Silverchair presents

Men on Boats

by Jaclyn Backhaus

March 6 – 28

Directed by
Jeremy Duncan Pape

Sponsored by Barbara & Jay Kessler

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MEN ON BOATS is presented by special arrangement with Dramatist Play Service, Inc., New York.
LIVE ARTS

Presents

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March 6-28, 2020

Written by Jaclyn Backhaus
Directed for Live Arts by Jeremy Duncan Pape
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Study Guide

Study Guide researched and compiled for Live Arts by John Conover
Dramaturg for MEN ON BOATS

With editing by Live Arts Intern Beatrice Goodwyn & Education Director Miller Susen
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Promotional photography courtesy of Martyn Kyle, Pernmoot Photography
Chapter 1: Historical Introduction

John Wesley Powell, one armed ...

as he appears in the National Portrait Gallery.

MEN ON BOATS retraces a true story of the nearly one-hundred-day summer 1869 expedition down the Green and Colorado Rivers from Green River, Wyoming to and through the Grand Canyon. All the major incidents in the play come directly from Powell’s book, *The Exploration of the Colorado River and Its Canyons*. Powell made another river run two years later, and conflates some of the escapades of the two trips in the book.

As a young man he undertook a series of adventures through the Mississippi River valley. In 1855, he spent four months walking across Wisconsin. During 1856, he rowed the Mississippi from St. Anthony, Minnesota, to the sea. Born in 1834 Powell joined the Union forces as a strong abolitionist. He lost most of his right arm at the bloody Battle of Shiloh, where he was one of over 23,000 casualties.

Later he had a prosperous career as a naturalist and anthropologist at the Smithsonian and the US Geological Survey.
Legacy

John Wesley Powell was honored on a U.S. commemorative stamp in 1969.

Maud Powell, niece of John Wesley Powell, photographed at his monument, Grand Canyon, Arizona, 1918.

- In recognition of his national service, Powell was buried in Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia.
- The John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, signed March 12, 2019, authorizes the establishment of the John Wesley Powell National Conservation Area, consisting of approximately 29,868 acres in the state of Utah.
- The rare mineral powellite was named after him.
- Green River, Wyoming, the embarkation site of both Powell expeditions commissioned a 9 1/2-foot tall portrait of Powell holding an oar, which now stands in front of the Sweetwater County History Museum.
- Lake Powell, a man-made reservoir on the Colorado River, was named for Powell.
- He is the namesake of Powell Peak.[36]
- Powell Plateau, near Steamboat Mountain on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon was also named in his honor.
- In Powell's honor, the USGS National Center in Reston, Virginia, was dedicated as the John Wesley Powell Federal Building in 1974. In addition, the highest award presented by the USGS to persons outside the federal government is named the John Wesley Powell Award.
- The residential building of the Criminal Justice Services Department of Mesa County in Grand Junction, Colorado, is named after John Wesley Powell.
- John Wesley Powell Middle School is located in Littleton, Colorado.[39]
- Powell Jr High School is located in Mesa, Arizona.
- He was portrayed by John Beal in the 1960 film Ten Who Dared.
In 1984, he was inducted into the Hall of Great Westerners of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.

Chapter 2: Boats & Questions Posed

In Powell’s own words about the beginning of the trip...

May 24, 1869. Early in the spring of 1869 a party was organized for the exploration of the canyons. Boats were built in Chicago and transported by rail to the point where the Union Pacific railroad crosses the Green River. With these we were able to descend the Green to the Colorado in Colorado down to the foot of the Grand Canyon.

The good people of Green River city turn out to see us start. We raise a little flag, push the boats from shore, and the swift current carries us down.

Our boats are four in number. Three are built of oak; staunch and firm; double ribbed with double stem and stern post, and further strengthened by bulkheads, dividing each into three compartments. Two of these, the fore and aft, are decked, forming water-tight cabins. It is expected that this will buoy the boats should the waves roll over them in rough water.

The fourth boat is made of pine, very light, but 16 feet in length and every way built for fast rowing and divided into compartments as the others. The little vessels are 21 feet long and taking out the cargoes, can be carried by four men.

We take with us rations deemed sufficient to last 10 months, for we expect, when winter comes on in the river is filled with rice, to want to lie over at some point until spring arrives; and so we take with this abundant supply of clothing, likewise. We also have a large quantity of ammunition and two or three dozen traps. For the purpose of building cabins, repairing boats, and meeting other exigencies, we are supplied with axes, hammers, saws, augers and other tools, and a quantity of nails and screws. For scientific work, we have two sextants, four chronometers, a number of barometers, thermostats, compasses, and other instruments.

The flour is divided into three equal parts; the meat, and all other articles of our rations, the same way. Each of the larger boats has an axe, hammer, saw, auger and other tools, so that all are loaded alike. We distribute the cargo this way that we may not be entirely destitute of some important article should any of the boats be lost. In the small boat we pack a part of the scientific instruments, three guns, and three small bundles of clothing only; and in this I proceed to advance to explore the channel.

List of the shipping/boating terminology

Obviously, the current carried the boats and passengers down-river. Sometimes the water roiled and boiled in rapids, whirlpools and over and around rocks. It was too swift to navigate without capsizing. There were safer but arduous options.
Lining was to attach ropes to the front and back ends of the boat and try to walk alongside the river guiding the boat and avoiding the worst hazards.

Portage was a more difficult strategy. This required taking the boats out of the water, emptying them of all supplies and carrying them downstream parallel to the river. Two people portage a recreational canoe. It took four boatmen to carry Powell’s heavier boats. This was difficult as the walking paths were mostly non-existent trails over and down piles of rocks.

If there was no passable path on either side of the river, lining and portaging were not options. And running the rapids was the only way to proceed, relying on skill and blind luck.

Gunwale is the top edge of the hull of a ship or boat. Basically, the handrail of the side, where you would rest or hold on to for balance. On a canoe, the gunwale is typically the widened edge at the top of its hull, reinforced with wood, plastic or aluminum, to carry the thwarts. On a narrowboat or canal boat, the gunwale is synonymous with the side deck - a narrow ledge running the full length of the craft. Originally the structure was the "gun wale" on a sailing warship, a horizontal reinforcing band added at and above the level of a gun deck to offset the stresses created by firing artillery.

Swelling wood shrinks or swells depending on its moisture content. As planks or boards dry out, they get smaller and develop cracks and spaces. This can cause leaks. It isn’t always the problem that it might seem to be. Wood can be rehydrated by soaking it, and the wood expands with the moisture. That is swelling. If a wooden boat has been out of the water for a long time and become leaky, it can sometimes be cured by sinking it for some time, then raising and bailing, and often all is right. However, if a boat is built too tight with dry wood and installed with the grain running wrong, mere floating it can cause too much swelling and the boards and planks can pop up out of place.
Chapter 3: The Historic Men & Their Language

In his book, which Powell edited from his journal, he described the men that he had recruited and led on the river. We have no images of the men, other than Major Powell. The detailed and illuminating graphic illustrations of the river and the canyons were not a product of the 1868 trip but from later voyages and external sources.

**Sumner** was a soldier during the late war, and before and since that time has been a great traveler in the wilds of the Mississippi Valley in the Rocky Mountains as an amateur hunter. He is fair-haired, delicate looking man, but a veteran inexperience, has performed the feat of crossing the Rocky Mountains in midwinter on snowshoes. He spent the winter of 1886-87 in Middle Park, Colorado for the purpose of making some natural history collections for me and succeeded in killing three grizzlies, two mountain lions, and a large number of elk, deer, sheep, wolves, beavers, and many other animals. (In her introduction of Summer, Jaclyn Backhaus likens him (page 13) to a Bear Grylls of the 1860’s. Grylls is a popular modern English adventurer with a self-polished image and financially sustaining media presence.) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bear_Grylls#Charity_and_politics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bear_Grylls#Charity_and_politics)

**Dunn** was a hunter, trapper, and mule-packer in Colorado for many years. He dresses in buckskin with a dark oleaginous luster, doubtless due to the fact that he’s lived on fat venison and has killed many beavers since he first donned his uniform years ago. His raven hair falls down to his back, for he has a sublime contempt for shears and razors.

**Captain Powell** was an officer of artillery during the late war and was captured on the 22nd day of July 1864, at Atlanta and served ten 10 months’ time in prison at Charleston, where he was placed with other officers under fire. He is silent, moody, and sarcastic, although sometimes he enlivens the camp at night with a song. He is never surprised at anything, his coolness never deserts him, and he would choke the belching throat of a volcano if he thought the spitfire meant anything but fun. We call him “Old Shady.”

**Bradley**, a lieutenant during the late war, and since an orderly sergeant in the regular army, was, a few weeks previous to our start, discharged by order of the Secretary of War, that he might go on this trip. He is scrupulously careful, and a little mishap works him into a passion, but when labor is needed, he has a ready hand and powerful arm, and in danger, rapid judgment and unerring skill. A great difficulty or peril changes the petulant spirit into a brave, generous soul.

**O. G. Howland** is a printer by trade, and editor by profession, and a hunter by choice. When busily employed he usually puts his hat in his pocket, and his thin hair
and long beard stream in the wind, giving him a wild look, much like that of King Lear in an illustrated copy of Shakespeare which stumbles around the camp.

**Seneca Howland** is a quiet pensive young man, and a great favorite with all.

**Goodman** is a stranger to us - a stout, willing Englishman, with florid face and more florid anticipations of a glorious trip.

**Billy Hawkins**, the cook, was a soldier in the Union Army during the war, and when discharged at its close went West, and since then has been engaged as a teamster on the plains or hunter in the mountains. He is an athlete and a jovial good fellow, who hardly seems to know his own strength.

**Hall** is a Scotch boy, nineteen years old was what seems us a “secondhand head,” which doubtless came down to him from some knight who wore it during the Border Wars. It looks a very old head indeed, with deep-set blue eyes and a beaked nose. Young as he is, Hall has had experience in hunting, trapping, fighting Indians, and he makes the most of it, for he can tell a good story, and is never encumbered by unnecessary scruples in giving to his narratives those embellishments which help make the story complete. He is always ready for work or play and is a good hand at either.

**Text Language in MEN ON BOATS**

Although the chronology and the events depicted in the play are substantially faithful to Powell’s book, the playwright does not make much effort to imitate original speech patterns. This holds for individuals or the historic group. That was her choice.

Chief Tsauwiat and his wife, “The Bishop,” only appear in one short but wonderful, satiric scene. They speak youthful, sarcastic English, as in “Oh, caskets. Oh yeah totally. In the ground? That’s so chill.” None of the boatmen talk like that in either wit or modernity.

Interestingly, the characters very rarely swear. It seems unlikely that the men shooting down the rapids or beset with a sea of troubles would so consistently avoid profanity. A rare exception is Powell’s speech, where he uses “fucking” as an emphasizing adjective four times in stating his claim of leadership. Nor is there any sex, explicit or implied, in the text. The same holds in Powell’s writing. Personal longings or needs are not recognized, whatever their nature.
Which of these historic men fought in the war?

Five of the ten men participated in the Civil War. All fought for the Union.

1. **John Wesley Powell**, trip organizer and leader, major in the Civil War;
2. **Walter H. Powell**, captain in the Civil War;
3. **George Y. Bradley**, lieutenant in the Civil War, expedition chronicler;
4. **W. R. Hawkins**, cook, soldier in Civil War;
5. **John Colton "Jack" Sumner**, hunter, trapper, soldier in the Civil War;
6. **William H. Dunn**, hunter, trapper from Colorado;
7. **Oramel G. Howland**, printer, editor, hunter;
8. **Seneca Howland**;
9. **Frank Goodman**, Englishman, adventurer;
10. **Andrew Hall**, Scotsman, the youngest of the expedition;

How long have they been on the boat before the start of the first scene?

The author doesn’t say, so there is no way of accurately answering. The 1869 expedition left Green River, Wyoming, on May 24. Passing through dangerous rapids, the group passed down the Green River to its confluence with the Colorado River (then also known as the Grand River upriver from the junction), near present-day Moab, Utah, and completed the journey near the present-day Lake Mead at the southern end of the Grand Canyon on August 30, 1869.

At the end of Act 2, are those lines from a poem? Or lines from journals?

From the journal, the party arrived at and first marveled at the big canyon on July 18th. It is a little strange that both O.G. and Seneca simultaneously recite the lines as if they were well-known, but they are describing first-time human experience.

The lines may be a creation of the author. There is no reference from her and I cannot confirm any other source. They are not found in Powell’s journal, which was written several years later and beyond his accurate memory. ¹

¹ Different thoughts are expressed in a modern pop song about looking up to the sky. This is only included as an irrelevant sound break. Read and listen. [https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/demilovato/neonlights.html](https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/demilovato/neonlights.html)
Chapter 4: Some Text Points and Entering the Grand Canyon

Page 10 – Bradley, “Old Shady is Powell’s older brother.”

Members of the expedition called him Old Shady which was a reference to a popular ballad which he frequently sang with his bass voice.

Captain Walter H. Powell, “Old Shady”, was Powell’s full-blood brother. Major Powell was born in 1834. Walter was born in 1841, actually making him the younger brother.


The Powells moved westward from New York. They appear to have lived for some time in southeast Wisconsin but not in Boone. Their Boone County is in northern Illinois, adjacent south to the Wisconsin state line. If so, the play text doesn’t reflect historic reality.

Boone County (Illinois) was formed in 1837 out of Winnebago County. It was named for Kentucky frontiersman Daniel Boone. The first non-Native American settlers arrived in what is now Boone County in 1835. They arrived as a result of the end of the Black Hawk War as well as the completion of the Erie Canal. They consisted entirely of settlers from New England. These were "Yankee" settlers, that is to say they were descended from the English Puritans who settled New England in the colonial era. They were primarily members of the Congregational Church though due to the Second Great Awakening many of them had converted to Methodism and some had become Baptists before coming to what is now Boone County. When the New England settlers arrived in what is now Boone County there was nothing but a dense virgin forest and wild prairie.

Page 23 - Yorkshire-born.

Yorkshire, formally known as the County of York, is a historic county of Northern England and the largest in the United Kingdom. The emblem of Yorkshire is the White Rose of the English royal House of York, and it represented the color in the 14th century War of the Roses. Today the population of Yorkshire is greater than all of Scotland.

Page 31 - Dunn, “I wonder if the government will sanction this land once our expedition is over”

This is an archaic or out-of-use term referring to a grant of land from the government to a private individual. The power to “sanction” is founded in statute by
some level of government, like Federal or state. Examples were the land rushes, historical events in which previously restricted land of the United States was opened for homesteading on a first-come-first-served basis.

Best-known were the Oklahoma land rushes of the later part of the 19th century.


On March 3, 1889, [President] Harrison announced the government would open the 1.9 million-acre tract of Indian Territory for settlement precisely at noon on April 22. Anyone could join the race for the land, but no one was supposed to jump the gun. With only seven weeks to prepare, land-hungry Americans quickly began to gather around the borders of the irregular rectangle of territory. “Boomers,” by the appointed day hopefuls were living in tent cities on all four sides of the territory.

The events that day at Fort Reno on the western border were typical. At 11:50 a.m., soldiers called for everyone to form a line. When the hands of the clock reached noon, the cannon of the fort boomed, and the soldiers signaled the settlers to start. With the crack of hundreds of whips, Boomers streamed into the territory in wagons, on horseback, and on foot. All told, from the territory that day, they had staked thousands of claims either on town lots or quarter section farm plots.

An extraordinary display of both the pioneer spirit and the American lust for land, the first Oklahoma land rush was also plagued by greed and fraud. Cases involving “Sooners”—people who had entered the territory before the legal date and time—overloaded courts for years to come. The government attempted to operate subsequent runs with more controls, eventually adopting a lottery system to designate claims. By 1905, white Americans owned most of the land in Indian Territory. Two years later, the area once known as Indian Territory entered the Union as a part of the new state of Oklahoma.

Such sanctioned land was usually limited in size and required the settling family to build a house and live there for a certain number of years as a condition of receiving
full and marketable title. The land size was often 640 acres, a square mile referred to as a “square”.

A public land grant is a conveyance of ownership or other rights and privileges in publicly owned property to members of the general public who come under the qualifications of the statute that makes the land available. Such a grant is ordinarily noted in a public record, such as a charter or patent. In order to properly trace the ownership of property, it is sometimes necessary to determine each successive owner following the first grant.

Page 39 – Dunn, “We’re only still in Utah”

We don’t know if Powell or any of his crew referred to the surrounding territory as Utah back in 1868.

Utah is a state in the western United States. It became the 45th state admitted to the U.S. on January 4, 1896. Utah is the 13th-largest by area, 30th-most-populous, and 11th-least-densely populated of the 50 United States. Utah has a population of more than 3 million.

Approximately 62% of Utahans are reported to be members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), making Utah the only state with a majority population belonging to a single church.

Utah also has the 14th-highest median average income and the least income inequality of any U.S. state.

A common folk etymology is that the name Utah is derived from the name of the Ute tribe, purported to mean 'people of the mountains' in the Ute language. However, no such word actually exists in the Utes' language. The connection of "Utah" to mountains likely originated as a "Mormonization" of references to mountains made by members of the Ute tribe. In Spanish it was pronounced Yuta; subsequently English-speaking people may have adapted the word as 'Utah'.

Page 41 – Sextants.

This an old instrument used to make calculations of position in relation to other visible objects. It was used in navigation and astronomy. The still-valid principles of the sextant underlie modern electronic and digital calculations. For Powell the sextant was essential to pinpointing their latitude and the height of surrounding cliffs.
A sextant is a doubly reflecting navigation instrument that measures the angular distance between two visible objects. The primary use of a sextant is to measure the angle between an astronomical object and the horizon for the purposes of celestial navigation. The estimation of this angle, the altitude, is known as sighting or shooting the object, or taking a sight. The angle, and the time when it was measured, can be used to calculate a position line on a nautical or aeronautical chart—for example, sighting the Sun at noon or Polaris at night (in the Northern Hemisphere) to estimate latitude. Sighting the height of a landmark can give a measure of distance off and, held horizontally, a sextant can measure angles between objects for a position on a chart.

**Page 42 - Pants off scene.**

In John Wesley Powell’s own words from The Exploration of the Colorado River and Its Canyons:

**June 18** - We start up a gulch; then pass to the left on the bench along the wall; then up again over broken rocks; then we reach more benches along which we walk, until we find more broken rocks and crevices, by which we climb them; still up, until we have ascended 600 or 800 feet, when we are met by a sheer precipice. Looking about, we find a place where it seems possible to climb. I go ahead; Brindley hands the barometer to me, and follows. So we proceed, stage by stage, until we are nearly to the summit. Here, by making a spring, I gained a foothold in a little crevice, and grasp an angle of the rock overhead. I find I can get up no farther and cannot step back, for I dare not let go with my hand and cannot reach foothold below without. I called to Bradley for help. He finds a way by which he can get to the top of the rock over my head, but cannot reach me. Then he looks around for some stick or limb of a tree, but finds none. Then he suggests that he would better help me with the barometer case, but I fear I cannot hold onto it. The moment is critical. Standing on my toes, my muscles begin to tremble. It is 60 or 80 feet to the foot of the precipice. If I lose my hold I shall fall to the bottom and then perhaps roll over the bench and tumble still further down the cliff. At this instant it occurs to Bradley to take off his drawers, which he does, and swings them down to me. I hug close to the rock, let go of my hand, seize the dangling legs, and with his assistance am enabled to gain the top.

**Page 43 – Goodman, “If only I had a crisp Muscadet”**

Muscadet is a French white wine from the Loire Valley. It is unlikely to be available along the Colorado River, crisp or not, even today.

The classic food and wine pairing in the Pays Nantais region is of Muscadet with the local seafood, particularly oysters. Other seafood dishes with which Muscadet pairs well include lobster, shrimp and mullet. San Francisco Chronicle wine editor Jon Bonné called Muscadet “the perfect oyster wine".
Page 64 – The Powells, “The crew is down at camp repairing boats and sussing rations.”

tr.v. sussed, suss-ing, suss-es Slang
1. To infer or discover; figure. Often used with out: "I think I’m good at sussing out what’s going on" (Ry Cooder).
2. To size up; study. Often used with out: "Suss out the designers in whom you are interested" (Lucia van der Post).

Page 67 - Episode with rattlesnake.

Unless fooled by faulty memory, this scene does not come from Powell’s book. It is a dramatic creation by Jaclyn Backhaus, and a good one.

And, finally, there is the perpetual question of what is a butte vs. what is a mesa?

If you can remember it, a mesa is higher than it is wide. A butte is usually the opposite. Buttes are the eroded remains of mountain ranges. Mesas are the remains of buttes after even more erosion.

Both may have steep, nearly vertical sides. Most mesas can only be scaled with great energy and ropes. Buttes often have a gradual side which allows for posses, warring Indians and buffalo to be seen up there looking down. Cars on top of a mesa in an advertising setting were put there by helicopter.

Entering the Grand Canyon

The close of Act 2 has the crew agog at their first view of the majesty and enormousness of the Grand Canyon. This is what they may have seen.
Chapter 5: Jaclyn Backhaus, playwright

Jaclyn Backhaus is a playwright, cofounder of Fresh Ground Pepper, and new member of The Kilroys. Her plays include MEN ON BOATS (New York Times Critics’ Pick, Clubbed Thumb, Playwrights Horizons, published by Dramatists Play Service), India Pale Ale (Manhattan Theatre Club, recipient of the 2018 Horton Foote Prize for Promising New American Play), You Across From Me (co-written with three other writers for the Humana Festival), Folk Wandering (book writer and co-lyricist with 11 composers, Pipeline Theatre Company), and You On the Moors Now (Theater Reconstruction Ensemble), among others. She was the 2016 Tow Foundation Playwright-in-Residence at Clubbed Thumb and she is currently in residence at Lincoln Center. Backhaus holds a BFA in Drama from NYU Tisch, where she now teaches. She hails from Phoenix, Arizona, and currently resides in Ridgewood, Queens with her husband, director Andrew Scoville and their son Ernie. (Updated Mar 2019)

MEN ON BOATS (2015) is Ms. Backhaus’ most widely produced play. It had a New York opening but most of the subsequent productions have been in community or university settings. The latter mostly don’t have professional reviewers in their communities, and commentary is often just news releases, uncritical outlines or flaccid opinions about the show. This New York Times review (link available in the online Study Guide) is interesting, goes deeper, and doesn’t make much in the way of suggestions.

More literature:
- Essay on her Punjabi-Sikh heritage after 2012 terror attack.
- Two brief interviews with Jaclyn Backhaus. (1, 2)
- The Wives, her most current staged work. (1, 2)
- India Pale Ale, another recently produced play.
- Ms. Backhaus wins Horton Foote award and cash prize.
Chapter 6: Rafting the Canyon, WoMEN ON BOATS and Powell’s right arm

History of the Rafting in the Grand Canyon

Archaeological evidence confirms that Native Americans have occupied the Grand Canyon for over 10,000 years. Throughout that time natives would traverse the Colorado River as needed in sturdy, hand-carved canoes, but whitewater rafting in the Grand Canyon as we know it today is a relatively new activity. The 16th century "Age of Discovery" produced a thirst for exploration and a hunger for gold. In 1540, Spanish soldiers became the first non-native people to explore the canyon.

These Spanish soldiers, led by Captain Garcia Lopez de Cardenas, arrived in the canyon nearly 500 years ago, in 1540. Their mission was to discover the mythical and elusive Cibola, known to adventurers and conquistadors as the Seven Cities of Gold. They began their expedition at the South Rim, accompanied by Hopi Native American guides. Nothing in the explorers’ experience could have prepared them for the sheer size and vastness of this
beautiful painted landscape. The search lasted three years and, though the fabled village was never found, the expedition put the Grand Canyon on the map. Today, you can experience the Spanish soldiers' wonder and search for your own legendary Cibola on our lower canyon raft trip options.

The first mission to accurately and scientifically explore the Grand Canyon wasn't commenced for another 300 years after the Spanish explorers' foray. In 1869, Major John Wesley Powell, a Civil War veteran, courageously voyaged down the Colorado's whitewater, through the Grand Canyon, with the intention of mapping it. Up until that point, the Canyon was peculiarly absent from any Western United States maps. Major Powell and his team whitewater rafted through the Grand Canyon, much as we do today. Finally in 1923, the US Geological Survey conducted the first instrument survey of the Grand Canyon section of the Colorado River.

By the mid-20th century, only about 100 people are documented to have navigated the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. The second half of the 20th century brought dramatic changes to the Grand Canyon tourism. The sparse number of river rafters willing to circumnavigate the Colorado through the Grand Canyon went up dramatically when army-surplus inflatable rafts became available. Therefore, the Canyon became a hub for adventure tourism sports.

Today's familiar commercial river running was founded by the late and great Georgie White Clark (see below). She used the army-surplus inflatable rafts and introduced many innovations and methods, such as tethering multiple rafts together to maintain stability through large rapids, that whitewater rafting tour guides still use to this day.

In 2001, the United States Board on Geographic Names renamed Mile 24 Rapid in her honor. Today, you can honor this amazing Grand Canyon whitewater rafting pioneer by rafting through her rapid on our Upper Grand Canyon Tour. Although much has changed since the days of the Spanish explorers and Major John Wesley Powell, life within the great painted cliffs of the imposing Grand Canyon remains much the same.

**The Raft And Other Equipment Used For Rafting**

The first thing that comes to mind when someone mentions rafting or a raft is Huckleberry Finn, those wooden slabs or branches tied together with thick strings and a long piece of wood used as a paddle for maneuvering this very simple water craft. He wasn't asking, "What is rafting?", he just made a raft and went for it! Hey, you?re not wrong about that. That is the most traditional raft there is.

These days however, rafts look like a rectangular boat and are inflatable. Most of these are made of thick and tough rubber so that it would not rupture easily. The number of oars attached to the raft depends on how big it is and how many people
can fit in it. Today, people going on rafting trips should wear protective gear like life vests and even helmets.

Georgie Clark White, first women outfitter in the Canyon and others
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgie_White
https://www.oars.com/blog/first-women-whitewater/
https://she-explores.com/landmarks/west/rafting-the-whole-grand-canyon/

River Voices: Women rafting the Grand Canyon
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUtA_1MWbWY

Rafting and other water trips down the Colorado River and through the Grand Canyon are highly regulated by the National Park Service. There is competition and a lottery for available slots.

Keeping the environment clean is the job of all who spend time in the Canyon.
https://raftarizona.com/number-two-with-a-view/

People wanting more thrills and history still seek out wooden boats or dories.
https://azraft.com/dory-trips-grand-canyon-rafting-history/

Typical cost of a long and guided trip in the Grand Canyon
https://raftarizona.com/explore/oar/ 

Full Wikipedia article on the Grand Canyon
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Canyon
Chapter 7: Utes and Chief Tsauwiat

The language in the play is mostly modern and poses few questions or challenges. The exception is Chief Tsauwiat. How is his name pronounced?

John Wesley Powell, in his book, The Exploration of the Colorado River, describes an excursion he took to a Ute Indian reservation in search of supplies after nearly five weeks on the river. It was a walk of twenty miles. On arriving, he says, “It is pleasant to see a house once more, and some evidences of civilization, even if it is on an Indian reservation several days’ ride from the nearest home of a white man”.

He goes to visit a chief that Powell spells as Tsaúwiat. Jaclyn Backhaus loses the accent.

Powell describes the Chief. “This old chief is but the wreck of a man, and no longer has influence. Looking at him one can scarcely realize that he is a man. His skin is shrunken, wrinkled and dry, and seems to cover no more than a form of bones. He is said to be more than 100 years old. I talk a little with him, but his conversation is incoherent… … His wife, “The Bishop,” as she is called, is a very garrulous old woman; she exerts a great influence, and is much revered. She is the only Indian woman I have known to occupy a place in the council ring. She seems much younger than her husband, and, though wrinkled and ugly, is still vigorous …. ” They live in a “beautiful valley (that) has been the home of a people of a higher grade of civilization than the present Utes.”

Powell published extensive anthropological studies on the Ute people inhabiting the canyon lands around the Colorado River. His views towards these populations, along with his scientific approach, was built on social Darwinist thought; he focused on defining what features distinguished Native Americans as 'barbaric', placing them above 'savagery' but below 'civilized' white Europeans. Indeed the study of ethnology was a way for scientists to demarcate social categories in order to justify government-sponsored programs that exploited newly adopted land and its inhabitants. Powell advocated for government funding to be used to 'civilize' Native American populations, pushing for the teaching of English, Christianity, and Western methods of farming and manufacture.

Powell did not distinguish what branch of the Ute people Tsauwiat was from. “Utes are now living primarily in Utah and Colorado, within three Ute tribal reservations: Uintah-Ouray in northeastern Utah (3,500 members); Southern Ute in Colorado (1,500 members); and Ute Mountain which primarily lies in Colorado, but extends to Utah and New Mexico (2,000 members). The majority of Ute are believed to live on one of these reservations. Utah is named after these people.”

A recent ethnography of now-called Northern Utes, quotes Powell “White River Ute, as they are known the Indian Department, being those tribes which receive their annuities at the White River Agency, were, when I knew them in the winter of 1868 and 69, divided into three tribes. One tribe recognized Co-lo-row as their chief, another recognized Tsok’-wi-outs, and the third Douglass.” (underline added) https://www.nps.gov/colm/learn/historyculture/upload/Ethnographic-Overview-Draft-2-McBeth.pdf

Promotional photography by Martyn Kyle of Pernmoot Photography

This Study Guide can also be found on the Live Arts website.