

Traditional Camping

A Syllabus of Readings and Assignments

By David Wescott, 2017©

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Case Study #5 - Camping As A Democratic Pastime: Style vs Ethics

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

Yvon Chouinard is a highly respected leader in the outdoor field, but he still maintains many of his early dirtbag beliefs. They say to never let him cook on an expedition. Today, it's not so much his legend, but his outlook that have garnered the respect that he now enjoys. From an article entitled the *Climber's Bill of Rights*, written for the book *Voices From The Summit*, Chouinard has said, "*Ethics concern values, morals, and the principles of right and wrong—not only the rules of conduct among ourselves...The interesting question is whether we're talking about style or ethics here. I say it's pretty simple. 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. Here's all you need to know about climbing ethics:*

The Climber's Bill of Rights - You have the right to climb anywhere, in any style you want, as long as you don't alter the medium or infringe on the next person's experience.

*Although style is mostly defined in degrees, we need to establish an absolute cornerstone. Let's call it **perfect style**. In climbing, perfect style is a naked human soloing a new route on sight. Anything other than that is of lesser stylistic value: If you put on shoes - you get docked one point; extra sticky rubber - two points; previewing or reading a topo – another point; placing one piece of pro - another point; and so on ad infinitum. The farther you get away from Perfect Style, the less proud you should be of yourself.*

As a sport matures it doesn't necessarily get better.... Western man, in his rush to blindly embrace all new technology, is missing a crucial stage in his development.

Many of the solutions to our complex environmental problems will not be achieved with increased complexity. Question every technology. Reject the unnecessary. Keep it simple. Leave room for serendipity. Keep it real and do no harm. We should seriously consider David Brower's advice: "...Turn around and take a forward step."

*Being an expert need not be a function of your job... Cliff Jacobson says, "Experts are distinguished by the **style** in which they travel, not by the difficulty of the trips, or the number of days out." **Style and skill are synonymous.***

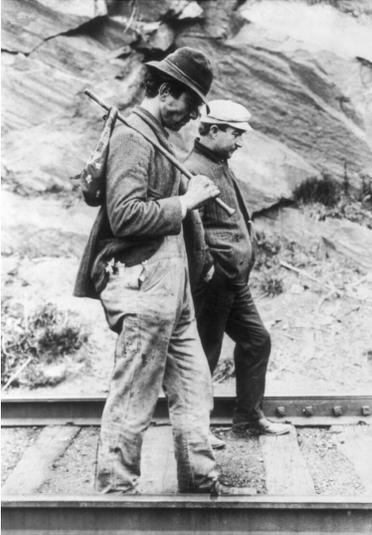
Stephen Gorman, AMC Guide to Winter Camping

Balloons & Bindles On The Road With The American Hobo Steven M. Watts...2013



*"They were road kids, and with every word they uttered the lure of
The Road laid hold of me more imperiously...And it all spelled Adventure."*

Jack London



Definitions (from The Golden Age—1870's-1920's)

***Hobo:** migratory worker ("travels and works")*

***Tramp:** migratory non-worker
("travels but doesn't work")*

***Bum:** non-migratory non-worker
("neither travels nor works")*

"The Civil War had turned thousands of boys into disciplined foragers, resilient, hardened, able to find food and shelter in all conditions, proficient in the use of the railroad. After the war, many of these men, uprooted and inured to years of wandering and fighting for survival, found peace an unsettled time. Few jobs awaited. Now, with the days of troop movements and army camp life and dodging hostile forces behind, many continued their wandering—picking up odd jobs, sleeping outdoors under any available cover, begging meals, a new kind of adventure for which they were well trained. They followed wagon roads and trails. But mostly they hit the tracks."

Roger A. Bruns, Knights of the Road, 1980

These men, and a few women, wandered the country working in mines, logging camps, and shipyards. They worked for the farms, the railroads and the road crews. Some of them wandered to Texas joined the great cattle drives and became the mythic American cowboy—"hobos-on-horseback". Hobos literally built the new America of the late-19th/early 20th century.

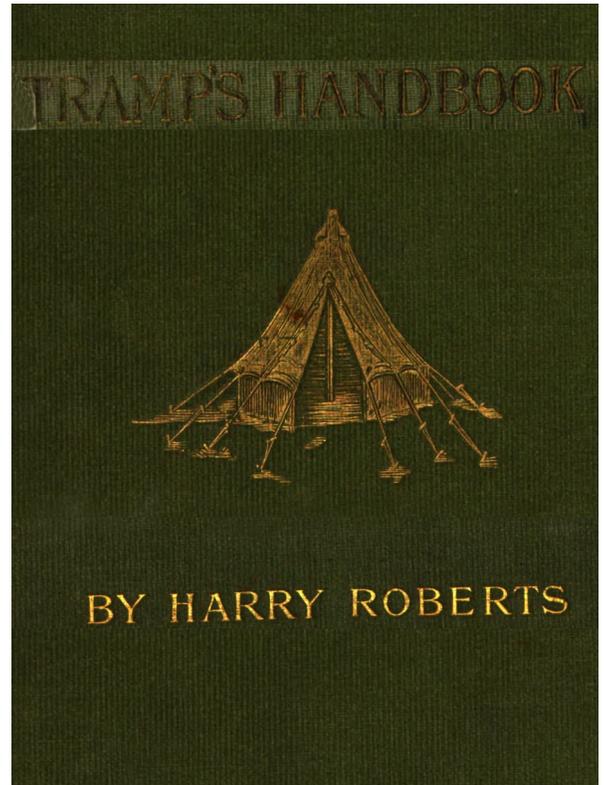
The Depression of the early 1870's sent more men on the road in search of work—many of them highly educated professionals—now suddenly down on their luck. This group injected a strong literary/political element into the hobo community (think Robert Service and Jack London)...that inclination would eventually marry them to the labor movement of the 1920's.

The technological developments of the 20's reduced the need for large forces of manual laborers and the stock market crash and the Great Depression meant way too many unemployed and way too few jobs. The Golden Age of the Hobo was over. The number of hobos declined—and the numbers of tramps and bums increased. Today, the true hobo is a rare thing.

Throughout the Golden Age, hobos travelled with their worldly goods in bags, suitcases and packs—but mostly they carried their bedrolls (“balloons” & “bindles”) slung on their backs—*backroadsmen on the freight train frontier.*

Refer to - Vagabond Tech for more (#5 in Case #5 Resources file)

Vagabonds are a worldwide tradition – the Gypsy of Europe, the Swagman of Australia, as well as the American Hobo. Their longtime wandering has taught them much about life outdoors, and the technologies and languages they have created are unique to their culture – Martin Luther created *The Book of Vagabonds and Beggars* in 1528 and numerous other books have been written since then. It’s the technologies of these travelers that have found their way into our camping traditions that we find interesting. Especially things like – the Hobo Stove, The Tumpline, The Bedroll



While working on Paul Van Horn’s thesis, we had a chance to interview Yvon Chouinard about changes he had seen over the years in camping traditions. He mentioned how he had used a tumpline for years but couldn’t find a way to sell them since no one knew how to use them. They have been a major part of traditional kit for generations without interruption. When *180°* became a cult movie, tumplines became a fixture in the new Patagonia product line-up.



<https://www.patagonia.com/blog/2011/08/on-tumplines/>



Waltzing Matilda

Once a jolly swagman camped by a Billabong
Under the shade of a Coolabah tree
And he sang as he watched and waited till his billy boiled
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"

Down come a jumbuck to drink at the water hole
Up jumped a swagman and grabbed him in glee
And he sang as he stowed him away in his tucker bag
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me".

Up rode the Squatter a riding his thoroughbred
Up rode the Trooper - one, two, three
"Where's that jumbuck you've got in your tucker bag?",
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me".

But the swagman he up and jumped in the water hole
Drowning himself by the Coolabah tree,
And his ghost may be heard as it sings in the Billabong,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"

A.B. (Banjo) Paterson, 1895



Explanation of Australian slang in the song

Billabong	A waterhole.
Billy	A can or small kettle used to boil water for tea.
Coolabah tree	A type of native tree in Australia
Jumbuck	A sheep. There are 20 times as many sheep as there are people in Australia.
Squatter	At one time, squatters claimed (seized) land for themselves in addition to land that they had been granted. Eventually through the continuous occupation of the land, their claims were legitimised in the eyes of the law.
Swagman	Someone who lives on the open road. A hobo. The term came from the canvas bag that they would carry their bedroll and/or belongings in.
Trooper	In Australia's early days, there was no police force. The colony was protected by and policed by soldiers and even when a police force was eventually formed, they were still referred to as 'troopers'.
Tucker bag	A bag for storing food in the bush.

http://members.ozemail.com.au/~enigman/australia/waltz_mat.html#swagman

I discovered that what's really important for a creator isn't what we vaguely define as inspiration or even what it is we want to say, recall, regret, or rebel against. No, what's important is the way we say it. Art is all about craftsmanship. Others can interpret craftsmanship as style if they wish. Style is what unites memory or recollection, ideology, sentiment, nostalgia, presentiment, to the way we express all that. It's not what we say but how we say it that matters.

Federico Fellini

"The less a man carries in his pack, the more he must carry in his head... The simpler the outfit, the more skill it takes to manage it, and the more pleasure one gets in his achievements." ---

Horace Kephart

Camping/Tramping

Start by reading Section 6 in *Camping In The Old Style*

The Bushcooker

dir**t**bag

Syllabication: dirt·bag

Pronunciation: dûrtbg

Noun: Slang A filthy or vile person.

In 1973, Chouinard started making outdoor clothes for customers he affectionately calls "dirt bags."

The dirt bag is the person that lives and breathes their passion, which is their sport. But in reality most of the dirt bags can't even afford Patagonia, and in fact they progress beyond needing any kind of equipment, you know. They've gotten so good at their game that they don't need our stuff. But that's who we focus our product on and that's who we try to design for.

My partner Tom Frost and I were guided by a philosophy of design expressed by the French aviator Antoine de St.-

Exupéry in Wind, Sand and Stars: "It is as if there were a natural law which ordained that to achieve this end [the

ultimate principle of simplicity], to refine the curve of a piece of furniture, or a ship's keel, or the fuselage of an airplane, until gradually it partakes of the elemental purity of the curve of the human breast or shoulder, there must be experimentations of several generations of craftsmen. In anything at all, perfection is finally attained not when there is no longer anything to add, but when there is no longer anything to take away, when a body has been stripped down to nakedness."

When we began Patagonia, we applied the same principle of ultimate simplicity to clothing.... Function always dictates the form—and the perfect form is the result of a perfectly solved functional need.

Yvon Chouinard



HOBO CREED

As inscribed in the Annual Convention Congress of the Hoboes of America held on August 8, 1894 at the Hotel Alden, 917 Market St., Chicago Illinois: - www.hobo.com

- 1.- Decide your own life, don't let another person run or rule you.
- 2.- When in town, always respect the local law and officials, and try to be a gentleman at all times.
- 3.- Don't take advantage of someone who is in a vulnerable situation, locals or other hobos.
- 4.- Always try to find work, even if temporary, and always seek out jobs nobody wants. By doing so you not only help a business along, but insure employment should you return to that town again.
- 5.- When no employment is available, make your own work by using your added talents at crafts.
- 6.- Do not allow yourself to become a stupid drunk and set a bad example for locals treatment of other hobos.
- 7.- When jungling in town, respect handouts, do not wear them out, another hobo will be coming along who will need them as bad, if not worse than you.
- 8.- Always respect nature, do not leave garbage where you are jungling.
- 9.- If in a community jungle, always pitch in and help.
- 10.- Try to stay clean, and boil up wherever possible.
- 11.- When traveling, ride your train respectfully, take no personal chances, cause no problems with the operating crew or host railroad, act like an extra crew member.
- 12.- Do not cause problems in a train yard, Another hobo will be coming along who will need passage thru that yard.
- 13.- Do not allow other hobos to molest children, expose to authorities all molesters, they are the worst garbage to infest any society.
- 14.- Help all runaway children, and try to induce them to return home.
- 15.- Help your fellow hobos whenever and wherever needed, you may need their help someday.
- 16.- If present at a hobo court and you have testimony, give it, whether for or against the accused, your voice counts!

*To do a dull thing with style – now that's what I call art .
Charles Buckowski, Poet Laureate of Skid Row,*

Dirtbagging is stripping backpacking down to its essentials: fun and adventure. Throw a few things in an old pack, and just get out there. You don't need all that expensive backpacking gear. Leave the extra clothes behind, sleep in a pile of leaves or next to a fire. Dirtbagging is keeping it simple and using your wits instead of your wallet. Steve Gillman, Recipe For A Dirtbagging Trip

Go forth a greenhorn camper if you must, but return a thoroughbred, having learned the art of living with nature by actual experience. On such the Red Gods smile.

Frank H. Cheley, 1933

Comfort means minimum equipment; comfort means bodily ease. The task is to balance, to reconcile these apparently-opposing ideas.

Edward Stewart White, 1920

HOBOS, HEROES AND SCRIBES

One of the hall-marks of the veteran woodsman is the way he contrives to make himself comfortable in camp, mainly by utilization of the forest materials ready to hand. He has gotten past the stage of unnecessary roughing it, knowing well that the hardships of the hunting trail will be quite enough without imposing any additional burdens in camp.... These who so suffer simply do not know the game, are inadequately supplied with either equipment or knowledge, or both, and richly deserve all the misfortunes that befall them or are heaped upon them...

Warren H. Miller, 1915

The same article that one declares is the most essential to his comfort, health, and happiness is the very first thing that another will throw into the trail. A man's outfit is a matter which seems to touch his private honor. I have heard veterans sitting around a camp-fire proclaim the superiority of their kits with a jealousy, loyalty, and enthusiasm they would not exhibit for the flesh of their flesh and the bone of their bone. On a campaign you may attack a man's courage, the flag he serves, the newspaper for which he works, his intelligence, or his camp manners, and he will ignore you, but if you criticize his patent water-bottle he will fall upon you with both fists.

Richard Harding Davis, 1917

In 1924, George Mallory and his climbing partner Sandy Irvine disappeared on the heights of Mount Everest – at the time considered the 3rd Pole of Expolration. What we have

The Dirtbag Manifesto A PROCLAMATION OUTLINING THE BEDROCK TENETS OF SUCCESSFUL MINIMALIST CAMPING

From Donovan Webster's *Secrets of the Wildman* (with Mark Norell)
(*Sports Afield* August 1999)

Verily, in the course of seeking the most fully enjoyable experience allotted each life among the Wilderness, We have drafted this document, limning the truest path to the depth such experiences can provide. While high-tech encumbrances may be embraced by some, We Dirtbags are sworn to shrug them away in favor of a Wilderness Life without burden. Thereby, in renewed search of the ancient Joys and Snug Freedoms of Dirtbaggery, We pledge to...

1) Recognize that dirtbagging is a process.

And it should be a pleasant one. So to achieve the ends of true dirtbaggery, we will start slow. For our first camping trip, we will take only as much equipment as we feel comfortable with, noting what we don't use. We will then leave these items behind on our next trip. Quickly, a very small bag of highly effective gear will evolve.

2) Discard all false pride at home.

Once in the field, we wish to become further resourceful, experimenting and opening our minds to the multiple uses the earth has offered for each member of its vast plant, animal, and geologic aggregation. We will remember, for instance, that a pile of leaves makes a warm and soft bed, fallen trees make top-drawer shelters from inclement weather, and that--if cooked long enough--things considered inedible in the "civilized" world can become mighty tasty.

3) Acknowledge deserts as the premier location for improving dirtbagging skills.

Also good are beaches without insects. We pledge to avoid tundra's and northern temperate forests during summer: With their clouds of black flies and ground fogs of mosquitoes, these are "experts only" territory and demand bug screens for our remaining brethren.

4) Remember the 10-80-10 rule.

We will pack only the basic 10 percent of things truly necessary for a camping trip (extra change of clothes, weather protection). We will then happily sacrifice the middle 80 percent of above said stuff (tents, coolers, lanterns, flashlights, extra clothes, and that 12-inch "trail knife" you think makes you look "outdoorsy") while respecting and universally abiding by the addition of the "fun" 10 percent of supplies usually taken into the wilds (a small cache of good food, a little hooch, some toys).

5) Happily endure meals of rice and beans flavored with a little jalapeno, not to mention evenings completely blanketed with sleep.
(Anyone not understanding this particular tenet should consider golf.)

6) Buy the best equipment we can afford and torture test it in the backyard before transporting it into the wilderness.

Put it another way, that money-back guarantee from the outdoor store is worth squat in the backcountry.

7) If necessary, slather ourselves in mud, a time honored human and insect repellent. *(Anyone confused should refer to Tenet 2)*

8) Remember to invite along fun friends.

Dirtbagging is a social experience--the more the merrier. So while we may happily leave most camping gear at home, a game and a gung-ho companion or two may prove to be the ultimate backcountry accessories.

9) Always accouter with the universal dirtbag implement: duct tape.

It can be employed for anything from bandages and rope to makeshift moleskin for blisters, to a belt, a fabric patch, a sling, or even--when rolled into a cone--a drinking cup.

10) Transcend the artificial conventions of soaped society.

We pledge to remember that fun and misery remain two sides of the same coin. The enjoyment of being muddy, dirty, and soaked by rain has never been a jailable offence. Instead, it's something our parents and teachers crushed out of us during a decades-long "educational" process. And while all members of the aforementioned groups may be helpful now, as in the past, they haven't always been right.

learned from the discovery of Mallory's remains in 2007 is that these amazing explorers were equipped with the best equipment of the day – equipment that pales in many ways to today's arsenal of options – weighing less and allowing more flexibility than ever imagined. Simpler isn't always lesser.

View: If you ever get the chance, watch *The Wildest Dream* – the re-enactment of the Mallory/Irvine climb. Here is a clip –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVfMERRg8JE>

Take a minute and look up another famous "dirtbag" – Millican Dalton – Professor Adventure. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48kwS9goxQA>

Optional Read: *Invisible On Everest*

Millican Dalton

As mentioned in Case #2, the shift from Woodcraft to Emerging Technology methods of camping was a conscious one. We call them “emerging technologies” because they are always changing – an industry built on planned obsolescence and “newer is better” thinking. The shift can be dated to 1964 when the Wilderness Act was passed and the rush to the backcountry took off – changing the paradigm of life outdoors from camping to backpacking. A leader in the change was Paul Petzoldt – first Chief instructor for Outward Bound, founder of the National Outdoor Leadership School and the Wilderness Education Association.

Paul was a dirtbagger of the first order, outfitting his trips with surplus gear and utilizing many of the traditions of the past mixed with modern ways of living outdoors – minimum impact camping – although the transition was interesting. Watch *30 Days To Survival*, filmed in 1969, and see how methods have changed



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8zKt8btHYU>



Thirty Days to Survival

View: *30 Days To Survival* – documentary of a NOLS course in 1969 – and note how things were done then as compared to how you were trained.

ETHICS WITH STYLE

Read: *A Woodsman Reveals His Fashion Secrets* (#3 in Case #5 Resources file) and *In Defense of Wool Pants* (#4 in Case #5 Resources file) are both referred to in the study sheet questions. Both articles have been highlighted where they refer to the questions. Take a look at the articles and answer the questions on the study sheet.

Style is the perfection of a point of view. Richard Eberhart, poet
Style is everything. Dogtown and Z-Boys

THE ISSUE of STYLE vs ETHICS

Wescott Notes - 2015

(Refer back to Case #3 - United By Practice)

***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*

STYLE

*"Style is everything.....**Good style helps define a set of ethics** for us as outdoor users".
*Allen and Mike's Really Cool Backpackin' Book, Page 1**

*"Experts are distinguished by the style in which they travel, not by the difficulty of the trip, the frequency of the trips, or the number of days out. **Style and skill are synonymous.**"* **Cliff Jacobson**

*"Good Style – Looking good vs looking “together” (professional)... **Striving to camp and travel in good style makes you a better camper in the long run**".*

*"Perfect Style – an absolute cornerstone – naked human soloing a new route on sight. Anything other than that is of lesser stylistic value....the farther you get away from perfect style, the less proud you should be of yourself.....**As a sport matures it doesn't necessarily get better**".*

Yvon Chouinard – The Climber's Bill of Rights

For years I adapted summer backpacking techniques [style] to winter, traveling fast and light in the mountains unencumbered by lots of gear. But as the years passed I started taking longer, more ambitious trips deeper into wilderness, and the backpacking paradigm [style] no longer worked. In fact, for transporting loads on long journeys,

canoeing is a better model.

Stephen Gorman, *AMC Guide to Winter Camping*

ETHICS

Ethics is the field that deals with defining what is good and bad, and the moral obligations that ensue.

Yvon Chouinard on Ethics & Style

• *Ethics concern values, morals, and the principles of right and wrong – not only the rules of conduct among ourselves.....there are some elements of style that help to define the rules of the game.*

• **The Climber's Bill of Rights** – *You have the right to climb anywhere, in any style you want, as long as you don't alter the medium or infringe on the next person's experience. Many of the solutions to our complex environmental problems will not be achieved with increased complexity. Question every technology. Reject the unnecessary. Keep it simple. Leave room for serendipity. Keep it real and do no harm. We should consider David Brower's advice: "Turn around and take a forward step".*

The Classic Revolution - A Camper's Manifesto

Masters of In Your Face

A Post-Modern Outer's Ethic

By David Wescott, 2016

Creating a Woodcraft Ethic

It is understood that this Post-Modern Woodcraft ethic supports the 7 operating principles of the modern Leave No Trace outdoor "ethic".** It does not, however, support LNT's underlying premise that man is not a part of the natural world, nor that technology can be employed without impacting the natural world.

Masters of In Your Face 8 Operating Principles

1. Employ skills only in appropriate areas
 2. Learn from where you are
 3. Look just beyond your doorstep
 4. Do more with less
 5. Always employ underlying social ethics
 6. Use it up, wear it out, make do, or do without.
 7. Recognize traditions and foundations
 8. Allow room for mastery
- practice working within limits
 - develop a sense of place
 - stay home; wilderness is not a must
 - support sustainable consumerism
 - embrace an inclusive ethic
 - craftsmanship / improvising
 - context and heritage
 - pursue optimal experience

The Bottom Line

- There are tensions and conflicts within both traditional and emerging technology ethics. Bad style under any conditions is inappropriate.
- Woodcraft is an artform that must be conducted in controlled settings with good technique and a working knowledge of the environment in which it is practiced. Woodcraft skills do not require a **W**ilderness setting.
- Woodcraft is honest about its suspicions of modernism and consumer culture.
- Woodcraft does a better job of connecting people to the land. We learn from the resource, and to work within the limits of materials and resources.
- The practice of Woodcraft skills can create impact, but impacts can be mitigated and are, for the most part, limited to the places they occur.
- Woodcraft does not have to be steeped in male rhetoric, but a healthy appreciation for adventure (nature on its terms / new environments) is helpful.

Refer to: *Leaving LNT Behind (#2 in Case #2 Resources file)*

Leave No Trace 7 Operating Principles**

1. Plan ahead and prepare:

- Carry a map and know where you are going to reduce the chance of having to travel off trail.
- Always pack out trash. Repackage food to reduce waste.
- Schedule trips during low-use times and travel in small groups.

2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces:

- Camp on durable surfaces. These include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- Protect plant and wildlife habitat by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

3. Dispose of waste properly:

- Pack it in, pack it out.
- Do your business in "cat holes" at least 200 feet from water, and cover the hole. Or pack it out.
- Wash yourself or your dishes 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

4. Leave what you find:

- That rock or antler looks cooler in the wild than on a shelf at home.

5. Minimize campfire impacts:

- No raging bonfires. Burn only when essential in established fire rings or using a low-impact mound fire.

6. Respect wildlife:

- View from a distance.
- Never feed wildlife.
- Control pets so that they don't harass or scare wildlife.

7. Be considerate of other visitors:

- Be quiet and let others coming up the trail pass by.

This advice is not for the tenderfoot, for he should never attempt to "rough it..."

Camp and Trail Methods, 1910

Such camping experiences give us worth-while things to talk about, tend to act as a good guide to our reading, and set most modern "good-times" in such unfavorable contrast that the latter lose much of their appeal. To become a good camper is a challenge to the best in us, as well as an achievement.

Frank H. Cheley, 1933

The Manifesto

Definitions of manifesto on the Web:

* a public declaration of intentions (as issued by a political party or government)

wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn

* A manifesto is a public declaration of principles and intentions, often political in nature.

wikipedia.org/wiki/Manifesto

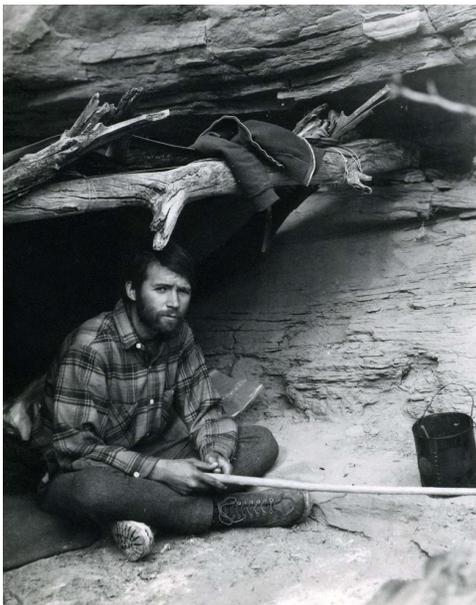
* in art a public declaration or exposition in print of the theories and directions of a movement. The manifestos issued by various individual artists or groups of artists, in the first half of the twentieth century served to reveal their motivations and reasons d???etre and stimulated support for or reactions against them.

www.eartmart.com/pages/glossary.html

* a document or public declaration of information, motives, or demands by a government, sect, or group of people; believed to be of some importance

www.psychedelicrainbow.com/glossary.html

Read: *The Manifesto* (#6 in Case #5 Resources file) and *Class manifesto* (#7 in Case #5 Resources file) The Manifesto contains example a variety of manifestos - mainly addressing the field of "crafting". Class Manifesto has examples of past writings by your classmates. Try your had at creating a simple *Manifesto Of Traditional Camping*.



David Wescott – Solo in The Gulch, 1971.
Escalante Wilderness. Note Billy Can.

Burglar alarms and telephone =  | = child

Lookout gun handy =  = woman

Only women here. Easy =  = Old woman

Go by! Policeman Constable or Judges house =  X = Man

This camp is safe =  X = Old Man

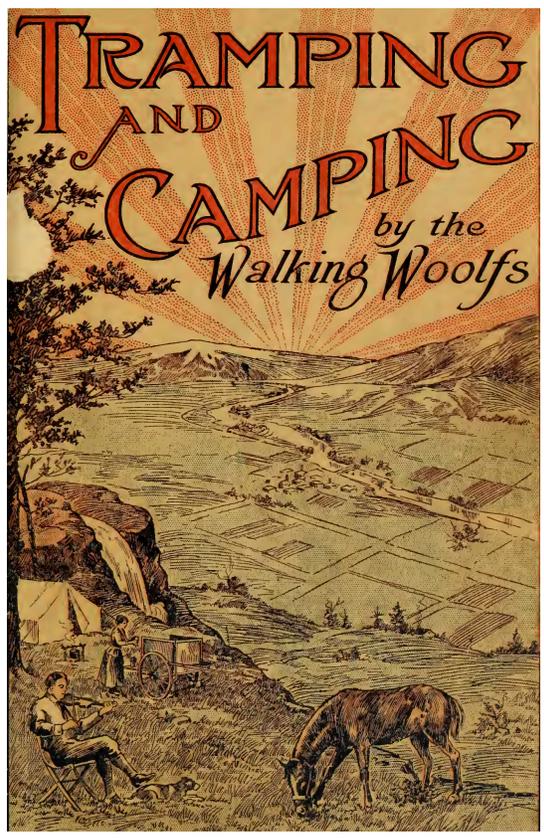
Make you work for meats =  = Vicious Dog

All right. Will give up =  WM = Must work for meal.

Worth robbing =  XH = Must work for meal.

 = No use

Hobo signs placed on gateposts to indicate houses To visit and houses to be avoided.



Cross-country trampers sold postcards of themselves to earn money for food and lodging.

Hobos modified nickels as a folkart that could be sold.

