

Camp Sensibilities: Tradition, Narrative, and Playing Indian at American Summer Camps

Katherine Gonella Manley

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Education

University of Washington

2023

Committee:

Nancy Beadie, Chair

Jesse Oak Taylor

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Social and Cultural Foundations

University of Washington

© Copyright 2023

Katherine Gonella Manley

University of Washington

Abstract

Camp Sensibilities: Tradition, Narrative, and Playing Indian at American Summer Camps

Katherine Gonella Manley

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Nancy Beadie

Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

Storytelling is an integral tradition at American summer camps. Summer camps allow children to participate in a form of narratological escapism and abandonment of ‘real world’ societal rules: where children play with their expression, identities, and how they interact with one another. Through analyzing hegemonic representations of the ‘Indian’ and other settler-colonial myths in *Camping Magazine* and other American Camp Association publications, I will illustrate that a formative and enduring summer camp tradition is the misappropriation of Native American symbols, names, and iconography. In addition, I will critically examine the settler-colonial myths I myself have perpetuated from my own summer camp experiences. I argue that the narratological paradox of the American summer camp industry is that while it attempts to provide an escape from modern life and societal constraints, by ‘playing Indian’, summer camps have in fact partaken in one of the United States’ oldest traditions.

Table of Contents

Camp Sensibilities: Tradition, Narrative, and Playing Indian at American Summer Camps

Dedication	Page 5
Chapter 1: A Short and Dubious History of Summer Camp	Page 6
Chapter 2: Playing Indian in <i>Camping Magazine</i>	Page 26
Chapter 3: Finding Camp Menzies	Page 59
Opportunities for Further Research	Page 93
Bibliography	Page 100
Appendix	Page 111

Dedication

Menzies, for the magic and love that stays.

Mom, Dad, and Blue — a sunflower's sun.

David, the somebody who figured me out.

Chapter 1: A Short and Dubious History of Summer Camp

Tie-dyed shirts, sticky s'mores, the smell of bug spray, eyes burning from campfire smoke, the sound of children singing the same songs over and over (and over), and capture the flag: few institutions in the United States have tropes as enduring and iconic as summer camps. For nearly 200 years, American children have been going to camp.¹ Fourteen million children attend some version of summer camp each year, and camps collectively employ one million seasonal staff every summer.² While scholars have established that summer camps have a positive influence on youth,³ critical historical research of the settler-colonial traditions of summer camp is underexplored. Summer camp's reach to youth populations, tradition of 'playing Indian', and distinctive ability to develop autonomous children make it a worthwhile topic for further philosophical and historical exploration in the field of education.⁴

The institution of summer camp in the U.S. has a long history of oral storytelling, outdoor stewardship, and escaping modern life. However, these traditions have often commandeered objects and imagery from a vast array of Native American tribes, such as Tee-Pee's, headdresses, and many of the stories/songs told at camps. The use of these objects, images, and stories from Native American tribes is not done in community with tribes and is culturally appropriative.⁵ (Ziff and Rao, 1997). Until very recently these racist traditions have largely remained uncritically accepted amongst scholars and camp professionals, often bespoke as "...rites of passage, some

¹ Eleanor Eells, *Eleanor Eells' History of Organized Camping: The First 100 Years* (American Camping Association, 1986).

² Camper Enrollment Survey, American Camp Association. (2016)

³ The American Camp Association is currently conducting a 5-year impact study on summer camp and the positive effects it has on its staff and campers. ACA conducted a similar study in 2001-2006, in which over 5000 campers and families participated. The most notable finding in the 2006 study was that, as a result of summer camp participation, campers demonstrated higher levels of self-esteem, independence, confidence, and collaboration.

⁴ Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (Yale University Press, 2022).

⁵ Bruce H. Ziff and Pratima V. Rao, *Borrowed Power: Essays on Cultural Appropriation* (Rutgers University Press, 1997).

more formal or explicit than others, designed to foster children’s sense of participating in a transformative enterprise.”^{6 7}

Likewise, large summer camp institutions, especially the American Camp Association, have held to idealized storied versions of American history in which camp professionals “...find pioneering footprints across the West of early Americans who forged communities in frontier and rural settings,” and camp landscapes have been explicitly “modeled after Native American and even more prehistoric cultures.”⁸ While racist traditions are now seemingly phased out of most modern summer camps, the tradition and legacy of ‘playing Indian’ is still present in the summer camp industry.⁹ While there are important ongoing research projects on summer camps and their impact on adolescent Americans,¹⁰ the historical and settler-colonial context of summer camps has been absent from this conversation. There needs to be further exploration of how the summer camp tradition of ‘playing Indian’ maintains relevance. This topic will be discussed in this thesis through a historical, narrative lens but remains a necessary area to be further explored in summer camp research.

It is worthwhile to further explore how summer camp traditions have relied upon racist caricatures of Native Americans because summer camps continue to be a powerful shaping force

⁶ Alexia Franzidis, Alana N. Seaman, and Jayna Donaldson, “A Toponymy of American Summer Camps: Onscreen Stereotypes or Symbols Ripe for Change?,” *The Journal of American Culture* 45, no. 2 (May 19, 2022): 139–54, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jacc.13337>.

Kenneth B. Kidd and Derritt Mason, *Queer as Camp: Essays on Summer, Style, and Sexuality* (Fordham Univ Press, 2019).

⁷ Leslie Paris, *Children’s Nature: The Rise of the American Summer Camp* (NYU Press, 2010).

⁸ Lance Ozier, “Camp as Educator: Lessons Learned from History,” American Camp Association, September 29, 2015.

⁹ I often use the phrase “summer camp industry.” By this, I mean the American Camp Association and summer camps associated with/accredited by the American Camp Association. Of course, there are summer camps that are not ACA certified. But by in large, the ACA is extremely influential and formative in the organized camping movement from a standardization, legal, cultural, and historical standpoint.

¹⁰ The Girl Scouts Research Institute recently partnered with the American Camp Association to conduct studies on the positive impact of outdoor recreation on young Girl Scouts. Additionally, The University of Utah’s Parks, Rec, And Tourism academic department has two ongoing impact studies on the lasting impact of summer camp and young adults.

in the lives of American youth. This critical pedagogy and reflection on the settler-colonial history of summer camps must occur because camps are novel environments, especially now. Summer camp allows children to participate in a sort of time-bent narratological escapism and abandonment of societal rules: where children play with their expression, their identities, and how they interact with one another.¹¹ This socialization usually occurs in natural, outdoor environments, away from screens, technology, and social media. This form of socialization is proven beneficial for youth populations and thus renders a critical reflection of our harmful, archaic history as an industry necessary.¹² Contextualizing the history of Native American appropriation within the summer camp industry is crucial for sharpening the focus of the future trajectory of summer camps in the U.S.

Summer camps have historically prioritized affluent and white populations, but there has been a recent push to make summer camps more individualized for traditionally underrepresented children.¹³ The summer camp industry, as exemplified through the American Camp Association's updated policies, workshop offerings, and published articles, is beginning to work towards an inclusive future where more children can experience the proven benefits of a summer camp experience. This must be done with a clear and complex historical portrayal of our industry's history and how it pertains to current camp professionals. Historical context creates the hegemonic norms we live by today, and for most of summer camp history, the norm has been

¹¹ Penny Harvey, Juhwan Seo, and Emily Logan, "Queer at Camp: The Impact of Summer Camps on LGBTQ Campers in the United States," *Gender a Výzkum / Gender and Research* 22, no. 2 (January 18, 2022): 45–70, <https://doi.org/10.13060/gav.2021.019>.

Laurie P. Browne, Ann Gillard, and Barry A. Garst, "Camp as an Institution of Socialization: Past, Present, and Future," *Journal of Experiential Education* 42, no. 1 (January 4, 2019): 51–64, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1053825918820369>.

¹² *Camp as an Institution of Socialization: Past, Present, and Future* by Laurie Browne, Ann Gillard, and Barry Garst

¹³ LEAD Inc. and Transplaining Inc. are two nonprofits that specialize in developing curriculum at summer camps that focus on gender affirming care, youth mental health, collective racial trauma, and addressing microaggressions against staff members of color.

an uncritical appropriation of Native American symbols, names, and iconography. The paradox of summer camp is that it has always been an institution for people to escape modern life and societal constraints, yet by ‘playing Indian’, summer camps have in fact partaken in one of the United States’ oldest traditions.

Summer camp professionals have long believed the ‘natural’ environment of summer camp is the best space for youth populations to grow, learn, and develop.¹⁴ In *The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper and the Nature of Camp*, Michael B. Smith describes that the ‘camp world’ is thought to be unilaterally better for children than the ‘real world’ amongst camp professionals. This, he argues, is because the camp world is in closer proximity to the natural world. He writes that “... many camping leaders had taken as an article of faith — that the camp world, diffused with the elemental, was more real than the world campers come from, where all experience was too mediated to be ‘real’”.¹⁵ This represents a paradoxical narrative belief. Though the ‘camp world’ is typically set in a natural environment, it is still manufactured and designed to facilitate a specific experience.¹⁶

While it is common for an organized group of people to share a common set of beliefs, it often appears that summer camp professionals believe that “summer camp is the best space for youth populations to grow, learn, and develop” is not a claim, but indeed an irrefutable, canonical fact.¹⁷ Such claims are not problematic when they’re framed as autoethnographic, situated philosophical statements. However, when they are institutionally validated, it reduces the possibility and space for counter-claims and other lived experiences. This belief, instead, is

¹⁴ Rita Yerkes, “His Story, Her Story, Our Story: 100 Years of the American Camp Association,” American Camp Association, September 29, 2015.

¹⁵ Michael B. Smith, “‘The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper’ and the Nature of Summer Camp,” *Environmental History* 11, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 70–101, <https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/11.1.70>.

¹⁶ Abigail Ayres Van Slyck, *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890-1960* (U of Minnesota Press, 2006).

¹⁷ To be fair, I believe this, too — but I am aware this belief reflects my own personal experiences.

supported by institutional American Camp Association publications. To date, there is one comprehensive book about the history of summer camps widely read and cited by summer camp professionals. Eleanor Eells, an influential figure in American Camp Association (ACA) history, published the *History of Organized Camping: The First 100 Years* in 1986. In this book, Eells chronicles different ‘chapters’ of summer camp’s growth and evolution into a modern industry. The chapters of the book are as follows: The Beginnings (1861-1910), Camping as a Growing Vital Force (1910-1918), The Period of Challenges (1918-1945), and The Period of Acceptance (1945-1961). This book is well-researched and includes a fascinating array of source material such as letters, educational journals, photography, and legal documents. However, the topics of race, segregation, and cultural appropriation are noticeably absent from this historical accounts of the summer camp industry, though they were integral in its formation.¹⁸ That is, these topics are not brought up until the summer camp industry began to take a more active role in racial desegregation in the 1950s.

Of course, this book was written for, supported by, and published by the American Camp Association. It is thus not surprising that the book paints the summer camp industry in a positive light. However, given the financial backing of this publication, I argue this book operates as propaganda for the summer camp industry. This book operates as our industry’s most comprehensive historical text, and yet it largely glazes over the less attractive details in the history of organized camping. Since the summer camp industry does not accurately represent its full, narratological history in publications such as *History of Organized Camping*, this leads to biased claims and narrative lapses in other succeeding publications.

In Peter Brooks’s *Body Work: Objects of Desire in Modern Narrative*, he argues that people are driven to read stories because of our natural human drive to “find meaning within

¹⁸ Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Duke University Press, 2016).

chaos”.¹⁹ This drive to find meaning, he writes, stems from our competing Freudian desires for both dilation and closure. We associate plots with the narratives of our own lives so we can continue to make sense of our own human experiences. This structuralist standpoint that Brooks presents illuminates why a singular, narrow historical narrative like the one presented in Eleanor Eel’s *History of Organized Camping* is compelling to summer camp professionals. If we examine the themes of Eleanor Eel’s book, it provides a narrative that is compelling to summer camp professionals. It presents their work as important and valuable.

Eleanor Eel’s book remains influential in texts that are published today in the summer camp industry. The wide influence of Eel’s book on the narratological history of summer camp makes a critical, decolonial examination of our industry’s history imperative.²⁰ One such study which illustrates this institutional bias is *Organized Camping: A Historical Perspective* by Ron Ramsing.²¹ In this article, Ramsing uses sources compiled by the American Camping Association. He cites ‘camp management’ handbooks, ACA surveys of camp directors, Eleanor Eel’s book, and ACA historical compilations of summer camp administration documents. Ramsing’s sources are limited in scope, but it is understandable, as there are few publications about summer camp not created by the American Camp Association.²²

Ramsing’s article establishes that urban living places a strain on the lives of American youth. It is clear Ramsing believes that summer camps are important because an outdoor respite from urban life is beneficial to youth populations, but Ramsing illustrates a bias that outdoor and ‘natural’ living is better for youth than urban dwellings. He provides little evidence for why

¹⁹ Peter Brooks, “Body Work: Objects of Desire in Modern Narrative,” *SubStance* 23, no. 2 (1994): 111, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3685072>.

²⁰ Amanda Shore explores this topic more fully than I do in: “Notes on camp: A decolonizing strategy.” *Thesis, NSCAD University* (2015).

²¹ Ron Ramsing, “Organized Camping: A Historical Perspective,” *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America* 16, no. 4 (October 2007): 751–54, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chc.2007.05.009>.

²² ACA has been the preeminent organized camping standardization/researching body since 1935.

children benefit from an urban respite, and such claims imply that urban living has inherent negative qualities. This is a biased claim but is not portrayed as such. Later in this article, Ramsing states, “It is this American tradition of organized camping that would invariably touch more lives than any other social institution aside from public schools,” though this claim is unsubstantiated with any evidence.

Ramsings’ article is indicative of a pattern of summer camp publications. Though I am a summer camp director with a decade of summer camp experience (and thus am inclined to align with Eels and Ramsings’ claims) I recognize that a strong personal connection to one’s research, left unstated, leaves room for bias and unsubstantiated claims.²³ Complicating the singular historical narrative of the summer camp industry is important to completing critical historical research. Not only will it make us better camp researchers, but confronting the settler-colonial origins of summer camp situates camp professionals to better serve more diverse youth populations.

In Eleanor Eeel’s 1986 book *History of Organized Camping*, she canonizes Fredrick Gunn as the ‘founder’ of the organized camping movement. Leading a camping trip in 1861, he certainly was an early adopter of outdoor youth expeditions. However, I argue Gunn’s politically progressive views as an abolitionist outdoor educator positioned him as the best-fit founder of the organized camping movement. In other words, he represented the ideals that the American Camp Association wanted to be positioned alongside in 1861 — a progressive, anti-racist one. Though Gunn was indeed an influential figure in the organized camping movement and outdoor education, in representing the ‘start’ of camping, he allowed the American Camp Association to distance itself from the racially segregated origins of America’s first summer camps.

²³ John Echeverri-Gent and Kamal Sadiq, “Situated Knowledge, the Construction of Meaning, and Political Action,” in *Interpreting Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2020), 18–50, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190125011.003.0002>.

In *Therapeutic Uses of Nature* author Kieth Russel writes that the first summer camps were developed by boarding schools looking to fill the summers of their wealthy, white New England students, the idea of camping stemming from a “direct reaction to the physical and moral declines of youth growing up during the industrial revolution.”²⁴ This ideology has clear links to race — for whose moral decline would educators be concerned with rescuing? Platforming an abolitionist figure like Gunn perpetuates settler-colonial narratives about summer camp history, ignoring how issues like cultural appropriation and racial segregation have caused material harm to traditionally underrepresented communities at summer camps. Understanding the prevailing narratives about Fredrick Gunn and his ‘first’ camps illustrate why he was an attractive selection for the American Camp Association.

In 1861, just as the Civil War was beginning in earnest, Frederick Gunn went camping. He was not alone: trailing behind him, carrying two weeks' worth of supplies, were thirty school-aged boys. Frederick and his wife Abigail ran a school for boys in Washington, Connecticut, formally called the Gunnery School, where the Gunn’s taught boys how to become the abiding societal contributors the abolitionist North would soon need them to be.²⁵

Frederick, a staunch abolitionist, thought of this two-week backpacking and camping trip as an opportunity to prepare the young boys for what might soon be their new normal: living in the outdoors, in tents, fighting the rebels. But this camping trip also represented American lore about the settlement of the frontier. Connecticut was far from California, but venturing outside allowed the boys to “recreate the romanticized view of a soldier’s life of camping under the stars,” however contrived this wilderness might be.²⁶ Though living in the wilderness was part of

²⁴ Keith C. Russell, “Therapeutic Uses of Nature,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental and Conservation Psychology* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 428–44, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199733026.013.0023>.

²⁵ “The Abolitionist,” The Frederick Gunn School, <https://www.frederickgunn.org/about/history-traditions/the-abolitionist>.

²⁶ Eleanor Eells, *History of Organized Camping: The First 100 Years*, Page 5, American Camp Association (1986)

the lore of America's settlement and the westward migration, Connecticut was far from this wild frontier. The outings Gunn organized were geared toward cultivating survival skills and spiritual inspiration. Americans felt nostalgia for the rural farming culture, which had dominated the country in its early years, and now seemed threatened by the urbanization of the industrial age.²⁷ Gunnery Camp is commonly recognized to be the first residential summer camp in the U.S.²⁸ Summer camps then spread rapidly throughout New England.²⁹ However, according to the American Camp Association's yearly published 'Guide to ACA Accredited Summer Camps', summer camps didn't seem to grow in popularity on the West Coast until the 20th century. Even in this transition from east to west, though, Gunn's militaristic and Native American-inspired approach to curriculum influenced summer camp permanently.

Though Gunn discussed in letters and correspondence his militaristic inspiration for this first camping trip and viewed the Civil War as inevitable, he was also a deep admirer of the peaceful and nature-oriented Transcendentalist movement. He often referenced Ralph Waldo Emerson's 1936 essay *Nature* in letter correspondences with his wife Abigail ("I love to read Emerson - what perfect peace, founded on perfect faith in the Oversoul!")³⁰ and his students at the Gunnery wrote in *Master of the Gunnery* of Gunn's ability to recall entire passages of Emerson from memory. In an 1887 speech to fellow educators, Gunn emphasized that "the ideal school is set in the country, or, if in the city, the generous city fathers have afforded it liberal space with trees and flowers."³¹

²⁷ Paula Gibson Krinsky, "Reading, Writing, and the Great Outdoors: Frederick Gunn's School Transforms Victorian-Era Education," *Connecticut History*, July 18, 2021.

²⁸ United States, Senate. 99. S. Res. 406, 99-2. Resolution honoring the 125th anniversary of organized camping in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary. 1986.

²⁹ Eleanor Eells, *History of Organized Camping: The First 100 Years*, American Camp Association (1986)

³⁰ William Hamilton Gibson, *The Master of the Gunnery: A Memorial of Frederick William Gunn*, page 166. 1887.

³¹ William Hamilton Gibson, *The Master of the Gunnery: A Memorial of Frederick William Gunn*, page 150. 1887.

It appears they did not talk about the Civil War on this camping trip. On the trip, the boys fished, cooked over a fire, looked up at the stars, and swam in a nearby lake. The couple continued the tradition for twelve years, embarking year after year with a group of about 30 boys into the woods to teach them about good morals.³² On many of these trips, Gunn would stress the importance of following in the path of the Indians, using their ‘traditions’ to teach his students how to better connect with nature. His camping trips were described as places “where campers were taught an ersatz pastiche of Native American culture, how to hike, cook on a fire, bead moccasins and belts, play baseball.”³³ With this first organized expedition, Gunn instated an unequivocal truth of the narratological ethos of summer camp. Summer camp would, first and foremost, be an opportunity for young people to escape modern life. Second, camping would represent how children could playfully integrate patriotism into their lives by playing Indian.

In addition to his love of the outdoors, Gunn was noted for his politically radical ideals. When asked if he would consider allowing black and Indigenous children at his school, Gunn wrote, “...I am no critic of skins; that I teach all who come to receive my instructions.”³⁴ His ideas about education are certainly appealing to a modern audience. It makes sense why Gunn was the perfect choice as the father of organized camping. In 1986, the same year Eleanor Eels published *History of Organized Camping* which named Frederick Gunn the founder of organized camping, the American Camping Association celebrated its 125th year by holding a camp on the town’s Gulf Beach for 1,500 campers from around the world.³⁵

³² This number is an approximation made by the author. Gunn wrote in letters that he would take the entire school, and according to the following text, the school maintained a residency of about 30 students: Grace Powers Thomas, *Where to Educate, 1898-1899; A Guide to the Best Private Schools, Higher Institutions of Learning, Etc., in the United States* (Palala Press, 2016).

³³ Rich Cohen, “The Life Lessons of Summer Camp,” *The Wall Street Journal*, July 8, 2022, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-life-lessons-of-summer-camp-11657292830>.

³⁴ William Hamilton Gibson, *The Master of the Gunnery: A Memorial of Frederick William Gunn*, page 106, 1887.

³⁵ Paula Gibson Krinsky, “Reading, Writing, and the Great Outdoors: Frederick Gunn’s School Transforms Victorian-Era Education,” *Connecticut History*, July 18, 2021,

The organized youth camping movement was one of several emerging, upscale camping initiatives in the nineteenth century, the Gunnery Camp being a prominent youth-orientated camping tradition. This movement was supported by popular publications like *Camp-life in the Adirondacks*, by William Henry Harrison Murray in 1896. As outdoor historian Dan White writes, “In the 1850s and ‘60s, widely circulated travelogs and illustrations in books, journals, and newspapers helped make the Adirondacks of Upstate New York an early hotspot for upscale camping initiatives, which increased in popularity after the Civil War”.³⁶ U.S. cities in the 19th century were also growing more populated and seemingly ‘dirty’.³⁷ Summer camps only grew in popularity as time drew closer to the 20th century, especially as they grew more widely reported in the academic zeitgeist. As previously stated, summer camps have always engaged in the use of Indian imagery, clothing, and storytelling. This appropriation did not end with summer camps. In the early twentieth century, many anthropologists identified Indians as inherently and permanently primitive people, genetically unable to participate in the process of evolution. While this view contributed to the idea that Indians were a vanishing people, it also positioned Indians as the children of the human race.

In 1904, Child Psychologist Stanley Hall published the immensely influential work *Adolescence*. *Adolescence* validated a line of thinking which reinforced white supremacy as the ‘civilized’ race, and much has been written about the material harm Hall’s work replicated for people of color in the United States.³⁸ However, understanding the wide influence of this text is

<https://connecticuthistory.org/reading-writing-and-the-great-outdoors-frederick-gunns-school-transforms-victorian-era-education/>.

³⁶ Dan White, “Luxurious, Full-Service Picnics Are a New Spin on an Old American Tradition,” *The Washington Post*, June 6, 2021.

³⁷ Tobin Miller Shearer. *Two Weeks Every Summer: Fresh Air Children and the Problem of Race in America*. 1st ed. Cornell University Press, 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt1qv5qj7>.

³⁸ Garrison, Joshua. "A problematic alliance: colonial anthropology, recapitulation theory, and G. Stanley Hall's program for the liberation of America's youth." *American Educational History Journal* 35, no. 1-2 (2008): 131+. Thomas Fallace, “The Savage Origins of Child-Centered Pedagogy, 1871-1913,” *American Educational Research Journal* 52, no. 1 (2015): 73–103, <https://doi.org/10.2307/24546722>.

essential to learning why summer camp became such a wildly popular phenomenon, specifically amongst white and wealthy American families. Additionally, if there are any merits of *Adolescence*, it is his acknowledgment of the unique needs of an ‘in-between’ age group, one between adults and children. His two-volume study sparked many youth experts and families to pay special attention to this ‘new’ age group.

Hall posited that each child (he meant every white child) moved through a series of developmental stages from savagery to civilization. This theory of evolution was popular at its publishing, as his work mirrored narratives present in the emerging early 20th century anthropological field that Indigenous populations, like the Native Americans in the United States, illustrated an earlier stage of humanity, and symbolized the historical formation of civilized society. Children, therefore, according to Hall, should spend lots of time in nature: they should learn to build fires and shelters like the pre-civilized (although he said ‘savage’) people they were. In describing the natural state of children as savage, he strengthened an emerging connection drawn between children and Indigenous populations in the United States. This solidified Native Americans as the perpetual children of the human race and made their traditions and cultural artifacts open grounds for the child’s imagination, given that Native American cultures were essentially frozen in time, according to researchers like Hall. In her book *Red Pedagogy*, author Sandy Grande refers to this phenomenon as ‘Indian essentialism’, which serves to propagate romanticized images of Native Americans and ensure that “white stream publishers maintain control over the epistemic frames of the discourse and thus over the fund of available knowledge on American Indians”.³⁹ Indian essentialism was a critically important element in the formation of summer camps in the United States. As we will observe in Chapter 2 on *Camping* magazine advertisements, Native Americans have been framed as a singular group that is fixed,

³⁹ Sandy Grande, *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

inherent, and have universal characteristics. Playing Indian at American summer camps relies on generalizations and oversimplifications about Indigenous cultures, identities, and experiences.

Hall's theories on children and nature provided a massive endorsement for summer camps in the United States. It was considered natural for children to 'act like savages', and summer camps proved the perfect space for children to act out the American tradition of playing Indian.⁴⁰ Hall encouraged adults to allow children to explore their savage nature, as such, playing Indian dominated the activities at youth organizations established in the early years of the twentieth century.⁴¹ *Adolescence* confirmed the place summer camp would hold in our shared vision of American identity: in 1900 there were fewer than one hundred camps in the country. By 1918, there were more than 1,000.⁴²

Adolescence emphasized that urban dwelling was feminizing young men and that the outdoors offered a Teddy Roosevelt-esque robust and rigorous reentry towards masculinity.⁴³ It makes sense why white, affluent parents sought solutions and respite for their children; they wanted to ensure their children were prepared for an ever-changing society. And, given that every summer camp 'boom' has occurred during or directly after wartime, it is clear parents have historically seen summer camp as a solution to their parental anxieties. Furthermore, Hall's connection to the organized camping movement has been well established by scholars, but he was not the only scholar forming white supremacist views that summer camp was an antidote to

⁴⁰ Michael B. Smith, "'The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper' and the Nature of Summer Camp," *Environmental History* 11, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 70–101, <https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/11.1.70>.

⁴¹ This is particularly true of the Woodcraft Indians, Campfire Girls, and the Boy Scouts. It is less true of the Girl Scouts, who took on more of a militaristic approach to their ceremonies and traditions. For more on this, see *Growing Girls: The Natural Origins of Girls Organizations in America* by Susan Miller and *Delinquents and Debutantes: Twentieth-Century American Girls' Cultures* by Sherrie Inness, which both focus on the militaristic origins of the Girl Scouts. Though, having been a Girl Scout camp director myself, it is worth noting that Native American inspired campfire stories, songs, and traditions are still present in these spaces.

⁴² Abigail Ayres Van Slyck, *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890-1960* (U of Minnesota Press, 2006).

⁴³ Macdonald, Robert. *Sons of the Empire: The Frontier and the Boy Scout Movement, 1890-1918*. University of Toronto Press, 2011.

the “degenerating” human race.⁴⁴ From this, we can infer that summer camp was viewed as a necessary retreat for white children in an increasingly multicultural, urbanized world.

In *The Camping Ideal, The New Human Race*, author Henry Wellington Mark visited 124 summer camps in the New England region during the summer of 1924. At the time, Mark was the ‘summer camp’ editor for RedBook Magazine.⁴⁵ This book was the second volume published about summer camps for RedBook. He states in his introduction the inherent value of a summer camp experience, citing the natural experiences and “proper” company a camper would keep at camp. In this text, he describes summer camp as a form of escape for “Anglo” children from an increasingly chaotic world. The American summer camp grew up segregated. Henry Wellington Mark’s text illustrates that the camping ideals so strong in the formation of summer camp traditions were explicitly for white children. Michael B. Smith further discusses this phenomenon in *The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper and the Nature of Camp*:

“By the 1930s, a few outspoken leaders of the camping movement saw the summer camp functioning not merely as an escape but as a laboratory — a place where the most degrading influences of the machine age would be absent and where the work of compounding civil society from the energy and curiosity of children with the invigorating power of nature could proceed most smoothly.”⁴⁶

Summer camps are unexceptional in the history of desegregation, mirroring much of the same language and values used to racially segregate other outdoor recreation spaces in the early 20th century.⁴⁷ What *is* noteworthy is how the American Camp Association now frames the summer

⁴⁴ Henry Wellington Wack, *The Camping Ideal: The New Human Race; a Brief Survey of the Summer and Winter Outdoor Camp Movement in the United States, with Particular Reference to Organized Cultural Camps in the Atlantic and Midwestern States, Based Upon Observations Made on a Second Camp Tour Undertaken for the Red Book Magazine*, 1925.

⁴⁵ RedBook Magazine is a now out-of-print American women’s magazine. It is directed towards mothers. Of note: Red Book can often be seen being advertised in issues of *Camping* through the early 90’s — urging parents to advertise their summer camps to their large readership.

⁴⁶ Michael B. Smith, “‘The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper’ and the Nature of Summer Camp,” *Environmental History* 11, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 70–101, <https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/11.1.70>.

⁴⁷ Allie Spensley, “Segregated Summer Camps,” US History Scene, February 16, 2020.

camp industry as a force for desegregation.⁴⁸ This narratological dissonance and historical amnesia are indicative of a larger cultural trend within the summer camp industry. According to the American Camp Association ACA 2019 attendance survey, 90% of campers in the U.S. were white children that particular summer. In this, I argue that the white supremacist beliefs of the early 20th-century camping industry continue to maintain a cultural hold. The summer camp industry perpetuates a cultural disparity between those who attend summer camp and who do not.

As previously stated, youth organizations exploded in popularity at the turn of the 20th century in congruence with anti-modern philosophy and a growing emphasis on the newly ‘discovered’ (and highly impressionable) age between child and adult: the adolescent. The most popular of these organizations are still familiar to modern audiences: The Campfire Girls, YMCA/YWCA, the Boy Scouts, and the Girl Scouts. Though these organizations differed in their approach to youth development and views towards patriotism, playing Indian was extremely common for these youth organizations. The most formative in incorporating Playing Indian into youth outdoor organizations was that of Ernest Seton of the Boy Scouts.

Ernest Thompson Seton was an English-born Canadian-American founder of the Woodcraft Indians in 1902, and one of the founders of the Boy Scouts of America in 1910.⁴⁹ Seton also influenced Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of the Boy Scouts in England. Lord Baden-Powell was close friends with Juliette Gordon Lowe who founded the Girl Scouts in the United States in 1912. Though Seton founded the Boy Scout movement, he left to start a different youth organization as they took (what he thought) to be a far too militaristic approach to

⁴⁸ Marcy and Bob Browner, “Desegregating Circle M Day Camp: A Determination to Succeed,” *Camping Magazine*, May 2015,

<https://www.acacamps.org/article/camping-magazine/desegregating-circle-m-day-camp-determination-succeed>.

⁴⁹ Ernest Thompson Seton, *Woodcraft and Indian Lore: A Classic Guide from a Founding Father of the Boy Scouts of America* (Simon and Schuster, 2016).

character building for youth. From his perspective, young people underwent the best character-building by connecting to nature and acting as Indians. Playing Indian was synonymous with being in nature. And, given that the Native American population dwindled drastically in the latter half of the 19th century, actual Indigenous people could not complicate or challenge the simplistic portrayals acted out at summer camps and other youth organizations. Indeed, their absence was what allowed children at summer camp to play Indian with such fervor: for if actual Native Americans were not there, then Indians in their mind could be whatever they needed.

The United States has perpetually struggled to manifest a sense of self, one that was not constructed as purely oppositional dissenters from the United Kingdom. As historian Philip Deloria notes in *Playing Indian*, White Americans have a long and complex history of playing Indian that dates as far back as the 1730s. He writes, “Playing Indian has been central to efforts to imagine and materialize distinctive American identities.”⁵⁰ For example, during the Tea Party, white people adopted Indian dress to reinforce what they saw as their cultural distance from Britain. This use of the ‘savagery’ image reinforced that Euro-Americans were the correct stewards of the land, as ordained by God. Many of us recognize this philosophy as Manifest Destiny. These cultural tropes are replicated at American summer camps with similar fervor as playing Indian: cowboys, the Gold Rush, and covered wagons.⁵¹ Chapter 3 of this thesis will include a longer reflection on settler-colonial Manifest Destiny origin myths at summer camps.

Many summer camps, particularly those focused on wilderness activities, have historically incorporated elements of Native American culture into their programming, often without fully understanding the cultural significance of these traditions. Primary examples of

⁵⁰ Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (Yale University Press, 2022).

⁵¹ Martin Hall, *Missions, Furs, Gold, and Manifest Destiny: Rethinking an Archaeology of Colonialism for Western North America*. *Historical Archaeology*, John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2006.

appropriation include the use of Native American-inspired names, costumes, and rituals, such as pow-wows or drum circles, without permission or input from local Native American communities and tribes. These practices, removed from their context, perpetuate harmful stereotypes and misrepresentations of Native American culture, thus resulting in cultural appropriation. According to We R Native, a comprehensive health resource for Native youth, by Native youth, cultural appropriation is “when someone from the dominant culture (i.e., the most visible and accepted culture in a society) takes aspects of an oppressed culture (one experiencing any form of repeated or prolonged discrimination) without permission”.⁵² The misuse and characterization of Indigenous communities in the United States reinforce colonial attitudes toward Native populations. Furthermore, this continued tradition of ‘playing Indian’ erases the voices and experiences of Native American communities, framing the outdoors as a space for white children’s imaginary landscape to appropriate Native American culture however they wish, regardless of harmful repercussions.

In recent years, there has been some cultural shift within the summer camp industry to move away from summer camp traditions that misuse or appropriate Native American culture.⁵³ However, this emerging shift is insufficient thus far because it has framed Native American appropriation as an issue for individual summer camps to assess within their own traditions and practices. This places the blame for such practices away from influential and formative organizations like the American Camp Association which has enabled, endorsed, and normalized such practices through its publications traditions. Many camps still accredited by ACA dress their campers in Native American outfits, or split campers into “tribes” – often with names that

⁵² “Native Cultural Appropriation,” We R Native, June 2, 2021, <https://www.wernative.org/articles/native-cultural-appropriation>.

⁵³ Julia Wang, “Cultural Appropriation in Summer Camps: When Will There Be Real Change?,” EFBA, May 24, 2021.

belong to Native American communities such as ‘Apache’.⁵⁴ And while ACA features a growing number of articles, resources, and interviews for camps looking to critically examine their camp’s history, ACA offers no official guidance or rules regarding Native American appropriation. By critically examining advertisements in *Camping* magazine, I hope to illustrate how long-standing and pervasive Native American appropriation has been at American summer camps. By featuring advertisements that featured racist depictions of Native Americans, *Camping*, and the American Camp Association, platform ‘playing Indian’ as an expected practice and tradition in the summer camp industry.

Much of this thesis is formed around *Camping* magazine and some context should be laid out for its publisher, the American Camp Association (ACA). The American Camp Association is by far the most influential organization in the American summer camp industry. More commonly referred to as ACA, the organization was originally dubbed the ‘camp directors Association of America’. The ACA was formed in 1910. When it was originally founded, the goal of ACA was to create a standardized, accountable model of the organized summer camp. ACA officially adopted a set of standards in 1948, following a massive World War II summer camp boom.⁵⁵ At this time, ACA also organized several tri-state summer camp professional conferences around the country, with the first national conference hosted in 1979.

With this shift towards standardization, ACA began a new program of accreditation, requiring a minimum set of standards for all overnight residential summer camps. The initial accreditation process was a bit sparse, but there are now 260 ACA standards covering areas such as conditions of facilities, food service, risk management, emergency procedures, staff

⁵⁴ “The Art of a More Inclusive Color War,” The Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle, accessed February 13, 2023, <https://jewishchronicle.timesofisrael.com/the-art-of-a-more-inclusive-color-war/>.

⁵⁵ Susan A Miller, *Growing Girls: The Natural Origins of Girls’ Organizations in America* (Rutgers University Press, 2007).

screening/hiring, camper health information, health care, medication storage, equipment maintenance and inspection, program guidelines, and more.⁵⁶ These standards have evolved to illustrate the changing values of ACA as an organization. For example, amidst the emerging Civil Rights Movement, ACA sought to establish summer camps as a racially progressive institution. In 1950, ACA's Intercultural Committee presented resolutions to the effect that ACA, in the future, would use facilities in which all hospitality and privileges were extended to all members of the Association, regardless of race, creed, or color.⁵⁷ This resolution, after passing, prompted ACA to find a new host for their conference that year in Chicago which was not racially segregated. This act influenced ACA committee members to add new standards regarding staffing and HR policies to their accreditation process. In 1955, ACA added a standard that ACA-accredited camps can not discriminate against camp staff applicants by race or color.

Today, the American Camp Association (ACA) is a national organization that remains the leading advocate for the summer camp industry. Its mission is to promote the value of the camp experience and ensure that children have access to high-quality camp programs. The ACA works to support and enhance the camp community by providing resources, professional development opportunities, and accreditation services to camps across the country. It serves as a unifying platform for camp professionals, camp staff, campers, families, and other individuals or organizations involved in the camp industry.

The summer camp industry continues to frame summer camp as a nostalgic escape from modern life. This is reflected in so many of the narrative images one might associate with summer camp. For instance, one of the hallmarks of a summer camp experience is storytelling around a campfire. Storytelling, origin, and myth-making are imbued into the essence of summer

⁵⁶ As of writing this in January 2023. Though the number of standards vary by state due to state specific laws.

⁵⁷ "History and Youth Development Resources," 100 Year Anniversary of the American Camp Association, accessed January 21, 2023, <http://www.acacamp.org/anniversary/collection/historical/>.

camp. Thus, the summer camp industry is struggling to leave behind its more appropriative and racially driven historical traditions because it calls into question its very notions of being. The summer camp industry's very identity derives from its self-made storytelling, and these narratives require settler-colonial myths of our collective (supposed) American heritage: of cowboys, Indians, the Goldrush, the covered wagon, and the American family.⁵⁸ The tradition of escaping modern life is increasingly difficult to balance as many summer camps are also striving to be more progressive and social justice-focused. A choice must be made. It is impossible for a summer camp to be an emancipatory, radical institution and still cling to idealized narratives of the past.

⁵⁸ 'The Role of Camping and Our American Heritage' by Lloyd B. Sharp, *Camping* magazine, February 1942, Vol 14 Issue 2

Chapter 2: Playing Indian and *Camping* Magazine

On the cover of a special edition February 1942 issue, *Camping* magazine posed a simple question to its readers: “What is the role of camping in America?”

What is it, indeed?

Throughout this special issue of *Camping*, educators, camp directors, and philosophers engaged in lengthy meta-discussions of the state of American summer camps amidst worldwide political turmoil. The articles covered the intersection of summer camp with just about every other meaningful American value: a living democracy, education, conservation, healthful living, and our shared American heritage. The issue appears to modern readers with a Wharton-like innocence: the United States had formally joined the Allies in World War II just two months prior, and the writers in this issue denounce Nazis and espouse the benefits of summer camp with equal fervor.⁵⁹ One particular article, entitled ‘The Role of Camping and Our American Heritage’ by Lloyd B. Sharp, discusses how the camping movement relates itself to American heritage and how its preservation can provide a fuller understanding of and appreciation for natural landscapes.

⁵⁹ In the 2019 reprint of *The Age of Innocence*, Elif Baufman writes in the introduction: “By the last chapter, they are generally said and thought, and [the protagonist] understands the extent to which people’s lives were deformed by what was only half known. This is a novelistic insight, the kind that comes with living through historical change. It isn’t particular to the 1870s, or the 1920s. In a way, every age is an age of innocence, because every age has its own unsaid, half-known truths, which are articulated more clearly over time.”

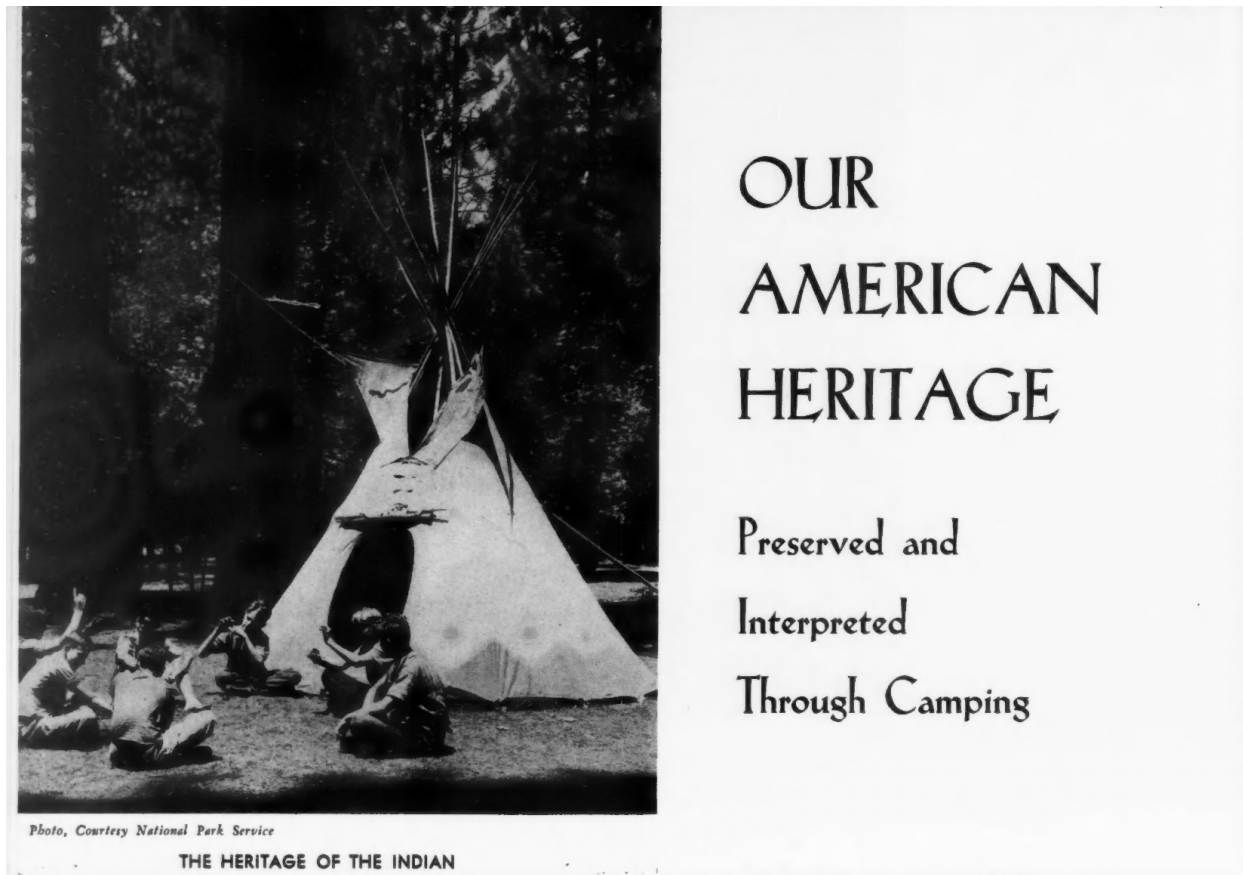


Figure 2.1. *Camping* magazine, Vol 14 Issue 2, photo courtesy of National Park Service

Included in this article are different historical figures/tropes that author Sharp considers essential in the history of camping: the Indian, the covered wagon, the cowboy, the farm, and the American family. In Sharp's view, these historical figures serve as timeless inspirations for modern camping programs. Lloyd B. Sharp is considered one of the most influential pioneers of the modern outdoor education movement.⁶⁰ His incorporation of John Dewey's educational philosophy into a 'learning by doing' model is considered pivotal within the summer camp industry. It is of note this article was written by someone of great influence in the camping movement; his depiction and description of the Indian and other American phenomena can be

⁶⁰ Julie A. Carlson, "The Legacy of Lloyd Burgess Sharp (1895-1963): A Career History of a Pioneer in Outdoor Education," *Journal of Experiential Education* 27, no. 3 (March 2005): 326-27, <https://doi.org/10.1177/105382590502700317>.

viewed as influential in wider cultural values within the summer camp community at this time in history. More specifically, he describes the ‘Indian’ as follows:

“The first campers in this country were the Indians. They were wholly dependent upon nature for their food and shelter. They knew the plants and roots, and knew their many uses. They built houses and shelters best adapted to the surrounding country, to material at hand, and to the climate. They were agriculturalists—developed drought corn, practiced soil fertilization, made irrigation ditches, and have made many other valuable contributions of benefit to us.

“From the standpoint of appreciation of his surroundings, care of self, resourcefulness, utilization of natural resources, and the practice of simplicity of living, the Indian was a good camper. The period of the early explorers, traders, prospectors and trappers marked a second chapter in camping. These rugged individuals had to know the way of the woods in order to make their expeditions successful. With the help of friendly Indians it was possible for them to accomplish their goals. The stories of these hardy and daring people add a significant part to the larger concept of adventurous camping.”⁶¹

The ‘primitive Indian’ Lloyd B. Sharp presents in ‘The Role of Camping and Our American Heritage’ in *Camping* perpetuates harmful and substantive stereotypes about Indigenous people.⁶² With descriptors like “good campers” and “simplicity of living”, this article illustrates how the summer camp industry viewed Indians in 1942 and how they contextualized Indians within summer camp narrative histories. In Sharp’s summer camp singular narrative retelling of history, the Indian is framed as a person of the “past” alongside mythologized cowboys and covered wagons. Native Americans are ancestors of all Americans, whose sole purpose was to develop agricultural and camping tactics to make “valuable contributions” for modern, white, affluent campers.

1942 marked a year of reflection and looking ahead for *Camping*. This issue of the magazine featured almost no advertisements, classified sections, or letters to the editor — all

⁶¹ ‘The Role of Camping and Our American Heritage’ by Lloyd B. Sharp, *Camping* magazine, February 1942, Vol 14 Issue 2

⁶² Fryberg, Stephanie A., Hazel Rose Markus, Daphna Oyserman, and Joseph M. Stone. “Of Warrior Chiefs and Indian Princesses: The Psychological Consequences of American Indian Mascots.” *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 30, no. 3 (September 26, 2008): 208–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01973530802375003>.

sections that normally appeared in every issue of *Camping*. Instead of advertisements featuring canned goods, canoes, or washing machines, this issue of *Camping* seemed to be advertising summer camp itself to the wider public. And within this public representation, *Camping* emphasized its views of the Indian. We observed in Chapter 1 that the summer camp industry has long been interested in narrating its history into a cohesive, attractive, and singular narrative. In Chapter 2, we will discuss how this narrative tradition is cemented in persisting racist imagery in summer camp industry publications. Through analyzing representations of the ‘Indian’ in *Camping* magazine advertisements, we will see how playing Indian has been institutionally normalized in the summer camp industry.

Camping magazine is a monthly periodical that has been published by the American Camp Association (ACA) since 1930 with the purpose to inform and educate summer camp professionals. The forerunner of *Camping* Magazine, *The Camp Directors Bulletin*, was founded in February 1926. By the March/April 1926 bulletin, the name of the bulletin was shortened to just *Camping*, just before the bulletin was expanded into a wider distributed publication in 1930. *Camping* illustrates meaningful historical insight into the summer camp industry in the United States. A journey through *Camping* archives means observing cultural turning points and summer camp industry responses to political shifts in the American landscape. This means one can read through *Camping* archives and observe how changing attitudes about race and cultural appropriation has transpired and shifted throughout the existence of the summer camp industry.

Between 1926 and 1929, *The Camp Directors Bulletin* was a short publication with a small readership. It was not intended for public consumption, rather, it provided updates and meeting notes to camp directors in the New England region who were interested in the emerging

standardization of camping practices.⁶³ As the camping movement grew further towards the West Coast (thus making in-person meetings more challenging) the American Camp Association Executive Committee decided to publish a magazine designed for wider distribution. The goal of the publication, as it self-described, was to present organized camping to the public on an adequate institutional plane equitable to to education, outdoor recreation, and healthful living.⁶⁴

The current goals of *Camping* are still similar to its original mission, though they has evolved. The content of *Camping* is designed to offer insights and guidance on camp management, staff recruitment and training, program development, risk management, marketing, and other pertinent issues. It often includes feature articles written by camp professionals, experts, and researchers, highlighting innovative practices, case studies, and perspectives on the camp experience. Additionally, the magazine also includes updates on the ACA's initiatives, resources, events, and advocacy efforts related to the camp industry. It aims to foster a community of professionals who are dedicated to providing safe, enriching, and meaningful camp experiences for children.

⁶³ For more on the formation of the American Camp Association, see: Leonhardt, Patricia Ann. "The History and Development of the Standards Program of the American Camping Association, 1920-1969." Oregon, Dept. of Recreation and Park Management, 1969.

⁶⁴ American Camp Association, "The Official Journal of the Camp Directors Association," *The Camping Magazine*, January 1930. In the section entitled, "Our Aims", the magazine reads: "To provide a medium of communication between the members and sections of the camp directors Association."



Figure 2.2. Original Cover of Volume 1 Issue 1 of The Camping Magazine. Photo is from A.E. Williams, a founding Associate Editor of the magazine.

I first came across *Camping* during my tenure as a camp director. My summer camp was accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA), which meant we were 'ACA members'

and received six editions of *Camping* every year. The magazine's intended audience is camp directors and I was always pleased with the publishings (which included topics such as program innovations, new research on the benefits of summer camp, how to navigate wildfire seasons, and timelines for ordering camp supplies). However, I did notice some narrative discrepancies when I read *Camping* as a camp director. Throughout its entire existence as a publication, I noticed how the American Camp Association responded to an evolving social culture around them while attempting to maintain its identity as a "classic" American pursuit. I would notice summer camps with Indigenous sounding names write a solidarity statement about anti-racism in *Camping* magazine. I would see 'authentic Sioux teepees' advertised on the same pages as an article about cultural appropriation. This dual desire, to be both progressive and hegemonic, highlights a narratological tension throughout *Camping* — for summer camp to be seen as both an educationally progressive force and a unchanging American pastime.

I noticed in my time as a camp director that while the American Camp Association offered an increasingly progressive curriculum on issues such as gender diversity, I didn't often observe this behavior extend to Indigenous cultural appropriation at summer camps. Many summer camps in the U.S. still have culturally appropriative camp place names.⁶⁵ Additionally, it is still common to find items like totem poles, tee-pees, headdresses, and dream catchers within the summer camp context, ripped from their historical and cultural context. While the summer camp industry has sought to frame itself as socially progressive on a variety of social issues, this same consideration has not extended to culturally appropriative practices that involve playing Indian. This, I believe, illustrates how intrinsically interwoven Indigenous cultural appropriation is to the identity of the American summer camp industry, and why a historical examination of

⁶⁵ Alexia Franzidis, Alana N. Seaman, and Jayna Donaldson, "A Toponymy of American Summer Camps: Onscreen Stereotypes or Symbols Ripe for Change?," *The Journal of American Culture* 45, no. 2 (May 19, 2022): 139–54, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jacc.13337>.

this issue is so imperative. Through an examination of advertisements from the 1940s to the 1970s, I argue that *Camping* advertisements provide textual and visual reinforcement for the powerful and enduring cultural trope of playing Indian within the organized camping movement.

I will primarily be discussing advertisements in *Camping* that illustrate caricatures of Native American stereotypes (and they are caricatures, not characters). In this, I draw from Philip Deloria's masterful book *Playing Indian*, in particular Chapter 4, where he discusses *Playing Indian*, authenticity, and American Modernity in the Boy Scouts movement. Deloria discusses how the rise of Boy Scouts (and many other youth organizations) in the early 1910s was amidst a cultural temporal boundary. This culture shift, Deloria writes, frames Seton Hall's founding of the American Boy Scout Movement, specifically his incorporation of Indianness into the Boy Scout's foundational curriculum. His turn towards the 'primitive' Indian for inspiration illustrates progressive impulses, as "primitivism and progress defined the dialectic of the modern, and they both reflected the intuition that America had experienced a radical break in its history".⁶⁶ Seton was interested, in the face of modernization, to a turn towards 'authenticity' — which was in his mind the Indian. He viewed the Indian (or rather, the cultural idea of one) as the original pioneer of camping in America, and what youths should be encouraged to embody when exploring the outdoors. Seton Hall was turned off by the militaristic turn organizations like the Boy and Girl Scouts later took in their objectives, but he himself was very much engaging in military tradition by tokenizing Indian imagery to represent American patriotism and ideals.

I examine *Camping* advertisements through a historical narrative lens as described by Hayden White in *The Historical Text as Literary Artifact*. White applies theories of fiction to historical writing and history itself. White points out that historians, philosophers, and literary theorists have not properly explored the status of the historical narrative. Historical narrative is,

⁶⁶ Deloria, Philip J. *Playing Indian*. (Chapter 4) Yale University Press, 2022.

as he describes, “a verbal artifact purporting to be a model of structures and processes long past and therefore not subject to either experimental or observational controls.”⁶⁷ It is important to compare history and narrative alongside and within one another because, he argues, there should not be a binary separating the disciplinaries. White attempts to blur the line between history and literature, between fact and fiction by coining the term/theory called ‘meta-history’. I am interested in using ‘meta-history’ because history has an important place in cultural meaning-making. The historian’s creative license and ‘emplotment’ of the story brings the story of history to life, giving it meaning, and thus shapes how we read it as the implied reader. In this, the historian (in this case, myself) becomes the implied narrator.

I am interested in viewing *Camping* through a historical narrative lens because I am interested in viewing advertisements as storytelling devices. Storytelling is intrinsic to summer camp culture; the first feature story ever featured in *Camping* was about campers listening to a story around the campfire. Additionally, some advertisers relied on storytelling and myth tropes to sell their products to camp directors. If we view these advertisements from a storytelling perspective, one might glean narrative insights as to what these advertisements are attempting to portray to their audiences. We might ask: are these advertisements presenting a story familiar to their audience? Or are they presenting something new and noteworthy? However, there are other aspects to the narrative besides the implied narrator, including the primary narrator and the audience.

Lloyd B. Sharps’ *Camping* article “The Role of Camping and Our American Heritage’ illustrates how the summer camp industry has clung to narratives of an idealized, non-existent past: one in which Euro-Americans lived ‘off the land’ in a way that was virtuous and noble. Our

⁶⁷ Hayden, White C. “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact.” *Clio*. 3, no. 3 (1974).

collective Indian, farmer, pioneer, cowboy, covered wagon, and American family origins are accepted as canon. These different tropes morph into a collective, all-encompassing identity.

Essential to the transformative nature of playing Indian was the ability to play, imagination, crafts, and dress up.⁶⁸ In their early formation, Camp Fire Girls adopted Indian names and wore Indian-inspired fringed dresses decorated with beads and Boy Scouts participated in intricate campfire ceremonies that usually involved wearing ceremonial headdresses.⁶⁹ In *Playing Indian*, Philip Deloria describes that play was the perfect vehicle for coopting and appropriating aspects of Indian culture at camp (and in other contexts) because it cemented the idealized version of the Indian as real: “the donning of Indian clothes moved ideas from brains to bodies, from the realm of abstraction to the physical world of concrete experience”.⁷⁰ Play and craft moved the idea of the Indian from imaginary into a lived reality. This is represented in the high number of ‘Indian crafts’ advertised in *Camping* magazine. For example, I documented seeing this advertisement below in Figure 2.3 eighty-seven times throughout the archives of *Camping* from 1940-1970.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Pauline Turner Strong, “Cultural Appropriation and the Crafting of Racialized Selves in American Youth Organizations,” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 9, no. 2 (December 31, 2008): 197–213, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708608325918>.

⁶⁹ Misha Maynerick Blaise, “Creating Boy Scout Ceremonies Without Taking Native American Cultural Property,” *Medium*, March 24, 2019.

⁷⁰ Deloria, Philip J. *Playing Indian*. Page 184. Yale University Press, 2022.

⁷¹ Given that the archives I used are incomplete, this advertisement is likely in *Camping* more than 87 times.

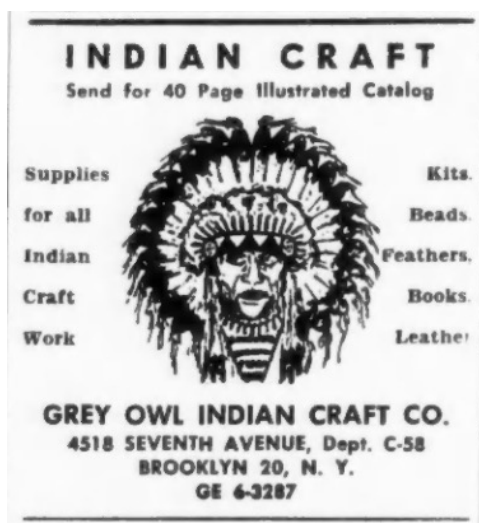


Figure 2.3. From *Camping Magazine*, June 1959: Vol 31 Issue 7.

In all of these advertisements, the Indian figure in the advertisement in Figure 2.3 never changes. He is never named, described, or acknowledged. His stoic presence in the advertisement, absent from any differentiating description, cements his space in the advertisement as a symbol. He is there to evoke the idea of Indianness and convey their aesthetic presence for Grey Owl Indian Craft Co.

This particular advertisement illustrates one of the most common types of Indian caricatures I saw throughout the magazine — the use and making of Indian-style ‘crafts’ using a generalized image of an Indian. In some of their advertisements, Grey Owl emphasized their authentic Indian crafts, and I was curious if this claim could be substantiated. In the case of Grey Owl Indian Craft Company, they do appear to still be in operation, and though their website notes that they are committed to sourcing authentic and high-quality Native American craft supplies, they denote no specific tribal affiliation. Additionally, a *Camping* ‘buyers guide’ pamphlet from 1976 describes ‘Indian lore’ as Grey Owl’s “hobby”, which can be seen below in Figure 2.4.

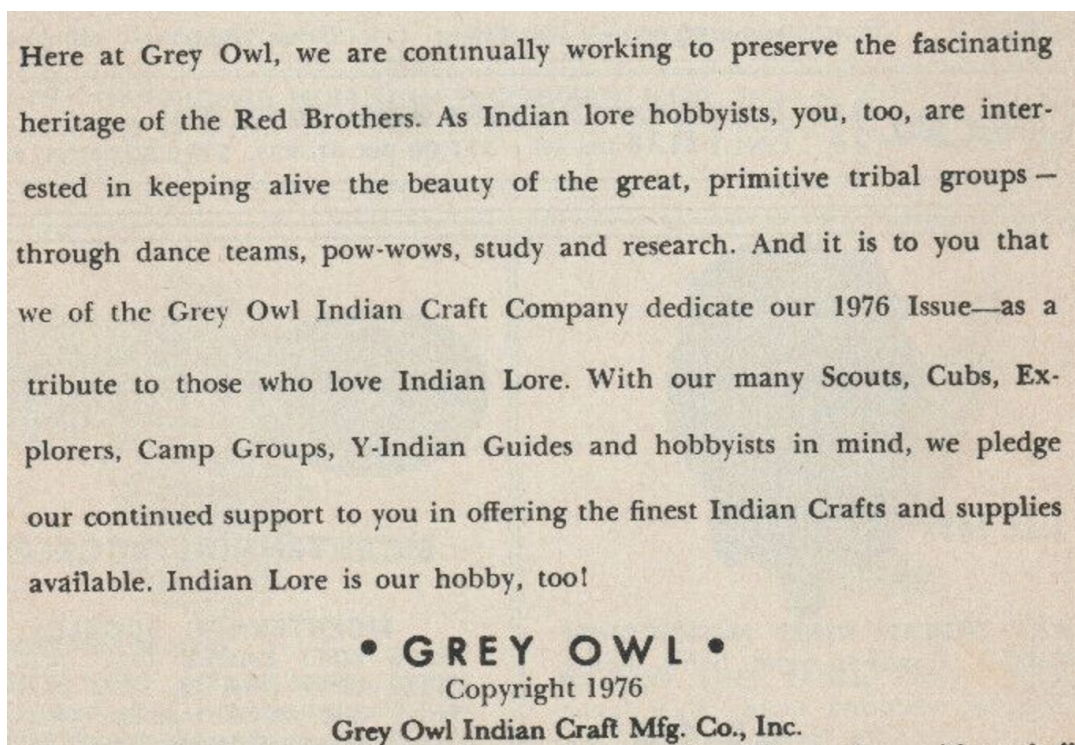


Figure 2.4. *Camping* ‘buyers guide’ pamphlet. Grey Owl Indian Craft Company, 1976.

As previously mentioned, it was important for camp professionals to employ ‘authentic’ Indian practices and traditions at summer camps. We have previously mentioned Seton Hall’s interest in authenticity, but he was far from the only individual in the camping movement interested in this. As seen below in Figure 2.5, Cleveland Crafts Co. can be seen advertising two different camp crafting products: sticks and totem poles.

 **S-T-I-C-K-S** 

\$1⁵⁰ per 1,000
(7 for ONE PENNY)

 An economical creative craft for your camp projects. With **MAT STICKS** you can make items such as bird houses, bird feeders, baskets, boxes, sunburst mats or create projects of your own. Sticks are 4½" long, 5/16" wide and 1/16" thick. Can be colored with paints, spatterinks or dye. 

AUTHENTIC INTERLOCK TOTEM POLES



These new molded, solid-plastic Totem Poles are ready to be painted with Placonamel. They are 9" high and may be interlocked to form one giant-size Totem Pole.

PAINT-A-POLE \$5.00 Doz.
Series 1 (one of each pole to set) **\$50.00 Gross**
50¢ per set
Buy a gross and get a pair of 4 ft. plastic TOTEM POLES Free.

PLACONAMEL \$2.95
Set of 10 Colors & Thinner

• Write For Free Crafts Catalog
CLEVELAND CRAFTS CO.
The House of Original Ideas

4707 Euclid Avenue Cleveland 3, Ohio 34 Elmwood Parkway Chicago 35, Ill. 4 East 16th Street New York 3, New York

Figure 2.5. *Camping Magazine*, March 1940: Vol 12 Issue 3. Cleveland Crafts Co.

There is a difference in how Cleveland Crafts Co. is presenting its two products here. Suggested use of the sticks includes using them to make bird feeders or houses. This does not denote a specific cultural use. Thus, the sticks are not described as authentic, merely as 'sticks'. The totem poles, however, are assigned the label of 'authentic'. This is an important distinction. It suggests that it would be important to the audience that the totem poles are authentically Native

American. This illustrates Deloria's thesis in *Playing Indian* that adults are involved in youth development were interested in images of the 'authentic' Indian. It is also worth noting that these totem poles are likely not actually authentic, if 'authentic' here means what it implies to a modern audience (that the totem poles were created with specifications from relevant tribal members).

In reality, a wide diaspora of Indigenous tribes constructs totem poles with particular specifications, though they are one of the most recognizable symbols from Indigenous communities of the Pacific Northwest. Totem poles are often sacred constructions used for telling stories or for trading purposes.⁷² Given that none of Cleveland Crafts Co. advertisements of their 'play' totem poles include specific tribal affiliations, my reading of their advertisements is that their self-described authentic totem poles is a disingenuous claim.⁷³ This is an example of nonnatives 'borrowing' elements of Native American culture without fully understanding or respecting its significance.

For Seton, and others interested in youth organizations, the idea of the authentic Indian "serves as a way to imagine and idealize the real, the traditional, and the organic in opposition to the less satisfying qualities of everyday life".⁷⁴ In their minds, the frontier was diminishing and Americans weren't spending enough time outside. Everyone was working, moving, and industrializing — and fast. Seton and others were concerned with how this would shape the next generation of American children. Deloria vocalizes these anxieties of Seton (and others) in how children performing/playing Indianness becomes an outlet enacting something natural, organic, and authentic in the face of increasing modernization:

⁷² Marjorie M. Halpin, *Totem Poles: An Illustrated Guide* (UBC Press, 2011).

⁷³ From my online research, it does not appear Cleveland Crafts Co. still exists. They did continue advertising in *Camping* until the 1980s. But this did limit my ability to research the company and see if they did actually construct totem poles in collaboration with Native American tribes.

⁷⁴ Deloria, Philip J. *Playing Indian*. Page 184. Yale University Press, 2022.

“How would the nation fare if its future leaders lacked the fortitude of those shaped authentically by America's powerful natural environment? Envisioning a grim set of scenarios, people like... Seton set out to reimagine the frontier experience through scouting, wilderness, and nature study. Even if one could no longer pursue a rugged individualist destiny on the frontier, a rustic week of Indian camping in a national park or a scouting expedition in the country might prove reasonable substitutes.”

This idea of ‘authenticity’ precisely describes playing Indian as a phenomenon in the summer camp movement — as an antidote to modernity.⁷⁵ Again, below in Figure 2.6, we can observe yet another ‘authentic’ Indian crafts company.



Figure 2.6. *Camping Magazine* April 1956: Vol 28 Iss 4.

As Philip Deloria writes in *Playing Indian*, “With the onset of outright war in 1775, the figure of the Indian appeared as not only noble and civilized, but also willful, determined, and strong. Indians appeared on military flags, newspaper mastheads, and numerous handbills.” Deloria here is specifically describing military propaganda and flags during the American

⁷⁵ Livia Gershon, “Summer Camp Has Always Been About Escaping Modern Life,” JSTOR Daily, April 26, 2016, <https://daily.jstor.org/history-summer-camp/>.

Revolution, but his understanding of how the image and aesthetics of Indian-ness have been coopted for centuries. We can observe that during both World War II and the American Revolution that the Indian has been used to represent American ideals to a wider audience. There is thus a parallel and precedent here, and throughout history, of white Americans Playing Indian in order to express, or advertise, certain patriotic beliefs. It is worthwhile to investigate how playing Indian has specifically manifested within the summer camp industry because of how these racist practices endure in the 21st century. A close reading of *Camping* illustrates the aesthetics and language of playing Indian in the summer camp setting, and how 'Indianness' has been intentionally tied to American ideals of childhood.

"No Camp Fire Fighting Equipment is Complete Without INDIAN FIRE PUMPS"

Says **MAX J. LORBER**, Director of Camp Nebagamon

(Camp Nebagamon is located 25 miles from Superior, Wis. and 30 miles from Duluth, Minn. It is in an area completely devoid of fire protection and caters to youngsters from 21 states throughout the middle west.)



READ WHAT MR. LORBER SAYS ON THE VITAL SUBJECT OF FIRE PROTECTION:

"We have used **INDIAN FIRE PUMPS** for many years. We have had two brush fires which these **INDIANS** put out and I am sure we would have suffered dire consequences if this equipment were not available. The main feature of these pumps that appeals to us is their portability. Hardly a day goes by we do not use these pumps to put out cook-out fires and Council fires. If we never used the pumps for any other reason we would have them for extinguishing the above mentioned fires. I believe proper fire fighting equipment should be in every camp and no camp fire-fighting unit is complete without **INDIAN FIRE PUMPS**."



Are YOU ready for fire? You will be if you have an ample supply of **INDIAN FIRE PUMPS**. Don't take chances. Your children's lives are dependent upon your precautions. Send for descriptive circular and price list today.



Smith **INDIAN** Drinking Water & Supply Tank (Many uses in every camp)

Have you Ordered **INDIAN FIRE PUMPS** for Civil Defense? Be prepared!

D. B. SMITH & CO. 417 MAIN ST. UTICA 2, N. Y.

PACIFIC COAST BRANCHES:

Hercules Equipment & Rubber Company, Inc. 435 Brannan Street San Francisco 7, California	Fred E. Barnett Company 2005 S. E. 8th Ave. Portland, Oregon	Titan Chain Saws, Inc. 2700 Fourth Avenue South Seattle, Washington	Canadian AGENTS: Flech Brothers, Limited 110 Alexander Street Vancouver, B. C., Canada
Ray G. Davis Company 617 East Third Street Los Angeles, California	Fred E. Barnett Company 600 Spring Street Klamath Falls, Oregon	L. N. Curtis & Sons 426 W. Third Street South Salt Lake City, Utah	O. E. Hickey & Sons, Ltd. Hamilton, Canada

Figure 2.7, *Camping Magazine* 1961-06: Vol 33 Iss 7

In Figure 2.7, the notion of ‘playing Indian’ is being used to advertise Indian Fire Pumps. What, one might wonder, makes these fire pumps ‘Indian’?

There exist a few feasible explanations for the direct connection between how these fire pumps are Indian. Perhaps the brand wishes to establish a connection to the natural environment: the Indian, in perfect harmony with nature, would understand how to tame a wildfire, and (by delineation) so too the Indian fire pump. Or perhaps the Indian fire pump appeals to the stoic, solemn image of a “savage” Indian, who is a formidable force of nature themselves. Most likely, the advertisers tagged the word ‘Indian’ to their fire pumps simply because they thought it might appeal to a camp director audience.

Every advertisement pictured in *Camping* represents a symbolic flow of meaning from the original author to the readers of the publication. In this transferal, there are endless possibilities of meaning, interpretation, and dialectics. We have discussed previously the question of ‘authenticity’ in playing Indian at American summer camps. In cases such as this advertisement, asking whether or not this is an ‘authentic’ representation of the Indian feels misguided (though, to be sure, any of these previously suggested interpretations I have laid out are not ‘authentic’ representations of Indians). For this product, ‘Indian’ is being used as an adjective — a descriptor to evoke certain narratological images. These are not authentic fire pumps to interpret as authentic objects, in fact, they are simply interpretations of interpretations. The fire pumps are hybrid objects displaced so far from their original context that a dialectic semantic debate here isn’t possible or necessary. The word ‘Indian’ is being used here for branding and nothing more. But by portraying the fire pumps as ‘Indian’ it allows the reader to form a story in their own head, and construct a narrative based on whatever preexisting ideas about ‘Indianness’ that already exist in the reader’s head.

By viewing advertisements in *Camping* as storytelling devices, we allow these advertisements to take on new meanings. As historians, we are looking at these advertisements designed for audiences differently than we can as modern readers. We can't know the exact predicaments or assumptions both the advertisers and audiences were relying on in *Camping* magazine. Often, storytelling can be framed through a binary lens. Ronald Barthes' famous essay on *The Death of the Author* describes the transformative role a text undergoes when it is absorbed by a reader.⁷⁶ However, this view of historical narrative is too simple for our purposes, as our perusal of historical documents transcends space, time, and the typical relationship between reader and author. This reinforces that the idea of the Indian as a storytelling device in this advertisement because the term 'Indian' in Figure 2.7 is flexible to however the reader interprets it. 'Indian' in this advertisement is completely dislodged from its original, historical, and cultural context. In this displacement, it emphasizes the difference between modern audiences and the Indian as a historical figure.

Also a common trope in *Camping* advertisements is the use of the generic Indian. This form of cultural appropriation groups all Indigenous people in to one unified culture, ignoring the wide breadth and diversity of different Indigenous cultures. It frames the Indian as a pure, essentialized ideal with no place of origin. Examples of a generic, essentialized Indian can be seen in Figures 2.8 and 2.9.

⁷⁶ Barthes, Roland. *Image, Music, Text*. HarperCollins UK, 1977.

SCIENCE READING ROOM

Chief want-'um double order

velva sheen campwear selling like crazy!

Terrifically designed
imprints to your
specifications
... and service
like you
wouldn't
believe!!!

VELVA SHEEN has the most complete line
of campwear around • Top Quality Mer-
chandise • Handsome Imprints •

VELVA SHEEN/The Craftsmen of Printed Sportswear
3860 Virginia Avenue/Cincinnati, Ohio 45227
Please rush a copy of your latest catalog to:

Figure 2.8, *Camping Magazine*, February 1970: Vol 42 Issue 4



The Legend of Little Elk

Many moons ago, there was an Iroquois named Little Elk, who made bows and arrows for the great hunters. In return, they supplied him with food, shelter and warm clothing. For Little Elk's bows were strong and supple and his arrows straight and keen and, with them, the hunters shot many fleet deer.

Another Iroquois, called Yellow Eyes, envious of Little Elk, said to himself, "I too, will make bows and arrows and I will tell the great hunters that mine

are better than Little Elk's." So he carefully copied everything he had seen Little Elk do and, when his bows and arrows were finished, he traded them to the great hunters.

But the great hunters quickly discovered that Yellow Eyes' bows were not strong and his arrows did not fly straight, so that they missed many deer. From that time on, Yellow Eyes could find no one who wanted his bows and arrows, but Little Elk was busier than ever before.

Good insurance, like good bows and arrows, is the product of experience and cannot be successfully copied by an opportunist.

Higham, Neilson, Whitridge & Reid, Inc.

Boston • Philadelphia • Atlanta • Chicago • Dallas • Los Angeles • New York • St. Petersburg • San Francisco

LEADING THE NATION IN CAMP INSURANCE

For more information circle 217 on page 35.

Figure 2.9, *Camping Magazine*, April 1969: Vol 41 Issue 4

In both of these advertisements, we can observe distorted, romanticized versions of Native American figure. In Figure 2.8, we have a ‘chief’ cartoon figure, who appears to be reading an issue of the advertisers catalog. In Figure 2.9, we have two figures paried with a narrative story which ends with a metaphor for purchasing insurance: “Good insurance, like good bows and arrows, is the product of experience and cannot be successfully copied by an opportunist.” This statement appears to be emphasizing this insurance company’s reputation, as they also describe themselves lower in the advertisement as “leading the nation in camp insurance.” Both of these advertisements are examples of what Sandy Grande describes in *Red Pedagogy* as Indian essentialism, which she argues is an integral part of the overall domination working to hold Indigenous people within the “creative needs of whites”.⁷⁷ Indian essentialism, Grande writes, is usually found in White creative works — designed to inspire and conjure at the expense of actual Indians. In both Figure 2.8 and 2.9, artistic depictions of Indigenous people are used for the purpose of selling insurance and campwear. In both of these instances, it is likely a White advertiser speaking to a White camp director. This leaves no room for an actual Indigenous person to self-determine how their likeness is portrayed or what it is used for.

Analyzing advertisements means meditating a great deal on the narrative relationship between an author and their audience. In Wolfgang Iser’s essay *The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach*, Iser is primarily concerned with illustrating the significance of the relationship between the reader and the text they are reading. Iser presents a phenomenological approach because it stresses that “in considering a literary work, one must take into account the text but also, ... the actions involved in responding to that text.”⁷⁸ Phenomenology, as Iser

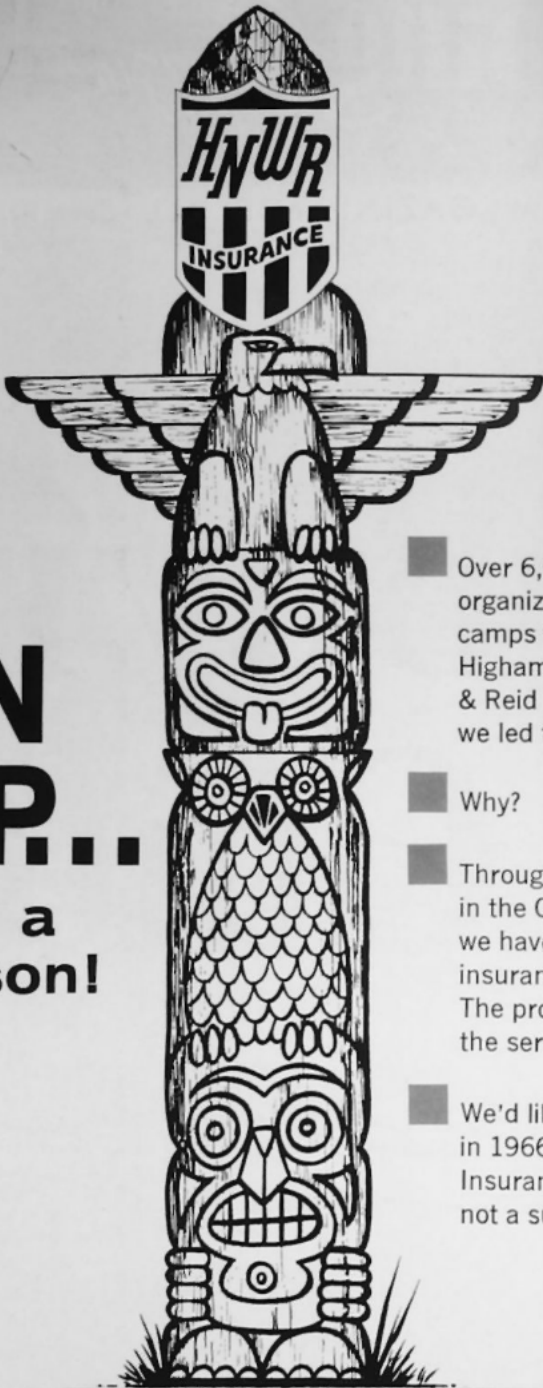
⁷⁷ Sandy Grande, *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*, page 101. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

⁷⁸ Iser, Wolfgang. “The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach.” In *New Directions in Literary History*, 125–45. London: Routledge, 2022. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9781003247937-8>.

defines it and how I will use this term, is primarily concerned with the systematic reflection on and analysis of the structures of consciousness, and the phenomena which appear in acts of consciousness.

Phenomenological historical analysis of *Camping* advertisements takes place from a highly modified “first person” viewpoint, studying phenomena not just as they appear to “my” consciousness, but to any consciousness. This is to say that the author, the advertiser, is not the ultimate signifier of a given text. Relying on Iser’s phenomenological approach to reading allows there is not a clear distinction between reader and author in the composition of a text. Meaning is created, interpreted, and reinterpreted. While we cannot ascertain the motivations behind certain advertisers’ creative or narrative decisions, the narratives we infer as readers are in itself an act of creation and thus as integral to the text as the original authors. Approaching narrative from a phenomenological approach allows us as historians to contemplate how a text can be a reflection of different audiences at different points in history. Later in *Red Pedagogy*, Grande writes that romanticized images of Indians ensures that “whitestream” publishers and intellectuals maintain control over epistemic games of discourse and available knowledge about Indigenous people.⁷⁹ Thus, even if the advertisers here might argue in this case that these depictions of Indigenous people are harmless, as their only object is to charm and/or inspire their customers, it would be an insufficient defence. Essentialist, romanticised images of Indians still frame the lens through which white audiences conceptualize Indians. Furthermore, as we can see below in Figure 2.10, HNWR Insurance repeatedly uses cultural appropriation to advertise in *Camping* magazine. This emphasizes that Indian essentialism is continuously sustained throughout *Camping*.

⁷⁹ Sandy Grande, *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*, page 103. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).



**ON
TOP...**
For a
Reason!


- Over 6,000 of the finest organizational and private camps were insured by Higham, Neilson, Whitridge & Reid in 1965. Once again we led the field.
- Why?
- Through years of experience in the Camp Insurance Field we have developed the finest insurance programs available. The protection is excellent, the service unequalled.
- We'd like to insure your camp in 1966. Remember, Camp Insurance is our specialty, not a summer sideline.

HIGHAM, NEILSON, WHITRIDGE & REID, INC.
PHILADELPHIA • NEW YORK • BOSTON • DALLAS • ATLANTA • CHICAGO • LOS ANGELES • ST. PETERSBURG

Figure 2.10, Camping Magazine 1950-04: Vol 22 Iss 4



Figure 2.11, *Camping Magazine*, April 1968: Vol 40 Issue 4



12

MARCH

Here's Jimmy

Rhulen's "CAMP TIPS" tell you how to:


- Prepare for him
- Shelter him
- Protect him
- Entertain him
- Feed him

**Pack him up and send him home
and much, much more.**

Rhulen's "CAMP TIPS" newsletter has been giving camp owners and directors helpful hints on running a camp more efficiently and profitably for four years now. In fact, many of these camp managers consider it their bible.

If you've been missing out so far, we'll be glad to help you catch up with some of our selected back issues. Meanwhile, start your own free subscription now. No obligation, of course.

Isn't it time you started collecting tips? Write Rhulen and start today. (Letterhead, please.)



Rhulen
AGENCY INC. • MONTICELLO, N.Y. 12761
Area Code (514) 794-8000 • N.Y. PHONE WRITERS 4-2300
Call us free from anywhere in the U.S.
(800) 431-1270
"Specialists in Camp Insurance"

For more information circle 133 on page 53.

CAMPING MAGAZINE

13

Figure 2.12, *Camping Magazine*, March 1968: Vol 40 Issue 3

In Figures 2.11 and 2.12, we can observe children literally playing Indian at camp. These advertisements appeal to hegemonic and normative ideas about what kids look like at camp. Specifically, they rely on commonly accepted tropes that appeal to the intended audiences of *Camping*. In a magazine geared towards parents and camp directors, *Camping* advertisements that feature children are usually visually appealing: the child is smiling, their hair is combed, and they are happily participating in the day's activities. How are these campers culturally represented and meant to be interpreted by *Camping* readers? They are meant to see these

campers as in their ‘natural’ and authentic environment, and this is represented in the form of the Indian.

In Figure 2.12, we have a child (named ‘Jimmy’) playing Indian. He’s wearing a headdress and it provides descriptions of how to “prepare, shelter, entertain, feed” Jimmy while he’s at camp. This advertisement works to reinforce ideas of Indianness as perpetual childhood, which we discussed in Chapter 1. Jimmy is presented here as a child and an Indian, and both versions require an attentive caretaker. Many of these advertisements in *Camping* that feature Native Americans will illustrate this narrative parallel between playing Indian and ideas about childhood: the target audience is adults who work with campers, and never the campers themselves. But what do campers think of playing Indian? Where do the people actually playing Indian fit into all of these presumed ideas of Indianness?

In her essay *Cultural Appropriation and the Crafting of Racialized Selves in American Youth Organizations*, Pauline Turner Strong highlights the histories of how Campfire Girls utilized ‘Playing Indian’ to form their distinctly American cultural traditions. Charlotte Gulick, the founder of Campfire Girls, relied on playing Indian to foster girls into fashioning antimodern gendered selves (the ‘Campfire’ in Campfire girls referring to the hearth of the home): “All of these girls, Gulick thought, could be instructed and unified through Camp Fire’s distinctive practices—and, notably, immigrant girls could be Americanized.”⁸⁰ In centering Camp Fire around a form of symbolism associated with the nation’s history, Gulick and his associates participated in a common form of nationalism that largely excluded the Native American present even while appropriating the Native past. Though, as Strong describes later in the same essay, playing Indian has shifted meaning throughout the history of summer camp.

⁸⁰ Pauline Turner Strong, “Cultural Appropriation and the Crafting of Racialized Selves in American Youth Organizations,” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 9, no. 2 (December 31, 2008): 197–213, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708608325918>.

Returning to the children featured in Figure 2.11, I wonder how children at camp feel about playing Indian. When these imaginary children return home from camp, will they remember their ‘adopted’ Indianness or their newfound friendship with each other? Will they remember playing Indian fondly, for will they recall the culturally appropriative games with slight discomfort? Perhaps their feelings about playing Indian will shift and change as they grow older and further from their summer camp experiences. Strong documents her own changing feelings about playing Indian herself in the *Campfire Girls*:

“While I remember spending a fair amount of time beading, sewing, and making beeswax candles for the Wo-He-Lo ceremony, it was spending time with my friends and camping in the Colorado mountains that kept me in Camp Fire. The hybrid practices of Camp Fire Girls, which from the beginning embodied contradictory motivations and agendas, lent themselves well to reinterpretation by new generations of girls. And my generation was one that was interested in civil rights and women’s rights—a generation for which some of the traditions of Camp Fire began to be vaguely uncomfortable.”⁸¹

Playing Indian at camp has always been slotted next to other reasons why parents would send their children to camp: ties to community, connections to nature, disconnecting from technology. But playing Indian has begun to take on new meanings for new generations. As younger camp staff and campers have begun critiquing summer camp’s racist tradition of playing Indian, the American Camp Association has been largely supportive of this effort without acknowledging their active role in sustaining, supporting, and enabling this tradition in their own publications.⁸²

Camping has been continuously published since 1930. A long-running publication like *Camping* is going to change significantly over time, and older issues of the magazine likely don’t reflect the opinions of the current editorial staff. Highlighting these examples of Native American appropriation is not to smear or humiliate the current *Camping* editorial staff. These

⁸¹ Pauline Turner Strong, “Cultural Appropriation and the Crafting of Racialized Selves in American Youth Organizations,” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 9, no. 2 (December 31, 2008): 197–213, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708608325918>.

⁸² Here is a great example of a undergrad thesis/projects focused on cultural appropriation at summer camps: Acacia Welsford. "Canoeing, Campfires, and Cultural Appropriation: Racism Against Native Americans in American Summer Camps 1880-2018" (2018). History Undergraduate Publications and Presentations. 21.

instances of Native American appropriation are not the fault of individuals advertisers or editors — instead, they are indicative of institutional beliefs. The *Camping* advertisements in this chapter illustrate how ‘playing Indian’ has been systematically interwoven in the summer camp industry. While racist depictions of Native Americans is far less common in *Camping* in its recent issues, many summer camps still have Indigenous-sounding names or a culturally appropriative totem pole. Native American appropriation is so deeply interwoven into the traditions of summer camp that these instances don’t strike audiences as insensitive or harmful. The pervasiveness of Native American imagery and appropriation in *Camping* magazine, especially in advertisements, illustrate that while ACA may currently view itself as a progressive organization, it has a history of showcasing harmful and racist depictions of Native American communities.

I love summer camp and believe in its transformative capabilities.⁸³ I struggle to maintain a pure and uncomplicated adoration of it as I continue learning about the industry’s enduring racist practices and its history of endorsing normative ideas of being and settler-colonial narratives. Summer camp has a complex history, and the industry has struggled to find “alternative practices with an equivalent symbolic resonance and transformative power” as playing Indian has for decades.⁸⁴ The summer camp industry wants to see itself as a progressive institution, but it also has obligations to a very traditional and all-American clientele of rich, WASP-y parents. It suggests that an obligation to financial stakeholders supersedes any desire to criticize culturally appropriative practices common at summer camps.

⁸³ Garst, Barry, and Anja Whittington. “Defining Moments of Summer Camp Experiences: An Exploratory Study With Youth in Early Adolescence.” *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership* 12, no. 3 (July 14, 2020). <https://doi.org/10.18666/jorel-2020-v12-i3-10109>.

⁸⁴ Pauline Turner Strong, “Cultural Appropriation and the Crafting of Racialized Selves in American Youth Organizations,” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 9, no. 2 (December 31, 2008): 197–213, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708608325918>.

Nowhere is this counterbalance more apparent than in *Camping*. In the mid and late 60's, *Camping* magazine published more articles about the importance of scholarship programs so more campers had the chance to attend. There are then, of course, opposing 'letters to the editor' written by camp professionals attesting to the important role camp plays in the lives of affluent children — that summer camp provides an oasis for 'well to do' children to access a much-needed escape from our rapidly increasing and chaotic world.⁸⁵ Take for example an expert from a sermon delivered to campers and parents at Camp Pasquaney in 1934, one of the longest-running boys camps in New Hampshire:

*“And while this turmoil is whirling around us in the big world outside, we at Pasquaney are hardly conscious of it. To be sure, we have our everyday problems, but they are mere drop in the bucket in comparison, and we are left to live the same lives as boys have lived at Pasquaney for the last forty years in an environment of peace, untroubled by the cyclone of serious events beyond our Camp boundaries...”*⁸⁶

Summer camps like Pasquaney believed the moral role of summer camp was to offer a respite to white children from an ever-changing society. Statements like the one above reinforce that the 'timelessness' spirit of camp exists to facilitate white children's camp experiences at the expense of others.

Playing Indian at summer camp is scrubbed of context, and appropriates aspects of Native American identities for its campers to play and 'camp' within. This manifests in overt colonial retellings of American history: campers can become a cowboy, a pioneer, or even an Army soldier. The camper becomes a patriotic American because they love the land in which they discovered themselves, and they feel they are a part of history, regardless of how invested

⁸⁵ Petrzela, Natalia Mehlman. “Why Fear of Big Cities Led to the Creation of Summer Camps.” *HISTORY*, August 7, 2017.

⁸⁶ Pasquaney Traditions: A Sermon delivered on Water Sports Sunday, July 29, 1934, by Mr. Teddy. Pasquaney archives. https://pasquaney.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/pasquaney_traditions.pdf

the camp is in historical truth-telling.⁸⁷ In this, camp becomes the wilderness Thoreau found himself in, and so too the campers.

The summer camp environment is powerful, community-oriented, and intentionally creates an ‘in’ group and an ‘out’ group.⁸⁸ Historically, the summer camp community has viewed themselves as the ideal space for children to socialize, in opposition to the outside world. Many camp professionals throughout the 20th century believed that at camp, children “could develop more complete personalities and eventually contribute more fully to civil society as adults.”⁸⁹ In framing summer camp in such an altruistic light, it brought about an even higher endorsement for playing Indian and other culturally appropriative traditions. Given that summer camp can be such a formative social space for participants, I have wondered how playing Indian at summer camps might have impacted emerging adults’ perceptions of Indigenous people. Campers often cite very strong attachments and feelings of loyalty to their camp, even when a camp’s traditions might cause direct harm to an ‘out’ group.⁹⁰ In *Selves in Place: Sports, scouts, and American cultural citizenship*, authors Strong and Posner describe the history of how U.S. youth organizations have crafted a ‘sense of self’ through cultural appropriation. In this article, the authors describe the ‘Indian’ inspired canoes at a Camp Fire Girls’ residential summer camp:

“While similar decorations may have once been used by Native Americans to attract fish and game, Camp Fire Girls employed them as a means of personal self-expression. At a time when many Eastern Woodlands tribes had lost their land base – and with it, the ability to subsist through hunting, fishing, and wild rice gathering – archery and canoeing

⁸⁷ “Tans, Tepees, and Minstrel Shows: Race, Primitivism, and Camp Community,” in *Children’s Nature: The Rise of the American Summer Camp* (NYU Press, 2010).

⁸⁸ Hanna, Nancy A., and Thomas J. Berndt. “Relations between Friendship, Group Acceptance, and Evaluations of Summer Camp.” *The Journal of Early Adolescence* 15, no. 4 (November 1995): 456–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431695015004004>.

⁸⁹ Michael B. Smith, “‘The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper’ and the Nature of Summer Camp,” *Environmental History* 11, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 70–101, <https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/11.1.70>.

⁹⁰ Wilson, Cait, and Jim Sibthorp. “The Role of Behavioral Loyalty in Youth Development at Summer Camp.” *Journal of Leisure Research* 50, no. 1 (January 2019): 28–47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2018.1544840>

became leisure activities for the daughters of those who had displaced Native Americans from the land”⁹¹

The memories campers form in playing Indian are dynamic and powerful. This makes contemporary discourse about summer camps’ archaic, outdated, and culturally appropriative traditions difficult within the summer camp community. In Chapter 3, I will provide some personal stories of my own summer camp experiences which will contextualize my situated knowledge within the settler-colonial narratives of summer camp. In highlighting these advertisements from *Camping* magazine that feature racist depictions of Native American tropes, images, and stories, I hope to have illustrated how intrinsic ‘playing Indian’ is within the summer camp industry.⁹² It is my hope that as we collectively address how to make summer camp more inclusive, we do not proceed with a sort of color-blind cultural amnesia that ignores the material and emotional harm that our collective racial mimicry inflicts on Indigenous communities.

A Note on Research Process

For my research purposes, I relied primarily on the physical *Camping* periodicals available in the University of Washington libraries. In these physical collections, I first went through the entire archive and marked every advertisement which in some way mentioned Indian cultural tropes.⁹³ Since the physical collection is incomplete and some decades are missing, I also relied on ‘Internet Archive’ for scanned microfilms of the magazine from the years 1930-1948. Most of these scans were of great quality and easy to read. I also found modern editions from 2000-2021 through EBSCO through the University of Washington library. However, how the EBSCO archives are largely incomplete. EBSCO only contained PDFs of feature stories and

⁹¹ Pauline Turner Strong and Laurie Posner, “Selves in Play: Sports, Scouts, and American Cultural Citizenship,” *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 45, no. 3 (August 9, 2010): 390–409, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690210370380>.

⁹² Travis Allison, “Cultural Appropriation - Anti-Racism in Summer Camps — Go Camp Pro,” *Go Camp Pro*, August 18, 2020, <https://gocamp.pro/blog/cultural-appropriation-anti-racism-in-summer-camps>.

⁹³ Volumes of *Camping* currently available at University of Washington libraries: v. 12, v. 37-38, v. 39-40, v. 41-42, v. 41.8, v. 43-44, v. 45-72. (Volume 72 is 1999).

articles from their collection of *Camping*. This means many of the other pages from each magazine are missing — sections such as classified, letters to the editor, and full-page advertisements. The only advertisements I was able to see in 21st-century issues of *Camping* were ones featured on the same page as feature articles. This severely limited my ability to physically look through all of the advertisements in issues of *Camping* from 2000-2021.

Camping is the sole historical source for this chapter as it covers a vast array of years, subjects, and participants. However, using one historical source does come with limitations. Principally relying on *Camping* means that I am reaching from the experiences of adults who spend time philosophizing, thinking, and engaging with summer camp. People who are involved with the ACA and write for *Camping* are passionate about camp. Given my own experiences as a summer camp professional, I believe this makes me, and this magazine's authors, to be quite biased when it comes to camp, and prone to creating an echo chamber. Furthermore, early editions of *Camping* featured little camper input or meaningful evaluation of summer camp programs. Therefore, it is difficult to evaluate the truthful nature of the magazine's printings, though I am assuming that since *Camping* featured a full editorial board and has been regarded as reputable by publications such as the *New York Times* and *Parenting*, I am employing a good faith interpretation that everything published in *Camping* was/is true to the best of the editors' knowledge.

Chapter 3: Finding Camp Menzies

Playing Goldrush

At nearly every overnight summer camp, the ‘all-camp’ activity reigns supreme in the minds of campers and staff. This can range from a week-long ‘Color War’, camp Olympics, or Capture the Flag. At my camp, we play an all-camp game inspired by the history of the Northern California Sierra Nevada mountains where our camp resides. We played a game called Goldrush.

In Goldrush, we hide gold spray-painted rocks all over the camp property, and each camper’s goal is to retrieve as many gold pieces as they can and bring the rocks back to the ‘bank’. The ‘bank’ is a cardboard box in the camp’s Dining Hall we have fitted with a Sharpie scrawling of “BANK”. We assign older campers the role of ‘robbers’ whose job is to steal gold from younger campers and re-hide the gold before younger campers can bring the rocks back to the bank. After rules are described and teams are chosen, what ensues is delightful, wonderful chaos. Running is allowed, points are not kept, scores are meaningless, and a ‘winner’ is never determined. The game concludes when the younger kids are tired of running and the older kids have run out of hiding places.

I love Goldrush. The pandemonium of it exemplifies so much of what I love about summer camp. When we explain the rules of the game, campers practically vibrate with excitement, and the staff giggles conspiratorially with each other about where they’ll hide. When we finally yell “GO!”, I watch dozens of kids squeal with delight and run with glee into the woods. I watch them take their friend’s hand and sprint freely, uninhibited, unknowingly with a watchful adult trailing close behind. There aren’t many times I witness young kids, girls especially, exist with this complete lack of inhibition. The competitive air rushing through the camp when we’re playing Goldrush is something thick and alive. I watch teenagers, who are

often otherwise constantly adjusting their hair and standing so self-assuredly in an “*I’m way too old and cool to be here*” fashion, run full-speed at a tree stump because they caught a glint of something shiny. I’ll see a middle schooler plunge into the dirt towards a fern plant, chucking dirt at her friends. I’ll see a gaggle of 10-year-olds abandon the game to braid together wildflowers in the meadow, unbothered by the chaos around them.

I love nothing more than watching this scene unfold before me. I stand and stare and laugh until I can’t breathe. But I can’t shake the feeling whenever we play Goldrush we’re playing into something weird and complicated. I can’t help but think about the fact that before the Gold Rush began in 1848, at least 20,000 Sierra Miwok people lived here in the Sierra Nevadas, but by the 1910 census, only about 300 Sierra Miwok people (then called ‘digger Indians’) were recorded on the Tuolumne County census.⁹⁴ ⁹⁵ The Hunter family, a Miwok family who used to live where Camp Menzies is now, isn’t here anymore. The Gold Rush killed thousands of people, and here I am teaching kids that it was all in good fun.⁹⁶

I know the campers who come to Camp Menzies are familiar with the Gold Rush, albeit a narratively simple version. Nearly everyone who grows up in California is closely acquainted with the Gold Rush, and for those of us near the Sierra Nevadas, its legacy is inescapable. Brendan Lindsay discusses in his book *Murder State: California’s Native American Genocide 1846-1873* how many Americans today are ignorant of California’s past as a genocidal state. He writes, “...[Gold Rush] history is covered as little more than the rip-roaring good times of gold

⁹⁴ From the book, *Murder State*: “In 1911, the state had only about 10 percent of the Indigenous population it had sixty years before.” Brendan C. Lindsay, *Murder State: California’s Native American Genocide, 1846-1873* (page 351). (U of Nebraska Press, 2012).

⁹⁵ Miwok has several spellings. I have seen Miwok also spelled as Mi-Wuk or Me-Wuk. 1906, Special Agent C.E. Kelsey used "Miwak." I am using the current name of the tribe, which is "California Valley Miwok Tribe." The former name of the federally recognized tribe was "Sheep Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians of California."

⁹⁶ Alexander Nazaryan, “California Slaughter: The State-Sanctioned Genocide of Native Americans,” *Newsweek*, August 17, 2016.

miners or the triumphal joining of east and west via the Transcontinental Railroad”.⁹⁷ You can feel the truth of Lindsay’s claim in legacy Gold Rush towns. Practically every Main Street, town square, and school is named after an aristocrat who got rich off the Gold Rush. While 4th graders in Southern California construct tiny dioramas of Spanish missions, Northern Californian kids pull covered wagons and pan for gold in Coloma, where James Marshall ‘discovered’ gold in 1848.⁹⁸

Camp Menzies is at the center of the Gold Rush’s physical history. Coloma is only a one-hour drive away, and even closer to us still is Colombia, one of the largest Gold Rush ‘boomtowns’ from the 1850s.⁹⁹ I’ve driven dozens of campers to the town of Colombia for field trips where campers meet a blacksmith, learn about soap making, and look at an old gold mill. Unlike so many Gold Rush boomtowns, Columbia isn’t a ghost town.¹⁰⁰ People live here. However, like so much of the Northern California region that exploded in population during the Gold Rush, Columbia grips its colonial history like a life raft. As I would listen to reenactment storytellers act out monologues about the exciting Gold Rush and the American Dream, I’d think about how a well-rehearsed and conclusive narrative is usually a dubious one.¹⁰¹ But the legacy of the Gold Rush is what this town has, and so it clings to it.

I remember being taught that the Gold Rush was inseparable from the identity of Californians, and how it influenced our plucky, creative, and independent spirit. Growing up in the Sacramento area, I absorbed the gospel of Joan Didion, believing that Californians could make something out of nothing. Surrounded by the most beautiful trees — giant redwoods, palm

⁹⁷ Brendan C. Lindsay, *Murder State: California’s Native American Genocide, 1846-1873* (Introduction, page 9). (U of Nebraska Press, 2012).

⁹⁸ “Indian Country Diaries . History . California Genocide,” PBS, accessed March 19, 2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20071018030304/http://www.pbs.org/indiancountry/history/calif.html>.

⁹⁹ “Our History: How It All Started,” Columbia California, accessed April 19, 2023, <http://www.visitcolumbiacalifornia.com/history/>.

¹⁰⁰ Sam Kemp, “Visit the Ghost Towns of the California Gold Rush,” *Far Out Magazine*, January 24, 2022.

¹⁰¹ Jia Tolentino, *Trick Mirror: Reflections on Self-Delusion* (Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2020).

trees, or majestic oaks — you could live in the Golden State and become the truest version of yourself. Didion writes of this Northern Californian disposition in *Notes from a Native Daughter* where she recalls the disappearing Sacramento of her youth. According to her, “It is characteristic of Californians to speak grandly of the past as if it had simultaneously begun, *tabula rasa*, and reached a happy ending on the day the wagons started west. *Eureka* — ‘I Have Found It’ — as the state motto has it.”¹⁰² Most of California’s modern recognition power doesn’t come from Northern California, even if it’s where our golden legacy began. This leaves Northern California and its many cities, strewn about the valley, foothills, and Sierra Nevada mountain range, condemned to the footnotes. It isn’t cool to be from Northern California, as Didion herself espoused even back in 1979: “Anybody who talks about California hedonism has never spent a Christmas in Sacramento.”¹⁰³ What Gold Rush towns still exist are far less populated than other California metropolitan areas, produce alt-right figureheads, and elect far-right conservatives to office.¹⁰⁴ Gold Rush era Main Streets have never been updated and feel frozen in time.¹⁰⁵

I worry that when we play Gold Rush at Camp Menzies, I perpetuate the Gold Rush myths I grew up living in. A part of me thinks our version of the Gold Rush is so anachronistic from the real, traumatic history that we are perhaps absolved. Another part of me knows that while the Gold Rush represents the beginning of California’s human history for many people, for

¹⁰² Joan Didion, *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* “Notes From A Native Daughter” (Macmillan, 1990).

¹⁰³ Michiko Kakutani, “Joan Didion: Staking Out California,” *The New York Times*, June 10, 1979.

¹⁰⁴ Some recent headlines from this geographic area to emphasize this point:

1. Christopher Mathias, “Exposed: Dallas Humber, Narrator Of Neo-Nazi ‘Terrorgram,’ Promoter Of Mass Shootings,” *HuffPost*, March 3, 2023.
2. Hansen, Robert J. “Community Defends Drag Queen Story Hour from Proud Boys and Hate Group.” *NewsBreak Original*, April 17, 2023.
3. Lucy Hodgman, “Woodland Bar Stormed by Hateful Protesters after Violent Threats Cancel LGBTQ Event,” *The Sacramento Bee*, July 1, 2022.
4. Sabine Tischler, “Patriots of Gold Country: Anatomy of a Homegrown Hate Group” *Sierra Foothill Stump*, May 10, 2021.

¹⁰⁵ Lila Seidman, “Placerville Is Keeping the Nickname ‘Hangtown’ after Removing a Noose from Its Logo,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 30, 2021.

the Miwok, Patwin, Neislan, Washoe, and other Indigenous communities, it represents an end.¹⁰⁶ Many white descendants living in Northern California believe that Native Americans in the area died because of exposure to diseases like smallpox that their immune systems weren't used to. This did occur, but this preceding narrative instills a certain passivity on the part of Euro-American settlers and negates their human agency and actions. Playing Goldrush at Camp Menzies forces me to confront the settler-colonial history of the summer camp industry at my own summer camp. It forces me to think of the ways I myself have enabled summer camp's racist traditions — that if we're 'just playing' it's all in good fun.

I have argued in the previous two chapters that the summer camp industry clings to overly simple narratives about its collective history, traditions, and identity. In doing so, I have highlighted the prominent myths in summer camp history, and in particular, I highlighted how the widespread culture of playing Indian has persisted as an institutional norm at American summer camps. While I believe the entire summer camp industry needs to meaningfully and critically examine our settler-colonial myth-making practices, I also think this shift will require individual, personal reflection. I want to spend this chapter exploring the settler-colonial myths I have participated in as a model to other camp professionals.

As a camp director myself, I know how challenging it is for summer camp professionals to recontextualize the history of summer camp and acknowledge our part in perpetuating settler-colonial myths of American exceptionalism. Indeed, it is deeply uncomfortable, and forces us to challenge personal truisms we have taken for granted. As Shari Huhndorf raises in *Going Native*, “acknowledging this terrible past contests the imaginary unity of America and

¹⁰⁶ The Native Californian population reduced by 90% during the 19th century. It is estimated that in 1800 more than 200,000 people populated the state. The population was 15,000 by 1900. Most of these deaths occurred in the latter half of the century, following the 1848 Gold Rush. This statistic is further explained in the book *Murder State* by Brendan Lindsay

undermines the ideal of a free and democratic nation.”¹⁰⁷ In this final chapter, I am going to outline some of my personal, ongoing, and competing narratives about summer camp. This includes investigating the history of my camp’s name ‘Camp Menzies’ and the land’s previous stewards, a Sierra Miwok family named the Hunters. It also includes a narration of my camp’s generator for its ability to disrupt the romantic and idealized landscape of Camp Menzies. The competing narratives of summer camp and my camp history informs my ability to confront the settler-colonial history of summer camp. Camp is a highly personal topic to me, and it is irresponsible and impossible for me to feign objective impartiality.

Many 20th-century-founded youth organizations have recently begun critically examining their history of culturally appropriative practices, but this reflection has proven especially difficult for youth organizations like the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Campfire, and the YMCA. Strong (2009) suggests this is perhaps because the very nature of childhood has for generations been formed through embodying Indianness. Playing Indian can be symbolically powerful, spiritually resonant, and feels distinctly American. The essay anthology *Queer as Camp* features reflective essays from children’s literature scholars on their childhood experiences at summer camp. Many of these essays feature recalled memories of playing Color War, dressing up as Indian Chiefs, and participating in complex Indian pageants. In the introduction, Derritt Mason recalls how playing Indian was, for him, a powerful and liberatory experience,

“It was something of an honor, as a staff member, to portray Hiawatha. As a camper, I longed to play this part. Eventually, I would — and I even played the Chief himself, in my twenties. Sliding into the weighty leather costume, crowning myself with the headdress, and reciting the ceremonial script that had resonated in my mind for over a decade — it was thrilling and liberating. I felt powerful. This was a part of camp in which I shined.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Cornell University Press, 2015).

¹⁰⁸ Kidd, Kenneth B., and Derritt Mason, “Introduction” in *Queer as Camp: Essays on Summer, Style, and Sexuality*. Fordham Univ Press, 2020.

Anecdotes like Masons’ emphasize how complex it is for the summer camp industry to collectively reflect on how settler-colonial myths cause harm. Playing Indian isn’t just an advertising tactic used by companies in *Camping* magazine — it has been a hallmark of the summer camp experience for its entire existence. However, if the summer camp industry is truly invested in diversity, equity, and inclusion, then we must recontextualize the settler-colonial myths we continue to participate in as an industry and community.¹⁰⁹ Playing Indian is (and has always been) actively harmful for many reasons. Joshua Whitehead, another contributor to *Queer as Camp*, writes that Playing Indian warrants criticism as “such aesthetics, in all of their promises for futurity, depend upon a cooptation of Indigenous land (literal and figurative)”.¹¹⁰ Playing Indian and playing Goldrush rely on a literal cooptation of Indigenous identities. I love playing Goldrush at Camp Menzies. But if playing this game relies on narratives that frame gold seekers as altruistic and Indigenous people as “primitive petroglyphs”, then it’s time to find a new form of play.

¹⁰⁹ American Camp Association. “Why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Matters at Camp,” July 27, 2022. <https://www.acacamps.org/about/diversity-equity-inclusion/why-it-matters>.

¹¹⁰ Joshua Whitehead, “Finding We’Wha,” in *Queer as Camp*, ed. Kenneth Kidd (Fordham University Press, 2020), 223–40, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/9780823283637-016>.

Finding Camp Menzies

For the unindoctrinated: the name of a summer camp is a powerful thing. Camp names are culturally and spiritually significant to participants and staff alike, and they're virtually everywhere at any given camp. They get printed on t-shirts, repeated in camp songs, posted on signs, and repeated constantly throughout camp daily life.¹¹¹ Generally speaking, environmental place names help create meaning and community.¹¹² They pay tribute to a specific person (e.g. a founder, donor, or a local historical figure) or signify nearby features of the surrounding natural environment. Place names situate participants in that particular space, and give meaning to the natural environments and shared experiences. This is particularly significant in the camp setting, where campers are spending days, even weeks at a time, in that space without many outside forces or influences. This emphasizes the significance of summer camp place names. In the camp setting, place names can also give insight into a camp's history and values. For example, my camp's sleeping units have names like Cedar Woods, Oak Grove, Ponderosa Pines, Sugar Pine Glen, and Silver Fir — these names work to remind campers of the trees they're surrounded by in the Sierra Nevadas.

Children typically arrive at summer camp from urban environments.¹¹³ This means campers are arriving perhaps without context for the new and potentially overwhelming experiences they're having. This heightens the importance of the camp name. As a camper arrives at camp for the first time, often the first thing they're greeted with is a welcome sign for the camp. When they get off the bus, all of the staff are wearing shirts with the camp's name. The

¹¹¹ "Camp Traditions: Memories in the Making," American Camp Association, September 29, 2015.

¹¹² Yi-fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (Columbia University Press, 1990).

¹¹³ Quote: "Eight in ten girls say Girl Scouting allows them to do outdoor activities they have never done before and wouldn't have done otherwise—suggesting Girl Scout [camp] opens the door to novel outdoor experiences." from 'Girl Scouts Soar in the Outdoors' a 2019 Report from the Girl Scouts Research Institute

camp name is the first foothold campers are given in an otherwise unfamiliar space. It's also the first, if only, thing they have in common with other campers.

The importance of a camp's name is further complicated in that many summer camps in the United States are named to sound Indigenous.¹¹⁴ This has historically been done to appeal to parents and children the primitive nature of summer camp and to emphasize the close connection to nature that summer camp can offer.¹¹⁵ My summer camp is a rare exception, though its name still directly evokes the complex history of the land.



Figure 3.1 - Campers in front of one of the signs pointing towards Camp Menzies, 2021

¹¹⁴ Alexia Franzidis, Alana N. Seaman, and Jayna Donaldson, "A Toponymy of American Summer Camps: Onscreen Stereotypes or Symbols Ripe for Change?," *The Journal of American Culture* 45, no. 2 (May 19, 2022): 139–54, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jacc.13337>

¹¹⁵ Abigail Ayres Van Slyck, *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890-1960* (U of Minnesota Press, 2006).

The summer camp I have spent many years working at, primarily in a leadership position and most recently as the Director, is called Camp Menzies. The camp name is integral to our camp's identity. Colloquially, our camp staff constantly refer to the 'Menzies Magic' that powers our camp. We tell campers the Menzies Magic powers our generator, lights our campfires, and provides our staff's seemingly endless supply of positive energy. Our camp name refers specifically to a single man who made our camp possible: Charles Menzies, a cattle rancher and businessman whose primary residence was in Stockton, California. The story goes that the 175 acres had been used by Charles Menzies and his wife Winnetta for a few years for recreation, and he donated the land to the Stockton Girl Scout council in 1943 with the stipulation that it could only be used as a camp for girls.¹¹⁶

This is the origin story I've always been told about the history of Camp Menzies' name. After so many years, the Menzies Magic has been interwoven (literally) into my skin and identity, but I've never known a great deal of the history behind our name or our camp's land. I've wondered if learning about Charles Menzies would reveal new things about our camp, and who lived here before Charles Menzies. As the camp director, my job was to use the Camp Menzies property to help campers learn to love and care for the outdoors. Doing so without fully contextualizing this land and its history feels irresponsible to this land's autonomous agency and its previous stewards. After so many summers living here, I want to be in community with the land of Camp Menzies and not just use it for a utilitarian purpose. I feel responsible to learn more about Camp Menzies and its history beyond (what I assume) is an oversimplified version. After learning about the Gold Rush and how irreparably linked its legacy is to the land Camp

¹¹⁶ Camp Menzies Land Deed, Calaveras County Official Documents, page 165. (1942)

Menzies is on, I know there are a multitude of embedded narratives within Camp Menzies' physical and lived histories.¹¹⁷

As camp directors and summer camp researchers, I argue we have a collective responsibility to teach our campers and camp staff how to be mindful land stewards and outdoor activists. This includes learning about the deep history of the land where our summer camps are located. A 2014 Girl Scout Research Institute study found that kids who go camping year after year grow up to be more environmentally conscious than kids who don't go camping.¹¹⁸ The University of Utah has also found that time outside benefits children, and meaningful outdoor recreation often leads to ecological stewardship.¹¹⁹ Knowing this, the outdoor stewardship we engage in at summer camp should be contextualized in the specific bioregion of our summer camp. In her book *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy*, Jenny Odell describes how understanding the specific bioregion where she is makes her more connected to the world around her. She writes,

“Similar to many Indigenous culture's relationships to land, bioregionalism is first and foremost based on observation and recognition of what grows where, as well as an appreciation for the complex web of relationships among those actors. More than observation, it also suggests a way of identifying with place, weaving oneself into a region through observation of and responsibility to the local ecosystem.”¹²⁰

Odell writes in her chapter on bioregions that she first experienced 'disconnecting' from the online world when she was in the Sierra Nevadas researching the Mokelumne River. When she

¹¹⁷ 'Embedded narratives' refer to a narratological framing tool in Literary Studies, sometimes referred to as a kind of 'russian doll' or 'story within a story' plot device. For my own purposes, an 'embedded narrative' refers to a shift in narrator characterized by emphasis on the process of communicating knowledge. In other words, who imparts what and to whom. This is not a purely diegetic process, and as is in this case, the reader is an active participant in the narratological storytelling in their decision to privilege certain historical narratives over others. For more on embedded narratives, I relied on William Nelles' *Stories within Stories: Narrative Levels and Embedded Narrative* and Nancy Miller's *Emphasis Added: Plots and Plausibilities in Women's Fiction* for my own use of this term.

¹¹⁸ Girl Scouts Research Institute. "More Than S'mores: Successes and Surprises in Girl Scouts' Outdoor Experiences," 2014.

¹¹⁹ For example, the American Camp Association is working in collaboration with the Journal of Outdoor Education and The University of Utah to conduct multiple decade spanning qualitative surveys into the impacts of summer camps on participants and families.

¹²⁰ Odell, Jenny. *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy*, page 122. Melville House, 2020.

arrived at her cabin, she realized she was without phone service and would be for the whole weekend. But in the absence of technology, she realized she could pay much closer attention to the world around her. This anecdote struck me because of how much I could identify with the author's specific bioregional descriptions. A small branch of the Mokelumne River runs through the Camp Menzies property, and I always lose phone service within 20 miles of driving to camp. Disconnecting from the online world can be a powerful experience, and it's one of the most novel aspects of a modern summer camp when so much of our world relies on technology.¹²¹ And I know how beautiful this specific part of the Sierra Nevadas is — I feel closely acquainted with its trees, dust, dirt, and wildflowers. But I don't know a lot about Camp Menzies' previous land stewards. Thus, I want to learn all of the history of Camp Menzies — not just the settler-colonial narrative that begins and ends with Charles Menzies.

¹²¹ Daniel, Brad, Jim Shores, and W. Brad Faircloth. "The Effects of Natural Landscapes on Inspiration: An Exploratory Study." *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education and Leadership* 13, no. 4 (2021): 30+. *Gale Academic OneFile*.

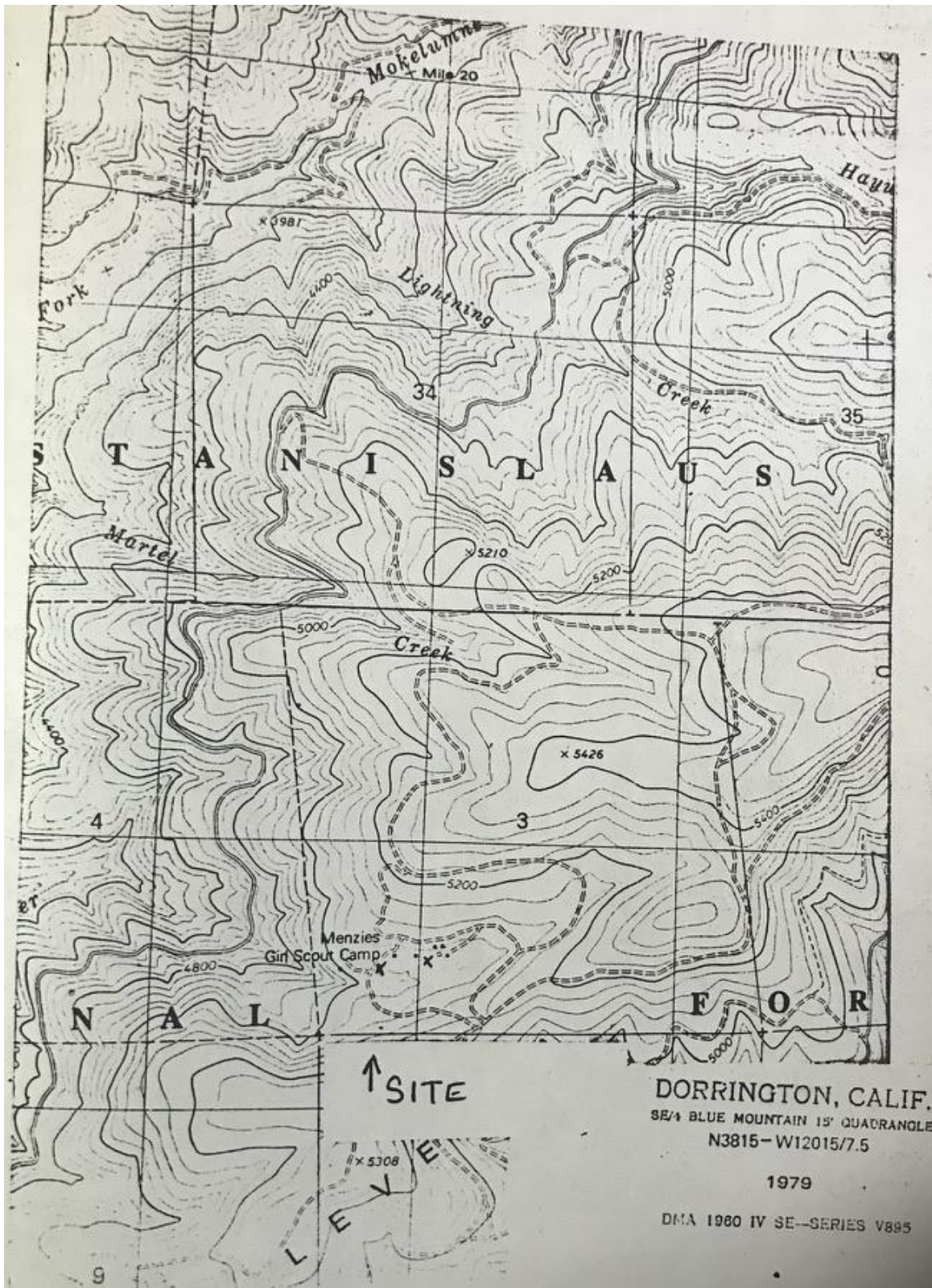


Figure 3.2 - A topographic map of Calaveras County used to highlight Camp Menzies' location (1979)

Using a combination of historical Calaveras County records, library archives, archaeological records, census data, some very kind volunteers at the Calaveras Historical Society, the WayBack Machine, and scattered Camp Menzies documents and stories, I have attempted to sketch out a modest timeline of Camp Menzies' land stewardship history. What follows is the story of this land, as best as I can piece it together (for now).

Camp Menzies is two hours east of Sacramento, California — just outside the small town of Arnold. It's about 5500 feet in elevation, in the heart of the Sierra Nevadas, and covered in Ponderosa Pines and Dogwood trees. It neighbors Calaveras Big Trees State Park, which as the name might suggest, covets a large grove of Giant Sequoia Redwoods. This region falls alongside a traditional border region between the Central Sierra Miwok and the Washoe of Lake Tahoe and Carson Valley.¹²² Traditional Miwok stories and archeological data suggest that “Miwok [families] traditionally summered at the higher, cooler altitudes of the big trees and moved to lower elevations before the snows came.”¹²³ This suggests that Camp Menzies would have made a great summer home for Sierra Miwok families. Within the jurisdiction of Big Trees State Park and the Camp Menzies property, there are hundreds of Miwok acorn and salt-grinding rocks.¹²⁴ Acorns (or ‘muyu’ in Miwok) were a major food source for both Miwok and Washoe populations, and given acorns’ high tannin content, acorns were mashed into a flour or paste to mild out their bitter flavor.¹²⁵ The high concentration of grinding rocks and other archeological

¹²² Shelly Davis-King and Judith Marvin, “Historic Properties Survey Report For the Calaveras County Water District Arnold Reach 3A Water Transmission Pipeline Replacement Project” (Calaveras County Water District, 2014), <https://snlm.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/hpsr-jmarvinreport-arnold.pdf>.

¹²³ Carol A. Kramer, *Calaveras Big Trees* (Arcadia Publishing, 2010).

Data for this point also from the ‘The First People’ by Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., Davis, CA, 2007.

¹²⁴ Perlman, David. “Stone Basins May Be Miwok Salt ‘Factory.’” *SFGATE*, December 30, 2009.

<https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Stone-basins-may-be-Miwok-salt-factory-3277185.php>.

¹²⁵ Leslie A. Landefeld, “THE MIWOK AND MAIDC PEOPLES OF THE SIERRA NEVADA AND FOOTHILLS,” in *Yosemite and the Mother Lode Gold Belt: Geology, Tectonics, and the Evolution of Hydrothermal Fluids in the Sierra Nevada of California* (The Pacific Section American Association of Petroleum Geologist, 1990), <http://dx.doi.org/10.32375/1990-gb68.2>.

markers indicate that Miwok families lived in this region of the Sierra Nevadas regularly for thousands of years before the Gold Rush.¹²⁶ Sierra Miwok families who summered in the Big Trees area likely encountered Spaniards when they arrived in California in the 1600's, but given the Sierra Miwok's preference for living at higher altitudes, they were mostly spared from attacks and disease, as the foreigners found the Sierras difficult to summit. Sierra Miwok communities often lived together in communities, forming neighborhoods with other families. Historians, archeologists, and Miwok tribal members believe that up to 20,000 Miwok people lived throughout this Northern Sierra region.¹²⁷ When gold was struck in 1848 Coloma, everything changed. This is where the documented, settler-colonial history of Camp Menzies begins.

After gold was announced as being discovered in the Sierra Nevada foothills, Euro-American settlers migrated to California in massive droves. One of these hopefuls was potentially George Henry Hunter (born in 1828), a British man living in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Canada.¹²⁸ When the Gold Rush started, he would have been around 28.¹²⁹ George Henry moved to the Big Trees Calaveras area in the mid-late 1800s. There, he met a Miwok woman named Matilda Full, who was born in 1830 and would have been around 26 in 1848. Not much is known about Matilda's life before meeting George Henry, but she reported having lived in the Big Trees area for her entire life. This could suggest Matilda lived on the Camp Menzies land before meeting George Henry. Matilda and George Henry were married (though Matilda later disputed this) and homesteaded on the land near where Camp Menzies, then began having

¹²⁶ Gifford, Edward Winslow., Barrett, Samuel Alfred. *Miwok Material Culture: Indian Life of the Yosemite Region*. United States: Yosemite Natural History Association, 1997.

¹²⁷ "History – The Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians," *The Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians*, accessed March 19, 2023, <https://mewuk.com/cultural/history/>.

¹²⁸ Information relayed to me from Maureen Elliot, an archivist at the Calaveras County Archives Office.

¹²⁹ Calaveras County Death Index, section "h".

children.¹³⁰ James was born in 1861, then followed by Annie in 1866, Nettie in 1872, and George Jr. in 1874.¹³¹ Given the steady rate of birth years dispersed amongst the children, I believe George Henry might have moved to the Big Trees area close to 1860. He was a shingle maker, so it is possible he didn't move because of gold, but instead for the lumber industry.¹³²

Historical records of the exact birth dates, names, and number of children between Matilda and George Henry isn't known with certainty. One source I found claims that between them, they had 10 children.¹³³ Perhaps some of their children died in infancy, but the only children for whom I could locate consistent census documentation were James, Annie, Nettie, and George Jr., so these are the only children whose lives I tried to follow. That said, census data of Indigenous people in colonial California has been reported as notoriously scattered, insufficient, and unreliable by modern historians.¹³⁴ This can lead to tenuous claims, some of which I encountered in my own research. For example, historian Carol Kramer claims in *Calaveras Big Trees* that the Hunter family lived in the Oak Hollow campground area within Big Trees State Park. However, the Hunter family cemetery is several miles away from Oak Hollow, further up Highway 4 near Camp Menzies.¹³⁵ Additionally, Hunter family-built shake cabins are still on the Camp Menzies property, and at the time of George Henry's murder, he was described to be working for Harvey S. Blood on the Big Trees Road — a road project that was many miles north of Big Trees State Park at the time.¹³⁶ Not to disparage her historical work, as many of

¹³⁰ From Calaveras County Archive Records: "Marital status: In the inquest on the death of George Hunter, she stated she was not married to George Hunter, just lived with him."

¹³¹ Calaveras County, CA Death Index "H" (2012)

¹³² "George Henry Hunter: 1828-New Brunswick, Nova Scotia-6/23/1878 Dorrington. Age 50 yrs. Shingle Maker." Emailed to me from Maureen Elliott at the Calaveras County Archive office.

¹³³ Carol A. Kramer, *Calaveras Big Trees* (Arcadia Publishing, 2010).

¹³⁴ Brennen Lindsay discusses this extensively in *Murder State: California's Native American Genocide, 1846-1873* (U of Nebraska Press, 2012).

¹³⁵ From "Cemetery Lists of Calaveras County", compiled by Maureen Elliott in 2012 from records at the County Archives, newspaper obits and death indexes.

¹³⁶ "Blood and Curtis' first construction project in 1868 was to complete the new Big Trees road between Bear Valley and Silver Valley." From "History," Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway, accessed April 19, 2023, <https://scenic4.org/history/>.

Kramer's claims in *Calaveras Big Trees* were helpful to me in learning about the history of Calaveras County. I bring up this one example because I believe my deep familiarity with this specific subsection of Calaveras County supplies me with an astute awareness of the land and its history. It also reinforces that the narrative I have pieced together thus far is based on a somewhat inscrutable history.

MURDERED. — From the *Alpine Signal* of
Wednesday we obtain the following:
On Saturday, the 20th, George H. Hunter,
for several years in the employ of Mr. H. S.
Blood, and recently engaged in repairing the
the Big Trees road, was murdered near his
residence, about one mile from Gardner's, it
is supposed by a half-breed Indian. He was
dead when found on Sunday morning. De-
ceased leaves a son at Dayton in the employ
of J. W. Johnson.

Figure 3.3 - The death announcement of George Henry Hunter from the Morning Appeal (Carson City, NV), 8/3/1878, page 2

Not much was reported of the Hunter family besides the birth records of their four children. That is until George Henry Hunter's murder is reported. Below is the inquest and report of his murder trial, as relayed to me from the Calaveras County Archival Office:

“George Henry Hunter: 1828-New Brunswick, Nova Scotia-6/23/1878 Dorrington. Age 50 yrs. Shingle Maker. Married to Matilda (American Indian). Cause of death: knife wound by person unknown. The Inquest, done at the time and place of the death, has that George had beat Matilda the night before with a poker and beat her again in the morning. John Hodge was at the house but left in the morning. Shortly after, George Hunter was found dead outside by one of the Hunter children. Matilda stated in the inquest that she was not actually married to George. They had lived together for years.

The criminal trial, where a Native American named Jack Jim, aged about 25 who was stated to be the brother of Matilda was accused of the killing, did not mention that John

Hodge had been present. Witnesses at the trial were Tom Duncan, John Gardner, Nathaniel Beede, John Stage none of who witnessed anything and who all came after the body was found. Other witnesses were Matilda Hunter and her daughter. Matilda stated that George Hunter beat her the night before with his fists and boots. When George got a knife she ran out and hid behind a log leaving the children in the house with their father. She stated her daughter watched her father sleep. In the morning George hit her in the face then ate his breakfast and beat her again before leaving the house. Soon after the children found him dead near the house. The family claimed that George had killed himself but the wound was in the right shoulder at the back and it would have been impossible to stab himself.”

I present this narrative with little to add in terms of commentary, though I will speak on my reactions. Learning of this murder was a great surprise, and when I set out to learn more about the history of Camp Menzies, I certainly didn't expect to happen upon an unsolved murder. What we can ascertain from this is that after this trial, Matilda and her children continued living on their homestead near Big Trees Road, near where Camp Menzies is today. Annie Hunter, the oldest daughter, used the 1862 Homesteading Act to assume the land deed of their homeland in 1885, a few years after George Henry's death.¹³⁷ It's unclear if the family had applied to legally acquire the land before 1885, but given that the entire family unit was now non-white, perhaps they wanted to establish legal land ownership rights. It's likely that the entire Hunter family lived together as a family before George Henry's death, which is further substantiated by the mention of different family members appearing in George Henry's murder trial. This implies that the family maintained a permanent residence on Camp Menzies.

George Jr., the youngest son, died at 27 in 1902. He was buried next to his father in the Hunter Family Cemetery.¹³⁸ In 1907, a new land deed was filed with the state of California for the property, but this time in James Hunter's name.¹³⁹ It is not clear why a new land deed was filed, as Annie was still alive. My best guess is that perhaps Annie got married and moved

¹³⁷ See Appendix 1.

¹³⁸ From "Cemetery Lists of Calaveras County", compiled by Maureen Elliott in 2012 from records at the County Archives, newspaper obits and death indexes.

¹³⁹ See Appendix 2.

elsewhere, but later census records show Annie still living on the Camp Menzies property. Matilda, affectionately nicknamed ‘Tilda’ by family and friends, died soon after in 1914 at the age of 80 and was buried next to George Jr. and George Henry at the Hunter Family Cemetery.

According to a 1929 Calaveras County Indian census, Annie, James, and Nettie were all recorded. They were listed as half Miwok and the birth years matched what I found elsewhere in archives.¹⁴⁰ They were all listed as unmarried and childless, though I have seen some records that disputed this. James died a year after this census was taken in 1930 at 67. Charles Menzies bought the land from the Hunter family in 1937. I myself have seen the land deed his lawyer wrote — a fellow camp staff member and I came across it during the summer of 2022 while we were searching through old camp documents.¹⁴¹ The Hunter family was, at that time, composed of just Nettie and Annie.

When we first came across this 1937 land deed, we were grateful to learn some of the names of the Hunter family who had lived at Camp Menzies before it was Camp Menzies. Charles Menzies’ acquisition of the site, however, does not list what the land was sold for, or why the Hunter family sold the land their family had legally owned since 1885. In 1910, less than 10 percent of Indigenous people in California were living on land that they owned.¹⁴² I am not sure what to make of Nettie and Annie’s decision to sell their land to a businessman who wanted to use the site for recreation.

Camp Menzies is beautiful. It is understandable why Charles Menzies might have originally wanted to purchase this land. His original cabin, however dilapidated and rat-ridden, is even still situated on the property today, but it’s surrounded by tons of junk: metal bed frames,

¹⁴⁰U.S. Census Bureau; California Miwok Valley Tribe, generated by L.A. Dorrington; Indian Census of 6/30/1929 in Calaveras County (Sacramento Jurisdiction)

¹⁴¹ See Appendix 3.

¹⁴² Brendan C. Lindsay, *Murder State: California’s Native American Genocide, 1846-1873* (U of Nebraska Press, 2012).

charbroiled pipes, and (for some mysterious, unknowable reason) a large number of discarded bathtubs. There are many other reminders on the camp property of the land's previous lives. This land has been stewarded for thousands of years, and Camp Menzies has only represented a small blip of this history.

This history of Matilda and her children disrupts the common and racist misperception that Native Americans were transient and nomadic and never had a permanent residence. While it is true that many Native American communities moved to different areas depending on climate, it's wrong to assume that all Native Americans lacked a semblance of home. This myth reinforces colonial ideals that, since Native Americans lacked a homeland, it makes their forced displacement from their stewarded lands less impactful than it was. It also reinforces the image of the ecological Indian — if Native Americans are constantly moving around, living off of the land, in community with nature, it renders our perception of them as frozen in time, and in the past.¹⁴³ Nettie stayed close to Camp Menzies, even after all of her family members died. She lived near Camp Menzies her whole life. She is now buried in the Murphys Protestant Cemetery, next to her siblings Annie (who died in 1940 at 73) and James.¹⁴⁴ She died at 93 in 1965.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Ter Ellingson, "The Ecologically Noble Savage," in *The Myth of the Noble Savage* (University of California Press, 2001), 342–58, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520222687.003.0023>.

¹⁴⁴ Calaveras County Death Index Records, section "H", 2012

¹⁴⁵ Census: Murphys, Calaveras, California; Roll: T627_194; Page: 12A; Enumeration District: 5-4 (1940). California, Death Index, 1940-1997.



Figure 3.4 - Nettie Hunter in the early 1990s. Photo from Calaveras County Archives.

Sierra Miwok people have lived in the Sierra Nevadas for thousands of years.¹⁴⁶ In what is now known as Calaveras County, Miwok tribes typically lived in semi-permanent villages that clustered alongside Mokelumne, Calaveras, and Stanislaus Rivers.¹⁴⁷ According to a Calaveras

¹⁴⁶ Landefeld, Leslie A. "THE MIWOK AND MAIDC PEOPLES OF THE SIERRA NEVADA AND FOOTHILLS." In *Yosemite and the Mother Lode Gold Belt: Geology, Tectonics, and the Evolution of Hydrothermal Fluids in the Sierra Nevada of California*. The Pacific Section American Association of Petroleum Geologist, 1990. <http://dx.doi.org/10.32375/1990-gb68.2>.

¹⁴⁷ Gabriel Moraga's campaigns into the Californian interior in 1806 were scouting undertakings meant to protect the farms and pueblos that were developing in central California. During his journey, Moraga named many of the rivers in California, including the Mokelumne, Stanislaus, and Calaveras Rivers. It is unclear if Sierra Miwok communities had their own names for these rivers, although, 'Mokelumne' is Miwok for "People of the Fish Net".

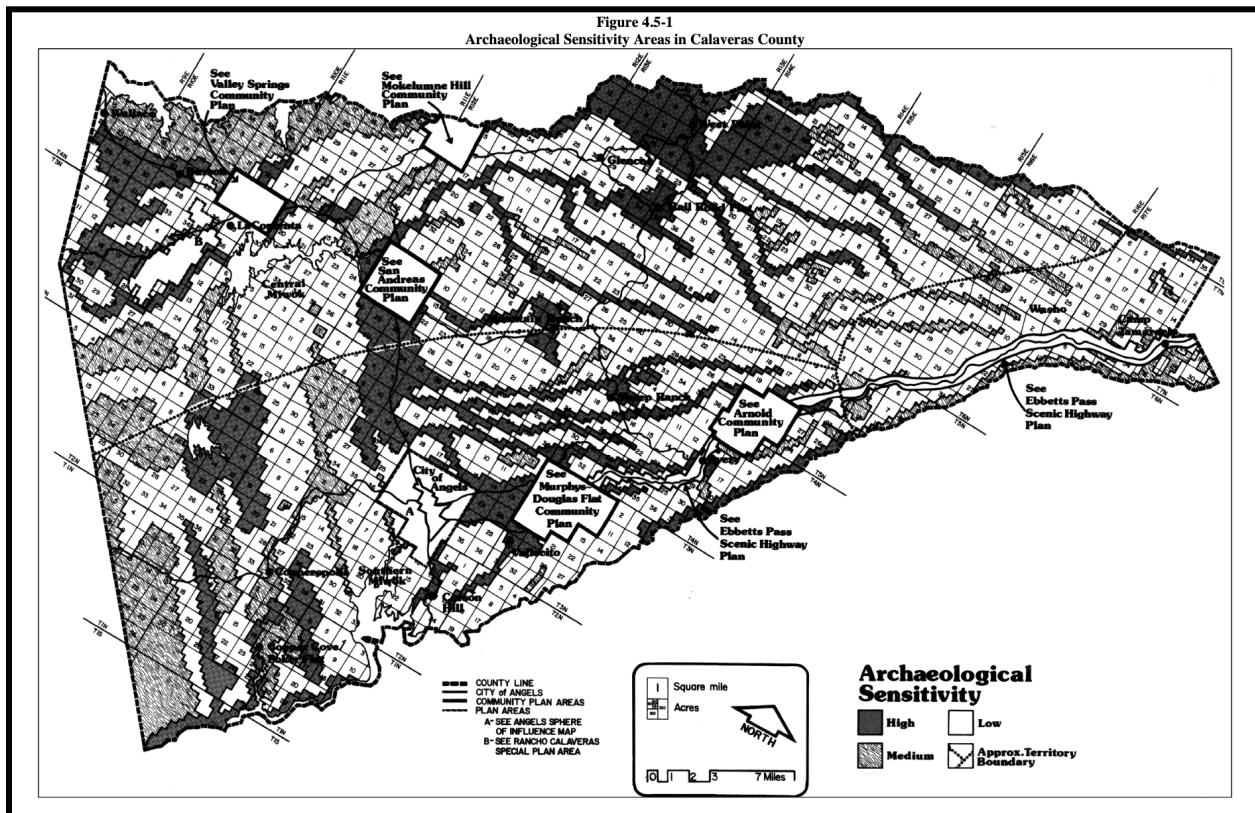
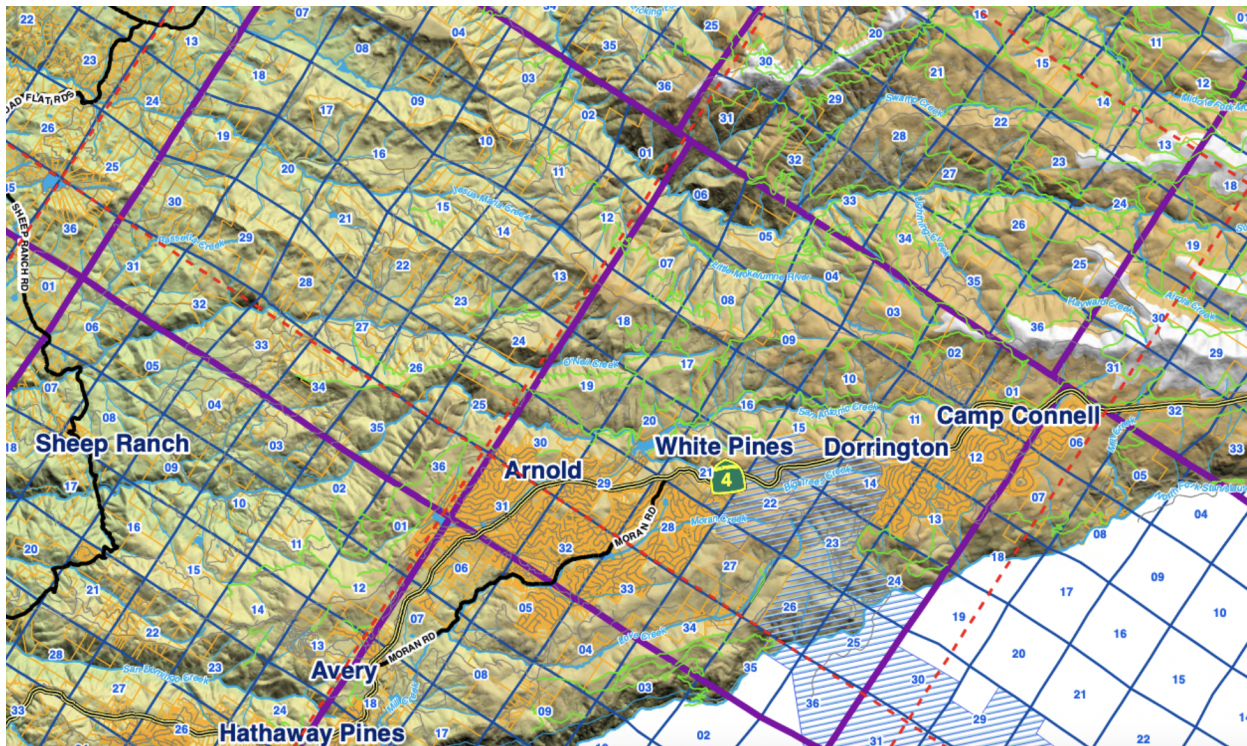
County archeology report conducted in 2018, “traditional Mi-Wuk houses reportedly were made of thatching, tule matting, or slabs of bark over a conical framework of poles”.¹⁴⁸ Individual families lived in separate residences in clusters to one another, and other structures included in these villages included the sweat lodge and the dance house. Both of these spaces are communal and are still used for spiritual and communal practices by Miwok communities today.¹⁴⁹ In the same archeological report, remains of some of the large structures have been found at archaeological sites in the central Sierra foothills.¹⁵⁰ Below, one can observe through comparison of a current day Calaveras County topographic map (Figure 3.3) with the 2018 Archeology sensitivity map (Figure 3.4) that Camp Menzies is an area of high/medium archaeological sensitivity.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Levy, Richard (1978). "Eastern Miwok." In *Handbook of North American Indians*. Vol. 8, *California*, edited by Robert F. Heizer, 398-413. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.

¹⁴⁹ C. Hart Merriam, “Distribution and Classification of the Mewan Stock of California,” *American Anthropologist* 9, no. 2 (April 1907): 338–57, <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1907.9.2.02a00080>.

¹⁵⁰ Chapter 4.5.2 “EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING”, Cultural and Tribal Resources, Calaveras County Draft General Plan (2018)

¹⁵¹ For reference: Camp Menzies is located in blocks 03 and 04 in Figure 3.3. and Figure 3.4. Both are from 2018.



Figures 3.3 and 3.4 feature comparative topographic maps of Calaveras County where Camp Menzies is located.

In a 1996 Archaeological Survey conducted for the Calaveras County Draft General Plan, the land where Camp Menzies is located was labeled with a ‘high’ archeological sensitivity (seen in Figures 3.3 and 3.4).¹⁵² This means there are archeological remains of Sierra Miwok people at Camp Menzies. When I came across these comparative maps in my research, it was unsurprising. There is other evidence on the Menzies property besides the buildings of this land’s past iterations. Despite the campgrounds having been an operational Girl Scout summer camp for over 75 years, campers find old (and new) materials every summer: horseshoes, wrenches, cowbells, arrowheads, rusted metal contraptions/parts we can’t make sense of. Every time a camper proudly delivers a new finding into my possession, I silently confirm in my head that, yes, we do indeed require updated tetanus shots from campers. These artifacts, to me, appear as persistent reminders that while we busy ourselves constantly with the self delusion that the past is behind us, the artifice of time remains just that: contrived and meaningless. There are ghosts at this camp. They demand to be known. And of course the children find them before I do.

In researching the history of Camp Menzies, there remains one question I haven’t been able to answer: how much did this land sell for when Charles Menzies bought it from Annie and Nettie Hunter? I reached out to historical societies, talked to a previous Menzies camp director, and asked friends to visit libraries for me. I knew I’d never be able to learn *why* Annie and Nettie sold their land to Charles Menzies, but I knew other details of the sale were (in theory) knowable. I hoped it was written down somewhere. I didn’t talk about this obsession with a lot

¹⁵² Chapter 4.5.2 “Existing Prehistoric and Historic Archaeological Resources”, Cultural and Tribal Resources, Calaveras County Draft General Plan (2018)

of people because I felt it would become a better story, more neatly wrapped up, when I could finally report all the facts.

Why, exactly, was I invested in learning the exact amount that this sale amounted to? What would that answer?

Perhaps I wanted to know that Charles Menzies was a fair businessman. If the land was truly bought for an amount of money that seemed ‘fair’, then I maybe could feel absolved of some of my guilt for operating a summer camp on land that doesn’t truly belong to me. But perhaps the better question is this: is there a fair price that this land could have sold for? Can one put a price on land where people have lived for thousands of years? Regardless of price, when Charles Menzies bought this land, it became a part of the colonial state. The 1942 Girl Scout land deed I held in my hands represented a set of technologies that people introduced to California in 1848. la paperson writes in *A Third University is Possible* that “property law is a settler colonial technology. The weapons that enforce it, the knowledge institutions that legitimize it, the financial institutions that operationalize it, are also technologies.”¹⁵³ In the end, the price of the land doesn’t matter — it would be interesting to know, but knowing would not revoke this land’s lived history as legitimized technology of settler-colonialism.

It doesn’t matter if the Hunter sisters sold the land because they wanted to or because they felt forced to. They were still making a decision based on their rapidly changing world, a world that was forever altered because of Euro-American settlers. The idealized myth of the West, the Gold Rush, and its succeeding economic boom that spread rampantly throughout all of Northern California are the reasons this camp exists. With these, Charles Menzies’ family wouldn’t have migrated from Scotland.¹⁵⁴ George Henry Hunter wouldn’t have moved from

¹⁵³ la paperson, *A Third University Is Possible* (U of Minnesota Press, 2017).

¹⁵⁴ James Menzies (Charles Menzies’ grandfather) was born in Pertle, Scotland, July 25, 1820 and moved to Oregon in the 1840’s.

Nova Scotia to Calaveras County and married Matilda. The Hunter family wouldn't have sold their land, because maybe they wouldn't have bought it in the first place. I'll never be able to learn the exact reasons which led the Hunter sisters to sell the land that became Camp Menzies. Maybe they needed the money. Maybe they wanted to live closer to other Sierra Miwok people, knowing that a nearby Calaveras rancheria for land-displaced Miwok individuals was in the works.¹⁵⁵ Regardless, I am glad to know this history and for the chance to share it with others who care about Camp Menzies.

¹⁵⁵ Echo Hawk, Larry (August 31, 2011). "Reaffirmation of decision by BIA not to organize government of California Valley Miwok Tribe" (PDF). Letter to Silvia Burley and Yakima Dixie.

The Generator

No structure on the Camp Menzies property captures my personal competing narratological difficulties with summer camp better than our generator. Before you even arrive at Camp Menzies, you're made deeply aware of how humans have shaped and impacted the Sierra Nevadas. Driving up Highway 4, deep in the mountains, you take a sharp left onto a dirt road, and you drive up and up a 4-mile dirt road until you, somehow, miraculously, happen upon a Girl Scout camp. It feels as if you're in the middle of nowhere. The camp road transports you to a different world: you lose phone service, your car is covered in dirt, and you hear the quiet, constant hum of the generator right by the parking lot. Gone are the comforts of everyday life. Camp Menzies shares the dirt road with a local logging company, and the road is wrecked with potholes, broken branches, and huge rocks. When kids are being transported up to camp, many of them think they've conquered car sickness on the bus ride only to have their stomach's hubris challenged on the final, bumpy stretch.

Arguably, the best stretch about this road is just before you make it onto camp property. Around mile three, you turn around a huge, tree-enclosed corner to come across a massive valley and a stunning view of the Sierra Nevada trees, mountains, and landscape. On a clear day, you can see Jackson, a city 40 miles away. This view, while awe-inspiring, is only made possible because of the logging company we share the camp road with. Without the clearing of thousands of Ponderosa Pines and Redwoods, thousands of people would pass up this road not knowing what a killer view they're missing. The view is so beautiful, people often don't even see the logging stumps on their first drive up the road. They're too busy being mesmerized.

Summer camp is made to make us feel that we've been transported to a different time or world. It's common to hear people in the summer camp industry refer to the summer as 'camp

time’ or when people return home, they say they’ve left the ‘camp world’ for the ‘real world’ — wherein camp feels far removed from reality and the normal constraints of daily life. And it does feel that way — it’s designed to.¹⁵⁶ Campers on their way to Camp Menzies get excited about camp after seeing the beautiful lookout because other humans guaranteed they’d see that beautiful valley on mile 3. The camp road feels like it’s carved from the wilderness, and carved it was. When I worked for the Girl Scouts, we discussed in property meetings the possibility of paving over the camp dirt road with asphalt to make it easier to drive on. It was ultimately shot down, though, so we could preserve the ‘rustic’ feel of arriving at camp. All of the emotions that rush in while arriving at Camp Menzies, nostalgia, awe, etc. are not experienced by accident — they’ve been approved at a board meeting. I also recall the placement of the generator coming up in these board meetings. While the remote placement of the generator was often chalked up to safety, I think it was also an aesthetic choice. We didn’t want campers to remember that fossil fuels is needed to power the camp —not camp magic. The generator disrupted the magical fantasy.

The generator is a big, ugly, tan box. It’s anomalous to the entire camp property. Not knowing what year it was made or constructed, I can only determine that it just *feels* old, evoking imagery of technology outdated and reminiscent of the 20th century — a century I was born into, but only technically. What the generator does feel like, to me, is something nostalgic for an era of technology I was convinced we were ready to leave behind. It feels large and impractical.

The first thing we have to tell people when they arrive at Camp Menzies is that we don’t have power at night — this is when the generator is off. It has to be off overnight so we don’t risk overheating the machine. We remind our campers to always keep a flashlight with them, as

¹⁵⁶ Thomas Isern, “Past Like a Mask, or, The Trouble with ‘The Trouble with Wilderness,’” *The Journal of New Zealand Studies*, no. 16 (December 19, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.26686/jnzs.v0i16.2048>.

they can't rely on light switches at night. The generator getting turned off always seems to be what parents ask us about the most. The thought of camp being disconnected and their children virtually inaccessible is more frightening than falling trees, mountain lions, or forest fires.

At camp, the generator plays with and changes our human interactions. The staff all charge their phones and devices during the day, as that's when we have power. This means no one at camp carries their phone with them. Seeing a cell phone is uncommon at camp — the LED screens are inherently anomalous juxtaposed against the otherwise rustic environment. There also isn't any cell reception at camp, and the WiFi we *do* have is slow and really only works in the office. On the rest of the 150 acres of the property, the phone quickly becomes clunky, expensive, and worthless. I usually find myself leaving my phone by my bunk, only removing it to blast ABBA and Fleetwood Mac albums during mealtimes.

Living in this decade without electricity is strange. No power, even for just a part of the day, affects everything: you sleep differently, you speak at lower volumes, you announce your presence to others (at night you assume others can't see you). Whenever the generator is off, I surprise myself with how quickly my body adapts to this new reality. My hand doesn't reach for light switches, I rely on my hearing, and I feel my eyes widen in the dark. At the beginning of each summer, though, I always have to get used to carrying a headlamp and flashlight with me everywhere so there are always a few early, chilly nights in May in which I have to trudge my way around camp in the dark, without a flashlight. The first time this happened, I realized that sound was a great barometer for how closely I was staying on the trail. The crunchier (i.e. the more sticks I stepped on) my steps got, the farther I was wavering from the center of the trail. I also soon realized that on clear nights, flashlights weren't necessary; the full moon was bright enough to cast shadows. On more than one occasion, I've awoken in the morning with my

headlamp still on my head— realizing it was easier to keep it around in case I was woken up in the middle of the night to get a bat out of a cabin, or help a crying kid because she got her first period.

When the generator is turned off for the night, you are first struck with how loud the contraption was while it was on. The engine sound gets diluted down to background white noise amidst the chaos throughout the day. One can only appreciate how loud the generator is when you approach the beast itself, especially when you open the engine's door. Inside the engine, you're confronted with the tinny smell of hot oil and all other noise is drowned out. The generator is turned on and off with a large crank (not unlike one of Frankenstein-esque origins.) The handle tends to get stuck so someone left a comically large sledgehammer inside the generator's door a few years ago. Both practical and absurd, if the handle gets stuck, you slam the handle down with the sledgehammer like some sort of county fair carnival game. The first time I had to hammer it myself, it was late at night, I was alone, and I had my toothbrush clamped down between my teeth like a pipe. I laughed to myself at how differently this would play out if this wasn't happening at an all-girls camp. Those hammer-and-hit carnival games are one of my earliest recollections of performed masculinity: an excuse for men to display their strength purely for consumption and performance. It made me wonder how quickly something like the generator would be construed as a symbol of masculine strength if this camp was a different place.

Camp Menzies is a Girl Scout camp, and while our staff isn't only women and we always have men and trans folks on staff, camp doesn't feel as inundated with the toxic masculinity encumbering the world beyond our bumpy camp road. This place is run by and prioritizes the needs of women. I don't think this setting grants the generator as a feminist object. It's still the

creation and result of patriarchal capitalism, its reliance on crude oil a reminder that we aren't removed from the rest of the world as much as the design and landscape of the camp would like us to think we are. Maybe the generator is a feminist on the days it inexplicably decides not to work: denying us labor, denying us energy, and shattering the Pioneer homesteading illusion that this camp provides us a space to 'live off the land.' Without the generator, without oil, without power, this camp wouldn't exist. With a consistency I sometimes anthropomorphize to be intentional, the generator stops working for a few hours every once in a while to remind us of this fact. And when the generator *is* off, you can finally hear the nature of this place.

The generator at Camp Menzies is nothing short of a behemoth. Bearing resemblance to what I can only imagine as an old ship, it chugs like an assembly line or a Model T Ford engine. Maybe neither of these things; I'm not certain I know what it resembles. Perhaps it feels more sincere to simply describe the generator as both arcane and omnipresent to life at Camp Menzies — and though my very existence at camp depended on the generator, a great deal of its history and lore will remain unknowable to me, despite that the generator was created by human industry and not by nature.

The generator grosses me out with its abject insistence. The insides are grimy and slick with years of accumulated dirt and oil, the smell reminding me of my Grandpa's warehouse where he kept his collection of army Jeeps that he liked to tinker with. While all the inner-workings of my life are only made possible by industry and oil — from my cell phone to my hiking boots to my favorite beer — objects like the generator feel anomalous to my current world. The generator smells like the oil it has to be fed every week, and makes no effort to mask its industrial appearance and obstructive sound. So much of the landscape at Camp Menzies is manicured to appear indigenous to the surrounding landscape. There are cabins a mere 10 feet

from one another that are invisible to each other, the distance obscured by intentionally un-lumbered trees.

So perhaps the generator's existence is a protest. An environment grounded in its obsession with the picturesque, the entire landscape of Camp Menzies insists you feel a romantic connection to the land. The trails are meandering and placed near natural spots to invite pause and contemplation, and the buildings on the property are situated to obscure their view until just before you happen upon them. All of the buildings are painted dark green, brown, or tan. The camp wants you to forget that human industry built this place and that it was done with specific aesthetic concerns. However, just when you might be ready to buy into the mirage that camp magically erected itself overnight, the generator won't work for half a day, and the campers realize that the ambient buzzing they chalked up to perhaps the sound of bugs flying around was in fact the whirring of the generator — pumping water from our wells, chilling the fridge, and printing camper health forms in the office. The generator is loud, and it's ugly, and it appears both too old and too new for it to fit in with the landscape. But the camp also can't exist without it. Our immersion into the natural world is contingent upon this massive hunk of oil-powered machinery. The generator makes it impossible to observe the scenery for purely objective and aesthetic pursuits. Oil brought us to this beautiful landscape, and the loud engine demands you remember. The buzzing you hear isn't from nature, but instead the actual life force of camp. Once you hear the generator, you can't unhear it.

The generator at Camp Menzies has forced me to contemplate new possibilities of being and existing. My first year at Camp Menzies, I was intimidated by this beast: afraid of its churning unprotected motor, unsure of my own strength to control it, and unsettled by the very real prospect of getting covered in oil. I was always scared I would forget one of the steps in

correctly turning it off, and I would wake the next morning with the power out because I had somehow broken the goddamn generator. For months, I lived in dread of this machine. I hated thinking about going to bed, because going to bed would first entail facing something I feared, something that felt intrinsically far from my capabilities and removed from my comfortable mode of existence. But our camp needed power, and so did I, and so I learned to live with the generator. And then I learned to admire it. It was powerful, it was consistent, and it was always making noise.

When I decided I wanted to write about the generator, I reached out to old camp staff for pictures of the generator. No one had pictures where the generator was the focus of the photo — but everyone had photos where the generator could be seen clearly in the background. Such is the persistence of the generator, and the complex history of summer camp that I struggle to make peace with. Part of me wishes I could scrub all the messy context of summer camp and erase the history that doesn't reflect what I love. It cannot be done. History exists. This camp was built. The road around it was built. The trees were cut down. I won't ever entirely reach peace with the generator or its unknowable history, but the generator needs to be turned on. And so we must live with this context, with this history, with this energy, and use it to create new possibilities for ourselves, and for the world of summer camp.

At the end of July in 2021, on one of my last mornings at Camp Menzies, I recall approaching the generator to turn it on in the early morning. It was quiet at camp: it was a day off, and a lot of our staff were sleeping in. I ran into another staff member on my way to turn on the generator. She had wanted to turn it on herself so she could make coffee in the kitchen but wasn't sure she could do it right. I opened the door to the generator and showed her where the handle was, and instructed her to *not hold back*. She pressed the engine's 'on' button and the

generator roared to life. Her eyes widened in shock and she immediately stumbled backward. I laughed and kicked the door shut. I told her she looked like I did after I turned the generator on for the first time. We then turned and began the short distance towards the camp kitchen, remembering the generator, and how much this place changed me. The generator replied in its persistent, thrumming hum, deciding today — it would stay on.

Opportunities for Further Research

I would like to highlight a few discussion topics I was not able to include elsewhere in this thesis. While researching and writing this thesis, I read a great deal of academic literature about summer camps. The current and dominant method of inquiry in summer camp research leans toward quantitative research studies. Besides writers like Jay Mechling, Philip Deloria, and Pauline Turner Strong, I didn't come across many researchers who specifically cited their personal youth organization experiences in their academic writing about camp.¹⁵⁷ However, many of the people writing and researching camp are past/current camp professionals themselves.

In my perusal of secondary sources, I have come to believe that the most compelling assessments of summer camp are ones that state the author's situated knowledge of summer camp. I believe this strengthens a researcher's analysis of summer camp as camp is a powerful shaping social and emotional force in people's lives. If a person's research is motivated by a powerful bond to their own summer camp memories, this is an asset that should be included in the research. Pauline Strong mentioned in her article about Campfire Girls that she grew up a Campfire Girl, and that "autoethnography and ethnographic fieldwork are promising, under-exploited methodologies for exploring the continuities and changes in representational practices within youth organizations, as well as the role of youth culture in the formation of racialized and gendered subjects."¹⁵⁸ Mechling, a lifetime Eagle Scout and a member of the Order of the Arrow, remarks in his introduction that he has sometimes found it difficult to

¹⁵⁷ Pauline Turner Strong, "Cultural Appropriation and the Crafting of Racialized Selves in American Youth Organizations," *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 9, no. 2 (December 31, 2008): 197–213, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708608325918>.

Deloria, Philip J. *Playing Indian*. Yale University Press, 2022.

Jay Mechling, *On My Honor: Boy Scouts and the Making of American Youth* (University of Chicago Press, 2004).

¹⁵⁸ Cultural Appropriation and the Crafting of Racialized Selves in American Youth Organizations: Toward an Ethnographic Approach by Pauline Turner Strong

establish “the appropriate critical distance for writing about an institution that is so much a part of me” (p. xxiv).¹⁵⁹ This is an important and revealing statement, and greatly aids Mechling in the claims he makes.

Currently, the dominant research studies in the summer camp field exclude autoethnography and personal-driven narratives. As we have previously established from my stories about the game Goldrush, the generator, and the context behind Camp Menzes’s name, my personal connections to the camp industry are inseparable from how I approach understanding camp as a scholar.

Additionally, in this thesis, I have highlighted the various ways summer camps have participated in settler-colonial cultural traditions and practices. However, there are absolutely summer camps that have actively combated oppressive concepts of being. One such example is Circle M Day Camp, which was run by civil rights activists Marcy and Bob Bower who sought to serve diverse youth and desegregate their Chicago suburb day camp in the late 50s.¹⁶⁰ And there was Camp Kinderland, a left-wing Yiddish camp founded in 1923, which was intentionally and systematically designed as an interracial camp. Kinderland’s staff was racially mixed and its campers were from all over New York State, when many prior New York staffed camps catered to solely middle and upper-class New York City families.¹⁶¹ When Kinderland was founded, it was originally called Camp WoChiCa — short for ‘Workers Children’s Camp.’ Camps like WoChiCa inspired a small (but mighty!) emergence of socialist and communist camps in the 1930s that taught camps socialist political beliefs alongside traditional camp skills.¹⁶² These

¹⁵⁹ *On My Honor: Boy Scouts and the Making of American Youth* by Jay Mechling

¹⁶⁰ Marcy and Bob Browner, “Desegregating Circle M Day Camp: A Determination to Succeed,” *Camping Magazine*, May 2015.

¹⁶¹ Camp Kinderland still exists today, and serves children 8-16 in the New England area. Their camp still features strong labor and social justice messages/teaching.

¹⁶² Patrick O’Donnell, “Wo-Chi-Ca—a Communist Children’s Camp: Education in Democratic and Egalitarian Values under the Polestar of Social Justice,” *ReligiousLeftLaw.com*, July 21, 2020.

radical camps illustrate the unique capability of the summer camp environment to teach children skills of community, cooperation, and resistance.

The issue remains, however, that settler-colonial narratives remain present even at politically radical and subversive camps like WoChiCa. The name itself, ‘WoChiCa’ is shorthand that is intentionally designed to sound Indigenous.¹⁶³ This camp name reinforces and reflects the larger trend of playing Indian at summer camp. In her book *Red Pedagogy*, author Sandy Grande highlights how even amongst critical scholars, it is common to find essentializing language and beliefs about Indigenous people. She writes, “essentialism [is] an integral part of the overall project of domination working to hold American Indians (and other subaltern peoples) to the polemical and creative needs of whites”.¹⁶⁴ Camp Keewatin, for example, is the oldest continuously running residential summer camp in the United States. Keewatin opened in 1902 and is located in Vermont. Keewatin means “Northwest Wind” in Ojibway (from the Chippewa people), and is also the name of the area rock formation surrounding the camp. This camp was not named in honor of or in collaboration with the Chippewa people. The camp was housed on land that was ancestrally significant to many Chippewa people, but they had been long since displaced and forcefully moved at the opening of Camp Keewatin.

Confronting the past is difficult, especially when it's been overshadowed by a dominant and more digestible narrative. But as we previously discussed — camp place names are powerful. As Catherine Walsh writes in *On Decolonity*, eurocentric renaming is a central practice of colonization. In the colonized state, names of people and places become anglicized for the palettes of colonizers. She writes, “The European baptizing of the continent drastically modified

¹⁶³ Alexia Franzidis, Alana N. Seaman, and Jayna Donaldson, “A Toponymy of American Summer Camps: Onscreen Stereotypes or Symbols Ripe for Change?,” *The Journal of American Culture* 45, no. 2 (May 19, 2022): 139–54, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jacc.13337>.

¹⁶⁴ Sandy Grande, *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*, page 101. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

the heretofore history, plurality, and social, cultural, economic, spiritual, territorial, and existential foundation of these lands, making it—by naming it—a singular unit seen and defined from the European gaze...”.¹⁶⁵ In the spring of 2020, Camp Keewatin updated its website to include a land acknowledgement of the ancestral lands on which their camp is situated. This decision, though quickly blighted with other news events, illustrated to me that the summer camp industry is capable of confronting and contextualizing our shared, complicated, and colonial history.¹⁶⁶ Camp Keewatin’s land acknowledgment felt like progress, albeit insufficient and incomplete.¹⁶⁷

In her dissertation *Towards a Pedagogy of Solidarity: Uprooting Traditions of Racial Plagiarism and Cultural Appropriation at Camp Ahmek*, Amanda Shore observes the strategies used by camp staff to repatriate costumes and props as they work to dismantle racialized traditions. Addressing this history, she argues, requires a “complex, long-term commitment to decolonizing practices directed by Indigenous educators.” She concludes that cultural appropriation at summer camps is a complex process of intellectual and cultural theft, which resists intervention and persists in many material and immaterial forms. I am inclined to agree with Amanda’s conclusions that addressing summer camp’s colonial history will take years of dedication, collaboration, and solidarity. It will require ongoing collaboration, reflection, and dedication from summer camp industry professionals, academic scholars, tribal members, and historians.

¹⁶⁵ Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine E. Walsh, *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis* (page 22) (Duke University Press, 2018).

¹⁶⁶From *On Coloniality* by Catherine Walsh, pg. 24: “The interest is with how decoloniality’s project and praxis take form in and contribute to the fissures of the dominant order, what I have called its decolonial cracks.”

¹⁶⁷ Shore, Amanda. "Towards a Pedagogy of Solidarity: Uprooting Traditions of Racial Plagiarism and Cultural Appropriation at Camp Ahmek." PhD diss., Concordia University, 2020.

Narrative Cracks

This narratological dissonance I feel in response to the game Goldrush and the Generator at Camp Menzies mirrors so many of my feelings on the larger camp industry. Empirical data supports the work we do as camp directors, but the heart of summer camp has always been in the magic of how camp experiences make us feel. Summer camp is unrelenting, difficult, and exhausting work for its industry leaders. It does not pay well. The job requires staff to live far from home for months at a time.

Why, then, do so many of us return year after year?

It is difficult to describe to those who did not grow up at summer camps what makes this particular line of work appealing and rewarding. *It's just magical*, we say. *It feels like home*, we say. *It's impossible to say*. I suggest it is not the qualitative research that makes us stay at camp (though it is vital to supporting our work), it is the stories we experience at camp that sustain us. Summer camp *is* magic, and it *does* feel like home, and it is worthwhile to explore why that is from an autoethnographic, personally situated standpoint. Our personal and emotional attachment to playing Indian is why it has endured as a camp tradition. It can feel difficult to imagine a future of summer camp in which we do not erect tee-pees, tell Native American origin stories, or idealize the pioneer lifestyle. But it is both entirely possible, necessary, and the responsible choice.

Storytelling is intrinsic to the collective identity of summer camps.¹⁶⁸ Nearly every summer camp has an origin story that is shared and repeated year after year, and camp directors successfully convince skeptical parents to send their children to the remote wilderness under the

¹⁶⁸Sharon Wall, *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario Summer Camps, 1920-55* (UBC Press, 2010).

Lwin, Soe Marlar. *A Multimodal Perspective on Applied Storytelling Performances: Narrativity in Context*. Routledge, 2019.

presumption of an attractive narrative — “*Your child will go to the woods and find themselves.*” Storytelling and narrative are the means through which we convey the unique morals of our camps to our campers. The stories we tell at summer camp often encourage our campers to question notions of right from wrong. They evoke specific images that help campers decide what kind of person they want to become. What origin stories, then, does the summer camp industry accept without criticism? And what stories do we need to revisit and change?

There are a multitude of histories waiting to be uncovered within the field of summer camp. Summer camp is a valuable field of study worth pursuing for historians, philosophers, and educators. If the goal of education, both formal and informal, is to help children become flourishing adults, then children should have the opportunity to progressively practice their relationship and identity-building skills. Given their unique environment for children to practice autonomous thinking and decision-making, summer camps are a valuable asset that should be further considered as an institution to support the goals of education. It is clear to me that summer camps are a novel institution: they are uniquely American, present interesting narratives about childhood and colonialism, and are impressive for their adaptive durability. Given summer camp’s proven benefits and historical significance, they are an institution that warrants further educational inquiry and philosophical consideration.

Summer camp has provided an ahistorical form of escapism for generations. Summer camps are still largely in remote areas that lack screens and phone reception, and campers can meet peers who don’t live in their hometown or go to their school. Where else do children, especially now, get this kind of socialization opportunity? The summer camp environment provides children with the enhanced opportunity to reflect on their life, engage in outdoor stewardship, and consider alternative possibilities for their future life away from home. And yet,

it is still an industry that has evolved and changed as a result of larger cultural forces within the United States.¹⁶⁹ At my summer camp, Camp Menzies, we had zero cell phone service and were over an hour from the nearest hospital. Menzies embodies a rustic wilderness to our campers in which they can play with their expression, identities, and how they interact with one another. But technologies like the generator, games like Goldrush, and the lived histories of the Hunter family link Camp Menzies to the outside world no matter how dazzling our camp tries to be. There is no amount of ‘Menzies Magic’ that can undo the settler-colonial context of our camp. And if we want to continue stewarding this land, we have a responsibility to our campers and the land itself to know its entire history, not just the cherry-picked parts that are enjoyable to play within.

When I consider what summer camp can accomplish, I remember the dozens of girls at Camp Menzies who came out as gay to me for the first time, asked their counselors to try using different pronouns for them, or wore different clothes than they normally would. Camp made a difference for those kids. That said, most American Camp Association-accredited camps are still serving a majority of white, affluent children.¹⁷⁰ We have a long way to go if we are committed to giving every child the opportunity to attend summer camp. As the summer camp industry moves consciously towards a more liberated future, we must acknowledge our history and traditions, and, as a result, change our outdated rituals.

¹⁶⁹ Penny Harvey, “‘It’s Camp’: Summer Camp Culture, the Renegotiation of Social Norms and Regulation of Gender and Sexuality,” ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University, 2017, https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology_theses/70.

¹⁷⁰ American Camp Association, ‘Camper Enrollment Snapshot’ (2021)

Selected Bibliography (Chapter 1)

- Korpalski, Adam. *The Gunnery, 1850-1975: A Documentary History of Private Education in America*. Washington, CT: Korpalski, 1977.
- Balch, Ernest. *A Handbook of Summer Camps* (1926), 18.
- Blanc, Dina, and Peter Brooks. "Body Work: Objects of Desire in Modern Narrative." *SubStance* 23, no. 2 (1994): 111. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3685072>.
- Balch, A. "Camp Chocorua; A Boy's Republic," *McClure's Magazine*, 1 (1893): 242-48.
- W. Barksdale Maynard, "An Ideal Life in the Woods for Boys': Architecture and Culture in the Earliest Summer Camps," *Winterthur Portfolio* 34 (1): 3-29.
- Browne, Laurie P., Ann Gillard, and Barry A. Garst. "Camp as an Institution of Socialization: Past, Present, and Future." *Journal of Experiential Education* 42, no. 1 (January 4, 2019): 51–64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1053825918820369>.
- Camping Magazine*. *Light from a Thousand Campfires*. American Camping Association, 1960.
- Cobb, Edith. *The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood*. Spring Publications, 2022.
- Cohen, Rich. "The Life Lessons of Summer Camp." *The Wall Street Journal*, July 8, 2022. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-life-lessons-of-summer-camp-11657292830>.
- Deloria, Philip J. *Playing Indian*. Yale University Press, 2022.
- Echeverri-Gent, John, and Kamal Sadiq. "Situated Knowledge, the Construction of Meaning, and Political Action." In *Interpreting Politics*, 18–50. Oxford University Press, 2020. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190125011.003.0002>.
- Eells, Eleanor. *Eleanor Eells' History of Organized Camping: The First 100 Years*. American Camping Association, 1986.
- Fallace, Thomas. "The Savage Origins of Child-Centered Pedagogy, 1871-1913." *American Educational Research Journal* 52, no. 1 (2015): 73–103. <https://doi.org/10.2307/24546722>.
- Franzidis, Alexia, Alana N. Seaman, and Jayna Donaldson. "A Toponymy of American Summer Camps: Onscreen Stereotypes or Symbols Ripe for Change?" *The Journal of American Culture* 45, no. 2 (May 19, 2022): 139–54. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jacc.13337>.
- Gibson Krimsky, Paula. "Reading, Writing, and the Great Outdoors: Frederick Gunn's School Transforms Victorian-Era Education." *Connecticut History*, July 18, 2021. <https://connecticuthistory.org/reading-writing-and-the-great-outdoors-frederick-gunns-sch>

- ool-transforms-victorian-era-education/.
- Gibson, William Hamilton. *The Master of the Gunnery: A Memorial of Frederick William Gunn*, 1887.
- Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2015.
- Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledge: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." In *Women, Science, and Technology*, 489–506. Routledge, 2013. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9780203427415-40>.
- Harvey, Penny, Juhwan Seo, and Emily Logan. "Queer at Camp: The Impact of Summer Camps on LGBTQ Campers in the United States." *Gender a Výzkum / Gender and Research* 22, no. 2 (January 18, 2022): 45–70. <https://doi.org/10.13060/gav.2021.019>.
- Inness, Sherrie A. *Delinquents and Debutantes: Twentieth-Century American Girls' Cultures*. NYU Press, 1998.
- Kidd, Kenneth B., and Derritt Mason. *Queer as Camp: Essays on Summer, Style, and Sexuality*. Fordham Univ Press, 2019.
- Macdonald, Robert. *Sons of the Empire*. University of Toronto Press, 2011.
- Mechling, Jay. *On My Honor: Boy Scouts and the Making of American Youth*. University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Miller, Susan A. *Growing Girls: The Natural Origins of Girls' Organizations in America*. Rutgers University Press, 2007.
- We R Native. "Native Cultural Appropriation," June 2, 2021. <https://www.wernative.org/articles/native-cultural-appropriation>.
- Ozier, Leslie. "Camp as Educator: Lessons Learned from History." *Camping Magazine* (September/October 2010) 24–27.
- Paris, Leslie. *Children's Nature: The Rise of the American Summer Camp*. NYU Press, 2010.
- Ramsing, Ron. "Organized Camping: A Historical Perspective." *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America* 16, no. 4 (October 2007): 751–54. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chc.2007.05.009>.
- Russell, Keith C. "Therapeutic Uses of Nature." In *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental and Conservation Psychology*, 428–44. Oxford University Press, 2012. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199733026.013.0023>.

- US History Scene. "Segregated Summer Camps," February 16, 2020.
<https://ushistoryscene.com/article/segregated-summer-camps/>.
- Seton, Ernest Thompson. *Woodcraft and Indian Lore: A Classic Guide from a Founding Father of the Boy Scouts of America*. Simon and Schuster, 2016.
- Slyck, Abigail Ayres Van. *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890-1960*. U of Minnesota Press, 2006.
- Smith, Michael B. "'The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper' and the Nature of Summer Camp."
Environmental History 11, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 70–101.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/11.1.70>.
- The Frederick Gunn School. "The Abolitionist." Accessed February 1, 2023.
<https://www.frederickgunn.org/about/history-traditions/the-abolitionist>.
- Thomas, Grace Powers. *Where to Educate, 1898-1899; A Guide to the Best Private Schools, Higher Institutions of Learning, Etc., in the United States*. Palala Press, 2016.
- Tuck, Eve, and Marcia McKenzie. *Place in Research: Theory, Methodology, and Methods*. Routledge, 2014.
- Wack, Henry Wellington. *The Camping Ideal: The New Human Race; a Brief Survey of the Summer and Winter Outdoor Camp Movement in the United States, with Particular Reference to Organized Cultural Camps in the Atlantic and Midwestern States, Based Upon Observations Made on a Second Camp Tour Undertaken for the Red Book Magazine*, 1925.
- Wall, Sharon. *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario Summer Camps, 1920-55*. UBC Press, 2010.
- Wekker, Gloria. *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*. Duke University Press, 2016.
- White, Dan. "Luxurious, Full-Service Picnics Are a New Spin on an Old American Tradition."
The Washington Post, June 6, 2021.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/06/06/luxurious-full-service-picnics-are-new-spin-an-old-american-tradition/>.
- Yerkes, Rita. "His Story, Her Story, Our Story: 100 Years of the American Camp Association."
 American Camp Association, September 29, 2015.
<https://www.acacamps.org/article/camping-magazine/his-story-her-story-our-story-100-y>

ears-american-camp-association.

Ziff, Bruce H., and Pratima V. Rao. *Borrowed Power: Essays on Cultural Appropriation*. Rutgers University Press, 1997.

Selected Bibliography (Chapter 2)

- American Camp Association. "The Official Journal of the camp directors Association." *The Camping Magazine*, January 1930. The Internet Archive.
https://archive.org/details/sim_camping-magazine_1930-12_3_3/mode/2up.
- Barthes, Roland. *Image, Music, Text*. HarperCollins UK, 1977.
- Batuman, Elif. "The Age of 'The Age of Innocence.'" *The New York Times*, November 1, 2019.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/01/books/review/age-of-innocence-edith-wharton-elif-batuman.html>.
- Carlson, Julie A. "The Legacy of Lloyd Burgess Sharp (1895-1963): A Career History of a Pioneer in Outdoor Education." *Journal of Experiential Education* 27, no. 3 (March 2005): 326–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105382590502700317>.
- Carr, Lowell Juilliard, Mildred Aileen Valentine, and Marshall H. Levy. *Integrating the Camp, the Community and Social Work*, 1939.
- Deloria, Philip J. *Playing Indian*. Yale University Press, 2022.
- Eells, Eleanor. *Eleanor Eells' History of Organized Camping: The First 100 Years*. American Camping Assn, 1986.
- Franzidis, Alexia, Alana N. Seaman, and Jayna Donaldson. "A Toponymy of American Summer Camps: Onscreen Stereotypes or Symbols Ripe for Change?" *The Journal of American Culture* 45, no. 2 (May 19, 2022): 139–54. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jacc.13337>.
- Fryberg, Stephanie A., Hazel Rose Markus, Daphna Oyserman, and Joseph M. Stone. "Of Warrior Chiefs and Indian Princesses: The Psychological Consequences of American Indian Mascots." *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 30, no. 3 (September 26, 2008): 208–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01973530802375003>.
- Garst, Barry, and Anja Whittington. "Defining Moments of Summer Camp Experiences: An Exploratory Study With Youth in Early Adolescence." *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership* 12, no. 3 (July 14, 2020).
<https://doi.org/10.18666/jorel-2020-v12-i3-10109>.
- Gershon, Livia. "Summer Camp Has Always Been About Escaping Modern Life." JSTOR Daily, April 26, 2016. <https://daily.jstor.org/history-summer-camp/>.
- Halpin, Marjorie M. *Totem Poles: An Illustrated Guide*. UBC Press, 2011.
- Hanna, Nancy A., and Thomas J. Berndt. "Relations between Friendship, Group Acceptance, and

- Evaluations of Summer Camp.” *The Journal of Early Adolescence* 15, no. 4 (November 1995): 456–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431695015004004>.
- 100 Year Anniversary of the American Camp Association. “History and Youth Development Resources.” Accessed May 21, 2023.
<http://www.acacamp.org/anniversary/collection/historical/>.
- Huhndorf, Shari M. *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination*. Cornell University Press, 2015.
- Iser, Wolfgang. “The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach.” In *New Directions in Literary History*, 125–45. London: Routledge, 2022.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9781003247937-8>.
- Warner, Robert P., Jim Sibthorp, Cait Wilson, Laurie P. Browne, Sabrica Barnett, Ann Gillard, and Jacob Sorenson. “Similarities and Differences in Summer Camps: A Mixed Methods Study of Lasting Outcomes and Program Elements.” *Children and Youth Services Review* 120 (January 2021): 105779. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105779>.
- White, Hayden , C. “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact.” *Clio* 3, no. 3 (1974).
- Wilson, Cait, and Jim Sibthorp. “The Role of Behavioral Loyalty in Youth Development at Summer Camp.” *Journal of Leisure Research* 50, no. 1 (January 2019): 28–47.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2018.1544840>.

Selected Bibliography (Chapter 3)

- Barrett, Samuel Alfred, and Edward Winslow Gifford. *Miwok Material Culture: Indian Life of the Yosemite Region*. Yosemite Conservancy, 1997.
- Browner, Marcy and Bob. “Desegregating Circle M Day Camp: A Determination to Succeed.” *Camping Magazine*, May 2015.
<https://www.acacamps.org/article/camping-magazine/desegregating-circle-m-day-camp-determination-succeed>.
- Daniel, Brad, Jim Shores, and W. Brad Faircloth. “The Effects of Natural Landscapes on Inspiration: An Exploratory Study.” *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership* 13, no. 4 (October 25, 2021).
<https://doi.org/10.18666/jorel-2021-v13-i4-10633>.
- Davis-King, Shelly, and Judith Marvin. “Historic Properties Survey Report For the Calaveras County Water District Arnold Reach 3A Water Transmission Pipeline Replacement Project Calaveras County, California.” Calaveras County Water District, 2014.
<https://snlm.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/hpsr-jmarvinreport-arnold.pdf>.
- Deloria, Philip J. *Playing Indian*. Yale University Press, 2022.
- Didion, Joan. *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*. Macmillan, 1990.
- Drovdahl, Robert, and Jeffrey Keuss. “Emerging Adults and Christian Faith: The Faith Experience of Emerging Adults in the Pacific Northwest.” *Christian Education Journal: Research on Educational Ministry* 17, no. 1 (February 12, 2020): 130–44.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0739891319900511>.
- Ellingson, Ter. “The Ecologically Noble Savage.” In *The Myth of the Noble Savage*, 342–58. University of California Press, 2001.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520222687.003.0023>.
- Franzidis, Alexia, Alana N. Seaman, and Jayna Donaldson. “A Toponymy of American Summer Camps: Onscreen Stereotypes or Symbols Ripe for Change?” *The Journal of American Culture* 45, no. 2 (May 19, 2022): 139–54. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jacc.13337>.
- Girl Scouts Research Institute. “More Than S’mores: Successes and Surprises in Girl Scouts’ Outdoor Experiences,” 2014.
- Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2015.

- Hansen, Robert J. "Community Defends Drag Queen Story Hour from Proud Boys and Hate Group." *NewsBreak Original*, April 17, 2023.
<https://original.newsbreak.com/@robert-j-hansen-1587368/2993798366598-community-defends-drag-queen-story-hour-from-proud-boys-and-hate-group>.
- Harvey, Penny. "'It's Camp': Summer Camp Culture, the Renegotiation of Social Norms and Regulation of Gender and Sexuality." ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University, 2017.
https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology_theses/70.
- Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway. "History." Accessed April 19, 2023. <https://scenic4.org/history/>.
- The Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians. "History – The Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians." Accessed March 19, 2023. <https://mewuk.com/cultural/history/>.
- Hodgman, Lucy. "Woodland Bar Stormed by Hateful Protesters after Violent Threats Cancel LGBTQ Event." *The Sacramento Bee*, July 1, 2022.
<https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/crime/article263095433.html>.
- Huhndorf, Shari M. *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination*. Cornell University Press, 2015.
- PBS. "Indian Country Diaries. History. California Genocide." Accessed March 19, 2023.
<https://web.archive.org/web/20071018030304/http://www.pbs.org/indiancountry/history/calif.html>.
- Isern, Thomas. "Past Like a Mask, or, The Trouble with 'The Trouble with Wilderness.'" *The Journal of New Zealand Studies*, no. 16 (December 19, 2013).
<https://doi.org/10.26686/jnzs.v0i16.2048>.
- Kakutani, Michiko. "Joan Didion: Staking Out California." *The New York Times*, June 10, 1979.
<https://www.nytimes.com/1979/06/10/books/didion-calif.html>.
- Kidd, Kenneth B., and Derritt Mason. *Queer as Camp: Essays on Summer, Style, and Sexuality*. Fordham Univ Press, 2019.
- Kramer, Carol A. *Calaveras Big Trees*. Arcadia Publishing, 2010.
- Landefeld, Leslie A. "THE MIWOK AND MAIDC PEOPLES OF THE SIERRA NEVADA AND FOOTHILLS." In *Yosemite and the Mother Lode Gold Belt: Geology, Tectonics, and the Evolution of Hydrothermal Fluids in the Sierra Nevada of California*. The Pacific Section American Association of Petroleum Geologist, 1990.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.32375/1990-gb68.2>.

- Lindsay, Brendan C. *Murder State: California's Native American Genocide, 1846-1873*. U of Nebraska Press, 2012.
- Lwin, Soe Marlar. *A Multimodal Perspective on Applied Storytelling Performances: Narrativity in Context*. Routledge, 2019.
- Mathias, Christopher. "Exposed: Dallas Humber, Narrator Of Neo-Nazi 'Terrorgram,' Promoter Of Mass Shootings." *HuffPost*, March 3, 2023.
- Mechling, Jay. *On My Honor: Boy Scouts and the Making of American Youth*. University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Mignolo, Walter D., and Catherine E. Walsh. *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*. Duke University Press, 2018.
- Nazaryan, Alexander. "California Slaughter: The State-Sanctioned Genocide of Native Americans." *Newsweek*, August 17, 2016.
- Odell, Jenny. *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy*. Melville House, 2020.
- O'Donnell, Patrick. "Wo-Chi-Ca—a Communist Children's Camp: Education in Democratic and Egalitarian Values under the Polestar of Social Justice." *ReligiousLeftLaw.com*, July 21, 2020.
- Columbia, California. "Our History: How It All Started." Accessed April 19, 2023.
<http://www.visitcolumbiacalifornia.com/history/>.
- Perlman, David. "Stone Basins May Be Miwok Salt 'Factory.'" *SFGATE*, December 30, 2009.
<https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Stone-basins-may-be-Miwok-salt-factory-3277185.php>.
- papers, la. *A Third University Is Possible*. U of Minnesota Press, 2017.
- Petrzela, Natalia Mehlman. "Why Fear of Big Cities Led to the Creation of Summer Camps." *HISTORY*, August 7, 2017.
<https://www.history.com/news/why-fear-of-big-cities-led-to-the-creation-of-summer-camps>.
- Pritzker, Barry. *A Native American Encyclopedia: History, Culture, and Peoples*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2000.
- "'Scouting for Girls': Reading and Recruitment." In *Making Girls Into Women: American Women's Writing and the Rise of Lesbian Identity*. Duke University Press, 2003.
- Seidman, Lila. "Placerville Is Keeping the Nickname 'Hangtown' after Removing a Noose from

- Its Logo.” *Los Angeles Times*, April 30, 2021.
<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-04-30/placerville-is-keeping-the-nickname-hangtown-after-dropping-a-noose-from-its-logo>.
- Slyck, Abigail Ayres Van. *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890-1960*. U of Minnesota Press, 2006.
- Smith, Michael B. “‘The Ego Ideal of the Good Camper’ and the Nature of Summer Camp.” *Environmental History* 11, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 70–101.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/envhis/11.1.70>.
- Strong, Pauline Turner. “Cultural Appropriation and the Crafting of Racialized Selves in American Youth Organizations.” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 9, no. 2 (December 31, 2008): 197–213. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708608325918>.
- Swindle, Dawn. “Camp Traditions: Memories in the Making.” American Camp Association, May 1, 2010.
<https://www.acacamps.org/article/camping-magazine/camp-traditions-memories-making>.
- “Tans, Tepees, and Minstrel Shows: Race, Primitivism, and Camp Community.” In *Children’s Nature: The Rise of the American Summer Camp*. NYU Press, 2010.
- Tischler, Sabine. “Patriots of Gold Country; Anatomy of a Homegrown Hate Group – Sierra Foothills Stump.” Sierra Foothill Stump, May 10, 2021.
<https://sierrafoothillstump.org/?p=872>.
- Tolentino, Jia. *Trick Mirror: Reflections on Self-Delusion*. Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2020.
- Tuan, Yi-fu. *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*. Columbia University Press, 1990.
- Turner Strong, Pauline, and Laurie Posner. “Selves in Play: Sports, Scouts, and American Cultural Citizenship.” *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 45, no. 3 (August 9, 2010): 390–409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690210370380>.
- Wall, Sharon. *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario Summer Camps, 1920-55*. UBC Press, 2010.
- Whitehead, Joshua. “‘Finding We’Wha.’” In *Queer as Camp*, edited by Kenneth Kidd, 223–40. Fordham University Press, 2020. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/9780823283637-016>.
- American Camp Association. “Why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Matters at Camp,” July 27,

2022. <https://www.acacamps.org/about/diversity-equity-inclusion/why-it-matters>.

Appendix 1 - Land Deed to Annie Hunter (1885)

77



The United States of America,

To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting:

Homestead Certificate No. 3475
Application 6089

Whereas, There has been deposited in the General Land Office of the United States a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at Sacramento California, whereby it appears that, pursuant to the Act of Congress approved 20th May, 1862, "To secure Homesteads to actual Settlers on the Public Domain," and the acts supplemental thereto, the claim of Annie Hunter

has been established and duly consummated, in conformity to law, for the North Half of the South West quarter, and the South West quarter of the South West quarter of section twenty-two and the North West quarter of the North West quarter of section twenty-seven, in Township six North of Range sixteen East of Mount Diablo Meridian in California containing one hundred and sixty acres

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of said Land, returned to the General Land Office by the Surveyor General.

Now know ye that there is, therefore, granted by the United States unto the said Annie Hunter

the tract of Land above described: To have and to hold the said tract of Land with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said Annie Hunter and to her heirs and assigns forever; subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts, and also subject to the right of the proprietor of a vein or lode to extract and remove his ore therefrom, should the same be found to penetrate or intersect the premises hereby granted, as provided by law, and there is reserved from the lands hereby granted, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States.

In testimony whereof, J. G. Carter Cleveland PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the Seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.

Given under my hand, at the City of Washington, the nineteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States the five hundred and

U. S.

By the President,

J. G. Carter Cleveland

By M. M. Shaw, Secretary.

L. O. Lamar, Recorder of the General Land Office.

Appendix 2 - Land Patent to James Hunter (1907)

(RECORD OF PATENTS.)

4-405a-tyr.

307

The United States of America,

Do all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Homestead Certificate No. **3939.**
 Application **6231.**

WHEREAS, There has been deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at **Sacramento, California,** whereby it appears that, pursuant to the Act of Congress approved 20th May, 1862, "To secure Homesteads to Actual Settlers on the Public Domain," and the acts supplemental thereto, the claim of **JAMES H. HUNTER**

has been established and duly consummated, in conformity to law, for the south half of the northeast quarter and the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of Section seven and the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section six in Township five north of Range sixteen east of the Mount Diablo Meridian, California, containing one hundred sixty acres,

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Land, returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the Surveyor General:

NOW KNOW YE, That there is, therefore, granted by the UNITED STATES unto the said **James H. Hunter**

the tract of Land above described; TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said tract of Land, with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said **James H. Hunter**

and to **his** heirs and assigns forever; subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights, as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts, and also subject to the right of the proprietor of a vein or lode to extract and remove his ore therefrom, should the same be found to penetrate or intersect the premises hereby granted, as provided by law. And there is reserved from the lands hereby granted, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, **Theodore Roosevelt**, President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.

(SEAL) GIVEN under my hand, at the City of Washington, the thirtieth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seven, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-second.

By the President: Theodore Roosevelt
 By Frederick Klean, Secretary.
H. W. Bradford
 Recorder of the General Land Office.

Appendix 3 Cont. - Letter from Charles Menzies' lawyer to Girl Scouts (1962)

O. C. PARKINSON
 JAMES C. NICHOLS
 CHARLES M. GORE

PARKINSON, NICHOLS & GORE
 ATTORNEYS AT LAW
 309 BANK OF STOCKTON BUILDING
 STOCKTON 2, CALIFORNIA

TELEPHONE
 HOWARD 5-7216

MAR 9 1962

March 8, 1962

Delta Sierra Girl Scout Council, Inc.
 1219 N. El Dorado Street
 Stockton, California

Attention: Richard Prescott, President

Dear Sir:

I was pleased to receive your letter of February 6, 1962, informing me that a bronze marker in honor of C. M. Menzies will be placed in Pixie Woods with a dedication ceremony at 1:30 p. m. March 10, 1962. Immediately upon receipt of your letter, I mailed a copy of it to each of his relatives for whom I have addresses. Mr. Menzies, however, left no wife or child surviving him, and except for a cousin in Sacramento, all his other near relatives live in Oregon. It is doubtful whether any of them will be able to come down to the ceremony.

In view of the fact that a substantial contribution made by him to your Council was the summer camp in the Sierras, perhaps you would be interested in a brief history of that project from its beginning so far as Menzies was concerned. I have a rather complete file of all papers and letters connected with it in my office, since I prepared all the contracts, deeds and other documents, handled their execution and recording, and handled the incorporation of your Council, together with two amendments to its articles.

In the 1930's the 160 acre tract, which you now own, belonged to a tribe of Calaveras County Indians. They had a village in the meadow near the northeast corner of the tract and close to the spring, consisting of a number of cabins.

Menzies bought the property from the Indians and put wooden floors in the cabins and otherwise modernized them and for a number of years he and his wife used the place for weekends and vacations and did quite a bit of entertaining of friends there.

In April 1942, Mr. and Mrs. Menzies made a lease of the tract to your Council, which at that time had not yet been incorporated, giving you exclusive use of 20 acres in the northwest quarter of the tract, together with the right to use the remainder of the tract jointly with Menzies himself.

In June 1942 they deeded to your Council outright the northwest quarter of the tract containing the original 20 acres.