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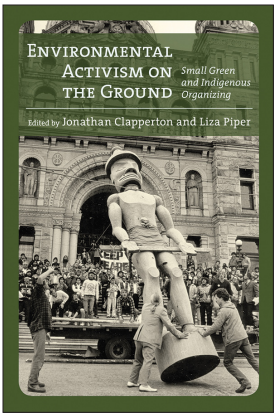

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM ON THE GROUND: Small Green and Indigenous Organizing

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Parks For and *By* the People: Acknowledging Ordinary People in the Formation, Protection, and Use of State and Provincial Parks

Jessica M. DeWitt

Provincial and state park history is still underdeveloped in the larger field of environmental history. National parks garner the most celebratory and analytical attention within scholarship and from society at large. The provincial and state park histories that go beyond surface-level treatment lean toward political and institutional histories or "great men" narratives, both of which focus on those in elite positions in society. The voices and unique experiences of the citizens for whom the parks were supposedly created are often pushed to the background, glossed over, or ignored completely. A refocus on more ordinary people—whether tourists, business owners, volunteers, or others—in park historiography enables historians to examine the ways in which economic and cultural practices interact with and change the environment at ground level by taking park landscapes, their people, and their flora and fauna out of the abstract and placing them at the forefront of park histories. This in turn requires that studies of small-scale conservation or environmental organizations expand to include individuals and groups that do not readily fall into conventional perceptions of environmental activism, but whose actions, be they recreational

or work-based, have tangible effects on the creation and management of state and provincial parks.

The neglect of non-elite narratives reflects the difficulties in writing a park history that focuses on the viewpoints and experiences of ordinary people. The sources, if they exist at all, are challenging to find. In contrast, official park service documents and the personal papers of conservationists and politicians abound. Another reason for this neglect is the general disconnect between environmental and social history, as described by Stephen Mosley in "Common Ground: Integrating Social and Environmental History."[1] The very nature of the field of social history rests on its focus on "ordinary people, rather than the elite."[2] Further, it claims that these ordinary people have complex pasts that shaped greater historical processes and deserve the same kind of serious analytical attention given to political and intellectual figures.[3] The absence of social history's capacity for illuminating the common person's experience is one of environmental history's failings, despite the fact that both fields "seek the structures lurking behind the more conspicuous but short-term events" and are typically grounded in "present-mindedness."[4] In his article "Modes of Prophecy and Production: Placing Nature in History," William Cronon argues that the greatest weakness of environmental history is its failure to look at individual stories and "[tease] apart the diverse material roles and perceptual experiences of different people in the holistic 'system.'"[5] Mosley explicates on this issue further, stating that in environmental history "ordinary people, with their different interests, desires, and experiences, can disappear from view."[6]

Park historiography is a microcosm of this larger divide between social and environmental history. One reason is that environmental history that does succeed in a "from-below" approach tends to have what Karl Jacoby calls a "lopsided understanding of the past"[7] that focuses primarily on the urban working and middle class and ignores rural residents and working- and /middle-class experiences gained outside the urban landscape. Another reason is park history's obsession with origin stories. Park histories that focus on the battle to preserve a piece of land under park legislation usually end at park conception, leading to stories that are heavy on policy and political manoeuvring but do little to illuminate the way in which park creation affects those on the ground before, during, and after

the park is created. To gloss over or ignore the experiences and opinions of those individuals for whom the parks were meant is a common oversight of park historians. Individuals within the general populace tend to be lumped into vague groups—"the public supporters," "the people," "park users," "environmentalists," "conservationists"—enabling their inclusion in the narrative without a clear understanding of who they are and what motives may be driving them.[8]

The role of ordinary people in provincial and state park history is arguably just as vital, if not more so, than their role in national park history.[9] Although they are often treated as a less important after-effect of national park creation, it is important to acknowledge that provincial and state parks have their own unique history that deserves individual investigation. Inclusion of ordinary people is important to both national and urban park history as well, but this chapter will focus on provincial and state parks. Provincial and state parks were created as part of wider attempts to democratize recreation in Canada and the United States. Yet they typically have not been as prominent in the tug-of-war between recreation and preservation as have national parks. Accessible recreation and its resulting revenues have almost always been the main objective of provincial and state parks.[10] As Ney C. Landrum points out, "state [and provincial] parks occupy a central position in the overall gamut of public outdoor recreation, bridging the critical gap . . . between the largely playground types of recreation provided by America's cities and towns and the contrasting backcountry recreational experiences available in the vast national parks."[11] The rallying cry of the original National Conference on [State] Parks (1921), "a state park every hundred miles," highlights the importance of public accessibility as a goal in the creation of state and provincial parks.[12]

Recent developments in state and provincial park historiography have begun to include more ordinary voices and experiences. In their introduction to a special issue of *Environment and History*, Keith Thor Carlson and Jonathan Clapperton point out the general neglect of non-national parks in historical literature despite their debatably greater impact on the lives of the general populace. National parks have received more attention by historians, they argue, largely because the homogeneity of the national parks' "central structure . . . makes it easier to create interpretive

metanarratives."[13] Carlson and Clapperton highlight the opportunity for non-national park histories to illuminate the role that parks play in local processes of community-building ideology, along with the prospect of unearthing and focusing upon subaltern perspectives. One of these underdeveloped perspectives in provincial and state park history, to which Carlson and Clapperton pay especial attention, is that of Indigenous peoples. They argue that too often Indigenous voices are lost in the sea of vagueness that characterizes historical treatments of adjacent park citizenry, failing to acknowledge the unique set of experiences and concerns that separate Indigenous groups from the dominant society.[14] Evans' chapter (this volume) offers some insights in this regard as he compares a provincial park and Indigenous reserves with national parks across the Americas.[15]

To create a more complete history of provincial and state parks, historians must also turn their attentions to the peripheries of the parks, for the effects of park formation and management are more far reaching than park boundaries suggest. In order for this to happen, historians need to broaden their scope when looking at park histories. Mosley offers three main frameworks under which environmental and social history can begin to grow together: environments and identities, environmental justice, and environment and consumption.[16] These frameworks are helpful for thinking about how park historians can better acknowledge the experiences of a broader spectrum of people, and also make connections between local histories from across Canada and the United States. In park history, stories of identity and stories of consumption and the environment tend to blur together. For example, the consumption of the environment at children's summer camps in and around Algonquin Provincial Park, as shown in Sharon Wall's *The Nurture of Nature*, facilitated the development of a modern Ontarian identity anchored in performative anti-modernism.[17] Additionally, research that addresses the development of tourism in state and provincial parks, as discussed later in this chapter, demonstrates the way in which the selling and purchasing of outdoor experiences contribute to the identity-formation of both business owners and tourists. Issues of environmental justice stand to enrich park historiography significantly. Recent efforts to integrate such issues have been made most notably in William E. O'Brien's *Landscapes of Exclusion*. O'Brien traces the way in which Jim Crow laws affected the development of the American South's

state park systems and African American access to outdoor recreation.[18] Inspired by the work of the above scholars, this chapter explores the methods, approaches, and opportunities that will enable historians to better understand the role of ordinary people in provincial and state park history. I have chosen to focus on Ontario and Pennsylvania because their park systems represent two of my dissertation case studies and they effectively illuminate cross-border similarities in park creation and management. Specifically, I examine several thematic approaches that offer important insights, including broadening our understanding of the character of environmentalism; looking beyond park boundaries to explore connections between tourism and park history in particular; and examining the important place of work and voluntarism in shaping state and provincial parks. The chapter closes with a consideration of some important source materials for studying this kind of small green environmentalism.

Expedient Environmentalism

In an interview about *Black Faces, White Spaces*, Carolyn Finney states, "We don't hear about them [African Americans] because nobody calls [their actions] 'conservation.' They don't fit into the way we talk about environmentalism in the mainstream."[19] This assertion can also be applied generally to non-elite voices in provincial and state park history. The word "environmentalism" typically fosters images of impassioned protest. Furthermore, it often assumes a level of education and understanding of ecological processes on the part of the environmental activist that automatically eliminates a large proportion of the population from inclusion in the term "environmentalist." One cause of non-elite neglect in provincial and state park historiography is that these parks tend not to lend themselves to titillating stories of flashy environmental protest. Although these kinds of stories do exist, more often than not provincial and state parks' histories are shaped by more subtle societal movements and individual actions. To better flesh out these subtleties, it is helpful to expand one's definition of environmentalism to consider instances of both unintentional and expedient environmentalism. Unintentional (or accidental) environmentalism refers to the actions of an individual or group that are undertaken for non-environmental reasons but that have an unintended

positive effect on the environment. Expedient environmentalism is characterized by environmentally positive actions that are undertaken for a desired outcome other than environmentalism, such as economic gain or positive publicity.[20] Chad Montrie introduces this concept in his article on Appalachian coal mining and the United Mine Workers of America (UMW). He demonstrates that with regard to surface mining, the UMW believed that "promotion of limited regulation seemed likely to stave off stricter regulation or abolition that would cut into strip mine employment."[21] The UMW supported mining regulation not because of environmental concerns but rather because it represented the most likely avenue by which to ensure the continued, long-term employment of its members. The concept of "unintentional environmentalism" is linked to the idea of "environmentalism of the poor," which is more commonly used in studies outside North America and Europe, although Leeming (this volume), among others, has connected it to the Canadian context.[22]

Cook Forest State Park in Cooksburg, Pennsylvania, offers an effective case study for examining the way in which broadening one's definition of environmentalism can augment the stories of ordinary people in park history. Cook Forest is on land originally owned by the Cook lumber dynasty. It is ecologically significant because the park contains the largest stand of old-growth forest in the United States east of the Mississippi River. Despite this significant fact, this parcel of old-growth timber was not easy to save. It took eighteen years, numerous personal and political battles, and a national campaign to get the Pennsylvanian government to purchase the land for the purpose of a state park; in the end the state only pledged $450,000 of the $650,000 needed to buy the tract of land, while the other $200,000 had to be raised by public donations.

The eighteen-year campaign to preserve the forest as a park can be divided into two distinct phases.[23] The first phase, from 1910 to 1923, was defined by its leader, M. I. McCreight—a banker, philanthropist, and good friend of the Cook family patriarch, A. W. Cook—who attempted to unite his elite friends and the Pennsylvanian government around the Cook Forest State Park idea under a rallying call for "practical" conservation. McCreight's efforts largely fell on deaf ears because what he advocated for, namely preservation for preservation's sake, was not, at that time, viewed by either the public or the government as a viable reason for saving a piece

of land.[24] The second phase of the Cook Forest campaign began in 1924 when Pittsburgh industrialist and conservationist Thomas Liggett took over the cause and founded the Cook Forest Association, the membership of which was made up of local industrialists and politicians. Liggett successfully ended the campaign with a victory in 1928 by cleverly inviting non-elites into the cause and adopting utilitarian-based, recreation-based, and economically based rhetoric. Although it can be argued that without the participation of non-elites in the last stages of the campaign the state would not have created Cook Forest State Park, the story of the park's creation, as told by historians to date, remains focused on McCreight, Liggett, Cook, and other elite players in the campaign, including national conservation figures Gifford Pinchot and J. Horace McFarland.

One way to more effectively extrapolate the role of ordinary citizens in the Cook Forest campaign saga is to further investigate the demographics, identities, and motivations of the local residents who contributed money to the campaign. The Cook Forest Association assigned specific donation goals to the surrounding counties and towns. Venango County, for instance, was expected to raise $125,000 toward the purchase of the old-growth tract and surrounding land.[25] To assist in this endeavour, Cook Forest Association hosted "County Days" to both reward and enlist donors.[26] The association emphasized that no donation was too small and publicized every donation of $1 or more; the average donation by local residents was $75.[27] A list of all donors once existed at the park but has since been lost.

Surviving historical sources indicate that much of the local populace supported the Cook Forest State Park campaign for reasons other than preservation. For instance, residents of Pleasantville, located thirty miles northwest of Cook Forest, supported the Cook Forest campaign because it was an opportunity to push their regional agenda and to attract attention and state money to their often-neglected, rural portion of the state. "Pleasantville residents see the forest," an article in the *Titusville Herald* read, "not only as an opportunity to preserve the last available tract of virgin timber but an incentive to auto traffic that will help in the local appeal for more paved highways in the district."[28] Cook Forest was also supported by local residents because of the opportunity to benefit from tourism revenue in an otherwise financially challenged region. Nearby towns competed for

the title "Gateway to Cook Forest." Liggett and other Cook Forest Association members promised local residents that their towns would see upward of $500,000 in revenue each year from park tourism. One local newspaper article read that Cook Forest "is a proposition which every man and woman in this section should get behind and boost, if not for sentimental reasons, from a purely business standpoint."[29] Cook Forest and its stand of virgin timber was saved not because of its ecological value but rather because of its potential direct and indirect use and existence values. Glenn C. Blomquist and John C. Whitehead define existence value, also known as off-site value or passive use value, as "the maximum willingness to pay for preserving the natural resource even though the individual does not visit the site."[30] It was more advantageous for local residents and the Pennsylvanian government to help save the timber than it was to let it fall to the axe. Examples of this kind of expedient environmentalism are numerous in state and provincial park history.

Beyond Park Borders

Further progress can be made to unearth the voices of common people in Cook Forest's past by expanding the park's history beyond park borders—to see the park as a regional instrument of environmental restoration and economic activity, not just as an island of preservation. When one looks beyond the artificial boundaries of the park, one finds that it is part of a much larger, complex, and neglected story. Cook Forest's relationship to the Clarion River, which runs through the park, is an example of why park history needs to expand its reach. The Clarion River runs from Johnsonburg, Pennsylvania, to just south of Emlenton, Pennsylvania, where it meets the Allegheny River. Throughout the nineteenth and into the early twentieth century, the Clarion served as a corridor of timber, tanning, paper, and wood chemical industries. Millions of gallons of waste and chemicals were dumped into the river daily.[31] Declared ecologically dead in 1909 and described as "unfit for life" and "black like ink,"[32] the Clarion River has since come back. A portion of it is now labelled a National and Wild Scenic River, and it serves as a recreational focal point for visitors to western Pennsylvania.[33]

The accounts of how this ecological revivification occurred follow a typical trajectory. Deforestation caused the timber industry to decline, subsequently leading to the decline of the tanning and wood chemical plants along the river, with the last plants closing in 1963 and 1948 respectively.[34] The major paper mill in Johnsonburg slowly cleaned up its act by modernizing its facility. The Clarion was initially identified as a study river by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, but it was considered too polluted for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System until 1996, when 17.1 miles of the river were declared "scenic" and 34.6 miles of the river were labelled "recreational."[35] This restoration was credited largely to the decline of the area's industry and to state and federal legislation, and was also vaguely attributed to increased public interest in the river. The "Clarion River and Mill Creek Wild and Scenic Eligibility River Report," for instance, states that "these changed conditions were brought about, in part, by renewed public interest for long-term protection of this river and improved industrial conditions affecting the river."[36]

The problem with this explanation of the Clarion River's rebound is threefold. Firstly, it does not consider the role of reforestation. Secondly, it does not delve deeply into why there was renewed public interest in the health of the river beginning in the 1960s. Thirdly, it does not take into account the creation of the Allegheny National Forest (1923), Clear Creek State Park (1922), or Cook Forest State Park (1928) along its banks. The oversight that draws these three issues together is the omission of any consideration of the parallel development of the area's tourism industry and the restoration of the river. Vacation cabin rental businesses popped up on the outskirts of Cook Forest in the late 1920s. After the park's creation, the area became one of the chief vacation destinations for middle- and working-class families from nearby cities, namely Pittsburgh and Cleveland. By 1956, the Cook Forest Vacation Bureau's brochure listed over twenty places to stay in the area immediately surrounding the park.[37] The prevalence of privately owned accommodations and recreational attractions, like horseback riding and canoeing, increased exponentially through the early 1990s. In this time, as described by several current and former business owners, park usage patterns changed.[38] When the park was initially created, visitors flocked to the Forest Cathedral—the stand of the tallest old-growth pine in the park. However, as the years passed the recreational

focus of the park gradually moved to the river. Today, during the summer, the river is lined with cars, and hundreds of individuals swim, canoe, and float down the river each day. The rise in the popularity of canoeing also denotes a move from state-sponsored recreation within the park to recreation provided by private businesses.

There is no record—at least that has been found to date—of any organized protest or support for the cleanup of the river on the part of the business owners. Instead, the parallel stories are connected by a quiet and utilitarian approach to environmentalism on the part of these individuals. They supported the restoration of the river and reforestation because these measures were good for business, and this business, in turn, helped lead to the restoration of the river. As Scott Moranda argues, when tourism enters a post-extraction landscape, like that of western Pennsylvania, the "tourism industry transform[s] the built and natural environments to better serve consumers. Tourists and locals . . . develop . . . expectations (sometimes conflicting) for the appearance of that landscape based on their local needs, leisure preferences, or larger national traditions."[39] Expedient environmentalism connects what goes on inside parks with what goes on outside. When it is overlooked, as in the basic narrative of the Clarion's restoration, the role of locals is overshadowed by governmental actors and policies, and larger environmental groups.

The Clarion River/Cook Forest link serves as an example of the important connections between private tourism and provincial and state parks, which warrant greater attention in environmental historiography. As Moranda observes in a historiographical essay, "in many ways, historians of tourism have always written about the environment,"[40] but it is not until relatively recently that historians have purposely and successfully meshed the fields together. Aaron Shapiro's *The Lure of the North Woods: Cultivating Tourism in the Upper Midwest* draws from the "Minnesota Resort Industry Oral History Project" and other collections to create a more complex understanding of the interconnection between the environment, tourism, and personal experience.[41] Shapiro demonstrates that "like earlier lumbermen, [tourist business owners] also saw profit in nature . . . they relied on the regenerative forces to provide a new cash crop, a forested and lake-dotted countryside offering outdoor recreation for the masses."[42] In the case of Cook Forest, the area surrounding the park developed into a

working and middle-class vacationland operated by small business owners who were a mix of locals looking for economic opportunity and outsiders looking for more serene, rural settings in which to make a living. The presence of these businesses and their owners affected the way in which the park and its surrounding area developed during the twentieth century. Shapiro's study is only partly about state parks; most of his analysis is directed toward the larger region in which the parks were situated. The role of privately owned tourism operations outside and inside provincial and state parks accentuates the importance of looking at developments both inside the parks and along the park peripheries.

Work, Voluntarism, And Parks

In her article "Laboring the Earth: Transnational Reflections on the Environmental History of Work," Stefania Barca argues that the intersection of work and nature is underrepresented in environmental history literature. She suggests "three arenas where the connections between work and environment can be investigated. The first presents the landscape as reflective of past human labor. The second examines the workplace and its relationship with the local community. The third focuses on working-class and labor environmental activism."[43] The place of labour within parks is part of the larger integration of work and environmental history and acts as another avenue by which ordinary people can be repositioned inside parks history.

From Ontario, in *Algonquin: The Park and Its People*, Liz Lundell and photographer Donald Standfield focus, by way of interviews and photographs, on the stories of individuals who have made their living in a park setting.[44] By studying parks and their peripheries as a kind of workplace, historians can better understand the role of labour in shaping the process of "emparkment."[45] When it comes to voluntarism, the opportunities for historical research are readily apparent. In both Canada and the United States, many national, provincial, and state parks enjoy an allied connection to "Friends of . . . " and other similar cooperating, philanthropic associations. Most "friends" groups rely on a mixture of private and corporate donations, special event proceeds, and grants.[46] Such organizations exemplify one form of small-scale environmentalism directly tied to the history

of parks. Historically, although the size and success of these groups varied, most friends groups associated with provincial and state parks were managed by local citizens and were relatively small. A handful, like Ontario's The Friends of Algonquin Park (FOAP), were large enough to support paid staff. The FOAP originated in 1983 when the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources approached private citizens about their willingness to work with a cooperating association if one were to be founded. The FOAP was the first provincial park cooperating association in Ontario. These original citizens, according to the FOAP, were motivated by a mutual passion for the park.[47] Under the original agreement between the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the FOAP, the FOAP took over the financing of park publications, using the profits for mutually agreed-upon educational and interpretive programs within the park.[48] Before the creation of the FOAP, the Ontario government had handled the publication of all Ontario parks material. This revenue was shared between all parks, and that led to a shortage of printed material at more popular parks like Algonquin. With its creation, the FOAP took over "responsibility for selling and reprinting official [Algonquin] Park publications using the revenue generated from their sale. This sales revenue would no longer return to the Ontario Government, but rather stay in the [p]ark to enhance educational publication offerings and more."[49] Between 1983 and 1988, the gross revenue of the FOAP increased from $34,869 to $316,277.[50] By 2007, the organization had 3,069 members.[51] Today Algonquin Provincial Park and the FOAP are entirely interdependent. The FOAP runs the gift shops, organizes workshops and activities, pays many of the employees associated with the park, supports research of park history and a park archive, publishes the park publications, and even raised millions to build the park's visitor centre and logging museum.[52] Without the presence of this charitable organization, Algonquin Provincial Park would only be a shadow of what it is today.

Pinery Provincial Park, also in Ontario, has its own group, founded in 1989. The Friends of Pinery Park (FPP), although smaller than the FOAP, began under similar circumstances—a desire by concerned local residents to educate park visitors and the general public about the park's environment. The FPP describes itself as "a charitable organization dedicated to the education, promotion, preservation and support of Pinery Provincial Park."[53] Like the FOAP, the FPP, since its inception, has relied on the sale

of park-related publications, products, and memberships to fund their park programs. FPP park programs such as poster contests and Father's Day canoe hikes are all aimed at fostering a balance between increased park visitation and public knowledge of the park's delicate environment.[54]

Charitable organizations like the FPP and the FOAP ride the line between non-elite and elite status. Some, like the FOAP, raise enough money to carry serious clout in the conservation realm, but they do not have any legislative powers. They are also often run by private citizens with high levels of education and relative influence in their communities. However, they are fundamentally organizations run by the "people," funded by small donations that typically amount to less than $100 and fuelled by volunteer participation. These "friends" groups deserve closer scrutiny in the histories of provincial and state parks because their rise in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s coincided with cuts in funding to provincial and state park systems. The upsurge in these organizations represents a takeover of basic park functions by volunteers. Who were (and are) these people? The records of the FOAP show that board members have included teachers, insurance agents, filmmakers, and attorneys.[55] What motivated them? What changes occurred in the park systems to necessitate the development of these cooperative organizations? What effect did the presence of these organizations have on recreational and preservationist aspects of provincial and state parks? What would provincial and state parks look like today if these volunteer organizations had not stepped in to help? These are questions that deserve fuller attention in provincial and state park historiography, and they are questions that will lead to a more complete understanding of the role of non-elites in the management of parks.

New Sources, New Stories

To find non-elites in state and provincial park histories, historians must both expand and fine-tune their research to include lesser-known and non-manuscript items. Source materials to watch for, which can sometimes be found within the governing files of individual provincial parks, are public surveys and petitions. Jenny Clayton demonstrated how to use such sources in her article "'Human Beings Need Places Unchanged by Themselves': Defining and Debating Wilderness in the West Kootenays,

1969–74," in which she opens with several quotes from letters and petitions written by local Kootenay residents.[56] The use of public surveys in park planning and management by provincial and state governments grew exponentially during the 1970s. In Canada, this growth coincided with the near-urban park movement; originating in Ontario and spreading across the country to other provincial park systems, this movement aimed to increase accessibility to outdoor recreation.[57] This spirit of public inclusion in the 1970s also infiltrated the park-planning processes of new and established rural parks, an example of which is Rondeau Provincial Park.

Created in 1894, Rondeau is Ontario's second oldest provincial park and one of the few parks in the system that still supports the leasing of park land to cottage owners. Today, the cottages in Rondeau are protected as a heritage conservation district.[58] However, the cottage community is not uncontroversial, as many individuals still believe that cottage communities have no place in provincial parks and threaten the ecological integrity of the parks.[59] This conflict has deep-seated roots dating as far back as the 1920s.[60] The James Gordon Nelson fonds at the Laurier Archives at Wilfrid Laurier University contain a wealth of documents relating to the 1970s manifestation of the cottager-versus-preservation battle.

Hidden within the collection are two folders that contain hundreds of letters and completed surveys written by local residents of Ontario's Rondeau Provincial Park in response to proposed changes to the parks management plan in the 1970s.[61] In May 1974, the Rondeau Provincial Park Advisory Committee was created to gather expert opinions on the future of the park as well as to solicit "the views of the public . . . in the form of letters or briefs from individuals and groups with an interest in the planning of the park."[62] Local residents were sent a "comment sheet" that provided "topics for consideration" such as "What are your views about the character and image of the park? Why?" and "Which activities and/or facilities should be included and encouraged in the park?"[63] The response rate was high. Residents were particularly vocal in the files about proposed removal of the private cottages in the park and the authorization/prohibition of hunting in the park. From these letters and surveys there are several discernible themes.

First, residents viewed the removal of the cottages to be an unnecessary action that trampled on their rights, illustrating a conflict between public and private land uses. One concerned citizen wrote, "If the ministry wishes to buy my cottage now, at full value, not 10% per year decrease, then rent it back to me for a reasonable amount. . . . I am prepared to consider this step . . . in the democratic process, people do have certain rights. One of these is to be treated in a *fair* and *equal* matter—especially by government."[64] Second, the letters demonstrate that the public's expectations for the park often clashed with Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources strategies and environmental programs. Many residents saw no conflict between increased development in the park and the park's ecology. One individual suggests that the park would benefit from the addition of a zoo, a "beautiful restaurant," and a boardwalk along the beach of at least six feet in width.[65] Third, the letters illustrate a belief that local knowledge of the park trumped that of so-called experts. One long-time cottage goer commenting on individuals who grew up summering at the park stated, "These same young people have walked the several miles of Beach, searched the woods for wild flowers and wild life and probably understood the Balance of Nature better in that Park than some of our experts who have not been brought up near Rondeau Park."[66] The records show that the advisory committee found it difficult to tabulate and summarize the variety of responses given, not to mention using them to implement changes.[67]

Additionally, the letters illuminate class tensions between different types of park users—tensions that do not come to light when park users are lumped together as one homogenous group. Some of the letters state that campers, day-users, and cottage owners have coexisted harmoniously.[68] However, other letters suggest that the white, Christian, middle-class cottage owners were the "right" kind of park user; that they, unlike the tent camper and day-use visitor, were invested in the long-term health of the park and were essentially on-site caretakers. One letter writer speaks to racial tensions in the park, stating that removal of "white cottagers" might lead park use to become "oriented to the Shrewsbury and North End black communities."[69] Examination of these kinds of sources often demonstrate the disconnect between policies that supported the democratization of outdoor recreation and how these policies played out on the

ground, nuances that are often not brought to the forefront in policy-driven park histories.

These letters bring to light a set of voices all too often ignored or brushed over in provincial and state park historiography and reveal the thoughts, opinions, and emotions of ordinary people toward these parks. Aside from these kinds of manuscript sources, provincial and state parks can benefit from the fact that much of their history has occurred in the relatively recent past, opening the way for the utilization of non-manuscript sources, such as oral history and photographs. Ben Bradley has explored the use of photography that juxtaposed high and low elevations by the British Columbia Parks Division.[70] There exists enormous potential for comparable photographic essays of family photos from provincial and state parks to be conducted, for it was with photography that many individuals captured what was most important to them. Uncovering these photos and other sources that better illuminate the role of common people in provincial and state park history will require closer relationships between historians and the public.

Oral history is an invaluable resource for enriching documentary resources, like photographs, and for unearthing the stories of underrepresented individuals who have not left or are unlikely to leave a documentary trail behind. It also has the potential to broaden park historiography by exposing activities like vacationing and working inside parks that rarely leave a paper trail and highlighting the significance of individual experiences that may otherwise be deemed unimportant.[71] As Barbara Allen Bogart states, "the very act of asking people about their experiences can give . . . narrators a new awareness of the significance of those experiences."[72] The history of Indigenous peoples and the effect of park making on their communities stands to gain the most from more targeted, oral history–driven, provincial and state park historical investigations. Speaking in relation to the history of work in Northern Californian Native American communities, William Bauer comments that oral history "helps us avoid the frustration stemming from the pithy and often biased documents historians find in archives. With assiduous use, oral histories help provide an Indigenous-centred history and reveal the manner in which Indigenous peoples of North America remember and interpret historical changes in their lives."[73]

Lastly, one promising new means of uncovering the stories of park visitors and other non-elites associated with state and provincial parks lies in social media and crowdsourcing initiatives.[74] One example of this kind of initiative is run by the Yosemite Conservancy, which on its "Your Yosemite, Your Story" page asks, "What does Yosemite mean to you?" "We are all part of the Yosemite family," the web page states, "we've hiked and biked and camped. We've shared a picnic lunch in a shady grove or on a vista gazing into the Valley."[75] The conservancy then invites people to share their story. Another example can be found in New York on the Letchworth State Park Facebook page. In preparation for the opening of the park's new Nature Center, the park invites people to "be part of the story" by submitting their own Letchworth memories. The stories vary in length and subject matter, but they all contain a charming personal touch. One example connects the state park to the exuberance of young love:

> It was a few years after graduation when I came back to visit my baby. Our eyes met at the Kenwood and it was go time all over again. We stayed up all night parking in our favorite spot in the rock quarry. We made plans to go for a bike ride the next day in my favorite place Letchworth State Park. My heart was racing as he hauled ass there. But once we passed the front gate, he slowed down and covered every inch of that park. Stopping on the side of the road to make out and tease each other. He brought a blanket for us to lounge on in the bright autumn sun. We walked the tracks overhead to get the best view possible of the gorgeous gourge [*sic*] below. He held my hand the whole time being so protective over me. Once again promised things that you could not deliver. But I liked listening to your dreaming stories of how our life would pan out. I will love you forever is no joke.[76]

These are the kind of stories that are missing from the vast majority of park histories. The stories that reflect the essence of humanity interwoven into each park's history, the personal connections that make the parks relevant in the day-to-day life of the average person. Historians need to

use the full range of resources available to better represent these stories in academic scholarship.

Finding viable sources is the greatest challenge facing the movement of park historians toward the acknowledgement of ordinary people in the formation, protection, and use of state and provincial parks. However, in order to find these sources, historians must also step away from narratives that focus on park legislation defined by elite actions and government leaders and accounts that are limited by park boundaries. Historians need to look to the peripheries of parks, to the communities of individuals pushed out of the parkland by park legislation or drawn to the parks by promises of opportunity. Historians should aim to broaden their definition of environmentalism to include actions not conventionally categorized under the term. Lastly, park and environmental historians need to continue to make further linkages to research conducted in social history and tourism history. The long-term desire of Canadian and American citizens for places of outdoor recreation and tourism revenue has had lasting effects on the North American environment and society that go far beyond drawing park boundaries on a map.

Notes

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3 Stearns, "The New Social History," 4.

4 First quotation from Alan Taylor, "Unnatural Inequalities: Social and Environmental Histories," *Environmental History* 1, no. 4 (1996): 8; second quotation from Donald M. MacRaild and Avram Taylor, *Social Theory and Social History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 6.

5 William Cronon, "Modes of Prophecy and Production: Placing Nature in History," *Journal of American History* 76, no. 4 (1990): 1129.

6 Mosley, "Integrating," 920.

7 Karl Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature: Squatters, Poachers, Thieves, and the Hidden History of American Conservation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), xvi.

8 For further reading on state and provincial park history and examples of the historical approaches noted above, see: Ney C. Landrum, *The State Park Movement in America: A Critical Review* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004); Thomas R. Cox, *The Park Builders: A History of State Parks in the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988); Gerald Killan, *Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Provincial Parks System* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993); Rebecca Conard, *Places of Quiet Beauty: Parks, Preserves, and Environmentalism* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997); George Warecki, *Protecting Ontario's Wilderness: A History of Changing Concepts and Preservation Politics, 1927–1973* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000); John C. Lehr, "The Origins and Development of Manitoba's Provincial Park System," *Prairie Forum* 26, no. 2 (2001): 241–55; Roy W. Meyer, *Everyone's Country Estate: A History of Minnesota's State Parks* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1991).

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10 For further discussion of the argument, see Keith Carlson and Jonathan Clapperton, "Introduction: Special Places and Protected Spaces: Historical and Global Perspectives on Non-National Parks in Canada and Abroad," *Environment and History* 18, no. 4 (2012): 481–83.

11 Ney C. Landrum, *The State Park Movement in American: A Critical Review* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004), xi.

12 See Landrum, *State Park Movement*, 74–110.

13 Carlson and Clapperton, "Introduction," 481.

14 For examples of Indigenous experience integration into park historiography, see: Jonathan Clapperton, "Desolate Viewscapes: Sliammon First Nation, Desolation Sound Marine Park and Environmental Narratives," *Environment and History* 18, no. 4 (2012): 529–59; Roger Spielmann and Marina Unger, "Towards a Model of Co-Management of Provincial Parks in Ontario," *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 20, no. 2 (2000): 455–86; Bruce W. Hodgins and Kerry A. Cannon, "The Aboriginal Presence in Ontario Parks and Other Protected Places," in *Changing Parks: The History, Future and Cultural Context of Parks and Heritage Landscapes*, ed. John S. Marsh and Bruce W. Hodgins (Toronto: Natural Heritage/Natural History, 1998), 50–76.

15 The 2011 special issue of *BC Studies* focused on "Provincial Parks and Protected Areas" also included several articles that addressed the general public's involvement in provincial park history. See Ben Bradley, "Manning Park and the Aesthetics of Automobile Accessibility in 1950s British Columbia," *BC Studies* 170 (Summer 2011): 41–65; Jenny Clayton, "'Human Beings Need Places Unchanged by Themselves': Defining and Debating Wilderness in the West Kootenays, 1969–74," *BC Studies* 170 (Summer 2011): 93–118; Philip Van Huizen, "'Panic Park': Environmental Protest and the Politics of Parks in British Columbia's Skagit Valley," *BC Studies* 170 (Summer 2011): 67–92; Bradley's recent research focuses upon the history of "bad" behaviour in provincial parks, illuminating not the way in which common people's behaviour benefits parks but rather how their behaviour often clashes with park rules and broader social norms. "Wild Behaviour in Wild Spaces: Provincial Parks as Habitat of the Canadian 'Yahoo,' from Hippies to Headbangers" (paper presented at Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, St. Catharines, ON, 26 May 2014).

16 Mosley, "Integrating," 924–28.

17 Sharon Wall, *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario Summer Camps, 1920–55* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009).

18 William E. O'Brien, *Landscapes of Exclusion: State Parks and Jim Crow in the American South* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015).

19 Francie Latour, "Hiking While Black: The Untold Story," *Boston Globe*, 20 June 2014.

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21 Chad Montrie, "Expedient Environmentalism: Opposition to Coal Surface Mining in Appalachia and the United Mine Workers of America, 1945–1975," *Environmental History* 5, no. 1 (2000): 76–77.

22 For a discussion of this kind of environmentalism, see Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier, *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South* (London: Earthscan, 2006), 3–21.

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25 "To Form 10 Groups of Volunteers to Work for Cook Forest Funds," *Franklin News-Herald*, 16 August 1926.

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29 "Community Has Vital Financial Interest in Preservation of Cook Forest, Says Thos. Liggett at Meeting," *Brookville Republican*, 15 July 1926.

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34 Williams, "Tanneries."

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36 National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, "Clarion River and Mill Creek Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Report," March 1996, 10.

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39 Scott Moranda, "The Emergence of an Environmental History of Tourism," *Journal of Tourism History* 7, no. 3 (2015): 269.

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41 To access these interviews, visit "Minnesota Resort Industry Oral History Project, 1991–2000," *Minnesota Historical Society*, http://collections.mnhs.org/voicesofmn/index.php/10002530.

42 Aaron Shapiro, *The Lure of the North Woods: Cultivating Tourism in the Upper Midwest* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xiii.

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Part 2

HISTORIES