To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Rosemary Kehoe Peacher entitled "The Experience of Place." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Psychology.

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THE EXPERIENCE OF PLACE

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctorate of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Rosemary Kehoe Peacher
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated

to my son

York Zachary Peacher

who followed me to many places in my

pursuit of a doctoral degree.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the human experience of place. A phenomenological approach was utilized employing an unstructured, open-ended dialogical interview method. Twenty participants, including ten younger and ten older adults, were asked to describe places which were special to them.

Interpretation of the interview transcripts revealed five themes descriptive of one's experience of place: Identity, Connection, Security, Possibilities, and Beauty/Awe. The experience of time was interwoven with all five themes.

The theme of Identity comprises the way in which a place can strengthen one's sense of self, provide continuity across the developmental life span, and trigger poignant memories from an earlier time in one's life. The loss of a special place was described as emotionally devastating.

Connection to loved ones, some of whom may be deceased, as well as to something larger than oneself, such as a university or a city, describes the second theme. Many participants expressed comfort at the recognition that a place may endure long after one's death.

Security, the third theme, embraces the ability of a place to provide a sense of permanence and tradition, ensure familiarity and safety, and to afford moments of relaxation, solitude, and a brief escape from life's problems.

Possibilities encompasses the way in which the participants experienced the environment as challenging their mental and physical abilities, stimulating their imagination, and enriching their opportunities for personal change and growth.

Beauty and Awe, the final theme, includes feelings of appreciation for the splendor of the earth, experiences of feeling alive, a sense of timelessness, and an awareness of a spiritual oneness with the universe.

Present results were discussed in terms of their implications for clinical psychology, most notably the need to recognize the role of the non-human environment in providing stability, identity, and a sense of well-being. Theoretically, this emphasis suggests extending the conceptual meaning of "object" within the context of Object Relations Theory.

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CHAPTER I

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

"What a powerful thing one's love for a place can be!"
(Aristophanes, quoted in Walter, 1988, p. 146)

Introduction

In the field of psychology, the role of place in the development of personality and identity typically has been relegated to the position of "ground" whereas the importance of people has been "figural." And yet, it is difficult to dispute the importance of the nonhuman environment. Special objects and possessions, one's home, neighborhood, city, state, region, and cultural heritage all influence who we are and how we perceive ourselves. This relationship is also dynamic since the environment is changed by its inhabitants. In his book, The Silent Language, Edward Hall (1959) acknowledges the paradoxical way in which this important subject has been ignored: "Man has developed his territoriality to an almost unbelievable extent. Yet we treat space somewhat as we treat sex. It is there but we don't talk about it" (p. 163). In this dissertation, I will talk about it. The experience of special places in the lives of both young and middle-aged adults will be explored, places that have influenced, nurtured, changed, challenged, and have been emotionally important to them.

This literature review contains four major sections. In Part 1, the role of place within the writings of a variety of psychoanalytic theorists will be discussed. Part 2 looks at the topic of space and how it has been

classified. Part 3 focuses on the subject of place, including its properties, features contributing to the identity of a particular place, the essence of place, the discovery-creation of places, the functions of place, attitudes toward place, as well as some special places such as one's home, city, wilderness, and the road. And Part 4 examines the topic of time and its relationship to place, including how the relationship between people and places changes throughout the developmental life span.

Within this literature review, the decision of where to include a topic had to be made quite arbitrarily since space, place, and time are so interrelated. The names of these three sections were chosen not only for their brevity but so that each part could embrace a diverse body of literature.

Given the fact that the subject of one's relationship with, and experience of, place has received so little attention within psychoanalytic writings and theory, I would like to discuss the evolution of my interest and attraction to this topic. My brief biographical sketch will also reveal some of the questions which have most intrigued me about our relationship with place.

I was raised in northeast Iowa, in a landscape that was so open and vast that I felt overwhelmed by the amount of uninhabited space around me. For nineteen years I lived on two acres of land which my family owned, surrounded by cornfields reaching to the horizon. Although it was a peaceful and orderly setting, I could not identify with this place. I remember frequently feeling that the world was

taking place somewhere else. Locating AM radio stations in cities as far away as Chicago and Philadelphia allowed me to eavesdrop on what I felt to be "the real world." Then, at the age of ten, my family traveled to St. Louis, and it felt like I was suddenly at the center of the world. I loved hearing traffic outside my window all night, and I felt comforted by the realization that someone was always awake at any hour in the city. <u>This world</u> reflected who I was or wanted to be; this landscape resonated with something inside of me. What is it about a place, a setting, a landscape that we connect with...or not? Given such limited experience with places, how can a child know so definitely that one place doesn't feel like home? How do places become a part of us, and vice versa? What is this relationship, this connection, this experience all about?

My academic interest in the topic of place arose during a course in Psychological Measurement, taught by Dr. Leonard Handler. In reviewing Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised test results of bright college students, I observed a pattern within some of the Information subtest items, questions which I have labeled "interest in the world." These items asked such things as: How many U.S. Senators are there? What is the population of the U.S.? How far is it from New York to Paris? I began to notice that many intelligent students failed these particular items which tapped their information about their world. Between my own background, many hours of which were spent poring over maps, and the testing data which intrigued me, the topic of this dissertation was born.

The next issue for me was to explore the literature. Being relatively familiar with many of the psychoanalytic and developmental theorists within psychology, I knew I would have to look elsewhere for literature which could help me understand this relationship with place. My first step was to do a literature search on such key phrases as "relationship with the world" and "environments and attachment behavior." Soon I noticed that many of the relevant articles were coded under the broader term, Environmental Psychology. And from there, I was able to make the leap to geography.

This literature review is truly interdisciplinary. My initial fear was that there would not be enough literature to review. Now the difficulty has become how to organize and synthesize the vast number of resources available. I have begun to appreciate that there is enough material here for many dissertations. And yet, I have found much satisfaction in the process of synthesizing material from across disciplines. The majority of my references have been books, with authors from fields as diverse as anthropology, architecture, geography, literature, philosophy, psychology, religion, sociology, and urban planning. Reviewing this literature has made me aware of how arbitrary the division of knowledge into academic disciplines is in the first place. Originally <u>all</u> knowledge was considered to be either geographical (chorology) or historical (chronology), encompassing the concepts of space and time. Until the 18th century, scholars could justifiably be called either a geographer or a historian. With the rise of laboratory

science, and the fragmentation of knowledge into different disciplines, geography became known as "the mother of sciences" (Martin & James, 1993, p. 8). Edward Relph, a phenomenological geographer, speaks to this need for experience not to be divided into academic disciplines:

> Any exploration of place as a phenomenon of direct experience cannot be undertaken in the terms of formal geography nor can it solely constitute part of such geography. It must, instead, be concerned with the entire range of experiences through which we all know and make places, and hence can be confined by the boundaries of no formally defined discipline. (Relph, 1976, p. 6)

Part 1: Psychoanalytic Theory

In order to understand why the importance of place has been neglected within psychoanalytic theory, I have attempted to review the work of a variety of spokespersons for each of the theoretical schools within psychoanalysis. The review begins with Classical Psychoanalytic theory, and progresses chronologically through Ego Psychology, Developmental theory, Object Relations theory, Self psychology, and Interpersonal theory. The major emphasis of each school will be described briefly. Within each theory, I will examine the degree to which the worldly environment is addressed, and how the relationship between people and place conceivably could be, or is, included within the theory.

Classical Theory

Sigmund Freud's driving passion was to understand intrapsychic conflict within the human personality. Modeling psychoanalysis upon the physical sciences, Freud

utilized the language of physics and discussed the human psyche in terms of energy, excitation, and discharge. His theory is centered on the instinctual drives, in particular, sexuality and aggression. Freud initially proposed a topographical model to understand conflict, first introduced in Interpretation of Dreams (1900). This model divides the mind into three systems: the unconscious, the preconscious, and consciousness. When the topographical model did not adequately resolve such theoretical issues as the fact that the repressed conflicts and the repressing agent itself are both unconscious, Freud then, in 1923, introduced his structural theory (Bellak, Hurvich, & Gediman, 1973). I like to think of Freud as a cartographer of the mind, mapping the psychic terrain with such identified 'regions' as the id, the ego and the super-ego.

Freud defined each of these psychic structures by its function. The id is the container of the instincts and "contains everything that is inherited, that is present at birth, that is laid down in the constitution" (Freud, 1940/1949, p. 2). The ego has the complex tasks of self-preservation, negotiating with the external environment (reality), and resolving conflicts between the psychic structures. The tension which exists between the ego and id results in anxiety, which the ego attempts to resolve either through finding realistic solutions which are satisfactory to all three psychic structures, or through the creation of ego defense mechanisms in order to protect itself against this intolerable anxiety-affect. And third, within the super-ego resides the influence of culture, including

various parental figures, teachers, religious tradition, and the broader societal milieu (Freud, 1940/1949; Bellak, Hurvich, & Gediman, 1973).

As one can see, Freud's emphasis was on the hypothesized interior places of the psyche. In an often quoted passage from Civilization and its Discontents, when Freud did address one's relationship to the external world, he admitted his perplexity at this feeling "of something limitless, unbounded--as it were, 'oceanic'....a feeling of an indissoluble bond, of being one with the external world as a whole....I cannot discover this 'oceanic' feeling in myself" (Freud, 1930/1961, pp. 11-12). Freud believed that the ego typically maintains "clear and sharp lines of demarcation" toward the external world. The only non-pathological exception to this is "at the height of being in love the boundary between ego and object threatens to melt away" (Freud, 1930/1961, p. 13).

Ego Psychology

Whereas Freud's emphasis was on the id, the instincts, and conflict, the neo-Freudians emphasized the role of the ego. Heinz Hartmann is regarded as "the father of modern ego psychology" (Blanck & Blanck, 1974, p. 24). Hartmann was interested in the roots of ego development which are independent of instinctual drives, particularly as it relates to external reality and adaptation to reality. In Hartmann's book, Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation (1939/1958), the role of the environment became much more figural than it was within classical psychoanalytic thought. The following quotes portray this

changing emphasis from instincts and drives to ego and adaptation:

> The newborn infant is not wholly a creature of drives; he has inborn apparatuses (perceptual and protective mechanisms) which appropriately perform a part of those functions which, after the differentiation of ego and id, we attribute to the ego. (p. 49)

> Generally speaking, we call a man well adapted if his productivity, his ability to enjoy life, and his mental equilibrium are undisturbed....What makes a person succeed or fail in a given situation? The degree of adaptiveness can only be determined with reference to environmental situations (average expectable--i.e., typical--situations, or on the average not expectable--i.e., atypical--situations)....The observation underlying the concept "adaptation" is that living organisms patently "fit" into their environment. Thus, adaptation is primarily a reciprocal relationship between the organism and its environment. (pp. 23-24)

The dynamic person-environment relationship, emphasizing how each changes and affects the other, is discussed as follows:

> Adaptation may come about by changes which the individual effects in his environment (use of tools, technology... etc.) as well as by appropriate changes in his psychophysical system....Two processes may be involved here: human action adapts the environment to human functions, and then the human being adapts (secondarily) to the environment which he has helped to create....A third form of adaptation is the choice of a new environment which is advantageous for the functioning of the organism. (pp. 26-27)

Hartmann advised throughout his writings that the term "environment" should not be equated solely with the people who exist within it. Consistent with Freud's use of the

word "object," environment was to be defined by the needs of the instincts.

In their book, Ego Psychology (1974), Gertrude and Rubin Blanck review ego psychology theory, stating that with Hartmann's introduction of the concepts of inborn ego apparatuses and average expectable environment, psychoanalytic theory expanded from a psychology of conflict to a broader psychology of normal developmental behavior. These inborn ego apparatuses remain in the conflict-free sphere (i.e., not determined by instinctual drives in the search for pleasure, as Freud posited), and over time develop into ego functions.

Bellak, Hurvich, and Gediman (1973) described in behavioral terms twelve ego functions: reality testing; judgment; sense of reality of the world and of the self; regulation and control of drives, affects, and impulses; object relations; thought processes; adaptive regression in the service of the ego; defensive functioning; stimulus barrier; autonomous functioning; synthetic-integrative functioning; and mastery-competence.

In my opinion, there are three ego functions where one might expect the topic of space and place to be included. The first is reality testing. This domain includes a person's ability to distinguish between inner and outer stimuli, and to accurately perceive and interpret both internal and external events, including orientation to time and place. However, no mention is made of place other than as a frame of reference, including knowledge of one's whereabouts and a perceived familiarity with known places.

The second ego function where one would expect place to be included is the sense of reality of the world and of the self. This ego function encompasses the extent to which a person feels that the world one inhabits is real (the opposite is labeled derealization), feels connected to one's self (versus depersonalization), as well as the degree to which a person has developed a stable body image and a sense of self, distinct from other people and objects. The strength of one's ego boundaries between the self and the outside world are examined, such that this ego function makes figural one's perceived separation from, rather than connection with, the external world.

The third ego function where one might expect to find a reference to place is object relations, defined as the quality of one's relationships with others, especially the ability to form friendly and loving bonds with others with a minimum of inappropriate hostility; the maturity level of the relationship as defined by the ability to respond to others as independent beings rather than as extensions of oneself; and the ability to maintain object constancy (Bellak, Hurvich, & Gediman, 1973). A place, unlike a relationship with another person, conceivably can offer object constancy and object permanence over a period of decades, if not centuries, providing comfort and security for an individual living in a world which changes rapidly. A place is dependable in that it has a type of immortality that people cannot provide for one another. For example, in visiting the Grand Canyon one can barely comprehend the fact that the schist layer of rock at the very bottom of the

canyon is more than a billion years old. If an individual lives to be 100 years of age, that is considered "old" by human standards. Some special places can teach us about stability, constancy, and time.

The relationship between an individual and a place might include aspects such as an individual creating a nurturing and supportive home for him or herself, being a caretaker of nature and the natural environment or an ardent defender of one's neighborhood or city. An individual invests his or her time, energy and interest in a particular place, which in turn provides meaning and a sense of accomplishment and identity to the individual. In other words, the relationship is mutually beneficial. It is obvious that Bellak, Hurvich, & Gediman examine a variety of functions which are assigned to the ego; however, none of their twelve functions addresses the ability to relate to a place. I imagine that a thirteenth ego function exists, one that we might label attachment to place, which would provide health and well-being for both an individual and a place.

Ego-Developmental Theory

The two psychoanalytic writers most associated with this bridge between Ego Psychology and Object Relations theory are John Bowlby and Margaret Mahler. In 1950, Bowlby was asked by the World Health Organization to advise them on the mental health of homeless children. The articles which he wrote in response to this request evolved into a three volume series of books entitled Attachment, Separation, and Loss. Researching the relationship between mother and child

became his life's work. Bowlby defines attachment as follows:

> To say of a child that he is attached to, or has an attachment to, someone means that he is strongly disposed to seek proximity to and contact with a specific figure and to do so in certain situations, notably when he is frightened, tired or ill. (Bowlby, 1969, p. 371)

> No form of behaviour is accompanied by stronger feeling than is attachment behaviour. The figures towards whom it is directed are loved and their advent is greeted with joy. So long as a child is in the unchallenged presence of a principal attachment-figure, or within easy reach, he feels secure. A threat of loss creates anxiety, and actual loss sorrow; both, moreover, are likely to arouse anger. (Bowlby, 1969, p. 209)

> The function that the behaviour fulfils [sic]...is to be sought in the contribution it makes to survival....A view I have already proposed is that the function of attachment behaviour is protection from predators. (Bowlby, 1969, pp. 223-224)

In my dissertation data, it will be intriguing to note whether the attachments which people have to special places are analogous to Bowlby's description of the child's attachment to a loving caretaker. Are these relationships parallel; does a place compensate for the absence of a person; does place come to represent the connection with a key person; is each experienced completely independently of the other?

A developmental theorist who informs the technique and writings of many clinicians is Margaret Mahler. Similar to Bowlby, Mahler based her theory on observations of mothers and their children interacting with each other, and proposed a three-phase theory of development leading to identity: the autistic phase, which lasts from four to six weeks,

during which an infant appears to be in a state of primitive hallucinatory disorientation in which his/her needs are, ideally, satisfied automatically by the mother; the symbiosis phase, lasting until approximately six months of age, during which an infant behaves and functions as though mother and infant were one omnipotent system; and separation-individuation, a phase when an infant learns to walk and talk, explores his or her environment at some distance from the caretaker, and begins to develop a stable sense of gender identity and self-boundaries. During this last period of time, it is said that "the world is the junior toddler's oyster" (Mahler, Pine & Bergman, 1975, pp. 69-71). Greenacre (1957) has observed that during this phase, the infant has a "love affair with the world" (p. 57). Although psychoanalytic theorists observed the importance of the nonhuman environment for individuals during infancy, its relevance was ignored during the remaining developmental stages of life.

Object Relations Theory

Object Relations theory provided a needed balance to Classical theory, which stressed the biological needs of humans, and to Ego Psychology, which focused on cognitive abilities and needs. Object Relations theory makes salient the type and quality of relationships with others, especially as they have been internalized within one's psyche, and as they are capable of influencing feelings and actions. It may be helpful to define object, as it is used in the psychoanalytic literature:

> In psycho-analytical writings, objects are nearly always persons, parts of persons, or symbols of one or the other. This terminology confuses readers who are more familiar with 'object' in the sense of 'thing,' i.e. that which is not a person. (Storr, 1988, p. 151)

Within psychoanalytic theory, an object refers to a human being. Places, homes, or favorite possessions are not included here.

W. R. D. Fairbairn, one of the major British Object Relations theorists, disagreed with the basic premise of Freud's drive theory; i.e., that the major goal of the psyche is to regulate tension and conflict. He stated: "the ultimate principle from which the whole of my special views are derived may be formulated in the general proposition that libido is not primarily pleasure-seeking, but object-seeking. ... The real libidinal aim is the establishment of satisfactory relationships with objects; and it is, accordingly, the object that constitutes the true libidinal goal" (Fairbairn, 1952/1954, pp. 137-138). Eventually Fairbairn abandoned the term libido completely since it implies an entity separate from the person.

An essential principle in Fairbairn's relational-structural system is that ego and object are inseparable. The ego is unthinkable except as connected with objects. Fairbairn describes the fragmentation which occurs to the ego system as a result of both necessary and unnecessary rejecting or disappointing relationships with others in one's early environment. As a result, more of one's energy is invested in these destructive internal objects, leaving

less motivation for investing oneself in the real world (Fairbairn, 1952/1954).

Harry Guntrip is another of the British Object Relations theorists. He disagreed with Freud's drive theory more on moral than on theoretical grounds, and has integrated and extended Fairbairn's theory. Guntrip added the concept of the regressed libidinal ego to Fairbairn's ideas about the fragmented ego which results from negative early experiences with caretakers. The regressed libidinal ego, helpful in understanding and treating a person with a Schizoid Personality Disorder, is described as a flight from life; a withdrawal into an isolated, objectless state; a feeling of profound helplessness and hopelessness. All people, both external and internal, real and imaginary have been renounced. The regressed ego is awaiting a second chance to be reborn into a more hospitable human environment. Although the regressed libidinal ego is hidden, it exercises a powerful backward pull on the rest of the personality in proportion as pressure, fear and anxiety are experienced in real life. Guntrip states:

> It [regressed libidinal ego] is the true source of all passive and regressive phenomena, exhaustion and fatigue, compulsive sleep, agoraphobic anxieties and the claustrophobias which are a reaction from them, phantasies of a return to the womb and retirement and escapist phantasies and longings in real life. ... The regressed libidinal ego retains the primary capacity for spontaneous and vigorous growth once it is freed from fears. There lies the ultimate hope of psychotherapy. (Guntrip, 1961/1964, pp. 432-433)

For both Fairbairn and Guntrip, objects are people. The possibility of utilizing a nurturing place for comfort

as well as stimulation is not considered. Instead, the psyche retreats, and waits passively until the human environment changes. Actively searching for a more appropriate non-human environment is not considered in the theories of either Fairbairn or Guntrip.

Donald W. Winnicott, the third British Object Relations theorist to be discussed here, was a pediatrician before becoming an innovative contributor to psychoanalytic theory and treatment. The major concepts pertinent to this discussion of the role of place in psychoanalytic theory are Winnicott's concepts of transitional phenomena and transitional objects (Winnicott, 1958/1975). In the infant's experience of the external world, certain objects, such as a doll or a blanket, are eventually imbued with special significance. Winnicott states:

> The transitional object and the transitional phenomena start each human being off with what will always be important for them, i.e. a neutral area of experience which will not be challenged. Of the transitional object it can be said that it is a matter of agreement between us and the baby that we will never ask the question 'Did you conceive of this or was it presented to you from without?' The important point is that no decision on this point is expected. The question is not to be formulated. (Winnicott, 1958/1975, pp. 239-240)

The child finds an object in the environment which represents the beloved caretaker, and imbues it with feelings reminiscent of the internal image which the child carries within of the mother, most typically. The transitional object is both created and discovered, and could be considered sacred to the child.

In a chapter entitled The Place Where We Live, Winnicott speaks of his concept of a potential space:

> It is useful, then, to think of a third area of human living, one neither inside the individual nor outside in the world of shared reality. This intermediate living can be thought of as occupying a potential space, negating the idea of space and separation between the baby and the mother, and all developments derived from this phenomenon. This potential space varies greatly from individual to individual, and its foundation is the baby's trust in the mother. (Winnicott, 1971, p. 110)

> In infancy this intermediate area is necessary for the initiation of a relationship between the child and the world, and is made possible by good enough mothering at the early critical phase. Essential to all this is continuity (in time) of the external emotional environment and of particular elements in the physical environment such as the transitional object or objects. (Winnicott, 1958/1975, pp. 240-241)

Winnicott believes that this potential space is necessary for creative play, for illusion, and for cultural experiences such as the creation and enjoyment of the arts and religion. A major question of this dissertation is whether a place can also provide this potential space...a place which becomes internalized and allows one to create new versions of oneself...a place which symbolizes both outer and inner, and is located between outer and inner? When we are away from our home environs, we can imagine ourselves living a different life, interacting with a novel place. Travelers sometimes assume character traits they never would express in their hometown (Wheelis, 1958). Temporarily, we are able to leave behind the routine and the restrictions of daily living. We live, for a moment, in this potential space, and re-create ourselves.

The fourth Object Relations theorist to be considered in this review is Otto Kernberg, the only American psychoanalyst to characterize his own work as an Object Relations theory (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p. 327). However, in spite of this theoretical identification, Kernberg continues to pay allegiance to Freud by retaining the concepts of libido and drives, and by placing them at the top of his motivational system, above the concepts of affects and internalized object relations. However, unlike Classical theory, Kernberg believes that drives originate in affective-object relations experiences as opposed to being biologically determined. In the following passage, Kernberg explains the relationship among the three concepts:

> Affects are at the center of each of the infinite number of gratifying and frustrating concrete events the infant experiences with his environment. Affects link a series of undifferentiated self-object representations so that gradually a complex world of internalized object relations, some pleasurably tinged, others unpleasurably tinged, is constructed. ... Love and hate thus become stable intrapsychic structures, in genetic continuity through various developmental stages, and, by that very continuity, consolidate into libido and aggression. ... Affects, in short, are the building blocks or constituents of drives. (Kernberg, 1982, pp. 907-908)

What is the meaning of Kernberg's object? He states: "The term 'object' in Object Relations theory should more properly be 'human object' since it reflects the traditional use of this term in psychoanalytic metapsychology for relations with others" (Kernberg, 1976, p. 58). Once again, we have a theorist who does not include the nonhuman environment within his conceptual framework.

Self Psychology

Self Psychology again provides a corrective to those psychoanalytic theories which preceded it, since another missing element is the consideration of one's relationship with oneself. The basic feature of Heinz Kohut's psychoanalytic theory is the self. He attributes functions to the self which in the classical drive theory are ascribed to the structures of the id, ego and superego. The self is no longer a product of the demands of the instincts (Classical theory), or of the activity of the ego (Ego psychology), or an internal representation of a person (Object relations theory). The self is the active agent (Kohut, 1977).

In Kohut's theory, the child's need for relatedness with others is essential for survival. However, the infantile self is weak and has no durable structure; it requires the empathic participation of others. Kohut terms these others selfobjects, since they are objectively separate people who will serve functions for the infant which will later be performed by the individual's own psychic structure (Kohut, 1977). Kohut considers that the infant seeks two types of relationships with his or her caregivers: mirroring selfobjects ("I am perfect and you admire me") and idealized selfobjects ("You are perfect, and I am part of you") (Kohut, 1977). In Kohut's theory, the self consists of two poles drawn from these early relationships; either pole can form the core of a healthy and cohesive self. One's personality may be organized around a grandiose, exhibitionistic trend, expressed as

healthy ambition or assertiveness and derived from the mirroring selfobject. Or, the idealizing selfobject relationship may be dominant, expressed in terms of healthy and strongly held ideals and values. The nature of a particular personality is determined both by the content of these poles of the self and by their relation to each other (Kohut, 1977).

Self psychology is focused on the intrapsychic experience of individuals--the selfobject experience--but it also considers the environmental conditions that shape the selfobject experience (Wolf, 1988). With his formulation of selfobjects, Kohut has replaced drive as the basic constituent of mental development. The child innately needs these relationships, not as an end in itself as in Fairbairn's system ("the aim of libido is the object"), but as a vehicle for homeostasis. In fact, in his book, How Does Analysis Cure?, Kohut has written that we never outgrow our need for selfobjects:

> Throughout his life a person will experience himself as a cohesive firm unit in time and space, connected with his past and pointing meaningfully into a creative-productive future, [but] only as long as, at each stage in his life, he experiences certain representatives of his human surroundings as joyfully responding to him, as available to him as sources of idealized strength and calmness, as being silently present but in essence like him, and, at any rate, able to grasp his inner life more or less accurately so that their responses are attuned to his needs and allow him to grasp their inner life when his is in need of such sustenance. (Kohut, 1984, p. 52)

Once again, we have a theorist who has overlooked a major area of existence--the nonhuman environment. But, can a place satisfy the requirements of a selfobject, providing

a space of calmness, nurturance, resonance, and strengthening one's sense of self?

Interpersonal Psychoanalytic Theory

Unlike the major psychoanalytic theories we have examined previously, Interpersonal Psychoanalytic Theory emphasizes relationships with real people in the external world. In this section, I will review the work of four theorists, including Erik Erikson, Erich Fromm, Ernest Schachtel, and Harold Searles.

Erik Erikson studied psychosocial development in a variety of cultural and social settings. Unlike other psychoanalytic writers who concentrate upon the first five years of life, Erikson's theory includes the entire life span, from birth to death. David Rapaport is quoted in Erikson's book, Identity and the Life Cycle, as follows:

> The crucial characteristic of this psychosocial theory of ego development...is a conceptual explanation of the individual's social development by tracing the unfolding of the genetically social character of the human individual in the course of his encounters with the social environment at each phase of his epigenesis. (Erikson, 1959/1980, p. 11)

Erikson's eight stages of development are a blueprint for the interaction between the biological organism and the social-cultural environment, including both its opportunities and limitations. The first five stages describe childhood and adolescence, and the latter three describe adult stages of growth. Each stage presents a crisis for which the maturing child or adult must find a solution, or else developmental progress is hampered. Both the child and the caretakers are challenged to take a new

perspective, to demonstrate a new attitude, at each successive stage (Erikson, 1959/1980).

Erikson does not view external reality as a conspirator against the infantile, instinctual wishes of the psyche. In fact, he speaks to the prejudice which psychoanalysis has shown in regard to the external environment in this quote: "The implicit conclusion that an individual ego could exist against or without a specifically human 'environment,' i.e., social organization, is senseless" (Erikson, 1959/1980, pp. 162-163). Each of Erikson's stages presents an opportunity for the child to grow and find a niche, a <u>place</u> in the world. In each successive stage, a person has an opportunity to develop a new perspective and find resonance within the social-cultural environment. Although Erikson does not discuss the nonhuman environment specificially, his stages include challenges which bring one into relationship with both physical and social tasks, as well as life within a larger community. As long as we are alive and growing, we are attempting to resolve the tasks of these stages.

Erich Fromm likewise believed that Classical Freudian theory, as well as Object Relations theory, under-emphasized the larger social and cultural context in their attempts to explain the origin and development of personality. Fromm's particular goal within Interpersonal Psychoanalytic theory was to integrate Freud's psychodynamic theory of the unconscious with Marx's theory of history and social criticism (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983).

In his book, <u>The Sane Society</u>, Fromm discusses the need for <u>roots</u> and the importance of <u>nature</u> in providing our

roots. "Man, being torn away from nature, being endowed with reason and imagination....has lost the original unity with nature, has to make decisions, is aware of himself" (Fromm, 1955, p. 62). The central feature of the human condition is the realization that each one of us is alone. With no instincts to guide us, humans search for ways to escape their anxiety-filled isolation. Fromm speaks of our relationship to the soil and the importance of the tribe in forming one's identity. This combination of blood and soil is what makes the tribe so powerful as a source of roots, making it "the real home and frame of orientation for the individual" (Fromm, 1955, p. 52). However, the realization of our separateness in this world and of our responsibility for shaping our life often leads to illusionary answers and neurotic symptoms. Writing after World War II, Fromm writes that mankind feared the freedom inherent in this realization, and "escaped into a new idolatry of blood and soil, of which nationalism and racism are the two most evident expressions" (Fromm, 1955, p. 59).

In 1959, Ernest Schachtel wrote Metamorphosis, revising Freud's drive theory which had claimed that the aim in life was to achieve pleasure through relief from drive tension ("the pleasure principle"). In drive theory, affect is considered a safety valve which rids the organism of excess instinctual pressure. Schachtel, on the other hand, posits two types of affects: embeddedness-affect, analogous to Freud's type of discharge-of-tension affect; and activity-affect, which is goal-directed, coordinated, and environment-seeking. Unlike Freud, Schachtel believes that

actively relating to the world is pleasurable in itself, and not solely for the purpose of finding objects which can satisfy instinctual needs. He states:

> The function of the activity-affects is to establish an effective emotional link between the separate organism and the environment, so that the organism will be able to engage in those activities which will satisfy his needs, develop his capacities, and further his life. (Schachtel, 1959/1984, p. 31)

This is a radical shift within psychoanalysis. Whereas Freud believed that every increase in stimulation was unpleasurable, Schachtel believes that there is a "wish to encounter the world and to develop and realize, in this encounter, the human capacities" (Schachtel, 1959/1984, p. 151). In what seems to be a profound statement, Schachtel writes: "The embeddedness principle yields to the transcendence principle of openness toward the world and of self-realization which takes place in the encounter with the world" (Schachtel, 1959/1984, p. 157). He appears to be saying that without an active relationship with the world, one cannot develop, learn, and come to know oneself.

The prerequisite for the child's healthy exploration of the environment is trust in the mother's availability. Changes in the world can be tolerated and even welcomed if the most important object, the mother, continues to exist, is dependable, and remains constant or unchangeable (Schachtel, 1959/1984).

The fourth theorist to be reviewed here is Harold Searles, an American psychoanalyst who has done much work with schizophrenic patients. In 1960, he published <u>The</u>

Nonhuman Environment in Normal Development and in Schizophrenia. Obviously Searles was inspired by something other than his psychoanalytic mentors, as he expresses in the following passage from his book:

> Probably for every one who has found life to be more kindly than cruel, the land of his youth is a golden land; youth is such a golden time of life. Certainly for me the Catskill region of upstate New York possesses an undying enchantment, a beauty and an affirmation of life's goodness which will be part of me as long as I live. For as far back as I can recall, I have felt that life's meaning resided not only in my relatedness with my mother and father and sister and other persons, but in relatedness with the land itself--the verdant or autumn-tapestried or stark and snow-covered hills, the uncounted lakes, the rivers. In subsequent years, the so-different life in cities--Boston, New York, San Francisco, Washington--has shown me that the 'nonhuman environment' here is equally enchanting and profoundly meaningful to one's living. Whether in surroundings that are largely natural or largely man-made, I have found that moments of deeply felt kinship with one's nonhuman environment are to be counted among those moments when one has drunk deepest of the whole of life's meaning. (Searles, 1960, pp. ix-x)

This is the topic of this dissertation! Searles defines the nonhuman environment as "the totality of man's environment, with the exception of the other human beings in it" (Searles, 1960, p. 3). In his critique of psychoanalysis, Searles states:

> When psychoanalysts have been confronted with phenomena in which a nonhuman object has played an important role in the life of an individual, they have generally assumed that this nonhuman object derived its significance from its symbolic or defensive value....The object, whatever it may be, "stood for" or "represented" either mother or a part of the body. (Searles, 1960, p. 65)

The thesis of Searles' book is that the nonhuman environment is one of the most important aspects of human existence:

> It is my conviction that there is within the human individual a sense, whether at a conscious or unconscious level, of relatedness to his nonhuman environment, that this relatedness is one of the transcendentally important facts of human living, that--as with other very important circumstances in human existence--it is a source of ambivalent feelings to him, and that, finally, if he tries to ignore its importance to himself, he does so at peril to his psychological well-being. (Searles, 1960, p. 6)

Searles consults a variety of sources which give evidence of a state of unity which was originally experienced with the nonhuman environment during the earliest moments of our existence. These varied sources include mythology, anthropology, children's fairy tales, humorous cartoons and literature for adults, dreams, hallucinations, effects of experimental isolation from the nonhuman environment, and long-term psychotherapy with schizophrenic patients. Based on these sources, Searles hypothesizes that the infant progresses through three stages of awareness: 1) one is aware of being alive and distinct from the inanimate things in the environment; 2) awareness of oneself as human and distinct from the animate part of the nonhuman environment; and 3) awareness of oneself as a living human individual, distinct from other humans (Searles, 1960, pp. 43-44).

Why Place is Excluded from Psychoanalytic Theory

Given the strong argument that Searles makes for the bond between people and the nonhuman environment, it is

puzzling why the relationship between person and place has not been considered within psychoanalytic theory. Within Freud's Classical theory, an object relationship is viewed as the creation of a drive demand. A thing in the external world becomes an object because it can satisfy either the sexual drive or one's aggressive impulses. Within Hartmann's theory of adaptation and the "average expectable environment," the meaning of environment was not limited to people who exist within it. Objects remained, as they did for Freud, largely determined by instinctual needs (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983). Within both Object Relations theory and Self Psychology, however, an object refers solely to a person. Winnicott allows for a possible consideration of one's relationship with a place within his concept of potential space. His idea of potential space is psychically somewhere between inner and outer reality, however, and does not refer to a point defined by longitude and latitude. And although Kohut's theory seems broad enough to include the nonhuman environment, he refers to human surroundings when describing the need for selfobjects throughout one's life.

Given the receptivity that Searles has found when speaking with people about the nonhuman environment, he asks the question: "Why has there not been formulated, before this, a more compre-hensive psychoanalytic theory than we have at present, a theory which takes into account not merely man in his <u>human</u> environment, but man in his <u>total</u> environment?" (Searles, 1960, p. 25). Searles argues that the reason is "anxiety which we psychoanalysts possess, along with other human beings generally, concerning our

relatedness with the non-human environment" (Searles, 1960, p. 25):

> Much of the delay in our coming, in the psychoanalytic profession, to a realization of the importance of the nonhuman environment, is attributable to the circumstance that any determined effort to penetrate this area brings up in us the kind of anxiety which, I surmise, we knew all too much of as infants, when the world around us seemed, oftentimes, comprised largely or even wholly of chaotically uncontrollable non-human elements. Such anxiety is, surely, no total stranger to our everyday experience. ...
>
> There is a second great source, I think, for the anxiety which impedes our exploration of this whole subject. Not only do we have unconscious memory traces of infantile experiences in which we were surrounded by a chaotically uncontrollable nonhuman environment that was sensed as being a part of us; in addition, we presumably have unconscious memory traces of our experience with losing a nonhuman environment which had been sensed, heretofere, as a harmonious extension of our world-embracing self. ... Thus the exploration of this whole subject, no matter upon how scientific a plane we attempt to pursue it, impinges upon a deeply rooted anxiety of a double-edged sort: the anxiety of subjective oneness with a chaotic world, and the anxiety over the loss of a cherished, omnipotent world-self. (Searles, 1960, pp. 38-39)

According to Searles, it seems that our earliest moments blind us to anxiety-ridden material within the practice and study of psychoanalysis. How else could a topic of such importance have been ignored?

Part 2: Space

> "'Space ain't nothing,' she said, 'if nothing don't happen in it.'" (Walter, 1988, p. 13)

> Winston Churchill once stated: "We shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us" (Saarinen, 1976, p. 45)

In my readings about place, I came to the realization that in order to understand place, one must start by understanding the concept of space. Space is not only the raw material out of which place is constructed, it also surrounds it. Outside of place, space is once again undefined. The distinction between space and place also appears to be in the eye of the beholder. Whereas city planners seek to create a place, architects talk about space. As a child when I gazed at the Iowa fields of corn stretching to the horizon, I saw space, not place.

In his book, Space and Place, The perspective of experience, Yi-Fu Tuan, the Chinese-American phenomenological geographer, writes: "Place is security, space is freedom: we are attached to the one and long for the other" (Tuan, 1977, p. 3). This existential dilemma must strike at the very heart of America, "a rootless, restless people with a culture of superhighways" (Fischer, 1993). Tuan explains more fully his distinction between place and space in the following quote:

> "Space" is more abstract than "place." What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value....The ideas "space" and "place" require each other for definition. From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space, and vice versa.

> Furthermore, if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place. (Tuan, 1977, p. 6)

Thomas Saarinen is a behavioral geographer who published a book entitled Environmental Planning: Perception and Behavior (1976). Behavioral geography was a movement within academic geography beginning in the late 1960's which attempted to be a corrective to economically-based location theory. The major premise of behavioral geography is the acknowledgement that human actions are based on one's perception of the environment, which may be quite different from objective reality. The argument was made that in order for location theory to accurately forecast such things as land-use decisions and settlement patterns, it must be based on a knowledge of human behavior. One of the first attempts by geographers to explore and design models for human behavior began at the University of Chicago with a series of investigations into human responses to environmental hazards, initially floods (Johnston, 1991).

Thomas Saarinen was educated at the University of Chicago, where he combined the study of psychology with that of geography. Saarinen writes of the dynamic interaction between people and their environment, each influencing the other, in the following quote:

> The greatest challenge facing us today is how to live in harmony with our environment on spaceship earth. Whether we want to or not, we are creating a new world, and in so doing, we are creating a new person. (Saarinen, 1976, p. 1)

Saarinen has organized his book according to scale, covering spaces as small as the size of a room and as large

as the world. He reports research that combines both the theoretical issues of the social sciences as well as the practical concerns of designers and planners. As a result of his approach, it is possible to see the contributions of different disciplines, including psychology, social psychology, architecture, urban planning, sociology, political science, and geography, all in one place, a rare feature in our world of super-specialization. His seven scales of environmental space include personal space and room geography, architectural space, small towns and neighborhoods, the city, large conceptual regions, the nation, and the world.

Edward Relph is a phenomenological geographer. In 1970, while at the University of Toronto, Relph wrote a paper advocating that some of the concepts of phenomenology are directly relevant to the study of geography. Relph stated that a basic aim of phenomenology is to present an alternative to positivistically-grounded location theory, a new methodology which is grounded in people's "'lived-world' of experience" (Relph, 1970, p. 193). Relph's paper was soon followed by that of another geographer at the University of Toronto, Yi-Fu Tuan, to whom geography is a mirror, revealing the essence of human existence and human striving. "To know the world is to know oneself" (Tuan, 1971, p. 181). Much of the structure of Part III of this literature review is inspired by the writings of both Edward Relph and Yi-Fu Tuan.

Relph (1976) distinguishes between the concepts of space and place in the following quote:

> Space is amorphous and intangible and not an entity that can be directly described and analysed. Yet, however we feel or know or explain space, there is nearly always some associated sense or concept of place. In general it seems that space provides the context for places but derives its meaning from particular places. (p. 8)

The six types of space which Relph discusses in his book, Place and Placelessness (1976), are as follows: (1) pragmatic or primitive space, defined as the space of instinctive behaviour and unselfconscious action in which we always act and move without reflection; (2) perceptual space, the most immediate form of awareness, differentiated into places, or centers of special personal significance; (3) existential or lived-space, constantly being created and remade by human activities, and experienced and created unselfconsciously, without deliberate reflection or a prearranged plan; (4) architectural and planning space, involving a deliberate attempt to create space. Relph quotes Gauldie who states that the essential task of the architect is "the creation of place in the sense that he has to set about endowing some considerable part of the human environment with a new and special order" (Relph, 1976, p. 23); (5) cognitive space, consisting of the construct of space derived from the identification of space as an object for reflection and the attempt to develop theories about it; and (6) abstract space, which allows us to describe space without basing those descriptions in empirical observations. Relph informs us that the different types of space are not to be understood as clearly separated, but rather, as

closely linked both in thought and experience (Relph, 1976, pp. 8-26).

The types of space most intimately involved with a sense of place would appear to be perceptual and existential space. These two types of space represent ways in which individuals relate to their physical environment on a daily basis as they go about living, working, playing, and interacting with their world.

Another way of classifying space is represented by Gaston Bachelard, a French philosopher who wrote a unique book entitled The Poetics of Space (1958/1969). He established his reputation in the philosophy of science, especially in physics, by writing a thirteen volume set of books, one of which was entitled The Experience of Space in Contemporary Physics. Throughout his life, he remained curious about both the outer and the inner worlds of space, and the relationship between human beings and the spaces they create. In The Poetics of Space, Bachelard investigates private spaces such as secret rooms; cellars and garrets; drawers, chests and wardrobes; nests, shells, nooks and corners. Bachelard writes of these spaces:

> In the present volume...the images I want to examine are the quite simple images of felicitous space. In this orientation, these investigations would deserve to be called topophilia. They seek to determine the human value of the sorts of space that may be grasped, that may be defended against adverse forces, the space we love....This is eulogized space....It has been lived in, not in its positivity, but with all the partiality of the imagination. Particularly, it nearly always exercises an attraction. For it concentrates being within limits that protect. (Bachelard, 1958/1969, pp. xxxi-xxxii)

It appears that when a place is protective and intimate, when we participate in that particular place with our imagination and our being, this place will attract us.

To my knowledge, it is Bachelard who first used the word topophilia, although credit typically is given to Yi-Fu Tuan who published a book by that title in 1974. Bachelard considers topoanalysis to be a rich area for studying the human 'soul' since one's house can be considered a reflection of one's intimate being. He states:

> Descriptive psychology, depth psychology, psychoanalysis and phenomenology could constitute, with the house, the corpus of doctrines that I have designated by the name of topo-analysis. On whatever theoretical horizon we examine it, the house image would appear to have become the topography of our intimate being....There is ground for taking the house as a tool for analysis of the human soul....A psychoanalyst should, therefore, turn his attention to this simple localization of our memories. I should like to give the name of topoanalysis to this auxiliary of psychoanalysis. Topoanalysis, then, would be the systematic psychological study of the sites of our intimate lives. (Bachelard, 1958/1969, pp. xxxii-xxxiii, and p. 8)

It appears that Bachelard is suggesting that studying one's house is one way of knowing the soul, the unconscious. For people who feel intimately connected with the nonhuman environment (as Searles described), Bachelard's form of psychoanalysis would seem to be quite appropriate. When we consider the topic of Homes later in this chapter, we will meet Bachelard once again.

Mircea Eliade, a French philosopher of religion, has written The Sacred and the Profane (1957/1961). He discusses space from a religious framework, and presents

such concepts as sacred space and profane space, privileged places, the center, and a perfect place.

"Sacred and profane are two modes of being in the world, two existential situations assumed by man in the course of his history" (p. 14). For a religious person, "space is not homogeneous; he experiences interruptions, breaks in it; some parts of space are qualitatively different from others" (p. 20).

Eliade also describes his concept of privileged places:

> ...privileged places, qualitatively different from all others--a man's birthplace, or the scenes of his first love, or certain places in the first foreign city he visited in youth. Even for the most frankly nonreligious man, all these places still retain an exceptional, a unique quality; they are the "holy places" of his private universe, as if it were in such spots that he had received the revelation of a reality other than that in which he participates through his ordinary daily life. (Eliade, 1957/1961, p. 24)

One does not have to be particularly religious to feel the sacredness of places which are special to us as individuals. Ethel Person (1988), a psychoanalyst, has written that love is "a religion of two" (p. 39). If a relationship with a person can be classified in these terms, then in a similar manner, the places that we love are sacred.

In the following quote, Eliade discusses the center:

> The manifestation of the sacred ontologically founds the world. In the homogeneous and infinite expanse, in which no point of reference is possible and hence no orientation can be established, the hierophany [i.e., the manifestation of the sacred] reveals an absolute fixed point, a center....It is for this reason that religious man has always sought to fix his abode at the "center of the world."....The cry of

> the Kwakiutl neophyte, "I am at the Center of the World!" at once reveals one of the deepest meanings of sacred space. (pp. 21-22, 36)

The concept of the center seems an important one. In Iowa I felt like I was at the periphery of the world and I yearned to be at the center. Eliade also describes the concept of a perfect place, "combining completeness (mountain and water) with solitude, and thus perfect because at once the world in miniature and Paradise, source of bliss and place of immortality" (p. 153).

Applying Eliade's terms to this dissertation on special places, when we care for a place, become rooted in a place, feel attached and committed to a place, identify with a place, and feel centered in a place, we have created a sacred space.

Part 3: Place

> "This is the most beautiful place on earth. There are many such places. Every man, every woman, carries in heart and mind the image of the ideal place, the right place, the one true home, known or unknown, actual or visionary." (Abbey, 1968, p. 1)

> "Topophilia is the affective bond between people and place or setting." (Tuan, 1974, p. 4)

> "Distinctive and diverse places are manifestations of a deeply felt involvement with those places by the people who live in them, and for many such a profound attachment to place is as necessary and significant as a close relationship with other people." (Relph, 1976, p. i)

In this section entitled Place, we will examine a variety of aspects of place including the properties of

place, concepts which contribute to the identity of place, the essence of place, the discovery-creation of place at a number of levels from the psychophysiological to the geological, functions of place, attitudes toward place, and four special places.

Properties of Place

How can we understand a place? We know that a place is a fixed point in space with a longitude and a latitude. But it is much more than that. A place is a personalized corner of space, capable of becoming a part of one's identity, of who one is. Relph (1976) developed a list of seven properties of place, as follows:

1. Location: Somewhat surprisingly, Relph states that location is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of place. Examples of locationless places are a ship, constantly traveling and changing locations; and a gypsy camp, an Indian camp, or a circus camp. Relph believes that mobility does not preclude an attachment to place:

> In contemporary society the most mobile and transient people are not automatically homeless or placeless, but may be able to achieve very quickly an attachment to new places either because the landscapes are similar to ones already well-known or because those people are open to new experiences. (Relph, 1976, pp. 29-30)

2. Landscape: "Tell me the landscape in which you live, and I will tell you who you are" (Jose Ortega y Gassett, quoted by Norris, 1993). Likewise, Relph describes the relationship between humans and landscape:

> Landscapes are more than aesthetic objects to be observed and appreciated; they are also transcriptions of cultures and individual endeavors, and they have specific histories.

> Every landscape has its identity and character....Just as landscapes are transcriptions of cultures and individuals, so cultures and individuals are transcriptions of landscapes. We are, in part, the landscapes and places in which we live and have lived [underlining added]. Those who do not recognize this relationship must consider their environments to be of no consequence. (Relph, 1979, p. 33).

This dynamic relationship between people and places seems so obvious and yet so ignored. A place and all that it represents becomes part of an individual's identity, and similarly, a society enacts its values upon the physical landscape in the form of the humanly-built environment. Tuan, likewise, speaks to the existence of this dynamic relationship in the following quote: "Formal geography is a mirror for man--reflecting and revealing human nature and seeking order and meaning in the experiences that we have of the world" (Relph, 1976, p. 4).

Places have physical, visual form; appearance is one of the most obvious attributes of place. Lawrence Durrell speaks to the property of landscape as follows:

> Yes, human beings are expressions of their landscape, but in order to touch the secret springs of a national essence you need a few moments of quiet with yourself. ... Ten minutes of this sort of quiet inner identification will give you the notion of the Greek landscape which you could not get in twenty years of studying ancient Greek texts. ... Everyone finds his own 'correspondences' in this way--landscapes where you suddenly feel bounding with ideas, and others where half your soul falls asleep and the thought of pen and paper brings on nausea. (Durrell, 1969, pp. 157-160).

As Durrell states, there are some environments in which energy is created, and others in which it appears to be destroyed. Durrell's humorous reflection seems similar to

the discussion on 'affordances' and 'fit' to be examined shortly in this chapter.

3. Time: The Royal Commission on Local Government in England and Wales found that people claimed that their attachment to their home area increased with the length of time they had lived there and was strongest when they lived in the area in which they were born. The result of such a growing attachment is the feeling that this place has endured and will persist as a distinctive entity even though the world around may change (Relph, 1976, p. 31).

4. Community and public places: The relationship between community and place is a powerful one in which each reinforces the identity of the other.

> In short, people are their place and a place is its people, and however readily these may be separated in conceptual terms, in experience they are not easily differentiated. In this context places are 'public'--they are created and known through common experiences and involvement in common symbols and meanings. (Relph, 1976, p. 34)

Relph states that the commonly experienced messages and symbols of the landscape maintain a collectively conditioned place consciousness, which gives the people from a place essentially the same identity that the place itself has, and vice versa. In addition, there are places that are understood by their physical or symbolic qualities, such as city squares, landmarks, and monuments. Because of their remarkable size, exceptional architecture, unusual natural features, or associations with events of great significance, such as the birth or death of heroes, battles, or the signing of treaties, such places contribute greatly to the identity of a community (Relph, 1976, p. 34).

5. Private and personal places: All places and landscapes are individually experienced, for we alone see them through the lens of our attitudes, experiences, and intentions, and from our own unique circumstances. John K. Wright has written that "the entire earth is an immense patchwork of miniature terrae incognitae -- the private geographies of individuals" (Relph, 1976, p. 36). The most important aspect is the sense that this particular place is yours, because your experience of it is distinctively personal. "Intimate places are places of nurture where our fundamental needs are heeded and cared for....The home itself feels more intimate in winter than in summer. Winter reminds us of our vulnerability and defines the home as shelter" (Tuan, 1977, p. 137).

6. Rootedness and care for place: To have roots in a place is to have a secure point from which to observe the world, an understanding of one's own position in it, and a spiritual and psychological attachment to one place in particular. Relph states that the places to which we are most attached are fields of care, settings in which we have had a multitude of experiences and which call forth a complex array of affections and responses. To care for a place involves more than having a concern for it that is based on past experiences and future expectations. There is a real responsibility and respect for that place, both for itself and for what it is to you and to others (Relph, 1976, p. 38).

7. Restrictions of place: This is the last of Relph's seven properties of place, and he explains that places to

which we are the most attached also may be oppressive and imprisoning. Relph believes that there is a sheer drudgery of place, a sense of being tied to this place and bound by the established routines.

> Drudgery is always a part of profound commitment to a place, and any commitment must also involve an acceptance of the restrictions that place imposes and the miseries it may offer. Our experience of place, and especially of home, is a dialectical one--balancing a need to stay with a desire to escape. (Relph, 1976, p. 42).

In reviewing Relph's list of seven properties, they appear to be a mixture of physical properties of space and time (location, landscape, and time); ownership or sense of possession (public and personal places); and possible attitudes we hold for places (rootedness and restrictions of place). I will continue to examine these and other aspects of place in the following sections.

Identity of Place

Relph presents a set of concepts relating to the identity of a place, defining identity as follows: "The identity of something refers to a persistent sameness and unity which allows that thing to be differentiated from others" (Relph, 1976, p. 45).

Relph deconstructs the essays about North Africa written by Albert Camus in order to identify the components of place. After analyzing Camus' account of Oran, Relph concludes:

> First there is the bountiful physical setting of sand, sea, and climate and buildings. This provides the backdrop to the ostensible, observable activities of the people, yet is complemented by and influences those activities. But embracing and infusing both of these is a set

> of meaning for Camus--particularly the opposition of innocence and boredom. (Relph, 1976, pp. 46-47)

Relph discusses these components, both individually and in groupings, to understand what comprises the identity of a place.

> These three components of place that are so apparent in Camus' writings--the static physical setting, the activities, and the meanings--constitute the three basic elements of the identity of places....The three fundamental components of place are irreducible one to the other, yet are inseparably interwoven in our experiences of places. (Relph, 1976, p. 47)

Relph comments that what is significant about these three concepts is the way in which physical setting, activities, and meanings are always interrelated. Relph states that "like the physical, vital, and mental components of behaviour that Merleau-Ponty (1967) identifies, it is probable that they constitute a series of dialectics that form one common structure" (Relph, 1976, p. 48). For any particular place, these dialectics are interrelated and it is their fusion that constitutes the identity of that place. "Physical appearance, activities, and meanings are the raw materials of the identity of places, and the dialectical links between them are the elementary structural relations of that identity" (Relph, 1976, pp. 47-48).

Lynch writes that the identity of an environmental image is "its distinction from other things, its recognition as a separable entity" (Lynch, 1960, p. 8); he states that "the image of a given reality may vary significantly between different observers" (Lynch, 1960, p. 6). We might ask the question, "the identity of a place for whom?," and if we

apply Lynch's statement to our discussion on the identity of place, it seems there could be as many identities of a place as there are people. Relph argues against this point, stating that "while every individual may assign selfconsciously or unselfconsciously an identity to particular places, these identities are nevertheless combined intersubjectively to form a common identity" (Relph, 1976, p. 45).

Is it possible that the decision to relocate occurs when one's personal image of a place does not match the common identity? When one cannot accommodate oneself sufficiently to the group perception of a place, a state of tension or cognitive dissonance is created, and a decision is made either to tolerate disagreement with the public image or to leave the place. If this hypothesis is true, then the people who remain in a place would tend to become more homogeneous as they validate one another's perceptions over time.

Not yet satisfied with the ability of these three components to define the identity of place, Relph (1976) adds another dimension:

> This is the attribute of identity that has been variously termed '<u>spirit of place</u>', 'sense of place' or 'genius of place' (genius loci)--all terms which refer to character or personality. Obviously the spirit of a place involves topography and appearance, economic functions and social activities, and particular significance deriving from past events and present situations--but it differs from the simple summation of these. Spirit of place can persist in spite of profound changes in the basic components of identity. (p. 48)

Lawrence Durrell (1969) writes humorously about the persistence of this aspect of place in his book, Spirit of Place:

> I believe you could exterminate the French at a blow and resettle the country with Tartars, and within two generations discover, to your astonishment, that the national characteristics were back at norm--the restless metaphysical curiosity, the tenderness for good living and the passionate individualism: even though their noses were now flat. This is the invisible constant in a place. (p. 157)

To summarize, Relph provides us with four components which comprise the identity of a given place: the physical setting, activities, meanings, and the spirit of place. These components take into account the characteristics of a place as well as the people in that place, their active intentions, and the character of the place, or what I like to think of as the energy one feels when in that place. These components make salient the fact that the relationship between people and places is a dynamic one. Each affects the other. However, these components also apply to other geographies, such as landscapes, cities, and homes. Is there a quality which distinguishes place from other types of space?

The Essence of Place

Is there an essence of place, a necessary or even sufficient condition which creates place out of space? The one theme which continued to emerge throughout the literature was the contrast between inside and outside, defining space as open and place as protective. "Space is nothing but a 'horrible outside-inside'" (Bachelard,

1958/1969, p. 217). Norberg-Schulz has written: "To be inside is the primary intention behind the place concept; that is, to be somewhere, away from what is outside" (Relph, 1976, p. 49). "Enclosed and humanized space is place" (Tuan, 1977, p. 54). Relph believes that there is an essence of place:

> The essence of place lies...in the experience of an 'inside' that is distinct from an 'outside'; more than anything else this is what sets places apart in space and defines a particular system of physical features, activities, and meanings. To be inside a place is to belong to it and to identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is this identity with the place. (Relph, 1976, p. 49)

"[Places are] nodes or centres of special importance and meaning which are distinguished by their quality of insideness" (Relph, 1976, p. 21). "It is the difference between safety and danger, cosmos and chaos, enclosure and exposure, or simply here and there" (Relph, 1976, p. 49).

Tuan discusses the power that architecture has to heighten the awareness and accentuate the difference between inside and outside. Two particular examples he discusses are the suburban shopping center and the courtyard house. "Consider the sense of an 'inside' and an 'outside,' of intimacy and exposure, of private life and public space....Within and without are clearly defined; people can be certain of where they are" (Tuan, 1977, p. 107). In ancient China as well as in Europe, cities had walls around them. The city had a defined inside and the countryside was outside (Tuan, 1974).

Andres Duany, an architect-town planner, spoke at a planning conference in New Orleans on the topic of suburban sprawl. The following quote was transcribed from a tape of the meeting:

> Old towns have a terrific sense of place. That is achieved by a tightness of the space, a general discipline of the buildings...it makes the streets feel like a room, and secondly, a tightness generally helped by the trees. Once you achieve that tightness, that is sense of place. (Duany, 1991)

Relph (1976) has organized the inside-outside dimension on a continuum of intensity, representing seven modes of experience. The levels are neither discrete nor precisely separated from one another.

1. Existential outsideness: This relationship with place is characterized by a selfconscious and reflective uninvolvement, an alienation from people and places, homelessness, a sense of the unreality of the world, and of not belonging.

2. Objective outsideness: This is the deliberate adoption of a dispassionate attitude toward places in order to perceive them in terms of their locations, or as spaces where objects and activities are located. There is a deep separation between person and place.

3. Incidental outsideness: Places are experienced as the background for activities and are quite incidental to them. This level applies to those places in which we are visitors and toward which our intentions are limited and partial.

4. Vicarious insideness: Places are experienced in a vicarious way, without actually visiting them, yet the

experience is deeply felt. One purpose of the artist or writer or poet or filmmaker is to convey what it is like to be in a particular place.

5. Behavioural insideness: This attitude consists of being in a place and seeing it as a set of objects, views, and activities arranged in certain ways and having certain observable qualities. It involves deliberately attending to the appearance of a place.

6. Empathetic insideness: This demands a willingness to be open to significances of a place, to feel it, to identify with it, to know and respect its symbols--as a person might experience a holy place as sacred without necessarily believing in that religion.

7. Existential insideness: This is the most fundamental form of insideness. A place is experienced without deliberate and selfconscious reflection, yet is full of significances. It is the insideness that most people experience when they are at home and in their own town or region, when they know the place and feel accepted there. A person feels a deep and complete identity with a place that is the very foundation of the place concept. Existential insideness is knowing implicitly that this place is where you belong. (Relph, 1976, pp. 51-55).

Similar to Relph's modes of experiential insideness, Rowles discusses three types. First is physical insideness, defined as an implicit awareness and familiarity with the physical features of a place as a result of repeated use. Second is autobiographical insideness, signifying a sense of personal history or bondedness with a place as a result of

experiencing meaningful events in that location. Third is social insideness, representing the integration into the social milieu of a place--attachment to one's neighborhood and residential area, city and region (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992, pp. 146-148).

Discovery-Creation of Place

"If the world is to be lived in, it must be founded" (Eliade, (1957/1961, p. 22). How are places discovered, created, founded? Is the need to relate with place a part of being human, "hard-wired," so to speak; or is it a variable on which people differ? Lawton (1989) states that just as there are socially-detached people, there are "environmentally-detached people" (p. 21) who attain well-being in ways other than through establishing a home.

In the following section, five ways of discovering and/or creating places, representing a variety of disciplines, will be explored. The first theorist to be discussed is the psychologist, James Gibson, who has developed a psychophysiological-perceptual theory of the person-environment relationship.

> The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill....The noun affordance ...implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment....Knee-high for a child is not the same as knee-high for an adult, so the affordance is relative to the size of the individual....Ecologists have the concept of a niche. A species of animal is said to utilize or occupy a certain niche in the environment....I suggest that a niche is a set of affordances. ...The niche implies a kind of animal, and the animal implies a kind of niche. Note the complementarity of the two. (Gibson, 1979, pp. 127-128)

Some examples of affordances within the terrestrial environment are air (affords respiration), water (affords drinking, washing and bathing), fire (affords heating and cooking), surfaces (afford support and locomotion), solid substances (afford nutrition as well as manufacturing), and objects (a variety of action affordances are made possible such as grasping, cutting, throwing, and weaving). Gibson (1979) states that the richest and most elaborate affordances of the environment are provided by other people. The perception of what one person affords another is complex but lawful, and is based on information found in touch, sound, odor, taste, and ambient light (p. 135). What about <u>places</u>? Gibson (1979) states that the habitat of a given animal contains places which have different affordances. There are places which afford food, refuge, danger, and concealment. He states that "animals are skilled at what the psychologist calls place-learning. They can find their way to significant places" (p. 136).

<u>Where</u> do these affordances exist? In the environment, or in the mind of the observer? In an interesting discussion which differentiates Gibson from a pure phenomenologist, and which sounds familiar to our review of Winnicott (1958/1975) and his concept of transitional phenomena, Gibson (1979) explains:

> An important fact about the affordances of the environ-ment is that they are in a sense objective, real, and physical, unlike values and meanings, which are often supposed to be subjective, phenomenal, and mental. But, actually, an affordance is neither an objective property nor a subjective property; or it is both if you like. An affordance cuts across the

> dichotomy of subjective-objective and helps us to understand its inadequacy. It is equally a fact of the environment and a fact of behavior. It is both physical and psychical, yet neither. An affordance points both ways, to the environ-ment and to the observer....Affordances are properties of things taken with reference to an observer but not properties of the experiences of the observer. (pp. 129 & 137)
>
> The affordance of something does not change as the need of the observer changes. The observer may or may not perceive or attend to the affordance, according to his needs, but the affordance, being invariant, is always there to be perceived. An affordance is not bestowed upon an object by a need of an observer and his act of perceiving it. The object offers what it does because it is what it is. (pp. 138-139)

This discussion brings two points to mind. First, it must be a fact that we overlook many possibilities in our environment. It affords us many things and we take advantage of only a few. Many qualities exist in an object, a person, or a place which are not perceived. Second, it must be that each of us interacts with the environment in a manner which best fits our individuality. Gibson (1979) states: "The child begins, no doubt, by perceiving the affordances of things for her, for her own personal behavior" (p. 141). Even though certain affordances may exist in the environment, they may not provide what an individual needs or desires. This helps explain how children are able to realize at a young age that an environment does not seem like home even when they have not been anywhere else. The open fields and spaces of Iowa did not appeal to me, whereas the sound of traffic in St. Louis and of urban radio stations felt like home. Gibson's theory informs us that it is a matter of perceiving a fit between

oneself and an environment. To someone else, the open spaces of Iowa may have been quiet and soothing. It did not afford me calmness because I was searching for stimulation.

The second theorist to be discussed is Jean Piaget, whose concepts of assimilation and accommodation help explain the process of how we bring the external world inside of us and adapt to the realities of our environment. How is it possible for an environment to affect and change a person? What is the psychological process by which this happens? I believe that Piaget's concepts address these issues.

> All needs tend first of all to incorporate things and people into the subject's own activity, i.e., to 'assimilate' the external world into the structures that have already been constructed, and secondly to readjust these structures as a function of subtle transformations, i.e., to 'accommodate' them to external objects. From this point of view, all mental life, as indeed all organic life, tends progressively to assimilate the surrounding environment. In assimilating objects, action and thought must accommodate to these objects; they must adjust to external variation. The balancing of the processes of assimilation and accommodation may be called 'adaptation.' Such is the general form of psychological equilibrium, and the progressive organization of mental development appears to be simply an ever more precise adaptation to reality. (Piaget, 1964/1967, pp. 7-8).

A person living in New York City assimilates different sensory information, a different rhythm, than a person living in rural Iowa. In general, a New York City person must be more vigilant, faster paced, and thicker skinned to protect herself from the amount of sensory information available (predominantly from other people) without being overloaded. On the other hand, an Iowa farmer must be

attuned to aspects of the physical environment, including weather patterns, the signs of disease in the crops, the ingredients of soil, etc. A different rhythm and pacing is assimilated. Each must accommodate successfully to the reality of his or her individual environment in order to adapt to the accepted norms of behavior and to survive in that location. The dual processes of assimilation and accommodation continue to be fine-tuned until each person fits his or her environment quite naturally, and vice versa. If this does not occur, one could hypothesize that any of a number of things might result. First, a person could leave that environment, choosing a niche perceived as better suited to one's needs. Secondly, one might lower his or her expectations of that environment, attempting to reconcile oneself to the reality as well as taking advantage of those qualities which it does afford. Thirdly, a person could manipulate and change the environment to produce a better fit. Fourth, a person could refuse to acknowledge aspects of the environment which were disappointing, although one's health and welfare could be endangered in the event of a radically distorted perception of the environment. Fifth, a person might remain in an unsatisfying environment for economic or social reasons and be chronically unhappy. Piaget's concepts of assimilation and accommodation seem useful in describing the process of how we bring our special places inside of us and how they, in turn, change us.

Similar to Piaget's concepts is a term discussed by Dovey, a professor of architecture in Australia.

Referencing Heidegger, Dovey discusses the concept of appropriation:

> Appropriation is a dialectic process through which we take aspects of our world into our being and are in turn taken by our world....As we open ourselves to the world of things and places we bring them meaning, and at the same time these things and places lend meaning to our sense of identity....It is the dialectic between personal change and environmental change, the process through which we change our environment and we are in turn changed by environmental experience. (Dovey, 1985, pp. 47-48)

This term captures well the relationship between a person and a place. Each changes the other, providing meaning.

A third way in which places are created is through social and cultural means. Tuan states that "words have great power in creating place" (Tuan, 1980, p. 6). Words, gestures, and the stories we tell from one generation to the next all serve to create place. Naming areas of space creates a place--humans claim space for themselves by naming. Tuan writes that "city people are constantly 'making' and 'unmaking' places by talking about them" (Tuan, 1980, p. 6). Objects also claim space. Is there any doubt about this when we see a picture of the American flag planted on the moon. Tuan states that scientists also create a place: "the source of the Mississippi River was determined by them, and then the surrounding area designated a park" (Tuan, 1977, p. 162).

Now we will take a leap to another level of creating place: utilizing political mechanisms such as urban planning and zoning. A sense of place is an elusive quality which

planners strive to create, usually unsuccessfully, states Duany (1991). Is it something that happens spontaneously, or can it be planned? In his essay, Peirce Lewis (1979) addresses the need for a sense of place.

> To have a sense of place--to sense the spirit of a place---one's own place--is as indispensible to the human experience as our basic urges for food, or for sex....I do not think that one can survive as a humane creature on this earth without special attachments to special places....But I would suggest that Americans have seldom done a very good job of creating genuine places, much less of preserving them....We must learn to recognize genius loci, to nurture it when we find it, and, if we are lucky, even discover ways of inculcating a sense of place where it does not now exist. (pp. 29-30)

A sense of place has been defined by Cissna (1979) as "the composite reflection of an area's past accomplishments, aspirations and conflicts blended into the present through public recognition and acceptance" (p. 89). How is this composite character of a neighborhood or a district protected and strengthened? By zoning. Cissna describes zoning as "regulation of land use by local units of government and a valid exercise of police power in support of the public interest through promotion of the public health, safety, and general welfare" (p. 89).

James Barker (1979) discusses the difficulty in planning or creating a sense of place in a small town in the following quote:

> Understanding what creates a true sense of place in small towns is a complex task because the factors of influence and the forces involved in creating a sense of place are constantly changing, paralleled by changes in the community. We are able to "feel" when these factors fit together to create a sense of place, but an understanding of

> how and why this fit happens is very difficult to grasp. (p. 164)

Barker provides a number of intriguing (and most likely unattain-able) paradoxes which must be resolved for a sense of place to emerge. A community must be sensitive to its roots, but not at the risk of ignoring its present and future. A small town must be able to change and adapt, yet be anchored by a sense of stability and security. There needs to be an ambiance that is simple enough for a visitor to comprehend, and complex enough for life-long residents to be stimulated on a daily basis. There must be attention paid to the workings of the town at the level of the largest social and physical scale, as well as to the tiniest relationship and architectural details. A town needs to possess a coherent image which can knit the entire community into a unified whole, while also providing diversity and tolerance for its citizens. And a small town must understand its uniqueness and be impossible to duplicate in any other location (Barker, 1979). If we want places worth having and preserving, planning and zoning for a sense of place are needed in both our towns and our large urban areas.

Analyzing and describing the needs of large American cities is equally, if not even more challenging, than solving the problems of small towns. In her book, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, Jacobs (1961/1993) argues that city planning must protect the vitality of a city through the following goals. First, there must be the greatest possible range and quantity of diversity among uses

and people throughout each district of a big city. The term mixed use is typically employed to designate a mixture of residential and commercial buildings within each neighborhood. With good planning, a mixture of businesses can co-exist so that there will be customers on the sidewalks during most hours of the day and late evening. "The safety of the street works best, most casually, and with least frequent taint of hostility or suspicion precisely where people are using and most enjoying the city streets voluntarily and are least conscious, normally, that they are policing" (Jacobs, 1961/1993, p. 46).

Second, networks of local neighborhoods must be promoted to protect the public spaces of the city and to ensure the safety of children. Third, city districts need to be varied and large enough to encourage residents to identify with the city district and to combat the destructive presence of border vacuums. Fourth, conditions must be created to persuade residents to stay in their districts rather than leaving for the suburbs, which will lead to a sense of community over time (Jacobs, 1961/1993, pp. 531-532). Jacobs states: "For this kind of planning, it is not enough for administrators in most fields to understand specific services and techniques. They must understand, and understand thoroughly, specific places" (Jacobs, 1961/1993, p. 533).

Finally, geology creates magnificent places. The Grand Canyon, The Alps, Yellowstone Park, Mount Everest in The Himalayas, Yosemite...these places are a testament to the power of nature and time. "Perhaps any large feature in the

landscape creates its own world. ... Enduring places, of which there are very few in the world, speak to humanity" (Tuan, 1977, pp. 163-164).

Functions of Place

One way of understanding the relationship with a place is to understand what functions it fulfills in one's life. In Gibson's language, we would say, what it affords. In this section we will examine a number of authors, presenting various functions of place.

Riley (1992) argues that it is the memory of nurturing and loving relationships, not the physical environment itself, which is at the root of our attachment to a place:

> The attachment comes from people and experience, the landscape is the setting. We remember landscapes where good things happened to us. The landscape is part of the experience, it can become a symbol for the experience, but it is not the primary element. (p. 19)

Brown and Perkins (1992) state that "human experience is integrally related to place and involves a holistic and ongoing blend of people, processes, and places" (p. 282).

Low and Altman (1992) discuss a variety of functions which places serve for individuals as well as for groups and cultures.

> Place attachment may provide a sense of daily and ongoing security and stimulation, with places and objects offering predictable facilities, opportunities to relax from formal roles, the chance to be creative and to control aspects of one's life. At another level, place attachment may link people with friends, partners, children, and kin in an overt and visible fashion. It may bond people to others symbolically, providing reminders of childhood or earlier life, parents, friends, ancestors, and others. Furthermore, place attachments may link people to religion,

> nation, or culture by means of abstract symbols associated with places, values, and beliefs. (p. 10)

It appears that place can offer a person whatever is needed for balance in his or her life. The goals of privacy, serenity, and spirituality may be more important to some in their attachment to a place, whereas others may primarily seek relationships or community through place.

Another function of place is that it is central to self-definition. Rubinstein and Parmelee (1992) discuss how place contributes to self-identity. "Places and things are important symbols of the self, cues to memories of significant life experiences, and a means of maintaining, reviewing, and extending one's sense of self, especially in old age" (p. 147). Brown and Perkins (1992) note that "physical settings and artifacts both reflect and shape people's understanding of who they are as individuals and as members of groups" (p. 280). In doing research with people who experienced the loss or disruption of secure place attachments as a result of burglaries, relocations, or disasters, they describe the following process:

> Negotiating one's place in society requires both individual and communal aspects of identity....Places, especially homes and neighborhoods, are essential actors in this tension, providing places for certain groups to interact, creating barriers between others. Places become part and parcel of these identities, but in a very subtle way. When place attachments are disrupted, individuals struggle to define their losses in order to identify what types of connections will provide them with a meaningful relationship to the world. (Brown & Perkins, 1992, p. 280)

These authors discuss the dialectic of stability and change as another function. Places promote and reflect stability, and long-term bonds develop between people and their homes and communities; and yet, places change in accordance with changes in people and their activities, growth, and interests (Brown & Perkins, 1992).

The subjective sense of self is defined and expressed not simply by relationships with other people, but through connections to the various places that define and structure our lives (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983). These authors define place-identity as being a crucial aspect of self-identity:

> It is a sub-structure of the self-identity of the person consisting of, broadly conceived, cognitions about the physical world in which the individual lives. These cognitions represent memories, ideas, feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and conceptions of behavior and experience which relate to the variety and complexity of physical settings that define the day-to-day existence of every human being. At the core of such physical environment-related cognitions is the 'environmental past' of the person; a past consisting of places, spaces and their properties which have served instrumentally in the satisfaction of the person's biological, psychological, social, and cultural needs. (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983, p. 59)

The following four functions have been conceptualized by Lawton (1989) in reference to one's relationship with a home: attachment, cognitive control of the environment, behavioral competence, and identity. Lawton states that these functions are located within the four traditional domains studied by psychology: affect, cognition, behavior, and self.

Place attachment is described as an "energized, compelling, or vivid affectual state born of one's linking significant life events, key developmental themes, or identity processes with a particular environment" (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992, p. 142). A similar term, place dependence, is described as leading to attachment to place when that particular locale facilitates one's pursuit of desired goals and activities better than alternative environments (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992).

Searles (1960) also addresses various ways in which the nonhuman environment contributes to one's growing sense of self and identity. His list includes the following six functions. First, the nonhuman environment contributes to the emotional security, sense of stability and continuity of experience, thereby helping the person develop a sense of personal identity. Second, the nonhuman environment functions as a shock absorber onto which various parts of the self can be projected until the ego is sufficiently strong to integrate these warded-off parts into the developing sense of self. Third, the nonhuman environment, being less complex and more stable than the human environment, provides a training ground in which future interpersonal relationship capabilities can develop. Fourth, the nonhuman environment offers relief from tensions as well as satisfaction and companionship when one is anxious or lonely. Fifth, one can become aware of his or her capabilities and strengths (physical, intellectual, ingenuity) as well as limitations through interaction with this environment. Sixth, during the transitional period of

adolescence, the formerly close relationship with the nonhuman environment is helpful as the person becomes committed to assuming the status of a human being, shifting these feelings onto other humans (pp. 78-92).

The last function of place to be examined in this literature review is the role of the landscape in expressing the spiritual beliefs of a culture. The Australian Aborigines utilize the landscape as a holy scripture, a mnemonic which helps them recall the events of the birth of the world, a time and place which they call the "Dreaming" (Cowan, 1989, p. 2). For the Aborigines, the landscape is "a bibliography of meaning" (Cowan, 1989, p. 35) and has a sacred story to tell:

> Landscape became an important co-respondent in the dialogue between man and earth....A visual language had been created out of rocks, contours, flora, fauna, etc., that would enable man to converse with Sky Heroes and so re-create the eternal moment of the Dreaming. (Cowan, 1989, p. 29)

Attitudes toward Place

Four attitudes or ways of interacting with the nonhuman environment will be discussed in this section. The first attitude is one of respectful care for things, as described by Martin Heidegger. The second attitude is a loving acceptance of another in their entirety, inherent in the philosophy of Martin Buber. The third is a mature relatedness with the world, as proposed by Searles. And the fourth attitude is a discussion by Marc Fried of the potential grief that is felt when a place is lost or destroyed.

Martin Heidegger was born of peasant stock in the German Black Forest. In his book, Earth and Gods: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Martin Heidegger, Vycinas (1961) states:

> The earth and the gods are strange problems for philosophical investigation. The earth seems to be too obvious, too real to become a philosophical problem; and the gods, on the other hand, are too unreal to be of any interest for philosophical consideration; they can only have a religious, mythological, or possibly a poetical importance. Nevertheless, these problems are highly Heideggerian problems. (p. 1)

Within his essay, Building-Dwelling-Thinking, Heidegger discusses the idea that building and dwelling are not two separate modes of the human way of being. "Building, namely, is not merely a means and a way for dwelling; building is in itself already dwelling" (Vycinas, 1961, p. 14). In the Old High German, the term building meant dwelling and both of these words were related to being. "Dwelling or building is 'the manner by which we men are on the earth'" (Vycinas, 1961, p. 15). The word dwelling is also related to the concept of sparing, which means:

> The tolerance of something in its own essence, letting something be the way it is in itself. Such a letting-be is sharply or diametrically contrasted to the modern domination of things. Not by ruling or controlling, but by respectful sparing, can we let the earth appear in its gifts. (Vycinas, 1961, p. 15).

Heidegger struggles to understand and describe our existence in the world, which is "Dasein, the to-be-in-the-world" (Vycinas, 1961, p. 31). Vycinas states:

> To-be-in-the-world is a way of "to be" of a being which differs from disposables. An existing being does not face the world as an object, but is

> worldly--belongs to the worldliness of the world. On the other hand, it can also be said that the world belongs to our structure. There can be no world without man, just as no man can be without the world....Man can never be understood adequately without the world, and the world is meaningless without man. (Vycinas, 1961, p. 31)

This idea appears similar to my discussion of one of the functions of place: self-definition, which is possible only through one's relationship with the world. Without the world, there is no relation, the essence of being. Heidegger enumerates a variety of ways in which the "to-be-in-the-world" occurs, such as "having something to do with something; producing something; consuming something; abandoning something or letting it get lost; under-taking, accomplishing, inquiring, questioning, considering, talking over, determining..." (Vycinas, 1961, p. 32). These activities demonstrate the human interest, anxiety and concern for things.

> Expressed in one word all these activities can be called care-taking (Besorgnis). To-be-in is to-be-careful in the sense of to-take-care-of. Care-taking is not an occasional feature of man but a feature essentially belonging to him....Care-taking is the basis of man's relation to the world. (Vycinas, 1961, p. 33)

Martin Buber's book, I and Thou, is considered a classic in the fields of philosphy and religion. Buber (1924/1970) discusses two relational attitudes which people assume with humans and objects in the world. The first is I-You, or what is usually translated I-Thou; the second is I-It. Buber states:

> The world is twofold for man in accordance with his twofold attitude. The attitude of man is twofold in accordance with the two basic words he

> can speak....The basic word I-You can only be spoken with one's whole being. The basic word I-It can never be spoken with one's whole being. (Buber, 1924/1970, pp. 53-54)

According to our willingness and ability to relate to people and things as equals, accepting the other in their entirety, the world itself is experienced differently--the world is twofold. There are three spheres of relation with the world. First is life with nature; second is life with other people; third is life with spiritual beings. A person may assume either the I-You or the I-It attitude in any of the three spheres (Buber, 1924/1970). I-You is the primary word of relation, mutuality, directness, intensity, and acceptance. The You of I-You is not limited to other human beings, but may include animals, trees, objects of nature, and God. I-It is the primary word of experiencing and using. It takes place within a person and not between the person and the world, and is lacking in mutuality. Accepting another human being, as well as the nonhuman environment as a unique and precious entity, is the highest achievement of a human being.

Searles (1960) described the ideal attitude one can hold toward nature. He believes that the attitude toward the nonhuman environment characteristic of the emotionally mature human being could be expressed in the word relatedness. This relatedness involves a recognition that we are not one with our environment; i.e., ego boundaries are not relinquished. One's individuality as a human being and the sense of separateness are not denied. However, this does not mean that the mature person does not occasionally

retreat (or regress, to use Guntrip's term) into a temporary feeling of oneness during times of great loss, frustration, or crises. Then when the crisis passes, an attitude of relatedness is again assumed.

Searles (1960) outlines four benefits that result from a mature relatedness with one's nonhuman environment. They are:

> 1. This sense of relatedness helps to assuage man's existential loneliness in the Universe, and to alleviate his fear of death. It helps him find a sense of peace, stability, continuity, and certainty. Finally, it counteracts feelings of worthlessness and insignificance.
>
> 2. This sense of relatedness--usually when coupled with <u>active working in relation to</u> the nonhuman environment--helps him gain a deeper sense of personal identity, of individuality; it helps him develop his creative capacities as well as realizing his abilities and the limitations upon those abilities.
>
> 3. The third benefit is the enhancement, the sharpening, the deepening, the strengthening, of the individual's experiencing his own existence, and the existence of the world around him, as being <u>real</u>.
>
> 4. One can become more appreciative, accepting and compassionate toward one's fellow human beings by accepting one's dependency upon the nonhuman environment. (pp. 122-138)

These intense feelings of mature relatedness toward one's human and nonhuman environment could be described as a loving attitude. An aspect of this love is wanting to protect others and a willingness to sacrifice oneself for the welfare of others. The geographer, Tuan, appears to be in agreement with the philospher, Buber, and the psychoanalyst, Searles, and provides an example of this loving attitude. The following passage is attributed to a

citizen of Carthage at the end of the third Punic War when the Romans were about to destroy Carthage. The citizen pleaded with the Romans as follows:

> If you have pity for us ... spare the city which has done you no harm, but, if you please, kill us, whom you have ordered to move away. In this way you will seem to vent your wrath upon men, not upon temples, gods, tombs, and an innocent city. (Tuan, 1977, p. 151)

The fourth attitude to be examined in this review is that of grief over the loss of a place. In an article entitled Grieving for a Lost Home, Marc Fried, a psychiatrist, writes of the experiences of the inhabitants of Boston's West End neighborhood when they were forced to relocate as a result of an urban renewal project. Two years after the crisis, many continued to mourn the loss of their former home. Fried describes their reactions in the following passage:

> For the majority it seems quite precise to speak of their reactions as expressions of grief. These are manifest in the feelings of painful loss, the continued longing, the general depressive tone, frequent symptoms of psychological or social or somatic distress, the active work required in adapting to the altered situation, the sense of helplessness, the occasional expressions of both direct and displaced anger, and tendencies to idealize the lost place. (Fried, 1963, p. 151)

Fried explains the distress from relocation in terms of a disruption both in the continuity of one's spatial identity as well as within one's social networks. Particularly interesting is Fried's attention to the spatial identity factor.

> It is the sense of belonging someplace, in a particular place which is quite familiar and easily delineated, in a wide area in which one

> feels "at home." This is the core of meaning of the local area....Even familiar and expectable streets and houses, faces at the window and people walking by, personal greetings and impersonal sounds may serve to designate the concrete foci of a sense of belonging somewhere and may provide special kinds of interpersonal and social meaning to a region one defines as "home." (Fried, 1963, p. 154)

In a manner similar to Searles, Fried addresses the topic of attachment to a place, an area which has been so neglected within psychology.

> In stressing the importance of places and access to local facilities, we wish only to redress the almost total neglect of spatial dimensions in dealing with human behavior....The crisis of loss of a residential area brings to the fore the importance of the local spatial region and alerts us to the greater generality of spatial conceptions as determinants of behavior. In fact, we might say that a sense of spatial identity is fundamental to human functioning. It represents a phenomenal or ideational integration of important experiences concerning environmental arrangements and contacts in relation to the individual's conception of his own body in space. It is based on spatial memories, spatial imagery, the spatial framework of current activity, and the implicit spatial components of ideas and aspirations. (Fried, 1963, p. 156)

In his article, Fried concludes that such strong feelings of loss as well as the sense of belonging to a specific place are representative of a working-class neighborhood, while the sense of spatial identity in the middle-class population is less dependent upon the external stability of a place, the localization of social patterns and daily routines (Fried, 1963). I believe that more research is needed in this area before such a generalization can be made. However, it is obvious that Fried is a pioneer, and not unlike Searles within psychoanalysis, he is

attending to an area of human behavior which has been neglected.

Special Places

In this section, we will look at four special places: home, the city, natural settings, and the road. The purpose here is to explore briefly four places which almost everyone has experienced, and which many authors have discussed in the literature on the experience of place. Quotes and discussions from my favorite references will be presented.

Home

Clare Cooper (1974) uses Jungian psychology in order to understand the deep meaning and sense of attachment that an individual feels for his or her home. Cooper writes that the 'self' is "the inner heart of our being, our soul, our uniqueness" (p. 131), an unsolvable riddle with which we constantly struggle and which we attempt to comprehend. The human body is the first concrete representation of the self, whereas on a less conscious level, a house symbolizes a wider extension of the self. Both a human being and a house contain an interior which encloses space and a facade which excludes everything outside of it.

> The house therefore nicely reflects how man sees himself, with both an intimate interior, or self as viewed from within and revealed only to those intimates who are invited inside, and a public exterior (the persona or mask, in Jungian terms) or the self that we choose to display to others. (p. 131)

Cooper states that in making the numerous decisions about what furniture, art, and personal mementos to display, where to put them, choosing colors and designs with which to surround ourselves in a home, a person projects aspects of

his or her individuality onto a house, transforming it in the process into a home which has become an embodiment of the self. In addition, the house speaks as a personal statement back to ourselves and to those intimates with whom we share this personal space. Cooper discusses this two-way communication, which she labels a house-self continuum:

> Thus, the house might be viewed as both an avowal of the self--that is, the psychic messages are moving from self to the objective symbol of self--and as a revelation of the nature of self; that is, the messages are moving from objective symbol back to the self. (pp. 131-132)

This two-way process seems to be a way of understanding the idea that we create our buildings, and then they, in turn, create us.

Bachelard has stated that "our house is our corner of the world....It is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word" (Bachelard, 1958/1969, p. 4). He tells us of its chief benefits: "the house shelters daydreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace....Over and beyond our memories, the house we were born in is physically inscribed in us....The feel of the tiniest latch has remained in our hands" (Bachelard, 1958/1969, pp. 6 & 14).

Eliade has written: "Habitations are not lightly changed, for it is not easy to abandon one's world. The house is...the universe that man constructs for himself by imitating the paradigmatic creation of the gods....Every fixed abode in which one has settled is, on the philosophical plane, equivalent to an existential situ-ation that one has assumed" (Eliade, 1957/1961, pp. 56-57 & 178).

Relph (1976) discusses the importance of homes throughout one's entire life history:

> There is for virtually everyone a deep association with and consciousness of the places where we were born and grew up, where we live now, or where we have had particularly moving experiences. This association seems to constitute a vital source of both individual and cultural identity and security, a point of departure from which we orient ourselves in the world. A French philosopher, Gabriel Marcel, has summarised this simply: 'An individual is not distinct from his place; he is that place.' (p. 43)

Belk (1992) found in his research that from a total of ninety-six objects, people chose their current dwelling and their favorite room as most reflecting their 'selfness.' He explains this finding as follows: "Since we live out much of our lives in our homes, it is understandable that we become attached to the home as a symbol of our bibliography, an expression of self, and a source of security" (p. 39).

Dovey (1985), an Australian professor of architecture, has written an excellent chapter on the subject of home. He states: "Although a house is an object, a part of the environment, home is best conceived of as a kind of relationship between people and their environment. It is an emotionally based and meaningful relationship between dwellers and their dwelling places" (p. 34). Dovey describes three themes in our understanding of the phenomenon of home. The first consists of various kinds of <u>order</u> through which we are oriented in the world. Our home affords us spatial order, temporal order, and sociocultural order by which our lives become familiar, predictable, and stable. The second theme is the process of <u>identification</u>

through which we connect with our world in a meaningful way. "Identity implies a certain bonding or mergence of person and place....We not only give a sense of identity to the place we call home, but we also draw our identity from that of the place" (pp. 40-41). The third theme in understanding the concept of home is that of dialectic processes which describe an essential dynamic relationship in the process of becoming at home. Dovey includes familiar-strange, secure-dangerous, sacred-profane, autonomy-heteronomy, rest-movement, and being-at-home versus yearning (p. 45).

> The phenomenon of home is essentially intangible. There is no precise point at which a house becomes a home, and none of the properties that I have outlined previously are necessary nor sufficient for the experience of home. Rather, like fibers in a rope, each property lends strength to the meaning of home. (Dovey, 1985, p. 51)

Anne Buttimer (1980), a humanistic geographer, also speaks of home, and places in general, in dialectical terms. She states:

> I suggest we think about places in the context of two reciprocal movements which can be observed among most living forms: like breathing in and out, most life forms need a home and horizons of reach outward from that home. The lived reciprocity of rest and movement, territory and range, security and adventure, housekeeping and husbandry, community building and social organization--these experiences may be universal among the inhabitants of Planet Earth. (p. 170)

Home is such a rich topic that for every quote I included, others had to be eliminated. In addition, the idea of home brings forth such strong feelings as well as a sense of everydayness, that it can be difficult to

satisfactorily express either experience through words alone.

The City

The next special place is the city. Kevin Lynch (1960) writes of the city, a place he seeks to perceive and understand:

> Like a piece of architecture, the city is a construction in space, but one of vast scale, a thing perceived only in the course of long spans of time....At every instant, there is more than the eye can see, more than the ear can hear, a setting or a view waiting to be explored. Nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings, the sequences of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences....Every citizen has had long associations with some part of his city, and his image is soaked in memories and meanings. (p. 1)

Lynch's book, The Image of the City (1960), has become a classic. He was the first to study the mental images which the residents of a city have internalized, and can reproduce when asked. Lynch compared responses from people in various cities, concentrating on one particular visual quality, the apparent clarity or "legibility" (p. 2) of the cityscape. By this is meant the ease with which the parts of a city can be recognized and organized into a coherent pattern. Regarding the function of holding an internal image of our environment, Lynch states: "The terror of being lost comes from the necessity that a mobile organism be oriented in its surroundings....Way-finding is the original function of the environmental image" (p. 125).

Lynch gives the following example of how an internal image can influence one's activity long after it is functional: In their daily walks, many people in Florence

"continued to follow streets that no longer existed but were only imaginary tracks through a razed and empty section of Florence" (p. 126). A city becomes a part of us as we become a part of the city. Like the people of Florence, following the city streets within their mind, a city exists inside of us as well as around us.

Jane Jacobs' book, The Death and Life of Great American Cities (1961/1993), is one of my favorite references for this literature review. Her book was recently reprinted, and she states in the new foreword: "We can speak of foot people and car people. This book was instantly understood by foot people" (p. xii). She discusses the role of the automobile in the life of cities in this quote:

> Automobiles are often conveniently tagged as the villains responsible for the ills of cities and the disappoint-ments and futilities of city planning. But the destructive effects of automobiles are much less a cause than a symptom of our incompetence at city building. Of course planners, including the highwaymen with fabulous sums of money and enormous powers at their disposal, are at a loss to make automobiles and cities compatible with one another. They do not know what to do with automobiles in cities because they do not know how to plan for workable and vital cities anyhow--with or without automobiles. (p. 10)

My favorite quote by Jacobs addresses the inter-relationship of cities and societies:

> Cities are in a sense natural ecosystems too--for us. They are not disposable. Whenever and wherever societies have flourished and prospered rather than stagnated and decayed, creative and workable cities have been at the core of the phenomenon; they have pulled their weight and more. It is the same still. Decaying cities, declining economies, and mounting social troubles travel together. The combination is not coincidental. (p. xviii)

Michael Sorkin (1992) has edited an intriguing book of essays entitled Variation on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space. Places such as the gigantic megamalls and Disneyland are analyzed in this book. Sorkin questions the future of the cities we are currently creating in this culture. The following words give one cause for concern.

> Computers, credit cards, phones, faxes, and other instruments of instant artificial adjacency are rapidly eviscerating historic politics of propinquity, the very cement of the city. Indeed, recent years have seen the emergence of a wholly new kind of city, a city without a place attached to it. This ageographical city is particularly advanced in the United States....The structure of this city is a lot like television....The new city likewise eradicates genuine particularity in favor of a continuous urban field, a conceptual grid of boundless reach....Its growth no longer merely physical--a matter of egregious densities or metastasizing reach--the new city also occupies a vast, unseen, conceptual space....What's missing in this city is not a matter of any particular building or place; it's the spaces in between, the connections that make sense of forms. (pp. xi-xii)

The need for diversity among people and business establishments in a city is discussed by Jacobs. What could be described as the synergistic liveliness of a city is the fact that diverse people live and work together in relatively small spaces, and they share public space such as streets, sidewalks, subways, parks, and theatres. However, Sorkin's argument is that it is now possible to live the majority of one's entire life within private space. One can work at home in front of one's computer, shop from a TV set, watch movies on a VCR, and avoid the streets completely in many cities because of the skyway systems, a securely

patrolled area which filters the "poor, infirm, black, native Indian, or mentally ill from entering" (Boddy, 1992, p. 138). Boddy argues that it is the desire of the middle class to avoid the poor, not the extremes of climate, which is motivating the construction of skyway systems throughout North America. The middle class are safe inside the skyways, while "the downtown streets outside were left to the walking wounded, the urban casualties of Reaganomics" (Boddy, 1992, p. 138). Sorkin's book of essays raises questions as well as one's consciousness, and inspires one to think beyond the appearances of places, in order to reconsider the social and political meaning of how we are constructing and forming our places, our cities, our world...a process which will, as Winston Churchill stated, shape us as individuals and as a society.

Nature

"The rich early traditions of all great religions acknowledge that God is unveiled through communion with nature at special places" (Swan, 1992, p. xxiii). Eliade speaks of the respect and care accorded the earth by the American Indians, and quotes an Indian prophet, Smohalla, chief of the Wanapum tribe, who refused to till the ground.

> You ask me to plow the ground! Shall I take a knife and tear my mother's bosom? Then when I die she will not take me to her bosom to rest. You ask me to dig for stone! Shall I dig under her skin for her bones? Then when I die, I cannot enter her body to be born again. You ask me to cut grass and make hay and sell it, and be rich like white men! But how dare I cut off my mother's hair? (Eliade, 1957/1961, p. 138)

Smohalla's relationship with the earth was an I-Thou relationship, and he respected every aspect of it. His attitude is also an example of Heidegger's concept of sparing--letting something be the way it is in itself. Perceiving the earth as sacred rather than as a potentially profitable object to be controlled and subdued is a perspective almost unknown in Western civilization.

Rachel and Stephen Kaplan (1989) wrote a book entitled The Experience of Nature: A Psychological Perspective, in order to study the natural environment, people, and the relationship between them. What does nature do, for whom, and under what circumstances? Their research is concerned with the benefits people receive from the natural environment. Their major interest was to understand people's preferences for natural settings. They see preference and perception as closely related, and believe that humans are "far more likely to prefer a setting in which they can function effectively" (p. 10). Their methodology involved presenting photographs of natural environments to people and asking them to judge them according to their preferences. A framework developed which they labeled The Preference Matrix, containing two domains and four cells:

	Understanding	Exploration
Immediate	Coherence	Complexity
Inferred, predicted	Legibility	Mystery

The first domain involves two major categories of human needs: the need to understand (the need to make sense of

what is going on) and the need to explore (to find out more about what is going on in one's surroundings). The second domain involves the degree of inference that is required in extracting the needed information: immediately available as opposed to inferred or predicted. The combination of these two domains yields four informational factors portraying a person's preference for nature, described as follows: Coherence, defined as how easy it is to organize and structure the scene. Complexity, meaning the extent to which the scene contains many elements of different kinds. Legibility, defined as how easy it would be to find one's way around in the environment depicted. Mystery, the extent to which the scene promises more information if the viewer could walk more deeply into the scene (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). The Kaplans have done much research further exploring how these factors guide our preferences.

Gary Nabhan and Stephen Trimble (1994), in their delightful book entitled The Geography of Childhood, state that "wilderness is not some scenic backdrop to gaze at; it is responsive to our exploratory urges. It is where you can play with abandon. In a word, playfulness may be the essence of wilderness experience" (p. 12). Unlike cities, wilderness is designed for more than one species; it "is full of things, of other lives, animal, vegetable and mineral" (p. 12).

In an article entitled "Wisdom and Wilderness," Joseph Meeker (1981) finds connections between these two topics, in that wisdom and wilderness are "two of the most essential

resources for human beings--both necessary to our survival and welfare" (p. 15).

> Neither is subject to human management. They happen by themselves, according to natural processes that are not understood. No educational system knows how to create wisdom, and no science can make wilderness. We do know how to damage and destroy both of them, however, and we have devoted much of our energy to that in recent centuries. Before we reach the point where both wisdom and wilderness cease to exist, we should think about what they are, how they relate to one another, and what the world would be like without them. (Meeker, 1981, p. 15)

In a somewhat ominous thought, Meeker writes: "The state of the natural environments in which people live reflect the state of the human spirit. We all find ourselves in the environments we deserve, reflecting our values and our beliefs" (p. 17). Meeker poetically describes the profound attraction that people have for wilderness settings in the following passage:

> Wilderness is an otherness that to many people has looked like God or some cultural equivalent. Wilderness can have the same effect upon scientists who may regard themselves as irreligious. Perhaps the sense of awe in the face of nonhuman complexity and greatness of scale is the central experience felt by the religious and irreligious alike. Whatever the cause, the world has accumulated much testimony that prolonged experience of wilderness is a deepening and expanding experience for many humans....Our minds and souls have roots in the untamed processes of nature. Preserving wilderness is human self-preservation. (Meeker, 1981, p. 16)

The Road

Although it could be argued that the road cannot possibly be a place, as an American I would argue that it is the place where the majority of us spend much of our lives!

And if it is not a place, it certainly is the quintessential American state of mind. As Dovey (1985) stated, in order to understand home one must understand journey. What is this restlessness all about? What are we hoping to find in our frequent travels and relocations? Are we escaping the past? Intensifying the present? Reaching for the future? Outrunning death? All of the above?

Christopher Salter (1979) has written an article entitled "Thoughts on the Road" in which he discusses four catalysts which set people in motion, four different reasons which motivate us to 'take to the road' at different points in our lives.

First, the road as flight. Salter states that in our discussion of sense of place, what is overlooked is the dynamic aspect of this sense. "The sensations that give substance to locational preferences, fears, delights, and a sense of belonging are in constant flux" (p. 12). The road functions as therapy for many people in response to a failed relationship, a job which ends, or an unrealized goal: "Access to the road as flight has long been an elemental human freedom. Americans cherish this relentlessly" (p. 12).

Second, the road as a source of new self-images. Salter sums up his second point in this way: "Motion and the road have an exhilarating capacity for freeing the traveler from the past. ...Change from the past and freedom from outmoded patterns has always come more easily in new settings" (pp. 12-13). On the road a person "can be

anything he or she has the gall and the gift to create....a more satisfying self is the destination" (p. 12).

Third, the road as education. The road offers new experiences and challenges, different landscapes, people, and cultures. "Learning to deal with this flow of uncertainty is the lesson that the road offers so well, so much better than any other classroom" (p. 13).

Fourth, the road as a source of environmental options. Our curiosity about other places, the search to discover our environmental preferences, the desire to explore other cities and regions, differences in both physical and cultural landscape, and popular media images all play a role in stimulating movement (Salter, 1979).

In my opinion, however, not just any road is a place. The homogeneity and monotony of interstate travel today can hardly compare with what I remember as road trips in the decades of the fifties and sixties. The book, Route 66: The Mother Road, commemorates a different type of experience, as the following passage describes:

> It began in the early 1920's with a vision of a paved highway that would connect Chicago to Los Angeles and the West. By the time of its completion, the road would cover over 2,400 miles, three time zones, and eight states....Route 66. It was the road of dreamers and ramblers, drifters and writers....A ribbon of American highway that transported the Okies, driven from their land as storms of dust swept across their farms, to the promise of California. It was also the highway of commerce--of automated ice-cream stands and old "no-tell" motels, salty truck stops, and a neon allure. Phillips 66, Coca-Cola, Burma Shave....Route 66, the passage west, the road of flight, the Mother Road. (Wallis, 1990, jacketcover)

This type of road is now almost non-existent, but it is the road of Jack Kerouac (1957) and William Least Heat Moon (1982) and Peter Jenkins (1979, 1981). This road will live on in memory in every dreamer. In fact, Route 66 is a place that is currently being memorialized, in that what remains of it is being declared a national treasure.

Richard Quinney (1986) has written a reflective and thoughtful article entitled "A Traveler on Country Roads." Similar to Dovey (1985) and Buttimer (1980), he contemplates this dialectic of home and journey, asking: "Must the journey always be away from home?" (p. 25). As he travels the country roads of the Midwest, the land of his birth, he seeks to understand the mysteries of the land and of himself.

> As with all travel--no matter how near or far from home--every moment is a journey of the soul....On the road we are engaged in imaginative play. This thing we call self is immersed in the present moment of travel. The conscious self is lost in a self that is larger than itself. Children in elemental play, we drop our conventional adult selves and become intimately bound to an unhindered space. Each moment of unlimited time is now without beginning or end--we are in eternity. We are choicelessly unfolding, undifferentiated from all else, in a land with which we are ultimately one. (pp. 21-23)

I like Quinney's emphasis on time and his emphasis on travel as a way of knowing oneself. It reminds me of the lines by T. S. Eliot:

> We shall not cease from exploration
> And the end of our exploring
> Will be to arrive where we started
> And know the place for the first time.

Part 4: Time

> "Space and time, however conceived, are the great framework within which we order our experience. We live in time-places." (Lynch, 1972, p. 241)

> "Going out together to discover new places is the surest way to be reminded that we do not see the land with the same eyes, nor smell it with the same nose. It sings different songs to each of us, and what we hear changes in accordance with our years." (Nabhan & Trimble, 1994, p. 3)

> "I had not been down this road for at least a dozen years, but its gentle slopes and isolated farms were as familiar to me as my own left leg. My heart soared. This was like going back in time. I was about to be a boy again." (Bryson, 1989, pp. 18-19)

A theme which continually emerges in the literature is the way in which places and time are interwoven. Space and time are two of the most practical aspects of our lives, and yet each seems profoundly incomprehensible. Bachelard (1958/1969) states: "Memories are motionless, and the more securely they are fixed in space, the sounder they are" (p. 9). Rubinstein and Parmelee (1992) write: "The very notion of place implies a conflation of space and time such that attachment to a particular place may also represent attachment to a particular time" (p. 142). This last section of my literature review will present some of the ways in which place and time are related.

In his book, Space and Place, Tuan (1977) writes: "Place is a pause in movement....The pause makes it possible for a locality to become a center of felt value" (p. 138). The passage of time is required for this relationship to develop in that "a person in the process of time invests

bits of his emotional life in his home" (Tuan, 1974, p. 99). One of the strongest human needs is to feel connected to something larger and more steadfast than oneself, and place speaks to this need. "Permanence is an important element in the idea of place. Things and objects endure and are dependable in ways that human beings, with their biological weaknesses and shifting moods, do not endure and are not dependable" (Tuan, 1977, p. 140).

Rootedness

Is this permanence and commitment to a place over time what is meant by roots? "Rootedness [is] a feeling of belonging to place" (Godkin, 1980, p. 77). Carl Jung believes that "in all of us there are deep roots which seek to achieve geographic harmony to stabilize the psyche, like the roots of a tree" (Swan, 1990, p. 173). In The Need for Roots, Weil states: "To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul. It is one of the hardest to define" (Weil, 1952, p. 43). Activity, time, and place seem to be the ingredients for a feeling of rootedness. But what do "roots" and "sense of place" mean? Tuan (1980) states that "their essential meanings do not merely differ from each other but are opposed" (p. 4). Feeling rooted is analogous to Relph's 'existential insideness'--a knowing that this is where you belong. "Sense of place, on the other hand, implies a certain distance between self and place that allows the self to appreciate a place" (Tuan, 1980, p. 4). We cannot maintain a state of rootedness deliberately, whereas a sense of place can be achieved and maintained by taking thoughtful

steps in its creation and preservation (Tuan, 1980). Americans do not necessarily have to live in the same locality for many generations to feel rooted. Rootedness as a state of mind exists if one's life seems "pleasantly humdrum and timeless" (Tuan, 1980, p. 5) and if a person does not yearn to see a world beyond that which is intimately known.

> Rootedness in its essence means being completely at home --that is, unreflectively secure and comfortable in a particular locality. It therefore excludes not only anxiousness and curiosity about what lies beyond the next hill, but also what lies beyond present time. (Tuan, 1980, p. 5)

Is it any wonder that Americans are so obsessed with finding their roots given that so few experience this state of mind.

Time and Place

Places connect us with the past. It is virtually impossible to remember important people and events in one's life without recalling a place. Riley (1992) states that "time, landscape, and people are inextricably entangled" (p. 20). He asks the question, "Is this possible, that the greater power of place lies not in inhabiting it but in remembering it?" (p. 20). Is memory the essence of this emotional relationship with places which we have been describing? Through places, we can reconnect with ancestors and cherished people whom we have lost, and even more poignantly, to an earlier time in our own life which has also been lost to us, except through memory. "Awareness of the past is an important element in the love of place" (Tuan, 1974, p. 99). Places also become the silent

historians of our lives: "Place can acquire deep meaning for the adult through the steady accretion of sentiment over the years. Every piece of heirloom furniture, or even a stain on the wall, tells a story" (Tuan, 1977, p. 33). Marcus (1992) states that "a component of an individual's move from adolescence to adulthood is an increasing interest in the past (individual, family, cultural) and how he or she fits into this complex temporal schema (p. 101).

Places also help us fantasize about possibilities and opportunities. A new place can be an incubator, helping us change in directions that we choose, assisting us as we sever connections with the past and grow into our future selves. In an article entitled "Possible Selves," Markus and Nurius (1986) state:

> Where in time is the particular self-conception located? Many of an individual's self-conceptions are images of the now or current selves; they describe the self as it presently is perceived by the individual. Other self-conceptions, however, are possible selves. These may be past selves that no longer characterize the self, but under some circumstances could be relevant again, or they may be future selves, images of the self that have not yet been realized but that are hoped for or feared. (p. 957)

It seems that one could also ask, "where in space is the particular self-conception located?" Salter (1979) states that "change from the past and freedom from outmoded patterns has always come more easily in new settings" (p. 13). And if we are not able to leave the restrictions of our present lives, we can escape to a different place in our imagination. Riley ponders this theme of fantasy:

> The internal landscape, the landscape of memory and fantasy, also gains much of its power from the

> imagined experiences, the stories, that one sets in that landscape....[at a national forest] we might also ask how many visiting males are fantasizing themselves as John Wayne or Gary Cooper. (Riley, 1992, p. 22)

We can also change within the same place, if it is the right place. Dovey (1985) suggests that a home, or a favorite room, are places of freedom, a human territory where we can impose our own order secure from the impositions of others. By virtue of this autonomy, as well as the fact that a home reflects one's identity, it can provide a connection to one's future. Home allows both for one's present identity as well as for the growth leading to one's future identity. This possibility is described as follows:

> The growth of identity requires a certain freedom of interaction between present and future, between our experiences and dreams. Knowing that we have the power to remain in a place and change it permits us to act upon and build our dreams....Home suggests a certain dynamic adaptability. (Dovey, 1985, p. 43)

The possibility that place serves as a means for metamorphosis when we have outgrown our present lives seems as important as the way in which it links us with ancestors and loved ones of the past. The bond between people and place, in this hypothesis, would stimulate growth and change across the developmental life cycle.

Life Course Development and Place

In this section we will examine how people interact with places during three stages in their lives: childhood, the early-to- middle adult years, and late adult years. Most of the literature which examines developmental aspects

of place concentrates on the very young and the very old, probably because both groups are perceived to have more particular environmental needs relating to health, safety, and mobility. However, it seems apparent to me that, in fact, these are human needs regardless of age.

Childhood

"A toddler leaves his mother's side to explore the world. Places stay put. Their image is one of stability and permanence" (Tuan, 1977, p. 29). What qualities do children seek in a favorite place? According to Louise Chawla (1992), who has written an article entitled "Childhood Place Attachments," places conceivably satisfy three types of needs for children: "security, social affiliation, and creative expression and exploration" (p. 68). In behavior mapping studies and favorite place analyses, Chawla reports the following:

> [There is] a sequence from close-to-home, mixed-sex play in the preschool years, to expansive engagement with the local landscape in the company of same-sex friends in middle childhood, to the formation of new mixed-sex groups and a retrenchment in visible neighborhood use as adolescents turn inward into the privacy of their homes and outward to distant attractions. (p. 66)

Chawla states that at every age, "undefined space" (p. 69) is needed where children can formulate their own worlds. Preschoolers enjoy manipulating their environment, and play consists of imitating adult roles; school-age children need hideouts and playhouses where privacy and independence can be experienced; adolescents desire both private refuges and public hangouts where social relationships can occur and ideas can be exchanged (Chawla, 1992). Interviews, essays,

child-led expeditions, drawings, and observational studies with children indicate that favorite places include areas where there is a sense of being able to "appropriate these spaces in undisturbed privacy and shape them to their will" (Chawla, 1992, p. 76). These places included fields, woods, hideouts, forts, and leftover spaces in the home or outdoors. Places which are removed from the surveillance of adults and where the rules of order and neatness do not apply are chosen because they afford children the physical and emotional freedom to interact with, manipulate, and explore their environment.

In their book, The Geography of Childhood, Nabhan and Trimble (1994) discuss the desire of children to become intimately engaged with their environment. While adults scan the landscape "for picturesque panoramas and scenic overlooks" (p. 5), children are on their hands and knees, scouring the ground "for bones, pine cones, sparkly sandstone, feathers, or wildflowers" (p. 6). In the introduction to their book, Nabhan and Trimble quote from the 1993 book, The Thunder Tree, by Robert Michael Pyle:

> ...a ditch somewhere--or a creek, meadow, woodlot, or marsh....These are places of initiation, where the borders between ourselves and other creatures break down, where the earth gets under our nails and a sense of place gets under our skin. ...Everybody has a ditch, or ought to. For only the ditches and the fields, the woods, the ravines--can teach us to care enough for all the land. (Nabhan & Trimble, 1994, introductory page of quotes)

Gender differences in place preferences are reported after the age of five, in that boys are observed outdoors more than girls and are allowed to explore a greater range

of places. Girls compensate for their restricted territorial range through a more intimate knowledge of the places in which they spend their time. Boys described their homes more in physical terms, as objects of possession and achievement, whereas girls expressed stronger social and emotional ties to their homes (Chawla, 1992).

In another study, Chawla (1986) analyzed the child's relationship to the physical environment through the medium of 20th century published autobiographies. This study was designed as a comparison to Edith Cobb's study of imagination in childhood using the same methodology. Cobb concluded that "a living sense of a dynamic relationship with the outer world" (Chawla, 1986, p. 34) is <u>universal</u> in children; Chawla disagrees:

> Cobb's theory must be amended to allow for two different degrees of experience. It is possible that, in a very general--and therefore weak--sense, all children's developing consciousness of the world involves this dynamic sense of relationship with their place. Only in some children, however, is this experience so intense that it burns itself into memory to animate adult life. (Chawla, 1986, p. 36)

The following seven forms of environmental memory emerged from Chawla's qualitative analysis of the autobiographies:

> 1. <u>Transcendence</u>. Memory of a dynamic relationship with the outer world, of a profound continuity with natural processes. It transcends social consciousness through a feeling of one-to-one communion with the environment. It involves elation, a sense of exuberance or enveloping calm, of timelessness, boundlessness, and radiance. The context for this memory type appeared almost inflexible: freedom, solitude, and an opportunity to feel that the natural environment was one's own.

2. Affection. Memory of places to which we trace our roots, associated with happiness and security. It incorporates social definitions of the environment, and there is a parallel between the warmth of feeling for the place and for the people in it. Catalogues of everything in the setting are common.

3. Ambivalence. Ambivalence results when identification with the place in which one is rooted is complicated by the tension that it represents family weaknesses or social injustices. Often the dominant culture devalues this place. It cannot be rejected because it is where one's personality and perspective developed and there are ties of affection to it, but neither can it be embraced.

4. Idealization. The person identifies with an environmental abstraction rather than a concretely lived-in-place. It may be a geographic region, or a realm of the imagination. This mentally inhabited world becomes an intensely felt symbol for personal desires and values.

5. Rejection. The environment represents a place to escape from. It fails to meet basic needs. It may be rejected for what it actively contains or for what it lacks.

6. Detachment. Detachment occurs when few words or feelings are invested in environmental description. The environment is referred to in order to locate life events in time and space, but it is a flat backdrop in scenes in which the actors occupy center stage.

7. Omission. The physical setting is not described at all. The location of events must be inferred from scattered allusions. (Chawla, 1986, p. 37)

Chawla reports that, in addition to the seven types of memory described above, six contexts emerged as important considerations, affecting the person-place encounter: location (urban-suburban-small town-rural), economic status of the land (privately owned, rented, public space, wild land), social setting (solitude vs. companionship), rules

(freedom vs. constraint), evaluation of the setting by society (valued vs. devalued), and age at time of encounter (early, middle childhood, adolescence). She concludes that the form of environmental memory most cherished by the authors in this study is a relationship with a place which sustains their self-identity, a finding consistent with Relph's (1976) concept of existential insideness. Having the sense that this-is-where-I-belong, feeling at-ease in that setting, and the sense that this-place-belongs-to-me are experiences that describe this type of environmental memory (Chawla, 1986).

Riley (1979) suggests that "the memorable landscapes of our childhoods may directly shape our adult responses by determining the nature of the pleasure or satisfaction that we will ever after obtain from the environment" (p. 12). This is a frighteningly powerful statement. Riley quotes Wallace Stegner in the following passage:

> There is a time somewhere between the ages of five and twelve which corresponds to the phase ethologists have isolated in the development of birds, when an impression lasting only a few seconds may be imprinted on a young bird for life....Expose a child to a particular environment at this susceptible time and he will perceive in the shapes of that environment until he dies. (Riley, 1979, p. 12)

This may be a good example of Winnicott's "potential space" discussed in Part 1. For a moment, outer geographical space is internalized and connects with the experienced essence of oneself, and this moment shapes later perceptions of both the self and the world. Wallace Stegner's experience echoes in my own life. At the age of nine, I traveled with my

family from Iowa to Montana, a two-week car trip which changed me significantly. Along the way, I coordinated a postcard and photograph collection, which is one of my favorite childhood possessions. When I think about my love for travel, my Montana trip seems like my archetypal travel experience.

Adulthood

How do adults experience place? Is it similar to how children relate to the environment? Tuan writes that "the child knows the world more sensuously than does the adult. This is one reason why the adult cannot go home again....Experienced spans of time [in different places], at different stages in life, are not commensurable" (Tuan, 1977, p. 185). We have all had the experience of returning to our childhood home and grounds, and being utterly amazed at how small it is in comparison to our memories of it in childhood.

Cooper Marcus, a professor of landscape architecture at UC-Berkeley, asks her students to write essays about significant places in their lives, and to draw their own fondly remembered childhood environments: an exercise she calls Environmental Autobiography (Marcus, 1992, p. 89). The purpose of this assignment is for future designers to become aware of how they are influenced by the places of their lives, so that they will be freed from repeating their own experiences in their professional work, allowing them to become more responsive to the expressed desires of their clients. Approximately one fourth of Marcus' students are foreign, from countries as distant as Nigeria, Iran,

Australia, and Indonesia. Despite differences in culture, the places which consistently emerged in their drawings of childhood places are "creating or finding special hiding places" (Marcus, 1992, p. 90). It is intriguing to wonder if the evolutionary basis for person-place relations is the security which a particular environment affords humans, offering them a refuge from predators.

Three themes which emerged from the essays by the adult design students are summarized by Marcus (1992):

> The issue of gaining control over space in order to feel a positive sense of self-identity; the issue of manipulating, molding, or decorating that space in order to create a setting of psychological comfort, which interconnects with identity or personal well-being; and the issue of continuity with significant places of the past, so that a sense of control and identity experienced at an earlier age is supported by reproducing the essence of a significant past environment. (p. 88)

A second methodology which Marcus (1992) developed is to explore the emotional meaning of one's dwelling through role-play. She states that a frequently recurring theme is "the recognition of the continuing influence of a significant childhood setting on current choices of dwelling location, dwelling form, garden design, interior decoration, and the like" (p. 98). She believes that incorporating childhood memories into a current dwelling can represent a wish for security as well as a desire to remain connected with a loved family member, for whom the original dwelling was a creation or expression of the ancestor's sense of self. By repeating the design, the relationship is renewed (Marcus, 1992). Lynch (1972) also has observed that many

American families choose a house, when relocating to a new city, that reminds them of their childhood home.

Combining her interest in both design and psychology, Marcus (1992) discusses another way in which childhood homes influence adults: the possibility of creating a dwelling that is either a contrast to a childhood home, or a "replay of unresolved childhood problems" (p. 103). In her interviews, homes were reportedly chosen or decorated in reaction to such issues as a controlling parent who dominated one's childhood, a childhood house which was utilitarian and austere, or one in which there was no space for privacy. Marcus (1992) states:

> Many people unconsciously seek out relationships [with people] that enable them to continue (and, possibly, complete) the unresolved interpersonal emotions of childhood....Perhaps some of us also unconsciously place ourselves in conflictual environments that enable us to work out unresolved emotional connections with significant places of childhood. (pp. 106-107)

Marcus (1992) reports that gender differences also emerged in her research: men were more likely to replay childhood patterns in terms of the layout and the design of the house whereas women do this in relation to furniture or objects. Marcus concludes that while men identify a dwelling as a shelter, women perceive it as a home (p. 110).

Other adults, rather than being content with recreating their childhood home in a different place, do, in fact, return to the geography of their birth. Marcus (1992) states: "The need to return to our environmental roots seems especially pressing for many people in the second half of life, as old age appears on the horizon" (p. 100). Maybe

this yearning is about synthesizing one's roots with one's created identity, a variation on the theme of "you can never go home again." Or maybe it represents a desire to be close to loved ones and a wish to return to native soil where things are familiar, before one loses these possibilities. In his book, The Lost Continent, Bryson (1989) states:

> On another continent, 4,000 miles away, I became quietly seized with that nostalgia that overcomes you when you have reached the middle of your life and your father has recently died and it dawns on you that when he went he took some of you with him. ... I wanted to travel around. I wanted to see America. I wanted to come home." (p. 12)

As he is traveling the country roads of the Midwest, Quinney (1986) reflects on the dialectical theme in his life of leaving and returning, attributing it to something especially true of Midwest children:

> There is a transcendent quality in the Midwest that survives all human constructions. It has to do with the line of the horizon, the way the sky meets the land, the drift of clouds over the fields, the way the sun reflects from the weathered barn. This is the landscape that brought me back to the Midwest after years of travel in another place....The American landscape, especially that of the Midwest, symbolizes and exemplifies the contrast between place and space. The phenomenologist of the landscape, Yi-Fu Tuan, characterizes the Midwest as a mythical land located at the center of the country but which inspires us to move to another land. Growing up in the Midwest we are pulled between staying at home and moving farther away in order to become something else. A son or daughter of the middle border carries a lifelong guilt no matter which course is chosen. (p. 25)

On his photographic journey, Quinney reflects on life, leaving home, landscape, existence and special places:

> Where we are born is a reference for all that follows, the place that we will continue to call

> home. Where we might expect to die is the next most significant landmark. In between, we wander from one place to another. (Quinney, 1986, p. 24)

Late Adulthood Years

For an elderly adult, the environment and special places are important for a number of reasons. First, feelings about former places may be a way of remembering cherished experiences during one's life. In this way the past is kept alive and a sense of continuity and identity is maintained. Second, attachment to a current place may be a means of strengthening the self and maintaining a positive self-image in light of the decreasing social status society bestows upon aging people. Third, attachment to a current place may represent an environment which allows for continued independence and competence. As physical and cognitive abilities decline, the physical environment increases in importance (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992).

In an article entitled "Toward a Geography of Growing Old," Rowles (1980) discusses his study of five elderly people over a period of three years. His goal was to understand the way in which older people perceive the places of their lives. One of his most intriguing findings concerned the way in which the participants were connected vicariously to a variety of displaced environments. Rowles labels this mode of experience "fantasy," and sees it as having two aspects: (1) reflective geographical fantasy involves reminiscence and selectively participating in environments of the past. A series of places through time were recalled in detail by the participants in his study. Rowles realized that these places constituted the present

lifeworld of his participants, as these places could be reinhabited and reconstituted. The participants immersed themselves in geographical settings which represented the entire time-space continuum of their personal histories.

(2) projective geographical fantasy transported the participants to a contemporary environment, but one spatially removed from their present residence. Typically these involved places where their children lived. This tendency for projection into the worlds of children has been labeled "altruistic surrender" by Hochschild, in that a parent lives through the experiences of a child and gains a sense of intimacy and identification which compensates for their geographical separation (Rowles, 1980, pp. 60-61).

One's home is of obvious importance to people of any age. Yet, for elderly adults, it takes on even more importance, since increasing amounts of time are spent at home due to health concerns, mobility limitations, and decreased social roles in the larger world. The home becomes not only "the central staging ground for being and doing by older adults, it also acts as a repository for cherished personal possessions" (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992, p. 153). Marcus (1992) reports that when older adults relocate to housing for the elderly, if they are able to recreate the interior of their former home in the new apartment, finding a parallel in the floor plan and in their daily routine, their adjustment to the move is much more positive (p. 107).

While both autonomy and support are needs of all people, Lawton (1989) states that in the later years,

personal needs move in the direction of support. Biological decline, whether chronic illness, cognitive impairment, or simple reduction in energy, results in the contraction of space and reduction of stimulation (Lawton, 1990). Homes are usually rearranged, creating a new mini-environment which Lawton calls a "control center" (1989, p. 27) where both the functions of cognitive control and behavioral competence are facilitated by increasing the density of control. Favorite chairs, dressers, and beds are moved to the ground floor; dining room tables are converted to a combination office, reading room, and pantry; toileting arrangements are added to the living room area; chairs are placed close to the front door so that the porch, sidewalk, and yard can be monitored; television, radio, and telephone are all placed within arm's reach of the chair; letters, photo albums, books, and favorite objects are placed nearby. Autonomy is increased in direct proportion to the degree to which space is restricted. Lawton's major point is that diminished function does not automatically mean the end of autonomy if one is willing to create an environment which is congruent with an elderly person's needs and abilities. "No matter how lopsided the balance tips toward support, there never ceases to be some area within which autonomy may be constructively preserved" (1989, p. 30).

This process of manipulating the home environment to accommodate limitations in spatial abilities by concentrating living spaces within central zones is called "environmental centralization" (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992, p. 152). These authors state that centralization increases

independence by decreasing environmental demands. Familiarity with a place which allows for control over a daily routine becomes a crucial element in orienting an elderly person to time and place, prolonging their well-being, sense of identity, and satisfaction in life. In fact, familiarity becomes a major environmental need of older people (Lawton, 1990). Ultimately, however, the use of physical space in the home is a reminder, as well as a tool, for accomplishing the last developmental task of life: relinquishing one's lifelong social roles in preparation for death (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992).

> Memories serve to anchor us in time and space; they are one means by which we make sense of the continual becoming that is the essence of life. Reflecting on who and where we once were helps us become clearer about who we may want to be. (Marcus, 1992, p. 111)

Evolution of Place

One of the features of place which is so attractive is the sense of permanence that people receive from a beloved place. And yet, this stability is an illusion. Our environment "should be conserved; it cannot be preserved. It will change despite us, whether owing to our intent or to our heedlessness" (Lynch, 1972, p. 242). Like humans, places have a developmental life cycle. They are created and can be destroyed. What can human beings learn from the life cycle of a place? Do places have something to teach? Kevin Lynch (1972) has written a book entitled *What Time Is This Place?* in which he asks questions about time and place:

> Might it also be possible to use environment to teach change instead of permanence--how the world constantly shifts in the context of the immediate

> past; which changes have been valuable, which not; how change can be externally effected; how change ought to occur in the future? Past flux might be communicated by marking out the successive locations of activities or populations or by representing the changing aspect of a single place. The lesson could be disturbing. (p. 43)

How do people react when homes and towns cease to be? Quoting from Harvey Cox's article, "The Restoration of a Sense of Place," Lynch (1972) cites the example of a woman from Lidice, the Czech village utterly destroyed and plowed under by the Nazis. "She confessed that, despite the loss of husband and separation from her children, her greatest shock was to come over the crest before Lidice and to find nothing there--not even ruins" (Lynch, 1972, p. 41). Relph provides a similar example given by Robert Lifton in his study of the survivors of Hiroshima. The following words are spoken by a history professor:

> I climbed Hijoyama Hill and looked down. I saw that Hiroshima had disappeared....I was shocked by the sight....What I felt then and still feel now I just can't explain with words. Of course I saw many dreadful scenes after that--but that experience, looking down and finding nothing left of Hiroshima--was so shocking that I simply can't express what I felt. (Relph, 1976, p. 40)

Losing a hometown due to a war, tornado, fire, flood, earthquake, or a hurricane destroys one of our strongest illusions: even if we die, place is immortal. We might remember that it was the study of people's perceptions of natural disasters that brought geography and psychology together at the University of Chicago. What was especially curious was the behavior of people who persistently returned to resettle areas after devastation by natural disasters (Saarinen, 1976). They could not leave the place they had

known as 'home'. Lynch observes that we have not yet learned how to manage environmental transitions:

> Professionals have been concerned almost wholly with new growth rather than the environment of decline. They do not know how to deal with waste --old farms and scrub growth, derelict mines and buildings, vacant lots, abandoned tenements, accumulated solid waste, old railroad yards, or the space under highways....If these phenomena are simply regarded with distaste, if our only hope is to hide them or push them farther away from wherever we happen to be, then in time we shall live surrounded by our own excrement. But when we look at waste and scars with interest, we may learn how to integrate them into a continuous cycle of use. (Lynch, 1972, p. 190)

I cannot help but see the similarity between how this society regards aging people and declining places. We do not know how to utilize people in their post-retirement years. We also attempt "to hide <u>them</u> or push <u>them</u> farther away from wherever we happen to be." Because we cannot deal with mortality, we have not learned how to conserve either aging people or aging places.

Peirce Lewis (1979), in his essay, "Defining a Sense of Place," writes sardonically of how the United States owes its success to <u>mobility</u>. And yet this same mobility has also led to destruction, abandonment, and wastefulness of our environment:

> Mobility gave Americans an incredible freedom to experiment with new ways of doing things, and if the experiment didn't work, we could abandon the project and move on. Cut too many trees in northern Michigan? No problem--move on. Slums developing around our central cities? No problem --move to the suburbs. Northeastern machinery wearing out? Never mind--abandon the old factories of New England and the old industrial belt from Boston to Chicago--and move if you like to Georgia, or Texas, or California. (p. 32)

Over twenty years ago, Lynch (1972) provided some answers for transforming our aging environment gracefully, but the United States has been slow in heeding his advice.

> Adaptive techniques are hampered by the common attitude that things should last forever and never change and that if they do change it is for the worse....Is there any way in which this sense of the temporary can be taken advantage of, as a basis for adventure and learning?.... Flooded gravel pits are good sites for water sports, other surface depressions for racetracks, amphitheaters, campgrounds. Old rail and canal lines can be pleasant pedestrian paths. Old mine tips may be planted with trees....Can the empty row houses of central Baltimore be used as schools, or playhouses or clubs, or workshops in which to learn the building trades? (pp. 191-202)

If we learn to live with change, creating new places while conserving, recycling, and transforming the old places, we may provide an environment which is able to both stimulate and nurture. As Lynch (1972) states: "The best environment for human growth is one in which there are both new stimuli and familiar reassurances, the chance to explore and the ability to return" (p. 204). Home and journey...we need both.

Conclusion

Space, place, and time are all interconnected as they affect our experience of the world. We cannot deny the impact that a particular place has on us. Psychologically, we dwell in places of our past as well as in our present geography, and we discover new places which help us grow toward our future. Through place, we can recollect experiences with loved family members and cherished friends; and, through place, we can find solitude and privacy to comfort and calm us. Place can energize as well as nurture,

provide stimulation or relaxation. If we are restless, we can decorate or renovate a place to fit our mood. If we are receptive, a place can transform us. Place can provide adventure, novelty, or security. And most profoundly, a place becomes a part of us, and we become part of it.

A final passage by Yi-Fu Tuan ends this review:

> Space, not place, tantalized Americans when the frontiers were open and resources appeared limitless. Space is abstract. It lacks content; it is broad, open, and empty, inviting the imagination to fill it with substance and illusion; it is possibility and beckoning future. Place, by contrast, is the past and the present, stability and achievement. A major consequence of the ecological movement and the energy crisis is to make us realize that space is no longer an apt image of our crowded earth; place is. Earth is not just a launching pad for space, or for dreams of interminable expansion. It is the human home in the cosmic scheme of things....To live in a place is to experience it, to be aware of it in the bones as well as with the head. Place, at all scales from the armchair to the nation, is a construct of experience; it is sustained not only by timber, concrete, and highways, but also by the quality of human awareness. (Tuan, 1975, pp. 164-165)

CHAPTER II

METHOD

A method of research provides an outline for an investigative journey; Polkinghorne (1989) has compared it to a map used in the pursuit of knowledge. Viewed in this way, there are two traditions possible for guiding any specific piece of psychological research. The first is quantitative in nature, and derives from a positivistic philosophy of knowledge. In this method, an attempt is made to identify and then explain the causes of behavior in a quantitative way. Hypotheses are generated on the basis of some abstract theory and the research is designed to evaluate these hypotheses. Reality or truth is thought to be objective and publicly verifiable, and the ultimate aim is to generalize to a population larger than the sample of people actually tested. Laboratory experiments, questionnaires, and statistical analysis are frequently used within this approach. A privileged position is granted to the third-person, or objective perspective of the researcher rather than to the first-person, or subjective perspective of his or her subjects.

A second tradition is qualitative in nature and generally derives from a more humanistic philosophy, such as that of phenomenology (e.g., Husserl). Within this tradition, the goal is to describe how one experiences the world, and a privileged position is accorded to the actor's

own first-person perspective. Reality or truth is thought to be personal, or consistent with how one perceives and experiences the world. Participant observation and in-depth interviews are the procedures usually employed within this approach. The use of qualitative research methods initially became popular in the detailed participant observation studies of urban life taking place at the University of Chicago from approximately 1910 to 1940. By the 1950s, however, the popularity of such methods decreased with the growth of both grand theories and more quantitative methods (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984).

In an article entitled "An Application of Phenomenological Method in Psychology," Giorgi (1975a) characterized the traditional quantitative, laboratory approach to psychological research in terms of the following description: First, the experimenter determines the conditions and structure of the laboratory experiment, and "the subject is presumed to fit into that structure in a cooperative but unknowing way" (p. 102). Second, in the traditional perspective, the biographical history of the subject is unimportant; "there is only the present performance" (p. 102). In fact, Giorgi states that within the experimental method, the more anonymous the subject, the better. Third, the traditional approach is not directly relevant to concrete, everyday, life-world reality. The goal is to formulate and test abstract principles which apply to an anonymous group of subjects rather than to specific individuals.

These three characteristics are to be contrasted with the phenomenological approach, which Giorgi (1975a) described in the following terms: First, the participant chooses which experiences to share, communicating them to the researcher in his or her own words and ideas. Both the interview and its subsequent interpretation are sensitive to the participant's, and not the experimenter's, point of view. Second, detailed descriptions of concrete biographical experiences, as these have been lived in the participant's life, are the essential data of phenomenological research and the participant is never an anonymous subject. Third, phenomenology values the everyday world as it is lived by each of us prior to explanations and theoretical interpretation. The researcher is interested in the concrete experiences of a particular person in a real-life situation rather than in an abstract generalization that can be applied to an anonymous population.

In discussing some of the broader issues separating quantitative and qualitative methodologies, Taylor and Bogdan (1984) point out that such methods specify more than different data-gathering techniques; they also define two separate ways of approaching the empirical world. To facilitate their discussion, these authors identify ten characteristics which they feel describe the essence of qualitative methodology:

One, qualitative research is inductive. Concepts and understanding develop from patterns in the data. Rather than starting from testable hypotheses, research questions are flexible and only vaguely formulated.

Two, the research explores settings and people holistically, not reductionistically. People are studied within their temporal and spatial contexts, and are not reduced to discrete units of behavior that can be counted and manipulated mathematically. No artificial boundary is created, thus excluding meaning.

Three, qualitative researchers are sensitive to the effects the research has on the people they study. Researchers interact with participants in a natural and unobtrusive manner. Interviews are conducted on the model of a normal conversation rather than on the basis of a structured questionnaire.

Four, qualitative researchers attempt to understand people from their own frames of reference and to experience reality as others experience it. The researcher empathizes and identifies with the people studied in order to understand better how they see their world.

Five, the researcher suspends his or her own beliefs, perspectives, and predispositions. All information is explored; nothing is taken for granted.

Six, the qualitative researcher values all perspectives. All people are viewed as equals and those typically ignored by society are given a voice within qualitative research.

Seven, qualitative methods are humanistic. The qualitative researcher comes to know and understand people on a personal level, becoming familiar with their struggles, suffering, and frustrations.

Eight, qualitative research emphasizes validity. The methods stay close to the empirical world and are designed to ensure a close fit between interpretation and what people say and do.

Nine, qualitative researchers believe that all settings and people are worthy of study. No aspect of being human is too ordinary or mundane to be studied.

Ten, qualitative research is a craft which is changing as new research is published within this perspective. Methods have not yet been as standardized as within quantitative research; therefore, qualitative research remains flexible. The researcher is a craftsperson, encouraged to be his or her own methodologist. There are guidelines rather than rules to follow. Methods are to serve the researcher and the research problem and not vice versa.

The Phenomenological Perspective

If personal experience, the first-person perspective, is to be recognized as having value for psychological research, how should such experience be studied? To begin this process, it seems necessary to move from a positivistic philosophy of knowledge to one deriving from existential phenomenology. As its name suggests, existential phenomenology offers a combination of two philosophies, one of which, existentialism, is concerned with human existence in its concrete particularity and the second of which, phenomenology, is concerned with a certain mode of investigating that existence as it is experienced by specific individuals. Both philosophies share a common

interest in human experiences in the world of everyday human life, and this interest does not view experience as a consequence of some internal set of events such as mind or brain (Polkinghorne, 1989; Pollio, Henley & Thompson, 1995; Valle, King & Halling, 1989). Instead, both existentialism and phenomenology seek "a rigorous description of human life as it is lived and reflected upon in all of its first-person concreteness, urgency and ambiguity. For existential phenomenology the world is to be lived and described, not explained" (Pollio, Henley, & Thompson, 1995, pp. 12-13).

Since the existential phenomenologist's goal is to describe the phenomenon being investigated, rather than to master, control, dominate, predict, manipulate, or change it (Colaizzi, 1978), it is consistent with this philosophy that, unlike traditional psychology in which the typical method is an <u>experiment</u> regardless of the content area to be explored, there is no such thing as <u>the</u> phenomenological method. Rather, a phenomenological researcher must allow the content of his or her research to dictate the method most useful in understanding and describing a particular psychological phenomenon. As opposed to laboratory science, where one or a few elements are examined in isolation, separated from the context and totality of the experience, the spirit of phenomenology is to examine with precision and depth not only the parts but the entirety of a phenomenon.

One important feature of an existential phenomenological perspective is that experience is not divided into objective and subjective categories. No research method is seen as either purely objective, i.e.,

being free from human experience, or purely subjective, i.e., free of worldly phenomena (Thompson, Locander, and Pollio, 1989). Giorgi (1975a) described the phenomenological method as follows:

> Phenomenology is the study of the structure, and the variations of structure, of the consciousness to which any thing, event, or person appears. It is interested in elucidating both that which appears and the manner in which it appears, as well as in the overall structure that relates the "that which" with its mode or manner. ... The minimum condition for the study of anything is that it be present to someone's consciousness. (p. 83)

For Giorgi (1975a), there are two types of structure: "situated structure" and "general structure." Situated structure is concerned with the description of some topic of consciousness in its concrete, everyday form; its primary value is idiographic in attempting to understand the world of the individual. General structure is more abstract and nomothetic. It is meant to understand the event of consciousness as it might appear across individuals or in a more theoretical context. Given an emphasis on structures, the key criterion for qualitative research is "whether a reader, adopting the same viewpoint as articulated by the researcher, can also see what the researcher saw, whether or not he agrees with it" (Giorgi, 1975a, p. 96).

Thompson, Locander, and Pollio (1989) apply the Gestalt metaphors of <u>pattern</u>, <u>figure/ground</u> and the Wittgensteinian metaphor of <u>seeing</u> to present their understanding of this perspective. For example, the metaphor of figure/ground implies an ever-changing visual perspective in which an object in one's visual field advances (i.e., becomes

figural) and then recedes (i.e., becomes ground) as it is perceived over time. Similarly, from an existential-phenomenological perspective, human experience may be described as a process in which at a particular time and place, certain events advance into the foreground while others recede into the background. As a person continues to perceive (i.e., experience) his or her world, what was perceived previously as figural may recede into the background whereas a previously unnoticed aspect of the background may now emerge as figural. Thus, there is a continual fluidity in one's experiencing that is located neither inside nor outside the person, and which seems best described as being located between the person and the world.

Pollio, Henley, and Thompson (1995) also note that any figural event is contextualized by two different sets of grounds: the first is the immediate context surrounding an object or focal event; the second is the larger context surrounding the person, including previous experiences with the figural event, the language one speaks, and the culture in which one lives. These authors portray the multiple grounds as figure/ground/horizon, and describe this concept as follows:

> All experiencing is relational, and the field of experience -- the phenomenal field -- is grounded as much by the world of nature and things as by those of culture, history, and situation. All events experienced as figural emerge only against the multiple grounds of everyday reality comprised of its worldly and sociopersonal aspects. (p.23)

What is relevant for this research is how the experience of <u>place</u> may be described as one of these multiple grounds. Although a specific place can be the

figural object of an experience, as well as the more immediate ground contextualizing some other event, the majority of the time it would seem to exist quietly as a horizon. The same event occurring in one part of the world potentially has a very different meaning if it were to occur in another place. Meaning flows in both directions; i.e., the figural event may change one's perception of context just as one's contextual grounds may influence one's relationship to the figural event.

The figure/ground metaphor is also useful in describing relationships between reflected and unreflected experience. "Reflected meanings and symbols emerge from the ground of unreflected experiences" (Thompson, Locander, and Pollio, 1989, p. 137). Experiences which are as yet unreflected are the background of our existence: they seem to be unbounded--spaceless, timeless, and nonverbalized, redolent with sensory impressions. As one attends to a particular experience, however, it emerges as the subject of thought and becomes figural in consciousness -- an event located in time and space. At this point, one is able to attach words and meaning to it, thereby making the event capable of being replayed in imagination or memory. The experience can be written or spoken aloud, and is remembered. These reflected experiences attach a person to his or her world in a particular way and become a part of his or her identity. A reflected experience may also become part of a shared history between two people. Although this experience may eventually fade into the background, it will never again be

unreflected; when one remembers this experience, one will remember one's reflection upon the event as well.

In the application of the existential-phenomenological perspective to the gathering of research data, it frequently happens that a participant shares an unreflected experience when talking with the researcher; i.e., an event which had been in the background of an individual's life as a 'ground' or a 'horizon' is reflected upon for the first time, becoming figural in the dialogical process. With the opportunity to think carefully about a personal experience and discuss it with another person who is equally interested in that experience, a participant gains access to more of his or her life history.

The Phenomenological Interview

A phenomenological psychologist begins with a curiosity, a question about some phenomenon as it is humanly experienced, and the most direct way to understand such an experience is to ask; i.e., to interview an individual about a specific experience in his or her life. Before participants can be interviewed, however, the researcher must ask the following questions of him/herself:

> Why am I involved with this phenomenon? ... How might my personal inclinations and predispositions as to research value influence or even bias how and what I investigate? ... Pursuing this line of questioning, he will discover that his approach, and all that is involved in his approach, such as personal gain and prestige, social recognition, moral, ethical, religious, political and economic features, can never be entirely eliminated. ... Without some personal interest he could never follow through in completing or even initiating a research project. (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 55)

By interrogating oneself, a researcher strives to uncover any beliefs, hypotheses, attitudes, and biases that might interfere with an understanding of the phenomenon. This attempt to "bracket" (Giorgi, 1975a) one's prejudices means that the investigator will attempt to place within parentheses commonly held beliefs that the researcher or the culture might hold, so that the research will be open to experiences being described by another. Giorgi notes that descriptions...

> ...always reveal something of the world of the describer, even if it is only the fact of an enigmatic world. The task of the researcher is to let the world of the describer, or more concretely, the situation as it exists for the subject, reveal itself through the description in an unbiased way. Thus it is the meaning of the situation as it exists for the subject that descriptions yield. (Giorgi, 1975b, p. 74)

This attempt to understand a phenomenon without prejudice is sometimes also labeled a "phenomenological reduction" (Kvale, 1983). It involves the suspension of judgment as to whether the content of an experience actually exists or not. While Merleau-Ponty believes that a total reduction is impossible, the goal is to raise one's awareness of one's presuppositions (Kvale, 1983). This process also helps the researcher decide upon the words and phrases to use when talking with research participants about the phenomenon of interest.

The phenomenological interview is one of the most frequently used methods of obtaining data within existential-phenomenological research. The purpose of this interview is to enable the researcher to gather descriptions

of the life-world of the participant, the goal of which is to allow psychologists to understand better the essential nature of human experience and existence. Seamon (1982) asks: "In what ways do we as human beings reach out, make contact with, and behave in the world? What most succinctly are the essential characteristics of the human lifeworld?" (p. 124). Although a textbook definition of some phenomenon may exist within traditional psychology, typically it would be defined in terms of something it is not (for example: hunger might be defined in terms of the number of hours without food rather than in more human-experiential terms capable of leading to a description of the experience of hunger as lived). Within a phenomenological interview, a phenomenon is described in terms of how it is experienced and what it may mean to the individual.

This mode of understanding a participant's experience on the basis of a research interview is outlined by Kvale (1983) in terms of the following twelve characteristics:

First, the interview is centered on the life-world of the participant and its purpose is to describe the central themes which the interviewee experiences and lives in his or her relationship to the life-world. The topic of interest, however, is not the person but the experience itself. In other words, the interview is theme-oriented and not person-oriented.

Second, the major task is to understand the meaning of what is said. Kvale notes that it is necessary to listen to the directly expressed meanings as well as what is said between the lines. An alert interviewer is sensitive to the

nuances of language as well as to the subtleties of non-verbal communication expressed by the participant during the interview.

Third, the researcher's goal is to obtain qualitative rather than quantifiable responses concerning various aspects of the participant's life-world. One's experiences are not reduced to a number, a process which translates the variety and individuality of a particular situation into a mathematical language for the convenience of the researcher. The results may then be said to be statistically significant, but are they psychologically meaningful?

Fourth, the researcher attempts to obtain uninterpreted descriptions of the experiences, feelings, and actions of the interviewee. In fact, the dialogue not only allows the participant to describe his or her personal experiences; it also frequently results in the participant discovering the meaningfulness of an experience which can then be integrated more fully into his or her self-perception and/or identity.

Fifth, the interview seeks to obtain descriptions of specific rather than general situations from the interviewee. The description of an experience as it emerges in a particular context is the essence of an experience in phenomenological research. The goal is to understand that experience, not to formulate theories which apply abstractly to general situations but, in fact, aptly describe none.

Sixth, the interview attempts to gather presuppositionless descriptions, often called prereflective statements, of the relevant themes of the participant's life-world. Likewise, the researcher is aware of his or her

own hypotheses and presuppositions during the interview. The research question does not emerge from a theory about human psychology; rather, it grows from a natural curiosity about the human world.

Seventh, the researcher focuses on certain themes, or psychological phenomena, of the life-world of the participant. Within the area being questioned, it is up to the interviewee to discuss topics that have importance and meaning to him or her. The participant always has the privileged position.

Eighth, if some of the statements of the participant are ambiguous, it is the task of the interviewer to clarify whether the ambiguity is due to a failure of communication or whether it reflects perceived contradictions in the life-world of the interviewee; i.e., the phenomenon is experienced as ambiguous.

Ninth, during an interview, the participant may come to change his or her descriptions and meanings about an experience as a result of insights gained while discussing the phenomenon with the researcher. Because of this a qualitative research interview typically cannot be reproduced exactly, a requirement in traditional scientific research.

Tenth, because the dialogue emerges in a social context between two individuals, and the researcher is a significant part of that context, interviews obtained by different interviewers will not be identical. Investigators vary in the amount of sensitivity and empathy they express toward another individual. In addition, gender, age, and racial

similarities or differences between the interviewer and the participant may also influence how easily a person discusses personal experiences during an interview.

Eleventh, because the interview is an interaction between two people, each reacts to and influences the other. The interviewer needs to be conscious of the interpersonal dynamics and take them into account during the interview itself, as well as when analyzing the completed interview. Rather than considering this a source of error, such reciprocal influence is a strong point of the qualitative interview as long as one recognizes and applies the knowledge of this interaction to one's interpretation of the interview.

Twelfth, the interview may be an enriching experience for the interviewee. It is unusual, outside of psychotherapy, for someone to be able to explore a personal topic with another who is so interested in listening. As a result, it may be difficult to end the interview. Most research participants express appreciation for an experience which has felt unusually valuable to them and they frequently comment on how rewarding it is for them to talk about an experience with an interested researcher (Kvale, 1983).

✓ Phenomenological interviewing works best within a flexible overall research design. The number and type of participants are not usually specified beforehand and anyone who is familiar with the psychological phenomenon being investigated, and is reasonably articulate, can serve as a research participant. In this regard, Giorgi (1975a)

states: "The minimum condition for the study of anything is that it be present to someone's consciousness" (p. 84). What is important is the potential of each participant to add to the insights gathered on the topic in question. A researcher wants enough variety to capture several examples of the phenomenon being investigated. What usually happens in studies of this type is that some point is reached at which time the researcher begins to experience a repetition in significant words and phrases describing the phenomenon. When this occurs, the researcher can feel comfortable in collecting no additional data. Methodologically, this means that when interviews with additional participants yield no genuinely new insights, one concludes that a sufficient number of people have been interviewed. Again, it is important to remember that the content of the research, not traditional rules, guide phenomenological research.

During a phenomenological interview, it is important for the researcher to create an atmosphere in which people feel comfortable and safe to talk freely about meaningful experiences in their life. Unlike a structured interview, in which the questions are pre-determined before the researcher meets the participant, in qualitative interviewing the research occurs within a situation comparable to a relaxed, natural conversation between two individuals. The major difference between the interview and a conversation is that the flow of dialogue is largely one-sided in the interview. The participant being interviewed is considered the expert and, except for the initial research question, the interviewer's role is to remain close

to the words of the participant. The interviewer's task is to ensure that each experience is discussed in detail, and to seek clarification for any statement that may be vague or not fully understood. Because the topic under consideration is of great importance to the researcher (as well as to the participant), he or she has a genuine interest in the experiences of those being interviewed which adds to the depth of thought and feeling often expressed in the interviews.

As participants often share quite personal information during the interview, it is necessary for the researcher to be nonjudgmental, patient, attentive, and sensitive. He or she follows up on the participant's remarks until there is a clear picture of the people, places, experiences, and feelings being described in the interview. A researcher needs to sense how and when to probe, without allowing the participant to become unduly distressed or dysphoric. In this type of research, the interviewer <u>is</u> the research tool.

An experimental psychologist might argue that since people see their world through potentially distorting lenses, the researcher must verify the authenticity (reliability) of what the participant reports during an interview. Granted, a participant can fabricate, exaggerate, and distort the information being described and the researcher can be fooled. While this limitation is true of all types of self-report research, the participants who contribute their time and efforts to the phenomenological interview typically are just as interested in the authenticity of the topic being investigated as the

researcher. Any inclination that a participant might have to distort information typically is outweighed by the human desire to be known by oneself as well as by another person.

The Process of Interpretation

✓ The method of interpretation used in a phenomenological study evolves from the particular question asked. As stated previously, guidelines rather than rules are formulated to help the researcher interpret the data obtained from a series of phenomenological interviews. In general, one goal of the research is to describe phenomena as they are lived by a particular person in an individual context. At the same time, the researcher is also required to attempt to describe essential features that characterize the experience across individuals. To this end, meaningful descriptive passages from the interviews are identified, from which a thematic structure is derived. In order to reduce the voluminous amount of interview data to essential themes, a continual and fluid process of relating the parts of the interview to the whole occurs, a process usually called 'the hermeneutic circle' (Bleicher, 1980; Gadamer, 1976; Kvale, 1983). Significant statements are understood in terms of the entire interview, and statements from different participants are related to one another, all in the attempt to understand the structure of a particular experience. It is the entire Heideggerian phrase -- 'being-in-the-world' -- which phenomenological research attempts to capture, unlike the psychoanalyst who explores only the 'being' of the phrase, or the behaviorist who is concerned primarily with the 'world' part of the phrase.

Pollio, Henley, and Thompson (1995) propose four values by which to guide phenomenological research: the methodological concerns of rigor and appropriateness, necessary for credibility; and the experiential concerns of plausibility and illumination, satisfying the need for insight. These authors state: "Well executed qualitative procedures that do not generate meaningful results are technique without soul. Brilliant interpretation may have value but one needs to be convinced of the evidence serving to ground such findings in lived experience" (p. 83). It appears that only when both sets of criteria are met does qualitative research contribute significantly to the body of psychological knowledge. ✓

Methods Used in This Research

Development of the Topic

The initial research question was to explore the relationship between oneself and the world. The experiential background to this concern was rooted in my childhood and re-awakened during a testing course in which I was puzzled as to why bright college students knew so little about the world as measured by a subset of items on the WAIS-R Information test.

The Bracketing Interview

In order to understand my own curiosity about the relationship between a person and the world, discover my own expectations, hidden hypotheses, biases and beliefs, and to help formulate the wording of my research question, I asked one of my colleagues to interview me. This interview, which technically is called a bracketing interview, was tape

recorded, transcribed, and discussed in the Phenomenology Research Lab at The University of Tennessee. Because the topic of my research changed somewhat over time, eventually focusing specifically on the relationship between people and places instead of the broad topic of world, I asked another colleague to interview me on experiences of place which have been significant to me. This second bracketing interview also was tape recorded, transcribed, and discussed with the research group. Significant statements, metaphors, themes, patterns of thinking and of expression all were noted in an effort to bracket my own potentially biasing presuppositions about this topic, which is both academically and personally meaningful to me.

The Phenomenology Research Group

The Phenomenology Research Group consists of ten to twelve people committed to qualitative research who meet weekly for the purpose of discussing and thematizing phenomenological-interview protocols. During the discussion of my bracketing interviews, each member of the group was asked to reflect and respond briefly to his or her own unique experiences of the world and later, of place. Responses included favorite objects, places, people, animals, and memories. In fact, it was in this dialogical process that the decision was made to narrow the research question to one's relationship with special places rather than one's experience of the world, since the former concern reflected more fully the topic of interest to the researcher.

The way in which this research topic evolved and became refined through dialogue and discussion within the research group provides a good example of why flexibility is valued within phenomenological research. Likewise, it is in dialogue with the researcher that participants become more fully aware of their experiences, having an opportunity to hear their own thoughts and memories expressed aloud on the topic of interest, often for the first time, and the chance to refine and clarify their descriptions in the interview process. Unlike a structured questionnaire which asks a subject to reduce his or her experience to a phrase or a number, the phenomenological interview allows the participant to fully describe a personal experience in a fluid and individualistic manner. The dialogical process becomes a creative encounter in which the person may discover something meaningful about his or her life through the process of talking with someone who is equally respectful of that experience.

Within the Research Group, the exact wording of the interview question was decided upon, and the decision was made to interview both young adults, defined as between 18 and 25 years of age, and older adults, between 40 and 65 years of age. The reason for this decision reveals a curiosity within my own thinking about place and human development; i.e., the way in which one's relationship to place evolves across the life span. At this point, I made the decision to interview ten adults within each age group, and to strive for equal representation of men and women if possible. Permission to conduct research with human

subjects was applied for and granted by The Office of Research Administration at The University of Tennessee (see Appendix A).

Interview Procedures

The need for research volunteers was announced in a number of undergraduate psychology classes, with a sign-up sheet (see Appendix B) placed on a central bulletin board. Interested students were contacted by telephone -- this system provided ten young adults and five older adults for the study. In addition, three older adults were recruited through a local church, and two participants were suggested by acquaintances who knew about my research.

Each participant was contacted by telephone, during which a mutually convenient time and place for the interview was determined. All fifteen students were interviewed in one of the offices within The University of Tennessee, while the remaining five participants were interviewed either in their home or office. During the initial telephone call, each participant was asked to think of two or three places which were special to him or her, and each was given the freedom to define "place" as it fit his or her life experience. On the day of the interview, each participant was asked to read and sign an Informed Consent Form (see Appendix C) and then a copy was given to each person. These consent forms were the only materials containing the names of the participants since at this time a number was assigned to each participant. Throughout the entire research process, this number was the only identification used on either the cassette tapes or on the interview transcripts.

In addition, consent forms were kept in a locked file and were never viewed by anyone other than the primary researcher.

After the consent form was signed and any questions by participants answered, the interview began with the following question: "Could you tell me about a place that is special to you, in as much detail as you can?" The investigator attempted to focus the conversation on the participant's experiences while in their special place, asking for clarification of comments or the particulars of descriptions originally provided by the participant. After the first place was discussed fully, the researcher asked the participant to talk about a second place, and then another until all their examples of special places had been described. Although all participants spoke easily about a number of places which had been special to them during their lifetime (the range being from two to five places), it appeared that, in general, participants were more emotionally invested and connected to the first place discussed during the interview.

All interviews were tape recorded with the full knowledge and permission of the participants. Typically, interviews lasted from sixty to ninety minutes, with the agreement that the completed transcript would be sent to each participant when finished. After thanking the participant for his or her willingness to discuss personal experiences with the researcher, the interview process ended.

The Data Analysis

After each interview was completed, the transcription process began. The researcher transcribed eight of the twenty interviews herself, and hired a professional typist to transcribe the other twelve. The researcher then listened to each of the twenty interviews, including those transcribed by her personally, in order to edit carefully the computer copy of each protocol before it was printed. It was at this time that any confidential material -- names, addresses, personal information which would identify a participant, etc. -- was removed from the protocol.

It is important to note that in this type of research, before the more formal data analysis begins, the investigator becomes deeply familiar with the language and emotion expressed by each of the participants during the interviews. This familiarity occurs in multiple ways and through various sensory modalities; i.e., during the live interview, while listening to the tapes, and in the process of transcribing, reading, and editing the protocols. After the researcher was satisfied that the transcriptions matched the audio tapes as closely as possible, including appropriate pauses and emotional expressions, the protocols were printed and the cassette tapes were erased.

The completed transcription of the first interview was presented to the phenomenology group, the same group of people who were already familiar with the two bracketing interviews of the researcher. This step served a number of purposes: first, it was a method of checking the interview style of the researcher, ensuring that she remained close to

the words and themes stated by the participant rather than introducing ideas and evocative statements of her own. Second, it was a helpful way of beginning the rather intimidating process of analyzing a fifteen to twenty-five page protocol, just the first of twenty interviews to be analyzed. Significant phrases and ideas were discussed by various members of the group, patterns were recognized, interpretations attempted, and an embryonic structure began to emerge. During the course of data collection, three different interviews were presented for group discussion; the remaining seventeen protocols were analyzed by the researcher working alone.

When reading an interview, the researcher first identified and numbered each example of a special place that the participant described during the interview. Following this, significant statements -- words, phrases, or sentences directly pertaining to the phenomenon being investigated -- were identified within the protocol. All possible statements which meaningfully described a person's relationship to a place were included.

The next step consisted of preparing a brief summary statement for each of the twenty interviews (an example is given in Appendix D). Within this summary, only those significant statements which were repeated, emphasized, and discussed across situations by participants were included. After the researcher summarized all twenty interviews, each participant then received a packet containing a copy of the summary, a copy of the interview, and a letter (see Appendix E) asking him or her for feedback on both documents. While

most participants declined the opportunity to make corrections, a few did refine phrases in both the interview and the summary so as to reflect more accurately the meaning of their experiences. At this step, the Phenomenology Research Group again was consulted, so that some of the summary statements might be read and discussed.

The next step consisted of returning to the raw data. The experiences of the individuals in each group were collapsed and the data were analyzed within each group as a whole. The significant statements located within the protocols of the younger adults were grouped into similar-sounding categories such that all those sentences describing a sense of identity were put together, all those expressing the idea of security were grouped together, etc. These statements were then typed and read many times so that the researcher might become deeply familiar with the variations of meaning within each category. The entire process was then repeated for the older group of adults. In doing this, the investigation became organized according to themes rather than according to individual participants. Although it would have been possible to collapse experiences across the two groups and analyze themes for all twenty participants, the researcher decided to keep the two groups separated since one of the major interests within this study was a comparison between younger and older adults regarding the ways in which places are incorporated into life-experience.

Eventually, after much trial and error, different themes emerged and a thematic structure of the phenomenon of

the experience of place was created. The researcher then compiled a list of special places for all twenty participants (see Appendix F).

In the last step, the resulting structure was discussed with the Phenomenology Research Group in order to determine if the thematic structure offered was understandable to them and whether they felt the structure was supported by relevant excerpts from the various protocols. In this way, the final thematic structure was subject to a series of checks and balances for the researcher, both in regard to her ability to communicate her results and to bracket her own personal experiences and presuppositions concerning the relationship between people and places.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The primary goal of this research was to arrive at an understanding of the meaning of place; a secondary goal was to understand if and how the meaning changes as we grow older. In this chapter, the results of interviews with twenty participants, ten of whom were young adults and ten of whom were middle-aged, will be presented. Those interviews numbered 11-20 denote participants in the young adult group; those interviews numbered 21-30 denote participants in the older group. Female participants are designated by F, whereas male participants are denoted by M.

First, the variety of places chosen by the twenty participants will be presented and described, including quotes from participants about their special places. These places have been categorized in three ways: the first is by age group, the second is by gender, and the third is by the order in which the participant discussed the special places during the interview with the researcher.

Second, each of the five themes which emerged from the interviews with all twenty participants will be presented in order to describe more fully the experience of place. Since phenomenological description takes the perspective of the participant in attempting to characterize the significance of a lived experience, numerous quotes from the interviews expressing each theme will be provided. In addition,

results from the two groups will be compared, including thematic similarities and differences between individuals at different stages of adult development.

Situations

The first method of organizing the present set of interviews was in terms of the type of place participants chose to discuss, categorized by age-group. Fifty-nine places were described, with the young adult group discussing 32 different places and the older group mentioning 27 places. For two of these situations the place was coded in two different categories. As a result, the total number of places coded equals 61. Both of these doubly-coded responses were former residences of participants in the older group as well as being cabins in the woods. Therefore, they were coded within the two categories of 'home' and 'nature'. Table 1 on the following page presents the results of this compilation.

The type of place discussed most frequently by participants was that of a home or a residence. This category included the childhood home of a participant, the home of his or her grandparents, a family vacation home, a former residence, a current home, and a specific room at home. Homes were mentioned a total of twenty-four times, ten by the younger group and fourteen by the older group.

The second most popular category was a natural setting, including such particular places as a state or city park, a cabin in the woods, mountains, lakes, islands, a beach, wilderness areas, and the outdoors. Seventeen natural areas

TABLE 1

Frequency of Places Mentioned
By Age-Grouping of Participants

Place	Group		
	Younger	Older	Total
Home, Residence	(10)	(14)	(24)
Childhood home	5	3	8
Grandparents' home	3	2	5
Vacation home	1	1	2
Former residence	0	4	4
Current home	0	3	3
Room	1	1	2
Natural Setting	(9)	(8)	(17)
Park-like setting	6	1	7
Cabin in woods	0	3	3
Mountains	1	1	2
Lakes	1	0	1
Islands	1	0	1
Beach	0	1	1
Wilderness	0	1	1
Outdoors	0	1	1
College, High School	7	1	8
Large City	1	4	5
Miscellaneous	(5)	(2)	(7)
Church	1	1	2
Friend's home	2	0	2
Graveyard	1	0	1
Mall	1	0	1
Theater	0	1	1
TOTALS	32	29	61

were described by the participants, including nine places by the younger adults and eight places by the older adults.

The third most common category was a college or high school campus, discussed a total of eight times. Seven of the eight times it was the younger adults who described the specialness of a college or campus in their lives. For the one older adult who discussed a college locale, it was her present worksite. One young man reflected specifically on his high school football field, which held special memories for him.

The fourth most common category was a city, mentioned a total of five times. Four of these responses were contributed by members of the older adult group. The particular cities mentioned were New York City; Chicago, Illinois; London, England; Orlando, Florida; and Knoxville, Tennessee.

The remaining seven places comprise a miscellaneous category, including a church, the home of a friend, a graveyard, a mall, and a theater. For a complete listing of each situation discussed by each participant in the two groups, please see Appendix F.

Another way in which the data were organized was according to gender, presented in Table 2 on the following page. It is interesting to note that homes and residences were mentioned slightly more often by females (13) than males (11), whereas natural settings were described by males (10) more frequently than by females (7). Colleges and high schools were discussed four times by each group, and large cities were described three times by males and twice by

TABLE 2

Frequency of Places Mentioned
By Gender of Participants

Place	Group Women	Men	Total
Home, Residence	(13)	(11)	(24)
Childhood home	5	3	8
Grandparents' home	2	3	5
Vacation home	1	1	2
Former residence	1	3	4
Current home	2	1	3
Room	2	0	2
Natural Setting	(7)	(10)	(17)
Park-like setting	3	4	7
Cabin in woods	0	3	3
Mountains	0	2	2
Lakes	1	0	1
Islands	1	0	1
Beach	1	0	1
Wilderness	0	1	1
Outdoors	1	0	1
College, High School	4	4	8
Large City	2	3	5
Miscellaneous	(7)	(0)	(7)
Church	2	0	2
Friend's home	2	0	2
Graveyard	1	0	1
Mall	1	0	1
Theater	1	0	1
TOTALS	33	28	61

females. The most noteworthy distinction between males and females is that all seven of the miscellaneous category were contributed by females.

In most of the interviews, it appeared that participants described one particular place that was especially meaningful to them. Since each person had been asked in the initial telephone conversation to be prepared to discuss two or three places, no participant discussed fewer than two nor more than five places. In the majority of interviews, however, most of the dialogue and emotional energy was concentrated on the first place discussed and there were more significant statements made about this initial place. Therefore, all of the places contributed by the participants were categorized according to the ordinal position in which they were discussed by each participant. The results of this method of categorization are presented in Table 3 on the following page.

A childhood home of either parents or grandparents was the first choice of nine individuals whereas the current home of one participant was chosen, a home designed by her husband and herself. A natural setting was chosen by five individuals whereas a campus was the first choice discussed by three people. A city was the choice of one older adult, that city being Chicago. A church was the favorite place of one younger adult. It seems significant that of the twenty first-choice places, ten were homes, either from past or present circumstances. Thus, the order of places was home (10), nature (5), and specifically created human settings

TABLE 3

Type of Place Mentioned First
By Participants In Both Groups

Place	Group		
	Younger	Older	Total
Homes	(3)	(7)	(10)
Childhood Home	3	4	7
Grandparents' Home	0	2	2
Current Home	0	1	1
Natural Setting	(3)	(2)	(5)
Cove or park	2	0	2
Islands	1	0	1
Beach	0	1	1
Mountain Cabin	0	1	1
Campus	(3)	(0)	(3)
College campus	2	0	2
Football field	1	0	1
Large City	0	1	1
Church	1	0	1
TOTALS	10	10	20

such as a college or high school campus (3), a city (1), and a church (1).

A few of the special places now will be described, beginning with the most frequently mentioned category, home. Different periods of life were represented within this category by the participants, such as a childhood home, the home or farm of grandparents, a former house in which one participant had lived as an adult, and the current home in which another now resides. Only members of the older group discussed homes in which he or she had resided as an adult. More frequently, a family home from the participant's childhood was mentioned, and these places were significant because they brought forth a multitude of memories. In discussing the place -- a childhood home -- the details and emotions connected to that time of life were once again experienced by the participants. Some of the responses describing this category of home are as follows:

A middle-aged woman (#25F) stated that the place that is really special to her was "where I was born and lived up until the age of eight years old. After we moved out, about a year later my father passed away. That, you would say, is why I hold it dear to my heart because we all were together then as a family."

One young woman (#14F) stated: "The first place would be where I grew up. I've been back there quite a few times just to walk around the area and remember games we used to play. Everything was so innocent back then."

A young man (#19M) described his home as follows: "It's because my parents are very accepting. I feel like I

can come back there and they will accept me regardless of what I do. I feel comfortable, I feel safe."

A middle-aged man (#28M) indicated that his grandparents' dairy farm was his special place. He stated: "From the earliest times that I can remember, one of the places that I enjoyed going the most, and still think about all the time today, is going back and spending two weeks on the farm in the summer. We went there every year. It just became a tradition in our family."

Another older man (#29M) stated:

> Well, it's quite clear that where I grew up, the farm where I grew up, is very special for a lot of reasons that really go deep into my psyche, because there have been long periods of times in my life, over periods of decades in my adult life, when I would dream of things and they would always have a farm setting. I interpret that as going back to a place that's familiar and safe, where you can work out whatever is going on in your mind.

All of these responses describe how place can allow one to remain emotionally close to loved ones, transcending time and space. In addition, such a place provides constancy, safety and familiarity. From these interviews, it is obvious that childhood memories of special places are retained across a lifetime.

Frequently, the homes remembered from childhood seemed somewhat fused with important people, especially family members. In contrast, a home from adulthood, while occasionally connecting the participant to people, more frequently was described as expressing the creativity and lifestyle of the individual as an adult. Within this grouping of homes, consisting of places in which one has

resided as an adult, two of the responses were cabins in the woods. For both of these participants, it was the natural setting as much as the house which was meaningful. Quotes describing homes from adulthood now will be presented.

An older woman (#23F) stated the following about her house:

> My house, my home. My belongings, my screened-in porch, and just working around my house doing my things. There are times that I've pulled my car in on Friday night and it doesn't get moved until Monday morning, so that I can find that time by myself. But I just don't even want to get off the place.

One middle-aged woman (#21F) responded that a special place for her was:

> Where I raised my children. My husband was a minister, and most of my children did their growing up in this one ministry in northern Ohio. That place is special because they grew up there and because I feel that I was able to develop closer relationships with persons there than at any other place that we served.

This participant went on to describe how she and her husband never had the opportunity to own their own home; as a result, it was difficult to become attached to the house itself. Because of this, she felt that it was the people at each ministerial location who became the focus for her.

The woman (#27F), who together with her architect husband designed their dream home, stated the following about the house:

> The home that we're walking through right now is really, of all the places that I've ever lived, the most special place for me. There is something about our searching for a place, and longing for a place, and finally knowing that we had found it, which is so much a part of the house and the history that brought us here. ... There was so

> much about the events that shaped our coming here and the design of the house that has given it that sense of a brightness, a being, a place that has a very deep meaning to us.

This participant also discussed a special room -- her room -- within the house, describing it as follows:

> This is my space. And this is something that I have always dreamed of. In this particular space I have just the most intense feeling of myself. It feels like a complete world inside here with my books and my pets and my view.

This space allowed her to be herself in a way that was impossible for her to achieve in any other place.

An older man (#29M) described his feelings about a former residence which changed over time:

> There's another place that's really significant. The other place I lived for almost an equally long time was a house over in Oak Ridge that we bought when we came here back in '66. What I found particularly significant about that was that during the time when [his wife] had cancer, there were a great number of dreams I had about the roof in that house leaking, and rainstorms and the ceiling getting wet and the drywall falling off the ceiling and the insulation behind it, and just making a huge mess of our bedroom and all these kind of things. And it was just a recognition of the chaos and the change in life that that sickness situation was bringing into my own life.

He went on to describe how after his wife died, he felt that he had to escape this home since it had become inextricably associated with the loss of his wife. Places track time, becoming a part of both the positive and negative events in one's life, and homes become an intense reminder of all that occurs within their walls.

The second most frequent location described in this study was a <u>natural setting</u>. A young woman (#13F) portrayed her favorite place as follows: "There's a place that I used

to go to a lot when I was young called Crockett's Cove and it's in Bristol, Virginia. It's right up in the mountains. It's just one of those places where you feel safe. It's pristine. It's just a perfect place."

A young man (#20M) discussed his feelings when sitting on Umbrella Rock, located on Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He stated: "I can feel right now what it felt like. It's like the whole world was open, like my inside was just opened out and there was the world. I felt like an eagle would: free! My imagination could take me everywhere."

A woman from the older-adult group (#23F) said the following about her special place:

> My most favorite place is to go to the beach and walk the beach for three, four, five miles at a time and just listen to the ocean, look out and see what's there. It's very soothing when you're uptight when things have been stressful. I like a beach that has a lot of beach, that doesn't have obstacles in the way where you can't continue walking.

All three places discussed by one middle-aged man (#24M) were natural settings, the first being a cabin located in the Smoky Mountains where he had lived for fifteen years. He described it as a place "that quite often I couldn't wait to get back to when the day's work was done and it was time to go home. I would catch myself hurrying up to get back to the peace and the quiet and the solitude."

Another older adult (#30M) described his favorite spot in the Smokies, John Oliver's cabin in Cade's Cove, stating:

> It's nestled back against the side of the mountain. You stand on the end of the porch there and look out across the cove and see the

> mountains. There's just a serenity there, the feeling that when you go there, you don't have to worry about what else is going on; you're just removed from the rest of the world.

Thus, natural settings were described as affording an individual escape from daily hassles, as helping him or her relax by providing peace and solitude, and as a wilderness area capable of inspiring the person to meditate on ideas such as God, beauty, and truth.

A college or high school campus was the third most frequently mentioned place among participants in this study. One young man (#15M) stated:

> The most special place that I've ever been to has been this campus. It's primarily the buildings, the architecture. Not so much the trees and nature kinds of things, but it's walking around and seeing the buildings on the hill and seeing Neyland Stadium and seeing Circle Park.

Another young man (#16M) indicated that his favorite place was "my high school football field. There are certain feelings that evokes whenever I'm around it, like nostalgia." The one older adult who mentioned a college campus (#22F) said the following about the campus where she now is employed:

> I grew up here, too. I was 21 when I came here. My girls were little. There's people that work here on this campus who are retired now but who watched my girls grow up. So this is a special place too. I think I've done a lot of growing up here.

Following one's dream, being a part of a larger group in a place that will continue to exist long after oneself, continuity and a sense of permanence were aspects of place which made high schools and colleges very special for participants in this study.

A large city was the fourth most popular response, discussed more frequently by older adults than by participants in the younger group. A city can provide a person with a sense of freedom, diversity, challenge, possibility, learning, and an expanded sense of self. A middle-aged woman (#26F) described her favorite city, Chicago, as follows:

> I would start with a big place that is special to me, which is Chicago. I grew up there, spent most of my life there, and this is the first time that I've really moved away from it for good. I've been away for almost three years and I'm amazed still how much I miss Chicago. I miss specific places and aspects of the city as well as just the general sense of being oriented to a place and knowing a place as well as I know that place.

A second respondent, a young man (#11M), chose New York City as one of his favorite places, stating: "I wouldn't want to live there, but I enjoyed it while I was there. I enjoyed the surroundings, just the atmosphere, it's so much different from what I was used to." He described how he conquered his fears while he was there by attempting to 'fit in' with the people he observed, and he felt proud of his ability to survive such a challenging environment.

Of the Miscellaneous group of special places mentioned, quotes from participants who selected a church, a mall, and a graveyard will be included here. A middle-aged woman (#22F) described one of her special places, a church, as follows:

> The church itself is very special to me. Just the building, the memories. ... I can sit in that church and I can remember things I used to do as a kid in that church and I remember going with my husband, and the first time I took him to that church with us. ... You can go back in your life

> in that same place. You can go back there and remember, more so probably than if you didn't go back there. Association with place and memories, I guess.

This woman recalled details of being a child in that church, and for her, the church was an avenue to many positive childhood memories of herself and her family.

A young woman (#17F) chose a mall as one of her special places, describing it as follows: "I love to go to the mall. I just want to go by myself, spend some time by myself and look around, try on by myself, things like that. And that's really good for me." Ironically, she was able to find solitude among the masses, quite similar to the woman who expressed a comparable contentment about living in Chicago; i.e., the ability to experience private moments against a background of others. For both participants, the special place provided a way of being alone without feeling lonely.

The final place from this miscellaneous grouping is a graveyard, explained by a young woman (#14F) in her interview in this way:

> The graveyard where my brother is buried is a very special place. I mean, for some crazy reason, I think that he can hear me better when I'm there than when I'm anywhere else, which doesn't make any sense. But in some way I feel closer to him when I'm at the graveyard than if I'm just at the house or the dorm or someplace else. I can concentrate better, but probably the only reasoning behind that is because when I sit there, it's like I'm entirely focused on the fact that he's there and I'm there.

It is readily apparent that people have intensely personal feelings about places, some of which are intimately connected with people from their past, others which are

strongly associated with an aspect of their identity, and still others which allow them to escape their everyday world and situations.

Thematic Analysis

The final step in this study was to identify those themes which reveal the meaning of the experience of place. Five different themes emerged -- these themes were identified and titled as follows: Identity, Connection, Security, Possibilities, and Awe/Beauty. Each of the five themes is comprised of several subthemes; all of the themes and subthemes will be discussed along with quotations from the various interviews so as to provide clear examples of each theme. While all five themes were present in interviews with both the young adult and older adult groups, there were some variations between groups. These differences will be discussed within the description of major themes and subthemes. Appendix G presents a complete listing of all themes and subthemes.

Theme One: Identity

This theme was strongly emphasized by participants in both groups and involved three distinct aspects of identity. The conclusion that emerges is that a special place helps one answer the question "who am I?" and serves to influence and limit who one can become. In the context of a particular place, a person is shaped and becomes receptive to its traditions and predominant values. The theme of Identity is comprised of four subthemes: Place as an influence on one's identity and development, Place as a

trigger for early memories, Ownership and possession of a place, and Loss of a place.

Place as an Influence on One's Identity and Development

A number of participants described the process of their own personal development and how their career goals were strongly influenced by place. Many participants endorsed the belief that they would be very different today if they had not had the experience of their special places at an earlier time in life. Quotes reflecting this first subtheme are as follows:

> 1. There's a sense of possession, a sense of rootedness and just that that is a place [Chicago] where I'm me in a particular way. And when I'm away from that place I'm less sure somehow of who I am, because so much of my identity is wrapped up in growing up there, being a teenager there, and a young adult there and being always very involved in the city. (#26F)
>
> 2. It feels like a lot of my creativity is tied to the sense of self that I've created in my own space, and that I can't get the same sense of myself in any other part of the house. (#27F)
>
> 3. My major is now elementary education. Before I went [to the Bahamas on a church mission trip], it was interior decorating and designing and fashion merchandising. And I realized when I went over there, I changed, and that's what made me decide to go into working with children. (#18F)
>
> 4. It just taught me to set goals, it taught me to be healthy. If I would have gone to another school I would not be healthy at all. Taught me to care for myself. Taught me dependability, teamwork. I learned so much from it. I would have been just a lazy person if I went to another school. I set so many goals for myself. (#19M)
>
> 5. The diversity of this high school experience also impacted me a lot. See, I wouldn't have had that in a place like Knoxville. That really had a great impact on who I became because I learned that people are all alike. (#26F)

6. Somewhere in growing up I was taught or began to understand or believe that good hard work was important, and the farm was that to me. It's a lot of hard work. It had a big part in what I wanted to do. And I think it just built a lot of the values that I have today. (#28M)

7. It's not like you change immediately from who you are just because you change locations. There is, I think, a tension and a struggle to define yourself in a new place. It doesn't just seem to happen as automatically as when you're tied into your relationships with your friends and your career and other people. There's more fluidity in being able to move to a new place. But we found ourselves constantly in this tension to go back and approach everything with workaholic determination. And that, over time, has been getting weaker and weaker, and more pleasure and delight and enjoyment and more the values of tranquility and simplicity have become important to us since we've lived out here. (#27F)

Place as a Trigger for Early Memories

Another aspect to the theme of Identity is the link between place and time. Places from the distant past frequently were discussed by participants in both groups and, by remembering a special place, an individual was able to revisit his or her childhood, adolescence, or early adulthood. A place became a marker against which could be charted one's life progress. Excerpts illustrating this subtheme follow.

1. When I go home, I just like to drop by. I've grown up there. I guess that's another reason why I like to go there. When you have all these Sunday School classes in all the years that you grow up in, you go back and you just look and you see all the finger paintings on the walls and you remember: 'I did that.' (#17F)

2. You know, I just realized something, though, in recalling these three different places. They're three different growing-up stages in my life. I didn't realize that, you know, when I was thinking, when I was trying to get these places

> fixed in my mind. I guess the strong attachment to the home is my first attachment that I had, really, to the family. And then the Tennessee Theater was several years later -- when you have your first love, you're usually a teenager. So that's the teenage period of my life. And now that I'm older and probably more melancholy, I like to be by myself sometimes and be alone. And that is three stages right there. (#25F)

> 3. My high school football field. There are certain feelings that evokes whenever I'm around it, like nostalgia. Even though I've only been away for a couple of months, I went back to a game last week and I just felt a part, even though I'm not anymore. And whenever we were ready to play games I'd always get a nervous excitement just being on the field, whether it be right before the game or the Monday before that Friday even, you know, just get a feeling of tension. (#16M)

> 4. Probably the first place that's really special to me and I've thought about a lot -- I guess I'm just a sentimentalist -- but it was where I was born and lived up until the age of eight years old. I like to go over there and reminisce, you know, about the good old days. And as I say, some of my most memorable times were in that house. (#25F)

Ownership and Possession of a Place

The issues of ownership and symbolic possession comprised the third aspect of the theme of Identity. One's room, one's home, one's land, one's city all help to establish a sense of identity. The possession of favorite objects within a favorite place is an experience which validates and expresses one's sense of self. Symbolic ownership also is included within this subtheme since many people identified a sense of owning a place -- such as a city or a church -- which, realistically, could not belong to any one person. Participants, however, did describe

feeling as if the place belonged to them. Quotes describing this subtheme are as follows:

> 1. It's ours, it's always there. And it's our land. Nobody can get to it. When you work so hard for something and you buy it with your own money and your blood, sweat and tears over it, it's yours, you know. You're going to care for it a lot more than if it's not yours. (#19M)
>
> 2. I have a feeling that in some way the city belongs to me and to people like me. I mean not just mine alone, obviously, but that what happens there, somehow, still is a part of me. ... That I can go there anytime. There's a sense of free access, you know, like the whole city is my backyard. And I've always experienced it that way and felt that way about it. (#26F)
>
> 3. This is my space. And this is something that I have always dreamed of. When you talk about a place having more importance than anything in the world, for me it's the idea that this is my own space, and it's got things in it that I love: my piano and my canaries, my books. (#27F)
>
> 4. I've ridden the subways in every direction. I have been to all the museums, and I've walked up and down Michigan Avenue and the lakefront countless times, and so there's a sense of possession, a sense of rootedness, and just that that is a place where I'm me in a particular way. (#26F)
>
> 5. I have a key. I can go there [the church] anytime I want to, if I want to. And the lake's the same way. I have a key. I can go there. It's mine if I want -- I mean, it's not -- but it is, you know. (#22F)

Loss of a Place

Losing a special place undoes the sense of confidence and validation which special places add to one's sense of self. In this study, participants described feeling vulnerable, uncertain, and homesick after losing such a place. They also noted that the loss needed to be grieved,

just as one grieves the loss of any significant relationship. The intensity of feeling that was apparent when participants discussed losing a special place suggests that there is a strong sense of connection between people and places. The decision was made to include this subtheme of Loss within the general theme of Identity, rather than within the theme of Connection, since many participants described the sense of losing a part of the self after leaving a special place. In this way, the loss brought to awareness how strongly the place had become a part of his or her identity.

> 1. When I'm away from that place I'm less sure somehow of who I am, because so much of my identity is wrapped up in growing up there, being a teenager there, and a young adult there, and being very, always very involved in the city. (#26F)

> 2. I think the worst thing I ever had to do was help put my toys and pack up my room when we had to leave when we moved to Jackson, Mississippi. I just didn't want to leave. And it took me almost a year to get over it because that was like 'the safe place' and I didn't want to move away. (#20M)

> 3. I've been away for almost three years and I'm amazed still how much I miss Chicago. I miss specific places and aspects of the city as well as just the general sense of being oriented to a place and knowing a place as well as I know that place. It wasn't until the second year that I started feeling really homesick, and really this sense of deprivation about not being in Chicago. And when I went home to visit, it wasn't so much seeing my family that rejuvenated me as much as it was going to movies, walking on the streets where I knew where I was, and doing the things that I had always done. (#26F)

> 4. I walked through the house and it was, of course, empty, and it felt empty. No one's been in it for awhile. And I found myself...I

> remembered where the furniture was, and I wouldn't walk where the furniture was because it was like it was still there. I mean, I could look at a place and almost see it in my eye. (#20M)

> 5. The yard where I grew up as a young child is now paved over as a parking lot and you know, my brother and sisters and I talk about missing and yearning to return there to see the tree that we climbed when we were children, and it isn't there anymore. (#26F)

There were many similarities in the responses of the older and younger adult groups on this theme. Both groups pointed out that their chosen values and career paths were influenced by place. Childhood places were just as significant to the older adult group in spite of their twenty to forty additional years of experience with places in their lives. Issues of ownership and loss also were salient to both groups. The major difference in the responses of these two groups was stylistic rather than thematic in that the older adults had had many more years during which to observe life patterns, resulting in complex and insightful discussions on this theme. Issues of identity formation, self-development, individuation from one's family of origin, and loss are psychological and social processes which relate to people as well as to places, and the older adults were able to distinguish between influential people and influential places in their lives. In contrast, these concepts were described by the younger adults in such a manner as to suggest that they remained somewhat fused.

It seems obvious from reading the preceding quotes that people form intense relationships with places. A place

substantiates one's sense of self, is a ground on which one's talents and beliefs are formed, and it ties one to one's past. To lose a special place is to lose a part of oneself.

Theme Two: Connection

The theme of Connection was an intensely described aspect of place for both groups of participants. Strong feelings of being intimately bound with others remain in memory long after the relationship has dissolved in reality. In remembering or visiting the place where these connections occurred, participants described feeling the most intensely present with a loved one. It seems the place itself functions as a memory trigger for many of the scenes, events, and stories of family life. Connection to a larger group of people, such as a feeling of being a member of a team, a small town, or a city also was discussed. Many participants described an awareness of being a separate individual while simultaneously experiencing oneself as a part of a larger whole, thereby allowing one to put his or her own problems in perspective as well as avoiding a sense of loneliness. Contributing labor for a larger good, whether it be for the livelihood of a farm or the upkeep of a national park, were some of the experiences described by participants within this theme of Connection.

Connection to People

Places often are bound inextricably with significant people. Some of the participants in this study remembered a place in terms of loved ones, especially those now deceased. Returning to a special place allowed them to feel closer to

their family and friends. Or, alternately, after losing a loved one, the place became unbearable. Both adult groups produced strong statements in regards to this subtheme. The major difference is that the older group frequently included their own children among their important people, and felt nostalgic about houses where they had established their first home.

1. Last year my brother was killed in a motorcycle accident, so the last time I went back it was more like searching, because I was scared I was going to lose the memories of childhood. So, I went back and it was like I have to go back to the house. I have to see it and imagine us playing. I just had to go back and look and make sure it was all still there or something, like it was going to go away if I didn't go back that year. (#14F)

2. We all had a couple of kids that would always hang around and that were our favorites, and so it was just so hard to leave them. I cried on the whole train trip and plane ride, the whole way back, and it was really hard to come back. (#18F)

3. I guess you would have to say that relationships is the big thing as far as making a place memorable for me...not so much the geographic location or the material things there -- not the house, not the land, not anything like that -- but the relationships that I had in those places. (#21F)

4. Since my husband is buried here and my son is buried here, that makes Tennessee special. (#21F)

5. I worked at the Tennessee Theater in the box office when I was a junior and senior in high school. And I met my first real boyfriend there. I enjoyed working there at the theater though, and I guess that's my strong attachment to it still yet. I think about that: 'the one that got away'! (#25F)

6. It was where we raised our kids. (#29M)

7. When [my wife] died, I just wanted to be out. Not only out of the house after a certain period of time, but just out of the community. (#29M)

8. That's what I think about most. That's the only attachment really, I guess, you could say that I have to my Dad is we were all there in the house. (#25F)

Connection to Something Larger than Oneself

Another aspect of this theme concerns connections between the person and other social units or events larger than oneself. A person feels connected with a place because he or she feels a part of a group, whether it be a family, a football team, or a city. Being connected with something larger than oneself enhances and extends one's own sense of self. Both the younger and older adults included comments relating to this aspect of Connection.

1. There's eleven people that you have to be close enough to, to know what they're thinking, and be able to interpret what they're going to do so you can play to the best of your ability as a group. (#16M)

2. Then the whole family gets together and you see where you came from all in one little place, and that type of fellowship is really good. (#16M)

3. The other thing about the city which I miss is that you can be alone but with other people at the same time, and so you can be meditating and reflecting in an inner way, but you're also part of a larger thing. You're not alone and you're part of something. (#26F)

4. Seeing the poverty and the winos and the drug addicts, it was just part of the whole. (#26F)

5. The greatest thing in the summer was to go work with my grandfather and do the same things he did; and there again, he would let me just be a part of whatever they were doing. And they had various farms and things, and I felt like I really made a contribution. (#30M)

6. It was just incredible to have a home town and to be accepted and made to feel a part of what was going on. ... I was included in these. The social gathering place was The Dairy Queen. What happened was that every night there gathered 'the regulars'. (#30M)

7. It [Cade's Cove] also gives me some sense of my own insignificance in the overall scheme of things -- that this is a great big wide and wonderful world and that my problems are really just a very small part of what's going on, and it helps me keep those in perspective. (#30M)

Connection to the Planet and the World

A third subtheme within the theme of Connection concerns the perception of inter-connectedness among the inhabitants of the world. This sense of association produced a feeling of responsibility for the well-being of the planet with the accompanying desire to protect it. Only participants in the older group contributed statements expressing this third subtheme.

1. One of the neighbors and I would like to go out there by ourselves and just sit on this high place, look down over the interstate and watch the traffic go back and forth and sit there and talk. I guess watching the traffic made me feel like I was in touch with the outside world to a degree, because farm life can make you feel cut off. (#21F)

2. If a person does experience more of that kind of natural setting, they will have a better sense of their relationship with the planet and with the resources, etc. (#24M)

3. There was one summer about three years ago when the trail leading up to Spence Field was the trail that I had been assigned as part of the Adopt-A-Trail Program, of which I'm a volunteer, which is a program administered by the Park Service in the Smokies. You do some light maintenance, pick up trash, talk to hikers. There was a certain, what you might call proprietary

> feeling that crept in, too. You kind of start thinking of it as 'my place.' (#24M)

Particular places connect people, loved ones as well as strangers, with one another across time and space. When a place is remembered, so too are the people and the events which occurred in that setting. Certain places allow a person to have a sense of connection with a larger group of people, providing feelings of membership, belonging, and a responsibility to the group.

Theme Three: Security

This theme emerged during interviews with both groups of participants and was strongly and dramatically worded. Places which allow us to feel safe, secure, and free from constraints are desirable places. The theme of Security contains a number of subthemes: Permanence and tradition, Familiarity and safety, Relaxation and tranquility, Solitude, and Escape from life's problems.

Permanence and Tradition

The first subtheme, permanence and tradition, has to do with there being a history in regards to a certain place that pre-dates one's own memories. It also includes an experience of knowing that a place will outlive oneself and continue to exist into the future. In other words, the place is more enduring than the person. Family traditions define a different aspect of this theme: there is security in knowing that one can always return to some place -- this place -- and that the same rituals and activities will occur there year after year. The place and all that it represents

will not disappear. Examples of this subtheme are as follows:

1. It's so cool because I know it's going to be there for the rest of our lives. Me and my brother have already talked about it. When we get older, out of school and have jobs, we're going to redo the house, recarpet it and everything, so it's going to be there for the rest of our generation to generation to generation. (#19M)

2. It's just like tradition, too. There's pictures all over the place; everybody keeps a bulletin board so every time somebody comes, somebody puts up a picture. There's pictures from back when my Dad was like a five year old. And you can go back and just look and see your whole family all over the place. There are memories from years and years and years. (#19M)

3. My parents' home has always felt like my home. As long as they were alive, it was my home and I felt perfectly comfortable and at ease going back. I didn't feel like I was visiting. I felt like I was going back home, like I always had a place. There was always a place there for me. (#21F)

4. The way I look at it, my Dad was the first generation, and then I'm the next generation. My girls are the next. One of my daughters has a little boy and we're in the fourth generation of going to this same piece of property. And it is a very special place to all of us. I've seen four generations of people grow up. (#22F)

5. I had been going there during summers and spending periods of varying lengths, anything from a weekend to two weeks in the summer for a vacation. It was where our family quite often went for our vacation from the time I was like one or two years old. I don't suppose we missed a single summer of at least going up for a weekend or two. (#24M)

6. Chicago will always be home, and I will always go back for visits and hopefully feel that. It's also liberating in a way to have a whole city to feel that way about rather than a particular house or a particular piece of property or a particular tree or something that might not be there for you. (#26F)

Familiarity and Safety

The need for familiarity and safety is strongly connected with experiences of place. In a cold and dangerous world, a warm and safe place protects the very existence of a person. In addition, familiarity is necessary for emotional well-being; one cannot re-create his or her world every day. Is there anything as terrorizing as feeling lost and disoriented? The following quotes speak to these experiences one finds in a special place.

> 1. It's relief or acceptance. I feel comfortable. I feel safe. I don't have to put any fronts on; I mean, I'm me. (#19M)
>
> 2. It's just a safe place, especially when I had my dogs there. You know, I was in my safe little space. I ventured out of it a lot, so I wasn't homebound by any means, but I always enjoyed being there. And possibly just the kind of awayness of it, maybe was part of what inspired the feelings of security. (#24M)
>
> 3. Coming back and seeing the glow of the lights through the curtains and knowing that there was this bubble of warmth. And those times I can remember in coming back to the cabin, especially at night -- being really cold outside, maybe snow on the ground -- and coming back and seeing the cabin with the lights coming through the windows, it would particularly seem like some kind of haven at those times. (#24M)
>
> 4. I've been away for almost three years and I'm amazed still how much I miss Chicago. I miss specific places and aspects of the city as well as just the general sense of being oriented to a place and knowing a place as well as I know that place. So I'm finding it very hard to be in a place that's unfamiliar. I mean, there are probably very few places in Chicago that I've never been. (#26F)
>
> 5. There have been long periods of times in my life, over periods of decades in my adult life,

when I would dream of things and they would always have a farm setting. I interpret that as going back to a place that's familiar and safe, where you can work out whatever is going on in your mind. (#29M)

6. It was as though I pulled on an old familiar pair of work gloves that were just shaped to my hands and comfortable. That's what it felt like moving to that place. (#30M)

7. The church makes you very calm. I always feel real safe there, real quiet. And I've gone before and have just sat in the sanctuary, to just sit and be calm and quiet for awhile. It's just a very soothing atmosphere for me. (#22F)

Tranquility and Relaxation

Attaining a sense of tranquility, calmness, rest, and relaxation -- even if only for a moment -- is highly desirable. All participants, regardless of age, offered many significant statements expressing this subtheme. Some people were quite explicit in recognizing how places help them control their moods, and reported having special "soothing places" since early childhood. Returning to a place capable of restoring one's equilibrium and perspective during periods of extreme stress or frustration was a frequently described aspect of one's special place.

1. I think my mind just relaxes. It's almost like when I drive through there that no matter what my problems are, I forget about those problems and it's almost like my mind is in a state of meditation. If I just drive through there, whether I stop or not, it seems to relax me. (#11M)

2. It's like everything in a way shuts down. My mind just takes a break from everything. I don't think about any problems. They just kind of drift away. You don't actually fall asleep, but it feels like you are, in a way. It's very tranquil. You just can rest there. All the body functions cease except for breathing. (#13F)

3. It's kind of like I still need those places, like the Cove and everything, but not as much. I guess I was more dependent before, and now I think I've grown up a little bit and I've learned to control my emotions a little bit better, so I don't really need them as much anymore. (#13F)

4. My most favorite place now is to go to the beach and walk the beach for three, four, five miles at a time and just listen to the ocean, look out and see what's there. It's very soothing when you're uptight when things have been stressful. (#23F)

5. The arboretum over there in Oak Ridge. Now that is a place that I like to go just for me, you know, to relax and look around, take a look at the scenery, and just relax from everything. I guess when you get older, you appreciate the quietness more. (#25F)

6. That was one of the ingredients that we were looking for, of course. Our change from Los Angeles to this was also very much based on wanting something that would be more tranquil and serene. A simpler lifestyle. (#27F)

Solitude

Solitude defines a fourth variation on the more general theme of Security. As intimately involved as people are with others, a need arises for solitude where one can find a quiet space, away from the distractions of other people. Both groups of adults strongly endorsed a desire for places which protected their privacy, as the following quotes illustrate.

1. It's a chance for me to be by myself. I enjoy being around my friends and with other people. But I'm a type of person that I have to have my time by myself. And whether I go camping by myself or whether I go with two or three people, there's always a point in that trip where I'm by myself. It's just me and it's nature and it's the environment. And something about those three being combined is very relaxing for me. (#11M)

2. I like a church, you know, not necessarily the service that they have there but just going by myself and sitting in there. It's real special to me because I can think by myself, and it's just open in there and it's really special. I can be myself there. No one's there with me to judge anything that I'm doing, or it's just a time to be by myself and just be open with myself. Yeah, be open about everything. (#17F)

3. I don't know that I ever feel like I have solved anything by walking, or know exactly what plan I'm going to take when I get back home. It's just a matter of that solitude, I guess, my body or my mind or something just needs to have the time by itself like that. ... When I do walk with other people, I don't enjoy it as much. I do it at their pace or they want to pick up shells or different things. It's not the same as walking by myself. (#23F)

4. It's a place that quite often I couldn't wait to get back to when the day's work was done and it was time to go home. I would catch myself hurrying up to get back to the peace and the quiet and the solitude. (#24M)

5. This is a very small thing, but I like to sometimes have written sayings that are very meaningful for me, or a calendar or a picture that is just important to me. And that sense of not having to explain it to other people -- it's just a private relationship that I have that's meaningful to me. There's so many elements that go into this being the most special place for me. (#27F)

Escape

Participants frequently described seeking an escape from something, whether it be other people and the external demands placed upon them or from the minor hassles of daily life, such as the noise and distractions created by modern "conveniences" such as the television, telephone, and beepers. A constraint that was frequently discussed was time; many participants spoke of the need to escape

pressures of the clock. After enjoying a few carefree moments of peace and quiet, they reported feeling re-energized and able to face the world once again.

1. I think both would be good places to go if I ever felt that things were proceeding too fast, and I got to my third or fourth year at UT and just felt like I want to feel like a kid again. Those would both be places that I would like to go there to get away from time. (#16M)

2. I sat down for half a day once and watched a beaver build its dam in a little stream. ... Experience is real important to me because I think people waste their lives too much. They want to hurry up. What is there to hurry up for? You're just going to die. So why not just take a time out, sit down and watch. ... But I get real stressed out sometimes because I think every-thing's just going too fast. (#20M)

3. It was more of a place of solitude because I know nobody would be stupid enough to go out there with me. And more or less freedom. I wasn't scared. I'd just look over a thousand feet down and just stand there. I can feel right now what it felt like. It's like the whole world was open, like my inside was just opened out and there was the world. ... I wanted to feel like I had all the time in the world. I never would wear my watch. You know, sometimes when you feel in your chest like everything's compressing in on you? And you have all these situations and things are worrying you and stuff like that? There, I felt, I guess, like an eagle would -- free! My imagination could take me every-where. It was just...I felt inwardly open. (#20M)

4. Well, you're carefree. It's a relief. There's no telephone. There's no TV. And it's just like the rest of the world isn't there. The world is there if you want it, but you don't have to deal with it. (#22F)

5. It [her love of open spaces] has something to do with the journey of being a [her profession], with being a wife and mother of four, with all of the constraints in a way that that places on me. And they're significant constraints. And also the constraints of my clients where I have to be

> certain places at certain times and I have to take care of people when they're in their most painful and difficult times in their lives. So I need a release, I need a sense of some freeing. So my desire to be outdoors and my sense of enjoying the outdoors has more to do with that sense of bigness and openness than it does with the fact that I also enjoy seeing trees and birds. (#26F)

> 6. I like a beach that has a lot of beach, that doesn't have obstacles in the way where you can't continue walking. It's just something about the water and being able to walk without having to stop. (#23F)

> 7. [The keys represent] a getaway. It's a key to an escape. I can be there if I want to. And I don't have to tell anybody. It is my choice, my control. Take your key and go. (#22F)

> 8. She had cancer and was dying. Then this place [work] was an escape to me because he was at home with her during the day and I came to work. So I did escape from him, from the kids, from her, so it was escape, too, because that was a rough time. (#22F)

When stress levels soared, quiet environments promising peaceful moments were sought. As the above quotes indicate, the special place frequently was a protected and enclosed environment such as a cabin in the woods or a botanical garden. At other times, places such as a beach, a large city, or a natural setting with a vista were sought since they were experienced as allowing the participant to feel free within these wide open spaces.

Although the older group provided more detailed descriptions expressing the theme of security, the younger adults also reported seeking secure and tranquil places for the very same reasons.

Theme Four: Possibilities

This theme enhances one's sense of what he or she can become. Imagination. Mental stimulation. Excitement. Exploration. Learning. Challenge. Diversity. Adventure. Doing. All of these aspects of living are enhanced by place. Depending upon where one is, one is inspired to think big thoughts, dream big dreams, set big goals. There is an element of freedom within this theme since circumstances within a favorite place do not impede one's desires. There is also a temporal aspect, in that dreams take time to incubate and come to fruition. This theme was entitled Possibilities in order to include all of these aspects of place.

The theme of Possibilities includes the subthemes of Learning and challenge; Exploring and doing; Diversity and unpredictability; and Imagination, goals, and opportunities. Divisions among the various subthemes defining Possibilities were not as sharply drawn as among the other major themes. For this reason, headings for each of the subthemes are somewhat arbitrary, chosen more for ease in presenting and understanding the material than for expressing distinct differences.

Learning and Challenge

In general, the theme of Possibilities speaks to the need for stimulation and for the desire to learn and be challenged by one's environment. Some places are able to provide emotional and intellectual stimulation, challenging one to learn a new routine, to conquer one's fears, to understand complex differences among living beings (both

human and non-human), and to increase one's level of expertise in a new skill from year to year. Places that were very different from one's typical habitat were described by the participants as especially desirable places. Quotes describing this subtheme follow:

1. I was always learning something new. Every summer or every two-week period that we went there, we always were doing something different. Although there was a routine to it, which included haying and milking the darn cows -- which gets old real quick -- and other things, there was always enough variety in it. And each year I went back I was a little bit older, so I was given a little bit more responsibility and allowed to do things that maybe two or three years ago I wished I could have done, like drive a tractor. And then two or three years I'd come back later and got a chance to drive the tractor. (#28M)

2. I would love to go camping in the winter. It would be hard, it would be more of a challenge, but that's something that I plan on doing someday just to see if I can survive it, really! (#11M)

3. It was an accomplishment, I'd say, to make it down the slope without falling, and make it down the slope at whatever speeds. It's like I was able to master it. Of course the wind, the rush of speed, it was exciting. (#15M)

4. There are certain non-verbal signals that are passed that you both know that there's a communication, though unspoken. I was always what they called 'street-wise' because we lived in neighborhoods that were changing and were often dangerous, so I had to learn to take care of myself on the street. So you learn how to avoid the alleyways and the dark doorways and you learn how to read the signals of the city and the various people that you encounter. (#26F)

5. I was always interested in whatever birds were going through and eventually found a pair of binoculars, you know, and my folks got me a bird book, and I'd go out and see what birds I could identify. And I had a tree book which I still have. I'd go out and identify the different kinds of oaks so I would know them by heart. (#29M)

6. I seem to like places that are remote, that require a little extra effort to get to. I seem to gravitate towards places that are a little off the beaten path. Probably I like a little bit of the challenge of getting there, knowing that it's a kind of special place in that regard, that not everyone's going to see. I seem to be drawn towards isolated, wilderness-type places -- relatively undeveloped places seem to be my favorite places. (#24M)

Exploring and Doing

Participants described special places which offer the excitement of exploring new territory. They remembered the importance, especially when young, of having an opportunity to create things with their own hands. Being active and on one's own, away from adult supervision, was implicit in many of the comments illustrating this subtheme. It is interesting to note that all of the significant statements presented within the subtheme of exploring and doing were produced by male participants.

1. And again I explored. There was a stream that ran under the bridge behind our house. I followed it all the way down the mountain, 2500 feet, and I found a cave. ... Then I found a hiking trail. (#20M)

2. I guess you could say exploring is my high. I don't smoke or do drugs or anything. (#20M)

3. When I was a child I would be up and gone even at a young age...but they wouldn't worry about me. I'd hike to the top of the mountain, take an old barely discernible trail that cut off the road and went up to the top of the mountain, and I'd be up and gone before anybody else would even be up. So it's always been a place, even from a very early age, a place where I could go and feel secure. (#24M)

4. The woodland is where I started exploring when I was a kid, because these little pastures of woods were formidable to somebody who had never gone through them before. (#29M)

5. They had quite a bit of land so they would take down trees and produce most of their own lumber for consumption there on the farm. And after one winter when they had a lot of logs they put through, they had all the slabs or the pieces of wood that were of no value left. So during one period of time when we were up there, I can remember getting a big old box of nails which we found somewhere and a couple of hammers, and we worked so hard for two weeks taking all this slab lumber and building some sort of a little fort out of it on the ground. And it was a lot of fun to build it. (#28M)

6. It's also very important to me to be able to produce things with my own efforts, and to use my hands to make things either work or to grow them. I don't do as much of that as I would like to do, but there's a real deep satisfaction with being able to make something. (#30M)

7. On the farm, there were always things to make, there were always things to fix. We always had machinery that was breaking down that you'd take apart and fix and put back together. Certainly from a mechanical standpoint you understood how things worked, like engines and so on, simply because you had the experience of taking them apart and putting them back together again. (#29M)

Diversity and Unpredictability

This subtheme represents a need for surprise in one's life, and special places often provide this sense of unpredictability. A similar aspect is the need for diversity. If familiarity and permanence provide security, as discussed earlier, then diversity affords growth and opportunity. One can measure one's ability to survive, as well as comprehend one's own home turf, whether a city or an entire culture, through exposure to diversity. The following quotes illustrate a variety of aspects to the subtheme of Diversity and Unpredictability.

1. The preacher asked us to write down some things, and what I put was that it does us a lot of good to come over to their culture [the Bahamas] and to learn their ways and to compare it to ours. It does us a whole lot of good because they do things in their own time. But I really can't see too many ways that it would benefit them from coming over here to see our side. There's a lot of differences, but I think most of the benefits would be ours, which I hate to say that. (#18F)

2. You do a lot of things that you don't do in the city. I mean, I've put a metal roof on a barn one summer. I've taken lots of hikes all over the area. Just have done a lot of different things that I would never have a chance to do anywhere else. (#28M)

3. And so I realized that that's where I wanted to go was to the few tall buildings that there were and a few fountains or concrete steps or places where you might see street people or you might encounter something unpredictable. (#26F)

4. That's something that I, at times, seek out is to be in an outdoor situation where I'm not in control and have to be pretty much prepared to take whatever comes. These are places that get you out of town, get you away from the usual comfortable existence. And there are times when I consciously, actively seek that out. (#24M)

5. It's just so different. I mean everything you did was just so completely different than what you did when you're in a city. You had no chance to do any of those things. And the experiences, every summer you went there, there was another experience that happened to you that was just unlike the previous summers and something that will never happen, never happened again. It was just one thing after another. (#28M)

6. I was extremely lucky in the neighborhoods we lived, the high school where I went was small and extremely diverse. I mean we had children whose parents spoke -- and a lot of the kids did too -- Italian, Puerto Rican, Irish, Mexican. I mean, they were from everywhere -- black, white and everything in between, Korean, Japanese. (#26F)

Imagination, Goals, Opportunities

As both adults and children, environments which inspire one to be imaginative and creative are special places. Sometimes the creativity concerns one's own identity in that moving to a new place allows one an opportunity to re-create oneself anew. Another aspect of this subtheme is the challenge of setting and attaining goals since certain environments push us harder than others. Those places which encouraged one to reach goals were described as highly desirable locations by participants in this study. Quotes which illustrate this fourth subtheme are as follows.

> 1. I'd stay at my grandmother's the whole weekend. She had these big metal tubes, with legs on them -- they're on the outside of the trailer. And then there's like a little spout that came up out of this one side of it, and I would just act like it was a horse. You know, I'd ride across the country as far as I was concerned when I was little. (#14F)
>
> 2. I was alone a lot so I had a lot of imagination. And looking back, I think that's the time when I really didn't need anybody. I needed to be self-sufficient and to be confident in myself. Being alone with my imagination, I learned how to be self-sufficient and I was happy with it. It was more the experience I learned from being there. (#20M)
>
> 3. And since nobody here knew who I was before, then I could be who I wanted to be. ... I felt like when I got here, I could be anybody I wanted to be, and any personality characteristics that didn't seem to sit right with people in Lexington could either be redefined or adjusted. (#15M)
>
> 4. Whatever I wanted to try -- I'm not sure that as a parent that I've been able to give reign to those kinds of things that my children have wanted to do. I've been too cautious, I'm sure, most of the time -- but if I wanted to try something, it was "OK, fine" rather than "Oh, no, you can't do

that." They let me see for myself that I couldn't do that or that I could. (#30M)

5. At North Carolina, it was more of a challenge. It was more like I'd finally felt like I had gotten somewhere in my life. (#12F)

6. Every year we'd set goals, like I'd say our freshman year, I said: "Okay, I don't think I'm going to be able to start this year. So, I want to make a special team like a kickoff team." And we would meet that together and that was incredible. (#19M)

7. It's [her house] full of the possibilities of what can become. Like that bend in the river where you can't see what's there, but there's some kind of faith that it's going to be wonderful. There's this feeling of being blessed. (#27F)

Places in which one has a chance to dream "the impossible dream" were described as desirable special places. As one struggles to learn and master, to imagine and create, a place pushes one farther by presenting challenging new lessons and obstacles. Places also provide opportunities and possibilities for the future, like the woman who designed her own house, a home that now will help redefine who she is and will become.

Theme Five: Beauty and Awe

This last theme addresses the ability of a place to communicate a divine or supernatural influence, to inspire one to transcend his or her own boundaries in identifying with a oneness of the universe, and to recognize the natural beauty and majesty of a place. Some of the participants in this study became quite reflective, speaking about issues of spirituality, mystery, and awe when in a favorite setting. The places described seemed to hold a power over them that was not quite explicable on the basis of rational thought.

There were some differences between the two groups relating to this theme. While members of the younger group expressed recognition of the beauty and awe inspired by a place, they seldom, if ever, discussed spirituality. Older participants, however, frequently imbued the beauty of their special places with a spiritual symbolism, such that experiences of awe were associated with thoughts about the existence of a universal spirit and a sense of wholeness about the world. To some degree, perceptions of beauty, awe, spirituality, and transcendence are experiences which are difficult to verbalize since they seem to arise from the very depths of our existence. For present purposes, responses expressing this theme will be organized in terms of two subthemes, Beauty and Awe.

Beauty

Participants perceived beauty in a variety of places, from mountain settings to shopping malls. Regardless of specific location, participants expressed their appreciation of beauty -- whether natural or humanly created -- in strikingly similar terms. It appears that words can be somewhat limited in expressing the glorious and breathtaking quality of the perception of beauty. The following quotes illustrate this subtheme of Beauty.

> 1. It's such a pretty place because all the streets are cobblestone and there were trees. All the buildings of the quad are like these huge, colonial stone buildings. The quad has a lot of trees, and it's a beautiful place. ... We had sorority houses at Chapel Hill. They are so pretty, with spiral staircases and the columns and chandeliers. They're gorgeous. (#12F)

2. It's the prettiest mall I've ever been into. Their architecture -- it's just beautiful how they're making them. They're really big, too. It's got gazebos and statues and art work, and it's just beautiful to go. (#17F)

3. I do like my town. I really love Franklin, and just the place -- the actual street that I live on -- is beautiful. (#19M)

4. It's a beautiful spot. It's one of my favorite places in the park [Smokies] -- a beautiful spot, about a five and a half mile hike to get up there. (#24M)

5. There's a lot of beautiful architecture and a lot of beauty. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Museum of Science and Industry, and The Art Institute, and on and on. Just really wonderful. (#26F)

6. There's a beautiful beautiful quality to lying in the bed with the view -- you see the birds flying across here and the clouds. (#27F)

7. For me it has a very special meaning that I can see only so far along the river; and I do know that the river continues around that bend, but I can't see it. And I always find that that has a very important spiritual connotation to me about having something beyond which I can see so far, and I can't see around the bend, but that in my mind it's associated with something very beautiful. (#27F)

Awe

The last quote presented above suggests that perceptions of beauty and spirituality merge at some point, with one theme inspiring and enriching the other. Within the subtheme of Awe, for example, some of the following quotes suggest experiences of beauty as well as of more spiritual meanings. The younger adults, however, did not discuss spiritual themes specifically, although some did use the word "awe." For many of the older adults, perceptions of beauty as well as an appreciation of some of the harsher

realities of life inspired thoughts of a sacred unity and meaning to the world. What appears similar for both groups is the ability of a special place to inspire a sense of magnificence, grandeur, and splendor.

1. I got to spend a couple weeks in Colorado just skiing. I was very impressed with the beauty there too, the views that you could get on the mountains. I remember it being very impressive and breathtaking. I guess overwhelming appreciation for the beauty, aside from the rush of skiing. It was awe in a different sense; it was just really beautiful. (#15M)

2. It's like the whole world was open, like my inside was just opened out and there was the world. ... There I felt, I guess, like an eagle would -- free! My imagination could take me everywhere. It was just, I felt, inwardly open. (#20M)

3. Especially like at night under the open sky and all those million extra stars that you can see when you're at a place like that, and you're away from the city lights and it's nice and clear. That's pretty awesome, awe-inspiring, I'll say. (#24M)

4. We as a congregation really understood the city to be a sacred place. And we understood that the life of the city was sacred -- that all of the various dramas and stories of the city were stories of resurrection, were stories of hope, were stories of suffering and redemption. (#26F)

5. It was during this process of feeling a lot of this insecurity and uncertainty that we went ahead and just built the house that we wanted to, without really knowing how things were going to turn out. So there's a lot of spiritual events and faith that led into our coming here and designing it and building it, so that it has a really deep meaning to us. (#27F)

6. I feel like the spiritual qualities of our life were really underdeveloped in Los Angeles. And I feel that there was a spiritual quality that brought us to this place, but that in the process of living here that there's been a real evolution

> of our spiritual development because of living here. (#27F)
>
> 7. I've carried that sense with me during my whole lifetime. I think that's my sense of a great spirit, for lack of a better word for it. So I have a spiritual connection to the land, and as I grew up I got interested in astronomy, and I built my own 6-inch telescope that I still have down in the basement from a set of plans that I got from Popular Mechanics. ... I sense in the vastness of our own solar system and the galaxy, and then knowing about this huge space between us and the next galaxy we can see that's 100 million light years away, and so on -- I sense that it is inhabited by spirit, in some way or another. ... And that has always been much stronger with me than anything I would have gotten from formal religious training. (#29M)

Places can inspire one to travel beyond the mundane and to imagine another way of being. Special places enable one to appreciate the beauty and mystery of the universe. In this study, participants shared thoughts and impressions that they had not shared with others before. The young man (#20M) who described his exploration of Umbrella Rock on Lookout Mountain, Tennessee, sharing his experience of freedom as he stood out on the ledge, identifying with how an eagle must feel, appeared truly amazed that anyone would be interested in these experiences. He said: "This is the first time I've talked about a lot of that. I just kept it inside, didn't think it was really important to anybody else."

The Role of Time

While five themes captured the meanings expressed by participants concerning their experiences of special places, it is important to note that time was interwoven with each of the themes. Within the theme of Identity, for example,

time was intimately involved with place, especially as people remembered childhood homes. One older man (#28M) stated: "That [the farm] to me is not only that place, but that time was as special to me as any have ever been." Recalling a favorite place, or actually visiting a place from the past, was described as automatically bringing forth the time period one had spent there, together with all of its associated memories. There is also a temporal progression in the yearning for a place, owning and caring for a place, losing a place, and then grieving a place. One woman noted that it took her a couple of years to appreciate how deeply she missed Chicago.

Time is also related to the theme of Connection. Participants spoke frequently about loved ones from the past, including family members now deceased. Either this loss bonded them to a place, or sad memories prevented a return to the place they once shared with the loved one. Experiencing the loss of a place itself can be like a death. A man who was thwarted in his desire to buy his grandfather's farm never wanted to return there, his favorite place from childhood.

Experiences of time also were strongly interwoven with the theme of Security. The need for roots became apparent in the attraction many participants reported having for a place that had been in the family for generations. Many of the cabins in the woods and the family farms which participants discussed had been built by their grandfathers. Owning something across years and decades connects one deeply to the land and to one's family. The place takes on

historical significance and establishes traditions and rituals within an extended family.

The theme of Possibilities also was associated with time. A goal begins with an idea, and it takes time to incubate before it can become reality. A number of participants imagined a future self, and being in a new place gave rise to an ability to visualize oneself expressing different traits and characteristics, thereby altering one's sense of "who am I?" In a new place, there was a sense that the person could create him or herself anew.

Within the last theme of Beauty and Awe, there frequently was reported a sense of timelessness. Some participants appreciated so intensely the visual beauty of a special place that they seemed to experience a sense of freedom in escaping the constraints of time and of space. Feeling open to the world and identifying with the essence of life, their thoughts incorporated questions about a divine presence or a spirit of oneness and wholeness in the universe. Instead of being absorbed with everyday concerns, these participants' thoughts were enthralled with concepts such as time and space as measured in light-years between galaxies, the freedom of what it is like to be an eagle, and the meaningful dramas of redemption and hope within a city -- thoughts that transported them from both their physical bodies and from time as measured by the clock. As one participant (#30M) stated about John Oliver's cabin nestled within Cade's Cove, a place that time seems to have forgotten:

> There's just a serenity there, the feeling that when you go there, you don't have to worry about what else is going on, you're just sort of removed from the rest of the world. In my mind's eye, I can be John Oliver and I can be looking across fields, either pastures or fields of plowed ground, and see this as an unspoiled natural place. (#30M)

Interrelationships Among Themes

To this point, each of the themes has been described as distinct from one another, although even a casual reading of the various quotes indicates that all five themes are interconnected. In other words, even though one theme may be figural within any particular statement, there are also echoes and intimations of some or all of the remaining themes. Like the facets of a fine diamond, each theme enlightens and influences the other four, thereby adding depth and power to the experience of a special place.

In an attempt to capture this pattern of interconnections among themes, the results of the present study may be cast in the form of a geometric figure -- a pentagon -- with each corner defined by a single theme (see Figure 1 on the following page). This mode of presentation is meant to illustrate that although participants may have been emphasizing a single theme at a particular time, this description always occurred in the context of its relationship to all other themes. Although the complete figure, or any given subcollection or pattern of themes, may be figural in a specific description, it is the total pattern, encompassing all five themes and their interrelationships, which captures the human experience of place.

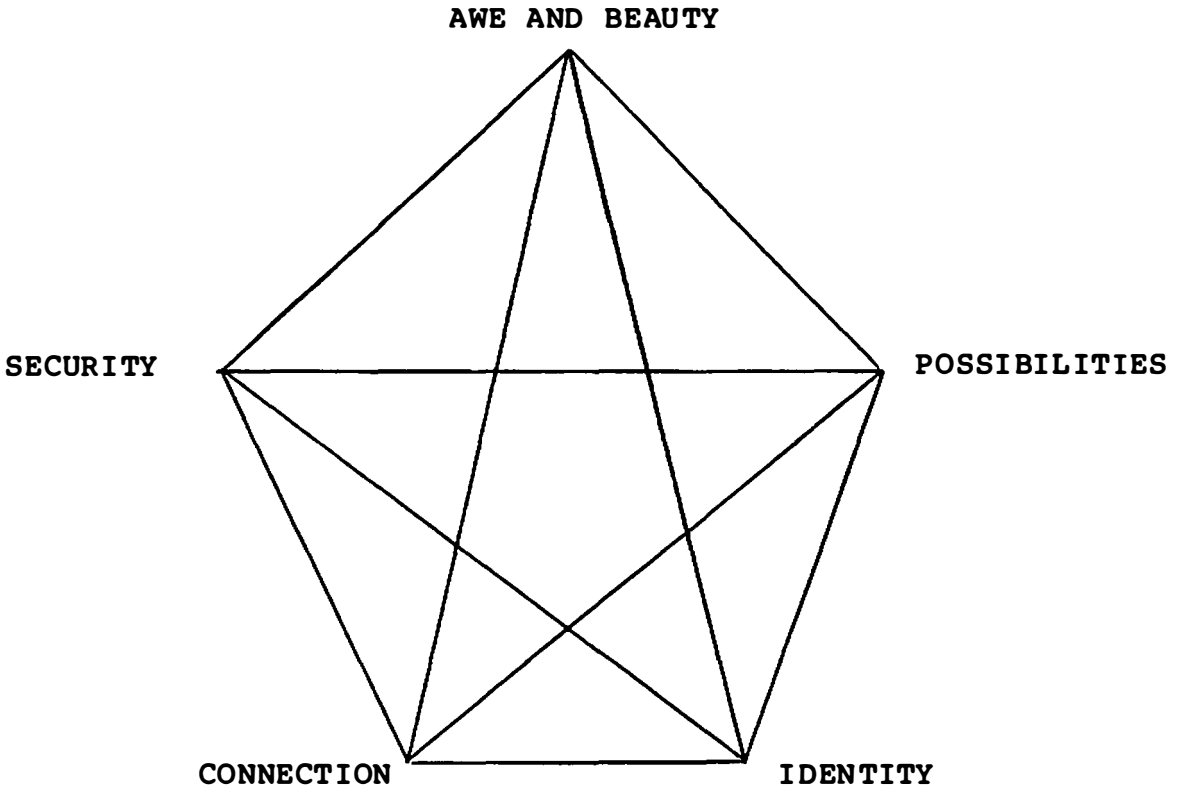

FIGURE 1

Pattern of Thematic Meanings

Describing the Experience of Special Places

The position of themes in Figure 1 is not arbitrary but is meant to present patterns of thematic meanings provided by participants' descriptions. For example, the placement of the themes of Security and Connection on the pentagon is intended to suggest a closer relationship to one another than that between Awe and Connection, although connections between the latter two themes also were expressed. An examination of various thematic pairs reveals significant meanings; in the present case, e.g., Awe and Connection, that of "caring for the earth" as illustrated by the man who serves as a volunteer in the Adopt-A-Trail Program and helps to care for hiking trails in the Smoky Mountains.

Other thematic pairs, likewise, suggest important meanings. The combination of Identity and Possibilities aptly describes the young man who stated: "I could be anybody I wanted to be [in that new place]." In a similar way, the pairing of Security and Possibilities produces a sense of safety in the act of exploration and is illustrated by the man who stated that as a young child he enjoyed getting up early in order to investigate the top of the mountain, feeling safe and secure all the while. Another example involves the pairing of Identity and Connection, nicely illustrated by the woman who realized after leaving Chicago how much she missed it and how differently she felt about her own identity when she was away from Chicago. Although for purposes of discussing each of the five specific themes, participants' quotes were placed under the umbrella of one particular theme, it seems clear that they also could be described by linking pairs of themes.

Finally, higher order pairings also are meaningful. For example, the triad of the themes of Security, Connection, and Identity was found to characterize the meaning of home for many participants, illustrated by the young man who stated about his home: "It's because my parents are very accepting. I feel like I can come back there and they will accept me regardless of what I do. I feel comfortable, I feel safe." The themes of safety (Security), relationship with his parents (Connection), and feeling that he can be himself (Identity) all are expressed within this participant's description of his home.

In a similar way, the triad of Connection, Awe/Beauty, and Possibilities combines to describe the woman in touch with the sacredness of the city, a place in which she feels a part of something larger than herself (Connection), and where she is aware of a spiritual dimension (Awe/Beauty) in the struggles of the poor and homeless who continue to hope for a better future (Possibilities).

Another example is presented by the triad of Connection, Identity, and Possibilities, which describes the woman who together with her husband designed their own home (Connection), a new place for which they searched for just the right location and in which they expect to change and grow (Possibilities), learning new habits and values which will fortify both themselves and their marriage (Identity).

While other possible interconnected meanings could be described, what is important to keep in mind about Figure 1 is that the total pattern of meaning -- the Gestalt -- describes the thematic meanings offered by participants when

discussing their experiences of special places. Although some of the themes, or pairs of themes, may not have been emphasized in some portions of the dialogue, all five themes invariably were implied in the complete text of the interview. The human experience of place is a multifaceted Gestalt that emerges most dramatically in conjunction with an awareness of time. To describe a special place is to be concerned with issues of Identity, Connection, Security, Possibilities, Beauty and Awe as these are interwoven with the human experience of time.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The experience of special places involves several different aspects of awareness, what are called themes in phenomenological research. Within the present study, participants described their special places in terms of five different themes: (1) being secure and safe, (2) feeling connected to other people and to the world as a whole, (3) having a strong sense of identity, (4) experiencing a sense of possibilities and opportunities, and (5) being aware of the beauty and having a sense of awe about these special places. Although certain places stimulated some of the five themes more strongly than others, and for many of the individuals certain themes were more salient than others, the experience of place seems best understood in terms of a combination of all five themes. The geometric figure of a pentagon, including the five inner-connecting links between every pair of themes (see Figure 1 in Chapter III) is meant to convey the overall structure of meanings defining the human experience of special places.

It is important to note that all of the places discussed by these twenty participants were perceived positively, with little if any ambivalence. This might be explained by the fact that the researcher asked the participants to talk about 'special' places. If they had been asked about places in a more neutrally-worded question, examples of negative relationships with places might have

been described. Another explanation is that the majority of these places were recalled either from memory or the individual visited them presently only for brief time periods. Everyday places, especially those in which one perceives having little control, may be perceived with some degree of ambivalence, if not outright negativity. For example, an older woman described a vacation home which she had despised as a child, but which she now views very positively. She takes delight in realizing that four generations of her family have experienced this retreat. She believes that her change in attitude is due to the freedom which she has as an adult to choose when to go to this place, whereas as a child she felt powerless -- it was her parents who decided when to visit the lake house. It is interesting to note that of the 61 responses, only five responses (including three homes, one room, and one city) involve places with which a participant has an 'everyday relationship'.

Security

The theme of Security is the most complex and multi-faceted of the five themes, as it contains five different subthemes. The essence of the Security theme, however, is that places can provide protection and a feeling of safety -- physical, emotional, and existential -- and they do this in a number of ways.

The first subtheme of Security concerns a sense of Permanence and Tradition. Participants expressed a strong feeling of security in knowing that, for example, a place had been in the family over many generations. Participants

also described being secure in their love of a place that they trusted would never disappear, such as a large city. Knowing that a place pre-dated and would outlive one's own life span allowed for a basic sense of trust, which would seem to relate to Erikson's (1980) first stage of psychosocial development. Although Erikson's theory refers to relationships with other people, results from this research could be interpreted so as to broaden the theory to include non-human aspects of one's environment; e.g., special places also can provide a sense of trust.

An enduring sense of trust applied to a place rather than to a person is one way of describing the idea of rootedness. If a person feels rooted and 'at home' in a place, he or she trusts that place so strongly that it may seem to disappear from consciousness. One feels so much a part of the place that remaining in the place is never considered; however, neither is leaving. A person can take the place 'for granted' in the best sense of that phrase -- never asking "why am I here?" or "is there a better place for me?" The geographer, Tuan (1980), states that objectively, rootedness is "long habitation at one locality" whereas subjectively, it is "a state of being, made possible by an incuriosity toward the world at large and an insensitivity toward the flow of time" (p. 4). This lack of curiosity combined with a disregard for time produces a type of merger between the person and the place; the place itself embodies time for the person. For example, Wallace Stegner (1989) states that having lived in more than twenty places

in his lifetime, he envies people with attics. What is an attic if not a spatial embodiment of time?

Participants in this study who spoke about places that gave them a sense of permanence and tradition described them in a 'timeless' way, as in the following phrases: "it always felt like home," "we never missed a single summer of going there," "as far back as I can remember, we went to the farm," "it's going to be there for the rest of our lives," "he [his father] would go there every weekend of his life," "it's just tradition," and "every 4th of July we go there." For these participants, going to their special place was automatic -- there was no decision to be made, no curiosity about exploring a different place. Many generations of family members used and enjoyed their special places, making history and establishing traditions within the walls of such cherished places.

In contrast, when time is external to the person-place relationship, an individual is aware of other times and of other places. The young man who longed to leave Kentucky and attend The University of Tennessee was very aware of place. Not being rooted in his native land, he was curious about other places and seemed to be waiting for his future to happen in another place. The woman who designed her own house searched for the best location for it, knowing since childhood that Los Angeles never would provide roots for her. These participants described situations which exemplify what Tuan has described; if one is aware of place, one is not rooted. Likewise, if one is rooted, there is no specific sense of place. These terms are not merely

different from each other; they are opposites (Tuan, 1980).

The second subtheme of Security, Familiarity and Safety, was described by many participants. Typically, smaller and more enclosed places afforded this aspect of security -- a cozy cabin in the woods, familiar streets within a large city, the farm where one grew up, a family church from childhood. Within the walls or boundaries of these smaller places, participants experienced a sense of safety and protection. In Chapter I, the developmental theorist, Bowlby, was quoted as stating that "the function of attachment behaviour is protection from predators" (1969, p. 224). Results of this research suggest that one important aspect which makes a place desirable for human beings is its ability to provide shelter from dangerous aspects of the environment. For some participants, isolation provided this sense of safety, exemplified by the man who lived in the mountain cabin in the woods. For him, isolation from others afforded security. Familiarity was the key to security for other participants, and it was important in at least two ways. First, knowing how to negotiate a complex social environment, such as Chicago, gave one participant a feeling of security. She felt less safe in Knoxville because so little was familiar; her knowledge of a large city, learned on the streets of Chicago during her childhood, felt almost useless. Another type of familiarity was visual. A participant described how she immediately was attracted to the terrain of Tennessee and felt puzzled over this 'love-at-first-sight' reaction. Upon reflecting on her feelings, she realized that the flora of

East Tennessee reminded her of England where she had lived earlier in her life.

Another participant described internalizing his special place, the family farm, in a manner aptly described by the object relations theorists, most notably Guntrip (1961/1964). Guntrip theorized that given a safe and protected environment, the most problematic aspects of one's psyche will begin to express themselves. In this study, the participant shared his observation that whenever anything was particularly troubling to him in his life, he would work out these issues in his dreams, always in the context of the family farm. This familiar and safe place seemed to provide enough security for him that he could delve deeply into traumatic issues. For him, the farm became "a safe haven."

Tranquility and Relaxation define a third aspect to the theme of Security. This subtheme was mentioned by almost all participants in that certain places were sought to reduce the tension and stress of daily living. One participant described finding her special place in childhood, initially having gone there with her parents. During her teenage years, she drove to this natural setting, a cove in Virginia, whenever life became too complex and emotional for her. The place helped her achieve total physical relaxation; in fact, she described the sensation of having all of her bodily functions shut down except for breathing whenever she was in this location. Another participant stated that his special place allowed him to feel as if he were in a state of meditation, even if he

visited the location for only a few minutes. The places described by these participants were so identified with this feeling of relaxation and equanimity that when they again felt emotionally upset or anxious, they decided to return to their special places.

It seems intriguing to observe how closely the subtheme of Tranquility and Relaxation reflects a major emphasis in classical psychoanalytic theory on tension-reduction. Freud believed that the organizing concept of mental life was to avoid pain and to obtain pleasure through the temporary release of energy contained within the instinctual impulses. Responses from many participants validated that a sense of relaxation and tranquility is, indeed, one important motivation in seeking a special place, although, apparently not the only one.

The fourth subtheme, Solitude, was sought by participants in many ways -- some described finding it within a mass of people, such as at a mall or in a large city; others sought it within a quiet church or in a secluded spot within a natural setting such as a beach. Within psychoanalytic theory, the importance of solitude has not been emphasized. In fact, the opposite is closer to the truth: the hallmark of psychological health typically has been seen as the ability to develop mature relationships with others. One exception is Winnicott (1965), who wrote a paper entitled The Capacity to be Alone in which he states the following: "The capacity to be alone is a highly sophisticated phenomenon and has many contributory factors. It is closely related to emotional maturity" (p. 36). For

many participants in this study, solitude was a time for inner communication, escape from the demands of others, and for refueling one's energy. Special places which ensured a time of solitude were sought, remembered, and frequently visited by them.

Closely related to a desire for solitude is the final aspect of the Security theme, Escape. The positive side of this subtheme would be freedom; however, since all responses were worded in the negative direction, the label of Escape better describes the experiences of the participants. This subtheme was included within the dimension of Security to reflect the way in which feeling secure also may be defined as feeling free from worry, concern, or apprehension. Some of the constraints mentioned by participants were time pressures, demands from one's career, serious illness in the family, and unwelcome interruptions from such modern inventions as the telephone and television. It seems intriguing that many participants reported seeking open places with vistas or large areas such as a long unobstructed beach in their attempts to escape from life's constraints. In this way, the openness of the landscape allowed them to share in this sense of freedom.

The notion of open and closed, or 'inside' and 'outside' is discussed by many authors such as Bachelard (1958/1969), Relph (1976), Tuan (1977), and Norberg-Schulz (Relph, 1976), and all agree that one essential feature of place is a feeling of being enclosed or 'inside'. Results from this research, however, seem to indicate that either a feeling of being enclosed (experiencing a sense of an

'inside') or a perception of openness (having a sense of being 'outside') is consistent with the definition of a special place. The crucial factor determining which type of place is sought appears to be one's state of mind -- fear, danger, and coldness tend to trigger a desire for an enclosed space; frustration, constraint, and stress lead to a search for an open space where one feels a sense of release and relief.

Tuan (1977) has written: "Place is security, space is freedom: we are attached to the one and long for the other" (p. 3). This human dilemma seems to explain the need for both enclosed places and open spaces, and respondents in this study indicated that both needs -- security and freedom -- may be satisfied by place, although the places they sought were as different as the needs they experienced. Likewise, the following thought has been attributed to Frank Lloyd Wright: "There are two things that modern architecture can give to a house: a sense of space and a sense of shelter" (1993, videotape). Humans need both.

Possibilities

The second general theme, Possibilities, in many ways stands in contrast to the theme of Security just discussed. The theme of Possibilities includes the idea that places give us new opportunities, help us expand our repertoire of skills and knowledge, push and challenge us in unexpected directions, and provide an array of choices that offer ideas for the future. The theme of Possibilities implies a need for stimulation from the environment. Unlike Security, which pertains more to mood and the stress level of one's

physical body, Possibilities predominantly is concerned with mental and physical activity as well as with more creative and imaginative forces.

Among the psychoanalytic theories explored in a review of the literature, this theme is quite consistent with ego psychology which emphasizes adaptation to external reality as well as aspects of human functioning that are independent of instinctual drives. Hartmann (1939/1958) has stated that "the observation underlying the concept 'adaptation' is that living organisms patently 'fit' into their environment. Thus, adaptation is primarily a reciprocal relationship between the organism and its environment" (p. 24). This sense of reciprocity emerged in some of the participants' descriptions of special places. The first example concerns the respondent who described how his grandparents' farm continually provided him with a variety of challenging tasks and responsibilities. As he grew older, more complex and challenging tasks became available to him. He and the farm seemed to be involved in a reciprocal relationship, an 'adaptive fit' to use Hartmann's concept, in that as he changed the farm seemed to adapt to his growing and developing needs and abilities.

A second participant described a sense of reciprocity she felt when in her special place, a room within her house, in the following way: "Just knowing that as I change, I can create this space the way I want to, and it will somehow come along with me through whatever changes I have [made]." This room and the participant were involved in an adaptive,

reciprocal relationship which nurtured and mirrored the participant, changing along with her.

A third participant discussed the relationship between herself and Chicago. As she grew, so did the city, expanding along with her maturity level. When she was very young, "there was my block and I couldn't go off the block." As she grew older, "then it was four or five blocks and we'd have to let my mom know approximately where we were going to be." Then as an adult, she had access to the entire city of Chicago as well as the suburbs. Whatever amount of stimulation and limits she needed at a given time, she found the city could provide for her. This participant described how in the grieving and growing that she has done since leaving Chicago, she gradually has learned to explore both within herself as well as outside herself. Initially, she needed to be in her home environment of Chicago in order to do this; when she left Chicago, this freedom of mental and physical movement suddenly was curtailed and her sense of herself was hindered. Now, however, she is able to move freely in either direction in a smooth, flowing manner without being in Chicago but by remembering her special city.

Although normally we think of terms such as 'fit' and 'resonance' as descriptive of a mother-child relationship, it seems apparent from discussions with these participants that people-place relationships also are capable of providing resonance and fit. Participants described being able to accept mental and emotional challenges at various

stages of life, and to develop more optimally because of having experienced places which were beneficial to them.

The possibility of learning and being mentally stimulated and challenged by a special place was meaningful to one middle-aged male participant. Living on a large Midwestern farm as a child aroused his curiosity and led to numerous scientific questions -- the age of the rocks in the gravel pits on his farm, the quality of the coal in the fields, the species of birds flying across the sky, the types of trees on the property, the names of the stars and galaxies in the night sky. He described finding encyclopedias, binoculars, books, and building a telescope in order to answer these questions. It appeared that the place functioned as a natural classroom for this participant and he became his own teacher. This was the essence of a positive reciprocal relationship between a person and a place that emerged in the data. When there is a good fit between person and place, the person is able to nurture and provide for him or herself; in this context, the person flourishes.

The theme of Possibilities reveals an apparent aspect of human life that cannot be explained by classical psychoanalytic theory with its emphasis on stimulation reduction. Present results indicate that participants sought stimulation, expansion, exploration, challenge, diversity, and unpredictability in their lives. This study thus would seem to validate Schachtel (1959/1984) who disagreed with Freud's idea that the dominant aim of human existence was to seek relief from instinctual tension and to

re-establish equilibrium within one's psyche. Instead, Schachtel proposed that in addition to an 'embeddedness-affect' which seeks peaceful quiescence (similar to Freud's theory), human beings also possess an 'activity-affect' which is goal-directed and environment-seeking:

> The function of the activity-affects is to establish an effective emotional link between the separate organism and the environment, so that the organism will be able to engage in those activities which will satisfy his needs, develop his capacities, and further his life. (Schachtel, 1959/1984, p. 31)

Schachtel further noted that human beings "wish to encounter the world and to develop and realize, in this encounter, the human capacities" (p. 151). Many participants in this study described situations that relate to Schachtel's ideas, such that environments which provided the possibility of physical activity, mental challenge, full engagement with the world, emotional satisfaction, the learning of new information and the development of innovative skills and abilities were described as desirable special places. Beyond seeking pleasure and equilibrium, human beings desire to be aroused and to increase the excitement and energy in their lives, and they seek places which afford them these opportunities.

Connection

The theme of Connection, the third of the five general themes comprising the overall experience of special places, speaks to the complex and intense need of human beings to be connected to someone and/or something external to themselves. In their desire for intimacy, humans seek connection with other people to counteract loneliness and

isolation. In addition, being a part of a large place or institution can provide feelings of connection to something immortal. Family members (including loved ones who are still living and others who are now deceased), friends, towns, cities, natural settings, football fields, farms, and houses: all provided a strong sense of connection for one or more of the participants in this study.

Of all the psychoanalytic theories of significance to psychology, object relations theory seems most adequately equipped to understand the theme of Connection. This theory emphasizes one's contemporary and remembered relationships with significant others, focusing on learned patterns of early relationships which are applied, often inappropriately, to subsequent relationships with others. Within any person's unique history, some relationships will be beneficial while others may be destructive; whatever is learned becomes the way in which the world is perceived, both intra- and inter-personally.

Object relations theory includes a concept, 'internalization of objects', which assumes that memories and representations of external objects are incorporated within the person and have an influence over his or her behavior and/or ways of thinking. One major limitation to object relations theory, however, is that most theorists intend the term 'object' to refer solely to other people. Data from this study suggest that the concept of 'object' should be expanded since it is possible to form strong and intimate connections with non-human places. A few participants described this process of internalizing

characteristics of their special places; for example, one participant stated: "I think that I probably see myself as more self-reliant and more capable for having done some of the things that I've done to get to these places or to live at the cabin or to get to Spence Field." As a result of visiting these places, he was changed; he integrated many of the qualities he perceived in this place -- the ruggedness and challenge of the natural environment was internalized and this participant's identity and image of himself was transformed in a positive way.

A question to explore within the theme of Connection is whether people use places as substitutes for people. In other words, is it more natural to form strong bonds with humans, and could it be considered unhealthy -- say, a defense against intimacy -- to experience a place as meaningful and special? Is this type of relationship a substitution for a relationship with a person? Results from this study indicate that the answers to these questions are mixed. Some participants shared situations in which they felt intimately connected with places as well as with people. For example, the woman (#26F) who dearly loves the city of Chicago and felt homesick when she left, works in a career in which she is personally involved with others, taking care of those who frequently are suffering and in turmoil. Another participant devoted her life to her family and yet was very attached to her special place, the long beaches on which she could walk for miles at a time. If anything, it appears that some individuals have maximized

their relationships with other humans as well as with the non-human environment.

In other cases, however, participants seemed to have received less than adequate nurturing from a former environment, including the people with whom they had been involved in that particular place, and looked to a special place to help restore the perceived deprivation. In a new environment, where the 'fit' was good, participants described being able to continue growing and changing. An example is the young man who felt stuck in his hometown in Kentucky; he was at odds with his peers and described just waiting to relocate to Tennessee where he knew he could grow and change. Another participant described feeling limited by family and friends, expected to conform and exist in a mold, with limited options for experimentation and growth. Her new home allowed for the development of different personal characteristics and ways of approaching the world.

For yet another group of participants, the two concepts -- people and place -- were somewhat fused. Attachment to place symbolized being attached to the people of one's past. The place was the only way of feeling connected to a person now lost. The best example of this was the young woman who had lost her brother in a motorcycle accident. While visiting her childhood home she felt momentarily connected with him and had mental access to many playful interactions from childhood. She stated that she feared she would lose the good memories unless she sat in the driveway of her former home; in this place, the precious memories returned. For this group of participants, it appeared that the special

place functioned as a repository for memories of relationships that have not been internalized. We could speculate why certain relationships are not internalized, since this would seem to argue against one of the basic tenets of object relations theory. However, the point is that places assist people in remembering loved ones who have been lost to the passage of time. There is no more access except by being in the place where the memories were initiated.

What this research suggests is that people are flexible and capable of establishing nurturing and healthy relationships with places in spite of somewhat disappointing relationships with people in the past. If one's original environment does not provide a good fit, one can replace it with a different environment. If one's family or friends cannot provide adequate resources, it is possible that one can find a place that will be more responsive to one's needs. In this way, a relationship with a place can be a substitute for a person, and the themes which emerged in this study become characteristics of healthy and nurturing relationships in general. Many of the words and themes used in describing personal relationships with places -- such as Security, Connection, Possibilities -- also could describe relationships with people. Since the language of relationships typically is learned in this culture within the context of relationships with other people, the language of interpersonal relationships may be thought of as providing useful metaphors for other types of relationships including those involving physical objects, places and pets.

The important point is that people seek connection with objects that exist outside of oneself, and such objects can be both human and/or non-human. Relationships with both the human and the non-human world can offer positive rewards. As Searles (1960), one of the few writers found in the psychoanalytic literature who expressed an appreciation for place, stated: "Whether in surroundings that are largely natural or largely man-made, I have found that moments of deeply felt kinship with one's nonhuman environment are to be counted among those moments when one has drunk deepest of the whole of life's meaning" (p. x).

Results of this study suggest that the concept of the term 'object' within the psychoanalytic literature should be extended to include place. Furthermore, the human ability to relate to and feel connected with a special place is evidence that the meaning of the ego function of Object Relations (Bellak, Hurvich, & Gediman, 1973) should be extended to embrace non-human objects, such as place. Another possibility is that a thirteenth ego function, given a title such as Attachment to Place, should be recognized and added to the list of ego functions.

Identity

Identity, another of the five major themes which emerged from this study, includes the ability of places to help answer the question "who am I?" as well as to influence who I become, the values I endorse, and the career I choose. One of the ways in which this process was described as occurring was in terms of having a sense of possession about a place. A place in which I live, whether I own it or not,

becomes "my place" and thereby helps to define who I am. A home can be a symbol of one's self regardless of whether we are aware of this or not. As a result, when a special place such as a home is lost -- either in moving away from it or if it is changed, such as in urban renewal or as the result of a national disaster or war -- a person may feel that he or she has lost an important aspect of his or her identity. Places also help hold time constant since we can revisit places from childhood and seemingly re-enter that former time period and much that was associated with it.

The origin and strengthening of identity is a major feature of Self Psychology, especially as presented by Kohut (1984). He has written that humans need relatedness with other people all throughout their lives, but especially in childhood, in order to support and strengthen the development of a sense of 'self'. The concept of 'selfobjects' was proposed by Kohut as a way of explaining the need for an external support system; in particular, humans need both 'mirroring' and 'idealized' selfobjects. Kohut, however, limits selfobjects to other human beings, overlooking the possibility that the nonhuman environment -- whether natural or humanly created -- can perform similar functions. In Chapter I, the question was asked: "Can a <u>place</u> satisfy the requirements of a selfobject, providing a space of calmness, nurturance, resonance, and strengthening one's sense of self?" Results from this study would seem to indicate that the answer to this question is "yes."

The geographer, Tuan, has stated: "Geography mirrors man" (1971, p. 181). It is intriguing to note that the word

'mirrors' is one frequently used in the language of Self Psychology. Humans need 'mirroring' to develop a healthy self. Our homes, cities, and use of land are mirrors of who we are as individuals and they serve to reflect the collective values of our society. Familiarity and knowledge of a place is familiarity with oneself. As Tuan states: "To know the world is to know oneself" (1971, p. 181).

Participants in this study described being aware of their external environments, incorporating the idea of mirroring or the lack of mirroring, from a very early age. One woman stated that she never felt Los Angeles could nurture her; she perceived herself as an introspective person and related: "I feel that I can be most open to myself and my environment in the rural setting. I have no idea why, even as a child, I was drawn to rural places." Another woman always had felt that her identity was connected strongly with Chicago: "So much of my identity is wrapped up in growing up there, being a teenager there, and a young adult there and being very involved in the city."

The first participant described above had a strong sense of place and had been aware of her surroundings since childhood because she felt that she did not belong to, and was not rooted in, the city of Los Angeles. Her dream became one of creating a place for herself where she could feel mirrored and which would become 'home' in all its possible meanings to her. The second woman described was so much a part of Chicago that she was not really aware of the place itself until she left it. Slowly she began to realize how much she missed Chicago, until a few years later she

identified the separation from Chicago as a tremendous loss. She described feeling different when she was away from the city; her sense of self was not validated by her new city in the same manner.

Both of these examples illuminate how strongly a place is connected with one's identity; they also illustrate Tuan's (1980) point that being rooted in a place is the opposite of having a sense of place. Although the question of how a person can know at such an early age whether or not he or she fits a certain environment was not answered definitively in this study, two of the ingredients emerged in the interviews with the two participants described above.

One ingredient of fit between an individual and an environment is the stimulation level. The first participant described Los Angeles as over-stimulating whereas the second participant felt comfortable with the measured doses of stimulation she experienced in Chicago as she matured. The second ingredient seems to be a sense of expanding opportunities; the Chicago woman reported that as her spatial freedom grew so too did the number of possibilities she perceived in the city. The Los Angeles woman had to wait until she was able to create possibilities for herself in a new environment, her new home in Tennessee.

An additional aspect of the theme of Identity is that certain places fit certain stages of development. A person does not have the same needs and desires across the lifespan. For example, the woman from Los Angeles spoke about this issue in the following way:

> The person that loved London was not the middle-aged person that could love East Tennessee. When I was single and I didn't mind living in a bed-sitter and just having one room, and I didn't need a lot of comforts and wanted to be able to travel and had more of a sense of adventure than I think I probably have right now, that London was a very meaningful choice for me. But I feel now that I'm older and middle-aged, this has more to do with roots and that London had more to do with exploring the years of my twenties and being able to explore, and absolutely loving the place but feeling that I could not put roots down in England. (#27F)

As this woman expressed so clearly, she had different needs -- adventure versus rootedness -- at different stages of her adult development. One way of having these needs satisfied was to seek different environments at different life stages, each of which afforded the characteristics she wished to integrate into her style of living at that particular time.

Beauty and Awe

The fifth and final general meaning of special places concerns the theme of Beauty and Awe. Participants described experiences of being appreciative of the beauty and magnificence of a place and of having a sense of oneness and unity with their favorite places. This experience of beauty and majesty suggested to some of the participants allied experiences of spirituality and awe. As one participant noted:

> I want to show you something that is probably the most meaningful thing to me, which is the bend in the river where you can't see. You can look out over the river. This is where the sun sets, just over that ridge over there. It's very beautiful, almost every time that there's a sunny day, there's just an outstandingly beautiful sunset right here over the river. And for me it has a

> very special meaning that I can see only so far along the river; and I do know that the river continues around that bend, but I can't see it. And I always find that that has a very important spiritual connotation to me about having something beyond which I can see so far and I can't see around the bend, but that in my mind it's associated with something very beautiful. (#27F)

This participant was extremely articulate in describing the physical features of the setting -- the sunset, the bend, the river which was invisible to her on the other side -- associated with the spiritual meaning of her special place for her. In addition, the desire to transcend one's physical and temporal limitations can be accomplished, for a moment at least, by allowing oneself to experience and appreciate the splendor of a special place.

Qualities of place frequently described by participants were "perfect" and "unspoiled." Participant #13F, in describing Crockett's Cove in Virginia, stated: "Here it is pristine; I mean it's perfect. It hasn't been polluted by the environment. It's just a perfect place." Cumberland Island, Georgia was described by another participant (#24M) in the following way: "It's a relatively undeveloped place on the Atlantic Ocean there. So you get a real kind of unspoiled ocean experience when you go to Cumberland." And participant #30M, in talking about Cade's Cove, said: "In my mind's eye, I can be John Oliver and I can be looking across fields, either pastures or fields of plowed ground, and see this as an unspoiled natural place." These participants all have identified a feature of their special environments that is an important aspect of their sense of Awe and Beauty -- the recognition of a place being unspoiled

and, thus, perfect. Places which have not been polluted by people or spoiled by industry are becoming rare indeed, and the appreciation of such natural beauty appears to be one of the qualities capable of inspiring spiritual meaning and feelings of transcendence.

The responses presented above correspond with Eliade's (1957/1961) concepts of 'sacred space' and 'a perfect place'. He describes a perfect place as a miniature world, complete within itself, capable of providing a person with feelings of bliss and immortality. Meeker (1981) has expressed similar thoughts:

> Wisdom and wilderness are awesome words. They inspire feelings of profound respect, a little fear, and wonder when we recall how little we know about them. It is something like talking about God or joy or love; most people would rather not. These subjects are what engineers like to call "soft" topics -- the kind that cannot be handily measured or readily applied in solving problems. But wisdom and wilderness are also two of the most essential resources for human beings -- both necessary to our survival and welfare. (p. 15)

The relationship between spirituality and wilderness is also echoed by Wallace Stegner (1989), who writes especially of landscapes in the American West:

> The reminder and reassurance that it is still there is good for our spiritual health, even if we never once in ten years set foot in it. It is good for us when we are young because of the incomparable sanity it can bring briefly, as vacation and rest, into our insane lives. It is important to us when we are old simply because it is there -- important, that is, simply as idea. ... We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures -- a part of the 'geography of hope'. (1989, tape recording)

Each of the themes which emerged in this research describes one aspect of the experience of place. A special place can restore a person to a peaceful and quiescent state of existence, mitigating the uncomfortable aspects of too much internal stress or excitement, a major theme of Classical Psychoanalytic theory. A place can provide possibilities, opportunities, and an adaptive environment, the emphasis of Ego Psychology. A special place nurtures and grants a sense of connection to others, salient in Object Relations theory. A place also helps one develop aspects of identity and self knowledge, emphasized by Self Psychology. Each of the major psychoanalytic theories addresses one aspect of human functioning, and it is a combination of all of them, just as it is a combination of all five themes which emerged in this study, which describes and expresses the needs, motivations, and psychological functioning of human beings.

It is very intriguing to note that the themes which emerged in the present study of place appear to describe the same basic experiences of human life which are described within the various psychoanalytic theories. This suggests that these various theories complement or complete one another rather than compete with each other. While any one of the theories may be more astute in addressing a particular dilemma or aspect of human functioning, it is the collection of all theories -- remaining distinct and discrete from one another, not collapsed into one eclectic theory -- which is necessary in order to understand and describe the behavior of human beings.

Of the five themes which emerged in the interviews with the participants, it appears that the theme of Beauty and Awe, with its potential for helping a person experience spiritual meaning in life, has not adequately been addressed within the discipline of psychology. Rather, it is philosophers such as Eliade (1957/1961) and Bachelard (1958/1969), or more modern inter-disciplinary writers such as Swan (1990, 1992), Meeker (1981), Cowan (1989), and Stegner (1989) who have written about the concept of sacred space, the symbolic aspects of one's dwelling, and the connection between God, beauty and nature. The manner in which an environment, a special place, can help human beings transcend their emotional and physical limitations has rarely, if at all, been addressed within the psychological literature.

Categories of Special Places

There were four categories of special places discussed in the review of the literature in Chapter I -- homes, cities, nature, and 'the road'. In this section, these four types of special places will be discussed once again, taking into consideration results of the present study. Any major differences within the participants' responses will help in providing additional material for discussion and speculation.

Homes

Homes were found to provide a sense of security, safety and connection to loved ones. They symbolized and helped to establish one's identity and were perceived as places of freedom ("I just start cleaning or whatever comes along that

I decide I want to do, at my pace, by myself, that day"). The feeling of being at-home also provided roots and a sense of transcending time ("I can always go back"). As discussed in Chapter III, the category of Homes was the most frequent response in participants' discussions of special places.

One nuance that emerged in the participants' descriptions of Home was the time involved in establishing a sense of feeling at-home in some place. For most participants, home was a place embedded in time. Years, if not decades, of family life contributed to the rich sense of place identified as 'home'. There was the sense that 'it always was, and always will be' -- if anything, the place was perceived as existing beyond the individual's lifespan. For other participants, however, there was a sense of immediacy when a particular place became 'home' in a moment. Examples from two participants who expressed this second perception of a place will be presented:

> The thing that always struck me was that it was like that John Denver song; there's a line in one of his songs that says "coming home to a place that you've never been before." I'd never been there [Monterey, TN.] before but it was home, and to this day it's as close to a hometown as I've ever had. I mean, there's just something about it. (#30M)

> Strangely enough, even though I grew up in Los Angeles, there was no way that that was a place to put down roots. That was a place to earn money. It was very good in terms of careers, career opportunities, and I did my Ph.D. there and went to UCLA, but it never felt like home. And I lived there most of my life and I've only been here for two and a half years, and this feels like home. This is my home and that never had that feeling of being a home to me. (#27F)

Participants are telling us that time is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for feeling 'at-home' in some place. The first individual had moved multiple times in his life and suddenly experienced a good fit between himself and Monterey, Tennessee. He felt at-home for the first time. It was unexpected, and yet the feeling was so strong that it overcame his previous pattern of feeling disconnected from each new place. The second participant had lived her entire life in Los Angeles but had never felt at-home there for as long as she could remember. After a relatively short period of time in her new chosen location, she felt like she had found her home at last.

Wallace Stegner (1989) has written about the relationship between time and the feeling of being at-home in a place. On his tape recording entitled "A Sense of Place" he states:

> Salt Lake [City] is not my hometown because my dead are buried there, or because I lived certain years of my youth and the first years of my marriage there, or because my son was born there. Duration alone does not do it. ... I was not living in Cambridge at the pace and with the complete uncritical participation that swept me along in Salt Lake. To recall anything about Cambridge is an effort, almost an act of will, though time may teach me that I took more from there, too, than I thought I did. But Salt Lake City revisited either in fact or in imagination drowns me in acute recognitions. ... There is only this solid sense of having had or having been or having lived something real and good and satisfying, and the knowledge that having had or been or lived these things, I can never lose them again. Home is what you can take away with you. (1989, tape 3)

This definition of home seems a reassuring one for anyone who has found it necessary to leave a place that he

or she loves. It also is an indicator of how places become a part of one's identity -- we do take favorite places along with us, not just the photographs or objects collected there. The warmth and security of a home, the collective identity of a hometown all become a part of oneself, as the woman from Chicago (#26F) told us repeatedly in her comments. As we become a part -- and a participant -- within the identity of a new place, so too does a place change and leave its imprint upon us. We learn new ways-of-being and meet new challenges and goals in each environment. Different demands are made upon us; an environment pushes and pulls and we act and react upon it. Each is changed because of the other. The title of the song I Left My Heart in San Francisco could just as well be: San Francisco Left Its Heart in Me.

The City

Another of the four special types of places discussed in Chapter I was the city. Cities provide extension, a sense of opportunities and possibilities, a 'reaching out' beyond one's own personal world to include people different from oneself. One participant discussed how Chicago taught her that superficial differences were really quite unimportant between people. She spoke of the 'sacredness' of the city and believed that she would have had different values without the influence of the city on her early development. Another participant noted the challenge of New York City, and his attempts to 'fit in' so as to be oblivious to anyone who might intend harm upon others. A third participant remarked on how easy it was to live in

Orlando: "Everything just really flowed well." London provided exploration and adventure for a fourth participant, a woman who lived there in her early adult years.

Cities have their own identities, are perceived as uniquely distinct from one another, and afford different possibilities to their inhabitants. Lynch (1960) writes that a city is "perceived only in the course of long spans of time" -- there is always more than the senses can absorb. Diversity, challenge, ease, exploration and adventure are some of the characteristics discovered in the cities in which these participants lived or visited.

Nature

An ability to explore was also a major characteristic of the third special type of place, nature. Many of the male participants spoke of the need for adventure and exploration which natural settings afforded them, both when young and as adults. Kaplan and Kaplan (1989) researched the relationship between people and natural environments, finding that one of the basic human needs is exploration of a complex environment which offers more than can be perceived immediately. Using this definition, cities and natural settings are similar since both offer "complexity" (diverse elements are contained within a scene) and "mystery" (the scene promises more than what can be perceived readily). Mountains are a good example of a natural setting providing mystery -- behind every ridge is yet another scene unknown to the viewer. Like the description of the mysterious bend in the river for one of the participants in this study, the imagination is

stimulated when more is promised by a setting than can be delivered immediately.

Nature also provided calmness and escape from other people, daily responsibilities, and the world. In addition, many participants reported attempting to escape from their own anxiety, reaching a peaceful meditative state beyond thought and physical awareness in their special places. In the woods or in the mountains, participants could relax or soar like an eagle, thereby re-establishing a sense of balance and equilibrium for themselves. Some participants reported that they felt nature was the only place where they could find God and/or a meaningful spirituality in their lives.

The Road

The Road, or traveling between places, was the fourth special place reviewed in Chapter I. In a sense, a road is the antithesis of place, symbolizing freedom, open spaces and representing a desire to explore places other than where one is presently. Salter (1979) has described four motivations which attract people to life on the road, each reflecting one or more of the themes that emerged from this study. The first, the road as flight, is similar to an escape from constraints which many participants in this study discussed, a subtheme categorized within the Security theme. Salter states that "the road functions as therapy for many" in response to failure or a period of transition.

Second, the road as a source of a new self-image was reflected in this study by participants who described depending upon a novel place to help create a new self,

freeing them from undesirable personal characteristics of the past and allowing them to have a chance to re-make oneself in a new location. These opportunities afforded by the road reflect a combination of the themes of Identity and Possibilities emerging from this study.

Salter's third motivator for the road is education in that the challenge of experiencing the uncertainty of new environments leads to knowledge. In this study, one participant's special place was described as a classroom, providing mental stimulation and arousing a scientifically gifted child to become his own teacher. This aspect of special places was categorized within the theme of Possibilities.

The road as a source of environmental options is the fourth motivation to travel, including curiosity and the desire to explore other cities and regions, and to understand differences in new physical and cultural landscapes. This desire for adventure and exploration likewise was included within the Possibilities theme in this study. Although participants in the present study did not mention 'the road' when asked to describe special places, their descriptions of places they loved included the various reasons presented by Salter in attempting to explain the fascination people have for the road.

Clinical Implications

The therapeutic aspect of special places seems apparent, both in this study and in much of the research reviewed in Chapter I. Searles (1960) in particular enumerated various ways in which the nonhuman environment

promotes well-being throughout the early developmental years. The following section will present ideas concerning the clinical implications of this study along with ideas for further research.

The five themes which emerged in this study of special places describe five qualities-of-being important for psychological and emotional health. By understanding each theme, including the various subthemes contained within them, it is possible also to understand something about the opposite of each of these themes, and of less than optimal psychological functioning. The antithesis of Identity would be a lack of individuality, or a sense of restriction and conformity in living. Without a sense of Connection in one's life, there is isolation and loneliness, feelings of separateness. The opposite of Security would be fear and anxiety, lack of rootedness and danger. Without sufficient Possibilities, there is boredom, routine, and stagnation. Imagination would be useless in such a life. A world lacking in Beauty and Awe is colorless and profane.

Understanding each of these themes as characteristics of human living also may provide insight into some of the more typical clinical diagnoses and problems of living commonly experienced today. The lack of a sense of identity is one of the markers for Borderline Personality Disorder. Having too few connections with others is an indicator for Schizoid Personality Disorder. Too little security, tranquility and relaxation results in anxiety, while having too few possibilities could be conceptualized as a recipe for depression. A world without beauty, in which the person

never experiences a sense of awe, would seem to produce both depression and an over-reliance on material goods since little value is placed on spirituality.

A dependency upon any one or two of these themes at the expense of others also could produce psychological problems. For example, if it so happens that a person solely depends upon people for fulfillment of his or her connection needs, it is predictable that a psychological crisis could occur if loved ones suddenly were not available. In fact, it happens frequently that the ending of a relationship with a loved one is a catalyst that results in the person seeking psychotherapy. And yet, results from this study indicate that the need for connection to something outside of oneself can be satisfied in many ways other than through association with other human beings. Places such as one's home, a city, beaches, the woods, and mountains provided satisfying and fulfilling relationships for many of the participants. This is not to suggest that places alone can provide a person with a sense of connection and intimacy, but that in certain circumstances a special place can offer companionship and connection, mitigating some of the overwhelming grief and loss experienced through relationships with other human beings.

Anxiety, stress, and psychosomatic complaints are other problems which frequently motivate people to seek therapy. Participants in this study were open and honest in discussing the ways in which they utilized a special place to reduce stress and in helping themselves learn to relax. There is no way to avoid anxiety and stress so long as one

is alive. What is important to realize is that special places can help in coping with psychological, physical and emotional problems. Comprehending the relationship between each of these five basic themes and psychological health would seem to add to one's clinical ability in understanding human problems and suffering.

It is important to recognize that some people who seek psychotherapy may not experience any of these five themes as a part of their daily existence. For many, their homes and neighborhoods are not safe, and their sense of psychological turmoil may be largely in response to violence and crime that are constant realities of their world. In such situations, working directly in the community in order to address social issues seems to be a necessary first step before individual psychotherapy can begin. Helping individuals find a temporary escape, such as a city park that is safe, or an art museum that is awe-inspiring, may provide a brief respite from the terror and danger of their daily lives.

Incorporating questions about place into a diagnostic interview or therapy session is another way in which this research can be used clinically. If a home is a symbol of the self, then a less intrusive way of gaining valuable information about a patient is to discuss his or her homes and favorite environments. If one's relationships with people are not particularly good, a patient might find it much easier to discuss relationships with places, including those having either positive or negative associations. One might even conceptualize an Axis VI on which to evaluate a

patient based on a place or an environment in which one remembers functioning either particularly well or unusually poorly.

In addition, this research can raise our awareness in regard to the sense of loss and the grieving process necessary in order to recover from such natural disasters as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, fires, etc. If an individual suffers the loss of a home or a special place, then he or she also has lost a part of the self. Although tangible goods will be necessary such as food, clothing and shelter, it also will be necessary for the victims of these disasters to grieve their losses. It would appear that clinical psychology, along with the Red Cross, could have a major role to play at the time of crises such as these.

An area for future research on the relationship between people and places would be to understand differences among people in their ability to connect with special places. There are some people who seem oblivious to their surroundings, choosing a specific locale for business and monetary reasons but rarely becoming acquainted with the place itself. Such individuals might live in a place for years but never visit the local museums or other regional places of interest. In contrast, there were participants in this study who felt such strong attachment for places that they grieved the loss for years. One young man reflected on how he walked around the imaginary, formerly-placed furniture whenever he visited the home where he used to live. Years later, he still had respect for the integrity of this place and imagined it as it had been in the past.

Other participants described how they did not feel comfortable in their original environments but were able to discover or create an environment which did fit their needs and in which they could continue growing. Why are some people able to do this and others cannot? Understanding the differences among people in how they attach to places, integrating special places into their psychological and social worlds and utilizing places in satisfying their needs is an area which needs further research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CRP # 3989 B

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE

FORM B

Application for Review of Research Involving Human Subjects

I. IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECT

Project Director (PD) and Co-Director (Co-PD):

Project Director: Rosemary K. Peacher, M.A.

Faculty Advisor: Leonard Handler, Ph.D.

Address and Phone number of PD and Co-PD:

Rosemary K. Peacher, M.A.
Department of Psychology
310-C Austin Peay Building
Knoxville, TN. 37996-0900
(615) 974-6846

Leonard Handler, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
310-C Austin Peay Building
Knoxville, TN. 37996-0900
(615) 974-6846

Title of Project: The Phenomenology of the Experience of Connectedness to Place

Department: Psychology

Starting Date: Upon CRP approval

Estimated Completion Date: July 1995

II. OBJECTIVES OF PROJECT

Depth psychology in general, and object relations theory in particular, has been almost exclusively concerned with exploring a person's relationships with other people. Memories, thoughts, feelings, and experiences with places have been largely ignored. And yet, these presumably play a

major role in shaping one's identity, providing comfort, and maintaining a sense of continuity in one's existence. This study will explore that relationship.

A specific interest of the researcher is how one's relationship with places may be used to facilitate the challenge of transitions throughout the life span. It is for this reason that people of two different age groups will be chosen for the study.

III. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECTS

The subjects for this study will possibly include both men and women between 18 and 25 years of age, and between 40 and 65 years of age. A maximum of ten to twelve subjects per group is anticipated. Subjects will be volunteers who are obtained in various ways: a notification about the research may be placed on the bulletin boards in a number of buildings on the UT campus; the possibility of participating in this research may be announced in classrooms, with the full permission of the instructor; a notice of the research may be placed in The Knoxville News-Sentinel, The Daily Beacon, and the Press Enterprise. If subjects are still needed, announcements of the research may be made through church and hobby groups. Extra credit will be given to undergraduate psychology majors.

IV. METHODS OR PROCEDURES

Each participant will be individually interviewed by the project director. In the interview, the participant will be asked to discuss and describe situations and experiences when they felt especially connected to a place. Subsequent questions or comments by the researcher will be for the purpose of clarifying information already provided by the subject, and to elicit more detail of those experiences shared.

The interviews are expected to be one to two hours in length. All interviews will be audio-recorded in order to ensure accuracy of the data. The interviews will be transcribed verbatim by the project director or a legitimate research associate. All identifying information will be removed from the transcripts before they are reviewed by qualified researchers who are trained in phenomenological analysis. These researchers include the interviewer and participants in Dr. Howard Pollio's and Dr. Leonard Handler's research groups. The researchers will read the interviews of the subjects, labeling themes that emerge from the data. A structural description of the experience of

being connected to a place will be identified, and data from the two groups will be compared and contrasted in order to determine if the experiences are different among the participants in the two age groups.

In addition, a pilot study will be conducted in order to refine the researcher's skills at using the phenomenological method of data collection. Undergraduates who participate will be at least 18 years of age and will be drawn from introductory psychology classes. They may receive extra credit for participation in the study. Graduate students who participate will receive no compensation. A maximum of five practice interviews is anticipated.

V. SPECIFIC RISKS AND PROTECTION MEASURES

This research presents no significant risks for the participants. In fact, it is anticipated that the questions asked of the subjects will, in general, elicit pleasant experiences. The interviews will be conducted with sensitivity to the personal and confidential nature of the information shared.

Informed consent according to the University of Tennessee Human Subjects Committee guidelines will be obtained and the purposes of the study will be discussed with each participant prior to data collection. Participants will be informed that they may choose to discontinue the study at any time.

The project director will have received sufficient training to refine her technical skills in phenomenological methods of data collection before conducting interviews with the participants. The project director is a clinical psychology doctoral student and a licensed psychological examiner who has more than ten years of experience as a psychotherapist. However, should the interview result in any psychological distress, the participants will be informed that they may contact the project director. If any participants feel that they need additional psychological help, they will be assisted in finding an appropriate and available therapist. Dr. Leonard Handler, the faculty advisor, is a licensed clinical psychologist. He will be available for discussion and consultation throughout the study.

The anonymity of the participants to all but the project director will be ensured by using a numerical code on the interview forms and tapes. Any identifying information contained within the interviews will be removed

or changed at the time of transcription of the audiotapes so as to preserve confidentiality. The tapes will be erased after they have been transcribed. Precautions will be taken to secure the identified information about the participants. Only the project director and research associates will have access to the transcripts. Audio-recordings and transcriptions will be stored in secure computers and locked file cabinets located in Dr. Handler's office, 310-C Austin Peay Building.

VI. BENEFITS VS. RISKS

While this study presents very minimal psychological risk to the participants, the results will provide three foreseeable benefits:

1. This study will broaden object relations theory so as to include connections and attachments to places within the environment, rather than an exclusive focus on relationships with persons. Results from this study, as well as further research in this area, may lead to the conclusion that the process of establishing these relationships comprises an independent ego function, apart from the ego function labeled object relations.

2. Results from this study will provide a better understanding of the process by which people assimilate the environment into their lives and their identities. These relationships are presumably quite stable temporally. They can provide continuity during role transitions and when significant human relationships are lost.

3. It is an assumption of the researcher that the ability to establish relationships with places differs among people. By identifying and learning more about this ability, it may be possible for clinical psychologists and others in the counseling field to help individuals who are presently unable to assimilate the environment in a beneficial way.

The results of this study will be made available to the participants upon their request.

VII. METHOD OF OBTAINING "INFORMED CONSENT" FROM SUBJECTS

The attached document entitled "Informed Consent Form" will be discussed with each subject and signed before any data are collected. Any questions regarding their participation in the study will be answered.

VIII. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATORS

Ms. Rosemary Peacher is a fourth year clinical psychology doctoral student at the University of Tennessee. She has a masters degree in psychology and is a licensed psychological examiner. She has eleven years of experience in providing direct services to patients in the field of clinical psychology.

Dr. Leonard Handler, a professor of Psychology at the University of Tennessee, is a licensed clinical psychologist. He has over thirty years of experience in the teaching-research-psychotherapy fields.

IX. ADEQUACY OF FACILITIES TO SUPPORT RESEARCH

Research will be conducted in Austin Peay Building, within the second floor rooms where psychotherapy sessions are conducted. In the event that one of these rooms is not available, the research will take place in an office on the fourth floor of the same building. Care will be taken to ensure that the conversation between the researcher and participant is private.

X. RESPONSIBILITY OF PROJECT DIRECTOR

The project director subscribes to the principles stated in "The Belmont Report" and standards of professional ethics in all research, development, and related activities involving human subjects under the auspices of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. It is the responsibility of the project director to ensure the following:

a. Approval will be obtained from the University Committee prior to instituting any change in the research project.

b. Development of any unexpected risks will be reported to the University Committee.

c. A status report (Form D) will be submitted at 12-month intervals or as requested, attesting to the current status of the project.

d. Signed consent statements will be kept for the duration of the project and for at least three years thereafter.

Project Director: Rosemary K. Peacher, M.A.

_____ _____
Signature Date

Faculty Advisor: Leonard Handler, Ph.D.

_____ _____
Signature Date

XI. DEPARTMENT REVIEW

COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The application described above has been subjected to departmental review and has been approved.

Department Head:

Warren Jones, Ph.D.

_____ _____
Signature Date

Chair, Departmental Review Committee:

Richard A. Saudargas, Ph.D.

_____ _____
Signature Date

Faculty Advisor:

Leonard Handler, Ph.D.

_____ _____
Signature Date

APPENDIX B

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

Volunteers between the ages of 18 and 25, and between 40 and 65 years are needed in order to study your relationship with places which are very special to you. You are free to define this concept in whatever way is most meaningful to you. The study will involve an interview which will take approximately 90 minutes and will be tape recorded. Undergraduate psychology majors will receive extra credit for participating in this study.

If you are interested, please leave your name and telephone number below, or call me at 974-6846. If you have any questions about the study, I will be happy to answer them for you.

Rosemary K. Peacher

Name_____Telephone_____

Name_____Telephone_____

Name_____Telephone_____

Name_____Telephone_____

Name_____Telephone_____

Name_____Telephone_____

Name_____Telephone_____

Name_____Telephone_____

Name_____Telephone_____

Name_____Telephone_____

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a research project designed to explore your relationship with places which are very special to you. You are free to define this concept in whatever way is most meaningful to you. This project will involve an interview which will be conducted on an individual basis with you. The interview is expected to require one to two hours of your time. In order to ensure accuracy, all interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Identifying information will be changed in the transcripts to ensure confidentiality. Names will be deleted from the interview data and a numerical identification code will be assigned. Transcripts will be reviewed only by the investigator or qualified researchers who are trained in phenomenological analysis. Audio-recordings will be erased after they have been transcribed. Precautions will be taken to secure identified information so that only the project director and legitimate research associates will have access to it. Audio-recordings and transcripts will be stored in secure computers and locked file cabinets.

Participation in this study is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. The results of this study will be made available to you, if you so choose. If a problem arises, you may contact Rosemary Peacher, the project director, at 974-6846, or through:

The UT Department of Psychology
310-C Austin Peay Building
Knoxville, TN. 37996-0900

Your signature indicates that you have read and that you understand the above information, that you have discussed this study with the project director, that you have decided to participate based on the information provided, and that a copy of this form has been given to you.

_____

Signature of Participant Date

_____

Signature of Project Director Date

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANT #24M

Situation 1: A cabin in the woods

His grandfather built this cabin, which the participant lived in for about 15 years as an adult and which he has visited since he was one or two years old. It's "a nice, quiet, getaway-type-of-place" with a view of the Tennessee Valley. It's a place "I couldn't wait to get back to when the day's work was done...back to the peace and the quiet and the solitude." He feels secure in this "safe little space" and enjoys being with his dogs and cats on the mountaintop. As a child, he enjoyed exploring without fear of worrying his parents. In the winter, the cabin is a "bubble of warmth...a haven" which contrasts with the snowy coldness outside. He is proud of the "low tech" lifestyle at the cabin (wood heat, no running water), feeling it represents a simpler era from the past. Living at the cabin is remembered as a unique time in his life where he had the opportunity to learn, explore, and rest.

Situation 2: Spence Field in the Smokies

This special place is on top of a mountain on the Appalachian Trail in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. He has hiked to Spence Field for over twenty years, and describes it as a beautiful and rare spot, accessible only by a five-and-one-half mile uphill hike. For one summer he was a volunteer in the Adopt-A-Trail Program in order to help maintain the trail, and he felt quite "proprietary" and protective...thinking of it as "my place." Sometimes he sits for hours in the tall thick grass, picking blueberries, admiring the rhododendron, and feels "overwhelmed at the specialness of it." When there, he feels peaceful and calm, happy, joyful, and awestruck when under the stars in the open sky at night. Since a variety of experiences are possible, he never knows what to expect. Spence Field offers a simple kind of existence in a remote wilderness area, isolated and undeveloped, "off the beaten path." He feels more capable, self-reliant, and stronger within himself when he is there since it requires "a little extra effort to get to." He also feels closer to the planet and respectful of its resources after being in this natural setting.

Situation 3: Cumberland Island, Georgia

He camped in this protected wilderness area for four days during winter. It is a quiet, beautiful, "unspoiled ocean experience" with very little development. Conditions are unpredictable and he needed to be prepared for anything. He especially enjoyed the unique aspects of this location, where he saw porpoises, wild horses, ruins of mansions, oak groves with palmetto groves underneath, and a deserted beach.

Summary of themes across situations:

All three places are beautiful, quiet, wilderness settings where one can enjoy the ruggedness of nature, far from 'civilization' and the crowds, stress, and routine of city life. There is a sense of adventure where one cannot predict future conditions, and must depend upon oneself in order to survive the challenges presented by the outdoors. All three places allow one to interact directly with nature on a large scale, where one can be awed by the ocean, mountains, stars, blue skies, and the diversity of plant and animal life. In these three environments, one can become a part of something larger than oneself.

APPENDIX E

September 20, 1994

Dear Participant,

As you may remember, I interviewed you last fall on the topic of places that are special to you. This is my dissertation topic, and I am now in the process of doing the thematic analysis of each of the interviews. I have read carefully the transcript of the interview we did together, and have attempted to summarize the meaning of each special place that you discussed with me. At this time, I would like to get some feedback from you to see if you think that these impressions are accurate. Please feel free to make any changes in this summary. After you have read the summary, please return it to me so that I can incorporate your corrections into my analysis.

I am now living in Chicago, doing my clinical psychology internship at The University of Chicago. My new address is at the bottom of this letter. I hope that you are doing well and enjoying the fall semester at UT. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you so much for sharing your experiences and your time with me.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Peacher

APPENDIX F

Special Places Reported by Participants

THE YOUNG ADULT GROUP

11M:

1. A residential area named Whispering Winds
2. New York City
3. The University of Tennessee campus

12F:

1. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
2. Duke University
3. The farm in Tennessee where she lived until age 12

13F:

1. Crockett's Cove, near Bristol, VA.
2. The back stairwell of her friend's apartment
3. The attic of her friends' apartment
4. Her grandmother's house
5. Tyson Park, a city park in Knoxville

14F:

1. Where she was raised in Indiana
2. Her grandmother's trailer
3. The graveyard where her brother is buried

15M:

1. The University of Tennessee campus
2. Skiing in the Colorado Rockies

16M:

1. His high school football field
2. His grandparents' home in Kentucky

17F:

1. Her hometown church
2. A lake near her home
3. West Town Mall in Knoxville
4. The house where she was raised in North Carolina
5. The University of Tennessee campus

18F:

1. The Bahamas where she attended a church mission trip
2. Her bedroom which she decorated herself

19M:

1. His family home
2. Brentwood Academy, his high school
3. A house on Kentucky Lake

20M:

1. Where he lived as a child in Biloxi, Mississippi
2. A waterfalls and hiking area near Columbia, TN.
3. Umbrella Rock on Lookout Mountain, TN.
4. The family farm

THE OLDER ADULT GROUP

21F:

1. The farm in Kentucky where she was raised
2. The place in Ohio where she raised her children

22F:

1. The lake house in Knoxville where she was raised
2. The church she attended when she was a child
3. The University of Tennessee where she is employed

23F:

1. Any expansive beach without obstacles
2. Her current home in Knoxville

24M:

1. A cabin in the woods where he lived for 15 years
2. Spence Field in the Smoky Mountains
3. The wilderness area of Cumberland Island, GA.

25F:

1. Where she lived until age 8 in Knoxville
2. The Tennessee Theater in Knoxville
3. The UT Arboretum, near Oak Ridge

26F:

1. Chicago
2. The outdoors

27F:

1. The house which she and her architect husband designed
2. Her special room within her home
3. London, England

28M:

1. His grandfather's dairy farm in New York
2. Orlando, Florida
3. Knoxville, TN.

29M:

1. The farm where he was raised in Indiana
2. The house where he lived as an adult in Oak Ridge
3. His current home in Knoxville

30M:

1. His grandparents' houses (the locations changed)
2. A former residence in Monterey, TN.
3. John Oliver's cabin in Cade's Cove

APPENDIX G

SUMMARY OF MAJOR THEMES AND SUBTHEMES IN THE STUDY OF SPECIAL PLACES

I. IDENTITY

- A. Place as an Influence on One's Identity and Development
- B. Place as a Trigger for Early Memories
- C. Ownership and Possession of a Place
- D. Loss of a Place

II. CONNECTION

- A. Connection to People
- B. Connection to Something Larger than Oneself
- C. Connection to the Planet and the World

III. SECURITY

- A. Permanence and Tradition
- B. Familiarity and Safety
- C. Tranquility and Relaxation
- D. Solitude
- E. Escape

IV. POSSIBILITIES

- A. Learning and Challenge
- B. Exploring and Doing
- C. Diversity and Unpredictability
- D. Imagination, Goals, Opportunities

V. BEAUTY AND AWE

- A. Beauty
- B. Awe

VITA

Rosemary Kehoe Peacher was born in Waterloo, Iowa on April 12, 1950. She attended St. Athanasius Elementary School and Don Bosco High School, graduating in 1968. The following year she and her sister, Pat, embarked on their adventure to experience new places, living in Boulder, Colorado for two years before moving to San Francisco, California in 1971. After living and working in the city for a few years, she began her college education at City College of San Francisco and then transferred to The University of California at Berkeley. After moving to Tennessee to join her husband, she received the Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee in 1978 and a Master of Arts degree in Psychology from Austin Peay in 1980. In Clarksville, she was employed as a psychological examiner in a group private practice for nine years as well as teaching both psychology and sociology courses at Austin Peay State University. In 1989, she moved to Knoxville in order to pursue a doctorate in clinical psychology at The University of Tennessee, and returned to the Midwest in 1994 to do her clinical psychology internship at The University of Chicago Hospitals. She will receive the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in December 1995.

Rosemary has one son, York, and is presently living near Nashville, Tennessee.