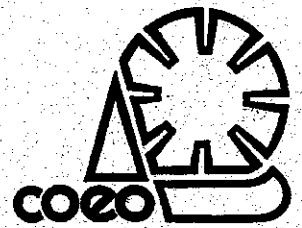


Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF
Volume 9, No. 6, January/February 1998

OUTDOOR EDUCATION



Pathways

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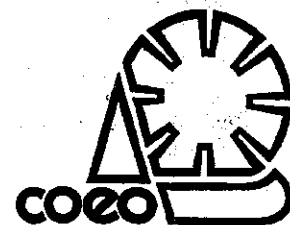
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OUTDOOR EDUCATION



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Sketch Pad

Kevin Stoyka is an adult Aboriginal student in his first year of Elementary Education at Augustana University College. He was a student in an introductory outdoor pursuits course in the fall and created this piece of art on the cover as a reflection of his experience in that class. He describes his work titled "The Thunderbird" as: "This is a realization of the direction of harmony and balance within the outdoors and life experienced by Aboriginal People. To be one with nature the Thunderbird is the outreach point that guides our existence and permits us to expand towards the union."

Jon Berger sketches from the canoe and campsites of Northern Ontario. He will be the featured artist of Summer 1998 issue. Thanks to Robin Bloom and Sarah Carson for their art within, to accompany content on request.

Just how is *Pathways* structured? Well, it is a remarkable workable process and certainly one that is always open to suggestions. Firstly, your friendly editorial board meet two or three times per year and have even dabbled in conference callings as well. Our most productive meetings follow the annual conference. At the conference we thrive on the suggestions, all feedback and a general surveying and sharing of the interests and needs of COEO members that surface. Then we meet to flush out theme issues, specific features, and new columns to introduce in future issues.

Our role as editorial board members is to pursue these directions. We also consider, centrally, what we can reasonably accomplish given time and resources. We leave our meetings with various delegated jobs and a structure for the months ahead. Not to sound overly structured, a healthy number of the *Pathways* submissions are unsolicited from COEO members and otherwise. This is a most exciting event.

This current issue before you introduces a new column titled Wild Words. (Thanks to Mark Meisner for this idea). The March/April issue will introduce another new feature titled, Keepers of the Trail. The column will profile COEO members. (Thanks to Dorothy Walter for this suggestion.)

To review, other columns include: In the Field, a report from a programme; Back Pocket, resources, or activity; The Gathering, concerning the upcoming annual conference; Opening the Door, for creative writing and a student voice; On the Land, presenting an environmental issue; Explorations, offering relevant research in the field; Intersections, a report on a Curriculum Integrated Programme; Reading the Trail, a book/music/resource review; Prospect Point, a opinion viewpoint; and, Beyond our Borders, being a report from another province. Tracking is a page or two devoted to new items, upcoming events and regional reports. Columns do not necessarily run every issue but we try to ensure they are semi-regular. Perhaps the above brief descrip-

tion will inspire you to put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard as the case may be. Consider that columns are usually one to two pages, or 600 to 1,200 words.

Features may be unsolicited or specifically sought out to suit a theme issue or fill a suggested need. We know that do-able outdoor activities is a main request but strangely the sharing of activity ideas seems to be among our hardest submissions to acquire. Theme issues planned for future issue include; Politics and Change for March/April; a Seneca College issue in keeping with our theme of a programme showcase, i.e. Queens's and Lakehead in 1997 Historical Interpretation for the Summer issue. Themes rarely are all inclusive so submissions along different "pathways" are always welcome. To share our own greatest concerns: we are regularly looking for art to both accompany specific themes or for general additions; we are, as stated earlier, always keen to print do-able outdoor programme ideas; and finally, while we have members serving in columnist roles, it is always greatly appreciated to receive submissions that fit within our various column structure.

For your interest, filling the 36 pages seems like a daunting task in the early conceptual stage of many issues, but, in the end, we usually have more content than we can use allowing for a balanced issue that had been fun to put together. Not that *Pathways* is a mystery, still we thought considering the editorial board's structure for our COEO journal might aid in the process of getting more members involved. We'd love to add a letter to the editors page and a healthy mix of theory and practice, activity and reflection, politics and recognition. To achieve this end, we need to cast a larger net amongst our members and interested "others".

Bob Henderson

"Make Peace With Winter" has been the aim of many of us recently as snow and ice created havoc across the province in January. Especially hard hit was Eastern Region. I'm sure our hardy and resourceful members in that neck of the woods were a real asset to their neighbours. I hope life has returned to a normal (?) Or more comfortable state. A natural disaster can certainly renew our appreciation of resources.

Speaking of resources, COEO has been fortunate in having some board positions filled by great ones. Bonnie Anderson is our new vice-president. Bonnie is a full time outdoor educator running a field centre in Eastern Region. Lori Briscoe, our new treasurer, is busy getting an outdoor centre up and running in Killarney for the Sudbury Separate School Board. Our Western Region Rep, Carl Freeland, is a classroom teacher who cycled across Canada last summer. Steve Green, a student at Seneca College in the outdoor programme, and Cathy Paskin, who teaches at the Jack Smythe Field Centre are our Central Region Reps. Look for these folks and other board members at "Make Peace With Winter".

I am currently awaiting a response from fifteen environmentally responsible and reputable outdoor retailers and outfitters. Identified as providing quality goods and services of value to COEO members, they were asked if they would be interested in offering a discount to members, in exchange for advertising in *Pathways* and display space at workshops and conferences, we of course, can offer increased sales from members and active outdoor leaders using their products. Depending on the response, we may approach others. If you know of a business that might be interested, please let me know.

There are lots of regional events planned over the next few months. Help make them happen by participating. Check the Tracking column in this issue or the COEO web site (www.headwaters.com/COEO) or call your regional rep for details. Upcoming board meetings are scheduled for the weekends of Jan. 30-Feb.1 in South River and Feb. 28-Mar.1 at MPWW in Dorset.

Let me know if you have an agenda item or would like to attend. I'd like to leave you with a few "fanny pack ideas" (since back pockets are less accessible this time of year). Put a twist in your next ski outing by making it a Poker or Trivia Ski. At designated spots along the trail, post plastic bags with either playing cards or trivia questions sealed in recycled envelopes in them. Students collect one from each station and at the end, either play their best hand or answer the trivia questions. Play your favourite game on snowshoes. My favourite is baseball; substitute your best arm for the bat and a volleyball for the baseball. On a snowshoe outing, periodically stop and identify a large tree as the target. Who can hit it with a snowball? How about a modified Biathlon? Combine a skiing or snowshoeing race with target shooting (snowballs). Lastly, an idea for those of you hardy enough to enjoy winter camping. Put grommets around the edges of a crazy carpet and lash it to the outside of your pack. Attach a length of P-cord and you can easily pull your pack along a trail. It's easier on your back and a lot cheaper than an Odawban. In making all these suggestions I have assumed that you have snow to play in. If you don't, here's wishing you get some soon! In a pinch, you can always fill a couple of plastic garbage bins from the piles outside the arena and have a fun filled recess. Share your winter wonders with the rest of us. Just jot them down and send to anyone on the editorial board. See your name in print!

Yours in the snow,
Linda McKenzie, President, C.O.E.O.

From Both Sides

"No problem can withstand the power of sustained, creative thought."

Frank Glow

Our challenge is to teach students how to manage environmental conflicts constructively.

Never before in the history of education has it been more important to teach environmental students how to fully examine both sides of a conflict before making a decision. The recent teachers' act of civil disobedience to the government's Bill 160 is a relevant example of the need for students to learn and to master the procedures and skills required for managing intellectual conflict in a constructive manner. This democratic right and duty should be exercised, not only to improve education or the environment, but to improve the quality of life in general.

Thomas Jefferson noted, "Differences of opinion lead to inquiry, and inquiry to truth". Piaget (1950) proposed that it is disequilibrium within a student's cognitive structure that motivates transition from one stage of cognitive reasoning to another. History is filled with many exciting examples of constructive conflicts such as religious freedom, civil rights, the Vietnam War, Tiananmen Square, and environmental issues. The major issues of our times have been shaped by past conflicts. A democracy is conflict in action. Just as it is not possible to eliminate conflict from history, it is not possible to eliminate conflict from our school life. It is in the classroom that students will learn how to participate in open and free discussion in ways that enrich their learning and lives.

Our challenge is to teach students how to manage environmental conflicts constructively and thereby to give them the procedure and competencies that will allow them to live a productive and successful life.

Ontario Agri-Food Education has developed a curriculum unit, *From Both Sides*, that introduces Johnson and Johnson's newest cooperative learning method of conflict resolution. It is called, *Creative Controversy* (1995). *From Both Sides* addresses the environmental issue of pesticide use at the intermediate and senior level using Creative Controversy in a

rational and objective manner. Once the technique is mastered, it can be universally applied to other environmental issues and social conflicts such as rain forests, land use, clear cutting and habitat loss.

The process of Creative Controversy consists of five major continuous steps. Students work in small sets of four but within this group of four, two subset groups are made, each representing a different opinion on the debatable topic of pesticide use. Students are assigned polar views on whether pesticides are beneficial or not. Controversy exists when the ideas, information, conclusions, theories and opinions of one individual are incompatible with those of another, and each seeks to reach an agreement. Students must research and prepare a position, present and advocate their position, refute opposing views and rebut attacks, reverse perspectives and create a compatible synthesis during the process. The process involves the following five major steps:

Step 1 Preparing the Best Case for Your Position

Students gather and research evidence to support all relevant facts, information and experiences that validate their assigned position on the issue of pesticide use. They should organize all information into a reasoned persuasive argument by arranging it into a thesis statement or claim. All supporting facts should be arranged into a coherent, valid and logical rationale, leading to a conclusion.

Step 2 Presenting the Best Case for Your Position

The use of more than one media is encouraged here in order to advocate and persuade the other group to agree to the proposed theses.

Each group should plan and practice their delivery. For evaluation purposes, each group should listen carefully and write down opposing positions and points which support those positions.

Step 3 Free-For-All Open Discussion

Each group continues to advocate their position with supporting facts, evidence and rationale. Each should learn the information presented by the opposing team. Here students can verbally refute evidence presented by the opposition, separate fact from opinion, check the reliability of evidence and point out erroneous reasoning. This requires the use of a number of social and cognitive skills, including criticizing ideas, and not people.

Step 4 Reversing Perspectives

Perspective reversal is the process of taking the position of the opposing side and sincerely and completely presenting this position as if it was their own perspective. New facts and evidence can be inserted. Again, this will require a brief caucus to plan the presentation.

Step 5 Synthesizing

Students drop all advocacy, objectively summarize the best evidence from both sides of the issue, and form a joint position in which all members feel comfortable. A new position will be created that subsumes the previous ones, thereby bringing both sides into harmony. A joint report will be written to explain the group's new viewpoint, based on group consensus and supported by evidence. Each group will present their conclusions to the class, using a variety of media, such as drama, music, video, skits, cartoons or other creative ways.

The curriculum unit, *From Both Sides*, goes one step further than Johnson and Johnson by encouraging students to apply their new learning in a practical manner. Many sugges-

tions are included in the unit as to how students could assimilate new learning into their lifestyle.

The unit is presented in ten progressive lessons which are accompanied by background resources. The lesson format for each activity includes the expectation, learning strategies, assessment, extensions and resources. Background information is included in support of both sides of the issue, along with 18 Internet addresses for further research. Beginning lessons address the key preparatory concerns of differentiating between fact and opinion, detecting bias, determining risk, learning presentation tips and rules of debating, as well as providing assessment rubrics.

Workshops including the curriculum unit are offered free of charge to all Ontario teachers. The unit can be purchased without a workshop at a cost of \$10.00 from *Ontario Agri-Food Education (OAFE)*. Ontario Agri-Food Education builds awareness and understanding of the agricultural and food industry for Ontario Schools. In-service sessions for teachers are presented by educational consultants in both English and in French. The free workshops are offered during or after school hours and on P.D. Days. Workshops can be tailored to meet your professional development needs.

The workshops present strategies and activity ideas that facilitate integrated learning, problem solving and cooperative learning. Links to the expectations in the new Ontario Curriculum are demonstrated at all workshops.

Workshop topics include:

Food, Farming and Fun (P/J)—agricultural themes

Pizza Pizzazz (P/J)—science you can eat

Alphabet Soup (P/J)—reading and writing connections

All About Food (P/J) (I/S)—uses food to explore mathematics

Resources/Resources/Resources—hands-on related material

Toys/Tools/Technology (P/J) (I/S)—explores simple machines and technology

Agriculture and the Environment (P/S) (I/S)—explores issues and provides environmental activities

Food on the Move (P/S) (I/S)—teaches the agricultural food chain

Career in Agriculture (I/S)—outlines many careers related to food and the food chain

Soil Ecology (I/S)—experiments and outdoor activities



Other Resources

Update—OAFE's free newsletter on new resources and related topics such as technology, nutrition, the environment and animal welfare

Print—a listing of fiction and non-fiction books related to animals, farming and food

Audio Visual Catalogue—a listing of excellent resources such as videos, teaching kits, picture files and software that are free to teachers, shipping charges paid, from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

Internet Web Site—<http://www.oafe.html>

Speakers and Workshops (free)

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Dairy Educators—Gayle McDougall Phone: (905) 821-8970

OAFE Advocates—trained volunteers Phone: (905) 878-1510



To book a workshop or to inquire about resources, please call:

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Frank Glew has had a long association with the Waterloo Board of Education and COEO.

Completing the Cycle of Transformation:

Lessons in the Rites of Passage Model

Pamela J. Cushing

Introduction

Among the variety of outdoor education courses, many aim to facilitate transformation for the students who participate in them. While the sort of transformation intended varies, and may not even be specified, the rites of passage model is often cited as an analogous pedagogical process because it is also structured to facilitate transformational learning. In many ways the analogy is useful in that the model provides a broader cultural framework for understanding experiential education and its outcomes. A critical analysis of the model using anthropological theory however, reveals many ways in which the model does not fit the conditions of current outdoor experiential education courses. Still, the analysis also reveals how a closer look at the rites of passage model points us to ways that we could alter our practice to improve the longevity of the personal transformations that we facilitate on course.

Ethnographic Basis

The analysis and recommendations in this paper are part of a larger project that was undertaken with 22 students from the Canadian Outward Bound School. That ethnographic research involved both participant observation and multiple interviews in which the students and I co-constructed their self-narratives over six months. This was a route to exploring if and how they transformed themselves through the course experience, and what factors facilitated this process. I began using the rites of passage model as a framework for understanding specific *cultural* dimensions of the experience that operated in tandem with the individualist or psychological factors usually studied in evaluations. The model proved useful for understanding parts of the process, but was insufficient for explaining other parts as will be discussed below. Any student comments included in this paper derive from the original ethnography (Cushing 1997).

Aims

There are three building blocks that I need to construct in this paper, before moving into the possible solutions. The first is to outline the key aspects of the rites of passage model, its origins, and its limitations. In the next step I suggest what types of outdoor education courses the rites of passage and its particular notion of transformation can inform. Next, I focus the discussion on how most courses neglect the third stage of the model, "re-incorporation" and why this limits the *longevity* of the transformations. Having laid this foundation, I will outline the kinds of elements which need to be included to bring the third stage back into the course structure, and discuss examples of how to do that successfully.

Origins and Limitations of the Rites of Passage Model

"There's real life involved in it — it's interesting because you're removed from your life, but it's totally about your life. That's the whole point of Outward Bound." (Jeremy)

Rites of passage or rites of transition are a formalized, ritualized way for society to recognize and legitimize changes in an individual or group (Bullock 1988: 749). Anthropologists recognize them as part of the ongoing process of constructing one's identity, and as such they are a cultural (i.e. learned) phenomenon rather than a "natural" one (Robbins 1997: 141). Ritualizing the process minimizes the social disturbance caused as the initiate makes the necessary transition between "positions" within the social structure (van Gennep 1960 [1908]: ix). Common examples include the transition from child to adult, and from single to married. Contemporary examples also include rituals that precede becoming a member of a sports team or a fraternity. While these rites are

culturally based, there are common stages across most cultures. The simple structure is intended to facilitate transition or transformation.

Rites of Passage Model (and student comments)

- 1) Separation: the initiand is separated from her regular "place" in society (geographic, social and symbolic).

"It is kind of taking you away from it all- from all you know and are comfortable with." (Esme)

- 2) Liminal Period: the "time out" from normal life: a period and place in which the initiand will learn, reflect on, and experiment with the new skills needed to transform into their new position in society.

"Everybody taught me something — maybe not directly but indirectly by what they said or did it taught me about myself too. I'll miss being in a caring and comfortable environment created by us...you could just do things." (Kirin); "When you're at home, you can't really look at it—but when you're far away you can look at your home in a different perspective." (Maria)

- 3) Reincorporation: the process of reintegrating the initiand into their new position in society. *"I want to learn how to interweave my comfortable behaviour here, with when I meet people at home." (Geoff); "You get skills here, but then you have to branch them out." (Jeremy)*

These stages need not be equally elaborated in every ceremony. For example, funerary rituals emphasize the "separation" most elaborately. Still, since each stage plays a unique part in the cycle of transformation, each one must be incorporated into the structure of the ritual. As I will discuss below, it seems that the third stage has been under-emphasized in outdoor experiential education (OEE) programmes.

By examining the origins of this model, it is possible to see why we must be careful in assuming that the power attributed to traditional rites of passage is analogous to OEE.

The model was created in 1908 and was based on data about rituals from pre-industrial-

ized societies with at least four traits quite different from the situation for today's

Canadian students. These traits included:

- 1) Limited division of labour—meaning fewer, & clearly defined, possible social roles or positions, transitional times,
- 2) Smaller populations—meaning that most people knew each other's position and transition,
- 3) Shared rituals—people around the initiand understood the function and meaning of the rites,
- 4) Less out-migration—continued inhabitancy around the same village and people.

Many of these factors can be seen as contributing to traditional initiands' ability to sustain the transformations that they undertake while in the liminal period. The first factor indicates that there was greater clarity about what positions in the social structure you occupied, as contrasted with the blurred and over-lapping social positions our students (and we!) occupy today. The second and third acted as social mechanisms to "pressure" the initiand to sustain their transformation because those around them were familiar with how the initiand ought to have developed and could thus remind them if they were "slipping".

The fourth factor created a situation wherein the initiands continued to be surrounded by their cohorts from the transitional period, as well as the elders who guided them through it.

This meant that they continued to have a support and communication network which today's students often do not have after they "go home" from the course. The students I interviewed identified this last aspect as one of the two top reasons for why they were not able to sustain their transformation as much as they had intended to.¹

I have tried to demonstrate in brief how the rites of passage model can be an analytic tool for outdoor experiential education, but that it must be used cautiously. The next step is to discuss in what instances it can be usefully employed.

What Kind of Transformation is it?

"I met a bunch of complete strangers. Saw a whole new line-up of different personalities. It's knowledge! So it has kind of prepared me in that way for the future." (Holden)

To use the analogy of a rite of passage is to imply that our OEE courses are intrinsically transformational experiences. This claim must be further specified by defining what is meant by "transformational". I use transformation to refer to the personal adaptation which people may, and sometimes must, undertake in order to deal with changes to their environment and their position. This sense of transformation contrasts with the more political or radical sense in which the term is used by, for example, deep ecologists or Marxists. There are three broad types of learning that outdoor experiential educators undertake: Skills (to develop them according to given guidelines), Citizens (to transform, as in to develop students' views of the world and their role in it, within socially-defined parameters), and Radical (to transform society by encouraging students to rethink the existing social order and cultural assumptions about how we dwell on the earth).

It is not really necessary to draw on the rites of passage model in designing a curriculum for a straightforward skills course. While the model could be used to enhance a curriculum designed with a radical agenda (Cushing 1997), rites of passage have traditionally been used specifically to prevent such "subversive" endeavours, through ritualized control of the process of social transition, by elders (Turner 1979: 241). In other words, the model is optimal for educators involved in the second, "Citizen development" type of courses that have an interest in facilitating personal transformation beyond skills.

Outward Bound is a good example of such a school in that Hahn, the founder, had explicit aims for transforming participants into better citizens by giving them the opportunity to realize their full potential and their

interconnectedness with other people and with the natural world.

Elsewhere I have discussed the eight key areas in which students identify or manifest transformations that reflect such "good citizen" sorts of aims (Cushing 1997).

Two of these areas, "empathy" and "broader perspective" are reflected in these students' comments: *"At some point on the course, everybody is going to hold the position that everybody else held at another point—it's like a cycle."* (Jeremy); *"I felt more laid-back after the course—like I knew who I was. Or more like just whatever I am right now, that is okay. Not that you're problem-free, just more accepting of the good and the bad in yourself."* (Chloe). In summary then, an educator must identify what sort of transformation or learning he or she is aiming for before employing the rites of passage model.

The Neglected Third Stage

"A person is always a teller of stories, he (sic.) lives surrounded by his own stories and those of other people. He sees everything that happens to him in terms of these stories, and he tries to live his life as if he were recounting it." (Sartre 1947)

Even for organizations like Outward Bound who are clearly committed to the second sort of transformational pedagogy, and who have a well-developed structure in place, the third stage of re-incorporation is often under-emphasized to the detriment of the course effectiveness. By effectiveness I mean the chance that the personal transformations that students undertake on course will last, that they will be incorporated into their *life stories*. The effect of this neglect on longevity should be of prime concern since our trade is often accused of not being able to show any lasting "results" beyond a short-term boost in the students' well being. I suggest that paying more attention to *rites of re-incorporation*, or the "exit" of the experience, could increase *longevity* of the learning.

The aim of rites of re-incorporation is to

transition the novice back into society and into his new "position" in the social structure for which the liminal rites have prepared him.

It is a potentially difficult time, as the novice must forego the freedom from normal responsibilities, expectations and pressures that he enjoyed during the liminal period, in order to take on the new role in regular life. As outlined above, there are various social mechanisms in place to assist the traditional novice with sustaining and even developing his new self further.

In contemporary outdoor education courses however, the rites of re-incorporation tend to be overlooked in that either they are not structurally included, or are de-emphasized in the chaos as the course winds down. Often it is assumed that the student will be able to make the transition themselves (Fellner 1976: 249); to know how to extract lessons from their experiences, and to grasp how to transfer such lessons to their regular life. When I followed up with students three months after their courses however, there was a significant degree of variation in ability to articulate learning, or to make explicit connections between the course and their regular lives. Granted that some experiential learning is difficult to articulate. However, it seemed clear that many of these students could have broadened and deepened what they took away from their experience, and made it last longer, with minor assistance and simple tools.

By attending to how we might include some of these elements in our course design, we can increase the likelihood that our courses will provide a long-term benefit to students.

As Thomas James wrote: "direct experience is key, but there must be some way to help the student beyond the immediate consumption of experiences to the greater challenge of improving their lives back home." (1980: 6).

Possible Directions for Practice:

Creating more emphasis on the rites of re-incorporation in order to improve the longevity

of the students' transformations, need not be difficult to achieve. I have identified a few key elements that will serve to provide wholeness to the cycle of a course. Although these can be introduced in various creative forms, I have included a examples to illustrate how one might begin to employ these ideas.

1. Opportunity to Express:

Having the space to express what transformations the student feels she has undergone, how she hopes to make them last in regular life, and identifying likely obstacles that can assist her in articulating her experience to herself and to others, thus making it more accessible for reflection.²

Examples: This is an exercise that could combine private journal writing, and public modes such as group sharing circles, or one-on-one discussions with the instructor. One example is to have students work alone or in pairs to create a personal contract for how they want to be when they re-integrate into their regular lives. If they are in pairs, they can plan to follow-up with each other at a designated point in the future. More adventurous possibilities could be explored if time permits, such as providing the time and materials for students to express their transformation in some creative manifestation such as a drawing, poem, soap sculpture, small play, or group video. This creation could be shared and discussed in the group, or even incorporated into the sharing discussed in the next point.

2. Opportunity to Perform:

Providing the opportunity for the participants to "perform" or experiment with their new role or attitude outside the safety of the group gives them a chance to "fail" and then work with the group to redress how to succeed next time when they will be alone.

Examples: a community service project is an ideal way to include this element as it is not costly or hard to find opportunities, and also enhances a feeling of unity among the group of initiands as they venture out and then return.

3. Re-introducing the "Other":

You can ease the transition back into regular life by exposing participants to periods of interaction with non-group members.

Examples: if there is a base camp, structure activities that require interaction with others such as dishes or other chores, inter-group dinners, and campfires.

4. Planning to Share:

As discussed above, our students' family and friends often do not understand what the course experience was like, and how the student has transformed. We can encourage the student to develop her own social mechanisms.³

Examples: several styles of initiatives could be used here with the aim of assisting the student to plan what she wants to share with key people in her regular life, and how she wants to ask for help in maintaining her goals. One example would be to have her write down three things that she feels she has developed her competence in, (such as leadership skills, or helping behaviours). From there, she can identify corresponding areas where she would like to continue to exercise the competence at home, and finally, what obstacles she foresees as inhibiting her. Asking for support can be awkward, especially for young people, but having the group co-operate in developing a clear idea of how to do it should help.

Another possibility is having the group co-write a letter about what the student has undergone and how he has transformed, that he can share with key people in his life to give them a sense of how others see him growing.

5. Building in Rewards:

There are intrinsic benefits to sustaining the transformed self, however extrinsic benefits can help to reinforce the value of the transformation as well.

Examples: As a follow-up to the sharing-support discussion above, instructors could lead the group in a discussion of how they will

reward themselves if they are able to meet their goals. The rewards could be primarily symbolic, such as having a cord or bracelet put on that you would cut off if you have succeeded for one month.

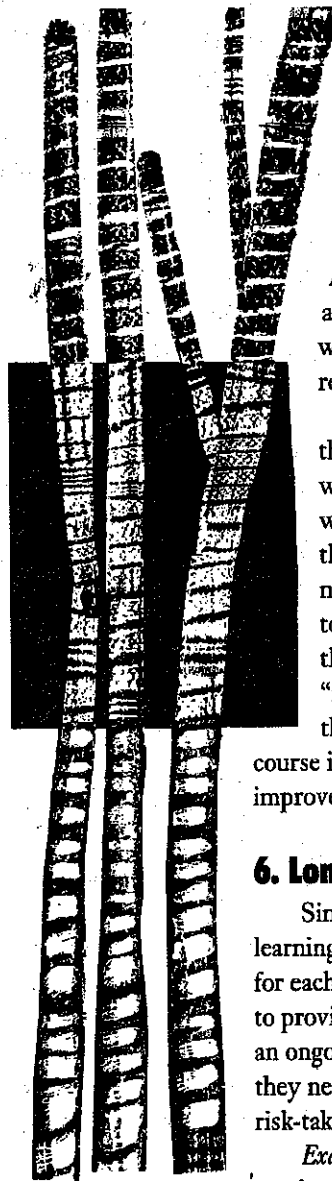
Alternatively, the group could agree to have partners that you will write to in a month with a report of one's successes.

Another idea is to suggest the student make an agreement with his parent or friend who will treat them to something if they succeed. The key here is not to focus on the reward, but to focus on sustaining some of the tangible or concrete "motivations" for transforming that are more intrinsic on the course in the form of adventure and improved relations.

6. Longer-term support:

Since the seeds of experiential learning germinate at different times for each learner, it would be helpful to provide "support" in some form on an ongoing basis that is there when they need it to encourage continued risk-taking and growth.

Examples: a school-wide newsletter that is sent to alumni can be an excellent medium through which to provide reminders of the kind of growth and intrinsic



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rewards that are possible when you attempt to move out of your comfort zone. It is also a good forum for positive role-modeling by providing the space for "testimonies", personal narratives, stories, and even instructor profiles, that can evoke memories for students of their own experiences. Another possibility is to have a "chat line" or e-mail address where a student can call in if she wants to talk to someone about basic strategies for dealing with a challenge she is facing in making her transformed attitude or skill work in her regular life.

This is an initial listing of some possible strategies and initiatives that could be used to improve the chance that the transformations that we work hard to encourage on course will last in ones' regular, day to day reality. All of them are grounded in the idea of re-emphasizing the importance of rituals of the third stage of the rites of passage model.

While many of these suggestions would require additional organizational resources, they should significantly enhance the quality of your programmes in terms of student learning. I welcome any ideas from readers who have designed and tried such efforts in their own schools.

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Endnotes

¹ The other reason was that they felt that they had more responsibility and stresses in their regular lives that prevented them from putting as much effort into their own development as they could on course.

² See Henderson (1995:73) on the need for learning how to articulate our experiences of nature better: "There is a deep knowledge experienced on trip that we are not accustomed to...(and for which) we do not have an adequate language."

³ For a good example of a group that has attempted to involve more of the initiand's community in the process, see Venable (1977).

The Personal Growth of Outstanding Canoeists Resulting from Extended Solo Canoe Expeditions.

By Andrea G. Swatton & Tom G. Potter, Ph.D.

The first great thing is to find yourself and for that you need solitude and contemplation ... or at least sometimes. I tell you, deliverance will not come from the noisy centres of civilization. It will come from the lonely places.

Fridtjof Nansen (1988, p.3)

Being alone for an extended period of time can be frightening, and looked upon as "not normal", yet wilderness solitude can be an opportunity for self exploration, reflection and renewal (Brown, 1989; Morgan, 1986; Richley, 1992). With this in mind, this study explored four outstanding North American canoeists' solitary wilderness experience to determine whether or not their extended solitude fostered personal growth.

Even though a solo wilderness experience can be risky, the benefits emanating from such a journey can be invaluable. For instance, self-chosen wilderness solitude can be viewed as a therapeutic experience which offers the potential for personal growth, self-discovery and renewal (Richley, 1992). To provide a perfect example, the guru of modern American wilderness therapy, Henry David Thoreau willingly spent a significant portion of his life in wilderness solitude "to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived". A more recent example of the value of wilderness solitude in Western society is the Wilderness Vision Quest programme that focuses on how the wilderness can be used as an opportu-

nity for self-discovery, exploration, enrichment, healing, and growth of the human spirit (Brown, 1987). Similarly, extended solo canoe expeditions offer an opportunity for personal growth for outstanding canoeists (Swatton, 1997).

Methods

Since the object of inquiry of the study was to gain an understanding of the inner perspective of the solo canoeists in wilderness solitude, a qualitative method was selected to best serve the aims of the research. In-depth semi-standardized interviews with four male outstanding canoeists, between the ages of 45 and 68, who have at least 25 years of paddling experience and have completed four or more solo canoe expeditions of two weeks or longer, were conducted to gain an understanding of their solitary wilderness experience. Three of the solo canoeists are from Toronto, and the other is from Boston, Massachusetts. The face-to-face interviews involved the implementation of a number of predetermined questions, as well as freedom for the researcher to probe beyond the answers of the prepared and standardized questions. The interviews were approximately 40 minutes to one hour in length and were tape-recorded and later transcribed. Before a thematic analysis of



Findings indicated that the convenience of a self-chosen solo canoe expedition offered an environment for self-actualization, enjoyment, and personal growth.

the data was administered, the transcription of recorded verbal communications were inductively condensed, made systematically comparable, and examined for common themes to bind the data. Emerging themes were organized into logical clusters to accurately represent the solo canoeists' description of their experiences. In addition, to reduce bias judgement, the accuracy of the results and discussion were read, verified and commented on by the four solo canoeists.

Results and Discussion

Findings indicated that the convenience of a self-chosen solo canoe expedition offered an environment for self-actualization, enjoyment, and personal growth. Through years of paddling, the canoeists have attained a high level of skill, knowledge, and self-confidence in wilderness paddling, and as a result, each canoeist has freely chosen to participate in a high number of solo canoe expeditions. In accordance with the studies by Morgan (1986), Hendee and Brown (1988), and Richley (1992), this element of choice displayed by the canoeists exemplified their willingness and readiness to endure the challenges of solitary wilderness canoe experience. To further understand the motivation, the meaning, and the changes resulting from their solitary wilderness canoeing experiences, the following commonalities will be discussed: reasons and motivations, solitary wilderness experience, and personal growth.

Reasons and motivations

Surprisingly enough, convenience was the common motive for all four canoeists to embark on a solo canoe expedition. The canoeists found solo canoe tripping, rather than group expeditions, a more convenient method of wilderness canoe travel to attain their personal goals. To plan, organize, and implement a canoeing expedition with a group was seen to be far more time consuming and challenging than a solo canoe expedition. More importantly, a solo canoe expedition liberated the solo canoeists from group consensus and allowed for greater freedom of expression. In agreement with

Hammit (1982), wilderness solitude creates an opportunity for these paddlers to express their freedom of choice concerning the types of information they must process through involuntary attention (to be passive, or in an aroused state that requires no effort) during their wilderness solitude. In other words, solo canoe tripping is their preferred choice for fulfilling their needs and goals of wilderness canoe travel.

The element of self-actualization and enjoyment as reasons for choosing solitary wilderness travel were common among three of the four canoeists interviewed. Through the process of enduring the physical, mental, and emotional demands of a solo canoe expedition, the paddlers inevitably became more aware of the self in the natural surroundings. As one canoeist mentioned, his main reason for taking on the challenge of solitary canoe expeditions was to experience himself in the wilderness and to become more aware and sensitive of his potentials and surroundings. Supporting Richley's (1992) research, solitude offers the canoeists an opportunity to observe and explore the self.

In addition, enjoyment of solo paddling and experiencing nature in solitude was clearly expressed by the canoeists. The simple pleasure and entertainment of exploring nature's beauty by canoe was a strong force that drives them out into the wilderness for extended periods of time. As one canoeist clearly indicated, "I particularly like the solitude. I find that if there is anyone else, I find this an intrusion of my spiritual existence."

Solitary wilderness experience

As difficult as it is to describe any personal experience, a deeper understanding of the solitary wilderness canoe experience was attained through the interviews with each canoeist. While different meanings of each canoeists' experience exist, the overall experience can be described through physical, reflective, intellectual, and emotional domains.

A solitary wilderness canoe expedition of

two weeks or more demands an intense level of physical exertion. It is evident that the canoeists, who have freely chosen to experience wilderness solitude, have accepted the demanding inherent physical challenges of such an experience. The by-product of the physical challenges and exertion involved in the solitary wilderness experience was an increase in self-confidence in the wilderness, improved self judgement, and a deeper feeling of satisfaction.

The canoeists' solitary wilderness experiences provided the tranquillity, peace and time necessary for reflection that is difficult to attain during the bustling everyday life. In accordance with Horwood (1989) and Knapp (1995), the combination of being alone with one's own thoughts in silence, no disturbances or sense of rush by other humans, and unscheduled time, created the ideal environment for reflection. The important aspect of reflection that emerged from the canoeists' solitary experience was time; time to think about the past and bring deeper meaning to one's experiences. The benefits of time to reflect that emanated from the canoeists were a feeling of renewal, pleasure, satisfaction and self-awareness.

The canoeists' solo experiences not only provided the opportunity for reflection but also intellectual learning. Each day of a solo experience, both the body and mind are exposed to the natural surroundings: weather, landscape, vegetation, wildlife, and insects. With nothing but time, solitude fostered thinking. In other words, another by-product of wilderness solitude for the canoeists was direct learning about the natural surroundings. Moreover, the canoeists developed and improved their decision making processes. With risks such as, rapids, personal injury, wildlife attacks, and damaged canoe and gear, they exercised careful and honest judgements of their abilities to prevent unnecessary accidents.

Finally, the canoeists experienced an array of emotions throughout their solitary expedition.

Although emotions are personal, unique, and distinct for each individual, they shared common feelings of frustration to satisfaction, apprehension to happiness, disorientation to a sense of control.

However, an overall sense of fatigue, both physically and mentally, was a strong commonality shared by the four canoeists during and following their solo canoe expeditions.

Personal growth

Wilderness solitude provides a serene and optimal environment for an individual to become aware of her/his potentials, capabilities, and talents, as well as her/his natural surroundings (Moustakas, 1956). In turn, this self-actualization that occurs during solitude empowers an individual to explore, discover, change and increase her/his potentials (Maslow, 1962; Moustakas, 1956); hence, an opportunity for personal growth is created. Personal growth, although a complex phenomena, is "a range of effects toward fulfilment of one's capabilities and potentials" (Hendee & Brown, 1988). Results show that solitary wilderness canoe expeditions foster personal growth for the four canoeists. The two common themes shared by the canoeists were self-discovery and physical awareness.

Previous discussion of the canoeists' solitary wilderness experience revealed their awareness of the level of intensities and different emotions, actions and thoughts experienced throughout their journey. Their solo canoe expeditions nurtured and encouraged them to become more sensitive and more in tune with their inner emotions. With time and tranquillity, the canoeists had the opportunity to reflect on their daily events and accomplishments, and to realize the significance of what they had experienced. In addition, supporting Maslow's (1962) self-discovery theories, the canoeists' feelings of satisfaction, fulfilment, and high degree of happiness experienced throughout their journey fostered self-actualization. Through this process of awareness, reflection, and realization, the capabilities and potentials of the canoeists were learned and re-enforced.

Similar to the common theme of self-discovery, the canoeists became aware of their

*Finally,
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physical abilities and potentials by facing and enduring an array of challenges imposed upon them throughout their solitary wilderness experience. Wilderness solitary experiences offered the canoeists an opportunity to become self-sufficient, self-reliant and live basically. In accordance with Ewert (1989) and Csikszentmihalyi (1975), as the level of skill, knowledge, and self-confidence in solitary wilderness travel increases so does the desire to challenge one's abilities. Therefore, the canoeists continue to participate in solo canoe expeditions to satisfy their craving for new and exciting challenges, as well as, remind them of their abilities. However, with age, two of canoeists interviewed are becoming aware of their changing physical limitations and expressed concern and doubt about their abilities to complete further solo expeditions. Through physical awareness, actualization of one's abilities, the canoeists gained a more accurate understanding of their potentials and limitations.

Conclusion

This research attempted to illustrate the value of wilderness solitude while participating on extended wilderness canoe trips and the opportunity for an individual to connect with nature, reflect on her/his life, explore self, and further develop her/his mind, body, and spirit. It is hoped that this study will serve as an inspiration for outdoor enthusiasts and leaders to better understand the values of solitude, as well as, intrigue their interest enough to work towards experiencing extended wilderness solitude.

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By Bob Henderson

"I am not so lost in lexicography as to forget that words are the daughters of earth..."

Samuel Johnson, Preface to his 1755

Dictionary

The German philosopher Martin Heidegger once wrote; "The language already hides in itself a developed way of conceiving". The English language, it can be argued, is limited when it comes to offering us a richness of expression and choices. It's "developed way of conceiving" is of a particular kind; one that is lacking in ways of capturing our receptiveness or allurements to express our connection to the earth. Our "developed way" has us trapped in an awkward duality of nature/culture, man/woman, good/evil, mind/body. Dualism is a type of cognitive emphasis whereby complete divergence of realities allows a person to be aware of differences, though seeing the differences as existing in different realities.¹ Our language and word use supports and encourages detachments. Does a cognitive emphasis produce a language/choice of wording or does one language produce a cognitive emphasis? This chicken and the egg problem is still argued in linguistic theory. There is no doubt though that the impact of language is significant. Here's one example. When the Hopi tribe of the American South West see a deer run by, they would convey this in language with the following cognitive emphasis (as I understand it), "see the deer passing through me". With our Western English language we would say, "see the deer running by". The difference in how such an inclusive, connected reality versus a divergent reality would shape our world view is staggering; certainly a rich puzzle for the imagination. Perhaps learning inclusive reality words can challenge our dualistic reality and vitalize our imagination for a connected reality.

Of this false dualism conveyed within a language that has us convincingly deluded, ecopsychologist Robert Greenway has said "[It's] a massive cultural con game." Do you cringe when you find yourself saying "time to go out to nature"? Or do you want to say, "one with nature" after watching a glowing sunset and finding your body gripped in "the shivers of

delight" but avoid all expression because ... well, it just sounds too silly. In the first case, dualism in our language leads us to erroneous statements. With the second case dualistic thinking prevents us from incorporating wise and wild words/phrases into expression.

We all know the notion that in Inuit societies, there are many words for snow and ice. This state exists to reflect the demands on the language, to attend to the needed nuances of types for so important an entity. (Actually, based on Richard Nelson's research in *Hunters of the Northern Ice* the figure is not in the dozens but in the hundreds.)

Well, like the Inuit, we are developing our own way of conceiving around ways of being and the "stuff" of being. Just think of all the words newly generated to serve the computer and information systems field. But do we not need to advance our understandings and meanings as pertaining to our relationships with the earth. Certainly "nuanaarpuq", the Athabaskan word that roughly translates to mean, "to take extravagant pleasure in being alive," and the Japanese word "yugen", "an awareness of the universe that triggers feelings too deep and mysterious for words" could help us, as Outdoor Educators and our students, bring our voices to those fleeting feelings where our culture rarely allows us to go. Arguably we don't go there because we do not have the words in our repertoire and therefore struggle for the conceiving.

This new column in *Pathways* is an effort to advance our language from an Outdoor Educators perspective. We need words to displace duality and psychic numbing. We need words that open our spirit toward a "developing way of conceiving" linking our psyche with the earth. In each future issue we will select words from other languages that can help us express that which is poorly expressible (in English anyway). These words can be used as openers and closures, or shared along the trail in spontaneous moments. They may be shared one per day over the time of a trip or residential stay. Ideally, these primal words can be incorporated directly into our daily speech and "expanding"

We need words to displace duality and psychic numbing. We need words that open our spirit toward a "developing way of conceiving" linking our psyche with the earth.

reality. The point is that they are best used with the best translation possible. They will be taken mainly from the out of print delightful book, *They Have a Word for it: A Lighthearted Lexicon of Untranslatable Words and Phrases* by Howard Rheingold. But please feel free to send in your own examples of words you use or should be using in your Outdoor Education practice.

This idea is taken in part from an earlier *Pathways* article, "Wild Words: Nature, Language and Outdoor Education" by Mark Meisner (Oct. 1993) and by Bert Horwood who has been introducing us to new words in print and with presentations for years. A suitable closing thought by Howard Rheingold is in order:

Finding a name for something is a way of conjuring its existence or making it possible for people to see a pattern where they didn't see anything before. I gradually came to realize that the collective human world view is far larger than any of our individual languages lead us to believe.²

Bob Henderson

¹ Robert Greenway, *Healing by the Wilderness Experience*. In D. Rothenberg (Ed.) *Wild Ideas*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1995. pp. 182 - 193.

² Howard Rheingold, *They have a Word for It: A Lighthearted Lexicon of Untranslatable Words and Phrases*. Jeremy P. Tarcher, Los Angeles, 1988.

bonga (Santali, India): Spirit of place who must be dealt with.

[noun]

When Europeans came to the North American continent, the tribal hunting-and-gathering civilizations found it astounding that these powerful new invaders didn't regard the earth as a living entity. These newcomers found their spiritual power in spired buildings instead of the land upon which they built their structures.

As the great machines and cities established dominion, the old spiritual connotations of specific places were forgotten and paved over. In those few pockets of old-style agricultural society that continued to exist into this century, the beliefs—and languages—of these stubborn survivors furnish a glimpse of how the world must have looked before people started seeing it as a machine. In certain villages north of Calcutta, along the edge of the Ganges, for example, the people known as Santals still remember the importance of paying attention to the *bongas* (BON-gahs)—the local spirits of the place.

As delightful book by W.G. Archer, *The Hill of Flutes: Love, Life, and Poetry in Tribal India*, has this to say of the Santals and their place spirits: [Underneath the sun, beneath the clouds] bongas of spirits roam, and only by coming to terms with them can Santals be happy.

... The third and most significant bonga territory is the village itself, its fields, houses, trees, hills, rocks and air. Here reside the Sima or boundary bongas, the *Bir* or forest bongas, *Buru* or mountain bongas, *Dadi* or spring bongas and *Khuntut* or tree-stump bongas.... Each dwelling contains an *Orak* or house bonga. All these bongas are "spirits of particular places," which the spot itself has partially suggested. Other bongas ... have a much wider role and special places provided for them. Inside each house, a tiny compartment, known as the *bhitari*, contains the *Abhe* bongas—the bongas of the sub-clan to which the particular householder belongs.... All these bongas are, in a special sense, a Santal creation.... Their prime concern is with Santals only.

Indeed, to the bongas, Hindus, Muslims, Christians or the British simply do not exist.

Do you always stub your toe on that exposed tree root in your backyard? The local tree *bonga* might be telling you in its own way that it requires propitiation for your continued habitation on its turf. Or is it a piece of mislaid sidewalk that trips you up? Could it be a *bonga* trapped underneath, yearning to breathe free?

When you move into a new house, take some time to get acquainted with the local Orak. And when you sleep by a stream or spring, by all means honour the Dadi and ask them for beneficial dreams. It's time to get beyond the simple recognition of "good vibes": Let's bring the *bongas* back into our lives? Get the kids in your neighbourhood some peanuts and mineralwater to feed the friendly local spirits, and organize a *bonga* hunt today!

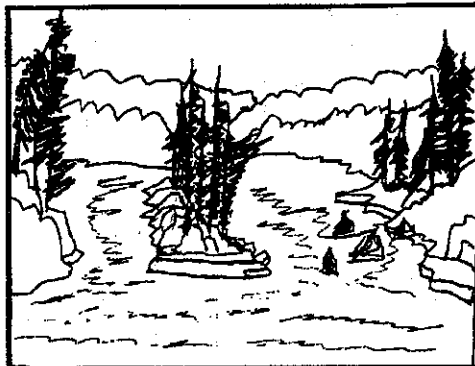
**orenda (Huron): The power of
voiced, focussed will—the opposite
of *kismet* fate. [noun]**

When the Huron Indians of the northeastern United States use the word *orenda* (ōr-² END-uh), which literally means "song," they really are conjuring the concept of mystic influence of incantation, *the kind of power that mortals can summon to combat the blind forces of fate.* The English *prayer* doesn't convey its pride, and *spell* is too sinister. Among the Huron, one meaning of *orenda* is conveyed by the image of the cicada, composing its early morning song in order to make sure the day will be hot and the corn will ripen properly. The idea that the Huron were trying to convey something more universal than simple animism was noted by anthropologist R.R. Marett, who interprets the true nature of the word as "a bitter-sweet blend of fear and hope-of humility and confidence. Thus, on the one hand 'he is arrayed in his *orenda*' means that one is trying to obtain one's desire, and hence is equivalent to saying 'he

hopes or expects.' On the other hand, however, 'he lays down his own *orenda*' stands for 'he prays,' indicating submission in the face of a superior power."

The use of a word that can mean hope, power, focussed intention, and prayer to a higher power, without conveying either a sense of helpless passivity in the face of a coldly deterministic fate or the overweening pride the Greeks call *bubris*, has a place in the modern Western world, as a counter-spell to negative affirmations like "I guess it was kismet," or "Whatever will be will be." Just counter with: "I'm deeply in my *orenda* regarding the Johnson contract," or I'm deeply concerned about the way our relationship is going, so I'm going to lay down my own *orenda* on it."

Bonda and Orenda are selected from *They have a Word for It*, by Howard Rheingold.





AUGUSTANA

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Augustana University College ... a university experience the way it was meant to be.

Augustana University College, located in Camrose, Alberta, an hour southeast of Edmonton, is a unique place of learning and community. In 1985, Augustana became the first private college to receive degree granting authority in the province of Alberta. And, from its inception in 1911, Augustana's residential lifestyle has fostered a special kind of community.

Augustana offers a liberal arts and sciences curriculum. This provides students the advantage of both a solid foundation in their chosen disciplines, as well as exposure to a lively, wide-ranging choice of diverse subjects. Augustana's liberal arts and sciences curriculum equips students for a wide variety of opportunities and possibilities. In September 1997, a four year degree in Physical Education with a specialized stream in outdoor pursuits was added.

Augustana has a strong history and tradition in outdoor pursuits dating back to 1964 when Dr. W.G. "Gibber" Gibson began sharing his knowledge and love for both wilderness and people. It began with a course in the fall semester involving backpacking and canoe tripping and a winter course that focused on winter survival and ski touring. Common to both these courses was an emphasis on personal growth and leadership development, communication and small group living skills. Dr. Gibson soon partnered with Dr. David Larson, a biologist, adding a strong environmental component to the programme. In the spring of 1975 they added a 25-day spring course that was similar to the fall course with a more intense group experience and opportunity for a higher level of skill acquisition in white water canoeing

and backpacking. These early days set a firm foundation for today's four year degree. The primary goals remain steadfast: personal growth and leadership development, communication and small group living skills, environmental awareness, sensitivity and understanding using experiential and adventure learning methods. While Dr. Gibson is retired, Dr. Larson remains an integral aspect of the programme and Dr. Glen Hvenegaard, Assistant Professor of Geography and faculty advisor for Environmental Studies, also works collaborately with the outdoor pursuits programme. The contributions of Drs' Larson and Hvenegaard add a strong interdisciplinary and environmental component to the outdoor pursuits degree. Not surprising, many students combine physical education—outdoor pursuits and environmental studies as majors and minors.

These two areas of study are a natural combination and complement each other well, equipping students with an excellent blend of skills and knowledge that prepares them for a wide range of career possibilities.

Central to the outdoor pursuits stream is a fall course that incorporates a 4-day backpacking trip and a 5-day canoe trip as well as an exploration of wilderness philosophy. Our winter course focuses on ski touring, telemark skiing and avalanche awareness with a 7-day ski touring trip during spring break. The later part of this course involves students in adventure games programming. The spring Outdoor Leadership Development course remains a 25-day experience in May and is co-taught with either Professor Hvenegaard or Larson who provide instruction in field geography or

biology. As a capstone outdoor pursuits course we offer an arctic expedition course which allows students to plan and prepare for a 21-day canoe trip in the Arctic. This class has previously paddled the Mara and Burnside Rivers, the Thelon and Horton Rivers. New to the four-year degree are courses titled programming and Processing the Adventure Experience, Philosophical and Historical Foundations of Outdoor, Adventure and Experiential Education, Studies in Leadership Theory, Leadership Practicum and a spectrum of physical activity courses including cross country skiing, flat water and white water canoeing. In addition, there are opportunities provided for students to achieve instructor certification in a variety of activities.

The goal of this programme is to prepare women and men first of all for leadership and service in society generally and for a life of continuous learning. Also, it is to prepare men and women for specific career opportunities in fields related to physical education, outdoor pursuits and environmental studies. We are excited about the way we have been able to combine outdoor, experiential and adventure education with physical education specifically and the liberal arts and sciences generally. Our experience has demonstrated that liberal arts and science courses combined with specific practical experiences and certification opportunities has equipped students with the leadership skills, personal and group skills and specific job skills to be successfully employed in related fields after graduation.

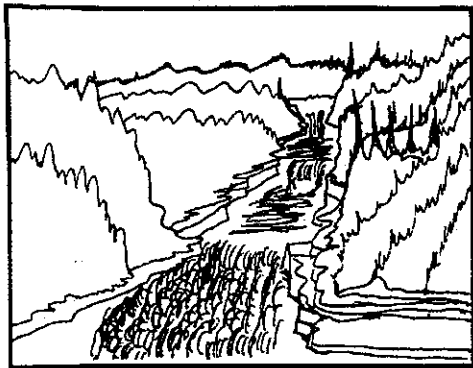
People have said of our programme:
 Kathy Ronald—1997 Graduate—Nahanni River Adventures Guide and Augustana University College Admissions Officer.

"What Augustana offered that was different from other places were the community and communication aspects. I saw what I could become. It is so important to have teachers who care enough to know where you want to be heading and help you get there."

Professor Bob Henderson (McMaster University) External evaluator for the four year degree proposal.

"The outdoor experiential education stream is certainly a strength as an area of specialty added to the generalist offerings. The Outdoor Pursuits stream is in keeping with the University's athletic sports traditions and to my knowledge unique amongst Canadian University Physical Education/Kinesiology programmes. Specifically the balance of offerings of Outdoor Pursuits throughout the four years plus the senior year Arctic course set Augustana apart in terms of quality and quantity of curriculum. This stream should be a drawing card for Augustana from students nation wide. In fact, this is evident now."

Morten Asfeldt is an Assistant Professor of Physical Education at Augustana and teaches primarily in the outdoor pursuits stream. He can be reached at 403-679-1158 (phone) or e-mail asfeldtm@augustana.ab.ca



Experience Canada Take to the Road

by Joanne Eby

Unlike tourists, students participate in activities they would not otherwise be able to access, particularly with visits to aboriginal communities, tours of industrial plants and discussions with influential leaders of controversial issues.

Well, it's an unusual time for taking a bus tour in Labrador, but that's just what a group of high school students did this week, braving the road to Happy Valley/Goose Bay. It was no vacation though ... these students came to learn about low level flying." (CBC report, St. John's, Newfoundland, April 9, 1997)

These sixteen students are part of a unique high school programme called *Experience Canada*, that provides young people with the opportunity to earn four senior credits while traveling extensively as a group within Canada for seven weeks during the semester. Students spend the other eleven weeks in Kingston studying issues in Environmental Science, Geography and Aboriginal Perspectives, in relation to their travels. They also work together as a team fundraising about \$12,000 to cover travel costs, as part of the requirements for a Personal Life Management course.

Offered under the auspices of the Frontenac County Board of Education, the main objective of *Experience Canada* is to introduce students to a world of travel and enlightenment, in motivating them to want to learn about themselves and their country while considering prospects for post-secondary opportunities. Unlike tourists, students participate in activities they would not otherwise be able to access, particularly with visits to aboriginal communities, tours of industrial plants and discussions with influential leaders of controversial issues. The programme maintains a neutral stand to ensure objectivity by structuring the programming so students explore and examine their own values, thus encouraging them to arrive at their own conclusions and to act according to their conscience.

During the 15-day road trip to Happy Valley/Goose Bay in April 1997, *Experience Canada* students investigated the impact of NATO flight training on the traditional hunting grounds of the Innu people in Labrador. First, they had the opportunity to go winter camping in the bush with Innu activist Elizabeth Penashue, who shared her experiences in creating international awareness of how low-level flying has impacted on the Innu people.

Larry Innes, the scientific advisor to the Innu Nation, explained his role as a university-trained environmentalist hired to interpret and assess the validity of the government and military environmental impact reports. The group also had an audience with Daniel Ashini, vice-president of the Innu Nation, who provided the historical background to the issue and reinforced the depth of spiritual attachment the Innu people have with land. Several hours were then spent in a question-and-answer process with Larry Pittman at the Town Hall. As the town development officer for Happy Valley/Goose Bay, Pittman addressed the *Experience Canada* students by pointing out how the economic benefits from having the NATO base in the community outweighed whatever effects low-level flying might have on the transient Innu.

Experience Canada's final stop was the Canadian Armed Forces Base Goose Bay, where Public Relations Officer Captain Luc Plourde explained the military's involvement and answered the students' queries. "You said you need hard scientific proof," says Sarah Power, a Grade 12 student in the programme. "But, what is hard scientific proof, compared to people who know the land? We don't know the land, you don't know the land. It's my opinion that no one knows the land like aboriginal people do." In his response, Captain Plourde spoke of how it was an honor for Canada to be chosen for NATO's flight testing programme in light of international political agendas, and that the CFB's Avoidance Programme was available to Innu who did not want to be overflown.

What makes *Experience Canada* particular as an alternative approach to learning is that the programme is directed towards students who demonstrate an interest in academic achievement, but are indifferent to the typical classroom environment. Whereas other experiential programmes often feature the recreational aspect of the outdoors, *Experience Canada* is more academic in nature. The development of reading, writing, communication and critical thinking skills are high priorities, enabling students to interpret, understand and express what they have learned from their travels and

experiences. "Neither of us have seen our son so excited about school," reported the parents of one graduate. "He commented, 'I've learned more about Canada in the past two months than in all my elementary and high school classes.'" Following their time in Labrador, each student had his or her opinion of how the situation should be handled, but all realized the need to question information presented by the popular media with regard to accuracy and bias. Students then gave public presentations at both the local library and in other classes at the school to share their new insights.

These presentations provide parents with a rare opportunity to see their sons and daughters in an academic school setting. This Labrador trip is typical of the dozen excursions over the past four years that have taken students to explore similar issues related to logging, mining, land claims, energy production and natural parks from coast to coast.

Experience Canada first began as a vision, one that has been nurtured by teacher Bryan Scholes since its inauguration in 1994. The programme has since evolved to address the travel and financial logistics and concerns as defined by Scholes, to enhance the programme's academic component while maintaining an otherwise intuitive, heartfelt approach to education. Living and working together with students over extended periods of time has created a rare opportunity for him to know each student as a 'whole person', in appreciating the students' other characteristics or talents that may not emerge during a regular school day.

Those hearing about the programme for the first time often ask about the nature of the learning that occurs in *Experience Canada*. Former students claim that they did not fully appreciate what they may have gained until the experience could be placed in context a year or two after they finished the programme. Regular feedback from other classroom teachers report that graduates commonly excel on independent projects following their time in the programme, based on places they visited and issues they addressed while traveling. Parents often provide insight to the extent that *Experience Canada* has contributed to the maturation of their children in respect to responsibility, compassion and enthusiasm: "Academically, we are uncertain as to how much she has actually learned in her twelve years at school. However, this programme has reinforced her strongest and finest

traits of logical reasoning, sense of responsibility and justice, the ability to see the other person's point of view and the importance of social skills."

Furthermore, belonging to a group like *Experience Canada* with a common learning goal has provided students with a sense of purpose and compassion that may not normally be part of a regular classroom environment. One of the intriguing components of the selection process is that students represent a variety of social, geographic and economic backgrounds. Being accountable to one's peers enables them to see themselves in a different light: during fundraising, for instance, students work together in 'real-life' situations, requiring them to take initiative and make decisions. Although *Experience Canada* is an adventure-based programme, little effort is made to cater to or promote the pervasive notion that learning must always be 'fun'. This learning is about looking for meaning in a sea of unpredictable information and taking personal and creative risks. As Grade 12 student Kelly O'Dette expressed, "We will be the workforce, we will be the government, we will be the future. We need to know where the problems are. By learning and talking to other people, by spreading the word of what is going on in our country, we can do something about it."

A study is currently being made by the author, a graduate student at Queen's University, who has worked with *Experience Canada* since 1996. The aim of the research is to assess the nature of the learning from the perspective of the former students, in determining the programme's relevance as a function of time passed. The participating in the study will reflect on their time in *Experience Canada*, with the results to be used to enhance the programme's academic component.

Joanne Elvy is currently involved in an M. Ed at Queens University. She is interested in the "experience of geography and land". It helps that she has been a landscape photographer for years. She is researching the extent to which students in Experience Canada learn through travel, ie. perspective taken from students themselves, to substantiate the value of learning experientially. Joanne received an undergraduate B. A. A. in Photographic Arts from Ryerson in 1985, and has been a practising artist for 18 years.

Former students claim that they did not fully appreciate what they may have gained until the experience could be placed in context a year or two after they finished the programme.

Nice Work If You Can Get It: A Serious Look at the Role of the Outdoor Guide

by Jennie Barron

In the waning days of summer '97 I put grad school out of mind and took work as a canoe tripguide and instructor for the 9-day field component of a fourth-year McMaster University course, Kinesiology 4D03: Outdoor Education. This course, now in its 14th year, is programmed and coordinated by Bob Henderson and has evolved to its current form through the combined influences of each year's team of staff. It takes place in the woods and on the lakes of Ontario's near north, and resembles, in no small way, the formative summer camp experiences of many an outdoor educator.

While some students may have struggled to convince skeptical parents and envious peers that this adventure would be indeed a sound and rigorous educational experience ("Wow! You get credit for that?!?!"), I revelled in the privilege of calling this my work (even if only for one week of the year). But lucky as we may all have been to enjoy ourselves so thoroughly, there was never anydoubt in my mind that the course had educational value, and that I had a job to do. This article — which could be read as a justification for the guide's honorarium — is really intended to spell out many of the possible functions and responsibilities of a trip guide in a programme with explicitly educational aims. I should say that this account is more diary than job description, and that the claims I make are reflective and speculative in nature.

The staging point for this 9-day experience was a place known as the Outpost (in summer a canoe trip outfitting centre for the Taylor Statten Camps) which is situated on Lake Maskinonge, at the end of a winding gravel access road leading from the small town of Hagar, between Sudbury and Sturgeon Falls on the Trans-Canada Highway. It was here that our group of 6 staff and 26 students spent two days preparing for a five-day out trip (and later one day jubilantly recovering from it). Prior to leading a group of seven students on the out trip

(independent of the three other groups), my responsibilities at the Outpost included leading instructional sessions on navigation, compass and map-reading, knot-tying, and campcraft (covering trip equipment, food packing, tent set-up, and the proper carrying and waterproofing of gear); leading a couple of group games; and taking a group of students on a half-day out trip to visit a man-made canyon and old logging chute. I also made use of little windows of opportunity during this time to also share snippets of ecology and environmental science (e.g., energy in ecosystems, acid rain and dead lakes, tree identification, ethnobotany, wild edibles, etc.).

The aim during these two days was not only to build up some of the technical skills that the students would need (e.g., paddling and portaging boats), but to begin to develop comfortable interpersonal relationships, and to open the students' attention to the land and to the echoes of human history discernible through the "wilderness." Evening programmes, while still structured and with purpose, were an upbeat time of laughter, silliness, and fireside song. And although fun for fun's sake hardly needs justification, its contribution to the overall educational experience should not be underrated; as all outdoor educators know, few things intensify learning quite like good group chemistry. Anyway, whatever boundaries we as a society may have erected to separate physical, affective, cognitive, social, and ecological learning, they were so easily dissolved in this setting that it was not until the writing of this article that I thought to mention their absence!

Once on trip my responsibilities were to be a canoe guide and group facilitator: orienting students to trip routines and practices (e.g., setting up camp, cooking, doing dishes, animal-proofing food, getting firewood, handling an axe, going to the bathroom in the woods, staying dry, etc.); evaluating weather and

making decisions regarding safe travel; pointing out sites of interest; encouraging a relaxed pace of travel in which spontaneous explorations were possible; initiating and sometimes facilitating group processes (e.g., decision-making, debriefing); instructing or sharing knowledge on topics as diverse as solo paddling, native pictographs, voyageur rituals, old-growth forests, and the process of staking mining claims, which we compared to the process of claiming aboriginal land rights. In addition I read to the group from pre-selected writings on more reflective topics such as wilderness travel and survival, industrial tourism (an Ed Abbey tirade!), and the philosophical distinction between body time and mechanical time. All of us kept journals.

It was part of my job to see that the students tried new things and took on suitable challenges; what may have been challenging for one student might not have been for another. I also tried to see that the work was shared, and that there was an awareness of the group's tendency to fall into a classic pattern of gendered labour — the males starting the fires and the females cooking the food. I made room for our fears and goals regarding the trip to be articulated and tracked; and each day kept listening and watching for interpersonal dynamics and developments within the group that might need to be addressed. As leader, I also added a ceremonial element, by enacting rituals that recalled, for example, the voyageur traditional marking a height-of-land portage by anointing each paddler with a cedar bough dipped in water from both watersheds, and drinking a good swig of rum! Finally, as a goal of the programme, I looked for ways to culturally disorient the students through situations in which normal (city) social mores and habits were challenged — sleeping outside on bare rock under the stars, swimming naked in the rain, jumping from canoes in the middle of the lake, eating wild plants like blueberries, wintergreen, and watercress, drinking water straight from the lake, struggling through bog muck thigh-high, waking at 5:30 to watch the dawn, articulating our tangible connections to

the wild through first-hand contact with moose prints and bear scat...

The Curriculum: Endless Points of Departure

The fact that I was working within the context of a programme that was already established and had run in very much the same manner for 16 years made my job a lot easier. I was not creating a role for myself so much as I was putting one on, and with confidence too, knowing that this was a tried and true programme with adequate timing and preparation built in, and thoughtful, progressive sequencing of elements (for more about sequencing in the use of games in this programme, see Henderson et al, in *Pathways* 9 (5) December 1997). Within this secure structure there was still room for me, and the other guides, to bring in new ideas for content — a game or short instructional session at the Outpost, sauna-building on trip, an informal discussion about Medicine Wheel teachings, or horse-logging, for example.

Indeed, encouraging a diversity of interests and flexibility in the course content was central to the dominant ethos of self-directed learning in this course. In other words, the "curriculum" was wide-open, a generalist's dream; every day provided numerous experiential points of departure for learning about an unlimited array of topics related to outdoor travel. A partial list might include alternative lifestyles, environmental thought, ecology, resource use, alienation, Canadian histories, animal rights, human rights, aboriginal cultures and issues, stars, weather, risk, self-knowledge, craft, consumerism, canoe design, geography, and as an overarching theme, human connections to the land, to wildness, and to what we call nature. One of the most exciting points of departure for me came on the second or third night, when the couple who run the Outpost, Hugh Doran and Dorcus McLeod, gave a presentation about the trapline they run in winter, and the choices and issues involved in trapping as lifestyle and livelihood. I was

*...articulating our
tangible connections
to the wild...*

The Ojibway consider all birds teachers, and the great blue heron the best teacher of all, because it rarely makes any noise, but when it does, everybody listens.

thrilled that this could be part of our "curriculum" because it helped disorient the students' cultural maps a bit, and challenged pre-conceptions many of us may have held.

Once back at McMaster, and for the remainder of the course the students would pursue interests they had identified while on trip, and use these as the basis for small group projects, individual research, writing, and presentations. Topics pursued by the class of '97 included storytelling; the night sky; the medicinal use of plants; fire by friction; the interpretation of native pictographs; the role of environmental education in the travel experience; and the value of outdoor ed in the treatment of eating disorders. Several students also took on building projects: making paddles, birdhouses, and a wannagan.

Leadership: Sometimes Less is More

Bearing in mind the responsibilities I have just described, I nonetheless tried to keep a relatively low profile within the travel group, coming out as a leader only when I felt it was truly needed. I tried to introduce and orient the students to skills and routines that, once learned, would not require my leadership again. It was important for the students to do as much for themselves as possible so they could know that, to the greatest degree possible, this had been their trip — their tone, their decisions, their goals. The group soon realized that they could not only set the tone, but set the goals (hard push or lazy day; portages in one go or two), read the map, the work, and take initiative, without approval from me.

Near the beginning of the trip I told the students something I'd heard about Ojibway myth: that the Ojibway consider all birds teachers, and the great blue heron the best teacher of all, because it rarely makes any noise, but when it does, everybody listens. Well, I could hardly be accused of not talking enough, and so at times, when I felt I might inadvertently direct the group too much (simply by

being talkative or too eager to engage where I wasn't needed), I took to random disappearances — a quiet paddle during breakfast or a wander down the beach at will, simply in the interest of self-restraint. (Maybe this abandonment came too easily, because on occasion I found the students being my leaders, waiting patiently for me while I struggled to find something I'd lost, or explaining to me what the next plan of action was to be.)

As leader I lived in the tension between making myself obsolete and letting the group know that they could still count on me to take charge in an emergency, or generally to ensure that campsites and portages were found, and that we wouldn't get seriously lost. While I wanted the students to see me as a trusted group member with whom they could be themselves, I also took advantage of my role as non-peer, since it gave me license to bring in formal structure on occasion, thereby ensuring that the group came together to do and discuss things they probably would not have done spontaneously.

At the end of the trip, during our final evening small group reflection, one of the students described something he'd observed while paddling: a heron who appeared to be leading us from lake to creek, who was always just around the corner, and who, when still, was barely noticeable against the grey-blue sky. And the student said the heron was like me; it was the greatest compliment.

Education vs. Recreation

Though I had previously worked as a canoe guide, youth leader, and educator, this course was the first chance I'd had to do outdoor/environmental/experiential ed with university students, who tend to be mature, capable, smooth-functioning people (in contrast to groups of children or youths with emotional and behavioural problems which often thwart positive group development, reflective discussion, and self-directedness). Because of that, I was able to try out this new, less-is-more leadership approach. At the same time, I became aware of how much has to go into it, how much

depth and substance is required for such a style to work. I had to try to think more, and say less. Subtlety, I learned, must not be understood as a substitute for skills or observation, nor as a cover for disengagement.

On top of everything else, the leader's role is also to go on learning. In those short nine days, I picked up new group games and ice-breakers; tips on axe-handling, compass use, and knot-tying; new skills in carrying a wannagan, erecting a cotton tent with cut poles, baking with a reflector oven, and starting fires with flint and steel. I practised active listening and facilitation techniques, such as soliciting input, summarizing and paraphrasing, checking perceptions, creating safe spaces for discussion and outlets for non-participation, setting a tone, debriefing, and bringing closure to experiences.

These skills, and more, are required of leaders in both recreational and educational programmes.

But as a final reflection on the role of the outdoor guide I want to summarize those skills and qualities that to my mind distinguish the latter from the former. Given that it was part of a university course, what aspects of curriculum or leadership made this field experience any different from a guided holiday or summer camp trip? I would suggest at least three. First, this field experience was conducted with the expectation of follow-up at McMaster. It was not, in and of itself, a course, but a point of departure for continued learning, to be directed by the students themselves. This meant that as a guide I could not be, and did not pretend to be, an expert in all (or any!) of the topics the students might pursue. My job was to encourage their emerging interests, by fanning the flames of curiosity. At McMaster three months later I was wowed by the presentations the students gave — not so much because of the presentations themselves, but because of what they attested to — an amazing motivation and self-directed engagement with learning and caring in areas that the students had identified as meaningful as a result of our trip.

Secondly, this field experience encouraged reflection. As experiential educators know, learning is not in the experience alone, but in the meaning we make of it. It would follow then, that structured reflection, and/or the creation of conditions conducive to reflection, is a key ingredient in making an experience

educational, and not just recreational, and therefore an important part of the guide's job. In this programme, reflection was incorporated both through the requirement that the students keep a journal, and through the readings, debriefs, and facilitated discussions that took place on trip and afterward. Moreover, space for reflection - unprogrammed time - was itself considered a curricular component.

Third, an educational experience helps and even pushes students to evolve toward greater independence. It challenges and entices them to teach and lead themselves. But only after the overall structure of the programme is in place. After the students have been provided with the basic tools and support (ie. some orientation, advice, and instruction) to make such a goal possible. And always within a context of safety, thoughtful sequence, and challenge by choice. If this is so, the guide's role would accordingly be to provide for the students progressively less as the trip goes on, while still setting up (to the extent that a leader can) the critical social, emotional, physical and psychological conditions that co-create deep, lasting educative experiences.

In closing, there is much more that could be said about the role of the outdoor guide, but I have tried to stick to my own reflections, and the meaning I made of the course as an educational experience in leadership. Year after year, the McMaster course seems to work magic. As a trip leader I learned that it doesn't happen by itself; it only looks that way. I suspect that this course works as powerful education because it recognizes that freedom and structure are not opposites at all, no more than fun and learning. The guide or leader's job is to make space for each and all of these qualities in abundance, so as to maximize the students' self-direction, reflection, and development of independence. In a Taoist sort of way, it may be that the more thought that goes into a programme, the less it seems to show. I think this is where the heron comes in. When the bird blends into its surroundings, it's not by accident, but by design.

Jennie Barron is completing her Masters in Environmental Studies at York University, where she seeks to develop her own capacity for self-direction, reflection, and independence.

*When the bird
blends into its
surroundings, it's
not by accident,
but by design.*

Call for Articles: The Journal of COBWS Education lives on!

The Outward Bound movement began in 1941 under the guidance of Kurt Hahn and since then has spread throughout the world. Not only are there now more than 40 Outward Bound schools world wide but the Outward Bound philosophy has been adopted by many other institutions and organizations involved in adventure education. With the advent of the 21st century there are many issues facing Outward Bound which are worthy of exploration. This is also a time to reflect upon the last 50 plus years during which time Outward Bound has been a primary influence upon the adventure education field. For these reasons I have selected, as the acting guest editor, the theme of "Outward Bound: Approaching the millennium" for the next issue of the Journal of COBWS Education.

The Journal was born in 1985 out of the inspiration and hard work of Andrew Orr, an instructor who had been with the Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School since its earliest days and who is now Executive Director of the Western Canada School. The last issue of the Journal was in 1993, the gaps between issues (six in total) becoming longer. Thus, this issue, possibly the last of this century, represents an exciting opportunity for individuals from COBWS, the Western School, other Outward Bound schools, and friends of COBWS/Outward Bound to examine and reflect upon the Outward Bound movement over the last half century and to explore ideas about how Outward Bound might best move into the third millennium. It is an opportunity not only for reflection, but also for dialogue within and between our communities concerning this issue.

I would encourage everyone to take part in this exciting project. The process for submitting work to the Journal is as follows: All creative work - drawings, poems, letters, short stories, or essays - should be mailed to the Toronto office c/o Sarah Wiley. Written work should be submitted both in hard copy and on a 3.5 computer disk formatted for IBM & Compatibles. If you are into the world of high-tech communications, work may also be submitted by E-mail. Please remember to keep a copy for yourself!

Once your work has been received it will be reviewed by at least two people. If no major revisions are needed, and the work submitted is appropriate to the Journal, a copy will be returned including any suggested minor revisions. Unless we hear otherwise, we will assume that the suggested revisions are satisfactory, and the piece will be included in the issue. The deadline for submissions will be August 15th, 1998, however, if you have an idea for an article please try to submit your work as soon as possible. If you are interested in helping out with the Journal, either reviewing articles or editing, please contact me as soon as possible. I hope to have the Journal published and released by early spring 1999. Please join me in trying to make the final issue of this century the best one yet.

Sarah Wiley,
COBWS staff and guest editor of the 7th issue
of the Journal of COBWS Education.

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Growing Cities Organically—Why We Need Young People

by Kasia Tota

The Great Canoe! Working Group

Most of us, city dwellers, rarely pause to think about this strange (yet marvelous in many ways) entity which is our home: the city. And if we do, we tend to concentrate on the smoke stacks, traffic jams, crime statistics and bored youth hanging about the mall. Some of us insist on living in denial: this is not *really* our home. We're only here to support that dream-come-true house in the country or a cottage on a lake in the Canadian Shield.

But the fact is, the city is an ecosystem in itself and whether we like it or not, we are a part of it.

As Jane Jacobs discovered, there are two types of ecosystems—one created by nature the other one by human beings, each type sharing some fundamental principles. Each—the city and the forest—needs diversity to sustain itself and they do not exist in a vacuum: how we design our cities and what we do in them directly affects nature in and around the city.

Nature in the city? I used to despise summers in Toronto and longed to escape the heated sidewalks and the ever-present smog in exchange for a breath of fresh air in a green oasis, somewhere, far away. But then, a rare native tree species was pointed out to me in someone's backyard. Later, I started exploring empty plots with "for sale" signs and discovered that an amazing diversity of species moved in when people moved out. It wasn't long before I was turning some of these empty plots into organic community gardens and "naturalized" sites with a group of other young and enthusiastic people. Thanks to working with like-minded peers, I suddenly began to realize the many exciting possibilities of what a city *can* be.

The idea of an urban ecosystem is catching on faster than anyone could have imagined. Schools are removing pavement from their

school yards and replacing it with naturalization and vegetable gardens. In Toronto, some major industries have teamed up in a co-operative effort to reduce waste and increase resource efficiency. It is based on the simple fact that what is one manufacturer's waste is another's resource. This simple expressions of creativity made it possible to implement nature's concept of recycling in an urban process.

At the core of what is now known as the "organic city" or "urban village" movement is a lot of creativity guided by a few simple assumptions. The first one is that cities can express, rather than subdue, the diversity of existing landforms (we have all witnessed the emptiness of industrial suburbs cloned indiscriminately in every corner of the world). The second one is that cities are communities which can become alive with people, that is if they are designed for people as opposed to automobiles. The third assumption is that nature does not have to be lost in a city, but rather it can become its central component, if ecological urban planning is implemented. In an "organic city" it is easy to imagine feeling "at home" and feeling good about it, knowing that our "ecological footprint" has been managed in the best possible way.

Our environment shapes who we are, how we feel and how we interact with others. In the words of Jane Jacobs: "Decaying cities, declining economies, and mounting social troubles travel together. The combination is not coincidental". At a time when our country's economy is supposedly "flourishing", youth unemployment and youth social problems are escalating. A recent study from Dalhousie University analyzed the views of over 4,000 grade 11 Canadian students. The study indicated that the students we most concerned with the threat of nuclear weapons, global hunger, poverty and environmental issues. While young people are sensitive to and aware of these complex problems, they are not prepared by the present

The idea of an urban ecosystem is catching on faster than anyone could have imagined.

effectively. In the words of Tom Lyons: "All this can be overwhelming, and unless addressed effectively, these issues may lead to resignation, inactivity, resentment and excessive behaviour."

That is why it is so important to tap into the talents and passions of young people and to provide them with the skills needed to become effective leaders in an increasingly complex world. The will, after all, grow up to be the workers, the educators, the decision makers and the parents of tomorrow.

It is my belief that we have to get our own house in order before we can preach to others as to how they should get their houses in order.

My discussion about organic cities is meant to sketch what is possible here, in Hamilton. We are located in the watershed of the largest surface fresh water ecosystem in the world—the Great Lakes. How many of us think about it when we dump deadly chemicals and fertilizers to keep our lawns green, and then complain that we have to buy bottled water? The vision of organic city does not necessarily require expensive government programmes (this does not mean letting government off the hook, however); it requires all of us doing a little bit all of the time.

OPRIG—McMaster is doing its part. It is sponsoring a unique youth environmental leadership programme: The Great Canoe! Adventure Environmental Expedition. As part of this project, we are inviting about 30 keen young people from the Hamilton—Wentworth Region to participate in a voyageur canoe expedition on sections of Lake Ontario, Lake Erie and the Georgian Bay this summer. Although the programme utilizes the outdoor environment for adventure based environmental education, we are not trying to escape the city but rather aim to look at it from a different perspective—from the water! The programme also included a series of educational workshops during which we will explore water issues from local and global perspectives and define strategies for youth action in the city of Hamilton. In the future, we would like to include in the project youth and communities from around the Great Lakes basin.

Youth between the ages of 15 and 19 are invited to apply. Our goal is to make this programme accessible to all interested youth, so if you would like to dedicate your time or make a financial contribution, please contact OPRIG—McMaster for details. In the summer of 1998, we hope that the canoeing experience will provide Hamilton youth with an expanded perspective on the ecology of the city and the larger ecology of the Great Lakes system. This may bring us one step closer to creating a sustainable future in an "organic city".

Facts, please...

- In North America 40 million mowers consume 200 million gallons of gasoline every year one sixth of all commercial fertilizers are used to produce greener lawns instead of food
- pesticide use is 15 times higher in urban than rural areas
 - one hectare of trees absorbs 4,000 kilograms of carbon dioxide every year
 - streets with trees are 5 to 6 degrees Celcius cooler on hot summer days
 - urban naturalization can cut landscape maintenance by 80%
 - 45% of domestic water use in Canada is used in the bathroom while only 10% is used in the kitchen
 - Canadians use 340 L per day per person while Europeans use 140 L per day per person
 - a tap, leaking at a rate of one drop per second, can waste up to 25 L per day, or about 10,000 L per year

Sources:

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- Goebel, Annette. "The Natural City". *Earthkeeper*. Feb/March 1994.
- MOE. *Water—No Time To Waste. A Consumer's Guide to Water Conservation*. 1995.
- Lyons, Tom. "Global Education". *Earthkeeper*. May/June 1992.
- Orr, David W. *Ecological Literacy. Education and the Transition to a Postmodern World*. State University of New York Press: Albany. 1992.

Focus on Forests

Saturday, May 23, 1998

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Jack Smythe Field Centre,

Terra Cotta

Join Susan Gesner of the Ontario Forestry Association for an informative day of activities, lessons and information all about forests. You will improve your environmental education skills and knowledge base as well as receive a 200 page "Focus on Forests" manual to use either in the classroom or back at your Centre. The cost is only \$35 and includes the manual of your choice (either P/J or I/S), beverages, snacks and great door prizes.

Registration for Central Region COEO
Events

Name

Address

Phone

Fax

Occupation/Interests

Special Needs

Make cheque payable to: Cathy Paskin
Mail to: The Jack Smythe Field Centre
R.R. 1, Terra Cotta, ON L0P 1N0
For more information call Cathy
at (905) 453-3552
Jan. 30 for Feb. event
Apr. 17 for May event

Catalogs

Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario

The latest COEO publication—*Inventory of Integrated Curriculum Programmes: Employing Outdoor and Experiential Education at Ontario Secondary Schools*—is now in its second printing.

The *Pathways* (Ontario Journal of Outdoor Education) *Index* is also available, as is the 1992 *Catalogue of Programmes and Personnel, Sites, and Services in Outdoor Education*. Although the latter is out of date, it can still be a handy reference.

To order any of these (each \$10.00 Canadian), simply mail a written request and cheque to the COEO office, 1185 Eglinton Avenue East, North York, Ontario M3C 3C6. Voice: (416) 426-7276. E-mail: <www.headwaters.com/COEO>. For information regarding *Pathways* or advertisement, contact Mark Whitcombe at (705) 435-4266.

Ecotheology on the Net

Much has been said and written in the past few years about the relationships between spirituality and nature. As Richard Kool (*Green Teacher*) points out, "this investigation of spirituality is reminiscent of Garrett Hardin's classic 1968 paper *The Tragedy of the Commons*, in which he points out that there are classes of problems that have no technical solutions but instead require *fundamental extensions of morality*." As a result of his investigations into this phenomenon, Kool has assembled a collection of web sites "for inquiring Eco-spirits":

The *Center for Respect of Life and Environment* was created in 1986 in response to the growing environmental crisis. Their stated belief is that "significant changes in both attitudes and institutions are necessary for a humane and sustainable future." <http://www.center1.com/CRLE.html>

The *Center for Creation Spirituality* is the home of materials by and about ecotheologians Matthew Fox and Thomas Berry. <http://www.maths.soton.ac.uk/~cjsc/cs/>

The *Creation Spirituality Network* includes full text articles and columns from their *Creation Spirituality Network Magazine*. <http://www.csnet.org/>

Earth Portals presents a philosophic, new-age examination of various forms of human expression. <http://www.earthportals.com/>

ECOTHEOL listserv archive is an ecotheological discussion group. gopher://nisp.ncl.as.uk/11/lists/ecotheol *Ecotheology bibliography*: <http://www.cep.unt.edu/ecotheo.html>

"Where Learning Comes Naturally"

June 7, 1998

Fish Ways Introductory Workshop

A one day workshop, commemorating Oceans Day, for educators and youth group

leaders sponsored by the Canadian Wildlife Federation. Participants will be introduced to and receive the Fish Ways manuals and related curriculum materials. This active outdoor workshop will focus on fisheries ecology and management. Contact Barb Kerr by phone 1-800-563-9453, fax 613-721-2902, email inf@cwfcfcf.org or mail WILD in Winter, CWF, 2740 Queensview, Ottawa, Ontario K2B 1A2

Frost Field School June 21-27, 1998

The perfect way to obtain credits toward your college diploma. Complete the first part of a college credit course in Forest Entomology and Control, Forest Pathology and Control, Natural Resources Skills or BioArt in the comfort of your own home via the World Wide Web or other means of distance education. Finish the course by canoeing, hiking and engaging in practical field exercises in the Haliburton Highlands at the Frost Centre. Pay only \$365 per course for tuition, transportation, accommodation and meals plus an opportunity to obtain Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association canoeing certification for free. No prerequisites are required. Registration is limited to 36 people.

Contact either Neil Steffler nsteffle@flemingc.on.ca or Paul Bell pbell@flemingc.on.ca or visit our Web site: <http://gain.flemingc.on.ca>. Contact by phone 705-324-9144, fax 705-878-9312, or by mail Sir Sandford Fleming College, Fox 8000, Lindsay, Ontario K9V 5E6.

Project WILD Introductory Workshops June 25, August 26 1998

A one day workshop for educators and youth group leaders sponsored by the Canadian Wildlife Federation. Participants will be introduced to and receive the Project WILD manuals and related curriculum materials. This active outdoor workshop will focus on wildlife and aquatic ecology and management. Contact Barb Kerr by phone 1-800-563-9453, fax 613-721-2902, email inf@cwfcfcf.org or mail WILD in Winter, CWF, 2740 Queensview, Ottawa, Ontario K2B 1A2

An Evening At the Frost Centre July 1998 (Date to be announced)

Join us for tours, demonstrations, a buffet dinner and "On the Shores of St. Nora": a multi-media celebration of the Frost Centre's heritage written and performed by singer/songwriter David Archibald. Contact the Frost Centre by phone 705-766-2451, fax 705-766-9677, or mail Frost Centre, R.R. #2, Minden, Ontario, K0M 2K0.

Computer Camp '98 July 5-11, 12-18, 19-25, 26-1, August 16-22, 23-29, 1998

Learn Web Site design in an all inclusive, week-long package taught by site design professionals.

The course will provide young adults with solid skills that can be added to resumes. Each student will be assigned their own computer while working in air-conditioned comfort. The course includes Web design basics, Microsoft Front Page Introduction, Microsoft Image Composer and live video feed and video-conferencing. Participants will build their own site and post it on the Internet. Your Web page stays on the Internet for free and you keep all the software tools! You will also enjoy swimming, canoe instruction, campfire activities and a well equipped weight room. Transportation from Toronto is included in this package along with all room and board. Please book your place by April '98 Contact Infosapien at 1-800-311-4427 or email ~infosapien@geocities.com or visit our Web Site at www.geocities.com/~infosapien

The Second Annual Wilderness Women's Professional Workshop Weekend

Come and learn, share, discuss, express, and network.

Friday April 17th—Sunday April 19th
Sliding scale contribution of \$20.00 covers weekend and newsletter mailings.

For more information e-mail thecabin@superaje.com Or phone Heidi Mack at (613) 545-6000 ext. 7423 and leave name and address.

An Alberta Review

by Mark Lund

School Outdoor and Environmental Education

In Alberta, outdoor education and environmental education are both recognized within the provincial educational curriculum, particularly within the physical education and science programmes.

The outdoor pursuits is one of seven dimensions recognized within the physical education curriculum. How these dimensions are met is left pretty much up to the individual teachers and schools, and thus the quality of programmes varies widely. Another factor that influences the quality of all programming is the school based budget concept that has been adopted across much of the province, especially here in our Edmonton Public School system. This allows schools a great deal of discretion in how funds are applied for staffing, programme support and curriculum development (within the provincial guideline). The third factor that influences all educational programmes here has been the provincial government reductions in funding. Transportation for field trips has often been one of the first items cut, or passed on to students and their families. Our schools in Alberta are becoming very efficient fund raising organizations. And, as you may suspect, the quality and diversity of school programmes often reflect the socio-economic status of the school neighbourhood.

District wide support for outdoor education has been reduced. For example, here in Edmonton, our Bennett Environmental Education Centre now collects directly from those schools utilizing its programmes.

The Bennett Environmental Education Centre is the only major facility operated by a school board in Alberta; other boards including Calgary Public and Edmonton Catholic do operate system wide programmes, but usually from seasonal facilities or facilities jointly operated with local recreation departments. Rick Mooney from Edmonton Catholic Schools reports that over the past two years they have put nearly 17,000 participants each year through their mix of half, full day, and out-trip

programmes. In Alberta, we also have a number of non-profit (ie. The Edmonton YWCA YoWoChAs centre, the Rocky Mountain YMCA Yamnuska Centre), municipal (ie. Strathcona Wilderness Centre [SWC], religious (ie. Pioneer Ranch Camp) and private (ie. Birch Bay Ranch) outdoor centres.

These offer a wide variety of environmental and outdoor pursuits programmes that are utilized by schools throughout the school year. Carol Smith at the SWC reports that they are holding their own in terms of programme numbers, even though they have half the staff of a few years ago. They are also taking more of their programmes into the schools directly to avoid transportation costs (they are approximately 20 minutes from their sponsoring community). Carol also reports that they have had to cut some of the more adventuresome programmes (ie. rock climbing, white water canoeing) due to insurance costs.

Here in Alberta, the Environmental and Outdoor Education Council of the Alberta Teachers Association would be the closest equivalent to your COEO. This group publishes a quarterly newsletter and hosts an annual conference. Their next conference is late April 1998, and is to be hosted on the Stony Indian reserve, at the Nakoda Lodge, west of Calgary. EOEC member Gareth Thompson reports that attendance was up at last year's conference and membership remains stable.

A major concern of the group is the apparent "Back to Basics" mentality that threatens outdoor and environmental education as a peripheral "option".

During the boom years most of our major urban areas received support from the provincial government for the development of major municipal parks. These parks have often included a nature centre (ie. the Kerry Wood Nature Centre in Red Deer) and these centres are heavily used by school classes. Another sign of the times is on the eastern boundary of Edmonton, where we have a major provincial park and interpretive centre that has been closed due to the provincial funding cuts to parks. At present it looks as if the local county may

acquire that park, but revitalizing the interpretive/science centre does not at this time appear to be a part of their plans.

To wrap up, school-based outdoor and environmental education appears to be holding its own struggling somewhat (like all public education programmes) with the funding reductions, and like always is strongest where there are committed and well-prepared teachers.

Post Secondary

Within our post-secondary education system in Alberta, we again have some stability, some cutbacks, and some new programmes. The University of Calgary Outdoor Pursuits programme within the recently renamed Faculty of Kinesiology continues to take approximately 16 students per year, and given their mountain setting the students are well trained in the outdoor pursuits for that environment. If any readers would like to know more about this programme please refer to their web page at: <http://www.kin.ucalgary.ca/odpu/html/index.html>

The University of Alberta B. P. E. programme, as many may be aware, dropped the outdoor education route a couple of years ago, and dropped the requirements for all first-year physical educators to take the introductory outdoor education course. The faculty still offers a variety of outdoor education courses, and outdoor pursuit physical activity courses. Within the remaining programme structure it is still possible to develop a good grounding in the outdoor education field—students will just need to be a little imaginative, and selective with their field placements and course options.

Most of the community colleges offering transfer programmes to the big two universities continue to offer some level of outdoor education course, and outdoor pursuit physical activity courses. At Grant MacEwan Community College, my employer, we offer the introductory outdoor environmental education course and the introductory Nordic skiing and paddling courses. This spring we are offering for the first time a Spring Outdoor School. This will combine the credit courses Introductory Outdoor and Environmental Education, the first level Canoeing and Kayaking Course, with our non-credit courses Aquatic Emergency Care

and the CRCA Basic Canoeing Instructor course. This programme has been structured so that students may take from one, to all of the offered components. I understand that Morton Asfeldt will be reporting elsewhere in this edition on the new programme offerings for outdoor education at Augustana University College. Lakeland Community College, at their Vermillion Campus, has just commenced a two-year Adventure Travel diploma programme. In general, in the post-secondary system, we are holding our own, and maybe even making a little progress.

Other notes: For more than twenty years the Blue Lake Centre, north of Hinton, was supported by our provincial government and held a leadership role in the development of outdoor and environmental educators and leaders. Unfortunately the centre has been privatized, and is now run more as a private lodge, with just a small selection of outdoor and environmental courses compared to previous offerings.

Personal notes: Glenda Hanna, who many of your readers may know, and formerly of the University of Alberta has a visiting professorship in New Zealand later this year. Glenda will be at Lincoln University, just outside of Christ church, for 6 months. Harvey Scott is now retired from the University of Alberta, and may even have finished his last grad student this past year. He is happily raising a few head of cattle north of Athabasca and is busy keeping the northern pulp mills honest.

Gary Gibson has also retired from Augustana University College and was last seen by this author escorting his very pregnant daughter (Olympian Carol) around the Canmore Nordic Centre on skis!

If any readers would like more Alberta info I would be happy to respond and I can be reached by e-mail at:
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Flooding: Canada Water Book

by *Adrienne Blattel*

Flooding: Canada Water Book is a publication by Environment Canada to contribute to the United Nations International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction by raising public awareness about flooding. The book describes all of the major causes of flooding in Canada, and then recounts important flooding events in each province and territory. At the end, there is a detailed section on the role of the different levels of government in flood prevention and assistance. Flooding has excellent photographs, clear explanations of complex ecological issues, and exciting examples, and this is why it would be a great teaching tool for anything related to hydrology, the environment, or geography.

The general slant of this publication is that flooding is paradoxical, like most environmental issues. On the one hand, it is immensely destructive in urban areas and costs the government 75% of its total annual disaster assistance payments. Yet, the floodplain itself is an essential part of the ecosystem, with for example important wetlands which serve as reservoirs and breeding grounds, and all of this is maintained by the flooding of a certain frequency, duration and magnitude. Environment Canada voices the opinion that the best solution is non-structural- we should modify our use of the floodplain to one which is less hazardous both to ourselves and to the water system.

Flooding is a readable, intelligent portrayal of Canadian flooding issues. The result is a comprehensive description of the important hydrological events in Canada through history, geography, urban planning, role of government, and ecology. Flooding tackles complex and sometimes counter-intuitive ecological concepts, such as the viewpoint that flooding is a necessary natural event. It covers a topic which is very wide in scope, with many different yet related issues, and in general, succeeds in grounding every explanation with a poignant example in Canadian flood history. For instance, there is a photograph of someone paddling on the Ottawa River Parkway, which was flooded completely by heavy rainfall and sewage back-up on July 1, 1979 (pg 67). These local flood stories are enormously important considering our tendency to forget disaster quickly after it occurs! The examples, photographs and personal accounts bring the topic of flood management to life, making this publication an excellent tool for stimulating interest in our

local natural environments. Some of the flood examples include maps of the affected area, although it is useful to read this book with an atlas for the specific references to waterways and towns. The different chapters of this book can stand on their own, if it would be more useful to focus on a particular region or issue.

Some of the more exciting highlights include: ice jams, spring runoff peaks, glacier floods, effects of urbanization on flood regime, rare events such as tidal waves, Hurricane Hazel, and all of the largest floods since the late 1800's. Regrettably, this book was published in 1993 so it doesn't include the most recent Red River floods in Manitoba, nor the Saguenay floods in Quebec. A few of the interesting and useful concepts explored here include the role of the different levels of government in environmental issues, the evolution of policy surrounding flood control, assistance and prevention, perspectives on dams, flood forecasting, flood risk mapping, and conflicting needs and values. The only issue which Flooding didn't explore with enough detail is the perspective of native Canadian peoples on flood control. The book mentions this only briefly, without providing any insight into the relationship between government policy and native issues such as for the James Bay hydroelectric projects. In general, Flooding focuses on the highly urbanized context, illustrating that it is only our presence near the floodplain that creates the risk, rather than the flood itself. Indeed, as noted, flooding regenerates ecosystems in a wild context.

Flooding: Canada Water Book is a valuable publication because it is so complete in its scope, yet remains accessible and interesting to people with different educational backgrounds or ages. It is easy enough to understand that it requires no prior information about hydrology, phy, or ecology, and it brings together so many different fields of knowledge that it would interest people with a strong background in any of these fields. The publication is available through bookstores or may be ordered from:

Canadian Government Publishing
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9
(819) 956-4800 or fax (819) 994-1498

Flooding costs \$29.95 in Canada and outside of Canada, it costs US \$29.95. Cheques or money orders should be payable to the Receiver General of Canada. Shipping, handling and GST are extra.

Adrienne Blattel is a senior student in Arts and Science at McMaster University. Her undergraduate thesis concerns flooding issues and cultural attitudes toward natural disasters.

The general slant of this publication is that flooding is paradoxical, like most environmental issues.

Practitioners and Researcher in Outdoor Education: Time to Bridge the Gap

I have just returned from the Coalition for Education in the Outdoors Fourth Biennial Research Symposium at Indiana University's Bradford Woods. Founded in 1987, the coalition is a co-operative network of associations, educational institutions, agencies and businesses that promote the educational use of the out-of-doors.

The Coalition for Education in the Outdoor's goals are: to stimulate and facilitate communication among affiliates in an effort to advance the mission of outdoor education; to disseminate information about outdoor and environmental education through publications, networking, educational gatherings and media; and, to promote outdoor education through conferences, symposia, workshops and research. To help meet these goals the coalition publishes a quarterly journal, *Taproot*, that is highly regarded in the field of outdoor and environmental education (CEO, Park Centre, P.O. Box 2000, Courtland, NY, 13045)

The Symposium brought together researchers and practitioners representing diverse interests in outdoor, environmental, adventure and camping education. Small in nature (35 participants), the symposium offered an intimacy not found in larger conferences and provided me with the opportunity to converse with professionals from many parts of North America. The Symposium schedule included a wide variety of both fascinating and critical topics for review. The stimulating presentations and discussions included titles such as: An Integrative Review of Literature of Women in the Outdoors, Learning Outdoor Recreation in a Safe Place: Lessons from a Single-Sex Programme, Controversial Issues in Adventure Education, Evaluating Short and Long Term Retention Associated with an Interpretive School Trip, Factors Affecting the Personal and Social Outcomes of Organized Camping, and The Future of Outdoor and Environmental Education.

I left the symposium confident that while our field is growing and maturing, a serious void between outdoor practitioners and research exists. Outdoor practitioners, the professionals in daily contact with students and clients, seem hesitant to communicate their needs for inquiry to researchers. Conversely, researchers often operate in an academic vacuum and study issues that may or may not be applicable to practitioners; furthermore, study results are all too frequently inaccessible to practitioners. Both groups have important skills, interests and resources that, for the most part, are extremely complementary. Both groups share common interests but seem reluctant to bridge their gap and unite for mutual gain. With increased communication and co-operation, practitioners could measure programme outcomes, learn more about their specific areas,

gain more effective teaching and methodologies and become more current and productive. Similarly, researchers could gain research funding, have access to populations for study as well as facilities to conduct their studies and, most critically, help the field to move ahead where its missions and objectives can be most effectively realized. The field of outdoor experiential/environmental education as a whole could then mature with greater focus and at a more accelerated rate, to ultimately become more applicable and valuable to those whom we serve.

What then needs to be accomplished to bridge this gap? First, practitioners must determine what their specific needs are for research and communicate them to research professionals. Next, practitioners need to offer their facilities and programmes for study, seek researchers as both mentors and partners and engage in a dialogue among peers to measure programme outcomes. Researchers must begin to investigate more application content and publish in a dialogue that is practitioner friendly. Academics should hold workshops at conferences attended by practitioners to facilitate research training and help practitioners to realize how research can be of assistance to them.

Additionally, researchers need to reach out to practitioners and make themselves open to foster co-operative discourse. In order to nurture practitioner/researcher communication and partnership, web sites need to be made available where needs from both groups may be posted, thereby linking common needs, interests and possible funding. Furthermore, partnership must be developed where co-operative grants may be secured and studies conducted.

I look forward to the Fifth Biennial Research Symposium sponsored by the Coalition for Education in the Outdoors in the year 2000. It is my sincere hope that by this time many of the barriers, some real and others perceived, separating practitioners and researchers will have come down and be replaced by an aggressive process of bridge building. The challenge is ours, as are the solutions—good luck!

Tom Potter is an associate professor in the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario (807-343-8843).