A Tale of Two Parks

Nature Tourism, Visual Rhetoric, and the Power of Place

A Comparative History of Yosemite and Mineral King, California

by

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ABSTRACT

The study of American national parks provides invaluable insights into American intellectual, cultural, and sociopolitical trends. As very popular tourist attractions, parks are also depicted in art, film, television, books, calendars, posters, and a multitude of other print and visual media. National parks therefore exist both physically and in the American imagination. Comparing Yosemite National Park, one of the oldest and most popular national parks, to Mineral King, California, a relatively unknown and far less-visited region in Sequoia National Park, unveils the deep complexity of the national park idea. From the mid-nineteenth to the late twentieth centuries, the visual and written representations of each area, including art, photographs, advertisements, and government publications, evolved and shifted, sometimes rapidly and paradoxically, depending upon the aims and needs of historic societies. The power of imagery and production of knowledge to influence visitation, management, and land designation is revealed through this comparative study. Park representation and interpretation in the cultural consciousness, moreover, uncovers how societies perceive and, thus, will ultimately use certain environments. A place cannot truly become a national space until it is viewed and valued as such in the American imagination. The creation of cultural material, especially visual works, is vital for forming and sustaining national park narratives. Popular parks like Yosemite need to have their legacies reinforced, and lesser-known units, such as Mineral King, deserve the chance to have a cultural legacy created—thereby helping to ensure that both remain for future generations.

DEDICATION

To: Mom and Stella

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INTRODUCTION

There is pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is rapture on the lonely shore,
There is a society where none intrudes
By the deep sea and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

--George Gordon Byron (1788-1824)

When I try to recall the exact age when I first romanticized the outdoors, memory escapes me. What does come to mind are vague recollections of bicycles and skinned knees, of laughter and ancient oak trees, and whizzing along endless park paths. Reminiscences return of gazing upon vast shores lined with sparkling water, tasting salty air, and balancing on kelp-covered, craggy rocks in search of the perfect shell. Memories surface of frighteningly tall redwoods looming like giants, and my sister and I crouching to make fairy houses amongst the pine needles on the damp forest floor. Apparitions reappear of sandy hiking paths that curved like snakes, as I caught up victoriously with my father at the mountain top to witness the blinding sun and the minuscule world below.

Growing up in Northern California, there were plenty of natural environments at my disposal—from the coasts of Monterey Bay to the heights of Mt. Tamalpais to the forests of Muir Woods. All were my playgrounds. Due to my early experiences, I have long associated the outdoors with my childhood and, thus, romanticizing and appreciating the natural world in my adult life follows quite effortlessly.

I am not, however, unique in associating the outdoors with childhood. In fact, it can be rather common. Many people reminisce about idyllic youthful days gamboling in parks and playgrounds. Some families take summer trips to the beach, the mountains, or the countryside, and to many adults, such as myself, these vacations are some of the most endearing and memorable moments of childhood. A significant amount of national park tourism, for example, is spurred by adults trying to recapture childhood memories and wanting to share those experiences with their own progeny.[1] The human race, in a sense, looks back to its childhood, its primeval and earliest state, with longing. This is reflected in many intellectual and artistic movements throughout world history, including Romanticism, Pastoralism, Transcendentalism, and the rich traditions of East Asian poetry and art, which extol the natural world and view it with nostalgia. Arguably, this is an ancient theme, both nature as paradise and as the foundation of humanity, as the Roman stories of the Gardens of Elysium and The Bible's Garden of Eden demonstrate. Perhaps this is why I, and so many others, easily connect landscapes and elements of the natural world with sentimental notions about the past.

The role of nature and, more specifically, ideas about nature, have long fascinated me for what they can help elucidate about various cultures and societies. It is not so much the physical environment itself that is intriguing, but *how* individuals see that area and *how* they choose to use and shape it. Of course, individuals and groups can see vastly

[1] *America the Beautiful: promoting our national parks as travel destinations* : hearing before the Subcommittee on Competitiveness, Innovation, and Export Promotion of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, United States Senate, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, second session, April 27, 2010, p. 36, HathiTrust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31822037822251;view=1up;seq=1 (Accessed January 2019).

different things. Scholars Keith Basso and Yi-Fu Tuan, for example, demonstrate through their work this cultural and personal aspect of land.[2] The multitude of land conflicts, both public and private, throughout time is also a testament that land can mean different things to different people.

American national parks are intriguing for what they can illustrate about American history and society. If landscapes reflect identity, then national parks can help illuminate national themes, ideas, and trends in general. National parks, for example, have held a special place in the American imagination since their creation in the nineteenth century. These hallowed landscapes are popular tourist attractions which continue to draw millions of visitors from all over the globe year after year. National parks are also the subjects of art, film, television series, calendars, books, posters, and a multitude of other print and visual media. National parks therefore are physical spaces but also exist in the American mind. The public is in a unique position as stewards and consumers of national parks, in addition to being producers of the national park idea. This nexus of the natural world, tourism, and representation in the cultural consciousness sheds light on the immense power of imagery along with ideas to affect viewpoints, management, and visitation to particular places.

National parks as historical subjects fascinate me. They combine my appreciation of the outdoors with a quest to better understand historic societies. I am not alone either, for many academics study national parks. Environmental historians in particular write on

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[2] Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*, (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1996) and Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

the political, societal, and ecological impacts of these spaces.[3] American art historians also look at the many artists who have chosen national parks as subject matter. As transdisciplinary approaches to academic studies are increasingly in vogue, scholars have only begun to delve into the benefits of combining art history, visual studies, and environmental history. National parks, with a profusion of art and imagery in the public sphere that spans three centuries, are one of the ideal subjects with which to blend these fields.

Most art historians and environmental historians who focus on national parks, however, do not thoroughly converse with each other's scholarship. Some historians demonstrate the impact of art in national park history; yet they do so briefly and mainly to note how works by famous artists helped preserve parks in the nineteenth century.[4] Art historians study the works and lives of well-known artists, such as Albert Bierstadt or Ansel Adams, more in depth than historians; yet do not often include national park historiography in these studies.[5] In addition, art historians, by the very nature of their

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[3] Robert Keiter, Roderick Nash, Joseph Sax, Paul Sutter, Thomas Morton Taylor, and Laura Watt.

[4] Scott Herring, *Lines on the Land: Writers, Art, and the National Parks* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2004), touches upon the influence of art and literature on national parks. Hans Huth, *Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, second edt., 1990), 151, 153, 157, Alfred Runte, *National Parks: American Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 3rd. edt., 1997), "Chapter 1: Catalysts: Nationalism, Art, and the American West," 11-47. John Sears as well looks at art, scenery, and Yosemite history in one chapter of his *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989). Historian Laura Watt investigates preservation ideals and realities, wilderness concepts, and working landscapes at American national parks, more specifically at Point Reyes National Seashore in her work, *The Paradox of Preservation: Wilderness and Working Landscapes at Point Reyes National Seashore* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016).

[5] Nancy Anderson, Kate Nearpass Ogden, and Rebecca Solnit are some of the art historians who study Yosemite art and artists.

field, focus on art when looking at national park imagery. There are countless pieces of visual cultural material, such as posters, films, postcards, photographs, pamphlets, to name a few, that remain to be studied for their powerful and long-lasting contribution to national park narratives and influence on American landscapes. In order for scholars, policy makers, conservationists, citizens, and visitors to better understand American national parks and their role in society, the entire scope of the visual and written history of these spaces needs to be further explored.

What comes to light when these sources are studied in tandem is that parks are not static and unchanging spaces but are rather fluid and flexible. They reflect the differing desires, interests, and values of certain cultures at specific times. While some American national park scholarship tends toward American Exceptionalism and narrow, over-arching narratives when detailing parks, current transnational and global parks studies reveal that the 'national park' concept is immensely varied throughout the world.[6] Each national park, such as those in Mexico, South Africa, or Switzerland, has a unique history, culture, and identity in addition to the wide variations of the physical spaces and ecosystems. Furthermore, transnational park studies can help to break some of the

[6] Jane Carruthers, *Kruger National Park: A Social and Political History* (Pietermaritzberg: University of Natal Press, 1995), Emily Waklid, *Revolutionary Parks: Conservation, Social Justice, and Mexican National Parks, 1910-1940* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011), Patrick Kupper, trans. Giselle Weiss, *Creating Wilderness: A Transnational History of the Swiss National Park* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2014), Gissibl, Bernhard; Hohler, Sabine; Kupper, Patrick, *Civilizing Nature* (Berghahn Books, 2012), http://www.myilibrary.com?ID=421596, (Accessed, January 2019). For more on American national park narratives and American Exceptionalism see James Morton Turner, "Rethinking American Exceptionalism: Toward a Transnational History of National Parks, Wilderness, and Protected Ares," in Andrew Isenberg, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

uniformity in American national park narratives by lending support to the idea that each unit of the U.S. National Park System is likewise as unique.

The System, for example, is made up of hundreds of single units in many different categories, including national historic parks, national recreation areas, national landmarks, and national monuments.[7] While national parks are the type unit that has the largest total combined visits, nearly 25%, it is two non-national parks, Blue Ridge Parkway and The Golden Gate National Recreation Area, that are the most popular units with nearly 15 million annual visitors each.[8] There are national parks in U.S. territories, such as Samoa National Park and the National Historic Park of Guam, that also get overlooked in narratives of U.S. national parks. Scholars Alfred Runte and Roderick Nash writing in the 1970s, for instance, leaned toward a national park idea with a patina of American Exceptionalism that reflected the grand, monumental U.S. parks founded in the late nineteenth century, such as Yellowstone and Yosemite.[9] Contemporary scholarship of both American and global national parks, however, supports the belief that

[7] As of December 2018, the system contained 418 units made up of national parks, national monuments, national preserves, national rivers and wild and scenic parkways, national scenic trails, national recreation areas, national historic sites, and national parkways.

[8] National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/articles/nps-designations.htm, (Accessed January 2019).

[9] Roderick Nash, "The American Invention of National Parks," *American Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (1970), 726-35, JSTOR, https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/stable/2711623?sid=primo&origin=crossref&seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents doi:10.2307/2711623, (Accessed January 2019), and Alfred Runte, *National Parks: American Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1997), 3rd edt., 1 and 213. Both Runte and Nash's work and narratives are still published, and perpetuated, as Nash's more seminal work, *Wilderness in the American Mind,* was in its fifth edition in 2014 and *National Parks* was in its fourth edition in 2010.

the national park idea is not a single concept and there is no particular, transferable definition of a national park.[10]

In addition to scholarly and cultural park narratives, other factors such as legal status, visitation, and tourist accounts all combine to portray richly different entities in the cultural consciousness. The variation is so great that one wonders if there can be a cohesive concept or definition of the term 'national park.' There are, for instance, units which are viewed as jewels of the system and are known all over the world, typified by parks such as Grand Canyon National Park, Yellowstone, or Yosemite. One can easily conjure a distinct image of any of these parks in one's mind—even if one has never visited the area. And yet, the vast majority of the units of the National Park System are not representative of this type of park and are not as known nor visited, except by locals.

Comparing a popular park such as Yosemite, the fifth most-visited and with an extended identity in the American cultural consciousness, to Mineral King, a relatively unknown and far less toured area in Sequoia National Park only 100 miles from Yosemite, unveils the problems of utilizing narrow and centuries-old narratives as the main source for current ideas about and depictions of American national parks. The study also reveals the tremendous power of imagery to cement ideas and narratives in the American mind along with cultural production of knowledge to spur visitation,

[10] Robert B. Keiter, *To Conserve Unimpaired: The Evolution of the National Park Idea* (Washington: Island Press, 2013), xiii and John Sheil, *Nature's Spectacle: The World's First National Parks and Protected Places* (London and Washington D.C.: Earthscan, 2010), 1. Historian Laura Watts notes that "even an area designated as a national park and protected in perpetuity continues to shift," and not just in physicality but also in societal and cultural meaning, *The Paradox of Preservation: Wilderness and Working Landscapes at Point Reyes National Seashore* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016), 15.

designation, and management of lands. Sources also demonstrate that individual park representations and interpretations shift and morph, sometimes quite rapidly and paradoxically, depending upon the current political, artistic, intellectual, and cultural trends. The depictions of each park, from the mid-nineteenth to the late twentieth century, moreover, exposes two very different parks and two very different paths to national park status.

A Tale of Two Parks is divided into two parts: the first five chapters are devoted to Yosemite National Park and the last chapter focuses on Mineral King, California. The imbalance is regrettable; yet, it reinforces the argument that parks are not equal in the cultural consciousness since the reason for the uneven structure is the dearth of information on Mineral King. Environmental history, art history, as well as cultural and visual studies all figure prominently and form the methodological basis of the study. Primary sources researched include the written and visual, and range from governmental records and correspondences to works of art and ephemera, such as brochures and postcards. Chapter One begins at the foundation of Yosemite representation and interpretation shortly after the area was first "discovered" in the 1850s. In the early written and visual accounts, created by writers, journalists, and local entrepreneurs, the human-made environment and tourist elements figured prominently. In less than ten years, when word about Yosemite had reached eastern shores and more people ventured to the valley, the interpretation of Yosemite ironically shifted to one that erased humans and their paraphernalia to showcase a sublime, primeval wilderness.

Chapter Two traces this abrupt alteration in Yosemite representation as the landscape artists, painters and photographers, utilized artistic trends from the Romantic Era to reshape the visual record of Yosemite. The area became an icon of sublime nature, and one that exemplified American values and uniqueness. This representation and narrative touted the individuality, monumentalism, and unsurpassable beauty of American landscapes at a time when individuals searched for an identity separate from Europe.[11] Works by painters in the 1860s and 1870s, such as Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Hill, William Keith, and photographers Carleton E. Watkins and Eadweard Muybridge, all exemplified this interpretation of parks as sublime, primeval wildernesses. It is not coincidental that at this time Congress designated Yosemite as the first federally-recognized state park, in 1864, and Yellowstone became the first national park eight years later.[12] The nineteenth century artistic representation, most importantly, still captivates the American imagination and is one of the interpretations that is still deeply embedded in the narratives about American national parks today. The power of art and its visual rhetoric to stimulate and sustain cultural ideas throughout history is a commanding sub-theme of this section.

[11] Ironically, many of the artists, including Albert Bierstadt, William Hahn, William Keith, and Thomas Hill, were originally born and trained in Europe. The artistic trends, such as the themes and iconography of the Romantic Movement, were also borrowed from Europe by artists working in America from Europe and, ultimately, adapted to fit American tastes.

[12] There is not enough direct evidence to link works by early Yosemite artists, such as Albert Bierstadt, with the direct protection of Yosemite in 1864; however, many scholars believe that it was a factor. See Herring, *Lines on Land*, 20. Thomas Moran's art depicting Yellowstone, however, was directly involved in its protection, see *Thomas Moran's West: Chromolithography, High Art, and Popular Taste* by Joni L. Kinsey (Lawrence: Joslyn Art Museum and the University of Kansas, 2016), 60-61.

Chapter Three details the rise of industry and technology in America, from the 1880s through the 1920s, which would shift representations of Yosemite once again. In the late nineteenth century, the advent of the transcontinental railroad was one of the top factors influencing Yosemite, as well as settlement and visitation to the Far West in general. The growth of transportation and tourist businesses led to new producers of Yosemite cultural material. These individuals and groups, such as leaders of corporate and short line railroads as well as local concessionaires, incorporated both tourist elements and pure landscapes into their writings and imagery, along with new ideas. New themes included travel and a diversity of resources as part of the park experience. The growth of technology and industry at the turn-of-the-century also impacted Yosemite representation through the meteoric escalation of mass media and mass distribution, as well as the creation of professional advertising. While landscape photography helped to democratize the production of Yosemite imagery in 1870s, mass distribution and mass media brought the knowledge of the area to a much wider audience than ever before. The mainline railroads, such as the Atchison & Santa Fe and Southern Pacific, for example, produced millions of promotional materials in various forms, such as postcards, calendars, posters, magazines, journals, and traveling exhibits to name a few. Chapter Three ultimately demonstrates the pervasiveness of the cultural impact of technology in society, including perpetuating ideas about nature and spurring national park tourism.

In 1916, the Organic Act established the National Park Service (NPS) to oversee the National Park System. Chapter Four looks at the role that the leaders of the NPS played in propagating the national park idea and how agency leaders represented and

interpreted Yosemite, and national parks in general, to the public. From the 1930s to the 1950s, the world wars and the Great Depression severely limited tourism and administration of the parks, and, thus, Chapter Four focuses mainly on the 1950s and 1960s. The postwar era was a period of especially heightened NPS activity and promotion as visitation to the national parks skyrocketed to numbers in the millions. Once again sociopolitical trends, such as the Cold War, impacted the interpretation of Yosemite and national parks. The NPS, for example, stressed the innate and incalculable value of parks to solidify and develop fundamental American principles such as democracy and freedom. In other words, national parks fostered better American citizens. Various other factors, such as personal experiences of Yosemite field employees and the environmental movement reshaping Americans' views of public lands and wild nature, also impacted NPS representation in the postwar period. Chapter Four showcases that the NPS, like the national park idea, is non-static and fluid.

Chapter Five looks at the rise of the environmental movement and its impact on Yosemite imagery during the 1970s and 1980s. The most significant development in this period was the fact that tourists and tourist elements re-entered Yosemite art as central figures. Art photographers and environmental cartoonists focused on tourism in national parks as a commentary on society. Modern photographers, for example, used juxtaposition and satire to feature such mundane elements as garbage cans and urban tourists in nature parks. Comparing the art by Yosemite photographers with environmental cartoons produced by the Sierra Club reveals an underlying anxiety about humanity's impact on the natural world during the 1970s and 1980s. The ties between

intellectual and social movements and cultural representation, more specifically the influence of environmentalism on Yosemite art and imagery, is undeniable during this period.

The second part of the dissertation examines Mineral King, CA, and its path to national park status. Chapter Six traces the local history of the area from the late nineteenth century as a failed mining town to the prominent public land battle involving the Walt Disney Company, the Sierra Club, and the Forest Service in the 1960s and 1970s. Mineral King, as a case study in contrast to Yosemite, clearly shows that narratives and imagery (or lack thereof) about certain spaces in the cultural consciousness impact how the public views that area and how it is utilized. The history of both areas demonstrates that the representations, imagery, and interpretations of place shift in the American cultural consciousness. The Mineral King story, in particular, demonstrates that social, political, and intellectual trends of a period can reshape views of nature, such as the concept of wilderness, to ultimately impact the status and management of certain lands.

The significance of this revelation is that, hypothetically, any national park unit could lose its status. Natural areas and landscapes are interpreted in myriad ways by diverse people within the same generation and the majority interpretation of a particular society can be re-interpreted differently in the next. Land, as a natural and limited resource, is a particularly interesting subject to reveal changes in history and society. Future generations may not see the value in Mineral King as a part of a national park, resulting in portions of it being developed for what may be perceived to be more pressing

societal needs.[13] Tourist narratives—as perpetuators of visitation, funding, and knowledge of the area—could shift and landscapes that were once invaluable for tourism in one generation may not be in the next. The representation and interpretation of these spaces in the cultural consciousness, therefore, reveals how societies view, and, ultimately, shape the environment. Units such as Mineral King gain from public knowledge, from having an identity in the cultural consciousness. While a great many individuals may make the counter-argument that public knowledge generates tourism which threatens the environmental integrity of these spaces, I beg to differ. Mass tourism and unregulated tourism, yes, is a threat to any ecosystem, but to certain areas of national parks a shortage of tourism and lack of knowledge of the area is also a threat—a threat to the long-term protection of the area.

The units of the National Park System, moreover, are not spaces protected for wild nature as a value in itself, but for what they provide people.[14] It is people, therefore, that are the stewards of these spaces and on whose shoulders their continued national park status and environmental protection rests. Many individuals only act on their stewardship role when a national park is threatened, as exemplified in the Mineral King battle in the 1960s and 1970s. There are many other ways that both American and global

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[13] Some might argue that the existing laws, such as the ones designating the Mineral King Road as a historic landmark and hundreds of acres surrounding Mineral King Valley as national wilderness, in addition to the law that designates Sequoia National Park as a national park and Mineral King a part of it, ensures the preservation of the area. However, laws, like interpretations, are human creations, and, in fact, lag behind ideas as drivers of history. Moreover, laws can be overturned and humans can change their minds.

[14] This dissertation however does not cover wildlife protection within national parks. While not the main use of these spaces, it should be noted that preservation of fauna, such as the bison in Yellowstone, and flora, such as the Giant Sequoias in parks throughout California, are components of parks that are not necessarily human-centric.

populations can support these spaces. Visitation is just one. I argue, however, that tourism follows the pathways laid out by public narratives and visual representations of those tourist spaces. Literature, imagery, art, and other representational works are instrumental in forming and sustaining national park narratives in the American imagination, thereby securing their protection from one generation to the next. Narratives which are more encompassing and better reflective of the diversity of these spaces, and the peoples and cultures which utilize them, need to be developed and perpetuated in order to ensure that all national park units—Yosemite *and* Mineral King—remain for future generations to enjoy.

CHAPTER 1

MAKINGS OF A TOURIST ICON: IMAGE, WORD, AND THE CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION OF YOSEMITE VALLEY, 1855-1861

Yosemite, as America's fifth most-visited park and first federally-recognized state park, holds a key place in national park narratives.[15] What is it about this California landscape tucked at the foot of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range that so captivates the American cultural consciousness? From Yosemite's first "discovery" by Anglo-Americans in 1851, the region has long seized the American imagination and draws many visitors as well as producers of both written and visual cultural material year after year. Within only the first decade of its discovery, for example, many writers, entrepreneurs, and journalists ventured to the area and published their accounts. Their depictions and descriptions are the earliest known of Yosemite, and thus are important for studying how the area first became imprinted on the American visual, physical, and cultural map.

Most scholars, however, do not include a comprehensive study of these early accounts and imagery into Yosemite national park narratives. Art historians mainly focus on the early landscape art, such as the works by Carleton E. Watkins or Albert Bierstadt.[16] Some national park historians detail the early parks' primitive nature and,

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[15] Alfred Runte argues that Yosemite can be deemed the first national park, since the Yosemite Park Bill protected the area as the first federally-recognized state park in 1864. Yosemite would also become "the symbol of the national park ideal" and template for the creation of the first national park, Yellowstone National Park, see Runte, *Yosemite,* 7.

[16] Amy Scott, ed. *Yosemite: Art of an American Icon* (Los Angeles: Autry Center in association with University of California Press 2006), *Views of Yosemite: The Last Stance of the Romantic Landscape* (Fresno: Fresno Art Center, 1982), David Robertson, *West of Eden: A History of the Art and Literature of Yosemite* (Yosemite Natural History Association and Wilderness Press, 1984), Sears, *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* and Herring, *Lines on the Land: Writers, Art, and the National Parks.*

thus, do not look in depth at early visitor accounts or tourist narratives. These scholars also write about the vast changes the advancement of technology and industry inflicted on these spaces, however, they place these developments in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[17] When environmental historians study human use in national parks, they also tend to focus on periods of great societal and ecological change such as those due to the advent of the automobile in the 1920s as well as the post-World War II boom of mass tourism.[18] Some historians do note that a touristic element existed at national parks from the outset, but none touch upon just how much the early representations of Yosemite portrayed human presence and tourism.[19]

By studying the Yosemite accounts and imagery of the 1850s and early 1860s, a different aspect of Yosemite history is revealed. Early articles, books, engravings, and photographs included what can be now described as the Yosemite built environment alongside the natural wonders. Subject matter such as roads, transportation networks, tourist structures, built attractions, and other man-made developments were featured

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[17] John Ise, *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), 33, 102, 111, and 301-323. Robert Keiter in *To Conserve Unimpaired* includes recreation, use, tourism, and commercialism as part of an "evolving" national park ideal and states that commercial interests and human use were part of national parks from the beginning, 63, 91, and 261-269. His narrative on commercialism and tourism does not go earlier, however, than the 1870s and declares that the early parks had many wilderness attributes, 41-43 and 91-92. Joseph Sax, *Mountains without Handrails: Reflections on the National Parks* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1980), 8 and 11-12.

[18] Sax, *Mountains*, 10-12, Keiter, *To Conserve Unimpaired*, 41-69, James Morton Taylor: *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics since 1964* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012).

[19] Keiter, *To Conserve*, Lary M. Dilsaver and William Tweed, *Challenge of The Big Trees: A Resource History of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks* (Three Rivers; Sequoia Natural History Association, 1990), James Morton Taylor, "Rethinking American Exceptionalism: Toward a Transnational History of National Parks, Wilderness, and Protected areas," in *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental History*, edt. Andrew Isenberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 282-302, Runte, *Yosemite: An Embattled Wilderness*.

extensively and sometimes even as main focal points in many of the works. When Congress designated the area as the first federally-recognized state park in 1864, art by landscape photographers and painters touting the sublime, primeval wilderness became the dominant representation of Yosemite. The landscape artists' depiction captured the American imagination at the time and remained well into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. If tourism and its infrastructure were key to the formation of Yosemite as a cultural icon, and its representations, why then does the narrative shift away from including tourists and the tourist landscape to highlighting romantic ideals of nature in less than a decade?

Studying why and how the narratives and representations change at Yosemite gleans insight into how national park narratives reflect societal trends, including management of certain environments. The cultural producers who first depicted Yosemite primarily as a tourist attraction are key to this narrative, for their foundational accounts and imagery demonstrated Yosemite as an area for humans to use and enjoy. Due to aesthetic, cultural, and societal trends in later years, this depiction of Yosemite shifted to one that represented the area as a sublime, primeval wilderness absent of humans. This rhetoric, especially in imagery, continues to be a powerful and long-lasting theme among the many elements that constitute an ever-changing national park idea. Studying the foundation of this mutable paradigm is a gateway into better understanding historic societies, landscape ideals, and national identity, but also how later policy and the management of these parks functioned within these narratives as well.

Yosemite's "Discovery" and Early History

Indigenous Americans traversed what is now known as the Yosemite Valley in the California Sierra Nevada Mountain Range long before the first recorded Anglo-Americans entered the area in the early 1850s. Tribes of California's Central Valley, such as the Yokuts, Mono, and the Miwok, settled in the more-welcoming environment of the foothills. Almost all these tribes, however, made frequent trading and hunting trips throughout the Sierras, including what is now Mono Pass in Yosemite.[20] When workers discovered gold at Sutter's Mill in 1848, thousands of ore-seekers from all across the globe came to Northern California in search of wealth and prospect. By 1850, nearly 300,000 individuals entered to the region.[21] The population surge that resulted from the Gold Rush radically altered the landscape and the lives of California's indigenous populations. When miners quickly exhausted the minerals of the northern streams and rivers, many individuals traveled south in search of what they perceived as open land replete with opportunities. In order to settle these regions, such as the California Central Valley, Anglo-Americans forced the relocation of many American Indians who had lived in these areas for thousands of years.

In March 1851, Major James D. Savage led a small group of men in pursuit of a local indigenous tribe into what is now known as the Yosemite Valley.[22] The California

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[20] Francis P. Farquhar, *History of the Sierra Nevada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), 7.

[21] Joshua Paddison, "1848-1865: Gold Rush, Statehood, and the Western Movement," CaliSphere, University of California, http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/calcultures/eras/era4.html, (Accessed February 2018).

[22] Runte, *Yosemite*, 10. The group also consisted of a few Indian guides.

state government authorized the group, known as the Mariposa Battalion, to capture a tribe known locally as the Yosemite. Savage and his men claimed that the Yosemite, in a perceived declaration of war, attacked their establishments and killed a few individuals in the process.[23] Shortly after the Mariposa Battalion ventured into the Yosemite Valley, rumors quickly spread throughout California about the unsurpassed, spectacular natural wonders of this hidden valley. As a result of the news, small groups of curious explorers, eager entrepreneurs, local artists, commercial hunters, and regional tourists explored the region in the mid-1850s.[24] This Anglo-American opening up of the region signified the first step toward the cultural, social, and intellectual incorporation of what is now Yosemite National Park.

Early Representations of Yosemite, 1855-1859

James M. Hutchings was one of the first individuals to travel to the rumored Sierra Nevada valley shortly after the Mariposa Battalion. He became the earliest Yosemite promoter, introducing the area to individuals as far as the eastern U.S., as well as one of the area's most prolific writers. Born in England in 1820, Hutchings immigrated to New York in 1848. When news of the Gold Rush reached eastern shores shortly afterward, he caught gold fever like many in the country and traveled to California in search of wealth. While Hutchings lost most of his mining money to bank failure, he turned to publishing as a permanent career and found great success. The stories

[23] James M. Hutchings, *In the Heart of the Sierras: The Yosemite Valley, both Historical land Descriptive: And Scenes by the Way*. (Yosemite, Ca: Old Cabin, 1886), 63-64.

[24] Farquhar, 103.

circulating in the mid-1850s of a spectacular valley in Central California intrigued him. With an adventurous entrepreneurial spirit and desire to showcase the wonders of California to the world, he immediately ventured off to document the area for the first edition of his new magazine. The small tourist group led by Hutchings included artist Thomas A. Ayres, who is credited with producing the first recorded images of Yosemite.[25] In July 1856, *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine* debuted. Hutchings, as editor, wrote that the magazine's purpose was "to picture California, and California life: to portray its beautiful scenery and curiosities…to tell of its wonderful resources and commercial advantages."[26] Yosemite, teeming with picturesque wonders and unique landscapes, appeared to have the ability to draw settlers and tourists to California. The valley seemed tailor-made for Hutchings's aims.

"The Yo-ham-i-te Valley, and Its Waterfalls," a seven-page article written by Hutchings, detailed not only the region's natural features but also its history.[27] Hutchings,

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[25] Robertson, *West of Eden,* 4.

[26] *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine*, 1:1 (July 1856), Published by JM Hutchings and Co., San Francisco, 1, Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/hutchings_california_magazine/01.pdf (Accessed February 2019).

[27] The naming of Yosemite Valley is controversial in itself, both in present times and in the mid-nineteenth century. Hutchings insisted that his Indian guide in 1855 corrected them and stated the valley was called "Yo-ham-i-te," see *Scenes of Curiosity and Wonder in California* (San Francisco: J.M. Hutchings and Co., 1861). This is contrary to the account of Lt. L.H. Bunnell, who was part of the Mariposa Battalion in 1851, which stated that the Indians called the area "Yo-sem-i-te," see Bunnell's article, "How the Yo-semite Valley was Discovered and Named," in *Hutchings' California Illustrated Magazine*, No.35 (May 1859), 498-505. Hutchings eventually acquiesced to Bunnell, since Bunnell "was the first one to visit in the valley" (504). Bunnell also stated that 'Ah-wah-ne,' was "the old Indian name for the valley" and that the Ah-wah-ne-chee was the name of the original tribe of the area (503-4)—this information is generally accepted in present times. To add to the name confusion, however, some nineteenth century sources stated that the term, 'Yosemite' or versions thereof, meant grizzly bear. Scholars of the twentieth century, however, believe that this definition is incorrect and that 'Yosemite' in fact means "some among them are killers," see Runte, *Yosemite,* 11-12. Due to translation issues, extermination of local tribes, and confusion among writers of the primary sources, it is doubtful that the true name of the valley can ever be known; some even speculate that it is very likely that different tribes had different names for the region.

from the article's onset, utilized what would become typical descriptors of Yosemite. He wrote that "there are but few lands that possess more of the beautiful and picturesque than California," and "among the remarkable may be classed the Yo-ham-i-te Valley."[28] In romantic language typical of the time, Hutchings waxed poetic about the "immense mountains," the "beautiful green valley," the "most fantastic shapes," "the biggest waterfall in the world," and "the terrific chasm" that was Yosemite.[29] Hutchings also romanticized the history of Yosemite, lamenting the fact that Major Savage and his various trips into the region relocated or exterminated most of the American Indians in the area. He added wistfully that when his group traveled through the region in 1855, "the trails were overgrown with grass," and only "an old acorn or two" were left to "tell of the once flourishing settlement, and numerons (sic) tribe of the Yo-ham-i-tes."[30]

Hutchings, in addition to sentimentalizing the valley's natural features and indigenous history, also provided a detailed chart at the end of the article. The chart was basically a step-by-step guide for the future Yosemite traveler to utilize. Hutchings wanted to promote California and the natural wonders of Yosemite in hopes that more settlers and tourists would generate economic growth for the state. His purely economic

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[28] *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine*, 2.

[29] Ibid, 2-4.

[30] Ibid. Many artists, intellectuals, and authors included American Indians as objects in the literary, cultural, and artistic theme of romanticizing a vanishing past in the industrialization of the mid- and late nineteenth century. With the rise of modernization and growth of technology, the American Indian symbolized primitive man in a rapidly disappearing rural environment. Landscape painters such as Albert Bierstadt and Thomas Whittredge Worthington are among the artists to depict this theme of "The Vanishing Indian." The burgeoning field of anthropology also became interested in studying American Indians as endangered specimens. One example of this is the story of Ishi, known as "the last Yahi" in California at the beginning of the twentieth century, see Theodora Kroeber's *Ishi in Two Worlds; A Biography of the Last Wild Indian in North America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).

interests would become even more noticeable in Hutchings's later writings, where direct promotion of Yosemite tourism featured prominently.

The premiere article of *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine* was actually the second published account on Yosemite by Hutchings; yet, the first one to include more than a single image.[31] In "The Yo-ham-i-te Valley" Hutchings included four black-and-white engravings based on sketches by Thomas A. Ayres: "General View of Yo-ham-i-te," "The Yo-ham-i-te Falls," "The Twin Domes," and "The Indian Lake." Ayres, born in 1816 in Woodbridge, New Jersey, came to California at the start of the Gold Rush and turned to art after failing at mining. Ayres made rough drawings while on the 1855 trip with Hutchings that were later turned into engravings. The engravings, while grainy and colorless (typical of the type found in 1850s magazines or newspapers) accomplished their aim: to introduce Hutchings's readers visually to Yosemite in hopes of kindling their desire to travel to the valley. "The Indian Lake" showcased a large, placid lake ensconced within sizable and distinctly-shaped mountains. In the image, human presence is shown alongside the landscape in two ways: by the fact that there is an artist's standpoint (which becomes the viewer's position as well) and the inclusion of a human figure near the edge of the lake pointing a rifle.[32] In "Yo-ham-i-te Falls," human figures

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[31] Robertson states that the first published image of Yosemite in 1855 was a lithograph by Ayres, "The Yo-Semite Fall," but he does not include the publication information, *West of Eden*, 5. Hutchings wrote the first published Yosemite article, "California and Its Waterfalls!" for the *Mariposa Gazette* on August 9, 1855 which was republished shortly afterward in the *San Francisco Daily Chronicle*. Hutchings's tourist party in June 1855, incidentally, was the second recorded tourist party to travel to Yosemite, the first being a party led by Robert C. Lamon in 1854, see Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/california_for_waterfalls.html. (Accessed February 2019).

[32] *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine*, 1:1 (July 1856), 7.

were also a part of the scene in the form of a group of travelers sitting around a large campfire (Figure 1).[33] Ayres included human activity and use of the area within illustrations of Yosemite's natural wonders since he produced images for Hutchings's magazine that aimed to promote tourism to California.

In "Twin Domes," Ayres also included the mark of humanity (Figure 2).[34] The image depicted a camping tent in the foreground, with the looming and now-recognizable Twin Domes in the background. Art historians state that landscape artists (particularly with early Yosemite imagery) placed figures in the foreground of scenes to create scale and perspective. This technique became useful particularly when artists attempted to recreate Yosemite's impressive and massive natural features. Ayres, more importantly, chose people or indications of humanity, such as a tent, rifle, or campfire, to demonstrate scale instead of figures from the natural world, such as deer. Ayres's visuals were particularly important to the narrative of Yosemite art, imagery, and representation since they were the earliest known published images of the valley. Some of his other artistic themes, such as displaying the grandeur and uniqueness of the landscape, therefore, were prototypes for much of Yosemite imagery to follow. Other motifs, such as of human enjoyment of the area, changed based on future societal, cultural, and artistic trends, including the growth of tourism, technological and transportation advances, and the development of art as an industry and profession on the West Coast.

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[33] *Hutchings' Illustrated California,* 3.

[34] Ibid, 5.

Ayres, in addition to his images, published his own account of the "celebrated" region, in *Daily Alta California* in August 1856.[35] "A Trip to the Yo-hamite Valley" was similar to Hutchings's article as it included an extensive section on the journey to and throughout the valley. Among such detailed travel logistics were the names of hotels and inn-keepers, schedules of pertinent coaches, the best trails, and suggestions of the most appropriate guides for the trek. Ayres also wrote about how he spent each day within Yosemite Valley. For example, he told his readers of the valley's must-see attractions, such as Bridal Veil Falls and Yosemite Falls. He also added how tourists should experience Yosemite once in the region, noting that "the first view of the valley as seen from the Mariposa Trail is best."[36] Ayres's aim, by including specific travel details in his article, was to provide an instruction manual for those wishing to travel to Yosemite.

Ayres, also likewise to Hutchings, utilized romantic language to describe Yosemite. He often noted Yosemite's natural wonders as "sublime" or "picturesque." While writing about one of the many waterfalls of Yosemite, the Cascade of the Rainbow, he mentioned how the cataract hung "like a prismatic veil from the somber cliff." He also chose the term "everlasting" to describe the towering mountain walls of Yosemite. This description implied that he saw in Yosemite a permanence that comforted him in rapidly industrializing nineteenth century America. This theme of nostalgia for a pre-modern time was also reflective in Ayres's account when he stated that he was "glad

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[35] Thomas Ayres, "A Trip to Yo-Hamite Valley," *Daily Alta California*, August 6 1856, 7:207, Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/a_trip_to_the_yohamite_valley/ (Accessed February 2019).

[36] Thomas Ayres, "A Trip to Yo-Hamite Valley."

to escape the intense excitement" of San Francisco.[37] This sentiment was indicative of a common nineteenth century belief that nature rejuvenated and restored urbanites from the ills of city-life and modernization.[38]

Shortly after Hutchings's magazine debuted and more Californians learned about Yosemite, word of the valley began to trickle to the East Coast.[39] This dissemination of information spurred a few prominent writers and journalists to travel to California specifically to see the picturesque valley. One of the most notable individuals was Horace Greeley, the editor and founder of the *New-York Tribune*. His well-circulated account was one of the first on Yosemite to be read by individuals throughout the country. In *An Overland Journey, New York to San Francisco, the Summer of 1859*, Greeley devoted seven chapters to California and two of which detailed his trek to Yosemite and the nearby Mariposa Grove of Big Trees. Greeley, like other Yosemite travel writers in the mid- to late-1850s, provided meticulous detail about his travel to the valley, including costs, stagecoach routes, specific distances, as well as "the better dwellings" and rest

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[37] Ibid.

[38] William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; Or Getting Back to Wrong Nature" *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature* (New York: Norton, 1996); Sanford Demars, *The Tourist in Yosemite: 1855-1985* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1991); Roderick Nash, *Wilderness in The American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 3rd edt, 1967); Kate Nearpass Ogden, "Sublime Vistas and Scenic Backdrops: Nineteenth-Century Painters and Photographers at Yosemite," *California History*, Vol. 69, No. 2 (Summer, 1990), pp. 134-153; and J. Gray Sweeney, *Masterpieces in Western American Art* (New York: M & M Books, 1991) to name a few scholars who have noted this nineteenth-century sentiment. John Muir, Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and other late nineteenth century intellectuals known as the Transcendentalists represented this idea in their writing as well.

[39] John Sears, in *Sacred Places*, states "the work of Hutchings, Ayres, and Weed [a photographer Hutchings commissioned in the late 1850s] established Yosemite as the major tourist attraction for visitors to San Francisco," 125.

stops.[40] Some scholars explain that this itinerary-style of writing stemmed from the fact that mid-nineteenth century travel writers aimed to produce instruction manuals for potential tourists.[41]

Greeley, for example, specified how he and his fellow tourists rode a ferry from San Francisco to Stockton and rode a succession of stagecoaches "east by south" to Central California for seventy five miles.[42] He wrote that the group eventually made it to the town of Mariposa outside Yosemite, late the next evening. At the time Greeley visited the area, the town of Mariposa hosted the Mariposa Trail—one of the two main entrances to Yosemite Valley. The other access route was a trail, roughly equidistant (40 miles on horseback) to Yosemite as the Mariposa Trail via the town of Coulterville. Greeley, not accustomed to such rigorous travel, described the difficulty he had arriving at the valley. He wrote that "the trail became at once so steep, so rough, and so tortuous."[43] He also detailed the equally arduous descent that took the party nearly two hours in the middle of a pitch-black night. Greeley's grievances and discomfort quickly turned to awe, however, when he first gazed upon Yosemite Valley. He wrote:

> The modicum of moonlight that fell into this awful gorge gave that principle a vagueness of outline, an indefinite vastness, a ghastly, and weird spirituality. Had the mountain spoken to me in audible voice, or began to

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Horace Greeley, *An Overland Journey, New York to San Francisco, the Summer of 1859*, New York: C. M. Saxton, Barker, and Co. and San Francisco: H.H. Bancroft & Co., 1860, 295-300, https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=v3EFAAAAQAAJ&pg=GBS.PP1, (Accessed April 2019).

[41] See Demars, *The Tourist in Yosemite*, 16.

[42] Greeley, *Overland Journey*, 293.

[43] Greeley, *Journey*, 299.

> lean over with the purpose of burying me beneath its crushing mass, I should hardly have been surprised.[44]

Greeley's descriptions of the valley echoed many similar themes of the other early Yosemite writers: its vastness and immensity, its sense of character and aliveness, as well as its ability to render the viewer awe-struck at the immense natural features. Greeley also wrote, however, about various Yosemite man-made and human elements: a cabin and its landlord in the valley, "Hussey's steam saw mill, the "ranche (sic) at South Fork, as well as roads, ferries and toll-bridges.[45] Since Greeley's travel account was one of the earliest and most-circulated at the time, it is important to note that he not only described Yosemite's natural wonders but also included many travel and tourist specifics, such as hotels, buildings, and roads both within and outside the valley.

Scholars note how early Yosemite travel writers, including Greeley, Hutchings, and Ayres, applied the terms 'sublime' and 'picturesque' to Yosemite based on mid-nineteenth century romantic cultural and aesthetic nature terminology.[46] Romanticism was an art movement that began in Europe in the early nineteenth century as a reaction against the Industrial Revolution. Romantics emphasized an intensity of emotion and lauded the landscape ideal of the sublime, or divine greatness in nature. American writers such as Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson utilized Romantic Era themes, lexicon, and ideals in their writings and helped entrench these landscape ideas in

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[44] Greeley, *Journey*, 300.

[45] Greeley, 294. 295, 302, and 309.

[46] See Demars, *Tourist in Yosemite,* 12 and 13.

American culture in the nineteenth century.[47] Greeley, although incorporating romantic language, also represented a somewhat darker picture of wild landscapes. His sublimity aligned with what some scholars note as the interpretation of the sublime as an imposing, dangerous, and frightening aspect of divinity in nature.[48] This version of the sublime as menacing in some nineteenth century accounts, however, is often over-looked by scholars solely focusing on the more prevalent sentimental rhetoric of the beautiful and romantic in Yosemite.[49]

Promoters, Tourists, and Artists, Early 1860s

In addition to Hutchings and Greeley, other individuals ventured to Yosemite to record their travels**.** Reverend Thomas Starr King, another recognized figure on both coasts, for example, published an account of his travels to Yosemite in *Boston Evening Transcript* in 1860 shortly after Greeley's piece. Yosemite was quickly becoming the 'it' landscape of the mid-nineteenth century for American journalists, magazine editors, painters, and authors.[50] King, born in New York City in 1824, departed for California in

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[47] Huth, *Nature and the American*, "The Romantic Period," 30-54.

[48] Emily Brady cites Edmund Burke (1729-1797), an Irish philosopher and statesmen, as "a major figure in the history of the sublime" and one who first identified the "sublime with fear," 23-24 and 28, see Emily Brady, *The Sublime in Modern Philosophy*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), ProQuest EBook Central, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/lib/asulib-ebooks/reader.action?docID=1303563 (Accessed February 2019). Beverley Catlett also writes that Buke analyzed "the sublime as the intervening hand of a terror-and-awe inspiring God," 10, see Beverley Catlett, *W.H. Auden's on this island: Nietzschean Aesthetics and the Negative Sublime,* ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/2037203590?accountid=4485 (Accessed February 2019).

[49] Demars, *Tourist*, "Chapter 3 A Romantic Pleasure Resort," 27-54.

[50] Sears, *Sacred Places*, 124-129. Nascent landscape photographers, such as Carleton E. Watkins, would shortly venture to Yosemite few years later in the early 1860s.

1860 to start the first Unitarian Church of San Francisco and traveled throughout the region preaching as well as writing and publishing. “A Vacation among the Sierras, Yosemite in 1860,” is a valuable reference as to why early tourists traveled to Yosemite. King, for example, explained that he learned about Yosemite from reading Greeley’s “report of it,” seeing “a painting of one of its waterfalls” in a Boston art exhibit, as well as hearing “the eloquent adjectives and ejaculations” of his friends in California.[51] He added that “there has been might (sic) rhetoric born in California from the “Yo-simte” and its wonders” but that none of the monotonous print material did the area justice.[52] King’s account clearly demonstrated that the art and literature of Yosemite, as well as word-of-mouth, directly prompted individuals to the visit area. The visual and ideological rhetoric of the valley was beginning to form in the American cultural consciousness in tandem with the promotion of tourism to the California valley.

King, as with all the other Yosemite tourist accounts, described in detail how he first reached the valley.[53] This fact signified the importance of the surrounding geography to the entire Yosemite travel experience. King, for example, included such specifics as the $11 steamboat fare from San Francisco to Stockton, “dessert of apple pie” at Knight’s Ferry,” and how the last eleven minutes of the ride to Coulterville required “an enormous

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[51] Thomas Starr King, “A Vacation among the Sierras, Yosemite in 1860,” San Francisco, The Book Club of California, 1962, *Letter 1,* San Francisco: October 1860, Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/vacation_among_the_sierras/letter_1.html, (Accessed February 2018).

[52] King, “A Vacation,” *Letter 7*, San Francisco: December 1860, Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/vacation_among_the_sierras/letter_7.html, (Accessed February 2018).

[53] King, “A Vacation Among the Sierras,” *Letter 1, 2, and 5,* Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/vacation_among_the_sierras/, (Accessed February 2018).

amount of labor."[54] These early tourist accounts were not solely guides for future tourists, but also foundational representations of the Yosemite experience. Yosemite, from the earliest accounts, became much more than a physical space. The fact that almost all of the published accounts by the early visitors start their works before they get to Yosemite, whether from San Francisco or the East Coast, reinforced the idea that the journey is also part of the park experience. The Yosemite experience, thus, began long before the traveler stepped into the valley.

"A Vacation," was a series of letters about King's excursion in which he employed the classic Romantic Era language typical of the time to describe his impressions of Yosemite. He wrote how "the scene was sublime," about "the sublime walls," and described El Capitan as "the sublime rock."[55] In other familiar tropes, he personified Yosemite as "the Queen of Sheba before her visit to King Solomon" and compared the area to the Swiss Alps and other European landmarks.[56] King, however, was unique from his fellow mid-nineteenth century Yosemite travel writers by his use of the word 'wilderness' repeatedly throughout his writing. Statements such as "the unbroken wilderness," "we were in the aboriginal wilderness," "a rough and flavorsome wilderness," "a meadow in the wilderness," and "queens of the wilderness" abound in his

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[54] King, "A Vacation," *Letter One*. $11 dollars in 1860 would roughly amount to $300 dollars in 2018.

[55] King, "A Vacation," *Letters 1, 2, 4, 5,* and *6*, Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/vacation_among_the_sierras/ (Accessed February 2017).

[56] King, "A Vacation," *Letter 6*. Many Yosemite writers, especially in the late-nineteenth century compared the area's falls and mountains to European landmarks. James Hutchings, in particular, has a whole chapter in his book, *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity in California* (San Francisco: J.M. Hutchings, 1861), comparing Yosemite to European landmarks, http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31822031028921;view=1up;seq=7 (Accessed February 2018).

article.[57] Other early Yosemite accounts rarely—if at all—described the area as wilderness.[58] King not only incorporated the term into his account of Yosemite but repeated it often, and nearly more than any other noun. Roderick Nash wrote that the Judeo-Christian tradition was an immense influence on European formative attitudes toward wilderness, citing that the term occurs 245 times in the New Testament.[59] He also noted that nineteenth century American Transcendentalists, such as Henry David Thoreau, also interpreted wilderness through an element of divinity.[60] King was a reverend and religious figure, therefore wilderness was a part of his worldview and lexicon. This fact helps to explain why he is one of the few early Yosemite writers who described the region and its landmarks as wilderness and with such zeal.

Despite the fact that King utilized the term 'wilderness' as a way to describe the surrounding areas of Yosemite, he also integrated what is now termed as the built environment into his account. He described, for example, a great deal about the various hotels and hoteliers he encountered during his travels. The first hotel he mentioned was "an excellent" one in Coulterville.[61] He detailed the Union Hotel in Mariposa, writing that its landlord "was a Portuguese from Pico" and that it was "composed of four or five

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[57] King, "A Vacation," *Letters 1, 2, 4, 5,* and *6*.

[58] See Hutchings, Greeley, and Ayres. Some of these accounts, particularly Hutchings's *Scenes of Wonder*, used the terms 'wildness' and 'wild' to describe Yosemite and its surrounding areas, however, none use term 'wilderness' except for King.

[59] Nash, *Wilderness in the American Mind,* 13. See also "Old World Roots" and wilderness as antipode to the Garden of Eden, 15, 17 and the Puritanical legacy on American concepts of wilderness, 35-40.

[60] Nash, 84.

[61] King, *Letter 1*.

wooden cottages."[62] He also mentioned "Clarke's" on the way into Yosemite and its "very intelligent" landlord, Galen Clarke.[63] King incorporated into his writings other man-made developments and tourist accommodations within the Valley, such as the "shanty-hotel" situated across from Yosemite Falls. He went into remarkable detail about this hotel:

> The hotel is a two story institution about fifty feet long, and fifteen feet deep. The front is clap-boarded; the back wall is common cotton cloth. The hall upstairs is not furnished off into chambers, but has spaces of eight feet square divided by cotton screens, within which bed without sheets are laid upon the floor. There are two rooms below which have beds on posts, and furniture for the ladies.[64]

While this particular hotel sounds rustic to modern readers, the account clearly demonstrated that Yosemite contained hotels that supported a burgeoning tourist industry at this time. This nascent tourist infrastructure in Yosemite continued to develop alongside the increased circulation of print material. As Yosemite became more known to the American public in the 1860s, many tourists, businessmen, and legislators demanded additional and improved accommodations.[65]

James Hutchings, facing competition by the early 1860s, continued to publish articles in his magazine but also compiled a full-length book, *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity in California*. In the work, Hutchings gave suggestions to future visitors on

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[62] King, *Letter 3*.

[63] Ibid. Clarke would later become the first state-appointed guardian of Yosemite in 1864.

[64] King, *Letter 6*.

[65] See Demars, *Tourist*, 44.

how to view, tour, and experience California landmarks. He even proposed specific improvements to the area that would facilitate the travel experience and tourists' comfort. Hutchings utilized much of his previously published material for the book, and, thus, the work contained the same sentimental and romantic language to describe Yosemite as he had applied before. Hutchings, for example, described how the visitor was awe-struck gazing on the "sublime," "picturesque," and "beautiful" natural wonders and various scenes of the Yosemite Valley.[66] Of note, however, in *Scenes of Curiosity* was that the second edition of the work contained a total of one hundred and five engravings, some from previous articles but many new ones based off photographs taken by C. L. Weed in 1859. Hutchings commissioned Weed, as he did with Thomas Ayres, to visually document one of the publisher's many excursions into the valley and Weed is credited with producing the first photographs of the region.[67] Although Hutchings reused much of his previously published material for *Scenes of Wonder*, the work is hailed as one of the first comprehensive guidebooks for California tourists.

More significant than Hutchings's account of the natural wonders of Yosemite in *Scenes*, therefore, were his descriptions of the tourist infrastructure, human developments, and improvements in the area. Along with the text, various images throughout the Yosemite section showcased structures, transportation, and even industry. Hutchings, as with King, highlighted hotels, stores, cabins, bridges, and other man-made

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[66] Hutchings, *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity,* Chapter Four, 61-139, HathiTrust, http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31822031028921;view=1up;seq=7 (Accessed February 2018).

[67] Robertson, *West of Eden*, 12.

structures in and around the Yosemite Valley. He mentioned several commercial tourist enterprises, such as Mr. Coulter's in Coulterville, "Cunningham's Store and boarding house," and the Upper Hotel, also known as the Yosemite Hotel, that was "half a mile up the valley."[68] Hutchings also noted the various trails, bridges, and structures created by local residents or funded by local city councils, such as ones in Mariposa or Coulterville, in his publication.

Many towns around Yosemite grew increasingly dependent on Yosemite tourism in the early 1860s. Local citizens and city governments even erected structures to facilitate travel in order to bring more visitors and revenue to the area. In some instances, locals even created tourist attractions. Hutchings wrote how someone constructed ladders to Vernal Falls, one of Yosemite's many waterfalls, and charged a toll of $2 to $3 for tourists to utilize the structure and a corresponding trail. Hutchings added, that "the charge is very reasonable" because there was no safe means of climbing "the perpendicular wall of rock" before the ladders.[69] A woodcarving based off Weed's photograph in *Scenes* showed these two very precariously-placed vertical ladders resting on a steep and craggy rock (Figure 3). The six tourists in the image, four at the bottom of the ladders and a man and woman at the half-way point, not only demonstrate scale but also the use and purpose of the ladders. Both the picture and the description reinforced

[68] Hutchings, *Scenes of Curiosity*, 80 and 95. Hutchings would later purchase and operate the Upper Hotel in 1864, renaming it Hutchings's Yosemite Hotel, see Josiah D. Whitney, "Address of the Property of Continuing the State Geological Survey of California, Delivered before the Legislature at Sacramento" (San Francisco: Towne and Bacon, 1868), 62.

[69] Ibid, 113-114. $2-3 dollars would roughly be equivalent to $57-85 in 2018, supporting the fact that many early Yosemite tourists were upper-class elite who could not only afford leisure time but also the high costs of travel and tourism.

the idea that human constructions eased access and were attractions themselves in the early Yosemite experience. The images in *Scenes of Wonder* not only included the touch of humanity, as Ayres's works did in 1855, but focused specifically on tourist landmarks. Creators of the early Yosemite promotional material, moreover, viewed hotels, bridges, or other structures that pertained to travel as important elements to the park experience, and, thus, included such imagery and description in their works.

Hutchings, in a three-part series for his magazine that predated the book by a year, included even more images and writings about what can now be described as the early Yosemite built environment. In fact, a large portion of the piece later became *Scenes of Curiosity*. In the second part of the article, Hutchings wrote about "the hotel," which "being newly built, although roomy, was not very commodious."[70] A picture of this structure was included a few pages later, and labeled "The Yo-semite Hotel" (Figure 4).[71] The image, like the ladder woodcut in *Scenes,* was based on a photograph by Weed. The picture showcased a wooden, raised, two-story building amid towering pine trees. Several horses and various travelers, both men and women, congregate either in front or under the

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[70] James Hutchings, "The Great Yo-semite Valley, Part II," *California Illustrated Magazine*, (San Francisco: Hutchings and Rosenfield: November 1859, no 41), 193, Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/hutchings_california_magazine/41.pdf (Accessed February 2018).

[71] Hutchings, "The Great Yo-Semite Valley, Part II," 195. While most of the early travel writers mentioned the names of various hotels and their innkeepers, it was not until 1864 that officials took a survey of the private property in the valley. Josiah D. Whitney, California's first State Geologist, led the surveys and produced several governmental reports in addition to a guidebook, *The Yosemite Guide Book: A Description of the Yosemite Valley and the Adjacent Region in the Sierra Nevada, and of the Big Trees of California* (1869). Whitney wrote that the first house built in the valley was the Lower Hotel opposite Yosemite Falls. A second hotel was built a year later half a mile up and was known as the Upper Hotel. These two hotels would change ownership several times from 1857 through 1861, with Whitney naming Messers. Hite, Sullivan, Cashman, Reed, Longhurst, Cunningham and Beardsley all as proprietors at different times, "Report," 20.

hotel's three doorways. A canvas tarp on the left side of the image, although difficult to decipher, appeared to demarcate a parking area for carriages and horses.

The two main ideas the reader could have gleaned from the image was that the Yosemite Valley hosted a lively hotel and burgeoning tourist industry, as well the fact that this structure was a part of the Yosemite experience. The imagery of early Yosemite that accompanied the written accounts reflected much of the same rhetoric about the area. One of the recurring messages of this promotional material in both image and word from 1850s and early 1860s was that the complete Yosemite experience included human developments and enterprises in addition to the natural wonders. Clearly, Yosemite tourists were the main target audience for the tourist accommodations and structures, as well as the promotional material about them. Tourism, in other words, worked symbiotically with the visual and written rhetoric of Yosemite to create narratives of the park experience in the American cultural consciousness.

By 1863, a great many Californians, literate and cultured easterners, and even some Europeans had heard of the glorious wonders of Yosemite. The number of individuals visiting the area increased with each passing year. The early Yosemite imagery and literature encouraged many of these tourists, as well as artists, to visit the area. Well-known landscape painter Albert Bierstadt, for example, first learned of the area from these early 1860s accounts. He spent the summer of 1863 in Yosemite sketching what would later become paintings that were instrumental in introducing Yosemite on a national scale to Americans. *Valley of the Yosemite* (1864), and his other landscape paintings of the region, added brilliant color and large-scale immensity to the

collection of early cultural material on the region. More importantly, Bierstadt's art and representation of the area demonstrated a shift in the visual rhetoric and representation of Yosemite.

Changing ideals and aesthetics in art would alter the narrative of Yosemite. The 1850s and early 1860s cultural material included humans, tourism, and the built environment as part of the narrative and even incorporated images of such elements as focal points. By the mid-1860s, the rhetoric and imagery would shift to representations of Yosemite as a grandiose, idealized landscape indicative of a sublime, primitive wilderness. As more tourists flooded into Yosemite via easier modes of transportation, ironically, narratives and representations that eliminated or relegated the increasing human presence to the periphery became in vogue. Romantic Era ideals of nature coincided with a country struggling with surging industrialization and rapid advances in technology, spurring a nostalgia for a pre-modern past.[72]

The early imagery and literature of Yosemite captivated the public and inspired certain individuals to want to protect the area. Some feared Yosemite's destruction by wanton tourists who littered, carved into trees, or from individuals who saw the area's potential for other commercial enterprises such as mining and logging.[73] Others feared that Yosemite would transfer entirely into private hands, and that these companies or individuals, such as the hoteliers, would dictate both use and access to the area.[74] In 1864,

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[72] Runte, *National Parks*, 14, 19-23, and 28.

[73] Frederick Law Olmstead, "Yosemite and The Mariposa Grove: A Preliminary Report, 1865," www.yosemite.ca.us/library/olmstead/report.html (Accessed February 2017).

[74] Olmstead, "Yosemite," and Alfred Runte, *Yosemite,* 17-2.

several local entrepreneurs and businessmen contacted Senator William Conness from California with their grievances. Conness created and introduced a bill in the federal legislature to designate Yosemite and surrounding Grove of Big Trees as public parks entrusted to the State of California.

The bill eventually passed and Abraham Lincoln signed it into law in June 1864. Conness, when asked about the unprecedented nature of the bill during the Congressional hearing, affirmed that "there is no parallel, and can be no parallel for this measure."[75] A few years later, the governor of California approved the law (for the state would own and manage the area), and per its stipulations appointed a group of commissioners, including Central Park landscape designer Frederick Law Olmstead and State Geologist Josiah D. Whitney, to oversee the area. This "model piece of legislation" marked one of the first endeavors of the larger conservation efforts in the second half of the nineteenth century.[76] This trend toward preservation and conservation of wildlife and natural areas, such as Yosemite, is typically viewed by scholars as a reaction to the growth of modernization and industrialization at the end of the nineteenth century.[77]

The early travel accounts and articles by entrepreneurs and journalists in the 1850s and early 1860s gives a fuller understanding of the development of Yosemite and the early representations of nature attractions and national parks in general. Studying the early images and representations also sets the stage for understanding why and how

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[75] *Congressional Globe*, May 17, 1864, 2301. https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llcg&fileName=066/llcg066.db&recNum=350 (Accessed March 2017).

[76] Runte, *Yosemite*, 21.

[77] Runte, *National Parks*, 109 and 117-8.

cultural, artistic, and societal artistic themes of national parks shift during particular historical periods. Yosemite representation drastically changed in the mid-1860s from prior depictions and would continue to change throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This shifting narrative of national park narratives, ideas, and representations sheds light on the fact that national parks and landscape attractions are truly prisms, reflecting various cultures and societies' interests, desires, and tastes. National parks, in other words, and ideas about national parks are not static in the American cultural mind nor in reality. The significant shift in the mid-1860s when landscape artists took the reigns as the leading depicters of nature attractions, particularly Yosemite, reflected important shifts in culture and society. In particular, concerns about the rapid depletion of certain environments and wildlife in the name of modernity and progress caused some individuals to advocate for governmental protection of lands, as well as the growth and professionalism of American art and its interpretation of landscapes, would wholly impact ideas about Yosemite to form a new, and long-lasting, representation.

CHAPTER 2

CREATING A NATIONAL WILDERNESS: LANDSCAPE ARTISTS, VISUAL RHETORIC, AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN THE YOSEMITE VALLEY, 1860S-1870S

Yosemite Valley became a state park in 1864 through the work of transportation leaders and politician-preservationists.[78] The cornucopia of visitor reports, tourist books, and articles, as well as the imagery of the area circulating since the mid-1850s helped obtain federally-recognized state protection for the area.[79] While early Yosemite literature and imagery focused on human presence, nineteenth century artistic tastes touting primeval and sublime nature became the dominant representation of the valley by the late 1860s. This portrayal of Yosemite as an ideal wilderness remains firmly part of the American cultural consciousness, reiterated throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries by artists, tourists, writers, advertisers, movie makers, historians, political agencies, institutions, and other disseminators of print and cultural material.[80] The dichotomy between the visual ideal of Yosemite Valley as a wild nature absent of humans and the reality that the area (as a nature attraction) always had a connection to

[78] Runte, *Yosemite,* 18.

[79] Ibid and Herring, *Lines on the Land*, 20.

[80] See Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Alfred Runte, *Yosemite,* John Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, Joseph Sax, *Mountains Without Handrails, Views of Yosemite: The Last Stance of the Romantic Landscape* (Fresno Art Center, 1982) to name a few. In popular culture, see Ken Burns' documentary, *America's Best Idea: Our National Parks* (2009), IMAX movie *America Wild: National Park Adventure* (2016) and even Amtrak's National Park Adventures Vacation advertisements and promotions 2016 to present.

human use did not quell the pure wilderness representation of the area.[81] This landscape ideal, however, is only one of the many facets that combine to create the ever-changing concept known as the American national park idea. The depiction of national parks as sublime, wild nature is one of the most enduring and entrenched representations about national parks in American history. Scholars can better understand how American nature ideas evolve and the impact those shifting ideas have on national park policy and experience by studying the transformation in Yosemite's visual narrative from one that included human presence to a wilderness ideal.

Artists such as Thomas A. Ayres and C. L. Weed chronicled all facets of the Yosemite experience in the mid-1850s to the early 1860s. These individuals showcased images of human-made structures and tourist developments, such as hotels, ferries, and bridges, as well as visitors themselves alongside the area's natural wonders.[82] In the early to mid-1860s, however, the artistic and aesthetic narrative shifted to one that represented Yosemite as a sublime, primeval wilderness. Prominent painters, including Albert

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[81] Almost all global and transnational national park scholarship adheres to the idea that national parks throughout the world are modernized spaces. For more, see Jane Carruthers, *Kruger National Park*, Patrick Kupper, *Creating Wilderness: A Transnational History of the Swiss National Park*, John Sheail, *Nature's Spectacle: The World's First National Parks and Protected Places*, (London: Earthscan, 2010), and Emily Waklid, *Revolutionary Parks.*

[82] The earliest known published images of Yosemite are by Thomas A. Ayres. His four images in *Hutchings' Illustrated California* in July 1856 are said to be first published depictions of the area. All but one of these first images, "Grand View of Yosemite," depicts indications of humanity, such as human figures or campsites, see *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine*, 1:1 (July 1856). The first comprehensive guidebook, *Scenes of Curiosity* (1861) contained over 100 images of California—with many depictions of the tourism and industry (hotels, logging sites, ferries, tourist structures, etc.) alongside the natural wonders and landscapes of the state. Images, such as "Ladders," "Ferry," and "We're off" all focused on tourists and tourist structures as the main subject matter. In addition, in a three-part series on Yosemite in *Hutchings' California Magazine* (November 1859), images of tourist structures, such as the "Yo-Semite Hotel," (also based off a photograph by C.L. Weed) were depicted as main subject matter and were featured in the article along other images focusing on the natural wonders, Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/hutchings_california_magazine/40.pdf (Accessed March 2018).

Bierstadt, Thomas Hill and William Keith, interpreted and projected the themes and trends of the burgeoning field of American landscape art onto their canvases, and, ultimately, onto the American imagination as well. This new representation transformed the production and imagery of the Yosemite Valley. Since Yosemite was a symbol and prototype for later national parks, these artistic depictions significantly shaped the way Americans viewed national parks.[83] Yosemite became an emblem for earthly Eden and one of the last remaining examples of romantic wild nature on the western frontier.[84] The Yosemite portrayed by these landscape artists drew tourists, other artists, entrepreneurs, explorers, and intellectuals to the area seeking the physical embodiment of Romantic Era ideals of the picturesque, beautiful, and sublime.

Landscape photographers Carleton E. Watkins and Eadweard Muybridge crafted Yosemite imagery around the same time as the landscape painters. The early landscape photographers, similar to the painters, also depicted Yosemite Valley as a primeval, sublime wilderness. The medium of photography also helped to democratize the cultural production and dissemination of Yosemite imagery. Many more individuals, for example, were able to see photographs through stereographs and purchase Yosemite images compared to the one-of-a-kind, costly paintings.[85] Producers of landscape art conversed with each other's works and the art functioned symbiotically with the growing tourist

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[83] Runte, *Yosemite,* 7.

[84] Kate Nearpass Ogden, "California as Kingdom Come," in *Yosemite: Art of an American Icon*, ed. by Amy Scott (Los Angeles: and Berkeley: Autry National Center in Association with University of California Press, 2006), 23 and *Views of Yosemite,* 4.

[85] "Watkins' Yosemite Art Gallery," *Daily Alta California* 24:8053 (13 April 1872), 1, California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc (Accessed March 2018).

industry in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Tourists, as patrons and audiences for the landscape art, influenced the art market and, in turn, the imagery contributed to the growth of Yosemite tourism.

Key to a more complete understanding of Yosemite and other national parks is the study of art and its influence on these places throughout history, as well as its role in perpetuating and shifting landscape ideals in the American cultural consciousness. The idealized Yosemite as the sublime, primeval wilderness has captivated the American imagination for over one hundred and fifty years; and yet, it is only one of the many interpretations of national parks. The power of art to stimulate national park myths is central to this analysis, for the Romantic Era ideal of nature continues to influence visitation, imagery, and representation at Yosemite and other national parks such as Yellowstone or the Grand Canyon. Lesser-known park units, most of which do not fit into this paradigm of sublime, grand nature often see less visitation and, thus, less cultural production. These units also, historically, tend to be under more threat from development as well as a loss of status due to their relative obscurity. In order to ensure all national parks remain for future generations, it is fundamental to demonstrate that there is an ever-shifting paradigm of the national park idea and that there are many different ways to represent, experience, and interpret these places.

Albert Bierstadt and the Yosemite Valley, Early 1860s

Albert Bierstadt was one of the first individuals to read Yosemite accounts in the late 1850s and early 1860s by noted individuals such as Horace Greeley and Thomas Starr King. These writers' romantic descriptions of the hidden California valley spurred

Bierstadt to travel to the region to witness the natural wonders for himself.[86] Bierstadt, born in Scotland in 1830 and artistically trained in Dusseldorf, first traveled west in 1859 to the Rocky Mountains with a federally-sponsored scientific expedition. The excursion included artists, surveyors, and geologists to help document the area. The presence of both artists and scientists stemmed from contemporary ideas of using enlightened rationalism as a means to fulfill American imperialist aims of settling the West.[87] In addition, advancements in the field of photography would not develop until a few decades later and painters could visually record these areas for their sponsors. Bierstadt soon realized that eastern art markets prized depictions of exotic western landscapes. He found an audience and patrons eager for his colorful and grandiose depictions of western scenery.[88] Bierstadt, therefore, decided to venture even farther west, to California, for his next artistic expedition in search of even more foreign, grand, and picturesque landscapes to paint. He ascertained that if the rumors about Yosemite Valley were true, then its natural landmarks would coincide perfectly with current artistic and aesthetic tastes.

Bierstadt synched with the trends of the art market, yet he also was aware of the broader cultural and aesthetic fashions in the mid-nineteenth century America. Art

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[86] Photographs by Carleton E. Watkins in Goupil's gallery in December 1862 may have directly enticed Bierstadt to visit Yosemite, see Nancy Anderson and Linda Ferber, *Albert Bierstadt Art & Enterprise* (New York: Hudson Hills Press in Association with the Brooklyn Museum, 1991), 141.

[87] J. Gray Sweeney, "An 'Indomitable Explorative Enterprise': Inventing National Parks," in *Inventing Arcadia: Artists and Tourists at Mount Desert* (Rockland, Maine: Farnsworth Art museum, 1999), 132.

[88] Bierstadt was a well-known painter before his Yosemite paintings, showcasing his works in many eastern galleries and national exhibitions, such as in the Annual Exhibition at the National Academy of Design in March 1861, see Anderson and Ferber, *Art and Enterprise*, p. 141. He often invited journalists and reporters to his New York studio. One reporter recorded in 1865 that crowds waited outside Bierstadt's studio to see his painting, *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak* in 1865, Anderson and Ferber, 172.

historian Nancy Anderson states that he "had a firm hand on the national pulse."[89] Bierstadt, as a member of the Hudson River School of Art, along with Thomas Cole, Asher Durand, and Frederic Edwin Church, introduced western landscape painting to America in the early to mid-1800s. The Hudson River School painters typically depicted eastern landscapes in the style of English romantic naturalists. Naturalism and realism, as one scholar describes, "harkened back to the idyllic life in the immediate past."[90] These American landscape artists combined ideas of nature as the embodiment of the divine with themes of nationalism to produce paintings that celebrated America's God-given natural majesty. In particular, leading Hudson River School artists, such as Cole, Church, and Bierstadt, represented "landscape before the arrival of civilization" to uphold the idea of wilderness as a place "unsullied by man."[91] In the mid-nineteenth century, notions of Manifest Destiny, the belief that God ordained Americans to settle, conquer, and civilize the West, also profoundly influenced American culture and art. Depictions of unseen sublime western landscapes were soon in great demand.

With the growth of modernization and industrialization, American citizens and intellectuals also looked westward with nostalgia for a return to a simpler, less-modernized time and landscapes that reflected this past. The unspoiled, less-populated and less-industrialized West with its vast, open natural spaces captivated the American

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[89] Anderson, *Albert Bierstadt,* 13.

[90] Ruth Westphal, et al., *Impressions of California: Early Currents in Art, 1850-1930* (Irvine, California: Irvine Museum, 1996), 28.

[91] Weston J. Naef, *Era of Exploration: The Rise of Landscape Photography in the American West, 1860-1885* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975), 15-16.

imagination and fit perfectly into this narrative. When the Civil War started in 1861, the artistic interest in western landscapes intensified as Americans looked to the West for unity and as an escape from wartime difficulties. Paintings of California sublime landscapes, Weston J. Naef writes, were "nearly perfect antidotes to war."[92] At the center of these artistic, visual, and cultural trends stood Albert Bierstadt. He arrived in California at the perfect moment to 'sell' Yosemite and the state's grand landscapes to easterners. In June 1863, Bierstadt returned to his New York studio after a few days sketching and enjoying the sights of Yosemite, and began producing large, dramatic paintings of picturesque, romantic wildernesses.

Bierstadt completed *Valley of the Yosemite* in 1864 shortly after his first California trip. The work is typical of his representation of Yosemite (Figure 5). In the painting, Yosemite's sublime natural wonders on are on full display, exaggerated and manipulated for dramatic effect. The viewer is situated center stage, looking down the valley framed by Yosemite's grand rock formations—Half Dome on the right and Cathedral Rock on the left. There is a small lake in the center of the painting that adds to the illusion of serenity in the scene. A hazy, rose and yellow patina also adds to the peacefulness by creating a feeling of warmth and helping to unify the various elements in the work. The only indication of life is a herd of wild deer, probably Mule Deer which was the most abundant mammal in the valley at the time.[93] Bierstadt choose deer instead of grizzly bears or any other threatening valley denizen in order to represent Yosemite as

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[92] Ibid, 14.

[93] Ibid, 7.

a safe and inviting wilderness.[94] In the image, since there is no hint of human presence, the viewer feels as if he or she peeked through a keyhole into a prehistoric past. This depiction aligned perfectly with a style of landscape the easterners living through the Civil War (and a rapidly industrializing and modernizing America) wanted to view and purchase.[95] Bierstadt's visual representation of Yosemite as a place where Americans could reclaim their pre-modern past in a grand and dramatic way catered to themes of national identity in the 1860s.[96]

The earliest recorded visual representations of Yosemite by individuals such as Thomas A. Ayres and C. L. Weed in the 1850s and early 1860s depicted human presence. These artists included what can now be described as the built environment, such as roads, hotels, and other human-made structures alongside accounts and representations of Yosemite's natural wonders. This style of representation stemmed partly from the fact that businessmen commissioned the artists to record images for their articles and tourist guidebooks. Depictions of man-made elements that facilitated travel in and around Yosemite Valley became an essential component of early representations of the area. Many of the images included in the articles and guidebooks showcased creations such as

[94] For more on America's changing ideologies and attitudes about the concept of wilderness in the nineteenth century see Nash, *Wilderness.* For more information on the cultural construction of wilderness, see William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," *Environmental History*, 1:1 (January 1996). For scholarship that engages American wilderness narratives, see Joseph Sax, *Mountains,* Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002) and James Morton Taylor, "Beyond American Exceptionalism," 287 and *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics since 1964.*

[95] Anderson, 80 and 81. Ogden, "California as Kingdom Come," 23 and 24.

[96] Ogden, 23 and Anderson, 85.

ladders, bridges, and hotels as focal points to demonstrate a burgeoning tourist industry in Yosemite Valley and California. These early images were small, grainy, black-and-white reproductions and proved no match in stirring emotions like the imposing, colorful, and romantic Yosemite on Bierstadt's colossal canvases. His depictions of the Yosemite landscape as a grand, sublime wilderness, soon became the desirable Yosemite representation. The popularity of this aesthetic trend and artistic subject matter prompted other artists to travel to the area and produce similarly-styled images in hopes profit and notoriety.[97]

All the paintings that Bierstadt fashioned from his first trip to Yosemite generated a great deal of publicity and praise, both for the valley and for the artist. Reviewers describing *Valley of the Yosemite,* for example, spoke of its "flood of sunlight" and "the bleak vastness" and that it was "full of fine enthusiasm;" while another said it was "impossible to escape this picture."[98] Some individuals criticized the work as a "gross exaggeration;" and stated that "no such colossal mountains exist, Mr. Bierstadt!"[99] Bierstadt's paintings, regardless of their mixed reception, introduced eastern audiences to Yosemite in a new and impressive way: full of sentiment and color, larger-than-life, and as an idealized sublime wilderness absent of humanity.

Not many tourists made the difficult trek to Yosemite in the early 1860s and therefore Bierstadt could paint the area as he wished. Scholars agree that he dramatized

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[97] Robertson, *West of Eden*, 33.

[98] Anderson and Ferber, 207.

[99] Ibid.

the scenic features not only to stir emotions but to give his eastern audience picturesque landscapes that far surpassed, both in beauty and scale, any in the eastern U.S. Bierstadt's images worked to cement Yosemite, California, and the West in the American imagination. Scholars Nancy Anderson and Linda Ferber note that Bierstadt's paintings were perfect mediums to perpetuate nature myths and landscape ideals, since they were physically distant from Yosemite and shown to individuals who had not visited California.[100] Bierstadt's stirring and fashionable paintings literally and figuratively put Yosemite on the American intellectual and cultural map.[101]

In 1869, the completion of the transcontinental railroad opened up western landscapes to economic development, settlement, and tourism. Easterners now had a more efficient and relatively easier way to travel California. One of the first items to see on the lists of the fashionable tourist set was Yosemite. By the close of 1855, four years after James Savage and the Mariposa Battalion first "discovered" Yosemite, the valley averaged only forty-two visitors a year.[102] With more technological advancements aiding access to the Far West and into the Yosemite Valley, the total number of tourists reached

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[100] Ibid, 105.

[101] Bierstadt created several Yosemite paintings in the late 1860s from his first trip to the region. He showed these paintings in various galleries and exhibitions across the country. Art critics also reviewed the paintings in national magazines and journals. For example, *The Yosemite Valley (Looking Down Yosemite Valley, California* (1865) traveled to Milwaukee, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Reviews of *The Twin Domes of Yosemite* appeared *The New York Times*, *Morning Post*, *Boston Transcript*, and *Saturday Review*. Bierstadt exhibited that particular painting at a London art gallery in April 1868, Anderson and Ferber, 180-185.

[102] Farquhar, 118.

an average of 3,800 a year by the 1880s.[103] By 1909, Yosemite hosted about 13,000 a year.[104]

Early Yosemite Photography: Carleton E. Watkins and Eadweard Muybridge

The transcontinental railroad was not the only technological advancement to impact Yosemite representation in the late nineteenth century. The field of photography also developed, allowing individuals who clamored for outdoor photographic depictions of "pure landscape" (or landscape as the main subject matter) to capture Yosemite.[105] Photography initially, from the 1840s through the 1850s, limited photographers to the indoors and the predominant subject matter was portraiture. The innovation of the glass-plate in the mid-1850s made it possible for photographers to capture images outside. When members of the Hudson River School began producing landscape art in the Civil War Era, photography grew in tandem with American artistic, cultural, and aesthetic trends.[106] Some painters created their most known works from landscape photographs, such as Church's *Niagara Falls* (1867) and Bierstadt's *Grizzly Giant* (1872-3). Landscape photography, thus, grew out of both the technological advancements and artistic trends of this era.[107]

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[103] Demars, *The Tourist*, 55.

[104] Ibid. While 13,000 is still not a very great number, it is an increase of about 242% in just thirty years. By 1915, numbers averaged 30,000 and in 1922 Yosemite first witnessed 100,000 annual visitors, National Park Visitation Statistics, Yosemite National Park, https://www.nationalparked.com/yosemite/visitation-statistics. (Accessed January 2019).

[105] Naef, *Era of Exploration,* 16.

[106] Art, photography, and literature were working together to create an idealized Yosemite in a process of "canonizing the landscape as high art," see Herring*, Lines on the Land*, 21.

[107] Herring, 34.

Also integral to the rise of landscape photography in the late nineteenth century was the growth of a leisure class. The upper-middle class, white elites that constituted this group became the patrons of landscape artists, sightseers of landscapes, generators of the tourist industry, and later also the photographers as well. A celebrated tourist attraction such as Yosemite, whose natural landmarks had already been the focus of much imagery and tourism for a few decades, became a magnet for both the tourist leisure class and early landscape photographers in the 1870s. The first landscape photographers in America, in fact, made names and careers for themselves through their Yosemite images. One of these pioneers was Carleton E. Watkins (1829-1916).

Watkins was born in New York in 1829 and arrived in Sacramento, California in 1853. He was originally employed as a carpenter but switched to photography when Robert Vance, San Francisco's leading portrait photographer, asked him to run his San Jose photography studio. By the time Watkins first visited Yosemite in 1861, there was already a sizable amount of literature and imagery circulating about the region.[108] James Hutchings, for several years prior, published many articles and images about the celebrated valley in his magazine, *Hutchings' Illustrated California*. Hutchings also commissioned the first photographs of Yosemite by C. L. Weed. Some art historians describe Weed as a "neophyte" and his images as "primitive," however, he worked at a time when both the culture of landscape art and photographic technology were nascent.[109]

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[108] For early tourist accounts see Greeley, *An Overland Journey* (1860), Hutchings' *Illustrated California Magazine*, 1:1 (July 1856), Hutchings's *Scenes of Curiosity* (1861), and Thomas Starr King, "A Vacation Among the Sierras, Yosemite in 1860."

[109] Robertson, *West of Eden*, 55 and Naef, *Era of Exploration*, 35.

Watkins, moreover, is typically touted as the individual to transform Yosemite photography into an art form. Watkins's rapid success inspired other artists and entrepreneurs to capitalize on the popularity of Yosemite photography.[110]

Watkins traveled to Yosemite several times from the 1860s through the 1890s. His first photographs from the mid-1860s, however, are the ones that art historians hail as some of his best work.[111] Aside from bringing artistry to his images, Watkins pioneered the use of mammoth plate photography. Watkins specifically commissioned a camera for his Yosemite trips that could accommodate 18 x 21 inch glass plates, the largest size of any other field photographer at the time.[112] Part of what made Yosemite a popular tourist site was its monumental and grandiose natural landmarks, and Watkins realized this fact.[113] Arguably, Bierstadt and the landscape painters understood this as well and used large canvases to attempt to convey the immensity of Yosemite's natural wonders. Watkins, producing works alongside and influenced by landscape painters, not only aimed to capture Yosemite's grandness but also showcased the area as a sublime wilderness absent of human presence.

In Watkins's *Cathedral Rock* (1866), for example, the viewer witnesses two immense granite rocks occupying nearly the entire plane of the photograph (Figure 6).

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[110] Many photographers of early landscapes did not copyright their work, and scholars have a difficult time identifying a specific artists' photograph from this period. Anderson writes in *Art and Enterprise* that it is known, however, that Watkins exhibited his photographs in eastern galleries as early as 1862.

[111] Naef, *Era of Exploration*, 35.

[112] Ibid, 26 and 81.

[113] For the ties between monumentalism and the establishment of early national parks see Runte, *National Parks,* 65-66.

The size, weight, and texture of the granite is easily conveyed through the central position that Watkins selected for the cliffs. These two monoliths convey a sublimity worthy of distinct treatment. The viewer grasps, much like he or she would with human subjects, the personality and presence of the duo. The Yosemite natural landscape is the main figure of the image, framed by the dense line of forest trees and greenery at the foot of the rocks. In this representation, there is no indication of human elements. The image reflects a prehistoric landscape before humans existed, only impaired by the eye of the photographer (which is the viewer's eye as well) onto the scene. There is no necessity for figures or even animal life in the image, moreover, for Watkins creates a sense of being and aliveness out of the natural formations.

Watkins showcased his images in magazines such as the *Philadelphia Photographer*, eastern art galleries, and even in European art competitions where he won top medals for his work.[114] As his images become more well-known, the public clamored for photographs of Yosemite. Watkins eventually set up a small studio on Montgomery Street in San Francisco in 1867 to display and sell his works directly to the public.[115] Photography, unlike landscape paintings, could be reproduced from a negative which made them more affordable and accessible. Other individuals soon followed Watkins's lead and ventured out to produce photographs of Yosemite. One such individual was Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904).

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[114] Naef, *Era of Exploration*, 39 and 84.

[115] "Watkins' Yosemite Art Gallery," *Daily Alta California* 24:8053 (13 April 1872), 1.

Originally born Edward James Muggeridge in England in 1830, Muybridge went through various name, career, and location changes before eventually settling on photography in California the late 1860s. Robert Vance who influenced Watkins also prompted Muybridge to turn to landscape photography as a career. Muybridge, watching Watkins's success, set out for Yosemite in direct competition with him. Muybridge became steadfastly determined to surpass Watkins's Yosemite photographs in both artistry and notoriety. Muybridge particularly desired to fabricate even larger images than Watkins and of never-before-seen panoramic views.[116] The first images scholars attribute to Muybridge are copyrighted under the name Helios in 1868, but art historians and biographers believe he ventured into Yosemite as early as 1865.[117]

In *Valley of the Yosemite from Union Point* (1872) the viewer witnesses an imposing, jagged rock cliff on the left side of the photograph (Figure 7). The middle section of the image looks down from a high vantage point into the valley adorned in trees and vales. The asymmetrical composition of his photographs contrasts with Watkins, whose photographs tended to be more classical and orderly.[118] Muybridge preferred a less-composed, non-structured nature image, yet focused on the sublime like other artists of the time. In Muybridge's image, for example, there is also no hint of humanity and a truly primeval, unruly wilderness is represented. The image even suggests that humanity is not welcome in, nor advised to enter, such a rugged and

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[116] *Eadweard Muybridge: The Stanford Years, 1872-1882* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Department of Art, 1972), 8.

[117] Naef, *Era of Exploration*, 39.

[118] Naef, *Era*, 41.

dangerous terrain. The angle of the photograph helps to perpetuate this idea, as Muybridge was known to dangle off cliffs or in other precarious positions to achieve nature shots that seemed to hang-suspended. The effect was to eradicate the last vestige of humanity that a typical pure landscape photograph would belie: the photographer and his camera. Muybridge truly aimed for art that conveyed a primitive landscape before the existence of humanity and its paraphernalia, such as cameras. The dearth of human figures or elements in the picture coupled with Muybridge's purposeful aim to obscure himself as photographer from the scene, showcased the lengths he was willing to go to erase humanity from his Yosemite images.

Muybridge's *Scene on the Merced River* (1867) is slightly more indicative of a "mannered romantic style" (Figure 8). [119] In the image, a placid and picturesque waterscape is surrounded by forest trees and rocky cliffs in another asymmetrical composition. There is also no hint of human presence in the photograph, and the viewer once again feels as if he or she were intruding on a primitive wilderness. Scholar Rebecca Solnit observes that Muybridge had a "strange attraction" to fallen trees and tangled branches.[120] These articles would create a "foreground of chaos" that helped demonstrate a more natural scene and not a manufactured landscape.[121] In *Scenes on the Merced River*, these motifs are most noticeable in the lower front where Muybridge chose to include only the tops of some bushes as well as omit the river's edge in the frame of

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[119] Ibid.

[120] Rebecca Solnit, *River of Shadows: Eadweard Muybridge and the Technological Wild West* (New York: Penguin Putnam Inc., 2003), 46.

[121] Ibid.

photograph. This construction creates the illusion that the Merced River is flowing out of the image and obscures the linearity of the photograph's edge, thereby producing a more animated and seemingly truer nature scene without a border.

Muybridge's representation of Yosemite is similar in subject and theme to the works of both Watkins and Bierstadt; yet, it is stylistically distinct. All three artists in the 1860s and 1870s showcased Yosemite as an environment that harkened back to a pre-modern time where humans and their developments did not exist.[122] These artists evoked these themes, however, with different elements, mediums, and viewpoints. Muybridge, for example, purposely and artistically constructed and captured his photographs in a way that worked to eliminate the photographer and his camera from the nature scene. One article from the *Daily Alta California* in 1868 touted a collection of Muybridge's Yosemite photographs as "the most wonderful and artistic photographs ever taken on this coast."[123] As more artists and photographers ventured to Yosemite and more articles appeared about their works, the production of this cultural and visual knowledge of the area began to cement in the American consciousness.

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[122] Robertson in *West of Eden* writes about early landscape photography that "usually people, if they are present at all, are far away and small, dwarfed by the monumental landscape," 33. In *Yosemite: Art of an American Icon*, Amy Scott writes how the "environment envisioned by painters and photographers" was mainly of an "'untouched'" wilderness, 3. Bierstadt scholars note how the painter was reluctant to add notes of modernity and the "first and only" time he included a train was in his painting, *Donner Lake from the Summit* (1871). Railroad tycoon Henry E. Huntington commissioned this painting and dictated the subject matter, but was displeased at the final work since Bierstadt only a hinted at the presence of the train and did not depict it directly, Anderson and Ferber, *Art and Enterprise*, 96-97. Watkins and Muybridge both photographed other subject matter besides landscapes, however, their earliest and most prolific works are their photographs of Yosemite and other pure landscapes. Naef in *Era of Exploration* writes that Watkins, for much of the 1860s, "photographed the wilderness landscape and little else" and that his success and accolades influenced "every photographer in CA" to depict "raw landscape," 26 and 39.

[123] "Letters from the Capital," *Daily Alta California* 20:6544 (14 February 1868), 2, California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc (Accessed March 2018).

Nineteenth Century Tourism and Thomas Hill

Bierstadt and the early landscape photographers' art grew in tandem with the rise of the American leisure class in the mid-nineteenth century. This burgeoning group of wealthy easterners borrowed cultural tastes from the intellectual and social currents of Europe that idolized romantic, sublime, and picturesque landscapes.[124] The scenic experience was a principal component of this interpretation of nature, which supported the belief that natural scenery should elicit profound emotional responses from the viewer. Also fueling Yosemite's growing tourist infrastructure and market was the need of this tourist class to meet or surpass their peers in wealth and activities. Yosemite became one of the trendy, must-see landscapes.[125]

Nineteenth century leisure class tourists closely aligned with the themes and ideals of the artists that created imagery of nature attractions. The American fashionable set searched for uniquely American landscapes that could rival and even surpass European landmarks.[126] As a result, western tourist rhetoric and ideals paralleled and helped promote nationalism and a distinct American identity and culture.[127] Historian John Sears argues that "tourism played a powerful role in America's invention of itself as

[124] Demars, *The Tourist*, 27.

[125] Demars, *The Tourist,* 23 and 26. Olive Logan, "Does it Pay to Visit Yosemite?" *The Galaxy* 10 (October 1870), Yosemite Online Library, http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/logan/, 2-4 (Accessed February 2019).
[126] Samuel Bowles, *Across the Continent*: A Summer's Journey to the Rocky Mountains, the Mormons, and the Pacific States, with Speaker Colfax, (Springfield: Samuel Bowles & Company; New York: Hurd & Houghton, 1865), 224, Hathi Trust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433081764718;view=1up;seq=1 (Accessed February 2019).

[127] Runte, *National Parks*, 17-22, King, "A Vacation in the Sierras," *Letter 6*. James Hucthings, in particular, has a whole chapter in his book, *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity in California* (San Francisco: J.M. Hutchings, 1861), comparing Yosemite to European landmarks.

a culture."[128] Yosemite, as one of the most popular tourist spots in the late nineteenth century, played an integral part in the creation of that American identity and imagination.

The esteem and success of the images by Bierstadt, Watkins, and Muybridge inspired other artists to capitalize on the growing market for Yosemite and California landscape art. This burgeoning art scene in California fueled a group of artists to establish the San Francisco Art Association and corresponding School of Design formed in 1871. Painters and photographers now flocked from all over the globe to take advantage of the California scenery and Yosemite's escalating marketability and popularity.[129] One such painter, whose work would become synonymous with Yosemite, was Thomas Hill.

Hill, born and trained in Europe, came to California in 1861 after a brief period in the eastern art scene. He visited Yosemite in 1862 and went back several times during the 1860s and 1870s. The market grew so rapidly for Yosemite and California art that Hill reportedly supported himself solely from his art career, earning about $20,000 a year.[130] Some of the main patrons of Hill's (and other successful Yosemite artists' works) were the California nouveau riche, such as railroad moguls Leland Stanford and Charles Crocker. The grandiosity and monumental scale of California landscape art, particularly of Yosemite, perfectly symbolized these nineteenth century business moguls' sense of prestige and power.[131] In addition, Yosemite as sublime, unique, and grand, echoed facets

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[128] John Sears, *Sacred Places*, 4.

[129] For more information see Janice T. Driesbach, et al. *The Art of the Gold Rush* (University of California Press: Published in association with the Oakland Museum of California, 1988).

[130] Marjorie Dakin Arkeliam, *Thomas Hill: The Grand View* (Oakland: Oakland Museum of Art, 1980), 24.

[131] Ogden, "Sublime Vistas and Scenic Backdrops," 144.

of American Exceptionalism that also appealed to the industrial tycoons who opened up the American West. This now not-so-hidden valley in California was becoming more than just a popular tourist attraction and artistic subject, the area was developing into an icon of American identity as well.

A typical example of one of Thomas Hill's Yosemite paintings is *Yosemite Valley (From Below Sentinel Dome, as seen from the Artist's Point)* created in 1876 (Figure 9). In the painting, as with Bierstadt's, Yosemite and its grand natural wonders are on full display. Half Dome is situated on the left of the canvas, while one of Yosemite's impressive waterfalls on the right. A few of California's Giant Sequoias trees (also tourist attractions at the time) complete the scene by soaring proudly in the foreground. There are, however, differences between Hill and Bierstadt's paintings of Yosemite. Hill as the first seasonal artist-in-residence in Yosemite Valley catered directly to tourists and his inclusion of human figures is reflective of this fact. In addition, Hill's images appear truer to Yosemite topography and more photographic-like than Bierstadt's over-dramatic, highly-stylized pictures.[132] Since photography grew into a burgeoning art field and public novelty at this time, many painters felt compelled to produce paintings that resembled photographs in order to compete with the popularity of this new medium.[133] In fact, many contemporary art critics rated landscape paintings based mainly on how well the artist reproduced reality.[134]

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[132] Robertson, *West of Eden*, 28.

[133] Herring, *Lines on the Land*.

[134] "Bierstadt Criticized," *Daily Alta California* 30:10143 (17 January 1878), "the highest art" is closest to nature, "bordering on imitation…much as a camera," 1, "Local Art Matters" *Daily Alta California* 21:7095,

Hill's scenes, in particular, were praised enthusiastically by art critics for their exceptional realism. One critic wrote that Hill "painted with a truth that gives a giddiness as you gaze a moment" at his works.[135] Another reviewer mentioned Hill's "freshness, vigor, and truthfulness."[136] A different critic compared Hill to Bierstadt, writing that "if Bierstadt's pictures, as some contend, are composed, Mr. Hill's may be truer to nature."[137] Hill's paintings of Yosemite were not wholly true-to-life depictions, however, but rather were constructions of the Yosemite he saw in his mind's eye.[138] In *Yosemite Valley*, for instance, the viewer's standpoint is in mid-air and the natural features seem exaggerated for emotional effect. Arguably, even Yosemite photographers carefully constructed and manipulated the natural elements or camera angles to create a certain desired image. Yosemite imagery, then and now, is based on what the creator envisions in their mind's eye; and although the images are steeped in the cultural and popular tastes of the times, they are also coated with a patina of individual interpretation.

Tourism in Yosemite increased exponentially with each passing decade. Some landscape artists, moreover, introduced tourists into their images—albeit in a style that allowed for the sublime, wild landscape to dominate the scene. Hill's *Yosemite Valley,* for

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2 (23 August 1869) California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc, (Accessed March 2018).

[135] "The Royal Arches of Yosemite," *Daily Alta California* 25:8343 (30 January 1873), 1, California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc (Accessed March 2018).
[136] "Thomas Hill's Pictures," *Daily Alta California* 26:8785 (20 April 1874), 1, California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc (Accessed March 2018).

[137] Ralph Keeler, "Keeler's Letters: A Picture View—Notes of Noted Paintings—California Artists in New York—Gossip about Art and Artists Generally," *Daily Alta California* 20:6640 (20 May 1868), 1, California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc (Accessed March 2018).

[138] "The Royal Arches of Yosemite," 1.

example, includes a small party of sightseers in the lower corner of the painting. While the trail and tourists indicate the presence of humanity, the trio of tourists in Hill's work are engulfed by the massive foliage, mountains, and waterfalls. Hill's tourists are a small component of the landscape and blend into the scenery.[139] This representation is different than the 1850s imagery which depicted tourism or tourist structures, such as hotels, as the main focal points in a particular image.[140] Hill's tourists are not center stage nor are they opposing, manipulating, or dominating the landscape. Hill's tourists, much like Bierstadt's Mule Deer, are simply a part of the wilderness scene.

Hill eventually set up a permanent art studio in Yosemite Valley in 1884. As "the artist-in-waiting to the Yosemite," Hill catered directly to tourists and the tourist market.[141] His studio even became a tourist attraction itself. At the shop, visitors could purchase made-to-order paintings of Yosemite.[142] Since Yosemite tourists were set on doing what was fashionable, it makes sense that they would want paintings to commemorate their visit and to display to their peers. As a consequence of this growing tourist art market, Hill's paintings became increasingly formulaic. His notebook demonstrated that his clients would specify what Yosemite landmark, such as Sentinel

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[139] Kate Nearpass Ogden writes that Thomas Hill and William Keith's "romantic vision of Yosemite" was one that was "relatively unpeopled" but that growing tourism and tourism market did influence their works, *Yosemite*, 24 and 39.

[140] Robertson writes how post-1880s to the 1900s the Yosemite art "is not as good as the previous decades," noting the cause as technological advancements, such as with photography creating a more democratizing process, the growth of the art and tourist industry creating cliché and formulaic imagery, as well as increased development within Yosemite itself, *West of Eden*, 92-93.

[141] Sweeney, *Masterpieces in Western American Art*, 174.

[142] Arkeliam, *Thomas Hill*, 74.

Rock or Half Dome, as well as what figure or figures, such as an American Indian or wildlife, they would want in the painting and Hill would create it for them.[143] Hill's later artworks therefore once again reinterpreted the Yosemite landscape and experience, and directly incorporated another the tourist viewpoint into the cultural material. Meanwhile, Yosemite landscape photography became very formulaic and trite as thousands of images of the same landmarks and scenes flooded the market.[144]

By the late nineteenth century, tourists helped to drive the creation of Yosemite and California landscape art.[145] This symbiotic relationship between the 'buyers' and 'sellers' impacted Yosemite representations and imagery. The growth of the tourist art market generated demand for depictions of Yosemite as more and more people viewed and experienced the area. While Yosemite was no longer interpreted solely through nineteenth century landscape artistic trends and mediums, the sublime wilderness ideals still remained one of the most sought-after depictions. The quantity of Yosemite art and imagery increased significantly in the 1880s as the tourist-buyers grew in number. The Yosemite tourist then and now, thus, is continually "buying," or partaking of a scenic, national and cultural icon and mostly desire the representations that highlight those

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[143] Ogden, "Sublime Vistas," 148-149.

[144] Naef, 74 and Robertson, 90.

[145] Ogden "Sublime," 148.

ideals.[146] Yosemite was not only a symbol of American identity and a romantic wilderness ideal, but also a consumer product.[147]

William Keith, 1870s

Well-known painters and amateur opportunists all clamored to partake in the popularity of Yosemite and the California art. Nearly every landscape painter in Northern California during the 1860s and 1870s exhibited paintings of Yosemite.[148] William Keith was another European born and trained artist who painted California landscapes. Keith's 1872 work, *Sentinel Rock, Yosemite*, is similar in composition to many other Yosemite paintings, yet is different in artistic and individual style (Figure 10). Keith's paintings, in the mode of the French Barbizon School, are richer in color and have a more painterly, textured quality. Keith heavily used glazes, which made his paintings much darker and richer in tone than Hill or Bierstadt's. One local art critic, for example, praised Keith for his "distinguishing characteristic" of "felicitous management of color" which made his "landscapes stand out" from other painters at the time.[149] Another critic wrote that Keith's "pictures are marked by delicacy, tenderness, and harmony of coloring" with a fine mastery of the effects of light and shade.[150]

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[146] For more on tourism and the tourist as modern man see Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 3rd edt., 1999).

[147] Sears, *Sacred Places*, 10.

[148] Robertson, *West of Eden*, 33.

[149] "The Keith Gallery," *Daily Alta California* 26:9015 (7 December 1874), 1, California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc (Accessed March 2018).

[150] "Californian Art," *Daily Alta California* 24:8117 (16 June 1972), 2, California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc (Accessed March 2018).

In Keith's *Sentinel Rock*, the viewer glimpses into a Yosemite scene featuring a standard landmark, Sentinel Rock; however, Keith's talent and propensity for color, harmony, and contrasting shades stand out. The dark glazing, for example, creates an obscured and shadowed foreground that helps illuminate the main focal point, Sentinel Rock, looming over the scene. Keith also includes a small group of sightseers taking in the natural wonders and lounging by the lake.[151] The painting's glazing blends all elements together, including unifying and harmonizing the tourists into the nature scene. While Keith demonstrates (and later Hill will as well) a stylistic shift in the late nineteenth century, much of the same artistic representations and themes of California landscapes—as a sublime and romantic nature—remained in place in the 1870s.

A Non-Idealized Yosemite?: William Hahn's Genre Paintings, 1870s

The 1874 Yosemite paintings by William Hahn (1829-1887), although they do not follow the same themes and narratives as the other artists of this time, enrich the knowledge of Yosemite imagery. Hahn's 1874 triptych, *The Trip to Glacier Point*, *Yosemite Valley from Glacier Point*, and *Return Trip from Glacier Point*, instead of a pure Yosemite landscape, depicts a tourist party and its activities as the main focal points.[152] The study of these paintings, moreover, demonstrates that while there tends to

[151] William Keith bemoaned the "avalanche of tourists" that were "flooding the hotels," in the 1870s and Ogden cites the rise in tourist industry and the direct competition between the artists for the inclusion of tourists in landscape art, *Yosemite*, 39. Robertson cites Keith as well, in which Keith stated that there were many paintings of Yosemite, which he described as "nature" and all depicting "the same mass of sky, cliffs, and foliage," *West of Eden*, 31.

[152] Hahn was not a landscape painter but rather a genre painter. One could also argue that he also could not be classified as a Yosemite painter with only three Yosemite paintings.

be majority trends in representations of national parks at certain times, there are individuals and their works that do not always fit the mold.

William Hahn, similar to Albert Bierstadt, was born and artistically trained in Germany. Hahn traveled to the United States with his American friend and fellow artist William Keith in 1871, where they established an art studio together in Boston. A year later, Keith suggested Hahn travel west to the burgeoning San Francisco art scene.[153] California audiences viewed Hahn's paintings of everyday life as strange curiosities, yet, as a Dusseldorf-trained artist, the art community's inner circle, which included Hill, Bierstadt, and Keith, immediately embraced him.[154] Hahn's California paintings, such as *Sacramento Railroad Station* (1874) and *The Convalescent* (1874), captured a range of human moments, from the intimate poignancy of caring for the ill to the impersonal, bustling energy of a train depot. Hahn traveled throughout California in the 1870s and 1880s, depicting various human endeavors such as logging or bear hunts, and eventually ventured into the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Keith, known for his close friendship with John Muir and his numerous Yosemite paintings, most likely first introduced Hahn to the area. Even though Hahn produced three paintings of the region, his 1874 Yosemite scenes should be viewed primarily as genre paintings designed to display a day-in-the-life of a particular group of people. In contrast to Keith and the other Yosemite landscape painters, Yosemite is not Hahn's main subject matter but rather the backdrop or stage for human activity.

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[153] Marjorie Dakin Arkelian, *William Hahn: Genre Painter, 1829-1887*, (Oakland: Art Department, Oakland Museum 1976), 20.

[154] Arkelian, *William Hahn*, 23.

The Trip to Glacier Point (Figure 11) and *Return Trip from Glacier Point* (Figure 12) features the same party of tourists as they ascend on horseback up to a Yosemite landmark, Glacier Point, and then while resting upon their return. In sharp contrast to the landscape paintings of the same period, the human and animal figures take up most of the canvas while the natural features frame the painting and add context to the activity. The touring party consists of both men and women, dressed in upper-middle class attire typical of leisure tourists in the late nineteenth century, with two tour guides. It is difficult to glean any artistic opinion, negative or positive, in these two paintings of the tourists or their activities. Similar to Hahn's *Sacramento Railroad Station*, the scene appears to aim for a neutral, albeit aesthetically pleasing, rendering. Art, even photography, however, is never completely objective as the artist chooses each element, such as subject matter, frame, tone, and size, of the work. The middle painting of the series, *Yosemite Valley from Glacier Point* (Figure 13), the largest and most detailed of the three, contains more elements with which the viewer can gain more insight into Hahn's rendition of human interaction with the natural landscape.

In *Yosemite Valley from Glacier Point*, the same tourist party in *Trip* and *Return*, are located at their destination: Glacier Point. The group consists of four women and one female child, three gentlemen, two male guides, and their horses and pack animals. In the distance, two Yosemite landmarks, Half Dome and Yosemite Falls, can be seen. Only four individuals from the group, however, seem to be gazing in the direction of those recognizable natural features with others looking off toward the right and the young girl staring up at what most likely are her parents in the center of the painting. The two guides

are the least interested of all in the sights, signifying their separateness from the others in both class, purpose, and familiarity of the landscape. One guide, for example, is resting (and perhaps asleep) in the shade of the animals indicating his closer connection to the beasts of burden than the upper-class leisure tourists. Art Historian J. Gray Sweeney suggests that the resting guide is, in fact, bored with the scenery after a multitude of trips to this location.[155] The second guide on the left is bringing victuals to the tourists, which is not immediately significant except for what is shown in the foreground directly behind him: trash from previous picnics. Since Hahn paints everyday life, the viewer should be cautious to view the inclusion of garbage as making a statement about tourist destruction of the natural environment. However, as one of the few genre painters to depict Yosemite in the mid-nineteenth century, the inclusion of trash and the disinterested individuals is a sharp contrast to the idealized depictions of the awe-inspiring Yosemite of the landscape painters and photographers.

Albert Bierstadt, 1870s

To clearly show the impact that nineteenth century landscape art had on shifting the visual narrative of Yosemite, it is helpful to return to the painter that began it all. Bierstadt traveled back to California in 1871 via the newly constructed transcontinental railroad. San Francisco, due to the travel and technological improvements, nearly tripled in population—from 56,000 in 1860 to 150,000 in 1870.[156] To accommodate the surge,

[155] Sweeney, *Masterpieces of Western American Art*, 173.

[156] San Francisco History, San Francisco Genealogy, http://www.sfgenealogy.com/sf/history/hgpop.htm (Accessed March 2018).

engineers built more transportation networks linking the port city to other parts of California, including areas near Yosemite. The valley also saw indications of increasing development. Hotels, bridges, and roads were always an integral part of the area since the mid-1850s; however, the infrastructure to support a nature attraction continued to grow, including larger accommodations, in order to support Yosemite's increasing popularity.[157]

One new development was Glacier Point Trail, which Bierstadt commemorated in the 1873 painting, *Yosemite Valley, Glacier Point Trail* (Figure 14). In addition to the obvious significance that he depicted a new, human-made trail, the painting also contains a group of tourists in the foreground. This is not exactly the same landscape devoid of humanity Bierstadt showcased ten years before, for now a group of tourists supplant the herd of deer. The trail can also be seen as a symbol of the increased access and growing human presence in the valley.[158] The natural wonders of the area, however, are still the main focal point and are depicted as sublime, picturesque, and romantic. The tourists in the image are dwarfed by the natural landscape. Another factor influencing Bierstadt's change in imagery was also the growing Yosemite art market. In 1862, Bierstadt had no artistic competitors. By the early 1870s, however, many more Yosemite painters and photographers created works and Bierstadt may have felt pressure to include tourist elements in order to make his work more marketable. Art reviewers were also more

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[157] Runte, *Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness*, 17.

[158] For more on significance of trails, roads, and movement in the creation of national parks see Timothy Davis, "Everyone Has Carriage Road on the Brain," in *Public Nature: Scenery, History, and Park Design* by Ethan Carr et all, (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2013).

critical of his dramatized style after the advent of landscape photography and painters, such as Hill, who strove for a more realistic style.[159] All of these factors may have contributed to his slight change in subject matter.

One year before Bierstadt completed *Glacier Point Trail*, Congress declared Yellowstone in Wyoming the first national park. Artist Thomas Moran's landscape paintings of Yellowstone, created much in the same style as Yosemite landscape art, directly spurred Congress to designate the area a national park.[160] Yosemite's High Sierra, not surprisingly, became one of the next national parks in 1890, alongside two other California parks in the Sierra Nevada region, Sequoia National Park and General Grant. Throughout the late nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries, despite increasing modernization, urbanization, and industrialization, the depiction of Yosemite by early American landscape artists as the nature ideal of sublime, romantic wilderness still captured the American imagination.[161] Nineteenth century landscape artists glorified and helped to cement the representation of Yosemite as the pinnacle of American landscapes and, thus, also as a symbol of American Exceptionalism and identity as well.[162]

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[159] "Bierstadt Criticized," *Daily Alta California*, 1. The author of the article wrote that Bierstadt's painting was "a false representation which was "the main point to be urged against it and all other paintings like it."

[160] For more on Thomas Moran's work and the passage of the Yellowstone National Park bill in 1872, see *Thomas Moran's West* by Joni L. Kinsey, 60-61.

[161] Ogden, *Yosemite*, 51.

[162] Runte, *Yosemite*, 7.

The nineteenth century artists' wilderness ideal, however enduring, is only one facet of the national park idea.[163] While many scholars believe that most American national parks are not wilderness areas and do not fit into the sublime landscape paradigm, much of the American public still views, defines, represents, and experiences national parks through these concepts.[164] Most individuals, moreover, will clamor for the depiction of Yosemite as the sublime, primeval wilderness in postcards, posters, art, computer wallpaper, film, or even in personal photographs rather than images depicting crowds, parking lots, trash, campsites, hotels or any other less-aesthetically pleasing elements. An idealized nature park as a wilderness absent of humanity, however, grows ever-farther from the physical and visual realities of most these spaces.[165]

From the 1860s to the 1870s, the visual rhetoric of Yosemite transformed from one that included humanity and tourist elements to one that idealized landscapes reflective of a primeval past. The power of art to perpetuate national park ideals was reinforced by the fact that nature attractions were, and still are, mainly experienced visually as well as art and imagery's ability to stir emotions.[166] The Yosemite paradigm would transform once again just a few decades later during the 1870s and 1880s. The

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[163] Robert Keiter in *To Conserve Unimpaired* writes that "national parks are not one single idea, but rather a complex assortment of ideas," 9 and specifically see Chapter 2: Nature's Cathedrals, 13-38.that "national parks and wilderness are practically synonymous, at least in the minds of most visitors," 13.

[164] Keiter writes that "national parks and wilderness are practically synonymous, at least in the minds of most visitors," *To Conserve*, 13.

[165] Ibid. Historian Laura Watt notes that "of all the ideals of national parks, the most consequential one has almost certainly been the idea that parks are devoid of people," specifically to management policies and preservation, see, *The Paradox of Preservation,* 33.

[166] For more on the tourist gaze and the visual nature of tourism see, John Urry's *The Tourist Gaze* (Sage: London and Thousand Oaks, 2nd edt. 2002). Urry, however, does not speak of a tourist gaze onto art depicting the tourist attraction, choosing to mainly study the tourist gaze on the physical landscape.

advent of the railroad and the growth of technology and transportation eased access to far western spaces such as Yosemite and opened the area (and its representation) to more individuals. The next significant promoters of Yosemite after the American landscape artists were the western railroads, such as the Atchison & Santa Fe and Southern Pacific Co. Following the railroads' lead in Yosemite advertising were other tourist-related businesses. These industrialists, businessmen and concessionaires not only had different aims, tastes, and audiences than the landscape artists but also used the new mass markets of publication, media, and dissemination to inundate the public with numerous volumes of their material. As a result of these historic shifts in society, a new Yosemite representation emerged once again showcasing the ever-evolving concept of national parks and the power of ideas and imagery to shape Americans' imaginations and experiences of nature.

CHAPTER 3

MASS PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE: ADVERTISING, TRANSPORTATION, TOURISM, AND THE GROWTH OF INDUSTRY AT YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, 1890S

When figures such as well-known landscape artist Albert Bierstadt painted Yosemite as a grandiose wilderness absent of humanity in the 1860s and 1870s, leisure travel and high art were privileges of upper-class Americans. Artistic and intellectual trends of the antebellum and postbellum period, thus, dictated much of the imagery of American landscapes, especially national landscapes like Yosemite. In the early stages of the Second Industrial Revolution, American landscape photographers helped to democratize the production of knowledge and representation of Yosemite Valley; however, landscape photography, as a nascent art, relied heavily on the aesthetics of early landscape painters.

The written and the visual narratives of Yosemite would once again shift at the turn-of-the-century. Officials staked the golden spike commemorating the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, but tourists did not utilize this method of transportation to California and the Far West in significant numbers until the 1890s.[167] The growth of the tourist, transportation, and advertising industries, as well as the advent of mass production and distribution networks would impact Yosemite's physical

[167] Michael E. Zega, "Advertising the Southwest." *Journal of the Southwest*. Autumn 2001, 43:3. 282. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/40170222. (Accessed February 2018).282, and Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lincoln: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 37-38.

environment as well as popular conceptions and representations of the area. The western railroads would lead the way as the central promoters of national parks in the late nineteenth century.[168] Other Yosemite business interests, such as short line railroads and local concessionaires, quickly followed in the corporate railroads' path as national park tourism grew in tandem with transportation technology and advertising.

From the 1890s through the 1920s, promoters flooded the American public with advertisements, pamphlets, brochures, posters, postcards, booklets, calendars, roadmaps and myriad other national park promotional material. These advertisements incorporated prior representations of Yosemite, such as the artists' idealized pure landscapes and early accounts that included elements of burgeoning tourism, as well as the latest societal trends to form a new representation. This latest Yosemite depiction was of a landscape indicative of an American industrial empire, one that reflected diversification—in imagery, landscape attractions, and tourist needs—and one that was part of a growing mass consumer market. The earliest Anglo-American representations of Yosemite in the 1850s through the early 1860s included modes of transportation, tourist infrastructure and elements of travel experiences.[169] These components reentered the narratives in the late

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[168] See Anne Farrar Hyde, *An American Vision: Far Western Landscape and National Culture, 1820-1920* (New York: New York University Press, 1990) for the role of corporate railroads in promotion and tourism at national parks: Yellowstone and the Northern Pacific Railroad, 245-268, the Santa Fe Railroad at the Grand Canyon, 268-281, and the role of the Great Northern Railroad in Glacier National Park, 281-293. The transcontinental lines did not build directly to Yosemite as with the above listed parks. In many ways, railroad companies had less direct involvement in Yosemite tourism, such as owning concessions and accommodations, than at other parks.

[169] Greeley, *An Overland Journey, New York to San Francisco, the Summer of 1859*, *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine*, 1:1 (July 1856) and (November 1859). The first comprehensive guidebook, *Scenes of Curiosity* (1861) by James Hutchings contained over 100 images of California—with many depictions of the tourism and industry (hotels, logging sites, ferries, tourist structures, etc.) and Thomas Starr King, "A Vacation among the Sierras, Yosemite in 1860."

nineteenth century but on a grander scale, reflecting the growth of industry and technology. The representation of Yosemite during the decades before and after the turn-of-the-century was of a national park reflective of a progressive, diverse, and democratic industrial society. This depiction upholds the idea that national parks are not walled-off spaces nor that the national park idea is a single, fixed concept, but rather that parks are interpreted and represented differently by various historical societies at distinct times.

In October 1890, the high country surrounding the federally-recognized state park of Yosemite Valley became Yosemite National Park.[170] The date is significant since it was approximately the same time that railroads saw significant passenger travel to the Far West on the transcontinental lines.[171] Railroad leaders recognized the economic benefit of the preservation of Yosemite as early as the 1860s, and these individuals played a role in securing its protection in 1864 and again in 1890.[172] Yellowstone National Park also had early connections between public and private interests, and only became a significant tourist destination once the railroad linked it to the rest of the country in 1883.[173] Hal Rothman writes that, likewise to Yellowstone and Yosemite, the advent of the railroad at

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[170] U.S. Statutes at Large, Vol. 26, Chap. 1263, pp. 650-52. "An act to set apart certain tracts of land in the State of California as forest reservations**,"** 1890 [H.R. 12187], National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/yose/learn/management/enabling_leg.htm (Accessed February 2018).

[171] Zega, "Advertising the Southwest," 281 and Richard Orsi, *Sunset Limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Development of the American West, 1850-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), xiv-xv.

[172] Orsi describes the direct involvement by Southern Pacific leaders in Yosemite wilderness preservation from 1880s to the early 1900s, *Sunset Limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad*, 349 and 358-370.

[173] Paul Schullery, "Privations and Inconveniences: Early Tourism in Yellowstone National Park," *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, eds. David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (Nebraska: University of Kansas, 2001), 227, and 235-236 and Rothman, *Devil's Bargains*, 45.

the Grand Canyon symbolized its increasing national significance and, not surprisingly, the region became designated a national park shortly afterward.[174] It seemed a natural role, then, for Far West railroads, such as the Southern Pacific Co. and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe (AT&SF), to become the leading promoters, and hence representors, of the western national parks from the late nineteenth century through the first decades of the twentieth.

Representation of Yosemite and other national landscape attractions by private interests was nothing new. The literature and imagery of Yosemite produced by local entrepreneurs and eastern journalists in the 1850s and early 1860s included many travel logistics, modes of transportation, and human structures.[175] The large landscape paintings by artists, such as Bierstadt's Yosemite images and Thomas Moran's Yellowstone paintings, in the mid-nineteenth century could also be deemed as "selling" parks by linking the art market with national landscape iconography.[176] More direct promotion, such as advertisements, by tourist businesses at Yosemite was also not a novelty when the corporate railroads entered the scene in the decades following the Civil War. As early as the 1860s, hotels operators, travel agents, and stage proprietors advertised Yosemite tourism in the *Daily Alta California*.[177] What the railroads would revolutionize, however,

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[174] Rothman, 57.

[175] See footnote 3.

[176] Ogden, "Sublime Vistas and Scenic Backdrops," 148.

[177] "Look at this, Pleasure Seekers! C. H. Sisson, Dooly & Co, Proprietors, "stages run daily…also for Yosemite," *Daily Alta California* 18: 6080 (4 September 1866), 6, "Mammoth Grove Hotel" Advertisement by Sperry and Perry Proprietors, *Daily Alta California* 19:6275 (20 May 1867), 3, "Yosemite" J.B. Bruce, Agent, *Daily Alta California* 21: 7090 (18 August 1869), 1, California Digital Newspaper Collection, https://cdnc.ucr.edu (Accessed February 2018).

was the sheer quantity of material and money spent in highly organized promotional campaigns that directly spurred the expansion of tourism and its industry at national parks.[178] In the process, the promotional material significantly influenced the representation and interpretation of Yosemite and other national parks, such as Yellowstone and the Grand Canyon, in greater numbers and to a wider segment of the American public than ever before.[179]

Several themes emerge when looking at Yosemite tourist and advertising ephemera from the 1890s through the 1920s, particularly at the end of the nineteenth century. One of the earliest motifs, connected to the idea of modernity and diversification, is the demonstration of an intrinsically-linked relationship between tourist businesses. James M. Hutchings, who promoted Yosemite from 1855 until his death in 1902, advertised in the late 1890s a Yosemite guided trip with detailed transportation logistics.[180] As a proto-travel agent, he included pertinent names and details of other businesses, as well as stated that he worked "in connection with the Southern Pacific

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[178] Zega, "Advertising the Southwest," 284. For early railroad promotion and tourism at Yellowstone see Schullery "Privations and Inconveniences" in *Seeing and Being Seen*, 227-239. At Mount Rainer, see Marguerite S. Schaffer's chapter, "Seeing America First: The Search for Identity in the Tourist Landscape," *Seeing and Being Seen*, 165, and at the Grand Canyon, see Rothman's chapter "The Tourism of Hegemony: Railroads, Elites, and the Grand Canyon," in *Devil's Bargains*, 50-80.

[179] Peter Blodgett, "Defining Uncle Sam's Playground: Railroad Advertising and the National Park Service, 1917- 1941, *Historical Geography*, 35:8-113 (1 June 2007), 81, EbscoHost, http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu (Accessed February 2018) and Alfred Runte, "Promoting Wonderland: Western Railroads and the Evolution of National Park Advertising," *Journal of the West*, 51:1 (January 1992), 43, EbscoHost, http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu (Accessed February 2018).

[180] The advertisement is not dated, but can only fall between the dates of 1897, when the Sierra Railway began, and Hutchings's death in 1902. "Yosemite Valley" by J. M. Hutchings, San Francisco, N.D. *Sierra Railroad Records*, Box 5, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA (Accessed November 2017).

Railroad Co. and the Sierra Railway."[181] Sierra Railway officials even edited several drafts of this particular advertisement, clarifying routes, details, and names for Hutchings.[182] This business cooperation further demonstrated the idea that the various Yosemite tourist interests, especially in transportation, coexisted in both physical space and the economic market and therefore worked in tandem for tourist dollars.

Many promotions in the late 1880s and 1890s demonstrated how small, private businesses co-advertised with each other as well as with transcontinental railroads. This type of representation is important as it lays the foundation for the following decades where tourist businesses will highlight diversity of resources and accommodations and continue to co-promote. A stage coach flyer from June 1887, for example, advertised its new and improved Yosemite "Tourist's Stage Route" with "the completion of the New Railway Line" at Brenda and Raymond as the "shortest, quickest, and cheapest" line.[183] Not only did the railroads alter the physical landscape and original stage routes, but they also influenced park promotional material as smaller businesses began to advertise the railroads alongside their own companies. A Yosemite Stage and Turnpike Co. brochure, for example, from the late nineteenth century prompted readers to "purchase ticket at Southern Pacific Railway Office," and then take the train from the Arcade Depot or Santa

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[181] Ibid.

[182] Incorporated in 1897 and fully completed in 1900, the Sierra Railway connected the California Gold Country at Jamestown to California's Central Valley at Oakdale. Several versions of the advertisement, with penciled edits over railroad and route by an unknown official of the Sierra Railway are in Box 5 of *Sierra Railroad Records*, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkley, Berkeley, CA. (Accessed November 2017).

[183] Flyer in *Corporate Ephemera,* "Yosemite," California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017).

Barbara to Brenda or Raymond where stage agents would then assist travelers to Yosemite.[184] The brochure also detailed hotels and other tourist accommodations along the way to Yosemite. This theme in the material demonstrated how Yosemite private interests were already linked by a growing network of transportation and tourism, which would become even more pronounced in both representation and reality in the following decades.

Yosemite promotional material at the turn of the century also stressed that an integral part of the national park experience was the journey itself. This concept was particularly ubiquitous in transcontinental railroad advertisements, whose officials wanted to sell western national parks as destinations and their routes as part of the vacation experience. The two main transcontinental lines that traveled to California in the late nineteenth century were the Southern Pacific Co. and the AT&SF (or Santa Fe). Both railroad companies competed with each other in organized advertising campaigns to bring settlers and tourists to the western states; however, Southern Pacific was the forerunner in this crusade to promote the American West.[185] The company formed when the Big Four of the Central Pacific Railroad "modernized and integrated" their monopoly on various California transportation businesses into a holding company in 1884.[186] By the 1890s, Southern Pacific saw immense success due to its highly organized advertising

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[184] "Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Big Trees" brochure, *Yosemite Valley Railroad--Corporate Collections*, California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017). The flyer lists A. H. Washburn as the General Manager of the Yosemite Stage and Turnpike Co., dating the brochure between 1886, when he first became manager, to his death in 1902.

[185] Michael E. Zega and John E. Gruber, *Travel by Train: The American Railroad Poster, 1870-1950* (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 2002), 26 and 27.

[186] Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 24-26.

campaigns run by executives such as advertising pioneer John C. Stubbs.[187] Michael Zega and John Gruber argue that the company's greatest achievement of its promotional endeavors was the "selling of California."[188]

Southern Pacific Railroad Co. leaders launched *Sunset*, a highly successfully national magazine, in May 1898 as a part of their California advertising campaign. [189] The editors stated the aim of the magazine was "publicity for the attractions and advantages of the western empire."[190] It is significant that the magazine creators chose Yosemite for their debut issue, as the exemplar of not only American western attractions but as one of the West's economic "advantages" as well. The editor, E. H. Woodman, supported the idea of tourism as an important western industry when he wrote that *Sunset* would cover all "the resources of this great western empire for the husbandman, stockman, and miner, and for the tourist and health seeker."[191] Yosemite as an economic product was not a new concept in the America consciousness, and, in fact, can be traced to its formation as an Anglo-American destination in the mid-1850s and 1860s.[192] At the

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[187] Ibid.

[188] Zega and Gruber, *Travel by Train*, 15 and 22.

[189] Editors stated that *Sunset* even in "its initial number salutes a large circulation of readers," *Sunset* (San Francisco: May 1898) 1:1, 1, HathiTrust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.c079368091;view=1up;seq=6 (Accessed January 2018).

[190] "Yosemite and the High Sierra in this Number," *Sunset* (San Francisco: May 1898) 1:1, 1. HathiTrust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.c079368091;view=1up;seq=6 (Accessed January 2018).

[191] Ibid.

[192] One could also argue that the 1864 law that preserved Yosemite implied it was a resource or product by including the words "public use" in the legislation. Many scholars analyze the implications and effects of the wording of the law on all national parks, see Peter Blodgett, "Defining Uncle Sam's Playground*,* 81-106. U.S. Statutes at Large, Vol. 13, Chap. 184, p. 325 and "An Act authorizing a Grant to the State of California of the Yo-Semite Valley,' and of the Land embracing the Mariposa Big Tree Grove."' [S. 203; Public

turn-of-the-century, moreover, backed by powerful and wealthy railroad men and in large-scale, national distribution as *Sunset* and other mass-circulated material, a new era in Yosemite representation began.[193] Yosemite became one of the leading products of this new western industrial empire.

Sunset, as well as other promotional material by the Southern Pacific Co., contained many typical narratives and images about western national parks, particularly Yosemite. The common use of superlatives to describe these parks, such as the impressiveness, sublimity, and uniqueness which surpassed European landmarks, abound in the material.[194] This interpretation of landscapes stemmed from the influence of the Romantic Era ideas of nature and were typical descriptors of most landscapes that fit into national identity paradigms in the nineteenth century.[195] Yosemite, from the earliest Anglo-American accounts, evoked intense sentiments and superlative descriptions and,

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Act No. 159], National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/yose/learn/management/enabling_leg.htm (Accessed February 2018).

[193] Orsi writes that by 1900, the number of copies of *Sunset* for distribution were commonly "in the hundreds of thousands," *Sunset Limited*, 157. He adds that *Sunset* was so successful as a "publicity organ" that the railroad leaders created other versions that focused on the Southwest and Pacific Northwest regions of America and even one solely devoted to Europe, 161.

[194] Blodgett, "Defining Uncle Sam's Playground," 93-94. Theodore S. Solomons, "In the Upper Merced Canyon," *Sunset: A Magazine of the Border* v.6 (Nov. 1900-Apil 1902), HathiTrust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433081660676;view=1up;seq=1, H. C. Best, "Impressions of Yosemite," *Sunset*, v.13 (May 1904), 105-108, Hathi Trust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=njp.32101064477829;view=1up;seq=255, Zega and Gruber, *Travel by Train*), 4.

[195] Rothman, *Devil's Bargains*, 40-43. For the impact of Romanticism on American nature ideals, tourism, and early national parks see Hans Huth, *Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2nd ed., 1990), Chapter Three: "The Romantic Period," 30-53 and Chapter Nine: "Yosemite, Yellowstone, and the Grand Canyon," 148-164.

thus, married perfectly with advertising methods and the railroad leaders' visions and aims.

The Yosemite trope that words were "so inadequate" to the "task of communicating the grandeur of magnificence of its scenic wonders" also populated the Southern Pacific Co. promotional material.[196] A 1904 Southern Pacific Yosemite booklet stated that "language is woefully inadequate" and that "a truer idea is conveyed" through the series of twenty four full-page photographs following the brief written introduction.[197] One individual even asserted that "photographs and paintings are inadequate" to "personal observation," further driving home the idea that one must travel to Yosemite to fully appreciate its wonder.[198] The impact of these representations, themes, and motifs of Yosemite promotional material on individual tourist experience is difficult to decipher. One tourist wrote in June 1914 that "words could never describe it [Yosemite]" when detailing her trip on a postcard; however, one can never know if advertising rhetoric directly influenced her impressions.[199] These mindsets about American nature, such as its grandeur can only truly be experienced in person, took on new meaning when railroads utilized them in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Since the railroad

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[196] Chris Jorgenson, "My Studio in Yosemite," *Sunset: A Magazine of the Border*, Vol 6-7 (San Francisco: Southern Pacific Publishing, November 1900 to April 1901) 113 and 114. HathiTrust, babel.hathitrust.org (Accessed January 2018).

[197] *Yosemite National Park, California* (Passenger Department, Southern Pacific Co., 1904), 5, HathiTrust, https://babel.hathitrust.org (Accessed January 2018).

[198] Jorgenson, "My Studio," *Sunset* (November 1900 to April 1901), 113.

[199] "Half Dome and Washington Columns, Yosemite Valley, Cal," Postcard sent June 25, 1914, Camp Curry, *Yosemite Valley Railroad Corporate Collections*, California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017).

companies directly profited from the use of these Yosemite motifs (in order to experience Yosemite in person most would have to buy a train ticket) the Romantic Era language became an advertising technique and profiting tactic.[200]

Another theme in the Yosemite narrative utilized by railroad advertising at the turn-of-the-century was the notion that the journey was part of the experience. Unlike prior accounts that bemoaned the very real difficulties of the trip, depictions now represented travel as part of the pleasures of touring since it could be done with speed, comfort, and style. Although leisure travel began to democratize towards the end of the 1890s, tourism to the Far West was still an endeavor of the American upper-class until the 1920s.[201] Competition for travelers' dollars spurred extensive railroad advertising campaigns.[202] An outpouring of hundreds of thousands of railroad promotional materials, each targeting this elite passenger class, inundated the public.[203] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, railroads catered to their desired clienteles' interests and needs. This was particularly true about the "limited" trains that offered direct, full service to the Far West. Technological advances in travel, such as air-conditioned and heated cars, Pullman sleepers, and refrigeration progressed alongside increased American leisure

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[200] *Sunset* (San Francisco: May 1898) 1:1, 4.

[201] Rothman, *Devil's Bargains*, 24.

[202] Zega and Gruber, *Travel by Train*, xi.

[203] Orsi writes that Southern Pacific Co., "was issuing heroic quantities of pamphlets and other materials," by the early 1900s. In one three-year period, the company created about 10 million pieces of promotional material, see *Sunset Limited*, 158. Southern Pacific advertising and printing expenditures increased steadily from $150,000 in 1888 to $400,000 in 1900 to $1,800,000 in 1907, *Sunset Limited*, 163. Zega and Gruber write that railroads fiercely competed with each other for passengers, although freight traffic was the highest source of income for the trains, *Travel by Train*, 3.

travel. Hal Rothman argued in *Devil's Bargains* that competition, advertising, technology, and the increasing "spheres of influence" of the railroads in the West directly "led travel to become tourism" by the 1900s.[204]

A 1913 AT&SF booklet on their *California Limited* train from Chicago perfectly reflected how corporate railroads' advertising specifically targeted American upper-class leisure travelers. The pamphlet emphasized "exclusivity," "high-grade service," "fashion," "travel comfort," and advertised that the trip was "quicker and cheaper than an ocean voyage."[205] The booklet also shed light on the theme of diversification, noting that "the train has a car for nearly every travel need," and modernity, advertising the men's smoking car equipped with a bank, daily newspapers, writing desk, and all the "familiar club comforts for the man of the big city."[206] Details about industrial advances, such as descriptions of "evenly heated" cars "by the Garland Process" and "modern all-steel Pullmans," also adorned the brochure.[207] Many images alongside these descriptions helped the reader to visualize these themes. Gentlemen in full suits, for example, and women dressed in the finest clothes and ornate hats are shown lounging in the trains, being serviced in the dining cars, and enjoying the scenery from large observation windows (Figure 15). One image of a train interior depicting the back of a large comfy-

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[204] Rothman, *Devil's Bargains*, 44 and 48-49.

[205] *The California Limited: Nineteenth Season, 1913-1914*, W.J. Black (Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway Co.: 1913), 3-4, 6, 8, Hathi Trust, babelhathitrust.org, (Accessed April 2018).

[206] *The California Limited*, 12.

[207] *Limited*, 7 and 8.

looking chair as a main focal point is particularly symbolic of the notion that the railroad leaders wanted to sell the idea of comfort, wealth, and leisure (Figure 16).

The 1913 AT&SF booklet also demonstrated how transcontinental railroad company narratives incorporated western nature attractions when aiming to sell travel to the Far West. The editors noted, for example, that the *California Limited* would pass the "world-wonder, the Grand Canyon."[208] The Santa Fe particularly showcased Southwest culture in its company imagery and advertising campaigns during this period and, therefore, tended to focus more on the Grand Canyon than other areas such as Yosemite.[209] On the AT&SF *California Limited*, however, "incomparable Yosemite" became one of the main sights for the company to promote to travelers.[210] One particularly large image, for example, showcased Yosemite's recognizable Half Dome as part of the sights to see.[211] The booklet depicted most of these nature attractions and landmarks through large observation windows, reinforcing the idea that train travel, including sightseeing of national parks, was part of the vacation experience. This representation of western park landscapes supports the idea of "windshield" tourism, another interpretation of how technology impacts national park tourism.[212]

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[208] *Limited*, 4.

[209] Zega, "Advertising the Southwest," 281 and Rothman, *Devil's Bargains*, 55-60.

[210] Ibid, 3 and 4.

[211] Ibid.

[212] Many scholars write on the impact of the automobile on nature attractions and describe the rise of "windshield wilderness," or the period when many Americans began to experience national parks from car windows in the early twentieth century. The use of the automobile for nature tourism would only increase in the postwar era, and continues today as most Americans "encounter parks primary through their automobiles," David Louter, "Glaciers and Gasoline: The Making of a Windshield Wilderness, 1900-1915, *Seeing and Being Seen*, 249. For more on the impact of cars on wilderness preservation see Paul Sutter's

Advances in printing, the growth of advertising, and the rise of mass circulation all influenced the railroads companies' promotional campaigns as transportation developed symbiotically alongside other industries, including tourism. In 1881, Frederick Ives (of Currier and Ives) revolutionized illustrated advertising and "sparked a boom" when he invented the half tone process, a means of reproducing an image by the human hand onto a printed page.[213] The amount of promotional material produced by the railroads after this date numbered in the hundreds of thousands, especially the inexpensive and easy-to-circulate booklet.[214] The intense competition between the railroads led to growth of advertising as a modern business and a science, with the creation of national advertising magazines, such as *Printer's Ink*.[215] The railroads also utilized a "media mix" of mass promotional material that included ornate travel posters, detailed maps, pamphlets, postcards, magazines, newspaper articles, expositions, and even traveling displays.[216] The growing networks of transportation made mass circulation possible, sustaining and fueling the advertising campaigns. These advances in industry and technology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries cannot be overemphasized in the connection between the growth of railroads, transportation

Driven Wild. Most studies on the role of the automobile in nature tourism do not include earlier modes of transportation, such as the railroad, early motor tour buses, and stage coaches, which could all be interpreted as early tourists sightseeing from vehicles as well.

[213] Zega and Gruber, *Travel by Train*, 3.

[214] Zega, "Advertising the Southwest," 285.

[215] Zega and Gruber, *Travel by Train*, 3.

[216] Zega and Gruber, 22.

networks, advertising, and tourism. As historian Earl Pomeroy observed, by the first quarter of the twentieth century, "the tourist industry was becoming representative of American mass production techniques."[217]

Central to the growth of tourism was an emergent national transportation infrastructure that brought travelers closer to their desired destinations.[218] Wealthy entrepreneurs saw the potential of building short lines to link with the main lines in California as early as the 1870s.[219] It was not long after the promotional campaigns and the rise of the tourist industry in the 1890s when the locomotive replaced horse-run stages into areas such as Yosemite. Hank Johnston notes in *Short Line to Paradise* that the "tremendous tourist appeal" of Yosemite fueled an "optimism" about building a rail line through the "twisting, turning path" and rugged terrain of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.[220] The mounting pressures from the growing crowds of tourists accustomed to comfort, ease, and modern forms of travel also played a role. Since neither the Southern Pacific nor the Santa Fe thought it feasible to build a line directly to Yosemite, a group of San Francisco Bay financers formed the Yosemite Valley Railroad (YVRR) in December 1902.[221] Construction began three years later, after the company secured

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[217] Earl Pomeroy, *In the Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2nd edt., 1990), 138.

[218] Rothman, *Devils Bargains,* 24.

[219]Almost immediately after the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, Central Pacific (precursor to Southern Pacific) bought other railroad lines and built extensions into the Central Valley in 1872. By the end of the 1870s, the company "monopolized California transportation," see Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 17-20.

[220] Hank Johnston, *Short Line to Paradise: The Story of the Yosemite Valley Railroad* (Long Beach: Johnston and Howe, 1962), 9, Hathi Trust, www.babel.hathitrust.org, (Accessed January 2018).

[221] Johnston, *Short Line to Paradise*, 10.

rights-of-way, and on May 15, 1907 the engineers completed the first full-length run from the Central Valley city of Merced to El Portal (the "Gateway") just outside Yosemite National Park.[222]

The YVRR created promotional material, although not as extensive and elaborate as the mainline railroads, during the height of its tourist traffic from the late 1900s to the 1920s.[223] One early black-and-white brochure echoed similar themes to the transcontinental railroad material, such as travel being "convenient and comfortable" and the journey part of the "picturesque" sightseeing experience.[224] One section described the sixty mile trip on the YVRR as a "most interesting ride" through "mountain scenery of unusual beauty."[225] A two-toned YVRR brochure from the 1910s was replete with a full page map, schedules, and multiple pages with photographs of Yosemite landmarks overwhelming the pages.[226] This pamphlet exemplified the theme that travel to Yosemite was part of the tourist experience even more so than earlier YVRR material, as it aimed

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[222] Johnston, 10 and 14.

[223] Johnston writes that the height of YVRR passenger travel was in 1925, with a total revenue of $358,234. During both WWI and WWII the federal government took over all railroads, including YVRR. When Highway 140, the All-Year-Highway from Merced to El Portal was completed in 1926, the YVRR lost much of its tourist traffic and stayed in business mainly with freight traffic from local cement and lumber companies. After a reorganization in 1935, the company struggled for ten more years and, eventually, the railroad ended on August 24, 1945, see *Short Line to Paradise*, 22-24.

[224] "Yosemite Valley Railroad Co." Brochure (1) in *Yosemite Valley Railroad Corporate Records*, California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017). O.W. Lehmer is listed as the General Manager, dating the brochure from 1907 to 1920, when he held that position.

[225] Ibid.

[226] "Yosemite Valley Railroad Co." Brochure (2) in *Yosemite Valley Railroad Corporate Records*, California State Railroad Museum. Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017.) O.W. Lehmer is listed as the General Manager and the postcard mentioned the "Wells Fargo Express Office," first built in 1910, thereby dating the brochure between 1910 and 1920.

to sell all parts of California along the YVRR route. The brochure described Merced, the nexus point of the YVRR trains with the main lines, as "a pretty little city" in the "richest fertile sections of the San Joaquin Valley."[227] Whole paragraphs devoted to travel into Yosemite include detailed descriptions such as "on every side are orchards, vineyards" with "ideal picnic and camping grounds" in front of the "glistening Sierra Nevada."[228] Images of the YVRR train cars and the depot appeared alongside these descriptions. While the landscape photographs dominated the visual narrative, it is noteworthy that modes of transportation and the built environment had a place in the imagery of the brochure. The YVRR clearly aimed to promote its train and route not only as a way to get to the park, but as a part of the narrative of a Yosemite vacation.

The theme of travel to the park as part of the tourist experience in railroad promotional material from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reinforced the idea that Yosemite was more than its physical location. The implication of such a narrative was that tourism to Yosemite started well before a tourist actually entered the park. A plethora of YVRR postcards from the 1910s reflected this idea. Many of the postcards included trains, the depot, and hotels such as the Del Portal in El Portal as the main focal points. YVRR postcards also depicted the trains on route to Yosemite, in the midst of green canyons and beside the sparkling blue Merced River.

Many businesses and industries utilized postcards for advertising at the turn-of the-century since they were inexpensive to produce, eye-catching, and easy to

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[227] *Yosemite Valley Railroad* Co. (2)

[228] Ibid.

circulate.[229] At Yellowstone National Park, one of the first concessionaires was a family-run company, Haynes Photo, which specifically created and sold postcards in several sites throughout the park. Lesley Gilmore writes that Haynes' images not only advertised the park but directly helped the area become a "tourist mecca."[230] Advances in print media and developments within the United States Postal Service at the end of the nineteenth century were key to giving rise to a "national craze" of sending and collecting postcards, with numbers of cards produced in the millions.[231] Locals around Yosemite and the Central Valley, however, also sent Yosemite postcards as a quick note to family or friends.[232] There is a difficulty, therefore, to know the influence of postcards on Yosemite and other national park tourism, if the cards were sometimes purchased and sent by non-tourists. Postcards, moreover, have many limitations as a primary source and it is difficult to uncover the full influence of ephemera on a particular historical society.[233]

Also demonstrated in the YVRR promotional material was the theme of co-promotion of other tourist businesses, similar to the pattern of early stage and agent

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[229] Allison C. Marsh, "Greetings from the Factory Floor: Industrial Tourism and the Picture Postcard," *Curator: The Museum Journal,* 51:4 (October 2008), 380-381, Wiley Online Library, http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/doi/10.1111/j.2151-6952.2008.tb00324.x/full (Accessed February 2017).

[230] Lesley M. Gilmore, *Canyon Village in Yellowstone: The Model for Mission 66* (San Francisco: Arcadia Publishing, 2017), ProQuest EBook Central, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/lib/asulib-ebooks/reader.action?docID=4852810 (Accessed March 2019).

[231] Marsh," Greetings from the Factory Floor," 380.

[232] *Postcards, U-Z*, "Yosemite," California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017).

[233] Marsh, "Greetings," 378.

announcements in the late 1880s and 1890s. In addition to the many photographs of Yosemite landmarks, such as Washington Column, Bridal Veil Falls, and Half Dome, the YVRR brochures also described tourist accommodations inside the park. For example, the YVRR brochures detailed Camp Yosemite and Camp Curry as "excellent camps" that were "well situated and well kept."[234] Additional particulars about the accommodations, such as "everything is clean," tents are raised and electric-lighted, and even that "beds are good," can be interpreted as direct promotion for these other businesses by the YVRR.[235] This feature demonstrated the continued interconnection of Yosemite businesses in the tourist market. Since the YVRR leaders needed to promote a pleasant Yosemite experience as a whole in order to sell tickets on their trains, the company found it productive to advertise other Yosemite businesses in combination with its own.

Modernity as a positive force and the diversification of resources and experiences were also themes of YVRR promotional material from the 1910s and 1920s. The company stressed the ease, comfort, and "engineering skill" of travel to Yosemite.[236] A brochure from the 1920s, titled "Yosemite by Rail" was even more indicative of a furthering embeddedness of these themes in Yosemite representation. On the cover, unlike the earlier YVRR pamphlets depicting landmarks, there was a large image of a train in front of a Yosemite landscape landmark (Figure 17).[237] There was also more

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[234] "Yosemite Valley Railroad Co." brochure (2), 1910-1920.

[235] Ibid, 15.

[236] Ibid.

[237] "Yosemite by Rail" by the Yosemite Valley Railroad Co., *Yosemite Valley Railroad Corporate Records,* California State Railroad Museum, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017). The YVRR herald (with

descriptions of the trains themselves inside the brochure, an increase from years prior. The YVRR officials, for example, stated that "equipment includes a roomy, spotlessly clean observation-parlor car."[238] The brochure also mentioned that for the first time "convenient, comfortable" Pullmans from Los Angeles or San Francisco traveled all the way to Yosemite, so "visitors from the east can include this inviting side trip in their western itinerary."[239] Since the train symbolized industry, it makes sense that railroad leaders would represent their product as a positive element of modernity; yet, it is significant that the YVRR chose to specifically detail mechanical and technical elements in their advertising. This representation showed that the readers of the pamphlet, and potential tourists to Yosemite, would be interested in the comfort, speed, and other conveniences that modern technology could provide in the early twentieth century.

YVRR representations of the Yosemite which highlighted industry also included the theme of a diverse experience. The material, for example, stressed a wide-range of travel elements, such as accommodations, scenery, and recreational activities, which the area had to offer. One brochure advertised that "every day there are new sights" and emphasized that Yosemite was a "year round [sic] playground" with numerous activities during all seasons.[240] The imagery in the brochures also reflected diversity. One brochure presented the same shot of the valley in two different ways: one image depicting a valley

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an image of Vernal Falls) used throughout the brochure helps date it from 1921 to 1935, when that logo was used.

[238] "Yosemite by Rail," Yosemite Valley Railroad.

[239] Ibid.

[240] "Yosemite," Yosemite Valley Railroad Brochure (2), 1910-1920.

covered with flowers in spring and another sprinkled with winter snow.[241] Into the 1920s, the promotional material reinforced the idea that Yosemite hosted a variety of resources, implying that many different social and interest groups could enjoy the park at all times of the year. The growing democratization of the tourist industry and diversification in the modern era, thus, played a role in advertising, touring, and representing Yosemite.[242]

Contributing to the growth and democratization of the tourist market, as well as the representation of Yosemite as a mass consumer product, was the advent of another mode of transportation: the automobile.[243] As the YVRR replaced the horse-drawn coaches in the 1900s, the short line itself was made extinct by the predominance of the automobile in the early twentieth century.[244] The first automobile entered Yosemite in 1900, and park managers briefly banned the vehicles on the belief that they interfered with the pleasures of the Yosemite experience.[245] Park managers could not prevent the burgeoning trend of automobile ownership, however, which more than doubled nationwide from half a million in 1910 to 1.3 million in 1913.[246] Pressures from the automobile enthusiasts and related special interest groups caused the park ban on cars to

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[241] "Yosemite," Yosemite Valley Railroad.

[242] While there was a growing democratization of national park travel in the 1910s and 1920s, white, upper and middle-class individuals still mainly visited these places. One must note, therefore, that tourist representations, experiences, or promotional rhetoric did not typically include working-class citizens nor minorities.

[243] Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West*, 130 and 138.

[244] Johnston writes that the all-year highway to YNP "hurt the YV [Yosemite Valley Railroad] more than anything else," *Short Line to Paradise*, 26.

[245] David Louter, "Glaciers and Gasoline," 250 and 252.

[246] Louter, 255.

be lifted, and by 1915 park managers allowed automobiles inside all national parks.[247] The true supremacy of the automobile at Yosemite, however, commenced with the completion of a four lane, All-Year-Highway from Merced to El Portal in 1926 and the improved road networks within the valley by end of 1928.[248]

There was one organization that was not a corporate railroad nor a tourist business but that promoted Yosemite and other national parks during the late 1910s through the 1920s: the National Park Service. The Park Service under its first Director Stephen Mather (1916-1929) pushed for more visitation to national parks and instigated many reform programs, such as creating better roads, highways, and infrastructures, including the All-Year-Highway into Yosemite. Alfred Runte wrote that the "business acumen" of Mather and his successor Horace Albright was "of inestimable value" for the promotion of the national parks and that no other names "are more closely linked with the success of the National Park Service" than theirs.[249] Mather personally led campaigns in Congress, toured the parks with politicians and newsmen, and touted the parks all across the country in an organized campaign to promote, garner funds, improve, and essentially ensure the future success of the national parks and the Park Service. Mather also looked to the railroads for both funding and advertising and employed newspaper and magazine colleagues to write articles on the parks. In 1923, Congress bestowed $7,500,000 to the

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[247] Louter, 250.

[248] The Service initiated a Road Building Program in 1924 and worked with the Bureau of Public Roads to improve road conditions at all national parks, Linda W. Greene, "Yosemite: The Park and Its Resources," 332-337.

[249] Runte, *National Parks,* 102.

Service to improve roads and better enable automobile tourism.[250] Mather and the men he employed to promote parks incorporated much of the same themes and methods, such as co-advertising, using a variety of mediums, and promoting diversity of resources, as the other tourist businesses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Mather knew that the success of the Park Service and the parks themselves relied upon cooperation between both private and public interests to stimulate not only continued visitation to the parks but also Americans' interest in them as well.[251]

Historian Hal Rothman labeled the stage in American western tourism when the automobile revolutionized park travel and advertising, as "recreational tourism."[252] Easier access to parks by transportation infrastructures, a broader distribution of wealth, and a national market for recreation all spurred the rise of a new type of traveler. This new tourist was primarily middle class and was not interested in the refined tastes and cultured activities of the American elites. In the nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries, the leisure class held a "hegemonic influence" on tourism which the automobile helped to dissipate.[253] From the 1920s on, the new recreational tourism catered and appealed to a broader section of the American public, causing travel to become more democratized.[254]

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[250] Robert Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 3rd edt., 1970), 147 and 169.

[251] Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, 194.

[252] Rothman, *Devils Bargains,* 24.

[253] Ibid.

[254] Ibid.

The Curry family and their businesses exemplify this new stage in tourism. David and Jennie Curry were two school teachers with a "brevity of purse" who began a small, seven tent camp "experiment" in the Yosemite Valley in 1899 that quickly grew into a large concessionaire conglomerate, albeit family business.[255] The Currys described their rise as "typically American growth."[256] The Curry Camp Company promotional material echoed many of the same themes as those by the railroads at the turn-of-the-century, as well as showcased the increasing democratization of travel and further growth of tourism and technology within national parks.

A brochure detailing the 1923 Camp Curry season had a few references to motor services in Yosemite, while the landscape, accommodations, and recreational activities took center stage in both word and image.[257] The cover depicted the Camp Curry entrance sign, and their signature attraction, the fire fall, as the two main focal points. The images scattered throughout the brochure were a combination of photographs and drawings of various Yosemite landmarks, Curry accommodations, and recreational activities. There were no images of any vehicles, modes of transportation or automobiles throughout the brochure. There was a small section, however, advertising "Camp Curry's

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[255] "Yosemite: Where the Fires Falls," Camp Curry Co., 1923, *Corporate Ephemera,* "Yosemite," California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017).

[256] "Yosemite: Where the Fires Falls," Camp Curry Co., 1923. Linda Greene notes that in 1911, the Department of the Interior allowed Camp Curry to accommodate up to 500 guests and their tourist numbers for the season soared to 3,500. By 1916, the Curry's could accommodate 1000 people at a time. The DOI also allowed for improvements and developments at the camp, such as a bowling alley, repair shop, social hall, swimming pools, steam laundry, ice plant, and a 200 car storage garage, in the late 1910s "Yosemite: The Park and Its Resources," 292 and 384-385.

[257] *Yosemite,* Camp Curry, 1923.

Yosemite-Sierra Automobile Map and Guide folders" that could be found at the camp or an automobile office.[258] The paragraph also added that this guide detailed all roads into and throughout Yosemite, as well as information on grades, distances, supply stations and government road regulations.[259] Although automobile tourism did not figure visually nor prominently in text, there was a clear indication that motor tourism existed in Yosemite in the early 1920s and that concessionaires provided services for this type of tourist.

The Curry Company and the YVRR were not the only Yosemite tourist businesses in the early decades of the twentieth century creating promotional material. The Yosemite National Park Co. in the 1920s was another large stakeholder in a variety of Yosemite services. The company was previously known as Desmond, but after a reorganization and split in December 1917 from the former owner and founder, D.J. Desmond, the new management decided to change the name.[260] In 1925, the Yosemite National Park Co. produced a resort brochure that demonstrated many of the same themes of Yosemite advertising in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The pamphlet highlighted Yosemite's diversity of resources, a growing democratization of travel, as well as the incorporation of modernity and technology into park representation. The company, for example, wrote that the "great scenic attractions and unlimited recreational opportunities" of Yosemite National Park are "made accessible to the public"

[258] Ibid.

[259] Ibid.

[260] Greene, "Yosemite: The Park and Its Resources, Historic Resource Study," 295 and 360.

by the variety and number of resorts.[261] The brochure creators even boasted that Yosemite's resorts were "of the widest variety" of any national park and that there was "something to suit every taste and purse" from inexpensive, rustic hiking camps to five-star luxury hotels.[262]

The brochure, in addition to focusing on the wide-range of services, also promoted the Yosemite natural landscape as diverse. The creators scattered quips such as "open the year round" and "distinctly beautiful in every season" throughout the pamphlet."[263] The brochure also boldly proclaimed that "majestic peaks and sapphire lakes do not call the same people back," but that an assortment of recreational activities, such as romantic nightly dancing, classy concerts with full orchestras, family-friendly swimming pools, and rustic saddle trips, stimulated repeat tourism.[264] The brochure's many photographs, including images of all the different resort types, Yosemite in various seasons, and tourists partaking in numerous activities, also reflected diversity in accommodations, landscapes, and recreation. Elements of modernity are also listed in the brochure as part of the diverse Yosemite experience. The brochure creators, for example stated "all modern service provided" and listed the garage, filling stations, department store with "first class meat market," barber shop, and beauty salons that the Yosemite

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[261]"Resorts of Yosemite National Park," Yosemite National Park Co., 1924, *Corporate Ephemera*, "Yosemite," California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017).

[262]"Resorts of Yosemite National Park."

[263]"Resorts."

[264] Ibid.

offered. [265] This representation echoed the idea of a diverse Yosemite, having a variety of resources for all types of tourists with differing interests and needs, which reflected an increasingly modernizing American society.

Yosemite brochures from the mid-1920s exemplified how quickly the dominance of automobile travel grew in western national park tourism and promotion during the 1920s.[266] A *Yosemite Road Guide* from 1925 created by the Curry's Yosemite Transportation System Co. (YTS) reflected this fact by specifically targeting Yosemite motor tourism. The yellow-tinted cover showcased two large vehicles full of tourists underneath a giant Camp Curry sign, with a third of the space dedicated to Half Dome in the background (Figure 18).[267] The covers of Yosemite brochures now featured both the automobile and motor tourists as focal points, signifying their importance to Yosemite tourism, advertising, and the concessionaires.

Another brochure from the mid-1920s contained a whole section, "See America through the National Parks," reflective of the "See America First" campaign adopted in the early twentieth century by various organizations promoting domestic tourism.[268] The

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[265] Ibid.

[266] About 51,895 individuals traveled by train to national parks in 1915 compared with 7,418 who traveled by car. In 1930, about 2,684 individuals traveled by train and 194,771 visited national parks by car, Runte, "Promoting Wonderland," 47.

[267] "Yosemite: Road Guide, 1925" Camp Curry Company, *Corporate Ephemera*, "Yosemite," California Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017).

[268] For more on "See America First," see "Marguerite Shaffer, "Seeing America First: The Search for Identity in the Tourist Landscape, *Seeing and Being Seen*, 165-193. *Yosemite*, brochure by the Yosemite National Park Co, ND. *Corporate Ephemera*, "Yosemite" California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017). The Hetch Hetchy Valley is detailed, as well as the statement that it would soon be turned into a lake, which dates the brochure shortly before 1923, when the O'Shaughnessy Dam flooded the valley.

brochure advertised that "the national parks of the extreme west are linked by splendid highways, making possible a delightful motor tour through these treasured spaces of the continent."[269] The brochure promoted Yosemite, the Giant Forest, General Grant, Kings River Canyon, Rainier, and Zion as one unit that reflected American identity and whose experience was only made possible through technology and innovation. Pamphlets even marketed roads with superlatives and glowing adjectives such as the "wonderful hard-surfaced highways" and "a splendid system of matchless automobile highways."[270] Praise for and dependence on American industry, technology, innovation became more intertwined in the representation of Yosemite and other national parks by the mid-1920s. This park representation conveyed the concept that national landscapes were products of an American industrial empire, similar to the promotional themes of the corporate railroads a few decades before.

Although some Yosemite tourist enterprises co-advertised other businesses, fierce competition existed between companies within the park. In the 1920s, the clash between the two largest Yosemite stakeholders, the Yosemite National Park Co. and the Curry Camp Company, was at its zenith.[271] These two companies vertically integrated nearly all of the services in Yosemite, from gas stations to bakeries to saddle trips to hotels to transportation, and directly competed with each other to be lead Yosemite concessionaire. The 1916 Organic Act that created the National Park Service to oversee all national parks

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[269] "Yosemite," brochure by the Yosemite National Park Co.

[270] Ibid.

[271] Greene, "Yosemite: The Park and Its Resources," 387.

also entrusted the agency also with the regulation of park concessionaires. Stephen Mather felt that the agency could have more control over private business interests in Yosemite and other national parks if only one organized concession operated at each park.[272] At Yellowstone National Park, a regulated concessionaire monopoly already existed successfully. Mather, thus, gave the two "bickering" Yosemite service conglomerates an ultimatum in 1925: merge or be replaced.[273] The companies reluctantly joined into a single concessionaire company, the Yosemite Park and Curry Co. (YP&CC) in 1926, with a near monopoly on all park concessions. The Currys retained dominance, however, since the former Camp Curry president and the founders' son-in-law, Don Treissdder, became the new president and general manager of YP&CC.[274]

A Yosemite brochure from 1926 demonstrated the effect the merger had on promotion and representation which, in many ways, further cemented the themes of diversity and technology as a positive force. The bright orange cover contained only the image of the new company herald, which perfectly symbolized this idea. The earlier Yosemite motif of the park as a "wonderland" with diverse scenery and recreation through all seasons was turned into *the* slogan of the park with the logo declaring: "Yosemite National Park: California's All-Year Playground."[275] The pattern of co-

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[272] Greene, "Yosemite," 360.

[273] Greene, 387.

[274] Ibid. The YP&CC remained as the main concessionaire of Yosemite throughout the twentieth century.

[275] *Yosemite: Mariposa Big Trees*, Brochure, Yosemite Park and Curry Co., ND, *Corporate Ephemera*, "Yosemite," California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017). The brochure is not dated, but since the YP&CC is the creator and the Ahwahnee was advertised in the resort section with the statement that "will be open the summer season of 1927" dates the brochure from 1926 or early 1927.

advertising as well, with the merge and closer supervision of the park management, took on deeper meaning as concessions and the government became interconnected legally, physically, economically and in promotion.

The motor tour operated by the Currys, called the Yosemite Transportation System (YTS), exemplified how the automobile itself became a Yosemite tourist experience at this time. YTS brochures, similar to the road guides, specifically promoted motor tourism within Yosemite. In the brochures, the motor tour car figured prominently, popping up in various photographs full of tourists partaking in the Yosemite scenery from the vehicle (Figures 19 and 20).[276] Photographs of landmarks, such as El Capitan, without the tour bus picture are titled, "El Capitan—on "Y.T.S Tour" confirming for visitors that these natural attractions could be seen from the roads on the motor tour.[277] The typical themes of technological advancements facilitating the ease, comfort and pleasure of tourism, as well as contributing to a diversity of sights and experiences in Yosemite, featured prominently the brochure.[278] While details and photographs of the various types of resorts, scenery, and recreation still existed, the automobile was obviously the main character showcased in the brochure and appeared as part, and even the producer, of the Yosemite tourist experience.

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[276] "Yosemite Transportation System Tour" brochure by the Yosemite Transportation System (YTS), *Corporate Ephemera*, "Yosemite" California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017). The brochure is not dated, but described the "new government highway" so it was likely produced shortly after 1926.

[277] "Yosemite Transportation System Tour" brochure by the YTS, 6.

[278] Ibid.

Yosemite tours and private automobiles were not the only modes of transportation involved in national park tourism in the 1920s and early 1930s. Intercity and transcontinental bus companies, such as the Greyhound Bus Company, also made use of Yosemite and national park tourism and promotion. The Motor Transit Company rose to prominence from 1914 to 1930, when it became the Greyhound Company with bus lines extending all across the country, including California. A Pacific Greyhound Lines brochure from the early 1930s titled "What You'll See in Yosemite-High Sierra San Joaquin Valley," contained the same promotional themes utilized by railroads and concessionaires in previous decades.[279] The creators, for example, combined images of Yosemite scenery with pictures of the buses themselves on the cover and throughout the brochure. In addition, the brochure, much like YVRR in the first decades of the twentieth century, detailed the surrounding Central Valley and described the journey to Yosemite as an integral part of the overall sightseeing experience. The brochure also detailed the "Old Ghost Towns" of the California Gold Country and "Vacation Lands Near Fresno" alongside its descriptions of Yosemite, and, surprisingly, described the total as "the famous Sierra playgrounds."[280] Railroads at the end of the nineteenth century relied on previous rhetoric about landscape attractions to sell western national parks to their

[279] "What You'll See in Yosemite-High Sierra San Joaquin Valley," brochure by Pacific Greyhound Lines, Greyhound Co., ND, *Corporate Ephemera*, "Yosemite," California State Railroad Museum, Reading Room, Sacramento, CA (Accessed December 2017). The brochure is not dated, but can only be post-1930, when the company name switched to Greyhound. The brochure also described the all-year highway (completed 1926, refurbished 1928) as "new," placing it, most likely in the early part of the 1930s.

[280] "What You'll See in Yosemite," Pacific Greyhound Co.

audiences.[281] In the 1920s and early 1930s, bus companies and other businesses continued the production of knowledge linked to park tourism by also relying on the advertising rhetoric which came before, such as that of the railroad companies at the turn-of-the-century.

Yosemite and the other western national parks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not exist in vacuums. The migration and movement of people spurred by advances in technology and transportation gave more Americans easier access to these places, and allowed nature attractions to become further integrated into American culture and identity.[282] Societal trends in art, print, technology, and transportation all influenced national parks from the mid-nineteenth century through the 1920s, and continue to influence them today. The mass dissemination of various types of promotional material in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also removed western national parks, at least in representation, from their physical spaces. Since transportation business became the leading promoters of landscape attractions in the Far West, the voyage to these tourist destinations also became more integrated into their representation. One did not have to travel to Yosemite to learn the narrative nor sightsee the area with the hundreds of thousands of articles, photographs, images, posters, and magazines and other Yosemite promotional material saturating the American cultural consciousness. However, since the concessionaires, railroads, and even the Park Service

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[281] Anne Farrar Hyde, *An American Vision: Far Western Landscape and National Culture, 1820-1920* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 111.

[282] Hyde, *An American Vision,* 301.

benefited mostly from visitation to the parks, the brochures and images these organizations produced aimed to directly stimulate tourism to national parks.

Tourism to national parks slowed during World War I (1914-1917), the Great Depression in the 1930s, and World War II (1939-1945). In 1929, Mather died and his protégé, Horace Albright, served as Park Service Director and continued much of the same agenda as Mather until 1933. The Mather epoch of the National Park Service, therefore, truly ended when Albright left in 1933.[283] During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the national parks hosted New Deal Era activity through the Civilian Conservation Corps and even the Works Progress Administration; however, visitation slowed to a stop and concessionaires were in "dire straits."[284] During the United States' involvement in World War II, park visitation remained low, the Park Service staff dropped by 55% and some of the parks' natural resources, especially timber and minerals, became targets for exploitation in support of the war effort.[285] As John Ise wrote, the Park Service in the 1940s was "dominated by the war and the many problems the war brought on."[286] In addition, these decades also witnessed the end of the stronghold the transcontinental railroads held on western national park tourism and its promotion. The curtain fell completely on the golden age of the railroads in the post-WWII era, with only a few of

[283] Ise, *Our National Park Policy,* 321.

[284] Ise, 354.

[285] Ise, 448.

[286] Ise, 451.

the most popular trains enduring to the end of the 1960s.[287] The federal government in May 1971, under the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, consolidated what was left of the "skeleton" of the old lines and created the public/private organization known as Amtrak, which still runs America's passenger rail service today.[288]

The "opening-up" of the national parks to greater tourism during the Mather and Albright Era (1916-1933) could not compare to the expansion and growth in the years following WWII. The advent of more disposable income for leisure time and automobiles per capita spurred a surging American middle class to motor tour in general, but particularly to national parks.[289] The advent of a National Highway System in 1956 with improved surface structure of roads, an infrastructure to support long distance travel, such as gasoline and rest stops, and maintenance of said roads also led to increased automobile tourism to national parks. National parks and recreational tourism took ahold of the American cultural consciousness in an even larger capacity in the postwar period than the 1920s. During this time, the National Park Service leaders aimed to balance rising visitation with the environmental integrity of these preserved areas. The agency launched a highly organized and regulated program to improve the situation at parks and educate the public about the national park idea. To gain a fuller understanding of Yosemite's and other national parks' changing role in the American cultural consciousness, National Park Service promotion and representation in the postwar needs to be examined.

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[287] Alfred Runte, "Promoting Wonderland,"47.

[288] Ibid.

[289] John A. Jakle, *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth-Century North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985, 185-198.

CHAPTER 4

PERSONALITY, POLITICS, AND THE PUBLIC: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE REPRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION AT YOSEMITE, 1950S

National parks are reflections of cultural, intellectual, and political trends. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there were many contributors to corporations and park concessionaires, for example, all produced a plethora of Yosemite material that contributed to park narratives in the American mind. Studying these groups and individuals' works can help to better understand the role nature ideas play in society and in park narratives. One of the most ubiquitous and continual contributors to the cultural and social identity of national parks, and which has only thus far been briefly mentioned, is the National Park Service (NPS). The federal agency in charge of national parks, as a prominent producer and perpetuator of national park ideas since its creation in 1916, should not be overlooked in a study of interpretations and representations of national parks in the American consciousness.

The postwar era in American national park history is one of immense growth and dynamism and is an ideal time period to better understand NPS park representation. Visitation to national park units skyrocketed after World War II due to various economic and social reasons, such as the implementation of a national highway system, a more affluent middle class with abundant leisure time, and better transportation technology. The enormous visitation pressure on the parks spurred an NPS ten-year-long improvement project called "Mission 66" and national publicity campaigns to support the endeavor. Under Mission 66, park interpretation, the means of educating the public about

parks, became one of the agency's main tools to attempt to wield visitor experiences toward what the Service desired and deemed appropriate. The NPS, in particular, continuously stressed the scenic, cultural, and historical value of the national parks in hopes of influencing the public to revere these spaces and, ultimately, use them more wisely. It believed that improvements to park infrastructure would be useless in preparing the parks for the future if the visiting public did not do their part to protect and conserve the parks as well. The NPS, therefore, perpetuated ideas that national parks were repositories of an American cultural and historic legacy in their many national publications and promotions during this particularly heightened time of visitation and publicity.

Yosemite is a good case study for better understanding NPS representation and experiences at the field level during the 1950s and 1960s, as it demonstrates both continuity and conflict. The NPS, for example, showcased Yosemite in national publications as an archetype of their idea of American national parks. Yosemite became a symbol for American values, such as ideas of democracy and freedom. During the Cold War Era, the representation of national parks as spaces which fostered better citizenship and American political ideologies was particularly potent and prevalent. At this time as well, the NPS widened the program of park interpretation as a way to transfer agency beliefs to field units, including both field employees and the visiting public. Such interpretation programs included in-service training, ranger-led tours, campfire talks, signage, and any publicized information or material. At Yosemite, however, the aims and ideas that the NPS wished to articulate did not always transfer smoothly to individual

units. Sarah Gerke, in her study of the history of NPS interpretation at Grand Canyon National Park, argues that there is a "give and take" dynamic in the process of developing NPS interpretation between the national and local levels.[290] This was true at Yosemite National Park in the 1950s and 1960s. Field employees' personal experiences and preferences, for example, in addition to the individuality of Yosemite as a specific community and location complicated the transfer of NPS over-arching ideas, desires, and policies of the System as a whole.

The relationship between field offices and the Washington DC office was one factor influencing NPS representation in the postwar era. One of the other main influential factors was the growth of the environmental movement. The leaders of the agency, for example, demonstrated an increased anxiety about their public reputation, in particular their policy of conservation and natural resource management style. Studying NPS representation during the 1950s and 1960s, moreover, reveals the National Park Service is not a staid and one-dimensional institution, but rather a multi-facetious agency. As with the parks themselves, the Service is affected by the socio-political climate and influenced by the power of individuals, from NPS leaders to field employees to the public, who all help shape the national park idea.

Background of National Park Service to 1950s

In the first half of the twentieth century, NPS leaders struggled to solidify the agency's role as a federal land agency while enduring global economic and political

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[290] Sarah Ruth Gerke, *A History of National Park Interpretation at Grand Canyon National Park*, (Arizona State University ProQuest Dissertation Publishing, 2010), 3, https://repository.asu.edu/attachments/56079/content/Gerke_asu_0010E_10100.pdf, (Accessed December 2018).

events such as World War I (1914-1919), the Great Depression, and World War II (1939-1945). The Albright-Mather years of the NPS (1916-1931) are hailed by scholars as one of the agency's most successful periods, as these first two directors (and former advertising men) spearheaded successful campaigns to promote and fund the parks.[291] During the Great Depression, park visitation and commercial activity slowed significantly; yet, New Deal programs, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), enlivened the sites with various construction and development projects. America's involvement in WWII, however, "stopped cold" all of the improvements and progress made during the 1930s.[292] The NPS had to relocate from the political hub of Washington D.C. to Chicago, lost nearly 85% of its appropriations and half of its staff, and its leaders continuously fought off attempts to strip the parks of resources needed for the war effort.[293]

After WWII, the Park Service struggled to return to pre-war levels of functionality as national parks became immensely popular with an expanding American middle class. The postwar affluence of certain sections of society meant more Americans could afford both the leisure time and the means, such as automobiles and gasoline, to travel to the national parks and did so in the largest numbers ever.[294] Yosemite, for

[291] Runte, *National Parks*, 102.

[292] Greene, "Yosemite: The Park and Its Resources," 431.

[293] Greene, "Yosemite," 431-432 and Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, 447-448 and 451.

[294] Runte, *National Parks*, 158, 171-173.

example, hosted one million annual visitors by 1953—triple its numbers in the 1930s.[295] The units of the Park System were not prepared to support such sizable numbers of visitors, especially since the last federal development and maintenance projects occurred nearly two decades prior.[296]

National park visitation continued to rise in the years 1945 to 1953, as the Park Service remained constrained by a lack of federal funding and American involvement in global affairs.[297] The Korean War (1950-1953) and the escalation of the Cold War not only occupied the Truman and Eisenhower presidencies but also resulted in administrations that were not always sympathetic to the conservation of America's natural resources.[298] The federal proclivity for big dam construction in the postwar era also preoccupied the Service, as it directly conflicted with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the Interior Department (which oversaw both agencies) over public lands. The controversy over the proposed building of a dam near the Utah-Colorado border in Dinosaur National Monument, for example, eventually caused the resignation of the Park Service Director, Newton B. Drury, in 1951.

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[295] "Yosemite National Park: Travel Survey," United States Department of Interior, National Park Service in cooperation with the California Division of Highways, Statewide Planning Survey and United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Public Roads, 1953), 10-11, Hathi Trust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.c031845953;view=1up;seq=7 (Accessed July 2018).

[296] Greene, *Yosemite: The Park*, 432.

[297] Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007, 3-4.

[298] Elmo Richardson, *Dams, Parks, and Politics: Resource Development and Preservation in the Truman-Eisenhower Era* (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1973), 200-202.

Drury was one of the heads of the Park Service that leaned more toward preservation rather than the complete utilization of natural resources, and felt compelled to step down when the Department of Interior (DOI) authorized the dam in Dinosaur.[299] Drury selected Conrad L. Wirth as his replacement; however, Wirth had more in common with use-oriented directors, such as Stephen Mather, than with Drury.[300] Wirth began his career as a landscape architect and directed the CCC construction projects in the parks and monuments during the 1930s. He rose up the ranks of the Service to become Chief Land Planner, supervising all Park System design and construction, before eventually becoming director.[301] Wirth remained the leader of the NPS for thirteen years, from 1951 through 1964, ushering in an era of Service activity not seen since the Mather-Albright years. Wirth is best known for planning and implementing the ten-year (1956-1966) development project called "Mission 66" that aimed to prepare the parks for the projected 80 million visitors by the fiftieth anniversary of the NPS in 1966.

National Park Service Representation, Early 1950s

An NPS publication, "Areas Administered by the National Park Service," outlined the role of the parks under Wirth as well as his translation of the national park idea. The text stemmed from a presentation that Wirth gave to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs in the House of Representatives on March 9, 1953. In the speech, Wirth

[299] For more on the Echo Park Controversy, see Mark W. T. Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the Modern Conservation Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000).

[300] Russ Olsen, *Administrative History: Organizational Structures of the National Park Service, 1819 to 1985*, 19. Manuscript digitized 2012 by Internet Archive, https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/DownloadFile/492759 (Accessed June 2018).

[301] Carr, *Mission 66*, 40-41.

stated that the national park idea was “an expression of democracy” and that the “parks have value for what they represent out of the long association of man and nature.”[302] He reiterated this view by quoting a Congressman who described national parks as an “expression of freedom and democracy” and an integral component to America's "social well-being” and economic stability.[303] Wirth clearly believed that the national parks represented deeply-entrenched American societal and cultural values worth protecting. To Wirth and the members of Congress who just experienced WWII and were currently in the midst of the Cold War, terms such as ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom’ held special weight and importance. Wirth implied that the national parks were not valuable as nature for its own sake, but for the economic, social, and cultural benefits they produced for Americans.

Other NPS publications in the early 1950s added to the understanding of how the agency defined and represented both itself and the national parks. An NPS booklet intended for school children, for example, described the Service “like a big company” and the parks as “large land areas…so marvelous and magnificent” that it was “of national importance to keep them forever.”[304] A whole section devoted to the national

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[302] “Areas Administered by the National Park Service,” A Statement made by Conrad L. Wirth, Director, National Park Service to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, House of Representatives, 38th Congress, March 9, 1953 (Washington: GPO: 1953), 1, Hathi Trust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.31951d03669146o;view=1up;seq=5 (Accessed June 2018). Quotes are from pp. 1 and 2.

[303] Ibid, 2.

[304] “Your Booklet About the National Parks and National Parks, the National Monuments; For Use in Schools,” United States Department of Interior, National Park Service Region 4, San Francisco, California, July 1955, Resource Management Records Series 6, Subseries 7, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

park idea in the brochure explained the concept as "uniquely American," which originated when Congress set aside Yellowstone in 1872 "for the benefit and enjoyment of all the people of the U.S. for all time."[305] A 1953 brochure, "National Forests and National Parks," defined the parks in contrast to the national forests. The pamphlet writers proclaimed that national parks "protect the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life" therein for all Americans, while national forests were spaces "to protect, develop, and USE" natural resources for public interest.[306] While the NPS defined parks as "outdoor museums," the agency understood that to mean a policy of preserving nature for human use.[307]

Park Service leaders in the postwar era, in addition to defining the agency and its units, aimed to establish a more decentralized and professional agency. In-service training booklets distributed in 1954 and 1955 symbolized these changes in Park Service administration. The creation of the booklets, moreover, was in direct response to societal changes such as increased national park travel that led to greater interaction between the

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[305] Ibid.

[306] "National Parks and National Forests," A Statement by the National Park Service, United States Department of Interior, and the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 1953, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 7, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[307] "National Parks, National Forests" (1953), 1, *Camping Facilities in the National Park System* in "Memo to Superintendent, Yosemite from Regional 4 Chief of Interpretation," (29 November 1956) and "Your Booklet" (July 1955) Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 7, Yosemite National Park Archives (Accessed March 2018). A NPS brochure "The National Park Wilderness," stated that the agency's "single purpose inseparably combines use with preservation," 14, Howard Stegner, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Hathi Trust Digital Library, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112104107401;view=1up;seq=1 (Accessed July 2018).

public with the Park Service and multiple park units.[308] As Wirth noted at the time, "it is no longer sufficient for each employee to be thoroughly familiar only with the area in which he is stationed."[309] The purpose of the booklets was standardization and a desire to protect the Service's reputation in the public eye, mainly through the program of interpretation.[310] NPS leaders believed that correct interpretation was essential and that, in fact, bad interpretation could be detrimental to the parks and the Service.[311] The NPS Chief of Interpretation, Ronald Lee, stressed that all field employees who gave information directly to the public "read and observe carefully" the training booklets.[312] Director Wirth also urged employees to become familiar with the material as well, since "skillful and courteous referring of reliable information" was as "important as food and lodging to the welfare and comfort" of park visitors.[313]

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[308] "Information Handbook of the National Park Service" In-Training Services, US Department of Interior, National Park Services, Foreword by Conrad Wirth, i. Booklet itself is not dated, but it accompanied a memorandum about the booklet from the Assistant Director dated February 17, 1954, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[309] Ibid.

[310] "Information Please!" Training Bulletin for Field Employees of the National Park Service, Washington D.C. USDOI, NPS "In-Service Training Series," Ralph Anderson, 1955, 2, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 6-7, Box 28, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[311] Carr, *Mission 66*, 188.

[312] "Memorandum To All Field Offices From Ronald F. Lee, Chief of Interpretation," Washington, D.C., Department of Interior, National Park Service, May 26, 1955, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 6-7, Box 28, Yosemite National Park Archives (Accessed March 2018).

[313] "Information Please!" Training Bulletin for Field Employees of the National Park Service, Washington D.C. USDOI, NPS "In-Service Training Series," Ralph Anderson, 1955, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 6-7, Box 28, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

The NPS utilized the in-service training publications, moreover, as a tool to impart certain philosophies held by the agency onto its field employees. While the individual topics of the booklets varied, all aimed to communicate appropriate park representation and the importance of stressing the scenic, cultural, and historic importance of the units within the Park System. "Information Please!" for example, gave extensive coverage to correct employee appearance, speech, and demeanor when relaying information to visitors.[314] "Campfire Programs" explained that Service-run talks were "a tool for wielding the visitors' random experiences and impressions into well-developed understandings, appreciations, and satisfaction" for the parks.[315] In "Conducted Trips," the writers described ranger-led tours as an important way to supplement basic interpretation, such as exhibits, signs, and self-guiding mechanisms, within the National Park System.[316] In addition to educating visitors on the scenic and inspirational values of the parks, the booklet also stated that tour guides should teach "an appreciation of the significance of the area as a unit of the National Park Service."[317] Overall, the training booklets demonstrated that NPS leaders wanted to educate their field employees on the

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[314] "Information Please!"

[315] "Campfire Programs," Training Bulletin for Field Employees of the National Park Service, Washington D.C., US Department of Interior, In-Service Training Series, 1955, 4.

[316] "Conducted Trips," Training Bulletin for Field Employees of the National Park Service, US Department of Interior, In-Service Training Series, 1955, 1-2, Resource Management Records, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[317] "Conducted Trips," 3.

"background of principle, method, and technique" of the NPS in order to continue the "high standard" of the agency's public services.[318]

Herbert Kaufman's *The Forest Ranger: A Study in Administrative Behavior* (1960) focused specifically on the U. S. Forest Service, however, his work shed light on how large and complex resource management organizations, such as the Park Service, attempted to manage employee behavior at a localized level. One such method of regulation was providing up-to-date, extensive training guides and information manuals that detailed exactly how employees should react to as many predicted scenarios as possible.[319] Another approach was the indoctrination of company philosophy through multiple means, such as company publications, the use of symbols, and employee public relations.[320] The Park Service training booklets seem to be an example of all these methods; however, as Kaufmann pointed out, there are multiple challenges and limits to administrative control of individual employees' behavior. Some such powerful elements countering administrative cohesion, for example, are the influence of the local community, the distance sites are from office headquarters, and personal preference.[321] Director Wirth, interestingly, acknowledged Service employees' individual choice in the foreword of "Conducted Trips" when he wrote that the booklet's purpose was to "guide

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[318] "Campfire Programs," i and "Conducted Trips," i.

[319] Herbert Kaufman, *The Forest Ranger: A Study in Administrative Behavior* (Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future, Special Reprint Edition, 2006), 91.

[320] Kaufman, *The Forest Ranger*, 184-185 and 194-195.

[321] Kaufman, *Ranger*, 69, 74, and 80.

the individual interpreter to his own planning and presentation."[322] In short, while the in-training booklets aimed to standardize interpretive programs and behavior reflecting the Service leaders' goals, beliefs, and aims, it is difficult to ascertain what level of impact they truly had on individual field employees and their day-to day interaction with the public in the 1950s.

The 1955 in-service booklets did showcase the important role NPS interpretation played in the agency under Wirth.[323] While the philosophy behind the NPS interpretation program had a long history, the term was first consistently used by the Park Service in the 1930s.[324] Interpretation also changed somewhat in meaning, practice, and policy as each NPS director would modify the administrative structure of the agency and the programs within it. Director Wirth defined park interpretation as a program "designed to increase visitor understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the scientific, scenic, natural historic and prehistoric features of an area."[325] In its broadest terms, NPS interpretation meant a program of educating the visiting public about parks through various in-field services, such as tours, talks, museum exhibits, markers, pamphlets, and signs run or produced by park rangers, naturalists, and historians. At its most hallowed, defined by NPS employee Freeman Tilden, interpretation meant "an art form that appealed to the

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[322] "Conducted Trips," Foreword, i.

[323] Carr, *Mission 66,* 188.

[324] Carr, *Mission 66*, 184.

[325] "Information Handbook of the National Park Service" In-Training Services, US Department of Interior, National Park Services, 25. Booklet itself not dated, it accompanied a memorandum about the booklet from the Assistant Director dated February 17, 1954. Resource Management Records, Series 6, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

heart rather than the head," with an ability to imprint the sanctity and love of parks onto the public through human interaction and sentiment.[326]

It is not surprising that Tilden wrote these words about interpretation during a time when the program was at its most elevated status in the history of the Park Service. When Wirth became director, he created the first Division of Interpretation with its own chief, long-time Service man Ronald Lee, who managed several regional chiefs. Wirth also repeatedly declared that interpretation was the most important aspect of Mission 66.[327] Lee noted that one of the reasons the NPS under Wirth valued interpretation was because many units in the System were in the "interpretative stage," or in need of museums, visitor centers, and signage.[328] Ethan Carr notes that the visitor center was, in fact, a new building type invented by Park Service planners in the postwar era to function as an administrative museum, or "central hub" of interpretation and training.[329] The new interpretation program, symbolized by the visitor center, focused much more on individual sites than the broader NPS educational programs pre-1950s.[330] To Wirth, the interpretation program was the most effective tool for the NPS to guide the American touring public to understand the scenic, historic, and cultural value of the parks and, thus,

[326] Gerke, *National Park Interpretation at Grand Canyon National Park*, 448. Gerke states in her appendix that she adheres to Tilden's definition of interpretation in her work. NPS interpretation is a specific entity and cannot be confused with 'interpretation' in a dictionary sense. Wherever possible I try to delineate between Park Service interpretation as the specific program in the agency and interpretation in general, such as to interpret an idea or object.

[327] Carr, *Mission 66*, 187.

[328] Carr, 186.

[329] Carr, 12. The NPS built more than 100 new visitor centers during Mission 66.

[330] Carr, 184.

hopefully use them more wisely. In other words, improving the structural design of the parks was not enough to prepare them for over 80 million visitors by 1966, the NPS also needed to shape American beliefs about the parks as well.

The National Park Service, Ideologies, and Mission 66

Congress and President Dwight D. Eisenhower eventually approved the nearly $700 million appropriations for Mission 66 in 1956, which would be distributed in annual increments until 1966.[331] Shortly afterward, the Department of Interior and the Automobile Association of America co-sponsored a launch party in Washington, D.C for 350 guests, including Congressmen, Park Service leaders, and other key partners.[332] At the "American Pioneer Dinner" the NPS debuted the pamphlet, "Our Heritage," which summarized the policies, aims, and ideas behind Mission 66.[333] In "Our Heritage," the NPS described parks as national resources that yielded indispensable immaterial goods, such as "great cultural and inspiration products of knowledge, refreshment, and aesthetic enjoyment."[334] The NPS proclaimed, in language implying warlike threats to the System, that "grave problems beset that heritage" causing many to wonder "why their Government displays American treasures in a manner not in keeping with their greatness."[335] The "Our Heritage" booklet described Mission 66 as a forward-thinking

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[331] Ibid, 10.

[332] Ethan Carr, *Mission 66,* 117.

[333] Ibid.

[334] "Our Heritage: A Plan for its Protection and Use: Mission 66," National Park Service, United States Department of Interior (Berkeley: University of California at Berkeley, May 15, 1956), 2, Hathi Trust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.c3122672;view=1up;seq=1 (Accessed June 2018).

[335] "Our Heritage," 2 and 4.

solution to an immediate crisis that aimed to lift the Park System to standards Americans expected and deserved of their parks.[336]

Much of the language in the booklet echoed Wirth's presentation three years earlier, that the parks belonged to the American people as a part of their cultural, ideological, and historical legacy. Numerous narratives and representations by various individuals throughout the history of national parks (even prior the establishment of the Park Service in 1916) presented these spaces in similar nationalistic ways. The representation of parks as uniquely American and which promoted American ideals such as freedom, democracy, and a frontier spirit in particular was a popular depiction and theme, particularly in the Progressive Era.[337] In the 1950s, during the Cold War and international clashes between countries with different political ideologies, this representation of national parks as uniquely American took on an even more patriotic and political tone, especially when promulgated by the NPS.

The cover image used for "Our Heritage" reinforced these nationalistic themes and ideas. The picture displayed a photograph of "Mr. and Mrs. America and their youngsters" in front of a much larger image of the Liberty Bell (Figure 21).[338] The cover conveyed the message that the group symbolized both the ideal American family and sacred American values such as freedom and democracy.[339] The NPS clearly wanted to

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[336] Ibid, 6.

[337] Gerke, *A History of National Park Interpretation*, 287.

[338] "Our Heritage: A Plan," Hathi Trust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.c3122672;view=1up;seq=1 (Accessed June 2018), 1. The Liberty Bell is part of the National Park System managed by the National Park Service.

[339] "Our Heritage: A Plan."

communicate the visual message that the System belonged to the American people (albeit the agency's idea of the public as a white, middle-class family) not just as places of enjoyment but also of culture and history. In other words, the park system was as American as the Liberty Bell, and equally valuable.

The NPS outlined eight main objectives of Mission 66 in "Our Heritage," among which were the provision of more modern accommodations, government-operated facilities, funds for staff and operations, and adequate living quarters for employees. NPS interpretation fell under the third main category, which included increasing field audio-visual aids, improving road signage, printing more NPS publications, and the creation of park visitor centers. The following quote from "Our Heritage" demonstrated the importance of visitor centers to the Mission 66 program and the importance of park interpretation:

> If these visitors appreciate and understand the National Parks, and use them with wisdom and restraint, the parks can benefit great numbers of people and still be passed unimpaired. On the other hand, if these visitors do not understand the parks; if they yield to the habits of litter, vandalism, and abuse of public property; and particularly if they attempt to use them in ways inconsistent with their high purpose, the parks will eventually deteriorate and ultimately be lost.[340]

Wirth and the other leaders of the NPS strongly believed that if the agency educated the public about park values, such as their scenic beauty and national importance, then the touring public would not only have a better experience but this appreciation for the parks would influence them to act in what the NPS deemed correct park behavior. The NPS

[340] "Our Heritage," 16.

viewed itself not only as the manager of the parks, historic sites, and monuments, but also the interpreter of the national park idea and molder of proper stewardship at the parks and monuments.

NPS materials in the mid-1950s to early 1960s explained Mission 66 in ways consistent with the themes in "Our Heritage." A transcript written by Wirth for a slide reel that played in Yosemite and other sites gives a unique glimpse into the director's mindset about his program. Wirth firmly believed that the aesthetic and scenic appreciation of the parks refreshed, educated, and enlightened Americans.[341] He stressed this idea in the transcript by asserting that Americans must use their "rapidly expanding" leisure time "in ways that will strengthen the moral fiber of the nation."[342] Americans, in other words, would become better citizens if they visited national parks, and society would benefit overall. In the 1950s, social, political, and ideological events such as the Cold War and McCarthyism gripped the nation. Within this context, Wirth's words take on an important political and ideological implication. In order for the American government to fight for the ideals of democracy abroad, the country and its citizens needed to strengthen American values domestically. One way to do so, Wirth argued, was by visiting the national parks.

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[341] Conrad L. Wirth, "Mission 66 in Action—1957," National Park Service, "Still Pics—Slides, 1957-1959" Folder, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Sub Series, Box 21, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[342] Wirth, "Mission 66 in Action—1957," 16.

Yosemite National Park and Mission 66

In 1957, the National Park System consisted of 180 units that were divided into five regions, each with its own chief and regional office.[343] The NPS, like any bureaucracy, aimed to maintain consistency in policies and practices throughout the agency, especially at the field level. Yosemite National Park, as one of the most visited and most well-known parks in the System, provides a good lens for examining how field staff represented and visitors experienced Mission 66 programs and policies.

Americans easily recognized Yosemite's landmarks, such as Half Dome or Yosemite Falls, and the agency regularly utilized Yosemite images in Park System publications as a representation of all the national parks and their heritage.[344] Correspondence during the 1950s between field employees and officials in the NPS office in Washington D.C. revealed that the agency regularly needed good park images for various promotional activities or publications.[345] Yosemite employees never failed in delivering the requested images. The NPS heads even turned to Yosemite for certain park

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[343] "Areas Administered by the National Park Service," December 31, 1957, National Park Service, United States Department of Interior, iii and 1, Hathi Trust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.31951p00820310w;view=1up;seq=3 (Accessed June 2018).

[344] The inside cover of "Our Heritage" showed two images, one of a general campfire scene and the other was a sketch of Half Dome. Of the many photos scattered throughout the book, only a few are of specific sites and Yosemite has two, an image of Yosemite Falls and another image of Half Dome, "Our Heritage," 13 and 26.

[345] "Memo to Superintendent, Yosemite from Director Wirth, Subject Negatives for the Washington Office," (18 July 1955) and "Memo to Region 4 Superintendent from Assistant Regional Director, Region 4, Subject: Photographic Negatives for the Washington Office," (18 March 1958), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 5, Box 21, Yosemite National Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

images, such as early photos of national parks.[346] Yosemite had an ample supply of photographs since it was one of the most and earliest photographed units in the System and one that also harbored a museum, or a repository for archival material, since 1925.[347]

The NPS also took advantage of Yosemite's popularity among private companies and asked these businesses to promote the Park System as a whole and NPS national policies alongside Yosemite. In a letter to the Ford Motor Company, for example, Wirth stated how he hoped that their Yosemite film would "make an effort to get over to the public certain fundamental ideas" applicable to "all national parks" as well as show that the NPS helped Americans appreciate these spaces.[348] NPS leaders had a history of working with private companies to promote parks, such as Director Mather's partnerships with railroads in the 1910s and 1920s. The main benefit of cooperation with successful private companies with ties to national parks, such as oil, gasoline, or automobile companies, was that the NPS could save funds by relying on the private companies' advertising dollars. Director Wirth strongly believed that good relationships with private

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[346] In "Memo to Superintendent, Yosemite from Chief of Information, Subject Pics," (7 June 1955) author stated that the office had "been requested to get certain photos which we believe are more readily available in Yosemite than in most areas." Yosemite personnel sent an entire box of Yosemite scenes, see "Memo to Supervisor, Yosemite from Chief of Information," US Department of Interior, NPS, (5 July 1955) and Ronald Lee stated that office was "overwhelmed" with their Yosemite's "generous response" of sending 80 negatives when the department heads asked for 30, see "Memo to Superintendent, Yosemite, from Chief, Division of Interpretation Ronald F. Lee; Subject Negatives for the Washington Office" (Feb 1956) all memos within Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 5, Box 2, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[347] Yosemite Valley Museum built in 1925 was the first national park museum, see Denise Meringola, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks: Toward a New Genealogy of Public History*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012),666-68, ProQuest EBook Central, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/lib/asulib-ebooks/reader.action?docID=4533134&query= (Accessed July 2018).

[348] "Letter to Mr. Robert C. Dunn, Manager, Motion Picture Department, Ford Motor Company from Conrad Wirth," (18 May 1956), Resource Management Records, Series 5, Subseries 2/3/4, Yosemite National Park Archives (Accessed March 2018).

interests were paramount to the success of Mission 66.[349] The American Pioneer Diner that launched the promotion of Mission 66 reflected such tactics, as the American Automobile Association co-sponsored the event with the NPS.

Another NPS business partnership under Wirth was with the Woodmen of the World for the production of a Mission 66 calendar.[350] The NPS leaders not only selected Yosemite National Park as one of the six featured sites but also as the first park to be presented in the calendar. In 1960, the service distributed 50,000 copies of the calendar with hopes of producing another one the following year.[351] The calendar was yet another instance where the NPS singled out Yosemite to represent the entire National Park System and to promote a national NPS program. In many ways, Yosemite became a double-symbol of national identity, first as an individual park and then as representative of the System as a whole, during this heightened activity of NPS promotion.

Studying the Mission 66 calendar one can also try to uncover the voice of park rangers interpreting NPS policies. John Preston held the position of Superintendent of Yosemite National Park from 1952 to 1965, roughly the same years that Wirth led the NPS. Since the calendar producers chose Yosemite as the first park to be featured, they asked Preston to send a paragraph detailing Mission 66 and a general statement on

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[349] Carr, *Mission 66*, 118. The Resource Management Records at Yosemite National Park contains many memos from Wirth supporting private companies' (such as Standard Oil or Eastman-Kodak) promotional work, including advertisements, books, or films, on the national parks.

[350] Director Wirth attended the Woodmen of the World national convention, gave a speech and presented an award, "Memo to Superintendents of Yosemite, Bryce Canyon, Rocky Mountain, Blue Ridge, Glacier, and Mesa Verde National Parks from Regional Director, Region 2," (26 June 1959), Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[351] Ibid.

Yosemite. The Yosemite section echoed many of the typical themes in previous narratives and representations, such as the wonder, beauty, history, and "rich reward" the park offered visitors.[352] In the Mission 66 paragraph, the writer described the program as a construction project aimed to allow for the "widest possible use" with the "maximum protection of the natural resources" in the parks.[353] This section, moreover, devoted more attention to Yosemite's role in Mission 66 than to the program in general, noting that the park illustrated "very well the need for such an all-out-program" due to having over a million visitors each year."[354] The author then listed the specific improvements at Yosemite that the NPS enacted under Mission 66, including the construction of new campsites, road work, and the modernization of facilities.[355] While it is not clear whether Preston wrote the calendar text himself, what is evident is that Yosemite leaders represented Mission 66 as a successful project improving the preservation of Yosemite.[356] Employees at individual units within the National Park System viewed and experienced system-wide programs and policies of the NPS from the standpoint of the parks they lived and worked at.

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[352] "Memo from John Preston, Superintendent Yosemite National Park, to Regional Director, Region 2, Subject: Text" (6 July 1959), Yosemite National Park Archives (Accessed March 2018).

[353] "Memo from John Preston, Superintendent Yosemite National Park" (6 July 1959). From the Mission 66 calendar correspondences at the Yosemite National Park Archives, it is difficult to ascertain whether Preston wrote the calendar statement or if another employee produced it. Preston, nevertheless, approved the text and sent it to NPS headquarters.

[354] 'Memo from John Preston," (6 July 1959).

[355] Ibid.

[356] Ibid. From the Mission 66 calendar correspondences at the Yosemite National Park Archives, one cannot ascertain whether Preston wrote the calendar statement or if he had another employee produce it. Preston, nevertheless, approved the text since he sent it to Washington for publication.

Since the NPS leaders believed that promotion was integral to the success of Mission 66, they attempted to standardize field employees' public relations at the local level. In May 1957, for example, the NPS Department of Information prepared a lengthy press release on Mission 66 at Yosemite that the park leaders were to disseminate to the local press [357] The Acting Director of Region 4 also distributed to his region's superintendents, including Preston, a guideline for press releases that included such details as timing and developing relationships with the press.[358] The NPS leaders also attempted to correct employee public relations behavior. One memo from Associate Director E. T. Scoyen, for example, rebuked field offices for not communicating to their local Congressmen important park developments prior to releasing the information to the press.[359] Scoyen also reprimanded field employees for failing to mention the Service or the Department of Interior in these press releases.[360] Field office staff, as the Mission 66 calendar demonstrated, understandably concentrated their park representation largely at the field level. This could result in a conflict with the leaders of the NPS in Washington

[357] "Memo to Superintendent Yosemite National Park from Chief of Information, Subject: Press Releases on Yosemite Mission 66 Program, (7 May 1957) which included "Yosemite Mission 66 Program Focused on Protecting Famed Valley," Resource Management Record, Series 6, Subseries 6, "Press Releases 1950s," Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[358] In the memo, it was noted that the Region 2 Director created the guideline, but that the Acting Director of Region 4 believed it would benefit his area as well. "Memo to Region 4 Superintendents from Acting Regional Director, Region 4, Herbert Maief" (8 December 1958) including "Guidelines for Issuing Press Releases" (14 November 1958), Resource Management Files, Series 6, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[359] Scoyen also mentioned that an earlier memorandum on November 21, 1956 also covered "this situation," "Memo to Washington Office and All Field Offices from Associate Director, Subject: Identifying the Department of Interior and National Park Service in Press Releases, Speeches, etc.," (15 April 1957), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 5, Box 22, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[360] Ibid.

D.C. who had to vie for federal funds and support for the National Park System as a whole. The leaders of the Park Service, moreover, wanted to regulate individual park representation, particularly when it involved Mission 66, yet, correspondences show that that regulation was not always successful. As Kauffman demonstrated in *The Forest Ranger*, distance and the strength of the community dynamic were some of the most powerful forces countering administrative control at the local level.[361] It is not implausible, therefore, to conjecture that at Yosemite, as a unit far from the NPS headquarters and one that had a long history and therefore strong cultural identity, these opposing forces to unity would be especially strong.

The end of the year reports on the Information and Interpretation Services at Yosemite provide more insight on how the NPS administrative-wide policies, such as the interpretive program, translated to individual parks. From 1960 through 1962, the reports indicated that the program did have some successes, such as orientating visitors to the park via free pamphlets at entrance stations, but that, overall, many areas needed improving. [362] One constant requirement, for example, was for more and better trained interpretive employees. Another interpretive need was for mechanisms to familiarize and guide visitors to the park once they were inside.[363] The reports also listed the Yosemite

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[361] Kaufmann, *The Forest Ranger*, 71, 74.

[362] "Annual Report on the Information and Interpretive Services, Yosemite National Park and Devil's Postpile National Monument," prepared by William R. Jones, District Naturalist, 1962, 1-2 and 4, "Interpretive Activities (Reports) 1960, 1961, 1962" Folder, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 5, Box 20, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2014).

[363] Ibid 4, and "Annual Report on the Information and Interpretive Services, Yosemite National Park and Devil's Postpile National Monument," for years 1960 and 1961.

Valley Museum as the most utilized interpretive station; yet, the area was often "odiferous, congested and noisy" and information was not adequately "assayed."[364] A contributing factor to the limited success of the interpretive program at Yosemite was also the fact that visitation continued to rise and the staff struggled to provide services to meet visitation needs with their already limited means.[365] Another reason was that Yosemite had a long history of interpretation, including the oldest park museum, and, thus, the Mission 66 plan for Yosemite did not focus on this area as much as it did at other sites. The Grand Canyon, for example, received a new museum and visitor center in 1957, one of seven other sites to receive one that year.[366] Overall, the reports indicated that the Yosemite interpretive and information staff had some control over their program, such as reconfiguring administrative structures or discontinuing a publication program; yet, agency-wide issues, such as lack of funding, encumbered their program at the park level.[367]

One could argue, however, that the overall Mission 66 plan for Yosemite National Park was successful. The Mission 66 aims outlined by the NPS, such as in "Our

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[364] "Annual Report," 1962, 4 and "Annual Report" 1961, 4.

[365] "Annual Report," 1962, states that more than one and a half million visitors came to Yosemite in 1961, which was an increase of 23% from prior year. Interpretive "contacts" increased by 215,000, 2.

[366] Gerke, *A History of National Park Interpretation*, 280. Gerke argues that interpretation at Grand Canyon changed under the Mission 66 program, most notably from the control and influence of onsite rangers and naturalists to outside authorities and NPS leaders. She states that the Mission 66 interpretive program at Grand Canyon was "a mixture of successes and disappointments," including issues with the operations at the new visitor center, 280-284. Quote on 268.

[367] "Annual Reports," 1960-1962. One such liberty, for example, was the discontinuation of a monthly publication of the Yosemite Natural History Association in order to more efficiently utilize interpretive staff and funds, "Annual Report," 1961, 1.

Heritage," were general guidelines for the entire National Park System, yet each park, site, and monument had its own individual plan for improvement. At Yosemite, the "paramount objective" was the restoration of the most trafficked and developed section of the park, Yosemite Valley.[368] By the early 1960s, the NPS had met many of their tangible Mission 66 goals for Yosemite Valley, such as placing limits on campsites and building more accommodations outside the most popular areas. The NPS also completed two of its most important developments, the construction of a new administration and staff housing building outside the park at El Portal and the razing of certain dilapidated structures in the Valley. Most of the local and state newspapers that covered Mission 66 developments deemed the NPS improvements a success.[369] *The San Francisco Chronicle*, for example, noted that beauty was being restored to Yosemite through the actions of the NPS.[370] Many local papers, such as *The Fresno Bee* and *The Mariposa Gazette*, also covered Mission 66, particularly Wirth's dedication of the new Yosemite Village store in 1959, and noted all the progress being made.[371]

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[368] "Yosemite MISSION 66 Program Focused on Protecting Famed Valley," 1-2, Department of Information, National Park Service, United States Department of Interior, see "Memo to Supervisor, Yosemite National Park from chief of Information (7 May 1957), "Press Releases," Resource Management Records, Yosemite National Park Archives (Accessed March 2018).

[369] "Village Store Huge Improvement for Visitors' Facilities," *Highway 120 Gazette* (1 June 1959) and "Old Buildings in Yosemite Are Removed," *Fresno Bee* (23 April 1959), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 6-7, Box 30, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[370] "Beauty being Restored at Yosemite," *San Francisco Chronicle* (San Francisco: 26 April 1959), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 6-7, Box 30, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[371] "National Park Director Dedicates New Facilities in Yosemite Nt'l Park, *Mariposa Gazette* (Mariposa, CA: 14 May 1959) and "Use Plus Protection is Wirth's US Parks Goal," *The Fresno Bee* (11 May 1959), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 6-7, Box 30, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

While most publications presented Mission 66 at Yosemite positively, a growing faction of individuals perceived ever-increasing park tourism as a threat to their environmental integrity and questioned Wirth's "use plus protection" policy.[372] The Sierra Club, a California-based environmental group founded by one of the earliest Yosemite advocates, John Muir, particularly took a keen interest in the Mission 66 activities at the park. Ansel Adams, a well-known Yosemite photographer and spokesperson, and other local Sierra Club members believed that Mission 66 set a dangerous precedent at Yosemite and led a small, unsuccessful campaign to halt road construction in the Yosemite backcountry.[373] While the Sierra Club and Adams did not hold the majority opinion of Mission 66 developments in Yosemite in the 1950s, national trends during the 1960s and 1970s would influence more Americans toward an environmentalist view of national parks. As a result, many more individuals began to question the Park Service's enthusiastic embrace of recreational development and advocate for more awareness and protection of the parks' ecological integrity.

Stewart Udall, the Environmental Movement, and Wirth's Resignation

National Park Service directors, such as Conrad Wirth, influence the representation and policies of the National Park Service. Other factors that also impact the agency and its units are shifting societal attitudes toward natural resource management and presidential administrative appointees, particularly the position of

[372] "Use Plus Protection is Wirth's US Parks Goal," *The Fresno Bee*.

[373] "Adams Urges Halt to Sierra Development," *The Fresno Bee* (25 January 1959), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 6-7, Box 30, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

Secretary of the Interior.[374] In 1961, halfway through Mission 66, a political and cultural shift occurred at the national level when Democratic presidential candidate, John F. Kennedy, took office. For most of Wirth's directorship, the Republican administration of President Eisenhower approved of Wirth's administration of the NPS. A year into the Kennedy administration, Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* on the detrimental effects of the use of DDT as an insecticide and helped reshaped the way Americans perceived their environment. Many scholars declare *Silent Spring* a launching pad of the modern American environmental movement, leading to the creation of many more environmental organizations, increasing popular support for environmental causes, and new federal laws to protect the environment.[375] Perhaps the most direct change in the early 1960s impacting Wirth and the NPS, was President Kennedy's appointment of Stewart Udall as Secretary of the Interior. Udall was not only the first Interior Secretary since Harold Ickes (1933-1946) to heavily involve himself in the activities of the NPS, but he was also a leading conservationist.

Conservation as a resource philosophy and political movement, however, changed in the postwar era. Prior to World War II, conservationists were mainly natural scientists deeply imbued in the ideologies of progressivism.[376] The first Forest Service Chief,

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[374] Elmo Richardson writes that while disagreements between the heads of the Interior Department and the NPS often occurred in the postwar era, cooperation could produce "substantial accomplishments" in park improvement, such as those by Secretary Harold Ickes in the 1930s and early 1940s under the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration, see Richardson, *Dams, Parks, and Politics*, 4.

[375] Mark H. Lytle, *The Gentle Subversive: Rachel Carson, Silent Spring, and the Rise of the Environmental Movement* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), vi.

[376] Grant McConnell, "The Conservation Movement: Past and Present," in *The Western Political Quarterly* (University of Washington, September 1954), 463-464.

Gifford Pinchot, and the United States Forest Service were indicative of this type of conservation, which was fundamentally utilitarian and believed in managing natural resources to produce “the greatest good for the greatest number.”[377] In the 1950s, the conservation movement, and the very definition of the term, was uncertain as various groups with vastly differing outlooks claimed to be conservationists.[378] A schism in the movement eventually occurred, as groups such as The Izaak Walton League and The Wilderness Society believed certain natural areas deserved protection for their inherent values regardless of whether they had some potential utilitarian use. Preservation, in other words, might trump development in special places like parks and wilderness areas.[379] Samuel Hays notes how the term “environmentalism” came to be utilized by this second faction to distinguish themselves from the more use-oriented conservationists.[380] Stewart Udall initially upheld the traditional conservationist agenda of efficient, utilitarian use, but as the years progressed he moved toward a more preservationist and environmentalist perspective.[381] Specifically, he embraced wilderness preservation and more ecological management of the national parks.[382]

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[377] McConnell, “The Conservation Movement,” 464, 472. Quote on 468.

[378] McConnell, 464.

[379] McConnell, 477.

[380] Samuel P. Hays, “From Conservation to Environment: Environmental Politics in the United States since World War II,” Environmental Review, 6:2 (Special Issue Autumn 1982), 17-18.

[381] Thomas G. Smith, *Stewart L. Udall: Steward of the Land* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2017), 134-136.

[382] Smith, *Stewart L. Udall*, 156.

The clash in personality and park philosophy between Udall and Wirth eventually resulted in the NPS director's resignation in 1964, one year short of the culmination of Mission 66. Udall believed Wirth drove the recreational agenda of the parks too far and operated the Park Service as an independent agency.[383] Wirth, ironically, became leader of the NPS from a similar conflict of park philosophies between the Interior Secretary and the NPS Director thirteen years before. This time, however, the positions reversed and the DOI leaned more toward preservation of natural resources in the parks rather than their development and use. This shift symbolized a larger evolution in societal thinking about nature and land in the 1960s. Stewart Udall remained Secretary of the Interior until 1969, serving under Lyndon B. Johnson after Kennedy's assassination in 1963, bringing national attention to both environmentalism and conservation throughout the 1960s.

The NPS and Yosemite, 1964-1969

When Conrad Wirth resigned in 1964, George Hartzog replaced him as the Director of the National Park Service. Hartzog had an amicable relationship with Udall, however, he was not as prominent a personality in promoting the parks as either Wirth or Udall. Hartzog instead focused his attention toward the agency itself and flooded his Park Service with like-minded, energetic individuals.[384] He created new positions in the agency, such as multiple associate and assistant directors, and bestowed the title of 'director' on leaders of individual programs within the NPS.[385] At one point Hartzog had

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[383] Smith, *Stewart L. Udall*, 155-156. Udall wanted Wirth to "get aboard the Interior conservation program," and eventually Wirth resigned due to friction between his agency and Udall and other Bureaus, such as the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, 174.

[384] Olsen, *Administrative History,* 25.

[385] Olsen, *Administrative*, 24.

three Deputy Directors (typically the single-person role of Assistant Director) working directly under him.[386] Russ Wilson argues that the Service was not "staid" until Hartzog left in 1972, since he changed the administrative structure a total of seven times in nine years—the most of any one director in the agency's history.[387]

In addition to NPS administrative changes, the growing environmental movement continued to influence the agency under Hartzog. Many more people in American society, for example, questioned the NPS policy of managing parks for maximum use, particularly recreation. By the mid-1960s, NPS leaders demonstrated an increased anxiety and concern about negative publicity and press.[388] One article about the conditions at Yosemite National Park by an ex-employee particularly distressed agency leaders. In "Down with Yosemite City!," Starr Jenkins detailed the myriad problems, such as "smog, crime, juvenile delinquency, rush hours, gang warfare, slums, and urban sprawl," in the park during the summer season.[389] Jenkins called Yosemite a "burgeoning metropolis," that at its very worst was "only slightly less crowded, commercial, and honky tonk than

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[386] Ibid.

[387] Ibid.

[388] Prior leaders of the NPS kept track of various newspaper articles that mentioned the agency or the park system; yet the leaders in the 1950s appeared to not be as bothered as the leaders in the 1960s when individuals or publications viewed the Service or parks negatively, see "Digest of Newspaper Comment—For All N.P.S. Employees," (2 August) and (17 October 1955), United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Washington 25, D.C. and "Letter from Regional Director, Lawrence C, Merriam to Region Four Superintendents," (2 March 1955), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 2/3/4, Box 19, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal (Accessed March 2018).

[389] "Memo to Director from Regional Director, Western Region; Subject: Article, "Down with Yosemite City!," by Starr Jenkins," (16 August 1965) with attached pages of the August 1965 edition of the magazine, *San Franciscan*, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 7, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

Long Island or Disneyland."[390] Jenkins suggested tangible and long-lasting solutions to these problems such as doubling the ranger force, banning motorcycles, and remaking the road system.[391] In a memo to Director Hartzog, the NPS Western Regional Director stated that irate citizens were already sending letters and that the entire matter needed to be brought to the attention of both the director and the Information Department.[392] Overall, the article clearly concerned NPS leaders. The increasing backlash against NPS park management by more members of the public in publications deeply concerned the NPS leaders who saw themselves, ultimately, as a public service agency that needed support.

In addition to public criticism, correspondences in the 1960s also demonstrated frustrations and conflicting desires, particularly in the areas of interpretation and representation, between Yosemite leaders and NPS heads. Lack of funding, for example, remained a constant bane of field employees trying to adequately manage their individual parks according to NPS policy in the 1960s. By 1966, Yosemite hosted nearly 1,635,000 visitors a year, an average of a 5% increase each year since 1963, and funds for interpretive services, such as the free pamphlets at entrance stations, could not keep up

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[390] Starr Jenkins, "Down with Yosemite City!," in "Memo to Director from Regional Director, Western Region; Subject" Article, "Down with Yosemite City!" (16 August 1965).

[391] Ibid.

[392] "Memo to Director from Regional Director, Western Region," (16 August 1965). Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 7, Yosemite National Park Archives (Accessed March 2018).

[392] Jenkins, "Down with Yosemite City!"

[392] Ibid.

[392] "Memo to Director from Regional Director, Western Region," (16 August 1965).

with the demand.[393] Superintendent Preston wrote to Director Hartzog in 1965 that Yosemite was once again short of free information brochures during their busiest season.[394] He also stated that the previous year employees had to make temporary and very inadequate copies due to the shortage and asked that this recurring situation be rectified as soon as possible.[395] If these pamphlets were one of main interpretive services at Yosemite to orient visitors to the park and its values, then it was easy to understand why the Superintendent believed "drastic action" should be taken to make sure the free pamphlets continued to be available to visitors.[396]

Yosemite leaders also seemed frustrated with NPS leaders about Yosemite representation and the realities in the field, particularly about the importance of the High Country. Yosemite managers, aside from being able to edit and look over the new NPS editions of the free pamphlet, would also send the national office specific requests.[397] In 1965, field employees for example asked that an updated Yosemite map, which included more High Country markers, be included in the new information pamphlet. The Western Regional Office also sent two photographs of the Yosemite High Country for the editors

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[393] "Park Travel Increase Shows New Trend," Park Press Release (20 October 1966) and "Yosemite Visitors total 1,547,000 for Year," Press Memo 11 January 1965, Resource Management Record, Series 6, Subseries 6, Box 30, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[394] "Memo to Director, Supervisor, Yosemite; Subject: Lack of Free Information Publications (9 July 1965), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 7, Box 34, Yosemite National Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[395] "Memo to Director from Supervisor, Yosemite," (9 July 1965).

[396] Ibid.

[397] "Memo to Chief, Publications Section, Publications and Public Inquiry Branch from Assistant to the Regional Director; Subject, 1964 Yosemite Folder (9 December 1963), Resource Management Records, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

to use as the map cover, citing a lack of frontal images of the High Country in any of the Yosemite material.[398] The NPS leaders, however, denied the request on the grounds that the new map was too busy and that limited space (mostly devoted to heavily-toured spots such as the Valley) on the existing map prohibited their additions.[399] The Region 4 Director's assistant expressed in a letter how deeply disappointed the district and Yosemite staff were with the rejection and added that he anticipated that their requests for the cover image would be honored. [400]

This increased interest in the Yosemite back country by field staff and visitors demonstrated one of the ways NPS representation in the mid-1960s, reacting to changes in society and nature tourism, differed from that of the 1950s. The growth of the environmental movement, as well as the skyrocketing visitation numbers of Yosemite, were some of the factors influencing people to seek out more remote and less-crowded sections of the park. Other contributing factors were the availability of better hiking and camping gear and supplies, as well as more trails, roads, and detailed information of the areas to aid visitation. Even though these more remote areas of Yosemite became trendier than they had been in previous years, they still were far less traversed than the most popular areas of the park, such as Yosemite Valley. Information on environmental awareness and even sections on ecology as well entered Park Service interpretation

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[398] "Memo to Director; Attention: Chief, Publications Section from Assistant to the Regional Director, Western Region; Subject, Photographs for Cover Illustration Yosemite Map Section, Resource Management Records, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[399] "Memo to Chief, Publications Section," (9 December 1963).

[400] "Memo to Chief." Bennet Gale, the assistant to the Region 4 director, added in the memo that he hoped the new map would be considered in the following year; however, the NPS leaders denied it again.

programs and publications in the last half of the 1960s, also signifying the influence of the environmental movement on NPS representation.[401]

During Hartzog's time as Park Service Director, interpretation moved around in the agency. It was eventually downgraded from having an entire division with its own chief under Wirth to eventually becoming merely an arm of the operations at two new training centers.[402] Interestingly, however, and perhaps because of the loss of status in the administration, the director's office issued a bi-weekly "National Park Service Interpretation Newsletter." In May 1967, the editors of the first edition stated that the newsletter's purpose was as "a medium for news of developments" and to offer "tips on sources of interpretive materials and technical information" for all field staff.[403] In subsequent editions, the newsletter writers described upcoming interpretive changes, such as the use of more "modern communication methods" and broadening services from the field to "the people at large," that Secretary Udall had recently discussed with Director Hartzog.[404] In 1969, the editors dedicated an edition of the newsletter to environmental

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[401] "An Innovation for Visitor Use," Press Release (9 September 1969) United States DOI, NPS, Yosemite National Park. The article details a new approach of using shuttles to transport visitors into Valley to keep cars out of area. NPS quoted Secretary Udall's words to Director Hartzog which included that the NPS write about increased conservation efforts and "ecological principles and applications" in park interpretation services, see "NPS Interpreters' Newsletter," (15 December 1967), in Resource Management Records, Series 6, Box 31, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[402] Olsen, *Administrative History*, 109-113. By 1978, the word 'interpretation' was out of NPS administration and the program morphed into "history, anthropology, and historic preservation" within the Division of Cultural Resources Management.

[403] "Memo to Superintendents, Western Region from Regional Chief, Director of Interpretation and Visitor Services," (26 May 1967), including "NPS Interpreters' Newsletter," United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Washington D.C. 25, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Box 31, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA(Accessed March 2018).

[404] "NPS Interpreters' Newsletter," (15 December 1967) No. 3 (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1967), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Box 31, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

awareness, which they named as the "most significant trend in the NPS" as well as the most relevant issue in contemporary society as a whole.[405] Ironically, as the newsletters indicated, NPS leaders stressed the importance of park interpretation as it became downgraded in the administration.[406]

The newsletter series, more importantly, demonstrated an increasing concern of the NPS leaders about field employee behavior and growing environmental activism. In an article entitled "Discretion," Bill Brown, the Special Assistant to the Regional Director for Environmental Awareness, reminded field offices of appropriate interpretive behavior, specifically pertaining to environmentalism and public land battles. The piece was a response to a recent event where an employee of a "sister agency" gave an interpretive presentation at a park unit which was construed as an attack on that agency.[407] Brown elaborated that NPS employees should "avoid falling into traps" and using the term 'they' as an accusatory mode of address, especially if 'they' was a sister agency.[408] He added that NPS employees should always steer a "strong middle course" in interpretive services, explaining that the agency operated within an institutional structure and needed to continue to do so in order to protect the parks.[409] "Discretion" insisted on a neutral employee position since parks were federally-funded and the NPS directly

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[405] "NPS Interpreters' Newsletter," (August 1969), No. 11 (Washington D. C., National Park Service, 1969), Resource Management Records, Series 6, Box 31, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018).

[406] "NPS Interpreters' Newsletter," (15 December 1967).

[407] "NPS Interpreters' Newsletter," (August 1969).

[408] Ibid.

[409] Ibid.

competed with other agencies, such as the Bureau of Reclamation or the Forest Service, for political support as well as land and funds. In other words, the NPS is a federal agency and, thus, the parks are political sites that have to ultimately function within a governmental framework. However, as Kaufmann pointed out, employee personal preference, such as an individual's support for environmentalism or his or her frustration with another land agency, is one of the elements combatting cohesion within large organizations.

The increasingly politically-minded American public involved in the Cold War and various social movements permeated all areas of the daily lives of individuals, including leaders of the Park Service, field staff, and visitors. National parks, moreover, are revealed to be more than spaces set aside to preserve nature. Each unit is unique as a locality and the national policies and interpretation of the national park idea by the leaders of the NPS did not always directly translate to the experiences at the individual parks. The dynamics between the NPS and its relationships to the political administration and its leaders was another factor that influenced the Park Service and the park units. National Park Service representation and interpretation of parks, especially during the 1950s and 1960s, therefore, truly sheds light on the fact that these parks are not walled-off, staid places and that the NPS is just as multi-faceted and permeable to both external and internal influences as the parks.

Republican candidate Richard M. Nixon became president of the United States in January of 1969. Stewart Udall left the position of Secretary of Interior that year, while Hartzog remained NPS director until 1972. In his last few years in office, Udall became

frustrated that the administration allotted less money and attention to conservation efforts, rejecting many of his requests to designate additional monument and park acreage.[410] One of the main reasons for the change was President Lyndon B. Johnson's escalation of America's involvement in the Vietnam War.[411] In the late 1960s, however, the modern American environmental movement continued to expand. As mentioned earlier, the American conservationist movement entered a new phase in the postwar era when the two camps divided and environmentalists branched off into their own movement.[412] The "change was so obvious," Paul Hirt writes, that it required a new name.[413] Due to this growth and new activism, many major environmental laws passed in the 1960s, such as the Wilderness Act (1964) and Clean Air Act (1963), and continued to be enacted in the late 1960s and early 1970s, including the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (1968), the National Environmental Policy Act (1969), and the Clean Water Act (1972).

Many new environmental organizations formed as well while established groups grew exponentially. The Sierra Club, for example, once a small, local wilderness preservation society, boasted 66,000 members in 1968, a national office in New York, and sub-organizations such as the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund (now Earthjustice).[414]

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[410] Smith, *Stewart L. Udall*, 284.

[411] Smith, 273-4, 276.

[412] Paul Hirt, *Conspiracy of Optimism: Management of the National Forests since World War II* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 216.

[413] Ibid.

[414] Alexandra K. Vicknair, *Mindsets, Motivations, Mickey Mouse, and the Mountains: The Social, Political, and Intellectual Foundations of the Mineral King Controversy, 1965-1978*, A thesis presented to CSU Stanislaus (June 2013), 113, scholarworks.csustan.edu/bitstream/handle/011235813/265/VicknairA.spring2013thesis.pdf?sequence=1 (Accessed July 2018).

Because the Sierra Club was one of the first groups to advocate for the preservation of parks, and because the club became the leading environmental organization into the 1970s and 1980s, looking at its Yosemite representation in this time period sheds additional light on the role of national parks in the American mind. In addition, the Sierra Club's imagery correlates to contemporary art photographers' representations. The next chapter examines the imagery of environmental groups and photographers to reveal contemporary society's conflicted feelings about humanity's role within the natural world, particularly the growth of tourism in the national parks.

CHAPTER 5

THE RETURN OF THE TOURIST: YOSEMITE ART, PHOTOGRAPHY AND REPRESENTATION, 1970S AND 1980S

Producers of national park imagery help shape the national park idea, which in turn, influences policy and management of those spaces. The history of Yosemite imagery demonstrates that human elements, specifically tourists and tourism, were a fundamental part of the early visual narrative of the area in the mid-1850s. In less than a decade, however, landscape painters and photographers dominated the production of Yosemite art and switched the visual narrative to one that idealized the landscape and excluded elements of humanity. Artistic and societal trends in the mid-nineteenth century influenced these artists to create idealized, pure wilderness depictions of America's last-remaining natural wonders, which they believed were disappearing in a rapidly modernizing society. For over a hundred years, American landscape artists' depictions governed the majority of Yosemite art produced. While advertising and print material created by transportation businesses and concessionaires included tourists and tourist elements at the turn-of-the-century, artists still prefered to depict national parks as idealized, pure landscapes.Well into the twentieth century, artists such as Ansel Adams, created park images with the same themes, subject matter, and styles as the 1860s and 1870s landscape painters and photographers.

The production of Yosemite art, moreover, did not shift from the idealized, pure landscape until the the second half of the twentieth century when dramatic changes in both art and society occurred. Postwar economic prosperity, technological advances, and

population surges, for example, influenced all facets of society, including national park attendance which soared into the millions. Art became pluralistic and less elitist, as institutions, degrees, and opportunities opened up for many more individuals to pursue careers and education in this field. Artists also dramatically rejected traditional themes, theories, methods, and subjects to showcase a wider variety of styles and mediums. Photography in particular became a much more dominant and diverse presence in western art and culture by the early 1960s.[415]

Social movements, such as the civil rights movement and the women's movement, dramatically affected postwar American society as well. The environmental movement, for example, reshaped the way Americans viewed humanity's role in the world and many more individuals became conscious of the negative impact growing populations had on America's natural resources. Many more citizens also viewed the growth of tourism, urbanization, and commercialism in the national parks as threats to their natural wonders. Environmental groups, such as the Sierra Club, saw their membership numbers increase exponentially in these decades as many more Americans became directly involved in environmental causes, including the preservation of parks and wilderness areas.

The combination of artistic and intellectual trends, therefore, once again affected Yosemite representation as they had in the mid-nineteenth century. No longer were artists solely producing idealized national park imagery that jettisoned people and their paraphernalia. Humans and tourist infrastructure reentered Yosemite art in the second

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[415] H. H., Arnason, *History of Modern Art: Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Photography*, 5th ed., with Peter Kalb, revising edt. (London: Laurence King Publishing Ltd., 2004), 517.

half of the twentieth century as photographers focused on tourists and mundane manufactured elements such as signage and garbage cans present at nature attractions. Cartoonists working for the Sierra Club also produced Yosemite imagery with similar methodologies, subject matter, and iconography as the artists. Satire became a prominent tool, for example, to comment on tourism in national parks, as well as the use of juxtaposition to place tourist and tourist elements in nature attractions. The works by the photographers and environmental cartoonists supported the idea that intellectual and societal trends about nature ideas affect park interpretation. As in the mid-nineteenth century, the postwar era witnessed a drastic reshaping of American ideas about the environment. Yosemite art supports this fact, as art is a major reflector of cultural idenity. The reinclusion of tourists and human elements in Yosemite imagery in the 1970s and 1980s reflected changing societal ideals about nature, specifically an increased anxiety and concern about the precarious balance between use and conservation of natural resources such as the national parks.

Pre-Cursors to Modern Landscape Photographers

American artistic commentary on the destruction of the environment existed as early as the mid-nineteenth century. Transcendental writers, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1802-1883) and Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), for example, lauded the wild lands of America and warned their contemporaries about humanity's negative impact on these environments as early as the 1840s. Another individual, John Muir (1838-1914), who was a founder of the Sierra Club, not only wrote about the ruin of wild lands but also fought to protect them against human desecration up until his death in

1914. Even some of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries landscape painters commented (although more indirectly than the writers) on rapidly disappearing wild lands and open spaces by showcasing a nostalgia for pure landscapes that depicted the awe-inspiring beauty of American natural scenery.

One of the earliest American landscape paintings to comment on the negative effects of human progress on the environment was Thomas Cole's 1843 work, *River in the Catskills* (Figure 22). Scholar Alan Wallach argues that while most art historians describe the works by early landscape painters as idyllic, pastoral landscapes, *River in the Catskills* is distinctly "antipastoral" due to the fact that Cole, unlike his contemporaries, clearly expressed a negative view about environmental change.[416] Cole was the leading member of the earliest school of American art, the Hudson River School, which makes the aberrance of the painting all the more significant. In *River in the Catskills,* Cole displays a New England scene that he painted nearly ten different times throughout his career, yet, with distinct changes to the landscape. The trees in the foreground, for example, are missing, and a steam locomotive (one of the first oil paintings to contain an image of a train) crosses a bridge in the distance.[417] The work also contains symbols of the destruction of the natural world, particularly the felling of trees, indicated by the ax held by a lone figure and the stumps and culling debris in the foreground.[418] While these

[416] Alan Wallach, "Thomas Cole's *River in the Catskills* as Antipastoral," *Art Bulletin*, 84:2 (June 2002), JSTOR, https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/stable/3177272 (Accessed August 2018), 334, 339 and 344.

[417] Wallach, "Thomas Cole," 334.

[418] For more on the symbolism of tree stumps in early landscape painting see Nicolai Cikovsky Jr. "Ravages of the Ax'": The Meaning of the Tree Stump in Nineteenth-Century American Art," *Art Bulletin* 61:4 (December 1979), 611-626.

elements are not immediately noticeable, Wallach argues that their inclusion is immensely significant and cannot be excluded from the overall interpretation of the work.[419]

Cole's writings also demonstrated his beliefs about human and technological advances and their damage to the natural environment. In 1836, Cole wrote "Essay on American Scenery" in which he lauded the virtues and aesthetic appeal of the American landscape. He concluded the piece by expressing his sorrow that "these beautiful landscapes" were "quickly passing away," adding that "ravages of the ax" were increasing each day."[420] Cole, in another instance, penned that he abhorred the "merciless and tyrannical" railroad and its "violence" done to the natural and human landscape.[421] The addition of the locomotive to the Catskill scene and the symbols of environmental change in *River* become important, therefore, since one cannot ignore the artist's viewpoints when analyzing any art piece. The painting, therefore, is an example of an early American landscape painting that conveyed the message that environmental destruction in the name of human progress was neither progressive nor positive. Cole's work serves as pre-cursor to American modern landscape photographers working at Yosemite that comment, if even veiled, on environmental degradation.

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[419] Wallach argues that while the work makes a "strong, moralizing comment" about the destruction of the natural world, Cole had to create some semblance of a pastoral scene in order to sell the work. He adds that Cole had a difficult time trying to sell the piece precisely because it did not fit into the normal conventions of the pastoral genre, see "Thomas Cole," 344-345.

[420] Thomas Cole, "Essay on American Scenery," *American Monthly Magazine*, 1 (January 1836), 12.

[421] Ibid.

Direct Influences on Yosemite Landscape Photography: Ansel Adams

The legacy and impact of the mid-nineteenth century Yosemite landscape artists on later producers of national park imagery, however, was much more profound and extends far into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. One individual, in particular, took up the mantle of depicting Yosemite as a glorified wilderness from these nineteenth century landscape artists and whom, arguably, is most influential on modern Yosemite photography—Ansel Adams.[422] David Robertson writes in *West of Eden: A History of the Art and Literature of Yosemite* that Adams's photography, spanning the 1920s to the 1970s, was, in many ways, a "throwback" to the imagery of Watkins and Muybridge in his depiction of unpeopled landscapes.[423] Robertson argues, however, that Adams was also an original since he utilized and created new photographic, aesthetic, and artistic techniques that allowed him to create even more "perfect" photographs than his predecessors.[424] Adams, in his more ideal and flawless depiction of Yosemite, did not include natural debris or any other non-man made elements that defiled the perfection he saw in his mind's eye. Through Adams's extensive oeuvre of Yosemite landscape photographs, the viewer witnessed the utmost beauty of unspoiled wilderness, and, like humanity and its paraphernalia, even nature's garbage had no place in this undefiled, faultless depiction. Examining Adams's imagery and his direct influence on his

[422] Robertson, *West of Eden: A History of the Art and Literature of Yosemite*, 117, 126 and 129.

[423] Robertson, *West of Eden*, 126 and 129.

[424] Ibid, 122 and 129. Adams created a tonal technique called the "Zone System" as well a process of interpretation he called "visualization," see Robertson, 118-119.

photographic successors helps to better comprehend the latter's works but also narratives of Yosemite and park imagery as a whole.

Trying to understand Adams's intent and meaning in his Yosemite photographs, such as why he chose not to include people or debris, however, is a difficult endeavor. This effort is mainly complicated by the artist's tentativeness to explain either his art or the creative process throughout his lifetime.[425] From 1972 to 1975, however, Adams gave a series of interviews for the University of California at Berkeley which somewhat help to elucidate his artistic methods and meanings. Adams expressed to the interviewer at one point, for example, that "motive is a subconscious thing," and that he could not explain it even if he wanted to.[426] He explained that the deeply mysterious and personal thing called 'intent' (he used the term "visualization" to apply to his own art) was essentially "the difference between creativity and observation."[427] In other words, meaning and purpose, while hard to pinpoint and describe, were essentially what turned works into art.

An image that Adams did expound on in the interview was one of his earliest photographs, *Monolith, The Face of Half Dome* produced in 1927 (Figure 23). Adams described this work as his first "visualization," or truly artistic image."[428] He affirmed that "the element of anticipation" was essential to the creative process and that *Monolith*

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[425] Adams, both in public and in private, refused to discuss any meaning viewers should find in his images, Robertson, 124.

[426] Ansel Adams, "Conversations with Ansel Adams, Oral History Transcript, 1972-1975," Berkeley: Bancroft Library, Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Archive.org (Accessed August 2018), 123.

[427] Adams, "Conversations with Ansel Adams," 320-321.

[428] Adams, "Conversations," 17-18.

displays this expectancy perfectly.[429] He added that while taking the picture, he felt a "monumental quality" and aimed to heighten the eternalness of nature through various photographic techniques.[430] Timelessness, thus, was a major theme of Adams's work. Adams himself stated that his art was fundamentally static and that, through his lens, he envisioned scenes that "changed at a very slow rate."[431] This understanding of Adams's mindset helps to explain why he excluded people, human artifacts, and debris, or, essentially, any feature that might hint at any specific moment in time. Adams saw eternity in the natural landscape and his Yosemite photographs therefore depict an everlasting wild nature. This idealized abstractness may explain why producers of Yosemite images continue to this day to represent the area as a virgin wilderness—it is a symbolic and ideal image out of time in contrast to the frenetic and transitory nature of modern humanized landscapes

Adams, with a career spanning six decades and producing thousands of images, was an important figure not only in the production of Yosemite landscape art but also in the field of photography in general. In the 1930s, he helped form f/64, a loose group of photographers which included Imogen Cunningham and Edward Weston. These artists rejected earlier traditions of creating photographs in the style of paintings, such as utilizing soft-focus lenses to create blurred imagery, and, thus, avoided manipulating the

[429] Adams, "Conversations," 17.

[430] Ibid, 18.

[431] Adams, 17.

image in any part of the photographic process.[432] Their major aim was to distance their field from painting in order to demonstrate that photography could stand on its own as an art form.[433] In 1940, Adams helped establish the Department of Photography at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). A "masterful technician" as well as popular figure, Adams became the first photographer to be featured on the cover of *Time* in 1979.[434] Adams, most importantly to Yosemite imagery, directly influenced burgeoning landscape photographers by leading yearly workshops in Yosemite for decades. In addition, because of this substantial legacy, all later Yosemite artists, including national park and landscape photographers, consciously or unconsciously converse with his imagery and iconography in their art.

The Paradigm Shifts: Yosemite Photography in the 1970s and 1980s

Adams chose to depict Yosemite as timeless, pristine wilderness into the 1970s; yet, other individuals could not ignore the onslaught of tourism, urbanization, and modernization in American national parks.[435] The growth of the environmental

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[432] "Conversations with Ansel Adams, Oral History Transcript, 1972-1975," Berkeley: Bancroft Library, Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Archive.org (Accessed October 2018), 50-53.

[433] Ibid.

[434] Arnason, *History of Modern Art*, 323 and Robert Cahn and Robert Glen Ketchum, *American Photographers and the National Parks* (New York: Viking Press and Washington D.C.: The National Park Foundation, 1981), 138.

[435] Ansel Adams was a member of the Sierra Club from the 1920s into the 1970s, and personally fought to protect Yosemite from environmental destruction. In his later years, he was more accepting of tourism and commercialism in the area, particularly since he ran an art studio and gallery in the valley. He stated in an interview that too many people criticized Yosemite about its traffic, congestion, and controlling concessionaires but that the area belonged to the people and they should be able to visit it. He also added that this negative viewpoint of parks prevailed in most conservation groups at the time, and that this was one of the reasons which influenced him to "get out of the Sierra Club." See Adams, "Conversations with Ansel Adams," 422.

movement of the 1960s and 1970s meant many more Americans supported the protection of the environment, including the desire for less tourism and urbanization in national parks. The art world also reflected the changing times with new generations of modern and postmodern artists dramatically rebelling against former art forms and styles.[436] Photographers, in particular, rejected the long-held idea that in order for a photograph to be considered artistic it could not be in color.[437] Landscape photography shifted as well, ushered in by a 1975 groundbreaking exhibit called the New Topographics, from scenes of pure natural vistas to images that focused on man-altered, urban, and suburban landscapes.[438] These changes in art and society helped switch the narrative of Yosemite art imagery from the idealized, pure landscapes of Adams and his predecessors to landscape scenes that specifically focused on tourists, man-made elements, and park infrastructure.

One of the individuals who reflected the change in Yosemite art and photography in the 1970s and 1980s was photographer Ted Orland. As a student of Ansel Adams, Orland's personal transition from years of "straight Adamsonian landscapes" to one which embraced his own individuality and beliefs paralleled the larger paradigm shift in

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[436] Arnason, *History of Modern Art*, 588.

[438] Nicole Herden, *Re-Simulating an Artificial View: Contemporary Western American Landscape Photography*, Arizona State University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2013, htttp://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/1355124888?accountid=4485, 5. Herden argues that the exhibition was a decisive break from past imagery of the western landscape dominated by the works of Ansel Adams. In the New Topographic photographs, for example, "nature and industry appeared to be intertwined" and emphasized the commonplace. She maintains that these images of contemporary landscapes prevented an escape into the past that the nostalgic wilderness imagery had allowed for decades, see Herden, *Re-Simulating an Artificial View*, 24 and 27.

the production of Yosemite imagery.[439] Orland described how his first entry into art photography was through one of Adams's Yosemite workshops in 1966. He then attended them yearly, later working as Adams's assistant, for the rest of the 1960s and 1970s.[440] Orland wrote in 2006, that "while Adams's world was timeless, monumental, and sharply defined," his own "world was quirky, ephemeral, and decidedly fuzzy around the edges."[441] After realizing the connection between individuality and art, he began to move away from the black and white, idealized virgin landscapes of Adams to photographs with color and mixed media that included a tongue-and-cheek humor about urbanization, tourists, and national parks. As Orland surmised in a journal entry in the summer of 1978, "after all, if God created Yosemite, it is equally the case that tourists and the government created Yosemite National Park."[442] In other words, the National Park Service and park visitors were as much a part of the Yosemite landscape as its natural features.

Orland's 1975 photograph, *One-And-A-Half Domes*, is a perfect example of how his style radically departed from the nineteenth century landscape artists and Adams's style of pure landscapes (Figure 24).[443] The title refers to the three "half domes" in the

[439] Ted Orland, *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity: The Photographs and Writings of Ted Orland* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1988), 7.

[440] Ibid and Ted Orland, *The View from the Studio Door: How Artists Find Their Way in the World* (Santa Cruz: Image Continuum Press, 2006), 51.

[441] Orland, *The View*, 74.

[442] Orland, *Scenes of Wonder*, 68.

[443] Orland created several Yosemite images with similar themes, subjects, and styles to *One-and-a-Half Domes* see *Inspiration Point, Yosemite* (1975) in *Picturing California: A Century of Photographic Genius* (San Francisco, Chronicle Books and Oakland: The Oakland Museum, Art Department, 1989), 94, and *Dreams of Mechanical Half-Domes* (1985) in *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity*, 111.

scene—the natural landmark, Half Dome, the park signage about Half Dome in the foreground, and the profile of a half-dome-shaped garbage can just right of center. Although the title refers to these three interconnected objects, the bear-proof garbage can in the front of the scene is clearly the most prominent "half dome." This presentation is an abrupt break from previous imagery of Yosemite that focused on idealized versions of the natural landscape and omitted any indication of modern, permanent or even transitory human incursions. The nineteenth century genre painter William Hahn, unlike his contemporaries, included trash and disinterested individuals as a small facet in his 1874 work, *View from Glacier Point*; therefore, Orland is not the first Yosemite artist to negative aspects of Yosemite tourism. What sets Orland apart, however, is that he placed a garbage can on full display and as a focal point, signifying its role in, and even its importance to, the Yosemite touristscape. Orland also created the image with a refreshing satire (the title, imagery, and the hand-painting of the photograph) that pokes fun at this tourist presence in the park and the infrastructure needed to support it. In Orland's own words, he stated that: "rather than try to avoid the people, I came to view Yosemite more as a sociological phenomenon than a natural wonder."[444]

David Robertson writes that one of the few ways to break with the overpowering influence of Adams's photography, was to satirize his work—which Orland did successfully.[445] Orland presented this juxtaposition of both the old and new in *One-And-A-Half Domes*. The sepia-toned background, Robertson adds, echoed a warmth and

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[444] Robertson, *West of Eden*, 145.

[445] Ibid.

recalled the images of the nineteenth century photographers; yet, the foreground is incredibly modern, not only in the subject matter but also the hand-colorization of the park signage.[446] I would augment this argument by pointing out that Orland created the section with Half Dome in pure landscape while the section with the man-made elements utilized modern artistic methodologies, both of which helped to reinforce the contrast between the old and the new. In addition, the growing distance of 1970s society not only in artistic styles but also in physical reality from the idealized, virgin landscape of Yosemite a century prior is echoed through the closeness of the viewer to the modern section with the natural wonder far removed in the background. While some scholars may describe Orland's depiction of people and their paraphernalia as beautiful "in-and-of themselves," I would argue that Orland is somewhat more similar to artist William Hahn who depicted a slice of human life without too much commentary on society, or at a least a veiled commentary.[447] Orland sees the interesting and photographable in all components of Yosemite National Park, including the natural wonders, tourists, and park infrastructure. The "beauty" Orland portrays is the humor he displays about the irony that both man and nature—garbage cans and Half Dome—intrinsically exist together in order to create and maintain Yosemite National Park.

Another photographer who focused on people, specifically national park tourists, was Roger Minick. In his 1980 *Sightseer Series*, Minick captured visitors to various national parks in the late 1970s in all their finery and, similarly to Orland, represented the

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[446] Ibid.

[447] Robertson, *West of Eden*, 145.

change in Yosemite artistic representation in the second half of the twentieth century. The tourists, for example, are the main subject matter of Minick's photographs and many of the images read as portraiture.[448] Minick also juxtapositions the new and old, in artistic style, aesthetics, subject matter, and even in the contrast of the park's natural wonders with suburban tourists. Minick, much more so than Orland, pushes the element of satire about tourism to the brink of ridicule, which some viewers may read as a pessimistic commentary about their presence in the national parks.[449] The tourists, moreover, in his *Sightseer Series* are clearly the primary spectacles and not the natural landmarks of the national parks.

The clash of the inauthentic and authentic is one of the motifs in Minick's *Sightseer Series*, including the photograph *Yosemite National Park* (Figure 25).[450] In the image, a woman gazes on one of the iconic tourist views of the site, with El Capitan on the left of the frame and Yosemite Falls on the right. As with Orland, Minick contrasts the Yosemite natural wonder with a facsimile: the women adorns on her head a souvenir scarf which includes the very scene she is gazing on. The kitsch kerchief, with its shininess, smoothness and bright colors (particularly the blue of the sky and cataract), however, stands in stark contrast to the textured, grainy, and frankly duller-toned reality of the natural scene. *Sightseer* was Minick's first photographic series in color and it is

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[448] See Minick's *Crater Lake National Park, Oregon* (1980) and *Yellowstone National Park* (1980) in *American Photographers and the National Parks*, 110-111.

[449] See particularly *Man at Glacier Point, Yosemite National Park, California* (1980) in Minick's Sightseer Series (1980), https://www.rogerminick.com/ (Accessed September 2018).

[450] For more on authenticity and inauthenticity in tourist experiences and practices see Dean MacCannel, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, 91-107.

interesting to note how the various hues reinforce his themes.[451] Overall, the juxtaposition of the scarf as a human creation and the Yosemite landmarks as works of nature reinforces the opposition between the authentic and inauthentic in the image.

Yosemite National Park also raises questions about tourism and the individual tourist experience. Is the woman visiting the park to buy the manufactured piece of Yosemite or to experience the wonders of the natural environment, or perhaps both? What role does the tourist narrative play in sightseeing? Could the woman be gazing on this scene because the popular tourist narrative about Yosemite, here symbolized by the scarf, instructs tourists on which landmarks they must see and how to see them?[452] One could argue that the scarf is certainly more idyllic and more beautiful than the natural landscape, for the waterfalls are cerulean and full-flowing, the trees verdant and abundant, and the sky is a brilliant blue. Whereas in reality, Yosemite's sky is not always clear, the foliage is not always green, and the waterfalls do not always flow. These questions challenge the viewer, ultimately, to delve deeper into his or her own thoughts and feelings about nature attractions, the role of tourists, and the tourist industry.

This conflicting emotions and discomfort about tourist practices and levels of the inauthentic in human society is reflected by the photograph's title: *Yosemite National Park*. This label could refer, for example, to the physical site itself or, as the scarf clearly spells out for the viewer, it could refer to the souvenir. It could also refer to both. Robert

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[451] See Roger Minick's biography on his website, https://www.rogerminick.com/bio, 2015 (Accessed September 2018).

[452] For more on how on how tourists are drawn to tourist sites and their interaction with them before, during, and after their visitation, see McCannell, "A Semiotic of Attraction," in *The Tourist,* 109-134.

Malej Bednar, for example, suggests that the subject of Minick's photograph is not the natural tableau in the background or the scarf, but rather the touristic process of interacting with the landscape.[453] Minick, ultimately, leaves the answer up to the viewer to decide. What is evident, however, is that the binaries of the authentic and inauthentic, the natural and unnatural, as well as the tourist and the tourist site, are inescapably linked and locked in tension with one another, particularly at national parks.

The National Park Association sponsored a major traveling exhibition in 1980 entitled *Photographers of the National Parks* as well as an accompanying book which featured Minick's *Yosemite National Park*. In 1989, Minick's *Yosemite National Park* was also part of a show at the Oakland Museum titled *Picturing California: A Century of Photographic Genius* that toured nationally and exhibited over a hundred images, including one from Orland, dated from 1851 to 1987. The organizers of *Picturing California* later created a catalogue book, and, interestingly, chose Minick's *Yosemite* for the cover. The curator of the exhibition, Therese Heyman, aptly opined that Minick and some of his contemporaries, such as Richard Misurach, introduced ridicule into "the California photographer's armament" and gained prestige from their "iconoclastic contrasts."[454] Bill Batrich in his introductory essay, "Acts of Attention," wrote that in Minick's photograph the "ironies are multiple," but the main conclusion is that perhaps

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[453] Robert Malej Bednar, *Postmodern Vistas: Landscape, Photography, and Tourism in the Contemporary American West*, (Ann Arbor: The University of Texas at Austin, 1997), 159, ProQuest Dissertation Publishing, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/304374393?accountid=4485, (Accessed September 2018).

[454] Therese Heyman, "Scenes of Curiosity and Wonder," in *Picturing California,* 142.

humanity has "finally succeeded in turning nature into something merely decorative."[455] I would argue that since the image is constructed of ironies, opposites, and juxtapositions that no one conclusion that can be drawn, and certainly not one as final. The prominence and interest in Minick's work, moreover, demonstrated that subject matter about humanity's place in the natural world struck a chord with Americans in late 1970s and early 1980s.

Since social movements in the postwar era deeply affected the art being produced, one could postulate that the environmental movement shaped elements of the two artists' national park imagery.[456] Some scholars, for example, do argue that Orland and Minick's images did comment on disappearing wild lands and were indeed a negative portrayal of tourism in national parks.[457] Others individuals, such as Robert Glen Ketchum, believed that national park artists did not help the preservation of parks enough and even contributed to the "use-abuse cycle" of these areas.[458] One certain element is that Orland and Minick rejected the traditional representations of Yosemite as the sublime, picturesque, and virgin wilderness. Ansel Adams, however, served four decades on the national Board of Directors of the Sierra Club, so there is no correlation between being an

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[455] Bill Batrich, "Acts of Attention," in *Picturing California: A Century of Photographic Genius* (San Francisco, Chronicle Books and Oakland: The Oakland Museum, Art Department, 1989), 18.

[456] Arnason, *History of Modern Art*, 588, 634-640.

[457] Therese Heyman in *Picturing California* wrote that Minick and one of his contemporaries, Richard Misrach, had "passionate feelings concerning contemporary uses of land," 142.

[458] Ketchum, "Curatorial Viewpoints and Observations" in *American Photographers and the National Parks*, 143 and 144.

environmentalist and discarding the idealized, unpeopled version of Yosemite.[459] Minick and Orland's use of parody and opposition adds more insight, as this style conveyed the message that national park tourism was in contrast to the natural landmarks. This fact on its own, however, does not indicate whether their Yosemite works contained themes of environmentalism.

Looking into Orland and Minick's writings and other images, however, does suggest that their art aimed to comment on society and that the ideologies of the environmental movement did influence some of their concepts about the natural world. In *View from the Artist's Window*, for example, Orland stated that art must mean something to the individual artist and used the cause of loss of wilderness to urban development as an example of why a photographer might create an image.[460] In addition, many of Orland's other photographs reflect the idea of a disappearing natural world as well as a theme that industrial objects were turning into new natural landmarks.[461]

While Minick's words are not as available as Orland's, his works also help to understand his aim as a photographer and his views of the natural world in general. Prior to *Sightseer*, for example, Minick worked on a photographic series of San Diego farm workers titled *Undocumented* that could be viewed as aiming to convey a social and

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[459] From 1934 to 1971, Adams served as a Director on the Board of Directors of the Sierra Club. Prior to 1956, the terms were for a year only, but after 1956 a Director served for three years and could serve two terms consecutively with a year off in between, see Sierra Club Roster of Board of Directors, "History and Officers, sierraclub.org, http://vault.sierraclub.org/history/downloads/directors.pdf (Accessed October 2018).

[460] Orland, *View from the Artist's Studio*, 78.

[461] See Orland's images *palmus californai* and *Tractus Constructivus* (Archeological Treasures of Northern California Series), 1979, in *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity*, 36 and 49.

political message.[462] In 1996, Minick created a photographic series called *American Biographics,* which his website described as having a "particular emphasis on the precarious balance between the natural and man-made."[463] Elements in the images themselves and Orland and Minick's other works suggest that the environmental movement did shape their imagery, yet, like Adams, they largely left the ultimate meaning of their Yosemite photographs up to their audiences to decide.

Yosemite Representation and Environmentalists, 1970s and 1980s

The Sierra Club, formed in 1892 by preservationist John Muir, was one of the earliest environmental organizations. The group primarily fought for the preservation of national parks and wilderness areas from its origins through the 1960s.[464] The Club made many strides in this area, such as helping establish the Wilderness Act (1964) and stopping dams in national park units. But in the 1970s the club rapidly expanded its efforts far beyond parks and wilderness. The organization grew geographically, as well as numerically, soaring from a staff of 25 and membership of 14,000 in 1960 to 400,000 members in 1986. By the end of the 1990s, the Sierra Club boasted 700,000 members with a paid staff of 300.[465] The Club also expanded its environmental agenda, tackling

[462] See Roger Minick Bio, https://www.rogerminick.com/bio (2015) (Accessed August 2018).

[463] Ibid.

[464] Mike McCloskey, *In the Thick of It: My Life in the Sierra Club* (Washington: Island Press, 2005), xii.

[465] McCloskey, *In the Thick of It*, xiii. Club membership rose sluggishly from 100,000 members in 1970 to 184,000 in 1980, see *Sierra Club Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Sierra Club*, April 13, 1970, 14 and *Sierra Club Minutes of an Organizational Meeting of the Board of Directors*, San Francisco, CA, May 3-4, 1980, 4. By the mid-1980s, however, the Club welcomed its 400,000 member, see *Minutes of an Annual Meeting of the Sierra Club*, November, 1986, Online Archive of California, care of The Bancroft Library, http://www.oac.cdlib.org/ (Accessed September 2018). McCloskey referred to 1972 through 1984 as the Club's "glory years" since the organization had so many successes, especially in environmental legislation, as well as having the overwhelming support of a majority of the American public, 128. In the 1970s,

“issues of every stripe” both domestically and internationally, including nuclear power and clean energy, international wildlife protection, population control, the quality of air, sound, and water, as well as attempts to include more urban areas and minorities into their cause.[466]

The Sierra Club’s main publication, the *Sierra Club Bulletin* (which later became *Sierra*), demonstrated that the Club in the 1970s and 1980s had moved far from only focusing on American wilderness and national park preservation.[467] During the entire decade of the 1970s, for example, the editors of the *Sierra Club Bulletin* only published about twenty or so articles on wilderness areas and national parks. The monthly magazine contained about four or five main articles in each issue, which meant that wilderness and national parks represented about 4% of the coverage of the magazine for that decade.[468] This figure, however, does not include the plethora of images of wild lands, national park units, and state parks scattered throughout the issues as well as various updates about wilderness or park battles, such as the one at Mineral King, California. In addition, the *Bulletin* featured the Sierra Club’s wilderness outing program every January and these

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however, the Club focused on trying to stabilize internally after a Board of Directors schism and financial losses stemming from McCloskey’s predecessor, David Brower, and his resignation. For more on the exit of Brower, the Club’s first Executive Director in 1969, and its aftermath, see “The Brower Affair,” in McCloskey’s *In the Thick of It*, 84-97.

[466] Quote from McCloskey*, In the Thick of it*, 128. *Sierra Club Bulletin* and *Sierra*, 1970-1984, William E. Colby Library, Sierra Club Headquarters, Oakland, CA (Accessed August 2018) and *Sierra Club Board of Director’s Minutes*, 1970-1989, Online Archive of California care of The Bancroft Library, http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/hb9290139g/?query=Sierra+Club+board+of+directors (Accessed September 2018).

[467] The *Sierra Club Bulletin* became *Sierra* in October 1977.

[468] This calculation does not include the October 1976 wilderness issue that contained several articles pertaining to the subject.

outings were an important and quite extensive part of the organization and magazine. In the 1980s, the newly named *Sierra* showcased global wildernesses and international parks more prominently than parks and wildernesses in the United States.[469] While the Sierra Club shifted its main focus from American wilderness preservation in these two decades, it was still a topic dear to the Club evidenced by the fact that it was the only topic to have its own *Bulletin* edition, a yearly outing program devoted to it, and a Club-sponsored television program.[470]

Most of the articles on national park units in the *Bulletin* throughout the 1970s and 1980s reflected the Club's environmental policies and highlighted natural wonders while arguing for their better management and protection.[471] Articles specifically on Yosemite National Park were few and mainly focused on the mismanagement of the area, the problem of park concessionaires, and over-commercialism.[472] "The Yosemite Story," by Galen Rowell, for example, reported on how a corporate giant, Music Corporation of

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[469] Mike McCloskey, "World Parks," *Sierra,* 69:6 (November/December 1984), 36-42, and Peggy Wayburn, "World Parks Conference: Preservation, Development, and the Third World," *Sierra* 68:2 (February 1983) 21-22, 25-26, William E. Colby Library, Sierra Club Headquarters, Oakland, CA (Accessed August 2018).

[470] "Wild Places" aired in December 1974 on NBC, *Sierra Club Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors*, August 31-September 2, 1974, 3, Online Archive of California, care of The Bancroft Library http://www.oac.cdlib.org/ (Accessed September 2018). Will E. Siri, in a 1975 Sierra Club Publications Report detailed how the publications program was broadening away from wilderness conservation (which was the editors' main agenda in the 1960s) to include more global environmental issues. He added that the program would continue to maintain "strong ties to the traditional wilderness theme," see *Sierra Club Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors*, May 3-4, 1975, Exhibit F: "Sierra Club Publications Program Report of the Board of Directors from the Publications Committee," 2, Online Archive of California, care of the Bancroft Library http://www.oac.cdlib.org/, (Accessed September 2018).

[471] Robert Cahn, "The National Park System: The People, the Parks, and the Politics, *Sierra,* 68:3 (May/June 1983), 47-55 and "The State of the Parks," *Sierra* (May/June), 10-15.

[472] "Galen Rowell, "The Yosemite Solution to Ursus Americanus," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, 59:2 (February 1974), 27-31.

America (MCA), controlled 96% of Yosemite concessions and, due to this monopoly, threatened the area's national park values.[473] Two other articles, "One Concession Too Many," and "California: Breaking the Stronghold of National Park Concessioners," also detailed problems of park concessions, with a specific focus on Yosemite.[474] One of the few articles on Yosemite in the 1980s, "Yosemite National Parking Lot," reflected identical themes, such as curbing hyper-commercialism, of the magazine in the 1970s and demonstrated that environmentalists were still frustrated with what they believed were the detrimental effects of over-urbanization and mismanagement of popular parks such as Yosemite.[475]

Sierra Club members viewed themselves as stewards of the national parks, particularly Yosemite where the Club originated, and their representation of these areas reflected this belief. The sentiments in the articles, moreover, are echoed in powerful imagery, mainly political cartoons, which were featured alongside the editorials in the *Sierra Club Bulletin*. Cartoons as primary sources showcase a wealth of historical information. Dale D. Goble, Paul Hirt, and Susan J. Kilgore argue, for example, that "as historical artifacts, cartoons frequently focus complex moral, political, and social connections into a simple image that dramatically reveals a defining moment of a

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[473] Galen Rowell, "The Yosemite Story," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, 59:10 (October 1974), 17-20; 38. William E. Colby Memorial Library, Sierra Club Headquarters, Oakland, CA (Accessed August 2018).

[474] John Lemons, "One Concession Too Many," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, 61:5 (May 1976), 21. William E. Colby Memorial Library, Sierra Club Headquarters, Oakland, CA (Accessed August 2018).

[475] Keiko Ohnurna, "Yosemite National Parking Lot," *Sierra* (November/December 1989), 31-34. One of the only other articles on Yosemite in the 1980s was Carl Pope's "Undamming Hetch Hetchy," *Sierra* (November 1987), 34-38.

political issue."[476] In the case of the Sierra Club Yosemite cartoons, the political issue was how to best manage national parks. More specifically, the images delve into concerns about what level of commercialism, urbanization, and tourism should exist in these sacred spaces of nature.

Sierra Club Bulletin and Yosemite Cartoons

Accompanying Rowell's 1974 article, "The Yosemite Story," for example, are two cartoons that satirized the immense power and control that the Club believed the concessionaires had at Yosemite. "Evolution of Yosemite Valley" presents a timeline of the geologic history of Yosemite where, in the final image, corporate power completely transforms the natural formations into a dollar sign (Figure 26). In "Thank You MCA," by S. Johnson, the Music Corporation of America has turned one of Yosemite's most iconic and loved natural features, Half Dome, into a symbol of commercialism: a cash register (Figure 27). Both images, moreover, reflect the idea that Yosemite, and, more specifically, its natural features and wild scenery, were not only for sale but already suffered environmental degradation and exploitation by capitalistic interests. The cartoons reflected the ideas in the articles: giant corporations should not dictate policy nor exist in national parks since these places belonged to the public, should be egalitarian and, above all else, experienced for their natural wonders. In other words, mass-commercialism, urbanization, and large corporations had no place in national parks.

Another *Sierra Club Bulletin* cartoon from 1973 demonstrated these same negative sentiments about commercialism and tourism at national parks, specifically at

[476] Dale D. Goble, Paul Hirt, and Susan J. Kilgore, "On Environmental Cartoons," *Environmental History*, Volume 10, Issue 4, 1 October 2005, Pages 776–7, (Accessed November 2018).

Yosemite. In the image, the park entrance sign announces: "Yosemite National Park and Shop," as automobiles stuffed with tourists flood into the site (Figure 28). The motif that concessionaires controlled the area, and not the Park Service, is literally spelled out for the viewer by the statement under the entrance sign that "Theme Enterprises, Inc." now supervised the park. The inauthenticity and complete usurpation by the commercial tourist industry were also reinforced by a sign in the foreground that stated that no hiking, camping, fishing, or, in other words, no "natural" or authentic tourist experiences were allowed in the Valley. The negative commentary about Yosemite's commercialism, unlike "Evolution" and "Thank You," extended to the tourists themselves who are depicted fully engaging in the theme park atmosphere. The drawing, incidentally, gave the managers of Yosemite National Park cause for concern for its portrayal of Yosemite and was stored in the administration's public relations records.[477] Overall, the artist, reflecting ideologies of the Sierra Club, clearly represented through satire and ridicule that the correct way to experience Yosemite was in a less commercialized, less-urbanized, and, thus, more authentic way.

The Yosemite political cartoons which appeared in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* and *Sierra* in the 1970s and 1980s reinforced the idea of the sanctity of the natural wonders in national parks and Yosemite's violation by over-commercialization, tourism, urbanization, and corporate influence. Goble, Hirt, and Kilgore, in "On Environmental Cartoons," state that many of the environmental cartoons post-1960 were not as hopeful

[477] "Press Releases—Services" File, Resource Management Records, Series 6, Subseries 2/3/4, Box 19, Yosemite National Park Archives, El Portal, CA (Accessed March 2018). Hand-written pencil declares "Publicity File" on top of photocopy of the cartoon, with indiscernible writing also underneath "Yosemite National Park and Shop."

about the negative impact humans had on the natural world as they had been in the decades prior. The Sierra Club cartoons truly reflect this point, and move beyond farce into tragedy—particularly "Yosemite National Park and Shop." Comparing the cartoons to the works of Minick and Orland, reveals similar anxieties over the human impact on the natural world in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Satire, Contrasts, and Anxiety: Yosemite and National Park Representation

All the Yosemite images of the 1970s and 1980s commented, whether consciously or not, on the national park idea. What is a national park? Who are the stewards of the parks? What sorts of activities, accommodations, and buildings are appropriate in a national park? What and who does not belong in a national park? These are just some of the questions that the national park idea evokes and the answers can be very different depending on the party answering them. The viewer, thus, gleans visually from the Sierra Club cartoons, even more clearly than the ideas outlined in the articles, that, for the members of the Sierra Club, national parks were sacred places of wild nature where only certain types of tourism and tourist activities should exist. In other words, mass tourism and hyper-commercialism had no place in national parks. The organization, via their magazine, also promulgated the idea that national parks and wilderness areas were always under human threat and, thus, should be continuously protected and guarded to ensure their safety. This belief maintains that Yosemite and other national parks should be, above all else, nature sanctuaries and activities that go against the environmentalists' interpretation of the national park idea should not exist within their boundaries.

This interpretation, however, tends to separate Yosemite the wild and natural landscape from Yosemite the tourist attraction. This division was reinforced by the Sierra Club through the plethora of images portraying the idealized, sublime, unpeopled Yosemite littered throughout the *Sierra Club Bulletin* and *Sierra* in the 1970s and 1980s in addition to the cartoons.[478] There is no happy medium portrayed in the environmentalist visual representation of Yosemite: national parks are either shown as the ideal virgin landscape a la Ansel Adams or in an extremely pessimistic, satirized way over-flowing with tourists, commercialization, automobiles, and urbanization. The Sierra Club reinforced the message that the organization preferred Adams's idealized presentation of Yosemite since this depiction appeared frequently on the covers and as featured photographic spreads.[479] This conflict about wanting to protect the natural wonders of Yosemite, yet also realizing that tourism and commercialism would always be part of the area, was and remains a constant source of tension for environmentalists and supporters of national parks.

Ideas about humanity's role in the world and the impositions of the suburban, commercial, and inauthentic onto the natural world were prevalent enough in society to

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[478] *Sierra Club Bulletin*, 55:1 (January 1970), cover featured Ansel Adams's *El Capitan in Winter*, 3 and a spread of eight winter Sierra Nevada photos, 4-7. *Sierra Club Bulletin*, 56:4 (April 1971), cover featured *A Stream in the Sierras* by Robert Kaufman. Full page photo of "Half Dome, Moon, Yosemite Valley, CA by Ansel Adams, *Sierra Club Bulletin* 57:5 (May 1972), 28 and *Vernal Fall* by Ansel Adams*, Sierra Club Bulletin* (September 1972), 2, "Wilderness and Ansel Adams," nine photos, 32-37 in *Sierra Club Bulletin* (February 1975), "1976: A Memorable Wilderness Year," photo array of multiple images, 4-8, and an entire issue devoted to Ansel Adams featuring many images of Yosemite, *Sierra* 64:3 (May/June 1979) to name a few.

[479] Mike McCloskey's memoir, as well as the *Sierra Club Minutes from 1970-1989*, reflect that the magazine suffered financial problems throughout the 1970s but eventually with a more vigorous advertising program managed to pull through. Mike McCloskey, the Executive Director, also stated in his memoir that he personally reviewed each edition of the magazine, see *In the Thick of It*, 187.

shape imagery of national parks. The schism, which emerged in the late twentieth century of either depicting national parks as sublime natural wonders or as urban spaces full of congestion, concrete, and commercialization creates a Manichean representation of the spaces themselves. It idealizes the natural wonders and separates them from the park infrastructure and tourism, which are crucial elements of the national park experience. These two types of representations continue today as more and more individuals visit the national parks. Americans, in other words, have still not come to terms with balancing tourism and human elements with the natural world in national parks, especially popular sites such as Yosemite. The environmental cartoons and the art photographers of the 1970s and 1980s portrayed parks as a site of juxtaposition between man and the natural world. That contrast highlights both the aspirations and fears of Americans regarding the percieved dichotomous relationship between nature and civilization. The images examined here reveal how national parks are as much social and cultural spaces as they are physical places, and, accordingly, representations of the parks reflect the hopes and concerns most prominent in any culture.

Yosemite, as the first federally-recognized state park and one of the second national parks, remains one of the most popular tourist sites and the production of imagery and visitation has never waned from the initial interest in the area in the 1850s. A deeper study of national parks and their visual representation merits a comparison of a popular park such as Yosemite with a far less-known, represented, and visited national park. Examining Mineral King, California and tracing its development from a small, local mining community in the late nineteenth century to becoming the center of a highly

public and contentious land battle in the 1960s and 1970s and ending with its annexation to Sequoia National Park in 1978 adds to this study of national parks and their representation in the cultural consciousness.

CHAPTER 6

ONE ROAD TO NATIONAL PARK STATUS: MINERAL KING, PUBLIC LANDS, WILDERNESS CONCEPTS, AND TOURIST IDEALS, 1870S-1970S

Mineral King, like Yosemite, is a region in the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range of California. Each region contains a valley that is approximately seven miles long and a mile wide, surrounded by high granite peaks. Mineral King lies about a hundred miles south of Yosemite at twice the elevation, approximately 8,000 feet, so it has harder winters with more snow. Both areas are also either designated a national park or are a part of a national park. Although both regions are similar in topography, geography, park status, and are in close proximity, most individuals have not heard of nor visited Mineral King compared to the multitude who know of and venture to Yosemite year after year. How could two regions that have so many similarities be so different in the American mind?

The production of knowledge regarding how individual park histories and narratives are constructed is a pathway to discovering the answer. A comparative study of the histories and narratives of each park, thus, sheds light on American landscape ideals, the production of tourist spaces, and the importance of visual rhetoric to the popularity of national parks. The knowledge of Yosemite that its early writers and artists in the mid-nineteenth century disseminated to the American public showcased the area as a picturesque nature attraction worthy of world attention. These images and descriptive accounts worked symbiotically with the growth of the region’s tourist industry to bring a steady flow of individuals to the region from the 1870s on. Mineral King, in contrast,

remained isolated in both geography and in the American cultural consciousness until the mid-twentieth century. Due to this relative obscurity, very few images and accounts of Mineral King exist from this period.[480]

Not until the Forest Service chose a world-renowned individual, Walt Disney, to develop Mineral King into a multi-purpose recreational alpine village in the 1960s, did more than just locals take notice of area. The postwar era influenced various Americans' ideologies and views about the environment and public lands in general. Mineral King, during the rise of the American environmental movement, became a national space through a highly publicized land battle. The conflict over Mineral King in the late-twentieth century was essentially a dispute about ideas. Debates over the meaning and value of wilderness, national vs. local spaces, public lands vs. private profit, and the historical narratives that shaped the meaning of an individual landscape all appear central in the rhetoric and materials of the land battle. Tracing the history of Mineral King from the late nineteenth century through the 1970s sheds light on shifting roles of American landscape trends and ideologies to reflect societal ideas about American identity. Ultimately, the narrative of Mineral King's path to park status helps demonstrate that the national park idea actually constitutes many definitions and representations of what it means to be a national park.

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[480] One of the very few art works on Mineral King is a photograph by Ansel Adams. Interestingly, the 1932 image, "Latch and Chain Mineral King, CA" is not a landscape photograph which Adams is most known for, but rather a picture of a door, see http://www.artnet.com/artists/ansel-adams/latch-and-chain-mineral-king-california-6xgh5K6g5go68FT4zSF64g2 (Accessed October 2018).

Early Narratives of Mineral King: Local Histories

The beginning of the Anglo-American history of Tulare County is similar to the early accounts of the Yosemite region. Both narratives commence in the early 1850s with the saga of failed miners and their exodus from the depleted rivers of Northern California in search of more opportunities in regions to the south. Shortly after the nascent state government created Tulare County in 1852 in Central California, a small gold rush near the Kern River brought more individuals to the area. Visalia, which is about eighty miles west of the Mineral King area, quickly developed into a "hub of sorts" as a main stop on the transcontinental route of Butterfield's Overland Mail Company in 1858.[481] Many of the earliest Anglo settlers of Visalia and nearby towns would become the earliest non-Indian residents of the Mineral King area.[482]

Most historians report that Hale D. Tharp, an early explorer of the High Sierras, was the first recorded Anglo-American to venture into the Mineral King region.[483] Tharp is most known for being the first individual to settle in the Giant Forest in 1858, just north of Mineral King, in what is now part of Sequoia National Park. Local Mineral King lore, however, credits Harry O'Farrell, alias Harry Parole, with the "official" discovery of

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[481] John Elliott, *Mineral King Historic District: Contextual History and Description* (Three Rivers, Mineral King Preservation Society: 1993), 21.

[482] Elliott, *Mineral King*, 25. Louise Jackson, *The Story of Beulah* (Three Rivers, Sequoia Natural History Association: 2006), 43. Locals first called the area "Beulah" until the name gradually changed to Mineral King, Jackson, 45. "Visalian is First White Child Born in Mineral King," *Daily Delta*, 16 September 1874.

[483] John Elliott mentioned that Tharp ventured into Mineral King around 1860, although there is no clear evidence to support such a claim, *Mineral King Historic District*, 23.

Mineral King in the early 1860s.[484] O'Farrell, described by local accounts as "a lonely recluse," a "rugged soul," and even a "legend," originally lived in the San Gregorio region until he, embarrassed from losing a boxing match, "disappeared for a time."[485] Locals state that he resurfaced in the High Sierras around 1861 or 1862 when a federal crew building a trans-Sierra route hired him as their hunter and meat supplier.[486] One day while hunting with two Indian guides, as the story goes, O'Farrell stumbled upon the area now known as Mineral King Valley. Since he believed the region might contain mineral wealth, he kept his discovery a secret but returned periodically to search for gold and silver.[487]

Of equally apocryphal origins is the strange local tale of the next "discoverer" of the region, James A. Crabtree. John Elliott, a local historian, described Crabtree as a "devout spiritualist and veteran prospector" who, in August 1872, had a strange experience while exploring the High Sierras with two other individuals.[488] Crabtree

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[484] One local source stated that the first white settlers in the region, a family known as "the Works" and an individual named John Lovelace, visited Mineral King even earlier than O'Farrell, see Joe Doctor, "Barton Tells of Early Mineral King Trails, Roads," *Exeter Sun*, 15 January 1986.

[485] "Mineral King Boasts A Colorful History," *Visalia Times Delta*, 7 July 1959, Jackson, *The Story of Beulah*, 4.

[486] John Elliott, "Making History on Miner's Peak, Part I" *Sequoia Sentinel*, 1 September 1994. Jackson, 4. A federal map from 1896 lists federal and other trails around Mineral King, see "Sketch of the General Grant and Sequoia National Parks and the Sierra Forest Reserve and their Immediate Vicinity," Surveyed and Drawn by 2nd. Lieut. M. F. Davis, 1896, Mineral King Preservation Society Archives (Accessed June 2017).

[487] John Elliott, "The Discovery of Mineral King," *Sequoia Sentinel*, Three Rivers, CA, 29 June 1994, 3. O'Farrell is credited with discovering Mineral King by locals even though the accounts always mention two Indian guides. There is no further information on these guides, but one can surmise that they knew and traversed the area prior to leading O'Farrell there.

[488] Again, the stories note that two Indian guides accompanied the white men, but include nothing else on the guides. Elliott mentioned that there was a local legend of a shipwrecked Anglo man who stumbled into the area pre-white settlement and eventually "won the confidence" of local Indians and became their chief,

allegedly awoke one night to the vision of a great white Indian chief who told him of a beautiful, sacred valley full of minerals. The specter then led the party to the canyon that is now called White Chief Canyon. In 1873, Crabtree, a year after his vision, filed the first mining claim in the area and formed the earliest mining company, the Mineral King Mining District.

While these two Mineral King origin stories overlook local indigenous populations, some later accounts do briefly mention American Indian history or peoples in the region. Orlando Barton, an early Mineral King resident, for example, narrated to a regional newspaper "that the Wutchumna Indians (a branch of the Yokuts) knew all about Mineral King and could describe it in detail."[489] Louise Jackson also wrote that the Mineral King Valley was "tabu" for the Yokuts and that her grandfather could only get them to work just below the valley.[490] A 1980s National Park Administration Report also recorded that Mineral King was "tabu [sic]" for the California foothill tribes and that there were "many indications of use of Mineral King Valley by native people" prior to nonindigenous settlement.[491]

A small body of scholarship on the prehistory of the Southern Sierra Nevada, contrary to the Mineral King local lore, is in consensus that indigenous peoples traversed

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see Elliott, "The Mystery and History of White Chief," *Sequoia Sentinel*, Three Rivers, CA, 22 June 1994, 3. This narrative about a white chief also fits into local portrayals of indigenous peoples as the subaltern, or populations outside the hegemonic power structure in colonialism, since it implies Anglos were the only ones who saw the mineral potential of the valley.

[489] Joe Doctor, "Barton Tells of Early Mineral King Trails, Roads," *Exeter Sun*, 15 January 1986.

[490] Jackson, *Mineral King*, 62.

[491] Mineral King Preservation Society Archives, Three Rivers Museum, Three Rivers, CA.

the region well before O'Farrell or Crabtree. Social scientists, for example, believe the Southern Sierras had a long history of trade between tribes flanking the mountain range in Central California and in the Great Basin in Nevada.[492] High Sierra hunting probably pre-dated trade and could have spanned five millennia.[493] Significant indigenous occupation of the Sierra foothills, however, did not exist until after 3000 BCE, and the tribes of the higher foothills, the Monache and the Tubatulabal or Pitanisha, settled in small numbers only as recently as 500 years ago.[494] The Western Mono, a subtribe of the Monache, never totaled more than 2,000 individuals.[495] These small bands of Sierra Nevadan Indians lived permanently in the lower mountain regions and traversed the higher alpine areas, such as the Mineral King, seasonally for both hunting and trade.[496]

In *Challenge of the Big Trees: A Resource History of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks*, Lary M. Dilsaver and William Tweed detail the region's indigenous history. They write that the Patwisha, a band of the Monache or Western Mono, occupied most of the Sequoia park region and that their largest village was at the landmark known as Hospital Rock.[497] A small amount of archeological evidence found in alpine regions,

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[492] Kathleen L. Hull, "The Sierra Nevada: Archeology in the Range of Light," in *California Prehistory: Colonization, Culture, and Complexity*, edts. Terry L. Jones and Kathyrn A. Klar (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2007), 272 and Julian Steward, *Indian Tribes of Sequoia National Park Region* (Berkeley: National Park Service Field Division, United States Department of Interior, 1935), 1-2.

[493] Nathan Stevens, "Changes in Prehistoric Land Use in the Alpine Sierra Nevada: A Regional Exploration using Temperature-Adjusted Obsidian Hydration Rates," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology,* 1 January 2005, 25:2, 201.

[494] Hull, "The Sierra Nevada: Archeology in the Range of Light," 272 and 284.

[495] Steward*, Indian Tribes of Sequoia National Park Region*, 5.

[496] Ibid, 7, Stevens, 201, Jones and Klar, 284.

[497] Dilsaver and Tweed, *A Resource History: Challenge of the Big Trees*, 20-21.

including Mineral King, supports the theory that Patwisha pursued seasonal resources into the higher elevations of the Southern Sierra.[498] Dilsaver and Tweed also add that Tharp's records indicate that he saw hundreds of American Indians at Hospital Rock in 1858; however, by 1865, these indigenous peoples had vacated the area due to the increasing presence of white settlers.[499] While Mineral King local lore hails Crabtree and O'Farrell as the two discoverers of the valley, a long history of indigenous culture in and around the region existed well before the 1860s.

Mineral Rush and Early Settlement at Mineral King

Word soon spread amongst locals about the valley's mineral potential shortly after Crabtree ventured into the valley in August 1872, and a small silver rush quickly brought industry, families, and settlement to the mountain region.[500] One of the first articles on Mineral King celebrated the first birth in the area and noted that the child's father was one of the thousands of gold miners in the region.[501] By the late 1870s, at the height of the mining activity, some sources claim that there were around 2,000 mining claims and nearly 3,000 individuals.[502] A sizable town infrastructure grew alongside the burgeoning mining industry at this time, with a total at one point of 600 houses and

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498 Ibid, 22.

499 Dilsaver and Tweed, 23 and 33. Hospital Rock is located near the Three Rivers entrance to Sequoia National Park and is 22.8 miles (on the Mineral King Road) from Mineral King.

500 Jackson, 14.

501 "Visalian is First White Child Born in Mineral King," *Daily Delta*, Visalia, California, 16 September 1874.

502 Jackson, 44.

cabins, six two-story hotels, including the Smith House and Kelley's Hotel, thirteen saloons, thirteen restaurants, three assay offices, three butcher shops, and various other merchandise stores.[503] There were also three lumber mills, a stamp mill, a warehouse, a coal house, and a regular stage running from Mineral King to nearby cities, such as Three Rivers and Visalia.[504] Mineral King blossomed into a nascent mining town with an extensive built environment by the 1870s and early 1880s.

Supporting the importance of mining to the community are the earliest recorded images of Mineral King. These two woodcuts, published in *The Tulare Times* in 1879, depicted one of the largest mines in the area, Empire Mine, and its tramway (Figures 29 and 30). The images advertised to the reader that a sizable mining operation with the newest technologies existed in Mineral King. The exact creator of the Empire Mine woodcuts, unlike the 1855 Ayres' Yosemite engravings, is unknown, however, there is some information about the mine and the tramway. In 1878, O'Farrell sold his mining claim to a state senator and cattleman, Thomas Fowler, who poured large amounts of capital into Empire Mine and the entire area.[505] Fowler hired Andrew Smith Hallidie, a successful San Francisco businessman known for the cable car system, to plan and construct an intricate tramway for the mine.[506] It is most likely that Fowler commissioned

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[503] Jackson, *Beulah*, 53 and 55.

[504] Jackson, *Beulah*, 53.

[505] Fowler completed many improvements in Mineral King, such as the reconstruction of buildings, the creation of the tramway, as well as finished the all-important access road into Mineral King, Jackson, 26.

[506] *Letter from A.S. Hallidie to Arthur Crowley*, 19 April 1879, Mineral King Preservation Society Records, Three Rivers, California. (Accessed June 2017).

the woodcuts to publicize his business. The Mineral King woodcuts, interestingly, were similar to the early Yosemite engravings in that they both visually introduced the public to each mountain region.[507] The significant difference of the early images of each region, however, was in their representation: Yosemite was first introduced as a public tourist attraction and Mineral King as a place of private business and industry.

The Mineral King silver rush lasted from 1873 to 1883, which some local sources described as a "boom."[508] Other accounts detailed the topographic, climatic, and human-created hindrances that prevented the area from becoming a prosperous mining town. One of the main obstacles to any development in the area (which would also prove problematic to the creation of a resort in the 1960s and 1970s) was the difficult terrain and limited access. While crewmen finished the Mineral King Wagon and Toll Road in 1879, the small, winding, steep-grade road remained a bane to travelers, including preservationist John Muir, well into the twentieth century.[509] In addition to the area's "disadvantage of isolation," some individuals also blamed the miners' naiveté and limited funds for the failure of a successful mining operation at Mineral King.[510]

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[507] Copies of the "Empire Mine and Tramway" woodcuts, courtesy of Thomas Porter, *The Silver Rush at Mineral King, 1873-1882* (Self-published, 1976), Mineral King Preservation Society Records, Three Rivers, CA. (Accessed June 2017).

[508] Alice Jackson, "A Country of Live Ghosts," *Touring Topics*, 19 August 1924. Frankie Welch, "Mineral King Activity Recalls Boom of 1870s," *Fresno Bee*, 10 October 1965. Elliott, *Mineral King*, 25.

[509] Muir described the trip from Visalia into Mineral King as a "very long ride" on a "rough rocky dusty [sic] road," *Letter from John Muir to Helen Muir*, September 1896, John Muir Archives, University of the Pacific, digitalcollections.pacific.edu. (Accessed March 2018). "Mineral King: A Letter from Our Famous Summer Resort," *Visalia Delta*, Vol 27, 23 August 1894, stated that "the mountain road is badly cut up now, and pulling is very hard." Muriel Irwin, "From Plains to Peaks," *Los Angeles Times*, 7 May 1899, 8-10.

[510] "The Los Angeles Mining Review Gives an account of Tulare County Mines," *Visalia Delta*, 28 May 1908. Jackson, "A Country," 19. Frankie Welch, "Mineral King." Barton mentioned how O' Farrell was the

Ultimately, the environment—the frequent avalanches and snow slides—crushed all hope for year-round business or settlement at Mineral King. As soon as the earliest residents built saloons, schools, stores, cabins, sawmills, and other edifices, they quickly realized that snow slides and avalanches would become the main impediments to successful and permanent settlement. Early resident Barton recalled a snow slide in the winter of 1877 and 1878 that buried a Mrs. Tauger and several workers from the New England Smelt and Tunnel Company. While no one died in the disaster, he added that residents "could not keep a house at the tunnel" because it was "constantly swept away by avalanches."[511] A particularly devastating snow slide occurred only a few years later in 1880 that destroyed the Empire Mine and the new tramway, signifying the end of any hope of a continued mineral rush. [512] While residents rebuilt their town shortly afterward, the slide caused such a serious blow, both physically and psychologically, that most women and children ceased living year-round in Mineral King from then on.[513] Mining operations slowed after 1880 and never fully picked up again, especially with the sudden death of Senator Fowler in 1884. Some Mineral King residents, however, retained their

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only individual who knew anything of silver mining or prospecting in the area, see Doctor, "Barton Tells," *Exeter Sun*.

[511] Joe Doctor, "Barton Tells," *Exeter Sun*.

[512] Joe Doctor, "History—The Big Snow Slide that Ended Mineral King Rush," *Exeter Sun*, 25 January 1978.

[513] Frankie Welch, "Lore of the Sierra: Mineral King Activity Recalls Boom of the 1870s," *Fresno Bee*, 10 October 1965.

claims and dreams of large mineral strikes for decades to come while the main area transitioned into a small local resort town.[514]

A New Use: Early Tourism at Mineral King

A few accounts from the 1890s describe summer tourist activities in Mineral King. An 1893 article in the *Daily Morning Delta* reported the adventures of a tourist party of twenty-six that ascended Sawtooth Peak, a mountain in the region.[515] Another piece described the Mineral King resort as a "delightful camp" that hosted "at least 300 people."[516] Among the tourist activities described in the newspaper articles were nightly bonfires, local dances, and even a "lively bit of competition" between two dueling concessionaires.[517] The article hailed the camp as a "famous summer resort" replete with notable tourists, such as an unnamed wealthy New York confectioner; yet, most of the visitors were locals.[518] Compared to the thousands of Yosemite published tourist accounts and the numerous paintings, articles, and full-length guide books from the late nineteenth century, the portrait of Mineral King in the cultural material from the same period mainly reflected a small, local summer retreat.

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[514] Snow slides and avalanches plagued the area every few years, including one that occurred after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. A particularly devastating slide in 1901 completely destroyed six of the early residents' houses and partially wrecked two, "At Mineral King: That Village Nearly Destroyed by the Recent Heavy Snow," *Visalia Daily Times*, 27 May 1901.

[515] "Mineral King: A Chapter of Exciting Incidents in Camp," *Daily Morning Delta*, 30 August 1893.

[516] "Mineral King: A Letter from Our Famous Summer Resort," *Visalia Delta*.

[517] "Mineral King," *Visalia Delta*, 1894.

[518] Ibid.

Muriel Irwin wrote one of the few published accounts of Mineral King by a non-local for the *Los Angeles Times* in 1899. In "From Plains to Peaks," Irwin explained that she and her party "fled to the hills in search of health and comfort" to escape the heat of California's Central Valley.[519] She noted her four day trek from Visalia up the "dizzily steep and dangerous" route to Mineral King.[520] She described the "long, dusty road" that grew increasingly more dangerous, causing her to cling to the brake during the "sharp turns and "downward plunges."[521] She also remarked that the trek "was not a pleasant prospect for women not born mountaineers."[522] Irwin's account foreshadowed what many writers, journalists, and those involved in the Mineral King public land battle in the 1960s and 1970s believed: that access was the main obstacle to any successful development or widespread public use of the area.[523]

Irwin's tone in her account differed from the local articles that celebrated a lively and jovial summer camp. Irwin described Mineral King as a "great mining failure" and a

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[519] Muriel Irwin, "From Plains to Peaks," *The Los Angeles Times*, 7 May 1899, 8.

[520] Ibid, 9.

[521] Ibid, 8 and 10.

[522] Ibid, 9.

[523] Forest Service officials stated that "access is the crux of the entire problem" of development at Mineral King, see *Letter from Harold Rainwater, Secretary to M.M. Barnum, Asst. Forester*, 16 March 1953, "Winter Use Mineral King Winter Sports Area Project, 1946-1954, Sequoia National Park Archives (Accessed June 2017). "The stumper" to all-year round recreation possibilities is the road, "Mineral King Area Boasts Valley 1 ½ Miles Long, *Visalia Times Delta*, 11 January 1947. In the early stages of the development, shortly after the Forest Service accepted Disney's proposal, the main issue was the road, both in cost, need for an all-weather highway, and the fact it would have to pass through a portion of a national park. After the California government approved $22 million for the all-weather highway in 1968, and Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall reluctantly approved a portion of it passing through Sequoia National Park, the road became less of an obstacle; see "Agencies Still Disagree on Mineral King Route," *Visalia Times Delta*, 14 October, 1968.

"melancholy monument to the vanity of human ambition."[524] She also noted that she and her tourist party looked around "unenthusiastically" at the "grandeur of the mountains and the melancholy ruined stateliness of Mineral King."[525] Her pessimistic attitude coupled with the account of the challenging ascent into the region, moreover, would not have inspired her readers to visit Mineral King.[526] Locals, in sharp contrast to Irwin, promoted the area in its resurrected role as a lively resort and not as a depressed, mining failure. The juxtaposition of the local viewpoint and Irwin's interpretation demonstrated how residents and outsiders (as emblematic of "the other") view and experience tourist attractions differently, especially in the early development and creation of these areas as tourist spaces.[527]

Mineral King Imagery in the Early and Mid-Twentieth Century

The next article on Mineral King in a non-local publication was Alice C. Jackson's "A Country of Live Ghosts." The piece appeared in the August 1924 issue of the American Automobile Association of Southern California's magazine, *Touring Topics*. Jackson described Mineral King as "one of the least known and still most interesting spots in California" and added that the area hosted a beautiful mountain resort

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[524] Irwin, "From Plains to Peaks," *Los Angeles Times*, 10.

[525] Ibid.

[526] Irwin's account, unlike the plethora of early Yosemite traveler accounts, was one of the few sources on Mineral King in the late nineteenth century. Scholars, therefore, are limited in ascertaining how non-locals viewed Mineral King since Irwin is just one source.

[527] Dean MacCannell, *The Ethics of Sightseeing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 10 and 49.

with much to offer tourists.[528] The article also contained some of the earliest known published photographs of Mineral King. One of the images showcased a "gnarled and twisted" Tamarack tree and another displayed one of the several mountain lakes in the region, Eagle Lake (Figures 31 and 32).[529] The largest image in the article was that of Sawtooth Peak, highlighting a vast mountain range, covered in speckles of snow with large, puffy white clouds encompassing the scene.[530] All the images communicated to the viewer and readers of *Touring Topics* that an inviting mountain resort with beautiful scenery and sights existed at Mineral King.

The Mineral King photographs in *Touring Topics*, while not created by famous artists, contained many similarities to the early photographs of Yosemite. The imagery of both regions, for example, showcased the same subject matter, such as mountain lakes and granite cliffs, and similar themes, such as the personification of nature. By studying images of both Mineral King and Yosemite created by the 1920s, it is apparent that cultural knowledge of place is linked to the production of imagery. The limited public knowledge of Mineral King in the early twentieth century certainly led to the dearth of articles, accounts, and especially imagery of the area in the public sphere compared to the plethora of material on Yosemite. This scarcity of knowledge, in turn, limited visitation

[528] Jackson, "A Country of Live Ghosts," 18. Alice C. ("Crowley") Jackson was the granddaughter of John Crowley, an early Mineral King resident who ran the toll road in the 1870s and 1880s. Alice's father, Arthur Crowley, operated the Mineral King Resort (with his wife) from 1890 until his death in 1932. Alice's daughter, Louise Jackson, is the author of one of the few comprehensive books on Mineral King, *Mineral King: The Story of Beulah* (2006) and as of 2017 is the current head of the Mineral King Preservation Society.

[529] Jackson, "A Country," 19.

[530] Ibid.

to the region as Mineral King was not known to many people outside locals or even those throughout the state. This fact demonstrates the intrinsic link between tourism, promotion, and the knowledge and representation of place within the public sphere.

Mineral King ephemera from the early twentieth century provides more insight into how individuals, such as the concessionaires, presented and represented the valley to the public.[531] A technicolored postcard most likely produced between 1907 and 1915, for example, showcased a small mountain retreat with several wooden cabins and buildings (Figure 33). [532] The creator depicted the resort nestled among dark green trees, a grass-topped mountain, and a clear blue, babbling brook. The postcard advertised a rustic and quaint mountain hide-a-way that would be ideal for any tourists wanting to escape a hectic, urban life. Two other Mineral King postcards, from 1915 to 1930, also reflected the idea of Mineral King as mountain tourist resort with sight-seeing activities. "On the Trail, Mineral King" displayed a few tourists riding horseback through the mountains with a few pack donkeys carrying supplies alongside the party (Figure 34). "Sawtooth Peak, Mineral King, Cal." displayed a large mountain scattered snowfall and imposing forest trees spotting the granite cliffs (Figure 35). Mineral King postcards from the first

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[531] Postcards have limitations as primary sources for historians. One of the main obstacles is the fact that most are not dated. Details such as a post card stamp, a dividing line on the reverse side, or a Kodak logo, however, can help scholars to date them, see Allison C. Marsh, "Greeting from the Factory Floor," 378.

[532] The MKPS Archives dates the postcard to 1899, although this is probably the date of the original photograph. The postcard bears the name "postcard" and has a divided back without a white border, thus, it is more likely from 1907- 1915 or the "Golden Age of Postcards." Another postcard period, known as "The White Border Period" occurred from 1915-1930 when a creating a white border and black-and-white images reduced the cost of manufacturing. For more information see Smithsonian Institution Archives, History of Postcards, https://siarchives.si.edu/history/exhibits/postcard/postcard-history. (Accessed March 2018).

half of the twentieth century mainly functioned as keepsakes for tourists and advertisements for tourist businesses at Mineral King.

An advertisement for the Mineral King Resort produced around the same time as the postcards, for example, contained similar imagery and tourist themes. The flyer, created by the resort operator, Arthur Crowley, publicized Mineral King as a hidden mountain paradise where visitors could trek into the wilderness to escape the ills of civilization.[533] The pamphlet also promoted the resort's services, such as daily meals, cabins, baths, equipment, guides, and gear. In addition, the brochure highlighted all the various recreational activities that a tourist could enjoy, such as trout fishing, hiking, swimming in the mountain lakes, and packing trips, as well as excursions to Sawtooth Peak and nearby Mt. Whitney. Crowley described his "scenic resort" as having "splendid" outings in the "wonderland" that is Mineral King Valley.[534] The clear intent of the flyer was to bring visitors and revenue to the resort, and thus Mineral King was represented as a delightful vacation spot. The flyer and the postcards demonstrated to the public that Mineral King contained plenty of sights and attractions for any tourist wishing to enjoy a rustic stay in the High Sierra.

In the 1930s, tourism to national parks waned across the country as America faced the economic downfalls of the Great Depression.[535] Park tourism continued to decline

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[533] Arthur Crowley, "Mineral King Flyer," Mineral King Folder, History Room, Tulare County Library, Visalia, California. (Accessed June 2017).

[534] Arthur Crowley, "Mineral King Flyer."

[535] Ise, *Our National Park Policy,* 354.

into the late 1930s and early 1940s as Americans engaged in World War II.[536] The postwar era, however, saw a surge in domestic tourism, particularly to public lands and national parks, as the economy boomed and more families could afford automobiles, gasoline, and leisure time.[537] The federal government also constructed the Federal Highway System, which significantly aided automobile travel. Mineral King also saw a flourishing of postwar activity, but not for mining or local tourism as it had before. In the late 1940s, a new interest group, skiing enthusiasts, re-envisioned the valley as the ideal location for the "world's foremost ski area."[538] Mineral King, as with any locality, was a microcosm of larger social, economic, cultural, and political trends. This was somewhat true in Mineral King's early history, yet was even more emblematic in the postwar era as the region became a contested environment that highlighted issues about wilderness designation, land ideals, public vs. private ownership, and local vs. national spaces.

Public Land History of Mineral King

A parallel narrative to the early local history of Mineral King was that of the public lands in the region. In 1890, when Congress designated the surrounding high country above Yosemite Valley as Yosemite National Park, they also created two other Sierra Nevadan national parks, General Grant and Sequoia. The southern border of Sequoia National Park was just ten miles north of Mineral King. An 1895 federal map outlined the regions of General Grant and Sequoia National Parks, and also demonstrated

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[536] Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, 448-451.

[537] For more see Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).

[538] "Mineral King Area Boasts Valley 1 ½ Miles Long."

that federal troops traversed the vicinity of Mineral King in the late nineteenth century.[539] The existence of private property and mining claims in Mineral King, moreover, discouraged the consideration of the area as part of a national park in the late nineteenth century.

In 1920, when federal land agencies discussed a bill to add nearly 85,000 acres (including Mineral King) to Sequoia National Park, debates arose over the optimal use of the subglacial valley. United States Forest Service (USFS) representatives, not wishing to lose forest land to the Park Service, argued that mineral lands, such as Mineral King, should remain open to future operations and be excluded from national parks.[540] Stephen Mather, the first director of the newly formed National Park Service (NPS), believed that Mineral King's mineral development had "been slight indeed" but that the community should be allowed to continue its "old-time mining ideals."[541] Both agencies, ultimately, viewed Mineral King in the 1920s as a small, failed mining town with "no scenic beauty" and slight potential for mineral development and, thus, agreed it should not be included within a national park.[542]

The land agencies and other interested parties finally reached a compromise on the bill that reduced the proposed addition of 85,000 acres of park land to 604 acres—

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[539] "Sketch of the General Grant and Sequoia National Parks," Lieut. M. F. Davis, 1896, Mineral King Archives. (Accessed June 2017).

[540] *Roosevelt National Park Bill Hearing, Before the US Congress House Committee on the Public Lands, H.O.R. 66th Congress* (Washington: GPO, 1920), 29.

[541] *Roosevelt National Park Bill Hearing*, 32.

[542] *Roosevelt*, 69.

excluding Mineral King. Prior to 1920, Mineral King existed as part of the Sequoia National Forest. The drafters of the new Sequoia National Park boundaries, however, drew the boundaries of the park in such a way as to exclude Mineral King. Despite this, federal policy makers still thought Mineral King deserved some sort of enhanced protection status and therefore designated it a Federal Game Refuge that remained under the control of the USFS.[543] In 1926, President Calvin Coolidge signed the bill into law. Dilsaver and Tweed wrote in *Challenge of the Big Trees*, that this compromise and drawing of the park boundary left Mineral King "like a knife of future development plunged into" the heart of Sequoia National Park.[544]

The Mineral King residents lived and operated their business, such as the historic cabins and the small Mineral King resort, in the Sequoia National Forest and Mineral King Game Refuge for most of the twentieth century.[545] As early as 1900, many residents

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[543] A USFS 1947 Land Report lists twenty official game refuges, including the Sequoia Game Refuge, totaling 15,770 acres in the U.S. The report stated no specific policy of operating game refuges except for stating that they were for "the protection of game," *Land Area Report as of June 30, 1947,* www.fs.fed.us/land/stuff/lar/LAR-documents/LAR_1947.pdf (Accessed June 2017). Alexandra Vicknair, "Mindsets, Motivations, Mickey Mouse, and the Mountains," 29-30. John Elliott, "Mineral King Historic District: Outline," 8 April 1988, Mineral King Preservation Society Archives (Accessed June 2017).

[544] Dilsaver and Tweed, *The Challenge of the Big Trees*, 118.

[545] A 1984 Park Service report helps to understand private land holdings and transfers in the Mineral King area. The historic Mineral King area was listed as approximately 160 acres of private land in which 28 cabins and a small commercial operation including a store, restaurant, and small resort existed. There were also some nearby cabins privately owned but on public land. When Mineral King transferred to the National Park Service in 1978, the cabin owners' leases with the USFS (the buildings were private but not the land on which they stood) transferred to the NPS with the stipulation that the lease would expire when the original leasee died. The Mineral King residents fought this arrangement in the 1980s and the NPS eventually change the clause so that leases would transfer to any relative of the original lease holder. The largest amount of private land owned in Mineral King in 1986 totaled 460 acres. This land was mostly undeveloped and in the more wild areas of the region. For more, see "Land Protection Plan, Mineral King, Sequoia—Kings Canyon National Park, California," (Government Printing Office: National Park Service, United Stated Department of Interior, 1984), Hathi Trust, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pur1.32754074846514;view=1up;seq=1 (Accessed November 2018).

and business owners in the valley built their homes and commercial structures not on privately owned land but on federal land leased from the Forest Service. Some individuals did own plots of private land within and outside Mineral King Valley, but a large number did not own the land on which their homes and businesses stood.[546] This private/public coexistence remained relatively congenial throughout the first half of the twentieth century until the Forest Service decided to allow developers the opportunity to build and operate a ski resort on federal land at Mineral King. The USFS, with a long-standing policy of multiple-use for the greatest good, believed that Mineral King could function both as a game refuge and as a ski resort to support the country's growing recreational demands.[547] The descendants of the earliest Mineral King residents, however, cherished their traditions, rustic cabins, and small summer resort and were highly opposed to the proposed development.[548]

Mineral King Development, 1940s-1960s

Most Tulare County citizens, in contrast to the Mineral King cabin owners, supported the proposed USFS development and welcomed the idea of transforming the hidden mountain valley into a popular skiing destination. In the late 1940s, for example, a

[546] "Land Protection Plan, Mineral King," 1984.

[547] Vicknair, "Mindsets," 22 and 30. The USFS sought ski development for the Mineral King area as early as 1947. Within a few years, they placed "considerable emphasis" on building "a large and extensive winter sports development in the Mineral King area" based on the need for recreation across the country, see Lawrence C. Merriam, "Memo: To Director Subject: Winter Sports Development," 22 April 1953, Sequoia National Park Archives. (Accessed June 2017).

[548] In a 1953 letter, E. T. Scoyen, the Sequoia National Park Supervisor, stated that there was "considerable local agitation over the Mineral King ski proposal." He added that the summer home owners in Mineral King were "very much opposed to the project," see *Letter to the Regional Director, Region 4 from Supervisor of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park*, 16 February 1953, Sequoia National Park Archives. (Accessed June 2017).

plethora of county newspapers enthusiastically followed those working on the initial stages of the ski resort. In January 1947, one of the first articles about the development quoted experts who touted Mineral King's "magnificent ski terrain" and potential for Olympic competition.[549] A few months later, another article stated that the "chairman of a statewide committee" declared Mineral King an "untapped gift" with the capacity to become a major recreation area in the U.S."[550] By the end of the year, local newspapers excitedly reported that a Mineral King Association, made up of Southern California winter sports aficionados, had started snow surveys.[551] The newspapers continued to update the public as others, including a Los Angeles financier, Forest Service officials, and even United States Weather Bureau representatives, joined the surveys and initial stages of the development.[552] Nearly all the county newspapers at this time echoed a general enthusiasm for the transformation of Mineral King into a skiing mecca. Most Tulare County citizens believed the resort would bring much-needed revenue, attention, and tourism into the area and its nearby towns.[553]

From the 1870s through the 1930s, county newspapers generally described Mineral King as either a failed mining town, a snow slide haven, or a summer retreat for

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[549] "Mineral King Area Boasts Valley 1 ½ Miles Long."

[550] "Mineral King is Undeveloped Gold Mine in Tulare County Backyard, Says Skiers," *Visalia Times Delta*, 14 May 1947.

[551] "Party of Three to Make Snow Survey," *Visalia Times Delta*, 24 October 1947.

[552] Ibid.

[553] "Two Men, Women will Spend Winter at Mineral King to Make a Detailed Survey of Prospective 'Nation's Playground,'" *Exeter Sun*, 24 October 1947.

locals. By the second half of the twentieth century, however, with increased attention to the area for its ski potential, the narrative switched to one that represented Mineral King as a "winter wonderland."[554] Several articles repeatedly described Mineral King as a "skier's paradise" with the "finest" and "greatest" potential for skiing in the world.[555] One statement perfectly symbolized this change in representation from a relatively unknown, local summer vacation spot to a celebrated winter "wonderland" by commenting that Mineral King's "winter beauty far surpasses its summer beauty."[556] In addition to the seasonal change in representation, previous negative descriptions of Mineral King as a decrepit mining town also became more positive. One article even described Mineral King as a "famed and picturesque mining town."[557] These new interpretations could also demonstrate simply that a new generation of county citizens viewed the area in a whole different light.

Several images that accompany the county newspaper articles in the late 1940s and 1950s also presented Mineral King as a skiing haven. One photograph, "Skier's Paradise," did not depict Mineral King as a sunny, summer mountain retreat, but rather blanketed in snow (Figure 36).[558] Another image titled, "Plenty of Snow," displayed a

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[554] J. E. Doctor, "Winter Visits to Mineral King are Practical, Well Worth While, Part of Skiers, Newsmen Find on Weekend," *Exeter Sun,* 1 February 1949.

[555] Omer Crane, "Region May Be Equal to World's Best," *Fresno Bee* and "Ideas for Mineral King: Narrow Railroad Suggested," *Visalia Times Delta*, 15 April 1950.

[556] Joe E. Doctor, "Winter Visits to Mineral King."

[557] "Mineral King—Hopoff for Land Beyond," *Visalia Times Delta*, 26 May 1950.

[558]"Skier's Paradise," *Visalia Times Delta*, 30 January 1953.

snow-laden cabin with a smiling press party gathered in front of it (Figure 37).[559] "Mineral King Valley" depicted the region as a winter wonderland with a few of the quaint cabins peeking out from underneath the heavy winter snow (Figure 38).[560] In contrast to the earlier images publicizing Mineral King as a summer retreat, the visual representation of Mineral King in the postwar era presented the area as a playground of winter recreation. One magazine described this change as a new bonanza in Mineral King, that of "white gold."[561] Interestingly, the local newspapers in the first half of the century reported Mineral King as a dangerous place in the winter and repeatedly detailed the devastation of the heavy winters.[562] Stories of snow slides and avalanches, however, had no place in the representation of an alpine skiing haven and recreational winter wonderland.[563]

This new change in description and desired use of Mineral King reflected the changing landscape ideals and tourism trends of postwar America: a general affluence, increasing popularity and accessibility of skiing, and rapid growth of recreation and tourism. Ironically, the main impetus for this new vision of Mineral King (unlike earlier

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[559] Tulare County Library Archives, Visalia Branch, Mineral King Folder, Newspapers, 1950s, Undated and uncited, but within folder of local newspaper articles during the 1940s-1950s.
[560] Ibid.

[561] "Mineral King—Back Country Shangri-La," *Westways* (August 1956).

[562] Some writers during the Mineral King land battle stated the main reason that the project was not viable was Mineral King's propensity for avalanches and snow slides, see Eric Burr, "Mineral King-Mickey Mouse or Disneyland?" *Powder* (October 1978), 25-33. John Harper, one of the leaders of the Kern-Kaweah chapter of the Sierra Club also believed the frequent snow slides and avalanches made the entire project unfeasible.

[563] A Disney employee died in a snow avalanche while the company conducted surveys in the area in the late 1960s. The death, however, was not publicized and, in fact, was covered up since the company did not think it would make for good publicity for the nascent resort.

descriptions and representations) came from outsiders, primarily Southern Californian skiing enthusiasts. While Tulare County did not harbor a large winter sporting community, most residents supported this new utilization of Mineral King since it would bring revenue and residual tourism to their cities and businesses. In addition, county citizens believed that Mineral King (and, thus, Tulare County) could rise from relative obscurity to become an attraction known all over the world as the "nation's playground" for skiing.[564]

A National Mineral King: Public Land Battle, 1960s-1970s

The private cabin owners, or Mineral King "old timers," did not support the ski development mainly since they would lose their family cabins and treasured, secluded summer vacation spot.[565] These descendants of the earliest Mineral King residents found natural allies in rapidly-growing environmental groups, such as the Sierra Club, who fought major developments on public lands. In February 1965, the USFS officially issued a prospectus for the Mineral King development and selected Walt Disney and his company's bid for a $35 million multi-recreational all-year-round resort. The cabin owners, along with the local Kern-Kaweah Chapter of the Sierra Club, immediately

[564] "Ideas for Mineral King: Narrow Railroad Suggested." Tulare County Library Archives, Visalia Branch, Mineral King Folder, Newspapers, 1950s, Undated and uncited, but within folder of local newspaper articles during the 1940s-1950s.

[565] Joe E. Doctor, *Exeter Sun*, 29 July 1987, mentioned how five main families descended from the early residents known as "old timers." In 1965, there was an "adverse reaction" to development by "old timers," and one of them, Bob Barton, lamented the fact that they were all going to lose their cabins, see Welch, "Lore of Sierra," *Fresno Bee*. Both the Tulare and Visalia County Chamber of Commerce supported the USFS and opposed the Sierra Club, "Wilderness Hearings Open in Fresno: Area Officials Back Mineral King, *Visalia Times Delta*, 2, November 1966.

sought assistance from the national organization to stop the Disney development.[566] In the late 1940s, the directors of the Sierra Club initially supported the Forest Service's quest to find developers to build and operate a ski resort at Mineral King.[567] One of the main reasons being that the Club felt that Mineral King was not a true wilderness.[568] In 1965, however, the Club voted to oppose any development in Mineral King.[569] The majority of the Board of Directors felt that the immense Disney development, including an all-weather highway passing through Sequoia National Park, would be too destructive to the natural environment and the Club launched an extensive, highly organized campaign to fight it.[570] At both the local and national level, in the court system and in the

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[566] The Conservation Committee of the Kern-Kaweah Chapter "circulated a report" for "proposed preservation" of Mineral King that made it to the Board of Directors, *Minutes of the Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board of Directors*, 1-2 May 1965.

[567] The Board of Directors stated that the Club found "no objection from the standpoint of its policies to the winter sports development in Mineral King proposed by the USFS." The initial prospectus issued by the Service, however, was for a resort with "a lodge and two ski lifts" with an investment of 200,000 to 300,000 dollars, see, *Sierra Club Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors*, 4 September 1949, 6. Online Archive of California, www.oac.cdlib.org (Accessed June 2017).

[568] At an August 31, 1947 meeting, the Sierra Club stated that it "could not as a matter of principle oppose any development to Mineral King or any other non-wilderness area," *Sierra Club Minutes of the Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board of Directors*, 1-2 May 1965, 11, Online Archive of California, www.oac.cdlib.org (Accessed June 2017).

[569] The standpoint of the Board of Directors was not unanimous. Some believed the Club needed to stick to its original 1949 resolution. Of the four final resolutions drafted in 1965, the Club adopted the one to oppose any development in Mineral King by a vote of 9 to 4 with one abstain, see *Sierra Club Minutes of the Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board of Directors*, 1-2 May 1965, 11-14. Online Archive of California, www.oac.cdlib.org (Accessed June 2017).

[570] Ibid. The proposed Disney development included fourteen ski lifts, two major hotels, ten restaurants, a hospital, a conference center, an ice skating rink, a chapel, a theater and various other buildings that could accommodate 20,000 skiers a day, "Disney Promotional Flyer" Mineral King Preservation Archives, Three Rivers, Ca. (Accessed June 2017).

forests, the Sierra Club and the private cabin owners fought the Mineral King development until the area officially became part of Sequoia National Park in 1978.[571]

The Mineral King controversy became national news in the 1960s and 1970s with the involvement of prominent players like Disney as well as a lawsuit that made it to the Supreme Court in 1972.[572] The increased attention to Mineral King spurred more articles, showcasing the previously unknown mountain valley and debating issues of land use—particularly about public lands and ideas about wilderness. Popular and varied magazines such as *Sunset*, *Harpers'*, and *Sports Illustrated*, as well as top newspapers, such as *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, all covered various parts of the Mineral King controversy.[573] Most national articles supported the environmentalists, indicating Americans' increasing support for preservation over development in the postwar era.[574]

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[571] In addition to the more publicized national organization's battle and lawsuit against the Mineral King development, the local chapter of the Sierra Club led a vibrant grassroots campaign, see John Harper, *Mineral King: Public Concern with Government Policy* (Arcata: Pacifica Publishing Co., 1982). In "Save Mineral King: Stickers Greet County Officials," *Visalia Times Delta*, 19 August 1969, Gary Daloyan described an "omnipresent Sierra Club" in the area with a "caravan of protestors."

[572] U.S.C. *Sierra Club v. Morton* (1972). The Sierra Club created the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund in 1969 (now Earthjustice) specifically to battle the Mineral King Development in the courts. While the Sierra Club lost the 1972 Supreme Court case on the issue of not providing enough evidence of standing to sue, it reformulated its case and continued to fight in the lower courts until 1978. For more information on the Sierra Club and its initiation into environmental law, Vicknair, "Mindsets, Motivations," 110-115 and about the Mineral King lawsuits and the 1972 Supreme Court decision, 116-124.

[573] *Sports Illustrated*, 19 December 1966, *Sunse*t (August 1967), Peter Browning, "Mickey Mouse and the Mountains" *Harpers' Magazine*, March 1972, 57-71.

[574] "Mineral King Folly," *The New York Times*, 2 February 1969 and "Scandal of Mineral King" 24 June 24 1969, www.nytimes.com. (Accessed October 2018), "To Guard and Preserve or Open and Enjoy?" *Time Magazine*, February 7, 1969, 17, Browning, "Mickey Mouse," 57-71, Arnold Hano, "The Battle of Mineral King," *The New York Times Magazine*, 17 August 1969, 56- 57.

The Mineral King controversy, moreover, as stated by Tom Turner, became a "prominent national environmental issue."[575]

Even though popular opinion tended to support the Sierra Club in its fight against the Mineral King resort, many county residents and Southern Californian skiers continued to back the Mineral King development.[576] A main theme that emerges from studying the cultural material from the Mineral King battle is the debate about ownership of public lands and the issue of who can speak for them. In other words, many individuals had answers to the question of exactly who was "the public" who stewarded public lands. Writers for regional newspapers, such as *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Visalia Times Delta*, and *The Fresno Bee*, all believed that the Sierra Club should not determine the uses of Mineral King and opined that it was pushing its agenda onto locals and Southern Californians. One article, for example, claimed that the environmental organization was not the "ultimate authority on what public lands would be developed."[577] *The Los Angeles Times* wrote that the Sierra Club tried to make Mineral King a "private preserve" for only a few experienced mountain enthusiasts, wasting a natural treasure that belonged to all Californians.[578] In addition to debates about who exactly constituted the public in relation

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[575] Tom Turner, "Who Speaks for the Future?" *Sierra*, Vol. 75, Num. 4 (July-August 1990), 70.

[576] Ron Taylor, "Mineral King: This Was the Year," *The Fresno Bee*, 13 December 13 1970 and Alexandra Vicknair, "Mindsets" 127-129.

[577] "Mineral King Project Shouldn't be Blocked," *Visalia Times Delta*, 19 June 1969.

[578] *The Los Angeles Times*, "Other Editors: Not a Private Preserve." Ironically, both Southern California skiing enthusiasts and county citizens could be classified as outsiders pushing their ideals onto the Mineral King area and its local residents. In addition, many of the Mineral King cabin owners were the members of the Sierra Club who fought the development at the grass-roots level.

to public lands, another central argument in support of the development was the fact that Mineral King was not a wilderness nor did it have any extraordinary scenic value, and, thus, should not be preserved.

Ideas and concepts of wilderness were at the heart of the Mineral King controversy, as each side interpreted and purported to know what type of land and space Mineral King was, or should be. During the battle, most cultural material swayed between the two poles of land ideologies: one side believing adamantly that Mineral King was not a wilderness and the other extoling it as a one of the last remaining and most beautiful wild spaces.[579] Walt Disney Productions, for example, vowed that Mineral King's "natural beauty must be preserved at all costs," yet emphatically stated that Mineral King was "not a wilderness."[580] The USFS and its officials always believed that Mineral King, because of the private property and mining claims, was not wilderness.

Some groups and individuals were not unanimous in outlooks throughout the entire controversy and positions changed with different leaders or, simply, with the times. The Park Service leaders, for example, did not have a cohesive viewpoint on Mineral King from the 1940s through the 1970s, yet most did not believe the area to be entirely a

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[579] "Mineral King Project," *Visalia Times*, says that the Sierra Club "knows full well" there are more than 2 million acres of real wilderness in the Sierra near Mineral King. The article added that Mineral King did not qualify for wilderness status and that the Club knew it was "poppycock" to say so. Wesley Marx in the article, "The Disney Imperative," stated Mineral King is "rather rare" as one of the "last reaming 2 %" of wild land in the US. He also lamented that "wilderness is not being desecrated" it is being out-charmed," see *The Nation*, 28 June 1968. A pamphlet described the area as "one of the most beautiful wild places in the Sierra," *Mineral King Task Force Flyer,* 1977, Tulare County Archives, History Room, Visalia, California. (Accessed June 2017). *Sunset* (August 1967) stated that "the pressure to open up wilderness lands for greater recreational use is rising, and urged readers to visit Mineral King while it was still "quiet, lonely, wild," 43.

[580] "Disney Promotional Flyer" and E. Cordon Walker, "Disney News, 3 May 1972 in John Harper Collection, Fresno State Archives, Fresno, CA (Accessed Fall 2012).

wilderness area.[581] The most pressing issue during the land battle for the NPS was the all-weather highway passing through a portion of a national park unit, which Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall reluctantly approved in 1967.[582] The Sierra Club position was also not so straightforward nor unanimous. In 1965, for example, the Board of Directors (after a tie vote and four resolutions) reversed the organization's 1949 decision to approve a Mineral King ski resort and officially opposed any recreational development in the area due its "primitive aspects."[583] The Club, in order to fight the Disney development and preserve the area years later, was compelled to argue that Mineral King was worthy of either wilderness or national park status.[584] The Sierra Club's reversal in less than two decades demonstrated how much public sentiment had changed since 1949 and how

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[581] The second Park Service Director, Horace Albright, stated that Mineral King "has not been a primitive area for some time," in "Disney News," *New York Times*, 26 July 1969. John White, the Superintendent of Sequoia National Park, in a series of letters to the Regional Director of Region Four of the USF from February to August 1947, stated he would be against the development of Mineral King since a portion of the road would have to pass through his park, "Winter Use Mineral King Area Project, 1946-1954," Sequoia National Park Archives, Three Rivers, CA, (Accessed June 2017). White's successor, E. T. Scoyen, however, stated the Service desired "to develop this particular section [Mineral King] for skiers," *Letter to Omer Crane, Fresno Bee from E.T. Scoyen*, 3 February 1949, Sequoia National Park Archives.

[582] In 1967, Stewart Udall wrote that George Hartzog, the Director of the NPS, believed "very strongly" that the Mineral King project was "ill-conceived" and that both he and Hartzog were highly concerned about the highway, *Letter to Otis Chandler, President of The Los Angeles Times From Stewart Udall, Secretary of the Interior*, 6 January 1967 in Sequoia National Park Archives (Accessed June 2017).

[583] "Mineral King a magnificent area and although not all wilderness, parts are de facto wilderness and all parts have been returning to a wild state," *Sierra Club Minutes of the Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board of Directors*, 1-2 May 1965, 13 and 14.

[584] Mike McCloskey, one of the leaders of the Sierra Club, stated that the Club wanted to designate the Mineral King area as an official federal wilderness area, see "Wilderness Hearings Opens in Fresno." In "The Sierra Club Opposes Development of Mineral King," *The Sierra Club Bulletin* (November 1967) McCloskey stated that "a large part of Mineral King had reverted to de facto wilderness," 7.

much public land battles influence the way individuals and groups perceive, describe, and represent certain landscapes at various times.[585]

Even individuals not directly involved in the Mineral King land battle represented the controversy as a debate about wilderness preservation. Wesley Marx in a 1969 article for *The Nation*, for example, strongly opposed the Disney development and called Mineral King a rare and "pristine wilderness" that developers wanted to turn into an inauthentic Disneyland.[586] In 1970, Dewey Anderson in an article for *National Parks and Conservation Magazine* stated that Mineral King "valley has not had much human use" and "should have been made part of Sequoia National Park from the beginning."[587] Roger Rappaport in a 1972 edition of *Ramparts* wrote that the public land battle was "deadly serious" since there was an "ever-increasing need" for wilderness in America.[588]

Many national articles, therefore, mostly argued for the preservation of Mineral King on the grounds that it was one of the few remaining wilderness areas, reflecting America's changing ideals about preservation, land use, and wilderness. In the first half of the twentieth century, very few publications described Mineral King as a wilderness although many of the images and ephemera promoted the resort as a place in contrast to

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[585] For more on the Sierra Club and what influenced their shift in their Mineral King policy see Vicknair, "Mindsets, Motivations, Mickey Mouse, and the Mountains," 87-101.

[586] Marx, "The Disney Imperative."

[587] Dewey Anderson, "Mineral King A Fresh Look," *National Parks and Conservation Magazine* (May 1970).

[588] Roger Rappaport, "Disney's War against the Wilderness," *Ramparts*, 13 July 1972.

civilization.[589] The Wilderness Act of 1964 defined wilderness as an area "untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain," and "without permanent improvements or human habitation."[590] One could argue that parts of Mineral King, under this definition, were not wilderness; however, one could argue that many other sections of the area were, in fact, wilderness. One could also make a case in support of wilderness status on the grounds that the developed part of Mineral King was so slight and no permanent residents lived there. The fact that both sides of the debate declared Mineral King either a wilderness or not, moreover, demonstrated that, despite legal definitions, certain landscapes could be interpreted and viewed very differently by particular groups at particular times. One motif of American landscape ideologies that emerges by looking at the history of the Mineral King battle is the over-arching perception in modern times of wilderness as a limited commodity and as a space that is in contrast with civilization.[591]

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[589] John Muir, interestingly, did describe Mineral King as a wilderness in a private correspondence *Letter from John Muir to Helen Muir, 13 July 1908*, John Muir Correspondences, University of the Pacific Digital Collections, digitalcollection.pacific.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/muirletters/id/5902/rec/8. In several letters from that trip, Muir wrote about the High Sierras in a general way (to which the "wilderness" may refer to) although the letters are addressed "Mineral King, California," John Muir Letters, *Letters from John Muir to Helen Muir 6, 8, 13, 18, and 24 July*, University of the Pacific Digital Collections, digitalcollection.pacific.edu. (Accessed September 2017).

[590] The Wilderness Act, Public Law 88-577 (16 U.S. C. 1131-1136), https://wilderness.nps.gov/document/wildernessAct.pdf. (Accessed September 2017). For more information on wilderness and politics see Craig Allen, *The Politics of Wilderness Preservation* (University of Alaska Press, 2008) and James Morton Turner, *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics since 1964* (Seattle: University of Washington, 2012).

[591] For more on the history of wilderness concepts in America, see Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 3rd edt, 1967).

The Sierra Club and the cabin owners succeeded in delaying the construction of the Mineral King resort for nearly a decade, while other factors also prevented its development. In 1966, for example, Walt Disney, the main driver of the Mineral King project for the company, died suddenly of lung cancer only a year after the Forest Service accepted his prospectus. Walt Disney Productions vowed to keep Disney's alpine dream alive; however, company support for the project significantly waned without their founder's passion and in the spotlight of the long, heated national controversy.[592] The larger trend of the American environmental movement also aided the Sierra Club's ability to stall the project. The enactment of new federal environmental laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in 1969, for example, greatly hindered the Disney project since the Forest Service could not complete the NEPA-required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Mineral King until 1976.[593]

As the development stalled year-after-year, even some of the resort's biggest and earliest supporters, such as skiing enthusiasts, lost all hope for the development.[594] County citizens, however, remained optimistic into the mid-1970s.[595] The most direct factor that ended the public land battle, however, was a political redistricting that allowed Democrat John Krebs to be elected to Congress in 1977 as a representative for the area that included Mineral King. Local politicians and congressmen had long supported the

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592 Vicknair, "Mindsets, Motivations, Mickey Mouse, and the Mountains," 80.

593 *Mineral King Final Environmental Statement*, Sequoia National Forest, California Region, United States Forest Service, (Washington: GPO, 1976). For more information see Vicknair, "Mindsets," 129-130.

594 Vicknair, "Mindsets," 127-128.

595 Ron Taylor, "Mineral King: This was the Year," 127-128.

Mineral King development for nearly three decades, but Representative Krebs reversed his predecessors' stances and immediately launched a campaign to protect Mineral King.[596] His Mineral King Preservation Bill was eventually added to a large omnibus park bill that President Jimmy Carter signed into law in 1978. Its passage officially made Mineral King part of Sequoia National Park.[597]

While high-profile organizations and individuals eclipsed the local efforts by the Mineral King residents during the public land battle, it was their vision of Mineral King as a small, summer retreat that, ironically, remained its primary use. In 1979, locals had the chance to decide how Mineral King would be incorporated into Sequoia National Park. The four proposals ranged from leaving it in the present condition to making the area into a highly constructed tourist space for year-round recreation.[598] In the end, the community voted for Mineral King to have the slightest tourist infrastructure or built environment: few trails, campgrounds and sites, and barely any historical sites or trail markers.

A vast majority of the area, therefore, still exists as it did in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the historic cabins remain with the descendants of the early Mineral King residents. In 2003, the Mineral King Road became part of the National Register of Historic Places and is still (and will likely remain) the twenty-six mile, windy, two-lane road early tourists and settlers traveled on. In 2009, the area

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[596] "Wilderness Hearing Opens in Fresno" and Vicknair, 131-134.

[597] "The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978,"16 U.S.C. 471i (1978) and Vicknair, 134.

[598] Gene Rose, "Four Plans for Mineral King," *The Fresno Bee*, 11 November 1979, B1.

surrounding Mineral King Valley, nearly 70,000 acres, became the John G. Krebs Wilderness preserve in honor of Krebs' conservation efforts in the region. This designation, theoretically, ended future debates about the area's wilderness status. Mineral King, moreover, is still difficult to get to, relatively undeveloped and unpeopled, and stands in stark contrast physically, ideologically, in representation and as a tourist space to that of Yosemite National Park.

There is more to national parks, therefore, than just the physical localities. Human perceptions, experiences, and desires combined with sociopolitical and cultural trends impact the national park idea and what lands particular societies define as a national park. Individual park units, such as Mineral King have their own history, identity, and legacy. The Mineral King story demonstrates that there are myriad paths to national park status. In fact, roads to park status can be as shifting and circuitous as narratives and representations about parks. The public land battle over Mineral King during the 1960s and 1970s also showcases how individuals within one society can define the same place in paradoxical ways and how viewpoints about those lands can change rapidly from one generation to the next. Ultimately, there are multiple ways to view and define national parks.

The power of local communities to influence designations and use of public lands is a significant conclusion from the Mineral King story. Locals chose to keep Mineral King's landscape within Sequoia National Park nearly identical to how it had been prior to its new designation, and locals are still those who hold most of the knowledge about the area. Who is to claim ownership of Mineral King, therefore, when the relatives of

“old timers” and descendants of cabin holders pass on and increasing global populations and resource extractions continue to pressure American landscapes? Americans, as stewards of all national park units, need to realize that narrow narratives which extols solely the popular, monumental parks using rhetoric of American Exceptionalism must be more inclusive if the future of all national park units is to be secured in an increasingly global and interconnected society.

CONCLUSION

The earth is rude, silent, incomprehensible at first,
Nature is rude and incomprehensible at first,
Be not discouraged, keep on, there are divine things, well envelop'd,
I swear to you there are divine things more beautiful than words can tell.
--Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Be less curious about people and more curious about ideas.
--Marie Curie (1867-1934)

On March 1, 2016, National Park Service employees placed a white nylon sign over the old wooden welcome sign that had demarcated Yosemite's Curry Village for over a hundred years. The new sign read "Half Dome Village." At the Ahwahnee Hotel, in operation since 1926, Yosemite staff removed or covered all awards, merchandise, or any other paraphernalia with the "Ahwahnee" name. The hotel, among whose former guests include Queen Elizabeth II, Charlie Chaplin and President John F. Kennedy, was stripped of its original moniker and rechristened "The Majestic Yosemite Hotel."[599] The Park Service opted for the new titles while it fought a former concessionaire, Delaware North (DNC), in court over the rights to the original names. DNC was the operator of Yosemite concessions since 1992, but had recently lost the contract to Aramark. Since DNC trademarked the names of "Curry Village," "Ahwahnee," "Wawona Hotel" and "Badger Pass Trail," the company contended that Aramark and the Park Service needed

[599] Rory Appleton, "The Temporary Signs covering Yosemite's Landmarks won't be removed anytime soon," *The Fresno Bee*, 30 August 2017, https://www.fresnobee.com/news/local/article170192292.html (Accessed January 2019).

to pay royalties in order to continue to use the iconic Yosemite names. The Service argued that those names were not Delaware North's to patent, but rather belong to the American people.[600] From the subsequent public outrage and campaigns to "Boycott DNC," it would seem that most Americans agreed with the Park Service.[601]

While *DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite, INC. vs. the United States of America* is still ongoing at the time of this writing (February 2019), the legal battle over place names in Yosemite raises similar questions about the nature of national parks that this study attempted to uncover. Inquiries, for instance, about ownership. Who exactly has stewardship over the parks? Does that stewardship extend to the names of the parks and their attractions as well, and why or why not? Another question is the role of tourism. What role does visitation play in park experiences? If the tourist industry is intrinsically linked to national parks, how much power should private interests have in national parks? Yet another facet about parks that surfaces is the role memory plays in individuals' conceptions and ideas about parks. Why would the name of a hotel at a national park mean so much to members of the public? A specific area's historic legacy and people's personal experiences and memory of the place must be fundamentally linked to national parks and their role and importance in society.

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[600] Ibid.

[601] Kenneth Brower, "What's In A Name at Yosemite?" *National Geographic*, 25 January 2016, https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/01/160125-yosemite-names-ahwahnee-national-park/ (Accessed January 2019) and Thomas Fuller, "Bitter Contract Dispute Extends to Who Owns Yosemite Names," *The New York Times*, 1 March 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/02/us/bitter-contract-dispute-extends-to-who-owns-yosemite-national-parks-names.html (Accessed February 2019).

According to the laws, the national parks are owned by the American public; however, the federal government manages the areas and private companies run concessions and accommodations.[602] That grouping makes for strange bedfellows. Who, then, is 'the public' when the private and federal also stake claim to national parks? Different individuals and interest groups throughout history have held property or pecuniary or personal interests in the parks. This dissertation showcased works and ideas by entrepreneurs, concessionaires, locals, travel and transportation businesses, artists, photographers, National Park Service leaders and employees, tourists, and environmental activists to name a few. The cultural material produced by this patchwork quilt of people all added to narratives about national parks and worked to create, shift, and mold the national park idea.

Previous chapters demonstrated also that artistic and intellectual trends, such as the rise of American landscape art in the nineteenth century and the modern environmental movement in the postwar era, were particularly strong influencers on national park representation. These accounts shaped public perception and management of the area. In the case of Mineral King, for example, the environmental movement and changing ideas about wilderness resulted in the region receiving national park status. Control over park narratives, therefore, is as consequential as legal or economic control over park resources. Through images and words, the American public has voiced its desires and asserted a powerful influence over how national parks are understood, cherished, and managed through the generations.

[602] *Concessions Management Improvement Act* (1998). Public Law 105-391, National Park Service Organic Act (1916) 16 U.S.C. 1, *Yellowstone National Park Act* (1872), and *Yosemite Grant Act* (1864).

At the heart of this dissertation is tourism and the integral role it plays in national park experiences and ideas. Among the many definitions and views of national parks is the concept that these spaces are natural resources and, therefore, are also commodities. In other words, these spaces are primarily prized and retained for what they provide humanity. Since national parks are mainly valuable to the majority of the American public as nature attractions, tourism is the basis and core of these areas. Concessions, park infrastructure, and the tourist industry, therefore, are integral to the national park experience and especially park representation. Chapter One demonstrated that a burgeoning tourist industry served as the foundation of the Yosemite narrative and experience from the beginning of its creation as a cultural construction. The most abrupt and significant narrative shifts, or changes in how individuals and groups represented Yosemite, centered on tourism. One of the major components of the history of national parks is how tourism and tourists are portrayed in narratives. Whether or not tourism is depicted as negative or positive or purposefully exaggerated or erased in park representation and imagery is a major indicator of larger societal and intellectual trends.

This dissertation also asserted that national park units are more than physical spaces. Representations, written and visual accounts, about national parks in cultural material are powerful shapers of land history. Written and visual depictions can travel beyond physical borders and reach wider and more varied audiences in many different geographic regions. Chapter Two, for example, covered how nineteenth century artists, such as Albert Bierstadt, introduced California's Yosemite to eastern audiences through his large, dramatic paintings. Chapter Three also showcased how mass production and

dissemination of advertising material at the turn-of-the-century brought Yosemite to a greater sector of the American public than ever before through magazines, journals, pamphlets, postcards, brochures, posters, and traveling exhibits. National parks, thus, are more than their physical environments but also exist in mediums such as paintings, movies, books, photographs, postcards, and even computer wallpaper. One does not need to go to Yosemite, for example, to see it or know of it. National parks also exist in intangible areas, such as memory. In other words, national parks are more than what is behind the gates when a visitor enters. Their borders, while connected to a physical space, also extend into the immaterial world and exist far beyond their localities as representations, myths, narratives, and memories.

National park narratives in the cultural consciousness are instrumental to their history, but, most importantly, to their significance in society. In other words, it is knowledge of place that keeps visitors coming and reasserts their value as nature attractions. In many ways, they are also symbols of the past. Tracing the history of Yosemite and Mineral King's narratives elucidates how a place becomes designated a national park. Most importantly, it demonstrates how some national parks become national spaces and reflective of the national park idea, while others remain little known beyond their locality.

When travelers and entrepreneurs first wrote about Yosemite in the 1850s and 1860s many promoted the region with what can now be described as a rhetoric of American exceptionalism. In other words, Yosemite became a landscape that Americans

could celebrate as not only one of the best in the nation, but also in the world.[603] Many contemporary scholars note the connection between the creation of American national parks in the late nineteenth century to the foundation of America as a world power and the search for, and solidification of, a distinct American identity.[604] Notions of American exceptionalism are linked to the foundation of the national park idea and is still one of the most dominant and powerful narratives about these spaces today.[605] Interestingly, as with Yosemite, when individuals viewed Mineral King as a nationally important space, whether promoting its commercial potential or upholding its wilderness values, they started to describe it with the rhetoric of American exceptionalism. Many writers, for example, used superlatives, such as the "greatest," "finest," "best," "most beautiful, "rare," and "unique" to describe the mountain valley.[606] Some writers also compared the landscape of Mineral King to the other regions in the world, stating that the potential ski area was "equal to the world's best," if not better.[607]

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[603] Hutchings, *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity in California*, Chapter Four, 61-139.

[604] John Ise, *Our National Park Policy* (1961), Robert B. Keiter, *To Conserve Unimpaired: The Evolution of the National Park Idea* (2013), Joseph Sax, *Mountains without Handrails: Reflections on National Parks* (1981), John Sheil, *Nature's Spectacle: The World's First National Parks and Protected Places* (2010).

[605] In popular culture, see Ken Burns' documentary, *America's Best Idea: Our National Parks* (2009) and IMAX movie *America Wild: National Park Adventure* (2016), Keiter, *To Conserve Unimpaired: The Evolution of the National Park Idea*. The National Park Service website is riddled with this narrative.

[606] Sierra Club, "Mineral King Task Force Flyer." Wesley Marx, "The Disney Imperative, *The Nation*, 28 June 1968, United States Forest Service, "Public Release" (San Francisco, 29 September 1949), Sequoia National Park Archives. (Accessed June 2017). A Walt Disney Productions flyer stated that when Walt Disney first saw Mineral King, he believed it to be "one of the most beautiful places in the world," "Disney Promotional Flyer," Mineral King Preservation Society Archives, Three Rivers, CA. (Accessed June 2017).

[607] Omer Crane, "Region May be Equal to World's Best," *Fresno Bee*. Walt Disney Productions wrote that the slopes at the Mineral King resort would "rival slopes anywhere in the world, "Disney Promotional Flyer." "Mineral King: A Milestone," *Tulare Advanced Register*, 29 December 1967 stated that the Mineral King resort would be "one of the finest year-round recreational areas in the nation, if not the world," and that the development would open up "one of the world's truly fabulous mountain areas."

The key to creating a national place, therefore, is not just designation or law, but also in the creation of narratives in the cultural consciousness that tout the area as nationally significant. Laws and protective designations are not enough to simply transition a space into a national one, it must have an identity and importance in the public sphere and in the American imagination. While Mineral King's early production of knowledge as a public space began in the late 1940s, Yosemite's occurred nearly a hundred years earlier. By looking at large, over-arching historical themes, such as rapidly growing economies, new technological advances, increased leisure time and recreation, some similarities can be made between the time periods. The comparison suggests that expressions of American uniqueness and identity through landscapes tends to surface at particular times in history and especially if the area needs to be viewed, for protection reasons for example, as a national space. Only through public narratives—including imagery, visitation, and reinforcement of legacy—can these spaces truly become viewed as nationally valuable.

The production of knowledge at Mineral King, compared to the highly toured, constructed, and promoted Yosemite, demonstrates that national park narratives are not straight-forward nor equal. The plethora of Yosemite imagery and written material, contrasted with the dearth on Mineral King, played a key role in working to communicate the area to the world, asserting its status as a national icon, and generating millions of visitors year after year. From the late nineteenth century until today, with a brief interlude from the late 1940s through the late 1970s, the main producers and holders of knowledge about Mineral King were and are locals. Mineral King, while it had a national persona for

a brief period in the mid-twentieth century, returned to relative obscurity from the 1980s onward.

A key factor in the production of knowledge of Mineral King, then, is that locals mainly determined the construction of the physical space and its representation. Due to this fact, the area has not truly become a national park in tourist narratives nor in the American cultural consciousness. The Mineral King story also demonstrates that only when the aims of the cabin holders aligned with the majority of Americans' changing ideas of nature were locals able to secure their desired use for the area. This reveals that while locals can have great influence over the use of public lands, it is when the majority of the public's viewpoints align with theirs that local influence prevails or change occurs. Mineral King is currently part of a national park; yet, one must wonder about its future, as well as the prospect of other less-visited and less-known national park units and regions, if knowledge and use of the space continues to be limited only to locals.

National parks are not reflective of one national park idea or experience, but of many differing ideas and experiences. National parks, as cultural constructs, are multidimensional and complex. Scholars assert that they are both mirrors and reservoirs of society.[608] Parks are places of national identity, and, yet, they are also individual localities. They are commodities and resources but also personal experiences. Many societal groups and individuals work to create national parks and the ideas behind them, even if shifting and fluid, vibrant in the cultural consciousness. It is a symbiotic

[608] Ethan Carr, *Mission 66,* 15 and Jane Carruthers, *Kruger National Park,* 1.

relationship with historic cultures that reinforce the importance and value of national parks from one generation to the next.

Ideas are powerful drivers of history. Nature ideas in particular shape how historic individuals and groups interpret environments and negotiate how that space is utilized. Land use, therefore, is a reflection of cultural identity. National parks are unique spaces that, theoretically, belong to the public and all sectors and individuals of society hold a stake in their management. National parks are also multifaceted spaces—local and national, private and public, urban and natural, human and non-human—and therefore historic societies can view and shape them in a multitude of ways. Narratives and representations of national parks in the cultural consciousness are instrumental to what ultimately transpires at the location, including preservation or development. Images, as strong influencers in perpetuating nature ideas and knowledge about national parks, are key to those narratives. Since parks are primarily, but not entirely, experienced visually (as areas of "sight-seeing"), images reproduce the area for the world to see. Images imprint the knowledge, ideas, and representation—the complete picture—of that area more directly and powerfully than words can in the public sphere.

All narratives, ideas, and definitions about American national parks ultimately should broaden and become as flexible as the history of these spaces and their representations demonstrate. In particular, park units would benefit from accounts and representations that demonstrate and detail their value to individuals at all levels: global, national, and local. National parks would also thrive from the circulation of narratives that stress their worth beyond merely sight-seeing, such as education, scientific

discovery, and protection of wildlife. American national park narratives especially need to move beyond the nineteenth century interpretation rooted in American Exceptionalism, as this narrative only applies to a very few national park units.

If spaces like Mineral King are truly to become known and viewed as national spaces, then narratives about national parks need to include all the uniqueness and diversity of the individual units of the National Park System. In an increasingly global society, looking at the value these spaces hold for *all* visitors, including those from around the world, should also enter into their representations as well as their management and interpretation programs. International visitation continues to rise at national parks, and continuing to highlight a certain type of national park, which upholds ideas seeped in American exceptionalism, may not continue to resonate with visitors in an increasingly interconnected and global society. In other words, narratives and legacies of these spaces should include a more holistic approach and not limited nationalistic rhetoric—otherwise, we may only have Yellowstone, Yosemite, and the Grand Canyon federally-protected in the future. Places like Mineral King are just as valuable as spaces of sightseeing and rejuvenation as the popular national parks. These lesser-known park units must be allowed to grow into to their national park status in hopes to safeguard these spaces in generations to come.

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APPENDIX A

FIGURES

Figure 1: *The Yo-ham-i-te Falls* by Thomas Ayres, 1855 Lithograph.

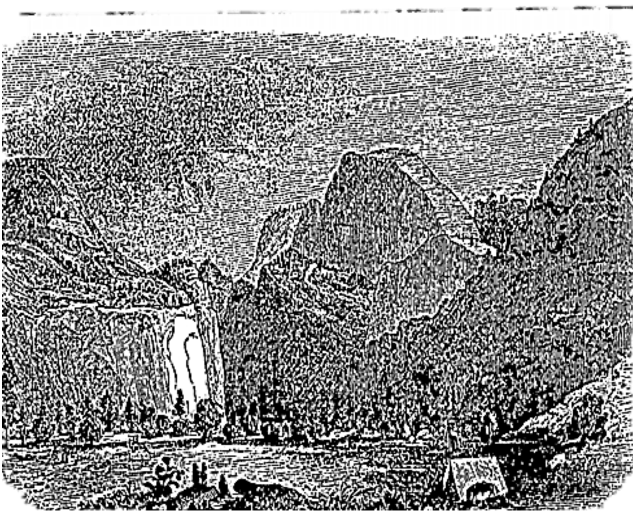


Figure 2: *Twin Domes*, Engraving based on drawing by Thomas Ayres in *Hutchings' California Magazine* (July 1856).

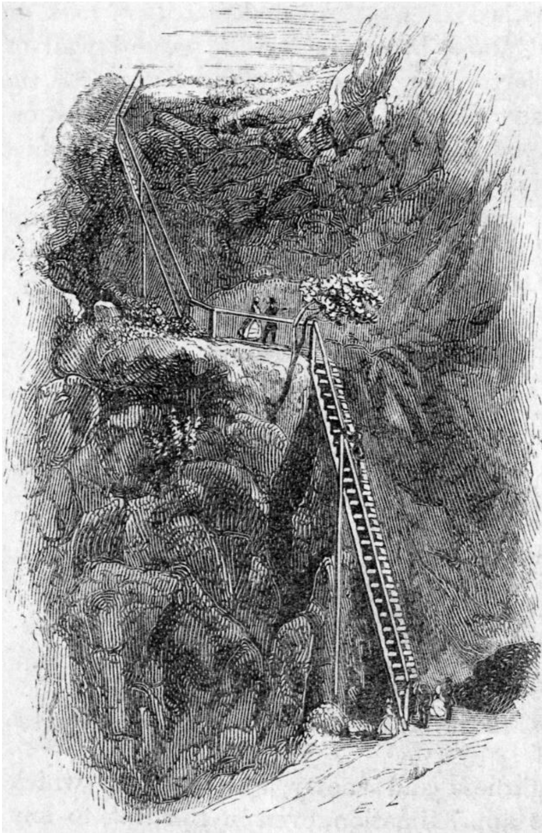


Figure 3: *Ladders—Vernal Falls*, woodcarving based on photograph by C.L. Weed in *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity in California* (1861).

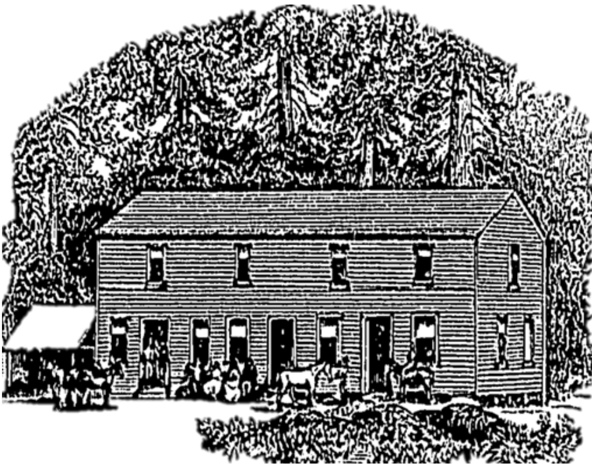


Figure 4: *The Yo-semite Hotel* Etching based on photograph by C.L. Weed in *Hutchings's California Magazine* (November 1859).

Figure 5: Albert Bierstadt, *Valley of the Yosemite*, 1864, Oil on Canvas.

Figure 6: C. E. Watkins, *Cathedral Rock, 2,600 FT., Yosemite*, *NO. 21*. About 1866.

Figure 7: Eadweard Muybridge, *Valley of the Yosemite from Union Point*, 1872.

Figure 8: Eadweard Muybridge, *Scene on the Merced River*, 1867.

Figure 9: Thomas Hill, *Yosemite Valley (From Below Sentinel Dome, as Seen from the Artist's Point),* 1876, Oil on Canvas.

Figure 10: William Keith, *Sentinel Rock*, Yosemite, 1872, Oil on Canvas.

Figure 11: William Hahn, *The Trip to Glacier Point* (1874), Oil on Canvas.

Figure 12: Willam Hahn, *Return Trip from Glacier Point* (1874), Oil on Canvas.

Figure 13: William Hahn, *Yosemite Valley from Glacier Point* (1874), Oil on Canvas.

Figure 14: Albert Bierstadt, *Yosemite Valley, Glacier Point Trail*, 1873

Figure 15: *The California Limited: Nineteenth Season,* 1913*,* Image 1. Image courtesy of Hathi Trust, babel.hathitrust.org.

Figure 16: *The California Limited: Nineteenth Season,* 1913*,* Image 2. Image courtesy of Hathi Trust, babel.hathitrust.org.

Figure 17:"Yosemite by Rail," YVRR Brochure, 1920s. Image Courtesy of the California Railroad Museum Library and Archives

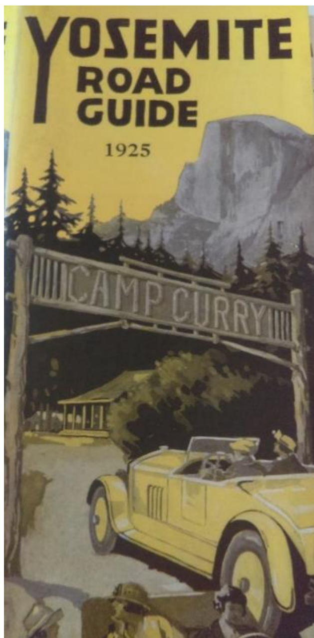


Figure 18: "Yosemite Road Guide," Camp Curry Company, 1925. Image Courtesy of the California Railroad Museum

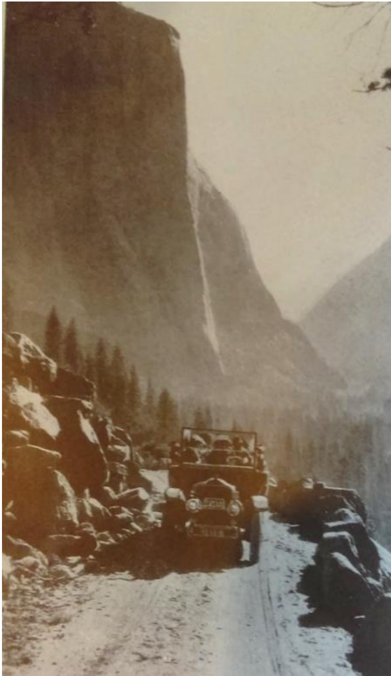


Figure 19: Yosemite Transportation System Tour Brochure, 1920s, Image 1. Image Courtesy of California Railroad Museum

Figure 20: Yosemite Transportation System Tour Brochure, 1920s, Image 2. Image Courtesy of California Railroad Museum.

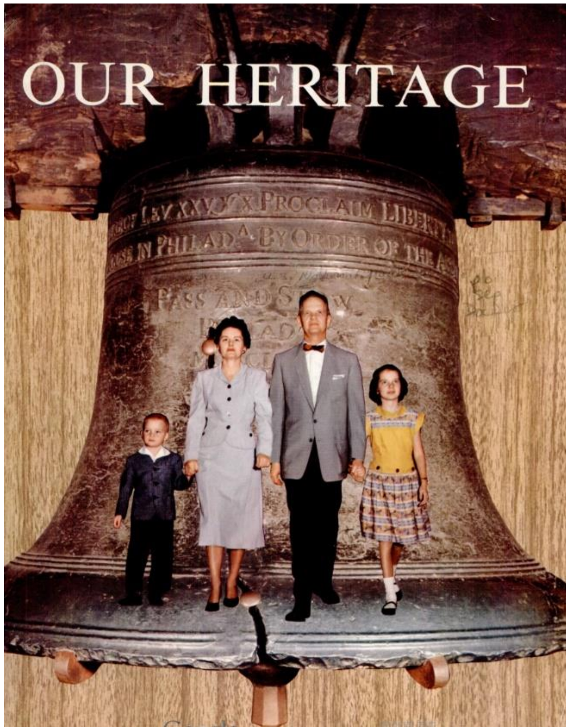


Figure 21: Cover of “Our Heritage: A Plan for Its Protection and Use: Mission 66, 1956.

Figure 22: Thomas Cole, *River in the Catskills* (1843), Oil on Canvas.

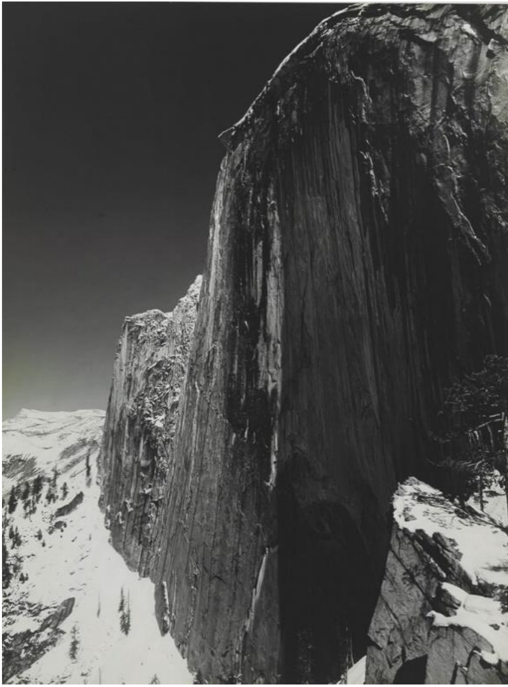


Figure 23: Ansel Adams, *Monolith, The Face of Half Dome* (1927) Gelatin Silver Print. Photograph Reproduced Courtesy of the Ansel Adams Printing Trust.

Figure 24: Ted Orland, *One-And-A-Half-Domes*, 1975, gelatin silver print, hand-tinted and hand–painted. Photograph Reproduced Courtesy of Ted Orland.

Figure 25: Roger Minick, *Yosemite National Park*, “Sightseer Series,” 1980.

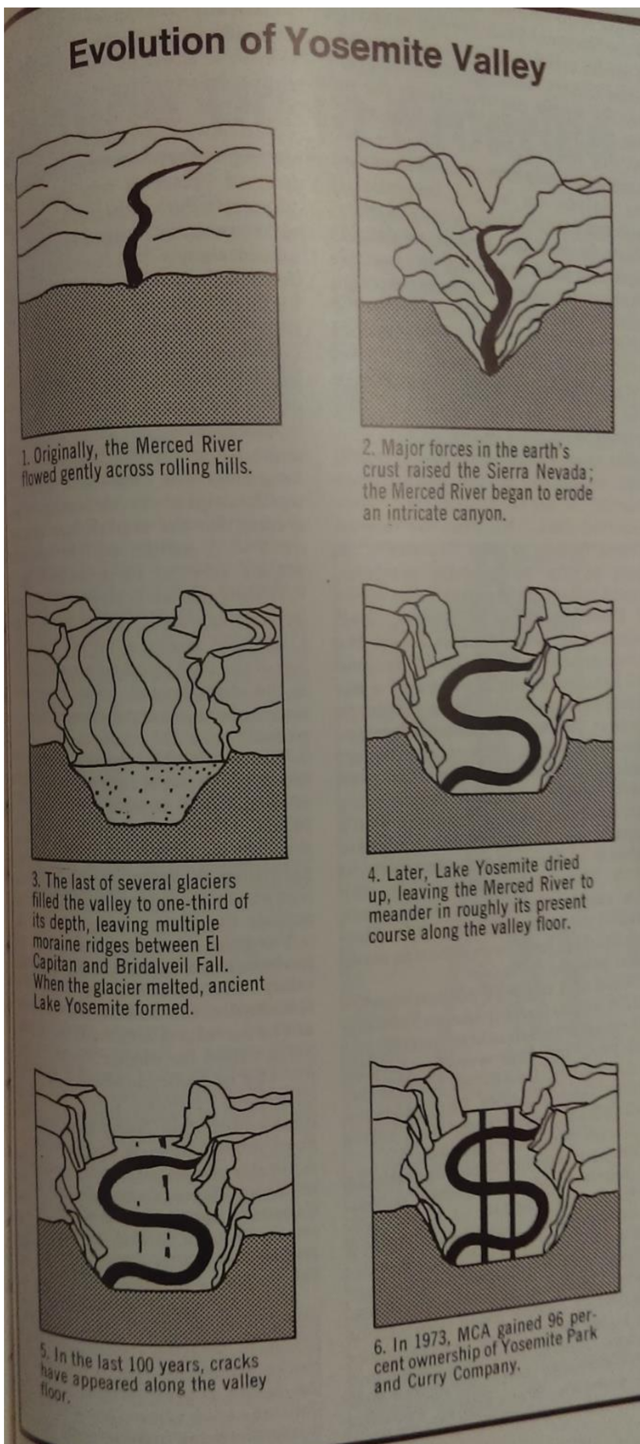


Figure 26: "Evolution of Yosemite Valley" in *Sierra Club Bulletin* (October 1974). Image Reproduction Courtesy of William E. Colby Memorial Library, Sierra Club.

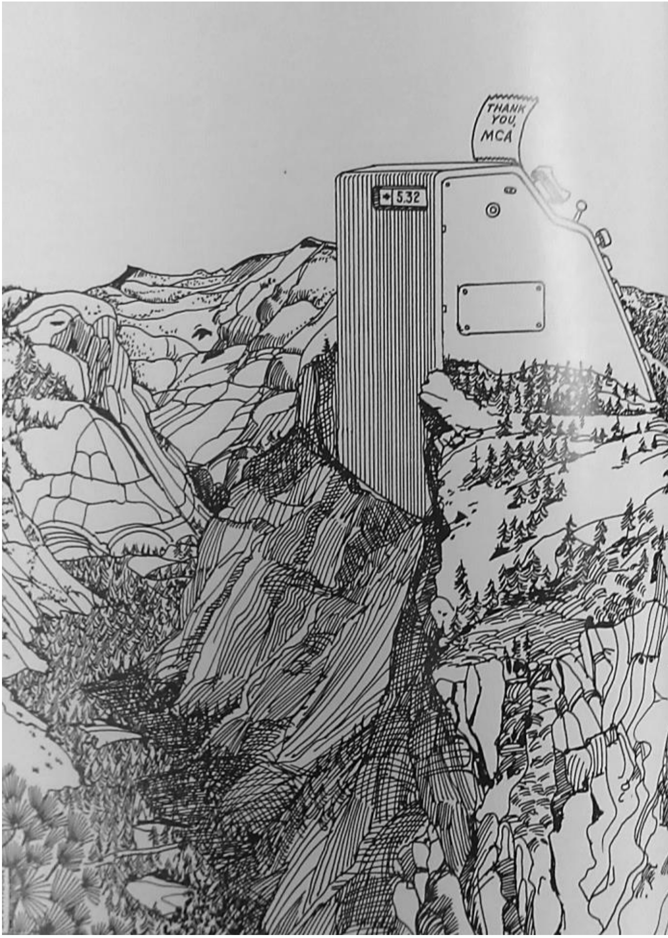


Figure 27: S. Johnson, “Thank You MCA,” *Sierra Club Bulletin* (October 1974). Image Reproduction Courtesy of William E. Colby Memorial Library, Sierra Club.

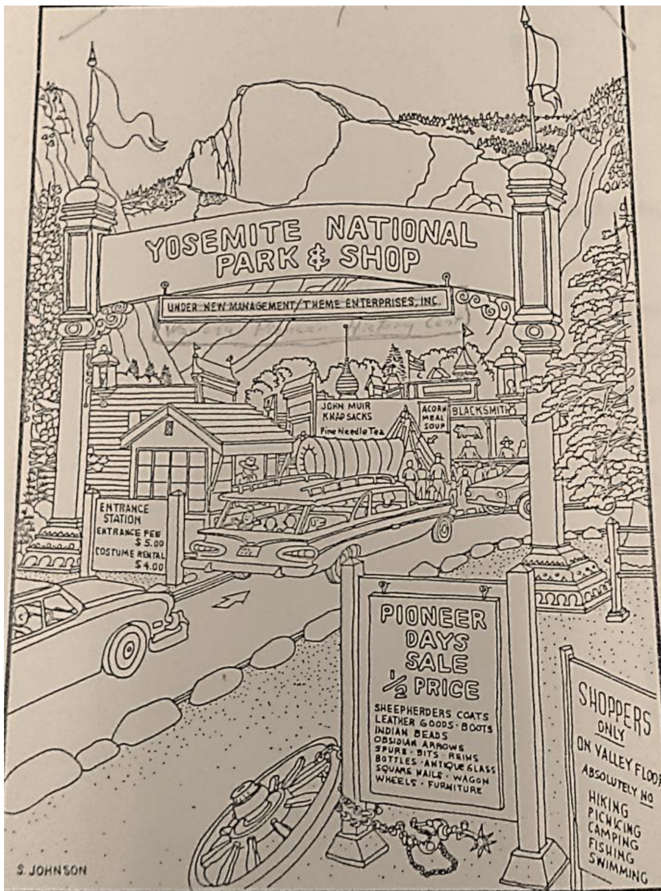


Figure 28: S. Johnson, “Yosemite National Park & Shop,” *Sierra Club Bulletin* (March 1973). Image Courtesy Yosemite National Park Archives.

Figure 29: Empire Mine and Tramway Woodcut, 1879. Image Reproduction Courtesy of the Mineral King Preservation Society.

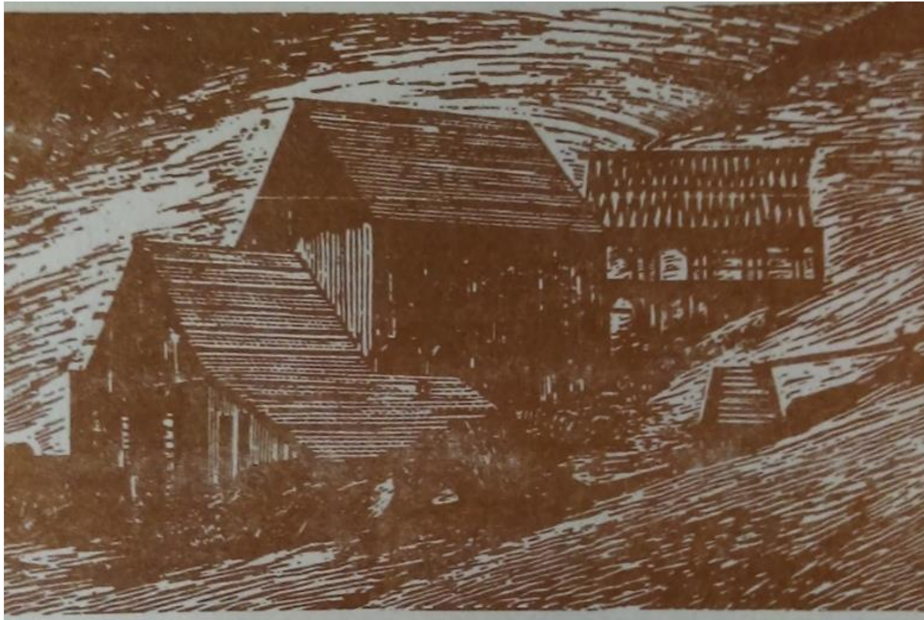


Figure 30: Empire Mine Woodcut, 1879. Image Reproduction Courtesy of the Mineral King Preservation Society.

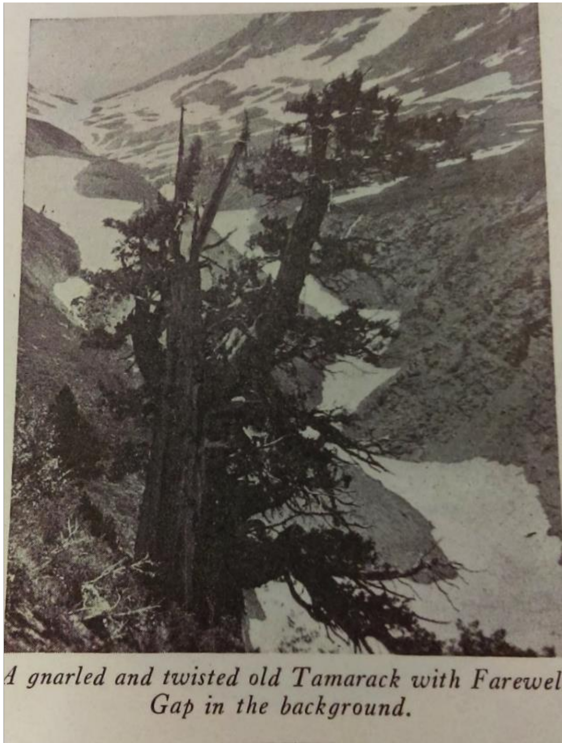


Figure 31: “A Gnarled and Twisted Old Tamarack with Farwell Gap in the background,” 1924, *Touring Topics*. Image Reproduction Courtesy of the Mineral King Preservation Society.

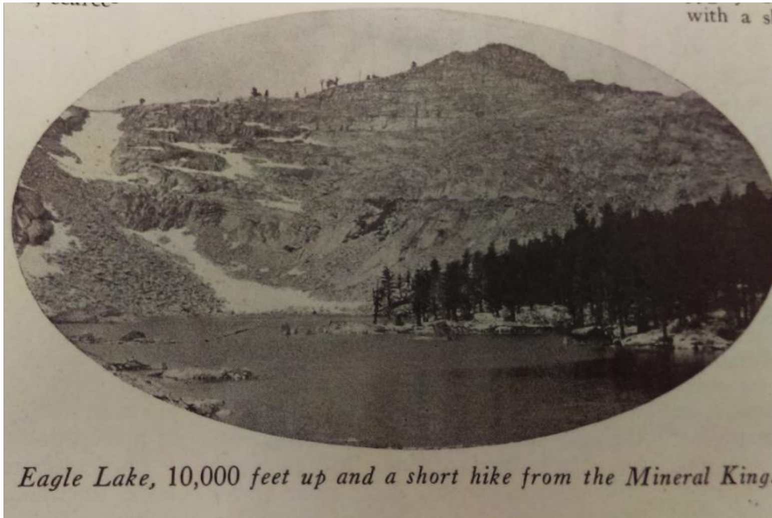
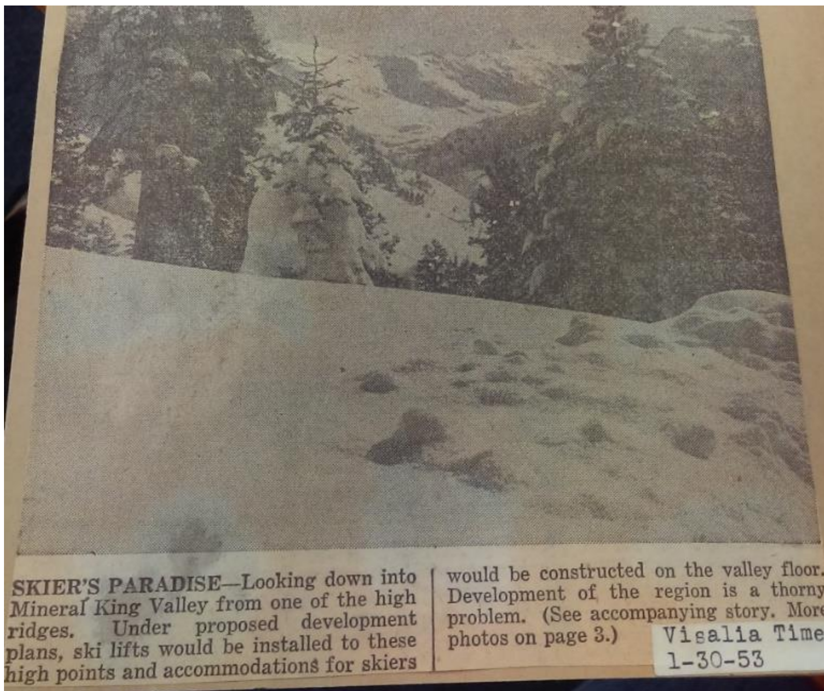


Figure 32: “Eagle Lake, 10,000 feet up and a short hike form Mineral King,” 1924, *Touring Topics*. Image Reproduction Courtesy of Mineral King Preservation Society.

Figure 33: “Mineral King, Tulare Co., Calif.” Postcard (Undated). Image Courtesy of Mineral King Preservation Society.

Figure 34: "On the Trail, Mineral King" Postcard (Undated). Image Reproduction Courtesy of the Mineral King Preservation Society.

Figure 35: "Sawtooth Peak, Mineral King, Cal." Postcard (Undated). Image Reproduction Courtesy of Mineral King Preservation Society.



SKIER'S PARADISE—Looking down into Mineral King Valley from one of the high ridges. Under proposed development plans, ski lifts would be installed to these high points and accommodations for skiers would be constructed on the valley floor. Development of the region is a thorny problem. (See accompanying story. More photos on page 3.)

Visalia Times
1-30-53

Figure 36: "Skier's Paradise," *Visalia Times Delta*, 1950. Image Reproduction Courtesy of History Room, Tulare County Library, Tulare, CA.

PLENTY OF SNOW — More than 33 inches of snow on top of a 64 inch pack greeted these newspaper men and ski experts at the Ray Buckman resort in Mineral King last weekend. The press party, from left to right, include E. T. Scoyen, superintendent, Sequoia-Kings National parks; Omer Crane, Fresno Bee; Don Lewis, assistant superintendent, Sequoia National Forest; Ludvig (Vicki) Hasher, Mineral King snow survey; David Monahan, Mercury-International Pictures; Art Lavagnino, Pasadena Ski Club; Sutter E. Kunkel, Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce; Walt Little, Bakersfield Californian; Jack Hansen, Visalia; Lew Holland, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce; Clark Sheff, Tulare News; John A. Reynolds, Central Valley Empire Association; Mr. Buckman; Woodrow W. Todd, Tulare County Chamber of Commerce manager; Harry Barrell, Santa Fe Railroad; Jay Brown, Tulare county supervisor; Barry Donnelly, Southern Pacific Railroad, and Jim Lee, Mineral King.—(Ward Studio Photo).

Visalia Times Delta

Figure 37: "Plenty of Snow," *Visalia Times Delta*, Appx. 1950s. Image Reproduction Courtesy Tulare County Library History Room.

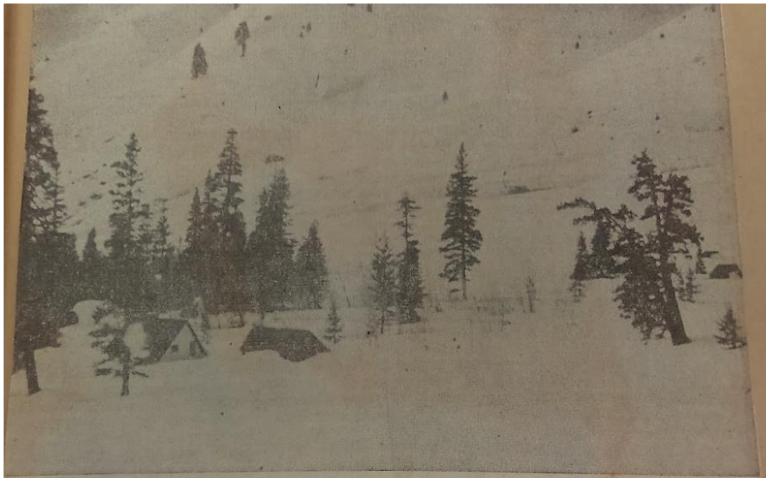

MINERAL KING VALLEY—This photo, taken last winter, shows the snow-covered Mineral King Valley, just north of the Mineral King store. The cabins in foreground and at extreme right are on Forest Service land. Owners of the cabins would be forced out in any large scale development for ski purposes, the owners believe.

Figure 38: "Mineral King Valley," *Visalia Times Delta*, Appx. 1950s. Image Reproduction Courtesy Tulare County Library History Room.