

Camp is for Girls: The Role of Single-Gender Summer Camps in Connecting Children to Nature

Constance Scharff¹

Children are increasingly spending more time indoors. The result is less contact with and understanding of the natural world. While older adults once played outside as youth, children's lives are now consumed with television, video games, and virtual interactions. "Texting" has replaced stickball in most communities. This article notes the alarming trend toward the creation of a generation of hothouse flowers and some of the associated problems seen in today's youth including mental and physical illness. Eco-feminist ideals of interrelation and radical non-duality, when applied to outdoor education, offer a means of reconnecting youth to the natural world. Single gender residential camps are the main focus of this work, though the ideas are generalizable to other outdoor education and recreation settings. The names of all students in this article have been changed to protect their identities. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2008 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

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Separated from the Natural World

I loved being outside when I was a kid. I spent hours in the trees in our small orchard, frolicked with my horse through the forests, and explored the stream that led to the swimming hole. My parents thought nothing of my being gone for hours, picking grapes in the back field, or tracking

¹ **Constance Scharff** is a Ph.D. student in Transformative Studies at the California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, California. Her research interests include leadership, service learning, and spirituality in healing. Address correspondence to: Constance Scharff, 1136 Marilyn Dr., Beverly Hills, California 90210; tel. 310-271-2225 e-mail: cscharff@sbcglobal.net.