# The Space and Place of Unstructured Leisure in Rural Adolescents of Southern Ontario:

## WHERE SMALL-TOWN ONTARIO TEENS HANGOUT AND WHY

by
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# Abstract

This study had two objectives: 1) to determine the space of unstructured leisure in rural adolescents through mapping and spatial analysis; and 2) to determine the place of unstructured leisure through the examination of the individually ascribed meanings and values of this behaviour. Four hundred grade IX and X high school students from the Region of Waterloo completed a questionnaire and participated in focus groups to describe both the location and meaning of their unstructured leisure (hangout) behaviour. It was found that the physical location was secondary to the recreational amenities that a given location could provide. However, several prime locations for hanging out were identified as being home/friend's house, school, downtown, the mall and the arena. These locations illustrate the importance of place. Further, it was determined that the primary factors of unstructured leisure were contact with friends and entertainment and activity value. Several secondary factors were identified by the subjects as being of importance to their hangout behaviour such as food and acceptance. Significant gender variations were revealed. The study contends that there is inherent value to the adolescent experience of unstructured leisure. These results encourage continued studies in the area of adolescent space and place.

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*"If at first an idea does not seem absurd, there is no hope for it"*
Albert Einstein

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Kingsley G. Hurlington

# Dedication

To the glory of God

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Proverbs 1:7 KJV)

May this work be considered a testament of the honour and integrity of my parents Olive and Kingsley Hurlington, my siblings (Thrifine, Alexander, Anthoy and K-on) and to my wife Priscilla.

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Chapter

1

# Introduction

*"Children today are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food and terrorize their teachers"*

Socrates, circa 400 B.C.

## 1.0 Introduction

In a work entitled *Teen Trends: a nation in motion*, Reginald Bibby and Donald Posterski (1992) provide some puissant insights into Canadian youth. They state that the top two valued goals of today's teenagers are freedom and friendship. Adolescents want and need the freedom of choice – this is a point of critical significance for the modulation from adolescence to adulthood. Additionally, adolescents require friends as a frame of reference and support in order to be able to take advantage of their freedom and become contributing members of society. From the perspective of Canadian adolescents, these two factors compose of their greatest needs. Indeed, Bibby and Posterski illustrate that there exists a similar trend among Canadian adults; not surprisingly, as freedom and friendship can be seen as the longing of all peoples.

Freedom, being of primary importance to adolescents, not only refers to decisions concerning activity. Freedom also refers to the spatial location of these activities and experiences. In effect, this suggests a dependence upon location for activity. In an effective society, there would exist physical locations wherein the expression of this freedom, in corroboration with friends, could be realized. Indeed, the ecclesiastical proverb "there is a place and time for everything" taken in tandem with the classic maxim "a place for everything and everything in its place" would appear to be of seminal relevance.

Unfortunately, there exists a seriously limited scholarly understanding of adolescent spaces and their meanings. While some knowledge exists about the importance of space and place during the earlier childhood years, similar understandings of adolescents' space and place have remained either elusive or disregarded. Such ignorance of space and place in adolescents often questions the necessity of spaces that would be dedicated to adolescents. Moreover, it fosters a quiet distrust of adolescents and inquires "why can't they be more like adults." Perhaps unconscious, nevertheless this distrust exists and is based upon rampant misunderstandings that adults exhibit concerning the younger members of society. The opening quote from Socrates could have been in yesterday's newspaper.

Canadian society does not know what it wants from its adolescents. It expresses discomfort with the flirting of the line between independent mature adult and frivolous dependent child. Indeed, Canadian society remains a significant part of the duplicity of adolescents. Can they be trusted or must they be abased? Canadian society has created an experience where adult fare is paid at age 12 and the privilege of driving a car afforded at age 16. Yet, the age of majority is 18 years old and alcohol cannot be purchased until a year later; society, thus, has forced adolescents to remain in a state of flux and confusion. Lost in their search for themselves, they are readily blamed by society for not accepting a prefabricated social-cipher map. Adolescents, who too quickly take on adult responsibility (for example, full-time work or teenaged pregnancies), are shunned. The reciprocal condition of adolescents behaving like younger children is similarly renounced. Indeed, adolescence is a time of confusion both internally and externally.

Despite the lacuna that exists in formal knowledge concerning adolescent space and place, much is known about adolescent behaviour. The underlying biological factors contributing to the experience of adolescence has been well documented. Psychologists have identified the personal and mental turbulence that many adolescents experience (Hall, 1904). Sociologists have given attention to the explicit social nature of adolescents, identifying that adolescents manifest a stronger social component then do their older or younger counterparts (Berndt and Savin-Williams, 1987). Several studies testify to the adolescents' powerful dependence upon their peers.

The nature of adolescence in North America allows for a largely unscheduled day, in which participation in many discretionary activities may be pursued. Apart from school and responsibilities at home, many adolescents are free to determine the activities in which they will participate throughout the remainder of the day. Generally, adolescents have more free time than

any other social age cohort does in North America. This free time can be dedicated to organized leisure. This form of leisure involves activities such as sports, clubs and other types of formal training such as music lessons. These activities are generally supervised or lead by adults and are viewed as being urbane and benevolent by society. Structured or organized leisure can be seen as society's steely disingenuous method for adding diligence and organization to the "non-docile" teen. This view, while somewhat cynical, is often echoed by adolescents who innately desire greater ownership over their leisure. Unstructured leisure is the manifestation of the desire for ownership of experience. Adolescents spend more time in unstructured leisure activities than any other age group in North America (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984). This time, much of which is described as "hanging out", is time that is often spent with friends doing various activities – any activities that they want – in a range of places.

While there exists little to debate on the benefits of structured leisure in adolescents, the benefits of unstructured leisure are coming to bear with greater weight. It is while engaged in these unstructured activities that adolescents can become properly socialized and gain strength of person from being with their peers. Adolescents will expound the virtues of unstructured leisure and the positive, bonding memories of this behaviour carry through to adulthood. This unfettered activity has generally been seen as the veritable spawning pool of mischief, deviance and societal dissonance. Why has this view been taken? Society sees large quantities of youth participating in free social expression in an environment where they ought not be. If there existed no wrong place then there could be no violation (see Cresswell, 1992). It is the open defiance of social norms in public space that is unacceptable to many – public space demands a certain comportment. The question of space and place is alive in public and political circles, especially as it pertains to unstructured leisure in adolescents. This question of space and place embraces a varied form depending on the environment in which an adolescent lives. The experiences of rural and urban dwellers are different and so remain the question of space and place between these locations of residence.

For those who live in the city, the country represents an amicable reprieve. Yet, while rurality might offer stronger ties to nature and family, in it exists fewer urban resources. Small-town and rural adolescents do not have the same experiences as urban adolescents. An examination of the environments in which they live, dictates that there will be differences in their experiences. Rural adolescents do not often see the utopian illusion of the rurality. Rather, these

teens find themselves in an environment that is restricted in ways that their urban compeers do not experience. For a rural adolescent, rurality can be highly restrictive.

There would appear to be a relationship between rurality and recreational amenities. Rural environments have fewer recreational amenities. Generally, there is a lack of organized leisure activities in which to participate. Further, there may even be a lack of peers with whom to associate. Without transportation, rural adolescents are forced to remain in their local environment. While time and space may exist in abundance, this does not represent the freedom desired by adolescents. There must be exposure to additional stimuli. Social interaction with adolescents of similar ages and condition can provide a significant part of that required stimulus. The lack of recreational amenities such as malls, restaurants and arcades restricts the types of locations where leisure behaviour might be found. Hence, rural adolescents, in an effort to account for reduced access to recreation amenities, cleave to the only leisure resource they may have – each other. Unstructured leisure is more popular in smaller settlements; adolescents interact with each other wherever they can in public, private and non-designated space. The formulation of bonds in these spaces may create valued places for these adolescents.

It may be intuitively apparent that there is intrinsic meaning entwined and shrouded within the location of adolescent leisure. Yet, little is known about the space and place where this time is spent. Sibley's (1995b, p. x) statement "who are places for, whom do they exclude, and how are these prohibitions maintained in practice" is of increasing interest to social scientists. This study examines the issue of rural adolescent space and place as it relates to leisure.

## 1.1 Problem statements

This study is interested in the identification of the location of physical spaces where adolescents in rural areas go to participate in unstructured leisure or to "hang out". Further, determining what makes a location ideal or valued as a place to "hangout" is of concern to this study. Locations that provide recreational amenities have been documented to be an attractive location for adolescents within urban areas to congregate and socialize (Anthony, 1985). However, rural communities often have few recreational amenities when compared to urban areas (Weber, 1976). As well, most rural adolescents do not have available transportation and are forced to enjoy their leisure in their local environment. This transportation deprivation is a

significant constraining factor to leisure participation (Jackson, 1994; McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995). Clearly, adolescents require physical space in which to participate in their activities and these spaces must have individual meaning to adolescents. These factors, in combination, form the foundation upon which the study question can be considered. Where are the spaces and places where small-town adolescents spend their unstructured leisure? Simplified, the problem statement becomes: "Where do adolescents in small-town communities with few recreational amenities "hang out"? Hence, the objectives of this study can be summarized into two points:

1. to determine the *space* of unstructured leisure in rural adolescents through mapping and spatial analyses to delineate patterns that exist within the study towns; and
2. to determine the *place* of unstructured leisure in rural adolescents by examining the meaning and value of this behaviour through standard analyses techniques.

## 1.2 Structure of report

This document is organized into chapters. A review of literature relevant to this study is presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 contains the study background, which examines the definitional conventions used through this study and provides a detailed description of the study area. This is followed by the description of the methods by which data were collected and the techniques by which these data were analyzed in Chapter 4. The two subsequent chapters (5 and 6) contain the results of the analysis; the former dedicated to the spatial results and the latter to the place-related results. Chapter 7 is the discussion of the results as they pertain to the literature. The document is completed with the conclusion in Chapter 8.

Chapter 2

# Literature Review

## 2.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the state of the literature concerning the fundamental tenets upon which this study is based. It is organized by theoretical construct such that each major area upon which the study is based is reviewed with specific focus toward the underlying themes of this study. These underlying themes are space and place, adolescence, leisure and the rural adolescent. Toward the end, the chapter examines several exemplary studies that are of particular relevance to this study.

## 2.1 Space and Place: Geographical Constructs

One of the key interests in geography is that of the spatial characteristics of phenomena (Hartshorne, 1958; Johnston, 1992). Indeed, it could be argued that spatial concepts are the unique and founding tenets upon which the discipline stands – the notorious raison d'être. Studies of phenomena from a spatial aspect – specifically examining location, patterns and relationships of these phenomena over space – have been, and continue to be, the focal research of geographers (Horton and Reynolds, 1971; Johnston, 1991).

Further, human geography finds itself not only interested in the quantitative expression of spatial phenomenon (as in the study of space) but also with the qualitative meaning of space. The experience or meaning that is conferred upon a location or a variety of locations by the individual or a group of individuals is of interest to the geographer. These areas of inquiry have traditionally been relegated to other studies of social science; however, they have become of increasing interest to the field of geography in recent decades (Johnston, Gregory and Smith, 1994).

To some degree, space and place are intertwined concepts. The relationship between these two concepts is such that they can be difficult to completely segregate. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to foster a division between these two concepts as this is often done in the literature (Johnston, 1992; Tuan, 1977).

Both space and place have been in scholarly geographic discussion for many years (Osborne, 1996). Despite being labeled qualitative and enduring a reduced emphasis during the quantitative revolution, the space and place paradigm returned to popularity in the 1970s (Bunge, 1973; Hart, 1979). While many recent studies of space and place have been phenomenological in nature (Massey, 1993; Osborne, 1996), there have been several positivistic studies of place such as Johnston's "A Question of Place" (1992) . In addition, studies of places specific to unique groups of people, for example the aged, have been undertaken (Joseph and Chalmers, 1995; Rowles, 1983, 1984). Despite this resurgence of interest in place much remains to be studied with many concepts such as places of rural adolescents remaining relatively untouched.

### 2.1.1 Space

The discussion of space in geography predates any discourse of place. Indeed, space was the basis upon which the discipline of geography was founded (Johnston, 1992). Space is primarily quantitative in nature; the distribution of phenomena within physical boundaries is the primary role of space.

Before any clear definition of space can be achieved, it is to be noted that there is a fundamental split between two forms of space. The difficulty in defining space is that it is "not a unitary concept" (Johnston et al., 1994, p. 573). Space is divided into absolute and relative space. This concept of the divisiveness of space was proposed by Blaut (1961). Absolute space was suggested to be "a distinct, physical and eminently real or empirical entity within itself" while the contrasting relative space was defined as "merely a relation between event or an aspect of events bound to time and process" (Blaut, 1961, p. 3). By these definitions, it appears that the separation between the concepts of space and place is directly apparent; space is a scaled, unrestricted geometry of a physical location. Thus, space could be seen as the opposite of place or as Entrikin suggests space and place are "polar opposite[s] ... on a continuum between particularistic and universalistic geographical viewpoints" (Entrikin, 1997, p. 265).

This suggestion of concrete empirical space inevitably faltered, giving birth to more anthropocentric definitions. This definition proved acceptable for physical geographers as it provided only a statement of location with no explanation of why that location was thus (Sack, 1974). It left human geographers struggling to understand why phenomena existed within spatial restrictions. Hence, the eventual trend was to appreciate the geometric relationship by understanding the complex human processes that underpinned them. This realization was discussed by Moss (1970) and Harvey (1973). Harvey stated his argument poignantly: "The question 'what is place?' is therefore replaced by the question 'how is it that different human practices create and make use of distinctive conceptualizations of space?" (Harvey, 1973, p. 14). The human requirement for the definition of space is what Harvey termed the "relational" view of space. Thus, the separation between space and place began to dim.

Schatzki (1991) has described yet another possible separation of space. He suggested that the division of space could be based on stronger association to human behaviour. The result of this discussion yielded social and objective space. Objective space was seen as being the ordering of objects in space (Tuan, 1977, p. 21). Of greater relevance here, was social space. This was described by Gregory in the *Dictionary of Human Geography* (Johnston et al., 1994, p. 574) as being "the opening and occupation of sites for human existence within which social practice can take place." Gregory continues by stating that the advent of social space increased the focus on the underlying social nature, and therein all but removes the separation of space and place completely.

#### 2.1.1.1 The relationship between space and place

To the causal observer, the relationship existing between space and place would appear be one of synonymy. Yet, a closer inspection of the literature shows a slight but significant difference between the two perspectives. Before any examination of the differences between space and place, it is appropriate to review their interdependencies. Returning to Tuan (1977, p. 6), he states that space and place "require each other for definition." In a stronger statement, Pred (1984, p. 279) states the relationship between space and place as "Place... always involves an appropriation and transformation of space and nature that is inseparable from the reproduction and transformation of society in time and space." Neither space nor place can exist without the other.

This difference between space and place is clearly illustrated by Rubinstein and Parmelee (1992). In a discussion about place attachment in later life, the authors show the relationship between space, place and personal identity, but go further to explain the differences between these concepts. To summarize, the meaning of place is individually discerned while the meaning of space is socially assigned. Considering the statement by Rubinstein and Parmelee, "personal identity transforms space into place," it can be seen that the abstract meaning of space can be converted by personal experience (p. 147). This is in league with researchers such as Pred (1983) and Tuan (1977). Tuan (1977) states that "'space' is more abstract than 'place'" (p. 6).

The concept of personal experience formulating the difference between space and place is described by Rowles (1983; 1984). In these works, Rowles identifies this concept as a notion of "insideness". This is further supported by Dunbar (1996) and Smith (1996), from whom Entrikin (1997, p. 265) summarizes the conversion of space into place, with place "becoming like personality, unique and particular." While space can be defined and, in fact, is defined in a universalistic way, place is relegated to the particularistic aspects of existence.

#### 2.1.1.2 The value of space

It is critical to note that the earlier suppositions of space are subverted by these social or cultural overtones and are referred to by some (Johnston et al., 1994; Smith, 1990) as "spatiality." This inclusion of social milieu at the heart of space assigns a post-modern tone to the previously socially flaccid concept of space (see Soja, 1980). It was this advent that allowed space to be included as the abstracted but valued partner of place.

The post-modern variant of space has greater value to the social scientist as it examines not only the location of phenomena but the mechanics as well. Giddens (1984, p. 368) expounds that "space is not an empty dimension along which social groupings become structured, but has to be considered in terms of its involvement in the constitution of interactions". When space is given social meaning, it allows insight into groups, societies and cultures in ways that place cannot. This is exemplified in Pellow's (1992) study of the Adabraka people of West Africa. She states that "all use [this] physical space, but at different times, in different ways, for different reasons, with differing effects" (Pellow, 1992, p. 197). The social behaviour of the community is examined spatially.

While the differences between space and place are notable, the similarities remain. A critical difference remains such that to some, for example Agnew (1993), place is of significantly greater importance. A critical similarity is that both space and place must have meaning assigned to them (Cresswell, 1992; Harvey, 1989; Moore, B. 1986). This is despite the fact that the party who performs the assignment varies.

#### 2.1.1.3 Approaches to studying space

Foucault (1986, p. 23) makes the following potent statement:

> *There are oppositions [to desanctification of space] that we regard as givens: for example, between private space and public space, between family space and social space, between cultural space and useful space, between the space of leisure and that of work. All these are still nurtured by the hidden presence of the sacred [space].*

Each of these types of space is culturally discerned and each can be studied under the ideology of space. There are far too many examples to elucidate each of these studies of space. Of particular importance to this study are the studies of public space (Berman, 1986; Valentine, 1996b), open space (Burgess, Harrison and Limb, 1988) and the space of leisure (Larson and Richards, 1989). Although this use of space is not universally accepted (see Agnew, 1993) it has become an ontological form.

### 2.1.2 Place

Place has various meanings. This multiplicity of meanings continues to pervade the equally multifaceted discipline of geography. Thus, defining place is tedious and tenuous, dependent upon which facet of geography – indeed, of social science – is embraced and underlain. As Agnew and Duncan (1989) astutely note, even in every day language, place can occupy several spheres of meaning from rank ("last place") to temporal features ("having taken place") to social aspects ("knowing one's place"). In its simplest form, Duncan in the *Dictionary of Human Geography* (Johnston et al., 1994, p. 442) defines place to be "a portion of geographical space occupied by a person or thing." This definition, though lacking any specificity, encompasses the range of definitions of place.

The development of humanistic geography in the 1970s fostered a strong relationship to the concept of place, specifically the idea of "sense of place" (see Johnston et al., 1994). Thus, along with the growth of the phenomenological thrust of geography, place developed – not at all unfettered to works such as Relph's (1976) *Place and Placelessness* and Tuan's (1977) *Space and Place*.

To the positivist geographer, place has been examined as a simple geographical construct, suffused with ideas of scale. Region occurs at a smaller scale. Place, on the other hand, is more individual and as such a larger scale. These concepts have become cornerstones of geographic inquiry (Johnston, 1992; Paasi, 1986). This renewed interest in place by geographers is not described as a desire to study geography in its earlier clearly-defined but occlusive form of regionalism (Entrikin, 1989). Far from being oppressively synonymous with region in an empirical sense, geographical place has harmonized with the more human-based, post-modern experience of place from other social sciences (see Johnston, 1991).

It is this post-modern view of place that is being revived in geographical circles (Daniels, 1992). While space often describes characteristics of a physical location relative to another, place provides an insight into the experiential characteristics of a given location by describing the values assigned to that space by its users (Tuan, 1977). Agnew (1987) broadens the definition of place by examining its composing features. He suggests that place has three such features: locale, location and "sense of place". These three elements have traditionally been examined by researchers in isolation instead of in compliment to one another (Agnew and Duncan, 1989). Locale is the social aspect of place, examining the relational functionality of place. Location is directly related to space. As place cannot exist without space (Giddens, 1979; Tuan, 1977), this is a critical constituent of the definition. Finally, place has an individual component. The individual's experience is the defining difference between space and place. This is the "sense of place," which exists explicitly for the emphasis of the importance of the individual's experience. Different facets of geography have shown interest in each one of these elements of place, but not necessarily appreciating their interconnections.

The thrust of individuality into the heart of place has been the focus of post-modern geographies. Feminist geography, radical geography, geography of the aged and other post-modern forms of geography took hold of the power of the individual within place. This led and has continued to lead to greater inclusionary practices within the discipline (see Buttimer and

Seamon, 1980; Mazey and Lee, 1983) and perhaps, more significantly, challenges the biases of the underpinning theories of geography (Johnston et al., 1994).

Not only does place have many definitions, it also has many underlying theories. These theories of place have been developed over time with particular attention being given to the interaction between place and other facets of geography. There is a paradox involved within the transformation of the meaning of place. Notably, there are those such as Greogry and Ley (1988) and Cresswell (1992) who believe that it is inappropriate to define any single meaning of place; rather, researchers should be concerned with the examination of the *meanings* of place. This becomes almost obligatory, as there must exist as many explanations of meaning as there are experiences thereof. Thus, as the meanings of place increasingly incorporate the experience of the individual, several concerns arise. First, the experience of the individual directly reduces the objectivity of any meaning and moves aggressively toward subjectivity in this continuum. Second, place becomes only as unpredictable and dynamic as human behaviour. Third, a conflict erupts between the socially prescribed and socially acceptable definitions of place. Each of these aspects of the paradox is examined below.

#### 2.1.2.1 Betweenness of Place

Relying upon works from Entrikin (1991), Agnew (1987) and Sack (1988), the argument of the "betweenness" of place has become a strong one. As Crestwell (1992) summarizes in a paper about graffiti, place cannot be exclusively viewed as objective or as subjective. The objective nature of place would seek to expound the exclusivity of Agnew's (1987) "location" element of place. Conversely, the subjective nature of place would tout the necessity of the individual (but reciprocal to location) "sense of place." Thus, some middle ground must be achieved. In contrast to those who would pit these extremes in a proverbial tug-of-war, Cresswell summarizes the effective argument that place need not be either objective or subjective but may exist in a state of "betweenness." While this adds a certain ambiguity to the idea of place, there may be no other effective solution. As a broader review of the topic is completed, it is seen that Daniels (1990) identifies the same type of enigma in his efforts to explain landscape. Daniels is forced to accept what he terms a "duplicity" in landscape because it cannot exist exclusively as fact or ideology – it is both.

Entrikin's (1991) book entitled *The betweenness of place: toward a geography of modernity* expands on this premise of place. In it, he illustrates the importance of both the objective view and the subjective view of place. Additionally, he describes the benefit that can be achieved in a combined view of place, which is summarized as both facts and the relationships that exist between people and their spaces. Daniels (1992) says of Entrikin's work that this combined view allows for the placement of objects in space as well as the establishment of their meanings.

#### 2.1.2.2 Geographical imaginations / Social imaginations

The term "geographical imagination" was contrived by Harvey in a work entitled *Social Justice and the City* in 1973. The purpose of the term was to enact and emphasize a geographical aspect to the way that human behaviour was understood. Up to this time, the primary view of human behaviour came from what Mills (1959) described as "sociological imagination". The sociological imagination was a multidisciplinary view of human behaviour founded upon social theory with an emphasis on time (see Agnew and Duncan, 1989). Time was important because social theory experienced modulations over time. Harvey's argument was that human behaviour could not be adequately understood under the restrictions of social theory alone, rather, that human behaviour might be better understood with the addition of geographical theory. Thus was born geographical imaginations.

Best defined by Agnew and Duncan (1989, p. 1), geographical imaginations are "concerned with determining the nature of and classifying places and the links between them." *The Dictionary of Human Geography* adds to this definition by suggesting that geographical imaginations have to do with the significance of place and space to the experience of social life (Johnston et al., 1994).

Geographical imaginations are not to be restricted to a single discipline. Instead, the intention was that all aspects of social science could benefit from viewing social nature through geographical and spatial acumen (Harvey, 1973). In recent years, there has been a notable effort by social science scholars to incorporate and coalesce sociological and geographical imaginations (Agnew and Duncan, 1989; Foucault, 1980; Giddens, 1981). This is a bold step as, for years, place was not a relevant area of study for social scientists other than geographers (Altman and

Low, 1992). The intention of this step was an acquisition of a greater depth of understanding of human behaviour.

The idea of geographical imaginations provides a forum for the examination of the dynamic nature of place. As it allows the linkages between places to be scrutinized in a symbolic way, it is flexible enough to morph under the constant flux of the meanings of place. The boundaries of place are symbolically and theoretically assigned, and as such, are in a constant state of flux. The multiplicity of place ensures an equally transient boundary of imagination. Once again, Cresswell (1992, p. 333) effectively summarizes the nature of these symbolic boundaries with his statement that "symbolic boundaries not only vary with place but are constituted by place."

The variability of place has been a recent focus of discussion (Duncan and Duncan, 1988; Jackson, 1989). Place is strongly multifaceted in that it can be and has been studied from many points of view. Wong's (1992) *Person, Place and Thing* contains a collection of essays that are concerned with place. Among them are six papers that deal with the transformation of place. The dynamic nature of place is clearly expounded upon between and within these works.

#### 2.1.2.3 The human experience of place

We know that place is based on one's perceptions or experiences (Richardson, 1984). It quickly follows that distinct issues will arise from this thought. If place is personally or individually discerned, then the "value and meaning of any space or place are not inherent, but must be invoked" (Cresswell, 1992, p. 332). Many others, such as Harvey (1989) and B. Moore (1986) feed Crestwell's analysis of this situation by providing the basis for this stance. All places must have meaning and value assigned to them. Who assigns this meaning? The individual confers unique meaning to a place while society, generally speaking, fosters general or overall meaning to a place. This is extremely important to recognize because it is readily assumable that meaning or value could have been abstractly prescribed. The meaning of a place is anthropocentrically, socially, environmentally and culturally based (Cresswell, 1992; Godkin, 1980; Relph, 1976; Riley, 1992).

An individual's meaning of place can be challenged by the acquisition of information, knowledge and insight – by one or more of the meanings subscribed to by society. In his

celebrated and distinguished work, Tuan (1977) provides an exceptional insight into this process with the following illustration. He describes a visit to Kronberg Castle in Denmark by world-renowned physicists Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg. Bohr is quoted as saying:

> *Isn't it strange how this castle changes as soon as one imagines that Hamlet lived here? As scientists we believe that a castle consists only of stones, and admire the way the architect put them together... None of this should be changed by the fact that Hamlet lived here, and yet it is changed completely... The courtyard becomes an entire world, a dark corner reminds us of the darkness in the human soul, we hear Hamlet's "To be or not to be."... And at once we know that, Kronberg becomes quite a different castle for us.*
>
> (Heisenberg, 1972, p. 51)

As mentioned in the previous section, the meanings of place are exceptionally dynamic. Yet, despite the dynamic nature of place, these meanings can still be used to create identity – either personal or communal identity. Godkin (1980) extols the importance of shared symbolic meaning of place between individuals and groups of people, stating that this can create group identity or a "sense of belonging". This identity can be applied to any group or subgroup within a society from gender to ethnic, from neighbourhood to political. Examples of place-borne identity – generally referred to as *landscapes* – can be seen in Agnew (1992), Domosh (1992), Duncan (1992) and Osborne (1996). This is a much-shortened list as studies involving landscape and identity are extensive.

The aforementioned sense of belonging can be examined under the auspices of place attachment. As place fosters identity, that identity speaks to the innate human need to attachment. This need operates at several spheres: biological, environmental, psychological and socio-cultural (Altman and Low, 1992). Further, an effective understanding of place attachment cannot be had without an appreciation of its complex nature. To understand the dynamics of place attachment certain questions must be asked. What type of attachment is experienced? Who are the people, whether individuals or groups, that are involved in the attachment? What type of social relationship do they have? What is the temporal nature of the attachment? Clearly a multidisciplinary approach is required to answer such questions and an excellent summary of the answers is presented in Altman and Low's volume entiltled *Place Attachment* (1992). The important point here is that place attachment is actively bound to place itself. Thus, an

understanding of the nature of one's attachment to place will provide a stronger, more accurate picture of the meaning of behaviour across a landscape.

It should be noted that if it is possible to have a sense of belonging that is applied to a place, then it is possible to have a removal or ablation of this identity. This is known by several varied terms, each slightly different in its definition but contributing to the overall understanding of this phenomenon. Tuan (1977, p. 150) describes the lack of belonging as being "out-of-place". It has been described as "placelessness" by a host of researchers including Entrikin (1991), Heidegger (1962), Porteous (1988) and significantly, Relph (1976). It also has been characterized as "uprootedness" by Godkin (1980, p. 75) who defines it aptly as "a sense of non-belonging to place." Godkin goes on to describe how a place could be experienced as threatening and how readily this could become a challenge to "the integrity of one's identity" (Godkin, 1980, p. 75). The dynamic at work here is described by Ley (1974, p. 35) in his statement that these social environments "have an ascribed meaning and contain clues prescribing appropriate forms of behaviour." The ramifications of placelessness, uprootedness or being out-of-place, are far reaching and could be compiled into several volumes. As such, they are not dealt with in detail here.

A final note about place is important at this stage. Given the dynamic and multidisciplinary nature of place, an incontrovertible understanding of place, in any of its varied forms, may not be possible. This study will lean upon two philosophies of Daniels (1992, p. 321). The first is a reminder of priority that is appropriate to this study: "at issue here is not so much how places function as what they mean." Daniel's second idea is similar, encouraging the researcher to "attend to place as a medium as well as an object of study".

#### 2.1.2.4 Environmental Psychology and Place

A body of literature exists that is separate from space and place, but of a related nature in the context of this study. It is appropriate to examine this literature using a laconic approach. Environmental psychology is a branch of psychology defined by Stokols and Altman (1987, p. 2) as "the study of human behaviour and well-being in relation to the sociophysical environment." Hence, this area of study has been interested in the relationship between the person and the environment.

Despite being a relatively new area of interest (emerging in the 1960s), environmental psychology has been of interest first to psychologists who study human behaviour and next to architects who assist in the creation of the physical environment. Environmental psychology has branched into many sub-areas including studies of criminology, urban planning and environmental studies.

Additionally, a marked range of research has come out of the environmental psychology thrust geared toward the explanation of space and place of children (Hart, 1979; Moore, R. C., 1986b; Spencer and Blades, 1993). This research has traditionally focused on young children and their behaviour patterns. Remarkably, research from this discipline has not generally included the examination of adolescent behaviour.

Environmental psychologists have an interest in place theories, the meaning of location and built forms and the individuals' experience of place. Clearly, there is a direct relationship between the interests of environmental psychology and this study. As such, reference will be made through this study to related works.

## 2.2 Adolescence: A time of transition

It is with fervour that social scientists have attempted to study and understand the transition period between childhood and adulthood. The study of this social entity, being merely a century old, has experienced impressive growth over this time. The harbinger of the invention of adolescence, Rousseau was one of the first to express an interest in "the crisis that forms the bridge between child and man [sic]" (Rousseau, 1911, p. 3).

The stark social change of the mid to late 1800s has been assigned culpability for the creation of a significant transitional period between the frivolity of being a child and the responsibility of mature adulthood (see Elder, 1975). Aries (1962) describes the evolution of adolescence, including a permissive definition of adolescence as the period of "quarantine" for the adult experience. The furtherance in the study of adolescents lead to the creation of the teenager in the 1950s (Heibige, 1979). Certainly, ambiguity exists in the definition of adolescence as no concrete biological, sociological or psychological delimitation exists (see Sibley, 1995b).

A description of work surrounding adolescence would be arduous to present due to the veritable plethora of research that has been completed to date. Consequently, a précis of research relevant to this study will be presented.

Attempts have been made to understand the experience of adolescence from a variety of social science perspectives. These perspectives have generally suggested the existence of some fundamental truths about the experience of adolescence. Note that it cannot be stated that all disciplinary perspectives of adolescence offer a harmonious view of adolescence; however, there does exist a strong understanding of elementary adolescent behaviour. As an overview, it can be stated that adolescence is a period that is fraught with variability, paradox, change and adaptation. These are summarized in the adjoining paragraphs.

### 2.2.1 The biological experience of adolescence

Adolescence is perhaps the time of most significant and tumultuous biological change throughout life. Hall (1904) suggests that the time of adolescent development is a time of "storm and stress". Adolescent turmoil is, in part, directly related to the physical changes that are occurring during these years.

Puberty is the process of biological maturation into full adulthood that occurs over several years. Excluding disease or other anomalies, puberty is a universal experience (Richards, Abell and Petersen, 1993). Without examining explicit details, both males and females experience hormonal changes which trigger the development of secondary sex characteristics. This begins, on average, at age 11 for girls and age 12 for boys and continues for several years (Lee, 1980; Tanner, 1974). Further, this is a time of significant physical growth, both in height and weight. During this time of hormonal upheaval, it is not uncommon for adolescents to experience mood swings, poor self-esteem and other forms of psychological instability (Petersen and Ebata, 1987; Undry and Talbert, 1988).

Pubescence is a time of the development of sexuality in both males and females (Diepold and Young, 1979; Miller and Dyk, 1987). This development of sexuality is biologically and socially determined.

It is noteworthy that the early adolescent years are also a time of marked growth in cognitive abilities and psychological awareness (Marcia, 1980). Cognitive development occurs in

both social and non-social veins. Momentous researchers such as Piaget (1963) and Piaget and Inhelder (1969) in cognitive development, and Kohlberg (1984) in moral development, have added to the understanding of adolescent development. Psychological awareness is related to the increasing desire for self-awareness and the search for personal identity (Erikson, 1968).

In summary, because biological and genetic factors underscore all other socio-emotional development, it was important to refer to them. This study is primarily interested in the development of the individual through their experience and social relationships. Thus, there is an emphasis in these areas below.

### 2.2.2 The social experience

#### 2.2.2.1 Family

During pubescence, a strain in parent-child relationship tends to occur. This is accompanied by an increased emotional distance between the parent and child (Hill and Holmbeck, 1986; Steinberg, 1981, 1987). This strained relationship is due, in part, to the continued development of a self-concept or identity in the adolescent. As adolescents seek to determine who they are physically, socially, morally, emotionally, sexually and even spiritually, conflict with parents and other adult role models is inevitable. In seeking one's identity, it is necessary to have a central concept of self. This manifests itself in statements such as "my parents don't understand" or "nobody likes me" referring to the burgeoning centrality of self (Galatzer-Levy and Cohler, 1987).

Walsh and Scheinkman (1987, p. 151) identify "identity clarification" as the "process of differentiation of self from the family and the exploration of new relationships and a place in the social world". It is during this process of identity that adolescents seek out their own meaningful adaptation of ideas and beliefs concerning life and they seek someone with whom they can share this experience of quandary. The search for identity can, and frequently, manifest itself in a challenge of parental authority. This is well summarized by Garcia-Preto and Travis (1985, p. 26) in the following quotation from their work from the *Handbook of adolescents and family therapy*: "It is obviously difficult and confusing for the family to be both the target of rebellion and a sanctuary." Falicov (1988) suggests that the family struggles through the adolescent years. This

is supported by a host of other studies, such as Erikson (1958), Hill (1980) and Turner (1980), that establish tension, challenge and adjustment in the family.

No longer can the family provide fully for the adolescents' needs. This is partially due to the adolescent truculent desire for independence. With the denial of parental support, additional support is required. This support most frequently comes from an adolescent's peer group.

#### 2.2.2.2 Social companions

Peer groups are present in all developmental life stages and are not unique to adolescents (Hartup, 1983). Yet, in no social group do peers play so significant a role as in the adolescent group. "Forming and maintaining satisfying relationships with peers is a central developmental task of adolescence" (Berndt and Savin-Williams, 1987, p. 203). Indeed, peers are not a frivolous pursuit during the adolescent years; rather, there is evidence to suggest that the presence of close peers can improve the self-esteem, academic and social skills of an adolescent (Berndt and Savin-Williams, 1987; Savin-Williams and Berndt, 1990). Further, proper personal and social adjustment during adolescence has been shown to be related to peer relationships (Youniss, 1980). Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) have shown that adolescents typically spend more time in interaction with friends than with members of their families or any other adults. Despite this, there exists the potential that peer relationships can lead to delinquent behaviour (Bronfenbrenner, 1970; Steinberg and Silverberg, 1986). Nevertheless, to an adolescent, friends are of paramount importance.

In an Italian study, Pombeni, Kirchler and Palmonari (1990) illustrated that almost all adolescents belonged to a group of peers who met regularly for activities. Most adolescent peers possess similar social characteristics within the group. Further, adolescents tend to identify with peers who have similar morals to themselves and correspondingly to their parents' values (Pombeni et al., 1990). Youniss (1980) describes friendships during adolescence as contributing to a sense of identity. As mentioned previously, adolescents spend more time with their peers than with any other group and furthermore, participate in more activities with their peers than with any other group (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984; Tietjen, 1982). The time spent with peers is important for many reasons, of which the most important is that adolescents feel a sense of security and belonging and can be themselves without condemnation. They want a non-

judgemental and accepting environment – this is not always available in the home from parents. Thus, the social time spent with peers is generally free from adult intervention, interruption and presence. This ensures privacy, which has been shown to be of marked importance to adolescents (Brown, 1990; Sibley, 1995a).

Finally, it is worthy of mention that the adolescent experience of times past – even if only a generation – is significantly different from the adolescent experience of today. While the biology may not have changed, the social nature of adolescence is constantly subject to changes in society. Thus, so long as there are changes in society, there will be changes to the experience and perception of the social nature of adolescence.

### 2.2.3 The space and place of adolescence

The adolescent perception and experience of space and place are different from that of adults and children (Chawla, 1992; Van Roosmalen and Krahn, 1996). As such, it is of much importance to this study to examine the nature of space and place through the adolescent years. More than others, adolescents experience barriers and restrictions to space and a unique experience of the spaces where they are permitted. Unfortunately, social researchers have yet to develop a comprehensive literature to elucidate the adolescent experience (Furnham and Stacey, 1991; James, 1990; Philo, 1992; Valentine, 1996b). This remains an even greater truth when applied to the adolescent experience of space and place. Although there exists a small but impressive literature on the space and place of children, which is mostly from the environmental psychology branch of social science, this literature places little emphasis – if any – upon adolescence.

The studies that have been accomplished concerning adolescence have had a bias toward deviant behaviour in adolescents, rebellion and the defiance of social values (see Brake, 1980; Cooper, 1995; Hall and Jefferson, 1976; Iso-Ahola and Crowley, 1991; Mungham and Pearson, 1976; Williamson, 1993). Fewer works exist for the illumination of the unknown pathways that adolescents walk. Many of the basic assumptions about space and place of children can be, and have been crudely mapped onto the adolescence experience.

Valentine (1996b) suggests that the study of children began in the 1970s with two crucial works. Bunge (1973), who identified children as the largest minority group in society, completed

research dealing with their relationships with their physical environment. Blaut and Stea (1971) studied cognitive development and spatial/mapping skills in children. The latter work was particularly well received by social scientists and spawned many related works such as R. C. Moore (1986) and Matthews (1980, 1986, 1988).

In a broad-based critique concerning the examination of the spatial nature of children, James (1990, p. 279) states that little work had been undertaken concerning the "ways in which children's lives, experiences, attitudes and opportunities are spatially structured". In fact, she expresses concern that the works accomplished thus far may have been so accomplished under the mistaken terms of adult experience. Leaning on the work of Matthews (1980, 1986, 1988) she argues that there may be no concordance between adults' and children's interpretation of places. "Hence children's 'places' form a context for behaviour which is fundamentally different from the context of adult behaviour" (James, 1990, p. 281). She concludes by making the following warning: "Children cannot be merely 'tagged on' to existing types of geographical analysis without any alteration to the theoretical assumptions underlying these analyses" (James, 1990, p. 283). Despite the fact that James refers to children throughout her work, the application of her concerns directly impact the study of adolescence. There are adolescent spaces and the meaning of these spaces may be unique to adolescents.

#### 2.2.3.1 The experience of adolescent space and place

It is not uncommon to hear parents recite the adage, "teens need their space." However, greater than being simply cliché, this statement illustrates a functional reality of the North America adolescent. There are spaces where they would prefer to be found and others where they would not. As such, it is necessary to examine the literature concerning adolescent space, the boundaries thereof, and their accepted meaning. While this literature is not extensive, it is sufficient to provide an elementary view of adolescent space. The examination of this space will be subdivided into three areas: private, public and non-designated space.

#### 2.2.3.1.1 Private Space

Despite the aberrance of parents, many adolescents still find their home to be a place of value. At home, there tends not to be unbridled freedom, however, there does exist distinct advantages. Specifically, an adolescent's bedroom is of immense importance as it provides a sanctuary yielding protection, privacy and a sanctum of individuality (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984). A number of studies suggest that the personal bedroom is a favourite place to be for the adolescent (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Ladd, 1977; Lynch, 1977; Schiavo, 1987). Specifically, in the study by Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) adolescents identified their room as a place where they felt at home.

Studies in human territorial behaviour have shown that children exhibit characteristic behaviour that follows the environmental pattern of home, school and playground (public space) (Grabow and Salkind, 1976; Medrich, Roizen and Rubin, 1982). This pattern can be seen in adolescence with the proviso that there may be a de-emphasis upon the home as a primary environment in favour of alternate spaces (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984). It is established that the home range (or spatial territory) of children increases with age (Hole, 1966; Michelson and Roberts, 1979; Pollowy, 1977). It is therefore withstanding that adolescents will seek to exercise their freedom by liberating themselves from the sanctuary of home to the world beyond.

At this juncture, gender differences are of importance. Two separate areas of study establish a similar trend: females tend to make use of the home more than males. First, evidence can be seen that males have a greater home range than females and are more likely to express this freedom (Coates and Bussard, 1974; Hart, 1979; Michelson and Roberts, 1979). Second, feminist models of behaviour highlighted the importance of the family and in so doing have given prominence to the nature of adolescent female behaviour (Carter, 1984; McRobbie and Garber, 1976). This behaviour is intensely relational and tends to lead to time spent in conversation with peers in a personal domestic/social space such as a bedroom (Griffiths, 1988; Kostash, 1987; Lees, 1986).

In the absence of parents, home can become a central place of activity for adolescents. This would constitute freedom and facility without interruptions. Home can be a social environment, a private space, and a place of individuality – but this is dependent upon family relationships (Combrinck-Graham, 1985; Garcia-Preto and Travis, 1985). As a final note, the

home environment can also occur at a friend's house or any other environment where there is comparable privacy from adult interference and freedom (Eubanks Owens, 1988; Hester and McNally, 1988; Parke and Sawkin, 1979; Wolfe, 1978).

#### 2.2.3.1.2 Public space

In addition to private space, adolescent space can also be public venues, including schools, community space, retail environments and non-designated space. These are discussed below but remain parts of public space.

A primary place within public space for adolescents is school. It is the common experience of adolescents across North America and is required by law. School can play a critical role in the socialization of adolescents. This is because it is quintessentially a social environment (Blackman, 1998; Trickett and Schmid, 1993). There are differing views about the role that school can play in an adolescent life. Many adolescents find school academically and socially stressful (Bibby and Posterski, 1992). Friedenberg (1965) argues that what matters at school is not the lessons taught but rather the experience of place that is achieved by the adolescents.

Perhaps it is necessary to entertain discourse on whether or not schools can be seen as public space as they are generally off limits to adult strangers; however for simplicity, schools shall herein be accepted as public space. They exist as public space because they are a common social environment for many adolescents and as such cannot be seen as personal/private space. The nature of school is such that, paradoxically, it provides a regimented place and relatively free social place in the same space. Throughout the school day, scheduling is purposeful and concrete; however, at the end of the day the scheduling is open and adolescents are free to use the space as they see fit – within reason of the school administration. Thus, despite the social stress that school can cause, it is also a primary location of social support (Larkin, 1979; Wynne, 1978). In this way, the school space can be similar to home space; yet, the experience of place at these locations is notably different. The school grounds provide a place that is familiar and, for the most part, readily accessible.

Notwithstanding all other issues, the matter of the encroachment and infringement of adolescents and their space upon the space of adults is of paramount concern. There is much literature examining this conflict (Baumgartner, 1988; Cahill, 1990; Pilkington, 1994; Qvortrup,

1994; Valentine, 1996b). In summary, these studies suggest that adolescents need and want ownership over their own space as well as privacy within that space (Valentine, 1996b).

#### 2.2.3.1.3 Community space

These are either spaces that have been assigned to adolescent use or spaces where adolescents have been readily accepted by the community. These include facilities such as youth clubs, legitimate sports facilities (for example, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, or a play-field), parks and arenas. These forms of public space can be severely underused if adolescents do not feel that it is "their place" (Henderson and King, 1999). This underuse of prescribed facilities is also present in younger children (Brower and Williamson, 1974; Churchman, 1979; Gold, 1972). In this context, adolescents want the same characteristics that have been mentioned in previous discussions. A space cannot be an adolescent space if they do not experience the freedom to participate in their activities and there is the potential of being watched by adults, in violation of their need and desire for privacy (Brown, 1990; Sibley, 1995a). Clearly, adolescents require a form of "ownership" of any space – be it public, priviate or non-designated – for it to become of value to them (Bembry and Tufono, 1996; Henderson and King, 1999).

Access to, and use of public space is not equally distributed in society. There exists an unexpected shift of this space away from adolescents and other minority groups (Berman, 1986). This inequality challenges the "public" aspect of public space as Valentine (1996b, p. 210) states that public space is "'naturally' or 'normally' adult space". For reasons mentioned previously, the adolescent search for individuality and respect often manifests itself in deviations from social norms such as clothing, jewellery and outlandish behaviour (Downes, 1966; Matza and Sykes, 1969). While this behaviour tends to foster stronger relationships between adolescents, it isolates them from adults. This behaviour is most frequently perceived by adults as deliberate dissidence and an attempt to overthrow, or at least jettison, the organization of public space and society (Pilkington, 1994; Valentine, 1996b). The result is the distrust of adolescents and increased desire to keep order by controlling the behaviour – especially spatial behaviour – of youth. This provides a partial explanation for the scholarly emphasis on adolescent deviance that was previously noted.

#### 2.2.3.1.4 The Mall: Pseudo-public space

The mall or shopping centre plays such a significant role in the experience of adolescence that it required its own subsection. Due to the quantity of material that could be stated concerning malls, the discussion here will be deliberately succinct. In his article, Goss (1993) describes the intention of the space and place of the mall with exemplary detail. Many studies point to the significance of the mall to adolescence (Anthony, 1985; Hopkins, 1991; Kowinski, 1985). Specifically, Anthony (1985) describes the attraction of the mall to adolescents as social space. This generally leads to loafing or congregating of adolescents in what is perhaps their most public environment. This space is designed to be an enticing environment to shoppers where their every need can be met (Richards, 1990). Not only is it the adolescents' most public place, it is also potentially their greatest source of political conflict with adults (Hine and Hedlund, 1994; Hopkins, 1991). The mall, in essence, lures adolescents with its attractive spaces, but in many ways is controlled autonomous space that can be intolerant to the free spirit of adolescence (Hopkins, 1991). Hopkins (1991), in his discussion of the famous West Edmonton Mall in Alberta, illustrates the enigma of malls which attempt to be both public and private space simultaneously.

#### 2.2.3.1.5 Non-designated space

Non-designated space is a specific type of public space that is "unclaimed" or logistically cannot be claimed by society. Private spaces, such as homes, are not truly private for adolescents as they are subject to the prying attention of adults or siblings (Parke and Sawkin, 1979; Wolfe, 1978). Public places are subject to confrontation with adults over the ownership of space (Valentine, 1996b). The only remaining option for space is annexed public or open space upon the retreat of adults. Thus, non-designated space such as streets serve as autonomous space that adolescents can claim for their own (Corrigan, 1979). Further, Corrigan (1979) notes that the use of non-designated space is often reserved until after dark when most adults have returned to their residences.

The use of non-designated space is the adolescent's attempt to rebel, either consciously or unconsciously, against the restrictions of adult power and authority (Valentine, 1996b). As

discussed in detail in the previous sections of this chapter, the unifying power of annexing space for their own use would be both exhilarating and strengthening for social bonds.

It is in non-designated space that illegal and deviant behaviour is most likely to occur (Valentine, 1996a). In addition, this space is where the strongest forms of "youth cultures" are likely to appear. These youth cultures include activities such as skateboarding. Youth cultures can include subgroups or gangs who can establish territory (Watt and Stenson, 1998) and this can lead to seriously deviant, violent and illegal behaviour (Hesse et al., 1992). Indeed, this can be the exceptional example of the conversion of space into place by gangs who have a strong emotional relationship to a specific place; so much so that they would be willing to resort to violence in its protection (Watt and Stenson, 1998).

This section of this chapter has been devoted to illustrating the differences among adult, child and adolescent space and place. It has been shown that adolescents have a unique experience of space and place that can be misunderstood by adults. The next section of this chapter will briefly examine the activities that occur within that adolescent space.

## 2.3 Leisure

Leisure is a nebulous concept, for which a simple definition cannot be readily provided. Arguments concerning the nature of leisure are of an extended and expansive nature (de Grazia, 1964; Iso-Ahola, 1980; Murphy, 1981; Neulinger, 1974). Variations across disciplines and throughout time constitute a key portion of the problems experienced in any attempted definition of leisure. In corroboration, Mobily (1989, p. 11) appropriately states that definition of leisure is "an elusive and frustrating area of research." Murphy's (1981) book entitled *Concepts of Leisure* features twenty definitions of leisure by various, well-respected researchers in an attempt to illustrate the kaleidoscopic nature of leisure. The definition of leisure has experienced transition through several paradigm shifts. Generally speaking, the earliest definitions of leisure, going back as far as Aristotle and Plato, have been related to freedom; that is, the freedom remaining after the completion of life sustaining activities (Goodale and Godbey, 1988). In other words, leisure was defined as discretionary time (Brightbill, 1960).

The influence of psychology, sociology and other social sciences brought a coalescence of social thought to the definition of leisure. This offered a more personal and experiential view of leisure. Thus, a transition in the definition of leisure from an emphasis of time to emphasis of behaviour and attitude can be detected. This is a subjective definition of leisure, finding its foundation in the work of Neulinger who saw leisure as a psychological phenomenon (Neulinger, 1974, 1981; Shivers and deLisle, 1997).

Further along, not so much in time but rather in abstraction, is the metaphysical view that leisure cannot be restricted to time or activity. Rather, leisure is defined as a "state of being" in which activities and behaviours exist for their own purpose. Such conceptualizations of leisure have been seen in the work of de Grazia and his colleagues (de Grazia, 1964). In this way, leisure can be defined as any activity or behaviour, so long as that activity or behaviour occurs with the right frame of mind or state of being (Iso-Ahola, 1980).

Geographers have tended to define leisure within their own confines. Leisure is defined in Johnston's *Dictionary of Human Geography* as "The activity patterns of people during their non-working hours studied over time and space" (Johnston et al., 1994, p. 386). The dictionary of human geography continues by stating that leisure is "a general term embracing all free time from work and other obligations" and is occupied by recreation (Johnston et al., 1994).

Many other attempts to define leisure exist including feminist views (see Henderson et al., 1989). However, Klieber, Larson and Csiksentmihalyi (1986) suggest that the general public associates leisure with "free, unobligated time." As such, alternate and radical definitions of leisure are not examined in detail.

### 2.3.1 Adolescent Leisure: The action behind the location

Definitions aside, the literature concerned with adolescent leisure is comprehensive and impressive. This research covers a range of interests in adolescent leisure, from the central role of leisure within the experience of adolescence (Meeks and Maudlin, 1990; Raymore, Godbey and Crawford, 1994; Willits and Willits, 1986), to the types of activities in which there is participation (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984; Iso-Ahola, 1975; Moller, 1992; Poole, 1986; Smith, 1987), to the constraints thereof (Hultsman, 1993; Jackson and Rucks, 1995; McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995). Other studies have shown that adolescent leisure varies from adult leisure

(Iso-Ahola, 1980; Scott and Willits, 1989). In addition, there have been a few studies that have included the examination of geographical variables of adolescent leisure (Jackson, 1994; Shaw et al., 1991).

The results of these studies in adolescent leisure have provided a foundation that has lead to a strong understanding of the role that leisure plays in the adolescent life. Many of these studies testify to leisure as the adolescents' expression of freedom and individuality (Neulinger, 1981; Zarbatany, Hartmann and Rankin, 1990). There are several studies that shown the significance of adolescent leisure in later life, of which one is Brooks and Elliot (1971). Brooks and Elliott (1971) conducted a longitudinal study that revealed the relationships between free time activities during adolescence and adult adjustment. Fundamentally, leisure is the time of relationship-building for adolescents. The time spent participating in leisure activities is often social time spent with friends (Dusek, Kremis and Monge, 1979; Garton and Cartmel, 1986; Hine and Hedlund, 1994; Poole and Juchnowski, 1976). Other studies have illuminated deviant and non-socially acceptable behaviour in adolescents (Caldwell, Smith and Weissinger, 1992; Iso-Ahola and Crowley, 1991).

Leisure studies have described the importance of the peers with whom the leisure experience is shared (Larson, 1983; Montemayor, 1982). As well, there have been studies that illustrate the importance of solitude as a function of adolescent leisure (Hine and Hedlund, 1994; Larson, 1983; Larson and Csikszentmihalyi, 1978). Still other studies examine the constraints and the negotiations these constraints within the leisure experience of adolescents (Crawford et al., 1991; Jackson and Rucks, 1995). Constraints to leisure have been found to be a significant challenge in adolescence. A few major constraints include transportation and accessibility (McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995), parental restrictions (Witt and Goodale, 1981), socio-economic factors (Searle and Jackson, 1985) and peer relationships (Garton and Pratt, 1987).

Adolescents have been shown to participate in active leisure such as sports, partying and organizational activities as well as "passive" activities such as television viewing, socializing, and hanging out (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984; Valentine, Skelton and Chambers, 1998). There are many references to such types of activities in the adolescent leisure literature. In Canada, adolescents have been shown to have more time for leisure activities than any other demographic group the country (Devereaux, 1993). In fact, there has been no shortage of studies examining adolescent leisure activities.

While it has been shown that scheduled leisure activities hold significance for adolescents, unscheduled leisure is of critical importance (Hine and Hedlund, 1994; Kleiber et al., 1986). Unscheduled or informal leisure is often a defining experience of adolescence (Hendry, 1983). This type of leisure (often refered to as hanging out / hanging around) can be found throughout the literature as an important and time consuming component of the experience of adolescent leisure (Bembry and Tufono, 1996; McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995; Valentine et al., 1998; Van Roosmalen and Krahn, 1996).

## 2.4 The Rural Adolescent

While the experience of adolescence described above is generally accepted as universally applicable, the specifics of that experience are free to vary within reason depending on many factors in an adolescent's life. One such factor is the location of residence. Clearly, the differences between cities and small towns are marked and plural, variegating on many levels: geographic, economic, social, cultural, psychological and others. Thus, it stands to reason that the experience gained from an adolescent's environment will be different between rural and urban adolescents.

The experience of the rural adolescent has long been married to the experience of the farm adolescent. Perhaps in times past this was unquestionably legitimate; however, in today's society this may not be a valid assumption. Certainly, the trend in developed countries has been away from farming in rural areas, especially since the industrial revolution. It follows that if there has been a reduction in the numbers of farmers that there would be a related reduction in the numbers of farmers' children (Ward, 1990). People move to the rural areas for reasons other than agricultural interests (Dasgupta, 1988). There has been a documented increase in the flow of families from the cities to suburban environments and beyond to rural environments (known as contraurbanization). The move is in an effort to alleviate concerns about many city problems such as overcrowding, pollution and violence in addition to in an attempt to restore their relationship to the natural environment (Mitchell, 1975; Momsem, 1984; Thomson and Mitchell, 1998). Thus, many small towns are being resettled by previous urban dwellers.

The current rural environment is undoubtedly different from the environments that have existed in the past. The advent of new media and technology (especially the Internet) has all but eliminated the intense isolation that was a significant part of rurality in times past (Patmore, 1983). Communication and transportation have effectively reduced the distance between urban and rural locations (Haggett, 1983; Norton, 1992). Regardless of these facts, it remains a common notion in the literature that there exists a rural "culture" that is separate from the cultural experience of the urban environment (Ward, 1990).

It is not an overstatement of the situation to suggest that the documentation of the experience of rural adolescents is easily overshadowed and overcome by the formal knowledge that exists concerning urban adolescence. This notwithstanding, the studies that do exist provide an obscured glimpse into the nature of rural adolescents.

The types of differences that have been documented between urban and rural adolescents exist, in part, due to a greater weighting of the environmental factor (urban/rural) as opposed to the person factor (adolescents). Rural environments do not have the same amenities as urban areas (Dasgupta, 1988). This exclusion can include recreational amenities such as malls, movie theatres, restaurants and youth centres. Indeed, it has been argued that rural adolescents do not have the same opportunities as urban adolescents, much to their detriment (Gordon and Caltabiano, 1996; Quaglia and Perry, 1995; Weber, 1976).

An additional factor that permeates the urban/rural adolescent discussion is that of transportation. Most cities have a public transportation system that is heavily used by adolescents; however, this form of transportation is non-existent in rural environments (McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995). Further, several United States federal government studies on rural adolescence, identify transportation as a significant problem (Prendergast, 1963; Office of Juvenile Justice and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention, 1979). These studies also recognize the imbalance of recreational amenities that exist between urban and rural environments.

It has been suggested that rural and small-town adolescents attempt to acquire their driver's licenses as soon as it is possible to allow greater independence in transportation (Hine and Hedlund, 1994; McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995). Before this privilege is achieved, however, adolescents are restricted to the transportation that would be available from parents and other adults (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984). An additional factor is that in urban areas, transportation deprivation can be overcome by the use of manual modes of transportation (i.e.,

bicycles, skateboards). Unfortunately, this may not be a practical alternative for rural adolescents as many amenities may be a non-negotiable distance away for manual transportation. Notably, rural adolescents are not strangers to buses, as many of them must ride school buses to school. So unique is the experience of rural school bussing that it has been suggested that this, too, is its own culture (Ward, 1990). It appears types of transportation are a part of the adolescent experience.

It has been established thus far that differences exist between the environments of rural and urban adolescents. The question remains, "Is the experience of space and place different in rural adolescents?" The answer to this question comes from studies that have compared the experience of rural and urban adolescents. These studies suggest that rural adolescents, in order to compensate for fewer recreational amenities, spend more time in social leisure. This social leisure is specifically of an unstructured nature. Simply put, rural adolescents hang out more than urban adolescents (Gordon and Caltabiano, 1996; McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995). The most common statement in studies of rural adolescents is "there is nothing to do" (Gordon and Caltabiano, 1996; Hine and Hedlund, 1994; McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995). This is in reference to their under-equipped rural environments. Inevitably, rural areas have larger quantities of open and non-designated space that adolescents can use for unstructured social leisure. However, it is important to note that conflict still occurs between adolescent and adult space (McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995). This is due to the lack of public places such as community centres where adolescents can participate in informal leisure, which as mentioned earlier, is of specific importance (Hine and Hedlund, 1994). In a study by Fine, Mortimer and Roberts (1990), it was established that in rural environments hanging out could be accepted as legitimate activity so long as it was confined to specific locations.

Despite the general adolescent enjoyment of the outdoor environment and the fact that this environment is readily accessible, this does not compensate for the lack of the amenities of the city. Rural and suburban adolescents spend as much of their time in urban environments as possible, this being limited by socio-economic forces and more significantly, transportation. It has been shown that rural adolescents experience a sense of isolation or of being trapped (Ward, 1990). Thus, visits to urban areas allow them to meet with other adolescents who assist in the development of self (Hine and Hedlund, 1994).

## 2.5 Exemplary studies

There are four exemplary studies that address different aspects of this study. These studies will be reviewed at this stage to illustrate their particular importance within this study.

In a study conducted by Korpela (1992), the nature of adolescent places was examined. The experience of adolescent place had been related to self-regulation (Korpela, 1989; Swann, 1983). As such, this study set out to examine the relationship between the adolescent experience of place and the regulation of happiness and self-esteem. Working with older adolescents (aged 17 and 18), Korpela (1992) extensively examined the concept of "favourite place." This is of particular significance to this study. Her results revealed that adolescents could readily describe their favourite place in writing and that these results showed that adolescents could have several favourite places. These favourite places illustrated the importance of privacy, natural settings and restaurants/shopping facilities.

Of even greater significance were the descriptions provided by the study group as to why they went to these places and what was experienced while they were present there. Generally, an experience of conflict with family or friends was the catalyst that encouraged adolescents to go to their favourite place. The meaning of the places was assorted but there existed several commonalities such as pleasure, security, control, privacy and reflection. Korpela describes the nature of these places as being the conversion of impersonal space into a private, personal place where the maintenance of self-esteem can take place.

The second study is Canadian and was conducted by Wyllie and Smith (1996). This study examined the routine spatial behaviour of grade 10 adolescents in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The objective of this study was to determine if spatial behaviour was influenced by extroversion in adolescents. As has been mentioned in this chapter and was stated by Wyllie and Smith (1996), most research examining spatial behaviour has focused upon children. Clearly, a study such as theirs was both unusual and exemplary for its examination of spatial nature of adolescents. They discussed the nature of their work in the light of a non-geographical social science but also illustrated the merits of viewing adolescent behaviour spatially suggesting differences between the spatial nature of adults and adolescents. The data were collected through questionnaires, interviews and mapping techniques.

The results of this study illustrated the spatial behaviour of adolescents specifically examining the average sizes of activity spaces. It was found that extroversion did have an effect upon adolescents' space, particularly in females. Further, while adolescents pay little attention to their travel routine, there was an unconscious optimization of their social environment. An important finding (in light of the current study) was the importance of unstructured activity. It was found that a high proportion and variation of adolescents participate in this behaviour, not only the deviant minority.

The third exemplary study is that of McMeeking and Purkayastha (1995). The goal of this study was to describe the challenges of accessibility and mobility in adolescents. Specifically, this study was interested in adolescents aged 13 to 16 who lived in urban, suburban and semi-rural environments. A gamut of techniques was used in the collection of data in this study including interviews, focus groups and questionnaires. These techniques inquired about the activities in which the study group participated, where these activities were located, how they got to the location of the activity, and a description of the problems encountered in participating in these activities. The participants were non-driving which restricted their transportation independence.

This study yielded many fascinating results. These included the nature of the universal complaint of having nothing to do or nowhere to go. The adolescents felt that their access and thus activity were seriously limited. For this group, the definition of leisure was simplified to spending time socializing and being with their friends. They also expressed concern over the identification of space in which they could socialize and participate in unstructured leisure. Hanging out was extremely important to them, as was maintaining social contact with their friends using any means possible including the telephone. Further, adolescents in this study expressed their desire to participate in structured leisure, but were limited by the problems of acessibility. McMeeking and Purkayastha also identified variations in gender, socio-economic, ethnicity and age groups as constraints to accessibility. This work by McMeeking and Purkayastha formed an essential base for the current study.

The final exemplary study was conducted by Hine and Hedlund (1994). This was a particularly relevant study because it dealt with rural adolescents and their leisure activities. Using semi-structured interviews, data were collected from high school students, grades 9 through 12, in rural portions of upstate New York. The subjects came from four schools that differed in their degree of rurality. The study was a part of a larger project and was conducted over four

consecutive years. While Hine and Hedlund openly conceded the non-representation of their sample, which was biased toward higher socio-economic status and higher than average academic performance, this study remained exceptional.

The results of this banner work revealed many previously unstudied characteristics of rural adolescents. A particularly notable result was the identification of the lack of adolescent space in rural environments. This study corroborated the literature on the transportation deprivation of rural adolescents, adding the unbridled desire of these adolescents to expand their home range with the acquisition of an automobile. The quintessential nature of the school, particularly as a social nexus and source of formal leisure through extracurricular activities, was identified in this study. An analysis of the formal, informal and solitary leisure behaviour was completed. Furthermore, Hine and Hedlund discuss the issues of rural adolescent space and place, and describe the desire that these adolescents exhibit for the amenities of the city (specifically mall and movie theatres).

These four studies contain the complete compliment of critical components that are of relevance to this study. Each contains aspects of space and place and deals with the experience of free time in adolescents. The McMeeking and Purkayastha study examines adolescents who live outside urban environments. Despite the fact that this study did not explicitly focus on rural adolescents, it remained valid and significant. Hine and Hedlund covered the area of rural adolescence and their specific behaviours. Korpela's study was conducted in Finland but the remaining three were conducted in North America (of which one was Canadian).

## 2.6 Summary

In summary, this review of literature has described the nature of space and place as well as the experience of space and place to adolescents. Further, it examined the leisure experience in relation to adolescence. It established differences between the experiences between rural and urban adolescence. Fundamentally, it found that leisure (particularly unstructured leisure), establishes who adolescents are as social and psychological beings and further, what they will become as adults through their experiences.

Although the studies reviewed above create a broad literature concerning adolescent space and place, there remain definitive gaps within scholarly understanding. Many studies have focused upon a specific aspect of the adolescent experience, often failing to examine the interconnections that exist between these areas. The pyscho-social nature of adolescents has been clearly documented. Yet, the individual experiences of adolescents remain to be explored. Indeed, studies concerning subgroups and subcultures within adolescents are only now beginning to receive attention (Skelton and Valentine, 1998). It is possible that clear divisions and differences exist between different groups of adolescents, however, these are yet to be uncovered. It is equally provocative to examine what little is known about the variations of adolescent space and how this space is divided and shared (Spencer and Blades, 1993).

Much is understood about adolescent leisure. The logistics of the time, activities and overall demeanour of adolescent leisure have been studied (see Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984). What remains unknown is the nature of the relationships between leisure activities, attitudes and behaviours, and the locations where leisure occurs.

Clear differences exist between the dwelling within the city, suburbs and rural areas. These differences have primarily been determined by looking at the adult experience. By doing so, there remains much unknown concerning how youth experience the difference between the urban and the rural environments. While studies concerning adolescent leisure abound within the urban environment, the experience of rural leisure has not been given equal attention (Hine and Hedlund, 1994).

This study examines the experience of leisure in adolescents who live in rural environments. Specifically, it attempts to elucidate the relationships between space and place and leisure activities, attitudes and behaviours. Thus, it synthesizes several gaps within scholarly literature and attempts to examine them in an effort to foster stronger bonds between these areas as well as – in part – narrow the lacuna of scholarly understanding.

Chapter

3

# Background

## 3.1 Introduction

This short chapter contains a description of the various definitional conventions that are used throughout this paper. The definitions have been so presented to alleviate possible confusion and misunderstanding between this and any other study. The chapter concludes with a discussion concerning the geographical area upon which this study is built.

## 3.1 Definitions

Several definitional conventions will be used throughout this paper. This section will elucidates and justifies the reasons for the use of the chosen terms. The five major definitions, upon which this study is founded, are leisure, space and place, hangout, adolescent and rural.

### 3.1.1 Leisure

As discussed in the literature review, leisure has seen several paradigm-related shifts in definition. At its earliest stage, leisure was defined simply as the time remaining upon completion of essential activities, such as work for income (Shivers and deLisle, 1997). This definition, lacking any appreciation for personal experience, was replaced by a more psycho-sociological definition. Leisure was no longer defined only by time, but by behaviour and attitude as well (Neulinger, 1974). Finally, the definition of leisure has continued to evolve into a metaphysical view; any activity or behaviour can be defined as leisure so long as the state of one's mind or being is so inclined (de Grazia, 1964).

While the most modern definition may be all encompassing and representative of a post-modern paradigm, it is exceedingly difficult to measure – one's state of mind may not be obvious to a researcher or, more significantly, to the participant (Dane, 1990). For this reason, this study did not adopt the definition of leisure as a state of being. Geographers have tended to define leisure as free time in which an individual is free from obligatory activities and time is available to participate in activities for entertainment (Johnston et al., 1994). For the purposes of this study, leisure will be defined as a form of behaviour. It will be assumed that this behaviour will be motivated by certain conscious patterns of thought. Following the tendencies in geography, leisure is free time in which activities defining a non-obligatory behaviour are those in which there is participation.

### 3.1.2 Space and Place

The traditionally accepted definition of space will be used for this study. Space is a physical location referenced in either absolute or relative terms (Blaut, 1961). The concept of space is fundamental to the raison d'etre of the discipline of geography. In this view, space is primarily quantitative in nature; the distribution of phenomena within physical boundaries is the primary role of space. While space and place are interrelated, it is important to draw the differences between these terms.

Place is more difficult to define than space. Place deals with the values and meanings that are ascribed by individuals upon physical locations. As such, it is more qualitative in nature, being heavily dependent upon human behaviour and experience. While simpler definitions of place exist, they tend to incorporate Agnew's (1987) three major elements of locale, location and sense of place. Locale addresses the social or relational issues, location the physical position (space) issue, and sense of place deals with the construction of feeling which addresses the individual experience.

### 3.1.3 Hanging out/Hangout

The definition of hanging out is founded upon the definition of leisure. While no formal definition of hanging out was found in the literature, the concept is clearly visible. This time of

social "inactivity" is found in many studies such as Csikszentmihalyi and Larson's (1984) *Being Adolescent*. A relatively simple explanation of the phrase "hanging out" was selected. Hanging out is unstructured leisure or behaviour in which participation is voluntary and entertaining but not scheduled or structured. Specifically, if the activities in which the teens participate are:

a) organized by an authority figure or anyone other than a peer;

b) scheduled such that "where" and "when" it will occur is known by all; and

c) predetermined such that a full awareness of exactly what activities will be done exits,

then that behaviour would not be deemed hanging out.

Clearly, from the established definition, hanging out does not include any scheduled recreation-type activities such as team hockey practice, music lessons or extracurricular activities; this exclusion addresses the unstructured component in the definition. However, a peer-regulated casual game of road hockey between a group of friends or watching a movie with friends would typify hanging out, as it has been defined. Note that hanging out can be either a social or personally reflective experience. It was this definition of hanging out of which the subjects were made aware for this study.

It should be stated that a related expression, "hangout," is contextual in its definition. Paradoxically, it refers both to the activity of hanging out as well as the location where this activity would occur. Consider the following uses of the expression: "We just hang out with our friends and do stuff" in contrast to "The stores downtown are my favourite hangout." The former refers clearly to the leisure activity while the latter expresses the location of activity. The difference between these two forms is satisfied by a simple convention. The activity, that is the verb form of hanging out, will be expressed as the two-word phrase "hang out." The location of the activity, which is the noun form, will be express and the single word "hangout". This introduces a simple convention that solidifies and separates the usage of the forms of the expression of which the reader can be aware.

### 3.1.4 Adolescent

Many scholarly articles place an age-delimiting adjective before the word adolescent to reduce the ambiguity and add specificity to its definition. It is generally accepted that adolescence is the age cohort between the ages of 12 and 18 (Mitchell, 1979). This is particularly true in education and psychology research. Reference to a slightly older group would invoke the use of the word "youth", which tends to refer to young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 (Valentine et al., 1998). A younger group is popularly dubbed either children or pre-adolescents. Modifiers such as "young" or "early" have been used to refer to the first three to four years of the adolescent cohort, and, subsequently, "middle" and "late" are used to describe the remainder of the adolescent years.

Unfortunately, there exists no standard among these modifiers in the literature. In his article, Gagnon (1994) defines early adolescence as the years between 12 and 18 years old while McMeeking and Purkayastha (1995) describes early adolescence as ages 13 to 15 years old. This lack of consensus has lead to an open abuse and confusion of the term, vitiating its scholarly value. As such, the use of the term adolescents in this research includes no age-delimiting adjectives. Rather, for the purpose of this study, adolescents will refer to the to secondary school grade levels rather than directly to age. Throughout this study, the term adolescents is used to refer to males and females in Grade IX and X of the Ontario Secondary School system. Students in grades IX and X are, for the most part, 14 and 15 years old with a negligible number of students who are slightly older or younger.

While it is not being proposed that this definition of adolescents should be openly adopted in all studies, it is the standard that is accepted for this study. Finally, the words "teen" and "students" will generally be used synonymously with adolescent to refer to males and females of the same age group previously defined.

### 3.1.5 Rural / Small-town

Like leisure, the term "rural" and its counterpart, "urban", have no concrete definitions despite the fact that they have been discussed in great detail over many years. This study is particularly interested in rural areas. Accepted definitions of rural have remained implicitly

variable and relative (Dasgupta, 1988). The variability of the definitions of rural have included factors such as settlement size, settlement dispersion, distance from nearest urban centre, availability and accessibility of facilities (Norton, 1992). This definition reflects an underlying geographic paradigm to defining rural. Alternative paradigms for the definition of rural can also include sociological variables (interpersonal relationships or homogeneity), psychological variables (perception, environmental concerns or transportation issues), and additional geographic variables (scale and land use).

In light of the variations in the definitions of rural, it can be seen that rurality exists not as a concrete construct but as a continuum between suburban environments to the frontier or hinterland. This study, much like the study by Hine and Hedlund (1994), has respected the spectrum of rurality and has attempted to establish a definitional position within this spectrum. Rural, within the context of this study, is positioned toward the urban-rural fringe. Specifically, the use of the term rural is in reference to small town settlements.

For simplicity, this study only considered one major factor in the definition of rural: settlement size. A reasonable distance from a large urban centre also was included in the definition; however, this remained deliberately ambiguous. This study will refer to rural as settlements with a population of 5,000 and below that are located a reasonable distance from a major urban centre. In this context, a reasonable distance is defined as sufficiently far away to be located outside Census Metropolitan Area boundaries (CMA). Areas outside of CMAs are generally sufficiently far away from an urban centre, such that they cannot be easily shown to be a suburban settlement. The key features of the definition of rural for this study are a focus on reduced resources, distance to urban centre and transportation deprivation. In consideration of this fact, the definition of rural chosen, while not as full and complete as it could be, is acceptable.

## 3.2 Study Area

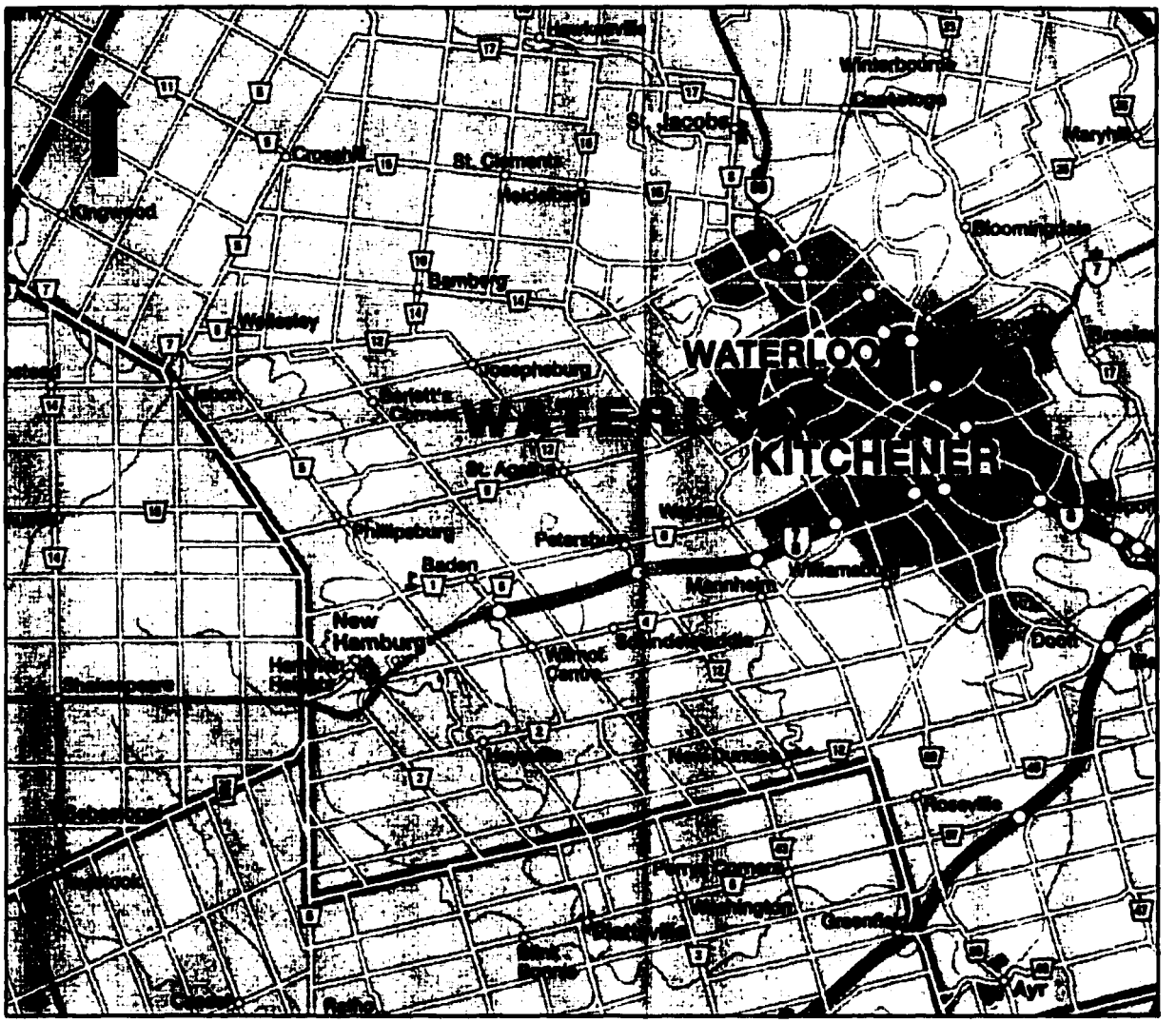
The study area is located west of the City of Kitchener in Ontario, Canada and is represented by the catchment area of Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School. Waterloo-Oxford Secondary School is located just outside the town of Baden, Ontario. Baden is situated approximately 18 minutes west of the City of Kitchener along King's Highway 7/8 between the

cities of Kitchener and Stratford. As the school is located in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, it is under the administrative control of the Waterloo Region District School Board.

The boundaries of the catchment area for the school are challenging to define as they transcend normal political boundaries. The school is located at the western edge of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, which borders Perth County to the West and Oxford County to the South. Within the Waterloo Region, the school draws students from Wilmot Township (in which it is located) as well as Wellesley Township. In Oxford County students attend the school from the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock and in Perth County students attend from North Easthope Township. Wilmot Township had a population of approximately 14,000 in 1996 (Statistics Canada, 1999) and contains many of the towns in which the subjects reside such as New Hamburg, Baden, New Dundee, St. Agatha, Mannhiem, Petersburg, and Phillipsburg. Wellesley Township, with a population of 8,500, is home to towns like Wellesley, Lisbon, Crosshill, and Bamburg. Outside the Region of Waterloo, there were fewer subjects. North Easthope Township contains the Hamlet of Shakespeare and East Zorra-Tavistock Township contains the town of Tavistock. Plattsville and Washington are in Blandford-Blenhiem Township. The population in 1996 was 2,200 for North Easthope and 7,350 for East Zorra-Tavistock Townships (Statistics Canada, 1999). A visual representation of the study area can be see in Figure 3-1.

The catchment area for Waterloo-Oxford is quite large requiring up to 65 minutes per trip by bus for a student to travel from its extents to school. The area is largely agricultural with a strong rural-farm sector (Statistics Canada, 1999). The population is primarily comprised of rural-dwellers.

Finally, the adolescent population of the townships as a percentage of the total population shows some variation throughout the catchment area. Statistics Canada, in 1999, used five-year cohorts and as such these numbers represent the population between ages 10 and 19 inclusive. In East Zorra-Tavistock Township there were 1,095 adolescents, which constitutes 14.9 per cent of the total population. North Easthope Township had only 280 adolescents, representing 12.9 per cent of the population. Wellesley and Wilmot Townships had 1,560 and 2,200 adolescents, respectively. These adolescents compose 18.0 per cent of the population of Wellesley Township and 15.9 per cent of the population of Wilmot Township.




• **Figure 3-1**: Map of study area

*Where ⚐ denotes the location of Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School (west of Baden)*
*Approximate Scale: 1 : 200,000*

Base map from MapArt Publishing © 1997

### 3.2.1 Description of the study towns

Each of the study towns presented with similar basic social and economic characteristics. This is also true of the recreational amenities that are available within each town. This section summarizes these amenities of the town as they were at the time this study was completed. It should be noted that this is an uncorroborated description. An official listing of amenities present within each town was not available. These indicators were derived from a systematic visual examination of the towns.

Table 3-1 examines the occurrence of several key characteristics within the study towns. Most of the characteristics in the table are self-explanatory. However, it should be noted that the "fast food" character refers restaurants such as pizza store and donut shops. Also, major parks contain playgrounds, benches and a path or trail.

As is clearly illustrated, the occurrence of certain characteristics such as youth centres is relatively uncommon. Common characteristics within the study town include convenience stores, libraries and elementary schoolyards.

• **Table 3-1**: Summary of Town Characteristics

| | Characteristics | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | General | | Recreational | | | | | | | | |
| Town | *Downtown Core* | *Library* | *Arcade* | *Benches* | *Grandstand* | *Park (Major)* | *Pool Hall* | *Skateboard Park* | *Waterfront* | | |
| New Hamburg | ◆ | ◆ | | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | | |
| Tavistock | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Baden | | ◆ | | ◆ | | | | ◆ | | | |
| Wellesley | ◆ | ◆ | | ◆ | | ◆ | | | ◆ | | |
| New Dundee | | ◆ | | | | ◆ | | | ◆ | | |
| Plattsville | | ◆ | | | | | | | ◆ | | |

Examining specific towns, it can be seen that New Hamburg has the most recreational characteristics of any of the study towns. The trend follows that the size of the town dictates the

number of characteristics that can be expected. Thus, New Dundee and Plattsville have the fewest number of characteristics. This table is designed to provide insight into the nature of these towns. In corroboration with the maps in Appendix B and the photographs in Appendix C, this table gives provides sufficient awareness into the nature of the study towns.

Chapter

4

# Methods

## 4.0 Introduction

A range of techniques was used for the collection and analysis of data throughout this study. Each stage of data collection required that the methods be carefully chosen and meticulously applied. This chapter is subdivided to represent the methods that were used to acquire the data as well as the methods that were involved in interpreting the collected data.

Before the review of each phase of the data collection, it is prudent to review those from whom the data were collected. The subjects of the study were all students at Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School in the Region of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. Each subject was either in grade IX or X and their ages ranged between 13 and 17, with the majority of subjects being age 14 or 15 years old. Waterloo-Oxford is a rural school with its students coming from a large rural catchment area.

Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School was chosen as the study school for several reasons. First, this school meets the socio-demographic criteria that were desired. Located in a rural environment, it is more than 15 minutes by car to a large urban centre and located outside of the Kitchener/Waterloo census metropolitan area. The towns from which its students come have few prescribed recreational amenities. A summary of these amenities was provided in the previous chapter (see Table 3-1). The distance between towns restricts the interactivity between the subjects in each town.

The second major reason that Waterloo-Oxford School was chosen was the willingness of its administration to participate in this study. Initial contacts were made within the Waterloo Region District School Board due to proximity to the University of Waterloo and to take advantage of a pre-existing and thriving professional relationship between these organizations.

Waterloo Region District School Board is one of the smaller school boards in Ontario (especially due to the amalgamation of school boards in Ontario brought into effect at the beginning of the 1998 school year). Both the location and size of the school board are limits to the number of rural schools for which it is responsible. In this school board, only two schools could be considered "rural", despite the fact that many of the schools in the region have catchment areas that extend into rural areas. One rural school, located to the north of the City of Waterloo, was unable to participate in the study for undeclared reasons. The administration of the remaining rural school, Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School, was willing to participate and indeed was excited to do so as merit was given for the usage of the results of the study.

It should be stated that Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School was not the ideal choice for a study school as it remained less rural and isolated than initially desired. The eastern portion of the catchment area of the school was located in the Kitchener census metropolitan area. However, time and travel limitations encouraged the use of schools within the local area, and within that area, the unequivocal best school was Waterloo-Oxford.

## 4.1 Social Survey Techniques

Social surveys have been used in a variety of situations and with many different groups of subjects. The usage of the social survey with adolescents has been well-documented (Babbie, 1990; Dane, 1990; Gray and Guppy, 1994). The social survey is a highly developed and accepted data collection technique.

### 4.1.1 The Questionnaire Survey

The primary tool for gathering data in this study was the use of social survey techniques – specifically a questionnaire. The role played by the questionnaire was critical to the study as it allowed the rapid collection of a large quantity of high quality data.

Given the adolescent need for dynamic interactivity, one might question the use of a static tool such as a questionnaire for data collection. Questionnaires have been shown to be an effective method of collecting data from adolescents and have been used frequently (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984; Feldman and Elliott, 1990; Wyllie and Smith, 1996). While

alternative methods were considered, the questionnaire was chosen for its overall ability to acquire large quantities of data (Dane, 1990). This was of particular importance in this study as there were few human resources available. Human resources are required for the successful application of many of the alternate methods of data collection. The questionnaire provided base data upon which subsequent phases of the study were composed.

Despite the benefits of a questionnaire, notable objections still exist to its usage with adolescents. Students, even in the same grade and class, have widely varying abilities in reading, comprehension and the written response. Conversely, it can be argued that most adolescents have highly developed conversational skills (Feldman and Elliott, 1990). Thus, it would seem beneficial to exploit the innate conversational behaviour of adolescents. While focus groups or interviews allow for more open conversation, these methods would have required more human-hours than were practical for the acquisition of the volume of data that was desired.

#### 4.1.1.1 Development of the Questionnaire

Upon determining that a questionnaire would be the most suitable method for data collection, several decisions remained. First, the types of questions that would appear on the questionnaire needed to be determined; second, decisions concerning the administration of the questionnaire were to be explored; and finally, the physical layout of the questionnaire was to be considered in detail.

There are many ways to present a written question to a subject and many ways to record the subject's response. Given the nature of adolescents, the questions needed to be interactive, comfortable to respond to, simple to read, and easy to understand. This was to prevent adolescent subjects from becoming bored or frustrated while completing the questionnaire, which would have lowered the quality of the study. Generally, adolescents require high levels of stimulus to remain focused on a task. Clearly, an effective questionnaire would provide this type of stimuli.

In the earliest stages of the questionnaire design, it was determined that the questionnaire would be divided into three sections: leisure activity inventory, hangout description and socio-economic data. Each section of the questionnaire was designed to obtain specific information about these three areas of adolescent life. This is consistent with the recommendation from and praxis of many successful questionnaires (Dane, 1990). The leisure activity inventory was an

inquiry into the activities and general behaviour subscribed to by adolescents during their unstructured leisure. The hangout description section focused on getting the subjects to describe both the location and meaning of their hangouts. Finally, the third section of the questionnaire was designed to solicit general socio-economic data from the study group.

Overall, the questionnaire used a combination of open-ended and close-ended questions. The closed-ended questions were discrete and measured at the ordinal level while the open-ended questions were descriptive and thus nominal in nature. The use of these types of questions was carefully considered in contrast to questions that would have provided continuous scale or index measurement possibilities. The decision to use categorical response sets wherever possible was chosen to reduce the work of the study subjects, and further to reduce the time required to complete the questionnaire. Providing the subjects with ordered choice proved simpler than simply encouraging them to "fill-in-the-blanks". Ordinal selection questions further simplified the coding process over the alternative methods. Although, closed-ended questions can easily create bias within the data if caution is not exercised.

Consideration was given to the use of a Likert, Likert-type or semantic differential scale instead of several closed-ended questions and as a complete replacement of all open-ended questions. In many situations, this was not possible. The use of these types of scales assumes that the researcher has an understanding of the factors that underlie specific behaviour (Babbie, 1992; Dane, 1990). In other words, the researcher must know what questions to ask in order to measure specific responses. In this case, the relative originality of the study warranted caution in assuming that any understanding of underlying factors could be seen as formal knowledge. Specifically, the use of a Likert-type scale instead of open-ended questions would have significantly restricted the data that would have been collected. The open-ended questions were designed to provide an intensely rich source of data that would require further interpretation and mining. The use of a closed-ended Likert-type question would have presupposed an understanding of the same behaviour that was being studied – a hazardous paradox. Concerning closed-ended questions, wherever a Likert-type scale could have been used, it was found that a simple selection question provided a more effective yet uncomplicated and lucid form of the question. Specific examples of this are described in later paragraphs.

A few general notes about the questionnaire are appropriate at this juncture. The temporal unit of measurement for the questionnaire was the average week. It was decided that while the

average day may have been easier for subjects to recall, significant variation in activity may have existed across each day in a given week, especially on weekends. This gave preference to the average week where variation could be minimized and the subjects' recollection of activity would be fairly strong – encouraging the most accurate data possible in the context of this study. Further, the calculation of one's activity over a week was determined to be relatively simple.

The subjects were asked to complete the questionnaire with the entire school year in consideration (September to June). The exclusion of the summer months was deliberate due to the marked variation that they would have introduced. For many adolescents, summer can be a time when they do not have full control over their leisure behaviour due to family trips or vacations and other such events. Alternatively, the other extreme may also exist such that the subjects have an inordinate amount of unstructured leisure. In addition, the entire school year was considered due to the timing of the data collection. This took place in late fall, when subjects were less likely to participate in general outdoor activities. By including the entire school year, an effective examination of the full range of outdoor and indoor, cold and warm weather activities and behaviours could be completed.

Finally, when asking the subjects to describe one specific hangout, this hangout was further constrained to be the subjects' "most frequent" hangout. A decision had to be made between the most frequent hangout and the subjects' favourite hangout. It was decided that a favourite hangout might not be frequently visited because of distance, transportation or other contravening factors. The pattern of behaviour that was of most significant interest was the behaviour of "everyday". Thus, the decision was made to include "most frequent" in the questionnaire questions.

The first section of the questionnaire was the leisure activity inventory. Far from being an exhaustive inventory, it was much simplified and was focused primarily on social activities. Many exhaustive adolescent activity inventories have been completed in the past (including Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, (1984)). Clearly, it was not the intention of this section to be exhaustive although it could be argued that this was a unique group of subjects with unique leisure behaviours. It was believed that the number of leisure inventories that have been completed to date did not warrant yet another.

The initial question in the leisure inventory was definitional and critical, requesting the subjects' definition of hanging out. The next set of questions dealt with general hangout

behaviour: time spent hanging out per week, time of day and hangout group characteristics. A shortened checklist of activities was included as part of the activity inventory. The activity list was focused on social behaviour and was created with some assistance from reviewing Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) and Smale and Shaw (1993). Additional questions inquired about roaming, deciding where to hangout, location, transportation and visits to urban centres.

This section of the questionnaire used a combination of fact and opinion questions. Primarily, questions seeking a factual response were selection-type questions while questions requiring an opinion allowed the subjects to respond with a short answer or written dialogue. Subjects either circled or checked the response or responses provided that they felt best typified their behaviour. Subjects also were allowed, in certain situations, to specify additional selections that were not available in the selection set. The open-ended, opinion questions simply asked the subject to write a response to the question.

Hangout location description was the second section in questionnaire. It was comprised of only two questions that required extended answers. This section also required the most time for the subjects to complete. The instructions provided to the subjects were relatively simple. They were asked to describe, in detail, the place that they hang out the most, paying attention to both indoor and outdoor locations. The subjects were further asked to comment on the reasons why that hangout location was of interest to them. These questions were primarily focused on exploring the underlying reasons for subjects' hangout behaviour. Secondly, these questions promoted an exploration of the relationship between this behaviour and the meaning of the hangout locations. Thus, it was appropriate to use open-ended questions. Clearly, the questions in this section were designed to solicit the subjects' individual perceptions, experiences and opinions. Individuality, in conjunction with variation in the subjects' writing ability, suggested that a wide range and diversity of responses would expected throughout this section.

The final section of the questionnaire entailed questions of a socio-economic nature. The questions were primarily factual and covered socio-demographic points such as gender, age, number of siblings, and hometown. Although this section was designed to be simple to complete, many of the questions were of the open-ended, fill-in-the-blanks type. This was material with which the subjects were intimately familiar and therefore would require only a few minutes to complete. This section of the questionnaire included several types of questions. There were questions concerning the social and economic status of the subjects' family. This question asked

subjects to describe the type of work with which their parents were associated. The final question concerned the employment status of the subjects themselves, specifically inquiring about the number of hours that subjects worked per week. This section of the questionnaire provided the basis for subgroup classification of the results of the questionnaire for the purpose of comparison. For the most part, these data were not included in the analysis stage.

#### 4.1.1.2 Refining the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was refined in several stages. The content, phrasing, functionality and answerability of the questions were reviewed. While mistakes, inaccuracies or inconsistencies on the questionnaire reduce the overall effectiveness of the study instrument and ultimately the quality of the data, the effect of such incongruities on data would be particularly devastating to the results altogether. It was seen that a questionnaire for this age group needed to be exceptionally simple to complete and free from any inconsistency that would hinder its effective completion – as far as possible, it needed to be a pleasure to complete.

With a focus upon these high goals, an aggressive period of critique from several parties was required. The first level of critique was simply theoretical. By reviewing the suggestions for the creation of an effective questionnaire in seminal works such as Dane (1990) and Babbie (1992), it was possible to improve the overall quality of the questionnaire. Further, whenever possible, previously applied questionnaires were examined and the concepts behind effective questions were employed in this study instrument. The first major modification was the rearrangement of the sections in the questionnaire such that the background/socio-economic section appeared at the end of the questionnaire instead of at the beginning. This improved the flow of the questionnaire by opening with a simple, general question about one of the core study topics (see Gray and Guppy, 1994). Page numbers were removed to reduce anxiety about the length of the instrument. Next, closed-ended questions were checked to ensure that the selection option list provided was both exhaustive and mutually exclusive; a complete range of options was to be given to the subjects and there was to be no overlap among responses. Finally, extended written instructions were included at the beginning of each section explaining how to answer the questions and describing the types of questions that were to be asked and the reasons why they were of importance to the study.

The second level review and quality check was performed by third party, non ex-parte readers. These readers were highly efficient in identifying inconsistencies among questions and suggesting improvements to the questions. The readers consisted of both academic and non-academic colleagues. Suggestions for improvement from this level of review included changes to the phrasing of questions for clarification, reordering of the questions to improve comprehension, addition and clarification of check-box options and the addition of new questions to better cover the areas of interest. Further, the readers suggested the addition of question numbers; a suggestion that was implemented in the final version of the questionnaire. The non-academic readers were of particular value as they included persons such as teachers and parents who had a strong understanding of adolescents.

It was during this stage of the review that the physical format of the questionnaire came into discussion. It was determined that a more "friendly" format should be adopted. Further to this suggestion, the questionnaire was converted from a standard portrait (8½ by 11 inches) stapled format to folded tabloid (11 by 17 inches), non-saddle-stitched (stapled) booklet style. This allowed a full and attractive cover page to be added to the questionnaire. In addition, graphical devices (such as images) were used to separate the text as well as create white space and reduce the "examination" feel of the instrument. The additional space afforded by this format was used to create stronger separation between each question and more space for writing answers to open-ended questions. A simple font was used for the principal text and larger clearer section headings were created. A sample of the questionnaire can be seen in Appendix A.

#### 4.1.1.3 Field-testing

The single most effective tool for validating the effectiveness of the questionnaire was the field-testing. Upon completion of the refining of the questionnaire, it needed to be tested in a mock study environment. This allowed factors such as time required for completion to be monitored and modified as necessary. The field-testing also provided the first set of results from which it could be determined if the answers to the questions were as comprehensive as was expected. The real value of the field-testing was that of using actual adolescents to review the study instrument. As it was a survey in which they played an integral part, their participation at this stage was invaluable.

The field-testing subjects consisted of members of Scouts Canada. Scouts Canada is a volunteer youth organization that encourages young people to achieve their full potential as individuals through interaction with other young people as well as become responsible members of society through community service[1]. Through contacts with the District Commissioner of North Waterloo, permission was granted to conduct two field-testing projects with a mix of mostly rural adolescents. It was desired that the field-testing subjects be as similar to the study subjects as possible. To this end, rural adolescents aged 14 and 15 were desired for the field-testing. The programs at Scout Canada are organized by age and for this reason, the field-testing subjects were taken from the Venturers program rather than the younger, more popular Scouts program (aged 11-14). The Venturers' program is smaller than the Scouts program and therefore required more time to schedule meetings with the groups. Eventually, two Venturer groups participated in the field-testing: Elmira and Kitchener. The 1st Elmira Venturer Company was especially valuable because the town of Elmira is located to the North, outside the City of Kitchener-Waterloo. The Kitchener group graciously participated, but was valuable to a lesser extent as most of the subjects in this group were from the City of Kitchener-Waterloo and displayed urban leisure behaviours.

The field tests were conducted in the first part of the month of November 1999. Before these tests, information letters and letters of permission were issued to the leaders of the Venturer groups who forwarded them to the parents of the subjects. Only subjects who had permission from their parents or guardians were allowed to participate in the field-testing. The Venturer group from Kitchener included a younger group of adolescents (aged 12 and 13 years old) who had been given permission to participate in the field test and were permitted to do so.

The field-testing began with an introduction of the study and background on what was required of the subjects. They were made aware that the results of their questionnaire would not be included in the final results of the study; rather, they would be used to improve the questionnaire for the actual study group. They were further advised of the significance of their collective role and the value of their critique and comments. The subjects were then given 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire and were asked to make corrections and suggestions directly on the questionnaire. The subjects were encouraged to ask questions if they were unclear or unsure about any of the questions. Following completion of the questionnaire, a facilitated discussion followed in which the subjects voiced their opinions on both general and specific issues

[1] *Official Scouts Canada Web Site: www.scouts.ca*

of concern from the study instrument. Upon completion of the field-testing, 23 subjects from both Kitchener and Elmira had participated.

Maintaining that the fundamental reason for the field-testing was the verification of the quality and effectiveness of the questionnaire, the results of both field-testing events were quite beneficial. It is notable, however, that the field-testing environment was not an exceptional imitation of the study environment. This was for two main reasons. First, the field-testing subjects tended to be slightly older than was desired. As such, many had overcome some of the challenges of transportation deprivation, citing friends' cars as a standard method of transportation. In addition, these older adolescents participated in older adolescent activities such as going to youth clubs. The second main difference between the field-testing subjects and the study subjects was that almost half of them were from urban environments. Despite the fact that Elmira is North of Kitchener-Waterloo, it still has a substantial commercial downtown area that includes restaurants such as McDonalds. None of the study towns has such significant commercial development. Again, the subjects from the Kitchener-Waterloo area took full advantage of the benefits of their urban environment. They made use of malls, downtown areas, arcades, restaurants and most significantly, public transportation. The most common suggestion from this group was that public transportation be added to the list of forms of transportation. There were no study towns that had a public transportation system and as such this recommendation was not applied.

Exceptions and differences aside, the suggestions put forth from these groups concerning the content, phrasing, functionality and answerability of the questions were applied to the final questionnaire. These suggestions included the removal of certain antiquated phrases and the simplification of several questions. They suggested splitting several multistaged questions into separate questions for ease of answering. The results of the field-testing encouraged the addition of the "other friends" option to the list of hangout companions. The results also challenged the assumptions about the size of adolescent social groups and encouraged the use of an open-ended format for this question. As well, in corroboration with other suggestions from academic colleagues, the results of the field-testing introduced the important definitional question, "What does 'hanging out' mean to you?" using that specific phrasing. They suggested that clearer instructions be attached to the question concerning hangout locations. This also was accepted and applied in the final version of the questionnaire. The field-testing subjects in Elmira were the first

to review the questionnaire in its tabloid booklet format and compare it to the standard portrait format. The tabloid booklet format was very well received and a certain disregard shown for the standard portrait format. The tabloid booklet format was used for the final questionnaire with the study group.

#### 4.1.1.4 Preparation for the Administration of the Questionnaire

For the effective administration of the questionnaire, the critical stage of preparation was required. The survey was to take place in a publicly funded school where time was at a premium. Further, fostering the proper relationship with the school administration and teachers was more than simply diplomacy, it was important to the overall quality of the study.

In the earliest stages of preparation, a meeting occurred between the school principal and the researcher. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the principal to the study, provide some background, explain the reason for the study and describe how the results of the study would be used. A copy of the thesis proposal was forwarded to the school administration. It was at this stage that the needs of the study were introduced: number of students and time commitments of the teachers. A second meeting opened dialogue with the department heads of the Geography and History departments. These departments were chosen because they contain courses that all grade IX and X students are required to take and were willing to participate in the study. At this meeting, a rough timetable of required class time was discussed and the department heads were encouraged to relay information about the study to each teacher whose class would be participating in the study. Upon each teacher deciding to participate in the study, dates when the data collection would be completed were established. These dates were set for early December 1998.

Although it would have been beneficial to the researcher to spread the data collection dates over several days (perhaps up to a week) with the large number of students involved, this was not beneficial for the school administration and teachers. To minimize classroom interruptions and the number of days required to complete the data collection, it was decided to conduct these sessions over two days. This was the minimum number of days in which it was possible to visit all sections of grade IX Geography and grade X History. There were 14 sections

of Geography and 13 sections of History for a combined total of 27 classes that were to be visited over two days for the completion of the questionnaire.

Significantly, the classroom visitation process was to be completed twice. The first visit took place a week before the administration of the questionnaire. The purpose of this earlier visit with the potential subjects was to introduce the study to them, invite them to participate and to create an atmosphere of excitement about the study. They were made aware that their participation not only hinged upon their personal desire to be a part of the study, but in all cases, they required parental permission as well. The students were given an information package that included an information letter to parents or guardians as well as a permission form that parents or guardians were required to sign if their child was to participate in the study. Students were asked to return the signed permission form to their teacher as soon as possible to avoid non-participation in the study. The students were motivated by the fact that the study focused on their behaviour and possible improvements to their environment as well as the fact that the survey would forgo normal class work for that day. While this initial meeting with the students was only 15 minutes long, it received praise from the administration, teachers and the students themselves and is the only plausible explanation for the unusually high participation rate. It was time consuming, but well worth the commitment.

The teachers were asked to participate in the preparation for the administration of the questionnaire in several ways. First, they were asked to provide class time in which the administration of the questionnaire and the recruitment meetings could take place. Next, they were asked to be responsible for the collection of the permission forms from the students as well as providing information packages to students who were absent on the recruitment day or who had lost their packages. Most significantly, teachers were asked to encourage the students to return the permission forms if they wanted to participate in the study. The teachers also were asked to be responsible for the activities of students who chose not to, or were otherwise unable to, participate in the study. Finally, teachers were asked to be present in the classroom during the administration of the questionnaire. All of the preparation for the questionnaire was done to create a rapport with both the teachers and the potential subjects.

#### 4.1.1.5 Administration of questionnaire

The administration of the questionnaire was highly dependent upon the earlier stage of preparation. As the preparation was effectively completed, the results of this were seen in the smooth execution of the administration of the survey. The questionnaires were administered over two school days. Each day included a mix of Grade IX Geography and Grade X History classes with fourteen classes on the first day and the remaining 13 on the second day. The school has a five-period day beginning at 8:30AM and concluding at 3:00PM. The questionnaires were administered to an average of four classes per period excluding lunch periods. Only students who had returned their signed parental permission form were permitted to participate in the study.

Due to the relatively large number of classes participating in the study per period, it was necessary to allow teachers to use the class time before the administration of the questionnaire began in their classroom for their own purposes (lessons, classroom administration). However, as soon as it was time to begin administration of the questionnaire in their room they concluded their work and permitted the preamble to the completion of the questionnaire to begin.

Each survey session in each class began with a brief introduction to the study to remind each subject about the nature of the study. Next, the questionnaire was described to the subjects including information about how the instrument was subdivided. The introductory paragraph at the beginning of the questionnaire was read to the group. This was of particular importance because it included instructions crucial to the effective completion of the questionnaire. These instructions contained delimiting information such as the exclusion of structured or scheduled activities when completing the questionnaire as well as the request to consider activity and behaviour over the entire school year. Additionally, subjects were reminded that their responses were completely confidential and were encouraged to complete the questionnaire individually without the assistance of other classmates. The subjects were further reminded that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions, rather only their experiences and opinions mattered. Furthermore, subjects were encouraged to respond truthfully to all questions, to complete the entire questionnaire and most importantly, to ask questions if they were unsure about the meaning of a question. Upon clarification of any questions that the subjects had, the questionnaires were disseminated to the study group. With a final word of encouragement concerning the detail with

which the questionnaire was to be completed, subjects were allowed to begin completing the questionnaire. This process was repeated for each class.

After several minutes, the researcher returned to each class to ensure that any questions could be answered. The teachers were asked to encourage students who had questions to continue working until the researcher arrived to respond to them. This accomplished two goals: first, the teacher was released from his/her obligation to guess what the correct answer to a question might be and second, the researcher was able to provide standard responses to similar questions to help reduce bias. Throughout the completion of the questionnaire, there were very few questions. These were generally simple, for example, clarification of multiple selection questions or nearest town to ones home. The teacher also assigned quiet work to students who were not participating in the study and ensured that the noise and interruptions in the classroom were kept to a minimum.

The students were allowed as much time as needed to complete the questionnaire with a general time delimitation of 45 minutes (although this was not needed as all students completed the questionnaire in less time). Students who completed the questionnaire before their peers were asked to submit their completed questionnaire to their teacher and commence working on a prescribed assignment. This method was beneficial because it encouraged students to take more time to complete the questionnaire in order to avoid working on the class assignment.

Upon completion of all questionnaires in a class, the subjects were thanked and reminded that their statements were confidential. The subjects were further reminded of how the study results would be used and to whom copies of the executive summary would be sent. Students interested in the results would be able to contact the school administration to see a copy of the executive summary. The completed questionnaires were not segregated in any way at this stage; rather they were simply mass-collected for later review and analysis.

### 4.2.1 Processing of data

This section will describe, in detail, the procedures that were involved in the processing of the survey data. It entails descriptions of the coding practices and digitization of the data. The procedures described forthwith are in agreement with the techniques suggested in Babbie (1990), Dane (1990) and Gray and Guppy (1994).

#### 4.2.1.1 Coding of the questionnaire data

The first stage of coding the survey data was the assignment of a four digit primary key to each usable questionnaire. Thus, each questionnaire was reviewed and verified for completion and accountability. At this stage of the processing, accountability referred to the effective completion of the questionnaire. Any questionnaire bearing flagrant examples of deviant behaviour such as inappropriate language or drawings was immediately assigned inactive status, labelled as such and removed from the set of active questionnaires. The set of active questionnaires was sequentially and incrementally assigned a four-digit primary key code beginning with code 0000. This primary key was recorded on each questionnaire on the first and third pages to prevent any inadvertent commingling among the pages of the questionnaires. All non-active questionnaires were marked with an error code in the same fashion.

The coding of the actual questions within the questionnaire was significantly more tedious. For each question, it was determined how best to record the data with simplicity, but maintaining the quality of the data. In the case of open-ended nominal or descriptive questions, they were directly transcribed – recorded word-for-word. General selection lists were coded by numbering the options in the list, beginning with the number 1 and reserving the number 0 for a non-response to that specific question. For example, question 2 of the questionnaire asks, "How much time do you normally spend hanging out during the week?" To this question there exists five possible responses: "Less than 20 hours", "20 to 34 hours", "35 to 40 hours", "45 to 60 hours" and "More than 60 hours". These responses were coded with "1", representing "Less than 20 hours", sequentially to "5", representing "More than 60 hours". If a particular study subject chose not to answer this question then the assigned value would have been "0".

In several open-ended questions (see Appendix A, Questions 7 and 9), the subjects were asked to record an absolute number to be interpreted as a ratio variable. However, in many cases the subjects responded with a range instead of a single number. In these cases, two variables were used to code the responses. These variables represented the low boundary and the high boundary of the range as recorded by the subjects. These high and low boundaries were averaged to provide a single midpoint value.

Another specific challenge for coding was realized with multiple selection questions in which the subjects were instructed to examine a list of potential responses and then select all that

applied. It was not possible simply to assign ordinal values to the responses as was done previously in single-selection scenarios. Multiple selection questions were dealt with using a strategy that was different from the single selection questions. Each option in the multiple selection lists was treated as a binary or logical variable for which the alternatives were selected or not selected. This significantly increased the number of variables required to represent the data; however, it preserved the integrity of the responses. Concerning the "other" open-ended alternative provided with the multiple selection questions; these were directly transcribed as open-ended questions.

#### 4.2.1.2 Digitization of the data

The digital processing of the questionnaire data was the subsequent stage after the coding of the data. The data were digitized for several reasons, the most notable of which was the improved ability to analyse the data using statistical analyses and other computer software packages. The software chosen for the digital storage of the data was Microsoft Access 97, which is a database software package. It was determined that a database would be the best tool for storage of the data because there were appreciable quantities of text-based variables. Although Microsoft's spreadsheet package, Microsoft Excel 97, was considered for the primary storage tool, its capacity to store text is limited in comparison to Microsoft Access 97 (herein referred to as Access 97). The Microsoft products were selected over standard statistical software packages such as SAS and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) because they provided greater general availability and lower cost. As mentioned previously, Access 97 was used as the primary storage package with most calculations and analyses being performed in Microsoft Excel 97. The ability to transfer data between Access 97 and Microsoft Excel 97 was exceptionally valuable and was taken advantage of throughout the processing and analysis. Additionally, Access 97 has the functionality for automatic record save. Access automatically saves all record data as soon as focus is set to another record or the window is closed. A final benefit of Access 97 is its versatility. It can be programmed to make use of standard statistical techniques. This was important in the earlier stages of decision making.

The first step in the digitization of the survey data was to create a database in Access 97. This was done by creating three tables to represent the three sections of the questionnaire. Each

question per section was assigned one or more variables in which the reported values could be recorded. These variables were of three primary types: text, numeric and logical. Again, multiple selection questions were represented as a logical variable for each option in the selection list. The three tables were linked via a primary key – the same four-digit code assigned to each questionnaire. Access 97 also allows the definition of data validation rules. These rules allow the user to delimit what type or range of data will be permitted to be stored in a specific variable. For example, data validation rules could be created such that a numeric variable would only accept values greater than zero and less than six.

The next step in the digitization process was the creation of a data entry form. While Access 97 does not require the creation of a form for data entry (data can be directly entered into the tables), it was beneficial to create such a form to ease the challenge of data entry as well as increase speed. A form also provides a clean mechanism for reviewing data that has been previously entered into the database.

Upon testing the structure and integrity of the database, data entry began. Entering one section at a time, beginning with Section C: Background Information, the data from the questionnaires were stored in the database. Sections A and B were entered contiguously through the use of a linked form. Requiring over two hundred hours, the data entry took five weeks to complete.

In certain cases, a study subject would circle more than one option in a question for which only one answer was required. If it could be determined that an attempt was made to highlight one of the two selections (i.e., scribbling out of a selection or additional highlighting to another) then that option was assumed to be the subject's selection. If no such distinction could be established then a null value was entered for that question. Any other such indiscretions were dealt with on an individual basis. Some deciphering skills were applied to the open-ended questions although there was a conscious effort to maintain the integrity of the subjects' statements – bad grammar and all. Every attempt was made to maintain adolescent jargon, slang or lingo in an effort to ensure the specificity of the language was not lost. One specific modification that was made to the subjects' responses applied mostly to females who selected the "No" option in response to the question "Do you have a job?". In these situations females selected the negative option then proceeded to include the statement that they baby-sit occasionally. In this situation, the negative selection was changed to the affirmative.

The data were entered in no specific order, as once they were digital they could be organized according to any variable. Notwithstanding logistical database problems (such as form errors and a corruption of the database), the data were successfully digitized. During the data entry, some common concepts were identified in the open-ended questions. These were summarized into simple phrases that were added to a new text variable that was designed to catch these commonalities. This was particularly useful during the later content analysis. Incomplete questionnaires were not entered into the database.

#### 4.2.1.3 Rectification of digitized database

Before any analysis of the data could be performed, the data entered into the database had to be checked for correctness. This was accomplished on two fronts. For the closed-ended questions, it was to be verified that the correct information was taken from the questionnaire and stored digitally. As mentioned previously, the use of Access 97 allowed for the creation of data validation rules. These were used as the first line of defense against error during the data entry phase. It was not only plausible, but probable that errors would be identified. Errors in the data validation rules did not necessarily mean that there would be error in the digital data set; however, neither did it preclude the possibility that errors would exist. Thus, instead of verifying the accuracy of the data validation rules, it was decided that it would be a better investment of effort to verify the actual data.

The validation of the closed-ended ordinal data was accomplished by building contingency tables in Access 97. The contingency tables provided a summary of the data in tabular form so that erroneous classes (either rows or columns) could be readily identified. Contingency tables were quickly built in Access 97 and allowed highly modifiable results. A comparison of sums was also performed in Access using the same contingency tables. Each table was to total the expected number of male and female subjects as well as the total number of questionnaires. In this way, a few oversights in the data entry were identified and eliminated. These mistakes were primarily errors of omission and were relatively simple to correct.

Clearly, the techniques applied to the rectification of the closed-ended questions could not be used with the open-ended questions. The open-ended questions were treated as prose. Thus, the methods used for rectification were no different than would be used with any other writing:

spelling and grammar checks. Again, the exceptional functionality of Access 97 was applied. Access 97 includes both spell- and grammar-checking abilities, which were used to identify clerical errors only. The data were tested using standard and custom dictionaries. There were several corrections in spelling, almost all of which were due to typing errors. Spelling inconsistencies were eliminated so that there existed only one acceptable spelling for a given word throughout the database. This was particularly important and valuable during the content analysis. Generally, so long as the sentence structure was understandable and the meaning of the statements comprehensible and unambiguous, the grammar was not modified. A proofreading of all open-ended questions was performed and slight modifications to grammar were realized if the were attributed to clerical error.

## 4.2 Focus Group Techniques

Focus groups have become an increasingly popular method of data collection in recent years (Krueger, 1994). The technique involves moderated group discussion involving diverse people having common attributes. The moderator poses a series of questions to the group and they respond to the questions based on their personal experience or beliefs. The participants' responses to the questions are recorded for analysis.

The focus group was the last phase of the data collection in this study. The goal of the focus groups was to verify and clarify the conclusions about adolescent leisure that had been determined from the questionnaire data in order to gain a stronger understanding of the meaning that is attached to place. The focus group method was chosen because of two specific advantages that it boasts. The first advantage that focus groups provide is flexibility (Babbie, 1992). The aggressive interpersonal contact that focus groups afford, allow it to remain extremely flexible while maintaining its value as a qualitative technique. The second advantage that focus groups offer is their ability to generate quick and valid results (Babbie, 1992). There is little analysis that needs to be done to the results of focus group data before they are readily and comprehensibly presentable.

In previous discussions, it was mentioned that adolescents require dynamic interactivity and tend to have strong conversational skills. These characteristics make adolescents particularly

well suited to the use of focus groups. The focus group allowed subjects to participate in a fun discussion concerning a topic with which they were all familiar. From this discussion, the degree to which the participants agreed or disagreed with the results of the study could be gauged. To the point, the focus group allowed the exploration of the meanings that the subjects attached to places.

The focus groups were deliberately scheduled to occur after much of the analysis of the survey data had been completed. This allowed these results to become the topic of focus for the group. A strong grasp of the results of the questionnaire was required to ensure that the focus group could remain a dynamic but meaningful discussion. In addition, the later scheduling of the focus groups allowed a significant amount of time to elapse after the survey. This was necessary because it allowed the focus groups to take place during a different time of year. Recalling that the survey subjects were asked to consider the entire school year in their responses, the delay in the focus group allowed validation of the types of activities and behaviours that the adolescents reported.

### 4.2.1 Preparation for the focus groups

The preparation required for the focus groups was not as intense as the preparation for the survey, nevertheless the completion of an important set of tasks were required for their success. The preparation for the focus groups did not require as much time as preparation for the surveys simply because of the fewer numbers of participants involved.

Choosing a "within-group" study method, it was decided that the focus group participants would be students from Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School who participated in the earlier social survey phase of the study. This decision was defended by the underlying reasons for using focus groups in this study. Only the previous questionnaire subjects could add valid comments to the results derived. The focus groups were not designed to solicit external opinions; rather, the definitive purpose was to either validate or refute and assist in the interpretation of the results of the questionnaire. Using subjects from the survey phase of the study reduced the number of confounding variables that would be introduced in the focus group participants.

Drawing on the already thriving professional relationship between the school administration and the researchers, permission was quickly granted to schedule and proceed with

this part of the study. A meeting with the school administration secured the time, space and access to the students required.

The first major decision concerning the focus groups was that of number of groups. Relying upon subjects from the previous study group, it was determined that only two focus groups would be required. There is dissension between researchers as to the optimum number of focus group participants required to meet the needs of the study, ranging from a high of 14 (Babbie, 1992) to a low of five (Krueger, 1994). The desire to create an environment where all participants would feel free to partake of the discussion was of paramount concern. It was decided, after discussions with colleagues and a further review of the literature, that a group size of eight would provide an optimal solution. A request to the school administration was forwarded asking for permission for 16 students to be made available for the focus groups: two groups of eight students comprised of equal gender and grade/age representations.

Discussion was generated around the nature of the mix of participants in focus groups. Specifically, evidence exists within the literature to suggest that mixed-gender participants within the same focus group can reduce the quality of results (see Krueger, 1994). It has been noted that when men and women are in the same discussion group, there tends to be a disproportional gender response – men speak more and women become quiet (Krueger, 1994). It was recognized that in the secondary school setting, males and females are mostly in the same classes. Thus, it appeared that there should be no major concern about having mixed focus groups. Indeed, the alternative of having gender-specific focus groups across the grade IX and X years posed a notable threat of incompatibility. It was decided that the focus groups would consist of males and females from the same grade levels as it was anticipated that this would improve the quality of data over the alternatives.

The second major decision concerning the focus groups was the time requirements. It was highly desirable that the use of the participants' time be optimized as well as minimized. These participants had already given 45 minutes of their class time to the survey so it was felt that anything that could be done to reduce the time commitment for the focus groups would be appreciated. Given the nature of the material as well as the number of questions that needed to be discussed, it appeared appropriate that 30 to 45 minutes would be sufficient. Although it initially appeared that a longer period would be required to accomplish the goals of the focus group, upon

re-evaluation the aforementioned period was deemed adequate. The fatigue of the groups had to be considered as well.

The last major decision that remained to be resolved was that of subject selection for the focus groups. The selection of participants is one of the most critical phases of the focus group method. The members of a focus group need to be vocal and interested in the topic of discussion. Focus groups in which participants do not participate in the discussion are certain to produce disappointing results. Thus, reiterating the earlier point, the selection of participants was crucial to the success of the focus groups. Several alternatives existed for the selection procedure. As the class teacher could express a greater familiarity with the students than any other party involved, it was considered that the class teacher should select the students who would participate in the focus groups. Unfortunately, the teacher's knowledge creates a paradox; his or her own biases would come to fruition if there were no other factors included in the decision as to who would participate in the focus groups. It was of particular concern that the teacher might have selected students who were proficient academically, but might not be vocal enough to participate effectively in the focus groups. A second alternative for the selection of focus group participants was a random method. By randomly selecting participants from the previous study subjects, the selection of focus groups could boast statistical significance while lending itself to a simple selection scheme. Again the concern of the selection of participants who would be most active, suppressed this alternative. The focus groups needed a gregarious group of participants.

The selection of the participants for the focus groups was eventually deferred to the students. Considering the innate difficulties of the alternatives, it was decided that it was important to allow only those students who wanted to participate in the focus groups to do so. After being informed as to the role of the focus groups, students were asked to volunteer to participate. The first students who returned with permission from their parents and/or guardians were accepted as participants in the focus groups. Equal gender and grade representation was maintained. Clearly, there was inherent bias this method. Allowing student to determine if they wanted to participate may have lead to an unrepresentative sample. It was decided that despite this, these self-selected students would be suitable as they illustrated initiative.

It was determined that the format of the focus groups should be kept simple and informal, fostering a relaxed environment. The recording of data during the discussion was to be performed by a human recorder. This recorder was to document the participants' responses to the questions

asked by the moderator. The moderator also was equipped to record some of the participants' responses. This method allowed the moderator to focus on listening to the participants and formulating questions to ensure that the participants' statements were understood. Further, the moderator did not require additional time to document statements, as this was the responsibility of the recorder. The recorder was not an active participant in the focus group discussion. To protect the anonymity of the participants, no electronic equipment, such as tape recorders, were used during the focus group discussions.

### 4.2.2 Development of focus group questions

The questions used in the focus group were generated primarily from the results of the questionnaire. Evolving from questions generated either directly from the questionnaire or from the results of the questionnaire, a list of questions for discussion was created. Some questions were of a general nature such as the frequency of mixed gender social groups while others were specific concerning behaviour as described in the questionnaire. Any response from the questionnaire subjects for which the underlying dynamic was not understood or for which a better understanding was desired had the potential for becoming a focus group question. As such, a significant refining of the focus group questions was required to meet the time restrictions.

The questions for the focus group discussions were organized into four categories derived from the four primary areas where questions arose. Questions about hangout companions, hangout activities, hangout location and hangout issues were examined. Concerning companions, subjects were asked to describe, in greater detail, who comprises their hangout groups. In the activity category, participants were asked to provide separation between activities by describing differences between certain activities. Further information concerning transportation was one of the primary questions that were asked in the location section. Broader issues around hanging out, such as questions concerning privacy, were examined in the hangout issues section. Each of these questions served to establish an understanding of the meaning that the subjects attached to their places.

A major concern identified during the survey phase of the study had to do with subjects describing details of either their own or their friends' illegal and/or seriously deviant behaviour. This was determined to be a potential and highly undesirable area during the focus groups. It was

requested that participants not describe any illegal activities and not mention any names of people participating in such activities.

### 4.2.3 Implementation of Focus Groups

The focus groups occurred on a single day in mid June 1999, five months after the questionnaires had been administered. A week before the focus groups were to occur, the participants were given an information package containing a letter requesting permission for the student to participate as well as a permission form. The permission form had to be signed and returned by the student to allow participation in the focus groups.

An early problem developed with the focus groups. Due to confusion between the school administration and the researcher, the focus groups were scheduled on an inconvenient day wherein the length of the school day was reduced. This unfortunate situation restricted the amount of time that could be used for focus groups. The inevitable solution was to reduce the number of focus group sessions from two to one. Thus, a single focus group session was created by amalgamating participants from both grade levels. A final group of 11 participants was involved in this focus group. While this was a significant inconvenience, it is not believed that the data collected from this focus group was of any less quality or value.

The participants met with the moderator and recorder in a room at Waterloo-Oxford Secondary School. The meeting began with a short introduction by the moderator as to the reason that the focus groups were needed and a statement of appreciation to the participants for agreeing to participate. The role of the recorder was introduced and then the recorder sat at a strategic position at the back of the room away from the participants. The participants were given name tags showing their first names only. This allowed the moderator to refer to participants by their name, creating an environment conducive to open discussion. Several of the participants were familiar with each other. The focus group session, which lasted 30 minutes, was unfortunately restricted by the shortened class periods. Nevertheless, all participants were highly vocal and participated in the discussions. Despite open differences between both gender and age groups, a non-confrontational attitude was taken by all and the conversation was friendly and light-spirited. The moderator had opportunity to expand upon the responses of participants, using contrived scenarios such as "If a cool hangout location could be created in your town what would some of

its characteristics be" to ensure that an understanding of a concept was correct. Overall, the focus group discussion was pleasant and informative. Upon completion of the focus group discussion, participants were thanked again and given a letter of gratitude outlining how the results of the discussion would be used.

### 4.2.4 Processing of the focus group data

The processing of the focus group data was simpler than the data of the survey. The first step in the processing of these data was a comparison of records between the moderator and recorder. This occurred immediately following the focus group. This ensured that important statements had not been missed. The comparison further ensured that statements made by the participants were understood and properly recorded. During this time, insights into hangout behaviour of these adolescents were recorded on separate paper. These insights were to be later used in the application of the results of the focus group to the results of the survey. The comparison of the recorded notes was an important part of the quality assurance of the focus group data and took a short time to accomplish.

The second step in the processing of the focus group data was the transcription of the data into digital format. This was not a necessary step, however, it proved to be valuable as statements from the focus group could be quickly and directly quoted.

Finally, the data were analyzed and reviewed for specific quotations that typified specific behaviours or actions. Specific quotations that exemplified the answer to a question during the focus groups and established a relationship to results of the survey were identified and catalogued for later inclusion in the discussion chapter. It should be noted that there exists no chapter of results for the focus group data, as this was not the intended purpose of the focus group. The results of the focus groups were used for their ability to illustrate the true or underlying meaning of an idea established in the survey data.

This concludes the description of the data collection methods. The methods used to process the data collected into meaningful results are described throughout the remainder of this chapter.

## 4.3 Statistical Techniques

The statistical techniques that were applied to the digital data from the questionnaires were principally descriptive. Descriptive statistics were used extensively through the analysis phase of this study. Conventional statistics such as means and standard deviations were restricted in their usage because of the type of data that was generated by the questionnaire. The open-ended questions were managed using the techniques described later in the content analysis section of this chapter. Most of the other questions were of a selection list format which are ordinal in nature. With the exception of ordinal question formats such as the Likert scale, ordinal data are generally not processed as interval or ratio values. As such, the calculations of standard descriptive statistics such as the mean were not performed. For the ordinal data, descriptive statistics such as percentage response were calculated.

Single selection and multiple selection questions were summarized in the same way. Percentage response was calculated for each possible selection. This was a simple calculation based on the number of responses to a question as a percentage of the total number of possible responses, which varied from question to question. In addition to percentage response, the standard error of the proportion was calculated. The standard error of the proportion, in its simplest explanation, is the standard deviation of the sampling distribution of the proportion (Diekhoff, 1992). This calculation allowed an effective method of establishing if a significant difference existed between two responses.

A variety of software packages exists for the calculations of basic statistics. In the case of this study, Microsoft Excel 97 was used. This software package was chosen for its simplicity, readily available visualization tools and data-sharing capabilities with Access 97. Microsoft Excel 97 was used to import the data set from the Access 97 database format and place it into a spreadsheet format for calculation. Microsoft Excel 97 was also used to create bar graphs of percentage response. It was also versatile enough to allow the addition of the standard error bars to the graphs.

The ordinal nature of the data forced reliance upon non-parametric statistical tests. For comparisons between subgroups of the study (for example, males and females or grade IX and grade X), the Chi-square test statistic was heavily used. Key questions in each section of the questionnaire were analyzed for significant differences between subgroups. T-tests were used in

two situations where data values were ratio. Specifically, t-tests were performed for the gender and grade subgroups. These situations were the number of companions in the hangout groups and the number of hangout locations reported. For all statistical tests, the standard of a 95 per cent confidence interval was applied.

## 4.4 Content Analysis Techniques

Content analysis is the technique of both quantitative and qualitative analysis that involves text. This text can be derived in many ways including prose, poetry, lyrics to music, transcribed interviews and written responses to questions. Interestingly, this text can be acquired from a collection of equally variable sources. These sources can be primary, secondary or tertiary sources of data.

There are two types of content analysis. In the first type, the researcher begins with a very specific idea of what is being sought. Generally, this means that there are words and/or phrases that confer the whole meaning of that which is being sought. Thus, there is a reduced need for inference. This is known as manifest content analysis and is defined by Dane (1990) as being "physical or non-inferential material". If the researcher is attempting to define meaning from the data by inferring it, then it is appropriate to use the second type of content analysis. This is known as latent content analysis. The researcher attempts to understand the underlying meaning hidden within words or phrases. Latent content analysis is often used for archival research to improve an understanding of the social behaviour of people at a certain time (Babbie, 1992; Dane, 1990). This form of content analysis is often quite difficult to support in the absence of large quantities of auxiliary data. These types of content analyses can frequently compliment each other.

The goal of content analysis in this study was to identify the meaning of the adolescent hangout locations. The subjects had much to say about what their hangouts meant to them as well as what these places provided for them. It was the purpose of this method to identify and isolate the common values and meaning applied to these locations. Common behaviour and experiences can be difficult to interpret; however, the provision of sufficient auxiliary data can be valuable.

Manifest and latent content analyses were both employed during this phase of the data analysis. A simple form of latent content analysis was used through the generation of a complete word list. This word list became a primer to developing phrases to be used for manifest content

analysis, which was the general technique that was used to extract meaningful information from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire. For each open-ended question, the subjects were asked to record their opinion or experience in a given area. These responses, which were provided by the subjects, were then read to provide a basic understanding of the trends seen in the responses. The responses were then analyzed at the word level. All of the responses were subjected to a word frequency count in which the number of times each word was used was recorded. This type of analysis lead to the generation of a keyword index. Groups of frequently occurring words were summarized in a key-phrase index. These words were used to establish certain meaning when applied in context. Such an index was used in the definition of what hanging out meant to the subjects. Each keyword and phrase was catalogued and then frequency for each was determined.

Manifest content analysis was further applied to specific open-ended questions. Due to the relatively short response, there was no need for a word frequency count. Rather, the statement was analyzed as a whole. This was possible because for certain questions (such as Question 11 on deciding where to hangout and Question 13 on leaving a hangout), each subject responded with a single purposeful explanation. A categorization of these responses into classes of common responses was performed. Following this, the frequency of responses to each class was analyzed. This was a highly effective method of extracting meaning from the entire study group, notwithstanding the large time commitment for its completion. It should be stated that this was a subjective procedure and unquestionably susceptible to human error. Nevertheless, the process was carefully scrutinized and the rules for each decision, including ambiguous responses, was recorded to allow a review of each decision by an independent party. In the case of multiple responses to one of these questions, the response was classified under the first or most prominent response and all other responses were ignored.

The results of the content analyses were summarized both quantitatively and qualitatively. There was an emphasis on qualitative summaries as they more readily applied to the underlying reasons for performing the content analyses. From a quantitative perspective, percentage frequency was used to determine how often a phrase or word was used by the subjects. This absolute measure provided an effective way of comparing results. Qualitative summaries took the form of quotations that were exemplary and representative. This collection of quotations is

employed throughout the results to show typical responses as well as to provide an interpretation of the quantitative results.

Two software packages were used in the content analysis. NoteTab Light Version 4.6a was created by Eric G. V. Fookes and is an award-winning, fully customizable text editor. In addition, NoteTab Light is freeware meaning it is free to the public. Its full-featured coding language allowed for the customization of the text editor for the purpose of content analysis. In corroboration, these factors allowed the selection of NoteTab over commercially prepared content analysis packages. Although commercially prepared content analysis software provide many sophisticated analysis functions, many of these functions were not required for this study. Furthermore, the prices of such software are prohibitively expensive. NoteTab allowed the required functionality to be programmed and then executed in the form of a customized feature. An example of such functionality was used for the keyword and key phrase development. A script was developed to search and report on several groups of words simultaneously. Such dynamic scripting is not available within major word processing software packages. NoteTab was readily modified and was used extensively in the content analysis.

The second software package that applied to the content analysis was Microsoft Access 97. This was especially beneficial as Access 97 was being used as the storage receptacle for the questionnaire data. Access 97 has very powerful query abilities and these were used chiefly to identify the occurrence of key phrases and similar words. This was accomplished with greater ease in Access 97 than in NoteTab.

The limitations and drawbacks of content analysis have been well documented and considered throughout the discussion stage of this study. Confidence can be placed in the results of this analysis as several quality assurance techniques were applied.

## 4.5 Spatial Interpretation Techniques

### 4.5.1 Mapping: Data Visualization

Geographical information systems (herein referred to as GIS) software was used as a visualization tool throughout this study. As no computationally intense GIS analyses were applied to the data, a less sophisticated and less expensive software package was used. The GIS software

package that was chosen for this purpose was ArcView 3.1 by ESRI. ArcView provided a simple, but effective method for presenting the data in a visual form.

The base data used for the mapping aspect of this study were derived from the Ontario Base Map (OBM) series in digital form. These maps are prepared by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The digital OBMs that were used in the study were generated in 1986. Available at a scale of 1 to 10,000, these maps were an excellent scale for mapping small towns in southern Ontario. Despite their age, these digital data files were valuable for base data, although roads that were constructed after 1986 had to be added. Further, the OBM attribute data had to be verified as some road names had changed; this was especially true for the town of Plattsville. The OBMs contained many layers that were not of interest to the study. The layers that were included in the display were transportation, vegetation, buildings and drainage features.

A total of 18 base maps were required to show the study area. Two OBM map tiles, which were of interest, were not available in a digital form for use in this study and therefore had to be digitized. These tiles were located outside the Region of Waterloo and were digitized from the OBMs in paper format, also from 1986. This digitization was accomplished using ESRI's Arc/Info version 7.2.1 (NT).

The towns for which individual maps were generated were Baden, New Hamburg, New Dundee, Plattsville, Tavistock and Wellesley. For each of these towns, the hangout locations identified by the survey subjects were plotted in ArcView. This was accomplished using the on-screen digitizing functionality of ArcView along with auxiliary data, such as maps of the towns, that were available. These locations were later ground-truthed to ensure accuracy. The spatial accuracy was limited to intersections only as each location was georeferenced by street crossroads. This was due to the way the spatial location question was asked on the questionnaire. Further, attribute data were added to spatial data in ArcView. The attribute data were acquired directly from the questionnaire as well as from the results of the content analysis. These attributes included frequency of mention by subjects, a descriptive name for the location (i.e., home, school) and the type of location (public, private or non-designated).

A second set of maps was created to show the results of the spatial statistics. The calculated values from the spatial statistics were plotted for each of the towns. These maps were included as a visualization of the numeric analyses.

#### 4.5.1.1 Three-dimensional Rendering of the data

Three-dimensional models are data visualization techniques that take advantage of the mind's ability to perceive and cognize information in three dimensions. These models allow for the representation of data as it is perceived in our ambient environment. Three-dimensional models often generate information and insights about a study area that otherwise might not be evident.

It is noteworthy to mention that while other techniques for displaying the data existed, it was believed that no other visualization technique offered the level of visualization that could potentially be achieved with a three-dimensional model for this study. As such, it was determined that three-dimensional models would be applied for the exemplary visualization of the data. The three-dimensional modelling was performed using ESRI's ArcView GIS version 3.1 with the 3D Analyst Extension. The response frequency for each location was counted during the content analysis. These frequencies were used as the z-values (elevation) for the three-dimensional models.

The data were rendered using an extrude modelling technique. Extrude modelling is a type of solid model. These types of models allow for true three-dimensional extrapolation. Solid models are primarily used to show discrete surfaces at the two upper levels of measurement. Simply put, extrude modelling is a method which attempts to aptly represent objects as multi-storey buildings across an imaginary skyline.

Extrude models were applied explicitly for their ability to model discrete data. Each hangout location was represented not as a point, but rather as a polygon, which could then be stretched or extruded into three-dimensional space by interpreting some attached value as a z-factor.

With the extrude model, it was the intention to show the hangout hotspots as points of significant change on the z-axis (peaks). Each hangout location was redigitized as a polygon represented as a rectangle. The results of this modelling can be seen in Appendix B.

### 4.5.2 Spatial Statistics

This section describes the types of spatial analyses that were applied to the data from the questionnaires. Relying upon spatial statistics – a branch of statistics which concerns itself with the location of data in space – as the main tool, the methods applied here were used to generate results relevant to the spatial component of hang out behaviour.

Spatial statistics have many similarities to non-spatial statistics including the ability to describe a data set or to infer information from a set of data. The major difference between these types of statistics is that formulae for spatial statistics contain spatial co-ordinate parameters.

In specific reference to this study, spatial statistics were used in their descriptive capacity. The spatial statistical methods were applied to the location of hangouts within specific towns within the study area. These towns were chosen by their size; that is, their availability of data. The lack of data was a mitigating factor in the spatial analysis. Many of the smaller towns had too few data points to substantiate the valid use of these methods.

The descriptive statistics that were used in this study were the spatial mean (or mean centre), standard distance deviation (or standard distance), standard deviational ellipse and nearest neighbour analysis. The spatial mean is similar to the arithmetic mean, however in this case, it involved data in two dimensions (x and y co-ordinates). The standard distance deviation is the equivalent of the standard deviation, with the addition of a spatial component. The calculation of the standard distance deviation yields a value that represents the radius of a circle. The circle, when centred on the spatial mean, denotes an area representing a standard deviation. The standard deviational ellipse is comprised of two standard deviations at right angles to each other; one representing a maximum deviation, the other a minimum deviation reflecting the orientation of the distribution of points (Edbon, 1985). Nearest neighbour analysis is a group of techniques for the measure of distance and variation among points on a plane. These measures can include the average neighbour distance, the degree of dispersion among points and a confidence test for randomness. The mean and standard deviation were used for their comparative value among each of the study towns. The other calculations, particularly the dispersion degree of nearest neighbour analysis, have limits in their ability for cross-location comparisons. These limitations are discussed later.

While few commercial software packages included the ability to perform spatial statistical techniques, some popular packages are providing such additions to their software. These additions or extensions must be purchased separately and are generally expensive. Further, and surprisingly, none of the major GIS software packages is equipped with spatial statistics functionality (Lavine, 1996). However, there exist several software packages, most of which were created for specific applications of spatial statistics, that are available. These programs include *Spatial and Temporal Analysis of Crime (STAC)* by Dr. C. R. Brock of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, *SASP: A Two-Dimensional Spectral Analysis Package for Analyzing Spatial Data* created by Dr. E. Renshaw of the University of Strathclyde and *Hawaii Pointstat* authored by Dr. N. Lavine of the University of Hawaii. These packages are considerably less expensive than their commercial counterparts. In fact, *Hawaii Pointstat* is freeware and is available to the public free of cost. *Pointstat* was the software package that was chosen to assist in the calculation of the spatial statistics. A command-line based program, *Pointstat* was simple to use and provided all the basic spatial statistical functions that were required for this study.

The spatial statistics were calculated separately for each of the following towns: Baden, New Hamburg, New Dundee, Tavistock, Wellesley and Plattsville/Washington. These towns were chosen because they had a large enough set of data points to substantiate the valid use of spatial statistics. All smaller towns had fewer than 10 identified hangout locations and were not a part of this analysis. For each town the standard mean, standard distance deviation and nearest neighbour were calculated and compared. An additional calculation, distance from centre of hangout to central business intersection (CBI), was included in this comparison. The CBI for each town was determined on an individual basis, however this was relatively simple in each case considering the size of the towns. Major intersections identified by stop signs or traffic lights, locations of stores and other landmarks were used to determine the CBIs.

The use of spatial statistics was of marked value to the overall effectiveness of the spatial component of this study. The results of the spatial analysis are visually summarized on the maps in Appendix B.

The methods described within this chapter illustrate the techniques used to acquire and prepare the data set and to derive the results that are seen within the two subsequent chapters. The spatial results and the results concerning the place aspect of the study are described in separate chapters.

Chapter

5

# Spatial Results: Findings in Adolescent Space

## 5.0 Introduction

Within this chapter is a statement of the results of this study as they pertain to the space of rural adolescents. This chapter addresses the study objective designed to determine the space of unstructured leisure in rural adolescents through mapping and spatial analyses. In addition, this objective proposed to delineate the patterns of adolescent space that exist within the study towns. The results examined herein are the response to this objective and describe, both in words and visually, the location of the subjects' hangouts. This chapter includes descriptions of the spatial statistics that were used in the analysis of the six towns within the study area. The general results of the questionnaire are described in the adjoining chapter. Before the description of the space of rural adolescents, a general statement of the results of the social survey is reviewed.

## 5.1 General social survey results

### 5.1.1 Questionnaire

Initially, permission forms were provided to all of the Grade IX and X students at the study school who were present on the day on which the letters of permission were distributed. This totaled 450 students. The response from the permission forms was 432, meaning that four per cent of students did not return their permission form. These students did not secure parental permission to participate in the study and as such were not permitted to do so.

Upon completion of the survey, several questionnaires were given inactive status as they were either incomplete or had shown signs of deviant behaviour and were not of use to the study. Upon completion of the data entry, a total of 400 completed questionnaires had been secured and were used in the analysis. These 400 questionnaires represented 88.9 per cent of the initially contacted students and 92.6 per cent of the subjects who completed the questionnaire.

Of the 400 questionnaire subjects, the gender and age divisions were equally represented. Concerning gender, 49.5 per cent of the subjects were males and 50.5 per cent were females. Of the subjects, 54.8 per cent were grade IX students while the corresponding 45.2 per cent were students from grade X. The grade level of the subjects corresponds directly to the age of the subjects with only a few exceptions. Thus, 52.2 per cent of subjects were 14 years old, 43.8 per cent were 15 years old and 4 per cent were either younger or older than 14 and 15 years old. There were no significant differences in age and gender among the towns in the study area.

#### 5.1.1.1 Socio-economic Data

These are the results from Section C of the questionnaire. These results included gender, age and grade. Most of the subjects (95.8 %) stated that they had siblings with the average number of siblings being approximately two (2.02). The standard deviation of the number of siblings was 1.32, which is a function of the small percentage of subjects (4.25 %) who reported having more than four siblings with the highest reported number of siblings being 12.

The subjects came from many towns scattered across the study area. Table 5-1 shows hometowns of the subjects or the nearest larger town to the subjects' hometown. This table also includes the percentage of subjects that resided within those towns. New Hamburg is the largest settlement in the study area and correspondingly has the highest percentage of subjects (31.8 %). Baden is home to the second highest percentage of subjects and is followed by Tavistock, Wellesley, Plattsville and New Dundee. A small percentage of subjects (3.8 %) identified their place of residence as Kitchener-Waterloo or other locations. Most of Question 26, which asked subjects to describe where their house is situated, was unusable in this study and as such the results were not summarized. Notwithstanding, Part A of this question was used to corroborate the location of the homes.

• Table 5-1: Composition of subjects by town

| Composite Towns | Number of subjects from each composite town | Percentage of subjects from each composite town. |
|---|---|---|
| New Hamburg | 126 | 31.5 |
| Baden | 86 | 21.5 |
| Wellesley | 43 | 10.8 |
| New Dundee | 35 | 8.8 |
| Plattsville | 37 | 9.3 |
| Tavistock | 58 | 14.5 |
| Kitchener | 9 | 2.3 |
| Other | 6 | 1.5 |

Household economic data were to be derived from Question 27, which asked subjects to describe the type of work that their parents do for a living. Unfortunately, the logistics of summarizing these data greatly exceeded the resources available in this study; hence, these data were not included in the results and analyses.

The final question of the questionnaire inquired about the subjects' employment status (Question 28). Approximately 60 per cent (59.0) reported that they had jobs. Of this group the average number of hours worked per week was 17.2 with 10.2 of those hours occurring on weekdays and 7.0 of those hours occurring on the weekend. Included in this question was a section for subjects who lived and worked on a farm. This applied to 12.0 per cent of the subjects who, on average, devoted 10.48 hours per week to farm chores.

It is noteworthy that females more frequently reported having a job (61.9 %) than males (56.1 %). The value illustrating the frequency of female having a job was inflated due to the earlier decision to include babysitting as a job. However, males reported working approximately 1 hour more than female during the week and 0.25 hours more than females on weekends. Further, males, on average, reported up to three times more time spent on farm chores. An explanation of the underlying factors that may be responsible for these differences will be given in the subsequent discussion chapter.

### 5.1.2 Focus groups

The selection process for participation in the focus group was deliberately limiting. Contact was made with 16 students with equal representation of gender and age groups. In the final single focus group that was conducted, there were a total of 11 participants. The divisions

were as follows: four males, seven females, seven grade IX students and four grade X students. The towns in which the students lived was not of consideration for the focus group process.

## 5.2 Physical Location

This section examines the answer to the question "Where do small-town teens hangout?" Spatial statistics are used as part of the examination of the description of the physical location of hangouts that follows.

The six amalgamated study towns are examined individually. A comparison among the towns is presented toward the end of the chapter. It was not practical to represent all six towns on one map as, due to scale issues, no details of hangout location would be visible. The six study towns were Baden, New Dundee, New Hamburg, Plattsville, Tavistock and Wellesley.

The location of adolescent hangouts varied among the study towns. Intuitively, it can be assumed that the larger towns will have a greater number of hangouts. This was proven to be a valid assumption. As can be seen in Table 5-2, the largest town (New Hamburg) has the greatest number of hangouts while the smallest single town (New Dundee) has the fewest number of hangouts.

• **Table 5-2** : Number of Hangout per Town

| Town (ordered by population) | Population ♦ (unconfirmed) | Number of Hangout Locations |
|---|---|---|
| New Hamburg | 5,652 | 35 |
| Tavistock | 2,158 | 22 |
| Baden | 1,531 | 18 |
| Wellesley | 1,453 | 11 |
| New Dundee | 1,140 | 10 |
| Plattsville/Washington | 1,104 (Plattsville only) | 15 |

♦ These values are estimates from the respective township planning departments

"Largest" can refer to either population or geographical area; in this case, the results remain unchanged. The larger towns contain a greater number of hangouts. While an exception to this statement appears to be the town of Plattsville, this anomaly is explained by the amalgamation of Plattsville and Washington into a single study town. Washington is a hamlet with almost no amenities. The subjects from this town indicated that they spent most of their time in Plattsville

due to its proximity to Washington. As such it was decided to amalgamate the Washington subjects with the Plattsville subjects.

### 5.2.1 Spatial Statistics

The spatial statistics for the study towns were based on the location of hangouts to the nearest intersection. Two separate sets of spatial statistical calculations were performed: weighted and arithmetic statistics. The weighted statistics were weighted on the frequency of response from the subjects for a specific location. Thus, locations that the subjects frequently identified would have a greater weight and correspondingly, locations that the subjects' rarely identified would have a lesser weight. Both the weighted and arithmetic statistics are reported.

The basic statistics to be examined are the spatial mean and standard distance deviations. These values are best viewed visually, rather than as simple co-ordinate pairs. The spatial means, both weighted and arithmetic, can been seen on the second set of maps of the towns in Appendix B. The standard distance deviation is represented as a circle centred upon the mean. The maps only show the standard distance deviation of the weighted data set. Table 5-3 is a comparison of weighted and arithmetic standard distance deviations. In almost every case, the former is smaller than the latter. This suggests that that there was spatial less dispersion from the spatial mean in the case of the weighed data.

• **Table 5-3**: Standard Distance Deviation values for study towns

| Town | Standard Distance Deviation (m) | Weighted Standard Distance Deviation (m) |
|---|---|---|
| New Hamburg | 779.51 | 575.05 |
| Tavistock | 937.78 | 591.60 |
| Baden | 1084.79 | 1039.62 |
| Wellesley | 601.83 | 459.47 |
| New Dundee | 379.02 | 379.28 |
| Plattsville/Washington | 397.67 | 301.92 |

Two notable conditions exist within this table. The first is that New Dundee, unlike the other towns, does not show a reduction in the standard deviation between the weighted and arithmetic data set. Upon examination of Map 2-5, it can be seen that there is a notable distance between the means and this contributes to the slight increase in the weighted standard deviation. These

standard deviations are very close in value and realistically would be considered equal. The second point of interest is the deviations for the town of Baden. It has the highest standard deviation of the set. This is because Baden is spatially elongated, being a town set along a primary road with no major intersections. An observation of Map 2-3 will visually reveal the linearity of this town. The representation of the standard deviation with a circle is problematic in this case and would be better represented using the standard deviational ellipse. However, the standard deviational ellipse was not used in this study, due to questions about its effectiveness and identified problems with interpretation.

Upon causal observation of the first set of maps in Appendix B, it can be noted that there is some proximity of the means and the Central Business Intersection (herein referred to as CBI). Indeed, empirically, there is little difference between the spatial co-ordinates of the weighted and arithmetic mean centres. Table 5-4 summarizes the distance between the means. It can been seen that these distances are generally relatively small.

• **Table 5-4**: Distance between Arithmetic and Weighted Means

| Town | Distance between weighted and arithmetic hangout means in metres |
|---|---|
| New Hamburg | 230.60 |
| Tavistock | 225.20 |
| Baden | 357.72 |
| Wellesley | 129.29 |
| New Dundee | 48.13 |
| Plattsville/Washington | 67.08 |

Whereas the distance between the means is less than 100 metres, which is the case of New Dundee and Plattsville, this could be shown to be less then the distance of the minimal resolvable element. Simply, the distance between intersection/crossroads (the resolution at which these data were positioned) is less than 100 metres. This suggests that these means occur at the same location when error is considered. The actual distance between crossroads is not known and as such the previous statement remains a supposition only.

The distance between the weighted and arithmetic mean centres and the CBI reveals how far the average hangout location occurs from the economic centre of the town. The geographic centre of the town had no practical application and was excluded in lieu of the economic or business centre. Generally this is located at the intersection where there is the most traffic and the

most stores, businesses and the like. The distances from the CBI to the means can be seen in Table 5-5.

• **Table 5-5**: Distance between means and Central Business Intersection

| Central Business Intersection of Town | Distance to mean (metres) | Distance to weighted mean (metres) |
|---|---|---|
| New Hamburg | 99.18 | 267.33 |
| Tavistock | 340.60 | 125.48 |
| Baden | 423.39 | 87.11 |
| Wellesley | 222.72 | 93.70 |
| New Dundee | 415.53 | 405.92 |
| Plattsville/Washington | 319.41 | 386.06 |

With the exception of New Hamburg and Plattsville, all of the other towns show the weighted mean as geographically closer to the CBI than the arithmetic mean. This suggests that there is a greater frequency of reported unstructured leisure near the economic centre of each town.

### 5.2.2 Nearest-neighbour Analyses

The nearest-neighbour index (referred to as R) describes the pattern of distribution of points within an area. This index can have a calculated value between 0 and 2.15, where 0 refers to a completely clustered pattern, 1.0 refers to a completely random pattern and 2.15 refers to a completely dispersed pattern (see Edbon, 1985). Thus, the degree of dispersion or clustering can be identified with this statistic. The nearest-neighbour index requires several additional statistics before it can be calculated. These statistics can be of value in isolation from the nearest-neighbour analysis. The mean nearest-neighbour distance and the related standard deviation are examples of these statistics. Table 5-6 presents the mean nearest-neighbour distance and the standard deviation of the nearest-neighbour distances. The mean nearest neighbour distances are relatively similar between the towns with the range between the highest mean and lowest mean distance being only 228.99 metres. This is somewhat remarkable considering the variation in the number of hangouts per town. This may be representative of an established tolerance distance between hangouts. The mean nearest-neighbour distance did not vary with the size of the towns or with the number of hangout locations identified.

• **Table 5-6**:Nearest-neighbour distance statistics

| Town | Mean Nearest-neighbour distance (metres) | Standard deviation of nearest-neighbour distances (metres) |
|---|---|---|
| New Hamburg | 223.33 | 236.84 |
| Tavistock | 274.73 | 580.89 |
| Baden | 343.83 | 656.01 |
| Wellesley | 295.32 | 194.69 |
| New Dundee | 148.29 | 60.59 |
| Plattsville/Washington | 114.84 | 53.14 |

The range of the standard deviations between the towns was considerably larger (602.87 metres). The largest standard deviations of the nearest-neighbour distances occurred in Tavistock and Baden. These two towns had several outlying hangout locations (see Maps 2-2 and 2-3 in Appendix B).

• **Table 5-7**: Nearest-neighbour index statistics

| Town | Value of Nearest-neighbour Index (R) | Number of points (n) | Statistical Significance ($\alpha$ 0.05; one-tailed) |
|---|---|---|---|
| New Hamburg | 0.9426 | 35 | $R_{clus}$= 0.855; Fail to Reject $H_o$ |
| Tavistock | 0.8773 | 22 | $R_{clus}$= 0.817; Fail to Reject $H_o$ |
| Baden | 0.8818 | 18 | $R_{clus}$= 0.797; Fail to Reject $H_o$ |
| Wellesley | 1.4467 | 11 | $R_{disp}$= 1.259; Reject $H_o$ |
| New Dundee | 1.3633 | 10 | $R_{disp}$= 1.272; Reject $H_o$ |
| Plattsville | 1.1097 | 15 | $R_{disp}$= 1.222; Fail to Reject $H_o$ |

The nearest-neighbour index was calculated for each of the study towns and it was determined whether or not these values were statistically significant. The results of the nearest-neighbour analysis are summarized in Table 5-7.

The three largest towns (New Hamburg, Tavistock and Baden) have nearest-neighbour indexes that are less than 1.0, which means that they are clustered. However, these towns have larger calculated values for R than critical values of R and as such are not considered statistically significant. Hence, for these three towns it can be concluded that they are moderately clustered, but not to the level of statistical significance. The remaining three towns, Wellesley, New Dundee and Plattsville, show nearest-neighbour indexes that are greater than 1.0. This is interpreted as being dispersed. It is notable, however, that in two of these towns (Wellesley and New Dundee), the critical values of R are less than the calculated values of R. In the case of dispersion, this leads

to the conclusion that these data are statistically significant. The town of Plattsville displays a non-statistically significant dispersion pattern in the location of hangouts. The critical values of the nearest-neighbour index were derived from statistical tables in Ebdon (1985).

### 5.2.3 Spatial statistics of classified hangouts

As described earlier, the hangout locations were sub-classified into three classes: public space, private space and non-designated space. The visual display of these data can be seen in Appendix B. Initially, it was decided that spatial statistics describing each type of hangout would be useful and effective. For several reasons, this was not so. The primary reason for the non-use of sub-classified data was insufficient data. As can be seen on the second set of maps (Maps 2-1 to 2-6 in Appendix B), there were too few locations that were representative of the classes. This was particularly true of the smaller towns. With so few data points, it was neither practical nor representative to perform statistical analyses on this meagre data set. For a proper analysis to be completed, more data were required.

A summary of the results of the classification is reported in Table 5-8. Several patterns are readily visible from this table. First, it is apparent that within each town, the highest proportion of hangouts is private such as personal residences. An average of approximately 69 per cent (68.9%) of hangout locations across the study towns were categorized as private hangouts. The remainder of the hangouts was either public or non-designated locations.

• **Table 5-8**: Types of Hangouts by Town

| Town | Number of hangout locations | Public hangout locations | Private hangout locations | Non-designated hangout locations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Hamburg | 35 | 5 (14.3%) | 24 (68.6%) | 6 (17.1%) |
| Tavistock | 22 | 2 (9.1%) | 16 (72.7%) | 4 (18.2%) |
| Baden | 18 | 2 (11.1%) | 15 (83.3%) | 1 (5.6%) |
| Wellesley | 11 | 2 (18.2%) | 8 (72.7%) | 1 (9.1%) |
| New Dundee | 10 | 2 (20.0%) | 5 (50%) | 3 (30%) |
| Plattsville | 15 | 5 (33.3%) | 9 (60.0%) | 1 (6.6%) |

Generally, the larger towns (New Hamburg and Tavistock) showed a weighting of the remaining hangouts toward the non-designated category. Notably, both of these towns have significant

downtown areas. The remainder of the smaller study towns displayed a heavier proportion towards the public hangout with a single exception being New Dundee.

It should be noted that in the few cases that the data were almost sufficient, an emergent pattern was seen. In New Hamburg, it can be seen that many non-designated hangouts were close to the Central Business Intersection. Conversely, many private hangouts were located outside the business core toward the periphery of the towns. This appeared to be consistent with current models of urban structure (Haggett, 1983; Norton, 1992). Again, no pattern could be accepted as concrete as there were too few data points.

## 5.3 Comparison among towns

It is difficult to compare the results of spatial statistical analysis across different geographical areas. These comparisons can be hazardous as locations that are subtended upon different spatial configurations and boundaries will inevitably exhibit different spatial statistical characteristics. Nevertheless, among this data set, characteristic similarities do exist. Primarily, the three largest towns, New Hamburg, Tavistock and Baden display similar spatial characteristics as is seen in the tables. The hangout locations in these towns (especially New Hamburg and Tavistock) are clustered around the CBI. While this characteristic can be seen as a prominent feature in other towns such as Wellesley, they cannot be accepted as they are not statistically significant.

All of the hangouts in all of the towns are centred upon some recreational amenity. In many cases this central location would be the CBI, however, in at least one case, Plattsville, the central location is a location where several recreational amenities exist in proximity to one another, away from the CBI. New Dundee also exhibits this characteristic as its mean hangout location is centred on a park rather than the CBI. It could be suggested that these locations are the Central Recreational Intersection (CRI) in these towns; however, more data would be required to substantiate such a claim.

A common feature to all towns is the general scattering of homes and friend's houses as hangout locations across the entire town. As mentioned previously, in the larger towns it appears that there may be more of these types of hangouts located towards the periphery of towns.

Most of the towns are best characterized using the simple geometric square or circle. Baden does not conform to this format; it is spatially elongated and more suited to characterization as an ellipse. This ellipsoid shape may have contributed to the markedly higher standard deviation of the nearest-neighbour distance.

A thorough examination of where adolescents hangout has been covered in this chapter. However, this has not provided any insight into why these locations have been chosen by adolescents or rationalized the underlying dynamic factors, which impact these decisions. These issues are reviewed in the adjoining results chapter.

Chapter

6

# Place-related Results: Findings of Adolescent Place

## 6.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the findings of the standard statistical techniques and content analyses that were applied to the questionnaire data. It begins with a summary of the responses to the questionnaire questions and continues with the revelation of information concerning the meaning of the hangout places. The results for each question are reported sequentially in the order they appear on the questionnaire. This chapter involves the use of common statistical techniques including the arithmetic mean, the standard deviation, the standard error of the proportion and the chi-square statistic.

## 6.1 Findings from the Questionnaire

As summarized at the beginning of the previous chapter, there were 400 questionnaires from which these results were derived. These questionnaires had equal representation of males and females, and there was approximately 55 per cent representation of grade IX students and the remaining 45 per cent were grade X students. Later in this chapter, the differences between male and female adolescents are discussed. It was determined that the differences between grade IX and grade X students were mostly benign.

### 6.1.1 What is Hanging Out?

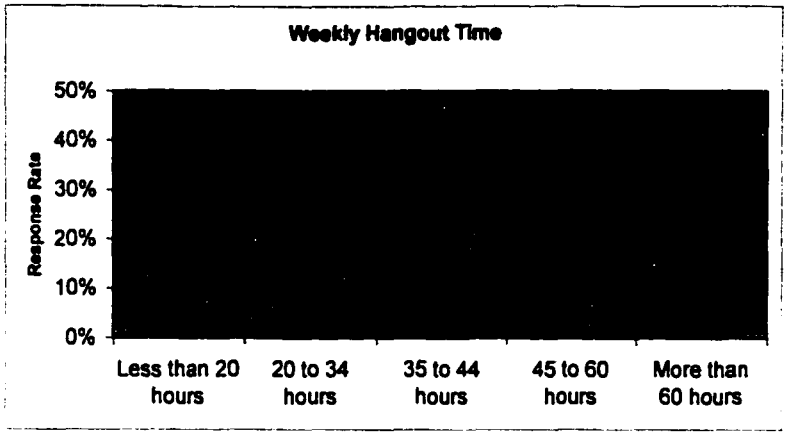
The research definition of hanging out was established to be a form of voluntary and discretionary unstructured leisure. One of the first obstacles was to determine what this phrase meant to the subjects. The first question on the questionnaire dealt with this definition and was phrased "What does 'hanging-out' mean to you?" This phrasing was deliberate as it was chosen in an effort to avoid biasing the response of the adolescents. Within this phrasing, there were no suggestions of social behaviour or spatial location or any other factors of interest. Using content analysis, several keywords were identified in the open-ended responses of the subjects. Table 6-1 shows the frequency of response for some of these keywords.

• **Table 6-1** Hangout definition keyword index

| Keyword (or similar words) | Percentage of subjects that included it in their definition |
|---|---|
| Activity | 86.2 |
| Friends | 78.5 |
| Anywhere / somewhere | 26.8 |
| Entertainment / Fun | 25.0 |
| Alone | 4.5 |

From the results of Table 6-1 a composite definition can be created. The subjects defined hanging out as the participation in unstructured activities (or inactivates) for the expressed purpose of having fun with friends without concern about location or specific activity. Hanging out is an active behaviour that includes friends although a small number of subjects suggested in their definition that hanging out could involve a solitary individual.

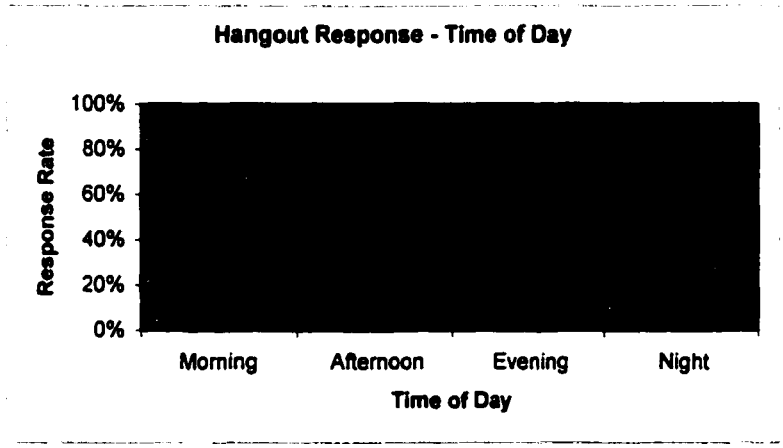
The next question sought to identify the number of hours per week that the subjects spent hanging out (Question 2). The subjects responded by selecting one of five categories. The results of their responses are summarized in Figure 6-1. Figure 6-1 shows a peak at the 20 to 34 hour category signifying that approximately 45 per cent of subjects selected this option. This category is more than 15 per cent greater than the next highest response of less than 20 hours.




• **Figure 6-1** : Weekly Hang out Time

It is noteworthy to state that the remaining three classes yield a combined total of slightly more than 25 per cent. These classes represent more than 35 hours per week spent hanging out.

The subjects reported that they hang out anytime throughout the day, although there was a focus upon the latter part of the day (Question 3).

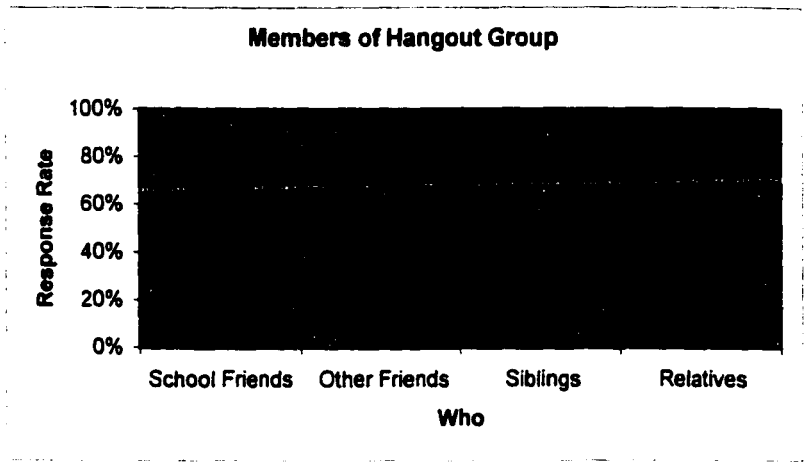



• **Figure 6-2**: Hang out Time of Day

This was a multiple response question, in which subjects could select as many options as applied to them. The highest response was 78 per cent and occurred in the evening (5 to 8 p.m.). Only a few subjects reported hanging out in the morning.

In corroboration with the definition of hanging out, the responses to the question concerning hanging out by one's self were primarily small. Hanging out was defined as a social activity by the subjects and this was reiterated in their response to this question. Sixty per cent of participants stated that they sometime hang out by themselves and this was the highest response to this question (Question 4). A much smaller group (20 %) stated that they often hang out by

themselves. It was of interest to determine who the members of a hangout group were likely to be (Question 6). It can be seen in Figure 6-3 that almost all of the subjects (91.5 %) identified friends from school as the primary component of their hangout groups. Other friends also made a significant component of the hangout group.



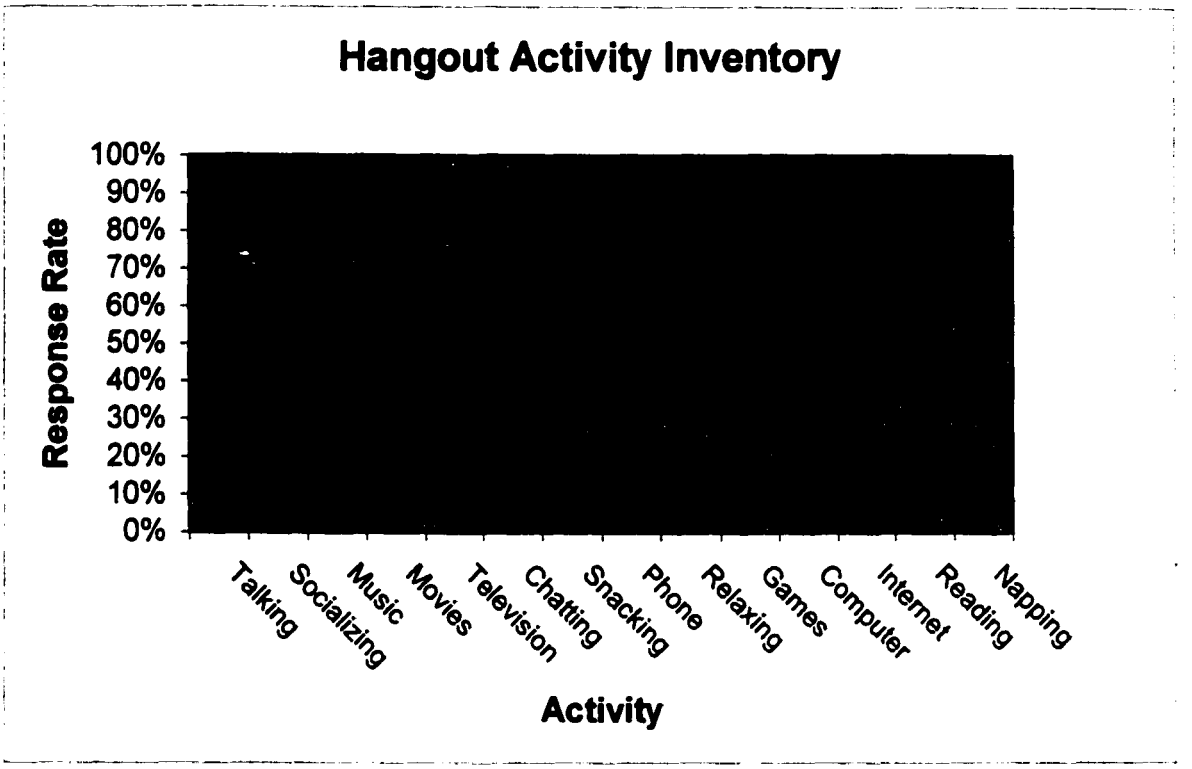

• **Figure 6-3**: Hangout group members

Lastly, the subjects were given the opportunity to report how many people were in their hangout groups (Question 7). The subjects provided a range of possibilities of which the lower bound was 5.95 and the upper bound was 9.01. These bounds were created by calculating the averages of the low and high values given by the subjects. Thus, the size of the hangout groups were somewhere between six and nine people, including the subject.

### 6.1.2 The Activities of Hanging out

The subjects were asked to select all of the types of activities that they participate in while they hang out (Question 8). This was a multiple selection question where the participants were allowed to select as many options as applied. As such, the percentage response was calculated and is shown in Figure 6-4 for each of the activities included on the list. This figure provides a strong insight into the types of activities in which the subjects participated during the time dedicated to hanging out. It is clear that the top two responses reported were talking (84.0%) and socializing (79.3%). These are followed by listening to music (76.9 %), watching movies (71.3%), watching television (70.0%), snacking (66.0%), chatting (66.0%), informal games or sports (53.3%), talking on the phone (56.0%) and relaxing (55.0%). The remaining activities had

lower response rates, each reported by less than 30 per cent of the subjects. These activities included using a computer (27.5%), surfing the Internet or using email (21.3%), reading (9.3%) and napping (8.8%). The standard error of the proportion was calculated for these values and has been displayed on the graphs as I-bars. This allows the determination of statistically significant differences between responses.




• **Figure 6-4**: Hang out Activity Inventory

In a final note concerning this question, subjects were given an open-ended option to specify other activities in which they participated. The response rate to this question was relatively low at 37.8 per cent. These activities were summarized using content analysis techniques and were found to primarily fit within the established activity list. This was one of the questions in which subjects reported participation in deviant behaviour such as smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol.

In response to the inquiry concerning the number of locations in which hanging out occurred, subjects reported a range consisting of a low and high values (Question 9). Again, the low values were averaged and the high values were averaged to yield the upper and lower bounds. The values that were reported varied around four, with the lower value being 4.04 and the high

value being 4.57. It should be noted that the standard deviations for these values were particularly high, being calculated as 3.46 and 4.04 respectively. Some subjects reported much higher numbers of locations where hang out behaviour occurred - some into the twenties.

With subjects reporting an average of four hangout places, it was deemed prudent to ascertain if subjects moved from hangout to hangout in a single day (Question 10). This behaviour, dubbed hangout roaming, was reported by the subjects as being moderately common. Sixty-one per cent of the study group reported roaming from one hangout to another in a normal day.

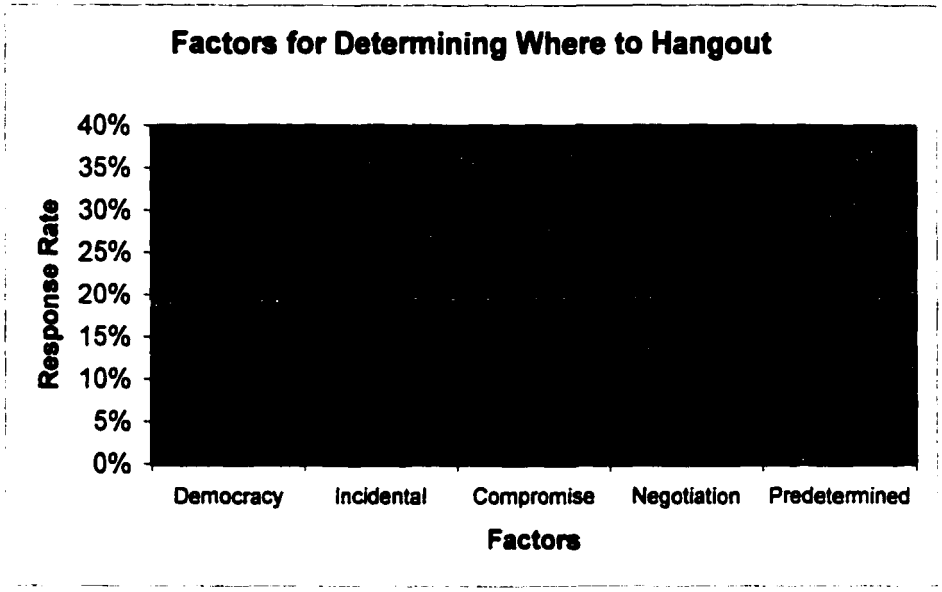
### 6.1.3 The logistics of hanging out

Question 11 on the questionnaire is the first in which subjects are asked to discuss the underlying hanging out decisions. As such, the subjects responded to the open-ended question with reflective prose. This was also the first question that required more advanced techniques of content analysis. When asked to explain how they decide where to hang out, the subjects responded in a variety of ways. These broad-based responses were simplified and classified into five representative categories. The categories are negotiation, democracy, predetermined, incidental, and compromise. With the context of this question, the following definitions of these terms were applied:

- Negotiation is defined as accepting a location that is suggested by a member or members of one's hangout group. Democracy involves voting or arriving at a mutual agreement.
- Predetermined refers to going to a location or being involved in an activity because this behaviour is so frequently chosen that it is prescripted.
- Incidental is the desire to be where something extraordinary is occurring. This is related to roaming because subjects who fit this category often mentioned moving around to find a certain activity. Also, the incidental category included subjects who mentioned that they roamed until they just found somewhere to hang out.
- Compromise is defined as following, or going along with what others are doing. This category included subjects who followed the crowd.

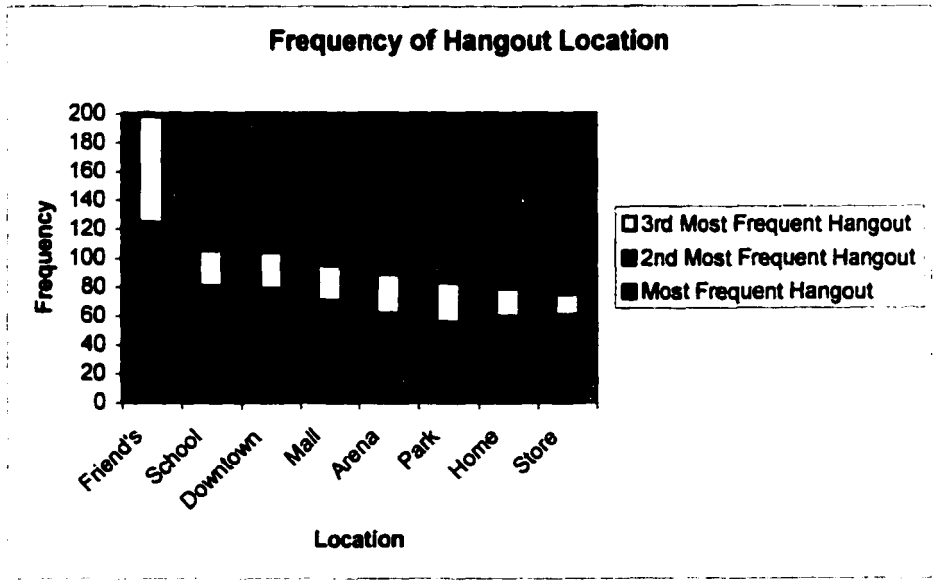
It should be noted that privacy, although it does not immediately appear to fit within this group of classes, was identified as one of the major determinants for deciding where to hangout. Here,

privacy is defined as going to a place where there are no authority figures such as adults, older adolescents or younger children. The results of this classification can be seen in Figure 6-5.




• **Figure 6-5**: Factors for determining hangout location

Democracy was most frequently reported at 33.8 per cent. This was followed by incidental at 24.0 per cent, compromise (13.5%), negotiation (12.8%), and predetermined (8.5%). Slightly less than 5 per cent of subjects chose not to respond to this question.



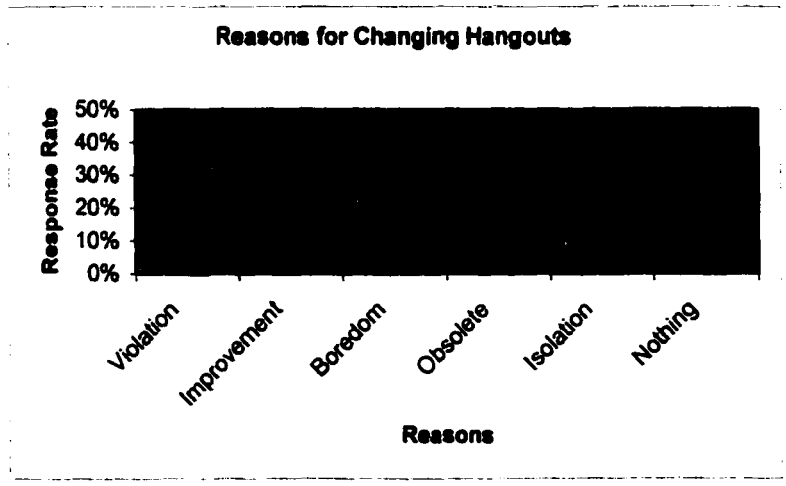

• **Figure 6-6**: Frequency of Hangout Location

The subjects were asked to list the three places where they hang out the most (Question 12). The results of this question are summarized in a stacked bar graph (Figure 6-6).

Unquestionably, friends' houses were the most frequently mentioned place where the subjects spent the most time hanging out. A significant trend is that upon examination of the most frequent hangout, school is mentioned the most with friends' houses acquiring the second place. When the stacks are examined concurrently, the reverse trend is seen; friends' houses are used the most and the school is used second most. Other frequently enjoyed hangouts include downtown, malls, arenas, parks, homes and stores. There were a few significant gender differences and these will be reviewed later in this chapter.

A second open-ended question was reviewed and categorized much like question 12. This question inquired about leaving or changing a favourite hangout (Question 13). The responses from this question were collapsed into six categories, which included boredom, violation, improvement, isolation, obsolescence and nothing.

- Boredom has no unique meaning in this context; it refers to a lack of stimulation.
- Violation is a breach of privacy or the integrity of a location being compromised by unwelcome visitors.
- Improvement refers to the identification or location of new or better facilities.
- Isolation is defined as having a lack of companions.
- Obsolescence is the ablation or removal of a hangout location. In this context, it refers to a location physically no longer being available due to problems such as fire.
- Finally, a final response from the subjects was best summarized as nothing. There was no perceived factor that could cause or force the abandonment of a hangout.




• **Figure 6-7**: Reasons for changing hangouts

From Figure 6-7 it can be seen that approximately 40 per cent of subjects (40.5%) cited a violation of their hangout space as the primary reason for changing a favourite hangout. The second most frequent reason cited was improvement although it was half as commonly suggested as violation. It is not known what specific improvements in the new location fostered this decision.

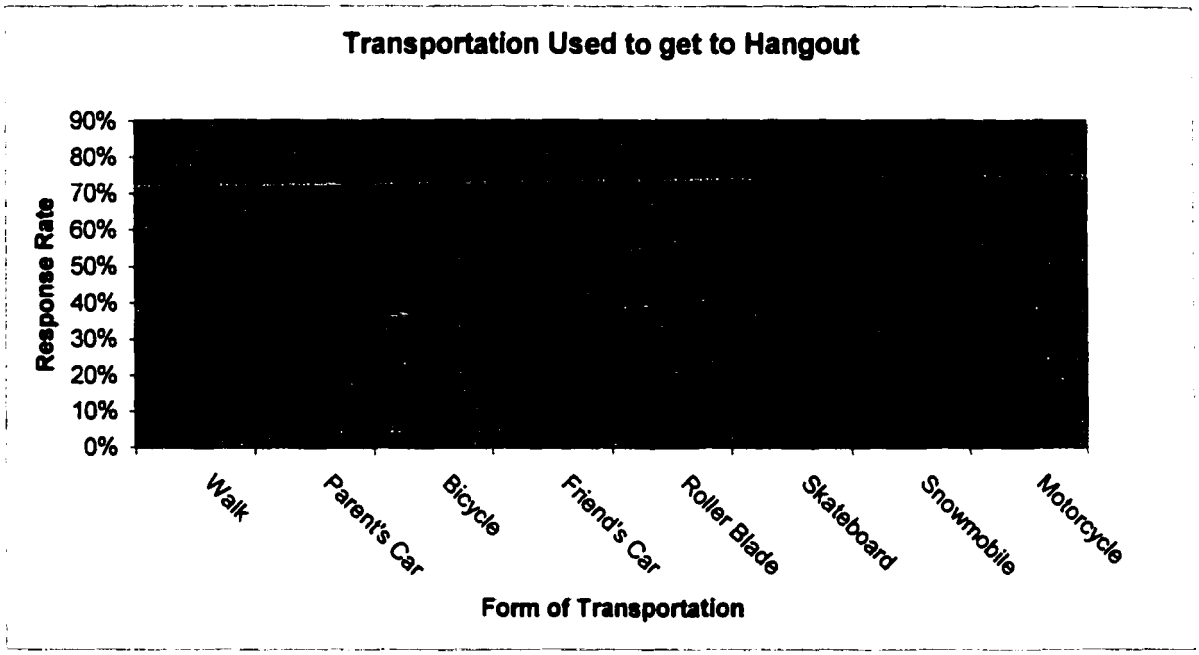


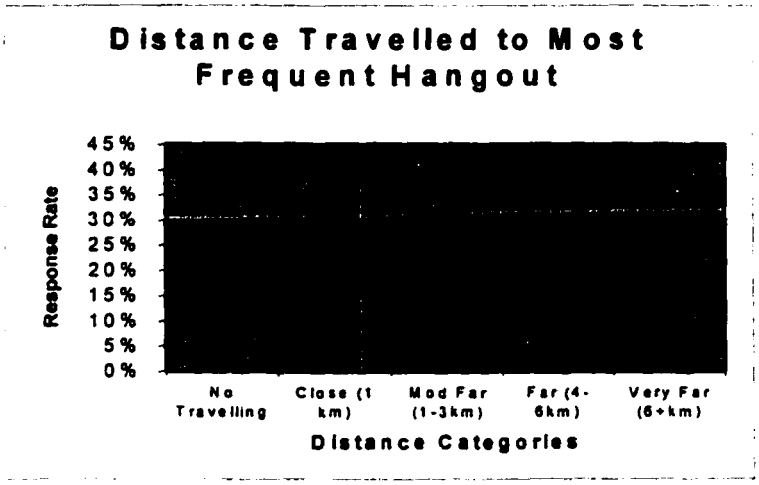

Figure 6-8: Transportation for getting to hangouts

Following an examination of location, transportation to and from that location becomes an important issue. The transportation selection list was easily divided into popular forms of transportation and unusual forms of transportation. Summarizing the findings of question 14, Figure 6-8 shows that almost equal proportions of the subjects walked to their hangouts (76.5%) and secured a ride in their parent's car (71.5%).

These two forms of transportation are separated by only 5 per cent. The other two forms of transportation that would be considered members of the popular transportation set are bicycles followed by the use of a friend's car. All other forms of transportation (roller blading, skateboarding, snowmobiling and motorcycling/dirt biking) were uncommon by comparison to these four, with response rates lower than 20 per cent.

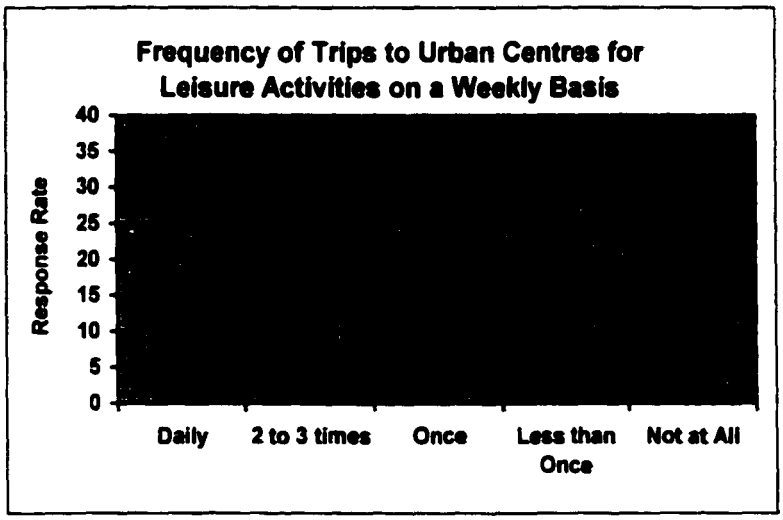
The next question attempted to solicit the subjects' perception of the distance that they travelled to get to their most frequented hangout (Question 15). These results were tenuous as the response rate was low. As such, these results were not examined in detail. However, the results

summarized in Figure 6-9 show that most subjects (38.3%) felt that they travelled only a short distance of less than one kilometre. The second most frequent response (32.0%) was between one and three kilometres.




• **Figure 6-9**: Distance travelled to most frequent hangout

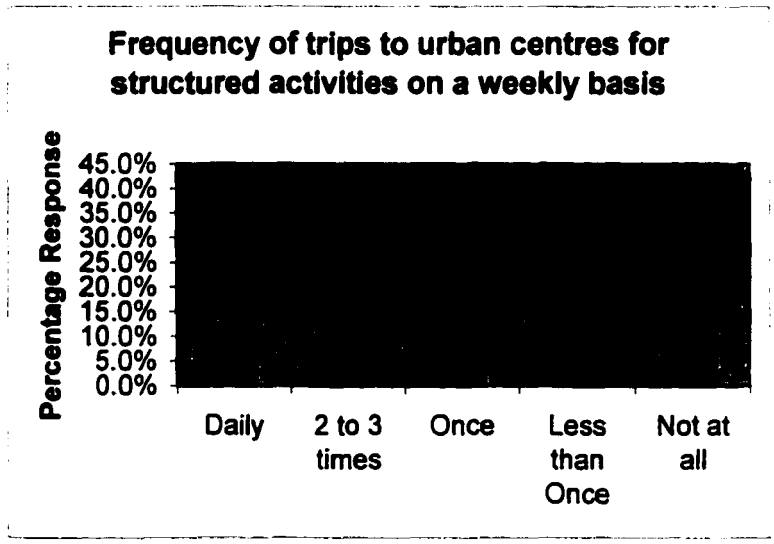
The next two questions (16 and 17) examined the subjects travel to the nearest urban centre. Generally, this distance was too far to be traversed by manual forms of transportation and, as such, since public transit does not exist in any of the study towns, the subjects required a ride in a car. Reporting for an average week, 35.5 per cent subjects stated that they travel to a major urban centre two to three times a week for the purpose of leisure. An additional 31.8 per cent of subjects reported that they travel to a major urban centre once a week.




• **Figure 6-10**: Frequency of trips to urban centres for leisure activies on a weekly basis

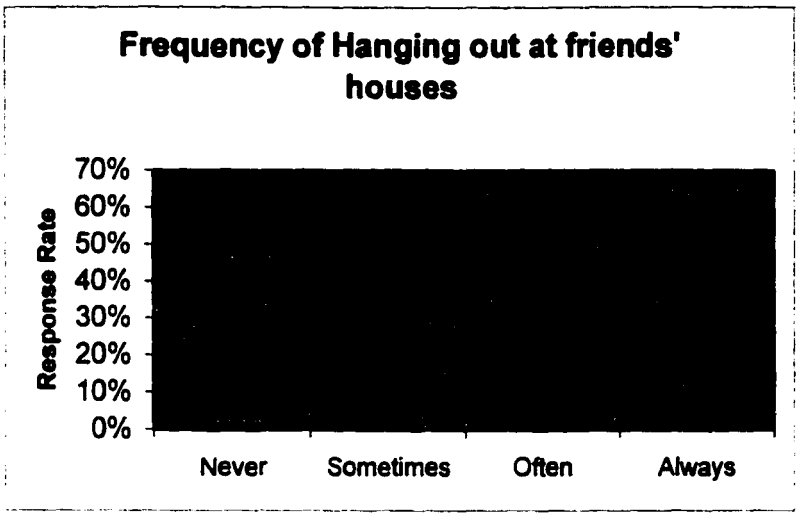
In combination, over 70 per cent of subjects reported travelling to an urban centre no less than once a week for leisure activities.

In contrast, fewer subjects reported travelling to urban centres for structured activities such as hockey practice or music lessons. It can be seen that more than 40 per cent (42.3%) of the study group stated that they do not travel to major urban centres on a weekly basis for structured activities.



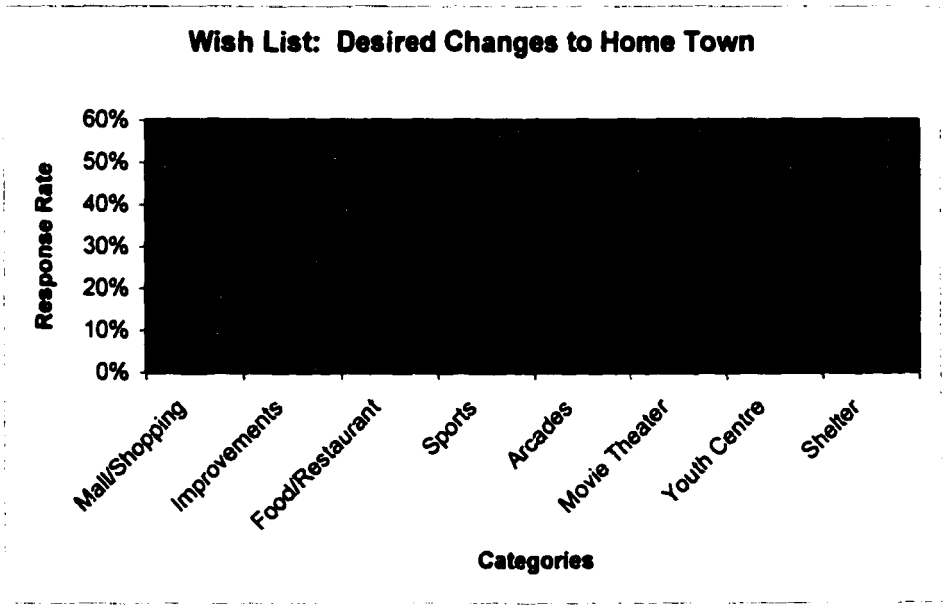

• **Figure 6-11**: Frequency of trips to urban centres for structured activities on an weekly basis

Question 18 inquired about the study groups' propensity to hang out at the homes of their friends. As is seen in Figure 6-12, the type of behaviour is common with almost 60 per cent of subjects citing that they hang out at friends' houses often. Only 1.3 per cent of subjects reported that they never hang out at someone else's house.




• **Figure 6-12**: Frequency of hanging out a friends' houses

The subjects were asked about making improvements to their towns in Question 19. This was a general question that asked about making their hometown a better place in which to hang out by adding or modifying facilities, and activities. This was an open-ended question in which subjects were encouraged to be practical such that the results from this section might be used to improve their environments. Short of requesting the removal of all adults, the subjects had no specific requests about what to remove.




• **Figure 6-13**: Desired changes to hometown

Conversely, subjects were forthright with their requests for improvements to their towns by adding facilities. Figure 6-13 details the desired changes that were suggested by the subjects. The addition of a shopping mall was the number one request of the subjects at a response of 44.5 per cent. While this did not fit in with the request for practicality, the second most common request (36.5%) was for improvement to existing facilities. This composite category included requests such as repairing skateboard parks, improving arenas and creating more sitting space along streets. Food/restaurant refers to the addition of common fast food restaurants such as McDonald's® or Burger King®. None of the towns contains a popular fast food restaurant outlet. The request for fast food restaurants was made by 28.5 per cent of the subject group. The sports category referred both to the addition of sports teams and facilities. The request for new facilities focused on skateboard parks for the towns that did not have them as well as baseball, basketball and swimming pools. These facilities were requested by 26.8 per cent of the subjects. Arcades and movie theatre additions were straightforward as they were explicitly stated by the subjects. The request for a youth centre and for shelter could have been amalgamated into a single category called "youth space." This request was in reference to dance halls, pool halls and generally to warm indoor facilities. This combined group was mentioned by 17.0 per cent of subjects. Note that this question allowed responses to be classified into as many categories as were applicable.

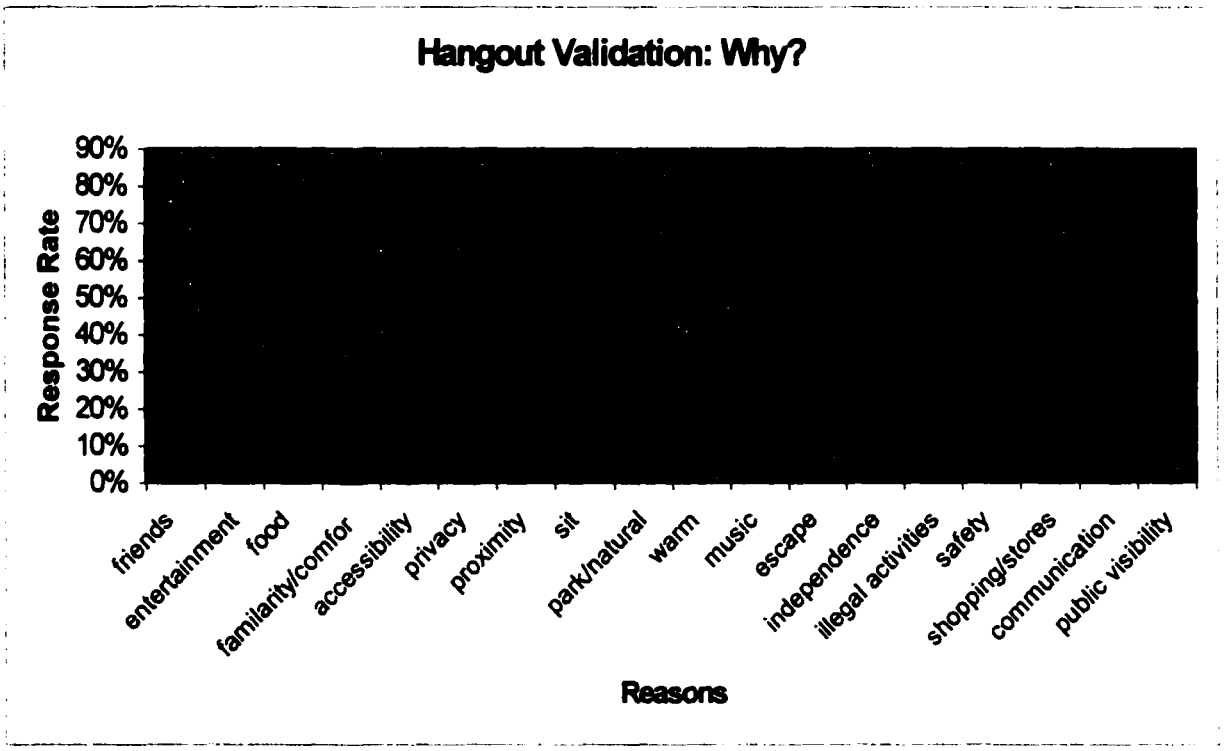
Questions 19 through 23 were subjected to content analyses techniques and the results from these questions were used to determine the values and meaning that hangout locations embody for the study group. These questions are dealt with in further detail later in this chapter. The response rate of the questions up to this point was almost 100 per cent. These four questions, two of which comprise Section B of the questionnaire, were not always answered fully by the subjects; however, as long as there was legible information it was included in the study.

### 6.1.4 Meaning of Hangout

In this section, the questions with specific relevance to understanding the meaning of hangouts are examined. Primarily, this focuses upon Section B of the questionnaire, which is entitled "hangout description". The two questions that comprised this section asked the subjects to describe their hangouts in as much detail as possible. These were open-ended questions and the subjects were encouraged to write as much as they could to convey a sense of what it would be

like to be at these places. Additionally, this section includes the results of Question 19 and 20 as they pertain to the understanding of hangouts. Question 19, which asked the subjects to identify the location of their hangouts, was used mostly for that purpose and was the primary source of data for the spatial analyses. Some subjects included more detail in these questions than was required and so this information was included in the analysis of the meaning of hangout locations.

Depending heavily upon content analysis techniques, this section was summarized by developing keywords and key-phrases that were common across the responses of the subjects. This broad-based work is summarized through Figure 6-14. This figure contains amalgamated classes that attempt to capture the essence of the statements that the subjects wrote. Each of the responses in the figure represents a portion of a statement that was made by a subject. Subjects could have responded in such a way as to be counted in many categories.




• **Figure 6-14**: Hangout validation characteristics

What makes a hangout important? From the responses in Figure 6-14, it can be clearly seen that friends are of the utmost importance. With a percentage response of 74.4, the majority of subjects indicated that friends and companions were a quintessential part of hanging out. This corroborates with the definition of hanging out that was determined from the subjects and discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The second most important factor that was identified

from the subjects' responses was entertainment. Again, in support of the definition of hanging out, 62.4 per cent of subjects suggested that entertainment was of importance to the experience of hanging out. Entertainment, in this sense, refers to any activities or references of having fun. The third factor was the last to surpass the 50 per cent mark with a percentage response of 50.6. This third factor is food. Many subjects referred to food, eating or snacking while they were hanging out. In addition, a few subjects made specific mention of being close to places where food could be procured.

All of the remaining hangout factors reported by the study group have response rates that are lower than 50 per cent. This does not limit the value of these factors. Hence, each factor will be described in order of percentage response. Familiarity and comfort were grouped as a single factor that incorporated the subjects' references to feeling welcome and accepted at their hangouts. Familiarity and comfort were reported by 33.2 per cent of the subjects. Accessibility refers to the subjects' ability to get to a specific place and to afford to go to that hangout. This category was also used for subjects who stated that they went to a hangout because it was the only place to which they could go. This was interpreted as an accessibility issue. Slightly more than 27 per cent (27.6) reported hanging out at their most frequent hangout for this reason. As mentioned earlier, privacy is an important factor in determining a hangout location. This serves to authenticate the earlier findings; subjects reported that their most frequent hangouts have a marked measure of privacy. Privacy was directly mentioned by 23.8 per cent of all subjects.

The next factor is proximity. Proximity is related to accessibility; however, it is important to note the distinction between these two factors. Proximity refers to a hangout being close to other places where hanging out can occur, while accessibility is directly related to the ability to get to and make use of a hangout. A given hangout might have many proximate locations that are not accessible. Almost the same proportion of subjects that reported privacy as an important factor in their most frequent hangout reported proximity as a factor as well. Proximity was reported by 23.3 per cent of subjects, which is almost 5 per cent less common than accessibility. Having a place to sit while hanging out was mentioned by 18.7 per cent of subjects. This could have been included under the comfort factor, however, its relatively high response rate suggested that it warranted a category of its own. Similarly, a park or natural environment was found in 17.6 per cent of the subjects' statements. This is a factor that occurs in tandem with other factors such as privacy and accessibility. The next factor is unquestionably seasonal in nature but was reported

by subjects as a factor that is found at their most frequent hangouts. Warmth (which is not in reference to the psycho-emotional response by simply to the physiological response) was reported along with shelter by 12 per cent of the subjects. Despite the instructions to the study group to consider the entire year when completing the questionnaire, some subjects still mentioned warmth as an important factor in the places where they chose to hang out most frequently. The ability to have music at a hangout was an important factor for 11.8 per cent of all subjects.

The remaining seven factors had a response rate of less than 10 per cent of the subject group. Many of these factors have very important ramifications yet were mentioned by so few of the subjects. Reasons for this will be presented in the discussion chapter of this document. Escape was reported by 9.0 per cent of subjects. In this context, escape meant that there was recession from parents, siblings and other adults. In this way, escape is a variant of privacy with greater specificity and deliberateness. Independence can be best defined contextually as the ability to express freedom of activity and behaviour. While only 8.4 per cent of subjects mentioned independence explicitly, it is a covert component of most of the other factors. Along with independence and privacy is the ability to participate in illegal or deviant behaviour. Slightly more than 8 per cent (8.2%) referred to being able to readily participate in deviant activities at their hangouts as an important factor. It is possible that either greater or fewer subjects included this within their stated factors of independence or privacy. Initially, safety and comfort appear to be similar; however, safety refers to being in a place where there is no threat of physical harm. Only 7.4 per cent of subjects cited this as being a notable factor at their hangouts. The ability to shop where hanging out occurs was mentioned by 6.9 per cent of subjects, while having access to communication facilities such as telephones was mentioned by 6.1 per cent. Finally, a small percentage of subjects identified being in a place of high public visibility as an important part of their most frequent hangout.

It has been suggested from these results that several factors could be collapsed thereby creating fewer classes. If this were done it would be possible to have as few as five composite factors. These factors could be friends (74.5%), entertainment (100%), comfort (79.0%), accessibility (49.8%) and privacy (39.5%). It should be immediately obvious that by reducing the number of factors that the overlap between the accepted factors increases markedly. The overlap further reduces the specificity of the factors as well as their ability to convey intricate details that the subjects reported.

This concludes the review of the results of the survey questions. This section of this chapter has been the most comprehensive review of the questionnaire results. The next section of this chapter examines the differences between subgroups in the study. Gender differences as well as age differences are reviewed and described as they apply across the entire data set.

### 6.1.5 Difference between subgroups

Throughout the earlier section of this chapter, attention was drawn to specific questions that displayed characteristic differences between subgroups. Specifically, subgroups refer to gender and age differences. This section is a review of the differences in gender and age. Not every question was tested for subgroup variations; rather, only questions that were particularly revealing about the experience of hanging out were tested.

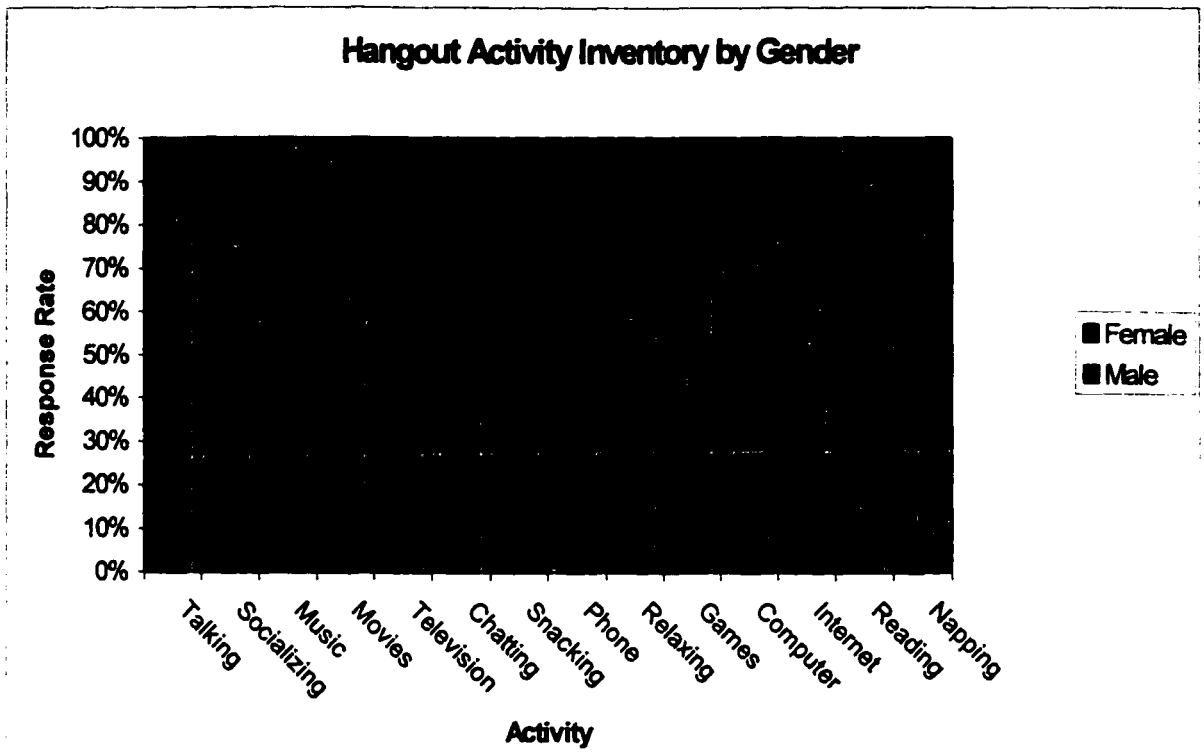
The age cohort of 14 to 15 years old was chosen for specific reasons and was seen as its own subgroup. Originally, there was no intention of testing for differences between these two years, or more to the point, between the two grades (IX and X). However, it became apparent that in at least one case, there were marked differences between subjects who were in grade IX versus those in grade X. A significant difference was found between grade IX and grade X students in their travels to an urban centre for the purpose of unstructured leisure. Grade X students were able to travel to urban centres more frequently than their grade IX companions. The result of the chi-square calculation was significant at the 0.05 significance level, showing a calculated value of 13.48 which was greater than the critical value of 9.49 at 4 degrees of freedom ($X_{calc(\alpha=0.05,\ d.f.=4)} = 13.48 > X_{crit\ (\alpha=0.05,\ d.f.=4)} = 9.49$). This corresponded to a greater availability of friends' cars; 56.0 per cent of grade X students reported having access to this form of transportation in comparisons to only 44.0 per cent of grade IX students. No other variations across the age subgroup were identified. As such, it can be suggested that age is not an important factor as travel to urban centres is a function of having more driving friends for 15 year olds.

#### 6.1.5.1 Gender Variations

Many differences between males and females were apparent throughout the results. However, there were many similarities as well. Many of the basic characteristics of hanging out were common to both males and females. For example, males and females defined hanging out the same and there exists between them no significant difference between the number of hours that are spent hanging out per week. Additionally, males and females cited very similar frequency distributions when responding to hanging out alone or with a group of companions. Female hangout groups consist of the same types of people as male hangout groups; that is, school friends are most important. However, this is where many of the similarities end.

By creating a single composite average for the numbers of people who are in a hangout group, males reported a mean of 6.68 people while females reported a mean of 8.26 people. This difference was determined to be significantly different. Using a t-test, these results were tested for a difference between them and the results were positive ($Prob.[t_{calc(d.f.=398)} = 0.000016] < Prob.[t_{crit\ (d.f.=398)} = 0.05]$) which indicated that females have significantly larger groups.

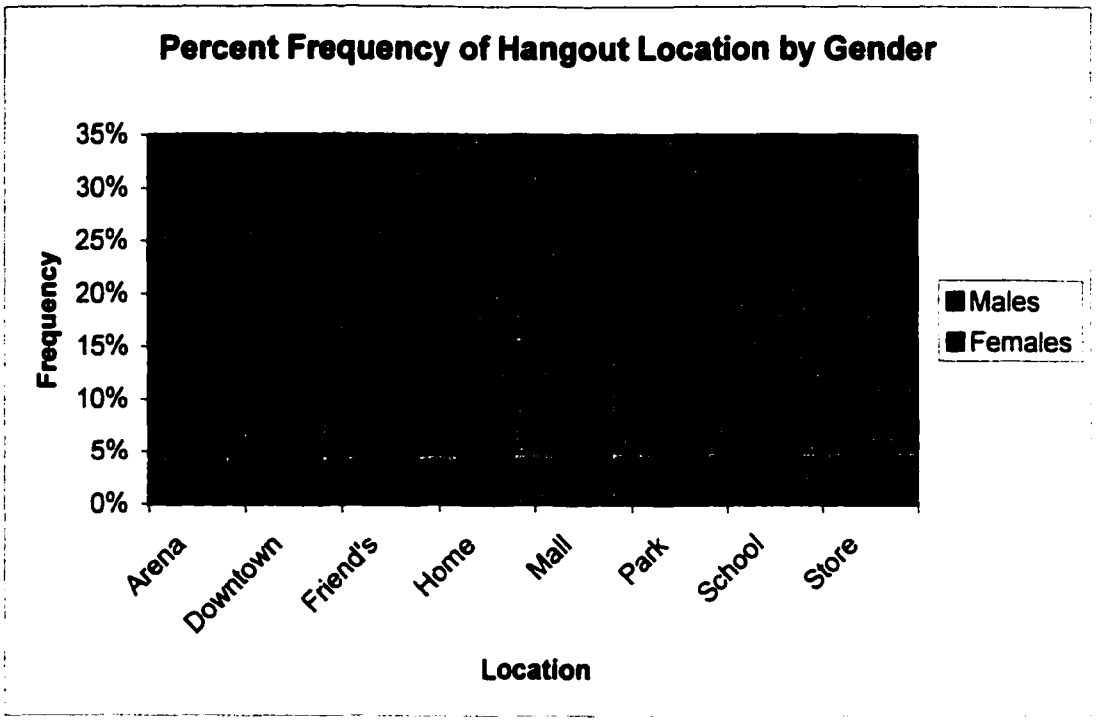
There are further differences found when the activities in which there is participation during hanging out are considered. Males and females participate in different hangout activities. These differences are summarized in Figure 6-15. The error bars represent the standard error of the proportion. Thus, in interpreting this chart, there is only a clear significant difference between males and females where the error bar on the one bar does not exceed the value of the opposite bar. It should be noted that this method is not a true test of statistical significance; rather, it is simply an arbitrary decision on the observed differences. In an example of this technique, there is no significant difference between males and females in reporting relaxing as a hangout activity. This is because the error bar on the male bar exceeds the value of the female bar. This occurs in several situations. Females talk on the telephone significantly more than males. Females were more likely to report participating in "socializing" activities than males. Females reported chatting, snacking, napping, talking, watching more movies, reading and listening to more music than males. This reveals a disturbing trend: females, in all but two categories, reported participating in more activities than males.




• **Figure 6-15**: Hangout activity inventory by gender

It is yet undetermined if this is due to sampling errors or is representative of the subjects' behaviour. This is discussed further in the adjoining chapter. It is noteworthy that males report more activity than females in two areas: computer usage and informal games. These differences are notable, but cannot be said to be statistically significant. A final note on hangout activities is that there is one activity that received almost identical response rates from both males and females. This activity was surfing the Internet and using email, despite the fact that males use computers more than females.

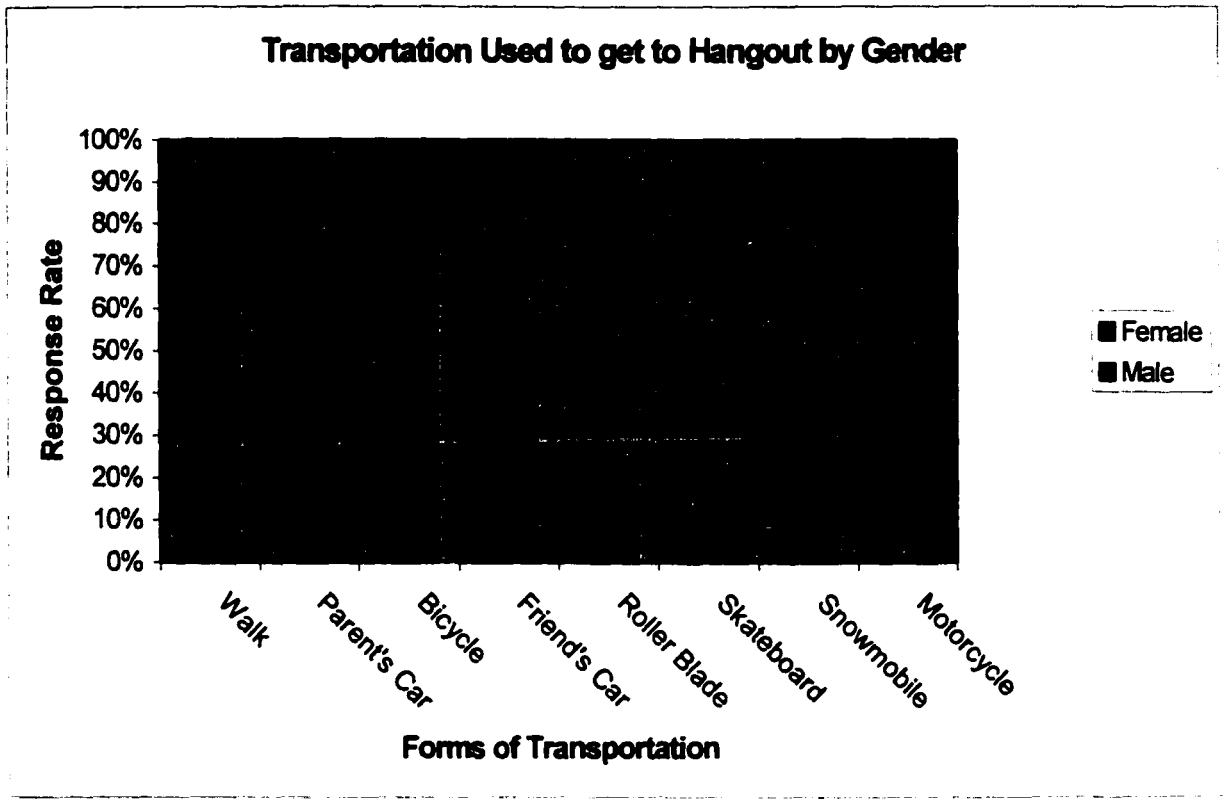
The next question for which gender differences were examined was the three hangouts where subjects frequent the most. Generally, there were few differences between the reported rates of males and females in this matter. However, a few specific situations showed marked difference between male and female subjects. These differences can been seen in Figure 6-16. Recall that the non-overlap between the error bars and value bars suggests a notable relationship. It can be seen that the mall represents a marked difference between males and females. Females hangout at the mall more than males do.




• **Figure 6-16**: Hangout locations by gender

There are marked and statistically significant differences between male and females in the use of parks and stores as hangouts. Males report significantly higher usage than females in both of these situations. Strong similarities are seen between males and females and their reported rates of hanging out at the arena, downtown and at their homes.

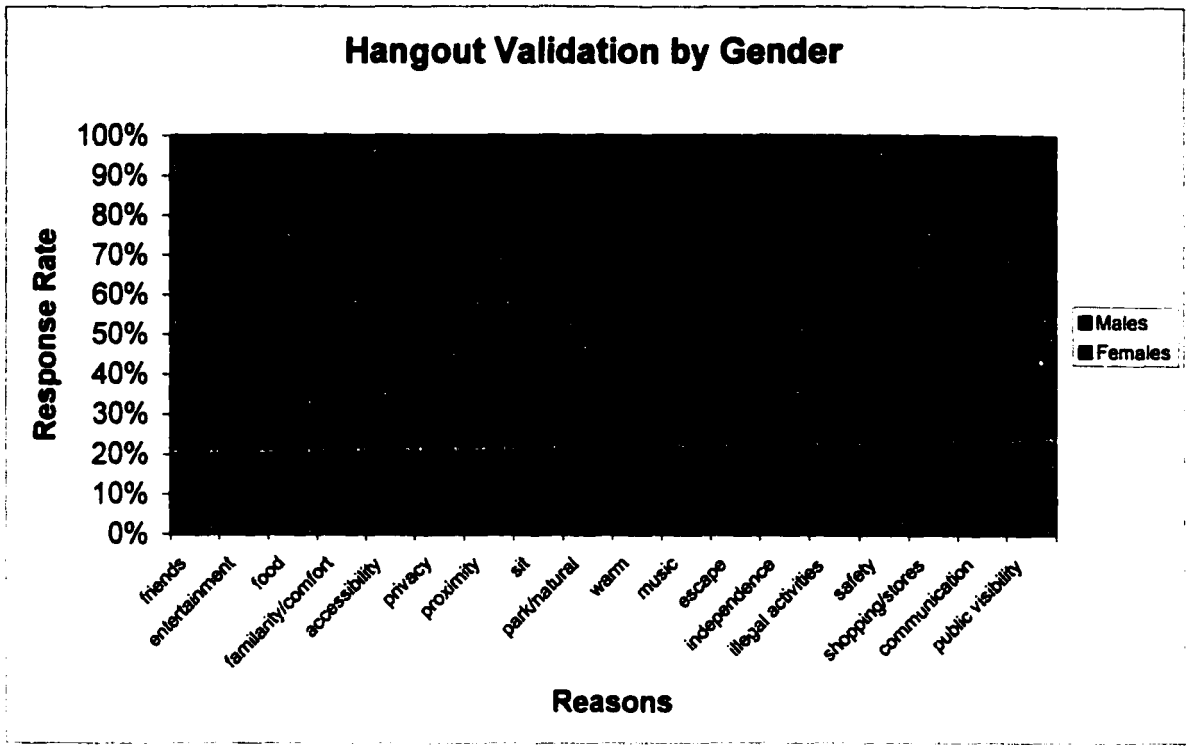
Significant differences were found in the modes of transportation that were used by males and females. Figure 6-17 shows that there are differences between males and females such that males reported using bicycles, skateboards, motorcycles and snowmobiles more frequently than females. In contrast, females using cars, either parents' cars or friends' cars, as a form of transportation significantly more than males. Indubitably, this is related to the places that females stated that they hangout.




• **Figure 6-17**: Transportation used to get to hangout by gender

Males and females travel to urban centres at the same rates. Females report that they travel to urban centres for leisure activities more frequently than males. These results were found to be statistically significant by use of a chi-square test statistic ($X_{calc(\alpha=0.05,\ d.f.=4)} = 9.73 > X_{crit\ (\alpha=0.05,\ d.f.=4)} = 9.49$). Females were more likely to report travelling to an urban centre for leisure purposes 2 to 3 times per week (37.1%) while males the same frequency of travel but with a lower response rate (33.8%).

The final major difference that can be established between males and females is in their validation of why they choose to hangout where they do. There are many differences between males and females on this matter. These differences are shown on Figure 6-18.




• **Figure 6-18**: Hangout vailidation by gender

All of the hanging out factors show significant differences except privacy, parks/natural areas, warmth, escape and public visibility. A general but clear trend is that response rates are almost always higher in females than in males. This trend does not apply to the following factors where males have a higher response rate than females: entertainment, privacy, warmth and public visibility. A few exceptionally large deviations between males and females can be seen in the chart. Females report familiarity and comfort as an important part of hanging out almost 20 per cent more frequently than males. Further, females strongly report food (14.6% difference) and friends (13.2%) more frequently than males. It is clear that males and females hang out for different reasons.

#### 6.1.5.2 Differences across towns

It is important to recognize the differences in the study towns as they pertain to the place of hanging out. Each town has different recreational amenities and positive hangout factors. This fact meant that it was possible for subjects to travel, of their own accord, to alternative locations for hanging out. This was common, particularly as it related to New Hamburg. Outside of Kitchener-Waterloo, New Hamburg had the largest number of recreational facilities. New

Hamburg has an arena like many of the surrounding smaller towns, but in addition to having the arena it also has a hockey team that plays there regularly. This is a powerful positive factor for the subjects, which encouraged them to travel to the town of New Hamburg. It is possible to identify other trans-town trends. For example, skateboarders generally travelled out of New Hamburg to alternative skateboard parks because the facility in New Hamburg is old and decrepit. Transience within the study area was relatively uncommon though, as most travel appeared to occur toward urban centres. Other differences between the towns were discussed in the background chapter and the spatial results chapter.

This concludes this chapter of place related results. This chapter included an overview of the results of the questionnaire. Specifically, each question in each section of the questionnaire was reviewed and summarized. Further, the results of the statistical analyses were revealed and their impact on the overall results shown. The results of the content analyses also were presented. These results were used to summarize and realize the factors that the subjects defined as important to their hanging out experience. Subgroup differences were examined with an emphasis upon gender differences and with some mention of age differences. Finally, a discussion of the differences across towns was briefly considered.

The next chapter will examine the meaning of the two results chapters, as they relate both to one another and to the overall meaning of the study. The discussion chapter will attempt to explain some of the trends that have been revealed in the subjects' expression of place and space. The relationships between place and space will be determined.

Chapter

7

# Discussion

## 7.0 Introduction

While space and place of unstructured leisure varies among males and females, towns, age, personality and undoubtedly a plethora of other factors, this study has identified a collection of activities, behaviours and attitudes that are characteristic of hanging out. This chapter seeks to establish, from the results described thus far, an understanding of the acute factors of hanging out.

The nature and importance of hanging out will be examined from the perspective of the adolescent. Further, the coalescence and commingling of the concepts of space and place will be discussed from the experience of the study group. A distillation of the meaning of hanging out to adolescents, from the results of the questionnaire and the focus groups, will be performed. Exemplary quotations from the data sets will be used to solidify each factor that is established in this précis of the meaning of adolescent space and place. The chapter ends with a section that examines the biases and sources of potential errors in this study and sets the stage for the scholarly recommendations of the next chapter.

## 7.1 What does it mean to "hang out"?

**It means to go some place and do something with my friends.**

**(female, age 14)**

The study subjects were forthcoming with their definitions of hanging out. Through the content analyses, it was established that there were two critical factors in almost all of the definitions. The subjects stated that entertainment and friends were the most significant components of their unstructured leisure. It is curious to note that friends can be a source of entertainment, and further, unstructured leisure is a social phenomenon that is highly dependent upon friends. Nevertheless, the definitions of hanging out identified by the subjects contain strong suggestions of social space in which they could enjoy themselves. This is consistent with the nature of unstructured leisure as shown by Hine and Hedlund (1994) and by McMeeking and Purkayastha (1995). Although this behaviour is not always referred to using the same terminology – variations exists in phrasing from "hanging around" to simply "hanging" – the behaviour is similar and consistent among these studies. There is a high level of freedom associated with the behaviour as well as a social gathering. These factors relate directly to the nature of hanging out as described by the study subjects.

## 7.2 The relationship of space to hangout behaviour

It is critical to recall that Giddens (1979) and Tuan (1977) exhort that place cannot exist without space and that the two are inextricably linked. Thus, it becomes almost impossible to extricate a discussion of the relationship of space to hanging out completely separate from that of the relationship of place. The first major objective of this study was to determine the nature of space in the unstructured leisure of rural adolescents. This nature has become increasingly meaningless when examined in isolation from adolescent place. However, there are a few clear details that are of worth and are direct responses to the space objective of this study. They will be examined forthwith.

The subclassification of space into three categories, namely public, private and non-designated, captured the gamut of responses from the subjects. The subjects described different types of activities that occurred at each category of hangout and the responses varied between males and females. Private space primarily came in two forms: the subjects' homes and the houses of the subjects' friends. In every study town, private spaces were the most frequent type of space in which adolescents were involved in unstructured leisure. Unfortunately, public space was more broadly defined and cannot be easily relegated into classes. Public space was seen as

common space that is shared with the rest of society. Schools were the primary form of public space. Finally, non-designated areas were described as those in which adolescent leisure behaviour is neither desired nor generally accepted by the rest of society. This can be anywhere that adolescents are not wanted and includes areas like downtown areas, storefronts and streets.

These spaces can have a multiplicity of meanings to adolescents. However, the activities that occur in these areas are broadly experienced by many. Private space was used as the home-base for the study subjects. Subjects identified these locations as having strong meaning. The activities in which there was participation varied between males and females, however generally these were the types of activities that were comforting and shared with a smaller, but closer group of friends. It is within the private spaces that some deviant activities were experienced but, only if there was sufficient privacy. In answering the question of why a particular hangout was attractive, one 14 year old female responded:

> I like it because it's just teenagers, no kids and no parents and that makes it very appealing and in the dark at night no one can really recognize us or anything. We can talk and no one will listen to our conversation either.
>
> (female, age 14)

Public space is the location where adolescents participate in public and socially acceptable activities. Despite the general belief of society to negative alternatives, most of the study subjects did not participate in deviant behaviour; those who did, did so in isolation. Thus, public space was seen as a location where there was high visibility and interaction with the rest of society. Privacy was not as much of a factor as facility in the use of public space. The subjects identified public spaces as the locations where there were the most facilities and amenities. As the results of the study show, facilities were of notable importance to the study group and as such these spaces were used aggressively. Public space was most frequently described as being open space located outdoors. Further, this was where the largest groups of subjects would be found.

Finally, non-designated space was described by the subjects as being the locations in which anything could happen. Two factors are to be considered when examining the nature of non-designated space. First, Van Vliet (1983) showed in his work that the home range of children is directly related to age; thus, as children get older they can play a further distance from home.

Second, Johnson (1978) states that adolescents are more likely to arrive at the location of their leisure by conscious decision and less from other factors. In combination, these factors assist in the understanding of the adolescent need for non-designated space. Some of the non-designated spaces are almost featureless but others are in proximity to public space that contains many amenities. The primary feature or benefit of non-designated space is that it provides privacy from adults and other intruders. Non-designated space was a haven for clique groups such as skateboarders who wanted to be away from non-members of their group. It is within this space that subjects identified freedom reaching the peak of its fruition.

### 7.2.1 Genderization of Space

The genderization of space was examined with the focus group participants. The focus group participants were asked if their hangout groups consisted of a mix of males and females or if the groups were homogeneous. The results indicated that hangout groups that consisted of both males and females were not uncommon. This was particularly true of public space hangouts. In the case of private space, referring specifically to homes and friend's houses, the groups were far more likely to have either all males or all females. In the most general form, females enjoyed indoor home-based social behaviour while males made use of outdoor activity-focused behaviour. This is generally consistent with leisure studies (see Kleiber et al., 1986) and with the greater socio-psychological understandings of gender differences. Here, it can be seen that space is a function of the experience of unstructured leisure.

### 7.2.2 Ownership of Space

> There is a bush behind my friend's house and we built a fort there. We go and talk and there are four walls of wood, a roof of tin and a door. It is not very big. There are chairs, tables, bed, cooler, snacks, windows and a little heater. My friend's house is nearby. I hangout at this location because my friend goes to another school so we meet there and talk and it helps us to get out of the house. This location is fun to hangout at because it's like a mini-house. It is friendly because we have decorated it so it's what we want. It is appealing because we are alone to do and talk about whatever we want to.
>
> (female, age 14)

> The Dam. It is surrounded by cement walls with big beams supporting the building top. The walls are graffiti the way we like it and there is a small stream that runs under the building. This location provides us teens a place to talk without supervision. This place is friendly because we are alone and we can do anything we want without getting into trouble. It is appealing because we just want to be with our friends ... and it gives us a place to hangout.
>
> (male, age 16)

The use of space is directly related to the adolescents' experience of ownership, control and self-esteem. The subjects indicated that freedom to do whatever they wanted was a key part of the pleasure of unstructured leisure. As such, freedom to participate in any activity is intimately related to the freedom to vary the location of occurrence of participation.

The concept of freedom was examined in the literature review as being a critical part of the growth of adolescents (Brown, 1990; Sibley, 1995b). It also was noted that the home environment was not always the most plausible location to express freedom. The study subjects, along with the focus group participants were clear that they preferred private home space only if there were no parents, other adults or kids present. This afforded them a greater opportunity to express themselves unreservedly.

A Grade X focus group participant solidified these concepts with a statement that typified the overall experience of the group, "*I want to do what I want to do*," in reference to the nature of hanging out. Having control over their environment was important to the subjects, not so much because they could participate in deviant behaviours, rather because it afforded them responsibility over their own behaviour. They desire greater control over their environment and this is true in all types of space: public, private and non-designated.

An examination of the maps in Appendix B (Map 1 series) showing the types of hangout space within towns, does not directly convey whether or not the spaces were designated for adolescent use. Only a few spaces in the larger towns such as the arena in New Hamburg and the sports bar in Tavistock are designated for adolescent use. Adolescent space is missing from the study towns. As such, it is not common for subjects to have locations where they are wanted or where what they want exists. This is not unrelated to the idea of ownership and control of space in adolescents. Consider the following: if subjects desire ownership and control of the spaces in which they hang out and such space is not available will it be dynamically assigned as needed?

Indeed, this study suggests that this is the nature of adolescent space. The subjects suggested that without the proper levels of control provided in a given space, other locations that afforded the desired level of control would be located, or if necessary, annexed. In part, this annexing behaviour was seen in the study in subjects who frequented the homes of their friends for the amenities (such as food and privacy) that existed there. Other locations, particularly public space such as streets, were also annexed, which, in essence, was the challenging of the boundaries of their adolescence. A possible reasons for this behaviour is that adolescents do no relish placelessness. Such challenges of impinged societal boundaries are common in the adolescent years (see Tolan and Cohler, 1993) and were clearly typified in this study.

It is important to recognize that ownership not only refers to the space, but to the activities within that space. Subjects stated that they would avoid locations that were controlled by adults. The focus group participants stated that much of the non-use of existing facilities can be linked to the fact that they are "*too organized*" and "*there are too many adults*". This presence of adult figures and organization removes control of the space from the adolescents.

Thus, it can be stated that in the context of adolescent space, freedom is a function of ownership and control. This statement is in agreement with the findings of several studies, the most notable of which would be Henderson and King (1999) and Bembry and Tufono (1996) both of which attest to the importance of ownership.

### 7.2.3 Transportation

> Friend's house ... Within walking distance ... Other friends' houses within walking distance. Corner store within biking distance. I hangout at my friend's house because it gets me out of my house and it is something to do. This location provides me with entertainment and it is almost the only place to go.
>
> (male, age 15)

The discussion of the relationship between space and unstructured leisure cannot be complete without examining the challenges of transportation. It is apparent that as there is physical distance between where an adolescent is and where he/she would like to be then there will be transportation issues. The results of this study point to the desire to acquire the recreational

amenities of the city, which are at some distance from the subjects' hometowns. The issues of transportation are clear and relate to space on several fronts.

The first space-transportation relationship that must be examined is the need to traverse the expanse between home and amenity. This relationship exists microcosmically within the subjects' hometowns as well as at the larger scale of transportation from town to city. As the results indicate, motion from destination to another hangout location is common – even more so at the local level. The focus group participants illuminated the discussion of transportation deprivation by expressing their unfettered desire to increase their freedom by being able to drive a car. Furthermore, they discussed the attraction to older adolescents who are able to drive and the frequency with which travel occurs. Parents and the parents of friends, however, secured the majority of distance travel to urban centres. While it would seem to infringe on their burgeoning desire for freedom and privacy, it appears that the desire for the recreational amenities of the city, such as the mall, is often stronger, although it is clearly seen as a conundrum. Further discussions about the attraction of the mall will be examined later in this chapter. The focus group participants underscored the need to be able to travel to external recreational amenities. Further, they described the effort that was required to encourage adults to transport them. In the words of one participant, to get parents to drive you, you have to "*force a compromise*" in which parents will choose to drive instead of being forced to be home-stranded. These concerns and the overall conundrum of transportation versus freedom are examined in McMeeking and Purkayastha (1995) and the challenges that are revealed are similar.

Second, travelling across space is necessary to have access to a prime source of public space: the mall. In this study area, the malls that are desired are those of regional status and as such they contain many amenities. As seen in the literature (Goss, 1993), the mall provides recreational amenities under the shroud of the crowd, which is quickly transformed into a privacy issue. Paradoxically, the subjects view the mall as a place where their freedom can be readily expressed. This paradox is given greater attention in forthcoming sections of this chapter.

### 7.2.4 Roaming

Roaming is an activity of which more than half the subjects made mention. As it implies, it involves moving from one hangout location to another over the course of a single hangout

period such as an evening. Roaming is dependent on having the space within which to move as well as the freedom and transportation that is required to move from one location to another. For most of the subjects, the reference to roaming suggested that the area in which motion occurred was highly localized. Specifically, it referred to moving from hangout to hangout within a hometown, mostly via manual transportation.

Roaming, while fundamentally spatial, has place-related overtones. The reason for roaming can be interpreted several ways. However, one clear insinuation of roaming is that it de-emphasizes the importance of space. The subjects expressed that they wanted to be with their friends and that so long as that condition was met, they would move wherever their friends went. This readily illustrates the importance of place over space. The subjects were seeking an experience with their friends with a general disregard for the location of that experience.

A second possible explanation for roaming is that it is an attempt to locate activities of high entertainment value. The content analysis revealed many references to having nothing to do and no where to go. Thus, this explanation is directly linked to Figure 6-7, which identifies boredom as a reason for changing hangouts.

The discussion of roaming was not present in the literature reviewed for this study. However, it was found to be a common part of the experience of unstructured leisure for the study subjects.

As mentioned above, it is difficult to separate the nature of space and place as it relates to hangout behaviour. This section has been an attempt to discuss the issues of adolescent space in relative isolation from place. In the adjoining section a fuller discussion of the overall experiences of space and place, and their relationship to unstructured leisure will be examined.

## 7.3 The relationship of place to hangout behaviour

Place is the personal meaning of space. While it is virtually impossible for two people to have exactly the same personal experience in a space, there will be commonalities between the experiences. Hence, this section discusses the nature of the personal experience of the study subjects as it applies to unstructured leisure.

Wariness must be exacted when scientifically studying personal experience in any context. This predicate is no more important than in the examination of place in adolescents. While an attempt has been made to summarize the responses of the subjects, the results must be cautiously and critically viewed. The statements in this section of the discussion are born of the generalized personal experience of the study subjects as well as the focus group participants and should be received and interpreted accordingly.

### 7.3.1 Primary factors of adolescent hangout places

#### 7.3.1.1 Entertainment: Something to do

> The place that I hangout the most is on a street. All my friends are there. I get a good laugh and have fun there. It is something to do and there isn't much to do in this town.
>
> (female, age 14)

Throughout the questionnaire, the study group displayed an overwhelming focus on entertaining activities in which to participate. Hanging out represented "something to do," which was fun, engaging and positive for the subjects. This was aggressively corroborated through the responses of the focus group participants. Fascinatingly, it could be perceived that the traditional stance in the literature has been to treat unstructured leisure with less value than that of structured leisure due to the uneven distribution of structured leisure studies. These results refute this stance and are supported by recent studies such as McMeeking and Purkayastha (1995), Hine and Hedlund (1994) and Henderson and King (1999).

Despite the overall desire for entertainment by the study group, it is fascinating that the nature of entertainment means different things to males and females. Males more frequently made explicit reference to the need for something to do and the desire to participate in an activity to satisfy their need for leisure. In past studies [such as Kleiber et al., (1986) and Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984)] it was found that both males and females reported social activities as being their favourite type of leisure. The results of this study support that stance, however, the results also indicate that males and females have different standards by which social activity is measured. This point was poignantly clarified through the focus group discourse. When male participants

were asked, "Do you think that girls hang out differently than you do?", they responded in the affirmative citing differences such as "*girls talk more*" and "*girls have intimate discussions*". Upon requesting a reciprocal response from female participants, they indicated that males "*have competitions and stuff*" as well as "*play games and sports*". Thus, it is appropriate to state in this study that most males hang out by participating in physical activities that involve friends such as skateboarding, other informal games and watching television. Females tend to participate in more social and conversational activities as is highlighted in the next section. The results show that males view the importance of friends as being on par with the importance of entertainment. Their activities almost always involve friends, but in a form different from female activities.

#### 7.3.1.2 Social Leisure: Being with my friends

> It is appealing because we just want to be with our friends because they are more important than anything else....
>
> (male, age 16)

Being with friends can be stated as the apogee of the unstructured leisure experience in this study. With cogent frequency, the subjects and focus group participants expounded upon the value and requirement of friends to make hanging out fun and worthwhile. As such, it is at this point that the argument must be raised: does place have any importance in unstructured leisure at all? The following is an examination of this argument.

Are friends an influence in the key components of the logistics of hanging out? As illustrated in the results, it can be seen that unstructured leisure occurs primarily outside of the normal weekday routine – that is, in the after-school hours and evening. The earlier part of the day is consumed by school and school-related activities during the week. The weekend was not examined as a separate entity in this study, although it is reasonable to postulate that the open unscheduled nature of Saturday and Sunday would lend themselves to large quantities of unstructured leisure throughout. The week affords direct communication with friends for unstructured leisure; however, the weekend provides challenges for meeting and participating in

activities if friends live a significant distance apart. Clearly, there exists a relationship between friends and the time of day when hanging out occurs.

For purpose of clarification, the focus group participants were asked about the "other friends" category, which was introduced as somewhat of a mystery in previous chapters. The other friends that the subjects were referring to consisted of peers from other aspects of their lives. The participants identified the other friends as being peers from sports teams, church, neighbours who go to different schools and older adolescents who can drive. It can be said that these are peers with whom the subjects had a "function acquaintance".

Friends have a direct impact upon determining where to hang out. This is seen in the nature of the categories that were developed to categorize the subjects' responses. Each of the five factors for determining where to hang out has peer-based overtones. In fact, many of the reasons for changing hangout locations, roaming and travelling to hangouts have peer-related factors intertwined within them.

Males and females both clearly identify the importance of peers in unstructured leisure. Significantly, friends can be the most common and most accessible recreational amenity in a small town. Throughout the week, the school functioned as a central meeting place for the subjects. Some subjects implied that the bulk of the logistics of hanging out such as where, when and with whom was decided at the end of the school day.

In continuation of the gender-oriented discussion of the previous section, it is reiterated that females tend to participate in hangout behaviours that are social and conversational in nature. As such, it would appear that there is a significant de-emphasis upon the activities of hanging out, in lieu of the companions of hanging out. As females hang out, it is more important to have friends with whom to talk and socialize than any other factors. This includes other forms of activity or secondary factors. Privacy remains a key element of hanging out for females, as they were quick to remark during the focus groups. As one Grade X female stated, they wanted to be where no one was "*bugging or eavesdropping*." It is important to note that females consider talking with a group of friends an activity as much as males consider skateboarding an activity. The focus group participants suggested that males and females do not always agree on these matters.

A fascinating combination of results from the focus group illustrates the difference between male and female hangout behaviours. When asked about the nature of the hangout

groups, the participants indicated that they were mixed gender groups. When encouraged to talk about the activities in which group members participated, the following statement was made: "*Guys do stuff and the girls watch the guys and stand around and talk.*" Females, when unable to physically meet with their friends, will adapt by using the telephone. While males use the telephone, they would not consider this hanging out in any way. Females described the use of the telephone as in important part of their hanging out behaviour.

With females participating in largely socially driven hangout activities it is curious that they would report having larger hangout groups. This finding is not directly supported by any of the literature reviewed; however, it is not refuted either. The discussion of the number of people in a hangout group appears in Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) and suggests smaller hangout groups than have been determined in this study. Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) do not identify differences in hangout group size of males versus females. These differences could be due to any of a number of factors including the rural nature of the subjects in this study. Sufficient evidence does not exist to make a concrete statement about why there are differences between males and females or between this and other studies.

There are a number of reasons why the subjects may have chosen to hangout in large groups. Besides the obvious possibilities such as more players on a team or more people with whom to socialize, another possibility exists. Hanging out in large groups provides a certain level of privacy. This became apparent through the focus group discussion in which participants were asked about why they chose to hang out in such large groups. They indicated that there were a limited number of places to hangout and as such there was a grouping at the most attractive locations. Additionally, participants suggested that a flocking mechanism might be at work in the large groupings of adolescents in small physical spaces. This flocking mechanism provides protection from intruders. It would protect against physical harm (a concern of a small proportion of the subjects) as well as provide a sense of anonymity. It is the anonymity that creates the privacy. Onlookers cannot identify any individuals, which provides an additional sense of privacy. This theory has no immediate support within scholarly literature and as such must be treated with scepticism.

In response to the question posed earlier, despite the overwhelming response of the importance of friends and the de-emphasis upon location as a critical factor, it remains a fundamental fact that both males and females require a location where they can hang out. As it is

possible to hang out where they are not wanted or where they have no control over the environment, it stands to reason that place is a critical factor in hanging out, irrespective of its subconscious and sometimes subtle nature. The literature has no consensus on this matter as there are those who consider place a frivolous sedentary matter. However, there is growing support for the importance of adolescent place in their leisure experiences (see Hine and Hedlund, 1994; Korpela, 1992; and McMeeking and Purkayastha, 1995).

### 7.3.2 Secondary factors of adolescent hangout places

It is clear that the two primary factors of adolescent place are activity and friends. However, several secondary factors exist which must be briefly discussed. While these factors are not as frequently mentioned by the study group, they are important in their own rights as parts of hangout behaviour.

#### 7.3.2.1 Food

> ...usually we sit and talk and listen to music upstairs and eat pizza from the local pizza place.
>
> (female, age 14)

> I like it because you can get food (chocolate and pop)...
>
> (male, age 15)

Eating is a social phenomenon. This statement carries multinational and international ramifications and is certainly true in a Canadian context. As such, it should come as no surprise that food plays a role in adolescent hanging out. What remains remarkable is the significance that food is given within the context of adolescent hangout behaviour. From the initial survey results, there was a question as to cause and effect. Did subjects deliberately hang out where there was food or was it coincidental that food happened to be at the locations where the subjects chose to hangout? This quandary was immediately alleviated after the focus groups. It cannot be said with

more potency than the following quotation from a focus group female: "*First thing you ask is, 'Where's the food?*" She was remarking on a question relating to hanging out at friends' houses. Unquestionably, participants suggested that the results accurately represented the statement that they made sure that there was food where they were hanging out.

Food not only functions as a part of the socializing of the group, but also provides an activity in which all group members can participate. Both males and females noted the significance of food as a part of hanging out. However, females identified the importance of food at the same level as the importance of entertainment, which was significantly more frequently than males. This is not particularly surprising, as it was the female focus group participants who suggested that food was an activity in which everyone could participate. An additional function in the importance of food is that it fosters familiarity. Females noted that food helped them relax and made them feel comfortable. While males conceded the social nature of food, they did not suggest that food provided either an activity or comfort.

The most notable aspect of food in the literature is its relative absence. Only one of the studies reviewed mentioned food as a part of hanging out. However, Hine and Hedlund (1994) only mentioned food in passing and failed to provide specific insights in the importance of food to adolescent hangout behaviour. This is unquestionably an important area that has been understudied.

#### 7.3.2.2 Acceptance

> I mostly hangout at my house ... Everyone that comes there feels welcome. My family gets along with all my friends. ... People like my house because it's cozy and friendly...
>
> (female, age 15)

> The place that I hangout the most is the home of my two best friends. ... Because I can be myself and I don't need to feel like I need to impress someone. It is a nice environment.
>
> (female, age 15)

Being a part of an accepting group is of critical importance to adolescents. This has much to do with the experience of puberty during adolescence and solidifies the need for an accepting, non-critical environment (Erikson, 1968; Petersen and Ebata, 1987; Undry and Talbert, 1988). It is this group that facilitates the adolescent socialization, that is, socialization in both meanings of the word. In many ways, the concept of acceptance has been examined lightly through the related area of space ownership. Moving to the personal level, however, shows the innate need not simply for a broad social interaction, but for a sense of belonging. A sense of belonging is dependent upon location as well as familiarity with the people at that location.

It is difficult to annex space as an individual and therefore space is often annexed by groups with common goals and desires. Far from suggesting a causal relationship between ownership of space and personal acceptance, it should be stated that personal acceptance is a cornerstone upon which adolescent relationships are built. Furthermore, personal acceptance within a group is based on comfort. Acceptance, in this context, is referred to by the subjects as being "*where people take you for what you are and don't try to change you*". This quotation was from a questionnaire subject and illustrates both location and social factors of acceptance.

Females were twice as likely as males to identify the need for acceptance. It is believed that in this case, males may experience the same need for acceptance and value its importance just as much as females, but were less likely to report their need. This conclusion was determined through the focus groups where male participants admitted to desiring trust and comfort. Acceptance cannot be completely separated from the need for friends since friends are a strong contributor to comfort and familiarity. Males and females both reported friends as being very important to their experience of hanging out. This is unquestionably interconnected with the need for acceptance.

The literature is replete with the discussion of the adolescent desire for acceptance and belonging. There are too many references to list, however, a few key notes can be taken from Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984), Feldman and Elliott (1990), Korpela (1992) and Tolan and Cohler (1993). This is a well-researched area of adolescent experience both from the psychological and sociological perspectives.

A final note on acceptance deals with the popular discussion of peer pressure. The incessant adolescent dependence upon acceptance and belonging can cause indiscriminate behaviour. When peers participate in an activity it may cause an adolescent to put aside his or her

sagacity or social values in favour of acceptance. This comes through in several aspects of the study such as determining where to hang out. More notably, it is staunchly rejected in certain situations. When asked about hanging out not for pleasure but rather for social acceptance and fear of rejection, the participants suggested that there was little conscious pressure to force others to participate in specific activities. They suggested that those who did not want to hang out simply did not.

#### 7.3.2.3 Transportation

> I usually hangout at a friend's house or at home talking on the phone. On weekends I might meet a friend at a shopping mall. We might talk and watch TV or a movie and visit other friends. I don't really think there is anywhere else to hangout. I live in the country between two small towns so sometimes it is hard to get someone to drive me to town. I think that once I have my license I will be changing my hangout locations because then I will be able to get to where I want to.
>
> (female, age 15)

The issue of transportation has been examined from the perspective of space. This section examines transportation as a function of place. As these two are related, the discussion here will be condensed and succinct.

The focus group participants stated that they expressed no preference over who would provide transportation for them: parent, friend's parents, guardians, grandparents or older adolescents – anyone who was willing would be accepted. Although requiring a ride somewhere displaced the subjects' desire for freedom and independence, the attraction of the destination was more powerful than the need for pride and independence. Yet, it is clear that parents are most likely to accept the responsibility when it comes to transportation of their children. Some participants suggested that most of the time, their parents were readily accepting of the transportation responsibilities. However, this was the exception rather than the rule as most parents were not eager to drive indiscriminately. Thus, it is an exercise in diplomacy to find someone who would drive. Females, in particular, stated that if a group wanted to travel to a location then all members would become co-operating participants in the effort to secure transportation. Through negotiation and compromise, parents could be convinced to drive.

However, it is often the case that travel to urban leisure amenities is coupled with trips to urban centres for other reasons. While parents were pursuing their goals, the subjects would participate in urban leisure.

Despite the reluctance of parents to drive at every whim of the subjects, the focus group participants indicated that parents did not complain when subjects were in *need* of a ride. When male participants were asked if they ever had to call their parents to drive them home because they had become stranded at a location, they indicated that the response was mostly positive. One Grade IX male went so far as to state, "*my parents say 'thanks for calling' and then come get me*".

The study by McMeeking and Purkayastha (1995) suggests that parents are reluctant but willing to be responsible for the transportation of their children. This study supports the evidence regarding the nature of adolescent transportation. The discussion of transportation is strongly represented in Hine and Hedlund (1994) as well.

## 7.4 Prime locations of hanging out

There are locations that are more ideal for hanging out than others. These locations are ideal because they provide access to primary and secondary components of adolescent space and place. Each of these locations are represented on the maps in the appendices because they were commonly identified in the hangout experiences of the subjects (see Figure 6-6). From the results of the questionnaire and the focus groups, the following short descriptions of each of the hangouts is included below, which incorporates the relationships of the primary and secondary factors of adolescent space and place. Each of these hangout locations has received significant attention in the literature. Particularly strong scholarly references are included within the discussions.

### 7.4.1 Home/Friend's house

> The place I hangout at with my friends is my house. It is quiet because normally no one is home. It is bright and warm. We like using the computer and playing the piano. Everything we want to use is free. The phone, food, TV, computer and heat. It appeals to me because it's free. All the things we want to do and need are free and clean. It's only us. I can invite as many people as I like and it is not noisy so I can hear everyone.
>
> (female, age 14)

Home as a hangout is paradoxical on many fronts. First, it is private and individual space, but people with whom the subjects suggested they would rather not interact during their hang out time most often occupy it. These people include parents and siblings. As such, the function of a room or place within the home can be utilized if there is sufficient privacy. Second, home is not the best place to exhibit the characteristic traits of freedom because it is a controlled environment. Even when parents are away, respect for the rules of the home need to be observed, as parents will return.

The home or a friend's house is an excellent place to hangout because adolescents have access to many recreational amenities such as televisions, computers, telephones and importantly, music. Most importantly, it is a place where friends can be present and a sense of belonging and individuality can be experienced by all. All of the facilities of home are generally free of cost and this is another highly attractive feature. There is food available and it is a comfortable environment that includes warmth, places to sit and safety. Private residences are discussed as a place of leisure throughout the literature.

### 7.4.2 School

> I mostly hangout at school [Waterloo Oxford] in the cafeteria or gymnasium with my friends at lunch. There are many objects and services but there is also a fooseball table and vending machines in the cafeteria. There are a lot of people socializing.
>
> (male, age 14)

As mentioned earlier, this study indicates that school is the focal point of social leisure for rural adolescents. In this study area, the school is not in proximity to any other recreational amenities. As such, it is relatively isolated, but self-contained. The school is a place where everyone can meet with friends. There is ample seating and warmth. Food is generally available while the cafeteria is open, after which all that remains are vending machines. The school is large enough for there to be areas of relative privacy and safety is well controlled.

The school is an ideal location for both males and females as it has access to indoor and outdoor facilities. It is the location of structured leisure, but can also function effectively as a place of unstructured leisure. The entertainment value of school is lower than other locations; however, this is readily compensated for by the high access to peers that it affords. The school has equipment for unstructured sports and other activities. The greatest challenge of unstructured leisure in schools is the accessibility. As most subjects ride the bus to school, when the bus leaves so do all of the peers. At the study school there were late buses, which afforded the subjects more time to spend in each other's company. The school illustrates the importance of the "timing of space." The activities and participants are subject to the rigor and restriction of time.

### 7.4.3 Downtown

> Downtown. It is a big area with a gravel and pavement. It is not neat and clean but we don't really care. It if was neat and clean then we would be expected to keep it tidy. It is just a place to get together where there are no adults so we can do what we want and not be supervised.
>
> (female, age 14)

> Downtown in New Hamburg. It is great because there are virtually no rules. We can do what we want and no one cares. Lots of people are always there and it's close to everything. There are lots of private places and also crowded ones. There is a wide range of things you can do. Main point is that there are no adults (i.e. parents) around to supervise or scold.
>
> (female, age 15)

Downtown areas are prime hanging out locations because of the variety of activities in which participation can be experienced. Downtown cores are public space but can quickly be

annexed if there is a sufficient number of adolescents present. The most dynamic of the local hangout places, it microcosmically approximates the regional mall, but most assuredly, does not replace it. Downtown cores provide shopping but only if they are large enough. In the study area, New Hamburg and Tavistock were the only two towns with a sufficient economic base for clothing stores, computer stores and the like.

The downtown area provides entertainment and access to friends. It is simple to get to provided that the adolescents live within that town and as such relinquished the dependence upon parents for transportation. These areas contain open space for activities but often do not provide anywhere to sit. A few sparsely placed benches could be found within the study towns, but these were generally not sufficient for the number of adolescents [see image 9 in Appendix C]. Food is readily available for purchase in downtown areas. Downtown areas do not provide warmth or privacy. Support for downtown areas for hanging out can be seen in Valentine (1996b), Wyllie and Smith, (1996) and Childress (1993).

### 7.4.4 Mall

> The mall, lots of stores around and movie theatre nearby. Lots of things to do and places to go. Often to see a movie...
>
> (male, age 14)

> Stratford shopping mall. Near restaurants (Taco bell, McDonalds...) ... I hangout at this location because it provides me with a chance to meet new people. This location provides shelter when it is raining, a place to eat and shop and a place to make new friends. People make it a friendly place to hangout. It is appealing because it provides a place where I can get away from everything.
>
> (male, age 15)

Mall. It has many stores... there are stores that sell clothing and jewellery. It is near movie theatres and near restaurants and strip malls and car dealerships... You get to see many hot guys... shop and try out new clothes. The atmosphere is friendly because all you ever see is friends and hoards of people and singles all gathered in one place. I like it because you can do all sorts of things and get some shopping done too.

(female, age 15)

The mall is big and there are lots of stores in it. It is nicely decorated and it looks like a park when you're inside. Because I like to go shopping with my friends and there is a food court.

(female, age 14)

The mall or shopping centre has been studied aggressively over past years. As mentioned in the literature review, malls are a public-private space hybrid that is designed to attract youth. In the case of this study, the malls to which the subjects are referring are regional in nature and quite large. This is the first and only one of the hangouts discussed in this section that has significant gender characteristics. The mall is visited far more frequently by females than males. Males do not take trips to the mall as regularly as females. The following statement by a male focus group participant expressed the overall feeling of the other males in the group: "*the only time I go to the mall is with girls*". To corroborate, a male subject stated that the mall had many stores, was near a movie complex, was somewhere to eat and "*my girl friend makes me go*". Although males visit the mall less frequently than females, it remains that they do still go. Further, the quotations above suggest that they enjoy their experience.

The mall functions in much the same way as a friend's house. There is warmth, atmosphere, seating, food and abundant stimuli. The large numbers of people that visit the mall mean that there is anonymity, which provides a type of privacy. Some focus group participants suggested that the mall is a good place to meet new people as well as socialize with your friends. Obviously, there is an exceptionally large variety of places to shop for almost anything. As mentioned in the transportation sections of this chapter, malls are not accessible but are often proximate to many other recreational amenities. A specific example of this is the large regional mall that is frequented by most of the study subjects. It is close to restaurants and movie theatres.

There is no shortage of literature on malls and shopping centres. Furthermore, a significant literature examining the adolescent interaction and experience with the mall is present. There are not many studies that examine rural adolescents' experience with the urban mall. One might be suspect of differences based on accessibility.

### 7.4.5 Arena

> The arena is a pretty old building. There's not a lot of reasons why it's a great place. It just seems to be the central place where everyone can get to. It has a place to get food, to sit and talk, to watch hockey and to just be. Since it's in New Hamburg, you can walk around a bit if you want to go shopping or go to a friends house. The most important thing is that everyone likes to be there. That's what makes it fun. It isn't really important what the building is like. I like to hangout there because I really like hockey – but more importantly I like hockey players. I also like to talk with all my friends that like to be there too. It provides washrooms, sitting areas and food.
>
> (female, age 14)

> The place where I hangout the most is probably the hockey arena. A lot of my friends go there, both males and females. Some of my friends play on the Junior C team for New Hamburg. We socialize and have fun, we enjoy watching. It's cheap entertainment. I hangout at this location because my friends are there, both boys and girls. Girls that we like and want to get to know and meet. This location provides entertainment. It is a friendly place to be because there is also a lot of adults so you can't really get into trouble. I enjoy the entertainment and being with friends.
>
> (male, age 15)

Within a local town environment, the arena (if one is present) manages to attract many adolescents. This is especially true during hockey season if the town has a hockey team. Arenas provide a clear place of entertainment and a meeting place for friends. There is food, warmth and seating available. On the surface, the arena appears to be an organized environment, but the subjects experience it as an unstructured leisure environment. This is due to the fact that there is no one who monitors what adolescents are doing during the game. Several females admit to attending the games not because they have any interest in hockey or want to watch the game, but because it affords them an opportunity to fraternize with the opposite sex. Nevertheless, the arena provides an environment where freedom can be experienced, even if only in a restricted sense.

For males, the allure of the arena has much to do with the activities that are happening there. Many of the male subjects stated that they have friends who play on the hockey teams and work in the arena so the building is a comfortable place to be. Furthermore, arenas are generally proximate to downtown areas and other recreational environments. Arenas function as a strong attraction for rural adolescents. Very little work has been done concerning arenas and adolescents. Hine and Hedlund (1994) provides some discussion concerning arenas. This discussion is much like the discussions in U.S. government reports that suggest that more facilities need to be provided for adolescents and specifically mention arenas (Prendergast, 1963, Office of Juvenile Justice and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention, 1979).

### 7.4.6 Park

> I usually hangout in the park which has picnic tables and benches to sit on. There are hills going around two sides and a river goes around the other two sides. There is a pond with a little island on it too, on the other side of the park. It has a swing set and slide and small creative where a lot of kids are during the day but when we are not around. We just come there to talk, it's nice to not always be around our parents. We go to the park because there usually aren't many people there and it gives us a little privacy to talk.
>
> (female, age 14)

> As explained, the park is located right next to the public school. It has a large red swing set next to a very large tree. It also has a baseball diamond. I hang out at the park because it's a nice, peaceful and friendly environment to hangout at. It's appealing because there always something to do.
>
> (male, age 14)

> I hangout with my friends at the Baden park where they have park benches and baseball games going on in the summer. We go there to watch and to meet each other. We hangout there because we can sit down, talk and do activities like football and baseball. We can also get there easily and everyone lives nearby.
>
> (male, age 15)

The power of the park is that it can provide unparalleled freedom, privacy and tranquillity. It is a place where groups or individuals can go and participate in any activities without the captiousness of adults. As established, finding a location that is private yet accessible can be challenging for rural adolescents. The park provides such an environment. Furthermore, the park provides access to the second primary factor of adolescent places – entertainment. Being "too old" for the play equipment provided within a park does not stop adolescents from using swings, slides and other equipment. The park provides other facilities more suited to the adolescent years in baseball diamonds and playing fields. In addition, the park provides a source of entertainment through the groups that may be participating in organized activities there. This allows the adolescents to become spectators of sports and other activities. However, spectatorship is a less common use of the park. Its value comes from the privacy and freedom that it provides.

Parks are generally accessible and provide either a place to sit and have quiet conversation or a place to participate in boisterous activity. It should be noted that while this section generally refers to parks as designated areas, the study subjects identified natural outdoor environment as parks. This less restrictive definition of park forces them to become commonplace within the experience of rural adolescents. The prevalence of parks coupled with their functionality creates an excellent location for hanging out.

These six prime locations, home/friend's house, school, downtown, the mall, the arena and the park, provide the focal points of the hangout experience. They are the embodiment of both the primary and secondary factors in which adolescents place value. On any given day, while hanging out, there is a good chance that rural adolescents will be found enjoying an activity with their friends at one of these places.

## 7.5 Limitations

All studies have limitations and this one is no exception. This study has a few significant limitations, some of which were deliberately imposed and others that were inherent within the design of the study. This section of this chapter examines these limitations as well as the specific identified sources of bias within the study.

### 7.5.1 Deliberate restrictions of the study

Several restrictions were enacted based on the unavailability of resources. Time restrictions within this study limited the depth of several analyses. Data were collected on the socio-economic nature of the subjects in the form of parental occupation. It was intended that an index of household income would be created upon which subjects could be further sub-categorized as other studies suggested difference according to socioeconomic factors. While the data were available to perform this analysis, it was determined that the time requirement for such a task was immense. The restriction being that it would have required the content analysis of each subject's response and then the matching of this index to the government average occupational income data available for the study area. This restriction was due to the misjudgement of the researcher in the formulation of this question. An improved form of the question may have yielded better results.

Other data from the questionnaire that were not used in the analysis or results of the study included Question 26b concerning the distance to nearest town and Question 26c describing the distance to the nearest neighbour. These questions offered little insight into any real issue surrounding unstructured leisure and were ignored.

From the spatial aspect of the study, a number of smaller towns had to be removed from the study set, as they did not have enough subjects living within them to warrant the use of the spatial analysis techniques. These subjects were not completely lost from the study as all of the place-related data that they provided were included in the other analyses.

A reduction in the number of completed questionnaires was performed in the earliest stage of the processing of the questionnaire data. As previously mentioned, subjects that had flagrant examples of deviant behaviour such as inappropriate language or drawings were removed from the study set. It is unknown if these questionnaires provided any valuable data or insights into adolescent hangout behaviour.

The impact of siblings – both older and younger – upon hanging out was not explicitly examined. Having a job or working on a farm was not analysed for its impact on hangout behaviour.

Finally, more work could have been done with the comparison among the study towns from the spatial aspect. Socio-economic data for these towns were not forthcoming and restricted the breadth of this analysis.

### 7.5.2 Design flaws within the study

Other than a simple question numbering error and a spelling mistake, there were no problems with the layout, graphical design and grammar of the study instrument. However, at least one conceptual error should be highlighted. Section B of the questionnaire as well as Question 19 had issues that required resolution. The subjects answered these questions in almost the same way, although they addressed subtle differences and were worded differently. The content analyses for determining the meaning of hanging out was applied to all three of these questions rather than exclusively to Section B, contrary to the original intention for the research.

A particularly significant conceptual error surrounds the usage of the nearest major intersection or crossroads as the minimal resolvable element for spatial location. Perhaps this concept would have worked excellently in an urban environment however, in small rural towns it failed. Several of the study towns have only one major intersection and as such there may be inordinate clustering at that location. While mental mapping techniques were initially disregarded as a method for this study, it is possible that they might have provided a stronger result in this area. Another possibility would have been to provide subjects with maps of their towns upon which they could have identified hangouts. They would have required large quantities of time for interpretation, which was the reason that they were not included.

In an effort to standardize the responses, all time-related questions needed to be set-up based on a single unit of time. The study time period was therefore set as the week. It may have yielded better results if weekends were examined separately in order to better understand the hang out dynamics of these two days. As it stands now, this study reveals little about the weekend, in contrast to weekdays, as a time for hanging out.

The response rates of the open-ended questions were good, but there were still subjects who left these questions blank. These questions do require strong writing skills and this could have been a deterrent for some subjects. It is possible that this could have been alleviated by the

use of closed-ended questions and scales. It should be noted that the richness of the open-ended questions was an effective exchange for slightly lower response rates.

Inherent within the content analysis techniques is the potential for errors due to misclassification of subjects' responses. While every effort was made to reduce this type of error, it cannot be stated that errors of commission and omission do not exist within the data set. These errors were reduced by attempting to clearly define the rules by which classes or categories were created.

### 7.5.3 Other sources of bias within study

A clear source of bias within this study is the sampling method. Subjects were not randomly sampled and as such the inferential nature of the results is restricted. A truly random sample would have far exceeded the resources available for this study. Nevertheless, it appears unlikely that the sampling method that was implemented introduced any significant measurable bias.

A further possible source of bias is illustrated by the pattern of response rates between males and females. As seen in the figures (especially Figure 6-15) the response rate is consistently higher for females than for males. There are a variety of possible explanations for this phenomenon, several of which suggest bias within the sample. It is conceivable that this represents underlying gender differences and is not a function of bias.

The design of the study required rural towns. The study towns were almost all completely within the socio-economic shadow of the larger urban centres. Specifically, several of the study towns fell within the boundary of the census metropolitan area. This increased the frequency of the subjects' travel and interaction with the nearby cities and restricted the rural aspect of the study. A more rural environment was desired. It is believed that a more rural environment would have produced significantly different results.

This concludes the discussion of the findings of this study. The importance of hangout behaviour was described and there was a purposeful examination of gender differences. This discussion was set in the context of the literature as reviewed earlier. The discussion brought to

the forefront some of the critical factors in the experience of hanging out. These included having something to do with friends and ownership and control of the environment in which these activities occur.

The final chapter in this report describes the contributions that this study may have had upon the existing scholarly knowledge and to society at large. It also contains recommendations for further studies as well as recommendations to the local governments of the study towns for improvements that will positively impact adolescent life.

Chapter

8

# Conclusions

*"In principle, every teen-ager is a delinquent"*

(Goodman, 1966)

## 8.0 Summary

In the June 10, 1999 issue of the *Newmarket Era-Banner* (a local newspaper), an article appeared concerning the loitering of adolescents in the former downtown core of the city. Newmarket is a settlement of 60, 000 people located immediately north of Toronto. In this article, residents and business members of the former downtown core were complaining that adolescents were damaging the business and social climate of this area. Efforts had been made to alleviate this problem such that the police had been called in to patrol the area more frequently and ask those teens who were hanging out to "move on". Not only were these adolescents considered a nuisance, they also were seen as a hazard, threatening the safety of all who lived and worked in the area. Indeed, the youth had faced unsubstantiated blame for the recent incidents of break-ins and theft. Fascinatingly, the problem of adolescent hanging out is occurring in the former downtown area of Newmarket, Ontario right outside an old movie theatre that has been converted into a teen centre. The residents and business people have vowed that they will not rest until this youth centre is closed or relocated.

This article is reminiscent of the environmental waste NIMBY (not-in-my-back-yard) days of the 1970s. This is representative of the classic story of conflict between adolescent space and place and adult authority. The opening quotation from Goodman so aptly and ably summarizes the view of many adults in Canadian society. Clearly, there is a problem with perception when

adolescents cannot stand in their own space and converse with each other without inciting and awakening "flight or fight" instincts within the adults who are forced to coexist with them. This article proves two important points. First, the conflict between adult and adolescent space is an ongoing and timely issue. Second, there exists a serious misunderstanding between adults and adolescents. With statements in reference to the teen centre such as "It's the bane of my existence" and "I want it out of here" the level of adult misguided mistrust for adolescents is clear (Valderlinde, 1999, p. A1). It was for these practical reasons that this study was undertaken.

From the "squeegee kids" of Toronto to the inferno of the Woodstock 99 Music festival, adolescents have been labelled as the scourge of society. This label – like most – is gratuitously applied to the entire group with complete disregard for those who would not fall within the circumscription of its stereotypes. It breeds distrust, anxiety and conflict between adults and adolescents in every facet – not the least of which is the use of space.

The results of this study show adolescents as people who participate in leisure activities for their entertainment. These leisure activities are often unstructured, and in the eyes of a casual onlooker, may appear to be a complete waste of time. The scholarly studies on the matter put this behaviour in a different light. The fact remains that unstructured leisure is a critical part of the multifaceted socialization of adolescents. Hanging out is done with friends because friends provide the support and unfettered acceptance that they cannot receive anywhere else.

Adolescents have more time to participate in unstructured leisure than any other group in society. Additionally, they have a larger home range in which to enjoy this unstructured leisure than their younger counterparts. More than anything else, they are simply looking for something engaging to do with their friends. The results of this study do not, in any way or form, suggest that this translates into illegal activities. The response concerning the participation in illegal activities while hanging out was below 10 per cent. Within the context of small-town Ontario, it is noteworthy that it *appears* that most adolescents hang out in public spaces such as streets and arenas. In reality, the proportion of adolescents who hang out at home or a friend's house is far greater than those who hangout in public space.

Adolescents hang out after their social responsibility of attending school is complete. They are using their available time to bond with friends and grow into the responsible members of society that is desired from them. This growth cannot occur without the release of the restrictions that are placed upon them. The coveted freedom that hanging out provides is overshadowed by

forms of social organization such as voting to determine where to go. Numerous studies have shown that adolescents seek out companions who have the same sagacious attitude as they do themselves and, notably, as do their parents.

The experience of hanging out remains with people from their youth to their adult years. Hanging out is an adolescent form of independence and freedom – the control that is thrust into their own hands to decide what to do, when to do it and with whom. It is appropriate to state that the location of unstructured leisure is not perceived by the subjects to be as important as the friends with whom this leisure is shared.

The results also have indicated that there are differences between the male and female experiences of hanging out. These variations are not surprising if it is appreciated that hanging out is a life experience. Additionally, some variations also were found with age. Hangout behaviour changes as age increases. This is due to changes in mobility and home range. Indeed there is some suggestion that hangout behaviour continues into the retirement years, citing mature adults who travel to the mall for the purpose of social leisure.

The meaning of unstructured leisure varies by the individual. However, the commonalities between the meanings of hangout behaviour illustrate that there is immense value that is concentrated within these experiences. Many adult social and psychological problems are linked to poor socialization during the formative adolescent years (see Tolan and Cohler, 1993). The specific meaning is not as important as the functionality of the experience. It cannot be stressed enough; unstructured leisure is an important part of adolescent development.

## 8.1 Scholarly Implications and Further study

The scholarly implications of this study are as varied as the literature upon which it is based. This study has found a corroborative post within most of the scholarly knowledge that surrounds it. The implications discussed below are organized according to the discipline to which it specifically applies.

The first implications are to that of space and place. This study attempted to bring praxis to an overtly theoretical area of geographical knowledge. It is clear from this study that the constructs of space and place are applicable to adolescents and their unique behaviour patterns. This study addressed the need for research that examines the nature of adolescent space and place.

It continues and strengthens the fundamental argument of James (1990) and Spencer and Blades (1993), both of whom suggest that the children's geography is unique, compelling and worthy of full scholarly examination. The geography of children deserves to follow the path that feminist geography has travelled, and perhaps effectively reveal that which has remained hidden from view. As this research is yet in its infancy, there are innumerable areas from which this research can proceed, including the testing of current accepted theory against the adolescent experience. Studies such as Astor, Meyer and Behre (1999), (a brilliant study on the space and place of violence in schools) have already begun this important work.

Continuing with the importance of space, this study furthers knowledge in the area of control of space. This area has not been examined in detail and this study concludes that the control of space can be acquired and possessed by adolescents. Other studies such as Hine and Hedlund (1994) and Valentine (1996b) suggest similar results.

From the basic social aspects, this study continues the examination of the importance of parental attention during adolescence. As has been concluded through several studies, the time of adolescence often places strain upon the parent-child relationship (see Hill and Holmbeck, 1986; Steinberg, 1987). This study illustrates the importance of this relationship and concludes that the study adolescents were dependent upon parents for transportation. It was further concluded that it is important that parents allowed the space and freedom for growth that occurs during the adolescent years. This is consistent with the works of Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) and Garcia-Preto and Travis (1985). Indeed, from a geographical aspect, the nature of the child-parent relationship as it relates to leisure could be examined.

Further along the social discussion, this study substantiates the quintessential importance of friends in the adolescent years. The subjects were unwavering in their response that nothing was more important than their friends. While this is an unremarkable finding due to the magnitude of studies that have arrived at the same conclusion, it speaks to the effectiveness of this study – at least in this aspect. This conclusion is shared with that of many studies which include Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984), Berndt and Savin-Williams (1987) and Pombeni, Kirchler and Palmonari (1990). Significantly, there is no departure in the stance of the importance of friends for rural adolescents. While this study cannot completely substantiate the claims of Gordon and Caltabiano (1996), Quaglia and Perry (1995) and Hine and Hedlund (1994) concerning the increased importance of friends for rural adolescents over urban adolescents, this is

suggested through the results. In addition, this study agrees with the conclusion that rural adolescents are at a disadvantage when it comes to recreational amenities within their local environments. This imbalance between urban and rural adolescence falls entirely within the auspices of geographical theory and its study is yet in the stage of infancy. This study, like Gordon and Caltabiano (1996), identifies the importance of the continued research in this budding area.

Finally, this study contends that there is exceptional value to unstructured leisure. In earlier studies this conclusion may not have been accepted as there was a lack of corroborating evidence. However, more recent studies such as Kleiber et al., (1986) and Hine and Hedlund (1994) have added credence to this fact.

Perhaps as the area of children's geography matures toward the experience of adolescents, there will be an increased awareness of the significance of adolescent space and place. Further, it may be realized that geographers have the propensity and theoretical platform upon which to build a reasonable literature based on the study of the phenomena of adolescent space and place. Geographical imaginations must include the experience of youth or it will age without grace or form. Adolescents constitute a significant part of society and ought to be studied as such.

## 8.2 Practical Implications

The practical implications of this study can be seen as far reaching. The study concludes that there may be an imbalance between the space and place of rural adolescents and the space and place of urban adolescents. Conceivably, this is a fact of which rural adolescents would be aware and would attempt to force into equilibrium. A response to such an imbalance might manifest itself in small-town adolescents trying to balance the recreational amenities between urban and rural by travel – as frequently as possible – to urban centres. This would not only mean a loss of money that could have been spent locally, but it also would be an inconvenience to the adolescents and their parents. While their wish of having a regional mall within every small town is unrealistic, there are options that can be provided to rural adolescents that may meet some of their needs. These needs can be met on several fronts as discussed below. Further, several factors that should be considered in the creation of space for adolescents are also examined below.

This study has illustrated the importance of space in the experience of unstructured leisure for rural adolescents. Several characteristics of hangout locations were described previously as being of significance for adolescents and these would need to be of importance to any decision-making body whose interest it was to meet the adolescent need. Of primary importance here is adolescent ownership. For any space to be a success in attracting adolescents they need to feel a sense of ownership, control and privacy. Ownership in this context includes being allowed to assign meaning to a location. This means that there does not need to be an emphasis upon scheduling activities for adolescents to do; rather, providing the opportunity to enjoy time filled with their activities and conversations. Unquestionably, specific adolescent need would vary with specific town and as such it would be of value to include the adolescents in any planning activities. Indeed, this step alone would provide some of the ownership that is necessary for success.

Additionally, towns need to consider the level of regulation that hangouts need to have. As adolescents value their space and the privacy it affords, they should be made aware that wherever problems occur within the community, the level of regulation would increase. This may prove to be a deterrent for problems and adolescents may become self-regulating.

Concerning the physical location of adolescent space within a town, this study reveals several areas of importance. First, any adolescent space must be conducive to having groups of adolescents present. As previously discussed, friends are of an overwhelming importance to adolescents. In consideration of the importance of friends, if there is not space for adolescents to be with their friends then only limited success (if any success at all) would be realized. To meet the needs of both males and females, it would be important to provide places for sitting and conversation as well as a source of active entertainment or proximity to such a source.

Second, adolescents want to be near the existing recreational amenities within a town. This helps to meet their desire for entertainment. Recalling the importance of food to adolescents, proximity to restaurants, cafés and convenience stores would be of value. Generally speaking, within a small town, such a location would be close to the central business area.

It should be recognized that adolescents will annex the space in a downtown area. This may be especially true if there is no other space in which they can hang out. Consideration should be given to providing such a facility although this may not completely resolve the problem of adolescent loitering.

In the case of an organized facility for adolescents, it is extremely important to consider who would be responsible for its operation. While an adolescent-operated facility may not be a popular choice, any external party would have to be, generally speaking, less like a parent and more like a friend-in-authority.

Finally, the maintenance of existing facilities is very important. It speaks to the level of respect that is given to adolescents. As they are likely aware of this, they avoid facilities that are in a poor state of repair. Maintaining and upgrading existing recreational amenities would result in an increase in usage and satisfaction. Adolescents can be partners in this type of initiative.

In conclusion, adolescents need to be studied as important members of society who are sentient, passionate and powerful human beings. This sentience finds its expression through unstructured leisure, which is the manifestation of the desire for ownership of experience, control and ultimately maturation. The fostering of respect for these unique members of society coalesced with tolerance and the memory of the adolescent experience will strengthen Canadian society both today and for the future. Conceivably, the relationship between adolescents and their adult counterparts can be dramatically improved as the research into adolescent geography increases the knowledge upon which ideals are drawn. Every teenager is not a delinquent, every teenager is a person who deserves the respect of adults and should be treated as a human being under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

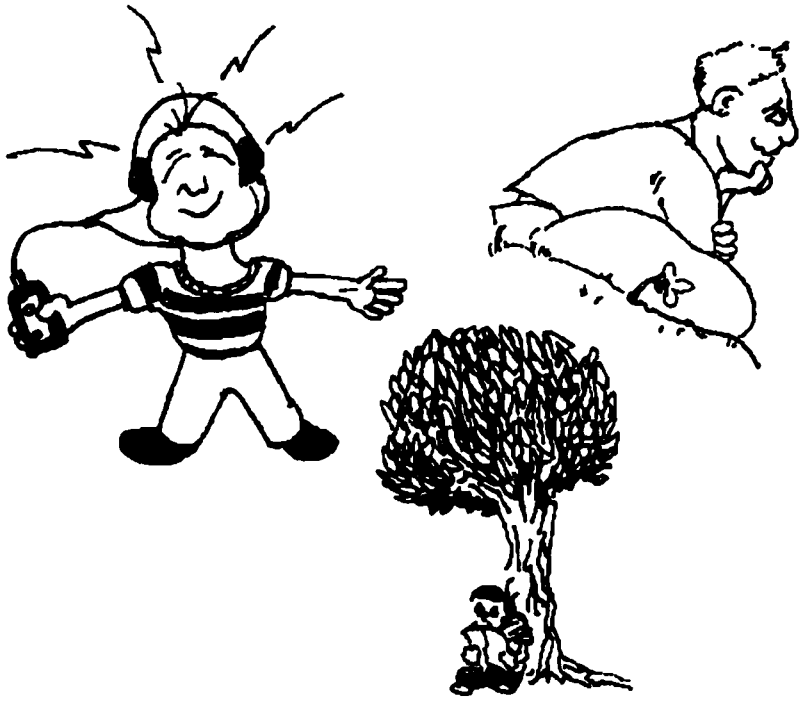
> **"If the city [or town] makes no place for the child, it destroys the man [sic] of tomorrow."**
>
> **(Gregorie, 1978, p. 337)**

Appendix

A

# Study Instrument

# Leisure Location Questionnaire



University of Waterloo
Researcher: Kingsley G. Hurlington

The purpose of this survey is to identify where teens (like you) hang-out during your daily leisure. Your participation is important and your answers will provide an insight into a teenager's lifestyle. **Your responses are completely confidential.** You may choose not to answer any of the questions, although a fully completed survey would be appreciated.

**Important**: When reporting information about hanging-out, please do not include any scheduled or structured activity such as extracurricular activities, sports practices or music lessons. As well, please report information based on the entire school year (i.e. from the start of the school year in September to the end in June).

## SECTION A

**LEISURE ACTIVITY INVENTORY** This section asks questions about what you do when you hang-out. Remember that your answers are confidential so be truthful.

*For the following questions, check or circle the option that best represents your answer. If there is a blank then write in your response.*

1. What does "hanging-out" mean to you?

2. How much time do you normally spend hanging-out during the week?
   *(6 hours of free time per day would be about 42 hours per week)*

   Less than 20 hours | 20 to 34 hours | 35 to 44 hours | 45 to 60 hours | More than 60 hours

3. From Monday to Friday, what time of day do you do most of your hanging-out? *(Circle all that apply)*

   Morning (6am to 12) | Afternoon (12-5pm) | Evening (5-8pm) | Night (Later than 8pm)

4. How frequently do you hang-out *by yourself*?

   Never | Sometimes | Often | Always

5. How frequently do you hang-out with another *person* or a *group of other people*?

   Never | Sometimes | Often | Always

6. When you hang-out with a group, who is in that group? (*Circle all that apply.*)

   Friends from School | Other Friends | Siblings (brothers and/or sisters) | Other Relatives

7. How many people (including yourself) are usually in the group? _____

8. What types of activities do you usually participate in while you hang-out? *(Check all that apply)*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ❍ | Relaxing | ❍ | Talking on the phone |
| ❍ | Socializing | ❍ | Chatting/joking |
| ❍ | Snacking | ❍ | Napping |
| ❍ | Talking | ❍ | Watching TV |
| ❍ | Surfing the Internet/email | ❍ | Watching movies |
| ❍ | Using a computer | ❍ | Reading |
| ❍ | Listening to music | ❍ | Games or Informal sports |
| ❍ | Others (specify) | | |

_____

_____

9. How many different places do you hang-out? _____

10. In a normal day, do you stay at one place when you hang-out or do you go to several different places?

One place Or Several different places?

11. How do you decide where to hang-out?

12. List three (3) places where you hang-out the most (e.g. school, corner store, downtown, mall)

1)

2)

3)

13. What would cause you to change or leave your favourite hang-out and find a new favourite location to hang-out?

14. Which of the following forms of transportation do you use to get to your most frequently visited hang-out? If you have several hang-outs then answer the question for your favourite. *(Check all that apply)*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ❍ | Walk | ❍ | Bike |
| ❍ | Roller blade | ❍ | Skateboard |
| ❍ | Motorcycle | ❍ | Parent's Car |
| ❍ | Snowmobile | ❍ | Friend's Car |
| ❍ | Other (specify) | | |

_____

_____

15. How far away *from home* do think you travel to get to the most frequent place that you hang-out?

| No travelling (Stay at home) | Close (less than 1 km) | Moderately Far (1 - 3 km) | Far (4 – 6 km) | Very far (over 6 km) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

16. How often in a normal week do you travel to an urban centre (such as Kitchener/Waterloo or Cambridge) for *leisure activities*?

| Daily | 2 to 3 times | Once | Less than once | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|

17. How often in a normal week do you travel to an urban centre (such as Kitchener/Waterloo or Cambridge) for *structured activities such as hockey practice or music lessons*?

| Daily | 2 to 3 times | Once | Less than once | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|

18. How frequently do you hang-out at someone else's house?

| Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|---|---|---|---|

19. Imagine that you are inviting a friend from out of town to visit you at your most frequently visited hang-outs. Where would you tell your friend to meet you? Write the directions you would give your friend in the space below for *both* your most frequently visited **inside** hang-out and your most frequently visited **outside** hang-out.
*(Give enough detail for so that the location could be found on a map)*

| Location | Where is it? (major intersection, cross roads or general description of how to get there) | What type of place is this hang-out location (e.g. friend's house, park) |
|---|---|---|
| **Inside** | | |
| **Outside** | | |

20. If you could make changes to the town that you live in (or near) to make it better for teenagers to hang-out, what types of things (buildings, activities, services, places) would you add or remove?

## SECTION B

**HANG-OUT DESCRIPTION** This section asks you to describe your hang-out. Hang-out locations can be either inside or outside. Remember that your answers are confidential so be truthful. Be as descriptive as you can.

21. Using your own words, describe the location where you hang-out the most. **Try to give as much detail about the place so that someone who has never been there before could imagine what it is like.** Describe where it is but you do not have to give away the exact location. Tell about the objects that are nearby, the services that are available and describe noises and lights and anything else that you think is important.

22. Describe why you hang-out at this location. What does this location provide for you? What makes this location a friendly place to hang-out? Why is it appealing to you?



Tired?
You're <u>almost</u> done... just one page to go!

## SECTION C

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION** This section may contain questions that do not seem relevant or related to the rest of the questionnaire, however they are important questions to the study.

*Check or circle the option that best represents your answer.*

23. Gender Female Male

24. Age: _____

25. Grade: _____

26. How many siblings (brother/sisters) do you have? _____

27. Name of town where you live (or the nearest town): _____

a. Name the streets at the closest major intersection to your house

b. If you do not live in a town (i.e., you live on a Rural Route), then how far is it to the closest town? _____ kms

c. How far away from your house is your closest neighbour? _____

28. Describe the type of work your parents do. (Please be specific)

Mother:

Father:

29. Do you have a job? Yes No

a. How many hours do you work in an average week? _____

b. How many hours do you work on an average weekend? _____

c. If you live on a farm, how many hours do you spend working on *farm chores* in an average week? _____

*This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your participation in this survey!*

Appendix

B

# Maps

# Map 1-1: Hangout Locations in New Hamburg






400 0 400 800 Meters

Legend

Hangout Location

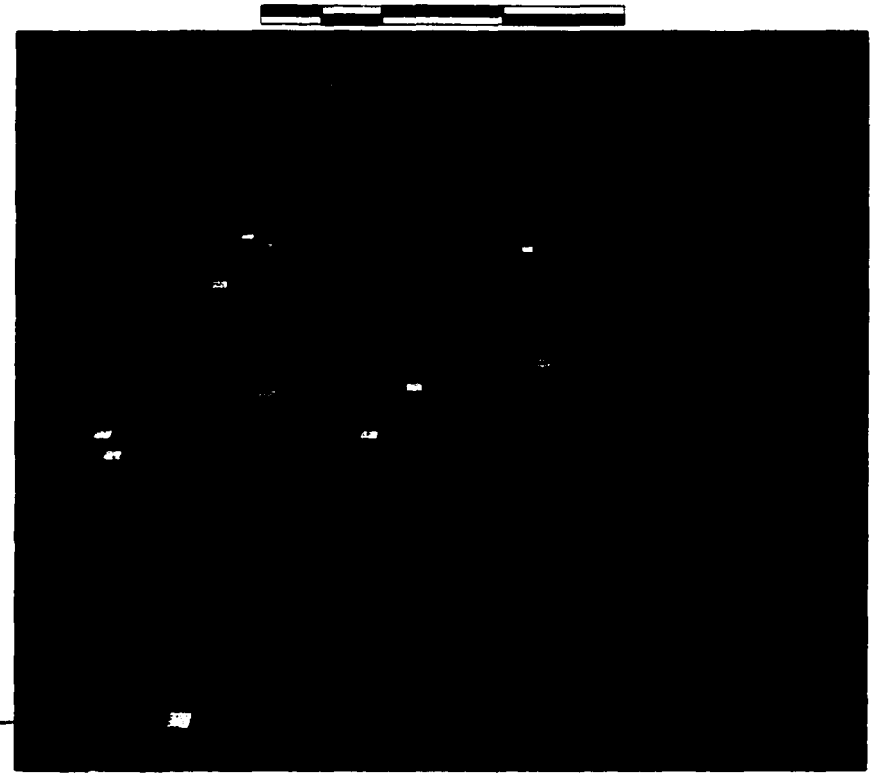
- Arena
- Bowling
- Church
- Downtown
- Friend's House
- Home
- Park
- Parking Lot
- Store
- Tim Hortons
- Youth Centre

Base

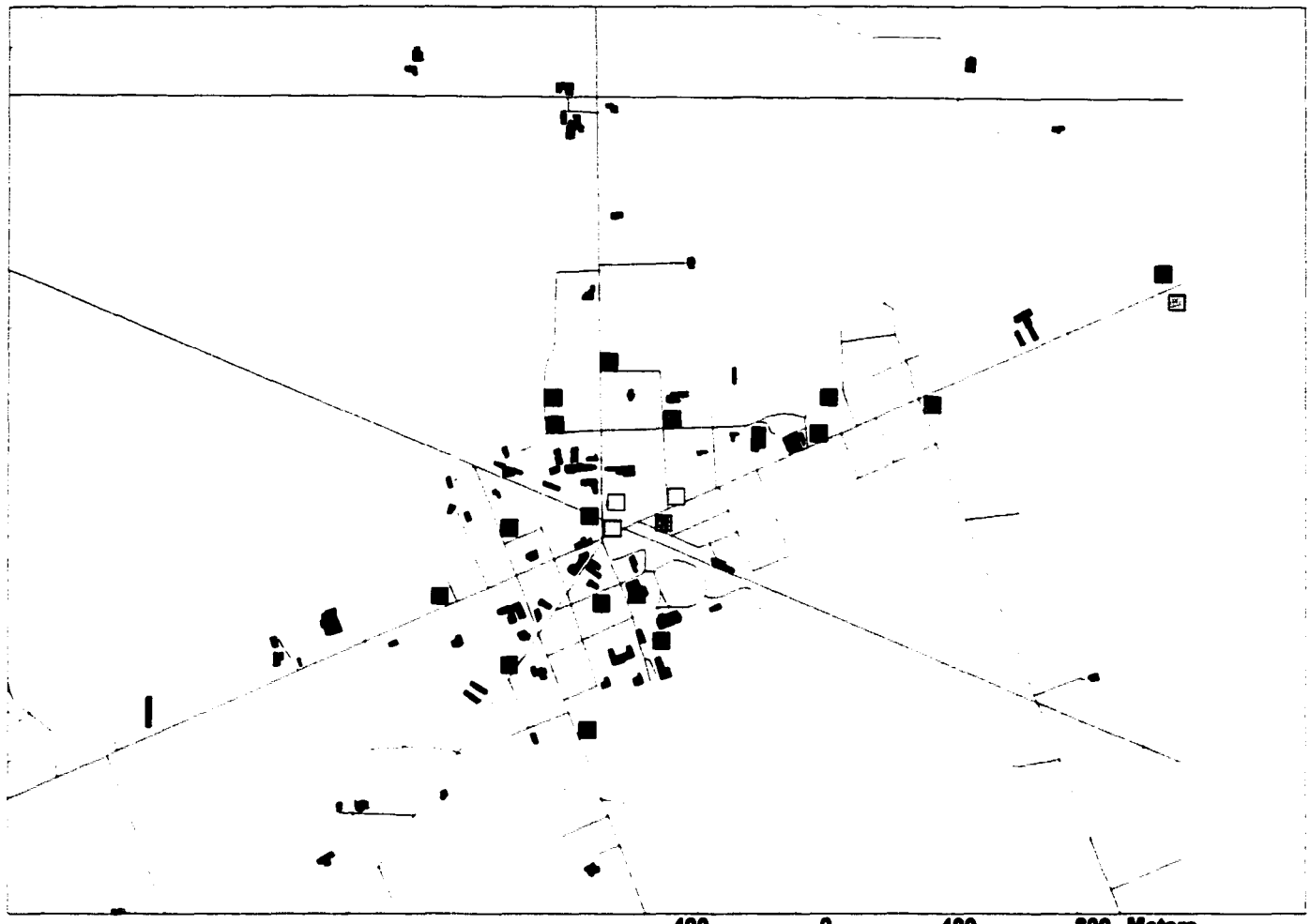
- Drainage
- Building
- Vegetation
- Transport

Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999

3D Extrude Model of Hangout Locations in New Hamburg showing frequency of use



# Map 1-2: Hangout Locations in Tavistock




Legend

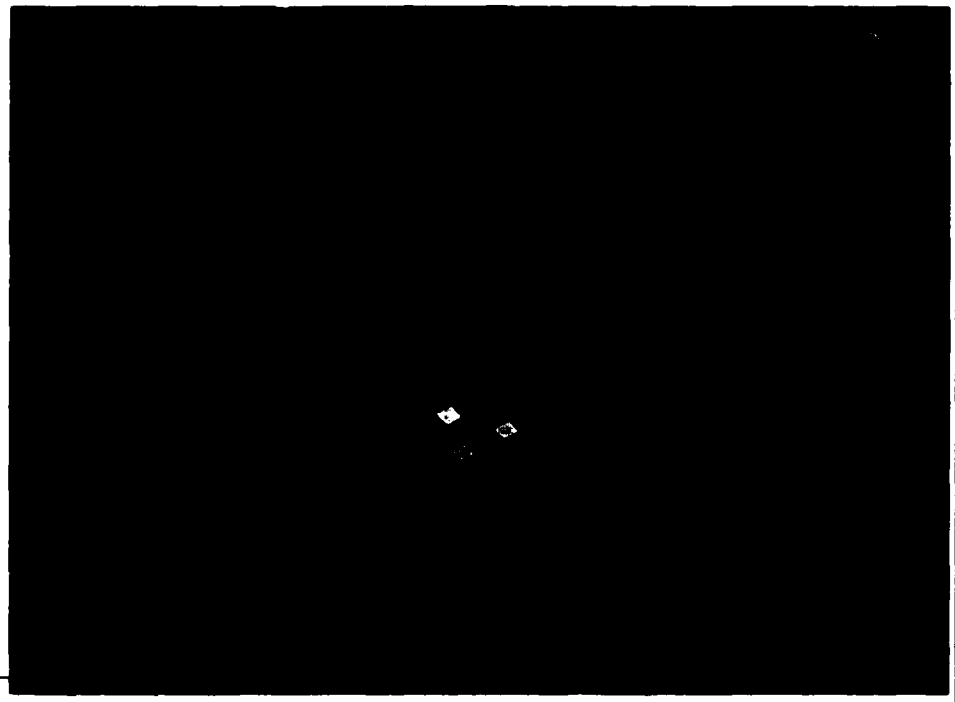
Hangout Locations

- Arena
- Arlington Bar
- Church
- Corner Store
- Downtown
- Friend's House
- Home
- Park
- Parking Lot
- Pizza

Base

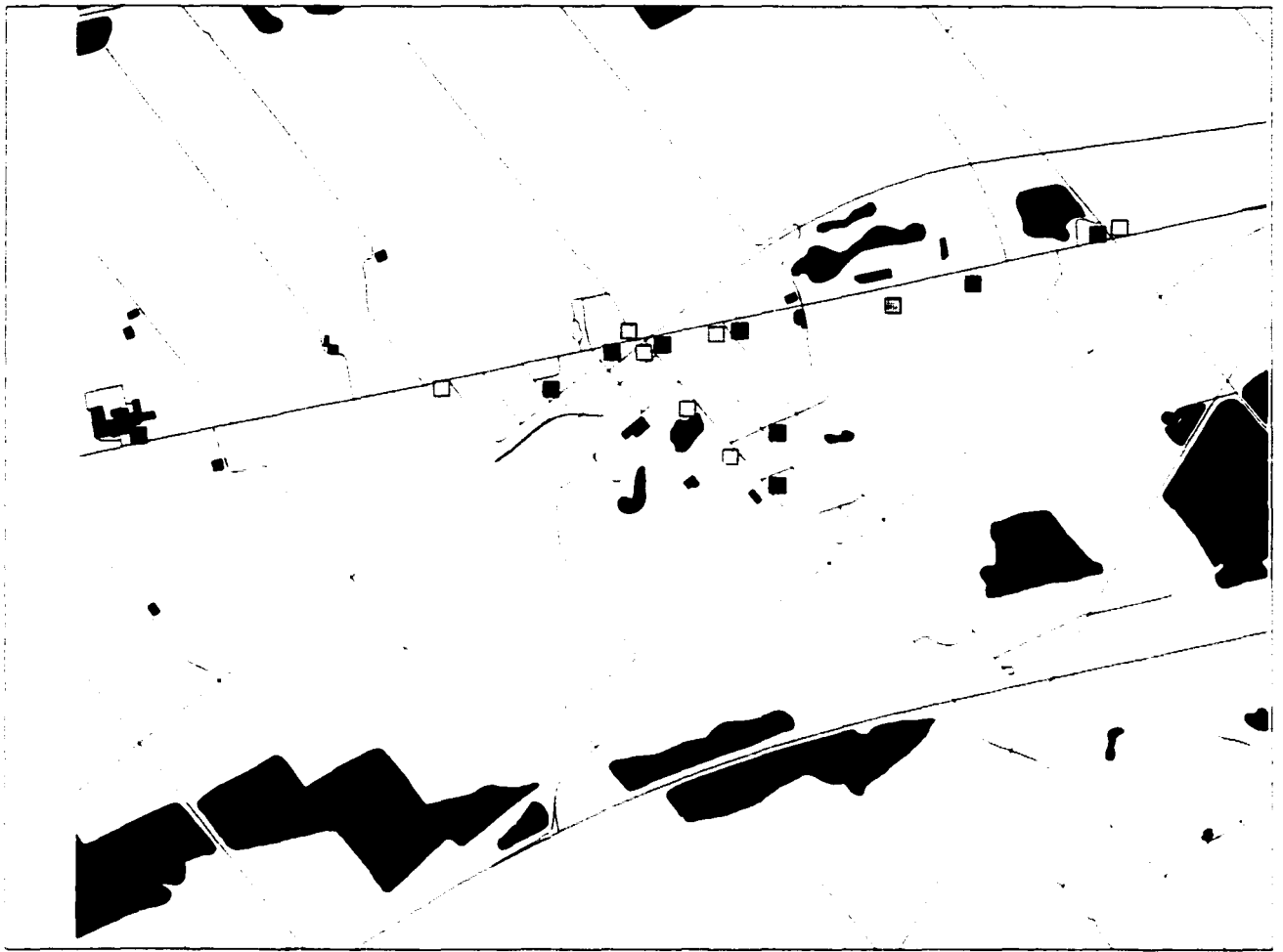
- Drainage
- Building
- Vegetation
- Transport

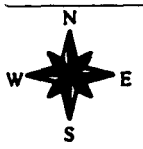
Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999



3D Extrude Model of Hangout Locations in Tavistock showing frequency of use

# Map 1-3: Hangout Locations in Baden





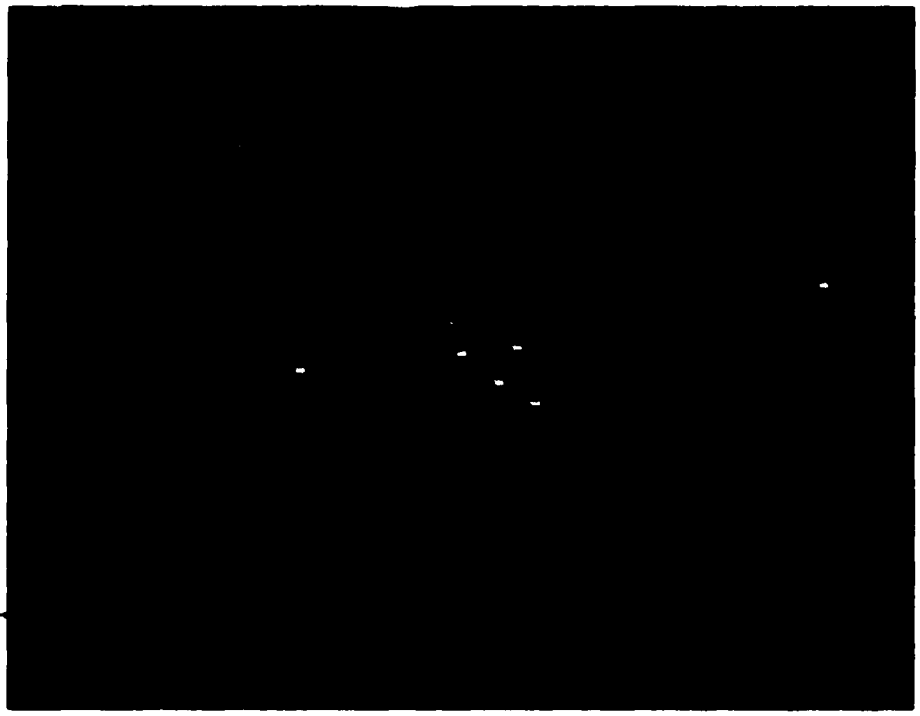

400 0 400 800 Meters

## Legend

Hangout Locations

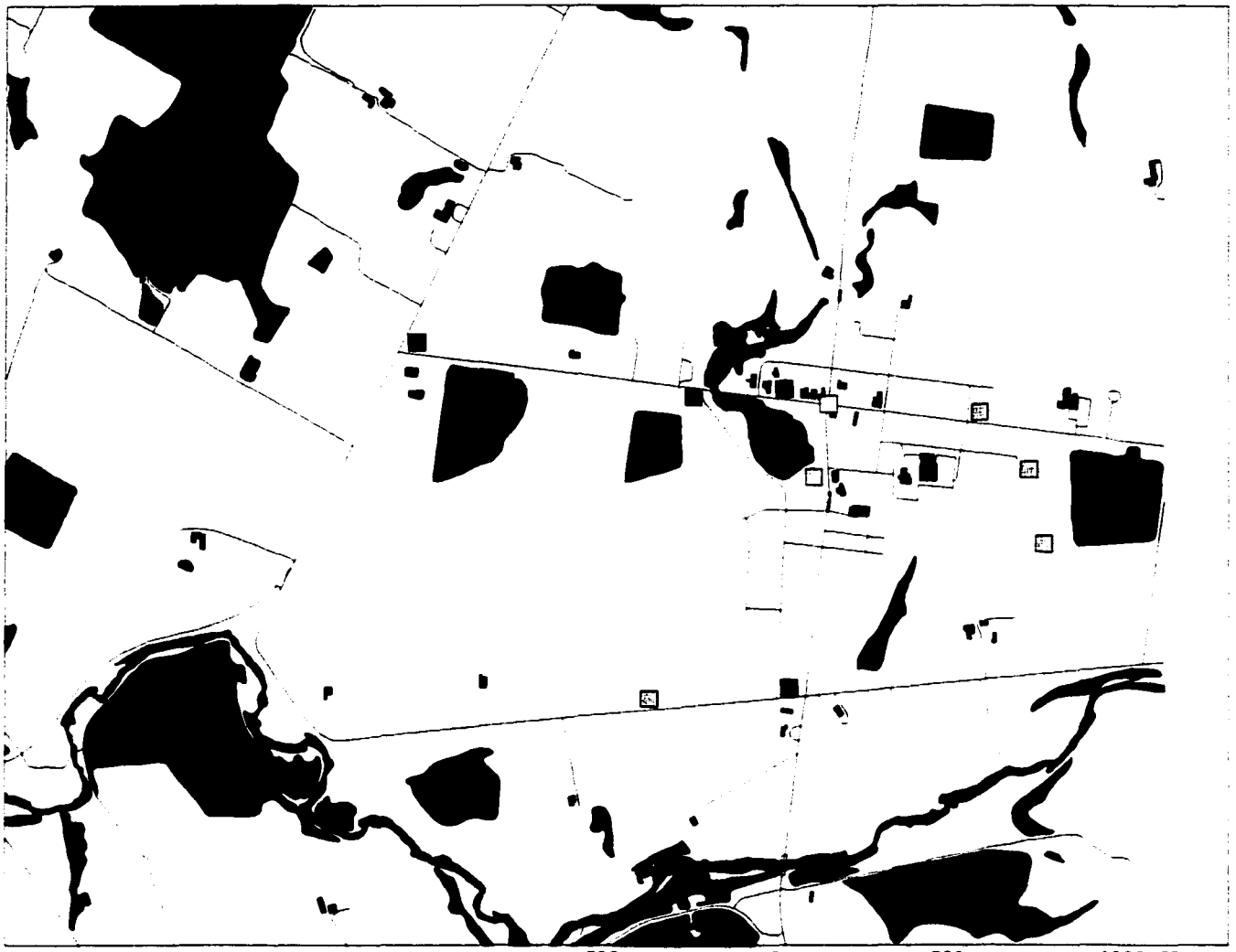
- Friend's House
- Home
- Park
- School
- Skate Park
- Store
- Drainage
- Building
- Vegetation
- Transport

Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999



3D Extrude Model of Hangout Locations in Baden showing frequency of use

# Map 1-4: Hangout Locations in Wellesley



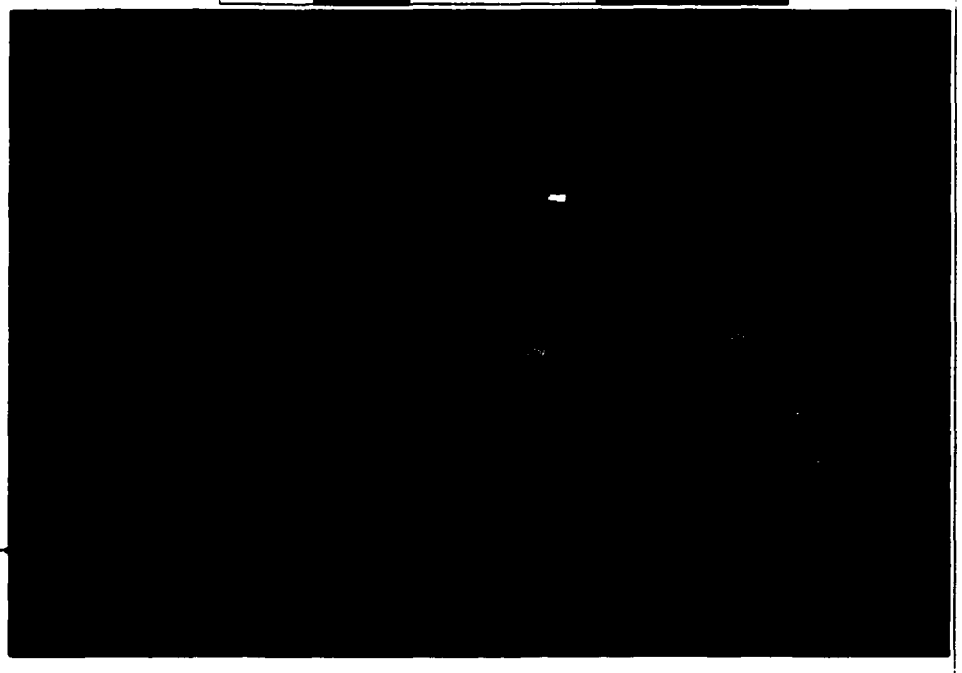
500 0 500 1000 Meters

N
W E
S

## Legend

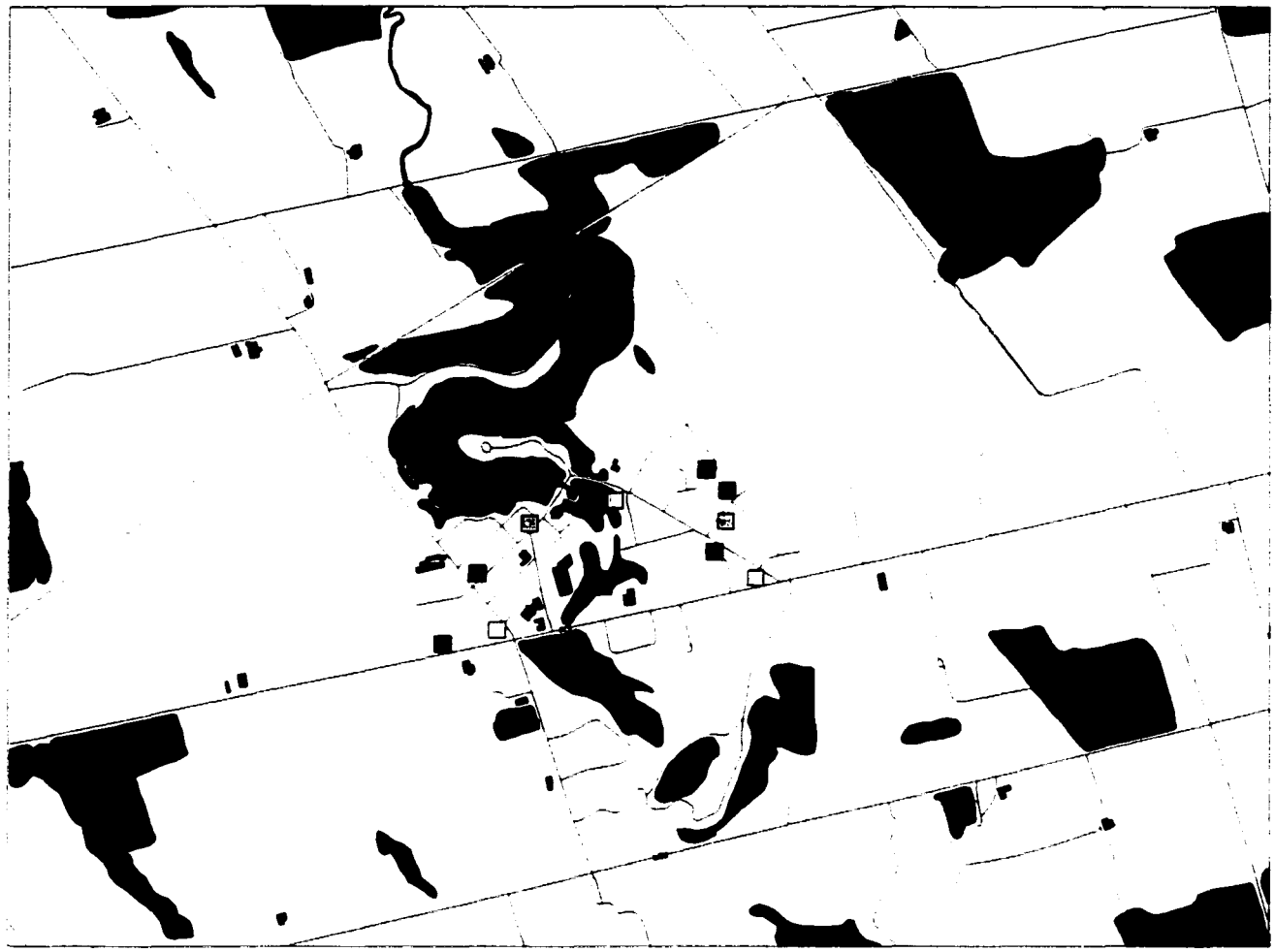
| Hangout Locations | Base |
|---|---|
| Arena | Drainage |
| Downtown | Building |
| Friend's House | Vegetation |
| Home | Transport |
| Park | |

Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999



3D Extrude Model of Hangout Locations in Wellesley showing frequency of use

# Map 1-5: Hangout Location in New Dundee




## Legend

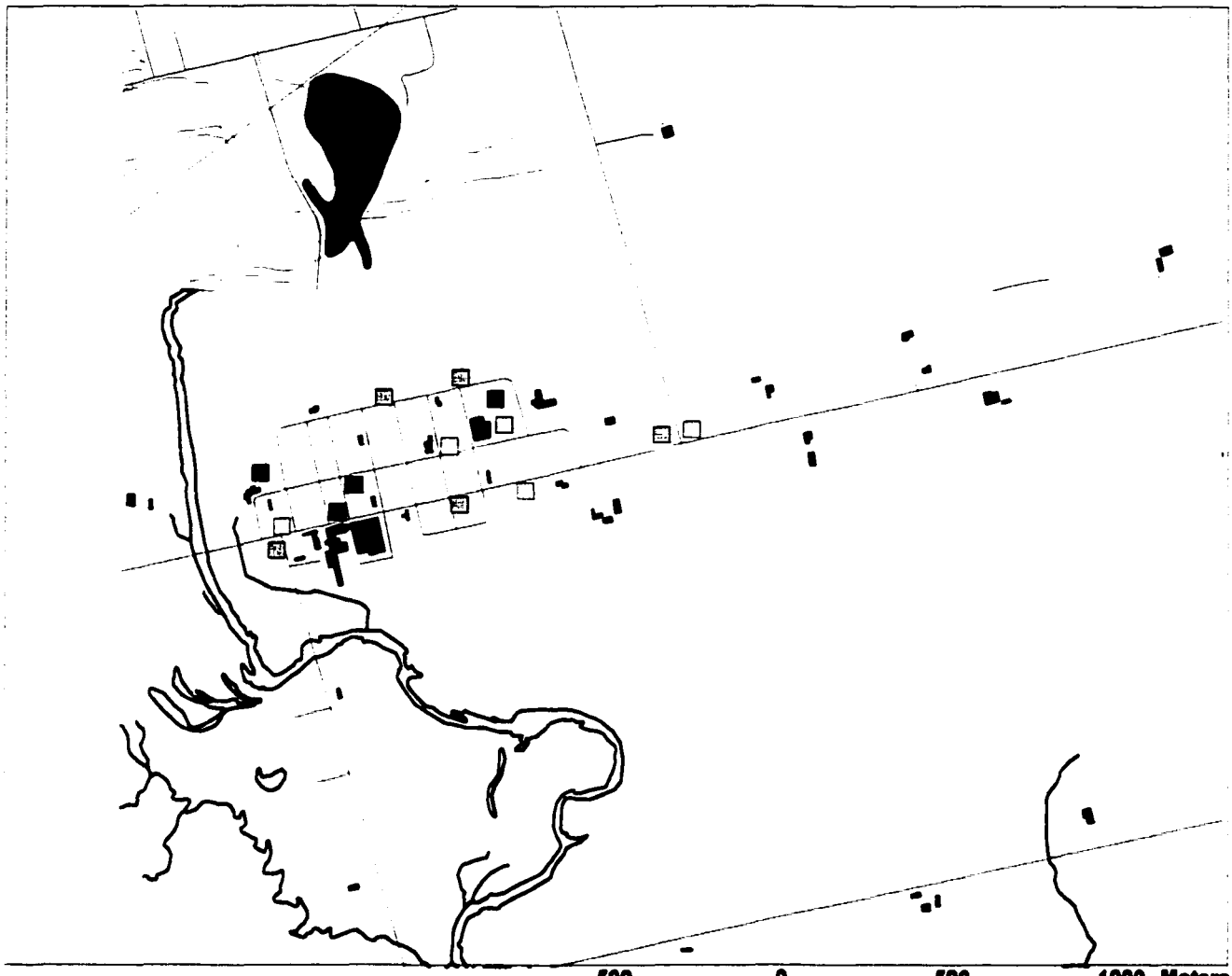
| Hangout Locations | Base |
|---|---|
| Abandonded Building | Drainage |
| Corner Store | Building |
| Friend's House | Vegetation |
| Home | Transport |
| Park | |
| School | |

Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999



3D Extrude Model of Hangout Locations in New Dundee showing frequency of use

# Map 1-6: Hangout Locations in Plattsville







Legend

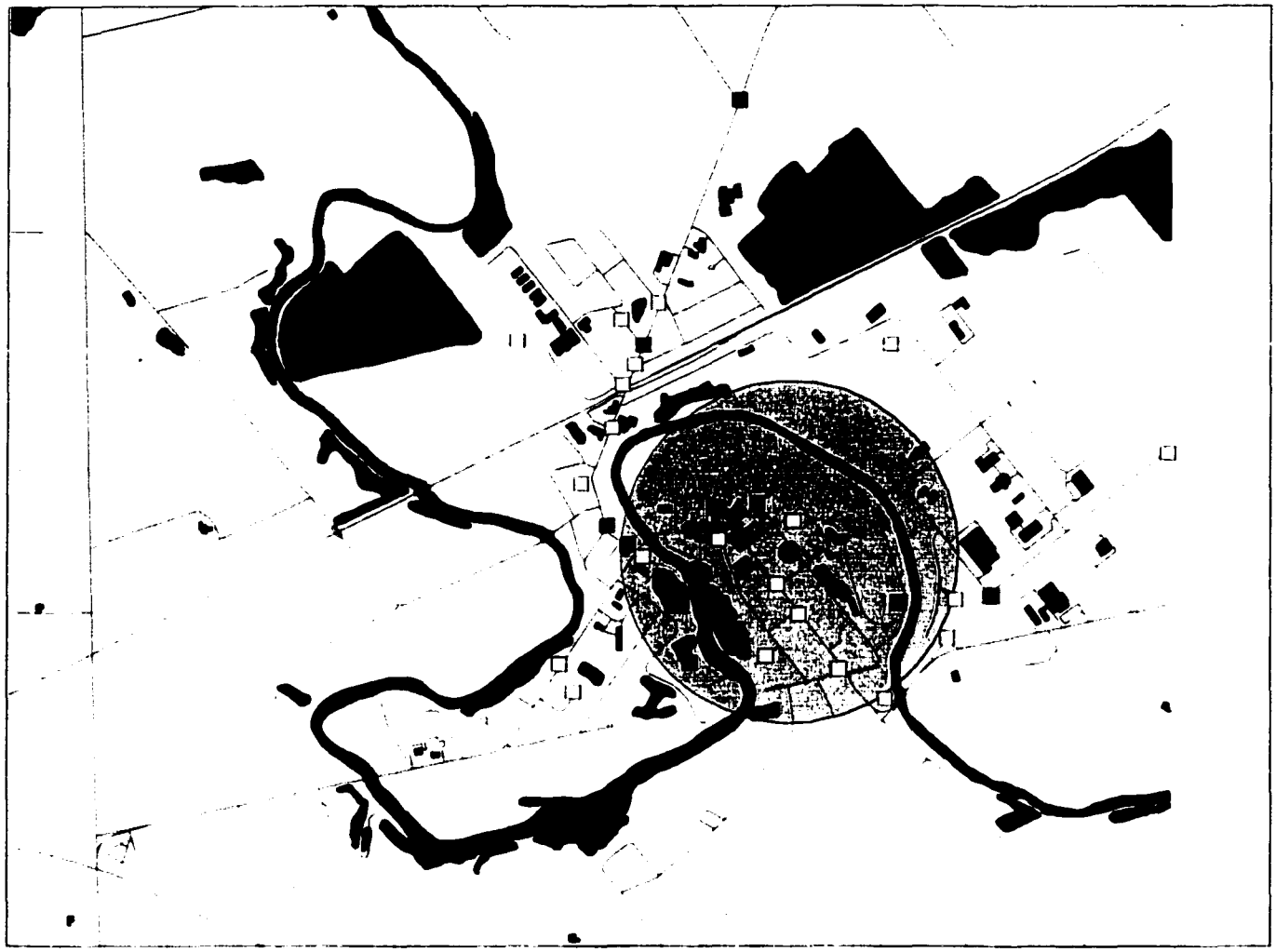
| Hangout Location | Base |
|---|---|
| Arena | Drainage |
| Friend's House | Building |
| Home | Vegetation |
| Park | Transport |
| Pavilion | |
| Streets | |
| Woods | |

Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999

3D Extrude Model of Hangout Locations in Plattsville showing frequency of use

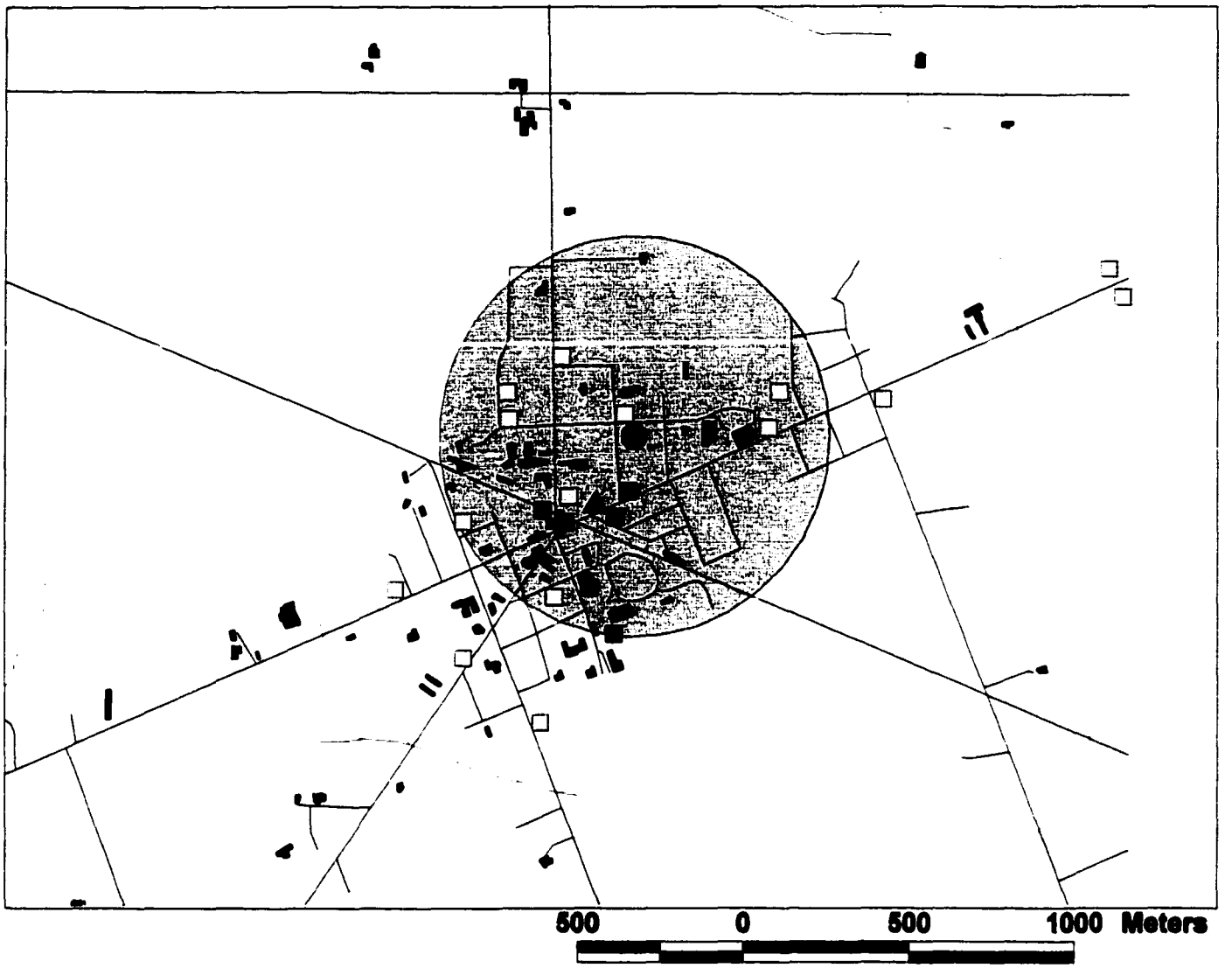


# Map 2-1:
# Hangout Categories with Spatial Statistics in New Hamburg




Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999

# Map 2-2:
# Hangout Categories with Spatial Statistics in Tavistock




Legend

Hangout Categories

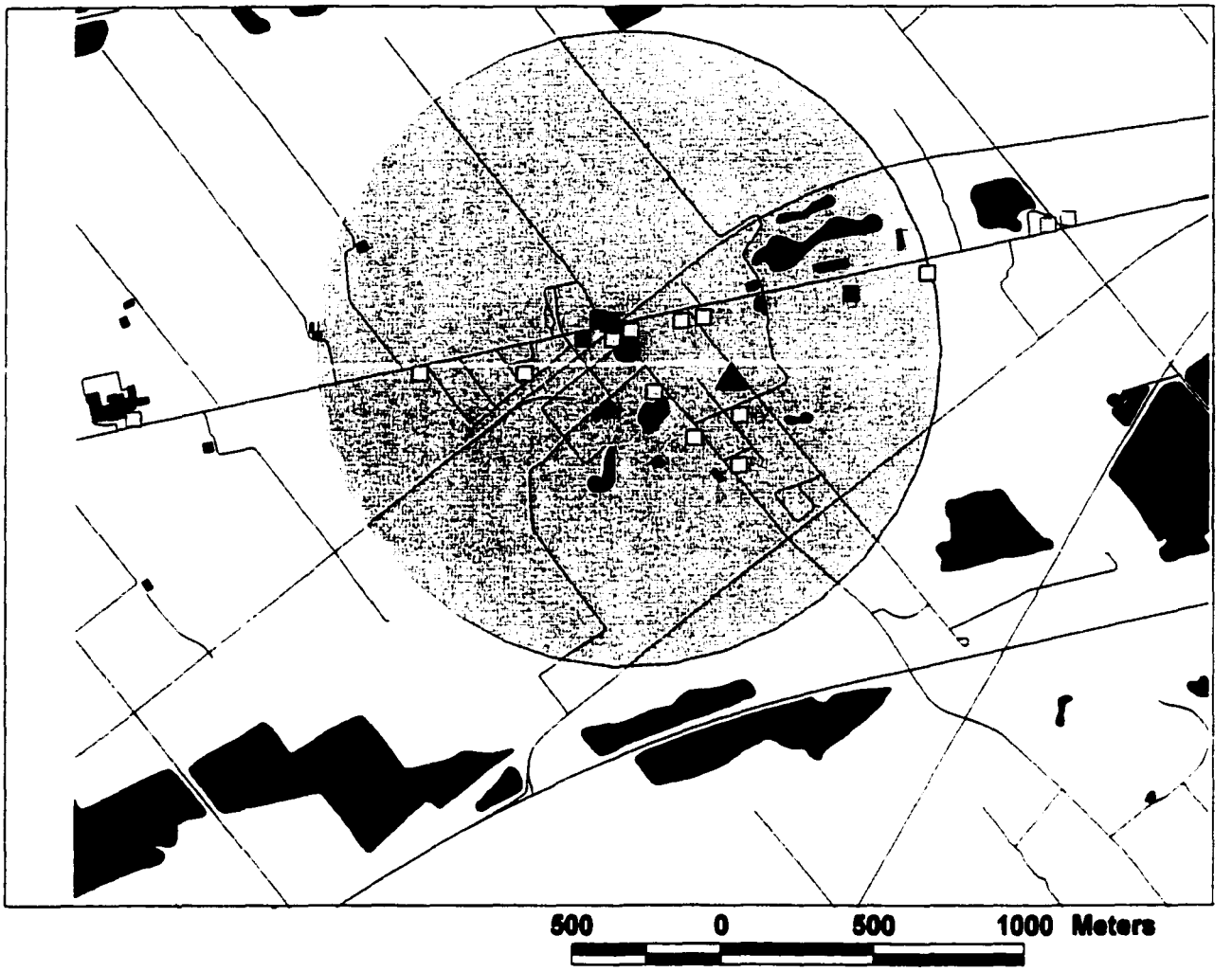
- Non-Designated
- Private
- Public

Spatial Statistics

- CBI
- Mean
- Weighted Mean
- Weighted StDev
- Drainage
- Building
- Vegetation
- Transport

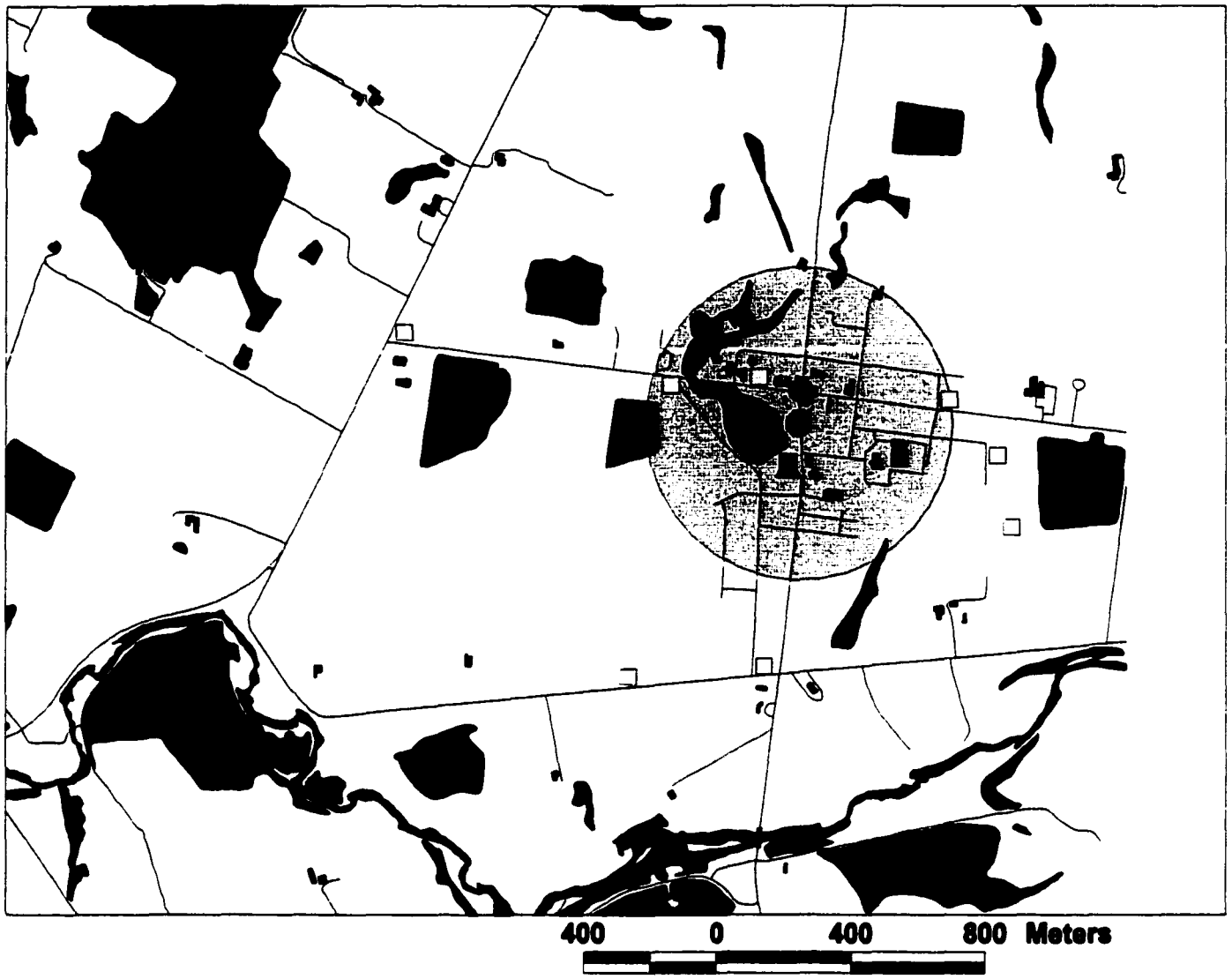
Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999

# Map 2-3:
# Hangout Categories with Spatial Statistics in Baden



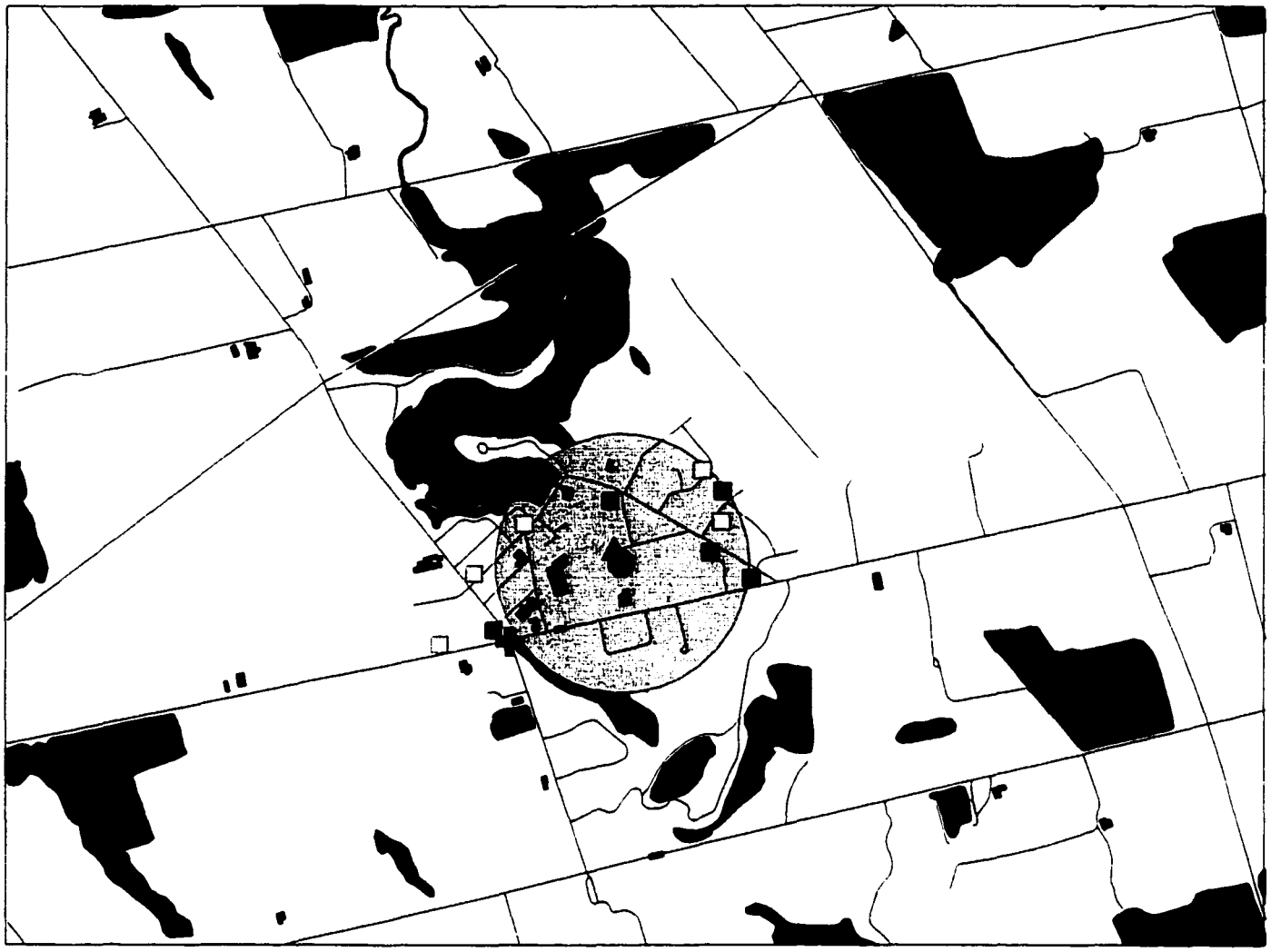

Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999

# Map 2-4:
# Hangout Categories with Spatial Statistics in Wellesley




Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999

# Map 2-5:
# Hangout Categories with Spatial Statistics in New Dundee



500 0 500 1000 Meters

N
W E
S

Legend

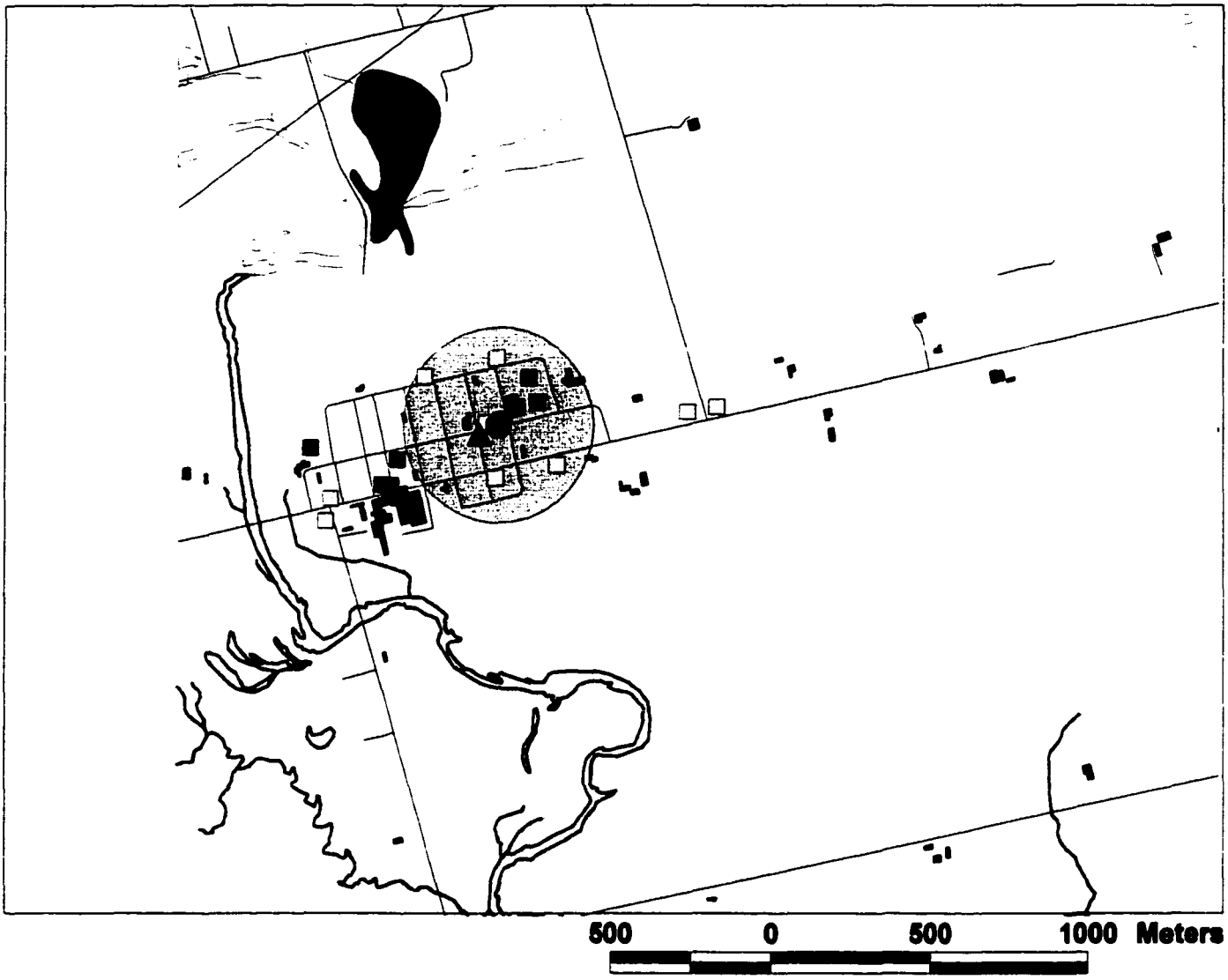
Hangout Categories
- Non-Designated
- Private
- Public

Spatial Statistics
- CBI
- Mean
- Weighted Mean

- Weighted StDev
- Drainage
- Building
- Vegetation
- Transport

Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999

# Map 2-6:
# Hangout Categories with Spatial Statistics in Plattsville




Legend

Hangout Categories

- Non-Designated
- Private
- Public

Spatial Statistics

- CBI
- Mean
- Weighted Mean
- Weighted StDev
- Drainage
- Building
- Vegetation
- Transport

Kingsley G. Hurlington, 1999

Appendix

C

# Photographic Gallery



**Image 1**
Waterloo-Oxford District
Secondary School
West of Baden



**Image 2**
Downtown
New Hamburg



**Image 3**
Grand Stands
New Hamburg



**Image 4**
Tim Hortons Restaurant
New Hamburg



**Image 5**
General Store
Baden



**Image 6**
Skateboard Park
Baden
*(Located behind Township Office)*



**Image 7**
Downtown
Tavistock

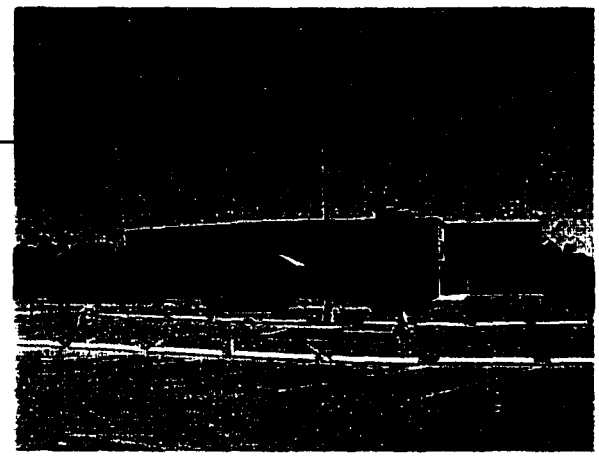


**Image 8**
Arena with
Skateboard Park
Tavistock



**Image 9**
Major Intersection
Wellesley



**Image 10**
Arena
Wellesley

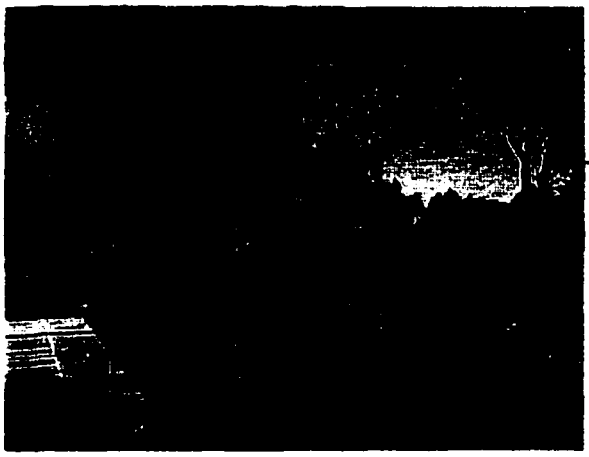


**Image 11**
Major Park
*(with lake in background)*
Wellesley



**Image 12**
Pavilion
*(with Arena in background)*
Plattsville

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