VALUED SPACES OF ADOLESCENTS
IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

by

Staci Jo Guitner

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTERS

of

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Professor, Eran Ben-Joseph, Chair

Professor Elizabeth Gilboy

Professor Cosby Steele Rogers

May, 1998
Blacksburg, Virginia

Key Words: Valued Places, Adolescence, Rural Communities

Valued Spaces of Adolescents
in a Rural Community

Staci J. Guitner

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted with the recognition that adolescence is a developmental stage in the human life cycle and that during this stage adolescents have unique outdoor needs and preferences. In general, the social and emotional needs of adolescents require that their environments provide opportunity for companionship. Within this context, the purpose of this study was to provide designers with information that can be used to assess environmental preferences. With this information at hand, a landscape architect can begin to understand the intricacies of designing a place for adolescents that supports their developmental needs and will be a place that they enjoy.

This study was a partial replication of a study *Venues and Values* conducted by Patsy Eubanks Owens (1987) in which the valued spaces of suburban teens in California were explored. Rather than studying suburban adolescents, this study focuses on rural adolescents in a southwest Virginia town. Adolescents at a local high school are used as the subjects for this study. They were asked to take photographs of their two most valued outdoor spaces. A questionnaire was then given to each student to gain information about characteristics of each valued space.

The results of both studies are compared to generate issues for consideration when designing for teens. Results indicate that natural areas, developed parks, and places at school are generally valued by both suburban and rural adolescents. The findings also support the notion that spending time with friends is the most important reason for valuing a place. Differences between the two groups do exist and are discussed within this study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my husband, Tim Peters, for his encouragement and support through this long and rocky journey. He has given me strength to complete this goal and has provided endless hours of editing.

Thanks to all of my family and friends for their support and understanding.

Thanks to Elizabeth Gilboy. First, for the opportunities that she provided me at the Community Design Assistance Center. Second, for being an active member on my committee.

Thanks to Cosby Steele Rogers for finding time in her busy schedule to sit on my committee and offer knowledge in the field of child development.

Thanks to Eran Ben-Joseph for providing supervision as my committee chair.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Joan Nichols for her support and encouragement. Above all I would like to thank her for the hours that she spend with me editing and massaging the text of my thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICIES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives

The overall objective of this study was to examine the preferred outdoor spaces of adolescents in a rural community of Southwest Virginia. The study was conducted with the recognition that adolescence is a developmental stage in the human life cycle and that during this stage adolescents have unique needs and preferences for outdoor spaces. In general, the social and emotional needs of adolescents require that their environments provide opportunity for companionship. Within this context, the purpose of this study was to provide designers with information that can be used to assess environmental preferences and social developmental needs of rural adolescents in the creation of outdoor spaces.

The specific objectives of this study include the following:

- Identify the social and developmental needs of adolescents regarding outdoor environments.

- Determine the types of outdoor spaces that are important to teens in a rural community.

- Provide information which will aid in the design of outdoor spaces for teens.

1.2 Background

An extensive literature review was conducted to develop a better understanding of the appropriate factors and methods used in studies similar to this research. Literature was collected from several disciplines: landscape architecture, psychology, sociology, recreation, and planning. In general, there is a lack of information on the outdoor needs and preferences of rural adolescents. Issues of adolescent needs and preferences have been addressed separately in the literature but there has not been a combined effort to explore the needs and preferences together.

Adolescents at a local high school were the subjects of this study. A series of meetings were conducted with eighteen adolescents (14-16 years old) to collect information about their valued outdoor places. They were asked to take photographs of their two most valued outdoor spaces over a one week period. The photographs were developed and a questionnaire was given to each student. The surveys were analyzed and a follow-up interview occurred with several students to gain additional information.

1.3 Thesis Organization

This thesis begins with a literature review that summarizes the issues in dealing with the preferred outdoor spaces of adolescents. The literature review consists of an overview of psychological analysis in adolescent theory, spans several disciplines, and provides some discussion on design issues of outdoor spaces.

In Chapter Three methodology is presented and discussed. The research approach and survey used in this study is based on a model developed to examine the valued outdoor spaces of suburban teens (Owens 1987).

The results of the study are examined in Chapter Four. The analytical process is elaborated on with the support of a series a figures and verbal descriptions of the study results.

The study is summarized and concluded in Chapter Five. A section is dedicated to a comparison between the results of this study and a replication of *Venues and Values* conducted by Patsy Eubanks Owens (1987).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review introduces some definitions and theories on adolescent development. Focal Theory is the primary vehicle used to explain adolescent development throughout this study. The importance of the community is also explored. The next two issues are focused on a discussion about the recreation and leisure activities of adolescents followed by a section that emphasizes valued places. This information is derived primarily from the design professions and is used to explore the types of places and characteristics of places valued by adolescents. This is followed by a discussion on the importance of designing space for teens. The conclusion provides an overview of how the literature relates to this study.

2.2 Adolescence

The concept of adolescence is relatively modern. "It's discovery, or recognition, in technical societies was largely a response to the social changes that accompanied the industrial development in the 19th century" (Seifert and Hoffnug 1997). Three major legal changes influenced the development of adolescence: child labor laws, compulsory education, and a special legal status and procedures for juveniles. These developments along with social change played a major role in making adolescence a social reality (Seifert and Huffnug 1997).

Hendry (1993) defines adolescence as a "transitional period between the protected and dependent status of childhood and the independence and freedom of adulthood" (Hendry et al. 1993, 4). Adolescence is generally considered to begin around age ten and end sometime around age twenty two (Siefert and Hoffnug 1997). There are three stages (early, middle and late) within adolescence. Middle adolescence is generally considered to

occur between the ages of fifteen to seventeen which largely encompasses the high school years.

A study conducted by Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) provides valuable empirical data about the lives of adolescents. In this study, seventy five adolescents, ranging from grades nine to twelve, were given an electronic pager for one week. Each teen was paged a total of eight times per day. They completed a self-report form at the time of each page. According to the results, adolescents spend 27% of their day within the public realm. This exposure to the public is important because it provides examples of adult behavior as well as opportunities for spontaneous, unsupervised activities (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1984, 61). Teenagers want access to the adult world, but in places where the power of authority is weak or nonexistent (Hall 1993). An example of this is a fast food restaurant or shopping area. These are places within the adult world that have very little supervision. In contrast, places at school are seen by adolescents as a world with quite a bit of supervision.

Adolescents spend 40% of their day in leisure activity, with approximately 16% of this total spent socializing. Nearly half of their day is allocated to self-chosen activities where there are no pre-determined goals, better known as "free time." Talking is by far the single most prevalent activity in an adolescent's life (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1984, 63).

Approximately 23% of an adolescents' day is spent with classmates and 29% is directed to friends. Most of these interactions with friends occur with same-sex friends or in a peer group. Before the age of 16, adolescents prefer to spend time in a group (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1984, 63). In terms of time, peers are the greatest presence in an adolescent's life (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1984, 71). Peers provide a growing person with unbiased feedback that is needed to develop a realistic sense of self (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1984, 156). "Young people need to be given every opportunity to become involved in peer group activities" (Coleman 1980, 92).

"Friends, companions and peers are generally considered to play an especially important role in the development of the young person during adolescence" (Coleman 1980, 90). John Coleman (1980) developed a list about the important role of friends in an adolescent's life.

- The process of disengagement from parents and family leaves an emotional gap that is usually filled by the peer group.

- Common experiences create a bond between people. Conflicts, anxieties, and difficulties at home can be shared with others and therefore resolved through mutual sympathy and understanding.

- Vulnerability and a lack of self confidence brings a strong need for support. Peers become the major support at this time as adolescents feel increasingly unable to turn to their parents.

- There is an increase in age segregation where parents are spending less time with their children. This trend contributes to the importance of the peer group.

It must be noted that the importance of the peer group and the influence of the peer group are not synonymous. The role of the parent is still very influential.

With this insight into the world of an adolescent's public life, leisure time, and peer relationships, the community plays a very important part in their lives. The spaces within a community must provide public spaces for adolescents to spend their leisure time with their peers. Without these spaces the adolescents may become isolated, which could be detrimental to their development.

2.3 Approaches to Studying Adolescence

Overall, there are two conflicting views to the study of adolescent development. One view defines the period of adolescence as a period of extreme "storm and stress," a period when major physical, intellectual and emotional changes create tremendous upset and crisis within the individual (Seifert and Hoffnug 1997). According to the authors, this view can be traced back to Freud and his belief that development is full of conflict.

This view is also supported by Erik Erikson's stage theory that states the key developmental challenge of adolescence is to resolve the crisis of identity versus identity

diffusion (Miller 1993). Erikson's main theme of life is the quest for identity, suggesting the development of identity reaches a crisis during adolescence (Miller 1993).

The second view on adolescent development contends that adolescence is not a time of extreme storm and stress, suggesting that most adolescents in the United States adapt to the changes required by both society and parents in a relatively smooth and peaceful way (Seifert and Hoffnug 1997). Focal theory is an example of this view on adolescent development.

2.3.1 Focal Theory

According to John Coleman (1980, 177) "The transition between childhood and adulthood can not be achieved without substantial adjustments of both a psychological and social nature." Nevertheless, despite the overall change experienced, most young people are extremely resilient and appear to cope with adjustments without undue stress (Hendry et al. 1993, 9). There is a considerable degree of change occurring in an adolescence's life and this theory supports the idea that there are issues which arise from normal development (Hendry 1983).

Coleman's Focal Theory is focused on particular relationship patterns that occur at different ages. These patterns, or issues, are relationships with the opposite sex, relationships with peers, and relationships with parents. All of these patterns, or issues, can occur at the same time but usually one becomes more dominant at a particular time (Figure 2.1). Each curve in Figure 2.1 represents a separate issue and a slight overlap occurs when two or more issues take place at the same time. Adolescents "cope" with a large amount of stress by dealing with one issue at a time. They pace themselves through the adolescent transition. When there is more than one issue to cope with at a time, problems are more likely to occur. Coleman found through empirical evidence that patterns tend to occur within a certain age group. However, it is possible that certain adolescents may differ in sequence. The sequence, amount of overlap, and intensity of the issues make this a very flexible theory (Hendry 1983).

Heterosexual Relationships   Peer Relationships   Parental Relationships

13 Years   15 Years   17 Years
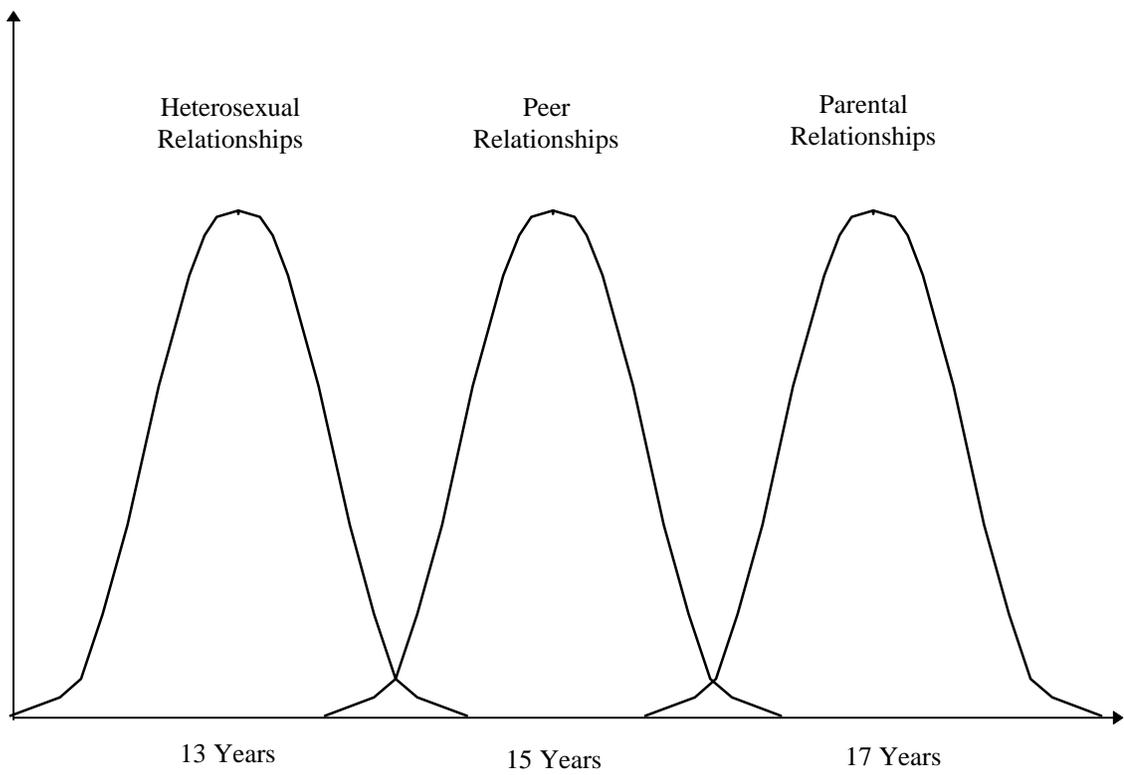
Source: John Coleman 1980

Figure 2.1: The Focal Theory

The critics of Focal Theory state that the transition of adolescents is oversimplified, because the issues of disadvantaged or deprived adolescents are not considered. Focal Theory is based on empirical research where the subjects represent the general population. This theory has been used to reconcile the contradiction between the amount of adaptation required and the ability of most young people to cope with the transition.

Leo Hendry (1983) expanded on Focal Theory in his book *Growing up and Going Out* (Figure 2.2). There are three different leisure issues that occur during adolescence: organized activities, casual activities, and commercial activities. The framework for the original Focal Theory still applies but the issues of focus and interest have changed.

Organized clubs and organized adult-led leisure pursuits provide adolescents (around age thirteen) with a safe environment to observe and interact with the opposite sex. This corresponds to Coleman's issue of heterosexual relationships. Peer relationships are very important and thus casual activities such as "hanging-out" is the prime leisure activity (around age fifteen). The official youth clubs that were once enjoyed are now too tame or over-organized and are too much like school. Later, at age seventeen, the adolescent has more money to spend and more freedom in selecting leisure-time pursuits. This corresponds with the issue of parental relationships wherein the desire for freedom will create a climate for parental disagreement (Hendry 1983). Understanding Coleman's Focal Theory gives a representation of the changes that adolescents go through on a psychological and social level. As Hendry has shown this then has a direct relationship to the adolescent leisure activities.

2.3.2 Ecological Theory

An additional theory that is often referenced when discussing adolescents and the environment is an ecological model introduced by Urie Bronfenbrenner (Brooks-Gunn et al 1993, 353-354). In Ecological Theory, individuals are viewed in a multiple hierarchically related environments or ecological systems in which they reside (nuclear family, extended family, peer group, neighborhood, and community). The underlying

Organized
Activities

Casual
Activities

Commercial
Activities

13 Years

15 Years

17 Years
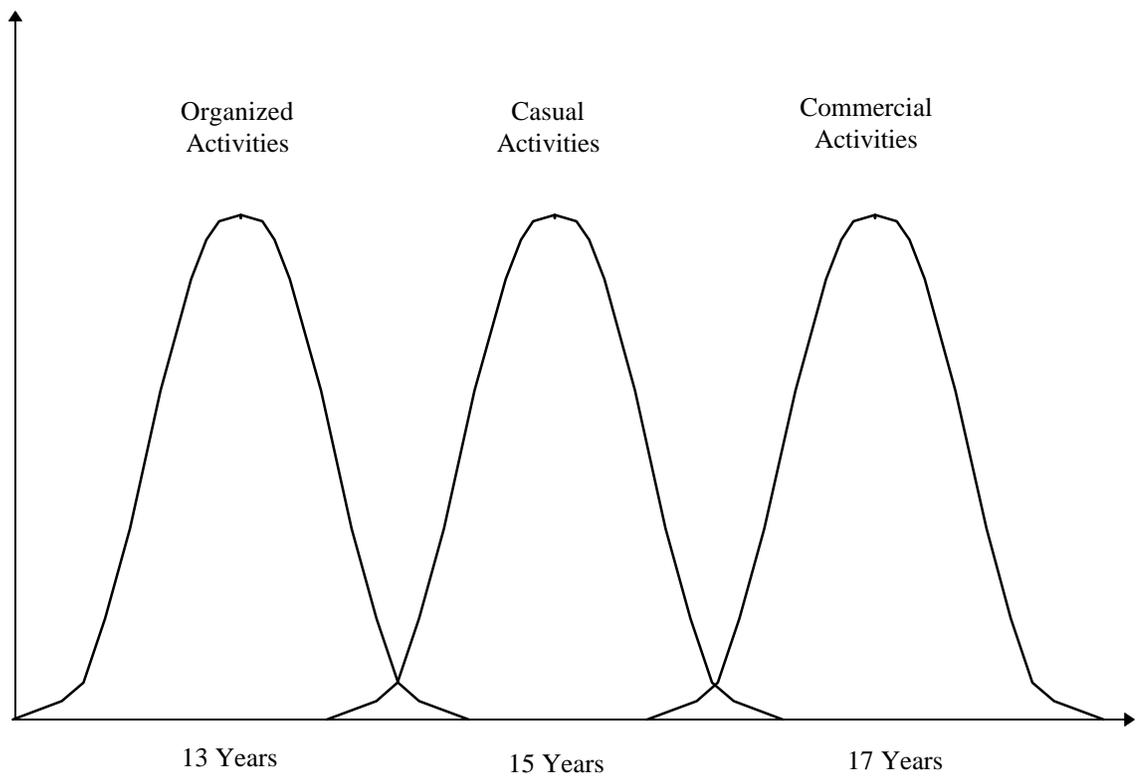
Source: Leo Hendry 1983

Figure 2.2: The Focal Theory of Leisure

premise of this theory is that an individual cannot be studied without the consideration of multiple ecological systems.   This theory is readily accepted in psychology but there is still a lack of research on the potential influence of neighborhoods (Brooks-Gunn et al. 1993). This theory tends to be geared more toward the individual and therefore it is difficult to generalize research findings to a group because no two ecological systems are exactly the same.

2.4 Importance of Community

Wynn et al. (1987, 7) defines community as an arena in which people develop their sense of identity and commitment. Within a community, individuals experience and develop skills that enhance their ability to communicate and resolve conflict as they learn to balance the tension between self and the social group. Schiavo (1988, 4) states that the neighborhood is one of the three most influential settings for adolescent development especially in terms of social development. Wynn (1987, 1) goes further, stating "communities are a resource for supporting the development of youth that is largely untapped and about which little is known." These statements suggest a connection between the various environments that exist within a community and the development of an adolescent. "The developmental environment experienced by adolescents affects their sense of identity and their affective development. In developing a sense of belonging and group identity, children and adolescents are greatly influenced by their participation in peer groups" (Wynn et al. 1987, 8).

Wynn et al. (1987) describes four ways that a community can support it's youth. These include opportunities to participate in organized, ongoing groups; avenues for contributing to the well-being of others; sources for personal support; and access to and use of community facilities and events including museums, libraries, parks, civic events, and celebrations.

A community can provide more support for its youth by increasing the access to the above mentioned items. It may be difficult for all communities to provide amenities such as museums, whereas access to parks, libraries, civic events, and local celebrations is

generally available. "Parks offer places for physical exercise and recreation and places in which to find both solitude or privacy and the opportunity to gather with friends" (Wynn et al. 1987, 12). The author believes that these facilities should be accessed independently and spontaneously by youth.

The research conducted by Wynn et al. (1987) supports the idea that the community in which an adolescent lives has a direct connection with the development of the adolescent. Within this context, the community can then be seen as a resource for development. "Community supports can further the development of capacities needed in the exercise of adult roles. Support should be widely available to youth in a variety of communities, including communities that are more and less affluent" (Wynn et al. 1987, 38).

2.5 Recreation

In the words of Malm (1952, 439) "Everyone needs recreation. No life can be called well balanced if a place is not made in it for a variety of healthful and enjoyable recreational activities." Recreation is important at any age, but it is particularly relevant during adolescence when the primary social need is to spend time with peers. Overall, recreation provides an opportunity to satisfy one's social needs more fully (Malm 1952).

Because recreation is recognized as an essential component in the lives of adolescents, it is important that recreation facilities are accessible to all youth (Malm 1952). Malm (1952, 439) believes that: "a community should provide good public recreational resources for the adolescent." However, it is "generally recognized that many communities, if not most, do not have adequate recreational facilities" (Malm 1952, 441). The lack of such resources tends to have a more adverse impact on girls, women, minorities, low-income and rural groups, and the elderly (Malm 1952).

2.6 Leisure Activities

Adolescence tends to be a transitional period in life when an individual encounters considerable stress. The leisure time in one's life emerges as one mechanism for coping with the series of demands that result from physical maturation, societal expectations, and

individual aspirations (Silbereisen et al. 1986, 87). Noack and Silbereisen (1988) view adolescents' goals and activities at leisure settings as steps toward mastering the developmental tasks necessary in the transition to adulthood. They believe that the adolescent has motives when visiting leisure places and that these motives are primarily to develop contact with adolescents of both the same and opposite sex. Peer relationships are an extremely important part of the adolescent's life and the primary contact to the peer groups is through leisure activities. Approximately 40% of an adolescent day is spent in leisure (Csikszentmihalyi 1984, 63), which is another reason why the types of leisure environments provided need to be considered.

If no leisure places are provided for adolescents, the type of peer contact could change into activities that are detrimental to the development of the adolescent, such as alcohol or drug consumption. Several studies have been conducted to examine the leisure time activities and leisure time places of adolescents. Hendry et al. (1993) provide some overall comments about leisure time activities:

- There is a steady decline in sports participation and other organized activities from a peak at the age of 13-14.

- Hanging around the local neighborhood and the perception of a lack of places to go peaks at age 15 with a rapid decline after age 16.

- Attending entertainment facilities such as discos and cinemas increases steadily during adolescence and peaks at 19.

- Men are more likely to be involved in sport and organized leisure whereas women are more likely to visit with friends and go to the cinema and disco.

- The general age of 'hanging out' is between the ages of 12-16.

In a study of leisure-time places, Silbereisen et al. (1986) provide a detailed list of adolescent preferences for leisure-time places according to sex. The average age of participation in the study was 14.6 years. The study's conclusions are summarized in Table 2.1 showing contrasts in the leisure places preferred between males and females.

Table 2.1: Preferred Leisure Places of Adolescents

	Male	Female	Total %
Private Home			22.3
Own home	8.4	10.1	
Friend's home	10	15.9	
Receptive leisure time			13.2
Cinema	8.7	9.1	
Library	0.9	1.3	
Other	3.8	2.6	
Unorganized social leisure time			10.5
Disco	4.4	6.5	
Pub, Café	2.8	3.5	
Other	1.1	2.6	
Organized social leisure time			5.4
City-sponsored youth center	3.4	2.9	
Church-sponsored youth center	0.6	1	
Other	1.1	1.7	
Street			19.3
Shopping	5.5	11.2	
Residential	5.2	5.1	
Other	8.4	3.2	
Nature			6
Public park	1.4	1.7	
Garden	3.4	1.2	
Other	2	2.3	
Sports			23.4
Swimming Pool	4.9	5.2	
Soccer Field	12.4	0.4	
Other	11.8	12.3	

Source: Silbereisen et al. 1986

James Coleman (1961) examined the activities engaged in during leisure time by boys and girls associated with nine public high schools. Sharp contrasts were observed between boys and girls (Table 2.2). The general pattern of these leisure pursuits show considerably more activity among the boys, which is indicative of the situation in the adolescent community, that boys have far more to do than girls. "Our society seems to provide a much fuller set of activities to engage the interest of boys" (Coleman 1961, 13).

A few conclusions can be drawn from the literature on leisure. The activity and spaces differ dramatically for boys and girls. However, sports and "hanging out" seem to dominate leisure activities for both boys and girls in the outdoor environment. Although this is important information for a designer to know, there is no real information about the characteristics of the leisure time settings. For example, the street is a common leisure time place but often there is no attribute information regarding specific characteristics of the street (busy street, narrow street, location of a seating area or shops nearby). Information such as this is valuable to a designer involved in creating successful outdoor spaces for adolescents.

2.7 Valued Places

Studying the valued spaces that are important to an adolescent, allows designers to make generalizations about the types of spaces and the characteristics within those spaces that adolescents tend to prefer. "Favorite places are used as a means of regulating unpleasant and pleasant feeling" (Korpela 1992, 250). Therefore, the ultimate goal in going to these places is to reduce the tension that goes along with being a teenager.

Patsy Eubanks Owens (1987) briefly summarizes past studies on adolescent outdoor spaces. "The themes that occur most frequently in these studies are that teens like to be with their friends, they like places where they can be with nature, they want their personal freedom, and they want privacy" (Eubanks Owens 1987, 18). The studies that are summarized encompass a large age group and a variety of settings. There have been additional studies published on suburban spaces within the last decade (Table 2.3). Overall, the themes that Eubanks Owens identified and summarized still apply today,

Table 2.2: Preferred Leisure Activities of Adolescents

Leisure Activity	Boys	Girls
Organized outdoor sports - including football, basketball, tennis, etc..	22.0%	6.90%
Unorganized outdoor activities - including hunting, fishing, swimming, etc.	14.7	11.3
Being with the group", riding around, going up town, etc.	17.2	32.5
Attending movies and spectator events - athletic games, etc.	8.5	10.4
Dating or being out with the opposite sex	13.6	11.6
Going dancing		12.0
Hobby- working on cars, bicycles, radio, musical instruments, etc.	22.5	20.1
Indoor group activities- bowling, playing cards, roller skating	8.0	8.1
Watching television	19.4	23.6
Listening to records or radio	11.2	31.7
Reading	13.7	35.5
Other, e.g., talking on telephone	7.1	9.3
No answer	8.1	3.7

Source: James Coleman 1961

Table 2.3: Summary of Valued Places of Adolescents

Valued Places	Schiavo 1988	Eubanks-Owens 1988	Silberiesen et al. 1986	Eubanks-Owens 1993
Developed Parks/Athletic Facilities	●	●	●	●
Places at Home		●	●	●
Commercial Areas	●	●	●	●
Natural Parks	●	●	●	●
Places at School	●	●		●
Undeveloped Open Space		●		●
Urban Hardscapes/Street	●		●	●
Theme Parks				●
Views		●		●
Friend's House	●		●	
Neighbor'sHouse	●			
Public Building	●			
Communal Greenbelts		●		
Youth Center			●	

Source: Schiavo 1988, Eubanks Owens 1988, Silberiesen 1986, Eubanks Owens 1993.

along with a few additional findings which will be elaborated on in the remainder of this section.

According to Schiavo (1988), the top four responses for favorite places for middle adolescents in a suburban community are the street, natural parks, commercial areas, and developed parks. All of these spaces can be utilized with friends which is psychologically beneficial to a group such as adolescents who enjoy being with their friends. In this study, adolescents suggested that additional gathering places such as club-houses, arcades, or dance halls be developed, indicating their preference for more public places to spend time with their friends.

Korpela (1992) stated that the natural environment provides adolescents with a sense of being away, a sense of being in a different world, a feeling of fascination, and compatibility with the environment. According to Eubanks (1987), natural environments, both parks and undeveloped open space, are the two most valuable spaces for adolescents.

According to Hall (1993), teenagers enjoy their personal freedom. "Teenagers want access to the adult world, but in places where the power of the authority figure is weak" (Hall 1993, 60). The author elaborates on some outdoor spaces that grant forms of personal freedom, ranking home as the highest place where adolescents experience personal freedom.

Coleman (1961) found that recreational spaces are more valuable to males. Though females use recreational facilities, many times they just 'hang-out' and socialize with each other rather than using the space actively. Swimming pools are one recreational facility that both males and females utilize and value a great deal. Schiavo (1988) concluded that females are more likely to value commercial areas both for shopping and 'hanging-out'.

Patsy Eubanks Owens (1993) derived a set of guidelines for designing spaces for adolescents. These guidelines have been developed to help protect, improve, and create

outdoor places that teens value. The guidelines are based on data of adolescent valued spaces in urban and suburban areas. The following list is a summary of those guidelines:

1. Instead of the typical arrangement of benches, evenly spaced along meandering pathways, they can be clustered and removed from the major traffic flow in order to facilitate talking among group members.

2. Seating areas can be located at a high point within a park, therefore allowing a prospect or view to other areas.

3. A series of smaller gathering spaces alleviates the potential for security problems by encouraging division of teens into smaller groups.

4. Gathering areas can range from very defined architectural spaces to undefined natural spaces.

5. There is a present conflict between store owners and adolescents. Adolescents enjoy 'hanging-out' in front of the stores but owners complain about the presence of teens keeping away real customers. Gathering areas can be placed so as not to block visual access to store fronts or interfere with pedestrian circulation.

6. Involving teens in the design and care of gathering places at school should occur. This could give them symbolic ownership at schools.

7. School yards are often gathering places for teens. Courtyards should provide shelters and areas for group seating. These spaces should be numerous and should vary in size to accommodate a different number of teens.

8. Fast food restaurants, a very large commercial draw for teens, could provide adequate outdoor seating for teens.

9. Just as playgrounds and tennis courts are acceptable in neighborhood parks, so too should be skateboarding areas.

10. The automobile provides independence, mobility, and identity, and is a very important part of teenagers' lives. Teens often 'hang-out' in parking lots and many public officials see this as unacceptable. Acceptable gathering places could be incorporated into the parking lot.

2.8 Reasons to Design for Teens

The design of outdoor spaces should be democratic, providing spaces to teens and all potential users. Webster's dictionary (1996) defines democratic as "of or for all of the people." This seems to be a fundamental concept when designing public spaces; a space for all people. However, teens have been forgotten and avoided in the planning and design of outdoor environments (Eubanks Owens 1993). A true democratic design of outdoor public spaces should be reached. One way to reach this democratic design is with the inclusion of adolescents in the design process. A true democratic design includes the needs of all users. Participatory design can be used to determine the needs of users. Including teens in the design of their own spaces will promote a sense of ownership of the space. Vandalism and inappropriate activities may be reduced if the teens feel sense of ownership of the space. The well-being of today's youth should be a concern for all, designers included. Designers should try to understand the needs of adolescents and provide environments which will support these needs.

Today's teenagers complain of boredom, stating that there is a lack of things to do in their community (Eubanks 1993). If there are no appropriate activities available for the teens to do, they may participate in unsatisfactory activities (Eubanks 1993). Providing adolescents with a variety of acceptable alternatives will contribute to reducing the possibility of undesirable activities.

2.9 Conclusion

This literature review has provided background information regarding the developmental stage of adolescence and the needs and preferences of adolescents. Focal Theory has been used as a framework to show that although adolescence is a turbulent time, most adolescents make it through by addressing one issue at a time. This theory ties directly in with the leisure pursuits of adolescents. Leisure pursuits take a similar form and adolescents tend to address one leisure activity at a time. Focal Theory is used to express the needs of adolescents. The specific age group of approximately fifteen is explored with peer relationships and casual activities being of primary concern. Once

designers understand the needs of this age group, they will be better prepared to design places that adolescents will enjoy and value.

The importance of peer relationships in an adolescents' life cannot be over stressed. They spend a great deal of time together and should have the opportunity to spend this time in public outdoor spaces, rather than isolated in their own homes. They need the opportunity to socialize and hang-out in groups and gain access to the adult world. The community serves as a resource for development. Adolescents are dependent on their community and because of this, a community should respond to the needs of adolescents by providing adequate facilities for adolescents to recreate and enjoy leisure pursuits.

The opportunity for recreation and leisure is important for everyone but is especially important for adolescents. Recreation gives them more opportunity to interact with peers and the adult world. As was stated earlier, many communities do not have adequate recreational facilities.

Valued places of teens are one way to determine the types and characteristics of outdoor spaces that teens prefer. Landscape architects can use this information when designing outdoor spaces that teens utilize and prefer. While the topic of valued outdoor spaces of adolescents is in its infancy and there is very little research in the area, there is quite a bit of information about adolescents. However, there seems to be no communication between professional fields that have an interest in adolescents. Psychologists fail to look at the information on preferred outdoor spaces. Theories fail to look at outdoor environments as a viable source of data. Designers only look at the preferred outdoor spaces and fail to look at the developmental theories which address the needs of adolescents. Before any conclusion can be made about the needs and preferences of adolescents in a rural community, a cross disciplinary collaboration is needed.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 General Approach

This study is a partial replication of a study *Venues and Values* conducted by Patsy Eubanks Owens (1987) in which the valued spaces of suburban teens in California are explored. Parents and teenagers were asked to photograph their valued outdoor spaces which was then followed by an in-depth interview with each participant to obtain information about their valued spaces. The sample for Owens' study was generated from tax maps of Danville, California. The procedure for this study is somewhat different as the sample for this study was drawn from rural teens in a class at Narrows High School in Narrows, Virginia. The students were asked to take photographs but instead of conducting an in-depth interview, a written survey was given to the students as a follow-up.

3.2 Age Group Selection

Adolescence is a very broad age group which usually encompasses the teenage years. The ability to drive a car typically occurs at age sixteen which gives the older adolescent a freedom that is not yet available to the younger adolescent. This study focuses on younger adolescents (14-16) that have less freedom and are more dependent upon the places within their local community.

3.3 Place Selection

The small rural town of Narrows is located in Southwest Virginia along the New River (Figure 3.1). According to 1990 census data, the population of Narrows is approximately 2,000 all of which live under the rural classification. The town consists of 99.4% white population with about 12% of the population falling between the ages of 12 and 19. There is no public transportation and 89% drive less than 30 minutes to work.
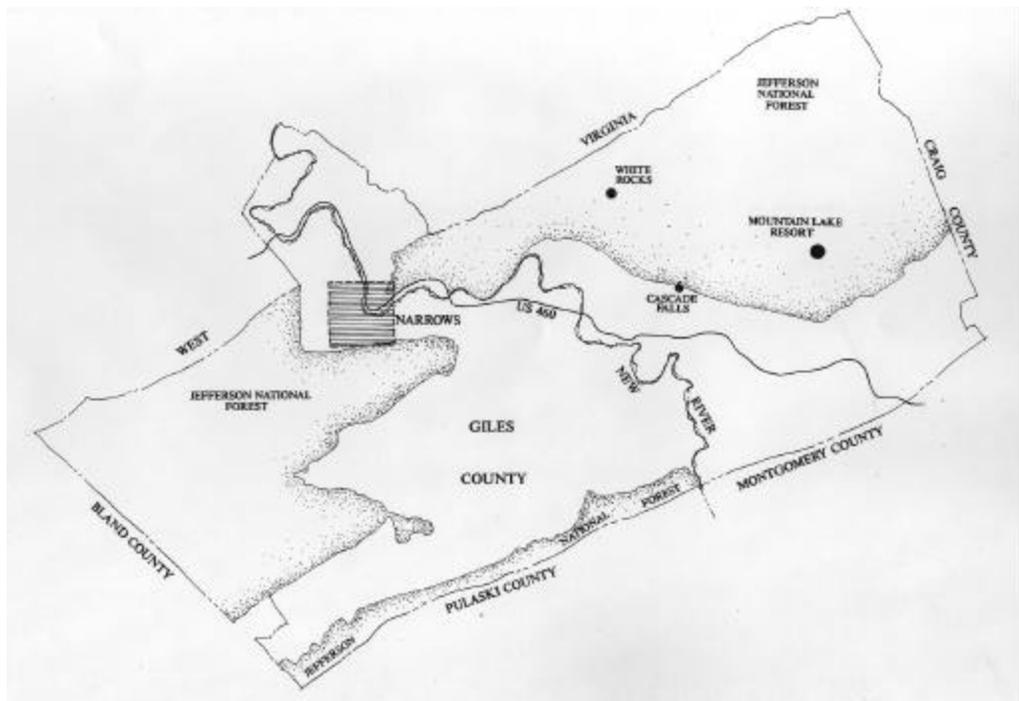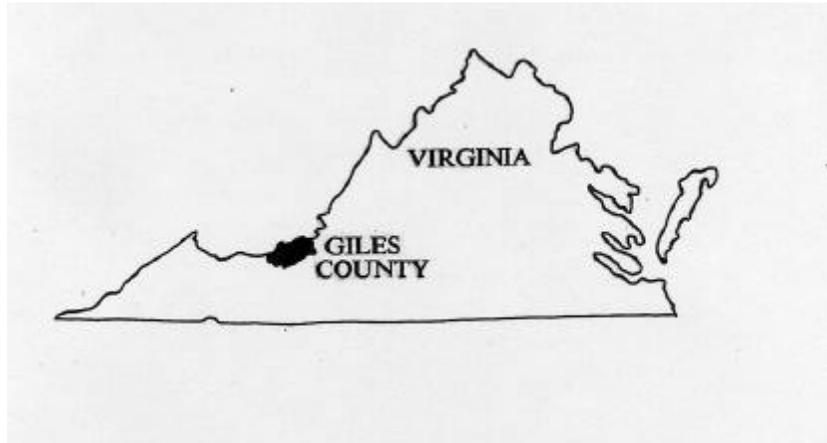
Figure 3.1: Maps of Giles County, Virginia

Based on the 1990 census national average, the citizens of Narrows are below average in terms of acquired higher education and median income.

Narrows was chosen for this study because it can be considered a typical rural community based on the data given above. The town has a central business district with about fifty percent occupancy. (Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3) There is a town park with basketball courts, a swimming hole, picnic shelter, volleyball court, and some children's play equipment. Most of the park is in disrepair. The New River flows through the town along with several tributaries. The high school is located a few miles from the central business district and is located in a residential neighborhood (Figure 3.2). There is a more recent commercial core located along State Route 460 that dissects the community (Figure 3.4). This state route has a speed limit of forty miles an hour through the Town of Narrows but is fifty five miles an hour through most of the state. There are no major cities within a one hour commute of Narrows. Jefferson National Forest surrounds Narrows but all major attractions are only available within driving distance. (Figure 3.2)

3.4 Sample Selection

The group of teenagers used for this study is a 9th grade English class from Narrows High School. Ninth grade includes teens in the age range of interest (14-16). An English class was selected because it is a required course at the high school and therefore represents a cross section of students in the community. The sample consisted of eighteen students; seven females and eleven males.

3.5 Approval Process

Before the study was implemented an approval process was necessary to gain permission to work with the students. First, the thesis committee and Department of Landscape Architecture approved the procedure of the study along with the survey. Next, the Giles County School Board and the high school principal received copies of the proposal, the survey, and parental consent forms. It was only after reviewing these documents, that official approval was given. Then it was necessary to get approval from the Institutional Review Board. This board reviews all university studies that involve
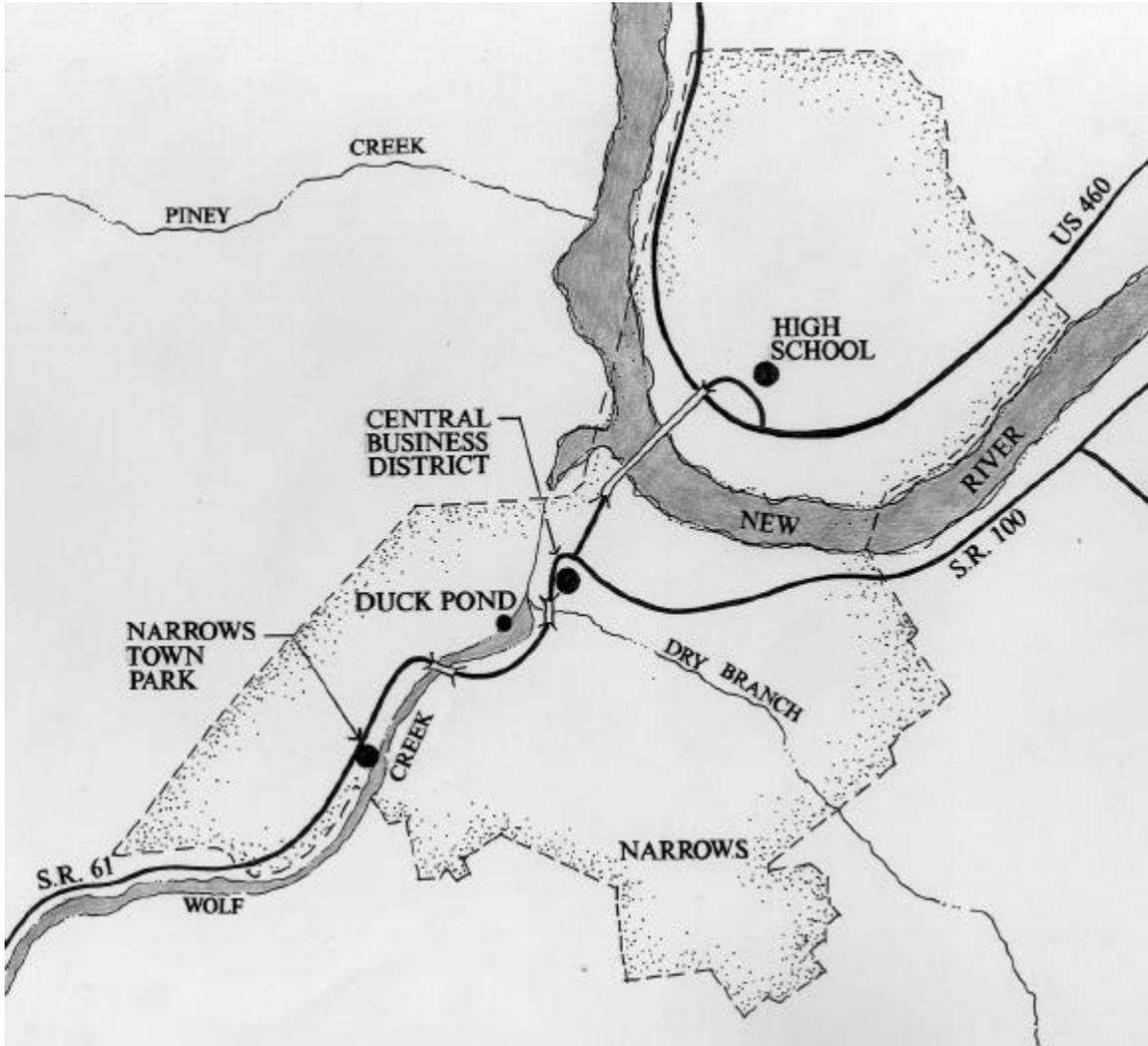
Figure 3.2: Map of Narrows

Figure 3.3: The Central Business District

Figure 3.4: Commercial area along Route 460

human subjects. After a few changes to the parental consent form, final approval was given to implement the study (Appendix C).

3.6 The Photographs

The purpose of using photographs was to determine the types of outdoor places that adolescents value. The camera gives the adolescent free choice in selecting their places without adult control. They are also useful in determining the characteristics within the places. The distribution of the cameras occurred in the classroom. Each participating student was given a uniquely numbered camera, with the following verbal instructions: "I am going to give you a camera and with it I want you to take photographs of the two outdoor places that you value the most in your community. This might include your own yard, a neighbors', a park, a view, a porch, a place you hang out, or a daily path you use. These are to be legal places that are free from extreme danger. Again, take photographs of two outdoor places that you value the most in you community. You may take one photograph of each space or several at each space. However many you feel is necessary to capture the space." The students were given one week to take the pictures and return the cameras. The photographs were then developed.

3.7 The Survey

To gather further information about the valued places, a written survey was also conducted. The survey took place in the classroom and lasted approximately 30 minutes. Most of the questions for the survey came from the interview developed by Patsy Eubanks Owens (1987). Some questions were modified in order to accommodate the format of the survey.

The purpose of the survey was to gain information on the characteristics of the valuable places and the reasons that these places are valuable. The survey was divided into two sections. The first section concentrated on the two outdoor places. A total of 24 questions (open and closed-ended) were asked about the places. The questions were identical for each place. The second section of the survey concentrated on gathering socioeconomic data about each participant.

A major change to the survey instrument had to be made because only 56% of the students returned the cameras. A second survey was given to those students who did not return the cameras. The second survey was identical to the first survey except that instead of a picture, a written description was required of their valuable places (Appendix A). A total of 31 valuable places were identified with the use of both surveys.

3.8 Interpretation of Responses

The data gathered from the surveys was interpreted and analyzed and the responses to the questions were grouped into several categories for comparison.

There were generally two types of responses; those that dealt with the place and those that dealt with reasons that the place was valuable. The responses that dealt with the place were grouped into categories that allowed for comparison of place types. The categories are similar to Eubanks Owens' study. The categories used were natural areas, developed parks, places at home, places at a friend's, places at school, views, and commercial areas. Definitions on these place types are provided in Chapter Four.

Those responses that dealt with why a place was valuable included: natural quality, coping, accessibility, interaction with friends, and recreation. These categories are defined further in Chapter Four (Appendix B).

3.9 Validity and Reliability

This study is a case study, and therefore, the results are valid only for the Town of Narrows. If this study were to be replicated in rural towns throughout the south eastern United States, and the same results were found, then the results would become valid for most of these rural adolescents.

This study is a partial replication of Patsy Eubanks Owens' study (1987), so the results can be considered more reliable. What makes this study reliable is the replication of the method. This study looks at rural adolescents whereas Owens' study looked at suburban adolescents, which means that the results may differ dramatically. However, if there are similarities some general conclusions can be made about the valued spaces of adolescents because the studies are similar in their overall approach.

One limitation of this study is the sample size (18 students). If a larger population consisting of an equal number of male and female participants had been sampled, the results would have been more statistically valid.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 About the Respondents

As stated in the methodology, the respondents for the study were from a ninth grade English class at Narrows High School. The average age of the respondents was 14.77 with a range in age from 14-16. All of the respondents were Caucasian. Fifty three percent of the respondents lived in a single family home, while forty percent lived in mobile homes. On average, the respondents have lived in Narrows for 9.44 years, but only three have lived in Narrows for less than five years. Seventy six percent of the respondents (13) have extended family that live nearby. (Appendix B) They participate in very few extra curricular activities outside of school, which may be a reflection of the opportunities for participation. Seventy-two percent of the males (8) participated in extra curricular activities within school, while only twenty-eight percent of the females (2) participated. Both genders provided a very wide range of responses to the question of how they spend their free time. Overall, the primary activities identified were team sports, relaxing, going out for entertainment, socializing, wilderness activities, and waterfront activities.

4.2 Valued Places

Each student was asked to take photographs of two valued outdoor places. After the photographs were developed, each student answered a survey for each of the places. A total of 31 places were chosen. Five students selected only one outdoor place. The places that the students selected have been categorized to make it easier to conduct comparisons. The following place categories were used:

Natural areas are those areas which remain in a relatively natural state with few to no man-made amenities. These places may vary from private to public land, small scale or

large scale. The one common thread to these places is that they are natural and away from the impact of people (Figure 4.1).

Developed parks are those parks that have several man-made amenities. Recreation is usually the primary focus of these parks with basketball courts, tennis courts, ball fields, etc. as the main focus of the park (Figure 4.2).

Places at home are those outdoor places near the respondents' homes. These may include the backyard, porch, or pool (Figure 4.3).

Places at friends are those outdoor places near a friend's home. These may include the backyard, a volleyball court, or porch.

Places at school are those outdoor places that may be found surrounding the respondents' school. These may include the front of the building, a small outdoor courtyard, or the football stadium, to name a few (Figure 4.4).

Views are those places where the view from the place is more valuable than the place itself. These views could be from anywhere; the respondents' home, school, etc. (Figure 4.5).

Commercial areas are those places that the respondents valued that contain a business. The use of the building and the outdoor spaces around the commercial areas become important (Figure 4.6).

4.3 Results of Place Categories

The most popular category was the natural areas which accounted for twenty-six percent of the responses (10). These areas ranged from waterfalls and cliffs to an open, quiet pond. One area was a wide open alfalfa field. There was not one natural area that was dominant.

The second most popular category was the developed parks which accounted for twenty-three percent of the responses (9). Narrows' town park was the common response. Some focused on the swimming hole while others focused on the basketball court. Narrows' town park is an isolated pocket park outside of the Central Business District and is located along Wolf Creek (Figure 3.2). It is situated near a residential

Figure 4.1: Photograph of Natural Area - The Duck Pond

Figure 4.2: Photograph of Developed Park - Basketball Court

Figure 4.3: Photograph of Home - Backyard Pool Area

Figure 4.4: Photograph of School - Football Stadium

Figure 4.5: Photograph of View - The New River

Figure 4.6: Photograph of Commercial Area - Billiards and Game Room

community and may be accessed by walking, bicycling, or driving. The park contains a swimming hole, basketball court, volleyball court, tennis court, and a shelter house with a concession stand. This is the only location for the adolescents to swim under the supervision of a lifeguard. The park is used for recreation as described by this comments, "It's a place to shoot basketball." It is also used as a place to socialize which is described by this comment, "I can hangout with my friends."

The third most frequent place category were places around the respondents' home. The spaces varied from a small intimate porch to a spacious backyard with a pool.

The fourth most popular place category were places at school. The football stadium was the most common place around the school. Some photographs show the entire stadium while others are close-ups of a particular portion of the stadium. One thing that all school places have in common is that they are places to spend time and socialize with friends as described by this statement, "I get to spend time with my friends."

Other place categories such as commercial areas, views, and places at friends were chosen less frequently (Figure 4.7).

A comparison was made between the male and female respondents. Figure 4.8 and Figure 4.9 provide percentages for both groups. The results show some interesting similarities and differences. For instance, the places at school and the commercial areas are equally distributed among both males and females. Females chose places at home as their most valued place. Eight percent listed places at friends as their most valued place. Nearly forty-one percent of the female responses focused around the home instead of natural areas and the developed parks.

Natural areas are the most popular places for males and developed parks follow a close second. These results correspond with the findings of James Coleman (1961) that found males are considerably more active than females. Places at home and places at school are tied for third placed while places at friends are not even mentioned.

Commercial
6%

Views
3%

Natural Areas
26%

Places at School
16%

Places at Friends
3%

Developed Parks
23%

Places at Home
23%
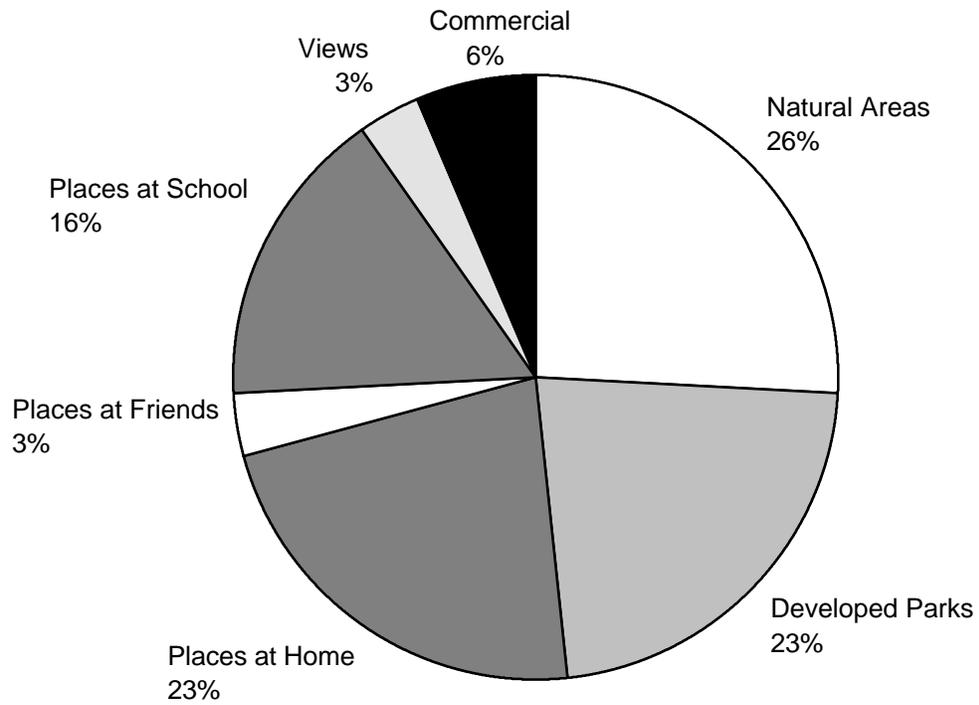
Figure 4.7: Valued Places of Teens
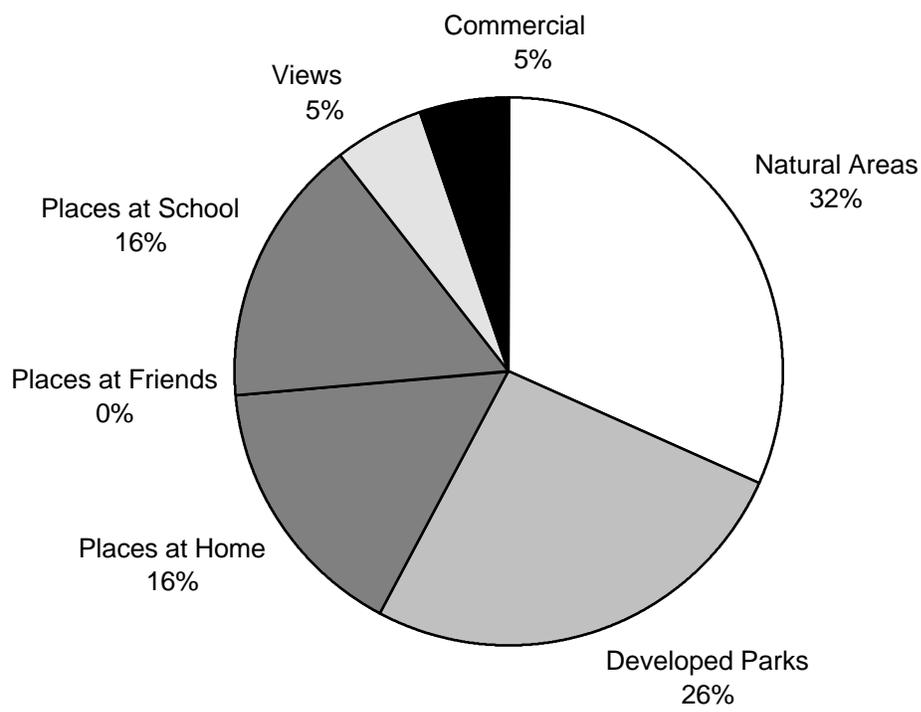
Figure 4.8: Valued Places of Males
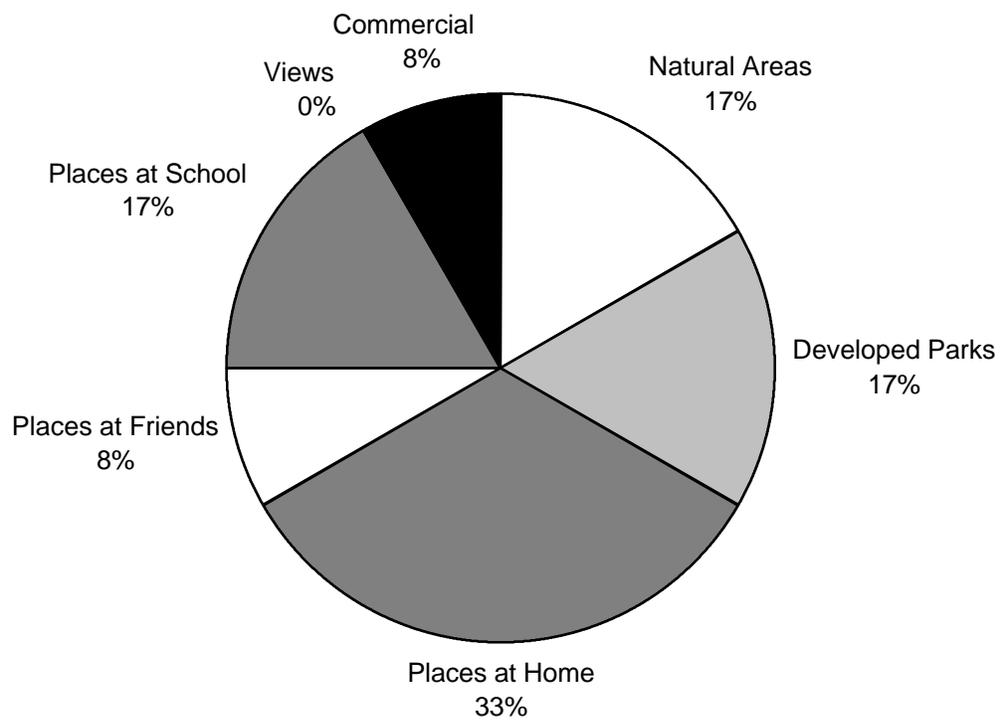
Figure 4.9: Valued Places of Females.

4.4 Reasons for Valuing

The photographs were used to determine the types of places that rural adolescents value. The surveys were used to determine the conscious and subconscious reasons that rural adolescents value the place type. The conscious reasons were determined by open-ended questions. The most important of these questions was, "What is it about this place that makes it valuable to you?" These responses were categorized to make comparisons easier. The categories consisted of: helping to cope, to be with nature, spending time with friends, recreation, and accessibility. Figure 4.10 shows the distribution of these responses (Appendix B). The overwhelming response was to hang out or spend time with friends. Approximately seventy two percent of all responses (21) fall into the categories of spending time with friends and recreation.

The open-ended questions were followed up by a group of structured questions that help to determine any subconscious reason for valuing a place (Appendix B). The following is an analysis that looks at all questions, both open-ended and structured.

Spending time with friends was the most popular reason for valuing a place. Both the open-ended and structured questions show that spending time with friends is very important. This reinforces the findings of both Coleman's (1980) and Hendry's (1983) focal theories. Peer relationships is the primary issue facing this age group as described by John Coleman (1980). The importance of spending time with friends is also related to Hendry's (1983) leisure Focal Theory. This theory emphasizes that at the average age of fifteen, casual activities are the primary activity. Hanging out and spending time with friends is a casual activity.

Examples of responses to the open-ended questions were, "it's a fun place to go and just hang out with your friends" and "a place to do things with my friends." The responses to the structured questions reinforce this importance. Ninety-four percent of all respondents take other people to their valuable place and sixty-one percent go to the valuable place because they know other people will be there. There is very little difference within this category between the males and females. The only slight difference

To be with Nature
10%

Helping to Cope
14%

Accessibility
4%

Recreation
31%

Spending Time with
Friends
41%
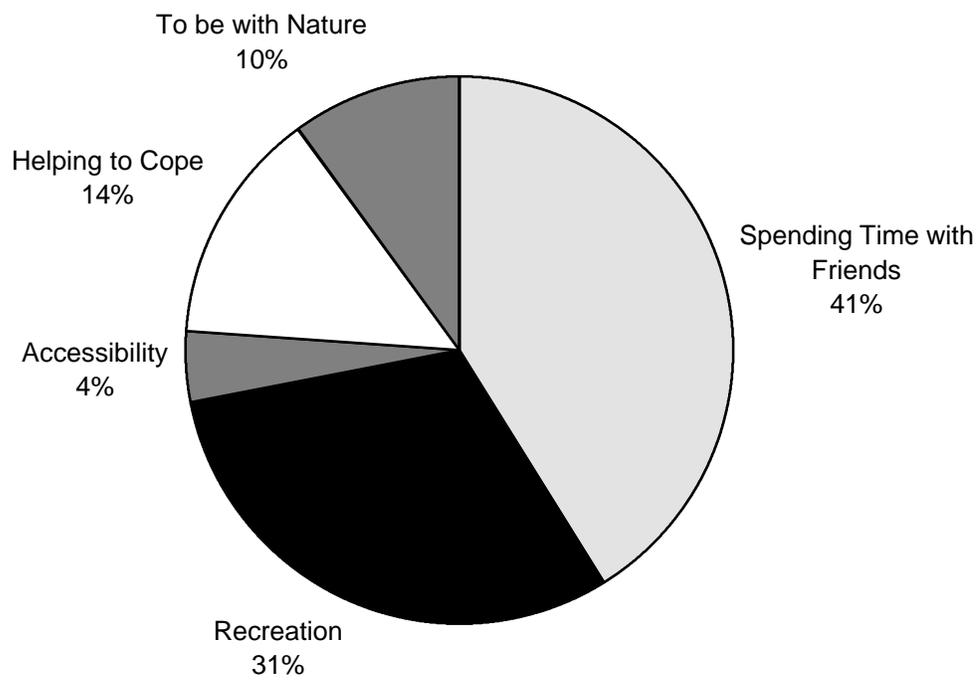
Figure 4.10: Reasons for Valuing Places

is that seventy-five percent (9) of the females go to a valuable place because they know other people will be there whereas only fifty-two percent (10) of the males are compelled by the same reason.

Recreation is the second most popular reason for valuing a place. "A place to play football" and "get cooled off in hot weather," are two examples of open-ended responses. These two responses to an unstructured question describe an open field near the school and a residential pool, focusing on reasons for valuing recreation within the place. Sixty five percent of the respondents (20) answered 'yes' to the structured question "Do you use this place for recreation?" The males use the valued place for recreation sixty-nine percent of the time while only fifty percent of the females use the place. This is consistent with the findings in the literature review that males have much more active leisure pursuits than females.

Helping to cope is a more broad category than the others and incorporates such things as being alone, getting away from the realities of everyday life and helping to cope with difficult issues. These are all related and grouped together instead of having several separate categories. This helps to show the significance of the category with fourteen percent of the responses. Examples from this category are "I get to go there and cry or something," "it's a place to go when you feel down," "I can go there to get away from everything," and "not many people know about it."

The results from the structured questions vary for this category. There were five structured questions that are related to helping the student cope. "When you go to this place in a bad mood, do you feel better having been there?" is a structured question that eighty percent of the respondents (24) answered "yes." "Does this place help you cope with the outside world?" is another structured question to which seventy-one percent of the respondents (22) answered "yes." With the results of these two questions it would seem that helping to cope is both a conscious and subconscious reason for valuing a place. However, there are three other structured questions that, at first glance, may contradict this finding. The questions "Do you go to this place to get away from other people?" "Do

44

you go to this place to look out and not be seen?" and "Does this place have some spiritual or religious significance for you?" yield "no" responses much more often (Appendix B).

In spite of the seeming contradiction, the first set of structured questions deal primarily with mood and coping, while the second set deals with being alone and religious significance. The first set is important to the teenagers while the second set is less important to the teenagers. This shows that the respondents "cope" by being with their friends. The open-ended question identified that only fourteen percent of the respondents value their space primarily to cope with the realities of life. Therefore, consciously they may not realize they are using the space to cope but they do spend time with their friends and use their valued places to cope with the world. This corresponds with the findings in the literature review that this age group focuses on peer relationships (Coleman 1980) and once again this reinforces the importance of friends.

To be with nature accounted for ten percent of the respondents (13) reason for valuing a place. Narrows, Virginia is located in Southwest Virginia along the Appalachian mountains. Many people would consider this part of the country as a haven for nature lovers. The combination of ridges and valleys, streams and rivers provide many opportunities to enjoy nature. It may be somewhat surprising that the adolescents do not value nature more highly. Several of the place types that were chosen are natural areas, but the respondents do not necessarily value the place because of the nature, rather they enjoy the place to spend time with friends or for recreation. It may be that access to nature is available and common for these respondents thus it is taken for granted. Examples of responses about nature include, "it's peaceful and has great beauty" and "the creek has been there for a long time."

There was one structured question that deals with nature, "Do you go to this place to be with nature?" The overall response to this question found that fifty-eight percent do go to their valuable place to be with nature. This statistic neither supports nor rejects the overall desire to be with nature. Overall, fifty-two percent (5) of females go to the place to

be with nature while sixty-three percent (12) of males go to the place to be with nature. This is consistent with the findings in the literature review that nature and recreation is more important to males (Coleman 1961).

Accessibility is the last reason to value a place. This reason was only selected by one respondent with the response, "it's the closest place to go if you can't go on the river." The respondent is discussing a dammed pond located in Narrows where the respondent fishes or relaxes. This place is valuable because it is easier to access than the New River.

There was one structured question that dealt with accessibility. This question was a range with one being very accessible and four being not at all accessible. The average of the responses was 1.4 which indicates that the respondents feel that their valued places are accessible. In a rural community it would seem that very little would be accessible. However, access to these adolescents may be defined differently, walking for one hour could be considered accessible by rural standards. A further look into the place types show that most of the places are a short distance from either home or school which makes these places accessible.

4.5 Other Reasons for Valuing

There were a few reasons for valuing that were covered in the structured questions but were not mentioned in the open-ended responses. These reasons could be unconscious because the reason for valuing is either not primary or not obvious to the respondent. These reasons include a sense of control over the place, a sense of ownership of the place, the safety of the place, if the place is crowded, the beauty, and if the place is special (Appendix B).

None of these reasons for valuing are statistically significant. However, there are some interesting findings when the results are separated for males and females. The largest contradiction is within the sense of ownership and control. Males feel as though they have much more ownership and control over a space than to females. The reasons for this difference may lie deep within the social norms of male and female roles. However, this

does give some insight to the designer involved in designing spaces for both males and females.

4.6 Values Associated with Four Place Types

The last portion of the analysis will be an examination of the special needs that the valued places fulfill. An in-depth look at all open-ended and structured questions will be discussed for four place types. These place types include natural areas, developed parks, places at home and places at school which are among the most frequent place type categories and therefore merit further analysis.

Natural areas account for twenty-six percent of the responses (8). A specific natural area was not chosen more than others. The responses to the questions show that teens use nature in a very active way. Seventy-five percent use the natural areas for recreation while only fifty-seven percent use developed parks for recreation. Eighty-eight percent go to these places to be with nature. The natural areas do help the teens to "cope." Eighty-eight percent indicated that they feel better having been in natural areas. In general, these areas tend to provide teens with a choice of things to do. Although natural areas are considered to be the most beautiful, they are also the least safe and inaccessible places.

In general, natural areas are used in a very active way with friends. These places give adolescents the opportunity to be with nature and participate in outdoor recreation. Quite a bit of the recreation is focused around the New River and several of its tributaries. Thirty-two percent (6) of the males chose natural areas while only seventeen percent (2) of the females chose natural areas as valued places.

Developed parks accounted for twenty-three percent (7) of the total responses. Sixteen percent (2) of the females and twenty-six percent (5) of the males chose developed parks as valued places. The only place chosen in this category was Narrows' town park. This park is used as a gathering area, a place to meet other teens. Most of the open-ended responses suggest that the park is valued because it is a place to hang out with friends. Only fifty-seven percent of the respondents valued the park for recreation.

Figure 4.11: Photograph of Developed Park - Swimming Hole

This is lower than the natural areas and places at school. Eighty-five percent of the teens felt as if the park belonged to them, reflecting a sense of symbolic ownership. They consider the park to be a beautiful place and the most special of all the areas. Accessibility and safety are not issues considered or identified.

Places at home vary quite a bit. These places range from an intimate place on a porch, a family graveyard, pool, and open field. These places account for a total of twenty-three percent (7) of the responses but there is quite a bit of difference between the male and female responses. Thirty-three percent (4) of the females chose places at home which is the most of any other categories. The males chose places at home only sixteen percent (3) of the time.

In general, places at home do not fulfill some general needs such as spending time with friends, being with nature or beauty. However, places at home do fulfill some fundamental needs. Above all, places at home are the most safe and most accessible. Adolescents feel as if they have control over decisions made about the place and take a very active role in changes made within the place. They do use the place for recreation sixty-six percent of the time.

Places at school account for a total of sixteen percent (5) of the responses. The male and female responses are equal within this category. All of the places at school were located outside of the school and the most frequent response was Ragsdale field which is the football stadium.

The places at school are valued primarily because it is a place to be with friends. The places at school are also seen as a place to help "cope" primarily because the adolescent is surrounded by friends. Again, accessibility and safety are not issues. Places at school are used for recreation. The respondents do not feel any control or symbolic ownership in the school and do not perceive school as a beautiful or special place.

Table 4.1 is a summary of these four place types and the likelihood that certain needs will be satisfied. Needs are broken down into categories and a scale of likelihood is provided.

Figure 4.12: Photograph of School - Front of School

Table 4.1: Likelihood of Place Types to Satisfy Needs

	Nature	Parks	Home	School
Visual Quality				
Beauty	×	×		◊
Extraordinary		●		◊
Primary Intent				
Bring others	●	●		●
Other people there		×	◊	●
To get away	×			◊
Recreation	●			×
Nature	●	×		◊
Supportive Intent				
Safety	◊	×	●	
Accessibility	◊		●	×
Voice in decisions	◊		●	
Symbolic ownership		●		◊
Unconscious Intent				
Feel better		×	◊	●
Provides choice	●	×	◊	

● Most likely to satisfy need   × Likely to satisfy need
    Less likely to satisfy need   ◊ Least likely to satisfy need

4.7 Analysis of Narrows

A final analysis was conducted that is not related to the places or the reasons for valuing. The last few questions on the survey focused on gaining information from the respondents about their general feeling of Narrows, Virginia. The intention of these questions was to determine if the adolescents felt that this community was exciting or boring in terms of the availability of activities. The final question required the students to describe their ideal community.

The results show that in general the respondents find Narrows to be a boring community with few activities for teens. On a four point scale, with one being exciting and four being boring, the average was 3.1. Also on a four point scale, with one being many and four being none, the average was 2.9 in regards to rating the amount of available activities and spaces for teens. When asked to describe their ideal community, eighty percent of the respondents list that more activities are needed. For example, "I would have a lot of places for teens," "having more places for the kids to hangout like a skating rink and dance hall and I would to have things more often that the community could get together and help out with everyone," and "a community with a mall and a lot of good hang out places with no violence."

This information is helpful when designing and planning in a rural community because it helps to know what the adolescents want. However, these few questions regarding Narrows is just a start to analyzing Narrows. This study specifically looks at the valued places within Narrows. A further study is needed to determine the intricacies of analyzing Narrows and the activities available in the community.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 How Can Landscape Architects Use This Information?

Booth (1983, ix) defines Landscape Architecture as "a professional design discipline that, in the broadest sense, deals with integrating people and the outdoor environment in a manner beneficial to both." With this definition in mind it is apparent that integrating adolescence and the outside environment should be a concern of landscape architects. Within this context, this study was conducted to generate information about the places that rural adolescents prefer and the needs that these places are likely to fulfill. With this information at hand, a landscape architect can begin to understand the intricacies of designing a place for adolescents that supports their developmental needs and will be a place that they enjoy.

The landscape architect may encounter three different types of situations in which they would provide places for adolescents. These are <u>protecting</u> existing valued places, <u>improving</u> existing places, and <u>designing</u> new places. The following three sections of this chapter provide a further analysis of each of these situations.

Before these situations can be analyzed it must be noted that these rural areas may take some special consideration. Thus far all of the studies involving preferred adolescent outdoor spaces have focused on urban and suburban teenagers. These rural adolescents are much more isolated and dependent on their communities than those adolescents who have access to commercial areas and mass transit. Not only is this a rural community, but it is also a poor rural community which has few amenities to offer their adolescents. However, there are several positive points to this rural community. It is a safe place to live in which the adolescents indicated they felt safe at their valuable places. There is also

immediate access to nature in this community. Narrows is surrounded by the beautiful Appalachian Mountains and the New River, both of which provide many outdoor recreation opportunities. Many urban and suburban adolescents would like greater access to nature. In a rural community the planner and designer are dealing with a clean slate, so to speak. Many urban and suburban situations deal with communities that are land locked or have very little room to offer new spaces. Narrows, on the other hand has a great deal of opportunity to expand its resources and facilities.

5.2 Protecting Existing Valued Places

This study has shown that natural areas, developed parks and places at school are valued by adolescents. Within the natural areas there was not one specific place that requires protection. Unlike urban and suburban areas, Narrows has less threat of losing natural areas, and therefore requires less protection. The developed park, Narrows Town Park, is a place that needs additional protection. This place was considered the most special area and provided the adolescents with a sense of symbolic ownership. This ownership is probably one of the main reasons that it is valued so highly because it is a place that "belongs" to the adolescents. Since the park is in need of repairs and new structures it is primarily the symbolic ownership that needs to be protected. This must remain a place for adolescents. They must be allowed to freely access the space and be actively involved in decisions about this place.

In general, when landscape architects do design work in communities they rarely have an understanding of the valued places and therefore do not know which areas need to be protected. In order for landscape architects to protect the valued places there must be some survey of the existing places as well as some survey about the reasons for valuing.

5.3 Improving Existing Places

Within this study there are a few places that could use improvement but the adolescents really do not stress the need for improvements. At this point in time, the developed park, the high school, and the central business district are several places that need site improvements.

Narrows Town Park is valued and considered a special place to the teens. However, when walking through the park it is apparent that improvements need to be made. The swings and play equipment are broken. The basketball and tennis courts need to be resurfaced. There are a lot of maintenance issues that need to be addressed as well as some design and planning issues. The park is spread out and therefore there is no real concentration of activities available for adolescents. Spaces must be made available for teens to gather and hang out when they are not active in recreation.

The high school is also a place that could use improvements. While the high school does provide a place to play basketball the rest of the school grounds offer no amenities. There needs to be a few gathering spaces located around the school, some which are sheltered. Open space must also be maintained to provide for spontaneous recreation.

There may be other locations within Narrows that could be valued if improvements were made. One possibility is areas within the central business district. This area is primarily vacant with narrow walks and no plaza or seating areas. An overall effort needs to be made to rehabilitate the business area. If this does occur, efforts should be made to provide spaces for adolescents to gather and hang out with each other. Consideration should also be made to provide businesses with the resources to attract adolescents to the downtown area.

5.4 Designing Places

An examination of valuable places indicated that these adolescents value natural areas, developed parks, place at home and places at school. They primarily value a place to spend time with friends and for recreation. Issues such as these should be considered when designing places for adolescents.

Rural communities are generally surrounded by natural areas so there tends to be less need to protect these places. The greatest evident need is to provide places within nature that adolescents can gather and feel a sense of ownership.

When designing parks, the research shows that active recreation is important, especially for males. Parks should offer some opportunity for passive recreation such as a

walking trails or gathering areas that can be used to simply hang out. This might involve the females more and offer them a sense of symbolic ownership. One place that the adolescents valued was the football stadium where teens often interacted with peers and friends. In this instance, seating preferences are an important component in the design process. Another issue when designing and planning parks is to group some activities in a given space rather than placing a basketball court and tennis court separated by a playground for toddlers. There should be areas for the adolescents to gather and socialize rather than unorganized amenities that offer no gathering location.

Areas at school provide rural adolescents with a great opportunity to spend time with friends. The schools are accessible and safe. However, there are a few key elements that could encourage the students to value it more. In general, the students should feel as if the school was their school, a place where they belong. This sense of symbolic ownership could be encouraged by giving students some voice in decisions made about the school. If areas around the school are being designed, the opinions and desires of the adolescents should be considered. Another issue is to provide gathering places outside. These spaces should be sheltered and the orientation of the seating should encourage conversation. Likewise, the design of places at home should involve the input of the homeowner's adolescents.

Since rural areas are spread out and the adolescents are isolated there needs to be a conglomeration of amenities. The parks, businesses, and schools should all be situated close by each other for easy access. In many cases, this is not possible due to existing conditions, therefore an effort should be made to connect all of these amenities. Whether through a greenway system or bike lanes on existing roadways the amenities should be connected to provide more opportunity for adolescents.

5.5 Comparison to Suburban Teens

The most distinct similarity between the suburban and rural adolescents is that the place types and percentages of place types are almost identical. In the study conducted by Eubanks Owens (1987), the natural parks, developed parks, and places at home all scored

highly just as in this study (Figure 5.1). There was one category (undeveloped agricultural land) that scored highly in her study that did not exist in this study with rural adolescents. Other than that category, there is great similarity in place types which indicates that while there are differences among these adolescents the places that they value are quite similar. This begins to highlight some universal place types that most adolescents will value.

The differences between these adolescents occurs when examining their reasons for valuing the places. The suburban adolescent is more likely to value a place to be with nature or to get away from societal stresses. While rural adolescents value a place to recreate or spend time with friends. The suburban teens value nature because it is rare whereas the rural teens value recreation and spending time with friends because they are often isolated.

This comparison supports the idea that there are some design issues that are universal when designing for teens. While the reasons may differ, the fundamental place types are similar in terms of the places that adolescents value.

5.6 Further Research

A few replication studies must be completed in rural areas to give more validity to the findings. Once completed there will be research into valued outdoor places of urban, suburban, and rural adolescents. These studies show the type of places that adolescents value and in some cases their reasons for valuing them.

Another issue that needs further exploration is the physical characteristics within a space. This could be done through some form of community workshop where the

Views
3%

Commercial
6%

Places at School
8%

Natural Parks
26%

Places at Home
17%

Developed Parks
19%

Undeveloped
Agricultural Land
23%
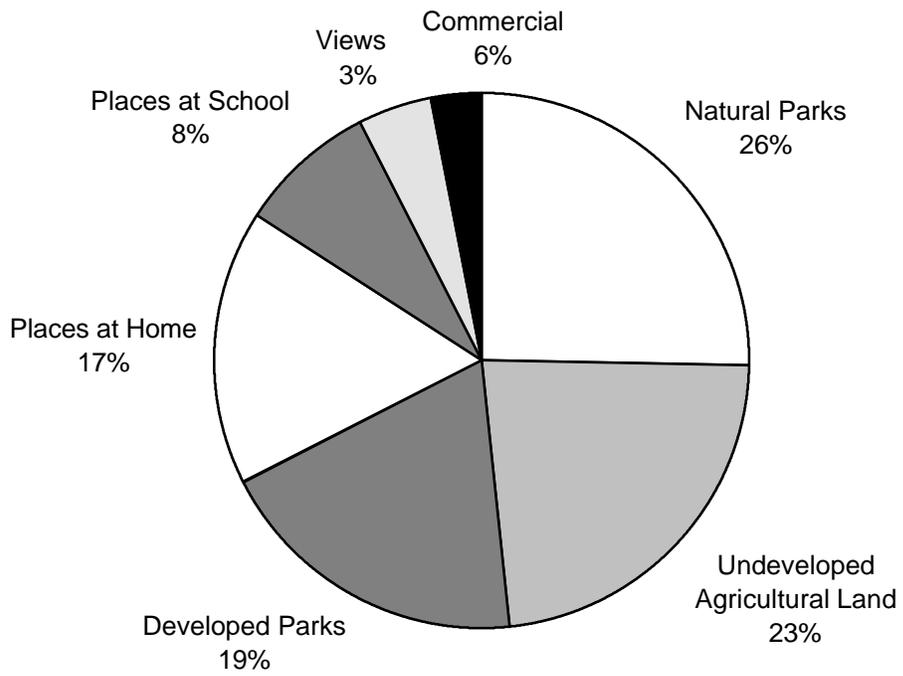
Source: Eubanks Owens (1987)

Figure 5.1: Summary of the Valued Places of Eubanks Owens Study

adolescents are directly involved in the design process. They could be asked specific design questions that would lead to physical characteristics in design. This information could also be collected in a similar fashion to this study with very specific design questions asked rather than reasons for valuing. This further research would compliment this study and others of its kind by going a step further.

There must also be a combined effort between the design disciplines and the social scientists. Information between the professions need to come together to form some overall theory about the outdoor needs of adolescents. Once this is accomplished landscape architects can design appropriate outdoor spaces for teens.

Annotated References

Anthony, Kathryn H. 1985. The shopping mall: A teenage hangout. *Adolescence* 20:78, 307-312. This was
> a study to determine the amount of time that suburban adolescents spend in shopping malls. Interviews give insight into the reasons that adolescents frequent the shopping malls.

Booth, Norman K. 1983. *Basic Elements of Landscape Architectural Design*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press.

Coleman, James S. 1961. *The Adolescent Society: The Social Life of the Teenager and its Impact on Education*. New York: The Free Press. Most of this book deals with adolescents and education. However, there is a chapter entitled "The Adolescent Culture" which gives preferred leisure activities of boys and girls between the ages of 14 to 24.

Coleman, John C. 1980. *The Nature of Adolescence*. New York: Methuen. This book examines past theories within adolescent development and then poses a new theory based on empirical research. The theory is called the 'Focal' Theory which states that relationship patterns come into focus at different times and thus allows the adolescent to cope with stresses.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly and Reed Larson. 1984. *Being Adolescent*. New York: Basic Books Inc. This is a
> book of empirical data on adolescents. It gives important insight into the world of adolescence; where they spend their time, what they spend their time doing, and who they share their time with.

Eubanks Owens, Patsy. 1987. Venues and Values. Master's thesis. University of California, Berkeley.

----. 1988. Natural Landscapes, Gathering Places and Prospect Refuges: Characteristics of Outdoor Places Valued by Teens. *Children's Environments Quarterly* 5:2, 17-24. This study focuses on outdoor places teen values and why they value them. Each outdoor place that is valued is then analyzed for the characteristics found at these places. These characteristics are to help designers in the design of outdoor spaces for
teens.

----- . 1993. Valued Outdoor Places: A study of Teen Places in Sunshine, Australia. *EDRA 24 Proceedings* 62-66. This case study is a follow up study to a 1977 study published in Kevin Lynch's book *Growing up in Cities*. The author does a comparison of valued spaces over time and across cultures.

----- . 1993. Designing Places for Teens. *CELA* 20-29. This article deals with several past studies done on adolescent environmental preferences. Implications for design are then given.

Francis, Mark. 1979. No Place to be… *Childhood City Newsletter*. 16:1-2. This is an introduction for a special issue involving teen environments. Francis lays out the problems faced by teens today and then gives resources to aid in teen participation in design.

Francis, Mark, Florence Ladd, Raymond Lorenzo, and Steve Townsend (Eds). 1975.Teen Enviornment: The Need to Know." Childhood City Newsletter. 1:3, 1-2. This editors note addresses the state of affairs in teen environments. It also calls for research to be done in the area of teen environments.

Hall, Laura. 1993. Teenagers in Suburbia: A Case Study in a California Suburb. *EDRA 24 Proceedings* 57-
62. This is a case study of a suburb of San Francisco. The purpose is to determine if the suburban teenagers are being well served by their environment. Questionnaires were given to 698 students, which asked students about their environment.

Hendry, Leo B. 1983. *Growing Up and Going Out: Adolescents and Leisure*. Great Britian: Aberdeen University Press. This theoretical book begins with an exploration of developmental theory. 'Focal' theory is examined in great depth. The author then uses the 'Focal' theory as a stage for a theory of adolescent leisure.

Hendry, Leo, Janet Shucksmith, John Love, and Anthony Glenndinning. 1993. *Young People's Leisure and*
Lifestyles. London: Routledge. This book is the results of a seven year longitudinal study involving 10,000 young people in Scotland. The purpose was to study the importance of leisure in the development of youth lifestyles. It provides information on what youth do in their leisure time.

Korpela, Kalevi M.. 1992. Adolescents' Favorite Places and Environmental Self-Regulation. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 12:249-258. The purpose of this study is to show that favorite places are used as a means of regulating unpleasant and pleasant feelings. The findings show that most favorite places of adolescents are their own rooms. However, the theory can be applied to outdoor environments.

Malm, Marguerite and Olis Jamison. 1952. *Adolescence.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc. This book is 45 years old but provides an in-depth look at the psychology of adolescence in the 1950s. The most helpful chapter of the book is entitled "The adolescent and the community." This chapter looks at the important relationship between adolescence and the community. Recreation is discussed in-depth.

Miller, Patricia H. 1993. *Theories of Developmental Psychology*. Third Edition. New York: W.H. Freeman
and Co. This is a book written to introduce the topic of developmental psychology. It describes developmental theory in general and then further breaks down prominent theories in the discipline.

Neufeldt, Victoria (ED). 1988. Webster's New World Dictionary or American English. (Third Edition) New York:Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Noack, Peter and Rainer Silbereisen. 1988. Adolescent Development and Choice of Leisure Settings. *Children's Environments Quarterly* 5:2, 25-33. This is a study of motives for visiting leisure settings. Development of contacts with adolescents of both the same sex and opposite sex seem to be primary motives to visit leisure settings. These goals can be seen as efforts to master developmental tasks in the transition to adulthood.

Schiavo, Steven R. 1988. Age Differences in Assessment and Use of a Suburban Neighborhood among Children and Adolescents. *Children's Environments Quarterly*. 5:2, 4-9. This is a study which compares three age groups; pre-adolescence, adolescence, and older adolescence, and their feelings about their neighborhoods. Photographs were taken of important places and analyzed as to the age of the respondent.

Seifert, Kelvin L. and Robert J. Hoffnung. 1997. Child and Adolescent Development. Fourth Edition. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Silbereisen, R. K., P. Noack and K. Eyferth. 1986. Place for Development: Adolescents, Leisure Settings and Developmental Tasks. In R.K. Silbereisen, K. Eyferth and G. Rudinger (Eds.) *Development as Action in Context*. Berlin: Springer-Verlag. This chapter looks at leisure time settings as a way for adolescents to cope with everyday problems. This study comes from a portion of the Berlin Longitudinal Study and asks students questions about their preferred leisure time places.

Van Vliet, Willem. 1983. Exploring the Fourth Environment: An examination of the Home Range of City
and Suburban Teenagers. *Environments and Behavior*. 15:5, 567-588. This is a study of human territorial behavior. It looks at home range of adolescents and does a comparison of age, gender, and environment.

Wynn, Joan, Harold Richman, Robert Rubinstein, Julia Littell, Brian Britt, and Carol Yoken. 1988. *Youth and America's Future*: The William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship. The purpose of this paper is to show that communities are a resource for supporting the development of youth. It focuses primarily on public policy through an extensive literature review.

APPENDIX A

THE SURVEY

Dear Student,

I previously asked you to take a photograph of two outdoor places that you value the most. This survey is a follow-up to the photographs that you took. I would now like to know how you feel about these valuable places. Please answer the following questions as truthfully as possible.

Below you will find a photograph of one of your valuable places. Please answer the following questions about this place and then do the same for the second photograph.

1. What is the name of this place?

2. How would you describe this place to someone who has never seen it before?

3. What, if anything, do you do here?

4. What is it about this place that makes it valuable to you?

5. Do you go to this place;   (*place a check next to one*)

a. _____ Daily (*How many times a day? _____)*

b. _____ Several times a week

c. _____ Several times a year

d. _____ Once a year

e. _____ Less than once a year

f. _____ Never

6. Do you bring other people to this place?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

      a. If yes, what is their relationship to you?

7. Do you go to this place because you know other people will be there? ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

8. Do you go to this place to get away from other people?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

9. Do you go to this place to be with nature?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

10. Do you go to this place to look out and not be seen?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

11. When you go to this place in a bad mood, do you feel better having been there?
           ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

12. Do you use this place for recreation ?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

      a. If yes, what kind of recreation?

13. Do you feel like this place gives you a lot of choices in things to do? ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

14. Does this place have some spiritual or religious significance for you? ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

      a. If yes, Why

15. Do you feel like you have control in the decisions made about this place? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

16. Even though you may not own this place, do you feel like it belongs to you? ☐ **YES** ☐

NO

17. Does this place help you cope with the outside world? ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

18. Have you changed anything in this place since you first visited? **YES** ☐   **NO** ☐

      a. If yes, What?

19. If you could change anything what would you change?

20. Do you think this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Safe	Somewhat Safe	Not Very Safe	Not Safe At All

      a. Please explain:

21. Do you feel like this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Accessible	Somewhat Accessible	Not Very Accessible	Not At All Accessible

22. Is this place usually:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Crowded	Somewhat Crowded	Not Very Crowded	Not At All Crowded

23. Do you think that this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Beautiful	Somewhat Beautiful	Not Very Beautiful	Not At All Beautiful

      a. Why?

24. Do you think this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very	Somewhat	Not Very	Not at all
Special	Special	Special	Special

a. Why?

Below you will find a photograph of one of your valuable places. Please answer the following questions about this place.

```

```
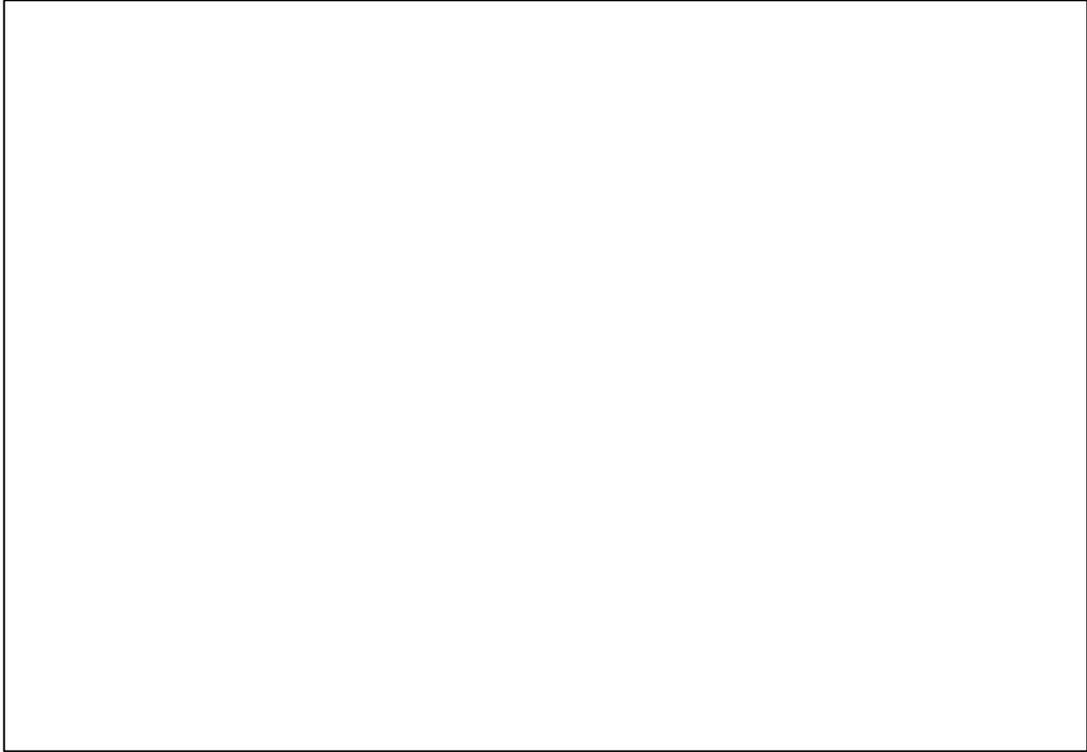
25. What is the name of this place?

26. How would you describe this place to someone who has never seen it before?

27. What, if anything, do you do here?

28. What is it about this place that makes it valuable to you?

29. Do you go to this place; *(place a check next to one)*

a. _____ Daily (*How many times a day? _____*)

b. _____ Several times a week

c. _____ Several times a year

d. _____ Once a year

e. _____ Less than once a year

f. _____ Never

30. Do you bring other people to this place?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

      a. If yes, what is their relationship to you?

31. Do you go to this place because you know other people will be there? ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

32. Do you go to this place to get away from other people?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

33. Do you go to this place to be with nature?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

34. Do you go to this place to look out and not be seen?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

35. When you go to this place in a bad mood, do you feel better having been there?
      ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

36. Do you use this place for recreation?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**
      a. If yes, what kind of recreation?

37. Do you feel like this place gives you a lot of choices in things to do? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

38. Does this place have some spiritual or religious significance for you? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

a. If yes, Why?_____

39. Do you feel like you have control in the decisions made about this place? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

40. Even though you may not own this place, do you feel like it belongs to you? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

41. Does this place help you cope with the outside world? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

42. Have you changed anything in this place since you first visited? **YES**☐ **NO**☐

 a. If yes, What?

43. If you could change anything what would you change?

44. Do you think this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Safe	Somewhat Safe	Not Very Safe	Not Safe At All

a. Please explain:

45. Do you feel like this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Accessible	Somewhat Accessible	Not Very Accessible	Not At All Accessible

46. Is this place usually:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Crowded	Somewhat Crowded	Not Very Crowded	Not At All Crowded

47. Do you think that this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Beautiful	Somewhat Beautiful	Not Very Beautiful	Not At All Beautiful

    a. Why?

48. Do you think this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all
Special	Special	Special	Special

    a. Why?

Finally, I have a few questions about yourself and your community.

49. What do you do during your free time? (*Place a check next to all that apply*)

_____ Arts and crafts, hobbies (*e.g. cooking, computing, model building*)
_____ Relaxing (*e.g. TV, reading, puttering, sunbathing, sleeping, listening to music*)
_____ Dance, drama, singing, playing an instrument
_____ Team sports (*e.g. baseball, soccer, basketball*)
_____ Physical activity games (*e.g. tennis, bowling, golf*)
_____ Going out for entertainment (*e.g. movies, sports event, cultural, eating out*)
_____ Driving, sightseeing, touring
_____ Aerial sports (*e.g. hand gliding*)
_____ Wilderness activities (*e.g. hunting, fishing, back-packing, camping, hiking*)
_____ Waterfront activities (*e.g. fishing, diving, boating, swimming*)
_____ Snow and cold activities (*e.g. skiing, skating, snowmobile*)
_____ Inactive games (*e.g. table and board games, cards, pool*)
_____ Socializing (*e.g. visiting, dating, entertaining, hanging out, going to clubs, dancing*)
_____ Participation in an organization (*e.g. church, volunteerism, civic groups*)
_____ Educational programs
_____ Fitness workouts, running, gymnastics
_____ Shopping
_____ Walking
_____ Biking
_____ Cruising
_____ Being outside with nature (*e.g., exploring, looking at nature, collecting*)
_____ BBQing and picnicking
_____ All Terrain Vehicles, dirt bike, snow mobile
_____ Other (*Specify*) _____
_____ I have no free time

50. How old are you? _____

51. Gender: ☐ **MALE** ☐ **FEMALE**

52. Which ethnic group do you consider yourself to be a part of: (*Place a check next to one*)
_____ Black, Afro-American
_____ Latino, Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Spanish heritage
_____ Asian, Asian-American
_____ Native American Indian
_____ White, Caucasian
_____ Other, (*Specify*) _____

53. Do you live in a(n): (*Place a check next to one*)

_____ Apartment
_____ Townhouse
_____ Duplex
_____ Manufactured home
_____ Single family house
_____ Mobile home

54. Do you belong to any clubs or youth organizations outside of school? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**
a. If yes, what clubs or organizations do you belong to?

55. Do you participate in any extra-curricular activities in school? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**
a. If yes, what extra-curricular activities do you do?

56. How long have you lived in Narrows? _____

57. Does your extended family live nearby? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

58. How would you rate your community:

1	2	3	4
Very Exciting	Somewhat Exciting	Somewhat Boring	Very Boring

59. How many activities and spaces are there for teens in your community?

1	2	3	4
Too Many	A lot	Few	None

60. Please describe your ideal community. (What would be found in your ideal community?)

Thank you for your time and effort. I appreciate the honesty and thoughtfulness that you have shown through this project. The information that you have given me is very important and will be used in an effort to improve the design of outdoor spaces for teens. **Thanks again**.

Dear Student,
Please describe (in detail) an outdoor place that is valuable to you (where is it? what does it look like?). Once you have described the place please answer the following questions..

1. What is the name of this place?

2. How do you get to this place? (*Walk, drive, bicycle*)

3. What, if anything, do you do here?

4. What is it about this place that makes it valuable to you?

5. Do you go to this place;   (*place a check next to one*)

a. _____ Daily (*How many times a day? _____)*

b. _____ Several times a week

c. _____ Several times a year

d. _____ Once a year

e. _____ Less than once a year

f. _____ Never

6. Do you bring other people to this place?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

        a. If yes, what is their relationship to you?

7. Do you go to this place because you know other people will be there? ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

8. Do you go to this place to get away from other people?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

9. Do you go to this place to be with nature?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

10. Do you go to this place to look out and not be seen?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

11. When you go to this place in a bad mood, do you feel better having been there?
                    ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

12. Do you use this place for recreation ?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**
    a. If yes, what kind of recreation? _____

13. Do you feel like this place gives you a lot of choices in things to do?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

14. Does this place have some spiritual or religious significance for you?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

a. If yes, Why?_____

15. Do you feel like you have control in the decisions made about this place?   ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

16. Even though you may not own this place, do you feel like it belongs to you? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

17. Does this place help you cope with the outside world?   ☐ **YES**   ☐ **NO**

18. Have you changed anything in this place since you first visited? **YES** ☐   **NO** ☐
        a. If yes, What?

19. If you could change anything what would you change?

20. Do you think this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Safe	Somewhat Safe	Not Very Safe	Not Safe At All

a. Please explain: _____

21. Do you feel like this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Accessible	Somewhat Accessible	Not Very Accessible	Not At All Accessible

22. Is this place usually:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Crowded	Somewhat Crowded	Not Very Crowded	Not At All Crowded

23. Do you think that this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Beautiful	Somewhat Beautiful	Not Very Beautiful	Not At All Beautiful

a. Why? _____

24. Do you think this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Special	Somewhat Special	Not Very Special	Not at all Special

Why? _____

Please describe (in detail) a second outdoor place that this valuable to you (where is it? what does it look like?). Then answer the following questions.

25. What is the name of this place?

26. How do you get to this place? (*Walk, drive, bicycle*)

27. What, if anything, do you do here?

28. What is it about this place that makes it valuable to you?

29. Do you go to this place;   (*place a check next to one*)

a. _____ Daily (*How many times a day? _____)*

b. _____ Several times a week

c. _____ Several times a year

d. _____ Once a year

e. _____ Less than once a year

f. _____ Never

30. Do you bring other people to this place? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

      a. If yes, what is their relationship to you?

31. Do you go to this place because you know other people will be there? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

32. Do you go to this place to get away from other people? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

33. Do you go to this place to be with nature? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

34. Do you go to this place to look out and not be seen? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

35. When you go to this place in a bad mood, do you feel better having been there?

           ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

36. Do you use this place for recreation? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

a. If yes, what kind of recreation? _____

37. Do you feel like this place gives you a lot of choices in things to do? ☐ **YES** ☐

NO

38. Does this place have some spiritual or religious significance for you? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

      a. If yes, Why?_____

39. Do you feel like you have control in the decisions made about this place? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

40. Even though you may not own this place, do you feel like it belongs to you? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

41. Does this place help you cope with the outside world? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

42. Have you changed anything in this place since you first visited? **YES**☐   **NO**☐

      a. If yes, What?

43. If you could change anything what would you change?

44. Do you think this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Safe	Somewhat Safe	Not Very Safe	Not Safe At All

a. Please explain:

45. Do you feel like this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Accessible	Somewhat Accessible	Not Very Accessible	Not At All Accessible

46. Is this place usually:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Crowded	Somewhat Crowded	Not Very Crowded	Not At All Crowded

47. Do you think that this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Beautiful	Somewhat Beautiful	Not Very Beautiful	Not At All Beautiful

      a. Why?

48. Do you think this place is:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Special	Somewhat Special	Not very Special	Not at all Special

      a. Why?

Finally, I have a few questions about yourself and your community.

49. What do you do during your free time? (*Place a check next to all that apply*)

_____ Arts and crafts, hobbies *(e.g. cooking, computing, model building)*
_____ Relaxing (*e.g. TV, reading, puttering, sunbathing, sleeping, listening to music*)
_____ Dance, drama, singing, playing an instrument
_____ Team sports (*e.g. baseball, soccer, basketball*)
_____ Physical activity games (*e.g. tennis, bowling, golf*)
_____ Going out for entertainment (*e.g. movies, sports event, cultural, eating out*)
_____ Driving, sightseeing, touring
_____ Aerial sports (*e.g. hand gliding*)
_____ Wilderness activities (*e.g. hunting, fishing, back-packing, camping, hiking*)
_____ Waterfront activities (*e.g. fishing, diving, boating, swimming*)
_____ Snow and cold activities *(e.g. skiing, skating, snowmobile)*
_____ Inactive games (*e.g. table and board games, cards, pool*)
_____ Socializing (*e.g. visiting, dating, entertaining, hanging out, going to clubs, dancing*)
_____ Participation in an organization (*e.g. church, volunteerism, civic groups*)
_____ Educational programs
_____ Fitness workouts, running, gymnastics
_____ Shopping
_____ Walking
_____ Biking
_____ Cruising
_____ Being outside with nature (*e.g., exploring, looking at nature, collecting*)
_____ BBQing and picnicking
_____ All Terrain Vehicles, dirt bike, snow mobile
_____ Other (*Specify*) _____
_____ I have no free time

50. How old are you? _____

51. Gender: ☐ **MALE** ☐ **FEMALE**

52. Which ethnic group do you consider yourself to be a part of: (*Place a check next to one*)
_____ Black, Afro-American
_____ Latino, Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Spanish heritage
_____ Asian, Asian-American
_____ Native American Indian
_____ White, Caucasian
_____ Other, (*Specify*) _____

53. Do you live in a(n): (*Place a check next to one*)

_____ Apartment
_____ Townhouse
_____ Duplex
_____ Manufactured home
_____ Single family house
_____ Mobile home

54. Do you belong to any clubs or youth organizations outside of school? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**
a. If yes, what clubs or organizations do you belong to?

55. Do you participate in any extra-curricular activities in school? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**
a. If yes, what extra-curricular activities do you do?

56. How long have you lived in Narrows? _____

57. Does your extended family live nearby? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

58. How would you rate your community:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Very Exciting	Somewhat Exciting	Somewhat Boring	Very Boring

59. How many activities and spaces are there for teens in your community?

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Too Many	A lot	Few	None

60. Please describe your ideal community. (What would be found in your ideal community?)

Thank you for your time and effort. I appreciate the honesty and thoughtfulness that you have shown through this project. The information that you have given me is very important and will be used in an effort to improve the design of outdoor spaces for teens. **Thanks again**.

APPENDIX B

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Results of Survey

NOTE: Within each survey there were two valued places. The first valued place refers to questions 1-24 and the second set refers to questions 25-48.

1/25.. What is the name of this place?
- It has no name. I took it from my back porch. It is the New River.
- 18 hole.
- There is not a name.
- Narrows Town Park
- Narrows Park, basketball court
- My backyard
- The New River
- Front of Narrows High School
- Beside Narrows High School
- Family Graveyard
- My pool area
- The Narrows mill damn (duck pond)
- Ragsdale field
- Ragsdale field (bleachers)
- Narrows Town Park
- My best friends house. Volleyball net and basketball hoop.
- The park
- The ball diamond
- Rick Creek Park
- L.J.'s
- Ragsdale field
- Narrows town park
- Duck pond
- It doesn't really have a name
- It doesn't really have a name but I call it the Blue Hole.
- The Narrows park
- My backyard
- Pool hall
- The falls

2. How would you describe this place to someone who has never seen it before?
- It is high up. In the fall when the mountain turns different colors it is beautiful.
- It has a huge ledge and deep water and is super fun to jump from. It also has a rope that is fun to swing off of.
- It's an ugly place, it's sloped.
- It's a place where you can meet a lot of friends also.
- It's a place to shoot basketball.
- It got a lot of woods and apple tree's.
- A Big River.
- The front of Narrows High School.
- Beside NHS.
- It is a small little area.
- It is round, and has water in it.
- Peaceful, relaxing, and beautiful in the summer and winter.
- A regular looking high school football field.

- I would tell them that it is the place where most of the teenagers hang out at during the ball game and that hardly any of the adults hang out there.
- Pretty, cool water, swing spots, a picnic shelter that sells hot foods and it has trees everywhere and is the best place to hang out during the summer.
- A yard with lots of space to play a volleyball game and basketball game.
- Its got a basketball court, place to swim, stuff to play on, baby pool, swing sets, picnic shelters.
- The best description of my favorite outdoor place is that it is a luscious green field covered with short purple bloomed alfalfa. The field is also closed in by trees just like natures own ball diamond. Batter up.
- The place I mostly hang around is the Rich Creek Park. I live right down below it. When I don't have anything to do, I go up there and shoot for hours. I like being up there because it is quieter up there. I can be by myself when I have a lot on my mind. That's my favorite place, I don't know anyplace else I'd rather be.
- I guess my second outdoor place would have to be the football field, located in Narrows, Virginia. The way it reads Ragsdale Field home of the green waves. I really like going there when I play football and when I don't. I watch with my friends and have a good time.
- Game Room: One place I go to get away. Sometimes it is quiet. You can play pool or video games or you can just hang out with your friends.
- It is a park in Narrows that is close to the creek.
- The duck pond in Narrows, or the Mill Creek.
- It is an old field. It is surrounded by woods. The grass is about eight inches high. It is located about four hundred yards from my house.
- It has a waterfall and a good place to swim. The water is very blue. It is surrounded by woods.
- The park has 2 basketball courts, it has a place to swim, and it has swings, volleyball net, and shelters. It has a place where you could buy food, and a tennis court.
- My backyard! I play basketball, football, and baseball. I have a big creek behind my house that I go swimming in and fishing.
- My place is a pool hall. All of my friends hang out there, it is in a cinder block building with an ice cream parlor tucked on to it. And different other buildings around it.
- The falls, it's a place where you go swimming or fishing, it's got a lot of water falls you can go under and during the evening's it would be a pretty sunset.

3/27. What, if anything, do you do here?
- Sit on the porch, or I can hunt from it.
- I fish.
- Play baseball.
- Football, soccer.
- Swim and fish, just hang out and have fun.
- Play pool, talk to friends, play games.
- Play pool or other games.
- Play volleyball and basketball.
- Go swimming, have picnics, play ball, swing.
- I like to just sit in my swing and look down at the view. I sometimes talk on the phone there. Me and my brother play football there.
- Fish and swim. I also catch crayfish and salamanders for fun
- I usually swim here.
- I shoot basketball.
- Play football.
- Play football.
- Just hangout, talk and watch the ballgame.
- Swim and hangout.
- I talk to my grandparents about what problems I had for a day.

- I swim.
- I roll old hay bails over the hills or I just walk around.
- Swim
- Play basketball and swim.
- Swim, fish or just go to sit here.
- Swim, shoot basketball, and play volleyball.
- Play football, baseball, and basketball. Go swimming and fishing.
- Sit, think, talk, work, push hay bails.
- Fish or just sit there and relax or feed the ducks.
- Meet friends and watch the football games.
- I bring my girlfriend there we do things. I shoot basketball there.
- Be with my friends. Play football, watch a game.

4/28. What is it about this place that makes it valuable to you?
- It is a place to go when you feel down.
- Spend time with my friends.
- Friends and recreation.
- You can see: New River, Rich Creek, Narrows, Glynn Lynn.
- It's not, I just go there in my spare time to hang out and have a good time.
- Because it is a cool place to hang out at.
- I like to hang out with my friends.
- I can spend time with my friends and get out of the house to play basketball.
- It's a fun place to hang out at.
- It helps me to relax and think. It is also near my house. From anywhere on the mountain you can see the river. I like to watch the birds, the little cars, and the river flowing so peaceful.
- I have fun here.
- It's the only place to swim and you can make a lot of friends here.
- It's a place to meet friends.
- A place to play football.
- A place to go and have something to do.
- I get to spend time with my friends there.
- I can hang out with my friends.
- I get to go there and cry or something.
- Get cooled off in hot weather.
- I can go there to get away from everything.
- Not many people know about it.
- It is a fun place to go and just hang out with your friends.
- The creek has been there for a long time.
- It is a place where you can hang out with your friends.
- A place to do things with my friends.
- It's peaceful and has great beauty.
- It is the closest place to go if you can't go on the river.
- It's a place to go to watch football after school on certain days.
- Hearing the net swish when I shoot.
- Playing football.

The results to questions 6-24 and 30-48 can be found in the following figures located in Appendix B.

The descriptions of the surveys without pictures are as follows:

- The place I mostly hand around is the Rich Creek Park. I live right down below it. When I don't have anything to do I go up their and shoot for hours. I like being up their because it is quite up there. I can be by myself when I have a lot on my mind. That's my favorite place I do not know any place that I would rather be.
- I guess my second outdoor place would have to be the football field located in Narrows, Virginia. The way it reads Ragsdale field home of the Green Wave. I really like going there when I play football and when I don't. I watch with my friends and have a good time.
- My place is a pool hall. All of my friends hang out there it is in a cinder block building with an ice cream parlor tucked on to it and different other buildings around it.
- Game room: one place I go to get away. Sometimes it is quite. You can play pool or video games or you can just hang out with friends.
- (One student drew a picture of a view from his house)
- The falls, its like a place where you go swimming or fishing, its got a lot of water falls you can go under and during the evenings it would be a pretty sunset.
- It is an old field. It is surrounded by woods. The grass is about eight inches high. It is located about four hundred yards from my house.
- It has a waterfall and a good place to swim. The water is very blue. It is surrounded by woods.
- The best description of my favorite outdoor place is that it is a lucious green field covered with short purple bloomed alfalfa. The field is also closed in by trees just like natures own ball diamond. Batter up.
- It is a park in narrows that is close to the creek.
- The duck pond.
- The park has two basketball courts. It has a place to swim and it has swings, volleyball net, and shelters. It has a place where you could buy food and a tennis court.
- My backyard! I play basketball, football and baseball. I have a big creek behind my house that I go swimming in and fishing.

Responses to the demographic information.

49. What do you do during your free time?
_____ Arts and crafts, hobbies (*e.g. cooking, computing, model building*) **4**
_____ Relaxing (*e.g. TV, reading, puttering, sunbathing, sleeping, listening to music*) **14**
_____ Dance, drama, singing, playing an instrument **4**
_____ Team sports (*e.g. baseball, soccer, basketball*) **16**
_____ Physical activity games (*e.g. tennis, bowling, golf*) **9**
_____ Going out for entertainment (*e.g. movies, sports event, cultural, eating out*) **14**
_____ Driving, sightseeing, touring **8**
_____ Aerial sports (*e.g. hand gliding*) **1**
_____ Wilderness activities (*e.g. hunting, fishing, back-packing, camping, hiking*) **12**
_____ Waterfront activities (*e.g. fishing, diving, boating, swimming*) **12**
_____ Snow and cold activities (*e.g. skiing, skating, snowmobile*) **8**
_____ Inactive games (*e.g. table and board games, cards, pool*) **9**
_____ Socializing (*e.g. visiting, dating, entertaining, hanging out, going to clubs, dancing*) **13**
_____ Participation in an organization (*e.g. church, volunteerism, civic groups*) **9**
_____ Educational programs **3**
_____ Fitness workouts, running, gymnastics **4**
_____ Shopping **9**
_____ Walking **10**
_____ Biking **8**

_____ Cruising **10**
_____ Being outside with nature (*e.g., exploring, looking at nature, collecting*) **7**
_____ BBQing and picnicking **10**
_____ All Terrain Vehicles, dirt bike, snow mobile **9**
_____ Other (*Specify)* <u>Hang out with friends,</u>
_____ I have no free time

50. Average age: 14.77

51. 11 male   7 female

52. 100% white, Caucasian

53. 1 Townhouse, 6 Manufactured/Mobil homes, 8 Single-family homes

54. Extra-curricular activities outside of school?
       3 yes   15 no

55. Extra-curricular activities in school?
       10 yes   8 no

56. Lived in Narrows an average of 9.44 years.

57. Extended family live nearby?   13 yes   4 no

58. How you rate your community? Average 3.1

59. How many activities and spaces are there for teens in your community? Average 2.9

60.)Please describe your ideal community.
   - Basketball courts, a swimming pool
   - more places for teens: game rooms, pools, more recreation
   - wide spread and more forest land
   - a place with a bowling alley, game rooms, YMCA, a race track and a dirtbike track.
   - small, where everybody knows everything
   - Cincinnati! Its fun there
   - lots of excitement and fun
   - I would have a lot of places for teens
   - college football stadium
   - karate school, laser tag, recreation billiards, climbing gym, pollution free, environmental club
   - a community with a mall and a lot of good hang out places, no violence.
   - having more places for the kids to hangout at like skating rink, dance hall and I would have things more often that the community could get together and help out with everyone.

6/30. Do you bring other people to this place?

7/31. Do you go to this place because you know other people will be there?

8/32. Do you go to this place to get away from other people?

9/33. Do you go to this place to be with nature?

10/34. Do you go to this place to look out and not be seen?

11/35. When you go to this place in a bad mood, do you feel better having been there?

12/36. Do you use this place for recreation?

13/37. Do you feel like this place gives you a lot of choice in things to do?

14/38. Does this place have some spiritual or religious significance for you?

15/39. Do you feel like you have control in the decisions made about this place?

16/40. Even though you may not own this place, do you feel like it belongs to you?

17/41. Does this place help you cope with the outside world?

18/42. Have you changed anything in this place since you first visited?

Teen Responses to Questions 6 - 18.

6/30. Do you bring other people to this place?

7/31. Do you go to this place because you know other people will be there?

8/32. Do you go to this place to get away from other people?

9/33. Do you go to this place to be with nature?

10/34. Do you go to this place to look out and not be seen?

11/35. When you go to this place in a bad mood, do you feel better having been there?

12/36. Do you use this place for recreation?

13/37. Do you feel like this place gives you a lot of choice in things to do?

14/38. Does this place have some spiritual or religious significance for you?

15/39. Do you feel like you have control in the decisions made about this place?

16/40. Even though you may not own this place, do you feel like it belongs to you?

17/41. Does this place help you cope with the outside world?

18/42. Have you changed anything in this place since you first visited?

Male Responses to Questions 6 - 18.

6/30. Do you bring other people to this place?

7/31. Do you go to this place because you know other people will be there?

8/32. Do you go to this place to get away from other people?

9/33. Do you go to this place to be with nature?

10/34. Do you go to this place to look out and not be seen?

11/35. When you go to this place in a bad mood, do you feel better having been there?

12/36. Do you use this place for recreation?

13/37. Do you feel like this place gives you a lot of choice in things to do?

14/38. Does this place have some spiritual or religious significance for you?

15/39. Do you feel like you have control in the decisions made about this place?

16/40. Even though you may not own this place, do you feel like it belongs to you?

17/41. Does this place help you cope with the outside world?

18/42. Have you changed anything in this place since you first visited?

Female Responses to Questions 6 - 18.
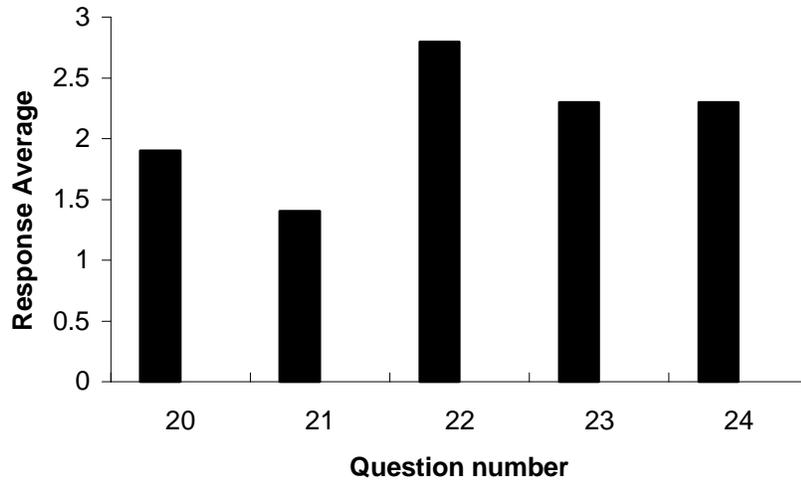
20/44. Do you think this place is:
1.) Very Safe   2.) Somewhat Safe   3.) Not Very Safe   4.) Not Safe At All

21/45. Do you feel like this place is:
1.) Very Accessible 2.) Somewhat Accessible 3.) Not Very Accessible
4.) Not At All Accessible

22/46. Is this place usually:
1.) Very Crowded   2.) Somewhat Crowded   3.) Not Very Crowded   4.) Not At All Crowded


23/47. Do you think that this place is:
1.) Very Beautiful 2.) Somewhat Beautiful 3.) Not Very Beautiful 4.) Not At All Beautiful

24/48. Do you think that this place is:
1.) Very Special   2.) Somewhat Special   3.) Not Very Special   4.) Not At All Special

Teen Responses to Questions 20-24.
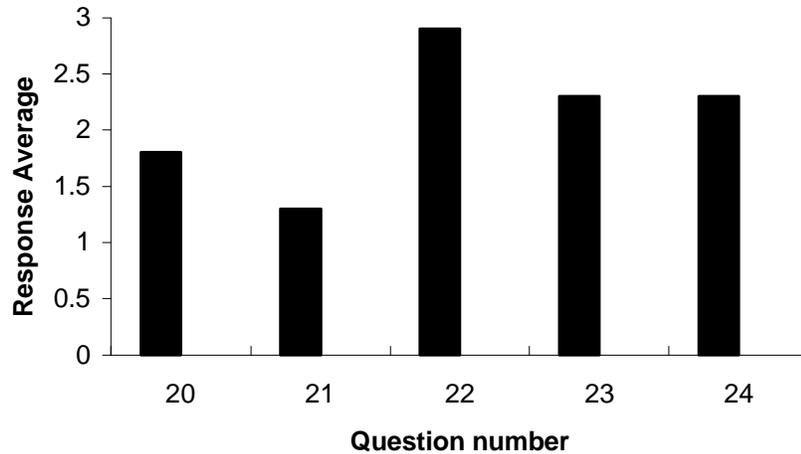
20/44. Do you think this place is:
1.) Very Safe   2.) Somewhat Safe   3.) Not Very Safe   4.) Not Safe At All

21/45. Do you feel like this place is:
1.) Very Accessible 2.) Somewhat Accessible 3.) Not Very Accessible
4.) Not At All Accessible

22/46. Is this place usually:
1.) Very Crowded   2.) Somewhat Crowded   3.) Not Very Crowded   4.) Not At All Crowded


23/47. Do you think that this place is:
1.) Very Beautiful 2.) Somewhat Beautiful 3.) Not Very Beautiful 4.) Not At All Beautiful

24/48. Do you think that this place is:
1.) Very Special   2.) Somewhat Special   3.) Not Very Special   4.) Not At All Special

Male Responses to Questions 20-24.
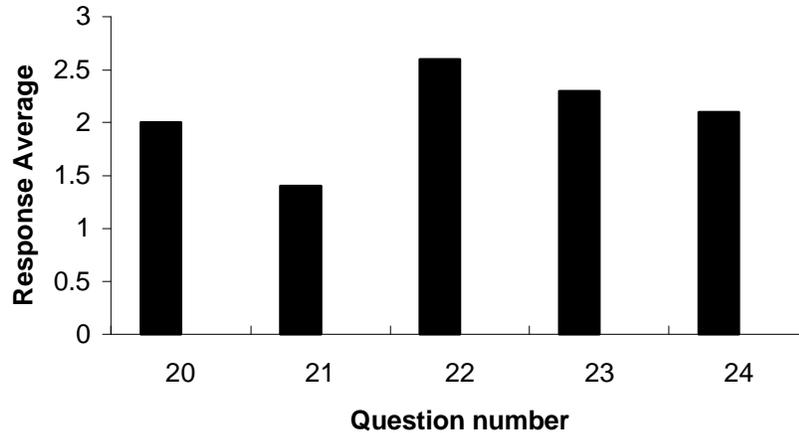
20/44. Do you think this place is:
1.) Very Safe   2.) Somewhat Safe   3.) Not Very Safe   4.) Not Safe At All

21/45. Do you feel like this place is:
1.) Very Accessible 2.) Somewhat Accessible 3.) Not Very Accessible
4.) Not At All Accessible

22/46. Is this place usually:
1.) Very Crowded   2.) Somewhat Crowded   3.) Not Very Crowded   4.) Not At All Crowded

23/47. Do you think that this place is:
1.) Very Beautiful 2.) Somewhat Beautiful 3.) Not Very Beautiful 4.) Not At All Beautiful

24/48. Do you think that this place is:
1.) Very Special   2.) Somewhat Special   3.) Not Very Special   4.) Not At All Special

Female Responses to Questions 20-24.

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Parental/Guardian Informed Consent

Valued Outdoor Spaces of Teens
Investigator: Staci Guitner

I. The Purpose of this Research/Project

The purpose of this study is threefold: (1) to determine the social developmental needs of adolescents, (2) to determine the types of outdoor spaces that are important to teens, (3) to provide designers with information for design that is adolescent friendly, by providing a list of characteristics that are found at these valued places.

This study is very important because at present there is little information to aid designers in the creation of successful outdoor spaces for teenagers. There is even less information dealing with adolescents in a rural setting. The list provided to designers will be valuable to create outdoor spaces that are supportive of adolescents' needs and preferences. The study will be conducted through a class at Narrows High School with approximately 15-20 students involved. The students will be directly involved with helping to determine the types of outdoor spaces that are important to teens.

II. Procedures

The procedure will begin when the researcher visits Narrow High School in September. During the first visit the researcher will explain background information about the project and distribute parental permission forms and participant assent forms. The researcher will return a few weeks later to begin the study. The study will begin with a set of oral explanations and the distribution of disposable cameras. The students will be instructed to take photographs of two outdoor places that they value the most. NOTE: The students will be instructed to take photographs of places that are legal and pose no great danger. They will have one week to take the photographs at which time the teacher will collect the cameras and send them to the researcher to be developed. Approximately two to three weeks later the researcher will return to the classroom with the developed photographs and a survey. Each student will be asked to fill out a survey about the outdoor places in the photographs. Once the surveys have been collected the results will be summarized. There may need to be one follow-up session with the students to clarify things from the survey. This would take place in a person interview. Not all students will be interviewed. After the interviews the contact with the high school students is over. You may contact the researcher at a later date for a summary of the research results. The phone number is listed on the last page.

III. Risks

The risks involved to the students are minimal. The participants have been asked to take photographs of outdoor spaces that they value. These spaces should be familiar and therefore pose a minimal risk to the students, not greater than they encounter in daily life.

IV. Benefits of this Project

The benefits of this project are meant for the larger society. The individuals in the study may see no immediate, tangible benefits, but the participants should feel proud that the benefits could reach a portion of the adolescent population. The benefits would be the design of outdoor spaces that better respond to the needs and preferences of adolescents. However, no promises or guarantees of benefits have been made to encourage the students to participate.

V. Extend of Anonymity

Anonymity is guaranteed throughout this study. At no time will the researcher know the names of the students involved in the study. There will be a code system devised between the teacher and researcher. Only the researcher will have access to the pictures and surveys and only the teacher will have access to the names of the participants. The results from the survey will be transcribed by the researcher to assure total confidentiality. There will be no pictures of people used in documentation of the study.

VI. Compensation

There will be a form of credit given to the students for participation in the study. Each student that participates in the study will receive an exemption from a weekly quiz. The student will receive full credit for the quiz. Those students that do not participate must take all weekly quizzes.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

The participants of the study are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. If they choose to withdraw, they will not be penalized by reduction in points or grade in the course. However, they will not receive exemption from the weekly quiz unless the study is completed. Subjects are free not to answer any questions or respond to experimental situations that they choose without penalty.

VIII. Approval of the Research

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and by the Department of Landscape Architecture.

IX. Parental/Guardian Permission

I have read and understand the Parental/Guardian Informed Consent and the conditions of this project. I have had all of my questions answered and give my child permission to participate in this project.

_____

Signature   Date

Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, I may contact:

_____   (540) 231-5644
Staci Guitner   Phone
Investigator

_____   (540) 231-3418
Eran Ben-Joseph   Phone
Faculty Advisor

_____   (540) 231-5281
H.T.Hurd   Phone
Chair, IRB
Research Division

VITA

Staci J. Guitner

September 4, 1973	Born - Columbus, Ohio
1994 - 1995	Co-op position, NBBJ
1996	B.S. Landscape Architecture, The Ohio State University
1996 - 1998	Graduate Program, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
1996 - 1997	Graduate Teaching Assistant, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
1996 - 1997	Student Landscape Architect Community Design Assistance Center Blacksburg, Virginia
1997 - Present	Graduate Landscape Architect, Kinzelman/Kline Inc., Columbus, Ohio

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Landscape Architecture