

American Indians, Place Meanings and the Old/New West

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The American West includes millions of acres of national parks, forests and other protected lands. These landscapes are often associated with sense of place and place meanings for those who live there and for people who go there for recreation and tourism. American Indian place meanings regarding national parks and protected areas are often very different from those of White Americans. This is due to differing interpretations of history, the symbolism of parks, and world views. These differences often result in conflict regarding management of recreation and tourism resources on and near Indian lands. The increased significance and presence of Indian tribes in the West make it necessary for scholars and practitioners in recreation, parks and tourism to have a deeper understanding of American Indians and their issues.

KEYWORDS: *American Indians, sense of place, place meanings, national parks and forests, symbolism, New West*

Introduction

The American West has long played a key role in recreation and tourism for the American people. The West is where most of the "crown jewels" of the national park system are located, as are most of the nation's designated wilderness areas, national forests, and other protected areas managed by federal agencies. These lands are visited by millions of Americans and international tourists each year. The parks and protected lands of the West are also important to the American psyche. Even those who do not visit these protected areas relate to them as part of America's heritage and national bounty of resources. The protected areas of the West seem to symbolize freedom, beauty and the renewal of the spirit to many Americans. Many would claim that many Americans have a general sense of place and place attachment to the landscapes of the West. So, it is important that professionals in recreation, parks and tourism understand the sense of place and place meanings Americans have regarding the West, have a realistic understanding of the changes that are happening in the West, understand the difference between the myths and the realities of the West, and understand the impli-

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cations that changes in the West will have for the recreation, park and tourism field.

The landscapes of the West are often cited as its most unique and compelling feature. The literature in our field, and others like geography and environmental psychology, indicates that landscapes represent socially constructed systems of meaning (Williams & Patterson, 1996; 1999). These landscapes of the West are often associated with sense of place of people who live there and people who go there for recreation and tourism. Sense of place traditionally described the bonds that people develop with the land though long residence or frequent times spent in a defined place (Tuan, 1974). But a more modern interpretation of "sense of place" includes the attachment people have with the land as a result of cultural connections to the land through symbols, myths and memories (Schama, 1995), and as a result of intense experiences on the land (Tuan, 1977). Sense of place has moved from being an unconscious condition of one's existence to a more self conscious one (Roberts, 1996). Sense of place, place attachment and place meaning have become major issues in recreation and tourism scholarship and management (Williams & Patterson, 1996; Williams & Stewart, 1998). Therefore, it is important that we understand how these concepts relate to the landscapes of the West and how changes in the West will influence how these concepts play out in recreation and tourism management.

The West is experiencing major changes that will have significant impacts on its landscapes, places and people. Population growth is creating sprawling cities with housing and commercial developments that block spectacular vistas. An economy that is shifting from resource extraction and ranching to more of a service-information based- tourism economy has attracted more people to move to the West. These newcomers expect a range of modern services including reliable water sources, jet airports, shopping areas and modern highways. They also demand access to the beautiful natural landscapes of the West, its parks and forests. Retirement developments, resorts, small hobby ranches and second homes near national parks and forests are changing the landscapes in areas that until recently were undeveloped. Geographers and regional planners are commenting on these issues and how the changes will influence the land and the people of the West. William Travis (name has been changed from Riebsame) (1997) and colleagues have written the *Atlas of the New West*, a book that I highly recommend for all those interested in the American West for professional and personal reasons. In their book, Travis and others make a compelling case that the interior American West is both changing and remaining the same; that some of the myths of the West are far from reality; and that even though the West is changing, its regional character or idiosyncrasy still separates it from other regions of the country.

Travis (1997) and others (Hunter, 1996; Limerick, 1987) see interesting parallels between the invasion and conquest of the West during the 1800's by the white settlers, ranchers, miners and timber cutters and the modern invasion and conquest of the West by those moving there today. Many of the

new arrivals today are attracted to the West because of its landscapes, opportunities for outdoor recreation, and the chance to live in the mythic "old west," a place of rugged individualism where one can refresh and reinvigorate oneself after the ravages of the life in urban America (Limerick, 1997). Limerick sees this as a constant cycle of locals seeing others coming in to settle nearby. Eventually newcomers regard themselves as locals. The locals develop a layered and deep sense of place and place attachment, then another set of newcomers come in and overwhelm them. The conflict that results is often centered on differences in sense of place and place meanings, often related to parks and other protected areas.

There are tensions in the New West relating to outdoor recreation and tourism, tensions between the new comers and the old timers like ranchers, timber, mining and oil people (Travis, 1997). But there are also tensions with the American Indians who were there centuries before the ranchers and other so called "old timers" arrived. American Indians are part of the Old and the New West. They have historic, contemporary and symbolic links with the landscapes of the West, including the landscapes in and near the major recreation, park and tourism resources of the West. Tensions are growing among American Indians and those using and managing the outdoor recreation resources of the West.

American Indians in the New West

We as scholars and professionals in recreation, parks and tourism are going to have to learn more about American Indians and their issues and values, for a number of reasons. A significant portion of the land area in the Interior West is owned by Indian Tribes (Travis, 1997). In addition, treaties give Indian peoples in the West certain privileges and use rights on national parks, national forests and Bureau of Land Management (B.L.M.) lands near reservations. Agencies like the National Park Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and Fish and Wildlife Service now must consult with tribes on actions that will impact tribal people. Many tribes are now exercising their sovereignty status and asking that they be considered as co-managers for recreation lands on and near reservations. And, the improved economic status of many tribes due to Indian gaming has given tribes the ability to hire lawyers to press their claims regarding lands and control of lands. In his book, both Travis and one of his contributors Charles Wilkinson (1997), state that the modern resurgence of Indian tribes in the West has been one of the most inspiring social movements in the past century. In the past there were only two sovereign governments in the West, federal and state. Now there are three, federal, state and tribal. This has made tribes very relevant to the political, social and geographic realities of the New West.

We in the recreation, park and tourism field have a lot to learn about Indians and their values. The recreation and resource management literature is beginning to include some research and discussion pieces on American Indian land use issues (Dustin, Schneider, McAvoy & Frakt, 2002; Jostad,

McAvoy & McDonald, 1996; Keller & Turek, 1998; Kimmerer, 2000; McAvoy, McDonald & Carlson, 2001; McDonald & McAvoy, 1997; Morishima, 1997; Redmond, 1996), but there is a need in our field for more attention to and understanding of American Indians. An area of study that I believe we in the recreation, park and tourism profession need to pay more attention to now is that of the differences in place meanings that different cultural groups ascribe to certain places in the West, places like national parks, national forests, wilderness areas and other protected areas. My goal in this paper is to examine sense of place and place meanings among people of color in the West, in particular American Indians.

I want to preface my remarks by saying that I am not an American Indian, nor do I presume to speak for Indian people. I became interested in American Indian land use issues 10 years ago when working with a graduate student who is a member of a Canadian First Nation. Since then I have been involved in a number of research projects with tribes in both the United States and Canada, research that has included both archival research and interviews with tribal members. My remarks and positions in this paper are a result of what I have learned through that research, and a reading of literature regarding American Indians and land issues. I make some general statements about "American Indians" in this paper. I realize that there is a significant amount of diversity among and between American Indian tribal groups in the United States and Canada. American Indian culture is not a monolithic entity. But even noted Indian scholars (Brown, 1976) hold that there are some pan-Indian characteristics or positions that are quite pervasive across tribal groups, although they may be expressed in diverse ways. The generalized statements I make in this paper are given in the spirit of my attempt to represent some of these pan-Indian positions.

American Indian Place Meanings

Williams and Patterson (1999) have written that landscapes represent socially constructed systems of meaning, and they outlined four approaches to understanding the meanings people assign to natural landscapes. One area of study that I believe we as scholars need to address is how different cultural groups prioritize these approaches to place meanings. Knowing which of these categories of meanings seem to be the most important for particular groups may help land managers better understand place meaning priorities and help alleviate some of the conflict we now see between cultures like American Indians and White America. The categories of place meanings described by William and Patterson are inherent/aesthetic, individual/expressive, instrumental/goal directed and cultural/symbolic.

- Inherent/aesthetic meanings are relatively tangible emotional responses to scenic beauty of landscapes. Williams and Patterson (1999) state that research has shown different observers generally make similar aesthetic judgments. So there would not tend to be much difference in the aesthetic meanings among people of different cultures or ethnic backgrounds.

But in the other three categories there may be differences among cultures in the priorities as to which of these meanings are most important, which category of meaning tends to dominate in decisions related to the land.

- Individual/expressive meanings are those where a person individually identifies with a place. It is a deep sense of personal attachment to a place, to the point of defining who we are as a person. This may be regarded as place attachment for the individual.
- Instrumental/goal directed meaning is what White Americans call “resource management,” where natural resources are managed to provide specific benefits or commodities, and humans are empowered to manage the land to sustain benefits.
- Cultural/symbolic meaning is where a place creates a sense of emotional, symbolic, historic, spiritual and cultural significance for a whole group. It often involves spiritual connections to nature, relationships to other humans in the group, and relations to ancestors whose remains may be in the place. This may be regarded as place attachment for the group.

My interpretation of the literature, including transcripts of public hearings and reports of research conducted with visitors to national parks and forests, suggests that for most White Americans the priority of place meanings they attach to most places in the West, and in particular to places in national parks, forests and other protected places, is in order of the priority listed above. First in priority would be individual/expressive, then instrumental/goal directed, and then cultural/symbolic.

But research that colleagues and I have been doing with tribal groups in both the U.S. and Canada indicates that the order of priority for many American Indians is just the opposite (Jostad, McAvoy & McDonald, 1994; McAvoy, McDonald & Carlson, 2001). For most American Indians in these studies, the first priority of place meaning is the cultural/symbolic meanings, then the instrumental/goal directed, and then the individual/ expressive. In both archive material and contemporary interviews with tribal members, we have found that the most prevalent expressions of place meanings for American Indians were culturally relevant, cultural/symbolic sense of place expressions of their tribe’s shared ties to the land.

Contrasting Place Meanings: The Example of Devils Tower

An example of how the contrast in place meanings can play itself out in recreation and park land issues is the recent controversy between rock climbers and American Indians at Devils Tower National Monument in Wyoming (Dustin, Schneider, McAvoy & Frakt, 2002). The Tower is a 600 foot monolith and a very popular rock climbing site. A number of American Indian tribes asked the National Park Service to limit climbing on the Tower in the month of June because the presence of large numbers of climbers was interrupting the Indians who wanted to go to the site for traditional

spiritual practices. After a number of meetings and hearings the National Park Service banned commercial climbing on the Tower during the month of June. The National Park Service was sued by the Mountain States Legal Foundation and a number of commercial climbers and their advocates. The National Park Service was enjoined by the courts to rescind the ban (*Bear Lodge Multiple Use ass'n v. Babbitt*, 2F. 2d 1448 U.S. Dist., 1998). There is now a voluntary ban on commercial climbing in June.

The court decided the case based on the establishment of religion issue, in that the court held that a mandatory ban would be favoring the Indian religion over the rights of individuals to climb when they chose. But the relevant aspects of this case to the discussion in this paper are the arguments each side used in arguing their case. The commercial climbers and their advocates primarily used the argument of individual/expressive place meaning. They argued that climbing on the Tower was an important aspect of who they were as individuals, that they had a personal connection to and identity with the Tower and to climbing. Some stated that climbing was their religion, Devils Tower was their cathedral, and that Indian religious practices should not take precedence over their religion which was climbing. The American Indians on the other hand argued almost exclusively from the cultural/symbolic meanings. They see Devils Tower as an important place for their entire tribal group, their ancestors, and their generations to come. There was an emotional, spiritual and historical attachment of the entire group and its history to the Tower and the lands immediately surrounding the Tower.

It is often difficult for Anglo-Americans to understand the depth of meaning that American Indians can ascribe to the natural environment, and to specific places in that environment. This depth of meaning has a great deal to do with the cultural and spiritual aspects of American Indian society. It is also often difficult for some Anglo-American resource managers and recreational users to understand the depth of concern many American Indians feel regarding many national parks and other protected areas like Devils Tower.

There are some generalities found in the land ethic of most American Indian cultures that may help us understand the depth of meaning that Devils Tower and other similar sites have for Indian people. One is the general view held by American Indians that a heightened sense of place or connection to the land is the result of the importance placed on the human/nature relationship and a long historical tie to the land (Gallagher, 1993). Another major element, and one of the most frequently held values associated with an American Indian land ethic, is the pervasive focus on the sacred (Deloria, 1992; Jostad, McAvoy, and McDonald, 1996). Spiritual aspects are infused into all parts of life, and especially in how American Indians relate to the land. Decisions are often based on an ethic derived from sacred traditions (Tyler, 1993). This spiritual focus has been called "spiritual management" by the Indian scholar Vine Deloria (1992).

American Indians often have historical and spiritual ties to special places within and near their traditional homelands. This is the case with Devils

Tower, where local American Indians have indicated that Devils Tower is a "sacred site" for them. Rudner (1994) has described the importance of sacred sites to American Indians, in particular sites which are now located on public lands. Marlene Atleo, Nuuchahnulth Nation scholar from British Columbia, in a paper presented to the UNESCO Sacred Sites Symposium in Paris (1998), indicated that sacred sites are regarded by tribal people as places for spiritual work. Narratives and ceremonial names originating in specific sites link generations of families and individuals of such families to the land in an intimate manner. Over time this intimacy helps create cultural schema and scripts where culture is the central feature. Sacred sites become part of a system of a culture's cognitive/psychological development, where that development is tied to the history of an area and the cultural scripts of the people.

Another identified characteristic of American Indian value systems concerning nature that appears to be evident in the Devils Tower situation is the belief in the cyclical pattern of life. This belief is exemplified through rituals and traditions in the form of offerings, or giving back, to the natural world that which was taken from it, a reciprocal relationship with the land (McDonald and McAvoy, 1997). Basic to American Indian mythology is the knowledge that human life depends on a healthy and structured natural world. In order to ensure a delicate balance between nature and human activity, appropriate acts of idealized behavior (rituals) are conducted at times of seasonal change. This helps explain why American Indians in the Devils Tower case prefer that the time of the solstice in June be set aside for their spiritual activities, and why prayer bundles placed on the site are so important to them.

American Indians and Anglo-Americans share the desire to preserve certain lands for their aesthetic and cultural significance, but they often have differing views on the purposes of designating these lands (McDonald and McAvoy, 1997; Redmond, 1997; Rudner, 1994; Sanders, 1990). Both groups value retaining and protecting pristine ecosystems, wilderness, and unique natural areas. But Anglo-Americans often see the value of protected lands as being places separate from humans, places to go for recreation and reflection, to fulfill spiritual needs, and then return to a modern way of life. Indians, in contrast, often see the same lands as places to fulfill their way of life as a part of the land on a level of coexistence which is not separate from these areas (Cornell, 1990; Dasman, 1992). The concepts of park preservation and outdoor recreation are often outside the historical experience of many aboriginal people of North America (McDonald & McAvoy, 1997). To most indigenous cultures, park and wilderness preservation requires a view of humans as detached and somehow responsible for managing nature. Furthermore, Indian cultures often see recreation as a notion of purposeful, restorative activity which has been developed in an industrial context.

If we had a deeper understanding of how different cultural groups attach meanings to the landscapes of the West, especially the landscapes in parks and protected area, we may have a better opportunity to avoid some of the conflicts that we now have and are going to have regarding land

management decisions on these protected landscapes. In the case of American Indians, if we had a better and deeper understanding of American Indian sense of place meanings we may be better able to avoid some of the conflicts and work with Indian people in cooperatively managing some of the critical landscapes on and near Indian Reservations.

It is ironic that many White Americans have developed (or discovered) a sense of place with the American West. And yet many Whites regard as quaint or idealistic the sense of place American Indians have for their former homelands (Keller & Turek, 1998). Many Whites say it is "OK" for Indians to keep that sense of place alive, as long as they do not demand their places be returned to them, or want to manage these places in ways that may limit or change White Americans' access to these places, or the White preferred uses of these places. The conflict at Devils Tower may be an indication of conflicts to come if better understanding and sensitivity to Indian values is not considered.

Symbolism and History of Forests, Parks and Protected Places

Landscapes in the West are often associated with the sense of place of people who live there, people who wish they lived there, and people who go there for outdoor recreation. Part of sense of place and place meaning is wrapped up in the symbolism of these landscapes, especially the symbolism of national parks, monuments, forests, wildlife areas and wilderness areas. It is important for us to be aware of the symbolism attached to these special places by different cultural groups. Joseph Sax (1980) tells us that the national parks symbolize nature in its own pace and power. To most White Americans these special protected places symbolize not only natural pace and power, beauty and majesty, but also personal freedom, national pride, and opportunities to escape from civilization. But to many American Indians these protected places symbolize lost land, deception, continued oppression, and the death or near death of a culture. Because of this, recreation scholars and managers need to be more aware of the history of American Indians in the West and how many of our national parks, national forests, B.L.M. areas and other federal lands in the West were established.

The United States signed a number of treaties with Indian tribes during the 19th century. These treaties established 138 million acres as "Indian Land" dedicated to tribes and designated as Indian Reservations. The General Allotment Act of 1887 (sometimes called the Dawes Act) was intended to assimilate Indians into modern American life by ending the communal ownership of Indian lands by tribes, by encouraging Indians to be farmers and ranchers and to be responsible for their own individual economic well-being. The legislation allotted individual Indians small acreage homesteads on these Reservations. By the late 1800's when the General Allotment Act was implemented, many tribes had been almost destroyed by disease, war and starvation. Since the number of Indians was relatively small compared to the size of the Reservations, once the individual allotments had gone to

tribal members a significant amount of Reservation land was "left over." Thus, over 60 million acres of the Reservation land was declared as "surplus." This surplus land reverted back to the federal government. Some of the surplus lands were allotted to White settlers as homesteads. Some eventually became national forests, national parks, B.L.M. areas, wildlife refuges and other federally managed land. Due to the inability of many American Indians at that time to effectively farm or ranch their allotted lands, or to pay taxes on it, an additional 27 million acres were subsequently sold to white settlers, or reverted back to states and counties due to unpaid taxes. After 40 years of the Allotment Act, land owned by Indian tribes dropped from 138 million acres to less than 47 million acres, a reduction of over two-thirds. Some tribes lost 90% of their reserves.

The Allotment Act was being implemented in the same era as the establishment of our national forest reserves, national parks and other protected areas in the West, at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. In the early 1900's President Theodore Roosevelt worked with Gifford Pinchot, the founder of the Forest Service system, to establish 150 million acres of forest reserves. Legend has it that he and Pinchot designated 16 million acres of forest reserve in one night in 1907 (Travis, 1997) because Congress was threatening to rescind his authority to withdraw lands from homesteading. Keller and Turek in their book *American Indians & National Parks* (1998) claim that the opening of the Indian reservations for white settlement compensated for millions of acres taken out of the public domain for national forests and parks. "In the era in which the nation laid the foundation for its national park system, native people suffered immensely. . . The 'Crown Jewels' of Yosemite, Yellowstone, Mt. Rainier, Crater Lake, Mesa Verde, Olympic, Grand Canyon, Glacier and Rocky Mountain had been "Indian country" in 1850" (Keller & Turek, p. 19). Portions of our national forests, B.L.M. areas and other protected areas in the West were created as a result of the Allotment Act and the "surplus" land it generated. The National Park Service received a smaller but significant portion of this land.

Many Indian groups today believe they were cheated out of their land when national forests, parks and other protected areas were created. Keller and Turek (1998) give a number of examples of this in their research. The Blackfeet Reservation at one time included several million acres of land on the Montana/Canadian border east of the continental divide. Decimated by disease and starvation, the Blackfeet Tribe lost much of their lands to subsequent taking by the federal government in the late 1800's. Advocates of what was to become Glacier National Park pressed the federal government to obtain the mountainous portion of the Blackfeet Reservation east of the continental divide. In 1895 the Tribe sold 800,000 acres of this land to the federal government for \$1.87 an acre. This land later became the heart of Glacier National Park and the Badger-Two-Medicine wildlands area in Lewis and Clark National Forest (Vest, 1989). The Tribe felt pressured to sell because they needed the money to help feed their starving tribal members. When they sold the land the Tribe retained the rights to hunt, fish and cut

timber on the ceded lands. These rights were later rescinded by the federal government, a practice that occurred over and over in other instances where the federal government obtained land from tribes, land that later became national parks and forests.

The history of Grand Canyon National Park presents another example of Indian people struggling for years to regain their lands which were taken to establish national parks, forest reserves and monuments (Keller & Turek, 1998). In 1892 President Benjamin Harrison established the Grand Canyon Forest Reserve, which President Theodore Roosevelt reclassified as a game preserve in 1906, and as a national monument in 1908. In 1919 Grand Canyon was designated a national park. For over 700 years the Havasupai people of the Grand Canyon area controlled and lived on an aboriginal territory of about 2.3 million acres. By the 1880's their holdings had been reduced to a 3000 acre reservation, most on the rim of the canyon with 518 acres in a small canyon above Havasu Falls. The Havasupai Tribe struggled with various parts of the federal government (including the Forest Service and National Park Service) and environmental groups for 90 years trying to regain ownership of enough land to sustain their people and culture. Finally in 1975 Congress passed the Grand Canyon Enlargement Act which transferred 185,000 acres of Forest Service and National Park Service land to the Havasupai Indian Reservation. This legislation also created a 95,000 acre traditional use area within the park available for hunting and traditional gathering activities by tribal members. However, there is still controversy here over allowable traditional uses, which must be approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

A last example of the history of federal government agencies interacting with tribes to obtain land for protected areas concerns the Ute Mountain Utes in Colorado and Mesa Verde National Park. The Ute Mountain Utes were coerced into giving up what they considered prime grazing land on their reservation to create Mesa Verde National Park—a park that in the Utes' opinion preserves the relics of an Indian people who left the area 800 years ago by swindling a contemporary Indian people out of their land (Keller & Turek, 1998). After the park was established, the government wanted to expand the park even more to include some additional Anazasi ruins. So the federal government coerced the Utes into exchanging tribal land adjacent to the park for national forest land some miles away. The Tribe later found out they were actually entitled to the land the government had offered in the trade. In essence the Ute Mountain Utes traded their land for land they already owned.

As we are considering the symbolism element of sense of place and place meanings for national parks, forests and other protected area of the West, we need to be aware of the history of these areas and how they were created. The land where these protected areas were created was not unclaimed or uninhabited. Native cultures had been occupying these lands for centuries. Disease, starvation and war had greatly reduced the numbers in these native cultures, but they were there and in many cases had been there for centuries.

The manner in which some of these protected areas were obtained by the United States government and its agencies (National Park Service, Forest Service, etc.) is a history that American Indian people remember. Their oral histories and the available written histories remind Indian people of the injustices that often surrounded the designation of these protected areas. It would be naive for scholars and practitioners in recreation, parks and tourism to believe that these histories are not important in the minds of Indian people. These histories influence the symbolism these protected areas represent for American Indians. We in the recreation, park and tourism profession need to be aware of this history, because tribal people remember. This history often greatly influences how Indians now relate to national parks and forests, and how they relate to the governmental agencies that now manage that land.

Another example of how different the symbolism of a national park or protected area can be between Indians and White Americans was expressed in an editorial by Tim Giago, an American Indian editor (Giago, 2001). His article was about the symbolism of Mt. Rushmore National Monument in South Dakota. Giago said that Mt. Rushmore is a historical and cultural sacred place for many White Americans, a national monument created out of a mountain side. Many White Americans see Mt. Rushmore as a symbol of freedom, democracy, opportunity, expansion and conservation. They see George Washington as the hero of the revolution and the father of our country. They see Thomas Jefferson as the father of democracy and the president who secured the Louisiana Purchase, which gave the United States most of the area now called the "New West." Teddy Roosevelt is regarded for his conservation accomplishments by creating the national forests and many national monuments which later became national parks. Abraham Lincoln is regarded as the president who preserved the Union and abolished slavery.

But the author Giago stated that many American Indians see different symbols at Mt. Rushmore. Many see the symbols of oppression, loss of land and culture, and death. They see Washington as the president who called for the extermination of Indians in New England. They see Jefferson as the president who appropriated all Indian lands in most of the West, and paid little regard to the fact that the land in the Louisiana Purchase did not belong to France—it belonged to the Indian people who had lived there for centuries. They see Roosevelt as the president who took millions of acres of Indian lands in the process of creating national forests and parks, forcing Indian peoples off their land, land that had been promised to them in treaties. And they see Lincoln as the president who sanctioned the largest mass execution in our country's history when he approved the hanging of 38 Santee Sioux in Mankato, Minnesota in 1862 at the end of the Minnesota Indian Uprising.

Symbolism is an important part of sense of place and place meanings attached to our national forests, parks and protected areas. We need to consider the symbolism of more than just the dominant White culture. We also

need to consider the symbolism of the indigenous peoples who have lived in the West for centuries, and who continue to live there.

Conclusion

There is overwhelming evidence that the American Indians of the West suffered greatly from encounters with the civilizing movement of Anglo expansionism. Limerick states that few other groups have faced such a combination of violence, property loss and systematic coercive efforts for assimilation (1987). The Anglo intrusion into Indian territories brought disease, war, famine, treaties that were not honored, forced boarding schools, dislocation, prohibition of Indian religions and languages, and partly or wholly destroyed cultures. The oppression and destruction included Indian lands as well as cultures (Grinde & Johanson, 1995). And yet scholars like historian James Hunter (1996) and Indian scholar Vine Deloria (1985) indicate that what the Indians of today require from Whites, if anything, is not so much sympathy, but some understanding of what it is Indians are presently attempting to do on their own behalf. American Indians are now making efforts to ensure that key aspects of their collective identities are safeguarded and regenerated. These key aspects include language, cultural traditions, and their tie to specific places on the landscape.

So, where do we go from here as scholars in recreation, parks and tourism? An article about the West in *Time Magazine* in the summer of 2001 described some of the conflicts between companies that want to extract natural resources (e.g. oil and minerals) from federal and tribal lands, and American Indians who claim some of these lands are sacred. The author concluded by saying, "The West these days could use a few more translators and a few less bureaucrats and lawyers" (Kirn, 2001, p. 32).

One of our roles as scholars in recreation, parks and tourism can be as "translators" to identify and translate the various senses of place and place meanings that different people hold for the West. We know that recreation is part of that sense of place. We also know that protected areas like national parks, forests, wilderness areas and refuges are important places where sense of place is kindled for many people who live in the West, or who look to the West for their significant senses of place. Through our research and scholarly activity we can help translate the sense of place and place meanings of various stakeholders and groups of people. One group of people we need to consider, one sense of place we need to better understand and help translate, is that of the indigenous peoples who have been in the West for centuries before we of African, Asian or European heritage came on the scene. We as scholars need to consider, translate and better understand the sense of place and place meanings American Indians have for the West.

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