The Blankety-Blank of Bear Creek Camp: A Rhetorical Analysis of a Folk Drama

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THE 'BLANKETY-BLANK' OF BEAR CREEK CAMP:
A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF A FOLK DRAMA

A Thesis
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the Faculty of the Department of
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Gregory Hansen
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THE 'BLANKETY-BLANK' OF BEAR CREEK CAMP: 
A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF A FOLK DRAMA

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A rhetorical theory of folklore was used to interpret how summer camp staffers use a folk drama as a means of identification and as a type of artistic expression. The performance was analyzed for ethnographic information using Kenneth Burke's theory of dramatism and for artistic techniques using Burke's theory of the psychology of audience. The dramatistic pentad contextualized the performance, and this information was analyzed for motives through the delineation of dramatistic ratios. The skit's syntagmatic structure was outlined using Burke's description of five aspects of form. The analysis demonstrates that meaning is emergent through both the content and form of the symbolic action of the folk drama. Identification is achieved primarily through the presentation of motives. The aesthetic experience is created primarily through the use of form. The interpretation demonstrates that the skit's content and form can not be understood apart from each other and that understanding content and form is but one aspect of the performance’s meaning.
CHAPTER I

PROLEGOMENON

Built on a 3,000 acre site near Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Bear Creek Camp is a facility for outdoor ministry within the Lutheran Church. Each summer thirty college-aged staff members teach over one thousand campers their program of Christian education. People who have worked at Bear Creek Camp often enjoy talking about their summers on staff. When they are together, they catch up on camp gossip, swap war stories, and occasionally try to understand what working at the camp means. When staffers are with people from the "real world," they drop camping stories into conversations less often. In addition to knowing that only their coworkers share their knowledge of Bear Creek's people, places, history, and approach to camping, staffers can hesitate to explain what they did during their summers in the Pocono Mountains. The camp is considered unique, and most staff members believe that its summer program can only be understood if people participate in it.

The camp is twelve years old, but its history includes the story of three "old camps" that the Northeast and South-
east Pennsylvania Synods of the Lutheran Church in America operated along the Delaware River near the Delaware Water Gap. The oldest camp, Camp Miller, was founded sixty years ago, and with the establishment of Camps Hagan and Ministerium, the three camps ran summer programs until 1973. During that year, the camps were forced to close because the federal government decided that their operation interfered with the Army Corps of Engineers' plan to flood the area by building the Tocks Island Dam. The dam project proved to be unfeasible, and the camps' properties lie unused and overgrown with weeds near the small town of Shawnee-on-Delaware. Bear Creek Camp was opened in 1974 to replace these Delaware River camps.

The old camps' last executive director, the Reverend Roy Gulliford, is presently serving as Bear Creek Camp's director. While working at Ministerium, Roy experimented with a summer program that was the forerunner of Bear Creek's program. The staff of Bear Creek Camp has helped to refine Roy's approach to camping which is an application of some of his theology. Roy views the Bible as God's attempt to teach humankind to live in community, and he stresses the "this-worldly" call for Christians to live their faith. Perhaps influenced by religious existentialism Roy believes the Kingdom of God is situated on earth, not in a heaven far-removed in space and time. Thus the camp's philosophy is to teach Christianity as a way of life. The staffers
teach using a hands-on approach to outdoor ministry, an innovative style of church camping in which they teach Christian precepts through direct experience. Most staffers share Roy's preference for teaching with activities that show campers the value of sharing, cooperating, and giving support rather than with lectures on the Lutheran faith or lessons about the Bible. The camp's program was designed as an alternative to the more traditional approach to church camping, and Roy used his academic training in theology and clinical counseling to develop the camp's program. He has used primarily Carl Rogers's theories of small group processes, supplementing Rogers's work with small group counseling techniques and his own ideas. The purpose of using small group psychology to further Christian education is to promote individual growth and to interpret this growth using Christianity's message.

I became involved with the camp in 1983 when a housemate from college mentioned that openings were available on the summer staff. In June I began a two year career as the waterfront head and boating instructor. I returned in the summer of 1986, working one final season as a camp counselor.

Needing a thesis topic and attempting to better understand what the camping experience means, I gave myself the chance to write about camp by researching the staff's folklore. Folklore is one way people express themselves,
and I looked to my discipline to discover what was being said. During my second year on staff, I studied the camp's folklore by acting as a participant observer and fieldworker. The staff's folklore was rich and diverse, for I discovered an interesting and extensive history, legends, a forty-eight page songbook, five folk dramas, hundreds of games, folk speech, foodways, ghost stories, pranks, rituals, festivals, anecdotes, personal experience narratives, legends, rumors, mythology, beliefs, folk art, folk dance, material culture, occupational practices, and a plethora of other types of folklore. Using twenty hours of audio tape, I recorded a large sample of the camp's folklore. My task was to use these tapes and field notes to examine the way of life led at camp.

My methodology in conducting interviews was to take a shotgun approach by asking my interviewees to tell me as much as they could about the camp. By covering the who, what, where, when, and whys in interviews, I probed for the staffers' ideas about life at camp. They taught me techniques for pranking, ghost stories, the camp's history, and other aspects of the camp's folklife. More importantly, they told me what they have learned to become counselors. Roy has explained that most counselors take three years to learn their work, and I was fortunate to talk with staffers who know how to work with children well.
Presenting all that I learned would be impossible. Consequently I narrowed my subject to the one performance filled with the most information about the camp. I selected a folk drama because everyone on staff participated in one of the five camp skits and because the staff acted out many of their ideas about camp life in the performances. A skit entitled "Blankety-blank" was the season's box office attraction. The skit was performed in a style similar to Bear Creek Camp's other productions, and it was packed with data I found interesting. I recognized meaning in "Blankety-blank" both because I study folklore and because I have worked at the camp. The skit's meaning, however, would not be evident to non-staffers, and many staffers, themselves, may not recognize the skit's value and significance. But, giving credit where credit is due, many staff members also drew conclusions about the skit that I, despite my academic training, had not seen. My focus in writing this thesis is to examine what is built into "Blankety-blank" by interpreting the skit to describe the meanings expressed through its performance.

For folklorists "performance" is a loaded term. The performance theorists argue that folklore must be analyzed in respect to the context within which it is performed. The "Blankety-blank" would be difficult to understand if I merely asked a counselor to give me the skit's script. "Performance" has also acquired a special significance influenced by the
linguistic distinction between performance and competence. The linguist Janet Dean Fodor explains that "competence" is the system of grammatic rules, the lexicon, and other aspects of language that a person uses in speaking or writing. Competence is widely regarded as the rules needed to create all and only all of the sentences that a language user would consider acceptable. Fodor explains that performance is the actual expression created when a person uses his or her knowledge of competence to create a sentence. The dean of American linguistics, Noam Chomsky, states that the goal of syntactic analysis is to describe the competence needed to use a particular language. Folklorists have applied the distinction between competence and performance to the study of human behavior. Dell Hymes argue that the notion of competence must be extended to include "kinds of knowledge and organization" other than "the purely grammatical." These kinds of knowledge include behavioral and artistic expressions presented in folklore. Herminia Meñez describes the concern of "the new ethnography" as a delineation of "a society's grammar of action, or the 'rules' for explaining or interpreting, predicting, and producing cultural behavior in a given setting." Thus the goal of ethnography is to describe the rules needed to create all and only all of the forms of behavior that members of a society would regard as appropriate or artistic. Meñez terms such a description the "folkloristic grammar." I am inter-
preting "Blankety-blank" by examining the folk drama's grammar.

Roger Abrahams calls for a rhetorical theory of folklore which includes some of the performance theorists' perspectives. As do the performance theorists, Abrahams analyzes folklore as a means of communication. As do the performance theorists, Abrahams recognizes rhetoricians' contributions to his theories. Unlike most of the approaches to performance, however, Abrahams's theories encompass both anthropological and literary approaches to studying folklore, thus making the rhetorical theory of folklore an original school of thought. Abrahams names the literary critic and rhetorical theorist Kenneth Burke as "the most important and persistent exponent of the rhetorical method," and he explains that Burke's theories discuss how individuals use language to assert ideas and to create emotional responses.

Although folklorists have not fully explored Burke's work, his influence on the discipline has been considerable. A ninety year-old gentleman, Kenneth Burke is one of the major contributors to the "new rhetoric." Communication researchers use this approach to study how we use language, their inquiries focusing on rhetoric as a means for maintaining social order, settling conflicts, and solving problems. The new rhetoric has been influenced by social scientists, and Burke, himself, works from Marxist, Freudian, and Aristotelian perspectives. Burke argues that
the key "difference between the 'old' rhetoric and a 'new'" rhetoric is that whereas rhetoric was once studied as a means for persuasion, it is now studied as a means for "identification." His use of the term "identification" is complex, occasionally ambiguous, and often straightforward. On the most obvious level identification can be linked to his method of "terministic analysis," an approach in which he analyzes how people use words to define and assess a situation. Communication, thus, is a means for sharing these identifications with others. Burke discusses the term at another simplistic level when he points out that identification can be a deliberate device, "as when the politician seeks to identify himself with his audience." In a more sophisticated perspective Burke explains that people use words to reveal themselves, thereby allowing themselves to become known to others. Identification becomes an end in itself, and rhetoric emerges as a means for its achievement. Burke's perspective on identification is valuable for folklore research, for studying folklore can show how people size up their situations as well as how they use this knowledge to express their identity.

Burke's methodology of terministic analysis is useful for studying performances. This methodology is a means for studying language as "basically modes of action" not as "means of conveying information." Burke writes that language does serve the important function of communicating
knowledge, but he inquires primarily into how people define their experiences and how they use their terms of definition. His method of terministic analysis is dramatism, a perspective in which he views life as theater and people as actors. In the following two chapters I use his dramatistic perspective to analyze the skit, my interpretation explaining how the staffers envision their life at camp.

Another of Burke's methods is his technique of examining the aesthetics of performances. Burke outlines his ideas about aesthetics in a theory that discusses the "psychology of form." *Counter-Statement*, his first book, is a study of how the symbol can create an aesthetic experience by appealing to the psychology of form. In chapter four I demonstrate how 'Blankety-blank's' players address the audience's sense of style through the skit's performance. Although ethnographic analysis is part of my investigation, in chapter four I am inquiring into the skit's aesthetic not presenting an anthropological description.

Burke uses a technique of gaining "perspective by incongruity." He advocates taking stands for positions opposite from conventional perspectives. Burke is not recommending willful, stubborn, or psychotic behavior. Instead, he argues that planned incongruity allows for in-depth analysis, for alternative perspectives can bootstrap a theorist into new areas of knowledge. Playing the devil's advocate and acting somewhat subversively does indeed yield new ideas, and it
heuristic value compensates for its inexpediency. The perspective by incongruity has been useful throughout this study. I have used it while doing fieldwork and analysis. I have taken the liberty of extending Burke's concept of form by including linguistic notions of structure within the psychology of form. In discussing Burke's theories of dramatism and aesthetics, I argue that he was a structuralist before structuralism was developed. Finally I use Burke's methodology to develop my own ideas about meaning and the skit's performance.

By looking at 'Blankety-blank' with the rhetorical approach, I discovered perspectives about camp as well as artistic techniques built into the skit. The staff's knowledge of these perspectives and techniques varies from individual to individual, and it is difficult to explain camp life at Bear Creek. But there are some ideas about camp that most staff members share in common, and these can be described in this thesis. My ticket into the staff's world is the skit, 'Blankety-blank.'
Notes

1 Roy Gulliford, interview held at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, July 23, 1985.

2 Ibid.

3 Roy Gulliford, interview held at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, August 1, 1984.

4 Roy Gulliford, personal communication to staff at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, July 9, 1986.

5 Ibid.


7 Roy Gulliford, personal communication to the staff at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, July 22, 1986.

8 Roy Gulliford, interview held at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, August 1, 1984.


11 Ibid.


20Lawrence B. Rosenfield, "Set Theory: Key to the Understanding of Kenneth Burke's Use of the Term 'Identification,'" *Western Speech* 33 (1969):175.


23Ibid.


25Ibid.

26Ibid., pp. 331, 332.


28Ibid.
"Blankety-blank" is a folk drama, a performance of folklore in which characters act out a story. The characters create the skit in a group effort, and they build some of their common perspectives about camping into the performance. These perspectives are the staffer's ideas about the camp's identity. The views the staffers hold that define the camp as Bear Creek Camp can, thus, be examined in the skit. Ethnographic interpretation is one means for such an examination. But before I can interpret the skit to discover how the staffers size up their world at camp, it is first necessary to introduce both the performance and the theory of analysis.

Kenneth Burke's theory of dramatism provides both a means to place "Blankety-blank" within its context and a method of ethnographic interpretation. Burke argues that life is theater and that the dramatistic perspective is a means for studying human relations in terms of individuals' actions. The first step in using his dramatistic perspective is to describe the action within its context.
Burke's tool for contextualizing the skit is the dramatic pentad. The pentad consists of the key terms scene, agency, purpose, agent, and act. The scene is the setting or the background in which something is done. The agency is the means for acting. The purpose is the reason for acting. The agent is the person who acts. And the act is what is done consciously, "on purpose."³

I am describing "Blankety-blank" using the key terms of the pentad. This description places the skit's text within its context, thereby showing more clearly how it was performed. Following the presentation of the performance, I will introduce the method of analysis. The conclusions about the camp's identity are presented in Chapter III, "'Blankety-blank's' Lexicon of Motives."

The Performance

Scene

"Blankety-blank's" scene is Bear Creek Camp. The staff performed the skit with four other ones as part of a Sunday evening program for campers. This first "all-camp" would open the weekly session while a second all-camp to be held on Friday evening would conclude the seventh session of the summer season. "Blankety-blank" had been performed during the Sunday all-camps for the past six sessions in the middle of a grassy athletic field located in the center of the camp. Approximately one hundred-sixty campers, aged eight to seventeen, and thirty staffers were sitting in the audience,
forming a semi-circle that set off a stage. The setting for the skit's action is identical to the setting for "Blankety-blank's" production.

Agency

The folk drama is an example of a classic summer camp genre of folklore. Skits are performed at church camps, Boy Scout and Girl Scout camps, and other facilities. As the action unfolds, "Blankety-blank's" cast also uses other genres of folklore that are popular at camps: games, practical jokes, one-liners, and folk speech.

Skits have always been part of the camp's repertoire of folklore. To understand the current skits' evolution from earlier productions, I talked with Bill Steward, a senior counselor who had been on the summer staffs since the camp's first year. During an interview I held on a Saturday while he and another senior counselor, Pete Johansson, were fishing at "The Lake" while on their day-off, Bill explained that the staff developed the present skits from simpler skits which were often borrowed from other camps:

Greg: Skits were always used here?
Bill: Yeah. Well they weren't always--
At one time they weren't as big a deal.
You know the lawn mower thing that was done?
Greg: Yeah.
I had in fact played the part of a lawn mower that would not start until a dupe from the audience tried. The engine turned over after he pulled an invisible cord because "all it took was a big jerk."

Bill continued:

They were more like that.

Or like, you'd get some kids out of the audience and say you were fishing or something.

And you're talking on the telephone with somebody and have to get people to hold up the line to get a better connection.

And you've got like ten campers holding up this string.

The guy goes, 'Well how's fishing?'

You go, 'Great, I've got ten suckers on the line right now.'

Greg: Ar-ar! (Alluding to the TV show "Mork and Mindy")

Bill: Yeah. Or something like that. They were real [sticks out his tongue and blows a short raspberry.]

Greg: Why did they change?

Bill: I don't know.

I guess what happened was one year we had one or two skits that went off pretty well, and then people felt like they had to keep doing that.

And they continued to feel like they had to keep doing that. 4
Bill pointed out that the productions can be fairly lavish. Although some of the skits still betray their roots as practical jokes-in-the-theater, all of them are made elaborate by the cast's use of scripts, costumes, plot twists, and occasionally some interesting character development. The staff members created the skits during the training session of pre-camp by forming various casts for each skit. They completed the skits during two afternoon sessions in the two-week period. Staffers improvise and adapt each of the skits throughout the season.

Prior to our fishing trip, I had interviewed Pete Johansson, and I discovered that "Blankety-blank" was his idea originally:

Yeah, it was mine. I had thought of it during the year.

It was Bridget's idea to do it in the "Blankety-blank" form because that is a game show in England that is "Match Game" here.

But I thought of the idea of a game show because that meant that we could be flexible with it, because the biggest pain I saw about doing skits is that they were dull week after week, because you have to do the same thing over again, and there is little change of roles.

I thought of the idea of a game show because then you could have something with a celebrity panel, and an
emcee, and a prize lady, and maybe an announcer. And the skit would change.
Each person decides their role, and the emcee could decide the questions so that it would be flexible from week to week.
And it's worked out that way.
And it's been a fun skit to do each week because it's never been the same twice.5

"Blankety-blank" was popular among the staff because the characters and their actions were varied throughout the season. The camper-composed part of the audience was easy to play to, for it does not take a comic genius to make an eight year-old laugh. Thus the skit was a success at camp each session.

Purpose

The staff used the skit during the all-camps to help introduce the campers to Bear Creek. The skits introduced campers to counselors and also to the camp's summer program.6 By introducing the session in an entertaining way, the counselors helped to "loosen up" campers who might have been uncertain about what was in store for them during the week.
Pete explained:

It's a time when the kids don't have to do anything. And it's Sunday night, and a lot of them are nervous about being at camp.
And if we were to play a game or do an activity, it might be difficult for some children. All they have to do is sit and watch.\textsuperscript{7}

The skits introduced Bear Creek Camp to the campers by allowing them to just "sit and watch." The skits also served a purpose for the staff, which Pete explained with a mixture of honesty and facetiousness:

[Skits] get staff away from their kids, which some people--which I--enjoy. [Laughs]

\textbf{Agents}

The agents included the cast, an announcer, and participants from the audience. In order of appearance the agents are:

Paul Lindahl--Paul plays himself, the camp's assistant director. He leads the songs between the skits and introduces "Blankety-blank."

Kevin Kring--Kevin plays Nowell Seeum, a prize lady for the game show. Kevin is the camp's naturalist, and he is dressed in drag, his costume setting off his black beard alluringly.

Tim Murray--Tim plays Mick Klutz, a Canadian game show host. His character is modeled after one of the comedians Bob and Doug MacKenzie. Tim is a junior counselor who is in-training for work on the staff.

Bill Steward--Bill plays Al Key Hall, a panelist on the game show.
Mike Schwoyer--Mike plays the dual role of two panelists, The Monkey and His Tree. The Monkey is a small hand puppet; His Tree is a walking, silent mass of ferns. Mike is a counselor.

Jim Rude--Jim plays Big Red Riding Hood, a masculine character who nevertheless retains her gender. When not on the panel, Jim works as a counselor.

Bridget Norton--Bridget plays the Little Good Wolf, a non-threatening panel member who accompanies Big Red Riding Hood. Bridget is from England and is working on the waterfront as a lifeguard and swimming teacher.

Pete Johansson--The senior counselor plays God, the final panelist.

Cheryl Moyer--Cheryl plays Inspector Twelve, a contestant in the camp's game show. When not acting as this character inspired from the Hanes underwear commercials, Cheryl is a counselor.

Neil Bonn--Neil plays himself and acts as a contestant. He is one of the week's visiting chaplains.

Gwen Bonn--Gwen plays Neil's partner as a contestant. She is an ordained Lutheran minister and is married to Neil.

Philip Mahoney--Philip plays himself. The counselor heckles the skit from the audience.

Greg Hansen--I play myself, the waterfront head. I am taping the performance, and I help to heckle the skit.
Roy Gulliford--Roy plays himself, the executive director of the Eastern Pennsylvania Lutheran Camp Corporation. Roy is seated in the audience and is heckled by the cast.

**Act**

The act is "Blankety-blank's" text. I recorded the performance in full, beginning with Paul's introduction:

Paul leads the audience through the camp's version of "Row Row Row Your Boat." The song is sung between skits allowing the cast to prepare their costumes and props. The song is not sung as a round, but Paul presents it as a challenge for all to display their vocal prowess. He leads them through one verse before stopping the song and explaining that he has a different way of singing the summer camp standard.

**PAUL LINDAHL**

*What we're going to do, when we sing it this time, is at the end of every verse we're going to leave off the last word--until we get down to not having no word at all. OK? We'll start off with the full song. Got it?*

["Row, row, row your boat" soon turns to "row, row, row your," then "row, row, row," then "row, row," then "row," and finally a brief silence. Everyone claps at the accomplishment, and the opening continues.]

**PAUL LINDAHL**

*All right! [Pretending to introduce a new song]*

Do your ears hang low?

I don't know, do yours?

Mine don't.

Do your ears hang low? [To the youngest campers]
[Campers smile and giggle as he teases them]

PAUL LINDAHL    [To the cast of the next skit]
Are you ready?

NOWELL SEEUM    [From offstage]
Yeah we're ready.

PAUL LINDAHL    The next skit is a game show, and it's entitled "Blankety-blank."

MICK KLUTZ      [Stepping to the front of the all-camp]
Hi. I'm your game show host for "Blankety-blank," Mick Klutz, and we're going to sing a song.

STAFF THEN AUDIENCE
[Singing the MacKenzie Brothers' theme song]
Loo coo coo coo coo coo coo coo coo.
Loo coo coo coo coo coo coo coo.

MICK KLUTZ      Now we're going to have our panel members--Al Key Hall.

[A disheveled Al Key Hall staggers in from offstage and falls into place behind a bench in the center of the stage.]

Our next panel member is The Monkey and His Tree.

[A hand puppet is carried out on the arm of His Tree. They find their places behind the bench.]

The next two panel members are Big Red Riding Hood--

BIG RED RIDING HOOD
Ahhhr, I'm Big Red Riding Hood.

[He appears pulling the Little Good Wolf, who has adorned herself with paper ears and is sucking her thumb.]

MICK KLUTZ      And the Little Good Wolf.

BIG RED RIDING HOOD  [Sitting next to the other contestants]
And get this monkey out of here. It smells bad.

MICK KLUTZ      This is our beautiful prize lady, Nowell Seeum.

[Nowell appears and takes a curtsy]
MICK KLUTZ
We need some contestants. Do we have any volunteers from the audience?

GOD [Through a megaphone from the woods]
What about me?

MICK KLUTZ [Selecting Inspector Twelve from the audience]
Inspector Twelve.

GOD [Slowly and carefully]
What about me?

BIG RED RIDING HOOD [Softly but earnestly]
Tim, Pete!

[There is no response from Mick, so Big Red Riding Hood gruffly returns to her character.]
Hey what's out there? I hear something, and I don't like it!

PAUL LINDAHL [From the audience]
Hey Tim!

MICK KLUTZ
Oh, how could this slip my mind? Another panelist--God!

GOD
Hello.

I am. [Pauses]

MICK KLUTZ
Can we have another contestant?
[Pointing to Neil and Gwen Bonn in the audience]
There's one. A pair! All right, we've got three.

BIG RED RIDING HOOD [To Al Key Hall]
Look fellow, stop winking at me.

MICK KLUTZ
Here's how we play the game.

NEIL BONN
I like seashells and sunsets, and I do a lot of jogging.

MICK KLUTZ
OK. I ask you a question and leave in a blank. They
write it down, and you say it. And you have to match or something.

INSPECTOR TWELVE
[Pushily]
OK, we get it. Let's get on with the game.

MICK KLUTZ
First question will be: Bear Creek Camp looks like BLANK.

[The panelists write their answers on slips of paper.]

PHILIP MAHONEY
[From the audience]
Tick tick

AUDIENCE
Tick Tick Tick Tick Tick Tick Tiindick!

MICK KLUTZ
Al Key Hall, can I have your answer please?

AL KEY HALL
Ah, ah, ah.

PHILIP MAHONEY
He forgot the answer.

INSPECTOR TWELVE
You forgot to ask me first. Mick come on.

BIG RED RIDING HOOD
Come on. Get it right.

GOD
Game show hosts do not fit into My Divine Plan.

MICK KLUTZ
Hey look, I don't want to mess with God!
Bear Creek Camp looks like--

INSPECTOR TWELVE
[Holding up a pair of underwear]
Super band waistband.

MICK KLUTZ
Al Key Hall?

AL KEY HALL
[Nauseously]
Where's the men's room?

MICK KLUTZ
Squeaky The Monkey?
THE MONKEY [Sticks out tongue and squeaks twice]

MICK KLUTZ
The noise he makes.

BIG RED RIDING HOOD
Grandma's cookies

MICK KLUTZ
No, that's not a match.

BIG RED RIDING HOOD
Come on bud, let's get this show on the road.

MICK KLUTZ
Lord, Thou Almighty, Your answer?

GOD
This is the God of Isaac, Abraham, and Wink Martindale. The answer is Sodom and Gommorah.

MICK KLUTZ
No, that's not a match.

GOD
I'm never wrong.

MICK KLUTZ
Next question will be: bear pooh pooh smells like--

AUDIENCE
Tick, tick, tick

OTHERS IN AUDIENCE [In a syncopated rhythm]
Tock, tock, tock.

MICK KLUTZ
Can I have your answer please?

NEIL AND GWEN BONN
You do it, no you, no you do it.

GWEN BONN
Can you repeat the question?

MICK KLUTZ
Bear pooh pooh smells like--
GWEN BONN
Food in the kitchen, food in the kitchen. Can we see the prizes?

[The panelists write their answers on slips of paper behind the bench.]

MICK KLUTZ
Al Key Hall?

AL KEY HALL
Can I have another drink please?

MICK KLUTZ
No. No match. Squeaky The Monkey?

THE MONKEY
[Squeaks three times]

MICK KLUTZ
Ptaft, praft, ptaft is not the right answer.

BIG RED RIDING HOOD
Food in the kitchen.

NEIL AND GWEN BONN
Yea, Hawaii, Hawaii!

GREG HANSEN
Close.

MICK KLUTZ
God, what's Your answer?

GOD
Thus sayeth the Lord of Abraham, Isaac, and the Stay Puff Marshmallow Man, the food in the kitchen.

NEIL AND GWEN BONN
Yea.

MICK KLUTZ
Double match. You go into the finals.

NOWELL SEEUM
First we've got prizes. Consolation prize for Inspector Twelve, a wet Nurf Ball. [To Neil and Gwen]
Your prize is a bag of Nack Pack Popcorn Supply Kit, good for an overnight. Yeah. You go into the finals.
NEIL BONN
You'll get some more stuff for us?

NOWELL SEEUM
You've got to win.

AL KEY HALL
Let's get this over with.

MICK KLUTZ
The question for the grand prize package is: Roy is the blank of the camp.

AUDIENCE
Tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, eeeernt!

MICK KLUTZ
Can I have your answer please?

GWEN BONN
Fool.

ROY GULLIFORD
What? [In mock surprise]

MICK KLUTZ
Fool.

[All of the panelists write their answers.]

BIG RED RIDING HOOD
I pity the fool that say that. [As if she were Mr. T.]

AL KEY HALL
Fool.

MICK KLUTZ
We have a match. Can we have The Monkey?

THE MONKEY
[Holds up a card that says 'fool']

MICK KLUTZ
Another match. That's two. Little Good Wolf and Big Bad Riding Hood?

BIG RED RIDING HOOD
Yeah, I'm bad. Fool!

MICK KLUTZ
[As if he were on the verge of existential despair]
God, what's Your answer?!
First I'd like to put in a word about what a great job Pete is doing as a counselor. Be good to him and send him money. Now the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Colonel Hannibal Smith says, 'fool.'

NEIL BONN [Jumping up and down and hugging Gwen] Hawaii, everything, millions of dollars!

MICK KLUTZ Now picture this. You're in the mountains. You're on a trip. It's snowing. You're skiing. There's a lot of snow. And you're there for two weeks in the Pocono Mountains!

NOWELL SEEUM [Sneaks up behind them and dumps a cup of flour over their heads] Your prize! With the skit's end, the cast lines up arm-in-arm in front of the all-camp's audience. They then introduce themselves, their introductions following a similar pattern:

"I'm Pete, and I'm in junior high seven and eight."

"My name's Bridget, and I work on the waterfront."

Campers often cheer their own counselors the loudest, and it has been rumored that the loudest cheers are from those groups who have been primed by their counselors. The enthusiasm often spreads to groups with less audacious counselors.

Following "Blankety-blank," the staff perform more songs and skits. When the evening's final skit ends, the song leaders introduce slower songs to create a feeling of hushed reverence while other counselors quiet fidgety kids. The three or four staffers helping to lead the songs return
to their seats on the grass of the Upper A-field, and Paul introduces Roy, who leads the Sunday evening vespers. This service includes a welcoming to the camp, a scripture reading by the chaplains, a sermonette by Roy, and a prayer. The service ends with a song, "Go In Peace," which Roy introduces as the camp's theme song. The first all-camp of the seventh session comes to a close, and the counselors take their campers back to their cabins or tents.

The opening's five skits, camp songs, and vespers had been performed each Sunday night for the past six weeks; only the last session's opening remained. As usual, "Blankety-blank" was the show stealer. Although this production dragged, running three times longer than the five minutes for which it was planned, the folk drama was a major theatrical event.

The Method of Dramatistic Analysis

To understand the skit's meaning more fully, the information laid out with the dramatistic pentad must be interpreted. Burke's theory of dramatism provides a means to analyze "Blankety-blank's" performance. The pentad describes the folk drama's context, but dramatistic analysis is a technique of probing for the interrelationships between the pentad's key terms. These interrelations are "ratios." A ratio is evident when a change in one aspect of a key term causes a change in how the entire
action is viewed. In the skit, for example, an agency-agent ratio is evident when Nowell delivers the prank on the chaplains by dusting them with flour. If the flour-dusting had not been a prank in a skit, but perhaps an accident by a careless cook, then the action's meaning would be different. If Nowell had dumped the flour on a camper instead of on the chaplains, then the pranks' effect would also be different. By looking at ratios, a researcher can gain insight into how people define their actions as meaningful. In this agent-agency ratio the way the cast regards a prank directed to the chaplains suggests a way they define the chaplains' position at camp.

Ratios suggest "motives." Motives are "shorthand terms for situations." At Bear Creek Camp these shorthand terms for situations are characteristic ways in which many staffers size up their camping experiences. For example, the agency-agent ratio described above suggests a motive I term "Christianity as a Way of Life." This motive is a perspective in which staffers regard ministry as a means for living the good life rather than as a call to embark on a pious quest for God. The motives, thus, are perspectives the staffers' hold about the camp, and much of "Blankety-blank's" content is built from these shorthand terms for situations.
The movement from ratio to motive does not always follow the linear progression of A plus B ergo C. The logic is more often A plus B ergo D or E. Dramatistic analysis is not illogical; instead not all of the premises are needed to support a researcher's conclusions. The method is a heuristic device, not a system of deductive logic.

Dramatism can be used to question assumptions, for examining a ratio is a means for checking an intuitive generalization. By considering hypothetical situations created by changing existent key terms, the real action comes into sharper focus. To illustrate, I suspected the motive "Christianity as a Way of Life" before I saw the performance. By looking at the agency-agent ratio of the prank played on the chaplains and considering how the action would be different if either key term were changed, I discovered that the motive was acted out in "Blankety-blank."

Dramatism can also provide lines of inquiry that suggest new motives. By considering what would happen if various key terms were put together to form ratios, an ethnographer can "track down implications" about what is being said. By examining the significance of an agency-purpose ratio--viewing the skit as a means for introducing the camp--I discovered that "Blankety-blank" was used as an activity to implement the staff's program of small group camping. The motive is described in the next chapter as "Facilitating."
Dramatism is a means for making ethnographic conclusions by examining a performance. The theory is a type of paradigmatic structuralism, for the pentad is a system of components devoid of content useful for analyzing a nearly complete spectrum of human interactions. The system is generative because human behavior can be described by a finite number of components and rules. The interrelations between these components and rules describe an infinitely large number of human expressions. By picturing life as a theatrical stage, the theory provides a panoramic view of culture. Applying the theory gives glimpses into the possible details of the views and the ability to "prophesy after the event" by making conclusions through observing and analyzing a performance. Prophesying after the event of "Blankety-blank," I account for the motives acted out in the folk drama.
Notes


3 Ibid., p. 332.


5 Pete Johansson, interview held at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, August 18, 1984.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Burke, "Dramatism," p. 333.


14 Ibid., p. 33.
CHAPTER III

'BLANKETY-BLANK'S' LEXICON OF MOTIVES

The dramatistic perspective is a means for interpreting "Blankety-blank." I used the dramatistic pentad to describe the skit in its context. Looking at this description for pentadic ratios suggests motives. The players' motives reveal how they perceive, assess, define, and express their ideas about the staff's worldview, for motives are conceptions that define the camp as Bear Creek Camp. Within "Blankety-blank" is a lexicon of motives, a vocabulary of shorthand terms for situations.¹ The cast acts out this lexicon, and this chapter is a description of seven motives inherent in the performance.

Motives are evident not only in "Blankety-blank" but also in the staffers' actions outside of the skit.² To explain more fully how the staff uses motives at camp, I am demonstrating that motives are evident in other forms of folklore and in various camping activities.³ These examples help define the motives more precisely and show more clearly how they are part of the staff's approach to camping. The lexicon of motives consists of the following entries:
Christianity as a Way of Life

Bear Creek Camp is a church camp, and some of the actions in "Blankety-blank" would surprise or offend people who hold conservative religious beliefs. Consider Pete's choice of a character and God's subsequent actions within the scene of the camp. There is also the agency-agent ratio of the practical joke played on the visiting chaplains. Although neither of these two examples of dramaticatic ratios suggest motives that are outright blasphemy, the actions could cause some people to question how the staffers value reverence within their program of Christian education.

Roy emphasizes that he did not want to use the "Sunday school under a tree" approach to camping at Bear Creek. He thinks that the best use of the camp's facilities is to stress a hands-on approach, for this experiential way of teaching takes advantage of the small group living situation in the out-of-doors. The program was initiated to teach living within Christian communities as well as stewardship for the environment, and these themes can best be taught
to campers through direct experience instead of through lectures. 4 Most of the staff enthusiastically support this approach to outdoor ministry. The prank on the chaplains and Pete's actions in the skit suggest this motive, namely that Christianity's primary value is in how it teaches people how to live their lives—not in how Christianity is a means to "get saved" from the threat of eternal damnation or a means to piously "find the Lord."

Not everyone on staff shares the same religious beliefs, but everyone tries to teach the "this-worldly" value of Christianity through the summer program. Everyone on staff will encounter the idea that conservative religious beliefs—such as fundamentalism—will not be taught at camp. The motive that Christianity is best regarded as a way of life generally is evident when staffers explain what the camp's conception of Christian education is not. In his candid and wry style, Bill Steward explains his view of the motive:

Another thing I may have introduced was the idea of fucking Christians.

And I like to challenge them—

Unfortunately we don't have a lot of the real heavy duty 'I'm into the God you-know, and He's into me Christians' up here this year.

I like to give them a hard time. And it's just to make sure that they're better Christians because
unless Christians are tried and tempted
they really aren't good Christians.
So I try to help make them good Christians. 

Bill points out that a fundamentalist Christian would have a difficult time with the staff. Lutheran theology is liberal in general, and the strength with which staffers hold the this-worldly perspective on religion is a reaction against more conservative religious beliefs such as fundamentalism. Staffers do not want to be thought of as "Bible bangers," and they see no value in "hitting campers over the head with a Bible" during their week at camp. Many staffers find it difficult to explain to others that they spent the summer working at a church camp because they perceive others as having this image of Christian education.

The motive of "Christianity as a Way of Life" generally is supported whole-heartedly by the chaplains. As ministers in their home congregations, they often emphasize the this-worldly approach to religion and sometimes question the value of pietism. The assault on austere obligations toward religious duties was clearly evident in the season during a joke-telling session after which I recorded two gems from Dave Kidd, the third session's chaplain:

The setting is the heavenly setting.

And the characters are, of course, two very important biblical characters, Moses and Jesus. And
they're up in Heaven.

And it's been a long time that they've been in Heaven, and just quite frankly they're getting bored.

Well Moses says, 'I've just got to exercise. I've got to do something like in those gool old days.'

So he walks out to the sea, and he says, 'Part.'

And the seas part.

And he brings them back together. You can see as soon as he turns this sigh of great relief on his face. And he comes back to Jesus and says, 'Boy that felt good; I really needed that.'

And Jesus said, 'I can see how good that felt.' He said, 'That's enough to encourage me to do my thing.'

So Jesus goes out to the same sea to the waters. And he begins walking on the waters.

But only as he walks he begins sinking deeper and deeper. And finally--

blub, blub, blub, and the gurgling--he swims back and gets out of the water. And he says to Moses, 'Damn, that used to work so well til I got these holes in my feet.'

Greg: [Laughs]

Dave: That's a favorite. And the other--like unto
'Why can Jesus not eat M & M's?'

Obviously because of the holes in his hands, and they keep falling through.' 6

Dave was not sure that he wanted these jokes on tape, but he gave me permission to use them. As do the somewhat irreverent actions in the skit, the jokes demonstrate that sacred cows are soon butchered at the camp. Dave explains that part of the reason he told the jokes was to "counteract myths about being a pastor and about God and about the Church." As does Dave, the staff battles the misconceptions that Christians are piously devout, humorless, or insincere. Telling Jesus jokes pushes the battle against people's misconceptions about faith to the limit, and Dave explains that he would only tell these jokes to people whom he believes would view them with the proper perspective. This perspective is a faith in which Christ is not being laughed at or ridiculed but rather laughed with. 7 Under no circumstances would he, or any other staff member, tell Jesus jokes to campers.

It is perfectly appropriate, however, to play a practical joke on the chaplains during an all-camp. By dusting the chaplains with flour, the staff is demonstrating that ministers are not sacred prophets from On High. Instead they are human beings who are working to live their faith.
The chaplains and the staff are Christian educators who practice their religion not simply as a means to find God but more importantly as a way of life.

Facilitating

The act-purpose ratio demonstrates that the skit introduced the campers to their camping session. Staffers introduced themselves through the skit, and they also introduced some of their ideas about their approach to camping, involving the audience in an easy way by letting them simply "sit and watch." The skit was used as a means for implementing, or "facilitating," the program, for "Blankety-blank's" players took into account the campers' stage of group development and selected an appropriate activity for them.

As were the four other skits, "Blankety-blank" was built around the role of the narrator. By using a narrator the players keep the skit tight, for one person controls the pace of the skit's action. In acting as an emcee, Mick Klutz enacts the narrator's role. When viewed in light of the skit's function, the act-purpose ratio suggests that Mick was acting as a facilitator for the introductory activity. This ratio suggests the motive that the counselor's role in working with campers is that of facilitator for the group's development.

Everyone on staff would recognize, accept, and possibly state verbatim this motive as "facilitating" is a Rogerian
term used commonly at camp. When a counselor facilitates a group's progress, she reads the group's stage of development, assesses their needs, chooses an activity to address these needs, discusses it with her co (her co-counselor), and then introduces it to the campers. Counselors learn to read a group's development during pre-camp's counselor training period and through practical experience. Most activities are selected from the typed programs the staff prepares during pre-camp.

The most important aspect of facilitating is a technique called "processing." Although processing includes the steps of reading a group's stage of development through introducing an activity, it is usually thought of as a period of group discussion following the activity. The purpose of this discussion is to express thoughts and feelings about the task and about how the group worked to solve the problem. Processing allows people to share their thoughts and feelings, resolve tensions, develop mutual trust and support, and plan for future activities. A good facilitator can teach campers how their actions affect others and how others' actions affect them. When facilitating, a counselor can demonstrate the value of working together cooperatively, of being sensitive to each other's feelings, and of virtually anything else an imaginative counselor wants to teach. Processing is the primary tool for teaching the campers the summer program.
The counselor gives form to a content when he or she processes an activity, just as the narrator gives form to the skit's content. During a skit's performance, the counselors supply the content; during an activity, the campers create the content. The counselor's task in both performances is to create a means for showing people the significance of individual actions.

For any of the community building activities to work successfully, the campers must take risks. These risks may not be demanding. For example, a counselor may simply encourage a camper to voice his or her opinion. Other times the stakes are higher. The counselor may expect a camper to share personal feelings and attitudes with the group, information that may reveal his or her vulnerabilities. Because it is not appropriate to describe my campers actions during a high-risk activity, I turn to a story to describe what is involved in facilitating one of these games. My raconteur is, once again, the guru of Bear Creek Camp, Bill Steward. His personal experience narrative is set at one of the old camps, but in it he demonstrates why he values high-risk activities and why they can be used at the camp:

There was one thing that I was involved in that was pretty interesting at the old camp. It was probably the best simulation game we ever had.

Junior high campers used to be in camp completely
alone, by themselves--

juniors would be out on their sleepout,
senior highs would be up here. [Bear Creek's site]

And what we did was--

at that time there was a lot of what was called 'squatters' in the valley where the old camp was. And they basically were hippies that had moved into houses that had been condemned by the government for the Tocks Island Dam Project.

And all the kids knew about the squatters. And some of them weren't a little wrapped too tight, and we had some incidents with them.

But anyway for this simulation game--

all the people in camp the kids really didn't know too well--

they may have known we worked here--

some of them didn't know that either--

what we'd do was, we'd get all these people together, the kitchen boys, the guys that worked maintenance, sometimes some people from the other camp, Miller-Hagan.

and we would proceed to take over the camp.

Of course the counselors were in on this. We'd get them together in a big bunch,
CORRECTION

PRECEDING IMAGE HAS BEEN REFILMED TO ASSURE LEGIBILITY OR TO CORRECT A POSSIBLE ERROR
alone, by themselves--

juniors would be out on their sleepout,

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the guys that worked maintenance,
sometimes some people from the other camp, Miller-Hagan.

and we would proceed to take over the camp.

Of course the counselors were in on this.

We'd get them together in a big bunch,
and we'd have guns and chains and all kinds of stuff, and we told them that we would allow them to keep going to camp here; however they could no longer worship God.

See we didn't believe in God. And the counselors would get together with the kids and discuss what they were going to do, whether they were going to worship, and if they were, were they going to make it known to the people that were taking over the camp, or were they going to do it under wraps, or what.

A lot of good things came out of it. Kids were always very pissed off at us and the counselors, but most of them got over it.

I think they got a lot out of it. It was what I would call the last of the real good simulation games because it was real for the kids. They didn't know they were playing a game. But then Roy got kind of worried about stuff like that. Greg: Like what?

Bill: Simulation games being too real.

I think if you're going to blow a kid's mind it might as well be at a church camp where they have some kind of support because sooner or later, if the kid's
not wrapped right, he's going to come apart anyway. Why not at a place where you can take care of him?
Pete: [Laughs] Because then we'll be sued.
Bill: Well we never were.

But that's my opinion. I feel the more you're willing to risk, the more you're going to get out of it.9

Bill has a unique talent for arguing convincingly for his unusual yet surprisingly obvious perspectives. He points out that individuals are challenged to grow at Bear Creek Camp. And he believes that the staff is competent enough to help the campers deal with the struggles that are part of personal growth.

Facilitating is the means for using the theories of small group processes to promote individual growth among the campers. Virtually any activity from playing games to doing chores on an overnight camp-out can be used for community building provided that the games are facilitated well. This method of teaching is an effective way of introducing the gospel's message, for it gives campers direct experiences rather than sermons. The camp may not be the first place where campers learn Christian precepts; it is, however, a place where campers can decide whether or not they value their Christian teachings.
By using the skit as an introductory activity, the skit's emcee facilitates a community building exercise for the entire camp. As an introduction, the folk drama sets the stage for the week, giving the campers an example of the format used in other activities.

Feedback

"Blankety-blank" includes a great deal of heckling from the audience and bantering between the players. Philip Mahoney yells out, "He forgot the answer." Roy sarcastically exclaims, "What?!!" And Big Red Riding Hood, Al Key Hall, God, the contestants, and others ridicule Mick Klutz. Teasing is a major form of recreation among the staff, and its presence in "Blankety-blank" is an example of an agency-act ratio. The ways in which this ratio is filled suggests the motive that giving and receiving "feedback" is accepted and expected among the staff.

"Feedback" is a term used to describe the act of telling people how their actions affect you. Feedback can be pleasant or less than pleasant to give or receive. Its use at camp is expected to follow four guidelines. First, the "information must deal with the here and now." It is not a good idea to wait three years or so to give someone a compliment or a piece of constructive criticism. Second, "feedback must deal with actions that can be changed." It is not fair to tell a person he is a jerk and not give him
any specific actions that support this contention. Third, "feedback must be intended to help" so that it can be used effectively. The final guideline is that "ownership must be taken for feedback." A person giving feedback must be brave and responsible enough to accept that it is her opinion. A person giving feedback must also assume ownership by directing the comment to the person who deserves it.10

The staff uses feedback to help maintain the community. It is a means for learning how other people are perceiving one another. It can be used to resolve tensions and disagreements. People can ask for feedback to help evaluate their own actions. During the beginning of every season, most staffers find it difficult to give feedback. This is especially true of information that the receiver may not want to hear. As the season progresses, most people find it easier to give feedback. This is especially true of feedback that the receiver may not want to hear.

Teasing is a form of feedback. Teasing is always inspired by an individual's actions, but the teaser has the freedom to break a rule of giving feedback and deny ownership by saying or implying "it's just a joke." Thus staffers must be careful when using play.11 The teasing in "Blankety-blank" does not deal with serious or sensitive issues, so the cast members are not breaking any rules.
As is usually true with other types of feedback, teasing is dished out in greater degrees as the season progresses. Feedback becomes easier to give and receive as individuals grow in their relationships. The staff performed "Blankety-blank" during the end of the season, and the teasing is present because the counselors felt comfortable with each other.

**In-jokes**

I wrote myself into my thesis by dropping a one-liner consisting of one word, "close," into the skit. When Gwen was yelling "Hawaii, Hawaii," it struck me as ironic because I knew what was awaiting her and her husband. They did not. The one-liner worked because the staff had seen "Blankety-blank" six times before and they knew what to expect. When I yelled out "close," I not only was foreshadowing the grand prize package, but I also was making an in-joke for the staff. This agency-act ratio demonstrates the motive that in-jokes play to a staff community that is distinct from the campers' groups.

During the counselor training period of pre-camp, the staffers worked to build a community among themselves. This community would serve as a support system for counselors and as a model community for the campers. Counselors need the support system, for the work can be high pressured. They are with children all day, and they are responsible for campers' safety and for teaching them the camp's program.
Kids at camp often test their counselors to see what they can and can not get away with. They will rarely listen to their counselors' first directions. They will run around with too much energy, and in general they will act like kids all week. The pace of the work can be fast, and the job can be demanding. Many staff members believe that they could not survive the summer season without having the support of the staff's community.12

Outside of the two weeks of pre-camp, the only other times that the entire staff is together are during the daily half hour staff meeting and during two longer staff meetings on weekends. Throughout each week, counselors have other communities to build, and thus they can not concentrate on building their own. As a result, it can be difficult to maintain the supportive community among the staff.

In-jokes, because they make sense only to the staff, can remind counselors that they have their own support system. In a community that stresses openness and inclusiveness of outsiders, the use of in-jokes might seem hypocritical. It is. But the intention behind in-jokes is to cause mischief—not to exclude others. Consequently most in-jokes are accepted by the staff even though they may perturb the campers. More importantly, because in-jokes remind the staffers that they have a support system,
in-jokes can often help counselors keep their energy level and enthusiasm high.

**Crudeness**

The cast uses some earthy language in the skit. Asking "Bear Creek Camp looks like blank?" implies the idiom "looks like shit" or "looks like hell." The coarseness is more obvious in the proceeding question "Bear pooh pooh smells like blank." Although these lines are fairly mild, consider the acts within the scene of the church camp designed to teach Christian education. These act-scene ratios support the motive that the staff will allow people to use earthy language and make bathroom jokes; however, there are limits, particularly for the campers.

Most counselors will not let their campers swear excessively, and most counselors realize that their youthful charges will fall prey to slips of the tongue, will try to shock their counselors with their language, and will talk about sex and tell dirty jokes on their overnight campouts. Unless campers' language becomes particularly offensive, most counselors overlook crude remarks because they know that campers enjoy "shocking" them. The best way to keep campers from trying to shock counselors is not to be shocked in the first place. Many counselors also tolerate "bad" language because they want to teach Christianity as a way of life. In teaching the religion they want to emphasize
the positive aspects of the faith by demonstrating that Christianity is more than a list of "Thou shalt nots."

Part of the counselors' work is to act as role models for the campers, so they are careful with their language when in the company of campers. People on staff take role modeling seriously because they know that many campers "look up to them." But role modeling can be confining, and it is easy to become tired of "being good" all the time. Consequently the staff members tend to be less conscientious about their language when they are away from campers, and they often use earthy language as an escape valve for blowing off job pressure.

The motive of earthiness shows up most often among the staff. Many new staffers and chaplains are shocked by the staff's language. It is considerably more vulgar than the campers', and the staff has an interesting repertory of off-color songs, stories, jokes and folk speech that they alone know. In addition to allowing staffers to vent pressures, the erotica is a massive in-joke for the staff, serving the same purpose as my one-liner in "Blankety-blank." The erotica is used to demarcate the staff community in another way, for "old staff" will break into a performance of an item to discover new staffers' reactions. The classic item used for this purpose is a playlet called
"Who'll Carry the Mail?" Bill Steward and Pete Johansson demonstrated and interpreted it for me at The Lake:

Bill: Things like that ["Who'll Carry the Mail?"] are fun because I like to get people to curse and get lowbrow. I like to be highbrow sometimes. But when people are being highbrow, I like to be lowbrow.

I think.

It helps them to lighten up and loosen up and see that everybody shits the same way. I don't know.

Pete: What he's saying is he likes to be subversive.

Bill: Yeah, I do. There's no doubt about that.

Greg: Do you want to do the mail thing for me now? I should get that on tape.

Pete: Should I do it with you?

Bill: Sure.

Greg: Yeah.

Bill: Who'll carry the mail?

Pete: I'll carry the mail.

Bill: Through the woods?

Pete: Through the woods.

Bill: What about the Indians?

Pete: Fuck the Indians.

Bill: You'd fuck an Indian?

Pete: I'd fuck a duck.

Bill: You foul [fowl?] fucker you, you ought to be
hung up by your heels and fed Ex-lax.

Pete: But I'd shit.

Bill: No you'd die.

Pete: But who'd carry the mail?

Bill: I'd carry the mail.

Pete: Through the woods?

Bill: Through the woods.

Pete: What about the Indians.

Bill: And on and on ad infinitum.

Pete: Ad nauseum.

Bill: Ad nauseum. Yeah. Pretty neat, huh?

Greg: How many repetitions do you think it will usually go?

Bill: It depends on the mood of the staff. I've seen it go ten or eleven.

People don't do it as much anymore. It will probably have a comeback in a year or two. In fact, I was surprised to hear it at all this year.

Greg: How does it usually start?

Bill: Well usually it happens when somebody that hasn't been around or is brand new and the community is around, and there's nothing better to do.

And you figure to show them how weird you are, you start this and see if they--

see what their reaction is--

if they do it,
or if they just stand there and look at us as if we're fucking nuts. 15

Bill pointed out that the off-color folklore can loosen people up and help them to join the community. The staff has limits against using language that is too crude, but the erotica and earthy speech is an accepted part of the staff's folklife.

Loosening Up

If "Blankety-blank" were televised, the viewers would find the action a little far-fetched and strange. With a cast consisting of a Canadian game show host, an alcoholic, a Monkey and His Tree, a ferocious Red Riding Hood, a meek wolf, God, a prize lady wearing a beard, a television commercial spokesperson, and two ministers, the audience could expect some weird action. The audience even participates in the production by pretending to be a timer. The act-scene ratio of the staffers' actions and the audience's involvement within the cmap's context leads toward the motive that people are encouraged to express themselves uninhibitedly at Bear Creek Camp. Weirdness is often the norm.

The staff does not advocate weirdness for the sake of weirdness. Staffers soon tire of the camper who feels compelled to do the unexpected at all times. Instead, the staff encourages children not to be afraid of looking
foolish when trying and possibly failing new activities. The program is facilitated by playing games, and the staff invites the campers to allow themselves to act like children and play for a week.

All counselors must believe in the value of play. Anyone can learn something in any game. The camp games are diverse, and there are infinite possibilities for using them to teach the campers. The lessons taught simply depend upon the counselors' creativity. Mud fights teach kids that they can get dirty, a necessary lesson for a successful camp-out. Chicken fights at the waterfront teach balance and cooperation. Diving shows from The Lake's docks can only be successful if the divers use their imagination. Guessing games around the campfire emphasize creative thinking. Activities written into the program teach campers trust, cooperation, sensory awareness, coordination, and many other lessons the counselors are not even aware of. Even unhealthy traits that emerge during play can be pointed out and discussed.

In working with campers I value creativity over order, and my discipline is lax. I see no point in scolding or punishing campers unless they are in the process of hurting each other. Children are straightened out enough by their parents and teachers. Why yell at them at summer camp?
To illustrate the benefits of placing the value of creativity over the value of decorum, consider a "piggy dinner" that three of my sixth grade campers dreamed up. At first I was not going to let them eat without using the benefit of their utensils or hands, but then I reconsidered. The activity fit into the program because it was a group activity, which was, in fact, initiated by one of their own. Real leadership skills were emerging. I noticed that the petite young lady from Philadelphia would probably never consent to sticking her face into a plate of noodles outside of camp. It was great that she did not feel shy about trying the activity. Although the inevitable food on the face would not present a pretty sight, little of the meal would be wasted, for the campers would clean up the table when finished. Finally I imagined what it would have been like to be eleven years old and tell my friends that I took part in a piggy dinner at camp. The meal would create terrific publicity for Bear Creek. The piggy dinner was a much more constructive activity than perhaps an evening of watching television. Children, and adults, need to play.

Often staffers need to look beyond seemingly obnoxious behavior and recognize its value. Shouting and screaming matches in the dining hall mean that campers are sharing their enthusiasm. Campers' dirty joke sessions on over-nighters mean that they are beginning to learn about and be comfortable with their sexuality. When campers stray off
into the woods during free time, it means that they are interested in exploring the camp. Children at camp often do not need punishment or lectures but simply guidance and support. In allowing campers to loosen up and play, the staffers provide this much needed freedom and support. In facilitating the activities, the staffers provide them with the guidance.

The Real World

Throughout "Blankety-blank" the cast makes deprecatory remarks about the camp and the camp's director. A person in the audience might conclude that the 1984 summer staff members were not happy with their place of employment and their employer. But if the nasty remarks are examined within the context of the entire scene, then the assaults upon the camp and Roy suggest that the staffers regard the camp as a uniquely special place that is different from "the real world."

The insults about the camp, the camp's food, and Roy are ways that the staff can tease Roy and themselves. By putting down the camp, they build it up, for they can tease each other because they feel secure that no one will be offended. The delivery of the lines calls attention to the camp, thereby setting it apart from the outside world.

Many staffers regard the camp as a special place having a way of life associated with it that is better
than "the real world's." People are asked to deal with one another supportively; and as a result, staffers form close friendships during the summer. I turned to another senior counselor, Lori Shollenberger, an articulate, perceptive woman who knows a lot about Bear Creek Camp, to find out why she makes a distinction between the camp and the real world:

There's sort of an attitude—with campers and with me personally—

When I come here, people know me a certain way—loose and crazy and creative—

and they like that. I know they like that. And I think it happens with the kids too.

When I go out into the world, I feel like I always have to be proving it to the outside world.

In other words, like in school, you're guilty until proven innocent or not talented until proven talented.

At camp you're talented until proven not talented, which nobody ever is.

Greg: They give you the benefit of the doubt?
Lori: Yeah. And it's not that there's a doubt. It's just that people see something in you before even you see it.

It's a much freer place.
Greg: Do you mean that you feel more like yourself here?
Lori: Yeah. I feel I can be more honest here and that it's accepted.
Greg: Even demanded.
Lori: Yeah. Definitely.

It's there in the outside world with a certain few friends. . . . For me what's really camp is that you can say with complete honesty, positives and negatives. But it takes a while to get to that point. 16

Lori explains that she can express herself freely at camp. By being able to relate to people honestly, she feels that she is a part of the staff's community. But being a part of the community is not so much a result of her efforts, for she finds that people at the camp accept her as she is. Lori explains how this was true even as a camper:

[When I was a camper] camp was 'wow they like me even though my hair's a mess and my nose is ugly.'

But when I went home, they made fun of me because my hair was a mess and my nose was ugly. 17

She describes the motive of "The Real World" quite succinctly. At the camp many staffers feel that they "fit in" with the rest of the staffers. In the "real world" it can be difficult to be accepted by others. When living in
the real world, staffers often miss the feeling of community that is a part of the camping experience. They wish that they could deal with people in the outside world as they deal with staffers. For many people the way they relate to others at camp is more honest than the way they relate to people away from Bear Creek. Jim Rude, who played Big Bad Riding Hood, once suggested, "we should start calling camp 'the real world' and the outside world the 'fake world.'"\(^{18}\)

The sense of community at the camp can not really be conveyed with words. But the feeling that people are accepted and loved at camp and that they are free to accept and love others is vital to the staff's and the campers' sense of place. This conception of what makes the camp Bear Creek Camp is linked to the other motives, for it is created by putting beliefs and values into action. Many members of the staff would argue that the camp's special feeling of community is present among the staff because God is working through the community as they live Christianity as a way of life.

In "Blankety-blank" the cast reminds the campers, and themselves, that the camp is a place unique from the world away from Bear Creek. The closeness that people feel for each other is demonstrated through the teasing and insulting lines about the camp in the skit. But the intimate friendships between the staff members also is symbolized by the
way they stand arm-in-arm to introduce themselves at "Blankety-blank's" close.
Notes


4"Cone of Learning," Counselor Training Manual, Unpublished manuscript used at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, 1986.

5Bill Steward, interview held at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, August 18, 1984.

6Dave Kidd, interview held at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, July 17, 1984.

7Ibid.

8One of the four programs prepared during pre-camp of 1984 is included in this thesis as Appendix VI.

9Steward.

10The staff's guide for using feedback is included in this thesis as Appendix V.


12Roy Gulliford, interview held at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, August 1, 1984.

13Jim Rude, interview held at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, August 15, 1984.

14Ibid.

15Steward.

16Lori Shollengerber, interview held at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, August 13, 1984.
17 Ibid.

18 Jim Rude, personal communication at Bear Creek Camp, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania, June 20, 1984.
CHAPTER IV

THE SKIT'S SYNTAX OF FORM

Using a lexicon of motives, the cast of "Blankety-blank" performed the skit to introduce campers to their week at Bear Creek Camp. This lexicon is a vocabulary of ethnographic themes that describes how the staff views camp life. But the folk drama has more meaning than the information found in the lexicon. The cast uses artistic techniques to act out the motives, and these techniques are part of the skit's meaning. The artistic techniques are a syntax the staff uses to communicate "Blankety-blanks" lexicon of motives. The syntax consists of rules and techniques that give the skit its form. Form is an abstract idea, and examining form in the performance can be challenging. The skit has a structure, but how can it be made tangible? The skit can be structured deftly by the cast so that the performance is presented artistically, but how can one account for its quality? I needed a means to examine the skit's structure to discover why the performance is aesthetically appealing.

Once again Kenneth Burke provides some useful ideas. In his book, Counter-Statement, he discusses artistic
expression and develops a theory of form. Burke first defined form as the "arousing and fulfilling" of the audience's expectations. He writes that "a work has form in so far as one part of it leads a reader to anticipate another part." In "Blankety-blank," for example, every one of Mick's questions demands an answer, thus creating expectations in the audience. These expectations are fulfilled with the cast's answers; thus the skit has form. Burke uses this definition of form throughout Counter-Statement, but he later states that the book's concern is with the "role of form in 'the arousing and fulfilling of expectations.'" The shift in definition is important, for arousing and fulfilling expectations becomes the psychological consequence of form, not form itself. "Form" remains undefined and perhaps undefinable.

Form can be an intangible idea, but artistic techniques are concrete. Anyone can identify the eloquent use of style. In "Blankety-blank" the cast uses many techniques to arouse and fulfill expectations. Burke describes such techniques in Counter-Statement in a chapter entitled "Lexicon Rhetoricae." The techniques specified describe how artists use form to appeal to the audience's sense of style. The chapter essentially outlines a syntax of form, a system of rules that can be used to describe the structure of any literary work. The syntax breaks form into five basic aspects:
syllogistic progression, qualitative progression, repetitive form, conventional form, and minor or incidental form. Form, itself, is present in a work of art through these five basic aspects. These types of form combine and recombine to form a complete chain, and the syntax describes an infinite number of artistic expressions. Because he formalizes a means to study the linear structure of literary works, Burke's methodology is a species of syntagmatic structuralism.

The skit begins with a conventional form, "the appeal of form as form," when Paul keys the performance by announcing "the next skit is a game show, and it's entitled 'Blankety-blank.'" The key is the same type of form used to open other types of performances; its function is identical to "Once upon a time." Mick Klutz completes the keying by stepping onto the stage and introducing the skit's theme song. This song is another example of conventional form because it designates a beginning as a beginning, as does Paul's introduction. The form appeals to the audience because they recognize it as a convention needed to begin the skit. Homer invokes the muse to open his epics--"Blankety-blank's" cast sings the comedians Bob and Doug MacKenzie's theme song.

Within the keying are other appeals to form, for Paul introduces "Row Row Row Your Boat" and makes a reference to another camp song. Campers expect to sing songs between skits; thus the songs also are examples of conventional form.
The song's appeal is not simply in the music but also in the existence of the songs themselves, for campers expect to sing at camp.

The camp's rendition of "Row Row Row Your Boat" is particularly interesting because it is a fine example of the syllogistic progression, the use of form to appeal to the audience's sense of rational order. Given the goal of "not having no word at all" and a logical means for reaching this goal, the audience members keep building their expectations as each word is dropped after each repetition of the song. The campers' expectations are fulfilled when they reach the brief silence of the song's end, and the effect of this silence is deafening. The aesthetic appeal of the silence is powerful because the form supersedes the content. Keying the skit in this manner, Paul sets the audience up for other manipulations of form, and the cast of "Blankety-blank" can play to a beautifully primed audience.

The syllogistic progression is the appeal of the reasoned argument, logical plot development, geometric formal proof, or perhaps the well designed computer program. The skit's syllogistic progression is simple. It consists of introducing the cast, asking contestants and panelists three questions, awarding the winners the prize, and concluding the performance. Every question logically demands an answer. A winner must receive a prize. And the sequence
must be followed in a rational order if the skit is to make sense. Any break from this rationality would violate a law of reason and also destroy the formal appeal of the syllogistic progression. Mick is urged to remember the sequence of actions in a less "klutzy" manner not simply because his mistakes break logical rules, but because his errors are at odds with the cast's sense of aesthetics. The principle of syllogistic progression is evident in Mick's actions, for his mistakes nevertheless follow logically from an emcee named "Mick Klutz." Some of the appeal of the other characters' actions, from Al Key Hall's slurred mumblings to Neil and Gwen's greedy begging, are all uses of this same aspect of form because the players are acting in character.

"Blankety-blank" is interesting not simply because of the logical development of its structure. One of the aspects of form used often is repetitive form. This type of form is the "restatement of the same thing in different ways." Repetitive form is the reiteration of the themes by the use of different details. For example, the motive I describe as "Christianity as a Way of Life" is evident in the character of God's actions as well as in the prank played on the chaplains.

The repetitive aspect of form also includes the use of rhythm or rhyme, and their appeal is in the repetition of the meter or the sounds. Philip Mahoney uses repetitive form
by beginning the human timer. As the sound and rhythm starts, everyone can identify the ticks as the pulse of a timer. The people in the audience participate in this form's use, and they help to create their own aesthetic experience. The rhythm is varied at different times, the "tocks'" syncopation strongly emphasizing rhythmic appeal. All of the "ticks" are performed in sets of threes, this threefold repetition playing to a conventional form firmly ingrained in American culture. The final count of the timer is a consummation of form as the imitation of a buzzer's sound, "eeeeernt," fulfills an expectation set up by the sound of the ticks.

The characters use minor or incidental forms throughout the skit. These forms have meaning outside of their literary or dramatic context, and they include metaphor, paradox, apostrophe, and other stylistic devices. God's line, "Thus sayeth the Lord," for example, can be recited out of its context and still appeal to the audience's sense of style. In "Blankety-blank" the staff employs minor form primarily by using numerous allusions. These allusions are targeted to a children's audience, and they consist of references to the MacKenzie Brothers, "Little Red Riding Hood," a Hanes underwear commercial, the Bible, television game shows, a game show host, the movie "Ghostbusters," and the television show "The A-Team." These forms have an intrinsic appeal
because they allude to things that the campers can recognize. They also establish some common ground between campers and staff; through these allusions the campers learn that counselors know who Mr. T. of the "A-Team" is or that they have seen the hit movie of the summer, "Ghostbusters."

Finally, allusions are effective appeals to form because the audience becomes involved by having to find the allusion's relevance to the skit's action.

One of the most interesting aspects of form that the counselors use is qualitative progression. With this aspect of form the audience's expectations do not develop according to logical principals. Instead the development is subtler, for qualitative progression is evident when "the presence of one quality prepares" the audience for "the introduction of another." 10 The character of God uses some prime examples of this formal aspect in the skit. God begins each of his answers with a version of the biblical quote "thus sayeth the Lord of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," but he plays to the audience's expectations by forcing the campers and staff to wonder whom he will allude to. For his final answer he builds the audience's suspense but delivers first praise to the actor playing his role. The effect of surprising the audience heightens the appeal of the line "First I'd like to put in a word about what a great job Pete is doing as a counselor. Be good to him and send him money."
Mick Klutz delivers his first two questions using a qualitative progression. The first question, "Bear Creek Camp looks like blank?" calls to mind the idioms "looks like shit" or "looks like hell," and thus no one in the audience is sure how the panelists and contestants will answer. Nobody delivers any answer that can be construed as remotely earthy, so the audience members are left feeling relieved or disappointed. This mood changes when Mick asks the next question, "Bear pooh pooh smells like blank?" because now the cast must respond with a bathroom joke. The effect of asking this question is heightened because many members of the audience had been anticipating bathroom jokes in the cast's answers to the first question.

The flour dusting awarded to the winners is an appeal to form. Mick sets up the prank by announcing the prize of the vacation in the snowy Pocono mountains while Nowell builds the audience's expectations by sneaking up behind Neil and Gwen. The prank is an example of the syllogistic progression because game show winners must be awarded prizes. The players also use the qualitative progression because the skit's structure builds up the audience's expectations for the awarding of the prize, but the cast delivers a practical joke instead (which some of the seasoned campers undoubtedly were expecting.) Rhythm, a type of repetitive form, inter-plays with the other two aspects of form in the prank, for
Nowell must time the prank's delivery well for the joke to work. If the dusting is too early, then the audience will not be prepared for it. If the dusting is too late, then the contestants will discover the set-up and not be surprised. The prank illustrates that the actors can use form nonverbally and that different aspects of form will interplay in a performance.

All of the aspects of form can overlap in a work of art. Another good example of the interrelation of forms is the skit's closing. It follows logically that cast members should introduce themselves after performing a skit designed to introduce the campers to Bear Creek. The closing also uses conventional form because it follows an accepted pattern present in the other skits. The form appeals as a form because the audience expects the skit to have some type of closing and because the players need some means to key themselves out of the performance.

The cast uses all five aspects of form to perform the skit. All of the artistic techniques making up the syntax of form are evident either by themselves or in various interrelations. I can not describe all of the uses of form in "Blankety-blank." Instead my intent is to show that the skit's players use form to create an aesthetic experience, a display of eloquence.
Folklorists often regard eloquence, the artistic use of language, as less important to the meaning of a text than the cultural patterns underlying a performance. Artistry is often seen as a polish coated over the surface of verbal art, a means to give the item of lore an interesting texture. Suppose this perspective is turned one hundred eighty degrees and eloquence is made the backbone of the performance. This alternative perspective can be supported well, for if any of the aspects of form were removed from "Blankety-blank," then the performance simply would not exist. Although it is true that the performance moves forward because of the rules of logic, the effectiveness of the syllogistic progression depends entirely upon matters of style. If the other aspects of form were also pulled from the skit, then the performance also would not work.

Burke emphasizes the importance of style, for he writes that eloquence is the essence of art. The syntax of form is a performance's framework, not a plaster coated over the completed structure. According to this perspective, the use of the syntax of form is an end in itself, not a means to an end. In "Blankety-blank," for instance, the syntax of form creates an aesthetic experience by arousing and fulfilling the audience's expectations. Thus the syntax of form does more than convey ethnographic information—the use of the syntax of form creates aesthetic meaning.
It is tempting to regard the description of the cast's use of form as an interpretation of "Blankety-blank's" meaning. Although the description of the aspects of form evident in "Blankety-blank" does contribute to a better understanding of the cast's artistry, the description is not the meaning. The skit's meaning is not in the analysis nor in the performance. The meaning is the performance.

Kenneth Burke makes this clear by drawing a distinction between "the psychology of information" and "the psychology of form." His distinction is a separation of subject matter from technique. The psychology of information refers to how the audience processes new data, and the psychology of form refers to how the information appeals to the audience's sense of style. An analysis of the skit--either ethnographic or stylistic--appeals primarily to the psychology of information. The actual performance appeals to the psychology of form. The primary appeal of artistic expression is to the psychology of form, and although every work of art does convey information, the introduction of data is "merely one out of many possible elements of style." Thus an inquiry into the cast's use of the syntax of form does not allow one to comprehend the aesthetic meaning, for to look at "Blankety-blank" solely to understand how the cast uses style is to miss entirely the "aesthetic truth."
If the aesthetic truth can not be analysed, why investigate the skit's syntax of form? Analysis will not define aesthetic truth, but interpretation can enhance a person's appreciation of "Blankety-blank's" meaning. An inquiry into the players' use of form demonstrates that they use the syntax not simply to convey the lexicon of motives' content but also to create a work of art. Thus the syntax of form has its own content. The players' artistry arouses and fulfills essentially the same expectations of each member in the audience. As a result, the campers and staffers share a feeling of unity which helps to build their identity as a group. Finally, by looking at "Blankety-blank's" syntax of form, it becomes clear that although folklore is a source for ethnographic data, a performance's meaning can not be reduced to its content of ethnographic information. The syntax of form creates meaning.
Notes

5 Ibid., p. 127.
6 Ibid., p. 124.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid., p. 125.
10 Burke, "Lexicon Rhetoricae," pp. 124, 125.
11 Ibid., p. 128.
13 Ibid., p. 33.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid., pp. 33, 34.
CHAPTER V

RECONSTRUCTION

"Blankety-blank's" lexicon of motives and syntax of form are aspects of the folk drama's grammar. This grammar is a system of rules used in the performance, and its two basic aspects reflect two different approaches to studying folklore. The information in the lexicon pertains to the staffers' worldview, and the discussion of the syntax of forms shows the artistic techniques used in the skit. Arguably the lexicon's content is interpreted from an anthropological approach whereas the syntax's description is a literary perspective. Roger Abrahams explains that a researcher must fuse both approaches to understand fully an item of folklore, for the way in which information is presented influences how the audience will understand the message. Abrahams advances the rhetorical approach to integrate anthropological and literary concerns. He argues that a folklorist must consider the relation between ethnographic detail and artistic technique in a performance. Abrahams argues that folklorists can not understand an item's meaning if they "objectify for the purpose of
analysis without making an attempt to put" the item back together again. I have taken "Blankety-blank" apart in the preceding chapters. The task remaining is to put the skit back together.

The first step in reconstructing the skit is to review the lexicon. The lexicon consists of motives which are ways the staffers size up their experiences. "Blankety-blank's" players act out these motives in the skit. Because the staffers' actions name "patterns of experience," the action in the skit is symbolic. The skit's symbols show how the staffers view the program of Christian education, the means for teaching campers, the techniques for building and maintaining their community, and the difference between life at camp and life in the outside world. The skit contains numerous symbols, but "Blankety-blank," itself, is a symbol. The folk drama defines a pattern of experience, the actions building a summer camp skit. The folk drama is an example of life at Bear Creek Camp, and the cast's actions should not be regarded as metaphors for understanding life at Bear Creek. The staff's acting is life at the camp.

The skit's players present the lexicon of motives using a syntax of form. This syntax is constructed from five aspects of form: syllogistic progression, qualitative progression, repetitive form, conventional form, and minor or incidental forms. "Blankety-blank's" performers
use these artistic techniques according to their own sense of style. Thus the actors' sense of style creates the artistic quality of the skit, or its eloquence. Eloquence is the essence of the skit, for the aesthetic quality of the performance determines how the cast members use language. Because eloquence is essential to the performance, the syntagmatic structure of the skit is equal to the artistic techniques used in creating the folk drama.

Both the lexicon and the syntax have content. The lexicon's content consists of ethnographic information, and the syntax's content consists of aesthetic techniques. The style of the performance enhances the delivery of information in a number of ways. The syllogistic progression of the entire skit is simple, for example, because of a number of reasons. On the most obvious level the structure has to be simple because the format of game shows is simple. More importantly the simple structure makes the skit easy for audience members to understand. An eight year-old probably could not follow "King Lear" as a summer camp skit. The skit's simple form follows the function that the skit serves as a facilitated introduction to the camp. To introduce themselves, the skit's casts uses a form appropriate to the audience's needs.
Another example of the interplay between the lexicon and the syntax is in the use of repetitive form to loosen up the campers. Although all of the aspects of form play to the audience's sense of style, the cast uses repetitive form to involve the audience in the performance. Audience members are highly involved when they simulate the ticking sound of the timer, for the campers are creating part of the folk drama. People in the audience find it easy to join in and count off the time because the ticking sound is easy to identify. Consequently many of the campers participate in the activity. The appeal of the form is much more interesting than the information conveyed, so the motive of "Loosening Up" is taught not simply through the staff's actions but also by the way the actions are performed.

Consider the effect of form within the complete performance. Form creates and fulfills expectations, and the emotions aroused are similar in each person. No one cries after the prank, and many people laugh at the jokes. The performance is the first time the camp's community will share the same emotions in common. Though any performance can accomplish this type of unity among the audience members, the use of form to call people to become one is especially relevant to the summer program. In teaching Christianity as a way of life, the staff emphasizes
community building, and the skit's form helps create the first sense of community among the campers and staff of the seventh session.

The skit's players often use form quite deftly. Form involves the campers during the entire performance. Campers' expectations are constantly built up by the emcee's questions, the characters' answers, and the promise of a grand prize package. Form not only enhances the information the actors deliver, but form can overpower the information content. For example, during the initial keying, the audience is not terribly interested in the lyrics of "Row Row Row Your Boat." The appeal is in the way the song is sung to accomplish the goal of "not having no word at all" rather than in the message conveyed in the words. Burke describes these types of strong appeals to the psychology of form as "formal charges." \(^5\) "Blanketyblank" includes numerous instances of such formal charges.

The aesthetic truth is not expressed solely by formal charges. Symbols, themselves, can be charged. Symbols are charged when they are particularly relevant to the audience's situation outside the performance's immediate scene. \(^6\) Many of the characters' actions symbolize motives pertaining to situations the campers will encounter during their week. All of the campers will participate in facilitated activities. They will be taught Christianity
as a way of life. And they will undoubtedly encounter the other motives. "Blankety-blank's" symbolic action expresses views about life at camp; the skit, therefore, contains numerous symbolic charges.

Symbolic and formal charges make the skit a success. The symbolic charges emphasize how the staffers regard life at camp, whereas the formal charges appeal to the audience's sense of style. At times the formal charges are performed with the symbolic charges. For example, the skit's practical joke symbolized the motive "Christianity as a Way of Life" while its delivery appeals to the psychology of form. In other instances there is little relation between the two kinds of charges. Some lines are delivered beautifully, but they have little relevance to the camping context. Throughout the entire performance the skit's players make the action interesting because they use symbols and form artistically.

Symbolic and formal charges keep the audience interested in individual actions in "Blankety-blank." Moreover, the entire performance is symbolically and formally charged. The folk drama is symbolically charged because the skit's action is pertinent to the camping context; the skit is an example of the staff acting at camp. The performance, thus, names a pattern of experience that is acted out at camp. The folk drama is formally charged, for the skit is an
example of conventional form. "Blankety-blank" follows a form that allows the audience to recognize the skit as a skit. The form is charged because the audience enthusiastically appreciates the artistry of the performance. "Blankety-blank" succeeds because the skit's players say meaningful things about Bear Creek Camp and they say them well.

To put "Blankety-blank" back together I have demonstrated that the performance is successful because the lexicon of motives is expressed artistically in the syntax of form. The lexicon and syntax are aspects of the skit's competence, the set of rules from which the skit is created. But my description of this competence is far from complete, for the performance of "Blankety-blank" entails at least a partial understanding of the competence evident in all of Bear Creek Camp's skits. The skits' competence consists of the rules describing all and only all of the possible skits that could be performed. "Blankety-blank's" competence includes the other skits' competence because the folk drama is one item within a genre that the camp community classifies as "skits." The skits' competence includes all possible motives, all formal techniques, the means for transforming motives into actions, rules demonstrating how the syntax links with each lexical entry, descriptions of who can play each part, descriptions of when
the skit can be performed, a means for linking linguistic grammar to the folkloristic grammar, and countless other issues. "Blankety-blank's" competence is such a broad network of knowledge and possible behavior that representing it is virtually impossible.

Not only is the skit's competence an incredibly vast system of knowledge, but competence is not a static entity. The knowledge of what is acceptable behavior varies from person to person. Furthermore, different people define "acceptable behavior" differently. Finally, competence is a system of knowledge that changes over time. A skit such as "Blankety-blank" might not be accepted by next season's camping community.

Rather than viewing competence as a massive system of rules controlling "Blankety-blank's" meaning, my approach has been to demonstrate meanings created and expressed during the performance. Competence is not a meaning existing a priori and controlling the actions in "Blankety-blank." Instead competence emerges when the cast acts. Although some values and artistic techniques are held in common among staff members, the skit's lexicon of motives and syntax of form emerge during the performance.

In discussing "Blankety-blank" I have described its grammar to show aspects of the skit's meaning at camp. But not all aspects of the skit's meaning can be reduced to lexical and syntactic information. To view meaning only
as data that can be comprehended rationally by asking "What does it mean?" is to miss many meanings. Interpreting the skit yields valuable and interesting information about ethnographic details and stylistic techniques. But these findings appeal to the psychology of information, thereby minimizing the appeal of the psychology of form. Kenneth Burke writes that the hypertrophy of the psychology of information results in the atrophy of the psychology of form. An example from Counter-Statement illustrates his point:

Consider, for instance, the speech of Mark Anthony, the 'Brutus is an honorable man.' Imagine in the same place a very competently developed thesis on human conduct, with statistics, intelligence tests, definitions; imagine it as the finest thing of the sort ever written, and as really being at the roots of an understanding of Brutus. Obviously the play would simply stop until Anthony had finished. For in the case of Anthony's speech, the value lies in the fact that his words are shaping the future of the audience's desires, not the desires of the Roman populace, but the desires of the pit. This is the psychology of form distinguished from the psychology of information.

Applying Burke's ideas to "Blankety-blank," consider what would happen if someone were to explain a motive or aspect of form rather than acting it out. If Nowell stopped to explain that she was about to dump the flour on the chaplains to act out the motive "Christianity as a Way of Life," explaining in full her rationale for accepting the perspective, then the prank would fail. If Philip Mahoney reduced the timer's ticking to its information
content by announcing that nine seconds had elapsed, then
the effect of the act would be entirely different. Drawing
conclusions about the skit's meaning emphasizes the
psychology of information, thereby downplaying the psy-
chology of form. Even conclusions about the use of the
psychology of form in the skit address primarily the psy-
chology of information. The only way to truly understand
the skit's meaning is to see the performance.

"Blankety-blank's" emotive appeal can not also be
fully experienced unless a person is a part of the camp's
community. The staffers build a great deal of themselves
into the folk drama. Their sense of who they are includes
more than rational and aesthetic conceptions about them-
selves--their sense of self includes how they feel about
each other and their own lives. The emotional appeal of
"Blankety-blank" is powerful not simply because form creates
and fulfills expectations but because the skit is part of
a community's life within which individuals strive to live
their religious faith and love one another. People at camp
associate the skit--and all of the camp's folklore--with a
way of life they enjoy living. Thus the skit has an emotive
value to the staff similar to the value of a memento or
family heirloom. The folk drama is a souvenir from the
summer.
This type of meaning is neither ethnographic nor aesthetic. Perhaps it is best described as evaluative. The evaluative appeal of "Blankety-blank" can not be interpreted. Its significance lies solely in the fact that the skit is part of the camp community's folklife. All of the staff members have different conceptions of what the camp means to them personally, and most of their feelings demonstrate that they value the experience of working on the staff. Because "Blankety-blank" is part of the camping experience, the skit can symbolize aspects of the evaluative meaning of the camp's entire way of life.

Because the evaluative and aesthetic appeal is so much a part of the folk drama's meaning, the skit can not be reconstructed. Anything I could write about the skit will appeal to the psychology of information. It is impossible to present how "Blankety-blank" addresses the psychology of form or the "psychology of evaluation."

In conclusion, the rhetorical theory of folklore demonstrates that the staffers are acting in "Blankety-blank." "Acting" is a key term in Kenneth Burke's theory, for he developed his ideas by making an important distinction between action and motion. Motion consists of physical, chemical, and biological processes whereas action includes self-expression, communication, and consummation, the "carrying out of possibilities." The action in
"Blankety-blank" can not be reduced to principles of sheer motion, for action is possible because we can use language to communicate values. The rhetorical approach demonstrates that "Blankety-blank's" cast does not passively react to extrinsic meanings controlling the players' use of symbols. Though the performance of "Blankety-blank" is influenced by meanings communicated through other symbols, the folk drama is created through human actions. These actions provide data useful for learning about life at camp, but their value can not be reduced solely to data.
Notes


2 Ibid.


6 Ibid., p. 163.


10 Ibid.


APPENDIX I
Gulliford's Arbitrary

4 Steps of a Small Group

Intro

1. Awkward silence - milling around
2. Polite surface interactions - "Hi", "Not much room in here"
3. Frustration - "When are we going to do something?"
   "There's no place for my trunk"

Facilitative Style

1. Don't begin anything till everyone's in
2. Take time with each new arrival
3. Chat briefly with parents
4. Give campers perimeters - "not much room in here"
5. Play games that allow for newcomers
6. Try 'getting acquainted' activity
7. Orientation - Unit - Camp
8. Start contracting

Step I - Testing

1. Resistance - facades - identifiable male and female roles
   - stereotypes - "sweety-pie," "macho man," "brain," "old camper"
2. There & Then data
   - history - parents, siblings, activities, camp last year
3. Safe sharing - making an impression - shock effect - status
4. Negatives - "My parents made me come"
   "These bugs"
5. Attack the Leader - "I don't have to do anything I don't want to"
   "My counsellor last year..."

Facilitative Style

1. Focus on here and now
2. Accept what is said, but concentrate on accepting them as they are
3. Start bringing in program - won't happen unless time has
4. Be firm but positive
5. Keep things moving, but leave space for conversation
6. Emphasize their responsibility for success of session -
   shared with you

Step 2 - Constructive

1. Risk-taking
   a. Here & Now - "You talk too much" "I like your smile"
      "I hate him"
   b. Personally meaningful material - "I don't have many friends"
   c. Trust - concessions
   d. Healing - "I'm sorry I said that" - reaching out to 'outsiders'
2. Self-acceptance - beginning of change
   a. Giving up facades - stereotypes dulling
   b. Impatience with defenses - expected of others
   c. Specific confrontation -
Gulliford's Arbitrary

4 Steps of a Small Group

Step 2, c (continued)

Feedback
1. available to everybody
2. deals with what can be changed
3. intended to help
4. ownership

3. Relationship forming - diads, triads
4. Group 'healing' on its own - less need for you

Facilitative Style
1. Encourage, reinforce
2. Watch cliques - wolf-packing
3. Honor personal space = integrity
4. Share leadership, ownership
5. Share more of yourself

Step 3 - Confirmation
1. Encounter - meeting as persons I'm OK You're OK
   - hurt with person, laugh with person, share joy
   - "I - Thou"
   - positive feelings = closeness = feelings expressed & accepted
2. Confirmation - celebrating of each as unique
   - celebrating common humanity

Facilitative Style
1. See step 2
2. Explain dynamics
3. Ask what can be done with new learnings

Step 4 - Positive Change
1. Behavioral change
2. Attitudinal change

Facilitative Style
None - They've grown up and don't need a parent anymore
Small group camping has little to do with the size of our groups. Instead it means that we use group dynamics to facilitate the growth of each member of the group and that because of the difficulty in handling all the potential interactions, the group must be of manageable size—small. The life together of camp is our matrix. Our goal is that study, discussion, worship, recreation, camping skills, crafts, swimming and boating, fun, and the experience of camp life contribute to an increased understanding of God, His Word, His World and reinforce the camper as he/she tries to live a Christian life.

Our objective is to:

- provide a natural setting, 3000 acres, developed in an environmentally sound fashion.
- accepting inconvenience/simplicity of woodland life and the many other "nations" that co-exist with us at Bear Creek.
- groups living and exploration of those dynamics.
- increase self-esteem through the gaining of a variety of skills.
- opportunity/responsibility for decision making.
- dealing with different kinds of people.
- community model based on Gospel.
- seeing Jesus Christ of scripture as source.
- celebrating their uniqueness and potential.
- environmental focus/demonstration.
- shalom—wholeness vs domination.

The four steps of group process are the structure on which we build our program all the while recognizing that the above is our objective and all activities are means to that end i.e. the site is not holy or unique; we are not teaching group process, we are using it; the goal of swimming instruction is not an A.A.V. champion but rather the self-esteem gained by campers who achieve their goals.

The method of camping we are using to fulfill the above objectives involves the use of small groups of boys and girls (14) and a team of counselors. Each group determines its own program under the careful guidance of the counselors. This approach is unique in comparison to the highly structured camp programs where children attend classes. In this program an attempt is made to "live the lesson" as well as talk about it.

The role of the counselor in this type of program is extremely important. The counselor is not only a teacher, recreation leader, crafts counselor, nature counselor, camping skills instructor, friend, brother, mother, father, but more important a facilitator. Your job is to help campers to grow.

Needless to say, the experience as a counselor is a demanding one. You live with the campers 24 hours a day. In such circumstances, the campers see you when you are happy, sad, angry, anxious, or even in pain. Every emotion and every action is noted consciously and unconsciously by the camper. Your example
is of tremendous significance in the growth and development of
the camper. The opportunities of this unique situation make it
possible for you to witness to him as a Christian.

You will be working in small groups. You will live in a
cabin/tent with 7 campers. Your cabin group will work with an-
other cabin group in what is called a "Quest Group". All of your
activities will be carried out in the "Quest Group". The coun-
selors and campers working and planning together arrange their
week's program activities.

Structured classes are not a part of the program. The skill
of the counselor in involving the children in an experience of
learning is important. It requires a lot of preparation on the
part of the counselor to develop this skill.

The training you are about to begin will be crucial to the
success of your work this summer. These two weeks will be
crammed with information and experiences that will equip you
in a most demanding job.

The unique setting of the outdoors provides numerous oppor-
tunities for the counselor to help the camper understand. Living
close to nature, the camper gets to see life from a different
perspective. Life is seen, lived and experienced first hand.

The counselor should understand where he fits into the
program. Specifically, the counselor's place in Small Group
is first to understand the camper. The young man or woman in
his group is a distinct individual with his own likes and dis-
likes, his own standards of values, his own habits, his own
needs. He or she cannot be categorized, but must be understood
as an individual, a child of God accepted by Him, as one who
loves and needs to be loved.

The counselor should be aware of the fact that he is assist-
ing in discovering and building values for himself and his campers.
Through teaching of the Word, through living the Word he helps to
construct a new way of life for himself and for the individuals
in his group.

The place of the counselor is to give an experience of
Christian fellowship. His objective is to build. It is never
to give a good time. This is always a by-product of his objec-
tive. Small Group Camping is not recreation for the sake of
recreation. It is living and growing together in a small, happy
Christian fellowship.

Finally, the counselor's place is not solely that of teacher
and leader. He is always a participant in the activities. The
whole Quest Group is discovering and growing together. The
counselor is therefore always intimately involved in the camping
program.

You'll grow too this summer. You'll be amazed at yourself.
You'll be far better at all this than you dreamed you would,
because you'll be surrounded, supported, challenged and forgiven
by people who love you. In this kind of context, we are all
surprised to discover how much we've got. Only God is not
surprised. He knew all along. 'He made us.'
PHILOSOPHY OF BEAR CREEK CAMP
(summer program)

It is as a part of the Church that our camp must see itself. It can neither exist in a void, nor be responsible only to itself, the campers, or their parents. Owned by the Church, supported by the Church, it is trusted because it is a part of the Church. This commitment is to be seen as a commitment through the Christ which the institutional Church reflects though sometimes imperfectly. His Incarnation must be its foundation, His redeeming, reconciling love the means by which youth become mature human beings after His image and likeness.

The task of Christian Education and Youth Ministry is to reveal the living Christ to our youth as He has been revealed to Christians in every generation, enabling them to live for and in Him.

Our camp is an extension of parish education programs and uniquely suited to complement the local congregation's efforts. ("Consider such advantages as these: 100% attendance, an adult leader for every nine to ten campers, 24-hour a day impact, opportunity for constant observation of leadership and for staff training, a setting and program eagerly accepted by children, and a fairly closed and controlled community. These and many other factors make resident camps fairly breathtaking in potential." These words come from Richard S. Doty's documented study of the impact of quality, goal oriented camping on participants, entitled, The Character Dimension of Camping. The above factors, if purposefully used, amplify the local parish's efforts.)

Twentieth-century people learn experientially -- through what they themselves feel and do. Our youth must experience for themselves what is spoken of in church school. Forgiveness, trust, acceptance, jealousy, anger, prejudice -- when identified and dealt with by a sensitive counselor in the living situation camp provides -- become real instead of simple classroom concepts. Hence, camp becomes a LIVING ENCOUNTER with the Gospel, helping the camper to grow from "I'm told my Redeemer lives", to "I know that my Redeemer lives - I've experienced Him".)
Camp then joins worship and church school in the Christian education process by providing a LIVING ENCOUNTER with the Gospel and its implications. The learning of a sport, an overnight hike, a canoe trip, -- these are means not ends. They become the vehicles or tools for LIVING ENCOUNTER, when used by staff to help the individual camper to grow as a person and as a child of God.

The camp must also recognize its responsibility to include Christian stewardship of the land in its programs. A sound environment is based on interdependence between plants and animals. A good steward maintains the estate of the Master. A Christian stewardship recognizes the dignity and value of all living things which are the creation of God. Human dominion over creation does not give the right to wantonly despoil, but gives the responsibility to live recognizing that all is a gift of God -- given in trust to be used and passed on to those who follow.

We dare not predetermine what the result of the camping experience must be. To pull youth out of their generation by insisting (subtly or directly) up their adopting the thinking and life style of their elders is denial of personal freedom and dignity.

Instead we must equip and free youth to interpret for their generation the implications of God's involvement with His creation. Perhaps their worship, their prayers, and their evangelism will take new and unfamiliar forms. But, if we have helped them to meet Christ, then however strange to our generation, their witness will be Christ working through them to save His beloved world. In being Christ to their generation in their own way, they are, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "The form of Christ taking form amidst a band of men".

revised 1/85
APPENDIX IV PROCESSING

The what and why of Processing: Essentially, processing is the act of bringing peoples' behavior to their attention through group discussion of some activity. The idea is that people are usually unaware of how their behavior affects a group's functioning. As an observer who knows how to ask questions, you can enlighten group members - helping them to grow as individuals and group members. Sounds easy enough.

You can process any event; making dinner on an overnight, a game of volleyball, or low ropes; any time you observe a dynamic you feel is significant.

The how of Processing: If you choose an activity there are important questions you and your "co" need to discuss. In other words, you should do low ropes because that's where your group is, not because it's Tuesday and Jr. High's always do low ropes on Tuesday.

1) What do we want to accomplish? What insight, learning, etc. do we want them to have?
2) Where are they in the 4 steps?
3) What activity(ies) will fulfill these goals? (Is this a new exercise for me, or am I relying on old standby's)
4) After the activity is completed what are one or two opening questions we can ask to encourage discussion of the activity - and hopefully realization of our goals.
5) What biblical input can I use to reinforce or illustrate the theme, or bring some religious understanding to light. What questions can I use in processing to illustrate these points?

The work of processing will be much easier if you plan ahead. Once you and your group do an activity - these are some things to watch for.

1) Who participated?
2) Who made decisions?
3) Who was listened to?
4) What was the atmosphere of the group?
5) Were feelings a concern?

While you are observing compare what you see to your goals - draw some conclusions - think about your lead questions.

When you sit down to process, keep these things in mind:

If it's the 1st processed activity of the week, explain what you are doing - getting them to think about their actions, etc. and also go over the rules of feedback. Even Jrs. and Middlers can understand it.

1) Time should be unlimited. Do not rush.
2) Ask open ended questions (those that require more than yes or no answers)
3) Don't be afraid of pregnant pauses. They need time to formulate answers and get up the courage to share them.
4) Don't let them off the hook, pursue difficult areas - this is how they grow.

(over)
5) Remember processing is tough and takes practice, but it's how campers learn.
APPENDIX V

Feedback! Feedback! Feedback! Feedback!

Say the word over and over and over. After a while it won't sound so stilted. Understand it. Get to know what it is and how to use it! It is a key ingredient in any successful community.

Feedback is:

1) The return to a point of origin of evaluative or corrective information about an action or process. (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary)

2) A means to avoid/alleviate conflict situations.

3) Based on the assumption that all members of a given group want to be the best they can be.

4) Can never be considered negative because it is always intended to help, either by enforcing or changing certain behaviors.

How to give feedback:

Let's use an example. Xaviara is a 3rd year counselor. She is creative, spontaneous, and feels confined by schedules. If her guest group is really involved in an activity she will not curtail it in order to meet swim lessons, clubs, meals, etc. Her 'co' is 2nd year counselor, Jay. He is a person who finds comfort in structure and feels that it is vital to be on time. They are working together 4th session and by Wednesday a conflict is brewing. How do X and J handle their feelings.

1) Information must deal with the here and now.

Wrong: J: For the past 2 years I've never seen you on time for anything.

Right: J: X, I'd like to talk about somethings I've noticed this week.

2) Feedback must deal with actions that can be changed.

Wrong: X: J, why do you have to be such a dud.

Right: X: J, when you interrupt activities it is disruptive to group process.

3) Feedback must be intended to help: to make every group member the best they can be.

Wrong: J: (who has just received a phone call from his girlfriend breaking off their 4 year relationship) X, grow up and be responsible for once.
Right:

J: X, as staff members we have responsibilities to support staff to be on time for their activities.

4) Ownership must be taken for feedback.

Wrong:

X: J, I've talked to your other 'co's' and we feel you need to loosen up.

Right:

X: J, I've noticed that you tend to cut activities short when we need to be somewhere. Instead, maybe one of us could run and tell whoever we'll be a little late.

It's as easy as that, and it gets even easier the more you use it.

Some extra little things to keep in mind:

1- Give feedback in the setting that is most comfortable for you and others involved. For some people that's in a group, for others its one-on-one. Find out.

2- If you receive feedback you're not entirely sure of, check it out with others that will give you a straight answer.

3- Ask for feedback
We chose the theme of "God Loves me Because I'm Different" because middle-aged children often feel uncomfortable with feelings and talents that go against prevailing social norms. They are often concerned with being like everyone else. The goal is not to negate their friends and peers, but to affirm their own talents and feelings and those of the people around them.

There is one theme to emphasize. What we found was three ways to emphasize this theme: Nature, Myself, and Others. If you can find other areas where the theme is applicable, feel free to use them. We recommend that you use all the areas daily, so that the unified theme is more thoroughly expressed, but be aware of where campers may need additional emphasis.

To use this program, decide first what aspects of the theme you want to use the next day. Then go through the program and pick exercises designed to address that aspect of the theme. After each activity in the Myself and Others section, you'll find a number from one to three. These numbers indicate at what level in the Four Steps of Group Process that particular activity will be most effective. There's also a section on Vespers and Morning Watch ideas, and a section on plain old fun games that you'll find helpful. Be creative in using the theme and enjoy it with your campers.

You may find that the activities listed under the categories of myself and others will lead to dynamics under either category. Do not limit yourself in processing. A new insight about yourself may lead to an understanding of others. Also, if a camper begins to accept the differences of others, and likes the idea, he may begin to enjoy his own differences. You may also lead into discussions about the environment.

Some of the activities will take preparation to perform effectively. There are many possible variations. Activities may need to be restructured to accommodate the environment or group. Again, remember that pre-planning will result in effectiveness. Know in what direction you're headed with each activity. What Biblical source will help your point?

**Myself**

Blind Walk (2)
Do things with one hand (2)
Bits and Pieces supplement (2, 3)
My Bag - Campers collect objects which are important to themselves throughout the week. At end of week share (3).
If I wore a color I would be ______ (1)
If I wore an animal I would be ______ (1)
Statues (1)
Charisma - Pick the trait that distinguishes you from others and then describe what you would be like without it (2).
Lifelines (2)
Rope Bridge (2)
I am (2)
Be yourself day - Camper can try on a role or style for the day; dress the part, etc. (2)
Yeah Buts (2)
Mobile with things about yourself (2)
Freak show - Show off your abnormalities, double joints, etc. (1)
Who am I? Each camper answers the question 10 different ways on paper.
Break into triads and share, then return to group and introduce one another (1). Variation: Who would I like to be? (2,3)

Time Capsules (3)
Bondage - Tie hands behind backs and try a task like eating.

Others

Weaving - Weave objects which belong to campers to make a wall hanging.
Make it easy to dismantle. Be creative and see how different the objects are. (2)
Little Chicks (2)
Four corners - one question with 4 possible responses (2)
Orange crate - One crate and everyone puts something in that represents self - makes group (2)
Make it Break it - group makes something (i.e. bowl) and then breaks it.
Each person gets a piece. Re-entry. (3)
Observation Game - each person picks random name at start of day and observes that person. At night write down traits of that person and group figures out who it is. (3)

Infirmity Hikes (2)
Trust walks, games, activities (2)
Nonverbally doing tasks (2)
Human knot (1)
Log roll (1)
5 Commandments - Each person writes 5 commandments that they feel are important for living and working together this week. (2)

Friday Love Letters (3)
Dyads (2)
Back rubs (2,3)
Simulation - the BOO Players - Supplement

Nature

This is a list of stuff appropriate to our theme. But, you must look through Kevin's packet, we didn't list that stuff, even though most of it is applicable.

Intro game: My Universe
Everyone makes a constellation mobile with adjectives describing themselves. Discuss. Hang all together to form sky.
When conflict arises, have group make clouds to cover stars that show 1) what camper feels is negative, 2) what camper feels he's not showing now, and 3) what the camper wants to develop. Clouds can be added and removed during the week.

Balance Mobile - Campers make a mobile using as many natural objects as possible. What happens when one is taken away? Discuss.
Animals - Paint your face like the animal closest to your personality. Then act like you think that animal would act. Who would be your friend/foe?
Sounds - Quiet for 5 minutes. Either draw what you hear (Kevin) or tell the group.
Orienteering
Beaver Hike
Terrariums
Creek Hikes
Stargazing
Site map usage - see differences at BOO
Def Leppard back up band - have kids make instruments in nature and pretend. Shadow profiles
Night hike
Rodent watch
Bug watch
Census takers - Kevin
Bark masks - Kevin
Explore BOO - forests, streams, lake, bog, pond, road, etc. Pretend you're an animal and find food, shelter, etc.
Adventure Hike - Hike through woods and rename things by their characteristics.
Conservation
Solitary reflections

Vespers & Morning Watches

There is a strong emphasis on the Biblical source in our theme of "God Loves Me Because I'm Different." The Christian aspects of this theme are the undercurrent for the week's activities, yet it is often Morning Watch and Vespers that set the mood for the day ahead, and offer reflections on the closing day. Keeping this in mind, it is important that counselors plan their group worship to specifically address a certain aspect of the theme for that day. We've divided this section of worship ideas into the three sections of Myself, Others, and Nature. Be sure to refer to "The Source" for additional verses.
The story of God calling Moses (Exodus 3:1-4:17) is an excellent illustration of the theme. Moses saw nothing special in himself and tried to avoid the mantle of leadership. Even though Moses himself did not believe he was different, God did, and put great trust in him. Emphasize that each child is precious to God, even if they don't feel special themselves.

The parable of the mustard seed (Matthew 13:31-32) can be helpful to this age group. Explain that the campers may be small, and compared to the adult world, their achievements may appear insignificant, but the tiniest seed can produce the largest tree, giving life to those around. Explain that though they may seem small, they can accomplish great things in the eyes of God.

Similar to this is a neat little pair of verses in first Timothy that deal with youth and modeling (I Timothy 4:11-12). Children feel that they must wait until they are older to make a difference, but emphasize that God sees the young as important. They don’t have to wait until they’re grown up or even confirmed to be active, vital Christians. Jesus calling the children (Luke 18:15-17) also emphasize the importance of children to Jesus.

Depending on the sophistication of the group, there’s a verse in second Timothy that could be interesting. It deals with Christians not being timid, but bold in their love (II Timothy 1:7). Ask your campers what they think power is. What does God think is the most powerful gift he’s given us? Hurricanes, tidal waves, nuclear weapons? Read the verse and discuss love and forgiveness as strengths. How powerful can love be? Does it take strength to forgive?

The emphasis in this section is on the child’s own worth in God’s eyes. Use passages here and in "The Source" to compare what God values in a person to what their friends value. Emphasize talents and uniqueness.

Others

The emphasis here is to help the campers accept their peers, friends, families, perhaps even humanity, as God’s children, each with his own unique gifts and talents. This may be difficult, at an age when children regard those not like them with either fear and loathing, or something close to adoration. It is an important balance with the Myself category, since we want the campers to be neither enslaved by their over-blown admiration of others, ultimately leading to self-flagellation and chronic alcoholism, nor to become megalomaniacs. The following verses could be of use in this rocky road to acceptance of others.

Man’s creation is a good place to start. Talk with the campers about what it means to be "made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26-27)." What does this mean? Emphasize the trust of leaving Creation in Man’s hands.

For your "Up with people" vespers, you might want to consider Psalm 8 or Psalm 139:1-13. The emphasis is on the greatness of God and His creation of man. One can’t help but think of the previous year’s theme of "God doesn’t make any junk." Emphasize the beauty, wonder, and responsibility of man with the campers.
The parable of the talents fits well into this theme (Matthew 25:14-30). Each person has different talents given by God, that are to be used to help others in God's name. Discuss the talents around the quest group. A good practical example is Jesus' Disciples. He chose rather ordinary men from various walks of life: fishermen, teachers, tax collectors. What looked like a hopeless collection of mismatched yokels, turned into a powerful vehicle for Christ's message. A good example of ordinary folks using God-given talents together to accomplish an almost impossible, but vital, task.

Children at this age tend to make scapegoats out of "weird" kids, often labelled as such because they don't like baseball, or for some other equally arbitrary reason. Read them the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10). Here Christ recognized and brought out the good in a hated man. In fact, the New Testament is full of stories of Christ caring for thieves, prostitutes, cripples, lepers — in short the filthy loathsome scourge of the society. Yet Jesus loved them. What did Jesus see in these people that others don't? What can we look for in folks we don't like?

Learnings in this category often go hand in hand with learnings in the previous category. Draw your kids through both together, since self-esteem often results in respect for others and vice-versa. Let the kids know that uniqueness and individuality are gifts. Especially get through their heads that we are all individually created and loved by God.

Nature

Nature covers a lot of ground, and is often difficult to twist into a central theme without some serious hammering out. This program in no exception. Briefly, there are a few things a counselor can do in a Morning Watch or Vespers to fit nature specifically into the theme of "God Loves Me Because I'm Different", but some other interesting sidelines develop.

The Creation story (Genesis 1), Psalm 8, and Psalm 139:1-18 deal with the variety of nature. Talk with campers about the differences in plants and animals. If too many deer come into an area, they eat out the food supply, and the area, as well as the deer, dies off. Tie this into the importance of God creating people different; if everything was the same, nothing would thrive.

Talk also about the variety in nature within creatures themselves. Many creatures start out life ugly or undesirable, only to develop into things of beauty. Through love and forgiveness given by God, we too can change the ugly things in us (hatred, jealousy, selfishness) to beautiful (love, acceptance, caring).

Nature also provides an immediate example of God's grace. Man has done nothing to earn the beauty around him, yet God has freely given His Creation to us. Nature is a gift of love from God, even though we may not deserve or appreciate it, just as His love and salvation are given. A good opportunity to talk about stewardship.

Talk about nature as praising God. The beauty of forests, grass, deserts, and mountains is a constant reminder of the power, love, and care of the creator. What starts as tiny seeds, caterpillars, larva, or egg, becomes beautiful and glorious, praising God with the beauty of their gifts. Other creatures less spectacular spend their lives as caretakers of the earth (bees pollinating, insects providing food, etc.). Maybe we can follow their example and praise God by caring for his delicate and beautiful gift for us.
Fun Games

The games in this section have been placed here because they did not fit under specific categories. As you know, any activity can be processed. Don't doubt that campers will find a way to relate any activity to the theme. Try the games and enjoy them. Don't limit yourself to this list. Remember the resource room and old programs.

Holding Clay: Divide groups into three. The first person is the model and assumes a distinct position. The second person is blindfolded and becomes the artist. The third person is also blindfolded and it is the clay. The artist must mold the clay into the same position the model is in.

Commando Tag: The person "it" runs around trying to tag folks, when "it" tags someone they are frozen. To get unfrozen another person has to crawl under the frozen folk's legs.

Color Twister: Played just like the game "Twister" except using colors on your body. Example: Right arm to red, and then people have to find someone wearing red and touch that part of their body with their arm.

Mouthful of Water: Can be played in pairs or in a group. Everyone gets a mouthful of water and tries to make the other person laugh. A great game on a hot day!

Bear Claws: The group has to try and get the highest they can on a tree and mark that spot with chalk (sort of like the donut game at low rope).

Cats: Everyone sits in a circle and one person starts by saying "meow-Tim," for example, and then Tim would say "meow-____" saying the person's name next to him. If you want to change the direction of the game you say, "ruff-____" or bark like a dog, and the game continues.

Pass the Mask: With everyone sitting in a circle, one player turns to the next, looks right into his or her eyes, and makes a funny face. The second player passes on the face to the third, and so on around the circle. At the same time, the first player has turned to the person on the other side and made a different face, which is passed around in the other direction. Continue until both "masks" have reached the first player again, or until laughter has stopped the game.

The Wind is a Blowing: Everyone sits in a circle leaving one chair out. Then the person who doesn't have a chair stands in the center and says, "The wind is a blowing for anyone with blue on." Everyone with blue on then has to get up and find another chair and the person without a chair says, "The wind is a blowing for everyone ...." and the game continues.

Singing Syllables: one player leaves the room, and the rest of the group decides on a word to sing. If the word is "cucumber" for example, some players will sing "Ou-Ou-Ou," some will sing "Oum-Oum-Oum" and the rest will sing "ber-ber-ber" all at the same time. Now the player who left the room returns and tries to figure out what the word is. Everyone gets a turn to be guesser, with a new word sung each time.
Drop It: Have several players line up next to one another, facing forward with their hands palm up in back of them. Another player walks in back of them and drops a marble into one of the players hands. This player then jumps forward and tries to run to a specified area without being touched by the others in line. Then another player is chosen to drop the marble and the game continues.

Lemonade: divide into 2 teams. Team A picks a profession they're going to mimic. They stand facing Team B. "A" says, "Here we come" "B" says, "Where from?" "A" replies a place (i.e. California). "B" says, "What's your trade?" "A" says, "Lemonade", "B" replies, "How we come if you're not afraid" "A" mimicks the profession and "B" tries to guess what it is. While they're saying this the teams move closer to each other. By the end they should be touching noses. "A" runs to a designated safe place after "B" guesses the profession. If anyone is caught they are now a part of "B".

Sardines: a tricky little hiding game. One person is chosen to be "it", she hides (preferably in a small spot) The rest of the group then splits up and tries to find "it". When "it" is found by a seeker, the seeker then hides with "it". Game goes on until everyone finds "it". First person to find "it" hides in the round.

Quick Shuffle: Split the group in half and have one person from each group stand in front. The rest line up and face the person in front. That person then has to memorize the order in which everyone is standing and turn around. Then everyone in line quickly moves into a different spot and when the person in front turns around, she has to remember what order they were in at first.
RULES (Counselors, explain why!!)

1) No sex, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
2) No bare feet.
3) No radios or electronic games.
4) No candles or open flames in the tents.
5) No candy in sleeping bags lest you have friends.
6) Never leave the group unless you tell the counselor where you're going.
7) Only use knives with counselor permission, and never use them on anything alive.
8) Lights out at 9:30. Lights out means lights are out and quiet.
9) Respect others' property.
10) No throwing stones.
11) Stay out of the courtyard.
12) Don't ring the bell.
13) If lost, stay where you are and call out at regular intervals. If no response after a while, follow a road or a stream downstream and call camp from the village.
14) Keep your stuff out of the bathroom.
15) During staff meeting, stay in the Upper A field, basketball or tetherball court. Don't go to the tents, find your counselors after staff meeting.
16) Give the counselors all your drugs, and he will give them to nurse. Always tell your counselor when you're sick or hurt or want to see the nurse.
17) Middlers 1&2 use Jr. 1&2 bathrooms and clean them (after checking with Jr. 1&2 counselors). Middlers 3-6 set up a schedule for your bathrooms (the toities off of A&C).
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**Breakfast**

- Morning Watch
- Germ Check
- Quest Group Time
- Q.G.T.

**Lunch Time**

- Change & Get Ready
- General Swim
- General Swimming
- Q.G.T.

**Dinner**

- Staff Mtng.
- All Camp Activity
- Camp Group Time
- All Unit Dance

**Bedtime**

- Feelings' Mtng.
- Good Night
- MSS Have Fun!
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