UCLA
American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title
Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks. By Mark David Spence.

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/97b9944q

Journal
American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 25(3)

ISSN
0161-6463

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Publication Date
2001-06-01

DOI
10.17953

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Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks. By Mark David Spence. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 190 pages. $35.00 cloth; $14.95 paper.

For well over a century, scholars have written about America's national parks. These publications served as promoters of the parks, alluring the public with spectacular images of waterfalls and rivers, lush meadows, and snow-capped mountain peaks. More recently, particularly in the late 1980s and the 1990s, a number of works have also described the political transformation of these majestic landscapes into the nation's parks. All together, however, these studies generally fail to include or fully discuss that at the time of their establishments most national parks were the traditional homelands of several Native American societies. If Indians are indeed mentioned, they are relegated to the distant past and usually defined as the parks' "first visitors."

Mark David Spence corrects this omission with his study of Indian removal from the nation's "crown jewel" parks: Yellowstone, Glacier, and Yosemite. Centering his discussion on the three parks, Spence links Native people and their distinct relationship to these western landscapes. Whether government officials and preservationists were unaware or chose to overlook the political, social, and spiritual importance of these lands to American Indians, the end result remained the same: Native groups were excluded from the parks' boundaries. Spence argues that, for park advocates who campaigned for the protection and preservation of western nature grounds, the removal of Native people was necessary in "that uninhabited wilderness had to be created before they could be preserved" (p. 4).

Focusing on the policies of Indian removal developed between the 1870s and the 1930s, Spence regards Yellowstone, Glacier, and Yosemite national parks as central to his discussion for three reasons: first, each provided for the cultural sustenance of a Native population at the time of its establishment; second, the policies of exclusion became important precedents in the removal of Indians from other national parks and monuments; and third, the transformation and preservation of these "uninhabited" wildernesses have influenced preservationist efforts and Native dispossession not only in the United States, but also in other nations.

Spence divides his study into four parts to discuss the policies of removal and demonstrate the similarities among the Native populations that inhabited the future parklands, the most important being that they never relinquished their rights to the park areas. The first two chapters are devoted to the nineteenth-century themes of wilderness, preservation, and federal Indian policy. In antebellum America, ideas of wilderness and romanticism were closely linked to the perceptions of Native Americans as "children of Nature." During the 1830s artists and writers such as George Catlin and Ralph Waldo Emerson inspired Americans to leave urban and village life for western woodlands to become reacquainted with the divine spirit and experience the meaning of the "natural man." As inhabitants of wilderness landscapes in the West, Indians embodied the pristine and natural state of the New World prior to European settlement. Wandering through these "wild" nature grounds

where Native populations dwelled became for Americans short-term remedies for the chaos and excesses of the antebellum era. However, as Spence clearly notes, several Native groups comprising the "Indian wilderness" had recently relocated from the East, either voluntarily or by removal, victims of the very "civilization" from which middle-class whites sought temporary escape.

The years following the Civil War reflected new attitudes about American Indians and landscapes. Through the treaty process, the placement of Native people on reservations opened up their former lands to white settlement. These agreements also recognized the tribes' rights to hunt on unoccupied lands now belonging to the United States. The Indians' efforts to exercise their usufruct entitlement to lands outside reservation boundaries often met with resistance from settlers and the military. They were also confronted by the challenges of preservationists concerned with the rapid exploitation and development of specific western wilderness. Spence accurately maintains that for this new breed of "patriotic aesthetes," Native people were a hindrance to the preservation of certain landscapes in their "wild" condition. They also interfered with the conversion of these "towering mountains, giant trees, and stupendous waterfalls that surpassed everything in the known world" into natural monuments that ultimately would exemplify national pride and identity (p. 33).

The preservationist movement focused on the physical geography of the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada, achieving its first victory with the passage of the Yellowstone National Park Act in 1872. In the book's second part, Spence provides an excellent overview of Yellowstone's ancient human history, Native use of the area in the historic era, and the displacement of Native people from the national park in order to "preserve" it. For the Kutsundeka, Agaideka, Tukudeka, Bannock, and Mountain Crow, despite their removal to reservations and the 1894 Lacy Act prohibiting hunting in Yellowstone Park, prior treaties affirmed the Native groups' continuous use of the park region. Nevertheless, in 1896 the US Supreme Court's ruling in *Ward v. Race Horse* nullified the Indians' hunting rights, arguing that the 1890 admittance of Wyoming into the Union invalidated these treaties. Tourism served a primary role in excluding Indians from Yellowstone Park. Ironically, as Spence points out, in 1899 it was again tourism that influenced park officials to support efforts to create an "aboriginal exhibit" on Dot Island in Yellowstone Lake. The scheme failed to materialize when Native people refused to participate.

The situation differed in Glacier National Park, the focus of the book's third section, where Indians were routinely employed to enhance the tourist experience. Although several Native groups maintained use of the mountains contained within Glacier, only the Blackfeet held recognized hunting rights to the park at the time of its establishment in 1910. Up through the 1930s, the Blackfeet figured prominently in the promotion of Glacier and entertained tourists at park venues. But they remained, as Spence acknowledges, absent from the tourist's experience of the "real" wilderness. Almost immediately after the establishment of the Glacier National Park, officials began a campaign to transform it into a "non-Indian wilderness" by excluding the Blackfeet

from hunting in the backcountry, a direct violation of the 1895 agreement specifying this right. The precedent established in *Ward v. Race Horse* also served to extinguish the legal challenges pursued by the Blackfeet to preserve their hunting rights in Glacier.

In the studies of Yellowstone and Glacier national parks, Spence details the legal disputes between government officials and Native groups most affected by the policies of exclusion. Because these Indians resided outside the parks' boundaries, less is known of the regular interactions between them and park officials. This is not the case in the book's final study of the Yosemite Indians. Two closely related reasons prevailed for what Spence states was "a remarkable exception to the general belief that parks and native communities could not coexist" (p. 100). First, the Yosemite did not enter into a treaty with the United States and subsequently removed to a reservation. Second, white Americans perceived the Indians of Yosemite Valley as "non-warriors," unlike their counterparts in Yellowstone and Glacier. Thus they were defined as "wilderness Indians," an integral component of Yosemite's landscape.

Such attitudes made it possible for the Indians to continue residing in Yosemite, providing labor for the park and entertainment for tourists. In the 1930s, however, with attempts to preserve Yosemite as a replica of "original American wilderness," park officials began considering the Indians' "moral right" to reside in the park as less important than their nonexisting legal right. Influenced by the terminationists of the early 1950s, the National Park Service adopted a policy to evict the Yosemite Indians from Yosemite. Without benefit of treaties or other agreements, the Yosemite were unable to challenge their expulsion in the courts.

Spence's study is an important addition to the scholarship of Indian land dispossession. He also illuminates the political relationship between Native societies and supporters of the national parks. Another strength of his study is the inclusion of Native women, especially in his discussion of Yosemite. However, less is known of the activities of Native women in the Yellowstone and Glacier areas. The question arises, particularly in Glacier where Indians were essential to tourism, if Blackfeet women, like the Yosemite weavers, also sold their baskets and other crafts to tourists. Further study could examine how the denial of the Indians' hunting rights impinged upon Native women gathering within the parks' boundaries. Additional topics for further research include a study of the Blackfeet as employees of Glacier Park and their relationship with park officials, and a chronicle of the Timbisha residing in the Death Valley National Monument, which Spence reviews briefly in the book's conclusion.

Spence's inclusion of Native voices clearly defines the cultural importance of the parks' areas to Native Americans, a sentiment that continues to the present.

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