

Case Study #5

Camping As A Democratic Pastime

Ethics are so you don't screw it up for the next guy, and style is so you don't delude yourself into thinking you're so hot. Yvon Chouinard

Dirtbag is an endearing term used by *Patagonia* founder Yvon Chouinard to describe the people they design for - *people who have a passion for what they do* - like the surfer who sleeps out on the beach all night to be the first one in the water the next morning.

Chouinard forged pitons during the winter months, spent April to July on the walls of Yosemite, then headed out of the heat of summer for the high mountains of Wyoming, Canada, or the Alps, and then back to Yosemite in the fall until the snow fell in November. He supported himself selling gear from the back of his car. The profits were slim, though. For weeks at a time, he'd live on fifty cents to a dollar a day.

Before leaving for the Rockies one summer he bought two cases of dented, canned cat tuna from a damaged-can outlet in San Francisco. This food supply was supplemented by oatmeal, potatoes, and poached ground squirrel and porcupines.

In Yosemite, Chouinard and his friends were called *the Valley Cong*. They had to hide out from the rangers in the boulders above Camp 4 after they overstayed the 2-week camping limit. They took pride in the fact that climbing rocks and icefalls had no economic value - that *they were rebels*.



VIEW - To gain an appreciation for the life of climbers and adventurers, view *Valley Uprising* and *180°South* - both available on *Netflix*.

Case Study Resources

- *The Dirtbag Manifesto* By Donovan Webster
- *Roughing It - Quotes from the Masters*
- *Go Light Camping - Quotes from the Masters*
- *Recipe For a Dirtbagging Trip* by Steve Gillman
- *Dirtbag* by Yvon Chouinard
- *The Climber's Bill of Rights* by Yvon Chouinard
- *The Post-Modern Outdoor Ethic*
- *A Woodsman Reveals His Fashion Secrets*
By Mike Everett, 2003
- *In Defense of Wool Pants* By Rob Weller



* Text Questions to Consider:

1. What is a "manifesto?"
2. What is a "pedagogy?"
3. What is a "dirtbagger?"
4. How does the 10-80-10 rule apply to our previous discussions - Dirtbag Manifesto?
5. What does the author mean when he says "dirtbagging is a process." How does this relate to Chouinard's thesis in his paper *A Climber's Bill of Rights*?
6. Are we truly "losing adventure?"

* Context Questions:

1. Reflect on our previous discussions and write a simple manifesto that puts this reading in context for a camper in our time.
2. What's a "swagman?" a "billy," a "tucker bag."

Questions from *A Woodsman Reveals His Fashion*

1. How does the author define:
 - FORM -
 - FLASH -
 - ACTION -
2. What does the author cite as "the hallmarks of the true woodsman."
3. What are the items "that make or break the woodsman's ensemble?"
3. Why should we "beware the poorly dressed woodsman."

Questions from *In Defense of Wool Pants*

1. What concerns Weller most about the shift from tradition to high-tech gear?
2. How often do you hear the term "system" related to modern equipment? What's the supposed reasoning behind its use (Refer to "Hegemony").
3. What is the problem with state-of-the-art equipment? How does it affect the decision-making process?

4. What are the actual technical comparisons between wool and synthetic clothing?
How do they actually match up? Include the carbon footprint.
5. What are the two main factors in the Petzoldt school of economics?

OPTIONAL READ: *The Importance of Traditional Woodcraft Skills*
By Paul Van Horn (#2 in the resources file)

Really Test Yourself: Extra Credit

1. What is a timeline and how does it work?
2. What was President Hinkley's favorite quote about living simply?
3. Your instructor will review a phrase "Just beyond your doorstep." How does this apply to this case study?
4. What does the idea of "sustainability" have to do with tradition?
5. What does "style" have to do with this discussion?
6. Create your own "Post-Modern Land Use Ethic."
7. Where do hobos fit into this discussion?
8. Where does the term "Billy Can" come from?
9. What is "spooza?"
10. What is a IIIB?

View: 30 Days To Survival - documentary of a NOLS course in 1969
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8zKt8btHYU>

Other Resources:

Simple Life (Friluftsliv) - People Meet Nature by Roger & Sarah Isberg

Elders Of The Tribe:

- Joseph Knowles
- George Washington Sears
- Jack London
- Rudyard Kipling
- Paul Petzoldt
- Yvon Chouinard
- James Austin Wilder
- George Mallory
- John Burroughs
- Henry David Thoreau
- Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Roy Chapman Andrews
- Richard Harding David
- Charles Fletcher Lummis
- Frederick Russell Burnham
- Millican Dalton
- Willis Willey