In 1872 Congress established Yellowstone National Park, and its vast wonders soon mesmerized early sightseers. One of them, William Wallace Wylie, visited in July 1880. The school superintendent was immediately smitten. He returned to Bozeman, Montana, and arranged his first tour group a few weeks later. His initial effort evolved into a full-fledged business, and from 1896 to 1905 the Wylie Camping Company fed, sheltered, and guided thousands of Victorian vacationers through relaxed week-long tours of geysers, hot pools, waterfalls, and trails.

Despite the park’s wilderness setting, Wylie lured travelers with promises of comfort, ease, and delicious meals, claiming such luxuries as “woven wire springs under fine mattress beds; no sleeping on the ground…fine covered buggies to ride in.” His “new method of caring for tourists” embraced separate dining tents, partitioned sleeping tents heated with stoves, informative outings, and fresh-air bonfires. His policy of hiring honest, hard-working college students and teachers who utilized the park as an outdoor classroom set an example for concessions throughout Yellowstone and other national parks.

But operating the Wylie Camping Company was a formidable task. There were bears, runaway horses, and cantankerous stage coach drivers. Anecdotes include observations of wildlife, the arrest of a bison poacher, and an altercation with the park’s game warden, Buffalo Jones. In order to serve his unique clientele, Wylie contended with park superintendents, railroad officials, Washington, D.C., legislators, and various other political personalities. Eventually the demands became too great, and he sold his business. But the Wylie Camping Company and its owner’s unswerving efforts helped develop, define, and preserve tourism in the West, particularly in America’s first national park.
Remote and rugged, Idaho's Priest Lake has remained a wild place. Even today, the upper lake is accessible only by foot, mountain bike, or boat. Despite being a favored location for Native American encampments, brutal winters discouraged any permanent settlement. Finally, beginning in the 1890s, adventurous souls—a wide cast of homesteaders, prospectors, speculators, and loggers, all dazzled by its natural resources—tried their best to tame it, with limited success.

Priest Lake's impressive white pine forests did not escape notice, but grand turn-of-the-century Western expansion bypassed the area, sparing its idyllic beauty. Most venture capitalists considered the ore and timber too expensive to extract. At the same time, forestry leaders like Gifford Pinchot were guiding the country toward new land management and conservation ideals. By creating the Priest River Forest Reserve in 1897, President Cleveland expanded federal influence over the region and introduced an enduring tension between public and private lands. Still, over the ensuing decades industrial and recreational use increased.

The Dalkena Lumber Company won a Forest Service contract in 1914, and within three years, there were thirteen logging camps. The Diamond Match Company was another major lumber harvester. Along with timber, summer cottages were in demand, and rangers doled out national and state land permits in mounting numbers. Families christened their cabins with names like the Playawhile, Sylvan Haunt, Slabsides, and This-L-Du as they created a seasonal community cherished for generations.

Devastating wildfires—especially in 1926—also initiated profound change. During the Depression a few years later, work by the Civilian Conservation Corps centered on fire suppression, although conservation efforts and recreational improvements were also part of their mandate. After World War II, population growth accelerated. Electricity became commonplace in the 1940s, and in 1947, a local newspaper crowed, “Priest Lake has become a cult with many vacationists.”

Today, every privately-owned acre and lot represents past optimism, opportunity, hard work, greed, or politics. *Wild Place* traces those remnants—focusing on little-known yet captivating stories of the colorful characters who navigated Priest Lake's demanding physical, political, and economic challenges.
River Song

Naxiyamtáma (Snake River-Palouse) Oral Traditions from Mary Jim, Andrew George, Gordon Fisher, and Emily Peone

Collected and edited by Richard D. Scheuerman and Clifford E. Trafzer
Foreword by Carrie Jim Schuster
With color plates by John Clement

“An invaluable treasure of Indigenous insights and experiences not previously publically shared, River Song is a wonderful entry into what is most cherished within the homes of four Naxiyamtáma family traditions.”
—Rodney Frey, Professor of American Indian Studies and Anthropology at the University of Idaho and author of Landscape Traveled by Coyote and Crane: The World of the Schitsu’umsh-Coeur d’Alene Indians

For many generations into the twentieth century Mary Jim, her family, and their ancestors lived a free and open life on the Columbia Plateau. They moved on horseback from the Snake River to Badger Mountain to Oregon’s Blue Mountains. They interacted and intermarried within a vast region in the Northwest, and their stories are rich in content, interpretation, and nuance.

Denied a place on their ancestral lands, the original Snake River-Palouse people were forced to scatter. After most relocated to Nez Perce, Umatilla, Warm Springs, Yakama, and Colville reservations, maintaining their cultural identity became increasingly difficult. Still, elders continued to pass down oral histories to their descendants, insisting youngsters listen with rapt attention.

Beginning in the 1970s and continuing over three decades, Naxiyamtáma elders—in particular Mary Jim, Andrew George, Gordon Fisher, and Emily Peone—chose to share their stories with a research team. They hoped to teach American Indian history in a traditional manner as well as refute incorrect versions. In the process, multiple themes emerged—a pervasive spirituality tied to the Creator and environment; a covenant relationship and sacred trust to protect and preserve their traditional lands; storytelling as a revered art form that reveals life lessons, and finally, belief in cyclical time and blood memory.

All four of the featured elders had ties to the Plateau people’s leadership families and had lived in the traditional way—gathering, hunting, and fishing. They participated in the ancient Wáshani religion and were raised to honor the Creator through First Food ceremonies. In their retelling, the authors have endeavored to capture their original voices and remain true to Snake River-Palouse oral traditions.

Creation stories include “The Creatures of Cloudy Mountain,” “Why Coyote Made the Palouse Hills,” and “The Origin of Palouse Falls.” Although narratives told by other groups are similar to Mary Jim’s “How Coyote Learned to Fish,” and Gordon Fisher’s “How Beaver Brought Fire to the People,” the versions in River Song offer a distinct Naxiyamtáma perspective.

Authors Richard Scheuerman, Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at Seattle Pacific University, and Clifford Trafzer, Distinguished Professor of History and Costo Chair in Native American Studies at the University of California-Riverside, previously paired up to write the award-winning book, Renegade Tribe: The Palouse Indians and the Invasion of the Pacific Northwest. In River Song, they also describe their method and approach—one that will serve as a model for conducting Native American cultural research.
Encounters with the People
Written and Oral Accounts of Nez Perce Life to 1858
Compiled and edited by Dennis Baird, Diane Mallickan, and William R. Swagerty

Organized both chronologically and thematically, Encounters with the People is an edited, annotated compilation of unique primary sources related to Nez Perce history—Native American oral histories, diary excerpts, military reports, maps, and more. Generous elders shared their collective memory of carefully-guarded stories passed down through multiple generations. One described the level of attentiveness required to preserve their oral history as “so still to listen that you could hear a bird take a drink of water on the other side of the mountain.” The work begins with early Nimiipuu/Euro-American contact and extends to the period immediately after the Treaty of 1855 held at Walla Walla.

The editors scoured archives, federal document repositories, and state and local historical museums in search of little-known documents related to regional cultural and environmental history. Most of the selected material is published here for the first time or is found only in obscure sources. Part of the Voices from Nez Perce Country series, Encounters with the People includes a thorough, up-to-date, annotated bibliography. Those interested in the Nez Perce, Native American Studies, Lewis and Clark, early missionary work, and Inland Northwest settlement will find it an essential reference work.

Co-editor Dennis Baird is a professor emeritus at the University of Idaho, and is the author/editor of eight books. Diane Mallickan is Nez Perce and Shoshone Paiute. Following studies at the University of Idaho, she became a park ranger and has served for more than two decades. She wrote a research paper on Starr Maxwell which was used in the University of Idaho Library reprint of Memorial of the Nez Perce Indians Residing in the State of Idaho to the Congress of the United States as well as Snake River Basin Adjudication testimonies. William R. Swagerty is the director of the John Muir Center at University of the Pacific and a contributor to the Smithsonian’s Handbook of North American Indians.

A WSU CLASSIC BACK IN PRINT

Fields of Toil
A Migrant Family’s Journey
Isabel Valle

As a reporter on special assignment for the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin, Isabel Valle spent an entire year with a migrant family, sharing domestic and other responsibilities. Every Sunday the newspaper published her award-winning, widely acclaimed reports on life with the Raul and Maria Elena Martinez family. As they resided and worked in the Inland Pacific Northwest and South Texas, Valle investigated topics such as the difficulties of asparagus cutting, drug smuggling and illegal aliens, children working in the fields, and Hispanic customs. She also examined cultural acceptance and language barriers. Her invaluable insights refuted stereotypes and replaced misconceptions.
RECENT RELEASES

**In the Path of Destruction**  
*Eyewitness Chronicles of Mount St. Helens*  
Richard Waitt

“The air had no oxygen, like being trapped underwater…I was being cremated, the pain unbearable.”—Jim Scymanky

“I was on my knees, my back to the hot wind. It blew me along, lifting my rear so I was up on my hands…It was hot but I didn’t feel burned—until I felt my ears curl.”—Mike Hubbard

A napping volcano blinked awake in March 1980. Two months later, the mountain roared. Author Richard Waitt was one of the first to arrive following the mountain’s early rumblings. A geologist with intimate knowledge of Mount St. Helens, Waitt delivers a detailed and accurate chronicle of events. The eruption story unfolds through unforgettable, riveting narratives—the heart of a masterful chronology that also delivers engrossing science, history, and journalism.

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**Coal Wars**  
*Unions, Strikes, and Violence in Depression-Era Central Washington*  
David Bullock

Strikes were a way of life for central Washington coal miners and their families, but Tuesday, April 3, 1934, was different. This time, people were afraid. Wives and mothers pelted cars with rocks, rotten eggs, and cow pies. They cursed and assaulted anyone who dared to cross their picket line. This time, conflicting union alliances turned residents of Roslyn, Cle Elem, and Ronald against each other, and the heated, violent battle left deep, lasting scars.

A refreshingly balanced account, Coal Wars captures the details surrounding a dual union movement in the 1930s American West while portraying the region’s melting pot of working families and the socio-political impacts of New Deal policies. Author David Bullock witnessed the bitter emotions first hand. His grandfather, a Roslyn miner, lived through the events depicted in Coal Wars.

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**Barnyards and Birkenstocks**  
*Why Farmers and Environmentalists Need Each Other*  
Don Stuart

Rural America is struggling. Family agriculture is gradually fading, and prime farmland is often converted into environmentally harmful applications. But food cultivation has ecological consequences, too. Farms consume eighty percent of the nation’s water. Although they often prevent sprawling development, improve water quality, or provide wildlife habitat, they also pollute rivers, drain wetlands, or emit destructive greenhouse gasses.

Don Stuart believes two dangerous trends—the loss of farms and damage to ecosystems—are connected, and that a major cause is the political deadlock between farmers and environmental activists. He offers a radical proposal: collaboration. To promote empathy and point out the costs of continued political impasse, he presents opposing perspectives. Topics include incentives, regulations, government spending, environmental markets, growth management, climate change, public lands grazing, and the Federal Farm Bill. Drawing from a lifetime spent settling conflicts, he identifies characteristics of successful community programs to suggest a model for a prosperous, healthy future.

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**Native Trees of Western Washington**  
*A Photographic Guide*  
Kevin Zobrist

In Native Trees of Western Washington, Washington State University’s Kevin Zobrist examines regional indigenous trees from a forestry specialist’s unique perspective. He explains basic tree physiology and a key part of their ecology—forest stand dynamics. He groups distinctive varieties into sections, all lavishly illustrated with full-color photographs. The result is a delightful and enlightening exploration of regional timberlands.

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