



Ken Low: A Life of Learning Beyond Convention

Ken was a mapmaker and explorer of the human species. Although considered by many to be a wise elder, he often reminded people that he was not the source of learning; life was. His role was to help people

learn from it. In that spirit, this exhibit is not so much a biography of his life, but a sampling of his life's learning journey so that others can get sense of what he was striving to understand about humanity and life.

1943 — 1955

Birth and Childhood

Ken was born in Edmonton to Solon and Alice Low on May 21, 1943. The seventh of eight very dynamic children, Ken was exposed to a rich and stimulating learning environment from an early age.

In 1945, the family moved from Edmonton to a dairy farm in Cardston, and then to Ottawa in 1948 after Ken's father became an MP.





The Big Questions of Life

Ken was born just a few weeks after the Germans surrendered to the Allies. Because the newspapers were rife with exposés on the extermination camps, Ken was exposed to photos of human cruelty at a very young age. This was the start of Ken's drive to understand the 'the big questions of life.'

“

It appeared to me that there was something about the Holocaust that was very significant for understanding some of the big questions in life about what it means to be alive and human.

– Ken Low

Edmonton Bulletin

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Weather
Today and Friday—Partly cloudy with moderating temperature.
Sun rises Friday 6:53. Sets 8:19. Light up vehicles by 6:30. Light up street by 7:30 hours.
Edmonton Temperatures—Wednesday, maximum, 36; Thursday, minimum, 26. Estimated low tonight, 26; estimated high tomorrow, 32.

Reds Prepare to Storm Odessa

Wins Acclamation at Convention

Hon. Solon Low Elected Leader Of National Social Credit Assn.

TORONTO, April 6.—(CP)—Hon. Solon Low, provincial treasurer of Alberta, today was elected national leader and president of the Social Credit Association of Canada at the organization's national convention here.

J. E. Gregoire of Quebec was elected vice-president by acclamation when the only other nominee, M. J. Haver of Saskatchewan, withdrew his nomination. Mr. Gregoire is a lecturer at Laval university and a former mayor of Quebec.

Mr. Low's election came by acclamation when the only other candidate—Major A. H. Jukes of Saanichton, B.C.—announced to the convention that he was withdrawing his nomination.

The election came on the third day of the three-day national Social Credit convention which yesterday voted to establish a Dominion-wide political party to be called the National Social Credit Association.

A native of Cardston, Alta., Mr. Low was born Jan. 8, 1900, and was educated there and at Calgary Normal school, the University of Alberta and the University of Southern California.

A school principal, he entered politics in 1932 when he was elected to the Alberta legislature for Warner riding and he entered the cabinet of the late William Aberhart in 1937. Defeated in Warner in the general election of 1940 he ran in a by-election for the Vegreville constituency which he represents.

A Latter Day Saint in religion, Mr. Low's home address now is Edmonton, Alta. He was married in 1923 to the former Alice Litchfield of Raymond, Alta. They have one son and three daughters.

HOLDS TWO PORTFOLIOS

In addition to his portfolio as provincial treasurer, Mr. Low also is minister of education.

Mr. Low said following his election that his name had been mentioned for the office only "last night." He would have to consult with Premier Ernest Manning and other Alberta cabinet members to see whether his new office would make it necessary to give up any of his provincial duties.

Three Alberta New Democracy members of parliament, who had

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In Near Future

Reorganization Alberta Cabinet Is Forecast Here

With the election of Hon. Solon E. Low, provincial treasurer and minister of education, to the post of leader of the Social Credit Association of Canada in Toronto, Thursday, observers here believe a shuffle of Premier Ernest Manning's provincial cabinet is imminent.

It is felt that with the heavy duties of national Social Credit party leader, Mr. Low will not wish to remain in the government, and will give up his seat in the legislature in order to devote full time to organizing the Social Credit movement across the Dominion in preparation for the next general election.

The new national leader will in all probability seek election to the House of Commons in the next Dominion-wide election. In that case, he may run in the Lethbridge riding, where it has been suggested that J. H. Blackmore, Social Credit M.P. since 1935, may not run again, because of ill-health.

In the event of Mr. Low's resignation from the Legislature, a by-election would be necessary in the Vegreville constituency to fill the vacant seat. It is required under the Alberta Election Act that this be done within 180 days of the seat becoming vacant. With a provincial general election expected in Alberta in the spring of 1945 at the latest, the by-election might be deferred.

Political quarters here are speculating on the changes that would be made in the cabinet, if Mr. Low resigned his portfolio.

SIZE OF CABINET

In view of the fact that the present cabinet, consisting of nine members in the largest Alberta has ever had, it is considered possible that Premier Manning would not add another minister to it, but would re-arrange the portfolios among the eight remaining members.

Mentioned as a likely successor to Mr. Low as minister of education is Mr. J. H. Blackmore.

Fatal Shooting Of Hargwen Boy

Royal Canadian Mounted Police are investigating a fatality which occurred Wednesday afternoon at Hargwen, about 20 miles west of

Edmonton Officer Decorated

Twice wounded in the fierce fighting in Sicily and Italy, Capt. John Douglas, 23-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. John Douglas of 855 18 street, is shown above being decorated with the Military Cross for gallantry in action. Lt. Gen. Oliver Lewis, right, Eighth Army Commander in Italy, is pinning the medal on the breast of the Edmontonian, who was awarded on August 5 last by successfully leading his forward platoon across 200 yards of open ground under heavy enemy fire. He was wounded in both arms and hands, but despite this he gallantly continued to lead his men until the objective was captured.

Plot Reported Kidnap McLean

WINDSOR, Ont., April 6.—(CP)—E. C. Avery, crown attorney, said today that Windsor police were in possession of definite information that an attempt might be made to kidnap Harry McLean, wealthy Merriville, Ont., construction man during his visit to Windsor last week.

Commenting on criticism expressed at a city council meeting

Soviet Units In Artillery Range of City

LONDON, April 6.—(AP)—The Russians announced tonight the capture of Sialba, where the remnants of 15 German divisions had been reported trapped.

By HARRISON SALISBURY
Moscow, 26th by British United Press

MOSCOW, April 6.—Russian mobile forces converged from three directions over the immediate approaches of Odessa today, clearing the way for storming the biggest Soviet city still in Nazi hands and bringing the German disaster in the Ukraine to a quick end.

Gen. Rodion V. Malinovsky's vanguard was within artillery range of Odessa the north, northeast and east—distances of 10 miles or less.

The Red army held out for two months under siege in the Black Sea port in 1941.

The London Evening News said the Russians were within sight of Odessa, "which now can be seen clearly."

GARRISON DOOMED

German troops in the Odessa pocket, numbering about 10,000 a few weeks ago, appeared doomed to death, capture or an attempted Dunkirk, evacuation because of Malinovsky's flanking drive which cut the escape route to the north-west.

Front reports said the big bases of Trappel and Chisinau were threatened directly by Soviet forces.

Official Here

Coal Mining In This Area Is Under Review

Survey of coal mining situation in Edmonton has been made by R. K. Henderson, Vancouver, on behalf of the Dominion government. It was learned Thursday, result of the survey will be forwarded to Ottawa, No

Living in Two Cultures: Cardson and Ottawa

Even as a young child, Ken made meaning of life in very thoughtful ways. He often said that the experience of being 'bi-cultural' (i.e., living in both Cardson and Ottawa) gave him a unique perspective, with valuable insights drawn from both 'the reality' of farm life and exposure to government and cultural institutions in the nation's capital.

“ You're exposed to a level of reality in farming that I think is healthy in a way that my peers in Ottawa had not been exposed to anything quite like that.

— Ken Low



Teenage Years

After losing his seat in Parliament in 1958, Ken's father moved the family back to Southern Alberta – this time to Raymond, where the Low family was highly involved in the Mormon church. Some of the boys at Ken's new school made him a target. The situation became so bad that Ken began carrying a weapon and the RCMP ultimately had to become involved.

This experience strengthened Ken's drive to understand power, self-efficacy, autonomy, weaponry, and guerilla warfare – inquiry paths that were reinforced by what was happening in other parts of the world – the Hungarian uprising of 1956, the Cuban Revolution in 1959, and the ongoing fight for civil rights in the US.

“

[My experiences in Raymond] showed me that one did not have to conform to the expectations of others who are in ostensible positions of power and who are in a position to threaten you.

– Ken Low



The Hungarian Uprising



The Cuban Revolution

Young Lions: the Club of Misfits

Ken banded with a few thoughtful and curious boys from school – “misfits” who, like him, were “looking for adventures in life” and were “more interested in science and current events than in partying, or basketball, or the kind of car to drive.” They called themselves the Young Lions and, together, they explored chemistry, physics, firearms, revolutions, explosives, global events, electronics, military tactics, and more. Their home base was an old gravel pit outside of town where they would test homemade explosives and refine their combat skills. The Young Lions remained active until the end of high school when they dispersed to pursue post-secondary education.

“

We were developing an aspirational image of ourselves as serious, dedicated, capable, potentially dangerous nonconformists.

– Ken Low



Ken's Young Lions membership card (back)



Ken's Young Lions membership card (front)

Curiosity of the Human Mind

The global events that Ken was tracking made him curious about human judgment, decision-making, and behaviour. His curiosity was further fueled by the stories he heard from his dad (now a circuit court judge) about the many troubling cases he presided over. In an effort to explain and reduce the cruelty and suffering he saw all around him, Ken began digging into psychology books, including books by Karl Menninger and David Abrahamsen.

These books had a profound impact on a set of inquiries that would frame so much of Ken's work:

Why do humans behave in such harmful, destructive, and self-defeating ways?

How are we programmed by genetics, experience, and our sociocultural environments?

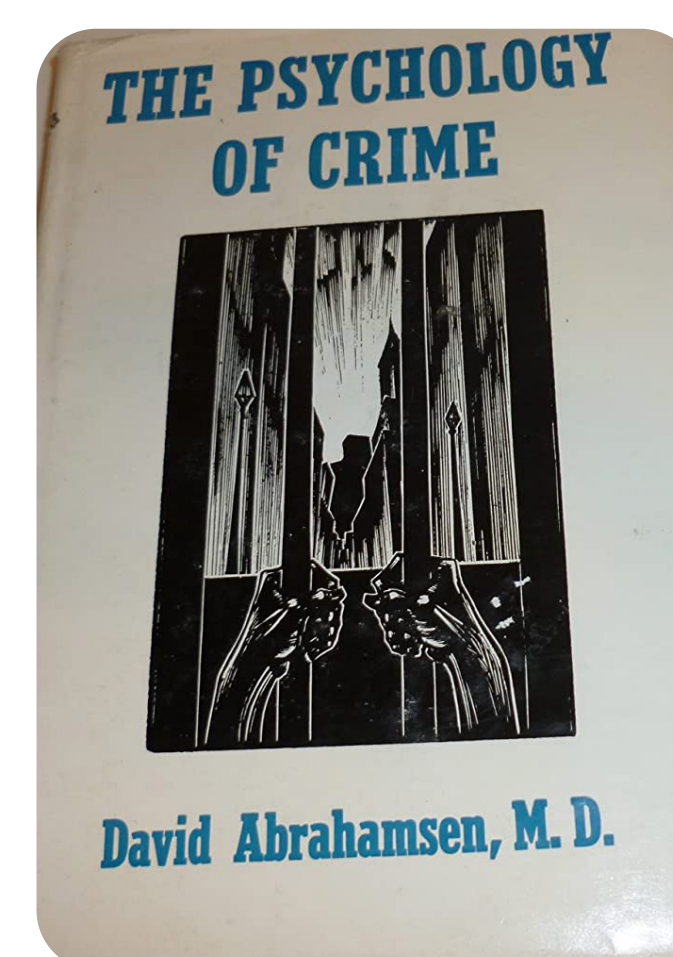
How can we shape ourselves in less harmful ways?

What is wisdom and how might humans develop more of it?

“

[These books opened] up a path to explanations of human conduct. You didn't have to fall back on just labelling people evil or bad or wrong; there was a logic to why they do what they do.

– Ken Low



The books also helped him to better understand himself, thereby equipping him to understand the complex web of allegiances and responsibilities tying him to the Mormon church. The insights Ken gained from psychology were valuable enough that he ultimately decided to pursue a degree in Psychology at the University of Calgary.

An Existential Walkabout

In the Mormon religion, it's customary for young people to go on a mission to spread their faith to others around the world, and Ken's parents were insistent that he take up this duty. Ken was experiencing doubts about the religion and had no desire to dedicate two years to a mission, but eventually bowed to his parents' pressure (with some conditions – he would do administrative work rather than proselytizing).

Ken referred to his years on the mission as his 'existential walkabout.' A walkabout is an Australian Aboriginal rite of passage where adolescent men spend up to six months in the wilderness learning to become adults. 'Existential' means the nature of existence – so in Ken's mind, this was a rite of passage where he developed a deeper understanding of what it means to be alive and human and cultivated an ever-growing commitment to reduce harm and support the development of wisdom in our species.

“

In interviewing missionaries, it was very common for people [to maintain their faith because] it would be too difficult to live with the disapproval of their family. So I crossed that bridge in a number of ways.

– Ken Low

Truth

Elders in the church told Ken to 'go along' with the Mormon belief system and pray that "this is the true church of Jesus Christ, and that Joseph Smith was a prophet." Given what he knew about confirmation bias and motivated reasoning, Ken realized that praying for what you wanted to be true was likely to lead to biased and distorted perceptions – so he took another path. Ken's 'existential walkabout' sharpened his quest to understand truth – what it is, what gets in the way, and how more accurate representations of reality can be achieved. This quest became a central theme in Ken's life journey.

“

It is strange how people assume that no training is needed in the pursuit of truth.... We should recognize that for this pursuit anyone requires at least as much care and training as a boxer for a fight or a runner for a marathon.

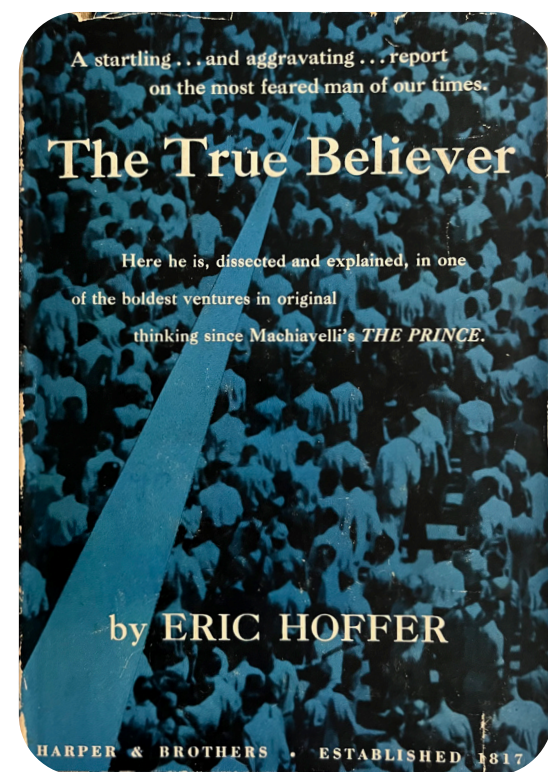
– B.H. Liddell Hart

Travelling Companions

Ken had no physical companions on his walkabout, but he had many virtual companions – all of whom fed his spirit, nurtured his soul, ignited his intellect, and supported his development. Among them were:

Albert Schweitzer, who had a huge impact on his existential development

Eric Hoffer (author of *The True Believer*), who helped Ken to better understand the religious and sociocultural dynamics he was seeing and the pressure that others were placing on him to conform



The film *Judgment at Nuremberg*, which triggered realizations about the path he needed to pursue and ignited a deep and lifelong commitment to prioritize truth over social conformity

Political figures like **John F. Kennedy**. JFK's assassination in 1963 devastated Ken and created in him a deep commitment to furthering the Human Venture (which was Ken's way of describing humanity's pursuit of wisdom).

“

I needed to understand the origin of the Holocaust and much of the rest of human suffering, and the inability of human beings to assess the quality and the veracity of their understanding of situations, and their refusal to do that in the face of external pressure.

– Ken Low

University

Ken majored in psychology at the University of Calgary and completed two years of grad school, but ultimately declined to 'jump through the hoops' required to become credentialed.

Because of his understanding of advanced technology, Ken served as a technical assistant through most of his student years. This gave him opportunities to observe faculty and students "to see how they worked and what was driving them, and why they thought that any of this was actually worthwhile and meaningful."



“

I wasn't looking for a degree. I was not really thinking about [university as anything] other than just a continuation of my inquiry and study of life.

– Ken Low

Ethology: A Love of Critters

Ken had always loved “critters” and was deeply curious about animal behaviour. Both at home and at school, he surrounded himself with animals, including gerbils, weasels, chipmunks, and colonies of deer mice that he kept on the balcony in the apartment he shared with Janice.

Ethology (the study of animal behaviour) was relatively new at that time, and Ken read everything he could find on the subject. Extending the scope of his inquiries to (other) animals and living things was incredibly productive and profoundly impacted his understanding of adaptive learning, evolutionary drivers, and the way we’re ‘programmed’ by genetics, experience, and sociocultural environments.

“

I started to realize [...] that studying the human mind was not enough; I needed to study animal minds and became very taken with a field of study in biology known as ethology or animal behavior.

– Ken Low



Finding Patterns in the Noise



In 1965, Ken's older brother Mort landed a contract with NASA to develop neurophysiological measures for test pilots and astronauts. Because of Ken's technical expertise, Mort asked him to help run the testing which involved using an EEG to measure brain activity while the pilots conducted a series of simple tasks.

In the course of his work with Mort, Ken was exposed to the process of signal averaging, a process to distinguish the signal from the noise.

The results, according to Ken, are "quite magical to see. The first pass is just a bunch of squiggles. The second pass is the same. On the third pass, you begin to see fewer squiggles in some parts of the line. By the time you get to about 12 passes, the signal is completely clear – there is no noise in it at all."

The idea of overlaying multiple examples to distinguish universal patterns in human development had a huge impact on Ken and informed the methodology he used to map out the dynamics of adaptive power and intelligence. Clear 'signals' began to emerge as Ken overlaid examples from a broad range of domains, time periods, and cultures.

The patterns he discerned provided significant insights into how individuals, organizations, societies, and civilizations learn, as well as how and why we fail to learn.

“

The universe is so complex. There's an awful lot of noise and we don't know what to attend to and what not to attend to.

– Ken Low

Family Life

Ken met Janice in a sociology course at the University of Calgary in 1965 and, after a short 'whirlwind' relationship, they were married. Kids soon followed, with David arriving in 1967 and Jason following in 1971.

Jason says that his dad's approach to parenting was based on three simple tenets: "Love them, feed them, and try to learn from one another when you can." Not surprisingly, Ken's fierce commitment to autonomy, mastery, self-control, and adaptive learning dictated the types of learning experiences his sons were exposed to. As a result, David and Jason had a very unconventional childhood, one that included activities like blacksmithing, rope walking, stilt walking, backcountry camping, sluiceway construction, and – when they were a little older – firearms and motorcycles.

In David's words, he and his brother were "hyper-empowered and enabled – almost to a fault..." David sometimes wanted Ken to exert a little more authority or control. Jason would have liked a little more structure at times, saying that Ken and Janice "treated the world with a degree of fascination that would override all other activities," including regular mealtimes.

In addition to developing his boys' capacity to engage with challenges, Ken also instilled a deep reverence for the natural world and demonstrated "unconditional love and openness" in his relationship with them. Jason says they knew that "no matter what was happening," his parents were there for them.



Ken and Janice's wedding photos



Ken and Janice newlywed

1965



“

I remember when I was a teenager, dad asked me ‘What would you do differently if you were me.’ He treated me like an adult – so that was special. [...] He respected our capabilities – sometimes in ways that weren’t warranted. He just really wanted the best for Dave and I.

– Jason Low

“

My dad always had all kinds of critters, and he was so caring for all of them. We'd go to the zoo and he would sneak Kleenex in [to give to the rodents]. I asked why and he said "they're bored! They need enrichments." He was feeling bad for the little critters in the zoo so he's sneaking in Kleenex so they can make better nests. [...] He had a natural respect for all life. He showed us that there's a lot you can learn from life – even from a mouse, that all life has intelligence.

– David Low

1970s

Hippie Drug Educator

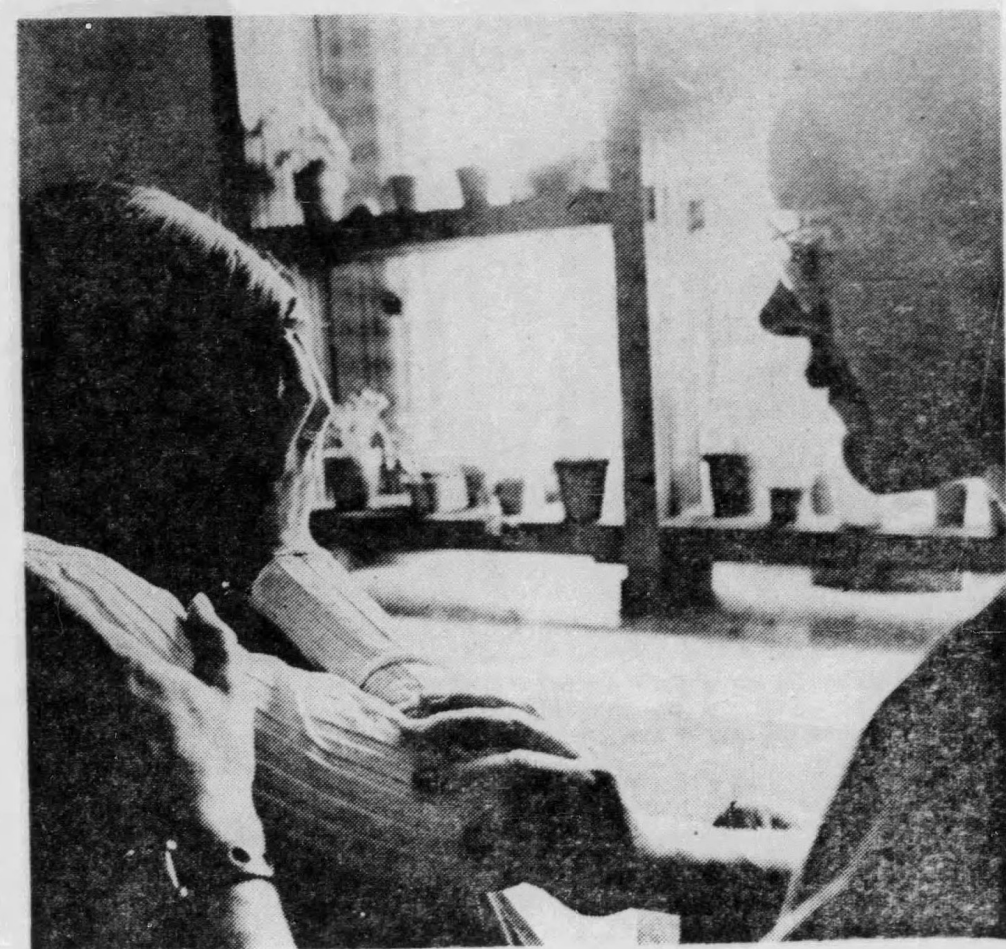
In the 1960s, the use of mind-altering drugs was becoming more common, especially among young people – and Ken began to develop an interest in understanding how and why people were using these substances. The dominant narrative was that people who used drugs were social deviants but, based on his observations, Ken didn't believe that to be true. To test this, he conducted a huge survey of drug users which he administered (believe it or not) through Calgary-based drug dealers. His hypothesis was confirmed – all types of people were using drugs for all kinds of reasons.

Ken wanted people to understand the truth about drugs rather than make decisions based on scare tactics that were common at the time, so he left graduate school to co-found the Drug Information Centre (now known as the Distress Centre). During this time, he became known as a subject matter expert and was often featured

in newspaper articles on the subject – but, with his long hair and granny glasses, Ken didn't look like most 'experts'. Many of the articles referred to him as a "hippie," a "rebel," or the Canadian version of Timothy Leary. During this time, he argued strongly against the practice of locking up kids at Spy Hill for "two years less a day" for drug possession and fought with police officers who, he felt, were doing harm when they effectively forced kids to inform on their peers.

In a decision that was hotly contested by the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) trustees, Ken became the Coordinator of the Drug Education Program for the CBE. After leaving the CBE, Ken would go on to develop resources for AADAC (now called the Addiction Recovery Centre), including a series of educational videos, and would draft an addictions prevention manual for the Department of National Health and Welfare (Health Canada).





The kaleidoscope that is Ken Low... a helping hand for a young girl suffering through a trip-turned-nightmare... an articulate, intelligent family man... a granny-glassed hippie on a motorcycle



Personality Of The Week:

As Head Of The Public School Board's Drug Education Program, Ken Low Has A Mandate To 'Teach, Not Preach'

By JACQUES HAMILTON (Herald Staff Writer)

Looked at through a kaleidoscope, Ken Low shatters into a thousand fragments of light and color.

That's the way most people see him.

It is barely three years since this elusive, soft-spoken man first emerged as a voice of authority on Calgary's drug scene. In those three years, he has accumulated dozens of devoted — if often baffled — followers; some of whom go so far as to imitate his dress and even his wispy mustache.

At the same time, he has accumulated dozens of devoted — if equally baffled — enemies who see him as a misguided messiah on a motorcycle. The majority of people in Calgary, up to now, have been spared the struggle of trying to understand the man. But today he is in a position where he will be influencing the structure of thousands of Calgary families, and many kaleidoscopes will be fixed to many eyes.

Ken Low today is in charge of the Public School Board's new drug education program. Even though he was chosen for the post only after some bitter in-fighting among board trustees and administrators — and only after some administrators stuck their necks out a mile for him — Ken isn't in a soft-peddling or compromising mood about how he'll handle the job.

"If I alienate anyone," he warns quietly, "it isn't going to be the kids."

To many people that doesn't sound like a reassuring attitude to those who would treat all drug-users as pathological criminals. "Most people who're using drugs," Ken suggests casually, "have a reasonably adaptive life."

"I'm not sure I want to categorize the drug-using pattern as any particular kind of thing. It may be escaping or a cover-up — or it may be a perfectly legitimate activity as far as the kid is concerned. Because he is entertaining himself or he is covering some kind of ground in a psychic sense. Or he is maintaining a peer-group orientation — which we accept quite readily if it's peer-group orientation in other ways."

"For peer-group orientation, we'll go to war for very silly causes and end up killing ourselves and other people. It's a respected principle. It's simply the fact that what a kid has to do to maintain status in a group is use more drugs — or use them more often or something like that."

"We can't brand this as being pathological or sick in any way. Publicly, no one has said exactly what went on in the closed school board meeting where Ken Low was chosen as head of the drug program. It is known, though, that it involved a

loud and bitter fight — and that trustee Harold Gunderson, among others, did his best to have the issue reopened in the public board meeting that followed, and failed.

The next day Mr. Gunderson took to the phone-in radio shows and to the letters-to-the-editor columns to voice his objections.

"There are going to be some hassles," Ken suggests with a grim smile.

A picture often offered of Ken Low is that of the son of one of Alberta's more prominent politicians, the late Solon Low. Ken is seen as an articulate, intelligent young family man with a strict Mormon background, and with enough political knowledge to warrant nibbles from the Social Credit party.

But turn the kaleidoscope a bit and Ken Low turns into a bell-bottomed, granny-glassed hippie with long blonde hair and a big green motorcycle.

Disturbing as disturbing as sitting at a service-club luncheon and listening to Ken quietly clue in a group of business men to the intricacies of the mesalline or luscious experience — with facts he gathered from his own use of the substances. Such public frankness inevitably causes a furor — a furor that makes Ken wince. But he feels he has to go on saying what he says until somehow he manages to bring the issue of drugs into perspective.

"Drugs can be fun or interesting in a number of different ways," he insists, "and we should not be afraid to admit that."

"There are a lot of things that are in some degree dangerous that are also fun and interesting. A sensible person will carefully weigh the potential liabilities and assets of a given opportunity without giving undue weight to either side."

"In assessing the kinds of returns people claim to get from using drugs, it is possible to get an idea of the way in which our culture is falling people; not enough spiritual involvement, not enough open personal contact, not enough aesthetic involvement."

"The drug problem won't be solved until we stop hickering about faults and responsibility and start pulling together."

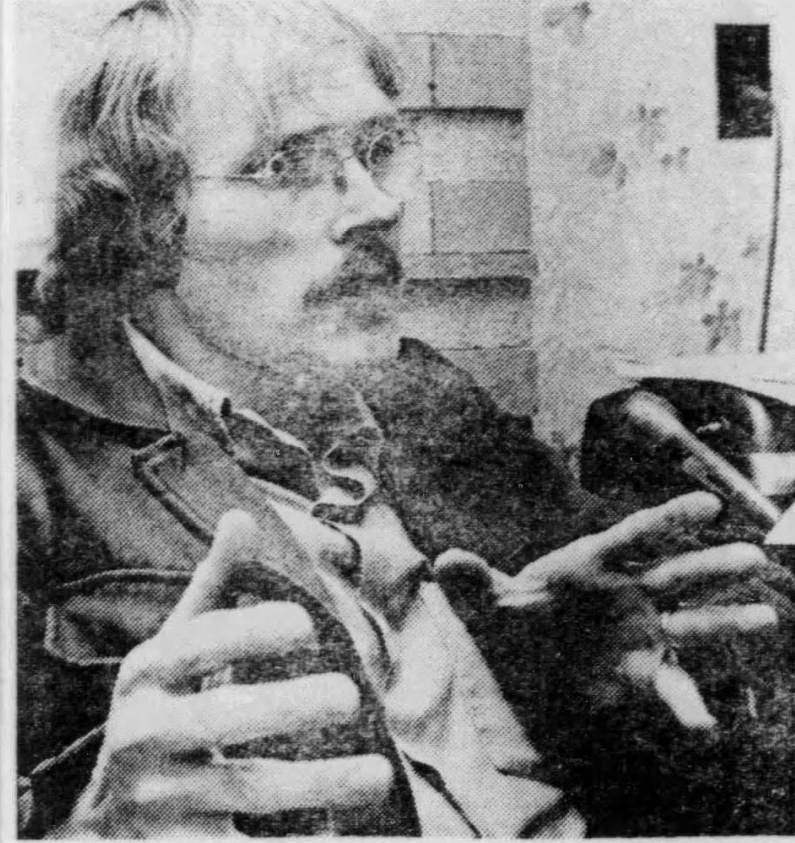
"Responsibility isn't worth much unless it is accompanied by good information, the ability to make decisions, and the patience or persistence to follow through."

"These things must be learned — and we don't seem to have done a good job of teaching them."

Ken Low sits in a position of influence of five drug research programs — including the position of vice-chairman of the provincial commission on alcohol and drug abuse. He describes these appointments as "ego trips."

Ken Low conducted Calgary's

'If I alienate anyone it isn't going to be the kids.'



first — and only — comprehensive survey of marijuana use in the city two years ago. He never computed the results.

The survey forms, filled with invaluable, detailed information, sit in a cardboard box on top of a filing cabinet, gathering dust. He just never got around to doing anything with them.

Ken Low sits on the floor of the Drug Information Centre, a young girl cradled in his arms. The girl is suffering through an LSD trip turned nightmare. Gently Ken talks her back to the point where she can cry again. Ken Low gets a lot of tear stains on his shirts.

"I wish," laments one friendly but exasperated police acquaintance of Ken's, "that he'd finish something sometime."

Some of Ken Low's critics see in him the makings of a drug-loaded guru — someone along the lines of a Timothy Leary.

Ken brushes the suggestion aside. Although he may no longer be a Mormon, he points out that the only time he used drugs was during controlled experiments in sessions with street users. He doesn't smoke and rarely drinks.

Ken's closer acquaintances insist that his refusal to use intoxicants is not a reflection of his judgment of the drug scene. It is simply that he doesn't need intoxicants.

Ken himself echoes the appraisal when he outlines his feelings on the best way to steer young people away from drugs:

"There are a number of people who aren't familiar with the ways you can turn people on. You can turn them on to life, or to learning — to a lot of interesting things that go on and on. And once we get these people going, once we get them lit..." Ken spreads his hands and laughs.

Ken, right now, is "turned on" to his new job as head of the drug education program. And it is in this area that he is most conscious of the stares of judgment and the sneers of parents are becoming aware that what this man feels is probably going to be reflected in Calgary classrooms this fall.

Ken's mandate — the one that made him try for the job in the first



'A healthy fear is one born of a realistic appraisal of the probable dangers involved...'



'... Any other fear is born of ignorance and superstition.'

place — is to "teach, not preach"; the policy the board set when it decided last spring to introduce a drug education program at the high school level.

Ken intends to take the mandate literally — although he knows there are people who think the schools' responsibility when talking drugs to young people is "to put the fear of God in them."

"People who would use the scare approach," he says, "would have us live in a world governed by fear. In fact, many of these people live in a world of fear themselves, being locked into a fundamentalist system of values and maintained by an apocalyptic vision of retribution and opposition."

"A healthy fear is one born of a realistic appraisal of the probable dangers involved and how they come about."

"Any other fear is born of ignorance and superstition."

"During the past months here, at the drug centre, I've had a chance to watch a lot of kids."

"And really, in any absolute sense, surveys don't seem to be a problem. The cases we see in here where people are really messing themselves up are, without exception, really life-cripples."

"They already have a problem and drugs are just making it worse — or sometimes the drugs just allow them to express the problem."

"We see a lot of this (the latter), this type of reaction, that doesn't have anything to do with the drug itself."

"Somebody crying for some kind of help; saying 'Look, this is a lousy, stupid system and I want to let you know I just can't carry on like this anymore.' And they use the drug as some kind of excuse for breaking loose and saying it."

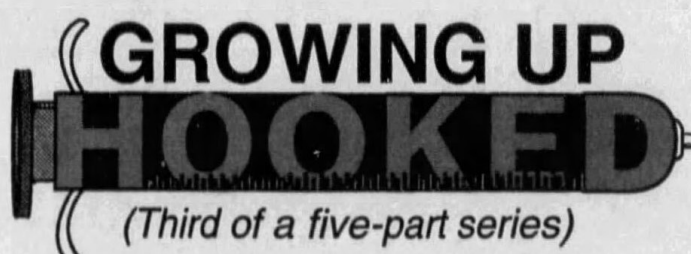
"If it weren't for unhappy, miserable lives, drugs wouldn't be a problem."

Ken Low sits with his back to the file cabinet and the dusty, neglected drug surveys, that doesn't have anything to do with the drug itself.

"You know," a young drug volunteer said once, "Ken Low is almost some kind of saint."

Saint, Solon Low's son, misguided messiah on a motorcycle, misquoting The Kaleidoscope keeps turning.

ARGUMENT



(Third of a five-part series)

Drug use is normal human behavior

By Ken Low
Special to the Citizen

CALGARY

The first thing people should know about drug use is that it is a very difficult subject to approach rationally. The issue is surrounded by protective stupidity, the same sort of wilful ignorance that permitted the German nation to accept the Nazi myth that Jews were the root of all evil, and to persecute anyone who questioned this belief.

Societies have always invented scapegoats when confronted with problems they couldn't or wouldn't face directly. Scapegoats provide a concrete base on which to heap public anxieties and uncertainties, providing an illusion of understanding and control. Our society is anxious and uncertain about a lot of things these days, and drugs have become our scapegoat. Politicians or anyone wishing to appear to have the public interest at heart can win support by attacking drugs. In this atmosphere the myths and stereotypes carry more weight than the facts.

So what are the facts? Firstly, drug use is normal human behavior. That is, most adults in

(Ken Low, former co-ordinator of drug education for the Calgary School Board, is president of the Action Studies Institute, a private think tank in Calgary.)

almost every society use mind-altering substances from time to time, and have done so for thousands of years. The use of drugs is not confined to the human species. A few animal species also seem to like to get high by eating fermented berries or intoxicating plants. This doesn't mean that there is a specific natural "drive" to become intoxicated. It just means that it is an option that some critters find attractive.

Why is intoxication attractive? For the same reason getting "high" on towers is attractive. When cities build towers people come from all over just to get "high" on them. It is not difficult to understand why. People don't like boredom and boredom is a lack of change. Being high changes things. What you do with that change is up to you.

One of the most important things to understand about drugs is that they are tools. More important than the tool is the intent, judgment and skill of the tool user. Drugs can't make people do things, any more than towers can make people do things, although both open up options, and some people may be totally unprepared to deal with the changes the tool provides. This is a difficult concept to grasp in contemporary society because we don't pay attention to developing judgment and self-control. It is easier to make the tool fool-proof or place it off-limits than to develop

Please see **NORMAL/B4**

It is wrong to let kids risk their lives

By R. Paul Welsh
Special to the Citizen

There need be no mystery about alcohol and drug dependence prevention. Parents need just a few facts, some thoughtful planning, and to not feel helpless and resigned.

To prevent teen substance abuse means to start at the crib, to delay experimentation, and be able to deal with it with sanity, love, firmness and respect if it happens. To put all the facts in a short article isn't possible, but we can make a start.

Alcohol is not a harmless drug, especially for young teenagers. It is addictive, just like tranquilizers, sleeping pills and street drugs. It is easier to buy and heavily advertised. About a quarter of all hospital admissions are to people with alcohol or drug dependence. Millions in taxes are gleaned from alcohol and prescription drug sales, while billions are spent by government to cope with their abuse. Addiction is not to be taken lightly.

Not all alcohol or drug use is dangerous. There is no moral imperative beyond this: It is wrong to

(R. Paul Welsh is executive director of the Rideauwood Institute, a provincially-funded addiction counselling service in Ottawa.)

Please see **RISK/B4**

let children risk their lives with alcohol or drugs when they are too young to judge the dangers. Intoxicated teens risk accidents, injury, high-risk sexual behavior, violence, crime, school problems and addiction.

Alcohol is usually the first, the "gateway" drug teens use. Our schools, hospitals, family and children's and youth service are beleaguered by teens with drug or alcohol problems. Our addiction services have waiting lists so long, and the absence of any residential treatment service in Ottawa is so bad, that hundreds of teens go to the U.S. each year for help.

This is no myth or imagined bogeyman. It's a daily frustration for those of us working with adolescents. It is a tragedy.

Most adults don't have alcohol or drug problems. But eight to 10 per cent do. One person in six is affected by a family member's addiction. Why are some at such high risk and not others? Who are the ones in danger?

Children of alcoholics first. They live with insecurity, abuse, grief, neglect, fear, loneliness, helplessness and shame. Other families can present similar emotional risks, such as seeing a parent be emotionally or physically abused, or being sexually abused, or coming from a family where the unlucky single mother on welfare can't afford good food, shelter, recreation or school

FROM B1 / NORMAL

judgment. In building our society we seem to have eliminated as many things that might test judgment and self-control as we possibly can, for the very practical reason that failures of judgment are often messy and inconvenient. We are working toward a kind of social Disneyland where there is a sensation of risk, adventure and discretion but not the reality.

This is an important backdrop to any consideration of drugs. There isn't a social framework to discuss the issues of self-control that are involved, so we tend to blame the drug for anything that goes wrong and ignore the judgment and self-control of the drug user. Individuals are often happy with this arrangement. Life is much easier when you aren't responsible.

That is not to say that everyone can control their intoxicant use. Learning to exercise good judgment in using intoxicants is like any other skill; genetic make-up, previous training and current circumstances all make a big difference.

There are some people who find it very difficult to control their intoxicant use, and it would be foolish for them to continue. Others do not seem to have too much trouble, although it often takes a year or more of experience to develop enough discretion to avoid even the obvious problems.

Many of our prevention strategies are counter-productive. We oversimplify the issue by equating drug use with drug abuse and drug abuse with physical harm. In fact, a relatively small proportion of users of any kind of drug, legal or illegal, become serious abusers or suffer significant physical damage (with the notable exception of tobacco).

But we don't want to admit that. It is far easier to make the drug seem dangerous and uncontrollable with no real attrac-

tions. The only reason for taking drugs then is being pushed into it by evil forces. By taking this approach we infantilize people's judgment even further, and make it even more likely that they won't be able to make wise judgments in the real world.

The greatest problem with drugs is not their danger, at least not directly. It is their attractiveness and convenience. They are dead simple to use. If you can swallow you can get there. So people tend to use them a lot, often to the exclusion of other things that they could and should be doing to keep themselves in shape for life.

When people don't exercise their powers, they start to decay. People with decayed personal powers can't do anything that requires initiative or self-control, and they are trapped into the easy things like drugs, sex, sleeping and watching TV. This is what decadence means.

Not all drug use is without challenge. Adults often accuse teens of looking up to kids who get drunk. They miss the point. What teens admire is not the kid who gets smashed, but the kid who can drink quite a bit without getting smashed, or the kid who can function in the morning even though they are severely hung over. This is similar to mountain climbers who climb at altitude without oxygen so they can develop the capacity to function in diminished capacity.

This is a real test of control, and is rightly recognized as an accomplishment. In a "judgment-sanitized" society, many teens find the challenge of keeping it together after drinking is one of the few real tests of self-control they experience.

The issue is not saying no to drugs. The issue is building a society that develops strong people who can make intelligent decisions.

(Ken Low, former co-ordinator of drug education for the Calgary School Board, is president of the Action Studies Institute, a private think tank in Calgary.)

FROM B1 / RISK

activities, or where parents are too busy with job, career, or volunteer work.

Such kids often have little to feel good with. The risks are high for attachment to the quick temporary relief of getting stoned.

It's often the careless or unwitting adult who teaches or allows early learning about getting high, especially at the age where it's necessary to learn constructive ways to cope with life. Most teens and adults in addiction services describe getting high as a pattern that began at ages 10 to 12.

So, how to prevent this in your child? Start by being careful when and how you drink. Avoid intoxication yourself, and in friends around your children. Kids will do what you do, not what you tell them to do.

Practise talking to your children as if you love and respect them even when they make mistakes or do wrong. They'll be less likely to conceal alcohol or drug use.

Pay attention to children's feelings, thoughts and reactions. Show respect and curiosity about their perceptions, talk about your past and present hopes and disappointments and joys and concerns.

They'll be less likely to fear and avoid their own, and to talk about them to you. Don't ridicule mistakes or use shame to punish. Those powerful weapons set up a child to get high to escape those feelings.

Learn about teens, alcohol and drug use. Take courses. Join or organize groups of interested parents and talk to other experts. Let your politicians hear about your concerns on the need for more treatment and prevention resources. Know who stu-

pervises the parties. Plan ahead what you as parents want to show and tell your children about life, fun, alcohol and drugs, respect and safety. Plan how to set standards and the expectation that intoxication in your child is not acceptable.

Be ready to deal with it firmly and with love if it happens. If there is alcoholism in your family, know that this topic may be difficult for you as a parent, as it may have been as a child.

There is no need to be overly fearful. It is dangerous to be cavalier. Thought and care and love and moderation will stand you and your children in good stead.

(R. Paul Welsh is executive director of the Rideauwood Institute, a provincially-funded addiction counselling service in Ottawa.)

Skills for Living

In the thirteen years he worked with the CBE (1970-1983), Ken came to realize that avoiding self-defeating behaviours like addiction required the development of “living skills” – skills for building resilience, responsibility, resourcefulness, self-efficacy, confidence, and engagement with life – so that’s where he focused his efforts. He captured some of his thinking

in a book called Changes which positioned drugs as a form of experience management and argued that the better equipped we are to create soul-satisfying experiences for ourselves, the less likely we were to develop addictions. His work in this area gave him deep insight into human decision making and control and provided a foundation for the Human Venture Meta-Framework.

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The mechanics of the addictions are this: it’s a destructive dependency. So the critical issue here is how do you develop a productive independence? [...] If young people were making poor choices we had to ask why, and what could we do to help them make better choices in life?



Can Do: A Program for Empowering Youth

Ken realized that our sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy is developed through effective engagement with real-life challenges – so he created experiences where kids and adults could be supported to engage with challenges productively. One of these programs, Can Do, was designed to help elementary school kids explore human ingenuity, understand how and why to learn, build life-long learning attitudes and skills, cultivate a growing sense of confidence as a learner, and develop a sense of personal power.

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Whatever else we seek to accomplish with kids, we should be seeking a way to solidly connect them to the human story and to the adventure of the human story.

– Ken Low



No big person tells them what to do or how to do it

"You can do anything..." run the words to the song.

So the kids do exactly that once a week at Dr. Gladys Egbert school.

For two hours they take things apart, pound, hammer, paint and saw wood, build a fort, or simply start something they've goofed over again.

And no big person tells them what to do or how to do it, or to keep quiet or to sit up straight.

They hang from the ceiling, build desks intended for use by little green men with fuzzy ears, or make pencil holders.

Sometimes they sit on the floor, watching everyone else and doing nothing themselves. And that's okay, too.

But most important, they learn. And they learn because nobody asks them to, or demands that they do.

Can Do is described as an activity-learning program, and is the pet baby of the Calgary Board of Education's action studies co-ordinator, Ken Low.

Low is convinced that our age of ready-made entertainments and television is producing kids that don't know how to do things for themselves, because they lack the opportunity for self-entertainment that was a necessity for an older generation.

He insists the ability to create and to go ahead and try 'things', anything, is a vital

link in a child's progress toward what he calls personal competence.

His answer is Can Do.

Three different age groups have been involved with Can Do at Dr. Gladys Egbert so far this year, ranging from kindergarten to grade five.

They've already consumed 500 pounds of reject televisions and small appliances, taking them apart just to try making something else from the pieces.

They've also gone through a small mountain of scrap lumber from housing projects, as well as anything else they take a fancy to making something out of.

Regular classroom teacher Gary Holmberg says he's amazed at the way all the kids, particularly the under-achievers and slow learners, have turned on to the program.

And he finds it pays dividends in other classes, where he can use their experiences in Can Do to spark a real interest in what he's teaching.

The kids have never had what they're doing explained to them. They're just told to go at it.

But when asked why he's taking an adding machine apart, 10-year-old David Dale says he isn't sure what he's going to end up with.

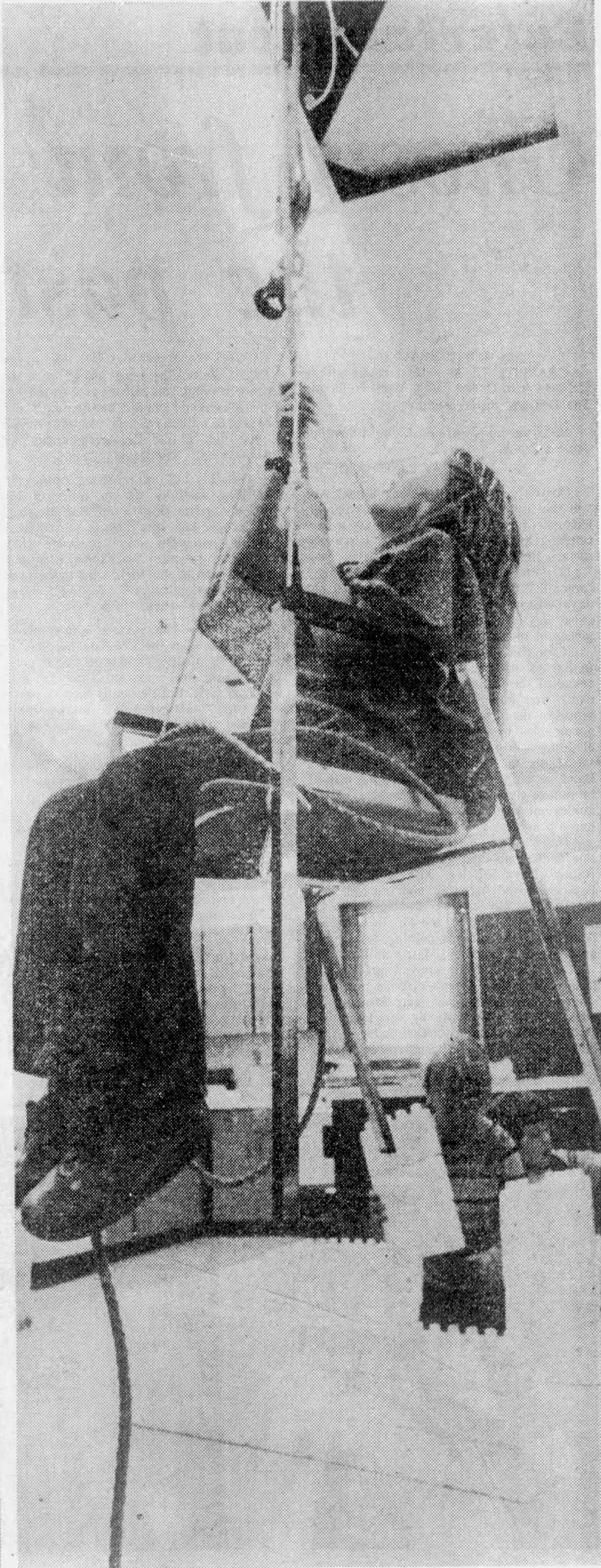
"It's fun learning to make our own things though," he adds unprompted. "I think it will make us more responsible."

And when he hears of that conversation, Ken Low smiles, "Hey, that's all right, eh?"

Story by DAN SMITH
Photos by RICHARD ESAU



TEN-YEAR-OLD DAVID DALE: "I'm learning to be responsible."



SATISFYING AN URGE TO SWING FROM THE CEILING

THE ALBERTAN, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 1977



1970s

The Realization Program: Empowering Women

The Realization Program was designed for women who had experienced major setbacks in life. By developing competence in a range of areas – welding, backwoods survival, motorcycle riding – the women developed a greater sense of confidence, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and engagement with life.



Action Studies Institute

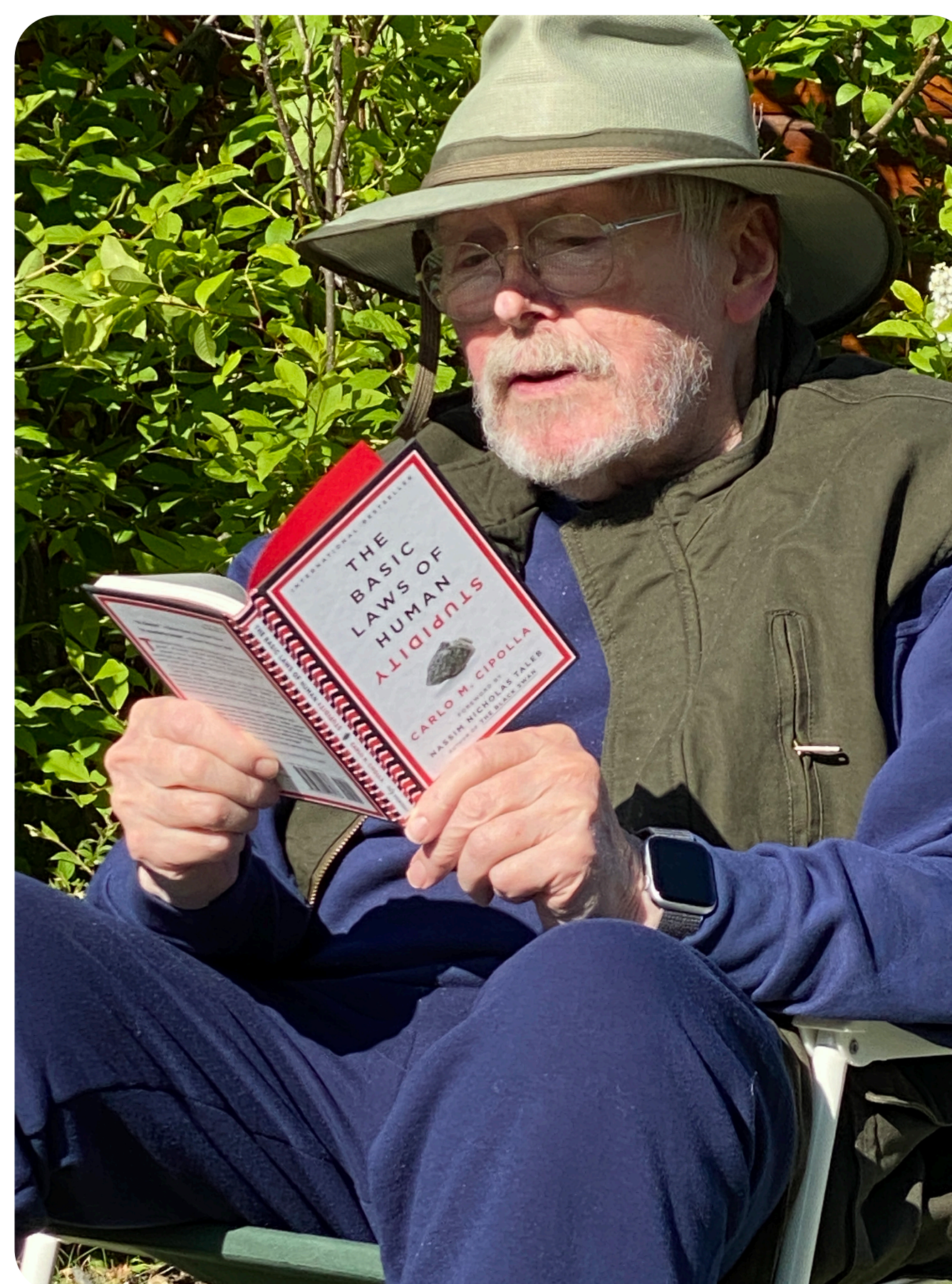
When Ken left the CBE in 1983, he was determined to continue his research on adaptive human development, and set up the Action Studies Institute (ASI) with a focus on “exploring the nature of intelligent action.” His first contract under the newly incorporated institute involved working on the Commission on Tolerance and Understanding, an inquiry that was undertaken when news broke that a teacher in Eckville had been spouting Jewish conspiracy theories and Holocaust denialism to his students for several years.

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I would not take contracts unless they would connect with either the research that was already in place or new potential areas of research they could open up.

– Ken Low

Ken’s contracts were varied and including everything from developing certification standards for helicopter sling rescue operations to designing a process to engage parents and community members in addressing low enrollment in inner city schools. During this time, Ken was also engaged on the public speaking circuit and served as President of the Calgary Council For Advanced Technology (C-CAT), an engagement that helped to push his thinking about “the ecology of innovation.”



Working with the Inuit

One of Ken's longer-term ASI contracts was working with the Inuit in northern Quebec. Activist and Inuit leader Sheila Watt-Cloutier happened to see a television program featuring Ken. His approach to youth empowerment and development resonated deeply with her and she thought he might be able to help her people in the design of their education and training systems. The Federal government had recently relinquished control of the Inuit schooling system, and Watts-Cloutier invited Ken to serve on the Nunavik Education Task Force and help them to draw on the best of Inuit values and traditions in ways that would equip their young people for life.

Ken began by asking the Inuit elders how they would define wisdom. One of them, a man named Johnny Morgan, responded by saying, "In our traditional way of teaching, the aim was to develop wisdom. A person became wise when they could see what needed to be done and do it successfully without being told what to do." This definition delighted Ken because it captured what he saw as the three-part structure of wisdom

(self-authorization, judgment, and operational capacity). He often quoted Johnny Morgan and included his definition in the 'map book' that outlined his research findings.

Ken's engagements with the Inuit prompted many reflections on how to design learning systems that more adequately prepare young people to "handle the problems and opportunities of their time and place in history."

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A person became wise when they could see what needed to be done and do it successfully without being told what to do.

– Johnny Morgan,
Inuit Elder

THE YUKON

The failing of an ancient education

By DAN DAVIDSON
Star Correspondent

The major reason why Indian and Inuit people in Canada were so devastated by the arrival of European culture in North America wasn't trade, disease or technology, says Ken Low of the Action Studies Institute.

The major reason was a loss of identity caused by a break-down in their traditional systems of education. Addressing 700 teachers at the recent Yukon Teacher's Association Conference, Low used this as an illustration of his main points about the need for quality education.

Low's recent experience with the Inuit in Northern Quebec made him

wonder why their traditional educational system failed them after contact with Europeans.

He says they had an effective education system of parents, elders and the land, which either produced results or killed you. Wisdom was defined by these people as the ability to see a need and do something about it without being told to. Wisdom was measured by the yardstick of survival.

"Survivors are the wise people," said Low, striding across the stage. And those who aren't wise? Simple. They die.

"That'll be an 'F'," he quipped. The arrival of Europeans changed the Inuit perception of things. There

were a lot of white men and they all seemed to survive, so they must all be wise, right? Wrong.

They were just using different values, a different education system, one developed during Europe's Industrial Revolution.

"The genius of the Industrial Revolution," said Low, "is that it enabled stupid people to survive."

This was confusing for non-Europeans and tended to erode their own sense of purpose. They thought that titles, pomp and circumstance indicated wisdom. Even though they could see that white men weren't particularly brilliant within an Indian frame of reference, there were so many of them that they had to be

doing something right.

In fact, said Low, the mindset of the Industrial Revolution leads to a misplaced reliance on following instructions and places too little emphasis on personal excellence, something which had really been at the core of the traditional aboriginal way of learning.

Europeans, having grown into industrial society since it began to develop in the 1750s, have learned subtle ways of coping with its influence, one of the major ones being a sort of "creative disobedience."

Low calls this "an essential survival skill in our culture." North American First Nations had the entire impact of industrial culture hit them all at once, without any

chance to adjust or take it on their own terms. The result was generations of chaos.

There was a breakdown of the definition of what it means to be wise, Low said. And everyone knows the old saying on that score: "Without wisdom the spirit dies."

Low has been working with the Inuit in Quebec to re-establish their educational system so that it encourages the development of the Inuit spirit, as well as providing access to global culture and meeting or exceeding North American academic standards. He said that no one system could do all of this by itself, and that the resulting model will probably be one that uses several diverse systems to accomplish these different ends.

Revolutionizing education is not easy

By DAN DAVIDSON
Star Correspondent

"If engineers paid no attention to why their bridges fall down, we could hire them as educators," Ken Low said at the beginning of his keynote address at last week's 1991 Conference of the Yukon Teachers' Association.

He said it with a smile, though. Low, the founder and president of the think-tank known as the Action Studies Institute, is known to be somewhat provocative in his views on education. While he has never been a teacher, as such, he has worked extensively with the Calgary Board of Education (1970-83) and most recently with the Inuit of northern Quebec.

He says he has a lot of sympathy for teachers who struggle to make the education system work on a day to day basis. When he speaks of faulty engineering, it seems to be the system itself he is talking about.

"No major educational reform attempted in the 20th century has

worked," Low stated, adding a prediction that the "Year 2000" initiative currently under fire in British Columbia — and under development in the Yukon — will not be an exception to this rule.

While discussions about educational needs and changes go back to the early 20th and even late 19th centuries, nothing seems to have had a permanent impact upon the educational system itself.

Low read from an 1896 educational survey book to show that pretty much the same things were being said then about the need for experiential methods in teaching science as are being said today. In between that time and this there have been a number of reforms intended to change the nature of science teaching in North America. There was a small bump of activity in the late 1950's, right after the Sputnik scare convinced everyone that the Russians were ahead of us in science. But very soon the educational system had teachers back to teaching about science rather than about how to do science. The difference is

form versus function.

"We know the problems," Low said. "Why can't we answer them?"

The biggest answer to this question is that setting goals in education isn't easy. The task is far more complicated than the building of a bridge. The purpose of a bridge is easy to see, while the purposes of education aren't so simple. Low suggested that we've lost track of what we want education to do. He had some suggestions for what he thought it ought to be doing.

"Learning is finding out how to direct your attention to the most significant parts of the environment," he said. Lifelong learning, he continued, is the ability to apply to yourself the pressure that is needed to keep your mind engaged in this process. This

used to be called "building character." Character building tends not to happen under established institutions.

Low was not positive about the effect of the educational establishment upon teaching and learning. He maintained that it tended to impair innovation and support conformity rather than encourage examination of real issues.

Low said there is a need in education to move towards the construction of wiser systems and social structures, systems which encourage and nurture character. We can no longer afford to be stupid people. "Pressures against this are building from all sides," Low said.

He said we have lessons of character to learn from our ancestors, who

were a lot smarter in this area than we tend to give them credit for. The good news is that those lessons are preserved and can be revived now.

The educational system, said Low, needs to encourage innovation without co-opting it or trying to force it into prescribed paths.

The real need in education is not so much to teach people about things as it is to teach them to be self-directed.

Low said perhaps the North in general, and the Yukon in particular, could get a head start on this revival by refusing to commit all the errors that have been committed in the larger Western society, before moving on to what he sees as the solutions. His message was warmly received by the 700 teachers in the F.H. Collins High School gymnasium.

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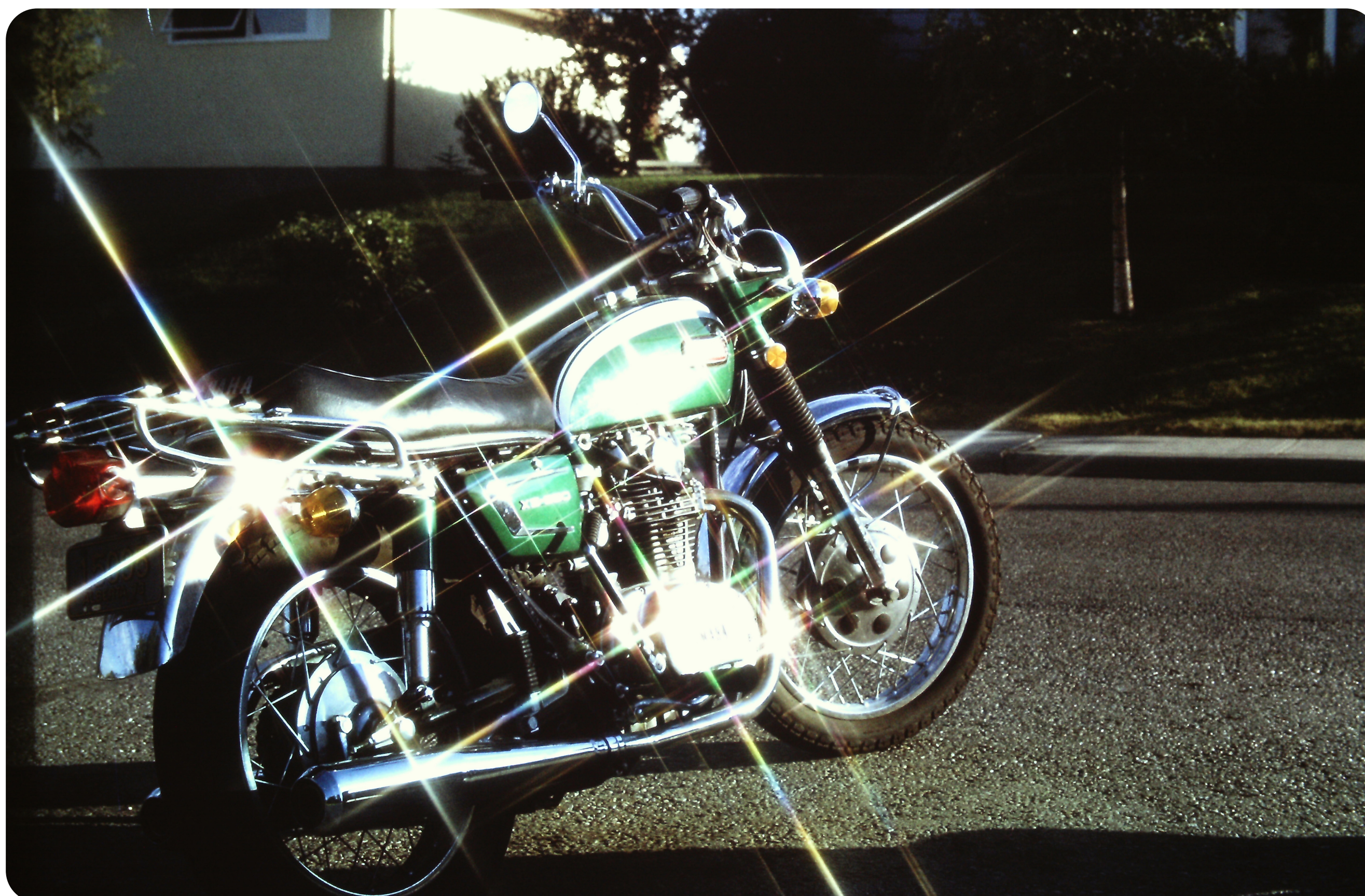
Education can be seen as everything a society does to prepare its people to handle the problems and opportunities of their time and place in history.

— Ken Low

The Motorcycle Accident

In 1989, while on his beloved motorcycle, Ken was hit by car at the intersection of 14th Street and Northmount Drive. Ken had taught motorcycle safety and was a very skilled driver. “One of the standard configurations that we would teach people,” he said, “was the dangers of being hit by an oncoming vehicle that’s doing a left-hand turn.” Sure enough, that’s what happened to Ken. The car crushed Ken’s left

foot, which had to be partially amputated, and tore the skin off much of his lower leg. These injuries and others (including crushed vertebrae from a hang-gliding accident years earlier) meant that Ken lived with chronic pain for much of his adult life – but he said the pain was a helpful reminder of the suffering of others and helped to fuel his desire to prevent it.



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I decided that I'll just learn how to live with [chronic pain], and then I'll interpret it in a different way. So I just use it as a reminder of the fact that every day there are tens of thousands, millions of people who have far more real pain in their lives than I do. So it becomes a connector between me and the rest of humanity that's experiencing pain... many, most, with more grace and humour and tolerance, and persistence than I have. So it becomes a positive thing. It becomes a friend. Not entirely a welcome friend, but a friend that I've had to learn to live with. And a helpful friend, because I can use it as a reminder of other things that are terribly important.

– Ken Low

Leadership Beyond Convention

In the late 90s, Volunteer Calgary asked Ken to develop a leadership program that would better equip community leaders to address the challenges of a complex and rapidly changing world. Volunteer Calgary was eager to develop a program that was truly leading edge, and they felt that Ken's approach to human development would take the program well beyond conventional approaches to community leadership.

In the fall of 1999, 23 individuals from the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors gathered for the first year of Leadership Calgary programming. Leadership Edmonton followed one year later. The leadership programs (now called Human Venture Leadership) offered Ken an opportunity to further map out the dynamics of adaptive power and intelligence and test his ideas with people engaged in addressing complex social issues. The dynamics Ken was mapping became known

as the *Human Venture Meta-Framework*, and the 'map book' he developed to outline his ideas has been a profound source of learning for the over 800 alumni who participated in the leadership programs in Calgary and Edmonton.



1999



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We are human ‘becomings,’ not human beings because our species is young and we are still shaping it.

– Ken Low

Human Learning Ecology: A New Discipline of Study

Ken's life's work culminated in the development of a new discipline called Human Learning Ecology. Human Learning Ecology draws on patterns of adaptive and maladaptive development across cultures, time periods, and fields of endeavor. Ken noted that the social sciences were too narrow in scope to understand human behaviour and development. His pattern search extended to all areas of human striving, achievement, and failure – including things like engineering, forensics, and military strategy – as well as to life and planetary systems.

Einstein said that the most incomprehensible thing about the universe is that it is comprehensible – that there are recurring, reliable patterns in life that we can come to understand. And therein lies

our greatest hope as humans. Patterns help us to manage complexity and navigate change – they help us to detect the most adaptively significant signals in the midst of so much noise – and this understanding can and should inform our line of development as human beings.

Ken's half-century investment in drawing adaptively significant patterns from the human and life stories serves as a much-needed guide in a world where the rate of change outstrips our ability to develop rules and recipes to manage every new challenge. The patterns he's discerned have the potential to help our not yet "sapiens" (meaning "wise") species course-correct and chart a more promising course into the future.



Death

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You are a guardian of the seeds for the world to come. All that has gone before and all that is yet to come is within you. Through you passes humanity's saving fire. You are running in a relay. This is the moment you have been chosen to hold the torch. You cannot refuse to run.

– Tolbert McCarroll

Ken was diagnosed with metastatic lung cancer in 2016. In the last few weeks of his life, he also wrestled with Covid and RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infection). Towards the end, every breath was a struggle.

On the last day of his life, a friend asked him how he was feeling about dying. He said he was not afraid; he was just concerned that he maintain his composure. For anyone who knew Ken, this was not a surprise. Like the samurai, Ken kept the certainty of death present in his day-to-day life. When you realize that we're all terminal, he explained, it helps you to avoid the trap of "everydayism" and focus on the things that really matter.

Ken saw his life as part of the Human Venture, the term he used for



humanity's "process of becoming." He explained that each of us can contribute to the venture by seeking to understand the bigger story in which we're all embedded, working to push back ignorance, and striving to increase our species' potential for wisdom.

Ken has now passed the torch to us. It's up to us to carry on the work he has begun. We "cannot refuse to run."

February 27, 2023



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We all die, but each one of us is part of something much bigger – the human venture. We contribute to the venture by searching to figure out what our collective story is about and striving to realize the best of humanity in ourselves.

– Ken Low