

POLYMORPHOUS TECHNIQUES OF POWER:
GOVERNING SEXUALITY IN A THERAPEUTIC WILDERNESS
PROGRAM

by

MICHAEL ANDOSCIA

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
Of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of Sociology
University of South Florida

May 2000

Major Professor: Laurel Graham, Ph.D.

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A participant observation study was conducted in a wilderness camp for “troubled” teenage boys. The focus of the study was on how sexual behavior/expression was governed within the camp. A description of specific technologies used within camp to govern the behavior of campers and to ultimately encourage campers to govern their own behaviors was given. Sexual behavior, however, represented a special case, requiring technologies beyond the normal policies of the program. Sexual behavior was viewed by the camp as being inappropriate. Sexual expression was also deemed inappropriate unless under the direct influence of an experienced, adult authority figure of at least supervisory status. The subtlety and acute nature of these techniques of power was not lost on the clients who developed covert and overt forms of resistance to the institutionalized power structure. The consequences of these power relations were tied to the client’s ability to tell and to develop their sexual stories and their masculine selves.

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Introduction

“Why is sexual conduct, why are the activities and pleasures that attach to it, an object of moral solicitude. (Foucault 1990C, 10)

Evolution of the Study

This project evolved over the course of three years. I had just received a promotion to supervisor, responsible for overseeing the functioning of four therapy groups and a transitional classroom group¹ in a residential wilderness camp for adolescent boys. The groups were typically composed of ten to twelve boys around age fourteen, and usually two counselors. Immediately after my promotion a rash of sexually related incidents were reported to me and to other members of the management staff. Such sexually related incidents typically involved verbal comments that were deemed inappropriate for camp. There were some issues regarding masturbation and one incident of a supervisor observing two boys kissing.

Sexual issues in residence programs are considered problematic by program staff and are a focus for various management strategies and techniques (Northrup 1993). A certain “number” of sexually related issues are expected in such environments, such as halfway houses, therapeutic foster care or any direct care residential facility. Each program develops strategies minimizing the incidence of

¹ A description of this setting is detailed in the Setting/Methods section.

sexual issues. (Fahlberg 1990, Northrup 1993) When the amount of such issues seems excessive, however, the staff feels inclined to intervene more directly.² This being the case at camp, a meeting was called involving the management staff (a meeting of which I was not a part). The management staff decided that a Sex Education curriculum should be planned and implemented by a qualified support team member. Such a curriculum would allow the boys to satisfy their “natural” sexual curiosity in a manner that was appropriate for camp and supervised by a staff member. A decision was made regarding who should fill this austere position, motion was seconded and sealed with unanimous approval.

Unsuspectingly, I returned from a well-deserved time off. I was picking up my mail after having secured a cup of coffee when I was approached by one of the meeting’s attendants. She informed me that I was chosen to put together a sex education curriculum for camp and that I would be working hand in glove with her. My blank stare beckoned further information. She told me that I was chosen because I had a degree in education and was therefore familiar with curriculum design. Most importantly, however, I was the obvious candidate because I had shown that I can talk about sex without getting embarrassed or otherwise

² A pre-established “amount” of sexual issues is not quantitatively assessed.

flabbergasted. The positive reinforcement was effective; I accepted the compliment and proceeded to lay out a timeframe for implementing the program. Though I considered her last statement about being able to “talk” about sex as quite the compliment, at the time, I was interested only in curriculum. I never considered the importance of or dynamics of sexual talk. However, I would later come to realize just how pervasive and subject to control was the act of “talk.”

It wasn't long before I ran into my first brick wall. I was looking in the files for previous work regarding sex education and I found—nothing. It seemed that a program for adolescent boys had been designed and established without consideration of sexually related issues. It was as if the boys were expected to be asexual upon entering camp. The only option left open to me was to start from scratch. I put together an outline which included the curriculum required by the Sunshine State standards, as well as subjects otherwise neglected, such as homosexuality, sexual assault and abuse, etc.

The curriculum met with the approval of the management staff, and I was set up to start implementing the program with each group. Certain assumptions were made about a sex ed curriculum (which I titled sexuality education). For instance, it was assumed that leading discussions about sexuality, especially with female counselors present, would be difficult. (Kids were given the opportunity to ask their female counselors to leave when discussing sensitive issues). Camp's clients would be unable to handle such discussion “appropriately.” Another assumption involved

the likelihood of a negative parental reaction. One member of the management staff asked me if I was ready to start the lessons. Instead, I asked her if she was ready because she would be the one handling the phone calls.

Ultimately, however, the above predictions were entirely wrong. The boys were more than willing to discuss sexuality openly and with considerably more maturity than any of us had anticipated. None of the female counselors were asked to leave at any point in our discussions. As for the parents, most of the boys rather excitedly informed them about the lessons, and I knew of no disapproval. The sexuality education lessons appeared to give the boys a space for discussing sexuality, their concerns, and their curiosities.

It also became a space for expressing much more than concern and curiosity, but for creating personal narratives as well. During a number of lessons I noted that a lot more than didactic intercourse was taking place. The boys were giving information about things that they do, or have done. They were sharing stories, and thus creating for themselves a sexual identity. These stories were usually framed in the manner of discussion questions, however, as an experienced counselor I began to wonder just how much of these questions were interrogatory and how much narrative.

During one lesson, for instance, we were discussing the physiology of the male sex organs. Specifically, I was describing the content of semen and its function. One boy raised his hand to ask a question. When called upon he informed

us that when performing oral sex his girlfriend likes to swallow his semen because she claims it is nutritional, high in protein. He presumably wanted to know if that was true. I did inform him that the nutritional value of semen was minimal. Many such 'questions' were asked before the end of the lesson.

Every activity in camp is evaluated within each therapy group. After a group finishes playing a group game, for instance, they come together and point out the things that they did well and things that they need to improve upon the next time they play. This is true for every activity, work, play, meals, discussions, etc. While evaluating the sexuality education discussion the two counselors and I informed the group that although I would be willing to answer any question, the sex ed lesson was not an excuse for telling intimate details of the boy's personal lives. Such stories should be left out of the discussion. Upon reflection of this incident I realized that this sexuality education was much more than a means of giving the campers needed information. My curriculum had, in fact, become a mechanism for controlling sexual discourse and defining what constitutes "knowledge," "learning," and "story telling;" what was appropriate and what was inappropriate.

Although it is impossible to know the intent of the boy mentioned above for, regrettably, I did not ask him, it is possible to determine what he was communicating to me and to others. He was letting us know that he had a girlfriend, therefore he was heterosexual. He was sexually active and had varied heterosexual, erotic experiences including oral sex. His girlfriend 'swallowed' which also had

implications of dominance and status. In essence, via his ‘question,’ the camper was able to define for himself a masculine, dominant sexual identity. He was doing more than asking a question; he was telling a story of self. (Plummer 1995)

So what’s wrong with that? I’m really not sure; however, it became my responsibility to put an end to it. In one deft move I silenced such stories, at least formally. It was decided that this kind of discourse was ‘inappropriate for camp,’ whereas had the boy just asked, “Is there any nutritional value to semen?” nary an eyebrow would have been raised.

Upon reflection of the decision to eliminate such story telling from the curriculum I became interested in silencing as a subject of study. How were voices silenced? Whose voices were silenced? Who was allowed to speak? What was allowed to be said? (Weis and Fine, 1993). After examining these questions I wondered about spaces. Where was sexuality being spoken? Under what conditions? I knew that counselors were equally silenced regarding sexuality when they were with their groups. However, counselors had a backstage set up in which topics of sexuality were readily discussed: the staff room, the time off house. Was I to believe that the campers had not created their own backstage? I knew that that wasn’t true. More than once I overheard sexual stories being told by campers when they had no idea that there was a counselor within ear shot. Counselors who participated in sexual dialogue in the back room, or the time off house were seen as

simply venting, letting off steam. Campers, however, were seen quite differently. Their behavior was seen as resistance to camp authority.

Telling sexual stories, silencing, resisting, sexual identity, masculinity. This was getting out hand! Obviously more research had to be done. A greater understanding of the complexities of sexuality in camp had to be understood. The adolescent years were considered a time when children were exploring sexuality and developing their own sexual mores, attitudes and identities (Sprinthall and Sprinthall, 1990). For a number of our campers a significant portion of their adolescence was spent in camp or other institutional settings. Their exploration of sexuality would certainly be affected by the manner in which such institutions govern sexuality.

Literature Review

Without adult guidance it is believed that teen sexuality would be out of control. Teens are unable to control their “raging hormones.” They are hypersexual beings who may even be a danger to themselves, their families, communities and society itself if their sexuality is not in some way controlled by adults (Baum, 1976). This is especially true when dealing with teens who have already shown a tendency toward deviance (Rodgers and Rowe, 1990). Such teens are more apt to participate in “dangerous” sexual behaviors.

The literature dealing with teen sexuality is rife with issues of control as it positively and negatively affects development (Petersen et al. 1995, Delamater 1981, Chilman 1989). Adults have a great responsibility in being the guiding hands in this development, and this for a variety of reasons that do not necessarily include the well being of the child (Baum, 1976). Uncontrolled teen sexuality is linked to deviance in other areas such as delinquency and is itself considered “mildly deviant behavior” (Rodgers and Rowe 1990, 278). The importance of adult intervention and mitigation in teen sexual development is thus reinforced. This ‘adult guidance,’ if done correctly, should facilitate ‘successful’ development of masculine and feminine identities. A measure of this success, however, is not present in the literature.

The research, however, indicates that adults who are immediately involved in a teen’s life have relatively little to do with a teen’s sexual development. Teens learn about sexuality from a variety of sources and discourses, many of which are dependent upon their peer groups (Baum, 1976; DiBlasio and Benda, 1994; Rodgers and Rowe, 1990). Society’s dominant discourses on sexuality and gender are also reinforced in teens via peer groups, media representations and even formal education (Jewitt 1997, White and Gillett 1994, Kimmel 1993). Sexual development and identity among teens also evolves for a variety of reasons disconnected from sexual practice. These developments involve power relations and resistance (Sattel 1976, Broude 1990, Baum 1976).

In fact, teens are exposed to a variety of commodified discourses that they consume, analyze and with which they experiment. Through dynamic mechanisms teens adopt and disregard a variety of sexualities (Weeks, 1986) and develop a sexual identity for which they produce their own discourses for the consumption of others. These mechanisms include peer association, institutional associations (family, church, school, hospital, etc.), and media influence; additionally, teens have a variety of personal experiences, successes, failures, cost/benefits (Rodgers and Rowe 1990) which are translated into discourse via the telling of sexual stories. (Plummer 1995)

Regarding institutions that are involved with direct care of adolescents, such as schools, and residential facilities, the onus is placed on adult and institutional control of these discourse. (Northrup 1993) “No residential treatment program can successfully function unless the basic issue of who is in charge is beyond question.” (Fahlberg 1990, 149) The very dynamics of ‘discourse’ in and of itself is such that a variety of mechanisms must be in place to affect such control (Foucault, 1980, 1990B, 1995). At first glance it would seem that the goal of such institutions is the silencing and restriction of all things sexual (Weis and Fine1993). However, closer inspection, as usual, reveals a much more dynamic process.

Focus of the Study and Theoretical Perspective

Much of the literature involves an underlying theme of adolescent sexuality developing in a certain, normative, way. Teenage boys are expected to develop their sexuality in a preconceived, heterosexual and masculine manner. They are also to develop quietly and with a minimum of information or interaction with adults. Yet, issues such as teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease among the young, date rape and sexual assault are viewed with angst among the general, adult population. And sexual experimentation and exploration in an institutional setting is feared.

As I examined the institution in which I work I noticed the same contradictions. This is the population of teens most likely to face and even to contribute to the above social problems. (Rodgers and Rowe, 1990) Thus, I was amazed at the amount of energy that was expended upon avoiding sexuality and making it invisible. However, despite this energy, sexual discourses and behaviors still existed and were perpetuated (Weis and Fine 1993). Upon further examination I realized that this resistance was an integral part of a larger, more complex mechanism. I continued my notes and literary research, eventually rereading Michel Foucault's introduction to The History of Sexuality. It was then that I realized that I was observing a model of what Foucault referred to as "polymorphous techniques of power." (11)

“People know what they do. They frequently know why they do what they do. What they don’t know is what what they do does.” (Attributed to Foucault)

When I put together camp’s first sex education curriculum I knew what I was doing. I created the curriculum with the philosophy that kids should be given as much information as possible if they were expected to make decisions. They were being educated in sexuality so they might make appropriate decisions regarding sexuality. But what was this curriculum doing in a dynamic social context? Wasn’t it, in fact, another means, another mechanism, for controlling sexual discourse? Wasn’t the reason behind such a curriculum a reaction to a rash of sexually ‘inappropriate’ behavior? Was this just another means of governing our client’s behavior and ultimately motivating them to govern their own? (Rose, 1998) By governing the sexual discourse of camp, silencing certain sexual stories, while encouraging others, camp also governed the development of identity and masculinity that were facilitated by the telling of such stories (Plummer, 1995).

Viewing camp from the Foucauldian perspective allowed me to observe these polymorphous techniques of power in practice and implementation. Camp, like other institutions, could be viewed as a “human technology,” an “assemblage of diverse forces, instruments, architectural forms, and persons to achieve certain ends, be they education, punishment, production, victory or adjustment.” (Rose 1998, 121) Such human technologies “are inherently linked to those knowledges and techniques that promise to bring such a transformation about.” (Rose 1998, 121) What are some

examples of these techniques and knowledges? How are they applied? What kinds of transformations are being brought about?

These polymorphous techniques of power became the focus of this study. How is this human technology used to manage and/or govern sexuality in camp? Why, however, did I focus on sexual behaviors or on sexuality in general? Certainly, in such an institution many different kinds of behavior were so governed. However, I observed sexuality being treated as a special case. Often times program criteria that applied to behavior such as violence, or disrespect for authority was set aside when dealing with sexual issues. Techniques of power became more dramatic, more controlled, and more intense than mechanisms for dealing with other problems.

Setting and Methodology

“Outdoor camping of this sort naturally leaves with the individual and his group the main responsibilities for their comfort and well being. The group must construct its own shelters, cut its wood, repair its equipment, arrange its own recreation, provide sanitary facilities, maintain the trails, and do all things necessary for safe and responsible living. These things in themselves provide objective discipline and play no little part in developing a sense of social responsibility.” (Loughmiller 1995, 1)

This study is a participant observation of how sexuality is controlled and managed in a boy’s wilderness camp. In describing this facility I use the generic epithet “camp” since this is used often within the institution itself as a quick self-reference. Since the setting and routines of the institution are the major consideration for this study I chose to combine a description of the field setting with an explanation of methodology.

A description of the setting is also important since “camp” is a very alien environment to most people. Visitors to camp often find it difficult to understand exactly what is going on and why. This is especially true for an observation of therapeutic techniques. Most visitors state that things happened “too fast,” or they are not sure “what happened at all.”

Physical Description

Camp, as can be assumed by the name, is located in a Florida wilderness, the closest town located about twenty-five miles away. The program is based on the experiences of Campbell Loughmiller who established the first wilderness program for troubled youth in Texas. The philosophy is fairly simple. Boys are moved from environments in which they are showing behaviors that are deemed unsuccessful, irresponsible, or in some way destructive and placed in a new environment. This environment is different from anything that they are used to. They must work with others in order to achieve a satisfactory level of comfort and security. In the process, the boys are given opportunities to learn new interpersonal skills with which they can be 'successful' anywhere, or rather, to conform to the dominant mores of society.

Living in the woods offers special opportunities to learn these skills. The physical elements themselves are often daunting to kids as well as to adults. This particular camp is located in a relatively marshy area of the Florida wilderness. Though there are canals that control the flooding during the rainy season, the summers at camp are long, hot and wet. With temperatures and heat index and humidity consistently in the high nineties the boys develop a great respect for those niceties that they are lacking in the woods. Throw on top of that mosquitoes, snakes, bugs, spiders and various other wildlife that seek dry ground in the summer.

Darkness is also a prohibitive experience for the boys, as most inner city kids have never experienced true darkness before. At night even a harmless armadillo stumbling blindly through a palmetto bush sounds something akin to a Tyrannosaurus Rex charging to devour an inner city kid who's never before been in the woods.

On the other extreme, the woods provide a new world to explore. Seeing rabbits and deer and owls and alligators are new experiences for most of our clients. It's often a surprise to our counselors when they lose all control of the group as a deer walks across the field. Suddenly, nothing is more important, even to the most raging camper, than the deer (the experienced counselor doesn't even try to regain control, but joins the kids in their admiration and curiosity for wildlife).

Living in the woods requires considerable cooperation among campers just to enjoy the most basic comforts. The campsites are not accorded the luxury of electricity. In fact, the only amenity is running water (and also recently, flushing toilets which were staunchly opposed by purists like myself). Each campsite is located in an oak hammock which allows for shade and a certain amount of coolness. The groups make dwellings in the campsite by hand in a most rustic manner. Indeed, this life is difficult and challenging, but could also be inspiring. "Such a life calls into play numerous individual skills, provides an outlet for almost

any ability a boy may have, and constantly encourages new and ever-broadening experiences...” (Loughmiller 1995, 1)

Maintenance of the campsite is done with vintage 19th century style tools such as draw blades, bow saws, etc. Two days out of the week the groups cook and eat in their campsites using a fire alter and/or a wood stove. The boys decide what they want, order the food within budget, and prepare it themselves.

Despite the fact that a considerable amount of work is necessary to maintain an acceptable level of comfort, the fact that kids want to have fun is not lost. Wilderness inspired activities such as rambles/hikes, tree climbing, fishing, swimming, etc are encouraged. Outside of mealtime, shower time and wake up time, there is no standard schedule to follow. Counselors and groups develop their own plans, and are encouraged to be as creative as possible.

The basic shape of camp is circular. Campsites are set up in a circular fashion allowing counselors to see what is going on all over campsite from any position³. The campsites themselves are circumscribed in the camp. When the group comes together for a discussion or a segway into the next activity it is done in a circle called a ‘huddle up.’ The dining hall, called ‘chuckwagon’ also reflects this circular formation. The tables are placed at the walls and tables are set to enable

³ See Map

counselors to sit on the outermost edge of the tables looking in to the middle of chuckwagon.

The physical characteristics of camp are deemed important enough to be reproduced outside of camp. Part of the camp experience is long term tripping. Such trips include river trips and backpacking trips. On such trips groups plan to be out of camp proper for two to three weeks. They carry all of their gear and food needed for the trip. Optimally, the same standards are adhered to out of camp as in camp. Trip campsites are also set up in the same circular formations. Consistency is stressed between camp and trips, as well as between groups.

Camp Techniques

These circular formations are part of maintaining what are referred to as 'psychological boundaries.' "The perfect disciplinary apparatus would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly." (Foucault 1995, 173) Campers are expected to learn to exist within these boundaries. Campers know that they can only stray so far from the group before the counselor will ask him to return or 'stick tight' with the group. The boys, strange as it may seem, learn to stay on established paths and boardwalks. They know that they do not walk into even their own tents when it is not time to do so. The idea is to get the boys used to living within these boundaries so they will find it easier to live within similar boundaries that exist at home, or at school, or just about anywhere else.

As mentioned above, trips, especially long trips, are an essential part of camp. Not only do they allow the boys to enjoy different experiences, but they are also significantly challenging. The intent of this challenge is to build a sense of “groupness” or group identity and pride as the whole group must work together to secure a successful trip. A certain amount of pride is sought as well, as the campers can look back on a twenty-one day canoe trip on the Suwannee River and feel a sense of accomplishment. Once again, all of the psychological boundaries of camp are reproduced on the trip, and are usually even more rigid.

Construction is yet another major aspect of camp technology. . The philosophy behind construction and maintenance projects is also linked to self-esteem, pride and a sense of accomplishment. “Boys are not apt to destroy what they themselves build. They do not tear down a tent they have erected, or the fire-pit they cook over, or a table they have made; but cabins built by hired carpenters would be in a constant state of disrepair.” (Loughmiller 1995, 3) Trees are cut down, transported to the campsite, skinned and cut to size. Holes are dug, which usually involves pounding through lime rock with a big metal pole. The tent is set up according to an approved plan designed by the campers. This shelter is of practical importance, as it may be the only thing separating the boy from the elements.

Tent construction, planting trees, cleaning tarps on the tents, making a neat looking campsite, making one’s bed, is referred to as ‘ABC’s.’ ABC’s are a

physical, visible accomplishment in which the boys can take and show pride. Campsites are rarely marred with graffiti or vandalism that often plagues other institutions that deal with the same populations.

ABC's also extend to the campers themselves, the camper's appearance. Clothes are to be worn in a certain way, shirts tucked in, and pants pulled up (a major issue in the age of sagging pants and showing off designer underwear). Belts and socks are to be worn as well as hiking boots. Jewelry such as earrings (and other piercings), rings, necklaces, etc. are not allowed, with the exception of projects made at camp (carved or beaded necklaces). Clothes are expected to be in good repair, without holes or frayed cuffs. Clothing must also be "camp appropriate." Shirts with beer advertisements, band symbols or drug messages are not allowed.

Campers' bodies are also the objects of ABC's. Hygiene for many of the kids is a significant challenge. The boys are expected to shower every day, cleaning themselves with soap and shampoo. At times this involves rather intimate instruction from counselors. Teeth are to be brushed at least twice a day. Hands are washed before every meal and after every activity. Hair is to be combed neatly and presentable. Rashes, cuts or other irritants are to be brought to the counselor's attention for immediate care. Obviously, staying clean is quite the chore when living in the wilderness. Dirty clothes are not unusual even though clothes are changed every day. The idea is that a clean camper, who lives in a clean campsite feels better

about himself and his group, especially when he is taught to take care of his own ABC's by learning to sew, or floss. This also constitutes a source of normalizing body discipline. (Foucault 1980)

Probably the key to camp technology is what is referred to as the 'group process.' Everything that happens in camp is ideally tied to the group process. An ideal group consists of about eleven campers and three counselors; at least one counselor should have considerable experience in program standards and techniques. Of course, the ideal is not easily met, as it is very difficult to find people who are willing to make the incredible sacrifices necessary for being a counselor. Often times, one counselor is with the group at a time.

Everything that a group does, however, is done as a group. A consensus must be developed in the group for every activity. The whole group must work together to accomplish even the most basic tasks. "Billy" will be the example (fictitious). If Billy needs to relieve himself the whole group stops what they are doing, walks to the campsites 'latrine box' (no longer a real latrine) and waits in a designated area while Billy takes care of his needs. The group as a whole does any task that needs to be done. A whole group performs every activity.

The catch, however, is everything must be done according to 'camp standards.' These are rules of behavior that every camper must live up to. Many of these standards are related to safety, such as how to use an ax. The more difficult

standards for the boys, however, are those that involve interpersonal skills. The boys are expected to treat each other in a manner that is considered respectful and appropriate and positive.

For instance, the group is working on tent construction. Billy is working on a notch and needs a flat draw blade to level the notch face. However, Sam is using the tool to shave bark from a pole. When Billy asks for the draw blade Sam says no. Billy calls Sam a “big, fat, jerk!” (Oh boy!) In this instance, Billy and Sam are not interacting in a way that is respectful and positive. The counselor may call a huddle up. The group stops what they are doing, sit in a circle and talk to Billy and Sam until the issue is resolved—also in a way that is a camp standard.

Huddles may be short and simple, or considerably longer. Remember the clientele. Billy becomes frustrated because he is being confronted for his behavior. He does not understand where he was wrong, after all, he wanted to work and do the right thing. The next thing you know, Billy is calling everyone in his group a volley of disreputable names. Once again, this is against camp’s standard of respectful behavior. Ultimately, however, the issue will be resolved in an appropriate manner, for it is also a camp standard that all problems are resolved.

Billy probably experienced a lot of things in this huddle. He is first confronted by his peers who are interested in building the tent. Some of these peers are more experienced with camp and have worked on the same problems that Billy is

having. The boys, through this process, learn from each other. Research indicates that peer association is primary to teen development. By including peer interaction rather than a counselor (adult) giving expert advice, children may be more willing to listen.

Billy also realizes that all issues must be dealt with, that there is no avoiding it. He cannot run into his room and slam the door. He can yell and scream and curse and throw himself on the ground and have a temper tantrum, but before the group moves on, the issue will be resolved.

So how is the issue resolved? Billy may be asked to “deal with [his] problem.” This is camp problem solving. Problem solving involves four steps. First, the camper must identify what the problem is. In this example, Billy chose to disrespect Sam because he does not get what he wants. Why he chose this behavior might be important to recognize but has no bearing on problem solving. Next, Billy must identify the consequences of his actions. The group was held up from a task and may be late finishing the tent. He may have injured a relationship with Sam. Sam may have lost his temper at being made fun of and made an inappropriate choice as well. Next, the camper must come up with a solution for this problem that he can use the next time he is in a similar situation. For instance, Billy may say that he will express himself in a manner that is appropriate. Sam may also be confronted and both boys taught how to compromise so they could both get a chance to use the

draw blade. The fourth, and often neglected part of problem solving is evaluation. This is when the group gets together and evaluates how well Billy lived up to his solution.

Over the course of months this process becomes automatic for many campers. The philosophy is that when a camper applies this method over and over again he will start to use it proactively in his decision making process. This is a significant disciplining of behaviors. “The exercise of authority here, becomes a therapeutic matter: the most powerful way of acting upon the actions of others is to change the ways in which they will govern themselves.” (Rose 64) A great deal of pressure is often on the boys to “not hold up the group,” to make “good” decisions. It constitutes an entire change of mindset from “acting on impulse,” to making “rational” choices. Foucault refers to this as normalization (Foucault 1980, 61)

Another significant feature of camp technology is referred to as ‘natural consequences.’ The philosophy behind camp is not one of reward or punishment. There are no merit points to earn or demerits for bad behavior as in many other programs. Any enjoyment the kids have, or discomforts that they suffer, are the result of these natural consequences. For instance, if a group does a good job in building a tent, the natural consequence of this is a sturdy, reliable shelter. However, if Billy is misusing an ax and it breaks, the group is, consequently, unable to chop wood. They must walk to the warehouse, talk to a supervisor and get a new ax.

Natural consequences, as they exist in camp can be many times more rewarding than any trophy, and may also be many times more punitive than corporal punishment.

Of course, this concept of natural consequences often breaks down at the human level. If Billy is using profanity his group cannot go into the dining hall, called chuckwagon, because of a rule concerning the use of foul language in that area. The consequence of this may be that his group does not eat in the air-conditioned chuckwagon, but in their hot, wet, bug filled campsite. This ‘natural consequence’ obviously has nothing to do with nature, but is instead the imposition of an institutionally imposed consequence for breaking a rule. Although one may argue that there are rules everywhere that carry a certain amount of sanction, it must be questioned just how “natural” such rules are.

Therapeutic Methodology

By now the reader has probably noticed my use of the word ‘choice’, or ‘choose’ regarding behaviors. I’ve referred to campers choosing to use profanity, or disrespectful comments. As will be highlighted later, this to a sociologist is a problematic idea. In camp, however, this concept is key to its therapeutic methodology. As a counseling strategy camp utilizes William Glasser’s Reality Therapy. The philosophy behind reality therapy is called Control, or Choice Theory.

Choice theory is remarkably simple, but abstractly complex. In a nutshell, choice theory states that people choose their actions in an attempt to control what is going on around them with the intent of fulfilling their own needs. Glasser categorized these needs as physical needs (sustenance, shelter), love and belonging (human relationships), power (one's ability to control his/her environment), freedom (the ability to make choices for oneself) and fun. No one need is necessarily more important than the other. A boy may join a gang to satisfy a love and belonging need at the expense of freedom. An anorexic may satisfy the same need by denying herself food.

Behavior, according to Glasser, is a total system involving physiology, thought, emotion and action. All four aspects are tied together. The best example of this may be one who is running late for an important meeting. Invariably, this person gets stuck in traffic. He may start to get angry, or anxious. His heart rate increases, blood pressure goes up, hands start to shake and his face becomes flushed and body temperature increases. The person may start to feel tension in his muscles and start grinding his teeth. His thoughts become angry at the guy in front of him, or with his spouse for not waking him earlier, or even Jay Leno for keeping him up late. He starts beeping the horn, using unmentionable words and hand gestures. According to Glasser this is a description of total behavior, unhealthy total behavior.

Reality Therapy is the therapeutic method prescribed by Glasser to help people get control of their lives. Above, the person is yelling and beeping his horn, raging and guess what...he's still stuck in traffic. Glasser explains that each of us has a picture in our minds of what life should be like in any given moment. In this picture all of our needs are being met. Our behaviors are our attempts to make that picture an actuality. We experience stress when the world does not match our picture. The person above did not include a traffic jam with his picture. However, no amount of "angering" (since behavior is a choice what are usually nouns are turned into verbs) is going to change the reality of the traffic jam. The solution—the person above should change his picture if only momentarily.

The Reality Therapist concentrates on what can be controlled by the individual. The traffic cannot be controlled. Anxiety and anger cannot immediately be controlled, nor can the physiological response to this emotion. He has considerably more control over his thoughts, but the reality therapist points out that he has total control over his actions. What can the person above do instead of beeping his horn and cursing? Perhaps he can turn on his favorite radio station. Singing may keep him from clenching his jaw and suffering the consequent headache later. He can relax his shoulders and continue relaxing muscles throughout his body (this is not an uncommon relaxation technique). Now, instead of thinking of disparaging the next person's genetic inheritance he can consider the obvious. He can start making a plan to avoid this situation in the future like waking up a little

earlier, or scheduling his meetings later in the day if possible. It may also be time to think about a vacation. Singing, listening to music and relaxing his motor responses are “doing” or action parts of behavior of which he has total control. Thinking about solutions rather than the problem is the next part of behavior, thought, for which he has only a little less choice. He may not be able to keep out thoughts of strangling that truck driver who’s causing this problem, but he can choose to concentrate on solutions, or on Hawaii. As a result the anxiety and anger subsides, his heart rate returns to normal and he has an overall feeling of having more control over his life despite the fact that he is still stuck in traffic.

Reality therapists state that they have used the strategies of control theory in cases as diverse as helping a girl deal with sexual abuse, to helping schizophrenic patients live a ‘normal life’ (N. Glasser 1984). Sociologists, however, may question what constitutes choice. “A simple celebration of choice ignores the fact that choices can be painful, and involve significant social struggle.” (Weeks 1995, 63) Who has choices? How do these choices fit within a social framework? One may even question whether anyone within a socially constructed microcosm can make any real choices at all. Certainly, if the person above is the president of the company he may have a range of choices exceeding our poor working stiff above. “We all have the same needs, but vary in our ability to fulfill them.” (Glasser 1984B)

A critique or confirmation of Control Theory/Reality Therapy is beyond the scope of this study. Instead, these concepts are viewed as the predominant discursive formations of camp, a “corpus of knowledge that presuppose[s] the same way of looking at things.” (Foucault 1972, 33) All of the counselors and most of the campers are well versed in the language of camp. Even those who are not familiar with its tenets tend to use the language well. “What do you want?” is asked in place of “Why are you acting like this?” “What are you getting out of this?” instead of “Why are you doing this?”

The marriage of control theory with group process in a sea of human technologies as stated above creates an incredible mechanism for governing bodies. “The self is to be a subjective being, it is to aspire to autonomy, it is to strive for personal fulfillment in its earthly life, it is to interpret its reality and destiny as a matter of individual responsibility, it is to find meaning in existence by shaping its life through acts of choice.” (Rose 1998,151) Campers are taught to constitute themselves as the subject of their acts (Foucault 1990A, 41) That their actions, their “choices” are going to affect the health and the comfort of their whole group significantly magnifies the intense social pressure for one to be a moral subject. This describes perfectly what Foucault refers to as a “morality of behaviors” (Foucault 1990C, 26). It is the primary focus of camp to teach kids to make appropriate choices that will enhance their chances of “success.” The focus is not only choice, but also specific, normative choices that are deemed socially acceptable.

The above techniques are methods of reform; “behavioral technologies...used in practices of reform that seek to ‘empower’ their subjects and restore them to the status of freely choosing citizens.” (Baistow, paraphrased in Rose 196)

The Population

The Camp population can be divided, for simplicity purposes, into four categories: Campers, Counselors, Support Staff or Management. The management staff supervises and delegates responsibility to the support staff. The support staff refers to those employees whose job may be described as helping counselors with their extra group responsibilities as well as overseeing the general functioning of camp. Such staff includes two other supervisors and me who directly oversee the groups and the counselors. We fall under the supervision of the program directors. The program directors oversee the implementation of program methods and standards. An educational coordinator is responsible for five resource teachers working with the groups in an attempt to keep them caught up with their grade levels academically. One business manager is responsible for the physical functioning of camp, inventory, budgeting, and a staff of cooks, cleaning crew and maintenance men. The social services coordinator supervises currently two but optimally three family workers who act as liaisons between camp and the boy’s families/guardians.

The resident director oversees and is responsible for camp in general and delegates responsibility to the rest of the management staff.

Counselors come from a diverse background and are composed of varying demographics in the course of this study. They are typically males in their mid twenties. In the course of this study, counselors have been mostly white. This is not currently true. Counselors, called Chiefs, are expected to be with their groups at all times, twenty-four hours a day, five days a week. The exception to this is female counselors who are not expected to sleep in campsites and are obviously discouraged from taking showers with the boys. The Chief's purpose is to be a guide and role model of appropriate behavior in his group. He is ideally to give unconditional caring and support to every member of his group, and is responsible for satisfying the needs of all of his campers. He will make sure every camper is taken care of physically and emotionally and is treated with dignity and respect regardless of behavior. He is underpaid, overworked, exposed to the elements, responsible for kids for whom nobody wants to be responsible, is denied most luxuries, most social interaction and is expected to live like this for two years. One member of the support staff, during a job interview with a prospective counselor made it a point that the desire to do this job must come from the heart. "If you come to camp because you think you want to help kids, you're going to fail."

Another surprising part of the Chief's job is called Chief's Touch. This is often a literal designation. For instance, I determined that one camper who was 'acting out' in a manner that was unacceptable and baffling to his counselor as trying to fulfill a love/belonging need. I informed the counselor that I would hug that camper every day, with no mention of the boy's problems, and encouraged the counselor to do the same. We followed this strategy, and the boy's behaviors leveled out. Chief's touch involves physical touch as well as emotional touch. The counselor may teach the boy to sew his pants, or carve a stick, or bait a hook. He may help the camper write a letter home. This is one of the most necessary components of building relationships with campers, and I have expressed to counselors that that is ninety percent of their job. "You can have the best counseling skills, you may be a master psychologist, but unless you have strong relationships with every single one of your campers you will not be able to do your job." One visitor to camp expressed surprise at just how often counselors touch campers considering current emphasis on accusations of sexual abuse and maintaining a professional distance from clients. In her book Residential Treatment: A Tapestry of Many Therapies Vera Fahlberg rarely mentions touch outside of restraining a client's movement. Her section on Supportive Control (151-156) mirrors camp's concepts of chief's touch on the emotional, but not the physical level. However, "The residential treatment of youngsters includes socialization and parenting as well

as psychotherapy; it therefore must include elements of loving, and especially for a direct care worker, direct body contact..." (Northrup 1993, xvii)

"Sometimes, when a boy encounters an adult who deals with him in the above manner, he does not feel that it is for keeps...he may never have known anyone that he could trust implicitly. He wants and needs such a person badly, but there is nothing in his past that leads him to think such a person exists." (Loughmiller 1995, 11) This is a good description of the typical camper. There are between fifty to sixty boys in camp at any given time. Boys entering camp are typically accompanied by parents or guardians at the ends of their ropes. The boys are often very familiar with the juvenile justice system, avoid school, steal from their parents, their communities, do drugs or have any number of problems. Parents often state that "something has to be done." "He's out of control!" "We just can't take it any more!"

This is true for just about every family, regardless of the background. Boys who come to camp are typically between the ages of twelve and sixteen. The average camper is white, though in the course of this study black and Hispanic campers have been reasonably representative of the population of the area, though currently, black campers are underrepresented. Native Americans have been consistently and severely underrepresented in consideration to the area's demographics including two reservations. Boys coming into camp are typically of

lower middle class or lower class families economically. They are of diverse backgrounds, some having what are considered stable homes, notably homes with both biological parents and no reports of abuse or illegal activity within the family. Many, however, are from single parent homes, or from homes in which at least one parental figure is not a biological parent. Many children in camp reflect the difficulties of their parents, such as drug abuse, problems with the law, etc. Camp also has some foster care kids. Kids may have been well treated throughout their lives, but “got involved with the wrong crowd,” or are considered, “just rebelling.” Other kids have a much more pathetic background of abuse, abandonment and neglect.

The boys we get at camp have a long history of failures that have undermined their self-confidence and made them feel worthless. They are hostile toward adults, impulsive in their behavior, defiant of authority. They have a vague and contradictory set of values or they are outright anti-social. Some are so defeated they have withdrawn and given up trying. For one reason or another they feel that life has not given them a fair shake. (Loughmiller 1995, 4)

Data/Methods

So how do these technologies serve to govern knowledge in a manner that is deemed appropriate to camp and to society over all? This study focuses on a more specific “kind of knowledge,” that is to say sexual knowledge. I will show that

camp governs sexual behavior at the physical level, the discipline of camper's bodies, as well as at the discursive level, knowledge of sexuality, or sexual knowledge. Michel Foucault elaborates extensively on the connection between knowledge and power. "In any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse." (Foucault 1980, 93)

In many instances camp treats sexual knowledge as a special case, though this is never elaborated. Unlike other behaviors or knowledges camp often utilizes various means above and beyond the above mentioned methods, to govern sexuality and to develop campers who will govern their own sexual behavior.

This is not a study of sexual behavior among teens, but a description of how sexuality is dealt with in an institutional setting. It is a description of human technologies implemented in the governing and the subjectification of sexuality in an institutional setting. Observation of interactions allows for considerable detail and description of the application of these mechanisms in the program. It is also significant to note what is happening as it is happening, allowing for an on sight analysis of management techniques at work. Through participant observation I am

also able to highlight the situational nature of these techniques. What decisions are being made? Under what conditions? Who are involved?

Through observational research, I am able to describe events, decisions and underlying structures adequately for the abstract nature of my research. My position in the camp is also conducive to observational research. I am a supervisor, and the key to success in my job is keen observation of what is happening in camp. This position allows me considerable opportunity to observe, as well as access to secondary information. As a supervisor, all discovered events, especially events dealing with sexuality, are reported to me both from the counselors and from the support staff.

As a staff member my participation in camp routines is expected. I am, therefore, able to make observations while minimizing the chance of my presence altering or affecting the overall functioning of the program. I am able to perform my job obligations in conjunction with my research. I am not an objective observer, standing in the background watching the action, but an active participant. Since it is my job to note most sexual issues that arise in camp, my research notes are not a significant supplement to my job responsibilities.

In contrast, survey research would not allow for the on sight data that is so important to my study. Survey research effectively reveals perceptions of past events that are of arguable use to my research question. Performing a survey may

also be disruptive to camp routines as time would have to be taken from the groups in order to fill out the survey form, thus bypassing the group process. As such, one must also question the accuracy of survey data in this instance. The kids in camp are notorious for losing interest in standardized questions, often taking time to nap during mandatory testing. As the kids become frustrated they tend to “Christmas tree” their answers by filling in blanks indiscriminately. A survey would also be hampered by the low literacy of many of our clients. Should my research only include those who can read? Another drawback of survey research is its tendency to separate the participants. My interest is in studying interactions. This is hampered by a group of individuals disinterestedly filling out a survey questionnaire.

Interviews are also disruptive to the day to day routines of camp and to the group process. Interviewing the group as a whole is also of questionable use as experience shows that kids respond differently around their peers than they do during one on one conversation with adults. Interviews are also often dependent upon interpretations of past events that are then being reinterpreted by the researcher. It is impossible to determine how much detail is lost in the translation.

Most significantly, however, is my position in camp as related to the campers. As a supervisor I hold a position of authority over the clients. Many of our campers have undergone such experiences as police interrogation, facing a dean or principal, etc. These experiences make them uncomfortable in an interview

format with authority figures. Many of these kids are also familiar with ‘the system’ and are uncomfortable disclosing information that might get them or their parents into trouble. They know that I am legally obligated to report certain things, especially concerning sexuality.

Regarding kids and sexuality, there also exist a number of ethical questions about survey and interview methods of research. These ethical issues are very difficult for this program to justify. The logistics of consent in a level six juvenile facility is daunting to say the least. Are kids, agreeing to an interview with an authority figure, giving “consent” or are they simply acquiescing to their authority? There is also a perceptual difference between information that comes out through a therapeutic process and information that is requested via survey or interview research to someone who is interested in the dynamics and technologies of interaction.

There are some obstacles that must be mentioned. As this study is based on participant observation it is important to note the nature of that participation. As a supervisor it is often my responsibility to ensure that the very mechanisms that I describe in my study are put into motion. For instance, I am responsible for training counselors in program techniques. I write the incident reports. I am involved in deciding which campers are accepted in camp and which staff members are hired. In other words, I am responsible for applying the very same polymorphous techniques

of power that I am trying to highlight. This is a significantly awkward position. How can I perform a task, then take notes on that task relevant to my study, and then state that my actions are not affected by my study. “Researchers have fluctuating levels of absorption and emotional involvement in their work on any given project.” (Ellis 1992, 103) It is impossible to determine where the researcher ends and the emotionally invested supervisor begins. Indeed, the fruits of my research must be an amalgam of all of my various roles, thoughts, feelings, excitements and fatigues.

So how does my research affect my job responsibilities and vice versa? This is a near impossible question to answer, as the extent of interaction between aspects of myself is impossible to measure. I have been a supervisor for three years and have been collecting data for over two years. My supervisors are aware of my studies and the data that I have collected has given me different insight into sexual issues. It would be irresponsible for me to collect data, then not use what I have learned until after my study is complete. I have, therefore, used the knowledge derived from this study during staff meetings and the therapeutic process. My research, though not complete, has affected change in program techniques. For instance, I mentioned the Sexuality Education Curriculum that I developed. In the body of this study, where applicable, I will note such changes longitudinally

Another obstacle exists concerning my position and experience with the camp process. On one level, my experience as a counselor allows me to ‘read’ a

group and make decisions about how to best handle any given situation. I am often more efficient in this process than the counselors in-group who are at most only a third as experienced. Also, as a supervisor, the campers see me as someone who could make their day potentially miserable. These two variables create a much different atmosphere when I walk into a group as opposed to when I am absent from a group. Therefore, some of my observations may be different from the norm, thus skewing the data.

Fortunately, surveillance from an unseen vantage is also a part of my job, which will be elaborated later. I am also privy to all reports of sexual behavior. My notes are thick with incidents that were reported to me. However, this is second hand observation and cannot be considered of the same quality as personal observation.

Camp is also a very masculine setting, despite the significant roles of female staff, including a female resident director. All of the clients are boys. Most of the counselors are male. Although there is a girl's camp that runs on the same programmatic philosophy, my notes include no observations in this setting. Consequently, there is a considerable masculine lilt to my study that may somewhat skew gender and sexuality issues. Where appropriate I intend to remark on the development of masculine identity at camp and how the aforementioned discursive mechanisms affect this.

POLYMORPHOUS TECHNIQUES OF POWER

“A ‘morality of acts’ long enshrined a sexual hierarchy which told us which types of erotic activity were appropriate or inappropriate, right or wrong. These activities in turn defined the type of person we were”
(Jeffery Weeks 1995, 47)

Appropriate Behavior and Group Process

Behaviors in camp are divided into two categories: appropriate and inappropriate. These categories highlight the definitions of “types of behavior” that are sanctioned or censured through what is described as the group process. If a camper “chooses” a type of behavior that is considered inappropriate then the “natural consequences” fall on the whole group, regardless of their collective behaviors. Thus, an incredible pressure is placed on the camper to conform to what is deemed by camp to be appropriate.

In virtually all instances expression of sexuality or sexual behavior is deemed by those responsible for the functioning of camp to be inappropriate. Though the clientele in camp consists of teenage boys, historically considered to be experiencing a time of sexual development and identifying oneself with a sexuality, there is very little sexual talk among the kids—at least on the surface. All forms of sexuality that are deemed inappropriate are summarily silenced or hidden from the boys. All sexual behaviors or forms of sexual expression are confronted intensely until such

actions are no longer shown. Is this in the best interest of the children or the adults?
(Baum 1976)

But what constitutes sexual expression/behavior? Often, this is a situational definition. Boys developing a masculine identity are hard pressed to separate sexuality from this process. Expression of an interest in girls, for instance, never raises an eyebrow. However, talking about actual sexual intercourse with a girl is out of the question. And expression of an interest in other boys meets with instant censure. The definition of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behavior, however, is determined almost exclusively by the adults.

Sexual talk is to be controlled by an adult, specifically a supervisor. The adult is to determine what is sexually inappropriate or not. For instance, one boy, angry with his Chief, called him a “cock sucker.” Is this an expression of sexuality, or of anger? Does the camper really believe that his counselor performs oral sex on other men? In this case the term is determined to be an expression of anger and the counselor ignores the inference and continues the therapeutic process.

These adults, via camp’s gate keeping technologies that will be elaborated upon later, tend to be of homogenous mindset regarding sexuality and what it means to be a “man” and what defines masculinity. Heterosexuality, and a quiet heterosexuality at that, is for the most part, the driving philosophy of manhood. As mentioned earlier, staff are expected to present a sexless persona to campers. So campers learn from their “role models,” that sexuality is to be restrained and hidden.

Or they simply view adults, those who judge their behaviors, and to a certain extent, determine their fate, as liars in the face of sexuality.

A young boy may experience the first appearance of body hair or find himself adjusting his genitals as they develop into puberty. Some of this may be addressed by the counselor or with a supervisor. Adolescent boys may often find themselves with an erection at the most inappropriate times. One boy was in the shower house during such a situation. This is potentially disastrous to a young boy's reputation in such a heterosexual environment. The boy decided to hide behind a dividing wall until he could safely walk to his clothes and get changed. Of course, the counselor called a huddle and expected the boy join the group. The boy refused. He was confronted for not following directions. The counselor reported the fact that the boy had an erection in the shower house to me. Even though I was not there it was my job to define the situation as appropriate or inappropriate, as sexual or not sexual. I defined the situation as physiological and advised the counselor to allow the boy the dignity of hiding behind the wall for a few minutes.

Counselors are expected to make such judgment calls all the time. When they decide that a situation is sexually inappropriate, or if they are not sure, they are expected to find a supervisor such as myself to make that designation and follow the correct means of dealing with it. The following is a result of one such incident, determined by the counselor to be inappropriate sexual talk:

A group approaches me. With the group are two female staff members.

Camper Bobby: Chief Mike, we wanted to talk to you because Joe was making sexually inappropriate comments and we have female staff around and we wanted it brought to your attention because that's just not right.

Me: Well, Joe, what did you say?

Joe: Nothing.

Me: I'm here for nothing?

Joe: No, I just don't want to say it again.

Me: Why not, you said it once?

Joe: I don't know. I just don't want to say it again.

Me: What were you trying to say when you said it the first time?

(This is not an unusual question in reality therapy)

Joe: Nothing, I just said it.

Me: You were trying to get something out of it, or you wouldn't have said it. What were you trying to get out of making your comment?

Joe: A laugh, I was just trying to be funny.

Me: A laugh. Did anybody laugh?

Joe: No.

Me: What made you think they would laugh when you make a sexually inappropriate comment?

Joe: I don't know

Me: Have you made other sexually inappropriate comments which made them laugh?

Joe: No.

Me: Have other guys in the group made sexually inappropriate comments which have been laughed at? (I knew they have)

Joe: I don't know.

Me: Did you deal with your problem?

Joe: Yeah.

Me: Did you apologize to (the female staff members) as well as your group.

Billy: Yeah, you're holding us up!

Me: That's not the point, Joe, not only are you holding this group up, but by being sexually inappropriate you are also disrespecting all of these guys mothers and sisters and girlfriends and grandmothers. Do you understand?

Joe: Yeah.

Me: All right, well...

Joe: (After a couple of minutes) Miss Sue and Miss Mary, I'm sorry for making inappropriate comments. Group, I'm sorry for making those comments and I'll work on it.

I never knew what the comment was, yet the counselor, and to a certain extent the group, defined Joe's behavior as sexually inappropriate; this definition was further motivated by the presence of female staff. At the very least, the group decided that Joe was "holding [them] up." Even though Joe had already dealt with his problem in the prescribed way it was still brought to my attention as a supervisor for closure. Normally, once a problem is dealt with it is closed, yet in the case of sexual talk, a supervisor must be sought. Below is an instance in which a counselor approached me unsure of how to define a situation:

Chief Bob: I wanted to report to you that we have talked to Billy about him grabbing his crotch. He was doing that Michael Jackson thing, but last week we had a big issue with Steve about that, him grabbing his crotch and being disrespectful, so I wanted to be consistent with that.

Me: So, grabbing your crotch is bad?

Chief Bob: Well, like I said, he does it all the time, it's becoming a habit for him so I'm going to bring it up. I don't know if you want to write it up, but I just wanted you to know.

Me: I don't know if grabbing his crotch is a UIR (Unusual Incident Report). Now if he grabbed someone else's crotch, that would be a UIR. But no problem, Chief, if that's the way you want to handle it.

In this instance the counselor decided to define Billy's, behavior based on how Steve's behavior had been defined earlier. Steve would grab his crotch and make gestures toward his counselors when confronted for inappropriate behavior. Billy, however, was "doing that Michael Jackson thing." He was essentially playing, or dancing. Both incidents were defined by the counselor as being sexually inappropriate due to the fact that genitals were involved. No attention was paid to what was being communicated by the campers. In Steve's case, he may have been expressing anger or frustration. In Billy's case, his behavior might have been defined as playful. My purpose in this interchange was to determine just how inappropriate such behavior was. Did it merit being written on an incident report, or reported to a higher authority, or just left as it stood?

Masturbation is probably the most common form of sexual behavior that is brought to the attention of supervisors. It is also to be reported higher up among the management staff. One senior counselor had addressed a masturbation issue with a group, discovering that most of the group was masturbating at any given time. This session came up in conversation with a member of the management staff:

Management (shaking head): Wait a minute. When did this masturbation issue come up?

Senior Counselor: Oh, I don't know, about two weeks ago.

Management: OK, now hear this, people. Whenever there is masturbation issue it needs to be reported immediately and I want to know about it as soon as possible. Not that the counselor isn't qualified to handle this, but it needs to be handled by management.

No reason was given as to why this needed to be handled by management. This was just the rule regardless of the qualifications of the counselor to "handle" the issue. Counselors were considered qualified to handle issues regarding violence, abuse, identity or any of a myriad of teen issues yet masturbation must be brought to the attention of management. "Staff concern is not about any ill effect from the act itself, but about the inappropriateness of it." (Northrup 1993, 25)

When a supervisor approaches a masturbation issue the subject swings to what is appropriate for camp. Masturbation, the kids are usually reminded, is a "natural" and healthy thing. However, it is an activity that should be done in private. Since there is no real privacy in camp, campers always being with their groups, masturbation is "not appropriate in camp." "If you want to masturbate when you go home, in the privacy of your own room, that is your business, but in camp it is not appropriate." "It [masturbation] makes others in the group uncomfortable."

The group process is always referred to. The camper is always with his group. The group members are uncomfortable with masturbation. Ultimately, it is the whole group that may be awakened in the middle of the night if a boy is caught

masturbating. It is the group that will take time out of their day or night to seek a supervisor and report the issue. The campers, some of whom are or have been sexually active or used to masturbating frequently, are expected to deny themselves gratification, to subjugate their desire, for five to six weeks at a time before they are able to go home for a two day home visit. Is this a reasonable expectation?

Sexual talk is often even more prevalent than masturbation and most typically subject to control. Once again, what constitutes sexual talk and what makes it a problem is situationally defined by the adults. Often a stray sexual remark from a camper is dealt with by the group counselor via the group process and problem solving method. However, the constancy of sexual remarks may be defined as a problem, which needs to be brought to a higher authority. Often, such a problem is seen as a desire to discuss sexuality. The adult staff, however, must enforce an “appropriate way” of meeting that “need.”

Management staff person to group: I want to move from the topic real quick since we seem to have it wrapped up. I have one more issue to address. I want to make one thing perfectly clear to you, sir, (addressing an individual camper). The sexually inappropriate talk is going to stop. Do you understand me?

Camper nods.

I don't know what you're trying to get out of talking like that, but it's making a lot of people in this group uncomfortable. We are not going to have that kind of environment here.

Me: You know, Johnny, if you have any issues that you want to address then huddle up your group, come see a supervisor and we'll find a place to talk. We can talk about anything you want.

Management Staff: In fact, Chief Mike is very capable of talking and leading discussions on sex. I'm talking to him right now about starting his sex ed course again. The point is, we can always find appropriate ways to talk about this subject.

Johnny was confronted quite directly. His behavior was defined by a member of the upper management, a person whom he perceives as having a great deal of power in his life, as inappropriate and "going to stop." There was no "choice" in the matter. I allowed a further definition of a boy "needing" to talk about sexuality. We offered him an "appropriate way" to discuss sexuality. This appropriate way was one in which an adult, most likely myself, was present and guiding the discourse.

Did Johnny really "need" to talk about sexuality, or some deep dark sexual issues that required the professional ear of a counselor? Johnny was given no opportunity to agree or to disagree. This situation resembles an encouragement toward what Michel Foucault refers to as the confessional, "Transforming sex into

discourse.” (Foucault 1990B, 61) “The confession is a ritual of discourse in which the speaking subject is also the subject of the statement; it is also a ritual that unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession...” (Foucault 1990B, 61). In camp, any sexual talk is considered inappropriate when it takes place beyond the confessional format.

So I was wrong in my original assessment. Sexuality is not silenced, but guided through a matrix of power relations that define what is and is not appropriate. The group process brings this into another level entirely. Because sexual behavior and talk is defined as something which makes the group uncomfortable, affects the group’s ability to fulfill its needs, holds the group up, it becomes the responsibility of the group to hold its members accountable for their actions. That this creates a form of inner surveillance is elaborated upon later in the paper. Here accountability is addressed as a technology for enforcing and developing a “morality of behaviors.” (Foucault 1990C, 26)

Group members are expected to “hold each other accountable,” by addressing any behavioral concerns with the group and the counselor. This constitutes normalization and ultimately interiorization as described by Michel Foucault (Foucault 1980). In the case of sexual behaviors campers may even inform the counselor that “we need to go find a supervisor, Billy is being sexually inappropriate.” Ultimately, this form of accountability is to persuade campers to

“hold themselves accountable.” “...ethical work that one performs on oneself, not only in order to bring one’s conduct into compliance with a given rule, but to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one’s behavior.” (Foucault 1990C, 27) The power of this interiorizing technology was made surprisingly apparent to me when one day a boy huddled his group up first thing in the morning and informed them that he had masturbated that night. He apologized to the group, who were clueless regarding his nocturnal activity, and dealt with his “problem” in the camp appropriate manner. This boy, in the strictest sense of the phrase, acted as “his own overseer,” (Foucault 1980, 155) even to the point of snitching on himself, revealing, confessing, his inappropriate behavior, his sin.

All other access to sexual information beyond what is strictly controlled by adults is minutely censored. Books are approved or disapproved based on their sexual content. Art books have been removed from the library due to the showing of nude models. The sexual content of movies that campers may watch during Tuesday night staff meetings is carefully scrutinized. While watching Titanic the movie was stopped twice and fast-forwarded through scenes that were determined to be sexually inappropriate.

The boy’s belongings are also scrutinized. While looking through one boy’s belongings as he was admitted into camp I noticed pictures of naked women taped to his notebook. I removed the pictures as being inappropriate. Women in bathing suits are also frowned upon. The appropriateness of materials in camp is most often

determined by sexual content. Camper journals have been taken away as well as photographs of girlfriends in provocative positions along with sexually explicit letters. One boy had a Men's Health Magazine that his counselor loaned him. In the magazine was a section on abdominal exercises in which many of the boys were interested—the much-desired 'six pack' stomach. One staff member noticed how excited the boys were reading the article and decided that they were a little too excited. He took the magazine and found a subsection of the abdominal exercises regarding exercises for strengthening the pubococcygeus muscle. Such exercises are suggested for men who have a problem with premature ejaculation, but are also suggested to any man who is interested in prolonging sexual pleasure for himself and his partner. The magazine was taken away.

These may be what Kenneth Plummer refers to as props. "We all possess a litany of props, in actuality and in a word, which helps us construct our stories...An array of possessions may also help accumulate a sense of who one is sexually." (Plummer 1995, 37) Yet campers are not allowed such props.

The camper's own work is also censored. One camper was confronted for drawing women in various sexual positions in his sketchbook. His counselor, an artist, had stated that he had no objections to drawing nudes, however, the content of this boy's sketchbook was "very disrespectful toward women." The issue was brought to my attention. Once again the "appropriate for camp" argument was used. "I have no problem with nudes, but camp is a place for concentrating on working on

our problems. Once you've done that, you graduate and go to art school, do what you want, but in the meantime, there are plenty of appropriate things to draw." Sexually explicit stories and poetry have also been confiscated from campers. In essence, camp strictly inhibits a camper's ability to construct his own personal narrative, his own sexual story. (Plummer1995)

Adults control the only source of sexual information to which campers have access. Sexual stories and personal narratives are condoned only in the presence of adults. Adults control the dominant sexual discourse in camp in every way. Sexual behaviors are so defined by adults. Not only are adults so empowered, but adults in camp represent a vexing authority over the campers. Campers' main goals are to "go home." To go home they must demonstrated that they can consistently show appropriate behavior. The adults are the figures that define appropriate behavior and show a significant malevolence toward sexual behaviors. Hence, sexual behavior means "not going home." Yet adolescence is defined as a time of considerable curiosity about sex, sexuality and sexual identity. Can a more contradictory, confusing and ultimately threatening circumstance exist for boys in a residential program?

Surveillance

As has been touched upon earlier, a complex system of surveillance is in place to best observe all behaviors in camp. The dynamics of surveillance in camp,

an incredible form of panopticism (Foucault 1980, 1995) can be divided into two different, but complimentary forms. I'll call these external and internal surveillance. External surveillance refers to adults, staff members, watching or potentially watching campers. Internal surveillance is the ultimate result of accountability as discussed earlier. In other words, not only are adults watching campers, but also campers are watching campers and reporting suspect behaviors to adults. Yet, whether the surveillance is external or internal, adults are the ultimate source of the gaze.

Now surveillance is a ubiquitous reality for campers, and is not exclusively focussed on sexual behavior. However, above and beyond all behaviors, sexuality is the most acutely scrutinized via surveillance. Whether or not sexually inappropriate behavior is going on within a group is analyzed not only by directly observing sexual behavior but often by observing and interpreting signs of sexual behavior.

The most basic form of external surveillance in camp is the aforementioned circular formations of camp (See Map). Every aspect of camp is set up to maximize direct observation of campers. Boundaries are set for every activity in order for counselors to be able to see what is going on, and hear what is being said. A camper is never by himself or alone with another camper without the direct supervision of an adult staff member. Although campers outnumber chiefs, and it is impossible for counselors to see everything and hear everything that is going on the campers know that there is a possibility of being seen.

There are a number of tricks which counselors learn that create the illusion of having eyes in the back of their heads, and bionic hearing. A counselor knows the body language of inappropriate talk, boys whispering, looking over their shoulders, and restraining laughter. “You boys need to stop being inappropriate,” the counselor states from way out of hearing range. The boys apologize and discontinue their conversation convinced that Chief has the best hearing they’ve ever encountered. A counselor may even huddle his group up and confront the group on not holding each other accountable when Chief “knows what’s going on,” even though he doesn’t.

During a huddle up at night the counselor asks the group what is going on. He meets with silence.

Counselor: “I’m waiting for someone to come forward and hold each other accountable.”

(More silence) Some campers deny that anything is going on.

Counselor: “I already know what’s going on. I just want someone to come forward with it. I don’t feel very comfortable going to bed knowing that I can’t rely on my group.” (The counselor did not truly know what was going on, but had suspicions)

The huddle continued in this vein until one camper raised his hand and informed the counselor that certain members of the group were masturbating at night.

Despite any variety of tricks that a counselor can learn and apply, campers become quite adept at watching their counselors and noting their limitations as observers. That's where my job becomes interesting. It is often my responsibility to watch groups from an unseen vantage. I sat in a tree one night watching a group directly under me. The counselor was hard of hearing, and it was not long before his kids figured that out. I watched as a member of the group asked the counselor for medicine. The counselor turned his back to get the medicine from his med cabinet and the group went wild, throwing things at each other, pushing and wrestling. When the counselor turned around they stopped and portrayed a group going to bed. When the group finally got to bed I came down from the tree and huddled the group up, letting them know what I saw. I also advised the counselor to put his med cabinet in the front of his tent so he would not have to turn his back.

In this instance I wanted the group to know that I was watching them, and that there was always the potential that I would be watching them. "In order to be exercised, this power had to be given the instrument of permanent, exhaustive, omnipresent surveillance, capable of making all visible, as long as it could itself remain invisible." (Foucault 1995, 214) Sometimes I allow myself to be seen, at others I remain unseen. I may inform the group the next day of the things that I saw the night before. I also take advantage of the boys' active imaginations. Groups often hear me in the bushes at night even though I am nowhere near them at the time. Armadillos are often my proxies in this case.

I don't always spend my nights in the bushes, but if there is a suspicion of sexual behavior, especially at night, I don my best mosquito gear and prepare a blind for my observations. My co-supervisors and I have been unknown witnesses of certain sexual incidents, mostly sexually inappropriate talk when campers don't think an adult is present. One boy was talking to another who was showing difficulty living up to camp standards, "Just stay on your goals, dog. Think about home." "Man, I'm just thinking about pussy." I addressed the issue the next day. Another supervisor witnessed two boys kissing after sneaking outside of visible boundaries. This issue was reported, but handled outside of the group process as will be detailed later.

The most intriguing form of external surveillance is the emphasis on what are referred to as Red Flag Behaviors. For instance, a group is consistently unsettled before bedtime, or a camper, out of the blue, refuses to take a shower. A camper showing "unusual" closeness to another camper or even a counselor is suspected of sexual inappropriateness. One conversation that I had with a group one night went as follows.

"Guys, you know, when I see a group that does not want to go to bed, a few things run through my mind. (Counting on fingers) I think someone might have contraband. Do I have to go through everybody's stuff?" The group denies having contraband. "Or I think there could be some sexually inappropriate behavior. "

Camper Billy: Oh man!

Camper Roy: Nothing like that anymore, Chief.

Me: Anymore? When was it going on?

Roy: I mean we had these problems a long time ago. I mean...I don't know...I wasn't even here for that stuff. I just heard. (Puts head in his hands)

Camper Jake: Like six months ago.

Me: Is this stuff still going on?

(Group shakes heads)

I mean if this stuff is still going on it needs to come out or you guys are looking at some late nights.

Jake: Nothin' like that's goin' on. Not in my tent anyway. That's all I know.

The overall response of the group, Roy hiding his face, Jake qualifying his statement with "Not in my tent anyway" is suspect behavior suggesting that we need to keep a closer eye on this group.

In another instance a member of the management staff approached me regarding Joey who refused to take a shower for several days.

Management: Tell me about Joey. I understand he's been refusing to take a shower.

Me: I got with the group and informed them that the next time he refuses to take a shower they need to come find me.

Management: Good! What do you think about that?

Me: Like I said before. Something's going on in that group that's making those boys very uncomfortable.

Management: Do you think it's the masturbation? (A previous issue with that group)

Me: I doubt it. There's something else.

The only information I had in both instances was an unsettledness in going to bed, and one camper's unwillingness to take a shower. In both examples, the possibility of sexual behavior was suspected and scrutinized. Other indicators such as enuresis or extreme behaviors regarding sexuality are also watched for. One counselor assistant (Ann) pulled me aside:

Ann: I have a question. If you can't answer I'll understand.

Me: Go for it.

Ann: Has Mikey been sexually abused?

Me: (familiar with the camper, but not his case history, shrug my shoulders) I've not really read his file, but I wouldn't be at all surprised. Why? What brings this up?

Ann: (Describes an incident in which a hacky sack dropped between another boy's legs. A second boy reached down and picked it up.

Mikey reacted in a way that Ann considered out of character) He just freaked out. He's not usually like that. (Ann stated that Mikey said "that was disgusting and gay and one boy should not reach between another boy's legs!") I tried to tell him that it's, like, no big deal. That he's making more out of it than it is. But he wouldn't calm down. That's what got me thinking.

Me: Well, that could be an indicator. I've often suspected some kind of sexual abuse. He's enuritic, so I usually keep that in mind. That's also an indicator in my experience, I mean, not always, but I still keep my eye out.

Ann: He's also a lot more comfortable with women than he is with men. I noticed that too.

Mikey's behavior could have been defined in a variety of ways, as a cultural issue regarding body space, for instance. However, the observation that he is "not usually like that" along with his sexual comments was defined as a possible sexual issue, most likely abuse. The fact that he wets the bed and the observation that he is more comfortable with women than with men reinforced that definition. Except for his sexual comments during the incident no overt sexual behavior was observed. As in the case with the group that was unsettled at night and the boy who refused to take a shower, sexuality was an imputed motive of behavior.

Counselors have been taught to recognize behavior that could be linked to sexuality. After a seminar regarding sexual abuse I approached a group that was showing some trouble. The counselor intercepted me before I reached the group.

Two boys, Bobby and Will are showing sexually inappropriate behavior, accusing one another of sexually inappropriate activity, such as touching each other. Billy is accusing other campers of looking at each other in the shower house.

Chief John: I was looking at some of the information we got during that abuse seminar.

Me: So what did you find?

Chief John: Well...it...it was just what I thought. When I heard Will talking like that it reminded me of Greg (a previous camper who was being forced by another camper to perform oral sex). He said the same thing about Jim when he was doing it (Forcing Greg to perform oral sex). That was his way to...I don't know...tell me what was going on.

Will: (From the huddle) I did not call him a cum sucking son of a bitch! I said cop sucking son of a bitch! (Laughing)

Others in the group: (Laughing) Now you're lying!

Chief John: So I looked it up, and it's the same thing they say. He's showing the same behaviors as Greg. And Bobby, the way he's

touching the others, they are getting real uncomfortable with it.

We've talked about it.

Me: What's going on in the shower house?

Chief John: Well...I don't know. We had a couple of issues. The group is saying that he is looking at them in the shower house, but then he starts accusing others and everything kinda falls apart.

Me: Well, make sure to write it all down. I'll let the night watchman know to keep his eye out, maybe spend some time out here.

What the counselor learned during this seminar, as well as his past experience with sexual issues led him to define what was going on around him as a potentially sexually abusive situation although no sexual abuse was observed or reported. The camper's behaviors and comments were overtly sexual, but as has been touched upon earlier, the campers may be communicating something very different from sexuality. Counselors are often taught by camp administration how to define behaviors as sexual, abusive, appropriate, inappropriate, normal and deviant. Chief John chose to "look up" a definition of this behavior using information given to him during a sexual abuse seminar. One pamphlet handed out during that seminar was entitled "Sexual Abuse Versus 'Normal' Sexual Curiosity Among Young Children."

Internal surveillance is dependent upon the culture of Groupness. That is just how much the campers are invested into the group process. Campers are expected to

hold each other accountable in all situations, but especially regarding sexuality. At first, most kids come to camp with a preconceived notion regarding accountability. Most campers refuse to “snitch” on another camper. “I ain’t no snitch!” “If he wants to do something then that’s him.” Reporting the behaviors of his peers to adult authority figures is often an alien concept.

However, as the boy experiences life in camp he slowly begins to change his mind. He is involved in the group process which means he will suffer the consequences of others misbehaving. And if it is discovered that he knew about this misbehavior and did not report it it will look bad on him. Regardless, the “natural consequences” of not living up to camp standards will affect him in the long run. Experience in group teaches him that the sooner these issues “come out” the less severe are the consequences. He also learns from campers who have been in the group longer than he has. They will not hesitate to “snitch” or to “hold others accountable.” He notices that these older campers who do hold others accountable receive more positive feedback and tend to “move on” quicker, graduating quicker as a “natural consequence” for their “positive” behavior—but not as a reward (hmm).

This creates some interesting dynamics in a group. Not only do campers have to be concerned about their counselor’s gaze, or the gaze of an unseen person in the bushes, but they must also be aware of their peers. One might say that this is a model of some Orwellian world. Campers usually have a good idea, however, about who will hold them accountable and who will not. In one instance, it was discovered

that every kid in one particular tent masturbated. “We have all of the sexually inappropriate ones in one tent,” remarked one supervisor. I laughed and said, “There’s a certain logic to that.” The logic, though in jest, was lost on the management staff. We rearranged the order of the tents. It was believed that campers who masturbate would not hold other masturbating campers accountable.

The camper eventually decides, however, that he is willing to hold others accountable if it means going home quicker, or even if he decides that such action is the right thing to do, no longer regarding it as snitching. There have been times when campers have expressed to the group that they are “going to hold others accountable from now on, so don’t do anything stupid around me because I’m going to tell.”

Ultimately, however, the goal of accountability is of an even higher and more internal nature. Eventually campers learn to hold “themselves” accountable. This may be an attempt to beat the other campers to the punch and inform the counselor before others have a chance to do it. Thus, the camper will receive praise for his courage and honesty and is more inclined to hold himself accountable the next time. It is the experience of camp that campers, as well as adults, respond better to praise or positive reinforcement than to ridicule or negative reinforcement. Everybody wants to be praised. The boy who informed his group that he had masturbated the night before is an example of just how pervasive this self-accountability is.

Gate Keeping

Sexuality is also controlled by carefully screening those who are involved with camp. Prospective clients and staff are put through a gate keeping process specifically intent upon keeping certain types of people out. Once a part of the program the gate keeping is maintained as we at camp learn more and more information about campers as well as the adults who serve them. A careful eye is kept on behaviors of all involved in the camp process and any problems are quickly evaluated and analyzed. At times those exhibiting “questionable” behavior are eliminated from the program. Campers are sometimes determined to have problems that “camp can’t handle.” Certain counselors have even demonstrated behaviors that raise a concern for the safety and wellbeing of the clients. These questionable behaviors most often revolve around sexuality.

Children are screened before coming to camp in order to determine if they are “good camp kids.” Typically this screening involves being interviewed by a family worker from camp, a background check and a psychological evaluation. Any indication that a child is extremely violent, or exhibits significant sexual deviance is a reason for the child being denied services from camp. What constitutes extreme violence or sexual deviance is determined by members of the management staff.

For instance, a child who has had numerous “normal,” heterosexual experiences may be an appropriate camp kid. However, if it is on record that that camper has had numerous consensual homosexual experiences a concern would

certainly be raised about him joining a group of all boys. Sexual assault, incestuous relationships, rape are all indicators of a child who would not be a “good camp kid.” (One camp does have a group for sexual offenders).

Campers are aware of this fact. It is not uncommon for a camper to call another camper “gay” to express his anger. One camper was being confronted by another camper for this very issue. “It doesn’t make any sense to call him gay. You know he’s not gay. If he was gay he wouldn’t be here, so you need to stop.” There have even been attempts by campers to claim to be homosexual with the intent of being kicked out of the program.

However, there are times when what are deemed serious sexual issues reveal themselves in campers during their camp stay. In most cases, these sexual issues arise as a question of sexual identity. It is not surprising, in a camp that deals with over fifty campers at a time that some of those campers reveal questions regarding their sexuality. In most cases, and in the course of this study, no camper was removed from the program because they revealed that they were homosexual or bisexual after being admitted to camp.

Those issues that are considered dangerous to campers, however, are means for dismissal from the program. It was reported that one camper was being accused of sexual assault by a younger child in his foster home. It became the immediate concern of camp to “keep an eye” on this camper until a decision was made. The camper was unaware of what was going on in the background. As more information

came in, it was decided that this camper would be exited from the program. One staff member stated, “we just can’t take a chance of having a kid in here with sexual issues like that.”

Of course, issues of sexual assault within camp are handled much quicker. Three boys in one group were accused of forcing two other boys in the group to perform oral sex on them. When this came to the attention of the staff, the three accused boys were immediately arrested and removed from the premises. Two of the boys later confessed and the third was found guilty of sexual assault.

It is also not uncommon, as will be detailed later, for campers to use sexual discourse and behavior as a weapon against adults. In one instance a camper accused a counselor of attempting to abuse him sexually. He filed a complaint and the counselor was suspended pending an investigation. During the investigation the camper revealed that the counselor had done nothing. He simply did not like the counselor and wanted to get him fired. The camper was exited from the program.

It is difficult to discuss gate keeping in this context. Sexual behaviors must be determined to be severe enough to warrant exclusion from the program. The above was not the only camper to use this technique to get rid of a counselor. However, he was the only camper to actually follow through with proceedings. This was considered by staff to be “severe enough.” A female counselor (Sue) approached me one day concerning a camper in her group.

Chief Sue: I was just informed that Donny (camper) has some kind of history of attacking girls in school. Chief Joe told me that he was charged with sexual assault.

I knew nothing about this, but looked it up. The boy was charged for ripping one girl's shirt off and touching her and another charge for dragging a girl across a patio. There was no more information. I reported this to Chief Sue.

Chief Sue: How did we let him into camp?

Me: Like I said, there were not many details. Very vague.

Chief Sue: Well, I don't know why we weren't informed, especially being female counselors. (I agreed)

I was not involved with the intake process of this camper; however, it was obvious that though he was charged with sexual assault, the issue did not seem severe enough to deny him services. However, other campers who have been so charged have been denied services.

Gate Keeping: Staff

More rigid than the gate keeping techniques focussed on the campers are those focussed on the counselors and staff. An extensive legal background check is done on potential staff. Counselors undergo a battery of psychological tests to determine if they are capable of doing the job and working with kids under a great

deal of stress. Also looked for are such things as problems with substance abuse, unstable personalities and sexual deviance.

Once hired, counselors especially, are scrutinized should they show some form of sexual deviance or “immaturity” on the job. One counselor was let go after it was discovered that he was soliciting sex from young boys over the internet. It was also alleged that he had admitted to a camper that he was gay. Another counselor was let go after a man called the camp and informed the management staff that he caught this counselor, prior to his employment with camp, having sex with the man’s son. The man’s son was eighteen at the time and no investigation was performed. Another counselor, however, who admitted to the management staff that he was bisexual was allowed to continue his employment. It was determined that his interest was in grown men and not young boys.

Female counselors are also the focus of a great deal of attention. Chief’s Touch could have a different meaning when coming from a female counselor. Female counselors have to be more aware of how they dress, how they act, the things that they say, and especially how they touch and interact with campers. One female counselor attracted the gaze of management.

Manager: I definitely don’t think Sharon should go to (five-week training course for new counselors)

Me: Really?

Manager: The maturity level is just not there. With the bra incident.

(The counselor showed up to work on three occasions without wearing a bra) Then the other day she's wearing shorts and has her legs laying on a couple of campers, I mean, come on! Get a clue!

Me: I don't know, I've seen her do good things too. I don't think she even thinks about it like that (sexually). She's just very touchy feely. I met her father. It appears to me that that's how she lived, very open, and very hands on.

Manager: I don't know, Mike. There are some other things too.

Me: Really? Like what?

Manager: (No answer)

Me: I think sometimes we have to stop and realize that those things that we feel are common sense after years and years at camp, to others, really isn't.

This counselor's behaviors were defined as being "sexually immature" and she was let go shortly after this conversation.

A counselor's sexuality is defined by the camp's role model policy. "A positive role model is one whose own behavior at all times is absent any conduct which is considered immoral by the standards of the community in which one is working on behalf of [camp]. (This might include but is not limited to behaviors related to sexual activity, illegal gambling, substance abuse, abuse or distribution, or

disorderly conduct.)” (Role model policy) In essence, staff often must create a sexless persona when dealing with campers. Casual, sexual talk with clients is out of the question. A counselor must always be wary that what he or she does in the company of campers may be interpreted in a sexual way. It is not unusual for a male and female counselor to be suspected by campers as being romantically involved.

This is remarked upon by Paula, a resource teacher. “It’s a matter of getting that energy out. When you’re out with the kids you have to be sexless. When you finally find yourself in mixed company, or with a man or other adults it’s like ‘Whoa! You mean I don’t have to hold all of this energy in.’” I suggested that she hold some of that energy in lest she find herself being kicked out of restaurants. However, one question comes to mind from this discussion. Staff members, though they must be sexless when in the company of kids, once they are in the back room are allowed a certain amount of levity in expressing this “energy.” Campers, however, are not afforded this luxury. Isn’t it reasonable to assume that if adults need to “let go of this energy,” that campers may have to do the same?

Resistance

It is unreasonable to suspect that campers have not created for themselves a form of back stage in which they can express themselves sexually, share sexual stories. Indeed, many of the examples above were collected while I was observing

this backstage. This may constitute a form of sexual resistance. “If sex is repressed, that is, condemned to prohibition, nonexistence, and silence, then the mere fact that one is speaking about it has the appearance of a deliberate transgression.” (Foucault 1990B, 6) Since sexuality is such a focus for mechanisms of control, it is not unusual that sexuality is used by the kids to affect a certain resistance to authority.

Resistance in camp may be covert or overt. Covert sexual resistance is an attempt by campers to express a sexuality, to tell a sexual story, to create a sexual identity outside of the gaze of adult authority, without the intervention of a confessor. Overt sexual resistance is a direct, visible use of sexuality, sexual imagery or sexual expression in an attempt to thwart adult authority. The ends of overt sexual resistance are usually not sexual at all, but a choice to use prohibitive sexual expression as a form of weapon not only against authority, but also against other campers in the face of authority.

Covert resistance needs very little explanation. Anyone who has ever hidden a stash of Playboys or other pornographic magazines or sexual paraphernalia has participated in this form of resistance. The same is reproduced by campers. Campers will create a backstage environment where they can express a sexuality that is not governed by the dominant sexual discourse of propriety in camp. Typically this backstage involves sexual talk, like one boy talking to another camper about having sex with his girlfriend over his home visit. I happened to be behind his tent that night and overheard the discussion. I huddled the group up, discussed the issue,

but it was fairly soon that the campers went back to bed, and I'm sure that within a few days similar discussion was continued.

Artifacts are also involved in this covert resistance. Campers often do the best they can to secure pictures with sexual themes, nude drawings, erotic stories, explicit rap lyrics, etc. One camper even tore a page from a World Book Encyclopedia that featured a photograph of a statue of three nude nymphs. What Plummer referred to as "props" could be seen in camp as artifacts of covert resistance.

Covert resistance is also very difficult to elaborate upon in a participant observation study. The very nature of such resistance is outside of the field of observation. Overt resistance on the other hand is quite different. My field notes are rife with such examples. The most immediate form of overt resistance is that of a camper resisting the authority of a counselor. One such example took place while I was physically restraining a camper who was threatening to harm other campers.

I held the camper (Jimmy) in a seated position, placing weight on his shoulders.

Jimmy: Get off of me!

Me: Are you going to stay seated?

Jimmy: Hell no!

Me: Then I'm not getting off of you.

Jimmy: (Continues to yell at me in an attempt to make me get off of him. I do not respond having decided not to respond until Jimmy informs me and shows me that he will remain seated).

Jimmy: You're all up behind me and junk. What are you, gay?

Me: (No response)

Jimmy: Get off me, I'm not gay! (Continues to repeat this)

Get off me, I'm not gay!

Me: My being on you has nothing to do with your sexual preference.

Jimmy: I still think you're gay!

Me: Well, my girlfriend knows the truth so I really don't have much to worry about. (Group laughs)

Jimmy: I still think you're gay! (No further response from me)

This is not an uncommon tactic used by campers, especially campers who have been through a number of youth programs. I have asked campers if the tactic of using sexual comments during a restraint has worked for them in the past. Every camper that I asked, and I only asked those campers who used this tactic, stated that it has. The child is restrained by an authority figure; they accuse him or her of sexual impropriety, and the restraint ends as the staff member fears for his career and reputation. Sometimes it is the policy of the institution to secure a higher authority immediately after an allegation of sexual abuse, regardless of situation. Campers are smart enough to do what works.

Another example is when a camper uses sexual imagery to gain an audience from the group at the expense of the counselor. One camper while being confronted for inappropriate behavior started describing his dream house in lurid detail. "...and in the other room I have a bunch of women, all but naked...(laughter from the group in general. A few boys asking him to stop) This boy knows that there is nothing that the adults can do to make him stop. The group will simply wait until he is done, then the issue will be addressed. In many cases, this is not enough to make a camper stop.

Usually, however, campers will use sexual epithets to show anger and general disrespect for their counselor's decisions. Male counselors are typically "cock suckers," "fuckin' faggots," "pussy bitches," or any of a number of sexual insults. Reserved for female counselors are the epithets "cunt," and " 'ho." Typically, once the camper realizes that he is not going to get a reaction from the counselor such a tactic is no longer used.

One tactic that always gets a reaction, however, is when a camper accuses a staff member of sexual impropriety. This is always brought to the attention of the management staff even when the camper immediately admits that he said it out of anger. This is not a very common occurrence, but it has happened a number of times in the course of this study. With the exception of an above example (the counselor admitting to a camper that he was gay) no camper has made a claim of a counselor's sexual impropriety without later recanting his statement as being made out of anger.

Another more subtle form of resistance is called testing limits. This is when campers participate in behaviors just to the point of being subject to a “natural consequence.” In one instance, two campers were talking to each other jokingly well within the hearing of their counselor, Chief Bob.

Camper Hal: You’re the one being sexually inappropriate all the time.

Camper Steve: (Laughing) Yeah, right!

Chief Bob: (In food line with other groups around) All right, enough of the conversation.

Hal: (does not acknowledge chief) You’re always saying stuff to other guys.

Chief Bob: Enough, gentlemen!

Steve: Naw! Don’t try me like that!

Hal: You said you wanted to screw me!

Chief Bob: We’re going to have to bring this elsewhere.

Camper Jimmy: Shut up! You know Chief will take us in the woods if you keep going. I want to eat.

Hal and Steve end their conversation. The group ate their meal without interruption. I do not know if the issue was ever addressed.

By testing the counselor’s limits, indeed Hal and Steve probably knew the counselor’s limits from the start, it is determined how much one can resist overtly

without there being a consequence. This may be a decisive factor in camper's overt resistance, though this is beyond the scope of my study.

Another focus of resistance is when campers use the same sexual messages to attack another camper. Campers may find themselves the object of the same abuse as the counselors receive. Campers often have their sexual identities questioned. "Billy keeps looking at me in the shower." They may be accused of masturbating. I walked up on one huddle. The counselor stated that he had something to report.

Chief Dan: (reported to me that Camper John was accused of masturbating on the box [latrine box])

Me: Did anyone see him?

Chief Dan: No...It's just that (camper) Art was beating on the box (making a drum beat on the wall of the latrine box), so the box was shaking, so of course when John came down everyone started laughing and making comments.

Me: They're playing games. (Went on to discuss something else then started to walk away)

Chief Dan: So do you want to address the masturbating.

Me: No. I'm not going to get sucked into their games although I'll tell you, at this point what they're doing is amounting to harassment.

We'll be addressing that. Right now let's get them to dinner.

My advice to counselors as well as to campers who are subject to such attack is simple. Don't react. The reaction is what such perpetrators are looking for.

Camper George: Chief, I need to talk to the Resident Director

Me: You need to talk to your group.

George: I can't. They're accusing me of raping some girl and I don't like that.

Camper Henry: You know they were just trying to get you going because you said something to them. Stop making a big deal out of it.

George: Hell no! I ain't gonna be accused of raping anyone. Then those guys said I said something about their girlfriends.

Me: Did you?

George: No!

Me: Did you rape anyone?

George: Hell no!

Me: Why do you think they said that?

George: To piss me off.

Me: Did it work? Looks like you're playing their game. What do you want the Resident Director to do for you?

George: Make them stop.

Me: Why should they stop when it works so well? Every time they want to get you going all they have to do is say you raped someone.

Stop getting so excited and they'll stop.

George: All right, all right Chief.

The camper did indeed "stop getting excited about it" and the rest finally did stop.

Resistance should be expected under such conditions in camp. There are many other modes of resistance, such as violence, refusal to move, and refusal to live up to basic camp standards. If a camper is mad at his group he can simply use a little profanity and the whole group goes into the field. It is up to the counselor to decide whether the camper is having a "real problem," because he has something on his mind or is frustrated, or if he is "power tripping," or doing something in order to make the group suffer a consequence. The manner in which sexual discourse and sexual behavior is governed in camp makes sexuality a prime weapon for acts of resistance. As sexuality is the most obvious object of acute authoritarian control in camp, it is also the most fruitful object of resistance. Any sexual act or statement becomes an attempt, either overt or covert, to curtail the influential authority of the institution.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AS A SPECIAL CASE

“There is no reason to think that troubled adolescents in residential care are appreciably different from other teenagers in their sexual feelings, thoughts and actions.

(Northrup 1993, 32)

The Story of Ralph Part I

In camp the topic of sexuality is held in such regard, one may say held almost in fear, that sexual behaviors and sexual modes of expression are often addressed outside of the parameters of the program. Even violent behaviors in camp are not addressed as acutely nor subject to such subtle technologies of power as is sexuality. Yet all campers, in fact, all teens, in some way face sexual issues. They are sexual explorers piecing together a story of their selves.

The story of Ralph, a very troubled youth in camp, is endemic of how sexual issues in camp are treated as a special case. The following story represents an extreme case. Certainly not all campers experience such abuse and such confusion about their sexuality. However, the manner in which Ralph’s “sexual issues” are handled in camp exemplifies the tendency of camp, the adults in camp, to separate themselves from sexuality beyond what can be immediately controlled and governed.

Ralph was a boy who entered camp with significant difficulties at home. His behavior was “out of control.” He would run away from home, express belligerent behaviors toward his grandmother. His sister a college freshman had given up hope on him having been the victim of his anger as well as his lying and thievery. Ralph was involved with drugs, and was spending time with a man in his mid twenties named Doug. Both the grandmother and sister defined this relationship as unhealthy.

Ralph entered camp and was placed in a group that was, to say the least, unstable. The group had experienced a number of changes and was having difficulty working together during the most rudimentary of tasks. Counselors in this particular group, the Indians, concentrated on meeting the group’s basic needs of food, showers and bed without anyone getting hurt.

Needless to say, Ralph’s admission to the group brought no relief. Ralph, an unstable kid in an unstable world went off like a hurricane. The group spent many, many hours trying to get through Ralph’s problems as well as their own. There were many late nights and many physical restraints as Ralph’s behavior became more and more malevolent and threatening. In fact, for the better part of a year it was questioned as to whether Ralph was making any progress in camp.

Much kudos must go to Ralph’s counselors who lived through his extreme behaviors. Ralph did indeed make progress and learned to put a great deal of trust in

his counselors. However, Ralph's behaviors always took a turn for the worst as Homes Day approached. This was a weekend every five weeks in which the campers went home to practice what they learned in camp. It was not long before the counseling staff decided that Ralph was afraid of going home. The group counselors decided to get to the bottom of this. During a long group discussion with Ralph he finally admitted what was bothering him.

Ralph explained that he sneaked out of his house one night on the way to a party. Before reaching the party he was attacked by an older man and raped. The group, normally rowdy and uncaring became one of concern and understanding for Ralph's plight regardless of the torment that he had put them through. This issue was immediately brought to the attention of a supervisor and became the focus of management decisions. The group counselors believed that Ralph's story was, in essence, true but contradicted itself in many instances. The counselors decided, and the supervisor agreed, that it would be better to simply accept Ralph's story and show support. Hopefully, the rest of the story would come out as Ralph realized that he could trust his counselors and his group with such a sensitive issue.

This strategy proved effective. Ralph eventually admitted that his attacker was Doug and that there had been numerous cases of abuse perpetrated on him. Of course, camp has a responsibility to report any abuse that is discovered, and such was done. Next, camp, as a therapeutic institution must handle the ramifications of

this confession. Camp follows a program for dealing with all behavioral issues. However, camp treated this issue as a special case.

The question was how are we as a camp going to handle this issue? A great deal of debate took place as to whether camp was equipped to handle this extreme issue. It is not uncommon for camp to deal with campers who have been sexually abused. Some have experienced significantly more abuse than has Ralph. However, this incident was unique in that Ralph gave much more detail than is normally revealed by other campers with similar experiences. The decision was made that a specialist should give Ralph outside counseling.

Every week camp would transport him to a counselor to discuss the abuse and to come up with strategies to deal with it. Often these strategies were significantly different than those used in camp. However, Ralph's abuse was no longer a camp issue, it was an issue for outside of camp. Relatively little dialogue with his camp counselors concerning his abuse took place.

I was not involved in the decision to send Ralph to counseling, and I questioned the reasoning. Below is one conversation that I had with a staff member (Mary) involved with Ralph's care.

Me: I don't even know why we are sending him to counseling.

Mary: We just don't have anyone in camp with experience to deal with this stuff.

Me: We deal with everything else: violence, abandonment, addiction.

What makes this any different?

Mary: Well, I don't know.

Me: I mean all of this came out here at camp. We must have done something right.

(Further discussion focused on Ralph not taking part in his group, combating group process stating that he does not have to “do” therapy here because he “does” therapy once a week with the outside counselor.)

(Management Staff Person walks into the room. Manager is filled in on the conversation.)

Manager: I do think it is important for a kid who has been sexually abused to talk to other kids who have been sexually abused.

This was the end of the discussion, but not the end of my questions. What made sexual abuse any different from physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect? All of these issues are “dealt with” in camp, according to a therapeutic protocol, without outside help. As for the experience of the counselors, these particular counselors showed enough experience to convince a seriously withdrawn child to reveal an extremely personal subject in a very unstable environment. During the course of Ralph's confession, the counselor showed consistently sound judgment as

evaluated by camp therapeutic policy. Camp counselors are expected to deal with issues of violence, addiction, abuse and any of a variety of trials and tribulations that a child might experience. What makes sexual trauma something that must be dealt with in a different manner?

During a telephone discussion with the same staff person I reiterated my concern. Mary responded, “We just don’t have a good SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) to handle stuff like this.” Yet there is an SOP (yuck!). It is referred to as “program.” “The boy is caught up in a cycle of frustration, anxiety, and anger due to his inability to function adequately in a situation at conflict with his developmental needs. He cannot acquire a sense of security in his relationships with others.” (Loughmiller 1995, 5) This is a description of any child, boy or girl, who has experienced any “kind” of abuse. “At camp he can begin to overcome his sense of helplessness as he discovers his adaptive capacities in living with the impersonal realities of nature.” (Loughmiller 1995, 5) One could say that this is exactly what Ralph was doing in trusting his counselors with his fears, putting his faith in people who, for the first time in his life, refused to give up on him regardless of how much he pushed them away. He had not yet reached the point that he had “overcome his sense of helplessness,” but was in the process of facing it.

Naomi Glasser, in her book Control Theory in the Practice of Reality Therapy: Case Studies, highlights a number of cases in which reality therapists,

using control/choice theory methods were able to help their patients through a number of serious problems. In the chapter “I’m Not Going to Let Them Affect Me” Terri Leonard, a school guidance counselor recounts her experience counseling Sarah Masters, a high school girl. “Sarah revealed to me some of the abuse she had experienced at that age. The reality was that her mother had abused her physically and sexually...She would even relive the pain that she had not been able to acknowledge previously when she had been sexually assaulted by four of her brothers. They had raped her repeatedly from age six to her present age.” (117) Sarah was undergoing this abuse even as she was being counseled, at one point becoming “totally immobilized” from fear (109). In the same book Janet Thatcher recounts her experiences with June, a “survivor of incest.”

Sexuality is not excluded from Control Theory. Glasser acknowledges the sexual nature of the “pictures in our heads.” Indeed, reality therapy and control theory does not change in practice when dealing with sexual issues or non-sexual issues. Group therapy and the group process are also applied in dealing with sexual issues. “Group therapy provides a safe environment to explore sexual offense and share victimization.” (Northrup 1993, 59) These being the main tools at the counselor’s disposal of dealing with any issue that a camper may bring forth, why is it considered that counselors at camp are not equipped to deal with such problems?

Yet it is not uncommon for camp to simply “not deal” with sexual issues, or to remove the group process, or the practice of reality therapy from sexual concerns in camp. As stated earlier, it is necessary for a counselor to bring any mention of sexuality, or any sexual behavior to the attention of a supervisor. In most cases, the supervisor will address the issue with the group and end each session with a paraphrase of this direction. “This issue is not to come up again. If it happens again, stop what you are doing and come find me.” The hope is to silence any further discourse on sexual issues. “Did you say (or do) this?” “Don’t do it again!” “This issue is closed.” I have been a witness and even, unfortunately, arbiter of such silencing on many occasions.

It is also not unusual for program management to skip the group process in dealing with sexual issues. The two boys mentioned above who were caught kissing each other were taken from their groups, talked to by the management staff, informed that they were not to do that again or the issue would be brought up with the group. One boy’s journal stated that he had had a homoerotic experience with a boy in another group. Neither group was informed. Instead, the two boys were taken into the office separately and confronted. Both boys admitted that it was consensual. They were both informed that they were not to participate in such behavior in camp again and that they were not to mention it. Once again, sexual discourse is the object of adult control and influence.

The next part of Ralph's story is an example of a failed attempt to silence sexual discourse. It is also an example of how my research, combined with my experiences in camp are entwined.

The Story of Ralph: Part II

This research has been conducted in the course of doing a job. The nature of this job is such that it also represents a lifestyle. It is my opinion and the dominant feeling of every program staff person that working in camp at least five days straight, eating, sleeping and being in camp continuously no longer constitutes a job. It is a way of life. My research is not simply an ordered and interpreted stream of data but may also represent a journal of my own lived experience. It is important, especially in this section, to remind the reader that mine is an emotionally involved subjectivity (Ellis 1992); my research is introspection as well as an inspection of lived experience. There is no real separation of researcher, supervisor and emotional human being. "A subjective sense of ourselves is one of the principle elements in lived experience." (Ellis 1992, 9) It is necessary to recognize the "subjective sense of ourselves" in research as the very act of 'researching a subject' is, in itself, a lived experience.

It was as a researcher/supervisor/emotional human being that I took part in Ralph's story. As a sociological researcher I was able to look at Ralph's situation from numerous angles. I was able to analyze the reaction of camp and question the

perspectives espoused. Why is this situation, as well as other sexually related concerns, addressed differently from any other issue? As a supervisor it was my responsibility, primarily, to implement a defined program in Ralph's interest. It was also my job to accept the decisions of my authority figures to perform extra-camp duties regarding Ralph, including assuring that he made his counseling appointments on time. This regardless of the fact that I was not in agreement with what was being done. However, as an emotional human being, I could not separate myself as a researcher, nor as a supervisor from my genuine concern for Ralph.

I returned from time off one day and sought my co-supervisor (Marv) to get caught up on the events of the last two days. Marv was in the office and advised me to sit down as this was going to be a long evaluation. He informed me that Ralph admitted to his group that he was bisexual. It is a common feeling among boys like Ralph, especially those who have experienced life in a lock down facility, that one "becomes gay" by being raped by another man. Marv, however, informed me that Ralph was simply using this as a means of "getting attention." In fact, Marv admitted to making light of the situation. "I tried to take it seriously, but...you know how he acts. Finally I lost it. I know I screwed up, but I asked him who he thought was cute in the group and other comments." Marv and other members of the management staff decided that it would be unwise to give Ralph the attention that he was craving in this way. The group was informed that they were not to bring the

subject up again and if they did they were to find a supervisor. Marv then went on time off.

Of course, the issue was not closed. That night the issue was brought up again and the group found me. I approached the group intent on discussing and hopefully dealing with the issue in a fruitful manner. I also held my notebook ready as I wanted to record as much as I could.

I discussed the issue with the group. Asked Ralph what makes him think he's bisexual. He admitted to having consensual, homoerotic relationships at least three times with boys his own age. He admitted that he enjoyed these activities. He stated that he fantasizes about guys. He judges guys on their looks. True to control theory Ralph and I discussed bisexuality as a choice. Then I turned my focus on the group. The group was unruly, especially three specific individuals: Billy, Bob and Brian. The group was interested in focusing on the shower house and their discomfort of being "looked at" by Ralph. All of the boys said that they were not worried that Ralph would "try something" with them. The group was having difficulty "dealing" with what Ralph had confessed.

Camper Jimmy: "You're telling us all this now...and you're expecting us to deal with it. I don't feel comfortable with this...I've

never had to deal with this before. Man, I don't want to go in the shower house with him looking at me and stuff."

Camper Paul: "Man if he looks at me I'll get sick to my stomach."

A few campers expressed that they were brought up to hate homosexuals.

Jimmy: When my parents find out that I have to take showers with a boy who likes guys they're gonna flip out. Man, my dad...Oh Lord!"
(Covers his face with hands)

Camper Vince: I was raised the same way. If there's someone gay comes near you, you hit him." Vince, however, goes on to talk about false accusations made about him and his sexuality. He states that he has learned to handle such things better.

Ralph: "Guys, I'm the same person as I was six months ago. I've always had these feelings...my whole camp stay."

Jimmy: "But you're not the same, man. We didn't know this about you six months ago."

Me: "So what's changed? Has Ralph changed or has our knowledge changed? What we're dealing with is perceptions and these are the issues that we need to deal with. Here are the facts. We are going to

take showers, and we are not going to separate anybody from the group. So we are going to have to come up with some way to deal with this.”

Discussion then focussed on shower house standards and boundaries, wearing a towel, giving each other their body space.

Discussion about identity, who we are, making choices.

After the discussion, the group was significantly calmer; Chiefs evaluated with me on the side.

Chief Ann: “Um, did Chief Marv evaluate with you about the way they wanted to handle it.”

Me: “Yeah, but the issues were never really addressed and really needed to be.”

Ann: “Program said they did not want to come down and talk about it. They said if they do that and make a big issue out of it the issue becomes ‘real.’”

Me: The issue was real, the feelings were legitimate. They handled it well. I’ll talk to Marv. We’ve got to handle these issues better.”

Ann: “Well he admitted he wasn’t very comfortable with it. It was handled better this time. I didn’t want anybody to get into trouble,

but we were told to bring them to see a supervisor if anything comes up.”

Returned to the group. Billy, Bob and Brian were still carrying on.

Me: “Those people who are handling this inappropriately, calling names and whatever. The issue is with themselves, how they feel about themselves and their own self worth. Look, who have been the most inappropriate about this?” (Billy, Bob and Brian’s names given by the group) “Aren’t those the three guys that we identified last week as having the lowest self image.” (The group agreed) “What does that tell you?”

Went on to discuss Reality Therapy and satisfying needs. Also discussed “labeling.”

Ralph: “Chief, you mean I’m choosing this.”

Me: “Yes. Right now it is satisfying some need. That’s not to say that the feelings aren’t real, but it is your actions that you control. Some time in the future you may choose other ways to take care of this need. Do you really want to accept a label that may stick with you even when you may not want it anymore?”

To my great relief and satisfaction the issue was never raised again. The drama above, however, indicates a somewhat different track for dealing with and

defining sexual issues. Program management decided that to create a dialogue with Ralph would make the issue “real.” Silencing, on the other hand forces Ralph to choose other means of “attention seeking.” The bisexuality then goes away. “On the subject of sex, silence became the rule.” (Foucault 1990B, 3) But there existed a whole dynamic of reality, multiple realities, not just concerning Ralph, but concerning the group in dealing with Ralph’s professed sexual orientation. The feelings espoused by the group may not have been right, they may not have been nice, but they were real. Feelings are always real according to control theory, always legitimate.

I focused on reality therapy in part. The boys’ feelings mostly concerned being “looked at” in the shower house. Their feelings were based on a history of fear and of hatred regarding homosexuals. This is sociologically significant but ultimately irrelevant to control theory. The reality was, regardless of their feelings, regardless of their personal histories, they would be taking showers with Ralph. This was not within the campers’ control any more than were their feelings. So what could the campers control? They could control whether or not they were covered up. They could control how much body space they gave each other in the shower house. They could control their actions if, for some reason, Ralph was looking in their direction.

Discussion of bisexuality as a choice is also consistent with reality therapy/control theory. As a sociological researcher, I can question whether or not this is a choice. I can look at the issue from numerous perspectives. I can analyze what constitutes “choice.” As a supervisor it is my responsibility to apply control theory to all situations. Perhaps Ralph didn’t choose to have homoerotic feelings, or sexual thoughts about other men. He did, however, choose his actions. He did choose to inform the group for reasons that are still unclear. Ultimately, he would choose to accept the label “bisexual” or not.

This led me to approach the issue based on my experience with sociology and my current research. Control theory makes no mention of “labels.” Nor will one find much on “perceptions,” in reading any of Glasser’s work. Although Ralph’s feelings were the same, “I’m the same person as I was six months ago,” his admission of those feelings changed the group’s sense of reality. “But you’re not the same, man. We didn’t know this about you six months ago.” Teens find themselves, for the first time, dealing with multiple realities. “There are times in life when the question of knowing if one can think differently than one thinks, and perceive differently than one sees, is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all.” (Foucault 1990C, 8) To paraphrase Hemmingway, what is true at first light may not necessarily be true when the sun goes down. Hence, “Reality” therapy may best be looked at as “Realities” therapy. And the dynamics of “choice” must certainly be viewed through a cultural, structural and historical lens to better

define what constitutes a “choice.” Behavior may be broken down to physical, rational, emotional and active, but must also be recognized as taking place within numerous social dynamics. Behavior, sexual or otherwise, is not only what happens but where and when it is happening. How is it happening? What is happening around the behaving subject? “If sexuality is, as I believe, about choice rather than destiny, then the issue of what we choose and how and why we do so becomes central to the debate.” (Weeks 1995, 5)

A couple of addenda are necessary in closing this story. One day Marv informed me that “Ralph realized he wasn’t gay, today.” I smiled and mocked, “But how does he know?” “Oh, it’s just another phase,” was Marv’s reply. Ralph has currently graduated, and the last I heard from him he is going to school, making average grades and has not gotten into any trouble with the law. He has rebuilt a relationship with his grandmother and his sister. I have no knowledge regarding his sex life, nor is it any of my business.

CONCLUSION

The exercise of authority here, becomes a therapeutic matter: the most
Powerful way of acting upon the actions of others is to change the ways
In which they will govern themselves.
(Rose 1998, 64)

Summary

“Multiple polymorphous techniques of power,” (Foucault 1990B 11) are used in camp to govern sexuality. Camp defines what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behavior and institutes these definitions via multiple governing techniques. Sexuality is almost always defined as inappropriate unless such discourse is being guided by an adult authority figure. Not only an authority figure is necessary, but a supervisor, a figure who is exceptionally versed in the dominant discourses of camp. Such adults use the group process, and the implementation of “natural consequences” along with the discursive properties of control theory to create what Foucault calls a “morality of behaviors.”

The omnipresent possibility of the gaze is another tool of camp. Campers live within circular formations and darkness. They are objects of the counselor’s gaze, and knowing objects of the potential gaze of an unseen observer. Their very actions are the focus of the gaze as red flag indicators are used to define camper behavior. And as this gaze falls upon them from beyond, so the gaze insinuates

itself from within through the socialization of accountability, of confession among their peers. Thus, a powerful, normalizing influence motivating campers to interiorize socially acceptable behavior. (Foucault 1980)

Gate keeping is utilized to limit the influence of outside sexual discourses. Intense scrutiny is placed upon prospective campers and staff who may bring an undesirable element into camp. Any “significant” undesirable agent, an agent that is perceived to be out of the control of camp authorities, is removed from camp, removing the possibility of infection. This serves to homogenize perspectives of sexuality and masculinity among the camp staff and limiting the influence of multiple sexualities (Weeks 1986)

Props or sexual artifacts are removed from camp as well. Books that describe sexuality, sexual pictures, or even pictures of the human body that could be looked at outside of a sexual context, are deemed inappropriate. Songs, drawings, steamy letters and pictures from girlfriends might be the object of censorship. Sexual information is grossly limited by the adult influences in camp. Appropriate material is that which the adults allow.

In many ways, sexual behavior/expression can be placed at the top of a hierarchy of pathology. Though sexual exploration, according to most studies, is considered healthy and natural, it is up to adults to ensure that children develop in a particular way. Any influence that might “cause” a differential development is

pathology, is inappropriate. Sexuality takes its place even above violence as a locus subject to control.

Sexuality is treated as a special case. The group process is often bypassed if it is unable to serve a governing function on sexuality. Sexuality outside of the influence of adults is silenced and made invisible by authority figures where other issues are encouraged to be spoken. “Extreme” sexual issues are brought out of camp under the mistaken assumption that camp is not “equipped” to deal with them.

The hierachization of sexuality, however, also places sexual expression in a privileged position. Campers, aware of the significance of sexual discourse, and the stringent control applied to sexuality, find an effective tool of resistance. Sexual language and behavior is often used overtly in defiance of authority, or as a weapon of anger and revenge against peers. Covertly, campers create a backstage environment where they can tell their sexual stories and develop their sexual selves without the intervention of adult authority.

The above has been explored in this text. But what does this mean. Is it enough to describe the mechanics of these polymorphous techniques of power without elaborating upon their dynamics? The pervasiveness of sexuality in the lives of all human beings has been described in detail. The sexual characteristics, behaviors, excesses, pleasures, voices, and structures have been catalogued from the womb to the deathbed. Yet for the teens in this camp as well as teens in various

other institutions, sexuality is to be governed. Ultimately, the teens in this program are to govern themselves.

The Pursuit of Information

In the time of this study I have experienced a number of surprises, but none more than the shock I received in implementing a sex ed curriculum in camp. It was my opinion, and the opinion of others that it would be difficult to control the behaviors of the group when discussing sexual issues. Troubled teens would not be able to “handle” such a course. My experiences were quite the contrary. My daily curriculum was planned for approximately forty-five minutes to an hour. Sessions always approached an hour and a half, by which time I would have to end the lesson with questions remaining. The campers were infinitely curious and willing to talk about sex and sexuality in a relatively mature manner.

As campers realized that I was not uncomfortable discussing sexual issues and that they would not be ridiculed for their questions many approached me with personal inquiries. I was often the first to know when a camper was worried that he might have an STD. There was a span of time when I had not done the “Sexuality Education” program. During one discussion with two boys, one of whom was wondering if it was OK for him to pursue a romantic relationship with his third cousin, the other boy stated, “Chief Mike, we need you to start doing sex ed again.”

The teenage boys that I have dealt with were interested in getting sexual information from adults. They wanted to “know about” sex. They were curious about how their bodies worked. They were equally curious about how women’s bodies worked. Some expressed concern that they might hurt their girlfriends during sex. The boys were interested in more than the ‘scientia sexualis’ (Foucault 1990B). Inundated with scare tactics about AIDS and STD’s and precautionary tales of using birth control, they were interested in orgasm, “What does the clitoris do?” “What is a G spot?” They wanted to know how to prolong sex by controlling their ejaculation. “What if I masturbate too much?”

Much of this information is not available to campers in camp yet does constitute a body of knowledge that sexual “experts” deem necessary for a “healthy” sexuality. At what age is it appropriate for human beings to have access to this knowledge? Adults make certain assumptions about children, and about teenagers who are not children any more, but not quite adults (Baum 1976). Yet my experience has shown that these assumptions are not necessarily accurate.

Teens are viewed as being naïve about sex and sexuality. This, from my experience in camp is not necessarily true. The only naivete is in the way adults address sexuality with kids. The boys I’ve talked to appreciate the physical beauty of Jennifer Lopez, but don’t insist upon it in their girlfriends. They know that when a girl says “no” she means “no.” Their dreams involve getting married some day and having children. They fall in love, not “puppy love” but the real thing. They show

concern, not scorn, for their peers who have experienced sexual trauma. In all, I have experienced teens who are ready and willing to gain knowledge of sexuality.

Limiting their access to this knowledge is an adult way to force teens to develop in a particular way. They are to develop their selves, their sexual identity based upon the scarce resources accorded them from the program. They are to develop under the gaze and the guiding hand of adults. Yet this is contrary to the interest of the teens that I've studied. They espouse an interest in being themselves. "I want to be my own man!" Human beings are not born with "a sexuality." Sexuality is a "product of social and historical forces." (Weeks 1986, 15)

Teens are going to explore a diversity of sexual discourses in an ongoing process of developing their sexual identities, their own sexual stories. This will happen with or without adult guidance. Their sexual stories will be shaped by experience, hearsay, peer pressure, family obligations, abuse, the evening news, Playboy, their girlfriends, boyfriends, drugs, old wives tales, counselors, teachers, family members, bosses, introspection and any of a number of things. The presumed adult responsibility of making kids develop their sexualities in a particular way is akin to resisting the irresistible force. Teens are interested in adult guidance, make no mistake about it, but they are not interested in being controlled, and ultimately, they can't be. There will always be resistance; there are always other ways to receive a sexual knowledge that will become a part of an evolving sexual identity.

Masculinity

Camp's technologies for governing sexuality are a double-edged sword. "All societies have to make arrangements for the organization of erotic life." (Weeks 1986, 31) This is no less true for camp. All behaviors, especially in a therapeutic society focussing on behaviors, must be judged and an appropriate discourse defined. "A firm, consistently applied set of limits must be established to give staff, families, children and referring agencies a clear sense of the program's boundaries." (Fahlberg 1990, 149) So camp must determine the place and the voice of sexuality. However, I question its current place and its current voice. What implications does camp's governing strategies have on the development of masculinity of our clientele?

I have found that Ken Plummer's book Telling Sexual Stories offers an interesting perspective in addressing this question. Telling sexual stories is a significant, yet certainly not the sole, aspect of developing a masculinity. "We invent identities for ourselves and others and locate ourselves in these imaged maps." (Plummer 1995, 20) The boys in camp are desperately trying to develop a masculine identity. This identity manifests itself in the form of personal narrative. "I am masculine. This is why..." It is camp's goal to help develop this masculinity with the intent of making the boys responsible and productive citizens. "Individuals are free to the extent that they choose a life of responsible selfhood..." (Rose 1998,168)

But what about sexuality? A part of “I am masculine,” for these boys is “I am sexual.”

We must recognize the significance of telling sexual stories, or telling stories in general. Camp is involved in changing camper’s conceptions of selfhood. “I am a thug gangsta,” “I am a druggy,” “I am a loser.” This, as Plummer may say, involves getting kids to change their stories, including their sexual stories. “Sexual stories lay down the routes to a coherent past, mark off boundaries and contrasts in the present and provide both a channel and a shelter for the future.” (Plummer 1995,172)

The boys in camp are limited in appropriate discourse at camp. Their ability to tell their stories, to develop their personal narratives is equally limited. The dominant discourse of camp is certainly masculine. What the boys learn about sexuality, however, is that it is to be hidden from adults. The adults in their lives are either asexual, or liars. Their sexual feelings and thoughts, once expressed, are inappropriate. Sexuality must be a hidden part of masculinity. They are the only boys in the world who have homoerotic thoughts.

One boy approached me with grave concern. He had noticed a soft lump behind each one of his testicles. He was very afraid that he would not be able to have children. The boy had no knowledge of his body. God only knows how long he fretted about the discovery of his own epididymus. Another boy acted belligerent for a week then finally admitted to his counselor on the side that he was worried

about red bumps on his penis. They were normal skin irritations of puberty. How long do boys, young men, have to suffer a lack of knowledge about their own bodies?

Sexuality for these boys is to be hidden from adults, shared only among themselves. Or it is a form of resistance against adults. Is it no wonder that peers are more significant in a teen's sexual development than are adults? (DiBlasio and Benda 1994; Rodgers and Rowe 1990) Their peers, at least in camp, are the only ones they can turn to, the only ones that they can share and develop their stories. This is a situation created by adults and a consequence of these polymorphous techniques of power. Perhaps, however, when adults make themselves available to enter a sexual dialogue with teens they will be turned to.

Once implementing this sexuality education, though it closely mirrored the dominant discourse of camp, I was struck with many observations. The first observation I elaborated upon in the Introduction. The lessons became a conveyance for campers to tell their sexual stories, to share their sexualities, to define and develop their masculinity. This, unfortunately, I quickly squelched. Secondly, I noticed that I became, for quite a while, "the sex guy" at camp. Campers came to me with their sexual concerns and questions because they knew that they could. Thinking back about Ralph. He did not come forward with his testimonial because his group was functioning so well—it wasn't. He did not come forward because the dominant sexual discourse of camp was so liberal—it wasn't. He confessed this very

difficult episode of his life because he could, because he trusted his counselor to help him.

“Staff...need specific training regarding issues of sexuality.” (Northrup 1993, 11) Many counselors are uncomfortable with discussing sexuality with teens. This is no small statement considering the sanctions imposed upon direct child care workers who “cross the line,” between being supportive and being sexual. However, I get the feeling that there is more to this than state sanction. Adults are afraid to address sexual issues with adolescents (Baum 1976). Living with teens twenty-four hours a day, five days a week, however, almost demands that counselors be able to approach sexual issues with kids. Staff training should involve dealing with camper’s sexual issues. Camp should have a safe, non-punitive access to sexual information and dialogue with a caring adult. Perhaps then all of the energy that is expended upon governing sexual behaviors, and manipulating campers to govern their own behaviors in a particular way, can be conducted toward a more realistic and emotionally fulfilling end.

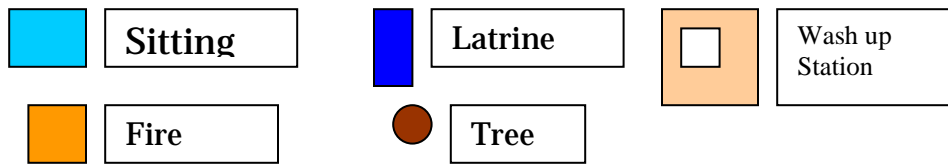
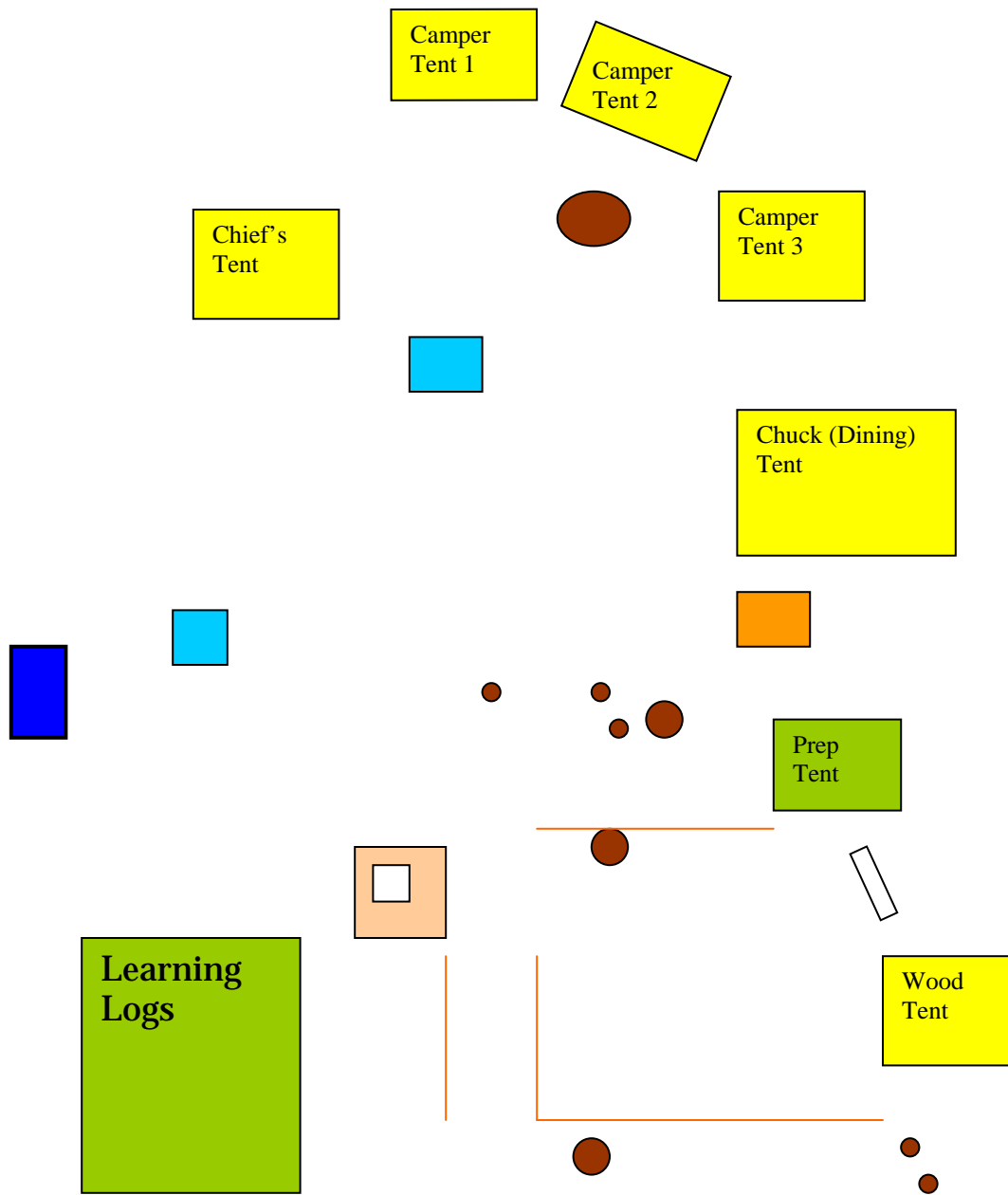


Figure 1. Map of Campsite

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