Chapter 12
Wild Pedagogies, Outdoor Education, and the Educational Imagination

Bob Jickling, Marcus Morse, and Sean Blenkinsop

12.1 Introduction

We are living in times of ecological precarity. The Earth is stressed in ways humans have never before witnessed, and there is no adequate language to describe the epochal scope of the coming change. Terms such as Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene, and more, circle the linguistic terrain but do not quite capture the scale of Earth's shifting geostory (Latour, 2014). Perhaps that is our first anthropocentric mistake—to think we can capture this change in our own words, let alone shift the trajectory of the crisis at hand. It is more likely that we cannot control this phenomenon, that Earth is even writing the script, and that "modern" humans, for the most part, are not listening. Yet one thing seems clear, the future is uncertain.

Education is often invoked as a way out of crises, yet this can be fraught. Current western modes of education are pervasive in their rational, measurable and neoliberal driving forces—and operate at a scale that makes them seemingly impenetrable to change. Bauman (2005), for example, is doubtful that attempting change by deploying the right kind of skills, attitudes, and behaviours in education can ever be

B. Jickling (✉)
Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, ON, Canada
e-mail: bob.jickling@lakeheadu.ca

M. Morse
University of Tasmania, Hobart, TAS, Australia
e-mail: marcus.morse@utas.edu.au

S. Blenkinsop
Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, Canada
e-mail: sblenkin@sfu.ca

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2023

J. Činčera et al. (eds.), *Outdoor Environmental Education in the Contemporary World*, International Explorations in Outdoor and Environmental Education 12,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-29257-6_12

effective, and insightfully asks whether educators attempting such approaches will ever really be able to "avoid being enlisted in the services of the self-same pressures they are meant to defy" (p. 12). In the end, such attempts seem unavoidably to bend back in the direction of the status quo, and business as usual. Those who have been following environmental education and allied fields will recognize that this field of study has by and large retained much of the same formulation that Bauman critiques (Humphreys et al., 2022; Bokova, 2016). And, this formulation can be traced to the Tbilisi Declaration's blueprint for environmental education authored in 1977. How far have we come? What holds us back?

These observations concern us and have driven the development of what we call *Wild Pedagogies*. A new geostory is being written and we humans—particularly those of us ensnared in modernist, globalized, westernized, euro-centric, neo-liberal, colonial, Cartesian, and/or anthropocentric narratives—have barely begun to listen (Latour, 2014). And the collective intellectual legacy of this resulting entanglement has left us with limited paths for knowing and being in the world, a narrow sense of cognitive rationality,[1] and an oversized sense of control.

12.2 Wild Pedagogies

Wild pedagogies are inspired by *wildness*. That is, they represent a desire to let go of an overabundant sense of control, to invite places we visit to become an integral part of our work. As such, wild pedagogies rests on the premise that an important part of education can include intentional activities that provide a fertile field for personal and purposeful experience without controlling the environment and its actors, learners, or educational outcomes. Responding to the crises of our times will require a radical re-imagining of ways of being human, as co-inhabitants of this planet. Thus, reimagined ways of teaching and learning will necessarily run counter to dominant cultural narratives that assert that the world is knowable, predictable, and subject to primarily human use and control. Educational responses can no longer assume that current "business as usual" models will offer effective guidance in a rapidly changing world and an unknowable future.

In problematizing control, we seek to challenge existing assumptions, to rethink possibilities, to push open the doors to educational opportunities, to expose the limits imposed upon epistemology, and to embrace the learning opportunities arising from being present in the more-than-human world. We have previously described philosophical framework and touchstones for practice of Wild Pedagogies (Jickling et al., 2018; Blenkinsop et al., 2018; Morse et al., 2021). Rather than restate this work, we take this opportunity to push further, and to ask—in what ways might

[1] For critiques of contemporary conceptions of rationality (see for example Arne Næss, 2002) and Val Plumwood (1993).

outdoor educators be uniquely placed to contribute to this wild pedagogical project? This question relates not only to reconsidering one's own practice, but also the possibility for outdoor educators to speak back toward the educational project more broadly.

This is not to say that there are not already many incredible teachers—across a variety of educational settings—pushing limits, defying the status quo, and persisting in offering rebellious alternatives (Blenkinsop & Morse, 2017). There are. And, we believe that there is an important place for outdoor educators in this mix. After all, outdoor educators literally work "outside" of mainstream educational classrooms. We argue that this context can enable them to view the larger educational system at some distance. It can also provide them with a basis for imaginative contributions that go to the heart of conversations about the future of education writ large.

But first we will consider just how deeply education appears to be culturally entrenched.

12.3 Problems in Education

Recently, the journal Educational Philosophy and Theory (2022) published a special issue that expressed doubt education's capacity to respond to the environmental crises, at all (Moran & Kendall, 2009). The editors are forthright in their misgivings and openly ponder the possibility that educational research produces no more than illusions of influencing education (Pedersen et al., 2022). They wonder if these illusions are mere simulations of education. They also wonder if we may just be deluding ourselves when we believe that our research produces "improvement agendas" which we then pursue as if they were possible. Put another way, are we just going forward—left foot, right foot—but not getting anywhere? Are schools and universities servants to a globalizing economy? Is the educational apparatus impenetrable? Is there no space between schooling and the status quo?

Social and cultural change through education is difficult work. Cultural assumptions are often hidden from view in pervasive language choices, hierarchical social structures, the scope of knowledge and understanding, and a guise of neutrality. These assumptions silently work to bend educators back to the status quo. Indeed, these forces can be the *real authorities* in a culture. How, then, might we meet these challenges and enable productive and hopeful pedagogies? Part of this task must involve naming the challenges and offering alternative responses. In the following sections we describe two key challenges for enacting the radical change proposed. First, change requires more than just tinkering at the edges; education more broadly must change. Second, educators, researchers, parents, and students require an expanded imaginative capacity to enable such change.

We suggest that there is far more for outdoor educators to do than simply run field trips at the edges of these concerns. Many outdoor educators are well equipped to offer educational understanding that reach far beyond their own practices and fields of expertise.

12.3.1 A Call for More Radical Change

People closer to the ground know that education is, in many cases, failing to deliver; and they are voting with their feet. For example, referendums held in January 2022 led seven school communities in Canada's Yukon to leave the Yukon's Department of Education and to join a new Yukon First Nations School Board. In essence, they voted to ditch the centralized colonial control of the Yukon's education system. Education, to them, was seemingly oblivious to, or even knowingly complicit in, the devastating consequences for their communities (Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, https://www.yfned.ca/fnsb. And alarmingly, public education did not seem to have either the will or the ability to change (Auditor general of Canada, 2019).

Interestingly, it wasn't just citizens of First Nations who voted for change. The Yukon First Nations School Board reached out to offer improved educational outcomes for all Yukon students. In turn, many other community members supported this move away from centralized control of education. Indeed, there is widespread dissatisfaction with the Yukon's Department of education and its inability to enact meaningful change that responds effectively to education needs in this the Yukon. (Pers. Comm., Ted Hupé. President, The *Yukon Association* of Educational Professionals, April 6, 2022).

This new Yukon First Nations School Board is just one concrete example of disillusionment with mainstream education. However, it is particularly interesting in the context of this chapter. First, there is a consistent message amongst First Nations leaders and Elders that education must get back to the land. Therein is an acknowledgment that humans are physical beings who learn through their bodies, and their senses. And the land has something significant to offer. In this way the world is a real place whereas abstract conceptualizations in classrooms are wordy simulations of these places. Le Guin (2016) captures the perils of this move away from land and towards words:

> We become so enamoured of our language and its ability to describe the world that we create a false and irresponsible separation. We use language as a device for distancing. Somebody who is genuinely living in their ecosystem wouldn't have a word for it. They'd just call it the world. (p. 106-107)

In this vein, First Nations people just call it *the land*. Elders in the Yukon already know that traditional ways of knowing, being, and doing require learning on the land. And that learning on the land is good for all children.

Second, Yukon First Nations are insistent that current education does not reflect their worldview and without this, mainstream education will always be inadequate. They insist that learning must embrace two worldviews—a task that inherently

requires education to migrate back to the land. We understand that this is a brief description of complex ideas and processes that will require much more discussion over time and that the task at hand is not to appropriate another's culture. Thus, we are foregrounding ideas that need considering if we who inhabit educational systems are going grapple with change.

This example makes clear that substantive ecologically and socially just change will need to be radical—it will challenge some of the most fundamental tenants of western worldviews. We cannot just think differently, we must inhabit the world in different ways. It may even require learning to see ourselves as co-inhabitants that can listen to the Earthly languages around us and to embrace nature as our co-teacher (Blenkinsop & Beeman, 2010).

Many outdoor educators may identify with threads that run through this section. First, by taking learners outside outdoor educators are already parting with most of mainstream education. They are already beginning to disrupt the status quo. Second, they acknowledge that humans are physical beings and that learning through whole bodies in real places is important. Third, they know that when taking groups outside the experience isn't always knowable, predictable, and that they will need to adapt. And fourth, the more-than human world is filled with knowledge, agency, and capacity to teach. We propose that these predispositions of outdoor educators and their pedagogical skills are some of the tools required for wilder pedagogies.

12.3.2 The Need for an Expanded Educational Imagination

To understand the role imagination plays in creating innovative schools and practices, we draw from a radical public "school" in British Columbia (Blenkinsop et al., 2018). The Maple Ridge Environmental School Project opened in September 2011 (see; Chap. 15 for more information). And this project questions foundational assumptions connected to the idea of school. Specifically, this school has no buildings, sees nature as an active part of teaching, and understands cultural change as part of its mandate. All learning happens outdoors and there is an active process of questioning every component of schooling.

Researchers at the Maple Ridge project identified four ways, explicit and implicit, that policy can hinder innovation (Blenkinsop et al., 2018). The most relevant for this discussion was "self-limited imagination." The emergence of self-limited imagination was a surprise. Although, once named, its presence became visible in many places. Self-limited imagination is not a case of something that has been thought of before, but ignored. Nor is it something that is deemed impossible. Rather, it was about alternatives not being imaginable at all! It was about participants not having the experiential materials, flexibility, institutional permission, and/or the cultural range to bring an idea into consciousness. It was about imaginative limits, and how limits are problematic if you are trying to move outside the culture within which you are doing your imagining. When something beyond these imaginary boundaries was offered to participants in this project, the response was often a blankness, or a

comment such as “I have never even thought of that….” So, if one accepts that imagination is limited, possibly by culture, how might we expand our own imaginations and those of our charges?

The idea of a self-limited imagination is striking. When not addressed, it stands to thwart far-reaching, or radical, innovation—and indeed to obstruct wild pedagogies. Blenkinsop et al. (2018) offer an example from the Maple Ridge Environmental School Project where it becomes clear that imaginative limits are also contained within social and cultural systems. Perhaps, imaginative capacity is not so much self-limited as it is culturally bounded.

While it is true that imaginative capacity will always be limited, maybe there are ways to expand its range. Such moves require a number of dispositions: a willingness to change; an active gathering of ideas about how to be differently in the world, within, and beyond one’s cultural reality; a constant expanding of available tools; a consideration of the stories, metaphors, and languages being used; and an intentional engagement in a diversifying range of experiences. The last consideration is aimed at the thoughtful development of the “stuff” that expands imagination—ideas, concepts, experiences, and encounters. It is the stuff that enables educators to consider limitations within their cultural context and then offer wilder possibilities for expanding their students’ imaginative potential.

Many teachers, parents, and students today are responding to the perceived incompleteness of an educational project built more than a century ago. They are also responding to globalization and environmental degradation by seeking alternatives to the mainstream educational systems. We believe the field of outdoor environmental education can thoughtfully and effectively respond to this demand in important ways.

12.4 Pedagogical Understandings of the Outdoor Educator

Outdoor educators often have unique pedagogical understandings that allow them to work effectively in responding to the current ecological crisis (Blenkinsop et al., 2016). But more than that, we are suggesting that these understandings may be urgently required across education more broadly. In other words, outdoor educators have an opportunity to consider their responsibility to speak back to mainstream education—to contribute toward the more radical changes required. In the following section, we highlight three key understandings that many outdoor educators will be familiar with, (1) An ecological, land, and body-based understanding of what knowledge might be, (2) an ability to work with risk and uncertainty, and (3) experience working with identity transformation. We believe that by flexing these understandings, imaginative possibilities can emerge.

12.4.1 Broadening What Counts as Knowledge

Outdoor educators teach outside, often removed from standardized school settings. Here, understanding knowledge can emerge in different ways. As Quay and Jensen (2018) highlight, "in most classrooms, it is rare for the varied and multiple self-wills of wider nature to be allowed to speak… Outdoor education offers a potential contextual advantage here in that it is premised on the notion of getting out-of-doors" (p. 296).

In most educational contexts, and even in many outdoor settings, knowledge is primarily situated within the human realm; knowledge is understood as human possession. It is describable, compartmentalised, centralised, and literally "knowable." This conceptualization of knowledge carries: a predisposition to control; a separation of, and hierarchy between, human and the more-than-human world; and a focus on measured outcomes that favour a particular form of rationality. This is discernable when coming to knowing the more-than-human world—where we often learn *about* the natural world, rather than *from* or *with* it. Furthermore, this learning is typically oblivious to the costs borne by the more-than-human. Even when teachers' agency is directed at child-centred learning, the agency of the natural world is often ignored.

The Wild Pedagogies touchstones offer examples for practice such as the rewilding idea of "nature as co-teacher" (Jickling et al., 2018). In this case, pedagogical approaches encourage including nature in the teaching process. The natural world is a vibrant, active, agential place that is worth listening and attending to, building relationship with, and learning from. However, this has significant implications for what knowledge is and how learning can happen. If nature becomes a co-teacher, then the human is de-centred, and learning become a shared project. Education can no longer be complete, or human-based. Taken seriously, the impacts are profound. What does it mean to recognize Salmon as a knower? How does pedagogy change if the human teacher shares space with myriad co-teachers? What happens to concepts of knowledge if it doesn't reside exclusively amongst humans?

Many outdoor educators understand knowledge as embodied, complex and, at times, beyond language. As Van Boekl (2020) reminds us, "the head is not the sole locus of cognitive thinking; our senses and entire bodily being directly structure, produce and store silent existential knowledge. In short, the whole human body is a knowing entity" (p. 247). This understanding does not just occur beyond the classroom; however, it can be particularly apparent in outdoor settings. Many outdoor educators will recall moments when they and their students are stopped in their tracks by the place, by a felt sensation. There is a moment of attention where understanding is suddenly grasped and there is a sense of knowing that is indescribable—that suddenly appears in defiance of logic.

This is not to suggest that rational and cognitive knowing, as currently understood, are not important. They are just not the whole story. Outdoor educators and their students can come to know in entangled, sensorial, and embodied ways that are often ignored by mainstream epistemological assumptions. As Nicol (2014) says, in

outdoor learning, "strands of knowledge need not be compartmentalised and unrelated" (p. 453). We are suggesting that outdoor educators and learners can experience knowledge that is more-than-rational, logical, fragmentable, and linguistic. We also suggest that these experiences of knowing and being-in-the-world are important across broad educational conversations.

12.4.2 The Role of Uncertainty and Risk

Outdoor educators know about uncertainty and risk in learning. These concepts are most frequently considered in relation to emotional and physical risks of adventurous activities; however, we seek to highlight another kind of risk encountered outdoors.

This risk flows from a wild and emergent curriculum on two levels. First, there is uncertainty when trusting both the learner and the place of learning. Second, there is uncertainty when trusting an emergent process, yet these kinds of trust are a key components of outdoor environmental educator practices.

There is always uncertainty when the natural world enters the learning process. To be hit by a rainstorm, strong winds, lightning, or a rising river can change the day dramatically. Equally a flock of birds, a mob of kangaroos, or a lone echidna can quickly revamp the learning interests and opportunities. Working in the outside brings a range of uncertainties that become a part of an outdoor educator's practice. During any day, educators are at their best when they trust spontaneous learning moments and, as skilful facilitators, embrace the opportunities that appear.

Teachers in such fertile environments need to prepare in different ways than do their counterparts in more conventional settings. Just as Dewey (1938) warned that the greatest threat to his philosophy of education was the assumption that it could be an improvised practice. So, spontaneous, and immersed educators must not assume that they can teach on an ad hoc basis. There is a great deal of background preparation that goes into this type of teaching.

Many educators focused on outdoor environmental learning are intimately familiar with the context and place in which they work, and they are able to recognise and respond to the educational moments when they arise. Although such a place-responsive focus is not guaranteed (Wattchow & Brown, 2011). Learning to listen to what the environment has to offer is a key skill in place-conscious outdoor learning (Greenwood, 2013, p. 98). It also requires the kind of preparation which comes from recognising place as both co-educator and curricular source—that is, seeing oneself as only as part of the teaching process. This kind of teaching challenges the educator to prepare the students, trust them to lean into their own learning, and to trust that the place will provide opportunities, as any good co-teacher would. In these insights, our field has offerings for mainstream educators, especially given our previous epistemological discussion.

12.4.3 Transforming Identity: What it Means to Be Human in a Less Alienated World

Historically, outdoor educators have been involved in identity work, often explicitly and sometimes implicitly. This involves assisting students to become who they want to be, to be differently in their worlds, or to behave differently in relation to others and/or the natural world. Yet, it appears this has not been enough to effectively change the modern cultural relationships with and in the natural world. Here we suggest additional forms of identity work that might be considered.

First, we argue here, and elsewhere (Jickling et al., 2018), that the ecological and social crises of our times rest largely on a human cultural penchant for both a separate positioning above the more-than-human world, and a drive for control—over each other, other beings, conceptions of truth, and even what constitutes rationality. If we are correct, this work of changing identity has to move beyond just changing individuals one at a time and begin working to change the very definition of what it means to be human. If the goal is to be human differently this world, then we must have opportunities to witness examples of cultural identity that are more equitable and ecological, and we must have the capacity to imagine additional options. As Snaza (2013) suggests "I propose that education be reconceived as a process that leads us—teachers, students, researchers, philosophers, etc.—*away from being human*, or at least away from thinking that we have any clear idea about what that means" (p. 49).

The second area of identity work concerns the concept and enactment of "teacher." Here we are talking about moving the teacher: away from the role of expert at the centre of planning and knowing—away from the designer and controller of "learning outcomes," and away from being the focus of class. We are talking about moving the teacher towards: a role as facilitator, a member of the journey, an interested inquirer, a co-teacher, and a recognizer of possibility. This is a seismic task, but one that offers a significant role to outdoor educators. For example, when working to help mainstream educators get their classes outside more often, we often encounter the assumption: "I can't go outside, I just don't know it well enough, what if the kids ask me about some tree I can't name?" Our belief here is that outdoor educators have much to offer their colleagues by virtue of their experiences teaching to the unexpected, helping learners find answers to their own questions, and being comfortable with not-knowing. This is not about "knowing" all the plants but about feeling comfortable in saying "I don't know" and stepping into that uncertainty.

Identity work is often about learning to hold space so that individuals have room for change—to become who they want to be, and to be supported in their journey to be differently in the world. Again, we suggest that many outdoor educators have skills to facilitate this kind of work, and these skills might be offered to the mainstream educational world more broadly.

12.5 Beyond Logic and Language

This section begins with a vignette describing an experiment in outdoor education. It arises from skills and practices developed over time and out of the imaginative "stuff" accrued during that period. The description of the project provides just one example of attempts to make learning a little wilder. The discussion about the experiment, however, opens up an important area of epistemological exploration.

The experiment took place during a canoeing journey that included a researcher and two young participants. Together, they sought interesting ways to represent their experiences and tactics for noticing and connecting with the places visited (Gablik, 1992). In this instance they chose pinhole photography as a vehicle for their expression. The homemade camera that they used had neither a lens nor a viewfinder. Making photographs, thus, demanded sensual presence during creation. They needed to get close to the ground to frame their pictures, and to pay attention to the light to estimate exposure times.

A core aim of this experimental journey was to loosen control over experiences, and to see what aspects of the landscapes would call them to make photographs. It was to see and feel what learning might arise from being in these places when the leash, tethered to controlling instincts, was loosened.

When the trip was finished and the photographs developed, the participants were asked to select the three photographs that they were most drawn towards. They were then asked to talk about their experiences around making the photographs, and the feeling evoked by viewing them. Sample segments of their conversations are presented below in three excerpts (Jickling, 2015).[2]

Andrew is 13 years old. While walking high into an alpine valley, a conversation went like this:

Well, Andrew, what do you think?
I don't have a word to describe it.
What do you mean?

It's like the flowers, the birds, the animals, the scenery—everything.

A second conversation, including an interpretive quotation, was similar:

Andrew, what do you feel when you see the picture we made at the end of that valley?
Wow!
What else? No answer.

He grasps this place in and exclamation of recognition, "the vibrant spoor of what cannot be said" (Lee, 2010, p. 22).

[2] Versions of the photographs and sample segments presented here were first published in *Cultural Studies of Science Education* (Jickling, 2015). The final publication is available at Springer via https://doi.org/10.1007/s11422-014-9587-y

These conversations represent the kinds of experiences familiar to many outdoor educators. We sometimes refer to these as "ah ha" moments where a kind of existential connection, relationship, or understanding suddenly arises and affects us, or our students (Figs. 12.1 and 12.2).

There are more famous examples of this phenomenon such as Aldo Leopold's life-changing experience that occurred on the day he saw a wolf die:

> We reached the old wolf in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes. I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes—something known only to her and to the mountain. I was young then, and full of trigger-itch; I thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunters' paradise. But after seeing the green fire die, I sensed that neither the wolf nor the mountain agreed with such a view. (Leopold, 1970, p. 138–139)

It was in this moment—in this experience—that Leopold was suddenly pierced with a blinding insight that altered his entire career trajectory. Or as Jan Zwicky says, that in sudden moments of recognition, "The this strikes into us like a shaft of light" (2003, p 53, left). The point here is that while the more famous experience that Leopold has given us is dramatic, convincing and, hence, useful in making a point, it is not rare. Andrew's experience described above can be familiar amongst attentive outdoor educators. And herein lies the basis for what is perhaps the most difficult, yet profound, contribution that outdoor educators can make to conversations about mainstream education.

Fig. 12.1 Poppies. (Photo: Bob Jickling)

Fig. 12.2 Kids and a cliff. (Photo: Bob Jickling)

However, later in the conversation with Andrew we looked at a photograph of three canoes on the riverbank, near the end of the trip. That part of conversation went like this (Fig. 12.3):

Oh yes, what I remember about that photo was being tired, and skipping rocks, and having twizzlers.
That's enough, questions!

> Dennis Lee (2010) asks, "How should we test a gestalt when it is simply **shown**? Not by hacking its bounty back into logical form and subjugating it to analytic verification; everything of substance is likely to be leached out in the process" (p. 37).

Andrew's first answers appear to arise from genuine bursts of wonder. However, his silence following the question, "What else?" in the second excerpt, felt more like an expression of resistance. He appears to sense that it can be perilous to talk about ways of knowing that fall outside of curricula of correct answers. He then sidestepped the final question that asked of his response to the three canoes. The Dennis Lee quotation that followed foreshadows the perils of asking evermore questions.

Fig. 12.3 Three canoes. (Photo: Bob Jickling)

To sketch out further understanding of this contribution we draw on Jan Zwicky's lyric philosophy.[3] She is convinced that understanding experiences in the world is too narrowly categorized when limited just logico-linguistic analysis (Zwicky, 2015), Thus, her lyric form of philosophy attempts to arrive at an understanding of experiences that affect us as beings with bodies and emotions—experiences that arise suddenly and affect us as sensuous beings in the world. Think about Andrew's responses to hiking in the alpine valley. His experiences suddenly announced themselves, not as a collection of logically linked parts; rather, they arrived in a moment as whole understandings. Zwicky calls these whole understandings gestalts and considers them neither rational nor irrational; they are, she suggests, *arational,* in that they elude adequate capture in words (2019).

We have pondered the durability of the *status quo* as framed in a variety of ways throughout this chapter. In this section we are led to wonder, as does Zwicky, why "are we so deeply susceptible to the charms of epistemological security?" (2019, p. 95*).* What goes missing when humans attempt to control conceptions of truth and even what constitutes rationality. It is a loosening of this control that is intriguing and leads us to wonder about other forms of knowing beyond those prioritized by mainstream educational systems.

[3] See also, Zwicky (1992, 2003).

Zwicky reminds us that our inclination towards logical "rules of thought"—rules that Andrew resists—may be in tension with an underlying proclivity to accept unexamined gestalts. They may also be in tension with the capacity of young people like Andrew to wonder at flowers, birds, animals, and scenery. She adds,

> There is no series of steps we can implement to precipitate gestalts in all audiences. Real thinking does not always occur in words; it can decay under analysis; its processes are not always reportable. This means that real thinking is in some sense wild: it cannot be corralled or regulated. But it is also the only access humans have to the experience of insight, to moral and mathematical beauty, to ontological vision. (Zwicky, 2019, p.95)

It is risky business for educators to stray so far from expected norms. Yet, in Zwicky's words, "where the danger lies, there too lies meaningful life" (2019, p. 95). So, we are challenged to ask what is lost: when thinking is limited to only thinking in words, when we rely on a narrowly conceived notion of rational logic, when we prefer to teach students to see a world that is reduced to its constituent parts? Can we be diligent in fulfilling our educational responsibilities if we do not embrace learning that increases capacity for thinking with and in the world? Is it reasonable to arbitrarily deprive learners of access to meaningful forms of knowing? The *arational*? We think not.

Here again we assert that outdoor educators have access to insightful experiences that can lead to a broadening of epistemological possibilities and ontological visions. The "ah ha" moments are not just quirky idiocrasies, they can be windows into rich understandings in the world that are often marginalized by the tyranny of cognitive rationality as it is presently conceived, rules of thought, assumed outcomes, and epistemological security.

These moments require pedagogues to leave space for student resistance and to exercise restraint in our analyses. Despite these challenges, many outdoor educators have a window into important educational possibilities. We urge them not to shy away from conversations about the insights that are revealed through their teaching and learning experiences. Indeed, we urge outdoor educators to join wild pedagogues, and other radical educators, in the heart of conversations about the future of educational possibilities.

12.6 Some Closing Thoughts

In planning this chapter, we all agreed that there was a natural alliance between outdoor education and wild pedagogies. In working with the relatively new idea of wild pedagogies, we were keen to introduce it to our colleagues. However, as we began to think about how to do this, we were reminded that outdoor educators constitute a special group amongst educators more broadly. In revisiting the somewhat unique skills that many outdoor educators have developed out of inclination and necessity (Blenkinsop et al., 2016), we suggest many already possess much of the imaginative "stuff" required to challenge the cultural of control of education and the vice-grip of the status quo.

It seemed natural, then, to use this opportunity to do much more than describe our wild pedagogies project. Here we are already working with a group of educators who know, at least implicitly, that imagining, resisting, knowing, and being are in some senses wild and that they defy being corralled or regulated. With this in mind, we have tried to spot places where outdoor educators have important things to say and practices to offer that are at the heart of conversations about the future of education in these troubled times.

References

Auditor General of Canada. (2019). June report of the auditor general of Canada to the Yukon Legislative Assembly: Kindergarten through grade 12 education in Yukon—Department of education. Accessed 6 Apr 2022, https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/yuk_201906_e_43400.html

Bauman, Z. (2005). *Liquid life*. Polity Press.

Blenkinsop, S., & Beeman, C. (2010). The world as co-teacher: Learning to work with a peerless colleague. *The Trumpeter, 26*(3), 26–39.

Blenkinsop, S., & Morse, M. (2017). Saying yes to life: The search for the rebel teacher. In B. Jickling & S. Sterling (Eds.), *Post-sustainability and environmental education: Remaking education for the future* (pp. 49–61). Palgrave Macmillan.

Blenkinsop, S., Telford, J., & Morse, M. (2016). A surprising discovery: Five pedagogical skills outdoor and experiential educators might offer more mainstream educators in this time of change. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning, 16*(4), 346–358.

Blenkinsop, S., Maitland, C., & MacQuarrie, J. (2018). In search of policy that supports educational innovation: Perspective of a place– and community-based elementary school. *Policy Futures in Education, 17*(4), 489–502.

Bokova, I. (2016). Foreword. In UNESCO (Ed.), *Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all* (p. 5). UNESCO.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. Schuster.

Educational Philosophy and Theory. (2022). Special issue: Education for sustainable development in the "Capitalocene." *54*(3).

Gablik, S. (1992). Connective aesthetics. *American Art, 6*(2), 2–7.

Greenwood, D. (2013). A critical theory of place conscious education. In R. Stevenson, M. Brody, J. Dillon, & A. Wals (Eds.), *International handbook of research on environmental education*. Routledge.

Humphreys, C., Blenkinsop, S., & Jickling, B. (2022). Education, sustainable or otherwise, as simulacra: A symphony of Baudrillard. *Educational Philosophy and Theory., 54*(3), 310–323.

Jickling, B. (2015). Self-willed learning: Experiments in wild pedagogy. *Cultural Studies of Science Education., 10*(1), 149–161.

Jickling, B., Blenkinsop, S., Timmerman, N., & Sitka Sage, M. (Eds.). (2018). *Wild pedagogies: Touchstones for re-negotiating education and the environment in the Anthropocene*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Latour, B. N. (2014). Agency at the time of the Anthropocene. *New Literary History, 45*(1), 1–18.

Le Guin, U. (2016). Crossing back from the silence. In J. White (Ed.), *Talking on the water: Conversations about nature and creativity* (pp. 99–120). Trinity University Press.

Lee, D. (2010). The music of thinking: The structural logic of "Lyric Philosophy." In M. Dickinson & C. Goulet (Eds.), *Lyric ecology: An appreciation of the work of Jan Zwicky* (pp. 19–39). Cormorant Books.

Leopold, A. (1970). *A Sand County almanac*. Ballantine Books. (First published in 1949.).
Moran, P., & Kendall, A. (2009). Baudrillard and the end of education. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 32*(3), 327–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/17437270903259873
Morse, M., Jickling, B., Blenkinsop, S., & Morse, P. (2021). Wild Pedagogies. In G. Thomas, J. Dyment, & H. Prince (Eds.), *Outdoor environmental education in higher education. International perspectives*. Springer.
Næss, A. (2002). *Life's philosophy: Reason and feeling in a deeper world*. University of Georgia Press.
Nicol, R. (2014). Entering the fray: The role of outdoor education in providing nature-based experiences that matter. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 46*(5), 449–461.
Pedersen, J., Windsor, S., Knutsson, B., Saunders, D., Wals, E. J., & Franck, O. (2022). Education for sustainable development in the "Capitalocene.". *Educational Philosophy and Theory., 54*(3), 224–227.
Plumwood, V. (1993). *Feminism and the mastery of nature*. Routledge.
Quay, J., & Jensen, A. (2018). Wild pedagogies and wilding pedagogies: Teacher-student-nature centredness and the challenges for teaching. *Journal of Outdoor and Environmental Education, 21*, 293–305.
Snaza, N. (2013). Bewildering education. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy, 10*(1), 38–54. https://doi.org/10.1080/15505170.2013.783889
Van Boekl, J. (2020). Linking the missing links: An artful workshop on metamorphoses of organic forms. In P. Burnard & L. Colucci-Gray (Eds.), *Why science and creativities matter: (Re)configuring STEAM for future-making education* (pp. 245–264). Brill.
Wattchow, B., & Brown, M. (2011). *A pedagogy of place: Outdoor education for a changing world*. Monash University Publishing.
Yukon First Nation Education Directorate. Yukon first nations school board. Accessed 6 Apr 2022., https://www.yfned.ca/fnsb
Zwicky, J. (1992). *Lyric philosophy*. University of Toronto Press.
Zwicky, J. (2003). *Wisdom and metaphor*. Gaspereau Press.
Zwicky, J. (2015). What is lyric philosophy? In J. Zwicky (Ed.), *Alkibiades' love: Essays in philosophy* (pp. 3–18). McGill-Queens University Press.
Zwicky, J. (2019). *The experience of meaning*. McGill-Queen's University Press.