Examination of the Underlying Trends in Village and Rural Recreation with Application in the Three Oaks School District

Pfliger

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EXA   ATIO OF THE UNDERLYING TRENDS IN VILLAG
AND RURAL RECREATIO       ITH APPLICATION
IN THE THREE OAKS SCHOOL DI TRICT

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the School of Education
The University of Michigan

In Partial Fulfillent
of the Require ent  for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

by
Alfred Pfliger
January 1949
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"The function of education and recreation is to make the human animal into a human being". This effort demands the combined cooperation of all the social agencies. Separately these agencies have tried and failed. The home has put forth its efforts but the development of the home is contingent upon the family background and the financial, physical, and cultural facilities of the home and the neighborhood. In many instances traditions are accepted as part of the family code.

Long before social agencies undertook the task, commercial interests were in action with fairs, carnivals, prize fights, circuses, etc. Politicians used recreation to create indignation and to promulgate doctrines. The poolrooms, shooting galleries, dance halls are all "appeals" to the baser desires of man. Along with the radio, movies, etc., these activities are escapes from reality. Under the impetus of war, commercially sponsored activities have grown. It is the author's opinion that entertainment designed to aggravate and emphasize the activities in man should be banned, not by laws alone, but by the creation and establishment of a worthy substitute.
Industry has learned, although only recently, that recreation is a part of their "must" program. The old barrier between management and labor is down. Employers are realizing more each day that workers need a period of recreation and expression. There remains a great deal of skepticism on the part of labor for they feel that such procedure might be used as a disguise on the part of management to decrease discontent.

Labor unions are rapidly recognizing their responsibility and are establishing a recreation program to meet the needs of their members.

One might also refer to the efforts of lodges, clubs, associations, religious groups, national groups, etc., and special interest groups, but one need not venture far to note that which is done is well done but that their work encompasses only a relatively small area, and leaves much undone.

Recreation is rapidly becoming a community concern for it is a strong force in conditioning attitudes and shaping character. Recent trends indicate that the school is the "child's world" now and always will be.

Before we can undertake the task of dealing with the whole personality of the child, we must establish certain concepts of philosophy in the minds of those who will control, guide, and direct the activities at hand.
Many people hold to the dogma that the home must retain the responsibility for the training of the child. These people hold to the philosophy that what was good enough for them is good enough for their children, never once realizing that "time marches on". The task then remains one of reeducation of parents, teachers, civic leaders, and all others who are destined to become a part of the total program.

Our primary goal must then necessarily be to build and establish a philosophy which will deal with the total personality of the child and the adult. All agencies,—the community, the church, the school, the state—must become a part of the program. In the mind of the author, leadership and initiative quite naturally fall to the educator. Traditions must be shattered, not by rough and ready techniques, but through research studies, forum meetings, consultations, and intelligent studies.

It is the author's belief that the educator must take the lead. The nucleus for the new program has already been formed. Several communities are establishing a twelve month school year. Teachers in these schools are hired on a twelve month basis with the usual amount of time spent in directing study. With the cooperation of the teacher training institutions, these teachers can be trained in recreational supervision, and with the addition of a full time recreation director an ideal program could be established.
CHAPTER II

THE PROBLEM

The type and quality of recreation in our total culture and in the life of every individual is determined by economic and social conditions. A study of these two fields of human relationship constitutes a basis for planning a recreation program.

Statement of the problem. The concern of this study has been to examine the underlying trends in village and rural recreation in general, especially as these trends may relate to, or throw light on, the recreation of village high school students, and then to attempt to see what effects these broad sweeping changes might be creating in the recreational habits of high school students in the particular village of Three Oaks, Michigan. It was hoped that, by using these broader social changes as a basis for interpretation, certain data that were collected from Three Oaks students themselves, it would be possible to sketch the outlines of some of the principles which would guide the thinking of any group undertaking the project of planning recreation for the high school students of that community. This study in no way pretends
to be a plan all neatly organized and ready to function. Community planning is a social process which must evolve within the community itself as it recognizes its needs, defines its goals, and begins to seek means of implementing its goals. At best, this study hopes to stimulate the thinking of the community leaders so that they will recognize a need for planning recreation in this area. It is hoped that this may be the beginning in helping the village of Three Oaks to define its goals in recreation for high school age children, to see what the present trends are, and to give the community leaders an indication of the effectiveness of some of the present institutions in the field of high school recreation.

**Delimitation of the problem.** The village of Three Oaks, Michigan, was chosen because it is in many ways a "typical" village community in population size and characteristics, economic functions, and social activities, because of the writer's own personal familiarity with some of the persons and problems involved, and because of the problem of community recreation for high school age youth which is currently troubling community leaders there.

**Importance of the study.** Much of the literature pertains to the overall recreational problem. The
problem of the recreational program of the small villages is unique in that they are alike in many respects, yet differ enough to make it necessary to study each individual community as to its needs.

With the state-wide tendency toward consolidation of school districts into larger units, it becomes mandatory that we study the recreational and social life of these young people as well as provide for their educational training.

Three Oaks, Michigan, is now providing for educational training with limitations, but has made very little provision for the other phases of a young person's life. This study is intended as a "trail-blazer" for the future planning of a community recreational-social program.

Definition of terms used. Rural in this study is taken to mean the country or country life.

According to the census, a village is a cluster of persons with a population ranging from 250 to 2,500. This definition of villages is used in this study when referring to the rural non-farm group.

Recreation in this study is interpreted to mean diversion or refreshment after toil or weariness. A limited interpretation would perhaps restrict us to physical activity, but this study includes mental refreshment
as well as physical. Included in the definition of recreation should be singing, reading, hiking, hobbies, and the many other activities of young people. The "sipping" of a "coke" at the drug store might be classified as recreation.
CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Much has been written on the subject of recreation, especially in light of current delinquency problems, but most of the literature concerns itself with an overall approach. These writings are all closely related to the topic which is the subject of this paper.

Jesse F. Steiner summed up the trends in rural recreation by saying, "The profound and all persuasive trend in rural recreation is its growing urbanization." This one "persuasive" trend manifested itself in many ways in rural life.

One of the most important factors determining rural recreational patterns in the past was the factor of isolation. Traditional American farm settlements were not in villages as in Europe, but in the open country. Villages developed later in response to the need of the scattered farm population for centers of supply and trade.

As to population characteristics, according to a report prepared by the President's Committee on Social Trends, the village stands midway between the farm and city. Whereas the farm population has more males and the city more females, villages tend to be divided fairly evenly by sex. The city does not reproduce itself in population while the farm population more than reproduces itself. Here again the village holds the middle ground, reproducing itself at a rate of growth about equal to the national rate of population increase so that it just holds its own in the general population trend. While cities tend to have the younger population and the farms the older population, the village is the balance between, with a fairly even age distribution within the population. In all this we see one significant fact—villages as a whole tend to represent roughly the national "average" toward which the city and the farm are gradually moving. From this we can expect that in the villages as a whole there will continue a high relative stability in population.

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2Recent Social Trends, prepared by the President's Committee on Social Trends, Washington, D. C.: 1933 Chapter on Rural Life.

3President's Committee, loc. cit.
There has been a decided tendency for open country schools, churches, and general stores to decline and for these institutions to become concentrated in the village. This shift, especially of the schools and the churches to the village, is significant in relation to recreation since it indicates that the recreational functions associated with these two institutions are becoming concentrated in villages. There has been in the villages, a decline as elsewhere in the number of youth between the ages of fifteen and nineteen employed which would indicate that a larger number of youth of this age are attending high school. Thus, a recreational program planned for children attending high school will include an increasingly larger proportion of the youth of high school age in the village.

Villages have tended to become more specialized in the type of services that they offer. With this specialization has developed the tendency of farmers to patronize several villages depending upon the type of service needed. To counteract this force which pulls the farmer from allegiance to any one community has evolved a force which brings farmers to identify themselves more closely to one village than any other; namely, the consolidated school district. As the consolidated school has become the most important governmental function of the village, so it has developed a new bond of unity between the village and the
surrounding country dwellers. So powerful has the consolidated school proved in tying contiguous areas to the village that Kolb and Brunner⁴ are willing to admit it as the chief factor in delineating the boundaries of the rural "community" which looks to the villages for its social, economic, recreational and educational life.

Kolb and Brunner⁵ defined a village as a cluster of persons with a population ranging from 250 to 2,500. In the United States there are, in round numbers, about 18,000 villages with a total population of 13,000,000 to 15,000,000 persons.⁶ This number of rural non-farm people represents a sizeable percentage of the total population and considerable study has been given to the examination of social characteristics of the village as a social group.

S. R. Slavson, in his book, Recreation and The Personality,⁷ gives a broad interpretation to the influence of recreation. He believes that recreation does not suggest primary growths as play does in the child. The

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⁵ Ibid., p. 81.

⁶ Ibid., p. 82.

It aims at psychological and physical balance by bringing into action areas of the body and the mind that are neglected in one's daily occupation, and to rest muscles, nerves, and the brain cells that become tired or overstrained in the pursuit of one's daily living and working.  

8 Ibid., p.3.
CHAPTER IV

LOCALE OF THE STUDY

With the coming of easy transportation from farm to village in the form of the automobile and paved roads, the barrier of physical distance and hence social distance between farm and village has tended to break down. Today, in thinking of the village "community", one's concept must go beyond the legal village limits to include those country people who look to the village for their social life, and, in a sociological sense, who may belong more to the village "community" than the man living on Main Street. Town-country contacts must have increased to inter-community contacts. These factors must be considered by the planner as he sets about defining his planning area.

Under the relatively isolated conditions of thirty years ago, propinquity was the basic determining factor in the farmer's choice of persons for recreational association. Today rural recreational association is very similar in urban association. Rural dwellers chose their friends on the basis of age, sex, and common interests. Their search for recreation and friendship may take them over a wide territory and into many different villages.
The farm "neighborhood", built around the rural schoolhouse is gradually disappearing and farm families, like city dwellers, now seek their recreation over a broad area. This increases the number of purely secondary contacts which rural persons have with all the resulting decline in group controls which this implies. This factor is especially important in understanding some of the problems faced in recreational planning for high school age youth. The growth of the consolidated school may be seen as both cause and effect in this development.

As a corollary of the tendency to seek recreational outlets over an ever wider territory, another profound change has taken place in rural recreation. Under relatively isolated circumstances, the family was the recreational unit. The family visited friends together and went to church together. Parties were family parties rather than a specialized party for children or young adults or the women. Much of the recreation of the family centered in their work and the biggest occasions of the year were those when farm families joined in whole units to help each other at harvest time. There was little specialization in farm recreation. However, with the coming of the automobile, the consolidated school, the school bus, the growth of clubs based on sex differentiation, and the availability of commercialized entertainment,
the family has become more and more atomized in its recreational life. As the family declines in importance as an institution for providing recreation, we are faced with a vital question in relation to high school age youth. If the family is no longer fulfilling its traditional function as the unit of recreation, what community institutions, if any, have arisen to fill that need?

Associated with this absence of specialization in recreational life that existed in the past, there existed a birth of special facilities and institutions devoting their chief energies to promoting wholesome recreation. The recreational function tended to attach itself to institutions whose fundamental purposes were not recreational, such as the church and the school. The rural church exercised a powerful social control over the types of recreation that were carried on both within the church and outside the church. In most village communities this control is declining rapidly and the place filled by the recreational services of the churches is minor when compared with the rise of specialized commercial and public recreational institutions. With the increase in the number of consolidated schools, the school has been tending to assume more and more responsibility for recreational planning for school age children; however, this movement has not begun to approach what has been done in urban
communities.

In village communities, a fact of greater significance is that, in the overall view, there has been a decided tendency for unspecialized agencies such as the church, family, and school to decline in their recreational functions faster than any type of specialized recreational institutions have been built up to take their places. This places older aged youths in many villages in a dilemma that borders on the pathological. There is simply nothing to do. Few of the institutions that have risen to fill this need in urban communities such as the supervised playground, extensive after-school athletic programs, libraries, theaters, professional athletics, youth organizations such as the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. have developed extensively in the villages. Canteens, Youth Centers, and "Milk Bars" dancing clubs are mostly urban developments. Rural communities have very little public supervision of recreation. Parks tend to be ornamental in character and used for few things other than band concerts and festivals. The public playground, especially one that is supervised, is almost unknown. Only seventy-three villages of less than 2,500 population in a possible 13,000 investigated had playgrounds in 1930.

And so, in concluding this brief survey of trends in rural recreation as they relate to high school age
youth, it can be stated that the main trend in rural recreation is its growing urbanization. The influences of the city are more evident, however, in the disappearance of the traditional rural amusements than in the appearance of urban forms of recreational activity and organization. Though the need for public recreational services first arose in urban centers, with the increased urbanization of the farm and village life the need for village recreational planning is becoming increasingly more imperative. For really effective planning such projects by necessity they must be carried beyond the village to the county and the region. All of these factors and influences should be carefully considered by the would-be planner of rural recreation so that he may work with rather than against the trends.

Some Characteristics of the Agricultural Village

As trends in recreation do not occur in a vacuum, so a recreational program for high school students cannot be evolved in a vacuum. The factors of social life are so interrelated that one must see the aspect of community life with which he is concerned as it relates to the rest of the community if he is going to have a rational perspective toward his work. Ideally, planning for recreation for high school students should be but one part of a
community plan for wholesome recreation in all age groups and this recreational program should in its turn play but its role in a more comprehensive plan for the development of economic and social life within the community as a whole. This community plan in turn should be integrated into a county-wide, state-wide or region-wide development. However, since recreational planning for high school students in Three Oaks cannot appeal for advice to any higher planning body, it is necessary that the problem be approached as nearly possible with the welfare of the whole community in mind. Consideration needs to be given to what is happening in the community in general so as to determine to what extent changes within the community will affect recreational programming. For that reason, this section of the study is concerned with what important changes are occurring within villages in general, and then more specifically, with sketching in brief the historical origins, regional location, population characteristics and economic basis of the village of Three Oaks as these factors may have a relation to planning for youth.

According to the census, there has been in the villages, a decline, as elsewhere, in the number of persons between the ages of fifteen and nineteen employed, which would indicate that a larger number of youth of these ages
are attending high school. Thus a recreational program planned for children attending high school will include an increasingly larger proportion of youth of the high school age in the village.

Villages have tended to become more specialized in the type of services which they offer. With this specialization has developed the tendency of farmers to patronize several villages depending upon the type of service needed. To counteract this force which pulls the farmer from allegiance to any one community has evolved a force which brings him to identify himself more closely with any one village than any other, the consolidated school district.

As the consolidated school has become about the most important governmental function of the village, so it has developed a new bond of unity between the villages and the surrounding country dwellers. So powerful has the consolidated school proven in tying contiguous areas to the village that Kolb and Brunner are willing to admit it as the chief determining factor in delineating the boundaries of the rural "community" which looks to the

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village for its social, economic, and educational life.\(^\text{10}\)

This is the viewpoint which has been adopted for the purpose of this study. The "planning area" for the village of Three Oaks in developing a wholesome program of recreation for high school age children has been considered to be the school district of the Three Oaks Consolidated School.

With this overview of trends in village life likely to affect recreation for high school students, it is now necessary to examine more closely the characteristics of the community of Three Oaks, Michigan, with which this study is concerned. What is the location of Three Oaks in relation to other villages and to larger cities? How easy are communications between them? What effects will this have on a recreational program for high school students? How stable is the community population? How stable is the economic life of the community? These and many other questions are the concern of the next section of this study.

The Community of Three Oaks, Michigan: Its Location, Population Characteristics, and Economic Base

Three Oaks, Michigan, is located in Berrien County

\(^{10}\) Kolb and Brunner, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-127.
just across the Indiana State line about fifteen miles northeast of Michigan City, Indiana; approximately twenty-five miles northeast of South Bend, Indiana; and about eighteen miles south of St. Joseph, Michigan. It is thus within easy driving distance of these three cities for shopping or entertainment purposes. It also falls well within the metropolitan region dominated by the city of Chicago as it is only a two hour drive from that city which is its wholesaling and newspaper center.

United States highway 112 runs through the town and so places it on one of the main trucking routes from Detroit to Chicago. This location also gives it a Greyhound bus service three times daily west to Michigan City and Chicago and east to Detroit. The main lines of the Michigan Central and New York Central Railroads come through the town, and while few trains stop, the railroad is a valuable link with the outside and is, of course, basic to the economy of the village. The most vital transportation connection between Three Oaks and other towns, so far as this study is concerned, is that provided by the automobile. Its influence upon high school recreation in Three Oaks will be examined in more detail later.

A second important factor in the location of the village particularly in relation to recreation, is that, while not directly on the shores of Lake Michigan, the
village is within six miles of a dune-lined shore. This places Three Oaks in a resort area which is frequented during warm weather by hundreds of people from Chicago and other nearby cities. The fact that Three Oaks is not itself located directly on the lake has kept the development of roadhouses, hotels, dance pavilions, and skating rinks from progression within the town itself, but made such commercial entertainment readily accessible to those with a car.

Three Oaks is a village with a population of 2,145 according to the 1940 census reports in which there is an almost equal distribution of males and females. In this instance it is representative of the middle position held by the villages as compared with farms and cities in the national population pattern. Of this number, 670 were classified as "rural farm" population residing within village limits.

In view of the trend toward a declining birth rate all over the United States, it is of interest to note that the proportions of the Three Oaks population in 1940 were as follows:
<table>
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<th>Age</th>
<th>Under 5</th>
<th>5-14</th>
<th>15-24</th>
<th>25-34</th>
<th>35-44</th>
<th>45-54</th>
<th>55-64</th>
<th>65+</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By this table it can be seen that there are almost three times as many persons in the age group 5-14 than there are in the group under five. This is true to a gradually lessening extent of each group following until the 55-64 level is reached. This may merely indicate a fluctuation around a trend, but should this continue, the community of Three Oaks may expect that its rate of increase by births is decreasing and, unless this is augmented by migration to the village, the high school population of ten years hence (the present) may be materially decreased.

As to the national origins of the community, in 1940, there were 1,960 native whites, 175 foreign born whites, and no negroes or other races reported. These figures, while not entirely representative of the situation in the high school population because it draws from surrounding farm homes and does include one negro family living outside the village, are, as a whole in correct proportion. From the beginning, the vast majority of settlers in Three Oaks were southerners from Kentucky, who for the most part settled on the farms, and the Yankees from New England. The chief interest of the latter centered in business and trade with a relatively minor proportion of pioneers coming from abroad, mostly
German.\textsuperscript{11} Thus it can be seen that, in dealing with recreation, the population must be recognized as a fairly homogeneous native white group with few, if any, of the cultural conflicts faced by planners in heterogeneous urban areas. In this respect, Three Oaks, with only 8.9 per cent of her population of foreign stock, is even more favorably situated than Berrien County as a whole which has a 9.7 per cent foreign born.

Dr. E. C. Bronson of Chapel Hill, South Carolina, has said that the economic security of a village rests on four legs, all of which need to be firm if the village is to be stable: production of raw materials, manufacturing, trade and transportation, and banking.\textsuperscript{12} The extent to which the community has the ability to predict its own future depends to a great extent on the degree of stability it can expect to maintain in its economic life which is the foundation of all other activity. For this reason it is of importance to examine briefly the economic basis of life in the village of Three Oaks. Dr. Bronson's classification will be used for purpose of analysis.

\textsuperscript{11} \textbf{The Region of Three Oaks}, published by the E. K. Warren Foundation, Three Oaks, 1939, pp. 77-78.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 3.
The production of raw materials: The Three Oaks Community owed its very beginning in 1849 to the wood-cutting industry which grew up to supply the Michigan Central Railroad with wood for fuel for its engines. With improved transportation, the level country around the village (the highest relief for the whole region is only seventy-one feet) began to be cleared for farming and, when the wood-cutting declined, the cultivation of general agricultural products, especially fruit for which the climate on the east shore of Lake Michigan is particularly adapted, developed in its place. Since that time, agriculture has been a source of moderate wealth for a fairly prosperous farm population. The increased demand for fruit coupled with the town's proximity to the Chicago metropolitan area would seem to insure this as a fairly stable source of economic wealth.

Manufacturing: In 1883, E. K. Warren founded the Warren Featherbone Company with a capitalization of $100,000 and set up the factory in Three Oaks. The company, which made material used in corsets and buggy whips, was an immediate success and by 1886 had a gross yearly business of $200,000.13 As the demand shifted,

13 Ibid., pp. 160-161.
the Featherbone Company began producing braids, elastic, ribbons, tapes, and other products and has progressed steadily. Neither the exaggerated prosperity of the 1920's nor the depression of the 1930's made any major difference in the general prosperity of the community which depends upon the company as its main source of income. In 1938 between three hundred and four hundred persons were employed in the factory.\textsuperscript{14} This one major industry which produces cheap essential items needed in time of depression would seem to give the community just cause for looking to a stable future in manufacturing.

\textbf{Trade and transportation: For local grocery buying and small hardware items, Three Oaks has built up a comparatively large retail shopping center that caters to the surrounding territory and is given an additional boost every summer when the tourists and summer resorters swell the volume of retail business. For the larger more expensive articles, however, shoppers tend to go to the bigger shopping centers at South Bend, Michigan City, and Chicago. Being on the main Michigan Central Railroad line together with its location on a main United States highway would insure a fair amount of stability in Three Oaks'}

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 196.
role as a minor transportation center.

Banking: While it might be an exaggeration to think of Three Oaks as a banking "center", the State Bank of Three Oaks acts as a bank for much of the money for the surrounding region and towns and so does perform the last function in Bronson's classification.

Even so cursory a survey as this has been of the economic foundations of the village of Three Oaks shows quite plainly that this community with its roots in farming, especially fruit farming, manufacturing, trade, and transportation and banking may look to a relatively stable future. Factors observed operating within the community have not given cause for expecting either a rapid growth or decline. In this respect Three Oaks is similar to those villages studied by Kolb and Brunner for which they predicted, in the aggregate, a leveling off and stabilization of village population and economic life.15

From the foregoing discussion it is possible to draw several conclusions about the community of Three Oaks likely to be helpful in guiding a recreation program planned for high school students.

1. The community is located so that it is within

15 Kolb and Brunner, op. cit., p. 87.
easy driving distance of three large cities and resort centers along Lake Michigan.

2. There seems to be an indication from the proportionately smaller number of children under five years of age in the population as compared with the upper age groups that this decrease will mean that there will be a smaller number of high school age children in the Three Oaks High School around 1950.

3. The community is of a fairly homogeneous native white stock which should make planning relatively more simple than if there were major culture conflicts existing within the village.

4. Three Oaks seems to have an economy founded on a sufficiently stable and diversified base to maintain the community at about its present size and wealth for some time to come.

In this half of the study we have attempted to fulfill the first step in rational planning—to be conscious of the trends in rural recreation and from that basis predict what may be expected in the future if nothing interferes with the direction of the trends. Our general conclusion was that rural recreation is becoming more and more urbanized and, since the factors making urbanization will undoubtedly continue to operate, we can expect that future developments in rural recreation will continue in this direction.
CHAPTER V

METHODS AND TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED

Survey. In order to obtain an overall picture of the problem, an examination of the underlying trends in village and rural recreation with application in the Three Oaks School District, a survey was made of the facilities for recreation which was available for high school students. This included the church facilities, those of the school, the village and homes. In addition to the survey of the physical equipment available, a study of the social, economic, and cultural background was made. These factors were considered important in studying trends.

Questionnaire. Survey questionnaires were distributed to the Three Oaks High School students through the study hall, a procedure believed likely to give the most accurate sampling of the school population within a minimum disturbance to the regular school routine. In all, 131 students filled out questionnaires, of which 127 were found to be of use either as a whole or in part. Because of the personal nature of some of the questions asked, it was thought best to have all replies remain anonymous. Those filling out questionnaires ranged in age from twelve to nineteen years and from the eighth grade through the
twelfth grade as the Three Oaks High School program includes all grades from the eighth through twelfth. The questions asked were:

How far would you be willing to drive to see a movie you wanted to see?

How far would you be willing to drive to go dancing?

How far would you be willing to drive on a date if there was some activity you wanted to attend?

Do you have a car in the family? If so, about how many nights a week do you get to use the car?

How far do you live from Three Oaks?

About how many hours a week do you spend in the evenings in the town of Three Oaks?

About how many hours per week do you spend in activities in the school building other than school work itself?

How many evenings a week do you spend doing things with your family?

How many hours per week do you spend in church-sponsored activity?

List the kinds of church activities you attend.

If your church considers a movie unfit to see, would this stop you from seeing it if you really wanted to?

Could you spend more time on school activity if there were something going on?

How many hours per day do you listen to the radio?

How many times per week do you go to the movies?

List the names of any clubs of which you are a regular member and attend regularly.
Of the replies used in the study, forty-six cases were from the eighth grade, twenty from the ninth grade, twenty-five from the tenth grade, twenty-three from the eleventh grade and twelve from the twelfth grade. As not many seniors were in school the day the survey was made, it was difficult to obtain usable replies from them. The distribution of ages will tend to weigh the findings in favor of the lower ages and this tendency should be borne in mind in interpreting the data.
CHAPTER VI

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In order to get some indication of how broad the planning area would have to be to include most of the recreational activities of Three Oaks High School, students were asked the following questions:

How far would you be willing to drive to see a movie you wanted to see?

How far would you be willing to drive to go dancing?

How far would you be willing to drive on a date if there was some activity you wanted to attend?
TABLE II
MEAN DISTANCES IN MILES ARRANGED ACCORDING TO GRADE IN SCHOOL WHICH THREE OAKS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REPORTED THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO TRAVEL FOR THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Movie</th>
<th>Dancing</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While the above figures are based on answers given to questions of a subjective nature, they do show quite clearly what would be considered a "reasonable" distance by persons of grades listed to travel to a movie, a dance, or a date. The distance each grade will travel increases regularly as the children grow older until the senior year. The apparent drop during the senior year shown in these figures is significant but is doubtful when the small number of cases in this is taken into consideration.

However, these figures do not show the deviation from the mean so that the results could be used as a basis for mapping a planning area. Having recognized that there were differences in the distances that various age groups would be willing to travel, it is now necessary to get a picture of the school as a whole since planning must be based on aggregate rather than individuals. The following chart shows the frequencies reported by high school students answering the questions taken as a whole. It is of interest to note here that nineteen students made the reply "any" rather than stating an answer in terms of miles. Only one such reply occurred for a movie, four for dancing and the fourteen remaining were found under dating. Such replies were given a mileage value of thirty as that seemed a figure at the upper end of the values reported which would give weight to the meaning of the reply without being
so extreme as to completely distort the picture. As can be seen from the frequency distribution, thirty miles was a conservative rather than a radical deviation.
### TABLE III

**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF TABLE II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>Movie</th>
<th>Dancing</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>91</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It should be pointed out here that the group "50 or more" was reported fifteen different times by at least ten different persons. This was found to occur most often as an answer to the question about dating. On the other end of the line, dancing is the activity which was reported by the largest number of persons as one they would be willing to drive to almost any distance to attend. This is interesting in view of the fact that, until recently, dancing has been little emphasized in the school programs and dancing lessons were not available.

When means and medians were computed for these frequency distributions, the results were as follows:
TABLE IV

THE MEANS AND MEDIANS FOR THE DISTANCES IN MILES WHICH THREE OAKS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REPORTED THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO TRAVEL FOR THE ACTIVITIES LISTED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movie</td>
<td>17.03</td>
<td>19.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>18.70</td>
<td>18.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>18.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Applying these figures to the problem of the radius of the planning area, it becomes very apparent that the average distance which students in high school are willing to travel for entertainment would lie somewhere between seventeen and twenty-three miles. However, we see that the median distance ranges between eighteen and twenty miles. Since the median represents the middle value, we know that only 50 per cent of the class would be accounted for within a radius of eighteen to twenty miles. This could hardly be considered adequate coverage for a thoroughgoing attempt to control the recreation of the high school students.

However, these findings must not be taken as cause for despair over the problem of local planning for recreation. The very wording of the questions would tend to elicit answers that would be extreme distances that would be traveled rather than the usual distance. Also, it is possible for planning to take another approach entirely and, rather than trying to control the places where youth now seek their recreation, attempt to build recreation centers that youth will prefer and so patronize, rather than those beyond local control. If this were to be adopted as one of the goals of local planning, the consolidated school district would be fairly adequate as a planning area.
As a check to see just how much these distances reported by students as distances they would be willing to travel for recreation were representative of how far they were likely to actually travel, each person was asked the following questions:

Do you have a car in your family?

If so, about how many nights a week do you get to use the car?

The assumption was, of course, that an automobile would be the usual means of transportation and in spite of a person's "willingness" would be tempered by how often, if at all, he got the family car for his own use.

In all, 137 students answered the first of these two questions. Of this number, twenty-one reported not having cars in the family. Of these 106 students, seventy-two reported that they never had the car for their own use and thirty-four reported they had the car for their own use for a number of nights varying from one to seven nights per week. This means that, even of those students whose families own a car, only 32 per cent ever got the car and 67.9 per cent never had the car at all. If we add the twenty-one persons whose families do not own a car to those who never get the car for their own use, we find 73.2 per cent of those students included in the
survey have no access to a car for their own use.

When the replies to this question are tabulated according to the grade in school of the persons reporting, it was found, as might be expected, that the percentage who do not get the car decreases as the age increases.
### TABLE V

PERCENTAGES, BY GRADES, OF THREE OAKS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH CARS IN THE FAMILY WHO NEVER GET THEM FOR THEIR OWN USE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>PER CENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is of significance when it is recalled that older students tended also to be willing to drive longer distances for recreation. Even in these figures, however, one is impressed rather by the number who do not have a car for their own use than those who do. If the number reporting no car at all in the family had been figured in with those reporting a car but no personal use of it, these percentages would have been even higher.

Since such a high percentage of high school youth in Three Oaks do not have direct use of a car, their recreation will of necessity have to be limited to a narrow area. These results give strong support to the possibility of local planning being effective. Yet, there is one other factor to be considered that shifts the picture slightly in the opposite direction. As will be recalled, it was on dates that high school students reported the greatest willingness to travel long distances just as it is on dates that the planner for recreation is most concerned with having some control of activity. On a date, the common practice is for the boy to drive and provide the car. Therefore, it is important to investigate the use of the car according to sex, to determine to what extent cars are available for dating purposes. Of the seventy-two who reported that they never had use of the family car, forty-four were girls and only twenty-eight
were boys while twenty-four boys reported they drove the family car and only ten girls. On a percentage basis it would appear that almost 50 per cent, to be exact, 46.2 per cent, of the boys can and do drive the family car. Thus the availability of cars for dating purposes is greater than would be indicated merely on the basis of the previous presented figures.

Much more could be said about the planning area. Enough has been said, though, to enable us to come to several conclusions. To be really effective, planning for recreation in the modern world must be carried over a large territory. Yet, it is possible for local planning to be of value if it attempts to create new recreation centers under local control which youth would find attractive enough to patronize rather than attempting to control recreation through regulation of the places youth now seek out as centers of their activity. Most of the recreation of Three Oaks High School students is confined to a fairly narrow territory by the fact that well over half the students have no car for their own use. This makes planning on a local scale both possible and necessary, for such children are limited to a narrow territory and must find recreational outlets close to home.

With these considerations in mind as well as the practical and social advantages involved in using a
recognized political unit as the school district for the planning area, the rest of the study was conducted with the idea in mind that the consolidated school district would be the most feasible unit for local planning of high school recreation in Three Oaks, Michigan.

Accessibility of Three Oaks to Children Within The Consolidated School District

After defining the planning area, the next problem is to decide what shall be done with that area to improve the recreation of high school students and where it shall be done. If, as has been suggested, one fruitful avenue of approach would be the organization of a recreational program of sufficient interest and vitality to attract high school age youth away from the recreational activities beyond local control, there arises the question of where such activities shall be located so as to be available to the largest number of the children of the area. The logical center would seem to be the town of Three Oaks since the planning area has been defined as the consolidated school district. Yet, locating the center of planning in Three Oaks, while probably more desirable than any other one location within the area, has certain disadvantages which the planners must take into consideration in defining their goals.
On the basis of this survey, it was found that 50 per cent of the students attending Three Oaks High School live outside the village limits. The actual figures for this were sixty-four out of 127 students included in the survey lived within the village and sixty-three lived outside the village. To what extent would the planning of the recreational activities in Three Oaks tend to limit the participation of those students outside the village?

The answer to the question was sought through two channels; (a) to determine the distance in miles the country children lived outside Three Oaks; (b) to determine to what extent this distance tends to limit participation in the events occurring in Three Oaks.

On the survey questionnaire, each student living outside the village limits of Three Oaks was asked to state in terms of miles, the distance he lived from the village. The following is a chart of the findings:
TABLE VI
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF DISTANCES OF HOME FROM THE VILLAGE LIMITS OF THREE OAKS AS REPORTED BY SIXTY-THREE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS LIVING OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance from Three Oaks</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It may be seen from this distribution that the distance from Three Oaks ranges from .5 of a mile for three students to seven miles for four of the students. Upon calculating the mean distance it was found that 3.11 miles was the average distance from town while the median distance from town was 3.15 miles. This would indicate there is a bell-shaped curve operating and that half the students live within three miles of town.

The standard deviation from the mean for these distances prove to be 1.644 miles. From this it appears that approximately 68 per cent of the children living outside of Three Oaks yet attending Three Oaks School live between 1.46 miles and 4.75 miles from the village. Or, to put the information in even more cognate terms, 90.5 per cent of the students living outside Three Oaks live over 1.5 miles from the village and so would be beyond regular walking distance from town. In terms of the high school as a whole, this means that 44.6 per cent of the children would be unable, except perhaps in good weather, to take part in recreational activities sponsored in Three Oaks without some kind of transportation other than walking. From this, it is
apparent that this problem is one which might well concern a planning committee.

In the days before the invention of the automobile, the finding that almost half of the children in the recreational area were not within walking distance of the center where most activities would be taking place, would have simply precluded the possibility of servicing these children at all. But, today, with the automobile, that fact is of importance only so far as this distance is actually a measure of the degree of isolation from town activities.

In an attempt to determine to what degree the out-of-village children were actually isolated from the community, a separate tabulation was made of their answers to the questions concerning the availability of the family car. Of the sixty-two persons questioned, eight replied that there was no car in the family and fifty-four reported that they had a car. Of these fifty-four, only twenty-three reported ever getting the car for their own use at all. We are probably fairly safe in presuming that those reporting one or more nights a week would have a rather sure way of getting into town when they wished to come. Transportation for the thirty-one who never get the car would be less certain for they would have to depend on parents or friends to drive them into town. For the eight children without any type of motor transportation it would be even less certain
for they would have to depend entirely upon friends. This would indicate, if these figures can be taken as representative of all children living outside of Three Oaks, that about 63 per cent of these children are dependent upon others for transportation into town. Or, stated in relation to the whole school, about 39 per cent of the children who would be included in the planning area would have to depend upon parents or friends to bring them to recreational activities centered in Three Oaks.

These figures would seem to draw a rather dark picture for the possibility of a near 100 per cent participation in a community program of recreation. However, there are other indices that are, in a sense, more accurate which do not indicate so high a degree of isolation. It was thought that a tabulation of the approximate number of evenings per week spent in the town of Three Oaks at the present time would serve as a guide to the degree of isolation of out-of-town children. The following chart is a frequency distribution showing the answers given by the sixty-one students answering the question, "About how many evenings a week do you spend in the town of Three Oaks?". Those replying "three to four" nights were, for the purposes of tabulation, marked as the average of the two values given which would in this case be 3.5 and so forth for all similar answers.
TABLE VII

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF NIGHTS PER WEEK REPORTED SPENT IN THREE OAKS BY SIXTY-ONE OUT OF TOWN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Nights</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
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<td>4.0</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
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<td>5.0</td>
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<td>5.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From this table it is apparent that the range in the number of evenings reported spent per week in Three Oaks is from zero nights for three students to seven nights reported by two students. In order to get this data into a form significant for use in this study, it was decided to divide it into quartiles. It was found from this calculation that the first quartile ended at 1.36 nights per week, the median fell at 2.33 nights per week, and the third quartile at 3.66 nights per week. This means that approximately one-fourth spend less than one night and-a-half a week in town, half the students spend less than two and-a-half a week in town, and three-fourths of the students spend less than slightly over three nights a week in town. The mean number of evenings spent in Three Oaks is 2.36. While the detailed decimal point calculations of these figures are not in themselves significant, it is of importance to note that, in general, half of the children outside Three Oaks would be able to come two evenings a week to activities in Three Oaks without any change in their present habits. Any program calculated to fill any more than three evenings per week, would find that it would be able to count only about one-fourth of the country children as full-time participants unless parents could be
induced to increase the amount of transportation provided or some other system of transportation could be provided.

Of course, for high school age students, much of any planned program might well fall within the hours after school but before supper. In most urban high schools this is the period of greatest youth participation in supervised recreation and the school has taken the responsibility for organization and sponsoring it. Such developments have not occurred extensively in rural high schools as was pointed out early in the study. Once again the rural child finds himself in the position of having time on his hands and little to do.

However, in a rural village, planning recreational activities for after-school hours meet with a difficulty not encountered to any extent in an urban community. It must be remembered that 50 per cent of the Three Oaks high school age children live outside the village and therefore depend on the school bus for transportation. It is felt that school buses must leave immediately after closing of school to accommodate those who must get home promptly. Before discussing this problem directly, it seems wise to first investigate what effect the necessity of riding the school bus now has on participation in after-school activities.

Each student taking part in the survey was asked,
"About how many hours per week do you spend in activities in the school building other than for school work itself?". Of the total of 122 children answering this question, fifty-five reported that they spent no time whatsoever in after-school activities. In other words, 46 per cent of the high school students in Three Oaks do not participate in after-school activities of any kind. The factor of special significance to us in our present discussion, however, is that, of these fifty-five replies, twenty-two were from students living in town who presumably get home by walking, while thirty-three were from children riding the school buses. Thus, 36 per cent of the town students reported no participation while over half, 55 per cent, out-of-town students reported no participation in school activities.

The following is a distribution of the replies received to this question.
TABLE VIII
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTED NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK
SPENT IN AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES BY 122 THREE OAKS HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS ACCORDING TO PLACE OF RESIDENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours Reported</th>
<th>Village Students Frequency</th>
<th>Out-of-Village Hours Reported</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is of interest to note in this connection that the mean value of the number of hours spent in after-school activities as reported by students living in the village was 1.6 hours. The median value for those living in the village was 1.27 while only .46 for those living outside. This shows that there is a decidedly skewed curve for those reporting from outside the village and, for our purposes, the differences between the median values gives a more accurate picture of participation than that between the means. One-half the children living in town participate less than 1.28 hours per week while for out-of-town children one-half reported less than one-half hour participation per week. Distances lived from the school definitely becomes a factor to be considered.

Having discovered that a real transportation problem exists whether the program is planned for after school, in the evening or both, planners for recreation in the Three Oaks Consolidated School District need to ask themselves several questions regarding their goals. Shall one of the goals of the program be to secure as near one hundred per cent participation by all the high school children in the area as possible? If so, how can this be best secured? To go back to the question of school buses,
it might be suggested here as a possibility that a late bus
be run to take home those children who wish to stay for
after-school activities. Of course such a program would
entail additional expenses. This then raises a question
as to the allocation of resources for recreation. What
proportion of the money available for a recreational prog-
gram would the planners be justified in spending to provide
transportation for children who could not otherwise partici-
pate? What other parts of the program would have to be
curtailed and to what extent would they be curtailed by
allocating funds for this purpose? Is this curtailment
more or less desirable than making it possible for country
children to participate?

This is only one of the problems in defining the
goals of the recreational planner in Three Oaks. It serves
to illustrate, however, that the defining of goals is essen-
tially a choice of values. Is it more important to use
resources for improving the kind of recreation being offered
or to make it possible for more children to participate in a
less elaborate program? This is an answer which cannot be
arrived at by mathematical calculation, but must be worked
out through the give and take of democratic planning.

It is not within the scope of this study to examine
and point up all the choices which will face recreation
planners for high school age youth in Three Oaks in the
process of delineating their objectives. But, before concluding, this study did hope to touch on one other vital field in the area. This is the field of institutional participation in the providing of wholesome recreation.

As has been shown before, the trend in rural recreation is toward urbanization. One of the main currents in urban recreation has been the loss of function by older institutions such as club organizations, extracurricular activities in connection with the public schools, and commercial amusement centers. We want to examine the extent of this trend in the recreation of Three Oaks High School students and see what effect this may have on the definition of goals.

We will concern ourselves first with the older institutions in the field of recreation, the home and the church, and then investigate the school which has always traditionally had a function in recreation but whose function is now changing rapidly. Finally, we will review the situation in regard to commercial amusement and specialized club organizations.

The Family in Three Oaks High School Recreation

It is rather difficult matter to find any one indication which will be completely reliable in determining the extent to which the home functions in
recreation. While an accurate measure could no doubt be obtained by a series of interrogations and cross checks, this study had to necessarily limit itself. After consideration, it was decided that about the best indication of family participation in recreation would be the amount of time students reported spending with their families in terms of evenings per week. While time spent during the evening with one's family does not necessarily mean it is spent in recreation, the leisure of most families falls during that time of the day and the indices would not be totally unreliable. Consequently each student was asked the question, "About how many evenings a week do you spend doing things with your family?". On the second page following is a tabulation of the results.

On this table the X values which were not marked were left blank so that a scattergram effect would be had by the reader. While it would not be of sufficient statistical significance to calculate the line of regression to determine the extent of the correlation between age and the number of nights spent with the family, it is apparent from simple observation that as children grow older the number of evenings spent with the family decreases. When the mean values for these different grades are calculated, it appears that the eighth grade spend an average of 3.98 evenings per week at home, the ninth grade 4.53, the tenth grade 2.77,
the eleventh grade 2.66, and the twelfth grade 2.36. This seems to bear out the general impression that as children get older the family decreases in importance as a unit of recreation and that planners for recreation in high schools will probably find the need for planning recreation outside the home greater in older than in younger persons.
TABLE IX

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION SHOWING THE NUMBER OF NIGHTS PER WEEK SPENT WITH THE FAMILY AS REPORTED BY 113 THREE OAKS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Nights</th>
<th>Eighth Grade</th>
<th>Ninth Grade</th>
<th>Tenth Grade</th>
<th>Eleventh Grade</th>
<th>Twelfth Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking the replies of the student population as a whole, the mean number of nights spent home per week is 3.35 while the median is 3.30. The standard deviation is 1.78, which indicates that 68 per cent of the students between 1.57 nights a week and 5.13 nights per week are at home. We also know that, half the high school youth of the planning area spend less than 3.5 nights a week at home and three-fourths spend less than about 5 nights a week with the family.

While there is nothing alarming about these figures, it is evident that the traditional control of recreation which the rural home used to exercise over its members is diminishing in Three Oaks as well as elsewhere. This time which is not spent with the family must be spent in the community where it would be more directly under the control of the social planner. To the extent that the family has lost its function in recreation, the community must step in to fulfill the need.

The Church in Recreation in Three Oaks

The other social institution taking a traditional role in rural recreation both by assuming recreation as one of its collateral functions and as an agency of social control over recreation was the church. The church still performs a function in the recreation of rural high
school youth, but it is in many ways a different role than that of the church of a generation ago. We are interested in discovering what role the church plays in the lives of Three Oaks High School youth today. Our first investigation sought to determine approximately how much time is spent in church activity of any kind by high school young people. Each person questioned was asked to state about how many hours a week he spent in church-sponsored activity. The following is a tabulation of the results.
**TABLE X**

**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION SHOWING THE PARTICIPATION OF THREE OAKS YOUTH IN CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Hours Per Week</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 122
These figures are very revealing. Though there is no data from a generation ago with which to compare this, it is certainly significant to find that thirty-nine students in 122 report spending no time in church activities of any kind. This is 31.9 per cent of the total. 

70.5 per cent of high school youth spend less than two hours a week and 36.9 per cent spend less than three hours a week in church activities. The average time spent by those reporting was 1.61 hours a week. In terms of time spent relative to the total amount of leisure available to the high school young people, the church cannot be said to be playing a very important role in Three Oaks recreation at the present time.

This study was interested also in determining just what kinds of activity within the church program in which high school youth were participating, so each person was simply asked to list the kinds of church activities he attended.
## TABLE XI

CHURCH ACTIVITY INTEREST TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number Times Mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preaching</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Sponsored Youth Groups</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Activities</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Classes and Meetings</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sunday school and preaching are by far the most frequently mentioned activity and they are characteristically passive in nature rather than requiring the active, creative participation of the child. Also, they are the more traditional services of the church rather than the more modern, specialized functions. It might well be noted, too, that these two activities come on Sunday morning, a period not likely to be considered "critical" in the eyes of recreational planners.

The development of specialized activities for youth has been one of the chief movements in the church recreation. This movement has begun in Three Oaks but has not progressed to the place where it has equalized the traditional services in its appeal to youth. In the number of children being reached by such organizations, the church cannot be said to be making more than a medium contribution. In all, only 26 per cent of the total number of children reported belonged to church groups.

It may well be said that the church exercises its control over recreation indirectly through setting the moral climate in which youth makes its choices. This is probably true and is an important function of the church. However, this study was interested in securing some type of concrete indication of the extent to which the church still played its traditional role as a censor in a
concrete situation. Each person in the study was asked, "If your church considered a movie to be unfit to see, would this stop you from seeing it if you really wanted to go?". While this question applies to only one situation and so is valid only in that context, the replies are still worth mentioning.

32 replied that it would not interfere with their attending.

29 replied that it would keep them from attending.

6 were in doubt as to what they would do in this situation.

The church, with its building unused during most of the week, its trained, full-time leadership, and its esteem in the mind of the community, is one of the most valuable resources a group of planners have in developing a community program of recreation. The churches in Three Oaks do not at present appear to be making the greatest contribution of which they are capable. It might well be one of the goals of the community planners to coordinate and bring into full fruition the potential resources of the village churches.

The School in Three Oaks Recreation

The school has emerged as the most important institution in community high school recreation in urban
communities. As revealed earlier, this development has not
grown to any extent in rural high schools. Probably the
two main factors which have slowed this development are:
(a) the fact that 50 per cent of the children ride school
buses and no means of transportation is readily available
to take them home after the buses leave; (b) rural high
schools have small faculties which are usually overloaded
by the burden of teaching different subject fields and
have little time or energy to devote to recreational
planning after school hours. Where a large school can
afford an "activity director", villages have to rely on
the existing faculty entirely.

Neither of these factors can be taken as absolute.
Even if no arrangements could be made for extra school
buses or private cars, it would appear that more out-of-
town students could take part in after school activities
if there were something interesting going on. In turn
students were asked the following question: "Could you
spend more time in after-school activity if there were
something interesting going on?".
TABLE XII

INTERESTS OF VILLAGE AND NON-VILLAGE STUDENTS IN AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Village Children</th>
<th>Out-of-Village Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The number replying in the affirmative is so nearly alike for village and non-village students that planners might wonder at the real significance of rural living. Might it not be possible that if a program of sufficient interest and vitality were planned, almost as many children from outside the village would find a way to participate as children living in the village? There is room for speculation.

The factor of the extent to which a rural faculty can be expected to participate in recreation programs is purely subjective in nature and not amenable to mathematical calculation. At this point it might be well to observe that in urban schools, while there may be an activity director to head the general program, the individual teachers are usually expected to sponsor one extra-curricular activity along with their academic work. Could the same be expected of the rural teacher? In a school of one hundred or more faculty members, the personnel within the school are able to handle the entire program. With only eight or ten faculty members, it may be necessary for the rural school to get supplementary help from the community if it is to offer a varied, interesting program. Would this be possible in Three Oaks?

One other insight into the problem of leadership
is entertainment. Stewart Cole in his survey of leadership in Recreational Opportunities in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, found that most communities tend to emphasize buying of physical equipment for recreation much more than to stress providing adequate leadership in recreation. Most persons familiar with recreational planning are agreed with Mr. Cole that an investment in recreational leadership is far better in terms of results than the mere provision of equipment. A good recreational leader can do a great deal with very little but even the best equipment will go unused if no provision is made for its use. This might well be taken into consideration when the planners decide for what their limited resources should be allocated, equipment or personnel.

In a town such as Three Oaks, a whole or part time recreational director employed by the town and backed by the trained personnel of the high school together with voluntary aid from the community could do much in forging a vital recreation program.

**Commercial Amusements in the Three Oaks Region**

One of the most striking developments in recreation has been the trend towards commercialization. In rural communities this trend has been manifest primarily in attendance at movies and listening to the radio. This survey
was interested in discovering what proportion of the leisure time of Three Oaks High School youth was spent in these two kinds of commercialized recreation. Following are frequency distributions showing the answers received.
TABLE XIII

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION SHOWING THE NUMBER OF HOURS PER DAY REPORTED SPENT IN LISTENING TO THE RADIO AND THE NUMBER OF TIMES REPORTED SPENT PER WEEK IN MOVING PICTURE THEATERS BY THE THREE OAKS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours per Day</th>
<th>Radio Frequency</th>
<th>Movies Times per Week</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From these reports, it appears that the average number of hours reported spent per day listening to the radio is $1.54$ or $10.78$ hours per week. The median is $1.63$ which indicates that half of the students reporting spent more than one and one-half hours a day at the radio. The average number of movies attended is $1.64$ nights per week and the median is $1.49$. In terms of hours per week spent in the moving picture theaters if we figured that one picture lasts about $2.5$ hours, it appears that about $3$ hours and $15$ minutes is the average amount of time spent but that half the students spend more time than this.

The moving picture and especially the radio bulk large in the recreational activities of Three Oaks youth when they are compared with time spent in other activities. Only $1.25$ hours were reported as the average amount of time spent in after-school activities sponsored by the school per week, and $1.61$ hours spent in church activities. Is it considered desirable that the commercialized activities listed should so overshadow the church and the school? This might well be one of the objectives of the community planners, to increase in relative amount of leisure time controlled by the church and school as compared with commercial recreation.
Youth Clubs and Recreation in Three Oaks

In urban recreation, clubs organized for and by youth supervised by adults have taken an increasingly vital role in the recreational life of the young people. They constitute a part of the trend toward more specialization in institutional supervision of recreation. We are here concerned with discovering the role such institutions or organizations play in the leisure time activities of Three Oaks high school students. In order that replies would not be prejudiced and only those organizations of sufficient importance in the minds of students to be thought of without prompting would be listed. Each person was simply asked to list the names of clubs of which he is a member and attended regularly. It was assumed that when blanks were left and the rest of the questionnaire filled in, the reply indicated participation in no clubs. Following are the results.
TABLE XIV
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS TO WHICH 117 THREE OAKS STUDENTS REPORTED BELONGING AND ATTENDING REGULARLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Clubs</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>117</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As may be seen, fifty-six of the 117 or 48 per cent of the total reporting did not belong to any club or organization or left the question blank. Forty-eight persons or 41 per cent reported belonging to only one club or organization. In all, 89 per cent of the students belong to only one club or less. This is not a very extensive development of such recreational organizations.

What were the organizations to which the young people belong? The most frequently listed were various church young people's groups, then the Future Home Makers of America, Future Farmers of America, the School Glee Club, Home Economics Club and several miscellaneous organizations which were reported by two or fewer persons. All of these clubs, with the exception of the church groups, are sponsored by the school. Significant to the planner might well be the dirth of organizations sponsored by other community agencies, the business men's clubs, the lodges, the factory, community women's groups, or nationally federated organizations such as the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. who have high school auxiliaries known as the Hi-Y and Girl Reserves.

The club organization is one which can be developed to operate where traditional institutions have lost part of their recreational function. They are readily adaptable to the small community and could well be one of the major types of organization developed to fill the gap left by partial urbanization.
CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From the foregoing study it is possible to draw several conclusions likely to be helpful in guiding a recreational program planned for high school students.

1. Three Oaks seems to have an economy founded on a sufficiently stable and diversified base to maintain the community at about its present size and wealth for time to come.

2. The community is of fairly homogeneous native white stock which should make planning relatively more simple than if there were major culture conflicts existing within the village.

3. Most of the recreation of the Three Oaks High School students is confined to a narrow territory by the fact that over half of the students have no car for their own use. A difficult transportation problem exists whether the program is planned for after school, in the evening, or for both. More study needs to be done along this line. The question immediately appears as to whether money should be allocated to bring children in for these programs and also what are the planners' goals. The problem also appears whether planners should improve the kind
of recreation offered or should they make it possible for more children to participate in a less elaborate program.

4. Churches, of which there are seven, do not appear to be making the greatest contribution of which they are capable. There needs to be more coordination between organizations and the use of facilities that are available.

5. The commercial recreation absorbs too large a proportion of the youngsters' leisure time. The school and church should control more.

6. Planners must decide whether their limited resources are to be allocated for equipment or for personnel to set up a program. In the town of Three Oaks a whole or part time recreational director employed by the town and backed by trained personnel of the school could do much in forging a vital recreational program.

7. New recreation centers need to be created under local control which youth would find attractive enough to patronize rather than to attempt to control recreation through the regulation of places youth now seek out as centers of their activity.

This study has not drawn many conclusions: that was not its purpose. It has pointed out trends which local planners should be aware of in the formulating of their plans for rural recreation and has attempted to present statistical data that will be helpful to planners
in the community of Three Oaks in defining their goals. This is only the beginning. The next step for planners is to concretely state their goals and then set about in their implementation. It is hoped that some of the material presented in this study may be helpful in both undertakings.


Lively, Charles Elson, Rural Recreation in Two Ohio Counties. Columbus: The Ohio State University, 1927. 23 pp.


Recent Social Trends, edited by William Fielding Ogburn, President's Committee on Recent Social Trends, 1933.

