On-screen Stereotypes or Symbols Ripe for Change? Exploring Summer Camp Names

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Methods
Toponomy / Content Analysis
1 Camp from each U.S. State
Data drawn from American Camp Association website

Camp History
- Can be named after different aspects (Van Slych., 2006)
  - Native American words/names
  - People related to camp/ role models
  - Institution affiliation
  - A near by town
- “Indian Play”
  - Way to eschew modernity (Wall, 2005)
  - Taught kids to emulate aspects of Native American culture, such as courage, spirituality, being w/ nature (Browne, 2019)
  - Having outsiders = being insiders (Paris, 2008)

Places Names / Toponymy
- Memorialization in any form indicates Cultural Relevance (Lowenthal, 1996)

Cultural Appropriation
- Use of symbols/names/icons often jumbled – lack of distinction between NA cultures is disrespectful (Browne, 2019)

Conclusions
Some Native American Terms & Figures still used in Camp Names
- Indicative of other elements of cultural appropriation (activities, costume, etc.)?

Overall, very little explanation of Camp Names or reasoning for Names selected
- Clarification could help to distinguish attempts at memorialization versus appropriation

Research Questions
- What inspires summer camp names?
- Are camps still appropriating Native American culture through names as depicted in popular culture?

Natural Landmarks
- Waterways
  - Camp Lake Hubert named after the lake that it sits on.
  - Sangamon River flows through the county where Camp Sangamon is located

Plants / Fauna
- Red Osier Dogwood = type of Red Willow found in ND inspiring name of Red Willow Bible Camp

Area Names / Regional Terms
- Camp Potosi- Potosi = town in Bolivia meaning ‘to be of great value’

Local Heroes / Founders
Founders
- Camp Foster YMCA- Thomas Foster was the camp founder and was dedicated to the YMCA.

Public Figures
- Van Buren Youth Camp = US President
- YMCA Camp Ernst- Senator Ernst served the state of Kentucky in the early 1900’s

Native American Terms
- Camp Chief Ouray- Local Native American Chief from the Ute tribe who went to DC to negotiate for his people
- Camp Akita- Akita was chosen from the Sioux Indian word meaning searcher

Religious Terms
- Camp Sabra- Sabra = Jewish person born in Israel