

Watts and Wescott

Camping As A Pedagogy - A Metaphor?

David Wescott, ©2019

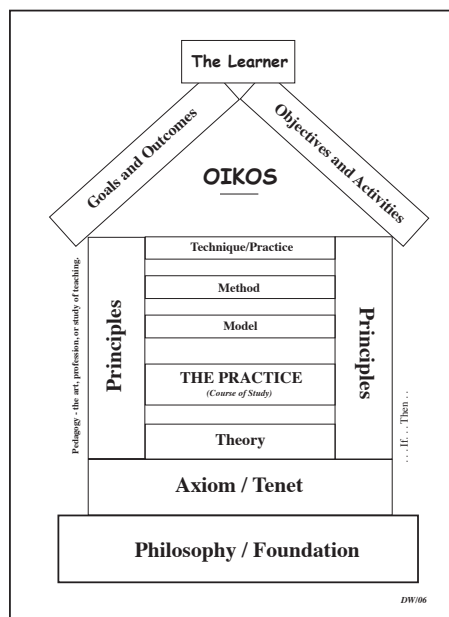
Camping out may well be classed as one of the liberal arts, so wide is its application.*
Warren H. Miller, 1918

Pedagogy - the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept.

This may be a totally academic exercise, and of no value to anyone but myself. With that in mind, I'm happy to proceed. Definition encourages precision and discipline. To work without boundaries, one is free to disregard quality, mastery or heritage. To achieve mastery in a "field of study" one must: recognize tradition, subordinate themselves, pursue excellence, advance the field, and mentor others. (see Robert Greene, *Mastery*). It is impossible to address any of these ideals without a framework within which to judge progression to mastery. To refuse definition, a field has no focus or standards for comparison. **DW**

* **The 7 Liberal Arts** - subjects or skills considered essential for a free person to know in order to take an active part in civic life.

- **The Trivium** - grammar, logic, and rhetoric.
- **The Quadrivium** - arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy.



Why Teach / Learn Traditional Camping - Foundations - A Rationale

OIKOS - The House

See - *A Radical View of Experiential Education*, 2009

I. Greater Skill Competence - The Created Anachronism

- Intervention vs Innovation
- Tradition vs Fad Creativity
- Innovation for Extremes
- The Thinking Man's Sport

II. Reconnects Us To Nature - Meets the demands of a natural affinity

- X-Ray Art - Tipi/Laavu, Snowshoe/Canoe, Animals,
- Natural Materials - Beauty
- The Sublime

III. Awareness of Impact - Directly related to and informed by PLACE

- A working knowledge of the land

VI. Connects To Our Heritage - Bridges to The Past

Anachronism - a thing belonging or appropriate to a period other than that in which it exists, especially a thing that is conspicuously old-fashioned...not appropriate for our time.

- Where did these skills come from?
- Why did we lose them?
- How can we get them back?
- Is that appropriate/needed?

V. Viable Alternative to Contemporary Ethics -"Style is Everything" -

- The more you know, the less you need.
- Style vs Ethics
- Hand Made - hands-on activity

VI. Accountability - Why People Don't Use Traditional Camping Skills?

- Past Negative Experiences With Classic Gear
- Bias Through Hegemony
- No Frame of Reference For Judgment

What is the problem - Who's problem is it? - What other problems might it cause?

Neoteny - the retention, by adults in a species, of traits previously seen only in juveniles.

Nemophily - a fondness or liking for forests, woods, or woodland scenery.

AXIOMS of Traditional Camping

- Traditional Camping skills and knowledge are – with proper instruction and mitigation methods - a viable alternative to modern camping pursuits.
- Traditional Camping skills are a continuum of a uniquely American tradition – the Frontier Connection
- Traditional Camping is the adaptation of tools and techniques reminiscent of the classic style used to camp in a modern world.

"When the skills of the Golden Age of Camping meet the 21st century."

"Traditional Camping moves through time."

Traditional Camping is:

- romance with tradition that connects us to our heritage.
- skills and knowledge documented by the masters of the old style.
- a viable alternative to contemporary/emerging technologies.
- retention of skills and techniques over convenience and security.
- a reconnection of skills with place.
- a merging of past, present and future.

Fashions fade away, while Traditions last forever.

David Wescott

New things depreciate, while the value old things grows.

Steve Watts

Classic Camping

Rustic • Romantic • Real

The goal of camping is camping itself.. The practice and the payoff are one and the same.

Steve Watts

Camp as if the act of camping mattered.

Camping is what you do when you get to camp, not how you get there.

David Wescott

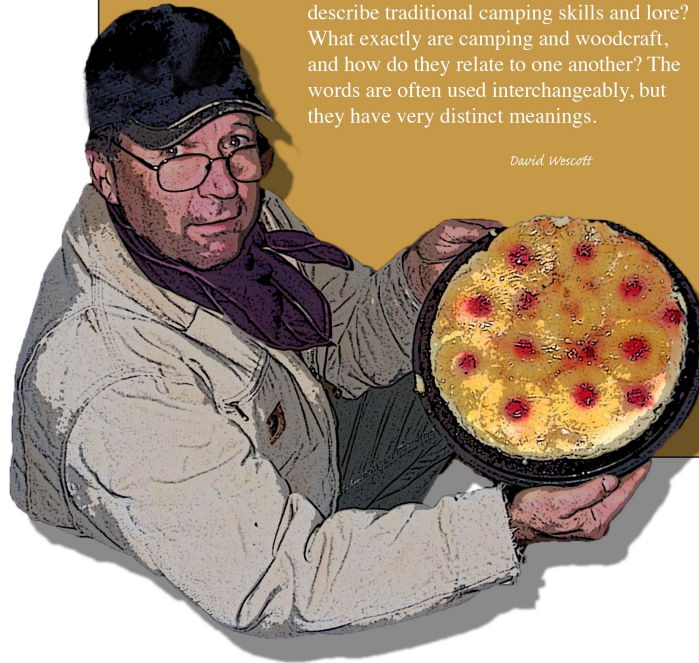
The 5 Tenets of Traditional Camping

- I. Traditional Camping requires added skill and knowledge.**
- II. Traditional Camping fosters a reconnection with Nature.**
- III. Traditional Camping encourages awareness of local impact.**
- IV. Traditional Camping builds a bridge to our past.**
- V. Traditional Camping is a beautiful way to camp.**

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so wide is its application.* Warren Miller, 1918

How do we define campcraft, woodcraft, woodslore,
bushcraft or any of the other terms used today to
describe traditional camping skills and lore?
What exactly are camping and woodcraft,
and how do they relate to one another? The
words are often used interchangeably, but
they have very distinct meanings.

David Wescott



4 Pillars of Traditional Camping

- **Campcraft**

*Skills used in camp and on trail to live **safely and comfortably** in the outdoors.*

- **Woodcraft**

*Skills and knowledge applied to live **simply and harmoniously** with the outdoors. A working knowledge of the land.*

- **Woodslore**

*Skills and techniques **informed by the land**.
Wisdom gained from “knowing” the land: mainly natural history
coupled with practiced technique.*

- **Trailcraft - Fieldcraft**

*Skills for **the moving camp**. Includes both what is done in camp- campcraft - and the
skills needed to negotiate the field in order to get to camp.*

Canoe – Tramp – Horse – Winter – 2 Wheel – 4 Wheel

5 Best Practices - Key Skills-Sets

Toolcraft

The proper use and maintenance of common camp tools – primarily edged tools.

Firecraft

The production, use and care of the open flame for cooking, heating and lighting.

Bindcraft

The use of manufactured or field expedient fibers for practical camp & field applications.

Sheltercraft

Mastery of items used for the comfort and safety of the human body in an outdoor setting.

Cookcraft

The planning, storage and preparation of food for camp and trail. Hearth Management.

Fieldcraft

Trailcraft

3 Skills Sub-Sets

• **Campcraft/Woodcraft Skill Sub-Sets**

Toolcraft

- Edged Tools – Knife, Axe, Saw
- Workshop and Workbench Tools
- The Ditty Bag – Tools of the Trade

Firecraft

- Ignition and Management
- The Hearth and Stove –
Cooking and Heating
- Lighting
- Mitigation Methods

Bindcraft

- Ropecraft – making, management
- Knotcraft – knots, bends, hitches
- Pioneering – lashing and anchors

Sheltercraft

- Clothing
- Bedding
- Tenting
- Kitcraft

Cookcraft

- Open Hearth Tools & Techniques
- Jack-Knife Cookery
- Food Storage and Care
- Food and Nutrition - 4-Dog Potology

• **Fieldcraft Sub-Sets**

- Expedition Behavior
- Landcraft - Ethics
- Navigation & Mapping
- Nature Observation
- Woodlore & Wildcrafting
Woodsmanship

• **Trailcraft Sub-Sets**

- Journeying –Expeditioning
- Tramping - Hiking, Trekking
- Horse
- Canoe
- 2-Wheel – Carts, Bikes, Motorcycles
- Autocamping
- Winter Skills

RM 223C - COURSE OVERVIEW

Ever since the days of Dan Beard, Ernest Thompson Seton, Bernard Mason, Horace Kephart and other "masters of the woods," the skills of the historic guide and "outer" have been available to those who long to live the trail life.

Traditional Camping Skills teaches how to live rather than survive in the woods. Today's lightweight tack lets you extend the umbilical of modern technology to the limits of your ability to pack it. The ways of the traditional woodsman let you really escape the grasp of the modern world and live in the "woods" with all the comforts and ease of the self-reliant life.

Traditional Camping Objectives

COGNITIVELY

- Define the field - What is Woodcraft, Classic/Traditional Camping
- Recognize the pioneers - both historic/contemporary
- Comprehend the history of our unique American camping tradition
- Establish a personal context - A Manifesto
- Re-define your learning with a post-modern view - Deconstruction

AFFECTIVELY

- Appreciate the context that is the foundation of our camping heritage
- Respect those who were/are the pioneering leaders in the field
- Become confident in working with edged tools and natural/upcycled materials
- Develop a crafting ethic for each skill set and subset
- Cultivate a relationship with the wild-land handiwork of the Creator

EXPERIENTIALLY

- Use a variety of edged camp tools to create projects
- Incorporate natural and upcycled materials into camp projects
- Make 1 practical item per skill set
- Create and live in a model camp using classic style and techniques
- Apply the skills learned in a field setting

6 Case Studies

- #1 - The Classic Camping Revival; The Theory Behind Teaching Traditional Camping Style - The Frontier Connection to Friluftsliv
- #2 - Woodcraft to LNT - How Did We Get Here and Why?
- #3 - Camping As Commodity - The Shaping of Leisure - Hegemony
- #4 - The Importance of Traditional Woodcraft
- #5 - Camping As A Democratic Pastime - Style vs Ethics Sustainability/Diversity
- #6 - Camping As - Art / Science / Craft

Camping Defined

Camping is an escape from routine and restrictions of urban life, returning physically and spiritually renewed. It is a pilgrimage to a sacred space.

Terence Young, *Heading Out – A History of American Camping*,
2017

Traditional Camping

Traditional Camping is the adaptation of tools and techniques reminiscent of the classic style used to camp in a modern world.

“When the skills of the Golden Age of Camping meet the 21st century.”
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Classic Camping

Classic Camping is the use of tools, techniques and traditions in the style of the Golden Age of Camping (1880-1930).

“When the frontier skills of Daniel Boone meet the industrial age of Henry Ford.”
“Classic Camping is a snapshot in time.”

Classic Camping is:

- directly connected to its historic context.
- an understanding and appreciation for handmade craft.
- the use of classic style – timeless utility - aesthetic efficiency.
- a comfortable confessed relationship with romance and nostalgia.
- re-creative and fun.

Traditional Camping vs Bushcraft/Survival: An Ethos vs A Skill Set

Bushcraft is simple (indigenous/local) skills and knowledge employed to solve complex problems, utilizing the resources found in nature... This definition of Bushcraft is a synthesis of other written attempts to define it. This definition would work just as well to define Woodcraft.

To my way of thinking, Bushcraft and Survival are better defined as an ETHOS rather than a specific skill-set.

David Wescott

If you catalogued the accumulated knowledge of a society that lives close to the land, most of it would have to do with understanding the natural world and how it works...The rest of that knowledge would consist of how they interact with the land. We call that Bushcraft.

Tim Smith, Jack Mountain Bushcraft

*Bushcraft is the term I employ to describe a deeper knowledge of the wild and of nature...the reliance upon oneself and on nature. In the study of bushcraft we step beyond survival and learn the subtlety that makes outdoor life both certain and enjoyable. What could be more natural than to recognize the wild things around us and find food, shelter, fire and water? Bushcraft ties us closely to nature, and at its core is respect for nature and all living things.... **That is the principle of bushcraft.***

I do not wish, though, to suggest that we should turn our backs on the skills and tools of today. Far from it - my hope is that we shall learn to use our modern tools more wisely by bolstering them with wisdom from the past... For me, a large part of bushcraft is about combining modern and ancient expertise.

Ray Mears, *Essential Bushcraft*, 2002

Bushcraft is about the skills and knowledge that allow you to thrive in a raw natural environment. Time-tested techniques, often passed down by aboriginal peoples, and simple yet robust tools that strive towards self-sufficiency. Bushcraft is about being resourceful and engaging in the natural world.....Bushcraft is the active component of our interaction with nature.

Bushcraft New Zealand

Why Craft?

The art of creating a camp that is safe, comfortable, beautifully simple, harmonious with your surroundings and sustainable requires craftsmanship. To do it well requires mastery. To achieve mastery, one must recognize the importance of history and tradition in one's practice, and commit to a goal of mastery not status as the skills become a part of who you are. DW

Craftsmanship is a way of thinking and doing where humanity is in tune with nature, not working against it.... *Craftsmanship—in the fullest sense of the word—is a way of life. It is about **fully engaging our heads, hands, and hearts** in our labors. It is about adhering to a set of values and principles that produce objects that are not only functional and beautiful but also make for a sustainable lifestyle.*

The Craftsmanship Initiative

Crafting – Where our hands meet the natural world...learn to make useful items from forest materials. **Tim Smith, Jack Mountain Bushcraft**

Ethos - The characteristic spirit of a culture, era, or community as manifested in its beliefs and aspirations. *Based on Aristotle's (1) logos or logic, (2) ethos or ethic, and (3) pathos or emotion.*

Axiom / Tenet - A statement or proposition which is regarded as being established, accepted or self-evident

Principle - A fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior for a chain of reasoning.

Curriculum - A specially constructed information system whose purpose is to influence.

An Evolution of "IDEALS"

David Wescott, 2009/2017

Proto-Pre-Industrial Ideals

Leisure Pace - 5 miles per hour economy - Cottage Industry
Inexpensive - Individualistic - Personal Independence
Simplicity - Open Space - Traditions
Family Solidarity

Traditional Wilderness Ideals

Conservation - Wise Use
Self-Reliance - " A Working Knowledge of Nature"
Masculine Rhetoric - The Men's Sport
Anti-Modern Sentiments
Skepticism of Consumer Culture

Modern Wilderness Ideals

Conservation - Preservation
Repackaging of Nature - "For Science or Culture (Recreation)" - Paradox
Rapid Growth in Recreation Use
Wilderness Politics - "The Wilderness Act"
Consumer Oriented Wilderness Recreation
Gender Loosening

Post-Modern Wilderness Ideals

Conservation - Stewardship
Strong Connection to Place
Renewed Desire For Self-Reliance
Renewed Skepticism of Consumer Culture - Hegemony
Dichotomy of Drives - Why We Go Camping

2/18 update