

**“See, Experience, and Enjoy:”
Visuality and the Tourist Experience in the National Parks, 1864–1966.**

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Abstract

Visuality lies at the heart of the tourist experience of America's national parks, spaces that have historically been bound up in ideas of national identity. Fostered by an array of visual culture – including paintings, photographs, advertising, exhibitions, and the built environment – visuality, and the idea of “the view,” has contributed to a vital relationship between the physical spaces of the national park system and visitors' constructed understanding of these spaces.

To “see” the parks was not only to see the natural landscapes; it was also to learn of their inherent value. Through visual culture, artists, photographers, advertisers, railroad companies, and the National Park Service directed visitor attention to the wonders of the national parks. Through interpretation they evoked a meaning for the national parks that drew on nationalist ideals and ideologies in order to make the tourist experience more significant and consequential.

This thesis explores the tourist experience in the national parks through the influence of visual culture, and surveys the ways in which park officials presented the national parks to visitors in an effort to enrich their experience, appreciation, and comprehension of what came to be considered spaces embodying the ideals and ideologies of the United States. Examining three periods in the history of the national parks, I consider the significance of the visual to the tourist experience. I demonstrate that visual culture and the tourist experience of the national parks was a constructed representation of both natural and ideological landscapes throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the vision of the national parks represented a broader vision of the nation.

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Introduction

Visuality lies at the heart of the visitor experience of America's national parks, spaces that have historically been bound up in ideas of national identity. Fostered by an array of visual culture – including paintings, photographs, advertising, exhibitions, and the built environment – visuality, and the idea of “the view,” has contributed to a vital relationship between the physical spaces of the national park system and visitors' constructed understanding of these spaces. In this thesis I explore the tourist experience in the national parks through the influence of visual culture, and I survey the ways in which park officials presented the national parks to visitors in an effort to enrich their experience, appreciation, and comprehension of what came to be considered spaces embodying the ideals and ideologies of the United States. Centered on a selection of national parks and national monuments in the Western United States, I examine three periods in the history of the national park system, each distinctive by the dominant mode of visitor travel, popular aesthetics, and the commodification of landscape. In each time period I consider the significance of the visual – be it paintings, photographs, architecture, design, exhibitions, advertising, and popular imagery – to the tourist experience.

In these three chapters, “Origins and Exploration,” “Cars and Cameras,” and “Sites and Sights,” I demonstrate that visual culture shaped a mode of visuality in the parks – a way of viewing the landscape – and consequently established “the view” as a fundamental part of the tourist experience for both seeing and understanding the inherent value of the spaces of the national parks. I argue that ultimately, visual culture, visuality, and “the view” of the national parks embodied the prevailing ideals and ideologies of middle- and upper-class, white Americans – the demographic that predominantly

patronized the national parks – as African Americans were discouraged or prohibited from visiting and Native Americans were displaced from these lands in the process of establishing the parks.

This prologue introduces the national park system and the connection between visual culture and tourism to the national parks. It considers the significance of visuality and meaning in the national parks through the relationship of the ‘real’ and the ‘representational.’ Here, the ‘real’ highlights the importance of the visual to the tourist experience; the ‘representational’ underscores the meanings of the spaces of the national parks as shaped by park officials using planning, design, and interpretation. Finally, it presents an overview of sources and a literature review, followed by the methodology and content summary of each chapter.

The Real and the Representational in the National Parks

Visual culture and tourism have popularized the national parks since their earliest years. Indeed, while visual culture brought these natural wonders to the nation’s attention, tourism brought the nation to these natural wonders. Paintings, photographs, and advertising celebrated the western landscapes, and cultivated and informed the public’s collective imagination and knowledge of its nation. Paintings by Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) and Thomas Moran (1837-1926) educated nineteenth-century Americans on the monumental splendors to be seen and experienced in the West; photographs by Ansel Adams (1902-1984) in the 1930s and 1940s transformed regions of wilderness into visions of aesthetic beauty; and postwar promotional campaigns by businesses and corporations such as Standard Oil, Sinclair Oil, and Kodak circulated popular imagery of

the national parks and imbued them with patriotic ideals consistent with other media representations.

Within the units of the park system, park officials fashioned a tourist experience that capitalized on the visual and physical sensation of viewing the country's landscapes. In the nineteenth century, the railroad companies transported privileged Easterners to the western parks and provided them stagecoach tours that took in the sights and spectacles they had seen rendered in paintings, captured in photographs and stereoviews, and reproduced in popular magazines. In the twentieth century, the National Park Service (NPS), established in 1916, developed facilities within the parks to cater to greater numbers of modern visitors as tourism skyrocketed with the arrival of the automobile. The NPS implemented planning, design, and interpretation to present the country's most valued scenic resources, to infuse them with nationalistic meaning, and to create a tourist experience by which visitors could "see, experience and enjoy" the parks and the values to be gleaned from them.¹

In 1864, Congress set aside Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove, in California, as the first region of American wilderness to be preserved. In 1872, it designated Yellowstone, in Wyoming, as America's first national park, placing the region's natural resources into the democratic ownership and inheritance of all generations. The United States Government established thirty-one more national parks and monuments by 1916. That same year, it instituted the NPS to safeguard and oversee the use of these exceptional landscapes and important areas of cultural heritage and phenomenon. By the mid-1930s, the NPS ensured the protection of sites of historic significance, and in 1963, it designated

1. Roy E. Appleman, "A History of the National Park Service Mission 66 Program," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (unpublished report, 1958), 22, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/hisnps/NPSHistory/mission66.pdf>.

the first National Recreation Area, reflecting the nation's growing focus on leisure and outdoor activities.²

The ideal of the first national parks embodied the ideology of westward expansion and relied on “pristine” and “uninhabited wilderness” to define that ideal.³ However, Native American tribes did inhabit, own, occupy, or claim these lands, and in some cases, such as in Yosemite Valley, an area's beauty was due in part to indigenous land use.⁴ Native American tribes made extensive use of these spaces: the geographical and geological conditions of foothills, mountains, and canyons provided shelter and sustained herds; and they served as locations of cultural identity, and spiritual and mythical importance.⁵ Yet, as the process of westward expansion displaced Native Americans from their lands, so too did the process of establishing the national parks. In Yosemite Valley, miners in the early 1850s killed and violently expelled Native Americans during the Mariposa Indian War; although some quietly returned to Yosemite in the coming decades. In Yellowstone National Park, park officials and the United States Military removed Native Americans – in a gentler manner – from the park in the 1870s and 1880s to fit popular conceptions and tourists' imaginings of the western wilderness as uninhabited. In Northwestern Montana, the United States Government purchased land from the Blackfeet Indians in 1895, and, despite initially agreeing to allow them to use

2. Today, the classification titles of the units of the national park system include: National Parks, Monuments, Preserves, Reserves, Recreation Areas, Lakeshores, Seashores, Rivers, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Trails, Parkways, Memorials, Historical Parks, Historic Sites, Military Parks, Battlefield Parks, Battlefield Sites, Battlefields and International Historic Sites. See: Laura B. Comey, “National Park System: What Do the Different Park Titles Signify?” Congressional Research Service, February 2, 2013, accessed October 17, 2013, <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41816.pdf>.

3. Mark David Spence, *Dispossessing: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks (USA)*: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4.

4. Robert Keller and Michael Turek, *American Indians and National Parks* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998), 20.

5. Spence, 6.

the ceded land for fishing, hunting, and timber collection, made ongoing efforts to prevent them from doing so when the region was established as Glacier National Park in 1910.⁶

By 1906, Congress passed the Antiquities Act, sanctioning the President to proclaim historic landmarks, historic or prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest, as National Monuments. Congress established a substantial number of the areas of the national park system under the Antiquities Act; the first being Mesa Verde in Southwestern Colorado, which safeguards the surviving ruins of Indian civilizations.⁷

Congress and conservationists championed the national park system for a multitude of reasons, beyond preserving the nation's irreplaceable wilderness and cultural resources. Notably, it provided Americans with the opportunity to come in direct contact with nature, perceived as a source of spiritual uplift and rejuvenation, and a place of restoration for individuals and society as a whole. The park system presented areas of unparalleled scenic beauty, lessons on the nation's origins and mythic destiny, and powerful reminders of the country's defining people and events. It stimulated domestic tourism and its economic benefits, and promoted a national identity embedded within the meaning of the individual units and the system as a whole.⁸

Through visual culture – paintings, photographs, exhibitions, and the built environment – artists, photographers, and park officials sought to make the immense

6. *Ibid.*, 69, 71-82; Keller and Turek, 20, 22. The history and relationship of the Native Americans and the national parks is outside the scope of this thesis. See: Spence; and Keller and Turek.

7. William C. Everhart, *The National Park Service* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), 12, 13.

8. Economic benefits include visitor spending in communities that are local to the national parks, impacting employment, earnings, investments, and tax revenues in these communities. See: Thomas Michael Power, "The Economic Role of America's National Parks: Moving Beyond A Tourist Perspective," *The George Wright Forum* 15, no. 1 (1998): 33-41.

spaces of the national parks comprehensible and meaningful. In *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (2001), Susan Stewart explores the relationship between the real and the representational; the relationship between the physical world and the visual re-creation of the physical world. Stewart establishes the body as the primary mode for understanding and perceiving scale and argues that, “our most fundamental relation to the gigantic [or the real] is articulated in our relation to landscape,” as “we are enveloped by the gigantic, surrounded by it, enclosed within its shadow.”⁹ Well-known artists and photographers captured this sentiment in the nineteenth and twentieth century, as did avid travel writer Thomas Murphy in 1925 when he described standing at Inspiration Point at the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone:

A long silence ensued as we contemplated the panorama before us. Words are idle; photographs are misleading; the masterpiece of the artist is inadequate. These may give some idea of the contour of the canyon and some hint of its coloring, but the awful distances, the overpowering vastness, dawn upon one only when his own eyes look upon the scene. It is this that quite overwhelms the beholder, who as a rule has little to say the first few minutes when the canyon in its full splendor bursts on his vision.¹⁰

In contrast to the real, or the ‘gigantic,’ Stewart terms the representation of landscape as the ‘miniature,’ and argues that it offers “transcendent vision;” the ability to see beyond what is physically there.¹¹ Thus, as visual culture creates “snapshots” or representations of the national park landscapes – visual microcosms of a macrocosm – it serves to cultivate a constructed meaning of the spaces of the national parks, which are considered to embody the nation’s ideals and ideologies.

9. Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (USA: Duke University, 2001), 100.

10. Thomas D. Murphy, *Seven Wonderlands of the American West; being the notes of a traveler concerning various pilgrimages to the Yellowstone National Park, the Yosemite National Park, the Grand Canyon National Park, Zion National Park, Glacier National Park, Crater Lake National Park and the Petrified Forests of Arizona* (Boston: L. C. Page & Company Publishers, 1925), 22.

11. Stewart, 69.

If an ideal is a principle or value that is actively pursued as a goal, an ideology is a set of ideas or beliefs that constitute that goal. In *Imagined Country: Environment, Culture and Society* (1991), John Rennie Short establishes that ideologies are used to maintain a national identity and often present a “selective, recreated tradition,” to cultivate collectivity; consequently, the histories of minority groups are “changed, hidden, and misrepresented” in the process.¹² Certainly for the timeframe examined in this thesis, the NPS’s interpretation of the parks was directed to America’s white population who could find relevance in their perceived significance. Freeman Tilden (1883-1980), writer and heritage interpreter for the NPS, clearly reaffirms this in *The National Parks* (1968), when he writes that the purpose of the parks is to preserve the “wilderness that greeted the eyes of the first white men who challenged and conquered it.”¹³ This speaks volumes about the fact that middle and upper-class, white Americans predominantly patronized the national park system. Park authorities disregarded Native Americans in the process of establishing the parks while park histories ignored their presence and distorted their experience; and in the first half of the twentieth century park officials deterred African Americans from touring to maintain the ‘whiteness’ of the parks for visitors.

In *The Tourist Gaze* (1990) John Urry examines visuality and the tourist experience to establish the concept of the “tourist gaze,” as a socially constructed, learned ability that varies by society, social group, and historical period. He defines it as a practice used to interpret, order, and classify the world, as “ideas, skills, desires, and expectations...

12. John Rennie Short, *Imagined Country: Environment, Culture and Society* (London, New York: Routledge, 1991), 56.

13. Freeman Tilden, *The National Parks*, rev. enl. (New York: Knopf, 1968), 22.

social class, gender, nationality, age, and education,” condition the way people look at the world.¹⁴ In the national parks, the tourist gaze is enacted by middle and upper-class, white Americans; thus, visuality in the national parks is reflective of their ideals and ideologies, which, as this thesis will explore, include the nation’s pursuit of progress and dispersion of liberty, and individuals’ desire for, and celebration of, prosperity, patriotism, democracy, and freedom.

Research Sources and Literature Review

This thesis relies on NPS archival resources from the postwar era; advisory publications, promotional brochures, and resource reports issued by the NPS; and from books and graduate theses written on the national parks, tourism, and the NPS. It also draws on important ideas and historical analyses from a variety of period sources dating from the 1960s and 1970s as well as those more recent publications. Such sources consider the origins and meaning of the parks in the patriotic 1950s and 1960s; cultural studies related to scientific and ecology-based park development in the more environmentally-aware 1970s; and historical surveys of tourism to the parks in recent decades. Tourism emerged as an area for scholarship in the 1970s as travel and leisure assumed a pivotal role in postwar America. As scholarship has expanded, tourism to the national parks has become a topic of investigation, as has the built environment of the national parks. Each is bound up with the other as this thesis explores.

The following literature review has been divided into three areas of focus based on this thesis’ fundamental elements: the national parks, tourism, and visual culture.

14. John Urry and Jonas Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0* (India: Sage Publications, 2011).

John Ise, Alfred Runte, and Roderick Nash are acknowledged to be the preeminent authors on the national parks, and their works yield historical data, statistics, and information related to the origins, establishment, and evolution of the national park system, and its relation to American culture. In *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History* (1961) Ise provides a study of national park legislative and administrative policy from 1872 to 1959, surveying its social and cultural impact on the national park system.¹⁵ Runte's *National Parks: The American Experience* (1979) provides a comprehensive history on the origins, meanings, and evolution of the idea of the national parks.¹⁶ He constructs an understanding of the relationship between nature, the national parks, culture, and nationalism, which led to the beginnings of tourism to the national parks. In *Wilderness and the American Mind* (1982) Nash surveys the evolving concept of wilderness and American's changing attitudes toward it, tracing the nation's shift from regarding nature for its economic value to prizing nature for its intrinsic value.¹⁷

The design of the national park environments did not emerge as a significant area of study until the late 1990s. Four books written on the built environment of the parks – all initiated from within the NPS – provide factual and conceptual information on policy, planning, design, architecture, and preservation. Authors discuss the ways in which the NPS sought to reconcile park development with natural scenery and historic features while accommodating visitors to the parks. This thesis synthesizes the information provided in these publications, along with the NPS's intentions for the tourist experience

15. John Ise, *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1961).

16. Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979).

17. Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and The American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

as documented in primary sources, to interpret the influence the built environment had on visitors' visual experience and constructed understanding of the parks.

Linda Flint McLelland and Ethan Carr's works survey the rich legacy of park development in the interwar period. *Building the National Parks: Historic Landscape Design and Construction* (1997) by McLelland, a historian for the NPS, may be regarded as one of the first publications on the subject and originated as an internal document for the NPS's National Register of Historic Places.¹⁸ McLelland presents an in-depth discussion of the park officials and landscape architects who planned and constructed the built environment of the parks during the NPS's first twenty-five years. She argues that the NPS developed a distinctive style of naturalistic design in order to address the dual mandate of preservation and use in the national park system. In *Wilderness By Design: Landscape Architecture and the National Park Service* (1999) Carr, Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and former historical landscape architect at the NPS, provides a series of case studies that investigate how park structures mediate tourists' experience with the wilderness and shape visitor circulation, use, and patterns of activity.¹⁹

In 2000, architectural historian Sarah Allaback published the first study on Mission 66, a ten-year project undertaken by the NPS in the postwar period to upgrade and modernize the park system, for the NPS Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program (PHSCLP).²⁰ In *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type*,

18. Linda Flint McLelland, *Building the National Parks: Historic Landscape Design and Construction* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1998).

19. Ethan Carr, *Wilderness by Design: Landscape Architecture and the National Park Service* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

20. Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2000).

Allaback examines the architects and architecture of specific visitor centers built during this era; however, she offers limited discussion on the overall historic context of Mission 66 and its other areas of development. In 2003, Timothy Davis, lead historian for the NPS PHSCLP, published a report that acknowledged the need for additional research on Mission 66. According to Davis, “not only are the basic outlines of the program imperfectly understood, but there is considerable debate about whether Mission 66 and its physical legacy should be treated with the same institutional reverence afforded earlier eras in national park history.”²¹ As such, Carr undertook a comprehensive context study on the program. *Mission 66: Modernism and the Park Dilemma* (2007) traces the program’s origins, evolution, park development, reception, and legacy, and situates Mission 66 within the broader framework of American history.²²

Two publications on tourism to the national parks underscore the integral relationship between transport and tourism, an important component of this thesis. Joshua Scott Johns in “All Aboard!: The Role of the Railroads in Protecting, Promoting, and

21. Timothy M. Davis, “Mission 66 Initiative,” *Cultural Resource Management Journal*, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (Fall 2003): 97-101, accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.cr.nps.gov/crdi/publications/CRM_Vol1_01_Research_Reports.pdf.

A number of graduate theses have been written on Mission 66 in the last fifteen years. In many cases they focus on the modernist architecture of the visitor center and pay particular attention to its structural obsolescence or historic preservation. A selection of these include: Jonathan Searle Monroe, “Architecture in the National Parks: Cecil Doty and Mission 66” (masters thesis, University of Washington, Architecture, 1986); Christine L. Madrid, “The Mission 66 Visitor Centers, 1956-1966: Early Modern Architecture in the National Park Service” (masters thesis, University of Virginia, Architecture History, 1998); Patrick T. Richter, “Constructing Suburbia in America’s Oldest National Park: Conrad Wirth, Welton Becket, and Mission 66 at Yellowstone’s Canyon Village” (masters thesis, University of Wyoming, American Studies Program, 2006); Rebecca Kinsley, “Mission 66: Where are they now? The preservation and re-use of Mission 66 Visitor Centers” (masters thesis, Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, 2013). Other masters theses on Mission 66 include: William Nelson Noll, “Mission 66: The National Park Service Program for the Revitalization of America’s National Parks, 1955-1966” (masters thesis, Kansas State University, 1997); Ashley Elaine Baker, “Interpretation of Mission 66 Resources in the National Park Service” (masters thesis, University of Georgia, 2011).

22. Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007).

Selling Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks,” (1996, masters thesis), and Marguerite S. Shaffer in *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (2001), examine railroad tourism to the West in the nineteenth century.²³ Johns pays particular attention to the role the railroad companies played in preserving the national parks and promoting travel to the West. Shaffer provides a comprehensive discussion that examines both railroad and automobile travel from the late nineteenth century to the onset of World War II. They describe the marketing strategies and messages of patriotism, nationalism, and national identity used by railroad companies and tourism promoters to foster tourism. In doing so, they construct an understanding of what tourism was shaped to mean in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, which provides the foundation for the meaning of the tourist experience examined in this thesis.

In *The Visual Culture Reader* (1998), Nicholas Mirzoeff defines visual culture as “visual events in which information, meaning, or pleasure is sought by the consumer in an interface with... any form of apparatus [which in relation to this thesis may include paintings, photographs, advertising, roads, trails, and architecture] designed either to be looked at or to enhance natural vision.”²⁴ The study of visual culture recognizes the image as a fundamental means of reflecting, representing, and communicating the nature of society. Relatedly, in *Buyways: Billboards, Automobiles, and the American Landscape* (2004), Catherine Gudis focuses on the development of outdoor advertising in America in the twentieth century and examines the role billboards played in the commodification of

23. Joshua Scott Johns, “All Aboard!: The Role of the Railroads in Protecting, Promoting, and Selling Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks” (masters thesis, University of Virginia, 1996), *American Studies at the University of Virginia*, 2009, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma96/railroad/ystone.html>; Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute Press, 2001).

24. Nicholas Mirzoeff, “What is Visual Culture?” in *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (USA, Canada, and England: Routledge, 1998), 3.

landscape and motion.²⁵ She writes not only about how the physical landscape is commercialized along the highways, but also how the natural landscape is commercialized on billboards to commodify scenery. Gudis' argument provides a framework for Chapter Three, which discusses the escalation of automobile tourism in the postwar era, the proliferation of popular imagery of the national parks, and the NPS's presentation and interpretation of the national parks. This commodification of scenery and mobility is coherent with the prevalent commercialization and consumption in the postwar period.

Of most recent implication is Thomas Patin's edited compilation of essays *Observation Points: The Visual Poetics of National Parks* (2013), which contributes to contemporary scholarship on nature and representation.²⁶ Authors seek to demonstrate how visual devices – such as architecture, overlooks, roads, publications, paintings, films, and optical apparatus – have shaped our views of nature, and structured our experiences in the national parks. While some of these elements of visual rhetoric are discussed in this thesis, the conceptual argument differs. For example, in “Roadside Wilderness: U.S. National Parks Design in the 1950s and 1960s” Peter Peters examines the influence park roads had on the spatial movement and visual experience of visitors. This thesis seeks to explain the meaning of that visual experience and how it is embedded within and symbolic of a broader vision of the nation.

25. Catherine Gudis, *Buyways: Billboards, Automobiles, and the American Landscape* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

26. Thomas Patin, ed., *Observation Points: The Visual Poetics of National Parks* (USA: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

Methodology and Chapter Content

This thesis is comprised of three chapters that survey the evolution of the national park experience and the commodification of the landscape. In each one I consider the relationship between mobility, wilderness, and visual culture. Mobility and wilderness were the means and the motivation for tourism, while visual culture shaped and ordered the tourist experience.

Chapter One, “Origins and Exploration,” considers the early tourist experience of the national parks engendered by the development of the transcontinental railroad, the revolutionary preservation of select regions of wilderness, and the dissemination of paintings, photographs, and stereoviews of the national parks. Chapter Two, “Cars and Cameras,” examines the automobile experience in the national parks between 1916 and 1941, the NPS’s use of roads as a means of presenting and interpreting the landscape, and the role photography played in influencing the tourist experience. Chapter Three, “Sites and Sights,” explores the Mission 66 program in the postwar era, the importance and meaning of “the view” from the visitor center, and the ways in which popular culture – through corporate advertising, magazines, television, toys, and the Disneyland amusement park – fuelled the nation’s collective imagination and commodified the spaces of the national parks.

We come from restless stock, we Americans. Our forefathers came here because they didn't like it where they were. Once here, they and their children began scattering over the continent, curious about what lay in the next valley and beyond the second hill. It wasn't mere restlessness that drove them on, the hunters and the trappers and the mountain men. There was a kind of spiritual necessity that drove them on, the need to know this land, to see it and feel it and thus somehow become part of it.

Hal Borland
"80 Million Americans on the Move"
The New York Times, August 24, 1952.

Chapter 1. Origins and Exploration: Tourism, Railroads, and “Seeing” the Parks, 1864-1916.

The transcontinental railroad and the first national parks came of age together. On July 1, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Act, authorizing construction of the transcontinental railroad. Two years later, on June 30, 1864, Lincoln signed the Yosemite Act, granting Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove to the State of California. The distinct outcomes of these two separate Acts became inextricably linked in the remaining decades of the nineteenth century as the railroad became the means and the park became the reason for tourism to the American West.

As the United States’ territory expanded throughout the mid- to late-nineteenth century, prominent conservation figures and railroad magnates worked to protect the nation’s natural wonders. At the same time, artists visually brought them to the attention of the government and the public, their paintings and photographs laying the foundations for how visitors would encounter these wilderness spaces. The great works of landscape painters Albert Bierstadt and Thomas Moran, and photographers Carleton E. Watkins (1829-1926) and William H. Jackson (1843-1942) provided a pictorial record and incentive for the United States Government to designate Yosemite and Yellowstone as national parks. The early tourist experience, provided by the railroad companies, followed the attractions reproduced by these artists. It capitalized on tourists’ imaginings of the mythic West and provided evidence of the nation’s progress of “civilizing” the region.

This chapter, “Origins and Exploration,” considers westward expansion and the frontier experience in the nineteenth century. I survey how Americans saw the West: how the panorama entertained and informed distant audiences, and how the transcontinental

railway enabled travelers to experience it firsthand. I discuss the nationalizing of nature in the nineteenth century and the shift from destroying regions of wilderness to preserving superlative scenery. I examine Yosemite and Yellowstone as the first national parks, and consider the role the railroad companies played in materializing the national park idea. I also survey a selection of artists and photographers and the influence visual culture had on the tourist experience of the national parks, particularly in Yellowstone, and finally, I discuss the establishment of the NPS in 1916.

Go West, Young Man: Westward Expansion

Between the end of the War of 1812 and the beginning of the Civil War in 1860, the United States Government deemed westward expansion crucial to nation building. Democratic and religious ideals underscored the push west, which shaped the American experience, cultivated national ideologies, and laid the foundations for travel and tourism.

In the nineteenth century, American pioneers set out for the unsettled lands lying beyond the nation's margins. As they fanned across the continent the United States enlarged its terrain from coast to coast. In 1845, American columnist and editor John O'Sullivan (1813-1895) described the phenomenon as Manifest Destiny, contending that expansion represented "the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions."²⁷

Democrats embraced the phrase to denote the nation's mission of territorial growth.

Manifest Destiny was firmly anchored in both ideological and religious ideals.

Indeed, pioneers were charged with the ideological undertaking to spread America's

27. John O'Sullivan, "Annexation," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* 17, no. 1 (July/August 1945), accessed October 17, 2013, <http://pdcrodas.webs.ull.es/anglo/OSullivanAnnexation.pdf>.

principles of government to new domains, and with the religious faith that it was a mission of divine inspiration. This combination of religious prophecy and dispersion of liberty vindicated the belief that the civilization of the land and the displacement of Native American tribes was preordained and allied with the enthusiasm and progress of the westward drive.²⁸

The moving frontier was a consequence of westward expansion, and as American historian Frederick Jackson Turner (1861-1932) outlined in “The Significance of the Frontier” (1893), it was central to shaping the American character.²⁹ Turner articulated that “the demand for land and the love of wilderness” had drawn the frontier onward and he theorized that the conditions of life at the edge of the wilderness had fostered the American spirit:

... to the frontier the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness. That practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients, that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends, that restless, nervous energy, that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom – these are traits of the frontier...³⁰

This frontier experience afforded pioneers self-betterment as they set off in search of prosperity and opportunity; it allowed individualism and democracy to flourish as settlers shed their Old World constitutions; and it facilitated the Americanization of people and

28. Michael T. Lubrage, “American History: From Revolution to Reconstruction and Beyond. The Components of Manifest Destiny,” *University of Groningen*, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/essays/1801-1900/manifest-destiny/the-components-of-manifest-destiny.php>; James W. Ceaser, “The Origins and Character of American Exceptionalism,” *American Political Thought: A Journal of Ideas, Institutions, and Culture* 1 (Spring 2012): 7-8, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://www.polisci.wisc.edu/%20uploads/documents/ceaser.pdf>.

29. Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier,” *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1921), 1-39.

30. *Ibid.*, 37.

institutions as the experience was continuously repeated along the nation's untamed border.³¹

As these pioneers forged West, their migration followed two main routes: the Oregon Trail, founded in 1811, stretched from Missouri to Oregon, while the Sante Fe Trail, established in 1821, extended from Missouri to Sante Fe.³² By the end of the nineteenth century, trails, paths, roads, and railway tracks marked the landscape and provided evidence of the process and progress of America's movement across the continent.

Seeing the West: Panoramas and Railroads

Visual and technological innovations offered those who stayed in the East the opportunity to see the nation's landscapes firsthand and from afar. The stationary and moving 'panorama' and the transcontinental railroad enabled Americans to visually partake in, to learn from, and to triumph in the nation's westward expansion.

The panorama was a visual, and often spectacular, representation of travelogues, landscapes, and historical events intended for urban audiences. In its stationary form, the panorama was displayed around the walls of a purpose-built cylindrical structure; spectators circled an elevated platform in the center to see the continuous narrative or landscape scene painted around them (Fig. 1.1). The medium was first exhibited in 1792 in London, and it became exceedingly popular in the United States by the early decades of the nineteenth century. The American public was captivated by the panorama's

31. Ray Allen Billington and Martine Ridge, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier*, 6th ed. abr. (Albuquerque: University Press of New Mexico, 2001), 2.

32. In 1978 the NPS commemorated the Oregon National Historic Trail, and in 1987 it designated the Sante Fe National Historic Trail.

immense scale, intricate detail, and astounding realism, and many onlookers expressed the feeling of being transported to the places portrayed.³³ Furthermore, natural landscapes were frequently depicted, which encouraged “nature tourists” to search out real life vantage points that would offer similarly open and expansive views of the landscape.³⁴

The moving panorama appeared in the United States in the 1830s, after debuting in Paris in 1822. It was a long painting of sequential scenes that was scrolled past a seated audience and accompanied by narration of each frame. The moving panorama proved to be particularly popular from the 1840s onward when droves of pioneers and explorers headed west. Resourceful artists followed, sketching and painting the lands they traversed.³⁵ Works such as “Moving Mirror of the Overland Trail,” (1849) and “Fremont's Overland Route to California,” (1850) portrayed the wild and uncivilized frontier, and the romance and adventure of the American West. These journeys across quintessential American landscapes provided viewers with virtual travels to new, unknown, and noteworthy places, and simulated how a tourist might view the landscape from a railroad car window.³⁶ Angela Miller argues that these spectacles “satisfied the nineteenth-century craving for visual [...] control over a rapidly expanding world.”³⁷ They fostered and

33. Angela Miller, “The Panorama, the Cinema, and the Emergence of the Spectacular,” *Wide Angle* 18, no. 2 (1996): 35; Thomas Patin, “Exhibitions and Empire: National Parks and the Performance of Manifest Destiny,” *Journal of American Culture* 22, no. 1 (1999): 50. The word ‘panorama’ was taken from the Greek to mean ‘all’ and ‘see.’ The panorama was invented and patented by Irish-born artist Robert Barker in 1787. He exhibited his first successful work – a picture of Edinburgh – in London in 1792.

34. Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing* (California: University of California Press, 1999), 44-45.

35. Erkki Huhtamo, *Illusions in Motion: Media Archaeology of the Moving Panorama and Related Spectacles* (USA: MIT Press, 2013).

36. Miller, 38. This notion supports Miller’s suggestion that the moving panorama anticipated mechanized travel.

37. *Ibid.*, 35-36.

helped satiate the public's curiosity to see the continent and the process and victories of westward expansion.

The transcontinental railroad further satisfied the desire for visual and physical dominance of the West. As noted earlier, Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroads Act in 1862, sanctioning the construction of a railroad linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. He identified it as key to westward expansion and believed it would secure and unite the nation. Furthermore, the railroad would significantly reduce the time it took to cross the continent, aid development of the nation's immense interior, and encourage settlement and civilization.³⁸ In 1863, the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroad Companies commenced building; the Central Pacific started in Sacramento, California, and the Union Pacific in Omaha, Nebraska. Over the next six years they laid tracks toward each other until they met at Promontory Point, Utah, on May 10, 1869.³⁹ Here, a new era in mobility, travel, and tourism began. Tourist agents quickly initiated excursions to the West, providing a small and elite class of wealthy Easterners with luxury vacations at exclusive hotels in California and Colorado Springs.⁴⁰

Preserving the Scenery: Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove

In the early-nineteenth century patriots believed America, as a relatively young country, lacked the cultural heritage of European civilizations. The New World did not have the established past and traditions of the Old World, nor its illustrious art,

38. Union Pacific Building America, "Building a Road," *Union Pacific Railroad*, accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.up.com/aboutup/history/overview/building_road/index.htm.

39. William Kaszynski, *The American Highway: The History and Culture of Roads in the United States* (USA: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2000), 19.

40. Shaffer, 25.

architecture, and literature. Patriots wished to affirm America's uniqueness and looked to the country's dramatic landscapes and wilderness to mark its own distinctive culture. Exceptional scenery was proof of God's handiwork and further confirmation of the nation's destiny. As a result, the natural and the scenic – mountains, forests, rivers, lakes, and waterfalls – became cultural claims, esteemed as the pride of the nation.⁴¹

Popular publications, such as *The Picturesque Views of American Scenery* (1820) and *The Scenery of the United States: Illustrated in a Series of Forty Engravings* (1855) circulated images of the country's landscapes. The bestselling *Picturesque America*, edited by the romantic poet William Cullen Bryant, and published in 1872 and 1874, also presented attractive scenes from across the country.⁴² These albums nationalized nature and drew on a spiritual rhetoric. They established a mode of viewing the landscape that can be seen in Moran's engraving of Palisade Canyon in Nevada in which he presents nature in such a way that two rocky walls frame a mountainous backdrop (Fig. 1.2). As Chapters Two and Three will discuss, this composition – the foreground providing a frame for the background – would be common in national park planning and design. Moreover, these illustrated volumes abstracted the nation to a series of views that testified to the diversity and distinctiveness of the American landscape.⁴³ Ultimately, they roused public

41. Runte, 7-8.

42. Joshua Shaw, *Picturesque Views of American Scenery*, painted by J. Shaw, engraved by J. Hill (Philadelphia: M. Carey & Sons, 1820); Anonymous, *The Scenery of the United States: Illustrated in a Series of Forty Engravings* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1855); William Cullen Bryant and Oliver Bell Bruce, *Picturesque America or The Land We Live In: a delineation by pen and pencil of the mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, water-falls, shores, cañons, valleys, cities, and other picturesque features of our country* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1872, 1874).

43. Sue Rainey, *Creating Picturesque America: Monument to the Natural and Cultural Landscape* (USA: Vanderbilt University Press, 1994), xiii.

interest in the natural and cultural landscape, encouraged both tourism and preservation, and like the panorama, gave viewers an understanding of the emerging nation.⁴⁴

Exploration of the continent unveiled Yosemite Valley, the Rocky Mountains, the Sierra Redwoods, and many other prized landscapes. These newly acquired wonders became a proud expression of American heritage for they embodied the supposed spirit of the pioneers who conquered the wilderness and discovered the landscapes, and they afforded visitors the belief that they were not only in intimate contact with nature but also with the very essence of the nation itself.⁴⁵

Patriots endorsed Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove as national assets and symbols of the country's prosperity. In 1864, Congress vested the region legal preservation to prevent exploitation and to protect it from private ownership and commercial interests. It granted Yosemite to the State of California and designated it as a State Park "for public use, resort and recreation."⁴⁶ This act of perpetuity established an historic precedent.

Runte argues that the primary impulse behind the Yosemite Act was preserving the region's monumental scenery, rather than protecting its environment. He finds his evidence in the placement of the park boundary that encompassed only Yosemite Valley and its surrounding peaks.⁴⁷ Respectively, John Muir (1838-1914), a zealous advocate of

44. Shaffer, 178.

45. Nash, 145. Through the early-to-mid nineteenth century, regions of wilderness provided Americans with respite from the urban and industrial centers swelling across the country. It was believed that nature offered an opportunity to be in the acquaintance of God's creations. Thus, the wilderness became a space for contemplation and inspiration; instruction and nourishment; and worship and wisdom. See: Debra White-Stanley, "Romanticism: Romantic Period in America 1828-1865," *University of Arizona*, 2004, accessed October 17, 2013. <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~atinkham/Emerson.html>.

46. Everhart, *The National Park Service*, vi. Nash, 101, 105, 107. Yosemite National Park was designated in 1890, and Yosemite Valley was transferred from state to federal designation in 1906.

47. Runte, 25.

the American wilderness in the nineteenth century and founder of the environmental organization the Sierra Club, wrote in 1875:

Tourists make their way through the foot-hill landscapes as if blind to all the best beauty, and like children seek the emphasized mountains – the big alpine capitals whitened with glaciers and adorned with conspicuous spires.⁴⁸

Simply, Muir observed that the touring public was most attracted by the size and glory of the scenery around them – the visual and physical experience and sensation of being enveloped within the grand landscape of Yosemite Valley.

“The Wonders of the Yellowstone:” Explorers, Railroads, Yellowstone National Park

The conservation of Yosemite Valley provided the foundation of the national park idea that would be further shaped by the designation of Yellowstone as a national park in 1872. Northern Pacific Railway led the campaign for its preservation anticipating the region’s potential for scenic tourism.

In 1870, American explorer and surveyor Henry Dana Washburn (1832-1871) led an expedition into the Yellowstone region in Northwestern Wyoming. Businessman Nathaniel Pitt Langford (1832-1911) was amongst his companions, funded by Jay Cooke (1821-1905), financier and promoter of the Northern Pacific Railway. Cooke was interested in Yellowstone’s potential to attract railroad business and he wanted Langford

48. John Muir, “Flood-Storm in the Sierra,” *Overland Monthly* 14 (June 1875): 496. Muir was strongly influenced by Transcendentalism, a philosophical, theological, and literary movement that developed in the eastern United States during the late 1820s and 1830s. The philosophy brought man, spirit, and nature into communion, arguing that a culture or individual’s happiness, strength, and morality was based on contact with nature. Muir believed direct and physical contact with nature had a spiritual ability to be refreshing and uplifting. He founded the environmental organization the Sierra Club in 1892 and transformed his support of the wilderness into a popular movement in the early twentieth century. His activism helped preserve Yosemite Valley, Sequoia National Park, the Petrified Forest, General Grant and Kings Canyon regions, and the Grand Canyon. See: John Muir, *Our National Parks* (Boston and New York: The Riverside Press, 1901); Michael P. Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club: 1892-1970* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1988).

to publicize and promote the region.⁴⁹ On his return, Langford gave lectures across the country and published his vivid descriptions in popular magazines. His entry titled “The Wonders of the Yellowstone,” printed in *Scribner’s Monthly* in May 1871, and illustrated with woodcuts by Moran, awakened readers to the visual beauty of Yellowstone:

A grander scene than the lower cataract of the Yellowstone was never witnessed by mortal eyes... It is a sheer, compact, solid, perpendicular sheet, faultless in all the elements of grandeur and picturesque beauties.⁵⁰

Renowned geologist Ferdinand Hayden (1829-1887) was inspired by Langford’s accounts and organized an expedition into the area in the summer of 1871. Hayden received government funding for his mission, and along with his cadre of scientists, he commissioned Moran and frontier photographer Jackson to visually document the trip.⁵¹ Cooke provided Moran financial aid for the excursion with the agenda of utilizing his artistry to entice railroad customers in the East.⁵²

After the expedition Hayden prepared his findings for Congress. Cooke and other Northern Pacific officials wanted to secure railroad access to the region for nature tourism and encouraged Hayden to recommend that Yellowstone be nominated as a public park, in the same manner as Yosemite.⁵³ On March 1, 1872, President Ulysses Grant designated more than two million acres as Yellowstone National Park, an area

49. Shaffer, 42. The expedition is commonly known as the Washburn-Langford-Doane Expedition and took place from August 16 to October 10, 1870.

50. Nathaniel P. Langford, “The Wonders of the Yellowstone, pt. 1,” *Scribner’s Monthly* 2 (May 1871): 13. This is Langford’s description of the upper and lower falls at the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. Moran illustrated the article without having yet visited the park; they were simply based on Langford’s descriptions.

51. Runte, 33.

52. Johns, “All Aboard!”

53. Ibid. Hayden also published his accounts of Yellowstone in *Scribner’s Monthly* and endorsed the access of the Northern Pacific Railroad to the region. See Ferdinand V. Hayden, “Wonders of the West – II: More about the Yellowstone” *Scribner’s Monthly* 3 (February 1872): 388-396.

“dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.” This significant act of preservation was twofold: it prohibited the commercial use of the region’s resources, and it established, for the first time, the democratic ownership of exceptional landscapes.⁵⁴

For the remainder of the nineteenth century, the railroad companies persuasively aided the creation of the national parks, foreseeing tourism as instrumental to their business. By the early 1900s, Congress signed four more national parks into law, and like Yosemite and Yellowstone, each park was restricted by its boundary designations to its foremost scenic wonders. As such, Runte argues, the physical catalyst for the national park idea was the grand and monumental scenery of the American West.⁵⁵

Visions of the West: Artists and Photographers

It was not only the law that preserved the nation’s wondrous landscapes. As with the panoramas, artists and photographers memorialized and visually preserved these landscapes as well. Their images offered a timely view of the continent when few Americans had traveled beyond the Mississippi. Moreover, their images, reproduced in popular magazines and newspapers, helped pave the way for wilderness protection and ultimately encouraged tourism.

In the 1850s, artists such as Bierstadt and Moran ventured west in search of untouched and monumental nature. They found this “newer, bigger” America in regions that would later be designated national parks – Yosemite, Yellowstone, Zion, and the

54. Lary M. Dilsaver, ed., “An act to set apart a certain tract of land lying near the headwaters of the Yellowstone River as a national park,” in *America’s National Park System: The Critical Documents* (USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1994), 28. Everhart, 8.

55. Runte, 5, 68. Designated parks include: Mount Rainer (1899), Crater Lake (1902), Wind Cave (1903), General Grant (1890).

Grand Canyon. Bierstadt and Moran's paintings romanticized these western landscapes, rendered to express their awe and wonder and to affirm the magnificence of what audiences in the East believed was waiting for them in the West.⁵⁶ In 1863, Bierstadt visited the Yosemite Valley. He painted his small oil sketch *Valley of the Yosemite* in 1864, and in 1865 he finished his larger painting *Looking Down Yosemite Valley, California* (Fig. 1.3). His panoramic view of the valley, immersed in golden light, conveyed both the spaciousness and opportunity to be found in the West.

Moran's sketches and paintings of Yellowstone from the Hayden Expedition in 1871 played a crucial role in influencing Congress to establish Yellowstone as a national park. Congress purchased his illustrious painting *The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone* (1872) and exhibited it in the Capitol in Washington, D.C.; it was the first landscape by an American artist to be displayed there (Fig. 1.4). Moran's painting was described in detail in *Scribner's Monthly*, and it was used by Cooke to attract publicity for Northern Pacific. His accentuation of the overwhelming scale and intense color of the region functioned as a persuasive and attractive lure for tourists.⁵⁷ For the next two decades

56. Stephen F. Mills, 59, 65. Barbara Novak, *Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting, 1825-1875*, 3rd ed. (USA: Oxford University Press, 2007), 15. American landscape artists at this time were greatly influenced by their European counterparts. Both the romantic sensibility and expansiveness of the sublime in European painting is evidenced in the work of German painters Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840) and Philipp Otto Runge (1777-1810) who used the contemplative, diminutive, solitary figure of the person, seen from behind, to set up the experience of awe before the landscape. This found expression in America in two aesthetic modes in nineteenth-century landscape paintings: the monumental and sublime landscapes of the West by painters in the Rocky Mountain School, such as Moran and Bierstadt, and the serene, picturesque, and pleasurable landscapes of the East by painters in the Hudson River School. The Hudson River School was a mid-nineteenth century art movement founded by British-born Thomas Cole (1801-1848) and based in the Eastern United States. Painters within the school also drew on the conventions of French painter Claude Lorrain (1600-1682) and depicted nature as detailed and idealized, believing it was the immanent manifestation of God. See Novak.

57. Peter Boag, "Thomas Moran and the Western Landscapes: An Inquiry into an Artist's Environmental Values," *Pacific Historical Review* 67, no. 1 (Feb 1998): 42; "Culture and Progress," *Scribner's Monthly* 4 (June 1872): 251-252. Cooke used the painting for Northern Pacific's promotional publicity as it captured the majesty of the region while the human presence in the scene reduced the threat of danger for potential tourists. See Johns, "All Aboard!"

Moran created hundreds of large paintings and published thousands of images of the West in periodicals such as *Harper's Weekly* and *Scribner's Monthly*. In 1927, art critic

Robert Allerton Parker paid tribute to Moran:

[He] opened the eyes of Americans to the vast inexhaustible expanses of natural beauty upon [their] own continent... he awakened the American consciousness to the permanent value of those wide, measureless expanses of wilderness, of sky and mountain and extravagances of Nature, as natural resources of beauty, to be prized and conserved and upheld as great national parks.⁵⁸

Bierstadt and Moran took the spectator into account and arranged their paintings in order to make the massive landscapes comprehensible and appealing to audiences in the East, the distant observers of westward expansion. As Runte proposes:

... the West was a stage, a setting for the adventure stories, travel accounts, and dramatic paintings that characterized so much of the period... While the last frontier passed into history, the nation watched intently...⁵⁹

Their paintings, therefore, contributed to the collective imagination and mode of visuality forming in the nineteenth century. Albert Boime finds that they often included a figure, seen primarily from behind, which acted as a surrogate for the viewer; drawing them into the picture, facilitating the ways in which to comprehend monumental nature, and humanizing the wilderness landscape. Additionally, they embraced a position that offered an elevated and/or expansive view, similar to that adopted in stationary panoramas. Boime terms this vantage point the 'magisterial gaze,' and aligns it with the nationalist ideology of Manifest Destiny. According to Boime, its presence was an expression of

58. Robert Allerton Parker, "The Water-Colors of Thomas Moran," *International Studio* 86 (March 1927): 65-66.

59. Runte, 8.

America's "sense of enormous possibility," "desire for dominance," and search "for new worlds to conquer."⁶⁰

Photography was equally important to safeguarding and promoting the natural landscape. Watkins was at the forefront of Yosemite's rise to fame and preservation and his photographs of Yosemite Valley and the Sierra Redwoods in the early 1860s brought attention to the area and helped cultivate an image of the immense West. His black and white photograph *El Capitan at the foot of the Mariposa Trail* (1865-66) captured the sheer size of Yosemite Valley's granite walls (Fig. 1.5). Jackson was also in attendance on the Washburn Expedition of Yellowstone in 1871 and his photographs helped to bring the national park idea to fruition. His black and white photographs, also displayed in the Capitol, provided Yellowstone with authenticity, while Moran's painted artistry fashioned a more realistic experience of the region.⁶¹

In the 1870s and 1880s, Watkins, Jackson, and other landscape photographers transformed Yosemite and Yellowstone's outstanding features into vivid three-dimensional stereographs (Fig. 1.6).⁶² The author Oliver Wendell Holmes described the experience of the stereograph in *Atlantic Monthly* in 1859:

60. Albert Boime, *The Magisterial Gaze: Manifest Destiny and American Landscape Painting* (USA: Smithsonian, 1991): 1-2, 20-21, 38. In contrast to the 'magisterial gaze,' Boime terms the upward line of vision the 'reverential gaze' and interprets it as the spiritual yearning for the unity of the nation with God.

61. Marguerite Hilery Walker, "Shooting Wonderland: The Photographic Construction of 19th-Century Yellowstone" (masters thesis, American Studies Program, University of Wyoming, May 2010), 19-24. To promote Yellowstone and lobby for its designation as a national park, Hayden arranged an exhibition to supplement the campaign. He included sketches by Moran and photographs by Jackson, whose images were published as *Yellowstone's Scenic Wonder*.

62. Peter J. Schmitt, "Nature and the Camera," in *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 147. A stereoview was comprised of two almost identical photographs, placed side by side on cardboard. When it was viewed with a stereoscope, the picture appeared as a three-dimensional image.

... the mind feels its way into the very depths of the picture. The scraggy branches of a tree in the foreground run out at us as if they would scratch our eyes out. The elbow of a figure stands forth as to make us almost uncomfortable. Then there is such a frightful amount of detail, that we have the same sense of infinite complexity which Nature gives us.⁶³

1870 to 1910 was the heyday of the stereoview, and in 1883, German photographer Dr. Herman Vogel even conjectured, “I think there is no parlor in America where there is not a stereoscope.”⁶⁴ Significantly, 1870 marked the period that travel to the West became more accessible via the transcontinental railway; and 1910, as Chapter Two will demonstrate, marked the rise of amateur photography and automobile ownership – a time when Americans started taking and viewing their own travel pictures. The period also spanned the closeout of the frontier in the 1890s. Thus, Edward E. Earle rationalizes, stereography, like panoramas and paintings, allowed viewers to visually partake in westward expansion.⁶⁵ It gratified the public’s curiosity, afforded them a sense of visual conquest, and fueled their own individual desire for expansion.

The stereograph provided entertainment, education, and armchair travel; and as the first photographic mass medium, the diversity of subjects and standardization of images played a critical role in shaping and enriching the nation’s collective imagination. Through the abundance of these commercial images, Americans gained visual knowledge of their country, an appreciation for the grandeur of its landscapes, and a greater understanding of the developing nation. Furthermore, stereograph producers often packaged the images to depict a travel experience of a featured region, and the sequential

63. Oliver Wendell Holmes, “The Stereoscope and the Stereograph,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 3 (June 1859): 738-48.

64. Dr. Herman Vogel, *Photographic Times*, August 1883, 403-404; Jib Fowles, “Stereography and the Standardization of Vision,” *Journal of American Culture* 17 (Summer 1994): 89-93.

65. Edward E. Earle, “The Stereograph in America: Pictorial Antecedents and Cultural Perspectives,” in *Points of View: The Stereograph in America – A Cultural History*, ed. Edward E. Earle, foreword Nathan Lyons (Rochester, NY: Visual Studies Workshop, 1979), 18.

changing of frames evoked a feeling of mobility and simulated a tour and narrative through that region.⁶⁶

Stereographs ultimately molded how the greater American public envisaged the national parks. They provided distant observers with a visual understanding and perception of the parks, and would-be visitors with an expectation of what they could experience. Furthermore, by the late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century, tourists to the parks endeavored to recreate such views using their own cameras.⁶⁷

“The New Wonderland:” The Tourist Experience in Yellowstone

Nineteenth-century explorers, artists, and photographers laid the foundations of the tourist experience in Yellowstone National Park. Railroad companies promoted the region as a brand name attraction and provided carriage to and from the park. They accommodated tourists in luxurious hotels within the splendor of its borders and contrived an experience that capitalized on the monumental scenery and civilizing ideals of the mythic West.

In 1883, Northern Pacific Railway commenced service to Yellowstone. The following year, and until 1910, the company promoted the region as the “New Wonderland,” drawing on the popularity of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, published in 1865. An illustration of Alice graced the cover of the Northern Pacific’s 1884 pamphlet; the use of this feminine image as the symbol of tourism to

66. Fowles, 89-93; Schmitt, “Nature and the Camera,” 147; Pauline Stakelon, “Travel through the Stereoscope: Movement and narrative in topological stereoview collections of Europe,” *Media History* 16, no. 4 (2010): 407-8.

67. Walker, “Shooting Wonderland.”

Yellowstone reinforced the “civilizing” of the West (Fig. 1.7).⁶⁸ Inside, the pamphlet featured a letter written by a fictional English tourist that began by comparing American landscapes to those in Europe, supporting the nationalist ideology that nature in the New World was far superior to that in the Old World, in color, size, and beauty. It continued with a description of the tourist experience of Yellowstone, including transportation, accommodation, and the natural attractions and wildlife to be seen. In 1885, the company nicknamed its rail journey from Minnesota to Washington “The Wonderland Route,” and accompanying brochures and guidebooks aligned the journey with gallant tales of westward expansion and Manifest Destiny. It established the tourist as an explorer, and the tourist experience, Marguerite S. Shaffer writes, as “part of the larger civilizing process of westward expansion.”⁶⁹

The guidebooks extolled the virtues of Yellowstone as a resort destination. Visitors, however, had to endure strenuous journeys to see the region. The primary tourist experience of the park until 1916 was the five-day “Grand Tour,” a 150-mile rough and dusty stagecoach tour that transported passengers between hotels and past attractions within a contained area of the park. Initially, travelers spent their first night at the luxurious National Hotel at Mammoth Hot Springs after which they stayed at modest and rustic hotels. As tourism increased, more modern and lavish hotels were built to appeal to the elite clientele, including the Fountain Hotel (1891) and the Old Faithful Inn (1903) (Fig. 1.8).⁷⁰

68. Northern Pacific Railway, “Alice’s Adventures in the New Wonderland: The Yellowstone National Park” (1884), *The Newberry*, accessed November 17, 2013, <http://dcc.newberry.org/collections/art-and-exploration-in-the-american-west-and-mexico>.

69. Shaffer, 50, 52.

70. Paul Schullery, *Searching for Yellowstone: Ecology and Wonder in the Last Wilderness* (Michigan: Edward Brothers, 2004), 101. The Fountain Hotel was a stopover for tourists en route from Mammoth to

Tourists considered the Old Faithful Inn an important part of a visit to Yellowstone, and a destination almost in itself. American architect Robert Reamer (1873-1938), hired by the Yellowstone National Park Transportation Company, took setting, structure, and adornment into account to design a hotel that materially and visually harmonized with the natural landscape.⁷¹ However, as Ethan Carr points out, its location within clear view of the Old Faithful Geyser meant it was hardly hidden.⁷²

Reamer was inspired by the primitive appearance and decorative arts of the eastern Adirondack camps created as rustic estates for wealthy clientele in the nineteenth century. They were constructed with native building materials and sited to take advantage of scenic views; Reamer inflated this style to enormous proportions for the Old Faithful Inn. He designed the exterior of the hotel with log and wood shingle, while inside featured a seven-story log and frame lobby, a colossal stone fireplace, towering interior balconies, and stairs with snaking wooden bannisters. Reamer's grandeur of design, exaggerated scale, cavernous space, and use of vernacular materials gave the Old Faithful Inn a

Old Faithful. Stagecoach tourists would stay at the Fountain Hotel and take a day trip to Old Faithful. When the Old Faithful Inn was built in 1904, guests preferred to stay at the newer hotel. Furthermore, with automobiles admitted in 1915, motorists could make the full journey to the Old Faithful area within the day, making the Fountain Hotel obsolete. It was closed in 1916 and torn down in 1927.

71. David Leavengood, "A Sense of Shelter: Robert C. Reamer in Yellowstone National Park," in *Pacific Historical Review* 54, No. 4, Architecture in the American West (November, 1985) 496-497. Ohio-born Reamer left school at age twelve, and at thirteen went to work as a draftsman in an architect's office in Detroit. He moved to Chicago in 1887 and became familiar with the Prairie School architectural style. He moved to San Diego in the mid-1890s and worked in partnership with Samuel Zimmer, establishing the office of Zimmer & Reamer. During this time, Reamer became acquainted with Harry W. Child, co-founder of the Yellowstone National Park Transportation Company, who commissioned Reamer to design the Old Faithful Inn.

72. Carr, *Mission 66*, 136. After 1916 NPS policy required facilities be as unobtrusive as possible and situated so as not to interfere with or intrude on scenic views. During the Mission 66 era the NPS relocated overnight accommodations and administrative facilities from "precious" areas to less sensitive areas. This policy meant that the NPS considered moving or demolishing the Old Faithful Inn, and the initial plan proposed that the hotel be torn down. However, the NPS quickly abandoned the plan as the program got underway. See Carr, 72, 96.

character that drew on the rugged frontier and allusions to pioneer building techniques.⁷³

David Leavengood contends that through design the Old Faithful Inn symbolized the promise and savagery of the West: it embodied visitors' longing for wilderness yet provided them with a stronghold against its forces.⁷⁴

The tourist route in Yellowstone was established in the park's early days. Langford was the first superintendent of Yellowstone and he envisioned the circuit system (still current today) soon after taking his position in 1872.⁷⁵ Superintendent Philetus Norris succeeded Langford, and his priority was to provide visitors with scenic and appealing views from and near the road. Thus, this first rough trail included the list of park features publicized by Langford, illustrated by Moran, photographed by Jackson, and loosely based on the route taken by both the Washburn and Hayden Expeditions. This route became further entrenched as early visitors, stereographers, and tourism promoters circulated imagery and literature of these attractions to audiences around the country, ultimately shaping how tourists encountered the park.⁷⁶ The United States Army Corps of Engineers stationed in Yellowstone developed the trail into a road during the late 1870s and through the 1880s. Once complete, the Grand Loop Road, as it was named, took in all the principal features of the region while leaving the vast majority of the park

73. Laura Soulli re Harrison, "Old Faithful Inn," in *Architecture in the Parks: A National Historic Landmark Theme Study*. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1986). 62-69, accessed November 17, 2013, <https://archive.org/details/architectureinpa00harr>.

74. Leavengood, 500. The Old Faithful Inn is one of the few remaining log hotels in the country and in 1987 it was designated a Historic Landmark; the NPS stating, "it has a sense of place as identifiable as the Park itself." Indeed, the NPS deemed it as worthy of preservation and culturally significant to the Yellowstone region and tourist experience as the natural landscape itself. See Harrison, 67.

75. Historic American Engineering Record, "Written Historical and Descriptive Data, Grand Loop Road, Yellowstone Roads and Bridges, HAER WYO 15-MAHOSP.V, 1," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1989, 32, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/wy/wy0200/wy0265/data/wy0265data.pdf>.

76. Walker, "Shooting Wonderland," 51-52.

untouched. Thus, stagecoach tourists experienced a refined version of the wilderness that took in all the “chief attractions” of the park, including Inspiration Point, as well as the hot springs, geysers, lake, canyon, and cataracts, which had also been memorialized in visual culture.⁷⁷

Amateur photographs from this period reflect the impact visual culture had on the tourist experience. In “Shooting Wonderland: The Photographic Construction of 19th-Century Yellowstone,” Marguerite Hilery Walker examines amateur and professional photographs of Yellowstone and establishes their similarities as a testimony to the pervasive influence of commercial photography.⁷⁸ Indeed, photography provided evidence of the tourist experience and authenticity to tourists’ imaginings of the West.

In 1897, one visitor documented his tour of Yellowstone for the *New York Tribune*:

All day the tourist sees pictures of nature, to which no frame or modification has been made by the hand of man; for hours the eye feasts on awe-inspiring landscapes, with nothing about or near them to suggest civilization, and then the traveller goes to a hotel which stands in the shadow of a giant mountain and reads his mail by electric light, surrounded by all the conveniences and luxuries to be found in this metropolis.⁷⁹

77. W. C. Riley, *Official Guide to the Yellowstone National Park: A Manual for Tourists, being a description of the Mammoth Hot Springs, the Geyser Basins, the Cataracts, the Canons, and other features of the New Wonderland* (St. Paul, Minnesota: Brown, Treacy & Co, 1890), 37, accessed October 18, 2013, <https://archive.org/details/officialguidetoy1890rile>. The “chief attractions of the grand tour comprise the Golden Gate, the Obsidian Cliffs, the Norris Geyser Basin, Virginia Canon and Cascades, the Grand Canon, and Upper and Lower Falls of the Yellowstone River, the view from Mt. Washburn, Tower Falls, thence southward to Yellowstone Lake and Mud Geysers, Crater Hill, and Mary’s Mountain road to Firehole or Middle Geyser Basin, the Excelsior and Upper Geyser Basin; and returning, Gibbon Falls, Gibbon Paint Pots, and Mt. Schurz, between the Middle and the Norris Geyser Basins.”

From June 6, 1997 to March 1, 1998, the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. held an exhibition titled “Lying Lightly on the Land: Building America’s National Park Roads and Parkways.” The exhibition traced the development and evolution of roads and their impact on tourism in a selection of parks. For a ‘postcard tour’ of Yellowstone visit: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hdp/exhibits/lll/wonder/tran07.htm>.

78. Walker, “Shooting Wonderland,” 60.

79. “The Yellowstone Park: A Region of Marvelous Beauty and Great Interest,” *New York Tribune*, April 4, 1897, B10.

His account highlights the dichotomy in the tourist experience of Yellowstone between the “uncivilized” and the “civilized;” the “taming” of the frontier and the “tamed.” By day, tourists – as pioneers – had an adventure in the wild, unsettled West that was in line with their cultivated imagination; by night, they enjoyed modern accommodations that were evidence of the nation’s progress in conquering and civilizing the West. Thus, tourists’ experience was a form of contained adventure while their constructed understanding of the spaces of Yellowstone came to mirror the ideals and ideologies of westward expansion in the United States.

“For the Enjoyment of Future Generations:” The National Park Service

The railroad companies continued to play an important and influential role in protecting the wonders of the national parks and promoting tourism after the turn of the century.⁸⁰ They also agreed to assist the government in upgrading park hotels, roads, and trails. However, as the national park system grew, members of the government sought to and take control away from the private railroads and unify the management of the parks. They lobbied to establish a federal bureau to oversee an integrated park system.

In 1910, Richard A. Ballinger (1858-1922), Secretary of the Interior from 1909-1911, drafted a bill for the establishment of a government agency, and on February 2, 1912, President William Howard Taft reiterated this need in a special message to Congress:

Every consideration of patriotism and the love of nature and of beauty and of art requires us to expend money enough to bring all these natural wonders within easy reach of our people. The first step in that direction is the establishment of a responsible bureau which shall take upon itself the burden of supervising the

80. Runte, 76.

parks and of making recommendations as the best methods of improving their accessibility and usefulness.⁸¹

Proponents generated publicity to aid the campaign, including photography exhibitions, films, and articles in popular magazines.⁸²

In 1915, Secretary of the Interior, Franklin Lane (1864-1921) hired Stephen Mather (1867-1930), a long time member of Muir's Sierra Club, as his special assistant, and assigned Horace Albright (1890-1987) as Mather's aide. At the onset, Mather brought together congressmen superintendents, concessioners, and travel people to discuss park needs and tourism potential.⁸³

When President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act on August 25, 1916, thereby establishing the NPS, there were fifteen national parks and eighteen national monuments; all but two were located in the western United States. The Organic Act transformed these areas into a system of "national assets" administered by an official, independent federal bureau. Through this consolidation, the government could actively promote a nationalized tourism and collective vision of the nation.⁸⁴

Landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (1870-1957) provided the statement of park purpose: "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."⁸⁵

81. Jenks Cameron, *The National Park Service: Its History, Activities and Organization*, Institute for Government Research (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1922), 12.

82. Shaffer, 100.

83. William C. Everhart, *The National Park Service* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), 18. Mather retired from the NPS in 1929; Horace M. Albright succeeded him and assumed the role from 1929 to 1933.

84. "National Parks as National Assets," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 16, 1918, 12; Shaffer, 94.

85. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "National Park Service Organic Act," 1916, accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/fhpl/nps_organic_act.pdf.

His statement delineates the dual mandate of the parks and the responsibility of the NPS: the delicate balance of preservation and use. It would prove to be an enduring and vital point of reference to guide the management and development of the parks.

In its early years, the NPS relied on private sector support and funding for national park promotion. Mather and Albright courted wealthy benefactors, such as John D. Rockefeller; supported landscape painters and found sponsors to exhibit their works; gave photographers and moviemakers access to the parks; and encouraged newspapers and magazines, such as the *Saturday Evening Post* and *National Geographic*, to publish editorials promoting the parks.⁸⁶ The railroads figured among the most influential endorsers and in 1916, thirteen railroad companies funded the *National Parks Portfolio*, an expensive picture book, distributed free to 250,000 people. The *National Parks Portfolio* was dedicated to the American people and designed to enlighten readers about the natural wonders of their own country. In the portfolio, Mather spelled out that he hoped to “bring some realization” of what the national parks “ought to mean, of what so easily they can be made to mean” to the United States.⁸⁷

Conclusion

During the nineteenth century, the wilderness functioned as a symbol of the nation’s providence as both an obstacle to overcome and as an asset for acclaim. For pioneers and settlers, the wilderness represented the western frontier to be conquered in

86. Michael Berkowitz, “A ‘New Deal’ for leisure: making mass tourism during the great Depression,” in *Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer Culture, and Identity in Modern Europe and North America*, eds. Shelley Baranowski and Ellen Furlough (USA: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 200-1.

87. Robert Sterling Yard, *National Parks Portfolio*, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1917), 3, 5; Everhart, 20. *National Parks Portfolio* was updated and reissued each year for the next two decades. The railroads also continued special publicity campaigns, introduced excursion rates, improved park accommodations, and provided direct subsidies to Park Service projects. See: Berkowitz, 200-1.

the name of liberty and Manifest Destiny. For patriots and preservationists, it represented God's presence, testament to America's fate to become a great nation. The frontier still existed in 1864 when Congress set aside Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove for preservation and the enjoyment of future generations. This preemptive act represented the beginnings of the national park idea; an idea that celebrated prosperity and democracy and placed regions rich in scenery into the inheritance of all Americans.

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, the American public was exposed to a canon of images and visual descriptions that romanticized and mythicized the West. Pioneering tourists to the national parks had an opportunity to see the progress and triumphs of westward expansion for themselves, and advertently played their own role in civilizing the western wilderness. These experiences laid the foundations for how the NPS would construct the meaning of the landscapes and the tourist experience. In 1917, Enos Mills, the prominent figure in the creation of Rocky Mountain National Park, expressed this notion in the tourist guide *Your National Parks*:

The frontier no longer exists, and the days of the wilderness are gone forever. Yet, in our magnificent National Parks we still have a bit of the primeval world and the spirit of the vigorous frontier. In these wild parks we may rebuild the past, and in them the trapper, the prospector, the cowboy, and the pioneer may act once more their part in the scenes that knew them.

Our National Parks will continue for generations to come to be the No Man's Land, the Undiscovered Country, the Mysterious Old West, the Land of Romance and Adventure.⁸⁸

In 1913, 25,000 visitors entered Yellowstone; 52,000 in 1915. That same year, park authorities officially allowed automobiles into the park; tour buses the following

88. Enos A. Mills, *Your National Parks: A Guide to the National Parks* (Boston and New York: University Press Cambridge, 1917), x-xi, xiii-xiv.

year.⁸⁹ Automobiles paved the way for a more democratic twentieth-century tourism and contributed to the demise of privileged stagecoach travel. Indeed, this shift was so rapid that by 1917 stagecoaches were no longer allowed in the park.

While automobiles changed the physical experience of Yellowstone, the visual experience remained primarily the same, as the Grand Loop Road became the “principal highway and scenic loop road system” in the park. To affirm its significance, the road was designated a Historic District in 2003, considered to be the “first, large scale-designed planned system giving people access into the “scenic splendors” in the country.”⁹⁰

The tourist experience provided by the NPS continues to draw on the visual culture of the national parks and uses this imagery to decipher the landscape. Each year, millions of tourists visit Artist Point on the South Rim of Yellowstone’s Grand Canyon to gaze upon the scene Moran reproduced in his distinguished painting. In recent years, the NPS installed a plaque that displays a reproduction of Moran’s painting, used to interpret the geology of the canyon walls (Fig. 1.10). Here, the visual culture and the view of the landscape have become one, as this visual experience at Artist Point is comprised of reality and its artistic representation, further shaping the way the scene is viewed and comprehended.

89. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Conservation and Protection Branch, “Public use of the national parks: a statistical report, 1904-1940,” unpublished report, reprint 1963. *National Park Service, Integrated Resource Management Applications*, accessed October 17, 2013, <https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/Reports/AbstractsAndForecasts>.

90. Historic American Engineering Record, 1. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic Resources of Yellowstone National Park,” c. 2003. *Wyoming State Preservation Office*, accessed October 7, 2013, <http://wyoshpo.state.wy.us/pdf/hrynp.pdf>.

The West from the tonneau of a motor car, and the West from a seat in a Pullman are two very different countries – from the spectator’s point of view. The West referred to, in this instance, is the real West of to-day, that section of the country which nature set on end, and man called the Rocky Mountains. It comprises several States, each boasting immensity of areas as one of its assets. It is on account of the enormous length, breadth and height of this area that one is compelled to use an automobile, if one expects to see half its glories, meet its people, view its scenery, and fully realize what difficulties confronted its pioneers, when they claimed this land as their own.

W. D. Rishel,
“What Transcontinental Touring Really Means,”
American Motorist, (May 1913): 395.

Chapter 2. Cars and Cameras: Photography, “Scenic Spots,” and Automobile Tourism, 1916-1941.

In the first half of the twentieth century, mass numbers of vacationers set out on the open road, aided by the development of the highway system and the accessibility of the automobile. The automobile allowed for an entirely different way of seeing the country. According to Wolfgang Schivelbusch, the railroad “destroy[ed] the close relationship between the traveler and the traveled space,” while the automobile afforded a more intimate, individual, and independent interaction with nature and the land traversed. The automobile also enhanced traveler’s visual perception. Motorists enjoyed panoramic views of the landscape through the windshield, in contrast to the railroad car that offered only limited side views. Furthermore, motorists were better able to distinguish the landscape and its objects due to the automobile’s gentler speed. The velocity of the railway car caused the view of the foreground to disappear, while the slower pace of the automobile brought it back into focus.⁹¹

Paid vacations and photography also encouraged Americans to discover what lay over the horizon. Paid vacations afforded middle-class and working families free time each year and further stimulated the tourism industry. The movement for paid vacations first emerged around the turn of the century; however, it was not until the 1920s that they became more widespread. Economic and social crisis came with the onset of the Depression and subsequently caused the number of employers offering vacations with pay to drop; but as the 1930s progressed, the majority of wage earners received paid

91. Wolfgang Schivelbusch, “Panoramic Travel,” in *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century*, trans. Carl Hanser Verlag, 2nd ed. (California: University of California Press, 1986), 52-69.

vacations. Employers recognized the benefits travel and vacation time had in reviving worker's spirits, energy, and efficiency, and by 1936 sixty million Americans took at least a one-week vacation away from home.⁹² The rise of amateur photography went hand in hand with this increase in travel as Eastman Kodak's advertisements encouraged motorists to appreciate and photograph the landscape, and Ansel Adams' photographs transformed the nation's physical sites into visual sights.

By the end of 1920, the majority of visitors encountered the national parks by automobile, and for the first time, the number of park visitors surpassed one million. Five years later, they topped two million.⁹³ The NPS recognized the importance of the automobile to the tourist experience and the road became a primary means of presenting and interpreting the national park landscapes. However, the NPS needed to achieve a balance between accessibility, preservation, and the tourist experience, allied with the dual purpose of the national parks outlined by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. in 1916: to conserve – and provide for visitors enjoyment of – the scenery, wildlife, and natural and historic resources contained within the parks. To realize this balance, the NPS planned and designed roads to minimize the visible and environmental impact of the road, while maximizing motorists' visual and physical experience from the road. Landscape architects employed planning and design to highlight and dramatize views, which facilitated photography as a growing ritual of the tourist experience in the national parks.

This chapter, "Cars and Cameras," discusses the development of tourism in America stimulated by the establishment of a national road system and the increase in

92. Berkowitz, 187.

93. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Conservation and Protection Branch, "Public use of the national parks: a statistical report, 1904-1940."

automobile ownership after the turn of the century. I consider the relationship between both amateur photography and tourism, and specifically consider Kodak and its “Scenic Spots” campaign in the 1920s and 1930s. Here, I will also examine the planning and design of roads built between and within the national parks considering the preservation of the natural landscape, automobile accessibility in the parks, and the importance of motorists’ visual experience. I discuss tourism during the time of the Great Depression and the steps taken by the NPS to promote patronage and ensure the maintenance of the national parks. Finally, I consider the constructed meaning of the national parks – depicted in posters and photographs as places of restoration and renewal – aligned with American ideals and ideologies during the Depression.

“See America First:” Highways, Automobiles, and Tourism

As Frederick Jackson Turner contended in 1893, mobility was vital to the American experience. In the late-nineteenth century, railroads transported people across the country; by the early-twentieth century a system of national roads gave automobile owners the freedom to travel autonomously. This increase in travel kindled the tourism industry during an era when progressive reforms and a concern for conservation figured prominently on the government’s agenda.

While the railroad increased mobility on a national scale, improving mobility at a local level also garnered growing interest. In 1880, bicycle riders initiated the Good Roads Movement and lobbied state governments for better roads and streets. The federal government recognized the need for improvements as the movement gained national momentum; it introduced a series of bills that made a determined effort to advance the

state of the nation's roads, and established the Office of Road Inquiry (ORI) – the first federal agency responsible for highway improvement.⁹⁴ In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt addressed the National Good Roads Convention and conveyed his support for the movement. For Roosevelt, roads signified great nationhood:

When we wish to use descriptive adjectives, fit to characterize great empires... invariably one of those adjectives used is to signify that the empire built good roads... The facility, the art, the habit of road building marks in a nation those solid, stable qualities, which tell for permanent greatness.⁹⁵

During the Progressive Era (1896-1920) the nation's leaders sought to counter social and economic problems brought about by rapid industrialization and initiated multi-faceted reforms, including the construction of roads and a road system. The Progressive Era also saw the beginnings of the conservation movement to which Roosevelt gave great impetus when he took office in 1901. Roosevelt was an ardent champion of the wilderness and he articulated a forward-thinking vision of conservation, rendering it as a “democratic movement” and a reflection of a nation's maturity.⁹⁶ During his term as President he designated five national parks, four game refuges, and fifty-one bird reservations, as well as instituting the National Forest Service (NFS).

94. Kaszynski, 20-21, 30, 35. In 1892, Senator Charles R. Manderson of Nebraska introduced a bill calling for a National Highway Commission to study future road improvements. The measure was an idea independently proposed by General Roy Stone and Rep. Philip S. Post of Illinois, who each saw the need for construction of more reliable roads for both military and civilian purposes. The final bill became the Agriculture Appropriations Act of 1894, signed into law by President Benjamin Harrison in March 1893. In October 1893, Agriculture Secretary J. Sterling Morton established the Office of Road Inquiry, the first federal agency responsible for highway improvement. Approximately ten years later, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Agriculture Appropriations Act of 1905, which created the Office of Public Roads. In 1910, the American Association for Highway Improvement (renamed the American Highway Association in 1912) was established by state and national organizations; it amalgamated various Good Roads associations, railroads, and highway agencies into one cohesive, powerful lobbying group.

95. *Ibid.*, 30; Thomas J. Pasko, Jr., *Public Roads*, U.S. Department of Transport, Federal Highway Association (July/August 1998).

96. Jeffrey Salmon, “‘With utter disregard of pain and woe:’ Theodore Roosevelt on Conservation and Nature,” in *Conservation Reconsidered: Nature, Virtue, and American Liberal Democracy*, ed. Charles T. Rubin (USA: Rowman & Little Publishers, 2000), 50.

The automobile was an increasingly ubiquitous sight on the nation's thoroughfares through the first decades of the twentieth century. Initially a plaything for the rich, it quickly became popular among the broader population when Henry Ford (1863-1947) manufactured and marketed the Model T in 1908. Ford's innovative automobile was cost efficient to produce and affordable to purchase, thereby making cars accessible to the general public and opening road travel to middle-class Americans. This "magical growth of the automobile industry," the *Washington Post* proposed in 1909, provided incentive for improved roads and "promised great good to all sections of the country."⁹⁷ Americans quickly embraced the automobile and by 1914 more than two million cars populated the roads. In 1921, the number totaled nine million and by 1926 it had doubled.⁹⁸

The rapid escalation in automobile production and consumption, and the development and improvement of the nation's roads accelerated travel and tourism. Trailblazers and organizations such as the American Automobile Association (AAA) mapped interstate automobile routes across the country, following recognized Indian and pioneer trails and exploring new routes. In 1913, the Lincoln Highway Association designated the country's first east-west, coast-to-coast route; and the north-south Dixie Highway from Canada to Miami, Florida was identified in 1915. By 1920, various organizations had named more than 250 nominated trails.⁹⁹

Shaffer asserts that promoters and advocates of a countrywide road system believed it would both foster the country's recreational needs and cultivate a national

97. "The Good Roads Movement," *Washington Post*, January 11, 1909, ES4.

98. Kaszynski, 24, 45. Foster Rhea Dulles, *A History of Recreation: American Learns to Play*, 2nd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965), 316.

99. Kaszynski, 38, 40-42. These include the Ozark Trail from St Louis to New Mexico, which later became part of Route 66; the Washington to Atlanta Highway; the National Old Trails Road from Baltimore to Los Angeles; and the Yellowstone Trail from Boston to Seattle.

sense of belonging. Many automobile organizations, such as the National Old Trails Association (formed in 1912 to mark the auto route The National Road, a nineteenth-century trail which linked the Mid-West to the Atlantic seaboard), the Lincoln Highway Association, and the National Highways Association (established in 1911) believed an extensive network of roads was a means to “physically bind America into a united nation.” Indeed, it would “promote a shared national identity” as automobile tourists individually, yet with a sense of togetherness, experienced the beauty, diversity, and history of their expansive country.¹⁰⁰ Benedict Anderson articulates this theory in *Imagined Communities* (1991) when he defines the concept of nation as a social construction, imagined by the people who identify themselves as part of that group.¹⁰¹

American Motorist, the AAA’s monthly magazine, promoted transcontinental tourism early on. In an article published in May 1913, W. D. Rishel even predicted that transcontinental tourism would “soon push baseball for first honors as the great National Pastime.”¹⁰² One year later, when World War I broke out, limiting travel to Europe, tourism promoters seized the opportunity to encourage travel within America. They embraced the slogan “See America First” – first used in 1905 to boost business, and later adopted in 1910 by the Great Northern Railway to encourage travel to Glacier National

100. Shaffer, 132. In 1914, the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO) formed to coordinate highway construction and planning on a national level. The AASHO passed the Federal-Aid Road Act of 1916 by which the federal government would provide financial assistance to the states to build a nationwide system of highways. Following the end of the War, and until 1939, civil engineer Thomas H. MacDonald headed up the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR), formerly the Office of Public Roads. Under the leadership of MacDonald, the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1921 expanded the federal government’s role in road planning and effectively worked to fulfill MacDonald’s vision of a national highway system. Kaszynski asserts that over the next two decades the American road “transformed from dirt and mud to a 234,000-mile nation-wide system of reliable, hard surfaced, all-weather highways.” See: Kaszynski, 52-3, 55, 59.

101. Benedict, Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991).

102. W. D. Rishel, “What Transcontinental Touring Really Means,” *American Motorist*, May 1913, 395.

Park – and translated it into a national movement to encourage and inspire patriotism, loyalty, and domestic travel.¹⁰³

Americans took to their automobiles as a new way to travel the country. While the railroad had brought all classes together, the automobile facilitated separation and enabled the upper classes to distinguish themselves through their early adoption of motor vehicles and conspicuous consumption. Automobile touring offered freedom and adventure, and autonomous and individual mobility. Traveling on rural and unmarked roads also encouraged sociability and camaraderie amongst fellow travelers and a more intimate experience of the landscape.¹⁰⁴ As the *New York Times* outlined, “there is no other way to get quite so much health-building enjoyment out of a vacation as with an auto. It is in truth preferable of winged vacation, with the stimulus of diversity ever available.”¹⁰⁵

Highways and automobiles transformed the national parks into popular and accessible destinations. In 1917 Enos Mills wrote in the tourist guide *Your National Parks*:

A national park is an island of safety in this riotous world... Within national parks is room – glorious room – room in which to find ourselves, in which to think and hope, to dream and plan, to rest, and resolve.¹⁰⁶

By the end of the war, Stephen Mather, appointed first Director of the NPS, reported that “people ha[d] turned to the national parks for health, happiness, and a saner view of life,” in a time of “trying economic conditions,” and “general unrest.”¹⁰⁷ Park officials presumed

103. Shaffer, 100, 103.

104. John A. Jakle, *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth Century North America* (USA: University of Nebraska Press, 1985) 101; Warren Belasco, “Commercialized Nostalgia: The Origins of the Roadside Strip,” in *The Automobile and American Culture*, eds. David L. Lewis and Laurence Goldstein (USA: University of Michigan Press, 1983): 109.

105. “Automobile Touring Season Nears Height,” *New York Times*, August 12, 1917, E4.

106. Mills, *Your National Parks*, 379.

107. Stephen T. Mather, *Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior, Travel Season 1920, October 14, 1920*, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1920), 13.

the national parks brought Americans from all sections of the country closer together, and offered benefits to individuals, to society, and to the nation as a whole. However, Shaffer notes that the NPS's understanding of "all sections" focused more on geographical diversity than race or class.¹⁰⁸

After the war and during the 1920s, the government upgraded, unified, and nationalized the units of the national park system. The parks received greater support from the NPS, and increased revenue from motorists' fees as automobile tourism emerged.¹⁰⁹ The NPS outfitted them with new hotels and public camps, and amenities to cater to the requirements and budgets of middle-class travelers. Moreover, the increase in visitors validated the need to develop park-to-park touring, and as the states redefined their parks in national terms, the NPS promoted seeing the parks as a patriotic duty. Shaffer argues that through this process the parks came to represent the essence of the nation and the act of touring allowed visitors to "actualize their citizenship."¹¹⁰ Indeed, in 1921, Franklin Lane issued an invitation to the American people that captured this nationalization and patriotic sentiment:

Uncle Sam asks you to be his guest. He has prepared for you the choice places of this continent – places of grandeur, beauty, and of wonder. He has built roads through the deep-cut canyons and beside happy streams, which will carry you into these places in comfort, and has provided lodgings and food in the most distant and inaccessible places that you might enjoy yourself and realize yourself as little as possible the rigors of the pioneer traveler's life. These are for you.

108. Shaffer, 125.

109. Stephen T. Mather, *Progress in the Development of the National Parks*, U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1916), 6, accessed November 17, 2013, <http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/59020#page/3/mode/1>. Park revenues from automobiles increased from \$14,245 in 1914, to \$42,589 in 1915, and to \$65,311 in 1916. Mather suggested this revenue be used to repair the natural wear and tear on roads and bridges due to extensive use by motor cars. He concluded, "no policy of national park management has yielded more thoroughly gratifying results than that which guided the admission of motor-driven vehicles to the use of the roads of all of the parks."

110. Shaffer, 121, 128.

They are the playgrounds of the people. To see them is to make more hearty your affection and admiration for America.¹¹¹

Through the concerted efforts of the NPS – and particularly Mather and Albright – the park system became a modern, comprehensive, and integrated entity, physically connected by roads and highways, and ideologically connected by patriotic value. “It is just by trips of that kind,” Mather expressed “that people learn what America is.”¹¹²

“Picture Ahead:” Kodak, Automobiles, and Landscape

The rise of amateur photography went conjointly with the increase in automobile tourism, as travel experiences became a frequent picture-taking subject for motorists. Kodak’s advertising and “Scenic Spots” campaign in particular encouraged motorists to photograph the landscape and directed them where to do so. This supported a greater appreciation for America’s landscapes, helped to establish photography as part of the tourism ritual of national parks, and contributed to motorists learning “what America is.”

In the late 1880s, innovator and entrepreneur George Eastman (1854-1932), founder of Eastman Kodak, started a revolution in photography when he introduced the first mass produced and simple-to-use camera. Enthusiasm spread swiftly, and by 1890, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* warned, tongue-in-cheek, “when amateur photography came it came to stay... the craze has not died out, but is spreading fearfully.”¹¹³ In 1900 Kodak

111. “Uncle Sam Bids You to be His Guest,” *The Pittsburgh Press*, 12 June, 1921, 2.

112. Shaffer, 119.

113. “Beware of the Kodak,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 28, 1890, 17.

marketed the Brownie, an affordable, user-friendly, lightweight camera designed for the masses, and by 1910, one third of American households owned a Brownie camera.¹¹⁴

Kodak recognized the opportunity to target families and tourists and advertised in the early 1900s with slogans such as “A vacation without a Kodak is a vacation wasted,” and “Vacation days are Kodak days.” Photography became integral to the tourism industry, and taking “snapshots” on vacation was soon standard travel practice. Kodak further fostered this practice by capitalizing on the nascent automobile industry and the new national pastime of touring. It published numerous advertisements that featured men and women in or near their car, with a Kodak Brownie in hand, and the catchphrase “Kodak as you go” (Fig. 2.11).¹¹⁵

In 1911, park superintendent Enos Mills postulated that photography assisted the conservation of Rocky Mountain National Park as the Kodak Brownie enhanced viewers’ aesthetic appreciation of the landscape:

The Kodak is helping to save the wilderness. It is one of the most influential factors in promoting a more rational and refined view of the flowers, the birds, and the trees...

It throws the robe of beauty artistically over everything. Through it the search is led for nature’s best; it reveals fairy lands and develops an appreciation of the beautiful.¹¹⁶

114. Eastman got into the camera business as a way to sell more roll film. Consumers bought a Kodak Brownie camera already loaded with 100-frame roll film, and when the film was finished, they sent the whole camera back to Kodak’s Rochester plant for processing and reloading. The camera and prints were then sent back to the consumer. See: Don Slater, “Consuming Kodak,” in *Family Snaps: The Meanings of Domestic Photography*, eds. Jo Spence and Patricia Holland (Great Britain: Virago Press, 1991).

115. A digital collection of Eastman Kodak advertisements can be found at the website of *Duke University Libraries*, accessed November 15, 2013, <http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/eaa/?keyword=kodak>.

116. Enos. A. Mills, “Save Our Camping Places,” *The New York Observer*, August 10, 1911, 185. It is important to note that most sources state Mills wrote this excerpt in 1932. However, Mills died in 1922. Additionally, while this article was published in *The New York Observer* in 1911, there is a reference to *Leslie’s Weekly* that suggests it was printed at an earlier date. The true date of this quote makes it even more significant as it occurred within the first decade of the growth of amateur photography.

Mills' description of the visual capability of photography and the role it played in tourists' experience of the national park evokes the facility of a Claude Glass, a small handheld optical device used by nature tourists in the late eighteenth century to create an ephemeral image of a picturesque landscape. Like the camera, the Claude Glass allowed tourists to see the landscape as an artwork or photograph. It isolated and framed a view of the landscape, transmuting its tones and hues, thereby creating an idealized vision of the natural world.

With automobiles ever-present, Kodak increasingly allied photography with leisure, mobility, and tourism. In 1922 the company instigated the "Scenic Spots" campaign. Employees searched out attractive views along the nation's highways and erected road signs that read "Picture Ahead! Kodak as you go" to notify motorists they were approaching a laudable photography moment. By 1939, nearly 6,000 scenic spots had been instituted, directing the eye and the camera to the aesthetically pleasing landscapes visible from the road. Nancy Martha West reasons that Kodak's campaign gave credence to the capacity of the tourism industry to define the modern travel experience.¹¹⁷ It structured the "tourist gaze," cultivated visuality, and encouraged photography of the landscape.

Supporters of the national parks also fostered the budding relationship between photography and automobile tourism. This is evidenced by a pamphlet issued by the Department of the Interior in 1915, when authorities officially allowed private automobiles into Yellowstone. The pamphlet outlines the rules and regulations governing automobiles in the park, and advertisements for local Kodak providers, such as F. J.

117. Nancy Martha West, *Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia* (USA: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 65, 66, 75.

Hiscock, “The Picture Man,” in Cody, Wyoming, are scattered throughout its pages.

Hiscock’s advertisement reads:

You Can Kick
 But you’ll have NO KICK COMING if you have your KODAK PICTURES of
 YELLOWSTONE FINISHED AT THE HISCOCK STUDIO. We can also
 furnish you with films and we sell THE BEST VIEWS of the Cody and the
 Shoshone Canyon, by a DAM SITE.¹¹⁸

This advertisement draws on the “kick back” rhetoric of the Model T Ford, establishes photography and Kodak as part of automobile tourists’ experience of Yellowstone, and highlights the importance of seeing and collecting images of the “best views” of the park.

A Road Runs Through It: Automobiles and the National Parks

The demands on the national park system shifted with the introduction of automobiles and the subsequent arrival of greater numbers of tourists to the parks. Within the first two years of its formation in 1916, the NPS initiated a program of planning and design to cater to growing numbers of motorists, while making every effort to protect and preserve the natural environment.

Mather recognized the value of the automobile to the future of American tourism and he made accessibility and decent roads his foremost priority to attract the public to the national parks. He developed alliances with the railroads, relationships with the automobile and Good Roads associations, and distributed automobile guidebooks to

118. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Rules and Regulations Governing Automobile Travel in Yellowstone National Park* (Cody, Wyoming: Park County Enterprises, 1915), accessed November 17, 2013, <http://archive.org/details/rulesregulation862cody>. Kodak became further linked with the nation’s parks when *National Geographic* photographers explored an uncharted region near Cannonville, Utah, for the September 1949 issue of the magazine. The photographers named the area Kodachrome Flat due to the landscapes’ spectacular colors, and after the then relatively new brand of Kodak film they used. The area was designated a state park in 1962.

promote tourist visitation.¹¹⁹ 55,000 automobiles entered the national parks in 1917; and once encouraged, 400,000 entered in 1926.¹²⁰ “It was inevitable that the automobile should revolutionize the park tour,” Mather foresaw in 1919.¹²¹

The NPS adopted an approach to design, architecture, and road planning that sought to harmonize construction with the landscape, similar to the intentions of earlier park development like that of the Grand Loop Road and Old Faithful Inn in Yellowstone. Linda Flint McLelland describes how the NPS developed built features subordinate to the natural and cultural features of the environment; laid roads and trails to create the impression that the landscape had not been disturbed; used informal landscape design to blend amenities into the natural setting; and employed native materials and traditional techniques for construction.¹²²

Mather placed particular importance on the gateways that marked park entrances, and recommended they be “simple, dignified, and in complete harmony with their environments.” He believed these gateways would both influence visitors’ first perceptions of a park and stimulate patriotism, writing, “it is with a thrill of pride in our great national playgrounds, that the average visitor passes through these gates and beneath the Stars and Stripes waving over them.”¹²³ He cited the rusticated Roosevelt

119. McLelland, 124.

120. Jakle, 68, 70-71.

121. Stephen T. Mather, *Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior, Travel Season 1919, October 15, 1919*, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1919), 47.

122. See McLelland; also Franklin K. Lane, “Statement of National Park Policy, May 13, 1918,” in *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior* 1 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1919), 1276. This included park villages, campgrounds, roads and trails, and facilities for lodging, comfort, picnicking, and purchasing supplies and gas. Ranger stations, residences, workshops, and garages were needed to manage the park and accommodate staff. Electricity, water, sewerage, and telephone services also received consideration and planning.

123. Mather, *Progress in the Development of the National Parks*, 9. Mr. S.F. Ralston, supervisor of Glacier National Park, also theorized that roads in national parks, passing “spots of scenic interest,” should encourage

Arch (1903, Reamer), made from locally quarried stone, at the northern entrance of Yellowstone, and the cedar arch at the southwestern entrance of Mount Rainier as the most impressive, both of which still stand today. Mount Rainier's superintendent Edward Hall designed the park's entrance in 1911; this simple yet stately gateway is comprised of upright poles on each side of the road and three heavy logs that lay across. It is made from local wood that harmonizes with its surroundings, and a sign is suspended from the arch with "Mt. Rainier National Park" chiseled into its face (Fig. 2.12).¹²⁴

Beginning in 1918, the NPS hired landscape architects to plan and design park villages, campgrounds, roads, trails, and facilities, and to provide advice on issues affecting the scenery of parks. Mather employed Charles Punchard (1885-1920) as the first Landscape Engineer in 1918, and the head of the Landscape-Architecture Division. Born in Massachusetts, Punchard studied at Harvard University School of Landscape Architecture. During World War I, the Department of Public Buildings and Grounds in the District of Columbia appointed Punchard as Landscape Architect, and in 1918 he was transferred to the NPS. Punchard spent his first year touring and studying the national parks in the West.¹²⁵ The roots of his planning lay in the writings of landscape designer and horticulturalist Alexander Jackson Downing in the 1830s and 1840s. Downing's romantic notions of park design emphasized the importance of circulation and scenic

Americans to travel domestically; tourists, thereby, would contribute to the American economy rather than the European. See U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Proceedings of the National Park Conference, held at Berkeley, California, March 11-13, 1915* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1915), accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/npsg/conference3/sec4.htm.

124. Theodore Catton, *Wonderland: An Administrative History of Mount Rainier National Park*, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources Program (May 1996), accessed November 15, 2013, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/mora/adhi/chap5.htm

125. McLelland, 136.

vistas, and directly influenced the location and design of roads, paths, and parkways, as well as features such as seating and picnic areas.

In 1920, Mather hired Kansas-born landscape architect Daniel Hull (1890-1964) to assist Punchard. Hull studied landscape architecture and city planning at the University of Illinois and Harvard University. Although their collaboration would prove to be brief due to Punchard's untimely death in 1920, Punchard's impact was long lasting. Hull became Chief Landscape Engineer in 1921 and he and landscape architect Thomas Vint (1894-1967), who joined the NPS as a draftsman in 1922, carried on Punchard's naturalistic principles of planning and design, which thereby continued to influence the character of the national parks.¹²⁶ When Hull left the NPS in 1927, the bureau promoted Vint to Chief Landscape Architect. He was responsible for the expansion of the landscape division into a design office involved in all aspects of park development, and in 1932 he became head of the NPS Landscape Division. By 1930 the NPS had established several national parks and monuments in the East and in 1933 promoted Vint to Chief Architect of the Branch of Plans and Design to oversee the design and development of both the eastern and western parks.¹²⁷

126. See McLelland for an in-depth discussion of park development from 1916 to 1940, and the biographies, principles, and legacies of landscape architects Punchard (135-157), Hull (159-192), and Vint (195-322).

127. Vint, a native of Utah, studied landscape architecture at the University of California, Berkeley. In 1938, he became the Chief of Planning; in 1946, Chief of Development; and in 1954, Chief of the Division of Design and Construction. He was particularly active in the formulation and administration of design standards for Mission 66 and continued to be the foremost authority on architecture and landscape architecture for the NPS until retiring in the 1960s. Vint was a member of the Mission 66 steering committee and oversaw initial planning for the program. He was named Assistant Director for Design and Construction in 1961, and retired shortly thereafter. See: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "A Brief Organizational History of the Office of Design and Construction, National Park Service, 1917-1962," unpublished report, 1963, accessed November 24, 2013, <http://www.nps.gov/history/history/hisnps/npshistory/design.pdf>; "Thomas Chalmers Vint," *The Cultural Landscape Foundation*, accessed November 24, 2013, <http://tclf.org/pioneer/thomas-vint>.

As roads became more prevalent and more necessary in the national parks, Punchard, Hull, and Vint endeavored to reconcile their layout with the scenery, and worked to maintain the delicate balance between accessibility and preservation. They planned park roads as carefully calculated networks that provided motorists with access to major attractions in the parks and offered the best views of scenery along the way. They designed them to blend with the natural landscape and curve with its contours, attempting to mitigate any damage to the natural features of the region and leaving scenic views unobstructed and clear of development.¹²⁸ Indeed, as the 1920s and park development progressed, these landscape architects became stewards of the national parks.

In 1926, Mather established an “interbureau agreement” between the NPS and the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) in order to better construct and improve park roads and trails. Through this agreement, the NPS took responsibility for the aesthetics of park roads, and the BPR ensured they were well conceived and well built.¹²⁹

128. McLelland, 175-176, 178, 182. The planning and design of the roads in the national parks had lasting effects on the history of road building. In 1963, *Man-made America: Chaos or control?* recognized the contributions the work of the NPS had made to the development of the modern highway. Authors Tunnard and Pushkarev wrote that road planning was an “artistic composition” of “focus, interest, and drama.” Much was written about the planning and standards of park roads during the postwar era. For Conrad Wirth, Director of the NPS, park roads provided the public with “leisurely access to scenic and other features” and were the “principle facilities for presenting and interpreting the inspirational values of a park.” Dudley Bayliss, the Chief of Parkways for the NPS, summarized that parks roads were designed to “lay gently on the land,” and were devised to discourage speed “so that visitors could see and enjoy” the park, particularly its “views and vistas,” which were an “integral part of park roads.” They were also designed, whenever possible, to “present the park in the best chronological or interpretive order,” incorporating “points of scenic, historic, or scientific interest.” Harold Bradley, president of the Sierra Club, noted that frequent turnouts enticed motorists off the road for “an opportunity to quietly contemplate and absorb the grandeur which presents itself from time to time.” See: Christopher Tunnard and Boris Pushkarev, *Man Made America: Chaos or control?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 263; Conrad L. Wirth, “Handbook of Standards for National Park and Parkway Roads,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (November 1958); Harold Bradley, “Roads in Our National Parks,” *National Park Magazine*, February 1959, 6; Dudley C. Bayliss “Planning Our National Park Roads and Our National Parkways,” *Traffic Quarterly*, July 1957, 417-440.

129. Carr, *Mission 66*, 256; Laura E. Soullière, *Historic Roads in the National Park System: Special History Study*, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, October 1995, accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/roads/shs3a.htm.

Through the Windshield: The View from the Road

The NPS used roads within the parks not simply as routes of access and circulation, but also to regulate what tourists saw. Landscape architects planned and designed roads to move motorists past a presentation of scenic splendors, and they considered vistas and viewpoints to be of particular importance to convey a park's significance and beauty. Evidence of the NPS's road planning and design is found in the Rim Road (built from 1923-27 and lengthened from 1930-35) laying atop the plateau in Bryce Canyon National Park.

Historian Peter Schmitt asserts that tourists at this time “lived by the road, and they most enjoyed the wilderness as it was framed in their windshields.”¹³⁰ Therefore, roads had to be built in such a way to enhance automobile tourists' visual pleasure and physical experience of the park. To achieve this PUNCHARD, HULL, and VINT worked in close association with Henry Hubbard (1875-1947), a professor of landscape architecture at Harvard University, a partner in Olmsted Jr.'s firm, and a consultant for the NPS for twenty years. Hubbard, with his wife and colleague Theodora Kimball, wrote *An Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design* (1917), which became the standard text for landscape architecture for many years.¹³¹ Hubbard believed roads should “seem to lie upon the surface of the ground,” and he set out specific rules for planning park roads taking into consideration their aesthetic value, and motorists' view and circulation through the park:

130. Peter J. Schmitt, “The Search for Scenery,” in *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America*, 163.

131. Hubbard remained involved in the affairs of the NPS. He was a delegate and committee member of the National Conference on Outdoor Recreation in the 1920s and he served on the National Capital Park and Planning Commission from 1932 until his death in 1947. See: McLelland 12.

... this enjoyment of views from the road is a matter of considerable importance in the whole design, pains should be taken that the spectators come to the various outlooks and objects of interest without retracting their course, in pleasant sequence, and prepared by each one for the next to come, as where, after passing through a shady wood, a road comes to an outlook over a sunny landscape.¹³²

The theories of landscape architect Frank Waugh (1869-1943), a professor at Massachusetts Agricultural College, and a consultant on recreational development for the NFS from 1917 to 1920, also influenced the practices of Punchard, Hull, and Vint.

Waugh was a prolific writer and he placed particular emphasis on the importance of the view in park design. He recommended that vistas be open and clearly focused on a natural feature of the landscape; roads be designed to draw attention to each view; and special views be “fixed, marked, and advertised,” so that the “the stranger is directed unmistakably to the main feature, the desirable vista or the glorious outlook.”¹³³

Accordingly, the NPS built scenic overlooks on park roads to provide motorists with a place to stop and enjoy panoramic views. These ranged from broadened areas on the side of the road, to larger parking areas built on natural plateaus and artificial terraces where they could command a spectacular view.¹³⁴

The Rim Road at Bryce Canyon (designated a national monument in 1923 and a national park in 1928) adheres to the scenic principles of Hubbard and Waugh and the circulation principles of Punchard, Hull, and Vint, and illustrates the integration of accessibility, preservation, and visual experience in park road design. In Bryce, park planners called for a road that ran parallel to the rim of the plateau – starting at the

132. Henry Hubbard and Theodora Kimball, *An Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design* (1917; repr., New York: Macmillan Co., 1924), 219, 222; McLelland, 181, 183, 185.

133. Frank Waugh, *The Natural Style in Landscape Gardening* (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1917), 121; McLelland, 31, 88, 183. Waugh was one of the most avid twentieth century followers of Downing’s theories of planning and design, and in 1921 he published a revised edition of Downing’s *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, first issued in 1850.

134. Hubbard and Kimball, 198; McLelland, 212.

northern periphery and stretching to the southernmost view at Rainbow Point – to facilitate leisurely motoring through the park and so as not to disturb the geological features that crowded the amphitheaters. It would create a progressive experience for tourists as they drove north to south, passing areas of varying character. The NPS started the road in 1923, but did not complete the majority of its construction until the early 1930s when automobile numbers escalated from 5,200 in 1929 to almost double in 1930.¹³⁵

The NPS designed the Rim Road to stay clear of the edge of the plateau and the park's main scenery – its geological amphitheaters; and in many sections natural overgrowth obscured motorists' views as the road traversed forests and meadows. The NPS marked and developed scenic overlooks along the side of the Rim Road at points such as Natural Bridge and Agua Canyon. For other viewpoints of the amphitheaters, like Inspiration Point and Sunset Point, motorists took short spur roads that led to the rim of the plateau. This served to heighten the anticipation of travelers and dramatize the views. At these points, motorists could exit their vehicles to enjoy and photograph the scenery and walk on trails below the plateau edge. Chapin Hall relayed his experience of the park for the *Los Angeles Times* in an article published in 1935:

The approach to Bryce is different from that to any of the other parks, no evidence of the canyon being visible until the visitor walks on to the rim and suddenly has revealed to him the wonderful sight in all its beauty.¹³⁶

In the late 1930s, Ford Motion Picture Laboratories issued a short film entitled *Nature's Cameo: Bryce Canyon National Park*, sponsored by the Ford Motor Company,

135. National Park Service, "Mission 66 for Bryce Canyon National Park, Prospectus," (Unpublished. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1956); University of Arizona College of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Planning, "Bryce Canyon National Park: Old NPS Housing and Bruce Canyon Lodge, Cultural Landscape Report 2006," December 2008, II-14, accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/brca/clr/07_References.pdf

136. Chapin Hall, "Kaleidoscope of Color Seen in Bryce Canyon," *Los Angeles Times*, July 23, 1935, 13.

which presented the tourist experience of Bryce.¹³⁷ The commentary highlighted the “28-miles of modern auto-road that made the canyon easy to see from end to end,” and for motorists to enjoy the “new and changing scenes.” The images depicted the views available to motorists from the Rim Road, and where visitors took up “stations” at scenic overlooks to “watch the canyon.”

Of course, Ford primarily intended to sell cars, as the closing narration attests:

Modern highways and modern automobiles have opened new realms of happiness and adventure. Broad smooth roads beckon and age-old mountains offer a quiet haven of rest and inspiration. For the family with a modern car, a thousand miles is no obstacle, and even those who have only a week or two of leisure, find it possible to enjoy these great national parks. Why not make them the scene of your next vacation adventure? Be sure you have a modern, dependable automobile. Then go wherever you choose with safety, comfort, and economy.

Ford promoted car sales by encouraging vacationers to tour the national parks. Its description of these spaces – as places where “age-old mountains offer a quiet haven of rest and inspiration” – drew on the stability and solidity of the country’s natural landscapes and the benefits for recovery, and opportunity for revelation that they offered to the nation, then in the midst of the Great Depression.

“The Playgrounds of the People:” Zion and Yosemite

Automobile tourism transformed the way Americans appreciated and experienced the landscape, as the journey became as important as the destination. The NPS used park-

137. Ford Motion Picture Laboratories, *Ford Motor Company presents Nature’s Cameo: Bryce Canyon National Park*, c. 1938-1940, recorded by Industrial Pictures Inc. Detroit, accessed November 24, 2013, <https://archive.org/details/NaturesC1930>. The video is dated c.1930s. However, a comparison to annual park statistics suggests it was filmed between 1938 and 1940 when visitor numbers surpassed 100,000.

Ford began producing films in 1914, frequently using Kodak cameras, and quickly became the world’s largest distributor of motion pictures. Ford shut down the in-house film department in 1932 due to the Great Depression; yet, he continued to hire outside firms to take over filmmaking and distribution. See: Ford R. Bryan. *Henry’s Attic: Some Fascinating Gifts to Henry Ford and His Museum* (USA: Wayne State University Press, 2006) 334.

to-park highways to improve accessibility, and park roads and tunnels as an opportunity to enrich and exaggerate the physical and visual experience of the parks. Carefully designed roads with viewpoints, such as the Zion Mount Carmel Highway and Tunnel (1930) and Yosemite's Wawona Tunnel and Tunnel View (1933), enhanced motorists' perception and experience of the parks. Indeed, the NPS listed both on the National Register of Historic Places because of their exemplary design.

Train travel peaked in 1920 but by 1929 the popularity of automobiles had radically reduced the number of passengers traveling by rail. Donald Itzkoff contends that the railroad companies were not initially alarmed as automobiles and buses allowed the railroads to eliminate money-losing short-haul and branch line operations. Instead, they cooperated with touring companies to organize auto stage lines into and between the parks.¹³⁸ In the early 1920s, Union Pacific Railroad wished to create a "tourist loop" between the national parks and monuments in southern Utah and northern Arizona – Cedar City, Zion, Cedar Breaks, Bryce Canyon, and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon – in order to operate eight-day automobile tours of the region. The company campaigned for the development of a modern highway to connect Zion and Bryce Canyon as it would provide a more scenic route and ultimately eliminate a detour of 175 miles.¹³⁹ At the same time, Mather and Albright also envisioned a system in which a network of scenic

138. Donald M. Itzkoff, *Off The Track: The Decline of the Intercity Passenger Train in the United States* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985), 12. In 1922 automobile travel was only 25 per cent of the rail passenger mileage, but five years later people travelled four times as much in cars as they did in trains.

139. Historic American Engineering Record, "Bryce Canyon National Park Rim Road, State Highway 63 to Rainbow Point, Tropic vicinity, Garfield County, UT, 1993, HAER Utah 9-TROP.V, 1," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1993, 1-2, 5-6, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/ut/ut0300/ut0399/data/ut0399data.pdf>. The Union Pacific Railroad established the subsidiary Utah Parks Company (UPC) to run the automobile tours and concessions in the parks. Through UPC, Union Pacific proposed and campaigned for the connecting highway between Zion and Bryce.

highways connected national parks. However, for Mather and Albright, ideology reigned over commercial profit, as they sought to create a more expansive and integrated national park system that was a symbol of national consciousness.¹⁴⁰ Mather and Albright believed that by incorporating superlative scenery, scientific and cultural resources, and the history of the American Republic, the park system would represent a comprehensive series of attractions and messages and promote a shared sense of national identity amongst the visiting public.¹⁴¹

In what is considered to be a feat of engineering, the NPS and BPR designed and built the Zion-Mount Carmel Highway Tunnel, completed in 1930, and devised for park-to-park touring. It was both a means of access and of visual pleasure as framed cutouts along the side of the mile-long tunnel provided a gallery of panoramic vistas over the canyon. On September 26, 1925, the *Salt Lake Tribune* described the projected experience of the future road:

The proposed automobile highway will rival in construction anything along the famed Columbia river highway, while the scenery it traverses will be something without parallel and such as hitherto has been possible only by a trip on horseback. The completion of this road will make it possible to enjoy these wonders while seated in an automobile and on a good, safe road with a steady grade... As a tourist attraction, therefore, the road should have a wonderful value.¹⁴²

The guidelines established by the NPS and BPR for the Zion-Mount Carmel Highway Tunnel articulated aesthetic and practical standards for the design and construction of the road in an attempt to diminish any damage to the natural features of

140. Hal K. Rotham, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth Century American West* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 151-3.

141. Rotham, 152-3; Shaffer, 119.

142. "Proposed Road From Zion Park Would Be Valuable," *Salt Lake Tribune*, September 26, 1925.

the landscape.¹⁴³ They built a two-way highway that rose sharply from the canyon floor of Zion, ascended via a series of switchbacks, passed through a cliff and next to petrified sand dunes to reach the plateaus above. The BPR undertook topographical surveys that revealed the irregular and unstable cliff face would not allow for an exterior half tunnel; however, a one-mile tunnel within the cliff face was possible. The BPR bore a tunnel traversing the interior of the cliff face with six galleries pierced to the outside.¹⁴⁴ Practically, these arched bays provided ventilation and light in the tunnel. Visually, they unquestionably drew motorists' attention to the breathtaking views of Zion and cued them on where and how to fully appreciate the view (Fig. 2.13). Parking spaces – no longer in use today – offered motorists prolonged, expansive, and elevated views of the canyon's colorful rock formations.

In Yosemite, motorists popularly entered the park from the south via Wawona Road, established in 1875. Pioneering tourists considered it the most scenic route to Yosemite Valley due to the panoramic view it afforded from Inspiration Point, despite the difficulty of its steep and narrow route.¹⁴⁵ Wawona Road was opened to motorists in 1917; an auto-traveler described his trip in 1921:

We paused for a third time at Inspiration Point and we cannot help envying those who are so fortunate as to come into Yosemite by this road and thus get their first glimpse of the valley from Inspiration Point... [it] burst on the wayfarer from the

143. Historic American Engineering Record, "Bryce Canyon National Park Rim Road," 5-6.

144. Historic American Engineering Record, "Zion-Mount Carmel Highway Tunnel, Zion National Park, Springdale Vicinity, Washington County, UT, 1984, HAER Utah 27-SPDA.V, 3A," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1984, 7, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/ut/ut0400/ut0421/data/ut0421data.pdf>. The gallery windows also served as holes through which rock debris from the tunnel could be pushed cleared from the area.

145. Historic American Engineering Record, "Wawona Road, Yosemite National Park Roads and Bridges, Between South Entrance and Yosemite Valley, Wawona, Mariposa County, CA, 1993, HAER CAL 22-WAWO.4," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1991, 2, 7, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/ca/ca1600/ca1652/data/ca1652data.pdf>.

Wawona all unaware and he sees unfold before him almost in an instant all the marvelous sights that have made Yosemite a world's wonder...¹⁴⁶

The NPS acquired the Wawona Road from a private company in 1917 and quickly determined that the road required constant maintenance to provide motorists with safe access to the park.¹⁴⁷ In July 1925 the NPS and BPR authorized the planning and construction of new roads within the park, and early in 1928 Mather announced plans to upgrade the Wawona Road. The NPS and BPR conducted two years of intensive studies to investigate the effect the new road would have on the surrounding landscape. They elected to bore a tunnel through the solid granite mountainside to leave the least physical and visible impact of development.¹⁴⁸

Engineers drilled the new tunnel, completed in 1933, through the mountainside below Inspiration Point. The end of the tunnel provided motorists with a framed view of the majestic valley spread out before them (Fig. 2.14). This dramatic reveal of the landscape, and the contrast between the dark tunnel and the lit valley enhanced the driving experience and the theatricality of the scene. From this use of design, motorists anticipated a “picture ahead,” so to speak. The NPS built a scenic overlook and parking area on an artificial terrace at the end of the tunnel, named Discovery View or Tunnel View. There, tourists could exit their automobiles to survey and photograph the landscape

146. Quoted in John C. Meyer, III, *Yosemite: The Forest Domain of the Pierce-Arrow* (Canoga Park, CA: Southern California Region of the Pierce-Arrow Society, 1984), 28-29.

147. Automobiles first entered Yosemite in 1900 but were banned in 1907 in response to increased road use. In 1913, park officials readmitted motorists, however, they were unable to use the Wawona Road as it was a toll road, built by private interests when Yosemite was a State reservation. The NPS took control of the Wawona Road in 1917 and eliminated the collection of tolls, allowing automobiles to use the road freely. See Historic American Engineering Record, “Wawona Road.” The Sierra Club agreed that the road necessitated improvement, stating it needed “to be put in as good condition as the state highways with which they connect.” See: “National Park Notes” in *The Sierra Club Bulletin, Volume X, 1916-1919* (San Francisco, CA: The Sierra Club, 1919), 249.

148. Historic American Engineering Record, “Wawona Road,” 12.

before them; a natural valley enclosed by Yosemite's El Capitan, Half Dome, Cathedral Rocks, and Bridalveil Falls. Ansel Adams' photograph *Clouds, from Tunnel Outlook*, circa 1934, helped make this view renowned, and in 1935 *Popular Mechanics* cited the view "far-famed" (Fig. 2.15).¹⁴⁹ Indeed, it has become the most photographed view of the valley.¹⁵⁰

"Motoring for Pleasure:" Tourism in the Great Depression

In 1929 the stock market crashed and the Depression hit. Yet, despite the hard times, the number of park visitors escalated, due in part to the increase in paid vacations and the ways in which President Franklin D. Roosevelt strived to boost the economy, strengthen morale, and counter growing unemployment. He reorganized the national park system, sanctioned a series of programs and activities under the New Deal to upgrade park facilities and national infrastructure and promote domestic travel; all contributed to a surge in park visitors.¹⁵¹

In the early 1930s, Roosevelt called for a restructuring of the nation's preserved regions, and he expanded the authority of the NPS by placing nearly all federally owned

149. "Joys of the Open Road: Where to go this Summer," *Popular Mechanics*, April 1935, 491.

150. Peter Fimrite, "Yosemite visitors treated to a new view," *SFGate*, October 24, 2008, accessed November 24, 2013, <http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Yosemite-visitors-treated-to-a-new-view-3188686.php#photo-2326721>.

151. As part of the New Deal the federal government also constructed national parkways that catered to leisurely and recreational driving and commemorated historic trails and routes. The parkway was designed especially for motorists and provided them with grand vistas and local encounters with the landscape. Most famously, the Blue Ridge Parkway (through Virginia and North Carolina) and Natchez Trace Parkway (through Mississippi and Tennessee), which later became units of the greater national park system, were designed specifically for viewing scenery through the automobile windshield.¹⁵¹ Timothy Davis argues that the parkways presented a discerning vision of American history and destiny, to be observed through the automobile window. Thus, parkway designers united the popular pastime of automobile touring with recognizable themes of national identity. See: Timothy Davis, "The Rise and Decline of the American Parkway," in *The World Beyond the Window: Roads and Landscapes in the United States and Europe*, eds. Christof Mauch and Thomas Zeller (Athens, USA: Ohio University Press, 2008), 36.

heritage sites into its management. In 1935, Arno Cammerer (1883-1941), Director of the NPS from 1933 to 1940, summarized: “today there are 129 related areas in the national park system... They are nation-wide in location; they touch every epoch in our national and Colonial history and reach far back into the days of America’s prehistory; in the aggregate they cover the greatest range of scenic grandeur in this workaday world.”¹⁵²

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), one of Roosevelt’s programs, made improvements to accommodate visitors in the units of the park system, and undertook maintenance and reforestation. The CCC operated from 1933 to 1942 and provided unskilled, manual labor jobs for unmarried men from families on relief. Throughout the national park system workers built more than two hundred information facilities, including museums and interpretive sites, as well as campgrounds, park lodges, and thousands of hiking shelters and cabins to effectively direct the movement and flow of visitors through the parks.¹⁵³

The government remained committed to growing and expanding the tourism industry, and in 1937, Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes (1874-1952), created the United States Travel Bureau (USTB), the first national tourist agency. Through the USTB, Shaffer explains, the government aligned tourism with national pride, and promoted it as a “patriotic duty” and a “ritual of American citizenship.”¹⁵⁴ Motoring-

152. Arno B. Cammerer, “Parks look for a big season,” *New York Times*, April 14, 1935, X15; John Bodnar, “The National Park Service and History,” in *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), 170-1.

153. Jakle, 72. Neil M. Maher, *Nature’s New Deal: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Roots of the American Conservation Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 71. Between 1933-40, the NPS received \$220 million for projects funded from a variety of emergency relief projects. This includes \$130 million from the CCC; \$50 million from the Works Progress Administration for land acquisition and construction of facilities; and \$28 million from the Emergency Relief Administration for recreation demonstration areas. See: Everhart, 32.

154. Shaffer, 4.

vacationers could visit a long list of attractions that traced the nation's history and heritage, and celebrated the country's landscapes. This tourist experience connected Americans with their shared history and territory, fostered patriotism, and endorsed and reaffirmed a national identity supported by Anderson's notion of "imagined communities." As the government closely aligned tourist attractions with America's heritage, these sites of national importance functioned as symbols of pride, progress, and achievement.¹⁵⁵

By the mid-1930s, the BPR and other transportation specialists determined a new generation of highways to be necessary. The Germans had recognized that a large-scale highway program would improve transportation, boost the economy, and stimulate the auto industry, and America looked to the German's Autobahns as a model of new express roads. Congress enacted the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1938 to advance the country's system of transcontinental highways. The proposed routes would facilitate domestic travel and bring benefits for national defense, helping to move military hardware and personnel; both requirements being particularly timely as war broke out in Europe later that year.¹⁵⁶

In 1933, less than 3.5 million people visited national parks. By 1938, the number leapt to 16 million, and by 1941 it escalated to 21 million.¹⁵⁷ During this time trailer camping increased in popularity as vacationers bought modern trailers or built makeshift accommodations and hitched them to the back of their car. As Ford's *Nature's Cameo* film relayed in the late 1930s, more than 100,000 people visited Bryce annually, and 40,000 had their own accommodations, ranging from "simple tent shelter to elaborate

155. Warwick Frost and C. Michael Hall, "National Parks, National Identity, and Tourism," in *Tourism and National Parks: International Perspectives on Development*, eds. Frost and Hall (USA: Routledge, 2009), 63-5.

156. Kaszynski, 118, 123.

157. Ibid. Maher, 73.

house cars.”¹⁵⁸ Popular magazines promoted touring as an extension of home life and provided readers with advice on how to make trailers secure, comfortable, and homely.¹⁵⁹

This rapid growth in the number of middle-class visitors arriving by auto-and-trailer manifested a shift in the concessions and amenities they required.¹⁶⁰ Max K. Gilstrap, a Ranger Naturalist with the NPS, described the new character of tourism within the parks:

Campers take great delight in setting up their camps. They spell out their names with lichen-covered branches at the camp entrance, construct bird baths, or put out feeding tables to coax a chipmunk or a squirrel to come around and pose for some “shoots” with their new fast-speed cameras. It’s all in the days [sic] activities as America goes camping.¹⁶¹

Historian Foster Rhea Dulles observes that during the Depression, in no other country “had motoring for pleasure... developed on any such grandiose scale.”¹⁶²

Automobile travel opened up environments that were formerly inaccessible or difficult to reach, and enabled tourists to view and experience landscapes they wouldn’t have seen otherwise. As David Louter concludes in his history of Washington state’s national parks, Americans came to know and appreciate the national parks because of cars and roads.¹⁶³

Back to Nature: Visual Culture and the Great Depression

Photographs, posters, and advertising in the 1930s embodied and promoted the exalted ideals of the Great Depression and helped park visitors to better see the beauty

158. Ford Motion Picture Laboratories.

159. Julian Leggett, “The Trailer Grows Up,” *Popular Mechanics*, August 1939, 177-184.

160. Ise, 430. To cater for the new increased numbers of campers, the NPS rehabilitated existing campgrounds, closed many old campgrounds, and constructed new ones. The NPS also created numerous planning and design schemes for trailer and car camping to suit most locations and conditions. See: McLelland, 372-3.

161. Max K. Gilstrap, “Nation’s Improved Transportation Leads Millions to National Parks,” *Christian Science Monitor*, June 6, 1941, V9.

162. Dulles, 320.

163. David Louter, *Windshield Wilderness: Cars, Roads, and Nature in Washington’s National Parks* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006).

and understand the value of the national parks. Influenced by this visual culture and through the built environment of the national parks, the tourist experience afforded visitors the opportunity to reconvene with nature in spaces where they could escape the realities of the Great Depression. As Albright boldly titled his article in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in 1933: “Fed up with Life? Try Our National Parks!”¹⁶⁴

Americans yearned for recovery, stability, and a sense of national identity during the turmoil and uncertainty of the Great Depression while the government worked to repair, reform, and strengthen the nation. As Americans sought comfort and solace, the ideals of hope, inspiration, and reconciliation were inherent in populist imagery and rhetoric, materializing in photographs, advertising, films, novels, and newspapers. Additionally, veneration for tradition and a growing fascination in the past encouraged the nation to believe it could triumph over current circumstances.¹⁶⁵

To encourage patronage of the national parks the government named 1934 “A National Parks Year” and the NPS anticipated a record number of visitors.¹⁶⁶ An intensive promotional campaign associated recreation and education with nationalistic objectives. The NPS sponsored radio programs and lectures on national park topics, and commissioned a series of posters by illustrator and draftsman Dorothy Waugh (1896-1996), daughter of Frank Waugh.¹⁶⁷ Her modern posters were displayed at Grand Central Terminal, New

164. Horace Albright, “Fed Up with Life? Try Our National Parks!” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 11, 1933, G2.

165. Richard H. Pells, *Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998).

166. Isabelle Story, “New Lure of National Parks Attracts a Host of Visitors,” *New York Times*, Aug 12, 1934.

167. Joan Michele Zenzen, “Promoting National Parks: Images of the West in the American Imagination, 1864-1972” (PhD diss., Graduate School of the University of Maryland, 1997), 295, 297. Waugh graduated from the Chicago Art Institute. She was employed under the New Deal’s Public Works of Art Project (December 1933 to June 1934), the first federal art project for artists. The primary goal of the program was to provide meaningful work for unemployed artists.

York – a hub of travel – and used simplified design, abstracted shapes, and saturated color to attract attention. She perpetuated the frontier associations of the national parks by using iconography of the West including horseback riding, campfires, and Native Americans, and headlines such as “Life at its Best” and “His Hunting Ground of Yesterday” (Fig. 2.16). Waugh’s posters promoted the national parks as places for Americans to rejuvenate and renew their spirit; a place to get back to nature and seemingly simpler times.

As part of “A National Parks Year,” the United States Postal Service issued twelve stamps commemorating familiar views of America’s famed parks, including El Capitan in Yosemite, Old Faithful Geyser in Yellowstone, and the Great White Throne in Zion. Additionally, the railroad companies continued to support the national parks despite decreasing passenger numbers and issued pamphlets and advertisements endorsing the health, economic, and social benefits of visiting the national parks.¹⁶⁸ As the nation felt the weight of the Depression, Government and park officials hoped the national parks would become places of healing and inspiration for the general public. As the *Christian Science Monitor* proposed in its 1934 article “Off to the Parks:”

The National Parks Year... may be a year in which great numbers of Americans shall consciously decide to shake off the mental dust of the last four years, breathe a sigh of relief over severed bonds, and turn to the national parks with a well-formed resolve to make their pilgrimage among America’s natural beauties a pilgrimage of rededication to American ideals.¹⁶⁹

Ansel Adams’ photographs also brought the national parks to the attention of the public in the 1930s and the following decades. Adams was first introduced to photography and the national parks when he visited Yosemite Valley with his family and Kodak Brownie in 1916. He was an ardent conservationist, a vocal member of the Sierra Club,

168. *Ibid.*, 284, 297.

169. “Off to the Parks,” *Christian Science Monitor*, February 7, 1934, 16.

and he believed visually documenting the national parks and monuments would foster their protection.¹⁷⁰ Yet, he knew his images encouraged tourism to the parks, and, by the 1950s, increasing numbers of Americans traveled to the parks to see and photograph his sights for themselves. Biographer Jonathan Spaulding claims Adams to be the most effective figure in the twentieth century to attract the public to the national parks, and to help “define their meaning for millions.”¹⁷¹

Adams’ prints emphasized the beauty and immensity of nature. He captured the national parks in the midst of the Great Depression, depicting them as sublime sanctuaries of natural grandeur. Indeed, Adams – like Waugh – portrayed the national parks as restorative places where Americans could eschew the hardships of the 1930s. His photographs required and embodied untouched nature – as did the NPS’s presentation of scenic vistas in the national parks – and both worked to cultivate a vision of the natural world in contrast to the tumult of day-to-day reality.¹⁷² The 1934 article in the *Christian Science Monitor* also reflected this when it suggested:

170. In the 1920s Adams began photographing the Kings River Canyon in the Sierra Nevada, and in 1936 he traveled to Washington, D.C. on behalf of the Sierra Club to lobby for the Canyon’s protection. Adams’ photographs were published in *Sierra Nevada: The John Muir Trail* (1938), and a copy was sent to Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes. Ickes, impressed with what he saw, brought the book to the attention of President Franklin Roosevelt. Adams’ photographs convinced Roosevelt and Congress to designate Kings River Canyon as a National Park in 1940. See: Estelle Jussim and Elizabeth Lindquist-Cock, *Landscape as Photograph* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 137.

171. Jonathan Spaulding, “Yosemite and Ansel Adams: Art, Commerce, and Western Tourism,” *Pacific Historical Review* 65, No. 4, Tourism and the American West, (Nov 1996): (615-639), 615. In October 1941, Ickes commissioned Adams to produce a series of photomurals to adorn the walls of the Department of the Interior building. Adams traveled throughout the Western states taking more than 220 photographs that reflected the NPS’s mission to conserve and exemplify nature. The photomurals never materialized due to America’s involvement in World War II, however Alice Grey contends that these pictures illustrated the spiritual relationship Adams perceived between man and nature. Grey suggests that these images were the genesis of his future work. They were printed in 1989 in *The Mural Project: Photographs by Ansel Adams*, and in 2010, the Department of the Interior held an exhibition of these works, titled “Ansel Adams: The Mural Project, 1941-1942.” See: Ansel Adams and National Park Service, *Ansel Adams: the National Park Service Photographs*, introduction by Alice Grey (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 1, 8-11.

172. David P. Peeler, “The Art of Disengagement: Edward Weston and Ansel Adams,” in *Journal of American Studies* 27, No. 3, American Art and Music (December 1993): 309.

... the nation might greatly benefit by lifting its eyes from pots and pans and blackboards and indices and resting them upon long lines of snow-etched mountains, awesome canyons, glacier-scooped valleys, granite headlands, woodsy uplands, gnome-burrowed caverns... They await in all their beauty, grandeur, mystery and, to a surprising degree, their primitive appeal the coming of increased thousands of citizens seeking new zest and inspiration and fresh points of view to bring to the days of reconstruction ahead.¹⁷³

During the 1930s, newspapers promoted the national parks as “riches,” “treasures,” and an “investment that will yield handsome dividends” – a sharp juxtaposition to the nation’s economic reality.¹⁷⁴ Modern Americans, touring the parks in their automobiles and camper trailers, could see and experience the country’s scenic wealth, come into close contact with nature, and learn of the nation’s heritage. Thus tourists’ constructed understanding of the spaces of the national parks – manifested through visual culture and “the view” – came to embody the ideals and ideologies of the Great Depression: they were patriotic and prosperous places of healing and refuge, optimism and progress. As Roosevelt declared in 1934, “There is nothing so American as our national parks.”¹⁷⁵

Conclusion

In the early 1900s Theodore Roosevelt attracted attention to the nation’s landscapes and championed their preservation, while Ford facilitated access to them. The introduction of the affordable Model T gave millions of middle-class Americans the ability to travel the country freely and visit the national parks. Photography became a popular pastime for motorists thanks to Eastman’s Kodak Brownie camera, which contributed to the growth of travel and greater recognition of the aesthetics of landscape. The combination of these

173. “Off to the Parks,” *Christian Science Monitor*.

174. Albright; “President Roosevelt Hails National Parks as Historic Treasures for Whole Country” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 6, 1934, 10.

175. *Ibid.*, “President Roosevelt Hails National Parks.”

actions and processes modernized American tourism in the twentieth century, and in contrast to railroads, opened the country to middle-class travel and altered the way tourists encountered the national parks and appreciated their landscapes.

As the automobile and the road became the primary means of encountering the national parks, NPS landscape architects worked to create both a physically and visually pleasing driving experience while protecting and preserving the natural landscape. The circulation of roads within and between parks facilitated automobile touring and helped to foster patriotism and convey the nationalist significance and meaning imbued in the parks by the NPS, while strategically sited and designed turnouts and viewpoints displayed the supreme aesthetic value of the parks.

Yet, in the 1920s and 1930s, modern automobiles and camper trailers afforded Americans the opportunity to return to a supposedly simpler time in the natural landscapes of the national parks. Through planning and design the NPS – like Kodak’s “Scenic Views” campaign – attracted visitors’ attention to nearby scenes of nature viewable from the road and cultivated a mode of viewing the nation’s landscapes. As such, visual culture, automobile windshields, cameras, and the built environment of the national parks, such as tunnels and overlooks, provided mediating viewing devices that offered framed and panoramic views and glimpses of the landscapes. Indeed, these “snapshots” and representations enabled visitors to better see and understand the beauty and constructed significance of the spaces of the national parks, presented and perceived as patriotic and natural safe havens during times of economic and social hardship.

For Americans, wilderness has an added meaning. This Nation is but a few generations away from the wilderness. The prairie schooner, the beaver trap, the gold pan, the long rifle, the axe, and the sod-breaker – weapons of wilderness conquest – are a part of American tradition. The most cherished branch of the family tree is often the one representing an American pioneer – a first colonist, a great grandfather who moved westward across the Appalachians, or a grandmother who handled the reins along the Oregon Trail. Somehow, Americans think of wilderness as tied to all that is strong and good in their Country's and their own family history.

Howard R. Stagner, National Park Service
The National Park Wilderness,
Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1957.

Chapter 3. Sites and Sights: Mission 66, Popular Culture, and “Views” of the Park, 1941-1966.

Profound changes took place in America in the optimistic and patriotic postwar era. The nation’s middle-class enjoyed greater prosperity and more leisure time than ever before, and the period saw a sharp rise in America’s birth rates that continued through the following decade. Known as the Baby Boomers, this group became a central focus of the nuclear family and of leisure activities. As such, an unprecedented number of Americans migrated to the emerging suburbs where they could own single-family homes, bringing even greater dependence on the automobile and good roads.¹⁷⁶ Accordingly, automobile manufacturers produced increasingly sophisticated cars and improved highways opened up larger horizons.

Travel and tourism skyrocketed against the backdrop of the postwar period. However, the burden on the national park system to host the touring masses was more than it could handle. In 1956, the NPS, under the direction of Conrad Wirth (1899-1993), sought to alleviate the postwar pressures. Wirth conceived of and initiated the Mission 66 program, which undertook to upgrade each park by the NPS’s fiftieth anniversary in 1966. The NPS constructed and improved the built environment of each park to accommodate tourists and guide their experience; and it developed interpretive facilities

176. H.W. Brands, *American Dreams: The United States Since 1945* (New York: Penguin Press, 2010), 69, 78. In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower approved 42,000 miles of freeway and interstate highway as part of his grand plan to build “a mighty network” of transcontinental super-highways. The National System of Interstate and Defense Highways was the largest public works project at that time. It modernized existing highways and constructed others anew to meet the needs of more traffic and faster travel. Eisenhower recognized that highways afforded Americans increased mobility in work and leisure and evacuation from cities during the Cold War. He reasoned should the threat of atomic attack arise roads provided city dwellers with “avenues of escape.” U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Association: “President Dwight D. Eisenhower: An Audio Gallery,” *U.S. Department of Transportation*, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/interstate/audiogallery.htm>; “Highway History: Ike’s Grand Plan,” <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/50grandplan.cfm>.

and activities to provide visitors with a narrative of their national heritage. The importance of the “view” underscored the location of visitor centers, as the NPS used these “views” not only to order the tourist experience, but also to communicate a constructed understanding of the spaces of the national parks.

Advertising and photographs in the postwar era increasingly commodified the landscapes of the West and associations to the frontier in ways that are comparable, perhaps, to the NPS’s constructed views of the parks. Framed views of nature’s scenery featured prominently in visual culture and postwar narratives, and fuelled the collective imagination of millions of Americans. Highway billboards, Standard Oil Company, Sinclair Oil Corporation, Viewmaster, and Eastman Kodak had – and continued to – promote their products by presenting photographs of western landscapes that fostered appreciation of the country’s natural splendors, endorsed photography as a hobby, and encouraged tourism to the national parks. Disney’s Frontierland, *Holiday* magazine, and the long-running series *Death Valley Days* are examples of some of the ways that conceptions of the frontier, and visions and stories of the Old West infiltrated views of the national parks.

This chapter, “Sites and Sights,” elaborates on the patterns of postwar tourism and its impact on the national park system, succinctly summarized by the notions of ‘construction’ – both physical and ideological – and ‘commodification.’ Here, I discuss the Mission 66 program and the development of visitor centers, investigating the significance of proximate views and the visuality made manifest through their design. I explore the commodification of the national parks through visual culture circulated in postwar popular media and the ways in which these images cultivated visuality and encouraged tourism. Finally, I examine

the narrative of park exhibitions at a time when imagery and stories of the frontier were prevalent in postwar ideology and popular culture.

“Exodus:” Postwar Tourism

By the eve of World War II, tourism ranked as one of the largest industries in the national economy.¹⁷⁷ However, the social and economic pressures of war stifled mobility and ultimately the tourism industry. By the end of the war, Americans were ready to relieve their pent-up desire to spend and to enjoy increased leisure time on the road.

In 1940, due to European travel restrictions, Congress passed “An Act to Encourage Travel in the United States” to support the domestic tourism industry.¹⁷⁸ President Franklin Roosevelt proclaimed 1940 as “Travel America Year,” and encouraged his countrymen and Canadians to travel in North America. This, he counseled, would consolidate “unity through greater acquaintance” by promoting better knowledge of “our own and each other’s” countries through the capacity of travel.¹⁷⁹ The USTB continued to strive to make significant contributions to the field of tourism promotion, cognizant of the benefits that travel would have on the country and the population. Its 1941 slogan distinctly conveyed this idea: “Travel Strengthens America. It promotes the nation’s health, wealth, and unity.”¹⁸⁰ However, when Germany declared war on the United States in December 1941, travel was one of the first leisure activities curtailed, marking a decline in the number of

177. Berkowitz, 205.

178. Ise, 429.

179. “1940 Made ‘Travel America Year’ by Roosevelt Friendship Gesture,” *Christian Science Monitor*, January 15, 1940, 19.

180. Berkowitz, 187, 203-204.

visitors to the national park system after twenty-five years of steady growth.¹⁸¹ Congress cut park appropriations by more than fifty per cent and gas rationing inhibited mobility. The reduction in visitor numbers diminished business for concessioners and spelled employment problems for the parks.¹⁸²

In 1946, following World War II, the government declared “Victory Vacation Year.” The slogan boasted, “You’ve Earned It. Now Enjoy It” and an article in the *Christian Science Monitor* advised:

Americans are free for the first time since the war to go where they please, when they please, without Government restrictions tugging at the conscience... So great are the postwar travel demands that all forms of transportation are girding themselves to handle huge throngs of vacationists.¹⁸³

Road construction resumed, resorts reopened, the roadside boomed, and workers enjoyed shorter workweeks and longer vacation periods. *Holiday* magazine dubbed the postwar vacation rush “Exodus, 1946,” and Donald M. Hobart, head of market research of Curtis Publishing, publishers of *Holiday*, told the American Marketing Association:

What we saw made our mouths water. We saw that postwar America represented a travel and pleasure hungry market – a market made up of millions of people, who, wary of wartime work and restrictions, would be eager to satisfy that innate urge for fun and relaxation.¹⁸⁴

181. Everhart, 34.

182. Ise, 447-8. The onset of the war also threatened the natural and cultural resources of the park system as pressures mounted to open the parks to timber cutting, mining, and grazing, or to close them for the duration of the war. However, Ickes sought to demonstrate that the parks could contribute to national defense by bolstering morale, and the NPS went out of its way to accommodate the armed services within the park system, providing them with spaces for military training, and rest and recuperation. See: Janet A. McDonnell, “World War II: Defending Park Values and Resources,” *The Public Historian* 29, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 15-33.

183. Leavitt F. Morris, “‘Victory Vacation Year’ Clears Way for Americans to Pack Up and Go,” *Christian Science Monitor*, March 15, 1946, 11.

184. Curtis Publishing, “Exodus, 1946,” *Holiday*, July 1946, 99; Richard K. Popp, *The Holiday Makers: Magazines, Advertising, and Mass Tourism in Postwar America* (USA: Louisiana State University, 2012), 28, 37. In 1940, the average working week was 44 hours, but by 1950 it had fallen to 40 hours, and by 1960 to 37.5 hours. See: Jakle, 185.

By 1949, vacationers had engulfed the highways. A survey by the Department of Commerce that year found that twenty-three million families had taken forty-three million vacation trips in the last year and the average trip lasted 10.5 days.¹⁸⁵ In 1953, the BPR determined that Americans made eighty-three per cent of their trips by automobile, as it offered an economic, convenient, and flexible means of travel for vacationing families.¹⁸⁶

“Parks are for the People:” Mission 66.

Hordes of restless postwar vacationers – enjoying their newfound freedom and increased leisure time – arrived at the national parks to view and experience the landscapes they had seen in popular advertising. Yet, what they found was a languishing park system, ill equipped to meet the tourist boom after World War II; it was vandalized, unsanitary, overcrowded, and understaffed. The NPS’s Mission 66 program responded to the pressures of these mass numbers of travelers and sought to modernize and renew the park system and its infrastructure to cater to the postwar era and in preparation for the future. The NPS developed the built environment to improve and manage the tourist experience, and implemented interpretation to convey the value of the spaces of the national parks.

In 1949, Newton B. Drury (1889-1978), Director of the NPS and a devoted conservationist, reported on “The Dilemma of our Parks” and the experience that postwar visitors confronted:

185. Jakle, 186. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Survey of Current Business, 1949* (Washington, D.C.: 1949), as reported in *The Vacation Travel Market of the United States: A Nationwide Survey, No. 1* (Philadelphia: Curtis, 1950), 17, 19. Relatively few people traveled by bus before World War II; its appeal lay primarily with low-income travelers. After World War II, buses provided cheap transportation for people who could not afford to travel otherwise. Like automobiles, they put travelers close to everyday action, but without freedom of individual action. See Jakle: 171, 174-5, 183-4.

186. Jakle, 186.

Too many of them have noted the heavy wear and tear on the vegetation of the parks; they have noted the carelessness with which trash is scattered in camp and picnic places, at parking areas, along the roads, even below the rim of the Grand Canyon... They have seen the evidence of sheer destructiveness of that small proportion of visitors who... mutilate or destroy. They have had experience with graveled or outmoded roads where they expected to travel in comfort; with crowded and ill equipped campgrounds; with inadequate and unsatisfactorily maintained sanitary facilities; with insufficiencies of various kinds of overnight accommodation.¹⁸⁷

Drury assessed the financial needs of the park system at nearly \$500 million for physical improvements, roads and trails, and parkway completions. The appropriation for 1949 was only a little more than \$14 million. The NPS could not afford to rehabilitate the roads, buildings, and facilities, or to pay for enough rangers to attend to the visitors and safeguard the scenic wonders.¹⁸⁸

In 1951, Wirth became Director of the NPS. He was a landscape architect and planner who studied under Frank Waugh at Massachusetts Agricultural College. In 1928 Wirth joined the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and in 1931 Albright offered him a transfer to the NPS where he became assistant director in charge of the Branch of Lands and supervised the CCC program in state parks.¹⁸⁹ In Wirth's inaugural year as Director (a position he held from 1951 to 1964), park visits skyrocketed to thirty-seven million while the level of staff and depreciated facilities remained stagnant at levels comparable to 1940 when the park system catered to seventeen million visitors.¹⁹⁰

187. Newton B. Drury, "The Dilemma of Our Parks," *American Forests* 55 (June 1949): 9.

188. Ise, 455, 534. Some of the proposals for reducing overcrowding in the parks included: encouraging vacationers to visit the National Forests; increasing the number of national parks and monuments; and using other areas, such as state parks and forests. In 1956 the NPS inaugurated a program similar to Mission 66 called "Operation Outdoors;" a 5 year program for improving recreation facilities. See: Ise, 542, 546.

189. Carr, *Mission 66*, 10.

190. Everhart, 35.

Wirth called for a broad, strategic plan in anticipation of increasing visitor numbers and a projected figure of eighty million tourists by 1966.¹⁹¹

MISSION 66 (originally capitalized) was a bold and ambitious ten-year plan designed to revitalize the national park system. In 1966, the NPS would celebrate its fiftieth anniversary; this significant event provided the bureau with the impetus to bring the parks up to standard and place them in a condition “to serve America and Americans, today and in the future.”¹⁹² Wirth based Mission 66 on the premise that the proposed development and use of the parks would not weaken or damage them; rather, it would enhance and protect them. President Lyndon Johnson expressed his support citing the potential of Mission 66 to “secure the beauty of America.”¹⁹³

Wirth saw Mission 66 in the romantic tradition of Mather and Albright, and believed the parks should reflect Americans’ pride and patriotism. He saw them as an investment in “good citizenship,” as the promotional booklet *Our Heritage, A Plan for its Protection and Use: “Mission 66”* explained:

Almost everyone knows a little something about the national park system. But only a relative few know the whole story... It is the history of America: If Mr. and Mrs. America and their youngsters could but journey through the whole System from site to site, they would gain a deep understanding of the history of their country; of the natural processes which have given form to our land, and of men’s actions upon it from distant prehistoric times.¹⁹⁴

191. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *The Need for Mission 66* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1956). Wirth approached Congress with the scope and objectives of the entire national park system, rather than of individual parks, and proposed an intensive study of all the problems facing the NPS. This included, “protection, staffing, interpretation, use, development, financing, needed legislation, forest protection, fire – and all other phases of park management.” The total Mission 66 program was projected at \$800 million, however, the actual expenditure passed \$1 billion. For further detail on Mission 66, see: Appleman, 1958; Ise, 534-556; Wirth, “Mission 66,” *American Forests* 61 (Aug 1955): 16-17.

192. Conrad Wirth, “Mission 66: Special Presentation to President Eisenhower and the Cabinet by Director Conrad Wirth, January 27, 1956,” in *America’s National Park System: The Critical Documents*, ed. Lary M. Dilsaver (USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1994), 193.

193. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *The Need for Mission 66*, 11.

194. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Our Heritage, A Plan for its Protection and Use: “Mission 66”* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1956); Wirth, “Mission 66: Special Presentation,” 195-6.

Wirth desired to make the national park system more relevant and accessible to the American public. However, this public was considered to be middle and upper-class white Americans, as clearly depicted on the cover of *Our Heritage* by a well-dressed, white, nuclear family of four superimposed in front of the Liberty Bell (Fig. 3.17). Sarah Allaback notes that Wirth personally chose the cover as it represented the ideal American family in the 1950s and the most desirable park visitors.¹⁹⁵

From the outset, the NPS established a set of five priorities to assess, upgrade, and preserve each park. This included identifying the important park resources and planning a circulation system to move visitors swiftly to and past these resources for them “to see, experience, and enjoy the values to be derived from them.” Notably, the NPS ranked “seeing” the parks first in the visitor experience entailed by Mission 66. The remaining priorities included determining the necessary visitor and administration facilities; and ensuring the protection of park resources.¹⁹⁶

The NPS laid out its plans for the parks in *Our Heritage*. Development included upgrading and constructing roads; enlarging campgrounds and concessionaire accommodations; increasing staffing; improving sanitary conditions; building better staff housing and facilities; rehabilitating or replacing worn-out facilities; and constructing and improving trails, picnic areas, parking lots, campfire circles, amphitheaters, and

Wirth’s intentions recalled the formative and instrumental policies of the NPS in the 1920s. Foresta draws comparisons between the two eras. He establishes both as periods of fervent optimism and pride, and belief in the integrity and exceptionalism of American institutions. Foresta finds that the NPS in both the 1920s and the postwar period made efforts to cultivate and secure a large citizenry that they perceived as a homogenized population of white, middle-class Americans. Foresta also expresses that Wirth’s era may be perceived as the incarnation of Mather and Albright’s progressive vision. Indeed, by the 1950s, the NPS catered to the clientele – “those with dependable incomes, a family car, and a paid annual vacation” – that Mather and Albright had been at the forefront of planning for. See: Foresta, 56.

195. Allaback, 5.

196. Appleman, 22.

bathrooms. In all development, the NPS's foremost priority was to preserve the parks system's cultural resources and natural wilderness, and its underlying intention for Mission 66 was that if park visitors would appreciate and understand the significant values of the parks, they would "use them with wisdom and restraint," so they could be "passed on unimpaired."¹⁹⁷ Throughout the park system, the NPS made efforts to build visitor centers, trails, roads, overlooks, and wayside exhibits near historic and natural features without disturbing the broader view or compromising the landscape. Architects and planners located, integrated, organized, and designed park development to ensure visitors could "see, experience, and enjoy" a representative and meaningful sample of each park, thereby preserving the greater extent.

It is important to note Mission 66 had its controversies in its time. Many preservationists, archaeologists, and historians condemned Mission 66 building and development. They criticized the program for its lack of legislative protection for the wilderness; the lack of funding devoted to scientific research in the parks; the scale, style, and aesthetics of Mission 66 building; and the types of recreation, such as automobile tourism, encouraged by the NPS. Conservationists, preservationists, and environmentalists, including the Sierra Club, viewed Mission 66 as prioritizing mass use and accessibility

197. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Our Heritage*. As Chapters One and Two discussed, the NPS considered scenic overlooks, and roads and trails within the parks to be integral and essential components of park planning and presentation. During Mission 66, the NPS continued to use roads, trails, and overlooks as influential means of directing the tourist gaze and interpreting the park. They presented objects, spaces, and landscapes by way of a continuous experience for visitors to visually and meaningfully experience the park. Roads were reconstructed, realigned, widened, and relocated to augment the driving experience, move cars more efficiently, and accommodate greater numbers of automobiles. Turnouts, parking areas, and overlooks were developed, enlarged, and upgraded to enhance the enjoyment and appreciation of the surrounding scenery. Trails were designed to provide a more intimate and authentic encounter with the character of the park and the wilderness, and road and trail markers and wayside exhibits were installed as part of the interpretative program to inform tourists of the meaning and significance of what they were saw. See: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Mission 66 for the National Park System: To Provide Adequate Protection and Development of the National Park System for Human Use* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1956), 86, 89, 97; McLelland, 468-470; Ronald Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers* (Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future, Inc., 1984), 54.

over preservation, standardizing park development, and catering to the uninformed. They deplored the program and called for a more ecological-based scheme rather than recreation-oriented. Wirth and other NPS officials countered the criticism contending that Mission 66 sought to manage and control visitors by limiting their impact and restricting their accessibility to select areas of the parks. However, Wirth retired from the NPS in 1964 when he faced mounting criticism from the Sierra Club; George Hartzog (1920-2008) took his place. Ethan Carr notes that the NPS celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1966 with barely a mention of Mission 66 and its accomplishments.¹⁹⁸

“A Place to Start:” Mission 66 Visitor Centers

Nevertheless, park officials and park proponents considered the visitor center to be one of the most important innovations of Mission 66. As deliberately sited, newly built, multi-use, modern structures that served as a focal point for tourist, visitor centers provided interpretive spaces, bathrooms, and administrative areas to cater to large numbers of people. Furthermore, exhibitions delivered important and interpretive information and sought to establish a consequential relationship between visitors and the historical narrative of the park. The visitor center constructed in Dinosaur National Monument offers evidence of the multi-faceted functions these buildings were designed to provide.

198. Carr, *Mission 66*, 227-28, 277-79; Foresta, 43-90; McLelland, 473-475; Kelly Marie Christensen, “Wilderness Values, The Environmental Movement, and Mission 66,” (masters thesis, Historic Preservation, University of Oregon Graduate School, 2011), 43-46. A large number of GI Bill-educated scientists joined the NPS in the 1950s and 1960s and by the mid-1960s they had shifted the bureau’s leadership from landscape architects to scientists. Recommendations in the Leopold Report of 1963 (officially known as *Wildlife Management in the National Parks*), and the Wilderness Act of 1964 also forced a shift in NPS policy from the recreation era of Mission 66 planning towards a new ecologically-based planning system. This reflected a change in the way the public valued natural landscapes and through the duration of the 1970s park planning evolved from managing scenic landscapes to preserving ecosystems. See Foresta, 43-90; McLelland, 477-81; Christensen, 56.

Tilden describes the visitor center as “a place to start;” an introductory point where tourists could “get acquainted with all that the place has to offer.”¹⁹⁹ NPS architects worked with external architectural firms and interpretive planners from the NPS’s museum departments to strategically site the visitor centers in the context of each park’s tourist experience. According to John Cabot, Supervising Architect at the NPS Eastern Office of Design and Construction, the location of the visitor center was integral to the interpretive strategy of each park, as its placement would “affect how, in what sequence, the story is told...”²⁰⁰ Cabot identified three possible locations for the visitor center in order to intercept and control visitor ‘flow:’ at the park entrance, en route, and at a popular destination. Cabot recommended that the visitor center at the park entrance help the visitor “transition” from the congestion of the highway to the atmosphere of the park. It should establish the “mood for the park,” and introduce the visitor to the “total interpretation of park values;” a visitor center at the end of the park experience should provide a synopsis of the park values and interpretation of nearby features.²⁰¹ Inside the visitor center, “exhibits, dioramas, relief models, recorded slide talks, and other graphic

199. Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 193.

200. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “Visitor Center Planning, Notes on Discussions Held in EODC November 18-22, 1957 and WODC February 4-6, 1958” (Unpublished. n.d. [1958]). The Western Office of Design and Construction (WODC) in San Francisco, and the Eastern Office of Design and Construction (EODC) in Philadelphia, were established as part of a reorganization of the NPS in 1954 due to the Eisenhower administration’s desire to reduce the size of government and improve the efficiency of the NPS. Previously, there were four regional offices to oversee design and construction. The EODC and WODC proved essential to carrying out the Mission 66 program. Vint assumed the role of Chief of Design and Construction based in Washington, D.C., and he played a significant role in establishing the design standards for the Mission 66 program, while architects, landscape architects, and engineers at the WODC and EODC carried out hands-on design. John Cabot became Supervising Architect of the EODC in 1954 and Chief Architect of the Washington Office of Design and Construction in 1961, succeeding Vint. Private architectural firms also designed larger facilities within the parks. See: Carr, *Mission 66*, 57-58, 63.

201. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “A Report on Visitor Centers” (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, c. January 1960).

devices,” prepared visitors for their park experience and educated them on the “meaning of the park and its features,” and “how best to protect, use, and appreciate them.”²⁰²

In 1964-65, the NPS built Dinosaur National Monument’s Visitor Center and Headquarters, designed by architectural firm Arthur K. Olsen & Associates of Salt Lake City, Utah, at the entrance of the park to house a small interpretive exhibit, shop, information desk, and auditorium. Visitors passed through a courtyard and covered patio to enter the building, which Olsen & Associates designed to harmonize with its surroundings through the use of a colorful, textured masonry façade.²⁰³

The NPS Western Museum Laboratory drafted exhibition plans for the Visitor Center that illustrate the graphic information intended to familiarize automobile visitors with the park, prepare them for their journey, and inform them of the tourist experience ahead. The first visual exhibit immediately highlights the importance of the visual experience in the park, as it depicts the design of an electric map of the area with illuminated transparencies and interactive buttons to “show the visitor where he [could] see spectacular scenery and encourage him to do so” (Fig. 3.18). Large images of the park’s scenic highlights and smaller images of visitors at each area served to foster and concentrate human activity at these locations. The title of the display, “Your Dinosaur National Monument,” established the democratic ownership of the region and its cultural resources, while the park pamphlet constructed a relationship between the visitor and the

202. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Mission 66 for the National Park System*, 102-3.

203. Allaback, 60. Arthur Kershaw Olsen (1927-2004) was head of the architectural firm established in 1957. See: American Institute of Architects, *American Architects Directory 1962*, 2nd ed. (New York: R. R. Bowker, LLC., 1962), accessed November 24, 2013, http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/American%20Architects%20Directories/1962%20American%20Architects%20Directory/Bowker_1962_O.pdf

park's former Native American inhabitants, whose rock art the monument seeks to preserve:

Here, nature has provided man with a looking glass into the past... Here you will find many opportunities for learning of nature and for recreation and inspiration. Prehistoric Indians, who left their traces in these canyons, must also have learned and played here, and surely they, too, were inspired by what they saw and felt.²⁰⁴

The second exhibition plan illustrates a relief map identifying the park's amenities, exhibits, and "principal geographic and cultural features." The four other visual displays used photographs to inform tourists about the Quarry Visitor Center, the history of the park, camping and picnicking, and how to see Dinosaur by water.²⁰⁵

A Room with a View: Visitor Centers and Visuality

The NPS built approximately 110 visitor centers, predominantly in the modernist style, due to the efforts of the Mission 66 program.²⁰⁶ It located the visitor centers to

204. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Brochure, *Dinosaur National Monument, Colorado and Utah*, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1962).

205. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Western Museum Laboratory, "Dinosaur National Monument, Artesia Visitor Center" (Unpublished. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1964). Labels prepared by Raymond S. Price, Staff Curator, Western Museum Laboratory. Rev. 11/10/64. The Western and Eastern Museum Laboratories were instituted to design the Mission 66 museum exhibitions. In 1935, a central Museum Division was established to serve the national park system, and the two museum laboratories were created to provide the hands-on work for their particular regions. The reduction in funding and decrease in tourism during World War II forced the laboratories to close in the early 1940s. However, due to the amount of work generated by Mission 66, each laboratory was revived in 1957 and each worked closely with the planners and architects in the respective Offices of Design and Construction. A projected rate of ten exhibitions were to be provided each year for the duration of Mission 66, with an average of twenty-three exhibits a piece, including information displays for the lobby as well as interpretive units for the museum. Mackintosh writes that exhibits were sequentially arranged to present a series of related ideas illustrated by carefully chosen objects and graphic supplements. See: Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective* (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, History Division, 1986), accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/mackintosh2/directions_museums.htm.

206. Allaback, 255-261. The number of visitor centers built varies between sources. Numbers include: 'more than 100,' 101, 114, 'more than 130.' The number of 110 has been taken from Allaback who compiled a list of Mission 66 visitor centers based on examining drawings on microfiche at the NPS Denver Service Center, and by comparing records of visitor center construction on file in the NPS History Collection at the Harpers Ferry Center. The number of 110 does not include 16 visitor center 'additions.'

introduce tourists to the imminent views of the parks, while architects designed the buildings to reflect a park's values, as epitomized by those built in Zion and Death Valley National Monument.

Visitor centers introduced modern architecture into the parks, a distinctly different style from the picturesque and rustic park architecture epitomized by the Old Faithful Inn. However, the NPS still required that buildings harmonize and blend with their local surroundings, and architects achieved this through minimalist design rather than allusions to natural features as had been prevalent in the past. Architects experimented with new design concepts and used modern construction methods and materials, such as steel, concrete, and glass, to build unobtrusive facilities intended to be low-maintenance.²⁰⁷ As such, an open floor plan, glass curtain windows, horizontal emphases, and the integration of inside and out characterized Mission 66 visitor centers.

In 1957 architect Cecil Doty (1907-1990) designed Zion Visitor Center in collaboration with architects at the NPS Western Office of Design and Construction and interpreters at the Western Museum Laboratory; it serves as a prime example of the new approach to park architecture. Doty joined the CCC in the early 1930s as a state park architect and transitioned to the NPS in 1937. While he worked in the traditional rustic style of park design during the 1930s and 1940s, he shifted to the modernist style with the introduction of Mission 66, under which he assumed a leadership role. Doty designed modest and practical buildings, eliminating all superfluous elements. He emphasized circulation and sought to establish a relationship between the building and the landscape,

207. Ibid.,10-16.

and subsequently designed buildings distinctive for their exterior view and sensitivity towards location.²⁰⁸

Zion's Mission 66 Prospectus called for a multi-use facility outside the crowded canyon area to replace the small rustic museum located at a busy junction along the canyon floor. The NPS situated the new Zion Visitor Center near the south entrance car park, where it would attract and have the capability to host large numbers of tourists.²⁰⁹ Doty and his cohorts designed the building to orient visitors to Zion and to be consistent with the park's theme. As is evident in a postcard of the Visitor Center circa 1960, the exterior surfaces of the building – brick and masonry – were coherent and in harmony with its surroundings, intended to evoke the geological narrative of the park and reflect the colors and textures of the canyon walls (Fig. 3.19). At the southern end of the building, a hexagon-shaped lobby composed of large plate glass windows created an air of transparency and highlighted the landscape; it invited visitors to move through the building and framed views of the imminent rock formations.²¹⁰

Tilden considered the NPS's function to be the “custodianship and interpretation of beauty.”²¹¹ He advocated planning, design, and landscaping not only to provide visitors

208. *Ibid.*, 213, 221. According to Allaback, Doty was one of the most prolific designers in Park Service history, but also one of the least known. See Allaback, Chapter 6, “Cecil Doty and the Mission 66 Visitor Center,” for a more comprehensive profile of Doty and survey of his work for the NPS. The architectural firm Cannon & Mullen in Utah served as consultants, providing the working drawings. See: Carr, *Mission 66*, 152.

209. *Ibid.*, 235. Today, the building is the Zion Human History Museum. A new Visitor Center was built in the 1990s.

210. U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service, “Zion National Park, Master Plan Narrative” (Unpublished. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, September 1964): Chapter 2, Area Objectives, Page 1. Inside, the interpretive exhibit provided graphic information on the park's story of “geology, history, animals, and plants,” and encouraged visitors to “go out and to see, to drive the roads, hike the trails, and to sit and absorb the scene.” Throughout the park roadside signs, self-guiding nature trails, and conducted nature walks and talks were used as a means of narrating the meaning of the park for the visitor. See: Chapter 3, Section 2, Page 3.

211. Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 151.

with a visual survey of the park, but also to enable them to connect with the “mood” of the park. Importantly, he saw it as a matter of park interpretation to “create the best possible vantages from which beauty may be seen and comprehended.”²¹² Thus, the NPS considered the view from the visitor center to be one of the most important in the park and, consequently, it was a driving force in Mission 66 design.²¹³

Doty and the NPS sited the Zion Visitor Center in a natural amphitheater where it capitalized on local views of the canyon and lofty geological features including the Western Temples, the Towers of the Virgin to the west (seen behind the Visitor Center in Fig 3.19), and Bridge Mountain to the east. An examination of Thomas Moran’s paintings of Zion from the Powell Survey in the summer of 1873 illustrates the perceived beauty of this selected site. Moran’s *Valley of Babbling Waters, Southern Utah* (1876) depicts his version of the canyon floor, the Virgin River coursing through the center of the valley with towering rock formations either side (Fig. 3.20). By comparing this painting to a NPS photograph of what would be the view to the north from the Zion Visitor Center, it is evident that the site is the proximate location from where Moran made his sketch for the painting (Fig. 3.21). Each offers a view from a widened expanse on the valley floor with the same rock formations lining the eastern wall of the canyon.

Zion’s Mission 66 Prospectus further outlined that “a visit to Zion [was] a profound emotional and esthetic experience:”

The spectacular setting is all in color which makes the area a pleasure to behold and a photographer’s paradise. The tremendous scale and color is the feature that overwhelms the visitor as he stands within the colored walls in cathedral-like stillness, broken only by rushing water or the song of birds.²¹⁴

212. Ibid., 120.

213. McLelland, 453.

214. U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service, “Mission 66 for Zion National Park, Prospectus,” (Unpublished. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1956), 2.

As such, Doty designed the visitor center – through the deliberate planning of windows, rooflines, and courtyards – to direct tourists’ gaze, emphasize important views, and convey significant park values. In Zion, visitors’ prevailing visuality was from the canyon floor to the peaks and towers of the canyon rim. The Visitor Center, based in a valley, oriented tourists to this visuality, which would become increasingly steeper – and more profound – as they journeyed along the narrowing base of the park. Thus, the visual experience imposed by the building introduced visitors to the sense of awe and reverence to be felt at the base of America’s natural temples. Indeed, Mormon pioneers who discovered the canyon in 1858 interpreted these lofty peaks as towers and temples of God and named the canyon Zion for its celestial skyline.

In 1957, Doty and the architects at the Western Office of Design and Construction also designed the Visitor Center and Museum in Death Valley National Monument, completed in 1959. The building is a comprehensive representation of their principles and intentions in siting, planning, and designing visitor centers. It is located in the most popular destination of the area – by the amenities and water supply of Furnace Creek – in order to attract maximum visitors. The building’s exterior design and setting against the backdrop of the Panamint Mountains is depicted in a sketch from the pamphlet that commemorates its opening (Fig. 3.22). Three major structures surrounded a courtyard, housing a museum, auditorium, information center, and offices. Inside, the open-plan design of the building facilitated circulation throughout the functional spaces and ensured visitors did not lose contact with the outdoors; outside, the courtyard framed and emphasized the views of the

Panamint Mountain range to the west and Funeral Mountains to the east.²¹⁵ Doty used naturally colored and textured concrete block to visually blend the building with the geologically rich landscape, while the horizontality of the building and its varied roofline captured the silhouette of the surrounding ranges. In 2010, the NPS listed the building on the National Register of Historic Places as it reflects the bureau's interpretation of modern architecture and landscape design, and embodies the distinguishing characteristics of the Mission 66 visitor center property type. It was noted as one of the best and most intact examples of a Mission 66 Visitor Center in California.²¹⁶

See Your West: Advertising, Popular Culture, and the National Parks

In the postwar era, commercially produced images highlighted and emphasized “the view” to be seen within the national parks. Furthermore, as travel became a significant component of the American way of life, commercial images also commodified these celebrated spaces and provided visual cues for tourists on how to view the landscape as a painting or photograph. Along the nation's highways billboards, in particular, presented framed views of America's scenic wonders to attract the attention of, and appeal to, touring motorists, while photographs of the western national parks became common in advertising and promotional campaigns, and circulated throughout the popular media.

Catherine Gudis in *Buyways* argues that through automobile tourism, motorists became consumers, and the landscape became a commodity for consumption. She

215. Death Valley '49ers, Inc., *The Story of Death Valley: Its Museum and Visitor Center* (California: Death Valley '49ers, Inc., 1960). The Center was made possible by a collaborative effort between the State of California, the not-for-profit Death Valley '49ers, and the NPS.

216. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “Furnace Creek Museum,” *Historic Structures Classification List, National Park Service*, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://www.hscl.cr.nps.gov/insidenps/report.asp?STATE=CA&PARK=DEVA&SORT=&RECORDNO=23>.

elaborates that advertisers appealed to motorists visually, through a countless number of outdoor billboards that featured the nation's landscapes, used both to promote local attractions and as backdrops for products and services. These framed views guided motorists on how to look at America's scenic wonders as "pretty pictures," and interpret them as works of art as advertisers often imitated nineteenth-century conventions of landscape painting.²¹⁷

Similarly, Standard Oil's "See Your West" campaign, Sinclair Oil advertisements, View-master reels, and Kodak Coloramas exposed millions of Americans to the natural treasures that embellished their country. These vivid images also served to commodify the nation's landscapes, while inspiring tourists to visit the national parks and fostering visuality. Additionally, they promoted photography and cultivated the nationalist meanings imbued in the American landscape.

Standard Oil and Sinclair Oil

Standard Oil publicized its company and encouraged gas consumption by endorsing automobile tourism and the nation's scenic attractions. In 1947, 1948, and 1954, Standard Oil instated the "See Your West" campaign, which linked mobility, photography, and the American landscape. It purchased the reproduction rights to a series of images by landscape photographers, such as Adams, Fred Bond (1893-1984), and Ray Atkeson (1907-1990), and gave an image free to motorists when they filled their tank at one of the company's gas stations. Each year Standard Oil distributed twenty-seven million images; a complete set of sixty prints indicated that a motorist had traveled extensively throughout the West, including twenty-one of the United States' national

217. Gudis, 54-57.

parks and monuments, stretching from Washington to Texas, and including British Columbia and Hawaii. Eminent authors wrote accompanying narratives that described and defined the significance and heritage of each region on the back of the collectible images. Inside the album cover Standard Oil stated: “See your West... know your West... and *preserve it!*” Thus, “See Your West” fostered the transformation of physical sites into visual sights, and promoted the preservation of both as ideologically important.²¹⁸

“See Your West” albums functioned not only as a souvenir of a motorists’ travel experience, but also as a photographic exhibition of the American landscape. By examining these albums it is evident that there are parallels to Kodak’s “Scenic Views” campaign as the images cultivated visuality, directed motorists to what was worth looking at, and guided viewers on how to see the world as a photograph. Many images presented a view of a landscape comprised of a mountainous backdrop with lakes, meadows, rock formations, trees, and/or flowers in the foreground, exemplified by Ansel Adams’ photograph of the Merced River and Half Dome in Yosemite Valley (Fig. 3.23). In some cases the inclusion of a road meandering through the front of the scene underscored the integral relationship between mobility and the American landscape. Furthermore, like *Picturesque America*, “See Your West” abstracted and commodified the nation to a series of scenic attractions that provided evidence of the country’s variety and uniqueness.

In 1955 and 1957, Sinclair Oil Corporation also initiated a public relations campaign that linked mobility, the natural landscape, and national identity. Its series of full-page magazine advertisements encouraged greater appreciation of America’s national parks and used images and text that drew on the visual and literary rhetoric of the parks

218. Standard Oil Company, “See Your West,” Photo Album, 1947, accessed at Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado.

established over the previous century.²¹⁹ In the tradition of Moran, the images featured substitute onlookers – families, small groups of tourists, couples, and solitary figures, seen primarily from behind – who stood in for the so-called typical white, middle-class, postwar tourist, and looked from elevated scenic viewpoints to the spectacles that lay before them (Fig. 3.24). They emphasized the immensity of the landscapes and the importance of the visual to the tourist experience, indeed, writing that Bryce Canyon was a “delight for the eye.”²²⁰ The advertisements also nurtured the park system’s democratic intentions and nationalistic ideals with headings such as “It belongs to you,” and text that reads:

... the Colorado just keeps on with the job. Typically American in spirit, it may get boisterous and rambunctious at times...but its handiwork is the wonder of the world.²²¹

This description of the Colorado River is in the practice of nineteenth-century patriots who nationalized nature. It infuses the American landscape with the essence of the frontiersmen for American character was built in the West.²²²

View-Master

The very popular View-Master by Sawyer’s, Inc. likewise can be seen as reducing and commodifying scenic views to collectible and consumable images, similar to Standard

219. P.C. Spencer, *Sinclair Oil Corporation: Annual Report, 1955* (New York: Sinclair Oil Corporation, 1955), 15, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://pbadupws.nrc.gov/docs/ML0104/ML010470421.pdf>.

220. Sinclair Oil Corporation, “A Mighty Tough Place to Find A Stray Cow,” 1955. *Ebay*, accessed November 16, 2013, http://www.ebay.com/itm/1955-Ebenezer-Bryce-Canyon-National-Park-Utah-Sinclair-Oil-Print-Ad-/231042028324?pt=LH_DefaultDomain_0&hash=item35cb2d9324

221. *Ibid.*, “Four miles wide and a mile deep... *and it belongs to you!*” *Ebay*, accessed November 16, 2013, <http://www.ebay.com/itm/Vintage-1953-SINCLAIR-OIL-PETROL-Print-Advertisement-GRAND-CANYON-/190757674622>

222. In a similar manner, Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein’s song “Ol’ Man River,” written in 1927 for the musical *Showboat*, contrasts the struggles and hardships of African Americans with the white man’s indifference through the metaphor of the endless, uncaring flow of the Mississippi River.

Oil's "See Your West." William Gruber, an organ maker and keen photographer, invented the View-Master in the late 1930s. He devised a hand-held device – derived from the nineteenth-century stereoscope – to be used with special format reels comprised of thin cardboard disks with seven stereoscopic three-dimensional pairs of color photographs. With postcard maker Harold Graves, Gruber introduced the View-Master to the public at the 1939 World's Fair in New York and the 1940 Golden Gate Exposition in San Francisco.²²³

Following the lead of its predecessor, the reels presented views of scenic landscapes from across the country and overseas. Photographers predominantly composed their images like that of Standard Oil's reproductions, and mostly without people or automobiles. However, 'surrogate tourists' featured in a small percentage of images, and in the established mode of visibility, they were seen from behind as they looked upon the landscape. Automobiles also denoted the tourist experience in the parks, which can be seen in a View-Master image taken from the end of the Wawona Tunnel looking toward the parking area at Discovery View, where four automobiles are parked and their drivers and/or passengers are surveying the view of Yosemite Valley (Fig. 3.25). Additionally, View-master packets featured photographs of scenic attractions, while accompanying booklets provided captions to educate and inform viewers on the history and meaning of the images they saw.

223. Mary Ann and Wolfgang Sell with Charley Van Pelt, *View-Master Memories* (Ohio: Mary Ann & Wolfgang Sell, 2000), 15. In 1958, the View-Master device was redesigned by Charles "Chuck" Harrison, who received a Cooper Hewitt 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award for his iconic design. Harrison shaped the toy into its most classic form, recognized and known by adults and children alike in the twentieth century. See: Cooper Hewitt National Design Awards 08, "Lifetime Achievement Award: Charles Harrison," *Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum*, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://archive.cooperhewitt.org/national-design-awards/2008/www.nationaldesignawards.org/2008/honoree/charles-harrison.html>.

Sawyer's promoted the View-Master as a substitute for the souvenir postcard and the swift change between scenes simulated a tour of the attractions depicted. A 1957

View-Master advertisement endorsed:

View-Master has pictured the places you'd like to go, in the "you are there" realism of three dimension, full-color photography. Each Packet is an armchair vacation to any of a hundred fascinating places, near or far.²²⁴

View-master reels could be purchased at tourist attractions and at stores around the country. For would-be-tourists, the View-master helped identify places they wished to visit; for tourists, View-masters served as a reminder of their travels and visually recreated the experience of being there again.

Kodak Colorama

In contrast to View-master's diminutive images, Kodak Colorama displayed larger-than-life landscapes on a larger-than-life scale. In 1950, Kodak commenced the Colorama campaign that would continue for forty-years, reaching 600,000 commuters each day. The company commissioned renowned photographers – such as Adams – as well as its own employees, to use Kodak's new eight by ten color sheet films. It displayed their images – as Dorothy Waugh's posters in the 1930s had been – in Grand Central Terminal, on an illuminated and grandiose scale, eighteen feet high and sixteen feet wide.

Indeed, Kodak aimed the Coloramas at a broad popular audience and in the postwar period these images presented nostalgic and aspirational visions of family, leisure, and travel – the core values of suburban life – with taking photos (memorializing experiences)

224. View-Master advertisement, "Where in the world would you like to go?" *Holiday*, July 1957, 86.

at its heart.²²⁵ Popular Coloramas in the 1950s and 1960s presented sweeping vistas of national parks, and images of Yosemite, Death Valley, Bryce Canyon, and the Grand Tetons flaunted the vast spaces of the West. In many cases the images recalled the panoramic spectacles of the nineteenth century, while the inclusion of horses and people dressed in pseudo-cowboy clothes, such as in the Colorama of the Grand Tetons in Wyoming by John Hood and Herb Archer, drew on symbolic and mythic representations of the West and the frontier (Fig. 3.26). Adams' populist commercialized Colorama photographs glorified the American landscape and reflected and communicated the prevalent ideals and ideologies of the era, as his pictures had done during the 1930s. However, in contrast to his black-and-white images that reinforced the solemnity of the Great Depression, his varied and vibrant Coloramas emphasized postwar optimism and abundance.

The Coloramas appealed to tourists and amateur photographers alike, and commonly included a surrogate photographer in the same way that Moran's landscape paintings and Sinclair Oil's advertisements featured a substitute observer. This, according to Adolph Stuber, Vice President of Kodak at the conception of the project, helped viewers to "visualize themselves as being able to make the same wonderful photo."²²⁶ Additionally, the occasional inclusion of superimposed snapshots showed viewers what to photograph and how to compose it.

225. Alison Nordström, "Dreaming in Color," in *Colorama: The World's Largest Photographs From Kodak and the George Eastman House Collection* (New York: Aperture, 2004), 5. The Coloramas were changed every three weeks over the forty-year period.

226. George Eastman House, "George Eastman's House Acquires Kodak's Colorama Archive. Press Release, June 11, 2010," *George Eastman House: International Museum of Photography and Film*, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://www.eastmanhouse.org/tools/pressroom/view.php?title=colorama-archive-2010>.

Highway billboards, “See Your West,” Sinclair Oil, View-master, and Coloramas highlight the prevalence of the commodification of the landscape in the postwar era. Advertisers and promoters transformed America’s scenic wonders into framed, abstracted views in order to sell and promote products while fostering appreciation of the landscapes. Additionally, they spurred viewers to visit the West, taught people how to view the world as a photograph, and encouraged people to photograph what they saw, preserving their images and memories of the national parks.

Behind the Appearances: Mission 66 Exhibitions in the National Parks

The NPS placed park development and interpretation on par for importance. Indeed, it physically constructed the environments of the national parks through development, and ideologically constructed the meanings of the national parks through interpretation. As such, within the units of the park system, interpretive exhibitions conveyed a narrative of the American experience; in the western parks and monuments they often told the story of frontiersmen and pioneers. This is evidenced in the museum exhibition in Death Valley National Monument, in which the NPS relayed a story of the gold seekers who discovered the region.

During Mission 66, the NPS instigated and standardized interpretive programs, seeking not only to convey history, but also the feeling of history. Tilden considered the role of the NPS to “reveal the truths that lie behind the appearances,” and in 1957, he articulated his principles of interpretation in the seminal text *Interpreting Our Heritage*. He proposed the chief goal of interpretation to be “provocation” rather than instruction, and that it “must relate to something within the personality or experience of the visitor.”

Tilden believed that by establishing a perceivable relationship between the visitor and the park – “between nature and man, between man and fellow man” – the visitor would find meaning in their own life.²²⁷ The NPS established this relationship within the natural landscapes of the park system through exhibitions and evening campfires that retold the mythic rituals and heroic tales of early pioneers and frontiersmen.

Across the national park system, exhibitions recounted the American experience outlined in the NPS publication *That the Past Shall Live: The History Program of the National Park Service* (1959). They unveiled a story from the “time of earliest man,” to the “heroic struggle for American independence;” from “the promise of the powerful new democracy,” to the “romantic story” of American expansion, and the “building of a great and powerful nation.”²²⁸ In the western national parks, exhibitions frequently drew on the themes of the frontier and westward expansion and told the stories of pioneers and explorers in sites of historical interest and natural beauty. The Western and Eastern Museum Laboratories used a narrative approach in their exhibitions to convey the story of the individual parks and to provoke an emotional connection between the visitor and their past. Tilden reasoned, “whether or not he is conscious of it, man seeks to find his place in nature and among men – not excluding remote men.”²²⁹

In Death Valley, the visitor center exhibition, installed in 1959, recalled the experience of the Forty-Niners who discovered the region in 1849, and it communicated

227. Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, ed. R. Bruce Craig, foreword by Russell E. Dickenson, 4th ed., exp. upd. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 25, 33-34, 164, 195, 198. Mather and Albright had begun implementing education programs in the 1920s to provide visitors with historic and scientific information; by the late 1930s, the term ‘interpretation’ had been adopted to signify both the educational and inspirational potential of the parks.

228. John Shirley Hurst and John A. Hussey, *That the Past Shall Live: The History Program of the National Park Service*, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1959).

229. Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, 37.

information about the park's geology, geography, and history through their arduous journey.²³⁰ The label of the first exhibit introduced readers to the park's narrative:

Misinformed gold-seekers, California bound, straggled over the eastern rim onto Death Valley's salty floor. About 100 men, women and children gazed at the towering Panamint Mountains blocking their way.²³¹

Throughout the park system, interpretive presentations made use of "scientific features, historic structures and objects, and the natural landscape," as part of their exhibit.²³² Fittingly, the NPS located the Death Valley Visitor Center near the base of the Panamint Mountains, as can be seen in Fig. 3.22, with views of the mountain range from the parking lot and courtyard – the same views, as the exhibition described, that the gold seekers had more than one hundred years earlier. The exhibition used artifacts, charts, and dioramas to convey the climatic and geological conditions the gold seekers encountered, with exhibits titled: "The Forty-Niners found water scarce..." and "The Forty-Niners saw little vegetation and less animal life..." Through this narrative of westward migration, the NPS relayed to visitors Death Valley's values and significance and sought to evoke a relationship between the postwar tourist and their experience of the natural landscape.

In 1952, Lynn Rogers, writing for the *Los Angeles Times*, described Death Valley as a motorist's "paradise." However, she also surmised that motorists who came to see the distinctive landscapes gave "little thought to the privations suffered by the early

230. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Western Museum Laboratory, "Death Valley National Monument, Exhibit Plan" (Unpublished. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1957). This exhibition remained unchanged for more than fifty years, only being updated in 2010 when the building was closed for refurbishment.

231. Ibid.

232. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Mission 66 for the National Park System*, 98.

pioneers who fought their way across this merciless desolate land.”²³³ By 1959, the Death Valley exhibition brought attention to the plight of these pioneers, and it provided tourists with a greater understanding of the region’s desert conditions through an association to their national heritage.

The Postwar Frontier: National Parks and Popular Ideology

The NPS interpreted Death Valley National Monument for visitors in a manner coherent with postwar ideology, narratives of the West, and the commodification of the frontier, which played a vivid role in the nation’s popular imagination. It told the story of pioneers and frontiersmen in ways perhaps not unrelated to attractions such as Disneyland or contemporary western television programs and movies. Specifically, *Holiday* magazine aligned tourists with nineteenth-century explorers; Walt Disney cultivated nostalgic perceptions of the Old West in Frontierland; and the series *Death Valley Days* affirmed the popularity of the western genre on radio and television.

Post-World War II, and during the decades to follow, travel to the West amplified the value of the war just fought and the preservation of ideals for which the United States stands. It evoked a national and individual sense of freedom, opportunity, and prosperity, as the nation cast itself as the guardians of liberty, democracy, and prosperity. The ‘frontier’ featured prominently in postwar populist rhetoric and imagery, drawing on the nineteenth-century ideologies of westward expansion and Manifest Destiny. Indeed, John F. Kennedy, at the 1960 Democratic National Convention, having accepted the Presidential nomination and faced with an intensifying Cold War, drew on the themes and values of the frontier

233. Lynn Rogers, “Death Valley Now Motoring Paradise,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1952, B6.

and the mythic character of the pioneer to represent the beginning of a new era and to charge his countrymen with national spirit.²³⁴

Holiday magazine also perpetuated the nineteenth-century ideologies of westward expansion. In 1946, *Holiday* published a cartograph of the United States entitled “From Footpaths to Concrete” that showed eighteen prominent old trails and early roads and the modern highways that followed them (Fig. 3.27). A poem of “rediscovering” America accompanied the map and told the story of the Native Indians who first “trode the trails,” and the pioneers who later blazed these routes and “won the land.” The poem continued:

If we but cast a backward
Glance in time, their vision can be ours.
Then on concrete highways, with eyes of Boone,
Chisholm, Applegate, Lewis and Clark,
We'll see those waterfalls, that mountain pass,
And live, ourselves, the epic that was theirs.²³⁵

Holiday played on the nation's imaginings of the frontier and cast the postwar traveler as the modern-day pioneer. This proved to be fitting, as both Disneyland and the NPS did the same in the following decade.

Like the national parks, Disneyland in California – opened in 1955, the same year Wirth conceived of Mission 66 – also relied on highways and automobiles. Walt Disney dedicated a large section of the park to Frontierland, a commodified, romanticized, and idealized conception of the heritage and landscapes of the West. He sought to keep the spirit of the frontier alive as cowboys, pioneers, and heroes roamed around historic towns and landscapes – such as the Grand Canyon – synonymous with the West.²³⁶ Indeed, the

234. K. A. Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* (USA: Taylor & Francis Group, 2005), 167-168.

235. Curtis Publishing, “Rediscovering America,” *Holiday*, August 1946.

236. Karal Ann Marling, “Disneyland, 1955: The Place That Was Also a TV Show,” in *As Seen On TV: The Visual Culture of Everyday Life in the 1950s* (USA: First Harvard University Press, 1996), 87-129. It is

wooden gateway to Frontierland bears a clear resemblance to the cedar log arch and suspended sign at the entrance to Mount Rainier National Park, as discussed in Chapter Two (Fig. 3.28).

Disney based Frontierland on a number of western film images, including Walt Disney Production's *The Living Desert* (1953) and *The Vanishing Prairie* (1954) from the documentary series "True-Life Adventure" that celebrated the natural American landscape as the essential foundation and generative principle of American culture.²³⁷ Notably, at the formal inauguration of Mission 66 at the American Pioneer Dinner on February 8, 1956, held at the Department of the Interior, Disney prepared a film for the occasion titled *Adventures in the National Parks*.²³⁸ It was a compilation of excerpts from both *The Vanishing Prairie* and *The Living Desert*, underscoring both the perceived importance and role the national parks played in engendering American culture, and the clear connections between the industries of American popular culture and the national parks.

The frontier and the national parks also found fame in the postwar era with Disney's *Davy Crockett* (1954-55) television series and movies, which turned the frontiersman and folk hero into a popular culture phenomenon and gained the highest ratings of the decade; and the syndicated show *Death Valley Days* that played on radio

also worth noting that in 1994 Disneyland constructed the resort hotel Wilderness Lodge in Orlando, Florida, designed by Peter Dominick of the Urban Design Group in Denver. The main building is modeled after the style and scale of the Old Faithful Inn. It uses natural materials of log and timber, and features a monumental open lobby with hand carved totem poles and a stone fireplace. The atmosphere captures the spirit and romance of the American frontier, and the Lodge's signature restaurant is even named Artist Point. John van Housen, "Denver Architects Add to Disney Magic," *Denver Post*, May 11, 1992, 1.

237. Nicholas Sammond, "See You Real Soon: Imagining the Child in Disney's Cold-War Natural Order," *MIT Communications Forum*, September 22, 2004, accessed November 28, 2013, <http://web.mit.edu/comm-forum/papers/sammond.html>.

238. Carr, *Mission 66*, 118.

from 1930 to 1945 – the medium’s heyday – and on television from 1952 to 1975. *Death Valley Days* was one of the most successful and long-running Western shows of all time. Producers filmed the series in and around Death Valley and based its stories on historical events centered upon the myths and legends of Death Valley when miners forged West during the California Gold Rush.²³⁹ Every week the opening scene of *Death Valley Days* featured twenty mules leading a covered wagon across the empty landscapes; and Death Valley Visitor Center’s opening exhibit resembled this scene. The drafted plan shows a family of gold seekers with their mule and covered wagon in a vast open space and the Panamint Mountain range beyond (Fig. 3.29); the photograph of the exhibit, taken in 1960, reveals how this plan materialized and how the NPS displayed it in the visitor center (Fig. 3.30).

The NPS’s ideological construction of Death Valley aligned with the postwar commodification of the frontier prevalent in the popular culture and rhetoric of the era. This constructed understanding not only provided visitors with a greater appreciation of the “views” to be seen within the national parks, but it also enhanced the meaning and value of the tourist experience and it’s facility to foster national identity.

Conclusion

Tourists engulfed the national parks during the 1950s and 1960s, fuelled by the prosperity of the postwar era, the freedom of mobility, the popular ideology of the frontier, and inspired by images circulating in the media. Under the banner of Mission 66, the NPS undertook a ten-year program to develop and construct the built and interpretive

239. Marling, 124; Tim Brooks and Earle F. Marsh, *The Complete Directory to Prime Time Network and Cable TV Shows, 1946-Present*, 9th ed. (New York: Ballantine Books, 2007), 342.

environments of the national parks in order to accommodate the mass numbers of tourists, provide lessons on national heritage, and to protect the prized resources of the park system.

Through physical and ideological construction, the NPS sought to present and interpret the beauty and meaning of the parks as visibility continued to play an important role in the tourist experience. Deliberately sited and strategically designed visitor centers introduced tourists to a park's visual splendor and constructed meaning, while geological exhibits and historical narratives recalled stories of westward expansion and played upon the nation's popular imagination of the frontier.

This construction within the national parks proved to be consistent with the commodification of the national parks in postwar popular culture. Visitor centers in the national parks framed and abstracted scenic views of the parks, as did images featured on highway billboards and circulated in promotional campaigns by Kodak Colorama, Standard Oil, and Scenic Oil. Exhibitions relayed narratives of the frontier and westward expansion, similar to stories in magazines, on television shows, and the commercialized venue of Disneyland. This vibrant array of images and narratives, cultivated by the NPS and popular culture, commodified the landscapes of the national parks, encouraged tourism, and established a physical, visual, and ideological connection between viewers and the landscape. Individually, and in aggregate, they presented scenic views of America's landscapes infused with the mythic and nationalistic ideals of the West, and fostered the popular ideology of the postwar era.

When you visit one of the great primeval parks for the first time, the impact of so much grandeur and beauty is overwhelming. At first you feel dwarfed, insignificant, even humbled, in spite of the eager intake of the perfection of the scene. But if your experience parallels that of most of us, these feelings are succeeded by a queer sort of exultation that all this loveliness and wonder is not foreign, not apart, but that you share something with it as it shares something with you.

From that moment your curiosity is stimulated. What does it all mean? How came it as it is? ... You wish to know. You wish to understand. You desire to take home with you something more than the picture in the mind's eye, unforgettable as that may be.

Freeman Tilden, Interpreter for the National Park Service
“Draft of manuscript for Mission 66 brochure on interpretation, March 10, 1957,”
Interpreting our Heritage, 1957

Conclusion: A Broader Vision of the National Parks

According to John Berger in *Ways of Seeing* (1977), “it is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world.” He reasons that “the way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe” and “when we ‘see’ a landscape, we situate ourselves in it.”²⁴⁰ This thesis – particularly timely as the NPS approaches its one-hundredth anniversary in 2016 – has examined the importance of visibility to the tourist experience of the national parks, spaces embodying the ideals and ideologies of the nation. To “see” the parks was not only to view the natural landscapes; it was also to understand their constructed value and relation to the observer’s national heritage.

Through visual culture and the presentation of “the view,” artists, photographers, railroad companies, advertisers, and the NPS directed tourists’ attention to the wonders of the national parks; through interpretation they conveyed a meaning for the national parks that drew on nationalist ideals and ideologies in order to make the tourist experience more significant and meaningful. In Susan Stewart’s study of the relationship between the real and the representational, she argues that the real – unaltered, unrefined, unarranged landscapes – overpower the visitor. Whereas, the representational – composed views of the landscape such as that from overlooks, roads, and visitor centers, and in visual culture – present nature as contained, controlled, and therefore comprehensible.²⁴¹ Thus, “the view” of the national parks, in both visual culture and in real life, was a constructed representation of not only America’s natural landscape but also its ideological landscape. Indeed, the vision of the national parks represented a broader vision of the nation.

240. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 7-8, 11.

241. Stewart, 78.

Paintbrush to Camera: Visual Culture and Tourism.

Visual culture assumed a role in the tourist experience as it encouraged people to travel, shaped their experience, and preserved their memories. Indeed, visual culture brought both attention and people to the West, and influenced and conditioned how people saw the region. Paintings, photographs, and advertising images appealed to tourists, cultivated collective visibility, strengthened national identity, and ultimately commodified the spaces of the national parks. Nineteenth-century paintings informed Eastern audiences of the region's monumental landscapes; photographs in the interwar period promoted a vision of refuge and sanctuary; promotional campaigns fostered the American landscape's nationalistic meanings; and particular postwar representations of the frontier cultivated the popular imagination of the West. This canon of images not only encouraged Americans to see the nation's landscapes for themselves, but also fostered how they would see it. Certainly, where painters and photographers had captured their pictures is where tourists would also wish to capture theirs. Kodak installed signposts along the roadside to indicate the best scenic views; and the NPS built scenic overlooks, turnouts, and visitor centers, and installed wayside exhibits to highlight and facilitate exceptional vistas recalling those memorialized in paintings and photographs in the nineteenth century.

In the twentieth century, photography quickly became a standard practice of the tourist experience, and in 1941, *Popular Science Monthly* listed photography as one of America's five favorite hobbies.²⁴² It was considered a fulfilling and constructive activity that gave additional meaning and focus to travel and leisure. Photography enabled

242. Edwin Teale, "America's Five Favorite Hobbies," *Popular Science Monthly*, May 1941, 98-103. Hobbies and do-it-yourself projects flourished during World War II as shortages forced Americans to be resourceful. By the postwar era, middle-class and upper-class Americans found themselves with more leisure time and more prosperity and they channeled their energy and money into hobbies and do-it-yourself. Robert Coughlan, "A \$40 billion bill just for fun," *LIFE* 28, December 1959, 69-74.

visitors to frame and commodify the landscapes of the national parks, as they had seen in visual culture, and the product of photography – the photograph itself – served as a tangible souvenir of the tourist experience.

How-to books and advertisements provided amateur photographers with encouragement and tips on taking better pictures in order to help them visually preserve their views and experiences of the parks. Travel photographer Fred Bond wrote a series of books that responded to the mass popularity of photography, including *Westward How: Through the Scenic West, How, Where and When to Go, What to See, and How to Shoot It* (1947). Bond provided readers with travel routes, foot trails, scenic highlights of the West, and suggested exposures for taking photographs. He recommended seeing the national parks for “their scenic grandeur and educational value,” and selected his images to help readers decide what they wished to see, being ones that “anybody can shoot, experienced or not.”²⁴³

George Waters at Kodak commissioned Ansel Adams for a number of color projects in the late 1940s and early 1950s, including the Kodak Coloramas, and ran his pictures in advertisements in popular media and photography journals. In 1948, Kodak printed Adams’ photographs of Yosemite, Grand Canyon, and Big Bend National Park, as well as other pictorial representations of the West, such as Taos Pueblo in New Mexico, in a four-page advertisement in *Popular Photography*. Kodak encouraged readers to “join [Adams],” and its advertisement served to commodify the celebrated

243. Fred Bond, *Westward How: Through the Scenic West. How, Where and When to Go, What to See, and How to Shoot It* (San Francisco: Camera Craft Publishing Co, 1947), 11, 35.

landscapes of the national parks and recognizable features of the West as other popular media also did in the postwar era (Fig. 3.31).²⁴⁴

The NPS also recognized the importance of photography to the tourist experience. The Mission 66 Prospectus for Bryce Canyon proposed the landscape would “challenge the photographer and the artist,” and the park pamphlet and exhibition in the new visitor center instructed tourists on how to capture the beauty of Bryce on film. This is evident in both the drafted exhibition plans (Fig. 3.32) and the materialized display installed near the door of the Visitor Center (Fig. 3.33) where tourists exited the building.²⁴⁵

The act of photography was considered another way to “see” and interpret the parks as the camera became an additional viewing and framing device, helping people to further focus on the beauty and perceived meaning of the landscape. In 1969, Kodak published a guide to America’s national parks that directed readers on the best “picture-taking spots” and the most photogenic views in thirty-four national parks. It recommended a variety of photography techniques that not only utilized the built environments of the park, but also drew on the principles of park design and interpretation. The *Kodak Guide* recalled Tilden’s theories on controlled compositions of scenery when it suggested framing vistas by using “an overhanging branch, a gnarled juniper, or a brace of cactus blossom” in the foreground. It additionally aligned photography with park interpretation,

244. Kodak advertisement, “Ansel Adams’ America... in Kodak Color,” *Popular Photography* 22 (March 1948): 75-78.

245. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Brochure, *Bryce Canyon National Park, Utah*, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1964; rev. Feb. 1963); U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Western Museum Laboratory, “Exhibit Plan: Bryce Canyon National Park” (Unpublished. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, c. 1958-59).

stating, “the visitor with the camera can derive education and inspiration that will last him a lifetime.”²⁴⁶

Visuality and “the view” became even more important with the popularity of photography as tourists wanted to see, photograph, and preserve their own visions of the national parks. Thus, tourists and the tourist experience contributed to the visual culture and commodification of the national parks, and the collective vision of the nation.

A Preserved Vision: National Landscapes and National Ideals.

Travel to the national parks – the confluence of mobility and wilderness – has embodied the nation’s contemporary ideals and ideologies. According to Frederick Jackson Turner, Americans forged their character, spirit, and identity in the wilderness. In *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (1950) Henry Nash Smith, defined the “character of the American empire” by a “relation between man and nature – or, rather – between American man and the American West.”²⁴⁷ This relationship between mobility, wilderness, and national identity provided the foundation of tourism to the national parks, and it is apparent in the time periods considered here; each of which represent a distinct era in the development of the national parks, and by extension, the nation and national identity.

In the late-nineteenth century, westward travelers had an opportunity to see and better understand the progress of the nation’s expansion. Pioneering railroad tourists enjoyed civilized accommodations at night and experienced the adventure of the

246. Michael Frome, *Kodak Guide: America’s National Parks* (USA: Popular Library, 1969).

247. Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 187.

wilderness during the day. This early tourist experience of the national parks offered white, upper-class Americans the opportunity to identify with the nation's victories over the West, and partake in the triumphs of those who conquered the frontier.²⁴⁸

By the 1920s and 1930s, travel to the national parks represented an act of patriotism. Automobiles afforded more Americans to travel to the West and wilderness conservation proved to be a key government agenda. Touring and visiting the parks represented a democratic and patriotic act, and the NPS promoted the spaces of the national parks as revered landscapes and havens that embodied the nation's regenerative ideals and ideologies, and the sense of solace of an earlier and simpler time.

In the postwar era, travel to the West symbolized prosperity, liberty, and democracy – although it was not extended to Native Americans, African Americans, and Jewish travelers. Improved highways and more sophisticated automobiles enabled Americans to visit the parks and encounter the wilderness in mass numbers, and the NPS conceived the Mission 66 program with the same democratic vision as the parks; the parks were for the people. In the 1950s and 1960s, visitors experienced the parks on an independent drive west, realizing their own visions of the frontier, and in a celebration of postwar prosperity and freedom.

As surveyed in this thesis, throughout the history of the national parks, artists, photographers, park officials, and the NPS have imbued the spaces of the park system with the ideals and ideologies – past and present – of the nation. Therefore to see the nation's preserved landscapes was to gain an understanding of the nation's preserved ideals. However, in all cases this vision and understanding of the national parks and its

248. Shaffer, 68.

implicit ideals was both commodified and exclusionary. Diversity – emphasized in the parks by “the view” – was, ironically, in stark contrast to the types of visitors seen actually visiting the parks and in a sense compromised “the view” of America as embodied by the national parks.

Historically, the national parks have functioned as part of, and perpetuated, the social construction of ‘whiteness.’ As Richard Dyer argues in *White: Essays on Race and Culture* (1997), “white people create the dominant images of the world and ... thus construct the world in their image.”²⁴⁹ Additionally, in *Sight Unseen: Whiteness in American Visual Culture* (2005), Martin A. Berger discusses ‘whiteness’ implicit in visual culture, including nineteenth-century paintings of Western landscapes, Carleton Watkins’ photographs of Yosemite, and nineteenth-century depictions of train travel.²⁵⁰ He argues that “viewed through the lens of whiteness” these paintings, photographs, and depictions provided America’s white population with confirmation of their civilizing influences in relation to their historical achievements and future ambitions.²⁵¹

Accordingly, “the view” within the national parks may be considered in a similar manner to embody and perpetuate ‘whiteness,’ as – noted in the introduction to this thesis – Native Americans, African Americans, and other minorities, have lacked a visible and physical presence in the national parks. While park officials displaced Native Americans from their lands, a confluence of law, discriminatory attitudes, and limited access to socioeconomic resources prohibited African Americans from touring the parks. Shaffer asserts that NPS administrators, at least in the 1920s, discouraged African Americans

249. Richard Dyer, *White: Essays on Race and Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 9.

250. Martin A. Berger, *Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture* (Canada: University of California Press, 2005), 2.

251. *Ibid.*, 79, 156.

from visiting the parks, stating at the Sixth National Park Conference in 1922, “While we cannot openly discriminate against [colored people], they should be told that the parks have no facilities for taking care of them.” The reasons given: “if they come in large groups they will be conspicuous, and will not only be objected to by other [white] visitors but will cause trouble among the hotel and camp help, and it will be impossible to serve them...”²⁵²

Until the 1930s, Congress had mostly designated national parks only in the West. However, come that decade, the government established several new ones in the South. Jim Crow laws required that public places such as parks be segregated by race, and necessitated the NPS to formalize segregation in these southern parks. In 1937, Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, wrote a letter to Walter White, Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, stating, “everyone, regardless of creed, color, or race, who conforms to the rules is invited to visit the national parks and monuments;” yet, he continued, “it has long been the policy” of the national parks “to conform generally to the State customs with regard to accommodation of visitors.”²⁵³ Accordingly, the NPS installed separate facilities, bathhouses, picnic grounds, and campgrounds in sites such as George Washington Birthplace National Monument and Shenandoah National Park, both in Virginia, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina, and Hot Springs National Park in Arizona.²⁵⁴ However, with the onset

252. “Accommodations for colored people,” Sixth National Park Conference, Yosemite, November 12-13, 1922; quoted in Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 126.

253. Letter from Harold Ickes to Walter White, February 4, 1937 as quoted in: Terence Young, “‘A contradiction in Democratic Government’: W. J. Trent, Jr., and the Struggle to Desegregate National Park Campgrounds,” in *Environmental History* 14, no. 4 (October 2009): 656

254. Susan Shumaker, “Untold Stories from America’s National Parks: Segregation in the National Parks, Part 1,” in association with “A Film by Ken Burns. The National Parks: America’s Best Idea,” *Public*

of World War II the federal government became concerned about the morale of African Americans, which provided the final impetus to end all national park segregation in June 1942.²⁵⁵

Still, African Americans, as well as Jewish travelers, did not have the ability to travel freely to the national parks and many other destinations as they faced discrimination and humiliation across the country. Motels denied them lodging, and restaurants, gas stations, and other highway establishments refused them service, forcing Jews and African Americans to restrict their vacationing to tolerant areas, drive long distances between accommodating motels or hotels, or even sleep in their car.²⁵⁶

In 1962, the Congress-appointed Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission found “nonwhites” still vastly underrepresented in the national parks.²⁵⁷ George Hartzog, who became Director of the NPS in 1964 – at the height of the Civil Rights Movement – focused on reaching out to African-American and other ethnic minority communities, encouraging them to become more involved in the national parks.²⁵⁸

Broadcasting Service, accessed November 14, 2013, <http://www-tc.pbs.org/nationalparks/media/pdfs/tnp-abi-untold-stories-pt-01-segregation.pdf>.

255. Young, 673

256. Susan Sessions Rugh, *Are We There Yet? The Golden Age of American Family Vacations* (USA: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 70, 90. This discrimination of the highway experience was a central tenet of President Lyndon Johnson’s case for 1964 Civil Rights Legislation; as it also was for Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., whose testimony was based on the ‘slender choices’ and ‘tremendous problems’ African Americans faced on the road. From conversations with my Jewish relatives, it is evident they faced anti-Semitic attitudes in the 1940s, as motel and hotel administrators denied them reservations when giving the name Cohen and Bresnick over the phone. Administrators stated that there were no rooms available; however when friends with Anglo surnames called immediately after they were able to make a reservation (author’s conversation with Judy and Sidney Bresnick, October 2012).

257. Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, *Outdoor Recreation for America: A Report to the President and to Congress by the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (GPO), 1962), accessed December 1, 2013, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CZIC-gv53-a545-1962/html/CZIC-gv53-a545-1962.htm>.

258. William C. Everhart and Janet A. McDonnell, *Oral History Interview with George B. Hartzog, Jr.* (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2007), accessed December 1, 2013, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/director/hartzog.pdf.

Yet, today, African Americans, Latinos, and other ethnicities rarely patronize the majority of national parks, although units such as the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site in Atlanta, and the Manzanar National Historic Site in California, site of a World War II Japanese-American detention camp, attract varied crowds. While the NPS has established new national monuments in recent years to recognize minority figures in American history, including civil rights activists Cesar Chavez and Harriet Tubman, Yosemite and other wilderness parks remain homogeneously white. Indeed, the NPS has declared that it should and needs to reach greater segments of society to make the national park system more meaningful and relevant to the broader nation.²⁵⁹

100 Years: A Future Vision of the National Parks.

How people experience the national parks today is directly related to what the railroad companies and park superintendents in the nineteenth century, and the NPS in the twentieth century accomplished. However, this applies to not only the tourist experience in the park, but also the tourists who experience the park.

Today, visitors to the national parks drive the same roads, walk the same trails, and stand at the same overlooks as the generations before them. Planning and development within the parks during the last century, and particularly during Mission 66, has served to

259. Mireya Navaro, "National Parks Reach Out to Blacks who aren't Visiting," *New York Times*, November 2, 2010, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/03/science/earth/03parks.html?pagewanted=all>; Kirk Johnson, "U.S. National Parks Try to Appeal to Minorities," *New York Times*, September 5, 2013, accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/06/us/national-parks-try-to-appeal-to-minorities.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0; U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Park Service Advisory Board, "Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century: A Report of the National Park System Advisory Board, July 2001," *National Park Service*, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://www.nps.gov/policy/report.htm>. Navaro's article reports that studies and surveys show that the 285.5 million visitors to the nation's 393 national parks in 2009 are overwhelmingly white. African Americans are the least likely group to visit, and "that reality has not changed since the 1960s, when it was first identified as an issue." A 2009 survey of Yosemite found that 77 percent of the visitors were white, eleven percent Latino, eleven percent Asian and one percent black.

establish a standardized tourist experience throughout much of the national park system.²⁶⁰ The preservation of the visitor centers has been a recent topic of investigation as most have passed, and the remainder near, the fifty-year mark. Some Mission 66 structures, such as the headquarters building at Rocky Mountain National Park and the Death Valley Visitor Center and Museum, have been added to the National Register of Historic Places. Indeed, the NPS has designated these Mission 66 visitor centers – like earlier park development including the Old Faithful Inn, the Grand Loop Road, and Wawona Tunnel and Tunnel View as discussed – to be “associated with events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of American history.”²⁶¹ They are perceived as being as worthy of preservation as the natural landscape that surrounds them. However, other parks have removed or altered many of their modernist structures. In Yellowstone, for example, two Mission 66-era visitor centers have been replaced by nostalgic designs that recall the earlier rustic architecture style.

In 1975, nearly ten years after the completion of the Mission 66 program, Ervin Zube, Joseph Crystal, and James Palmer undertook a study of twelve visitor centers across the country to garner feedback on the design process and inform future design decisions. They selected a cross-section of visitor centers built between 1935 and 1968, based on park purpose, geographic distribution, and architectural style. The study found that visitors were equally favorable to both contemporary and traditional forms of

260. Carr argues that Mission 66, despite its controversies, had a positive effect on the perpetuation of the national park system. The funding that Congress invested in the national parks during Mission 66 became the basis in terms of level and range for subsequent years. The program laid the foundation for how the national parks are funded and enjoyed today for the public continues to rely on the roads and trails, parking lots and campgrounds, and visitor centers and facilities constructed during Mission 66. See: Carr, *Mission 66*, 335.

261. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “Furnace Creek Museum.”

architecture in the parks; however, they preferred coarser, textured, natural building materials, such as stonework, as opposed to more modern ones.²⁶²

The overall findings strongly supported the NPS's planning design process, and reaffirm the successful design of the visitor centers and exhibitions examined in Chapter Three. The careful attention given to the relationship of the building to its site, and the sequence of arrival, parking, and entry received particular note; as well as the use of multi-disciplinary design teams, usually consisting of an architect, landscape architect, interior designer, and exhibit designer; and the relationship of the exhibition design to the building.²⁶³

In recent decades the NPS has implemented tailored strategies in individual parks to enhance visitors' understanding, appreciation, enjoyment, and use of the parks while continuing to ensure the preservation of the park systems' resources. These strategies have shifted the focus from the purely visual to include considerations such as atmosphere, noise, and crowding, which also play a role in the tourist experience. In *Managing Outdoor Recreation: Case Studies in the National Parks*, Robert Manning and Laura Anderson report that "Quiet Zones" have been designated within Cathedral Grove in Muir Woods National Monument to encourage visitors to reduce the noise they make and to protect the 'soundscape' of the tranquil natural environment; and at Half Dome in Yosemite, a park ranger enforces a daily limit on the number of people who can hike to

262. Ervin H. Zube, Joseph H. Crystal, and James F. Palmer, "Evaluating NPS Visitor Centers," in *Design & Environment* 7, no. 3 (Fall 1976), 34-37. This article is based on the report: Ervin H. Zube, Joseph H. Crystal, and James F. Palmer, *Visitor Center Design Evaluation: A Study Prepared for the Denver Service Center* (Unpublished report. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1976). The study addresses an array of issues including spatial and functional attributes, maintenance requirements, the relationship of the visitor center to its surroundings, visitor and staff perceptions, patterns of use, site selection procedures and team design responsibilities.

263. Ibid.

the summit of the iconic attraction, reducing overcrowding and increasing visitor safety. Additionally, in 2000, the NPS instated a shuttle bus service – the Zion Canyon Transportation System – along the arterial road of the canyon floor in Zion National Park. The NPS had found this road to be congested, polluted, noisy, and damaged as up to 5,000 cars entered the canyon each day. In a return to the park system’s pre-automobile days of the early 1900s, the NPS closed the scenic road to private traffic, and introduced thirty clean-running propane shuttle buses to transport 2.5 million park visitors each year to the principal features of Zion. The bus stops frequently for passengers to enjoy the magnificent scenery, and for those who don’t want to alight, views of the canyon are visible from the vehicle’s large side windows and roof vents. The system has been widely praised for helping to enhance visitor access, eliminate congestion, restore and protect park resources, improve air quality, and create a quieter and more tranquil soundscape. Furthermore, it has changed visitor behavior by taking them out of their cars and into closer contact with their surroundings. Due to the definitive success of the Transportation System, more than fifty units of the national park system now have some form of alternative transportation.²⁶⁴

In 1993, the NPS reconceived the thematic framework of the national park system. The NPS broadened the consensus vision of the story of American progress and the American experience that had previously defined the designation of park units and informed park interpretation up to and during Mission 66 to more accurately reflect the

264. Robert E. Manning and Laura E. Anderson, *Managing Outdoor Recreation: Case Studies in the National Parks*, Park Studies Laboratory, Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, University of Vermont (Malta: CABI, 2012), 95-98, 122-127, 128-131.

nation's cultural and social history and circumstances.²⁶⁵ Today, the national park system preserves 401 American sites that represent a more inclusive and collective expression of the broader population's values and heritage. Newer sites are less about the celebration of land and landscape and more about the retelling of history, historical events, and historical leaders. Sites such as Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail (designated in 1996), and Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site (designated in 1987), offer insight into the African-American experience of the 1950s; a time when the people these sites commemorate were not easily able to, nor encouraged to visit the national park system.

In 2008, the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), an independent advocate group for the national parks and NPS, convened a commission charged with developing a vision for the NPS for its second century. They met five times over the next year and released a final report that found the bureau needed to proactively engage with the people and communities not visiting the parks.²⁶⁶ NPS officials have identified cost, travel distance, and lack of information as barriers to visiting the parks. However, some officials also acknowledge that the parks may not seem welcoming to specific ethnic groups.²⁶⁷

265. The new framework was based upon eight concepts of human activity that “captur[ed] the complexity and meaning of human experience,” and enabled an “understanding of the past in coherent, integrated ways.” The eight concepts of human activity in the NPS thematic framework are: peopling places, creating social institutions and movements, expressing cultural values, shaping the political landscape, developing the American economy, expanding science and technology, transforming the environment, and the changing role of the United States in the world community. See: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, “NPS Thematic Framework: Introduction,” *National Center for Preservation and Training*, 1993, accessed October 17, 2013, <http://ncptt.nps.gov/articles/c2a/nps-thematic-framework/>.

266. National Parks Second Century Commission, “Advancing the National Park Idea: National Parks Second Century Commission Report,” *National Parks Conservation Association*, 2009, accessed December 1, 2013, http://www.npca.org/assets/pdf/Commission_Report.PDF.

267. Navarro.

The current Director of the NPS, Jonathan Jarvis, speaking to the *New York Times* in 2013, acknowledged that a visit to the national parks “can be transformative” and “create a lifelong pattern.”²⁶⁸ Consequently, the NPS is making attempts to bring African Americans, Latinos, and other ethnic minorities to the parks. *American Latino Expedition*, established in 2011, sponsors people from across the country to participate in tours of the national parks to ensure sites preserve, reflect, and engage the diverse stories and communities of American Latinos. *GirlTrek* organizes fitness-oriented park hikes for African-American women and girls.²⁶⁹

These changes in the national park system and the goals of the NPS echo changes in society and the bureau’s desire to reach and be relevant to a greater section of the population. Indeed, as this thesis has demonstrated, and as other writers have argued, the national parks are constructions, fashioned and shaped by a culture’s needs and the values of its time.²⁷⁰

In 2016, the NPS will celebrate its one-hundredth anniversary. As the landmark approaches, the NPS has acknowledged the dramatic change in America since the bureau’s formation in 1916 and outlined its vision for the century ahead:

... we will fully represent our nation’s ethnically and culturally diverse communities. To achieve the promise of democracy, we will create and deliver activities, programs, and services that honor, examine, and interpret America’s complex heritage. By investing in the preservation, interpretation, and restoration of the parks and by extending the benefits of conservation to communities, the

268. Johnson.

269. Ibid. “Our Mission,” *American Latino Heritage Fund of the National Park Foundation*, accessed December 1, 2013, <http://www.alhf.org/about-alhf/our-mission>. “The Mission,” *GirlTrek*, accessed December 1, 2013, <http://www.girltrek.org/#!/the-mission/c1zlc>.

270. Lynn Ross-Bryant, “Nature and Nation in the US National Parks,” *Religion and American Culture* 15, no. 1 (Winter 2005): 33.

National Park Service will inspire a “more perfect union,” offering renewed hope to each generation of Americans.²⁷¹

To achieve this vision, the NPS has detailed its goals and actions under four broad themes: connecting people to parks, advancing the education mission, preserving America’s special places, and enhancing professional and organization excellence. This includes making the parks relevant and valuable to new and diverse communities through stories and experiences that are accessible to all; deepening the understanding of individual and national identity; and building upon the country’s shared heritage and responsibilities of citizenship.²⁷²

Since its beginnings, the units of the national park system have been used to explain America and the American experience. They inspire; they teach; they unify; they define identity; and they assure continuity in society. However, the history of the vision of the parks, as examined in this thesis, has shown that the units of the park system explained *one* experience, defined *one* identity, and unified *one* group. Today, and into the future, the NPS seeks to explain a *multitude* of experiences, foster a *range* of identities, and unify a *larger* percentage of the country. Indeed, it seeks to provide and preserve a broader vision of the country and a more extensive and comprehensive representation of the nation’s ideals and ideologies.

271. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement,” *National Park Service*, August 25, 2013, accessed October 17, 2013, http://www.nps.gov/calltoaction/PDF/C2A_2013_screen.pdf.

272. *Ibid.*

Illustrations

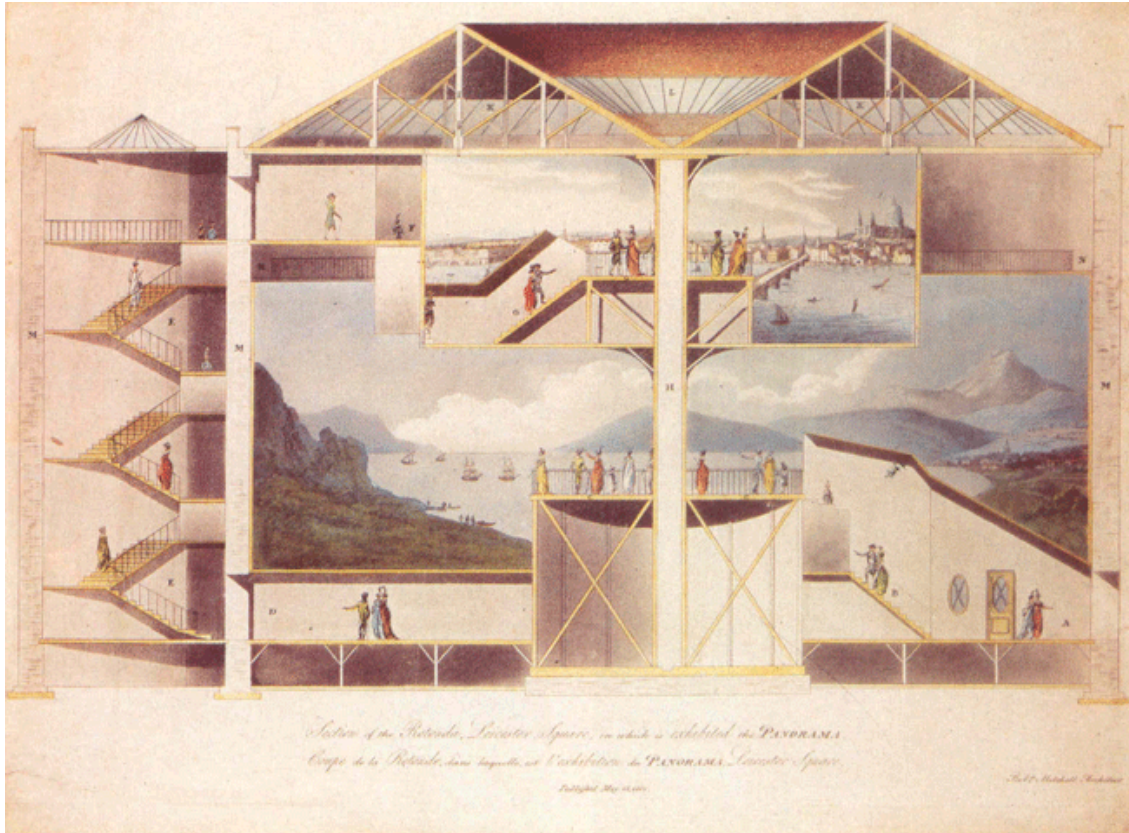


Fig. 1.1. Cross-section of Robert Barker's panorama of Edinburgh at Leicester Square. Colored aquatint by the architect Robert Mitchell, c. 1793. British Museum, London.

Source: *Panorama on View*, http://www.panoramaonview.org/panorama_history.html



Fig. 1.2. Thomas Moran, “Palisade, Cañon.”

Engraving from Bryant, William Cullen and Oliver Bell Bruce. *Picturesque America or The Land We Live In: a delineation by pen and pencil of the mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, water-falls, shores, cañons, valleys, cities, and other picturesque features of our country* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1872, 1874).



Fig. 1.3. Albert Bierstadt, *Looking Down Yosemite Valley, California*, 1865. Oil on canvas, 64 ½ by 96 ½ inches. Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, Alabama, gift of the Birmingham Public Library.

Source: *Birmingham Museum of Art*, [http://www.artsbma.org/collectionitemdetails?searchlayout=grid&showform=0&ordering=popular&searchphrase=exact&areas\[0\]=portfolio&searchcollection=American%20Art%20Highlights&areas\[\]=portfolio&searchlayout=details&limit=1&start=2](http://www.artsbma.org/collectionitemdetails?searchlayout=grid&showform=0&ordering=popular&searchphrase=exact&areas[0]=portfolio&searchcollection=American%20Art%20Highlights&areas[]=portfolio&searchlayout=details&limit=1&start=2)



Fig. 1.4. Thomas Moran, *The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone*, 1872. Oil on canvas, 84 by 144 ¼ inches. Smithsonian American Art Museum, lent by the Department of the Interior Museum, Washington, D.C.

Source: *Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Renwick Gallery*,
<http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=17832>



Fig. 1.5. Carleton E. Watkins, *El Capitan at the foot of the Mariposa Trail, Yosemite Valley*, 1865-66. Photograph. Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco, California.

Source: *Fraenkel Gallery*, <http://fraenkelgallery.com/artists/carleton-watkins>



Fig. 1.6. William H. Jackson, *Upper Falls of the Yellowstone*, 1871. Stereoview, Scenery of the Yellowstone. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Source: *Library of Congress*, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2005686843/>



Fig. 1.7. Northern Pacific Railway, "Alice's Adventures in the New Wonderland: The Yellowstone National Park," 1884.

Northern Pacific Railroad published this pamphlet to promote travel to Yellowstone National Park. It includes a map of the park and, on the reverse side, shown here, a long letter written by a fictional English tourist named Alice.

Source: *The Newberry*. <http://dcc.newberry.org/collections/art-and-exploration-in-the-american-west-and-mexico>.



Fig. 1.8. Old Faithful Inn viewed from the Beehive Geyser, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, 1904. Haynes Foundation Collections, Montana Historical Society, Helena, Montana.

Source: Leavengood, David. "A Sense of Shelter: Robert C. Reamer in Yellowstone National Park," *Pacific Historical Review* 54, No. 4, Architecture in the American West (November 1985): 501.




Fig. 1.9. "Group riding the stagecoach through Yellowstone," Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, undated. Frank J. Meyers papers, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming.

Source: *American Heritage Center Digital Collections, University of Wyoming*, <http://digitalcollections.uwyo.edu/>.



Fig. 1.10. Wayside exhibit featuring a reproduction of Thomas Moran's *Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone*, Artist Point, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, recent. Photograph by Thomas Patin.

Source: *University of Minnesota Press*, <http://www.umnpressblog.com/2012/05/window.html>



Kodak as you go

Autographic Kodaks, \$5 up

Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, N. Y., *The Kodak City*

Fig. 2.11. "Kodak as you go," advertisement for Eastman Kodak Company, c. 1910s.

Source: *Duke University Library*, http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/eea_K0485/.



Fig. 2.12. "Entrance to Rainier National Park Wash," Mount Rainier National Park, Washington, 1920s.

Source: *Thingstodo.com*, http://www.thingstodo.com/states/WA/nationalparks/images/mtrainier/mtrainier_9.jpg

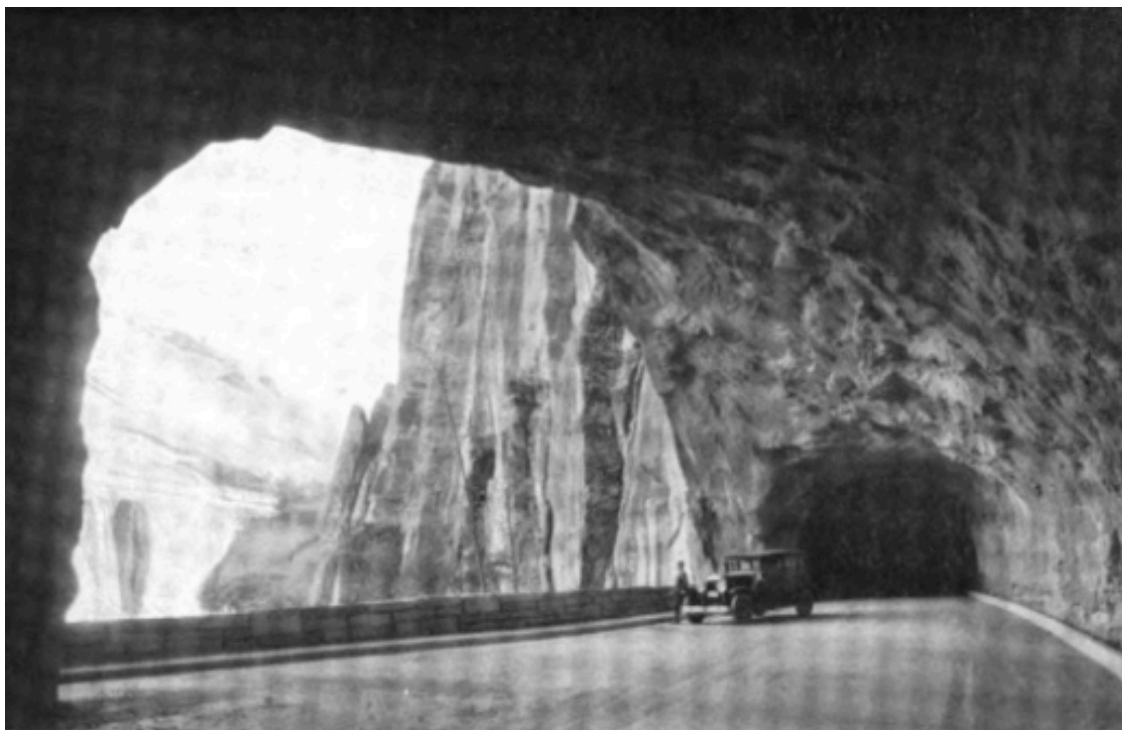


Fig. 2.13. "A Gallery of the New Mt. Carmel Highway," Zion National Park, Utah, c. 1931.

Union Pacific Railroad Company, *Zion, Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon National Parks*, (Chicago: Poole Brothers, Inc., c. 1931).



Fig. 2.14. View from Wawona Tunnel, Yosemite National Park, California, August 1965. Postcard.

Source: *Flickr*, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/hollywoodplace/3509258622/>

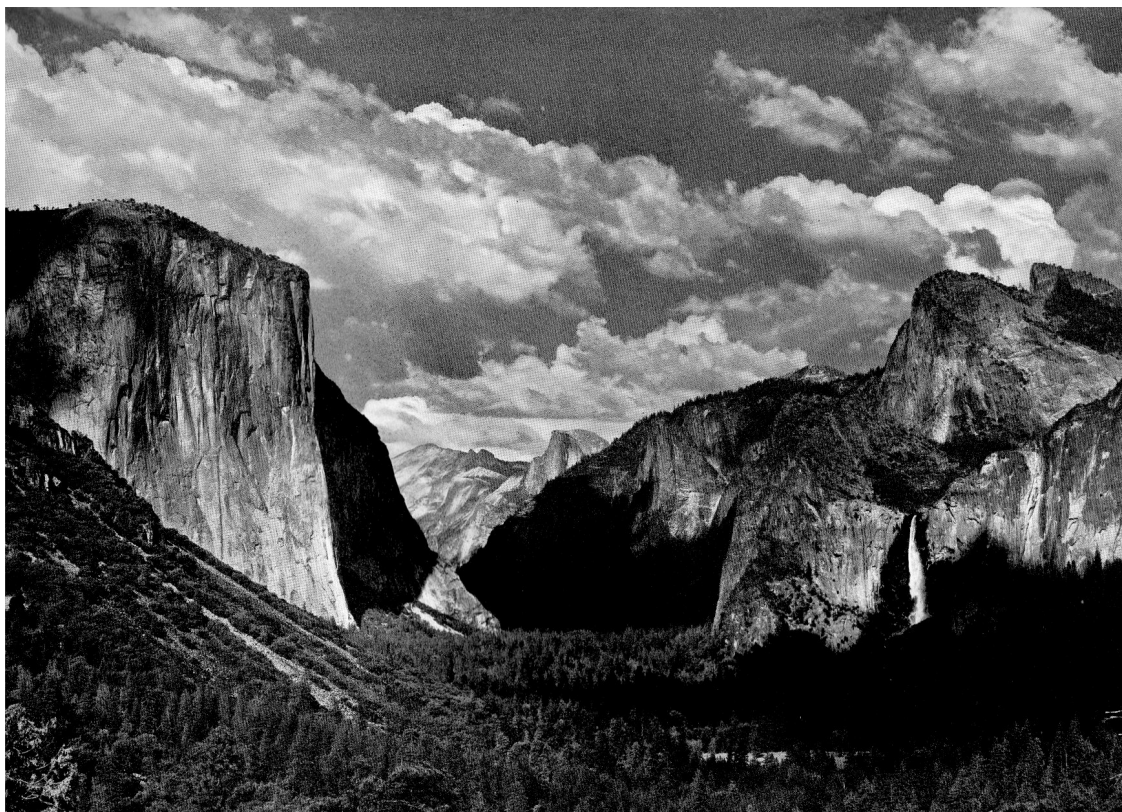


Fig. 2.15. Ansel Adams, *Clouds, from Tunnel Overlook, Yosemite National Park*, c. 1934. Photograph. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, California, gift of Mrs. Walter A. Haas.

Source: *San Francisco Museum of Modern Art*, <http://www.sfmoma.org/explore/collection/artwork/9933>.



Fig. 2.16. Dorothy Waugh, "Life at its Best," 1934. Poster (1 of 6). Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts.

Source: *Digital Commonwealth, Massachusetts Collection Online*,
<https://search.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:5999n3901>.



Fig. 3.17. "Mr. and Mrs. America and their youngsters." Cover. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Our Heritage, A Plan for its Protection and Use: Mission 66*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1956).

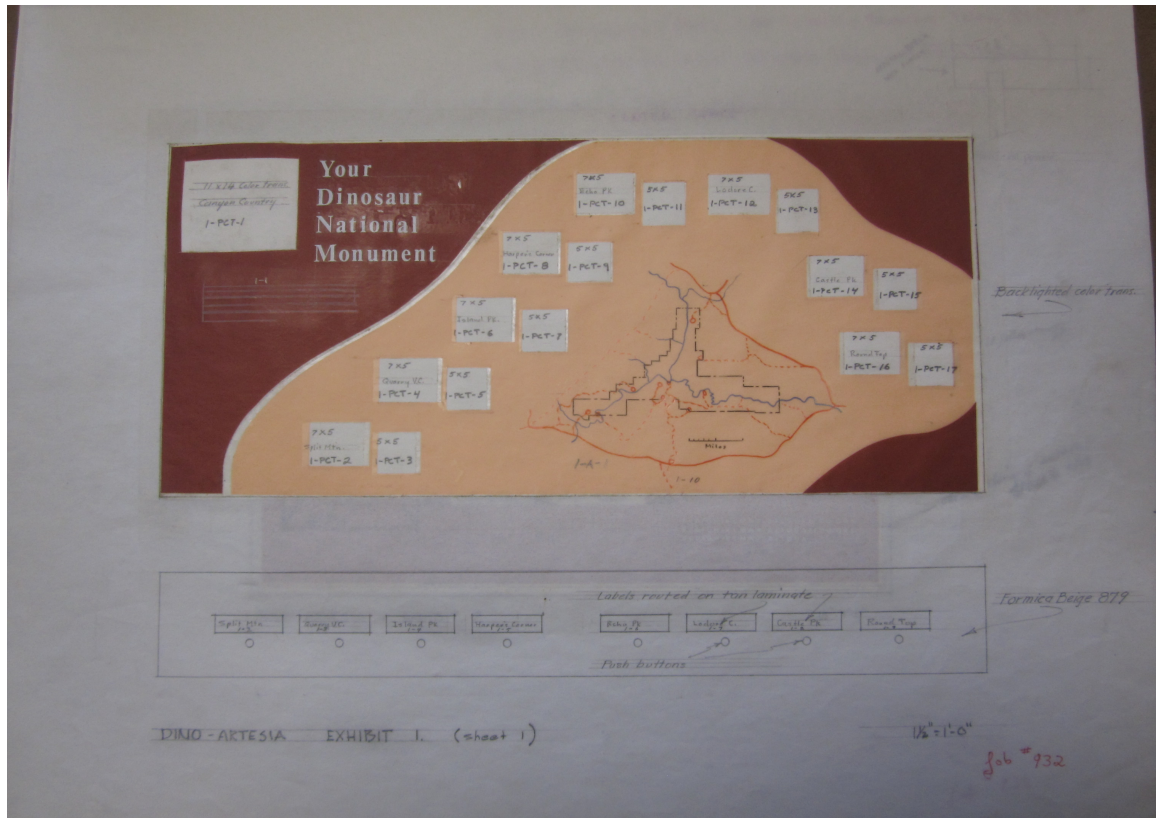


Fig. 3.18. Exhibit plan, "Your Dinosaur National Monument." Dinosaur National Monument Headquarters / Visitor Center at Artesia, Dinosaur National Monument, Colorado, 1964.

U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service, Western Museum Laboratory, "Dinosaur National Monument, Artesia Visitor Center" (Unpublished. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1964).



Fig. 3.19. Zion Visitor Center, Zion National Park, Utah, c. 1960. Postcard.

Source: *Flickr*, http://www.flickr.com/photos/edge_and_corner_wear/8422910049/sizes/l/in/photostream/

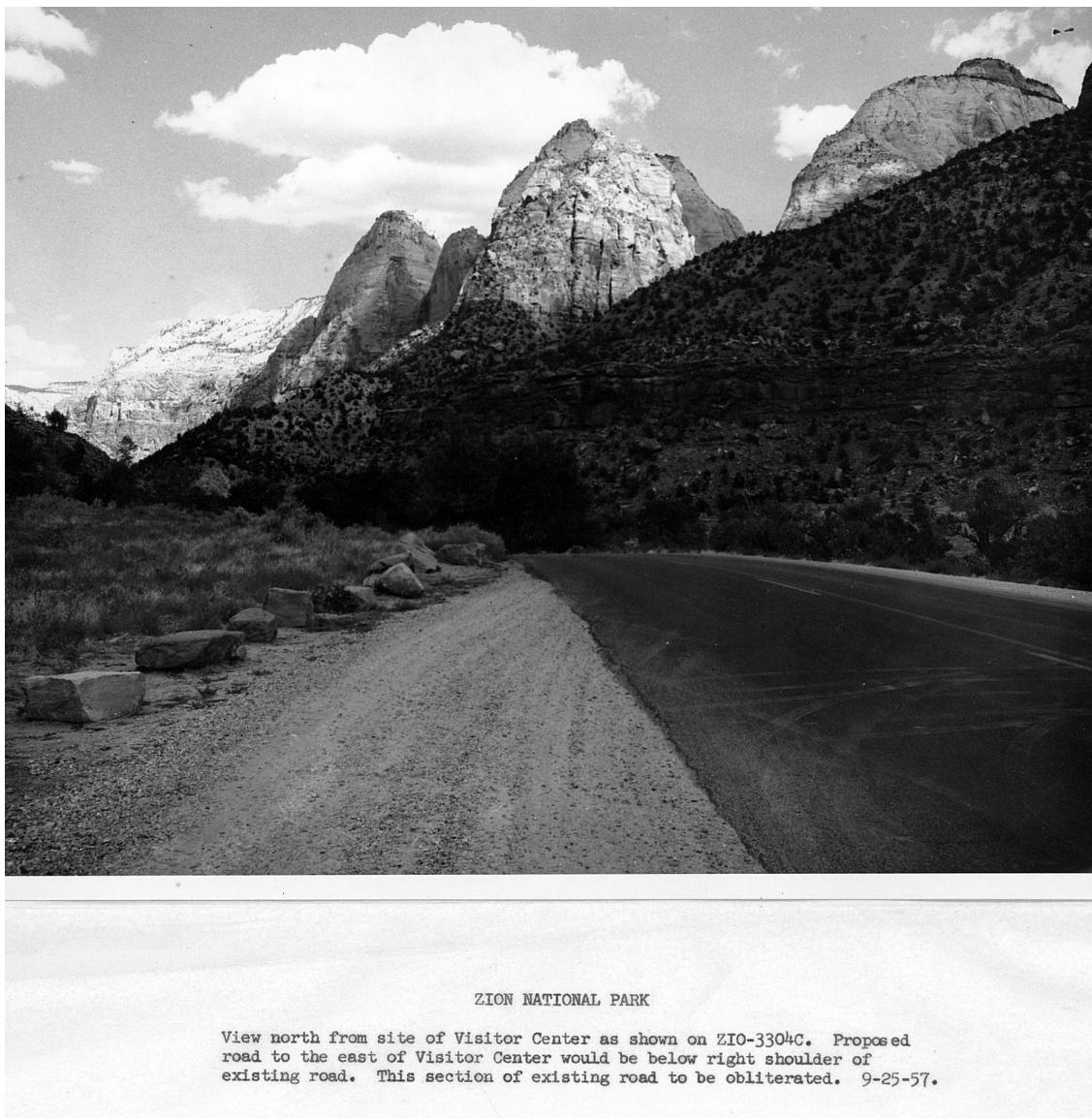


Fig. 3.20. View north from proposed Visitor Center, Zion National Park, Utah. September 1957. Photograph.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Colorado.



Fig 3.21. Thomas Moran, *Valley of Babbling Waters, Southern Utah*, 1876. Chromolithograph on wove paper, 9 ½ by 14 inches. Yale University Art Gallery, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, fund of Everett V. Meeks.

Source: *Yale University Art Gallery*, <http://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/valley-babbling-waters-southern-utah>

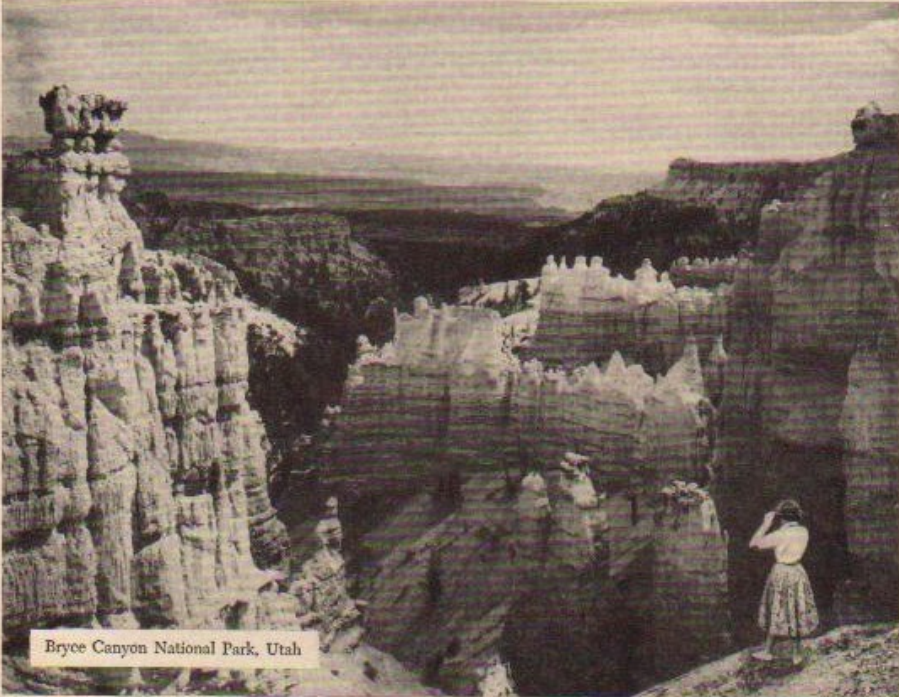


Fig. 3.22. Sketch of Death Valley National Visitor Center and Museum, Death Valley National Monument, California. Drawing by Cecil Doty, WODC, National Park Service.

Source: Death Valley '49ers, Inc. *The Story of Death Valley: Its Museum and Visitor Center*, (California: Death Valley '49ers, Inc., 1960).



Fig. 3.23. Ansel Adams, Yosemite National Park, California, 1947. Standard Oil, "See Your West," album. In the collection of the Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado.



Bryce Canyon National Park, Utah

"A Mighty Tough Place To Find A Stray Cow"

There it lay at his feet – a chasm three miles long and a thousand feet deep – with myriads of fantastically shaped spires and turrets, towering in flaming array. And Ebenezer Bryce, viewing for the first time the horseshoe-shaped basin that now bears his name, is reported to have said, "A mighty tough place to find a stray cow."

Today Bryce Canyon National Park is still a tough place to find a cow. But among its bright-colored formations you'll find delight for the eye and food for the imagination. Here

you can ride the breath-taking Rim Road, called "the most colorful 20 miles in the world," or go below the rim to places as colorful as their names – Silent City... Peek-a-Boo Canyon... the Queen's Garden.

Geologists will tell you this is erosion at work, with frost, snow and rain patiently sculpturing the soft rocks of Utah's Pink Cliffs. The less scientific have called it music frozen in stone. The music wasn't identified. It could be "America the Beautiful."

Sinclair Salutes the National Grange

Founded in 1866, the Grange is the oldest and largest farm fraternity in the world and has always had a natural interest in conservation and in our National Parks. With headquarters at 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C., this organization for many years has been active in promoting soil and water conservation for the farming lands upon which our economy depends. We salute the Grange for its part in creating in Americans the understanding and cooperation so necessary to accomplish this worthy objective.

MOTORISTS – if you would like to visit the National Parks, the Sinclair Tour Service will help you plan your trip. Write: Sinclair Oil Corporation, Sinclair Oil Building, 600 Fifth Avenue, New York 20, New York.

SINCLAIR
A Great Name in Oil

Fig. 3.24. "A Mighty Tough Place to Find A Stray Cow," advertisement for Sinclair Oil, 1955.

Source: *Ebay*, http://www.ebay.com/itm/1955-Ebenezer-Bryce-Canyon-National-Park-Utah-Sinclair-Oil-Print-Ad/231042028324?pt=LH_DefaultDomain_0&hash=item35cb2d9324



Fig. 3.25. View-Master, Yosemite National Park, California, 1948. Slide.

Source: *Panoramio*, <http://www.panoramio.com/photo/3190958>.



Fig. 3.26. John Hood and Herb Archer, "Trail Ride in the Grand Tetons, Wyoming," Kodak Colorama #245, October 1964.

Source: *Kodak*, http://www.kodak.com/ek/US/en/The_Kodak_Colorama.htm.

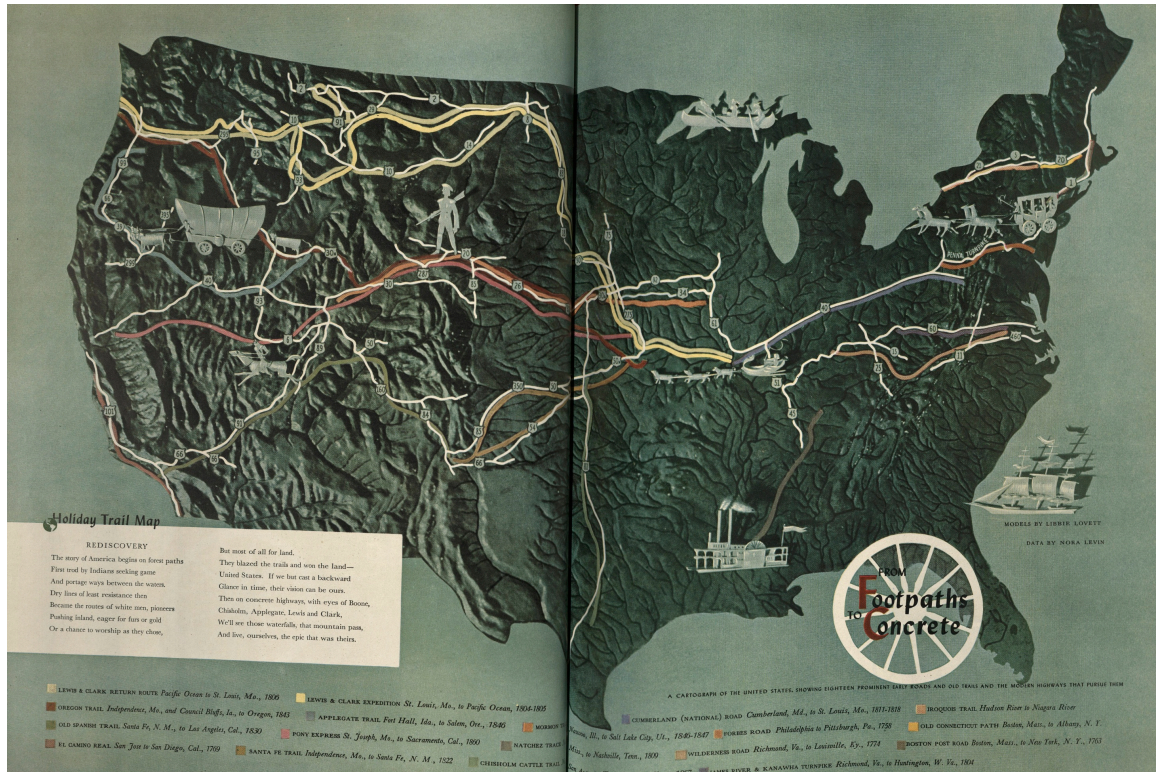


Fig. 3.27. "Footpaths to Concrete."
 From "Rediscovering America," *Holiday*, August 1946.



Fig. 3.28. Sign and entrance, Frontierland, Disneyland, California. Photograph, 1955.

Source: *O. C. History Roundup*, <http://ochistorical.blogspot.com/2011/12/disneyland-steps-in-time-frontierland.html>



Fig. 3.29. Exhibit plan, "Death Valley." Death Valley Visitor Center and Museum, Death Valley National Monument, California, 1957-59.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Western Museum Laboratory, "Death Valley National Monument Exhibit Plan," (Unpublished. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Colorado. c. 1957-59).



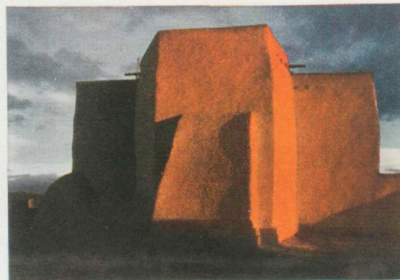
Fig. 3.30. Exhibition, Death Valley Visitor Center and Museum, Death Valley National Monument, California, 1960. Photograph by Philip Hyde.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Colorado.



Yosemite National Park—Cloud shadows are used to separate planes and give added depth to the picture

Ansel Adams' America... in Kodak Color



Rancho de Taos Church in sunset lighting

FOR YEARS Ansel Adams has been living in Yosemite, conducting a school of photography in San Francisco . . . and making magnificent pictures without end. He holds a Guggenheim Fellowship Award, with the mission of depicting the National Parks of America.

To his mastery of the photographic technic Adams adds a rare sensitivity to nature. He has a deep and instinctive understanding of the plains, river valleys, mountains, forests,

Kodak

Fig. 3.31. "Ansel Adams' America... in Kodak Color," advertisement for Kodak, 1948.

Source: *Popular Photography*, March 1948, 75-78.



Fig. 3.33. Exhibition, Bryce Canyon National Park Visitor Center, Bryce Canyon National Park, Utah, c. 1960. Photograph by Philip Hyde.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Colorado.

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