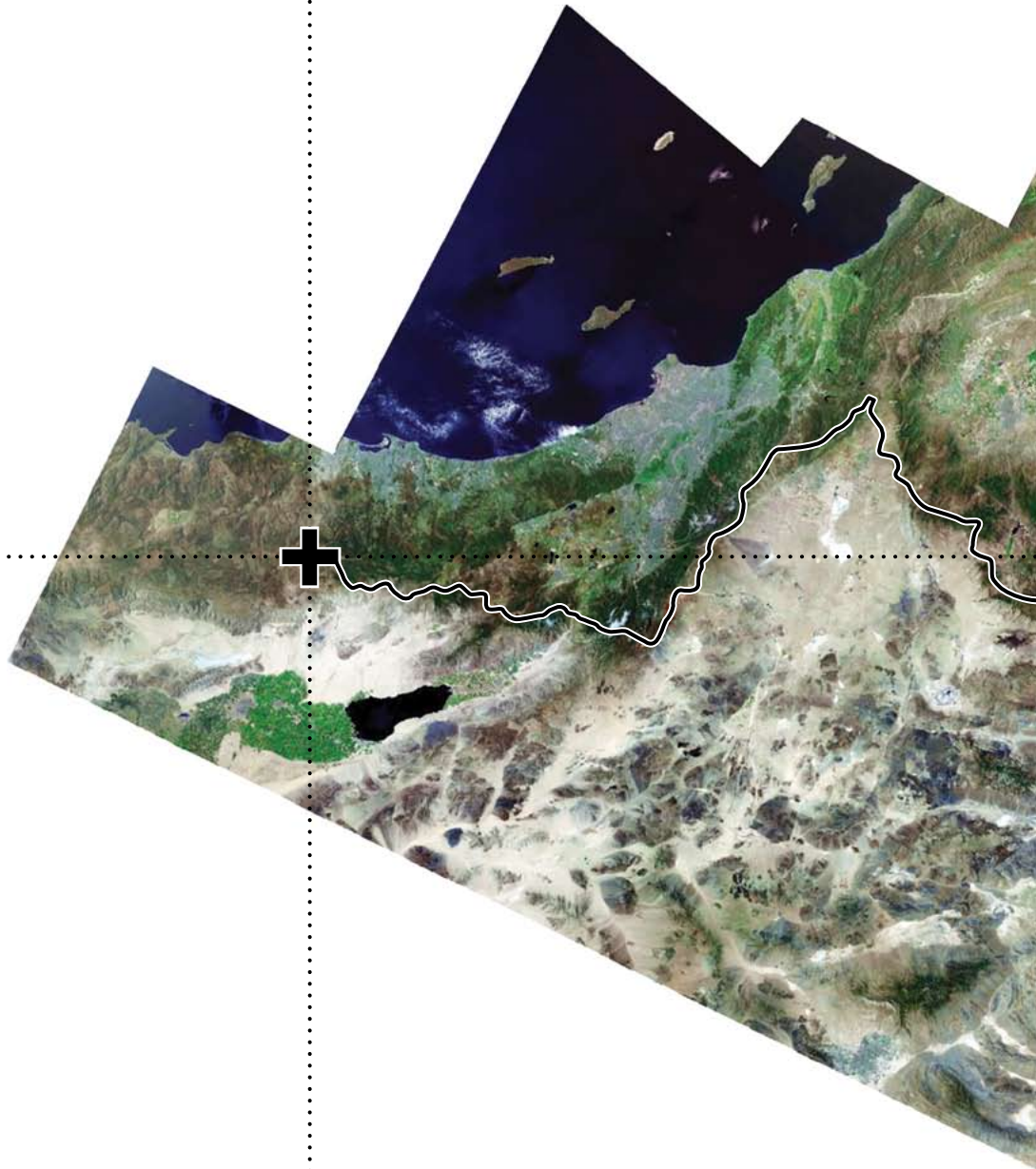


Beyond the horizon \_ >

PCT





*“A normal man acts abnormally because  
he is obedient to tribal tradition,  
not out of disobedience to it.*

~

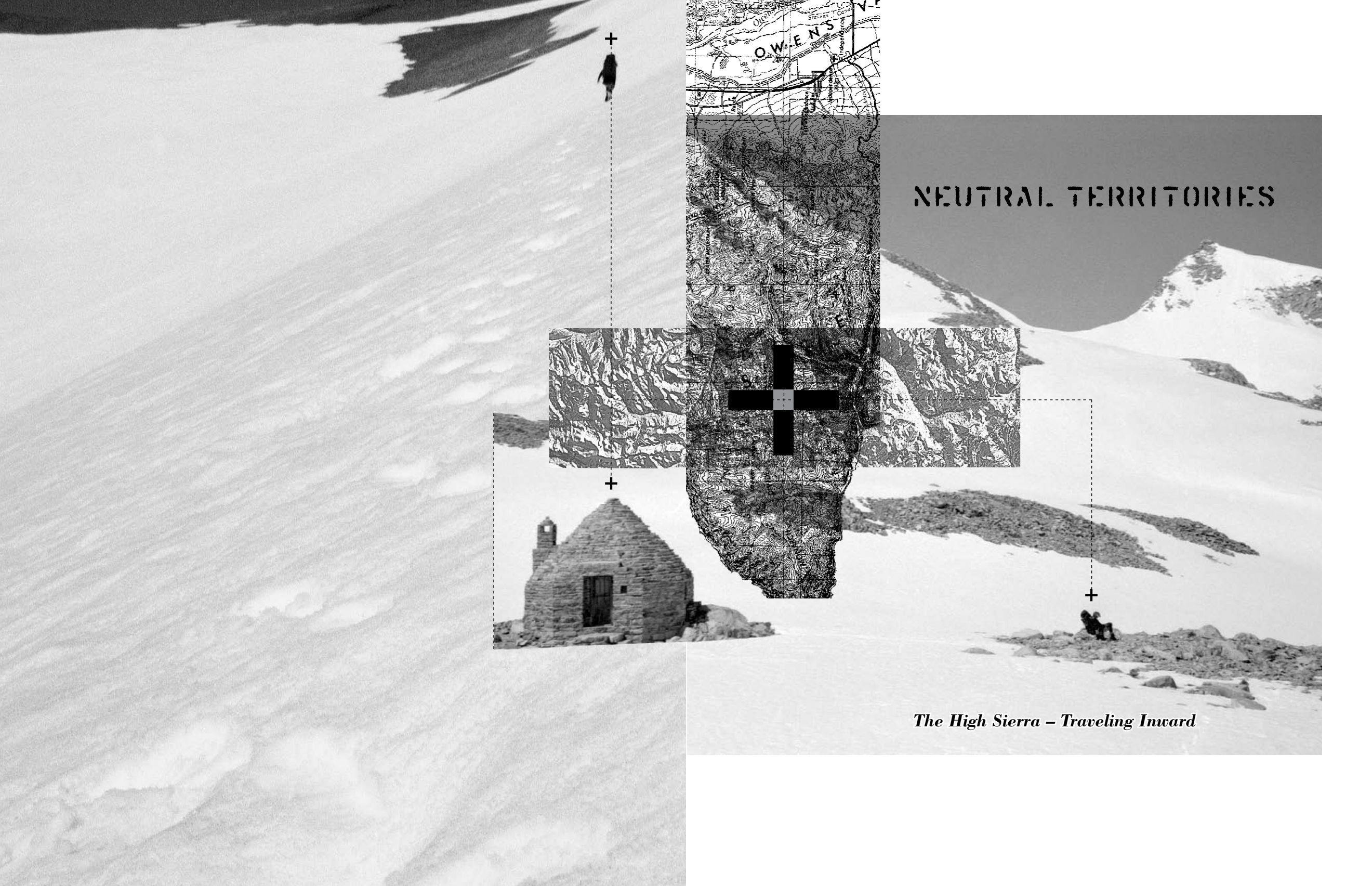
*He does not evade but fulfills  
his duties as a citizen.”*

*— Victor W. Turner  
from *Between and Between:  
The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage**

*P<sub>a</sub>C<sub>T</sub> Beyond the horizon*

**FOLIO / EXCERPT / TEASER**

This 16 page folio is an excerpt of an 80 page travelogue documenting a 82 day, 1700 mile walk across the physical world and the resulting eleven year journey into metaphysical interiors. ¶ For notification on the publication of *P<sub>a</sub>C<sub>T</sub> Beyond the horizon* (Fall of 2007) please mail the enclosed card.



NEUTRAL TERRITORIES

*The High Sierra – Traveling Inward*

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Dylan and I live in the woods. We went into a town, sat around, and watched television over the Memorial Day weekend.

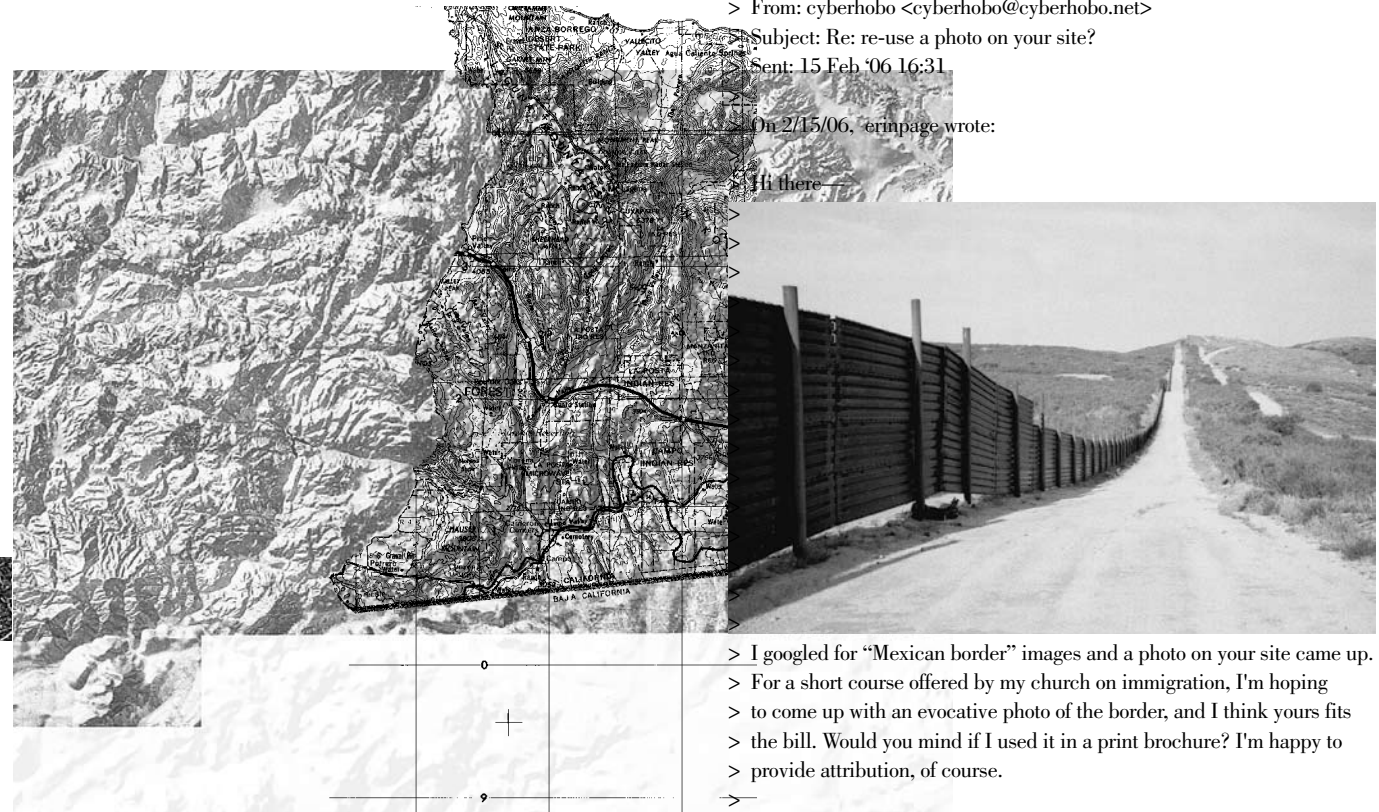
I don't know for certain if we've been walking for thirty seven days. It is only for posterity that I keep track. Rather than having to recall the date or day of the week I count. The camera's digital date display was turned off for good a few days ago. It never seemed to know the date either. Whenever numbers could be confirmed through laborious recollecting the camera would be wrong. Initially I liked the date feature as it imbued my snapshots with the cold impression of evidence. Though an appealing aesthetic, the date stamp didn't keep geologic time. Relative to ourselves, the land we walk through is timeless. It has preceded and will follow us for millions of years. Passing through this space is not necessary for it to be valid. Commemorating the fine views is certainly worthwhile. Photos will provide me relics of experience. All images, however, have the potential to take on a life independent of the place, time, and photographer who spawned them. Creating a dated image is a megalomaniacal attempt to confine the gaze presented to the time I was present – and to trap the land into the narrow confines of my experience.

Example A: Extrapolation of the camera date feature. >



Late this afternoon, we mounted a knoll jutting off a westward saddle of Olancha Peak. Ominous snow crowned peaks of the high Sierra rose out of the forested valley below. The view finder of my point and shoot scanned across the awe inspiring panorama. I laughed to myself and put the camera back in the pack.

There's just *no way*.



> -----Original Message-----  
> From: cyberhobo <cyberhobo@cyberhobo.net>  
> Subject: Re: re-use a photo on your site?  
> Sent: 15 Feb '06 16:31  
> On 2/15/06, erinpage wrote:  
> Hi there

> I googled for "Mexican border" images and a photo on your site came up.  
> For a short course offered by my church on immigration, I'm hoping  
> to come up with an evocative photo of the border, and I think yours fits  
> the bill. Would you mind if I used it in a print brochure? I'm happy to  
> provide attribution, of course.  
>  
> The picture I like is [LINK: <http://www.cyberhobo.net/PCT/pct02.jpg> ]  
>  
> For context, my church, Plymouth Congregational in Seattle,  
> is a mainline socially liberal church. The course, "Building Bridges, Not  
> Walls," is meant to give its participants a better understanding of the  
> complexities around the causes of migration and ways that a faith  
> community can respond with care and empathy.  
>  
> Please let me know! Thanks very much.  
>  
> Erin Page

Example B: \_ >

I received the above forward from Dylan on the first day of this project, while laying out the adjacent page. It pertains to a photo I took of the Mexican Border on 04.15.96 – day 01 of our 82 day walk. I started working on this text from day 37 in an attempt to highlight the familial relationships one leaves behind when embarking on a Territorial Passage. We were leaving my Mom's house heading into the high country. Receiving the link to my own picture from day 01 affirmed that I was beginning this journey again. Its appearance in my in box also told me that I should really go back and start at the beginning. Despite our detour to Mom's, by day 37 we were well into the neutral zone and wide open to the meaningful coincidences of



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Looking forward to the luxury of a day hike, we stowed our gear, with the exception of lunch, cameras, ice axes, and all our cold weather cloths, in the bear box and headed up the 8.7 mile, 4,150 foot altitude gain. Our packs looked deflated.

Snow completely obstructed the trail after a couple miles. Reflected sun intensified the blanket of white. A set of switch-backs rose in the distance up an immense snow laden slope. The morning snow was stiff and we practiced chiseling foot holds out of it with our ice axes. Elevation made me lethargic. Topping out on the slope we met a trail coming up from the eastern slope and turned south toward the summit. Fifteen to twenty feet of rock rose to our right marking the top of the ridge. An occasional break in the ridge exposed a stupefying glimpse of Owen's Valley, almost ten thousand feet straight down.

Four people and a dog, all from Los Angeles, were sitting on the peak. We swapped cameras and took group pictures backgrounded by panoramic vistas. I took a photo of the view from the highest outhouse in the United States at 14,460 feet. So many people hike to the summit during the summer that the Forrest Service had to build an outhouse. The "honey pot" has to be

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synchronicity. While attempting to illustrate, "All images have the potential to take on a life independent of the place, time, and the photographer who spawned them", I received Erin's email – a more profound demonstration of the point. According to psychologist Carl Jung, such meaningful coincidences build a bridge between the conscious and unconscious. Jung explains Synchronicity as the manifestation in the consciousness of archetypes,

airlifted out by helicopter. Because the helicopter can't land on the uneven slope, a ranger has to hike to the summit in order to clip the cable to the pay load – our tax dollars at work.

Looking from whence we came then toward our destination was humbling. To the south were green meadows surrounded by a couple of snow capped mountains. To the north, our destination, snowy plateaus and hulking granite peaks stretched as far as the eye could see.

There will be several tough creek fords tomorrow. At 13,195 feet Forester Pass will be our main obstacle. It is the highest point on the PCT. My Uncle Keith described the pass to me as "switchbacks chiseled out of granite cliffs." It is described in the book as "dangerous when covered with snow."

4  
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Though Whitney Creek was only knee deep, the prospect of wading fifteen feet of icy snow runoff to the frost caked far bank in the pre-dawn light was keeping me cocooned from the outside world at the bottom of my sleeping bag.

Dyl found a place to try rock hopping the creek. A couple rocks peeked out of the water setting up a big step to a partially submerged tree trunk. I absentmindedly waited my turn. He gingerly stepped out to the second smaller rock, squatted slowly and, much to my dismay, stretched way out to hack ice off the tree trunk with his axe. I wandered down-stream to look for a better crossing spot. The banks closed into six foot high granite walls about fifteen feet above a waterfall. By following a ledge out a few feet, I could make a large step to the pointy nub of an almost submerged rock. It was too far to shift my center of balance onto the perch. I could wobble for a couple of seconds on one foot before having to step back to the ledge. Gathering nerve, I placed my first foot, stepped out with my second, wobbled with both feet for a second, jumped three feet to a flat rock and then to the bank. It was difficult and potentially dangerous, with the falls downstream, but seemed preferable to getting my feet wet. On the next creek crossing, with my confidence up, I unwittingly hopped onto an ice glazed rock. My torso went backward and my legs forward. I landed in fetal position on the rock with my left arm stuck up to the shoulder in freezing water.

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"mental forms whose presence cannot be explained by anything in the individual's own life and which seem to be aboriginal, innate, and inherited shapes of the human mind." Symbolic motifs common to all humans and drawn like clear water from a dark well. To those of us vainly sifting expired dreams through a kaleidoscope of collapsing subjective relativism, archetypes function as way markers left for us by the ancestors who cut this path. I'm positive that someone has deconstructed Jung's claim that we can all access a common consciousness. Jung, however, anticipates all criticism by cheekily stating that his detractors do not know as much about the unconscious as he.

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I'm index aided quote pulling from a copy of Jung's *Man and His Symbols*. This particular book was a gift from Captain Bill – a wizened hippie whose couch Dylan had made his home.

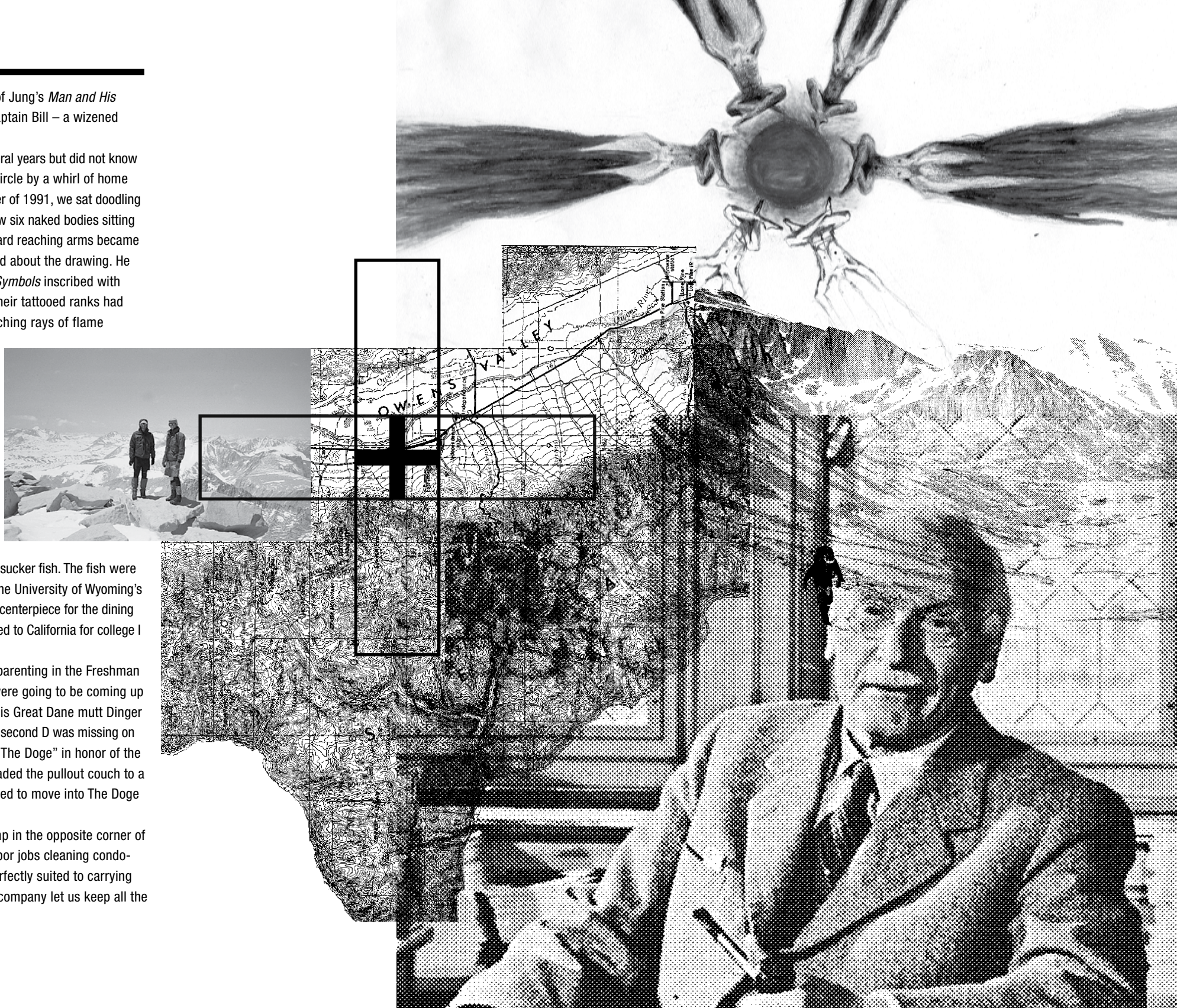
Dylan and I had been acquaintances for several years but did not know each other well. I was drawn into his and Bill's circle by a whirl of home cooking and tall tales. One evening, in the summer of 1991, we sat doodling at Bill's kitchen table with his two little kids. I drew six naked bodies sitting cross-legged around a sun. Their heads and upward reaching arms became rays of flame. Captain Bill was maniacally excited about the drawing. He insisted that I take his hardbound *Man and His Symbols* inscribed with "Chaos Manor" and his address. Within a year, their tattooed ranks had reduced to four on my outer arm. The upward reaching rays of flame reformed into a symmetrical cross of hands enveloping the earth on my inner bicep.

Our summer hanging out at Chaos Manor was a pivot into young adulthood. Both of us still lived with our parents, in the kind of tenuous way that eighteen-year-olds do. Dylan crashed at Chaos Manor most of the time. I was (in my mind) "visiting" my Dad. He had a pullout couch.

Dylan and I became forever friends the afternoon he asked a receptionist at Sun Tan USA if he could tan a whirling formaldehyde jar of sucker fish. The fish were liberated, with my Dad as an accomplice, from the University of Wyoming's Biology store room. They came to a final rest as a centerpiece for the dining room table at Chaos Manor. Sometime after I moved to California for college I heard that the jar broke – an inevitable outcome.

After a full nine months of autonomy from parenting in the Freshman Dorms, I moved back to Wyoming. School bills were going to be coming up in Fall and I needed a job – my first. Dylan and his Great Dane mutt Dinger had been sleeping in a silver grey Dodge van. The second D was missing on the grill making it a DO GE. We referred to it as "The Doge" in honor of the Dukes that ruled classical Venice. Dad had upgraded the pullout couch to a guest bedroom with a queen sized bed; but I opted to move into The Doge with Dylan and Dinger.

We expanded our habitat by setting up camp in the opposite corner of the state from Chaos Manor. We took migrant labor jobs cleaning condominiums in Jackson Wyoming. The Doge was perfectly suited to carrying wads of sheets and towels. The condo cleaning company let us keep all the food we found.



CHAOS MAJOR  
808 Sec 14 4214  
ADAM 82070



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Since The Doge had no refrigeration unit we had to consume perishables, sometimes gallons of ice cream, on the spot. We were sleeping in tents up Cache Creek Canyon southeast of town. To get to camp we'd park The Doge at the Gros Ventre trail head and walk a couple miles up the trail to a large encampment of hard case drunks. Our self-appointed guardians would cheerily invite us over for Mad Dog 20-20 when we crossed Cache Creek on a log adjacent to their hovel.

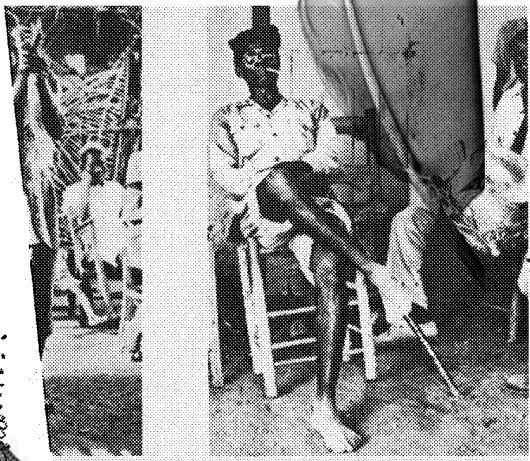
Our time together drew to a close after a hallucinatory late summer night. We clawed our way to the top of Gros Ventre Butte to watch the sunset. Dylan kept hiking back into the pine forests. I walked to the rocky end of the butte, perhaps the most picturesque place on earth. The Grand Tetons, mountains so iconic that everyone has a mental image of them pre-loaded by television and advertising, dominated the vista. To the north, thousands of elk had come down from the mountains to graze in the wide valley of The Teton Elk Refuge. I lay down and watched a thunder storm build from the southwest, near the Snake River, roll up the valley, rain on me, move north, and dissipate onto the high plain just south of Yellowstone. During the heavy hour-long storm I nestled into the dirt in an effort to hide from bursts of lightning which periodically lashed the butte. The more it rained the more I was able to wallow myself into the earth. After sunset, covered in mud, I scrambled down the face of the butte. At a county road, I crossed a barb wired fence into a manicured pasture. In the middle of the field, a pale horse snorted and twitched. Clouds still broiling in my mind went the way of their thunder bearing brethren into the sky. A pants wetting calm wiped across me.

On the way back to camp, Dylan came skipping out of the trees at the edge of the road. He had spent the night running with Coyotes back into the mountains, yelping whenever his turn came. A week later Dylan decided his days as a condo cleaner were over. His dad had just walked into the Windriver Mountains, a couple hundred miles to the southeast, to climb Gannett Peak. Dylan knew what day his dad was hiking in, not where he would be camping or at what pace he'd be walking. Fresh off his navigation lessons from the coyotes he left confident that he would have no problem catching up. Without the safe harbor of The Doge, I was cast adrift for another month of toilet bowl scrubbing and head sorting.





bull. They are one way the LM -  
to participate in culturally do-  
cument... "civilized" man erects



Among primitives, "possession" implies that a god or demon has taken over a human body. Above left, a Haitian woman collapses in a religious ecstasy. Above center and right, Haitians possessed by the god Gherde, who is invariably manifested in this position, legs crossed, cigarette in mouth.

thing more than its obvious  
& that is never precisely  
an understanding, we constantly  
refuse or fully comprehend.  
) limit the perception of the



The fire ignited in me by that 1992 lightning storm on Gros Ventre Butte was stoked to an inferno after the walk. Not able to go about my days wearing the tattered suit, I began to weave a behavioral hair-shirt. Distracted by the numbers on my first attempt to read the Bible, I began a daily ritual of cutting them all out, verse, chapter, and page, with an Exacto blade. I quit breaking contact with the Earth. I'm not afraid of flying. I'm a conscientious objector. Within the frame of my artificial phobia, jet-lag is the time it takes an Earth-bound soul to catch up with its body. Recently I began constructing an artificial phobia of having my picture taken. So far, I've avoided full investment in the "primitive" notion that a camera steals your soul. If I lost my license I couldn't have my photograph taken for a new one. When I lost my passport I'd be left with my illegible college i.d.. (My high school i.d. had been traded to Dylan for the dread lock on the crown of his head.) Inevitably I would lose my last piece of identification. As persona-non-grata, citizen of the planet, I would feel a profound pull to composite my eccentricities into a comprehensive quest: circle the surface of the earth with no identification – carrying a multi-language translation of the following passage from Numbers in my numberless Bible, "Let me pass through thy land: we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the waters of well: but we will go along by the kings highway, until we pass by thy borders."

I still don't fly, though I plan to on 11/11/06 – after eleven years. I'm flirting with the idea of not letting anyone take my picture for the next eleven years – timed so I can resume the documentation of this story in 2018. It would lend symmetry to my eleven years without flight. Both are about personal relationships to common technologies that have radically changed global culture. Not having my image at hand would facilitate a much needed creative transition. I'm tired of reproducing my visage, and showing it to others, to you, to exploring my identity as art, to waving my hands in the air and yelling, "Everybody look at ME!"

There are no plans to circle the earth, unless they involve flying, and perhaps a cruise in there somewhere. I used to call the detritus of my undertakings "the artificial by-products of insanity." As I get more enmeshed in the rhythm of marriage, property, and career I'm just not finding the time it takes to produce projects that look like they were executed by someone with a serious problem. The numberless Bible remains halfway finished – somewhere around page six hundred. Though a tinge of obsessive behavior still haunts the corners, I don't think my activities were, or are, a product of poor mental health. I think they are a product of ambition. Yet, why was my ambition so far afield? Does approaching life in such a highly constructed yet backwards manner add value? To me? To our culture?

A stone shack with glass windows sat atop Muir Pass. We went inside and signed the trail register. Psycho Ken and LETITBE had notations. I added a quote from Uncle Dewey's travel quote book that has stuck in my head.

***"All journeys begin and end the same way.  
All travel is a form of gradual self-extinction."***  
— Shiva, *Destroyer of Worlds*

I was feeling better yet fatigue still grasped at me. I began to lag behind in an effort to gain some mental space. Occasional trees broke up the terrain. Near one such outcropping I came upon a complete backbone. I picked up the interlocking vertebrae and held them at eye level. The spine fell apart and the vertebrae scattered on the ground. I stood for a moment stunned at my effect on the remains. With a vertebrae remaining in my hand, I chased off after Dylan to prevent him from disappearing onto the distance.

I had a dream last night. No, it was a premonition. Rather, the dream felt like a premonition. It has remained with me vividly all day. Dyl and I were inside the main hall of a great cathedral. Stained glass and carved wood banisters filled walls that stretched up endlessly to a high ceiling. Thousands of people filled the immense space. A Popeish figure stood at the pulpit giving mass. All very Catholic, this scene appeared, very old world European. Dylan sat out in the sea of anonymous bodies. I sat near the entry way on the type of simple table one usually finds cluttering the wings of such grandiose buildings. With me was a bright yellow inflated rubber ducky. It had some sort of bright red shirt or costume emblazoned with a gold lightning bolt. Ducky was me. I still sat there next to it, but it was me. Like a voodoo doll or talisman, Ducky and I were interchangeable. A charity box was being passed around with odds and ends, mostly clothes. In it were two immaculately shiny inflatable black boots, Ducky's size. Each had wings off either side like the sandals of that Greek messenger. I think Hermes is his name. A gold bolt which matched the shirt graced each boot. The boots radiated power. They were, for Ducky, like the super hero Green Lantern's ring. Without it, Green Lantern was just a guy in a funny costume. With it, he had super powers. I put the boots on Ducky and began to pump him with my hand. He squeaked with each squeeze. The squeaks overpowered all sound in the space; yet, everyone ignored it instead focusing on the sermon. Dyl's ears too were pricked by the squeaks. He bolted from his chair gesticulating maniacally and screaming, "The Ducky's got the boots! The Ducky's got the boots!" It was an indescribably profound and empowering moment. Everyone stopped, including the Pope guy, looked at Dylan, and listened to the squeaks. No one seemed to understand. They were only intrigued by the interruption. The moment passed. Dyl looked around silently and sat back down. Mass continued.





Territorial Passages are liminal rites that form the transformative core of coming of age rituals. It is the phase in which the participant is between what they had been and what they will become. The ritual participant is in a wholly sacred realm, open to the imprinting of mystical symbols in the form of dreams, visions, or meaningful coincidence. In aboriginal societies visions and dreams are interpreted in accordance with strictly prescribed cultural codes. Anthropologist Victor Turner describes vision quests among Native American boys as, “a type of situation in which there is no room for secular compromise, evasion, manipulation, casuistry and maneuver in the field of custom, rule and norm.”

Fire Lame Deer, a Lakota Sioux from the Black Hills, provides an example in the description of his coming-of-age Rite of Passage. He prayed that Wakan Tanka, The Great Spirit, would bestow upon him a healers vision so he could become a Medicine Man – a prestigious occupation in any culture.

Left alone, in a dirt pit at the top of a hill, Lame Deer worried that he would dream of the Wakinyan, Thunder Birds, or that a thunder storm would roll in. Such an event would determine that his latent mischievousness was of more importance to the tribes’ greater good than his skills at healing. When boys are visited by Thunder Birds on their vision quests, or lightning strikes their hill, they immediately become the Heyoka, or backwards man. Heyokas ride their horses backward into battle and face the entrance to their sweat lodges in the wrong direction. They are sacred clowns that live their life as an example of what not to do. In keeping with Turner’s observation, Lame Deer never mentions or even insinuates that if the hill were to be struck by lightning that he would tell the elders otherwise upon his return. Turner’s summation describes Lame Deer’s potential dilemma, “A normal man acts abnormally because he is obedient to tribal tradition, not out of disobedience to it. He does not evade but fulfills his duties as a citizen.”

