

NATURE DISCIPLINE:
THE PRACTICE OF WILDERNESS THERAPY AT CAMP E-WEN-AKEE

by

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Abstract

Wilderness therapy, the practice of sending troubled young people into nature in order to re-socialize them, poses a paradox. Time spent in wilderness is imagined to produce civilizing effects on young people, rendering them better prepared to live responsible and productive lives in society. Study of wilderness therapy, therefore, provides insight into constructions of youth and nature in contemporary American society.

This thesis emerges from ethnographic research conducted at Camp E-Wen-Akee, a therapeutic camping program for troubled youth, in Benson, Vermont, USA. In addition to living with the three groups of campers in their rustic camp sites and engaging in camp activities, I facilitated two camper-run research projects, and interviewed camp staff members, and the state social workers responsible for sending adjudicated youth to residential programs.

I find that camp life is an achievement of many heterogeneous actors, some of whom are human and others nonhuman. The resulting work is an ethnography of a nature-culture, wherein I describe how the camp mobilizes various resources to create the conditions for therapeutic change. The differing nature narratives of campers and the adults indicated that expectations for nature are at least in part, outcomes of class processes. Close attention to camp life shows that therapy is a social strategy brought into being at a number of scales: the material body, built and temporal architectures, landscape, and 'public' wilderness outside of camp's borders. I find at each scale a tension between the ordering tactics deployed by camp staff members and resistance posed by campers and 'nature' alike.

Campers' identities are meant to change as a result of repeated performances of pro-social behavior, and the on-going circulation of success stories. Together these practices

underscore that what one person does always has effects on others. The irony uncovered in this research is that while troubled youth are sent to a nature imagined as separate from society, Camp E-Wen-Akee provides young people with an ecological model for social life. Wilderness therapy is the outcome not of a separation between nature and society, but of ongoing relations between the two.

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1.

Introduction: The Paradox of Wilderness Therapy

Wilderness therapy, the practice of taking young people into nature in order to re-socialize them, presents a paradox. How does wilderness—conceptually and geographically positioned as distant from ‘civilization’—re-orient teenagers to society? What beliefs about nature and children drive parents and social service agencies to send young people into wilderness? In order to understand not only why Americans imagine nature to be healing for children, but also to witness how therapy in nature takes place, I conducted ethnographic research at a wilderness therapy program located in central Vermont in the northern New England region of the United States. Camp E-Wen-Akee is one of 17 wilderness education programs operated by Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc., a non-profit, private organization which has been running residential therapeutic camps for adjudicated and troubled youth since 1969. Eckerd’s practices, therefore, have developed and remained resilient over a modestly long period of time, offering the opportunity to analyze contemporary methods and to look through a historical lens, back to the origins of therapeutic camping in the United States.

While at Camp E-Wen-Akee I lived with the three groups of campers, ages 13-17, and their counselors, in their rustic campsites for several days and nights at a time over the course of seven months. The young people, mostly from the rural states of Vermont and neighboring New Hampshire, had experienced significant trouble in their schools, homes, and communities; most were adjudicated.¹ Nearly all were sent by their state’s social services agency to receive treatment for their behavioral and emotional problems. As I lived

¹ “Adjudicated” means that the young person’s case has been put before a judge; it does not connote guilt or innocence.

with the groups I participated in their work efforts, such as preparing meals, gathering wood, and shoveling out the campsite after a winter storm. I played group games with them, went swimming, attended their educational sessions and listened as they planned their month-long canoe trips. I took part in countless 'huddles', the at-the-moment group discussions that take place when there is a problem in the group. I usually chose to participate in the action, leaving my notebook and pen in my pocket until the evening. After everyone else had gone to sleep, I would write up notes. My perspective then, comes from interaction with the people, and daily goings-on, of camp.

Shortly after I began the ethnographic research, I realized that I was paying close attention to two processes: first, the way that therapy worked through interaction among various human and nonhuman material bodies and second, the production and circulation of stories that explained nature, social life², and behavioral change. The two processes reinforce one another, and indeed are parts of the same dynamic. The narratives campers held about nature and what to expect from it, for example, influenced their actions at camp. And the experiences they had once in camp spurred new stories about living outdoors, living with a group, and their own identities. Distilled to its essence, the model for camp life was to create conditions for specific kinds of experiences in nature, and to craft from these experiences stories that highlight success and positive identities for campers. Yet fashioning such experiences is not always easy because young people, staff members, and nonhumans each exert their own agenda, agency, and resistance to camp procedures. Wilderness is not a backdrop to social life, and troubled teens are not always compliant with the therapeutic nature regime they are placed into.

This account of wilderness therapy as it is practiced at a small therapeutic camp in Vermont became an analysis of the way social life is produced from interaction with all manner of beings and ideas. I use wilderness therapy as a vantage point from which to perceive the geographies of nature-culture interaction, and thus this work drifts far from current concerns in wilderness therapy literature. Recent WT literature is directed to three ends: measuring of outcomes and tracking long-term behavioral change in participants (Hattie et al. 1997; Russell 1999; Lambie et al. 2000; Russell and Phillips-Miller 2002; Clark et al. 2004); theorizing, defining, and improving wilderness therapy practice (Davis-Berman and Berman 1994; Priest and Gass 1997; Russell and Hendee 2000; Cassidy 2001; Itin 2001; Newes 2001; Fuentes and Burns 2002; Beringer 2004); and, finally, isolating the factors responsible for therapeutic growth in wilderness therapy practice (Kaplan and Talbot 1983; Kaplan and Kaplan 1989; Miles 1995; Doone 1998; Williams 2000). This research is crucial to designing programs that will best serve troubled young people. However, my experience living at Camp E-Wen-Akee and my geographical interests led me to a different research focus, one that draws heavily on nature-culture theory, feminist insights and methods, spatial relations analysis, and historical research.

I aim in this work to contribute to two fields of geographic concern: discussions of nature and culture, and research into the social lives of young people. In chapter 3 I discuss in detail the conversations in environmental history, historical and social geography, nature-culture theory, and sociology of science that inspired my approach to this topic. The influence of children's and youth geographies on my research is not as explicitly stated in subsequent chapters, so it is important to mention it here.

In recent years, the body of research on young people's geographies has grown tremendously. In preparation for the 2003 American Association of Geographers' Annual Meeting, Robert Vanderbeck and I put out a call for papers on the topic of "New Directions in Children's Geographies". We were astonished to receive enough papers to fill 5 consecutive sessions.² The evening after our marathon day of sessions at the AAG, the new journal *Children's Geographies* was officially launched, signaling that a critical mass of work in the sub-discipline had been reached. Research into children's geographies is not new however; the work of a number of prominent geographers such as Sue Ruddick (1996), Roger Hart (1979), Cindi Katz (1991; 2004), Stuart Aitken (2001), and Colin Ward (1988), paved the way for those of us who began work in children's geographies in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

There are myriad research trajectories within children's and youth geographies. One of the central projects has been to contest developmental conceptualizations of childhood which understand childhood as simply pre-figuring adulthood (Prout and James 1997). Most of the literature now recognizes children as active social agents and cultural producers who, although subject to many social, economic, and spatial constraints, exert an influence on their own lives and places (Katz 2004; Vanderbeck and Dunkley 2004). Geographers have also persistently deconstructed the notion of the 'child', showing how this term wrongly universalizes young people who are influenced by categories of social difference (including race, gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, disability, place, and so on) (Holloway and Valentine 2000). Some very engaging work has focused on how young people "operate their own spatializations" (Jones 2000, 37) through and around the

² We put together a collection of those papers in a special edition of *Children's Geographies* focused on Exclusions, Inclusions and Belonging in Children's Geographies, see Vanderbeck and Dunkley (2004).

constraints they face. For example, Cloke and Jones (2005) theorize the 'otherable' spaces children appropriate from adults for their own use. And, there is a growing set of research that shows how young people living in both rural and urban contexts carve out places for themselves in built environments with few resources for youth (Matthews 1998; Vanderbeck and Johnson 2000; Tucker and Matthews 2001; Kraack and Kenway 2002; Laegran 2002; Panelli et al. 2002; Dunkley 2004; Wridt 2004).³

The moral geography of childhood is another important theme in the literature. Sibley (1995), Valentine (1996a; 1996b), Aitken (2001), Matthews (1995) and Ruddick (1996) have each considered how constructions of childhood have translated into exclusionary and disciplining practices on young people. My research is with a group of young people who have experienced exclusion in many socio-spatial contexts: the school, the home, and the community. These individuals are characterized—even by those who are working to help them—as deviant, damaged, underprivileged, and highly sexualized. How does society imagine that it can change this positioning by sending them to a residential therapy program in 'nature'? Camp E-Wen-Akee is a site where the moral geographies of childhood are literally put to work on individual young people and therefore is a fascinating place to observe the paired processes of exclusion and re-socialization.

The ethnographic research at Camp E-Wen-Akee drove the topics I ultimately pursued in the thesis. The literatures and theoretical ideas that I bring to bear on the paradox of socialization in wilderness spin out of my own interactions with the various members of Camp E-Wen-Akee. To illustrate how my research directions emerged from my participation

³ I am focusing here on research conducted in minority world contexts (Punch 2003), but there is also a rich tradition of work in majority world contexts (some of these include: Punch 2000; Katz 2004; Robson 2004; Panelli et al. forthcoming).

in camp life, and to list the major themes I analyze in the thesis, I offer the following account from my fieldnotes.



Figure 1.1. Camp E-Wen-Akee Tent Structure

Lessons from Tent Construction

Three elements form the core of Camp E-Wen-Akee's therapeutic program: trips, tents and talk. The young people who are sent to Camp E-Wen-Akee stay from eleven months to three years, depending on the nature of their emotional issues, crimes committed, and rate of progress in making behavioral change. They spend their entire stay living with a small group of eight to ten other campers of the same-sex in a campsite, along with three to four counselors (called 'chiefs') who rotate work schedules in the group. Every few months, the group takes wilderness trips to places outside of camp. The longest of these trips is usually a month-long canoe trip in southern Florida, but others include one or two-week hiking, rock-climbing, or canoe trips to places in the Northeast of the U.S. Within the first few months of my research at Camp E-Wen-Akee, I heard many accounts of these trips and observed groups preparing to go on expeditions. I visited one group which was camping and doing a ropes course in northern New Hampshire. And, from the first day at camp, I heard and took part in lots of talk; the countless therapeutic conversations in huddles that take place everywhere and at all times of day. But it took nearly three months at camp before I had the chance to help build a tent, perhaps the activity in which campers take the most pride.

Campers commonly tell visitors on first encounter how long they have been at camp and then point out the tent structures they helped to build. Campsites are formed from a collection of these tent structures. Each activity has its own 'building': cooking takes place in the cook tent, campers sleep three or four to a sleep tent, the tools are housed in the tool tent, and firewood is stored in the wood tent. Large wooden poles form the frame of the tent. The floor, constructed of plywood, is raised off the ground on a platform. The walls, from the floor to about waist height, are wrapped with a heavy, mustard-colored tarpaulin material, the

same material that covers the roof. Above waist height the tent frame is wrapped with Mylar, a thick clear plastic (see figure 1.1). Although they are not insulated, the tents are heated by woodstoves in the winter months. The campers live here year-round, through rainstorms, snowstorms, heat waves, and -20 F nights.

The tents are clustered together in small clearings in the mixed hardwood and softwood forest. Carefully maintained stone-lined footpaths link the structures to one another. In summer, tidy plantings of marigolds, petunias, and begonias mark the areas outside the structures. When a tent begins to show signs of wear, perhaps after five or six years, it is torn down and a new one is constructed. Thus, the place in which the young people live, eat, learn, and play is of their own making. Knowing how meaningful this practice is to the campers, I was eager to see the process in action.

It is hazy, hot, and humid, the kind of weather that usually lasts only a few days in a Vermont summer. The Neché group has just walked to the campsite from breakfast "up top", where the community dining hall is located. The plan is to work on the new sleep tent the group has been building, but at the moment, we are standing in a huddle. The girls have been bickering back and forth all morning, and this is just the latest huddle in a long series. I quietly step out of the circle to join Chief Chuck, the Education Director who has come down to the girls' campsite to oversee the tent construction.⁴ I confess to him my impatience to begin the job saying, "It feels like forever to get started." He replies, "That's because their chiefs have no work ethic." The group follows the chiefs' lead. He says, "The group planned to put in two uprights in this work session, but I'm going to tell them they need to put up six before lunch."

Work finally begins. The group's energy is low, but still, under the direction of the staff members, the girls divide into small task groups. I am working with Megan, a sixteen-year old with her thick dark hair knotted on top of her head, and Cristina, an earnest fifteen-year old. Our job is to carry 12-15' long logs over to the tent site from their present location at the edge of the campsite. Weeks earlier, the group members selected the trees to harvest from the surrounding forest and cut them down using a long, crosscut saw that requires two people to work together. The girls limbed the branches from the log with bow saws and clippers. Next, they removed the bark from the trees using a two-handled curved blade aptly

⁴ In order to protect the identities of campers and employees at Camp E-Wen-Akee, as well as the social workers I interviewed, research participants either chose their own pseudonyms, or were assigned a pseudonym. There are no photos of people included in the thesis, both to protect the identities of the participants, and to comply with a camp rule that forbids non-camp members from photographing campers.

named a "debarker". Finally, they rubbed the log down with a mixture of kerosene and bleach in order to preserve the wood. Now the heavy logs are piled into a pyramid, gleaming white and sticky with pitch and kerosene.

"What's that?" I ask Megan and Christine. They are carrying a 4' long tool between them. It has a broad wood handle, hanging from which are two metal hooks. "A log dog" answers Cristina. She demonstrates how the metal hooks are placed on either side of a large log. When the tool is raised, the hooks tighten around the log, allowing it to be lifted by two individuals, one holding each side of the wooden handle. Big logs like these require two log dogs, one on each end, to be moved safely. We need another person to move the log so we call over to Kelsey who reluctantly joins us. "I can't carry that," she says. "Of course you can't carry it, we're going to help you!" we joke. Six logs are swiftly stacked next to the tent site.

Chief Chuck asks, "What's plumb?"

"Purple!" someone shouts out.

Chuck laughs and says, "Touché. Plumb in carpentry is straight up and down, straight to the middle of the earth." He holds up several feet of pink line weighted at the end by a pointed spherical piece of metal.

The group's energy seems to be picking up as the work progresses. The girls are laughing and talking while they work. While we've been moving wood from here to there, the rest of the group has been occupied with digging holes for the uprights. At present, the tent consists of a platform raised off the ground by pressure treated lumber. Three posts will be placed along each of the north and south sides of the platform, one at each corner and one in the center, outside the platform. The center posts are the tallest, forming the apex of the A roof. The two posts at the corners are lower, forming the knee wall ends of the structure. The group must dig six holes for the uprights, each three feet deep. Several holes have been dug so far this morning. The girls begin digging the holes with a long-handled shovel. When the hole is deep enough so that the shovel cannot lift dirt out of the hole without it falling back into the hole, a post hole digger is used. This tool has two five foot long wooden handles. At the bottom of the handles are two metal pieces that remain open when the handles are pushed together and close when the handles are spread apart. The design allows the dirt to be removed from a deep and narrow hole. The individual drives the tool into the earth with the ends open and then closes the ends, which traps the loose soil between the metal plates. The soil can then be lifted out of the hole, and deposited outside the hole.

I am with Emma, a confident worker who is about to graduate out of camp. We enlist a few other girls and turn the hole digging into a game. I suggest, "Let's take turns and see how fast we can dig this hole". Emma hands me her watch. "Dig hard for three minutes and then we'll switch," I say. Emma gets to work— slam-close-lift-empty, slam-close-lift-empty. "Just a few more seconds... go Emma!" I cheer. Then it's Kelsey's turn. I ask Emma which tents she's constructed since she's been at camp. "That one was being built when I got here" she says, pointing to the entrance tent where campers hang their bags and keep their toothbrushing supplies. "And we built Tent 2". Now it's my turn to dig. In a short period

of time, the hole looks about deep enough. Next, we measure the length the upright needs to be and mark the distance on one of the upright logs.

Cristina and another girl take either end of the cross cut saw and begin to cut the log in the spot we marked. The saw is binding up; it won't move smoothly through the wood. Cristina's partner gives up in exasperation and I offer to take her place. The idea is to pull toward one's own body and then to allow one's partner to pull the saw toward her body. It's binding up again. It's taking loads of energy just to yank it toward me. Emma says, "Stop guys. You need oil." Someone hands her a small red can. She instructs us to pull the blade out of the wood. She drips oil along the teeth of the blade, turns it over and does the other side. That does the trick. It is much easier to use. We slice through the wood in no time.

After a measuring mishap that required us to fill in one foot of the hole we dug, the upright is set into place. Several girls hold the heavy log in place while others fill in the hole with soil. We adjust it three times until it is firmly in place. Cristina has learned how to use the plumb line. She stands back from the upright holding the pink line vertically in front of her. With one eye closed and her tongue sticking up toward her nose, she squints at the pole and back at the line, making sure that the pole is in vertical alignment with the plumb line. She deems it straight and we fill in the remaining space around the upright with soil and water, tamping it down every now and then. Finally, we step away from the post and admire the total work accomplished by the group this morning. Not two, not six, but seven hefty poles stand awaiting side rails- tomorrow's job.

After the tools are put away, we hastily wash our hands and faces at the hand water pump. Although we are using an abrasive hand cleaner, the pitch, kerosene, bark, sawdust, and dirt have fused to our skin in the sticky heat and we can't get it off. It is time for lunch, and we head off in filthy, sweaty clothes toward the dining hall (called Chuckwagon), where we will join the rest of the camp community for the afternoon meal. Just before we depart from the campsite, Chief Chuck tells the girls, "You make sure that you brag at Chuckwagon about the work you did this morning. I can't think of any group who put up seven uprights in one work effort since I've been at camp, not even when I was a counselor."

The entire camp community—campers from the two boys' groups, administrators, teachers, maintenance staff, social workers and the kitchen crew—applaud when camper Francie announces Neché put in seven uprights this morning (see figure 1.2).

(Fieldnotes, 6-27-2003)



Figure 1.2. New Tent Construction at Neché Campsite

Goals, Methods, and Historical Roots of Therapeutic Camping

The morning's work described above contains several of the themes central to my analysis of the practice of wilderness therapy. To begin, there is the general context of the camp, and more specifically the question of why building a tent is part of the program. I

pursued the answer to this question back through the history of Eckerd Youth Alternatives, further still to the origins of therapeutic camping, and still further to the beginning of the camping movement in late 19th century America. Here I find that events such as industrialization, immigration, and changing notions of childhood and nature helped to propel the fast growth of camping into the beginning of the 20th century. At the same time as camping developed, the child-saving movement was afoot. These two developments form the origin of therapeutic camping programs such as Eckerd's.

A review of historical research on camping and child-saving efforts reveals that the concepts of 'the child' and 'nature' need to be problematized as cultural constructions subject to various interpretations. Which children are sent to what nature, by whom, to do what, and for what anticipated outcomes? As I discuss in chapters 2 and 4, social class in particular has influenced the answers to this question, and in fact, is of key importance to understanding the methods Camp E-Wen-Akee uses today. Much of Camp E-Wen-Akee's program is based on socializing underprivileged young people to middle-class culture. Nature too is viewed and mobilized according to middle-class cultural constructions.

Research into the history of camping demonstrates that camping has long been at core an effort to socialize young people in one way or another. Aspects of wilderness, such as dangerous wildlife, non-potable water, and inhospitable weather conditions, have been suppressed or managed in order to create a nature ideal that includes clean air and water, safety, and bucolic surroundings. Camping programs have typically not aimed to provide the child with an unmediated experience of wildness, but instead have sought to produce desired social results, namely to prepare the child for life in society. Practices have changed over time as social concerns and ideas of nature have changed. Therefore, it became important in

this study to try to identify more specifically the understandings of society, nature, and therapy that those involved with Camp E-Wen-Akee articulate. In addition to listening to the everyday conversations at camp, and casually asking questions of staff and campers while living at camp, I also formally interviewed staff members, administrators, and state social workers to identify their perceptions of Camp E-Wen-Akee's program, nature, and therapeutic practice. I weave these insights into the analysis, side by side with ethnographic notes.

An Ethnography of a Nature-Culture

Some readers may ask, 'where is the wilderness?' at Camp E-Wen-Akee. Building a semi-permanent tent does not seem like what one does in wilderness, and pastoral, rural Benson, Vermont may not look like wilderness compared to the vast tracks of public wilderness lands in the west.⁵ The definition of wilderness, and more specifically, the tricky task of locating the border between nature and culture became a productive pursuit in this thesis. As I describe in chapter 3, I find that the notion of a border between nature and culture is strategically used to produce a certain kind of wilderness therapy at Camp E-Wen-Akee, one that may be imagined as a project in border maintenance. However, despite the power of a dual world, life is experienced as a nature-culture, a mix of heterogeneous objects, elements, ideas, and creatures. I draw inspiration from environmental historians who deftly describe the back and forth between 'nature' constituents and 'human' beings in the making of places and moments in time. Theoretically, my analysis is influenced by social scientists,

⁵ Vermont does have federally designated wilderness lands, located within the Green Mountain National Forest and the vast North Forestlands that reach across northern Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont do constitute a vast, sparsely inhabited, and contiguous forest, one that can be understood as wilderness.

such as actor-network theorists, non-representational theorists, and others, who have attempted to trace and give language to how the world is brought into being through interrelationships among disparate actors. I call the analysis I offer here an ethnography of a nature-culture, aiming to highlight the notion that the nonhuman elements of Camp E-Wen-Akee are crucial to the implementation of a therapeutic strategy.

The Ecological Nature of Social Life

Camp E-Wen-Akee is formed around a central mission: to re-socialize youth who have been failed by and have failed in society. Camp and social service administrators want to make good citizens out of troubled teens. This intention draws together an assortment of practices, people, tools, and landscapes to carry out the therapeutic mission. In my tent building fieldnotes I describe how the girls go about constructing the tent, mentioning the tools, movements and conversations involved in the process. The construction experience is produced out of this particular mix of elements and would not take place in exactly the same manner if one item were replaced by another. Consider for example, the differing effects sub-zero temperatures, a power tool, the goal of doing precision carpentry, or a swarm of bees might have on the moment. The building of the tent is a relational achievement, one brought about by specific elements which need to be accounted for in the 'social' analysis. Tent building is an action, just as the overall therapeutic strategy of camp is one that is enacted minute by minute and day by day. Resistance to the program, offered sometimes by campers, sometimes by weather, animals, funding sources, and countless other elements, demonstrates the constant negotiation required in everyday life.

Friction also arises from within the institution itself. In the tent-building example, the two chiefs responsible for motivating the girls to take on the building project were slowing the process by failing to demonstrate enthusiasm and by allowing small issues within the group to drag into long and tedious huddles. Negotiation is required not just between humans and nonhumans or between campers and staff members, but also among the various players, policies, and procedures that together constitute "Eckerd".

The girls who had been in camp the longest, in this case, Cristina and Emma, taught the rest of us how to build the tent. They shared with us knowledge about how to use the tools, as when Emma instructed us to oil the saw so that it would move smoothly through wood. It is important to note however, that they did not impart their knowledge through speaking alone; they physically demonstrated how the action is achieved. It was through using the post hole digger, clumsily at first and then with growing accuracy, that we learned to dig the holes. This highlights the importance of physical engagement to both therapy and the transmission of knowledge in Camp E-Wen-Akee's therapeutic culture. Just as the girls learn to use tools by using tools, they learn new behaviors by enacting them at camp. When a young person first enters camp she is taught first how to care for her own body, and over time she begins to help care for others through chores that assist the group. By living with and relying on a group, one begins to understand the interdependent nature of life, among humans and nonhumans alike. A focus on engagement then, reveals what I call 'the ecological nature of social life'. This is the subject of chapter 5, where I draw on feminist notions of performance, the crucial importance of paying attention to material practices, and experiential learning concepts of learning through body.

A Therapeutic Taskscape

Explicit in the tent building fieldnotes is the fact that campers are actively involved in constructing a particular kind of place, a 'somewhere' where they live. Not explicit in this account is the fact that for many of the campers, their campsite will be the most stable home they will have during their youth. The longer the campers live at camp, the more meaning, or conceptual relief the landscape will hold for them. Actions take place in places, and places come to hold memories. In a photo project I conducted with campers who were preparing to graduate from camp, I learned that the micro-places of camp, some named and others unnamed, held both group and individual meanings, and that campers marked moments of significant personal change by recalling physical places at camp.

While humans attach meaning to places, landscapes also structure spatial relations, and the social relations among people who inhabit them. I describe Camp E-Wen-Akee as a therapeutic taskscape in order to capture the way the landscape is shaped by the daily goings-on of camp members and how specific camper behaviors are elicited through a precisely structured landscape at camp. Here I draw on Foucauldian insights to analyze discipline, surveillance, and control through spatial relations, while also acknowledging the ways such control is resisted by various actors. Again, I find that place is a relational achievement, cobbled together by many forces. These are the themes contained in chapter 6.

Stories As Anchors

I have framed this segment of tent construction fieldnotes as a story, with a beginning, central action, and an end. Further, this story is a narrative of positive progress, both in material results and in the way it reflects on the good efforts of the campers. This

framing matches the daily storytelling that takes place at Camp E-Wen-Akee, in which the positive is highlighted and anti-social behavior remains unmentioned. Drawing on narrative theory, I assert that narrative is the means by which people make sense of the world and themselves. New stories are produced as campers experience new places and activities while in residential therapy. With the production of each new story, the camper must reposition his own story of self in relation to these new narratives. In other words, he redefines himself within a changing cadre of narratives. Over time, the camper is meant to understand herself as a person capable of learning, living cooperatively with others, making choices, and changing. This new identity is supposed to travel with the young person as they leave camp and return to society.

I show in chapter 7 how wilderness trips are understood as a kind of practice run for living in public and provide a way to gauge group and individual behavioral progress. In a curious geographical imaginary, public wilderness is positioned closer to society than the private border space of camp property. Trips into wilderness areas serve to provide a set of new experiences that accelerate the production of new narratives and prompt identity change in young people. An art project associated with two wilderness trips demonstrated that success stories are made durable through camp's practice of story-telling within the wider camp culture, and how staff work hard to frame even disappointing experiences in positive terms. When the camper leaves E-Wen-Akee, she take with her behaviors, memories, and uplifting stories that are meant to sustain her. However, I point out that there is a weakness in this system: the places and people to which campers return often remain unchanged, and lack the support necessary to reinforce new identities. And for many campers, there is

neither a *somewhere*, nor a *someone* to return to, as many have no family waiting for them. This is a failure—not of nature or of camp therapy—but of the wider society.

Troubled Youth and Institutions

This research project affords a view on the relationship between troubled young people and the organizations charged with both protecting and re-socializing them. Most of the young people who become campers at E-Wen-Akee are subject to the mission statements, rules, and procedures of two institutions: Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. and their home state. These institutions replace, at least for a time, the legal, nurturing, and educational functions that families typically provide. They also can be interpreted as the embodiment of society's desires and notions of treatment for troubled youth, and as such, bring to life the moral geographies of youth. As Alison Mountz (2003) has shown, the action of the state can be analyzed as the sum of the activities, interpretations, and everyday practices of its employees. I consider the actions and words of the employees of the state of Vermont's Family Services Division (formerly called Social and Rehabilitative Services) and employees of Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. to interpret how the state of Vermont and Eckerd, respectively, mobilize their mission statements.

In chapter 4 I review the process by which the state of Vermont selects and sends young people to Camp E-Wen-Akee and explain the relationship between the two institutions, highlighting the significant power each exercises in the daily lives of campers. In the conclusion to the thesis, I bring the analysis back to the moral geographies of childhood as expressed and executed by the state and Eckerd. I find absences where there ought to be presences. In addition to a lack of homes, services, and resources for the young

people who leave Camp E-Wen-Akee, there is a lack of information about what happens to young people after their treatment, about the aspects of treatment that work or do not work, and about the long-term effects of residential therapy on the quality of young peoples' lives. The geography of young peoples' lives beyond treatment remains unmapped.

Hope

The pursuit of the paradox of socialization within wilderness uncovered conflicting ideas about American perceptions of wilderness and the nature of young people. For me, it also has led to an understanding that life is achieved through the organizing strategies of various human and nonhuman actors. Humans know 'nature' from engagement with nature, not by separating it off. We live the social through 'nature'. Our engagement is unavoidable. All of life is linked in a series of relationships with others. We live ecological lives. The quality of the relationships we have with others determines the quality of our lives.

In a surprising way, this network perspective offers hope, as no achievements are permanent or total, there is always the possibility for unexpected change to emerge from the on-going negotiations of everyday life. Michel Foucault (1995, 26), whose analysis of social life has had tremendous influence on social science philosophy, wrote that "power is exercised rather than possessed" and is an effect of strategic positions. While some are better positioned than others, by accident of birth or other circumstances, to access a wide network of resources and to exert power over others through these resources, alliances can be broken and formed again, opening the possibilities for people to change their lives.

Hope also springs from the acts of genuine compassion, caring, and sympathy I witnessed while living at camp. These moments create bridges across the perceived and

material divides of class, gender, race, age, education level, human-nonhuman, religion, family background, sexual orientation, rural-urban, that social scientists so frequently identify, and which sometime threaten to overwhelm. The elation of accomplishing the difficult task of putting up seven uprights, using only hand tools and teamwork, in blazing heat and in only two hours, was shared equally by all of us involved in tent work that day in June. The experience gave each of us the knowledge that we could accomplish it, and other tough tasks, again. The story we made of our actions may open new ways to think of ourselves, and what is possible in the future.

2.

The History of Therapeutic Camping in the United States: Placing Eckerd Youth Alternatives' Program in Context

Wilderness therapy has an ambitious goal: to change young people's lives. To accomplish this task, wilderness therapy practitioners assemble their clients into small groups, move into the spaces of nature, and practice outdoor living while engaging clients in group and individual therapy. A new society, one that encourages introspection, personal growth, and respect toward others, is constructed in wilderness, and is meant to influence the behaviors and self-concepts of the troubled youth for whom the program is designed. The once-troubled young people who participate in this new society in wilderness are meant to carry respect for self and others back to their home communities—back to the spaces of the social world.

The notion that spending time in nature, camping out, or vacationing in wilderness is just plain good for people, especially for children, is not new to American culture. For over a century the idea that the outdoors invigorates, promotes health, and relieves stress has prompted Americans to spend a week or two by a lake, weekend at a country home, and send their children to summer camp in the mountains. This impulse to go out of the city to more 'natural' places points to a conceptual spatial opposition of the city to the countryside and its affiliates, the rural and wilderness. Wilderness therapy developed in part out of this opposition. The history of camping as an antidote to the evils of modernization tells us much about the evolution of wilderness therapy, but not all. Wilderness therapy is also a movement to prompt change in young people who have exhibited exceptional resistance to society's codes of behavior. And so, its history is also located in the problem of what to do

with troubled and troubling youth, originally addressed by 19th century child reform movements.

Contemporary American Wilderness Therapy Programs

In 2000, Russell and Hendee (2000, 3) counted more than 100 wilderness therapy programs for youth operating within the United States.⁶ They found that WT programs collectively serve approximately 10,000 young people and their families annually, using 420,000 field days on public and private lands. Wilderness therapy is practiced in all kinds of 'natures'; program locations span the continental United States from Maine to southern Florida to Arizona and Oregon and trips are conducted in forest, desert, mountain, and river environments in summer, spring, winter, and fall.

Just as there are many natures involved in WT, there are also several different kinds of program structures at work in the field of WT. Many of the wilderness therapy programs in that list of 100 are boarding schools that use outdoor trips as part of their educational and behavior-modification programs. A few of those contained in the list are short-term weekend or week-long programs that are adjunct to non-residential community treatments for youth. The remainder of the programs, and perhaps the ones most commonly considered as 'wilderness therapy' are those in which young people live in small groups full-time outdoors, taking care of their basic needs such as preparing food, securing shelter, and doing activities such as hiking, canoeing, and rock-climbing. Within this group are two different program structures: therapeutic camping and nomadic programs.

⁶ Russell and Hendee (2000) use the term "outdoor behavioral healthcare" or OBH, in order to highlight the use of clinically-supervised therapy within the treatment program. The terms "wilderness therapy" and OBH are both used in the literature, along with a list of other related terms for wilderness-based treatment programs for

In therapeutic camping programs, like Eckerd Youth Alternatives, campers live in small groups in rustic campsites, often without electricity, insulation, or indoor plumbing. They are responsible for work such as building their own tent structures, preparing some of their meals, and chopping firewood for winter heat. They attend educational sessions or therapy sessions within the camp setting. From these established campsites, the group takes occasional long trips into wilderness areas to go canoeing or hiking. The majority of time that campers spend in treatment, however, is in the base camp. Campers may stay from about one year or longer in this kind of therapeutic camping program. This model developed out of the camping movement, and particularly out of the decentralized camping education movement.

I use the term 'nomadic' to describe the second category of wilderness therapy. In nomadic programs, the small group of participants and their counselors spend the entire duration of the program traveling in the backcountry, carrying all that they need with them. Therapists and others visit the group in the backcountry; the group participants never enter a larger community of people while on the program. The group moves from primitive campsite to campsite frequently, and engages in more hiking, water travel, mountaineering, and other outdoor activities than the young people in therapeutic camping programs. Lasting from one month to three, the programs are typically of shorter duration than therapeutic camping programs.

The young people served by these two models tend to come from different circumstances. The average client served by WT programs in general is a white male, aged 13-17 years (Russell and Hendee 2000). However, the nomadic programs are usually

adolescents including: "therapeutic wilderness camping", "wilderness adventure therapy", "wilderness treatment programs" and "wilderness experience programs" (9).

privately funded, meaning that either an insurance company or a parent pays the fee. By contrast, therapeutic camping programs, like Eckerd's, are publicly funded and state agencies pay to send youth to the camp. Typically the state uses the programs to treat adjudicated youth, those teenagers who have had cases reviewed by a judge. Russell and Hendee (2000, 3) found that the private programs tend to serve upper to middle income clients, while adjudicated programs serve working class families and a "more racially diverse clientele". According to their survey, few girls go to wilderness therapy programs but a higher percentage are enrolled in private programs (20%) than in adjudicated programs (15%) (56). Parents choose to send their children to privately funded programs; parents of adjudicated youth do not have much say in the matter (for example, in the state of Vermont adjudicated youth become wards of the state and a committee decides their best residential placement.) To sum up, nomadic programs are mostly accessed by privileged, white boys while therapeutic camping programs are used by the state to resocialize marginalized white and a few minority boys.⁷

Recently a new reality program titled "Brat Camp" aired on American television.⁸ It follows a group of young people who are participating in a real wilderness therapy program called SageWalk, based in Utah. This is a privately-funded nomadic program. The title of the show (besides being derogatory toward the youth involved) exemplifies how these youth are understood. The name signals that the kids are simply bratty: non-compliant, annoying, disrespectful, perhaps privileged and engaged in troubling behaviors like running away from home, using drugs, and the like. When researching the program on the internet, I noticed that other private, nomadic WT programs have begun to use the phrase "Brat Camp" as a

⁷ Camp E-Wen-Akee is exceptional in this regard, as one-third of its participants are girls.

keyword leading to their websites. But this is not the case for therapeutic camping programs. In my experience, the young people attending Eckerd's therapeutic programs have never been characterized as brats. They are more likely called deviant, anti-social, and damaged. Although the young people in the television show have experienced true trauma and pain, such as the death of a parent, sexual abuse, and teasing due to severe dyslexia, they differ from many of the young people I met at Camp E-Wen-Akee in that the SageWalk youth had families to return to, families who sent their child away to be treated. The SageWalk teens' offenses were generally less severe than the Eckerd teens who have sexually abused others, sold drugs, and stolen cars, for example.

While nomadic and therapeutic camping programs share some philosophical, historical, and cultural practices and origins, they differ in significant, mainly class-oriented ways. As I trace the ideas that traveled through time and various programs to influence the creation of Eckerd, I focus particularly on the changing notions of childhood, nature, health, and social reform from the late 19th century into the first half of the 20th century. Each of these contributed to the history of camping for children, as well as the related but separate development of therapeutic camping for delinquent, disadvantaged, and damaged youth.

Early Camping in the United States

Historians of camping often name Frederick William Gunn's summer encampments as the first instance of summer camping with youth (see for example: Hammerman 1980; Eells 1986; Paris 2000; Smith 2002). Beginning in 1861, Gunn, the founder and head of the Gunnery School, took boys from wealthy families on outdoor excursions that emulated Civil

⁸ Two seasons of "Brat Camp" aired earlier in the United Kingdom. In these programs, British youth were sent to American wilderness therapy programs in the American West.

War troop movements and encampments (Paris 2000). The boys marched, cooked for themselves, and lived in tents in the uninhabited areas of Connecticut (Smith 2002). These excursions ended in 1879.

In 1876, Dr Joseph Trimble Rothrock, a doctor, conservationist, and amateur botanist founded the “Mountain School of Physical Culture” in northeastern Pennsylvania. It was intended to restore the health of “weakly” boys by placing them in the outdoors and feeding them healthy food. Although successful, the school closed after two years (Eells 1986).

In 1881, a Dartmouth College student started the early camping program that perhaps most closely resembles contemporary summer camps. His was the longest lasting of the early camps, operating until 1889. Ernest Balch was concerned that boys of his class standing were becoming soft and required vigorous, rugged outdoor living. As Paris (2000, 36) puts it “Balch saw his camp as an antidote to effeminacy, a place where mollycoddled, privileged boys would experience the toughening effects of outdoor life.” The program, called Camp Chocorua, was run on an island on Squam Lake, NH. There the boys, ages 12-16, prepared meals, built shelters, and engaged in athletics (Eells 1986; Smith 2002).

Camp Chocorua developed as a response to a social concern. The camp, located far from civilization, was meant to return youth to society better prepared to flourish. Ever since, camps have been engineered to address perceived situations or deficiencies in society. As Paris (2000) and Smith (2002) each contend, the concerns that individual camps address have changed over time and have been somewhat unique to the organizations that sponsor them, yet they are always a reaction to the social world. In the latter half of the 19th century, several changes in the way people thought about children and their proper place met with concerns

over the new socio-spatial configurations in American cities, and changing ideas about nature, to create the conditions for the summer camping movement.

Childhood in 19th Century and Early 20th Century America

Graff (1995) analyzed 500 first person accounts of growing up in America from the middle of the 18th to the early 20th century. Contradicting Aries' (1962) claim that childhood as a concept developed in Europe between the 15th and 18th centuries, Graff writes that Western history has never lacked a concept of childhood, however, there have been multiple paths through childhood and adolescence and these paths have changed over time.⁹ At the close of the 19th century, especially during the decade of the 1890s, Graff contends, changes in politics, business, immigration, leisure, and consumption were enormous and led to a feeling of disorientation. Describing the turn to the 20th century he writes (1995, 187),

Among the continuities with earlier eras, for example, were the ongoing processes of class formation, gender reconstruction, cultural redefinition, institutional mediation of change, and the struggle for the terms and powers of social order. The extent of shifts and the magnitude of effects, the scale of life, the size and complexity of the continental nation, the numbers of people, and the degrees of apparent difference were nevertheless unprecedented.

Scholars of childhood hold that industrialization, urbanization and increased levels of immigration together challenged the social order in American cities, and changed the perceived proper place for children in society (see for example: Thurber and Malinowski 1999; Gagen 2000; Paris 2000; Illick 2002). Industrialization happened rapidly, especially in the northeastern section of the nation, where established commercial seaports already existed. By the 1880s, the largest sector of the economy was industrial (Illick 2002, 56). As working

lives became ruled by the clock, changes took place within the family. For the middle-class, the father typically went away from home to work while the mother was responsible for the home and for raising children of good character. The workplace, removed from the home, became part of the public sphere while the home was regarded as the private sanctuary of the family (Sznajder 1997; Illick 2002).

Illick (2002) points to the publication of parenting books, the popularity of toys, the increase in sporting opportunities for boys, children's books, concerns over hygiene, and celebration of children's birthdays in the mid-1800s, as evidence of a new focus – at least among the middle and upper classes – on children and their development.¹⁰ Further, the public school reform movement (1820-1860) placed probably more than half of the children under the age of twenty in school (Illick 2002, 69). Increasingly, the home and the school, and not just the home and the workplace, were seen as the proper places for children. With increased schooling into the high school years there was a "lengthening of childhood" (72). A lengthening of childhood also brought about an increase in leisure time for middle and upper class children living in cities.

Conditions were different for working-class families. Illick contends that even before industrialization there was always a poor, working class in America. While industrialization improved living conditions for middle-class children, it deteriorated life for working-class young people. Societal responses to such children changed over the course of the century.

⁹ Aries' findings have also been challenged by researchers of childhood such as Prout and James (1997) and Stephens (1995). However there is general acknowledgement that Aries' work is seminal in its contribution of the notion that childhood is a category understood differently by different cultures.

¹⁰ Illick (2002) acknowledges that childhood conditions and experiences were, and are, different for children according to gender, class, race, ethnic, regional and urban vs rural upbringing. For this reason, he devotes a separate chapter each to working-class, middle-class, African American, Native American, European-American, rural, urban, and suburban childhoods. While my historical account focuses mainly on class divisions, I am aware that other differences influence perceptions of childhood, nature, and camping.

The novel solution of the early nineteenth century was the creation of institutions where the deviant and the dependent would be isolated and rehabilitated. Their reformed behavior would demonstrate to the rest of society how to act. For working-class children this meant going to asylums (for the orphaned, the abandoned, even the poverty-stricken) or houses of refuge (for the convicted offender, the vagrant, the willfully disobedient). Children were also sent to almshouses.

(Illick 2002, 85)

Charles Loring Brace, an early child-reformer, criticized these places for failing to prepare young people for real life. He formed the New York Children's Aid Society in 1853 and began to do preventative work with the city's poor, vagrant, and troubling youth (Illick 2002). He simultaneously continued the practice of separating working-class children from their families, and instituted a new and enduring practice of sending children to nature when he put children on "orphan trains" headed to the west.¹¹ According to Illick, this practice was not motivated by romantic notions of the rural as wholesome and healing, but derived from Brace's belief that children would retain more autonomy in less developed spaces. However, the quotation from Brace below challenges Illick's assessment:

The confrontation between depraved delinquents and unspoilt nature was intended to have a spiritual and regenerative effect. 'Under a new atmosphere of kindness, sympathy, comfort and self-respect,' [in the countryside] said Charles Loring Brace, 'many of their vices drop from them like the old and verminous clothing they left behind... The entire change of circumstances seems to cleanse them from many bad habits.'

(Brace 1876, 137; quoted in Platt 1977, 65)

The impulse to place out urban working-class children to families living in rural areas was institutionalized two decades later with the creation of the Fresh Air Fund, still in

¹¹ Ashby (1997, 40) contends that Brace got the idea to place out destitute children from a Boston minister: "Brace was well aware, moreover, that in 1850 the Boston-based Children's Mission to the Children of the Destitute had started taking homeless children by train from Boston to foster homes on New England farms. The inspiration for the mission's program had reportedly been an innocent question a year earlier from a Unitarian minister's 12-year-old daughter when she saw poor children playing in the gutter. 'Can't we do something for these poor little things?' she asked."

operation today. In 1877, Willard Parsons, a minister, began sending immigrant and working class children to rural Pennsylvania to live with families for a couple of weeks at a time in the summer months. In 1887, the New York Herald Tribune began to sponsor the program. Soon, fresh air programs spread to other cities like Chicago, Cleveland, and Staten Island (Eells 1986; Paris 2000).

Increased immigration to American cities in the late 1800s prompted a moral panic among the urban elite who feared disease, disorder, and declining morality (Gagen 2000). Living conditions for immigrants and the urban working-class, famously photographed by Riis (1892), were often wretched. Elites and the middle-class began to align the filth of overcrowded inner-city life with the immigrants who lived there.¹² Working-class children played in the streets, outside the domestic sphere, signaling unruliness in and pollution of space in the public sphere. Riis believed that the “idleness of the street” was responsible for boys’ delinquency (131); he admired the work of the Fresh Air Fund for its “civilizing influence”:

There can be no doubt that their [fresh-air charities’] civilizing influence is great. It could hardly be otherwise, with the same lessons of cleanliness and decency enforced year after year. The testimony is that there is an improvement; the children come back better ‘groomed’ for inspection. The lesson has reached the mother and the home. The subtler lesson of the flowers, the fields, the sky, and the sea, and of the kindness that asked no reward, has not been lost either...Down in the worst little ruffian’s soul there is, after all, a tender spot not yet pre-empted by the slum. And Mother Nature touches it at once. They are chums on the minute.

(Riis 1892, 173)

¹² A child accepted into the Fresh Air Fund program was actually scrubbed and disinfected before being sent to the countryside, thereby physically embodying the purity expected in rural places. In fact, children were “graded” according to their level of hygiene before being chosen for or rejected by the program (Riis 1892). Sibley’s (1995) theoretical analysis of the discourse of purity and filth and its working out on children, nature, and socio-spatial relations in the west, has influenced my understanding of this process and much of the research on exclusion and the geographies of children.

Wrapped within Riis' statement are the familiar 19th century themes of the primacy of the family whose moral character is protected by the mother, the concern for hygiene, and an insistence on social order encoded in the word 'civilizing'. Camping gets its start from all of these, and especially from the notion that nature can offer respite from the stresses of the city.

Nature in 19th Century America

Industrialization and the territorial expansion of mainly European-American settlement changed the social order and the physical environments of the 19th century United States [for a broad overview of these changes, see Steinberg (2002)]. By mid-century, Americans living on the east coast and in the mid-west had to contend with deforestation, soil erosion and exhaustion, species loss, and water pollution, among other environmental problems. Just as undeveloped natural areas became fewer and more distant, nature became the object of a relatively new-found affection and came to hold new meaning for some Americans.

In his classic work, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Nash (1982) asserts that for early settlers in North America, nature held negative connotations as a chaotic and frightening place, and even the home of the devil.¹³ Christian settlers quickly went about creating a garden from the wilderness, in an effort to recreate the Garden of Eden.¹⁴ Yet Romantic ideas that developed in Europe in reaction to industrialization took root and inspired American transcendentalists such as Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson. They looked to a pure nature to counterbalance a destructive civilization.

¹³ This is a broadly generalized contention, one that surely does not describe the views of all early American settlers.

Furthermore, time spent alone in nature could provide a conduit to God. As Cronon (1995, 71-72) has described it, "Wilderness had once been the antithesis of all that was orderly and good—it had been the darkness, one might say, on the far side of the garden wall—and now it was frequently likened to Eden itself."

In addition to its spiritual value, and its value as a source for commodities (Steinberg 2002), wild nature came to be emblematic of the nation and its people. Wilderness was deployed as productive of American (masculine) vitality and virility, in contrast to European softness and frailty (Schmitt 1969; Nash 1982; Smith 1984; Haraway 1989). The new notion of wilderness as a positive and healthy space sits side by side with the Anglo-American rural ideal (also a response to industrialization) which imagines that the countryside provides children with fresh air, wholesome experiences, and access to space (Ward 1988; Bunce 1994). In his history of summer camp, Smith (2002) contends that as people moved to the city and further from their rural origins, urban Americans developed a sentimental view of both nature and agrarian life, and identified in them a simpler American past. Nature was the counterpoint to modernity.¹⁵

By the end of the century, middle and upper-class Americans looked to wilderness to ease the pressures of their modern lives in the city. Wilderness vacationing developed in response to the environmental and social anxieties of the city and in fact, physicians prescribed trips to places like the Adirondacks of New York State, the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and northern Maine, for relief from nervous conditions (McCombs 2004) and even hay fever (Mitman 2003). A central concern among the white middle and upper-

¹⁴ For an environmental history of how the attempt to recreate the Garden worked out in irrigating communities of the American West, see Fiege's *Irrigated Eden* (1999), and for further analysis of the Eden narrative in the United States see Merchant's (2004) *Reinventing Eden*.

classes was that their physical bodies and energy were weakened by modern, city living, and that their social standing was threatened by other racialized groups (McCombs 2004).

Moreover, Frederick Jackson Turner announced in 1893 the end of the American frontier, a place that was imagined to supply the adversity required to develop strong character among native-born Americans (Schmitt 1969; Paris 2000).

Native-born Americans, concerned about their stamina and retaining cultural and economic authority in the midst of heavy immigration, turned to the wild nature that remained in the United States for a solution. Starting in the last third of the 19th century, camping trips, visiting resort hotels in the mountains, and renting cottages in the countryside became popular practices for middle- and upper-class people in the Northeast (McCombs 2004). During vacations in nature, men could hunt and fish while women would take care of the cottage, activities that would both re-establish gender roles and revitalize bodies. Wilderness vacations offered the opportunity to step away from the pressures and routines of the city and to re-create social life based on an imagined past.¹⁶

Class and the Camping Movement

The idea that people require certain formative and difficult experiences to develop their character was promoted strongly in G. Stanley Hall's 1904 book *Adolescence*. Here he outlined his theory of "recapitulation" which posited that "childhood directly mimicked the evolutionary stages of human development, in a vastly condensed time-frame" (Gagen 2000,

¹⁵ There is a growing literature that contends that this particular construction of nature has historically belonged to a white, middle-and upper class culture (Nash 1982 (1967); Albanese 1990; Gottlieb 1993; Di Chiro 1995; White 1995a; DeLuca 1999), a discussion I hold more fully in chapter 4.

¹⁶ Schmitt (1969) points out, however, that the back-to-nature movement that developed at the turn to the 20th century was not a back-to-the-land movement; the upper and middle classes were motivated by the spiritual and not the economic resources nature had to offer, and looked for them in places like gardens, parks, and views.

604). Hall believed that children must move through primitivist phases sequentially following an evolutionary model. The text promoted the idea that boys needed to go through a wild and primitive stage and so for example, boys' disorderly conduct on the street was authorized although it required adult surveillance. Girls, by contrast, were not to be on the street at all (Gagen 2000). According to Smith (2002), camping advocates embraced the "recapitulation" theory because it resonated with primitivist ideas travelling out of the Romanticism and fueling the back-to-nature movement, which idealized pioneer and nativistic ways of living in nature. Primitive and pioneer skills became very popular, as evidenced in the partly fabricated accounts of the Woodcraft Indians, written by Ernest Thompson Seton. Seton drew on the traditions and practices of many different Native American tribes, and saw their adoption as a way to develop character among boys (Paris 2000).

However, a certain wildness among boys was not uniformly accepted across class lines.¹⁷ Paris (2000) identifies the three different kinds of summer camps that had developed before Hall's book was published: private camps for the upper-class; organizational camps, like the YMCA, for the middle-class; and working-class camps run by settlement houses and other charity organizations. Private camps for boys began to appear in the 1890s. Camp Keewaydin, for example, established its first site in northern Ontario in 1893, and then added its second site on Lake Dunmore in Vermont in 1910 (Eisner 2005). A few girls' camps were founded in the late 1890s; these focused on development of girls' physicality and gentility (Paris 2000). The first YMCA camp for boys, founded by Sumner Dudley, opened in 1885 with 7 boys and by 1891 had grown to serve 83 boys at an established camp on the shores of

¹⁷ The bounded categorization of class that is offered here is problematic for several reasons. See chapter 4 for a fuller discussion of its limitations.

Lake Champlain in New York (Paris 2000, 41). The YMCA, YWCA and other organizations such as the U.S. Boy Scouts (founded in 1910), the Camp Fire Girls (1911) and the Girl Scouts (1912) served mainly middle class children (Paris 2000). Eells' (1986) documents a number of camps for working-class children that grew out of the fresh air movement beginning in the 1880s and 1890s, as well as the start of settlement movement camps in the early 1900s.¹⁸ The intended social function of each kind of camp--private, organizational, and charity--differed. Paris (56) writes,

All kinds of camps shared the fear that unregulated and unprotected children would not reach their potential as future adults, good citizens, and true Americans... Reformers who felt that effete and overcivilized city life was disabling to upper-class children, saw the harsh living conditions of working-class life as differently dangerous.

Such dangerous conditions could lead to the nurturing of what Brace referred to as the "dangerous classes", the working-class who threaten existing social order (Brace 1872).

While camping was intended to provide certain invigorating nature experiences for well-to-do children, and to occupy the leisure time of middle-class children, camping was also a way to introduce the children of immigrants and their families to American traditions. "Ironically, reformers aimed to civilize immigrants in places far away from civilization, in the rural spaces where they could hope to exert a more complete control. If Americans of Northern European ancestry, especially boys, required the kind of foray into the primitive that Seton's Woodcraft program represented, this was a different kind of primitivism than that represented by 'lesser' immigrant cultures" (Paris 2000, 57). The contact with nature was

¹⁸ For more on the child-saving movement see Platt (1977), Ashby (1997), Sznajder (1997) and Zeiger (2003). Ruddick (1996) offers a social history on the child-saving movement in which she concludes that child-savers' concerns about unhealthy city environments had more to do with their disapproval of lower-class practices than anything else. Gagen (2000; 2004) offers an analysis of the playground movement and the ways that

meant to affirm a healthy wildness in upper and middle-class boys but camps for girls and for working-class youth were not intended to elicit wildness.¹⁹

By the start of the 20th century the notion that nature could revitalize, strengthen, and even reify gender and social identities had developed sufficiently in American society to sustain a wilderness vacationing industry in the Northeast, child-saving programs that involved sending disadvantaged children into the countryside, and a blossoming summer camp movement focused on middle-and upper class children's leisure and development of "wholesome habits for life" (Eells 1986, 29).

The Origins of Therapeutic Camping

Through the inter-war period, summer camps flourished, and proliferated along class lines. Therapeutic camping as a distinct sub-set of camping developed following World War II. Yet three events before the war were influential in its genesis. The first influence was the short-lived tent therapy movement, the second was the impact psychological and educational theories had on camping in general, and the third development was the birth of decentralized camping.

Caplan (1974) reports that in 1901 A. E. MacDonald, medical director of Manhattan State Hospital, was faced with overcrowded wards and the threat of a tuberculosis outbreak. He ordered that isolation tents be erected on the hospital grounds. The patients lived in open air tents, and daily life and treatment were conducted at the campsite. Staff members noticed

playgrounds, founded by child reform advocates, were intended to watch and control children (especially working-class children), and to produce socially useful subjects.

¹⁹ Paris (2000) analyses the raced dimensions of camping, both in the way camps drew on racialized images of Native Americans and African Americans in their camp practices, and the unequal access African American children had to camps. A certain kind of idealized wildness was attributed to both Native Americans and African Americans and camps drew on these by having campers participate in cross-racial performances. But wildness was not desired in Native American and African American camp employees.

that campers wandered the grounds and began to show interest in others. Patients exhibited medical and mental improvements during the summer, but regressed when they moved back into the hospital in the fall. The following spring, the hospital opened the tent colony again and patients again improved. Caplan cites articles in the American Journal of Insanity in 1906 and from 1915-1917 reporting on the results of similar efforts around the country. By 1920, Caplan (12) says, tent therapy "slipped out of sight."

The interchange between psychology and camping, and between educational and social theory and camping, did not end there. The impact of Progressive educational theory on camping was significant. McNeil (1957) holds that in the interwar period, psychology clinicians identified environmental change as a tool for resolving children's problems. Camping, which involves drastic environmental change, could be understood as providing a psychological opportunity for youth. The impacts of psychology on camping, and the usage of the term "therapeutic camping" are demonstrated in the 1947 special issue of *The Nervous Child*, which was devoted to the practice, methods, and problems of therapeutic camping. Articles contained in the issue included case studies of therapeutic camping programs (Eells 1947; Goodrich 1947; Morse 1947), the scope of therapeutic camping (Backus 1947; Harms 1947), and some of the problems of therapeutic camping (Perlman 1947; Redl 1947). Collectively, the articles point not only to camping as a treatment but also make the argument that 'abnormal' or 'delinquent' children require different kinds of treatment than 'normal' children. All of the case studies presented in the issue were from camps based on the charitable organization model: Morse writes about the University of Michigan Fresh Air Camp; Goodrich of Life Camps, [another camp founded as part of the fresh air movement (see below)]; and Eells' perspective comes from working with settlement and church-based

camps. Therapeutic camping grew out of the tradition of camps intended for working-class and immigrant children from cities.

Before World War II, camping advocates debated whether camps had become too urbanized or over-civilized. Camping leaders worried over the addition of city activities like drama and tennis, the loss of primitive camping and nature study, and increased hierarchy in the management of summer camps (Smith 2002). A second complaint was that summer camps had become too big and too routinized. One of the critics, L.B. Sharp, said in 1938 that camps were “nothing short of glorified school or army” (Smith 2002, 64 citing Sixteenth Annual American Camping Association Proceedings, ACA Archives, Box 1))

Sharp was a proponent of John Dewey’s philosophy of experiential education, and saw great educational potential in camping programs (Fine 1987). One of his main contributions to the camping movement was his advocacy of school camping programs, but his promotion of decentralized camping made the greatest impact on the structure of and philosophy behind therapeutic camping.

In 1925, Sharp was asked to take over leadership of Life Camps, a camping program sponsored by Life Magazine.²⁰ Life Camps had begun in 1887 as Life’s Fresh Air Fund, sponsored by the old *Life* magazine. It offered free vacations for underprivileged children at two sites known as Fresh Air Farms and was part of the fresh air movement of the time. Rillo (1980) states that when Sharp was asked to become involved in the program (initially by conducting an evaluation of the program as a graduate student at Columbia University) the camps were in deplorable condition.²¹ Rillo (1980, 21) reports the following about the subsequent name change of the camps:

²⁰ In 1953 Life Camps was renamed Trail Blazer Camps (Eells 1986).

²¹ In his doctoral dissertation, completed in 1929, Sharp coined the term “camping education” (Rillo 1980, 23).

He [Sharp] recalled in later years that he agreed to do the study only if the organization would change the name from Life Fresh Air Farms to Life Camps. L. B. Sharp said to Mrs. King [a social services official], "I don't know how to farm fresh air, but I do know how to farm pigs, wheat, and corn."

Sharp, having grown up on a mid-western farm, understood the practical nature of farming, and as I describe below, he had firm ideas about the value of physical labor. Sharp's study concluded that the camp was militaristic, unfairly hierarchical, and overly regimented, and he suggested that the committee overseeing camp hire someone to reorganize it. Sharp was offered the job of executive director. In this position, he field-tested his ideas about camping education, especially his belief that camping should not become too regimented. To counter regimentation he advocated camping in small, autonomous groups of eight campers with two counselors, responsible for their own daily living, and inhabiting their own campsite set apart from others (Fine 1987). Another decentralized camping advocate, Lois Goodrich, worked with Sharp at Life Camps (Eells 1986). In an article about the Life Camps program she wrote (1947, 205),

In a camp decentralized into small groups where the same eight children live together every day, all day, each child finds she is vital to the group: the shy one, the selfish, the over-bearing. In order that the group have breakfast, there must be wood-gatherers, fire-builders, cooks, table setters, dishwashers. By the end of the first day the group has discovered the leader, the poor sport, the lagging one, the attention-getter, etc., and the shy one has found she is important—that the group is dependant on her for her part of breakfast, and they can't go on with the exciting plans of the day until this responsibility has been carried well.

In her description, the importance of group functioning is highlighted, a value that small group therapeutic camping relies on today in programs like Eckerd Youth Alternatives. Goodrich (1947, 208) begins to get at the potential of decentralized camping to prompt emotional growth in campers in this sentence: "Too often the camp is so organized that the

camper uses it only as an escape from reality rather than as a place where he can no longer escape but must face his tasks and, as one parent wrote, 'learn to take hold of himself'. In decentralized camping, rustic living in a small group was, and is, meant to focus one's attention on oneself and one's interactions with others.

Sharp was deeply concerned about the perceived negative effects of urbanization. He believed a good camp program should center on the basic needs for "food, shelter, self occupation, group relationships, and spiritual uplift" (Rillo 1980, 23). He thought that the land itself could be a teacher and he put a high value on physical work. Fine (1987, 59) states, "...anything which utilized original objects to perform a practical function embodied Sharp's quest for the real world and, subsequently, defined real work." Hence, campers constructed shelters and chopped their own fuel wood. His idealization of 'the real', 'nature' and 'original' was also manifested in an admiration for and even idealization of Native Americans and early pioneers. Fine (1987, 63) maintains, "Sharp sought a camping practice which would foster the same sense of adventure as early settlers had had, coupled with the same compassion for the land as Native Americans." Not surprisingly, practices such as building camp fires, and the construction of Native American and pioneer-inspired shelters found their way into his camping programs.

In addition to directing Life Camps, Sharp also directed "National Camp", six-week long workshops for training outdoor education and camp leaders. For ten summers, beginning in 1941, people came to Lake Mashipacong in New Jersey to learn primitive skills like gathering food, orienteering, and how to run camps (Rillo 1980; Eells 1986; Loughmiller 2003). It was during this time frame that Sharp began to use the term "outdoor education" synonymously with school camping. Rillo (25) contends, "Because of National Camp and its

resultant program, the title 'Father of Outdoor Education' can quite honestly be bestowed upon L. B. Sharp. It is just a matter of simple chronological adjustment, for he was the first nationally recognized leader in the area of outdoor education."

I focus here on Sharp's accomplishments not because of Rillo's title for him, but rather because his ideas and architectural plans came to have a significant impact on therapeutic camping in general, and Eckerd Youth Alternative's program specifically. In addition to running Life Camps and National Camp, Sharp was a consultant for camp design. He conducted surveys for 49 camps and drew up master plans for 67 school, church, agency and municipal camps during his career (Fine 1987, 100). These camps were located predominantly in the mid-west and mid-eastern seaboard regions and, of particular interest to this history, Fine (101) writes, "...it should be noted how no camps were designed for private or independent groups or ventures. The affluent New England camp-type or similar entity was not surveyed or designed at any time in his career." Sharp's impact, then, was focused on camps for middle and lower-class youth, those more likely to attend a school, church, or charity-sponsored camp.

In particular, Sharp believed that within a camp, small campsites should be scattered throughout the property, not clustered together. He advocated that counselors sleep in separate tents or structures than campers, and he was adamantly against elaborate landscaping, as he wanted to retain the natural landscaping nature provides. As for the structures themselves, "Among Sharp's contributions, unique shelter designs and applications constituted his favorite. He strove for wide-use of tepees, lean-tos, round-tos, covered wagons, hogans, covered sleds, tree houses, and long houses. The mobile (temporary), canvas structures embodied a dynamic aspect of decentralized camping"

(Fine 1987, 88). In Sharp's view, the center of the camp should include a few community structures such a dining hall, health center, post office, and store and should command a bucolic view of lakes and hills, but not highways. Furthermore, it was best if it was located atop a hill to capture summer breezes.

The description of Sharp's ideal camp matches quite closely with that of Camp E-Wen-Akee, the Eckerd Youth Alternatives camp that is the focus of this study (see chapter 6). Some digging into the history of Eckerd Youth Alternatives revealed a direct lineage of camp philosophy and design from L. B. Sharp, to the Dallas Salesmanship Camp in Texas, to Eckerd.

The Birth of Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc.

In the late 1960's, Jack and Ruth Eckerd, owners of the financially successful Eckerd Drug Store chain, began to seek out philanthropic projects. Jack Eckerd, an accomplished businessman, was looking for "the greatest return on his investment" (Interview with Art Rosenberg, Eckerd Youth Alternatives Administrator, 2-28-2003). He determined that helping children would provide this return. In this, Eckerd's intentions to help young people (his programs were for adjudicated and troubled youth) matched the intentions of earlier 'child-savers'. In 1969 Eckerd sent a scout to the Salesmanship Club Youth Camp, a successful outdoor residential program for troubled boys. The scout returned with a positive report about the camp's practices. After spending three days at the Salesmanship Club camp himself and meeting with camp director, Campbell Loughmiller, Eckerd decided to emulate the program on a site in Florida. An employee from the Salesmanship Club, Beauford MacKenzie, moved to Florida to start Eckerd's program and modeled it closely after the

Salesmanship Club program. The first boys' camp, Camp E-How-Kee (His Open Door) opened in 1968 outside Brooksville, FL, and a girls' camp E-Nini-Hassee (Her Sunny Road) opened in 1969 outside Floral City, FL (Doone 1998, 34).²² Over time, the Eckerd camps spread northward up the east coast of the United States; Camp E-Wen-Akee (They Are Alive) in Benson, Vermont, was opened in 1978.

Dallas Salesmanship Club Camp

In 1920, a group of business people in the Dallas area formed the Dallas Salesmanship Club in rebellion against their local chapter of a national luncheon club organization, which they considered to be dominated by its eastern chapters. The group adopted its name from the Salesmanship Club of Houston, whose principal mission was to operate a camp for orphans. This became the Dallas group's mission too. The Club established the "Salesmanship Club Camp for Orphans" on a nearby lake, and brought boys and girls from surrounding orphan homes there for two week stays. After the camp operated for a time, members realized that underprivileged children who were not orphans often had worse living conditions than the orphans, so they changed the name and focus of the camp to "Children's Recreational Camp of the Salesmanship Club."

In 1943, the Club enlarged their facilities at the camp, but they were shut down by the State Health Department of Texas because of a polio epidemic. The camp facilities were then used by the military as a clubhouse for non-commissioned officers. In 1945, the Club sold off the original camp and purchased land for a new camp. In February 1946, they hired

²² Eckerd's camp names were reportedly derived from the language of a South Florida indigenous language (Rosenberg 2003). Eckerd, however, does not seem to maintain any kind of relationship with this tribe.

L. B. Sharp to survey the new site and available resources, and to develop a program. His program was adopted and put into operation in the fall of 1946 (Reeves 1978).

The same year, 1946, Campbell Loughmiller who held a BA in philosophy and a graduate certificate in social work from UC Berkeley, was hired as director of the camp. Shortly after he was hired, he [and according to his son, his wife and son Grover also attended (Loughmiller 2003)] was sent to New Jersey to attend Sharp's six week training at National Camp. Reporting on his experience to the Salesmanship Club, Loughmiller wrote:

This is the most intensive and effective training course offered in this field, and the most interesting. We actually lived the type of camp program that we were studying. We lived in tent shelters, in small camps of eight, two to a shelter. We got up in the morning about 7:00 o'clock and had breakfast, which we frequently cooked ourselves, cleaned up our camp and were ready for work at 9:00. We had lunch at 12:30 and were back at work from 2:00-4:30. This gave us time to have a swim or do a little fishing or boating before dinner at 6:00. Generally, we had an evening session from 8:00-9:30. Our informal sessions in our own small camps usually lasted until the coffee was gone.

We studied in detail the organization and administration of camps—including types of structures, program, maintenance, sanitation, and so on. We made day and over-night hiking trips and trips with pack mules. We studied maps and compass work, wild life, nature and so forth. We did these things, not for our own pleasure and benefit, but to illustrate a method by which we could make these experiences more meaningful to children. I think the most important thing any of us got was a point of view, an attitude, a philosophy of camping that will give us greater perspective and enthusiasm.

A part of our summer's work was the study and observation of three Life Camps in nearby areas operated under Dr. Sharp's direction. The children are referred to the camp by social agencies and are in camp for at least a month, and possibly longer. When they arrive they are placed in groups of eight—all about the same age. Two counselors are assigned to the group, and they are in charge until the children leave camp. This small group of eight children and two counselors live to themselves in one of several small campsites located throughout the camp property. They help build their own shelters, their fireplaces, tool racks and similar camp equipment. They do a good part of their own cooking in their small camps, especially breakfast. Although these small units live to themselves, they come together at the central camp two or three times a week for programs of common interest to all.

There is no limit to the fun and happiness that children in this sort of environment can have. With the help of their counselors each group plans its own program. It will always include, among other things, hiking, swimming, handicrafts and woodwork, nature study, campfire cooking and fishing. These are things that appeal to a child's spirit of fun and adventure and are invariably foremost among the things he elects to do.

Let me emphasize here that throughout the camp program the first consideration is the happiness of the children. This is basic, for no child is apt to be receptive unless he is enjoying himself and having a good time. This is the predicate for everything else that is undertaken.

(Campbell Loughmiller, Salesmanship Club Camp Director's Report to the Salesmanship Club, no date, Club Files, cited in Reeves 1978, 41)

In his report, Loughmiller writes that he visited six other camps, but that the children in Life Camps had more fun and a more constructive experience than the children participating in the other camps. In the remainder of the report he discusses the physical layout and construction plan he is working on for the Salesmanship Camp, putting Sharp's ideas into material reality. In subsequent years the camp continued to send staff members to National Camp trainings.

In 1949 the Salesmanship Club Camp switched from a "recreational idea" to a "reclamation" plan (Reeves 1978, 53). The camp began taking boys, ages 7-17, for a year round program in which they lived full-time and attended school at the camp. The boys were mostly referred by social service agencies in the county and stayed between 6 weeks and 2 years at the camp. Reeves (55) explains,

The new 'reclamation' idea for the maladjusted, the salvaging of a future citizen, became the guiding influence in future camp operations. Since these boys came to the camp from homes where family ties were broken, where situations existed worse than can be imagined, the new 'reclamation' approach seemed to work. Frequently the parents had a total lack of schooling and, too frequently, love and parental concern.

The 'reclamation' concept, premised on separating the child from their home, matches 19th century child-saving programs that sent delinquent, working-class, immigrant, and/or needy children to rural homes. The concern to train or encourage delinquent youth to develop into "good citizens" remains today in Eckerd's program (Eckerd Youth Alternatives Inc. 2003).

In his account of his twenty year directorship of the Salesmanship Camp, Loughmiller (1974) stresses the importance of many camp elements that Sharp espoused: the importance of the small group to the individual child's social development; the importance to boys of a sense of adventure in nature exploration; and the need to keep camp simple and free of modern gadgets. Most important, however, was the caring relationship developed between the camper and the staff people, particularly his counselor, because nature alone does not heal the emotionally disturbed boy (see also Reeves 1978). Indeed, the Salesmanship Camp, like all camps, was a social mission worked out in nature. This agenda, along with many of the camp philosophies, practices, and architecture traveled remarkably intact to Eckerd Youth Alternatives.²³

Camp E-Wen-Akee

The program, spatial relationships, and camp lay-out that I encountered when I began ethnographic fieldwork at Camp E-Wen-Akee closely resemble the ideal decentralized camp that Sharp proposed. Its practices, such as reflective sessions at evening campfires, canoe trips to wilderness areas, and daily chores are very much like those experienced by campers at the Salesmanship Club camp. The philosophy that campers can be 'reclaimed' and

purified of the negative habits and ways adopted from society is inherited from 19th century notions of saving children from society's ills. The young people served tend to be materially underprivileged, just as those drawn into child-reform programs. They, too, are legally, physically, and culturally separated from their families in order to undergo behavioral treatment in the woods.

Camp Keewaydin, the long-lived private boys' camp on Lake Dunmore, is located just 30 miles from Camp E-Wen-Akee. Vermont's hilly landscape of lakes, fields, and forests house both camp landscapes, but the physical similarities end there. While they are both built upon the notion that time in nature is good for young people, their genealogies diverge radically. Camp Keewaydin epitomizes New England private camps, begun during the onset of wilderness vacationing's popularity. Camp E-Wen-Akee's decentralized built landscape is a product of the philosophies of a mid-western farm boy turned outdoor educator. While Camp Keewaydin is still in the business of building character and making productive use of boys' leisure time,²⁴ Camp E-Wen-Akee works to alter youth behavior and identity through both work and play in nature. In terms of a therapeutic agenda, Camp E-Wen-Akee is a closer cousin, although still distant, to the wilderness therapy SageWalk program portrayed on "Brat Camp".

In his history of summer camp, Smith contends that camp has always been a corrective and hybrid space. Camps, despite the social group they are intended to serve, are a response to concerns about children and contemporary social life. The nature drawn on to carry out the social mission for children is always mediated in some way, so that camps are

²³ What was once the Dallas Salesmanship Club, now named the Salesmanship Club of Dallas, continues to support a number of educational and mental health programs for youth in the Dallas area, but they closed the year-round therapeutic camp in May 2004 (Salesmanship Club of Dallas 2005).

best imagined as a synthesis of nature and society. In the following analysis of wilderness therapy practiced at Camp E-Wen-Akee I find that nature and society are co-creators of daily life. Historically-rooted narratives about saving children and what nature is supposed to provide the child inform contemporary wilderness therapy, animate camp practices, and form the foundation of Eckerd's philosophies and architectures. In other words, history is threaded through everyday camp life.

²⁴ As described in Michael Eisner's (the CEO of Disney Corporation) recent memoir of Camp Keewaydin (Eisner 2005).

3. An Ethnography of a Nature-Culture

I came to Camp E-Wen-Akee to study why and how nature is put to work on socializing troubled youth. Within hours of my arrival, I was sure I had selected the wrong research site. My first evening at Camp E-Wen-Akee was spent shivering with cold and mild panic. All that day I had moved with a group of teenaged girls and their counselors through their daily routine on the camp property. We trudged back and forth through deepening snow, from their campsite to meals 'up top' at the central dining hall, down the hill to the showerhouse, and back to the campsite. All the while my ears were pricked for any discussion of nature, for any activity that could be characterized as nature in nature. But my notebook remained blank. Folding laundry, discussing problems, eating dinner in the dining hall, none of this felt like living in wilderness.

I thought back to an early interview I did with an administrator at Eckerd's headquarters in Clearwater, Florida. I recalled that each time I attempted to move the conversation toward his ideas about nature and the role wilderness has in Eckerd's small group therapy, we ended speaking about people. Although Eckerd refers to its outdoor residential therapy programs as "wilderness education systems", its brochure says not one word about how nature helps heal young people, nor why nature is selected for the residential site (Eckerd Youth Alternatives Inc. 2003). Had I selected a wilderness therapy institution that has no interest in nature?

My error, I realized as I sat in my tent, failing to keep warm during the snowstorm despite the heat from the woodstove, was that I was looking for nature as something separate from the social. My eyes were searching for activities that I could categorize as purely 'natural' and my ears were listening for articulations of how campers felt about interactions

with 'nature'. I was replicating a nature/culture dualism that imagines a purified wilderness and a purely social culture, into what Tim Mitchell might call a "binary arrangement" (2002, 36). Had I begun my day considering all of camp life as elements in a nature-culture (Latour 1993)—as a particular assemblage of people, nonhumans, ideas, activities, and forces constantly interacting—my notebook pages would have been full of observations. Had I begun with the premise that Camp E-Wen-Akee is an ever-evolving strategy whose goal is therapy for troubled youth, I would have understood why I could not pick up a thread called 'nature' without also drawing along a tangle of social threads.

My research questions changed after that first cold and snowy night. Instead of looking for instances of 'pure nature' I began to ask, "What makes this wilderness therapy work?" and "How is this wilderness therapy put into practice?" Close observation of daily life revealed that while constructions of nature, expectations for youth, and talk therapy all contribute to the doing of therapy, therapy equally relies on the material bodies of nonhumans, landscape forms and other nonhuman elements. I began to observe relationships and transactions across the nature-culture border and in so doing, learned that the imagined border itself is a powerful conceptual tool in Camp E-Wen-Akee's therapeutic program.

In this chapter I offer my assessment of Camp E-Wen-Akee as a nature-culture and show how this theoretical position worked in the ethnographic research I did there. Secondly, I present an analysis of the way that dualism, specifically the perceived split between nature and society, and between troubled youth and society, is drawn on and articulated in the socio-material geographies of the Camp E-Wen-Akee program. Thus, I deploy a network perspective to understand the dualism that renders many of camp's practices comprehensible.

This chapter, then, explains how ideas about borders function within a heterogeneous assemblage of actants who defy such theoretical and material divides.

Airing Laundry

I spent my first visit at Camp E-Wen-Akee with the Neché group, which on this day included nine girls, their counselor, Chief Rose, and a master counselor, Chief Alice. After meeting the group outside of “Chuckwagon”—the building housing the administrative offices, dining hall, and meeting rooms—we walked together on a long, narrow dirt road to their campsite. We entered a tent structure furnished with rectangular classroom tables and plastic chairs and I watched and listened as the girls folded laundry.

The tables are situated in rows so that the campers face Chief Rose and Chief Alice who are seated in plastic chairs at the front, white canvas duffle bags stuffed full at their feet. As the young women remove wool caps, hoods, and heavy canvas coats, I try to match up their exposed faces and hair to the covered-up people I met on the trail outside. One girl stands and states the behavior goals for the laundry dispersal: “No making comments about people’s undergarments. Be respectful.” Then Chief Rose and Chief Alice begin pulling items from the bags. They look for names on the clothing and then toss them across the room to their owners. A purple thong goes flying to a red-headed girl, wool socks to another, then canvas pants, t-shirts, lacy bras, jeans, are traveling through the air. Chief Rose announces that the group needs to have a conversation about some “underground” that a camper shared with her. Underground is the term for prohibited activities. In this case, two campers wrote on open notepads while watching a movie to express their sexual interest in each other. Both holding a one-on-one communication and having a romantic relationship with a member of camp are not allowed at Camp E-Wen-Akee.

Beth, a camper, looks down at the floor, her heavy blond, dark brown and auburn-striped hair covering her face, and tells the group that she wrote to Jessica, asking her if she liked her. After Beth explains what happened from her perspective, Jessica speaks quickly and at length about her perspective. Meanwhile the narrative is interrupted by “That’s mine Chief!” and “Chief, I need another bra” and “Whose blue t-shirt is this?”. One young woman who was looking toward Jessica is pelted in the side of the face by flying underwear. She laughs, and the chief apologizes. And then a campers asks “May I ask a clarifying question?” looking at Beth. The other girls weigh in their feelings and thoughts about the matter. When all the laundry is distributed, the conversation concludes.

(Fieldnotes, 4-3-03)

Many things surprised me: purple thong underwear at a wilderness therapy camp? They get to watch movies? Someone washed their laundry for them? This clearly was not the 'wilderness' part of the program. Skimpy underwear, VCRs, and electronic washing machines don't belong in the wilderness. It all seemed too domestic, too modern, and too much like life back home. If this hadn't been the very first activity I did at Camp E-Wen-Akee, if I hadn't been so impressed by the formal rules articulated and observed at laundry pass-out, and if I hadn't been struck by the language the girls used to speak with one another (and if I hadn't inwardly laughed at how the girls were airing dirty laundry while airing their laundry), I wouldn't have recorded any notes about it. How could this moment help me understand how nature is used to promote therapeutic change in these girls? There was no nature there.

William Cronon (1995), in his famous and controversial essay about the idea of wilderness, argues that the dualism that organizes wilderness as a pristine sanctuary, and human civilization as something completely separate and outside nature, poses some problems. For one, if by definition wilderness cannot include the human, then our presence in nature precipitates its fall from pure and original nature.²⁵ Further, this conception allows us to idealize a distant nature while ignoring the nature that surrounds us at home: "Without our realizing it, wilderness tends to privilege some parts of nature at the expense of others" (Cronon 1995, 86). By looking for wilderness at Camp E-Wen-Akee, and by expecting it to fit my pre-conceived notion of what living in nature looks like, I was missing how therapy was taking place in laundry pass-out, including how it relied on nonhuman nature.

²⁵ Bowerbank's (1999, 177) conception of the wilderness as retreat from 'civilization' identifies a similar contradiction: "Right from the beginning of Euro-American settlement, the seemingly oppositional practices of the wild—expansionary conquest and reverential sojourns—have coexisted in a strange symbiosis. The

Camp E-Wen-Akee as a Nature-Culture

I was looking for something that does not exist—‘pure’ nature—and this blinded me to the nature-social interactions that were taking place all around me at camp. Nature-culture scholars contend that in order for dualistic notions of reality to function, we must ignore the ways that humans and nonhumans are always intimately and inextricably combined. Many have pointed to the list of dichotomies underwritten by modern rationalism: men/women; us/other; child/adult; internal/external; heaven/earth; rural/urban; purity/pollution; primitive/civilized; animal/human; and nature/society.²⁶ These dualisms are often imagined as ranked, with the category accorded reason holding the prestigious position. According to Plumwood (2002), reason irrationally grants a fiction of autonomy to humans and renders our reliance on the rest of life invisible. In other words, it enables us to believe we don’t rely on others for our existence.

In recent years, social scientists have gone a long way to critique these dualisms, and to show for example how such categories as nature, gender, and the child are historical objects and socially constructed, and therefore neither as stable nor as universal as previously thought.²⁷ But others have pointed out that social constructionism still relies upon an erroneous separation between the material world and representations of it, between objects and their meanings (Latour 1993; Mitchell 2002). Indeed, Castree and Millman (2001, 210)

wilderness retreat, at least as it has been practiced, is a luxury product of the very culture the practitioner learns to despise.”

²⁶ To cite just a few works, representing diverse research subjects: Smith (1984); Cronon (1996); Sibley (1995); Emel and Wolch (1998); McDowell (1999); Goldman and Schurman (2000); Holloway and Valentine (2000); Ingold (2000); Mitchell (2002); Plumwood (2002).

²⁷ Examples of these arguments can be found in Demeritt (2001), McDowell (1999) and Prout and James (1997).

state that social constructionists and natural realists share an “inability to imagine human-natural relations in a non-dichotomous way.”

Environmental historians and historical geographers have done much to unsettle dualism in their accounts of human-nature interactions. For example, Richard White (1995b) has produced a history of the Columbia River that traces the story through law, fishery science, Native American culture, natural history, and hydraulics, without discriminating between what belongs to nature and what does not. Others have explicated plastic pink flamingoes (Price 1999), the meaning of the Exxon Valdez spill (Wilson 1992), and the re-wilding of New York City (Matthews 2001) by moving through the cultural, ecological, political, and historical spheres with ease. Environmental historian Mark Fiege (1999, 8) claims that it is of no use to attempt to deem some places ‘natural’ and others ‘not natural’ for it is impossible to tease apart the “ambiguous tangling of artifice and nature”. In his study of the irrigation schemes of European-American settlers in the dry lands of Idaho, Fiege (1999) shows that as soon as irrigators attempted to control water flow by creating ‘artificial’ waterways, all manner of natural creatures arrived, threatening to render the irrigation ditches wild. Rather than focusing on cataloging events, places, and actors as natural or social, history can be explained by tracing a story through its action.

Actor-network theorists have also been keen to understand action by bringing together disparate elements, forces, narratives, objects, and creatures into a single account. According to Latour (2004, 227), “[a]ny course of action will thread a trajectory through completely foreign modes of existence that have been brought together in spite of their heterogeneity.” This is accomplished by removing the barriers imposed by nature/social, rational/irrational categorizations and by allowing all elements in a network to be analyzed in

the same manner: by the effects of their interactions, and by recognizing what is made possible by their presence. In Latour's (2004, 226) words, "...anything that modifies a state of affairs by making a difference is an actor – or, if it has no figuration as yet, an actant. Thus the question to ask about any agent is simply the following: does it make a difference in the course of some other agent's action or not?" This does not mean that all participants involved determine the action, "[r]ather it means that there might exist many metaphysical shades between full causality and sheer non-existence: things might authorize, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid, and so on, in addition to 'determining' and serving as a 'backdrop for human action'" (ibid, 226).

Latour presents dualism as a fiction stating that there is no division between the material and social worlds. He (1993, 104) claims that we have always built communities of society and nature and that "*the very notion of culture is an artifact created by bracketing Nature off*. Cultures—different or universal—do not exist, any more than Nature does. There are only nature-cultures, and these offer the only possible basis for comparison [original emphasis]". This is not to say that actor-network analysis excludes the influence of ideas, symbols, the spiritual, narrative, or discourse. On the contrary, Latour (1993, 6) suggests that networks can be simultaneously "real like nature, narrated like discourse, and collective like society". The effects of each, however, are registered through material interactions in a network.

Actor-network theorists tend to start their analyses with a particular action or state of affairs and to work out their explanations locally. Timothy Mitchell (2002), for example, considers the interactions of war, damming a river, synthetic chemicals, and sugarcane production (and their material hydraulic, chemical, military, and agricultural linkages) that

facilitated the outbreak of a deadly strain of malaria in 1940s Egypt. He opens up the question of agency in his analysis rather than attempting to fit the particular, local experience into an existing universal narrative such as capital or power. He finds that human agency, expertise, and power are made through engagement with the world, and are in fact artifacts of collaboration with the material world.²⁸

In his analysis of a scallop production research project, Callon (1986) illustrated how events rely on the “enrolment” of various actants to take place. Scientists wished to learn if scallops located off the coast of France could be seeded and produced as scallops had been farmed elsewhere. To undertake the research project, the scientists had to engage in “interessement”, or obtaining the agreement in the form coordinated actions of other groups, namely scallop fisherman and scallops. The project relied just as much on the on-going cooperation of scallop fisherman as it did on the successful anchoring of scallops. Ultimately, both fisherman and scallops betrayed the mission of the project, and the research was unsuccessful. The concept of enrolment or enlistment, does not suggest intentionality or consciousness on the part of all elements of a network, but it does draw attention to the material ways that humans rely on nonhumans in every aspect of everyday life.

Actor-network theory has organized a way of bringing the other-than-human into social accounts and a new way of envisioning power. Rather than understanding power as a disembodied, autonomous force imposing itself from elsewhere, network analysis requires us to look at the way power is exercised and produced through actions, exclusions, translations, circulations, and exchanges ‘on the ground’. Power can then be understood as an effect of an actor or actant controlling a series of exchanges within a collective.

²⁸ A partial list of additional research inspired by actor-network theory includes: Callon (1986); Star (1991); Whatmore and Thorne (1998); Latour (1999); Endicott (2001); Michael (2000); and Cloke and Jones (2001).

In this way, ANT analysis can find some common ground with Foucauldian analysis which, according to Philo (2000, 231), starts from “a *surface* account, [original emphasis] where the things of the world—the phenomena, events, people, ideas, and institutions—are all imagined to lie on the same level...in a manner that strives to do away with hierarchical thinking.” Foucault (1995) looked for order in the spatial arrangement of things themselves. He pointed out the ways in which power was exercised through strategic positions.

Actor-network theory opened up my field of analysis at Camp E-Wen-Akee to include interactions among heterogeneous actants, some human and some not. This more ecumenical perspective enabled me to understand how the mission to socialize young people enlists such diverse elements as canoes, journals, state funding, and snowstorms, and further, how the daily practice of wilderness therapy in this specific place then impacts forest composition, identity change, and young people's future lives. It made power visible in unexpected places. To understand how therapy was taking place at Camp E-Wen-Akee, how ‘nature’ was enlisted into its practices, and the expectations staff members have for both campers and nature, I needed to extend explanatory power to ideas and stories, as well as embodied interactions. Foucauldian insights into the ways humans exercise ordering and power through spatial arrangements, bodies, coding, and various other mappings, informed my understanding of the ways that camp staff members attempt to discipline, govern, and train campers to be good citizens (as well as how nature is disciplined in the process). It is through consideration of movements, practices, and activities at the ‘surface’ levels that wider social narratives about nature, young people, and hope are manifested.

Ideas are passed down, made known, and articulated into practices and the material world. When I returned to Camp E-Wen-Akee for my second visit, I focused on the actions I

witnessed, the stories I heard told, as well as my own experiences participating in activities. The resulting fieldnotes were a series of descriptions of moments that struck me as powerful or were illustrative of important practices at camp. I no longer differentiated between what was a 'nature' activity or something that took place outdoors rather than indoors. It was through these moments and through conversation with people at camp that the ideas about nature and youth that motivated practices revealed themselves. However, and crucially, beliefs about nature, what it was good for and the right way to live in it were complex and contradictory, and underlying most of these was a foundational belief in nature as separate from and opposite to society. While the goings-on of camp always relied on interactions among humans and nonhumans, dualism breathes life into specific practices.

Dualism and the Borders It Produces at Camp

During the first few months at camp I was perplexed by the apparent lack of interest camp staff members had in nature. In fact, nature appeared at times as an unwanted distraction to some of the camp activities. I recorded a few of these moments in my fieldnotes:

1.
It's a beautiful spring day, the sky is a cobalt blue and the air is fresh. The group of two chiefs and nine boys is walking down the narrow dirt road from Chuckwagon when one of the Pathfinders shouts out, "A turtle!" The group stops and turns to look. A few boys are hunched over the little ditch on the uphill side of the dirt road, peering into the mud. Some of the campers call out "Don't touch it!" I look into the ditch but see nothing until one of the guys points out to me a half-dollar sized circle wriggling just under the surface of the mud. Jimmy lifts the turtle out of the muck. It's a tiny painted turtle, with characteristic red-orange stripes on its neck and body. Several of the boys look closely at its wriggling limbs. Chief McBragg yells, "Put it down!" and the chiefs urge us down the road.
(Fieldnotes 5-9-03)

2.
The girls are standing in a huddle, trying to decide how to go about their next activity. Someone interrupts the discussion to ask Jessica what she has in her hands. Looking up

guiltily through her long dark ponytail, Jessica opens her cupped hands to reveal a bright orange newt. Chief Rose curtly reminds her that she already asked Jessica to "leave the wildlife alone". Jessica gently places the newt onto the gravel at her feet. Some of the girls in the group shout out that the dry gravel will hurt the newt. Kelsey says, "The oils from your hands will hurt its skin!" Chief Stanleigh attempts to coax the newt onto my pocket notebook but gives up and using her hands, transports the creature to a shady spot in the long grass. In an earlier huddle, I watched Jessica secretly cuddle a caterpillar on a leaf. She was talking to it, letting it crawl up her fleece sweatshirt.

(Fieldnotes 6-7-03)

3.

The Pathfinder group had been very slowly making its way up the service road toward Chuckwagon, where breakfast is served. Our progress was delayed by huddle after huddle. Arlo is continually resisting taking directions from the group and the chiefs and so every few yards we stop, stand in a circle, and try to come to a resolution. The chiefs decide that Arlo's behavior will prevent us from joining the rest of the community in the dining hall. We'll have to eat back at the campsite. Our return back down the dirt road is arrested by yet another huddle. We are standing in the circle talking when someone says, "Hey look at the woodpecker!" in a loud whisper. Just a few feet from where we stand a large black and white woodpecker is tapping relentlessly against a small tree, undisturbed by our presence. The boys look toward the sound, craning their necks to see but not moving from the circle. Chief McBragg gruffly says, "We're in huddle" and directs everyone to focus on the discussion.

(Fieldnotes 5-9-03)

How could I go about understanding the way that nature is used to promote change in young people in a place where nature is seen as a nuisance? Isn't the whole point of wilderness therapy to be interacting with nature? The answer is no. Like all camps for youth, Camp E-Wen-Akee is the product of a social agenda, which is created within and through outdoor spaces (see chapter 2).²⁹ Nature study doesn't necessarily contribute to a social mission.

The primacy of the social at Camp E-Wen-Akee became explicitly clear to me in June 2003 when camp underwent an institutional review. Eckerd employees from other camps,

Eckerd headquarters administrators, and several staff members from Camp E-Wen-Akee formed a review committee and then spent several days observing and rating camp's daily life, therapeutic practices, and the physical facilities. The review culminated with an oral report to camp administrators in which "best practices" and areas for improvement were addressed. The meeting lasted a couple of hours. During that time not once was wilderness, environmental education, nature, or landscape mentioned. Nature is a silent partner in this "wilderness educational system".

Eckerd's mission is thoroughly social: to teach campers "the skills needed to be good citizens" (Eckerd Youth Alternatives Inc. 2003). In other words, Camp E-Wen-Akee's goal is to train young people to live within society's accepted boundaries. After all, transgression of boundaries is what brought young people to camp. The young people who are sent to camp have committed crimes, refused to go to school, and failed to act safely in society. Their entry into camp removes them as a threat to their home community, and it also serves to distance them from the negative social networks at home that perhaps encouraged or permitted their anti-social behavior.

Although Eckerd's brochure does not explain wilderness' role in its therapeutic practice, it does indicate that sometimes "a change in environment" is all that is required to spur change in a child's behavior (Eckerd Youth Alternatives Inc. 2003). According to dualistic ideas about nature and society, the outdoors offers a space free of the social, and a place jarringly different from the spaces of the home, neighborhood, and community. In this respect, nature is valued not so much for what it offers but for what it does not offer: social distraction. At the abstract level, the location of camp within 'nature' immediately creates a

²⁹ Historians of camping contend that camps of all kinds have always been a social agenda put into action in nature (see chapter 2), Smith (2002) and has documented that camping advocates have long worried about the

vast distance between the camper and home, regardless of the distance in miles. The perceived border between nature and culture is used to (temporarily) cleave troubled youth from society.³⁰

Within the blank space of nature, a new culture can be formed, one that centers on respect for self, others, and boundaries. Camp E-Wen-Akee staff draw on a number of tactics to re-socialize campers, each of which enlists borders. One tactic is to eliminate distractions to the socialization project. This is done by drawing a border between camp (what they refer to as “property”) and the outside world (called “community”). Staff members then screen all narratives, items, and social material that attempt to cross that border. Electronic devices, phone calls from home, drugs, and certain reading material are barred from entering.

A second tactic is to keep campers productively busy. Everything at Camp E-Wen-Akee is done according to schedule and to established rules (see figure 3.1). At each meal, the groups determine what time the subsequent activities will take place and they announce these “time goals” to the rest of the community in the dining hall. Daily, weekly, monthly and yearly rituals, chores, and traditions rigidly structure time. The schedule serves to minimize distractions; there is simply no time to stop and visit with a woodpecker.

lack of nature study (later termed environmental education) at most summer camps.

³⁰ For analyses of the way nature has been the receptacle for troubled youth see Sibley (1995) and Ruddick (1996). For a journalistic account of that describes this cleavage in a wilderness therapy program in the American West, see Ferguson (1999).

Time of Day	Activity Name	Activity Description	Rules of Activity	Activity Location
7:00	Wake-Up and Sweep-Out	Making beds, sweeping floors, organizing footlockers	Complete thoroughly and on-time	Sleeping tents in campsite
7:15	Pow-Wow	Set goals for the day; prepare fire tower for evening pow-wow	File silently to site, Listen to others, Sit still, State goals for day	Pow-Wow (area outside of main campsite)
7:30	Chores	Clean latrine buckets, Organize tool shed, Straighten "learning logs" room, Make pow-wow wood, etc.	Work cooperatively with partner, Stay in designated space for chore, Complete chore in allotted time	Campsite
8:30	Breakfast	Some campers serve, others simply eat	Remove hat, Use good table manners, Pass food, Be respectful of others' space, No huddles	Chuckwagon up-top
9:15	Chuckwagon	Listen to and participate in educational session led by staff member	Raise hand to speak, Stay in seat, be respectful of others	Chuckwagon up-top
10:00	Buyer's Day	Purchase needed items from "store"; balance account book	Wait for turn; be respectful of others; No comments on others' purchases	Store in Chuckwagon
11:00	Education	Participate in educational session led by teacher	Keep all legs of chair on floor; Participate; No huddles in RC; Complete homework	Resource Center, a separate building off the service road
12:30	Lunch	Some campers serve, others simply eat	Same as breakfast rules	Chuckwagon up-top
1:15	Chuckwagon	Same as morning chuckwagon	Same as morning chuckwagon	Chuckwagon up-top
2:00	Siesta	Mandatory silent rest time	No talking; Must remain in tent; May not interact with other campers	Sleep tents
3:30	Laundry Pass-Out	Receive clean laundry; fold laundry	No making comments about others' garments	Learning Logs in campsite
4:00	Showers	Take showers	Keep eyes to self; No masturbating in showers; No comments about another's body; No calling attention to one's own body	Showerhouse
4:30	Group Games	Play non-competitive games with group	Everyone must participate; No inappropriate touching; Respectful comments	Showerhouse Field
6:00	Dinner	Some serve, others simply eat	Same as breakfast	Chuckwagon up-top
6:45	Chuckwagon	Same as morning chuckwagon	Same as morning chuckwagon	Chuckwagon up-top
7:30	Dailies Paperwork	Complete paperwork to do with activity and meal planning; one's own therapy	Complete on-time	Learning Logs in campsite
8:30	Pow-Wow	Light pow-wow fire; Assess goals for the day; name "highlight" of day; Say goodnight to all	Same as above	Pow-wow
9:00	Lights-Out	Reading and lights-out for sleep	No talking; no interactions, including sexual, with others ³¹	Sleep tents

Figure 3.1. Sample Daily Schedule at Camp E-Wen-Akee

³¹ The Pathfinders' Group has a few additional rules for the sleep tent and for the shower house. Their sleep tent is differently designed from those of other groups to provide a higher degree of surveillance (see chapter 6).

A third tactic in camp's strategy is to discipline the physical spaces on property. Prescribed uses for specific places and appropriate ways to move through space are strictly enforced. Together, the disciplining of time and space create an unflinching structure through which campers must pass.³² Each of these tactics compels campers to practice observing boundaries. However, as the incidents above show, nature does not always follow the program. Turtles, newts, and woodpeckers unexpectedly show up and pull attention away from the social mission of the camp.

Border Crossings

I recorded the following observation during my first visit with the Pathfinders, the group of boys with sexual offense issues. Already on this day the boys had been admonished not to look at the woodpecker, not to pick up the tiny painted turtle found on the trailside, and to maintain focus on therapeutic discussions, not the beautiful spring weather.

Just before lunch I find the Pathfinders sitting in the sunlight on a patch of grass that hadn't received it's first mowing of the year. The group members are plopped down in a circular shape but their relaxed shoulders and faces tell me that they are not in a huddle processing a problem. Al is leading the effort to plan menus for the upcoming weeks. A few of the guys make contributions. Most of the boys are just resting. Everyone is touching the grass. It is a brilliant lime-green, long, and soft. Some of the campers are pulling the blades out from the earth and chewing on the sweet white section which was just under the surface of the soil. Others are grabbing at it and ripping out huge handfuls. Floyd and Blair are throwing it up into the breeze so it lands behind them in soft piles. Some twist it into rope, others still are stripping it into thin slices. Baines shows me a chain of dandelion stems he made. Each stem is formed into a circle with one end inserted into the hollow of the other end. The next circle is made so that it links the first into it. Jimmy silently points out the delicate purple flowers with the yellow centers that hide beneath the taller grass.

(Fieldnotes, 5-9-03)

³² For an analysis of temporal-spatial discipline at camp, see chapter 6.

At the time I observed this moment, it occurred to me that this was a kind of sneaky border crossing for the Pathfinders. Despite all the warnings to stay focused on the social, they had found a non-verbal way to fully engage with nature, and to take pleasure from it. The incident illustrates the undeniable fact that our bodies, if not our conscious minds, are in constant interaction with all kind of elements of the nonhuman world. The dualism that animates some practices at Camp E-Wen-Akee, the idea that many of us carry around in our geographical imaginations, is neither visible nor manifested materially in everyday life. It can be felt only as we impose it on the world around us.

The tension between mobilizing the impossible notion of nature as separate from society, and the constant boundary maintenance this construction requires produces a specific kind of therapeutic and metaphoric space. Rocks will tumble into the pathways and will need to be cleared, clothing will get dirty and need to be washed, animals will find their way into Jessica's hands and will need to be removed, just as Arlo will make mistakes and will need to be corrected again and again. The campers practice staying within limits and this learning is meant to transfer to social life back home.

Silent as it is, nonhuman nature at camp is a powerful and essential partner. A second look at laundry pass-out may illustrate this. Certainly, the space of the tent, the daily schedule, and the articulated rules for behavior together helped to discipline the way that laundry-pass out is conducted, and created a moment in which the girls could discuss an important social and emotional matter. But the articles of clothing, the arrangement of bodies, the washing machine and dryer, and the errant undergarment are partially responsible for actually bringing that moment to pass. The disciplining of time, space, and bodies is not so much laid down over campers and the camp landscape, but is made possible through the

enlistment of each of these into camp's strategy. In the following pages of this chapter, and in the following chapters, I show how collaboration among heterogeneous human and nonhuman entities creates the wilderness therapy program at Camp E-Wen-Akee. One of the best vantage points from which to view nature-culture collaborations are the daily rituals performed at every camp in the Eckerd Wilderness Education System.

Pow-Wow

The leaves are just breaking out of their buds, a luminescent bright green promise of Vermont's brief spring. The morning air is cool and wet. Nine teenaged boys, two staff members in their twenties, and I are seated on the damp logs that surround a small firesite. We watch, our heads down, as Pierce, a slight 17 year- old, deftly removes the charred pieces of wood and ash from a flat rock while Logan, the new camper, uses the business end of a broken broom to carefully sweep ashes away from the inside of the rock circle that surrounds the fire area. Logan carefully pulls a rock from the ring and sweeps the ashes through the opening to a dustpan. Meanwhile the seated members of the group in turn speak aloud their goals for the day, saying, "I'll follow first directions three times today," or "I'll express my feelings to a chief today." After each person states their intentions a chorus of voices responds with "good morning" and says the person's name. Somehow, Pierce pays attention to the voices around him and expertly constructs a small tower by laying thin slivers of wood atop each other. After the tower is complete Logan places the bleached curls of wood shavings into the center of the tower. Pierce wordlessly helps Logan to place just the right size mound of shavings at the top.

Meanwhile, there is a break in the flow of voices. Chief Guido asks Arlo to be more specific in his goals, and Arlo shuts down, refusing to set goals. As he announces this, Arlo's large green eyes stare straight ahead over the group and his long neck stiffens, his jaw set. There is silence as Pierce sets a large circular silver tub upside down over fire tower. The pow-wow fire will be dry and ready to burn when we return here tonight to evaluate our goals and the highlights of our day. It is 7:29 am and in eleven states along the east coast groups of bleary-eyed campers and counselors dressed in baggy cargo pants are also staring down at a metal tub covering a fire tower of sticks, preparing to talk through problems.

(Fieldnotes, 5-9-03)

Life at Camp E-Wen-Akee is rich with practices such as these which are meant to prompt therapeutic moments in which a person's inappropriate behaviors or inner thoughts

can be discussed, amended, and enacted differently next time. The event described above is the “pow-wow” ritual that begins every day at Camp E-Wen-Akee, and at all Eckerd camps in the country. Like many of the other practices central to Eckerd’s culture, “pow-wow” refers to both a ritual and a specific place at camp (see figures 3.1 and 6.6). It is the first and last activity of each day, always held at “pow-wow,” a small site located outside the main area of the campsite.

Without any further description, one can identify some of the potent characteristics of this practice. First, pow-wow marks time. It begins and ends each day. It provides borders for time and experience. Each morning campers mentally structure their day by assigning themselves a goal. At the end of the day the campers assess their progress on their goals and then the group bids each one goodnight, clearing out the mental ‘debris’ of the day. As Loughmiller, the long-time director of Dallas Salesmanship Club Camp (see chapter 2), wrote (1974, 127), “The pow-wow makes room for tomorrow.”

The daily repetition of the practice has specific outcomes as well. The doing of pow-wow each day reinforces therapeutic goals for the individual, but even more so reinforces group codes of behavior. In this way, key aspects of Eckerd’s therapeutic culture (like language, dress codes, ways of interacting verbally and physically) are introduced and re-enacted each day in the “sacred” and idealized space of pow-wow.

Second, the pow-wow space is marked by a number of spatial borders. There is the border implied by the separation of the pow-wow site from the main living area of the campsite. The distance signifies that pow-wow is a sacred place, different from the everyday spaces of camp. Another border is created by the arrangement of log benches surrounding a ring of stones that mark the fire pit. The horseshoe seating arrangement allows every

individual in the group to make eye contact with everyone else. It also defines the group as the paramount focus of attention.

Within these borders, different rules apply (see figure 3.1): no huddle may take place within pow-wow; campers must listen quietly to others, no one but the campers with fire chore may touch the fire, no negative comments may be made. The pow-wow borders elicit specific behaviors.

Third, the performance of the pow-wow ritual connects the members of one group to other groups of people, distant both in time and space. Campers are aware that all of the Eckerd campers along the east coast have their pow-wow at the same time and in exactly the same way. They are part of a larger group supporting this behavior. The pow-wow ritual has changed very little from its practice at the Salesmanship Club Youth Camp half a century ago. Many campers have gone before them in maintaining this tradition.

Finally, the name of the ritual "pow-wow" also brings up connotation or ties to Native American practices. References to Native American traditions are ubiquitous in Eckerd's wilderness therapy programs. The counselors are called "chiefs"; the camps are given names from a South Florida indigenous language and groups are named after Native American tribes along the east coast (Interview with Art Rosenberg, Eckerd Youth Alternatives Administrator, 2-28-2003); early structures included teepees; and people officially entering and exiting camp are "howed" in and out.³³

³³ Eckerd does not maintain any direct links with Native American tribes and the terms it employs seem to come from an imagined pan-Native American pool of cultural practices, beliefs, and languages. Evidence for the homogenization and adoptions of Native American cultural practices can be found in many American wilderness therapy programs (see chapter 2). Earlier in therapeutic camping history, Redl (1947, 143; quoted in McNeil 1957, 4) described the "good camper" ideal mobilized in camping programs, which included idealized versions of Native American and pioneer cultures: "Parts of it [the 'good camper ideal'] are derived from cultures which we conquered and exterminated (consider the heavy emphasis on Indian Lore), other parts are nostalgic reminiscences of a world which our nation has left behind (the lumberman at the campfire, the

"Pow-wow", then, is meant to give campers the sense that they are participating in a meaningful, ancient practice that brings them closer to nature. Pow-wow is located closest to unmanaged 'wilderness' in campsite, a liminal site and held at liminal times of day. The indigenous name invokes a powerful narrative that provides a feeling of solemnity to the daily ritual.

The pow-wow has endured over time because it seems to produce desired effects.

Loughmiller (1974, 174), offered this assessment of the practice,

One of the most productive single devices we have at camp is the pow-wow, an evaluative session held by each group at the 'pow-wow circle' in its own campsite at the close of the day... The purpose of the pow-wow is to take a reflective look at the group's experience during the day in terms of its successes and failures, and to examine the reasons for each. It is not a sing-song, a planning session, a story-telling hour, or any other of the many good things that are sometimes carried on around an evening campfire. To us it is more important-their evaluation of their own experience.

The pow-wow's durability may also be due to the fact that it takes place at a number of levels; borders are used to good effect both materially and conceptually. The separation and alliances between now and then, us and them, wilderness and society, sacred and everyday, are made manifest through spatial borders, time, re-enactment, and narrative. Or to put it in Latour's (1993, 7) terms, the pow-wow can be understood as a nature-culture that is simultaneously real, social and narrated.

The notion of networks in camping research has a history of its own. Describing the importance of physical setting and activity to the therapeutic outcomes of a therapeutic camp, Gump, Schoggen, and Redl (1957, 40) wrote,

Camping as a therapeutic instrument, involves use of two related but distinct areas of resources. The *social action* area refers to the relationships and techniques utilized by

conqueror of mountains and streams, the skillful survivor against odds through crafty use of ax and bow and arrow)."

staff with campers: social supports, behavior interventions, and therapeutic interpretations. The milieu area includes the physical plant of the camp, and the creation and arrangement of routines and activities or programs.

The researchers describe the complex of human and non-human factors as the “activity-setting” and illustrate how the activity-setting is productive of camper performances,

The word *setting* refers to the physical provisions and supports for the program: its housing or enclosing and its fixed and manipulable props. The word *activity* refers to the pattern of constituent performances associated with the program; in the crafts program this pattern includes such actions as procurement of supplies, shaping, joining, and painting of materials.

(Gump, Schoggen et al. 1957, 40)

They found that different activity-settings or “milieu” were productive of specific and different camper behaviors and interactions. The researchers stated that: (ibid, 43) “[t]he camp itself may be considered a community made up of a network of settings.”

Pow-wow can be understood as one node within the network of settings that comprise camp life. Pow-wow is a strange mix of ingredients: therapeutic language, fire, dusk and dawn, axes, people, desires, state funding, and borders. Pow-wow could not be enacted without the enlistment and on-going contribution of physical materials. It would not take place without people who perform it and pay for it. And pow-wow would not exist, at least not in the same way, without the meaning provided it by belief in and mobilization of a border between nature and culture.

A Border in A Network

At the start of this chapter, I explained how I came to understand Camp E-Wen-Akee as made up of interactions between an assortment of actors. I have also described the

imagined nature-culture border that produces the powerful conceptual spatialities that are a fundamental component of Eckerd's therapeutic strategy. Rather than understanding these as separate theoretical approaches to deciphering camp practices, I view dualism as nested within the camp nature-culture. Dualism can be understood as one of the narratives that circulates, explains, and instigates certain practices. The nature-culture border is always operating within the reality of constant interactions amongst heterogeneous actors that refuse to remain categorized as purely 'natural' or 'social' (is the wood fashioned into precise sticks and burned in the pow-wow 'natural' or 'social'? How about the tent structures, and the camp director's dog?). An ethnographic account of practices, ideas, things, and values most central to this wilderness therapy program must necessarily include the nonhuman constituents who play crucial roles in networks.

The contrast between the institutional construction of nature mobilized at Camp E-Wen-Akee and the inescapable myriad human interactions with nature that belied this construction became one of the most productive tensions in my research process. Rather than producing disorder, this tension between an imagined *nature/culture* and the bodily experience of a *nature-culture* creates an environment that enables a specific kind of therapeutic practice to take place. This practice is in large part an exercise in border maintenance.

4.
**Sent to Camp:
The Classed Nature of Camp E-Wen-Akee**

I asked Emma about her experience in the outdoors before coming to Camp E-Wen-Akee. She said that she had spent some time living in the woods in a tent and a bus with her twenty-one family members when they didn't have a house to live in.

Conversation with Emma, Camper, 4-4-03

"I'm an outdoors person. A lot of it for me, which I've lost being here, is the serenity. Peacefulness. Enjoying the beauty of where we live, being in nature. Hiking and meeting new people and finding what we share in common."

Chief Stanleigh, Emma's Counselor, 9-20-03

Introduction

Emma and Stanleigh arrived at Camp E-Wen-Akee with different expectations for living in the outdoors. For Emma, the outdoors was a place of last resort. For Stanleigh it is a recreational and spiritual resource. Emma was mandated by the State of Vermont to attend Camp E-Wen-Akee for behavioral therapy to address her drug and alcohol problems, difficulties in school, and aggression. She was sent to camp. Stanleigh chose camp. She, like most of the other chiefs at camp, took the job of wilderness therapy counselor just after graduating from college, eager to work with young people and to live in the outdoors.

This chapter examines the nature narratives of three groups of actors: the state social service providers responsible for selecting the young people who are sent to Camp E-Wen-Akee; the staff members who work at camp; and the campers themselves. I argue that these narratives are outcomes of class processes, and that state workers and camp staff deploy a version of nature that fits a middle-class narrative of the outdoors and what it is good for. This view of nature contrasts with some of the expectations for nature that campers bring

with them to camp. A network perspective on camp brings into view the nonhuman nature that is enlisted into camp strategy, and how it is made to fit into a narrative that views nature as recreational, personally challenging, and generally beneficial for young people. Finally, I consider how some of the therapeutic practices mobilized in camp's socialization project for young people can be understood as training to move through productive class contexts in society.

"A Camp That Changes Lives"

Eckerd's brochure slogan reads "A Camp That Changes Lives" (Eckerd Youth Alternatives Inc. 2003). Fifteen year-old Emma's life is meant to be changed for the better as a result of living with a small group in a rustic setting, doing outdoor work like cutting firewood, and taking month-long trips in wilderness. As Emma's counselor, Stanleigh is responsible for role-modeling good behaviors, providing discipline, showing care and support for Emma, and encouraging her to participate in therapy, education, outdoor games, and work. In effect, Stanleigh's job is to introduce and enforce the values of hard work, strong organization, cleanliness, education, safety, and group participation within a version of nature that is part playground and part frontier. However, the nature Emma stepped into when she entered camp is not the same nature Stanleigh imagined when she arrived at camp. Up until this point in her life, Emma had never encountered the notion that the outdoors was a fun, serene, and entertaining place. Stanleigh had never considered the outdoors as a frightening, unsafe, or undesirable place to live. These are contesting views of nature, views that are linked to participation in particular class processes. Class processes emerge when we ask, 'Who is placed in what nature and for what purpose?'

Historians maintain that the goal of summer camp has always been to fulfill a social improvement mission for children (Paris 2000; Smith 2002, and see chapter 2). Charity-run camps were designed to Americanize immigrant children (and their families), re-habilitate delinquent youth, provide surveillance on errant youth, and to teach working-class youth different ways to live. These camping experiences were meant to correct the child. No matter what their perceived deficiency, each was supposed to be improved by learning how to live according to social norms mobilized by the middle-class.

Eckerd Youth Alternatives has descended from the charity-run summer camp tradition. Camps like Eckerd's are different from typical summer camps because they are meant not to enhance skills like canoeing, violin playing, or sailing; they are intended to change the young person's behaviors all together. The desire to patch deficiencies and to re-socialize delinquent youth also motivates the social service workers whose job it is to refer troubled youth for residential treatment. Becca describes her work as a social worker below and in the process illustrates the rationale for sending "unmanageable" young people out of their home places:

I'm working with unmanageable and delinquent boys. I assess the child's and the family's needs, whether it's special ed., probation requirements, mental health, community service, restitution, to determine if they are safe in their community or if they need to move out of the community to learn the skills they need to come back into the community.

(Interview with Becca, 1-7-04)

A child's upbringing is viewed as deficient. Those responsible for sending children away from their home communities believe they know what is best for the child and have the means, or networks to impose it. The goal is to make disadvantaged and troubled youth into responsible citizens. As the following quote from a social worker implies, part of being a good citizen is being productive.

You know, they're [the young people in foster care] a product of their environment, and they did not ask to be here in this situation, and, any one of them would have chosen a different life, having been given the opportunity. So, that's why I do what I do, because these are kids who didn't choose to be where they are and I'm trying to help them to get beyond that and to get out, you know, to get what they need to be successful, and to get what they deserve, you know? Which is to be able to live as productive citizens. I mean, most of these kids are gonna end up in jail because, you know, the system can't wait for them to age out, so that they can, you know, see you later, age of 18, and, we're not done with them.

(Interview with Sara, 12-12-03)

Becoming a productive, good citizen, according to the social workers I spoke with, entails learning skills that the young people never learned in their home environments. It involves "getting out" of their present positions, a move made possible by learning new social skills necessary to get by in different contexts. In Eckerd's programs just as in all camping programs, specific aspects of nature are called upon to assist this socialization process. It is taken for granted that 'nature' will assist.³⁴ My experience at Camp E-Wen-Akee showed that staff members and social workers also took for granted that campers would share their affection for and faith in nature. The emotional and physical work it takes for staff members to make nonhuman nature conform to their own ideas, and to make campers "appreciate" the outdoors illustrates the many different ways people may interpret and live in the outdoors. Class difference emerges in the confrontation between campers' and staff members' differing mobilizations of nature.

³⁴ The nature invoked here is monolithic and homogenous. Ruddick (1996, 26) contends that in the late 19th century child-saving movement, nature and what it had to offer mattered little.: "For social historians, the task was to show that the value judgments that child-savers made about unhealthy inner-city environments (as opposed to cleansing rural ones) had much more to do with class-based forms of socialization than anything intrinsic to the 'environment' itself. In fact, they used their disapproval of 'the city' as a metaphor for their disapproval of lower-class practices."

“Class” and Networks

Class is a notoriously difficult concept, and I follow Gibson-Graham's (1996) theorization of class as a process. They place less emphasis on placing individuals or groups within a class position and more on understanding the multiple class processes that exist within and outside of capitalist activities. In a collaborative work with Resnick and Wolff (Gibson-Graham et al. 2000), Gibson-Graham outline two broad traditions of theorizing class. In the first and more popular stream, class emerges as locations in a social ranking, specifically a hierarchy of upper, middle, and lower class, with gradations between. The second definition focuses solely on the economic relation between producers and non-producers, or the working and exploitative classes. They prefer to return to this focus on exploitation, drawing on Marx's notions of the production of labor, the appropriation of surplus labor, and the distribution of surplus labor. Traditional class analyses, they contend, tend to forget distributive flows. Recognition of distributive flows—where and to whom surplus values travel—brings to light class positions and power relationships hitherto unnoticed.

Gibson-Graham et al. (2000, 7) recognize that each identity or event “can be understood as constituted by the entire complex of natural, social, economic, cultural, political, and other processes that comprise its condition of existence.” None of these can be identified as fundamental, but each can be singled out for analysis. Thus, they are sensitive to the warnings of feminist geographers that assigning a collective identity based on one category of difference can mask the influence of other differences, as well as diversity within a group (Bondi and Davidson 2003; Moss and Dyck 2003). Gibson-Graham et al. find that individuals may occupy several class positions and that each of these is a potential place to

build identity and forge social alliances, but no one position determines a fixed class position.³⁵

Gibson-Graham et al. (2000) explicitly divorce power/domination from class/exploitation. Power and class are not identical, they contend, and total domination is rare. They look for the ways that power is exercised, or enacted. They draw on an actor-network notion of power as an enlistment of material and bodies (Callon and Latour 1981) in order to muse over the many different ways that the marshalling of bodies and materials affects the flow of surplus labor, and in the process constitutes power, class and subjects.

Latour (1993) has been interested in what allows some collectives to dominate others. He maintains that moderns have increased the number of nonhumans enrolled in their collectives, creating longer networks. For some, these powerful networks may extend across the globe, but they are local all along the way, like stations along a railroad. The social world, he states, is held together by links of objects, practices, instruments, documents, and translations. Power is the ability to direct a number of interactions. It is one's sphere of influence.

In my analysis of class processes, nature narratives, and the ways that aspects of both class and nature are brought to bear on adjudicated youth at Camp E-Wen-Akee, I take as my starting point this notion that class is constituted through networks. By networks I mean the associations of material goods, activities, stories, and meanings that make up an individual's everyday world. An eye to the stories, material objects, and practices through which individuals make their lives may show how class is constituted and how class processes are

35 This is a point made by other feminist geographers. Pratt (1998), for example, has described how women from relatively affluent neighborhoods literally moved through class positions when they went to work in their working-class jobs.

enlisted in the project to change the identities and behaviors of troubled youth at Camp E-Wen-Akee.³⁶

The Trouble with "Class"ifying Campers

It would make my comparison of campers and staff members much simpler if I could group each within a bounded class position. But, following Gibson-Graham, I cannot. Campers, social service workers, and camp staff may occupy multiple class positions in various aspects of their lives. Further, I cannot assume that an individual builds her identity from any one class position, or based on any single category such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and so on. Finally, I made it a point not to ask the campers where they were from, about their legal infractions, or about their family histories because I felt it could infringe on their privacy, stir up painful memories, and potentially create a barrier between us. I was intent on watching interactions in the present. Therefore, I do not have statistics on family incomes or jobs or any of the kinds of data that are traditionally used to make social class distinctions.

Further complicating classification, most of the young people at Camp E-Wen-Akee are not functioning within the context of a family. Most have been taken into state's custody, therefore, many of the campers are no longer legally or geographically linked to any family or household, offering no place to affix a class location.³⁷ These young people seem to

³⁶ Pratt (2004) outlines a somewhat similar materialist and non-identity centered approach to theorizing the production of universals in her discussion of Young's (1997) use of Sartre's concept of seriality. Seriality describes the way an object or practice (practico-inert objects) can coalesce people into a collection (not a group with a fixed identity) and can condition action and meaning. It is a "lived process" (Pratt 2004, 88).

³⁷ See Jarosz and Lawson (2002) for an explanation of the way class identities can be linked to representations of geographic locations in rural contexts, for example.

operate outside existing categories such as blue-collar, working-class, underclass, middle-class, and the like, because they are attached to no one and no place.³⁸

Although I didn't systematically collect information about campers' socio-economic backgrounds, campers did share their life stories with me. Staff members also spoke about the campers' histories. The campers' stories share a few commonalities. Most of the young people at camp had experienced some form of abuse, neglect or trauma. All of the young people had engaged in aberrant or law-breaking behaviors. Many also went through at least a period of time when their basic needs of adequate food, shelter, and clothing were not sufficiently met. For all but one of the campers, financial resources were scarce, again, either because they no longer had families to support them or because their families were themselves dependent on the state (as welfare recipients or prisoners) or worked in low-paying jobs.³⁹ Discussions of the term 'underclass' have highlighted the dangers of subsuming production of surplus labor jobs, deviant behavior, and chronic poverty under a single label (MacDonald 1997; Gans 1999). Neglect, trauma, and abuse occurs throughout society and cannot be regarded as an outcome of a class process. Deviant behavior is also pervasive in society. Any definition of class that links behavioral traits to economic

³⁸ Asking Americans to place themselves in a class position may not reveal much class differentiation; Devine's (2005) research shows most Americans will self-identify as middle-class.

³⁹ Because campers were often separated from their families, it was difficult to get much information on the kinds of work their parents did, if they worked. Several campers had at least one parent in prison, a couple of parents had worked as prostitutes, one was a day-care provider for children, one was a military recruiter, another was a mechanic, some received disability payments or welfare payments. A couple of campers spoke of living on farms but it was unclear who owned the farm and if their parent(s) was a laborer. One camper, Megan, was sent to camp not by the state but by her parents who were hoping to break her out of drug use and anti-social behavior at home. This family had the resources to pay for camp themselves. In fact they had sent her to a NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School) outdoor program in the west before Megan came to camp. Megan wore high-end, expensive outdoor clothing. She had traveled on vacation trips with her family, and unlike the other campers, had performed outdoor recreation like rock-climbing and camping before coming to camp. In these respects, her life experiences differed greatly from the other campers. She explained to me that while she enjoyed outdoor recreation, she did not care for working in the outdoors (Interview with Megan, 8-2-2003).

positioning is hazardous because it elicits discussions about, for example, the deservedness or unworthiness of the poor (Gans 1999).

In light of all the complexities involved in classing campers and staff members, it was tempting to try to move around the issue of class altogether. But the juxtaposition of Emma's and Stanleigh's versions of the outdoors was too striking to leave aside, especially because their respective perspectives on nature were reiterated time and again and categorized themselves neatly on either side of the line dividing campers and staff members.

Gibson-Graham's notion of class-as-process, articulated through a network perspective, offers some assistance. It focuses attention on campers' position to labor and resources. In most cases, the campers have shallow personal networks, meaning they marshal few material resources, and have little control over interactions that involve them (such as the decisions adults make for their housing, therapeutic treatment, and health care). As people who did not travel much beyond their local communities, had disrupted school careers, and lacked exposure to diverse social environments, they had limited awareness of lives and worlds beyond their own immediate surroundings. They are not powerless, but they began their journey to Camp E-Wen-Akee with few resources and supportive relationships.

By contrast, those who work at Camp E-Wen-Akee enjoy a much richer set of resources. They all have college degrees, and described themselves as coming from middle-class, mostly suburban backgrounds. They discovered their love of the outdoors during their college years, mainly, and significantly each occupied a position that furnished access to narratives that describe nature as benign, fun, and even rejuvenating. In addition, they all had experiences that supported that definition. As holders of college degrees, as producers of surplus labor, and for some, as recipients of wealth from their families, the staff members

have more personal autonomy, sets of choices to select from, and more material objects to rely on, than do the campers. Further, their personal networks included a greater number of diverse stories, experiences, and exposure to more places. Regardless of their own family's position to labor, the staff members found themselves in a more advantageous position, one that exposed them to specific narratives of nature.

Rather than applying pre-determined and fixed class borders to campers, staff, and state workers prior to my analysis, I instead point to the moments when class difference emerged while I observed practices at camp. Understanding class as a process within a network of interaction required that I pay attention to class as it emerged through narratives and practices in the everyday life at camp. I begin by reviewing the way that categories of difference such as gender and age were called up and reproduced in the process of selecting which troubled youth will attend Camp E-Wen-Akee.

Sent to Camp

Each Tuesday, four or five individuals sit around a plastic table at Woodside Juvenile Treatment Facility in Colchester, Vermont, and consider the contents of several file folders. The men and women are representatives of the following state of Vermont agencies: Social and Rehabilitative Services, Mental Health, and Education.⁴⁰ A fourth member of the committee is from a non-profit organization called Vermont Family Federation that advocates for parents who have lost legal custody of their child. As representatives of groups, they carry with them the mandates and desires of their respective groups condensed into law,

⁴⁰ In July 2004, Vermont's Agency of Human Services was restructured. Social and Rehabilitative Services no longer exists. It has been renamed Family Services and is a division within the Agency of Human Services' Department for Children and Families. Family Services administers juvenile justice programs, child welfare

policy and procedure made manifest in written rule books, manuals, and protocol sheets. The committee's charge is to determine the residential placements for all behaviorally-challenged youth in state's custody.

Each folder lying on the table represents one young person's life history, including records of legal infractions, residential placements, educational needs, and mental health diagnosis. The folders contain sad and frightening stories: accounts of children who have been raped or who have raped other children, histories of post-traumatic stress disorder, tales of abandonment and violation, police records of vandalism and theft and drug use. Common to each child's story is the intervention of the state of Vermont, which has taken legal custody of the child, either because the individual has been adjudicated or because the young person's family has been deemed negligent. The members of the Central Review Committee sift through the contents of each folder and determine the best place for each child. Their task is largely spatial: where to locate a person?

It is not easy to be sent to Camp E-Wen-Akee; admission to camp is contingent on a series of actions and events. Many of the young people sent to camp first experience some kind of trauma in the birth family, whether it is neglect, abuse, or a lack of care or basic resources. An account of this trauma is circulated, and passed along to the state. The state's response to this is to provide an alternative set of social relationships and spatial locations. The child is placed within a variety of settings that ultimately all fail: community 'wraparound' therapeutic programs, foster homes, and/or schools. Finally, the child commits some kind of crime against people or property. It is at this point that the state workers decide

services, residential licensing, foster care, adoption, and a number of other programs related to children and youth in need. (State of Vermont Agency of Human Services website, <http://www.dcf.state.vt.us/>).

to remove the child from the spaces of 'open' society and to place her within a contained and surveilled place that will also provide therapy to prompt the individual to change her actions.

Once the young person's file is put before the Central Review Committee, his placement is weighed, deliberated, and determined. Being sent to camp is not inevitable; Camp E-Wen-Akee is just one of 24 facilities in the state of Vermont that serve teenagers with behavioral and mental health problems. However, Camp E-Wen-Akee is the only wilderness-based residential therapy program in Vermont. Because it is an outdoor-based program it is regarded as qualitatively different from the other residential therapy programs which are housed in buildings within towns and cities. One woman who serves on the Central Review Committee described these other programs as "more normal" indicating that the outdoor aspect of the program makes it extra-ordinary (Interview with Ann, 11-13-03). The Central Review Committee has the task of determining which of the youth who come to their attention will be a good fit for camp.⁴¹

Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. and the State of Vermont's Agency of Human Services

The majority of the 24 facilities the state of Vermont uses as sites for youth residential therapy care are not state-run programs. Most, like Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. are private organizations that must be licensed by the state of Vermont's Agency of Human Services to provide treatment to young people in state's custody.⁴² The state of Vermont, specifically the Family Services Division (previous to July 2004 "Social and

⁴¹ There are a couple of other contingencies too. There must be opening at camp available at the time the young person needs to be placed. There was some indication in the interviews I did with social workers that individual social workers' impression of and relationship with Camp E-Wen-Akee influence their recommendation to send any child to the Eckerd program. In other words, some social workers just trusted and liked Camp E-Wen-Akee so they expressed a tendency to send clients there if they felt the young person could do well at camp.

Rehabilitative Services”) of the Department for Children and Families in the Agency of Human Services, pays for wards of the state to receive treatment in these facilities.

While the treatment facilities must work closely with the state in order to be re-licensed, the therapeutic programs and the state of Vermont social service organizations are separate entities. Eckerd is a private, not-for-profit organization that specializes in therapy for behaviorally-challenged youth, and operates in several states. It is run by a board of directors and the organization is headquartered in Clearwater, Florida. Employees at Camp E-Wen-Akee underscore the fact that Camp E-Wen-Akee is one (relatively remote) facility among many within Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. with the language they use to describe policies and procedures. For example, administrators will speak of “organization-wide” trends or data, they refer to Eckerd as “the organization” and will make frequent reference to Eckerd’s administrative headquarters by saying “Florida”. By contrast, state employees in the Family Services division might use the name “Montpelier” to refer to the state capitol where laws are made, or to “Waterbury”, the geographical location of the main office of the Department for Children and Families, when referring to the decision-makers in their organization.

When a young person is sent to Camp E-Wen-Akee by the Family Services division in the Agency of Human Resources, she becomes subject to the rules and practices of two different organizations with two separate cultures. For this reason, it was important for me to listen carefully to the perceptions of nature and therapy held by both social service employees and Eckerd employees as they operate within different contexts.

⁴² Licensing regulations can be found at the Department for Children and Families website under the Family Services link at this address: <http://www.dcf.state.vt.us/fsd/>.

The Production of Gender, Age, and Nature through State Decision-making

The state officials I interviewed articulated a positive view toward 'nature'. They generally believed outdoor activities are beneficial for all young people. As Sara, a legal representative for youth said,

...everybody would benefit from nature, I, because, I mean, it's part of us, it's, it's something that, I think people that don't know about it are afraid of it, and I think that people, even in the smallest of ways, if they don't like it they should still experience a certain portion of it. And it's—being out in the fresh air, and I think that is the most wonderful environment for a kid.

(Interview with Sara, 12-12-03)

Because there are only a total of 30 placements available at Camp E-Wen-Akee, the Central Review Committee is forced to decide which young people will respond best to camp's outdoor program. To be sure, state officials take into account the different orientations of the various therapeutic programs available and compare them with specific therapeutic needs of the young person in question. However because the therapeutic regime at camp is so enmeshed with the practice of living outdoors, it is difficult not to conflate outdoor living with their small group therapy practice. It is fair to say that state officials primarily consider how a young person will do 'in nature' when deciding who will best fit at Camp E-Wen-Akee.

As I spoke with state officials, it became clear that certain perceived attributes (or markers of difference) make a young person appear more likely to succeed at Camp E-Wen-Akee. Joan, a long-time social welfare worker explained,

Kids who are uh, girls who are into makeup, who are into appearance, aren't camp kids. If you've got kids who, you know, when you look at a picture of them, you know, there's not a hair out of place, you know darn well that putting them in Camp E-Wen-Akee is gonna be the last thing in the world you're ever gonna try to pull off. But if you've got a kid who, whose strengths are the outdoors, the wilderness, the family connection, uh, who has a genuine interest in doing things differently, in changing, and

you've got a family that's right behind them, then camp is an ideal place. ...If I get a kid that's 13, anywhere between 12 and 15, those are your ideal camp kids.

(Interview with Joan, 11-4-03)

Sifting through this statement, gender, age, "wilderness desire", and family structure stand out as key factors in deciding which young people are sent to camp and which are sent to other residential therapy placements. But we can also see how Joan's interpretation of difference actually constitutes difference. Once these notions are mobilized through discussion at the meeting, they constrain and influence who will be chosen as a camper and who will be rejected. Existing simply as thoughts they do no work, but once they are unleashed through discussion, inform a decision, and then are manifested as words on paper, they determine the child's relocation. What are these powerful ideas about gender, nature, and age?

Wimpy Girls and Out of Control Boy Scouts

Concern for appearance came up over and over again in my conversations with state decision-makers. While not always explicitly stated, it was implied that girls are less likely to be considered for camp because they are concerned with how they look and this concern represented a kind of frailty. B.R., a social worker, emphasized an alliance between the outdoors and a kind of masculine fortitude,

There are kids that don't like it. They don't want to be outdoors, they're afraid of it, they're wimpy, they're girls that if their fingernail breaks gotta go to the hospital. Um, they can't be separated from the hairdryer or they're going to go into you know, like some kind of depression. You don't want to refer a kid like that to them, you just don't. There are other kids who love the outdoors, you know. I'm not saying that these other couldn't change, sometimes they can. Sometimes they can adjust to it, but then you're asking the kid to make double the adjustments. You know what I'm saying? So I look for a kid that I think would really enjoy the experience on top of therapy.

(Interview with B.R., 1-6-04)

B.R. expresses the belief that concern for appearance is linked to feminine weakness, a quality not suitable for living in nature. This notion is nothing new to Americans for whom activity in nature has historically been aligned with rugged masculinity (Nash 1982; Haraway 1989; Gottlieb 1993; Cronon 1995). Later in our interview B.R. said she believes that young people with behavioral problems and conduct disorder are "the kids that [this] kind of program can work for, which is kind of out-of-control Boy Scouts", again supporting the idea that nature is for rough and tumble boys.

Another social worker, Jim, suggested that nature could masculinize or toughen up a "mama's boy", someone with an overly strong attachment to a mother figure. Below Jim describes an overly controlling mother of a client,

Anyone who has to deal with his mother walks away like shaking their head, you know, because she'll be like, "...and I only want this one to cut his hair, he needs to take this kind of medicine", really, really, you know, you know, so to speak, and eh, when I see him [the boy] at camp, we used to meet, he was filthy dirty and his hair was all over the place, and I was like, "good".

(Interview with Jim, 1-2-04)

In this view, contact with nature makes the boy more manly. Dirt is for boys, for "out-of-control Boy Scouts". But yet, it is widely agreed by the state social workers that *young men* aren't appropriate for camp because they are no longer malleable. For camp to have the best effect, it seems, boys must be young enough to change. Joan said "for the older adolescent male, uh, I don't think [camp is] a good match at all". She explained that when boys grow older,

They get more street smart, and uh, they, you know, get that macho attitude. Well, we have kids that come in here, 'I wanna go to jail,' you know, 'I can smoke there' or, you know, stupid comments like that. [laughs] You know, they see their whole family in jail. You know, we've had some kids where their father's in jail, their brother's in jail, and hell, you know, they think, 'well, it's gonna happen to me, I might as well go now'. We've had some kids that feel that that's easier. I think that's what happens

with the older, whereas the younger male, you've still got a kid, and you've still got a real opportunity there if you can make it all come together right.

(Interview with Joan, 11-4-03)

In her reckoning, the older boys' identities are no longer subject to change. Nature serves boys best, but not older boys who have adopted a hyper-masculine identity.

A final key aspect of a child's suitability for camp is the presence of a family unit to which the child can return for homestays (a break from camp when campers return home for a long weekend) and when they transition out of camp. There was some dissent on this point amongst the various people with whom I spoke however. Those I interviewed who sit on the Central Review Committee all shared the belief that the Camp E-Wen-Akee camper needs a stable place to return to after their stay at camp.⁴³ Kids who have some prospect of reuniting with the normative social unit, the family, have a better chance of making it into camp. Young people with a fixed location can be imagined as positioned within society, while youth with no family attachments are imagined as outside society, beyond the margins.

As this last point suggests, there are specific spatialities associated with sending young people to nature for re-socialization. Many scholars have documented American society's practice of sending troubled youth away from society and into nature (Platt 1977; Ruddick 1996; Zieger 2003, and see chapter 2). What remains missing in the literature are youth conceptualizations of this process, their constructions of nature, and their ideas about what nature has to offer them. In the pages that follow, I recount how practices in and stories about nature revealed dissimilar class processes afoot at Camp E-Wen-Akee.

⁴³ The presence of a family is the ideal but not the reality for most of the campers at E-Wen-Akee. By the time they enter camp, many have already been separated from their birth family. And, as I describe in chapter 7, although state officials believe those with a home to return to are best suited for success at camp, the majority of campers do not have a family or a place to return to when they graduate from Camp E-Wen-Akee.

Outside People, Outdoor People and Their Natures

Outside People

The young people who I met at Camp E-Wen-Akee were familiar with living outside the normal boundaries of family and community life. They had not occupied the spaces that young people are meant to occupy—the family home, the school, the sports field—for a long time, if ever.⁴⁴ Many have been without a permanent and stable home for years. Consider the emotional implications of the terms “sent away”, “kicked out”, and “ran away” in the following conversation.

On this damp September afternoon the girls were tidying up their campsite and winterizing their tents for the coming cold weather. Beth was methodically raking up debris on the ground. As she raked she moved closer to a group of girls who were talking about why they ended up at camp. Destiny said, “I was sent away for hitting my mom, and for drug issues.” She said her sister was sent away for “not going to school”. She explained, “She was kicked out of (a residential youth center) because she was being bad at school- walking out of class. They told her they were taking her to a dentist appointment.” But they took her to a juvenile correctional facility instead. When asked, Beth says she’s at camp because she had no place to live. “It was abuse basically.” Her father abused her. She lived in several placements including a group home, a residential center, and with foster families. She ran away from her foster family. Her brother is in a juvenile center in New Hampshire. “On my last homestay my father abused another member of my family so I can’t go back there anymore. I don’t know where I’m going to stay on the next homestay.”

(Fieldnotes, 9-20-03)

These girls have no place beyond the boundaries of Camp E-Wen-Akee. For some of them, camp is the most stable and predictable home they’ve had in their teenaged years. For once the young person doesn’t need to worry about getting their next meal or if someone will

⁴⁴ There is a plethora of recent research on the spatial dimensions of youth social life, including on the spaces sanctioned for young people’s use and the violation of those borders. See for example: Ruddick (1996), Matthews, Limb et al. (1998), Childress (2000), Vanderbeck and Johnson (2000), Aitken (2001), Kraack and Kenway (2002), Panelli, Nairn and McCormack (2002), and Dunkley (2004).

look after them if they are ill.⁴⁵ Despite the sense of stability camp provides, campers don't necessarily embrace the rustic nature of the program.

The campers are sitting around the table in the campsite Chuckwagon [a tent structure that functions as dining area]. Chief Stella is dishing out pasta alfredo to the girls. As the group waits for their plates to be handed to them, I describe a research project I'd like the girls to work on with me. Because there are new girls in the group, I begin by describing my overall research question- why use nature as the site for therapy programs for teenagers? All at once a conversation about the deficiencies of the nature setting erupts. Sydney says, "The ones not in the woods are better." She thinks the therapy programs that are not based in nature are better "'cause they're in civilization." Another girl says they are "separated" and "segregated" in the Eckerd program. Sydney says, "Living in a house is so much better than living outside." And other girls join in by listing the problems with living outside: "nasty bugs"; "mosquitoes" "getting eaten alive"; "you don't have to be afraid to go to the bathroom" [because of wolf spiders]. They say that in a house-based program "you are more focused on your therapy" and "it's easier to keep clean".

Chief Stanleigh looks surprised and says to the group, "Remember the chapel [a values-based time for reflection] we had on this? You guys said you could concentrate better here [in nature]". The girls deny this now and say that they could run this program inside and it would still work. I ask, "Would it still work if you were in a house that was surrounded by other houses?" Sydney replies, "No, you couldn't have neighbors close by". She says, "You could buy a house that was far away from other houses."

(Fieldnotes, 9-20-03)

In this conversation, the outdoor setting of the camp program is described as uncomfortable and dirty, signaling that campers do not necessarily experience nature as a desirable space to live. Since at least some of the girls find outdoor living unappealing, we can understand how "segregation" from society can be seen at camp as more extreme than a residential therapy program housed in a less rustic setting. In this moment, it seems that the girls are not objecting to separation from society but to the actual living conditions in the outdoor context. 'Nature' represents to them a more severe spatial disciplining that just being sent away.

⁴⁵ Illustrating how deprivation can induce a constant fear of deprivation, a camp staff member told me of a boy who was discovered hoarding food in his tent.

Another noteworthy element of the above dialogue is Chief Stanleigh's insistence on asserting the positive aspects of living in nature. As soon as the girls describe living in the outdoors as unpleasant, the staff member provides an opposing point of view. This re-narration of what nature is, what it has to offer, and how to act in nature came up repeatedly at camp. Living outdoors can be dirty and unpleasant. Nature can sting, smell bad, and intimidate. And nature can be beautiful, peaceful, and soothing. It is all of this. Yet, staff members constantly reframe campers' descriptions of the outdoors, of camp life, and of outdoor recreational activities in positive terms. They find themselves doing this because campers do not enter camp with the expectation that nature is delightful and essentially benign.

Emma, the young woman who lived in the bus with her family for a time, said she felt angry when she learned she would have to live outdoors while in residential treatment. She worried about the cold. "I thought it was nutty. I didn't like living outdoors before coming to Eckerd." Emma also said that "having no locks on the doors" on the tent structures scared her because of a past experience when someone broke into her house (Conversation with Emma, 4-4-03).

Emma's history of literally living closer to the outdoors is not uncommon among the campers at Eckerd. When Curtis' dad abandoned him, he lived alone for three months in winter. Living in a heated tent at camp was an improvement over his unheated trailer at home. One camp staff member recounted that even when it was chilly and the wood they had to burn was green Curtis would say, "Oh, at least there's some heat." (Interview with Alice, 10-26-04). For these campers, the outdoors is where one lives when there is no other place to live. It's the last resort.

Campers at Eckerd do not primarily regard nature as a place for leisure, recreation, or rejuvenation. They did not grow up camping, hiking, biking, and canoeing with their families.⁴⁶ It is important to keep in mind that although many of the campers at E-Wen-Akee are from rural areas, they were not all necessarily exposed to stereotypically rural activities in nature like hunting, skiing, ice skating, farming, or playing outside. As social worker Becca pointed out, "Some of our rural kids are the most isolated, in their homes" (Interview with Becca, 1-7-04). In the eyes of the state social workers and camp employees, young people with no background in enjoying nature must be taught how to appreciate it, signalling the cultural dimension to perceptions of the outdoors. During my conversation with Becca I asked her to explain why she thought nature is good for all young people. She replied,

Participating in activities outdoors offers kids emotional benefits. It gives them a sense of peace and accomplishment to perform tasks that are in nature. It encourages kids to notice a certain beauty or artistry that they don't get if it's not pointed out to them.

Cherie: Do they need to have it pointed out to them?

Becca: Yes. They have had no opportunity to find things on their own. Their lives have been wrapped in chaos, negative peer involvement, they don't have the time or the opportunity. They are not going to notice because their minds are on other things, whirring around.

(Interview with Becca, 1-7-04)

Appreciation for nature, in her view, is something that is learned and perhaps not something taught in disadvantaged families, or families in crisis. In her view the young people who find themselves under state care neither had the opportunity to play in the outdoors nor did they receive the message that nature is a good place. This narrative was not circulating through their daily lives.

⁴⁶ Some of the boys at camp grew up hunting and fishing, but since these outdoor activities are also a means of procuring food it is unclear if they the boys and their families regard them as purely recreational pursuits.

It takes more than just a story to accustom children to enjoying the outdoors. It requires leisure time, the money to buy equipment, access to safe outdoor spaces, transportation to such places, and a guide. In the United States, the enjoyment of wilderness as a recreational space didn't occur until people had the means to take time off from work, the money to travel, and the desire to spend time unproductively in the woods (McCombs 2004). For children living in a survival situation, the opportunity to be introduced to these leisure practices in nature is unlikely.

This lack of recreational experience in the outdoors contrasts starkly with the high value camp staff members placed on outdoor recreation.

Outdoor People

What would attract a 22-year-old recent college-graduate to take a job living with juvenile delinquents 24 hours a day for five days in a row, and make the commitment to live this way for two years? What is appealing about spending 30 days on a canoe trip with a group of emotionally disturbed teenagers without a minute of time to oneself? There are two draws to working in these conditions at Eckerd: one is a desire to do service work, the other is the desire to work outside. For some of the staff these two desires are in equal measure, but for others, living outside, full-time is the stronger attraction. And, although Eckerd administrators say they hire to a profile that doesn't insist on outdoor experience, those who agree to work at Camp E-Wen-Akee seem to be motivated by the chance to live, as one former staff person put it, as "a rugged wildernessy kind of gal" (Interview with Sierra, 12-2-

03). Or as Chief Stanleigh said, "I'm an outdoors person," linking her sense of self to experience in nature (Fieldnotes, 9-20-03).⁴⁷

Lulu recently graduated from an Ivy League school where she helped start a non-profit organization serving kids. When she left university she knew she wanted an outdoor job working with kids. After graduating from a small liberal arts college in the mid-west, Rose wanted to live in an outdoor setting in a place like North Carolina or Vermont, and so accepted the job with Eckerd. Dexter said all of his friends from a Boston-area university went to law school or into business but he "didn't want any part of that." He said, "I thought I might want to teach" and he knew he wanted to work outside. Irene, a soft-spoken woman, said, "I knew I didn't want to be inside" when she began her job search, but admits that she's not so sure she's comfortable with the psychological aspects of her job at Camp E-Wen-Akee.

The notion that living outdoors is peaceful, healthy, and exciting is widely shared among the staff members who are hired at the entry "chief" level. Chiefs live with an assigned group, moving with them throughout the day, sleeping at the campsite at night, going on longer wilderness trips. Their job is combination guidance counselor, disciplinarian, care provider, educator, and group facilitator. It is a demanding job, especially given that chiefs may work five (24 hour) days or more without time off from the campers. And, it's not easy living with ten people who have behavioral problems. To add to these challenges, the young people who are sent to camp often don't hold the same

⁴⁷ In some environmental discourse, the formation of an ecological identity is an overt, conscious, and intentional practice, either on the part of individuals seeking to reposition themselves in relation to ecological processes or on the part of educators wishing to prompt identity change among students. Examples of this can be found in C. Thomashow (2002) and M. Thomashow (1995), and is analyzed by Bowerbank (1999).

enthusiasm for living outdoors as do the staff members. Therefore, the role of cheerleader-for-the-outdoors gets thrown into the job too.

Chiefs Stanleigh, Stella and Alice and I are quietly talking in the chiefs' tent while the campers have "siesta", their mandatory quiet time in the afternoon. The girls' group is preparing to go on a hiking trip along the Long Trail, a trail that stretches from northern to southern Vermont along the Green Mountains. I ask Stanleigh, "How are you feeling about the trip?" She replies, "I have anxieties about how bitchy they [the campers] are going to be and how many times we hear 'I can't'". Stella, a new chief in the group says, "I feel it's easy to counteract. We're just not going to listen. These are people who have never worn a pack." I ask Stella if she has done a lot of hiking, she says she has. She adds, "I am excited. It will be a nice break in the routine of the group and the organization. It'll be an opportunity for 'coming into myself' as a new leader. Hiking-, I already feel comfortable with that- it's the other things that I'm not" [meaning working with the group]. Chief Alice who has worked her way up to a master counselor and has been at camp for several years muses, "I ask myself, 'Will taking them on an extended hiking trip ruin it for me?'" The women talk about how arduous it is to motivate the girls on a trip. "Yeah, it's really important to me [being outdoors] and I don't want to make it so I dread it," adds Chief Stanleigh.

(Fieldnotes, 9-20-03)

The women explained that nature provides them "a backdrop for building relationships with people I'm travelling with", "serenity", "peacefulness" and "beauty". Chief Stanleigh added, "I love to go out at night and look at the stars. It's my one on one time."

The staff members imagined wilderness as aesthetically pleasing, a place to sense the interconnectedness of all life, and as a site for recreation, constructions prevalent in mainstream environmental narratives today. Yet, environment scholars assert that wilderness as beautiful, rejuvenating, transcendent, and peaceful is a classed idea, one historically produced by elite, literate white culture (Nash 1982; Fox 1985; Bullard 1993; White 1995a; DeLuca 1999; DeLuca and Demo 2001). DeLuca and White (2001, 553), for example, contend that white elite culture authorizes only some recreational uses in wilderness, and therefore, "White wilderness permits only visitors, but not all visitors." Richard White (1995a) makes a similar point when he describes a local wilderness debate in urban/middle-

class and rural/working-class terms. Because the middle-class, environmentalist, and white view of nature is not recognized as a cultural construct, it is normalized and then imposed upon others elsewhere and at home. The title of his chapter “‘Are you an environmentalist or do you work for a living?’” comes from a bumper sticker which implicitly aligns environmentalists with privilege, and labor with working-class people.

Recent research into wilderness use suggests that national parks and recreation areas are used predominately by whites with a high level of education (Walker and Kiecolt 1995), and nonwhite ethnic groups do not assign the same values to wilderness as do whites (Johnson et al. 2004), highlighting the plurality of constructions of wilderness and nature in contemporary United States. Either through their experiences growing up in families with both leisure time and an affinity for outdoor pursuits, or through their experiences in university, the (mainly) white staff members of Camp E-Wen-Akee gained the perspective that ‘nature is good’ and that there are proper and improper ways to use it.⁴⁸

The observation of practices and story-telling at camp revealed that camp staff members expect wilderness experiences to be difficult and recreational. In the examples that follow, the staff members draw on such things as a heat wave, a group game, and stories of fun rock-climbing trips to mobilize nature as a beneficial, enjoyable, and educational site/experience. These qualities are important aspects of the therapeutic regime because they are meant to impart specific values to campers.

⁴⁸ I did not ask staff members to declare their race or ethnicity, thus I cannot claim that all self-identify as white.

Wilderness as Difficult, Recreational Space

Nature as Difficult

On this August day the girls of the Neché have been playing games on the lawn: wheelbarrow races, crab races, and another "it" game. Now we are in another huddle. It's 2:30 in the afternoon and we are sitting in a circle in the full sun. The humidity is thick. Sweat is rolling down my back. I long for cooler clothes. I have on jean shorts that reach to my knees, socks, sneakers, and a collared short-sleeve shirt tucked in and secured with a thick leather belt. My attire is one of the coolest: Sydney is wearing grey corduroy pants, Kelsey has on a long sleeved t-shirt rolled above her elbows. They are all wearing hiking boots. Chief Chuck is addressing the group. Someone has mentioned that it is hard not to allow another person to control one's own emotions, not to react when someone offends you. In response Chief Chuck says to the group, "Ladies, we are in a wilderness program. Which means it's going to be challenging physically. Which means it's going to be hard mentally. How much are you going to change if you quit?" Later he adds, "We need to toughen up a bit. Part of my role with you guys is to point out what's not working with you guys." Destiny, her fair skin a brilliant red, reminds the staff that she is allergic to the sun and would like to move to the shade. Chiefs tell her she hasn't exceeded her time limit in the sun. Chief Chuck adds, "It's hot. It's uncomfortable. It's a wilderness program."

(Fieldnotes, 8-5-03)

Staff members describe the outdoors as a difficult place to live. It is uncomfortable, it's physically challenging, and it can be isolating. But, if one perseveres, the wilderness experience will elicit strength. The eastern woodlands of this camp harkens back to America's frontier experience, where clearing the land, fighting off the wildlife (and the native peoples), and wresting sustenance from the wilds was imagined to build one's character and strength. When Chief Chuck tells the girls that the wilderness is tough, he is not so subtly suggesting that the girls themselves should toughen up in response. If they can endure the wilderness experience at camp, they will return to society with a strengthened character. This narrative aligns with another American notion linked to class mobility: if you work hard enough, you will be successful.

Nature as Outdoor Recreation Site

Without exception, the staff members, especially the entry-level young staff members, enjoyed outdoor recreation. On their days off they would go hiking or mountain biking or skiing. As Alice noted, "I can't think of anyone I worked with at camp who doesn't enjoy doing things outside as a recreational activity" (Interview with Alice, 10-26-04). The staff members see nature as a place to have fun and to play and they expect the campers to learn to enjoy the outdoors in the same way. After returning from a weekend off or a week's vacation, the staff member share their mountain biking trips or backpacking trips with the campers, further reinforcing the idea that nature is for certain kinds of recreation.

Chief Nikki, an enthusiastic counselor working with the Pathfinders group voiced both the therapeutic aspects of nature as difficult and as play space when she told me, "There's something to be said for making a kid rough it. The elements add the element of accomplishment. There's fresh air, a big backyard to play in, structure. Room to grow" (Fieldnotes 10-28-03).

It is important to note that staff members described only certain activities in their accounts of time off. They told stories about hiking, paddling kayaks, and rock-climbing, not operating off-road vehicles or hunting, activities campers identified as fun. Class difference manifested in inclusions and exclusions such as these.

Class Consciousness- Or, When Class Shows Up at Camp

During my time at camp it became clear to me that not all staff members were sensitive to the moments when class distinctions between themselves and the campers emerged. Difference was most apparent when material goods were put on display. This

thought came to mind one afternoon when I joined the campers in a chuckwagon (an informal educational session that occurs after meals in the dining area). On this day, one of the male staff members stood up and explained that during his time off he researched and bought a high-performance mountain bike. No doubt it cost thousands of dollars. I wondered as I listened how many of these campers would ever have been in a position to own something like this, and the likelihood that they would be in this position in the near future. His implicit messages to the campers were: mountain biking is a "cool" and healthy activity in the outdoors; investing one's financial resources into expensive sports equipment is therefore an appropriate use of money; finally, that to be a good consumer, one should invest time in becoming educated about one's choices before purchasing. He affirmed the idea that nature is a play space, and that is it also a site for consumerism. He seemed oblivious to the way his discussion of purchasing a mountain bike might point up to campers the much greater access to material resources and leisure time he had. In other words, his ability to mobilize resources and time revealed his more extensive network, one that might be referred to as 'middle-class'.

Yet other staff members were conscious of class differences. My first visit to Camp E-Wen-Akee took place on a frigid January day. Chuck offered to take me on a tour of the property. He asked me to wait for a moment while he ran out to his truck to get his coat. He returned wearing an Eckerd baseball cap and a faded army-issue camouflage-green jacket. While we briskly walked the trails to the campsites, Chuck explained that he wore the army coat in camp because that is what they give the kids to wear. He told me that some of the new chiefs show up with high-performance outerwear made of gortex and down and wear it while they're working. "But what does that say to the kids?" he asked (Fieldnotes, 1-9-03).

It seemed that new staff didn't notice that wearing expensive outdoor clothing might register as insensitive to kids who came to camp with no clothing whatsoever and had to rely on the garments camp could rustle up.⁴⁹ My brother worked as a chief in the early 1990s at an Eckerd camp located in North Carolina. He recounted to me a moment when class difference seemed to wedge its way between himself and his campers. After working for four months in camp, Andy was looking forward to going home to Vermont for Thanksgiving break. He shared this with his group, and also told them where Vermont is located because many of the campers didn't know. Some noted the long distance between North Carolina and Vermont and guessed (incorrectly) that he might fly home. Some exclaimed, "Are you rich?!" He said that he tried to avoid moments like these because they took the focus away from dealing with their therapeutic issues and elicited a concern about difference (Conversation with Andrew Morse, 9-29-05).

The effects of class difference became painfully clear to me one night in April when I recorded these notes:

The Neché group is scuffing through the ankle-deep fresh snow. It is still snowing so the night is very dark. Four lanterns placed at the front, sides, and back of the group light the road to campsite. Francie says to someone, "Did you hear my cousin say that my dad was sent to the war?" Francie and the rest of the group had recently attended a woman's conference and Francie had met her cousin there. I listen to her piece together a mental picture. Her dad was stationed in Virginia but his group has left. Francie's voice sounds pinched. "Is my dad in the war now?" she asks herself aloud. (This was at the start of the U.S.-Iraq war.) I feel warm tears brim over my eyelids. I know of (and only distantly) only two people involved in the war in Iraq and they are both officers, pilots. In just 35 hours with this group of nine girls I have heard of one cousin, a half-brother, and a dad who are there in Iraq, enlisted soldiers fighting on the ground.

(Fieldnotes, 4-4-03)

⁴⁹ Other Eckerd camp administrators consciously try to minimize staff displays of material goods, making staff members park their cars in places hidden from camper view and insisting that counselors wear the same kind of

This moment brought forward the fact that the family members of campers were more likely to be enlisted soldiers with their bodies on the front line, rather than officers who must have college degrees. It also demonstrated the fractured state of Francie's family network, in that she learned only second-hand about her father's whereabouts.

Some staff noticed differences between themselves and campers not only in material, social, and educational conditions, but also in perceptions of nature and what it offers. Lulu articulated this one afternoon when she said, "When I see a deer I think, 'oh cool' and the campers think 'I want to shoot it'" (Fieldnotes, 5-23-03).

As the staff see it, it is their job to help campers learn to appreciate or teach (specific kinds of) recreation in wilderness and in the process they use nature to instill values of hard work, perseverance, cooperation, and healthy living. Sanctioned interactions with nature include certain kinds of play, certain kinds of work, and certain behaviors. What is hidden within this deployment of nature is how much work goes into policing it.

Making Nature and Young People Fit

When the state deems a child unfit to stay within his community, it doesn't merely cast him out to wilderness. They send him to a wilderness therapy program that uses specific therapeutic methods and particular interactions with nature to try to promote change within the young person. Camp E-Wen-Akee's wilderness therapy strategy draws on a culturally-constructed understanding of nature. At Camp E-Wen-Akee it's okay to hike in the woods, but they don't snowmobile. They sing songs in nature but do not listen to a radio. They travel rivers by canoe, not by motorized fishing boats. The tents are built to look rustic, the lakefront is left looking "natural", and the outbuildings are stained a dark brown (see figures

outdoor clothing as the campers (Conversation with Andrew Morse, former Eckerd counselor, 9-29-05).

4.1 and 4.2). Taken together these practices and decisions about how to live ‘in nature’ create a unique nature-culture. As I spent time at camp I noticed how much energy is put into maintaining this nature-culture collective, in organizing and enlisting undisciplined nonhumans into a therapeutic space that fits staff perceptions of nature as healing.



Figure 4.1. “The Boxes” (Outhouses)

According to Eckerd, nature is to be kept tidy and clean. In the Eckerd evaluation of Camp E-Wen-Akee I attended (see chapter 3), it was very clear that cleanliness and orderliness of trails and of campsites is highly valued by the institution. The visiting evaluators said that the well-laid-out campsites were "some of the best within the organization" and reflected pride. They were pleased to see that the trails were kept clear of any debris and were neatly lined with rocks. One woman boasted that she was able to roll her wheeled suitcase all the way from the parking lot into her campsite because the trails were so smooth (Eckerd Assessment notes, 6-27-03). The wooded landscape doesn't just present itself as obstacle-free and tidy; it must be cleared and then vigilantly maintained. This became abundantly clear when Hurricane Isabelle clipped southern Vermont, "littering" E-Wen-Akee's campsites with broken tree limbs and scattered leaves. Time had to be taken out of the daily schedule to quickly tidy-up camp's living spaces. The unruly aspects of nature must be disciplined into a neat space in order to align with the cultural expectations of it.

One of camp's goals is to teach personal organization skills to campers. Staff do this by enlisting campers in the planning involved in daily life: drawing up meal plans, supply lists, and personal goals. They teach them how to budget food on long wilderness trips. They give each camper an allowance of \$10 per month that they may use on "Buyer's Day", a day when they can buy personal items like deodorant, shampoo, and notebooks from the little store in the main office. Camp supports these organizational goals by laying the same standard of tidiness and ordering to the property.



Figure 4.2. Camp E-Wen-Akee's Lakefront Area

One might expect that 50 people living on 180 acres for 25 years would eventually carve short-cut trails between places, but because campers and staff are obliged to walk within the boundaries of existing trails, no such informal pathways exist at camp. One might also expect that the cutting of trees for firewood would leave brush and small limbs scattered about the forest floor but campers are required to “re-naturalize” an area after a tree has been cut. Small branches are scattered far away and people use a handful of leafed branches to sweep away the dead leaves and sawdust in the cut area to remove any visible trace of the work done. An orderly image of the woods is maintained at all times.

It takes effort and work to make both campers and nonhumans to fit into the expressions that fit these social norms. This realization came to me one night when I stayed at the Mahican boys' campsite:

The cherry red gas lanterns are lit. The group walks single file on a narrow path that leads away from camp, up an incline. A few yards up the path is a cleared area with 3 log benches arranged in a U and a circle of stones at center. In daylight one can look through the mixed forest of deciduous and evergreen trees to view the lake below. It is dark now, however, and we are reminded that we are overlooking a body of water only by the high-pitched chorus of tree frogs accompanied by the deep and continuous honks of Canadian geese. I am delighted by the sound- it always signals spring to me. As campers do every night, each person reflects on the best part of the day. When it's my turn I say the sounds of peepers and geese are one of the highlights of my day and the group responds with exclamations and groans. One guy says, "yeah, if you've got a gun". Later in the evening I lay in my tent trying to fall asleep. The peepers are relentless. The geese begin to sound like a pack of barking dogs. Only the heavy rains quiet them. When the rain ceases, they start up again. In the deep of the night, an owl joins the song with, "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you?" The vocal nightlife has ceased to be pleasant.

(Fieldnotes, 5-8-03)

My understanding of nature as aesthetically pleasing was challenged that evening. Having grown up in a family with sufficient financial resources, lived most of my life in rural places, earned an undergraduate degree in Environmental Studies, and worked in the fields of outdoor recreation and sustainable agriculture, I have appreciated 'nature' in much the same way as the staff at E-Wen-Akee. But, being uncomfortable in the outdoor camp setting made me sympathetic toward other viewpoints regarding nature. It manifested for me the realization that to be understood as benign and beautiful, nature must often be reinterpreted. And experience of nature as pleasant requires that one have the proper gear, knowledge, and outdoor skills. Staff members were constantly re-narrating outdoor experiences for campers, trying to divert campers' attention from the biting insects to the joy of a hike, for example. They also worked hard to make campers feel more physically comfortable while outdoors, as on this hiking trip campers described to me:

"It was wet. It seemed like a curse. We'd just barely get our tents up and it would be like a downpour." I ask, "How did you deal with the weather?" The boys reply, "We sang songs." "We made sure we kept dry." "Chiefs put baby powder in our boots."

(Fieldnotes, 10-28-03)

Sometimes chiefs succeed in developing a love for outdoor recreation within campers, but many times they do not. On their return from a week-long hiking trip, many of the Neché girls said they learned to appreciate camp more because hiking in the rain was horrible. But the point is not to make campers into rock climbers, mountaineers or even nature-lovers, it is to change their behaviors and to develop in them an appreciation for social life.

Just as nature at camp must be molded to fit a certain definition of wholesome outdoors, young people's behaviors are meant to mold into normalized, socially accepted versions of personal comportment. Staff members constantly remind campers to tuck in their shirts and brush their teeth. Grammar, language, personal space, and dress are persistently monitored. I remember vividly camper Cristina's personal goal for her upcoming wilderness trip: to learn to chew with her mouth closed. Another day, I overheard the Mahican boys tell a new camper about "chapel". Each week the camp community gets together in chapel, a space outfitted with benches in the woods overlooking the lake, and discusses a value or ethics topic together. Bob, the new camper, was worried it would be like church. After the boys assured him that they don't pray, someone instructed him, "You don't spit or talk."

These personal hygiene, comportment and body care issues are not needed to get along in nature, but to get by in society. The insistence on these behaviors underscores that part of Eckerd's therapeutic strategy is training for a productive engagement in the work force and wider society. Some of the skills required are self-evident, like learning to read and do math. Other behaviors and skills, such as learning to set a table or speaking in formal language, or working until the bell sounds, are the "hidden rules" required to get by in

'middle-class' and 'working-class' environments (Payne 2003). At Camp E-Wen-Akee, both nature and youth are coaxed into specific roles and behaviors.

The Practice of Wilderness Therapy at Camp

Constructions of nature and of difference influence who is selected to attend Camp E-Wen-Akee's program, who chooses to work at camp, and the way that nature is interpreted and called upon within daily life at camp. It is important to critically examine such nature constructions to better interpret the specific practices employed in camp's therapeutic strategy. Yet there is a danger in assigning all of the therapeutic work that takes place at camp to the conceptual. As the former section attests, nature is not an inert backdrop for the social program, and young people are not always receptive to change. People living at camp must constantly negotiate a multitude of nature's non-human elements that are sometimes loud, bothersome, intrusive, brilliant and untidy. Just as camp staff must constantly reframe nature experience to make it more palatable to disgruntled campers, and community members must police the nature-social borders to keep campsites tidy, the doing of wilderness therapy is a practice that takes place moment to moment.

'Class', 'nature', 'gender', and 'wilderness therapy' do not exist as fixed entities, but their effects can be observed as people enact them in mundane actions and interpret them in everyday discourse. It is in moments of slippage, when nature is where it shouldn't be, or when class barriers melt away in a moment of laughter or assert themselves in the form of an expensive bicycle, that the effort that goes into making the messy world fit into such purified and abstract categories is made clear. It takes just one brush of a hurricane to show how much work it takes to keep 'nature' out of the campsites. And there are moments when 'us

and them' distinctions between staff members and campers dissolve. One such moment took place near Halloween when staff members and campers alike stood in Chuckwagon and described their favorite Halloween costumes. Being just a few years apart in age, chiefs and campers could share an appreciation for the "Mutant Ninja Turtle Rangers" outfits and laugh together at the thought of a tall rather gruff boy wanting to be B.J. from the preschooler show "Barney" when he was a little boy.

These slippages inspired me to consider how nature-human interactions at Camp E-Wen-Akee are engineered to present nature as organized, recreational, and difficult and how campers are encouraged to adopt such values as their own through specific performances within nature. As feminist social scientists have pointed out, identities do not preexist their construction but are acted out in present moments (Butler 2004; Sundberg 2004). The performance of new identities in a space claimed as wholesome nature is one of the key strategies camp uses to effect behavioral change in young people, and to equip them with pro-social values and skills.

5.

Engaging Bodies: Ecological Strategy in Wilderness Therapy

There is nothing like emptying out a group latrine bucket to pungently illustrate the material reality of bodies. Much of the daily schedule at Camp E-Wen-Akee is devoted to caring for the physical body: dressing, showering, brushing teeth, cooking meals, chopping wood for heat, using the outhouse. More time still is devoted to regulating bodily comportment. Staff members instruct campers on how to walk, how to do chores, where to place one's gaze, how to interpret another's movements. Campers are literally fit into different modes of moving through life. After observing such practices for some time, I realized that the object of my attention was not only individual bodies, but also the interactions between bodies. The therapeutic strategy in the nature-culture of Camp E-Wen-Akee is worked out through transactions between the camper and other people, objects, and places. The knowledge that I produced from the ethnographic research was manifested through exactly the same process: interaction with other bodies at camp. It is precisely this dynamic—embodied engagement—through which Camp E-Wen-Akee staff members attempt to guide campers into new behaviors and new ways of thinking about themselves. Not surprisingly, the formalized therapies such as Relapse Prevention, Reality Therapy, and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, draw on what can be learned about oneself from immediate experience with others. However humble, emptying group latrine buckets is a disciplinary strategy intended to promote care for self, and care for others.

For campers, a focus on mundane practices is meant to illustrate the interdependent nature of social life; how one's actions always impact another, and how another's actions register back on one's own life. Theoretically, attention to material practices at camp reveals

the ecological, networked structure of social life. Learning and therapy at camp is experiential: the campers gain skills through performing actions. Observation of the body, specifically, how it is disciplined, cared for, and acquires new skills through material engagement, brings into view the way that therapy takes place.

Geographic Attention to Bodies

The body has received much attention in social geography as well as in the other social sciences.⁵⁰ Recently, some geographers have been concerned not only with abstract, socially constructed, and discursive conceptualizations of the body, but also with embodiment, that is to say with the process of living and theorizing through material bodies.⁵¹ In her research with mentally ill patients in therapeutic spaces, Parr (1999) challenges rationalist, artificial divisions of mind and body by conceptualizing the body as both a site of inscription and as locus of identity, emotion, and resistance. She suggests that mind and body can be understood as aspects of a singularity. This perspective is helpful in thinking through the way that identity and behavioral change in campers is wrought by specific bodily practices.

At Camp E-Wen-Akee, the physical body is regulated, disciplined, trained, enskilled, made active, and expressed. It is principally through engagement with tools, people, and places that campers are meant to change their behaviors and their self-concept. However, the body is also used as metaphor, and the socially constructed aspects of class, gender, race, and other categories of difference are worked out through and over campers' bodies. In light of this, I find Moss and Dyck's (2003, 60) conceptualization of embodiment helpful: "We think

⁵⁰ For a review of this work see Longhurst (2001).

of embodiment as lived spaces where bodies are located corporeally and conceptually, concretely and metaphorically, materially and discursively. This means *being* simultaneously part of bodily forms, their social constructions and the materialization of their constitutive interaction.” They imagine embodiment as taking into account both material and symbolic transactions.

Judith Butler (2004) has theorized that gender is a “corporeal style” (113), not an expression of an internal core or essence. That is to say, gender attributes are constituted through repeated social performances, or acts that are sanctioned and regulated by the fiction that heterosexuality is the fundamental condition of human life. She too is interested in challenging the Cartesian binary that underlies inner/outer, woman/man, and nature/culture in order to proliferate subject positions in the world. Although Butler cautions that insights from her work about the contingency and performed nature of gender cannot be simply mapped onto conceptualizations of race and other categories of difference, her work encourages me to consider the performative function of certain practices at camp. The repeated doing of socially-acceptable practices appears to be a means of performing socially-acceptable identities, with the hope that the doing will prompt campers to adopt these new identities as their own. To work this theorization through, however, requires paying close attention to people’s material bodies as they move through camp’s places and routines.

Robyn Longhurst (2001, 1) contends that “...the bodies articulated in geographers’ texts have tended to be theoretical, discursive, fleshless bodies. A distinction has been drawn between discursive bodies and material bodies.” In her research with pregnant women, heterosexual men, and managers in the spaces of the city, restroom, and workplace,

⁵¹ To name just a few examples: Parr (1999); Hinchcliffe (2000); Prorok (2000) Bondi and Davidson (2003); Longhurst (2001; 2003); Thrift (2003).

respectively, she shows that meanings and practices come together in lived bodies, whose boundaries are not neatly contained. In her reckoning, the way that bodies spill out, ooze, and transgress borders demonstrates a "politics of fluidity" (3). She writes that bodies are simultaneously 'real', socially constructed and "always in a state of becoming with places" (5). Further, her focus on the body challenges geographers to rethink whose bodies matter. "Those people whose bodies are understood to be messy and / or out of control-the disabled, pregnant, lactating, dirty, queer, fat, elderly, poor- are likely to be marginalised as illegitimate bearers of geographical knowledge"(26). The body, because of its engagement with other bodies, because it is messy, can be the starting point for theory. This is much the same point Moss and Dyck (2003, 60) make:

Separating bodies as outcomes from their constitutive material and discursive processes severs the living connection between bodies and those things that create, make up and sustain bodies themselves. As well, an embodied social geography is concerned with constructing knowledge that theorizes *from* bodies, privileging the *material* ways in which bodies are constituted, experienced and represented.

In my analysis of bodies at Camp E-Wen-Akee, I start with a focus on embodiment and work backward to ask, what geographical knowledge is to be learned from 'out-of-control' youth bodies in a wilderness therapy camp? In this chapter I first consider *how* bodies are disciplined and cared for within Camp E-Wen-Akee's residential program. Engagement is both the topic of my discussion and my methodological approach.

N. Katherine Hayles (1995a; 1995b) theorizes that humans experience life as a stream of "unmediated flux" from which the individual must make sense. Rather than understanding the world because the individual can detach oneself from it, she posits just the opposite, "everything we know about the world we know because we interact with it" (Hayles 1995a, 48). Drawing on research with other creatures, she demonstrates that to live in a different

body is to experience a different world, because the structures through which bodies perceive the world can be quite dissimilar. She (1995b, 148) contends, “[r]eality originates at the interface where an organism capable of perception, at whatever level, encounters the unmediated flux. Worlds come into being as a result of this interactivity.” This observation has important methodological and ontological implications.

It is through sensuous interaction (Abram 1996) with other bodies that I as researcher, and the young people at camp learn and make our way through the world. I can create no knowledge about camp that is not mediated by my interactions at camp. What I learn is a product of experience and translation. The kinds of bodies we are matter, as illustrated in the different ways gender plays out in transactions at camp. I attempt to push on the boundaries of whose bodies count by bringing attention to the nonhuman bodies who co-constitute the therapeutic strategy at camp. Just as campers are meant to stretch their concern from self to other, my aim is to expand notions of embodied engagement to include the myriad non-human others with whom humans are constantly engaged. A focus on engagement reveals the ecological nature of social life.

Camp Therapies

Therapeutic change at Camp E-Wen-Akee results from paying close attention to embodied engagement with others, observing the effects of one’s interactions, and then practicing new and different actions that will elicit desired results. Camp incorporates several different formalized therapies within its program, all of which rely heavily on learning from present interactions. It is important to point out, however, that the Eckerd camp model, derived from the Dallas Salesmanship Club Camp, pre-existed these therapies. Long before

Reality Therapy and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention and Relapse Prevention were developed, for example, there was the Dallas Salesmanship Club Camp which believed that therapeutic change occurred as a result of a child living in an activity-rich, caring, and highly-structured environment. Therapy did not occur during an hour-long session with a social worker or therapist, it happened all day long in the context of living closely with a small group of people (see chapter 2). Although Eckerd has adopted and adapted several relatively new therapeutic models into its program, its therapeutic foundation is the moment-to-moment therapy that occurs from living in close proximity with others.

Camp E-Wen-Akee's administrators refer to its therapeutic model as cognitive-behavioral in approach (Discussion with Winston, Camp E-Wen-Akee administrator, 6-26-03; Interview with Grady, Camp E-Wen-Akee administrator, 1-9-06). They incorporate aspects of Reality Therapy and Choice Theory into their program and use the Relapse Prevention Model with both sex offenders and campers with substance abuse issues. Therapeutic Crisis Intervention is employed with all groups in camp.

Reality Therapy, developed by William Glasser, places heavy emphasis on the development of a caring and trusting relationship between the counselor and counselee. In recent years Glasser has developed "Choice Therapy" which centers on this basic question: "Is what I am doing getting me closer to the people I need?" Both Reality Therapy and Choice Therapy begin from the premise that all problems derive from "disconnections" between the counselee and the people they need. Rather than delving into the past, these therapies focus on the present "because all human problems are caused by unsatisfying present relationships" (William Glasser Institute 2006). Camp E-Wen-Akee uses Reality

Therapy and its practice of “emotional interviewing” as the base model for problem solving (Interview with Grady, Camp E-Wen-Akee administrator, 1-9-06).

Relapse Prevention Therapy (RPT) is another therapy classified in the cognitive-behavioral tradition. It was initially developed as a maintenance program for those who had already received treatment for addictive behaviors but in recent years has become a treatment program in its own right. It takes as its starting point the notion that relapse is a failure of the individual to maintain changes in behavior and therefore its focus is on behavioral self-control (Parks and Marlatt 2000). Research into relapse rates suggests the majority of relapses occurred under one of three conditions: negative emotional states, interpersonal conflict, and social pressure (Marlatt and Gordon 1985). A RPT therapist will encourage the counselee to identify his addictive cycle and to develop coping strategies to avoid high-risk situations.

Grady, an administrator at Camp E-Wen-Akee, explained that RPT forms the basis of therapeutic treatment for the Pathfinder group (campers with sexual offending issues) who are trained to “examine their offense cycle, develop coping strategies, and look at their general patterns of behavior” (Interview with Grady, Camp E-Wen-Akee administrator, 1-9-06). Twice each week the Pathfinders have “Psychoeducational” groups in which they are taught the terminology of sexual offense, the sexual offense cycle, relapse prevention, and anger management skills. Once weekly the Pathfinders have “Focus Group,” a forum for discussion of the issues and experiences that have come up over the course of the week for the members of the group. The Relapse Prevention Therapy model is also employed with campers with substance abuse issues. These special groups are run by licensed counselors hired by Camp E-Wen-Akee and by upper-level camp administrators.

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) is the third formalized therapeutic training employed at Camp. All new chiefs undergo a five-day training and certification program in TCI while attending Eckerd's four-week new staff training, called "Catatogas". Every six months all of the staff involved in direct work with campers must complete a recertification program. TCI is a crisis prevention and intervention model that draws on crisis prevention, de-escalation techniques, crisis management, physical restraint techniques, and learning cycles within a residential institution. It was developed by the Family Life Development Center at Cornell University in 1979 after the Center had conducted a study of child abuse and neglect in New York State foster care institutions (Residential Child Care Project 2006). The curriculum the Center staff developed out of the study was pilot-tested in eight institutions in 1981-1982 and was further evaluated in the US and UK from 1994-1997 (Residential Child Care Project 2006). They report that the latter study demonstrated a decrease in physical restraints, fighting, physical assaults, runaways, and verbal threats in the institutions that used the TCI program. In addition, Center staff report that staff trained in TCI felt they could more effectively manage a crisis (Residential Child Care Project 2006). Anecdotally, several long-time employees at Camp E-Wen-Akee told me that physical restraints had become much less common at camp over the years, presumably because staff had learned better de-escalation techniques that can prevent campers from becoming physically aggressive.

These three therapeutic models have in common an emphasis on actions, increased self-awareness, narrative, and the present. Rather than excavating the past or delving into psychoanalytic theory, these therapies use experiences and conflicts as they arise to change behavior. They rely on embodied presence. These models fit well into a program that

already centered on discussing problems as they arise, and that relied on providing new activities and contexts for young people in order to promote self-awareness, self-confidence and relationship-building. They also seem particularly well suited to the young people at camp, many of whom have Attention Deficit Disorder and enjoy a high level of activity. These therapies rely on attention to one's engagement with others, and at Camp E-Wen-Akee, the starting point for therapy is attention to one's physical needs, one's embodied existence.

Care and Discipline

The young person who enters Camp E-Wen-Akee is both vulnerable and dangerous. She is dangerous because she has offended others in society and at-risk, or vulnerable, because it is likely she has not received the kind of care- stable housing, nurturing, education, physical safety- expected for a child.⁵² The offensive/offended young person requires both discipline and care. Camp staff members regard discipline and care as two sides of the same coin; one shows care by establishing boundaries through structuring time, space and bodies.

Disciplining Bodies and Creating a Culture of Care

Countless rules govern campers' bodies. A partial list includes: campers must adhere to a dress code; they must get out of bed on time; they must ask for permission to use a bathroom; they must brush their teeth; they must walk with their group at all times; they may not walk away from the group; they must use proper table manners at meals; they must carry a tool with the pointed end facing the ground; they must avert their eyes when passing another group in campsite; they may not touch the wildlife. Codes of behavior govern all

activities that are conducted within Camp E-Wen-Akee. The rules are reinforced verbally and spatially. Before each activity, the members of the group gather to “set agreements” for how the activity will be conducted. At the close of the activity the group meets again to review how and if all group members adhered to the rules. If a group is experiencing problems, however, the disciplining takes a spatial form. The campers stop their activity, move into a different space, stand in a circle and discuss the problem until the group can come to a resolution.⁵³ In many ways, the discipline is worked out through the individual body; for example, in forcing young men to cut their hair, or by prohibiting makeup for boys and girls. In the most extreme moments when a body is deemed “out of control”, and threatens others or camp property, staff members resort to physically restraining the camper’s body.

All of this regulation and control over campers’ bodies is meant to occur within what one camp administrator called “a culture of compassion and caring” (Interview with Art Rosenberg, Eckerd Youth Alternatives Administrator, 2-28-2003). New chiefs are taught during their training period to make an extra effort to show kindness and support to the campers. This often takes the form of doing something to care for bodies. For example, one rainy morning when I stayed with the Pathfinder group, I watched as the chiefs woke extra early, gathered up all of the campers’ rain ponchos and brought them into the Pathfinders’ sleep tent when they woke the campers. Being consistent in the way one handles discipline and enforces the daily schedule is seen as another one of the ways that chiefs show they care. Much is made of the fact that in each and every camp in Eckerd’s Wilderness Educational System, campers are woken at 7:00 am. Emphasized even more than the time at which

⁵² See chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of the factors that lead a young person to enroll at Camp E-Wen-Akee.

campers are woken is how they are woken. Chiefs quietly enter the sleep tents and gently wake the campers, either by greeting each camper by name, or singing, or with a gentle touch. "Just having the same person wake them up every day in a non-judgmental and accepting way is therapy for these kids," explained one of the camp's administrators (Fieldnotes, 5-8-03).

Chief's Touch

Two examples of bodily interaction between campers and staff members serve to show the poles of physical discipline and thoughtful care. Alice, a former campsite chief and master counselor, told me that typically every night each camper receives a hug from a chief. She said "they [hugs] are part of the program whether its written down or not. It's part of the chief's touch". She explained that the staff members must teach kids about physical space because the kids don't know how to appropriately touch another person. "They have to learn to stop and think about if it's okay to hug someone or to ask 'how do I know when I've asked for too many hugs?'" (Interview with Alice, 10-26-04). This intimate physical interaction is both a learning opportunity and a method to show care. It is governed by its own set of rules-when the hug can happen, where, for how long, under certain circumstances.

At the other end of the physical interaction spectrum is the "restraint" used to stop the movement of a camper body that is transgressing the boundaries of safe behavior. It too is bound by rules: the proper way to do a restraint so the individual is not physically harmed, the way to narrate the event so that feelings are not injured, the conditions under which the restraint can be used, and the reporting procedure staff members must follow after the

⁵³ Much of the disciplining work is achieved through the spatial layout of buildings and the spatial relationships among places on the camp property. For a full analysis of spatial disciplining, see chapter 6.

restraint. It is regarded by camp staff members as a means to ensure the safety of the camper, the other people at camp, as well as the camp property. And it is a way to demonstrate that campers' behavioral boundaries will be vigilantly policed by staff members. It is meant to be an action of last resort, when efforts to de-escalate the camper have failed. The lengthy excerpt from my fieldnotes describes how the circumstances for one specific restraint developed and how the restraint was carried out.

Bob is a new member of the Mahicans' group; he has been in the group for three days. Several times today he was called on transgressions of the rules: talking in the box, referring to drugs in conversation, singing a song with inappropriate lyrics. Each time he was corrected, he looked puzzled over his mistake, but accepted the correction and said that he would try not to repeat it. It has been a long, hard day in the Mahicans' group. One of the boys refuses to do his "dailies", a mandatory writing exercise, and now the group is standing outside in a long huddle in the dark. The rain makes heavy 'thud' noises as it hits the tarp roofs of the tent structures. Bob is fidgeting in the huddle, scraping soil into a mound under his boot.

Chief Lulu announces, "We walking up top." This is an imposed consequence for huddles that aren't resolved. The group is obliged to walk up the service road to the main office building, a walk that takes about ten minutes. Jonny, the calmest and seemingly highest functioning young man in the group, turns to a chief, very agitated, and says that he has taken his medication and is supposed to be in bed after he takes it. As people prepare to walk up top I see him sit on a log and put his head in his hands. I hear sniffles. Meanwhile, Bob has also become agitated. He swings his thin arms out to his sides as he asks why he has to walk up top because another person isn't doing his share. His voice grows louder and soon he's swearing. He starts to walk off toward his tent and away from the group. Chief Lulu warns him that he can't move away from group and then she quickens her step and puts her hands on his shoulders. Bob screams, "Don't fucking touch me!" and spins away from her. He then changes direction and charges through the group. As the group gathers at the start of the service road he hollers out that he's going to run up top. He sprints off into the darkness, his yellow poncho flaring out behind him like tattered wings. The group runs to follow him. It's all uphill on the muddy and puddled road. The blue lanterns swing from the arms of people alternately walking fast and running to keep up. It takes maybe five or ten minutes to climb the hill. Grit from the muddy road flies up onto bare legs. As we approach the Chuckwagon, the destination of the walk, we see that another group is there, the Pathfinders, consulting with a master counselor. We keep our distance from the group, waiting for our turn. Soon, the Pathfinders file past us, completely silent, heads down and Mahicans do the same.

It's our turn to process with a chief. After a few minutes master counselor Chief Karen has talked through the issue with the group and determines we can go back to our campsite. But

Bob is still yelling, saying he doesn't care about the group, he just wants to get to bed. When he hears we are ready to return to the campsite, he declares, "I'm running back!" and takes off down the road. Master counselor Chief Barnaby yells out, "Hey Chief, restrain him!" Chief Dexter runs after Bob, catching up to him at a bend in the road. Bob evades him for a second, yelling. But Dexter quickly wraps his arms around Bob's shoulders, and they careen off the road into the shadows where they are no longer visible to the group. Chief Barnaby has sprinted towards them. The group runs to follow. Chief Lulu arranges the group to stand at the edge of the road to watch. The lanterns are placed on the gravel. There is a single dark form in the wet grass under an apple tree. Deep roaring noises come from the form. Three counselors silently hold Bob down, while Bob is making sounds like a wild animal. I have never heard a human being make such noises.

The staff do not say a word, they simply hold the boy to the ground. The campers are silent, just watching. The only sounds are Bob's roar and his occasional offensive comment. He struggles against the restraint. This goes on for a long time, maybe fifteen minutes. The only time a chief speaks is to let the others know he is changing his position. When Bob has been silent for a while, a chief asks him if he is ready for them to release him. Chief Karen slowly lifts herself off from Bob's legs, then Chief Barnaby, and then Chief Dexter. Karen and Dexter return to the group on the road. Meanwhile, Chief Barnaby continues to speak with Bob who is now seated in the wet grass on the hillside, knees bent with his arms draped over his legs. I don't hear the conversation but by the end of the group discussion, Bob is much calmer. Later, Chief Barnaby tells Chiefs Dexter and Lulu that Bob confessed he has made some progress on controlling his anger in the past year, but working on his anger "is why I'm here". He attacked a teacher back home.

(Fieldnotes, 5-24-03)

Chief Barnaby restrained Bob because he felt Bob needed to learn that he cannot separate from the group. Chiefs cannot manage a group unless the members are together. There are safety concerns—for Bob's welfare in the woods at night, for the welfare of other people on camp property who Bob may attack—but mostly, in this case, for securing the sense of tight boundaries for campers.

These two poles of interaction, the hug and the restraint, demonstrate the dangers involved in physical interaction between camp residents. Each action, the hug and the restraint, can be quite powerful in both therapeutic and harmful ways. A hug can be interpreted as a sexual advance. Perhaps giving hugs is not listed in the staff manual for a good reason. As chief Alice alluded, a young person who has experienced sexual abuse may

be quite confused by intimate contact, and may have difficulty interpreting it. Further, given that chiefs and campers live together often in secluded settings, there is ample opportunity for a staff member to take advantage of a camper. The possibility that the camper can feel cared for and can learn appropriate physical contact with others through a hug delivered by a chief co-exists with the risk of harmful transgression.

The restraint also poses substantial risk and potential for learning. The restraint is the procedure of last resort, and according to Therapeutic Crisis Intervention material, should only occur after all available means to avert the physical restraint have been taken, and all efforts in working with children in crisis should respect the child's dignity (Residential Child Care Project 2003). In addition to producing psychological harm to young people who have suffered abuse, a physical restraint can also injure or kill the child, and can injure staff members who conduct the restraint (for information on research on restraint fatalities see Residential Child Care Project 2003). Eckerd has in place procedures meant to safeguard against injury, including an extensive incident report and evaluative procedure that requires staff members to answer questions such as "Has the child been allowed to separate from an audience? Was additional help called? What was done prior to the restraint? What were the pre-cursors to getting to that point?" (Interview with Grady, Camp E-Wen-Akee administrator, 1-9-06). Despite these efforts, as Grady said, "Injuries do occur." In 2000, a child in one of Eckerd's Florida camps died from asphyxiation following a restraint. A twelve-year old, sixty-pound boy who had been in camp just two weeks died after a 320 pound staff member (who had just received a promotion and was named Eckerd employee of the year) restrained him (Stutzman 2000). Chief Grady told me that within the Eckerd organization and within the state of Vermont there is a "push to reduce restraints." He said

that when looking at the restraint data, they often find one or two campers account for the majority of restraint incidents, and for young people who are physically aggressive they will look for an alternate placement outside of Eckerd. Grady stated, "We are not one program for all kids."

Chief Grady also observed that in each crisis situation the staff must ask, "What is the safest thing to do?" This question is telling in the way that it points out the subjectivity involved in deciding when to lay hands on another. He added that the more experienced staff members tend to conduct fewer restraints, indicating that as staff members increase their counseling skills, they are better able to effectively deal with situations before they become physical crises. This points to one of the weaknesses in Eckerd's system, which is that those who spend the most time with the campers, who live with them twenty-fours a day, are the most inexperienced in the organization. In the restraint I described above, the chiefs involved in the situation had each been working at camp for about five months. The master counselors, who were supervising the chiefs and who called for and participated in the restraint, each had two years of experience at camp. Bob was not attacking a person or property when he was restrained, he was running away from the group. According to TCI policy, running away is not a valid reason to conduct a restraint, yet running away violates Camp E-Wen-Akee's rules. The restraint was a judgement call made by employees with relatively little working experience.

The potentially positive outcome of the restraint was that Bob opened up to staff members and admitted that he had problems with physical aggression. It created a moment when Chief Barnaby and Bob could talk directly about Bob's behavioral issues and patterns.

Hugs and restraints are at the extreme ends of a continuum of disciplining and caring actions. Between these two poles of interaction are the many routines and chores that make up daily life for campers. Because they spend most of their time outside, campers must quickly learn to dress to keep themselves dry, warm or cool, and protected from insects or snow or sun. From the very beginning of their stay at camp then, individuals are obliged to pay attention to their material bodies and the conditions of their environment. Other tasks like showering, working with tools, and traveling by foot around the property require that people maintain attention to their actions and surroundings. The extension of attention from self to other is encouraged by chores such as planning meals, cleaning latrine buckets, chopping wood, carrying laundry, and setting the dinner table. Campers learn to care for others in a highly routinized environment. In this way, discipline and care are meant to support one another. As one Eckerd administrator said of the campers, "Structure has been absent in their lives... now it's a security" (Interview with Art Rosenberg, Eckerd Youth Alternatives Administrator, 2-28-2003).

The culture of care and the disciplinary regime are enacted and brought into being each day through a range of practices. Activity, written and verbal expression, and movement and rest are key strategies used to propel therapy. Each practice is meant to both manage bodies and to engage campers in potentially therapeutic physical interactions.

Interactive Strategies to Engage Bodies

Activity

"Thwack! A mittened hand contacts a snowpant-covered hip. Snow puffs up into a mini-drift as a heavy pack boot skids to a halt. "I got you!" "You did not!" Young women shriek with laughter as they chase each other through the snowy clearing. Thwack! "Oh sorry! I didn't mean to do that!" "OW!" The young women of Neché spin through the falling flakes in a

spirited game of team tag. Once tagged, Emma, a blond sixteen year old, turns round in a circle three times, her blue scarf unravelling, as she hollers, "I'm great! I'm great! I'm great!" As her arms and feet try to regain balance, she scans the group for her partner who is running away.

Beth stands outside the group. Her face is covered by a maroon neckwarmer and a hood pushed low over her forehead. She looks down at the ground and kicks at the snow with her boot. Eventually, she joins with the group and plays the next two games: bumper tag and Fox and Rabbit.

Chief Rose announces the end of the games and someone calls for a huddle. Breathing heavily the girls immediately form a tight circle. A camper says she called the huddle because she noticed that Beth hadn't participated in the first game. Beth, who keeps her eyes on the ground contends that she doesn't need to play the game if she doesn't want to. This spurs a conversation about Beth's participation in school. A camper points out that her lack of participation affects the group. Beth says that the group doesn't "know anything about me" and she doesn't think it's any of the group's business. Megan counters that statement saying that Beth's behaviors bring her issues from home into the group. Chief Rose notes that Beth doesn't seem able to hear the group's feedback at the moment but that maybe Beth could consider why the group doesn't know much of her life after four months of living with her at camp. Chief Rose suggests to Beth that she think about that for a while, and then she says it's time for the group to go to "logs" to work on skits.

(Fieldnotes, 4-3-03)

Group games like "Fox and Rabbit" provide the campers and staff members a chance to have some fun and work off excess energy, but they also are moments of physical engagement in which campers can practice appropriate interaction. Group games often elicit anti-social behaviors, the same behaviors that brought the young people to camp for therapy in the first place. In the above example, campers notice that Beth doesn't immediately participate in the game. They 'read' her body language, for she does not say anything at all at first. In the discussion that followed, Chief Rose and the other campers encourage Beth to connect her present behavior with other actions. Interactions such as these seem to present a different kind of therapeutic possibility than talk therapy alone might elicit. Non-verbal interactions can be entered into the therapeutic equation. Written expression is equally valued for its ability to divert potential anti-social interactions, as I describe below.

Expression as Preventative Tactic

Discussion about the body is nowhere more explicit than among the Pathfinders, the group of boys who have sexually offended. Chuck, a camp administrator and former Pathfinders' chief, explained that the boys in Pathfinders' are "highly sexualized" as a result of abuse and must be taught the appropriate ways to relate to other people, especially sexually (Fieldnotes, 1-9-03). Therefore, there is frank, open, and frequent conversation about not only how campers are using their bodies, but also more subtle body-topics like the way one camper looks at another, and the content of sexual daydreams. There is a constant movement from private to public, from interior to exterior, in the expectation that by making deviant thoughts public, the young men can learn what is socially appropriate, and avoid acting on potentially harmful impulses.⁵⁴ I begin describing this with an example of the way that sexual thoughts are aired through the act of writing. The following fieldnotes were recorded after my first visit with the Pathfinder group.

It's journal time. The group members climb the open steps to "Learning Logs," the building that serves as their meeting room and classroom. The deep screech of chairs being pulled away from the table and the rustle of paper and ping of metal binder rings opening fills the room. The boys quickly sit in chairs around rectangular folding tables arranged together and open lined paper notebooks. They pull pencils and pens from their ever-present backpacks. Someone asks, "Can we give our journals to Chief Cherie to read?" Chief Barnaby replies, "Yeah, it's okay but don't sugarcoat it for her. It's got to be what you'd write anyway." I begin my own note keeping and ten minutes later a notebook lands open on the table before me. The young man is frustrated because his mom did not give him his girlfriend's address. He wrote that he really needs to write her. After reading, I turn to one of the chiefs and ask for the procedure in reading journals. He says I could write back. I don't want to be invasive, or too directive. I write, "Sometimes when I want to communicate with someone but can't, I write that person a letter which I never send. It helps me to get my feelings out and helps me feel better. Maybe you could write to "Julie" but not send it."

⁵⁴ For more on the ways that Pathfinders are spatially disciplined differently from other campers based on their history of sexual activity, see chapter 6.

Another person gives me a journal and then a third arrives. This one belongs to Al, an amiable and articulate boy who displays positive leadership in the group. He wrote about some of the details of his day. Then he wrote about sexual feelings he had when he noticed a female camper at chuckwagon. This thought transformed into a sexual fantasy in which he imagined his sister "giving me a blowjob". Several questions come to my mind at this point. Why did he give this to me to read? Is he trying to shock me? How do I appropriately respond to this? Finally, I write, "Thank you for trusting me enough to share this with me." It is the end of the journal time and Al has just enough time to hastily read my words and put his journal back into the locked box where all the notebooks are kept. Later in the evening I speak with Chief McBragg about the content of the journal entry. He says that Al was probably not trying to shock me, but was frankly expressing his true thoughts.

(Fieldnotes, 5-8-03)

Although this excerpt brings up many potentially interesting topics, not least of which was defining my positionality in these encounters, I wish to highlight here how the act of writing is meant to replace one action with another action. The writing is a movement intended to substitute for a potentially harmful action. The written record provides a way for Eckerd staff members to maintain surveillance on campers' thoughts, and a means of self-discipline for campers, but also provides a procedure to respond to thoughts.⁵⁵ The journal procedure creates an opportunity for engagement.⁵⁶ The practice of expressing thoughts through writing and discussing the meaning of interactions is also not limited to the Pathfinder group but is part of the therapeutic strategy throughout camp.

⁵⁵ In a Foucauldian analysis, one might refer to this practice as part of "the regime of power-knowledge-pleasure that sustains the discourse on human sexuality in our part of the world," (Foucault 1990, 11). The act of "confessing" or verbalizing sexual thoughts could be cited as one of the ways "power" disciplines sexual discourse. The confession is a means for the speaker [or writer, see Bowerbank (1999)] to self-correct, an exercise of discipline by and through the individual.

⁵⁶ This kind of discussion is not limited to journal writing; the Pathfinders have a weekly group therapy session for sexual offenders in which they speak out loud some of their fantasies and receive verbal feedback from the therapist.

Movement and Rest

In a traditional school setting, a place where most of the Camp E-Wen-Akee campers have experienced failure, order is maintained by keeping bodies still. The outdoor setting of Camp E-Wen-Akee, by contrast, allows staff to employ both movement and rest to maintain order among campers. Especially among young people who have Attention Deficit Disorder, action may be one of the best methods to hold attention. If a huddle is not making productive progress, that is, if the young person who is the focus of the issue is not accepting redirection or actively working to solve her problem, the huddle literally moves. The chief will direct the group to walk for a bit and then draw the huddle back together. Implicit in this action is an acknowledgement that physical movement may prompt an inner shift. During their initial job training, the new counselor is taught to 'read' the situation. As Chief Nikki explained to me, "The whole point of huddles is to do it when you're moving." If a huddle takes too long, you're supposed to move the group. "The three questions you are supposed to pose are: 1) What do you need? 2) What do I need? 3) What is going on in this environment?" (Fieldnotes, 10-28-03).

Movement is a strategy, as is rest. If it appears that the camper simply isn't ready to acknowledge or change her behavior, as in the example of Beth's non-participatory behavior, the chief may decide to hold the conversation for another time, to let it rest. Movement and rest occur alternately throughout the day, allowing for times of high and low physical activity. There are periods of heavy outdoor work like chopping wood or intense play like running games, and there is a mandatory "siesta" every afternoon when campers quietly rest in their tents. Sleep is considered one of the campers' basic needs so staff make sure that campers get a long period of sleep each night, going to bed as early as 8:00 pm.

Staff members also come to realize that certain individuals have different needs for movement, and that movement can produce a kind of stillness. One evening, Chief Nikki explained that Pathfinders staff bought one of the boys a ball in order to help contain his energy. I had noticed him earlier in the day. I watched as he tossed the soft black ball from hand to hand, kicked it along the ground, even shoved it in his mouth. In huddles the chiefs continually handed him things just to keep him active, and to keep his body occupied so he could attend to the conversation. Without the small movements, he would have been making greater movements, disrupting the group.

As campers progress at camp, they seem to become more aware of their own bodily needs, as when Floyd told his group, ““I really need to run and get my energy out.” The group had spent much of their day standing around and processing problems; people were grouchy and uncooperative. It took some time for the group to decide which game to play but once “Capture the Flag” got started, the whole energy of the group shifted, as I describe in my fieldnotes:

As soon as Chief McBragg calls the game to order, people begin to move. Some approach the boundary line and teasingly jump back and forth, evading a tag from an opponent. Others stake out positions behind trees, waiting for an opportunity to make a dash to the opposing teams' flag. A third group hangs back near their own flag, acting as guards. As the game progresses people are leaping off rocks, sprinting to and from locations, warily shadowing others who look like they may attack. Some players wait anxiously to be released from jail. They shout out directions and warnings to their teammates, and call for assistance. It's a whirl of activity. Sweatshirts are cast off beyond the boundaries of the game as bodies heat up. It takes all of my concentration to survey where others are and judge my next move. The air is full of the thud of boots landing, the yells of triumph and warning, the taunts of those trying to draw attention, and laughter.

We play several rounds of the game, perhaps for 45 minutes. It's hard to tell how much time has past because I have been so involved in the game. In all of this time, no huddles were called. At the end of the game, people call out “Good game!” and relive moments of the play. We are breathing hard. We huddle to evaluate the game. The energy is high but feels quite different from before we started the game. The boys' faces look brighter, their loud

voices are from happiness, not frustration, and they are able to concentrate on what's happening in the huddle.

(Fieldnotes, 5-9-03)

The movement of the game allowed for rest from the tense social atmosphere. I made another observation from this event: my relationship to the boys in the group changed as a result of my participation in the game. I was accepted as a part of the group from this moment and throughout the remainder of my visits to the Pathfinders. This repeated itself again with the other boys' group, the Mahicans. This observation highlighted the importance of non-verbal, interactive communication and opened up a new way of observing relations between people and between people and non-humans.

Sensuous Interactions

The Mahicans group was running rough the first time I encountered them. The boys had difficulty talking through the issues that came up, there was a lack of positive camper leadership in the group, and some campers couldn't keep their hands off each other, resulting in numerous restraints by staff. I found that I had difficulty engaging with them, just talking with them. Just as with the Pathfinders, my relationship with the boys significantly improved when I interacted with them in a non-verbal, interactive, and physical way. After playing physical games, they seemed to trust me more and were more willing to speak with me. From this moment forward I began to observe how much of the communication between Mahicans was non-verbal and how important movement was to them. I noticed that Mahicans didn't care to simply walk along the trails, but with the permission of the chiefs, they looked for rocks they could jump off and hills to run down. When a soccer game was interrupted by a huddle, they really wanted to get back to the game and would accept hastily made

resolutions. One night I watched as the Mahicans spontaneously and wordlessly developed a group game with the most modest resources: some dice, some bodies, and a tarp roof:

It is evening and we are standing in the wash tent waiting for people to use the box. Tim has three dice he's been carrying in his pocket all weekend. He stands below the tent and tosses the die, one at a time, up onto the tarp roof, and catches them as they fall back. Other young men start to join him and it quickly turns into a game. Occasionally a dice gets caught in a low point in the tarp and a group member stands below the roof in the wash tent and punches up under the tarp to pop it loose. Soon, there are three guys standing under the roof on the platform and couple below on the ground. They are throwing the die onto the roof, popping them off the tarp, attempting to catch the returning die, and running around to the back of the wash tent to retrieve the die that shot over the ridge line of the roof.

(Fieldnotes, 5-24-03)

This group of boys could rarely get through a meal without a huddle, but they were able to devise a game with specialized roles silently and without friction. Communication occurred not only between people but also between bodies, dice, and the angles of the roof. In these moments a kind of "sensuous interaction" was taking place amongst boys, tools, and the physical environment (Abram 1996). Abram (1996, 52) describes the way that his body adjusts to the shifting world as a "silent conversation":

It is a sort of silent conversation that I carry on with things, a continuous dialogue that unfolds far below my verbal awareness-and often, even, independent of my verbal awareness, as when my hand readily navigates the space between these scribed pages and the coffee cup across the table without having to think about it, or when my legs, hiking, continually attune and adjust themselves to the varying steepness of the mountain slopes behind this house without my verbal consciousness needing to direct those adjustments. Whenever I quiet the persistent chatter of words within my head, I find this silent or wordless dance always already going on-this improvised duet between my animal body and the fluid, breathing landscape that it inhabits.

In the example I offered above, Tim did not think out the game and then propose it; the game developed out of interaction in the present moment, and involved a heterogeneous

set of actors. As I began to consider this notion of sensuous interaction while at camp, all manner of examples sprung forth.

Camp life is rich with sounds, smells, and sensations. There is the soothing sound of wind rustling the leaves of stately maple trees, and the delicious feel of cool lake water on a torpid day, and the inviting smell of chili on the cookstove. But there is also the irritation of black fly bites, the pungent odor emanating from the outhouse, and the deep chill of putting on wet boots. When one is living outdoors in rustic conditions it is hard to deny that one's body is in constant communication with other non-human bodies. Adjustments to nonhuman nature's conditions are constantly made: mosquito nets are hung in the spring, campers adjust their daily routine to make time for shoveling snow, they splash water on their skin on a sweltering day. Outdoor life demands that campers pay attention to what is happening around them. Staff frequently draw on these conditions metaphorically, comparing them to the way one cannot control what happens in life, only how one responds to life's situations. Camp counts on nature to be unpredictable for its therapeutic value in this regard.

Experiential Learning and Work

Although it is not verbally articulated, Camp E-Wen-Akee draws on bodily interactions between campers and nonhuman nature all the time to accomplish its therapeutic goals, often in the context of work. And, in the process of doing work, bodies are changed too.

Each morning at Camp E-Wen-Akee two members of the group must prepare the "pow-wow" fire. The campers use a hand axe to slice off 8" x .5" lengths of wood from a split log. Next they use a de-barking hand tool to peel off a few handfuls of wood shavings.

When the group gathers at the pow-wow site above the campsite and each person in turn sets a personal goal for the day, the two campers doing the pow-wow chore wordlessly construct a small tower of wood slivers and fill it with shavings. During my first visit with Neché, the girls' group, I watched as two campers struggled to cut the squared slivers of pow-wow wood. In frustration they said they couldn't do it because the wood was "no good". Without a word, Emma finished her own chore, walked to the wood shed, picked up the axe and expertly produced the pow-wow wood.

Later in the day I asked Emma why the task appeared so much easier for her. Laughing she said, "They were using green wood and I was using dry." She explained that she looks at the wood carefully; if it is dark colored, it means it is wet. The light-colored wood is dry. "You look for the lines in the wood," she added (Interview with Emma, 4-4-03). Although she didn't know the names of the different kinds of trees they cut for wood, she knew the qualities of wood that made it best for small kindling. She could see and feel it. This knowledge came from working with wood over a long period of time and paying attention to it. Environmental education is not a priority at Camp E-Wen-Akee and it was not uncommon to find that campers understood the qualities of a natural object without knowing its common or scientific names. They knew nature without being taught about nature.

This is the kind of intimate knowledge that comes from doing work in the outdoors. Environmental historian Richard White (1995a) maintains that work in nature entails an embodiment which is far more intense than outdoor recreation, in the way that it heightens the senses, increases awareness, and involves struggle. He claims it is no accident that outdoor recreation in wilderness mimics physical labor in nature. It requires sensitivity to the

actions and qualities of surrounding bodies. This is what is required of campers to do physical chores like shaving wood strips or oiling a saw or learning to paddle a canoe.

Work at Camp E-Wen-Akee is understood as experiential learning. Experiential learning is often described as learning-by-doing. People at camp understand that much of their success with campers is a product of this kind of education. June, a teacher at the camp stated, ““We can do hands-on activities with kids. That’s just good education. It’s too bad that you have to be abused, with a learning disability, have a substance problem, etc. to get that kind of education” (Interview with June, 6-16-03). She believes that the outdoors offers the opportunity for “kinesthetic learning”, the use of multiple senses to acquire new skills and knowledge. This point of view is in accord with Ingold’s concept of “attentive engagement” (Ingold 2000, 354). Ingold maintains that learning a skill is accomplished not merely by watching another do the skill, but being engaged with the materials and practicing the skill. He offered the example of watching Telefol children of New Guinea learn the skill of spinning fibers for making a string bag. In order to make the thread a uniform width, he observed, the Telefol children had to make continual adjustments when spinning fibers of different sizes. The children were in “continual dialogue with the material” (Ingold 2000, 356). Emma learned about how to cut wood efficiently from her numerous dialogues with the material. Making much the same point that Abram does about knowing the world through interaction with other bodies, Ingold shows that people learn by doing actions in relationship with other entities.

The young people at camp learn because they are placed in environments and provided tools to practice skills. The learning happens through the body, and their bodies are

transformed as a result.⁵⁷ They are enskilled. Therapy at camp is constant because young people are given the opportunity to practice new skills all day long, in all sorts of settings. Staff at camp point to the 'role modeling' that long-term campers and staff provide for new campers, but it is not merely the watching but also the doing that brings about skill mastery. As Ingold put it (353),

... the novice's observation of accomplished practitioners is not detached from, but grounded in, his own active perceptual engagement with his surroundings. And the key to imitation lies in the intimate coordination of the movement of the novice's attention to others with his own bodily movement in the world. Through repeated practical trials, and guided by his observations, he gradually gets the 'feel' of things for himself—that is, he learns to fine-tune his own movements so as to achieve the rhythmic fluency of the accomplished practitioner... And in the process, each generation contributes to the next not by handing on a corpus of representations, or information in the strict sense, but rather by introducing novices into contexts which afford selected opportunities for perception and action, and by providing the scaffolding that enables them to make use of these affordances.

Learning through the body is not restricted to physical skills but extends to social skills as well. One night I watched as Logan, a camper, used superb de-escalation techniques to pacify a new and very troubled camper named Hugh. Hugh was refusing to take part in the evening journal writing. He held a five-foot long stick in his hands and waved it about. The chiefs of the group attempted to convince Hugh to put down the stick and participate in the activity, but when he refused, the staff decided to allow the rest of the group to go into learning logs to write while one chief stayed outside with him. Logan asked for permission to talk with Hugh and Chief Nikki allowed him to engage Hugh while under her supervision. I watched as Logan drew Hugh's attention away from the conflict to a discussion about the sport of lacrosse. Eventually, he was able to not only convince Hugh to drop the stick and join the group, but to reflect on his behavior and discuss it later in a huddle.

⁵⁷ For an interesting discussion of the way that Civilian Conservation Corp workers' bodies and self-concept

Although the resolution of the conflict above did not involve any kind of sensuous interaction between Hugh and Logan, it did depend on embodied presence. Logan's close proximity to Hugh, his low and soothing tone of voice, and his non-threatening stance all contributed to the peaceful conclusion.

Camp E-Wen-Akee relies on this kind of learning, not only to help campers realize their personal power in responding to and affecting their world, but for reproducing the skills and culture that are at the heart of the therapeutic nature-culture.

Cultural and Environmental Knowledge Reproduction

Campers continually enter and depart from the three groups that comprise Camp E-Wen-Akee. Staff, especially the chiefs who live full-time in the campsite, also continually cycle in and out of camp. Yet, traditions, stories, rituals, and skills remained relatively unchanged over decades. Camp culture demonstrates strong durability over time. This is because camp practices are learned and passed on from body to body in an environment that is highly structured by routine. The daily and seasonal schedules rarely vary. The social and environmental knowledges pertinent to camp practices are learned by individuals in nearly identical settings. This is very important to the culture of camp because in some cases the staff of a particular group may leave camp earlier than some campers do. For example, I watched one day as Pierce taught a new camper, Gabriel, how to do the pow-wow chore. Chief McBragg joined us for a moment and said that Pierce was the "expert" at this task, and because Pierce had been at camp for so long (nearly three years) the chiefs often asked him questions about camp procedures.

were simultaneously transformed while they transformed the spaces of American nature, see Maher (2002).

Cindi Katz (1991; 2004) has shown that children reproduce social life and environmental knowledge through their work and play. In her early research in Sudan, for example, Katz used ethnographic methods to observe children's environmental learning and ecological engagements in the context of their village's inclusion in a state-sponsored agricultural development project. In recent work (2004), she considers the impacts of global economic restructuring on the material social practices of childhood, as well as children's ongoing roles in social reproduction in two places: Howa, Sudan, and Harlem, New York. Although this is not a major theme in her book, Katz highlights the tie between landscape and knowledge in a discussion of resilience. She found that dormant agricultural knowledge resurfaced for female residents of Howa when changing social and economic circumstances in their village forced them to begin farming. This resurfacing was made possible by the fact that certain landscapes still existed. Had the farmland and forest disappeared, the women would not have been able to farm it, and the agricultural knowledge required would have remained dormant. I would like to build from this observation in my analysis of cultural and environmental reproduction at Camp E-Wen-Akee. The physical landscape and ways of living at camp have remained mostly stable over time, allowing for knowledge, stories, and skills to pass, largely uninterrupted and unimpeded, from one camper to the next. The campers reproduce the cultural life of camp.

There are dozens and dozens of chores practiced each day at camp and most of them are not skills campers carry with them to camp. Yet they learn incredibly fast. Young people who have 'failed' in school swiftly gain the ability to perform all kinds of important tasks and then to teach them to others. I was amazed one afternoon to watch Destiny, the next-to-newest member of camp, teach Austasia how to wrap mylar around the tent in

preparation for winter. While Austasia's cuts into the plastic were ragged, Destiny expertly sliced the thick material in a straight line, folded over the bottom edge several times, and hammered the edge to the open window frame. Destiny had been living in camp just a few months and already she was a patient teacher. Destiny's mylar education didn't come from reading a manual or listening to a lengthy lecture, it was produced through her hands and the feeling of the plastic as she practiced how much pressure to apply to pull it taut. She learned it through her body and then provided the conditions for a new camper to learn it through her relationship to wood, hammer, nails, and plastic. In the learning and teaching of mylar application, Destiny gained not just a singular skill, but also a greater awareness of her own body, the environment that surrounds her, and most importantly, her ability to learn.

Relationships

I once asked a teacher at Camp E-Wen-Akee what made camp so successful in helping young people make positive changes in their lives. She replied, "Relationships". She was referring to social relationships and these no doubt are incredibly important to campers' therapy, but relationships among people and nonhumans deserve recognition too. The work and experiential learning that help bring about therapeutic moments depend on interaction with the bodies of trees, hand tools, soccer balls, paper, animals, sledding hills, and insects. Substitute a chain saw for a hand saw, and different possibilities arise. Substitute a chilly and wet day for a sunny, warm day and different possibilities at the lakefront emerge. Reliance on relationship with heterogeneous bodies is a point aptly made by actor-network theorists (see chapter 3), and one that could productively be brought into discussions of embodiment. Analyses of the contributions nonhumans make to everyday

human lives need not obscure the fact that bodies are gendered, classed, sexed, etc. and therefore evoke different kinds of interactions. Indeed, notions about how specific kinds of bodies (both human and nonhuman) should interact, and the way identities are performed within specific settings, help explain the different sorts of meanings and engagements that arise from particular assemblages of bodies.

Gendered Bodies and Wild Bodies

Because people live through bodies marked by socially devised categories of difference and physical differences, it is important to acknowledge how difference shapes experience. I agree with the contention that “we interact with the world not from a disembodied, generalized framework but from positions marked by the particularities of our circumstances of embodied creatures” (Hayles 1995a, 48). And I am in sympathy with Longhurst’s (2003, 288) contention that, “Focusing on a body that has no specified materiality (skin colour, body shape, genitalia, impairments, etc.) will not further feminist, socialist, anti-racist or disability activist agendas. Denying the weighty materiality of flesh and fluid will help preserve hegemonic bodily practices and politics.” Already I have touched on how a body seen as ‘out-of-control’ may be disciplined at camp, depending on the setting, the camper may be given a restraint, a pen, or a ball to play with. In this section, I focus on the way gender seemed to call up dissimilar ways of interacting with nonhuman nature at Camp E-Wen-Akee.

Although the boys and girls at camp engaged in the same routines, practices and tasks, I found that they interacted with, and interpreted nature experiences differently.⁵⁸ I

⁵⁸ To follow with Butler’s line of thinking, it could be argued that these were opportunities for campers to perform gender, to bring it into being through dissimilar interactions with nonhuman nature.

found, following Hayles' (1995a, 56) line of thinking below, different worlds operating in the one landscape of Camp E-Wen-Akee:

The range and nature of sensory stimuli available to us, the contexts that affect how those stimuli achieve meaning, the habitual movements and postures that we learn through culture and that are encoded for gender, ethnicity, and class- all affect how learning takes place and consequently how the world comes into being for us. To be incorporated within a different body would be to live in a different world.

Certainly, any number of categories of difference could divide campers: sexual orientation, physical aptitude, and rural versus urban background are just a few examples of many. Race did not emerge as something to separate campers because all campers were white (although certainly race was at work, especially in the absence of racial diversity, and raced ideas about nature, see chapter 2). Class-based differences were evident in narratives of opportunity and constructions of nature (see chapter 4) but, rather than cutting through campers, it operated to distinguish staff and campers. In my observations of daily life, gender seemed to be the dominant category of difference operating amongst campers, and it was most obvious in the way boys and girls interacted with and interpreted two key elements of non-human nature: wild animals and dirt.

To generalize (but not too grossly), the boys sought out interaction with wild animals, while the girls avoided such interaction. The boys' accounts of backcountry trips to Maine, Florida and New Hampshire feature animal sightings as the central theme. I heard lively stories about alligators, golden eagles, and moose. Fishing was the most popular warm weather activity for both male groups, and was one of the most anticipated activities on wilderness trips (see chapter 7). To be sure, some of the girls had an interest in animals, and a few would pick up newts and caterpillars they found on trails (even as the chiefs instructed them not to touch the wildlife, see chapter 3). Yet, fear of animals was the most loudly

expressed nature concern. They worried over black snakes in the tall grass, wolf spiders in the boxes, black bears on hiking trails. Sometimes the fear seemed contrived for excitement value like when the girls were sure something in the lake was biting at their toes, and they appeared quite entertained by jumping in and out of the water, screaming all the while. But, in many instances the fear sounded genuine as when the girls, wide-eyed, told me about the giant rat snake that a staff member did actually see in the field.⁵⁹

Pursuit of the cultural explanations for boys' desire for engagement with animals or girls' fear of creepy, crawly creatures would be a fascinating study, but that is not my aim here. Instead, I only wish to note how each orientation to animals affects not only interpretations of interactions with nature but bodily movement through nature. The boys were expansive in their physical movements: they ran, jumped, swam, looked, listened as they made their way through camp and out on backcountry trips. They were eager to experience sensuous interaction with bodies. In contrast, the girls tended to withdraw from this physical contact. They stayed within the safe boundaries of the trails.

The same dynamic flowed from contact with dirt; the boys didn't mind the stuff, the girls avoided getting dirty as much as possible. The day the Neché girls put up seven uprights during tent construction (see chapter 1) is a good example. When we walked up to Chuckwagon for lunch we were covered with dirt, sweat, and the sticky kerosene used to preserve the logs. Chief Chuck gave the group permission to go to lunch with filthy clothing. But while the girls seemed excited and proud of their accomplishment, they were also very concerned that they would be dirty for lunch, which was attended by all of the camp

⁵⁹ Gender may also influence the environmental knowledge young people acquire. It is possible that the girls in my research may not be as familiar with elements of nature as are some boys. For a discussion of the gendering of environmental knowledge among children working, playing, and living in agricultural and gathering economies see Katz (2004).

community. Beth and Sydney both worried that people would be “looking at them” because of all their dirt. They felt ashamed of dirt.⁶⁰

In my experience at Camp E-Wen-Akee I never heard any of the boys voice a similar concern, (which of course does not mean the concern may not have existed but perhaps didn't fit into their image of how boys 'should' feel about animals and dirt). It is as if the boys arrive on camp property ready to engage physically and emotionally with material wildness, with the stuff of nature, while the girls pulled back from such encounters. In some moments, female bodies experienced camp life much differently than male bodies, engaged with other bodies differently, and interpreted the meaning of engagement with nature differently too. Relationships at camp then, are not achieved on a 'level playing field' but are produced from sensuous interactions, the meaning of which are influenced by difference. In other words, the kinds of bodies people are matter, just as the kinds of surrounding bodies we interact with matter.

Body Awareness

For both boys and girls, however, the process of first becoming aware of one's own body and needs and then developing a concern and care for others' bodies and emotions was encouraged and facilitated by the activities conducted at camp. For many of the young people who come to Camp E-Wen-Akee, feeling and describing bodily sensations is a significant accomplishment. Learning to identify feelings in one's body may seem an elementary place to start therapy, but for young people who have been neglected, physically and sexually abused, hungry, or raised without love, body messages may have been ignored for a lifetime.

⁶⁰ Longhurst discusses worries over dirt and the exclusion of people seen as dirty in her book *Bodies* (2001), and Sibley describes a similar narrative of impurity used in the exclusion of people in his book *Geographies of Exclusion* (1995).

Hugh, the boy who could not stay still, for example, had been “raped every day of his life for five years”, his chief told me (Fieldnotes, 10-28-03). Turning off bodily sensations may have been a defensive mechanism. Part of Beth’s problem was that she couldn’t express what she was feeling and therefore couldn’t explain her behaviors to her group.⁶¹ If we imagine the body/mind site continuum Parr (1999) suggests, we can theorize that once young people are able to bring awareness to physical sensations, they may be able to slide their awareness to other areas of feeling such as emotions.

Over time and through the doing of caring actions, campers do seem to become aware of their bodies and its feelings. This became clear to me one afternoon when I attended a transition meeting, a time when campers who are about to graduate from camp meet with a staff member to discuss plans, concerns, and anticipated obstacles. In this meeting, Chief Emily asked the campers to describe the “internal cues” their bodies give them when they are getting angry. “My stomach gets tight” said Emma. Job said his temples throb. Francie said she clenches her hands into fists and her body shakes. Megan stated, “My throat gets tight.” They had learned how to recognize emotions manifested through their bodies and had gained the language to describe them (Fieldnotes, 6-17-03).

Self-awareness, feeling what is happening within one’s own body, is a first step to developing respectful and successful relationships with others. Self-awareness also involves recognizing boundaries. Young people who have been sexually and physically abused, must locate and police a boundary around their physical body. Young people who have hurt others must learn to respect others’ boundaries, to exert self-control. This is part of the boundary maintenance strategy of camp. But this is not all. Campers are given opportunities to

⁶¹ For more of the backgrounds of campers, see chapter 4.

acknowledge the effects, both physical and emotional, of on-going relationships with others. Through writing, working, playing games, and talking, campers are trained to see their embeddedness in networks of relationships. A sense of accomplishment in achieving a physical task can provide the awareness that other new skills, both physical and social (both embodied actions), can also be learned. With each successful social interaction, performed action, and conflict negotiation, the individual's imagined vision of what is possible is extended. The attunement to environment that is required when living outdoors or performing a new task heightens awareness of the world beyond our skin. It is an ecological model of engagement with the material world.

A Culture of Consistent Care?

Relationships are not always good. If we accept an ecological, networked model for social relations, we must also consider how negative actions, carelessness, and neglect on the part of one actor will impact the group. While Camp seeks to create a culture of compassion and care, it is not always achieved. During my time at Camp E-Wen-Akee I observed moments when the chiefs created negative conditions within the group. I once heard a chief working with the girls' group make sarcastic and painful comments to campers and watched as behavior within the entire group deteriorated. One day when I first arrived to meet a group, the chief, who was working alone, pulled me aside from the group. I thought she was going to fill me in on an important development but instead, she just wanted to chat. She had been spending lots of time alone with the group as Camp was short-staffed at the time and she merely longed for conversation with another adult. As she spoke I looked over her shoulder and saw that the campers were unsupervised, and sensed that they knew that the

standards for their behavior had dropped because no one was paying attention. Sometimes the staff members, especially the chiefs living in campsite, didn't care, were tired, didn't want to work, didn't like a particular camper, or were simply ill-equipped to handle the rigors of their job. In every such instance, relations within the overall group worsened. The quality of life in campsite relied on the quality of relations between people and as well as between people and nonhumans. Left unchecked or unmodified, negative social interactions will spread to everyone just as tainted water in the well will effect every member of the group.

One of the reasons long-time campers are responsible for so much of the institutional memory and embodied skills of Camp culture is because there is a high turnover rate for chiefs. When people are hired for the campsite chief position, they are asked to make a two-year commitment to the organization. Organization-wide, Eckerd loses 48% of their new staff members within one year of their hire. The chiefs who have done well as counselors in their campsite are selected to become Master Counselors. Master Counselors usually only remain in their positions for one year, choosing either to leave the organization or to move to another position within the organization at that time (all data from email correspondence with Grady, Camp E-Wen-Akee administrator, 1-25-06).

The chief position is a stressful job. Because there is so much staff turnover, Camp is always in the process of hiring and training new people. Greater time commitments are required from remaining staff members when Camp is shorthanded, and sometimes standard procedures are compromised. There are always supposed to be two chiefs with a group. But as in the moment I described above, sometimes a chief is alone with the group. The first night I stayed with Pathfinders, for example, I noted that Chief McBragg was the only chief in campsite. The night watchman was on duty in the Pathfinders' sleeptent (see chapter 6),

but I was under the impression that two chiefs were required to be sleeping in the campsite in addition to the night watchman. When I asked Chief McBragg about this he shrugged his shoulders and said, "You're here."

Sometimes, because of staff shortages, chiefs are expected to work extra days in a row without a break. I talked with some chiefs who worked ten days in campsite without a break. Because they sleep, eat, do all activities, shower, and go to education with the groups, that means that they had not one hour alone during that time period. It is difficult to create a culture of care when one cannot meet one's own needs. This is the reason chiefs cite for their early departure from camp (email correspondence with Grady, Camp E-Wen-Akee administrator, 1-25-06). Creating a higher quality work environment for the young people Camp hires would not only improve staff retention rates, but would also allow staff members the time to build their counseling skills and to become the experienced and highly skilled staff members that Eckerd requires to create a culture of *consistent* care. Camp needs good chiefs who care for the campers and who know how to appropriately treat their behavioral issues. The chiefs need an employer who will care for their personal needs for time off, adult companionship, and personal growth. Because the social relations of the entire camp are ecological in nature, the quality of relationships within the wider organization registers within individual group campsites. Improved supervision of chiefs and improved working conditions for chiefs would create more consistently good relationships within campsite.

Ecological Engagements

Relationships are not entities or states of being that simply exist, they are events that are enacted over and over. Bodies are always in dialogue with surrounding bodies. The

therapeutic strategy at Camp E-Wen-Akee calls attention to the individuals' connectedness to others by allowing young people to see how their actions affect others, and to learn how their bodies can have effects on other bodies, like a chunk of wood or a soccer ball. Although the therapeutic aspects of nature are not explicitly acknowledged at Camp E-Wen-Akee, the therapeutic strategy can be understood as ecological in approach, focusing as it does on the connection between the individual and her environment. A focus on the material bodies of young people deemed 'out-of-control' brings to light the disciplinary strategies achieved at the site of the body, but also the care that is expressed through bodily engagements.

Relationships are achievements requiring slightly different actions at each interaction. In the same way that a camper must learn to feel, anticipate, and adjust her movements each time she swings her axe to cut a piece of wood, she must learn to feel, anticipate, and adjust her words in a conversation with a friend. Ingold (2000, 253) states, "...whatever practitioners do to things is grounded in an attentive, perceptual involvement with them, or in other words, that they watch and feel as they work." Forging successful interactions with people requires the same "attentive engagement" (ibid, 354), the same ecological perception as moving one's body through the world.

At Camp E-Wen-Akee, ecology informs social life.

6.

A Therapeutic Taskscape: Place at Camp E-Wen-Akee

To *be* is to be *somewhere*, and our changing relations and interactions with this placing are integral to understandings of human geographies.

(Bondi and Davidson 2003, 338)

Camp E-Wen-Akee is not easy to find. From the center of the tiny village of Benson, Vermont, one drives west along a narrow paved road toward Lake Champlain. After a few miles one takes a series of turns along several miles of dirt roads. The car kicks up dust in the summer and snow in winter as it passes close to old farmhouses set near the roadside. After moving through alternating patches of forest and pasture, the visitor finally finds herself climbing a steep hill leading to a small gravel parking lot. The farmhouse adjacent to the parking lot resembles those just passed along the road: it's a white clapboarded building that juts this way and that with several additions (figure 6.1). It is easy to miss the faded wood sign that reads "Eckerd Youth Alternatives". There are no other markers that indicate 30 teenagers and a nearly equal number of staff people live and work here; there are no bike racks, basketball hoops, school buildings, or dormitories in sight.

Looking out from the parking lot, the visitor sees a juniper-covered pasture to the north that belongs to the farm at the bottom of the hill. To the south, a small dirt track descends past a long shed, through some mowed lawns and uncut fields of high grasses, and into a densely wooded forest below. Blocked from view are the three ponds that mark the southern border of Camp E-Wen-Akee's 185 acres. A gaze from this high point on the property doesn't capture much of the human lives lived here. Nor would a static photo reveal the perpetual enactment of the therapeutic strategy on a moving landscape that takes place

here. Yet it is impossible to fully appreciate Camp E-Wen-Akee's therapeutic program without paying attention to the "somewhere" of camp.



Figure 6.1. Camp E-Wen-Akee's Main Building

Camp E-Wen-Akee is a strategy to re-socialize young people who have resisted socialization. Camp relies on numerous spatial disciplining tactics to produce what Foucault (1995, 138) has termed "docile bodies". These tactics are put into action through material spaces. Therefore, the landscapes, nonhuman residents, and physical environment of camp are, of course, essential to operation of camp life, and must be included in any theorization of place. In this chapter I attempt to engage a Foucauldian analysis of discipline in dialogue with a more animated accounting of place, one that acknowledges the relationships between nature and culture, between people and nonhumans.

A Foucauldian analysis captures disciplinary desires and tactics as they are laid down over the landscape, explaining how much therapeutic work is achieved. Despite the emphasis Foucault placed on spatializations of power, some have criticized his work, and the work of those who have furthered his theories of discourse, for lack of attention to robust, real, everyday geographies [see Pratt (2004) for a discussion of this]. In my account of place at Camp E-Wen-Akee, I attempt to detail the specific, material ways that discipline is spatialized through elements of place, but I also show how lived experience of camp produces a landscape that is meaningful to the individual camper. I explore the notion that places develop conceptual relief over time. This is a topography of memory that works through and around the sanctioned disciplinary strategy. In the final section of the chapter, I suggest that Cloke and Jones' (2001) concept of taskscape enhances this theorization of place because of the way that it accounts for the myriad interactions among human and nonhumans in the production of place. The camp landscape can be understood as embedded within a network of relations, the effects of which are registered on the land and on the people who live there.

The Ordering of Space and Youth at Camp E-Wen-Akee

Foucault (1995, 228) asked, "Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?" He found that in 18th century Europe, these institutions began to hold in common architectures and practices meant to order and discipline bodies. He argued that when western societies moved away from public punishment (public torture, for example), strategies to discipline and create order were articulated throughout society in myriad strategies and forms. Foucault (1995) described the development of the Panopticon, a new prison form, as an illustration of the way that power

can be exercised through architecture. The circular design of the building put the guards at the center, behind windows. The prisoners were separated from one another into cells surrounding and facing the tower. The guards were able to see the prisoners, but the guards were invisible to the prisoners. The fact that the prisoners were never aware of when they were being watched engendered a persistent suspicion of being watched. Therefore the prisoner adopted or internalized the surveillance to a certain extent. The point is that, under the threat of surveillance, individuals would self-discipline, a process that could emerge in multiple and diverse sites throughout modern life.

Camp E-Wen-Akee, a space that functions as school, correction facility, mental health clinic, and work place, is an ideal site for viewing the disciplinary underpinnings of society at work. Camp's goal is to correct or discipline those who have resisted compliance to society's rules. Foucault's description of how discipline operates to produce compliant and useful social bodies maps neatly onto observable practices and spatial orderings at Camp.

Enclosure

There is an ever-present awareness of the boundedness of camp. Campers and staff refer to the space of E-Wen-Akee as "property", calling attention to the difference between camp life and that of "community", the name they give to all places outside of camp. In the case of camp where the enclosures are not visible--no fences or walls mark the property lines--language fixes the borders. In Foucault's reckoning, discipline requires "enclosure, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself" (1995, 141). With its unique mix of therapeutic practices, institutional rituals, and camp rules, Eckerd camps are like no other place. Camp's borders invisibly but definitively produce a physical space in which, to borrow from Pratt (2004, 20), "[t]here are *socio-spatial circuits* through

which cultural and personal narratives are circulated, legitimated, and given meaning” (original emphasis). She argues that, “[I]f we understand discourses as situated practices produced in particular places, we can also understand agency and critique in more embodied ways” (20). I review below some of the other ways that control works out ‘on the ground’ at camp in order to bring to view agency exercised by multiple constituents of camp.

Partitioning

Campers are distributed into three campsites. The campsites are separated from each other and from the other sites on property by forest. Each campsite includes: sleeping tents, a cook tent housing a wood-fired cookstove and dry basin for preparing weekend meals, a chuckwagon tent for eating meals, “learning logs” where education, therapy, and meetings take place, a wood tent for storing firewood, a tools tent where hand tools are kept, a wash tent where a hand water pump is located, a meeting tent where the group collects before moving to another activity, and the odiferous “boxes” or outhouses (see figure 6.2). All of the structures have been built by staff and campers.

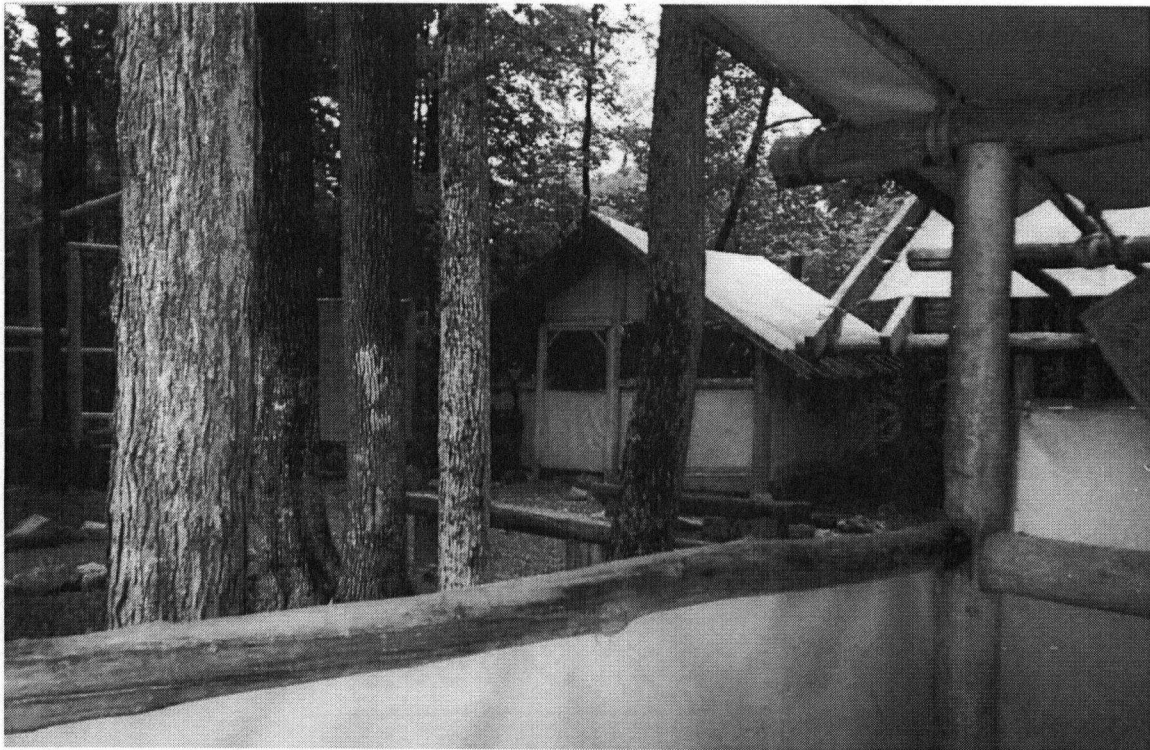


Figure 6.2. A Camp E-Wen-Akee Campsite

The campsites are orderly and clean. Everything and everyone has a place. Each camper is assigned a specific cot and a footlocker within a sleep tent. All personal items are kept within the footlocker, stored at the foot of the bed. Campers are not allowed to enter others' spaces, nor may they touch (and at times, even comment on) others' belongings. As for the items that belong to campsite, tools are hung up on hooks and gas lanterns used for lighting are neatly lined up on the ground (see figure 6.3). Cookware is stored on hooks and shelves in the cook tent. Latrine buckets hang on a post outside of the boxes. Even the footpaths leading to the tents clearly demarcated with stones. Partitioning, or the separating of bodies, tools, and practices into discrete spaces, is a science at Camp E-Wen-Akee.

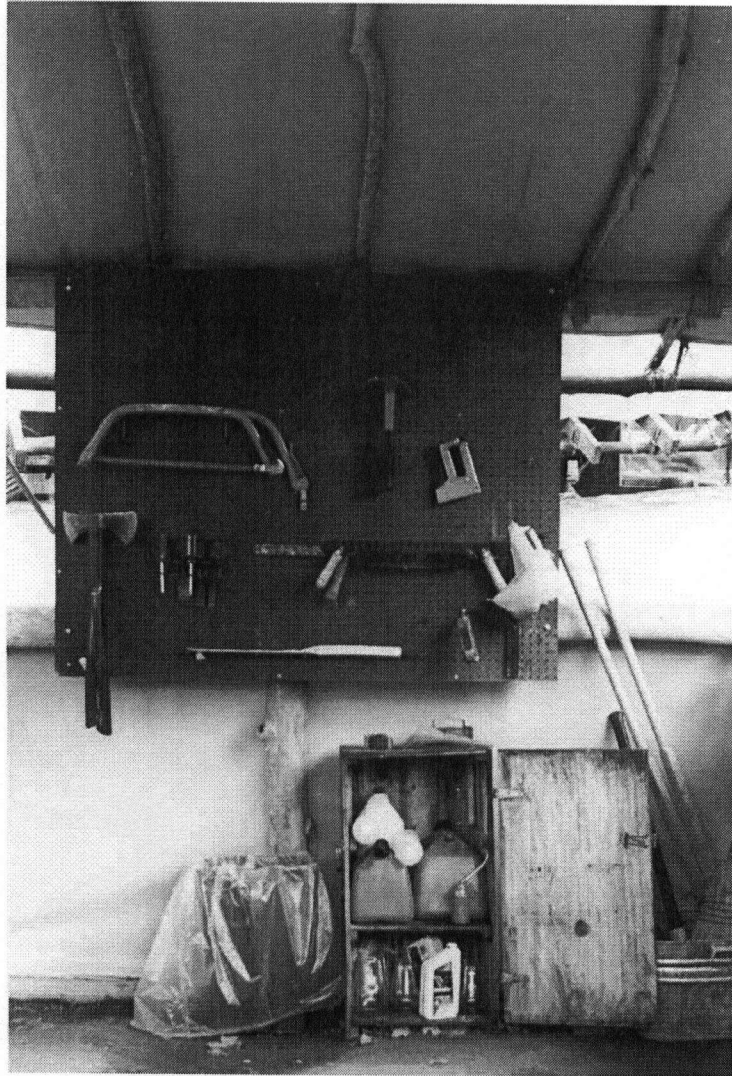


Figure 6.3. Tool Tent at Camp E-Wen-Akee Campsite

In Foucault's words, "Each individual has his place; and each place its individual" (1995, 143). This procedure makes possible a mastering or knowing of individuals, "[d]iscipline organizes an analytical space" (ibid). Individual behavior is easily monitored when each camper is allotted a space to care for, such as their cot, and a space in which to remain. The partitioning of personal space allows the group members to remain in close

proximity to each other while minimizing the danger that bodies will come too close together.

Functional Sites

Most buildings and sites at E-Wen-Akee serve just one purpose. The sleep tents are used only for sleeping. The pow-wow site is only for holding the daily pow-wow ritual. The learning logs are used only for educational and therapeutic sessions. This, along with the presence of a rigidly structured time schedule (see figure 3.1), makes it possible for camp administrators to locate any group within the property at any moment of the day. Bound together, spatial and temporal ordering create activity/time units in which camper behavior can be analyzed, a practice conducted repeatedly throughout the day. For example, each morning the campers must perform specific chores by a set time. If any of the group members haven't completed their work, the group will meet, discuss the problem, and set a new "time goal" for completing the chores. After all chores are done, the group re-convenes to assess how well they did the activity. In this procedure, the ordering of the spaces of the campsite, of time, and performance of a specific activity together constitute an analytical unit for commenting on individual behavior.

Not only are specific sites dedicated to single functions, but the activities therein must be performed in sanctioned ways. If codes for behavior are not followed, the activity must cease and the group of campers must vacate the space (this applies to both indoor and outdoor spaces). Should a problem arise within a group during mealtime, for example, the entire group must leave Chuckwagon and go outside to work through the problem in a huddle. When a chief or camper calls for a huddle, everyone stops his activity, stands in a circle, discusses the problems, arrives at a solution, and agrees to support that solution.

Huddles are an always-available and mobile spatial ordering that produces a therapeutic time-space.

Rank

“Discipline is an art of rank, a technique for the transformation of arrangements. It individualizes bodies by a location that does not give them a fixed position, but distributes them and circulates them in a network of relations” (Foucault 1995, 146). Rank is impressed on camp’s social and physical landscapes. Campers occupy the lowest social rank at camp; in general, campers have few opportunities to move about the camp and must stay with their group and the counselors at all times. Amongst campers there is another ordering: the newest campers and those whose behavior is deemed dangerous are subject to the tightest surveillance. They must stand next to a staff member at all times and are under close scrutiny for inappropriate behavior. The campers who have successfully moved through the program and are transitioning out of camp are given a few spatial privileges, such as being allowed to walk from one place to another without a staff member, and having the opportunity to meet with campers from other groups in supervised meetings.

The name “chief” automatically invests staff members with a certain authority over campers. The counselors who live in campsites with the groups are almost always new entry-level staff who have no, or the least experience, in the Eckerd organization. Next in rank are the master counselors who no longer live with a group but circulate amongst groups providing support, supervision, and advice to campsite chiefs. There are a number of mid-level staff who work as teachers, substance abuse counselors, and family workers. All are supervised by one of three program directors who oversee different aspects of the program. The camp director reports to Eckerd headquarters in Clearwater, Florida. In addition, there

are several support workers such as the “moms” who run the kitchen, order food and do the laundry, the administrative workers who manage the office, and the man responsible for maintenance of the property, buildings, tools, and vehicles.

Rank amongst staff is made known through a large display hung on a prominent wall in the dining hall where campers and campsite chiefs eat their weekday meals. It's a grid. Along its top edge are the names of the camp staff members in order of rank; the camp director's name is at the furthest left and newest chief is at furthest right. Beneath each name hangs a column of clear plastic pockets in which badges commemorating special trainings and certifications are displayed. Years of service are written at the bottom of each strip. The range of years employed is great: the camp director has worked for Eckerd for 19 years while most of the campsite chiefs have not yet reached one year of service. The support staff are not listed on the chart. The grid reminds all who see it where the power lies within the organization and how it accumulates with time and rank.

Camp's spaces are also ranked. “Chuckwagon” is the name given to the main farmhouse building in which administrative offices, a conference room, the kitchen and dining hall, camper store, and laundry facilities are housed. Camp residents refer to the main building along with the lawns and parking lot surrounding it as “up top”. This is where meetings with family workers, community meals, and ‘public’ activities take place. It occupies (nearly) the highest spot on the property and is the first place one sees when one arrives at camp.⁶² The campsites are located at the lowest elevation on the property (save for the lakes) and are at a distance from Chuckwagon. Located between the main building and the campsites are the maintenance building, the “RC” (resource center or education building),

⁶² The master counselors' house is located slightly above Chuckwagon on a adjacent rise of land, but it is not considered a ‘public’ space at camp.

and the showerhouse (see figures 6.4 and 6.5). To the south of the campsites are the sugar shack (where campers boil maple syrup) and the ropes course, sites for activities which are peripheral to everyday schedules at camp. Low rank and low elevation are linked, as well as low rank and greater distance from the “heart” of community (see figure 6.6).



Figure 6.4. “RC” Education Building at Camp E-Wen-Akee



Figure. 6.5. The Showerhouse at Camp E-Wen-Akee

Foucault imagined that the processes of enclosure, partitioning, functional siting, and ranking work together to produce spaces through which people are rendered trained, accountable, obedient, and useful. “In organizing ‘cells’, ‘places’, and ‘ranks’, the disciplines create complex spaces that are at once architectural, functional and hierarchical” (Foucault 1995, 148). In this way, places such as the classroom function as “learning machines” (ibid, 147). Thus, Foucault provides insight into how a place like Camp E-Wen-Akee attempts to produce changes in behavior amongst troubled youth. The spaces of camp, their arrangement in relation to each other, and their sanctioned uses literally emplace and move camper’s bodies through a grid (in Foucaudian terms) or, as I describe below, a network. I offer below two descriptions of built spaces whose aim are to control behavior

using the tactics already mentioned, but whose histories hint at entities not fully compliant with the disciplining regime.

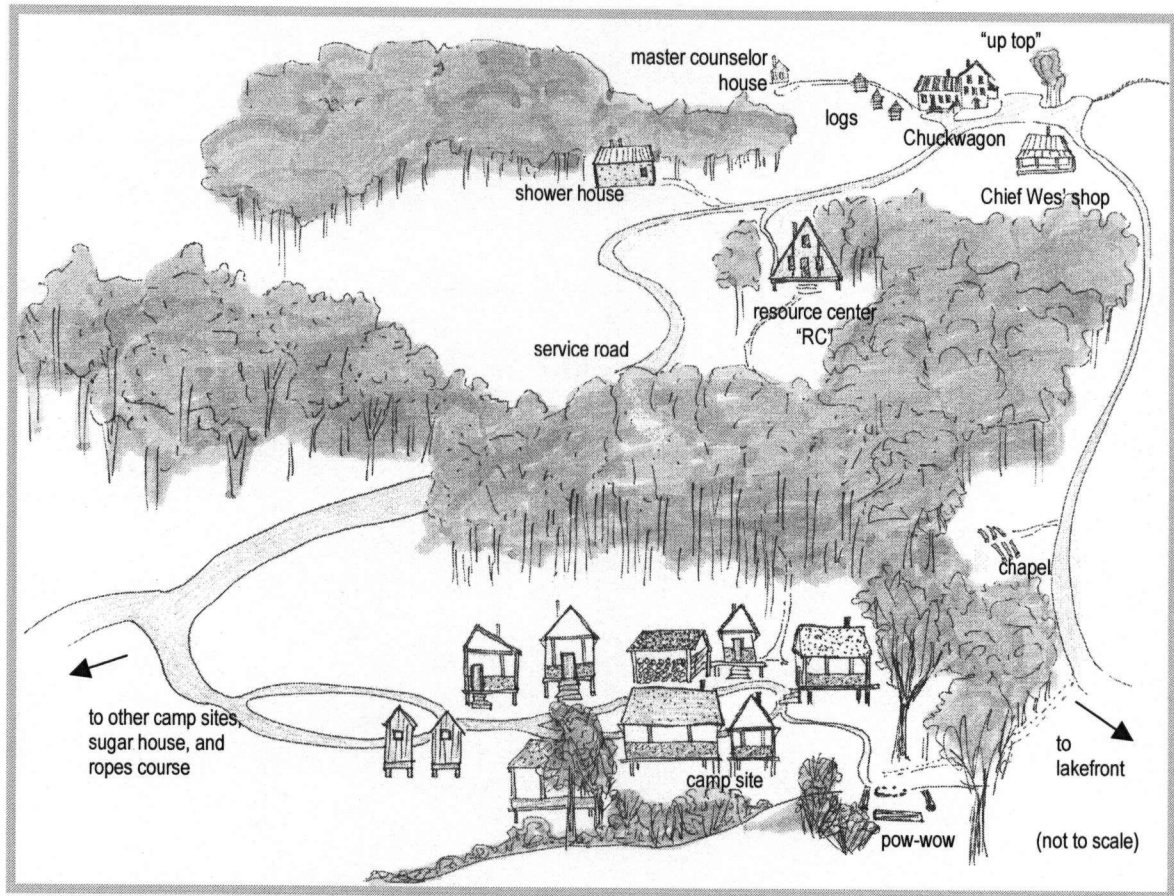


Figure 6.6. Stylized Map of Camp E-Wen-Akee

Disciplining Spaces at Work

"Logs"

Three small buildings sit in an arc along the hill just outside the back door of the main building up top (see figure 6.7). These little buildings, called "logs" are separated from each other by a distance of 30'. Their open doors face the door to Chuckwagon. Each group has its

own logs. Each group's name is painted on a sign affixed to its structure. The purpose of logs is to contain and calm campers before they enter Chuckwagon for meals. They also visually and aurally separate the groups from each other.



Figure 6.7. "Logs" Outside Chuckwagon at Camp E-Wen-Akee

Before every meal, each group walks up top and gathers inside the logs. About ten minutes before the meal is served, two "waiters" from each group are called down to the Chuckwagon to set tables. In the meantime, campers and chiefs work on paperwork, talk, or do planning until they are called to the meal. Once called and in turn, each group walks single file into Chuckwagon, they remove hats and coats and hang them on hooks behind their table, then stand around their table, waiting for grace. Each group has its own table

(made up of 4 rectangular tables pushed together) surrounded by benches (see figure 6.8). Groups are seated separately from each other. Thus campers may engage in a community experience but have a minimum of opportunity to interact interpersonally or physically with members of other groups.



Figure 6.8. Inside Chuckwagon

On my first field visit to Camp E-Wen-Akee, camp administrator Chief Chuck told me, “Chuckwagon would be chaos” if they didn’t have logs (Fieldnotes, 1-9-03). He also pointed out that logs provide shelter from rain, wind, and snow. Later I learned that logs are not a feature at every Eckerd camp. This came as a surprise because Eckerd headquarters closely oversees all construction at their camps and insists on uniformity in architecture. It

issues a folder of approved tent structure plans to each camp and each new tent structure built must exactly follow one of the blueprints therein. The fact that there were entire buildings present in Vermont that may not be present in a southern camp seemed out of character for Eckerd.

One day I visited the Pathfinder group at Eckerd's camp in northern New Hampshire where they were doing a ropes course trip. I noted that the New Hampshire camp had logs equipped with small woodstoves. I understood that the cold northern climates of New Hampshire and Vermont called for modifications in camp architecture and camp practices. In what other ways, I began to wonder, was Eckerd's rigid template for camp lay-outs challenged? This brought to light the possibility that control is not total, and there exists potential for resistance from both nonhuman actors and the young people, both of whom are targets for discipline at Camp E-Wen-Akee.

Pathfinders' Sleep Tent

In all ways but one the Pathfinders' campsite resembles the Neché and Mahicans campsites. In the Mahican and Neche campsites, campers sleep three to a tent and chiefs sleep in their own tent structures. As I walked down to the Pathfinders campsite on my first visit, Chief Chuck explained to me that this arrangement doesn't work out for "kids with sexual issues" (Fieldnotes, 1-9-03). The Pathfinders sleep in one large tent. It is constructed in the same way as all of the other tent structures at camp: a pole frame wrapped to waist height with the mustard colored tarp fabric, and clear plastic above waist height. One can see in and see out. It is not only the size of Pathfinders' tent but its floor plan that sets it apart from the other sleep tents on property.

The Pathfinder tent is long and rectangular. There is a door at each gable end and a single center 'hallway' runs along its length. A cast iron woodstove sits in the center of the hall. On each side of the open hall are what look like horse stables. Plywood dividers about three feet high partition the space into separate compartments. The doors to each enclosure open out to the center hall. Each boy has his own space, which is just large enough to house a cot and a footlocker. There are several hooks on which to hang clothes. On the north side of the sleep tent opposite the woodstove is a room wrapped in clear plastic. This is the office for the watchman who comes on duty each night at 10:00 pm and works until 6:00 am when a chief relieves him. His job is to make sure that the boys do not enter another boy's sleeping space during the night.

As Chief Chuck and I walked through the sleep tent I noticed that two by four boards form another sort of fence above the plywood. Chief Chuck said that even though a night watchman is in the tent all night, campers can (and did) sneak into each others' beds. "If the night watchman got up and was checking the far side of the tent, kids would crawl out" (Fieldnotes, 1-9-03). The extra height provided by the two by fours and the addition of doors onto the front of the partitions posed a greater barrier to escape. Chief Chuck talked a bit about the Pathfinders. He explained that because of their sexual offending issues, they require different safeguards and rules from the other groups of campers. This difference required a different architecture, one that provides the same kind of surveillance as the Panopticon described by Foucault (1995).

The watchman's room and its spatial relationship to the individual partitions allows the watchman to see each boy, and the rule requiring campers to stay prone in bed, along with the presence of a wall, is meant to prevent the boy from seeing other boys. This

arrangement is intended to make the boys visible to authority but invisible to each other, just as the Panopticon prison design does.

When I first stayed with the Pathfinders, the Pathfinder chiefs were attempting to closely monitor a camper who had recently left the sleep tent in the night and snuck through the woods to another camp site. One of their tactics to decrease his nighttime mobility was to remove all footgear and clothing from his sleeping space so that it would be very uncomfortable and even dangerous to go outside during the cold winter and early spring months. The cold climate was enlisted into the camp's disciplinary strategy for this boy.

In both examples of spatial ordering employed at Camp E-Wen-Akee, the use of "logs" and the design of Pathfinders' sleep tent, discipline is built into the landscape. Space is intended to help do the work of monitoring campers and managing their behavior. Also contained within each example is the hint of negotiation between human and nonhuman constituents. The cold climate spurred the construction of logs, boys' desires prompted additional disciplinary tactics in Pathfinders group, and snow was used to boost disciplinary measures against a single individual. The functioning of Camp E-Wen-Akee involves imposition of spatial, temporal, and behavioral ordering, but also response to camper resistance, to procedures and obligations imposed from outside of camp, and to nonhumans. The 'place' of Camp E-Wen-Akee is more accurately understood as a process, rather than an empty space upon which an uncontested regime is imposed.

Meaning and Memory as Topographic Relief

As I mentioned at the opening of this chapter, the visitor who stands in the parking lot and looks out over camp property would not gain a sense of the rich lives lived on this piece

of ground. A camper standing in the parking lot and looking south sees much more: Chief Art's field, the showerhouse field, the snake-filled field, "K2", the sledding hill. She knows the names of the differentiated micro-places before her. She associates these and other unnamed places with histories, experiences, and events. These places house memories and recollections of changes in her self-concept.

Removing the Social

Eckerd draws on the narrative of nature as free from the social to assemble its therapeutic program (see chapter 3). The woods, waters, and open spaces of property are valued primarily for their lack of social markers, or links to cultural life. Matching the lack of the social in nature, the buildings and grounds at camp are kept relatively empty. Few personal items hang within the sleep tents, no photos or posters adorn the walls of the camp site chuckwagon tents, and there is no elaborate landscaping on property. There is a spartan feeling to camp.⁶³

When young people first enter camp, they are stripped of identity markers linking their sense of self to networks of friends back home. The camp dress code forbids t-shirts with 'inappropriate' messages about sex, drinking alcohol, drug use, cigarette smoking, etc. As much as is possible, the campers are disconnected from their former culture so that they may form new and more socially appropriate identities at camp. Nature, the built spaces of camp, and the campers are equally subjected to an erasure of associations with larger society. Yet, as I moved through the property of camp, it felt anything but empty. The longer I

remained at camp, the more I moved through it, did activities there, passed time, the more differentiated the landscape became.

Transition Group Photo Project: Memory and Micro-Places

During the course of my fieldwork, I worked with the “transition” campers on a photography project designed to gain insight into their experiences of the people and places at camp. The project illustrated that the landscape became increasingly differentiated and laden with meaning for campers the longer they lived at camp. It was as if the map of camp gained conceptual relief over time. Furthermore, conversation about the photo project demonstrated that the camp landscape houses for campers material reminders of important shifts made in their self-concepts.

In her research with Sudanese children, Katz (2004) found that young people had extremely detailed “mental maps” of the landscape surrounding their village. This was especially true for the herdboys who were responsible for tending grazing livestock. One herdboys identified no less than 40 grazing sites within a one kilometer range of the village. Children shared a common cartographic knowledge of their area although they may have had different names for places. Children, through work and play, gained highly developed microgeographies in a landscape that appeared homogenous to an outsider. I found a similar process of place differentiation in play at Camp E-Wen-Akee.

“Transition” campers have nearly completed their stay at Camp E-Wen-Akee and are preparing to move back into school, home, and community life. The group is made up of

⁶³ The Pathfinder’s “learning logs” building appeared at first to be an exception. Its walls were covered with drawings, inspirational posters, art projects, and other artifacts from the group. However, shortly after I spent time in the building, all of the materials were pulled down and the walls and floors with bleached, literally

members from all three camper groups and they have special meetings with upper-level staff on a regular basis to plan their transitions. In July 2003, the transition campers (a total of seven people, or nearly 25% of the camper population) agreed to take photographs of camp and then to convene as a group to discuss their photographs. I gave each person a disposable camera to use for a week, then collected the cameras and developed the film. Each camper had been issued a list of suggested topics to photograph, such as "places/activities/people that make you feel proud" or "place/activities/people that you will think about a lot when you leave camp". These were provided only as suggestions; campers were given freedom to photograph what they liked (with two exceptions, as described below).⁶⁴

The first question I asked the group as we sat together around a table in Chuckwagon was: "what was hard about doing this project?" The replies to this question illustrate the spatial and temporal constraints campers live with at E-Wen-Akee. Francie replied, "Not being able to leave group to go take the pictures." Megan said she didn't have enough time to take all the pictures she wanted to take (Interview with Megan, 8-5-03).⁶⁵ Job said,

I know for me, I wanted to have, like, a couple of specific people that I wanted to be able to show their faces. Cause for that person they would have fit perfectly that thing. But without having their face in there, I had to substitute something else for them so that was kind of hard for me.

(Transition Group Photo Project transcript, 7-17-03)

Two of the camp rules (one forbidding pictures of the campers to be taken by or given to 'outsiders', and the prohibition on leaving the group) influenced the photos that the participants could take. In an attempt to compensate for this I gave the campers an

sterilizing the logs again. Pathfinders remain at camp longer than campers in other groups, which may account for the accretion of art and projects in their learning logs.

⁶⁴ Camper photos are (with one exception) not included here because the quality of the developed photos was, unfortunately, very poor.

⁶⁵ Megan was away from camp on the day the transition group discussed the photos. I met with her separately a couple of weeks later and audio-taped our conversation.

opportunity to tell the group about pictures they would have taken but could not due to rules and time constraints.

People, practices and interaction with nonhuman elements of landscape were all important to campers' recollection of significant moments at camp. For example, in response to a question about the "heart of camp," Megan said she took pictures of Chuckwagon (a place and practice) and of pow-wow (a place and practice, and see figure 6.9):

Chuckwagon is where we do everything, like, eat all our meals, have activities, have camp-wide activities with everyone involved in camp, and, like, do all sorts of fun things and just spend time together and relax and everything and, and pow-wow is the heart of camp because, like, camp is based on goals, and that's where you go and set your goals every single morning and you evaluate them at the end of the day. It's just a, it's just a really big part of, that's what camp is based on.

(Interview with Megan, 8-5-03)

In some instances, a person best represented a memory or quality of camp. Emma said that Chief Ferguson reminded her of "fun" at camp,

I really like Chief Ferguson, um, if you're down or something, he comes around and like he'll make you laugh or something. He, he- It could be the stupidest thing and it'll just make you smile.

(Transition Group Photo Project, 7-17-03)

Some of the micro-places at camp held meaning for a group of people and through story-telling and naming entered into camp's public narrative. These named sites are not marked by signposts and in fact I only learned about some of these place through the discussions generated by the photo project. I learned about "K2" (the name for a steep hill) when Job recounted the time his group was sledding there and he landed in a pile of rabbit guts. I never knew about "Chief Art's Field" until Francie mentioned it as a place where she

felt “proud”. The names are passed from camper to camper and from group to group, outliving the tenure of any specific camper or staff member at camp.



Figure 6.9. Megan's Photo of Building the Pow-Wow Fire

One day in May when I was staying with the Mahicans, Ralph explained to me that their cook tent once burned down. He recounted the story in detail. Someone had jammed wood in the stove box causing the pipe to come loose. When the group returned to camp site someone shouted, “Hey it looks like camp’s on fire!” and it was. “Chief Art built us a new tent that would last,” Ralph said (Fieldnotes, 5-24-03). Ralph spoke as if he had witnessed the event but he entered camp a month after the fire. When he said, “Chief Art built us a new tent...” he indicates his membership in a group that pre-existed and will exist after his tenure in the group. The group memory was spurred by our physical presence within the building. In that way, our interactions within the building brought forth the story.

It became clear in our photo discussion that public places at camp can also hold individual meaning. For example, Francie and Curtis each described how Chuckwagon became uniquely meaningful to them. Francie said that Chuckwagon reminded her of something positive she learned about herself. She explained that Chuckwagon is where they have chuckwagons (the informal educational session after meals) and it was there that she learned that she can learn within a large group of people, "Cause I used to not be able to learn in a big group of people and now I can" (Transition Group Photo Project transcript, 7-17-03). Chuckwagon marks for her a site in which she shifted her self-awareness. Curtis named Chuckwagon as the place where he learned something positive about himself but it was difficult to photograph what happened for him there:

Curtis: It's not really something I can take a picture of but —finally when I started breaking through some of the walls in my head. I'd say that was definitely the key-positive change. I can't really take a picture of that.

Cherie: Do you remember when it was in your time here that this started happening for you?

Curtis: Around. I know everyone was here when ah, Chief Ferguson said [something] about our group [the Pathfinders] in chuckwagon... That's when it clicked for me...he said something that was- like I wouldn't say embarrassing but definitely you know, something that wasn't an everyday thing to be said in chuckwagon...And so, that's when it kinda clicked on.

(Transition Group Photo Project transcript, 7-17-03)

There are other sites at camp that remain unnamed but are meaningful to an individual. For Megan a section of grass to the side of the service road marks the place where, and the moment when, she decided to change her behavior at camp. Pointing to a photo she said,

This is—well, this isn't me, but this is supposed to me be lying down on the side of Service Road, pretending like I'm sleeping, looking up at the sky, with my eyes closed.

And that was, that represents, like, my second day at camp when, for the first time I'd ever gotten feedback from someone in the huddle, and I wasn't used to it, and I was like, "why is someone three years younger than me telling me what I need to do better?" and I was, I was ticked off! So, I lied down and was basically like, "there's no way what you're gonna tell me what to do," trying to give off that message. And [I] didn't move for like three hours and pretended to sleep the whole time, and I kinda realized that even though it was like only my second day that I wasn't gonna, wouldn't be very nice—or very pleasant—for the rest of my stay if I was just gonna, every single time I had a challenge that I would just pretend to be asleep. So, I just decided that I needed to, I just decided that I needed to handle it in a different way, after that.

(Interview with Megan, 8-5-03)

Each time Megan walks by that spot it reminds her of her ability to change her thinking and her behavior. In this way, the camp property gains conceptual relief for those who have lived there. However, this place differentiation does not occur within an open field of possibilities. Campers are constrained by camp rules in the places they can access, and when they can visit places.

Disciplining Memory Through Movement

Eckerd staff members are aware that narratives and memories become attached to specific sites and therefore, they have constructed rules that attempt to minimize the linkage of negative behaviors and memories to commonly used places. This practice is taught to the new staff members in their initial training. Chief Nicki, a counselor who had been working at camp just a few months told me, "You don't want them [the campers] to associate a problem with a place. You should move a huddle every 10 minutes. That's why we never huddle in sleep tent. It's our sanctuary- where we sleep." (Fieldnotes, 10-28-03). Chief Alice expounded on the philosophy behind moving huddles. She said that association of huddles with a particular spot may become a "self-fulfilling prophecy. The kids might begin to think, 'If every time we walk by the shower house we have a huddle, then when we walk

by it again we'll have a huddle" (Interview with Alice, 10-26-04). Passing by the site dislodges the memory housed there, recalling an emotion that could trigger a behavior. For this reason, positive interactions are allowed to take place in areas that campers regularly frequent, but negative behaviors and conversations are kept mobile.

Staff members implicitly signal their acknowledgement that the micro-places of camp provide different attributes in the way that some places are used strategically in the therapeutic regime. Asked about the "worst thing or place or activity at camp" several transition campers named "the swamp". In the dialogue below, it is clear that staff members used the uncomfortable aspects of the swamp at night to hasten behavioral change in campers. Ralph begins by saying his chiefs brought their group out to the swamp one night because Ralph as acting "stupid":

Ralph: We were just walking through the swamp so we wouldn't affect other groups cause it's farther away from other campsites and stuff like that. And it was me and one other camper, decided we were going to stay up half the night being stupid and we went out to the swamp and got eaten alive [by insects] until we decided to problem-solve.

Cherie: So you were acting out and your chief said, 'We're going to the swamp'?

Ralph: One of the chiefs, yeah.

Cherie: And now is the swamp kind of a negative memory for you?

Ralph: Kind of. It smartened me up pretty quick. By the time I was knee-high in water and mud, I could barely pick my feet up, that's when I decided to stop.

Curtis: I decided to change my mind in the mud bog. Chief Grady brought us out in the middle of that one time because we weren't acting the greatest.

Cherie: What's the mud bog?

Blade: Right down by the sugarshack, you know, where you come in, it's all muddy out there. He had us go out and stand right in it.

Cherie: In the mud?

Blade: Yup, cause everyone wanted to sit down. And he said, 'Sit down over there if you want.' And we all had to step in the water, boots soaked, and if anyone wanted to sit down, they could.

Emma: I would have.

Cherie: Did people sit down?

(group laughter)

Curtis: A couple people did. But mostly everyone that [had] wanted to sit down, didn't.

(Transition Group Photo Project Transcript, 7-17-03)

Meaning is not simply laid over the landscape; places do not act as placeholders for the imagination. Non-humans influence action. The "K2" hill provides the gradient for the action of sledding. Sledding could not take place without it. Biting insects and mud encourage a change in behavior. Particular attributes of the spot at the side of the service road—the softness of grass, it's distance from vehicular travel, perhaps even the lack of a driving rain that day—provided a rather comfortable place for Megan to pretend she was sleeping for three hours. Places provide the physical material with and against which identities are formed. Ruddick (1996, 345) asserts that "*symbolism embodies a material force that is crucial in the creation and maintenance of social identity in and through space*" (original emphasis). Experiences are produced out of interaction with constituents of place, and place gains its individual and group meanings from narratives that spin out from such interactions.

As much as Foucault was interested in producing surface and local accounts of social life (Philo 2000; Butler 2004), his theory that emerges from the local can feel disembodied. His notion of the grid exemplifies that, for a grid is not three-dimensional. We can picture how it is laid over society, but not how one moves *through it* in everyday life. De Certeau

(1984) illustrates this vividly (and poignantly in light of its later destruction) in his description of viewing New York City from atop the World Trade Center. From there one can see like a god but cannot know any individual who is living in the city. De Certeau brings his vantage point down to the streets to show how pedestrian movements actually spatialize the city, and to look for places where the “swarming activity of procedures” have not been eliminated by panoptic administration, but have proliferated into “surreptitious creativities” (96). In the section that follows, I attempt to produce a grounded and ground-level analysis of the production of place at Camp E-Wen-Akee, acknowledging both disciplinary tactics and surreptitious or, at the least, unanticipated activities.

Camp E-Wen-Akee as Therapeutic Taskscape

I understand ‘place’ as comprised of cultural practices, abstract orderings, and material bodies. I join with Creed and Ching (1997, 7) who call for “a theoretical middle ground in which ‘place’ can be metaphoric yet still refer to a particular physical environment and its associated socio-cultural qualities. In this view, place becomes a *grounded* metaphor” (emphasis in the original). My understanding of place recognizes Massey’s (1994, 121) observation of place as “open and porous networks of social relation” as well as the relations between diverse bodies—including nonhuman bodies. When I refer to ‘place’ at Camp E-Wen-Akee, I mean to include the hardwood forest, the policies that shape camp therapy, the daily schedule of work, rituals, and movement through the property, and any number of embodied and disembodied forces that together produce life at camp.

In recent years, actor-network theorists have illustrated how nonhumans are always indispensable to, and firmly part of society (see chapter 3). As Michael (2000, 21) describes,

... for ANT, the intermixing of human and non-human is intrinsic to human society; one of its central interests is, therefore, to develop accounts of how this intermixing proceeds. What ANT provides is a conceptualization of interaction that captures the range of exchanges between heterogeneous actors, say the typically human and non-human. In the process, ANT examines the multiplicity of levels upon which exchanges and interactions between, and mutual shapings of, such seemingly disparate actors are conducted.

Although Cloke and Jones (2001) appreciate ANT's accounting for nonhumans in representations of the world, they, along with Thrift (1999) charge that ANT does not assist in identifying what makes places unique. They admit that place has been "a key but problematic concept within geography, landscape studies, and environmental thinking" but nonetheless try to identify the creative aspects of networks to illuminate thinking about place. In their article about a place in England (2001, 650), they attempt to bolster a network perspective with a redefined notion of dwelling:

It is this creativity that we wish to emphasise in this paper: places are dynamic entities, coconstituted and performed by human and nonhuman actants alike. How such places assume and reproduce their character(s) is an important issue, and it is in this context that we turn to the notion of dwelling, which offers insights into how (non)human actants are embedded in landscapes and places as well as networks, how nature and culture are bound together in place, and how these formations invariably have a time-depth where past, present, and future are interconnected. We argue that the notion of dwelling needs to be qualified and extended in a number of ways. In particular, there is a need to guard against understandings of places which are overly cosy-even romantic-which are fixed and unidimensional, and which too easily claim a sense of authenticity.

The notion of "taskscape", which comes out of Cloke and Jones' application of a dwelling perspective to a modern apple orchard in England, is helpful for my analysis of Camp E-Wen-Akee. In their analysis of the orchard, they point out how practices such as pruning trees and other orchard work, along with the qualities of apple trees and the mandates imposed by specific machinery, together create a particular landscape, one that is

experienced primarily by moving through it, not by viewing it from on high. I use the idea of “taskscape” to describe how the Eckerd therapeutic strategy applied to a particular piece of ground, people, and other entities results in the on-going production of a unique place. I do not believe that Camp E-Wen-Akee as place is the same for everyone, I only wish to suggest that the specific mix of actants and the attempt to enlist them into the goal of youth re-socialization produces certain patterns in landscape and in behavior. In other words, I am interested to show here how the ‘nature’ and ‘culture’ bound together in the task of re-socializing youth co-constitute the ‘place’ of Camp E-Wen-Akee, and further, how the physical places of camp are also bound into meaningful experiences for youth who live there.



Figure 6.10. Chief Art's Shop at Camp E-Wen-Akee

Chief Art: Keeper of Place

Probably the best portal to the negotiations between people and the nonhumans of camp is through the stories of Art, the person responsible for the camp buildings, grounds maintenance, vehicle maintenance, construction, and care-taking of the land. Following is a description of my first visit to his “shop” (see figure 6.10):

I have been searching for Arthur for fifteen minutes. I walk down the embankment at the edge of the service road to his shop. It's a one-story, white sided building with a shed roof that extends over a concrete pad to the south. Machinery and lengths of board are stored on the pad. A garage door is located on the east side of the building so that cars, trucks, lawnmowers and other vehicles can be driven (or pushed) in for repair. I knock on the aluminum door at the south side of the building. No one answers. I try to peek in through the window but the glass is so smudged with grime I can't see inside. I push the door in and yell “Hello?” The smell of oily rags greets me. No one is here, but an old boom box set on a shelf is blasting country music. There's a green John Deere riding mower parked in the middle of the concrete floor, along with saw horses, an octagon-shaped school table, pieces of wood, and sundry machine parts. Power tools hang neatly on a pegboard along the south wall. Cigarette butts litter the floor. A pile of them sits next to the shiny red fire extinguisher. Empty soda and CountryTime lemonade cans are all over the place. It's a sanctuary.

(Interview with Arthur, 10-28-03)

I called Art's shop a sanctuary because everything about it, except for the neatly hung tools, contrasts so starkly with all other spaces at camp. No place smells like this one. Litter is found no where on property but here on the shop floor. It's the only place with a radio. It felt like a spot where one could drop their guard and relax a bit. I learned that's exactly what upper level staff do here. “We play in there,” Art told me, referring to Grady, Ferguson, and Chuck, the program directors who sometimes help out with building projects and sometimes just hang out down in the shop (Interview with Arthur, 10-28-04). For the upper level staff, the shop is a refuge from the rigid order at camp as well as the often trying interactions with

campers. The disarray of the shop marks its privileged status, and the status of those who may access it.

Chief Art and his shop operate as alternatives for the campers too. Art's job is to keep all the physical systems operating at camp. He doesn't interact with the campers as a counselor, like the other chiefs do. Yet campers regard working with Chief Art and any of the upper-level staff members as a special opportunity. Chief Chuck laughed, "I could ask if anyone wanted to scrape the deck floor and they'd all want to come. It's the chance to be away from group and have the freedom to get a drink of water without asking" (Fieldnotes 6-17-03). Art also said, "If a kid's ready to leave [camp] but doesn't have anywhere to go, they work with me. Or if a kid is brought back to camp they will work with me. It works out pretty good." He laughed, "It's like someone else's baby- they're fun for awhile but when you get sick of him you can give him back!" (Interview with Arthur, 10-28-03).

Metaphorically and in spatial terms, Art occupies a privileged and special place amongst all the employees at camp. As caretaker of the land and the employee who has worked the longest at camp, he is also the keeper of history about Eckerd as a place. He knew the land before Eckerd transformed it into a therapeutic taskscape, he knows what it takes to keep camp systems running now, and he knows how the place has changed over the years.

Art grew up on a dairy farm in Benson, went off to do military service for a few years, and returned back to his hometown just in time to be employed by Eckerd in the construction of Camp E-Wen-Akee. That was in 1978. He explained that the property was originally a farm and then became a "summer camp for city kids" (Interview with Arthur, 10-28-03). After Eckerd bought the property, they cobbled buildings from other parts of the property onto the original farmhouse. For example, the ell on the south side of the building

was once an art building down at the pond. Art remembers what the landscape used to look like: Neché campsite used to be a horse riding corral, and "down by Cascades [a waterfall] there used to be totem poles" made by the former camp. "You can still see old fire pits there" he told me. This landscape has a history of its own and still bears marks of past interactions; just as present actions on the land are making their own distinctive impressions.

When Eckerd arrived in Benson it attempted to impose its standard camp layout over the landscape, but Vermont's climatic and seasonal conditions forced Eckerd administrators to adjust some of their plans. Art said, "They had no idea if it would be warm enough to live in those tents" and so the Eckerd people moved some boathouses that were located by the lake to the campsites for additional shelter. "But they were never used" he added. A negotiation between a new disciplinary and therapeutic regime and an existing nature had begun.

In a separate conversation, BR (Interview with BR, 1-6-04), a former employee at E-Wen-Akee told me,

The folks from Florida had no clue of the weather. I mean, you think they do theoretically, but they have no idea. They know it's cold, but they don't know what cold is. I mean, they wouldn't bury the water pipes where the contractors told them to bury them. They all broke. They had to dig them up, they had to do it again. You know what I'm saying? [Speaking of cooking outdoors in the early years:] it was too cold to do it that way really, you know, because we used to cook out two days down there, summer and winter, and the cook tents weren't closed [in] yet and it was open fires, they didn't have the [wood] stove there. I mean it really was horribly cold and there were some wicked bad winters, and so a lot of what was going on down there was just plain survival.

The climate forced Eckerd staff from elsewhere to change how they physically carried out their program. Over the years they built warmer cook tents in the camp sites, buried the water lines, and changed the schedule of meals served up top in the main

Chuckwagon. Evidence of this change is visible on the landscape. On the low hill to the north of the service road are three diminutive cabins with front porches sitting side-by-side. They once housed staff but were abandoned many years ago. As the years go by Eckerd changes the landscape, and is changed by the landscape.

I asked Chief Art how much of the wood that campers use to heat their tents is cut from the property. He told me that they used to get nearly all of their wood from the property, and that they still have enough trees to provide for their heating needs. But, when the State of Vermont's Department of Education said that young people had to have a certain number of formal education hours each day, "it cut down on the time they have to cut their wood." Now Art buys forty cords of firewood in chunks for the camp. "Ninety percent is bought," he added (Interview with Arthur, 10-28-03). This policy emanating from the capital of Vermont in Montpelier has of course altered the forest composition in camp. The forest is no longer managed for firewood as it once was. It is no longer the same forest, signaling how the changes at Eckerd involve many different actants and produce a constantly shifting taskscape.

Soil composition has also influenced how Camp E-Wen-Akee operates. The combination of soil composition and state environmental policy has constrained Eckerd's plans for the camp. Eckerd would like to add another group to camp, to bring the number of campers in therapy to forty. But state law prevents them from adding another. Art explained, "the soils don't perc [percolate]" and said that the state only allows mound septic systems, no alternative systems. "There were five camps here once," he said. (Interview with Arthur, 10-28-03). State policy reduced the number of campers living on this piece of land; the forest eventually overtook the campsites that once existed.

Over the years Art has seen many kinds of animals on the property: "Black snakes- lots of black snakes. Skunks, raccoons, woodchuck, deer, bees." "Has the wildlife changed over the years?" I asked. "No," he replied, "if it's changed, it's gotten used to us."

Art's stories indicate that there has been much "getting used to each other" happening at Camp E-Wen-Akee. The institution has attempted to achieve its therapeutic goals by laying down a specific spatial system over the existing landscape. Because nature and culture are inextricably intertwined, camp employees are sometimes compelled to modify practices, buildings, and places to accommodate the needs, influences and contingencies of other actants. Camp responds to conditions, just as the nonhumans of camp must respond to camp practices. We cannot fully understand camp if we consider only the social relations and spatialities placed onto the landscape. A network perspective allows us to explain the story of a place by tracing it to wherever it may lead, to memory, narration, embodied practices, and buildings.

Resistance in Place and Subject Formation

Sometimes it feels as if nothing changes at Camp E-Wen-Akee. The ways of doing things, language, styles of tent structures, the repetition of rituals have altered little over thirty-five years. As I considered the processes of place formation and therapy at camp I marveled at the lack of resistance from campers. Long-time employees of camp say that years ago, especially when camp first opened, campers tried to run away all the time. They were usually caught in someone's barn or hitchhiking up the road toward Burlington (the city two hours north) and brought back to camp.⁶⁶ Now campers only very rarely try to run away,

⁶⁶ I recently heard a humorous story of an escape from Camp E-Wen-Akee. Some years ago a boy left camp and made his way to a neighboring farm. He commandeered a riding lawn mower and successfully drove it for

which is something that staff can't quite explain. So can we consider the control at camp complete? In one regard we can. With a few exceptions, young people make it through the program by complying with camp procedures.⁶⁷ This is the desired outcome of the program: that campers will change their behaviors so that they can live in society as a productive person who does not hurt others. But how is the quelling of resistance achieved?

Part of the reason that there is relatively little remarkable resistance is because room for resistance is built into the program, which makes the camp program itself resilient.⁶⁸ For example, activities are engineered to bring up difficult emotions and behaviors so that campers are forced to work through them. An envelope of time and the container of the huddle provide the time-space for campers to express their anger, fear, fantasies, sadness, and grief. Resistance to camp codes of behavior is the fuel for emotional growth. Friction to the smooth operation of the camp program is offered by people and nonhumans alike, perpetually driving the need for negotiation between people, and between people and nonhumans. Camp members are practiced at dealing with unforeseen circumstances that sometimes come with living outdoors. Resistance happens all the time, everyday. Consider this moment I recorded in my fieldnotes:

White plastic disks loft gracefully into the air and land like flying saucers into the tall grass, concealed. The object of the game is to hit a target using as few throws of the frisbee as possible. The warm day, the bright sunshine, the blue sky and the light wind swaying the

one and a half hours up the state highway. When it finally ran out of gas twenty miles from Burlington, the boy abandoned the mower and hitched a ride to the city. This can be understood as a surreptitious creativity within procedure!

⁶⁷ Each year a small number of young people don't 'graduate' out of the program. While I was at camp I saw 4 young people leave without graduating. One turned 18 before he had successfully completed his therapy, and had to return home. One was deemed too dangerous to stay in the program and was sent to a locked juvenile correctional facility. Two others, both sex offenders, were sent to another, more contained program because camp staff felt they weren't making the necessary therapeutic changes while in camp's program.

⁶⁸ Katz (2004) carefully differentiates resilience, reworking, and resistance as discrete responses to oppression and powerful regimes of control. Each, she holds, is a mobilization of a different kind of consciousness. Here, I am using the term resistance to simply mean the introduction of friction to some action or relationship. The friction may or may not be intentional, but slows down or impedes the planned progress of events.

treetops give the day a relaxed feeling. Dragonflies hover and zoom along the tips of the grass, white moths flutter by. The Neché group members, however, are becoming increasingly frustrated with one another. A frisbee hits someone and a huddle is called. A young woman calls out with an annoyed tone, "Everyone is supposed to help look when a frisbee is lost!" "I'm scared there's snakes in there" Sydney cries out as she peers into tall grass, looking for her frisbee. Destiny says, "There's a snake, a spider whatever!" and she refuses to fetch the disk.

(Fieldnotes, 6-17-03)

On this day, most of the campers showed no desire to play this game. Snakes and girls conspired to create friction to the activity. But the processing of the problem which was engendered by resistance is exactly the kind of therapeutic conversation camp staff want the girls to have. What occurs in the place of flagrant refusals is on-going negotiation. The camp landscape bears the marks of these negotiations in its material body: in the abandoned buildings, the tidy camp sites, the shed that houses the tools to keep systems running. These are the visible evidence of a taskscape that is continually adjusted and re-enacted, one that is peculiar because of its therapeutic mission. Camp doesn't look like a prison, a summer camp, a wildlife preserve, a high school, or a clinic, because it is none of these. Invisible to the eye gazing from above, and even to the visitor who ventures along camp's trails, are the rich meanings, memories, and infrastructures of feeling (Rosati 2005) that exist for the people who live there. Camp is spatialized by those who move through it, act in it, cry and change their lives there. And, despite my claims that camp taskscape doesn't seem to have changed, it has, and changes in just one aspect of its network circulates back to effect other aspects of the network.

Reproduction of the therapeutic strategy relies in part on the repetition of rituals and practices passed from campers to staff members and back to campers. But the on-going circulation of cultural and environmental knowledge is also linked to landscape.

Environmental knowledge is contingent on the existence of the landscape to which it pertains (Katz 2004, and see chapter 4). Taking a network approach to landscape, we can understand how policy emanating from the state of Vermont may produce a forest with different species composition at camp, and may also result in the loss of institutional and cultural knowledge about the forest.

One afternoon I walked with the Mahicans into the woods to find a tree suitable for an upright support on a new tent they were constructing. It was a mixed forest of white pine, ash, and maple located near the marshy area next to one of the ponds. A master counselor joined the group. The group members inspected a number of trees for one that would make a strong, durable, straight pole. No one knew the species of the tree that they ultimately cut down. It took the better part of the afternoon to limb the tree and drag it back to campsite. Once it was debarked, the group realized the wood wasn't solid and couldn't be used for the job. This brought together several questions that I had been considering during my stay at Camp E-Wen-Akee. If the groups were still free to cut their own firewood, would they not be more knowledgeable about the forest in which they live? If staff retention rates were high would staff members accumulate more ecological knowledge about Camp? Surely, earlier campers and staff members who spent many more hours of the day cutting and collecting wood than current campers would have had more experience to bring to this task. The knowledge I am referring to here is not the name for the tree but the ability to sense its properties and qualities, the learning that comes from working with wood over time. And to reach back to the discussion begun in chapter 4, if the staff members' previous experience of the outdoors was work-related and not recreational, would they have known the tree? As both Katz (2004) and White (1995a) have pointed out, abstracted environmental knowledge

produced out of environmentalist discourse is a much different knowing, located at a different scale, than the intimate, applied, and tactile environmental knowledge that comes from productive work in the local environment.

When the state insists on the acquisition of abstracted knowledge in the classroom, the opportunities to learn from and interact with the outdoor landscape at camp diminishes, and institutional knowledge of the immediate environment withers and disappears. And the forest composition—the very landscape—changes, along with the ways people move through it and make it meaningful (it is difficult to walk through the crowded saplings of a regenerating forest, perhaps the campers will stop visiting some places at camp over time).

My aim in this chapter has been to show how camp life is produced from the dual and interconnected workings of strict spatial disciplining and on-going relations between people, practices, and nonhumans. Camp E-Wen-Akee's buildings, pathways, and topography are engineered to elicit certain desirable behaviors and to suppress others. Camp staff attempt to manage forests, friendships, tools and time as a means to control and craft the kinds of experiences campers have while at camp. Consideration of only these disciplining acts, however, produces an account that is one-sided and lacks an acknowledgement of the important contribution nonhuman and camper agency make to camp's daily functioning. It misses too, the topography of memory. The creativities de Certeau is searching for are found in the named and unnamed micro-places, the places that recall shame, pride, and transformation, in the infrastructure of feeling that exists on the ground. Camp E-Wen-Akee is a therapeutic taskscape not in spite of the distractions posed by uncontrollable nonhumans and resistant people, but as a relational achievement among them.

Wilderness Stories as Anchors: Space and Identity

The Story of Lee and the Missing Fish

Lee caught a big trout in the lake one day. He wrapped it in foil, brought it to the cooks in the kitchen, and asked them to store it in the freezer. Lee returned several days later to retrieve his fish. He intended to cook it for his group members at campsite. But, the fish had gone missing. It wasn't in the freezer. Lee looked everywhere. He asked everyone. But no one could say where the fish had gone. He stood before the camp community and told everyone about the absent fish. Several days later a funny and fantastical story about the fish-that-went-missing was tacked up on the community bulletin board in the dining hall, available for everyone to read.

(Fieldnotes, 6-17-03)

I tell this story about a story because it contains some of the key elements in Eckerd Youth Alternative's strategy to transform young people's identities: nature, activity, and narrative. Some combination of fish, fishing, kitchen management, and Lee created the experience of catching and losing a fish. But it is the story that was produced out of the experience that does a good measure of therapeutic work. Lee transformed the fish event into narrative, wrote it down, and hung it in a public place. Through this process, the story became both durable and visible, a reminder of Lee's ability to write a funny story. On average, Eckerd campers enter the Wilderness Education System with a fourth grade reading level (Eckerd Youth Alternatives Inc. 2003); many consider themselves, therefore, inferior or incapable learners. For Lee, writing a humorous story might have forced him to rethink his identity as an unsuccessful writer. Perhaps the entire experience prompted multiple re-definitions of himself: as good fisherman, accomplished outdoorsman, author, humorous public speaker.

Camp E-Wen-Akee uses a variety of disciplinary means (spatial, cultural, temporal, behavioral) to produce the conditions for campers to have specific kinds of successful experiences, and then elicits and disciplines the stories campers tell about these experiences, and ultimately, about themselves. Narrative, therefore, is central to transforming troubled youth into young adults ready to participate in society in a positive fashion (Eckerd Youth Alternatives Inc. 2003). So too, are the material spaces in which campers live out their lives. In this chapter I consider how wilderness as a space and the practice of storytelling are brought together to produce change in the camper's self-concept. Narrative is meant to anchor new subjectivities as campers prepare to move back into the spaces of community life. Camp E-Wen-Akee helps young people to achieve identities as people capable of social success within the highly structured spaces of camp, however, such narrated identities are challenged by inadequate spatial resources and home places outside of camp. The process of maintaining identity change cannot rely on the conceptual geographies of storytelling alone, but instead must rely on real, decent places to live new lives.

Space and Subjectivities

Elsbeth Probyn (2003, 290) writes that subjectivity is a "relational matter", produced within and through spaces. She draws on the work of Pratt (1998) and other feminist geographers who have demonstrated that places can elicit identities and that individuals therefore can have multiple subjectivities, contingent on travel between different settings.

Probyn (2003, 294) writes,

...subjectivity is not a given but a process and a production. It is also undeniable that the sites and spaces of its production are central. In other words, the space and place we inhabit produce us. It follows too that how we inhabit those spaces is an interactive affair.

This follows on Pratt's (1998, 28) contention that, "Accepting that identities are a process, a 'project,' and a 'performance' is compatible with an understanding that a stable identity is reenacted through daily life."

I share a similar interest in, as Probyn (2003, 296) puts it, *how* subjectivities "get configured across space and places." My research focused on the way that Eckerd tactically uses spaces and places to modify the identities of troubled youth. I find that a specific kind of wilderness is mobilized to elicit from campers desired behaviors and identifications, and that narrative is a method to make new identities stick. Furthermore, camp staff members actively modify and discipline the content of the narratives youth produce, silencing those with negative connotations and promoting stories that affirm campers' strengths.

Narrative in Wilderness Therapy

Margaret Somers (1994) theorizes that people make sense of the world by relating embodied experience through story. These stories are then contextualized in relation to other narratives. She describes two kinds of narrative: public and ontological. Public narratives are those "macro-stories" that circulate at the cultural level (ibid, 619). Ontological narratives are the personal stories that individuals tell to make sense of their own experience and among which they locate their personal identities. With each new experience the individual must reconcile the latest story of self with other existing ontological and public narratives.

Wilderness therapy programs such as Eckerd's rely on nature to provide novel experiences for young people. Researchers of wilderness therapy often attribute change among program participants "to the state of dissonance created by participants being in an unfamiliar environment, which provides immediate feedback." (Beringer 2004, 56).

Wilderness living is so alien, it is believed, that the traveler's social frame of reference is upset, forcing disruption of old ontological narratives and producing new ones. It is important that these new experiences in nature are construed as positive learning experiences as Miles (1995, 51) explains,

Those who design the challenges of wilderness-based educational programs are very careful to present the opportunity for success. Usually the learner is presented with a progressively more difficult series of challenges, demonstrating the value of learning and the positive outcomes to be derived from applying what is learned. In the outdoors the feedback and reinforcement from successful application of something learned is immediate. Rewarded for learning, the delinquent goes on to the next challenge and the next learning experience.

Cassidy (2001) asserts that optimal learning results from an experiential learning activity when learners connect lessons from the activity to their own personal experience. She (ibid, 25) encourages educators to assist this process by prompting learners' narration of the activity stating, "during the debrief stage, each personal narrative should be followed through and connected to the life stories of the participants if the experience is to be significant, memorable, and ultimately, transforming". Furthermore, Cassidy emphasizes that the creation and exchange of stories among group members brings added dimension to the learning experience. "Reflection on a shared learning event can capture the realm of personal meaning and connect life stories to a larger public meaning." She adds, "As we hear their story, we become involved in their story...Group reflection allows learners to expand their frame of reference as they hear the event interpreted from a variety of contexts". In other words, the ontological narrative is positioned in relation to other ontological narratives and perhaps even a larger public narrative.

The transfer of learning from the wilderness setting back to the social world is a concern for wilderness therapy practitioners. How can the new sense of self be maintained in

a different space? This question emerged in my interviews with wilderness therapy trip leaders. John, a trip leader from Canada, said that wilderness trips provide metaphors which function as “vehicles” to carry learning from the wilderness experience to daily life (Interview with John, 4-22-03). Metaphor slides across the cultural boundary back into social life through the medium of story. For Matt, a trip leader who works in New England, the process involves translating a visceral experience into words. “To find the words to attach meaning to a concept and then to give voice to that in a public setting, ... that’s a way of ... anchoring learning” (Interview with Matt, 5-2-03).

It is important to point out that the wilderness therapy process assumes that living in wilderness is temporary, and that the trip participant returns to a somewhere that is stable enough to provide time and space to integrate the metaphor into daily life. In other words, the young person has a known home place that contrasts with the unfamiliar wilderness. The presence of a home space however, cannot be assumed for many of the young people who make their way through Camp E-Wen-Akee’s program. This gives rise to the question, how can subjectivities be fixed without stable spaces? Or, to continue the metaphor, how can a story function as an anchor without a resting place?

Before engaging this question, however, it is helpful to first consider how the narrative process is employed at Camp E-Wen-Akee and how the spaces of wilderness and camp are constructed to assist with the re-fashioning of youth identities.

Disciplining Stories

At Camp E-Wen-Akee, the first step to changing a young person’s life is not to encourage a shift in identity but to change his behavior. Winston, a camp administrator,

explained it this way, referring to a hypothetical camper with post-traumatic stress disorder: "The behaviors they show that get them to camp hold a dangerous world at bay." They see life as dangerous and so "they misinterpret social cues, and see everyone as hostile." His or her first reaction may be to hit someone. After being at camp their "behavioral reactions are less hostile. They have learned a new cognitive skill set" (Interview with Winston, 10-11-04). In other words, through spatial disciplining, a minimum of outside cultural interference, constant verbal feedback, and practice, the camper is trained to change his reactions to the outside world. Over time, "the trick is generalized" and the cognitive restructuring is applied to other situations (Interview with Winston, 10-11-04). As the camper practices these behaviors, a shift in self-perception occurs, and this shift is stabilized by narrative.

Storytelling co-exists with bodily and spatial disciplining. Throughout their time at Camp E-Wen-Akee, campers are encouraged to narrate their emotions, their past experiences, and the new things they are learning about themselves. Campers tell their stories in huddles, in everyday conversation, in trip journals, in poems, stories, songs, and skits. Narration weaves learning from one moment to the next experience. The strength of new success stories, and of a new identity as a competent person, is meant to ensure camper success when they return home. Joan, a leading state social work official, articulated this when she told me,

...when the kids at camp all put together and built one of those tents, and they can step back and see what they as a group accomplished, it's a, it's a, it's gotta be a, you know, great feeling, of success. And, um, and it's gotta carry with them, uh, and I think it would allow them, when you've got some hard times out in the community, that feeling of success could carry over, and uh, they know, they know how to do it, they know what they did and how they did it, and um, I think it carries a tremendous amount of weight, in their, um, in their own mind. And they can fall back on it. I think.

(Interview with Joan, 11-4-03)

In addition to stories campers tell about themselves, there are the stories that staff members tell about campers. As a camper shows improvement in his social skills or his work habits or his willingness to face his fears, the moment is marked with verbal recognition. In this way, new stories are produced all of the time and with each new story the camper must relocate his identity among a wider range of stories. This process is not left to chance; it is carefully disciplined.

Just as body movement and expression (chapter 5), access to spaces (chapter 6), and contact with friends and family (chapter 4) are tightly controlled at Camp E-Wen-Akee, so too are the stories campers tell, and the stories they hear. Campers are trained not just to tell stories, but *how* to tell stories, in order to create positive outcomes and resolutions. They are taught specific vocabulary and phrases to use when narrating their feelings. This was, in fact, the very first observation I wrote in my fieldnotes when I stayed with campers for the first time:

My first impression is that the girls of Neché have an accurate and specific bank of phrases and words to describe their emotions and feelings. They say, "I would appreciate it if", "I feel", "I take responsibility for" "I could have done better at..."

(Fieldnotes, 4-3-03)

These are called "I statements". They force the speaker to acknowledge her role in a situation and to minimize blame on others. This practice causes the speaker to see their own power in any choice, even if it is simply the choice to feel one emotion rather than another. Camp E-Wen-Akee staff recognize the power of narrative and therefore closely edit the stories campers voice to the group. Staff members constantly encourage campers to frame their stories in a positive way. For example when I asked Austasia to tell me about her time

on the Neché hiking trip she said, "It was hard. I felt like I made it but I couldn't walk that fast." Chief Stella quickly interrupted to counter, "You were leading out sometimes!" (meaning that she was the first in line hiking the trail). Austasia then admitted, "I know, the last day" (Neché Post-Trip Assessment, 10-2-03). Clearly, Chief Stella was attempting to emphasize Austasia's success in hiking. She did not want Austasia to craft the story so that it reaffirmed her perceived weakness or failure. She placed her perception of events in contrast to Austasia's with the hope that Austasia would readjust her ontological narrative.

This dynamic takes place all the time. The stories told at pow-wow, for example, must be positive. The evening that staff members physically restrained Bob, Bob tried to make a joke of the restraint at pow-wow. He started to say, "The highlight of my day was being restrained" but several voices intervened and told him, "keep it positive," and "don't make fun of a restraint". Bob corrected himself with a smile and mentioned the bacon cheeseburgers we had for dinner. As a new camper he did not know that narratives that reinforce negativity or failure are not allowed.

Eckerd uses a variety of means such as limiting access to television, news, and music, elimination of clothing and body markers that indicate former social group membership, and access to friends and family to manage the public narratives young people access while at camp. Allowing some public narratives while shutting down others forces the individuals to recast their stories against new markers. Camp staff members give positive stories greater exposure than negative stories. For example, during the intense news coverage of the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York City, staff rationed the amount of disturbing stories the campers heard, saying that the stress would be too great for people already traumatized. The same rationing occurred during the start of the Iraq War. Even the stories told in books

are censored. The Pathfinders must have their science fiction and fantasy novels reviewed by staff to ensure that the campers are not exposing themselves to fantastic and unrealistic story lines that would affirm their own emplacement in, or identification with, anti-social fantasies.

Interestingly, stories or communication that are deemed inappropriate by camp staff are called “underground”, illustrating the suppression of negative talk at camp. Camp attempts to create the conditions for successful activities at camp and sanctions only positive narratives from these activities so that the number of success stories each camper has access to will increase over time.

Wilderness Stories

Twice a year, Camp E-Wen-Akee campers travel into wilderness, to places like the Adirondacks of New York State, the White Mountains of New Hampshire, for example. These trips into wilderness areas are a central component of Eckerd’s Wilderness Educational System. Unlike “nomadic” style wilderness therapy programs which operate entirely in wilderness areas, settlement-based programs like Eckerd’s draw on wilderness spaces only occasionally. In Eckerd’s therapeutic strategy, wilderness is used for several purposes: as a time-space unit of analysis, to provide an “intense shared experience” for group members (Conversation with Winston, Camp Administrator, Fieldnotes 5-8-03), and to diversify campers’ experiences. Wilderness is mobilized as a distant, public, and more ‘real’ space than camp, and these qualities are arranged in such a way as to produce many new stories in a concentrated period of time. Wilderness then, can speed up identity change for young people, or extend their stay at camp.

Historical Origins of Eckerd's Wilderness Trips

Trips have been incorporated into Eckerd's Wilderness Educational System since the beginning of the organization in 1968. In fact, it was one of the many practices Eckerd imported from the Dallas Salesmanship Club Camp, after which the Eckerd program was closely modeled. At that time, the Dallas Salesmanship Club Camp sent their campers on month-long canoeing trips and rafting trips. Loughmiller (1974, 48), the director of the Salesmanship Club Youth Camp, believed that a successful wilderness trip would boost a young person's self-confidence by providing them the opportunity to demonstrate their social and outdoor living competencies:

Actually a trip like this [a canoe trip] calls into play many of the skills that a boy has learned at camp requiring him to integrate them into a single enterprise. We see many tangible benefits coming from such experiences; for instance, after a successful trip of a month or six weeks on the river, every boy in the group can stand a little taller, speak with more confidence, look you straighter in the eye. Interpersonal friction in the group is reduced substantially. There is not room for conflict in a canoe when they are packed for a long trip. Group cooperation is required almost constantly, and there is less time and occasion for bickering.

Today Eckerd conducts wilderness trips in much the same way Loughmiller did, and to achieve many of the same results: group cooperation, increased self-confidence, and recognition of competence. However, at Eckerd, trips are deployed as a way to assess camper progress in social skill acquisition. Wilderness is positioned in this enterprise to provide specific spatial and qualitative resources.

"Deep, deep in the woods": Wilderness as Distant

Campers in Eckerd's program spend most of their time living within the boundaries of camp's property. Although their accommodations are rustic, lacking electricity and indoor

plumbing, and most of their activities take place outdoors, camp residents do not think of camp property as wilderness. Camp is located in a border space between the “ ‘normal’ social life of cities, towns, and teenage activity, and wild wilderness. As Mahicans camper, Job, described it, wilderness trips take place “deep, deep in the woods” (Fieldnotes, 8-5-03).

Campers think of the wilderness they travel through on trips as remote and staff members work hard to maintain this perception. On a hiking trip along the Long Trail in Vermont, one of the Neché staff members had to walk off the trail in order to get reception on the cell phone. She ended up walking all the way into a nearby town but attempted to hide the fact from the campers so that she wouldn’t break the illusion that they were deep in the woods. Chief Rose told me, “They think they are really, really far from civilization” when they’re on the Suwannee river in south Florida even though they are closer to a road there than when they are at Camp E-Wen-Akee in Benson. “Some were really scared,” she added (Fieldnotes, 4-3-03). The fear comes from the notion that they are far from help. As one chief told me, “There’s no one to run to out on a trip if something goes wrong.” (Chief Tim, Fieldnotes, 6-7-03).

Wilderness as More Real than Community

The perception of distance and lack of support makes campers regard events in wilderness as more ‘real’ than life at camp or elsewhere. Jonny, a camper, told me “...on a trip you’ve got to follow first direction. You’re not on property, you’re in the woods.” (Fieldnotes, 8-5-03).⁶⁹ The consequences for actions and events are immediate and seen as not as mediated by staff as they are at camp. So for example, when a canoe tipped over on

the Suwannee River, sinking the bag containing their eating utensils, the Mahicans were forced to carve their own utensils from wood. Sierra, a former Eckerd employee, provided this example of real consequences:

...we were on a camping trip once, Catatogas, and we were dumping [draining] the spaghetti, in the rain, and it all dumped out on a sandy beach, we were *so hungry!* "Rinse it off! We're eating it." It was the crunchiest spaghetti I'd ever eaten. But, you know, those are the experiences you remember, and, by God next time we're gonna be a little more careful when we dump that spaghetti. We're gonna take care because everybody had to suffer from that mistake...

(Interview with Sierra, 12-2-03)

The following description (Kaplan and Talbot, 1983, p.190 quoted in Miles 1995, 53) explains that for some, wilderness is the foundational space, and society is like a fog distorting the view of truth:

The wilderness experience is "real" in some rather concrete ways, as well as in a somewhat more abstract sense. It is real not because it matches one's ways of the everyday world (which of course it does not do), but because it feels real because it matches some sort of intention of the way things ought to be, of the way things really are beneath the surface layers of culture and civilization.

Travel through wilderness then, can be expected to show how someone "really" is because the self is meeting with reality. In this way, the camper's foundational self, including their behavioral problems, are rendered visible as illustrated in the following story.

On a trip to Maine, strong winds whipped up dangerously high waves on the lake the Mahicans were paddling. Chief Dexter explained, "We went around the corner and the waves were coming at us. It was really hard to canoe." The waves were so strong that they turned the canoes sideways. Camper J.C. said, "We were angry cause we couldn't get the canoe to go where we wanted it to go. I tried so many C strokes, J strokes, pry, draw,

⁶⁹ "First direction" refers to following a direction from a chief the first time it is given.

rudder...Anything I could think of". But the canoe began to fill with water. Chief Alice and camper Lee paddled over in their canoe to help them. I asked the boys, "Did getting angry help?" Bob smiled, looked down, and said "No." J.C. added, "It might have helped to paddle" (Mahicans' Trip Assessment, 8-22-03).

In this instance, the boys had no choice but to manage the situation; they could not walk away from the danger. Their anger got in the way. The situation forced them to use skills they had learned beforehand, like paddling strokes, and to rely on group members for support. This moment revealed some skills the boys may want to improve, and that their angry reactions were counterproductive. Staff members hope that through situations such as these, campers will recognize their own strengths and behavioral deficits, and learn to appreciate cooperation.

Wilderness as Public

Paradoxically perhaps, Eckerd defines wilderness as both far from human supports and as "in community". Camp E-Wen-Akee, positioned as it is outside of society, is mobilized as a specific therapeutic time-space with its own language, dress, rituals, and organization culture (see chapter 5). Enclosed by property boundaries (chapter 6), it constitutes a private space. The private space of camp is juxtaposed to the public space of 'community' located beyond camp's 'property'.⁷⁰ Therefore, when a group leaves camp property to go on a wilderness trip, they regard both the areas they drive through and the site for the wilderness trip as public spaces. Moving into the public poses risk: the opportunity for campers to act inappropriately, anti-socially, or even violently against members of the

⁷⁰ Camp E-Wen-Akee residents use the term 'property' to describe the camp and 'community' to describe all spaces outside of camp, see chapter 2.

public. As much as wilderness trips test their outdoor living and group cooperation skills, trips also test campers' social skills. Wilderness, with a presumed lower human population density than a city or town, is a good place to try out occasional interaction with the public.

Brief encounters with people allow campers to show that they can engage with people without offending them. Sometimes, it's clear that an individual or the group has more to learn. On a Neché hiking trip Austasia made negative comments about passers-by. At moments such as these, wilderness provided enough 'empty' space so that the group could distance itself from others (the 'public'), huddle up, and process the problem. Moments such as these signal to staff members how much additional progress individual campers need to make before they can be 'good citizens' back home.

Wilderness as Analytic Time-Space

Eckerd's wilderness trips function as "analytic space" (Foucault 1995, 143). Trips have a start date and an end date. They take place in a separate, unfamiliar space. They involve heightened risks and new activities. Together, time, space, and activity join to form an analytic unit in which behavior is assessed. In fact, the behavioral assessment begins long before group departs for its trip. Months before the departure date, group members carefully plan the trip itinerary, develop educational goals, and put together a menu. Weeks before the departure date, campers order the food, prepare needed equipment, and discuss the risks involved in the trip. Days before the trip the group packs food, clothing, and equipment, and determines individual and group therapeutic goals. All the while, staff members are discussing and measuring the readiness of the group to take the trip. Each task has a deadline

at which time it must be accomplished. If a group can meet each time goal, it is taken as an indication that the group is functioning well enough to go on the trip.

Campers are aware that their comportment is being judged and this often causes anxiety, especially for those campers who would like to begin the transition process out of camp. Speaking of a recent river trip, his third while at camp, Floyd said, "I felt relief when I got back [from the trip]" (Fieldnotes, 10-2-03). He knew he had to do well on the river as he was in the final stages of transition back to community. Chief Dexter explained, "Trip is an opportunity to bring your camp stay to another level, either toward transition or closer to it, or just another level. That causes stress for some people and some handle it better than others" (Fieldnotes, 9-22-03).

Time is both loosened and compressed on wilderness trips. On the one hand, on trips there is one simple goal for each day: to get to the next destination. Although they follow the same basic daily routine they keep while at camp, campers have fewer tasks to accomplish and the group has flexibility around when it eats meals, for example. On the other hand, because camper behavior in community is so closely analyzed, it feels like time is concentrated while on trips. While the Mahicans were telling me about their trip to Maine, a camper reported, "Chief Ferguson said two weeks in Maine is like one month in camp, and one month in Florida is like two months at camp". There was some confusion amongst the boys about what this meant. Ralph, who had been at camp longest in the group, settled the confusion saying, "They judge your behaviors more when you're out in community than when you're at camp." Chief Tuco stated, "There's more pressure out in community" (Mahicans Trip Assessment 9-22-03).

One of the key strategies used to assess behavior is goal setting and evaluation. Goal setting and evaluation is conducted methodically and routinely at camp; so campers are accustomed to this process. Prior to their departure for a hiking trip, I overheard Destiny, a camper, remind her group, "Make it measurable, make it attainable, make it controllable." When I asked what she was talking about she told me that she was going over the key parts of a goal: "MACCD: measurable, attainable, controllable, challenging, and desirable" (Neché Pre-trip Assessment, 9-20-03). Campers then, are enlisted into the process of narrative evaluation. They produce their own goals and contribute to setting group goals. When shared with the group or the camp community, the goals enter the public sphere. During and at the end of the trip goals are evaluated and made open to public comment. In this way, campers become part of the disciplining, therapeutic process for themselves and others. They transform their experiences out in wilderness into story. The stories make sense of or produce meaning from events. They are carried back to camp and shared with the camp community in the form of oral storytelling, writing, photographs, and drawings. Narrative plays a very important part in making wilderness an analytic space.

Travel as Productive of New Narratives

Travel alone is productive of new experiences and stories. Many of Camp E-Wen-Akee's campers have not had the opportunity to travel. Eckerd's wilderness trips provide a diversification of their activity experiences and their geographical ranges. Speaking of the benefits of their canoe trip in Florida, Chief Lulu said, "We had guys that had never left Vermont" (Fieldnotes, 5-23-03). The impact on campers of traveling, even to a place as close as Maine is from Vermont, is significant. J.C. said he was looking forward to the trip

to Maine because he was “going to a place I wouldn’t get to go” and Job matter-of-factly stated, “I might not get the chance to ever go back” (Mahicans’ Pre-Trip Assessment, 8-5-03).

For many campers, travel from camp to the wilderness site affords first sights of cities and tall buildings. The story of Emma’s trip to Florida illustrates how travel opened a new and meaningful world to her. The Neché group had recently returned from a canoe trip to Florida when I met them. While telling me about the trip, Chief Rose mentioned that Emma cried when they stopped at a beach. It was the first time Emma had seen the ocean. “She got real emotional about it” and ran along the beach, Rose said (Fieldnotes, 4-3-03). With Chief Rose’s permission, I asked Emma what it was like to see the ocean for the first time. Emma’s eyes grew wide and she smiled. With excitement in her voice she said, “It was my own world. It was amazing. I never thought I’d be able to go to the ocean ‘cause my family doesn’t travel. I felt ‘wow’. It smelled like rotten fish. It looked peaceful and quiet. I saw jellyfish. I felt free” (Interview with Emma, 4-4-03).

Clearly, the experience of the ocean provided a new geographical context in which to position her sense of self. It brought forth feelings and identifications she had never felt before, the effects of which extend beyond the explanatory power of narrative theory.⁷¹ If we take seriously the productive power of space on identity, we might say that the person Emma experienced while at the ocean cannot be experienced anywhere besides the ocean. Yet, the memory of feeling new sensations, of experiencing a new self in a new place does travel. The experience of the ocean gave Emma a new story about herself, one that made her

⁷¹ Indeed, narrative theory does not account for non-verbal sensations that some say form the crucial piece of the therapeutic experience. There is a growing body of literature for example on transcendent moments (Williams and Harvey 2001), the effects of soft fascination in nature (Kaplan and Kaplan 1989; Russell and

eyes sparkle months afterward. At a very basic level, it is important for campers to see that life can be lived in different ways, that there are different realities from the ones they know, and that they can build new narratives. Becca, a social services official I interviewed pointed this out when I asked her what function the trips serve. She said,

[The campers] get to see part of our country. They see something outside our state. They see that they can move. They don't have to remain in one spot. They see that they can be successful outside their own community and their own world.

(Interview with Becca, 1-7-04)

Sara, another state official had a similar view of the importance of travel for campers,

I think the trips, the trips are fantastic because they, um, again, you're out of your environment, you're totally out of your environment, so it causes, it just causes you to think different. You have to think different, so it gives kids a chance, and I know some of them come back phenomenally changed, I mean, they just think, they, some of them never even left the state. They don't know that there's places down—they've heard of Florida but they've never been there, and they, it really opens their minds to, you know, to something other than, than, um, the rotten life that they've probably lived. You know, that there *are* other things out there, good things. You know, different ways to do things, um, that, you know, some of them are never taught anything. Not even, not even that there are different ways to do things. They're just so, a lot of them are just so limited in their knowledge of the world.

(Interview with Sara, 12-12-03)

Each time a camper has one of these experiences, either visiting a new place or doing a new activity, it gives him another story to tell about himself. In Sean's case, sobriety was the new experience he had on his first trip with the Pathfinders. He told me this about the trip, "I didn't think about my family as much. It was a positive start. It kept my mind off it. It was the first time I had been sober. It was weird to have fun and be sober" (Fieldnotes, 10-28-03). With each new pleasant and unexpected experience, the camper's ability to

Hendee 2000) and a sense of awe and spirituality experienced in wilderness (Frederickson and Anderson 1999).

imagine other successes in unfamiliar territory grows. BR, a social worker and former Camp E-Wen-Akee employee believes,

... it's not being able to build a fire, it's just knowing that they can do things, they've been, they've been able to have some success, they've been able to learn some stuff, they've been able to complete something that's kind of exciting, like a river trip or a, or ... rappelling.

(Interview with B.R., 1-6-04)

These stories acknowledge that different spaces elicit different identities for young people. If the experience of new spaces is seen as positive, the identities in these contexts will be regarded as not only positive but also possible to experience in the future. The accretion of successes is meant to eventually shift ontological narratives from negative to positive. As Becca, the state worker said, "Some kids develop a history of personal failure. He's got the idea that he's bad. The camp experience gives him a concrete way to see that he can survive" (Interview with Becca, 1-7-04).

Narratives at Work: Analysis of Two Wilderness Trips

During my fieldwork at Camp E-Wen-Akee I worked with two groups, Neché and Mahicans to gain insight into how they perceive and experience wilderness trips. Both groups were planning wilderness trips in the late summer and early fall of 2003. Neché organized a seven-day hiking trip along the southern portion of the Long Trail in Vermont.⁷² The Mahicans planned a two-week canoeing trip to the Jackson Lake area in Maine. With their permission, I spoke to each camper individually and to the group as a whole about their feelings, expectations, and goals for the upcoming trip. I asked them to be the 'researchers'

for me since I could not join them on their journeys. Everyone agreed. Upon their return back to camp I met with the each group as a whole again, listened to their accounts, and then asked each group to come up with some way of showing others what happened on the trip. The Mahican and Neché groups had quite dissimilar experiences on their trips. Working with them on this project demonstrated how Eckerd's wilderness trips operate as assessment instruments of individual and group behavior, how storytelling is the means by which experience "deep, deep in the woods" is made meaningful back at camp, and how wilderness travel modified individual and group identities.

Goals, Trip Strategies, and Anxieties

The goals campers set for themselves (with the assistance of camp staff members) show the kinds of subjectivities wilderness is intended to elicit. The most common behavioral goals for the Neché and Mahican campers were: anger management, being a role model and positive leader, responding to directions immediately, maintaining a positive attitude, and improving relationships. In sum, Camp E-Wen-Akee was looking to wilderness to provide situations in which campers would behave as cooperative and socially responsible members of a group.

The goals that campers set for the wilderness trip were written on paper and carried along with them on their travels, a physical blueprint for behavior. But goals do not necessarily allay fears. Some campers told me they looked forward to leaving property and undertaking athletic challenges in the unknown outdoors. Several of the Mahicans for example, were very excited to go fishing on their upcoming canoe trip. Others hoped to see

⁷² The Long Trail runs along the spine of the Green Mountains from Vermont's border with Massachusetts north to the border with Canada.

wildlife. Bob, the new camper, was thrilled just to go away from property. "Hallelujah! I hate seeing camp" he said (Mahicans Pre-trip Assessment, 8-5-03). But other campers said they dread wilderness trips. Sydney, a Neché group member said, "...these trips are high stress for me--maximum stress. I hate the outdoors as it is. It's gross to me, having to go to the bathroom, having to drink river water and put iodine in it, and not showering" (Neché Pre-trip Assessment, 9-20-03). One of the Mahican boys, Mel, told me, "I don't want to flip a canoe. I hate being out in the middle of the water because it's kind of scary" (Mahicans Pre-trip Assessment, 8-5-03). Beth was afraid they might encounter a black bear while hiking. For staff members, the goal of these trips is to see how the campers confront and manage their fears while away from the supports of camp. The trick is to appropriately challenge the campers but not to put individuals or groups into situations for which they are not prepared.

Staff members put much thought into engineering the wilderness trips so they will yield success stories. Camp staff members believe that different kinds of activities in wilderness hold different possibilities for different groups. They gauge group interactions within camp before deciding what kind of trip will fit the group's needs. An administrator explained to me that camp does canoe trips with groups that are "less functional" because they can hook up the canoes while out on the water, process an issue, "and keep moving." And, the configuration of the canoes mandates that campers primarily interact with just one other person. He added, "We hold off on backpack trips for groups who are not functioning at a high level because the need to stop and process issues makes it difficult to carry through with the trip itself" (Winston, Fieldnotes, 5-8-03). Yet some of the campers saw canoe trips as stressful, especially for those campers "who can't handle themselves" (Job, Mahicans Pre-

trip Assessment, 8-5-03). When I asked Jonny, "What about a trip pushes people's buttons?" he replied, "People having to compromise in the canoes" (Mahicans Pre-trip Assessment, 8-5-03).

Johnny and Job's concern that the group may have difficulty working together was shared by many of the Mahican campers before they left for Maine. It was not surprising that staff members sent the group on a canoeing trip as the group had not been running smoothly before they left. However, as Chief Alice pointed out after the trip, the boys had made all of their deadlines before the departure date, so they were allowed to leave.

Campers see backpacking trips as more physically challenging than canoeing. The prospect of hiking called up Neché group member concerns about their fitness, and forecasted narratives of failure. Before they left I asked Kelsey, "How are you feeling about the trip?" She replied, "I am not excited because I'm not the most athletic person." She added, "I don't think the group's going to do too well. We're out of shape. I think we'll be lazy. It'll be hard to get to the top" (Neché Pre-trip Assessment, 9-20-03). Despite their worries, the camp administrators determined that hiking was an appropriate challenge for the girls, and that the potential for successfully completing the trip was high.

A Shaky Bridge: Mahicans' Trip to Maine

It had been my intention to meet with each group within a day or two of their return from their respective wilderness trips because I wanted to talk with them when their memories were still fresh. I learned when I got to camp on August 22 that the Mahicans had returned to camp several days before. They had cut their canoe trip early due to behavioral problems in the group. One camper was sent to the juvenile correctional facility because he

was "aggressive" and had become "assaultive against staff" (Conversation with Chief Alice, 8-25-03). The group would have continued with their trip once the boy had been removed, however the next day one camper alleged that another camper had made sexual overtures to him. Taking into account that the next portion of the trip was to a more remote site with no cell phone access, staff members decided to cut the trip short and bring the group home. The group had become too wild for wilderness.

Just as the trip functioned as an assessment of individual and group behavior, the trip project I conducted with Mahicans acted as a behavioral gauge. Both were rocky. It was a hot and sticky day when I met with Mahicans to listen to accounts of their trip. When I arrived at camp I found the Mahicans huddled up in the blazing heat on the service road. They were having trouble getting through their day. An hour later than planned we finally began our discussion of their trip. Fortunately, we gathered in the RC, which sits in the shade of the woods. It was cooler inside the building than out and the boys seemed to relax a bit as we began to talk about Maine, canoeing, and their adventures.

The boys leaned back in their plastic chairs and stretched out their legs as I began to ask questions about the trip. I first asked, "What do you want to tell me about this trip?" There was a flurry of responses. Mostly campers talked about the spectacular aspects of the trip- the moose, eagles, and loons sighted, the giant waves on the lake, the outhouse on Hurricane Island that was "full of poop". No one discussed Lee's attack or the allegations between campers. They started to allude to problems when I asked, "What about your group goals, like following first direction and writing in your trip journal three times a day?" One boy answered hesitantly, "Half of us got some done, some didn't." The campers began to disagree about this statement. Chief Dexter silenced the conversation with, "Some guys yes and some guys no" and then quickly changed the subject to something more positive. He volunteered, "One of the things the guys did really well was learning canoe strokes. Some quickly, some persevered."

The campers took up the hint to be more positive and a camper mentioned that there was some good teamwork in the canoes. Bob boasted, "I canoed fourteen miles in one day." But J.C. brought the conversation back to their behavioral problems when he stated,

"Canoeing-wise we did okay. It was when we were off the water that we began having troubles." The discussion moved to some of the stresses associated with riding in the van together and cleaning canoes, and feeling the pressure of just being on a trip. At this point, the conversation began to be interrupted by huddles. Some boys were being disruptive and others just weren't participating. For each incident the group stood up, walked outside the RC into the humid air, stood in a circle, and tried to talk through the problem. Both campers and chiefs looked weary. After the huddles there was never full participation in the project but more campers began to volunteer comments.

After about a half-hour of conversation we moved outside for the final part of the project. I had asked the group to think of something about the trip that they could share with the rest of the camp community. The only rule I set is that it has to be a group project.⁷³ The medium for the sharing was up to the group. Judging from their demeanor, I felt they needed some extra prompting for the project and I found I was soon facilitating the project more than I had planned. I post the lengthy fieldnotes below to illustrate the way the group functioned during the activity.

We are sitting on the benches of the deck outside the RC. I ask the Mahicans, "Pretend that the Eckerd administration comes to you and says, 'We don't have enough money to run all the programs we used to. Show us what trips do'." One of the boys says, "They don't do anything." I say, "OK". After some conversation a campers says that a lot of people learned about teamwork. I remind them that chief had said many people learned how to canoe better. B.J. says, "I learned that I can't do stern." I pull the three points together and say, "I am hearing that the canoe part of the trip did three things: 1. Some people learned teamwork, 2. Some people improved paddling skills, and 3. Some people learned what they're not good at. How can you show that somehow?" A few boys together decide to build a sculpture having to do with a canoe and with that, several guys run out into the woods and collect fallen branches and twigs. They crackle through the understory. There is no group consensus, and half of the group remains on the deck, lounging. Someone mentions something about building a pow-wow teepee and Jim is off collecting his own pieces of wood and laying them in a teepee shape around a tree.

⁷³ I made the rule so that the project would align with all other projects at camp which are always group-oriented.

At this point, a few of the guys began to work more or less together on the project but most of the others are working on separate pieces or are not doing anything at all. A huddle is called because someone was acting out. While we were still assembled in the circle a breakthrough occurred.

Job, shares an idea with the group. Job is a leader in the group and is close to leaving camp. He hasn't participated much at all today and I think that he, like Ralph who graduates on Monday, have mentally checked out of group. But Job comes through at the last minute with a plan. He looks at the pile of debris on the ground and says, "How about if we build a bridge and at one side are the experienced people who've been on a trip before and at the other side are the not experienced people? The bridge is how we came together on the trip." I make an encouraging comment on his idea and Chief Dexter adds, "If we build the bridge so one side is not built so well it represents how we know our weaknesses."

While some went about the business of building the bridge, other boys engaged in other activities. There were more huddles but somehow, despite all this, a bridge is built. It is constructed of dead logs and fallen branches from the forest floor.

I ask Lee, who hadn't been involved with the building, to describe the bridge as if speaking to a blind person. He says, "There are two logs going horizontally about two feet apart. They look like trees." Someone says, "They're blind!" I say, "It's OK, they've seen trees" and another person says, "They went blind later." Lee continues, "Branches that we took off trees are lying across. The other log is short. [One supporting log is longer than the other.] It's durable for holding weight." Someone tries to cross the bridge and by the bending of the logs and the crackling sound of wood snapping, it is clear the bridge won't hold weight. Some of the wood is nearly rotten, and some is just too dry. Chief Tuco asks Lee, "What are the differences in the branches going across?" Lee says, "The sticks are laid out horizontal and go from bigger to smaller." Chief Dexter clarifies, "Stronger to weaker."

The bridge builders laid out the deck of the bridge so that the end nearest the A-frame is constructed with the thickest branches and the branches descend in diameter from 7" branches to .25" twig (see figure 7.1). There was no discussion about this but the pattern emerged in the building process. Job says, "Part of our group was strong and knew about trips and the majority were inexperienced" explaining why there are more smaller branches than stout branches. A scuffle breaks out. During the conversation, Jim had taken the yellow paper ripped from his teepee, wadded it into a large ball and covered it with duct tape. Lee grabs the ball from Jim and Jim is coming after him. Chief Dexter immediately

wraps his arms around Lee's shoulders and upper arms to hold him but it isn't a full restraint. Chief drops his arms from Lee almost immediately. It takes a few minutes to resolve the situation. Tempers eventually cool.

After some final discussion of metaphors, the activity concludes.

(Mahicans Trip Assessment, 8-23-03)

The rough looking bridge that is supposed to hold everyone up but cannot is an appropriate metaphor for the Mahicans group at that time. The process by which it was constructed is representative of how the group was working overall. Arriving at a group consensus was impossible. The group was not yet ready to support its members and the former leaders of the group, Job and Ralph, at least initially, appeared to have abdicated their leadership in anticipation of their imminent departure.



Figure 7.1. Mahicans' Bridge

The doing of the trip and the doing of the trip project produced assessments of the group's functional level and of individual progress. For example, articulation of Job's ability to assist others and to identify his own strength came out later in the day. At Chuckwagon, Jonny stood up and tried to explain the trip project. But he spoke in a low voice and it was difficult to understand him. At my prompting, Job stood and clearly described the bridge and what it symbolized. One of the camp administrators asked, "Were you one of the strong branches?" As he sat down, Job smiled and said, "Oh, I was the strongest branch out there". This was greeted with laughter (Mahicans Trip Assessment, 8-22-03).

Perhaps for some of the campers, their comportment on the trip will serve to extend their stay at camp. If they can't make it in the public of wilderness, they are not ready for the public in community. For others, the trip will propel them faster to graduation. Job's individual behavior, for example, revealed that he can successfully manage social and concrete challenges, and he can produce positive narratives from such experiences.

At first, I found it remarkable that the Mahicans did not tell me that one camper was sent to Woodside and that another serious incident had caused them to leave Maine early. I only found out the details later, in a conversation with a master counselor. Yet, upon reflection, I realized that in the Eckerd way of thinking, a discussion of the problems in Maine would have affirmed narratives of failure. It is plain in my account of the group art project that I too became a part of the narrative process, and that even under adverse conditions, staff members will steer the production of narrative so that it results in up-lifting stories. The emotional strength involved in disciplining the multitude of stories that campers produce is great. It feels like an exercise in managing chaos.

As the trip assessment process shows, any experience generates any number of possible interpretations; for the trip to become therapeutic, the stories must be culled so just a few success stories enter the public narrative. Resistance in the form of counter-narratives is silenced. Camp makes it very difficult for alternative stories to emerge, for there are very few moments when two campers have privacy. Campers are not allowed to have two-party conversations; three campers must always be involved as a safeguard against alliances. Campers may not pass private notes to one another, and they are never alone together in bathrooms or outhouses, or out in the woods. As a temporary member of a group, I never heard "underground" while with the group; it was only in private conversations with staff

members that I heard the negative narratives. For campers, there is no conceptual or material space to tell narratives opposed to the sanctioned stories.

A Song from the Rain: Neché's Hiking Trip

One month after the Mahicans returned from Maine, the Neché group left for their hiking trip through the Green Mountains in southern Vermont. Although they faced some uncomfortable weather conditions and behavioral challenges, the project they crafted from their experience was entirely different from the Mahicans'. Hurricane Isabel brought heavy rain to the area the girls hiked through. When I spoke with the campers upon their return to camp, it was still rainy outside so we met in the top of the RC A-frame, where it was dark but dry. The stories from the trip flowed like water.

The girls were so eager to tell me about the trip that they spoke in a jumbled rush. I couldn't get it all down in my notebook: "It was really pretty. The view was really pretty. The food was really disgusting," said Destiny. Sydney countered, "It was great!" Another girl said that it rained a lot and she added, "I couldn't believe I wanted to come back to camp." Chief Natalie said, "It took us five and a half hours to walk three and a half miles. There were negative attitudes going around." The comments were coming so fast that I suggested we discuss each day in chronological order.

In the hour that followed the campers and chiefs told me about endless rain, and how the chiefs cared for campers by bringing them food in their tents, and about the funny people they met along the trail. They laughed when they described how Sydney whipped off her shirt when she thought a bug was on her neck. And, they discussed the "natural consequences" of the rain: muddy boots and clothing, wet tents, and "high stress". Although

some of the campers said they didn't do as well on their personal goals as they had planned, each girl was able to clearly articulate her goal and say what she had learned from the trip.

For example, Kelsey said, "It made me realize that camp is not that bad. We get showers."

Austasia and Destiny both mentioned they learned to "push past my comfortability" and another camper said she improved her "anger management skills". The girls said the hiking got better every day they were on the trail.

The fieldnotes below describe how the group responded to my request to produce something from their trip for the rest of camp.

I say, "Let's pretend that the people from Eckerd administration say that there's not enough money and they are considering canceling trips". At that, some of the girls start cheering and a few exclaim, "good!" It's clear that this approach may not motivate the girls to do the project. I ask the group how many don't care for the trips and they all raise their hands. Nevertheless, I decide to simply ask them to agree on some theme or learning from the trip and then to choose a medium to express that learning to the rest of camp.

They discuss what they learned. I suggest some ideas. We talk about how their hiking skills improved. Austasia says she doesn't think that she got better but the chiefs dispute that. I point out that the whole group made it, that they didn't have to pull off the trail and come home, even though many of them were worried about the hiking before they left for the trip. Austasia mentioned that she still was slow. I say, "Maybe that's it- that by taking small baby steps, you eventually make progress." I ask, "Is that how camp is, that it's hard to see progress everyday but eventually you do make changes?" The group agreed that this was a fitting theme from the trip.

The group wastes no time taking on the challenge of producing some kind of art. At first they consider writing a poem but then quickly decide to write a song. I sit back on the floor, put my clipboard down and watch as they all contribute to writing the lyrics for the song. They debate which song to model theirs after. They choose to put their song to the music of Jewell's "6 am". At first I don't recognize it but once someone starts humming it I recall it as a pop song. There are no arguments, no huddles, no sharp words. People shout out suggestions and then revisions of suggestions.

Chief Karen shows up unexpectedly. She is known to be a talented singer. She stays and sings with the girls. In less than 20 minutes, the song is written. Destiny and Kelsey took turns writing down the lyrics on the whiteboard and then transferring them to paper. I notice that Titi, who has hung back in the discussion, contributed to writing the lyrics. The group decides that instead of speaking their evaluation of the mornings' activities at chuckwagon, they will stand and sing the song. Someone radioed up top for a tape recorder

and while all this was happening, Chief Chuck appears with a tape recorder and new batteries. The girls stand and practice singing it through once. I tape their second take of the song. They decide to have a third try. I give them the choice of which they would like to keep as a final version and they decide on the third take. They are a bit late to get up top for lunch but they are cheerful and seem excited to perform.

Just before leaving, I peek into the Neché logs where they are waiting for the call to go to lunch. I notice that Cristina and Jessica who missed the project session are sitting with their heads bent over a page with the song lyrics, hastily trying to memorize the words so they can sing with the group (see figure 7.2).

(Neché Post-Trip Assessment, 10-2-03)

The Neché wilderness trip provided the kinds of results Eckerd hopes for. The wilderness was remote, the girls encountered people but not too many people, and the weather presented some hardship or 'realness' that the campers had to respond to. The trip also produced new experiences about which stories were told and meanings were created. And despite difficulties, each girl made it to the end of the hiking trail. The staff members can continually point to that fact and coax success stories from the campers, narratives about themselves that they will need to add to their bank of existing ontological narratives. Upper-level staff enthusiastically and eagerly supported the girls' process, demonstrating how staff members attempt to promote any opportunity to produce transformational stories.

7 a.m.

I hear the chiefs, it's 7 am,
I feel so far from E-Wen-Akee,
I got Pop-Tarts and my rice cakes too,
I got my Parmlait, everything but a shower.
I put on my pack in the pouring rain,
My sleeping bag just wasn't the same,
Cause it was wet and I was dry,
It made me miss camp oh so bad.
Cause hikes last for so long,
Even after we're done,
I know camp's not bad, cause this trip made me see
That camp was meant for me.
And I was meant for camp.

I go 'bout my hiking, I'm walking fine
Now what will we do cause we're taking less time?
Same old problems, not much to say
But solving more every day.

By
The Ladies of Neché
Sung to the tune of "6 a.m." by Jewel

Figure 7.2. Neché's Backpacking Song

From: "Neché's Days on the Long Trail Trip Journal", September 21-27, 2003

The song lyrics made the front page of Neché's final trip journal. They titled it "7 am", referring to the time they always wake up at camp. It became another durable success story from their wilderness experience. The trip journal was full of stories. The one that surprised me most was written by Sydney, the girl who said she disliked trips, calling them "high stress" (Neché Pre-Trip Assessment, 9-20-03). She wrote,

Mountain Tops

They take your breath away,
You wish forever you could stay.
Their beauty is so significant

In front of you are millions of little trees,
That let your mind be free.
And you feel like you're on top of the world,
Looking down on everyone
You see the brightness of the sun.
Then you tell yourself just a little longer,
While you sit and ponder.
About how you can keep this memory
Because the time you have to leave is coming near.
You come to the realization that this memory can stay in your mind,
And that it is your choice whether or not it does.

("Sydney" (pseudonym) 2003)

Although she dreads trips into nature Sydney finds something of value to bring home with her: the realization that she chooses what she brings home to camp. The fact that campers have choices perhaps not about what happens to them, but how they choose to understand and react to situations, is a key lesson which staff attempt to teach to all young people at camp. Of course, at camp, the stories told must be positive, and so the interpretive choice is narrowed significantly.

There is no objective knowledge that I can claim to discover in these trip assessment exercises. I became very much a part of the meaning and the stories generated in these projects. I, along with the Camp E-Wen-Akee staff, prompted campers to pull certain meanings from what we heard and witnessed. It was a creative process resulting in crafted meanings. This is the business of camp; it is one of the ways that camp attempts to change the way campers think about themselves. It is a technique used throughout a campers' stay at E-Wen-Akee, and as campers prepare to leave camp, they use narrative to imagine the future.

Talking through the Future

One summer day I found the Neché group outside the dining hall in a huddle. I was surprised to find that Emma was the focus of the huddle. She was the shining star of the group, slated to graduate in a few weeks.

After a bit of time Chief June helps Emma to see admit that she is worried about going home. Emma has a very large family, all of whom drink and/or use drugs. The kids at her school drink and use drugs. Her brother hides liquor bottles in a bag in the garbage can. She says he drinks all day and all night. She shares the living room with him for sleeping (they don't have a bedroom). It'll be really hard to resist drinking she tells the group, but she's going to. She'll think of her young nieces when she's tempted to drink. She doesn't ever want them to see her "messed up". She said that before she would drink when babysitting younger siblings. "I didn't care," she confessed.

June coaxes Emma to imagine a day at home. "What's it like when you wake up with your brother hung over?" she asks. Emma begins to understand the exercise and explains what she thinks her day will be like, walking the younger kids to school, going to classes. "You go into the bathroom and people are smoking pot and drinking" June throws in, "You've just gotten mad at a teacher, what are you going to do?" Emma says she'll walk away and try to find a mentor. It's clear that Emma will have to walk away from many places to stay clean. She'll have to escape friends, spaces in the school, and her home to avoid temptation. She doesn't even have a space in her home, not even a bed, to escape to. June points out, "No one in your family has ever successfully stopped using. Of course this is going to be hard."

(Fieldnotes, 6-26-03)

Later, as we walked down the trails together toward campsite I spoke with Emma. I asked her what she wants her life to be like when she's an adult. "I want a lot," she says, her eyes shining. "I want to be a dance instructor. I want a house and a car and my own computer. We didn't have a phone when I grew up" (Fieldnotes, 6-26-03). To achieve what she wants--staying clean, having a computer, financial success--Emma must create a new storyline for herself, one that is different from the narratives provided by her family. This requires much imagination and a belief in her ability to learn new ways of being.

She also may need different spaces as the existing spaces of home and school may call up for Emma her former identity as drug and alcohol user and unsuccessful student. It will be difficult for Emma to live out her new identity within the old places that have not changed. How can Emma be the girl delighted by the ocean when she no space of her own to find sanctuary?

The practice of imagining new ways of behaving in community is used all the time at camp. Before going home on their brief home stays, groups hold “boogie talks”. These are discussions of “worries and concerns” campers have for returning home (Fieldnotes, 4-4-03). Group members help each other to imagine how they might handle specific situations. It is a method of playing out various story lines. Campers who are in transition not only imagine and discuss future scenarios, but also write out strategies. Each camper writes a “community living plan”, a document containing names of supportive people, goals for community service, school and home life, a list of acceptable peers, and a crisis plan. This document along with new behaviors and new ontological narratives, are what campers take with them when they re-enter community.

Anchorless Identities

Eckerd Youth Alternatives brings together ideas about wilderness, activities in the outdoors, and disciplining practices to create a time-space in which troubled young people have an opportunity to succeed at learning or at handling their problems in a non-violent way. Narrating such experiences so that they are framed as successes prompts young people to re-assess their identity. A person who acts peacefully several times over finds it increasingly implausible to call himself violent. Job discovered this when he learned how to build a tent structure. He said, “It kinda made me realize that you know, that- it made me

feel positive about myself because before I used to be a real destructive person. And it made me realize that hey, you know, I can use a lot of my negative energy to make something you know, good out of it, like building a tent" (Transitions Photo Project, 7-17-03). Job will leave Camp E-Wen-Akee with more than just the skills to build a tent. He has a broad range of success stories that demonstrate his ability to learn, to lead, and to change. He knows that he has a choice about how he interprets his experience.

The trick for Emma and Job is to maintain their newly crafted identities when they move out of the therapeutic space of E-Wen-Akee and to their homes and communities. Camp E-Wen-Akee family workers work with family members to help them support the changes campers are undergoing while at camp. However, the worlds campers re-enter are mostly just the same as they were before. As Emma forecasted, it is difficult to maintain new behaviors and a new identity in a place that is unchanged. The success stories must be memorable and vivid enough to remind the young people that they can overcome challenges, they have experienced success and will do so again, and that the world contains many possibilities beyond those in their immediate environment.

In some ways, Emma and Job are the most fortunate of the young people who go to Camp E-Wen-Akee, because they have families to return to, a place to return to. Many of the campers have no place to go when they are ready to leave camp. No one and no place is waiting for them when they graduate. In fact, it is such a problem that the average length of stay (for non-Pathfinders) has increased from eleven months to nearly fourteen months because so many campers have no place to go (Interview with Winston, 10-11-04). Not only is this a heart-wrenching situation, but it is regarded as the possible un-doing of the progress campers make. Joan, a state social worker told me,

You gotta have, you gotta have a place, you gotta have a place to go. Otherwise, I think it has a negative impact, in the long run. Um, and, uh, it's unfortunate. I know—because all the good work that's gone on with the kid, uh, can start to slide back, if they have nowhere to connect with.

(Interview with Joan, 11-4-03)

Young people who have no place to be are mobile and circulate through so many spaces and identity positions, that a sense of stability both in space and identity is impossible to achieve. This is no emancipatory mobility or liberating holding of multiple subjectivities, this is survival outside of fixed spaces and subject positions in society. Many of the individuals who find themselves in this position are close to the age of eighteen, when they legally don't need adult supervision, or state supervision. Therefore, these young people end up hopping from one temporary living situation to the next until they "age out" of the system.

Curtis' story is one example. He graduated from the Pathfinders' group but had no placement. Camp E-Wen-Akee keeps in touch with their graduates for one year, checking their progress, and collecting their stories. Curtis lived first with a distant relative, then a friend, then with a group of friends. Although he started out doing well in school he eventually dropped out. "There was no major troubles" a family worker told me, "we lost touch" (Conversation with Stacey, 3-21-05). If Curtis had committed an offense, he would have garnered attention from the state, but since he posed no trouble, he faded from view.

The state of Vermont's Family Services Division recognizes their difficulty in placing older adolescents in foster families and adoptive families. In their Five Year Plan which was written in 2004, Family Services points out that they have achieved below the national standard in placing older adolescents (Family Services Division 2004). The plan names a range of action steps to fulfill their stated goal to: "Promote practice that will result in all

youth leaving SRS [the former name of Family Services] custody in late adolescence having a meaningful, ongoing relationships [sic] with one or more adults who will provide personal support into adulthood” (ibid, no pagination in report).

In recent years the Family Services Division has placed increased emphasis on keeping children who have been abused, neglected, or who have been beyond the control of their parents within the child’s home community. Social workers attempt to place children in the homes of relatives or nearby foster homes, they draw up community ‘wraparound’ programs, and whenever it seems appropriate, the state attempts to reunite youth with their families in short order. The Family Services website states,

We believe that children do best when they can safely stay with their families. That's why, whenever possible, we work with parents and extended family members to help keep families together. One way we do this is by providing the children and parents with access to the supports and services they need to make this possible.

(Family Services Division 2006)

Ironically, it may be this very emphasis on keeping families together which may contribute to the difficulty of placing Camp E-Wen-Akee youth when they transition out of camp. One of the outcomes of this policy is that those young people who are finally referred to residential therapeutic treatment have a long history of failures, and effective treatment comes late (Interview with Grady, Camp E-Wen-Akee administrator, 1-9-06). By the time they leave camp they either no longer have a family they can safely return to, or their families is unwilling to take them back. When I asked Joan (Discussion with Joan, Social Services Worker, 1-13-06) to identify the challenges in finding placements for young people leaving residential care she said, “They’re adolescents. People don’t want them.”

Family Services' goal to ensure that every older adolescent exiting state's custody has a meaningful relationship with an adult is laudable and important. However, it does not address the young person's need for a stable home, a fixed location.

If we understand subjectivity as a "relational matter", how do we theorize the subject formation of young people who have no place, who slide across spaces but have no resting places? It is difficult to imagine how such young people will eventually create for themselves a place within the society that has not provided places for them. It is difficult to imagine that one could survive with social skills intact when the means to survive are likely to be derived from outside the usual and sanctioned social spaces of school, home, and community. The narrative identity created from successful experiences living in the highly structured nature-culture of Camp E-Wen-Akee is meant to equip campers with the social skills to live in community but the community beyond camp boundaries excludes these young people. Stories are not enough to anchor identity; young people need places in which to anchor their lives.

8. Conclusion

When I told an acquaintance of mine the topic of my research—the role nature plays in healing troubled youth—she huffed and said the answer was easy: nature is good for all kids. The notion that nature is good for young people goes largely unchallenged but remains incredibly powerful in American society. We send our children to the outdoors through the vehicles of pre-school nature walks, Outward Bound programs, Scouting troops, and college orientations in the outdoors. Nature is found in children's books, videos, schooling, and recreational programming. Despite all this we have been warned, in Richard Louv's (2005) book, *Last Child in the Woods*, that American children aren't getting enough nature, and are suffering from what he calls "nature-deficit disorder". So great is our belief that nature aligns with and can draw out the original goodness of the child that we send our most troubled and troubling young people to wilderness to change them.

I too am one of those believers in nature. I worry that my own children don't get enough outdoor time so I shoo them away from the television and send them out to play in the fields and forests surrounding our home. I teach classes about nature, environmentalism, and rural life. For all that, I am critical of an easy faith in a universally 'good' nature.

The nature that my acquaintance referred to is a homogenous *out there* somewhere beyond our front doors and city limits. The nature that we interact with all the time is an alive, differentiated, and heterogeneous *here*. I was partially right when I complained that there is no 'nature' at camp; there are instead multitudes of micro-places and disparate constituents whose interactions with each other together comprise camp life. Those who run camp find themselves working with an eclectic assemblage of actants ranging from state

education policies to broken oil lamps to marauding porcupines to the contents of a science fiction novel. To try to separate what is natural from what is social is a hopeless and fruitless pursuit. Abandoning this task allowed me to see how life at camp, like life everywhere, is the result of transactions across the imagined nature/culture border.

Lessons from Camp

Abandoning one's existing socio-geographical imagination is a difficult achievement, yet one worth attempting on occasion. By shifting my focus from cataloguing activities into 'natural' and 'social' categories, to observing how one wilderness therapy was put into practice, I was able to discern the significant differences in campers' and camp staff members' perceptions of and resulting demands made of nonhuman nature. The analysis of this difference reveals that nature as 'good' and 'recreational' is not universally accepted. While the notion of a wholesome nature is foundational to the practice of wilderness therapy at Camp E-Wen-Akee, it is simply one narrative of many different constructions of nature.

An increased sensitivity to heterogeneous experiences and ideas about nature, as well as to the workings of class processes, may prompt rich dialogue among campers and staff, and might even open up new approaches to outdoor therapeutic activities. At the least, such dialogue among staff members may result in new strategies to ease the burden of 'selling' outdoor living to reluctant teenagers, while allowing the practices that work well at camp to persist.

I claim in this thesis that the body is where Camp E-Wen-Akee begins its therapy, its discipline, and its educational process. I argue that it is also a good place to begin theorizing how learning happens. Campers told me they felt a sense of accomplishment when they

learned to chop wood, or create a fire without a match. They were eager to do things that had visible, sensible impacts on their immediate world. At these moments, campers are receptive to learning more about their ecological and built environments. I suggest that camp staff members exploit these opportunities, for it takes small educational successes like these for young people to develop the confidence to take on more abstract learning, like reading and algebra. Further, the highly kinesthetic environment of camp provides countless chances for articulating metaphor.

The sensory input that comes from living outdoors piques all five senses, providing many pathways for learning and for drawing relationships from one process to another. For example, I wished that instead of drawing Pathfinders' attention away from the woodpecker, Chief McBragg would have pointed out that the woodpecker's incessant rapping against the tree was much like the repetitive conversations we were having in our long series of huddles that morning. Camp staff need not look for the wild, the peaceful, and the exciting in the 'deep, deep woods', for it can be found alongside us in our every day places. It is a 'natural' resource of a different kind.

My observations of camp life led me to contend that by beginning with learning to take care of her own physical being and then by doing chores that help others' material existence, the camper is meant to see how one's actions have effects on others. I call this an ecological model of social life. While the camp administration intends for staff members to build a caring social culture in campsite, there is a risk that other, less positive, cultures can form. The people who are hired as chiefs to live in campsite with the campers require training, close supervision, and respite. Chiefs spend the most time working directly with the campers. Often only a few years in age separate chiefs from their charges. Chiefs are the

least experienced counselors in the organization. I suggest that Eckerd administrators examine closely the data on early departure rates for chiefs and attempt to create better working conditions for their new staff. This may involve hiring more staff to allow more time off, it may require extended vacation time, hours off during the working day/night, or more interaction with adults during the work period. The more time a new chief can spend working side by side with the most experienced staff, the faster they may learn counseling and de-escalation skills, and the more supervision they will receive. The need for greater supervision and role modeling may require a substantial change in the present division of labor at camp. Staff members with increased skills will provide a safer and more consistently caring culture for campers.

While those who work at Camp E-Wen-Akee do not explicitly identify the landscape as a partner in the therapeutic process, my research revealed that elements of landscape are crucial to the re-socialization project. I call camp's landscape a 'therapeutic taskscape' to highlight how the camp's practices shape and are shaped by the land. Camp property holds deep meaning for camp residents, staff members use various environments to elicit therapeutic and disciplinary ends, and that the built environment is constructed in such a way to assist with the disciplining process. Given that Eckerd's brochure (Eckerd Youth Alternatives Inc. 2003) states that "a change in environment" is sometimes all a child needs to change himself, I find it curious that the organization reflects so little on what that means. Holding an organization-wide discussion of this topic could prove a fascinating and enlightening exercise.

If identities are performed, then space is crucially important. Performances, especially fledgling performances of self, rely on the scaffolding available in the immediate

environment. A support network anchored to a safe space does not exist for many of the young people who leave camp. Some young people surf couches until they 'age out' of the social services system, some find places in foster homes, some return to their families and muddle through, and others end up in correctional facilities. How is it that the basic human needs of shelter, food, and care are not guaranteed for young people who exit camp? This is one of the egregious absences in our geographies of childhood.

Troubled Youth, Society, and Moral Geographies

We can learn a great deal about the way American society regards troubled youth by considering the aims, practices, and outcomes of a program like Camp E-Wen-Akee. So too, we can see the value society places on its errant youth by analyzing the goals and procedures of the state agencies like the Family Services Division of the Department for Children and Families.

The young people who become campers at Camp E-Wen-Akee are mandated to go there by social service workers in the Family Services Division. They are wards of the state, specifically of the Department for Children and Families. Therefore, they have little choice but to follow the path laid out for them by state officials. After all, they are dependent on the state for their food, housing, clothing, medical insurance, education, and protection. Every aspect of their lives, then, is influenced by state policies and decisions. And, while they are at Camp E-Wen-Akee, the campers rely on camp for providing food, shelter, clothing, medical attention, as well as care, support, education, and therapy. They must even ask permission to use a bathroom. In the most intimate ways and at the closest scale, the state and a charitable institution manage the child's life. What are the outcomes of these

extraordinary measures, and this intense effort to re-train behaviors, teach skills, and transform identities? Put bluntly, no one knows.

The state of Vermont conducts no long-term tracking of the young people who exit state's custody. There are no longitudinal studies of the effects of any of the residential therapy programs the state uses. While Family Services does compile data on the number of children in their care, the number who return to their birth families or who are adopted (available in their Five Year Plan, see Family Services Division 2004), for example, they have no information on what happens to young people after state's custody. No one, therefore, can say for sure if the therapeutic regime at Camp E-Wen-Akee improved the quality of a young person's life; if changes in behavior lasted beyond the short term, or if former campers could point to camp as an experience that helped them build resilience.

In my view, the 'moral geographies of childhood' are simply the spatial manifestations of adult notions about where children ought to be and how they should occupy places. Adult ideas about children and childhood help shape the material worlds children experience. If one were to map the chronological journey of a troubled young person from his place of birth, through foster homes, schools, community spaces, and finally to the institutions designed to re-socialize them, this moment when the young person leaves Camp E-Wen-Akee is where the map ends.

Camp E-Wen-Akee chooses to track its graduates for one year following their camp experience, although it is not required by the state to do so. An aftercare worker meets with family members, foster parents, community workers, school officials, and state social workers to help coordinate supports necessary to help former campers succeed back in community. Camp employees recognize that camp graduates require supports beyond their

camp experience. As Chief Grady said, "Kids are not leaving the program fixed. They have a year where they've lived in a safe, nurturing environment where they can be kids. They learn skills but we have not addressed all of their needs" (Discussion with Grady, Camp E-Wen-Akee, 1-9-06). Each child may need something different to increase the chances that they will do well outside camp property.

While at Camp I observed the behavioral change that took place in individual young people. I heard campers identify their own changes, as when Francie told me she now understands herself as a person who can learn, even in a group setting. I can tell many success stories. However, it is actually quite difficult to substantiate success. First, one must identify what success is, and second, devise a way to measure success over time. This is not a practice that Eckerd follows.

When I first approached the director of Camp E-Wen-Akee about doing ethnographic research there, he was very enthusiastic. He told me that a few years earlier another graduate student had attempted to measure change among campers with various quantitative formulae, but he found that the study yielded few useful conclusions. He hoped that a qualitative account of camp would provide more helpful material, stories that would represent common patterns and areas for improvement. While it has not been my aim to measure Camp E-Wen-Akee's rate of success, or to assess its therapies, I do believe ethnographic research has yielded insight into how therapy is practiced. And, anecdotally, we can point to moments when individual young people have grown in self-awareness, have cared for others, and have exhibited trustworthiness, an eagerness to learn, and a willingness to work hard. This is not enough.

A longitudinal study of graduates of state-sponsored residential therapies in Vermont would provide crucial information that could assist the state and the service-providing organizations like Eckerd with the data they need to improve their therapeutic practices. A set of data on recidivism rates, self-described quality of life measurements, work history, educational attainment, stable housing occupancy and the like would allow service providers to know if interventions in the adolescent years yields lasting positive effects. Such data would make possible comparative studies of different therapeutic models. It would allow a geographer like myself to ask if an outdoors based program helps young people any more than a program within four walls. What's more, it only makes common sense to find out if the efforts the state pays for are producing the desired results: good citizens.

Most importantly, research tracing the lives of young people beyond state care would fulfill society's moral obligation to troubled youth. Social service worker Joan plainly said that no one wants to care for these young people. The campers I met like Curtis, Beth, and Ralph, were fully aware that no one wanted them. The fact that even the state, who exercised such tremendous influence in their lives, no longer cares enough to know what became of them can only add to a sense of alienation. It supports the notion that there is no place for them in society, no matter how hard they work to transform themselves into good citizens.

At the start of this research I was curious to understand how wilderness re-orientes a troubled teenager toward society. I learned that the 'wilderness' environment Camp E-Wen-Akee provides is often far more humane than the 'social' world campers experience at home. The next question to ask is this: why are there so few good places for young people back here, in 'civilization'?

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