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Letter from the Editor: Creating Teacher Agency

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seven they become indicative of a child's avoidance of reality.

Both Robinson's and Hoffman's studies are filled with similar descriptions. They become almost boring in their similarity, but that's the interesting part. They seem to reveal a reasonably common propensity towards transcendent experiences during middle childhood. Now, no longitudinal studies have been done to assess whether these people behave in a more ecologically responsible fashion in adulthood than the general population. My speculation, however, is that once you've felt continuous, and at one with the natural world, it will powerfully compel you to environmental ethics and behavior. Therefore, it follows, that if we want to develop environmental values, we should try to optimize the opportunity for transcendent nature experiences in middle childhood. That's where the children and nature design principles come in handy.

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About the Writer

David Sobel is a regular contributing editor of *Community Works Journal* and the Director of Teacher Certification Programs at Antioch New England Graduate School. He also co-directs the Community-based School Environmental Education Program (CO-SEED). This essay is based on an excerpt from a chapter he wrote for *Local Diversity: Place-Based Education in the Global Age*, published by Lawrence Erlbaum, Associates. In it he shares his own experience teaching teachers with methods that model the best principles of place-based education. David is the author of a number of books including *Children's Special Places* and a guest faculty member of Community Works Institute (CWI) <http://www.communityworksinstitute.org>.



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Creating Teacher Agency

The focus for next issue will be on creating "Agency" for the teaching profession. Agency in this regard, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is "The capacity, condition, or state of acting or of exerting power."

After talks with various faculty, staff, and students and of course with the board of the COE Alumni Association, I believe we need to break through the growing malaise that has settled over the field. The next issue will be a positive take on what you can do as a teacher to have power over what is happening in the system.

On another note, *Colleagues* has been awarded another APEX Award for Excellence and two Graphic Design USA

Awards for Design. It is always exciting to be recognized for good work, so I am happy to say "Thank you!" to all the volunteers from within and without the university that allow this magazine to function.

Our next issue of course will need your input. If you are interested in contributing a piece, please email me at pelonc@gvsu.edu with your proposal.

While I am always looking to the upcoming *Colleagues*, I hope you find this one as exciting as I do.

Clayton Pelon
Editor-in-Chief