

Far Too Much And Not Nearly Enough

Peter Matthew Stack

BFA, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, 2015

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

April 20, 2023

Approved by:

Phoebe Louise Adams Gloeckner

Phoebe Gloeckner, Graduate Committee Chair



Jane Prophet, Graduate Committee Member

Nadine M. Hubbs

Dean Hubbs, Graduate Committee Member



David Chung, Director MFA Graduate Program

Date Degree Conferred: April 27, 2023



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

*Far Too Much And Not Nearly Enough:
A Queer Photo Journal of Nature and Nudity.*

Masters in Fine Art Thesis.
Peter Matthew Stack.
University of Michigan.

Abstract:

This MFA thesis explores the artistic practice of Peter Matthew Stack during their time at the University of Michigan. It details the methodology and context of an artistic research trip that Peter conducted during the summer of 2022 as part of the Stamps MFA program. This thesis follows the structure of the journal that Peter wrote while traveling. Photographs of the trip and Peters' work are included, along with later research, analysis, and ponderings. Peter's work and this thesis delves into concepts of the nude body, social and cultural regulations, sexuality, childhood development, self-portrait photography, and human relationships with nature.

Keywords:

Queer Artist, Nudism, Journaling, National Parks, Gay, Autoethnography, Camping, Naturism, Self-Portrait, Photography.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction..... | 4 |
| Acknowledgements..... | 10 |
| Chapter 1 - Pre-Trip Ponderings..... | 11 |
| Chapter 2 - South Manitou Island..... | 15 |
| Chapter 3 - Creekridge Campground..... | 29 |
| Chapter 3.5 - Travel Log..... | 44 |
| Chapter 4 - Oasis 33..... | 47 |
| Chapter 4.5 - Yellowstone National Park..... | 55 |
| Chapter 5 - Bare Mountain..... | 65 |
| Chapter 5.5 - Petrified Forest National Park..... | 76 |
| Chapter 6 - White Sands National Park..... | 81 |
| Chapter 7 - Conclusions..... | 86 |

Introduction.

In this thesis, I will provide a blueprint for approaching and understanding the work and research I accomplished during my time in the Stamps Master of Fine Arts Program at the University of Michigan (2021-2023). Specifically, I will focus on the summer research trip I planned and executed in the summer of 2022. This thesis is queer. It is queer because the author is queer, and because it will deviate from the ideals of a standardized thesis. Much like the artworks I create, this written work should challenge readers while also highlighting the beauty in my chosen topics. Acknowledging and retaining the queerness in my work is vital for several reasons, as a challenge to traditional methods of knowledge formation, as a way to future proof my work against straight-washing, and because it serves as a loud and unapologetic beacon during a time in American politics and culture when LGBTQ+ peoples are under constant attack.¹

Research sites. In the summer of 2022, I traveled to multiple locations across Michigan and the greater United States and visited three distinct types of natural spaces. The aim was to experience and document how bodies, my body in particular, exist within each space. I visited several national and state parks, a gay men's campground, and two nudist colonies. At each location, I took photos of my nude body finding peace and pleasure within nature. In considering this artistic work as research, each location functioned as a site for experimentation, to answer the question: what are the implied and explicit rules for how bodies are allowed to exist, particularly in terms of nudity, self-expression, and sexuality? Most common spaces have specific terms and conditions, legislative and social “norms” for bodies, but on private or secluded lands, these become less clear or negligible. In the book *Naked: A Cultural History of American Nudism* Brian Hoffman states that “...physical spaces and landscapes can both restrict and liberate sex, sexual expression, and sexual identity...”² The sites were chosen because of their unique and beautiful landscape, and because each had

¹ Susan Miller, “‘War’ on LGBTQ Existence: 8 Ways the Record Onslaught of 650 Bills Targets the Community,” USA Today (Gannett Satellite Information Network, April 5, 2023), <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2023/03/31/650-anti-lgbtq-bills-introduced-us/11552357002/>.

² Hoffman, Brian S. Foreword. In *Naked a Cultural History of American Nudism*, 14. New York: New York University Press, 2015.

different guidelines and challenges to nudity and self-expression. In accordance with Special Directive 91-3, “the National Park Service will not allow a recreational activity in a park or in certain locations within a park if it would involve or result in ... unacceptable impacts on visitor enjoyment due to interference or conflict with other visitor use activities, among other things.”³ It goes on to say that essentially, nudity isn’t prohibited in parks, until it interacts with other guests. By contrast, the two nudist camps I visited, Oasis 33⁴ and Bare Mountain⁵, required nudity for males and strongly suggested it for females. Immersing myself in these distinct locations and adhering to their rules and norms within my comfort level would enable me to experience first-hand and analyze issues including body standards, shyness, exhibitionism, privacy, and bodily autonomy, key factors of my research at each location.

Every location, be it a church, a Walmart, a graveyard, or a theme park, has implicit and explicit guidelines for how people are allowed to acceptably exist and function while engaged with the space. Following a rule in one space can be the same as breaking a rule in another space. Sometimes these customs are written down and widely known and dispersed, sometimes they are unspoken and assumed. My research and practice is driven by my interest in bending and breaking social structures, particularly when they are in place to uphold the power of conservative groups while diminishing the existence of minority and LGBTQ+ people.

Positionality Statement. Like most experimentation, there are limitations to my work that are important to recognize. My “data” is anecdotal and qualitative, rather than quantitative. While that makes my findings more difficult to reproduce and my conclusions less widely applicable, it does allow for relatively novel research. Another major limitation to my work is that it focuses on my body and my experience; it is a study with a sample size of 1, my data is not reproducible, and it is certainly qualitative not quantitative. I grew up with relative privilege in a family belonging to/located in the upper end of lower class means. I was born with a set of male genitalia, and I present as relatively masculine despite identifying as genderqueer or non-binary. I experienced intense childhood trauma around being homosexual, but I was never without a home or physically abused. My work cannot, and should not, speak for all queer bodies and experiences. I am also a “white” person of Norwegian, Irish, Swedish, and Scottish descent. Much of this work was produced in spaces that were once inhabited by First Nation and Indigenous peoples.

My work fails to fully recognize and acknowledge that much of it happens on stolen and colonized land and traditional territories. Both North and South Manitou Islands are

³ Cables, Herbert. “Special Directive 91-3,” n.d. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/policy/upload/SD_91-3.pdf.

⁴ <https://club33naked.com/>

⁵ <https://bareidaho.com/>

thought to have been used by indigenous people for hunting and fishing, and there seems to be little evidence that permanent settlements were erected on either of the islands.⁶ There is a long history of various tribes living in Michigan, the tribe which currently resides closest to the islands is The Grand Traverse Bay Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians.⁷ There is the Crow Tribe⁸ of the Apsáalooke Nation in Montana and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes⁹ in Southeastern Idaho, both near the nudist camps that I visited in those states. And there is the Mescalero Apache Tribe¹⁰ which was likely to have inhabited the land that became White Sands National Park¹¹, and is still active in the area¹². It is not the intent of my work to recolonize these landscapes while placing my white body in them. The work is intended to highlight harmony with nature while stripping away and challenging harmful systems that oppress free expression. Despite my work's inability to rectify hundreds of years of oppression, genocide, and erasure, I do hope that it can be a small step towards queering natural spaces for the betterment of all (or at least not be a colonizing step backwards).

Gathering data. My creative practice research is an extension of my photographic practice. The “data” I collected from this project consisted of photographic documentation of myself and the areas I visited, small bits of organic material, research journal entries, as well as a sunburn and plenty of bug bites. Here I present those journal entries, edited for space and continuity, as well as my later interpretation of my notes, framed with theory and research from other queer academics to interpret and better contextualize my findings.

The writing from my trip takes the form of journal entries that I created using a text-to-speech function on my phone. This allowed me to speak freely and not second guess my writing. This work takes the form of an Autoethnography, which is used to “...study and analyze the self and personal experiences in context of influential factors that shape oneself, provide insight into possible alternative perspectives, and the influence in a specific field or body of knowledge. Using autoethnography, the researcher is both the observer and the participant, the researcher and the subject, and

⁶ Jim Muhn, “Historic Resource Study Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore,” <http://npshistory.com/>, accessed April 17, 2023, <http://www.npshistory.com/publications/slbe/hrs.pdf>.

⁷ “Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians,” Public Information - Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, accessed April 17, 2023, <https://www.gtbindians.org/pubinfo.asp>.

⁸ Official Site of the Crow Tribe Executive Branch. Accessed April 24, 2023. <http://www.crow-nsn.gov/>.

⁹ Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, April 20, 2023. <https://www.sbtribes.com/>.

¹⁰ Official Website of the Mescalero Apache Tribe. Accessed April 24, 2023. <https://mescaleroapachetribe.com/>.

¹¹ “Apachean,” National Parks Service (U.S. Department of the Interior), accessed April 24, 2023, <https://www.nps.gov/whsa/learn/historyculture/apachean.htm>.

¹² Chuck Roberts, “Mescalero Apache Perform Blessing Ceremony at White Sands Missile Range,” News (Las Cruces Sun-News, August 17, 2019), <https://www.lcsun-news.com/story/news/local/2019/08/17/mescalero-apache-perform-blessing-ceremony-white-sands-missile-range/2039955001/>.

an insider using an outsider's view or perspective."¹³ This method goes particularly well with my artistic practice because I mostly work with self-portraits. Autoethnography and journaling are like self-portraiture because they involve a lot of personal reflection and study. It is documentation but it is also a statement about how I fit into my surroundings and the world at large. I also use my outside research to edit and contextualize both my writing and my photography. Here I am combining my written thoughts, analysis, and research, with self portrait photography, with the intent of sharing the honest and full experience of creating this work. My art is my data. In the literal sense it proves that I physically attended these locations and performed within them. And as a visual learner, I believe that pictures can transmit a package of unspoken ideas, concepts, and language that words fail to convey. Images have a low barrier to entry, but their ceiling for interpretation and knowledge sharing is high. My pictures are worth at least a couple hundred words.

Although he might not be considered an academic, one of the people who influenced my journaling goals for this project was David Sedaris. I have long been a fan of David and Amy Sedaris for their wit and queer humor. Much of Sedaris' writing is in the form of journaling, and it often reveals intrigue in the mundane observances he makes of the people and places he visits. In *Me Talk Pretty One Day*¹⁴ Sedaris details how his childhood was filled with speech therapy for his lisp. I also attended speech therapy as a child for my lisp. He goes on to note that all the other children he saw going in and out of therapy were boys, and like him (and me) they tended towards effeminate. Like Sedaris, I injected my personal thoughts into the journaling process, coloring each entry with my unfiltered queerness. I am creating a portrait, literally and figuratively, of a young queer boy who grew up with trauma and has used that trauma in pursuit of artistic expression, the results of which are this visual and written work. I also attempted to emulate his style of observation and documentation by focusing on the small moments and details of my trip. My preferred method for pooping in the woods, the color and thickness of a nudist's pubic hair, nothing was too insignificant or boorish to evade notice. These tiny details add texture and context to my data when I cannot provide photographic evidence.

I brought my phone and computer along the entire journey, and I shared portions of my work and travels online. Social media has been part of my practice for over a decade. I find it to be a wonderful and frustrating outlet for sharing my work. Unlike galleries and art organizations, social media has an exceptionally low bar for entrance, both for artists and their potential audience. At times in my artistic career, social media has been the only "gallery space" that I have had access to, both because of my physical location and

¹³ O'Hara S. Autoethnography: The Science of Writing Your Lived Experience. *HERD: Health Environments Research & Design Journal*. 2018;11(4):14-17. doi:[10.1177/1937586718801425](https://doi.org/10.1177/1937586718801425)

¹⁴ David Sedaris, "Me Talk Pretty One Day." Book. New York, New York: Little Brown & Company, 2000.

because of the queer content of my work. I have made thousands of parasocial connections and shared my artwork with millions of people across platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and even OnlyFans. With all this accessibility comes censorship geared towards appealing to the lowest common denominator. Around half of the posts I make experience some form of restrictions and banning from the platform, or hateful rhetoric from viewers. Still, I believe that the role of “boundary pusher” is inherent and vital to my practice. The censorship of art, particularly art that deals with nudity, sex, and religion, is nothing new and I am frequently inspired by artists like Mapplethorpe, Andres Serrano, and Holly Hughes for their willingness and bravery to make work despite the negative impact it might have on their careers, finance, and legacy. Although, they were all making work prior to Instagram Community Guidelines.

My practice is informed by queer theory, and those theories are lenses through which I view all aspects of my work. My work follows a line of other “queer” artists who have used their work to challenge systems of oppression and inequality. Heteronormative, white, capitalist, oppressive systems in America have created and nurtured an unsustainable way of life. Queer leaders, theorists, and artists have laid out a path towards different modes of thinking that could improve life for all peoples. Despite being so heavily influenced by it, I want my work to be about more than just “Queer Identity” because too often the term queer is used simply as a definition for a certain type of sexual preference. It wasn’t that long ago that queer was used as an insult, and sometimes it still is. By contrast, in the collection of essays *Cruising Utopia, 10th Anniversary Edition The Then and There of Queer Futurity*¹⁵ Jose Esteban Muñoz moves beyond the ideas of queer as a certain sexuality, or even as an umbrella term for the LGBTQTI+ spectrum. They evaluate and critique several major theories such as feminism and try to find their positives while looking past them towards something bigger. In defining queerness as about more-than sexual orientation, Muñoz goes as far as to suggest that “gays in the military” and “gay marriage” are in some ways, a step backwards, or maybe a step forward but towards the wrong goal. They reason that gay marriage is unnatural because marriage is unnatural; gay people don’t belong in the military because no one, regardless of their sexuality, belongs in the military. The authors attempt to describe and define what a queer utopia looks like, both realistically and imaginatively. I would like my work to contribute in some way to pushing us closer to that queerness. We are not queer...yet. My work is part of a larger project that actively avoids normalizing queerness and incorporating it into the current heteronormative society. That is one reason why feminism, arguably, “failed,” because it

¹⁵ Muñoz, Jose Esteban 1967-2013, Ann Pellegrini, Tavia Amolo Ochieng’ Verfasser eines Vorworts wpr Nyong’o, Joshua Takano Verfasser eines Vorworts wpr Chambers-Letson, Jose Esteban Muñoz, Ann Pellegrini, Tavia Amolo Ochieng’ Nyong’o, and Joshua Takano Chambers-Letson. *Cruising Utopia, 10th Anniversary Edition The Then and There of Queer Futurity. Tenth Anniversary edition*. Sexual Cultures. New York: New York University Press, 2019.

tried to create equality in a system that was built on people not being equal. In order to move forwards, we must create a new system. However, to do that, there needs to be a critical mass of people who believe that radical change is necessary. We are not there yet. I would like my work to help educate people who do not have the time or resources to devote to studying queer theory. Part of the struggle is finding ways in which to meaningfully talk about critical issues in a limited space and time, and with a wide range of folks.

My work is timely and goes beyond simple self-portraiture. It is important that I make these challenges because my experience is shared by many other people in the LGBTQ+ community around the world. Oppressive religious heteronormative culture has negatively shaped our way of life in America for too long, and to stand up to it, and break away from it, we must question and challenge the systems that uphold it. I need to make this work because it connects my personal life and experience to those that came before me. The topics I work with and the questions I ask are things that I struggle with in my daily life. My childhood and young adulthood growing up in a conservative Christian family forced me to ask these questions in order to survive. And his research trip certainly tapped into my survival instincts. The planning, the execution, and the final presentation of my findings were all far and beyond anything I have tried to accomplish previously. There were countless unknowns that I bravely ignored to quell my chronic anxiety. I left the safety of my comfortable surroundings to drive thousands of miles so that I could dive headfirst into the belly of the gay/nudist beast.

The following consists of my journal entries made during my Summer Research Trip from early July to late August of 2022. They are chronological, and I have divided them into chapters and subchapters based on location. Each chapter starts with a brief introduction and general thoughts about the location. Some entries are focused on small revelations or humorous moments, while others deal with larger concepts and systemic issues. Following in the style of Autoethnography and journaling, I have attempted to retain the authenticity of these records, which are at times explicit or insensitive. I have also added extensive footnotes to some of the entries to dissect, understand, contextualize, and illuminate what I was thinking at the time of creation and what I have come to understand about the work in the year following.

Acknowledgments

The wonder and trauma of my childhood primed me for a project of this magnitude and focus, and the opportunities and mentorship I received while earning my master's degree in the Stamps MFA program at the University of Michigan, helped to make it all reality. I am overwhelmingly grateful to the guidance I received from my advisors, Phoebe Gloeckner, Jane Prophet, and Dean Hubbs, all of whom pushed me to dig deeper and express myself fully. As well as major writing help from Jennifer Metsker. A big thanks to the peers in my cohort and the director of Stamps Y David Chung. For helping to make my thesis show a reality, I am so thankful to Srimoyee Mitra, Rebecca Vogel, and Joseph Rohrer. I hope that my work here is a positive reflection of all the help I have received from the various art teachers throughout my high school, and undergraduate career. Also, thanks to my favorite roommate Jess who gave me plenty of advice, healthy snacks, and a well-stocked first aid kit for my trip. And finally, to my family, thank you for supporting me the best you can, even if you do not always understand the work I do.

Chapter 1.

Early July 2022, pre-trip ponderings.

As I prepare for my summer trip I am reminded of many points throughout my childhood. My parents met at an outdoor camp. They fell in love in the woods, and they felt it important to subject me and my siblings to countless camping trips. This was done both to encourage our love, respect, and knowledge of nature and how to coexist with it, as well as a money-saving way to travel with five children. I always regretted camping when I was a child. I remember feeling dirty and sticky, and always wishing that we could be in a pleasant hotel room with cable TV, heated showers, and a pool outside. As I have gotten older, I realize how being forced to spend time in nature has affected me, and as a consequence, I have developed a love for spending time in the cacophony of billowing leaves, birds chirping, rivers flowing and mosquitoes buzzing.



(Stack family photo, late 1990's)

How ironic is it that I am now with this summer project choosing to subject myself purposefully and willingly to the same spaces of my childhood melodrama? Simultaneously I am also expanding upon the ideals and the practices of my parents. When they were my age, my older brother and I had already been born, their concerns and goals in their late twenties and early thirties were quite different from my own as I approach thirty. I am traveling to places where my parents would not dare set foot. But not because of the remoteness, lack of water access, or the risk of wild bear attacks,

but because their religious beliefs mean that they would consider them sinful. I am easing into this trip with a return to a place my family visited many times when I was younger: South Manitou Island in Lake Michigan, where some of my ancestors were born, lived, and died. Then I am kicking it up several notches by visiting a camp specifically for gay men. I have never been to a gay bar, much less a homosexual campground that encourages social nudity and sex. I have personally started to grow less attached to the labels of 'gay' and 'man.' And I am concerned about my ability to integrate into this community of which I have little experience. But I am also recklessly excited by the opportunity to be amongst people who might find me desirable, or at least want to make connections over shared gay trauma of growing up in the rural parts of America.

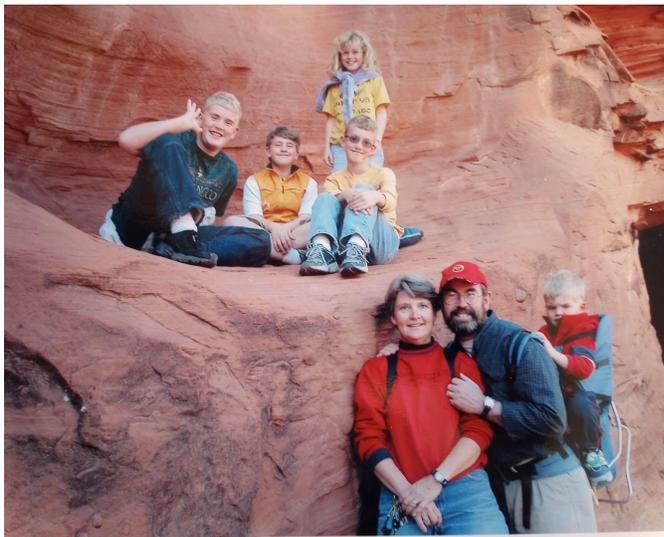
After my Michigan adventures, I will be traveling out of state in search of different and unique locations and landscapes upon which to impose my body. I am mindful of how placing my white European body in these locations is a form of appropriation. My intent will be to honor these spaces while reveling in their natural beauty. I plan to visit two different 'clothing-optional' or nudist campgrounds. I do not think that I am a nudist, but I do love being naked. Most of my artwork only feels complete and justified if I am not wearing clothes. Most nudists proclaim that their nudism is not meant as sexual and that there is nothing sexual about social nudity. And while I agree that nudity in general needs to be desexualized, I am also a fanatic purveyor of erotica. I would like to believe that I can find eroticism in an appropriate way amongst the bare and fleshy bodies of strangers.

When I tell my people that I will be visiting a nudist location, I get strange looks, drawn-out exasperations, and high-pitched insincere responses. It saddens me that some folks have not experienced the bliss and the joy and the unbridled realness of stripping off our cultural barriers of cotton and polyester to feel the benevolent embrace of the grass, the trees, the sun, the sand and yes, the mosquitoes. Or maybe I really am crazy? Does wanting to take my clothes off and run free down a trail of pine needles should qualify me to be on medication and under the watchful eye of a conservative psychiatrist?¹⁶

¹⁶ Queer behavior in western culture has previously been thought of as a sin against God, a crime against the community, and eventually a mental illness or deviation against the standardized heterosexual adult. Even before Freud and Foucault spoke to the lives and plight of homosexuals, psychiatrists such as Richard Von Kraft-Ebing in *Psychopathia Sexualis* and Magnus Hirschfield in *The Homosexuality of Men and Women* were studying people like me. Me and my work could certainly fit into categories such as fetish, masturbatory, and exhibitionist. Although these great thinkers also wrote and practiced in defense of homosexual adults to live their lives free from legislative and social persecution, it is unfortunate that so many modern medical, religious, and political "experts" have twisted their ideas and theory in an effort to oppress LGBTQ+ people.

The Bible describes in its first pages a garden filled with all the best things the earth has to offer, and it describes two people existing in that space without shame, without worry, without sin. That heaven is ruined not by a glossy apple and a sneaky snake, but by people partaking in the metaphorical fruit of the tree of knowledge and good and evil. That is the part the people always forget or choose to ignore. It is the tree of the knowledge of everything that is good and everything that's evil, that knowledge is what separates us from animals like cats, dogs, birds, and mosquitoes. The Christians I grew up with always talk about the Garden of Eden in a longing tone as if it is something to idolize. Yet when there are opportunities to reclaim some of those ideals, they do not grasp them and instead reject them. They enforce shame: of the body, sex, sin, nudity, and indulgence.¹⁷ I hope that through my work I can reclaim some of those idyls.

I will end my trip by traveling to the Southwest with White Sands National Park as my destination. My father moved my family out from Michigan to Arizona in the early 2000s so that we could work at an underserved hospital on the Navajo/Diné Indian reservation and be medical missionaries to the people there.



(Stack family photo, early 2000's)

That experience and the telling of those tales could be a thesis in its own right. Suffice to say that I had many dramatic and traumatic experiences growing up there. At the

¹⁷ In *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* Michel Foucault states that "...because repression is so firmly anchored, having solid roots and reasons, and weighs so heavily on sex that more than one denunciation will be required in order to free ourselves from it..." Repression and expression wax and wane throughout cultures and histories. I believe that my work and practice pushes up against the current litany of repressions that queer people face in 2023 from political, cultural, and religious sources. In a way, I am fulfilling Foucault's belief that, despite all the repression, modern societies dedicate themselves to discussing sexuality "ad infinitum".

same time, I was also subjected to and surrounded by some of the most beautiful and surreal locations of natural beauty. My family visited the Grand Canyon so many times that we got tired of seeing “that big hole in the ground.” This leg of my journey will be more impromptu as I search for locations to insert my body and document the process. My hope is that the improvisational nature of this road trip will allow for unexpected personal discoveries which will make good fodder for future pieces of art.

Keeping notes and journaling about my art-making experience, will hopefully increase understanding of my practice, both for myself and my potential audience.

Chapter 2.

July 6-9 South Manitou Island

South Manitou Island (SMI) is part of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. It sits in lake Michigan and is accessible by a ferry boat during the summer months. My great grandfather Anderson, lived as a child with his large family on the island for several years. His father was a boat captain that moved the family to the island, which was frequented by boat making journeys across lake Michigan. I never knew any of my family members who lived on the island, but I grew up hearing about their storied life there and reading the journal/collection of stories that my great grandfather published called *Isle of View*. We would make yearly trips to visit the island, and see landmarks left by our ancestors. I know that it was a hard life, living on the island, both because of the harsh and remote conditions, but also because of generational violence. My personal connection to this location was and is strong, and my hope was to experience some of what it was like to exist on the island, but also to explore my personhood and sexuality in ways that my ancestors were never afforded.



(Lake Michigan, South Manitou Island, 2022)

The images I was able to capture while on the island were wonderful and varied. There was a variety of ecosystems to explore and put myself in, such as the lake, the forest, and the beach. I also had a lot of privacy, more so than I would find in the other locations I visited. I did not need to worry about exposing myself to other visitors. This aloneness allowed me to experiment freely for extended periods of time, focused only on creating poses, adjusting my camera, and finding ways to caress nature. I also wanted to make some type of connection to the family history I have on the island. Thus, I documented many of the old buildings, long abandoned farming tools, and moss-covered gravestones.



(Tombstone, SMI, 2022)

These b-roll pictures helped to define the character and history of the island, but they did not fit well within the greater narrative of my journey. So, many of them fell on the cutting room floor as I was attempting to balance creating a photographic story with maintaining clarity and appealing viewers. I see snapshots of slugs and lighthouses as data points which might not be vital but help to define the outliers of my research.

Overall, South Manitou was the closest I was able to get to achieving a significant harmony with nature, and I was able to capture a wonderful body of work during my

time there. Public nudity is prohibited in National Parks, and there seems to be little or no curtailment of private nudity. I made a point not to be nude on the rare occasion that I was around other campers.

July 6th: I have officially started my trip. I drove from my grandmother's house in Frankfort Michigan to Leland Michigan where I will take a ferry boat. And stay on South Manitou Island for three nights, returning on July 9th. I have a large hiking backpack with my tent and enough food for several days. I have a sleeping bag, a sleeping pad, clothes, fire-starting equipment, camera, and a tripod.



(Leland MI, 2022)

I am bringing almost two gallons of water since there are no potable water stations on the island, and a water filtration system with iodine tablets for when I eventually need more fresh water. My bug spray is deet-free and organic, but hopefully, after a couple days my body odor alone will be enough to repel the insects.

The day is picture perfect, the waves are wavey, and the ferry is rolling and rocking. I feel like I'm riding a kelpie. I suck in as much clean lake air as possible as I munch on the candied ginger my grandma gave me to help with seasickness.



(Lake Michigan, 2022)

I am thinking of my great grandpa who rode with his father in a horse-drawn carriage along this same route in the dead of winter when Lake Michigan was frozen enough to traverse. The young teens sitting next to me remind me of my younger self and my cousins making this trip for day hikes on the island. Four boys and one girl, the girl is directing the group, and she broke up a handful of squabbles with the boys. One of the boys looks and sounds gay. I hope his family is kind and accepting.

We dropped folks off at North Manitou, and now we're heading to South. The boat worker boy is serving cocktails, and he took off his rain gear to reveal shorts and a tee-shirt. He is pleasant to look at, his muscles medium, probably from doing boat work, they don't look like gym muscles. He is playing music from the boat speakers, which are new since the last time I took this trip. His musical choice is heavy with country and mid 2000's radio hits. I would rather just hear the water and wind. He keeps spitting over the side of the boat and I think that's fun and kinda hot.

As we got off the boat, we headed into the boathouse and checked in with a ranger who introduced himself as Carl or something simple and masculine like that. He was quite handsome, trim and not overly muscular, with dark short hair and a heavy 5 o'clock shadow. He was quite nervous while telling all of us island campers about the rules and regulations. He paced back and forth while he talked, and I think he could have used a couple more dry runs. Or he was just really bored and didn't care. I started on the three and a half mile hike across the entire island to reach my campground. Along with two other campers, I got mixed up by some confusing signs pointing us in the wrong direction. We ran into the handsome ranger and an older woman who smelled like cigarettes, and they gave us clear directions to our campsites. I walked with a man named Daniel and his partner Rachel for about a mile and a half until our road split. As it turns out they were also in the arts. I told them about my project, and we added each other on Instagram so that they could see the photos that I will eventually take.

Hiking to my campground I walk past Lake Florence, the old schoolhouse, the graveyard and wonder about my ancestors skinny dipping in the lake, learning very basic mathematics and spelling as well as dying and being buried. I don't think any of my relatives were buried on the island, but I know that one of my great grandpa's brothers who had type 1 diabetes died in his teens while the family lived on the island. My dad told me that this young man, my great grand uncle, died the year before insulin was isolated and found to be effective in helping with type 1 diabetes.

The air is sickly sweet and humid but there is a continuous breeze thanks to the general proximity to the lake at any point on the island. It might be the heat or the tiredness, but I feel drunk from this delicious air. It's almost like a different type of breathing when every breath in through the nose brings in an evolving waft of sweetness and green verdant pleasure.

I arrived at Popple Campground to find seven separate and not equal campsites to choose from. The campsites formed a circle around a small, wooded area, three of them were close to a bluff looking down at Lake Michigan. Campsite number 3 was claimed by a group: a man, a woman and what looked like their two teenage children. They had obviously chosen the best campsite as it was large, had rough seating made from logs and was almost directly on a cliff with a beautiful view of the lake. I set up on site number 2, checked the tags on their site pole and saw that they were only staying for one night.

July 7th I heard the first bird of the morning start up like an alarm clock, quite shrill but somehow still pleasant. My neighbors left around 9:00 a.m. I immediately moved my tent into their space and took it over. Now I have the best spot!

There are an infinite number of chipmunks running about. The park ranger called them microbears because they will steal unattended food.



(Chipmunk, SMI, 2022)

There are also plenty of fat little toads who scurry across the trail as I cross it.



(Beach Toad, SMI, 2022)

There is a small outhouse at this campground, but I refuse to use it. Pit toilets are often smellier, germier, and grosser than just pooping in the woods.

I forgot my battery pack as well as my caffeine juice. Thankfully, I brought one can of Monster energy drink, the green one with only ten calories that tastes like a Jolly Rancher. I will ration out the 140 mg of caffeine over the next three mornings and hope that my caffeine withdrawal is minimum. Since I forgot my charger, I will not be using my phone for photos and videos and instead rely only on the Canon T17 camera. Maybe it's good because now I'm forced to keep my phone off.

My plan for today is to hike halfway around the island following the shoreline. My goal is to reach the area with the old growth trees. These trees were unable to be cut by loggers who cut many of the large trees on the island back when logging was a thing because supposedly their proximity to the beach meant lots of sand was blown into their bark and holes and the two-man saws the loggers used would dull almost immediately due to the grinding of the sand. So, they left these trees to grow for another hundred years.



¹⁸(Tree Clones, SMI, 2022)

The bugs are getting significantly worse. While walking the beach I kept getting bit by large flies who would cut right through my thick socks, piercing flesh. After about a mile, I decided to turn back towards my camp. My feet were hurting, the sun was hot, my tripod was heavy, and I didn't care to hike another 8 mi. I came back to camp and went

¹⁸ A self-portrait master such as Cindy Sherman would be an obvious reference for some of my work. She creates stories with her photographs, and casts herself as all the characters. I am also interested in creating narrative, but mine tend to be more ambiguous. And while Sherman uses makeup, wigs, and costumes in her work, my recent practice employs Photoshop and physical collage. I made several collages during my trip by taking multiple photos of myself while moving around in the same location. Then later I Photoshopped all the images into one.

swimming in lake Michigan instead. I took photos of myself looking both dead and alive.¹⁹



(Dead

Rock, SMI, 2022)

I tried out my water filtration systems and it worked just fine. Lake Michigan tastes good. I have only seen one other person all day, a man in khaki shorts with his shirt off and draped around his shoulder. I stayed hidden and spied on him for a while, hoping he would do something exciting like take off his pants and go skinny dipping.

With today being mostly a beach day my plan for tomorrow is to hike back through the woods and visit the cemetery and a pillar that my granduncle, Charles Anderson, built where his father's farm used to be. Life was just so different for them. I don't know how

¹⁹ I have at times documented my body as one that cycles between life and death. I think there is a romanticism to the natural process of life being reabsorbed. The collage work "Cycle of Life and Death" that I completed in 2022 portrays a body, possibly dead, although not gruesomely so, being absorbed by mushrooms, moss, and worms. I was also inspired by several Magic The Gathering cards, most of all *Deathspout* with art by Seb McKinnon. In all the major locations I visited, I experimented with poses that could be interpreted as dead, or asleep. I wanted to show a body at rest, whether that rest is a nap or eternal slumber, is up to the viewer. Again, Sherman could be seen as an influence, especially with her photograph *Untitled #153* I also ended up not making collages with many of my images from this trip, and instead displayed them as standalone objects. This decision moved some of my storytelling away from the photographs, and it ended up going into a later sculpture project that depicted my dead/asleep body being devoured by nature.

to relate to it other than just being in the spaces where they were also. I like the idea of living on this island struggling everyday just to make sure basic needs are met. Nothing comes for granted. But I also can't imagine myself here for much longer. I briefly considered packing up and heading back to the mainland tomorrow, cutting my trip a day short. But I decided against it. I want to see this through.

July 8th My phone was down to 19% even on extreme power saver so I didn't turn it on at all today. It was a real brain break being away from the internet for so long. I spent a lot of my time napping and staring at the lake, looking up at the sky, and thinking about tweets and conversations and memes and tick tocks and conversations with people. It made me realize how strong my dependency is.

Today I hiked back along the trail to visit the new graveyard, the old graveyard, and the old dock. While hiking I had a sudden surge in my bowels and I knew I wasn't going to be able to hold it in for the 3 miles I still had to hike back to camp. I gathered fronds of ferns, spruce, and cedar. They smelled genuinely nice. I moved off the path a little and found a spot that was free of poison ivy and relieved myself in the woods. While I was squatting the mosquitos swarmed my behind with their relentless bites. Wiping with the fronds worked, mostly. Out of all the places I have pooped during this trip the beach is by far the best. The sand is easy to dig a hole in, there's fewer mosquitoes, and washing off in the lake is the cleanest and most enjoyable way to wipe.²⁰

My first aid kit thankfully had aspirin as well as extra strength Tylenol. I took a couple of each over the last 2 days for my muscle aches, the blisters forming between my toes, and the caffeine withdrawal headaches. I never made it to Lake Florence or to the old growth cedar trees. I think that's okay. It was never my goal to see everything on the island. I would have been hiking about eight or nine miles every day if I had done that. It was more important on this trip that I be alone and secluded enough that I felt comfortable stripping down and posing my body in natural spaces. Which I did several times in the lake, on the beach, and in the woods. It was quite lovely to walk around my campsite in the nude, there was a strong breeze, so the waves were whipping against the shore and it was keeping the bugs at bay. It was good practice for my upcoming adventures at the clothing optional and nudist campgrounds.

²⁰ Living in nature, away from all our modern conveniences, is raw and potentially horrifying. The mind shifts to focus on more basic matters of survival. I relish in the moments like this, where I am forced to go against civilized convention. My work, the photos I took while living wild on the island, convey some of that unabashed grit and energy. Not only because of their visual content, but also in their unremorseful showing of a body that does not confine itself to the strict and rigorous confines of conservative straight culture. There is actually nothing abject about pooping in the woods, and nothing abject about my body.

I'm very comfortable being nude in nature by myself, I think it will be a new challenge to do it around other people. And I am quite naturally a little worried about being around other men in the nude and my ability to control my thoughts and feelings. Most of the nudist's groups that I have researched believe that nudity should be fully desexualized²¹. While I agree that the nude body should not inherently be sexualized, I cannot deny that I find the male form attractive and intriguing regardless of older age or body type.

While I was taking my many naps I fantasized about Ranger Rick (or whatever his name was) coming to check in on me. Having hiked 3.5 miles to get here he would be quite sweaty and dirty. I imagined him busting into my tent and calling me out for breaking some rule or regulation, and I would ask if there was a fine for being sexually attracted to a park ranger. He would definitely top, and I would definitely bottom. He wouldn't care about my precarious cleanliness, as he lives on an island and would be used to body odor and sandy crevices. Pastoral locations such as mountain ranges, dusty western trails, or a remote location like South Manitou Island, are ripe locations for intimate male bonding. The rules of "Normal" society do not apply the same way when no one is around to cast judgment. Strict Heterosexuality is much less compulsory²² in remote or wild places.

After going to bed early, I woke myself up at around 1:00 a.m. to see if I could see the stars but they were not as bright, and the sky was not as dark as I was hoping for. I took some cool photos anyway. I was trying to do a long extended exposure shot in order to get all the light of the stars, and I somehow turned my flash on during a 30 second exposure. It created an interesting ghosting effect.

²¹ "Why Nudity Is Required," Bare Oaks, n.d., <https://www.bareoaks.ca/why-nudity-is-required/>.

²² "Compulsory Heterosexuality." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, April 19, 2023.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compulsory_heterosexuality#:~:text=Compulsory%20heterosexuality%2C%20often%20shortened%20to,Compulsory%20Heterosexuality%20and%20Lesbian%20Existence%22.



(Night Sky, SMI, 2022)

July 9th



(Morning Sun, SMI, 2022)

I woke up at around 6:00 a.m. to watch the sunrise as I packed up my camp, took one last bathroom break in the woods. As I was peeing off the ledge overlooking the beach, I saw on my left a brown eagle perched on a downed tree that was rotting on the beach. It stood probably 3 and 1/2 ft tall. I ran to get my camera and even though I was back in about 30 seconds it had taken off. I finished packing up my camp and I trekked the three point seven miles back to the docks. It was buggy and the blisters on my feet swelled up again, but I had a renewed vigor knowing that I'd be back to the mainland soon. I thought about taking a quick side trip to see Lake Florence, but my feet decided otherwise. After putting my pack down at the docks and charging my phone a little bit at the ranger station as I waited for the boat to arrive and take me home.

I feel like I have been through a big trial, and mostly passed. I feel slightly superior to all the other campers on this boat. I camped with no water or electricity for three nights all by myself. I'm turning 30 tomorrow, and to celebrate I spent three nights sleeping on the hard ground with no amenities. My plan is to drive back to Frankfort, quickly shower,

pack up all my stuff, then take off for my parents' house downstate. From there I will continue my journey.

Chapter 3.

Creekridge Campground, July 12th- 14th



(Xboy, CRC, 2022)

The work I created at Creekridge Campground (CRC) was unique from the rest of the locations because it was more sexually charged, and because it involved more man-made objects. The photos are more stuck in a specific time and place, they are not as universal. Because several of the images also include recognizable sex equipment and situations, I have received more concern and admonishment while trying to display them. They speak a language that sounds like cursing to some and holy words to others. Specifically, other queer people tend to appreciate the work and see a sliver of humor in the poses and fantasies I created.

Additionally, the interactions I had with the people in this location were more meaningful and memorable. They didn't exactly affect my photos, but it did give me several powerful conversations and new acquaintances. CRC functions as a safe haven for gay men in the middle of rural and conservative Michigan. Many of the men I met were incredibly friendly, and I believe part of the charitability was possible because they were at ease. These men were allowed to be as flamboyant, kinky, soft, and as nude as they wanted to be, without fear of judgment or violence. Full and partial nudity was allowed in the camp, although I did discover some unspoken guidelines on proper attire for events. Public sex was prohibited at the pool, but seemingly encouraged in the wooded area behind the camp.

It's **July 12th** and I am on my way to Creek ridge campground. My pubic hair is trimmed, I am freshly douched, my legs are lotioned, and I am ready for 3 days of camping in the Gay woods. I am admittedly nervous about this trip and location. Even more nervous than I am about the clothing optional and nudist locations. I really don't know what to expect. There might be five other people, there might be a hundred other people. There might be redneck Conservative gays, and there might be college bros having a weekend in the woods. At 30 I might be the youngest person there, there is an age limit of 21 plus. I did not bring any video games or my computer; like on my last trip I am attempting to focus on my work. I hope this will also give me fewer excuses to not socialize as I'm going to push myself quite a bit to participate in as many activities as I can with the other folks at Creek ridge. I have an air mattress this time around and I think that will make my sleeping arrangements quite a bit more comfortable. I also bought a box of condoms in hopes that there may be an opportunity to use some of them. Being intimate physically with other people is certainly not my main goal during this time; however, I am trying to remain open to the possibility. I would at the very least like to make out with a man.

Today I will focus on getting to the camp which is about an hour and a half drive from my parents' house. I'll set up camp and check out the amenities. And I'll probably go for a walk in the woods. This campground has about twenty acres of land and has several hiking trails through the forest. I'm not expecting anything particularly amazing or unique from the rest of Central Michigan. So, I am imagining that this experience will be more about the experience of being in a space that is populated entirely by non-heterosexual people. The camp website states that they are for gay men. I will attempt to record in one way or another most of my experiences. I might, depending on the location and facilities, include more fabricated spaces in my photography. I took quite a few photos of man-made objects and buildings while I was on South Manitou Island so at this point, I

don't feel that my research and work specifically needs to not include man-made structures or non-natural locations. One could argue that anything that isn't complete wilderness is already affected by man and sculpted in one way or another. Even the trails through the woods are a mark of humans and our intervention and are not completely devoid of politics.

I arrived at the camp around 5:30 p.m. I called a phone number to be let into the front gate. I was greeted by a tall man in his forties with blonde hair, several piercings, and rings on every finger. He sounded like a smoker and his name was Byron. He was very welcoming, and he told me all about the camp and had me sign an agreement for staying here. I am in campsite 7A which does have water and electricity. There are lots of semi-permanent trailers set up around the camp, not very many tent sites or tents filling them. The campers and trailers look nice. Many have flowers, patios, and walk-up bars. I saw several other people, all of them waved and said hello, all of them white men in their '50s plus.

In my experience, it is more unusual to see and interact with queer elders in everyday life. Partially because of my sheltered and religious upbringing, and also because of the HIV/AIDS crisis that ravaged a generation, and the general erasure of queer elders²³ such as the old gay man that I met at CRC. These trailblazers are far from perfect; like any older generation, they often do not live up to the harsh and rigid expectations of young people. Despite that, the fact that they are still alive and able to express themselves is somewhat of a miracle. There are some groups like the Old Gays who are spotlighting older gay men who share their history with a wide audience. Learning from, and even just acknowledging, queer elders can be an enriching experience for all involved²⁴ and is important in documenting queer history.

I went for a scouting walk in the woods, and I was immediately greeted by an adult playground: there was a sex swing, wooden sex horses, a bondage cross, and a collection of other playground equipment. And farther out there was a mud wrestling pit, called the slip pit, as well as a roofless shack called Fort Dicks, which was basically just a couple fence walls with three glory holes cut outs. I found condoms and condom wrappers that had been lost in the dirt.

²³ Carnaghi, A., Rusconi, P., Bianchi, M., Fasoli, F., Coladonato, R., & Hegarty, P. (2022). No country for old gay men: Age and sexuality category intersection renders older gay men invisible. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 25(4), 964–989. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430220987606>

²⁴ Jordan, Jamal. LGBTQ youth want role models. queer elders have a lot of advice. in WP Company LLC d/b/a The Washington Post [database online]. Washington, D.C., United States Washington, D.C., 2023 (accessed April 23, 2023).



(Fort Dick's, CRC, 2022)

Returning to the camp, I noticed a man who I'd seen in a golf cart earlier was now cleaning the pool. He was tall, probably in his '60s, very tan and completely nude while going about his business. I'm jealous of the tan man who walked around in the nude. I would also like to go about my daily chores in such a manner. It's a bit of a peaceful "Fuck You" to the world when you walk around like that. It says, "I'm comfortable and feel safe presenting myself in this way."

I walked the perimeter of the camping sites. I passed by a screen house pergola and was greeted by the gruff voice of an older man. I said hello and was beckoned inside to the small smoky room. Two men, both shirtless, were sitting on chairs, their small dog barked at me as I sat down. We introduced ourselves. They were Dan and Patrick; they were both bears²⁵ of reasonable size.

Dan was quite a bit older, in his late '50s with a shoulder length gray beard, large metal rings in his ears, and plenty of body hair. Patrick was about my age, and Dan introduced him as his partner. They both had dog tag necklaces with different gay bear metal plates on them. They had an American and a bear flag flying in their space. They also had a flag that I had not seen before—it was blue transitioning into turquoise—and I asked them about it. Dan told me it was for men who are into men, he said that although he was supportive of trans people and the rest of the queer community he felt that transness did not necessarily fit in with gayness or lesbianism, because they are sexualities and transness is not.²⁶

I spoke with them about my project, and they thought it sounded interesting. Although, like most people I talk to about the project, they do not seem to grasp my intentions. Maybe I am doing something really novel, and maybe I was not able to successfully articulate my intentions. I asked Dan about the small plastic golden microphone award on the end table beside him. He said that he won it in a campground lip sync contest

²⁵ Bear is a colloquial term for a specific physical type of gay man. They are categorized as often having a decent amount of body hair, a thicker frame bulging with visible muscles and fat. They are often thought of as easier going, more interested in eating a good meal than fitting any unrealistic standards of gay cultural beauty. Bears are generally middle-aged men. Younger bear type men are placed in the subcategory of Cubs. Bears and Cubs are frequently seen mating, eating, and living together. There is a certain amount of safety that comes from staying within the Bear/Cub community, as there is less chance of being judged or ostracized for eating habits or body type. Although there are documented cases of Bears/Cubs branching out into other habitats, some Twinks, Twunks, Jocks, and Otters like to chase bigger men, and are quite fond of the perceived comfortability and fatherly attitude that Bears/Cubs often display.

²⁶ On the one hand there is certainly strength in banding together as a group under one flag that include LGBTQ and T people. On the other hand, I can understand why some gay men might feel that some Trans People do not fit into the queer sexuality category. I think there are probably some trans people who themselves do not wish to be lumped in with other queer people. They have gone to great lengths to be seen as a specific gender and want to remain strictly within the tight confines of a heteronormative and binary understanding of gender. At the same time, I know trans people who exist on a spectrum of gender identification. Their sexuality is not strictly heterosexual, and they very much believe that they belong in the larger family of queer people. Homosexual people who perpetuate general Trans exclusion are ultimately hurting themselves and the community. Trans people experience violence at a higher rate than many other groups and being a respected part of the LGBTQ community could bring some level of safety in numbers.

where he performed *Safety Dance*. He said it sucked, though, because he wanted to enter the Mr. Bear contest that was happening the next weekend, and apparently there's a camp rule that you can only hold one title, making him ineligible to enter the bear competition. The cigarette smoke and incense were starting to affect my sensitivity, so I excused myself to continue my walk. So far everyone has been extremely friendly. It might be partially because I am new here, or that I exude a pretty friendly vibe. But I'm sure it is partially because everyone here is confirmed gay. There seems to be a tight-knit community of people who stay here long-term.²⁷



(Man Cave, CRC, 2022)

I put the rain fly on my tent because it's supposed to start raining at 6:00 a.m. and continue for most of tomorrow. My campsite is right across the road from the pool and the bathrooms / showers. As I was getting ready for bed a golf cart pulled up to the

²⁷ In *The Homosexual Community* Evelyn Hooker examines how a place, such as a gay bar, can be the bedrock for a certain type of community that allows homosexuals to express themselves in ways not possible in everyday life. According to Hooker, these closed communities provide essentially the same types of benefits that most others do. I think in many ways Creekrige Campground (CRC) functions closely to this “bar community” idea. Safety, friendship, leadership structure, and a sexual marketplace are all present, the biggest difference is that CRC exists in an extremely rural setting. Decades after that observation, life is generally different for LGBTQ+ people in America. Being outwardly or publicly gay is a lot more common and acceptable. At the same time, in 2023 we are also experiencing a renaissance of condemnation, streaming mostly from inhumane and hypocritical conservative politicians and religious people. It is conceivable that places like CRC are just as important, and might become even more important, as being homosexual in public becomes more dangerous.

bathrooms and I saw a man go in with a towel. I waited about 10 minutes and then went into the bathroom myself, both because I had to pee, and because I thought I might see him toweling off. I pulled open the door and walked in, I could hear him still in the showers. I walked to the toilets and took care of business. Eventually I heard the shower stop and the curtain pull open. It was Byron, the man who checked me in and showed me to my site. He very pleasantly asked me about my day and how everything was going so far, he was not shy and never fully covered himself. I tried not to stare but I did steal a glance of his cock. His whole body was tan. As we were talking, I noticed he had a Star Trek insignia tattooed on his left arm. I asked him about it, and we launched into an in-depth discussion of our favorite series and the merits of the newest series. All the while he was toweling off and getting dressed in a t-shirt and a jockstrap and nothing else.

As we moved outside, he told me more about the camp. He first visited a couple of years ago, and he fell in love with the place, so much so that he got a job here. Turns out the camp has only been around for 6 years, and before that it was a Christian youth retreat, they used to teach children square dancing in the same barn where they now hold gay raves. I asked him what the neighbors thought of the camp or if they had ever had protesters or assaults. He said that the neighbors are not too fond of them, but that they have never had any serious issues. They even get visits from local men who are on the down low, married and curious, or in the closet. We talked about what a unique place this is, especially in Michigan. Bryon compared it to two other campgrounds called Camp-It and Boomerang. He said that Camp-It has both gay men and women, and that Boomerang doesn't allow trans men. I sarcastically asked if boomerang checks peoples' genitalia at the door just to make sure. CreekRidge is a male only camp, but as long as you identify as male and you have an M on your driver's license you're allowed to join, regardless of what's between your legs. He said this camp is really what you make out of it. If you want to sit in your tent and read a good book that's great, and if you want to get gangbanged in the woods that's great too. I brought a book of poetry, but I also kind of want to get fucked in the woods.

Byron offered me a ride in his golf cart for the 50 ft back to my tent. I think he mostly just wanted to keep our conversation going, and that was fine by me. Sitting in the cart outside my tent we talked more about the camp and how people have become a chosen family. I don't know how I feel about becoming part of the family here. As I sat next to Byron, I could feel blood rushing to my genitals; he wasn't coming on to me or flirting with me, I just enjoyed our proximity. He offered me a tour of the woods tomorrow. I might take him up on it. I'm trying to keep my mind, my heart and my legs open to new experiences.

July 13th.

It rained early in the morning and continued raining most of the morning. I went to brush my teeth and there was an older gentleman getting out of the shower. He put on a loose bathrobe as we wished each other a good morning. Last night I had an idea for an interesting photo shoot with the gloryholes in the woods. Around 10:00 the rain let up, so I grabbed my camera and tripod and hiked out to the adult playground. I passed two men who were walking back out of the woods. They were both big bearish type men. One was fully clothed in shorts and a T-shirt, while the other was completely nude except for a pair of cheap looking flip-flops. We said good morning, and I tried not to stare. I wondered what they had been doing in the woods—was it sexual, or did the naked one just want to walk around feeling the rain and the sun on his skin?

I reached “Fort Dick's” and set up my tripod facing the wall with three gloryholes. Keeping the camera in the same position, I used the timer function to run around and take photos of my mouth and face in each of the holes. My plan is to combine these photos to make it look like there are multiple people using the wall, although they'll all be me. I took photos of myself in front of the wall naked with my genitals poking through the holes. After that I switched and set up my camera on the other side of the wall. This side had a foam pad on the ground and handlebars screwed to the wall to make it easier for the folks who are providing oral sex. I reversed the roles and again using the timer function on my camera, I ran around and took photos of myself with my penis both erect and soft sticking through the gloryholes. On the dick sticking side of the wall there was an old church pew. All its varnish was worn away by time and the elements. But I could tell it was a pew rather than just a wooden bench, both by its form but also because on the back it had a holder where churchgoers would rest their Bibles or hymnals. It was currently filled with cigarette butts and debris from the forest.

currently working through *Cruising Utopia*²⁹, which talks about places that are haunted by Queer ghosts, places like tea rooms and bath houses, public restrooms with glory holes, and secluded spots in the woods much like where I am now. Like a restaurant that's closed for business or a factory long abandoned, these types of places have or had a specific purpose. One can see that purpose by the tools or the remnants that remain.

Eventually the rain let up, so I spent all afternoon lounging by the pool. Two gay couples showed up. The first couple, two muscle daddies, was local, and the other couple was from Canada. The Canadians got nude as soon as they arrived and stayed nude the whole time they were there. They were in their '60s, and uncircumcised, their generous cocks dangled loosely in the sunlight as they walked around and swam. The rain started up again momentarily, so we all huddled together under an awning while it passed. They asked me about the book I was reading. I told them it was poetry by a woman who had been molested as a child. It was called *Homebody*. My dad gave it to me for my 30th birthday. I think he saw it in the LGBTQ section of the bookstore and thought I would like it. They asked me to read some poems to them, so I did. They found them depressing. Later, the couple from Canada called me over while they were sunbathing. They were quite friendly, both were well educated and had master's degrees. We spoke at length about my project and American politics. I told them that most people my age and younger are very nihilistic about the future and don't see any hope in the American political system. They were both married to women when they were younger. One had three children and the other just had one. They said their eldest was about my age, I found that kind of titillating, that they could be my fathers. I asked him what it was like having children and they had only good things to say about fatherhood. Despite being fully nude all day they were not sexual or suggestive towards me or anyone else. They seemed perfectly comfortable in their skin. The other local couple was wearing bathing suits and were quite a bit more flirtatious. It's funny that sometimes wearing clothes can actually be more revealing or suggestive.³⁰

²⁹ This idea of traces or "the trace" was popularized by Jacques Derrida, but in *Cruising Utopia* José Esteban Muñoz adjusts and transforms the idea to relate more to ways of describing the queer histories of certain types of locations.

³⁰ Many nudist groups are interested in desexualizing nudity. Some camps are even family friendly, so open displays of sexuality are completely forbidden. I like to aim for somewhere in between those polar ideals. Nudity should not inherently be sexual, but I also wouldn't want to prohibit the free practice of consensual adult love, expression, or erotics. Kids should stay at home or simply not exist. In *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*, Lee Edelman talks about children as a type of cult where adults are rigidly forced into living their whole lives around creating, protecting, and pandering to the idea that is The Child. Part of being queer, according to Edelman, is rejecting the good of unchallenged and unquestioned reproductive futurism. Queerness has the power, like so many conservatives preach, to disrupt and destroy tradition, faith, and civil order.

I'm glad I was able to spend some close time with this nude couple, I was worried about how it might feel to be around naked men. I was concerned that when I got to the real nudist camps where clothing isn't optional, I might have a "hard" time. When the muscle daddy and his partner were leaving, he walked over, shook my hand twice, and said that he admired my individualism camping here alone in a tent. I got nervous when he touched my hand and talked to me so directly. I wanted him to fuck me, to pin me down with his strong arms, thick trunk legs, and ample bulge in his swimming shorts. He said the next time he sees me he's going to get me a drink, a martini. I like to imagine that he would want to get me a drink so that I might be open to the idea of letting him dominate me. But I need no liquid courage in that department. All I really need is an invitation. I lathered on sunscreen three separate times, but I'm still going to burn.

July 14th.

Last night Dan the big bear drove by my tent and called out to me. I popped my head out and said hello, he told me that he had just taken Patrick back home, he said I should come over because he was lonely. I said maybe. He called me Hon as he drove off. I didn't go to his site, because I wanted to hook up with him, and also because I didn't want to. I didn't want to intrude on anything he and Patrick have, and he was never clear on if they have an open relationship. He's also probably +25 years older than me, which is a positive and negative; it just makes the decision more complicated. I also really didn't want to be around more cigarette smoke. I hate that I'm so good at finding excuses.

I am definitely the youngest person here. There is one other guy, probably in his mid-30s, I saw him fully naked in the bathroom yesterday evening. I said hello and he didn't really respond as he went into the stall to urinate. I saw his bag on the bench, it was a tan Army camouflage bag that looked authentic. That made sense because he was built and fit, with a short army-like crewcut. As I was walking out, I saw a middle aged naked and portly man, smoking a cigarette in the showers. He was blowing smoke out of a small window. There were a handful of No Smoking signs posted around the bathroom. A couple minutes later when I was sitting at my tent, I saw the portly man and the army dude walk out of the bathroom together, the former was swishing back and forth in his pink fuzzy bathrobe, while the latter had put on boxer briefs. However, his semi erect penis and testicles were fully pushed out and visible through the fly of his underwear. It somehow felt more aggressive and certainly more sexual than the plethora of other men I have seen walking around fully nude. I watched this odd couple walk back towards their site. As they walked past a group of men socializing on their porch, the bathrobe man reached over and grabbed the army man's penis, shouting "You want some of this" while shaking it in the general direction of the other men. They

all chuckled. I have seen the couple three more times today, and each time the army man was wearing different boxer briefs with his crotch and/or anus fully exposed. They seem to have an interesting power dynamic in their relationship. Maybe the army man misses his army days, and thrives on having someone else order him around, tell him what to wear, and control his body.³¹

I went out and photographed the rest of the adult playground this morning. I got naked and played around on the swing, horses, and restraining board. It was exciting to be on sex equipment for the first time. I was both dreading and hoping that someone would walk out into the woods and see me working. I shot for several hours and was alone the entire time. The heavy rain yesterday had probably washed away any bodily remains from the equipment. Although touching them with my bare skin, I can see visions of men using them.



(Swing, CRC, 2022)

³¹ Power dynamics are inherently part of every relationship, young vs. old, wealthy vs. poor, academically vs. vocationally educated, top vs. bottom. Many of these exist in “deviant” relationships much in the same way they exist in “normal” or “heterosexual” ones.

I guess Thursdays are waste-emptying days. A naked man drove a tractor around to each trailer. It was pulling a large semi-transparent plastic container with hoses and tubes sprouting out of it. He would hook up the hose to each trailer's toilet system and spend about 15 minutes pumping out their shit slushy. The container was transparent enough so that as the pumping went on, I could see the liquid excrement waving and sloshing about. As if the visual and auditory components of this situation weren't enough, the smell was horrendous and impossible to escape. Gay shit smells just as bad as straight shit.

There is a potluck tonight, I am forcing myself to attend. It is directly across the road from my tent, so I really have no choice. I am bringing cherries, as well as a bowl of rambutan and cucumbers (because they will look like male genitalia). I was going to dress in just a jockstrap and open shirt for the potluck, but then I saw people arriving for the event, and everyone had real clothes on. Apparently group meals are the one place that has a dress code. Even the army guy who always has his cock out, was dressed in real shorts and a tee-shirt.

If I had attended this gathering without prior knowledge, I wouldn't have known that it was a gay potluck. It was just a bunch of older white men eating a plethora of different carbs. I sat next to one of the oldest men in the hall, his name was Phil, and he has been coming to the camp since the beginning. He complained about his back pain; he has been building a deck for one of the other long-term residents. He said that he was mostly finished, but he had to reinforce a lot of spots, so lots of "screwing" left to do. I told him that I was a student at UM, and he said that he went to UM for one year back in 1960 something. He must be in his late 70s or early 80s. I also met Cyrus; he was younger, probably in his 30s. He is a linguist, and he does freelance translation work. He is a furry, and he is working on a new fursona. He has long thick graying hair. Phil made a joke about my balls tasting good (I convinced him to try one of the rambutans I brought), he blushed a little as he said it. He said that this camp means so much to him that he wants it to be a welcoming and meaningful place for others too. Although it seems like maybe he doesn't appreciate some of the more flagrant displays of sex that are sometimes on display.

There was a dance party at 9pm in the dance hall where they used to teach kids square dancing. I told myself that I had to go and stay for at least an hour. I was dreading it because I knew I would feel awkward. I put on a fun and fancy outfit, tried to calm my nerves, and forced myself to pop over to the party. The club was impressive, especially for a campground. It was dark and lit by laser lights and a disco ball. Screens of assorted sizes lined the walls and played music videos. Five or six men were sitting at tables along the sides of the room, and only 2 or 3 were dancing. I sat down in the corner, and after a few seconds I saw that Phil was one of the ones dancing. He spotted

me and came to sit at my table, we chatted for a second and he asked if I was going to dance. I told him I wasn't much for dancing. He smiled at me and said, "hold on a second". He scooted over to the DJ booth and whispered something to the naked man DJing. A couple seconds later thousands of bubbles started pouring out from somewhere in the ceiling. Phil turned on his heel and beckoned me to join him in the bubbles. I couldn't resist. He was old enough to be my grandpa, but he was acting flirty, and he seemed really sweet. I got up and danced with him. A song by The Weekend came on, and we wiggled through clouds of bubbles that reflected the laser lights creating a dazzling display. It was a magic moment.

Phil liked my curly hair, he said that when he was younger, he would let his hair grow out and it would curl like mine. He said I was cute, and I told him that he was too. I wouldn't have minded being in that moment all night. But after a couple songs, the bubbles faded, and Phil said it was well past his bedtime. I bid him goodnight, we hugged, and I could feel his bicep—it was surprisingly muscular, it must be all that deck building. I should have offered to walk him back to his trailer. But I didn't want to overstep myself. I danced a couple more songs, but the music got worse, so I just sat and watched for a while.

The club closed at 11, and I had fulfilled the promise I made to myself. I walked back to my tent alone. Cyrus suddenly appeared in my campsite, and he was wearing just a long towel wrapped around his waist. He sat down and we talked for over an hour. We discussed a range of topics, from furry culture, the trauma of growing up in conservative Christianity and Catholicism, and how we have zero faith in any part of our current political system. It seems like most people I speak to who are my age and younger, and who are paying attention, have so little hope for the future. Most of us are just trying to find space to momentarily ignore our impending downfall.

Cyrus's body was surprisingly muscular and smooth. His breasts and abdominal muscles glowed softly in the pale moonlight. We also spoke about the sex culture of CRC, and he said that it really picks up on the weekends. He has gone out to the woods a couple of times and seen or participated in casual sex. Although he says that sometimes there are weirdos who don't act very nice or think much about consent. Apparently, it all happens at night; he has never seen anyone doing stuff during the day. That surprised and bothered me a little. Sure, there is more privacy and anonymity at night, but I loved the idea of a casual sex forest with bodies basking in the sunlight with bright flowers and butterflies. I have been reading about the idea of queer utopia, and although the Garden of Eden type utopia has been replaced with a more general queer futurity, I still aspire to the idea of the lush fantasy playland. A place where everyone is

kind, passionate, and free to be sexual. CRC is certainly approaching that idea, much more so than any other location in Michigan.



(Narcissus Fantasy, CRC, 2022)

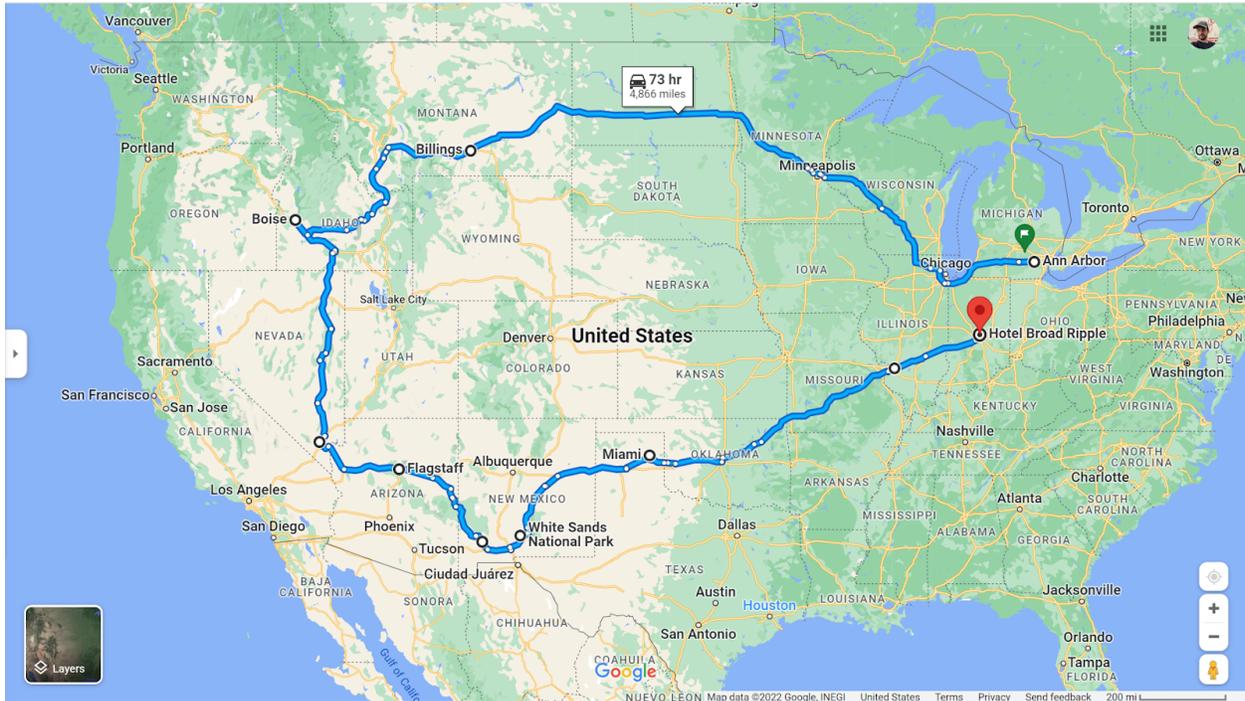
Cyrus left around 12:45 am, he was going to go stroll around the woods for a bit. I feel like I should have walked with him, I enjoy the idea of getting to feel his body and see what was underneath his towel. But I was tired, and it was cold. I am so good at coming up with valid excuses to not let myself fall into sexual situations. But I should also give myself credit for doing more and pushing myself harder than I have in the past.

I went to CRC with the hopes of discovering if it functions as a utopic space for a specific group of people, in this case, homosexual men in Michigan. I think in many ways it does, my photographic and written documentation reflect some of the possibility for unbridled sexual freedom and lack of oppression. It is not flawless by any means, but it does approach a type of utopia, for gay men at least. But I worry that the images from CRC will forever be cursed as some of my favorites that are the most difficult to

share, both because of their vulnerability and because of the constant threat of censorship.

Chapter 3.5

Travel Log, July 21st-22nd



July 21st.

Today I began the main legs of my trip. I should reach my first nudist camp in Montana within a couple days. I set out from Frankfort Michigan where I've been staying with my grandmother and headed towards the Mackinac Bridge. As I drove through the UP every twist and turn in the road revealed a gorgeous outlook on Lake Michigan. I was enthralled by the natural beauty, the UP is somehow more rugged than anywhere else in lower Michigan. Over the next 5ish hours, I drove through a plethora of small towns each with some kind of roadside motel or attraction and of course at least one stand that sold pasties. There were also a surprising number of food vendors advertising that they had wild rice. I guess that wild rice known as Manoomin does grow in parts of

Michigan, and there are indigenous peoples in Ojibwe communities who have a tradition of harvesting it.³²

I stopped at a strange gas station called Kwick. I suddenly felt that I was no longer in Michigan and had maybe crossed the state line without realizing it. I checked my map and realized I was practically in Wisconsin. Already everything was a little bit off. Simple things like the design of road signs, or the strange new variety of gas stations and grocery stores in the small towns I drove through. I had planned on driving for 8 hours, but when I hit the mark there were no campgrounds or accommodations around, so I just kept driving. After 2 more hours of driving, I got to a place called Superior, right across the bridge from Duluth Minnesota. My butt was sore, my pee bottles were all filled, and I could feel myself getting dazed and paying less attention to the road. I searched for nearby campgrounds and didn't find any, so I caved and looked for cheap hotels, eventually finding a Super 8. The hotel was a pretty shitty two star, although not the shittiest place I've ever stayed. It had a truck stop on its left and a place called Gronks Bar & Grill on the right. The man at the desk was balding with a straight blonde mustache. He was thick and his name was Ashley. As he was checking me in, I was checking him out, and I noticed a drip of clear wet snot forming on the tip of his nose. As he was handing me a card to my room the drip got so heavy that it detached from his nose and descended in a long thick string towards my paperwork on the desk. He finally noticed it and whipped around to grab a Kleenex apologizing and blaming on his allergies. I was slightly grossed out and concerned because I wasn't wearing a mask³³, but I told him not to worry about it. He said, "I'm all mixed up, my nose runs and my feet smell".

³² In *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire* the “the task of queer ecology is to probe the intersection of sex and nature with an eye to developing a sexual politics that more clearly includes considerations of the natural world and its biosocial constitution”. While many Indigenous cultures or communities have already developed a more holistic understanding and view of nature, Americans have created “dominant discourses that attach wilderness spaces to performances of heterosexual masculinity”. My childhood experience was tainted with both toxic masculinity and conservative religiosity. More recently I have rediscovered a love for nature and the outdoors. Nature provides me a space in which to make work without the judgment of others, a type of freeform studio. Making art in, and of nature has allowed me to explore a more animalistic and authentic side of myself, unburdened by the constraints in every other setting I find myself in.

³³ I went on this journey during the last several months of the COVID crisis in America. A time when a cough, a sneeze, and certainly a string of snot, could mean the death of you and all of your loved ones. I wore a mask during most of my human interactions on this trip, but most other people did not.

July 22nd. - Travel Log

I drove another 10 hours today. It was very long but also passed by in a flash. Now having stopped my body feels like it's still going. I told myself I was going to stop and take a nap or at least rest my eyes around lunch, But I didn't. I only stopped to get gas and empty my pee bottles. The sun was shining through the windshield, and I was getting hot, eventually I decided to take my clothes off. I'm trying to be more comfortable with regular nudity, seeing as how over the next couple weeks I will be required to be fully naked in front of many strangers. It's slightly more of a hurdle than I thought it was going to be, but I am not backing down. I don't think it's illegal to drive naked. As long as you're not purposefully flashing people your holes and poles.

North Dakota looked similar to lower Michigan, particularly with its many farms and fields of crops. Eventually the greens turned to dull browns, and as I crossed over the Montana border, the voice of my GPS welcomed me to the state. After several hours of driving, I reached a town named Glendive, searched for a cheap hotel, and found one called the Riverside Inn, an old but seemingly well-maintained roadside motel. I crashed in my room which was halfway decent, especially for \$64, but the water from the sink is tinted brown. I let the faucet run for several minutes but the color remained unchanged. The walls and carpet smelled of old smoke, but it was clean enough and the mattress didn't have any sign of bed bugs. I thought about trying to go out for food, but the idea of driving even a couple of miles felt impossible. I ordered a pizza for delivery, and half an hour later a tall slender young man banged on my door. He had platinum blonde hair, and I couldn't tell if it was natural or a dye job. He was wearing black skinny jeans and a black and white checkered button-up shirt which could have been some type of pizzeria uniform, or it could have been from Hot Topic. I gave him a 25% tip. He didn't seem to care. I wondered if he had spit in my pizza, I kind of wanted him to spit on my pizza. Maybe for a couple extra dollars he would have. The pie is mediocre, but lord knows I'm going to eat it all anyway.

Chapter 4

Oasis 33, July 23rd-25th



(Nudist Sign, Oasis 33, 2022)

Oasis 33 was my first true introduction and immersion into nudist practice. Full nudity was suggested for female campers but required for males while in the campground. Despite identifying as non-binary, I often present in masculine ways, both because of my biology and my grooming/clothing choices. Stripping down and socializing nude was difficult for about 15 minutes, but it very quickly became a non-issue. This is in part to my experience being naked alone, and because group nudity has an equalizing effect. Although only to a certain extent, everyone I met presented as heterosexual, strictly masculine, or feminine, and several of them were religious. While nudism seems to have the ability to break down some cultural barriers, more is required to approach significant equality.

Despite the camp only being a couple of acres, I did manage to find a decent amount of alone time to do my work. Unlike in the National Parks, my nude body was in no danger of persecution. This brought an even greater level of freedom in creating photographs. Nature itself was my biggest challenge. This biome was hot, waterless, and remote. However, the harshness of the landscape created a dichotomy with the pale tenderness of my body.

July 23rd.

I'm almost to Oasis 33, I'm excited and nervous about what kind of people I'll find there and how I'll feel about being naked around them. I stopped at a Walmart supercenter to pick up water and a couple other supplies. I was careful I put away my rainbow gay keychain and put on my most heteronormative looking clothes. When I was checking out the woman ringing up my supplies had a pin on her vest that just read "Jesus" with a red, white, and blue background almost like a political candidate button. I did enjoy how blunt the button was. It didn't say "Jesus Saves" or "Jesus loves you" It just said Jesus in all capital letters.

Surprisingly, Google Maps led me directly to the entrance of the campground. I could see a very rugged driveway leading up to a gate in the fence. I drove up a short, bouncy, and twisty driveway to reach the main campground. There are 10 side road pull throughs leading off of a main road, several of them filled with campers or tents. I parked, got out, and walked around until I found the common area where some folks were sitting under an awning. Next to them was next to a decent sized above ground pool that had been deflated, the water was slowly draining out and making a muddy mess. I asked if they had seen the owner. They said he was out on a water run. I'd seen several people at this point and all of them were naked. I wasn't quite ready to be nude myself, but I managed to take off my shirt and hike around the grounds for a bit. I met the owner, Dwayne, as he was returning to camp. He was a good looking and rugged man, probably in his '50s, with a nice mustache and a bit of a beer belly. He was tan all over and he wasn't wearing clothes or shoes. He had graying tufts of hair on his upper chest and around his nipples. His cock was flaccid but thick and meaty, and he looked circumcised, but I couldn't say for certain because he had a decent amount of loosely hanging skin.

I contacted Dwayne early in my planning for this trip. I introduced myself as an art student at the University of Michigan and asked him if I could visit with the intent of taking photos. I made it clear that I would only be taking photos of myself and the landscape. He was very open to the idea and said that as long as I didn't photograph

others without their consent, I was all good to join them. He was very pleasant to me, he either did not know or did not care that I am queer. I think he was also just excited to have a new person visit, and a little bewildered that I would drive all the way from Michigan to stay at their little oasis.

After unpacking and setting up my tent, I explored the campground a bit more. It sits on the side of a medium-sized mountain. Hiking up to the top took me 15 or 20 minutes at a decent pace. There were grand views in every direction I looked. I took a few quick shots during my hike. It's awesome to stand on top of the mountain with the wind, sun, and sand, blasting every crevice of my naked body. This mountain was rocky, dry, and populated mostly with juniper trees. I picked one of their pale dusty berries and crushed it between my fingers, allowing the vibrant pine smell to fill my nostrils.



(Cliff, Oasis 33, 2022)

There was a potluck happening at camp, so I walked back to the communal area. On my way down I met a short woman in her '50s. She was wearing a tank top that just barely covered her butt and the top of her thighs. She seemed a little dazed and she was tightly gripping her cell phone and charging cord. I introduced myself and she started to flirt with me. I saw her take several quick glances at my cock, not that there's much to glance at. She told me she liked my hair and that she loved guys with beards. I

thanked her while trying to sound as gay as possible, hoping that I wouldn't have to actually out myself. She complained to me about the phone trouble she was having. I showed her how to turn on battery saver mode and gave the phone back to her saying I wanted to get to the potluck. She said she had just been down there and had to walk away because she had too much energy. I was starting to think she was on drugs. She grabbed ahold of my arm and insisted that I help her down to the party. During our awkward walk she rambled on about how she was a homeschooler, and to be polite, I told her that I was also homeschooled for several years. She said she's still homeschooling her youngest, a 15-year-old, and that he doesn't want to learn and can't read that well. I thought but didn't say "well maybe you aren't setting the best example spending your weekend at the nudist resort on drugs and hitting on gay men 20 years younger than you." Not there's anything wrong with that, but if you've got kids, you really should just resign to signing the rest of your life away.³⁴

There was a decent variety of folks at the potluck. All of them nude and white, but they came from several different walks of life. I introduced myself and told them about my project. They seemed politely interested but didn't ask many follow-up questions. I'm definitely the youngest person here by a good 10 years. There is one other younger guy in his early '40s. He's ginger, decently muscular, and has a pale white cock. At one point I heard him say that he has a young son, which again gave me mixed feelings about parents spending their time in nudist camps.

There's an adorable older couple. The man has a lot of interesting stories and funny old dad jokes. The woman doesn't speak a lot but when she does, she sounds intelligent. She would look over at me and smile whenever there was laughter in the conversation. Eventually she mentioned that she's some kind of Medicare expert person. She was explaining the 20 different types of Medicare and what they all do and do not cover. There was another man who perked up when I mentioned that I do photography. He is also a photographer, but his subjects are landscapes, architecture and several types of racing cars and bikes. There was a large hairy man who spoke slow and low. He's a truck driver. Later, he invited me to come sit closer to him. I obliged and naturally we got on the topic of nudism. He mentioned that he has been kicked out of several Christian churches after telling people that he practices nudism. He had a surprisingly evolved

³⁴ This thought, while common in my brain, might seem extreme to some. At a basic level, I believe that most people do not need to produce offspring. If one does make the bold decision to have children, they should be prepared to make a plethora of self-sacrifices in order to raise their child. I think that too many people have children before they are willing or able to provide the love and positive environment necessary to rearing a child. Young people should focus their energy on themselves, their peers, and their community. That is what I chose to do when I entered a graduate program, as opposed to cultivating reproductive relationships. I have a tendency to judge people who appear to actively focus energy on themselves instead of the human life they have forced into existence.

view of separating the nude human form from sex and sexuality. He saw no sin in being naked. I applauded him for challenging the church. After a while it started to feel perfectly normal that everybody was nude. At least until one of the guys would stand up and I would have a front row seat to their genitals.



(Spread, Oasis 33, 2022)

July 24th.

The stars were gorgeous last night. I saw several meteorites, as well as Elon Musk's starlink. It was kind of like a slow-moving satellite that had a long tail of light behind it. I went to bed to the sound of coyotes cackling and cows mooing in the distance. I woke up as the sun was rising and hiked up to the top of the mountain to take photos. I put myself in all kinds of positions with the rock formations. It was somewhat tedious, and I have lots of scrapes, bruises, and scuffs for my effort. I don't use a remote, rather just the timer on my camera, so there's a lot of going back and forth to check things and press buttons. I built up quite a sweat and I started thinking about how this process is somewhat of a performance. Twisting, climbing, and maneuvering around sharp objects with my naked and vulnerable body is hazardous but it makes for a good photo. I like the contrast of my pale soft skin against the rough browns and reds of the sandstone.



³⁵(Bodyscape, Oasis 33, 2022)

I shot for about 2 hours and hiked down to the communal campground area. Folks were having a community breakfast and I was offered a plate several times, but I declined. At one point it was all just men standing around eating eggs in the complete nude. It was certainly intimidating, but at the same time there was a palpable feeling of fraternity. It's interesting to witness the small subtle ways men act differently when they're completely nude in front of other men. It's not the same as a locker room situation where the nudity is brief and often sexually and homoerotically charged. This was more of an acceptance, a type of laissez-faire attitude.

Most of the folks packed up and left after breakfast, going back to their jobs, clothes, and families. Around 6pm the wind picked up very quickly and very dramatically. I decided to take my tent down. I'll just sleep in the back of the car tonight. That way I'm

³⁵ Several of my photographs feel in line with the work of Arno Rafael Minkkinen. Certainly there are similarities in our focus on self-portraiture, and the interest in nudity and nature. Our bodies become part of the landscape. In several of my photoshoots I used bodyscape as reference, I disfigured my form to blend more into the scenery. My body, however, is very different from Minkkinen's, mine is like a hog bristle chip brush, as opposed to a sable filbert. I am also more concerned with showing myself as an individual. In most of my work, I purposefully show my face and all the beautiful flaws of my body. I want my personhood to be forefront and confronting.

not worrying about waking up to a flooded sleeping bag. After packing up, the sky got dark with rain clouds, and I saw lightning flash over the distant mountains. I grabbed my camera and foolishly ran up the hill to see if I could get some photos. I brought my camera and my tripod, but literally nothing else. The hike down was pitch black and a bit treacherous. I had to use the LCD screen from my camera to light my way down the mountain. I have three flashlights, two lanterns, a headlamp, and a phone with a great flashlight. I really should have brought at least one of them with me.



(Night Light, Oasis 33, 2022)

July 25th.

Like I predicted the winds died down quickly and I probably would have done just fine in my tent. Sleeping in the car is not terribly comfortable. When I woke up, I took a walk around camp and realized that I was the last one left. I thought Dwayne and his wife and teenage son would have come back last night or this morning, but they did not. I had to put on clothes because my skin had gotten quite raw and burnt by the sun. After a quick breakfast of fiber supplement and protein bar, I went for a walk and took some supplemental nature photos. I also gathered a bag of interesting looking rocks, sticks, and a couple of plants. I realized that I haven't showered since the first night of my trip in Superior. I decided to use the outdoor shower that was connected to the outhouse

near the main common area. It was just a gravity drip shower, and it was refreshingly chilled. I felt much better after scrubbing off layers of dirt and sunscreen. It was odd being the only one there, alone and wearing clothes at a nudist camp.



(Shower, Oasis 33, 2022)

I was really itching to get back on the road, And I felt finished with this location. I still have three more days before my reservation at Bear Mountain, So I'm going to fudge around a bit. I spent a while calling campgrounds in Yellowstone since it's only a 3-hour drive from my current location. Thankfully I was able to snatch a last-minute cancellation for a tent site in the Grant campground.

Chapter 4.5

Travel Log, July 25th-28th



(River, Yellowstone, 2022)

Yellowstone National Park was not on my original itinerary, although I am so glad that I visited. It was certainly the most glorious of locations. Unfortunately, due to my lack of planning for this specific side trip, I was always surrounded by other people while in the park. It is also one of the most visited parks in America, and I was there during the peak of summer vacations. The vast amount of people, and the well-established consumerism in the park, led me to feel like I was visiting a theme park such as Disneyland. There were long lines to get into the natural attractions, each with their own souvenir shop. While I did appreciate all the amenities available, I wondered about the overall gain/loss that comes with removing the wildness from the wilderness. There would be no space for me to make artworks unless I was willing to put myself at great risk. I was not prepared to do so. Maybe someday this project will expand to include more activism about nudity in supposedly public parks.

The drive to the park was lovely, I pretty quickly got to Wyoming and my heart swelled when I got to the Buffalo Bill Mountain and reservoir area. The winding road took me to a tunnel that ran through the mountain, I giggled and almost jumped in my seat, feeling giddy. I thought the drive couldn't get any better, but then I got to the actual Yellowstone Park, and I was proven wrong. I paid my \$35 entrance fee to an adorable park ranger. His name was Grayson, or Argyle, or Stetson, something unusual and proper. His skin

was surprisingly pale, and his lips were ruby red and wet, he seemed sensitive but also tough enough to be a ranger. The drive through Yellowstone was absolutely gorgeous and stunning the house down boots. Around every twist and turn was another picturesque venue. There was a wonderful variety of landscapes, from dense green woods to skyscraper mountains, to the vast Yellowstone Lake (although not as vast or beautiful as Lake Michigan of course). It truly felt like I had paid \$35 to ride the most beautiful roller coaster. I felt myself tear up at the sublime beauty of it all.

I found my campsite, set up camp, and realized I was very hungry for something other than chips and hummus or another protein bar. I bought a couple of groceries from the general store and made myself a nice dinner of fire roasted vegetable tacos with goat cheese and jam. I realized I hadn't cooked in over a week. I'm so used to cooking for myself every day. It's odd to be eating so much pre-packaged food, I don't love it.



(Dinner, Yellowstone, 2022)

I still had several hours of daylight, and Grant Campground is only a couple miles away from something called the West thumb. It's basically a collection of sulfur baths and

geysers. I did touch one of the pools, and it was surprisingly hot, which I guess is why they call it a hot spring.



(Hot Springs, Yellowstone, 2022)

July 26th.

I got up around 6:30 a.m. and had my breakfast of fiber supplements and Mio energy water enhancer, then I hit the showers. There was only one woman working at the station, she took my shower pass and pointed over at a big door. In a stern voice she said, “that’s the men’s shower”. It was a little odd to be so gendered. It’s really not that big of a deal, I do present masculine in some ways. I know some non-gendered or trans people feel really hurt by this type of gendering or misgendering, I don’t feel quite that way. Rather, it all just seems unnecessary to me. Regardless, I headed towards the “Men’s” showers with a strange mix of dread and excitement about what I would find

inside. It was a large tile room, billowing with steam, which felt nice because the temperature had dropped to the 40s during the night and it was still quite brisk. There were only two or three other people, to which I felt relief and disappointment. I liked the idea of waiting in line to enter a room filled to the brim with naked bodies, hairy, muscular, and bulging. Different ages, different races, all naked and wet, just trying to get clean. Now with a line of empty showers and only a handful of people, everyone was quiet and careful, no one was showing off.

Each individual shower was quarantined with walls that rose high and low and had all their gaps filled so there was no peeking to be done. Again, I was struck with a mixture of emotions. My shy side was relieved to have privacy, but my voyeuristic and curious side was bummed that there wouldn't be a show. I did drop my soap a couple times to give myself an excuse to bend all the way over and look under the low stall walls, but there was nothing to see.

When I was a tween camping with my family, I would escape by spending time in the bathrooms of the campgrounds. I was much more nervous then, but also curious and desiring to catch small glimpses of men in the bathroom through the cracks in the walls, in the reflection off a shiny floor, or through a shower curtain not fully closed. I remember my parents thinking that I had constipation because I would sometimes spend 30+ minutes in the bathroom.

I returned to camp, ate a handful of granola, then packed up. I surprise myself with my ability to set up and tear down a campsite. Going through the motion brings me back to childhood, when camping was required and tear down time was a forest forced fun activity. My dad always taught us that there was a right way to do things, a right way to pack away your tent, a right way to put out the fire, a right way to poop in the woods.



(Stack family photo, late 1990's)

An aspect of this trip was to help discover my own way of moving through the natural world. Like many children, I cannot, and do not want to replicate the exact experience as my parents, to do so would be stagnant and inauthentic. My goal then becomes to take from the knowledge they have provided, modify, and improve upon it, and craft it into something unique that will better serve my goals and ambitions. I have taken these gifted tools of working within nature and used them to create a body of artistic data, the likes of which my parents would never conceive.

I usually poop twice in the morning, once right when I get up and another time about an hour later. Especially now that I'm on my fiber supplement. While using the bathroom for the second time this morning I heard two men come in, an older voice said to a younger voice "Hey if you ever feel the need to intervene, go right ahead, you should feel comfortable doing so, I don't think you're stepping on my authority as a father," The younger voice replied "oh, okay great, thanks.". By the tone of the older man's voice, I could tell this was a test, he obviously did not want the younger man stepping on his authority, and he was clearly setting a trap.

I felt like it was important to at least see Old Faithful before I left. It seemed wrong to leave Yellowstone without seeing its most famous attraction. I was surprised by the amount of commerce at the Old Faithful Park. There were hotels, restaurants, gift shops, a gas station, and a surprisingly nice visitor center. I arrived about 45 minutes

before the next venting event and claimed what I thought was the best seat to watch the geyser and take photos. As the venting time prediction grew closer the large boardwalk around Old Faithful started to fill up with people, way too many kids for my liking, not that I enjoy the adults that much either. When I am enjoying nature, I prefer to do it alone or with people I care about. I feel uncomfortable being around large groups of heteronormative people and their spawn, because I feel that I cannot exhibit my truest self. My soul is lifted and filled by spending time as my true self, alone and in the middle of the woods is one of the rare times I get that experience.



(Old Faithful, Yellowstone, 2022)

When Old Faithful finally did erupt, it was a bit of a disappointment. It's cool that it goes off on the clock so faithfully, but there are a lot of other more stunning and sublime things to see in the park. I spent the next hour trying to figure out where to go next. I wanted to drive closer to Bear Mountain in Idaho, but I still had two days before my reservation. I tried finding a camping site or a cabin near the Grand Tetons, but everything was booked solid. I probably should have made some reservations in advance, but that's just not what kind of trip this is. Eventually I found a small fishing

cabin that was available in a place called American Falls. It was a couple of hours away and would get me closer to my next destination, So I booked it. It also had Wi-Fi and a place to plug in my phone.

American Falls is a tiny town, and for dinner I had the option between three different Mexican places or a Chinese one. I chose the Chinese one called China City. I was expecting greasy pre-made small town Chinese food, but what I got was surprisingly fresh and made from scratch. I left them a nice tip and a complimentary review on Google. While eating I wondered how the family running the place ended up in the middle of Idaho, and what kind of microaggressions they must face daily.



(Dine-In, American Falls, 2022)

July 27th. - Travel Log

I slept okay in the small fishing cabin. All the bedding and curtains were made of a hideous camo fabric, but not just normal camo, Jesus camo. Not so subtly blended into the leaves and wood designs are stereotypical icons of Christian faith, a variety of crosses, and line drawings of fishes and doves. The label reads God's Country Camouflage. I despise when companies combine commercialism and Christianity with vague conservatism and country style living products. Despite not identifying as a

Christian, I find it incredibly disrespectful, and blasphemous. I've read the Bible and I know what it says about graven images.³⁶

I have opened Grindr³⁷ almost every evening when I'm in a new place and have internet access. I don't actually intend on doing anything with anyone, but it's interesting to see what kinds of people there are putting themselves up publicly in different areas. In more rural areas the accounts get sketchier, and they often don't have pictures or information or location. I almost always get a message from a seemingly real person, sometimes welcoming, sometimes aggressive, I don't usually answer. Throughout last night and today I have gotten several messages from an account named Just For Fun. The man is aged 59, not much hair up top but he does have a thin, silver, and well-maintained handlebar mustache that curls into circles on each end. His account says that he's married, verse, and a discreet bottom. He's into anonymous clean-cut couple DTF kissing. He started our chat by saying "how are ya", "says we're close" and "would love to play". An hour later after no response from me, "hey" "can I suck you off". Now that I am several hours away, he messaged again and said "afternoon". It wouldn't really do any harm to entertain him, but I didn't feel like meeting him when he was 2 miles away, certainly not now that he's 102 mi away.

I am headed to a place called 1000 Springs Campground, it's just a couple of hours away from Bare Mountain. It advertises natural hot springs and gorgeous lakeside views.

³⁶ As someone who was raised deep within capitalist Christianity, I can say that it is incredibly prevalent. The Vatican has multiple gift shops, and Christians have their bookstores. Specifically with this Christian Camo, there is a solid reinforcement of traditional conservative values with the tools and culture of being in nature. The culture of hunting and foraging for food seems to have been co-opted and appropriated by organizations and individuals hoping to appeal to a white and conservative consumer audience. Some people and groups such as Blackforager (Alexis Nikole Nelson) and @queernature (on Instagram) are trying to recoup some of these lost knowledges, and reshare them back to the communities who originated and relied on them. My work also attempts to dismantle some of those systems of repression and appropriation. By placing my queer and non-normative body in the landscape, specifically in national parks, I am questioning their proper usage. Why should bodies have to conform to a specific code of moral decency in order to exist in shared natural spaces?

³⁷ I see applications like Grindr and Sniffies, as an extension of queer, and specifically male homosexual, community building. As well as a vital part of cruising culture.

I made it to 1000 Springs and was pleasantly surprised. I ended up doing a private bath in the hot spring jacuzzi. I got my key and wandered past the natural spring pool with families swimming in it, to a hot moist hallway lined with about 20 small doors. I was room number 14, I opened it up and found a rustic full sized jacuzzi style bath. I turned on the hot spring water and it had a faint smell of sulfur, although not enough to be unpleasant. The girl at the desk warned me not to touch the water right where it came out because it can reach 150° Fahrenheit. She wasn't wrong, as I was floating, I got a little too close to it several times and had to wince away. It took about 35 minutes for the tub to get warm but once it did, it was steamy. I bathed naked of course and I took some photos and videos for Instagram and OnlyFans. Why not seize the opportunity?³⁸



³⁹(Bath, 1000 Springs, 2022)

³⁸ I have developed many casual social and sexual relationships with a variety of people through online platforms. I believe in the easy and consensual exchange of sexuality online, so most of the content I post is free for any adult to view. Although I do sometimes attach small fees to very intimate videos. There is an unstable line between the content I make for OnlyFans and the art I make for galleries. I am interested in the ways that images of my body can function as both art and porn depending on the audience and platform.

³⁹ The history of bathhouses is long and varies greatly by culture. Public bathing locations open up discourse for standards of acceptable public nudity. An acceptance that I imagine is usually made possible by strict gender/sex segregation. Public/social nudity in a locker room fits perfectly well within cultural norms. But taking a nude swim on a public beach might get you arrested. The lines we draw to separate acceptable and unacceptable nudity are culturally constructed. They are completely real and enforced by multiple systems of law and shame, but they are still constructions and are unique to every group.

July 28th.

This morning I woke up to the bright Idaho sun shining into my tent and making me sweat. It was already 85° at 8:00 a.m. and my phone said it would get to 101° by noon.



(Tent, 1000 Springs, 2022)

I left the campground after packing up and headed on the two and a half hour drive to Bare Mountain. I stopped for gas, groceries, and pizza at a place called Fatty's Pizzeria. It was supposedly New York style, at least it was thin crust. My stomach got a little woozy, like pepperoni butterflies were flying around in there. Then I realized I'd stopped for pizza before making my way to Oasis 33. Pizza is my comfort food and I was a little nervous about going to another nudist camp. I just have no idea what to expect, no idea how I as a person will be received.

Chapter 5

Bare Mountain, July 28th-30th

Bare Mountain surprised me. After visiting Oasis 33, which was small, primitive, and remote, I was expecting more of the same from BM. What I found was a thriving and tight-knit community, and a fairly lush campground with modern amenities. I was unprepared for the heat, which complicated my photo taking process. Although I was in email contact with the owners several weeks prior to my visit, and they knew about and approved of my plan, the residents were also a little more skeptical of my camera, and I felt conflicted about taking photos anywhere except the remote trails. It was at Bare Mountain that I started to really realize that I work much better when I am more alone. Like any musician, writer, dancer, or chef, I need to get into a zone, a state of mind, in order to perform at my highest potential. I was distracted during this time, and I ended up not getting as many photos as I would have liked to. Although, thanks to the stunning natural beauty, I still got some great shots.

It was a hot but pretty drive-up tall mountains and down through greener valleys, finally after a couple miles on a one lane twisty road I arrived. I honked my horn twice and was let through the gate. There was a high fence around the property and several signs stating that it was private property and not to trespass. A tallish man greeted me probably in his late '60s with thinning white hair and an equally white handlebar mustache. He was naked, of course, except for his shoes. I told him my name and he seemed to remember that we had previously emailed about my visit. I didn't have enough cash for my payment, so he went to get his wife who knew how to run the tile for my credit card. She was a short plump woman with shoulder length gray hair that was cut with nice bangs and breasts that hung down to her belly button. She was very pleasant and welcoming, and after a couple seconds it was easy to forget that they were both naked. I still had my clothes on, but I didn't feel like they were judging me too harshly.

After I got all signed in, they showed me to my cabin which has Wi-Fi and air conditioner, true luxuries at this point. They gave me a map of all the trails and said it would be a quiet weekend, probably a couple folks in and out as well as the people who live here all summer. I took off my clothes and unpacked my car in the nude. I'm excited and a little nervous to meet other new people. I just hope there's not any children; this is technically a family campground and children are allowed. I don't entirely understand my feelings on it. The idealistic view I hear from many naturalists and nudists is that it's good for children to be exposed to the lifestyle, partially because they naturally don't feel

shame about their bodies until it has been inherited from adults. I believe in that idea, and I appreciate what they're going for, at the same time I don't really love the idea of being naked around people under 18. I'm going to have my camera and I really don't want to be mistaken for a creeper. Enough people have already been indoctrinated into the belief that queer people are abusers of children. We used to be called pedophiles, but nowadays the buzz word is groomers. Fox News and Ben Shapiro love to use the term groomers to describe queer and trans people. There is no evidence for this. In reality the evidence points to religious leaders, powerful men, and family members as the most likely to sexually abuse young people⁴⁰. But try telling that to conservatives.

The heat is oppressive. Particularly anywhere in the sun. I hiked around the mountain, trying to move quickly from one shaded area to the next, where I would pause to catch my breath and take a gulp of water. The trails are longer than I expected, and they are quite steep, although the views look quite promising for photoshoots. Right now, my plan is to go to bed around 10: 00p.m, and try to be hiking by 6:00 a.m. That way I can hike in the low seventies rather than the high 90s.



(Rock, Bare Mountain, 2022)

⁴⁰ "Redacted Report on Child Sexual Abuse in the Archdiocese of Baltimore ...," www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov, accessed April 17, 2023, <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/040523.pdf>.

I met a very friendly couple who have been coming here for years. They were older, the man looked to be in his late '60s, the woman seemed a little younger. I could have sworn that she very briefly checked me out, I just got the brief feeling. Not that it bothers me, it's more just surprising. I can't imagine a woman being attracted to my body; I can barely imagine anyone being attracted to my body. I feel bad because I don't want to give anyone the impression that I'm straight, I am also hesitant to give them the impression that I'm gay. I'd rather keep my impressions to myself for now. The men I've met so far during the non-gay nudist camping have seemed not to recognize what I had thought was my blatant homosexuality. Either that or they're really accepting...but I think it's the former. Maybe they haven't met many openly gay people in real life and so traits that would instantly inform a younger person are completely lost on them? The old man pulled out his map to show me what hikes he thought I should do. They agreed it was better to go out really in the morning before it gets hot.

As I was walking down the mountain and passing the pool area, I spotted the middle-aged woman probably in her mid to late '40s, with aviator glasses, large breasts, and brown hair that looked dyed to be browner and definitely straightened with a flat iron. She seemed a little apprehensive of me. In her left hand she grasped the hand of her child. I averted my eyes while trying not to look like I was. I don't really care if kids run around naked, it's more the parents. Again, I just don't want them to think I'm a person who would cause any issues. Maybe this is reading into it too much, but she seemed like a pretty conservative woman. It's odd to me to think of someone being conservative and a nudist, although one of the campers was flying a "thin blue line" flag. People are often more complex than we give them credit for. Getting to know someone better usually leads to greater understanding. Although in the current cultural and political climate, it can be risky. It is difficult to make conversation with someone who thinks you shouldn't have the same rights as others based on your sexuality, gender expression, ability, or race.

I went to the pool and the older couple I met before, as well as a new couple, were sitting on the deck. We talked about my travels for a bit. They repeated that this weekend would be less busy than most, I said that was alright with me because I am kinda new to nudism. They encouraged me and said that everyone has to start somewhere. I asked them when they had started practicing and they said around their late forties, the other couple had a similar story. They said that's when a lot of folks start, maybe because they care less, and maybe because that's when their kids start to move out. These folks had chosen not to participate in nudism until after their kids were grown. Although they knew of some people who were raising their kids in the nudist lifestyle. It's kind of like raising your kids in religion, how much do you push onto them

when they're young, when do you let them decide for themselves, how do you make sure you don't put them through something that'll cause trauma later in life.

It was getting to be about 5:30 p.m. and the wives were saying it was time to go start dinner. They left and I was alone for a couple of minutes, then three men, all wearing clothes rolled up to the pool. Two looked to be in their '50s and the third looked to be in his late '60s with white hair and a long gray Santa beard. I introduced myself as they stripped off their clothes. They were three buddies who had met through various nude hiking trips. They all lived in Boise, and they had come up together to take a dip in the pool. I was content to sit on the sidelines, but they requested several times that I join them. Eventually I did and we had some friendly conversation about who they were, about my project, and about how nudism was an important part of their personhood and a bedrock for their friendship.

One of the middle-aged men was tall and gregarious. He leads one of the nude hiking groups in the area, they hike on BLM property (Bureau of Land Management.) They also had a group that went around to skinny dip in various hot springs. I told them I had just come from A Thousand Springs. Not only did they know of it, but the gregarious man had proposed to his wife in one of the baths. He told me they never actually paid the fees and would just sneak around and climb up the walls to get in. They called it the old soak-n-poke. I asked if he ever brought her here to Bear Mountain, apparently the private bath nudity was as far as she was ever willing to go, and she even disapproved of him practicing nudism in their home. He sounded sad when he said that, adding that he could only feel like himself when he was naked. That would be such a deal breaker for me, I can't imagine being married to someone who, not only didn't want to participate, but disapproved of such a big part of my life. The other middle-aged guy was a little more serious, a little more bro, he was single and liked to tell stories about trying to hook up with the women who lived in his cul-de-sac. The older man was also quite friendly, he spent about 30 minutes with a net, fishing out bugs and bees that had gathered on the surface of the pool water.

Again, I was struck at the men seemingly not knowing I was gay, I can't imagine that they just didn't care, although maybe I'm not giving them enough credit. I'm starting to think they just don't have any openly gay people in Idaho, so no one knows how to recognize one. The gregarious man jokingly called the bro dude a fruit, he got very insulted and made him take it back.⁴¹

After about an hour of talking I was getting pruned so I bid them farewell and I wished the bro dude the best of luck in bedding his neighbor ladies. I suggested that he could bring them here to Bear Mountain, he said he had brought one before and she refused to leave the trailer or participate in the nudity. Again, I can't imagine being with someone who's so against something that's important to you.

July 29th.

I woke up at 5:30 a.m. and despite everything my body was telling me, I packed up for my hike and set out to climb the mountain. It was decently cool although I still had to stop every so often to catch my breath. The trail was quite sheer in many areas, and while my muscles weren't that tired, I just kept running out of breath. I found a couple good locations on my way to the top for photos, and I got some decent ones. I was on a time limit considering the sun would be all the way up and it would be ninety-five degrees within a couple of hours.

⁴¹ In *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire* the argument is made that “we should reorient our politics and take on something like a queer ecological perspective, a transgressive and historically relevant critique of dominant pairings of nature and environment with heteronormativity and homophobia...”. I see this as meaning that, in American culture specifically, there has been a linkage and dependency created between natural spaces and straightness. One of the positive aspects of my childhood and upbringing was my parents imparting their love and appreciation for nature into my being. They would frequently drag me and my siblings into the woods for weeks at a time to live in tents, cook over a campfire, and poop in the woods using soft leaves as toilet paper. While it was difficult to appreciate in the moment, these explorations in the natural environment are memories I now look back on positively. Passing along survival and navigational skills, as well as a general appreciation and care for nature has motivated me to continue my relationship with it. The idea of hypermasculinity being a prerequisite for being in nature is harmful and problematic. For a brief moment when I was 7 or 8 years old, my parents tried to get me to join the American Boy Scouts. I attended several meetings and events, but the rigid and straight structure around their systems really turned me off. While their education about survival skills and existing in nature is positive, their pairing of it with strict heteronormative gender and presentation is reductive. Thankfully my parents let me leave the program. With my work, I propose new relationships between myself and the natural world.



(Bear, Bare Mountain, 2022)

I didn't have to work so hard to ignore all of the insecurities, doubt and concerns that usually plague my mind. It helps that there was a bit of a survivalist element to this hike, I was really able to divorce myself from the rest of the world and everyone else in it.⁴² Although, several times throughout my stay I've had a jolt when I see someone and think "oh my god I'm naked I shouldn't be naked". Kind of like a dream where you're at school and you forgot to put on clothes, except it's real life and you're paying to be here.

⁴² Rare are the moments when I can fully detach my brain from all the concerns of everyday life. Those precious times are often fleeting, but they can make space for some true creative thinking and making. One of the reasons that I love being in nature, is that it provides opportunities for a few sweet seconds away from things like the internet, which I love, but also need to step away from at times. Something easier said than done in the age of constant news alerts, endless TikTok feeds, and the entire history of cinema, all in a machine that fits in the palm of our hand.



(Log, Bare Mountain, 2022)

On the way down I saw Greg, the old man I met on the first day, he had driven his golf cart up on the old Jeep Road and was weed whacking along the trail. He reminded me so much of a grandpa in that moment. I worried about him a little as it was getting hot, and he was sweating a lot, but it seems like he knew what he was doing. I stopped for photos and a TikTok several times, I got some more good shots, and I gathered some nice little flowers and sage. I ran into another man on my way down the mountain. He was fully clothed. I introduced myself, as did he. He had a slight lisp and a definite stutter. It was cute and endearing and reminded me of my brothers, who have similar speech impediments. He asked if I'd seen Greg and I told him he was just up the trail a bit.

After getting back I took a long cold shower, and it was quite refreshing. I spent the rest of the day eating and drinking water. I drank a whole liter and a half during my hike, but I still felt dehydrated.



(Room with a view, Bare Mountain, 2022)

July 30th.

I've only been outside to wash my dishes and go to the bathroom several times. I'm going to wait until it cools down and then I'm going to force myself to go try to take photos in the garden area. I'm a little bit nervous in general because there's more people here today, a couple moved into the cabin next door to me.

I went out and took some photos at a tiny waterfall on the mountain. It was basically decorative, and it felt a little silly to splash around in it. And I was too close to camp to feel comfortable having my camera out.



(Waterfall, Bare Mountain, 2022)

As I was walking around the campus, it struck me again just how well developed and lived in it feels. There's little paths everywhere leading to a small cabin or a large RV on bricks. They all have little signs and little gardens with little fences. This really is a community; people have dedicated a lot of time to making it feel like a little home away from home for themselves. It's cool that it's a community effort as well, it seems like everybody contributes to something in some way. Part of me felt bad for not contributing more.

In all three of the locations I have visited so far, there is already an established community. I don't think I'll be part of this Idaho community nor the one in Montana. The gay camp in Michigan is so close I imagine I'll return there again at some point. Although I already have a community of sorts. Part of my reasoning for this trip was to seek out some of the queer community I feel like I've been missing. But now that I've experienced them, it kind of just makes me miss my already established group. My community certainly isn't perfect and it's lacking in a lot of ways that are important to me. But it's what I have, and I know that there are people who care about me. I've also developed a wide but not very deep online community. It's pretty transient but there are

regulars who interact with me and who I interact with several times a week. I'm not sure I need to travel halfway across the country to be nude in the woods with people who I don't know. I think if anything it makes me feel like it's important to develop my pre-existing conditions. I kept thinking about what it would be like to turn my parents' property into a clothing optional place. Before I came on this trip my mom tried to talk to me about it a little. She hadn't really said anything about the particulars and instead focused solely on the camping aspect which is something she knows about and can latch on to. It felt like she was ignoring the fact that I was going to a gay camp and several clothing optional ones. But she mentioned that she had been thinking more about nudity and how in the garden of Eden Adam and Eve weren't ashamed of being naked. She thought that maybe there was something to that, and it sounds like she's even taken a naked walk in the woods after hearing me talk about how wonderful it is. A lot of the women here are around my mom's age (no one really wants to think about their mom naked) and they seem happy with throwing off the sexist requirements of culture and clothing. I am even more convinced that, as a society, we need to move past our obsession and sexualization of women, especially their chests. Part of my finished work for this project can speak to the idea of desexualizing nudity, not that I want to take the sex out of all my work, but I feel bad for people who have not experienced the joys of being naked in nature feeling free and unashamed.⁴³

⁴³ In the book *Turning to Nature in Germany: Hiking, Nudism, and Conservation, 1900-1940*, John Williams details how early nudist created organizations, groups, and schools around the idea that social nudity and returning to nature was a healthy path forward for people who have been oppressed by modern life. They saw it a socialist movement to reclaim the human connection with nature and each other. Many also thought that group nudity helped to create a healthy balance with sexuality. These ideas spread across Europe and even came to the US. In *Naked a Cultural History of American Nudism* Brian Hoffman shows how nudism became popular in the US after WW2. All of these nudists groups had their own issues of course, but I agree with them in normalizing and desexualizing social nudity. I think a lot of cultural problems could be solved if everyone was a little more vulnerable.



(Tree Hugger, Bare Mountain, 2022)

I'm going to pack up tonight and probably leave at 6:00 a.m. tomorrow. I've got a full 9 hours to drive and I'm not looking forward to it. I have a motel room rented in Alamo Nevada, so I'm kind of forcing myself to drive that long. It's going to be my goal to get down to New Mexico and back to Michigan in the next 10 or 11 days. I'm doing all right on funds. My biggest concern right now is how I'm going to work out White Sands, I'm a little worried about the August summer heat. And I'm not sure how difficult it's going to be to find an area where I won't disturb anybody if I take my clothes off, I'm also having an internal debate about whether it's worth it to drive all that way just to take more photos on sand. But I'm telling myself it's about the journey not necessarily the destination.

Chapter 5.5

August 2nd-3rd

I saw signs for the Petrified Forest National Park and realized it was almost directly on my path. My family visited when we were young and lived in Ganado AZ.



(Stack

Family Photo, Early 2000's)

I don't remember much except for the long and intense speech about not stealing petrified wood from the forest.

I only stayed for about 2 hours and only saw about half the park, but it was gorgeous. There were a decent amount of people walking about, too many to really strip down and get any good photos of myself. Although I did manage to get one with my pants down, the situation was too risky, and I did not feel comfortable making work there. I wasn't prepared to get escorted off the premises during a university funded research trip.



2022)

(Suns out buns out, Petrified Forest,

On my way out I stopped at the gift shop. There were two Navajo women behind the registers. They seemed incredibly bored, and I was the only one in the store. I asked one of them if they had patches, she used her lips to point over in the corner, I had forgotten about pointing with your lips. As I left, I wanted to say goodbye but I couldn't remember how to in Navajo. The only terms I remember well are “Yá'át'ééh” and “Dibeh cháą”, meaning “hello” and “sheep shit” respectively.

Faywood Hot Springs



(Cabana, Faywood Hot Springs, 2022)

I'm spending the night at Faywood Hot Springs, which is really out in the middle of nowhere which is kind of nice. The young woman who checked me in gave me a map which she drew all over with a highlighter showing me how to navigate the camp. There are optional baths as well as a private bath that I get to use later tonight. After going through most of the camp I got to my private little cabana shed. It had a bed, a desk, and not much else. This is a cool, weird, lovely little place.

I took a dip in the clothing optional public bath after unpacking. There was one large warm bath and a smaller hotter bath. Three adults were already in the small bath, so I stripped and got in the bigger one. It surprised me how easy it was to take off my clothes and to see strangers naked, I guess I'm getting used to it.

While soaking, I thought about the fact that I am gay and not straight. That I'm queer and homosexual, and how much that actually changes the way I view and move through the world. I can almost imagine what it must be like to live life as a straight man. It makes me really awfully glad that I'm gay. Not only gay but a nerdy little queer goblin menace. I don't mind peeing in water bottles while I'm driving, and visiting clothing optional places, and pooping in the woods. My queerness makes me resilient. It gives me the blind confidence to think that I can do whatever I set my mind to, obviously I fail

often and of course I struggle with a lack of confidence at times. But when I set my mind to something I can usually accomplish it. This trip is proof of that, in a lot of ways this is harder and braver than anything I've ever done. And I feel like I'm doing a pretty decent job of it.

Sometimes it's difficult to comprehend all the natural beauty that I see. I often think about pulling over on the side of the road and lying down in the grass or a big rock to try to let it soak into me and allow me to understand where I am. That's one thing that's missing from parts of this trip, it's one thing to undress and be naked around other people, it's another thing to be completely relaxed and unburdened. I might swim again tomorrow before I head to White Sand which is only a couple of hours away.

Before bed I had a nice soak in the private hot springs. And I took a couple sassy photos. I was really feeling myself.



(Faywood Hawt Springs, 2022)

August 3rd.

The drive to White Sands was only about two and a half hours, along the way I went by the missile base and was directed to pull over at a security checkpoint. I wasn't crossing any state lines, so it seemed kind of out of the way, but it was a pretty big setup. I pulled

in slowly, put my shoes on, hid my pee bottle, and prepared to be inspected. There was a man in full combat gear. He was tough and built and I couldn't tell if he was brown or just had very tan skin. I said hello and he asked where I'd come from as he was peering into my car. I stuttered a bit because I wasn't sure if I should tell him. I went with "I'm from Michigan actually, I'm on a road trip." I offered to roll down the windows so he could see better, he told me I could if I wanted to. I rolled down the windows and he asked if I was a citizen? I said yes sir and he waved me on my way. Driving away I wonder if I had just benefited from white privilege. He didn't ask to see my ID or anything. Just asked if I was a citizen. A part of me wished he had pulled me over and performed a personal inspection. I felt ashamed for fantasizing about such a thing, but I wish he had taken me into a back room, stripped me down and searched my entire body.

I've been getting a decent amount of likes and new followers on the photos I've been posting from this trip. I feel good about getting positive responses to my naked body on the internet. It helps that the locations are beautiful. Because of the hashtags I've been using, I'm getting a lot of follows from men who also spend a lot of time naked in nature. I am discovering that it's really quite a big community, most of them seem gay but I don't think all of them are. But they all share a love for being naked out in nature. Some of them are more sexual than others, some of them are obviously showing off and thirst trapping. Some call themselves artists, and some are bodybuilders.⁴⁴

The man who checked me in at the hotel desk was definitely gay. He was in his early '40s, Hispanic and he had glowing skin. We chatted a little bit about my travels and my photography, he said he always wished he had gone to school for photography. I told him it was never too late and photography's great because the barrier of entry is so low. It's nice when two people can recognize each other as gay and not even have to say anything. It's like some kind of unspoken code. It's like you automatically know enough about each other to understand that you're safe and you won't get hate crimed, at least not for being gay, you'll definitely be judged for your clothing, hair and accessory choices.

⁴⁴ In the months since I have maintained online relationships with several accounts such as @nudist_jeff - @bare.freedom - @jacquesmackay_art - @mr_tennessee. Bare.freedom is dedicated to posting pictures of naked men for the erotic pleasure, while someone nudist_jeff is just sharing his personal photo and nude hikes and his musings. He is specifically not posting his content for thirst trapping purposes, although he doesn't mind if people look at him with lustful eyes. Some nudist accounts I have found draw very clear lines and block anyone with impure intentions.

Chapter 6.

White Sands, August 3rd-4th

One of my thoughts from early in the trip planning process was to include locations with varied types of nature. White Sands certainly fit that need to photograph somewhere completely different from anywhere else. I had very little idea what to expect, other than a bunch of white sand, and as I progressed towards New Mexico, I became concerned with how I would be able to make interesting photoshoots. Of course, the landscape would be beautiful, but how would I meaningfully add my body to the equation?

The white sands of White Sands National Park popped up very suddenly, like some huge deity had poured out a giant bag of gypsum onto the darker sand of the surrounding area. I arrived right as the visitor center was closing. I pulled up to the ranger station and met a young woman who was hurriedly sweeping her little room. I excitedly pulled out my new annual park pass card and ID. I was getting ready to hand them to her when she waved me on and said enjoy your trip through the park. The park wasn't super busy, but every pull-off spot had several groups of people milling about. I drove to the furthest point that has a 5-mile trail through the dunes. It's pretty much just a tall orange post every couple hundred yards that stakes out where you should hike.



⁴⁵(Bush Boy, White Sands, 2022)

The sun was starting to set, and the sky was doing some interesting things. Over on one of the dunes, a large group was shooting a music video for a song in Spanish. They had instruments and lights and cameras, every couple of minutes they would loudly play the same part of a song, I assume doing multiple takes.

⁴⁵ Always an inspiration for wonderful landscape ideas, Ansel Adam has one known photo from White Sands, and it focuses mostly on scraggly plant life sprouting from a dune. I also photographed some plants, but none of them turned out great. However, I found a big bush, maybe some kind of sage, it was pale dusty green, and it added a fabulous third color to the blue sky and white sand. I created another body collage with the bush, photographing myself multiple times in different poses within it.



(Turn Back, White Sands, 2022)

I walked out into the desert, far enough from a couple of groups who were staking claims. I found a couple areas that looked good for photos, some with mountains in the background, some with just a beautiful contrast between the bright white sand and the darkness of the overcast sky. It felt very natural to take off my clothes, I was only wearing a tank top, mesh shorts, and my Crocs. After 30 minutes of shooting, more people started hiking in my direction, so I trudged out further into the desert.

The white sand against my white skin makes for an interesting contrast and it highlights just how white the sand really is. It is a different texture than the sand in Michigan. This sand is crustier, it has less give even though it's completely dry, it doesn't squeak like the sand I am used to, and it reflects so much light that I had to wear my sunglasses to be able to differentiate one dune from the others.



(Crawl, White Sands, 2022)

There were many signs warning of getting lost in the endless whiteness. Apparently, the dunes move a lot so maintaining a trail is like fighting a losing battle against nature itself. After another 30 minutes of shooting, I heard people getting closer and closer and I felt less and less comfortable being nude. Although it was more, I didn't want them to be angry, mad, or frightened by my nudity. I have little problem now with being nude around people, but I know that they would have a problem with me being nude around them. It was either, hike out a lot further, or turn back. I turned back. I'll go out tomorrow morning to get some early morning sunrise shots. Hopefully if I get there right when the park opens, I'll have at least a couple minutes without many other people around.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ I did manage to find some interesting angles for adding my body to the landscape, and in others I focused more on playing around like I was in a giant sandbox. This was the shortest visit out of my major planned visits. While I was able to get good photos, there were simply too many visitors around the park, and unlike the wooded areas I visited, there were no places to hide. I was simply too vulnerable to the peering eyes of people who might report me to a ranger.



(Farsight, White Sands, 2022)

August 4th.

My second and final day at white sands, I attempted to beat the crowds, but was quickly overrun. I think I would have had more success if I had ventured out much further into the park, but at this point I was exhausted and ready to start my long drive back to Michigan. National parks are simply not built with nudist adventures in mind. I, like many of the other nudists I spoke with, are regulated to sneaking around and just hoping that we don't get caught. Which adds an unnecessary level of stress and danger to an experience that is meant to be peaceful and rejuvenating.

There's not a lot to see in terms of natural beauty on my way back to Michigan now, part of me just wants to rush home and get it over with. I'm a little homesick and I'm pretty tired of driving. This was the final day that I made journal entries, I did not make any other major stops before reaching the endpoint of my trip in Michigan.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

I set out on this trip with several intentions and questions to answer. I wanted to experience and document my body in new and unique locations, creating a strong portfolio of photographic work. I wanted to learn more about the nudist lifestyle through firsthand experience and conversations with real nudists. I wanted to find joy, peace, and relaxation in the arms of Mother Nature. And I wanted to push myself to adventure and learn in ways that would have terrified younger Peter. I accomplished all of those goals. In showing the photographs from this trip, I have been told that they are brilliant, derivative, sexual, colonizing, brave, disgusting, far too much, and not nearly enough. All of those classifications are accurate, to various extents. As the school year went on, my work and research developed, and I realized that this series had the power to be divisive. Attempting to share my work online led to censorship and the near banning of the Stamps official Instagram account. I used the opportunity to speak out about the difficulty of sharing work that is vulnerable and honest, on a highly regulated online platform.

When planning to display this work for my thesis show, I realized that there was a plethora of ways to accomplish my goals. I learned a lot through trial and error during several critiques with my advisors and peers. Eventually I made several decisions, to cut down my images to focus mostly on my body, to show the work grouped by the physical location of where the images were taken, and to display them in a salon style hang.



I printed out each of my edited photos, glued them to a thick MDF board, and covered them with a generous layer of epoxy resin. I spent days sanding down each piece, and eventually I had around sixty images/objects of assorted sizes ready to hang in the gallery.



(Thesis show documentation, 2023)

Additionally, I decided to bring back, and finish, a sculpture that I started during my first year in the Stamps MFA program. During my second semester, I used materials such as latex, foam, and animal hair/skin, to create a lifelike clone of my full body. I thought that it was fitting to bring this physical sculpture back into my work and display it with my photos because unlike my photographs, this was a “real” representation of my body. It can be touched, it has smells, and it brings my presence to the gallery even when I am absent. It was also able to accomplish something that my real body is unable to. By planting the body with different types of grass, moss, and flora, this simulacrum is able to fully return to nature. I paired this sculpture with another artwork made during my first year



(Thesis show documentation, 2023)

When I proposed including the work from Creekridge Campground in my Thesis show, I was advised and asked to censor myself. It was requested that I wall off a separate portion of my gallery space in order to allow visitors to walk through the gallery and have the option not to engage with the images from this experience. I worked with the gallerist to turn this issue into a positive. Using a mixture of walls, plants, and shrubbery, I created a more intimate setting for viewing my more intimate work. My ultimate goal was to share this work in the public forum, and sometimes that means making concessions. In an ideal situation, I would be able to show this work however I wanted to without limitations. It is after all art; it is not pornography. It is not the intent for these images to be used as aids in masturbation. In a perfect situation, I would not need to lessen myself to appease an imagined audience of conservative children. The world I exist in is imperfect and unideal. However, by highlighting me and my work in a major university gallery, we do make positive progress, even if it is marginal.



(Thesis show documentation, 2023)

My work and its impact are not above critique and reproach, regardless of my intent. Nonetheless, I encountered homophobia, fat shaming, sexualization, and “cancel culture”, while sharing my documentation of this journey. I am choosing to use that as a gauge for the success of my work. I succeeded in creating something that can affect people in significant ways, and hopefully sparks urgent conversations about land usage and ownership, bodily autonomy, desexualized nudity, queer sexuality, and human relationships with nature.

Through the process of gathering all this artistic data, and then spending a year researching creating work, and studying myself, I discovered what it means to invest fully into a project. Never before had I spent months planning, executing, and refining a single body of artwork. I did not fully answer my original questions of how bodies exist, function, and are influenced by being in distinct types of locations. But I have added to the lexicon, and there were some minor discoveries along the way. Such as; nudists communities are complex and are not the utopian spaces I had imagined them to be, nature is sublime and I enjoy it most when I am allowed to be free in it, and most publicly accessible parks and nature preserves are not designed to function for nude recreation. There were also more personal realizations like; I work much better when I

feel safe and secure in my surroundings, and I do not need to travel thousands of miles to find welcoming communities and spaces in which I can wander in nude.

I accomplished much of what I had hoped for with my finished work. I shared the beauty in nature and nudity, and I managed to hold onto my queerness and sensuality. To (mis)quote Foucault, where there is power, there is resistance. Repression often produces creativity and expression. I set out on this odyssey and produced all this art as a way to resist that oppression I experience in my life. I found significant moments of unadulterated freedom, and I discovered new sources of persecution. I hope that by reading and viewing my findings and creations, that other people can gain some understanding of me, my process, and all the complexity and exquisiteness that accompany the simple act of being nude.

Citations

Miller, Susan. "'War' on LGBTQ Existence: 8 Ways the Record Onslaught of 650 Bills Targets the Community." USA Today. Gannett Satellite Information Network, April 5, 2023. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2023/03/31/650-anti-lgbtq-bills-introduced-us/11552357002/>.

Krafft-Ebing, R. von, Franklin S. Klaf, Joseph LoPiccolo, and Daniel Blain. *Psychopathia Sexualis: The Classic Study of Deviant Sex*. New York, NY: Arcade Pub./Skyhorse Pub., 2011.

"Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians." Public Information - Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. Accessed April 17, 2023. <https://www.gtbindians.org/pubinfo.asp>.

"Why Nudity Is Required." Bare Oaks, n.d. <https://www.bareoaks.ca/why-nudity-is-required/>.

Frank, Priscilla. "A Brief History of Art Censorship from 1508 to 2014." HuffPost. HuffPost, December 7, 2017. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/art-censorship_n_6465010.

Cables, Herbert. "Special Directive 91-3," n.d. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/policy/upload/SD_91-3.pdf.

Foucault, Michel. "Part One." Essay. In *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage Books, 1990.

"Cindy Sherman. Untitled #153. 1985: Moma." The Museum of Modern Art. Accessed April 17, 2023. <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/56490>.

"Deathspout (War of the Spark) - Gatherer - Magic: The Gathering." Gatherer. Accessed April 17, 2023. <https://gatherer.wizards.com/pages/Card/Details.aspx?multiverseid=461116>.

Edelman. *No Future: *Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

Williams, John A. Introduction. In *Turning to Nature in Germany: Hiking, Nudism, and Conservation, 1900-1940*, 20. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007.

"Otter Creek Beach." Nudist compass - otter creek beach. Accessed April 16, 2023. <https://nudistcompass.com/place/884>.

"Dunes, Hazy Sun, White Sands National Monument." The Ansel Adams Gallery. Accessed April 16, 2023. <https://shop.anseladams.com/products/dunes-hazy-sun-white-sands-national-monument>.

"Redacted Report on Child Sexual Abuse in the Archdiocese of Baltimore ..."
www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov. Accessed April 17, 2023.
<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/040523.pdf>.

Momen, Rayna E. "Living on the Edge: Trans Exclusion, Survival, and Resistance." ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, n.d.

Jordan, Jamal. "LGBTQ Youth Want Role Models. Queer Elders have a Lot of Advice." WP Company LLC d/b/a The Washington Post.

Carnaghi, A., Rusconi, P., Bianchi, M., Fasoli, F., Coladonato, R., & Hegarty, P. (2022). No country for old gay men: Age and sexuality category intersection renders older gay men invisible. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 25(4), 964–989.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430220987606>

Roberts, Chuck. "Mescalero Apache Perform Blessing Ceremony at White Sands Missile Range." News. Las Cruces Sun-News, August 17, 2019.
<https://www.lcsun-news.com/story/news/local/2019/08/17/mescalero-apache-perform-blessing-ceremony-white-sands-missile-range/2039955001/>.

Official Site of the Crow Tribe Executive Branch. Accessed April 24, 2023.
<http://www.crow-nsn.gov/>.

"Dunes, Hazy Sun, White Sands National Monument," The Ansel Adams Gallery, accessed April 16, 2023,
<https://shop.anseladams.com/products/dunes-hazy-sun-white-sands-national-monument>.

Muñoz, Jose Esteban 1967-2013, Ann Pellegrini, Tavia Amolo Ochieng' Verfasser eines Vorworts wpr Nyong'o, Joshua Takano Verfasser eines Vorworts wpr Chambers-Letson, Jose Esteban Muñoz, Ann Pellegrini, Tavia Amolo Ochieng' Nyong'o, and Joshua Takano Chambers-Letson. *Cruising Utopia, 10th Anniversary Edition The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. Tenth Anniversary edition. Sexual Cultures. New York: New York University Press, 2019.

Mortimer-Sandilands, Catriona, Rachel Stein, Bruce Erickson, Stacy Alaimo, David Bell, Giovanna Di Chiro, Andil Gosine, Katie Hogan, Gordon Brent Ingram, and Ladelle McWhorter. *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire*. Bloomington, UNITED STATES: Indiana University Press, 2010.
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/umichigan/detail.action?docID=3014847>.