

**'DOING' IDENTITY: CULTURAL IDENTITY EXCHANGE AND PRESERVATION  
AMONGST INTERNATIONAL COUNSELORS AT AN AMERICAN SUMMER CAMP**

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**By**

**Caila Criss**

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On my honor,  
I have neither given nor received  
unauthorized aid on this thesis.

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Caila R. Criss  
May 2014

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## **Abstract**

This paper explores the experience of international camp counselors at an American summer camp in the North East United States. It set out to understand the impact the summer camp environment might have on an individual's cultural identity. Personal interviews were conducted with ten current or former adult camp counselors from six countries outside of the United States. The research question was framed in the theories of intersubjectivity, habitus and acculturation strategy as well as the relevant body of empirical research. The research found that the culturally intense experience of camp led to an individual's cultural identity to be the product of active and strategic micro-adjustments and adaptations—in short, 'doing' identity.

## Table of Contents

	Page
<b>Introduction</b> -----	1
<b>Review of the Literature</b>	
<i>Theoretical Framework</i>	
Intersubjectivity-----	2
Habitus and the Self-----	4
Acculturation Theory-----	5
Strategies of Acculturation Theory (Figure 1)-----	6
<i>Empirical Framework</i> -----	7
<b>Methodology</b> -----	9
<b>Discussion of Findings</b> -----	11
<i>Defining Cultural Identity</i> -----	12
<i>The Active Cultural Meeting Ground</i> -----	13
<i>The Active Cultural Educators</i> -----	20
<i>The Enduring Nature of Camp Culture</i> -----	27
<b>Conclusion</b> -----	33
<b>References</b> -----	37
<b>Appendix A: Interview Participant Chart</b> -----	41
<b>Appendix B: Interview Schedule</b> -----	42

## Introduction

*It's everything from your surroundings, what you're doing, your food, the language, the opportunity, the weather. It's just the whole experience isn't it? That's what I think of when you say culture. I think of more the experience and like everythin' around. It's like chalk and cheese. But then in the same way, things are very similar.*

As a Scottish individual discussing the differences between her home culture and the culture of Camp Wynn, an American summer camp, Elizabeth touches on a fundamental statement concerning the nature of culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century—it is everything around. Culture exists, for everyone, in every daily action, interaction and reaction. Elizabeth's assessment, that Scottish and American culture are like "chalk and cheese," yet also have distinct similarities, colloquially captures the fact that culture has become a ubiquitous entity that exists as a byproduct of the fluidity of the globalized world. Since the rise of globalization and the New Economy in the 1970's there has been a distinct and noticeable blurring of the lines delineating cultural and ethnic boundaries (Pieterse, 2012). In today's world, in which business, tourism, and academia are largely global endeavors, individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds come in contact with one another on a daily basis and children are increasingly born with a variety of cultural frameworks in which to develop and behave. This increased prevalence in the multiplicity of cultural identifications raises the question of how those existing outside of strictly delineated cultural heritages negotiate their own cultural identities—identities that are clearly defined on an individual level but are nevertheless comprised of several different cultural inputs. This paper attempts to understand this phenomenon in the temporally brief but culturally intense environment of American summer camp. Through bridging the frameworks of intersubjectivity, habitus, and acculturation theory, I will argue that

the case of an individual entering such an environment will prompt an active and conscious series of micro-interactions as a means of managing and balancing alterations to their personal cultural identities—a concept I term ‘doing’ identity.

## **Literature Review**

In examining the ways in which international counselors preserve and reproduce or acclimate and alter their individual cultural identities through the experience of serving as counselors in an American summer camp, this study aligns itself closely with the central themes of much of the relevant literature. The following literature review places Goffman’s theory of intersubjectivity, Bourdieu’s work on habitus preservation and Berry’s acculturation theory as the underlying framework to a modern understanding of the experience of international camp counselors at American summer camps. Although a seemingly specialized circumstance to examine, the relationships that occur during the temporally brief time span of residential camp speaks volumes about the intensity of cultural interface, the work done on the individual level to foster a trans-cultural identity and the significance of the camp-initiated identity transformation.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

#### *Intersubjectivity:*

Erving Goffman’s 1959 publication, *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, heralded an important shift in the Western world’s conception of the individual being. Along with George Cooley, Goffman delved into what Scheff labels “the shame triad”—embarrassment, shame, and humiliation (Scheff, 2006). Beyond being largely taboo subjects in the Western world, these emotions place the previously autonomous, self-

contained individual in the spotlight of society and societal forces. While these emotions denote negativity and discomfort in today's Western lexicon, they serve as interesting lenses through which to examine the way in which an individual human being understands, constructs, adapts, and negotiates his or her actions within the social world. Scheff clarifies Goffman by explaining that, 'Every actor is extraordinarily sensitive to the amount of deference being received by others' (2006). Suddenly, the individual's actions are determined not by the structural framework of society at-large (the structural functionalist view) but by the internalized potential response of others—placing him or her on a metaphorical performance stage.

Goffman's conception of symbolic interactionism can be expanded to include the creation of a trans-cultural identity in the age of globalization. A central tenant of his theory is the idea of intersubjectivity, resulting from which "the shared experiences among people engaged in collaborative interaction: their history, values, thoughts, emotions, and interpretations of their world. Intersubjectivity is the psychological commonality that provides meaning in their lives" (O'Donnell & Tharp, 2011). When seen through the lens of cultural identity, it becomes clear that intersubjectivity lays the essential groundwork for the successes of globalization. As previously compartmentalized cultures come in contact, those individuals create and operate within a middle ground in which they live in each other's minds (Scheff, 2006) and use their shared experiences as a re-imagined culture-of-sorts. As per Goffman's theoretical framework, individual actors, such as the counselors in this study, enter this "cultural middle ground" and behave in a way that is both cognizant of and informed by the actions and responses of others. When 'the individual' and 'the



others' are members of differing cultures, the resulting action may be a reimagining or hybridization of aspects of each respective culture.

*Habitus and the Self:*

In 1977, Pierre Bourdieu, offered a groundbreaking model of "the self." While he actively disagreed with the bourgeoisie conception of the self as an agentic actor, he re-imagined individual action as a 'habit,' determined by positionality and "structuring structures" (Skeggs, 2004) This notion of habitus is further explained by Skeggs:

[I]ndividuals are always placed in situations in which they will be uncertain of the outcomes, thereby they have to draw on strategies to operate in particular situations; these strategies are objectively coordinated within the individual's consciousness, enabling the analogical transfer of schemes permitting the solution of similarly shaped problems (2004).

Significant in this definition is Skeggs' assertion that habitus operates entirely beyond conscious reflection. As it is not a mindful act, an individual's habitus is purely determined by the objective experience of the social environment during early childhood development. The individual then internalizes that felt sensory input, and produces a subconscious schema of action and behavior. This habitus becomes a manifestation of social reproduction and an individual's positionality within a larger social framework (Fowler, 1997). Bourdieu's understanding of habitus is closely intertwined with Lamont's notion of boundaries. Lamont and Fournier write, " Structural by definition, boundary distinctions are at first maintained by conceptual means: words and categories, such as male/female, white/black, are never innocent; rather, they convey often malleable connotations. They also prescribe attitudes and govern

behaviors (1992). Ultimately habitus is a result of the imposed and structured social boundaries that dictate social norms and interaction

It is then that globalization places the universality of habitus directly on its head. When one individual with a specific habitus and cultural framework encounters another individual with an entirely different habitus and cultural framework, the resulting cultural dissonance causes each individual to reevaluate their own world schema. It is significant to note that in turning habitus on its head, globalization actually feeds directly into the self-adapting nature of a person's habitus. Rather than representing a fixed perception of the world, habitus is an "explicit model of accumulation" and "impacts upon the structures that shape it, with the potential to change the formation of the field from whence it came" (Skeggs, 2004). Thus an individual's habitus is both shaped by and shapes the structures of the social environment. As a reflexive entity, Bourdieu's habitus serves as a valid model of the impact cultural hybridization has on the micro-, or individual level.

### *Acculturation Theory*

Scholars in the field of cultural studies have long theorized on the resulting effect of two distinct, previously separate cultures, coming into geographical contact. These theories have been traditionally informed by macro-level events like Christopher Columbus' interaction with the Taino Indians (Bohannon, 1995) or the mass-immigration of Hispanic individuals to the United States (Lichter, 2012). While these events certainly inform and legitimize the studies of cultural interface and exchanges, they don't encompass the micro-level cultural interactions that are taking place more and more frequently in today's globalized world. As Jensen posits, "The

flow across cultures of ideas, goods, and people is not new, but the current extent and speed of globalization are unprecedented” (2003). As a consequence of increasing access to technology, the global economy, widespread tourism and rampant migration, today’s global population is the most culturally diverse, aware, and knowledgeable it has ever been (Lim and Renshaw, 2001). And so, while the interactions that occur via social networking, at tourist attractions or at international job placement sites are decidedly less monumental than Columbus’ first encounter with the Tainos, they comprise significant evidence as to the possibility of a 21<sup>st</sup> century individual’s ‘trans-cultural identity.’

First proposed in 1980, J.W. Berry’s prominent acculturation theory provided a concise, diagrammatical depiction of the active process of managing cross-cultural contact. J.W. Berry, operating through the lens of cross-cultural psychology, proposed the four-pronged model of acculturation strategies. These strategies—integration, separation, assimilation, and marginalization—breakdown the various means by which an individual behaviorally navigates his or her place as a minority within a larger, culturally different majority (Berry et al, 1992). The four resulting strategies are contingent upon two distinct attitudes toward the interaction and interface with the differing culture, as Figure 1 depicts:

		<b>Attitude Toward Keeping Heritage Culture and Identity</b>	
		<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<b>Attitude Toward Learning and Interacting With New Culture</b>	<b>Positive</b>	Integration	Assimilation
	<b>Negative</b>	Separation	Marginalization

Figure 1. The four strategies of acculturation theory. (From Organista, Marin, Chun, 2010, p. 111)

This research study does not negate the validity of Berry's claims but presents a case in a light of the environment of a modern American summer camp. Several scholars, operating in the fields of sociology, have explored and critiqued Berry's model under the lens of the technological and trans-cultural advances of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006). Yet this study combines the complexity and intricacy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the culturally concentrated and temporally brief nature of the American summer camp setting. The confluence of these variables causes this specific circumstance to be easily generalizable to populations traveling to America for temporary work, study, or other brief foreign exchanges.

### ***Empirical Framework***

While the literature surrounding a theoretical understanding of cross-cultural interaction and individual identity work is abundant, there is little presence of camp-specific empirical research examining the intersection between individuals from two distinct cultures. Somewhat related is Dennis Waskul's study, outlining the "construction, maintenance, and dissolution of identity roles" amongst American counselors while at an American summer camp (1998). Although this study presented a perspective that took into account identity formation during the very short time span of a traditional summer camp, it did not explore the experience of international counselors—a fairly common occurrence at American summer camps. Similarly, Kang investigates the construction of identity through discourse amongst Korean-American camp counselors (2004). Yet Kang does not examine the case of the intersection of two distinctly different cultural frameworks and the ensuing felt (rather than verbal) effect on cultural identity. Further, this paper fills a clear gap in the available research by not only grounding the discussion in the theories of

Goffman and Bourdieu but also presenting the term 'habitus-work' to describe the active process of managing one's habitus in a unfamiliar environment.

This is all not to say that there is not an ample amount of research related to the impact on identity of other circumstances in which cross-cultural interaction occurs. Scholars of cross-cultural studies, race and ethnic studies, and the sociology of culture have extensively delved into the realms of immigration and migration to understand the experiences of those individuals that are transplanted from one culture to the next. Acculturation theory proved to be an accessible go-to for scholars from a variety of fields attempting to explain the explicit phenomenology of an individual identifying with a minority culture entering a majority culture. Berry's theory has laid the foundation for empirical studies exploring ESL programs (Hagan, 2004), immigrant identity (Orr, Mana & Mana, 2003), and ethnic group-specific mental health (MacLachlan et al, 2004; Kalek, Mak & Khawaja, 2010; and Yoon et al, 2012). From a broader cross-cultural studies perspective, Williams, Alvarez, & Hauck studied the case of young Latina immigrants and their experience in a U.S. Mid-Western high school. In examining gender identity as a contingent factor of assimilation, they found a pervasive trend toward actively invoking Latina identity to reject the American gender order (2002). Similarly, Schwartz et al. studied measures of personal identity processes and cultural heritage from 2,411 immigrant college students in America to discuss the convergence between personal and cultural identity (2013). The case of this paper builds upon the extensive breadth of published data and theory concerning cross-cultural interaction and the ensuing effect on an individual's identity by offering a perspective that is founded in the theories of

symbolic interaction, structuration and cross-cultural psychology and explores the extremely specific environment of an American summer camp.

## **Methodology**

### *Sample:*

The participant sample was drawn from the larger population of international counselors who work or have worked at Camp Wynn, a private all-girls sports and activities residential summer camp in the North East United States. I had previously been employed by Camp Wynn for two summers, and consequently knew all participants prior to the start of the study. This allowed for a positive existing rapport with the interviewed counselors. It should be noted however that these relationships could have resulted in some level of researcher bias in which our relationship influenced the honesty of their responses. All 10 participants were over the age of 18 and held citizenship to countries outside of the United States. Three counselors were from Scotland, two were from Zimbabwe, two were from South Africa, one was from Brazil, one was from New Zealand, and one was from Ireland. Of the ten participants, nine were female and one was male—a ratio that, while unbalanced, accurately reflected the gender makeup of the counselors at the single-gender camp. Participants were contacted on the basis of previously being my co-worker, yet agreement to participate was entirely voluntary.

### *Method:*

Amongst the variety of qualitative research methods, I selected personal interviews because it was the most effective medium for drawing out non-structured, free form perspectives on a series of topics. These interviews were conducted via Skype due to the largely international scope of the participants. If wireless internet

allowed, the interviews involved visual communication yet there were times when only audio communication was available. These sessions lasted approximately 30 minutes and occurred at a time convenient for the participant, factoring in a probable time change. All communication was digitally recorded and stored for later analysis.

*Assessment:*

Participants were asked 20 questions, increasing in abstraction and necessity of self-reflection. The first few questions served to locate them in terms of country of origin and the reasoning behind their employment at Camp Wynn. The participants were then asked questions concerning their home cultures and the aspects of those cultures that they held closest or identified with most. A large portion of the interview then investigated the intersection of the abovementioned cultural values and practices with camp life. These questions served to better understand which aspects (if any) the counselors chose to bring with them and then publicize at camp. They also examined the ways in which the counselors navigated the probing curiosities of the young, largely culturally misinformed campers. The interview then shifted toward exploring the various preconceived notions of the counselors toward American summer camp prior to their arrival. These answers were then compared and contrasted with their retroactive conceptions of camp, once they had finished a summer and could comment on their experience. The interview concluded with questions examining interactions with other international counselors as well as the direct and enduring interface between each individual's respective cultural framework and the summer camp, and often concurrently American, culture. A series of six demographic questions, determining age, gender, city of residence, marital

status, last level of school attended, and whether the individual had children of their own marked the end point of the interview.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The following guiding themes serve to elucidate the ways in which international counselors navigate and understand their cultural identity as an entity within the United States camp world—specifically the ways in which they create cultural meaning and value within the Third Space of camp, the ways in which they become active cultural educators for the American campers, and the ultimately enduring effects of camp culture.

In synthesizing the qualitative data from this study with relevant sociological theories, it became apparent that there were several common themes that transcended the microcosmic interactions at Camp Wynn and rather explored the larger ways in which individuals navigated the commonalities and differences between and across cultures. The confluence of various native cultures with American culture created the active “Third Space” of camp that mediated cultural differences and allowed for the creation, celebration, and perpetuation of a specific set of similarities. Conversely, this paper explores the ways in which international counselors navigate the dichotomy between a perception of American culture as individualistic and their role as cultural educators for otherwise uninformed campers. The balancing act between finding a cultural common ground and the contradictions between those found commonalities and the felt cultural vanity of the United States, creates a series of enduring cultural exchanges and adaptations.



### *Defining Cultural Identity:*

A person's cultural identity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century goes beyond the simple identifiers attached to a culture or ethnicity. Rather it comprises the act of adopting a worldview—comprising an understanding of who one is and how one relates to the suffering of others—and in turn, engaging in community unifying behaviors and practices (Jensen, 2003). Tajfel's 1978 Social Identity Theory posits that people "strive for positively valued social identity by comparing themselves to members of others groups and that they attempt to categorize and differentiate themselves from these others in a positive direction" (Berry et al., 1992). This theory parallels closely the configuration of the world previous to the rise of globalization in the 1970's, a period marked by a rise in global value changes and an increased level of transnational communication and foreign direct investment (Pieterse, 2012). Prior to this time, many countries and their citizens existed entirely economically and culturally within their own geographic boundaries.

This project revises that conventional notion to reflect the modern cultural identity of individuals in an increasingly globalized world in which boundaries between previously disparate cultures or ethnicities have become largely ambiguous. The pervasive and global trend toward a reliance on technological and media-driven communication and information has redefined what it means to be a member of a specific culture. Suddenly the individual identity is an active and fluid entity, one that can constantly change and adapt to the various inputs and variable of an environment:

The reflexivity of modern social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices, thus constitutively altering their character...only in the era of modernity is the revision of

convention radicalized to apply (in principles) to all aspects of human life....The self today is for everyone a reflexive project—a more or less continuous interrogation of past, present, and future (Adams, 2003 citing Giddens, 1990, 1992)

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an individual's cultural identity is informed, not by a defined inheritance of ethnic or cultural traits, but by an "ongoing sense of self" (Mathews, 2000) that is framed by a multiplicity of cultural experiences. The modern cultural identity includes unprecedented levels of reflexivity and intersubjectivity—or as Cooley and Goffman identify as "living in the minds of others" (Scheff, 2006).

*The Active Cultural Meeting Ground:*

By redefining the boundaries between individuals in the camp setting, Camp Wynn serves as a 'third culture' for many international counselors. The usage of this term 'third culture' refers to the bounded symbolic domain of the camp world—described as entirely different from both a counselor's home culture as well as the experienced or believed nature of the larger American culture. For many of the interviewed participants, Camp Wynn marked an experience entirely divergent from their home countries—a dynamic that may be expected. However, there was also an unanticipated yet overwhelming discussion of camp as being far from representative of the greater American culture. This disparity points to a distinct and collective ideology amongst international counselors of camp as a Third Space—decidedly different from their home countries yet with a felt dissimilarity to the rest of the United States.

The first day of camp for a counselor (either international or domestic) marks a significant entrance into 10 weeks of a daily life that is markedly different from that which they are used to. Many of the international counselors interviewed described

their interpretation of the camp world as being “a bubble” and far from “real life,” even going so far as to label it as “slightly cultish,” descriptively separating it from daily and mainstream U.S. life on the whole. Among the ten respondents, four of them directly referenced the well-known romantic comedy, *The Parent Trap*, as being the framework for their preconceptions of camp life. Interestingly even after a summer at camp, several interviewees mentioned that the plot line and setting of the movie still described life at Camp Wynn accurately. This speaks directly to the fantastical nature of the camp ‘Third Space’—largely contrary to the counselors’ own understandings of American culture. Half of the counselors interviewed had attended at least a semester of American college prior to their first summer working at camp. Forty percent of interviewees had spent vacations in various large American cities prior to their arrival at camp. Only one counselor reported that her first summer at camp was also her first time in the United States yet she did travel around New England and Washington D.C. following her summers at camp. An overwhelming majority of the counselors interviewed had a previous framework of the broader culture in America with which to compare to Camp Wynn. Thus, as individuals with well-informed, educated opinions, the counselors’ depiction of camp as existing as an entity noticeably distinct from both their respective home cultures as well as their understanding of American culture, marks Camp Wynn as a plausible cultural Third Space.

Taking into account the externally felt exclusivity at Camp Wynn, it is significant to note the structures put into place, by the camp, that further perpetuates that seclusion. Many interviewed counselors reported that the camp culture comprises a series of exclusive induction rituals and events and that only those who

are employed by Camp Wynn or attend as a camper understand specifically what each occasion involves and represents. The awareness and knowledge of these events transcends the barriers between individuals—creating a sense of commonality and unity. When asked whether there was ever any discussion amongst first-year international counselors concerning the shared experiences that they could all identify as being foreign and new, Charlotte, a Scottish equestrian counselor, explained:

You know when you're a first timer at camp, every day is a new day and you don't have a clue what theme days are, you don't know what Breakout, Fakeout, and Color War is. You learn as you go along, so the kids know more than you do. So at Fakeout you just look at your co-counselors and you're just—massive smile—like what is going on here? But this is hilarious, this is amazing. Your first summer is just like that, you bumble through it, not having a clue what anything is until the end of the day, when it's just happened. And you're like 'Ok so that was Track Meet.'

In Charlotte's explanation she mentions Fakeout and Breakout—days that occur every summer that involve all members of the camp community and kick off the Color War between girls on the Blue Team and girls on the White team. Intense team spirit, vocal cheering, and color-specific costumery characterize this friendly, summer-long sporting competition. It is traditionally understood that a new counselor never really grasps the scope and intensity of these concepts until he or she experiences them for themselves—at which point they have acquired a collective understanding that the next wave of new counselors will have to learn through the same active process. The inability to clearly articulate the experiences that occur at camp to an “outsider,” parallels closely the intensely personal and often inexplicable nuances of an individual's cultural background. Relevant social science research establishes that cultural competency is contingent upon explicit and experiential understanding

combined with tacit knowledge on the part of an individual foreign to that culture (Phillips et al., 2011). Correspondingly, while those within the camp in-group might not be able to articulate their experience to outsiders, they are fluidly and easily able to come together and engage in a discussion of these ritualistic occasions. The Third Space of camp culture offers a temporally brief but nonetheless significant addendum to their native cultural identities—now the counselor from Zimbabwe, the counselor from Scotland, and the counselor from Brazil can identify themselves as being members of the unifying camp world and are cognizant of the traditions, expectations, roles, and values of that world.

Further evidence that Camp Wynn—as an entity counselors perceive to be relatively removed and incongruent with the cultural values of the larger United States—serves as a location in which international counselors discover and create commonalities, is the all-encompassing familial atmosphere within the camp community. Many of the counselors in this study, described how their personal cultural identity revolved around the strength and cohesion of their families, specifically the mutual and collective care and concern exhibited within the family unit. Their personal familial structures as well as the high valuation of family within their respective cultures influenced their conceptions of respect and deference, child discipline, and moral boundaries. These attributes greatly influenced each individual's self-perception and self-presentation, and accordingly, the majority of counselors reported family as a central pillar of their personal cultural identities. Counselors also used this family metaphor when talking about the experience of camp. Many of the interviewees described camp, their co-counselors, and the campers as being part of a collective family, in which care and concern for one

another were top priorities. When asked, Asya, a tennis counselor from Zimbabwe, commented, “Camp is kinda like family, as much as you don’t know each other when you start, within a few days, you feel like you’re old family. And you all look out for each other and take care of each other, no matter where you’re from. I think that’s a big thing, that both places [Zimbabwe and Camp Wynn] have in common.” Significant to her statement is the collective ideology that cultural or ethnic background bears no weight on whether one will be cared for or welcomed into the camp family. This belief was especially prevalent in interviews with those counselors from Zimbabwe and South Africa—interestingly the counselors that most ardently identified their home cultures as being collectivistic. They almost unanimously discussed the necessity amongst co-counselors within the same bunk to act as a family (in a role-taking sense) and abide by the familial values that they mentioned as being significant to them and to their culture. This behavior was understood as important and valuable despite the fact that none of their bunks were comprised of counselors that originated from the same country or collectively identified with the same cultural values.

Though many counselors, when asked, will identify Camp Wynn as a “holiday” or a “free place where you have no worries,” it is ultimately a place of employment for these individuals. As the strong and ubiquitous familial environment at Camp Wynn differentiates it from typical employment environments, it is important to examine the conditions and structures in place that allow for such a dynamic. As mentioned, many of the international counselors began their time at camp with a predetermined conviction in the power of family. They brought with them, as a component of their cultural habitus, the tacit disposition toward the notion of family that highlights the

values they correlate with family, namely, respect, morality, and discipline. In turn, counselors approached camp, an entirely new environment, with a strong and unquestioned inclination toward creating and maintaining a relatable sense of familial cohesion. Similarly they actively worked to hold others to the same standards they might hold their family members in their countries of origin. Ana, from Brazil, discussing her process for taking care of the younger girls who were homesick, drew on the trope of family to explain her approach:

So since I'm really close with my family, I understood always that the kids (the young campers) were crying. And I was never trying to [m]ake them, not to think about home. But think of something else you know, think about a vacation that they will do together. And I would also think about me, you know, something that I wish I could do, if I was going home after the summer

Here, Ana describes her ability to understand and properly care for the youngest campers as a reflection of her own feelings toward missing home. She mentions that she has never told them to stop crying—as she is able to empathize with the emotions they are feeling—but rather encourages them to look forward to a vacation or other exciting event that they will enjoy with their family after camp. Homesickness, the root of this micro-exchange, is fairly common amongst young campers. Ana is successful in combating this problem due, in part, to her application of the Brazilian valuation of family as a means of providing a schema for interpreting events while at camp. In placing herself in the mind of the child—an expression of Goffman's notion of intersubjectivity—she makes the importance of family the focal point of the problem she is attempting to solve. It is significant to point out that this child's family is probably no more than a 5-hour drive away from camp while Ana's family is in Brazil. This massive discrepancy in true separation from the family unit speaks to the overwhelming strength of the commonalities that are found. While it could be argued

that Ana has a far greater reason to exhibit homesickness, she was able to place significant weight in the generalized and fundamentality basic need for familial connection—effectively including and validating the emotions of her campers while creating a sense of commonality, unity, and comfort.

From an external perspective, the structures in place at Camp Wynn persistently and comprehensively allow for the perpetuation of familial bonds and cohesion amongst co-counselors and campers. Of course, in its role as a children’s summer camp, Camp Wynn has reason to encourage an environment that is marked by solidarity, cohesion and unity. However Camp Wynn is also an employer. An examination of Camp Wynn in relation to its attributes as a workplace helps expand our understanding of solidarity-building in the camp environment. The owners and managers at Camp Wynn orchestrate a 10-day long orientation program for all counselors prior to the day the campers arrive. During that time counselors learn basics of childcare, childhood development and the rules and regulations of camp. Beyond this however, there is a considerable amount of time dedicated to activities, ice breakers, and small group projects in order to bring together counselors, who may not know each other, and encourage the discovery of commonalities, shared strengths or interests, and collaboration. These activities parallel the team building activities of many larger corporations whose employee retreats or training programs focus largely on fostering a sense of trust and mutual conviction in a shared mission or goal—a common form of labor control. As Gideon Kunda elaborates, “The development of forms of control is a dynamic process. In its most recent form, bureaucratic control, the impersonal rule of company law and policy is coupled with a growing tendency to enforce not only obedience to the rules but also an



internalization of the rules and an identification with the company” (Kunda, 2006). In this light, these company retreats and training programs ultimately serve to not only lay out the expectations and rules of the job but to also realign and encourage internalization of a structured company-made identity.

The orientation period at Camp Wynn places specific focus on breaking down barriers and nurturing a familial sense amongst counselors from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. As counselors begin at camp they bring with them a series of identifications, informed by their respective past experiences and the environment they were raised in. In applying the insights on labor control to the case of Camp Wynn, the camp’s orientation program could be framed as a work governance attempt to comprehensively realign these previously largely splintered and disparate subjectivities into a camp-orchestrated nexus of control. It is significant to note that the managerial staff at camp, responsible for creating this atmosphere, is not encouraging individuals to lose touch with their personal cultural identity, but rather to feel comfortable supplementing an established identity with characteristics gleaned from the camp culture. A counselor from Brazil suddenly can feel welcome to identify as Brazilian but also as a tennis counselor, a Juniper bunk counselor and a Color War Leader—all identities that comprise the makeup of the camp culture and family. With this in mind, those in leadership positions at Camp Wynn comprehensively and consistently begin the camp season ensuring that all counselors, regardless of their cultural background, can collectively relate and identify with the camp dogmas of care, concern, respect, and kindness—all core values in a cross-cultural understanding of the familial structure.

*The Active Cultural Educators:*

Just as international counselors actively locate and foster similarities between their home culture and camp culture, so to do they navigate and manage a series of specific cultural differences. As previously stated, half of the interviewed counselors had attended at least a semester at an American college while four of the ten had extensively traveled throughout the East Coast of America prior to their first summer. Only one interviewee had not spent any time in America prior to her first summer, although she did spend time traveling within the country in the months following her summers at camp. With this framework, many of the participants differentiated their culture from American culture by discussing an enduring theme of American individualism and ethnocentrism. While counselors' depiction of U.S. individualism and ethnocentrism varied, it held in common a less than positive valuation of these traits. Selena, speaking about American culture, made this observation about individualism, "I would say American culture is—revolves so much around individual advancement...I guess it's a culture that really values individuality, not necessarily in a selfish way all the time." Similarly, Kate emphasizes her perception of American ethnocentricity, "[I]t still amazes me, just kinda on the whole how ignorant the country can be at times...And it's so easy to kind of not think outside your own country....International news in the U.S. is, you're from Colorado and it's what's happening in New York. Whereas for us, international news is what's happening in the rest of the world." Although the sentiments varied almost all of the participants mentioned that Americans, in general, exuded an air of confidence, not only in themselves and their actions, but also in the power and legitimacy of their country and culture. This nationalistic pride was interpreted as narcissism and ethnocentrism by many international counselors and played a large role in determining their actions

while at camp. Because the primary goal of the camp is to care for children, it was within these interactions that the assertions of individualism on the part of the counselors were most prevalent. This paper analyzes this phenomenon using the term ‘cultural vanity’—to describe the unique confluence of individualism and ethnocentricity, presented as a cultural self-pre-occupation marked by a presumption of cultural superiority. This can be seen in the widespread lack of knowledge concerning geographical location or cultural norms of countries outside of the US.

Maggie, a ropes counselor from New Zealand commented:

Yeah I think just for me it stood out how much people didn't necessarily know about New Zealand...I remember a few times when the campers would ask me kind of crazy things. And they couldn't comprehend that the stars we saw at home were different to the stars that they saw at night, like Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere. They didn't understand that it was winter at home when it was summer there. And I showed them photos of snow and they were like, 'What?' So although that's not really a culture thing, I think just kind of educating them a little bit about how things are in New Zealand that's different to American [sic]

Maggie's commentary is significant because she explores the concept of perceptual differences toward the positioning of the stars—an example of utmost universality. Of course it is important to note that these assessments are based on conversations with campers of all ages—a question from a seven-year-old camper may be a result of an age-appropriate lack of geographical knowledge whereas a similar question from a 15-year-old camper could be due more to a learned sense of ethnocentrism or cultural vanity.

In the case of the latter, it is interesting to examine the two distinctly different responses on the part of the international counselors to the curiosities of the campers. On several instances, the counselors mentioned that in the face of perceived cultural vanity in the form of illogical or uninformed questions concerning their home

culture or countries, they opted to perpetuate the original ignorant belief. This paper defines this strategy for managing these interactions as 'identity isolation.' It parallels the separation variety of acculturation as proposed by J.W. Berry's acculturation theory in the discipline of cross-cultural psychology. Berry asserted that separation, as an approach to cross-cultural contact, occurs when "there is a value placed on holding onto one's original culture and a wish to avoid interaction with others" (Berry et al, 1992). Those counselors who practiced identity isolation actively desired to maintain the boundaries of their respective cultural identities and did so by creating distance between the curiosities of the campers and the factual truth of their home countries. George, from South Africa, actively engaged in this strategy and mentioned, "Yeah they did speak to me about, I mean asked me about South Africa and all the stupid questions that well, that people that don't know about South Africa. Like 'Do you have a pet lion and ride elephants and stuff like that.' I mean I find that amusing. Sometimes I play along with it." Similarly, Charlotte explains her approach to explaining the geographical location of her home country, "[T]o be honest they didn't really understand the difference between the UK and Scotland and England. You could tell them some funny things about Scotland and they'd completely believe you because they have no idea what it was." In deciding not to correct, but rather validate, the children's erroneous beliefs about South Africa and Scotland, these counselors are actively and consciously widening the gap between their respective cultures and the culture of the United States. Their attitude relies heavily on the assumption, on the part of the counselors, of widespread ethnocentrism amongst the campers and, in turn, the campers' willingness to place value and truth on seemingly factual information. It is significant to note that throughout these interviews, there was never

any evidence to suggest that the counselor's actions were malevolent or spiteful. Rather it appeared as though the above micro-interactions were consciously lighthearted ways in which the counselors worked to preserve their own cultural identities. In navigating the individualistic and culturally narcissistic output of the campers, these individuals chose to privatize and withhold factual information about their home countries. This validation of the campers' incorrect information was an attempt at placing a boundary between the personal sanctity of his or her cultural identity and the questionings of American youth who perhaps could be perceived as not understanding or appreciating that identity.

The desire to place distance between one's personal cultural background and the cultural vanity of the American children was a prevalent theme in the interviews. However this strategy was not expressed across-the-board by all counselors. Some counselors discussed the ways in which they helped *to inform* the campers of their respective cultures. Much like the instances reported above, these counselors mentioned that the questions that young campers asked about their home cultures were often misinformed, ignorant, and even possibly culturally insensitive. Yet in distinction to the counselors who employed distancing strategies thus perpetuating the children's ignorance, some counselors reported the effort to rectify what they knew to be erroneous information about their home culture. They opted for a strategy that served to publicize their own cultural identity in the name of education and awareness. This approach can be identified as a manifestation of Berry's integration variety of acculturation. Integration occurs when "there is an interest in both maintaining one's original culture and in daily interactions with others...here there is some degree of cultural integrity maintained, while moving to participate as

an integral part of the larger social network” (Berry et al, 1992). This approach to cultural contact emphasizes the importance of what occurs during the micro-interaction and exchange between individuals from different backgrounds. In this case, those interactions involve the cultural and geographical edification of the campers by the international counselors. Selena, a tennis counselor from Zimbabwe who previously spoke strongly of the individualistic nature of American culture, explained her approach to a series of mistaken assumptions about life in her home country:

I just remember telling them how we have, you know just like every country has the good side and the bad side. [T]he rich side, the poor side, the middle class families. We have that back in Zimbabwe too. So I just let them know that, Zimbabwe or Africa’s not just about the little babies with the flies. But we have the really well off people, we have the middle class families, then we have the lower socioeconomic status people. So basically I just let them know, ‘Yeah, yeah we have roads, streets, we have houses with gates, and servants and stuff.’

Here, Selena actively and strategically emphasized the similarities in socioeconomic scope between the United States and Zimbabwe. This served to equalize the previously highly polarized and disparate ideological difference between what the largely sheltered, upper-class Caucasian campers believed and what she knew Zimbabwe to be like. In doing this, she was choosing to combat cultural vanity with education—both preserving her identity while engaging others in a discussion of her home country. Selena’s approach was not unusual amongst the interviewed counselors—eighty percent of the participants discussed instances in which they took the time to clarify misconceptions about or share stories and experiences from their home countries and cultures.

Out of eight counselors that adopted an integration strategy for cultural contact, four counselors responded to a question about integrating aspects of their

home culture into life at camp with direct examples of situations in which they discussed their cultural or ethnic background with campers. This is significant because, for these counselors, the way in which they understood and located their presence within the larger camp dynamic is synonymous with the education of others concerning their cultures. When Kate was asked whether she remembered integrating any aspect of Scottish culture into her life at camp she mentioned, “I feel like there were times though where the kids were really—well occasionally with [Wynn] kids—interested because they don’t really think outside their little bubble. So for someone to come from somewhere else in the English speaking world, it’s kinda interesting for them to experience someone who’s kinda like them but then also really different.” For these counselors, the way in which they understood their cultural identities was in direct relation to and contingent upon the ignorance of the campers. In this light, it could be argued that the cultural vanity exhibited by the campers allowed the counselors the opportunity to navigate and negotiate the ways in which they wanted to present their respective cultural identities—the campers’ lack of cultural knowledge opened the door for the counselors to share only the information they deemed necessary.

Ultimately the entire process of defining cultural identity in a new environment is largely socially reflexive. As international counselors enter the camp world, they are required to navigate a series of distinctly opposing yet interrelated forces that place their respective cultural identities in a limbo—subject to the gamut of experiences and interactions contained in brief but intense 10-week long camp season. The malleability of identity closely parallels Bourdieu’s theory on habitus as a contingent factor of positionality. Their location within the larger camp dynamic is a

product of a series of deliberate micro-adjustments. As Wacquant posits, “The lines of action suggested by habitus may very well be accompanied by a strategic calculation of costs and benefits which tends to carry out at a conscious level the operations which habitus carried out in its own way” (Wacquant, 1989 cited by Jenkins, 1992). For these counselors, the ways in which they view their cultural identities and the decisions they make in publicizing those identities to their campers and co-counselors is an active process that requires constant recalibration. They consciously filter and manage the responses of others concerning the presentation of their cultural identities and can minimize or maximize their disclosure. Similarly, there is no set algorithm for the strategic negotiation of counselor positionality. While they may value the culturally similar concept of familial togetherness—and act within the confines of this safe, relatable framework—they simultaneously express two distinctly different management strategies in the face of a cultural vanity that defines camp and thus, all of America. This paper suggests that the process by which they consciously navigate the differing cultural inputs and decide which “self” to present can be labeled ‘habitus-work.’ This is a constantly evolving process that expands on Bourdieu’s reputed theory of habitus as the subconscious socially reflexive nature of human interaction. Habitus-work is contingent upon the active micro-adjustments that individuals make concerning the ways in which their personhood is conveyed to the world. It also speaks to the necessary ‘work’ or effort put into navigating one’s place within a world in which previously drawn lines of identification and self-hood are increasingly blurred and muddled. Further evidence of the obscuring of identity lines are the lasting effects of the culture at Camp Wynn.

*The Enduring Nature of Camp Culture:*



Camp Wynn's temporally short yet socially demanding nature, places a unique set of pressures and consequences on those individuals that arrive with an entirely different cultural framework. From the first day of orientation to the day the campers depart, the counselors are immersed in a cultural experience that is made up of the backgrounds of the campers, the backgrounds of the counselors and the general environment of the camp as established by the owners. The convergence of these factors creates a highly intense intersection of various norms, values, practices, and lexicons. In this context, international counselors have to negotiate between the cultural values they brought with them from their home country, those they were exposed to and hybridized while at camp, and those that they adopted upon returning home. While there was no set algorithm for this process, many international counselors reported common values and behaviors that they quickly picked up at camp and maintained throughout the duration of camp as well as upon returning to their home countries. As camp is such a culturally intense environment, it only makes sense that the behaviors that become reflexive while at camp could stay with an individual even once they have left that environment. The following are behaviors that were discussed by many interviewees when they described the influence of the camp experience on their behaviors upon returning home. While counselors experienced the influence of camp culture differently, their examples of how this experience later became integrated into their lives at home speaks to the collective nature of the effect and the lasting impact of camp life on an individual's cultural identity across a set time span.

As might be expected many of the counselors arrived at camp with a preconceived set of beliefs as to who they are and the location that they occupy in the

greater social dynamic. Many spoke about arriving at camp with firm convictions on a wide variety of topics ranging from the ways in which children should be disciplined to specific social norms and mores. When back in their respective countries, these culturally founded principles were largely confirmed and reproduced by their proximity to and relationships with those that identified with their same culture. Even among those counselors that spent time at American universities prior to beginning at camp, many of them attended the same schools as friends or significant others from their native country. Ultimately, for many of the counselors, the first day of camp marked a distinct break in the consistency and repetition of cultural sameness. For this reason, camp served as a significant turning point—a chance to re-examine and reflect on one’s identity and self in light of an entirely new and distinctive cultural experience. In offering novel and never-before-seen social and cultural schemas, Camp Wynn reframed several convictions that the counselors had previously held true. Selena explained the process she went through during her two summers at camp:

I think it really opened me up to accepting and tolerating everything else that I didn’t know to be normal. It allowed me to accept Americans for being who they are just as much as they accepted me for being African and having different values. I felt as if they were more open to accept me and my boundaries, and all of these things that came with me. But I was so resistant to accepting them and their openness and their different cultures. So I think being at camp, and spending so much time with so many Americans, it’s just allowed me to say you, ‘You know what? We’re so different because we’re different, from different worlds,’ and that’s ok and embrace that...So I think it just allowed me to just really open, to really be tolerant, to be accepting of what’s different to what I know to be normal.

Here Selena speaks to the ways in which the concepts of ‘difference’ and ‘dissimilarity’ are perceived and framed between cultures. Ultimately her proximity

to so many Americans, who accepted and embraced her values, prompted her to re-evaluate her own lack of understanding and reconsider the way she viewed Americans—people who would ultimately surround her for her entire undergraduate career and into law school. Similarly Triona, an Irish woman who worked in the camp office, discussed her discovery of confidence while at camp:

I became a lot more confident, and probably slightly cocky. Cause you're very confident in America, you're very sure of yourselves, like not in a bad way but you know what you want and you're very—you're very confident in yourselves which is really good. And I think I picked that up and I became very—and that was quite good because that's what, that's one of the reasons why I went to this camp, to camp. But um yeah you're very confident and I like that and I think I picked that up.

Triona's commentary on American culture as being defined by confidence to the point of cockiness speaks to the undercurrent of cultural vanity mentioned in the previous section. It is interesting to note that, rather than feel intimidated or offended, Triona harnessed this ubiquitous self-assurance and used it as a tool for self-improvement. These monumental micro-adjustments in self-perception as well as the ways in which they perceive those around them speaks to the strength of Camp Wynn as a cultural supermarket of sorts—a location in which an individual has access to a variety of cultural values, norms, and practices and can choose from them as he or she pleases (Mathews, 2000). It should be noted however that as a camp operating with an American cultural and ethnic majority of campers and managers, that the values, practices, and mores chosen by the counselors are largely those of American culture. In other words, none of the counselors reported adopting or hybridizing aspects of the cultures of their fellow international counselors. This trend parallels the conclusions in the relevant literature concerning this newfound cultural marketplace. Just as in literal supermarkets, the goods most recognizable to a widespread audience

are placed on the shelf closest to eye level. Mathews, citing Bockock, explains, “‘The United States...has come to epitomize the modern [worldwide] consumers dreamland’ and certainly the world’s cultural supermarket has more than its share of American ‘goods,’ in the influence of movies, music, and sports—America’s celebrity culture, spread worldwide” (2000). As a prevailing trait, American confidence and assurance are widely available for individuals like Triona—her ability to alter her entire self-perception over the course of ten weeks speaks to the strength and dominance of American culture.

In considering the lasting effects of camp culture on counselors’ self-hood, interview data also revealed concrete behavioral changes. Specifically, amongst counselors from English-speaking countries—those from Scotland, New Zealand and Ireland—there was a significant report of the usage of American terminology even once back in his or her respective home country. Ultimately the alterations to original lexicons emerged as the most ubiquitous cultural “after-effect” of time spent at camp. Specifically the Scottish and Irish counselors that I interviewed discussed the alteration of standard British words to standard American words, for instance, trainers became sneakers, trousers became sweatpants, chips became fries, fringe became bangs, and sweets became candy. Charlotte, who is from Scotland, described her experience, “[A]fter spending like three or four months with you guys in America, you come home and you’ve picked up stupid, crazy words, and you’re like ‘whoops.’ And then everyone takes the piss out of you cause you’re not in America and you’ve got the crazy slang.” Of course, this adaptation is perfectly expected and it would, in fact, be unusual for an individual to enter a new environment and not pick up the linguistic nuances of the population within that environment. Yet this phenomenon is

especially significant as all of the words referenced in interviews were directly and frequently used in daily camp life—they had to do with dressing the children, doing their hair, and helping them at mealtime. These counselors consciously altered their primary lexicon because they were communicating with largely ethnocentric children—it was understood that it was the job of the counselor to change to fit the needs and cultural awareness of the children rather than *visa versa*. Their altered lexicon represents a larger shift toward adapting various cultural behaviors in order to maintain a sense of proficiency and aptitude while carrying out their job. Elizabeth continued to explain, “Yeah after a while, after like a couple of weeks you just change it. Cause can’t be bothered to repeat yourself. So you just adopt the words...They’re all the things you have to say all time because of clean up and things like this....I gave up using my words.” For Elizabeth, the change to her lexicon was an entirely active process—she chose to say sneakers rather than trainers because it simplified communication while she was performing her job.

In differentiating the case of lexicon adaptation at camp from what could be expected in normal cultural context, it is important to consider that this situation is one of a culture within a culture. The hybridization of lexicons occurred, not because of the necessary prevalence of American terminology, but rather of camp-specific American vocabulary. The culture at the camp dictated the need for a unified vocabulary to some extent. Further the change occurred out of a conscious necessity and felt obligation to minimize culturally ‘jarring’ the campers. In actively managing the ways in which verbal communication is carried out while at camp, counselors ensured a level of self-preservation that nonetheless morphed into lasting, and ultimately multi-cultural, identity adaptations. Furthermore, while the reported

alterations in behavior were not out of necessity, they did speak to the strength of the cultural forces at Camp Wynn. It is not unheard of for an individual to reinvent an aspect of him or herself when exposed to a new environment. Yet Triona and Selena's rapid adaptation of self-confidence and cultural acceptance makes a significant statement concerning the instance of camp as a location in which one's cultural identity can enter as an entity grounded in concrete values and mores and leave with an entirely new framework for self-hood.

## **Conclusion**

For all intents and purposes, Camp Wynn is a hub of cultural identity activity. This dynamic is one marked by pre-established cultural values and identifications coming into contact with a setting that is, ultimately, a cultural supermarket—in which an individual can browse and select various addendums to their current set of cultural identifiers. With this in mind, this study set out to understand the ways in which international counselors manage these cultural identities within such a culturally convergent environment. It found that to understand an individual's cultural identity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to understand the active process that is an identity. One does not *have* or *hold* an identity anymore—rather one *does* identity. For the international counselors interviewed, the ways in which they understood themselves prior to working at camp is distinctly different than the way they understood themselves while at camp or after their summers were done. This personal transformation had to do, in large part, with the variety of individuals they interacted with and the weight of the experiences they came across. But it also involved an active role on their part—every counselor consciously and deliberately

chose to create and nurture an accessible cultural Third Space, to act as cultural educators or to practice identity isolation, or to reinvent and reframe their self-perception post-camp.

These findings have significant implications for the bodies of relevant empirical and theoretical literature. As stated in the literature review, there is a distinct lack of empirical data concerning the impact of American summer camp on international counselor identity. The literature that does exist targets specific niche markets of the summer camp community (domestic counselors at American short-stay camps or the experience of Korean-American counselors). The American Camp Association reports that there are currently more than 12,000 day and residential camps operating in the United States (2011 ACA Sites, Facilities, Programs Report) and nearly 20% of those camp staffs are made up of international counselors (2010 ACA Camp Compensation and Benefits Report). With this information taken into consideration it seems that there is a blatant lack of empirical data concerning the experience of international camp counselors and the significant impact that American camps have on the ways in which an individual's identity is framed and conceptualized.

Similarly, this study fills a clear gap in the body of theoretical literature. While the ideas of cultural identity, cross-cultural interaction, and acculturation have been well researched, they have been approached on a largely macro-level. This study highlights the resulting implications of micro-interactions and cross-cultural contact in a highly specific environment yet simultaneously frames the situation in the broader theories of intersubjectivity, habitus, and acculturation. For this reason, the case of the experience of international counselors at Camp Wynn can be understood

as a commentary on the larger nature of identity creation and preservation in light of modernity and globalization. It also raises a significant point on the importance of cultural space, not only at summer camps, but also in environments defined by a convergence of individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

It should be noted that this study did not address identity in its many other manifestations, for instance one's religious identity, socio-economic identity, sexual orientation identity, political identity or gender identity. While these factors are extremely important to the overall makeup of one's holistic identity and could fit well into a larger discussion of the active nature of identity-work, they were not deemed appropriate for the scope of this paper. Future research however could offer insights into one or more of these concepts as they pertain to the experience of individuals at summer camps or other environments in which there is a marked profusion of interaction between differing backgrounds or frameworks. A study examining the case of international counselors at American parochial camps could develop further the case of cultural identity as it correlates with the variable of religion within the camp setting. Similarly, these findings in this study could be furthered to analyze refugee camps or other transient circumstances in which there is close contact between individuals from differing cultural, religious, ethnic, or socio-economic backgrounds.

Lim and Renshaw point out that in the "age of globalization," cultural identities, "are neither fixed nor static, but are actually fluid, dynamic, negotiable, and constantly in the process of change and transformation" (2001). As boundary lines are crossed and cultures come in contact, the definition of one's cultural identity expands to encompass aspects of varying cultural, values, and ideologies. Managing



and navigating these aspects becomes a veritable activity—involving the balancing and bargaining of a series of culture inputs in order to maintain a sound sense of self. The experience of a counselor at Camp Wynn is not unlike that of an individual in any highly culturally diverse environment—a circumstance that is increasingly defining daily life.

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## Appendix A: Interview Participant Chart

<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>Country of Origin</i>	<i>Current City of Residence</i>	<i>Attends U.S. College?</i>	<i>Summers at Camp Wynn</i>
Ana	Brazil	Raleigh, NC	Yes	1
Asya	Zimbabwe	White Plains, NY	Yes	5
Charlotte	Scotland	London, UK	No	3
George	South Africa	Campbellsville, KY	Yes	2
Maggie	New Zealand	Queenstown, New Zealand	No	1
Kate	Scotland	Edinburgh, Scotland	No	3
Elizabeth	Scotland	Edinburgh, Scotland	No	5
Eva	South Africa	Campbellsville, KY	Yes	1
Selena	Zimbabwe	Baton Rouge, LA	Yes	2
Triona	Rep. of Ireland	London, England	No	2

## Appendix B: Interview Schedule

Hello \_\_\_\_\_, thank you so much for taking time to do this study. Please know that you may choose to not answer any of the questions and can stop participation whenever you like.

### I. Orienting Questions:

1. What is your country of origin/to what country(ies) do you hold citizenship?
2. How many summers have you worked at Camp Wynn?
3. Why did you originally decide to work at Camp Wynn?

### II. Home Culture:

4. If you could use three adjectives to describe yourself to someone who had never met you, what would they be?
5. Can you talk to me a little bit about the traditions and aspects of your native culture that you personally hold closest?
6. Can you give me a specific example of a time that you integrated an aspect of your home culture into life at camp?
7. Did your campers (either in-bunk, or in an activity) ask you about your home country?
  - a. If yes: Can you walk me through a time when that happened? What did you tell them?

### III. General Camp Experience:

8. Can you talk to me a little bit about your prior conceptions of American summer camp, before you arrived?
9. Looking back, what do you think of your camp experience?

### IV. Conceptions of American culture/camp culture:

10. Do you feel as though Camp Wynn was representative of the larger American culture?

11. If you had to explain American culture in a few sentences, based on your experiences, what would you say?

#### V. Third-Party Interaction

12. Did you know any other counselors from your home country before arriving at camp? If so, how did you know them?

13. Had you spent more than 2 months in America prior to your time working at Camp Wynn?

a. If so, where and in what capacity

i. If university experience: How does your experience at an American college compare to your experience at an American camp?

14. Did you discuss the experience of being an international camp counselor with other counselors (either international or domestic)? If so, what did you talk about?

#### VI. Interface with American Culture:

15. Were there any aspects of American culture (i.e. slang, pop culture, dress, food, values) that you found yourself using, even when in your home country?

16. Were there any aspects of American culture that you disliked or disagreed with?

17. What would you say are the largest differences between American culture and the culture you grew up with?



18. Did your experience at camp (in terms of your cultural identity) affect your experience or sense of self upon returning to your home culture?

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Demographic Questions:

What is the gender you most closely identify with? \_\_\_

What is your age? \_\_\_

What is your current city of residence? \_\_\_

What is your marital status? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the last level of school that you attended? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have children of your own? \_\_\_