

FROM THE WAY BACK MACHINE

My daughter says that there is an area of the Grand Canyon that is kept off limits by the government because of what was discovered there. She is not quite clear on whether it was alien artifacts or an unexpected cultural artifact (eg., Egyptian pyramid). I have never heard of anything like that myself. Does anyone know of such a rumor? John M

Explorations In Grand Canyon

Gazette, Monday Evening April 5, 1909 (Phoenix, AT - "Oldest Paper in Phoenix- Twenty-ninth year")

Mysteries of Immense Rich Cavern Being Brought to Light

The latest news of the progress of the exploration of what is now regarded as not only the oldest archaeological discovery in the United States, but one of the most valuable in the world, which was mentioned sometime ago in the *Gazette* was brought to the city yesterday by G. E. Kinkaid, the explorer who found the great underground citadel of the Grand Canyon during a trip from Green River, Wyoming, down the Colorado in a wooden boat to Yuma, several months ago. According to the story, related yesterday to the *Gazette* by Mr. Kinkaid, the archaeologists of the Smithsonian Institute, which is financing the explorations, have made discoveries which almost conclusively prove that the race that which inhabited this mysterious cavern, hewn in solid rock by human hands, was of oriental origin, possibly from Egypt, tracing back to Ramses. If their theories are borne out by the translation of the tablets engraved with hieroglyphics, the mystery of the prehistoric peoples of North America, their ancient arts, who they were and whence they came will be solved. Egypt and the Nile and Arizona and the Colorado will be linked by a historical chain running back to ages which staggers the wildest fancy of the fictional.

A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION

Under the direction of Prof. S. A. Jordan, the Smithsonian Institute is now prosecuting the most thor-

REMARKABLE FINDS INDICATE ANCIENT PEOPLE MIGRATED FROM THE ORIENT

ough explorations, which will continued until the last link in the chain is forged. Nearly a mile underground, about 1480 feet below the surface, the long main ventilation of the cavern, the heady draught that blows through, indicates that it has another outlet to the surface.

MR. KINKAID'S REPORT

Mr. Kinkaid was the first white child borne in Idaho and had been an explorer and hunter all his life, thirty years having been in the service of the Smithsonian Institute. Even briefly recounted, his history sounds fabulous, almost grotesque.

"First I would impress that the cavern is nearly inaccessible. The entrance is 1486 feet down the sheer canyon wall. It is located on government land and no visitor will be allowed down there under penalty of trespass. The scientist wish to work unmolested without the fear of archaeological discoveries being disturbed by curio or relic hunters. A trip there would be fruitless and a visitor would be sent on his way. The story of how I found the cavern has been related, but in

a paragraph: I was journeying down the Colorado river in a boat, alone looking for mineral. Some forty two miles up river from the El Tovar Crystal Canyon, I saw on the east wall stains in the sedimentary formation about 2000 feet above the river bed. There was no trail to this point, but I finally reached it with great difficulty. Above a shelf, which hid it from view from the river, was the mouth of the cave. There are steps leading from the entrance going thirty yards to what was at the time the cavern was inhabited the level of the river. When I saw the chisel marks on the wall inside the entrance, I became interested, secured my gun and went in. During the trip I went back several hundred feet along the main passage, till I came to the crypt in which I discovered the mummies. One of these I stood up and photographed by flashlight. I gathered a number of relics which I carried down the Colorado to Yuma, from whence I shipped them to Washington with details of the discovery.

THE PASSAGES

"The main passageway is a bout 13 feet wide, narrowing to 3 feet toward the further end. About 67 feet from the entrance, the first wide passages branch off to the left, along which, on both sides are a number of rooms about the size of ordinary living rooms of today, though some are thirty or forty feet square. These are entered by oval shaped doors and are ventilated by round air spaces through the walls into the passages. The walls are about 3 feet 6 inches in thickness. The passages are chiseled or hewn as straight as could be laid out by an engineer. The ceilings of many of the rooms converge to a center. The side passages near the entrance run at a sharp angle from the main hall, but toward the rear they gradually reach a right angle in direction.

THE SHRINE

"Over a hundred feet from the entrance is the cross hall, several hundred feet long. In which was found the Idol or Image, of the people's god, sitting cross legged. With a lotus flower or lily in each hand. The cast of which indicates some sort of ladder was attached. These granaries are rounded, and the materials of which they are constructed, I think is a very hard cement, A gray metal is also found in this cavern, which puzzles the scientists for it's identity has not been established. It resembles platinum. Strewn profusely over the floor everywhere are what people call "cats eyes" or "tiger eyes" a yellow stone of no great value. Each is engraved with a head of the Malay type.

THE HIEROGLYPHICS

"On all the halls, on walls, over doorways, and tablets of stone which were found by the Image are the mysterious hieroglyphics, the key which the Smithsonian Institute hopes yet to discover. These writings resemble

those on the rocks about this valley. The engraving on the tablets probably have something to do with the religion of these people. Similar hieroglyphics have been found on the peninsula of Yucatan, but these are not the same as those found in the orient. Some believe that these cave dwellers built the old canals in the Salt River Valley. Among the pictorial writings, only two animals are found. One is of prehistoric type.

THE CRYPT

"The tomb, or crypt, in which the mummies were found, is one of those that contain a deadly gas or chemicals used by the ancients. No sounds are heard, but it smells snakey just the same. The whole underground institution gives one of shaky nerves the creeps. The gloom is like a weight on one's shoulders, and our flashlights and candles only make the darkness blacker. Imagination can revel in conjectures and ungodly day-dreamers back through the ages that have elapsed till the mind reels dizzily in space."

AN INDIAN LEGEND

In connection with this story, it is notable that among the Hopis the traditions told that their ancestors once lived in an underworld in the Grand Canyon till dissension arose between the good and the bad, the people of one heart and the people of two hearts. Macllotio, who was their chief, counseled them to leave the underworld, but there was no way out. The chief then caused a tree to grow up and pierce the roof of the underworld, and then the people of one heart climbed out. They tarried by the Paisisvat (Red river), which is the Colorado and grew grain and corn. They sent out a message to the Temple of the Sun asking the blessing of peace, goodwill and rain for the people of one heart. That messenger never arrived, but today at the Hopi village at sundown can be seen the old men of the tribe out on the housetops gazing towards the sun, looking for their messenger. When he returns, their lands and ancient dwelling place will be restored to them. That is the tradition. Among the engravings of animals in the cave is seen the image of a heart over the spot where it is located. The legend was learned by W. E. Rollins, the artist, during a year spent with the Hopi Indians. There are two theories of the origin of the Egyptians. One is that they came from Asia: another that the racial cradle was in the upper Nile region. Heeren, an Egyptologist, believed in the Indian origin of the Egyptians. The discoveries in the Grand Canyon may throw further light on human evolution and prehistoric ages.



THE PLEASURE OF BEING BEHIND

Running Sweep

On a river trip, being the last member of your party in the rapid running order will garner you the respectable title of “sweep boatman.” But, if you’re like me, you know that running sweep has nothing to do with respect, and everything to do with just being slow. I have always been a little slow. On the last Grand Canyon trip I did, while the rest of the group was rowing through House Rock rapid, I was still way behind at Lees Ferry, finishing up the safety lecture with Ranger Dave —“wait, let’s go over this again, you mean you pee in the river?” I’m not the “let’s just wait five more minutes” kind of late. I’m the kind of late that will allow for geologic change. Sometimes I’ll get so far behind on the water that people will actually start to wonder if its possible to get lost floating down a river. “Well, that balanced rock was still standing when we passed it” my friends tell me if I ever catch up.

Being slow on the river has a lot of disadvantages. If you’re the last one there, you don’t get to see how anyone else runs the rapids. You don’t have anyone to follow, which is both scary and educational, because it forces you to develop your own basic plan of navigation. Mine goes like this:

1. Avoid any stationary debris, such as (but not exclusively) rocks, trees, gravel bars. Beware of other unexpected variables, like say, a dangerously misplaced concrete abutment.
2. Try to get up enough speed to plow through the big hairy stuff.

That’s it. Remarkably, I maintain a similar philosophy when it comes to mowing the lawn.

So you don’t get to see how the rest of your group runs the rapids. But in fact, if you get really far behind, you don’t get to see the rest of your group, period. There were a couple of guys on our trip who would always run lead. I never saw them. I think their names were Steve and Ricardo. I’ve heard they’re really a swell couple of guys.

The other people on my trip were smart enough not to entrust me with any group gear, at least nothing that they might need before dark. The only group camp item that I was responsible for carrying was a small green thermos, which evidently this guy “Steve” would use to make coffee in the morning (I was still asleep).

At first I blamed my boat, Franny, for our slowness. “You’re too heavy,” I would tell her, a comment which she seemed to tolerate better than anyone I’ve met. But I soon realized this was not the problem. It wasn’t Franny that was making things hard, it was what she was carrying. It wasn’t the boat itself, but rather what was inside the boat that was making things difficult, namely, me and the little green thermos. Though small, the little green thermos weighed a ton. Several times I considered throwing it overboard to relieve us of the weight, but then I thought of Steve. For all I knew, he could have been some kind of weird thermos fetishist, and would disapprove if I drowned one of his “babies.”

And so besides the thermos, a perhaps (in the eyes of some) under-appreciated (yet weighty) object, there was me. I was left as the sole impediment to our downstream progress. A truth which can be attributed to this fact: you can’t row and pick your nose at the same time (unless you use your feet, which is really hard to do. Not only does it demand a Gumby-like flexibility, but who has a big toe that will fit in their nose anyway?).

The people on my trip ended up getting in a lot of handy practice with their signal mirrors. Not from signaling planes, but from signaling me. Two flashes meant “Hurry up, damnit” and three flashes meant “Keep the stupid thermos, we don’t need it (or you) anymore.”

One thing I learned, is that if you’re going to be late pulling into camp, you better have a reason. “I got caught in an ice-flow” is a poor summertime excuse. I was lucky enough to have my girlfriend McKenzie hike in at Phantom to meet us for the second half of the trip. Once she showed up, my trip mates became much more understanding of my chronic tardiness. Because McKenzie and I were so often out of sight up-canyon, we were intuitively given the “Golden Salmon Award” for “going upstream to spawn.”

McKenzie had come on the trip wanting to learn how to row. What she learned from me was how to ship the oars and scratch herself. Instructive commands such as “push,” “pull” and “straighten out” were replaced with “see if there are any pretzels left” and “read me a story.” We played games like “Yell Really Loud and See if Anyone Can Hear Us” and “Let the Boat Drive Itself.” Fun games. She quickly took to complaining about the little green thermos, and I knew it was love. On the boat, we sang to each other and read cowboy poetry. We openly discussed the false and, we felt, misleading morality of many popular children’s bedtime stories, giving special emphasis and regard to “*The Tortoise and the Hare*.” Most days, our downstream pace was governed only by the fear that we might run out of mangoes. If mango

“... I HAVE
ALWAYS BEEN A
LITTLE SLOW ...”

and gummy bear trees grew in the Grand Canyon, I'm sure we'd still be down there.

We took an admittedly snobbish (and logically unstable) approach to justifying our slowness. "It's the Grand Canyon," we'd say, "it took time to create this thing, and we're going to take our own sweet time to see it." If we moved too quickly, we thought we might miss something. Going four miles an hour was simply way too fast. Motor boats would pass us and, because of their impossible speed, we would think they were giant, rubberized, Delorian-esque time machines from "Back to the Future," with Marty McFly at the helm and the Doc tugging on his hair and saying "Great Scott!"

So we took our time, and really got to see the canyon. A lot of what we saw we saw in the dark. Because we never got up before noon, we never made it very far on the river before nightfall. I'm here to tell you, heightened risk of hypothermia and drowning aside, there are certain unsung bonuses to running Bedrock in the dark. "Left? Right? What rock honey?...Oars?"

And so, in closing, I think we can all learn something from this. The next time you're down in the canyon, looking over your crew of competent, strong, and punctual friends, trying to decide who should run sweep, take a moment, and pick the guy picking his nose.

Matt Christensen



CRITTERS IN THE CANYON

"D"-flies: Which is a Dragon? Which a Damsel?

Dragon: (*Webster, 1991*): a huge serpent; a mythical animal usually represented as a monstrous winged and scaly serpent or saurian with a crested head.

Damsel: (*Webster, 1991*): a young woman; a young unmarried woman of noble birth.

Hmmmm...some of us tend to wonder about the common names of some species. Not quite sure where they originate in the insect world, maybe sort of like the constellation, a little abstract...? ...

Both dragonflies and damselflies are taxonomically related in that they are in the same Order, Odonata, and there are 450 species in North America. Both 'D-flies' have two sets of long transparent wings and large compound eyes which are oriented on a freely moveable head. The main difference between the two 'D-flies' is that the dragonflies hold their four wings out in a horizontal position and damselflies will fold their wings back when in a sitting position. Pretty unique to the insect realm, they both can move their wings independently and fly both forward and backward. They hunt mosquitos and other insects by making a basket-like trap of their legs (very beneficial predators).

Both 'D-flies' mate in flight; the male flies in front of the female grasping the female with an appendage on his abdomen and depositing the sperm into the the second addominal packet on the female. She will later lay the eggs in or close to an aquatic environment and they'll grow into nymphs or naiads and later metamorphis into D-flies. Although the adults and nymphs do not look alike, when fully grown, they crawl out of water, split their skin along the midline of the thorax and release the adult.

Hmm... again ya gotta wonder 'bout whether it truly is a dragon or damsel...

Nikolle Brown

OUR RIVER RUNNING SAINT

SAN JUAN NEPOMUCENO ` JAN NEPOMUK IN BOHEMIA

In New Mexico, Juan Nepomuceno is regarded as the patron of irrigation, lawyers, secrecy, and against slander (as elsewhere he is patron of bridges), Czechoslovakia [Bohemia], detraction, discretion, *boatmen, raftsmen, against floods, and against the dangers of water transportation*, and is, "Especially significant to the Penitentes for secrecy."

Another patron of boatmen is Julian the Hospitaller, said to be a "pious fiction" rather than an accredited saint. He killed a sleeping couple in his bed, thinking one of the pair was his wife. But—whoops—they were his visiting parents! As penance he built an inn and hospital for the poor at the mouth of a river, and was absolved from his sin when he gave his bed to an angel who was disguised as a leper. Boatmen can draw their own conclusions concerning the moral to the story.

Bunny Fontana

A VIEW FROM THE SWAMP

I came to Starr River Expeditions in 1966, when I was a clean-cut 17-year-old graduate from a top ranking high school, and I had a decade of river running experience. In other words, I had none of the qualities that Starr was looking for in a Grand Canyon boatman. I didn't drink hard, fight hard, swear or insult the customers. Besides that I weighed 135 pounds, couldn't bench press my weight, and was a slow runner. So how was it that I charmed my way into the bar room brawl that stood in place of a river operation in Marble Canyon? Really it was pretty simple—I jumped on a truck and laid under a tarp for a long time.

I was working in the Hometown, Utah boat yard, affectionately known as "The Swamp," painting oars, repairing frames, mowing Pam Starr's (the boss's wife) lawn, patching boats, and waiting for a trip. Every day, the New Mexico Boys – Roy, Carl, and I – would park ourselves on Redd Starr's back porch and wait for the blessed words, "Pack a lunch, boys. You're going on a two-day," or some such endearing line that meant we finally got to be boatmen. Most of the time, the call did not come, but the promise was always there. "We've got lot's of work, boys. There's oars to paint, drive jobs, and a weekly special in two weeks. And don't leave town because there's a big trip coming back from Grand that needs to be unpacked." We would moan that we wanted to be on the river but we lived in hope that some day Redd would trip over us and remember our name and send us out. Meanwhile, we continued dragging the decaying carcasses of inflatable military surplus bridge pontoons out of the swamp and trying to make them floatable. It was tedious work that did not pay well but we were allowed a free bunk in the "boathouse," and a chance to be where we belonged – on the river.

One day I let my big mouth get me into an argument with Gus Starr, the company's founder and Redd's father, over how to patch a boat. Roy gave me the panicked but patronizing look that told me to shut up – the same look he gave me after I incited the homicidal (post-Vietnam) Jerry Clew to dive through the \$25 Oldsmobile's window and grab my throat. I backed off. Gus stormed up to the house. The next day Redd came down to the boathouse early saying that his dad had died of heart failure last night, and there was an unconfirmed report that Shorty Burton had drowned in the Grand Canyon. It was a sad day, and the next trip came back from Grand one boatman short. We learned what to expect when a trip came back from Grand. The Boss and his favored boatmen would arrive a day ahead of the other boys and would be driving the best car in the fleet pulling a mountain of gear loaded on a flat bed hay trailer. The heavier, main load of equipment would arrive a day or two later—a veritable mountain range, a Uintah or a Wasatch, of food boxes, motors, frames, floor boards, chains, oars, and boats on an overloaded 1-ton truck that pulled a cordillera of broken miscellany on a limping U-haul trailer. We would always leave a parking space by the big cottonwood in front of Redd's house so if any of the rolling stock arrived without brakes, at least the rig would crash into the tree instead of the house. The junior boatmen would stagger out of the cab after driving non-stop at 35 miles an hour for two and a half days, and those of even lower status would climb out like roaches from under some of the load in back.

As shopworn as the least of the Grand Canyon swampers (assistant boatmen) was, he (always a he – we were all he-men) had status above the Hometown Boys, that allowing him to march into the house and start working out plans for the next Grand trip. Meanwhile, the Hometown Boys (if you weren't in Grand you were a Hometown Boy whether you were a New Mexico Boy, a Missouri Boy, or an Alabama Boy) would set about unscrambling the overloaded mess, cleaning out weeks worth of salad dressing and broken eggs from the repairable food boxes and stacking the equipment into three piles – hopeless Swamp bait; reusable by heroic effort; and barely-adequate-for-a-flat-water-one-day-if-I-don't-have-to-row-it. By definition, all the equipment was superior because it had been to Grand, but the reality was that only the dregs made it back to the Hometown swamp for repair or for local use. After all, so said the prevailing wisdom, the Hometown Boys only ran oars on short trips and it takes no skill at all to run a boat with oars compared to running a motor. While it is true that it takes a great deal of skill to motor a 3-ton rig through Grand, it is also true that most of the Motor Men of Grand Canyon weren't worth a hoot on the oars. Those of us who could do both resented being thought of as tainted or inadequate.

IN THE LAND OF REAL BOATMEN

Some of the Hometown Boys eventually made it to Grand by a variety of routes. Roy's ticket was overwhelming confidence, competence, and swagger. Carl's was dark alliances and back eddy stabbing. McGoo's was patiently waiting until Redd did trip over him—sent him out just to be rid of him. Mine was climbing under the tarp of a Marble Canyon bound overload in a typical Hometown June snow storm, yelling to Pam that I was tired of being cold. I would wait on the boat ramp at Lee's Ferry until Redd knew I was there no matter how long it took, and that turned out to be a mercifully short wait. After two days of rigging boats in 115 degree heat I got a job as Mark Leachman's swamper on a 10-day to Lake Meade.

On my next trip I graduated to trainee under Bert Clew, Jerry's big brother, who had tipped a 33-footer over on his previous trip. Redd called him Rollo. We were running a tail dragger, the Volkswagen of Grand Canyon, the slowest and smallest of the motored rigs, that forced the boatman to sit on the end of a 33-foot game of crack-the-whip. Wave energy seemed to be stored up in the rubber of the pontoon to be released suddenly under the butt of the boatman who was trying to hang onto the motor with one hand and anything he could find with the other. Hanging on was rarely 100 percent successful and most old boatmen wear reminders of meeting hard things head-on after a good tossing. Some boatmen tried to stay seated under a macramé of laptop ropes; others didn't, fearing a drowning from entanglement. We all remember Shorty who died from a kind of entanglement in his flip of a tail-dragger in Upset Rapid. Rollo introduced me to the seat belt style of bucking rig and I still like it about as much as a jab in the eye with a sharp stick.

Rollo ran us down the right side of Hance Rapid, a suicidal or incompetent route that no one in a tail dragger liked to take, and for good reason. The ride through Hance with two men on the motor frame was too much for the doubled 2 X 10 boards and they snapped during one of our violent runs to the bottom of a very sharp 8-foot breaking wave. But Rollo was VERY strong and saved the motor. We used some of his, like every boatman's, stash of 100 pounds of repair gear to patch a transom together that got us to Phantom Ranch. By reengineering the frame we had created another splintered emergency motor frame that had proved its worth by going to Grand. At Phantom we made a call out to Starr, and Redd, loving a good emergency better than most men, had the guys at Marble Canyon disassemble a frame and drive it four hours to South Rim where they sent it and a motor down the Bright Angel Trail on mule back. Our pre-planned layover day scheduled for Phantom Ranch gave us time to 'fix it on the way' – one of Redd's favorite remedies.

We camped at Phantom and those of us who weren't too drunk to fix a motor frame were also not too drunk to start feeding 200 people on the scorching beach. Seventy-five customers were going to be hiking out to the South Rim after their four-day trip, seventy-five customers on a 6-day had just come in to replace them, and a third trip with fifty aboard was stranded on the small sand bar too, waiting for the feared Massey to reappear as trip leader after absenting himself for a day or two. The junior boatmen could surely handle this mess while Dave and Steve Gorgeous, Britt Ready, Woody Hatch, and other two-fisted stuffed shirts stayed roaring drunk out of habit. And handle it we did, having gotten our training cooking frozen chicken over sage brush fires for 200 boy scouts on the Yampa River in Dinosaur National Monument. For some reason the still-drunk Happiness Brothers, Hugh and Ron, showed up at breakfast. As Ron's arm was frying from gray to black on the griddle after a triple inverted stagger through the fire, Hugh told him, "Get offa damn griddle. Wur try'n'a cook." Eventually the dudes thinned out, the incapacitated boatmen were helicoptered to medical attention (another story about Curt "The Whale" Hanson, best told by Brick Wells) or left to die on the trail out of the canyon, and Massey came back.

Sometimes Massey wouldn't come back, though, abandoning trips just out of meanness, and the remaining boatmen would shoulder the load and save themselves and the trip. Massey was unpredictable, fearless, and mean. Maybe that's why he was a favorite of Redd's. They could be found arguing, firing, quitting, and making up again over a drink several times a year. Massey drank a quart of Jack Daniels every day and he shit blood. His wish, I think, was to kill a man with his hands, and he could probably do it any time he wanted, being a three-time golden gloves champion in Utah and an equally decorated wrestler. He was also the best motor man I've ever seen, and a very good oarsman, though not as good as Don, Earl, or Roy.

Massey was on his way to killing Dean Agee on a trip later that summer of 1968. Dean looked like the baddest Hell's Angel ever to fork a bike, and may have been the baddest before he got unhooked from heroin or before he baked his brain on zinc fumes from his part time job welding garbage cans. He looked hard, wiry, and fast, and he pulled back his long black curls with a red bandanna. He wore two knives on his belt. One was a Buck Folding Hunter that he worked incessantly, fretfully, under muddy water often enough that he could deploy it blindfolded with one hand. "Shorty wouldn't have drowned if he could do that, eh?" imagined the pickled mind of Dean. The other was a long sheath knife, used mainly for appearance and as a kitchen tool. He would carve off a piece of dinner ham and skewer it on the point of the sword and thrust it under the nose of a trembling customer while growling through gritted teeth, "Is that

enough?" But Dean would not harm a fly—he didn't even pick on me. Massey chose him as the target that night. Massey was a five-foot eight-inch, one hundred sixty-five pound blur of angry fists and feet as he decked Dean. Then he picked him up and repeatedly slammed him down onto the boat's thole pins, ten-inch high pipes attached to the frames for rowing if the motors ever failed. Fearing the worst, Skip Jones grabbed up a pile of life jackets and started padding the pins, but stopped when Massey grabbed him by the throat, pinned him facing Dean on the muddy floorboard, glared at him and snarled, "You want some of this, too?" Why Massey stopped, no one knows, but Dean survived the attack, recuperating strapped to his duffel pile for the remainder of the trip while a trainee took over the motor.

TRAILERS IN THE SAGE

It was good to have run some Grand Trips, but I wasn't suited to the outfit and the times and I spent most of my summers working for Don in Idaho. If I wasn't there or in Grand, I was in Cataract Canyon, Desolation Canyon, or Hometown. But I still got a view of Grand from Hometown when the piles of used up equipment arrived for us to fix. One trailer load arrived behind the brown Pontiac Bonneville that Redd bought for Pam that summer. Pam forced Redd to promise not to use it for towing boats, but the next night it stole out of the driveway with a trailer full of emergency supplies. When it came back from Marble Canyon, it was carrying Redd, Massey, and some aspiring pugilists, but something was wrong. It was pulling a load of junk and was a day after the main pile, not before. What could have caused a two-day delay of the favorite sons?

Massey, Redd, and another good ol' boy had swilled a few beers at the Temple Bar bar while the less important boys loaded a trailer with the worst Hometown-bound boats, frames and oars. When the trailer and drivers were fully loaded, the boss and his men took off for Vegas and a night of carousing. Having pulled the grade out of Boulder City, the Bonneville was really feeling its oats and Redd opened her up to 80 miles an hour. The Alps stayed on the trailer so Massey, who was very clever, goaded Redd into another five miles an hour. "Come on Redd you piece of shit. A real man can go faster than that." Well, the real man did go faster, but the real trailer didn't like it. It skidded wider and wider arcs across the highway, dragging the complaining Bonneville with it until one broadside skid twisted the trailer off the hitch and sent it sliding and tumbling through the desert, trading thole pins for cactus, and boat rubber for rocks. The trailer was destroyed, but the boys and the car were OK. After lying their way out of a jail sentence, the sheep-

ish crew reloaded all the damaged gear onto a U-Haul trailer, and headed into Vegas for a much deserved rest. Redd fired Massey and everybody liquored up to rest up. The boys were feeling extremely rested (some say nearly comatose) when they took off for Hometown again. With the newly rehired Massey at the wheel, they made a few miles before the slate-eyed maniac said, "You think 85 was something? Watch this!" The eight cylinders and four barrels of the stock luxury car got the load up to 105 before the trailer once again started pruning sage brush. Another set of lies, a third trailer, a firing and rehiring, and a different driver finally got the boys to Hometown. We dug cactus out of our hands for months babying those ruined boats down the Green. But they were good boats. They had been to Grand.

EPILOGUE

Jerry Clew wore a carabineer on his belt that he could use like brass knuckles to kill niggers. He was expelled from the Hometown police force for using excessive violence. He turned to trucking and was shot to death in the cab of his truck by a drug-crazed stranger while waiting at a stop sign near Rock Springs, Wyoming. Massey broke into his ex-wife's home and fired all but one bullet from his .45, missing her. He went outside and put the last bullet into his brain. Skip Jones still guides river trips, mostly in Idaho. Roy is an emergency room doctor; Leachman manages an outdoor program at a high school; Carl builds trendy houses; Whale is dead from drugs; Don is dead from cancer; Starr is still going strong. Dave Gorgeous still runs Grand trips for pay. Between my recreational river trips, I manage radioactive waste that is generated in the country's madness to build atomic bombs.

David Yeamans



© David Yeamans, 2000, first printed, *Mountain Gazette*, July-August 2001 #81

GRAND CANYON HISTORY SYMPOSIUM

The first ever Grand Canyon History Symposium will be held January 24-27, 2002 at Grand Canyon Village, South Rim, GCNP.

Thirteen sessions, three of them on the Colorado River, with 38 presenters, interpretive sessions, tours, and get-togethers promise to be a grand weekend.

River runners are well represented as Emma Benenati, Bill Bishop, Brad Dimock, Richard Quartaroli, Larry Stevens, Michael Ghiglieri, and Tom Myers will give talks. Participation is limited to the first 100 participants; call Grand Canyon Field Institute at 928-638-2485 for registration and more information.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT? WHY I LOVE TO BOAT

I'm not sure where exactly we are. I didn't bring my guide book. There are two things for sure, we're someplace nice and we're headed down river. It's been a long day. I'm a little tired and maybe a little sunburned. The evening has cooled off nicely, but today was hot, hot. I think we went twenty six very flat miles today. Plenty of room between the boats and very quiet, providing great opportunities to get naked, relax and an soak in the sun (note: broil in the sun at your own risk).

A couple of the folks whipped up a great dutch oven dinner—Mexican food that tasted so great it's hard to believe how easy it was to make. Filled up my big belly. The dishes are done and the trash is put away.

After dinner I took off to the groover to make a movement and contemplate the evening light on the deep red, red cliff across the river. River poopers rank as the best of all places to "zone out." There were pretty yellow flowers at my feet and a short distance away, the ever busy water roils it's way to the Pacific, and pacific is how I feel.

Someone had the bright idea of taking the left over dinner charcoals and putting together a little campfire around which a number of my fellow travellers were gathered, sitting in their little folding chairs, parked close to the glow.

Somebody's hunched over, jabbing the wood, each prod causing a tiny flame to flicker larger. Some of the couples had slipped off to their camps probably to take in a little private "sparking." Luminescent domes of light marked their chosen spots tucked into the tammie thickets. Why do those couples always set up tents, even on clear nights?

The rest of us remained turned towards the fire hedonistically indulging in wine tasting and an occasional smoke. Soon the stories started to flow. Fireside chats. Stories about places I had never been, people I didn't know and of course the "no shit, there I was..." adventures. Each tale a little louder than the previous. As it was my first trip with these folks so I didn't have much to say—I find myself missing my regular boat buddies. I'll get over it, these are wonderful people.

Every now and then a bubble of laughter pop's into the night like cedar wood cinders, floating away, bright, then, poof— gone.

Tale time becomes punctuated by long pauses.

The yawning faces nod closer to the fire. One by one the tired boatboys and their friends drift away. I catch myself starting to snore in my chair. "Snort"—"Rude?" I've been accused of that. I'm in denial, I prefer to think of my sonorous lapses as an audio/visual demonstration of my great comfort and ease amongst my companions, not rude, I'm just relaxed.

Time for me to head down to the waterfront and climb out onto my boat. A lone shadow tends the fire, I'm ready for bed and really glad I'd taken the time earlier to unroll my pad and get my comfy bag out, setting them up on the front deck. Pull my shorts off and flop down on top of the bag. Using my life jacket as a pillow, I'm ready for the show. It's a hot night, but down by the river it's cool—the cool air slides across my 54 years. A soft caress from mother night. Very nice. Gazing straight into a sky still rimmed with the faintest twilight glow, a shooting star arcs it's way across the gathering night. It's going to be a good show.

Hours later the cool has turned cold. I awaken. My glasses are still in place. Crawling into my bag, now wide awake and ready to ponder the infinity of the Milky Way. Are there really more stars in the sky than tammie seeds in the wind on a late spring day? Or is it the other way around? Doesn't the word "infinity," fail the concept completely by trying to put a boundary around the boundless trying to comprehend the incomprehensible?

Dark canyon edges loom, while the boat rocks softly. The river slides on forever. So many stars so bright you can almost read a book by their glittering light. I lay awake. Just watching. Waiting for the morning light, so I can do it all over again.

That's what it's all "about." Why I love to boat.

Ricardo Martín



Julia Holland, 2000



Encountering Heidi:

Meeting Others as a Central

Lilian M. Jonas, William P. Stewart and Kevin W. Larkin

Abstract:: Over the past few decades, numerous studies have investigated encountering other people in backcountry recreational situations. Although academics and professionals may recognize that meeting others in backcountry areas could result in positive interactions that are beneficial to the experience, research directed at positive aspects of intergroup encounters has yet to emerge. This paper examines encounters using a symbolic interactionist framework and provides an interpretation of the inter-linkages between encounters, recreation experiences, and identities. Findings are based on more than 10 years of participant observation studies on multi-day white water rafting trips in the western United States. The major point is that encounters between groups of river runners are evaluated at the situational level and based on the nature of the social interaction. Evidence indicates that encounters may be some of the most meaningful events in a river running experience due to opportunities they afford to negotiate river runner identities. Dominant identities, central to many river running experiences, are related to being an adventurer (who is able to face and conquer white water rapids) and being a "river god/goddess" (who is resourceful in providing comfort within a wilderness setting).

Who is Heidi? To put it succinctly, Heidi is someone we "encountered" on a Grand Canyon raft trip one summer. We do not know her last name nor what she does when not rafting. We only know that she was on a solo Grand Canyon river trip, ate spaghetti every other night and had a leaky valve on her small, blue raft. We shared a large beach with her one night, the beach being large enough that we could not see where she was camped. We also invited her for a salmon dinner. A commercial trip on the other end of the beach, out of view from our camp, also invited her for dinner, but they were having spaghetti, so Heidi chose to dine with us. We ate together and exchanged stories. Our boatman examined her raft and shrugged his shoulders; he did not have any spare valves that would fit her tubes. Heidi went to the other group for breakfast and probably had a similar type of encounter. Although both the commercial group and our group could have considered the encounter with Heidi as intruding on our river experience, we defined it as part of that experience. In fact, we hoped to encounter her again as we floated downstream, and we asked trips that were traveling faster than us if they had seen her: Yes, Heidi had dinner with them last night. No, her valves had not been fixed.

On that trip, however, we did have a few encounters that detracted from our river experience. We met a commercial group in a narrow side-canyon with a loud-mouth leader who publically queried us about our recreation research. We passed a group of private boaters that were experiencing some inter-group conflicts and assumed that we wanted to take their camp for the night. We crawled over a string of boats in the mouth of Havasu Creek while avoiding the growls of one boatman upset about people stepping on his boat and quite sure that each new pair of feet added more sand. What made these encounters "unpleasant," however, was not due to meeting another party along the river, nor due to the encounter making us feel crowded. In fact, we had encounters at some attraction sites with a multitude of parties, but we agreed that the overall impact of encountering all those people at such sites left a positive effect on our river experience. It was the circumstances surrounding the encounters that affected the meaning we attributed to the interaction, and resulted in encounters being interpreted as either pleasant or unpleasant.

The perspective that encounters with other people have a positive and contributory effect on backcountry travel may seem inconsistent with the nature of a river experience. In general, a recreational river trip through the Grand Canyon, or many western rivers with long free-flowing stretches, are viewed as "wilderness" experiences. The peaceful desert environment and deep canyon walls isolate river runners from reminders of civilization. Those who venture on river trips do so for a variety of reasons, including escaping routines of everyday life, seeking privacy, experiencing challenge, and learning new skills (Cohen

Aspect of the River Experience

& Taylor, 1992; Driver, Tinsley, & Manfredo, 1991; Hammitt & Rutlin, 1995; Knopf, Peterson, & Leatherberry, 1985).

While these reasons for going on a river trip may seem "natural," and thus taken for granted, they are partially constructed through the colorful marketing brochures from commercial outfitters. In general, outfitters are adept at "helping" prospective passengers frame their motivations, and commonly stage the prospective Grand Canyon raft trip as a mixture of white-water adventure and escape:

When your spirit cries for peace, come to a world of canyons; Feel the exultation of high plateaus, the simplicity of sand and grass, the strength of moving waters, and the silence of growth.

(Arizona Raft Adventures)

There is no doubt that the canyon changes people, humbles them, gives them a new perspective on their place in nature. New canyon adventurers come full of themselves, but in the canyon, every living thing is on equal footing. In harmony.

(Diamond River Adventures)

Ahead, huge rocks seemed to block our escape. Suddenly, the raft spun sideways and we looked back to see our boatman gripping a line with one hand and steering the raft with the other. He was serious, not smiling. Did he realize we were approaching another giant hole nearly backwards? Just as we dove into the hole completely covered with water, a lateral wave smacked the raft from the right, spinning us forward and through a channel of rushing white-water barely wide enough to accommodate the boat. I looked back. Trent was grinning from ear to ear. He knows the river. Everyone hooted and hollered.

(Western River Expeditions)

Although not "typical" of a wilderness experience, pampering, especially in the form of eating gourmet meals, is another deliberately anticipated experience promoted by commercial outfitters for prospective passengers:

The guides understand the importance of a hot, fragrant breakfast, laced with fresh fruit after a night under the stars. They appreciate the Zen-like pleasure of a perfect picnic. When it comes to the evening meal, they know it's an art form – a blend of abundance, beauty, and mind-blowing good food.

(Outdoor Adventure River Specialists)

These motivating forces, and their related experiences, become central to one's identity as a river runner. In this study, we examine two defining components of an "authentic" river running identity: that of adventurer and that of river god/goddess. Encounters during the river experience serve to develop, maintain, and/or challenge

such river runner identities, and in doing, provide the context in which the encounters are evaluated as being intrusive, positive, unpleasant, and so forth. In this paper, we provide a symbolic interactionist interpretation of identity and inter-relationships between encounters and identities. Following this, we briefly describe the contexts in which encounters are interpreted and identify the river guides' role in facilitating their passengers' interpretations. Finally, we examine how encounters are an important aspect of both the experience and identity of river runners.

Theoretical Framework Leisure Identities

In general, an identity refers to a person's location in social life (Hewitt, 1994). When a person has an identity, "he [or she] is situated, that is, cast in the shape of a social object by the acknowledgment of his [or her] participation or membership in social relations" (Stone, 1981). The term identity is often confused with the concept of role. However, a role can be defined as a perspective from which behavior is conducted. A role in itself is lifeless, an unplayed part that has no substance until the individual claims it for his or her own and breathes life into it by identifying with it (Erickson, 1995; Foote, 1955). While some identities are fleeting because the roles are temporary or mundane, others are more heartfelt or intense as the individual comes to perceive those identities as part of his or her real self. In other words, the role and self merges (Turner, 1976). In the leisure setting, this occurs when the actor commits a lot of time and personal resources to the leisure role, and that resultant leisure identity becomes part of his or her "core" (Hughes, 1945; Mullaney, 1999) or "glorified" self (Adler & Adler, 1991). Those less committed to the leisure role, on the other hand, tend to have less enduring leisure identities, with the leisure role being less central to his or her overall definition of self.

Several studies in leisure research support the relevance of understanding leisure experiences through identity construction. Through a discussion of relationships among roles, identities, and social interactions, Kelly (1983, 1992; see also Samdahl, 1988) argued that leisure serves to negotiate the expression of one's self and that the creative and enjoyable part of leisure is the enactment or performance of the role (Kelly, 1992, p. 119). DiManche and Samdahl (1994) also emphasized

(continued on next page)

The data collection for this study was partially supported by the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center. This paper was developed from a paper of the same title presented at, and published in the proceedings of, the 1999 Wilderness Science in a Time of Change conference, Missoula, MT. Submitted to Symbolic Interaction ~ September, 2001

(continued from preceding page) the “self” as in a continual state of creation, with leisure providing a context to explore new identities. They suggested that a witnessing audience may inhibit the expression of a desirable identity, and that a leisure context is often an “arena where an actor can take off masks and forget about the audiences’ reaction to a performance” (p. 11). In contrast to DiManche and Samdahl (1994), the thrust of this paper underscores the importance of witnessing audiences to the construction of desirable identities.

The River Experience and Identities

The river experience is often perceived as magical or extraordinary (Arnould & Price, 1993). Part of the magic is associated with escaping from the rules and mundane routine of everyday life and finding oneself transformed by the beauty and remoteness of the river and its canyons (cf., Cohen & Taylor, 1992). This transformation has profound implications for identity as the individual learns to embrace becoming a river runner through opportunities to escape past roles and explore new ones.

While the river experience and emergent river identity are associated with the backcountry (“wilderness”) setting, these also depend on joint action (Blumer, 1969), specifically, the inter-linkages of actions among river runners. Various types of joint actions occur among groups of river runners, and include dramaturgical performances (Erickson, 1995; Goffman, 1967), identity work-up and displays (Birrell & Turowetz, 1979; Mullaney, 1999), and danger constructions (Jonas, 1999). All of these performances depend upon witnessing audiences, which are essential in the identity construction process.

River runner identities are not formed merely once an individual departs on a river trip. In general, identities are negotiated at the situational level, where they are enacted through a reciprocal process between an audience and the actor (Altheide, 2000; Becker, 1964; Blumer, 1969; Fine, 1993; Stone, 1981; Strauss, 1969). In their characterization of identities as negotiated, Pedlar, Dupuis, and Gilbert (1996) explored the ability of audience expectations to change and accommodate a broader range of identities in a given role enactment. Kuentzel (2000) also emphasized the fluid, growing, and “becoming” nature of identity as one negotiates the ambiguity of life’s situations. With the framing of identity being situationally-defined, identities must be continuously constructed and reconstructed in everyday life and are only recognized and confirmed during their enactment (Cicourel, 1973; Douglas & Johnson, 1977; Garfinkel, 1967; Kotarba & Fontana, 1984; Schutz, 1962; Silver, 1996). Identity construction is thus a continuous process that depends on both the activities of the individual and the ratification by a witnessing audience. On the river, this process occurs during encounters, whether they be intra- or inter-group

encounters. In this paper, we focus on the latter.

Encounters on river trips in Grand Canyon occur among three main types of river running groups: commercial, private, and research. Most passengers have their first, and often only, river experience on a commercial trip. Commercial passengers arrive from distant locales and spend an average of \$1600 per person per week for the on-river services of commercial outfitters; most Grand Canyon river trips are between seven and eighteen days in length. Commercial passengers are generally an affluent segment of society as evidenced by more than three-fourths of them having at least a college degree, and about half having annual household incomes

**“...PART OF THE MAGIC IS
ASSOCIATED WITH ESCAPING FROM
THE RULES AND MUNDANE
ROUTINE OF EVERYDAY LIFE AND
FINDING ONESELF
TRANSFORMED BY THE BEAUTY
AND REMOTENESS OF THE RIVER
AND ITS CANYONS...”**

greater than \$100,000 (Stewart et al., 2000). While passengers on commercial trips are on a vacation, their guides receive a paycheck and are officially “on the job” throughout the length of the river trip. On private trips, however, both river guides and passengers engage in leisure. Most private trips are on a relaxed schedule in traveling downstream compared to commercial trips. Whereas commercial trips accommodate up to 36 passengers per trip, the majority of private trips have 16 people on the trip (the maximum allowed by the National Park Service) and are usually comprised of family, friends, and assorted “tag-a-longs” resulting in a downstream adventure with a group of people who were not previously a group. Among the river guides, private trips often are characterized by their heavy drinking, wild partying or merely acting as “a bunch of yahoos who don’t have the slightest idea what they are doing.” While most private trips do not fit this description, there is a general assumption among the commercial river guides that private boaters behave much like “primates,” which they occasionally are called.

While private trips can be considered a total leisure experience, research trips are quite different. Neither passengers nor river guides are totally engaged in leisure as they venture on a research trip. Although the percentage varies from year to year, about 10% of the annual “user nights” of Grand Canyon river runners are related to research trips. These trips investigate various phenomena in the river corridor, usually related to studies of sedi-

ment transport, fisheries, archaeological resources, wildlife, or, less frequently, recreation. Those on research trips are concerned about avoiding negative perceptions of themselves during encounters to preclude accusations of acting like private boaters:

The TL [trip leader] broached the subject of alcohol,

"You need to keep a low profile. I know the atmosphere here is to have a good time, and we are one of the most lenient research groups around. You won't see any other groups with an open beer can on the boat. However, please hide your cans on the boats when we pass other groups. We are a "research" team and we don't want other groups remarking to the Park Service on our partying...we need to keep a positive image in the Canyon."

(Research trip, Grand Canyon)

Although the different river running roles (river guide or passenger on a commercial, private, or research trip) provide the backdrop from which to interpret encounters, the meaning of the encounter and its impact on the individual's identity are negotiated at the situational level.

Methods

The methods employed in this study center on a pluralistic approach to addressing the meanings of encounters in a backcountry setting. During the river trip in which we met Heidi, summer 1998, the three authors discussed the social dynamics of encounters as an interesting research topic. Further discussion led each of the authors to go back and examine field notes taken during this trip, and in the case of the first author, to examine more than ten years' worth of field notes taken for a separate study that focused on interactions between guides and passengers. She also took more focused field notes on subsequent river trips in 1999 and 2000. The narratives and interpretations within field notes collected by all the authors represent the data used in this study.

These notes were written in various forms and perspectives, or "voices" (Ronai, 1992). Some field notes were collected in journal format (Johnson, 1975) with the first author taking the role of observer (Adler & Adler, 1975; Gold, 1958; Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000) and watching and recording what was going on in the setting, and reporting the "objective" things that river runners said and did. In this fashion, a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of the river running arena was obtained. Other

notes were collected to capture the more subjective aspects of the river runner self and subsequently took the form of an "auto-ethnography/biography" (Adler & Adler, 1987; Ellis, 1991; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Hayano, 1982, 1979; Jules-Rosette, 1975; Krieger, 1985, 1983; Ronai, 1992). In this fashion, such techniques as "interpretive recall" (Hadden, Degher, & Fernandez, 1989; Schratz & Walker, 1995) and "systematic sociological introspection" (Ellis, 1991) were used to write field notes on personal experiences as both river guide and passenger.

The multiple methods of collecting and interpreting field notes allowed for a recognition of the ways in which

each author was not only an observer but also became involved in the production of events reported (Mitchell, 1991; Richardson, 1992, 1997). While the collection of the field notes prior to 1998 did not focus entirely on encounters, subsequent analysis of the data using a focused grounded theory method (Charmaz, 2000; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) revealed that encounters were a central component of the identity construction and affirmation processes of river runners. This information was used on subsequent river trips by the first author to gather more guided field notes that focused primarily on the relationship between encounters and

identities. By noting both the objective and subjective components of the river experience, the meanings that surround encounters in backcountry settings were more easily described and discussed. By using these multiple methods, we were better able to access both the social and interpretive components crucial to identity formation and modification (Blumer, 1969; Hewitt, 1989).

Findings and Discussion

Facilitating the Meaning of Encounters

Most river guides have been on the river numerous times and have constructed certain expectations and definitions of encounters. Passengers on commercial and private trips, on the other hand, because of their limited river running experience, have few expectations or predefined notions of encounters. Consequently, river guides play an important role in facilitating passengers' interpretation of encounters (Arnould, Price, & Tierney, 1998). The following field note demonstrates how river guides aid passengers in viewing certain types of encounters:

Then we heard the other [motor] boatmen complaining about the dories, who thought that they were "so great." For instance, they told us how those dory boatmen would not even look at the motor boats when they passed by and instructed their passengers to look at the canyon (continued on next page)

**"... PASSENGERS ON
COMMERCIAL AND PRIVATE
TRIPS, ON THE OTHER
HAND, BECAUSE OF THEIR
LIMITED RIVER RUNNING
EXPERIENCE, HAVE FEW
EXPECTATIONS OR
PREDEFINED NOTIONS OF
ENCOUNTERS ..."**

(continued from preceding page) *wall, or put buckets on their heads, because they thought that they were so much better than them and that motors were evil.*

(Commercial trip, Grand Canyon)

The dory passengers in the above story probably viewed every encounter with motorized boats as detracting from their identity as river runners in a wilderness setting. Their experience would have been different if the dory boatmen greeted the motor groups with more respect and deference. The following field note also illustrates how negative perceptions of encounters are potentially developed, this time with research trips:

Donna was telling me the story of one research trip where the people worked really hard, and took the hottest time of day to take a break - sleeping in the shade, and a commercial boatman points to them and tells his passengers, "See, your tax dollars hard at work." This really pissed Donna off, "that boatman really gave us a bad reputation in the eyes of those passengers. Why couldn't he have come around when we were working our butts off so the passengers could see how hard we really work?!"

(Research trip, Grand Canyon).

The guide in the above story could have led the passengers to interpret the encounters differently, perhaps by emphasizing the dawn-to-dusk work schedule of researchers, and that they were only taking a much-deserved rest. This would have made the encounter between the research and commercial group more supportive of the researchers' role and their subsequent identities. Researchers occasionally engage in remedial work (Goffman 1967) in an attempt to renegotiate undesired identities imputed on them by others:

We happened to camp just below the commercial group who gave us a hard time for hanging out in the shade in the middle of the day, so we decided to get a little close to them at one in the morning during one of our electrofishing runs. When they passed us the next morning, we asked them, apologetically, "Oh, we didn't disturb you with the noise from our generator last night? We didn't mean to shine our Q-Beam in your eyes" They didn't respond much, but they also didn't condemn us for sleeping during the day. (Research Trip, Grand Canyon)

In reality, river guides often facilitate positive interpretations of encounters with other groups, because it is in the river guide's best interest if his/her passengers have an overall enjoyable river experience. Consequently, instead of ostracizing another group by pointing out some sort of major deficiency, or how the other group's presence disrupts their own river experience, river guides often treat encounters with other groups as a normal,

even entertaining part of a river trip. This is evident in the following field note:

Soon after the commercial group from Colorado leaves, another group joins us [in Slickhorn pool - a popular attraction site]. We recognize them as the sport-yak, commercial group that we have been bumping into on the river. Actually, they camped upriver from us at John's Canyon and recognized us, "Oh, are you the group that were yelling and screaming at the other camp?" Uh yes, we were. "How was your happy hour?", asked one woman, and we answered that it was just fine. Then their TL [trip leader] and some older male passenger, directing their conversation to Lydia and I, tell us about the skinny dipper they saw, and how the TL couldn't keep the guys from taking pictures, and how this one chap busted his automatic rewind on his camera. "Oh, were you the two that were skinny dipping?.... Another group hikes in and also recognizes us, with the boatman making some snide remark on our previous activities. So, we made a reputation for ourselves on the river. What can you expect? One of the commercial guides invited us to lunch....We hesitated for a minute, but then dove right in, mingled with the passengers, and felt as part of their group....[Later, on the river,] the group that gave us lunch passed us, being

amazed by the number of people and amount of gear I had in my small boat. We asked them if they had any beer since we were out, but the guide only laughed and said he couldn't believe that we ran out of beer. We later pass him, and to our surprise, he throws us three cans of beer, and their passengers applauded as we dove into the water to retrieve them.

(Private trip, San Juan River)

While the commercial river guides teased the private river runners for their wild antics, they did not ostracize them from their passengers, but attempted to integrate them with their group by inviting them to lunch and providing beer. By throwing beer to the private group, the commercial guide provided the material for the private boaters to further enact their scripts as "wild partiers," evidenced by their diving into the river to retrieve the beer. This both confirmed the private-boater stereotype and demonstrated acceptance of such behavior through applause. In this manner, the river guides facilitated a positive interpretation of the encounter with private river runners, with the encounter becoming a part of their river "entertainment."

Encounters as Witnessing Audiences

Encounters provide audiences that are able to recognize, shape, and reaffirm identities of river runners. Consequently, when boats pass other boats or occupied camps, the groups often greet each other with a wave, shout, or water fight. Even floating past people who are not river runners on a beach reaffirms a river runner

"A CENTRAL ASPECT OF AN AUTHENTIC RIVER RUNNER IDENTITY IS BEING AN ADVENTURER; ONE WHO IS ABLE TO FACE AND CONQUER THE MIGHTY RAPIDS ..."

identity, as the following field note suggests:

As we passed the helicopter landing on river left, we watched the nice man in suit and tie pour bottles of champagne for the good people. We also watched five or six blue helicopters land noisily to deliver more people for the champagne brunch "on the river." They probably paid a lot for their "Grand Canyon Experience." We were just freezing our butts off in the rain - enduring the third day of cold drizzle. But what about these helicopters "ruining" our wilderness experience? I noticed our guide take our snout-boat directly towards the left shore, just directly below where the good people were having brunch under the Hualapai-made shelters. They point, take pictures, and wave. We wave back, toast them with our beers. Oddly, I didn't notice any resentment in our group - or even annoyance. For us, it seemed merely a break in the routine of running this flat water stretch; to watch the helicopters pass by and land, one by one. And, even more so, it gave us a sense of authenticity - even superiority. We were able to compare our "Grand Canyon experience" with theirs, which demonstrated that we were having a "real" Grand Canyon experience (getting cold, wet, sandy), while those having champagne brunch were not even getting their feet wet - so to speak. We even had "proof" that we were "real" river runners as they were taking OUR pictures - as if we were natives in this Canyon setting. (Private trip, Grand Canyon)

There have been numerous attempts to have helicopters completely banned from the Grand Canyon, both above and below the rim, because the noise disrupts the wilderness experience. The above field note suggests, however, that encounters with such "horrid" machines could become central to the identity construction process. While the encounter was not defined positively (i.e., helicopters in the Grand Canyon were still seen as unpleasant), it provided a comparison for the river runners. They were able to prove to themselves, and others, that they are "real" or "authentic" river runners. This authenticity was reaffirmed by recognition from those on shore, as indicated by their taking pictures of the river "natives." This type of identity affirmation occurs even if the encounter is defined as negative by individuals who are generally unaware of the implications to their identities.

When an individual engages in river rafting over a period of time, the river runner identity becomes more central to his or her overall sense of self (Jonas 1997, 1999). As this occurs, affirmation of that identity by other river runners becomes more important. This includes being recognized by name by river runners from other groups, as well as being acknowledged by appearance as a "true" river runner:

After I hiked down the side of the canyon, I decided to

venture back into the mouth of Blacktail to find some dunk pools. As I was headed out of the dark canyon, a commercial group was just beginning to wander inside the canyon. The passengers were your typical commercial passengers; all dressed up in their little tourist outfits, floppy hats, a mixture of white and sunburned skin, and generally out of shape. They seemed as if they couldn't even walk on the rocky ground, probably being only used to pavement. As I greeted them, I was thinking about how they looked out-of-place in the Canyon setting, as if they didn't belong. I waited for the passengers to awkwardly scamper up the rocks and around some small pools. One gal said to me as I waited for her to pass, "Oh thank you for allowing us in your back yard." She seemed

"... RIVER GUIDES PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN FACILITATING PASSENGERS' INTERPRETATION OF ENCOUNTERS, THEY ALSO MANAGE PASSENGERS' VIEW OF THE RAPIDS AS DANGEROUS..."

to consider me, all tanned and scratched, and dressed like a "real" river runner, someone who belonged there, as compared to her and the rest of her group. (Private trip, Grand Canyon)

In the above encounter, the river runner's wilderness experience was affected by a large group entering into the narrow canyon. The encounter could, on the surface, be defined as threaten-

ing one's identity as a river runner in search of a wilderness experience; instead, it provided the river runner with a comparison of what a "real" river runner is, which in turn, reaffirmed the image of herself as "authentic."

The River Runner as Adventurer

A central aspect of an authentic river runner identity is being an adventurer; one who is able to face and conquer the mighty rapids. Even though the Colorado River through Grand Canyon contains less than 10% white water (with the remaining 90% being flat water), there is constant anticipation of the next rapids and the thrills it will afford. Illustrative of the focus on white water adventure, the Colorado River through Grand Canyon is often referred to as the "longest stretch of white water in the country." The feeling of danger, however, must first be constructed before the river runners can experience adventure. As river guides play an important role in facilitating passengers' interpretation of encounters, they also manage passengers' view of the rapids as dangerous (Holyfield, 1997; Jonas, 1997, 1999; also see Donnelly & Young, 1988; Fine & Holyfield, 1996; Holyfield & Fine, 1997). River guides engage in a number of rituals and performances that increase the level of danger felt by the passengers, such as when scouting rapids:

"The dance of danger begins at Lava's lip. The boats are beached, and in ritualistic fashion the guides climb to the sacred vantage, a basalt boulder about 50 feet above the cataract. Once there, weight shifts from (continued on next page)

(continued from preceding page) heel to heel, fingers point, heads shake, and faces fall. This is high drama, and passengers eat it

(Reported in Bangs, 1989, p. 17)

As indicated in the above excerpt, scouting involves stopping at various points above the rapids to view the rapids before running them and determine the safest route through. Often, several groups converge at the rapids at the same time, making the scouting area congested with people. However, river runners typically perceive the encounters as an opportunity to exchange advice on navigating the rapids. It also allows the opportunity for an audience to witness the running of the rapid. While the river guide plays an important role in constructing the danger, the audience plays an equally important role in acknowledging that the river runners endured the danger. This is evident in the remarks below made by a river runner:

I think people would be upset if there wasn't a crowd at Lava. I really do think that it would be a big let down if you run through Lava and no one saw you. It wouldn't be as big of a thrill, people couldn't congratulate you, and you couldn't pop open a beer and bask in the limelight. *(Private trip, Grand Canyon)*

Meeting other groups at scouting areas also allows for assistance or support to less-experienced groups or more vulnerable craft. For instance, river guides operating motorized boats will often wait below major rapids to "scoop passengers and gear out of the river" belonging to non-motorized groups. Occasionally, groups will camp together above the rapids so they can run them together the following day.

A motor rig soon lands next to us, with crew and passengers dripping wet. They must have been as miserable as they looked, drenched and wearing little rain gear. The scrawny looking boatman didn't have anything on but a pair of shorts. He quickly darted up the rocks, probably as a means to get warm, and his passengers followed him. I later found out that the group just decided to go on a river trip on the spur of the moment and weren't equipped with rain gear. The boatman ended up giving all his gear to the passengers until he had none for himself. "Do you mind if we share your camp for a bit 'til we dry off and warm up?" Jack (our TL) told him that he was welcome to camp here as there was plenty of room and his passengers didn't look as if they wanted to be drenched again today. He thanked us and it seemed as if there were to be three groups sharing the one camp. I guess it was O.K. since none of us signed up for it at the registration box. There seemed to be a sigh of relief by all the groups that we were all not planning to run the rapids until morning, when we could provide each other support *(Private trip, Cataract Canyon)*

Although three groups in the above field note shared a relative small beach, the situation was positively experienced as a means to share the experience and thus affirm each other's adventurer identity. The three groups also

felt more secure knowing that there were others to help them run the rapids safely.

Along with the scouting area, eddies below major rapids are often used as vantage points to watch other rafts ride the rapid and tell stories that reaffirm each other's experience. Since the audience experiences the ride from afar and the performers experience the ride from within, there are multiple narratives of any given run which lead to the explicit co-creation and mutual recognition of an adventurer identity. The narratives that are shared in the camaraderie of the post-rapid eddies often function to define the identities of those participating on the trip.

It was a fun ride, and finally Lars took something head-on [in Hermit Rapids]. We drifted over to the right eddy to get some pictures of the others going through the rapids...The girl guide [on the OU trip - a commercial group] did an amazing job of riding the rapids and not breaking stride; she looked tough and the boat looked real small when it was down in the waves. The OU paddlers got drenched and some looked cold and tired - and they just started...Another oar boat came through and just perched on the crest of one of the monster waves; it spun around and started to get diagonal with the waves. Before we knew it, the boatman [Marty] jumped into the water and ... when the boat came up, the swamper [Marty's son] was swimming too. He hopped in the boat, and then went to pull in [his father] who grabbed the end of the raft. It took awhile, but they were both in the boat at the end of the waves, looking like drowned rats. They came over to our eddy; [Marty] was visibly shaken. "Why ja jump in?" we asked. He thought the boat was going to flip and didn't want to be under it. This was the trip of a lifetime for Marty. His son had graduated from high school and was going off to college; they hadn't rafted together, and wouldn't be able to again, especially in the canyon. This was IT for father-son bonding, and we got it all on film. Marty told his story of the run, the son didn't have much to add; we were excited for them. The TL gave us his business card and we'd be sure to mail the pictures of 'Marty's swim in Hermit' to him. We were at the right place at the right time. *(Research trip, Grand Canyon)*

Having an audience to witness Marty's experience helped to both interpret the experience through replaying (see Goffman 1967) and ratify the experience through recognition by others. Marty's identity as an adventurer was also captured on film by the witnessing audience, which would allow him to take "proof" of such an identity back to the "real" world. In short, the performance (ritualistic displays during scouting), the action (running the rapids), and the ratification by a witnessing audience (other groups watching from shore or on boats below the rapids), all seem to create and affirm the identity of the participants as true adventurers.

The telling of stories of western Anglo pioneers also provide contexts that shape an adventurer identity. Many points along the river corridor are linked to events of his-

toric raft trips, and while floating downstream or during mealtimes, public conversations among river runners turn to these events. A frequent conversation topic on river trips is the journey of Major John Wesley Powell in 1869 down the Colorado River. The life-threatening voyage of Powell's party in wooden boats was an act of discovery, and as told, an epic of high adventure. In varying degrees, the telling of Powell's trip through the "Great Unknown" functions as an invitation to vicariously experience the dangers and uncertainty of the first Anglo pioneer down the river.

"Well, Powell kicked our asses, but he had lots of practice lining before Cataract!" remarked Matt when we were finished lining the Big Drops and realized that it took the whole damn day. As we were lining, we discussed the fact that John Wesley Powell, the first one officially through Cataract, lined the Drops in less than half a day, but he did have a lot of practice as he lined over 20 rapids before he reached the Drops. Ironically, we relished the thought of truly knowing how Powell and his men felt."

(Private trip, Cataract Canyon)

Even though the risks of river rafting these days is in stark contrast to the risks had by Powell's party, today's river runners still imagine men dangling from cliffs, battling rapids, and fending off starvation from their secure vantage point of life jackets, huge inflatable rafts, and "Zen-like perfect picnics." The identities of many river runners are able to assimilate aspects of the Powell narrative through Cataract and Grand Canyons, and the telling and re-telling of Powell's vignettes eases the assimilation (Neumann, 1999, pp. 68-76).

Besides rapids, side attractions are also arenas for identity construction. As mentioned earlier, rapids are only encountered during a small portion of the river trip. However, since the adventurer identity is such a central part of the river runner identity, the process of adventurer identity construction occurs throughout the river trips, albeit generally not as intense as at the rapids. Another place this process occurs is at the side attractions where river runners enjoy short hikes to waterfalls, archaeological ruins, fossil sites, or other geologic formations. Such attractions also provide opportunities for social interaction with other groups of river runners. Like at scouting sites and the post-rapid eddies, encounters as witnessing audiences play a major role in the construction of such identities at these attraction sites.

"Deer Creek Falls was a fun time. When we got there around mid-afternoon, there were at least 30 people milling around the rocks and splash pool area. Where'd all these people

come from?..... After several attempts at getting at-one with the waterfall [attempting to swim underneath the 100 foot waterfall], one of the commercial passengers found a new trick to do — he stood on small ledge midway up the fold as if it were a diving board, and looked as if he were going to do a back flip. His pear-shape, white-skin, and clean cut told me he must work in an office building in a far-away urban area..... Myself, and others around, including his wife and three daughters, were fixed on him wondering what his stunt would be. He took a long time, anticipating whatever it was. A few swimmers, including Mike, couldn't wait and tried again to be at-one with the waterfall. After people cleared-out from below, [the pear-shaped man] surprised us all with a sudden, clumsy, but fully completed, back flip into the center of the white foam and roar of the splash pool. He popped up, and the crowd broke into a clapping and cheering. He came out of the water to the admiring praises of his family, knees quivering like rubber and amazed at his courage. "I knew I could do it!" "Dad are you crazy?!" they admonished, clearly proud of his feat. He went on to tell the story they had

just witnessed — why he did it, what he was thinking as he was getting ready to do it, and joking about the danger involved. Each of the girls took turns telling their story of crazy Dad's back flip at Deer Creek."

(Research trip, Grand

Canyon)

The situation at Deer Creek Falls was probably a high point of the trip for the family. It was clearly a daring move and "crazy Dad" was noticeably shaken. If there were no audience, nor concerned family members to witness, the adventurer identity of "crazy Dad" would not have been negotiated.

Not only do witnessing audiences at attraction sites acknowledge the adventurer identity, they also encourage river runners to engage in daring feats that they would not otherwise do:

Bill and I hiked a few miles up the LCR [Little Colorado River] and swam at a nice pool for a hour. It was very quiet and relaxing without another soul in sight. As we returned from our peaceful swim, we came across a crowd of commercial river runners near the mouth of the LCR. It seemed like there was nearly a hundred people cramped in the narrow canyon, all hanging out on a ledge next to the water, and it took some effort to maneuver around all the people. It was somewhat of a rude awakening from our previous "wilderness" experience just upstream. The commercial river runners were engaging in what commercial river runners typically do in that section of the LCR - strap their life jackets on their bottoms, with their legs dangling from the arm-holes, and float through a narrow stretch of the LCR that contained a number of small rapids. We watched for a while, with slight amusement, and were about to leave when one of the commercial river guides offered me his life jacket and convinced me to join his passengers, some of whom were also encouraging *(continued on next page)*

(continued from preceding page) us to join them. Hesitatingly, I strapped the life-jacket around my bottom. It felt awkward and looked really, really stupid, but once I got into the water with a group of passengers, it was fun! Both Bill and I ran the stretch of the LCR a couple of times, either independently or "attached" to groups of people-making human "trains." We were amazed to see all the older and non-athletic looking people engage in the sport. Even the woman who had to have her make-up just right allowed her lipstick to smudge off while running the rapids. She first refused to participate, but her friends/family were successful in getting her to join them."

(Research trip, Grand Canyon).

The above story describes two river experiences: one which entailed solitude and one involving encounters. While, at first, the encounter was perceived negatively, through interaction with the group, it evolved as a positive experience. The interaction resulted in our participation in some adventurous activities that we would otherwise not have done. This was also the case for many of the commercial passengers who did not "seem" like adventurous types, but through the coaxing and support of the witnessing audiences, they engaged in the activity. The audience thus both encouraged the actors to engage in the activity and ratified the identities that emerged from the experience.

The River Runner as "River God/Goddess"

While many wilderness experiences involve "roughing it" in terms of limited amounts of food and camping gear, river running often engages in the opposite, or "smoothing it." This is accomplished through eating lavish meals and camping in prime locations "with all the comforts of home," which turns an otherwise, inhospitable wilderness environment into one of comfort and familiarity. To this end, a considerable amount of gear and supplies are brought on river trips with rafts loaded-up like "garbage barges," with most of the gear related to eating and camping. This results in the construction of another aspect of the river runner identity which involves the ability to tame the harsh river environment through resourcefulness and familiarity with that environment. We refer to this part of the river runner identity as "river god/goddess," which overlaps in various ways with the "adventurer" identity. However providing comfort to fellow passengers within the eating and sleeping routines is emphasized within this discussion of the river god/goddess identity construction process.

Finding a prime campsite can be difficult especially

due to their limited availability compared to the number of groups searching for such campsites. Certain stretches of the river are known for a scarcity of beaches (which are used as campsites), and some beaches are valued as campsites for their proximity to attraction sites, rapids, or scenic views. Beaches usually start to be stalked as campsites by late afternoon when a party will "take out" and secure the beach as their own. The field notes below illustrate the focus on securing campsites:

"We were planning on camping at Galloway that night but when we arrived, the lavender boat people were already pulled-in. We took the rapids and pulled-in below at Stone Creek..... As Lil and I were setting up the groover [portapotty], thinking about quality vistas and privacy, the TL from [the lavender boat people] flagged us down on his way back from the water falls. "Where you gonna camp tomorrow night?" he wondered, and went on to tell his past troubles with setting-up for [camping near] Phantom and the Little Colorado River. He felt like he was getting shoved around by commercials, and had wide-eyed anxiety about securing campsites. His nervousness about campsites was a sore spot with his party; there were some inside jokes going on between him, his buddy, and girlfriend. Seemed like they enjoyed venting their anxiety on us. I was glad not to be in their party; what a drag to be so beach-centric. I can see why the rest of his party had problems with him. They pulled-in early to get

Galloway, and spent the whole day re-hashing the Phantom set-up and fighting about an early Galloway. When we told Lars [our TL] about the conversation, he felt like most privates are out of the loop down here. The guides know each other, and their camping patterns. They talk as they leap frog down stream. The privates have a hard time breaking into the loop, and don't know the campsites well. The lavender TL felt like his group should trust him (he's been down before!) to know where to camp; but he didn't really know and was angry that others knew better. Each day he wakes up and frets about where he'll camp."

(Research trip, Grand Canyon)

The obvious reason that there is such a focus on securing a good campsite is one of comfort - the joy of river running can be quickly dampened if the group has to haul heavy gear through knee-deep mud in order to make camp, or find that there are only boulders instead of soft sand. In addition, spending time at a certain attraction site is dependent upon staging a camp above that attraction site that would ensure it would be reached by a certain time of day. Although these are reasons why good camps are sought, and even fiercely competed over, finding a good camp also reflects upon the river guide's identity as a competent provider (Jonas 1997). Since most of a day on the river typically takes place at camp, the river guide who finds a good camp is highly praised, especially under difficult conditions (e.g., when compet-

ing with another group or where there are few good camps). Finding a good camp under adverse conditions helps to establish and/or confirm passengers' expectations of the guide's ability to win in the struggle to tame the river wilderness. The guides also struggle to obtain the campsites with the biggest beaches, the most shade (in the summer), protection from the wind, and overhangs during rainy days, which confirms their familiarity with the river environment. The passengers, in turn, benefit from the expertise of the river guides in finding the good camp and can feel secure that they have the most ingenious guide on the river, allowing them to vicariously experience the river god/goddess identity.

As the above field note also suggests, river guides actively compete with each other to obtain desired campsites on the river, and those who "win" in the competition can feel triumphant in their struggle to prove that they are the most resourceful on the river. The field note below also illustrates this competition over campsites.

"There are a lot of kayakers and canoeists on this stretch of river. They can do the flat water stretch but are motored back up river once they reach Spanish Bottoms, just upstream from the first rapid Brown Betty. There were some that we passed that didn't seem very friendly. Maybe they were intimidated by us as we were probably competing for one of the very few camps on Green, and we were rowing as fast as we could to ensure that we would get one of those few camps before they did."

(Private trip, Green River)

Implicit in the above field note is the notion that camping in close proximity with another party detracts from the river experience. Under certain circumstances, however, campsites are unavoidably shared with other parties leading to an initial framing of the encounter as decreasing the quality of the river experience. However, experiences are continually reevaluated regarding their implications to identity, and an initial negative framing could be transformed to a positive context. Although the river god/goddess identity often involves competition with other groups in proving which group is better at providing comfort for themselves, transforming the losing group into a reluctant witnessing audience, continued competition can also detract from that identity as the river trip becomes transformed into a stressful experience. Consequently to avoid stressful experiences, initially negative encounters between two groups who are forced to share a camp are often renegotiated into something more positive. This is illustrated in the following field note:

"We ended up having to camp near the canoeist, which made neither of us very happy. Cheryl and Matt just walked passed their camp, and these two gals just started to yell at them - for no reason! We overheard them talking to each-other, complaining how we stole THEIR camp. It was pretty rude - we were sure happy that we would be rid of them tomorrow. But later that evening, Fred and this one gal from the other group got to talking, and he brought her over to join us for some drinks. Soon, more folks came over and we all had a great

time. When we passed them the next day at Spanish Bottoms, they all lined the banks of the river and mooned us! We all just cheered!!"

(Private trip, Cataract Canyon)

In addition to finding a good campsite, river guides are exalted for their ability to prepare lavish meals under the harsh, wilderness conditions. Meals on river trips, especially for commercial passengers, are considered "rustic gourmet" and advertised as such across the marketing brochures of commercial outfitters. Guides pay extra attention to detail on both meal preparation and presentation, which helps make mealtime a central experience on the river, which is occasionally shared with other groups:

"The meeting with Billy's [commercial] boat made me realize how much I had adapted to the culture of food on the river. They invited us to have some of their food for lunch, and though it was largely the same food we had been having for the past few days, theirs was somehow better, because of the little details the commercial trips had that we didn't. Where we had rather simple sandwich ingredients, they had pita bread, Dijon mustard, etc., and candy for dessert. Somehow these details made all the difference in the world."

(Research trip, Grand Canyon)

Again, like with finding a camp under competitive situations, preparing lavish meals under harsh conditions results in positive recognition of the river guides' identity as being competent or even extraordinary. Through the provision of lavish meals, paying attention to detail, being able to sustain fresh food for more than a week in over 100 degree temperatures, and keeping sand out of the meals, river guides again maintain their identities as "gods" over the river wilderness. In addition, river guides also prove themselves by being able to obtain missing ingredients or other items through bartering with other groups on the river. In this fashion, river guides prove that the otherwise harsh river environment is as tame and familiar as one's own home, where all one needs to do for a missing ingredient is to turn to one's river running buddies, just as asking a neighbor for a cup of sugar.

"We went over to the say hi to the boatmen on the commercial group camped just downstream from us. One of their boatmen, I think it was the TL, greeted George by name and offered us some cold beers. Although we really should have started with our work, I thought it would have been rude if we didn't accept the offer. Their TL then started to hit us for some potatoes, "Do you have any potatoes we could spare?" George asked how many, and he only replied, "lots." I guess they completely forgot potatoes on their trip. George replied, "I'll check on how many we can spare." George then hit them up for some lettuce since we forgot lettuce and was using cabbage in its place on our sandwiches."

(Research trip, Grand Canyon)

"When we got below Lava, most of the privates were ready to barter for ice and other supplies. I guess they liked their cocktail hour; we passed a few that held up signs from their campsite "tequila" on one side of the card, "ice" on the other. Lil said they want to trade ice for tequila...."

(continued on next page)

(continued from preceding page) We passed another whose two signs said "lettuce, bread" and "ice," and the holder motioned us with his arms as if he were drinking something. Does he mean if we have ice, they'll give us lettuce and bread and maybe something to drink? Or do they want lettuce, bread, and ice from us and they'll give us a drink? Not sure, but we didn't stop to find out." (Research trip, Grand Canyon)

In addition to food and alcohol, river guides also barter for specific services, such as a rowing group obtaining a tow from a motorized group:

"A little later, a commercial snout pulls up and asks us if we mind if they had lunch there. Sure, no problem. How do we hit them up for a tow? The boatman and swamper began to prepare lunch as the passengers went up to hike Dark Canyon. They were out of beer and the boatman comes up to see if he could swap ice for some beer. Jack just happened to have an "emergency" 12 pack hidden and was willing to give it to him, not for ice, but for a tow. "I'm not suppose to, but sure." We also gave them some of our Dutch oven cake and thought that we got a good deal for the tow " (Private trip, Cataract Canyon).

While the obtaining of goods and services from other groups helps the identity of the river guide who, once again, proves his or her competence and knowledge of the river wilderness, passengers' identities are also elevated as they can boast that it is their guides, or their group who are the most resourceful on the river in the on-going attempt to provide comfort during the river experience. Passengers also benefit from the goods obtained, such as not having to go without potatoes or spend the extra time rowing across flat water.

Sometimes communication between parties to exchange goods and services information on campsites breaks down and parties view each other as threats, resulting in negative encounters and subsequent imputation of negative identities, as the following field note demonstrates:

"There is an interesting phenomenon occurring between commercial and private trip encounters that I hadn't really noticed before. Commercial boatmen (at least the group I hang out with) intentionally avoid any conversation with private boaters because they are "rude," and only want things from the commercial boatmen, like ice. "They don't even say "hi" anymore. They just demand, 'hey, you got any ice?' and expect us to give it to them like we're some delivery service." Although this attitude towards privates is not old, I believe it has become stronger from a recent incident. Apparently, a female private boater asked a commercial boatman, "Got any ice?" and the boatman responded, "show me your tits!" This offended the female private boater (although the boatman declared - "Hey, it seemed like a fair trade. If I were a private, I would first show them [commercial boatmen] my tits and THEN ask for ice.") and she reported it and got some boatman in trouble."

(Research trip, Grand Canyon).

In the preceding instance, some inter-group encoun-

ters are perceived as unfavorable. However, the negative interpretation of the encounter does not rest solely on the fact that it was an encounter, but on the nature of the encounter. In the above story, the private group was not following the "rules" of bartering - they were not part of the close network of commercial guides; they demanded instead of asking; and they violated the river principle, "what goes on the river, stays on the river," meaning that they complained about what occurred on the river to others in the "real" world. While there may be more underlying reasons for negative encounters between commercial and private trips, in the above performance the commercial guides tried to prove to themselves and their passengers that the private trip was not in control of the harsh river environment and thus were lacking in the river god/goddess identity.

Conclusions

The major point of this paper is that encounters between groups of river runners are evaluated at the situational level and based on the nature of the social interaction. The evidence of this paper indicates that encounters may be some of the most meaningful events in a river/wilderness experience due to the opportunities they afford to negotiate identities. Encounters provide audiences that help shape and ratify one's identity, and in doing so, have an enormous potential to affect one's quality of recreation experience.

The identities central to the quality of many river running experiences are related to adventure and making the best out of a harsh environment. Adventurer identities require the social construction of danger and risk. Encounters function as forums to exchange stories, bear witness, and create narratives of situational danger, resulting in a reaffirmation of adventurer identities. River god/goddess identities require taming an otherwise harsh environment and involve the ability to secure good campsites, prepare lavish meals, and, in general, demonstrating one's competence and resourcefulness in negotiating comfort in a wilderness setting. Camping decisions and the bartering for goods and services are thus frequent issues emerging in encounters between groups of river runners. Particularly for private river runners who are generally not part of the close knit network of commercial guides, anxiety about daily camping decisions or inability to successfully barter reflects problematic identity negotiations. Nevertheless, privates tend to claim more authentic river running experiences and resultant identities compared to their commercial counterparts who are providing catered wilderness experiences in the form of entertainment.

Although scores of studies have addressed relationships between encounters and recreation experiences (cf., Manning, 1999, chs. 4-6), the majority have purposely depersonalized "encounters" to focus on the quantity, rather

than the quality, of encounters. This study frames the encounter issue by addressing the question "What role do encounters play regarding the quality of the river running experiences?" By emphasizing the quality of experience and viewing encounters as witnessing audiences, encounters often become central aspects of one's river running experience.

This study provides a qualified context to understand past research on encounters. The effects of encounters in backcountry settings are complex; understanding such effects requires the inclusion of many factors besides those related to the number of encounters. Such a concern is not a new idea; more than three decades ago Wagar (1964) addressed the importance of understanding the quality of recreation experiences. This study reinforces Wagar's viewpoint that the quality of recreation experiences are a meaningful focus for studies examining effects of encounters.

At issue is the context of understanding the "quality of recreation experience." This paper connects the quality of experience to the meanings and identities that are continually negotiated during one's trip, with a focus on meanings and identities negotiated while encountering other groups of people. Past outdoor recreation research generally frames the quality of recreation experience as if it were something received through exposure to an environment, often generalized as experiential outcomes linked to individual preferences (for critiques of traditional outdoor recreation literature see McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998; Patterson, Watson, Williams, & Roggenbuck, 1998). In contrast to past research depicting experiential phenomena as some received bundle of sensory data (cf., Patterson et al., 1998, 447-450), in this paper individual experience is framed as an enactment process linked to situationally negotiated meaning. Thus, to understand the quality of individual experience is to study the meanings of social interaction in shaping identity.

While in final stages of preparing this paper, the first author had a memorable encounter on the river. On a research trip during the Summer, 2000, she re-encountered Heidi and made the following observation in her journal.

"My brother, Pete the boatman, and I stayed at Shinimu to set hoop-nets and minnow traps in the creek while the rest of the crew continued to Forester to set up camp and electrofish. Since it was relatively early in the day when we got to Shinimu, and there was a commercial oar boat trip hanging out in the shade by the creek, we decided to also hang out at the creek until everyone left before we began our work. We hung out with a group from the commercial trip on a flat rock that faced the waterfall. I quickly recognized one of their boatmen who was on a KAS [Kanab ambersnail research] trip that I did the previous year. So, we engaged in "river talk" for awhile, when suddenly, the person who was sitting next to me, on the other side from the boatmen, said, "Hey, aren't you Lil?" I

looked at her, and I was nearly speechless, it was HEIDI! And she remembered me! I thought it was amazing that she recognized me first when I was in the middle of getting this "Heidi" paper completed. It has been two years since that trip where we met - when her valves leaked. I asked her if she ever got her valves fixed and she said that it wasn't her valves - it was a small hole in her tubes that she had finally found. The rest of her trip went fine and she described all the people she met and the encounters she had. I just thought it odd that here she was, on a solo river trip down the Grand Canyon, the ultimate "wilderness experience," and what she remembered most vividly was the encounters. Not only did she remember me, she also asked about Bill and how he was doing. I questioned her about this, "Didn't all these encounters impact your wilderness experience?" She smiled and said that the encounters were part of her experience, "Last year, I went on an off-season, Green River trip and saw no one for two weeks. Spending all that time alone allowed for a spiritual process, where I could be at peace with my own soul. But meeting all these people in the Canyon is just another type of healing process; another way of soul searching. You meet new and interesting people and share a part of your life with them - and that's just another way of looking deep into your own self." I told her about how we kept on asking other trips that passed us about her and, I told her about our (her) paper, hesitating because I was afraid that she would be embarrassed. However, instead of being embarrassed, she was delighted that she too, was able to add to our experience - that through encountering Heidi, we were able to see more clearly into the soul of river runners, which we call the river running identity.

(Research trip, Grand Canyon).

Lilian M. Jonas, William P. Stewart
and Kevin W. Larkin



References

- Adler, Patricia and Peter Adler. 1987. *Membership Roles in Field Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Altheide, David. 2000. Identity and the definition of the situation in a mass-mediated context. *Symbolic Interaction*, 23, 1-27.
- Angrosino, M. and K. Mays de Pérez. 2000. "Rethinking observation: From method to context." Pp. 673-702 in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Arnould, Eric and Linda Price. 1993. "River Magic: Extraordinary Experience and the Extended Service Encounter." *Journal of Consumer Research* 20: 24-45.
- Arnould, Eric, Linda Price and P. Tierney. 1998. "Communicative Staging of the Wilderness Servicescape." *Services Industries Journal* 18, 90-115.
- Bangs, Richard. 1989. "Metamorphosis." Pp. 11-20 in *First Descents: In Search of Wild Rivers*, edited by C. O'Connor and J. Lazenby Birmingham. Alabama: Menasha Ridge Press.
- Becker, Howard. 1964. "Personal change in adult lives." *Sociometry* 27: 40-53.
- Blumer, Herbert. 1969. *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Birrell, Susan and Allan Turowetz. 1979. "Character Work-up and Display: Collegiate Gymnastics and Professional Wrestling." *Urban Life* 8: 219-46.
- Charmaz, Kathy. 2000. "Grounded theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods." Pp. 509-536 in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cicourel, Aaron. 1973. *Cognitive Sociology*. New York: MacMillan.
- Cohen, Stanley and Laurie Taylor. 1992. *Escape Attempts: The Theory and Practice of Resistance to Everyday Life*. London: Anchor Books.
- Dimanche, F. and D. Samdahl. 1994. "Leisure as Symbolic Consumption: A Conceptualization and Prospectus for Future Research." *Leisure Sciences* 16:119-129.
- Douglas, Jack and John Johnson. 1977. *Existential Sociology*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Driver, B., H. Tinsely and M. Manfredi. 1991. *The Paragraphs about Leisure and Recreation Experience Preference Scales*. Pp. 263-286 (continued on next page)

- (continued from preceding page) Empirical Support." *Leisure Sciences* 10: 27-39.
- Schratz, M. and R.Walker. 1995. *Research as Social Change: New Opportunities for Qualitative Research*. New York: Routledge.
- Schutz, A. 1962. *Collected Papers I: The Problem of Social Reality*. Edited by Maurice Natanson. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Silver, Ira. 1996. "Role Transitions, Objects, and Identity." *Symbolic Interaction* 19: 1-20.
- Snow, David and L. Anderson. 1987. "Identity Work Among the Homeless: The Verbal Construction and Avowal of Personal Identities." *American Journal of Sociology* 92: 1336-1371.
- Stewart, William, Kevin Larkin, Brian Orland, Don Anderson, Robert Manning David Cole, Jonathan Taylor and Nidhi Tomar. 2000. *Preferences of Recreation User Groups of the Colorado River in Grand Canyon*. Report submitted to the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center. 232 pp.
- Stone, Gregory. 1981. "Appearance and the Self: a Slightly Revised Version." In G. Stone & H. Faberman (Eds.), *Social Psychology Through Symbolic Interaction*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Strauss, Ansem. 1969. *Mirrors and Masks: The Search for Identity*. San Francisco: Sociology Press.
- Strauss, Ansem and J. Crobin. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Turner, Richard. 1976. "The Real Self: from Institution to Impulse." *American Journal of Sociology* 81: 989-1016.
- Wagar, John. 1964. "The Carrying Capacity of Wild Lands for Recreation." *Forest Science Monograph* 7, Washington, D.C.: Society of American Foresters.

Submitted to *Symbolic Interaction* September, 2001

ADVANCE NOTICE DEPT.

New River Gear To Be Auctioned March 1, 2002

The 2002 river season is just a few months away. To celebrate the joyous moment, GCPBA kicks off the new river year with it's annual "on-line auction." Last year's auction generated more than \$6,000 in profits for the club, which were used to fund our activities, including the legal action filed against the GCNP in an effort to get the Colorado River Management Plan revision process back on track and to help pay for the publication of *the Waiting List*.

This year's auction will be very much improved and will offer many generously donated products to a large, enthusiastic outdoor gear market.

Already this year we have a cataraft from Aire, Sawyer oars and oarlocks, a water filter from Katadyn, and a shuttle from Canyon REO. Many other items have been committed from vendors such as: Chaco, Voyageur, Witz, Teva, Patagonia, Superior Gear, as well as items from many authors and artists. Many more vendors will be adding exciting products to this list as the time draws near. Don't miss out on this year's auction. The GCPBA will be sending out notices as the auction gets closer. Stay tuned for this exciting event.

- Bidder registration will begin February 22, 2002
- The auction will run from March 1, 2002 through March 31, 2002
- Visit the GCPBA web site at: www.gcpba.org/auction

VELVET ANTS

Dear Superintendent - Grand Canyon National Park,
My name is Col. VanDyke Boudreaux Patchouilly, Esq. III, Ph.D. ret., and I am Chairman of the International Velvet Ant Appreciation Society, and Professor Emeritus of Entomology at The University of Southern North Dakota at Hoople. Recently I, and several other professors went down on a river trip through Grand Canyon, where we identified a number of rare and endangered species of velvet ants, along with a plethora of the common varieties. Fortunately, no one got stung.

We see here a significant opportunity to help save these proud creatures, however diminutive, for future generations to enjoy. And as you may be aware, oil from the hair of two of the identified rare species is known to cure post-pubescent hormone poisoning in young humans. The medical implications are extraordinary, and Pfizer Corporation has given us a promise of full funding for the project, including a blank check for the Park's general fund.

We wish to mount a major research initiative along the river corridor to further quantify the various populations, then relocate gene-selected groups to other beaches in order to increase their numbers and diversity of habitat. The first ten river trips would be used to gather raw data for the federally administered Western Regional Velvet Ant Repository and Research Center. Results of our joint findings with the University would then be used to actuate a forward thinking plan to advantageously place specific ant groups within the corridor. This would require another ten river trips at least, maybe twenty, depending on how many of the interested relatives/friends wanted to go and help with the research. These trips must be conducted in the summer when the "velvets" are active, and not hibernating.

Results from this research will be significant. The ants will survive in a protected environment, and the Resources Division of the Park will have a mountain of new information and specimens at no cost. In addition, we will publish a Grand Canyon Velvet Ant beach guide to be given all commercial and public river-runners for their enjoyment and education. Possible down side is that various beaches will have to be temporarily closed from time to time. I understand this has been done many times in the past and should be no problem.

My uncle, The Honorable Senator Orin Hatch, considers this to be an excellent use of research manpower, and considers it a go. Please get back to me at your earliest possible convenience so that we may begin scheduling launch dates.

At Your Command,
Col. VanDyke Boudreaux Patchouilly, Esq. III, Ph.D, ret.

Political Satire Cheerfully Written By Bruce W. McElyea

THE KISS

The hummingbird flits from raft to tamarisk
 Unfazed by human debate.
 A delighting path weaves through the group.
 Bright river garb emboldens the whirring wings
 Buzzing up yellow sleeve, across purple chest.
 "What flower is this?"
 Whirring wings quiet,
 "This beard makes a safe perch."
 Another heart races in a still body
 Thrilled to be trusted.
 The needle of a beak gently probes,
 "What nectar lies between these lips?"
 The wonder of a hummingbird kiss.

Grand Canyon

SEPTEMBER 2000
RIVER TRIP POETRY
 MAURY ELDRIDGE

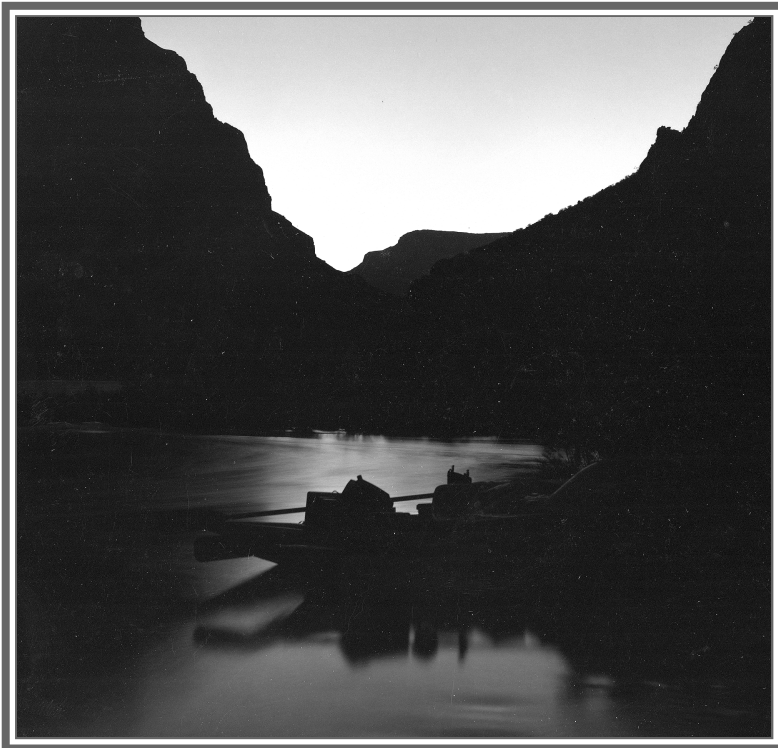


photo by Bruce McElya

EVENING RIVER CAMP

The river's Horns make music.
 Oars bend against frothing power.
 A human breath pipes elemental tones.
 Magic sings from a bowl
 To resonate with moaning conch.
 Guttural enchantment breathes through the pipes.
 The conch summons the moon.
 All merge under the spell.
 Words of thanks, words of encouragement, words of
 admiration
 Flow freely.
 Spiritual connections deepen beneath the schist.

Schist Camp below Hermit Rapid

FAMILY

The stone looms all around us
 As far as the eye can see
 The bedrock of life surrounds us
 A loving family

Life's river flows through the heartland
 Calm waters and wild rides
 Growing children make wild demands
 Calm stretches help us abide

Layer on layer stone rises
 Many colors laid down over time
 Shapes eroded into surprises
 Lifetimes shared create the sublime

Time spent together binds us
 In good times and memories
 The beauty of Earth reminds us
 Of our loving family

Nankoweap