

## “Undesirables Entering the Town to Look for Good Times”: Banff Confronts Its Counterculture Youth Scene, 1965–1971

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Résumé de l'article

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# ***“Undesirables Entering the Town to Look for Good Times”: Banff Confronts Its Counterculture Youth Scene, 1965–1971***

*Ben Bradley*

*Small urban centres remain largely overlooked in historical studies of the counterculture in Canada. This article examines the rise and fall of the scene in Banff, Alberta—a single-industry town with an economy based on accommodating travelling pleasure-seekers, that lacked an elected municipal government. Beginning in 1965, a fast-growing number of counterculture and transient youths trekked to Banff each summer. Some used its public spaces for behaviour Banffites deemed inappropriate and also bothersome to tourists, which pushed officials, business owners, and other permanent residents to debate the nature and limits of tolerance in their community. A few facilities and services welcomed counterculture youth, but most residents remained apprehensive about how Banff’s image might be affected during the high tourist season. After years of mounting frustration and resentment, tensions reached a crescendo in 1971, following which Banff’s status as a counterculture destination abruptly collapsed.*

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“A serious threat to the public health” was how medical health officer Dr. Alastair MacQuarrie summarized conditions at the Echo Creek “hippie” campground in late August 1971.<sup>1</sup> Established the previous year to accommodate an unprecedented influx of hitchhiking transient youths, by the end of summer 1971 Echo Creek was intensely controversial in the town of Banff. MacQuarrie’s description of the camp as filthy, reeking, and garbage-strewn and his order that it be closed immediately confirmed many Banff residents’ impressions of it as a social and environmental nuisance at the edge of their community. His headline-grabbing observation of young men “micturating” in a creek that bordered the camp was particularly disturbing in one of Canada’s outdoorsiest communities, where the economy depended on tourist perceptions of pristine nature.<sup>2</sup>

Echo Creek was not the first or only aspect of Banff’s fast-changing youth scene that created a stink amongst its permanent residents during the 1960s and early 1970s. In fact, the campground had been created in order to contain and reduce “bad behaviour” by young visitors that had led to rising tensions with merchants and other residents. These included littering, loitering, panhandling, shoplifting, drug use, underage drinking, noise, nudity, casual sex, illicit encampments, and general defiance of local conventions and authorities. Having endured such “freaky” behaviour for several years, and believing that it damaged the town’s tourist reputation, by 1971 many Banffites were sick and tired of problems associated with transient youths, who they saw as being allowed to run wild by permissive parents and accommodating bureaucrats. They therefore demanded they be cleared from Echo Creek, the epicentre of the town’s counterculture scene, as well as from its sidewalks and picnic grounds.

Fulminate as they might, however, Banff residents were largely powerless in the matter. The town lacked municipal status and a local government, which meant it was possible that the National Parks Branch and other Echo Creek supporters would disregard residents’ complaints and reopen the campground

the following summer, just as they had after facing opposition in 1970. The question of whether Dr. MacQuarrie's closure order would be permanent or temporary kept the town in suspense during the following months.

This article examines the changing youth scene in Banff during the “long 1960s,” focusing on its gradual rise and abrupt fall as a counterculture destination. It traces several distinct groups of young people who spent time in Banff during the busy summer months, their unruly behaviour, and local responses. The “bad behaviour” it highlights was predominantly that of white, middle-, and working-class Canadian youths who were away from home and engaged in activities that would ordinarily have been considered praiseworthy: working summer jobs, or, more commonly, touring across the country. Insight into the changing youth scene and broader socio-economic conditions in Banff is provided through the archival records of churches, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations; newspaper sources; and a dozen oral interviews conducted with people who visited or lived in Banff during those years. These include former youth outreach workers, student ministers, park staff, and Echo Creek campers.<sup>3</sup>

This is a history of an urban area inside a park, rather than of a park in an urban area. Whereas most scholarly histories of Banff focus on its national symbolism or the state's efforts to balance development and preservation, here the emphasis is on Banff as a type of urban community, a single-industry town that faced distinctive challenges in responding to an array of cultural, political, and socio-economic pressures. The notion that Banff has an urban history may seem counterintuitive, for since the turn of the last century its name has evoked sublime mountain scenery and uplifting recreation in the Great Outdoors. Famous as a wilderness playground and the crown jewel of Canada's national park system, it was promoted as the antithesis of crowded, polluted, angst-ridden modern cities.<sup>4</sup> Yet the *town* of Banff was the biggest community in the Canadian Rockies for most of the second half of the twentieth century and the most important tourist resort in western Canada. Its urban history has been overshadowed by its close, complex relationships with the park that surrounded it and the government agency responsible for managing them both.<sup>5</sup>

In few other Canadian communities was the permanent, year-round population so outnumbered by tourists, seasonal workers, and other short-term visitors. For eight or nine months of the year Banff was a quiet town of just a few thousand permanent residents, but during the summer it transformed into a bustling centre that drew up to 45,000 visitors per day. On long weekends the hotel guests, campers, seasonal workers, and art students who overnighted in town could outnumber permanent residents by more than three to one. That the overwhelming number of people who spent time in Banff each summer were only passing through raised questions about whose interests (and expectations) should be prioritized: permanent residents', or visiting outsiders'. This problem was highlighted by the influx of counterculture youth that began in the mid-1960s, which

brought residents' impulse to accommodate visitors into conflict with their need to protect the appealing atmosphere that was essential to the town's tourism plant. The resulting clash of values over what constituted acceptable visitor behaviour was part of a larger, ongoing power struggle over how much say Banff residents should have in how the town was run.

Tourist towns have so far been passed over in histories of Canada's counterculture, but the activities of “hippies” and hitchhiking transients in Banff suggest that many held views of nature that were less idealistic and more hedonistic than previously accounted for. As Stuart Henderson points out, there were “bohemian centres in just about every major city in North America by the mid-1960s,” and as the counterculture spread and took on new forms, many non-major cities acquired significant bohemian scenes too, with some made up largely of transplants from afar.<sup>6</sup> Banff was just one Canadian tourist town that hippies and hitchhikers were drawn to. Others included Jasper, Alberta (300 kilometres to the north); Percé, Quebec; and Tofino, BC.

Some of the biggest controversies around counterculture scenes in Canadian cities involved accusations that bad behaviour became rampant as entire neighbourhoods, such as Yorkville in Toronto and Kitsilano and Gastown in Vancouver were “invaded,” “occupied,” or “taken over.”<sup>7</sup> Tensions also flared in smaller urban centres in hinterland districts that attracted back-to-the-landers who declared their intention to put down roots. Communalists elicited hostile responses in Nelson and Sechelt, BC, for example.<sup>8</sup> The perceived threat was that counterculturalists would stay for the long term, changing the character of a community, affecting property values and business prospects, and engaging in behaviours—personal, political, sartorial, even criminal—that clashed with established residents' norms. In Banff, however, there was little possibility that counterculture youths would stay permanently. Banffites knew the dozens, then hundreds, then thousands of hippies and transients scattered amongst millions of tourists were coming to town for a good time, not a long time. They would tarry for days or in rare cases weeks or months but ultimately would depart: the scene reconstituted each summer after Victoria Day, then dissipated by the Labour Day long weekend. This high degree of seasonality and mobility, as well as the fact that the town's economy relied on young workers who had their own foibles, may account for permanent residents' relatively ambivalent response to Banff's early emergence as a counterculture destination during the mid-1960s. A clash between what tourism historian William Philpott identifies as “leisure lifestyles” and the “leisure economy” came only in the late 1960s, and then escalated—rather than diminished—with Echo Creek campground.<sup>9</sup>

It was Banff's public spaces, including, ironically, a park within a park, where the “bad behaviour” of counterculture youths was most controversial—particularly those that were in the public eye, where tourists with money to spend also congregated. Those spaces were attractive to young transients because they did not have to pay to use them: they were free. Few “hippies”



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could afford to stay in hotels or motels, which had strict rules and managers, while National Parks Branch campground regulations required campers to have a tent at minimum and also defined acceptable conduct (though not nearly as tightly as sociologist Joe Hermer describes for later decades).<sup>10</sup> Thus the town's lawns, sidewalks, picnic areas, and forest edge became contested ground within the national park. They were the spaces where counterculture youths felt freest to “go wild” while in Banff, and that residents felt the keenest need to monitor and patrol in order to preserve its tourist reputation.

### *A Fast-Changing “Town”*

A decade of steady growth turned into a boom for Banff after 1962, when modernization of the Trans-Canada Highway provided a paved, all-season road link to the Pacific Northwest. Banff was no longer the end of the road but instead a hub in western Canada's highway network and easily accessible to auto tourists. Visitation to Banff National Park skyrocketed from 450,000 in 1951 to 980,000 in 1959, then 1.8 million in 1965 and 2.5 million in 1971. This drove rapid commercial growth, with development facilitated by the political impulse of what environmental historian Alan MacEachern calls “recreational democracy,” wherein the state sought to provide citizens with affordable leisure and recreation venues.<sup>11</sup> Hotels, motels, gas stations, restaurants, cafes, and souvenir shops proliferated.

Most targeted middle-class holidayers, who had different tastes, shorter timetables, and more modest spending habits than the well-heeled clientele who patronized the tony Banff Springs Hotel at the edge of town. The Parks Branch also added hundreds of new campsites. Most were driving distance from the townsite, but the Tunnel Mountain campground immediately adjacent to it expanded to nearly 900 campsites. Wherever they stayed in the park, most visitors went into Banff to purchase groceries, see the museums, or soak in the hot springs. Banff Avenue, the town's main street, was congested every summer.

Commercial growth and expanded government services increased Banff's permanent, year-round population from about 2500 in 1956 to 3000 in 1961 and 3500 by 1971.<sup>12</sup> Toronto clergyman Stewart Crysdale visited in 1966 and found residents “obsessed with getting rich,” with one telling him “God in Banff is the tourist dollar.”<sup>13</sup> However, this boom mentality was underlaid by unease about the town's future and uncertainty over who was in control. As park historian C.J. Taylor points out, Banff had less local democracy and private property rights than communities of similar size, even as it outstripped them in amenities.<sup>14</sup> It was not legally classified as a town and therefore lacked an elected municipal government, because it was inside a national park that predated the province of Alberta. The Banff Advisory Council (BAC) made representations to government agencies but had no real power. Ottawa was in charge, and

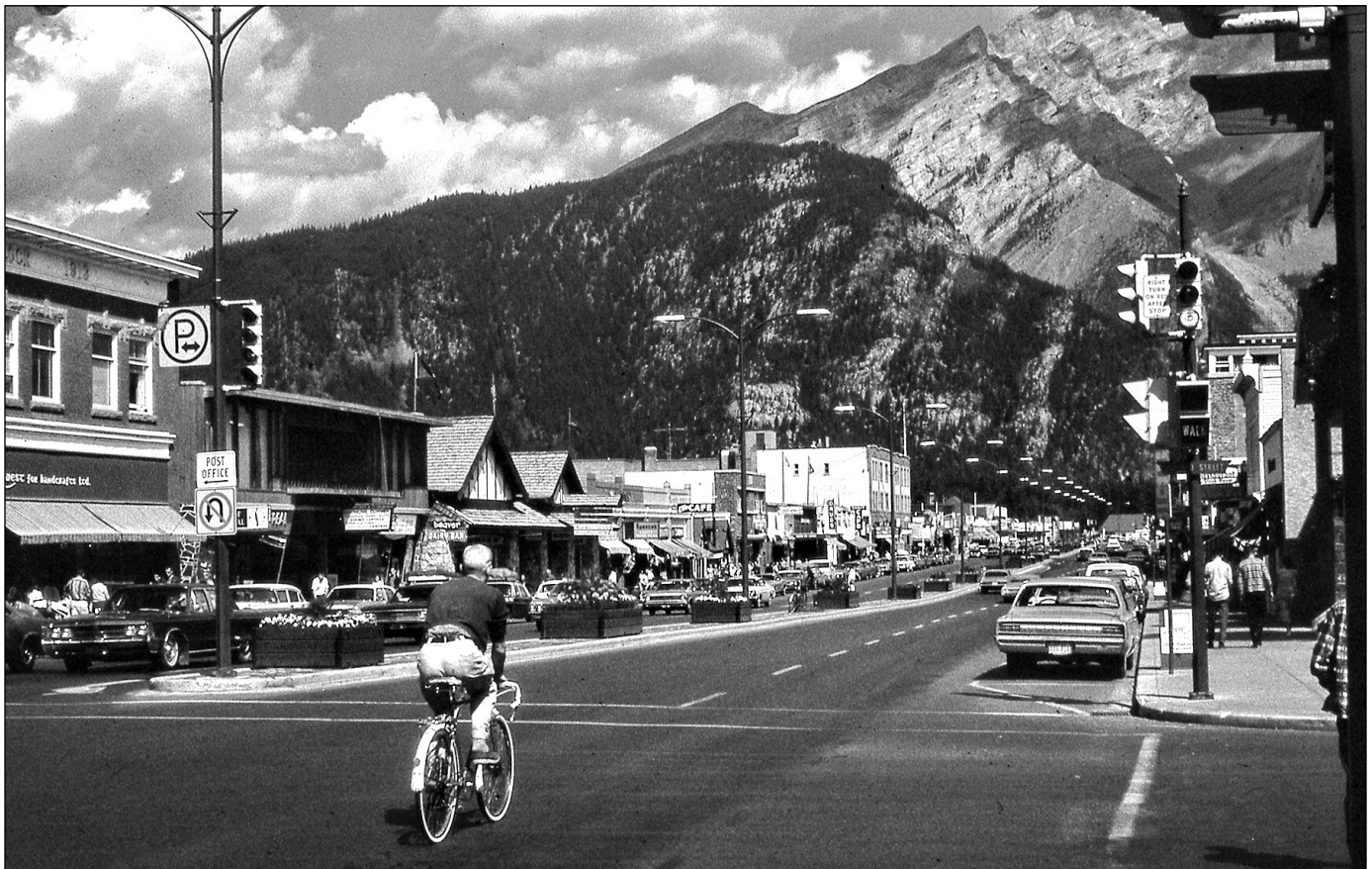


Figure 1. Looking eastward along Banff Avenue in the late 1960s. Courtesy of James Tworow.

since the late 1950s had been asserting greater control over the town's direction through expert techniques such as master plans, zoning, and long-range forecasting.

Policies unveiled in 1964 aimed to discourage further urban development in Canada's national parks.<sup>15</sup> Most controversially in park communities where land was leased rather than owned fee simple, Ottawa proposed to terminate the granting of perpetually and automatically renewable leases and shift to twenty-one-year leases wherein leaseholders would not retain rights to their improvements, such as buildings.<sup>16</sup> Banff residents interpreted this as a threat to their homes and businesses and invoked their rights as taxpaying citizens to fight against its implementation. They lobbied (unsuccessfully) for the townsite to be excised from the park and placed under provincial authority. In 1967 they banded with residents of Jasper and Waterton to take Ottawa to court over the lease issue.<sup>17</sup>

Thus during the period examined here, Banffites experienced dramatic growth, a fast-changing townscape, increased competition, anxiety about their future, and wariness of distant, indifferent politicians and bureaucrats. All the while, the town's economy depended on a frantic three-month window: the high tourist season from early June through early September. The resulting tensions shaped locals' attitudes toward outsiders and each other. Taylor concludes that perceptions of an external threat had a unifying effect, generating a “strong sense of community.” E.J. Hart concurs but emphasizes an underlying sense of persecution, wherein “citizens of Banff perceived themselves to be misunderstood and under attack.”<sup>18</sup> Frustrated by the way park officials handled “their” town while seeming to ignore their voices and interests, many Banffites were sensitive to other kinds of threats posed by outsiders, and to instances of park officials favouring non-residents over residents through special accommodations or lenient treatment. These tensions and anxieties were invisible to tourists but would colour permanent residents' perceptions of and responses to Banff's changing youth scene.

### *Where Kids Work for Fun*

The tourism and service sectors in Banff depended on Canadian youths who travelled there for summer jobs. A conservative estimate is that their number grew from around 1300 to 1800 during the period examined here.<sup>19</sup> Most were white and middle class, and many if not most were students at universities in central Canada—particularly those among the 750 employed at the Banff Springs Hotel. These sojourners typically arrived with secure employment contracts and housing arrangements. High-school-age teens and young adults not attending university also came to Banff, mostly from the Prairie provinces. They often arrived in town seeking a job as well as a place to stay.

Young people had been taking summer tourism jobs in the Canadian Rockies since the interwar years.<sup>20</sup> By the 1960s, Banff was well known for the co-ed cavorting that went on “back of stage,” away from tourists' view. In 1966 *Maclean's*

magazine set out to discover how Banff had gained its reputation as the town “where the kids work for fun,” and was told by summer staff from the Banff Springs Hotel that wages were less an attraction than the camaraderie and atmosphere of freedom during off-hours.<sup>21</sup> There was no curfew due to the prevalence of shift work, and that, combined with the “integrated student quarters” (meaning no separate buildings for males and females), provided abundant opportunities for partying, dating, and sex. Managers insisted that they strove to prevent “immorality,” pointing out that private police patrolled the dormitories and that “if a boy is found in a girl's room he is asked to depart [the resort].” They also claimed the hotel also took steps to prevent the “myth” spreading that it was an easygoing venue for young people looking for good times.<sup>22</sup> But whatever those unspecified steps might have been, they were ineffective. The hotel's reputation among Canadian youths aided greatly in recruiting summer staff. Interviewee MS recalled that during the mid-1960s it was widely known amongst male undergraduates at his Ontario university that there would be “lots of girls at the Banff Springs” and that staff enjoyed such perks as use of the swimming pools and golf course.<sup>23</sup> He described the hotel as a sophisticated, elegant place to work, far preferable to a smaller hotel or labouring outdoors for the Parks Branch. There were get-togethers in the dorms most nights and regular bush parties to avoid patrolling authorities: “We had kegs buried up the river. Don't ask how we got the liquor.”

Many Banffites were aware of the carousing associated primarily (though not exclusively) with the town's biggest employer. But since they were unaffected by it, and Banff's reputation as a place “where kids work for fun” helped its economy beyond the Banff Springs, few sought to learn more about negative aspects of the summer youth scene. The resort was a thirty-minute walk from the centre of Banff and fairly self-contained. Summer staff tended to socialize amongst themselves: the editor of the *Crag and Canyon* told *Maclean's* that “no one who lives in Banff mixes with the students [working at the resort]. They live in their own little world.”<sup>24</sup> Only a few residents—doctors, clergy, and police—dealt closely with young workers experiencing problems in Banff, from loneliness to unexpected pregnancy.

Another youth contingent in Banff also lived at something of a remove from town. The Banff School of Fine Arts (BSFA) overlooked the townsite from a ridge at the foot of Tunnel Mountain. Between 750 and 1000 Canadian youths attended each summer to study music, painting, dance, and theatre. Led by Senator Donald Cameron since 1936, the administration sought to inspire them by cultivating a rarefied air around living and working together “up the hill.”<sup>25</sup> The BSFA had strict rules and expectations for how students would comport themselves. There was a 10 p.m. curfew. Matrons supervised the dormitories. Drinking was not permitted on campus, and staff would not want Cameron to learn they visited establishments in town that specialized in purveying alcohol. Interviewee RW recalls art students as being slow to embrace counterculture ideals and trappings, but even in the mid-1960s they resented having to



“dress” for dinner, meaning no jeans, sneakers, or other informal clothing. RW recounts these rules generating creative tension: students and staff found fun ways around them, by holding surreptitious wiener roasts in the woods at the edge of campus, or sneaking in after curfew.<sup>26</sup> While many BSFA students were content to work in elevated seclusion, others desired more from Banff than routine visits to the post office and art supply store.

The Parks Branch, Banff Springs Hotel, and a few other big hotels housed their summer staff. But that still left hundreds of young workers to find their own place. Many landlords avoided renting to young workers because better returns could be had from renting to tourists. Low wages and high rents made it effectively impossible to live in Banff without at least one roommate, even in a basement or converted garage. Crowding could be severe: interviewee DG recalls an elderly landlady with three spare bedrooms to rent who usually had “at least a dozen kids” living in her house.<sup>27</sup> Partying was common, as were tensions between housemates that resulted from incompatibility and differing expectations about appropriate behaviour. Some observers were scandalized by co-ed housing (and rooming, and bedding) arrangements, but there was no concerted effort to regulate or reform summer staff housing during the 1960s.<sup>28</sup>

A few young people eschewed the comforts of roofed accommodation altogether. In July 1965 wardens and police cleared a “jungle” in the woods of Tunnel Mountain, 300 yards from the BSFA. They found treehouses and huts built from illegally cut trees and material pilfered from a construction site, all camouflaged with evergreen boughs. Park Superintendent Harry Dempster identified the arrested youths as passers-through, observing that “Banff has become a regular route for hoboes and bums ever since the Trans-Canada Highway was built. They decide to stop off here [and] haven’t a nickel in their pocket.”<sup>29</sup> The twenty-three-year-old founder of “Vagsville” countered that a few who slept there had menial jobs in town, such as dishwasher: “We’re not bums.”<sup>30</sup> Park staff watched for illegal encampments in the forest fringe along highways, where hitchhikers were likely to pitch up for a night, and around trails close to town, which could provide a base for longer stays.<sup>31</sup>

Youths summering in Banff enjoyed a limited range of leisure outlets prior to 1965. Hiking was popular, but not everyone wanted strenuous physical activity of that variety during their hours off. Going out for a bite was a limited option due to high prices and wait staff’s efforts to discourage customers taking up tables. Drinking in the beer parlours at the Cascade and King Edward hotels was popular but (legally) possible only for those who had turned twenty-one.<sup>32</sup> The lack of healthy leisure options was noted by critics such as Stewart Crysdale, who blamed it for the “cynicism and loose moral standards” he believed widespread amongst seasonal workers.<sup>33</sup>

For many youths, a summer job in Banff provided their first time away from home and thus a kind of vacation from everyday routines and the prying eyes of parents, neighbours, and teachers. “They had an anonymity for maybe the first time,” recalled

interviewee LD. “It was a big thing.” In contrast to an isolated farm or summer camp, Banff was extremely cosmopolitan for its size and had a playground reputation. Drinking was a common way young workers asserted their independence and performed adulthood, an acceptably rebellious way to fit in with a new cohort. LD recalled that even before “hippies and drugs” there was considerable underage drinking in Banff: “Nothing to do except party and maybe drink too much.”<sup>34</sup> Venues included friends’ places and well-known outdoor spots such as Lake Minnewanka. Canadians increasingly treated drinking as a kind of recreation in the postwar years. Craig Heron points out that drinking in a public outdoor space remained disreputable in the mid-1960s and in a big city would have been associated with “winos,” but with Banff completely surrounded by “wilderness,” such activity was associated with uninhibited freedom and seemed the natural thing to do.<sup>35</sup> There was a thrill of breaking the rules with new friends by drinking when and where it was forbidden.

Romance and sex were part of Banff’s summer youth scene beyond the dormitories of the Banff Springs Hotel. Historians Sharon Wall and Dale Barbour show that by the 1950s summer camps and resort towns were settings where Canadian youths took advantage of their distance from home to pursue a fling.<sup>36</sup> Many visitors to Banff did likewise. The informality of the setting and diversity of the youth scene in class, status, region, and ethnicity allowed them to meet, mingle with, and date people of the opposite sex—and undoubtedly in surreptitious cases the same sex—who “you wouldn’t have brought home to meet your mother back at home,” as interviewee LD put it.<sup>37</sup>

Not everyone made friends, or handled risk-taking activities well, or was fortunate in fleeting affairs of the heart. MS recalled that Banff Springs summer staff who hadn’t found a boyfriend or girlfriend “in-house” to go “fairly steady with” by July would venture into town in hopes of meeting someone there. LD recalled girls in their mid-teens coming to work in Banff from small-town Saskatchewan and “getting taken advantage of.” LD did not elaborate on what this meant, but two interviewees who worked as student ministers at churches in Banff during the mid-1960s described late August as “the busy season,” when young women who were non-residents approached them for pregnancy counselling.<sup>38</sup> The town “where kids work for fun” wasn’t fun for everyone. Nevertheless, by 1965 its hard-partying and arty reputations combined with the tourist fame of Banff National Park to exert a powerful draw on Canadian youths seeking more play than work.

### *The Unsquare Cellar and the Year Marijuana Came to Banff*

By the mid-1960s a few community leaders believed summer workers’ living conditions needed to be improved. In June 1965 Rundle Memorial United Church moved to establish a safe, inexpensive space where teens and young adults could socialize and relax in a “cool” environment. The Unsquare Cellar was a coffeehouse and drop-in centre located in the church basement,

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Figure 2. *The Unsquare Cellar in summer 1965. Photograph by Ron Duke.*

with direct access from Banff Avenue. It was established by Reverend John Travis and student ministers in town for the summer, with the intention of keeping youths “off the streets and occupied during the dangerously boring long summer evenings.”<sup>39</sup> Young people of all denominations and backgrounds were welcome, though the Cellar was intended primarily for young workers who needed “a break from ... headwaiters, managers, and landlords.”<sup>40</sup> It was patterned on the coffeehouse ministries that were popular on college campuses and also features of the counterculture scene in places like Yorkville.<sup>41</sup> There was no proselytizing: the Cellar epitomized the United Church’s 1960s mandates of direct social action and seeking cultural relevance by listening to “outsiders.”<sup>42</sup>

The Unsquare Cellar opened from 8 p.m. to midnight, Sunday through Friday, from mid-June to the end of August. Anyone sixteen years and older could purchase a fifty-cent membership valid all summer. Coffee, tea, and light snacks were sold at the same price charged by local cafes, in order to avoid undercutting and antagonizing them. The key difference was that “Cellarites” were not obliged to purchase anything and free to nurse a drink all evening. The basement had a stylish atmosphere, with dim lighting and artwork on the walls and ceiling. A varied program of games, movies, and music was offered, but the main activities were meeting up and socializing.

Responses were positive. Eleven hundred visitors made more than three thousand visits to the Cellar in summer 1965. A visitor from Ontario described it having the “enthusiastic support of many townspeople and all the churches.”<sup>43</sup> Interviewee LD recalls that “it met with approval from the parents of pretty much everyone in town. Restaurants approved too, to get kids from hanging out in their places all evening.” LD also recalled that because the Cellar was church-run, BSFA administrators deemed it an “approved” venue. BSFA students occasionally performed there, and those eighteen or older who attended could get permission to stay out after 10 p.m. Banff and Calgary newspapers commended the Cellar for providing a healthy venue for young people, even as they poked fun at those sojourners’ changing fashions and mores.

The Unsquare Cellar’s first summer went off without a hitch, but 1966 was radically different. Reverend Travis called it “the year that Marijuana came to Banff,” when controversy swirled around the town’s youth scene, including the Cellar.<sup>44</sup> A series of drug-related arrests were made in and around town beginning in July. The case that grabbed the most media attention involved an eighteen-year-old female BSFA student from Toronto who was arrested with two Vancouver men in their early twenties at the Bow Falls Lookout. All three were charged with narcotics (marijuana) possession.<sup>45</sup>

BSFA officials worried about the school’s moral culpability and legal liability in having one of its charges caught in such a situation. They were also concerned about its reputation. Senator Cameron promised a crackdown on students “seeking sex, way-out parties, and new ways of getting their kicks.”<sup>46</sup> Several were sent home for unspecified “misbehaviour”; others were confined to campus for associating with “undesirables.” BSFA officials drove off male “drifters and beatniks” who were not students of the school but loitered on its campus, warning of trespassing charges if they returned.<sup>47</sup> The Banff RCMP detachment was busier than usual that summer, breaking up parties, arresting underage drinkers, responding to noise complaints and reports of theft at Tunnel Mountain campground, and watching out for “undesirables entering the town to look for good times.”<sup>48</sup>

Radio news reports in Calgary implied that BSFA students used and sold marijuana. Rumours spread that the Unsquare Cellar was a joint where drug contacts could be made—not unsurprisingly, given it was the new epicentre of the town’s youth scene and the arrested student had attended at least once.<sup>49</sup> In his memoir, Travis recounted that Cameron—one of the most powerful people in Banff and an early supporter of the Cellar initiative—questioned whether staff were sufficiently selective with its clientele: “Pressure was brought to bear on me to restrict membership in the coffeehouse. I was [asked] to ban the bare feet, sandals, and long-haired crowd.”<sup>50</sup> Though Travis “refused to ban certain ‘types,’” both he and Cameron discerned an emerging trend in Banff’s summer youth scene: a growing number of young people in town apart from their families, without a job, and not attending art school.<sup>51</sup> For all the controversy and soured relations between the BSFA and Rundle Memorial, the Unsquare Cellar remained popular: 1900 members made 7800 visits, more than double the 1965 total.

Other Banffites noticed the change too. The BAC received complaints from businesses about “idle wanderers” loitering along Banff Avenue, including at the entrance to the Unsquare Cellar.<sup>52</sup> The *Crag and Canyon* observed that unemployed youths from out of town were annoying business owners and other residents by their looks and behaviour. It predicted that these newcomers could damage the town’s reputation in a way summer staff and art students never had. “The problem that is currently bothering many in Banff is this: ‘What to do about the creeps that constitute one of the lesser tourist attractions in Banff each summer?’”

[They could] be the main figures in a book to be entitled ‘How Banff Can Lose Friends and Alienate People.’”<sup>53</sup>

### *Banff’s Changing Scenery*

A growing number and proportion of the young people in Banff during summer in the late 1960s were transients, visiting to “make the scene” instead of to make money for tuition. Frequently labelled “hippies” for their look but sometimes differentiated from hippies for their (perceived) lack of idealism and disinterest in politics, transient youths came to preoccupy local business owners, institutions, government officials, and many permanent residents. These new entrants to the youth scene spent little on goods or services. They appeared not to be seeking work. They didn’t have cars. They hung around the townsite more than they explored the park’s natural attractions. And much of their “bad behaviour” was brazen, occurring in plain view in public spaces in open defiance of criminal law, park regulations, and local convention.<sup>54</sup>

Part counterculture, part subculture, long-distance hitchhiking was a major trend amongst “late” baby boomers in their teens and early twenties during the late 1960s and 1970s. Linda Mahood shows that in Canada this trend involved (mostly white) females and males from middle- and working-class backgrounds, slightly younger and less educated than the “hippies” of a few years earlier.<sup>55</sup> The trend was encouraged by the 1967 Centennial celebrations, where Ottawa exhorted Canadians of all ages to see their country, and then by Pierre Trudeau’s endorsement of hostelling and backpacking. Transient youths’ peregrinations were also spurred by declining employment opportunities: instead of working a minimum wage job all summer, or worse still, fruitlessly searching for one, many preferred to hit the road and have an adventure at minimal expense. Amongst the waves of hitchhiking transients searching for good times and camaraderie each summer, there were troubled youths including runaways, youths from broken homes, or with mental health issues, or using addictive drugs. Henderson argues that such individuals represented a small proportion of the many thousands who made the Yorkville scene during the late 1960s, but that they grabbed a disproportionate amount of attention and stirred up the worst anti-“hippie” bias in media coverage.<sup>56</sup> Banff would see enough defiant behaviour, petty crime, and drug culture to convince many residents that transients carried a host of big-city problems in their backpacks.

Banff was a big draw. It was on the “hippie highway” leading to the counterculture magnet of Vancouver. It had a reputation as the height of Canadian scenery and (in young peoples’ circles) a party town. By 1969 it was a counterculture destination in and of itself. Similar influxes to the seaside town of Percé in Quebec’s Gaspé region and the mountain resort of Aspen, Colorado, drew fiercely negative responses, with tourism interests directing police and courts to move hitchhiking “hippies” along through vagrancy laws.<sup>57</sup> But the response in Banff was comparatively restrained. The town was inside a park that was nominally free and welcoming to all. There was

a tradition of tolerance toward young people in town for the summer. Because it was not a municipality, its merchants and hoteliers had no direct influence over bylaws or law enforcement. Furthermore, many merchants worried a crackdown might make Banff feel *too* urban. Even when shoplifting and panhandling were epidemic (as described below), the BAC and Chamber of Commerce refused to request police foot patrols in the town centre. Their concern was that tourists who might thrill at the sight of an RCMP officer in red serge dress uniform would be disillusioned by the same officer walking the beat, shooing along young panhandlers who were evidence of the very big-city issues that tourists were assumed to want a break from in a national park. Americans were the tourists most likely to decry the presence of “hippies” in Banff. Complaint letters indicate that many sought in the Canadian wilderness a respite from their country’s political tensions and perceived culture of permissiveness, and thus were particularly disappointed to stumble across reminders of them on the sidewalks of Banff Avenue.<sup>58</sup>

One of the most contested spaces in Banff was Central Park, the manicured green space where Banff Avenue crosses the Bow River. River frontage, rolling lawns, and a 360-degree mountain view made this park within a park one of the most scenic parts of the townsite. Picnic benches and a handful of covered picnic shelters invited visitors to relax there. As a free space in pricey downtown Banff, close to all of its amenities (including public washrooms) yet slightly removed from its bustle, Central Park was a magnet for transient youth. Interviewee MS described it as the “hippie nexus,” where kids “came out of the woods” to meet up and socialize, where it was safe to crash day and night, where marijuana and mescaline were usually for sale and sometimes being used. It was also kitty-corner to the Unsquare Cellar.

In 1969 the BAC complained that “undesirable transients” lounging in Central Park were “a deterrent to natural beauty.”<sup>59</sup> Park administrators wanted the general public to feel comfortable using the park, but many visitors were reportedly dissuaded from doing so by transient youth smoking up, making out, sleeping on the lawn in the day, and in the picnic shelters overnight. Park staff employed a standard landscaping technique to get them off the grass. As part of his grounds maintenance job, MS recalls being instructed to run the Central Park sprinklers throughout the day in order to deter “layabouts.” Overwatering damaged the lawn and even ruined it in spots but blame was pinned on “hippies.”<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, the problem of youths lounging on the grass remained, even after the picnic shelters were removed. Central Park was the daytime spot to be.<sup>61</sup>

Central Park was not the only contested space in Banff. The lawns of Rundle Memorial United Church and several hotels were fenced off after being damaged by loitering youths. There was also handwringing in the newspapers about whether Banff’s most famous natural attraction—the hot spring pools at the edge of town—should be open to “extremely dirty people,” meaning transient youths.<sup>62</sup> The evening-hours Unsquare Cellar remained the town’s only youth-oriented venue during the late



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Figure 3. Relaxing on the grass at Central Park in the early 1970s. Rundle Memorial United Church can be glimpsed at top left, through the trees and across Banff Avenue. Courtesy of David Workman.

1960s. Visitation rose from 12,000 in 1967 to 14,000 in 1968 and then 21,000 in 1969. The percentage of Cellarites who were neither employed in Banff nor attending the BSFA doubled from less than 10 per cent in 1966 to about 20 per cent in 1969.<sup>63</sup>

Transients were frequently linked to petty crimes such as theft from campsites. Merchants described the shoplifting in summer 1968 as “the worst in years,” with grocery stores hit hardest. Several stores and restaurants responded by banning all “hippies” from their premises.<sup>64</sup> The following year, Banff’s magistrate sentenced several shoplifters to jail without the option of a fine, out of frustration that so many convicted of stealing ten- and twenty-five-cent food items had proven able to pay the fifty-dollar fine on the spot. In May 1970 a “Digger”-style volunteer initiative called The Crystal Smoke organized daily “feed-ins” for transients at Central Park, partly in the hope of reducing shoplifting. Nevertheless, the spree continued, and after trying forty-eight cases in July 1970 alone, the local magistrate began sentencing *all* shoplifters to jail time. Both local newspapers supported this measure; one predicted it would meet “unanimous approval in the community.”<sup>65</sup>

In 1969 the Banff RCMP detachment commander told the *Summit News* that his officers found “hippies” more belligerent than just a couple years earlier. Park wardens also reported transient youths increasingly likely to defy their authority and to partake in bizarre and potentially dangerous behaviour, often under the influence of drugs.<sup>66</sup> Interviewee LD describes a shift in attitudes amongst BSFA students by 1969, with more defiance and drug experimentation.<sup>67</sup> Court reports indicate that drug-related arrests spiked in Banff during the summer months, with most convicted being males aged eighteen to twenty-four from outside Alberta. The drug trade also brought a few known instances of violence, such as the twenty-year-old “Banff resident” who had a gun put to his head when was robbed by Edmontonians from whom he had negotiated the purchase of two pounds of marijuana.<sup>68</sup> The BAC pleaded for the RCMP and

Parks Branch to reinforce their local detachment and warden station, but could do little more.<sup>69</sup> Even as residents felt besieged by outsiders who park administrators were unwilling or unable to control, they lacked the power to pass basic bylaws that might help fight petty crime and minor nuisances.

Stories about the changing youth scene and related “bad behaviour” were common fare in Banff’s weekly papers. Initially their coverage was less hostile than that of their counterparts in other small urban centres that experienced counterculture influxes.<sup>70</sup> The *Crag and Canyon* and *Summit News* had erudite contributors, and the transient issue provided greater scope for literary licence than did lease litigation or subdivision zoning. Some writers were content to make fun, with criticism of hair, clothing, and cleanliness commonplace. But as might be expected in a town so dependent on youth, the majority, including those who were not pro-hippie, expressed genuine concern about transients and their place in Banff. A few Banffites sympathetic to youthful wanderlust emphasized the principle that national parks should be welcoming to people of all ages and incomes, and free from overbearing rules and regulations.<sup>71</sup> Such calls for open-armed acceptance were a minority view, approximately equal to the strict “run ‘em out of town” camp. Most observers agreed that the growing number of transient youth posed real social and economic challenges for Banff and required targeted rather than indiscriminate responses. Leniently permitting them to do as they pleased would damage the town’s tourist reputation, but so too would arbitrary or repressive measures.

This raised the question of precisely which youths engaged in bad behaviour. Some Banffites half-jokingly borrowed from natural history to develop a taxonomy, identifying species such as bums, burners, diggers, freaks, lumps, and “real” hippies. Others argued there were gradations, from “social parasite” to “entrepreneur type,” and that they deserved to be judged by their actions rather than grouped by appearance.<sup>72</sup> Still others argued the youth scene was characterized by an essential sameness: that the main difference between “vagabond hippies” and summer staff at the Banff Springs Hotel was that the latter group had had the good fortune to land jobs. Their “moralities” were said to be identical, only no one in town was troubled by hotel employees’ behaviour because it was “hidden.”<sup>73</sup> If not sympathy, then, unemployed, alienated transients deserved at least a degree of understanding.

In a community that ran on underpaid youth labour, there was concern that the transients might upset the hospitality industry’s delicate economic balance by finding solidarity with summer staff. As the town prepared for the 1969 tourist season, the *Summit News* warned that “discriminatory” bans practised against young people by few Banff businesses might combine with persistent problems around wages and housing to spark protests and even a “general walkout” by young workers. “It’s happened most everywhere else in the country, why shouldn’t Banff, with the highest per capita of youth in any spot in Canada, feel the tremors of protest as well?” University-aged youths

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were, after all, in the vanguard of political protest and labour action in North America cities and campuses. “This could well be the summer that peaceful old Banff ... finds itself thrust into the violent reality of the outside world.”<sup>74</sup>

Growing concern about the youth scene highlighted Banff residents’ limited power in the town. Lease litigation and other battles with Ottawa had newspapers packed with discussions about taxation without representation and how Banffites were incomplete citizens. With the transient youth issue, officials in distant Ottawa were seen as encouraging indigent outsiders to make their way to Banff, then allowing them to run amok while denying permanent residents a say in how rules were made and enforced and turning a deaf ear to their concerns. By 1969 many if not most Banffites had soured on or turned hostile toward the counterculture element of the town’s youth scene but were resigned to official inaction. “Whatever your attitude toward hippies, you are faced with one inescapable fact: *they* are going to be here, and *you* are not going to be able to do very much about that.”<sup>75</sup>

Tensions went up a notch late in the summer of 1969, when Ottawa announced it would appeal the lease issue to the Supreme Court of Canada. Then, in mid-August, park wardens and the RCMP raided an illegal encampment at the outermost edge of town. In the forest about a mile up the Spray River, they found a “colony” or “commune” consisting of half a dozen low huts built of pine poles, moss, and plastic sheeting. Forty youths were said to be staying there, though only half that number were arrested and evicted from the park.<sup>76</sup> According to the *Summit News*, “everything about the primitive village was repulsive.”<sup>77</sup> Litter, liquor bottles, and “unmentionable drugstore items” were strewn about, the latter alluding to sexual impropriety. The *Summit* stressed the age difference between “bearded youngsters and juvenile girls,” repeatedly mentioned that the youngest female found at this “hippie haven” was only fifteen, and emphasized that the male campers were “stranger[s] from some other part of the country.” Describing the encampment as “an example of how quickly virgin wilderness can be turned afoul” luridly captured how it violated most Banff residents’ moral and environmental expectations.<sup>78</sup> Following this raid, the *Summit* declared renewed faith in the Unsquare Cellar and praised it as a valuable asset to the community.<sup>79</sup> Happenings usually unseen in Banff’s wild forest edge drove home the need for safe, supervised youth venues in the town centre.

### *Echo Creek and the Tentless Transients*

In spring 1970 Banff residents were girding for conflict. Relations between merchants and transients were so fraught that in early May when a youth advocate witnessed a group of relatively well-groomed hippies denied service at a Banff Avenue restaurant, her first thought was that an investigative TV program was conducting a sting operation to expose discrimination and intolerance in the town.<sup>80</sup> In the lead-up to the high tourist season, the *Summit News* suggested, “It would take a thousand

psychiatrists to ferret out all the emotions in the psyches of local residents” on the transient youth issue.<sup>81</sup>

In the spring of 1970 government agencies were preparing to accommodate a great national surge of hitchhiking youths.<sup>82</sup> While cities around the country repurposed armouries to serve as hostels, in Banff the Parks Branch decided to establish an experimental campground that would concentrate transient youths in a single location. This was expected to solve several problems. It would simplify the provision of welfare chits, make it easier to offer counselling and health services (which were unavailable, but had been recommended), reduce loitering in the town centre, reduce incidents of theft in other park campgrounds, and eliminate illicit encampments.<sup>83</sup> For this new facility, the Parks Branch selected a cleared but otherwise undeveloped site along Mount Norquay Road, which linked the town and the Trans-Canada Highway, near where it crossed meandering Echo Creek.<sup>84</sup> It was easy for hitchhikers to reach and just ten minutes’ walk to Banff Avenue, yet far enough from the town centre to shield tourists and townsfolk from guitar music, marijuana smoke, and assemblages of denim and long hair. “Out of sight, out of mind,” was how the *Summit News* put it. Cold water taps, fire circles, and pit toilets were installed. No shelters were provided initially, and cars and tents were not permitted, on the basis that anyone with either could afford to use a regular campground. Stays were limited to three nights, and the price was next to free: the twenty-five-cents-per-night fee was a fifth of what was charged for a site in other national park frontcountry campgrounds.<sup>85</sup>

The Parks Branch informed the BAC of this experiment in early June, shortly before the campground was to open. Councillors were leery about “doing things to encourage transients to stay” but were assured that the primitive nature of the campground would dissuade anyone from staying longer than three nights. The Alberta Department of Social Development endorsed the experiment but did not fulfill the BAC’s request for a full-time counsellor to be stationed in Banff that summer. The Crystal Smoke relocated its feed-ins from Central Park to Echo Creek as soon as the campground opened.<sup>86</sup>

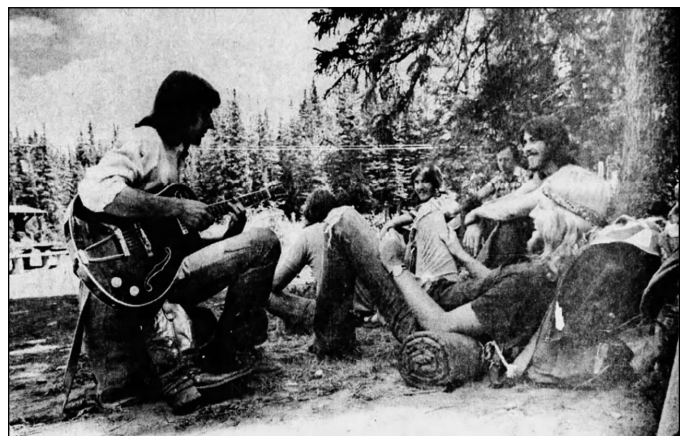


Figure 4. Making the scene at Echo Creek, summer 1971. Photograph by Bill Herriot. Courtesy of the Calgary Herald, a division of Postmedia Network.

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Between 200 and 275 tentless transients camped at Echo Creek each night in July and August 1970. It reduced the problems of panhandling, shoplifting, and illegal camping, but did not eliminate them, much to the disappointment of merchants and other residents who had expected a tidy solution.<sup>87</sup> The new campground was accused of encouraging transients to linger longer than in the past, with some exploiting a loophole in the three-day-stay policy by leaving for a night, then re-entering for another stint. Hearing a “near-constant stream” of complaints from tourists, some businesses blamed prevaricating park administrators and Banff’s lack of municipal status for holding up a crackdown.<sup>88</sup> Critics identified Echo Creek as further evidence that Banffites lacked “any real voice in the way things are run here”: officials in Ottawa had imposed a radical experiment on the town for the benefit of undesirable outsiders. The experiment also exposed fissures within Banff, with newspaper writers criticizing neighbours who advocated for transient youth, including church ministers.<sup>89</sup>

Echo Creek campers had complaints of their own. The most common were that there were too many rules, and park staff were too strict in enforcing them. The wardens who collected entrance fees and monitored the number of nights spent in the camp were said to be inflexible and unfriendly. The insistence by these authority figures that everyone pay the twenty-five-cent overnight fee was blamed for breaking up groups that were travelling together and whose members were not all able or willing to pay. Other common complaints were that longer stays and simple “do your own thing” shelters should be permitted. A rare instance of an “Echo Creek freek” contributing to Banff’s discussion of its summer youth scene is a letter the *Summit News* received from a backpacking British student writing under the name Ozymandias. He or she denounced park staff as “incompetent,” “thoughtless,” and wasteful, and the rules they tried to enforce at the campground as a form of “harassment.” “Bureaucratic stupidity, elder citizen’s paranoia, and prejudice have been the mainstay of [the] past two weeks I have been staying here,” reported Ozymandias.<sup>90</sup> The *Summit* doubtless recognized that publishing this letter, with its combination of aggrieved tone and admission to breaking several campground rules, would have the effect of painting Echo Creek users as the picture of ingratitude. Another, less eloquent instance of transients expressing their unhappiness with Parks Branch efforts to regulate what they got up to in Banff saw unidentified parties retaliate against the return of daytime water sprinkling at Central Park by depositing feces on the lawns and vandalizing the public washrooms with similarly painted peace signs.<sup>91</sup>

By late August, travel agents and journalists visiting Banff confirmed local business owners’ worst fears: these experts believed the mere presence of transients detracted from tourist experiences of the town and predicted that negative word-of-mouth would undermine ongoing promotional campaigns. The “humanitarian action” at Echo Creek was accused of “encouraging the problem.”<sup>92</sup> BAC meetings were usually staid, sparsely attended affairs, but the first one after Echo Creek wrapped up

in September 1970 saw heated discussion, with the audience interjecting as councillors tried to speak.<sup>93</sup> Nudity, drugs, and the fact that Echo Creek was not segregated by sex were identified as “moral issues,” implying it could corrupt local youths and any “good kids” who ended up there. Merchants shared tourists’ complaints about the youth scene as crucial evidence that it was affecting the town’s reputation. The student ministers who helped run the Unsquare Cellar spoke in favour of Echo Creek’s continuation (and “more sympathetic management”) on the basis that it provided a valuable “cultural area” with music and conversation.<sup>94</sup> However, asserting that some residents were hostile toward counterculturalists because Banff was a “small, quiet town” did not help persuade the audience, who were implied to be unsophisticated provincials. On the question of Echo Creek’s future, only four of twenty votes cast supported its return.

Initially the BAC called for the Parks Branch to discontinue the experiment it had foisted on Banff. It also demanded a crackdown on transient youths through additional policing and a province-wide hitchhiking ban. But it reversed its position after Banff’s RCMP commander deemed Echo Creek a success, which had prevented the wave of thousands of transient youth becoming an even bigger problem in town and elsewhere in the park. In light of police support for the campground, the BAC grudgingly suggested the superintendent might reopen it in 1971, provided it was under “tighter administration.”<sup>95</sup>

### *Echo Creek Returns*

Facing predictions of more than 20,000 transient youths to pass through Banff in 1971, the Parks Branch did reopen Echo Creek. The campground got off to a bumpy start, even with the addition of wash stations and cooking shelters. In early June, half the eighty campers on site refused to pay the entrance fee on the basis of principled objection to being charged for use of state-owned facilities. Park staff called the RCMP, who convinced the non-paying group to depart the campground. They camped illegally around town for two days before returning to Echo Creek, where they again refused to pay. Ordered out, a group of about twenty-five proceeded to “march uptown in protest.”<sup>96</sup> The march disbanded only after several leaders were arrested and the fee-resisters were promised a meeting with senior park administrators. Instead of the labour walkout predicted by the *Summit*, Banff’s first (and only) counterculture protest saw unemployed sojourners demand that a steeply discounted facility established especially for them should be free. Usually a phenomenon of big cities and university campuses, the march must have struck Banffites who witnessed it as radically out of place and a spectacle of generational entitlement that conflicted sharply with local values about work (and paying for a night’s stay).

Representatives of the fee-resisters met Superintendent Steve Kun in mid-June. Like Banff residents, they too wanted a greater say in how their dwelling place was run. Invoking the ideals of cooperative housing and back-to-the-land communes,



the campers argued that “an atmosphere of self-government and unity” would improve relations between transients and residents.<sup>97</sup> They demanded that no uniformed park staff be stationed on site, that pay-by-donation replace the twenty-five-cent fee, and that the maximum stay be increased from three to fourteen nights, as was the norm in other park campgrounds. In light of the strong desire by some campers (just how many is unclear) to run Echo Creek on a communal basis, as well as the participatory ideals of the federal government’s new Opportunities for Youth program, Kun ignored the recommendations of the BAC, RCMP, and his own operations staff and negotiated a settlement.<sup>98</sup> Campers would be allowed to stay at Echo Creek for one week, and “volunteer coordinators” amongst them would be responsible to collect all fees and turn them over to police or park officials.<sup>99</sup> This arrangement was the opposite of the tighter supervision the BAC and RCMP had called for in fall 1970.

The Parks Branch and its contractors withdrew from Echo Creek, apparently reluctant to visit for anything other than cursory sanitation work.<sup>100</sup> The RCMP monitored the campground for runaways but made no raids or arrests. Kun and the senior RCMP officer met sporadically with about a dozen volunteer coordinators, usually to reiterate rules about duration of stay and basic campground operation.<sup>101</sup> Interviewee BH was one of those volunteer coordinators and recalls “we pretty much ran it as a commune. Except for food we were self-contained. I honestly don’t remember anyone coming [in] for anything. We had to take care of everything ourselves.”<sup>102</sup>

According to BH, volunteer coordinators warned incoming campers not to “fuck around” in town or venture into Banff’s residential areas. Nevertheless, relations between most permanent residents and Echo Creek campers were frosty. Complaints poured in about the transient “parade” along Mount Norquay Road. When a mimeographed handbill from “Pete and Buddy” solicited Banffites’ assistance in cooking, serving, and washing up at Echo Creek, the *Crag and Canyon* poured scorn on the notion that “hard working” residents should help the thousands of able-bodied youths expected to pass through that summer.<sup>103</sup> Even young people who didn’t identify as hippies, freaks, or heads reported that inhospitable treatment by local businesses made them feel unwelcome in town. By mid-summer, letters to the editor half-jokingly proposed that park wardens should direct rogue grizzly bears to “that Government Pad” at Echo Creek in order to “clear up the garbage.”<sup>104</sup>

The counterculture segment of Banff’s youth scene flourished in 1971 and became rather insular, resembling the “hip separatism” Henderson identifies in Toronto’s early 1970s scene.<sup>105</sup> “They didn’t intervene, we didn’t interact,” is how BH describes Echo Creek. Pooling welfare chits provided \$150 per day for bulk food purchases, allowing large-scale meal preparation at the campground. Volunteers from the Alberta Service Corps and John Howard Society tried to organize an odd-jobs bureau so youths passing through town could earn a little cash. Banff gained the twenty-four-hour-a-day Mountain Information and Drug Crisis

Centre thanks to an Opportunities for Youth grant. It even had a short-lived anti-establishment paper, the *Scree*, funded by the Alberta Service Corps. Several student ministers and volunteers from the Unsquare Cellar spent much of their free time at Echo Creek, along with staff of the drug crisis centre (two of whom lived there all summer). Cellar staff found themselves with more spare time than in previous years because it lost a big chunk of its clientele on 1 July, when Alberta lowered its legal drinking age from twenty-one to eighteen. Attendance at the Cellar plummeted by more than 50 per cent as eighteen-, nineteen-, and twenty-year-olds flocked to Banff’s beer parlours. Legal drinking venues and freewheeling Echo Creek had supplanted the Unsquare Cellar as the cool spots for young people to socialize during their leisure hours.

From 400 to 500 people stayed at Echo Creek each night from the Canada Day long weekend through mid-August, double the same period of 1970.<sup>106</sup> Some sneaked in and many stayed longer than a week: the Parks Branch estimated 200 “permanent tenants,” while BH recalls 50–75 at any given moment. Drug use was common, though not ubiquitous. On multiple occasions drug crisis centre staff helped bring campers suffering a bad trip to the hospital or talked them down from a freak-out, including one armed with an axe.<sup>107</sup> By August, Parks Branch staff estimated that 70 per cent of the long-term campers remaining at Echo Creek were American, including a few who reportedly parked their cars in town and walked to the campground for the cheap camping, free food, and social scene. Not everyone found Banff’s counterculture epicentre to their liking. Many who pitched up at Echo Creek were turned off by the “freaky” scene and quick to move along.<sup>108</sup>

Most of the volunteer coordinators (including BH) had departed Banff by early August. With the Parks Branch detached from the campground’s operations, no one in a position of authority noticed that heavy use was overwhelming its limited facilities. Drainage pits for wastewater overflowed into nearby creeks. The poor state of the outhouses pushed campers in need of a toilet to the bushes around the perimeter. Campers built fires wherever they liked, including under the forest canopy. Litter and food were dumped wherever. People and pets reportedly slept in the cooking shelters. “No one seemed to care,” a park employee who looked in reported.<sup>109</sup>

This was the state of affairs when medical health inspector Dr. Alistair MacQuarrie arrived on 16 August—at the unofficial behest of the BAC—and issued an immediate shutdown order as a result of what he observed. Park officials did not contest Echo Creek’s closure, though they did object to MacQuarrie’s description of it as “a serious threat to the public health.”<sup>110</sup> The high tourist season was winding down, and the campground had been such an administrative hassle and generated so much bad press that it was politically impossible to countenance its reopening. An internal review concluded things had gotten out of hand largely as the result of the nature of Echo Creek’s users. Most were believed to have visited Banff in order to make the scene and have a good time, but under conditions of anonymity,

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without close supervision, sensing animosity from many town residents, and always with the ultimate intention of moving on, they felt no responsibility for its upkeep or future. In October the Parks Branch decided to proceed no further with a “free” or “open” campground for young people in Banff.

The town’s newspapers had no doubt who was ultimately responsible for the debacle at Echo Creek: it was “mostly the federal government” that had permitted “this disgusting state of affairs to exist in one of Canada’s premier beauty spots.”<sup>111</sup> The *Crag and Canyon* dismissed transient youths as nuisance wildlife: “As long as you supply them with food you will have them on your doorstep.”<sup>112</sup> After the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of national park residents on the lease issue, the BAC channelled built-up local frustration with federal politicians, officials, and experts onto the transient issue. In a widely distributed brief, it decried Echo Creek as “filthy,” “permissive,” and “hazardous,” and contended that administrators’ decision to hand control to its users was “a travesty on standards of morality, intelligence, and self-respect generally accepted by the people of it Canada.”<sup>113</sup> It insisted on the discontinuation of any special facility for “wandering” youth and reiterated that a crackdown on bad behaviour was essential to preserve the “high tone” of town and park alike.

Fall 1971 also saw the demise of another facility for young visitors to Banff. After seven summers, Rundle Memorial United Church declared the Unsquare Cellar “a dead number.”<sup>114</sup> It had lost much of its clientele after the lowering of the legal drinking age. It had also proven a hassle to operate and increasingly divisive within the congregation and community. Over the previous few years, the Cellar had had to rely on young, inexperienced student ministers and volunteers, who the minister in charge found resembled Cellar clients in many ways: too dedicated to “doing [their] own thing” and tolerant of controversial behaviour to the point of overlooking “obvious community hang-ups.”<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, church leaders had grown uncomfortable with the counterculture element of Banff’s youth scene. As the Cellar’s final annual report put it, “The class of clientele seems to have deteriorated and the young workers were less in evidence than the transient population.”<sup>116</sup> The original goal of providing a safe evening hangout for young tourism industry staff appeared obsolete.

### **End Scene**

“Now you see ‘em, now you don’t” is how DG recalled of the contrast between the summers of 1971 and 1972. “Word must’ve got out: the scene is over.”<sup>117</sup> While counterculture scenes were dissipating in cities and towns all around Canada in the early 1970s, the intensely seasonal nature of Banff’s made its passing quite conspicuous—at least to permanent residents.<sup>118</sup> Panhandling disappeared. Shoplifting plummeted. Drugs were not openly used in public spaces. The Banff Advisory Council found that “everything seemed under control [with] no large scale complaints around town.”<sup>119</sup> New problems would emerge, but even noisy motorcycles and



Figure 5. The end of Echo Creek campground, as depicted in the *Crag and Canyon*, 1 September 1971. Courtesy of the Bow Valley Crag and Canyon.

campground rowdiness seemed less likely to damage Banff’s tourist reputation.

Changes at important Banff institutions also affected the youth scene. It became less arty as the BSFA (rebranded the Banff Centre in 1970) brought in corporate clients and added more master classes, which dissuaded amateurs and hobbyists. Seasonal workers’ ranks were thinned after the Banff Springs Hotel began staying open in winter. It hired several hundred full-time, year-round staff, increasing Banff’s permanent population while commensurately reducing the number of young Canadians coming for summer work.

Banff’s rise and fall as a counterculture destination illustrates how urban centres beyond Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal experienced “hippie” invasions. Tourist towns were just one type of smaller urban centre that confronted radically changing youth scenes during the “long 1960s,” although by their very nature they faced distinctive pressures from and were limited in how they could respond to influxes of youths looking for good times. A key features of these towns was the intense seasonality of their economies. Hippies and hitchhikers passed through town amidst the tourists who provided residents with their livelihood, as well as young workers who kept the hotels, restaurants, and gas stations operating, and art students who contributed to its cultural scene. To some degree, all counterculture scenes had

a seasonal rhythm that was tied to the timetables of universities and high schools, but this pattern was so exaggerated in Banff that its scene can be said to have reconvened or reconstituted itself each year in June, then ended by Labour Day. Merchants, residents, and administrators never knew how many would arrive, or what new “bad behaviour” might emerge, but by the late 1960s could reckon on their annual migration. For the rest of the year, there was no counterculture presence. Unlike Canada’s biggest cities, Banff had no “hippie” neighbourhood or businesses that catered to their tastes. The counterculture element of Banff’s youth scene was always in a high degree of flux, with its only stable poles the grassy free space of Central Park, the bustling sidewalks of Banff Avenue, and the earnestly welcoming environment of the Unsquare Cellar. For all these reasons, there was very limited government response to the changing youth scene. The province of Alberta sent no counsellors or social workers during the summers, and the Parks Branch established no facilities to accommodate tentless transients until Echo Creek, which was linked to wider national programs. Pragmatic responses were left to churches and a handful of community volunteers, who for their efforts were sometimes criticized by frustrated neighbours and civic leaders.

The ambivalence of early responses to Banff’s emergent counterculture scene can also be traced to its status as a tourist town. The fact that so much of its summer population was just passing through predisposed residents to be open-minded and tolerant of difference. They were used to accommodating—quite literally—the diverse tastes, habits, and preferences of visitors. This shaped a cosmopolitan attitude in Banff. The tourist industry’s long tradition of hiring young outsiders as summer labourers also inclined permanent residents to overlook youthful “bad behaviour,” especially when it took place on the social and geographic edges of town. At any rate, permanent residents were effectively powerless to control visitors’ behaviour in town, as Banff had no municipal government to mandate or enforce acceptable conduct in public places. As Banff residents grew increasingly uneasy and even hostile towards the counterculture scene during the late 1960s, they were also battling the federal government in court over the future of their community. With the transient issue, their only recourse was to complain through newspapers and the BAC, or to act unilaterally, as with the “hippie” bans a few businesses instituted, or the local magistrate’s decision to jail shoplifters. The absence of residents’ participation through a municipal government set Banff apart from other Canadian urban centres in its response to what many saw as an invasion of outsiders engaging in “bad behaviour.” The Echo Creek campground, which Banff’s leading historian has called a “black mark on its social history,” was *not* closed as the result of growing local alarm about the town’s reputation as a tourist destination.<sup>120</sup> It was the health board, operating independently of the pragmatic National Parks Branch, that shut down the camp. Rather than the collective will of permanent residents, it was a rare intervention by another government agency that brought an end to the epicentre as well as the apex of the town’s counterculture scene. Similarly, the Unsquare Cellar

ended primarily in response to provincial liquor law changes, rather than complaints and concerns from within town.

Banff was a single-industry town, and its permanent population was acutely aware of its public image and reputation, as well as the need to accommodate a range of outsiders’ tastes, preferences, and behaviour. “Bad behaviour” by young workers whose labour was so essential could be tolerated so long as it was kept out of sight, but defiant or overtly political reminders of modern big-city life in public spaces were viewed less favourably, even as Banffites battled the federal government to gain the powers of a typical town. Once the majority of Banff residents perceived the counterculture scene as disrupting tourist experiences of the town, damaging its reputation, and receiving preferential accommodation from the National Parks Branch, their relationship with it became antagonistic. Even the segregation (or separation) of the Echo Creek campground did not lower tensions. As much as the park and the town inside it were based on notions of freedom from the strictures of modern everyday life, the growth of the summer counterculture scene challenged that idea to such an extent that Banff residents and institutions had to delineate the limits of their tolerance for “bad behaviour” by young, white, working- and middle-class Canadian visitors—a demographic that most of the time, as workers, students, and tourists, they deemed highly desirable to have entering the town to look for good times.

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### *Notes*

- 1 *Crag and Canyon*, “Filth, Stink Pervade Echo Creek Camp,” 1 September 1971. For MacQuarrie’s original report, see Library and Archives Canada (Winnipeg Service Centre), RG84 Parks Canada, acc.1997–98/160, file 62/1-C6 [hereafter LAC], box 128, Echo Creek file, “Report on Inspection of Echo Creek Campsite, 16/8/71” attached to A. MacQuarrie to Jean Chretien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 17 August 1971.
- 2 *Calgary Herald*, “Youth Campsite ‘Pollutes Creek,’” 7 September 1971; “Why an Echo Creek?” 8 September 1971; and *Crag and Canyon*, “Ecology in Banff ... Echo Creek Style,” 8 September 1971. On the importance of hiding such waste products in “wilderness” parks, see Craig Colten and Lary Dilsaver, “The Devil in the Cathedral: Sewage and Garbage in Yosemite Park,” in *Cities and Nature in the American West*, ed. Char Miller, 154–70 (Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 2010).
- 3 Between June 2017 and May 2018, the author conducted in-person and telephone interviews with seven men and five women who had been involved with or were observers of Banff’s youth and counterculture scenes at some point, 1965–72. Three were locals, while the rest came from away. All were in their teens or early twenties during the period under examination. Three were student ministers; three worked at the Banff School of Fine Arts; two worked at the drug crisis centre; two were long-term Echo Creek campers; two were park employees; and one worked at the Banff Springs Hotel.



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- 4 See, for example, Jonathan Clapperton, “Naturalizing Race Relations: Conservation, Colonialism, and Spectacle at the Banff Indian Days,” *Canadian Historical Review* 94, no. 3 (September 2014): 349–79; E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada: The CPR and the Beginnings of Canadian Tourism* (Banff: Altitude, 1983); Elsa Lam, “Rails, Trails, Roads, and Lodgings: Networks of Mobility and the Touristic Development of the ‘Canadian Pacific Rockies,’ 1885–1930,” in *Moving Natures: Mobility and the Environment in Canadian History*, ed. Ben Bradley, Jay Young, and Colin M. Coates, 275–98 (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2016).
- 5 On Banff’s urban history, see C.J. Taylor, “Banff in the 1960s: Divergent Views of the National Park Ideal,” in *A Century of Parks Canada, 1911–2011*, ed. Claire E. Campbell, 133–52 (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2011); and E.J. Hart, *The Battle for Banff: Exploring the Heritage of the Banff-Bow Valley, 1930–1985* (Banff: E.J.H. Literary Enterprises, 2003).
- 6 Stuart Henderson, *Making the Scene: Yorkville and Hip Toronto in the 1960s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 9. Internationally, Amsterdam was an important tourist destination that saw a major clash, including violence, over the presence and behaviour of counterculture youth during the same period examined here. See Richard Ivan Jobs, *Backpack Ambassadors: How Youth Travel Integrated Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 165–70.
- 7 Michael Boudreau, “Hippies, Yuppies, the Counter-Culture, and the Gastown Riot, 1968–1971,” *BC Studies* 197 (Spring 2018): 39–65; Henderson, *Making the Scene*; Daniel Ross, “Panic on Love Street: Citizens and Local Government Respond to Vancouver’s Hippie Problem, 1967–68,” *BC Studies* 180 (Winter 2013–14): 11–41.
- 8 Matt Cavers, “Dollars for ‘Deadbeats’: Opportunities for Youth Grants and the Back-to-the-Land Movement on British Columbia’s Sunshine Coast,” in *Canadian Countercultures and the Environment*, ed. Colin M. Coates, 179–200 (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2016); Kathleen Rodgers, *Welcome to Resisterville: American Dissidents in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014).
- 9 William Philpott, *Vacationland: Tourism and Environment in the Colorado High Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 248.
- 10 Joe Hermer, *Regulating Eden: The Nature of Order in North American Parks* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).
- 11 Alan MacEachern, *Natural Selections: National Parks in Atlantic Canada, 1935–1970* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 161–5.
- 12 Precise population figures for Banff are difficult to find, for not only did its population fluctuate dramatically with the seasons, but it did not appear in the Census of Canada during the period examined here because it was not legally designated a city, a town, or even a village.
- 13 Also see Stewart Crysedale, *Churches Where the Action Is! Churches and People in Canadian Situations* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, Board of Evangelism and Social Service, 1966), 72, 74.
- 14 Taylor, “Banff in the 1960s,” 136.
- 15 Both cited in Taylor, “Banff in the 1960s,” 138–9, 141. On the domination of bureaucracies and “rational” experts over Canadian and American national park policy during the period 1950–70, including on townscape management, see Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007); Paul Kopas, *Taking the Air: Ideas and Change in Canada’s National Parks* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), chap. 3.
- 16 Taylor, “Banff in the 1960s,” 139; Hart, *Battle for Banff*, 216–22. Also Leslie Bella, *Parks for Profit* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1987), 113–21.
- 17 Hart, *Battle for Banff*, chap. 9.
- 18 Taylor, “Banff in the 1960s,” 135; Hart, *Battle for Banff*, 207, 223. Also see Crysedale, *Churches Where*, 73–5.
- 19 This estimate is drawn from Jon Ruddy, “Banff’s Where the Kids Work for Fun,” *Maclean’s*, 6 August 1966, 12; Crysedale, *Churches Where*, 71; and United Church of Canada—Alberta and Northwest Conference Archives, Rundle Memorial United Church fonds, acc. 85/278, [hereafter UCC], box 3, file 92, Unsquare Cellar annual report (1968).
- 20 It was not until after 1945 that students provided the bulk of the summer labour at the Banff Springs Hotel. Bart Robinson, *Banff Springs: The Story of a Hotel* (Banff: Summerthought, 1973).
- 21 Ruddy, “Banff’s Where,” 10–12. Also see Sheila J. McHugh, *Give My Regards to the Beanery: Recollections of a Summer Staff Person at Banff Springs Hotel, 1962–1965* (n.p.: s.p., 1987).
- 22 Ruddy, “Banff’s Where,” 11.
- 23 MS, interview with author, 7 November 2017. A two-to-one ratio of female-to-male summer staff at the Banff Springs Hotel is cited in Grace Lane, “What Really Goes on at Resort Towns,” *United Church Observer*, 15 March 1967, 27. For former Banff Springs Hotel employees’ memories of their time working there, see <http://www.geocities.ws/banffspringshotelstaff/>.
- 24 Ruddy, “Banff’s Where,” 11. Interviewee MS similarly recalled that “Banff Springs people stuck together.”
- 25 On summer school at the BSFA as high-minded escape from everyday routine, see Karen Wall and PearlAnn Reichwein, “Climbing the Pinnacle of Art: Learning Vacations at the Banff School of Fine Arts, 1933–1959,” *Canadian Historical Review* 92, 1 (2011): 69–105.
- 26 RW, interview with author, 3 June 2017.
- 27 DG, interview with author, 19 September 2017. Also see *Calgary Herald*, “Her Name Was ‘Ma’ ... Until 3 Years Ago,” 23 May 1970. Poor housing conditions were common knowledge. As one member of the BAC would put it, dozens of rental spaces would end up shut down if health and safety regulations were ever enforced in Banff. Don Thomas, “Banff Gets Transient ‘Camp’ Despite Tourist Loss Fears,” *Calgary Herald*, 9 July 1970.
- 28 See, for example, Lane, “What Really Goes,” 26–9; Ruddy, “Banff’s Where,” 11.
- 29 *Albertan*, “Banff Breaks Hobo ‘Jungle,’” 23 July 1965, 3.
- 30 *Calgary Herald*, “Charges of Vagrancy Heard in Banff Court,” 24 July 1965; *Albertan*, “Protest Hobo Conviction,” 26 July 1965. That same week, two young men were charged with breaking into an unoccupied Parks Branch bunkhouse and the police roused a group of “young transients” who had “taken over” a campground picnic shelter as their sleeping quarters. *Calgary Herald*, “Charges of Vagrancy Heard in Banff Court,” 24 July 1965; *Albertan*, “More Vagrants Charged,” 26 July 1965.
- 31 Illegal campfires were one of the biggest concerns for park wardens. Dale Portman, *The Green Horse: A Park Warden’s Story* (Victoria: Rocky Mountain Books, 2017), 228; Mike Schintz, *Close Calls on High Walls, and Other Tales from the Warden Service* (Surrey: Rocky Mountain Books, 2005), 166.
- 32 On sneaking into Banff beer parlours underage, see Portman, *Green Horse*, 56.
- 33 Crysedale, *Churches Where*, 72.
- 34 LD, interview with author, 6 July 2017. Also DG interview.
- 35 Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003), chap. 9, especially 330. Drinking alcohol legally anywhere other than a beer parlour was still relatively “new” in Canada in the early 1960s.
- 36 Dale Barbour, *Winnipeg Beach: Leisure and Courtship in a Resort Town, 1900–1967* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011); Sharon Wall, *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario Summer Camps, 1920–1955* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 210–15. Wall also points to postwar growth of the tourism industry providing Canadian youths with opportunities to engage in sexual relationships pre-marriage. Sharon Wall, “‘Some Thought They Were in Love’: Sex, White Teenagehood, and

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- Unmarried Pregnancy in Early Postwar Canada,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 25, 1 (2014): 231.
- 37 On tourist resorts and camping trips providing privacy and anonymity for same-sex liaisons, see Barbour, *Winnipeg Beach*; Cameron Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women: Lesbian Lives in Canada, 1900–1965* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), chap. 3, especially 87–9.
- 38 LD interview; HT, interview with author, 15 August, 2017; MT, interview with author, 24 August 2017. How common such pregnancies were is difficult to say, but interviewees HT and MT recalled counselling “at least a dozen young women” in a single summer, at just one of Banff’s churches. The *United Church Observer* estimated that more than 10 per cent of female summer staff got pregnant while in Banff, but may have exaggerated this and other “moral problems” around the town’s youth scene. Lane, “What Really Goes On,” 27.
- 39 *Calgary Herald*, “Successor Named to Replace Founder of ‘Unsquare Cellar,’” 1 June 1968. Also see John Travis, *Memories of a Front Line Professional Worker in the Service of the Church* (Victoria: s.p., 2010).
- 40 Author’s collection, Unsquare Cellar annual report (1966), 4.
- 41 John D. Perry, Jr., *The Coffee House Ministry* (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1966); Bruce Douville, “Christ and Counterculture: Churches, Clergy, and Hippies in Toronto’s Yorkville, 1965–1970,” *Histoire sociale/Social History* 95 (2014): 747–74; Henderson, *Making the Scene*, chap. 2.
- 42 On the United Church’s activities in Yorkville, see Douville, “Christ and Counterculture,” 757–64. On its outreach and “listening” efforts, see Phyllis D. Airhart, *A Church with the Soul of a Nation: Making and Remaking the United Church of Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2013), chap. 8; Kevin Platt, *After Evangelicalism: The Sixties and the United Church of Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2013), chap. 6.
- 43 Crysedale, *Churches Where*, 78.
- 44 Travis, *Memories of a Front Line*, 89.
- 45 Whyte Museum Archives, “Crime” clipping file, “Two Men, Girl Arrested in Banff on Dope Count,” unknown newspaper [probably *Calgary Herald*, shortly before 27 July 1966].
- 46 Barry Mullin, “‘Beat’ Types Worry Banff,” *Albertan*, 28 July 1966.
- 47 *Calgary Herald*, “Banff School Plans Steps to Remove Undesirables,” 21 July 1966; Barry Mullin, “Beat Types Worry Banff,” *Albertan*, 21 July 1966.
- 48 Mullin, “Beat Types Worry Banff.” On RCMP observation of “hippies,” see Marcel Martel, “‘They Smell Bad, Have Diseases, and Are Lazy’: RCMP Officers Reporting on Hippies in the Late Sixties,” *Canadian Historical Review* 90, no. 2 (2009): 215–45.
- 49 Mullin, “Beat Types Worry Banff.” Of the rumours in town that summer, interviewee RW recalled, “You’d have to plug your ears, there was so much gossip.” Also see Juneva Boyden, “Banff’s Drug Scene Quiet This Summer,” *Albertan*, 12 August 1967.
- 50 Travis, *Memories of a Front Line*, 88.
- 51 A survey conducted at the Unsquare Cellar that summer indicated that 10 per cent of male and 5 per cent of female clients were searching for work in Banff. Unsquare Cellar annual report (1966), 14.
- 52 Whyte Museum Archives, MS-212 Banff Community Society collection, Banff Advisory Council monthly meeting minutes [hereafter BAC minutes], file 8, 5 September 1966. Also see *Calgary Herald*, “Vagabond Problem Distresses Banff,” 6 September 1966, 33. On the importance of a tourist town’s shopping district being amenable to visitors, see Michael Dawson, “Victoria Debates Its Post-industrial Reality: Tourism, Deindustrialization, and Store-Hour Regulations, 1900–1958,” *Urban History Review* 35, 2 (Spring 2007): 14–24, <https://doi.org/10.7202/1015918ar>.
- 53 *Crag and Canyon*, “How About That?” 7 September 1966.
- 54 *Crag and Canyon* hypothesized that Central Park’s appeal as a spot for transient youth to meet up and socialize was that “longhairs ... are under some strange compulsion to display themselves before as many people as possible.” Bill McCusker, “Not Quite a ‘Savage’ Encounter,” *Crag and Canyon*, 15 July 1970.
- 55 Linda Mahood, *Thumbing a Ride: Hitchhikers, Hostels, and Counterculture in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2018), chap. 3.
- 56 Henderson, *Making the Scene*, 254–5.
- 57 Philpott, *Vacationland*, 248. For a cinematic dramatization of the clash between young counterculture *indépendantistes* and Perce’s tourism-dominated business community in summer 1969, see Alain Chartrand, *La Maison du pêcheur* (Montreal: Films Séville, 2013).
- 58 Multiple complaint letters to this effect are contained in LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, with “disappointment” at hippies being allowed to “take over” or “roam freely” or “overrun” the town and park a common theme. On adults’ concerns about teenage loiterers in suburbia, see Steve Penfold, “Selling by the Carload: The Early Years of Fast Food in Canada,” in *Creating Postwar Canada, 1945–75*, ed. Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford, 178–82 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).
- 59 BAC minutes, file 8, 4 August 1969.
- 60 MS interview; also Bruce Beattie, letter to the editor, *Summit News*, 1 May 1969.
- 61 The sprinklers at “Canada’s best watered piece of real estate” were also turned on again in 1970. *Crag and Canyon*, “Hippie Haven Slated for Banff?” 1 July 1970; McCusker, “Not Quite a ‘Savage’ Encounter.”
- 62 *Crag and Canyon*, “Deny Hot Pools to ‘The Untouchables’?” 23 April 1969; *Summit News*, “Dilemma in the Bathtub,” 1 May 1969.
- 63 UCC, box 3, file 92, Unsquare Cellar annual reports. Banff’s first dine-and-dance discotheque, the Grizzly House, opened in 1967 and quickly gained a reputation for debauchery, but was too pricey for most young workers, let alone cash-strapped hitchhikers.
- 64 *Calgary Herald*, “Shoplifters a Problem at Banff,” 3 September 1968. On the perceived pros and cons of banning “hippie” youths, see *Crag and Canyon*, “You’re Groovy, Man, But Are You Welcome?” 21 August 1968.
- 65 *Summit News*, “The World Owes Nobody,” 19 June 1969; *Summit News*, “Crime and Punishment,” 19 July 1969; *Summit News*, “Transients,” 10 June 1970; *Summit News*, “Shoplifters Sentenced to 30 Days” and “Shoplifters Jailed,” 12 August 1970; Bill McCusker, “From Crag to Crag,” *Crag and Canyon*, 30 June 1971; BAC minutes, file 8, 1 June 1970. Also see *Summit News*, “Banff: No Place for Shoplifters,” 26 June 1969; David May, “Banff Shoplifters Get Jail Sentences,” *Albertan*, 7 August 1970; *Albertan*, “Shoplifters Finding It Tough at Banff,” 13 August 1970.
- 66 *Summit News*, “Mounties Get Ready for Hippie Influx,” 29 May 1969; Jack Gorman, “What to Do?” *Summit News*, 29 May 1969; Schintz, *Close Calls*, 166.
- 67 LD interview.
- 68 Graham Pike, “Banff Marijuana Plan Backfires into Court,” *Albertan*, 17 September 1969.
- 69 *Summit News*, “National Parks Act Unenforceable,” 5 August 1970, 1; Schintz, *Close Calls*, 155. Park warden Mike Schintz called the late 1960s and 1970s the era of “frontcountry law enforcement,” with crowds of tourists (including “hippies”) taking up most of the warden service’s attention.
- 70 See, for example, the vociferously anti-hippie newspaper coverage from the town of Sechelt, BC, as traced in Cavers, “Dollars for ‘Deadbeats.’”
- 71 See, for example, W.H. Young, “In My Opinion,” *Crag and Canyon*, 12 July 1967.
- 72 Jack Gorman, “No Hard and Fast Answers to the Hippie Phenomenon,” *Summit News*, 5 June 1969.

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- 73 Terry A. Kirk, “The Generation Gap,” *Summit News*, 12 June 1969.
- 74 *Summit News*, “The Summer of ‘69,” 24 April 1969. On student radicals and radical young workers in Canada, see Ian Milligan, *Rebel Youth: 1960s Labour Unrest, Young Workers, and the New Left in English Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014); Hugh Johnston, *Radical Campus: Making Simon Fraser University* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2005); Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), chaps. 9 and 11; Bryan D. Palmer, *Canada’s 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).
- 75 Gorman, “No Hard and Fast Answers.” Emphases added.
- 76 The estimate of forty campers is from Don Thomas, “Transient Youth: Banff’s Summer Woe,” *Calgary Herald*, 23 May 1970.
- 77 *Summit News*, “Hippie Haven on Spray Hit by Fuzz,” 21 August 1969. Also *Crag and Canyon*, “You Can’t Do That There Here,” 20 August 1969.
- 78 Also see Tom Moore, “Hippies Don’t Have to Be Animals,” *Albertan*, 19 August 1969; Jack Gorman, “Hat Rack,” *Summit News*, 28 August 1969; “Anti-Establishment,” letter to the editor, *Summit News*, 28 August 1969; “Anti-Hippie,” letter to the editor, *Summit News*, 11 September 1969.
- 79 *Summit News*, “Oddball Ministry Big Hit with Students,” 25 September 1969, 1.
- 80 Carrie Hunter, “Timber Lines,” *Summit News*, 27 May 1970, 5. A Canadian Broadcasting Corporation crew would visit Banff that summer and surreptitiously shoot film while reporting on tensions between locals and transients. Bill McCusker, “Not Quite a ‘Savage’ Encounter,” *Crag and Canyon*, 15 July 1970.
- 81 *Summit News*, “Transients,” 10 June 1970. Also see Don Thomas, “Transient Youth: Banff’s Summer Woe,” *Calgary Herald*, 23 May 1970.
- 82 Mahood, *Thumbing a Ride*, chap. 4.
- 83 For a park warden’s perspective on the advantages of concentrating transients at one site, see Schintz, *Close Calls*, 166.
- 84 Banff residents had used the area as an informal playground. Called a “barbecue area” by the Parks Branch, it was usually closed but occasionally opened for large picnic groups. “Recreation (?) Grounds,” *Crag and Canyon*, 6 May 1970; LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, S.F. Kun, superintendent, to Director of Travel Services, Alberta Motor Association, 4 May 1970.
- 85 *Summit News*, “Camp Opened for Tentless Transients,” 3 June 1970, 1; *Summit News*, “Transients,” 10 June 1970.
- 86 BAC minutes, file 8, 1 June 1970 and 6 July 1970.
- 87 LAC, box 127, Campgrounds General file, S.F. Kun, Superintendent to Operations Manager, 25 June 1970; *Summit News*, “The Procession of Panhandlers,” 5 August 1970.
- 88 Bill McCusker, “Of Hippies, Slobs, and ‘Festivals,’” *Crag and Canyon*, 8 July 1970.
- 89 BAC minutes, file 8, July 6 1970; Don Thomas, “Banff Gets Transient ‘Camp’ Despite Tourist Loss Fears,” *Calgary Herald*, 9 July 1970; *Crag and Canyon*, “Talk of the Town,” 29 July 1970; “Burners’ Find Banff an Easy Touch,” 26 August 1970.
- 90 “Ozymandias,” letter to the editor, *Summit News*, 15 July 1970.
- 91 *Crag and Canyon*, “Hippie Haven Slated for Banff?” 1 July 1970; McCusker, “Not Quite a ‘Savage’ Encounter.”
- 92 Mike Berry, “From Page II,” *Summit News*, 19 August 1970; *Summit News*, “Transient Problem Conflicts with Government Spending,” 19 August 1970, 1.
- 93 BAC minutes, file 8, 14 September 1970. Also see *Crag and Canyon*, “This Is a Park, Not a Relief Camp,” 16 September 1970.
- 94 Don Thomas, “‘Few’ in Banff against Hippies,” *Calgary Herald*, 19 September 1970. Also see UCC, box 3, file 92, Unsquare Cellar annual report (1970).
- 95 BAC minutes, file 8, 5 October 1970; *Crag and Canyon*, “Continue Echo Creek Camp: Council,” 7 October 1970. Park staff had misgivings about Echo Creek but supported its continuation as the best possible response. LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, Marc Crozier, Tunnel Mountain Campground Supervisor, to Operations Manager, 15 September 1970; E.H. Weeres, Townsite Manager to Operations Manager, 20 October 1970.
- 96 LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, R.D. Langevin, “1971 Report on Echo Creek Transient Youth Area, Banff National Park” (October 1971). Also F. Galloway to Langevin, 13 June 1971.
- 97 LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, unsigned memo initialled “S” and beginning with “The Present Situation at Echo Creek Campground,” dated 14 June 1971.
- 98 On the policy framework that the federal government assembled between fall 1970 and summer 1971, see Jennifer Marguerite Keck, “Making Work: Federal Job Creation Policy in the 1970s” (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1995), chap. 4; Mahood, *Thumbing a Ride*, chap. 5.
- 99 LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, G.C. Myers, “Summation of the Transient Youth Campground, Summer 1970”; Weeres to Myers, 20 October 1970. On counterculture youths using grants for recreational projects in and out of parks, see Cavers, “Dollars for ‘Deadbeats’”; Jenny Clayton, “‘Human Beings Need Places Unchanged by Themselves’: Defining and Debating Wilderness in the West Kootenays, 1969–1974,” *BC Studies* 170 (2011): 93–118. On the program’s goals, see Keck, “Making Work,” chap. 4.
- 100 See, for example, LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, T.L. Ross, Operations Manager, to Kun, 21 July 1971; R.J. Chapelhow, General Works Manager to Ross, 22 July 1971; Ross to Langevin, 27 July 1971. On the aversion of park wardens and RCMP officers to attend the similarly governed “Free Camp” in Jasper, see Schintz, *Close Calls*, 166.
- 101 LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, Kun to W.L. Smith, 19 September 1972.
- 102 BH interview with author, 6 May 2018.
- 103 LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, Pete and Buddy, undated handbill, “To the Community of Banff: This Concerns You”; Bill McCusker, “From Crag to Crag,” *Crag and Canyon*, 16 June 1971. For another instance of Banffites associating Echo Creek with drug culture and petty crime, see *Calgary Herald*, “Banff Guests Complain, Transient Youths Blamed,” 3 August 1971.
- 104 Mary Risely, letter to the editor, *Albertan*, 14 August 1971; R.H. Tomlinson, “Problem Solving,” *Crag and Canyon*, 7 July 1971. Also “Concerned,” letter to the editor, *Crag and Canyon*, 2 April 1969. Interviewee DG recalled a frustrated business owner whose operation was near Echo Creek saying Banff’s transient problem could be solved by throwing gasoline over them and setting them ablaze.
- 105 Henderson, *Making the Scene*, 268–70.
- 106 What follows is derived mainly from LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, Crozier to Langevin, 20 October 1971; and Langevin, “1971 Report on Echo Creek Transient Youth Area, Banff National Park” (October 1971).
- 107 LV, interview with author, 25 October 2016. According to BH, “no needle drugs” was one of the few formal rules at the camp in summer 1971. On drug use and theft at Echo Creek, also see Pat Moan, “Mean Times for Hitchhiking’s Free Spirits,” *Vancouver Sun*, 24 July 1971, 30.
- 108 Langevin, “1971 Report on Echo Creek.” Also see *Crag and Canyon*, “No ‘Yankee Go Home’ at Echo Creek,” 25 August 1971; BH interview.
- 109 Crozier to Langevin, 20 October 1971.
- 110 LAC, box 128, Echo Creek file, Ross to Kun, 31 August 1971.
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