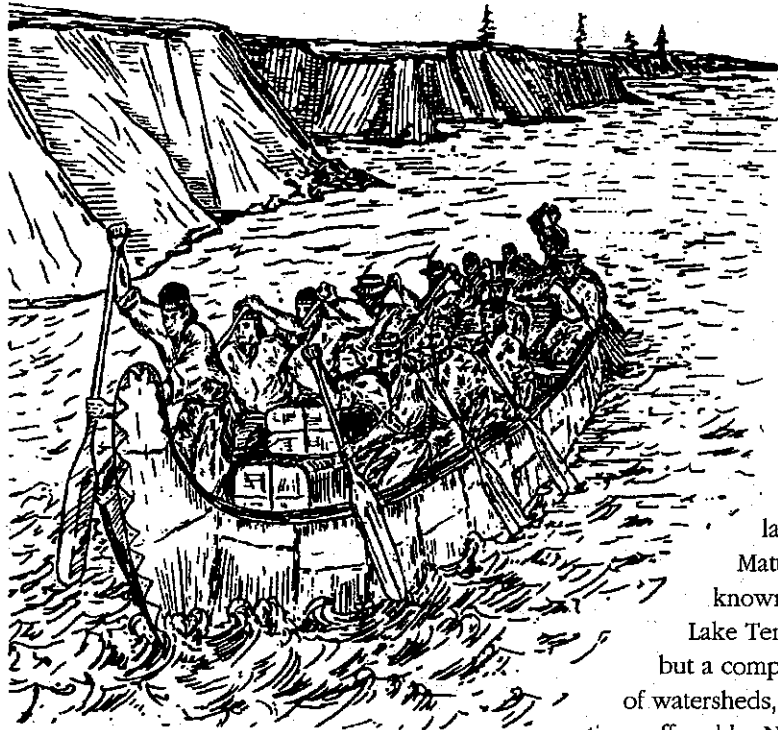
Participants completing the full circuit will travel by voyageur canoe. This canoe, fully loaded, can average 80 kilometres a day, and without diversion, could complete the course in about 10 days. The re-enactment, however, is not a race; it will be spread over a three-week period.

A three-day regatta on Frederickhouse Lake, Connaught, Ontario, is currently being organised for the summer of 1994. This regatta will be a meeting place for all canoeists interested in the Re-enactment. Specific departure/arrival dates, stopovers, and supply requirements will be decided and established during this meeting.

De Troyes' water route will offer scenic beauty, solitude, repose, fun, education, and as many challenges as an experienced canoeist can handle. The participants will gain a lifetime of memories and friendships.

The discovery of the Montreal-James Bay voyageur route is attributed to Chevalier Pierre De Troyes. In the mid-1600's, the British established several forts in James Bay to negotiate fur trade with northern Amerindian tribes. The French, sovereigns of the land, saw the British encampments as threats to their dominion and to the fur trade. In 1686, the French Gouverneur dispatched De Troyes to capture these British forts and to entrench

De Troyes Expedition...

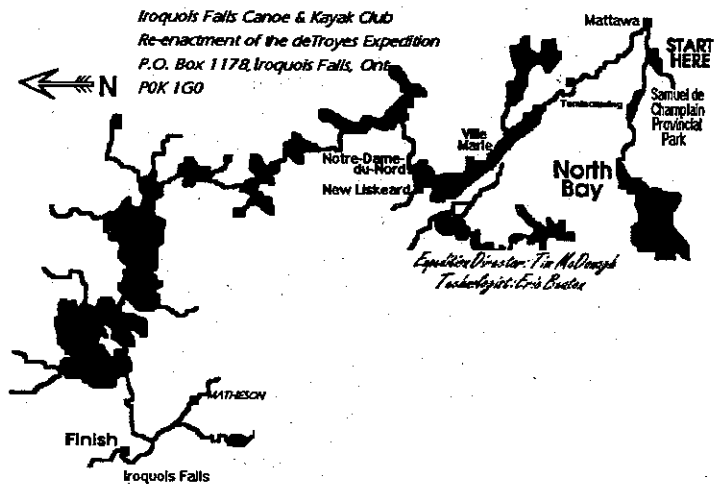
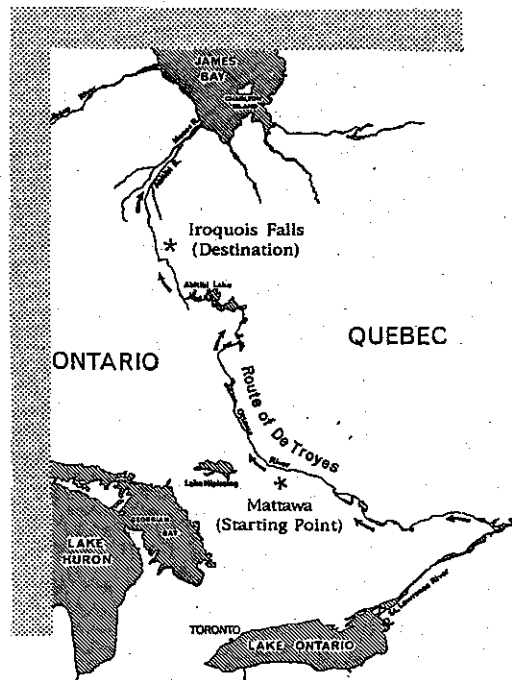


French rule. Historically, the venture is known as the De Troyes Expedition.

To reach James Bay, De Troyes and his men had to cut through uncharted landscapes. The path from Montreal to Mattawa along the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers was well known to early trappers and fur traders.

Little was known of the land immediately north of Mattawa. Nothing was known of the region north of Lake Temiskaming. With nothing but a compass, a sketchy knowledge of watersheds, and the sketchy directions offered by Natives the expedition met along the way, De Troyes coursed his way to James Bay along waterways skirting the present day Ontario-Quebec border. It was an arduous, 1,300 km-journey.

Interested parties may submit a \$5.00 membership fee payable to **The Iroquois Falls Canoe and Kayak Club**, and mail it to Eric Beaton, Expedition Assistant, Box 1179, Iroquois Falls, Ontario P0K 1G0. Members will receive newsletters outlining expedition developments.



GENDER AND THE CANOE TRIPPING MICROCOSM

...having two women lead a co-ed youth trip raises some eyebrows.

I spend two months of the year in the isolated microcosm of the canoe tripping world. Here, the only faces I look into are those surrounding the campfire each night as we stir our tasty one pot meal. Some think the urban stress of traffic jams and Insta-banks is the 'real world'; I believe that the group dynamics that evolve on an extended canoe trip have a very real influence on the individuals in the group. The co-ed youth camp I work for facilitates remote wilderness canoe trips on rivers across Canada. We have followed the footsteps and paddle strokes of great explorers such as Franklin, Back, and Hearne who, like ourselves, were awestruck by the indescribable beauty of the sub-Arctic and Barrens. Our trips are very different than theirs. We have maps, durable rubber boats, and many 'explorers' are now women.

Women leading remote wilderness canoe trips is not revolutionary--this is the nineties. However, having two women lead a co-ed youth trip raises some eyebrows. One question we get, usually from the locals in the areas we canoe in, is, 'You're the leaders? How?!' I don't have to answer this; ours and other outdoor education centres have been doing this for years. The disbelief in this question comes from the fact that there is not a male representative in the leadership section of the trip.

It is not surprising that the canoe tripping world has been dominated by men and boys. Most of the European explorers left their wives protected at home as they set off to conquer the wilds. We have all heard the old myth that males are strong and tough and can hack the rugged life of canoe tripping. Traditionally, challenging canoe trips were reserved for boys at all male camps while most all girls camps did less demanding excursions into the bush. There is no such division at our youth camp. In fact, the greater numbers in female staff

hired at the camp has meant that co-ed leadership is sometimes impossible (despite that all the trips are co-ed). The incredible success of the duo-woman leadership has promoted this form of leadership at the camp, creating a style of trip leading that differs from co-ed and total male leadership.

When I was 13, I went to an all girls camp where I was introduced to the world of canoe-tripping. There were two male guides who were the leaders of our all girl canoe trip while the female counsellor was present as the primary caregiver and to cook. I accepted that there were separate male jobs and female jobs on a canoe trip, and since I was a girl, I would never, as long as I lived, hold the maps and carry canoes--the latter because it could damage my ovaries. Since then, I have risen above that disempowering experience and have guided many boats over various bodies of water and portaged them many kilometres with my female co-leaders and campers doing the same. Even today, a few camps use the archaic model I have just described. This environment can be dangerously limiting to the growth of the female participants and difficult for the female leader as well.

Co-ed leadership can provide an entirely different set of challenges for the female leader. Often this woman is seen as the second leader. My own experiences have shown me that despite having the same skills and qualifications as the male leader, participants would gravitate to the man with all of their questions and concerns and only fall back on the woman if they wanted to know what would be for dinner that night or where could the bandages be located. The natural reaction to this would be for the female leader to work double time, attempting to do far more than she should or could do. If this fails, then rather than let the trip suffer with her attempts to gain recogni-

tion, she will frustratedly fall back into the mould that was pre-set for her.

Along with their knapsacks and hiking shoes, youth come to camp with different baggage: their values that have been shaped by the environment they are growing up in. Unless the youth are raised in a home with parents who educate them about the sexism in our society, or they are brought up by homosexual parents, their ideas about gender roles are usually traditional. Occasionally, the curriculum in the schools deals with issues of sexism, but my experience has been that the values of most youth reflect those of the patriarchal society they live in. They think that men are stronger, smarter, and better.

Things are very different on a canoe trip led by two women. On these trips, all of the tasks are performed by both leaders. The youth on these trips see that everybody can accomplish everything--there are no gendered divisions of labour. The two female leaders are important role models for the girls on the trip. Girls see that there is nothing they can't do. In my experience, the females in the group are often amongst the hardest and the most skilled workers. When I was 15 I changed camps and my heroine was one of my canoe trip leaders because she was doing all of the things that I had been condemned from two years earlier.

For the male campers, the absence of a male role model is a valuable learning experience. Often the boys on a canoe trip are in awe of the strength and hard skills of their male leader. Subsequently, the result is that these qualities are valued as something not only useful but necessary. On a female led trip, boys learn that there is more than one way to accomplish a task. For example, my co-leader or I might need help flipping our boats up on a portage. Next to a man who would have no problem doing this alone, this would be seen as a weakness. Without a man to compare with, this incident promotes co-operation and the simple need to go slowly and carefully and take a healthy well-deserved break. When we aren't competing with each other, trying to come out on top, the positive

and individual qualities can be brought out of each person on the trip. When communication, co-operation, and honesty are emphasized, trivial issues like strength are belittled.

Many articles and books have been written recently on the subject of 'women in the wilderness' and there are also several organizations in Canada that facilitate canoe trips run by and for only women. This shows women have created an alternative to the traditional male-defined wilderness experience. The goal of these trips is not simply go from A to B as quickly as possible for the glory to have said, 'I did it!'. There is great emphasis on the joy of travelling slowly to appreciate the awe and beauty of the environment. There is emphasis on group dynamics of the trip and the individual personalities within the group. Wonderful things can happen in the small group setting of a canoe trip. It can be an empowering experience that its participants will carry with them throughout their lives.

ANDREA DORFMAN is co-leading a six-week canoe trip on the La Pas and Notakwanon River over the height of land between Quebec and Labrador to the Atlantic Coast, for Camp Wanapitei.

When communication, co-operation, and honesty are emphasized, trivial issues like strength are belittled.

TIFFIN CENTRE FOR CONSERVATION A NATURAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT . . . FOR KEEPS!

The Tiffin Centre for Conservation, managed by the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA), is located just south of Highway 90 between Angus and the city of Barrie. The John L. Jose Learning Centre, Tiffin's education facility, was constructed in 1992. Since then, approximately 10,000 school children from Simcoe County have participated in the Tiffin programme. While supporting the school curriculum, Tiffin's education programme strives to increase awareness of the environment. In support of the NVCA mandate, sound practices of conservation and watershed management are emphasized in a variety of programmes.

Presently, Tiffin offers 30 day-use programmes that can be divided into six general subject areas: aquatic studies, plant and soil studies, wayfaring (orienteering), wildlife, winter, and 'nuts and bolts.' 'Nuts and bolts' is a miscellaneous category that includes life skills, heritage, decision making, and environmental issues.

Recent programme development at Tiffin includes the following:

Waterworks - watershed studies

Blanket of Snow - snow studies

Spaceship Earth - garbage crisis and pollution

Team Dynamics - team building skills

Pioneer Christmas - heritage

In addition to the regular use by the public and separate school boards in Simcoe County, Tiffin staff have been active in reaching out and accommodating other groups or clubs such as Guide and Scout organizations. These groups can fulfil environmental badge requirements while enjoying a day at Tiffin.

The first ever Tiffin day camp was launched in the summer of '93. 'Camp Tiffin'

now provides affordable, fun, environmental learning experiences for school children during professional activity days, March Break, and the summer holidays.

Equipment for the Learning Centre has been acquired through donations and fundraising efforts. For example, the 100 pair of snowshoes purchased in 1992 with funds raised at the Nottawasaga Region Conservation Dinner significantly enhanced the winter experience at Tiffin. Support by groups in the local area is greatly appreciated by Tiffin staff, including the 1st Stayner Boy

Scouts, for making two handicapped sleds for the Christmas programme, and the Second City Civitan Club of Barrie for donating an all terrain wheelchair (ATW). This ATW enables physically challenged students to participate in all Tiffin programmes.

Tiffin Trails, the newsletter compiled by Tiffin staff, was published and distributed this past January. By summarizing recent NVCA events, education programme highlights, park news and upcoming events, *Tiffin Trails* aims to show appreciation for our supporters and clients by keeping 'in touch.' The newsletter may also be a venue for future fund raising endeavours (e.g. Adopt a Bird, Tiffin memberships, etc.).

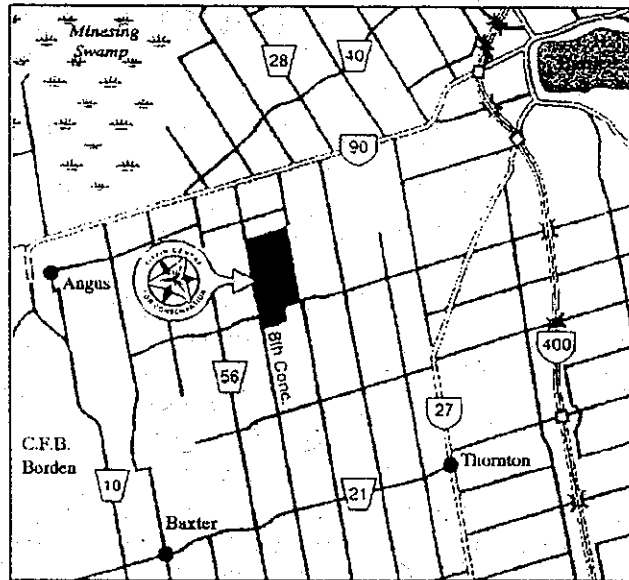
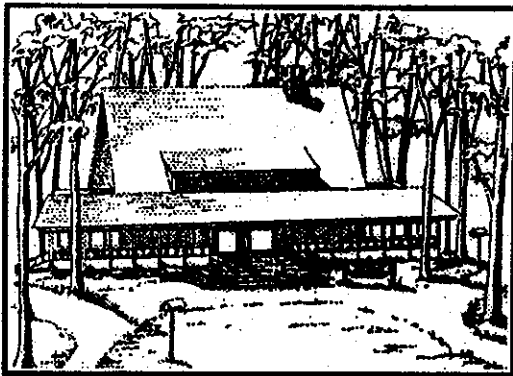
As with any education programme, much work goes on behind the scenes. As a result, a volunteer corps has been established at Tiffin. Over the past two years, volunteers as well as co-op students from local area high schools have supported staff by assisting with programme set-up, cleanup, and implementation, and with other special projects involving the development and maintenance of the education programmes. The assistance provided by our volunteers and students has proven to be

invaluable to the operation of the Learning Centre.

For more information contact:
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority,
R.R. #1 Angus, ON L0M 1B0; Barbara Mackenzie-Wynia at (705) 434-1479 or Lucy Coates-Goorts at (705) 424-1485.

**BARBARA MACKENZIE-WYNIA
AND LUCY COATES-GOORTS**

Barbara Mackenzie-Wynia is the Information and Education Services Director at the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. Lucy Coates-Goorts is the Tiffin Group Leader.



WATCHING THE MAGIC BUILD

Conference planning is taking shape nicely. Let us share with you some of the activities over the past few months and some of the highlights for an upcoming Sept. 29 - Oct. 2, 1994 event. Over 100 people have already registered as we go to press!

The programme committee is excited to add Sky Schultz, otherwise known as Professor W. W. Ooops! to the programme. The good professor was spotted at an educators' gathering in London earlier this year, and being a keen explorer and noted 'foolosopher,' was happily recruited to grace the shores of Tee Pee Lake in the fall. A roving reporter, along with an array of sophisticated techno-wizardry, has also come on board to provide a daily newsletter of the conference for participants. We need not be ill-informed in these days of information highways/networks even in canoe country. The "Conference Daily" is an exciting new idea that you will experience first at "watching the magic build" with COEO in Algonquin.

Promotional material has gone out to Colleges and Universities, Summer Camps in the area, and a phone call drive has also served to spread the word. In early June, the overall committee met at the conference site, Camp Arowhon, to plan site arrangements and organize a final conference programme package (coming soon). Registrations have been coming in during June. All is in place. Have you sent in your registration form yet? We are certainly hoping to gather together the wealth of enthusiasm to which COEO members are famous. We hope also to introduce many new people to the COEO spirit that harkens back to previous conferences at Bark Lake, Canterbury Hills, London, etc.

Here are some highlights presented in a random manner because we cannot discern one highlight from another with this friendly interactive programme of people and events.

- The Bill Mason Centre staff on ego/eco ideas for the transitional years (grades 7-9).
- Tom Lee of the Nippissing Field Centre,

Powasson, Ontario, on forest ecology of Algonquin, a guided afternoon hike. Tom also taught Eric Clapton a few guitar licks . . . wait, just kidding, but Tom is a great guitarist. Watch for the odd morning wake up by Travelling Algonquin Wilbury's.

- M. J. Barrett will share her trial experience into the exciting curriculum realm of cross-curricular programming.
- Linda Leckie will lead a canoe trip and interpretive talk on the mystery of artist Tom Thomson, visiting key sites related to the story.
- Mark Whitcombe will be back from England with new ideas about Outdoor Education, computers and networking.
- Lee Wilson will share the power and making of dream catchers.
- Chris Blythe will discuss and conduct (initiate) a site inventory/site management of the conference site. Mr. Blythe and Ms. Sober specialize in the ecological assessment of lands slated for development, to identify significant biological communities for preservation. They conduct studies such as Environmental Impact Statements, Environmental Assessments, Life Sciences and Reconnaissance Inventories, and Wetlands Evaluations. Their work often includes recommendations to mitigate the effects of development on the immediate and adjacent areas of the development site. Although most of their work revolves around the study of rural-residential-development sites, they have prepared several studies for summer camps and outdoor education facilities.
- Mike Beedell (tentative) will lead a photo hike or canoe trip rich in teaching new ways of seeing. Your camera will get lots of use.
- Our whole group (keynote) presenters, Ralph Ingleton (Connecting the environment with the common curriculum), Bert Horwood (The Re-Enchantment of Outdoor Education), Zabe MacEachern

(Magical Tales told in string figures, shadow art, and magic skirts), Professor W. W. Ooops! (Genius Lessons and other new perspectives on critical issues), will be at the conference throughout the time so that you might find time for a quiet

hike or a night paddle to enlarge the dialogue.

A bit more on our visitor from Michigan, Sky Schultz, PhD, Clinical Psychologist, alias Professor W. W. Ooops!?

WHO IS PROFESSOR W.W. OOPS!?

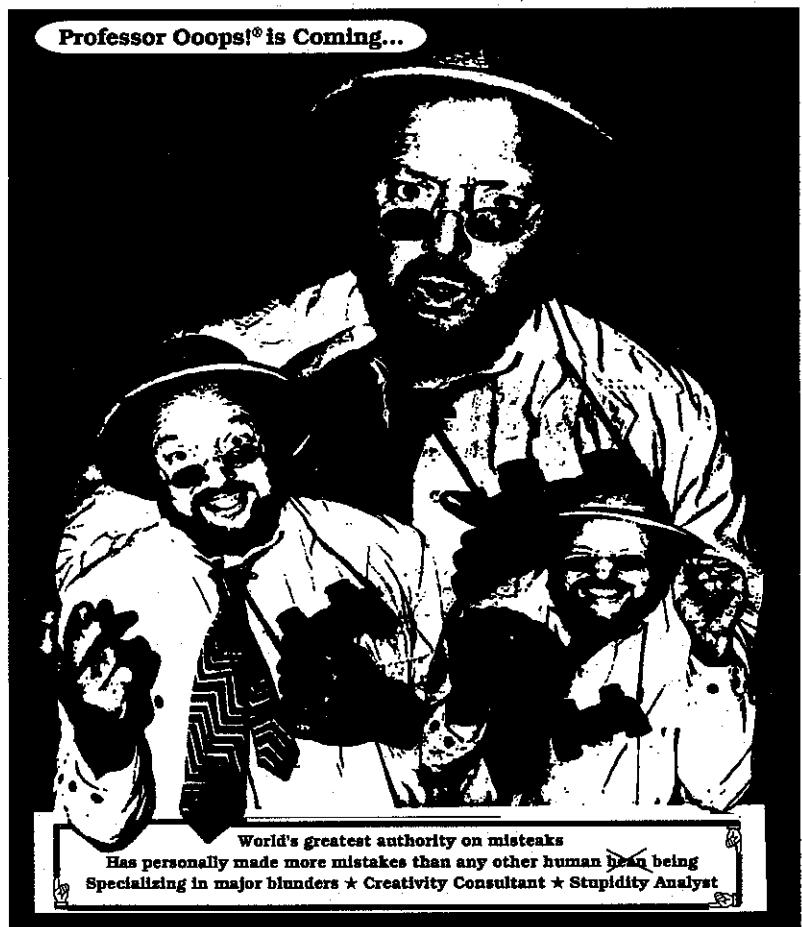
Professor Ooops! is a gentle jester, 'foolosopher,' and explorer who communicates important ideas about ecology, psychology, creativity, and science with wit and whimsy.

He is the 'World's Greatest Authority on Mistakes' and has given his keynotes, performances and 'Genius Lessons' to over 1,000 organizations nationally and internationally. He uses humour, magic, juggling, wacky inventions, slides, and his award-winning films to empower all ages to use their curiosity and creativity to the fullest. Professor W. W. Ooops! is an Educator, a Psychologist, a Naturalist, and Humorist in a package of genius-wise insights and mistakes. As he himself has said, 'Just as George Bernard Shaw, I try to find the most important thing I can say and then say it with the utmost levity.'

We'll stop there only for sake of space.

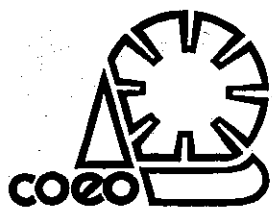
Our final conference package will be available in August. Please send in your registration forms as soon as possible to help avoid disappointment; us plan most effectively. Any questions over the summer, contact Lee Wilson (519) 821-6631 (H), Margit MacNaughton (905) 873-9195 (H), or Jim Gear (519) 471-6693 (H).

Professor Ooops!® is Coming...



See you in the fall splendour of Algonquin. Bring your hiking boots, paddle and PFD, a warm sleeping bag (no bug jackets necessary), a big car with lots of car poolers, your best and worst singing voice, and much more (see final conference programme package to be mailed to you in August for details).

YOUR "WATCHING THE MAGIC BUILD"
CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.



COEO: the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario

C.O.E.O. Conference '94

Camp Arowhon, Algonquin Park

Sept. 29 - Oct 2, 1994



Watch the Magic Build:
 Outdoor/Environmental Education

- : In You
- : In Algonquin
- : On Planet Earth

Registration Form COEO Conference '94

Name: _____ Male _____ Female _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____ COEO Membership #: _____

May we give out your name for car pooling purposes? Yes _____ No _____

Conference Packages & Fees:

Package A:	Full Conference (Thurs night-Sun noon)	\$230.00	\$ _____
	Early Bird (by Jul. 1)	\$190.00	\$ _____
	Student	\$160.00	\$ _____
	Student Help (limit 20)	\$145.00	\$ _____
Package B	Weekend (Fri night - Sun noon)	\$180.00	\$ _____
	Early Bird (by Jul. 1)	\$140.00	\$ _____
	Student	\$125.00	\$ _____
Non-Member	add	\$30.00	\$ _____
Student Non-Member	add	\$15.00	\$ _____
	Total		\$ _____

Payment:

Minimum \$50.00 deposit. \$ _____

Balance payable by post dated cheque Sept. 15, 1994 \$ _____

Cancellation Policy:
 After Sept. 1 the \$50.00 is forfeit unless a replacement person is found.

Please send registration form and cheques (**payable to COEO Conference '94**) to:
 Lee Wilson, 94 Dufferin St., Guelph, Ont. N1H 4A3

Announcing--Learning Grounds 1994-- A Conference on School Ground Naturalization

- Learning Grounds will explore positive changes to schoolyards that benefit the curriculum, the social and emotional health of students and the school community.
- Learning Grounds offers planning ideas, site visits, curriculum integration, "how to" sessions, fund-raising tips, networking opportunities and much more.

Where: Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington

When: Friday, Nov. 4 and

Saturday, Nov. 5, 1994.

Sponsored by: The Evergreen Foundation, Royal Botanical Gardens, University of Guelph Arboretum and others in the Learning Grounds Consortium

For further information, please write, call or fax, **Learning Grounds**
c/o Royal Botanical Gardens
Box 399
Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3H8
(P) (905) 527-1158 x247
(F) (905) 577-0375

'SCHOOL TO SCHOOL' INT'L PROGRAMME CALL FOR TEACHERS AND CLASSES

This programme, based in Milan, Italy, is looking for greater participation from North American schools. The underlying idea that drives the programme is that of creating channels of communication between young Italians, aged 12-16, with their fellow students around the world in the same age group. This allows them to work under a teacher's supervision on environmental topics, in their own schools, thus creating a concrete opportunity for exchange and growth through the materials they develop. There are five working phases:

population, resources, homes and dens, one house--many houses, and the useful and the superfluous. For more info., contact the 'School to School' International Secretariat, c/o Arcadia Edizioni, via Torino 44-20123 Milano, Italy. Phone (02) 72000512, fax (02) 72000254.

AMERICAN NATURE WRITING NEWSLETTER

A biannual publication of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment full of poetry and commentary. For more info., contact ASLE, c/o Cheryl Glotfelty, English Dept., Univ. of Nevada, Reno, NV 89557, USA. Phone (702) 784-6223.

WORLD FORUM FOR ACOUSTIC ECOLOGY

The World Forum for Acoustic Ecology (WAE) is an international, interdisciplinary coalition of individuals and institutions concerned with the state of the world soundscape as an ecological entity.

Acoustic Ecology is the study of the relationship between living organisms and their sonic environment for soundscape. WFAE's main task is to draw attention to unhealthy imbalances in this relationship, to improve the acoustic quality of a place wherever possible, and to preserve acoustically balanced soundscapes.

WAE invites people from all disciplines to become members: including people who are committed to caring for the quality of the acoustic environment through the perspective of their fields; people who, if they are creators of sound, are sensitive to the relationship between their sound production and the acoustic environment; people who may specialize in one area, but have an open ear for other disciplines.

Within this framework of care for the sonic environment, WFAE aims to:

- create a large and imaginative variety of context and situations that encourage

- 1) listening to the soundscape
 - 2) sharpening aural awareness, and
 - 3) deepening listeners' understanding of sounds and their meanings
- protect natural soundscapes
 - protect indigenous soundscapes produced by aboriginal peoples
 - preserve and create times and places of quiet
 - study attitudes towards silence in different cultures
 - design healthy soundscapes
 - publish information and research on acoustic ecology.

WFAE's head office is located at Simon Fraser University, Department of Communication, Burnaby, B.C., V5A 1S6, Canada (fax (604) 291-4024).

WFAE publishes, *The Soundscape Newsletter*, an English language publication with articles, reports and information about activities and events of the international acoustic ecology community.

ONE EARTH KIT

YMCA has produced an 86 page resource kit on the environment and development. The kit contains background information on poverty, the environment and sustainable development and uses case studies, simulation activities and student presentations to focus on change without confrontation. The activities are suitable for a range of ages, and a resource list is included. The One Earth kit costs \$8 for YMCA associations, \$10 for non-YMCA individuals. Contact National Supplies Department, YMCA Canada, 2160 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON M4S 2A9; phone (416) 485-9447, fax (416) 485-8228.

CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS 10th ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE 28-30 October, 1994 Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario

Presented by Canadian Heritage Rivers, Trent University, Atlantic Centre for the Environment, Canadian Canoe Museum

For information, contact: Canadian Heritage Rivers Conference, Frost Centre for Canadian Heritage and Development Studies, Trent University, Peterborough, ON K9J 7B8; phone (705) 748-1750, fax (705) 748-1801

CONNECTING WITH NATURE

Is it just me, or are kids more restless these days? When I take students for a hike in the woods at my Outdoor Education Centre, the energy emanating from them is almost palpable. They walk a few steps and almost convulse under the strain of not doing something with their hands. Sooner or later someone picks up a stick and whacks a tree or Ninja kicks a bush. And when for the tenth time I'm asking someone to be quiet while we try to listen to the sound of birds, it occurs to me that this natural experience I am subjecting the students to, is for many of them, an alien one.

If I imagine the world most kids know best, I begin to understand why the natural world must seem like such a strange place. The pace and intensity of modern life is so much at odds with a silent wood or a wind-swept meadow. Kids these days have so much more sensory input. From television to sports, to video games, to computers, kids are literally assaulted by the sensory, by products of a modern world. Their senses have been 'adjusted' to the fast-paced stimuli of a technologically driven society.

I think it becomes progressively more difficult for children (even adults) to use their senses in a proactive way, in a way which permits them to sit still and to listen; to watch and feel the world as it unfolds of its own accord. The world most children experience has been accelerated, amplified, and edited by machines. It is a skewed perception of reality which makes nature seem unduly quiet and dull.

It is amazing how many of the things a child experiences that are second hand, regurgitated through television, radio, books, and video games. What are the implications to children when you filter their world through so many sieves that what comes out is a condensed or a 'Readers' Digest' version of reality?

I am concerned that kids, as well as adults, are losing the ability to relate to the natural world. I mean this term 'relate' in the most basic sense of the word, a mutual exchange between a human being and their natural environment. One that is not interfered with, modified, enhanced or edited by machines.

Few things I can think of can be more fundamental than experiencing the natural world, as it presents itself, through your own senses. When you sit by the shore of a lake, feeling the wind on your face and watching the sun glint along the waves, it may occur to you that no other person **experiences** this piece of the world in precisely the same way. You are in a time, place and context that no one else has ever experienced nor ever will. Your perspective on the lake does not occur through a wall--the world 'out there' and you 'in here.' You are connected, from the eons it took to mould the lake, to the genes and circumstances it took to fashion you. Your presence affects the lake as it, in turn, affects you. You have experienced and are contributing to an experience that is unique. This notion is as breath-taking as it is simple.

I believe that nowadays, more than ever, kids and adults, need to tend and nurture their connections to the natural world. Actively engaging the senses, seeing, touching, feeling, smelling and hearing the natural world around us, help to strengthen these connections. A sense of connectedness is at the heart of caring.

Here are some thoughts on how to help kids and adults alike, foster their connections with nature, and to inspire them to make a commitment to continue doing so within the immediacy of their home, school, and work.

1. Opportunities for sensing:

It may be self evident that in order to care for natural places we have to provide opportu-

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nities to experience them. What may be less obvious is that nature can be found all around us, even in the most urban of places. People often believe that natural processes only occur in designated natural areas such as parks and conservation areas, forgetting that even a scrubby field in a vacant lot beside a mall can offer natural experiences. It is important for people to feel the immediacy of nature in order for them to feel connected to it. Nature doesn't have to be confined to weekends or summer camping excursions. It can be experienced everyday, almost anywhere.

When we do visit natural areas, it is sometimes tempting to go no further than the 'museum approach' to nature. We almost pretend that there is a sheet of glass between us and that which is natural beyond us. We marvel at the beauty of a forest or a mountain and rink in the surroundings with our eyes, but we often forget to activate our other senses. Perhaps this is because we are so used to receiving information from our technological world visually and to a lesser extent, acoustically. How many of us have smelled fresh earth, or have closed our eyes really felt the texture of the bark of a tree, or the veins of a leaf? How many of us have sat by a brook and concentrated on the music of running water or the sound of the wind as it sweeps through the trees.

I believe that it is necessary to provide people with the opportunity to 'turn up the sensory volume.' The beginning of caring comes from literally being 'in touch' with what is out in the natural world, even if what we encounter is less pristine and more urban than a wilderness area.

Steve Van Matre has designed a series of earthwalks, which encourage people to activate their senses in a creative and entertaining way. Whether it may involve an empty picture frame hung in front of a fetching natural scene or dental mirrors scanning the underside of mushrooms and rotten logs, people are invited to touch, to see, listen and smell the natural world around them. Steve Van Matre has termed this active sensory interaction with nature, 'acclimatization.'

Van Matre also promotes the use of magic spots. This involves sitting quietly in an area that one has developed an affinity towards. Even for as short a time span as 10 or 15 minutes, the amount of detail that can be revealed if one is given the opportunity just to sit and absorb natural occurrences, is amazing. Repeated visits to the same spot can foster an appreciation for the degree of movement and change in an area that at first glance appears unchanged.

Beyond Steve Van Matre's activities, there are many other ways to help children and adults foster their connections with nature and to inspire them to make a commitment to continue doing so within the immediacy of their home, school, and work. Joseph Cornell has written several excellent books which outline some wonderful hands-on nature activities. Here are a few other simple suggestions:

- a) **Focused Hearing:** Ask your participants to cup their hands behind their ears while squeezing their fingers together. Bend your ears slightly forward and close your eyes. It will be quite evident that your hearing has become enhanced. For the sceptics, ask your participants to remove their hands from their ears. They should notice a distinct difference. Count the natural noises you hear. What are they from? Can you find words to describe the sounds?
- b) **Stalking:** Native Americans had a special way of walking when they wanted to approach animals. This method of walking demanded great patience and skill. All their senses had to be used. Natives crouched down, placing their hands upon their knees. They slowly raised one foot and carefully, gently, placed the heel in a place where to telltale snaps of dry twigs or leaves could be heard. They smoothly and gradually shifted weight from one foot to another in the same manner. If what they were stalking looked towards them, they froze and remained immobile until the animal's attention was drawn elsewhere.

2. A shift in perspective

We take for granted what we know best. A grove of trees at the end of the street we live on may have been there for as long as we can remember. It has become a picture over which the daily occurrences of our lives are painted.

Change the perspective and the trees take on a new meaning. Lie down and look up at the interlacing of the branches. Listen to the wind rustling through the leaves and it becomes apparent that there is music up there. Lie under a series of trees and you realize that each one has its own voice and marvel at how the tree voices blend together.

Try eating lunch in a tree.

Blindfold someone and walk them to a tree. Allow them to feel the texture of the bark, the girth of the trunk and the arrangement of branches. Lead them away. Ask them to find with their eyes what they felt with their fingers.

Throw a hula hoop down over a patch of grassy field. Observe life within the hoop until the confines of that small space have taught you something. Some amazing things can be discovered. 'Is that how ants eat? I didn't know moths have tongues that curl and that you can hear the sound of a caterpillar chewing.'

Expand and contract your senses from the macro to the micro. There is something to be learned from the beat of a butterfly's wing to the shining of a star.

3. The natural world as teacher

Once, I and my co-worker took a group of 16 and 17 year-olds down to the basement of a dining hall. It was loud, smelly, dark, and damp. In fact, the sound of a rattling fan was so loud, it was hard to speak over it. This place was the perfect antithesis to a natural experience.

We asked the students to close their eyes, and we began to describe a natural place. We instructed the students to paint a picture of this place in their minds and to, as much as



possible, fill their senses with it. This required some degree of concentration, since we were not in an area conducive for imaginative excursions.

We then showed the students a slide of that exact spot. 'Fill your senses with this place,' we encouraged them again. 'Imagine you have fallen into the slide and are part of the scene.'

Next, we took them to that exact spot, which happened to be nearby. 'Fill your senses with this place,' we told the students one final time. And it was not difficult to do. The place happened to be a beautiful swamp. A faint smell of methane hung in the air, dragonflies flitted about, and fish jumped while the sun sparkled on the ripples of the water. Compared to the description we gave

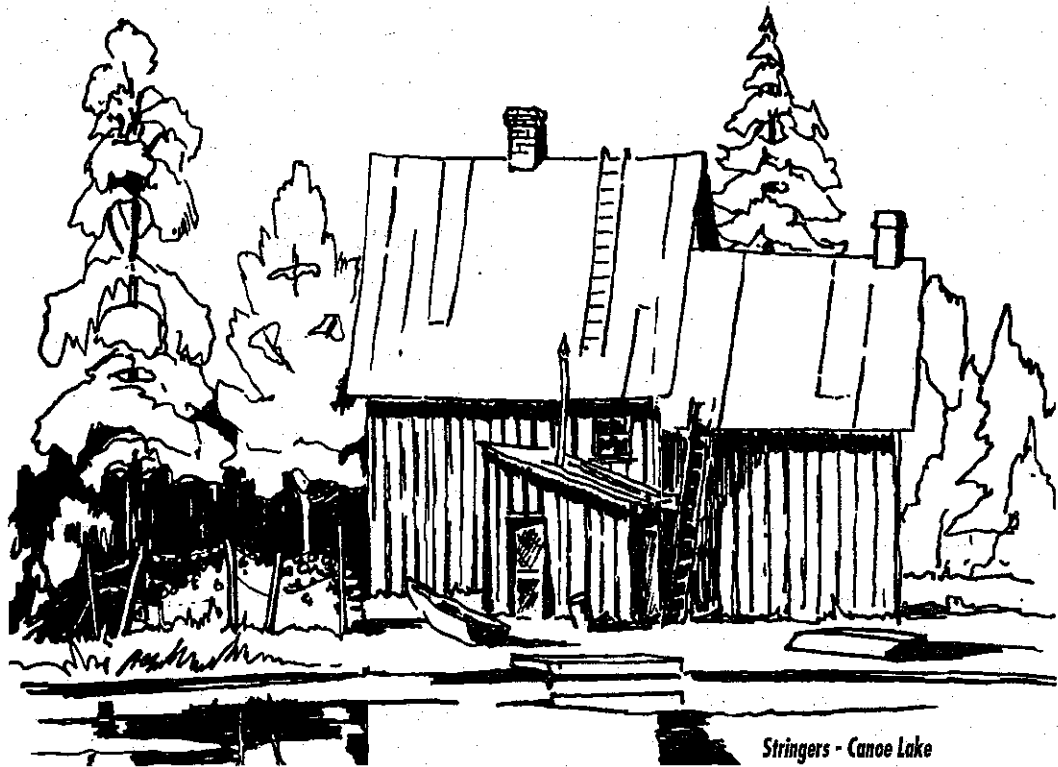
and the slide we showed, this place was magic.

The ultimate teacher about the natural world, is the natural world itself. More than books or television shows about nature, natural areas themselves offer a magic that simply cannot be substituted. The magic manifests itself most strongly when we are in a position to feel awe and wonderment. To be able to cultivate a sense of awe for the natural environment in a rapidly changing world that already has been dazzled by technology and the possibilities of science, is perhaps one of the greatest challenges facing outdoor educa-

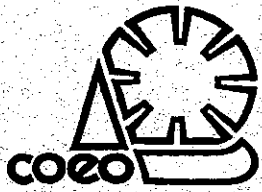
tors today. I am convinced that we can meet this challenge by giving people the opportunity to hear, touch, smell, taste, and feel natural places so that one day, they may develop the capacity to be amazed by them.

I would like to thank Cindy from Bark Lake for her ideas and inspiration. I would like to recommend *Sharing Nature With Children*, by Joseph B. Cornell, and *Acclimatization*, by Steve Van Matre.

JACOB RODENBURG is a Programme Naturalist at the Wilmot Creek Outdoor Education Centre near Sydenham, Ontario.



Stringers - Canoe Lake



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