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"Down to valley and up to right":

the amateur mountain photography of Ken Betts, 1929 – 1936

by

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Abstract

The amateur photographic album is a rich source of social and environmental communication. Drawing on theories of representation and the social construction of 'nature', this study asks how 'nature' is communicated in amateur photographs of Canada's mountain parks. 408 black and white photographs, compiled into two albums, are analyzed in order to discover the content, composition and narrative structure used. A detailed picture emerges of the representation of Canada's mountain parks in the context of changing recreational practice during the 1920s and 1930s. The study concludes that the albums present evidence of adoption, adaptation and rejection of both aesthetic and documentary visual forms in order to present a mountain environment that is sublime, untouched and available for recreational exploration.

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Dedicated to the memory of

Kenneth George Betts (1912 - 1970)

Mary Norma Betts (1910 - 2000)

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

> They had settled themselves around on the grass in
> poses seen in amateur snap-shots...
>
> Nabokov, <u>Cloud, Castle, Lake</u>

Inheriting a paradox

This thesis began with an inheritance of sorts—boxes and boxes of images,

prints and slides alike, taken by my grandfather over his lifetime. They had

been sitting for years in my grandmother's basement, those ranks of slides in

drawers, decks of black and white photographs in cigarette tins, picture after

picture of whatever my grandfather valued enough to capture with his camera. I

went downstairs to look at them, that day several years ago when this project

began to come into focus. Opening the drawers and the tins, I found

photographs of kids, the house, the garden, but more than anything else, there

were photographs of mountains.

Mountains spilled out from the boxes, trips taken to Assiniboine, Lake

O'Hara, climbs throughout the Rockies. There were photographs of gray, ranked

peaks, white streams feathery with the speed of water, sun-chunked rock-fall

and snow striped with ski-tracks. There were smiling men and women in

jodhpurs and tam-o'-shanters. There were traces of wind-blown climbs to stone

cairns, snug picnics in clumps of conifer, hikes along dark hills with a paper

white sky. Then there were the vertigo inducing shots, straight down the skree

to water-drop lakes in valleys like fissured stone. For a moment the perspective made my head spin and when it cleared I was back in my grandmother's basement looking, for the first time, at what I had only glanced at before, remembering the little I knew.

Kenneth George Betts, my grandfather, was born January 1, 1912. He was the son of a printer from Hertford, England who had immigrated to Canada to work on the fledgling Calgary Herald. Like his father, Ken Betts also went to work at the Herald. He began in 1928, when he was still only sixteen years old, and would work for the next forty years in the newspaper's composing room. Ken Betts' working life might have been given over to the Herald, but his passion was for the mountains. He became an avid hiker, climber and skier, hopping freight trains in Calgary in his eagerness to get to Banff. Lawrence Grassi (climber, trail-maker, guide and eventual O'Hara Park Warden) introduced Betts to climbing and continued to be a life-long friend and influence. Later, Betts took up ski touring spending as much time as possible in the Lake O'Hara and Skoki areas. Betts was a life member of the Alpine Club of Canada and a member of the Skyline Hikers of the Canadian Rockies. His interest in capturing the mountains he loved would lead him to become an accomplished photographer. Subsequent membership in the Foothills Camera Club and the Calgary Colour Photographer's Club provided Betts with both training and context for the display of his work. By the time of his death in 1970, his images had graced the Calgary Herald newspaper and yearly calendar, and had been displayed in numerous exhibitions of photography.

After my grandfather's death his photographs were not forgotten, but sat, untouched, in my grandmother's basement. A few were enlarged, printed, framed and hung—one in my mother's kitchen, another in my grandmother's living room. But the prints were never brought out and many of the dusty Kodachromes had not seen the light of day in the twenty years since my grandfather's death. The context for their display had disappeared along with my grandfather's voice and his stories.

Back on that day in my grandmother's basement, I pulled out photograph after photograph: crags, lakes, snow-heavy forests, mist on morning peaks, clouds sunk in lakes, long evening shadows. The photographs fixed both the immemorial, geological time of the mountains as well as human time, marked out in the clean blacks and whites of the silver print. As I flipped through the images—rectangles no bigger than my palm—I realized that what I held in my hands amounted to a sustained communication about the meaning one man found in the saw-toothed grin of a skyline or the shrug of a mountain's shoulder. These pictures were more than the inevitable souvenir of a trip to Banff. They expressed a philosophy of mountain environments: what they look like, what you do there, what it means to be there.

As I looked I grew puzzled. On one hand these photographs seemed to communicate something important about how individuals can come to invest a particular environment with the deepest significance and meaning. On the other hand, while many of the images were very handsome, there was nothing in them that I had not seen before in hundreds, even thousands, of mass-produced images.

Like mass-produced images, amateur photographs are produced in excess. Unlike mass-produced images—where single images are reproduced in massive quantities, usually for commercial purposes—the excess of amateur photography is the result of similitude between photographs not of identical cases. The strong similarities between family portraits, for example, can produce the impression of many images of the same subject—a single, mass-produced image of a smiling, posed family, even though this is obviously not the case. In other words, excess in amateur photography describes the production of multiple images produced in single quantities but which, in certain situations, are treated as the equivalent of single images in massive quantities.

An interest in the specifics of amateur photography—if, for example, the family snap-shot in question is one's own family—alters the dynamic of excess: excess is other people. The intrusion of the 'personal' as a pejorative form of specificity with regard to certain forms of amateur photography qualifies the images in such a way as to deny general significance to any single image. Obviously, certain forms of 'personal' interest (the historical, the aesthetic, the technical) are part of scholarly discourse in a way that the familial are not. Indeed, the notion of 'academic' interest connotes an impersonal interest. Nevertheless, the notion of excess in the case of amateur photography suggests that most amateur photographs are at once too common and too personal to matter—too general and too specific. Only by shifting the terms of discourse—changing, for example, into historical or artistic photographs—can amateur photography retain or regain enhanced signification.

Sachsse (2000) illustrates the peculiar connection between photography and the notion of excess in his account of the work of the German artist, Joachim Schmid. Sachsse recounts how small advertisements for "used and unnecessary photographs of all kinds" placed in photographic magazines by Schmid resulted in a deluge of material (256). Photographs poured in. So eager were respondents to find a home for these images that what was curious was not that people were willing to give up the photos, but that they had kept them at all. The caretakers of all these images had presumably been caught in the same bind: because of the way that certain forms of photography are valued these photographs could neither be kept nor could they be discarded. As a mass they were of limited value but individually each photograph retained potential value. To those negotiating this paradox, Schmid's artistic recycling project must have seemed to offer a much-needed way out.

Amateur photography is unique in that it is produced in singular conditions, but these singular conditions can be generalized (for example, Bourdieu, 1990). Photographs of family occasions, celebrations, vacations can be analyzed for aspects that they have in common. Amateur photographs have no claim to being mass-produced in the way in which advertising or commercial images are mass-produced. Instead, amateur photographs have a unique claim to being a form of cultural expression that is produced by individuals, *en masse*. In addition, this massive production of images by individuals is done in a context of mass-produced images. Photographs are produced in the context of mass advertising and mass visual culture. The selection and creation of each photograph is evidence of how individuals negotiate that context. Amateur

photographs do more than represent the overlap between individual experience and mass-communicated forms; they are the sites at which individual experience is configured in relation to mass-communicated forms. In amateur photography mass-communicated forms are accepted or rejected as vessels of individual meaning. Excess, in this view, represents a variety of possible responses, each worthy of consideration.

Sadly, excess in amateur photograph is usually associated with predictability or banality. For example, Bell (1998), considering the photographic image of western Canada, writes:

> Later, after the introduction of roll-film, when tourists were able to take their own photographs, the professional images provided prototypes for the amateur to imitate. This visual re-inscribing of the region with the new meanings developed by capital to promote tourism and economic development had, by the new century, established these images as 'normal'. Their predictability quickly became embedded in the banality of mass visual culture via postcards, snapshots, brochures, displays and photo-books. (60)

Making a similar point, Bright (1989) writes that Yellowstone and Yosemite parks were photographed in order to assist "in merchandizing landscapes for public consumption", with the resulting images becoming "the established 'standards' against which all future visual records of these landscape-spectacles would be measured" (128). Amateur landscape photography, by her account, amounts to little more than "the compulsion to take snapshots of the conventional shrines of Nature"(127). Another author

notes that "a large segment of the mountain photographic community were amateurs" but echoes Bell and Bright in adding that "most of their output adds little or nothing to the pictorial record of the western mountains" (Silversides, 1995, 5).

Amateur photographers reproduce an excess of images that are essentially identical to the mass-produced models that inspired them and so will not repay a closer examination—or so the argument goes. This view is inconsistent with my sense that the excess of amateur photography should produce a varied field of response to mass-produced photography. I wonder why predictability and banality is assumed in the accounts above. And even if there is a high degree of stability of iconography, why should that preclude scholarly interest? The stability of other mass-produced forms is at the heart of certain forms of cultural scholarship. Genre criticism in film and television, for example, relies on ability to attribute significance on the basis of iconographic similarity between films. Why should amateur photography be different from other photographic practices in this regard? In addition, the view that individuals do little more than helplessly reproduce mass-culture has come under attack (de Certeau, 1984). The presence or absence of a culture of commodities does not solely determine the forms of amateur photography. Amateur photographers are active agents and the photographs they take represent an on-going negotiation between the photographer and his or her culture. Amateur photography is unique in its ability to capture that negotiation and to preserve it in excess, in variety and in detail.

The photographs I held in my hand that day in my grandparents' basement were more than just mountain pictures. Each photograph presented possible evidence of how a history of mass communicated representations of mountain environments could be reconfigured in the process of negotiating new images—ones that would be responsive to new needs and new uses of those same environments. In other words, each photograph presented a way that the question of mountain environments—what they look like, what one does there, what it means to be there—could be considered in the context of a historic and continuing image of place.

My intention in undertaking this study is to describe the context and production of a selection of my grandfather's earliest photographs with the hope of understanding something of how individuals negotiate mass forms of representation. My curiosity is located in the general conditions of the production of the photographs in question (the history of representation of the mountain parks), the specific conditions of production (photography as aesthetic and recreational practice) and the content of the photographs (as emblematic of 'nature'). In understanding how the mountain photographs in this case relate to a history of photography in the mountain parks, I propose a more nuanced description of such work than merely 'predictable' and 'banal'. A more thorough understanding of the uses to which everyday photography can be put will provide some rationale for the practices of amateur and mountain photographers beyond that of the unthinking duplication of extant forms. The key is to understand how practices translate environments into culture—in this case a particular form of culture called 'nature'. In order to explore this process, I take

two albums of the photographer's earliest work as my case and advance the following research question: in a context of changing recreational use, how is 'nature' communicated in amateur photographs of Canada's mountain parks?

Why does this study matter?

Stuart Hall (1997) describes the 'cultural turn' which argues that culture is, "not so much a set of things—novels and paintings or TV programmes and comics—as a process, a set of practices" (2). Hall argues that meaning is a product, not of any singular item, but of that item in use. In this view, amateur photography has a unique and singular significance as evidence of past and present use.

Photographic practice is tied to the actual use of environments—together they constitute one form of the 'practice' of nature. A view of nature is constructed through specific photographic and recreational practices that both determine and become the subject of those photographs. The practice of nature is all of these elements, each modifying the expression of the others. Photographic 'templates' (some of which may represent nature as commodity, as in Bell, Silversides and Bright) help determine amateur photographic practice. Equally, the practices of amateur photographers may determine which mass-circulated images become culturally meaningful. Photographic technology may determine some of the limits of amateur photography just as photographic amateurs may adopt or reject various forms of photographic technology.

Recreational practices in mountain parks may determine the creation and form of those parks while the history and cultural significance provide models by which park users may understand their activities and environment. Sufficient detail and nuance is necessary to the study of how culture is manifest through use and how individuals use culture to produce meaning.

A study of the kind I propose here matters because it seeks to provide the detail required in order to explore some of this complexity. A study of this kind also can help to nuance questions that require immediate attention and possible action. The 'taken-for-granted' status of both amateur photography and the forms of mountain photography can be usefully described and considered. Such consideration, in turn, makes clear cultural assumptions about the use of mountain parks and other wild/non-industrial environments. It is sometimes the case that the cultural assumptions that underlie disputes over land use are versions of disputes over much more foundational moral and ethical issues (Evernden, 1992). It is sometimes also the case that phenomena that might seem to be independent of culture, such as 'nature', are subject to cultural assumptions after all. An understanding of a mountain environment as a 'natural' place is the product of an on-going negotiation in the form of cultural representations of environments. (To argue that 'nature' is a product of culture is not to argue that environments have no status in 'reality', but only that the meaning of particular environments is negotiated entirely through culture). Cultural documents (including these albums) do more than bear witness to that process, they are that process. Questions concerning the appropriate use of 'natural' environments (including mountain parks) are explored in communicative forms that combine

individual and mass elements. The use of Canada's mountain parks (for example, Banff National Park) is the subject of public controversy (see, for example, Favreau 2001, "Exclusion zone" 2000). These are issues of an immediate and practical nature, but have a basis and history in the recent past. The communicative forms and needs that are expressed in the albums of this case study are, I suggest, key to understanding the cultural construction of these particular mountain environments. The meaning that the mountain parks have accrued and the forms that this accrual takes are foundational to any discussions of future use.

What this study cannot do

There are a number of things this study cannot tell us and it is necessary to define those before proceeding. First and foremost, although this study is about photographic practices and the uses to which photography can be put in one case, this study is ultimately unable to tell us anything absolute about the intentions of the photographer himself. As a researcher I can make a variety of suppositions, some probably better than others, all grounded in the data but, in the end, the photographer's intentions are absent from this study. Time, misapprehensions, misunderstandings, and the possibilities of accidental misrepresentations all combine to make it impossible to definitively discover the intentions of another. Instead, this study comprises a range of possible intentions that may or may not include actual intentions.

An individual's intentions are difficult to assess, even in the best of circumstances. Bourdieu (1990) describes how an individual can be compelled into a narrow range of action by social or cultural circumstance. An individual may describe a decision made as "the fulfillment of a fully positive 'vocation', although her practices betray, especially by the mode in which they are carried out, a practical reference to the objective truth of her condition and her future" (4). Bourdieu provides this observation in support of a sociological perspective that emphasizes the connection between personal intentions and larger, socio/cultural conditions. He desires to explain both objective and subjective 'facts'—to give a social context to intentions even while analyzing those same expressions of intention to discover evidence of a particular social context.

The case study also has been written to detail the specific and to provide material for grounded generalizations, but with a caveat. Bourdieu's study of photography is based on the uses and practices of many photographers. This study is a single case—an attempt to map the specific conditions that combined to produce a set of photographic albums. I must be cautious not to over-generalize the data to support conclusions that are inappropriate to a single case. Instead I must rely on providing a context for the specifics of practice that I describe. Only a broader, scholarly context can provide the necessary grounds on which to generalize from the specific and individual to the cultural.

There are a number of things a study like this can do and the provision of descriptive detail is crucial to all of them. The study that follows tells us something about what is in these pictures. It also enhances what we know already about other, similar pictures. Also, wherever prior research exists, this

study confirms or denies the presence or absence of particular practices and particular ideas about nature, about photograph and about the parks. This study provides evidence of specific tourist practices as they are expressed in this case. And it provides examples of how photography is used as an everyday cultural language. This study does not tell us, in general, why people go to the parks, why they take photographs or what nature is.

Overview

In this introductory chapter I began with a problematic inheritance—amateur photographs that seem significant and ordinary in equal parts. I suggest that the excess of both amateur and mountain images often causes them to be associated with predictability and banality. Instead, I argue that such images should be seen as an opportunity to understand how individuals negotiate a culture of mass-produced images through the production of images of their own. The study of amateur photography is an ideal way to understand how individuals accept, reject, or alter mass-communicated cultural forms to suit their own needs as agents. The particular photographs from my grandfather's collection present one such opportunity. The photographic work in this study, taken between 1929 and 1936, dates to a time of considerable change in the uses of Banff, Kootenay, Yoho and Assiniboine parks. His work also follows on the heels of a history of mass-produced images dedicated to reproducing a specific environment as the cultural ideal of 'nature'. The

relationship between mass-produced images of the park, my grandfather's images and the context of changing use makes an ideal test case for understanding how individuals negotiate mass-communicated cultural forms. Key to this understanding is the question: in a context of changing recreational use, how is 'nature' communicated in amateur photographs of Canada's mountain parks? My desire is to describe the specific conditions of the creation of the photographic albums and the content that they express with the aim of better understanding how each of these factors relates to general photographic practice, recreational practice and the practice of nature. In better understanding specific photographic practice I will better understand how, in this particular case, mass-communicated cultural forms were negotiated. An increased understanding of the recreational practices and 'natural' content of these photographs will provide an enhanced understanding of some of the cultural assumptions and expectations that underlie discussion of the parks' future.

When I write of photographic practices I refer to the selection of camera technology and films, to the identification and composition of images, to the processing and display of prints. Recreational practices are those that activities done for pleasure. In this case, recreational practices include hiking, climbing, skiing, snow shoeing, horseback riding, various domestic activities associated with over-night backpacking, and amateur photography. Recreational practices are contingent on modes of transportation and accommodation, location and time, social and economic organization, and individual preference.

In Chapter Two I consider literature that establishes the theoretical basis of my claim that 'nature' is a cultural phenomena. Here, I am particularly

interested in theoretical work that traces the various expressions of 'nature'. I
also am interested in work that seeks to understand disputes over 'nature' as
disagreements over root cultural values. Ultimately, controversies over land-use
can be best understood as disagreements over basic value systems rather than
the virtues of particular forms of land use. Also in Chapter Two, I review the
literature that examines the relationship between 'nature' and culture from the
perspective of visual communication, with a particular emphasis on the
relationship between photography and 'nature'. From this perspective,
questions about the relationship between photography and truth or the
construction of the documentary photograph reveal assumptions about both the
representation of nature and the nature of representation. Finally, I consider
literature that describes the discourse of photographic landscape, as well as that
of amateur landscape photography.

In Chapter Three I move away from a theoretical perspective to describe
the material culture of the case study. I begin with an overview of the changes in
photographic technology that made possible the case study albums. I also
consider the development of the photographic album. I conclude with a
description of the material of the case study albums: the physical form of the
albums, the specific photographic apparatus involved, the captions and the
organizational strategies that the albums employ. My intent is to provide a
thorough description of the albums on which to base any subsequent
generalizations.

Chapter Four provides a context for understanding the case study albums
described in the previous chapter. Drawing on a broad base of descriptive

literature, I open out the grounds of discussion in two main directions: the content and composition of mountain images of Canada's western national parks, and the representation and history of changing recreational activities within the parks' locale. My interest in considering the case study albums in the context of mountain images and recreational activities is to place amateur photography as both an aesthetic and a recreational activity.

Keeping in mind the context provided by Chapter Four, I undertake, in Chapter Five, a series of analyses of the case in question in order to determine exactly how 'nature' is represented in both photographs and albums. These analyses are primarily qualitative but have quantitative aspects; methodology is described in detail in the chapter itself. Arising from these analyses are several representational themes, which are described and considered in detail. In my discussion, I consider how these themes might be related to the context provided in the previous chapter. I also ask how these themes might reflect the changing nature of recreational use in the area.

Chapter Six makes clear the conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis and discussion. Recommendations for further study conclude this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: THE PROBLEM OF 'NATURE'

Introduction to Chapter Two

In this chapter I establish the theoretical basis of my claim that 'nature' is a cultural phenomena. To begin, I survey social constructionist literature that distinguishes between the environment and a cultural 'nature'. The former is a physical fact, but is meaningless without the latter. The latter is interpreted, shared and negotiable. Drawing on the literature, I consider examples of negotiation between various forms of interpreted nature, especially with regard to wilderness parks.

Next, I turn to the problem of 'nature' in an explicitly interpretative context: visual communication. Photography, from its earliest days, has taken nature as both subject and first principle. The claim that photography, unlike painting, is a 'natural' and not an interpretative practice has influenced the aesthetic and social history of the medium. Notions of photographic meaning, photographic truth and the documentary function of photography deeply influence much of our understanding of the relationship between environments and their photographic representations. The aesthetic and functional forms of photographic landscape are determined by a reified 'nature' of which the photograph is 'natural' evidence. Amateur photography has little explicit discourse of interpretation but instead is inflected by the notion of the 'natural' at several levels. My consideration of the problem of 'nature' concludes with an

overview of literature that considers amateur photography as a cultural, not a natural, form of expression.

Issues in the social construction of natural environments

At the most elementary level, what do I mean when I write of 'nature'? Nature is a flexible term with a definition that changes according to use. Sometimes it refers to the implicit qualities of things, including human subjects. Other times it is restricted to referring to objects which exist independently of the operation of direct human agency—objects not made by humans or resulting from human activity in anyway. The term nature can be used as an organizational schema, or as an assessment of moral quality. It can be reified to express a metaphoric agency or even sometimes is ascribed full agency in its own right.

Keying off this lexical flexibility, the theoretical paradigm that underlies the notion of 'nature' as a cultural value is that of social construction. In this paradigm, scholars understand nature to be an idea which can be separated from the physical phenomenon that it is intended to describe—a division made between the external but intrinsically meaningless world of non-human objects and the internal, meaningful world of human interpretation. Social construction differs from a kind of radical skepticism in so far as the existence of the external world at some level is a given; instead, it is the human-based meaning and significance of that world that is at issue. Social construction has at its heart the

inevitability of human interpretation. The working-out, extent and ethical ramification of interpretation each comprise a major part of the scholarship in this area.

When applied to nature, social construction emphasizes that 'nature', like other human ideas, has a history and is part of human culture in a way that is qualitatively distinct from the physical world to which it refers. Social constructivists suggest that there is nature and 'nature' and that the relationship between the two is a source of necessary dispute. Social construction is complex and recursive, finding scholarly expression variously in a philosophical interest in epistemology, a sociological interest in the nature/culture division, a cultural interest in language, and an ecological interest in philosophy, sociology and cultural theory.

Nature and 'nature'

As mentioned above, social construction is paradigmatic; tracing its genesis and influence is daunting. There are a large number of disciplines that make explicit use of social construction with regard to 'nature' and natural environments. Macnaghten and Urry (1998) list significant work done in sociology, anthropology, archaeology, cultural history, geography, literary studies, post-modernity studies, philosophy, the sociology of science and women's studies (6-7). They echo Raymond Williams, stating that, "the term 'nature' is perhaps the most complex and difficult word in the English language; that the idea of nature contains an enormous amount of human history" (8).

The notion of 'nature' as an idea with a history of its own appears in Macnaghten and Urry. The authors provide a history of nature beginning with the development of, "a singular, abstract and personified nature" (8). One expression of this particular version of nature was the medieval European view of the world. Here, nature was personified as having a dominion of influence under God. Nature was compared to a book that could reveal God's plan if understood correctly. Macnaghten and Urry contrast this medieval concern for a proper apprehension of God's will through nature with a new view that began to gain credibility in the sixteenth century. Increasingly nature was understood to be singular and abstract but no longer personified through an association or identification with divinity. Instead, nature was likened to a machine with laws and rules. The result was a new regard for the laws of nature as independent of nature itself. The laws of nature and human apprehension of such laws became justification for the use of nature to maximize human self-interest: the fact that humans can manipulate laws of nature was used to justify the idea that humans should manipulate laws of nature. Macnaghten and Urry point to a "vision of struggle, of self-interest, and of the sanctity of physical intervention on nature for human use"(11). From this perspective of necessary contest came a view of nature in which the conquest of nature by humans is not only desirable but is natural in itself.

Opposition to this view came in the form of the Romantic Movement of the nineteenth century, which was "more escapist than visionary"(13). Macnaghten and Urry argue that romantic thinkers (Ruskin and Wordsworth figure in this account) failed to renegotiate the idea of nature in any significant

way. Nature continued to be construed as a phenomenon separate from humankind who could and must control it through apprehension and application of natural science. Aspects of 'nature' were relegated to physical environments peripheral or superfluous to human interest. Other aspects of 'nature' were maintained in preserves, and national parks, including Banff, are the products of this development. This is the genesis of what Macnaghten and Urry term 'managed wilderness'.

Other writers outline a similar 'history of nature'. In environmental studies, Evernden (1992) re-constructs a similarly shifting view of nature that begins with medieval symbolism in which "Nature is not simply a physical entity but a record of the will of God" (41). Like Macnaghten and Urry, Evernden points to the way that the Renaissance brought with it a new kind of abstraction based on reason. This system of rationality, not the will of God, now was understood to be implicit in nature. Through increasing abstractions of nature, human beings arrived at a notion of mechanistic nature with laws that could be discovered. In our own era, says Evernden, humans have abandoned the mechanistic, rule-bound, abstracted nature in favor of a situated nature that both acknowledges and privileges human subjectivity. He writes:

> In the past, the "authority" of nature was presumed to come from God: we saw it in the messages He chose to present. With the systematizers of the Renaissance, the authority shifts to what we might call the denotative core of nature: the innate "necessity" that ensures the adherence of the world to human-discerned laws. But as interest shifts from similitude to difference, and from general principles to particulars, nature is no longer

"verified" by over arching abstraction, but is instead authenticated by the

general observance of humanity: nature is as it is because we all can see it.

(85)

Like the scholars discussed above, Oelschlaeger (1991) uses history as a

method to uncover constructed nature. He focuses in particular on the cultural

development of the idea that there is a 'natural' divide between humans and

wilderness. He argues that it is precisely the mediating strength of a history of

human conceptualization of nature that makes it so difficult to envision the re-

construction of a view of nature that is the result of unmediated experience. He

writes "we are precluded by our idea of nature from recognizing its own being,

its history and elaboration" (338). Like Macnaghten and Urry, Oelschlaeger

argues that preservation and conservation practices themselves constitute a form

of 'stewardship' which implicitly acknowledges a human right to dominate and

manage (201).

This historical division between nature and human nature, with the

concomitant responsibility on behalf of humans to manage nature in some

capacity raises the question of the possibility, necessity and practice of

environmental ethics. Evernden and Oelschlaeger point to self-conscious

reflection on environmental discourse as a way past the impasse of the ecological

status quo. Eder (1996), discussed below, also is interested in the effects of

recursive reflection on environmental discourse. Each scholar argues that an

awareness of the construction of the historical discourse that gives 'nature'

apparent and particular substance—the trope of domination, the problem of

human nature, the assignment of environmental responsibility—brings a new

and different way of looking at the environment. Evernden and Oelschlaeger ultimately seek creative insight and Eder seeks renewed political insight in order to develop an environmental ethic—an indication of the rich diversity of reflection provoked by the idea of the history of nature.

'Nature' and culture

From the relationship between nature and history it is a short jump to the question of nature in the context of contemporary practice. Macnaghten and Urry remark that "it is necessary to identify the social and cultural context out of which environmental understandings are sensed and articulated" (20). Similarly, Greider and Garkovich (1994) look to culture to discover the symbolic terms by which societies define themselves. Individuals in a society, argue the authors, use the framework idea of 'landscape' in order to symbolize the meaning about their environment, which they have constructed as part of their communal self-definition. "Landscapes," they write, "are the reflection of these cultural identities, which are about us, rather than the natural environment" (2). This observation is used to explain why and how different social groups clash over the meaning of what appears to be superficially the same landscape. Greider and Garkovich argue that the impact of environmental change is a product of cultural accommodation, not of the environmental change in its own right. This is why "social impacts occur prior to the actual implementation of the development project or environmental change"(14). Similarly, when addressing the impact of new technologies (a category that once included photography) on 'landscape'

they stress the non-determinist perspective and suggest that individuals are able to control technological change to their environment through the act of cultural definition. Individuals, and by extension societies, negotiate the meaning of technological change. Individuals in society implement changes so that the changes "do not contradict their self-definitions and taken-for-granted relationships to each other and to their landscapes" (7).

Like Greider and Garkovich, Fine (1997) is interested in the way in which models of nature affect both human understanding of change and whether or not that change is considered to be problematic. He argues that "human actors ascribe meaning to the natural environment and situate themselves within this world. Natural objects are transformed from things into symbols" and that "This process of construing meaning makes nature *culture*"(69). Culture is the necessary intermediary between unmediated experience and the ability to represent that experience. Fine, in his work, shows how a group of American mushroom pickers use cultural templates to determine and describe the impact on nature of their own activities and those of others. The degree to which the human act of picking mushrooms is either natural or problematic is determined by the cultural template that the picker uses to make his or her experiences meaningful. Fine finds that the examination of an environmental problem without a consideration of the cultural templates that define and express the problem is incomplete. "Environmental ethics," he suggests "is, in this sense, a branch of cultural studies" (83).

Also working with the idea of the cultural construction of nature, Carbaugh (1996) calls for a communications perspective on the problem while

broadening the base of cultural inquiry. He states that communication is "radically and doubly 'placed'" insofar as any communicative act is both located within a natural environment, and also serves to locate that environment through meaning produced by the specific communication (38). Communication, in this sense, is both affected by physical setting, but also serves to make sense of that setting. Carbaugh seeks to broaden the usual perspective on environmental discourse, which seeks a strategic communicative approach in order to further environmental goals (see for example, Opie & Elliot 1996, Paystrup 1996). Instead, Carbaugh makes the case that it is not just specific communication about the environment that constructs nature. All communication has an environmental context and therefore works to establish or support a particular construction of nature.

Carbaugh concludes his discussion of communication and nature by calling for "specific case studies that trace the patterned use and interpretation of nature in communication and community" (54). He asks,

> How is natural space conventionally symbolized? What do these symbolic processes enable, and constrain, as situated social living? Are we reproducing and reconstituting troubles we seek to remedy? Or are we changing for the better the natural conditions, of nature and culture, in which we speak? (55).

In *The Social Construction of Nature*, Eder (discussed above) also considers the connection between nature and communication. Ultimately Eder is concerned with a so-called "sociology of enlightenment" as a new basis for political consideration, but within this larger argument is Eder's description of

the ways that culture and communication are used to construct nature as a concept. For Eder "cultural theory sensitizes us to the symbolic foundations of communication which are prerequisites for all communication prior to any normative generalization of expectations" (2). In other words, communication is grounded in our ability to make and share symbols, and the general ability to symbolize supports specific attempts to communicate. We only become aware of this level of symbolic activity though analyzing culture closely. The notion of 'nature', as a crucial summary of environment, is a result of our attempts to symbolize our environment prior to communication. When we forget that we have constructed symbols, those symbols begin to function as givens (called "cultural certitudes") (2). There is nothing inevitable or indeed 'natural' about these cultural certitudes. They are a product of cultural activity and are multiple—produced by communicants in response to the symbolic requirements of the culture that makes use of them. Cultural certitudes are created in communication, underlie all communication, make all communication possible, yet can be torn apart by communication.

Like many of the other writers reviewed here Eder has an explicit interest in environmental discourse. His interest centers on the reflexive approach to environmentalism itself. Reflexivity, in this case, is defined as an awareness of how culture creates the assumptions of environmentalism. In this view, the symbolic forms described above—which are understood to underlie a natural view of the environment—are properly in question. The result is considerable ambiguity in environmental communication as cultural certitudes come under constant scrutiny. In a series of cultural comparisons Eder describes the

mutability of environmental discourse in response to changing cultural certitudes. Closer to home, Eder ties changing environmental discourse with our own reflexive awareness of the way in which we use culture to construct specific and communicatively useful notions of 'nature'.

In contrast, Sandlos (1997) provides a case study of the lack of reflexivity in the construction of natural environments as they are produced by the culture of science. In considering the case of the plant, Purple Loosestrife, Sandlos argues that the science involved is "necessarily subjective because it is partly a product of and partly produces the cultural context in which it immersed" (¶ 7). By failing to consider the cultural context which determines what it is that science does, the view of the environment that is produced leaves out a whole range of unexamined possibilities. In short, the lack of reflexivity functions as a kind of blindness, leaving out other possible explanations or descriptions of the instance in question. In the case of Purple Loosestrife, a non-reflexive, scientific discourse constructs the category of 'invasive weed', producing an argument in favor of action to preserve wet-lands in a more 'natural' form that happens to support specific human recreational activities (in this case, duck hunting). Other versions of 'natural' fail to be considered. In this case, the author argues that conventional scientific discourse hides the long historic associations between human activity and the plant that have determined the plant's success. The invasive qualities of a plant are part of a much larger picture of the, "expanding social, economic and biological influence of European humans on the "new" continent" (¶ 16). The act of preserving the wetlands in a state of 'nature' disguises the way in which that state is already the product of human action.

Sandlos argues that a refusal to view nature as socially constructed through shared cultures (including that of science) serves to, "legitimize the commodity interests of the dominant culture by simultaneously mitigating its worst effects and by ensuring a continued bountiful harvest" (¶ 18).

Social construction and mountain parks

Some scholars have looked specifically at the social construction of nature and the implications of that idea on understanding the creation and function of wilderness parks. Above, I discussed the idea of parks, and of preservation in general as part of a historical tendency to interpret some aspects of nature as peripheral to human enterprise yet requiring continued human management. In his description of the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the United States, Weaver (1996) reminds us that "virtually no land exists that can be rhetorically separated from human habitation" (173). Weaver uses the idea of the history of nature to argue that discussion of a wilderness park needs to include a history of the continuity of human use in the area precisely because the land constantly undergoes a process of human mediation and meaning-making. In the case of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Weaver is interested specifically in the history of subsistence farming and hunting in the area. Tourism, in this case, is revealed as one process that can erase the prior history of human use within park boundaries and so destroy any understanding of prior relationships between the use and the meaning of the land.

Similarly, Simpson (1992) describes how the idea of "wilderness", inscribed by affluent urban Americans on the Adirondacks in the late 19th century, displaced an on-going history of farming and hunting in the area. The re-evaluation of what was to become the Forest Preserve—from land valued for subsistence use to land valued for a generic, spiritually redemptive quality—was matched by a similar re-evaluation of local residents. Simpson traces the development of the figure of the 'guide' to this disruption in previous patterns of human use in the area. The 'guide' was created by "a process of symbolic construction which was external to the guides themselves and which reflected the interests of more powerful social constituencies" (573). In general, Simpson links the establishment of the Adirondack Forest Preserve with an attempt by proponents of an urban, industrial America to redeem those very industrial activities without altering their political or physical conditions. In this view, 'nature' is re-inscribed by interested parties as 'wilderness', and evidence of any efforts by residents to alter the land for their own economic use is erased.

Donnelly's (1993) interest in the creation of parks stems from an interest in the social construction of 'private property'. He argues that, during the late 18th and 19th centuries, more and more land came under the control of a powerful minority who maintained their rights by prohibiting the majority from using the land for leisure activity (190). One significant result of the social construction of both nature and of private property was, Donnelly argues, "a series of unsatisfactory accommodations in the form of national parks and other limited protected areas"—the creation Banff National Park in 1885 is provided as an example (187). Donnelly also cites parks in general as an example of how the

right to wander has come under increasing attack during recent years. He describes a 'honey pot' effect which is the result of "the creation of a finite number of parks, frequently with good access" (194). The result has been overuse leading to increased development, environmental degradation and, ultimately, restrictions in use.

Above, I provide a survey of some of the literature that establishes the theoretical basis for the claim that 'nature' is a cultural phenomenon. To review, the idea of a history of 'nature' is seen to be a potent tool to begin to distinguish between the natural environment and the interpretative categories that make it meaningful. A division between 'nature' and 'human nature' is one of the most basic divisions in a contemporary view of nature and one that results in the notion of 'stewardship'. National parks are part of this process. From a communications perspective, a more thorough understanding of the cultural means by which we organize 'nature' will help us to understand the shared meaning that underlies our definitions. A better understanding of the shared meaning on which communication about environments is based will establish a degree of reflexivity with regard to the way that we categorize our environments. The result will be clearer environmental debate, which can proceed on the basis of different or shared cultural values.

The literature of the social construction of nature puts forward the view that there is no single, unchanging view of nature that will make clear how humans are to behave toward and within their environment. The role of cultural analysis is to uncover the ways in which environments are interpreted as 'nature'—a process that is myriad and ever changing. In the next section, I turn

to one particular area of cultural analysis—visual communication—to focus more closely on specific ways that 'nature' can be visually represented. In particular, I ask how the photograph both represents 'nature' and is understood to be a 'natural' product in its own right.

Issues in visual communication: photography and the problem of 'nature'

Photography and meaning

Visual communication might be understood to encompass an interdisciplinary analysis of communications occurring within the field of vision; it includes those forms of communication at which we look: painting, drawing, film-making and photography to name a few. Photography is unique in visual communication in that photography is sometimes understood to be the product of 'natural' processes and not interpretative ones. The degree to which this is true, or whether it is true at all, is crucial to any consideration of photography as a representation of 'nature'—a consideration that closely parallels that found in the literature of the social construction of nature. If that literature argues that 'nature' is an inflected term to describe otherwise meaningless environmental data, 'common sense' assumptions about photography argue the opposite. Simply put, if photography is itself a product of natural processes then the argument that it embodies a culturally inflected representation of 'nature' is nonsense. The assumption, in this case, is that there is a necessary

correspondence between the physical functioning of the camera and its product. This assumption is intensified when 'nature' itself is the product. This assumption finds expression in the 'common sense' notion that there is only one way to photograph a mountain. The view that photography, and especially the photography of nature, is inevitable in form is deeply rooted in the history and conventional understanding of photography. If the case photographs are to be considered as anything but the natural expression of nature itself, the seeming inevitability of mountain photography must be put to question, especially with regard to its relationship with its own discourse. Can photography be regarded as a product of discourse as opposed to an essential product of physical operations? Does photography take its inevitability from the role it plays in cultural discourse? Photography's ability to function in a variety of different discourses suggests that these are indeed the case. It is precisely this mutability of its product—understood as fine art in one moment, and document in the next—that makes photography that suggests that the 'meaning' photography makes is cultural not physical.

Refining this notion, Sekula (1982) defines discourse as "a notion of limits. That is, the overall discourse relation could be regarded as a limiting function, one that establishes a bounded arena of shared expectations as to meaning" (84). In this view, photographic discourse serves to limit the function of photography. "Discourse is, in the most general sense, the context of the utterances, the conditions that constrain and support its meaning" (85). Accordingly, where the photographic context is variable, contingent and the product of cultural assumption, so too is the photographic discourse. Like the other definitions of

nature, the practice of nature photography exists, as is suggested by the literature in the preceding section, in a context determined by the communication of cultural meaning. Just as the cultural context for understanding 'nature' varies, so too does the context for photographic discourse. There is no fixed and immutable nature that is likewise represented by a fixed and immutable photographic representation.

Drawing on a similar line of argument, Burgin (1982a) proposes that this focus on discourse serve as an alternative to the then "dominant mode of history and criticism of photography in which the main concern is for reputations and objects" (4). Burgin relies on Marxist critical traditions, and uses semiotic methodology, in order to establish that photography has no intrinsic character—no necessary aesthetic. However, Burgin himself points out that it is possible to reject what he terms the, "specifically Marxist form of the problematic" while still retaining the attempt to situate photography within an understanding of cultural production (practice) (8). Dominant forms of representation concern Burgin, and so do practices of photographers and viewers while producing or reproducing those forms. Questions of authorship and the ethics of representation and display arise from this latter concern (see below also).

In discussing representational systems in general, Stuart Hall (1997) identifies a connection between discourse and representation. Describing Foucault, Hall writes of the way discourse "constructs the topic. It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge" (44). Hall goes on to say that "this idea that physical things and actions exist, but only take on meaning and become

objects of knowledge within discourse, is at the heart of the constructionist theory of meaning of representation" (45).

This notion of discourse as a mechanism for the construction of cultural representations suggests that, just as nature is constructed and produced in and by cultural products and practices, so too is the category of products and practices that we call photography. The relationship between nature and photography as twin products of cultural construction is further complicated by a historical association between an understanding of an essential 'nature' and the truth-claims of photography as a unique reflection of that very nature. This historical association is one of the most salient features of the discourse of photography and it is to this that I turn next.

Photography and truth; photography and nature

What emerges from the focus on discourse described above is a challenge to the seemingly inevitable association of photography and truth that is based on historic claims to a technological objectivity made on behalf of photography. Sekula describes the idea of an "intrinsic or universal meaning to the photographic image" as a "particularly obstinate bit of bourgeois folklore" which "lies at the centre of the established myth of photographic truth" (86). And while it is hard to determine the extent to which people in general still believe that in the case of photography 'seeing is believing' there is no doubt that photography, from the very beginning, was understood to have a special relationship with reality. Writing of early history of photography, Trachtenberg (1991) points out

that by the mid-nineteenth century 'to daguerreotype' had become "a common verb that meant the literal truth of things"(17). Indeed, the relationship between the daguerreotype and its subject was understood to be a process of 'repeating' not 'copying' the original.

The association between photography and truth remained constant over time. Newhall's classic 1964 work on photographic history, *The History of Photography*, quotes from an 1861 journal of photography in which the correspondent writes: "hitherto photography has been principally content with representing Truth. Can its sphere not be enlarged? And may it not aspire to delineate Beauty, too?"(59). Here, the aesthetic function of photography is proposed as an overlay of the more fundamental 'truth-telling' operation. Tellingly, one hundred years later, the structure of *The History of Photography* continues to reinforce this assumption that photography has separate aesthetic and documentary functions by presenting chapters that alternate aesthetic and documentary developments in photography.

That nature was allied with photography's 'truth-telling' function is made clear by the historical language used to describe photography. Terms like 'the pencil of nature', 'artificial eye' or 'the mirror with a memory' associate technology (pencil, artificial or mirror) with modes of experience (nature, eye or memory) (Newhall, 12 -13, 17). As long as photography, as evidenced in the quote above, aspired to "Beauty, <u>too</u>" the aesthetic could only be contingent on the 'truthfulness' of the image. Even the rise of Pictorialism at the turn of the nineteenth century produced in Canada photographs that combined what Koltun (1984) describes as the "typically pictorialist features of broad chiaroscuro

effect and 'impressionist' fall of light" with clearly representational landscapes
(35).

Eco (1982) points out that what lies at the root of such assumptions
regarding the truthfulness of photography and the realm of the natural is "the
natural resemblance of an image to the reality it represents [which] is given a
theoretical basis in the notion of *iconic sign* (32). Barthes famously described
photography as containing, at its most basic level, a message without a code. He
wrote "in order to 'read' this last (or first) level of the image, all that is needed is
the knowledge bound up in our perception" (1998, 72). Eco restates Barthes'
notion of the uncoded iconic sign as "a sign possessing some properties of the
object represented" (32). Eco finds this notion unsatisfactory, pointing out that,
from a phenomenological perspective, photographs, like drawings, do <u>not</u>
possess the same properties as the referent. He concedes that iconic signs are in
fact messages <u>with</u> codes and that the codes are those of perception.

For Barthes the iconic sign is uncoded, for Eco the code reproduces
conditions of perception, but both theorists go on to theorize a progression of
subsequent codings. In Eco, a series of physical codes (perception, recognition,
transmission, tone) underpin iconic codes (including figures, signs and semes)
which in turn underpin cultural codes (iconography, taste, rhetoric, style and the
unconscious). Barthes restricts himself to theorizing the progression from
denotative to connotative levels of meaning. Critical theorists such as Tagg,
Sekula and Burgin follow Barthes in understanding 'nature' and 'the natural' to
be indicative of discursive formations whose sole intent is to hide the way they
are culturally constructed (Barthes, 1972). Tagg (1982) writes, "the very word

'natural' should alert us to a conception that is precisely ideological" (118).

Similarly, Burgin (1982b) writes, "even the natural landscape is appropriated by

ideology, being rendered, in anthropocentric perception, 'beautiful' or ' hostile'

or 'picturesque' (47).

Of course, this view of photography, in which 'nature' and 'landscape'

are no longer nature and landscape but ideology, can produce an endless stream

of culturally inflected objects, so that the object transformed by discourse already

turns out to be a product of discourse. Challenges to such formulations are made

by shifting the ground of inquiry from culturally mediated products (such as

landscape) to practices (such as perception) where physical givens certainly seem

to limit the extent to which the cultural inflection is relevant or even possible (for

example, see Broghaossian, 2001). This kind of consideration is an attempt to

determine the limits of interpretation with the polar extremes of fixed essences at

one end and utter relativism at the other. It is, at heart, the same question as that

of the relationship between culture and nature explored in the previous chapter.

Photography is interesting insofar as it is a cultural form understood to have a

natural ontology more consistent with environmental objects than with cultural

ones.

Eco supports the view that photography is a form of human

communication that must be learned and read. Eco establishes basic codes of

perception, recognition, transmission and tones in order to dismantle what he

terms "the theory of the photo as an analogue of reality" (1982, 33). Digital

photography—a practice where electronic manipulation is a source of public

controversy—may serve as the best possible critique of the relationship between

photographic 'nature' and photographic 'truth' (Batchen 1997). However, such

techniques arrive on the scene long after the period of this study. In the

photographs that comprise this case study, the conventions of 'nature' and

'truth' are determined by a variety of basic techniques. In the next section I look

at the construction of documentary photographs to better consider how the

truthful (or documentary) image is made.

Documentation

Research on documentary photographs describes how even a photograph

that seems to reproduce reality is the product of a code. Documentary code

reproduces the conditions under which images are said to faithfully record

events or individuals. The representation of 'objectivity' is a crucial part of

documentation and research can uncover the conventions that connote the effect

of dispassionate, objective documentation (Schwartz 1992, Hyatt, 1992).

Looking at the question of photographic practice, Schwartz analyzes how

photojournalism texts construct the codes by which photojournalists learn to

make specific images that are intended to be understood as 'objective'. She

discusses the ways in which formal compositional elements—largely assumed to

be irrelevant to the practice of photojournalism—are used to construct a "visual

code of naturalism" (95). The rule of thirds, selective focus, leading lines, angle,

framing, lighting become conventions that are supported by training and

practice. Schwartz points out that "photojournalists usually have little time to

consider a variety of approaches" so that these conventions are useful to

photojournalists insofar as they decrease the number of choices that must be made while photographing (106). Consequently, the so-called code of naturalism is a by-product of the conditions of professional photojournalistic practice. It is a matter of convenience, not design, that conventions of objectivity serve to produce simplified images that are quick to create and quick to interpret, while still satisfying an expectation of objectivity.

Schwartz is concerned with the construction of what she terms the code of naturalism. It follows from her argument that photojournalism's audience also is inadvertently schooled in the code of naturalism as an indicator of photographic objectivity. Hyatt extends a similar interest in codes of image construction and understanding. His work is a call for "visual literacy [which] includes the identification of those codes and allows greater viewer control and better image understanding" (78). Hyatt states that where the relationship between the photograph as icon and its referent is understood to be an equivalency, credibility in viewers will be high. Hyatt also points out that the photograph has more than an iconic value. Every photograph also indexes its technical, individual and cultural production. These indices are part of relationships between image, producer and viewer that are organized and expressed in the form of codes. These are the codes of which viewers must become aware in order to become visually literate with regard to documentary images.

There are examples of documentary codes that are explicitly produced to satisfy expectations of objectivity. For example, professional wedding photography uses non-natural, easily recognized formulas to document symbolic

events as objective truths (Lewis 1998). In a similar argument, although describing a different set of codes, Fiske (1998) describes the rhetorical effect of amateur news video where "moments of loss of technical control (blurred focus, too-rapid pans, tilted or dropped cameras), and their reduced editing all serve to reveal the discursive control that official news exerts over the events it reports" (159). Here, authenticity and, by extension, objectivity (insofar as an absence of discursive control is seen as synonymous with an absence of subjective interference) is established not by codes of naturalism that disguise the production of the image in question but by codes of incompetence which foreground the image's production.

The identification of various formal codes that determine the construction of an 'objective' image undermines the notion of the natural in photography. Here, the idea of 'code' tends to function in the same way as the notion of 'discourse', while connoting a more limited and technical set of rules. Discourse and documentary code are each a set of practices that "defines and produces the objects of our knowledge" (Hall, 1997, 44). In either case, assumptions regarding photographic naturalism are called into question whenever a photograph's meaning is sought, not in the content of the photograph, but in the rules that govern its creation and interpretation.

Issues in visual communications: the photographic landscape

Landscape as discourse

At the most basic level, there is a difference between an environment, which is a physical location, and a landscape, which is a representation of an environment. Osborne and Daniels (1988) define landscape as "a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolizing surroundings" (1). There are many possible cultural expressions of landscape, but the form of expression at issue in this case is one with roots in European art and philosophy. Macnaghten and Urry (1998) use the term to describe transformations accomplished by the beginning of mass tourist practices in Britain in the eighteenth century. Pratt (1998) suggests that Englishmen took the idea of landscape abroad, transforming it into a rhetorical device to justify colonial practices. Osborne (1988) finds regional diversity in the iconography of Canadian landscape. Mitchell (1994) ties landscape generally to the function of power. Bell (1990) and Bright (1989) associate landscape photography with certain forms of institutional discourse. Used variously, the idea of landscape is a complex set of ideas and practices.

When considering the ideas and practices of landscape, especially as they represent the 'nature' of mountain regions, the sublime deserves closer consideration. Writing from a communications perspective, Oravec (1996) describes the adoption of the convention of the sublime by American artists and writers in response to the landscape of the western states. She provides insight into the form in which the sublime arrived in the most western parts of the North American continent. Oravec argues that the sublime functioned as a "perceptual screen", a necessary lens through which artists and writers could interpret the

stuff of physical nature in order to ascribe meaning (59). The convention of the sublime determined what was understood as landscape, and artists physically altered the environment to produce the imagined landscapes they wished to record. Those same conventions also shaped the expression of the meaning ascribed by viewers to the land or landscape that was before them.

Oravec describes how certain formal elements came to represent the visual sublime—how certain fore, mid, and background relationships evocative of theatrical sets initially were part of the signification of the sublime. Later, exaggerated effects such as, "gigantic objects, odd perspectives and unusual atmospheric conditions" were more characteristic. Oravec's remarks concerning the positioning of figures in sublime landscapes is of particular interest. Where figures were used they were placed in subordinate positions, facing away from the image's viewer, and dwarfed by the imposing landscape before them. Oravec points out that these figures were modeling for the viewer the correct reaction to the sublime landscape. That reaction, which was ritualized and conventional, was understood by the discourses of 18th century psychology and aesthetics to consist of three emotions. Oravec names them:

> "first, apprehension, in which the individual subject encounters an object larger and greater than the self; second, awe, oppression, or even depression—in some versions, fear or potential fear—in which the individual recognizes the relative greatness of the object and the relative weakness or limits of the self; and, third, exaltation, in which the individual is conceptually or psychically enlarged as the greatness of the object is realized and the individual identifies with that greatness." (67)

This experience of the sublime was associated with moral thinking and behavior. But Oravec's main concern is with the relationship of the rhetoric sublime to the rhetoric of environmentalism. She writes that, "the sublime is the founding narrative—the primary trope—in the rhetoric of environmentalism.

A similar account of the sublime is given in Macnaghton and Urry (114). However, they go on to contrast the sublime to photography as a discursive form in its own right. In their formulation, photography lends an equal importance to everything it photographs. Photography reshapes travel (moving from one shot to the next), has its own aesthetic (sightseeing), emphasizes results over process, highlights and exaggerates the gaze, and supplies the images which circulate as mass culture, allowing us to abstract and retain the world in visual form. "Visual 'mastery' thus comes to be exerted over both nature and society" (117). The cultural pattern enabled by photography, according to Macnaghten and Urry, is that of visual consumption.

Issues in visual communication: amateur photography

The discourse of amateur photography

Unlike Nature or photographic essences, amateur photography has no claim to fixity of meaning. Often subsumed into larger considerations of 'vernacular' or 'quotidian' photography, amateur photography is very likely easier to define in relation to what it is not than what it is. Like 'vernacular' or

'quotidian', the term 'amateur photography' has a certain definitional

slipperiness that comes of being categorized in opposition to other photographic

practices. 'Vernacular', 'quotidian', or 'amateur' are all terms that establish

context and function, rather than characteristic or genre. This notion of defining

photographic practices by a shared history of exclusion prompts Batchen (2000)

to claim that "to truly understand photography and its history, therefore, one

must closely attend to what that history has chosen to repress" (263). Similarly,

Coleman (1992) indicates that any history of quotidian or vernacular

photography should include "all the photographs ever made, as well as all the

people who produced then, who are represented in them, and who laid eyes on

them" (315).

More exclusive definitions are possible. Castel and Schnapper (1990) use

the term 'amateur' in their ethnographic research of photography clubs in France

in the 1960s to exclude commercial or fine art practice. In this case, amateur

photography is examined as it relates to class. Social divisions are reflected in

attitudes to photographic practice. In particular, the attitude to the technology of

photography expressed by members of various photo-clubs depends upon class-

related assumptions about art. In general, the more middle-class the photo-club,

the more the attitude toward the technology of photography is ambivalent; the

more working-class the photography club, the more technology is an aspect of

pleasure and satisfaction in photographic practice.

Schwartz (1986) identifies the codes by which the practitioners of amateur

and fine art photography distinguish their work. Schwartz compares opinions

about photographic practice held by members of a camera club and those of art

photographers in the same locale. From this comparison she develops a list of characteristics which distinguish art photography from amateur practice (fine art photography is tied to other art media, has its own traditions, history and vocabulary, conveys ideas, is innovative, is personal, is a lifestyle, and has commercial aspects). Schwartz details the relationship between amateur and art practices, writing that "art photographers have responded to a close historical relationship to camera club amateurs by fashioning art activity in contradistinction to amateur activity"(191). Amateur photography, in this view, is what art photography is not.

Inglesby (1990) takes up the historical development of the term 'amateur' in the popular and the photographic press of the late 19th century to show how the term 'amateur' itself is defined through the exclusion of certain photographic practices. She describes dramatic change in the definition of 'amateur' between late 1870 and late 1880. This change was centered on the appearance of the so-called 'snap-shooter'. The 'snap-shooter' comprised a different population from those photographers who were termed 'serious' amateurs. In order to separate themselves from these new snap-shooters the so-called serious amateurs re-cycled a contemporary discourse from the popular press. This discourse stereotyped the snap-shooter as a technically and aesthetically incompetent "Kodak fiend". At first glance, such a discourse would seem to be contrary to the efforts of the serious amateur who were otherwise engaged in an effort to confer legitimacy on photography. But, as Inglesby points out, the influx of a diversity of photographers and photographic activities produced a narrowing of the term 'amateur'. The 'real 'amateur photographer—as the term was used by

the photographic press of the time—was not the same as the 'snap-shooter', who lacked technical and aesthetic expertise. The real amateur was distinguished on the basis of the leisured, educated and moneyed lifestyle—the means to achieve photographic expertise. In turn, the snap-shooters of the late 19th century "incorporated photographic practices into the pleasures and traditions of everyday life" and in doing so created an informal and fluid discourse capable of meeting a wide variety of social and personal need (24).

In describing changes in the term 'amateur', Inglesby describes, "the institutional shifts which may occur when an existing medium is socially and materially altered in such a way that a new medium is produced" (24). The shifting ground of the term 'amateur' reinforces the suggestion that conflicting discourses allow photographers to use excluded bodies of photographic work in order to provide self-definition.

To understand photography as discourse is to accept an inconstant object of analysis, the phenomena responding to the definition provided. The photographs in my case study can be defined by most definitions as amateur photographs of the 'snapshot' and not the 'serious' amateur variety. However, Betts' subsequent photographic practice complicates any simple categorization of his work. His extensive involvement with the culture of camera clubs and the commercial reproduction of his work produces a complex picture of shifting terms of practice within the work of one individual. Nevertheless, for this case study I will use the term amateur while keeping in mind that the use of the term brings with it certain social, cultural, and historical assumptions.

Coe and Gates (1977) descry the generally undervalued nature of the amateur 'snapshot', noting the importance of the snapshot both to the historical record but also as aesthetic objects in their own right. The thematic presentation of snapshot images in the case of Coe and Gates finds a more contextual approach in Greenhill (1981). Greenhill undertakes an examination of the family photographs of the Lever family of Toronto. She focuses on the relationship between the photographic image and the personal narrative that accompanies it. Eschewing albums *per se*, Greenhill writes that "individual albums come and go, but the photographs themselves remain. [...] the boundaries of a family album will be the walls of family homes" (5). Greenhill's interest in photographic collections lies in the way in which such collections constitute "perhaps one of the most significant forms of family folklore, which is also a method of transmitting folklore within it (2)." It is this interrelation of photographs and family stories that lies at the heart of Greenhill's investigation.

Lesy (1980) also incorporates family photography and family stories, although his method is even more direct. He includes transcripts of narrated family stories along side the individuals who appear in the stories. The narratives and stories do not refer to one another so the connection between the images and the narratives are less clear than in Greenhill. Only in Lesy's introduction does he relate the two, drawing parallels between his subjects' stories and their sub-conscious photographic choices.

Motz scrutinizes the conscious photographic choices made by turn-of-the-century American women when creating their own photographic albums (1989). She details ways in which the women put their albums together, including the

symmetrical or asymmetrical, overlapping, collage forms as well as the presentation of narratives through the careful selection of photographs, the juxtaposition of images, and the addition of comments on the pages. Motz makes clear that there are difficulties in interpreting albums on the basis of internal evidence or even on the basis of captions, which can be ambiguous. Even so, Motz suggests that the albums leave behind a record of one way in which some turn-of-the-century women were "able to construct identities for themselves—examine their pasts, place themselves in the setting of their families, friends, and environments, and even comment on the choices made"(89). Furthermore, Motz states that

> In an environment in which such independence was viewed with suspicion, some women turned to the creation of photograph albums, a socially accepted activity because of its association with the expression of family unity, but one which could be adapted to aid in the establishment of a personal identity apart from one's family. (63)

The ability of the photographic album to embed new activities in traditional and unremarkable forms is one of the results of the naturalizing function of photography. Motz shows how American women at the turn-of-the-century take advantage of this function.

The question of creating "space for critique, revision, and redefinition" also guides Hirsch (1997) in her consideration of the family photograph, although her intention is to make room where none exists (15). Hirsch considers family snapshots alongside the expressly artistic output of photographers from

Cindy Sherman to Christian Boltanski in order to explore family relations and identity from a multivalent perspective.

Looking to amateur snapshots to understand how we represent ourselves to ourselves and to the others around us motivates a number of researchers. For example, Jacobs (1981) considers the question of what individual and social needs are filled by amateur photography. Speculating on the characteristics that describe and determine the form and content of family snapshots, Jacobs suggests that "we use snapshots to communicate to ourselves, and those around us, and those who will succeed us, that we in fact exist" (104).

Similarly, Chalfen (1981) makes the case for looking at "snapshots and family albums as culturally structured visual communication" in which we "deliver culturally significant tales about myths about ourselves to ourselves"(111). In a later work, Chalfen (1987) describes what he terms 'home mode photography'—photography that incorporates the social organization, actual use and organizational structures that guide everyday use of the camera and the photograph. The creation of an event/component framework describes "the logic of our unwritten agreement regarding when and where and with whom we should, or should not, use our cameras"(48). An analysis of home movies, family snapshots and tourist photography follows. The chapter on tourist photography centers on the relations between tourist and the photographic subject and not on landscape photography *per se*.

Musello (1980) picks up on Chalfen's notion of a home mode photography: "a rule-governed and socially pattered communicative process"(23). He sets out to discover the uses and forms of home mode

photography by using Chalfen's framework to describe the social production and social content of home mode photographs. Musello is most interested in the implications of the considerable degree of personal signification built into the production and form of photography. He suggests that the photographs themselves are insufficient means by which to assess the 'meaning' ascribed to the photographs by their creators. He warns against the dangers of failing to consider "use, context and social convention as well as the technical artifacts of the photographic process"; the risk run is "to make unwarranted inferences from these materials" (40).

The point that home mode photography is produced within a web of social contexts is well taken. There is a great deal of meaning that leaches from photographs when they lose the personal context in which they were made. Despite this, I suggest that the loss of the original, personal context of home mode photography does not end their potential as communicative objects. The context of communication is altered, perhaps beyond recall, but they continue to remain the catalyst for some form of communication.

Schwartz (1981) describes one possible form of altered communication. Schwartz evaluates the potential of photographs as historical document on a par with written documents. Looking at photographs made between 1858 and 1871, Schwartz classifies the images by category: transportation, resource industries, settlement, society, nature and portraiture. Her comments on nature photography emphasize the degree to which the environment appears as a sub-set of human industrial or domestic activity: "pioneer photographers generally paid less attention to the intricacies and diversity of the natural environment

than to man's imprint"(78). Schwartz suggests, that photography, made to serve as a record of the lives and successes of the newest residents of British Columbia, also "reflects the interests, attitudes and values which they brought to and imprinted on their new environment" (92).

Amateur photography and landscape

How do amateur photographers construct landscapes? How do individuals, who are not artists or professionals, produce photographs of their physical environment? What is the relationship of those photographs to the mass-produced landscapes that are, presumably, 'models' for their own work? How do we look at the practice of amateur photography in this context?

Within Cultural Studies, the practices of mass media audiences have been considered using ethnographic research (Fiske 1992, Morley and Silverstone 1991, Lull 1988, 1980, Walkerdine 1986). The work of amateur photographers is simultaneously easier and more complicated to study insofar as there are both products and practices associated. Ethnographic studies of photo clubs capture the practice of amateur photography in that context. However, the study of photographs themselves offers another source of insight. In addition, the study of photographs is one way in which to consider the practice of amateur photography wherever time, geography or lack of opportunity makes ethnography an obstacle. A photograph presents an organizational logic of its

own as determined by the choices of its maker and some of this logic can be recovered through careful analysis.

Careful analysis can suggest ways that landscape conventions are adapted for evolving photographic practices. Analysis can also gauge the extent to which prior photographic and/or landscape conventions are present in extant amateur practice. Photographs can suggest how the use of particular landscape conventions might be adapted to express the desires of both photographers and their subjects. Finally, photographs, once restored to their historic and geographic context, can suggest why photographers, especially amateur photographers, might work as active agents rather than passive consumers of dominant imagery to reproduce aspects of mass-media landscape photography.

Ruby (1998) provides the example of Francis L. Cooper, an amateur photography in Pennsylvania at the turn of the last century. Cooper could be described as a 'serious' amateur and Ruby points out that "Cooper was concerned about the aesthetic problems posed by the conversion of nature into landscape more than simply taking 'snapshots of local scenes'" (¶ 29). Ruby points to the survival of repeated photographs of the same location as evidence of Cooper's aesthetic rather than documentary concerns. In particular, the Tuscarora Creek, the local mountains and forms created by trees in the area became a focus of Cooper's exploration of the area. His status as an untrained photographer "makes it impossible to know where he learned the photographic conventions he utilized" (¶ 11). Ruby suggests that Cooper's work is of note insofar as it demonstrates the pragmatic approach evidenced by most amateurs

(even serious amateurs) when negotiating the various forms of photographic practice.

A similar pragmatic approach distinguishes the work of early photographic professionals in adapting landscape conventions to suit the demands of new forms of geographic, photographic representation. Hoelscher (1998) describes the work of the commercial photographer H.H. Bennett, who was photographing the Wisconsin Dells at much the same time as Cooper was taking pictures in Pennsylvania. Hoelscher suggests that Bennett used photography to transform an area of industrial practice into landscape by using specific cultural forms. Hoelscher writes of how Bennett used photography to "narrate such significant composite wholes out of the disparate geological formations of the Dells and translate them into a coherent image of genteel recreation" (7). Photographic aesthetics that connoted scientific accuracy, (high resolution, considerable depth of field, wide angles), were combined with careful selection, (excising industry from the frame), and the more traditional use of foreground objects to provide both depth and scale. This combination of scientific and traditional landscape elements presented a carefully constructed image of nature as a site (actual or potential) of human rest and recreation. In this way Bennett systematically 'stripped [the environment] of any hint of social or environmental tension" (4).

Looking at photographs from the other side of the world, Aker (2000) considers the degree to which mass photographic images determined how amateur photographers negotiated specific regional representations—in this case how Europeans constructed a photographic view of the Middle East. She

suggests that 'snapshot' images "replicated the subjects and compositions of commercial work to the degree that the photographers had internalized these modes of viewing" (3). Aker finds that landscape photographs of the Middle East confirmed the particular cultural expectations of those who took them. Love (2001), on the other hand, documents efforts to gather the work of Arab photographers in an attempt to discover appropriate categories revealing how Arab photographers see their own landscape (as well as other photographic genres). Similarly, Chandra (2000) examines how the output of commercial photographers working in a studio context use aspects of landscape to represent the desires of the photographs' subjects in the context of the Fiji Indian Diaspora. Chandra suggests that the needs of the photographic subjects, in this case, produce particular uses of painted landscape backdrops that owe more to the community's historical context than to conventional representation of landscape. In this case, the assumed ability of the camera to record nature 'naturally' is subsumed in the symbolic use of a patently artificial landscape.

Watts (2000) demonstrates how amateur photographers were complicit in the creation of rhetorical landscapes in California between 1880 and 1920. In an examination of the use of amateur photographs in the Los Angeles periodical, *The Land of Sunshine*, Watt shows the degree to which willing amateurs were adept in reproducing "visual tropes centered on a salubrious climate ... fecund, even exotic, landscape; a graceful antiquity characterized by architectural relics (particularly missions); and the quaint appeal of the 'ethnic' other" (243). (The role of the Los Angeles Camera Club in producing certain kinds of images is noted). Watt argues that "new arrivals felt compelled" to reproduce the

photographs that had "seduced, enticed" them in the first place (248). She
suggests that Californians, disappointed in the physical environment of their
new home, eagerly sought to reproduce the very landscape forms that had first
drawn them there.

The complicity of amateur or commercial photographers alike in
recreating landscape (or regional) images is suggestive. Case studies such as
these above go a little way to suggesting why photographers might be complicit
in the reproduction of dominant images. Far from being the unwilling or
unthinking means by which discursive formations reproduce themselves,
amateur photographers, like commercial photographers, stand to benefit from
their photographic activities by negotiating the representation of environments
in light of the changing context of use, of which they are an active part.

Summary

In this chapter I suggest that the problem of 'nature' is the problem of the
degree of interpretation. Photography is constructed through a cultural
discourse that includes 'nature' as a component part. It follows that 'meaning' in
photography can seem as difficult to determine as 'meaning' in nature. The
discourse of photographic landscape ameliorates this difficulty to some degree
by distinguishing the cultural forms taken by the photography of 'nature'.
Despite this, the discursive strength of the 'natural' photographic representation
of 'nature' continues to be persuasive. Photographers, including amateur

photographers, can and do make use of this doubly inflected 'nature' in negotiating the representation of the environments in which they live.

In the next chapter, Chapter Three, I consider the material culture of my case albums in preparation for Chapter Four. There, I turn to the historical context for my case photographs in an effort to show how the history of photography in the mountain parks prior to 1930, and change in recreational use of the area during the same period, provides both the need and the opportunity for just such a negotiation.

CHAPTER THREE: THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE CASE

Material practices

Photographic technology and innovation.

It would be unwise to write about any communications medium without considering its technological development and history of innovation. In particular, I would like to mention the well documented changes in photographic technology which made the possible the spread of photography from the dedicated amateurs and professionals, who dominated the practice of photography in the early years, to the everyday amateur who came dominate subsequent practice.

The history of photographic innovation, from its beginning in 1839 to the rise of mass amateur photography in 1888, is well known. The process of the invention of photography was long and incremental, but the discovery of the first useful process was made public in the late 1830s. One of these early processes, the daguerreotype, involved a copper plate coated in silver and treated with iodine fumes. After exposure to light in a camera body mercury was used to develop the image which was finally fixed in a solution of salt. The other major process, Henry Fox Talbot's calotype, involved the use of chemically treated paper exposed to produce a negative, which was then waxed and contact printed onto another treated paper. Calotype images were soft, described as

"charcoal-like", while the daguerreotype process produced highly detailed and sharply focused images (Swedlund, 1981, 6). Both processes required long exposure times, leading early photographic innovators to favor inanimate subject matter, including landscape.

Daguerreotypes quickly became the dominant form of photography and remained so until the mid-part of the century. Trachtenberg (1991) remarks that "it was the daguerreotype that formed the earliest American conceptions of photography and thus helped shape the further development of the medium as a social practice"(25). This social practice included the use of albums as a means of display—a development detailed below. Despite this degree of influence on photographic practices, the technology involved differed considerably from the processes that would introduce the fully-fledged practice of photography to society at large. Daguerreotypes were incapable of being mass-produced—there was no negative and each image was unique in itself. The development of plates required long exposure times, making portraiture (the most popular genre) difficult to master and restricted the practice to professional photographers (25). The practice of landscape photography presented fewer obstacles in the form of extended exposure times, but awkward chemistry and the need to be near a studio continued to restrict the range of the practice.

In 1847 the use of collodion to fix silver salts onto glass plates allowed for the invention of wet plate photography which eventually replaced both calotypes and daguerreotypes. As in the production of the daguerreotype, the process was awkward, requiring plates to be wet during exposure. Wet plate photography presented a number of difficulties to photographers who wished

to work outdoors. The need to process plates immediately after exposure, the weight and complicated nature of the equipment, and the light requirements conspired to continue to make landscape photography a challenge. Bell, writing of the 1858 Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition (the first in Canada known to have produced photographs), remarks that "work was hindered by heavy cameras, glass-plate negatives, and uncertain chemistry confining the photographers' field of activity to static subjects viewed in good light conditions" (Bell 1990, 32). Greenhill (1965), in describing the difficulties encountered by photographer H.L. Hime on the same exhibition, writes that "in addition to his camera, stand and glass plates, Hime had to load all necessary chemicals and a dark tent on to canoe, dog cariole, and Red River cart" (510).

By the 1870s, dry plate photography was at last a possibility and by 1879 was rapidly replacing the wet plate process. In the dry plate process, dry gelatin was used in place of wet collodion to sensitize glass plates. Once developed and fixed the glass negatives were printed using sensitized papers (Jenkins, 1975). For the first time the new techniques allowed photographers to move far beyond the studio environment. In Canada, amateur photographers could purchase ready-made dry plates by the beginning of the 1880s. Significantly, hand-held cameras became available in the same decade. Robertson (1984) writes,

> The mass-produced gelatin dry plate freed the photographer from
> recourse to a darkroom for sensitization and development every
> time he exposed a negative. Furthermore the rapid exposure time
> of the dry plate made it possible to photograph subjects in motion

and, by minimizing the problem of camera shake, enabled the

photographer to use a small hand-held camera which was both

portable and inconspicuous. (16)

The innovation of dry plate photography expanded the practice of

photography and increased the number of serious amateurs who developed and

printed their own photographs. However, it was George Eastman's 1888

introduction of the box camera (the Kodak) which capitalized on the nascent

'snap-shooter' market. In Eastman's system, roll negatives (first paper, then

nitrocellulose) were coated in a gelatin emulsion. After exposure in a Kodak

camera the 100, two and a half inch round negatives were mailed to the Eastman

company where they were developed and returned along with the reloaded

camera. For the first time the processing and printing of photographic images

were separated from the process of creating the images. The result of this change

in photographic technology,

transformed the photographic industry from one characterized by

decentralized, handicraft modes of production in 1879 to one

characterized by centralized, mechanized modes of production in 1899,

but more important, signaled the emergence of a mass market in

photography. (Jenkins, 1975, 18)

It is overly deterministic to suggest that the change to photographic

technology caused more people to use cameras. Instead, technological changes

allowed photography to be "constructed as a new medium by the public, who

chose to use the new cameras for purposes that were previously unrealized or

demeaned" (Ingelsby, 1990, 24). Robertson notes that "the New Amateur

theoretically enjoyed the freedom to photograph just about anything. In practice most photographed what was familiar and accessible to them" (27).

Technical innovation in photography continued after the watershed introduction of the Kodak camera, continuing to enhance the choices of amateur photographers. Enlargers and refinements in photographic printing augmented the practices of the serious amateur (Koltun 1984). Similarly, research during the First World War resulted in advances in film and lens speeds which allowed for sharp, sensitive negatives; an increase in the range of printing papers available was another result (Rodger 1984). For the snap-shooting amateur, refinements in film and camera technology continued to simplify matters with lighter cameras of new and varied design.

The 1930s—the period of this case study—continued the general trend of increased photographic control in the form of faster, finer-grained films, new papers, a multitude of camera designs and the 35 mm film cassette (Schwartz 1984). The first widely available colour transparency system (Kodachrome) was introduced in 1935, although black and white paper prints continued to dominate for sometime (Swedlund 1981). The trend for more and more individuals to involve themselves in photography—sometimes as serious amateurs but more often as the takers of snap-shots—continued to increase. Ken Betts, the photographer at the heart of this study, was amongst them. Later he would become a serious amateur, but during the 1930s he was a snap-shooter.

A fuller consideration of the particulars of photographic technology Betts used in the production of the case study photographs follows. My intention in providing this overview of material practices has been to relate the development

of photographic technology to the practice of both amateur photography and landscape photography. The history and development of photography as a mass market provides a set of possible conditions under which individuals practice photography, while the choices made by individuals determine the shape and character of that mass market. The development and dissemination of dry plate technologies as well as roll-negative films, commercial development, improvements in film-speed and printing papers, and, finally, smaller and lighter cameras suitable to back-country use were crucial pre-conditions to the possibilities inherent in photography by the end of the 1920s. The desires of newly emergent amateur photographers would determine the ways in which possibilities would become practices.

Photographic Albums

From the earliest history of the medium, photography has included certain recognizable social uses—the decoration and display of photographs is one such example. Beginning with daguerreotypes, photographic practice has included forms of embellishment and exhibition. Daguerreotypes were the locus of everyday communication and, as such, were forms of enhanced display with both practical and sensory aspects. Specially designed cases kept images safe from damage while incorporating materials (including velvet, leather and even early forms of plastic) that satisfied the sense of touch (Batchen 2000, 263). Trachtenberg (1991), commenting on this same tendency to decoratively

enhance the process of handling the daguerreotype, calls the result, "a vernacular folk art of the first industrial age" (20).

The sequential ordering of photographs as a mode of display had a particular history in the commercial image of the American west. Sandweiss (1991) argues that the use of narrative forms in mid-nineteenth century photography was intended to accommodate the loss of the "imaginative impact and narrative detail of other popular art forms" when reporting events of interest and importance (101). Paintings, drawings and lithographs were able to create scenes that recreated events in a manner that was dramatic, aesthetically pleasing and concise. Photography was only able to record what was literally present. To begin with, photographs were restricted to supporting other forms of reportage when describing western American expansion. Sandweiss looks in detail at the use of photography to provide documentary material for the painting of panoramas (mile long canvas paintings that were unrolled to effect movement). Panoramas of the newly accessible and mountainous western United States were required as the popular consciousness of America went west. In addition, photographs (initially daguerreotypes) were taken and/or placed into geographic sequence and exhibited in their own right. Sandweiss writes that "By mimicking the narrative structure and public quality of the panoramic paintings [...] enterprising daguerreotypists in gold-rush California created a forum for their work" (103). Later, sets of stereographic photographs followed the pattern of temporal and geographic movement set by the panoramas. Ultimately, photographic views, like the ones sold along various western railway routes, reproduced narrative series. Sandweiss writes "photographers continued

to doubt the efficacy of the individual image and instead used photography as a narrative or story-telling medium" (115). The addition of printed text to photographic views enhanced the narrative effect.

The *carte-de-visite*—a form of the cumbersome wet plate technology printed on paper and mounted on card—had become a popular means of photographic display by the mid-century. *Carte-de-visite* photographs, which could be commercially prepared and mass-produced, were unlike previous photographic forms: individuals could put them into photographic albums. The rage for *carte-de-visite* images had reached North America by 1861 (Greenhill, 1965). In Canada, the *carte-de-visite* and the photographic album had reached as far west as Winnipeg by 1864. The appeal of the practice is clear from the following recommendation in the November 21, 1864 issue of *The Nor'-Wester*: "the pictures taken in this way do not fade, and can be put into the Albums which are now coming into general use" (cited in Greenhill, 52). The popularity of displaying the paper-backed prints in photographic albums suggests that the ability to arrange photographs into personal forms was part of the growth of the practice of photography as a whole.

By the 1920s the display of photographs in albums was firmly established. Organizational structures within the albums themselves guided the composition and viewing of a photograph album. Batchen (2000) describes an example of temporal organization in a photograph album from the early 1920s in which picture order is chronological. He gives further examples of spatial organization the same album in which a single individual appears in various poses on subsequent pages—a strategy that is given a temporal dimension with the

turning of the pages. Batchen writes that "we put the photograph back into motion, both literally in an arc through space and in a more abstract, cinematic sense as well" (266).

The ability to reconstruct the 'story' in a photograph album is of interest in Walker and Moutlon's (1989) sociological work on albums. By first analyzing the presentation of photographic albums by their photographers, the authors draw general conclusions about the use of multiple images and the personal nature of the narration that accompanies the presentation of the images. Later, Walker and Moutlon extend their analysis to albums where the photographer is not present to provide narration. When analyzing an album without a narrator present, Walker and Moutlon rely "on the basic assumption that every album is a thematic whole and that the meaning of each particular image is somehow related to the story that unfolds through the entire set of images" (171). The authors base their strategies of interpretation on album type: family, event, trip, autobiography and special interest albums. Common characteristics that organize 'trip' type albums include the make-up of the group of travelers, unusual modes of travel, and conventional 'tourist' photographs. Walker and Moutlon find that single trip chronologies are presented with obvious beginnings, middles and ends, each of which can provide insight into the photographer's expectations and experiences. For example 'middles' that emphasize the experience of travel instead of the location of travel indicate different sets of expectations. Multiple trip albums frequently are more concerned with familiar photographs of tourist locales than with chronologies of specific trips, but Walker and Molten suggest that, even here, a careful analysis

of the album will reveal specific organizational strategies used by the album's author.

Organizational strategies are implicit in the ordering of an album's photographs. Strategies of placement, order, context are crucial to the 'story' an album tells. Photographic strategies similarly determine implicit and explicit meanings within individual photographs. In either case, the material culture of the photograph or album is a reminder of the options available to the photographer at any given time and is evidence of material practice. The history of the innovation of photographic technology and display reminds us of the former in order to understand the significance of the latter.

In the section that follows, I undertake a thorough consideration of the material culture of the case itself in order to understand the practices that it embodies. I ask, what are the practices involved in creating the photographs and the albums in which they are finally displayed?

Material Culture

Albums

The case study is of 408 black and white photographs displayed in two albums. In Album 1 there are 193 photographs, all by (or with the camera of) Ken Betts. In Album 2 there are 209 photographs. Album One extends from February 1929 to April 1934 and covers approximately 20 well-documented trips

and a number of partially documented trips. Album Two covers March 1934 to May 1936 and covers a further 20 well-documented trips. Trip coverage in the second album becomes more comprehensive which explains why the second album spans fewer years.

In Album Two, photographers other than K. Betts took 54 of the 209 photographs. The vast majority of these 54 are from the camera of Herb Dickson, made by him, or sometimes by Rita Dickson. I have identified the few remaining photographs as the work of Doug Sadler. All three photographers are clearly Betts' regular hiking and skiing companions and they themselves appear frequently in the case study photographs and captions of both the first and, predominantly, the second album.

Album dimensions are 14" x 9 3/4 " x 1" (36 x 25 x 2.5 cm)—the covers and pages are virtually identical in size. The first album is comprised of 49 filled pages and the second album of 45 filled pages—an unfilled page at the front and back of each album separates the filled pages from the albums' covers. The pages are of heavy, black stock. Photographs are fixed onto the pages by adhesive black photo-corners.

Album covers are made of leather—a rough 'buckskin'—and embellished with brown, orange, red, black and white paint. Each album is decorated with the same image of a stylized head and feather headdress. The head is in profile, faces left and is consistent with racial stereotypes of First Nations people. Around the head is a half circle comprised of one solid and one broken line. The full range of available colors appears in the head; the face is painted in browns, oranges and reds, while the headdress is predominantly black and white. A

loose brush sketch executed in brown paint only depicts a range of hills, a stand
of conifers and teepee(s) extending to the left of the head. Minor inconsistencies
in detail between the paintings on each album cover, (for example, the feathers
on Album Two lack orange tips), as well as in execution, suggest that the
head/landscape designs were hand-painted but from a strict template. The
presence of Ken Betts' name in the painted text below the main cover illustration
further suggests that the albums were, to some degree, made-to-order. The text
is painted in the same brown paint of the head/landscape design. The word
"Snap-shots" appears at the top, while "Calgary, Canada" appears at the bottom.
The photographer's name appears on both albums while "Mountain Views"
appears on the cover of Album One only. A faint suggestion of a scalloped
edged created by brush strokes of the same brown paint decorates the three un-
bound edges of both albums. The scalloped edges, the sepia quality of the brown
paint and the frontier connotations of the head/landscape design combine to
produce the effect of tooled leather. The whole connotes 'old west'
(Photographic illustration 1).

The binding consists of the leather cover that is glued to the ends of the
pages to create a spine. Twisted brown cord feeds through two perforations in
the leather cover and two of the three punched holes at the short end of each
page to create a decorative binding. The cord is tied and decorated with leather
tassels.

Both albums are in poor condition. The cord and tassels on the second
album have disappeared and the glued spines of both albums are disintegrating.
In general, all the leather of both covers is in very poor condition, flaking and

Photographic illustration 1

tearing easily. The covers and bindings of both albums are very fragile and subject to wear from even gentle handling.

The provenance of the album covers is unknown. It is possible that they were hand-made by friend or family member, but, based on consultation with family and clues internal to the cover illustrations themselves, it seems more likely that these are commercially-produced souvenir albums that were produced or amended by the seller on demand. The formulaic nature of the illustration and graphic layout suggests that the production was routine and that any customization was limited to the addition of names and titles—for example "Ken Betts" and "Mountain Views" to reflect the author and content of these particular albums.

The association of the 'cowboys and Indians' motif with 'mountain views' is supported by analysis of period advertising in the name of both Canadian and American national parks (Bell 1998, Wyckoff and Dilsaver 1997, Hart 1983) and by contemporary events such as Banff's Indian Days (Luxton, 1975). Importantly, the association between First Nations people and the mountain landscape is an association that never occurs inside the albums in any of the photographs. Instead the albums present a view of nature that is entirely peopled with European-descended Canadians—a background shared by the photographer. The deliberately archaic effect of the album covers, with their 'old West' connotation, suggests that any connection between the landscape and First Nations people exists only within the past. One effect—I cannot gauge the intention—is to evoke and dismiss any prior history of use of the environment in

question. Alternatively, another effect is the implicit rejection or disregard of a particular stereotyped association between the 'nature' and first inhabitants.

Layout

From a purely descriptive perspective each page of the albums holds an average of five or six photographs, usually on facing pages. There is a considerable amount of variety in the way that those five or six photographs are arranged. Some common examples include three vertically oriented images on the top half of the page anchored by two horizontally oriented images on the bottom, or visa versa. Other common layouts involve four or more photographs which are ordered around a central image, or multiple photographs which fan out over top of a single, lower image. In general, the layouts tend to be symmetrical on either a vertical or horizontal axis—although perfectly symmetrical grids are never used to order the photographs on the page. Only occasionally are layouts asymmetrical and such pages usually represent a division in context that is reflected in two different organizational strategies. No matter what specific strategy is used, a pattern is always discernable in the placement of photographs. Sometimes the placement of photographs is done so as to emphasize visual elements internal to the photographs themselves. For example, a curve in one photographed is mirrored by a similar curve in another. However, in most cases the ordering of photographs, beyond their arrangement on the page, is determined by organizational categories as described in the analysis to come.

A few layouts are on the reverse sides of pages. These are less symmetrically ordered and more casually placed. Photographs by other photographers, or content that does not fit the full pages, may be found here. In addition to the approximately 82 laid-out pages of snapshot sized images, there were twelve 8 x 10 photographs that are set apart on their own pages—sadly these are all missing from the albums, and only the photo corners remain to mark where they once were.

Captions

The captions are rendered in hand-printed, capital letters. The use of both white ink and white pencil suggests that the captions (and indeed the albums themselves) were composed over time with different materials as available. Despite the variation in materials the handwriting itself is consistent throughout. The composition of the albums was the work of a single individual—Ken Betts, who is also the photographer of most of the images (E. Bryan, July 10, 2001, personal communication).

In general, each photograph has a caption and often more than one. Captions can be page titles, labels under individual photographs or general comments on a group or sequence of photographs. Captions around a photograph's rim, which identify specific features within the image, are extremely common. Sometimes arrows are used to link captions to particular features. Captions are rarely longer than a single sentence and frequently consist of a word or two. A variety of small illustrations accompany some captions.

These include stylized renderings of the photographer's initials or of the date of the photographs. Other drawings include a simple sketch of a mountain and stick figure, and a diagram showing the order in which climbers were roped.

I provide a more substantial analysis of the content of the captions in the next chapter.

Camera and photographic technology

Only one camera was used for the production of all Betts' photographs included in these albums. This camera is a No. 1 Pocket Kodak Junior Camera, manufactured between 1929 and 1932. Its original list price was $9.00 (in American dollars), making it one of Kodak's mid-priced cameras. (By way of contrast the No. 2 Brownie camera manufactured during the same period and requiring the same film had an original list price of $ 2.50; the No. 1 Kodak series III camera sold for $ 26.00 (Kodak, 1999)). Given that the photographer had at that time just begun his working life in the composing room of the Calgary Herald, it is tempting to imagine that this camera represents a first adult purchase.

When closed, the No. 1 Pocket Junior consists of a black metal case that is 16 x 8 x 3 cm in size. When the operator lifts a latch on the front, a leather bellows and metal railing unfold from within the case. The lens and shutter adjustments are set into the end of the bellows, along with a viewfinder that rotates to allow sightings along a vertical or horizontal axis. The camera loads

from the front (by removing the bellows and lens in the folded position) and takes 120 roll film (confirmed by an imprint on the camera's back).

The film used by the photographer during the years 1929 - 1936 was exclusively black and white. Based on an examination of some surviving negatives (which do not belong to the photographs in these albums but are later negatives from the same camera), the negatives produced would have been rectangular and approximately 6 x 9 cm in size. This negative size differs from modern negatives from 120 film. Now, twelve 6 cm square images are the most common photographs-to-roll ratio produced by modern 120/220 roll-film cameras, although some cameras do produce eight 6 x 7 cm rectangular negatives (Swedlund). The slightly larger size of the original negatives would have produced a slightly longer than usual ratio—particularly suitable for horizontal mountain vistas. Based on the size of the negatives I am estimating that the number of photographs per roll produced by the No. 1 Pocket Junior was likely between six and eight images (the exact number depends on vagaries of the film-advance mechanism). Unfortunately, there are no markings on the surviving negatives that can confirm this guess.

The prints produced by the No. 1 Pocket Junior camera and included in the albums are black and white. They correspond to the 6 x 9 cm negative size, which means that they were made without any enlargement at all and this lack of enlargement reduces possible distortion in the finished print. The relatively large negative size also potentially provides better quality images than the usual 35 mm negative with which most of us are familiar. Factors which could lower the quality of the negative produced are the quality of both the camera and

enlarger lenses, as well as the quality of the photographic products used—film, chemicals and photographic paper.

The exact chemical processes of development and enlargement are probably unrecoverable, although it seems extremely likely that a commercial photo-finisher was used. There is no evidence—either anecdotal from the family or physical in the form of notes or multiple trial prints from the same negative—that amateur film development and printing were part of the practices in this case study. Accordingly, photographic practices in this care are restricted to the act of composing photographs in the camera viewfinder and the subsequent deployment of the developed and printed images in the albums.

The use of the No. 1 Pocket Junior was simplified considerably by its basic nature. The lens is fixed and cannot be changed. The lens has no focusing mechanism and so focus depends on the photographer maintaining a correct distance from the subject in relation to other parameters such as available light and lens specifications. The complete lack of close-ups is likely explained by this fact—even portraits are taken at an enough distance to include the full figure. There are no markings to identify either the f-number or the angle of view of this particular lens, but the viewfinder duplicates the same view as my 35 mm camera fitted with a 49mm lens (a so-called "normal" configuration that roughly corresponds to that of human vision) (Swedlund). Given that this is the case, the angle of view (expressed in mm) in the No. 1 Pocket Junior is likewise "normal". The significance of a normal angle of view is that the lens produces neither wide angle nor long-focal length photographs.

Other settings on the No. 1 Pocket Junior camera are equally basic. There

are two shutter settings: 'I' which seems to be the standard shutter speed and 'T'

(time) which opens the shutter for a manually controlled exposure. Four

numerals (1 - 4) indicate four aperture settings which correspond to a rotating

metal plate with four various sized holes—these are the apertures with which we

usually associate f-stops indications. The numbering system suggests that

learning to use this camera was a process of associating each number with a set

light condition. The considerable depth of field suggests that the smaller of the

aperture settings (3 or 4) were used frequently, an indication of the high light

conditions associated with sunny mountain days. Settings 1 or 2 would have

been used in lower light conditions, during snow or foggy trips. Very low light

conditions would require with the largest aperture setting (1) and a manual

opening of the shutter. Experience and/or calculation would be required to

make such an exposure and a certain degree of trial and error would have been

required to develop an understanding of the range of exposures possible. For the

most part the quality of the photography in the first album gives little sign of any

such learning curve. Perhaps the infrequency of the earliest photographs—one

in February 1929, two in September of the same year, one in January of the

following year—as compared to the more exhaustive coverage of the later years,

represents absent exposures spoilt through inexperience. If so, the absence of

these prints hints at a selection process not discernible through an analysis of the

albums. The presence of processes of selection extra to the arrangement of

selected photographs in the albums must be acknowledged, but without the

photographer selection of this kind also must remain outside the scope of the

case. One of the few images to display an imperfect exposure is found early in the first album and is dated 1930. This under-exposure is the result of a difficult light situation: Muleshoe and the Bow River photographed from inside the "Hole-in-the-wall" cave. Evidence of use of aids to determine exposure (such as a light meter) is absent from any record, although there is no reason to definitively rule out such practices.

In order to actually take a photograph with the No. 1 Pocket Junior the camera operator would have to hold the camera, not to the eye, but at chest level, supporting the camera against the body with the left hand and depressing (or lifting) the shutter release lever with right. The viewfinder is physically separate from the lens and the photographer would have to remember to make adjustments to the positioning of the camera to correct for so-called parallax error: the difference in the image between what the lens and what the viewfinder see.

The implications of the camera technology described above are various. The No. 1 Pocket Junior is small, hand-held, relatively lightweight camera employing manufactured, cartridge style film, which allows for easy insertion, removal and transport for commercial processing. It is a world away from the heavy-bodied, tripod supported, operator-processed sheet film cameras that were typical of early photographic explorations of Canada's west. The basic nature of the lens apparatus of the No. 1 Pocket Junior—only four aperture settings, a single shutter speed and no focusing mechanism—encourages the operator to choose high-light situations with subjects at mid or long distance. Outdoor recreational photography, in which full figures are posed or active in

bright, long-distance environments of interest, fills the intrinsic requirements of the No. 1 Pocket Junior perfectly. Given the technical history of amateur use outlined above, it seems likely that tourist practice (the 'rage for Kodaking' in places like Banff (see Hart 1983, 58)) contributed to the production of cameras that enabled those interested in photography to head outdoors and those interested in the outdoors to take a camera.

I do not wish to stress the technical determinants of the case study photographs at the expense of cultural and individual patterns of behaviour. Still, I note that the technology of the No. 1 Pocket Junior did rule out, or make difficult, certain kinds of photographs, including close-ups, wide-angle shots, and soft focus images. Many standard manipulations such as depth-of-field or perceived movement were limited by the use of this camera. For example, a set shutter speed encouraged the photographing of moving subjects from a head-on rather than from-the-side position whenever the photographer desired to 'stop' the subject in motion. Stopping the subject in motion from the side would have required a more sensitive optical system. On examination, there is a distinct tendency in these photographs to choose head on perspectives of objects in motion (skiers, for example). A reduced range of aperture sizes and single automatic shutter speed reduced the ability of the photographer to deliberately choose the level of background focus. And, again, on examination, the photographs in this case are sharply in focus from foreground to extreme background. Softly focused images with a shallow depth of field are absent from these albums. Indeed, low light conditions, which would have produced softer focus and shallow depth of field are the subject of negative captions. Reference

to "Dull weather" may reflect more than a record of the day; they may acknowledge limited or altered picture-taking possibilities. Significantly, the complete lack of indoor photographs in the albums, which is certainly worth noting, is also very likely a partial result of these same technical limitations.

A consideration of the technical limitations and strengths of the No. 1 Pocket Junior is important to this case because these must inform any attempt to reconstruct photographic practice. The presence or absence of particular photographic form or aesthetic practice results from both a photographer's intent and the technological possibilities of the equipment in question. Successful photographic practices are those that accommodate the needs of the user and the limitations of the medium, both in the context of a history of prior image making. Technology and use determine successful photographic practices; they also grow out of contemporary practices capable accommodating evolving patterns of use.

Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed the history of technological innovation as it pertains to photography prior to 1930. I have also suggested that photographic albums and strategies of display have a history in their own right. This case study is evidence of the choice of particular material practices that are more meaningful when set against an understanding their history.

In the next chapter I review the history of image making in Canada's western mountain parks prior to 1930. I also consider the changes in recreational

use of the parks over the same period. Both contexts are necessary for the case

analysis and discussion to come.

CHAPTER FOUR: A HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR THE CASE

Introduction to Chapter Four

In the first chapter, I suggest that the question of how 'nature' is represented by a pair of photographic albums will produce a description of some of the ways in which individuals negotiate mass-produced images in particular contexts. Insofar as the photographic practices represented in this case also depict, and comprise in their own right, recreational practices, the two kinds of practice, in this case, are interdependant. In light of ongoing controversy over the use of the mountain parks, a consideration of how park users have negotiated representations of the popular image of the parks region can provide valuable insight into the expectations and assumptions that characterize past and present use of the area.

In the second chapter, I provide literature in support of the view that 'nature' is a culturally constructed ideal necessary for the interpretation of physical environments. The literature suggests that there is no apprehension of these environments except through ideas comprising a culturally determined concept of 'nature'. I also provide literature that critiques the notion of 'nature' as a way of describing the operation and essence of photography. The assumed 'naturalness' of photography further enhances the representation of 'nature' in a way that disguises the operation of cultural forms of meaning-making.

The third chapter leaves behind these theoretical considerations in order to survey the material of the case. A thorough investigation and description of the case study photographs and albums provide the best foundation on which to further analyze and discuss.

In this chapter, I continue to provide a foundation for analysis and discussion in the form of a historical context for the case. This historical context has two aspects. The first is the history of the image of the western mountain parks prior to the beginning of this case study. In this discussion, I am primarily concerned with photographic images, although acknowledge that many aspects of photographic idiom are contingent upon prior or simultaneous developments in other visual forms, especially painting. The second aspect of the historical context is the changing form of recreational activities within the parks up to the 1930s. This two-pronged approach is necessary to establish a context for the case that takes into account the photographs' ability to constitute and represent recreational use of the mountain parks.

History of images of the western mountain parks prior to 1930

Exploratory modes of representation

Silversides writes "Canada's western mountains have been avidly photographed for more than 130 years and there seems no end in sight to this curiously addictive activity" (1995, 1). Not surprisingly, photographers engaged

in exploration and surveying made some of earliest photographic representations of the western parks. These first photographic representations date to the middle of the nineteenth century. The camera, almost as quickly as any other visual form, was the means by which Canada's mountainous west was reproduced; and, in the guise of half-tone reproductions, photographs were the means by which much of Canada's new population would first view the western mountains.

Between 1858 and 1862, the North American Boundary Commission Survey surveyed and photographed the mountains along the forty-ninth parallel between the West Coast to the eastern slopes of the Rockies. Silversides describes the content of their photographic output as "boundary markings, cut lines, camps and examples of the varied terrain" (2). By 1871, Selwyn's Geological Survey of Canada survey included photographers Benjamin Baltzly and John Hammond, who photographed locations in the Fraser and Thompson River valleys. As Silversides makes clear, Baltzly and Hammond's work already incorporated both a documentary and a commercial purpose—responsibility for the payment of the photographers' salaries was divided between the Geological survey and the Montreal studio of William Notman, who wanted the images to sell back east (2). In the same year, the CPR was already making photographs of the future route of Canada's transcontinental railway (Hart 1983, 31). This work, by photographer Charles Horetzky, also had a dual "scientific and an artistic approach in photographing the mountains" (Silversides, 2). However, not all exploratory photography had a commercial aspect. Early tourist/explorers, drawn to the area by the fledgling tradition of mountaineering, brought cameras

with them. For example, Scott (2000) describes the pioneer mountaineers, Green

and Swanzy, developing their photographic plates in the wine cellar of Glacier

House in 1888.

On the scientific front, photogrammetry, a surveying method using

photography that was first proposed at the end of the nineteenth century, was in

time to be used to map the western mountains of Canada (Sandford 1990).

Silversides dates its first use in the Rockies to McArthur and Drewry's 1887 work

for the Dominion Land Survey. The next year, the same method was used to

draw up the first accurate maps of the Banff and Crowsnest Pass areas. In fact, it

is photogrammetry that links the practice of photography with the beginning of

organized climbing in the western mountains. Scott details McArthur's

numerous first ascents in order to survey the route of the CPR between Canmore

and Revelstroke—all ascents were made while carrying photographic

equipment. In the same vein, Sandford describes A.O. Wheeler's 1901 survey of

the Selkirks involving "the ascent of dozens of mountains in order to take

photographs of a given alpine terrain that could later be translated into

topographical contours on a final composite map" (259). As a result of a passion

for climbing engendered by this photogrammetric activity, Wheeler would go on

to become the first president of the Alpine Club of Canada, confirming a pattern

of association between photography and the growing sport of recreational

climbing. It was a pattern that would endure and perhaps, even more

importantly for this case, establish a new form of photographic representation of

the mountains region that looked down from on high rather than looking up into

the peaks. This exploratory mode of photography established a form of

photographic practice that grew directly out of surveying methods but could be easily applied to document other sorts of practices, including recreational achievement.

The Railway School

Also enduring was the relationship between photographic professionals and the CPR. Subsequent visits along the CPR line by photographers, including William McFarlane Notman (son to William Notman), Alexander Henderson and O.B. Buell, produced photographic images that were widely disseminated as photographic prints, half-tone engravings in printed matter, and paintings based on the photographic originals. The latter were the work of the so-called 'railway -school' of painters, whose work variously comprised and complemented the CPR's promotional activities (Hart 1999, Pringle 1987, Render, 1974).

Crucial to the aesthetics of the 'railway school' was W.C. Van Horne, who was General Manager of the CPR after 1882. Van Horne's use of mountain imagery in order to promote tourist services on the new line to the west set much of the form and expectation of images of the western mountains. To painters and photographers, Van Horne granted CPR sponsorships—a privilege that could include free passes for the length of the line and/or commissions for finished work. Pringle characterizes Van Horne as a patron—commissioning, assisting, or exhibiting the mountain landscapes of Lucius O'Brien and John Colin. In the case of John Arthur Fraser, Pringle describes Van Horne as something more—critiquing compositions and suggesting alteration to his work (61).

Similarly, Hart provides an exchange of letters between Van Horne and Fraser in which the former suggests that the latter alter the size of peaks in a painting-in-progress—an amendment that departs from both photographic models and the artist's own sketches. Van Horne justifies his editorial interference to Fraser on the grounds that the peaks so altered will be free of the lowering effects of wide-angle lenses and therefore more imposing. Hart writes, "clearly Van Horne was not above exaggeration for effect in material produced for tourist consumption" (35).

As is evident from the example above, photographs, such as those by the William Notman studio, Oliver Buell and Alexander Henderson, provided the raw material for paintings and etchings (Bell, Hart). Pringle writes,

> Van Horne's free pass program and his decision to offer corporate commissions was so successful in attracting painters to the North West that by 1887, only two years after the completion of the transcontinental line, Rocky Mountain landscapes dominated Canadian art. (74)

Pringle raises questions as to the efficacy of the display of the painting with regard to stated aim of promoting immigration and tourism, but there is little doubt that the images commissioned by Van Horne were widely seen in various forms. Hart establishes that, as the line opened, the CPR arranged for the wide distribution of commissioned engravings and half-tone photographic reproductions in journals such as *The Illustrated London News, Harper's Weekly,* and *The Dominion Illustrated.* Other promotional material produced by the CPR was reproduced in the company's own commercial publications. The first such publication, *The Canadian Pacific, The New Highway To The East Across The*

Mountains, Prairies & Rivers Of Canada, produced in 1887, included engravings based on photographs (Hart, 25). By 1892, the CPR had brought out a line of licensed photographs called *Glimpses Along the Canadian Pacific Railway*, which included the mountain views of the Notmans, Buell and Henderson (Hart). The CPR's commitment to photography on the line was such that a special car (Car No. 1) was outfitted in 1886 with a darkroom—both Buell and the Notmans made use of the car. Hadley (1987) remarks that "after overcoming its prejudices for manipulated painted images the CPR came to accept that photograph as a medium for promotion"(68). By 1892, there was an appointed company photographer: David McNicoll (Hart). The CPR continued to employ photographers up to and throughout the period of my case study. Over the period of the 1920s, the chief photographer in the CPR's promotional department was Harry Pollard, whose work was used "extensively for promotional pamphlets and magazines" (Silversides, 4).

The real legacy of CPR promotion and patronage was a set of images that would remained inextricably bound up with the region's image—images that would continue to reverberate with viewers into the time period of this case study (the 1930s) and beyond. Ring (1998) writes, "These images reached out to the world to create an idea of the Canadian West that merged fantasy and fact on an unprecedented scale" (21).

Mountain photography at the century's turn

The CPR was not solely responsible for images of the western mountain region. Silversides provides a substantial list of independent photographers in the Rockies and ranges to the west (12-13). Both Silversides and Hart catalogue independent photographers A.B. Thom, Boorne and May, the Bailey Brothers and R.H. Trueman among others. Of particular interest are the Banff photographers Byron Harmon and George Nobel who operated after the early years of the 20th century (Silversides, 13). Golden and Field, up the line, had photographers of their own (W.J. Gould and Arthur Percival respectively), as did Jasper (F.H. Stark and W. H. Robinson) and many of the other mountain communities (Silversides). In describing the kind of work produced by these commercial photographers, Silversides notes that:

> By far the most common use of mountain photography was for the production of tourist souvenirs: twenty-by-twenty-five centimetre mounted 'views'; limited editions gravures; calendars; photo albums which might contain real photos, gravures, or photo-lithographs; and, beginning in the 1890s, postcards. (11)

By the turn of the century, there was a group of photographers who worked "'along the line'" producing images such as those described above (Hart, 1999, 198). Certainly the best known of these—and the photographer more associated with the Banff region than any other—is Byron Harmon. Arriving in Banff in 1903, Harmon found a town "midway between the era of earliest exploration and the age of mass commercialism" (Robinson, 7). Harmon set to work and his stock of mountain images grew, until by 1907 he could boast of "the largest collection of Canadian Rockies postcards in existence ('over 100

assorted views')" (9). His work, combining postcard perfect imagery with photographic records of Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) climbs and Banff social-life, continues to be ubiquitous. Without a doubt, Harmon's photographs warrant the claim that it was commercial images such as these that were "often the most vividly recalled visual records of the valley"(Hart, 198).

Amateur photography of the same period is not so well documented, although there are exceptions. In 1887, George, William and Mary Vaux stopped at the Illecillewaet Glacier to take a series of photographs that would become the beginning of a decade long photographic observation. Their work—amateur in the best sense of the word—culminated in a pamphlet entitled *The Glaciers of the Canadian Rockies and Selkirks,* published circa 1900 by the CPR (Hart). Their other, less scientific photographs provide a comprehensive view of railway tourism in the mountain parks between 1887 and 1915.

At approximately the same time as the Vaux family published their work, Walter Wilcox was also published. His *Camping in the Canadian Rockies* (1897) and *The Rockies of Canada* (1900) were both illustrated with Wilcox's own photographic work. A decade later, Mary Schäffer—friend of the Vaux family, traveler and amateur photographer—also used her own, amateur photographs to illustrate her written work. In 1911, Schäffer published an account of her 1907 and 1908 journeys of exploration. The book, *Old Indian Trails,* combines familiar images of the Crowfoot Glacier or Lake Brazeau, for example, with less familiar images of horses struggling through dense, un-photogenic underbrush or the author washing her blankets (Schäffer, 1911).

The 1920s saw other, less well-known examples of authors who illustrated their written work with their own photography. B.W. Mitchell's *Trail life in the Canadian Rockies* is one such example (1924). As in Schäffer's text, Mitchell mixes standard views of Crowfoot Glacier with more personal images of the rigors of backcountry travel. Schäffer and Mitchell's photographs can be strikingly similar. For example, a comparison of two photographs of Crowfoot Glacier reveals similar framing and horizon lines as well as the use of trees as a framing device. Mitchell's side by side photographic illustrations of a pack-horse first mired and then breaking free from a slough is a somewhat more personalized presentation, although still related in function to Schäffer's, earlier, photographs of her horses (236).

The Vaux family, Walter Wilcox and Mary Schäffer were all Americans, of a class with enough money and time to travel. As tourists arriving at the forefront of the first wave of sight-seers and outdoor enthusiasts, their work was still in an exploratory and documentary mode. Nevertheless, they brought in their wake later photographers eager to retrace their travels. They also brought with them the world of commercially available mass-produced images, such as those produced by Byron Harmon and others. By the 1920s, photographer/authors such as Mitchell are clearly aware that, unlike Schäffer and the Vaux siblings, their travels are no longer voyages of discovery. Mitchell writes in the preface to *Trail life in the Canadian Rockies*, "this book is not a record of serious, scientific exploration"(ix). It is a testament to both the indebtedness and quick dissemination of the dominant imagery of the mountain parks that the shifting in context from genuine exploration to back-country recreation

should produce so little alteration in form. There is also the possibility that later travelers consciously desired to reproduce the images that had brought them there and, by doing so, intentionally cast their own travels in the exploratory mode that had inspired them.

Dominant imagery of the western mountain parks

Just as a particular historical version of 'nature' informed both the development of National Parks and the contemporary understanding of the process and essence of photography, this same view of 'nature' continued to inform many of the practices of photographic representation in the parks during this time. So ubiquitous is this understanding of 'nature', that the presence of a representational model of 'nature'—a 'naturalism' with roots in inherited conventions of European painting—almost goes without saying. Hart alludes to this mode when he writes that "this focus on realism continued to develop as the North American tradition of pragmatism and reason, its belief in nature as a divine creation and its preference for recognizable scenes took stronger hold" (185). Hart refines this general focus on realism, pointing out that by the 1870s "it was noted that Canadian art was following in the great European art traditions of depicting nature at its most sublime" (185). To review, the conventions of the sublime inherited from 'naturalist' landscape painting include: the use of fore, mid, and background relationships evocative of theatrical sets; exaggerated effects of size, perspective and atmosphere; and the

positioning of figures in subordinate positions, facing away from the viewer and dwarfed by their environment (Oravec, 1996).

By way of contrast, it is important to consider that there were examples of other forms of visual representation of the region that were not naturalistic or realistic. Lawren Harris' canvases are good examples of the possibilities for the non-naturalistic representation of sites in Yoho and Banff at the same time as this case. In photography, a Harmon image of a bright beam of falling water against an indistinct background of darkness (c. 1920) is expressive of photographic possibilities that move beyond the non-naturalistic, even into non-representational work. That such possibilities were readily explored in other media and in the work of an otherwise representational photographer makes clear that the naturalism of much of the dominant photographic imagery was entirely intentional.

Bell (1990), in his survey of the work of professional photographers in western Canada between 1858 and 1950, suggests that the convention of the picturesque was re-cycled, especially in CPR commissioned photography. This form was already familiar to viewers from writing and paintings representing the Alps or the Lake District in the United Kingdom. Bell argues that certain key positions for the production of picturesque images were established through repetition in promotional material. Views of Mt. Stephen, Banff, Moraine Lake, Lake Louise, and the Victorian Glacier were amongst these images. He writes that such images became,

> key picturesque tourist experiences along the line of the Canadian Pacific
> Railway, providing the visitor with a guide through which the area might

be anticipated, then 'experienced' and later remembered. Photographs also indicated what visitors should 'see' and the best vantage points from which to do that seeing" (60).

The image of nature constructed, according to Bell, provides a setting for human activity, especially that of recreation and/or hunting. Bell also finds that First Nations people—who were excluded from or photographed departing prairie environments during the period of first European settlement—were later reintroduced into mountain photography as an image for tourist consumption. In this later case, Bell argues, First Nations people were likened to their once 'wild' setting and represented as part of the landscape, both reproduced on behalf of the tourist (52). More generally Bell writes of the need to 're-present' the mountain region, changing the vision held by eastern Canadians, Europeans and Americans of a "'trackless' wilderness, [and] barrier to western expansion" to an attractive destination for train travelers (65). Scenes appearing in various publications designed to stimulate tourism frequently reflect the viewpoint of the train passenger, having been shot from the location of the train itself. Images reconstructed the region so that it seems familiar and safe. Certain views were proscribed; avalanche-covered railway tracks and wrecked trains were not to be photographed and photographers who did were not extended CPR privileges (59). The 'wildness' of the national park was reproduced in such a way to limit perceived dangers and to highlight views attainable from the safety of the train itself.

In a similar way, Hart (1983) stresses the effect of new cultural ideas concerning 'nature' that were popular in the latter part of the 1800s. Hart

points to a variety of symptoms of these new cultural expectations of nature: the 1872 establishment of Yellowstone National Park in the U.S. (influenced by the writings of Thoreau and Muir), the beginning of Thomas Cook's tours between the U.K. and Switzerland, and the formation of the Alpine Club in the U.K. (c.1860). The CPR advertised to the tourist who was attracted by images that promised a "communion with nature in the wilderness, grand alpine scenery combined with the possibility of rugged physical challenge, and the opportunity to fish and hunt to one's content" (42). Accordingly, CPR material made frequent mention of the possibilities for recreational activity. Hunting was mentioned in particular, with lists of possible game that emphasized the exoticism of New World animals, such as the antelope (26). Again, as in Bell, the sense of 'wild' nature contained is evoked through the juxtaposition of nature's extremes and human recreation.

The annotated CPR timetable, first published in 1886 (the first year of passenger travel between central Canada and Vancouver), set the direction for later illustration although it was illustrated with engravings taken from photographs and not yet by the photographs themselves. Even so, both the engraved and written descriptions of sights forecast the kinds of photographic illustrations to be included in later publications. In general, the mixing of paintings, engravings, photographs and word pictures in the creation of various CPR publications defeats the purpose of attempting to distinguish each medium on the basis of style. The CPR's use of images, and the corresponding establishment of a dominant imagery for the mountain regions, relied on a mixing of the compositional techniques particular to each medium—a kind of

convergence of finished paintings modeled on photographs with finished
photographs modeled on paintings. The images produced by the CPR were
nothing if not pragmatic (Pringle, Hart).

Although the 1886 annotated timetable covered the entire route, the
mountain region was emphasized; Hart contrasts the half page description of
Ottawa to the full page and a half devoted to Banff. Special attention was paid to
excesses of scale such as the vastness of Illecillewaet Glacier or the height of
Mount Sir Donald. Hart adds that a subsequent publication from the following
year, *The Canadian Pacific, The New Highway to the East Across the Mountains,
Prairies & Rivers of Canada,* (1887), continued to stress the mountain stretch of the
trip across the country. The images contained in the written description of the
region include references to Switzerland as well as detailed visual description of
the mountains themselves. From the excerpts quoted in Hart, it is clear to see
that the prose again relies on excess of scale ('vast', 'gigantic', 'minutest detail')
as well as modifiers that emphasize the 'otherness' of the landscape ('curiously',
'strange and rare'). This tendency to reproduce an exaggerated, 'other' nature is
ameliorated by its containment in human-made forms ('pyramids',
'sculpture')(26).

Reference to European models was still a feature of dominant imagery
twenty-five years later in the title of a 1923 guidebook, *50 Switzerlands in one:
Banff the Beautiful, Canada's National Park.* Inside, the guidebook's (unaccredited)
photographs emphasize the amenities of the town of Banff to a greater degree
than was possible (or wise) in the CPR timetables of thirty years earlier.
Photographs of Banff's buildings and tourist accommodations compete with the

scenic beauties of the mountains around the town; the emphasis of this guidebook is less on the mountain environment and more on recreational activity. Photographs of horse-back riders, climbers, golfers, curlers, fishers, tenters, boaters, and swimmers represent recreation. Winter sport is extensively photographed and includes ski-jumping, ski-racing (cross-country), ski-joring and snow-shoeing. Despite the fact that hunting was then (as now) banned in the park, sport hunting merits special mention and several photographic illustrations of successful huntsmen appear (one of which is an unidentified photograph of painter Carl Rungius) (15).

The mountain images that are scattered throughout *50 Switzerlands in one* are all within the conventions of naturalism. Trees almost always are present in the foreground, lakes or rivers in the mid-ground and mountains in the background. In other images, the use of strong diagonals cuts the picture surface into three receding planes of rock and snow. An image of Johnson Canyon emphasizes the scale of the canyon and the three tiny figures at the bottom. Some images are included less for aesthetic reasons than to present a particular peak in a particular context—for example, "Rundle Mountain... is said to be easy to climb" (35). In this case, the peak or range in question fills the frame in such a way as to permit no depth in the image. Instead, documentation of the content determines a flattened composition. All images of peaks and ranges are captioned with a name and generally a location—not surprising in a guidebook, but it is worth noting that the aesthetic impact of the image alone is insufficient reason for inclusion.

A second guide book, *Round about the Rockies: a guide book for the tourist, a souvenir for his friends*, also from 1923, includes fewer illustrations and mixes photographs with reproductions of paintings. Interestingly, the painting are credited but the photographs are not, reinforcing the 'natural', unauthored quality of the photographs. In either case, the images are presented on their own page rather than being interspersed with the text, as in the previous example. The paintings and photographs are virtually identical in their composition and content. Overwhelmingly of mountain imagery, the paintings and photographs both present the standard landscape conventions as described above. From a compositional point of view, there is sometimes very little to distinguish between the two kinds of images. However, there are differences between the photographs and paintings. The former tend to represent evidence of human presence in the landscape—or perhaps the difference lies in the ability of the painters to erase evidence of human presence. Roads, built objects, tents, appear in an incidental fashion (hidden behind other objects, off center) in several of the photographic plates. Interestingly, evidence of travel, especially rail-travel, is the one marker of the human that both photographers and painters alike present in their images. The captioning of the images is identical, naming peaks or water features presumably of interest to the viewer and locating each in part of the parks region.

In the United States, a similar construction of a dominant image for Glacier Nation Park was also underway. Wyckoff and Dilsaver provide a reconstruction of the tourist images produced for a promotional push by the Great Northern Railway between 1911 and 1930 on behalf of Glacier National

Park in the U.S. (1997). In examining 796 photographs from the railway's archives the authors arrived at seven themes produced for tourist consumption: Native Americans, Scenery, Recreation, Wildlife, the Wild West, Park management, and Personalities (8).

Over the nineteen years considered by the study, images of Native Americans made up a full 30 percent of the total images. Wyckoff and Dilsaver suggest that there is an association of images of Native Americans with natural environment so that "Native Americans enhanced the sense of wilderness aesthetics for tourists" (9).

Scenery comprised a little over twenty percent of the images surveyed (8). Wyckoff and Dilsaver write, "Traditional European and Euroamerican responses to the landscape provided a parade of predictable visual symbols that represented Glacier's natural landscape and echoed larger responses to the American West" (12). They include in their list of visual image "mountain peaks—often serrated and glaciated—and water features—lakes, waterfalls, and rushing mountain streams" (12). Characteristics such as spaciousness, wildness, sense of scale, proportions, planned, lighting conditions, diversity, and spectacle are used to describe the archived photographs (12)

Of the remaining five themes, 'recreation' comprised sixteen percent of the total. Wyckoff and Dilsaver list fishing, boating, hiking, camping and climbing as all available to the visitor with particular emphasis on horseback riding (16). 'Wildlife' made up ten percent of the total. Large animals, in particular mountain sheep, were used to reinforce notions of wildness and freedom. Bears, on the other hand, were subject to considerable anthropomorphism. Like smaller

animals (marmots, squirrels, birds), bears were featured begging for food or performing tricks that mimicked visitor's own activities (15). Wild West, park management and personalities comprised five, seven and ten percent of the total images respectively.

Wyckoff and Dilsaver also suggest four contexts that relate the idea of travel to the region with certain key social expectations. Those contexts are summarized as "otherness", "sublime nature … bracketed by and available for human activities", "acknowledged self-parody", and a "conquerable and consumable" natural setting and native inhabitants (24). They suggest that the desire to reproduce these contexts through a repetition of the thematic images "produced a semiology of landscape elements rich in their ability to denote recognizable signposts of regional character" (24).

Of the seven themes given in Wyckoff and Dilsaver—Native Americans, Scenery, Recreation, Wildlife, the Wild West, Park management, and Personalities—the last three are significantly underrepresented in the Canadian examples given above. Indeed, any photographs that would fit into the category of 'Personalities' are absent. Based on this, admittedly limited and informal survey, there is a possibility that the dominant imagery in Canadian and American National Parks, during the 1920s and 1930s, was not an identical case.

In describing the history of images of the western mountain parks prior to 1930 I have considered the ways in which the physical environments of Banff, Yoho, Kootenay and other mountain parks have been represented in photography (and other visual media) through the cultural construction of dominant visual images. To visit the mountain parks is to visit a constructed

landscape quite literally framed by countless photographic images. This discourse is designed to capitalize on contemporaneous ideas regarding nature. The literature discussed provides a variety of categories or general themes that summarize the kinds of images produced. Accounts feature a depiction of the mountain environment as 'other' or 'wild', effects derived from an emphasis on selected (or even exaggeration of) extant features. At the same time, various authors suggest that the 'wildness' or 'otherness' of mountain environments is constrained and framed by specific visual references. The visual reproduction of specific sites until familiar, the repeated references to other, known places (for example, Switzerland), and the repeated mention or depiction of recreational use of the same 'wild' environments all function to bracket that sense of 'otherness'. That these historical photographic practices—which are designed to stimulate and promote tourism—are contemporary with dramatic increases in amateur photography is highly significant. Mass-circulated images established both the context for the practice of amateur photography in the parks region and the expectations with regard to changing park use. It is to these developments in the recreational use of the parks that I would like to turn next.

History of changing recreational activities prior to 1930

Roads and forms of transportation

The photographic practices at the heart of this case study are produced in a context of rapid changes to forms of communication on two distinct fronts. First is the change in photography from a form of communication that is practiced by a few professionals or so-called serious amateurs to a widely practiced, mass-marketed form of individual communication. Second is the change in transportation from railways to roads. There are 20 years between the introduction of the first mass-marketed camera system (1888) and the arrival of the first car-worthy roads in the Banff, Yoho, and Kootenay region, yet both are necessary to produce the specific conditions that produced the case study photographs. In other words, the case study photographs exist as one possible "working out" of the cultural implications of significant changes in two, very roughly contemporary communications media.

One important characteristic of the expansion of roads into the mountain parks was its piecemeal character. While logic might assume an orderly extension from larger centers to the east and west into the mountain parks region, this was not the case. The influence of the CPR artificially extended the era of horse and carriage within park boundaries. The mountain parks prior to 1909 were essentially free of cars—a ban on cars in Banff townsite itself as well as the lack of suitable roads into the area curtailed motorized traffic (Hart, 1983). In 1909, the arrival of the first car along the partially construction Calgary-Banff Coach Road effectively signaled the end of the car ban (Hart, 1999). 1911 saw the completion of the road between Calgary and Banff, as well as the granting of formal permission to drive into Banff as long as cars remained parked at the police barracks (Hart 1999, Taylor 2001). 1913 saw cars allowed on the streets of

Banff and by 1914 cars were allowed to Minnewanka, Cave and Basin and on
Loop Drive (Hart, 1999). In addition to this limited access by private car, the
CPR, in connection with Brewster Transport, added side trips by motorized
vehicles as part of stop-overs on the train (Hart, 1983). This emphasis on vehicle
traffic within the park, rather than vehicle traffic into the park, encouraged the
development of roads on a piecemeal basis and did nothing to promote
connections with centers beyond park boundaries. This policy accounts for the
staggered progress of road construction (Luxton 1975, Taylor 2001, Silversides
1995). For example, there was road access from the railway to Emerald Lake by
1916, although the road connecting Castle Mountain and Lake Louise wasn't
build until 1920. Similarly, there was a road to Moraine Lake by 1923 but the
road from Lake Louise didn't reach Field until 1926 and Golden until 1927.

The Banff-Windermere road through Kootenay National Park was
completed in 1923, although motorists could drive the Calgary to
Continental Divide portion by 1914. This route through Kootenay
National Park to Invermere and south ultimately connected with the
Oregon to California route. A route east from California through the
Grand Canyon up through Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks on the
U.S. side of the border completed the so-called Grand Circle Tour (Luxton,
Hart 1983). The route was most significant for changing patterns of
international tourism and for amendments to the CPR's tourism strategies.
It can be imagined that during the 1920s and 1930s local tourist routes
from Calgary also would have been influenced by the economic and social
presence of this particular route.

The road between Banff and Jasper was begun as a depression project in 1931 and was still under construction during the period of this case study. The future Icefields Parkway (then called the Banff-Jasper highway) would not be formally opened until 1940, although portions were capable of being driven earlier (Silversides).

New Practices

Perhaps the biggest change wrought by the changing emphasis from railways to roadways was the change in the kind of tourist who began to make his or her way into the park. The change was widely remarked and had real repercussion on the development of park facilities. Luxton (1975) remarks,

> The development of the automobile had the effect, not only of increasing the number of travelers, but also of changing the social nature of the travelling public. Tourism was no longer the prerogative of the wealthy élite as it had been at an earlier period. The new travelers were not people who demanded luxurious accommodation. Rather they were people who were satisfied with either a campsite or a not too expensive room. (109)

Taylor (2001) agrees, stating that "another group that took to camping in the early 20th century were the less affluent who chose tents as cheap alternatives to cottages" (9). In Banff, an informal camping ground was established circa 1890 on the Bow River at Fortymile Creek, but there was a dramatic increase in the establishment of formal campgrounds after 1917. These campgrounds were designed by the parks' administration with car travelers in mind. Taylor groups

them into two categories: large, destination campgrounds (at Banff, Field, Waterton and Radium) and small, roadside stops along the new roads. In the 1920s, Banff saw the establishment of campgrounds at Rundle, Castle Mountain, Johnston Creek, Baker Creek, Moraine Lake, Lake Minnewanka, Lake Louise and Tunnel Mountain. Yoho had four sites at Kickinghorse, Chancellor Peak, Field, and Wapta. Automobile campers in Kootenay could stop at Vermillion Summit, Marble Canyon, Hawk Creek, Vermillion Crossing, Dolly Varden, McLeod Meadows, Sinclair Summit (Olive Lake) and Radium Hot Springs (Redrock) (Taylor, 13). By the 1930s, the largest of the campgrounds, Tunnel Mountain, could accommodate 17,500 users over the course of one summer (33).

As well as campsites, the CPR built slightly more luxurious bungalow camps (an early form of the motel). The earliest of these date from 1906 (in the Yoho valley and Moraine Lake), but most date to the period between 1921 and 1923. Hart (1983) lists seven: Wapta (1921), Windermere (1920), Lake O'Hara (1922), Yoho Valley (1922), Castle (Storm) Mountain and Vermilion River (1923), and Radium (1926) (103-4). Bungalow camps such as the one in the Yoho Valley could be reached by car.

Both the CPR and the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) built backcountry facilities. Huts, such as the Elizabeth Parker hut (1919) Abbots Pass hut (1922) and Fay Hut (1927) were built by the ACC. The CPR built the lodge at Assiniboine as well as Ten Mile Cabin among others. The Naiset Cabins at Assiniboine were built by A.O. Wheeler in 1925 (Patton and Robinson, 2000). Skoki Lodge was built in 1930 and enlarged in 1936. The initial work was done by "a bunch of ski enthusiasts" (Patton and Robinson, 106). In particular, Cliff

White and Cyril Paris are associated with the construction original lodge, which White operated for its first season (Sandford, 1999-2000, 7). Betts also part of the group who worked on the lodge (E. Bryan, July 10, 2001, personal communication). Unfortunately, there is no representation of these activities in the case study photographs.

The building of huts and lodges, as described above, was due to an increase in backcountry use in the 1920s and 1930s. This increase was due in part to increasing road access but also to the influence of organizations like the Alpine Club of Canada or the Trail Riders/Sky Line Trail Hikers of the Canadian Rockies (Sandford, Lore 1971). Both organizations had a mandate to encourage backcountry climbing, hiking or riding. In particular, the ACC, founded in 1906 under the aegis of A.O. Wheeler and Elizabeth Parker, is represented in the photographs. Its objectives were:

> 1) the promotion of scientific study and the exploration of Canadian alpine and glacial regions; 2) the cultivation of Art in relation to mountain scenery; 3) the education of Canadians to an appreciation of their mountain heritage; 4) the encouragement of mountain craft and the opening of new regions as a national playground; 5) the preservation of the natural beauties of the mountain places and of the fauna and flora in their habitat; and 6) the interchange of ideas with other Alpine organizations (Sandford, 271).

The ACC's regular camps, hikes and climbs promoted this mixture of Art, recreation, and environmental preservation, offering new parks users a conscious creed of use.

Although less formally organized, skiing was another recreational practice that expanded rapidly in the 1920s and 1930s and comprises a crucial component of the recreational practice expressed in this case. Recreational skiing came to the parks region much later than comparable forms of summer recreation. Sandford suggests that there was little recreational skiing prior to 1910 (1999/2000). The CPR closed its hotels in the winter and there was little impetus to develop winter sport from that quarter. In 1911, Swiss Guide, Conrad Kain, founded an informal ski-club in Banff that introduced Banff locals to the sport, including ski-jumping. Six years later, the Banff Winter Carnival brought ski-jumping professionals to the area. One of these, Gus Johnson, helped to organized the Banff Ski Club in 1917 (Hart, 1999). Mount Norquay became the site for the first established downhill ski runs, increasing in popularity and permanence through the 1920s. Ski-touring began even more informally. Sandford (1999-2000), writes,

> In March of 1929, Cyril Paris and Cliff White skied from Banff up Healy Creek with the intent of staying at a cabin above Wheeler Flats. Though they were benighted on the trail, they continued the next day to Citadel Pass. Not to be outdone, five Jasper skiers upped the ante by skiing all the way from Jasper to Lake Louise in January of 1930. The Rockies were suddenly open in winter (7).

Ski-touring made use of already extant cabins and newly built or renovated lodges including the adaptation of Assiniboine lodge and building of Skoki lodge (as described above). Neither Hart nor Sandford mention that the cabin at Lake O'Hara was also used as a base for winter ski-touring, but these case study albums provide ample pictorial evidence that it was. The earliest of these ski-

trips dates to 1933, placing the ski-touring represented in this case study at the very forefront of changing recreation practices.

Summary

The period prior to 1930 saw a great deal of change in the western mountain parks region. Chief among the changes was the beginning of a network of roads that would bring in a new kind of tourist and new tourist practices to be added to the old. Climbing and hiking would continue to grow in importance as forms of mountain recreation. Skiing was a relatively new form and assumed different guises, adapting old facilities and locales for new uses. Organizations such as the Alpine Club of Canada, the Sky Line Trail Hikers of the Canadian Rockies as well as the parks' own system of campgrounds introduced new practices to the experience of the parks and new individuals to extant practices.

Throughout these changes, photography would remain a constant mode of representing new uses and recreational practices. By 1930, the photographic history and context of the region reflected a dominant imagery based on a borrowed 'naturalism' further mediated through the representation of recreational activities. The stability of photographic codes from context to context speaks to the indebtedness and quick dissemination of the dominant imagery of the mountain parks. This stability of discourse also serves the needs of

photographers by providing their photographs with an aura of inevitability that disguises the changing nature of the practices represented.

The degree to which these possibilities are supported by the case study photographs and albums is the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE CASE

Introduction to Chapter Five

By 1930, certain forms of representation of 'nature' were borrowed and adapted by institutions, commercial interests and individuals in the mountain parks region. Ultimately, a dominant photographic image of the parks emerged that relied for effect on a history and tradition of 'naturalistic' imagery in a 'natural' medium. In the previous chapter, I detail this history and describe characteristics of the dominant image in question. I also point out that by 1930 significant social change, in the form of increased road building, was altering the kind of recreational use and users in the parks.

In this chapter, I provide evidence of these changes from the case study photographs themselves. I also suggest, based on findings in this case study, that the seeming inevitability of dominant imagery was useful to the amateur photographer of the time precisely because it legitimated new uses and new users.

Analysis of case photographs: content analysis of images

Content analysis: method

In order to assess the content of the photographs I undertook an informal content analysis. Beginning with a set of categories based on the work of Wyckoff and Dilsaver (see Chapter Three) I made numerous passes through the material, modifying their categories to suit the material. Through this process I arrived at a set of categories which most clearly expressed the content of the case study photographs. The main organizational divisions in these new categories are between images that reproduce predominately natural features, images that reproduce predominately human activities, and images that reproduce some other subject entirely. I further sub-divided each general category (natural features, human activities and other) into more detailed sub-categories. Sub-categories in the first case included vistas, peaks, water features, views from summits, geological features and other features. Sub-categories in the second included hiking, climbing, skiing, posing on summit, posing elsewhere, and other activities. Sub-categories in the third included animals, travel, accommodation and industrial features. In all cases, I made the final categorization based on the relative size of figures and features, placement of figures and features, subject gaze, and the captions associated with the image.

I discovered a methodological difficulty in determining whether or not to include a sub-set of photographs by other photographers. The presence of this multi-authored sub-set presented me with a number of options. I could include in the case study only those photographs by Betts and fail to consider the albums as a whole. Or I could include all the photographs and dilute a sense of authorship.

In the end, I decided to keep a separate tally of category totals with and without these photographs and base my final decision on a comparison between the two. I found that the inclusion or exclusion of the sub-set made no substantial difference to the relative representation of each category (expressed as a percentage). Additionally, where the ratio between the Betts photographs and the sub-set differed, the total number of photographs involved was so low that there could be no hope of any real significance—statistical or otherwise. The value of any generalization I might make on the basis of the difference was negligible. Finally and most importantly, I felt that the most useful understanding of evolving photographic practice as evidenced by these albums came, not from looking only at the act of photography, but from considering also how the photographer also composed photographs into albums. For that reason the totals below are based on all the photographs regardless of author. For interest's sake, I have retained the original separation between set and sub-set in Album Two in the content summary tables found below.

Content analysis: observations

In order to give a general sense of what kinds of photographs appear in the case study albums and in what quantities, I have chosen to express each category as a percentage. I remind the reader that the percentages given below are intended to approximate the relative occurrence of themes discovered within these photographs and not intended to be statistically representative of mountain or amateur photography in general.

Beginning with the most general thematic divisions, of the 402 photographs that make up the two albums, the majority (63%) contains content best described as of 'natural features'. Of these photographs of 'natural features' 87% completely lack any evidence of human activity at all. In only 13% of these photographs do figures appear and then only at a distance. This approximate ratio is preserved when Album One and Album Two are compared to one another.

Within the 63% of photographs of 'natural features' almost half (49%) are best sub-categorized as 'vistas'—a term I define for the purposes of this study as photographs of mountain environments over long distances, including multiple peaks and no significant human activity. The tendency toward panoramic views of mountain environments in these photographs is marked, even to the extent of including multiple photographs mounted to display a vaster expanse of peaks than the cameras lens can accommodate in a single image (Photographic Illustration 2). Additionally this category of 'vista' includes a small but interesting sub-category (1% of 'vistas') which is comprised of photographs taken from summits (and identified as such in captions). This sub-set of images has a set of companion images that I discuss below.

While almost half of the 'natural feature' images are of vistas, photographs of single peaks also occur and are plentiful enough to constitute the third largest of the 'natural feature' sub-categories—13% of total 'natural feature' photographs (Photographic Illustration 3). The representation of single peaks replicates in image the tendency to emphasize peaks through the use of name-
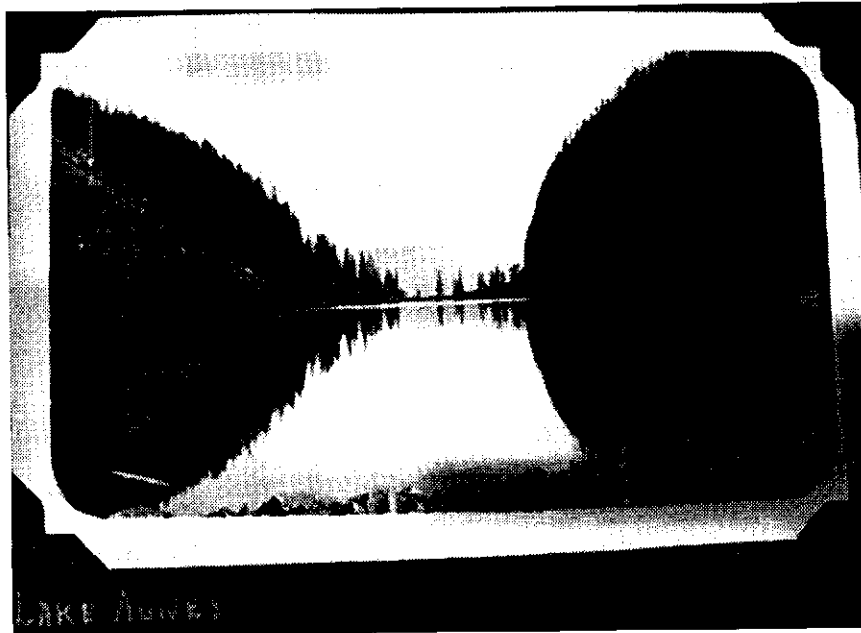
Photographic illustration 2

Photographic illustration 3

captions—a tendency I discuss in detail below. Combined, the 'vista' and 'peak'

photographs comprise 62% of the 'natural features' in this case study.

If single peaks and mountain ranges make up the bulk of photographs

that have 'natural features' as content, then those with 'water features' make up

the second largest sub-category. A full 33% of total 'natural feature' photographs

have lakes, rivers or falls as their primary content. Again, I considered water to

be primary content when it held a central place in the overall photographic

composition—a visual observation almost always supported by the caption

below as in Photographic Illustration 4).

Only 5% of 'natural features' were neither mountains nor bodies of water.

Of these photographs, most (4% of total 'natural features') showed geological

features of some description—details of glaciers and rock. The remaining 1% of

total 'natural feature' photographs contained content unique to itself. These

images still offer insight into the content of the albums by virtue of their under-

representation. The most powerful example is a single photographic image of

snow on a tree; an image which is emblematic of how very rarely vegetation—a

tree, a flower, a cluster of berries—forms the subject of these photographs. Here,

technical limitations, such as the lack of a focusing lens or black and white film,

provide a partial explanation, but this explanation is far from comprehensive.

The single photograph of snow on the tree demonstrates that such images were

both technically possible and aesthetically pleasing. The under-representation of

such images represents an active choice of subject matter.

If 63% of photographs in the albums depicted natural features—mountain

ranges and peaks, lakes, rivers and waterfalls, and geological features such as ice

Photographic illustration 4

and rock—then almost a quarter (24%) of the total images featured individuals or groups of people in mountain environments. I would like to make clear that—although I found peaks, falls or rivers in almost all images—the difference between the categories of 'human activities' and 'natural features' was that human content was clearly predominant in the former. That said, a number of total images (< 3%) were difficult to classify, consisting of images in which neither human activity nor natural features were exclusively predominant. As stated earlier, in these cases I used a set of compositional clues to assign these images to one category or the other. In then end, I was satisfied that these images ended up in the category with which they had the most aspects in common. Still, this is a limitation in my treatment of the data and there is a danger of forcing a more pronounced division between the presentation of recreation and environment than is present in the data.

Of the 24% of total images that featured 'human activity', well over half (66%) featured groups and 34% featured single individuals. In order to discover what activities were represented in these photographs I further divided these 95 images into sub-categories based on activity. I found that 21% of the 'human activity' photographs featured people hiking, a further 21% featured people skiing, and 9% featured people climbing.

The most common activity in which people pictured were engaged was simply posing (35%) (Photographic Illustration 5). Of course, many of the poses likely disguise other activities that have been temporarily suspended while the photograph is taken. Clues, such as skis, poles, ropes, ice axes, help to identify
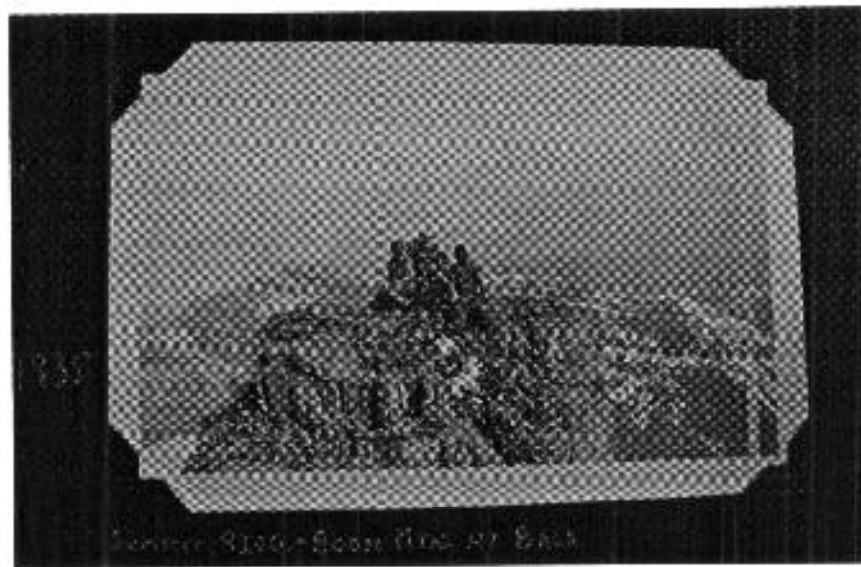
Photographic illustration 5

skiing and climbing but hiking is possibly under-represented in these numbers due to the lack of identifying equipment.

Interestingly, the figure of 35% posing subjects also incorporates a further sub-set of 10% made up of those images that are identified in captions as poses occurring on mountain summits. There is a temptation to combine the 'climbing' and 'summiting' categories, in which case 21% of activity photographs simply represent 'climbing'. However, not all summits were climbed. Some peaks (Fairview mountain, for example) obviously represent a hiked peak. Others (Cascade) represent a scramble, while still others (Mt. Victoria, the first peak of the Three sisters) qualify as climbs.

Whether climbed or hiked, I argue that 'summiting' is represented in these images as an activity in its own right, particularily when the activity is identified as such in the caption (Photographic Illustration 6). The category has a set of companion images in the 'natural feature' photographs taken expressly from summits. In total, 3% of total photographs in both albums are either taken on or from mountain summits. It is a small but evocative sub-category.

Of the remaining photographs that contain 'human activity' as primary subject, 14% showed subjects engaged in 'other activities'; the subjects were not posing, hiking, skiing or climbing. These other activities include domestic chores such as shoveling show, making fires, making tea, sweeping, drying wet clothes. A few, never repeated recreational activities, such as horseback riding and snowshoeing, are also represented in this category.

Finally, there remains 13% of total images for which I have not yet accounted. I found that these photographs contain content that fit into four sub-

Photographic Illustration 6

categories. The first category—forms of travel—comprises 5% of total

photographs. Here, I counted deliberate attempts to show means of travel, such

as trains, tracks, roads, cars and trails that are predominantly positioned and

captioned. A further 3% of the photographs were of animals, including

mountain goats, marmots, moose, chipmunks, porcupine, deer, and various

birds (gray jay, fool hen and ptarmigan). Another 3% of photographs were

photographs of accommodation (chiefly Alpine Club cabins). Finally, 1% of

photographs reflected some form of industrial feature (dams and a bridge).

In Table 1, I summarize the content of the first album. In Table 2, I

summarize the content of the second album. Table 3 reports the combined tally.

Table 1: Content - Album One

		Vista	Peak	Water	Sum.	Geo.	Other feat.
Natural Features	No figures	52	18	34	2	3	2
	With figure(s)	4	2	2	0	0	0
Human Activities		Hike	Climb-ing	Skiing	On sum.	Pos-ing	Other act.
	Groups	1	4	9	3	9	4
	Indv.	5	0	2	1	1	3
Other		Ani-mal	Travel	Accom-modat-ion	Indu strial		
		4	17	7	4		

Table 2: Content - Album Two

		Vista	Peak	Water	Sum.	Geo.	Other feat.
Natural Features	**No figures**	39/50 *	11/13	30/37	0	7/8	1
	With figure(s)	10/15	0	4/9	0	0	0
Human Activities		**Hike**	**Climb-ing**	**Skiing**	**On sum.**	**Pos-ing**	**Other act.**
	Groups	9/10	2	3/6	3	5/9	2/3
	Indv.	1/4	3	2/3	3	3/5	1/3
Other		**Ani mal**	**Travel**	**Accom-modat-ion**	**Indus -trial**		
		9/13	3	3/5	1		

* Where two numbers occur the first represents content tally for the work of K. Betts/ the second represents the total for the album which includes photographs by others.

Table 3: Content - combined Albums One and Two

|		Vista	Peak	Water	Sum.	Geo.	Other feat.
Natural Features	**No figures**	91/ 102	29/31	64/71	2	10/1 1	3
	+distant figure(s)	14/19	2	6/11	0	0	0
Human Activities		**Hike**	**Climb-ing**	**Skiing**	**On sum.**	**Pos-ing**	**Other act.**
	Groups	10/11	6	12/15	6	14/1 8	6/7
	Indv.	6/9	3	4/5	4	4/6	4/6
Other		**Ani-mal**	**Travel**	**Accom-modat-ion**	**Indus -trial**		
		13/17	20	10/12	5		

In summarizing the findings of the visual content analysis, I found that the overall picture created of the mountain parks area by these photographs was one of multiple peaks, single peaks, water features, geological features and other natural features. Humans photographed in the context of the environment were involved in explicit or implicit forms of outdoor recreation. The natural objects that were photographed tended to be gigantic in size. They also had a temporal permanence, lasting from season to season. These were features that could be identified from various perspectives, over long distances and over time. Perhaps most importantly, these were features that could be named—and in fact, they were named. Features that were unnamed as a result of their modest proportion or seasonal duration—small formations of rock or ice, temporary bodies of water, or plants—were photographed far less often than large and lasting objects.

Findings outlined in the previous chapter that suggested the wildness (or 'otherness') of the mountain environment was contained and 'bracketed' by representations of recreation are consistent with the findings outlined above (Bell, Wyckoff and Dilsaver). The mountain environment, in this case, is mediated implicitly and explicitly by human use. The content of these photographs reflects the photographer's use of a documentary mode of exploration, mapping and naming features that best lend themselves to those practices. Photographic practice reproduces this form of cultural discourse through the representation of the features photographed—ranges, peaks, lakes, rivers and falls. The containment of these features within representations of recreational activity is both incidental and useful.

Certain forms of recreation historically promoted by the CPR, the parks' administration or the ACC are reflected in these photographs even as local Calgary residents adopt them for their own. Patterns of recreation, transportation and accommodation are embedded in these photographs of 'natural' environments and so continued to be part of evolving representations of the mountain parks area. New forms of recreation, such as ski-touring, are seamlessly blended with the old (Photographic Illustration 7).

Other forms of recreation that played a significant role in earlier photographic representations of the region are entirely absent from the case photographs. Hunting has disappeared from these photographs as utterly as it was supposed to have disappeared from the park itself. Several of the categories determined by Wyckoff and Dilsaver also fail to be represented in the case photographs: park management, Wild West and Native Americans. Generalizing from a case is perilous and it is better to find evidence to support generalizations made in the literature than to try to do the reverse. All the lack of these kinds of images in this case can tell us is that they do not exist in this case—but, as I suggested earlier, they are suggestive of other possibilities, including divergent representational practices between American and Canadian National Parks.

These photographs are located at a crossroad of photographic practice and recreational practice. A specific history of human use is buried in these photographs of 'nature'. Further particulars of that practice are echoed and amplified as I now turn away from the content of the photographs to an analysis of their composition.
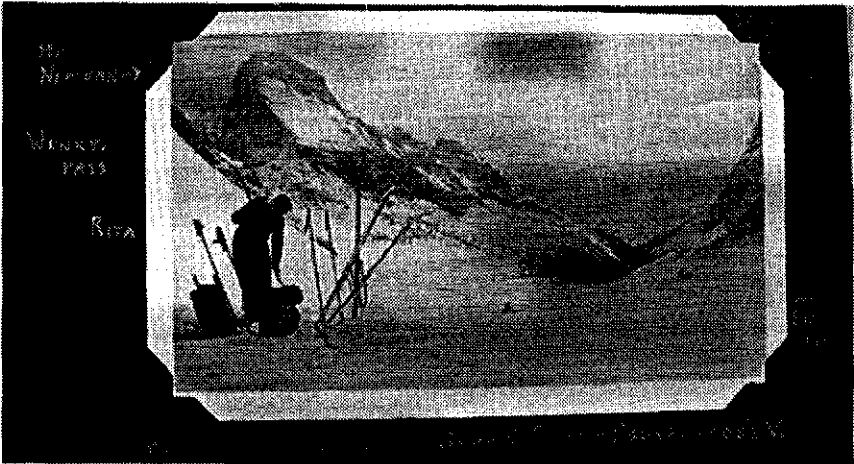
Photographic Illustration 7

Analysis of case photographs: compositional analysis

Compositional analysis: method

In analyzing on the basis of compositional elements I have limited myself
to considering those aspects identified in the discussion of the construction of
dominant imagery in the previous chapter. In that chapter, the dominant
photographic codes that were used to present the park prior to 1930 were largely
derived from an already established European naturalism—a form particularly
associated with photography but inflected by the painterly conventions of the
sublime. Consistent with this finding, composition is considered generally in
terms of fore, mid, and background relationships, balance, value, compositional
shapes and the placement of the human figure.

Compositional analysis: observations

In the case photographs that are best described as 'landscapes',
foreground objects sometimes are positioned in such a way as to denote depth in
the mid-ground and background, but this is not always the case. Focus is
generally sharp and depth of field is deep, which has the effect of flattening the
compositions. In the first album there is little evidence of selective focus or
framing to maximize depth. For example, there is surprising little use of the
standard landscape device of trees in the foreground, that frame a lake in the
mid-ground, that fronts mountain in the background. In addition, only very

occasionally does the placement of a human subject in the foreground produce an equally scaled fore, mid and background. The use of foreground objects to frame and add depth is more common in the second album. In these later photographs the human figure in particular is used in the foreground to produce effects of scale. Consistent with the use of the figure in the sublime, the figure is generally turned away to contemplate the landscape (Photographic Illustration 8).

The mid-ground is the source of much of the photographs' interest. The subject, whether it be human or environmental, is generally found in this area. Focusing distances must have had something to do with this compositional choice; still, the effect is to standardize the size of figures to some degree. The central placement of subjects forces the photographer to choose between human or environmental subjects. It is difficult to accommodate both in the same frame—either the overall landscape disappears to accommodate the human subject, or the human disappears when the landscape is the subject. In some photographs human subjects, although located in the mid-ground, are extremely small. The resulting effect is a shift in scale so that the mountains seem much larger by contrast—such an effect is consistent with conventions of the sublime. Posed photographs, of which there are fewer in the first than in the second album, do not follow landscape conventions in the least and locate all their interest in the mid-ground. This treatment of the figure in these works is significantly different than the treatment described above. The figure rarely is photographed in anything but a frontal pose with his or her gaze fully on the camera. Only when figures are photographed engaged in recreational activities

Photographic Illustration 8

such as climbing or skiing are they turned sideways or three-quarters to the camera. Even here there is a tendency to photograph skiers head on—in part to freeze the action where mechanical camera adjustments cannot, but possibly also as a result of a general bias in favour of frontal poses.

Mountains dominate the backgrounds of the photographs. Horizon lines are placed in the top third of the image in order to emphasize height. Some photographs from summits show considerably more sky, possibly to avoid the complete flattening out of space that occurs when the horizon line is raised to show more of the mountains below. Crisscrossing diagonals that divide the picture plane into three also create backgrounds. In this case, the diagonals create depth, although the aerial perspective that sometimes distinguishes foreground and background in painted or drawn landscapes is absent due to the deep focus of the camera and high atmospheric clarity of the mountain environment.

Where mountain ranges or massive peaks are placed at the compositional center there is a corresponding loss of perceived depth. Sky and valley floors are radically cropped in many of these images so that in some compositions fore, mid and background disappears into a homogeneity of tone and texture. Many of these photographs appear flat and without a center of interest, however they are among some of the most heavily captioned. Named and labeled, they present multiple points of interest to the viewer—an example of a documentary mode of photographic compostion (Photographic Illustration 9). Their inclusion into the albums would tend to suggest that these compositions are acceptable

Photographic Illustration 9

and possibly desirable even though they violate naturalistic codes of composition.

Balance is conventionally preserved through the symmetrical massing of shapes. Values are unevenly handled throughout the albums, likely because of lack of control in processing or printing. Contrast is sometimes marked; on other occasions it is flat. The limited ability to accommodate changing light conditions by changing aperture or shutter speeds is another likely cause of inconsistency. Where clean whites and blacks are present, balance is preserved through the symmetrical massing of these aspects as well.

Compositional shapes give the appearance of being incidental. The central placement of the subject determines most compositions. A frequent exception to this rule is found in the use of natural curves when photographing water features. Another classic landscape device associated with the photographing of water are the horizontally symmetrical compositions produced by a mountain and its watery reflection. In this case, as in others, compositional rhythm, like compositional shape, is discovered in extant natural forms while still maintaining a central placement of subjects.

With the exception of posed group or individual portraits, conventional landscape composition informs the underlying principles that guide the creation of the case photographs. That said, aesthetic principles are sometimes sacrificed in favor of documentary coverage. In particular, mountain features are sometimes photographed in accordance without conventional markers of depth and scale in order to photograph specific features. Some variation in applying the conventional rules of composition may well stem from the photographer's

youth and relative inexperience; the use of perceptual clues increases in the second (and later) album. However, in light of the photographer's tendency to photograph massive, permanent namable objects and his willingness to sacrifice aesthetics to coverage, I argue that the production of 'landscapes' was co-dependant with the documentation of environments. In fact, the compositional choices in these albums seek to provide to the viewer the most 'natural' appearance according to a presumed set of shared cultural conventions. An altogether unexceptional use of basic compositional indicators reproduces environments in photographs with minimal acknowledgment of the act of reproduction. Accordingly, the emphasis in these photographs is on the 'what' of each photograph—the vista, the peak, the river, lake and fall—rather than on the 'how'.

Aesthetic choices based on conventional landscape composition make possible the illusion of uninflected documentation ('natural' photographs) while still allowing some scope for the production of photographs that are 'beautiful'.

Analysis of case albums

In addressing the albums as a whole I am no longer thinking of these albums as a collection of single images but as a progression of interconnected images. By treating the photographs in context, I am looking for the organizational assumptions that pull these single images into a whole. What structural assumptions guided the selection and ordering of these photographs?

What expressive needs prompted the inclusion of certain sentences and words provided as captions? What are the effects of viewing the photographs in a form that is relational and sequential? In short, what is communicated by the organizational structures of the albums?

Analysis of case albums: organizational structures

Organizational structures: method

There is limited research on appropriate methodology for the analysis of the content of amateur photograph albums. As discussed in earlier, Walker and Moutlon (1989) suggest that many photographic albums are organized by their authors to accommodate a spoken narrative that accompanies the viewing. Walker and Moutlon then provide interpretative strategies by which implicit narrative forms in photographic albums can be uncovered in the absence of the author's own narration. Briefly, and by way of review, these strategies of interpretation are based on album type: family, event, trip, autobiography and special interest albums. The organizational categories that underlie many trip albums include the make-up of the group of travelers, unusual modes of travel, and clichéd 'tourist' photographs. The authors suggest that single trip chronologies are presented with obvious beginnings, middles and ends while multiple trip albums are frequently more concerned with cliché photographs of tourist locales than with chronologies of specific trips.

In terms of the typography provided by Walker and Moutlon, the albums I analyze in this case study were of the typography of the trip, and of multiple rather than single trips. However, when I began to look at the albums I noticed inconsistencies in applying Walker and Moutlon's interpretative strategies too strictly to these albums. The dichotomy of multiple versus single trip chronologies was absent. As I describe later in this chapter, multiple trips were represented in a rough chronological order, but the beginnings, middles and ends of any single trip were not necessarily represented in that order. Additionally, cliché tourist images largely were absent. Many trips failed to produce the standard images. Instead the photographs break up the famous views. Well-known sights are photographed from non-standard locations—places accessible only by climbs or scrambles of length and relative difficulty. Well-known sights are also photographed in less than flattering circumstance producing images that have the effect of reinterpreting the cliché. Standard compositions are reframed in order to represent better the geographic elements of importance. Obviously a different organizational logic informed these albums than that assumed by Walker and Moutlon.

In addition, there was no expressed methodology for treating the extensive captions that were a feature of these albums. The captions, while doing little to replace the albums' absent author, provided a little of the anecdote and personal data missing from an album entirely composed of images. For these reasons, Walker and Moutlon's typographies were useful but not fully applicable. Nevertheless, in accordance with their most general methodological recommendations I began to comb through the album looking for implicit

organizational categories and structural forms. My observations are found below.

As a methodological side-note, I would like to remind the reader of the fifty-four images in the second album that were made by photographers other than Ken Betts. In the up-coming description and discussion I treat these images as a whole with the others. This is consistent with my treatment of the same images in the preceding analysis of visual content. Also, the albums themselves have a single author (Betts) so I choose to operate under the assumption that the placement of all images follows the same guidelines.

Organizational structures: observations

Consistent with my description of the albums' content I remind the reader that I am analyzing two sources: layout and captions. Any overall content implicit in these albums is a product of the combined effect of both these features. Reporting them separately has the virtue of seeming clearer, but reporting them together has the virtue of acknowledging that their operation is indivisible. The arrangement of the photographs on the pages almost always reinforces the implications of the captions. This is especially true of the basic unit of organization: the trip.

Trips are variously defined by location or by date, frequently by both. Some trips incorporate several locations, in which case the date, and any title captions, become the distinguishing features. In this case, layout establishes that the images constitute a single trip but only after the captions have been read.

The trips are organized through the albums in a roughly chronological order with the earliest trips occur at the beginning and the last trips at the end. This chronology is not strict and deviations occur. For example, "Up Carrot Creek with Grassi and Montford. January, 1933" precedes "A try at Mount Temple with Montford at end of October 1932". The chronological rule is only generally true; it does not hold in every instance.

Once a trip has been laid out on the page (or pages) and further identified with a caption and/or a date, the use of chronology as an ordering principle is largely abandoned. Now geography becomes the ordering principle of choice. If the first order of narrative organization is 'the trip' then the second order could be termed 'the map'. Mapping the spatial relations through layout and caption becomes the pre-occupation of the albums' photographer, now turned compositor.

The beginnings and ends of trips are frequently positioned on the same page—passes are grouped together and captioned to give going-in and coming-out perspectives. An early example labels two adjacent images "Mitre Pass (left) (from Lefroy Glacier)" and "Lefroy Glacier (from Mitre Pass)". Likewise, images taken early and late in a trip might be combined to show a complete line of mountains or multiple views of the same peak from different perspectives. Panoramic layouts are common and photographs are not infrequently mounted side by side or overlapping in order to extend the camera's gaze. Examples include two photographs of Wind Mountain Pass, which are mounted separately but side-by-side with the comment "Looking up to south from picture on right". Other sets of two or three photographs are physically mounted as a single image

and labeled as one. Such is the case in the three shot "Panorama of Mt. Fairview" on page 39, or the two shot "Panorama of Lake Louise Group" on page 48, both of the first album. Other views are oriented to represent compass points. Four views (one missing) from the top of Yoho peak, found on page 37 of the second album, are labeled: "N.W.", "N.E.", "S.E.", & "S.W." with orienting comments such as "Upper reaches of Yoho Glacier", "President Group" or "Lake Louise Group at back" (Photographic Illustration 10).

The captioning particularly reinforces geographic order. Each caption names an environmental feature appearing in the photographic content. The proclivity for photographing large features readily recognizable at long distances, different perspectives and from trip to trip is emphasized by the captioning. Consistent with the findings in the content analysis, the captioning reinforces this naming function at every turn. Each range, peak, lake, river and fall is given its name, and sometimes the same feature is named several times from different approaches. In some photographs every such feature is named; a wild, jagged skyline is captioned with a neat row of names.

Photographic illustration 11 shows a 1931 trip from the Fay Hut that illustrates these patterns of geographic naming. The page is titled "Trip down (up) to Fay Hut" with the addition of the anecdotal comment "Climbs on 3 of 10 peaks". The first photograph on the page is captioned "Final ridge of Mt. Little from summit" and the "Fay Icefield". Set opposite it is another photograph that details "Crossing Fay Icefield". Below the first photograph is a summit photograph labeled "Desolation Valley from peak 3 - Hungabee at left". This particular photograph is further labeled at appropriate spots around the
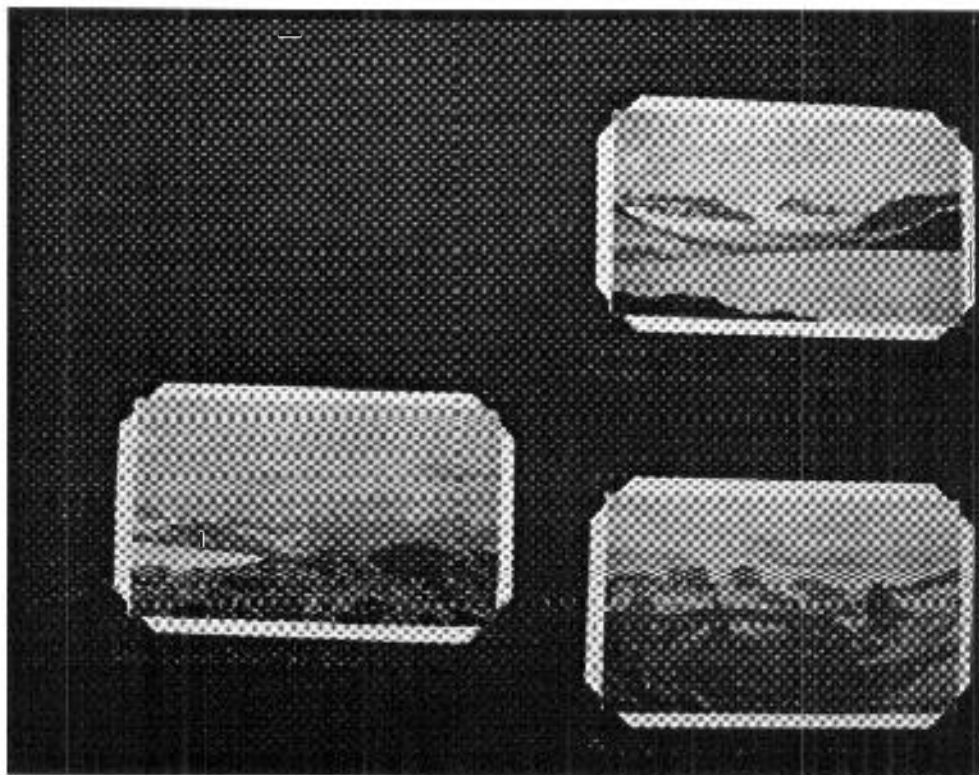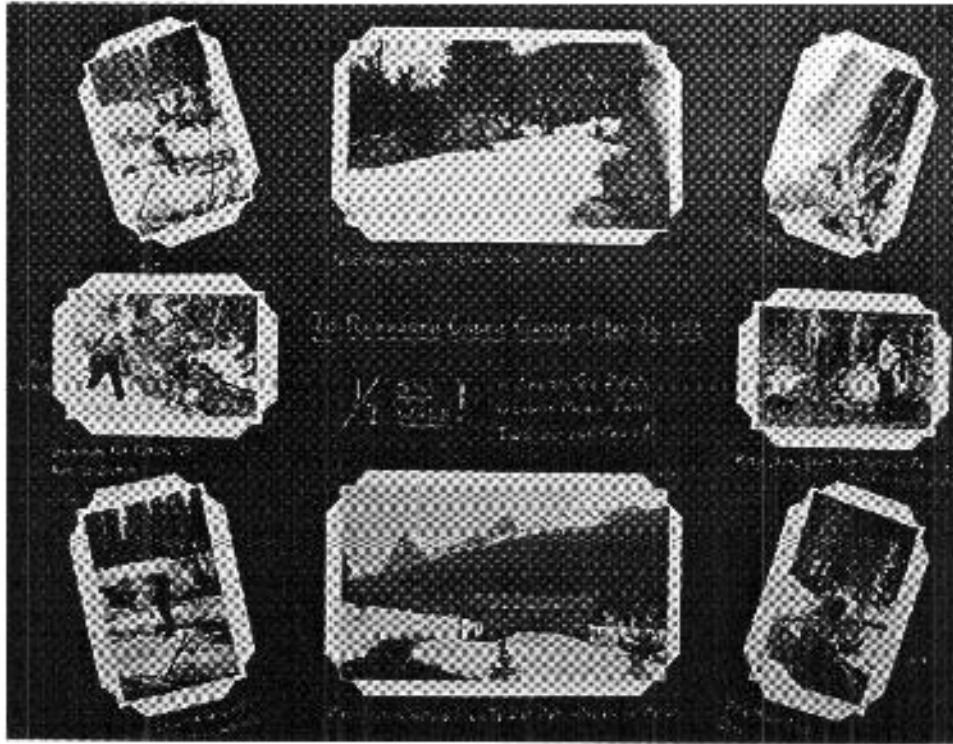
Photographic Illustration 10
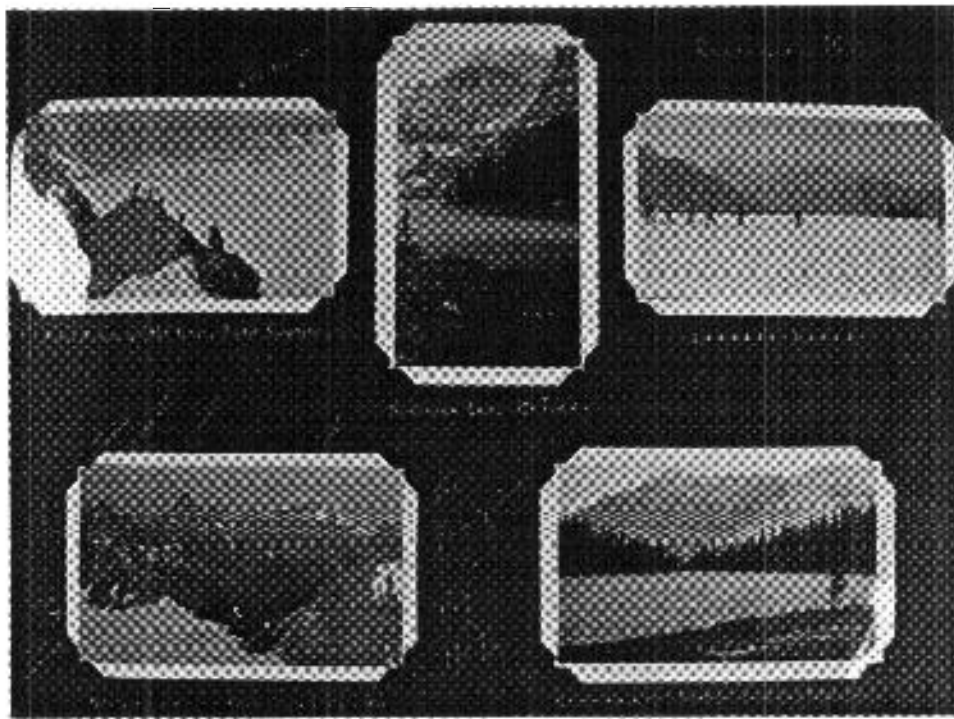
Photographic Illustration 11

perimeter with the words "Fay Icefield", "Lake", "Mt. Biddle"," 'Wenky' Pass",
"Hungabee" and "Mt. Lefroy". In all three photographs the identification of the
Icefield serves to orient the viewer. The final two photographs are captioned
"Kaufman Lake - Mt Tuzo" and "Kaufman Lake looking over the valley". The
first of these provides another view of part of the 'Ten Peaks' area while the
second provides another view from the same lakeshore.

I do not mean to suggest that these album pages constitute a thorough
photographic survey of the area, but I do suggest that these few photographs are
deployed and, especially, captioned in order to make the best 'map' possible.
The use of captions that consist of place names is the main means by which this
mapping is accomplished.

One exception to album organization based on principles of chronology
and geography is album organization based on anecdotal structure. By
anecdotal structure I mean stories that organize multiple photographs and must
be distinguished from anecdotal words or phrases that place individual images
into an anecdotal context. An example of anecdotal structure (Photographic
Illustration 12) demonstrates an unusual full page example in which
photographs are organized by event: bad snow conditions ("1/2 ski walk"), are
followed by an animal encounter ("Porcupine - had to chase out of cabin") and a
wetting ("Rita, Joe, Ken - the latter fell in the creek as usual"). Anecdotal
structures are still relatively uncommon, particularly as compared to
chronological or geographic structures. Fuller narratives, like the one above, are
rare.

Photographic Illustration 12

For the most part the basic ordering principle of chronology and then geography holds true throughout. Sometimes a trip chronologically positioned on a page or over several pages fails to show discernable geographic organization. The photographs seem to be mounted at random, as if it were enough for the composer to simply lump the same trip on the same page. I do not know why this should be. It is certainly possible that there is a geographic structure that I have not been able to discern. Alternatively, it is temping to speculate that the lack of structure had something to do with the conditions of making the photographs and/or the album. I cannot determine the time period over which the albums were composed although internal variation in construction suggests it was over several sittings at least and possibly over many sittings. This seeming randomness could be actual randomness—fatigue at the process of organization. Less than ideal photographic representation—lost pictures, pictures not taken, pictures of insufficient quality—could also result in a random collection of images. Still, like most exceptions, these random arrangements serve to support the general rule of organization based on chronology and geography.

In only a few cases do neither chronology nor geography organize the pages. The second page of the first album provides one such example on which three different dates and three different locales are represented by four separate images. Such a page seems to serve as a sort of clearinghouse of one-off images—an attempt to give them the solidarity they lack otherwise by physically grouping them together. Only in a few instances are one-off images left ungrouped so as to emphasize its unrelated nature. For example, a single

photograph of moonlight on the Glenmore Dam in Calgary is mounted alone on the reverse of a page. Interestingly it is also the only photograph in either album not taken in a mountain environment. Again, the singularity of this photograph's content and context serves to emphasize the photographer's tendency to group images and his use of chronology/geography to organize content.

By organizing the albums on the basis of chronology and geography general tendencies already identified in the content of the photographs are amplified. The documentary mode of exploration, which historically made environments communicable through the identification of features such as ranges, peaks, lakes, rivers and falls, determines not only the content of these photographs but the way in which they are organized into albums. The geographic identification and orientation provided through the layout reproduces this narrative of exploration.

Analysis of case albums: words and phrases

Words and phrases: method

In order to analyze words and phrases in the case study albums I catalogued the captions then grouped words and phrases by the function they served. Categories included: place or feature names (including hut and camp names), dates, locating words or phrases, companion names, and anecdotal

phrases. Anecdotal phrases were further subdivided into weather words,
· recreational words, travel words, photographic words. In reporting on the use of
words and phrases, I do not attempt to quantify the groupings in percentages but
report in more general terms, finding the essence of the captioning in the detail
not the quantification.

Words and phrases: observations

A survey of the kind of words and phrases that occur in the captions
supports the finding that chronology and geography are the underlying
structures which shape these albums. Most words and phrases are dates or place
names. The vast majority of the latter are names of environmental features such
as ranges, peaks, lakes, rivers, falls—a finding consistent with the findings on
photographic content. By naming a feature the caption reinforces the effect of
photographically singling it out and each name evokes a particular history of
exploration.

Names caption the geographic features. They also caption huts and cabins
(including Fay Hut, Abbot's Pass hut, Shadow lake Cabin, Assiniboine Camp,
Saddleback Hut, O'Hara CPR Bungalow camp, Redearth Creek cabin). The
names of individuals appear as well, usually in a spare, documentary form that
simply identifies figures: "Ken" "Herb" "Babs and Chris in doorway". Only
occasionally do names appear in anecdotal form; we read that "Rita is a very
poor housekeeper" or "Grassi likes a big fire even for a cup of tea". Anecdotal
phrases preserve the documentary feel: "Ski ground de luxe" or "Home sweet

home!! Shadow Lake cabin". Even the most fanciful are concentrated in form and restrict themselves to labeling a story rather than telling it: "The 'pansy' trip" (referring to my grandmother's qualities as an outdoorswoman), or "Two knights in 'Paradise'" (for a two-man, two night trip to Paradise Valley). Animal names also usually appear in the context of anecdotal phrases: "A free meal (Whisky Jack)" or "New Grizzly tracks on McArthur Pass".

Travel phrases duplicate the naming/locating function: "From New Road" or "The road and the canyon from the railway". Travel words are extremely common and usually occur in the form of directions—down, into, at left, west from, near summit, crossing, at back, up on are only a few such phrases (Photographic Illustration 13). Many of the geographic relationships between photographs are conveyed through words of this nature.

Words describing weather conditions also appear in the albums: "storm clearing", "snow very soft", "rotten weather", "heavy fog bank in valley", "good snow conditions" and "cold!!!". Some comments straddle the line between notes of conditions and anecdotes: "Sat., 11 p.m. - chinook. Sun., 1 am - chinook. Sun., 9 a.m. - storm. Sun., 9 p.m. - still snowing!" Their documentary quality is self-evident.

Interestingly, recreation, which is an important theme in the content analysis of the photographs, is somewhat muted in the captions. Specific mention is made of skiing or climbing particularly as a way of establishing a chronology: "Skiing in the winter of 1933-1934". Other recreational words are descriptive including "hauling", "traversed", or "attempted". However, there are many occasions where recreational activities in the photographs go without
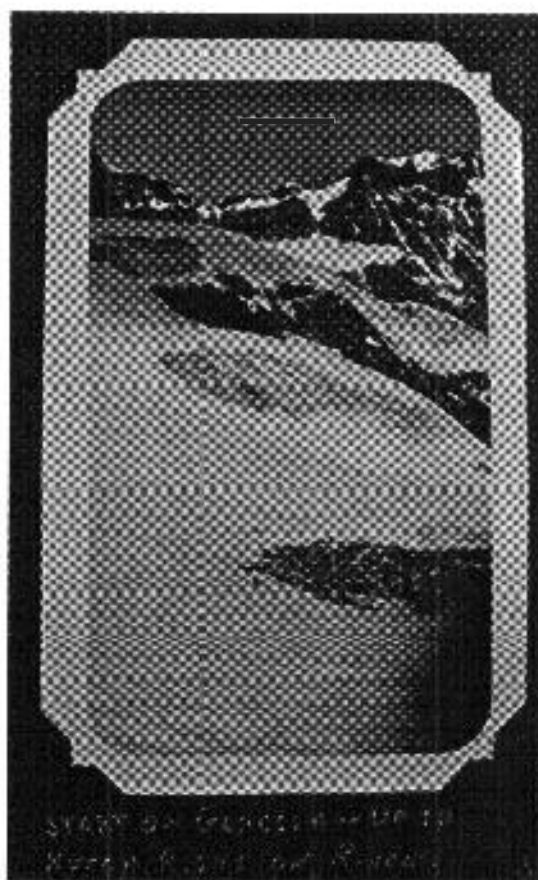
Photographic Illustration 13

mention in the captions. Significantly, climbs and ski trips are mentioned more often than hikes; unique forms of recreation such as snow-shoeing and horseback riding are fully captioned. The most common forms of recreation such as hiking have a 'taken for granted' quality. By way of contrast, the ever-present practice of identifying and captioning natural features in the albums suggests that these practices were always foremost in the photographer's mind. The absence of specific mention of recreational activities from the captions speaks to both their transparence and normalcy as a form of use in the mountain parks area.

The least common type of caption refers to the act of photography itself. There are only two examples of photographic information. The first, on page five of the first album, reads "Three Sisters (Time) 8 o'clock (5 sec.)". The second, thirty pages later, refers to the use of a self-timer. Like other forms of recreation, photography did not merit special mention. Like recreation, the act of making a photograph, was considered to be unremarkable—as 'natural' as the environments it described.

Summary

By dividing the analysis and discussion of the case study photographs provided into two sections, I have been able to consider the content and composition of the photographs separately from the ways in which these photographs are organized though implicit structures and annotation.

Exactly how the photographic reproduction of 'nature' described above and changing forms of recreational practice are interrelated in this case study is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction to Chapter Six

In the previous chapter, four analyses uncovered a number of themes in the case study photographs and albums that relate to the communication of a dominant image of 'nature' in the mountain parks. In the course of analyzing the content, composition, organizational structures and captions, I considered the relationship between these themes and the dominant image of the parks in the context of changing recreational use.

In this chapter, I summarize my findings and arrive at a cogent expression of possible implications. I again stress that this study is designed to be exploratory and descriptive. Generalizing from the data is possible only in a speculative context and in response to suggestions in the literature. With this in mind, I conclude this chapter by making some suggestions as to future research.

However, before I begin to summarize my findings and making recommendations, I would like to look at the elements in the case photographs and albums that support the idea of changing recreational uses. This case study, at its heart, is concerned with describing the communicative function of cultural artifacts, but it is also a consideration of historical evidence. There is ample evidence of changing recreational use of the mountain parks beginning in the early years of the century—the fourth chapter reviews this material. The first section of this chapter augments and particularizes that evidence, extending

forward the consideration of evidence of changing recreational use of the mountain parks to the 1930s.

Evidence of changing recreational uses

What evidence of changing recreational use do the case photographs and albums support? Not surprisingly, there is visible evidence of the effects of improved road access and increased local automobile traffic. Betts' earliest travel references are to the railway but there is increasing representation of automobiles after 1933. The earliest travel reference—"The Hobo trip" on page 4 of Album One—refers to Betts' practice of hopping freight trains to travel between Calgary and the mountains—one form of transportation readily available in the absence of an automobile (E. Bryan, July 10, 2001, personal communication). Trains and rail travel have a decided prominence in the early pages of the albums. For example, photographs of trains appear on page 1 and 19, while page 30 features in a full page spread documenting an early spring hike between Lake Louise and Field (Photographic Illustration 14). The railway tracks themselves feature as a hiking trail—the easiest route through deep snow. Most eloquent is the juxtaposition of a photograph showing the auto road buried deep in virgin snow (an upright snowshoe signals the depth) with a photograph of a triumphant engine steaming along the cleared tracks. The continued dominance of rail travel is explicitly addressed in these earliest photographs.
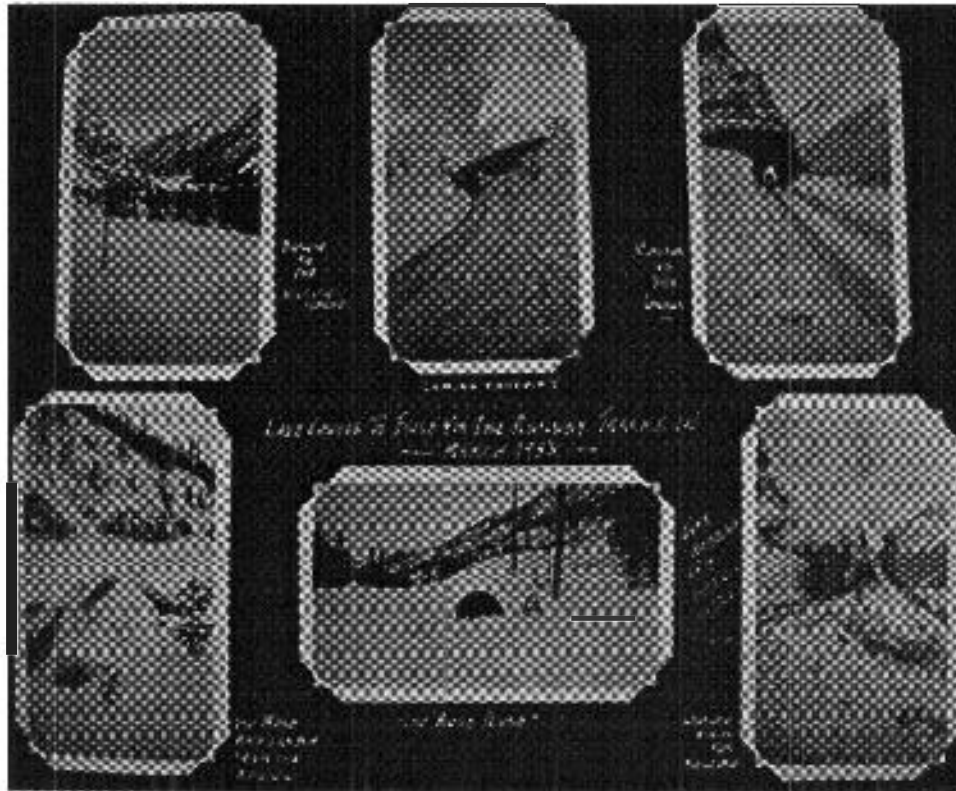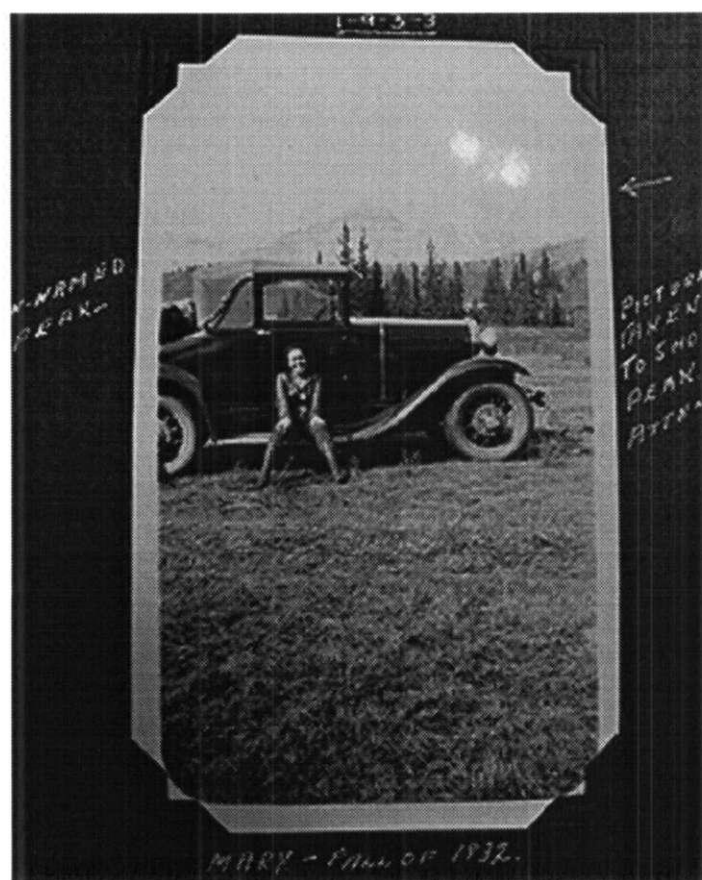
Photographic Illustration 14

However, riding the rails was not the only solution to the problem of transportation and access to the parks region. As suggested in the fourth chapter, another solution appears in the form of The Alpine Club of Canada. This organization provided another way to the mountains for a young local without means of transport. The albums contain photographs from a 1931 climb in the Valley of the Ten Peaks area, a 1932 trip up Mt. Edith and a 1933 trip up Cascade. Taylor (2001) writes that "well-to-do tourists wanting backcountry adventure traveled as part of organized groups... like the Trail Riders of the Canadian Rockies or the Alpine Club of Canada" (7). Betts' albums do not support this generalization. Hardly well-to-do, Betts' membership and subsequent instruction in backcountry use are more consistent with Sandford's (1990) observation that the ACC's founder (A.O. Wheeler) "proposed a club that anyone with an interest could join... [and that] annual club camps would offer cheap access to the Rockies and Selkirks" (252).

Nevertheless, as means of accessing the mountain parks both the railway, and the ACC, disappear from the albums after 1933. Here, internal evidence suggests that the formation of a stable group of hiking and skiing companions had something to do with this change; undoubtedly an increase in relative affluence with age also increased options with regard to transportation.

The first image of an automobile occurs in 1933—the penultimate year of the five years covered in Album One. The car, with my grandmother on the running board, is clearly at the center of the image (Photographic Illustration 15). After 1933, automobiles continue to feature in image and text: Album One: pages 38 & 41, Album Two: pages 21, 38 & 45. Interestingly, the car appears to be the

Photographic Illustration 15

same one but it has not been possible to discover to whom it belonged (it was unlikely the photographer's own). Reference to "the car hike with the gang", "From New Road" or "The new Lake Louise Jasper Highway as far as Peyto Lake Road to Bow Pass" reinforce the increasing presence of the automobile

It is interesting to compare the case study albums with the two guidebooks from the 1920s. *50 Switzerlands in one: Banff the beautiful, Canada's National Park* represents an automobile only twice in its eighty pages (and one representation is a back page advertisement for car tours). The visual possibilities of car and road would seem to be less than compelling, despite the inclusion of a full-page written description of 'auto drives' (25). By way of contrast, there are six images of horses used as mounts or pack animals in this 1923 guidebook. There are no images of automobiles at all in *Round About the Rockies: a guide book for the tourist, a souvenir for his friends*, although the first and second plates are of pack horses and a train respectively. It is hard to know the reason that automobiles are more readily represented in a mountain context in the case study than in the guidebooks. It is very possible that a steep increase in representation of cars occurred over the 1930s, corresponding, presumably, to the increase in cars themselves. It is also possible that amateur photographers were the ones to establish the template for specific representations that commercial photographer subsequently followed (for example, the car on the winding road under the mountain, or the group posing with car in front of mountain lake). There is no particular reason to assume that commercial photographic codes always precede amateur ones.

In the case study photographs and albums, automobiles are more than photographic content. The use of cars also altered recreational practices. A comparison of itineraries for two different weeklong holidays is most eloquent of the change in recreational practices brought about by automobile travel. The first itinerary is from 1932, before the first appearance in the albums of the automobile. The second itinerary is from 1933, after the first appearance. In 1932, a five day trip takes the following form: "Trip route - Healy Creek, Brewster Creek, (ditto) Pass, Og Pass, Lake Magog Camp - Valley of Rocks, Golden Valley, Citadel Pass, Sunshine Camp, Healy Creek, home to Banff - five days". A year later a car makes all the difference in the pattern of travel: "October - 8 - Climbed Cascade. 9 - Drove to Field. 10 - Climbed first sister at Canmore. 11 - Went to Banff. 12 - Drove to Wapta and went to Lake O'Hara. 13 - Caves & Lake Arthur. 14 - Home. 15 - Hiked to Taylor Lake". Prior to the car, a trip consisted of a multi-day backpack that made use of CPR or ACC huts to allow foot transport into and out of a single area of interest. After the car, such a trip was still possible, of course, but had to compete with a new pattern of use in which multiple locations were accessed for single day hikes or climbs that extended from the spine of the roadway. There is a degree of novelty in this later form of travel; as time passes in the albums multi-day, single location use reasserts itself. The point I wish to make is not the substitution of forms of use but the addition.

Of course, this is a case study and comprises a set of individual circumstance. The changes in practice do not reflect a necessary and inevitable correspondence between road-building, automobile ownership and the

circumstance of these albums. The presence after 1933 of a car belonging to the
photographer or, more likely, to a frequent hiking companion is evidence of a
specific, personal change in circumstance and not of widespread social change.
However, in light of other evidence of new roads and increasing access, the
changes reflected in these albums are emblematic of significant changes in
patterns of local use in the mountain parks region.

Other changes in patterns of use suggested by the literature are less
evident in the albums. Tenting is rarely presented in the albums. Instead, CPR
and ACC huts and cabins are presented exclusively as the mode of
accommodation. If other forms of accommodation were used (and they must
have been on the trip that followed the 1933 itinerary provided above) they are
not represented. The representation of the huts and cabins and lack of
representation of tents or bungalow camps is something of a puzzle. Possibly the
photographer's tendency to emphasize backcountry trips and accommodation
excluded the photographing of front-country accommodation. If this is the case,
front-country accommodations (roadside campgrounds or bungalow camps)
were not likely considered by the photographer to be consistent with the
representation of the mountain parks in the same way as backcountry huts.
Interestingly, this failure to represent changing forms of accommodation
suggests that the negotiation of the parks' image in this case included new forms
of transportation but not new forms of accommodation. It is impossible to know
why this should be the case but perhaps, in the photographer's view, there was
an incompatibility between the exploratory mode of the albums and the
rhetorical value of newer forms of accommodation. The geographic location of

the accommodation may also have failed to reverberate with the version of the nature expressed in the albums. Whatever the reason, the decision of the photographer not to depict new forms of accommodation is an example of how amateur photography can be set to legitimate one set of practices while disguising another.

One rather obvious aspect of use recorded by the albums that reflects contemporary patterns of use is the dates of trips. There is a not surprising tendency for many of the photographs to have been taken on holidays—New Year's Day, Labour Day and the May 24th long weekend occur most frequently. However, despite this pattern of holiday picture taking every month of the year is represented somewhere in the seven year period spanned by the two albums. This reflects the broad base of recreational activities detailed below. It bears mention that an emphasis on weekend and holiday use was very different than the patterns of use during the heyday of the CPR.

The mountain locales represented in these albums vary, but for the most part the albums represent locations along the great divide within Banff, Yoho and Kootenay National Parks and Assiniboine Provincial Park. Locations in Jasper, the Kannanaskis area and the mountain area east of Banff are represented, but not nearly to such a degree. The areas that are most often represented are Lake O'Hara in the Yoho, and the system of valleys on the other side of the divide that comprise the Lake Louise, Paradise Valley and the Valley of the Ten Peaks. Other areas are less frequently visited but heavily documented when visited: Mt. Assiniboine and the rest of the Yoho are the two best examples.

Any expectation that photographs of front country tourist sites would precede photographs of backcountry is not borne out by my analysis. Classic tourist sites are infrequently represented and, when they do appear, are different than the 'templates' suggested by commercial photography. For example, the standard image of Lake Louise appears only once—photographed on a dull day and under several feet of snow. Similarly, the peaks of the Valley of the Ten Peaks appear but from the B.C. side of the great divide—unrecognizable as the iconic image presented by the Moraine Lake viewpoint. Some images, for example Takakkaw Falls, receive a more conventional treatment, but this is the exception. In general, the photographs in these albums do represent a number of tourist views, but the photographer frequently chooses perspectives that present new versions of familiar sights. However, it is the change in recreational practice that prompts the new images, not a desire on behalf of the photographer to challenge traditional landscape forms. New ways of accessing the mountains—whether they be new tourists using little used areas and/or visiting at new times—bring about the changes to the dominant image but within the context of an extant visual tradition and history.

To summarize, evidence in these albums reflects changes in recreational use brought about by contemporary changes to roads and to ease of access for local residents. I suggest that the gradual change, from the prominence of railway travel to ever increasing car travel, is reflected in these study albums. Other trends, specifically the use of established park camping-grounds and bungalow camps, are not in evidence in the photographs. Instead the depiction of huts and cabins maintained by the Alpine Club of Canada or the CPR reflects

historic forms of recreation. The ACC itself appears in the albums as the photographer's introduction to the parks but its relative importance diminishes over the albums' time-span. The albums themselves suggest a pattern of use that emphasized weekend visits, especially over long weekends—a current pattern of use that is familiar to the point of being obvious, but likely was important to the increasing development of local tourism. Finally, I note that the locations represented in the photographs reveal a pattern of use that emphasizes those regions of the parks that were already well known. However, even here, new recreational practices allow new perspectives of these areas, although within traditional landscape conventions. These albums clearly embody something of a moment of transition in the history of use in the mountain parks.

Conclusions

The question with which I began this study asked how, in a context of changing recreational use, 'nature' is communicated in amateur photographs of Canada's mountain parks. The answer takes in the content of the photographs, the composition of the photographs, the organizational structures of the albums and the content of the captions. Each of these aspects—content, composition, organization and captioning—represents a site of possible negotiation with the dominant image of the mountain parks region. Whether these negotiations are consciously expressed intentions is beyond the scope of this case. The essential question is whether or not these negotiations, in the form of amateur

photography, serve any particular purpose. It is possible to argue, and some do, that amateur, mountain photographs are merely replications of mass-media images. In this view, amateur, mountain photography simply serves the purposes of those who produce and disseminate those mass-media images. Alternately, if the photographs can be shown to construct 'nature' in their own way, then the images can be said to bear witness to individual reconfigurations of mass-media images for new communicative purposes.

Photography is particularly well suited to sleights of hand involving cultural meaning. Photography has been viewed historically as a 'natural' medium that produces an image without human interference. As a consequence, all products of photographic processes have, at least, an implicit claim to being 'natural'. When 'natural' features—environmental aspects that have already been constructed as 'natural' by discourse—are photographed by this 'natural' medium, the presumed inevitability of such an image forms a powerful rhetorical trope. I argue that amateur photographers intuitively have been able to take advantage of this trope to extend the discourse of the 'natural' to recreational activities that it might otherwise not include.

Photography does more than 'naturalize' images of places or the actions of individuals. Photography is also a medium reputed to preserve whatever it reproduces. The conservation motto, 'Take nothing but pictures; leave nothing but footprints', provides an example of the double inflection that characterizes attitudes towards photography and 'nature'. At the level of the physical environment, 'taking nothing' away from the environment preserves it intact. At the level of symbolic 'nature', the act of 'taking pictures' in itself preserves the

environment as if photography had the power to subsume and contain fragile and threatened nature. It is at this level that photography legitimates new recreational uses of mountain environments that otherwise might be open to question. By photographing some activities (skiing) but not others (bungalow camps), photographers extend a symbolic penumbra of 'naturalness' to new recreational activities.

In the case study albums, dominant imagery is negotiated within the naturalizing practice of photography through choice of content, composition, organization and captions. An analysis of content reveals that the photographer showed a particular interest in recording environmental features that were large-scale, permanent and named—features that best lend themselves to practices of documentation including exploration, mapping and naming. In turn, environmental content is 'naturalized' through the use of traditional forms of landscape composition. In a Barthesian sense, each image is emptied out of the history of its cultural production as 'nature' and, as a result, is able to assume an additional documentary function when the photographs are put into albums. Documentary function is emphasized through the organizational structures that determine the placement of images. Geographic organizational strategies are embedded in an overall chronological organization, based around identified and dated 'trips'. Geographic organization is conveyed through the naming and locating function of caption words and phrases. Overall, the layout of the albums forms a very loose series of maps in which photographs of related geographic features are oriented to the viewer and other images though words, phrases and physical proximity. Words and phrases, however, do not represent

recreational activity to the same degree that it is represented in the visual content.

Something of a paradox emerges from these findings. We must remind ourselves that 'nature' is an inflected term to describe otherwise meaningless environmental data and that the use of the term 'nature' implies a variety of value systems, depending on use. The case study albums represent a view of 'nature' established by the photographer through exhaustive documentation in the form of naming and mapping of environmental features. An exploratory ethos is borrowed from historical discourse by which use of the mountain parks are reconfigured in terms of chronologies and geographies. Paradoxically, while natural features are dated, related and made the subject of intense photographic practice, human recreational activities assume a transparency and a 'naturalness' that stems from repeated visual association. In these albums, as in the history of the parks, the images of skier, hikers and climbers in the parks environment are taken for granted while 'natural' environmental features are repeatedly identified and mapped.

Such a paradox inadvertently is useful to the contradictory needs of new local users of the parks region who must have been eager to establish their own claim to the area. Once established, the 'naturalness' of recreation in mountain environments effectively defers concern about increased use. In short, in order for new patterns of recreational use to blend seamlessly into the on-going use, the region's 'natural' environment is best represented though established modes of photography, but human activity is best made 'natural' through silence. Mountain images, which seem so natural and transparent, are as rhetorically

freighted as any other photographic image. The seeming inevitability of the use of the camera as a response to highly valued natural environments speaks to the way in which a common theme of 'nature' linked and continues to link the two. That this link should prove to be useful to new uses and users is hardly surprising, but its strength depends on the degree to which it remains unarticulated.

I asked at the beginning of this study what it is that these albums and their photographs achieve with regard to the social construction of nature. I argue in these pages that the albums construct nature in relation to changing recreational use. Various ways of representing nature, drawn from traditional landscape idiom as well as a documentary idiom allow the photographer to adopt, adapt and reject representations to frame his own use of mountain environments.

The adoption of classic landscape devices, such as the arrangement of fore, mid and background space or the scale comparisons between figure and landscape, establish a portion of the images in the landscape tradition of the sublime. The adoption of aspects of this particular idiom gestures toward the awed, almost religious sentiments of the sublime tradition. This tradition is evoked by the photographs to the degree that the sublime remains an almost instinctive trope in contemporary cultural understanding. Equally, documentary idiom is evident in the photographs that abandon the traditional landscape concerns of depth and perspective in favour of the presentation of a flattened and recorded space more consistent with photogrammetric photography. The adoption of both documentary and landscape idiom in the same album, and even on the same page, suggests that 'nature' was constructed in these photographs as

both a location of exploratory, recreational use as well as of aesthetic pleasure. Perhaps it is not surprising that the aesthetics of exploration and the exploration of aesthetics should find ideal expression in landscape photography and its distinctive relationship between environmental and technological 'natures'.

The adaptation of certain representations of nature occurs within the stylistic framework described above. Adaptation comes in the form of new perspectives on classic mountain images as established by the discourse of CPR tourist advertising. These new perspectives can be physically different representations of otherwise familiar sights. For example, The Valley of the Ten Peaks from the backcountry to the west adapts familiar territory (as identified by caption) to incorporate new approaches, new backcountry use. The effect is to ground new recreational representations in an already on-going visual conversation. The legitimacy and value of the picture taking activities is established by the familiarity of the iconography. The increasing use of backcountry areas is seamlessly included in a view of 'nature' already legitimated by photographic tourism. In this same way, winter use by Calgary locals, which increased through the 1920s and 1930s, adapts a view of 'nature' that does not change with the new use but adapts previous iconography to the new season. For example, Lake Louise appears under a bed of snow. Or elsewhere, figures are treated identically in the photographs and only the exchange of walking sticks for ski poles indicates any change in use. New iconographic units are formed from earlier representations of nature, including the substitution of the car for the figure in mountain landscapes.

Finally, it is important to consider the range of representations of nature that are rejected. They include forms of representation of nature that are inconsistent with large-scale mapping approaches that replicate exploratory rhetoric: small scale photographic nature studies, transitory snow effects, temporary bodies of water. Rejected representations also include a rejection of unadapted representations of cliched tourism imagery. For example, there are few images of expressly tourist sights such as Lake Louise from the Chateau in summer. In addition, images that do not include the mountain environment even peripherally are rejected. Attempts at closely framed images of individuals and indoor photographs of the many cabins and huts are absent from the album. The range of rejected images reinforces the impression of a 'nature' that is sublime, untouched and available for recreational exploration.

Recommendations

What are the implications of the association of the photographic medium and the representation of 'nature'? I suggest that the implications are essentially ethical. We need to remember that the practice of photography never produces 'natural' products. We need to be careful how we view and use photographed environments. We should be conscious of the ameliorative effect of photographing threatened environments. We know that our environmental assumptions are reflected in the way we reflect the world around us; we also need to consider how unspoken assumptions about representational practice

produce or reinforce particular notions about the environment. In doing so, we move toward the development of a visual ethics for representing environments, such as the mountain parks area, where use is controversial. In making images of the mountain parks, how does each image we fashion and promulgate fit back into the complicated meshing of discourse? By identifying a specific relationship between Canada's mountain parks, their representation and assumptions about use, we will better understand the implications of the forms of representation we choose.

Other implications of these findings for further research comprise a closer examination of the visual rhetoric of the parks region. How do various organizations use mountain images? Are the same kinds of visual images of mountain locales used by both organizations promoting tourist use and organizations promoting ecological preservation. If so, how are such diverse images informed by the same visual rhetoric. Alternatively how does amateur photography represent other locales?

Finally, the question of how amateur photographers operate in a context of mass images is complex. The degree to which amateur work represents evidence of substantive negotiations with dominant imagery in the context of other practices cannot be answered by a single case study. Nevertheless, in this case there is evidence to suggest that the dominant image of a place can be adopted, adapted or rejected by a photographer in ways that may be advantageous to his own needs. Individuals are active users, not passive consumers, of mass-mediated images. Whether or not this generalization extends to the work of other photographers in other contexts is not known and

only future research can confirm the supposition. Also, there are considerable limitations to the consideration of the implications a body of work without some confirmation or disapprobation on behalf of the photographer. Further research needs to center on broader based analyses and investigations that also incorporate the understandings of photographers as well as analysis of their work.

The paradox of amateur photography, which is at once personally valued and publicly banal, is emblematic of humanity itself, formed with an individual and a mass face. The reconciliation of these apparent opposites requires understanding beyond the ken of most of us. Most of all it requires an abiding respect for the details that embody both.

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