

# Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION  
Spring 2020, 32(3)





# Pathways

COEO

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## *Pathways*

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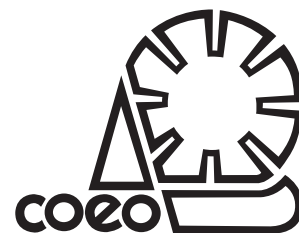
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## Wild Pedagogies Discussed

By Bob Henderson

*"If your words are dull, then your thoughts are dull."*

—Nils Faarlund

*"If some people don't hate your work, you're not doing it right."*

—Kate Tempest, *Hold Your Own*, Picador 2014.

*"Why would you determine one thing by means of study and reflection, and then, when you go to practice, practice something else."*

—Dave Jardine

Wild Pedagogies (WP), as a phrase, began as a way to describe Lakehead Professor Bob Jickling's desire to disrupt university education. Jickling taught a course in 2012 that explored opening the spaces for more student control in order to advance the complexity of thought and power of the spontaneous teachable moment with full attention to the ecological crisis and challenges we all face [my words]. I'm certain, on many levels, students in that course were presented with the following challenge: "The question is only: are you going to take part and if so, how?" (Derby 2015, 22)

Personally, I would have loved to have taken such a course as an undergrad back in the mid-1970s. Perhaps the educational environment wasn't ready for WP and Bob Jickling back then. Perhaps I wasn't ready. Perhaps many are ready now. I think so!

Now, in 2020, there have been many academic articles, theme issues of journals, a WP book and six and counting professional WP gatherings framed as colloquium, dialogues, workshops and international travelling (self-propelled) conferences.

Through the 1970s to the present, there has been a steady set of programming touchstones of outdoor educational reform guiding one slowly to a 2014-2020 WP understanding to go along with the realized Anthropocene. Steve Van Matre's acclimatization work, forest bathing and

forest schools all come to mind. Like a realization of the Anthropocene, a new epoch denoted by human impact on the earth, WP calls for a realization of advancing our understanding of education towards intentional culture change! This will demand changes to education, schooling and culture.

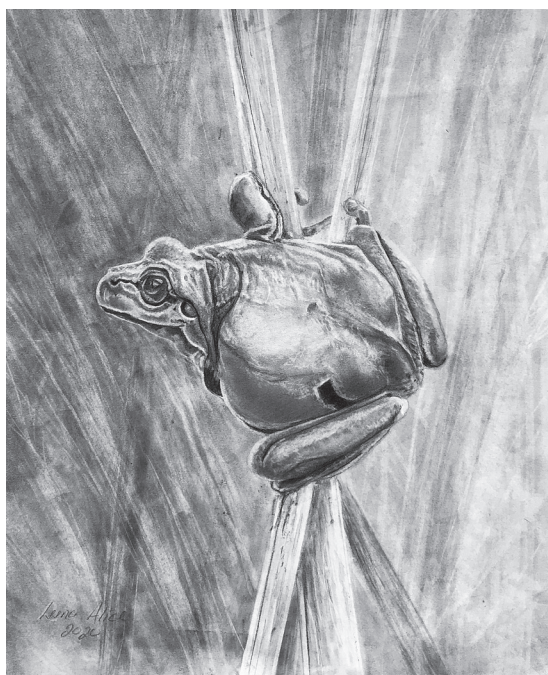
For decades, (one might argue since Arne Naess first coined the phrase Deep Ecology—rather than Shallow Ecology in 1972), there has been a brewing subculture attention to "cultivate ecological consciousness." This has been my go-to-phrase, among many, and is derived from sentiments like John Holt's, "school is structurally antithetical to learning." Or, David W. Jardine, who in the first issue of the Canadian Journal of Environmental Education called for schooling to be, "...reconceived as deeply ecological in character and mood." (1996, 47) School — and all education, really — has been a fertile ground for critique given schooling's adherence to a certain industrial growth status quo of society. And this adherence prevails when it is clearly emerging that to do so is an exercise of denial of ecological realities. The shift has been evolving such that the idealist is now the one who is intent on preserving the status quo. That's a big shift.

So, "the times, they are a changin." WP and the Anthropocene are here. There is now a sound WP textbook written from a collegial dialogue developed over time. Okay, textbook is the wrong word. Let's call it a guide. It can represent a guide to comprehend and evaluate one's practice as an outdoor educator. It is challenging. On a personal note, the Wild Pedagogies guide represents the best descriptor of what I always thought my career as a university professor was all about...though not so well articulated.

Within this theme issues of *Pathways*,



we will: hear from WP colleagues who have attended various WP gatherings; consider the six WP touchstones presented in Jickling et al (2018) *Wild Pedagogies: Touchstones for Renegotiating Education and the Environment in the Anthropocene* (referenced throughout this issue). I will explore pre and post thoughts from the 2019 Finse, Norway WP gathering. Gary Pluim and Kory Snache share a travelling course model and Maurie Lung shares a health counsellors' perspective with program activities both well suited to WP. Chris Peters gives the WP touchstones a try in his class time in Newfoundland. Student Nicole Strader considers a WP reflection concerning the wisdom of the hearth from a school winter field trip. Joshua Bennett considers WP and tourism outdoor guiding. Chris Beeman plays with our "visual imagination" rendering a WP image to consider.



This theme issue of *Pathways* is meant to promote a developing "updated" description or packaging of ideas (some perhaps new), to outdoor environmental educators in an emergent Anthropocene epoch. Do we need a new label or packaging for outdoor education?

The working premise here is that we do. For many, the case can be made that outdoor education is a "tired" term. I, for one, fear

outdoor education implies, to all too many people, outdated ideas and activities we may do but not as perceived. For example, one may teach canoeing skills so as to function on a canoe trip alone BUT also to be "one with the water" in an ecological relational understanding. One might wonder if there are ideas and activities that are part of Outdoor Education that are not connected to the label? Perhaps WP can be added to one's repertoire as needed. Perhaps it can serve as a rallying cry in the Anthropocene. Perhaps it can serve as a springboard in a dawning of relational nature and culture education. Or perhaps it is merely a term that keeps us playing in our own little sandbox, comfortable with our own little lexicon when we should be calling good outdoor experiential environmental education simply good education.

Whichever the case, *Wild Pedagogies* enters the arena of Outdoor Education in ways that confirm or even celebrate, reform or challenge. If the label gains cultural and institutional merit it can only add to the "may the forest be with you" dynamic of Outdoor Education, contemporizing our work to the times.

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*Bob Henderson works on a variety of outdoor education projects and in a variety of settings. He is a Resource Editor for Pathways, and the Guest Editor of this issue.*

I never thought that as an outdoor educator I'd be spending so much time in video calls and so little time in the forest, but the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has made this my reality for the time being. These have been challenging times for everyone in our industry — many outdoor educators have found themselves out of work, others fortunate enough to still be employed are suddenly finding themselves trying to teach outdoor education online, and all of us are finding ourselves cut off from many of the outdoor spaces that are integral to maintaining both our mental and physical health.

All of that being said, I have been amazed by the creativity and resilience of our membership who have been finding ways to make outdoor education possible at home. Countless activities have been shared that allow students to connect to nearby nature on a neighbourhood walk, in their yard, from their balcony, or through the window. I have seen resources that break activities down for teachers by grade and subject, blog posts that provide a week's worth of activities around a central theme, and videos that allow you to follow along with an instructor as you try it out for yourself. I've seen new webinars, podcasts, and livestream content being created right now that allows for great learning not only for the general public but also for outdoor educators in search of some professional development; my top recommendation is the content being put out right now by Caleb Musgrave of Canadian Bushcraft. We have demonstrated that outdoor educators are adaptable and outdoor education can happen in a variety of contexts, not just deep in the wilderness or at our outdoor centres. This makes me increasingly optimistic that outdoor education will be a component of school

reopening plans, especially as more and more people express a desire to have a break from their screens.

Normally at this time of year I would be happily sharing the success of another Ontario Wilderness Leadership Symposium (OWLS), our annual event to support the development of emerging wilderness trip leaders and outdoor professionals in Ontario. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to cancel this year's OWLS, which was scheduled to take place at Norval Outdoor School on May 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>. Fortunately, our generous funding from Cabela's Outdoor Fund will be deferred to next year's OWLS in spring of 2021. We are hopeful that we will still be able to gather at RKY Camp in September for our Annual Fall Conference, but we are continuing to monitor government guidelines and plan accordingly.

I wish you all the best as you navigate through this challenging time. COEO will continue to advocate for outdoor education and support outdoor educators; please do not hesitate to reach out if you think of other ways we can help right now. I encourage you to follow our social media accounts and be sure to read each month's e-newsletter, as this not only allows you to stay up-to-date on all things COEO related but also to see highlights of some of the great work being done by so many of our members. You can follow us on Facebook (@coeo.org), Instagram (@COEOoutdoors), and Twitter (@COEOoutdoors).

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Natalie Kemp  
COEO President

**Sketch Pad** – The art for this issue of *Pathways* was generously contributed by Leena Rahusaar (cover and pages 3, 10, 12, 14, 16, 19, 20, 23, 26, 28, 31, 34-36). Leena has always engaged in imaginative pursuits such as costume, set, and prop creation, jewellery, textile and visual arts, and writing. Growing up exploring forests and paddling lakes, the opportunity to do illustrations for an issue of *Pathways* was a particularly appealing opportunity. Formerly an educator, she now is at a stage in her life that she can freely develop her interest in arts -- drawing, in its accessibility, and foundational nature, is where she chose to start to seriously hone her skills as an artist. To see her work, or to message about creative projects, please follow her on Instagram at alicecre8. She can also be reached at alicecre8@gmail.com.



## Wild Pedagogies Playfully Conceptualized

By Bob Henderson

Recently while offering a Wild Pedagogies workshop, my co-presenter made an interesting slip-up in language. She had meant to say, “meditation” when referring to some aspect of nature-based learning. However, she inadvertently slipped in the word “medication”.

In an interesting way, both words worked in content with only subtle differences in meaning. The use of medication confirmed a strong nature therapy leaning, while, in context, meditation in nature more inferred a nature therapy leaning. This could have one thinking about language and its power to playfully and subtly, at times, influence the meanings and conceptualizing of ideas and activities.

Wild Pedagogies can and should be played with to capture its intentions in personalized ways. It is pedagogies and not pedagogy for a reason. Wild Pedagogies are not static and dogmatic. The ideology is open for interpretation within the large sweeping umbrella terms of outdoor and environmental education.

While the six Wild Pedagogies touchstones capture strong ideas to work with in our practice, they must be personalized in intention and spirit to hold. In that vein, I have tried to playfully work with the Wild Pedagogies touchstones with hopes to widen the conceptual dialogue where understandings fall short or can be further clarified.

Rebecca Carver (1996) presented a useful conceptualization of experiential education. I think it is most useful for its brevity. She had more going on within her overall model but the core of the concept was an A,B,C easily remembered framework.

Experiential Education can be understood as A (Agency), B (Belonging), C (Competency).

What might Wild Pedagogies look like within a similar framework?

Wild Pedagogies can be understood as:

A = Agency

B = Belongings

C = Culture Change or Competencies for Culture Change

As one becomes more familiar with the six touchstones, you could reduce the touchstone language to Three C's of Wild Pedagogies:

C = Control (A shift to students in thoughtful ways)

C = Complexity (Bring it back to learning against the prescriptive urge — be where the world is — outside.)

C = Culture Change (We are moving slowly and collectively away from denial — culture change is good — society must be served by education, not the other way around.)

In the 1990s, I was a huge fan of the folk-rock band Timbuk3. Remember, “The future’s so bright, I’ve got to wear shades.” They had a song called Too Much Sex, Not Enough Affection. There is a useful idea here.

Sometimes, understandings are enhanced by capturing what X isn’t, with what it is. Sex vs. affection, for example.

Wild Pedagogies can be understood as:

Too much answering. Not enough questioning.

Too much sport. Not enough play.

Too much risk. Not enough curiosity.

Too much complication. Not enough complexity.

Too much wilderness. Not enough self-willed land.

Too much known/managed. Not enough unknown/explored.

Too much arrogance. Not enough humility.

Too much human-centred. Not enough more-than-human-centred.

Too much teacher. Not enough nature.

Too much teacher —> student. Not enough teacher <—> student.

Too much somber learning. Not enough joyous learning.

Please feel free to add to this list.

In its simplest expression, Wild Pedagogies has been described as re-wilding education. Of course, it is more than that but re-wilding education is an effective start. What if the “RE” theme was continued.

Wild Pedagogies can be understood as:

RE-wilding education  
 RE-thinking wilderness as self-willed land  
 RE-establishing control to students  
 RE-embracing complexity  
 RE-shaping practices for culture change  
 RE-thinking the pace of change cognizant of time and patience

## Wild Pedagogies Touchstones Distilled

The six Wild Pedagogies touchstones represent, I believe, a well-thought-out collaboration of many educator conversations and various syntheses of ideas. In short, the following touchstones are a synergistic collection of thoughts articulating the actions of education reform needed to advance education in an era of climate change turmoil, ecological degradation and social inequalities.

The six touchstones from Wild Pedagogies (2018 book) are:

- 1) Nature as Co-Teacher: “...we need to be attentive to moments when our fellow co-teachers (natural places) are engaging students meaningfully.”
- 2) Complexity, the Unknown, and Spontaneity: “Knowledge, if given space, is wondrously dynamic.” Embrace the teachable moment.
- 3) Locating the Wild: “The wild can be found everywhere — in a range of settings — urban to rural. Seek self-willed land.
- 4) Time and Practice: “Building relationships with the natural world takes time and practice.”
- 5) Socio-Cultural Change: “Education has an important role to play in this project of cultural change...education is always a political act.”

- 6) Building Alliances and the Human Community: “...Not only in the environmental world, but across all people and groups concerned with justice.”

The Australian Journal has a slightly different set of touchstones, and the differences are mostly in the language used. The differences are thus: 1) Agency and Role of Nature as Co-Teacher, 2) Wildness and Challenging Ideas of Control, 3) Complexity, the Unknown, and Spontaneity, 4) Locating the Wild, 5) Time and Practice and 6) Culture Change.

I am a fan of these touchstones. They are, I believe, an articulate messaging of what is needed in current educational reform; certainly of what is needed in outdoor and environmental education.

That said, these touchstones do not feel new to me. These sentiments have been with outdoor environmental educators, in various incarnations, for many years. What is new is a comprehensive feel to this particular packaging of reform. If these six touchstones seem overwhelming, perhaps they can be distilled without losing meaningful qualities. Such distilling of the ideas is an exercise to articulate brief, clear statements.

So, if the touchstones, in a given movement, do not seem to be the most effective description, the following efforts are put forward as aides. They are derived largely from Jickling et al (2018) *Wild Pedagogies: Touchstones for Re-Negotiating Education and the Environment in the Anthropocene*.

Wild Pedagogies is an educational project of experiential learning opportunities in self-willed land /places to work against the environmental degradation of the acknowledgment of the Anthropocene. This will involve a striving for guided student agency and belonging with the more-than-human world implying action-taking to work within and for this world. Such an educational project will take time, patience and must be centrally attentive to notions and actions for culture change.



If you think this sounds like there is a struggle going on in this distilling experience, you would be correct. To continue, here are other efforts:

- Wild Pedagogies is aimed at re-wilding education; so there is learning with place (the land and water as teacher); so that teacher and student as co-learners attend to the untamed in place and self and don't settle for a cultural domestication. This requires making the walls around classrooms, buildings and modern Western education more permeable.
- Wild Pedagogies is a pluralistic project. There is not a single Wild Pedagogy. Critique of our current educational system must be paired with a vision toward ecological consciousness and sustainable socially-just initiatives.

As for the process of dedicated Wild Pedagogies gatherings over five years now with a common core of educators adding many new voices with each gathering, one can say:

- The Wild Pedagogies gatherings are an eco-social learning project to be a disruption from the conventional ways academics and professionals usually meet under "the conference" label. Efforts at the forefront of the Wild Pedagogies gatherings are to make meaning in a collaborative setting: that is collaborative in terms of people and place and perspective. By consciously being in-the-world, the aspiration is to do our work differently and in a more meaningful way.

As for the Anthropocene:

- The human world, the world-for-us, is drifting toward a global situation of human extinction. In this age of human impact, ecological urgency is coming to define our times. We now live in a new geo-story, a new epoch, the Anthropocene.<sup>1</sup> Educator Margaret Somerville (2018) asks, "...How is this time reconfigured, what does it mean to ask what comes after? How can we understand the time of a moment, of a day, a life, a generation in

the mattering of geological time?"

Finally, when educator John Hardy presented a Ted Talk, "My Green School Dream" in 2010, he expressed his pedagogical vision for a school that would simply; 1) be local 2) let the environment lead, and 3) think about how your grandchildren would think. Hardy said of the school, "we practice wholism." He begins his presentation with the claim that the Al Gore film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, ruined his life. Such was his impetus to start a Green School. Like many inspirational stories in education, there is much of Wild Pedagogies here.

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- Bob Henderson works on a variety of outdoor education projects and in a variety of settings. He is a Resource Editor for Pathways.

## Wild Pedagogies: A Modest Research Inquiry

By Bob Henderson

In advance of the Wild Pedagogies colloquium in Finse, Norway in August 2019, I set it upon myself to represent a practitioner voice for the gathering. By practitioner, I mean those teaching from early childhood to university levels, from outdoor centre staff to education curriculum consultants.

The idea was to give ten educators a copy of *Wild Pedagogies: Six Initial Touchstones for Early Childhood Environmental Education* from the *Australian Journal of Environmental Education* (Jickling et al, 2018). I asked each participant to read the article six months before I would interview them with one central inquiry question: how has Wild Pedagogies come to infiltrate your practice, if at all? This article was selected for its readability and succinct treatment with six possible ready-made ideas (or touchstones) to incorporate into one's practice...or not.

I had a nagging worry that Wild Pedagogies might come to reside in the realm of academia alone. Might the ideas only be used in disrupting some notions of research, journal authorship/conceptual journal submissions, and bestuck-in academic discourses at conferences and among the small group of folks attending Wild Pedagogies gatherings? Given that worry, let's see how practitioners view these six touchstones as entry points to their practice of teaching and learning.

After concluding July interviews, I planned to present my findings at the Finse gathering. The central interest of this research inquiry was "knowledge translation": that is, having Wild Pedagogies reach and influence a wider audience than its academic foundations. This notion of knowledge translation should be a significant concern for academic communities.

In the end, nine out of 10 participants complied with the six-month trial. Informal

interviews ranged between 15 and 40 minutes. The central theme concerned how, if at all, Wild Pedagogies **INFILTRATED** one's practice, but many were keen to include suggestions to the journal article authors — all of whom were present at Finse.

### Results

*How has Wild Pedagogies infiltrated your practice?*

- Three of nine responses were apologetic. They had read the journal article with interest, but for varied reasons, did not actively work with the ideas in any thoughtful or direct way. Why? Lack of time and energy. Lack of opportunity. The touchstones were too quickly forgotten to the immediacy of day-to-day teaching.
- Three participants had or will use the touchstones directly: two in course design and one in writing policy (using the language).
- Two participants felt they had gained insight and the touchstones had informed their practice in direct ways.
- One stated they are "already doing all of this." For this person, the exercise had been, in essence, a satisfying, confirming read but nothing new.

I will add that not engaging with the material *is* a useful response; no apology needed. There is an acknowledgment needed that it is not easy to bring this work to your day-to-day as a teacher. There are many barriers and circumstances at play. One person (a grade 7 to 10 teacher) sent an additional letter describing his efforts to bring Wild Pedagogies directly to his practice. (See page 13).

When it came to making suggestions to the authors, the advice was a bit less varied.



- Five advised the authors to present examples of applying the touchstones. What might be a lesson plan? “How to” to accompany the “what is” would help compel the practitioners into direct action.
- Three practitioners were supportive of the journal article as having workable ideas presented clearly: readily digestible and ready for trials and testing in the field.
- Two suggested the language could be improved to advance the overall message and promote applications for practice.
- One practitioner wanted the six touchstones to be distilled into a more discernible manner.

Some individual comments stand out as particularly interesting:

- These touchstones are “back of the head” ideas.
- “Easy to make this complicated but it distills down to one single thing: take kids outside. That’s the crux of the problem.”
- “The problem: teachers are all out of the same mold. They teach inside.”
- “The curriculum hangs over the head of teachers.” [Even grade 2.]
- “If you know the curriculum really well, it increases the option to develop Wild Pedagogies into your teaching.”
- It was important to read for course touchstones — helped me create more “openness into curriculum/evaluation.”
- “The public system doesn’t really allow for these touchstones. But I’m an intentional practitioner so I’ll find a way.”
- “The feel of this is not preachy — good for reflection.”
- “My board [of education] is trying to modernize outdoor education, i.e. local and accessible, equitable, decolonization, more place-based. Wild Pedagogies helps.”
- Curriculum constraints dominate.

- A strength: “Allowing it to look like many things.” i.e. Wild Pedagogies is not prescriptive.
- “Language is too cognitive.”
- “Can language be adopted to elementary teaching?”

### Recommendation

Having digested all the above and formatted the “infiltrate” question and suggestions for authors and for presentation in *Finse* for a group of thirty, mostly university educators, the following recommendations were suggested:

Develop a Wild Pedagogies workshop for teacher professional development.

Present “How To” Wild Pedagogies sessions at conferences to spread the word.

Further work with language and make an effort to distill the message.

Develop theme issues in a wide array of practitioner and academic journals (*Pathways* can be seen as a hybrid journal in this regard).

After the summer 2019 *Finse* gathering, some of this work has commenced in Canada and beyond from Botswana to Norway to Australia.

See the Wild Pedagogies website: <http://www.wildpedagogies.com/>.

### References

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*Bob Henderson is involved in a number of Outdoor Education projects since his retirement from McMaster University in 2010.*

## Wild Pedagogies Stories: Evaluation of Teaching

By Bob Henderson

Early in my career as an outdoor educator at a Canadian university, I ran into a conflict with my department superiors concerning philosophies and practices with significant implications to teaching evaluations. It was the mid-1980s. While the conflict was unfortunate, the lesson was a good one. I learned, early on, that the ways of one's field of teaching need to come before the conventional ways of the institution, most often. This lesson helped shape my career at the university.

I learned another lesson too: focus on the student experience, not one's collegial opinions. Such is the topic of this discussion here: teacher evaluations.

My department had a five question Leikart scale (scale of one to five, answers ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree) evaluation of teaching form. This was common practice in the 80s and 90s. Here are the questions by which all teachers were to be evaluated — from outdoor experiential-based educators to dance to exercise physiology professors:

1. The instructor demonstrated mastery of the subject material in this course.
2. The teaching methods used by the instructor were clear enough for me to follow them and learn from them.
3. The instructor succeeded in stimulating my interest in this subject.
4. The instructor was well organized and followed an explicitly detailed course outline.
5. The instructor's responses to essays, tests, performance, etc, demonstrated concern for my learning.

Following the numerical response (1-5), each student could provide specific comments beyond the open-ended final opportunity to comment more generally.

The course in question — the one that inspired the conflict — involved an eight-day field trip (canoe trips in groups of

nine), followed by student self-selected group projects/presentations and individual work/presentations, topics being determined in agreement with the professor (me), usually with one-on-one meetings. Class size was usually 40 students.



I "taught" largely out of class time with meetings to advance students' ideas. The post trip component of the course involved a few lectures/discussions and an urban field trip in the early goings. This all set the stage for the student-directed work and presentations in a three hour time slot once a week.

Students post-trip all know each other, which allows for an esprit de corps that is rare in university class rooms. It would feel, dare I say, criminal, to follow up a longish group field trip with a standard university transmission-based professor-to-student lecture. If the course has a group field component as its centre point, then the in-class component and evaluation needs to follow suit in-kind and reflect experiential/inquiry-based modes of teaching and evaluation: hence, the group work and individual projects.

Students even had a hand in their own project evaluations and in group projects evaluations. It was different for me and students. Some students resisted the unconventionality. Others (most), embraced it. Yes, it was all unconventional and



frowned-upon by conventional-driven colleagues, but this method was then, and, of course, remains a more “traditional” way of learning over the centuries. But that’s another topic. Back to the evaluation forms.

I quickly got used to scoring modestly, or even poorly, on the numbers aspect of the teacher evaluation questions, particularly #2 and #4. I assumed by third and fourth year, students were overly familiarized with the conventions of university schooling with teacher-centred lecturing, some discussion, and multiple choice evaluations with large class sizes (50-300 students). The experiential grounded teaching methods and evaluation were daunting for some and totally embraced by others, or, I really wasn’t “clear enough” or “well organized.”

However, generally, the written responses to the five questions were glowing. For example, for question #2, a common response went something like this: “Yeah, the teaching method was so different as to be unclear for us at times, BUT what a pleasure to have so much responsibility for what we learn, how we learn it, and how it is evaluated. Refreshing!” (Score: 2 out of 5).

A common response to the call for any other comments at the end was: “Best course I’ve taken.” Gratefully, the written comments and the numerical evaluation were both considered in terms of merit. But what if that were to change? (And it did with a later evaluation form.) What if only the numerical aspect of the evaluation was taken into consideration for merit and promotional purposes? I’d be scuppered! I hung my career hat more on teaching than research.

Taking all this into consideration, the experiential modality worked against the grain of common university practice but it was very successful in terms of student experience. I learned to focus on students, not the opinion of my colleagues. None of this should seem unusual to an outdoor educator in an institutional school setting.

One day, it came to me that I should play

a bit with the Leikart scale evaluation and even conduct a little research project. And so, I fashioned another set of questions that addressed the same inquiry points of practice; but from a standpoint that makes sense for experiential methods. The additional form was made as identical as possible to the standard required form. Here are the questions:

1. The course allowed me to develop some mastery of the subject.
2. The teaching methods we employed in the course allowed me to pursue a relevant and valuable learning experience.
3. The course was challenging and engaging for me.
4. The course unfolded in a meaningful and relevant way.
5. The instructor communicated concern and care for my learning during the course.

Students were given both “course” evaluation forms with as little fanfare as possible. They could choose which form to fill in first. I am certain that for some, the exercise itself was a useful pedagogical experience, even an awakening to what principles underlie the course in question. What I hoped the students would see, even as a minor epiphany, was that one form was teacher-centred and the other was by necessity and the logic of the experience, a “course” evaluation.

I planned to administer the two evaluation forms for five years and then compare the numbers. I expected the written comments to not change much. It was all about the numbers. Sadly, after two years, the department changed the form entirely to a computer-generated form system so I dropped the research project idea. The results of the two years were enough to prove my point, if only for myself.

The student-centred (even nature-centred) course-specific generated questions of my own design to suit the outdoor education course were (generally) answered with a four or five rating for all five questions.

Also, it was easier to be praise-worthy with written comments because the questions more directly reflected the course methods. I still got a two, three, or four for the departmental form with comments that had the common “but” clause, which showcased the fact that the department form did not relate to the teacher/course it was meant to evaluate.

I pointed this out to the appropriate colleagues who oversaw teacher evaluations and related merit and promotion, but it was clear, this was awkward terrain that was not to be entered into. One evaluation form was fine. We all teach the same. That was the bottom-line. To be fair, this story is set in the late 1980s. It might be different now, though I suspect there is much “sand in the machinery” for the experimental-based educator who is attempting to match field trips and classroom pedagogy with an institutional education setting.

The lessons of this 1980s evaluation forms story remain relevant today for a couple of reasons. First, because the teaching methods of outdoor experiential learning might not be in synch with institutional criteria (e.g. evaluation forms) and this will likely demand attention and, I might add, more work for the educator. Second, it is best to primarily focus on the quality of the student experience and deal with the fallout of collegial angst or institutional negativity as a secondary concern.

For a full treatment of a transmission curriculum and its differences from a transformational curriculum central to the two evaluations forms story, see J.P. Miller, *The Holistic Curriculum* (Toronto: OISE Press, 1988) 4-7.

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*Bob Henderson works on a variety of outdoor education projects and in a variety of settings. He is a Resource Editor for Pathways.*



## A Letter Concerning Wild Pedagogies Forays

By Chris Peters

**Editor's note:** This letter was not intended for publication but rather was a response to a research question (see p. 8).

"They were men of the north, fishermen who tried to keep their families in food by hunting ducks and geese in summer and autumn, and caribou, hares and ptarmigan in winter. Like their southern shipmates they were dressed in short jackets of tough cotton weave: little of their clothing was made of wool—the only fibre that could protect a man properly on the ice-field. On their feet were homemade boots..."

—Excerpt from *Death on the Ice*, by Cassie Brown.

There's a degree of competency — making boots, of surety in extreme environments, of hunting — implied here. The toughness of those described boggles the modern mind.

But alas, the physical competency to cope and the mental and spiritual rigor to deal have been badly eroded. Even the latest variation of the idiot-box — the smartphone — cannot take the blame for half a century of accumulated societal lethargy and largesse.

How to address?

A lot of education of late, to borrow from *Wild Pedagogies* (Jickling et al.) "is unable to shoulder the challenge of this work. Often (education) aids and abets the problem." The problem referred to therein is that life on this planet is in trouble. I am thinking that our lack of physical competency, our dirth of toughness exacerbates the referred to problem.

Education, writ large — from the home to the classroom — isn't addressing meaningfully the spectre of the climate crisis. In the Knowledge Revolution, we have access to ever more info yet understand and implement it poorly.

Preaching, I know, to the choir. Hence the

Wild Pedagogies ask. What follows is how I endeavoured to introduce it into my classes.

I have, for the past 11 years, been the nominal head of the school's garden and compost program (indeed it was the focus of my master's thesis). Two years ago, some parent volunteers, along with grant money, constructed a greenhouse for the school to use. We got plenty started. But a death in the family and the annual collision of exams and end of year mania (more on that later) meant we grew a bumper crop of weeds.

So before your request [to have Wild Pedagogies infiltrate my teaching practice], I had already decided to make the garden the term project for my World Geography class. I felt this fit well with the fourth touchstone, "Locating the Wild", as an opportunity for largely suburban/urban students to 'have encounters with the wild and/or self-willed communities.' Or, as some of my students refer to it, getting in touch with their vegan — a kind of catch all for anything green/environmental. While a little apprehensive in assigning a term project to a grade 11 class, it fit the curriculum outcomes.

I also had a notion that my grade 11 class could then 'teach' the younger students (we are a K-12 institution) about growing from seeds to seedlings to transplanting to the garden beds to harvest.

Best laid plans...

My grade 11 geography class responded well. We did a field trip to a local farm, under the tutelage of local farmers. Another grower came in and gave a seed starting tutorial. It wasn't wild, per se, but it wasn't the classroom, either. They were outside, and engaging with the world. In a limited way. And certainly, I would hesitate to say we challenged societal norms. (At the same time, only 1-2% of vegetables consumed in NL are grown here. Consequently, Newfoundlanders eat the fewest vegetables of any province in Canada. Whereas, not so



very long ago, communities had to be self-sufficient in vegetables and meat. Manure, seaweed and fish offal were used as soil amendments. And over 300,000 bushels of oats were grown here! Shows that the simple act of planting a seed and harvesting a crop can challenge the status quo.)



My grade 11s did work with some younger students, to good effort. However, while some seven classes have gotten involved beyond my geography class, the mandate for being in the greenhouse has been wholly teacher-centric and curriculum-driven. Certainly, many students have been engaged. But to borrow from the second touchstone, “Wildness and Challenging Ideas of Control”, there was — at least from where I stood — not enough room made for the unknown, spontaneous, and unexpected to appear. And more importantly the ‘natural world wasn’t able to self-represent’ — it was incorporated into larger lessons, pencilled in for 15-40-minute increments. I do feel students got ‘encounters with the wild’ but not in

ways that engaged their imagination, where they were empowered to make meaningful decisions. Partly this was because of time constraints. Partly because of unfamiliarity with gardening and the potential for the garden to be an agent connecting the human and natural worlds — to borrow from C.A. Bowers — the commons.

Perched atop Signal Hill, the wind hurtling in off the Atlantic, accompanied by a swirl of fog, I will admit to feeling cold. And after the previous day when the skies were clear and I got a burn, I had to work hard on gratitude for the moment. But my students didn’t. They were into it, and all that blathering about “kids today” (too soft, too online, complainers) was just that — so much hot air. Students who are regularly a nuisance in class weren’t. And slowly, borrowing from their energy I found joy in the moment too.

This was my second notion: to bring my grade 7 classes to Signal Hill overlooking, to the west, St John’s, and to the east, the blue-grey expanse of the Atlantic. I also wasn’t tied to any particular outcomes. This was a project I came up with to better understand, through art, ostensibly sketching on Signal Hill, then turning those into larger compositions at school. That I wasn’t tied to School Curricular Outcomes (SCOs) really helped change the dynamic.

There are two grade 7 classes, so on two afternoons we set off. The first — May 30<sup>th</sup> — was a gorgeous, clear day. The UV was very high and everyone got burned. Although the winds were calm, the sea seethed against the grey-red shoreline, and ‘berg debris was scattered with the currents — great arcs of icy bits, stark white against blue. I noted students were agreeable all afternoon. Funny, how being out of the classroom changes everything. When I took the students down a little used trail bordered by dogwood and alder, they enthused at the mystery, the dream-like trance the place suggested. I summarized the day with, “If I had my time back I would have dispensed with the art project pretence. It was the hike and student

experience of the outdoors I was after.” May 31<sup>st</sup> was altogether different again.

“Nature has not been kind to Newfoundland. Surrounded by the hostile North Atlantic and attached from the north by the frigid Arctic (Labrador) current, the Bland rises gaunt and grey out of a cold, grey sea...” (*Death on the Ice.*)

The wind was onshore. Fog swirled and obscured everything. I retraced the walk of the previous day. You could see lobster boats plying out through the chop, and an oil supply vessel was going through a safety protocol just offshore — water canons arcing into the grey-white swirl.

This class was into it. There were no complaints about the hike or the cold. Several students stood right at the edge — deceptive here as the hill often slopes rather than falls away. They produced some great sketches. The tang of salt dominated the air, and the calls of gulls, terns, Arctic terns and the slow canter of fulmars into the netherworld above the seethe of the seas made for a full-on sensory experience.

“Better than any classroom.”

That was the exclamation from a gentleman we passed on the trail. I had chosen Signal Hill because of its position between urban St. John’s and the wilderness of the coast and sea. I have come there in summer and watched the sky go inky black, the light pollution ensnared below. I have seen whales from on high, icebergs and sea ice that stretched in mounded, grey-white chunks off to the horizon. It is a liminal space, not quite of the city and rising out of the grey-blue depths. Formed by the sea, but not of it. (Although many ecologists might contest that.)

With these forays I found we touched on touchstone two, “Wilderness and Challenging Ideas of Control” and touchstone three, “Complexity, the Unknown and Spontaneity.” Allowing students to be present in place, to move away from being in charge and let nature

and the history of this spot speak was easier. Students asked after the icy tendrils that followed currents from the ‘bergs. We noted lobster pots and terns, fulmars and a half dozen varieties of gulls (I would, on the first day of June take my daughters around the Hill trail proper and an eagle rode a thermal so close to us that if we’d reached out, we could have touched its outstretched feathers). Built into a day — or days — like May 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> was spontaneity. And with that came opportunity. The manufactured rush of curriculum outcomes to get covered was wholly absent. And I would see possibilities, as if for the rest time for how a unit — why not even a year? — could be covered with place as our teacher. SCOs would be covered but in a rhythm beyond the drumbeat of bells, textbooks and ‘chalk-and-talk’.

Of course, there wasn’t enough time. But it was a taste. I have heard from students years after a field trip or Brother Brennan Environmental Centre visit that those were the moments that meant the most — brief as they were. If we as educators (and as a society) offer students immersive moments/time with wild and place, as touchstone four, “Locating the Wild” asks, then those experiences reverberate because they are genuine

This has become a much longer letter than I intended, but in trying to do justice to Wild Pedagogies, I wanted to convey my attempts — successes and failures — fully. I feel that there’s potential in my Wild Pedagogies forays, and I am already thinking of the coming fall with excitement.

Take care,  
Chris, in Newfoundland.

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*Chris Peters lives and works in St John’s Newfoundland with his wife and daughters. He is committed to bring his students outside — be it on the water, in the garden or on the trail.*

## Learning Wild and Free: Pedagogies from a Course on the Histories of Huronia

By Gary Plum & Kory Snache

### The Lost Village of Cahiagué

By most accounts, Cahiagué should have been almost exactly, as the crow flies, between the Narrows separating Lakes Simcoe and Couchiching and the mouth of the Coldwater River at Matchedash Bay. The village was the stuff of legends. A metropolis of historic Wendake, the pre-colonial empire of over twenty thousand people. Half a millennium ago, Cahiagué was the foremost of four Arendarhonon villages in eastern Huronia. Champlain met with Chief Atironta here in August 1615 to lend support and strategy for a surprise invasion on the Haudenosaunee of the south. Home to up to a quarter of the area's population, Cahiagué was once bustling with culture and politics, about two hundred longhouses, enclosed by palisades.

Remarkably, despite its past prominence, disputes remain as to the exact location of the village. Wendat communities moved every fifteen to twenty-five years or so to regenerate trees and soil, so tracking down its precise location is complicated. Dishearteningly, most of Cahiagué's artefacts were found displaced at the local dump. Local lore suggests modern-day Warminster as the former Wendat village, however, a deeper examination of the archaeological evidence, a tracking of trade goods through the area, and an analysis of the historical record point to other possibilities (Cranston, 1949; Fitzgerald 1986).

In this early map of Huronia, Cahiague is situated much further south than in many other portrayals (from Flenley, 1925).



In this excerpt of "Map to Illustrate the Travels of Champlain", Cahiagué is placed much further south than in most other accounts, roughly around the modern town of New Tecumseth in Treaty 18 territory (from Flenley, 1925).



Our university class passed through the area via the Uhthoff trail on a mild Tuesday morning in May 2018, keeping our eyes out for any remaining signs of the village. The rail trail we were biking along was moist from the late thaw and the dense, overhanging cedars. The area resembling the muskeg ecologies of much further north. As the route opened up into expansive fields more characteristic of Huronia, we scouted the land for the fabled settlement. With both freedom and purpose, we tested “our curiosity and powers for self and community”, as Polly Knowlton Cockett describes in an earlier edition of this journal (2016, p. 2). Through wild pedagogies, our search for Cahigué was just one of dozens of historic and geographic puzzles we tried to solve during our two weeks together.

### Histories of Indigenous and Settler Relations in Huronia

That morning ride through Huronia would eventually lead us through Coldwater, Waubaushene, and Victoria Harbour, arriving at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons for lunch. We were on a two-week, Lakehead University undergraduate adventure, a travelling, inquiry course constructed to connect pressing, contemporary social justice issues with local histories of and relationships between settler and Indigenous populations in our region. By getting out of our usual lecture halls and into our hiking boots, on to our bikes, and into canoes, we participated in “intentional activities that provide a fertile field for personal and purposeful experiences without controlling the outcomes” (Cockett, p. 2). As one student would later describe,

*Part of it was learning that there are so many good sources of knowledge out there that can be found outside of the walls of the classroom. ... We just had a super concentrated amount of life experience in those two weeks, but that's going to continue on, just in less concentrated doses, as we keep going.*

The flow of the course roughly followed the trajectory of historical relations in

our region. Day one we set out from the Wiigwasitig Gitigaan (the Birch Tree Gardens) at Lakehead University's main campus in Orillia and biked to the Mnjikaning Fish Weirs of Rama First Nation. During the first week we learned about the creation of Turtle Island, early Anishinaabe societies, pre-colonial culture, and first contact. The second half of our course included a heavier concentration on later Indigenous-settler relations, including the expansion of settler immigration to Canada in the nineteenth century and the impacts of social policies placed upon Indigenous peoples during the past hundred years.

Moved by the Calls to Action of the TRC (the 2015 *Truth and Reconciliation Report*) the course ventured through significant locations of the First Peoples of our area, stopping at various major historical landmarks. We investigated the patterns of European settlement over the past two centuries to envisage the social, geographic, and political dynamics that formed the basis of relations of our area. Because much of our social history in Canada requires reconciliatory responses, the TRC report provided a constant sounding board for our venture. We met with Elders, museum curators, teachers, professors, and others who helped us uncover histories that we may have otherwise never learned. One student from the course would later reflect upon this form of learning:

*It's not in any scholarly books that we would have access to at the library or online. These are experiential learnings. It really put into perspective the opportunity [we had]. To go out into the community and learn things that you would have never had the opportunity to learn is always there. There are always mentors and teachers in the community. Even though they may not be called mentors or teachers, they have knowledge that you likely don't, or you might have a different way of understanding, and they can help guide you and teach you new ways.*

During the course, we travelled primarily through Williams treaty territory, the traditional lands of the Ojibwe who

now live in several communities across Huronia. Within these territories we covered spaces that are protected today through the Copeland and Simcoe County Forests, Wasaga Beach Provincial Park, and Minesing Wetlands Conservation Area.

### Self-Willed, Uncontrolled, Wild Pedagogies

Our course was embedded upon the premises of wild pedagogies. Contrary to educational practice that is structured and sequenced toward predetermined outcomes, wild pedagogies relinquish control so that students gain autonomy over the direction of their learning. We travelled, meandered, and explored the land to better understand the complexities of the historical narratives. This approach was “self-willed, uncontrolled, even wild”, as Jickling describes in a previous edition of *Pathways* (2016, p. 6); one in which teachers don’t claim to fully understand the students’ starting points, the roots of their questions, or their paths toward learning. It’s “edgy and messy work”, says Cockett. They challenge “dominant cultural notions of control—of each other, nature, education and learning” (p. 2). Spending our days along paths, trails, and waterways throughout the region was certainly antithetical to the more common lecture and slide show techniques well-known to many university students.

Learning through wild pedagogies by travelling the area enabled us to feel the flow of moving water, the effort needed to move up and down hills, the textures of the surfaces, and the contours of the land. The use of non-motorized travel was an intentional aspect so that wild pedagogies could connect us with the waters, the land, and the ancestors of the region as we would hike, ride our bikes and canoe through the area. We travelled routes such as the Ganaraska, the former Grand Trunk Railroad, and the Trans-Canada Trail, and each day provided a new set of insights on the histories that have shaped Huronia.

### The Water Squeezes in from the Outside

Many of us will recall that spring came late in 2018. The lake ice had barely broken for our group to reasonably incorporate the water-based portion of our course. But when it did, it provided a great, experiential reconstruction for our journey. Just as First Nations and French fur traders set out the moment that solid thawed to liquid on their lengthy journeys between the forts of Lower Canada and trading posts of the upper Great Lakes, so too did we negotiate impressive ice flows through frigid and sometimes big water. The day prior to our search for Cahiagué we were out in canoes on Lake Couchiching, traversing southward toward the Atherley Narrows, a strait to Couchiching’s source—Lake Simcoe, below. The Anishinaabe translation for this popular summer lake is Gwajienjawjiing, meaning, fittingly, “the water squeezes in from the outside”. This route has been travelled for millennia, only one of five traditional gateways into Huronia. Imagining the region as it might have been hundreds of years prior, and viewing the splendidity of the lake ice and the sporadic wildlife was a personal, even spiritual experience for some. Cockett concurs that wild pedagogies can extend to “learning from the land and all human and more-than-human beings that inhabit places” (p.2). As one student described:

*I really remember seeing the eagle out on Couchiching one day. That was a very personal experience for me, just to see an eagle. I’d seen an eagle out east before that and I have always wanted to see an eagle closer to what I feel is my home. So that was very special to have that moment, very early on in the course too.*

*I was very much globally-oriented in my thoughts, before this course. I’ve started to move away from that. Since the beginning of this course, I’ve been really realizing how important the local is. Like I said, seeing that eagle in what I considered as my home, that aspect.*

That afternoon we paddled to the Chippewas of Rama First Nation and learned about this community's history, from its origins as peoples dispersed throughout the region, to Canada's first experiment with the reserve system along the Coldwater tract, to their relocation to Mnjikaning area under Chief Yellowhead. We were invited onto Big Chief Island, an original settlement of the band, now a sacred burial site at one end and a spot for goose hunting at the other. Later, we pushed southward toward the Narrows for a historical highpoint of the course. The Mnjikaning Fish Weirs, a National Historic Site with a proposed future interpretive centre, is among the earliest evidence of human activity in Canada. Here, Indigenous fishers built thousands of wooden stakes for harvesting fish as they moved through this narrow channel. Mnjikaning, literally meaning "you're at the fences", has had great cultural, spiritual, military and economic importance for five thousand years. Indeed, this location is a good example of how place affects society. Any lines of travel, trade, or communication from east to west (by land) or north to south (by water) had to pass through these Narrows. As members of our class imagined the customs and traditions that have been constructed and transferred through four or five generations of settler Canadians, it was fascinating to consider that these weirs have survived some two to three hundred generations.

### Cultivating a Sense of Eco-Social Justice on and Through the Land

Day seven was another great example of the outcomes of wild pedagogies. At this point in the course we had reached the western edge of Huronia, the shores of the big waters Champlain called Lake Attigouautan. As we biked southward along the coast, we passed through sandy flatlands, desolate before the populated summer months. We stopped at Ossossané Beach for lunch, once the clan's main village, now a quaint park, rocky shoreline, and boat launch. While most of us relaxed along its majestic shores, a couple of adventuresome classmates sought out to find evidence of the eponymous ossuary nearby. Remnants of numerous ossuaries



dot the province, but this one has special meaning for citizens of Huronia. The bone pit leftover from a Wendat *Feast of the Dead* ritual, a ceremony of life held here that was documented by Jesuit missionary Jean de Brébeuf back in the 1600s and more recently in Joseph Boyden's in *The Orenda* (2013). Proving more successful than our earlier search for Cahigué, the group returned to enthusiastically report their discovery not far inland. Although unspectacularly located along County Road 6, today the Ossossané Bonepit is marked by a historic plaque and provided further fodder for our collective imagination.

As the day wore on, we arrived at our terminal destination, the unfolding beaches of Wasaga. Curious about how early travellers located this site from the water, we hiked out to the mouth of the Nottawasaga River. Scanning the immensity of Georgian





Bay, we imagined the treks of the boaters that had come before, from the Anishinaabe hunters tracking herd through the territory, to voyageurs on their 22-day trip from Hochelaga, to the War of 1812 schooners transferring supplies through Simcoe County. One such schooner, the Nancy — its exploits captured by the 1984 Stan Rogers ballad — is preserved nearby at the Wasaga museum.

These anecdotes illustrate that wild pedagogies don't just enable learning about the physicality of the land. Our engagement with the land also allowed for social, political, historic and spiritual connections. Just as Bob Henderson merges deep ecology with critical social theory in his experiential initiatives, our wild, outdoor pursuits simultaneously enabled attention to pressing societal issues, each "rooted in a personal and cultural desire to change" (Henderson, 1999, p. 184). Through wild pedagogies we were able to gain a greater understanding of social histories and interactions in Huronia. Because so many of our structural associations today are unconsciously rooted in our region's history, the ways that relations developed between settlers and Indigenous peoples have profound effects on the structure of our current society. In one

student reflection, this realization reflected a sentiment that is common to many:

*I feel like I've been sleeping all my life, and I woke up. I've grown up in this whole area, but I know nothing about it. I know nothing of the people, nothing of the surroundings, nothing of the history. I feel like it gave me an opportunity to wake up my whole being.*

Throughout the course, there were further wild experiences that challenged our conventional views of local history. Exploring living history at attractions like Sainte Marie among the Hurons, the Huronia Museum and Discovery Harbour; simulation, role-play activities such as trappers and traders and the Kairos Blanket Exercise; and retracing footsteps along the Nine-Mile portage, and the "Canadian Camino", the historic Jesuit pilgrimage between Barrie and Martyrs' Shrine.

## Future Wild Pedagogies?

As an instructional approach, and especially at the post-secondary level, wild pedagogies were a fitting way to learn experientially about our region. Countless historical, cultural and social aspects were illuminated through wild pedagogies, as well as physical, ecological, and geographic aspects. We had many teachers, but most of all, the land served as our instructor. In her essay "Land Speaking", Jeanette Armstrong describes that "the land holds all knowledge of life and death and is a constant teacher"; that there is "special knowledge in each different place" (p. 142). As we hiked, biked and boated through Huronia, the chance to explore helped us uncover many nuances that we would have never learned in the classroom.

On that early day in May, our search for evidence of Cahiagué around the Uhthoff trail never materialized. Perhaps several kilometres to the south, Cahiagué Road, at the junction of Highway 12, might be a better area to investigate. Atop a hill brimming with tall pines, looking down into the lowlands that stretch to the mouth of the Coldwater River may be closer to the historic centre. This spot was once along a portage route—that evolved

into a cart trail, a dirt road, and eventually Highway 12 — connecting la Mer Douce (Lake Huron) with the large lakes to the South. Perhaps here, where country homes, trailers and a mulch farm now characterize the area, was once the most prominent of villages of the Wendat Nation.

Yet, despite our futile search — and indeed, more importantly — our curiosity was piqued, deeper questions were asked, and future wild pedagogical journeys have been imagined. For one, we are planning a similar adventure, “*Place-based Education in Huronia*”, as a Faculty of Education course at Lakehead, Orillia in the spring of 2021, pending the post-pandemic landscape. But Huronia, of course, is just one of countless areas in our province rich with local histories to explore. The possibility to travel and learn through wild pedagogies exists in all of our backyards. The Ottawa Valley, for example, would make a great land-based experience, through traditional Algonquin territory, the confluence of three rivers, the construction of the Rideau Canal, and the selection of our national capital. There are other fine examples such as the Robinson-Superior Treaty territory, learning the histories of the Anishinaabeg and Métis north of Lake Gitchigumi, investigating the celebrated fur trade outpost at the Lakehead, and unpacking the layered relations between the peoples of Fort William and Port Arthur; or, through the “Dish With One Spoon Territory”, along the Great Lake of the Entouhononons, exploring sites from the Battle of York, and piecing together the evolution of Upper Canada. Wherever the travels, wild pedagogies offer equal possibilities to delve into critical, social issues as they do for deep ecology learning.

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- This spring they will be instructing “*Place-based Education in Huronia*”, which will run between May 3<sup>rd</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021. If you are interested in this course, contact Gary at [gpluim@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:gpluim@lakeheadu.ca).

## Wild Tourism: A Guided Tour at the Intersection of Outdoor Education and Tourism

By Joshua Bennett

Back in grad school we didn't talk much about *the industry*, or what I've always called "the dirty work", of the outdoors. We philosophized over Foucault, inspected works of Ibsen, and harped over Humberstone, but rarely did we touch on the multiple facets of the modern outdoor industry. Getting a job, starting a business, risk insurance, and Excel spreadsheets were not primary topics of the curriculum. The world of Outdoor Education is filled with discussions that sit on the intersection of education and environment. Recently in the wake of the publication of *Wild Pedagogies: Touchstones for Renegotiating Education and the Environment in the Anthropocene* and its subsequent "walking colloquiums", readers and attendees were asked to re-wild our awareness as practitioners by cooperating with our seemingly monolithic friend, the "more-than-human-world", as co-teacher. (Jickling et al., 2018, 37). Like many Outdoor Educators, I have worked extensively in both the tourism sector and more traditional school programs, therefore, I reflect on how can these "touchstones" of Wild Pedagogy can be applied in the context of a growing industry increasingly dominated by capitalism and commodified excess? How could outdoor practitioners contest the status quo in a landscape of increasingly "McDonaldise[ed]" offerings? (Loynes, 1998; Zegre, Needham, Kruger and Rosenberger, 2012)

In 2018, the global adventure tourism industry was valued at approximately \$80 billion more than the global Outdoor Education industry and, at least in pre-pandemic times, these numbers were expected to respectively double by 2026 (Chouhan, Vig, & Deshmukh, 2019). In a world where the availability of outdoor and adventure tourism jobs become more plentiful than those in Outdoor Education, being an Outdoor Education professional means transferring one's skills to a

feverishly growing tourism industry. Using my experiences as an outdoor guide in Oslo, Norway, I will frame my experience using the "Six Touchstones for Wild Pedagogies" to emphasize how outdoor tourism can be an educationally productive and satisfying position to be in for both guides and guests.

### Intersecting Wild Pedagogies

In their chapter the "Six Touchstones for Wild Pedagogies in Practice", The Crex Collective poses six main "points of departure and places to return to" in an effort to assist educators "who are ready to expand their horizons and are curious about the potential of wild pedagogies" (Jickling et al., 2018, 77). The touchstones arguably serves as an evolving checklist for outdoor practitioners that can be "read, responded to, and revised as part of an evolving, vital, situated, and lived practice". In response to this experiential process offered by the Crex Collective, I'd like to briefly go through the six points of the checklist and offer some meditations on the touchstones as they relate to my practice as an outdoor guide thus far.

### Touchstone #1: Nature as a Co-Teacher

Oslo is a city where the Scandinavian cultural phenomena of *Friluftsliv*, one that puts nature at the heart of the culture, bears much influence on its urbanity. The city itself has used nature as its teacher and this is exemplified in its urban planning. Oslo's affinity for landscape architecture and a public transport system that is specifically designed to get people to the wilderness, are just two examples of how a city can cooperate with nature for design. As a guide, I am in a unique position to regularly renegotiate the concept of what is natural or native in a city where over half the land mass is considered park or forest.



The duty towards tourists to speak for the surroundings forces me to revisit the terms of *urban* and *wilderness* as they begin to evolve whilst observing and traversing by bike, foot, or ferry through Oslo's fringy reality of place and landscape. The dichotomy of humans and nature is ever present on tour. In terms of the tour and place, urban and wilderness are in cooperation while juxtaposed, for example, as the sounds of waves crashing against our ferry drum up old stories of ice age glacial melt and the future of climate and social change. Somewhere between the tour and nature, the guide facilitates the interpretation.

### Touchstone #2: Complexity of the Unknown and Spontaneity

In cooperation with nature, a primary role of the tour guide is to provide a confident sense of awareness and context through facilitation and interpretation to a group

that is relatively situated in the unknown. At first glance, a tour may seem somewhat restrictive in regard to "spontaneity" because of predetermined routes, talking points and time constraints. However, between the loose framework of departure times and *must-see* attractions lies a majority of liminal space, and that space is where unique and spontaneous experiences occur.

Aside from the basic tasks associated with leading and informing tourists from point A to Z, a tour is full of unpredictability (i.e. tourist diversity, weather, the ever changing cityscape, etc.) and the ability to improvise proves to be a paramount skill necessary and one that can only be achieved through a heightened awareness that has been trained through experience. A guide that can confidently improvise on tour, perhaps unbeknownst to their tourists, can facilitate in the manifestation of a temporary microculture that inspires



wonder and exploration that is accessible in the liminal space of the unknown.

### Touchstone #3: Locating the Wild

On the surface, locating wilderness and natural areas while on tour in Oslo is no difficult task. Oslo is considered a “European Green Capital” (European Commission, 2020). But, looking deeper into this concept, The Crex Crex Collective notes that, “The wild can be occluded, made hard to see, by cultural tools, by the colonial orientation of those doing the encountering, and, in urban spaces, by concrete itself” (Jickling et al., 88). The distractions of a busy city, smart phones and social media that are feverishly clawing at our attention span can prove to be some of the trickiest variables on tour. The tourism industry could seem to be the epitome of attracting patrons of a colonial mindset and for many tourists this is the case. Guides cannot predict or choose their audience, however; we are met with a tremendous opportunity to gain access to a willing and captive audience. A guide can easily find themselves in a powerful position to subtly lead by example, share local stories, shape global perceptions and highlight evidence of colonization in front of multiple groups of audiences every day. The guide’s ability to unveil the wild, demonstrate dissection of a place, or simply provide a space for others to be in the wild, could result in a paradigm shift. The potential to demonstrate and disseminate the fundamental acts of decolonizing perspectives during a tour is something that seems vastly underrated in the field of tourism.

### #4: Time and Practice

Once the wild is located, one needs time to be there. Philosophy around Naess’ *Deep Ecology* emphasizes that through experiences in nature one will identify with nature and therefore become empathetic towards it. Time is typically a crucial issue when guiding a tour. Logistics, limited gear supply, and budget make up the bulk of practicalities that shape a tour

behind the scenes. With these constraints there remains a window for some aspects of “clock-time” and “deep time” as they were referred to in touchstones (Jickling et al., 92).

During the clock time allotted in a 3-4-hour tour, admittedly there is little time for habit forming or deep examination. However, tourists do engage in certain less than monumental rituals such as the wearing of helmets and collecting of personal items when leaving the bike as we bike, stop, talk, walk, and bike again. As a guide, I have the ritual to regularly open the discussions for any questions as I aim to foster an environment on tour that is open for the interaction and curiosity of my guests.

When it comes to the concept of deep time, I see at least two opportunities. During the tour there are multiple times where tourists may break off from the group to explore independently at different sights for 10 to 30 minutes. During this time, they take their experience into their own control to explore the ruins of an ancient monastery or explore the world’s largest permanent outdoor art installation. Having this independence is not only a nice break but also, for many, the first time they’ve been alone exploring in this unknown new place. Of course, different guides have various schedules and one works with what they have, but it is educationally beneficial to be aware and seize these opportunities for exploration whenever possible.

The second opportunity I see is in the reflection process. If the guide manages to facilitate a memorable tour experience, there is arguably an increased likelihood that tourists will reflect more deeply upon their time in nature on tour. Of course, the long-term effects of my tours have not been empirically documented, but customer reviews and feedback do refer to primarily positive and thoughtful outcomes.

### Touchstones 5 and 6: Socio-Cultural Change, Building Alliances and the Human Community

Ideally, if time on tour spent in nature develops empathy, empathy may “induce people to protect nature, not because they think they ought to, but because they feel inclined to” (Milton in Gurholt, 2013, p. 1). On tour these touchstones work hand-in-hand with each other. The first (touchstone #5) in regards to the judgement in information delivered by the guide and the second (touchstone #6) facilitated by way of the guide and nature as co-teachers. A key concept in Wild Pedagogy, thus far, is the belief “that education is always a political act” (Jickling et al., 97). The term political, in this context, does not simply refer to governmental politics, but frames education as a vessel for socio-cultural and ecological change.

In the article *Defining Friluftsliv* (2007), Nils Faarlund notes that Friluftsliv offers a space to challenge “the patterns of thought, values, and lifestyles imposed by modernity” (p. 56). By default, outdoor guides are positioned on a unique platform to lead willfully captive audiences into that potential space where socio-cultural and ecological experiences foster empathy and instigate thoughtful challenge of the status quo. Arguably, the guide's position is more advantageous in comparison to traditional educators whose audience typically is required to be there. Guides have a practical responsibility to act as the intermediary between their co-teacher and its community. With this responsibility may come the guide's greatest responsibility: the ability to curate and exchange facts and stories with places and spaces for the audience. Without becoming too dogmatic, guides have the opportunity to subtly display progressive socio-cultural and ecological information that is relevant to individual visitors, locals, and the global community at large. Exposure and experience with the local human and ‘more than human’ community, even on a short bike tour through Oslo, will undoubtedly offer a tourist some kind of exchange in empathy, identification, or

ideas both socio-cultural and ecological. (Jickling et al, 2018, 79-107).

### Conclusion

Despite expectations you may have had of yourself in school, your dreams of being that outdoor social-worker or hybrid wilderness therapeutic arts practitioner could land you in disappointment whilst you jockey tourists from sight to sight. On the contrary, let this not cloud one's perspective and distract from the great opportunities tourism presents in itself to educators and other outdoor practitioners. Perhaps this shouldn't be seen as a conundrum at all but rather a meeting point of needs that at first glance may seemingly lie on different sides of the ideological spectrum. In fact, we could consider ourselves lucky to possess skill sets that provide even more opportunities for both employment and promotion of strong human nature relations that go beyond the four walls of a classroom. The tour is an ever-changing mobile classroom and with the right “lesson plan”, any Wild Pedagogue can disseminate key concepts that are both globally relevant and place-based in a short period of time to a wider audience than a standard school classroom. This unprecedented access makes the tour a hugely advantageous platform for those who are trying to communicate specific messages across large audiences.

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## Walking Mindfulness

By Maurie Lung

As a mental health counselor, I work with people who are struggling in their everyday lives. However, as a parent, and a human, I know that we all experience stress from time to time. Sometimes, a little bit of stress for a short amount of time may be helpful, such as to help motivate someone to study for a test.

Conversely, it could be uncomfortable and fleeting, such as a little poke from a needle when you are sewing on a button. However, chronic stress or traumatic stress is different. Research clearly shows that all stress, no matter the type, takes its toll on humans with both physical and mental health impacts (Keating, 2017; Carter, Garber, Ciesla, & Cole, 2006). Some people may cope with stress more effectively and recover from stressful events more quickly than others (Curcio, Ferrara, & De, 2006).

Recent behavioral studies show a strong positive indication that mindfulness practice enhances the ability to self-regulate attention and emotion, which in turn, shifts our perception of stress, which then helps us to mitigate the impacts of stress (Brewer, Worhunsky, Gray, Tang, Weber, Kober, 2011; Chiesa, Serretti, 2010).

In an ideal world, we are living a life where we are thriving and our coping strategies help us during times in our lives when we feel stress. Having a strategy that is easily accessible to us, such as mindful walking, can both strengthen our resiliency as well as protect potential vulnerability to stress (Farb, Segal, Anderson, 2013). What is so fantastic about mindful walking, is that it blends what therapists know about how our body and mind responds to stress, about the neuroscience of stress, and about the impacts of nature and mindfulness, to put it all together in an experience that offers healing and resiliency-building.

Stress occurs when our mind and our body feel under threat and it sends a message

to do something to protect ourselves.

It is a state of hyper-arousal where our automatic response system of fight, flight, or freeze kicks into high gear. Our body and mind get us ready to respond to this threat by sending a rush of adrenaline, which elevates our heart rate, increases our breathing rate, and tenses our muscles. This could be particularly helpful if we are in a particularly dangerous situation, such as a car accident or if we saw a saber-toothed tiger.

However, it is often an overreaction to stress in our day-to-day lives. This daily stress may start to show up as racing thoughts, feelings of restlessness or agitation, and difficulty with concentration or memory. Prolonged or chronic stress can lead to high blood pressure, insomnia, a weakened immune system, as well as anxiety and depression. With rates of anxiety and depression significantly increasing in youth, it is imperative that we learn, and practice, shifting out of this aroused state into a more relaxed state. (Bitsko, Holbrook, Ghandour, et al., 2018; Gotink, Chu, Benson, Fricchione, Hunink, 2015; Fox, Nijeboer, Dixon, Floman, Ellamil, Rumak, et al., 2014; Farb, Segal, Anderson, 2013).

Mindfulness helps us provide that shift in perspective for our body and our mind. Typically, mindful practices focus on how intention, attention, and attitude lead to this shift. This practice can help us neutralize our thoughts, our emotions, or our body sensations as they arise, instead of feeling controlled by them. In turn, this cultivates an ability to see a situation differently, and thus, reduce the threat we feel by our life experiences. Research clearly supports how the practice of mindfulness can change the structure and function of parts of the brain associated with emotional control (Bitsko, Holbrook, Ghandour, et al., 2018; Gotink, Chu, Benson, Fricchione, Hunink, 2015).





Pleasant natural environments can also help us to make that shift. Studies show that the physical environment influences our mood as well as the efficacy of our nervous system, our endocrine system, and our immune systems (Selub & Logan, 2012).

Nature, itself, provides many healing

opportunities. Studies have found that being in nature improves emotional and physical well-being (Cervinka, Röderer, & Hefler, 2012; Bowler, Buyung-Ali, Knight, & Pullin, 2010). Additionally, spending time in nature increases our ability to focus, as well as increases empathy and connection (Kim, 2010; Taylor & Kuo, 2008). This is especially important with the



significant screen time exposure (Morrison & Gore, 2010; Berman, Jonides & Kaplan, 2008).

Furthermore, both cross-culturally and cross-generationally, humans find nature pleasing. Researchers found that more than two-thirds of people choose a natural setting to retreat to when stressed (Marcus & Barnes, 1999).

Considering that anything rhythmic and repetitive for two to seven minutes helps to regulate (stabilize) our brains, walking is easily a regulating activity. By adding walking to the mindfulness and the nature exposure, it creates an exponentially effective way to mitigate stress. Bruce Perry (2008, p. 38-43) emphasizes that, "The only way to move from these super-high anxiety states, to calmer more cognitive states, is rhythm. Patterned, repetitive rhythmic activity: walking, running, dancing, singing, repetitive meditative breathing – you use brain stem-related somatosensory networks which make your brain accessible to relational (limbic brain) reward and cortical thinking."

It is easier than you think to incorporate this into your own work or home practice. The following are simple and accessible activity ideas that I have used with children as young as three years old as well as adults. **Downshifting Walking Pace:** It is often helpful to demonstrate *fast, normal, and slow* walking paces before the other activities. Do this by having everyone pace back and forth, noticing their normal walking speed. This is usually a fast speed, because we are excited about moving or self-conscious about being seen by others moving. Invite people to downshift to a slightly slower pace. This is more likely their normal walking speed. Now invite people to downshift again. This is their slow walking pace. Notice that people naturally have different walking paces.

**Bubble Walking Mindfulness:** In small groups or pairs, invite one person to blow bubbles, while the others move at a slow

walking pace. Invite people to practice thinking a thought, watch a bubble, and when the bubble pops, let go of the thought. Practicing letting go of thoughts with the image of a bubble. You could also highlight focus by inviting participants to practice following a bubble until the bubble pops.

**Paired Walking Mindfulness:** In groups of two or three, invite one person to start the pace of the walk, while the others follow at the same time. This can reinforce focus, relationship, and filtering out distractions. Invite people to shift the lead by gently tapping the other person's leg, practicing back and forth, which also practices sharing and taking turns. THEN, invite the pair to find an even, calm, shared pace that when they share back and forth, it becomes smooth without noticing the change between the "leader" of the pace.

**Counting Up Walking Mindfulness:** Invite people to individually walk while counting upward with each step. On the first step, count to one. On the second step, count one and count two. On the third step count one, count two, and count three. Continue adding one more count with each step. This will slow walking down and can also help practice focus. You can also play with the level of challenge (like how high can you count) or increase the challenge with smooth counting steps (not just putting your foot down and counting, but counting through the whole motion of stepping).

**Slow Walking Mindfulness:** Invite people to individually walk while folding their hands either in front of you or behind you (mostly to keep them out of the way). Invite them to focus their eyes and look about three feet in front of them on the ground. Keeping their eyes focused on this spot (that moves and they move), very slowly put one foot right in front of the other foot, heel to toe. This can help to practice focus, paying attention, and letting go of distracting thoughts.

**Box-count Breathing Walking Mindfulness (Also called Four-Count Breathing):** Invite people to individually

walk with a normal to slow pace while inhaling for the count of four (while lifting foot), holding the breath for count of four (while foot is in the air moving forward), exhaling for count of four (while setting foot back down), and holding the breath for count of four (while foot is on ground). Keep repeating this nice rhythmic box breathing. You can adjust counting to three or five to make the challenge easier or harder. This can help with focus and attention.

**Barefoot Walking Mindfulness:** Children especially love to walk barefoot! Invite people to individually walk with a normal to slow pace, without shoes, or socks, paying very close attention to every step they take, from the feel strike, to the roll, to the push off, to the air glide, to how the ground feels, bringing all of their attention to that movement. This is helpful with focus and even more fun if you can provide a variety of different ground to walk on, such as grass, sidewalk, carpet, tile, etc.

**Positive Self-Talk Walking Mindfulness:** Invite people to individually walk with a normal to slow pace and with each step, inhale saying (in their own head), “I have arrived” (while lifting foot), quiet (while foot is in the air), exhale saying (in their own head) “I am home” (while setting foot back down), quiet (while foot is on ground). Keep repeating this rhythmic message. You can adjust the messages to something like, “I am strong. I have the resources I need.” Or people can make up their own messages! This can be especially helpful with focus and attitude.

**Sensation Walking Mindfulness:** Invite people to individually walk with a normal to slow pace, taking in every sensation that they can notice. Perhaps rotating through sight, sound, touch/feeling, smell, taste – just notice as much as possible. An adaptation is to notice something specific, such as something that reminds them of themselves, or family, or a strength, etc. Or, if the location is familiar, it is fun to find something they haven’t noticed before today. This is a helpful practice for attention.

For some of you, mindfulness may be part of your comprehensive spiritual practice or perhaps your interest has now been piqued in other forms of walking mindfulness. I have talked about using mindfulness techniques in various walking activities, which has some similarities to walking meditation. Walking meditation can be found in many cultures, such as KinHin in Japan; Kinh hành in Vietnam; Theravada in Thailand; Gyeonghayaeng in Korea; and Shashu in China, just to name a few.

I typically include a bit of this information with participants to share that these cultures have used walking meditation for thousands of years, both as a way to engage the learner as well as to acknowledge the roots of mindfulness activities. As with any potential situation for cultural appropriation, it is important to acknowledge the cultural origins of activities and to pay homage to any artistry or ideas that are shared. (Christopher, Wendt, Marecek, Goodman, 2014; Prakhinkit, Suppapatiporn, Tanaka, & Suksom, 2014).

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## Hearths, Hestia, Home & Heart

By Nicole Strader

Sitting at home to reflect on our four-day outdoor education based winter field trip, “A Celebration of Winter as Place” one of the first things I wanted to share were thoughts about hearths. I think we mentioned hearths very briefly on our last night of the trip, speaking of their importance to gathering; in particular, to gather around them to share stories.

As I write my thoughts, weeks later from this cabin/winter living time in Algonquin Park, hearths seem to be in the heart of my mind. Funny how close heart and hearth are. At times the words are interchangeable. I think the following story - which occupied my mind when we were discussing hearths that last night - from Greek mythology allows me to explain more fully what I’ve been reflecting on since our trip.

Ancient law dictates that there are only 12 Olympian gods who sit on the council atop Mount Olympus —12 gods who champion their own thrones of power. In most mythological accounts, the gods are as follows: Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Athena, Apollo, Artemis, Aries, Aphrodite, Hermes, Hephaestus, Demeter, and Dionysus. However, Dionysus was not always one of the 12. What’s more, Dionysus wasn’t always a god. He was a demi-god, favoured by his father Zeus and gifted with immortality. But, if Dionysus is a new addition to the throne and the law dictates that there will always be 12 Olympian gods who sit on the council, then who was the god Dionysus replaced?

Her name was Hestia. Hestia, goddess of the hearth. Often depicted as a young girl, Hestia decided to yield her seat of power to Dionysus in order to keep peace on Mount Olympus. Hestia took her place tending to the hearth in the middle of the throne room. The hearth yielded to Dionysus, the shiny new god of wine, parties, drunkenness, and madness.

### The Heart Yields

That sentence, to me, seemed to encapsulate so much of what this trip has me thinking about. There is so much symbolism in the hearth: a place right in front of the fire/ wood stove, often the centre of a home or room. I’ve heard the phrase “home is where the heart is” and “home is where the hearth is”, and I think those both ring true. The hearth has such a rich history of gathering. I think a vast majority of the stories shared on that trip were told around the hearth—a place thrumming with connection and sharing. The place to gather. The place where the true heart of the home is—yet the hearth has yielded.

I immediately thought of this mythology I learned years ago in ninth grade English class. The myth explains so clearly what I’ve been thinking. The hearth, if it stands for connecting and sharing, has a tendency (at least in my own life) to be pushed aside for what’s new and exciting. When did my family stop playing board games with each other every night? When did my sisters and I stop playing together? When did I start to skip out on family dinners to party with my friends? When did my connections become so superficial? When did the only communications I have with friends and family happen through the medium of a screen?

I think of all those long nights in the past, where family and friends would gather and connect and enjoy each other’s company around the hearth. I don’t have that anymore.

I think in the time I spent at the Algonquin cabin I was reminded that for much of human history, people seemed to be more connected in a more real way. I was reminded of those times I have felt a genuine connection to the people around me. I felt that way on the school outdoor course/field trip and I almost always feel that way when I’m on trips.

The hope which I am beginning to find through thinking about hearths, hearts, connection and the story of Hestia is that the myth of Hestia stays. She stays on Mount Olympus. She gives up her throne, yes, but she *stays* to be the tender of the flame. Where she stays is the centre of the throne room. During council, she is always there tending the fire. To me, that's hopeful.

Embedded in this story is the strength of the hearth—its endurance. Though cast aside, it still remains. The possibility to connect in that way remains open. That's something I think I'm going to take with me from my few days in Algonquin. The knowledge that I'm not bound to connect in the ways that I have been. That I always have the chance to gather around a hearth and share with those around me.

### Editor's notes:

Readers interested in the hearth in folktales can consider the role of Cinderella (cinder-ella) maintaining the hearth (tending the fire) and cleaning the ashes for the wicked step-sisters. Lesser known on this side of the Atlantic are the Ash-Lad (cinder-lad) stories from Scandinavia. Here, another "lesser" browbeaten sibling in the sibling rivalry tradition, gains wisdom by working the fire of the hearth/ by gaining the wisdom from gazing into the fire and is thus able to wander and wonder on the land wisely to take on trolls and siblings in humble and winning ways.

See *The Ash-Lad: Classical Figure of Norwegian Ecophilosophy* by Sigmund Kvaloy Setreng in *Nature First: Outdoor Life the Friluftsliv Way*. Natural Heritage Books, Dundurn Press, Toronto, 2007-reprint 2020.

The McMaster University Arts and Science Course 3IE1 discussed herein is an experiential module (one credit offering). A collection of modules is offered to senior students each year to advance "in the field" based experiences. 3IE1 has run for five years at a cabin in Algonquin Park. Students engage in winter living chores (drawing water, cutting and hauling firewood, shovelling snow off roofs, etc), cross-country



skiing, snowshoeing, quinzee building, cooking and eating together, evening saunas, cards and board games and ample time for discussions about winter as place, Canadian identity and winter identity, and ideas of "North." A reading kit is provided to prepare students for discussions on the trail and around the "hearth"/wood stove. Each student is responsible to tell a Northern Canada story/legend. Examples of regularly selected stories to share by student storytellers are: The Lost Patrol of the Wind River, The Cremation of Sam McGee, native legends, Grey Owl - native imposter, Big Joe Mufferaw lumberjack stories and exploration tales. Student story-telling and final assignment has involved puppeteering, song writing, poetry, historical fiction, a trip advisor report, and general adventure and/or place narratives.

Originally from Walkerton Ontario, Nicole Strader will be entering her fourth year of studies at McMaster University. She is currently pursuing a B. Arts Sc. with a combination in Earth and Environmental Sciences, and a minor in sustainability. This summer she is working on a research project with Dr. Bob Henderson on the differences between urban and rural Integrated Curricular Programs (ICPs), in hopes to discern the ways in which place affect outdoor education pedagogy.



## Wild Pedagogies: Visual Imaginations

By Chris Beeman

One of the strengths of conventional black and white script – and the English language itself – is precision in communication. This is useful in certain contexts, but it may also limit the communication of some ideas. And while it is true that imaginative ideas can be expressed in standard text, these ideas are still limited by the form that contains them: at the heart of our current conception of imagination is still precision. What is lacking is an unknowing that permits entry of the visual imagination of the viewer/reader so that “text” is never quite certain, and so that the reader/viewer in some way completes the writing/drawing; not just in giving a home for ideas to roost, but in the creation of the ideas in the first place. It may be argued that a similar complexity is at the heart of Wild Pedagogies.

The original of this piece is in colour. It attempts to interrupt conventional representations and orientations of letters, positions of words, and spelling such that the viewer is forced, if they intend to “read” it, to move between image-interpretation and text-recognition. The expression is as easily viewed as an image as a text. This work has its origins in a drawn alphabet, which was begun during my undergraduate degree in Visual Art at Queen’s University.




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*Chris Beeman, Ph. D., is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Brandon University in Manitoba. He earned his Doctorate in Education from Queen's University at Kingston and teaches in the area of Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies. He specializes in understanding the philosophical underpinnings of ecological learning through Indigenous position and perspectives.*

## A Nod to the Pandemic: An Outdoor Travel Parable

By Kathy Watson. Thanks to Tim Dyer (White Squall Newsletter) for sharing.

Kathy Watson, a long-time White Squall staff member — wrote in about an experience she had solo sea kayaking up on the Pukaskawa coast. A quiet, accomplished paddler who has travelled that remote and unforgiving shore at least five times (that she can remember) I don't know anyone who has done that, let alone solo — yet she didn't write magazine articles about it or put her exploits on Facebook — she just did it! Anyway, here is what she wrote about how many of us are pushing to get things open again:

"Made me think of a Superior paddle where I was wind-bound for three days on the flats, near the end of the trip. I had the perfect camp in the trees, out of the wind and rain, with a tarp set up for cooking, I was warm, dry and safe. But I was running low on food, fuel and TP, had read all my books and eaten all the chocolate! So on the fourth wind day, I did something that I never do, and launched early in the morning knowing that the forecast was not great. The wind and waves were already high and I paddled into the wind and rain, inching forward, before turning around and setting up camp again. This time, I was wet and cold, the campsite was wet and all my gear was wet. The next day, it was beautiful and calm. I just had to wait one more day...

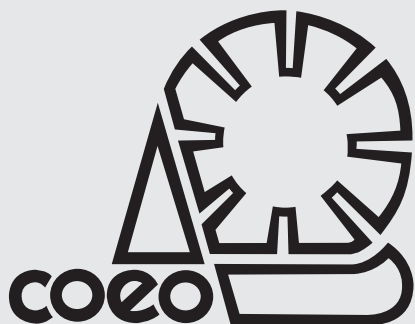
Seems that people are tired of waiting to move and willing to take a risk, even though the forecast still isn't favourable. The hard part is not knowing how much longer this will last before the forecast clears. Hopefully, people will be cautious and wait. Hopefully, the wind will drop soon."

Well spoke, Kathy!



*Kathy Watson is a retired secondary school teacher from Parry Sound. She was a White Squall canoe and kayak instructor and guide for many years. She enjoys solo kayak trips on Georgian Bay and Lake Superior.*

*Tim Dyer is the owner/operator of the White Squall Outdoor Store in Parry Sound. He enjoys canoeing, kayaking, backcountry skiing, and spending time outdoors with family and friends.*



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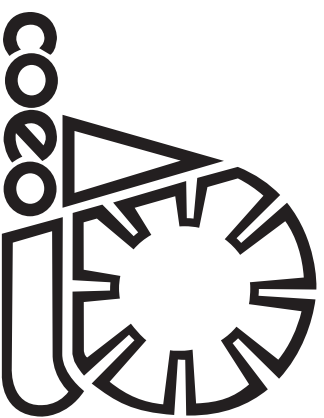
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## Endnotes

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