

PERSON-PLACE ENGAGEMENT AMONG  
RECREATION VISITORS:  
A Q-METHOD  
INQUIRY

By

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

In our everyday lives places are not experienced as independent, clearly defined entities that can be described simply in terms of their location or appearance.

Rather they are sensed in a chiaroscuro of setting, landscape, ritual, routine, other people, personal experiences, care and concern for home and in the context of other places ... (Relph, 1976, p. 3)

This statement represents the phenomenological nature of place. Inquiries into outdoor recreation place have been largely focused on setting attributes and the various activities supported by the outdoor setting. In a different approach Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, and Watson (1992) attempted to discover affective attachment to place among guests of wilderness areas:

The place perspective...recognizes that resources are not only raw materials to be inventoried and molded into a recreation opportunity, but also, and more important, places with histories, places that people care about, places that for many people embody a sense of belonging and purpose that give meaning to life. (p. 44)



According to Relph (1976) place is constructed out of a “concentration of our intentions, our attitudes, purposes and experiences.” (p. 43) Recreation and leisure represent arenas of personally chosen concentrations of these human attributes and offer a richness of opportunity for research in subjectivity of response to nearby open spaces.

The idea of a sense of place can be viewed from various perspectives. Jacob & Schreyer (1980) used the term “resource specificity” to mean “the importance an individual attaches to the use of a particular recreation resource.” They said that the individual’s choice of recreation site will vary with “1) a person’s range of experience which affects the evaluation of the resource’s physical attributes as unique or common, 2) feelings of possession and the role of a place as central life interest, and 3) its connotations of status” (p. 373). Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, and Watson (1992) focused on the outdoor setting as “the context within which recreation takes place” (p. 29), and Lee (1972) concluded that “outdoor recreational settings might best be understood in terms of the meanings assigned to them by particular sociocultural groups” (p. 68).

The interplay between person and environment can in time produce a person-place bond that may or may not be consciously recognized by the person. The nature and strength of this connection may provide a behavioral basis for conflict between recreational participants if “the cause of one’s dissatisfaction is identified as another group or individual’s behavior.” (Jacob & Schreyer, 1980, p. 369) There are expectations inherent in a person’s relationship with a preferred outdoor recreation setting. When these expectations are negated by stimuli from other visitors to the site, dissatisfaction ensues and recreational displacement results, either physically or psychically.

Multiple factors make up a person-place relationship: physical, biological, ecological, cultural, historical, and psychological. According to Lutts (1985) these factors imbue each location with its “unique spirit of place” (p. 38). Developing a sense of place requires time and communication between a person and the elements and features of a geographic site. Subsequently a sense of place becomes a part of the person.

Further, even when a sense of place is not a conscious perception, it can elicit an analogous response in another place similar to the one originally known. That is, a sense of place achieved through direct and intimate interaction with the living and nonliving components of a site is transferable to some degree. A receptive and responsive person carries place memory to new locations and finds new expressions for it. Thus, even though society is increasingly mobile, experiencing multiple relocations of households, a person is able to become *placed* anew, or *re-placed*. Snyder (1990) said, “Our place is part of what we are. Yet even a “place” has a kind of fluidity: it passes through space and time ...” (p. 27)

Experiencing place cannot be separated from esthetic perception. Humans are not only stimulus-seeking organisms with pleasure responses but also “social, meaning-construing beings” (Gee, 1994, p. 116). Seamon (1976) used the phrase “experiential dialogue with the environment” (p. 289) and recommended that imaginative literature be used as a source of data for investigating the phenomenon of person-place relationships, recognizing that the arts in general can contribute to a better understanding of the subjective “experience of knowing nature” (p. 289). This search for understanding of lived experience is exemplified by Gussow (1971) in the introduction to an anthology of American landscape paintings: “The catalyst that converts any physical location—any

environment if you will—into a place, is the process of experiencing deeply. A place is a piece of the whole environment that has been claimed by feelings” (p. 27).

An issue of *Orion* (Russell, 1995) features a special section, “The place where you live,” which includes a selection of passages composed by writers and other artists. The passages are expressions of their responses to places with which they have personal histories. The diversity of description is remarkable and points to the richness of possibility for ferreting out subjective factors that operate to give a person a sense of place.

The German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) presented the life-world as the intersubjective world of sensing subjects. For the lay person, reading the writings of Husserl poses significant difficulty, and it is fortunate that there are interpreters to make his ideas more accessible. Abram (1996) provides an explication of Husserl’s term *Lebenswelt*, which is translated into English as *life-world*:

The life-world is the world of our immediately lived experience, as we live it, prior to all our thoughts about it. It is that which is present to us in our everyday tasks and enjoyments—reality as it engages us before being analyzed by our theories and our science. The life-world is the world that we count on without necessarily paying it much attention, the world of the clouds overhead and the ground underfoot, of getting out of bed and preparing food and turning on the tap for water. Easily overlooked, this primordial world is always already there when we begin to reflect or philosophize. It is not a private, but a collective, dimension—the common field of our lives and the other lives with which ours are

entwined—and yet it is profoundly ambiguous and indeterminate, since our experience of this field is always relative to our situation within it. The life-world is thus the world as we organically experience it in its enigmatic multiplicity and open-endedness, prior to conceptually freezing it into a static space of “facts”—prior, indeed, to conceptualizing it in any complete fashion...

The life-world is thus peripherally present in any thought or action we undertake. Yet whenever we attempt to *explain* this world conceptually, we seem to forget our active participation within it. Striving to represent the world, we inevitably forfeit its direct presence. It was Husserl’s genius to realize that the assumption of objectivity had led to an almost total eclipse of the life-world in the modern era, to a nearly complete forgetting of this living dimension in which all of our endeavors are rooted. (p. 40-41)

With this frame of reference, it is easy to grasp the power of childhood experiences to shape a way of perceiving. The sensorial receptivity, the drive to explore, and the absence of ideology allow a child’s being to absorb, record, and retain information in pre-language form. “For the young child, the eternal questioning of the nature of the real is largely a wordless dialectic between self and world.” (Cobb, 1977, p. 31)

Even after basic language skills are acquired, there can still be time for interaction in the life-world without the intellectual constraints of an objective cultural mindset. There can still be time for a young child to experience *being in* nature provided

opportunity for such exploration and engagement is available. It may be that such a relationship between self and place can develop in any environment; however, the out-of-doors provides a vast, rich sensory palette with which a child can interact and explore endlessly, unrestricted by fixed perception and thought.

### *Rationale for the Study*

There is a continuing process of disappearance of rural lands, including rural recreation sites. Beleaguered by fiscal shortfalls and under pressure from urban sprawl, rural landscape (also called middle landscape and garden landscape) is rapidly disappearing. Along with the disappearance of rural lands comes the loss of recreation opportunity in relatively natural sites that are accessible to urban dwellers seeking leisure experiences in natural outdoor settings. Such sites of nearby nature offer the milieu in which some urban dwellers find restorative engagement.

Among visitors to rural recreation sites, there are those who purposefully and consistently choose areas that have a natural appearance and provide a quiet, unhurried atmosphere. It may be that, for these recreationists, the physical place itself is the primary facility for leisure engagement, the vehicle through which their satisfying leisure experience is achieved.

Even when a site is not sacrificed to real estate development, budget decision, political stance, or other policy-making factor, it is subject to increased development as a recreation site due to population pressure and management practices that fail to fully recognize the needs of those citizens who find leisure expression in natural spaces. When

the sites are public spaces, an agency's constituency is a rich source of input and feedback to inform management decisions. "To plan is to engage in a politics of place and in the public sector this underscores the necessity to move from a top-down, expert-driven management style to one that is more bottom-up and inclusive. The redesign of planning/decision making processes and institutions needs to be radically participatory and democratic." (Williams, 2002, p. 365)

One way in which management misses the mark in providing for recreation visitors who are drawn to outdoor sites with a comparatively natural appearance and a peaceful ambience is found in the traditional methods for gathering data on visitor need. Research instruments are typically survey questionnaires that ask closed questions and collect quantitative data. They ask such questions as how often a person visits the site, how many are usually in the party, and what activities the visitor pursues (hike, bike, canoe, fish, swim, camp, etc.). Such data informs decisions regarding the number of built features in a park.

A more inclusive questionnaire might ask questions such as whether the visitor would enjoy stargazing, discovering a spiral orchid, listening for night sounds of animals, or watching sunsets. Data collected from subjective inquiries might illuminate characteristic preferences of visitors who choose to spend leisure time in outdoor areas that offer landscapes of naturalness, places where natural features predominate over manufactured features. Such data might identify a population of recreation visitors for whom the character of the place itself is the recreation facility, visitors who would be displaced by perceived over-development. Thus, the nature of the experiential dialogue between person and place has consequences for management of outdoor recreation sites.

Some researchers have said that the outdoor setting is the context for a recreationist's experience. (Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992, p. 29) While the setting has a physical reality, it is also emergent in the experience of each visitor. The context is not simply the setting. The context is the relationship, the interaction between person and place. Out of this interactive relationship, the perceived setting emerges in the experience (past and present) of the participant and is, therefore a phenomenon expressed uniquely in the individual. It follows, then, that management personnel for recreation in rural natural areas would be concerned with subjectivity of response to nearby open spaces. In these places management practices should take into account the fact that, for many, if not most, visitors to these relatively natural settings, the place is paramount in the operant subjectivity of the individual.

As relentless development and urban sprawl consume the rural tracts that cradle recreation sites in natural settings, citizens lose accessibility to recreation and leisure opportunity. Kunstler (1993) alludes to a pervasive societal loss when he says that profligate development, much of which sits astride recently converted rural land, is dissolving "such age-old social arrangements as the distinction between city life and country life" (p. 15). The phrase "build it and they will come" (from the movie *Field of Dreams*) can be applied to the ever-expanding network of highways. Where the roads go the people go. New highways routinely generate more vehicular traffic than the highways are designed for and a perpetual cycle is maintained.

Where there was once a distinctly undeveloped area separating a city from outlying farm and grazing lands, there is increasingly an area of urban sprawl with a growing density of development. The area between a city and regional small towns and

villages is consumed by a process of ongoing clearing and building until the towns and villages are subsumed into a megalopolis as annexations or as bedroom communities. The middle landscape that formerly buffered city and country from each other disappears. Farmers and ranchers grow increasingly dependent on the city for goods and services while urban dwellers with affluent means build more and more residences in the country. Hiss (1991) notes that the rural landscapes (he calls them “working landscapes”) “are often the environments that have the least protection and are disappearing the most rapidly.” (p. 195)

Between Oklahoma City and Edmond in Oklahoma, the sprawl process has merged the two cities and consumed a landscape in which people who are now middle-aged used to go quail hunting. Today one of the major features of the area is Quail Springs Mall. Population pressure and commercial enterprise consume the middle landscape that once offered natural environments for leisure ventures and childhood explorations.

The nation has National Wildlife Refuges and National Preserves set aside for nonhuman species. The need may be just as urgent for human refuges in the rural landscape to provide respite from the stresses of human society and to satisfy psychic hunger for undefined contacts. As Terry Tempest Williams (1991) reminds us,

The landscapes we know and return to become places of solace. We are drawn to them because of the stories they tell, because of the memories they hold, or simply because of the sheer beauty that calls us back again and again. (p. 24)



Research in the field of outdoor recreation can serve the needs of recreationists throughout the nation by studying the various ways that outdoor leisure visitors engage with their preferred settings, what benefits accrue, and how such findings can inform managing agencies.

### *Statement of the Problem*

In the Stillwater, Oklahoma, area there are four widely used lake-based outdoor recreation sites: Lake Carl Blackwell, Lake McMurtry, Sooner Lake, and Boomer Lake. Boomer, lying within the City of Stillwater, has an urban character with such sights as people playing disc golf and people walking, roller-blading, or biking on the concrete path that rings the small lake. Sooner is a large catchment area impounded to provide a cooling reservoir at the Oklahoma Gas and Electric (OG&E) power plant. It is a favored area where migrating shore birds stop off for a while and where a very small population of loons reside throughout the year. McMurtry is a laid-back, tucked-away sort of park that draws the quieter visitors who want to dialogue with nature in a tranquil setting. Blackwell tends to attract exuberant social activity and has a higher level of site development than the other three. Appendix D lists physical features of the four lakes. Subjects for the study reported herein are visitors to Lake McMurtry Park.

Lake McMurtry Park, the study site for this project, is a City of Stillwater property. Twice in recent history the City has attempted to unburden itself of this property, while many citizens consider it a treasure. On both occasions citizens have acted to retain the park as city property.

Why do residents of Stillwater consider Lake McMurtry Park worth retaining? What is it about the place that brings visitors back in preference to other lake sites? The character of Lake McMurtry and the surrounding terrain is significantly different from the characters of other lakes in the area. Lake McMurtry has a natural appearance despite its origin as a flood water impoundment site. It has variety of landscape, affording tree-studded areas and grassy expanses, canopied woods and open spaces, vistas and cozy spots.

The Lake has an “east side” and a “west side” with differences in ambiance. The two entrances each provide a dramatic sense of passage *from* somewhere *to* somewhere. The route to the west side passes by cultivated fields and grazing acreages on the way to the access road which then twists and curves its way past fields of grass on one side and groves of trees on the other. The section road that leads to the east entrance is six miles of undulating pavement, and the access road in the park presents a downhill, panoramic view of the lake area that pleasantly surprises first-time visitors.

There are opportunities for various modes of interaction with the environs: hiking, biking, picnicking, canoeing, fishing, watching sunsets, camping, reading, visiting with a friend—all in a quiet, slow-paced atmosphere. There is a well-routed loop trail for hiking on each side, east and west, of the park. The trail on the east side has greater variety. It traverses all of the different types of terrain and vegetation, exhibiting variety in course, features, and views. It invites a visitor into a walkabout.

What do visitors to Lake McMurtry value about the park to such an extent that they would resist and thwart efforts to sell it to other agencies that would use it for decidedly different purposes? Qualitative data from previously conducted interviews

(Appendix C) show the range of responses that McMurtry visitors offered during depth interviews. Given the character of the study site and the verbal responses received during interviews with persons who visit the site, what can one learn further about the manner in which leisure seekers experience the Lake McMurtry environment?

If rural natural areas are to be retained and if needs of citizens are to be served through relationship with nearby nature, investigation can seek to answer such questions. This study is one effort to illuminate kinds of interaction with place that a researcher can discern from visitors to rural outdoor recreation sites characterized through visitor perceptions as having landscape naturalness and ambient peacefulness.

It was demonstrated in interviews with visitors to natural areas (Appendix C) that such questions are difficult for recreationists to answer. The subjects interviewed had not spent time thinking about person-place dialogue and phenomenological interaction. They go to Lake McMurtry because being there influences them in some desired manner. It is their way of being in the world. To call into consciousness and to articulate their subjective ways of interacting with elements of a place is simply not on their individual agendas. For some persons, finding words to express themselves in response to questions they had never considered required effort that the interviewer observed and appreciated.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to discover ways in which visitors to a rural recreation site, Lake McMurtry Park, engage themselves with the features of the site. Because of the affective, experiential nature of person-place engagement, Q methodology

is the research method of choice. It provides for direct measurement of subjective response.

“Q methodology provides a framework for a science of subjectivity that incorporates procedures for data collection (Q sort technique) and analysis (factor analysis)” (Brown, 2004a). Often referred to simply as “Q”, this methodology is a vehicle for the study of human communications. It is a body of principles that are used to examine subjective constructs such as preferences, attitudes, values, perceptions, opinions. It allows subjects to speak from their internal motivations on ideas that cannot be normalized between persons. It is *of* a person rather than *about* a person.

Raw Q data is obtained using the Q sort technique. A Q sort is an ordering scheme wherein a person can systematically express subjective responses to stimuli which are typically printed statements that the participant rank-orders under a normal curve on a continuum of self-reference between two poles, for example, “most like me” and “least like me” or “strongly like” and “strongly dislike”. Considerations of research method will be dealt with in greater detail in Chapter III.

Discovery of ways in which visitors to a rural recreation site interact with elements of the site can inform decision-making agencies and persons responsible for provision of such facilities and management of them. Information that addresses facility needs of recreationists and social benefits that the facilities offer to the citizenry can help custodians of recreation sites maximize benefits to patrons of the facilities. This study rests on the premise, suggested in interview data (Appendix C), that there is a population of leisure seekers for whom the place itself is the primary facility for leisure experience. The purpose of this study is to discover ways in which participants engage with the place.

The present study was undertaken as the second of a proposed series of projects that would, if results warranted, serve as the foundation for the development, in a stepwise process, of a research protocol to characterize person-place engagement at outdoor recreation sites. The progression of study can be schematized thusly:

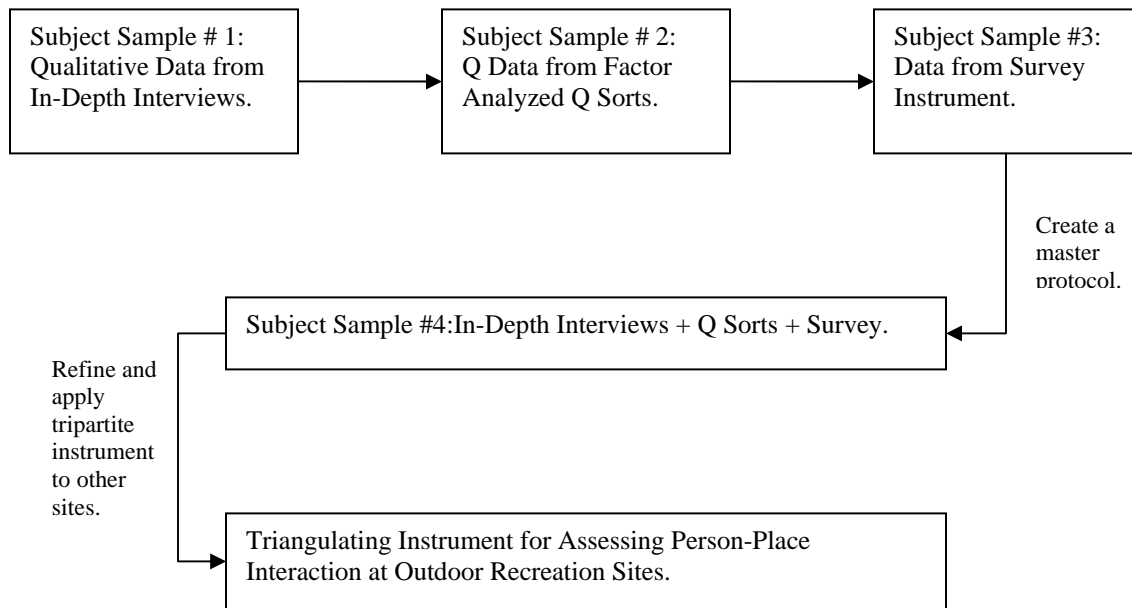


Figure 1. Sequence of studies. It is proposed that such a sequence of research trials would provide a means for developing a triangulating instrument for characterizing the ways in which visitors to outdoor recreation sites engage with environmental elements.

Should an effective instrument be realized from the progression outlined in Figure 1, it could inform management personnel interested in determining how to balance preservation of natural features with introduction of built features and landscape modifications. It would assist personnel who seek to support both tangible and intangible elements in accord with preferences of visitors to a site. One of the tasks that Williams and Patterson (1996) articulate regarding the contributions of natural and social scientists to ecosystem management “is to develop practical knowledge and tools for managing the meanings of specific places in the landscape” (p. 516).

### *Assumptions*

Identifiable assumptions in the present study include:

1. Q methodology is an appropriate means of eliciting participants' modes of subjective engagement with recreation place.
2. Stimulus statements taken from interviews (Appendix C) constitute an appropriate Q sample for this study.
3. Participants in the study responded in good faith and with honesty, having been assured of anonymity.

### *Research Questions*

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. Given the character of the study site and the verbal responses received during interviews of subjects who visit the site, what can one discover further about the manner in which leisure seekers dialogue with the Lake McMurtry environment?
2. Does the data reveal modes of person-place interaction?

### *Definition of Terms*

For the purposes of this study the following definitions apply:

- Landscape: “A view or vista of scenery on land.” (American Heritage Dictionary, Second College Edition, 1982, p. 713)
- Leisure: “Leisure is self-determined action with primary meaning contained within the experience.” (Kelly & Godbey, 1992, p. 20)
- Play: Play “is like art in the symbolic potential to be more meaningful than ordinary life just because it may suggest the meanings embedded in ordinary life ... is like leisure in being action with its meaning focused on the experience ... has connotations that stress its special world of order and symbols that make possible action that is open to the creation of the novel and the innovative.” (Kelly & Godbey, 1992, p 23)
- Recreation: Recreation is “voluntary nonwork activity that is organized for the attainment of personal and social benefits including restoration and social cohesion.” (Kelly & Godbey, 1992, p. 21).
- Recreational displacement: When a visitor finds conditions at a recreation site undesirable and seeks a similar site without the undesirable conditions, the transfer of visitorship is referred to as recreational displacement.
- Lived experience: The immediate, reciprocal experience a person has with any environment prior to subjecting the experience to mental processes such as reflecting, analyzing, and conceptualizing. Our sensing bodies encounter the world in reciprocal relationship: we experience the tension of interface and the

exchange of communication with our surroundings. Lived experience is the raw material of phenomenological human science.

- Constructed experience: Lived experience that has been perceptually processed through psychological and social memories. A person can accord meaning to constructed experience.
- Person-place interaction: The type of engagement a person practices within a given place setting.
- Place attachment: A person-place bonding that invokes identification with a specific place.
- Sense of place: A constellation of personal, social, and temporal affective experiences and cognitions that blend to give a person a set of remembered and anticipated responses to a place.
- Q Methodology: A conceptual framework for a discovery mode of research in which one explores operant subjectivity. "Subjectivity is ubiquitous, and Q methodology provides for its systematic measure." (Brown, 1993, p. 106)
- Q sort: A technique for transforming a person's viewpoint into a rank-ordering of self-referential responses in an array that can be treated mathematically. Data obtained in the analysis process is then interpreted by the investigator.
- Q sort deck: The packet of cards on which the Q sample statements are printed. It serves as a physical aid in a Q sort procedure.
- Concourse: "The flow of communicability surrounding any topic" (Brown, 1993, p. 94). The concourse of a topic is the domain of verbal and nonverbal



expressions of human response to that topic. For the purposes of a study, a researcher can develop a focused concourse relevant to the study at hand.

- Q set, Q sample: A group of stimuli taken from the concourse and used to elicit self-referent responses from participants in the study.
- P set, P Sample: The sample of persons selected to participate in a Q method study.
- Condition of instruction: What the researcher tells the participants to do, think, or remember while conducting a Q sort. The instructions are designed to establish a mental context within which the person will make decisions while assigning rank to responses.
- Factor analysis: A mathematical treatment that “examines a correlation matrix ... and, in the case of Q methodology, determines how many basically different Q sorts are in evidence” (Brown, 1993, p. 111). Factor analysis is performed on the Q sort correlation matrix.
- Factors: Families of subjective response extracted via factor analysis.
- PQMethod: Freeware that runs under Windows and mathematically treats Q data.
- PCQ: Commercial software that runs under Windows and mathematically treats Q data.

## CHAPTER II

### Review of Selected Literature

This chapter will present some ideas from the writings of other researchers for the purpose of constructing a philosophical framework to serve as context for the present study. The purpose of this study is (a) to discover ways in which persons who visit Lake McMurtry Park interact with the elements of the park environment and (b) to identify any modes of person-place interaction that might emerge from the data.

#### *Sociology of Leisure*

Following its 1989 Renewable Resources Assessment, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service reported that in this country there are six hundred ninety million acres of federal land open to recreation and more than fifty four million acres of recreational lands under management of state and local governments. They further reported that “private rural lands open for recreation, other than industry-owned parcels, are declining due to conversion to other uses and to increased closures or more restrictive access policies” (Cordell, Bergstrom, Hartmann, & English, 1990, p.7). Public land holdings include a broad range of terrains available for

leisure engagement. Examples of such terrains are forests, mountains, deserts, ocean fronts, prairie lands, rivers, lakes, swamps, caves and canyons.

Meanings that different researchers assign to the terms *leisure* and *recreation* vary and overlap to such an extent that the two terms will be used more or less interchangeably in the present report since the issue at hand is one of how persons engage with natural elements of an outdoor area as evidenced by subjective data. This study is not concerned with labeling a person's experience as recreation, leisure, or play. This project examines the lived experience of person-place engagement at a rural, lake-based recreation area.

Leisure experience involves a variety of factors such as personal traits, individual abilities and preferences, personal experience history; cultural influences, social fabric, social institutions, economic standing, and responsibilities to home and job. Given this web of intersecting and interacting factors inherent in leisure activity, an interpretive, or symbolic interaction, approach (Kelly, 1994) has been applied to the study of leisure.

As Kelly & Godbey (1992) put it “... a sociology of leisure requires a dialectical approach that incorporates both meaningful action and the organizational structures of the society. From this dialectical perspective, *sociology is the study of action and interaction in the context of the forces and organizational structures of a society*” (p. 24). Under this umbrella the researcher can consider a host of experiential influences that impinge on selection and nature of a leisure experience.

Increasingly, natural resource management agencies are giving credence to concerns that call for an ecosystem approach rather than the traditional focus on commodity production and harvest. One of the largest and most recognizable of public

management institutions providing outdoor recreation opportunity to visitors is the USDA Forest Service.

“ ... In June of 1992 the Chief of the USDA Forest Service, Dale Robertson, announced that his agency would be moving to an ‘ecosystem approach’ for the management of the National Forests. The Forest Service was the first agency in the world to officially declare adoption of an ecosystem approach to natural resource management” (Butler & Koontz, 2002, p.2). The USDA Forest Service was coming to terms with its management practices at the same time that participation in resource-based leisure activity was increasing. In the time span 1965 to 1988, visitorship of recreationists to federal lands increased by approximately two hundred fifty million visitor days (Schreyer & Driver, 1989, p. 385).

Managing a geographic area as an ecosystem provides a context within which management practices can accord value to natural features and processes and can accord value to the quality of experience available to a recreationist. Placing value on ecosystem maintenance and legitimizing the needs of visitors for personally beneficial leisure engagement with recreation sites presents a vast and fertile area for research into leisure experiences in natural areas (Ewert, 1996).

This expanding arena of resource-based research takes into account the emotional and symbolic elements of a chosen activity as well as the emotional and symbolic elements of a chosen place (Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992). Thus, the sociology of leisure becomes a concern of managing agencies of natural resource areas that are available to outdoor recreationists.

As one might logically suspect, visitors to natural resource-base recreation areas are persons who have the time available and the financial means for reaching a site and are also unable to pay the high cost of visiting a privately held recreation area. Cichetti (1972) found that the extent of participation in outdoor recreation correlated positively with income and negatively with age. Constraints imposed by age and income limit choice of site and choice of activity for leisure purpose. Furthermore, the ability to get there appears to be the major distinguishing demographic among outdoor recreationists visiting public natural resource-based areas. With respect to who did or did not participate in forest-resource activities, Kelly (1980) found that less than eight percent of the variance resulted from the combined influences of occupation, income, education, age, race, gender, and family life cycle. It seems, then, that visitor profiles for forest-based recreation are not richly diverse.

Personnel in resource management agencies would like to be able to predict levels of participation in outdoor activities available at public sites. Unfortunately, “the activities least predictable are those that are informal, readily accessible, and requiring no skills not acquired in almost any community, family, or neighborhood” (Kelly, 1980, p.134). The site chosen for the present study is far enough out of town (ten miles or so) to require transportation plus an expenditure of time and dollars. Once there, the recreationist need have no accomplished skill level to enjoy the place.

### *Personal Benefits*

A dictionary definition of *benefit* is “Something that promotes or enhances well-being” (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1996, p. 173). In whatever context one defines benefit, a common denominator among definitions is the idea that it represents a change in state that is desirable. Schreyer and Driver (1989, p. 388) use the terms “benefits,” “gains,” “improved conditions,” and “desirable consequences” interchangeably.

Using data from many years of USDA Forest Service research projects involving data collection from outdoor recreationists, Schreyer and Driver (1989) constructed a list of 17 “experience preference domains” identified from visitor satisfaction responses on scaled instruments. These domains are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

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Recreation Experience Preference Scales Making Up the Recreation  
Experience Preference Domains (shown in bold)<sup>a</sup>

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**Enjoy nature**

- A. Scenery
- B. General nature experience
- C. Undeveloped natural area

**Physical fitness<sup>b</sup>**

**Reduce tension**

- A. Tension release
- B. Slow down mentally
- C. Escape role overloads
- D. Escape daily routine

**Escape noise and crowds**

- A. Tranquility/solitude
- B. Privacy
- C. Escape crowds
- D. Escape noise
- E. Isolation

**Outdoor learning**

- A. General learning
- B. Exploration
- C. Learn geography of area
- D. Learn about nature

**Share similar values**

- A. Be with friends
- B. Be with people having similar values

**Independence**

- A. Independence
- B. Autonomy
- C. Being in control

**Family kinship<sup>b</sup>**

**Introspection**

- A. Spiritual
- B. Personal values

**Be with considerate people<sup>b</sup>**

**Achievement/stimulation**

- A. Reinforcing self confidence/self image
- B. Social recognition
- C. Skill development
- D. Competence testing
- E. Seeking excitement/stimulation
- F. Self-reliance

**Physical rest<sup>b</sup>**

**Teach/lead others**

- A. Teaching-sharing skills
- B. Leading others

**Risk taking<sup>b</sup>**

**Risk reduction**

- A. Risk moderation
- B. Risk prevention

**Meet new people**

- A. Meet new people
- B. Observe new people

**Nostalgia<sup>b</sup>**

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Source: Driver and Brown, 1987.

<sup>a</sup> The items that make up these scales have been tested for many types of validity and reliability, with reasonably good results.

<sup>b</sup> These domains have only one scale, with the same title as the domain.

In the same paper, Schreyer and Driver presented eight other tables of various categories and taxonomies. These authors document the range and complexity of personal experience and potential value that resource-based outdoor recreation holds for humans. Much research has been focused on specific categories of benefit and leisure modes at the individual level. As the demand for leisure opportunity in natural resource areas increases, the need to integrate the human element into resource management has been acknowledged, and social science research increasingly informs public land management actions. (Williams & Patterson, 1996; Williams & Stewart, 1998; Yung, Freimund, & Belsky, 2003).

Regarding the human element, Schroeder (1996) has pointed out that researchers can gain insight into person-place relationship by investigating the ways in which people engage with an environment. Identifying and making provision for various types of person-place engagement can be especially relevant to an agency that wants to provide and manage regional outdoor recreation sites by means that promote visitor satisfaction and maintain site quality. It is easy to overdevelop a site, and it is easy to degrade the natural features of a site. It is harder to reverse the effects of such change.

### *Benefits to Society*

The value of leisure and recreation to society is an indistinct area in which one can infer societal benefits as derivatives of personal benefits. Recreationists who achieve greater self-awareness, increased levels of self-confidence, more effective ways of dealing with stress, better interpersonal communication skills, increased physical



conditioning, and any number of other such self-enhancement competences while participating in natural resource-based recreation and leisure will, one might reasonably expect, transfer such increased levels of effectiveness as an individual into relationships with family, community members, co-workers, and others. (Kaplan, 1995; Pohl, Borrie, & Patterson, 2000; Orsega-Smith, Mowen, Payne, & Godbey, 2004)

Restored or increased health of mind, spirit, and body in the individual makes the same available to the person's web of social participation. Also, socially responsible leisure can be antidotal to socially unacceptable leisure activities such as vandalism, disturbing the peace, and drug use.

There is a clarion declaration of this latter point in *Stewards of access, custodians of choice* (Dustin, McAvoy, & Schultz, 1995, pp. 59-61). In July of 1967, the first author, then a college student at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, was studying, with wine glass in hand, on a sun-drenched balcony. Suddenly noticing what appeared to be a distant mass of smoke rising into the atmosphere, he turned on a radio and got the news that Detroit was burning. Another urban riot of the 1960's was underway.

"In the wake of those riots, the Kerner Commission identified the principal factors contributing to the civil upheaval. Included among them was 'poor recreation facilities and programs' (Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968)...as one of the major contributing factors...Although poor recreation facilities and programs were listed as a major grievance in 17 of 20 cities experiencing disturbances [National Advisory Commission], only lip service was paid to their rectification" (Dustin, McAvoy, & Schultz, 1995, p. 60).

As Kelly and Godbey (1992) put it, “Leisure is not just individual action and experience ... Leisure is a significant social space in which actors develop community ... In social action in which the meaning is on the experience rather than the product, individuals explore, create, diversify, cement, and express relationship with other people” (p. 26).

### *Leisure Experience*

The concept of leisure experience does not lend itself to sharp, clear definition. It is a constellation of personal responses to a time and place and all impinging influences, past and present. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to consider features of the experience that have been put forth. Kaplan (1975) pointed out six philosophical perspectives that give rise to different bodies of consideration with respect to defining leisure. These six perspectives are humanistic, therapeutic, quantitative, institutional, epistemological, and sociological. Kelly and Godbey (1992) articulated these six perspectives thusly:

The humanistic or classic approach is based on a concept of being human that requires freedom of action. The therapeutic perspective assumes that people are less than healthy and require some remediation. The quantitative model presumes that leisure as time can be identified by the form of time usage. The institutional concept views leisure as one element of a social system made up of institutions with complementary functions. The epistemological idea is based on the values embedded within a particular culture. And the sociological approach is based on the view that leisure and everything else is defined in a social context by social actors who are creating their own interpreted universe of meaning. These

metaphors are more than a list of alternatives. Rather, each begins with a distinctive view of people and the world. (p. 14)

More recently the social-psychological perspective has arisen out of overlapping interests that psychology and social sciences share. Since the basic unit of study in sociology is the social system and the basic unit of study in psychology is the individual (Iso-Ahola, 1980, p. 16), social psychology emerges from an interest in the study of individuals in social relationship. Still, social relationship is envired. Social interaction occurs in an environment.

Environmental psychology, an independent area of psychological study, is “unique with respect to its social unit by place orientation. Using a systems approach, behavior is studied within the context that it naturally occurs, because complex causal relationships are assumed to exist between the environment and behavior” (Aiello, Thompson, & Baum, 1981, p.425). The interdisciplinary perspective and the eclecticism of its research methodology give environmental psychology strong relevance to research in outdoor recreation, and now that environmental psychology has come to prominence in the area of resource-based outdoor recreation (Williams & Patterson, 1996), an eclectic nexus of psychological perspective is available to enrich leisure research.

As Neulinger (1981) says, “Leisure, no matter how defined, is part of the person’s total life experience. It is subject to all of the forces, personal or environmental, impinging on the individual, and in turn, it leaves its mark on the individual’s life-style” (p. 113). This statement highlights the need for a broad spectrum of research studies that approach leisure experience from a variety of viewpoints. As more and more viewpoints are brought to bear on an issue, an ecologically minded professional can construct a

bundle of thought—a psychic hologram, so to speak—that supports inclusive and circumspect vision.

The present study looks at leisure experience using Q Methodology, which incorporates phenomenology and hermeneutics in examining subjectivity, all of which are embedded in the above-mentioned nexus of psychological perspective. Such perspective seems to have gained expression and acceptance alongside the increasing interest in research that incorporates subjective and intuitive elements. (Fishwick & Vining, 1992; Henderson, 1991; Henderson & Bedini, 1995; Schroeder, 1991; Williams & Harvey, 2001; Wilson & Slack, 1989).

### *Sense of Place*

The term *sense of place* is an imprecise term that is used often and in a multitude of contexts. It has no standard definition among researchers. Steele (1981) defines his terminology thusly:

“Place” has two aspects: the *sense of place*, which is the particular experience of a person in a particular setting, (feeling stimulated, excited, joyous, expansive, and so forth); and the *spirit of place*, which is the combination of characteristics that gives some locations a special “feel” or personality (such as a spirit of mystery or of identity with a person or group). (p. 11)

This implies an interaction between person and place that elicits subjective responses in the person. The responses “include feelings, perceptions, behaviors, and outcomes associated with one’s being in that location” (p. 12). Physical features of the place and

attributes of the person interact to yield a sense of place, a set of responses that may be experienced consciously or unconsciously.

In general, definitions of “sense of place” include reference to physical environment, social context, human activity, and psychology of individuals. (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977; Greider & Garkovich, 1994; Williams & Stewart, 1998) “Empirical research, however, has neglected the role of the physical environment, focusing on place meanings and attachment as products of shared behaviors and cultural processes” (Stedman, 2003a, p. 671). It is important that researchers continue to seek new insights into place features and how they influence the experiences of recreationists. “A full understanding of recreation is unlikely to be achieved in the absence of an appreciation of the attributes of the places in which people recreate, and of the ways in which environmental factors contribute to and detract from the qualities of recreational experiences” (Wall, 1989, p. 453).

### *Individual Experience of Environment*

Research into the ways by which humans experience environment is constrained by the failure to fully comprehend our embeddedness in natural processes. As a result, the human regard for environment is one of separation and dichotomy. In the words of Ittelson, Franck, and O’Hanlon (1975),

The conventional wisdom which most of us bring to our study of environmental experience separates man from environments, divides man into responder and

builder, divides environments first into natural and manmade and then each of these into environment as stimulus and environment as product. (p. 191)

More than three centuries of dualistic regard for human presence in Earth is a monumental barrier to holistic treatment of human-environment inquiry. As Ittelson et al. (1975) suggest, it is important for researchers to be aware of and wary of their presuppositions with respect to studies involving subjective engagement in environments. These authors analyzed data from three person-environment research projects: a laboratory experiment, a field investigation, and a naturalistic inquiry. It is their contention that as many angles of view as possible are needed to illuminate truths within the complexity of how humans and local environments interact. A multiplicity of perspectives can help generate a holistic picture of human engagement with environment.

Ittelson et al. (1975) name five modes of perception by which individuals experience environment:

1. Physical place. Environment is external to the person. This mode is represented by traditional science.
2. Self. A merging of self and environment affords the mystical being-one-with.
3. Social system. Within this perception mode, a person elevates relationships with other humans to primacy above all other enviroining factors.
4. Emotional space. Affective response predominates.
5. Action arena. Response in this mode is seen among designers, planners, and developers who provide stages for human action.

These modes of perception and engagement shift and merge, of course, with changes in time, place, and circumstances. As Ittelson et al. state, “Environmental experience is the

continuing product of an active endeavor by the individual to create for himself a situation within which he can optimally function and achieve his own particular patterns of satisfaction” (p. 206). The above list of various modes is not intended to be regarded as complete. It is a starting point to help relax investigative presuppositions and promote more exploratory studies that may lead to better understanding of live-experience. The present study is an effort in that direction.

Nearly three decades after Ittelson et al. (1975) published their findings, Stedman (2003b) had this to say:

Sense of place is rich in theory, but quantitative research approaches often fail to reflect this richness. This schism between theory and application not only impeded the development of theory, but also the ultimate utility of the concept for integration into resource management planning. (p. 822)

The present study was conducted using Q Methodology, which provides a means of directly measuring subjective responses. Q provides a bridge between qualitative and quantitative research modes. A previous study made use of qualitative methodology, and a recommended follow-up study would use a quantitative framework. Such applications of multidimensional research to place phenomena may help to invigorate inquiry into how recreationists choose and interact with their preferred sites.

### *Phenomenology of Person-Place Engagement*

In the context of the present study, a body of highly cogent discourse on person-place engagement is offered by David Abram (1988, 1996). Abram has taken time to

experience, understand, and dissertate on the phenomenology of being in Earth. Building on contributions of the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1968) to the phenomenological perspective, Abram has elaborated an experiential discourse on the human-nonhuman dialogue. Abram's ability to experience the unfamiliar with minimal preconception or hypothesis has enabled him to offer a fresh vision of the human presence in the "more-than-human" world.

While acknowledging the cloud of authors that do address the intimate engagement of humans and nonhuman elements, Abram has noted generally that "ecologists and environmental theorists have paid little attention to our direct sensory experience of the enveloping world" (1988, p. 101). He has paid a great deal of attention to our direct sensory experience and bases much of his explication on what he refers to as the "participatory nature of perception" (1996, p. 57).

Abram's definition for *perception* is "the concerted activity of *all* the body's senses as they function and flourish together" (p. 59). Perception is participatory by virtue of the sensing body's reciprocal engagement with elements of a place. This line of discussion is far too complex for exploration here. In his book *The Spell of the sensuous: Perception and language in a more-than-human world* (1996), Abram has carefully outlined the philosophical underpinnings, historical foundations, and experiential illustrations of his ecologic regard for nature. It is a splendidly helpful text for expanding one's vision with respect to person-place interaction.



## CHAPTER III

### Method

“Subjectivity is ubiquitous, and Q methodology provides for its systematic measure” (Brown, 1993, p. 106). The present study is an inquiry into the modes of person-place engagement that might be identified among recreation visitors to a rural lake-based park that has a relatively natural appearance. This chapter describes the method selected to address the present investigation.

#### *Use of Human Subjects*

Any research method that involves the use of persons must be reviewed by and have the approval of an oversight body. The Institutional Review Board at Oklahoma State University reviewed and approved the proposal for the study reported here. That approval is recorded in Appendix A.

#### *P set*

The researcher obtained participants for this study by taking names randomly from a listing of persons who held annual permits for visiting Lake McMurtry Park. This

assured that all participants were visitors to the site in question. This was appropriate since the project was concerned with person-place engagement among recreation visitors to Lake McMurtry Park. All subjects had already chosen this rural natural area for recreation.

The researcher contacted potential subjects by way of a letter to request that persons participate in the proposed study (Appendix B). A response card was enclosed with the letter so that individuals could indicate acceptance or rejection of the request. Ultimately 24 respondents agreed to take part in the project. Thus the study had a P set of 24 persons, and the investigator set up appointments with the subjects for times and places at their convenience.

### *Q Methodology*

Q methodology is a system of principles that establishes a science of subjectivity. It provides for data collection via the Q sort technique. It provides for factor analysis via personal computer software (PQMethod & PCQ).

There is a community of researchers who practice Q methodology and support four avenues of information sharing: (a) a website ([www.qmethod.org](http://www.qmethod.org)), (b) a web list-serv for ongoing dialogue, (c) a journal (*Operant Subjectivity*) that is the official organ of the International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity (ISSSS or I4S), and (d) the International Q Conference that is held annually at different host sites.

Q methodology was delineated and described by William Stephenson (1953) as a way of thinking about human subjectivity and studying its behavioral manifestations. He

held doctoral degrees in both physics and psychology, and his ecologic intellect was not confined to structured discipline lines.

Stephenson devised an approach to research (which he designated Q to distinguish it from traditional research methodology which he designated R) that illuminates subjectivity operating in subjects. Q methodology (or simply Q) is a framework for studying subjectivity inherent in the domain of such concerns as attitudes, preferences, values, opinions, perceptions, and sensory responses.

Q methodology elicits and incorporates into the data a cloud of subjectivity: “a whole set of associations, feelings, opinions, notions, and cognition” (Schlinger, 1969, p. 53). Such complexities might be difficult to access with direct questions. During the interviews that provided a concourse for this study, subjects sometimes had difficulty articulating the more complexly subjective questions such as “What is it like to be there?” or “What is it about a place that makes you want to be there?” Occasionally a person would listen to a question, pause, take a deep breath, say “I don’t know. I never thought about it,” then gaze off into the air as if trying to access memory and subjectivity that might offer clues with which to answer.

Because of the effectiveness of Q in eliciting and mathematically treating subjective response, this methodology was chosen for the study of person-place interaction at Lake McMurtry Park. Even though Q involves rigorous mathematical treatment, there is also a hermeneutical component to data analysis in that the researcher must assign meaning to factor analytic output associated with stimulus items presented to subjects. Additionally, the research instrument is designed from within the group of persons who represent various reactions to the issue of interest in the study.

Researchers have come to recognize the limitation of logical positivism as a philosophical foundation for studying human behavior and are giving interpretive methodologies an increasing degree of appreciation as vehicles for making inquiry into human affect (Fairweather & Swaffield, 2003; Fishwick & Vining, 1992; Henderson, 1991; Schroeder, 2002;). Q is an appropriate avenue of research for investigators who are interested in the phenomenological nature of leisure experience and perceive a need for greater understanding of subjectivity as it relates to leisure engagement and choice making. Sometimes, when you want to get from one place to another, you need a bridge.

Q is not quantitative methodology and it is not qualitative methodology. It has been referred to as a *bridge* between qualitative and quantitative research. It has the same level of mathematical rigor as quantitative methodology, it provides for direct measure, and it has an interpretive component comparable to that of qualitative methodology. It is designed to (a) elicit operant subjectivity and (b) directly measure the response. It is not *about* a person. It is *of* a person.

A basic premise in Q thinking is the self-referential nature of such personal complexities as values, attitudes, preferences, perceptions, etc. As attention is increasingly focused on quality of leisure experience in the outdoors and, concurrently, on preservation of nonhuman nature in resource-based outdoor recreation areas (Mitchell, Force, Carroll, & McLaughlin, 1993; Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992), the researcher will have greater need to understand the subjective operancy the recreation participants bring to leisure experience and decision making.

Also basic to Q thinking is the fact that self-reference cannot be normalized. To treat subjectivity as a quantity that can be normalized is to dilute and distort the very truth

one is seeking. If one experiences cognitive dissonance in considering this idea, it may be helpful to use Stephenson's proposal, "All observations in Q-technique are premised on a common unit of measurement, namely, 'self-significance'" (McKeown & Thomas, 1988, p. 48).

Q methodology does not quantify or predict. It illuminates operant subjectivity. Therefore the statistical analysis of Q data treats subjects, not behaviors and traits, as variates. Centroids (clusters) of subjectivity are extracted from correlated data to be interpreted in context by the researcher. Cottle and McKeown (1980) quote Stephenson: "Operant behavior...is the primary concern in Q methodology, that is, an achieved objectivity free from categories imposed by the scientist; the behavior belongs to the Q-sorter and his concrete situations" (p. 63).

Another basic idea in Q thinking is the phenomenon of communicability. Collection of Q data does not require verbal stimulus even though printed verbiage is the most commonly used vehicle. Any stimulus (visual, auditory, tactile, etc.) to which a subject can register a comparative response can serve to generate data. This may be good news to researchers who study leisure environments since the physiology of the human being responds to environment in a multitude of ways that a subject may not be able to verbalize. It may also be good news to those investigators who are reluctant to include unschooled subjects in research projects.

Q requires that the researcher put personal vision aside, attend the input, and absorb data with no desire to apply preconceived categories, values, or judgments. It requires the mindset of a mediator in dispute resolution. A mediator comes to the table

with no opinions, takes no side, imposes no judgment, and makes no decision for the parties involved.

Such a regard for input is not easy to achieve in a world of science that presses for predictive numbers and seeks information that can be used for social control or economic gain. The ability to listen to the data and validate the voices of the subjects who respond from their own internal vantage points is a skill that researchers do not rush in droves to acquire.

“Diversity of perspective is so central to Sociology, yet methods for its study so lacking, that it must be as ready as Education is for something like Q methodology” (Brown, 2004b). Professionals who enlist human subjects for social research can miss the subtleties of their data if they fail to sufficiently divest themselves of their own viewpoints while pondering newly acquired information.

David Abram (1996) has lived within a number of indigenous cultures in both hemispheres while studying *in situ* their ways of being in the world. The extent to which he has come to understand diverse perspectives requires that he suspend the flow of educational and technological influences, turn off cultural filters, and *attend* the perspectives of indigenous social forces.

This skill for attending otherness may fuel Abram’s ability to see, as anthropologists Basso (1987) and Hoijer did not, that oral cultures do not simply *anchor* their stories in places, the places are *participants* in the stories, co-creators in the event along with the human beings who were present. Abram says, “If ... the place is itself an active element in the genesis of the event, then the metaphor of a *root* is far more precise than that of an anchor; to an oral culture, experienced events remain rooted in the

particular soils, the particular ecologies, the particular places that give rise to them” (1996, p. 162).

It is this respectful regard for nonhuman entities of place that prompted a Hopi cultural preservation officer, Leigh Jenkins, to say, after anglo archeologists had found and heedlessly explored an underground Native American burial site, “You need to look at the way native people feel about burials. I don’t think any Hopi would ever go down there without special spiritual preparation. Casa Malpais is not just a site of rocks and walls. Even the water is alive and remembers the history of the region” (Roberts, 1992, p. 32).

If professionals in recreation and leisure are to deal effectively with the diversity of personal, social, and cultural perspectives that recreationists bring to the leisure commons, it would be wise to get to know who these visitors are, what perspectives they bring to the commons, and what they hope to find there. Q is an effective means for acquiring such information.

### *Instrumentation*

In Q methodology the most universally applied technique for data collection is the Q sort and the most frequently used stimulus for the Q sort is verbal statements. It should be emphasized that the **Q sort** is a *tool* used to assist the subject in manifesting a point of view in a systematic way (Brown, 1980) such that the manifestation becomes data that can be treated mathematically. In contrast **Q methodology** is a “comprehensive approach to the study of behavior, where man is at issue as a total thinking and behaving being”

(Stephenson, 1953, p. 7). The root source of data in a Q sort is the lived experience of the sorter.

### *Q sort*

A familiar way of conducting a Q sort is to present the subject with a group of statements (called a Q set, or Q sample) pertinent to the topic at hand. The researcher describes to the subject a mental context (condition of instruction) within which the statements are to be rank ordered according to a fixed form that is bipolar. The form is typically a forced normal distribution or a platykurtic array. Such details are contextual and vary widely.

It might be natural for a researcher new to Q to consider it too “fuzzy” to support confidence in the results. After all, isn’t human subjectivity too capricious to capture with self-reported data? No. Operant subjectivity as revealed in Q has a demonstrable stability (Fairweather, 1981; Frank, 1956; Hilden, 1958).

A Q sort administered with appropriate conditions of instruction allows a subject to become involved in a task of self reference without self consciousness. This is not the same genre of self reporting as that associated with, for instance, a questionnaire response or an interview question. A Q sorter is “reporting” information without awareness of doing so, and the factors reported by analysis are constructed from subjects’ correlated sorts. Thus,

In R methodology, factor loadings are associated with the tests or traits that have been correlated and factored, whereas factor scores are associated with the cases,



i.e., with the persons in the sample. Arguments in R proceed with reference to the loadings...In Q methodology, factor scores are also associated with the sample, but the sample in this case is comprised of the statements [Q set], and so the factor scores are central: We are very interested in statement X and where it stands relative to statements Y, Z, etc., since these scores reveal the subjectivity at issue. ( In contrast, very little attention is typically paid to the Q factor loadings, which are associated with the persons.) (Brown, 2004c)

### *Concourse*

A concourse is a domain of self-referent communication. It is all the manifestations and expressions of human response and dialogue, verbal and nonverbal, on a given topic. A researcher can develop a focused concourse relevant to a study question. A typical way of acquiring a focused concourse is through verbal discourse with persons principal to the issue at hand. For this study, data from previously conducted in-depth interviews were used as a focused concourse, expressions of lived experience, to generate a Q sample for study participants to sort.

### *Q sample*

The statements for sorting were obtained from transcripts of twenty previously conducted in-depth interviews (Appendix C) with people who visited Lake McMurtry Park. The group of persons whom the investigator had interviewed prior to the present

study was independent of the P set that performed Q sorts for this inquiry. Taped records of the interviews constituted a focused concourse on the topic of person-place interaction at Lake McMurtry Park.

In choosing statements from interviews to make up the Q sample of the concourse for the present study, the investigator sought to represent the full spectrum of expressions present in the interview verbiage. Toward that end, the researcher identified categories of response in the interview data and represented each category with statements from the data. Upon examining the scope of comments made by persons interviewed, the author constructed five general categories and selected comments from the interview data to represent the categories. The five broadly constructed categories were designated (1) play, (2) spirit, (3) escape to be, (4) escape to get, and (5) sensory engagement.

Each category contained eight statements each, four pairs of homologous (to the researcher) statements. After those 40 statements had been selected, two statements were added to represent perceived need for the place in a person's view. A categorized listing of the 42 statements making up the concourse sample is shown in Appendix B.

It is important to remember that all of the above categorization is a product of the informed and interpretive views of the investigator. Classifying interview responses and selecting statements to represent the dissected classes of verbiage is merely an attempt to build diversity of stimulus into the concourse sample. Q sort data is no respecter of these categories. The effort to increase diversity among Q sort items offers a broader range of stimulus to the sorter and may result in a richer data set.



characterized by a natural appearance, a minimum of manufactured features and a visitor population that has a high proportion of couples and older, more established residents of the geographic region. Appendix C provides details of visitor description relevant to Lake McMurtry Park.

Lake McMurtry is a flood control impoundment situated in a rural tract several miles outside Stillwater, Oklahoma, a city of roughly 40,000 residents. The surrounding agricultural and grazing region is punctuated by small towns. As noted in Chapter II, visiting the park requires appropriate transportation, time, and money. Once the visitor is there, no accomplished level of skill is required to enjoy the place.

The park area of 4400 acres includes a variety of habitat areas and supports low-key recreation activities such as swimming, sailing, sunbathing, picnicking, fishing, hiking, biking, camping and bird watching. Camping areas include primitive and recreational vehicle (RV) sites. Motorized water sports are not allowed. Trolling motors on boats are permitted.

Within the park boundary on the north end are a number of duck blinds available for waterfowl hunting season. Also in the north end of the park is a firing range maintained by the local Rifle Club in agreement with the Department of Parks, Events, and Recreation.

## *Research Design*

### *Stimulus Statements*

To collect data, the researcher selected statements (Appendix B) based on prior interview data (Appendix C) and used them to assemble a Q sort deck. A Q sort deck is the stack of cards on which statements are printed to facilitate the task of sorting the statements across a continuum of self-significance between, for example, *most like me* and *least like me*.

### *Subject Sample*

Twenty four participants to perform Q sorts were recruited from a list of persons who held permits to the study site: Lake McMurtry Park. Initial contact was made with potential participants by way of postal letter. The wording of this letter is recorded in Appendix B. Follow-up mailings were not used. The investigator chose not to risk intruding on a person's leisure world. The researcher arranged to meet the volunteers at times and places of their choosing and expressed sincere appreciation for their assistance.

### *Q Sort Procedure*

Before offering the Q sort materials to the subject, the researcher presented a hard copy of an Informed Consent Form, a copy of which appears in Appendix B. The

investigator allowed time for the participant to read it, offered to answer any questions the subject might have about it, and asked if the person was ready to proceed and sign it. All persons with whom the researcher met signed the consent form. Had any volunteer declined to sign the form, the investigator would have graciously declined that person's participation.

The Q sort deck was made up of 42 statements printed on cards. The researcher provided a Q sort array form drawn onto a rectangle of matting board that created a lightweight, portable tabletop sorting aid onto which a subject could rank order the cards onto to a continuum having a value range of +5 (most like me) to -5 (least like me) and a midpoint value of zero. A quasi-normal distribution was achieved by arranging the 42 cells required for the Q sort of 42 statements into 11 piles. The number of cells stacked in the piles were 2, 3, 4, 4, 5, 6, 5, 4, 4, 3, and 2 sequentially across the continuum.

The investigator placed a stack of two cells at each pole because in-depth interviews, conducted prior to the present study, indicated that visitors to Lake McMurtry Park typically had never thought about the subjective foundations that informed their individual preferences for a particular resource-based recreation site. Placing a single cell at each pole might have introduced an unnecessary point of difficulty in the decision-making process. The researcher intended to challenge the volunteer sorters, not frustrate them.

### *Conditions of Instruction*

Prior to initiating a Q sort process, the researcher instructed the participant to (a) recall visits previously made to Lake McMurry Park and hold those recollections in mind while (b) deciding where on the board the subject would rank each statement in the Q deck. The researcher (c) suggested that it might be helpful to first sort the statements into three heaps: definitely like me, definitely not like me, and everything else. The participant was invited to (d) take as much time as needed and to (e) keep sorting until there was one card in each space on the board. The researcher pointed out that (f) there was no wrong way to sort the deck, that it would be his way or her way. The subject was (g) invited to ask any question at any time, and then the researcher stepped out of the work space.

### *Data Report*

Upon completion of a Q sort, each participant was given a data report form, (Appendix B), that bore a code number to accord anonymity to the data set. The upper half of the report form offered a participant the option to report six demographic items: gender, age range, race/ethnic group, occupation, size of the hometown in which the subject grew up, and the state in which that hometown was located. That demographic information is recorded in Appendix B. The lower half of the sheet displayed a miniature version of the tabletop form board and the participant penned numbers into the miniature image to correspond to the numbers on the statement cards in the corresponding cells of

the sort board. This provided a permanent record of the sort data, and it bore no personal identification.

### *Analysis of Data*

The researcher used PQMethod 2.11 software for analysis of data. PQMethod is a personal computer version of a statistical program originally written in FORTRAN code for the mainframe by John Atkinson under the guidance of Steven Brown at Kent State University in Ohio. Peter Schmolck adapted, revised, and maintains the product for personal computer use. PQMethod is in the public domain and can be downloaded free of charge at [www.qmethod.org](http://www.qmethod.org).

The numerical value, in the range +5 to -5, that is assigned to each placement of a statement card on the Q sort form board becomes the raw data entered into a factor analysis program. To factor analyze data using PQMethod, one inputs the text of Q sort statements, the dimensions of the Q sort matrix, and the values in the cells of the subject's completed sort form. The program then allows the researcher two options for factor analysis (Centroid or Principal Component) and two options for rotation of factors (Varimax and manual). Then the program differentiates the rotated factors on the basis of the Q sorts and their loadings on the factors. For this report, the Centroid and the Varimax options were selected.

Recall that a Q sort is a “‘modeling device’ [Stephenson's term] which helps a person to be systematic in representing his point of view on a topic” (Brown, 1980, p. 181) and yields data that can be treated mathematically. When working through a



Q sort process, a subject has to weigh each and every statement in comparison with each and every other statement in the sample. The sorter has to make numerous judgments regarding relative value of each statement with respect to all others and with respect to conditions of instruction. This is a richly subjective process. “Technical operations such as [Q sorts] force nature to manifest her subtleties” (Brown, p. 181). Q methodology elicits and incorporates into the data a cloud of subjectivity, “a whole set of associations, feelings, opinions, notions, and cognition.” (Schlinger, 1969, p. 53)

Such complexities might be difficult to access with direct questions. During the interviews that provided a concourse for this study, subjects sometimes had difficulty articulating the more complexly subjective questions such as “What is it like to be there?” or “What is it about a place that makes you want to be there?” Occasionally a person would listen to a question, pause, take a deep breath, say “I don’t know. I never thought about it,” then gaze off into the air as if trying to access memory and subjectivity that might offer clues with which to answer.

Each statement in the Q deck was entered into PQMethod, version 2.11. The recorded scores for each cell of each Q sort was entered into the program. The computational sequence is (a) correlation of Q sorts, (b) generation of factors, and (c) computation of factor scores.

### *Factors*

Analysis of the matrix of Q sorts demonstrates those Q sorts that correlate highly with each other and do not correlate with other Q sorts. This correlation matrix is used to

determine the factor structure, or a cluster of Q sorts that are alike. A cluster of Q sorts that highly correlate with each other and not with Q sorts that are not in the cluster is a *factor*. It represents a family of subjective responses that are closely associated. The number of factors and the characteristics of factors depend on the persons who performed the Q sorts for the study. Factors in Q derive from the subjects. Factors are *of* the subjects, not *about* them.

“Factorization simplifies the interpretive task substantially, bringing to attention the typological nature of audience segments on any given subjective issue” (McKeown & Thomas, 1988 p. 50). For the researcher using Q methodology, it is the statements, calculated as weighted z-scores, that are interpreted, that provide platforms for defining typologies.

### *Factor Loadings*

“Factor loadings are in effect correlation coefficients: they indicate the extent to which each Q sort is similar or dissimilar to the composite [hypothetical] *factor array* ... for that type” (McKeown & Thomas, 1988, p. 50). PQMethod will “pre-flag” a factor, and the print out of the factor matrix indicates those loadings of Q sorts that the program calculated to be significant loadings on the respective factors. Those significantly-loaded sorts are usually deemed to be defining sorts for the factor.

In PQMethod 2.11, a Q sort factor loading that indicates a defining sort for that factor is identified and indicated with an X in the printout “**if (1)**  $a^2 > h^2/2$  (factor explains more than half of the common variance) **and (2)**  $a > 1.96/\text{SQRT}(\text{nitems})$

(loading ‘significant at  $p < 0.05$ ’).” (Schmolck, 2002, p.14) “a” is a particular loading for a sort and “ $h^2$ ” is the sum of the squared loadings for the sort. Schmolck (2005) clarifies

Though it also contains a significance barrier (amounting to 1.96SE) as the second of the two conditions to be fulfilled, the algorithm is not designed to provide a definite statistical criterion. It rather functions as a practical help in selecting for every factor the best, specifically, the purest marker sorts. The first of the two conditions,  $a^2 > h^2/2$  (flag this factor only if it explains more variance than the other factors taken together), usually is the effective criterion.

The pre-flagging algorithm of PQMethod 2.11 is not a limit placed on the researcher. It is a logical means of identifying significance. Beyond this calculation and denotation, it is the researcher’s task to decide if further conditions should be applied to the specific instance. The judgment of the investigator is not discounted.

## CHAPTER IV

### Analysis and Results

This project addresses a two-part study question: (a) What can one discover about the manner in which leisure seekers dialogue with the Lake McMurtry environment and (b) does the data reveal modes of person-place interaction? This bipartite question involves an exploration of the subjective dimension of being human. For that purpose, Q methodology is a preferred vehicle for data collection. Q methodology elicits operant subjectivity and effects a direct measurement of the response.

#### *Subjects*

For this study, 24 participants provided Q sorts using a deck of 42 statements. Subjects were all visitors to the study site, Lake McMurtry Park. The names of potential subjects were randomly selected from a list of persons holding annual permits, issued by the City of Stillwater, for visiting Lake McMurtry. Mailing of invitations to participate in the study resulted in a sample of 24 subjects, each of whom completed a Q sort. Demographic information offered by participants is shown in Table 2.

At a glance, Table 2 shows that 7 of the 24 subjects were female and 17 were male. The sample included 5 wife-and-husband couples. Half of the P sample, 12 persons, were of ages 36 to 50. Of the remaining half, 6 were younger and 6 were older.

Table 2

*Demographic Information Provided By Subjects.*

Code#	Occupation	Age Range	Gender	Race/Ethnic Group	Hometown Population	Home State
32	Paraoptometric	18-25	F	White	125,000	OK
31	Student/Lab Tech	18-25	M	White	—	OK
24	Assistant Professor	26-35	F	White	100,000	NE
16	Student	26-36	M	White	35,000	OK
13	Masonry	26-35	M	White	5,000	OK
09	Technical Writer	26-35	M	White	35,000	OK
29	Business Printer	36-50	M	—	2,000	KS
27	Pastor	36-50	M	White	400	OK
26	Teacher	36-50	M	White	6,000	MO
25	Associate Professor	36-50	M	White	30,000	NJ
23	Teacher	36-50	M	White	700	OK
22	Instructor	36-50	F	White	—	OK
20	Mercury Assembler	36-50	F	White	15,000	OK
19	Electrical Contractor	36-50	M	White	25,000	TX
18	Route Sales	36-50	M	White	30,000	OK
17	Mercury Marine	36-50	M	White	30,000	OK
15	Pub. Sch. Administrator	36-50	M	White	25,000	NM
14	Professor	36-50	F	White	25,000	NM
28	Technician	51-65	F	White	100,000	NE
21	—	51-65	M	Indian	40,000	OK
12	Retired Carpenter	51-65	M	White	400	OK
30	Retiree	> 65	M	White	2,000	TX
11	Retired Professor	> 65	M	White	100	KS
10	Retiree	> 65	F	White	35,000	OK

## *Factors*

Twenty four sets of Q sort values were entered into PQMethod 2.11 program. Seven centroids were extracted and four were Varimax rotated to yield four factors that account for a total of 49% of the variance. In a three factor solution, one sort did not load significantly on any factor. The same was true of a five factor solution. Although three-factor and five-factor solutions accounted for more variance (42% and 70%, respectively), the researcher selected the four-factor solution because no sort was left out (i.e., no data was dropped) and the solution was richly informative.

The factor matrix for the four-factor solution is shown in Table 3. Bold face print calls attention to defining sorts. As indicated in Chapter III, p. 50, a defining sort is characterized by a factor loading that meets or exceeds statistical significance. In addition, the square of the load must be greater than half the sum of all squared loads for the sort.

The four factors in this solution account for 49% of the total variance: Factor 1, 13%; Factor 2, 9%; Factor 3, 19%; and Factor 4, 8%. In Table 3, one can see that all 24 sorts were flagged for load values (in bold face) that identify them as defining sorts. Factor 1 is defined by 6 sorts, Factor 2 is defined by 4 sorts, Factor 3 is defined by 10 sorts, and Factor 4 is defined by 4 sorts. There are no confounded sorts; that is, each sort loads on only one factor.

Descriptive characterization of the four factors was achieved by examining factor analysis data, specifically, Q set items that distinguished each factor from the others

(Tables 5, 8, 11, and 14) and Q set items with highest and lowest z-score values (Tables 6, 9, 12, and 15).

Table 3

<i>Factor Matrix</i>				
Sort Code #	Loadings*			
	1	2	3	4
09	-0.1263	0.1055	<b>0.4838</b>	-0.3561
12	0.2455	-0.0507	0.3853	<b>0.6112</b>
13	-0.0747	0.4009	<b>0.6350</b>	-0.0910
10	0.1836	-0.1105	<b>0.6271</b>	-0.2195
11	<b>0.7964</b>	0.0134	0.0441	0.0087
27	<b>0.5276</b>	0.0610	0.2981	0.1212
28	0.3587	<b>0.6944</b>	0.3100	-0.1204
29	<b>0.4706</b>	-0.0581	0.0346	0.0224
30	<b>0.3579</b>	0.2203	0.0033	-0.2308
32	0.2873	<b>0.6089</b>	-0.2174	0.3490
31	<b>0.6534</b>	0.0828	0.1237	0.1938
26	0.3794	0.0921	<b>0.6129</b>	-0.0953
25	0.1028	0.2371	<b>0.6522</b>	-0.0482
23	-0.0561	<b>0.4014</b>	0.2580	-0.1400
22	<b>0.6807</b>	0.0864	0.2903	-0.0181
21	0.0482	0.0594	<b>0.7709</b>	0.3520
18	-0.0687	<b>0.7943</b>	0.1472	0.0362
19	-0.0617	-0.0377	-0.0246	<b>0.4266</b>
20	-0.0155	-0.0236	-0.0796	<b>0.7306</b>
15	0.2464	-0.0856	<b>0.7205</b>	-0.2085
14	0.3771	0.0806	<b>0.4263</b>	0.1197
16	0.3749	0.1997	<b>0.6623</b>	0.1311
17	0.1549	0.4312	<b>0.6619</b>	0.0530
24	0.2116	0.1344	-0.1516	<b>0.4535</b>
Expl. Var.	13%	9%	19%	8%
# Def. Sorts	6	4	10	4

\*Bold indicates a defining sort.



### *Factor 1: Close-encounter Escapists*

“Close-encounter Escapists” is the name given to Factor 1. Out of all 24 sorts in this study, 6 define the Close-encounter Escapists. The factor array for Close-encounter Escapists is shown in Table 4. Table 5 lists the 8 distinguishing sort items. Close-encounter Escapists are distinguished by 4 most-like statements and by 4 least-like statements.

These people affect their person-place engagement largely through environmental sight and sound stimuli, those present and those absent. The visual impact of vegetation is important to them. The visual character of the landscape and the seclusion and tranquility of the place provide them with a milieu in which they can experience comfort and refuge and put aside the stresses of day-to-day life.

It may be that Close-encounter Escapists have innately heightened abilities to *attend* their environments and that the accumulation of sensory input in their daily life-worlds is excessive and negative to their well-being. The serene quality of sensory input to the human body at Lake McMurtry can offer a physical and psychic respite and provide a Close-encounter Escapist with an opportunity to store up pleasing responses to offset the stresses and demands of their lives.

As evidenced by distinguishing statements 41 (I need a place like that to give balance to my life.) and 42 (If there were no place like that...well, I just don't know what I would do.), they count on having a place like Lake McMurtry Park to find renewal. The high scores on items 41 and 42 indicate a primacy of need for the place. Distinguishing items 33 (I enjoy the diversity in the landscape and vegetation.) and 22 (When I'm there I

like to sit and watch clouds go by.) suggest a strong positive response to pleasing vistas, both landscapes and cloudscapes, a kind of pageantry of nonhuman elements.

Negative scores on items 4 (When I'm there I spend my time meditating on things.) and 16 (Out there I see god-ness all around.) suggest that Close-encounter Escapists are not seeking spiritual engagement. They want their senses to be activated in an environment of natural features. They give high values to item 35 (It's fun to watch for signs of animal life out there.) and 38 (I like to listen for sounds of nature when I'm there.). They want to be "up close and personal" with the place. They do not need another person for company in the quest (item 7: When I'm there I'd rather share the visit with someone.) and they feel no need for something to stabilize or ground them (item 18: Spending time there anchors me.).

Having items 34 (The trees, grasses and other native plants delight me.) and 36 (The scenery is important to me.) in the +3 pile reinforces the impression that Close-encounter Escapists have a strong desire for visual input. They appear to be escaping to the place for a sensory engagement that is important to them. They sensuously embrace the landscape and the sky.

Table 4

*Factor 1, Close-encounter Escapist. Factor Q Sort Values for Each Statement.*

	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	
least like me	<b>18</b>	8	2	1	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	10	<u>6</u>	20	35	3	most like me
	19	12	<b>7</b>	5	17	9	<b>22</b>	11	24	38	<b>41</b>	
		13	25	27	21	14	<u>26</u>	<u>23</u>	34	<b>42</b>		
			40	28	31	<u>15</u>	30	<b>33</b>	36			
					37	29	32					
						39						

Note. Numbers in bold indicate distinguishing statements. Underlined numbers indicate consensus statements.

Table 5

*Close-encounter Escapist. Distinguishing Statements and Corresponding z Scores.*

<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
41	I need a place like that to give balance to my life.	1.71
42	If there were no place like that—well, I just don't know what I would do.	1.30
33	I enjoy the diversity in the landscape and vegetation.	0.61
22	When I'm there I like to sit and watch clouds go by.	0.47
4	When I'm there I spend my time meditating on things.	-0.03
16	Out there I see god-ness all around.	-0.25
7	When I'm there I'd rather share the visit with someone.	-0.97
18	Spending time there anchors me.	-2.02

Table 6

*5 Highest Ranked\* and 5 Lowest Ranked\*\* Statements with z Scores: Factor 1.*

<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
3	When I go there I spend my time with my sporting gear.	2.09
41	I need a place like that to give balance to my life.	1.71
35	It's fun to watch for signs of animal life out there.	1.64
38	I like to listen for sounds of nature when I'm there.	1.44
42	If there were no place like that...well, I just don't know what I would do.	1.30
18	Spending time there anchors me.	-2.02
19	When I'm there I'm in another world.	-1.77
8	My time there is better when I am alone.	-1.64
12	It's a place where I can put aside the need to be "in control".	-1.58
13	Being there gives me a sense of humility.	-1.74

\*Most likely found. \*\*Least likely found.

## *Factor 2: Time-out Escapists*

Of the 24 sorts in this study, 4 define Factor 2. “Time-out Escapists” is the name given to Factor 2. The factor array and the 10 distinguishing items are given in Tables 7 and 8. This factor is distinguished by 5 most-like statements and 5 least-like statements.

Time-out Escapists want to visit an oasis of tranquility where they can explore the environs and become embedded in the place. They want a place where they can become personally grounded; where they can experience peace and relaxation; where they can put aside day-to-day obligations, phone calls, pressures, and frustrations. When these people need a break from their day-by-day lives, they run to Lake McMurtry Park and embrace “another world” (item 19).

Unlike the Close-encounter Escapists, the Time-out Escapists prefer human companionship for their visits to Lake McMurtry (item 7: When I’m there I’d rather share the visit with someone.) and like the Close-encounter Escapists, they indicate a need for the place to be an influence in their lives (item 41: I need a place like that to give balance to my life.). The level of primacy of need, or perhaps awareness of such primacy, is less for the Time-out Escapists for whom statement 42 (If there were no place like that—well, I just don’t know what I would do.) is on the negative side of the array. It is helpful to remember that being in the negative range of the array does not make a statement *not*-like; rather, a negative placement makes a statement *less*-like than statements to the right of it, toward the positive pole.

In visiting Lake McMurtry Park, Time-out Escapists enter an alternative dimension of existence (item 19: When I’m there I’m in another world.) and are

psychologically restored (item 27: When I go there I regain my perspective.). item 21 (Just being there is enough.) reflect the sense that Time-out Escapists are taking a “time out” to regain a vigor that has been diminished by life’s routines and/or pressures. While the Time-out Escapists like the idea of escaping to a place antithetical to their routine life-worlds, the experience is better when shared with another person—perhaps a close friend who has a similar appreciation for tranquil outdoor environments (Appendix C, pp. 105-106; Lee, 1977).

Table 7

*Factor 2, Time-out Escapist. Factor Q Sort Values for Each Statement.*

	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	
least like me	<b>16</b>	4	8	<u>15</u>	5	17	11	<u>6</u>	10	1	3	most like me
	<b>22</b>	<b>39</b>	12	30	9	29	14	18	<b>19</b>	2	<b>7</b>	
		40	13	33	25	31	<b>21</b>	<u>26</u>	35	20		
			<b>37</b>	42	28	32	<u>23</u>	<b>27</b>	<b>41</b>			
					<b>34</b>	36	24					
						38						

Note. Numbers in bold indicate distinguishing statements. Underlined numbers indicate consensus statements.

Table 8

*Time-out Escapist. Distinguishing Statements and Corresponding z Scores.*

<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
7	When I'm there I'd rather share the visit with someone.	-0.97
19	When I'm there I'm in another world.	-1.77
41	I need a place like that to give balance to my life.	1.71
27	When I go there I regain my perspective.	-0.61
21	Just being there is enough.	-0.28
34	The trees, grasses, and other native plants delight me.	0.81
37	I feast my eyes on the place.	-0.30
39	When I'm there I sometimes find myself sniffing the air for scents of nature.	-0.01
22	When I'm there I like to sit and watch clouds go by.	0.47
16	Out there I see god-ness all around.	-0.25

Table 9

*5 Highest Ranked and 5 Lowest Ranked Statements With z Scores: Factor 2.*

<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
3	When I go there I spend my time with my sporting gear.	2.09
7	When I'm there I'd rather share the visit with someone.	1.75
1	I like to explore the place to find out what's there.	1.38
2	It's fun to poke around to see what I can discover.	1.21
20	It helps me get away from everything.	1.50
16	Out there I see god-ness all around.	-1.92
22	When I'm there I like to sit and watch clouds go by.	-1.86
4	When I'm there I spend my time meditating on things.	-1.49
39	When I'm there I sometimes find myself sniffing the air for scents of nature.	-1.28
40	When I'm there I enjoy touching things I find.	-1.64

### *Factor 3: Purposive Dawdlers*

Factor 3 is defined by 10 out of a total of 24 sorts. Of the 4 factors revealed, this one is the most represented in the subject sample. This factor is referred to as Purposive Dawdlers. The factor array and the 12 distinguishing statements for Purposive Dawdlers are presented in Tables 10 and 11 respectively.

In a low-key, unscheduled fashion, Purposive Dawdlers like to interact with the place physically. They actively and consciously sense the nonhuman environment. They do not sit and wait for the place to draw them in; they amble out to meet it with all sensory systems engaged. They move about the park looking, listening, sniffing, touching, and even tasting what they find. They also check to see what other animals are on the move in the park.

Note the 9 highest ranked items in the array:

I like to explore the place to find out what's there. (item 1)

It's fun to watch for signs of animal life out there. (item 35)

The trees, grasses and other native plants delight me. (item 34)

The scenery is important to me. (item 36)

I like to listen for sounds of nature when I'm there. (item 38)

It's fun to poke around to see what I can discover. (item 2)

The secluded nature of the place is important to me. (item 24)

I enjoy the diversity in the landscape and vegetation. (item 33)

When I'm there I enjoy touching things I find. (item 40)

The very high ranking of these items indicate direct involvement with nonhuman nature in the manner of a child exploring the outdoors.

The diversity of landscape, vegetation, and habitat at Lake McMurtry Park seems to be a major source of opportunity for the quiet sense of discovery that Purposive Dawdlers seek. They want contact with the landscape (item 33), native plants (item 34), and wildlife (item 35). They do not want to passively sense the place; they want to touch things they find in the park environs (item 40).

Purposive Dawdlers do not appear to be concerned about overt spiritual engagement. The 9 lowest ranked items in the factor array indicate that pondering hypotheticals (item 42), meditating on the big picture (item 4), and consciously feeding the spirit (items 14, 16, 17, 25) are not operating in their selection of Lake McMurtry Park as a place for leisure engagement. Spirituality is not at issue. Exploration is central to the Purposive Dawdlers' needs.



Table 10

*Factor 3, Purposive Dawdler. Factor Q Sort Values for Each Statement.*

	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	
least like me	4	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	8	12	9	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	2	34	1	most like me
	<b>18</b>	25	<b>16</b>	13	28	<b>11</b>	<u>6</u>	10	24	36	35	
		42	<b>17</b>	<u>15</u>	30	21	20	<u>26</u>	<b>33</b>	38		
			19	29	31	22	<u>23</u>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>			
					<b>41</b>	27	32					
						37						

Numbers in bold indicate distinguishing statements. Underlined numbers indicate consensus statements.

Table 11

*Purposive Dawdler. Distinguishing Statements and Corresponding z Scores.*

<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
33	I enjoy the diversity in the landscape and vegetation.	0.61
40	When I'm there I enjoy touching things I find.	-1.18
7	When I'm there I'd rather share the visit with someone.	-0.97
39	When I'm there I sometimes find myself sniffing the air for scents of nature.	-0.01
3	When I go there I spend my time with my sporting gear.	2.09
11	Being there gives me great peace.	0.79
41	I need a place like that to give balance to my life.	1.71
17	Going there strengthens my spirit.	-0.04
16	Out there I see god-ness all around.	-0.25
14	That place gives me a peaceful spirit.	-0.04
5	When I'm there my spirit is free.	-0.54
18	Spending time there anchors me.	-2.02

Table 12

*5 Highest Ranked and 5 Lowest Ranked Statements With z Scores: Factor 3.*

<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
1	I like to explore the place to find out what's there.	1.67
35	It's fun to watch for signs of animal life out there.	1.77
34	The trees, grasses and other native plants delight me.	1.57
36	The scenery is important to me	1.56
38	I like to listen for sounds of nature when I'm there.	1.54
4	When I'm there I spend my time meditating on things.	-1.49
18	Spending time there anchors me.	-1.39
5	When I'm there my spirit is free.	-1.33
25	It's a place that heals my spirit.	-1.30
42	If there were no place like that...well, I just don't know what I would do.	-1.34

#### *Factor 4: Place Abstractors*

Factor 4 is defined by 4 out of the 24 Q sorts in this study. This factor is referred to as Place Abstractors. The factor array and the 12 distinguishing statements for Place Abstractors are shown in Tables 13 and 14 respectively. From the array, it is immediately noted that 1 distinguishing statement (item 3) falls in the extreme, least-like pile (–5), 2 distinguishing statements fall in the middle pile (0), and the remaining 9 distinguishing statements fall in the +1 to +5 range. Distinguishing items are concentrated in the range of higher preference. This concentration of distinguishing preferences gives Place Abstractors a sharp definition as a group.

Place Abstractors appear to be reflective, spiritually aware persons who find peace (items 14, That place gives me a peaceful spirit, and 11, Being there gives me great peace.), comfort (item 32, Being there is comforting to me.), and belonging (item 9, When I’m there I feel like I belong.) in the tranquil natural environment. Falling in the +4 pile, item 10 (When I go there I want to be **in** it, not just looking **at** it.) suggests that Place Abstractors are matrixed in the place in such a way as to experience a sense of interior peace and strength. Note the spiritual references in 8 of the distinguishing statements: item 11, *peace*; item 32, *comforting*; item 31, *spirit*; item 16, *god-ness*; item 17, *spirit*; item 9, *belong*; item 28, *spirit*; item 25, *spirit*. Place Abstractors have an unabashed spiritual orientation to their visits to Lake McMurtry Park.

Although Place Abstractors may appear on the surface to be more passive in their person-place interaction, it may be that Place Abstractors do not see their engagement with the place as passive at all. In the +4 pile, one sees item 10 (When I go there I want to

be **in** it, not just looking **at** it.), while, six piles to the left, with a -2 sort value, one sees item 21 (Just being there is enough.) Place Abstractors appear to plug directly into the place. They seem to actively abstract peace, comfort, belonging, and spiritual strength from the environment. The value of -5 for item 3 (When I go there I spend my time with my sporting gear.) suggests that Place Abstractors do not use an overt activity to mediate their interaction with the place. The place embraces them.

Table 13

*Factor 4, Place Abstractor. Factor Q Sort Values for Each Statement.*

	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	
least like me	<b>3</b>	12	2	1	20	<b>7</b>	5	<b>9</b>	14	10	<b>11</b>	most like me
	8	19	4	21	22	<u>15</u>	<u>6</u>	<b>28</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>32</b>	
		42	13	29	27	18	<b>25</b>	36	<u>23</u>	<b>31</b>		
			40	30	33	24	<b>35</b>	38	34			
					39	<u>26</u>	37					
						<b>41</b>						
Numbers in bold indicate distinguishing statements.							Underlined numbers indicate consensus statements.					

Table 14

*Place Abstractor. Distinguishing Statements and Corresponding z Scores.*

<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
11	Being there gives me great peace.	0.79
32	Being there is comforting to me.	0.36
31	Being there soothes my spirit.	-0.26
16	Out there I see god-ness all around.	-0.25
17	Going there strengthens my spirit.	-0.26
9	When I'm there I feel like I belong.	-0.17
28	Going there restores my spirit.	-0.48
35	It's fun to watch for signs of animal life out there.	1.64
25	It's a place that heals my spirit.	-0.81
41	I need a place like that to give balance to my life.	1.71
7	When I'm there I'd rather share the visit with someone.	-0.97
3	When I go there I spend my time with my sporting gear.	2.09

Table 15

*5 Highest Ranked and 5 Lowest Ranked Statements With z Scores: Factor 4*

<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
11	Being there gives me great peace.	1.95
32	Being there is comforting to me.	1.83
10	When I go there I want to be <b>in</b> it, not just looking <b>at</b> it.	1.47
16	Out there I see god-ness all around.	1.24
31	Being there soothes my spirit.	1.32
3	When I go there I spend my time with my sporting gear.	-2.39
8	My time there is better when I am alone.	-1.77
12	It's a place where I can put aside the need to be "in control".	-1.41
19	When I'm there I'm in another world.	-1.37
42	If there were no place like that...well, I just don't know what I would do.	-1.72

All factors indicate a reliance on the place itself to support the quality of their experiences and the modes by which they realize an operative relationship with place features. Close-encounter Escapists appear to be more aware of the primacy of need, having sort values of +5 and +4 for items 41 and 42 respectively.

Awareness of and desire for receiving spiritual benefits is most pronounced among Place Abstractors. For them this is an expectation. Though other factors most likely receive similar benefits, their focus is on the actions or elements of nature that mediate benefit acquisition. Purposive Dawdlers are especially prone to emphasize a physical interaction with the place. Theirs is the only factor that gives a strong positive value (+2) to item 40 (“...enjoy touching things...”).

Time-out Escapists may represent an underappreciated segment of visitors. Time-out Escapists reflect a need to escape to some place highly unlike the world they live in day by day. To take only that surface manifestation of need into account is to discount the social, emotional, and psychological benefits that attend their *choice* of getaway.

It seems that all the factors accrue emotional and spiritual benefits. Even consensus item 15 (Being there helps me see myself as a spiritual part of a “big picture.”) is valued at –2 for 2 factors and at 0 for 2 factors. All factors show positive values for consensus items 6 (Spending time there gives me a joyful sense of freedom.) and 23 (I expect to find tranquility there.). Consensus item 26 (It’s a good place to go when I’m stressed out.) has a sort value of +2 for Time-out Escapists and for Purposive Dawdlers, +1 for Close-encounter Escapists, and 0 for Place Abstractors. For Place Abstractors, saying that Lake McMurtry is a good place to go when they are stressed out may be too much of a matter of course to merit a high-ranking cell on the Q sort form. Consensus

items are listed in Appendix B. A consensus item does not distinguish between any pair of factors.

## CHAPTER V

### Summaries and Implications

#### *Summary of the Study*

This study was concerned with the exploration of the manner in which visitors to Lake McMurtry Park, a rural lake-based recreation area, engaged with the physical site. The research question is stated thusly: (a) Given the character of the study site and the verbal responses received during interviews of subjects who visit the site, what can one discover further about the manner in which leisure seekers dialogue with the Lake McMurtry Park environment and (b) does the data reveal modes of person-place interaction?

#### *Character of the Study Site*

Lake McMurtry Park is a resource-based recreation site. The combination of lake, land, and vegetation provides a landscape that is natural and is unique to the rural region. There are open expanses that allow for cloud watching, stargazing, and sunset appreciations. There are wooded areas to wander through and explore. Activity on the lake is of a quieter variety that includes sailing, canoeing, and fishing from low-powered

boats. The site is far enough outside nearby cities and towns to have a secluded quality that visitors consider a plus. It has a quiet atmosphere and variety in its terrain and vegetation. Amenities include picnic tables and shelters, boat docks, fishing piers, swimming areas, camp sites, hiking trails, and restrooms.

### *Methodology*

Q Methodology was chosen for its capacity to elicit and directly measure operant subjectivity. The instrument used for collecting raw data was the Q sort technique. The set of statements constructed for the Q sort process was based on information from twenty previously conducted in-depth interviews (Appendix C) with persons who were visitors to lake McMurtry Park. Twenty four persons who were visitors to Lake McMurtry, and were not among the subjects that were interviewed, provided Q sorts for this study. Raw data from the twenty four Q sorts was entered into a PQMethod 2.11 program for factor analysis.

### *Summary of Findings*

The first part of the research question asks, “Given the character of the study site and the verbal responses received during interviews of subjects who visit the site, what can one discover further about the manner in which leisure seekers dialogue with the Lake McMurtry Park environment?” The researcher has learned that the sample of visitors to Lake McMurtry who participated in this study represent four types of person-



place engagement with the nonhuman environs of the site. The names of these four types of person-place dialogue are: Close-encounter Escapists, Time-out Escapists, Purposive Dawdlers, and Place Abstractors.

*Close-encounter Escapists* are restored by communing with nonhuman influences. In this type of person-place dialogue, a person perceives a need to get away occasionally from the routine life-world. The person's senses absorb the landscape and the sky. It may be that the senses store impressions that later provide refreshing flashbacks.

*Time-out Escapists* are re-energized in a social context antithetical to their daily lives. This type of interaction, too, is a response to a perceived need to get away, though this person likes it to be a shared experience, perhaps with a friend who is of a kindred disposition. Sharing "another world" with a companion can restore this visitor's "perspective."

*Purposive Dawdlers* recharge psychic energy through direct experience with natural features of the area. This visitor would likely not be found sitting on a rock meditating; rather, the Purposive Dawdler is physically involved with the environment, exploring, playing. This person would experience directly the richness of the physical place. A visit would be all the more worthwhile with someone to share the experience.

*Place Abstractors* receive energy existentially from a tranquil natural ambience. This visitor would probably "soak up" the place by being relaxed in and spiritually attuned to a thickly textured and serene environment. Such a person could "strengthen my spirit" and maybe sense an unseen energy while being comforted by the tranquil place.

The second part of the research question asks, "Does the data reveal modes of person-place interaction?" Yes, it does. In Appendix B, there is a listing of "Q Statements

With Category Labels.” The 5 major category labels (play, spirituality, escape to be, escape to get, and sensory management) were constructed out of data from in-depth interviews previously conducted with a sample of visitors to Lake McMurtry Park. That subject sample did not participate in the present study. The constructs were used as a means of assuring that the Q set would be as inclusive as possible of the range of responses expressed by subjects who were interviewed. This was the sole purpose of listing Q items under category labels. Subjects who performed Q sorts had no knowledge of the categories. Only a statement and a tracking number appeared on the cards being sorted.

In the process of reviewing data from the present study, the author noticed that, in the factor arrays, there are loose constellations of near-consecutive item numbers. For example, in the array for Close-encounter Escapists, the item numbers 33, 34, 35, 36, and 38 all reside in three adjacent piles. By using colored markers to highlight the item numbers in the arrays, using a different color for each of the constructs associated with the Q items, the researcher was able to perceive “clouds” of colored numbers that represented the constructs within the set of Q statements. These loose constellations of items in the Q set are interpreted as modes of person-place interaction. Thus, the *modes* of person-place interaction are variously expressed to yield *types* of person-place dialogue.

## *Conclusion*

The author reports that the data from factor analysis of twenty four Q sorts demonstrates the strong likelihood of finding at least four types of person-place dialogue among visitors to Lake McMurtry Park. The four types revealed by the data are descriptively designated Close-encounter Escapists, Time-out Escapists, Purposive Dawdlers, and Place Abstractors.

Modes of interaction are identified in this study as (a) play, (b) spirituality, (c) escape to be, (d) escape to get, and (e) sensory engagement. These modes are variously combined in person types and are expressed collectively as types of person-place engagement.

## *Implications*

This study reinforces the evidence found in interview data that the geographic site itself is a major facility for leisure experience among persons who visit outdoor natural areas. The data reported for this study suggests that visitors to Lake McMurtry Park perceive a need for a place with the character of that park to supply intangible amenities to their lives. The richness of landscape texture at Lake McMurtry is not found in city parks of the area. The unique quality of the composite place appears to be a source of multiple categories of nurture to visitors at Lake McMurtry Park. The data reported here reflects social, emotional, and spiritual benefits.

The research query “Given the character of the study site and the verbal responses received during interviews of subjects who visit the site, what can one discover further about the manner in which leisure seekers dialogue with the Lake McMurtry environment?” is an open question and its answer will be on-going. The methodology used for this study was appropriate and productive, and it presents strong support for further study.

This study is the second of a proposed series of research projects (see Figure 2, p. 14) that could ultimately produce an effective triangulating instrument for assessing recreationists’ needs and responses when visiting outdoor recreation sites. Such an instrument would be an excellent tool for informing management personnel who need research data for decision making.

Swinerton and Hinch (1994) called attention to the fact that studies had indicated “the nature of outdoor recreation trips is changing with an increasing emphasis on shorter trips closer to home. This change in the spatial distribution of trips means that rural areas are likely to be the setting and destination for many of these visitors” (p. 6). That trend has also been stated this way: “Extended long-distance vacations are being replaced by more frequent, close-to-home recreation trips, consequently increasing the importance of recreation opportunities near urban areas” (Cordell, Bergstrom, Hartmann, & English, 1990, p. 8). This acknowledgment of need gives special relevance to the question posed by Kingsolver (1995, p. 180): “...who will love the *imperfect* lands, the fragments of backyard desert paradise, the creek that runs between farms: In our passion to protect the last remnants of virgin wilderness, shall we surrender everything else in exchange?” Studies such as the one presented here can promote awareness of and increase the

salience of interest in regional landscape. Further, such studies can bring citizenry and site management together in the evaluation of needs and possibilities related to rural recreation sites.

Further, such studies can bring citizenry and site management together in the evaluation of needs and possibilities for rural recreation sites. This Q method study and the previous depth interview study demonstrate that there is a population of leisure seekers for whom the primary facility is the place itself. This population of recreation visitors lose their primary facility when over-development destroys the natural character of the place. By bringing management personnel and leisure seekers into on-going conversation, both groups benefit.

Open dialogue between management and visitors can establish avenues of communication that reveal individual and classifiable needs of visitors to recreation sites. Management may accrue benefit by avoiding duplication of facilities and services, by reducing incidence of visitor conflict, and by cultivating an appreciative response among visitors to outdoor recreation sites. As such influences as economic constraints and the increase in age of the general population keep recreationists closer to home, pressures on outdoor recreation sites can be expected to increase. The earlier the dialogue begins and the more effective the selected avenues are, the greater will be the benefits to both recreating public and managing agency.

This line of research asks questions about the ways in which visitors dialogue with natural outdoor sites. The methodology involves extensive dialogue directly with the visitors. An effective way to find out what people need is to go to the people and allow

them to say more than the researcher can think of to ask. The richness of the information gained increases the chance of understanding basic needs and providing for them.

## POSTSCRIPT

“Matters of meaning and significance are fundamentally self-referential. What a statement or a concept is supposed to signify a priori may vary considerably from the meanings of other parties to the conversation. In Q methodology, this is not a problem; indeed, it is axiomatic in as much as the factors that make up its chief empirical product remain fundamentally *operant (based on subject operations) and not categorical in nature*. As such, ascription of their meaning occurs only after their discovery and not before. Because the data are “public”—that is, others are free to examine the factor arrays and arrive at their own independent conclusions—our interpretations are open to debate. We view this circumstance as a virtue of the method; it raises important issues within the scientific community where it belongs—not over the quality of the data, but over the significance of their meanings.” (McKeown & Thomas, 1988, p. 66)

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## APPENDIXES



Appendix A

Institutional Review Board Approval

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW**

**Date:** 05-04-95

**IRB#:** GU-95-007

**Proposal Title:** PERSON-PLACE ENGAGEMENT AMONG RECREATION  
VISITORS: A Q-METHOD INQUIRY

**Principal Investigator(s):** Lowell M. Caneday, Iris B. Wilson

**Reviewed and Processed as:** Exempt

**Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s):** Approved

APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT  
NEXT MEETING.

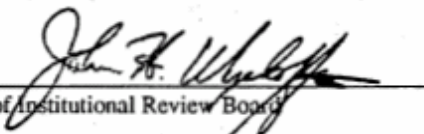
APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A  
CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD  
APPROVAL.

ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR  
APPROVAL.

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Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or Disapproval  
are as follows:

Signature:

  
Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: May 10, 1995

Appendix B

Q Method Materials

Participant Consent Form

for a research study titled

*Person-Place Engagement Among Recreation Visitors*

"I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby authorize Iris Wilson to conduct a Q-sort pertaining to use of Lake McMurtry. I understand that the Q sort procedure involves rank-ordering a prepared set of statements to show how I feel about visiting Lake McMurtry. The time required for the procedure is approximately one hour. My responses will be strictly confidential. Any published results will not identify me as a participant. All results will be used for professional purposes. Data collected may benefit society by informing managers of outdoor recreation sites about personal styles of leisure enjoyment among visitors to natural areas. The purpose of this Q-sort is to gather information about how individual visitors interact with outdoor recreational natural areas for leisure enjoyment. I also understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse any request. I can stop the procedure at any time. If I do not participate, my choice will be honored in good will. No penalty will result from my refusing to participate. I may contact IRIS WILSON at (405) 377-6616. I may also contact University Research Services, 001 Life Sciences East, Oklahoma State University Stillwater OK 74078."

"I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me."

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

"I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject before requesting the subject to sign it."

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Iris B. Wilson

## Q Statements With Category Labels.

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### Play

1. I like to explore the place to find out what's there.
2. It's fun to poke around to see what I can discover.
3. When I go there I spend my time with my sporting gear.
4. When I'm there I spend my time meditating on things.
5. When I'm there my spirit is free.
6. Spending time there gives me a joyful sense of freedom
7. When I'm there I'd rather share the visit with someone.
8. My time there is better when I am alone.

### Spirituality

9. When I'm there I feel like I belong.
10. When I go there I want to be **in** it, not just looking **at** it.
11. Being there gives me great peace.
12. It's a place where I can put aside the need to be "in control".
13. Being there gives me a sense of humility.
14. That place gives me a peaceful spirit.
15. Being there makes me see myself as part of a "big picture".
16. Out there I see god-ness all around.

### Escape to Be

17. Going there strengthens my spirit.
18. Spending time there anchors me.
19. When I'm there I'm in another world.
20. It helps me get away from everything.
21. Just being there is enough.
22. When I'm there I like to sit and watch clouds go by.
23. I expect to find tranquility there.
24. The secluded nature of the place is important to me.

### Escape to Get

25. It's a place that heals my spirit.
26. It's a good place to go when I'm stressed out.
27. When I go there I regain my perspective.
28. Going there restores my spirit.
29. It's sort of a safe harbor.
30. I find refuge there.
31. Being there soothes my spirit.
32. Being there is comforting to me.

### Sensory Engagement

- 33. I enjoy the diversity in the landscape and vegetation.
- 34. The trees, grasses and other native plants delight me.
- 35. It's fun to watch for signs of animal life out there.
- 36. The scenery is important to me.
- 37. I feast my eyes on the place.
- 38. I like to listen for sounds of nature when I'm there.
- 39. When I'm there I sometimes find myself sniffing the air for scents of nature.
- 40. When I'm there I enjoy touching things I find.

### Need

- 41. I need a place like that to give balance to my life.
- 42. If there were no place like that...well, I just don't know what I would do.

State in which I lived as a child \_\_\_\_\_

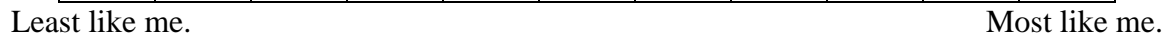
Size of childhood hometown \_\_\_\_\_

Race/ethnic group:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 36-50

\_\_\_\_\_ 51-65

\_\_\_\_\_ better than 65



### Q Statements With Ranks & Normalized Scores for Each Factor

#	Q Statement	Factor 1		Factor 2		Factor 3		Factor 4	
		Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
1	I like to explore the place to find out what's there.	30	-0.36	4	+1.38	2	+1.67	32	-0.58
2	It's fun to poke around to see what I can discover.	35	-0.95	5	+1.21	6	+1.48	36	-1.16
3	When I go there I spend my time with my sporting gear.	1	+2.09	1	+2.09	18	+0.25	42	-2.39
4	When I'm there I spend my time meditating on things.	21	-0.03	39	-1.49	42	-1.49	37	-1.36
5	When I'm there my spirit is free.	32	-0.54	26	-0.17	39	-1.33	16	0.30
6	Spending time there gives me a joyful sense of freedom.	11	0.66	13	0.57	14	0.51	18	0.24
7	When I'm there I'd rather share the visit with someone.	36	-0.97	2	1.75	10	1.03	24	0.01
8	My time there is better when I am alone.	39	-1.64	37	-1.24	31	-0.77	41	-1.77
9	When I'm there I feel like I belong.	24	-0.17	29	-0.58	22	-0.23	11	0.65
10	When I go there I want to be <b>in</b> it, not just looking <b>at</b> it.	16	0.31	9	0.88	13	0.56	3	1.47
11	Being there gives me great peace.	10	0.79	18	0.22	24	-0.36	1	1.95
12	It's a place where I can put aside the need to be "in control".	38	-1.58	34	-0.93	26	-0.47	39	-1.41
13	Being there gives me a sense of humility.	40	-1.74	36	-1.21	32	-0.87	34	-0.89
14	That place gives me a peaceful spirit.	23	-0.04	16	0.31	37	-1.23	9	0.85
15	Being there makes me see myself as part of a "big picture."	22	-0.04	31	-0.63	30	-0.62	22	0.09

16	Out there I see god-ness all around.	25	-0.25	42	-1.92	35	-1.04	5	1.24
17	Going there strengthens my spirit.	26	-0.26	22	0.13	34	-0.98	6	1.17
18	Spending time there anchors me.	42	-2.02	12	0.65	41	-1.39	23	0.06
19	When I'm there I'm in another world.	41	-1.77	7	0.99	36	-1.13	38	-1.37
20	It helps me get away from everything.	7	1.08	3	1.50	16	0.34	26	-0.14
21	Just being there is enough.	28	-0.28	15	0.46	23	-0.26	31	-0.52
22	When I'm there I like to sit and watch clouds go by.	14	0.47	41	-1.86	21	-0.19	29	-0.44
23	I expect to find tranquility there.	13	0.50	17	0.28	15	0.35	8	0.89
24	The secluded nature of the place is important to me.	8	1.00	14	0.54	7	1.45	21	0.10
25	It's a place that heals my spirit.	34	-0.81	28	-0.46	38	-1.30	17	0.27
26	It's a good place to go when I'm stressed out.	17	0.22	10	0.87	12	0.57	20	0.22
27	When I go there I regain my perspective.	33	-0.61	11	0.66	19	0.09	28	-0.17
28	Going there restores my spirit.	31	-0.48	25	-0.11	28	-0.57	12	0.64
29	It's sort of a safe harbor.	20	-0.02	24	0.02	33	-0.91	30	-0.50
30	I find refuge there.	18	0.09	32	-0.76	25	-0.37	33	-0.71
31	Being there soothes my spirit.	27	-0.26	21	0.16	29	-0.57	4	1.32
32	Being there is comforting to me.	15	0.36	20	0.16	17	0.25	2	1.83
33	I enjoy the diversity in the landscape and vegetation.	12	0.61	30	-0.60	8	1.15	25	-0.11
34	The trees, grasses and other native plants delight me.	9	0.81	27	-0.36	3	1.57	7	1.02
35	It's fun to watch for signs of animal life out there.	3	1.64	6	1.09	1	1.77	14	0.39

36	The scenery is important to me.	6	1.25	23	0.04	4	1.56	13	0.42
37	I feast my eyes on the place.	29	-0.30	35	-1.03	20	0.04	15	0.39
38	I like to listen for sounds of nature when I'm there.	4	1.44	19	0.21	5	1.54	10	0.69
39	When I'm there I sometimes find myself sniffing the air for scents of nature.	19	-0.01	38	-1.28	11	0.64	27	-0.16
40	When I'm there I enjoy touching things I find.	37	-1.18	40	-1.64	9	1.08	35	-1.06
41	I need a place like that to give balance to my life.	2	1.71	8	0.91	27	-0.50	19	0.23
42	If there were no place like that...well, I just don't know what I would do.	5	1.30	33	-0.83	40	-1.34	40	-1.72



Consensus Statements\* Identified by Factor Analysis

*Consensus Statements\* and z Score for Factor 1, Close-encounter Escapists.*

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<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
6	Spending time there gives me a joyful sense of freedom.	0.66
15	Being there helps me see myself as a spiritual part of a “big picture.”	-0.04
23	I expect to find tranquility there.	0.50
26	It’s a good place to go when I’m stressed out.	0.22

*Consensus Statements\* and z Scores for Factor 2, Time-out Escapists.*

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<u>No.</u>	<u>Statement</u>	<u>Score</u>
6	Spending time there gives me a joyful sense of freedom.	0.57
15	Being there helps me see myself as a spiritual part of a “big picture.”	-0.63
23	I expect to find tranquility there.	0.28
26	It’s a good place to go when I’m stressed out.	0.87

\*Consensus statements do not distinguish between *any* pair of factors.

## Appendix C

### Materials From Prior Interviews

<u>Interview Participants</u>			
Name	Age Group	Vocation Field	Home State
<u>Males</u>			
Johnny	26-35	Animal Care Management	OK
Greg	26-35	Law Enforcement	OK
James	36-50	Cell Physiology	FL
Douglas	51-65	Physical Education	KS
Jerry	36-50	Photography	OK
Edgar	51-65	Computing (ret)	OK
Patrick	36-50	Youth Programs	OK
Sam	26-35	Technical Writing	OK
<u>Females</u>			
Wendy	26-35	Elementary Teaching	OK
Rosalee	18-25	Laboratory Management	NC
Verna	36-50	Laboratory Research	KS
Martha	36-50	Office Management	OK
Esther	26-35	Political Science	NB
Katherine	51-65	Laboratory Coordination	NB
Sarah	36-50	Nature Interpretation	OK
Mary	36-50	Secretarial Coordination	CO
Ada	36-50	Outdoor Recreation	MO
<u>Married Couples</u>			
Phil & Vicki	36-50	Animal Science; Homemaking	WI
Bill & Leslie	65+	Electric Lines (ret); Healthcare (ret)	OK
Jack & Myrna	51-65; 36-50	Law Enforcement; Retail Mgmt	OK

## Question Guide for Interviews

### 1. Warm-up and Context Building.

How often do you get out to Lake McMurtry?

Do you usually go alone or with other people?

How much time do you spend when you go out there?

What sort of things do you do at Lake McMurtry?

What do you remember about your first visit to Lake McMurtry?

Why did you go back the second time?

Why do you keep going back now?

Do you go to other outdoor places besides McMurtry?

What do you like about those places?

Are there outdoor places you used to go but don't now?

### 2. How do you compare Lake McMurtry with other places you go?

How are they alike for you?

How is McMurtry different from other outdoor places you go?

How do you decide when to go out to Lake McMurtry?

Are there times when you want to go out there and don't?

What do you do instead?

Is there a favorite spot at McMurtry you go more often?

What's it like being at Lake McMurtry—for you?

Give me an example of something that would really delight you out there.

Give me an example of something that would really bother you out there.

If something happened and the park had to be closed, what would you do then?

How would you feel about not having Lake McMurtry to go to?

3. When you think back over all the outdoor places you've spent time in, what do you consider your favorite place?

What can you tell me about it?

What was/is it like to be there?

What sets it apart as special to you?

When you think about it, what goes through your mind?

Have you told friends about it?

What do you tell them?

What else can you tell me about it?

4. How did you get started going to outdoor places?

Can you describe places you remember?

What memories do you have of being there?

What was it like to be there?

What has happened to the place(s) you remember?

What did you feel about the outdoors back then?

How do you feel about outdoor places now?

What do you want an outdoor place to give you?

Will you want the same things 10 years from now?

Do you wonder what will happen to outdoor places in the next 10 years?

5. How do you pick an outdoor place to visit?

What is it about a location that makes you want to be there?

If somebody told you, "Hey, let's go to such-and-such place this weekend!" and handed you a brochure describing the place, what kind of words in the brochure would make you smile and say, "Yeah, I'd like that!"?

What kind of words would make you say, "No, that's not for me."?

What words would you use to describe a *perfect place* for you?

## Interview Narrative

The researcher conducted 20 in-depth interviews with persons who visited Lake McMurry Park. The in-depth interview was chosen because the researcher did not know if subjects would have the verbal facility to vocalize their affective experiences. It seemed prudent then to give subjects ample opportunity to say whatever they were capable of distilling into words. A face-to-face interview would allow the researcher to encourage subjects to speak of ideas that they do not typically think about.

A modification of the snowball method provided subjects for this project. By asking around in conversations if people visited Lake McMurry Park or if they knew anyone who did, the researcher was able to engage subjects who lived in the nearby city. To obtain subjects from small towns in the region the researcher approached the director of the agency that manages Lake McMurry and requested permission to obtain the names of some registered park users from the mailing list maintained by the park ranger.

As Lee (1972) points out, "When outdoor spaces draw visitors from regions they tend to take on peculiarities of the scheme or order typical of the regional culture. Belonging through possession, selective organization, and formalized control is typical of both regional and remote places, as proportionally few low income groups or minorities visit these areas" (p. 80). This observation is supported by the fact that all the interview subjects were Caucasian. According to the park ranger, members of minority populations occasionally use the park as families or groups during the summer.

Interviewed subjects provided copious information. Their ages ranged from the 20's to "over 65." The 20 interviews included 23 people because three subjects were

joined by a spouse. Nine women, eight men and three husband-wife couples granted interviews.

Interviews were conducted at times and places convenient for the subjects. Interview sites included subjects' offices, subjects' homes, outdoor places and a restaurant. The researcher recorded interview sessions onto audio cassettes with the permission of each subject and promised anonymity to all participants. Subsequent reviews of the tapes allowed the researcher to make written notes from which to organize data.

The initial question set proved to be redundant. It was compacted for smoother flow and less repetition. The revised question set was followed as closely as possible without interfering with participants' contributions. Ad-libbed comments and spontaneous questions were injected to keep subjects talking about things for which they often had trouble finding words.

Section 1 of the question set was designed to provide an overview of the subject's visitation to Lake McMurtry Park and to assess whether or not the park was the subject's preferred outing area as well as what mode of recreation the subject practiced. Lake McMurtry Park is "off the beaten path" so ending up there is probably a personal or social choice or is a result of personal or social exploration. The sample of people interviewed included day-users who typically spend an afternoon in the park as well as couples who spend weekends camping there. The retired couple, Bill and Leslie, are sometimes able to spend as much as a week camped at Lake McMurtry.

All subjects except two stated a definite preference for Lake McMurtry over all nearby public recreation areas. Of the two who did not declare it a preferred choice one is

still exploring his options and the other lives close to other available natural areas.

Despite his preference for Lake McMurtry Park, Jerry no longer frequents the area as he formerly did because his need for unfettered exploration of the outdoors can no longer be met there. He "used to be able to go out and roam without having to worry about a ranger pursuing you. I don't think you should have to pay for the ability to go out and look at nature."

Jerry's disdain for social control of a natural area was echoed by Greg who started visiting that area to ride his dirt bike while the area was being cleared in preparation for impoundment of the watershed. More than twenty years later he now rides a mountain bike out to the Lake McMurtry to be alone and commune with non-human influences: "It's just me and the lake...I don't know what to expect...just the earth and myself...it's as tranquil, as far away from everyday life as I can get being close to [town]...it's just kind of an even feeling." In that setting Greg is annoyed when the park ranger seeks him out to ask for a dollar: "I don't like going somewhere that should be where you can let your thoughts and feelings hash out and have someone come around with a Mr. Warden attitude...that blows it for me...like taking a warm bath, just getting settled in and the door bell rings."

Among some park users, as with Jerry and Greg, the quality of visitation seems to involve some element of proprietorship or membership, some sense of exclusivity that is key to the "atmosphere" that visitors expect. While Jerry and Greg would rather have tax money take care of resource management expenses so as not to have to encounter uniformed enforcement personnel and handle money, Phil has more of a real estate approach to retaining exclusivity. When he and Vicki pull their self-contained camping



unit into their favorite tucked-away RV site at Lake McMurtry, he finds that the place "has everything you need without the hustle and bustle of all the people" and he would be willing to pay twice as much for camping privileges if such a fee increase would keep the park management from constructing additional facilities to increase the volume of visitorship. He considers Lake McMurtry Park "a piece of property to go to that's out of the city" where he is "not intruding on neighbors" and he is away from "town where you have noise all the time." He enjoys the "tranquility of going out there and sitting in the boat whether you catch anything or not." In that boat neither sights, sounds, scents nor tempo direct his attention to disgruntled customers who use his products and services. The daily annoyances of in-town habitation are brushed aside, and he is at peace.

"Freedom" was the word Leslie used to name her feeling of "when you're out like that you haven't got a worry in the world" despite her age (70<sup>+</sup>) and restrictive health condition. Her husband Bill summed up the idyllic responses evoked by the park setting by saying that being out there makes you feel like "you're back when you were a little kid." The need for the spontaneity, the abandon, the exploration and the security of play settings apparently does not disappear as childhood is elaborated into adulthood.

In 15 interviews subjects indicated appreciation for being able to "get away from everything" as if being in a natural area allows them to enjoy a change in attitude that they consider beneficial. Esther, who occasionally goes out to the Lake with a friend to walk the nature trail, said "I think you tend to think about different things when you're outside than when you're in the city...you just start talking about different things ... environment affects what you think about." A desire for peace, quiet and solitude (paradoxically, even when accompanied by friends) was pervasive among the subjects.

They seem to be able to experience a personal state they name "solitude" even when they are in the company of others provided the others are similarly engaged with the place. Katherine seemed surprised to hear herself speaking appreciatively of the "solitude" that she enjoyed when she went out to Lake McMurtry Park with her family.

Verbal responses from two men and four women suggested a communing with the place. The remarks of these subjects implied a recognition of some "big picture" (Verna's words) with which each of them could feel a connection of some ineffable sort. Sarah spoke of a "sense of belonging," Patrick referred to "just such a peace that's hard to understand" and Martha remembers that around ten years of age "I had a singular thought that I was an outdoor person." Greg and Mary seemed to imply that occasional experiences of this communing variety serve as restorative influences in their lives. Greg sometimes goes to lake McMurtry Park to "gather" himself and Mary sometimes goes there to "vent frustrations."

The sample of visitors that were interviewed engaged in a variety of activities at the Park. The three couples have RV campers and take advantage of weekends, holidays and vacations to enjoy round-the-clock visits to Lake McMurtry. Phil and Vicki have two teen-aged daughters who join them for camping weekends. Myrna and Jack are accompanied by a teen-aged daughter and usually one of her friends. Bill and Leslie camp with their adult daughter.

Sam, Edgar, Mary and Sarah have camped overnight at Lake McMurtry and Verna has shared cookouts and evening campfires with husband and friends. All the other subjects have taken outings in the Park from one to several hours. Outings include such nameable activities as birdwatching, fishing, picnicking, hiking, talking to friends, nature

walks, reading and sunbathing as well as the not-so-easily defined practice of just "being there."

When Douglas was raising his children, he and his wife made a habit of using Lake McMurtry Park as a huge yard in which their young boys could romp relatively unrestrained on Sunday afternoons. Wendy and Esther like to take their dogs out to the Park for extended walks and are usually accompanied by a human friend too. Sam, Ada, Mary, Sarah and Greg indicated that they visit Lake McMurtry Park alone more often than with others, though all subjects interviewed said that they enjoy the area with family and close friends. James was introduced to the park when he attended a picnic organized by the department in which he works and later returned alone to explore the trail that someone had mentioned to him.

Responses to questions in section 2 showed the sample of visitors to be quiet, unassuming people who bear considerable responsibility as employees and appear to be personally caring.

Jack and Greg are law enforcement administrators subject to call at any time. Jerry, Katherine, Rosalee, Myrna, Martha and Johnny manage the professional units where they work. Katherine is also a volunteer for a meal service to elderly citizens. James and Esther are professors and researchers. Sam does private contracting in addition to full-time employment. Verna provides full-time technical assistance on a research project. Ada and Edgar are retired from career positions and are in graduate school to establish new directions in their lives. Martha is employed as an administrative assistant while engaged in academic pursuits. Douglas is an administrator who also volunteers with city sports programs. Sarah is a research associate and graduate student who also

volunteers as an environmental educator. Patrick recently received distinguished service recognition for his cumulative work in youth programs. Phil and Vicki own a small business and operate it six days a week. Bill and Leslie are both retired persons who "love the outdoors" and share it with their adult daughter whom they adopted when she was a young child. Wendy is a public school teacher who is also enrolled in graduate study.

What characteristics of Lake McMurtry Park cause this diversity of visitors to select it for their outdoor leisure experiences? Words such as "quiet," "peace," "solitude," "secluded" and "tranquil" were used by all subjects in describing preference for this outdoor area. Edgar described its atmosphere as "relaxing" and Sarah said that it provides "stress relief." Rosalee and Greg said that the park is for people who are "serious" about nature, contrasting it to a nearby recreational lake where people go to be "rowdy."

Five subjects used the word "clean" in describing the place. Seven people specified litter as a deplorable intrusion on their enjoyment in visiting Lake McMurtry Park. Mary and Sarah sometimes pick up trash as they walk, but the quality of a visit is lessened by the very presence of the litter and the thought that visitors who "don't have respect" for the place have left it there.

Eleven individuals and all three couples declared that loud people, loud music or mechanical noises would intrude deleteriously on their visit. Douglas, Phil, Jack and Martha reported that people who are "loud and partying" anger them and these subjects leave under such conditions.

Greg, Jerry and Mary said that the quality of experience was diminished for them when the Park Ranger invaded their solitude. He seemed to represent what they were there to leave behind in town.

The two different routes to Lake McMurtry Park's two entrances seem to offer a sense of passage in each instance. Sarah described the route to the west entry as affording a feeling of "going into the country" because the road passes by cultivated fields and grazing acreages on the way to the access road which then twists and curves its way past fields of grass on one side and groves of trees on the other. Greg enjoys using the undulating road that approaches the park on the east side because it offers a sense of getting far out of town and because the east side entry presents a panoramic, downhill view of the lake area that surprises and impresses first-time visitors.

The relatively undeveloped condition and natural appearance of Lake McMurtry Park is satisfying to all subjects in this sample of visitors. Thirteen individuals and two couples pointed to wild fauna as assets in the park while five individuals and two couples pointed to vegetative features as assets. Seven people named "scenery" and six people named "beauty" as desirable elements among the park's features. Eleven visitors considered the nature trail to be a park asset. Five subjects indicated a need to have water in a recreation natural area. Two men and two couples said that Lake McMurtry Park's "nice facilities" were important to them and two people lamented the absence of a telephone. Leslie pointed out that past acts of vandalism aimed at telephones have resulted in a decision to not install one. In her words "folks don't take care of the Lake like they should."

Lake McMurtry Park seems to accommodate a range of landscape preferences among visitors. Two people expressed a preference for openness, eight visitors prefer woodlands and five subjects like both forested and open areas. The biological diversity of the area and its scenic attributes, unique to the region, appear to make Lake McMurtry Park a source of pride for Greg and James. Greg, a local native, enjoys accompanying guests on first-time visits to the Park. According to Greg "They say, 'I didn't know this was out here!'" James tells friends about the uniqueness of the scenery at Lake McMurtry.

Despite their preference for the naturalness of the place, their love and care of its natural features and their objections to intrusions such as "trash," "mechanical noise," "loud people," "loud music," "hustle and bustle," "too many people" and "dogs on the trail," this sample of visitors do not appear to be activists. When asked what they would do if Lake McMurtry Park were closed, no one addressed the option of seeking support to keep it open. All six of the visitors who responded to this question just said that they "would have to find another place to be outside." Four subjects followed that statement with silence and a downcast gaze. It may be that visiting natural areas is so inextricably woven into these visitors' lived-experience that they never consciously consider a lack or loss of it.

Section 3 of the question set allowed subjects a chance to express awareness of affective response to outdoor places. Though not all subjects could declare a single favorite place, they were able to describe special places they had known, either in childhood or as adults. Edgar spoke warmly and pensively of experiences at the river where he went fishing with his father: "He'd go north, I'd go south--if fishing wasn't good I'd start playing--catch snakes--just do things--I was a kid, about nine." He described

clean, clear water in which markings on fish were visible from a boat. Martha spoke ecstatically of the place where she first reached the summit of a mountain, a place where in the fall the "aspens are turning, smells wonderful, sky is really blue, you go through so many different groves of trees." She felt "renewed."

People appeared to be more comfortable with these questions than with those in other sections of the question set. Subjects were prone to gaze off into nothing when they spoke of past experiences in places that stand out in their memories. Wendy was happy to display a framed arrangement of wildflowers she had collected and pressed at a mountain lake in New Mexico. Ada offered a detailed account of a beautiful, secluded place that she shared with friends while in college, a stream narrows appointed with a large, flat-topped, pink granite rock. Phil seemed pleased to have a chance to talk about a visit to an isolated park on a peninsula in Lake Michigan. Sam told of his exploration of Olympic National Park and recalled the great variety of natural features he experienced in the less-peopled areas. He characterized Olympic as "lush." Mary reminisced about a farm where she once lived. Rosalee spoke of a lake where she has gone scuba diving and described how the mist would rise off the lake in the morning. Subjects seemed to have no reluctance to ascribe affect to accounts of former encounters with favored places. All ages of subjects, men and women alike, spoke of scale perceptions, color, smell, sound, temperature and personal responses. These visitors to outdoor places appeared to enjoy recalling and relating previous experiences.

Section 4 of the question set addressed whether or not a subject had a history of outdoor visitation. All subjects except Douglas related instances of outdoor visitation all the way back into childhood. The earliest incidents Douglas reported were the numerous

camping trips that he and his wife took with their young children while he was a college student. Even though he first said that they went camping because it was a cheap way to travel with young children, he later pointed out that even if they had had money for indoor lodging they would have stayed outdoors anyway because they "just enjoyed that." It is interesting to note that Douglas was the only subject who was interviewed while attired in white-collar professional dress. He was *on duty* and seemed to be guarding against too great a departure from his *in charge* manner.

Rosalee first said she started going to outdoor places as a college student because of physical activity requirements at her school, but then she proceeded to recall outdoor excursions with grandparents throughout childhood and she pointed out that her family lived on a farm when she was twelve or thirteen years old.

Katherine thinks she developed her appreciation for natural earth places through childhood visits with her aunt and uncle. "They were the kind of people who really enjoyed the place they lived." She remembers when, as a child of probably five years, she first saw a snake. It was crawling past her aunt's foot and Katherine recalls being impressed with her aunt's matter-of-fact response to the snake's presence.

The histories of interaction with outdoor areas were as varied as the lives of the subjects. Bill and Leslie as well as Myrna and Jack grew up in rural Oklahoma. Phil and Vicki grew up in rural Wisconsin. James grew up in rural Florida. Verna remembers that she was "always interested in nature" and enjoyed it with her grandfather. Sam, Ada, Mary and Jerry have memories of childhood explorations in the outdoors. Greg, Wendy, Martha, Edgar, Sarah, Johnny, Esther and Patrick had families that regularly camped out in natural areas.



Section 5 of the question set was a chance for subjects to describe outdoor areas in ways they may have overlooked earlier. This section proved to be unnecessary. Subjects in their sixties and seventies had no use for imagining things. Leslie's response when asked to describe her idea of a perfect place was "Is there such a place?...maybe Heaven." Jack too named "Heaven" in response to this question. Among the younger men and women, some actually enjoyed describing a perfect place they had mentally constructed. Johnny unhesitatingly declared, "My perfect log cabin overlooking a mountain lake, tall pines, aspens...mountain lake with a stream coming like so" as his hands cut a stream bed through the air. Esther got her image of a perfect place from a picture she had seen in a brochure of a moonlit mountain snowscape. The responses gathered from section 5 were interesting, but the subjects were so generous with their answers to previous sections of the question set that this one was superfluous.

Even though subjects had not previously pondered the questions they were asked, they responded generously with place descriptors and referents that suggested a need to have contact with natural areas ("Just being there is enough" and "Sit and think, watch water" or "I like getting out in nature"). They expressed a concern for the place (Phil related how distressed he was when visitors used to cut up live trees for firewood) and they abhorred the occasional presence of partiers whose noise "invaded our space." They expressed pleasure in "beautiful sunsets," "great scenery," "armadillos" and "clouds." They were delighted by the sound of "water slapping on the shore," "coyotes moving in at night" or a "kingfisher making that rattling sound they make." They decried the ticks and chiggers and accommodated the bugs in their scheduling ("I have to go by myself in

June" because the rest of the family is more sensitive to chiggers). They walk the trail over and over, looking for the familiar and the "less predictable."

Bollnow (1971, p. 36) has described the lure of the hiking path with these words: "It is not cut hard into the countryside like a rationally laid road but clings to the natural landscape. It curves and winds where the auto road goes straight, it leads thoughtfully around a tree which the road builder would consider an obstruction and tear away. Movement on such a path is different. The path does not shoot for a destination but rests in itself. It invites loitering. Here [one] is in the landscape, taken up and dissolved into it, a part of it." That seems to be the way the subjects for this study see their visits to Lake McMurtry Park: they are *in place*.

Probably the most encompassing word that sums up the sample's responses is refuge. While refuge can suggest escaping from something it also suggests withdrawing to something as the subjects indicated in their comments: "get outside, feel the sunshine, the smells" or "just wander and look for little tiny plants" or "getting away from the city" or "tranquility of going out there and sitting in that boat whether you catch anything or not" or "see what's there."

## Appendix D

### Amenities At Four Lake-Based Recreation Sites

Lake	Water Surface	Shoreline	Developed Rec. Areas	Boat Ramps	Boat Docks	Picnic Areas	Group Shelters	Restrooms	RV Campsites	Primitive Campsites	Dump Stations	Swimming Areas	Water Skis & Canoes	Trails	Other
Carl Blackwell	3350 acre	58 mile	7	4	2	yes	7	7	35	yes	yes	yes	ok	yes	equestrian camp, archery range, fuel marina, hunting
McMurtry	1150 acre	28 mile	3	2	2	yes	2	2	20	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	duck blinds, private gun range, enclosed fishing dock
Sooner	5400 acre	42 mile	2	2	2	yes	no	3	no	no	no	1	no	no	bank fishing area with restrooms
Boomer	260 acre	6 mile	all	1	no	yes	5	2	no	no	no	no	no	concrete path	tennis, disc golf, roller hockey
<p><u>Boomer Lake Park</u> is an urban park with manufactured amenities placed largely on the western shore of an impoundment that provides cooling water for electrical power generation at the Stillwater Power facility. The eastern shore abuts a residential development. The lake is encircled by a concrete path for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.</p> <p><u>Sooner Lake</u>, also known as Sooner Reservoir, provides cooling water for power generation at an Oklahoma Gas and Electric facility. It has a markedly open landscape and a large water surface area that supports extensive habitat for fish and for migrating shore birds.</p> <p><u>Lake McMurtry</u> is perceived as being secluded. Traffic flow into the park is divided between opposite sides of the lake and manufactured amenities are likewise partitioned. This separation reduces activity density. Traffic flow may also be reduced by the fact that access roads on both sides of the lake connect to county roads that then connect to four-laned highways.</p> <p><u>Lake Carl Blackwell</u>, even though it has more than twice the area of lake McMurtry, has all of its developed areas concentrated in a segment of the southern shore that is accessed by a paved road that connects directly to a four-laned highway.</p>															

## VITA

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