Social Class and the Production of Mountain Space: The historical geographies of the Seattle Mountaineers, 1906-1939

Thomas C. Christian
chris62@wwu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://cedar.wwu.edu/wwuet

Part of the Environmental Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
https://cedar.wwu.edu/wwuet/577
Social Class and the Production of Mountain Space: The historical geographies of the Seattle Mountaineers, 1906-1939

By

Thomas C. Christian

Accepted in Partial Completion of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts

Kathleen L. Kitto, Dean of the Graduate School

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair, Dr. David Rossiter

Dr. Jennifer Seltz

Dr. Kate Darby
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master’s degree at Western Washington University, I grant to Western Washington University the non-exclusive royalty-free right to archive, reproduce, distribute, and display the thesis in any and all forms, including electronic format, via any digital library mechanisms maintained by WWU.

I represent and warrant this is my original work, and does not infringe or violate any rights of others. I warrant that I have obtained written permissions from the owner of any third party copyrighted material included in these files.

I acknowledge that I retain ownership rights to the copyright of this work, including but not limited to the right to use all or part of this work in future works, such as articles or books.

Library users are granted permission for individual, research and non-commercial reproduction of this work for educational purposes only. Any further digital posting of this document requires specific permission from the author.

Any copying or publication of this thesis for commercial purposes, or for financial gain, is not allowed without my written permission.

Signature: Thomas Christian

Date: May 12, 2017
Social Class and the Production of Mountain Space:
The historical geographies of the Seattle Mountaineers, 1906-1939

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of
Western Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Thomas C. Christian
May 2017
Abstract

Spaces and landscapes are actively produced, reproduced, and contested through social practices. The ways in which spaces and landscapes are constructed matters because they define how they can be used, who may occupy them, and who cannot. This study examines the Northwest’s mountain spaces and the social class background of the Mountaineers, a Seattle-based alpine club that influenced the construction of these landscapes. From its founding in 1906, the club shaped cultural and economic geographies through summer outings, an annual journal, and skills courses. Early on, the Mountaineers produced spaces for upper class socializing and scientific study, but individual club members struggled over the meanings of these activities. In the 1930s, young club members, who were mostly men, led a cultural revolution and promoted a more physical sport and an embodied experience in the mountains, which was also increasingly part of a larger consumer culture that started to endow recreation landscapes with significant economic value. This study reveals a tension within the Mountaineers’ production of space, where the representational divide between urban spaces and mountain spaces grew wider, but in practice, the club strengthened the cultural and economic links between Seattle and the mountains.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I feel very lucky and thankful to have worked with Dr. David Rossiter for the last two years. Our weekly meetings were a highlight of my time at Western. Dave pushed me in my writing, encouraged me to read widely, and advised me to take breaks, all of which helped me complete this project and become a better scholar and geographer.

I must also thank Dr. Kate Darby and Dr. Jennifer Seltz, who gave my thesis a close and critical read. Their encouragement, advice, and recommendations for further reading were much appreciated. Also, thank you to Dr. Andy Bach, Dr. Mart Stewart, Dr. Mark Neff, Dr. Nabil Kamel, Dr. Sarah Zimmerman, Dr. Pat Buckley, and Dr. Aquila Flower. Additionally, I must thank my fellow graduate students, particularly Zander Albertson, who was always willing to chat about geography, theory, politics, and mountains. He is now a close friend.

My research was supported by numerous institutions including Western Washington University’s Library, the University of Washington Special Collections, and the Mountaineers archives. I also need to thank Lowell Skoog, David Conca, and Nancy Winder, who helped me in my research. Dr. Laurie Trautman from the Border Policy Research Institute (BPRI) supported me financially with a research fellowship, but also broadened my graduate education and pushed me to study water governance and policy. While at BPRI, I also got to work with Dr. Don Alper. Thank you Don and Laurie.

Lastly, I must thank my partner Claire, who supported me in this work over the last two years. Claire read many drafts, was always my strongest critic, and helped me improve my writing. I could not have done it without her. Thank you Claire.
### Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................ iv

Acknowledgements ..................................................................................................................... v

List of Figures ................................................................................................................................ vii

Map of the Six Majors ................................................................................................................. viii

*The Mountaineer*, 1907-1939 ....................................................................................................... ix

**Chapter One**: An Introduction to the Mountaineers and Mountain Spaces .............................. 1
  Why Study Mountain Spaces? ..................................................................................................... 4
  The Mountaineers ....................................................................................................................... 8

**Chapter Two**: Wilderness and Alpine Clubs, Social Space and Landscapes ............................. 14
  Of Mountains and Clubs ............................................................................................................ 16
  Investigating Mountain Clubs and Landscapes ....................................................................... 24
  Space, Culture, and Nature ....................................................................................................... 33
  Social Class and the Culture of Labor on the Land .................................................................. 39
  Studying the Mountaineers ....................................................................................................... 47

**Chapter Three**: The Mountaineers and the Wilderness Nearby ................................................ 49
  Social Class Identity .................................................................................................................. 51
  The First Outings ...................................................................................................................... 56
  Edmond Meany .......................................................................................................................... 62
  Grand Scenery ............................................................................................................................ 65
  Science and the Representation of Mountains .......................................................................... 69
  The Production of Social Mountains ....................................................................................... 75
  Resistance and “Hard Trail Work” ............................................................................................ 87
  Small Group Climbing .............................................................................................................. 89
  A Modern Sport Takes Hold ...................................................................................................... 99
  Social Class and Consumerism ................................................................................................. 106
  Conclusion .................................................................................................................................... 110

**Chapter Four**: The City and the Wilderness ............................................................................. 112
  A Place Apart and Its Relationship to Urban Space .................................................................. 115
  Mountain Spaces ....................................................................................................................... 118

**Bibliography** ............................................................................................................................ 122

Appendix 1 .................................................................................................................................... 137
Appendix 2 .................................................................................................................................... 139
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1. Casper David Friedrich, *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog* (1818)..................18
Figure 2. One of three landscape photos featured in the March 1907 edition of *The Mountaineer*.................................................................58
Figure 3. Photo by T.C. Frye, “First party to reach the highest peak of the Olympic Mountains”...............................................................................................59
Figure 4. Edmond Meany with Chief Joseph and Red Thunder, photo by Edward Curtis....63
Figure 5. A Map from the 1916 Outing featuring a grid and topographic lines ...............72
Figure 6. A photo from the 1921 outing’s special banquet for members who climbed the six majors.................................................................................................75
Figure 7. The Mountaineers climb in file on Glacier Peak, 1921.................................81
Figure 8. Long skirts at camp during the 1912 summer outing to Mt. Rainier...............85
Figure 9. The Map from Winder and Farr’s 1934 Report ............................................98
Figure 10. "Proper Equipment is Required," by Herbert and Clark Willey...............107
The Six Majors

(Mt. Olympus, Mt. Baker, Glacier Peak, Mt. Rainier, Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Adams)
## The Mountaineer, 1907-1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Subtitle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1907-08</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Volume Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Cascade Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>Mount Adams Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Second Rainier Number, Grand Park and Summerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Second Olympic Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Glacier National Park, Mount Stuart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Mount Rainer National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Mount Baker and Mount Shuksan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Mount St. Helens and Mount Adams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Monte Cristo District, War Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Mount Rainier National Park, Second Trip, Encircling The Mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Mt. Anderson and Mt. Olympus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Glacier Peak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Mount Adams, Mount St. Helens, and the Goat Rocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Mount Garibaldi Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Mount Rainier National Park, The Himalayas as a Climbing Field, The Ascent of Mount St. Elias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Chimney Rock to Mount Stuart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Olympic Peninsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Mount Robson Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Cascade Range of Washington, Glacier Peak, Mount Baker, Mount Shuksan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Canadian Rockies, Special Ski Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Mount Rainier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>The Climbs of Mount Fairweather, Climbs in Garibaldi Park, Climbs in Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>The Guardians of the Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>The Fifth Outing in the Olympic Mountains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Going to Glacier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>New Conquests, The Lake Chelan Outing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Valley's Pounded, Summits Won</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Thirtieth Anniversary Number, Glacier Peak, Mount Baker, Mount Shuksan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>The Selkirks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>A Mountaineer's Sketch Book, Five Years of Climbing Courses, The Tetons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter One:

An Introduction to the Mountaineers and Mountain Spaces

On a hot Friday afternoon in late 1939, a group of excited men and women climbed into a green Dodge sedan and left their homes in Seattle for a summer vacation in Grand Teton National Park. In a few hours, the small group traveled east over Snoqualmie Pass and out into the dry sagebrush of Eastern Washington. As the moon rose over the desert, their steady progress slowed when they hit a deer. Stopped on the side of the road, the darkness was shattered by the lights of another automobile. The driver of the Dodge immediately recognized the other car as part of their group. The key indicator was a ski rack, an odd contraption to be ferrying across the desert on a sweaty July night, and a unique sign of cultural identity. The occupants of both automobiles were members of the Mountaineers, a Seattle-based alpine club that organized annual summer outings to the Cascade and Olympic Mountains, as well as other mountain ranges in the North American Mountain West.1

In the 1939 edition of the Mountaineers’ annual journal, Helan Rudy reported on this summer outing to the Tetons. Midway through the article, Rudy narrates her thoughts about why the group felt drawn to the high country: “Sitting there, while the rest of camp slept, I thought I knew an answer. From the earliest dawn of civilization, man has been pushing upward. Something stronger than himself has forced him to reach mentally and spiritually for the heights.”2 However moved Rudy felt by the vertical landscape before her, humans have not always, or uniformly, felt drawn to mountains for recreation or leisure. Within European and

---

2 Ibid., 12.
European-American history, the cultural meanings of alpine landscapes have changed over time, from places of great evil, to places of sublime beauty, and now, with the development of recreation industries, into places of economic value. Furthermore, the desire to climb, to camp outside, and to face mountain hazards on recreational terms is endemic to historically specific social and cultural groups.

Formed in 1906, the Mountaineers were one of the first alpine clubs in the Pacific Northwest and one of the first groups based in the state of Washington to organize travel to the mountains for leisure, adventure, study, and fellowship. Its membership body came from Seattle’s professional middle classes and its leaders had significant influence in the city’s economic and cultural institutions. During the early years of the club, the Mountaineers produced a highly organized mountaineering culture through an annual summer outing, which brought many Seattleites to the mountains. The reports from these outings, published in the club’s own journal, represented the mountains as an unknown landscape still waiting to be discovered and a place for scientific study that the club hoped to open up for others to follow. Despite the representation of the mountains as non-human space, the club’s practices linked the mountains both culturally and economically to the region’s urban centers. During the interwar period, the initial meanings of the mountains shifted and diversified as the membership body grew and working and middle class members resisted earlier mountaineering practices. In the mid-1930s, young working and middle class members, most of whom were men, took over leadership positions and produced mountain spaces for modern sport and individual climbing.

__________________________

3 For ideas about wilderness and mountains as places of evil, see Roderick Frazier Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 4th edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 8–22; For the shift to romanticism, see Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 44-66; for the shift to economic value, see Andrew Denning, “From Sublime Landscapes to ‘White Gold’: How Skiing Transformed the Alps after 1930,” Environmental History 19, no. 1 (January 1, 2014): 78–108.
While this study chronicles the history of the Mountaineers, it is also about the club’s social spaces – its camps, small group climbs, and skills classes, which organized people in the mountains – and the production of mountain landscapes. This research takes on the theoretical argument that landscapes, as well as the spaces of human life, are social constructions produced through both discourse and material practices. As such, mountains, national parks, and wilderness areas are not simply reserves of untouched nature or stages for outdoor activities. Rather, scholars who have studied the history of mountain recreation have found that both individuals and institutions have shaped these spaces in many different ways. In a history of the Alpine Club of Canada, historian PearlAnn Reichwein argues that “it is through a dialectic of landscape as idea and landscape as material that people interact with mountains to make the meanings of place, and to affect other ideas related to mountainous places: tourism, conservation, and nationalism.” Furthermore, mountain spaces are social constructs with complex histories. This matters because the meanings of these constructs have implications for who belongs, how social groups interact, and how people relate to the more than human world.

Humans have significant agency in the production of mountain landscapes and have historically shaped the physical world. For centuries, the people indigenous to North America have worked with non-human systems to shape and manage resources. Today, recreational mountaineers rely on fossil fuels and engage in political economic systems that are changing

---

carbon cycles and affecting global and regional climate patterns. These anthropogenic global changes are also impacting the mass balance of northwest glaciers, causing them to shrink in size, and producing different physical mountain landscapes.9

Furthermore, human knowledge of the mountains and the cryosphere is shaped though individual and collective experiences. We cannot know nature outside of ourselves and our shared humanity. Post-structuralist scholars have rejected the notion that there can be objective knowledge of the world. According to geographer Dave Demeritt, the insights of the literary turn have destabilized epistemological realism because the is no point of view “secure above language and cultural values from which to hold a mirror to nature.”10 According to geographers Noel Castree and Bruce Braun the struggle over the meanings of nature are both material and discursive, which means that “nature is always something made [and thus] its making is always about much more than just nature.”11 This means that how meaning is constructed, and which social identities influences its construction, matters. In this context, meaning making refers to the way that humans have produced, both materially and symbolically, the mountain landscapes. The purpose of this study is to examine the role of social class in the Mountaineers’ making of meaning and production of mountain space in the Pacific Northwest.

Why Study Mountain Spaces?

Mountains are important sites to study a variety of resonant socio-environmental issues,
many of which have implications for social and environmental justice. The relationship between outdoor recreationalists, the global economy, and glaciers offers interesting opportunities to discuss the ways that humans shape their environment or produce new natures.\textsuperscript{12} In British Columbia, resource development in the mountains has increasingly included discussions about First Nation land claims, making the Coast Mountains places to address questions about colonialism and indigenous rights.\textsuperscript{13} In the state of Washington, mountain regions are also sites of conflict over resource use, such as the “owl wars” that took place between environmental groups and the logging industry on the Olympic Peninsula.\textsuperscript{14} As the timber industry has declined, economies have shifted and cultural fights over regional forest plans, new wilderness areas, and the decision making process have ensued.\textsuperscript{15} All of these issues reveal complex cultural and political-economic struggles over mountain environments.

Across western North American, outdoor recreation has changed the cultural and economic geographies of the mountains and their surrounding communities.\textsuperscript{16} In the United States, much of the Mountain West is managed by the federal government, meaning that the mountains are theoretically a public space. The region also has a history that is closely tied to

resource extraction which has promoted certain uses and prohibited others.\textsuperscript{17} Throughout the twentieth century, development shifted many of these landscapes of production towards landscapes of consumption, tourism, recreation, and leisure.\textsuperscript{18} In former logging and mining towns like Leavenworth, Washington, and Silverton, Colorado, a form of gentrification has occurred as investors have brought in outside capital and built restaurants, ski resorts, condominiums, and vacation homes for the leisureed classes. These new industries have reorganized economic structures and are home to new social classes, mainly from the service industry, there to serve the leisureed classes. In a history of the Colorado high country, William Philpott identifies that while economic shifts are challenging, cultural changes present yet another set of issues. Towns like Leadville, Aspen, and Breckenridge developed during mining booms and as a result resource production informed people’s cultural identities, connections to land, and hopes for the future.\textsuperscript{19} In the mid-twentieth century, some residence resisted efforts to develop new recreation economies and Phillpot cites one Denver Post contributor who wrote with “pride” that Leadville “is a mining camp.”\textsuperscript{20} This means that struggles over mountain landscapes have often been underpinned by culture and identity in addition to economic issues. Therefore, Pierre Bourdieu’s discussion of social class and cultural capital, which expands a

\textsuperscript{17} For resource extraction, see William Wyckoff, “Mountain Geographies 1860-1920,” in Creating Colorado (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 42–100; For federal lands, see, William Wyckoff, How to Read the American West: A Field Guide (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014), 238–45.
\textsuperscript{19} Philpott, Vacationland, 42–54.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 45.
traditional economic analysis, is a useful lens to explore the Mountaineers’ construction of landscape and culture in the Pacific Northwest.\textsuperscript{21}

In the state of Washington, mountain recreation occupies a place of great economic and cultural importance. For much of the twentieth century, Mount Rainier was an icon for both the cities of Tacoma and Seattle, as well as a destination for many city residents; the same is true for Mount Baker and the city of Bellingham.\textsuperscript{22} According to a 2015 study, outdoor recreation contributes 20.5 billion dollars to the state’s economy and residents of Washington spend an average of fifty-six days a year recreating in the outdoors.\textsuperscript{23} The study also notes that recreation on public lands, much of which is centered around the Cascade and Olympic mountains, supports 122,600 jobs. As a result, outdoor recreation has created economic and cultural links between the state’s mountains, public lands, and rural and urban communities.

Often, North Americans have taken for granted the relationship between mountain, rural, and urban landscapes. The nature writers from Henry David Thoreau to Edward Abbey, have identified a great divide between the city and wild or pastoral places.\textsuperscript{24} However, the history of the Mountaineers suggests that Seattle and the surrounding mountains are not fully disparate spaces. In the preface to Nature’s Metropolis, a book about the relationship between Chicago and “The Great West,” William Cronon writes that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} O. Alan Weltzein, Exceptional Mountains: A Cultural History of the Pacific Northwest Volcanoes (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 72–96.
\item \textsuperscript{23} This study uses a broad metric for outdoor recreation, including water sports. It does note that federal lands and mountains are important to this economy. See, T. Briceno and G Schundler, “Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State” (Tacoma, WA: Earth Economics, January 2015).
\end{itemize}
Americans have long tended to see city and country as separate places, more isolated from each other than connected. We carefully partition our national landscape into urban places, rural places, and wilderness. Although we often cross the symbolic boundaries between them-seeking escape or excitement, recreation or renewal.25

Similarly, geographer William Wyckoff argues that it is critical to see mountain recreation and leisure in the West “not merely as some discretionary activity on the region’s scenic margins, but rather a key component of the regional economy, a shaper of landscapes and environments, a powerful influence in defining regional character, and a creator of cultural capital.”26 By carefully analyzing the history of one of the Northwest’s oldest mountaineering and conservation groups, this historical-cultural geography seeks to develop a better understanding of how mountain spaces have been produced, the linkages between urban and mountain landscapes, and the resulting implications for a range of social groups.

The Mountaineers

At its founding and throughout its early history, the Mountaineers helped mark a cultural shift in the Northwest as the club promoted ideas and practices that transformed the mountains into a landscape where one consumed a leisure experience and recreation resources located in fixed locations. This is in contrast to other social groups that used and valued mountain spaces for resources that could be extracted from the land. In the late nineteenth century, local leaders and the Northern Pacific Railway, promoted recreation and tourism at Mount Rainier. In 1899, President William McKinley signed legislation to make Mount Rainier the nation’s fourth National Park and the first in the Northwest. While this helped to develop an interest in outdoor

26 Wyckoff, How to Read the American West, 338.
recreation, individuals and industry valued much of the land in the new state of Washington for its productive resources. In the early twentieth century, loggers cut timber on the Cascades’ western slopes, shepherders used the high and dry eastern meadows for their summer range country, and prospectors and trappers roamed the valleys and the alpine environment in search of minerals and furs. The federal government, with the passage of the Forest Reserve Act of 1891 and the designation of the Washington Forest Reserve in 1897, also ordained much of the Cascade and Olympic mountains as a productive landscape. In addition to these settler resource economies, indigenous people also used and occupied the mountains during the early twentieth century. The Nooksack and Skagit people used to hunt animals and gather berries near Koma Kulshan, or Mount Baker, a mountain that the Mountaineers visited during many summer outings. While resource extraction and productive use of the land continued to be important to the region, by the 1930s, the Mountaineers had helped to establish a booming outdoor recreation culture and economy in the Pacific Northwest.

Early leaders of the Mountaineers came from Seattle’s professional and cultural upper classes, many of whom were politically progressive, engaged in multiple civic and reform organizations, and valued social order and scientific knowledge. Among these leaders were professor Edmond Meany and photographer Asahel Curtis, both of whom grew up near Seattle in working class families, but were able to develop the cultural and social capital necessary to join the city’s small, but growing cosmopolitan class. Both men had also witnessed the growth of Seattle from a small mill town to a significant economic center and home to major infrastructure

28 Williams, The U.S. Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest.
29 Miles, Koma Kulshan, 33.
During first decade of the twentieth century, there was a sentiment in Seattle that the city had progressed beyond the pioneer and Native American era, and was moving towards modernity. Many members of the Mountaineers believed that scientific study and education developed modern knowledge of the environment that contributed to the social progress of the region.

In March 1907, the club printed its first journal, *The Mountaineer* as a means of documenting its activities and the mountains that it visited. In the first edition, charter members committed themselves,

> to explore and study the mountains, forests, and water courses of the Pacific Northwest; and to gather into permanent form the history and traditions of this region; to preserve, by protective legislation or otherwise, the natural beauty of the Northwest coast of America; to make frequent or periodical expeditions into these regions in fulfillment of the above purposes. Finally, and above all, to encourage and promote the spirit of good fellowship and comradery among the lovers of the outdoor life in the West.

Here club members explicitly stated their desire to develop knowledge of the region’s geography. The early editions of the journal typically included a feature article that reported on the previous summer’s outing and supporting articles that often focused on geology, botany, zoology, or anthropology. It frequently represented the mountains in text as an unknown landscape, despite some knowledge of indigenous people using and naming the mountains. However, the club also mixed Romantic poetry and prose, often about esthetics or an embodied experience in the mountains, with attempts at scientific objectivism designed to separate the writer from the empirical reality of the place. These two discursive strategies suggested that from the outset, the Mountaineers did not have one consistent way of representing mountain space.

---

Following other scholars who have analyzed climbing literature, this research uses *The Mountaineer* as its primary data source and analyzes the social class perspective and cultural narratives that its contributors assumed.33

Throughout its early history, the Mountaineers’ main social function was its annual summer outing, many of which were located near one of Washington’s five volcanos. Held in July and August, the outing lasted for two to three weeks and included groups of more than one hundred people. Sometimes they set up base camps, but often the club did not stay in the same location for more than a few nights during the trip. These outings maintained a clear social structure and resembled a military organization, as captains and lieutenants worked to ensure order and safety. The leadership of the club, many of whom were teachers and university professors, emphasized the importance of community as opposed to individual wilderness or climbing experiences and promoted the observation of grand scenery, scientific knowledge, and geographic discovery while in the mountains.

Resistance to the institutional tradition of the club developed within a decade of its founding as its membership body grew and identities within the club shifted. In the early twentieth century, there was a common North American cultural concern regarding the effects of the urban environment on the male body, and outdoor activity was often thought of as a tonic. By the 1920s, younger working and middle class Seattleites began to look beyond the club’s highly organized landscape to focus more on individual experiences and physical activity instead of scientific study and fellowship.34 The club had historically included both men and women in

33 *The Mountaineer* is archived digitally and is available online at [www.mountaineers.org/about/history](http://www.mountaineers.org/about/history). For scholars who have used and written about mountaineering literature, see P. A. Nettlefold and E. Stratford, “The Production of Climbing Landscapes-as-Texts,” *Australian Geographical Studies* 37, no. 2 (July 1, 1999): 130–41; Zac Robinson and Jay Scherer, “‘How Steep Is Steep?’ The Struggle for Mountaineering in the Canadian Rockies, 1948–65,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 26, no. 5 (April 1, 2009): 594–620.
34 Reichwein, *Climber’s Paradise*, 37.
even numbers, but by the end of the 1920s, stories about women dropped out of *The Mountaineer* almost completely. At the same time, a group of young men reported on small group outings that promoted a physical climbing landscape, and in the process marginalized the presence of women in the mountains. However, other club members grew frustrated with these climbers because they guarded their skills from the main body of the club. To solve this problem, some club members started a climbing course, outside the authorization of the Mountaineers’ leadership, which later revolutionized the institutional focus of the group.

During the 1930s, the Mountaineers increasingly represented the mountains as a wilderness retreat from the city, but the practices of the club strengthened the cultural and economic linkages between the two places. During the outings, club members organized themselves around social divisions of labor, gender and skill, which extended the social codes of urban space into the mountains. Furthermore, a developing consumer culture within the Pacific Northwest further linked the urban and mountain spaces. At first, the summer outings focused on the consumption of an experience, with minimal emphasis on the consumption of equipment, even though it took significant economic and cultural capital to join the club. In the late 1920s, the introduction of small group climbing and a modern sport introduced greater amounts of equipment that was produced by labor far from the mountains. As a result, consuming experiences and equipment became a means of establishing an outdoor identity and created another social barrier for accessing the mountain landscape. Small group weekend climbing was also facilitated by automobiles and access to energy sources that shortened travel time and collapsed the spaces between the mountains and the city. This trend also strengthened the conflict between the club’s representation of the mountains as a non-human wilderness, which
separated them from the city, and the practices of the club, which developed complex flows of people, materials, and ideas between the mountains and Seattle.

Going forward, chapter two reviews literature about the history mountaineering and the making of cultural geographies and social spaces in the mountains. It begins by detailing some aspects of the historical-geographic thought regarding mountains and wilderness. It then moves to a more theoretical discussion about social space, landscape, culture, and social class. Chapter three narrates the historical geographies of the Mountaineers, further detailing the overview provided above. It ends with club member’s formation of Recreation Equipment Incorporated (REI) and the acceleration of an outdoor recreation economy in the Northwest. Chapter four summarizes the point that mountain recreation landscapes are linked to urban centers and it argues that they are also morally salient and deeply political spaces, and that their making has implications for social and environmental justice.
Chapter Two:

Wilderness and Alpine Clubs, Social Space and Landscapes

This study of the Mountaineers’ production of mountain space in the Pacific Northwest draws heavily from scholarship on the histories of mountain leisure and the making of outdoor recreation landscapes in North America. Scholarship by PearlAnn Reichwein, Zac Robinson, Annie Coleman, Paul Sutter, Carolyn Finney, and Joseph Taylor is of particular importance. These scholars have studied the history of outdoor recreation in North America, and in doing so they found that specific social groups produced landscapes for leisure, recreation, and sport, the meanings of which were rooted in particular constellations of culture, economy, history, and identity. These studies demonstrate that in the late nineteenth century, mountain recreation in North America was often a pursuit of upper class European Americans and Canadians, as social elites toured western landscapes and enjoyed extended stays in national park lodges. During the interwar period, outdoor recreation began to draw from a new white middle class. More people began to enjoy summer outings in the Canadian Rockies, car camping in national parks and forests, and alpine skiing in the Colorado high country. Within these cultural practices, recreationalists established clear gender roles and often constructed the model climber or skier as young, strong, and male, despite the fact that many women climbed and skied as well. The history of the Mountaineers generally follows the social history laid out by the aforementioned scholars, however the club also grew out of a regionally specific culture and created its own

mountain geographies and recreation based economies that still resonate in the twenty-first century.

Some of the literature on the history of mountain recreation, such as Reichwein’s history of the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) and Taylor’s history of Yosemite Valley rock climbers, observes that these social groups drew on meanings of mountain places rooted in Europe and promoted by the world’s first alpine clubs. In the mid-nineteenth century, these mountain clubs were central to an upper middle class culture that reimagined the Alps as a sporting landscape and wilderness retreat. In North America, turn of the century climbers, including the Mountaineers promoted an outdoor life of leisure and recreation rooted in European ideas of nature and relationship between humans and world around them. But in so doing, the Mountaineers and the ACC also drew on ideas about the frontier, outdoor leaving, and nationalism that were unique to American and Canadian history. As a result, the broader history of mountaineering and mountain tourism is important for understanding the more localized production of mountain geographies by North American alpine clubs.

This chapter explores the European history of mountain landscapes as well as the cultural narratives from which the makers of North American twentieth century recreation cultures have drawn. It then establishes the connections among alpine clubs, identity, and the production of recreation landscapes. Next, it wrestles with the concepts of culture and landscape, as well as the critical geography literature on the social production of space and nature. This chapter ends

36 Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise, 73–79; Taylor, Pilgrims of the Vertical, 15–43.
38 This contrasts with environmental historians who have traditionally viewed nature as a relatively stable concept, knowable through ecology and other the natural sciences. See Demeritt, “Ecology, Objectivity and Critique in Writing on Nature and Human Societies.”
with a discussion of the utility of social class as a category through which to make sense of the Mountaineers’ construction of meaning in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest.

Of Mountains and Clubs

When the Mountaineers organized their first summer outing in 1907 and promoted the Olympic mountains as an unexplored wilderness and a landscape for leisure and recreation, its members were reacting to social, cultural, and economic shifts in Seattle and throughout North America. However, their ideas about wilderness and their interest in mountain climbing for pleasure drew on a cultural tradition with roots in Europe. In 1857, middle class men in London formed The Alpine Club, which became the first institution dedicated to mountaineering as a modern sport. This started a trend of organized mountaineering clubs based in urban centers, often far from the mountains their members pursued and celebrated. However, Europeans have not always or uniformly pursued mountains for the sake of recreation or pleasure.

For many centuries, European religions viewed the mountain wilderness as an ugly, useless landscape. Pre-Christian religions believed that the mountains and forests of northern and central Europe were home to supernatural creatures, demigods, and spirts. While some of these supernatural beings were revered, many were feared and the wilderness was often thought of as a place of great evil. The Judeo-Christian tradition, which helped shape European views of the physical world, also includes narratives about wilderness and mountains as places apart.

---

39 Robbins, “Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class.”
the Hebrew bible, the wilderness is the place where the faith of the Israelites is tested through their exile from Egypt, and in the New Testament it is where Jesus of Nazareth went to be tempted by the devil. In these narratives the mountains, though not sites of evil, were home to an alternate reality. In the mountains of the Sinai Peninsula, Moses encountered God in the form of a burning bush, which was not consumed by flame. In the story of the transfiguration, Jesus took Peter, James, and John high into the mountains where the three disciples witnessed the appearance of Moses and the prophet Elijah as Jesus’s “face shone like the sun.”

Early European-Christians maintained similar views of wilderness as place apart from humanity and, according to historian Rodrick Nash, “as the earthly realm of the powers of evil that the Church had to overcome.” However, they also maintained the idea that the mountains could serve as a place to find religious purity. Both of these European narratives helped shape a culture that separated society from the wilderness, nature, and the mountain landscape.

The meanings of mountains began to change in the mid-seventeenth century when wealthy English gentlemen began to frequent resorts in the Alps. By the early nineteenth century, some of the English middle class also traveled to the Alps to view the mountain scenery. Among these travelers were the Romantic poets, who endowed the Alps with images of the mystical, inaccessible, and sublime, meaning that it was nature in its purest form and closest to the work of God. The Romantics also thought of the mountains as a place apart, where one could transcend the world below. Caspar David Friedrich’s 1818 painting *Wanderer Above a Sea of Clouds* provides a visual example of the Romantic sensibility, as it depicts a man quietly

---

43 Matt. 17:2 NIV.
45 Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness.”
46 Hansen, “Albert Smith, the Alpine Club, and the Invention of Mountaineering in Mid-Victorian Britain.”
observing scenery (see figure one). Here, the body of the viewer is separated from the landscape. In the book *Vertical Margins*, literary scholar Rubin Ellis argues that readers of “literature who have enjoyed their Romanticism from Wordsworth to Ruskin are particularly conditioned to regard mountains, where they appear in a literary context, as geographical touchstones to abstraction and epiphany.” During the early eighteenth century, few of the Romantics journeyed into or climbed mountains. Instead, they preferred to view them from afar, constructing them, in the words of alpine historian Andrew Denning, as “a sublime wasteland.”

With the beginning of the Enlightenment, advances in science also offered new ways of making sense of the world’s physical geography and mountain environments. Between 1785 and 1799, Scottish geologist James Hutton published his three volume *Theory of the Earth*, in which he argued that the earth was constantly being formed and that the earth’s age stretched back infinitely in time. In the book *Mountains of the Mind*, Macfarlane observed that “[o]nce

---

47 For a discussion about Friedrich’s painting in relation to mountaineering and Romanticism, see Alan McNee, “‘Cold Stony Reality’: Subjectivity and Experience in Victorian Mountaineering.” *Dandelion* 2, no. 2 (April 12, 2011).
49 Denning, “From Sublime Landscapes to ‘White Gold.’”
geologists had shown the earth to be millions of years old and subject to immense and ongoing change, mountains could never be looked at in the same way again. Suddenly, the effigies of permanence had acquired an exciting, gaffing mutability.”

In the eighteenth century, scientists and cartographers started to make early ascents in the Alps and other mountain ranges around the world, but they typically did not view their climbing as sport. In the early nineteenth century, the Prussian natural historian Alexander Von Humboldt traveled extensively throughout the Americas and climbed several mountains including the Ecuadorian stratovolcano, Chimborazo, of which he published a map of climate and vegetation zones. These scientific studies built upon a philosophy of realism that assumed that humans were rational subjects and developed a separation between the human and the object of inquiry. In an article about mountaineering literature, Jeffery McCarthy argues that the “consequence of this epistemology is that modern people [or the Cartesian subject] experience nature as separate from the ego-founded individuality of human experience. Nature has thus become the object of speculation and dissection for purposes as various as sightseeing and farming.”

With the emphasis on science and scenery, Europeans constructed the mountains as abstract landscapes for observation and empirical study, which could be categorized, quantified, and compared.

Scientific research in the mountains, as well as other physical environments, flourished in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as natural history and biogeography grew as “sciences of empire.” According to literary scholar Mary Louise Pratt, the drive to produce

51 Ibid., 35.
geographic knowledge stemmed from industrial development in Europe and “the inauguration of a new territorial phase of capitalism propelled by searches for raw materials.” Like Humboldt, eighteenth and nineteenth century scientists wrote travel narratives that helped develop what Pratt called a “planetary consciousness” centered in European thought. This tradition of travel writing continued as mountaineers and other explorers wrote texts that separated knowledge of a place from a physical location, turning that knowledge into a commodity that could be consumed by those abroad.

Prior to the eighteenth century, European mountaineering was hard to separate from amateur scientific research and Romantic tourism. However, the founding of the Alpine Club marked a shift as members reformed the landscape into a place to climb, engage in competition, and strengthen themselves both mentally and physical. During the Victorian period, many upper class men viewed the growth of urban space and modernity as a threat to physical labor and masculine identity. This paved the way for the introduction of modern sport as a physical outlet for masculine expression. According to the sociologist David Robbins, mountaineering imagined purely as a sport means that it is “rational recreation, not because it increases the individual’s knowledge and appreciation of the natural world, but because it cultivates such qualities as physical fitness and courage in the face of danger.” Risk and danger were central parts of the Victorian mountaineering experience, and accidents such as the one that occurred

56 Ibid., 1–11.
57 The Alpine Club was found in London in 1857 and after other alpine clubs were founded in Europe, the AC marked its elitist tendency by continuing to be named simply, the Alpine Club.
58 For a discussion on the history of modern sport in Great Britain, see John Bale, Sports Geography (London ; New York: E& FNSpon, 1989); For a discussion of masculinity and mountaineering, see Peter L. Bayers, Imperial Ascent: Mountaineering, Masculinity, and Empire (Boulder, Colo.: University Press of Colorado, 2003).
59 Robbins, “Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class.”
during the 1865 first ascent of the Matterhorn that left four men dead, captured the attention of the British non-mountaineering public.\(^6^0\) Denning observes that the transition from Romantic mountain leisure to what he called “Alpine modernism” began when skiers started to focus on the speed of descent and an experience mediated by technology.\(^6^1\) Denning also argues that modernity arrived in the Alps when they were no longer viewed as a sublime scenic wasteland, but rather as a place with significant economic value.

Despite the introduction of modern sport to the mountains, scientific and cartographic thinking continued to influence the ways that mountaineers made sense of alpine landscapes. In its formation, the Alpine Club was structured much like other learned institutions including the Royal Geographic Society of London, an organization Ellis describes as “the great clearinghouse of nineteenth-century British imperial exploration.”\(^6^2\) In 1863, the Alpine Club started a regular publication named *The Alpine Journal*, originally subtitled “a record of mountain adventure and scientific observation.”\(^6^3\) By the late nineteenth century, Victorian mountaineers changed their focus to first ascents and the emphasis on scientific study diminished. In the 1890s, *The Alpine Journal* expanded its attention from the Alps to mountain ranges across the world. Geographic exploration as form of tourism grew in popularity among the social elite during the Victorian period. However, according to Pratt, “the ideology of discovery… has no existence of its own. It only gets “made” for real after the traveler (or other survivor) returns home, and brings it into being through texts: a name on a map, a report to the Royal Geographical Society, the Foreign

---


Office, the London Mission Society, a diary, a lecture, a travel book.”64 This relationship between mountaineering as geographic exploration and the production of written reports and mountaineering literature developed in a similar way within the shadow of European and North American colonialism.65

Following in the footsteps of the Alpine Club, continental Europeans founded their own mountaineering groups, including the Austrian Alpine Club (1862), the Swiss Alpine Club (1863), and the German Alpine Club (1869). By the late nineteenth century, mountaineers had climbed many of the highest peaks in the Alps, leading mountaineers from England and the rest of Europe to move their focus towards Asia, North America, and Africa, linking the quest for first ascents with nationalism and imperialism.66 According to literary scholar Edward Said, ‘‘imperialism’ means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory; ‘colonialism,’ which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory.”67 In the early nineteenth century, a desire for economic capital helped drive geographic exploration, but mountaineering as a form of exploration in the fin de siècle was a symbolic statement of power and claim to land. Mountaineers often competed to plant the flags of their countries in the high places of the world, a phenomenon Reichwein calls “summit nationalism.”68

During the Progressive Era, North American mountaineers formed their own national clubs as upper and middle class urbanites developed an interest in outdoor lifestyles and

64 Pratt, Imperial Eyes, 204.
65 Ellis, Vertical Margins: Mountaineering and the Landscapes of Neoimperialism.
66 Ibid.
68 Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise.
recreation beyond the metropolis. Additionally, Americans established numerous other civic organizations that echoed the mountain clubs’ interests by promoting healthy outdoor living and a better society: the Boone and Crockett Club, the Fresh Air Fund, the Audubon Society, and the Boy Scouts of America are a few examples. According to historian Evan Berry, “[w]alking, botanizing, and traveling to the mountains or seaside to ‘take the waters’ were all commonplace practices designed to affect the physical and spiritual well-being of the mobile classes.” In 1876, professors from Boston area universities established the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), which became the preeminent east coast mountaineering organization. Originally, club members focused their attention on the White Mountains, but by the late 1880s, some of the more enthusiastic members started to travel to the Canadian Rockies to seek unclimbed peaks and new territory. While European mountaineers influenced AMC club members, the AMC also drew inspiration from the American transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau who wrote about the aesthetics and spiritual experiences in the open spaces of the northeastern United States. Following the AMC came the founding of John Muir’s Sierra Club of San Francisco (1892). After the Sierra Club came the Mazamas of Portland (1884), the American Alpine Club of New York City (1902), the Alpine Club of Canada based in Calgary (1906), the Mountaineers of Seattle (1906), the British Columbia Mountaineering Club of Vancouver (1907), and the Colorado Mountain Club of Denver (1912). These clubs drew

---

71 Ibid., 62.
influence from Europe, their own North American identities, and regional physical geographies. Each organization has its own unique origin story. However, the overarching theme of recreation in the mountains was shared and by the second decade of the twentieth century, these institutions as well as many other mountain clubs and geographic societies were formally interacting under the guidance of the Associated Mountaineering Clubs of North America, and later the International Conference of Mountaineering Clubs.75

Investigating Mountain Clubs and Landscapes

Scholarly and public literature has established aspects of the Mountaineers’ history, most notably, Jim Kjeldsen’s book The Mountaineers: A History, which was published by the club’s book division.76 Kjeldsen provides a detailed descriptive history that narrates aspects of the club’s cultural evolution during the interwar years, the club’s role in conservation politics, and introduces a discussion about the club’s middle and upper class identity at its founding. However, he says little about the social and historical context of the club and provides minimal critical analysis of the club’s role in the production of northwest mountains spaces. Historian Mathew Klingle describes the social revolution that occurred within the club during the 1930s, noting in his book Emerald City, that the Mountaineers introduced a greater focus on climbing and public access to both skills and mountain landscapes. Klingle situates the changes in the club within the social history of Seattle, but provides little detail about the meaning of the mountains

or the club’s social spaces. By using these two books, as well as the large body of literature on
mountain clubs and mountain parks, this historical geography seeks to develop a more complete
understanding of the Mountaineers and their social geographies.77

To investigate the production of mountain landscapes in the Northwest, this thesis takes
inspiration from Reichwein’s book, Climber’s Paradise: Making Canada’s Mountain Parks,
1906-1974. This study chronicles the history of the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) from its
founding in 1906 in a burst of nationalism, through the nation’s post-World War II economic
expansion, and the resultant growth in an outdoor recreation cultural and economy. To begin,
Reichwein introduces the club’s founders and the middle class identity of its membership body.
From there, the book moves to explain the club’s annual summer camp as an important site of
meaning making, followed by a discussion about cultural conflict within the club as well as its
foray into conservation politics. In doing this, Reichwein argues that the social history of the
ACC is inextricably linked with the making of Canada’s Rocky Mountain National Parks.78

Reichwein’s research also demonstrates that the making of Canada’s mountain parks was
more than a simple land designation under the laws of the state. Rather, it was a process of
making and remaking a space through social practices involving, and excluding, many people
and groups. She argues that the “history of mountaineering in Canada is not a unilineal process
of sport ‘progress’ or a ‘coming of age,’ but a diverse and contested field of ongoing social
relations interacting in specific times and places as a dynamic site of culture.”79 Through the
ACC’s annual summer camps, its climbing, skiing, and hiking efforts, and its debates

77 For a third book the uses the Mountaineers’ archives, see Berry, Devoted to Nature: The Religious Roots of
American Environmentalism. Berry focuses on the protestant religious services that the Mountaineers held during
their early years. Within The Mountaineer journal, the services were only mentioned in passing and therefore they
are not a focus of this study.
78 Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise.
79 Ibid., xi.
surrounding these pursuits, it created meanings of place that organized and informed the interactions between club members and the physical environment. While the ACC was not the only institution to work on Canada’s parks, Reichwein demonstrates that it had the ability to make its meaning of place durable and resonant for large segments of Canadian society as it forged a close relationship with Parks Canada, advised the federal government on recreation and conservation issues, and amassed a large membership body that drew from both Canada and the United States. Ultimately, Reichwein shows how the ACC’s meaning making manifested spatially in the production of contested mountain spaces.

To explore the identity of the ACC, Reichwein places social class near the center of her analysis and describes the club as “an English-speaking organization dominated by members who were urban, well-educated, leisured, and drawn largely from professionals and business people of British ancestry in the middle to upper class.” Regarding the occupational characteristics of the club members, Reichwein notes that it was not unlike London’s Alpine Club, as many “white collar professionals, such as engineers, barristers, and schoolteachers, joined, as did celebrated summiteers, explorers, scientists, luminaries, and literati.” In an article about the British Columbia Mountaineering Club (BCMC), Christopher Dummitt also uses occupations as a way of identifying social class. He notes that members were professors, doctors, and engineers, who he called middle class professionals, as well as “small business people and white - and blue - collar mangers.” In the post-World War II years, the BCMC also

80 For camp life and sporting practices, see Rechwein, 61–118, 170-186.
81 For a discussion about government relations, see Ibid., 121-151; and for membership, see Ibid., 32-49.
82 Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise, 34.
83 Ibid., 35.
85 Ibid., 9.
included working class semi-professionals such as lithographers, technicians, and teachers, and a small number of urban working class members such as laborers and drivers. It did not include many people who did manual labor in the forest industry or on the waterfront, which were two of Vancouver’s main industries. Reichwein and Dummitt’s use of occupation provides a key framework for investigating the Mountaineers’ social class identity, but it should be noted that this form of analysis focuses on the labor of traditionally masculine professions and says little about the domestic labor carried out by women during the first half of the twentieth century.

In addition to focusing on occupation and social class, Reichwein also shows how the organization of summer camps and the production of mountain landscapes were reliant on complex political economies that structured social relations within the group. This included the labor of working class individuals such as cooks, horse packers, and all the personnel who assisted members in their travels to the camp locations. The ACC also hired European climbing guides to staff their camps, many of whom were on loan from the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). Often, the guides that served the ACC, the CPR, and tourists from Europe came from working class backgrounds and were drawn to the mountains partly because of the economic demand created by mountaineering as a form of recreation and consumption. In short, the ACC’s members were representative of a social class of consumers who were creating new markets and spaces of consumption in the mountains.

While Reichwein focuses on class dynamics, she also pays attention to the ways gender intersected with work and recreation. At its founding, the ACC included both men and women,

---

86 For a discussion about guides, cooks, and packers, see Rechwein, 70–80.
87 Conrad Kain was an Austrian mountain guide, born in poverty, who moved to Canada in 1909 to start work for the ACC. See Kain’s biography, Conrad Kain, Where the Clouds Can Go, ed. J.M. Thorington (Surrey: Rocky Mountain Books, 2009).
though it established clearly gendered spaces and practices.\textsuperscript{88} In a 1907 guide book, co-authors Elizabeth Parker and Arthur Wheeler wrote that “no lady climbing, who wears skirts, will be allowed to take a place on a rope.”\textsuperscript{89} But according to Reichwein, there was a hegemonic dress code in camps where women wore full length skirts and maintained a feminine appearance and identity. She also notes that it was common for Anglo climbers to use gender to categorize the mountains, quoting Alfred Mummery who wrote in 1896 that “all mountains pass through three stages – An inaccessible peak – The hardest climb in the Alps – An easy day for a lady.” The club divided the mountain landscape into sharply gendered spaces and identified that climbers were men of action, whereas women were less visible in the ACC’s reports. Reichwein cites a call from Parker, the female co-founder of the ACC, for Canadian men to take up the challenge of “a noble landscape” and in another instance, an ACC declaration to “bring me men to match my mountains.”\textsuperscript{90} For these upper and middle class men, climbing helped to “counteract everyday modern existence through the physical expression of rugged frontier masculinity in the mountains.”\textsuperscript{91} The opposite was true for women who had to maintain their female identity while in the male space of the mountains. These social dynamics demonstrate that class and gender intersect in the relationships between labor and outdoor play in nature. In another example, Dummitt identifies that the mountains just north of Vancouver were sites for post-World War II middle class urban and suburban men to embrace challenge and risk.\textsuperscript{92} Middle class masculine identities had to be maintained and the mountains offered opportunities not present in the relatively safe and controlled spaces of suburban Vancouver. Dummitt also describes a tension

\textsuperscript{88} For a discussion about gender and the ACC, see Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise, 37–43.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., 41.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., 38.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{92} Dummitt, “Risk on the Rocks.”
between managing risk and embracing it. Middle class men were supposed to be both rational and safe decision makers, and also show courage in the face of a danger and physical challenge. However, he says little about women who labored inside or outside the home. Moving forward, this study of the Mountaineers attempts to critically considers gender in the relationship between social class and the meaning of labor and play in the outdoors.

To help narrate the history of the ACC, Reichwein includes biographies of important club members inset into the main body of the text. The purpose of including these biographies is not only to provide details about these people, but to tell the multiple and diverse stories of individuals who together made up the institution of the ACC. This helps move beyond the important yet general discussion about gender, race, and class, which can obscure individuality. In the book *Driven Wild*, historian Paul Sutter uses a similar narrative approach as he chronicles the lives of four individual men as a way of exploring the formation of the Wilderness Society. By telling individual stories, Sutter was able to detail the ideas and experiences that led these four men to advocate for wilderness preservation in response to industrial tourism. This methodology helps to break down simplistic and universalizing narratives suggesting wilderness to be valued by a specific social group and not by another. Such narratives may be helpful for explaining some historical events, but they tend to become abstract from the individual lived experiences of people on the ground. In an attempt to root the making of space and place in the individual lives of the Mountaineers, this research follows this rhetorical strategy and inserts biographical information into the larger narrative about the general identity of the club.

As a method of investigation, Reichwein uses discourse analysis to analyze the ACC’s *Canadian Alpine Journal* (CAJ) and other archived sources to explore how texts constructed

---

93 Sutter, *Driven Wild*. 

---
mountain landscapes. There is a long tradition in geography, history, and literary criticism of using books, geographic reports, and travel narratives to investigate the ways in which various authors have represented space and landscape in text.\(^94\) Geographers P.A. Nettlefold and E. Stratford argue that mountaineers develop climbing landscapes in journals and guidebooks, thereby providing powerful tools of meaning making which help to organize people’s mountain experiences.\(^95\) These texts produce representations of space, though they can also reveal the lived practices of their authors. In this way, McCarthy argues that mountaineers’ textual representations transform abstract spaces into knowable places.\(^96\) Such representations of space and place are always partial and include assumptions about nature, gender, race, class, cultural difference, and ways of knowing the physical features of the earth’s surface.\(^97\) Building upon the insights of these scholars, as well as the many others who have analyzed mountaineering’s vast body of literature, this study of the Northwest’s alpine geographies places *The Mountaineer* annual journal at the center of its analysis.\(^98\)

Scholars have also shown that mountaineering texts are sites of struggle, where the meanings of culture and landscapes are contested, maintained, and remade. In a history of skiing in the Canadian Rockies, historian Zac Robinson uses the CAJ to show how ski mountaineering was initially constrained by the club during the 1920s before being promoted in the 1930s.\(^99\)


\(^{95}\) Nettlefold and Stratford, “The Production of Climbing Landscapes-as-Texts.”

\(^{96}\) McCarthy, “A Theory of Place in North American Mountaineering.”


According to Robinson, the culture of the ACC from 1906-1930, as represented in the CAJ, maintained a traditional view of mountaineering, a reflection due at least in part to the fact that its contributors were mostly middle class males in their fifties and sixties. For these men, the use of skis in alpine environments ran counter to the traditions of their sport. Ski mountaineering entered the pages of the CAJ in four articles in 1930, the same year that the seventy-year-old club co-founder, Arthur O. Wheeler, stepped down from the editorship. This was the first time the position had turned over in the club’s twenty-four-year history. As a result, Robinson shows how differences in age as well as social class influenced the struggle over the production of culture within the CAJ.

In another article on the ACC, Robinson and Jay Scherer show how the CAJ was a site of cultural struggle over the forms of climbing during the post-war years. This article narrates the climb of Brussels Peak in 1948, as well as other climbs that used new methods and tools such as pitons, expansion bolts, and carabineers. Previously, the ACC’s climbing required little equipment as the group made ascents on well-established low angle snow and easy rock routes. In response to this new form of mountaineering, some members of the ACC wrote scathing articles in the CAJ that argued the equipment diminished the climber’s ability to show courage and overcome the challenges of nature in some unmediated form. As the debates over the ethics of climbing took place in the CAJ, it became “the principal site for both the production of the dominant culture and the active marginalization and containment of oppositional sporting forms and practices.” However, Robinson and Scherer also argue that this debate contained deeper cultural conflicts driven by class, ethnic, and generational differences. As Reichwein notes, the

---

100 Zac Robinson and Jay Scherer, "‘How Steep is Steep?’ The Struggle for Mountaineering in the Canadian Rockies, 1948–65?,” The International Journal of the History of Sport 26, no.1 (April 1, 2009):594-620
101 Ibid., 600.
ACC had an aging membership made up of mostly upper and middle class people of Anglo-European background. In contrast, the new technical climbers were mostly working class immigrants from Eastern Europe. In the Alps, a similar Anglo-Germanic rivalry developed in the 1920s and 1930s, but according to Robinson and Scherer, it took on new meanings in post-War Canada as the rise of fascism in Europe was still fresh in the minds of Anglo-Canadian mountaineers. One satirical article in the CAJ even featured a “mechanically minded climber” named Aldorf Hilter.\(^{102}\) Despite the resistance to change by the conservative club leadership, innovative technical climbing grew in popularity during the early 1960s and, as a result, the CAJ featured more reports on first ascents up new routes in the Canadian Rockies. While the climbers from the older generation and younger generation originated from two very different economic backgrounds, Robinson and Scherer also show how mountaineering landscapes became the sites of a cultural, ethnic, and political struggle, the boundaries of which lay well beyond the mountains of North America.

In their respective histories of the ACC’s cultural geographies, both Reichwein and Robinson put social class at the center of their analysis. They show how different social classes developed different cultural landscapes in the Canadian Rockies, but also remained sensitive to the ways that other identities intersected with social class in the struggle over the meaning of the mountains. Despite the important social difference described by both Reichwein and Robinson, the struggles over mountain landscapes took place between factions within the ACC, a group of people that was relatively homogeneous and did not include voices from a broader cross section of society. All of these climbers had the ability to consume recreation experiences in the mountains. Within the accounts of these struggles, only minor resistance was offered to the

\(^{102}\) Ibid.
production of mountain landscapes as male space and few actors of non-European descent were included in their making.

**Space, Culture, and Nature**

To explore the Mountaineers’ making of meaning in the alpine environment, Henri Lefebvre’s concept of the trialectics of spatial production offers a helpful starting point.\(^{103}\) Lefebvre argues that space is not an *a priori* container for human action, but rather it is produced and reproduced through social institutions and practices. The trialectics of spatial production refers to three aspects of its production: *representations of space*, *spatial practices* (the spaces of daily life), and *spaces of representation* (space of resistance). *Representations of space* are the hegemonic spaces of a capitalist society, including the spaces of production, consumption, and spectacle, which are constructed by a dominant social class that persuades the rest of society that abstract representations, such as maps or coordinate systems, are realistic representations of social space. In a discussion of Lefebvre’s work, Ceri Watkins writes that it is this aspect that “codifies epistemological approaches to understanding, against which claims of knowledge and truth are evaluated.”\(^{104}\) For Lefebvre, such abstractions are problematic as they ignore that space is a fundamental component of human’s lived experiences. He postulates that the spaces of everyday life and the spaces of social resistance work with the dominant representations of space to constitute humans’ experience of social space. The spaces of everyday life refer to the way that people work within the hegemonic representations of space, such as a person using a map to

---

\(^{103}\) Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*.

guide their personal experience of a place. Meanwhile, spaces of social resistance are created by people pushing back against the dominant rules and representations of space. Watkins argues that it is the spaces of resistance that manifest “deviations, diversity, and individuality that are a fundamental aspect of any social encounter.”105 While Lefebvre developed these insights into social life by studying the form of the capitalist city, they can also illuminate the constant negotiation and renegotiating of space, culture, and landscape within the history of the Mountaineers.

Geographers Dennis Cosgrove and Peter Jackson define culture as “the medium through which people transform the mundane phenomena of the material world into a world of significant symbols to which they give meaning and attach value.”106 It is the way that humans make sense of, narrate, and struggle over all ways of knowing and living in the world. Postmodern geographers and practitioners of cultural studies, including Cosgrove and Jackson, have argued that the world is made up of a plurality of cultures, or spheres of meaning that are contested by an array of groups and individuals. Jackson argues that there are many ways of making meaning and as a result, culture is the “domain in which meanings are contested.”107 While individuals bring to bear their own unique and diverse experiences, the making of culture is a social project carried out by a collective that in turn influences those individual interpretations.

To study the culture of the Mountaineers and the ways that the institution produced knowledge of the mountains, one could survey and list their social practices – the climbs, the campfires, and the classes, but doing only this would ignore that culture is always made, remade,

105 Ibid., 213.
107 Jackson, Maps of Meaning, 180.
and struggled over. This means that mountaineering cultures and other sporting practices are products of labor relations and social class position, or as geographer Don Mitchell argues, it “is not determined abstractly, but by the concerted effort, the unavoidable work, of many people seeking to pin down a ‘fierce little concentration of meaning.’”¹⁰⁸ This work, which is carried out by those who can control the production of meaning, determines what sporting practices and physical uses of the body are acceptable. This means that a critical survey of culture must also include a discussion about relations of power and ask who has the ability to make cultural meanings durable. Power allows dominant social groups to celebrate certain practices and define others as deviant. For example, in the Pacific Northwest, prior to and during the time of the Mountaineers founding, schools and missions were set up in both British Columbia and Washington to teach indigenous people how to be “civilized” or act like European Americans.¹⁰⁹ In many instances, Europeans forbid native people to speak their language or practice their customs. As this case demonstrates, power matters in the process of cultural production and struggle.

When considering cultural production and relations of power, Antonio Gramsci’s concept of hegemony is helpful.¹¹⁰ Hegemony does not simply mean dominant power or force. Rather, it refers to the ability or power of a social group to persuade, rather than coerce, subordinate groups to embrace their political and cultural values as natural truth. Gramsci also argues that, hegemonic meanings are always resisted and struggled over. In this sense, it relates to Lefebvre’s representations of space, which are the hegemonic ways of socially constructing

¹⁰⁸ Mitchell, Cultural Geography, 74.
spaces and used to measure the “reality” of humans’ lived experiences. In his book, *Maps of Meaning*, Jackson writes that “subordinate groups have evolved a wide repertoire of strategies for resistance, negotiation, and struggle.”\(^{111}\) Jackson goes on to argue that cultural struggle and the hierarchy of the social classes are far more fluid and complex than Gramsci acknowledged. Instead, social life is made of many mixed groups, with intersecting identities, which hold positions of “relative power.”\(^{112}\) In an article titled, *Sport and Social Class*, Pierre Bourdieu argues that sporting practices are “objects of struggles between the fractions of the dominant class and also between the social classes.”\(^{113}\) This means that within a relatively homogenous group, the Mountaineers for example, there is a constant struggle over the production and reproduction of sporting practices. As a result, culture is a dynamic social sphere where power is asserted and meanings are contested and resisted.

The struggle over meaning, which Mitchell called “the culture wars,” manifests spatially in the production of landscapes.\(^{114}\) In this instance, it is difficult to separate the discursive and material spheres of culture. As people produce landscapes and make the cultural meanings “real,” they can allow certain actions and practices while forbidding others. Such hegemonic representations of space can also order individual lives, as they include messages about nature, gender, race, class, sexuality, and a myriad of other social identities. As Jackson observes, landscapes are ideological “maps of meaning,” that inform and influence individual and collective action.\(^{115}\) People read landscapes like signs that tell various social group how to make sense of the physical world. Meanings explain who belongs, who does not, what actions are

\(^{112}\) Ibid., 55.
\(^{115}\) Jackson, *Maps of Meaning*. 
appropriate, and which are deviant. In the city, visual expressions of homosexuality were long taboo, but gay neighborhoods developed as important sites of resistance and cultural struggle within the larger urban landscape.\footnote{Mitchell, *Cultural Geography*, 184–90; Wayne Myslik, “Renegotiation the Social/Sexual Identities of Places: Gay Communities as Safe Havens or Sites of Resistance?,” in BodySpace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality, ed. Nancy Duncan (London: Routledge, 1996), 155–68.} The meanings of various spaces and places can be quite diverse, yet it may be possible to gain a better understanding of their meaning by looking at their relation to other places and landscapes.

Since landscapes are social constructions produced by humans acting in the physical world and imbuing it with meanings, both material and symbolic, many scholars have argued that nature is not an \textit{a priori} space, identity, or state of being, but rather a social construct.\footnote{For surveys of the different ways that scholars have made arguments about the social construction of nature see, Noel Castree and Bruce Braun, “The Construction of Nature and the Nature of Construction: Analytical and Political Tools for Building Survivable Futures,” in Remaking Reality: Nature at the Millennium, ed. Bruce Braun and Noel Castree (London: Routledge, 1998), 3–42; David Demeritt, “Science, Social Constructivism and Nature,” in Remaking Reality: Nature at the Millennium, ed. Bruce Braun and Noel Castree (London: Routledge, 1998), 173–90.} This means that scholars, recreationalist, and environmentalists should not take mountain parks and alpine landscape for granted as untouched nature. People cannot interpret the physical world outside of their own lived human experiences, informed by cultural knowledge. Regarding mountains, Macfarlane argues, that “\textit{we read landscapes, in other words, we interpret their forms in the light of our own experience and memory, and that of our shared cultural memory.}”\footnote{Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind*, 2003, 19.} Simply put, people cannot understand nature or the world around them outside of their own discursive constructions and human existence.

While insights about the discursive construction of nature are important analytical tools, one could take the argument to mean that there is a material nature that exists, separate from both human knowledge and understanding. This implied dichotomy between the world and human...
experience can reproduce the divide between nature and humanity. In contrast, other scholars such as geographer Neil Smith have focused more on the material production of nature and human agency in the world. In Smith’s book *Uneven Development*, he moves beyond the nature-society divide, which he calls the bourgeois ideology of nature, and shows how capitalism produces and reproduces the physical world.\textsuperscript{119} Central to this argument is the idea that humans are part of nature and the human landscapes, such as cities and parks, are ecological spaces.

Quoting Karl Marx from *Capital I*, Smith argues that human labor produces useful things that fulfill human need…but labor effects more than just a simple change in the form of matter; it produces a simultaneous effect on the laborer. ‘Labor is, in the first place, a process in which both man and nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material re-actions between himself and nature. He opposes himself to nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate nature’s productions in a form adapted to his own want.’\textsuperscript{120}

As labor and capital accumulate at certain sites across the face of the earth, the process produces a landscape of uneven development, where the city stands in contrast to “natural” places. While labor’s effects are obvious in the city, human labor can and has rearranged mountain natures that are constituted of rock, ice, trails, human bodies, and material items such as ice axes, ski lifts, and fire lookout towers. The material production, or reproduction, of mountain natures is also increasingly exemplified by the political economies that drive climate change, the results of which affect the mass balance of alpine and non-alpine glaciers, as well as other parts of global systems.\textsuperscript{121} These observations help break down the constructed divide between cultural representation and material nature. However, geographers Bruce Braun and Noel Castree have


\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., 35–36.

noted that in literature on the construction of nature, the narrow focus on political economy diminishes the importance of culture and discourse alluded to by Macfarlane. This is a significant analytical gap, because “struggles over meaning are every bit as ‘material’ and important as practical struggles.” As was pointed out in the discussion about landscape and culture, symbolic meanings can drive material action and as a result, it is difficult to separate the material and symbolic spheres of social life.

As socially constructed spaces, mountain landscapes raise questions about who gets to determine dominant geographical meanings and practices; these are questions of central import for a study of parks and outdoor recreation. The act of naming a landscape or an object natural is political act that seeks to depoliticize that space or material item and take its social production out of contestation. In the book *Making Meaning Out of Mountains*, sociologist Mark Stoddart argues that “constructions of the environment matter because they define who may legitimately inhabit and use these places. They also identify which social actors deserve to be included in – and which may be exclude from – decision making about the use and management of mountain environments.”

By paying attention to both discursive readings and material practices, this study of the Mountaineers attempts to develop a better understanding of how the club formed mountain landscapes and at what cost to social groups.

**Social Class and the Culture of Labor on the Land**

This study builds on the work of numerous scholars who have authored historically specific accounts of the social production of nature and “natural” landscapes such as national

---

parks and wilderness areas. In the now-classic essay *The Trouble With Wilderness or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature*, William Cronon offers a powerful critique of the wilderness idea in American history and argues that wilderness is not a non-human landscape, but rather a cultural artifact and a product of modernity.\(^{124}\) He writes that wilderness,

> is not a pristine sanctuary where the last remnant of an untouched, endangered, but still transcendent nature can for at least a little while longer be encountered without the contaminating taint of civilization. Instead, it is a product of that civilization, and could hardly be contaminated by the very stuff of which it is made.\(^{125}\)

To make his point, Cronon turns to economic and material changes in the social life of Americans. He argues that wilderness is a form of bourgeois anti-modernism valued by an social class of people separated from work on the land.\(^{126}\) Historian Richard White, in a critique of late twentieth century environmentalism and outdoor recreation, goes further in saying it “is no accident, then, that the play we feel brings us closer to nature is play that mimics work. Our play is often a masked form of bodily labor. Environmentalists like myself are most aware of nature when we backpack, climb, and ski.”\(^{127}\) By work, White refers to labor that produces the material artifacts necessary for life, including food, warmth, and shelter. Play, on the other hand, is for those who do not need to labor in this way, and as such, Cronon and White argue that it is the social classes that are separated from labor on the land that have produced outdoor recreation landscapes. While highly insightful, these critiques ignore the history of women’s labor and do no fully grapple with the fact that the type of labor in question has been gendered throughout much of American history.

---

\(^{124}\) Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness.”
\(^{125}\) Ibid., 7.
\(^{126}\) Ibid., 14.
Many other scholars have followed Cronon’s approach, emphasizing the material and economic aspects of the making of wilderness and outdoor recreation landscapes. In *Driven Wild*, Paul Sutter argues that the rise of automobile ownership and the growing interest in outdoor recreation in the 1920s spawned the modern love for wilderness and inspired the founding of the Wilderness Society to push back against industrial tourism.\(^{128}\) Similarly, historian David Louter shows in his book *Windshield Wilderness* that advances in automobile technology shifted the way in which Americans made sense of and interacted with national park landscapes in Washington State.\(^{129}\) Together, these studies demonstrate how economic and material shifts change the meanings of a place. However, the focus on material economies underemphasizes symbolic and cultural differences, which influence the production of landscapes. While Sutter does focus on major material shifts, he also chronicles the educational background of four of the founders of the Wilderness Society as a way of showing how cultural knowledge, in this case ideas about progressive science, forestry, and regional planning, shaped the ways that the founders thought about wilderness. Cultural knowledge, in addition to economic structure, has a profound impact on the way that people approach land and develop meanings of place.

Though class analysis is central to Cronon’s work, he also identifies important cultural narratives that inform the wilderness ideal. For segments of the American population, namely white males, labor on the land has been a central part of being an independent American. In the early years of the republic, Thomas Jefferson argued that the individual small plot farmer was at the core of American democracy (known as agrarianism), an idea that drew from enlightenment

---

128 Sutter, *Driven Wild*.
thinking and the conception of the liberal individual as a rational and independent being.\footnote{130}{Linda A. Malone, “Reflections on the Jeffersonian Ideal of an Agrarian Democracy and the Emergence of an Agricultural and Environmental Ethic in the 1990 Farm Bill,” \textit{Faculty Publications, William & Mary Law School Scholarship Repository} Paper 597 (1993).}

According to geographers Deborah Dixon and Holly Hapke, Jeffersonian agrarianism contains five core principles that have permeated American culture and politics:

(1) a belief in the independence and virtue of the yeoman farmer, (2) the concept of private property as a natural right, (3) land ownership without restrictions on use or disposition, (4) the use of land as a safety valve to ensure justice in the city, and (5) the conviction that with hard work, anyone could thrive in farming.\footnote{131}{Deborah P Dixon and Holly M. Hapke, “Cultivating Discourse: The Social Construction of Agricultural Legislation,” \textit{Annals of the Association of American Geographers} 93 (2003): 144.}

In 1862, congress passed the Homestead Act, which authorized the transfer of 160 acres of land from the federal government to an individual willing to live on it and make improvements to it for at least five years. While this encouraged westward migration, some Americans in the mid-nineteenth century were already concerned about the closing of the frontier and the end of open land. Meanwhile, some progressive and reform minded American responded to this concern by advocating for the protection of wildlands and the development of parks as means of preserving the agrarian experience in open space. As early as 1833, painter George Catlin promoted a “nation’s park, containing man and beast, in all the wild and freshness of their nature’s beauty!”\footnote{132}{Nash, \textit{Wilderness and the American Mind}, 101.}

In the mid to late nineteenth century, these ideas influenced environmental politics, legislation, and a number of national figures including John Muir, Gifford Pinchot, and Theodore Roosevelt, all champions of public lands.\footnote{133}{Finney, \textit{Black Faces, White Spaces}, 36–37.} The concern about the loss of open space was also famously articulated in 1893, by historian Fredrick Jackson Turner, who declared the end of the frontier in his thesis, \textit{The Significance of the Frontier in American History}, in which he described the westward expansion of the United States where settlers threw off the cloak of European
civilization, returned to a primitive state, and then through struggle built a strong independent and democratic society. According to Cronon, Turner’s thesis and the perceived closing of the frontier in American life corresponded with an “elite passion for wildland[s]’ and the outdoor life.” In the West, Muir wrote about pristine nature and celebrated grand scenery while rugged men like Roosevelt championed outdoor experiences and frontier nostalgia. As was the case with the Victorian mountaineers in London, Cronon observes that in the United States, there was significant concerns about overcrowded cities and the perceived artificiality of modern industrial civilization, which was “especially insidious for men, who all too easily became emasculated by the feminizing tendencies of civilization.” As a solution, wilderness and outdoor recreation offered opportunities to reestablish male strength and an identity of individualism related to work on the land. However, this love of wilderness did not recreate productive labor. Rather it was about recreating or consuming an experience for specific cultural reasons related to social class, gender, and the meaning of urban work.

Despite the importance of agrarianism to the meaning of American wilderness, it is a narrative that has not been representative of the experiences of all Americans. In the book White Faces, Black Spaces, geographer Carolyn Finney argues that the experience of slavery, Jim Crow, and the denial of property under the Homestead Act has shaped African Americans relationship to land in ways that have differed from white Americans and proponents of

---

135 Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness,” 1.
wildlands like Roosevelt and Muir. While white Americans live with the agrarian narratives about labor, democracy, and property in land, African Americans live with the reality of slavery which meant work on somebody else’s land. This difference is fundamental and Finney argues that

[from the beginning, the creation of “wilderness” and public lands was the center piece to the nation-building project of who we are as Americans. These lands were our cathedrals, our representations to the world of, supposedly, the best of who we are and who we can be. From the beginning, African Americans as well as other nonwhite peoples were not allowed to participate on their own terms in this project.]

Other scholars such as geographer Bruce Braun and historian Mark Spence show how the making of wilderness areas and parks has at times meant dispossessing native space. Contrary to some historical accounts, the mountain regions of North America have been and often still are culturally important places for first nations and tribes. Together, these scholars show that the preservation of wildlands and park spaces has been an important political act, carried out by a dominant culture, which has produced exclusive landscapes and marginalized other identities and cultural experiences of these spaces. While economics are important to this history, American cultural values regarding work and undeveloped land have also informed interests in parks and recreation.

Other scholars who have studied the cultural and economic development of parks and outdoor recreation have identified that recreation landscapes have historically been occupied by two groups of people, those there for leisure and those their due to a demand for labor, represented by such occupations as mountain guides and service industry workers. However,

---

139 Ibid., 50.
141 Miles, *Koma Kulshan*. 
some people in the recreation working class have held a high degree of cultural capital that complicates traditional urban class structures. In Canada, Reichwein identifies that working class mountain guides marked themselves with special pins to denote an elevated cultural status due to their unique skillset, but the relevance of this status and their skills was contingent upon a certain geographic location and social situation within the mountains. In a history of skiing in Colorado, Annie Coleman describes how the development of large commercial ski resorts gave rise to a bohemian mountain culture of ‘ski bums,’ individuals who took menial jobs in an effort to work as little and ski as much as possible. Interestingly, this inverted working class culture became the ideal for some of the ski areas’ affluent visitors as the ski bum occupied a unique social position with a great degree of cultural prestige and little economic power. The ski bum was also a consumer of leisure experiences and required a social structure that could support that. Moving forward, the present study attempts to examine both culture and economic influence together by using the term social class.

In order interrogate the complex dialectic between culture and economy, this research turns to the work of Bourdieu and his discussion of cultural capital, social class, and habitus. While traditional political economy has looked at capital in narrow economic terms, Bourdieu’s research on the sociology of education led him to broaden the meaning of capital to include both cultural and social capital, as translated forms of economic capital, in a discussion of social class. One’s access to, and the composition of, the three forms of capital informs their social class position. These forms help individuals and groups produce and understand social practices. Cultural or symbolic capital can exist in an embodied state, such as skills, knowledge, or

---

143 Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital.”
physical abilities, or the objectified state such as a graduate degree or piece of artwork with important symbolic meanings. It can also reference fame or prestige, the accumulation of which can equate to a greater degree of social influence. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital starts to accumulate in a child from birth, as they are educated and gain knowledge of tastes, manners, and practices. Sometimes economic and cultural capital can overlap; as wealth holds both functional economic value and it can also carry an element of prestige. The example of the ski bum is interesting because it is a person with high cultural capital within a given social circle or field, but little economic capital. The concept of cultural capital adds another dimension to the understanding of political economy, as the quantity and form of cultural capital may influence an individual’s agency in the production of space.

As people learn cultural tastes, skills, and practices, they start to develop their sense of place within the social classes, or their habitus. Bourdieu defines habitus as one’s social position, which includes a limited range of practices and choices within a larger social field.\(^\text{144}\) It refers to one’s sense of place, but also the sense of place of others within the social landscape. In this sense, it helps overcome the dualism between structure and agency, as people make choices from a position within the social field where options are limited. Sometime limitations of choice are visible, but often they are not. This helps explain why trends exist within the social world, despite the fact that there are not specific rules that state that, for example, outdoor recreation is a value of middle and upper class white people. Social context, which may change over time, plays a role limiting individual tastes and choices. Bourdieu writes that habitus is “both a system of schemes of production of practices and a system of perception and appreciation of practices. And, in both of these dimensions, its operation expresses the social position in which it was

elaborated.” Here, Bourdieu emphasizes an ongoing process where one’s habitus is shaped through the accumulation of capital, potentially in the form of cultural narratives and epistemologies that are reified by an individual and their social groups. Of course, the other forms of capital, as well as the meanings of other identities, also help to shape one’s habitus. In a summation of Bourdieu’s work, Karl Maton writes that habitus “captures how we carry within us our history, how we bring this history into our present circumstances, and how we then make choices to act in certain ways and not others. This is an ongoing and active process – we are engaged in a continuous process of making history, but not under conditions entirely of our own making.” Therefore, it is important when discussing the identity of the Mountaineers to explore the narratives, the educational background, and cultural practices that have helped inform their making of meaning in the mountains, in addition to the economic situation of members’ lives.

**Studying the Mountaineers**

The scholarship reviewed in this chapter is essential for understanding the mountain recreation landscapes of the Pacific Northwest. Both Lefebvre and Bourdieu show that people consistently produce and reproduce social spaces. Similarly, cultures and landscapes are socially constructed both materially and symbolically. This means that the past matters when explaining culture, landscapes, and the constant negotiation of identities. An examination of the historical geographies of the Mountaineers can help illuminate the meanings of the Cascade and Olympic mountains in the twenty-first century. *The Mountaineer* journal tells stories that, in the words of

---

146 Maton, “Habitus,” 52.
geographer Derek Gregory, are “histories of the present,” as they identify “processes in the past which in some way bear on the constitution of the present.” 147 Ways of knowing the world are informed by and layered upon past social practices. Reichwein took on such a framework, writing, “mountain parks are and were not simply space that can be taken for granted as ‘nature’ or ‘wilderness,’ because these terms are mutable and anchored in specific contexts of time and place in a given society and language.” 148 This also means that past narratives, which inform the present, have their own histories. As such, the investigation of mountain places through the historic work of an alpine club must also explore the institutions’ foundational cultural narratives.

Scholars such as Reichwein, Cronon, Finney, and Macfarlane have identified important histories that help contextualize the Mountaineers making of meaning during the early twentieth-century. This body of scholarship offers helpful narratives about the constructions of wilderness, the development of mountaineering as a modern sport in Europe, and narratives about national identity, particularly that of the pioneer. Similarly, the work of Reichwein, Robinson, and Cronon also shows that the history of mountain recreation is wrapped up in social class identity. Mountaineers and lovers of the outdoors have primarily produced these landscapes for the consumption of an experience by a leisured social class. Within these histories, gender roles have often been clearly defined and different cultural experiences have shaped the meanings of regional recreation geographies. The next chapter explores changes in the social class identity of the Mountaineers as way of looking at the struggle over the meanings of the Cascade and Olympic mountain landscapes during the early decades of the twentieth century.

148 Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise, 7.
Chapter 3:
The Mountaineers and the Wilderness Nearby

The Mountaineers’ own historiography traces the formation of the club back to the 1905 meeting of Seattle businessperson W. Montelious Price and photographer Asahel Curtis during a Sierra Club trip to Mount Rainier.\(^{149}\) A year later, the two men met again and decided to join the Mazamas summer outing to Mount Baker, to summit the supposedly unclimbed Mount Shuksan. It was on this trip that they imagined the formation of a Seattle-based alpine club.\(^{150}\) That fall, at a gathering to celebrate the Frederick Cook Expedition on their return from Alaska, a group of Seattleites, including Price and Curtis, created a committee to write to the Mazamas and the Sierra Club asking for advice about a new mountaineering group. Originally, the group planned to be a Seattle extension of the Portland-based club, but within a year, the members shortened the name from the Seattle Mountaineers Club - Auxiliary of the Mazamas to simply the Mountaineers. At its founding, the club drew members from Seattle’s urban middle class while well-educated social elites made up the leadership. Through the mid-1920s, few members from Seattle’s working classes were visible within the reports of the club.

Throughout the Mountaineers’ first few decades, reports from the summer outing maintained a place of prominence within The Mountaineer annual. Held every summer over a three-week period, the outing was the highlight of the club’s calendar and was an important site of meaning making. The purpose of these early trips was to offer up to one hundred participants the joys of camping without having to pack or carry supplies into the mountains, much of which

\(^{149}\) Kjeldsen, The Mountaineers; Miles, Koma Kulshan, 97.
was done with hired help. While climbing was part of the outing, it was not the focus. Rather, the group promoted fellowship and developed an institution where members camped, hiked, and climbed en masse.

During this period, the Mountaineers promoted the Olympic and Cascade Mountains as a wild and unknown landscapes in need of discovery. Themes of scientific study and geographic exploration were common within *The Mountaineer* and the summer outing, though the club also celebrated the observation of grand scenery. All of these narratives worked to abstract the mountains from the embodied experience of individual club members and produced meanings of place that reflected the identity and cultural experiences of the club’s leadership. Through the representation of the mountains as a wilderness and non-human space, the Mountaineers made a cultural landscape that reflected their social lives in Seattle and broader cultural narratives with roots in North American and Europe. The practices of the club also showed that the summer outing was a complex site for the negotiation of social class identity and the consumption of a recreation experience.

As the club grew in the 1920s, the social class and gender identity of the people writing articles in *The Mountaineer* shifted, and the meanings of mountain space changed as well. The climbers who wrote new and different narratives were much younger and often representative of a middle and working class that had grown significantly since the founding of the club. They were also almost exclusively men who did not have the same social or cultural capital as the club’s founders. However, both groups came from social classes with the ability to consume recreational experiences, as well as the material items necessary to do so. By the late 1920s, themes that emphasized the mountains as a retreat from the city and a place for adventure sport took a place of prominence in *The Mountaineer* while reports on science and physical geography
faded, although they did not completely disappear. By the 1930s, climbing as form of modern sport framed the club’s dominant representations of mountain space. Often, this necessitated the purchase of more equipment, most of which came from Europe and was sold in Seattle. By the end of the 1930s, climbers and skiers had established the alpine landscape as a site for modern consumer culture. In doing so, they developed a tension within the Mountaineers’ production of space where the representational divide between urban spaces and mountain spaces grew wider, but in practice, the club strengthened the cultural and economic links between Seattle and the Olympic and Cascade Mountains.

**Social Class Identity**

To understand the formation of the Mountaineers, it is important to place the club in the social history of Seattle as it grew from a small pioneer community in 1880 to a major metropolitan center in the 1920s. The arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad in the mid-1880s helped stimulate economic growth and greatly benefited the city’s two main industries: coal and timber. During the 1880s, Seattle’s population jumped from 3,400 to 42,000 residents. Then in 1897, Seattle’s newspaper announced the discovery of gold in the Yukon Territory. This created an economic boom, especially for Seattle’s merchants who sold food, equipment, and transportation services to more than 25,000 miners bound for the Yukon. The amount of capital invested in the city also increased as the total value of bank deposits rose from seven million dollars in 1898 to sixty million dollars in 1906. By 1910, the population of Seattle had

---

jumped to 237,000. Despite this growth during the Mountaineers’ early years, the timber industry was still Seattle’s largest employer and the city continued to be an economic center for a regional economy that, in the words of western historian Earl Pomery, was more “devoted to the extractive industries, to extensive agriculture, to mining, and to logging than manufacturing.”  As the Mountaineers traveled from Seattle to the mountains, they passed through many of these landscapes of production and often made note of sheep drives, mines, mountain towns base around extraction in the pages of The Mountaineer.

In contrast to the general population of Seattle, the Mountaineers were founded and shaped by a well-educated social class who wielded significant influence in the city’s political, economic, and cultural institutions. In January of 1907, the Mountaineers held their first annual meeting in Seattle’s chamber of commerce room, a place controlled by the city’s business class. At the meeting, state geologist Henry Landes was elected club president. Landes held a graduate degree from Harvard University, was a professor of geology at the University of Washington, and served as University President from 1914-1915. At the same meeting, Bertha Knight Landes, who was Landes’ wife and later elected mayor of Seattle, also joined the group. She was women’s suffragist and progressive Democrat who was also involved in many civic organizations including the Seattle Federation of Women’s Clubs and the Women’s Century Club. Other Mountaineer’s cabinet members included Dr. J.P. Sweeney, a former President of

---

Seattle’s Board of Aldermen, medical doctor Cora Smith Eaton, a prominent leader in the women’s suffrage movement, Dr. E.F. Stevens, and Mary Banks of the Seattle Public Library. In general, the Mountaineers leadership resided in a social space formed by their access to large amounts of economic, cultural, and social capital.

While much of the leadership was male, the inclusion of women’s rights activists, Cora Smith Eaton and Betha Knight Landes helped to create an organization that was relatively progressive regarding gender relations. Throughout the Mountaineers’ early decades, women made up slightly more than half of the club and many women were active participants during the summer outings. In 1909, the summer outing to Mount Rainer included at least forty women in the group of ninety people. Prior to this trip, the Mountaineers had advertised it as a side trip for the National American Woman’s Suffrage Association’s annual conference that was being held in Seattle in conjunction with that summer’s Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (AYP). At the time, Smith Eaton was also treasurer of the Washington Equal Suffrage Association, that also held its annual conference in Seattle that summer. Multiple members of the Mountaineers’ were involved in the planning of the AYP event, which included a Suffrage Day that, according to Washington historian Paula Becker, helped lead to statewide woman suffrage in 1910. Despite these progressive efforts and relatively even numbers of both men and women in the club, the Mountaineers projected an urban male identity from its other leaders.

During the Mountaineers’ early years, Asahel Curtis, well known across the region for his photography of the Klondike Gold Rush, helped lead the club’s summer outing committee. Curtis later became a booster for Mount Rainier National Park and a recreation advisor to the

---

Secretary of the Interior.\textsuperscript{159} He was the younger brother of Edward Curtis, also a Seattle photographer, who climbed with the Mazamas.\textsuperscript{160} Edward earned national renown for his twenty-volume portraiture, \textit{The North American Indian}, funded in part by J.P. Morgan, which perpetuated a myth about the “vanishing Indian.”\textsuperscript{161} The Curtis brothers grew up in the upper-Midwest, but moved with family to Puget Sound in 1887. In 1888, the father Curtis died and twenty-year old Edward provided for the family by laboring on the land and foraging for food.\textsuperscript{162} In 1891, Edward took out a loan and moved to Seattle to start a career as a photographer. Once he established a photography studio, he hired Asahel and the rest of the family joined them in the city. Though the brothers eventually had a falling out, they both were representative of Seattle’s new and fragile cosmopolitan social class at the turn of the century.\textsuperscript{163} Like many other Seattleites and early members of the Mountaineers, the Curtis brothers transcended a working class life on the land and adopted the progressive notion that the Pacific Northwest was moving beyond the pioneer era.\textsuperscript{164}

In addition to the leaders, much of the Mountaineers’ membership body also did not labor on the land. At the club’s second meeting in February 1907, one hundred fifty-one people, seventy-seven women and seventy-four men, signed up as charter members. Surveys of the club rosters reveal that the Mountaineers also drew from an urban population rather than the region’s rural residents. In a fiftieth anniversary history of the club, Joseph T. Hazard highlighted that the

\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., 31.
majority of members came from Seattle’s professional middle class, including fourteen university professors (eleven from the University of Washington), forty-two librarians and teachers, twenty-three business men, thirteen physicians and doctors, four scientists, and three attorneys. Hazard also wrote that some forty-four additional members were “wives of climbers, husbands of climbers, valley pounds, somewhat humble or forgotten folk, or those, there, but still sitting the seats of the scornful. But few if any!” The fact that the club marginalized domestic labor, which was carried out by women, and did not note the inclusion of dockworkers, loggers, anglers, or people who physically labored to earn their living further reveals the club’s identity as an urban professional group. The club also did not include immigrants from Asia or people indigenous to the Pacific Northwest. At its founding, the Mountaineers represented a unique social group in Seattle, a city where mud flowed in the streets, stumps smoldered on the outskirts of town, and many in the region worked on the land or water to make their living.

While early club members had economic capital that enabled them to afford outdoor recreation experiences, they also came from a social class that was well educated. High school teachers and librarians made up almost a third of the club and university faculty held a place of privilege in the reports from summer outings and local walks. Scholars such as Christopher Dummitt have suggested the teachers might fall into the lower middle or working class, but their time off in the summer gave them a unique opportunity for summer recreation. It is also

---

165 Hazard, “1906: The First Twenty-Five.”
166 Ibid., 7.
167 For descriptions of muddy streets, stumps, and Seattle’s landscape between 1889-1903, see Klingle, Emerald City, 88–89,126; For Seattle's labor force, see Putman, Class and Gender Politics in Progressive-Era Seattle, 33–35.
important to point out that teachers were one of the few professional positions in Seattle that was predominantly female. In particular, three young female teachers, Gertrude Streator, Lulie Nettleton, and Winona Bailey played prominent roles in the club and often contributed educational texts to *The Mountaineer*, which were scientific in nature.\(^{169}\) The high concentration of this form of cultural capital informed the club’s work in the mountains and was a central component in the representations of spaces in need of discovery. The club’s original charter reflected this perception as it constructed the mountains as objects of study, places to be protected, and sites for social gathering, which became the dominant themes in the narratives told by the Mountaineers in the following decades.\(^{170}\)

**The First Outings**

In the spring of 1907, the Mountaineers began to plan for their first summer outing to the Olympic Mountains west of Seattle. In preparation for the trip, *The Mountaineer* featured multiple articles that represented the mountains as an empty land ready for discovery. One article, by Professor John B. Flett, called the interior of the Olympics, “Terra Incognita.”\(^{171}\) In another, the outing committee, made up of Curtis, Price, and Smith Eaton, wrote that the Olympics were probably the least known of “all mountain regions in the United States.…Many

---


\(^{170}\) The club’s mission statement read: “The objective of this organization shall be to explore and study the mountains, forests, and water courses of the Pacific Northwest; and to gather into permanent form the history and traditions of this region; to preserve, by protective legislation or otherwise, the natural beauty of the Northwest coast of America; to make frequent or periodical expeditions into these regions in fulfillment of the above purposes. Finally, and above all, to encourage and promote the spirit of good fellowship and comradery among the lovers of the outdoor life in the West.” “Constitution and By-Laws.”

of these peaks are unnamed and their altitudes are unknown.” The Mountaineers also reported on previous ventures into the Olympics including the Press Expedition of 1889 and 1890 that mapped and named parts of the range. This group of six men, “experienced in out-of-door hardships and perfectly fitted for such a trip,” traversed the mountain range north to south, up the Elwha River valley and down the Quinault River to the coast. In 1907, the Mountaineers planned to follow this route up the Elwha Valley and even put out a special call for local scientists who might be interested in studying the area. By reporting on the Press Expedition, the club constructed the Olympics as on the edge of civilization and firmly situated themselves within the tradition of geographic exploration that would help bring these spaces into the European-American sphere of consciousness.

During the outing, the Mountaineers continued to promote themselves as vanguards of discovery. On the morning of July 24, sixty-four club members, including eight professors, traveled to Port Angeles and set out up the Elwha River Valley. Over a week later, at least thirty members of the party left their upper Elwha camp to make a summit attempt at Mt. Olympus. Upon reaching what they thought was the true summit, the clouds broke and they realized that the west peak of Olympus was actually higher than the group’s location on the middle peak. Using the language of American imperialism, L.A. Nelson described the moment writing, “[t]he work on this peak being finished, the course of empire was still westward.” This sentiment was

---

175 According to Ruben Ellis, mountaineering in the early 20th century was firmly situated in a cultural of geographic exploration and imperialism. Ellis, Vertical Margins: Mountaineering and the Landscapes of Neoimperialism.
further reflected in the photographs published before and after the summer outing. In the March 1907 edition of The Mountaineer, photos depicted the Olympics as a vast unpeopled landscape (See Figure 2). According to geographer John Gareth, realist landscape imagery similar to these photos helped construct the North American continent as wide-open space. This was in contrast to the photographs that accompanied the post-outing reports that included group portraits and close up action shots that positioned members within the landscape (See Figure 3). This shift in visual representation, from human absence to presence, showed how the club represented the mountains as a vast unexplored wilderness ready for the club to conquer.

However, the Mountaineers were not the first people to travel in, use, or develop knowledge of the Olympic Mountains. They were a group of people who claimed to have

---

discovered knowledge of a distant territory already known to the people indigenous to the region. Throughout the West, the sites of many future mountain parks were important places for indigenous people, who in some instances, were forcibly removed to make a wilderness. Historically, narratives about the Cascade and Olympic Mountains, whether produced by the National Park Service, the Mountaineers, or other organizations, have often underestimated and undermined the importance of the alpine landscape to the people indigenous to the region. In Olympic National Park alone, many archeological sites demonstrate indigenous people’s use of the high country dating back thousands of years. According to the Olympic Peninsula Intertribal Cultural Advisory Committee, recent “archaeological research suggests that as the glacier receded, people moved into the high country, where new vegetation attracted game and expanded hunting and gathering opportunities.” The Klallam people also had names for the local peaks seen from Port Angeles. Griff and Unicorn Peaks were known as Mi’m’xwən, meaning women lying down and Hurricane

---

178 Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks*.
179 David Conca (Archeologist, Olympic National Park) in interview with author, November 1, 2016.
Hill was probably named Me muxtIn.\textsuperscript{182} Indigenous people also traveled in the high country of the Cascade Mountains and named the volcanoes Koma Kulshan and Tahoma before they Europeans named them Baker and Rainier.\textsuperscript{183} Both the Nooksack and Skagit people used resources, picked berries, and hunted mountain goats in the high country near Mount Baker.\textsuperscript{184} On the eastside of the Cascade Mountains, the “tsill-ane” people traveled into the mountains via Lake Chelan, crossed one of many high passes, and traveled down the Skagit River to trade with other tribes.\textsuperscript{185} Clearly, the mountains of the Northwest were not “terra incognita,” but rather they were a well-known place prior to the arrival of the Mountaineers and other non-native settlers.

Despite the notion that the Olympic Peninsula as one of the last unexplored wilderness areas in the United States, \textit{The Mountaineer} annual reveals that the club was aware of native people living there. In 1913, the club returned to the Olympic Mountains, this time making the full traverse up the Elwha River and down the Quinault River, where they employed the Quinault people to take them down the river in canoes.\textsuperscript{186} \textit{The Mountaineer} also regularly included articles about the people indigenous to the region, often identified by the authors as less civilized than non-native peoples. In a 1923, Catharine W.B. Yocum wrote an article in \textit{The Mountaineer} titled, “Interview with a Native of Mount Garibaldi” that narrated an encounter with a native man and depicted him as simple and animal like.\textsuperscript{187} Yocum wrote,

\begin{quote}
He accepted another peanut and began nibbling it. I then noticed that his teeth were quite yellow. Involuntarily I exclaimed, ‘Why, I don’t believe you ever brush your teeth!’ I
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{182} Wray, “Olympic National Park Ethnographic Overview and Assessment,” 54–60.
\textsuperscript{184} Miles, \textit{Koma Kulshan}, 33.
\textsuperscript{187} Catharine W.B. Yocum, “Interview with a Native of Mount Garibaldi Park,” \textit{The Mountaineer} 16 (1923): 32–33.
realized immediately that I had been tactless; but to my surprise he seemed not to resent any hasty comment, merely regarding me with a reproachful gravity. I hastened to assure him that his face and hands would, as to cleanliness, compare favorably with those of any camping Mountaineer. He showed his forgiveness by accepting another peanut.\textsuperscript{188}

Other articles about indigenous peoples also suggested that the mountains appeared in their legends, but the authors made a distinction between their oral histories and western empiricism or scientific knowledge.\textsuperscript{189} Often, Europeans have thought of native people and their oral traditions as pre-history and outside civilization. In some instances, European-American have represented natives as part of the wilderness. In 1917, \textit{The Mountaineer} reported that during the summer outing to the Mount Adams region, the club was “met with a rather unique situation, almost tragic – the white man arrived at his selected camp-site to find it occupied by the Indian! Happy playground of the Redman! The huckleberry slopes, the Indian race-course, the picturesque teepees, the Indians themselves, all formed a part of the stage setting.”\textsuperscript{190} Here, the native people are both part of the scene and in the way. According to historian Mark Spence, “Anglo-American conceptions of native people and wilderness [have] operated within the framework of a self-reciprocating maxim; forests were wild because Indians and beasts lived there, and Indians were wild because they lived in in the forest.”\textsuperscript{191} This axiom helped lead to the idea that the mountains and much of the west was open country. In the book \textit{Culture and Imperialism}, Edward Said writes, “imperialism means thinking about settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by other.”\textsuperscript{192} While the

\textsuperscript{188} Ibid., 33.
\textsuperscript{191} Spence, \textit{Dispossessing the Wilderness}, 10.
\textsuperscript{192} Said, \textit{Culture and Imperialism}, 5.
club was not settling in the mountains, they constructed them as an unknown space and ignored native voices, uses, and knowledge of these places. This actively dispossessed native spaces and firmly positioned the club within the colonial history of the Pacific Northwest. Other scholars, including both Cronon and Braun, argue that wilderness and nature are places made by people, often through acts of dispossession. In the years following their first outing, the Mountaineers created a recreation playground in the mountain “wilderness” that continued to reproduce these colonial landscapes.

**Edmond Meany**

One figure that was particularly representative of the Mountaineers during the club’s early years was Edmond S. Meany, a University of Washington professor of history and forestry with a special interest in the history and geography of the Pacific Northwest. Meany joined the club soon after its founding and was elected club president in 1908, a position he held until his death in 1935. By many accounts, Meany was the guiding force for the club through its first three decades. He was also a prominent booster for the city of Seattle and helped plan the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition world’s fair that, according to Seattle historian Mathew Klingle, celebrated “the Pacific Northwest’s environment as an endless supplier for eager consumers.” During his tenure as president of the Mountaineers, Meany helped to shape the clubs’ culture and knowledge of the Pacific Northwest’s history and geography.

Meany was born in Michigan in 1862 and grew up in a working class family. When his

---

father died in a prospecting-related accident in the mountains northeast of Seattle, Meany had to help provide for the rest of his family. Despite this extra burden, he was able to attend high school at the University of Washington, where he joined the Young Naturalist Society, a group of young gentleman who took field trips around Puget Sound to study the natural history of the region. In 1885, he graduated as valedictorian with a Bachelor’s of Science.

Then from 1891 to 1893, Meany served as a Republican in the Washington State House of Representatives. In 1899, after teaching for a few years at his alma mater, Meany moved to Madison, Wisconsin to start work on a Master of Letters and a thesis on Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce people, with whom he later became acquainted (see figure 4). At Wisconsin, Meany was advised by Fredrick Jackson Turner and took Turner’s History of the American West course. After finishing at Wisconsin, Meany returned to Seattle to teach at the University of Washington. There he assisted Edward Curtis with his *North American Indian Project* and contributed a history of the Teton Sioux for the

---

collection’s third volume (1908). Meany was able to leave behind the working class life of his parents, amass a large body of cultural capital, and join the ranks of Seattle’s growing cultural and political elite.

The articles that Meany published in The Mountaineer reflected his interest in the natural, pioneer, and Indian history of the Pacific Northwest. While in the mountains, he often lectured on these topics, which helped the club make the summer outing into a space for learning as if it was an extension of the university. One of the highlights of the outing was the evening campfire, which often included talks by Meany. Like his advisor Turner, Meany lamented the end of the pioneer life and what he perceived to be the end of indigenous cultures in the northwest. However, Meany also subscribed to a notion prevalent in Seattle at the time, which understood the end of both pioneer life and native cultures as part of the progress of American society.

Those who believed this subscribed to a social hierarchy where Anglo-Saxon society was more advanced than the native peoples of the Pacific Northwest. At that time, there was a sense that Seattle had emerged from the wild frontier and had joined the modern world. In 1905, Meany gave a speech at Seattle’s Founders Day celebration in which he stated that, “[e]very American is proud of the achievement of his race in conquering from the wilderness a continent and winning it from savagery to civilization.” Here he made manifest the frontier narrative promoted by Turner. According to Seattle historian Col-Peter Thrush, the annual Founders Day celebrations,

200 For an account of Meany’s lectures, see Ben C. Mooers, “Mount Garibaldi Park Outing of The Mountaineers,” The Mountaineer 16, no. 1 (December 1923): 9–21.
201 Thrush, Native Seattle, 144–45.
202 Quoted in Frykman, Seattle’s Historian and Promoter, 101; For a discussion of Founders Day and Seattle’s "triumph," see Thrush, Native Seattle
which Meany helped facilitate, were urban spectacles that linked Seattle’s history to larger national narratives and creation myths. “In reenactments and other rituals, Seattle’s “Pilgrims” were not just founders of one northwestern city but players in a triumphant drama of civilization-versus-savagery that had begun at Plymouth Rock.”

In a 1922 article in *The Mountaineer* titled “Indians of the Olympic Peninsula,” Meany echoed this sentiment and made a clear distinction between indigenous cultures and civilized Europeans who brought progress to the region through the introduction of western history, scientific knowledge systems, market economies, and private property. He argued that

> [w]hen settlers came among them, these Indians were quick to learn the nature and value of potatoes, apples, chickens, flour, and cloth. In a rude sort of way, they began the cultivation of gardens and learned to work in field, camp or mill for pay in these new goods. It was not a difficult transition from this condition to the reservation period in their history.

According to Meany’s biographer, George Frykman, Meany regularly defended Governor Isaac Stevens’ treaties with native peoples, which placed them on reservations, as part of the social progress of the region. In other instances, Meany often placed the clubs’ activities within the progressive history of the region and he described its members as if they were like the pioneer pushing west into an unknown frontier where others would follow. In 1910, for example, he wrote, “by seeking the joy of seeing and knowing these beauties [club members] gladly turn and point the way for thousands of their fellows to see and know in nature and endless joy.”

Going forward, *The Mountaineer* reflected this progressive outlook, though it manifested in different ways, as the club sought to organize and produce public knowledge about recreation landscapes.

---

203 Thrush, *Native Seattle*, 144.
204 Meany, “Indians of The Olympic Peninsula.”
205 Frykman, *Seattle’s Historian and Promoter*, 73, 152–53.
Grand Scenery

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Mountaineers’ progressive politics and interest in social well-being and development influenced the way that they promoted and advocated for the preservation of scenery. In the years that followed the 1907 trip to the Olympics Mountains, the summer outing was the highlight of the club’s social calendar and the reports from these trips were given a place of prominence in the annual. Up until the mid-1920s, the locations of the outings focused almost exclusively around the mountains that the club named Washington’s “Six Majors.” This was a list of peaks that included the state’s five volcanoes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mount Adams</th>
<th>Edmond S. Meany (1911)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I
How solid, broad, and buttressed thy base of rocks doth rest
On earth’s great primal platform beneath the sands and clays,
To hold secure thy shoulders, they high and gleaming crest,
Serene in storm or sunshine through Time’s eternal days!
Wild winds may whirl,
Cold snowdrifts swirl,
And thunders hurl
Their blazing spears to rend and blast;
Thy sides may shake,
The wide plains quake,
But, lo! They deep-set granite holds thee firm and fast.

II
These rock-hewn caverns,
Thy vaulted taverns,
Where Arctic spites in revels hover!
Wee knight may prance
With lifted lance,
His rival drive to darkling cover.
And then perchance,
In languid dance,
Demurely seeks a frost carved gem for elfin lover.

Mount Rainier, Mount Adams,
Mount Baker, Glacier Peak,
Mount Saint Helens, and the non-volcanic Mount Olympus.
The five volcanoes were also the five tallest mountains in Washington and they represented, in the eyes of the club, scenery in its grandest form.\(^{207}\) By highlighting these places, the Mountaineers’ production of space developed unevenly as they represented the

---

Six Majors as monuments of greater value than the surrounding peaks.

The early editions of the annual emphasized the aesthetics and visual observation of these large mountains. Many featured poems written by Meany, such as one from 1911 titled Mount Adams, which described the sublime beauty of the landscape.\(^{208}\) In the same year, Henry Landes drew on this idea and described his excitement as the club approached Mount Adams via train, writing “I have always sat by the window, getting every possible glimpse of the beautiful and symmetrical mountain as it rose grandly at times above the gray and bare hills of the foreground.”\(^{209}\) By writing about this form of scenic landscape observation, the Mountaineers separated themselves from the mountains as the body of the viewer passively consumed the scene from afar. According to McNee, such a separation between the sublime landscape and the viewer was common in the writing of the European Romantics, who also highlighted the aesthetics of alpine space.\(^{210}\) While aspects of the Mountaineers’ narratives resembled the words and images of the Romantics, there was also an element of national and regional pride that informed the club’s celebration of grand scenery.

In addition to focusing the summer outings around the Six Majors, club leaders like Curtis, Landes, and Meany promoted the conservation of scenic beauty and the development of the regions’ parks and forests.\(^{211}\) In the late nineteenth century, the United States Congress designated national parks to preserve their unique scenic character as if they were, in the words


\(^{210}\) McNee, “‘Cold Stony Reality.’”

of Fredrick Law Olmsted, “national treasures of art.”212 For some elite social classes, visiting these landscapes was akin to developing a national cultural literacy. In a cultural history of the Cascade volcanoes, O. Alan Weltzein argued that “[t]he Northwest’s first two national parks highlight the prominent role of our most exceptional mountains in the nation’s visual iconography. The national affirmation of Northwest volcanoes at the turn of the twentieth century capped, in some respects, nineteenth century…veneration of monumental landscapes in the American West.”213 At the time of the Mountaineers’ founding, the federal government had established national parks around three of the Cascade volcanoes. In 1911, Meany wrote an article reporting on the creation of Olympic National Monument under the Antiquities Acts, which celebrate the Olympic’s high country and lofty scenery. In the article, he wrote about the Mountaineers’ recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior that Olympic National Monument be turned into a national park that included only the high summits.214 Meany made it clear the club did not oppose resource development, but did support the protection of unique landscapes for future generations. As Paul Sutter has observed, early twentieth century wildland preservation was more about protecting scenery and a recreational experiences than opposing development or some perceived ecological damage.215 Meany wrote that the Mountaineers “strive to lead rather than to hinder the advance of real progress.”216 On the Olympic Peninsula, the low lands offered opportunities for resource extraction and economic development, while the scenic character of the high country was worthy of being protected for its social values.

212 Quoted in Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 157–58.
213 Weltzein, Exceptional Mountains, 40.
214 Meany, “The Olympic National Monument.”
215 Sutter, Driven Wild.
This trend continued into the club’s second decade when *The Mountaineer* included multiple articles written by Park Service leadership about scenery and public access. This included a greeting from 1919 by National Park Service Director Stephen Mather, where he called upon the Mountaineers to work to protect the forest borders along the highways to Mount Rainier in order to protect their scenic value. Again, this form of conservation was about scenery and experience rather than ecology. Though *The Mountaineer* made it clear that the club preferred to view the mountains from a trail rather than from a road or lodge, the outings to these places still resembled a leisured cultural experience centered around the aesthetics of a place, one that the club leaders felt was worth promoting and protecting. This reinforced the dominant representation of mountain space, to borrow Lefebvre’s term, as scenery for mountaineers and park visitors to consume visually.

**Science and the Representation of Mountains**

Throughout the Mountaineers’ first two and a half decades, members emphasized science and empiricism, in addition to the observation of scenery, as way of knowing the mountains, reflecting the social and educational identity of many club members. The club published scientific articles in *The Mountaineer*, maintained meticulous statistical records, and promoted the summer outing as an opportunity for scientific research and education. The report from the first local walk in the spring of 1907 noted that the group returned to Seattle from the West Point Light House, in what is now Seattle’s Discovery Park, “by way of the beach to give those interested in marine life an opportunity to gather specimens.”217 A report from a walk held a few weeks later mentioned that it included an increase in the number of scientists, “with the result

---

217 Mary Banks, “Mountaineers In The Olympics,” *The Mountaineer* 1, no. 3 (1907): 20.
that more accurate records were made than on any previous trip." 218 Even the informational bulletins sent out prior to the summer outing included lists of recommended readings about the summer outing’s destination and provided special information about the packing of research equipment for those interested in bringing it along. 219 In doing this, the club positioned its members who were academics and scientist in a place of privilege, a trend that existed within other North American mountaineering clubs and reflected the political climate of the time. 220

During the progressive period, resource conservation, scientific study, and land use planning took hold among a select group of educated elites who helped established these mechanisms of knowledge production as dominant ways of knowing the world. 221 According to Kingle, “[e]ngineering was always about turning the city into an engine for progress by harnessing the physical energy of nature to urban design.” 222 Meany, in particular, exemplified this identity and cultural worldview. According to George Frykman, he had great “faith that civilization was marked by inexorable progress [where]…Science, together with accumulated wealth had worked miracles in achieving well-being for men everywhere.” 223 Similarly, other European and North American alpine clubs put a high premium on scientific knowledge. 224

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, articles in The Mountaineer focused on empirical observations and the scientific categorization of the mountain environment, often

218 Ibid.
220 Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise, 50–59.
222 Kingle, Emerald City, 87.
224 Robbins, “Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class”; Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise, 50–58; Manning, “Men and Mountains Meet.”
arguing that science was the best way to know the mountains. In 1917, Hugo Winkenwerder, a University of Washington forestry professor, published an article in *The Mountaineer* titled “How to Know the Trees.” In this text, he argued that getting to know the trees and their names offered great pleasure. However, to really get to know them, “one must study their life-habits, the sizes they attain, their rate of growth, their special likes and dislikes for different soils.”225 In 1922, Professor Edwin J. Saunders, a geographer from the University of Washington, took a similar tone in a technical article filled with elevation measurements and argued that “Snoqualmie Pass with its surrounding mountains…cannot be fully understood unless we look back into the geological conditions which gave rise to the present Cascade Mountains.”226 This explicitly marginalized individual and embodied knowledge of the mountains. Other articles from this period featured titles such as *Science Notes* and *Some Birds of Our Higher Altitudes.*227 Club members who were university faculty, local teachers, or librarians published many of these texts. However, it was also common for non-member scientists or federal land managers to contribute to *The Mountaineer.*228 This further drew the club into a broader national culture that promoted scientific knowledge as the dominant way of representing space.

The Mountaineers also carried out survey projects that organized the meaning of the mountains, often in statistical and quantifiable ways. Reports from the summer outing regularly included detailed maps that used mathematical grids and topographic lines to mathematically

Figure 5. A Map from the 1916 Outing featuring a grid and topographic lines.
order, abstract, and represent the mountain landscape (see Figure 5). Club members also worked on projects to catalogue trails and the summits of peaks that they climbed. Initially, members marked peaks with rock cairns once they had climbed them, but in 1915 the club purchased metal cylinders that its members started to place on summits as a way of holding registers. In the years that followed, the annual published the ever-expanding list of cylinder-laden mountains and their respective elevations, further emphasizing quantification as a way of representing mountain space.  

Like the narratives about grand scenery, these scientific representations also created a separation between the Mountaineers and the land, as the club constructed mountains as objects of study. However, this not only separated the viewer from the object, but also built upon an ontology that understood that humans could study mountain environments outside of the subjectivity of human culture and experience. In a discussion about nature and science, geographer Neil Smith argues, “science treats nature as external in the sense that the scientific method and procedure dictates an absolute abstraction both from the social context of the events and objects under scrutiny and from the social context of the scientific activity itself.”

According historian Evan Berry, this ontology is rooted in historical, philosophical and theological debates about the order of humans, God, and creation, which partitioned humanity and nature and gave birth to a Cartesian logic and desire for certainty in knowledge. Despite the appearance of objectivity within The Mountaineer, these reports conveyed socially produced knowledge rooted in European cultural ideas about social progress and the place of humans in

229 Ben C. Mooers, “Record of the Location of the Thirty-Six Record Tubes Purchase in 1915 and 1919.,” The Mountaineer 18, no. 1 (1925): 64.
230 Smith, Uneven Development, 14.
the world.232

Many of the reports from the club’s outings and other travels also made attempts at scientific objectivity. In Ben Mooers’ account of the 1923 Mount Garibaldi outing to British Columbia, he made regular note of elevation and time. For the reader, this helped to develop the boundaries of space by referencing quantifiable intervals of travel. On the climb of Garibaldi, Mooers’ group left camp at three in the morning and took fifteen minutes to get to the lake. Then “fifteen minutes were spent in a rather vain effort to calk the leaky seams of the boat…One and a half hours of rowing [to the far shore]…Five minutes [from the boat to the glacier and] two hours to a sort of saddle or pass on the glacier.”233 Once the group reached the summit of Mount Garibaldi, Mooers included brief allusions to their subjective experience, writing, “we drank in a marvelous view…but for only twenty minutes.”234 All of these methods of claiming the mountains highlighted the club’s focus on scientific rationalism. Other reports highlighted the numerical distances traveled, but the effects were just the same. By reducing descriptions of place to the empirical and statistical, this style of mountaineering narrative separated the narrator from their surroundings, further abstracting the mountains as a non-human landscape and marginalizing the value of the subjective and lived human experience of a mountaineer. Surveys, lists of peaks classified by elevation, and grid based maps also separated knowledge of a place from a physical location, which meant that people elsewhere could reconstruct knowledge of these geographies, a trait that was necessary for the claim to territory, further aligning the club with a form of geographic imperialism.235

232 For a discussion on and critique of the epistemology of progress, see Dipesh Chakrabarty, Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference (Princeton University Press, 2000), 11–16.
234 Ibid.
235 Ellis, Vertical Margins.
While empirical abstractions and scientific reports were characteristic of many early editions of *The Mountaineer*, some articles contained allusions to individual and embodied experiences, such as a climber’s fears and joys at being in the mountains or narratives that developed a direct connection between the authors and the land. In a report from a winter trip to Mount Rainier, Elizabeth W. Conway describes her feelings while facing a storm, writing “against a wind-swept tree, we stood for a moment drinking in the silence; then tossing our heads in defiance we whirled off into the darkness, erect, confident, [and] exhilarated.”  

Other articles, particularly the reports from the summer outing, moved back and forth between terse numerical descriptions of the landscape and more personal descriptions of the environment similar to Conway’s passage. In an article about shifting descriptions of the Skagit River Valley in the Cascade Mountains, environmental historian Linda Nash writes, “scientific representations, no matter how abstract, are the product of human beings who at critical moments re-recognize their contiguity with the nonhuman world.” All of this suggests that no single club member subscribed to one way of knowing or being in the mountains. Despite this, the Mountaineers’ scientific representations of space dominated their discourse and helped to reproduce hegemonic ideas about wilderness and nature as spheres separate from human society and culture.

**The Production of Social Mountains**

Despite the annual’s frequent representation of the mountains as an abstract landscape outside culture and humanity, numerous narratives offered a conflicting account of the

---

mountains as a site for social engagement. Often the club got around this by representing the mountains and nature as a stage for social action, rather than a space produced through such actions. The 1906 charter of the Mountaineers promoted fellowship and comradery, a theme that Ben Mooers reemphasized in 1917 when he wrote in the annual that the outing offered “an excellent opportunity for those who like to commune, not only with nature, but with their fellow men as well. For the social is not the least important side of mountaineering.”

Mooers went on to say that such outings were also about getting away from civilization, which meant that for this communal group getting away was about leaving behind certain aspects of society. By vacationing in the mountains, the club was engaging in a social activity that distinguished its member from the general population of Seattle. However, *The Mountaineer* also showed that club members organized themselves and others by class, skill, and gender, which produced a space that reflected the urban landscape and social structures from where they had come. This demonstrates that there was a conflict, similar to the ones identified in Lefebvre’s trialetics of spatiality, between the dominant representations of space and the club’s lived spaces that linked the city to the mountains though cultural and economic means.

During the summer outing, the Mountaineers produced a social space that reflected the interests and identity of the leadership. Unlike the competitive European climbing culture of the late nineteenth century, the Mountaineers did not initially emphasize individual achievements, but rather a collective idealism where they climbed en masse and brought principled social politics into the high country. In a 1925 article titled “Mountaineer Spirit,” Ralph L. Dyer

---

239 Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*; Watkins, “Representations of Space, Spatial Practices and Spaces of Representation”
240 Robbins, “Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class.”
wrote, “[I]ove of the mountains is, by its very nature, inseparably associated with service to others-helping others also learn the love of the hills and forests.”

Around the turn of the twentieth century, outdoor recreation and wilderness experiences were tools for social engineering and progress. Civic organizations like the YMCA, Fresh Air Fund, and Sierra Club promoted healthy outdoor living for the betterment of society. Club leaders like Asahel Curtis and L.A. Nelson had the experience to climb on their own, but they worked to get the whole group ready for the main climb of each summer outing. In his cultural history of the Cascade volcanoes, Weltzein argues that the Mazamas and the Mountaineers “combined challenge with creature comforts” in a form of leisure that placed the image and identity of the club above individual achievement. Meanwhile, Edmund Meany’s work on summer outings included organizing social events such as the evening campfires, storytelling, and lectures. In so doing, he helped create a place where education and fellowship was paramount. Within the club, members were given the opportunity to learn about the geography and natural history of the region, and the annual regularly lauded this as evidence of the “success” of the summer outing and the club’s commitment to social progress.

During the early years, the Mountaineers promoted access to the mountain, as club leaders thought it was important that more people should be able to experience outdoor recreation in the mountains. *The Mountaineer* highlighted the importance of outdoor life for society and, in 1910, Meany wrote that the club was “anxious to blaze ways into the hills that anyone may follow.”

---

244 Meany, “Objects Of Our Club,” 5.
upper classes seized the notion that the country life and wilderness retreats could help maintain healthy bodies that spent too much time in civilized environments, though the focus was more on male bodies than female bodies.\textsuperscript{245} Despite this national interest in outdoor life, the early Mountaineers did not convey a particularly anti-modern ethos and they did not try to recreate hard recreational labor during their outings. Rather, the leaders promoted the production of new mountain natures that they thought would be more accessible to the public. In 1911, Asahel Curtis wrote an article in \textit{The Mountaineer} calling for the construction of more roads in Mount Rainier National Park as a way of increasing access.\textsuperscript{246} The construction of roads eventually met some resistance within the club, but in 1911 Meany also offered his support writing, “the Mountaineers wish to help in every way possible to build trail and roads into these parks and to safeguard the beauties of nature there for the free enjoyment of all people.”\textsuperscript{247} As a result, the Mountaineers represented the mountains as public space, a site of social progress, and a place for healthy living.

Despite the club leaders’ emphasis on fellowship, education, and accessibility, the practices of the club made it difficult to join, which ultimately contributed to the production of an exclusive mountain landscape. To become a member of the Mountaineers, one had to gain the endorsement of another club member and a “favorable” vote by the board of directors.\textsuperscript{248} Annual dues were three dollars in 1916, with an additional four-dollar one-time fee to join. The summer outings also required the ability to take extended vacations and pay the participation fee. Participants also had to provide their own clothing, shelter, and footwear.\textsuperscript{249} The cost of the first

\textsuperscript{245} Nash, \textit{Wilderness and the American Mind}.
\textsuperscript{246} Curtis, “The Future of the Rainier National Park.”
\textsuperscript{247} Meany, “The Olympic National Monument,” 59.
\textsuperscript{248} “Constitution and By-Laws.”
\textsuperscript{249} Nelson, “Glacier Peak and Lake Chelan.”
summer outing in 1907 was forty dollars and by 1911, it had gone up to forty-five dollars.\textsuperscript{250} To put that in perspective, Seattle high school teachers earned, according to historian Doris Hinson Pieroth, between $1020 and $1380 in 1910, and the rental of a room in a house on Capitol Hill could cost twenty-four dollars per month.\textsuperscript{251} Not only did the Mountaineers represent a group of people with influence in the production of cultural institutions, but also a social class that had the ability to consume both materials and experiences.

In contrast to more exploratory expeditions, such as the Press Expedition, which the Mountaineers reported on, the summer outings produced a space for upper class leisure and consumption. In 1911, the outing committee wrote that the “annual outing of the Mountaineers is a co-operative one arranged to give the greatest pleasure to its members that can be gained from a trip into the mountains without the burden upon the individual members of cooking and packing supplies.”\textsuperscript{252} Eating good food together, while in the mountains, was one of the highlights of the summer outing. In preparation for the 1907 outing, the leadership had consulted “experts” who had advised simple dried meals, but they opted instead for a more elaborate commissary that included pies, cakes, bread baked daily, and cattle for fresh beef.\textsuperscript{253} From the very beginning of the club, the summer outing linked the clubs’ recreational spaces to political economies well beyond the mountains. Other outings featured multi-course meals, formal wear, and in 1921, a server dressed in a black and white suite that Robert Walkinshaw described as a “black rastus.”\textsuperscript{254} It is not clear from a photograph or the outing report if the trip actually included an African American man, or if a white cook, helper, or club member dressed in black face (see

\textsuperscript{251} Pieroth, \textit{Seattle’s Women Teachers of the Interwar Years}.
\textsuperscript{252} Belt et al., “The Fifth Annual Outing,” 3.
\textsuperscript{253} Banks, “Mountaineers In The Olympics.”
Figure 6. A photo from the 1921 outing's special banquet for members who climbed the six majors. The accompanying article refers to the man as a “black rastus” (standing right), while two other servers are also visible in the scene. Mountaineers Archives, MTR.2015.17

It is clear, however, that this outing developed a social hierarchy where class and race intersected in the mountains. All of the outings required work by the club leadership and the labor of hired help such as horse packers, paid cooks, transportation services, and in some instances, professional guides. In planning for the 1907 trip, Curtis and the other club leadership negotiated with the Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce to cut a trail up through sixty miles of the densely forested Elwha Valley in order to make the route passable for a pack train. During the 1907 and 1908 outings, the group hired Robert Carr, of Seattle’s Cooks’ Union, but *The

Mountaineer did not list him as a participant in the manual, which reinforced the class structure created in the landscapes of the summer outing.

While the summer outing was certainly a landscape of consumption, the presence of laborers complicates the arguments made by Cronon that recreation and wilderness are of interest to those who do not labor directly on the land. As has been the case with recreation in other mountain regions, the Mountaineers remade scenery and rugged terrain into valuable natural resources, creating new opportunities for work.\(^{256}\) The landscapes of the summer outing were also shaped by the horse packers and mountain guides, who are people who make their living from the land and its resources. Since club members were required to pay to join the outings, the structure of these trips created a division of labor in the mountain landscape where some people were there to consume an experience and others were there due to a market demand for labor, which started to restructure the economic geography of a

\(^{256}\) Coleman, *Ski Style*, 173–81; Philpott, *Vacationland*; Kain, *Where the Clouds Can Go*. 
region once dominated by resource extraction.

Within the institution, the Mountaineers also promoted strict codes of conduct that ordered club members within space. Leaders organized the group during climbs in a military fashion. Members were broken down into companies that climbed in file and followed the whistles of the captains and lieutenants (See figure 7). There was always a climb leader and a rear guard put in place. This regimented form of recreation also carried over into the club’s local walks where, according to Norman Huber, “[t]he leader, designated by a nickel-plated badge pinned on his back, starts the party by blowing two blasts on his whistle and set the pace.” This created another social hierarchy within the group, as cultural capital was not evenly distributed among the climbing party, and a place where individuals had little freedom.

In addition to the military structure, the Mountaineers created a social space organized by ability and skills. Reports from various outings often mocked the beginner or “cheechako” as a participant who was ignorant of appropriate place based knowledge. The term cheechako comes from Chinook Jargon and means “newly arrived.” In the report from the 1923 outing to Mount Garibaldi, Ben Mooers made regular note of inexperience, beginning with the long slow hike to camp when he identified much of the group as “soft.” He wrote for “the swiftest and hardiest” the trip was a breeze, but for most, it took “entreaties, threats, and ‘kidding’” to get them to camp. Early in the outing, leaders lead tryout climbs up The Black Tusk that were meant to be a test for the inexperienced climber who desired to later climb Mount Garibaldi. According to

---

257 Frank I. Jones, “Mountaineers Hiking up Snow Field to Glacier Peak, August 6, 1921,” 1921, Mountaineers Photographs, PH Coll 341 Album 41.70b, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.
259 Thrush, Native Seattle, 124.
261 Ibid.
Mooers, this was an “elimination climb.” The Mountaineers divided the mountain landscape into places appropriate for certain skill levels as members had to prove themselves worthy of being in those places. The club leaders also bounded the landscape by limiting where people could go on their own and by not allowing “novices” to leave the camp outside of the scheduled day trips. As a result, the club produced a mountain space where the elevated social classes were the skilled climbers and the physically fit.

Social class divisions by ability and skill also intersected with the social division of gender. Unlike the Alpine Club of London, the Mountaineers initially welcomed both men and women, and often the membership body consisted of more women than men. At its founding, seventy-seven women and seventy-four men made up the club; by 1920, those numbers rose to 371 and 321, respectively.262 A survey of the outing rosters also reveals that both genders participated in relatively equal numbers, but gender roles were still clearly established and club members constructed mountaineering as a masculine activity. At times, men directly questioned the presence of women on climbs. In 1912, Winona Bailey and L.E. Lovering wrote letters of protest to the Mountaineers’ board of directors about gender discrimination.263 These women described a situation in 1909 when the outing committee did not allow women on certain climbs due to some perceived safety issue. Lovering wrote: “Had the danger been as great as was represented a ruling which would have prohibited all inexperienced members of the party from attempting the ascent would have been fair, but in a club where fifty-one and four-tenths percent of the members are women, sex discrimination should not be made, and if made, should not go

262 See Appendix 2. - Membership
unprotested.” In this instance, the male leaders considered the climb safe for half the club and not the other. According to Reichwein, “[a]t the turn of the century there was significant concern about the effects of physical activity on the female body and competition, strenuous exertion, and perspiration were not considered ladylike.” 264 Meanwhile, such activity was thought to be important and healthy for the male body and a strong masculine identity. In Weltzein’s history of the Cascade volcanoes, he argues that in the mountaineering “milieu of masculine virility…Theodore Roosevelt become the role model and Northwest volcanoes and their mountains, ideal proving grounds of selfhood.” 265 When women did join climbs during the outings, they were often in smaller numbers than men and the reports in The Mountaineer often made special note of their presence. Articles such as Elizabeth Sander Lily’s Impressions of a Tenderfoot, in which she referred to the “tenderfoot” as “she” and “her” further reinforced these practice that feminized the unskilled club member. 266 This is in contract to club’s guides and outing leaders who were usually male: L.A. Nelson, Asahel Curtis, Grant J. Humes, Ben Mooers, and Joseph T. Hazard. Other scholars who have studied mountaineering and alpine skiing cultures have observed similar patterns of gendered inequity in outdoor recreation where articles and advertisements have represented men as skilled agents, actively climbing or skiing while women were present, but represented as passive observers. 267 From the Mountaineers’ founding and onward, The Mountaineer represented the spaces of the summer outing, most notably the climbing day trips, in masculine terms.

Despite the fact that women often made up the majority of the club, the club’s practices

264 Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise, 39.
265 Weltzein, Exceptional Mountains, 25.
267 Denning, Skiing into Modernity.
produced gendered spaces where the presence of women was unique. At camp, the Mountaineers’ leadership often marked off women’s quarters, while the rest of the space was open for the men. In preparation for that first outing, Asahel Curtis, W. Montelious Price, and Dr. Cora Smith Eaton instructed women to bring long skirts to wear around camp, but not on the side trips (see figure 8). Instead, women were supposed to wear knickers or bloomers in the masculine climbing landscape. Only in the camp, which more closely resembled the domestic spaces of the city, could women assert their femininity. In 1908, Eaton Smith and L.A. Nelson published camp packing lists for male and female mountaineers in the *Washington Women’s Cook Book*. The men’s list was simple and short while the women’s list was long and included

detailed instructions, revealing that women had more to worry about while in the clubs mountain space. The fact that Smith Eaton, a strong advocate from woman suffrage, was so deliberate in her instructions shows how powerful the hegemonic gender norms were, even in the mountains.

While the Mountaineers’ representations of space and social practices normalized the place of the male in the landscape of the summer outing, women also resisted this hegemonic social structure. Bailey and Lovering’s 1912 protests to the board of directors is one example. In 1909, when the National American Woman Suffrage Association joined the Mountaineers on their summer outing, the group planted an Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition flag on the summit of Mount Rainier. Attached just below the main flag was a long banner that read “Votes for Women.” 270 On top of the tallest mountain in the state of Washington, the club produced a space of resistance the reflected social struggles taking place in Seattle and urban centers around the United States. Interestingly, Asahel Curtis’ report in the 1909 *Mountaineer* mentions the AYP flag, but not the Votes for Women banner. 271 Despite the silence regarding this act of resistance, other editions of *The Mountaineer* did celebrated female climbers, particularly those who had earned a pin for climbing the Six Majors. By 1921, seven women, out of sixteen total members, had accomplished this feat, but for the most part, the spatial practices of club members worked within the hegemonic representation of the mountains as male space. 272 As the Mountaineers entered their second decade and interest in the mountains as a site for more athletic forms of climbing grew, the club continued to reinforce assumptions about skill and gender, further emphasizing the importance of identity in the production of these landscapes.

270 Elizabeth Cady Stanton et al., *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 6 (Rochester: Anthony, 1922), 677–78.
272 “Graduate Members of The Mountaineers,” *The Mountaineer* 9, no. 1 (1921): 73.
Resistance and “Hard Trail Work”

Shortly after the formation of the Mountaineers, cultural resistance to the dominant representations of mountain spaces appeared within the club, but it took time before *The Mountaineer* recorded it with any significance in the annual. In 1914, the Mountaineers completed construction of a lodge at Snoqualmie Pass to serve as a meeting place within the mountains and as a jumping off point for short weekend hikes and climbs. This marked somewhat of a break from the large organized summer outings and local walks. However, there was only scant mention of lodge-based activities or individually organized climbs in *The Mountaineer* until the mid-1920s.

In 1917, resistance to the leadership’s emphasis on the observation of scenery and empirical study was entered into record when *The Mountaineer* featured an article titled “Back-Packing and Week-end Climbing” by Joseph T. Hazard, a Seattle school teacher who, in 1919, became chief mountain guide for the Mt. Rainier National Park Company.\(^{273}\) In his article, Hazard offered a different way of making meaning in the mountains and a glimpse of what would eventually grow into a significant institutional “culture war,” to borrow geographer Don Mitchell’s term.\(^{274}\) Hazard wrote,

> [i]n most of our mountain literature one of the three main motives for exploring the wilds has been left sadly in the discarded. We have been told repeatedly about the marvels of scenery; the scientists have brought us the flowers, the animals and the earth’s crust; but in fiction alone has there been an adequate presentation of the lure of strenuous effort, of the charm of hard trail work.\(^{275}\)

He went on to note that near the Snoqualmie Pass lodge there was a growing interest in the physical act of climbing, including speed records and feats of endurance. Like the founders of


\(^{274}\) Mitchell, *Cultural Geography*.

\(^{275}\) Hazard, “Back-Packing and Weekend Climbing,” 63.
the Alpine Club that introduced ideas of modern sport to the Alps, Hazard’s “hard trail work” placed the body back into the representations of alpine space and put a premium on individual experiences as a mediator for understanding the mountains. In contrast, scientific representation and the observation of scenery produce an abstracted vision of place that did not mesh with the embodied experience of “hard trail work.”

Six short vignettes about various backpacking trips, which the club referred to as “knapsacking,” followed Hazard’s short article. Whereas the summer outings provided pack trains to carry equipment, “knapsacking” required people to carry all their own clothing and food. The experience did not rely on the labor of others in the same way as earlier club practices. Shorter weekend trips also did not require vacation time and were thus more accessible to Seattleites on a regular basis. In promoting these different activities, C.G. Morrison argued that physical exertion led to the “satisfaction of having done our best.”

Hazard, too, celebrated this sort of “salty effort” as it would “throw [the mountaineer] against a wilderness demanding the arts and the backbone of the pioneer.” During the 1920s, *The Mountaineer* increasingly represented the practices of the club in these terms. This reflected a national interest, often among men, in physical recreation that Cronon observes was a way of reestablishing masculine identity threatened by the feminizing life of the city. It also promoted an anti-modern sentiment that was in marked contrast to the progressive politics and vision of Seattle that early club leaders promoted. Within this outdoor movement, there also grew a cultural interest in self-sufficient outdoor life that differed from the bourgeois tourism and grand lodges that had become popular in the late nineteenth century. On the extreme end was the Woodcraft movement that

---

celebrated rugged male individualism and the skills needed to live off the land like pioneers, all in a protest against modernity. In the case of the Mountaineers, “knapsacking” developed as a cultural opposition to the leisured spaces produced by the summer outing.

Instead of leading a revolution, Hazard and other club members, such as Ben Mooers, who were interested in “hard trail work” joined the outing leadership and introduced knapsacking to the summer outing. In E. L. Bickford’s report on the 1919 outing to Mount Rainier, the membership list highlighted that about half the group carried their own overnight equipment for a one-night “knapsack.” At other points in the trip, the group split up as the “highliners” traversed rock and ice and the “lower liners” or “low lifers” took the “tourist trail.” Once again, the club produced a landscape with a social class hierarchy based on physical exertion. Bickford also noted that both men and women worked to cut trail, but this was recreational labor or, as Richard White argues, physical play that resembles work on the land that produces the material artifacts necessary for life. Despite this resistance, the Mountaineers’ annual continued to promote the mountains as a communal space where the summer outing was still the main site of meaning making.

Small Group Climbing

The end of the 1920s marked a shift in the club’s culture as some members incorporated small group climbing into the Mountaineers’ dominant representations of mountain space. By the early 1930s, climbing and sporting narratives stood out in contrast to the reports on the summer

281 Ibid., 9.
282 White, “Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?”
outing in The Mountaineer. During this period, the number of scientific articles published in The Mountaineer also diminished, though the club did start a glacial recession research project on Mount Baker in 1934. In 1929, the club published a Special Ski Number annual and reported on the increasing interest in Snoqualmie Pass and Mount Rainier as winter sporting landscapes. Two years later, the 1931 annual featured a long subtitle that read The Climb of Mount Fairweather, Climbs in Garibaldi Park, and Climbs in Washington and focused almost exclusively on climbing as an activity that could be taken on by smaller, more independent parties. According to the Mountaineers’ own history, “Edmond Meany’s [1930] description of the club’s fifth outing into the Olympics, although pleasant enough, couldn’t compete with the climbing accounts for drama.” Climbing as sport or as “hard trail work” started to replace older mountaineering practices.

During the Mountaineers’ first two decades, summiting peaks was an important activity wrapped into the summer outing, but by no means was it the focus of the club. In contrast, small group mountaineering with more equipment, a renewed interest in first ascents, and a focus on the form and experience of climbing marked a move towards a modern sport, to borrow the term used by David Robins that celebrated individual and small group achievements. The club members who brought these new narratives and practices to the forefront of The Mountaineer had significantly less cultural capital relative to Meany and the founders of the club and they occupied a distinctly different social sphere or habitus.

---

286 Robbins, “Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class.”
The Mountaineers’ new generation of climbers was largely representative of a new middle and working class that had developed in the region throughout the interwar period. During the 1910s, Seattle went through a period of economic growth associated with an increase in war-related shipbuilding contracts and a rising manufacturing base.\textsuperscript{287} Previously, the city’s manufacturing industry had been small relative to other cities of its size.\textsuperscript{288} In addition to the migration of people into the region, these economic trends helped grow the city’s middle and working classes who constructed their identities not simply by gaining greater access to the modes of production, but also by establishing a culture of social consumerism in the Pacific Northwest.\textsuperscript{289} The 1920s also saw the development of a national middle class with greater purchasing power. Through the first three decades of the twentieth century, discretionary spending (beyond food, clothing, and housing) increased nationally from twenty percent to thirty percent annually.\textsuperscript{290} According to American consumer historian Gary Cross, “[w]hat distinguished the American labor force [during this period] was not so much high wages, but the fact that the salaries of well-paid skilled workers often put them at the same lifestyle level as the presumably “higher” class white-collar workers.”\textsuperscript{291} During the 1910s, organized labor in the Northwest grew in strength, but by the 1920s, the social tide among the working and middle classes shifted to include co-operative consumption and the organization of purchasing power, in addition to co-operative production.\textsuperscript{292} Whereas organized labor worked for labor rights and

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{288} Ibid., 33–34.
\textsuperscript{290} Gary Cross, \textit{An All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern America} (Columbia University Press, 2000), 17–18.
\textsuperscript{291} Ibid., 19.
\textsuperscript{292} Frank, \textit{Purchasing Power}.
\end{flushleft}
higher pay, community co-operatives kept the price of consumer goods down. These cultural and economic changes meant that the new generation of climbers were from a fundamentally different city and urban space, one shaped by a growing consumer culture and fordist economy, than the Seattle that Meany and Curtis knew in their youth.\textsuperscript{293}

In the early 1930s, young male club members wrote many of the articles that reported on or promoted small group climbing (see Appendix 1). At the same time, narratives about women dropped out of the pages of The Mountaineer. Among these young men were Arthur Winder, Forest Farr, and Norval Grigg, who made the first ascent of Three Fingers together in 1931.\textsuperscript{294} Winder and Farr, along with Laurence D. Byington, first appeared in the annual after their 1930 climb of Chimney Rock, a peak northeast of the Snoqualmie Pass lodge that had drawn significant attention from the club in years prior.\textsuperscript{295} Both Farr and Grigg worked professionally as engineers while Winder was one of the few within his social group that did not go to university and instead took a job at Crescent Manufacturing in Seattle.\textsuperscript{296} In 1920, Byington worked as a hardware store manager.\textsuperscript{297} Other members of the Mountaineers that were part of this young group of climbers included Herbert Strandberg, William Degenhardt, James Martin, and Donald Blair.\textsuperscript{298} According to the 1930 U.S. census, these men worked as a draftsman for the city of Seattle, as a draftsman in the Seattle Engineering Office, as an insurance cashier, and as a boat

\textsuperscript{293} Klingle, \textit{Emerald City}; Frank, \textit{Purchasing Power}
\textsuperscript{294} For the climb of Three Fingers, see the interview with Norval Grigg in, Bates, \textit{Cascade Voices}, 10–13.
\textsuperscript{295} Byington, “Ascent of Chimney Rock.”
\textsuperscript{297} 1920 U.S. census, King County, Washington, population schedule, Seattle, sheet 5B, dwelling 109, Laurence D. Byington; digital image, FamilySearch.com.
\textsuperscript{298} Forest Farr et al., \textit{North Cascades history project interviews}, 1975, interview by Harry Majors and Karyl Winn, August 6, 1975, North Cascades History Project, Accession No. 2161-001, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries; Bates, \textit{Cascade Voices}, 10–19.
mechanic respectively. When this group started climbing, they were in their late teens and twenties, far younger than the Mountaineers leadership at the club’s founding. This group also had a different form of social freedom as they were just starting out in their careers and many were not yet married. Grigg and Winder were actually high school friends who developed an interest in hiking and outdoor recreation prior to joining the Mountaineers in 1926. When they joined, Winder was twenty-two and Grigg twenty while Farr joined in 1930 at the age of twenty-seven. When Meany joined the Mountaineers, he was forty-five and like many of the club’s founders, he was well established within in his career and the cultural and economic spheres of Seattle. While young climbers did not come from the same social class as the club’s leaders, Grigg noted in a 1975 interview that they were lucky to have jobs and particularly ones that allowed them the time to recreate. In depression era Seattle, this leisure time was a rare privilege.

According to Winder’s daughter, Winder and the rest of this group was independently minded. Politically, Winder was not highly engaged, though he voted and did not support the social politics of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal. This group’s independent streak also appeared in their approach to climbing. Instead of waiting for the summer outing or other planned weekend trips, Winder and company spent almost every weekend in the mountains.

300 Bates, Cascade Voices, 10.
301 Farr et al., North Cascades history project interviews, 1975.
302 Nancy Winder (Daughter of Art Winder), in interview with author, October 5, 2016.
with their own group of friends, though they were also regularly involved with the club’s social activities.\(^{303}\)

By the early 1930s, the road to Snoqualmie pass was open year round to automobiles and club members regularly recreated there on weekends.\(^{304}\) Personal car ownership across the United States increased significantly during the interwar years, rising to one car for every five people in 1929, which provided easier access to National Parks and other recreation spaces for the nation’s new consumer classes.\(^{305}\) This helped to develop an important relationship between mountain recreation, cars, and fossil fuels, the results of which continue to contribute to shifts in the global carbon cycle and the remaking of mountain natures.\(^{306}\) With access to automobiles and fossil fuels, Winder and company were able to work Saturday mornings, take off for the mountains, and be back to work on Monday mornings.\(^{307}\) In these days, many people worked Saturday morning and had Saturday afternoon and Sunday off. Cheap energy compressed the distance between the city and the mountains. This made independent mountain recreation possible during short periods of time and changed the culture of the club that once focused on longer scheduled outings.

The reports on climbing in the 1930s also helped to reshape the club’s culture by representing the mountains as a landscape for achievement, pioneer individualism, and masculine strength. During the weekends, Winder and company climbed with their wives and girlfriends, some of whom they met in the club, but few reports of mix gender climbing appeared

\(^{303}\) Farr et al., North Cascades history project interviews, 1975.


\(^{305}\) Cross, An All-Consuming Century, 26; Sutter, Driven Wild, 30–41.

\(^{306}\) For the relationship between mountain recreation and cars, see Louter, Windshield Wilderness.

\(^{307}\) Farr et al., North Cascades history project interviews, 1975.
within *The Mountaineer* during the 1930s.\(^{308}\) In fact, the presence of women in the Mountaineers’ representation of space actually decreased during this period as articles about small group climbs shifted towards narratives about masculine independence. Often the articles seemed to embrace the many difficulties that climbers’ encountered including cold, wind, rain, and steep trails. Whereas the early summer outings worked to make trips as pleasurable as possible, this group of young male climbers built upon Hazard’s love of hard trail work. They accepted and often embraced challenges and discomfort in a show of individual toughness. In the 1935 annual, Will Borrow, an installer at a telephone company, used this representational strategy to describe a bivouac at 11,000 feet on Mt. Rainiers’ Liberty Ridge: “We enjoyed little sleep that night – our space was too limited and it was extremely cold…In spite of our close and confined quarters, we were not uncomfortable, although we had to exercise caution not to move too close to the edge.”\(^{309}\) For these climbers, the mountains offered both a mental and physical challenges not present in their workplace in the urban landscape. According to Cronon, in the wilderness “a man could be a real man, the rugged individual he was meant to be before civilization sapped his energy and threatened his masculinity.”\(^{310}\) Even though it was mostly men who wrote in *The Mountaineer* in the 1930s, some women also used this masculine langue in their writing. In the 1936 annual subtitled *Valley’s Pounded, Summits Won*, a women named Mildred Frank Armstrong reflected on her experience in the mountains writing that “[we] feel real mountain pioneers this last week. And I feel a yearning toward this quiet carefree life.”\(^{311}\) In this instance, Armstrong’s lived experience was shaped by the dominant idea that the mountains were a

\(\footnotesize{\text{\(^{308}\) Bates, *Cascade Voices*, 14–19.}}\)
\(\footnotesize{\text{\(^{310}\) Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness,” 14.}}\)
carefree and wild place. This quote also shows how both men and women used gendered terms to represent the mountains as an open space separate from the city. However, the practices of the club, as well as competing narratives, continued to create a tension where the mountains were pulled closer to urban centers through the strengthening of gender norms, the development of more rules and regulations, and the introduction of equipment and a growing recreation consumer society.

During this period, the Mountaineers classified mountains in ways that the club had not previously done. The 1931 annual marked this transition by including two articles: “How To Climb The Six Major Peaks of Washington” by Joseph Hazard and “Six Other Great Climbs” by Winder and Grigg. While the two articles served the purpose of guiding a climber’s experience or route in the landscape, the two men compiled their lists for different reasons. Representing some of the ideas about grand scenery, Hazzard selected his list of peaks due to their significant height and mass relative to their surrounding peaks. In contrast, Grigg and Winder chose their list by the quality of climbing, writing that good mountain “climbing, broadly speaking, may be considered directly proportional to the difficulty of the peak to be climbed, as well as to the enjoyment the mountaineer may experience in climbing…The peaks [in this group of six] offer the Alpinist of genuine ability all he desires in the way of climbing snow and rock.” Winder and Grigg also stated that “[l]ittle or no attention has been paid to height in selecting these peaks.” In this instance, they were not interested in the quantification of scenery as much as the evaluation of the physical environment by what constituted good climbing as a way of

313 Winder and Grigg, “Six Other Great Climbs,” 51.
314 Ibid., 52.
interacting directly with the mountains. While scenery was still of interest to club members, the
importance of modern sport changed the way the Mountaineers valued and represented mountain
space. However, the scientific quantification of mountain space never disappeared within the
club, as mountaineers later started to used numerical grades to quantify the climbing landscape.

Instead of replacing all the earlier narratives, many of the climbing reports layered new
meanings over older ones and drew heavily upon the idea that the mountains were an unknown
place. In a 1932 article titled “Ten Days on Mount Terror,” Strandberg narrated a trip to the
Picket Range in the North Cascades, a region little known to the club, where they claimed first
ascents and spent hours on the summits taking compass bearings and locating other peaks.315
Strandberg also filled this travel log with notes about the high quality of climbing that the region
offered and described the final ascent of West Peak writing “tennis shoes were used in climbing
the next hundred and fifty feet to the summit, a very interesting bit of rock work.”316 The
introduction of tennis shoes was a novelty at the time. The soft rubber helped the climber grip the
rock better than leather boots with metal hobnails in the soles. The article concluded with the
comment that “those who like to explore the unknown will find it of extreme interest.”317 In a
1934 article on the Stehekin and Lake Chelan region of the North Cascades, Grigg and Winder
also included a detailed map and then declared that these were “mountains for mountaineers”
(See Figure 9).318 In both these articles, the authors drew upon the themes of discovery and
empirical classification already established within The Mountaineer, but also helped to establish
individual climbing as a dominant practice within the club and as a means of categorizing land.

316 Ibid., 24.
318 Grigg and Winder, “The Lake Chelan Region,” 16.
As the depression wore on in the 1930s, club membership fell, but an interest in climbing as form of sport continued to grow within the group. During this period, the Mountaineers introduced a second list of ten peaks to climb in the Snoqualmie pass region, as well as the Climber Code in 1932. A Climbing Committee, made up of H.W. Playter, Farr, Winder, Grigg, and Strandberg, drafted the code to offer some social structure and as a means of standardizing the way that people interacted with one another and the world around them. However, for those who wanted to learn to climb, the club offered little in the way of lessons. The young men who contributed climbing narratives to The Mountaineer were largely self-taught in their skills and others were left to their own devices, an attitude that frustrated other club members. During this period, The Mountaineer changed the way it represented mountain space. Articles emphasized small group climbing and modern sport, but this did not match the

---

320 Wolf Bauer, Bauer (Wolf G.) Interview, interview by Harry Majors, August 27, 1974, Wolf G. Bauer Papers, Accession No. 1669-002, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries; for another interview with Bauer, see Bates, Cascade Voices, 29–33.
lived experiences of many club members who did not have the skills, or necessary cultural capital, to climb on their own and experience these new mountain spaces. Along with the increasingly masculine nature of mountaineering, these artikel helped produce an exclusive mountain space that marginalized other uses, women, and climbing newcomers. For most members of the club, as well as new members, there was no mechanism or system to teach the skills necessary to participate in the small group climbing landscape.

A Modern Sport Takes Hold

On April 22 1935, Edmund Meany died of stroke at the age of seventy-two just before he was about to start teaching a Monday history class at the University of Washington. While many members of the Mountaineers loved and respected Meany, it was clear that after twenty-eight years as president, his interest in the mountains out of step with a

---

321 Frykman, Seattle’s Historian and Promoter, 193–203.
significant faction of the club. After his death, vice president Elvin P. Carney, a thirty-one-year-old Seattle attorney, took over the reins of the club. In the years that followed, the Mountaineers instituted term limits for both the president and the board of trustees. These shifts in leadership and institutional structures helped open the door for younger members to push for significant cultural changes within the club’s institutional practices.

In the year prior to Meany’s death, Jane E. Wing announced the formation of the Climbers Group in the annual. This group, under the direction of chair John “Jack” E. Hossack, a pattern maker at a Seattle ironworkers, was a party of young men and women interested in promoting climbing through research and instruction as a form of social engineering. In their formation, they offered a direct protest to the traditional culture of Meany’s Mountaineers, a social group first and climbing group second, as well as the independent climbers like Winder, Farr, and Grigg, who kept their skills to themselves. The group hoped to teach more climbing leaders, and according to Wing, “prevent the formation of cliques and special groups of self-satisfied individuals who climb for personal pleasure entirely and think nothing at all of helping the newer and less experienced members.” This reemphasized accessibility, but this time the club promoted the development of individual skill and a more equitable distribution of cultural capital, rather than built infrastructure like trails and roads that Curtis had previously promoted. After some conflict with older members of the

---

Mountaineers, the group decided it had two options: form a fully new club or get more involved in the management of the Mountaineers.\textsuperscript{327} Choosing the later, the group ran four candidates for the board of trustees in the 1937: Anderson; George MacGowan, an insurance salesman; Harry Jensen, an automobile agent; and Agnes Dickert, a stenographer prior to marrying O.P. Dickert, one of the young climbers and a model builder at Boeing.\textsuperscript{328} Though the Climbers Group was not absorbed into the Mountaineers’ Climbing Committee until 1937, it radically changed the club’s practices and brought the lived spaces of club members more in line with the reports that represented the mountains as a climbing landscape in the early 1930s.

Among the members of the Climbers Group was Wolf Bauer, a German immigrant who started climbing and skiing as a youth in Bavaria.\textsuperscript{329} During the 1930s, he was part of a group of German immigrants who helped reshape the Mountaineers’ climbing culture.\textsuperscript{330} In Germany, Bauer grew up in an upper class family, but the post-world war one years were difficult for the Bauer family, as was the case for many in Germany at the time, and in 1925 they emigrated to the United States. Once in Seattle, the Mountaineers gave Bauer, still a high school student, free membership because the club, according to Bauer, was interested in his skiing ability.\textsuperscript{331}

\textsuperscript{328} For L. Andersen, see 1940 U.S. Census, King County, Washington, Seattle, sheet 6B, dwelling 55, Lloyd Andersen, digital image, FamilySearch.com; For G. MacGowan, see 1930 U.S. census, King County, Washington, population schedule, Seattle, sheet 1B, dwelling 10, George MacGowan; For H. Jansen, see 1930 U.S. Census, King County, Washington, Seattle, sheet 13B, dwelling 60, Harry L. Jensen, digital image, FamilySearch.com; For A. and O.P. Dickert, see, Lynda V. Mapes, “Othello P. Dickert Was Avid Climber, Longtime Employee at Boeing,” Seattle Times, January 2, 2005.
\textsuperscript{329} Wolf Bauer and Lynn Hyde, Crag, Eddies and Riprap: The Sound Country Memoir of Wolf Bauer (Seattle: Northwest Passage Press, 2010).
\textsuperscript{330} Other German immigrants included: Hans Otto Geisse, a stenographer and one of Bauer’s climbing partners who learned to climb in the alps; Hans Grang, a sheet metal worker who climbed with Bauer; and Otto Trott, a medical doctor who learned to climb in Germany and in 1948 started the Mountain Rescue council with Bauer and mountaineer Ome Daiber.
\textsuperscript{331} Bauer, Bauer (Wolf G.) Interview.
In 1935, Bauer was asked by Hossack to give instructions to the new Climbers Group, a lesson that later evolved into the Mountaineers’ official climbing course. To build the climbing course curriculum, Bauer wrote to acquaintances in Europe to inquire about the latest climbing techniques. The Mountaineers’ early climbs were not particularly technical as members could often walk rather than use their hands. Typically, the only climbing equipment that they used was an alpine stock, a long staff with a metal point, and hobnail boots. By the late 1920s, climbers were using ropes and ice axes more frequently, but the climbing course introduced new tools like pitons and skills such as the belay. In his memoir, Bauer wrote “I felt I was really in the saddle as far as knowledge was concerned, not because of myself, but because of the help I’d gotten and the peculiar – or you might say unique – position I held in my relationship to the old country, where these things were so far ahead.” Unlike many within the club, he was occupied a unique social field, to borrow Bourdieu’s term, as he was exposed to mountaineering and skiing as child and knew how to get more information about both sports. Though he graduated from the University of Washington in the spring of 1935 with a degree in engineering, it was the cultural capital, in the form of climbing skills, and social capital, in the form of climbing networks in Germany, that helped him shape a new mountaineering culture in the Pacific Northwest.

The goal of the climbing course was to introduce more people to the mountains and instruct them in a highly organized curriculum broken up into beginner, intermediate, and advanced courses. In *The Mountaineer*, Madalene Ryder wrote that the climbing classes were part of the progress of the club and “compared favorably with similar classes in England and

---

332 Anderson, “The Beginning of the Climbing Course.”
333 Bauer, Bauer (Wolf G.) Interview.
continental European countries.” In a way, the climbing course mirrored the progressive social politics of the Mountaineers’ founders, but promoted a different mountaineering practice, one that focused more on the experience of the individual. Bauer was a highly competitive skier and ambitious climber who pushed the limits of his individual ability and skills, but when it came to teaching, he was in full support of the Climbers Group’s effort to make skills and the vertical landscape more accessible to others. In a 1974 interview, he expressed frustration with other climbers, particularly those who were slightly older, independent, and self-taught, who choose to keep their skills private. Knowing that mountain guides had been taking clients into the Alps for decades and that European climbers were revolutionizing the sport in the interwar period, Bauer was driven by the desire that the “Cascade climbing culture should keep pace with [the progress of] European techniques” and thought that someone in the club should be teaching them. The course’s first graduating class was small and made up of mostly young middle and working class men with some previous climbing experience, but by the end of the decade, it was introducing hundreds of people to this form of modern mountaineering.

While the summer outings had previously served as the primary site of meaning making within the mountains, the climbing course revolutionized the ways that the club produced social spaces in the mountains. It resisted the large party ascents of Asahel Curtis, and in their place the course promoted small roped teams where all members had some training. The summer outings to faraway places such as the Selkirks (1938) and Tetons (1939) still attracted large numbers of participants, but Helan Rudy’s 1939 report reveals that the trips were divided into smaller

---

336 Wolf Bauer, Baurer (Wolf G.) Interview, interview by Harry Majors, August 27, 1974, Digital Collections, University of Washington.
337 Bauer and Hyde, Crags, Eddies and Riprap, 110.
338 Ibid., 87–120.
climbing groups and celebrated the work of young men like Hossack and MacGowan, who during the outing, “pioneered a new route up the north face of the Grand.”

In the late 1930s, the large group climbs of the summer outings, with the ridged social class structure of captains and lieutenants, gave way to the more egalitarian small group climbing as the Climbing Course attempted to distribute mountain skills more equitably throughout the Mountaineers.

In 1936, participants received a course notebook with a cover that read “Proper Training and Knowledge Will Conquer the Peaks and Advance the Art and Save a Life.” Topics focused on equipment use, trail, rock, and ice techniques, woodcraft, camping, navigation and first aid. It also included sections on the biology and geology of the mountain environment, connecting this new form of the sport to the club’s earlier culture. To graduate from the course, instructors evaluated and graded students’ knowledge and skills. In the written test, they had to demonstrate the orienteering skills with the use of a compass and topographic map, as well as classify and list different techniques and skills appropriate for conditions and climbing situations. This standardization of skills helped transform mountaineering in the Pacific Northwest into a modern sport, which according to Andrew Denning, is marked by an emphasis on rationalism and “universal rules.”

While Bauer did acknowledge that there were multiple ways to climb, he argued that it was best to agree upon one form of mountaineering and way of interacting with rocks and glaciers that help to constitute alpine space.

---

341 Denning, Skiing into Modernity, 9.
Like the climbing code, one of the purposes of the climbing course was to manage risk and develop a safe mountain culture, an interesting contradiction because many of the Mountaineers’ young climbers celebrated the mountains as a landscape of challenge. The desire to regulate practices in order to make the mountains safer also contrasted with the Mountaineers’ notion that the mountains were a wilderness retreat and open space. In Bauer’s writing, he emphasized safety, yet also highlighted the importance of facing and overcoming difficulties. In a 1935 article titled “The Final Conquest,” Bauer described the first ascent of Mt. Rainier’s Ptarmigan Ridge, a nearly 4000-foot climb with sections greater than fifty degrees, where he and his partner made slow progress up steep ice with no rope or protection. On the way, falling rock and ice cascaded down around them. Despite the description of their precarious position, Bauer finished the report by arguing that mountaineering was “a safe and sane art and sport or recreation.” He went on to acknowledge that others in the Pacific Northwest did not feel the same, and that the public should not be misled by narratives or photographs that depict “a dare devil-thrill.” Here, Bauer embraced two dueling narratives – that of rational safety and courage in the face of danger, which are, according to Christopher Dummit, central tenets of the masculine nature of modern mountaineering. For urban middle class men, conquering a summit in the mountains could reaffirmed male identity, but these men were also supposed to be rational and responsible decision makers in the face of danger. The climbing course, along with the Mountaineers’ focus on conquering unclimbed peaks and new routes, picked up this tension and reproduced the mountains as a place to establish middle class identity through the practice of modern sport.

343 Ibid., 6.
344 Dummitt, “Risk on the Rocks.”
Social Class and Consumerism

Despite shifts in the identity of the Mountaineers, the membership of the club, from its founding and through the interwar period came from a social class of people who had the ability to consume leisure experiences and the necessary material items to do so. Mountain tourism, according to Denning, is a form of spatialized consumption.345 Starting in the 1910s, The Mountaineer featured advertisements for rugged clothing from companies like Filson and Eddie Bauer, but generally the early summer outings emphasized the mountains as sites for the consumption of scenery and experience more so than material items. However, the early Mountaineers also valued mountain spaces as places of transcendence and social progress more than places of economic value. In the interwar years, as technical mountaineering and skiing grew in popularity, a culture of material consumerism grew stronger within the group, which created new economic opportunity in the mountains and nearby urban spaces. Near the beginning of the 1939 annual, in an article on the climbing course, the club featured a single page photograph titled “Proper Equipment is Required.”346 In the photo, pitons, hobnail boots, tennis shoes, crampons, carabiners, a camera, and other material items used for mountaineering surround an ice axe and rope, which was indicative of the ever-increasing amount of equipment needed to recreate in the mountains and experience places that the club represented as separate from the city (See Figure 10). This furthered the conflict between the idea that the mountains were a place apart and the practices of the club that increasingly made the mountains into sites of consumption. The introduction of more equipment also started to remake mountain spaces a more climbers, as Neil Smith observes, the labor of their own natural bodies on the external

345 Denning, Skiing into Modernity, 144.
nature of the mountains, leaving their boot prints in subalpine meadows and steel pitons pounded into alpine rock.\textsuperscript{347} While the Mountaineers’ membership represented only a fraction of the people and equipment that appeared in the mountains later in the twentieth century, the club’s practices and representations fundamentally reshaped alpine space in the 1930s.

Equipment also started to take on symbolic meanings as the club transformed it, in the words of Bourdieu, into objectified cultural capital.\textsuperscript{348} According to Mountaineers member and mountaineering historian Harvey Manning, in the early 1930s, an ice axe “was a symbol of rank reserved for the heroes who had achieved fame by pioneering the high wilderness.”\textsuperscript{349} Similarly, in Helan Rudy’s 1939 summer outing report, the occupants of her sedan recognized other members of the Mountaineers by the ski rack on their car as it passed. Noting that this was a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{348} Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital.”
\item \textsuperscript{349} Manning, \textit{REI: 50 Years of Climbing Together}, 1.
\end{itemize}
unique item, she wrote “[w]ho else but a Mountaineer would be carrying a ski rack across the desert on a sweltering night in July?” In this modern mountaineering culture, consuming equipment was not only about purchasing the tools necessary to access certain practices, but also as a way of establishing individual and collective identity in mountain and urban space.

Much of the new equipment, such as ice axes and pitons, had to be imported from Europe and was sold at high cost in Seattle, thereby strengthening the linkages between the landscapes of consumption and the urban spaces of production. Frustrated by the high cost of equipment, Lloyd and Mary Anderson, who came from rural working class families, started a small co-operative to purchase this equipment wholesale. Anderson grew up on farm in the low lands near Mount Rainier where his family had, according to Manning, “two nickels to rub together but rarely two silver dollars to jingle in the pocket.” He attended the University of Washington where he earned a degree in engineering, but despite this form of cultural capital, he struggled to find regular work during the depression years of the 1930s. At the same time, he climbed regularly (he climbed all six majors in the summer of 1931), but was frustrated when he attempted to order an ice axe from Europe for twenty dollars. The co-op that the Andersons started in 1938 was supposed to help make equipment more accessible to the public; the co-op was later named Recreation Equipment Incorporated (REI). Other club members also got involved in the outdoor retail industry. During the 1930s, Ome Daiber made his living making

---

353 Manning, REI: 50 Years of Climbing Together, 11.
354 For Anderson’s climbing records, see Lloyd Anderson, “Lloyd Anderson’s Climbing Notebook,” 1980, Lloyd Anderson papers, 1929-1979, Accession No. 2648-002, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries; For expensive equipment, see Manning, REI: 50 Years of Climbing Together, 2.
equipment such as sleeping bags and Sno-seal, a leather sealant that he invented in 1933.\textsuperscript{355} In the 1960s, Larry Penberthy started the company Mountain Safety Research in an effort to develop safer carabiners and other climbing equipment.\textsuperscript{356} Like early club members who brought their cultural backgrounds and social codes to an experience within the mountains, in the mid-twentieth century, the Mountaineers brought an increasing amount of rules, regulation, and equipment with them for a similar purpose, which strengthened the social barriers that regulated who had access to alpine space. Equipment required capital and created an economy based in Seattle that relied on a fixed natural resource, recreation landscapes.

In the book \textit{Skiing Into Modernity}, Andrew Denning argues that modernity arrived in the Alps when Europeans reconfigured the mountains as an economic resource. In contrast, loggers and prospectors bought the mountain regions of the Pacific Northwest into a regional economy based on extraction prior to the arrival of modern sport and mountain tourism. Many prospectors ventured high into the subalpine environment and even established complex trail networks. As the Mountaineers and other Seattleites introduced recreation landscapes into the local and regional markets, they shifted the economic geography of the Pacific Northwest. Whereas the landscapes of production moved resources from the mountains to urban centers, the newly made landscape of consumption required that people travel from the urban space to the mountains. All of this drew the mountains and Seattle closer together in a complex flow of people, materials, and ideas.


Conclusion

In the 1930s, working and middle class climbers were far more visible within the Mountaineers and the annual than they were in the early years. In many ways, this younger generation of club members changed the meaning of the mountains through representations of them as a wilderness to be explored and a place of challenge for individuals who carried their own equipment and were likened to the pioneers. Furthermore, the introduction of the climbing course and the founding of REI changed the way that club members accessed mountain space. On one hand, the climbing course distributed the cultural capital and mountaineering skills more equitably among club members, but it also introduced more social codes and rules to an already highly regulated landscape, further limiting individual freedom. In contrast to the earlier focus of the club, mountaineering as form of modern sport reshaped the mountains into a place for the expression of individual identity and achievement through the consumption of experience and material items.

The image of the pioneer was central to the 1930s climbing narratives as members embraced physical play that, to paraphrase Richard White, resembled hard work on the land. According to Cross, “consumption [in the interwar period] relieved the pain of increasingly meaningless labor. While new urban ‘luxuries’ tore many from the rigors of pioneer life, the frontier survived in the acquisitive and individualistic personality of the modern American.”

Though the image of the pioneer was also important to Meany and other earlier club members, the first summer outings did not require the participant to work or struggle against the mountains in the same fashion. Rather, early outings celebrated the progress of the group, more than the individual’s experience. At this time, the large size of climbing parities did not conflict with the

club’s idea that the mountains were a non-human space. For Meany, the end of the pioneer era, though lamentable, was also a mark of social progress. Rather than recreating labor on the land through “hard trail work,” club members embarked on recreational journeys to the mountains to view grand scenery and study the landscape. This form of progressive leisure was more about transcending the past. Despite the difference between the two eras, the club never shied from the production of spaces for consumption where access was largely limited to white middle class people from the urban centers. As the Mountaineers moved into the post-war era, the exchange of ideas and material goods between the mountains of the Pacific Northwest and these urban places continued to develop. At the same time, the club also fully invested itself in the national wilderness movement. In 1958, The Mountaineer focused on the proposed Glacier Peak Wilderness area and featured an opening article titled “Wilderness World,” which helped reinforced the already dominant idea that the North Cascades were a wild and natural place unencumbered by humanity, the last remnants of the frontier. However, within the Mountaineers’ production of space this continued to develop the tension between the hegemonic representation of mountains as a non-human wilderness and the spatial practices of the club that reinforced the structures of social space, particularly around class, skill, and gender, and strengthened the cultural and economic linkages between the urban and mountain landscapes.

---

Chapter 4:

A The City and the Wilderness

I walked briskly over the bricks in Western Washington University’s red square after I submitted the final assignment of the quarter. Ready for a break, I returned home and my partner and I loaded up our car with food and gear; skis made in Austria and avocados grown in Mexico. After fueling up the car with gasoline, we drove east up Highway 542 into the mountains. The sun flashed off the icefall on Mount Baker’s northwest ridge as Paul Simon sang about being received in Graceland. At the end of the road, we joined a few dozen other people at Heather Meadows and Artist Point, a place where the Mountaineers have held numerous summer outings.\(^{360}\) Sitting in the snow between Mount Baker and Mount Shuksan, I felt relaxed. We went to the mountains for a retreat, but it was clear that we were still in a very human landscape. In thinking about her mountaineering travels in the remote regions of Canada, Reichwein writes, “there is nowhere to retreat from society, even on a rock island in a snowstorm.”\(^{361}\) Here on the edge of the Mt. Baker Wilderness and North Cascades National Park, we were in the middle of a complex social space shaped by huge inputs of fossil fuels and cultural struggles over the uses of the North Cascade Mountains. As skiers, we helped reproduce these spaces and strengthen the links between urban and rural landscapes.

In the twenty-first century, such an experience is common in Washington’s mountains. In addition to Highway 542 that dead ends near Mount Baker, five other highways cross the Cascade Mountains, linking the urban centers of Puget Sound to parks and wildlands as well as

\(^{360}\) See *The Mountaineer* from 1908, 1916, 1928.

\(^{361}\) Reichwein, *Climber’s Paradise*, 298.
the smaller cities and rural landscapes of Eastern Washington. From downtown Seattle, eight lanes of pavement wind east to Snoqualmie Pass, providing easy access to the 414,161 acre Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area. At both Snoqualmie and Stevens Passes, ski resorts now employee hundreds of people in an industry where snow is a valuable natural resource. Further east, small towns like Leavenworth and Winthrop are home to many people employed in the tourist industry as well others who have made a home there in order to more permanently escape the city and engage in a life of leisure in the mountains. The process of making these mountain landscapes has a long and complex history involving many groups including the Mountaineers and the Sierra Club, while others have often been excluded, notably the people indigenous to the region.

The political, economic, and cultural geography of the Cascade and Olympic mountains is closely intertwined with the history of the Mountaineers. Shortly after its founding, the club began to advocate for a national park on the Olympic Peninsula, as well as policy changes in Mount Rainier National Park. To be clear, modern wilderness preservation had not yet developed within the club and national conservation politics during the early decades of the twentieth century focused on the preservation of scenery and recreation experiences, rather than the protection of ecosystems. After World War II, the Mountaineers engaged in a new form of conservation politics and supported the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act, which did include an ecological component even though “wilderness” recreation experiences were still a central part of the bill. Locally, the Mountaineers joined with other groups and fought hard for the creation of the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area (1960), North Cascades National Park (1968), and

362 According to Sutter, Aldo Leopold introduced an scientific and ecological component to the wilderness idea in the late 1930s, after the Wilderness Society was established in order to protect a certain type of recreation experience. See, Sutter, Driven Wild, 248-250.
the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area (1976).\textsuperscript{364} In 1960, the Mountaineers published \textit{Freedom of the Hills}, the now iconic mountaineering textbook that is on its eighth edition and has exposed generations of climbers to the club’s climbing culture.\textsuperscript{365} The founding of REI, which has introduced outdoor equipment and clothing to the American public at large, has also helped to reshape both urban and mountain landscapes across the country.\textsuperscript{366} In, 2014 the co-op boasted 5.5 million members. Despite this history, producing these geographies was not a simple or linear process. Rather, the club struggled over the meanings of place and the nature of this struggle shifted throughout the twentieth century.

The making of the Cascade and Olympic mountain landscapes involves many more actors than just the Mountaineers, but the history of the club provides a specific account of how one prominent group produced social spaces and cultural landscapes in the mountains. The social history of the Mountaineers generally supports the critiques laid out by Cronon and White, that wilderness and outdoor recreation are products of modernity and cultural artifacts made by social classes who consume, rather than labor on the land.\textsuperscript{367} The Mountaineers, in the early twentieth century, were a predominantly urban club and many of the people who published in \textit{The Mountaineer} worked middle class jobs that did not require them work directly on the land. For these club members, trips to the mountains were meant to be a form outdoor recreation that provided an opportunity to appreciate mountain natures in ways that differed from their daily lives. For some younger men, physical activity was an important part of this experience.

However, the social history of the Mountaineers also complicates the arguments made by Cronon

\textsuperscript{364} Tom Miller and Harvey Manning, \textit{The North Cascades} (Seattle: The Mountaineers, 1964).
\textsuperscript{366} Angel Gonzalez, “As REI Thrives, Does It Have Members or Merely Shoppers?,” \textit{The Seattle Times}, January 23, 2016.
\textsuperscript{367} Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness”; White, “Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?”
and White who paid little attention to the people who work in consumer landscapes such as guides and horse packers. In the making of recreation spaces, the Mountaineers helped develop new markets and a demand for wilderness experiences, which also created new work opportunities that reoriented the way that people worked on the land and the way that people consumed natural resources. Furthermore, Cronon and White’s focus on labor on the land also does not adequately consider that men have historically carried out such labor and they say little about the labor of women. In the early years, the recreation spaces of the Mountaineers included both men and women in relatively equal numbers, and many of these women likely would not have performed the type of productive labor that would have supposedly put them in touch with the land. Additionally, this history complicates Cronon and White’s critiques because early club members believed that they were part of a regional history that was progressing beyond the pioneer era. People like Meany did not work on the land, but they also did not promote a recreation experience meant to model the hardships of pioneer life. Put together with the work of Rechwein, Taylor, Klingle, Louter, and Weltzen, this research adds to a more complete understanding of the Northwest’s mountain landscapes and North American mountain cultures at large.

A Place Apart and Its Relationship to Urban Space

Throughout the cultural struggle over the production of mountain landscapes in the Pacific Northwest, the Mountaineers regularly represented the mountains as an unknown place and later, as a place apart. The first outing called the Olympics “terra incognita,” as it constructed the mountains as an unexplored landscape that progressive professors and scientists

---

368 Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise; Taylor, Pilgrims of the Vertical; Klingle, Emerald City; Louter, Windshield Wilderness; Weltzein, Exceptional Mountains.
could make known through empiricism and scientific study.\textsuperscript{369} While these early outings were meant to be a retreat and form of leisure, they did not contain the same anti-urban ethos that was present in later trips. At the turn of the century, many in Seattle believed that the city had progressed beyond the pioneer period. It was not until the 1920s that the club really started to represent the mountains as an escape from urban life and promote “hard trail work” and play that resembled labor on the land. Many scholars have identified this sentiment, within a larger history of parks and recreation in the west, as connected to narratives about the frontier, as well as Romantic critiques of modernity and the perceived overdevelopment of the city.\textsuperscript{370} Such representations are rooted in the cultural notion that nature and culture as diametrically opposed. As Seattle grew into a major metropolitan center in the early twentieth century, so too did the middle class and the membership body of the Mountaineers, many of whom flocked to the mountains for weekend retreats. In the twenty-first century, such representations of the Olympic and Cascade Mountains persist and for many, culturally constructed wilderness experiences are personally powerful and very real.\textsuperscript{371}

Despite the dominant representation of mountain space as wild nature and a non-human landscape, the practices of the Mountaineers created cultural and economic links between the Cascade and Olympic Mountains, the city of Seattle, as well as many other mountain regions and urban space across North American and Europe. This helped to establish a strong relationship between the production of urban and rural space, and one that continued to grow into the twenty-first century. Other scholars have also wrestled with this relationship, notably Cronon in his book \textit{Nature’s Metropolis}, in which he explores the links that capitalism created between Chicago and

\textsuperscript{369} Flett, “Observation On The Olympics,” 43–44.  
\textsuperscript{370} Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness.”  
\textsuperscript{371} Marler, \textit{East of the Divide}. 
“The Great West.” While Cronon focuses more on the accumulation of capital in the city, others have identified ways that capital has flowed towards rural landscapes. In a historical geography of pre-confederation Canada, geographer Cole Harris observes that in the nineteenth century, capital “penetrated the countryside’s of settler colonies to obtain labor and commodities and to supply goods that local economies could not produce.”372 In the case of the Mountaineers, its members invested both cultural and economic capital in the mountains of Washington, but not for extractive purposes. Rather, they were looking for recreation resources and experiences that the city could not produce. This also brought more people and equipment, from other places, into the high country, which reshaped mountain geographies. In this process, the meanings of the mountains developed unevenly, as the club first focused on the volcanoes and then extended their pursuits to the North Cascades. This body of scholarship, put together with this research, makes it difficult to take mountain spaces for granted as reserves of untouched nature or to think about mountain, rural, and urban landscapes as disparate places.

The production of space in the Cascade and Olympic mountains is closely linked with cultural representations of wilderness and mountains rooted in Europe. Other scholars such as Reichwein and Taylor have also demonstrated the importance of European mountaineering in the making of North American alpine clubs.373 But despite these connections, the Mountaineers did not simply remake a European mountaineering culture in the Pacific Northwest, nor did they simply reproduce Seattle social life in the mountains. Instead, the Mountaineers created a mountaineering culture with a unique regional history. In his historical geography of Canada, Harris identifies a similar theme where Europeans immigrants did not reproduce European space

372 Cole Harris, “Historical Geography and Early Canada: A Life and an Interpretation,” Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe Canadien 52, no. 4 (December 1, 2008): 422.
373 Reichwein, Climber’s Paradise; Taylor, Pilgrims of the Vertical.
in North America, but drew on their past experience to create new and locally specific North American places.\textsuperscript{374} In the Northwest, landscape production was inspired by European mountain cultures as well as the local physical geography, national narratives about pioneers and labor on the land, the history of Seattle, and the individual lives of Asahel Curtis, Edmond Meany, Art Winder, Wolf Bauer, and many more.

**Mountain Spaces**

As Lefebvre has observed, the spaces of human life are not \textit{A priori} stages for action, but rather they are made through social practices and representations such as those that appear in \textit{The Mountaineer}.\textsuperscript{375} This includes places such national parks, climbing landscapes, and the smaller spaces of summer outings and individual climbing parties. Often these places are represented as natural landscapes, but nature, Bruce Braun argues, “is always something attained, not found in passive observation.”\textsuperscript{376} Today, the Mountaineers describe the mountains of the Northwest as reserves of wild and untouched nature, yet this obscures and depoliticizes their making. It also does not critically consider what it means to be a human being, a political and ecological actor in the world. The purpose here is not to show or argue that the Mountaineers production of mountain space was right or wrong, but to explore how these landscapes were constructed, who was able to make and maintain dominant meanings of place, and who has been left out of this meaning making process.

The socially constructed divide between culture and nature, which has developed in part through attempts at empirical study as well as the development of market capitalism, that has

\textsuperscript{374} Harris, “Historical Geography and Early Canada.”
\textsuperscript{375} Lefebvre, \textit{The Production of Space}.
\textsuperscript{376} Willems-Braun, “Buried Epistemologies.”
transformed both the land and human labor into commodities, has produced dominant representations of space that have separated people from the land. *The Mountaineer* is full of such descriptions of mountain space, and yet many members of the Mountaineers also resisted these representations and wrote about direct and embodied connections to the mountains. Meany’s poems speak to an emotional association with the land while others in the club developed a sense of place through physical forms of recreational labor. In the Northwest, the production of mountain space was constituted by these different ways of knowing the land.

By embracing the roles that humans play in the making of space and place, we can ask questions about what natures and social spaces we want to produce and live with in the future. Other scholars have already started to critically discuss this question, particularly within the context of mountain parks, outdoor recreation, and tourism. According to scholars Lisa Cook, Bryan Grimwood, and Kelley Caton, “mountain environments, which play host to tourism activities, [are] morally resonant spaces – spaces in which different meaning and values are asserted, contested, negotiated and resisted.” This has become particularly relevant as the concept of the Anthropocene and the argument that humans are now acting as a geologic force has permeated both public and scholarly discourse. Within this literature is a critical discussion about the social impacts of global change. Engaging in outdoor recreation means engaging in economies with both global and locally specific implications. Cronon argues that “we live in an urban-industrial civilization…[and] at the same time pretend to ourselves that our real home is in

---

378 Cooke, Grimwood, and Caton, “A Moral Turn for Mountain Tourism?”
the wilderness, to just that extent we give ourselves permission to evade responsibility for the lives we live." In the conclusion of *Climbers Paradise*, Reichwein eloquently describes how humans have shaped mountain natures and how mountains have shaped the nature of her own body. She writes,

> [m]ica dust sparkles everywhere, in the stream sediments, in our drinking water, all over our packs and clothes, in the cracks of our feet and hands, and no doubt inside our bodies as we ingest a daily dose of the mountain. You can see it gather as a deposit in the bottom of a Nalgene bottle. What are you drinking? Carcinogens in plastic or DDT trapped in glacier ice? Frozen memories of atmospheric pollutants.

In the twenty-first century, the discussion of the Anthropocene complicates traditional wilderness politics that focused on the preservation of places unburdened by humanity. Reichwein goes on to tell how local mountain guides have witnessed a changing environment and the ablation of the Athabasca Glacier, new mountain landscapes created by economies that have changed the global carbon cycle. In the Pacific Northwest, this is also the case as anthropogenic climate change is affecting glaciers that have been, for the most part, out of equilibrium with the climate since the end of the little ice age. Mountaineers and skiers bear witness to these local examples of global change and they are deeply implicated in the social systems that help to drive such changes. This means that mountaineers and skiers are also uniquely positioned to speak openly about the ways that social life shapes these places, both materially and symbolically, and the resulting consequences for other people.

Thinking critically about the cultural meanings of place, which include assumptions about gender, race, and class, may also offer ways forward towards more socially just mountain

---

381 Reichwein, *Climber’s Paradise*, 299–300.
spaces, as well as their relationship to the urban environment and global economies.

Mountaineers and skiers should not blindly follow Thoreau who sauntered “through the woods and over the hills and fields, absolutely free from all worldly engagements.”\(^{383}\) As Reichwein and Robinson have both identified, skiing and mountaineering are powerful political acts with major social implications. This historical geography of the Mountaineers demonstrates that the mountains of the Pacific Northwest are like much of the region, indigenous landscapes that have been disposed through forms of imperialism. Critically engaging in this history of disposition may help us move beyond common neo-imperial narratives that reproduce this history. This research also shows that the regions’ mountain landscapes have largely been made in the ideal of a white male upper social class. It is no wonder that many scholars, both public and academic, have commented on the lack of social diversity in national parks and other outdoor recreation spaces.\(^{384}\) By engaging in traditional forms of recreation and celebrating narratives about wilderness and parks, many of which may be important to us, we must also ask if we are reproducing meanings that marginalize. If we are, we can also ask how we might create more socially just mountain spaces and think critically about the cultural and economic relationships that link the mountains to other places and peoples. The answerers to these questions are not simple. However, if we fail to think critically about the cultural, ecological, and economic politics of outdoor recreation, we will be remiss in our roles as worldly political agents and risk producing undesirable and unjust places.


Bibliography

Archived Documents and Interviews


*The Mountaineer* and *The Mountaineer Bulletin*


Banks, Mary. “Mountaineers In The Olympics.” *The Mountaineer* 1, no. 3 (1907): 75–79.


“Graduate Members of the Mountaineers.” *The Mountaineer* 9, no. 1 (1921): 73.


———. “Record of the Location of the Thirty-Six Record Tubes Purchase in 1915 and 1919.” The Mountaineer 18, no. 1 (1925): 64.


**Secondary Literature**


Appendix 1.
Articles Reporting On Significant Ascents and Small Group Trips Outside the Regularly Scheduled Summer Outing (Washington Only)

1907  *The First Ascent of Mount Shuksan*, by Asahel Curtis
1908  -
1909  -
1910  -
1911  -
1912  -
1913  *The Ascent of Whitehorse*, by S.V. Bryant
1914  -
1915  -
1916  -
1917  *Backpacking and Week-end Climbing*, by Joseph T. Hazard
1918  *Success Cleaver Route to Rainier's Summit*, J. H. Weer
1919  *The Ascent of Mount Baker*, 1919, by Edmond S. Meany
1920  -
1921  -
1922  *The First Ascent of Mount Constance*, by A.E. Smith
1923  -
1924  -
1925  -
1926  -
1927  *Skiing Near Rainier's Summit*, W.J. Maxwell
1928  -
1929  -
1930  *Ascent of Chimney Rock*, Laurence D. Byington
1931  *In the Heart of the Skagit*, by Hebert V. Strandberg

1932  *Ten Days on Mount Terror*, by Hebert V. Strandberg; *Mountaineer Ski Trips*, Arthur Winder


1937  -

1938  *Damnation With Triumph*, By Lloyd Anderson; *Spire Peak*, by O. Phillip Dickert; *Blue Mountain*, by Agnes O. Dickert; *Another "Unclimbed" Conquered*, by Lyman A. Boyer

1939  *A First Ascent of Sinister*, By Loyd Anderson; *A First Ascent of Despair*, by Lloyd Anderson; *First Ascent of Bear's Breast Mountain*, by Fred Beckey and Wayne Swift; *Mount Rainier on Skis*, by Sigurd Hall
Appendix 2. Membership as reported in *The Mountaineer*

(Includes all branches of the Mountaineers)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of Members</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1907-08</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>897</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>844</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>