Reviews

Zoe Weil. (2004). *The Power and Promise of Humane Education*. Gabriola Island: New Society Publishers. 175 pp.

The Power and Promise of Humane Education is an inviting, easy-to-read book that provides a clear introduction to humane education and engaging activities and lessons for classroom, after-school program, camp, and home-schooling settings.

As author Zoe Weil describes it, humane education is a comprehensive field of education that aims to promote understanding of various forms of social justice, from human oppression to animal exploitation to environmental degradation. It explores "how we might live with compassion and respect from everyone ... for all people, ... for all animals, ... and for the Earth itself" (p. 4). Given this broad focus, its scope is vast, encompassing human rights issues (e.g., sweatshops, modern-day slavery, political oppression), cultural issues (e.g., media and advertising influences, multinational monopolies), environmental issues (e.g., global warming, resource depletion, species extinctions, nuclear waste), and animal exploitation issues (e.g., factory farms, cruelty in animal testing, the traffic in animals for zoos and circuses). Its goals are equally aspiring; Weil explains that humane education aims to foster in students critical and creative thinking, reverence and compassion, and a sense of responsibility and action to create a more humane world.

The book is divided in two parts. In the first part, "Principles and Practice," Weil outlines the scope of humane education, the rationale behind it, and how it could be integrated into elementary and secondary schools or other educational settings. In the second part, "FAQs, Activities, and Suggestions," Weil addresses the "how-to" of humane education, describing 21 humane education activities in detail and providing suggestions for dozens more.

One suggested activity is "A Whale's Stomach," in which students are given a trash bag filled with the contents found in the stomach of a dying sperm whale, including plastic jugs, nylon ropes, garbage bags, and a blob of rubber. Students contemplate each item and consider if it could be recycled or reused, what alternatives might exist to producing it in the first place, and how people could have prevented the items from winding up in the ocean. In another activity, "True Cost," students analyze a variety of products (e.g., a can of Coke, a wool sweater, a container of ammonia) and research the effects of the products on themselves, other people, animals, and the environment. For each activity Weil outlines suggested grades, times, materials, and the subject areas in which it could be incorporated, be it social studies, language arts, math, science, history, health, or a combination thereof.

There is a lot of information packed into this small book—aided con-

siderably by 27 pages of facts, statistics, and recommended resources concerning the myriad topics of humane education—but readers may well find they require much more information about these complex and multi-faceted topics before they can effectively teach about them. This deeper understanding will not come from this book (and certainly could not come from one resource alone), but *The Power and Promise of Humane Education* is a valuable resource nonetheless that provides a compelling introduction to the field of humane education along with many creative ideas for putting it into practice.

Jan Oakley recently completed her MEd thesis, The Human-Animal Divide: Anthropocentrism and Education*, and is about to begin her PhD studies in the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University.*

Noel Castree. (2005). *Nature*. London and New York: Routledge. 281 pp.

Nature, by Noel Castree, lives up to the breadth of its title, providing both a comprehensive survey and a thorough interrogation of geographical approaches to nature. This accessible and engaging book, named an "advanced introduction" for students, is distinct from other overviews in geography because it considers physical, human, and environmental geography together in one volume. Castree does not present new material, but rather brings together scholars from across the discipline to examine how their ideas relate (or not) to one another. This makes *Nature* extremely useful as a textbook for upper-level undergraduate courses, particularly for those courses that concentrate on intersections among science, representation, and nature in environmental studies.

The central argument of the book, fleshed out in the subsequent six chapters, is that the knowledges of nature produced by geographers are truth claims rather than accurate representations of some real and knowable nature. Castree notes in the preface that *Nature* attempts neither to define the black box that is nature, nor to determine the best method for its analysis. Instead, the book aims to show how and why truth claims about nature are made, who is authorized to make them, and what impact they have in the world. If you object to what Castree has to say in the preface, then you probably won't like the rest of *Nature*.

If you do make it past the preface, however (and I strongly recommend that you do), *Nature* offers remarkable insights into the "divided discipline" of geography. Chapter 1 points out the ways that ideas about nature and the natural world have been made rather than found by scholars. Chapter 2 is what Castree calls a "potted" or abridged history of geography and its approaches to nature. Beginning with the founders of the discipline, Castree sketches out the major intellectual currents from the late 19th century to the

present. Chapters 3 and 4 enter into contemporary debates, dealing with human and physical geography respectively. Castree skillfully argues that human geography has taken a denaturalizing approach to nature, emphasizing representation, discourse, and the production of nature, while physical geography maintains its ability to access the reality of nature. Castree notes, "In effect, the naturalism of physical geography is the mirror opposite of the denaturalising thrust of human geography (leaving environmental geography a schizophrenic field with, as it were, 'divided loyalties')" (p. 179). The implications of this are that sub-disciplines in geography produce very different kinds of knowledges about nature, which Castree asserts is a good thing for the vibrancy of the discipline. In Chapter 5, Castree addresses the recent theoretical interventions of the so-called post-natural approaches, for example actor network theory, that seek to avoid the "ontological schism" of either physical or human geography. And finally, in an exceedingly short conclusion, Castree reasserts that his aim is to disrupt ideas of nature as pre-existing or fixed, but instead to encourage students to question by whom and for whom geographical knowledges of nature are made.

Nature does suffer from the limitations typical of the genre of textbook writing, namely that because these kinds of books attempt to cover so much ground, they cannot do everything justice. For my own part, I would have liked a more detailed examination of the contributions of feminist, queer, and anti-racist scholars to human geography discussed in Chapter 3. In spite of this necessary limitation, *Nature* is an invaluable contribution to the field. Not only is it comprehensive, but it is also pedagogically useful. Particularly helpful from this point of view are the text boxes throughout which explain key concepts, as well as the suggested activities, exercises, and essay and exam questions designed to help students engage deeply with the ideas in the book. But *Nature's* most useful contribution is its challenge to students, scholars, and the public to never take the knowledges produced about nature for granted.

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Etta Kaner. (2006). *Who Likes the Snow?* Toronto: Kids Can Press. 25 pp.

Irene Luxbacher. (2006). *The Jumbo Book of Outdoor Art*. Toronto: Kids Can Press. 144 pp.

Children's books are like breakfast cereals. Just as Mommy or Daddy must divert little Johnny's attention away from the Candy Puffs shelf and try to convince the boy that Oaty-O's will give him big muscles, publishers need to dis-

tinguish carefully between their audience and their buyers, recognizing that both must be satisfied if a book is to be successful. 2006 saw the release of Etta Kaner's *Who Likes the Snow?* and Irene Luxbacher's *The Jumbo Book of Outdoor Art*; each takes a very different approach to the fragile task of pleasing both reader and listener, buyer and beneficiary, self-proclaimed progressive-wholesome-outdoorsy parent and fidgety little kid.

The added factor in publishing (as opposed to the breakfast cereal industry), of course, is that teachers and librarians buy kids' books as well. *The Jumbo Book of Outdoor Art* will likely fail at home with kids and parents, but might show up in schools and libraries. *Who Likes the Snow?* is well-suited to any setting, and does a much better job of capturing the magic of the outdoors. As with most tools and resources, both books have experiential learning potential; they just need to be used right!

The Jumbo Book's dismal reception at my own home is no surprise; with four kids under 9 years old (three of whom are under 4!), books are a quiet refuge from busted crayons and noisy plastic cash registers, a perfect way to dispel a dolly tug-of-war and enjoy some peaceful bonding on the sofa. They do not need to be fictional; a book of opposites or recipes can take us away just as easily as fairies or talking animals. Books must relieve stress, though; somehow, Luxbacher's compendium of eerie-looking sculpture and painting projects is more stress-inducing than relieving; almost all 57 of the materials lists require a trip to the art supplies store, and many of the final products (created by artist-instructors at the Avenue Road Arts School in Toronto) look either dauntingly difficult or unceremoniously junky, or both. Kids need no Jumbo encouragement to collect pine cones and seashells, and parents have no Jumbo interest in running out to the art supplies and hardware stores so that their kids can be creative outside. In fact, there is precious little room for a Jumbo anything in our lives at home. In its defence, this book may be an interesting resource on an art teacher's shelf, as an insight about adding an organic element to class projects.

Who Likes the Snow? is also informative, with a fold-out flap on every page revealing the science of snow in friendly language and attractive paintings by Marie Lafrance. The best part about the flaps, though, is that they can be ignored, leaving a simple sentence on each beautifully illustrated page (e.g., "I like the snow because snowy days are so quiet") and an expression of curiosity on each flap (e.g., "I wonder how snow makes it quiet outside"). When it comes to books about the great outdoors, sometimes less is more. After testing both books on all four kids for a month, all 57 of the Jumbo projects remain unattempted, and the "snow book" is a new family favourite.

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Peggy F. Barlett. (Ed.). (2005). *Urban Place: Reconnecting with the Natural World*. Cambridge: The MIT Press. 330 pp.

As environmental educators, it is often assumed that we do the bulk of our work in inspiring countryside locations near rivers, lakes, meadows, and forests. In short, our work too often invokes a sense of place "outside" of cities, suburbs, and housing developments. As many might agree, environmental education is not meant to separate human places from natural places. Quite contrary to this, environmental educators consistently rise to the challenges of exploring the "natural" in a wide variety of contexts, including both rural and urban spaces.

In *Urban Place: Reconnecting with the Natural World*, Peggy Barlett compiles an intriguing set of essays that explore the intimate relationships between city dwellers and the natural world. Building on the assumption that urban communities are historically seen as separate from natural places, the text journeys through various ways that urbanites "reconnect," including community gardens, ecological restoration, and farmers' markets. These essays demonstrate that people working in urban commons develop new personal knowledge, ethical relationships, and commitments to action within various urban communities that conserve human-nature bonds (Bowers, 2006) as well as promote human welfare. As an example, look to Susan Stuart's article "Lifting Spirits: Creating Gardens in California's Domestic Violence Shelters." Stuart notes several examples of transient communities of women in shelters developing new skills, activities, and restoring mental health with powerful quotes. Says one woman, "I go out and water and kind of just meditate … It's nice to have a place to be by yourself … My ex-boyfriend has destroyed my plants four times. But I keep replanting them" (p. 72).

The book is composed of two main sections. The first section, "Arenas of Reconnection," describes the various *means* that social groups use in establishing their place consciousness. Whether they enter into these place-based projects intentionally or as a result of some other motive, the participants in these programs report invaluable results from their time spent in any or all of the "three dimensions of place attachment" (p. 40) that Barlett sets forth in Chapter 2 of this section—the cognitive, affective, and practical. Barlett's exploration of the goals, implementation, and outcome of the Piedmont Project at Emory University in Atlanta centred upon the intellectual, emotional, and interpersonal enjoyment of the workshops. The inspiring possibilities that result from the project reach beyond the personal and into the University community and beyond. Moving through the rest of this primary section, the editor takes care to include essays that reflect a wide variety of urban dwellers, including "cosmopolitan" university professors, victims of domestic violence, ethnic and racial minorities, immigrants, culinary merchants, and the farmers who enter cities to sell local produce, and to provide historical accounts of programs that aim at maintaining the social-nature connection.

The second section is entitled "Consequences of Reconnection for Human Health and Functioning." Here, the focus is centered on the wide range of impacts, or *ends,* that arise from the connections and networks presented in the previous chapters, including psychological, physical, social, and to a lesser degree, aesthetic benefits. Rachel and Stephen Kaplan provide the most intriguing summary account of these benefits within their chapter, "Preference, Restoration, and Meaningful Action in the Context of Nearby Nature," contending that "nearby nature places" provide "the circumstances that help bring out the best in people" (p. 271).

Woven together, these two sections provide inspiring past and present narratives of human-nature bonds that are preserved through inter-generational, and often cross-cultural, endeavours. The text also provides us with future visions for partnerships and participatory learning. The farmers' markets, community gardens, and restoration projects in this book are all examples of the many local, culturally relevant, place-based narratives exhibiting the power dynamics, history, and complexity of urban life. As educators, we need to value these stories for their ability to foster vital conceptualizations of identity that do not separate the "human" from the "natural," but work to maintain ideological and spatial connections for learners in any environment.

References

Bowers, C. (2006). *Revitalizing the commons revitalizing the commons: Cultural and educational sites of resistance and affirmation*. New York: Lexington Books.

Joshua Russell is a PhD student in York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies, Toronto, where he is currently exploring the moral dimensions of environmental education.

Richard Peet & Michael Watts. (2004). *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge. 444 pp.

Environmental problems are not technical—as if the "right" knowledge properly apprehended will enable solving of them—they are social problems. Or more precisely, they are complex interactions of cultural, political, and economic relations of diverse actors, resources, and land reaching across scales from local through regional to global forces. Articulating this complexity is the intent behind this book, the second edition of the ground-breaking *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements.*

Liberation ecology is a specialized form of political ecology. The latter applies political-economic analysis to human interaction with the land and

resources; that is, the ways markets and governments shape environmental degradation. This approach is in contrast to explanations of environmental degradation that focus on such factors as technology, population, poverty, ignorance, or lifestyle practices. Much of political ecology has dealt with rural cases, although there are some examples of urban and first world political ecological analyses.

Liberation ecology charts the ways discourses of liberation and power also shape the ways humans interact with the land. In many ways, *Liberation Ecologies* represents the impossible resolution of the debate over the primacy of the global political economy and local or regional manifestations and corresponding resistance. Post-structural attention to diffusion and hybridization of knowledge, power, and practice are an undercurrent to the practice of liberation ecology as conceptualized by Peet and Watts and their contributors. The task is a complex one, as is any analysis with so many subtle discourses; the book proves equal to this task, but correspondingly difficult to read.

Most of the chapters are case studies of international development work. The scope of the case studies is represented by the five sections into which the book is divided: Renewing political ecology; Discourse and practice; Institutions and governance; Conflict and struggle; and Movement. Most cases, however, include elements of several of the headings. The 15 cases cover such topics as soil degradation in Bolivia, racialization and pollution in New Mexico (the only Northern case), forests in El Salvador, green neoliberalism in the World Bank, water markets in India, and discourses of industrial pollution in Thailand.

Several chapters will be especially interesting to readers of this journal as they advance themes prevalent in Canadian environmental education. One chapter contextualizes the Chipko movement of India in a way that deromanticizes it; two chapters deconstruct discourses of "indigenous" in Indonesia and Ecuador. Mike Davis presents an historical account of world famines in the 19th century that shows "persuasive evidence that [people] became dramatically more pregnable to natural disaster after 1850 as their local economies were violently incorporated into the world market" (p. 58). Only five of the cases were part of the first edition, meaning that this edition includes much new material plus 170 more pages. The editors have also written a new, lengthy introduction that describes the extensive literature in political ecology and the changes in the sub-discipline since their first edition.

The book is an excellent addition to our understanding of development processes. My recommendation is to read Davis' chapter as he writes with literary flair. Then pick and choose from the relatively standard academic cases. Sometime later read the introduction, which is well worth the effort but will take mental stamina. Peet and Watts' own contribution has numerous editorial missteps (such as the repetition of several sections of one paragraph later in the chapter [p. 18, p. 24], or naming environmental historian Donald Worster as Worcester [p. 15]) as well as academic jargon made more difficult

by complex sentence structures. My annoyance with the book was based primarily in the thick academic language in which it is written and the mistake of struggling through the Introduction first and fearing it would be representative of the rest of the text.

The impact of the first edition of *Liberation Ecologies* (1996) was immense. Like the first edition, this second edition will be a valuable collection for understanding the political ecology of environment and development around the globe. Other scholars have reported that the first edition was tough reading for many graduate students. However, appreciation of the complexities of environment, politics, economics, development, and local practice is important in preventing replication of past mistakes and oversimplifications of the complex interactions (have I said that yet?) of socio-ecological features.

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Allen Carlson & Arnold Berleant. (Eds.). (2004). *The Aesthetics of Natural Environments*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press. 297 pp.

I have an ongoing friendly argument with a person who spent many years in Whitehorse. I spent much of my life in Yellowknife, and there is a rivalry between the two cities. "Whitehorse," I say, "is okay—but the mountains get in the way of the view." This statement for me goes to the heart of any argument about aesthetics. Our sense of what constitutes beauty is constrained and channelled by our experiential preferences.

As *The Aesthetics of Natural Environments* notes, when it comes to outdoor aesthetics, we are provided by authorities with clues as to what aspects of the natural world are worthy of our aesthetic appreciation. Thoughtful local tourist associations erect signs pointing out the scenic views. If we cannot make it to those views in person, then other people capture them for us on postcards and in coffee table books. Artists paint the scenic vistas, poets and travel writers describe them, and musicians evoke them.

Framing experiences as art is the traditional ground of aesthetics. In a wide-ranging introductory essay, Carlson and Berleant note that some recent authorities on aesthetics do not even mention the unfiltered natural environment as a subject for aesthetic appreciation, arguing that only art as an intentional act is susceptible to an aesthetic approach. The book provides a survey of essays written in response to that view, a range of opinions about how the authors believe natural environments should be viewed in an aesthetic sense. Some approaches stress the similarity of the natural experience with the experience of art, some stress the difference. In this argument, I side

with those who emphasize difference. The environment, unlike art, is not intentional; it is omnipresent and enveloping, not distant and framed.

In one influential essay, much quoted by the authors, Allen Carlson proposes that an aesthetic appreciation must be learned. In the same way as those facing a Jackson Pollock painting for the first time may dismiss it as scrawl, those facing nature without knowledge of its mechanics and history may not have the tools with which to appreciate it. An opposite view is espoused in essays by Arnold Berleant and Noël Carroll who argue for a more emotional, engaged, even passionate approach to nature as a basis for aesthetic response. Other essayists attempt some sort of reconciliation between these two views. Marcia Muelder Eaton writes, "Human valuings are holistic; we rarely experience something purely aesthetically or purely ethically or purely religiously or purely scientifically etc." (p. 179).

These essays are accessible to an audience with no background in art or philosophy, and provide a solid survey of the recent (since 1960s) thought on environmental aesthetics. Although references are made to the total sensual nature of natural environments, there is a focus in many essays on the visual aspect of aesthetic appreciation. Single essays are devoted to aural and literate appreciations of nature.

The goal of environmental educators may be summed up as the task of educating people about the natural environment, in the hopes that by so doing they will inculcate an appreciation of that environment with a view to its preservation or conservation. The aesthetic provides one possible and very accessible approach to that task, providing a way in for people who may not appreciate the environment for its other values. Although it is not a "how-to" manual, this book could help environmental educators craft aesthetic appeals to reach new audiences.

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Stan Rowe. (2006). *Earth Alive: Essays on Ecology*. Edmonton: NeWest Press. 274 pp.

It's important to recycle, to save the whales, not to club the seals, and not to pollute. These are all truths we take for granted, especially if we, even loosely, describe ourselves as environmentalists. These days, the green movement is omnipresent, we see it everywhere; even car companies advertise their wares like they are hiking boots designed to get you into the great outdoors.

The truth is the environment movement was not always so ubiquitous or so "in," it evolved out of an honest concern that our resources are limited, and

that we have only one true home, one which we share with a multitude of other living beings. The first "environmentalists" came upon this realization slowly and were not born into this zeitgeist as most of us are today. Henry Thoreau was an early prophet, Rachel Carson a more recent one, while Stan Rowe stakes a solid claim to the naturalist/philosopher role in this collection of essays on ecology, *Earth Alive*.

The former forestry scientist, who once authored classic academic papers, retired to lead a simple, writer's existence among British Columbia's mountainous interior. He uses folksy, wry humour to sum up the human relationship with nature over history and in different places, including his New Denver home. All through the book, Rowe's manner is humble and self-deprecating, which makes the bitter pill of our mistreatment of the environment easier to swallow. In one very short essay he is cutting the grass, and a young idealistic girl points out the folly of a lawn which requires "four times the amount of poisoning as the average acre of farmland." Rowe argues with her, and tries to point out that it is part of "our culture," and in the end somewhat foolishly decides to tune her out.

Rowe died before the book was finished and the polishing and final selections of essays were left to his editor. The author's intent remains clear, however. Through a lifetime spent out of doors observing the natural world, the importance of treating the planet like a precious jewel became clear to him. Rowe appreciates, as we all should, the worth of the earth's natural undisturbed resources, such as the water that comes out of his kitchen tap "pure and sweet at the moment" but in the same breath—"officially described as 'raw and untreated'"—he rails against our complete disregard of the true value of nature's gifts.

This perspective is what makes the book a treasure. Each essay is a vignette used to illustrate an ecological principle and the serious threat to our existence posed by environmental degradation. But Rowe is above all optimistic. Because our mistreatment of the planet is such an ingrained part of our culture, like the mowing of a lawn, he believes that the solution is not technological or political, but cultural. Just a slight shift in our mindset and attitudes toward our "mother earth" is all that's needed, but it is needed soon. The scientist turned philosopher/writer's message is clear. Don't tune out, tune in to nature's lessons. *Earth Alive*, as it comes so clearly out of a good place—one man's love of nature—is a good place to start.

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William McDonough & Michael Braungart. (2002). *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*. New York: North Point Press. 208 pp.

If helping to create positive change is a goal for environmental educators, *Cradle to Cradle* can serve as an inspiring example of how to work toward such a goal in practical ways. This book, written by two visionaries, presents a wealth of creative ideas and approaches for designing products differently to create a better tomorrow for "all the children, of all species, for all time" (p. 14). Starting with the premise that the "things" that many of us, in the West, use daily have played a significant part in creating the current crisis we face, McDonough (an architect) and Braungart (a chemist) present their optimistic vision for the future and the steps that designers, industries, businesses, and consumers can take in a radically different approach to designing and producing the objects we use and enjoy. They see an emerging movement, perhaps even the next industrial revolution, founded on adopting "nature as our model" (p. 122), on human creativity, respect, fair play, prosperity, and goodwill. The authors argue that these ideas have the power to transform both industry and environmentalism.

McDonough and Braungart begin by providing a critical and brief history of the original Industrial Revolution and outline the fundamental flaws in the West's current designs and thinking. They explain that what is of great concern is that nutrients are contaminated, wasted, or lost in the current one-way model of "cradle to grave" designs. Alternatively, the authors suggest that humans will have to learn to imitate nature's highly effective "cradle to cradle" system of nutrient flow and metabolism. Accomplishing this requires designing things—products, packaging, and systems—at the outset, with the understanding that there is no such thing as "waste." All product designs would thus be composed of either materials that biodegrade and become food for biological cycles, or technical materials that stay in closed-loop technical cycles, in which they continually circulate as valuable "nutrients" for industry. The authors make it clear that the next industrial revolution will not be about returning to some idealized, preindustrial state in which; for example, all textiles are made from natural fibres, since the natural materials to meet the needs of current populations do not exist.

The authors introduce many useful terms and concepts that I intend to incorporate into my environmental education vocabulary, including: "downcycling" and "upcycling" (versus recycling), "products plus," and especially their concept of "eco-effectiveness," which means working on the right things—on the right products, services, and systems—instead of making the wrong things less harmful. Moreover, their suggestions appear to align with discourses in social and environmental justice, as they raise concerns about the treatment of international employees and the location of toxic waste disposal, and they advocate for incorporating a comprehensive concept of respect into any design.

I found it refreshing to read a book that links environmentalism with indus-

trial practices in an optimistic way. McDonough and Braungart acknowledge the entrenched scepticism that sees environmental strategies, at best, as extraneous to economics, and, at worst, inherently anti-economic. I agree with these authors that we are accustomed to thinking of industry and the environment as being at odds with each other, because conventional methods of extraction, manufacture, and disposal are destructive to the natural world.

I found this book inspiring. I also found, however, that the authors, perhaps purposely, avoided or merely touched on all too briefly a few areas that I consider important. For example, the authors report minimizing consumerism as a current approach to dealing with pollution and environmental decline, but they do not discuss this further. They do not problematize current rates of consumption, or the relative disparity between the least and most privileged. Instead, they suggest that if Western society adopted their vision, "people could continue to indulge their hunger for new products as often as they wish, without guilt and industry could encourage them to do so without impunity, knowing that both sides are supporting the technical metabolism and biological systems" (p.114). I also had trouble with absolving corporations of responsibility for waste, pollution, and other negative effects by stating that it is simply the consequence of outdated and unintelligent design.

Overall, this book is highly informative for anyone on a personal level. Interdisciplinary and accessible, it could be used as a course reader in a wide range of fields, including courses related to design (e.g., architecture, engineering, urban planning, industrial management), business, environmental studies, history, and geography. McDonough and Braungart demonstrate quite clearly why the West must move beyond its current thinking. Just focusing on being "less bad" is not good enough. It *is* about rethinking. In the words of Albert Einstein, as quoted on the book's opening page: "The world will not evolve past its current state of crisis by using the same thinking that created the situation."

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Stephen M. Meyer. (2006). *The End of the Wild*. Cambridge: The MIT Press. 97 pp.

One challenge of environmental education is to reconcile ecological understanding with an anthropocentric perspective. Not only must we move ourselves away from the centre of discussion (i.e., where nature is a storehouse of resources intended for human consumption), we must also recognize that human activity is the main reason for having this discussion in the first place. Meyer's book reveals the difficulty of locating humanity within nature

by discussing our impact on "the wild." Although short, Meyer's book provides some useful insights that environmental educators should consider.

Starting with the acknowledgement that "the guiding hand of evolution is unmistakably human" (p. 2), Meyer argues that humans are causing the inevitable extinction of wildlife, and it is more important now than ever that we take responsibility for our actions. In seven chapters, Meyer presents a poignant argument: human coexistence with the natural world has always involved taming the wild. Consequently, species have been "selected" to succeed alongside humanity; Darwin's "natural selection" has been replaced by "human selection." Meyer suggests that current conservation efforts are noble but insufficient. "Unfortunately," he writes, "such efforts are far too little and far, far too late" (p. 41). The problem is these efforts "are themselves powerful engines of human selection, tweaking (for our pleasure) but not fundamentally altering the outcome: massive species loss with the attendant disappearance of the wild" (p. 42). The end of the wild is insurmountable, but doing nothing would be worse. Ultimately, the end of the wild is about humanity within nature and not some abstract conception of "the environment."

This book is both alarming and discouraging. Its clear and earnest attempt to re-focus conservation scientists and policy-makers on the immediacy of the task at hand questions much yet answers little. Problems, illustrated by numerous species-specific examples, are largely anecdotal. Solutions, such as shifting our ecological worldview, enhancing research, creating and protecting meta-reserves, and intensive conservation management, are ambiguous. Admittedly, the intent was to offer a big idea in a concise book and to challenge common practices with alternative perspectives, rather than to undertake an exhaustive study. As such, this book may provide further motivation for that admirably obstinate group dedicated to saving wild spaces. But for those who are new to wildlife conservation or those with a weaker sense of purpose, Meyer's message may be misunderstood as one of hopelessness and despair. In this sense, *The End of the Wild* seems unfortunately pessimistic.

Still, it may be a useful work to demonstrate the difficulty of reconciling humanity as part of nature. Meyer often states that humanity must become less anthropocentric. Yet, like most ecological thinkers, he has difficulty presenting a cohesive premise. For instance, he adopts the definition of "wilderness" used by the United States Wilderness Act of 1964. Yet legal systems are human machinations—an awkward point from which to argue for a less anthropocentric perspective. Even if Meyer suggests only a partial move toward an ecocentric outlook (although I do not think he does), this definition remains somewhat antiquated. As historian William Cronon wrote over a decade ago, "the time has come to rethink wilderness" (1996, p. 69). Romantic notions of nature, wherein the wild is considered "the last remaining place where civilisation, that all too human disease, has not fully infect-

ed the earth" (p. 69), are as dichotomous as Meyer's suggestion that species in the wild will realize one of two fates: to colonize or be overwhelmed.

He does not propose to clarify humanity's relation with nature, but Meyer suggests that intact evolutionary processes and healthy ecosystem functions should be insulated from "human selection" through natural area trusts. Meyer advocates intensive conservation management, but unlike present conservation areas, these trusts would protect the broader ecosystem rather than particular species, have porous boundaries, and would be buffered by a protective perimeter where human activity would be highly regulated. This isolation recalls John Terborgh's *Requiem for Nature* (1999), which claims that nature has all but disappeared, that parks systems have failed, and that strict policing of national conservation trust funds must be supported by international regulations. Like Terborgh, Meyer advocates intense government supervision which would require dedicated administrative neutrality on a politically and economically intense issue: the control and use of public and private property. While conceivably reconcilable with a less anthropocentric view, the concept of natural area trusts seems discordant with his claim that current conservation attempts merely continue the process of "human selection." As Bill McKibben (1999) suggests, such systems imply a need for an American model of conservation management based on well-run park systems and federal land ownership of monitored "mega-reserves." This outlook does not account for the successful models in other countries where human environments and natural environments are not mutually exclusive.

Overall, Meyer's book may be a useful manifesto to motivate the champions of biodiversity. Its accessibility, aided by its brevity and focus, is undermined by the delayed revelation that it is, in fact, a message of hope. The sombre account of our failure to save biodiversity would discourage most readers. The apparent difficulty, however, of locating humans and their institutions within natural processes deserves special attention. *The End of the Wild* provides a thought-provoking example of this challenge.

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Jeffery Cottes is a PhD candidate in the School of Public Policy and Administration at Carleton University in Ottawa.

John Chi-Kin Lee & Michael Williams. (Eds.). (2006). *Environmental and Geographical Education for Sustainability: Cultural Contexts*. New York: Nova Science. 359 pp.

The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) is well underway. The primary directive of the Decade is for all jurisdictions to examine their educational policies and practices to best prepare their citizens to respond to the challenges humanity faces. In effect, the world's leading intergovernmental body is asking for education policy and practice audits. The work of educators is again being acknowledged as vital to responding to the deepening and interwoven social, economic, and environmental crisis we are in.

It is within the context of the Decade that this compilation of articles is of particular relevance and value. The editors have brought together 22 articles from over ten countries (including Australia, Canada, China, Finland, India, Korea, South Africa, and the UK) to share insights and experiences. Together they capture current perspectives on the evolving, overlapping, and at times confusing areas of education interchangeably called education for sustainable development, education for sustainability, or environmental education for sustainability. The challenge of defining education for sustainability is all the more complex when considering the influence of culture, and this is a significant aspect of this publication.

The title, *Environmental and Geographical Education for Sustainability: Cultural Contexts*, is somewhat misleading. The scope of this collection is of much broader range of interest, and it does an admirable job of providing a wide range of perspectives that help to flesh out the theoretical and practical elements of education for sustainable development. Differentiating environmental education and education for sustainable development is tackled by a number of authors. Education for sustainable development is identified as a context for educational reform that is gaining worldwide attention. The shift to education for sustainable development does not signal the end or diminishing of environmental education, just as it is not a threat to character education, citizenship education, or educational reform through the use of information and communication technologies. A common task of all of these "educations" is to take on the extremely difficult challenge of educational reform. The umbrella of education for sustainable development and the UN Decade provides an opportunity to advance this important agenda.

A central premise of this collection is an acknowledgment that achieving sustainability is a cultural undertaking and will therefore follow different paths. Part of this process will include the evolving perceptions of environmental and sustainability education. I recommend this volume to *CJEE* readers interested in furthering this evolution as a means of improving the educational response to the economic, social, and environmental challenges we face.

Stan Kozak is a teacher, independent learning specialist, and project leader for the Sustainability Curriculum Review Project, Learning for a Sustainable Future.

CJEE—Announcement: A New Face

We are delighted to announce that Lisa Korteweg (Lakehead University) has kindly agreed to join us as an Associate Editor.

EECOM 2008

In 2008, EECOM will return to the east coast when it holds its annual conference for the first time in Newfoundland and Labrador. Our working theme for this important event is "Life on the Edge: Sustainable Culture and Communities," and it will tentatively take place September 25-28. The venue for the conference will be beautiful Gros Morne National Park <www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/nl/grosmorne/index_e.asp>, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Participants will have ample opportunities to see the wonders of the park and its surrounding communities while taking in the wide range of keynote speakers, presentations, displays, and workshops at Canada's premier national environmental education conference. For up-to-date details, visit <www.eecom.org>.

NAAEE Conference 2007

The 2007 conference will take place November 14-17 in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The theme is "Come to the Coast: Explore New Horizons for Environmental Education." The Research Symposium will be held on November 14. Details can be found at <www.naaee.org/conference/>.

The Ecological and Environmental Education Special Interest Group [EEE SIG] of the American Educational Research Association [AERA] Conference 2008

The Ecological and Environmental Educators special interest group invite you to the AERA annual meeting in New York from March 24-28, 2008. The theme of the 2008 meeting is "Participatory Approaches and Ecological and Environmental Education: Theory, Policy, Practice, Progress?" For additional information, please consult the EEE-SIG website <www.bath.ac.uk/cree/eeesig> and the AERA website <www.aera.net/> or contact Program Chair, Alan Reid <a.d.reid@bath.ac.uk> or Program Co-Chair, Robert Stevenson <eoastevo@buffalo.edu>. To become a member of the EEE-SIG, please contact the SIG Secretary, Amy Sloane <alsloane@wisc.edu>.

The Critical Interspecies Education SIG of the American Educational Research Association [AERA]

A petition is being circulated to establish a new AERA SIG—Critical Interspecies Education—focused on educational research about other animals and human/animal relations. Signatures of at least 30 AERA members who are interested in being a member of this SIG must be collected before September 15, 2007. For more information, contact Julie Andrzejewski <jrandrzejewski@stcloudstate.edu>.

5th World Environmental Education Congress, Montreal, Canada, May 10-14, 2009

We have some very exciting news. The Permanent Secretariat of the World Environmental Education Congress has asked Canada to organize and chair the 5th Congress in Canada in 2009 at the host city of Montreal. Lucie Sauvé and Bob Jickling are now planning for the 5th Congress and working closely with the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EECOM), L'Association québécoise pour la promotion de l'éducation relative à l'environnement (AQPERE), the City of Montreal, Université du Québec à Montréal, and Lakehead University. We have also begun a helpful dialogue with the North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE). During the months to come we will continue to build a network of partners interested in working with us to develop and convene this Congress. In the meantime, please address inquiries to <5weec@uqam.ca>.

New Book by Advisory Editor

One of our Advisory Editors, Arjen Wals, has edited a book that may be of interest to *CJEE* readers, *Social Learning Towards a Sustainable World: Principles, Perspectives, and Praxis* (Wageningen Academic Publishers, 2007). Containing 27 chapters and contributions from six continents, the book presents and discusses key principles, perspectives, and practices of social learning in the context of sustainability.

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Translator

Thank you to Gilles Bédard for his invaluable assistance with translating in this volume.

Website

Thank you to Jason Zou, Val Gibbons, Blair Niblett and Jan Oakley at Lakehead University for their work on the website < http://cjee.lakeheadu.ca > .

Guidelines for Contributors

Contributions may take the form of research articles, reports, evaluations, case studies, critical essays, practitioner reflections, and reviews. Theoretical essays or research reports should include a description of the practical applications of the ideas raised or tested, while reports of teaching practice or techniques should contain an explanation of the theoretical foundation underlying the practice or technique in question.

Manuscripts will be reviewed by at least two advisory editors or invited consultants with relevant expertise. Contributors may wish to supply names and addresses of potential reviewers. The selection of articles for inclusion in the journal will be based on these reviews. Submissions are accepted as early as September 1st and no later than October 31st of each year, allowing for a timely review process.

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Manuscripts should be clearly written and well-organized and will be edited for clarity and brevity.

Electronic submissions are now requested. Please check the following website for instructions and updates: < http://cjee.lakeheadu.ca/ > .

All submissions should include a brief abstract to a maximum of 125 words and a minimum of five key words for referencing of papers. The name and affiliation of the author(s) should appear on a separate title page to ensure anonymity during the reviewing process. Authors should retain an exact copy of this manuscript in order to respond to requests for clarification of specific pages, paragraphs, or lines. Microsoft Word is the preferred format.

Manuscripts are accepted for publication on the understanding that they have been submitted only to the *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* and that copyright of the published articles will be owned by the journal. Authors are responsible for the factual accuracy of their papers and for obtaining permission to reproduce text or illustrations from other publications.

The *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* will not normally publish feature articles by the same author in consecutive issues. Exceptions may be considered in cases of contiguous work. This limitation does not apply to short analyses, response pieces, or book reviews.

Papers should not exceed a **maximum of 5000 words**. To check manuscript length we conduct a computerized word-count that includes the abstract, endnotes, references, and bibliographical sketch(es) of author(s). In exceptional circumstances a slightly longer paper may be submitted, but this should be negotiated, in advance, with the editors. It is the author(s)' responsibility to ensure that his/her paper meets these guidelines. Long papers may be returned to authors at any stage of the review or production processes. To avoid disappointment, please take care.

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Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th edition (APA), must be used as a style reference. Explanatory notes should be avoided whenever possible. Essential notes should be identified with consecutive superscripts and listed in a section entitled "Notes" at the end of the text. Papers not formatted in APA style may be returned to authors at any stage of the review or production processes.

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Egan, K. (1989). Individual development. In K. Egan, A. Luke, & S. de Castell (Eds.), *Literacy, society, and schooling* (pp. 243-255). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Greenall Gough, A. (1993). *Founders in environmental education*. Geelong: Deakin University Press.

Warren, K. J. & Cheney, J. (1991). Ecological feminism and ecosystemecology. *Hypatia*, *6*(1), 179-197.

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Calls for Papers for Volume 14, 2009

Inquiries into Practice

Volume 14 of the *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* aims to highlight the work of practitioners engaged in inquiring into practices of environmental education. Inviting contributions from K-12 education, post-secondary and adult education, community-based organizations, and other venues and locations of environmental education practice, this issue hopes to encourage critical and empathetic inquiry into the understandings and assumptions we work with, blind spots, and hoped-for future directions in our work, and possible generative dialogues and collaborations. Particularly in the face of the recent upsurge in popular support for environmental concerns in Canada and around the globe, and a growing awareness of relationships with social issues and cultural contexts within environmental education, it seems timely to take a careful and thoughtful look at our individual and collective practices. We also look forward to bringing together this issue of the journal in time to continue the conversation at the 5th World Environmental Education Congress in Montreal, May 10-14, 2009. We hope you will join us in inquiring into lessons learned, things unconsidered, challenges faced, and possible new directions for environmental education practice.

In the spirit of collaborative inquiry, CJEE would be happy to help facilitate writing partnerships between interested parties—if you have an idea and would like to discuss it or possibly be connected with a writing partner or team, please contact cjee@lakeheadu.ca and include "Inquiries into Practice" in the subject line.

In order to publish this issue prior to the World Congress, please submit completed articles by July 2008.

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ental Education Congress has asked Canada to organize and chair the 5th
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in working with us to develop and convene this Congress. In the
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