

Loving Lakes

Soulfulness & Story
in Lake Management

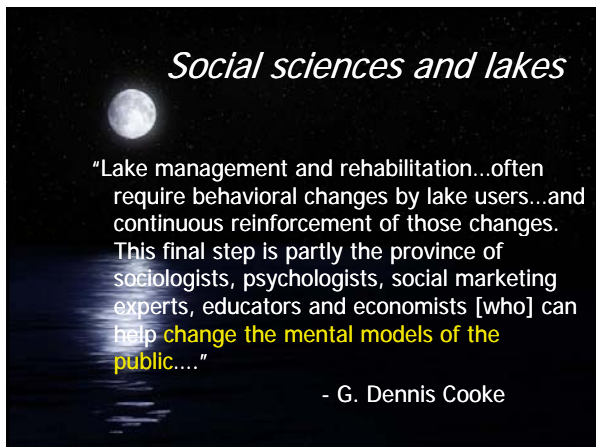
Tom Gordon

Rustling Leaves
Sanctuary
Cherry Hill Seminary



Tom Gordon

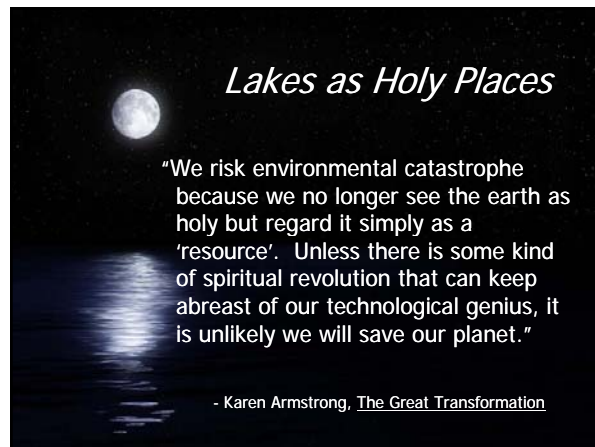
- ☞ Executive Director, Cobbossee Watershed District, 1973-1992
- ☞ President, NALMS, 1981-1982
- ☞ Owner, AV Portland, 1991-
- ☞ Chair, Cumberland County SWCD, 2001-
- ☞ Executive Director, Maine Assoc. of Conservation Districts, 2009-
- ☞ Next?



Social sciences and lakes

"Lake management and rehabilitation...often require behavioral changes by lake users...and continuous reinforcement of those changes. This final step is partly the province of sociologists, psychologists, social marketing experts, educators and economists [who] can help change the mental models of the public...."

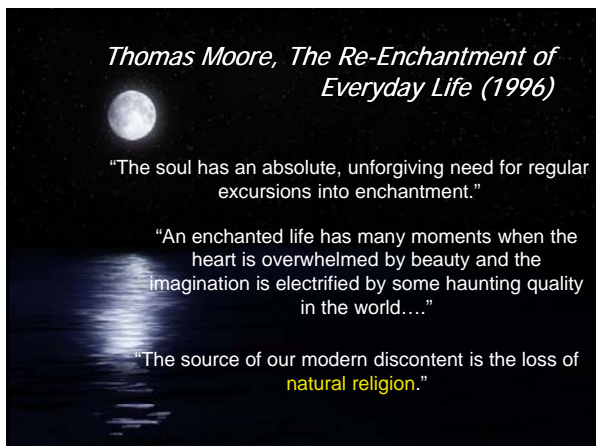
- G. Dennis Cooke



Lakes as Holy Places

"We risk environmental catastrophe because we no longer see the earth as holy but regard it simply as a 'resource'. Unless there is some kind of spiritual revolution that can keep abreast of our technological genius, it is unlikely we will save our planet."

- Karen Armstrong, The Great Transformation



Thomas Moore, The Re-Enchantment of Everyday Life (1996)

"The soul has an absolute, unforgiving need for regular excursions into enchantment."

"An enchanted life has many moments when the heart is overwhelmed by beauty and the imagination is electrified by some haunting quality in the world...."

"The source of our modern discontent is the loss of natural religion."




"Loving Lakes" Survey

- ☞ Personal spiritual connection with lakes
- ☞ Lake work as mental or spiritual restoration
- ☞ Lakes vs. river/marine work
- ☞ The future of lakes




"Indirect" Responses

- ☞ "Ask X, he's an expert on social sciences and lakes"
- ☞ "Ask Y, he's got a great slide show of scenic lakes"



Common Themes

- ☞ Pilgrimage, katabasis (descent)
- ☞ Rituals of lake living
- ☞ Continuity, seasonal cycles
- ☞ Reflection
- ☞ Archetypes



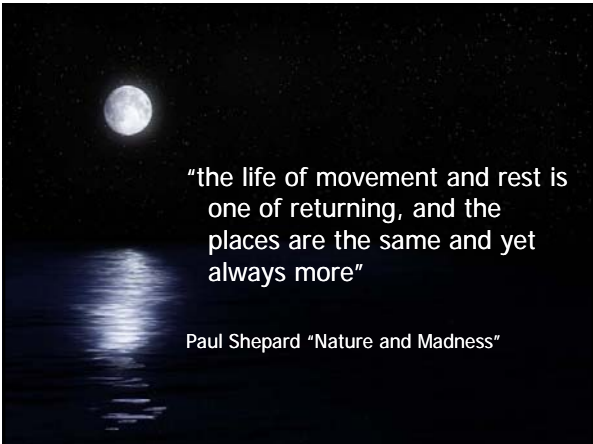
Pilgrimage and descent

- ☞ Journey of descent in myths of many cultures (Persephone, Orpheus, Inanna, Lazarus)
- ☞ Opening a subconscious connection to nature
- ☞ Traversing the watershed to shoreline and immersion



Reflections

- ☞ Search for self-definition and identity
- ☞ Sense of place
- ☞ Sense of time



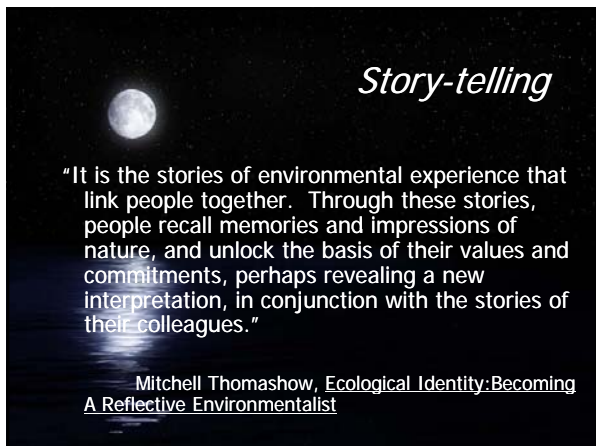
"the life of movement and rest is one of returning, and the places are the same and yet always more"

Paul Shepard "Nature and Madness"



Rejuvenation

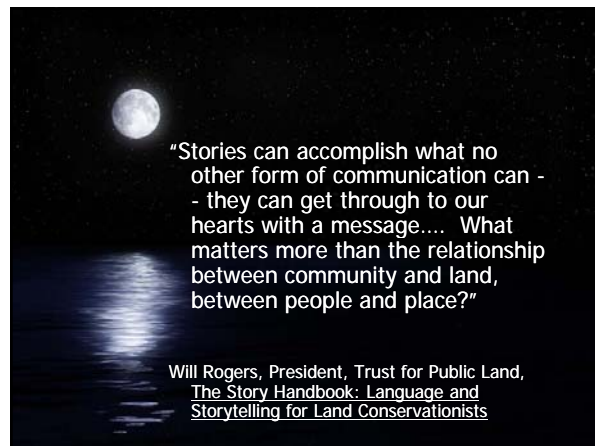
- ☞ Compassion fatigue can affect anyone who cares for the environment
- ☞ Lake management can cause stress - lakes don't



Story-telling

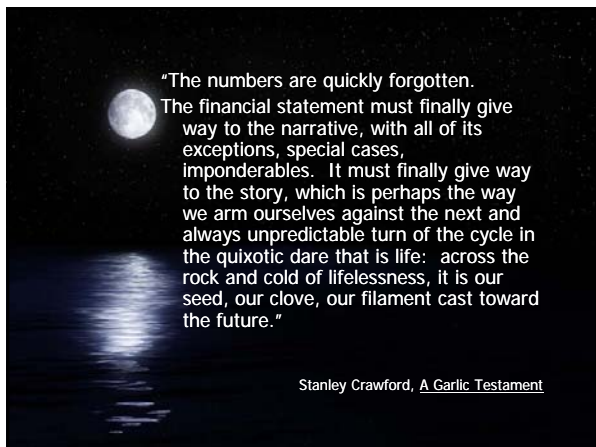
"It is the stories of environmental experience that link people together. Through these stories, people recall memories and impressions of nature, and unlock the basis of their values and commitments, perhaps revealing a new interpretation, in conjunction with the stories of their colleagues."

Mitchell Thomashow, *Ecological Identity: Becoming A Reflective Environmentalist*



"Stories can accomplish what no other form of communication can - they can get through to our hearts with a message.... What matters more than the relationship between community and land, between people and place?"

Will Rogers, President, Trust for Public Land, *The Story Handbook: Language and Storytelling for Land Conservationists*



"The numbers are quickly forgotten. The financial statement must finally give way to the narrative, with all of its exceptions, special cases, imponderables. It must finally give way to the story, which is perhaps the way we arm ourselves against the next and always unpredictable turn of the cycle in the quixotic dare that is life: across the rock and cold of lifelessness, it is our seed, our clove, our filament cast toward the future."

Stanley Crawford, *A Garlic Testament*



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