

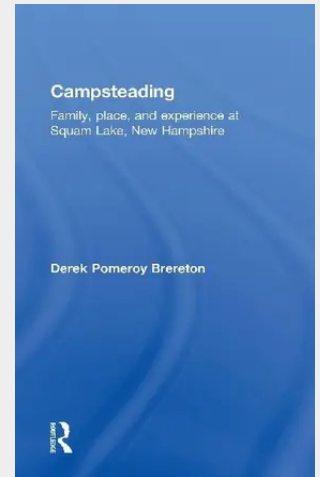
Brereton

Campsteading

Family, Place, and Experience at Squam Lake, New Hampshire

The campstead is an American institution. After the Civil War, with neo-colonialism, environmentalism, and arts-and-crafts on the rise, some families sought rural locations for rustic camps. There they raised their children in the summertime. Around Squam Lake, after some eight generations, twenty-one such camps remain in these families. The Squam area thus becomes a natural place to study relationships of persons and places, families and landscape, and humans and the world. Our present concerns for environmental stewardship, open space protection, and core values instead of consumerism, make this a good time to revisit the simple American Campstead. Rustic camping itself revisited aspects of the American frontier. Just as the western frontier was disappearing, some families resorted to remnants of the first frontier among mountains and lakes of the Northeast. Through campsteads, these families preserved elements of the frontier ethos. Campsteads facilitate particular experiences involving nature and family. Brereton investigates campstead experience, and through it the nature of human experience generally. This book is the first detailed account of campsteading, the first application of critical realism in anthropology, and the first anthropological use of John Dewey's evolutionary model of experience. Building on Dewey, the author further analyses experience into its levels, orders, and features.

This book describes and accounts for American campsteading, an institution that draws on historical trends to link families to places, and so shapes human presence on the land. The author draws on John Dewey's evolutionary model of experience to produce a detailed analysis of this phenomenon.



232,40 €

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Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9780415562966

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-0-415-56296-6

Verlag: Routledge

Erscheinungstermin: 09.12.2009

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: 1. Auflage 2009

Produktform: Gebunden

Gewicht: 669 g

Seiten: 332

Format (B x H): 161 x 240 mm

