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Nostalgia for the Old West in Knott's Berry Farm, Orange County, California

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Over the last century, western nostalgia has taken on a variety of entertainment forms. From Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows through to Rockstar's *Red Dead Redemption* video games, the entertainment industry has maintained an emotional attachment to America's frontier past across a diversity of platforms. Nostalgia has translated into the setting aside of physical spaces across the trans-Mississippi (and beyond) that celebrate a mythic frontier realm. From Yosemite National Park to Dodge City and Deadwood, a range of 'nostalgic landscapes' collectively underline the significance of the frontier in American history, to paraphrase Frederick Jackson Turner (Turner 1921, 1), and foster a mass appreciation for nineteenth-century exploration and pioneering. The roster of nostalgic landscapes includes twentieth-century amusement parks, with Knott's Berry Farm in Southern California one of the earliest examples of an attraction based around frontier values.[1]

Knott's Berry Farm, Orange County, began in the 1920s as a small, family-run farm headed by Walter Knott and linked to boysenberry production. During the Depression era, the Knott family opened a roadside restaurant that proved incredibly popular. In the early 1940s, Walter Knott constructed a Wild West town chiefly as a distraction for customers gathered in long queues outside the restaurant, sometimes waiting three to four hours for their chicken dinners. Knott's 'Ghost Town' represented a paragon exercise in Western nostalgia. Billed as an authentic Wild West experience, the Ghost Town signified a conscious attempt to immortalise what its creator Knott deemed America's proudest historical moment. What started off as a simple distraction soon morphed into a key tourist destination in California. Watching the crowds amass in his new Ghost Town, Knott related, 'They get so interested that I had to install a loud speaker to call them back to dinner.'[2]

The Knott's Berry Farm Ghost Town offered a distinctive interactive take on frontier history. Visitors explored a town akin to a Hollywood-style film set, watching performances of live-action drama, playing mechanical amusements, and even listening to wood-carved figures speak to them. The Ghost Town pushed a visceral, entertainment-focused reading of the West. It blended the feel of older, traditional historic sites like Dodge City with a fresh theme park ambience. Visitors walked amongst gun-toting cowboys, panned for gold, and imagined themselves as virtuous pioneers. The park invited audiences to become active participants in frontier storylines. The first of

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a wave of Western-themed attractions that opened in the mid-century (and presaging Walt Disney's Frontierland by over a decade), Knott's Ghost Town signified an innovative experiment in frontier nostalgia.

This article explores the production of frontier nostalgia at the Ghost Town in the 1940s and 1950s. Existing histories of Knott's Berry Farm focus primarily on the life of Walter Knott, particularly his business achievements and his conservative politics. By contrast, scholarly understanding of specific park mechanisms at Knott's, including the use of frontier nostalgia, remain little understood.[3] I argue that nostalgia proved a key factor in both the manufacture and subsequent popularity of Knott's Berry Farm in the mid-century, with Walter Knott creating and curating a highly 'symbolic West' for the masses. I do this by identifying and exploring five distinct forms of nostalgia that operated inside the park.

I firstly reflect on Walter Knott's *personal nostalgia* for the frontier and his desire to 'revisit' a moment in time, manifested in a 'hobby' that grows into a commercial venture.[4] Secondly, I argue that the development of the Ghost Town reflected a wider, arguably generational, desire in the mid-century to preserve and protect Western heritage, a form of *preservationist nostalgia*, with conservative figures such as Knott actively moving to solidify, and celebrate, the frontier as the heyday of American exceptionalism. Thirdly, projects such as Knott's Ghost Town relied on a growing sense of *symbolic nostalgia* about the frontier, of a crafting of (and yearning for) comforting images of pioneering in mid-century America, often superficial in nature and tone, and disconnected from historical reality, but nonetheless driving an increasing interest in that period. Fourthly, as an amusement park experience, these forms of nostalgia manifested into a physical interaction between performers and guests, of collectively 'acting out' the West. The dynamic between costumed gunfighter-actors and their audience created a distinctive form of *performative nostalgia* at the Farm. Frontier nostalgia in the mid-century thus took the form of a mass performative act. Finally, Knott's presented an exercise in *nostalgia capitalism*, of selling the frontier experience for money and capital gain. Western nostalgia at the Ghost Town thus functioned on multiple layers, producing an experience of the frontier highly persuasive with audiences.[5]

Walter Knott's Personal Nostalgia and the Covered Wagon Show

The Ghost Town at Knott's Berry Farm owed its existence to Walter Knott. In the late 1930s, Knott introduced a vintage stagecoach, a rock garden, a 'working' replica volcano, and a redwood stump with countable rings, outside his restaurant as novelty attractions. In 1939, Knott committed to designing a whole Ghost Town there. Within a few years, Knott had installed a range of pioneer buildings next to his restaurant, in the process, producing a lively facsimile of frontier life.

Knott's inspiration for the Ghost Town derived from his personal experiences of the West. Knott spent his childhood in Pomona, California, gardening for money. In 1914, Knott tried homesteading near Newberry Springs in the Mojave Desert, but struggled to make a living, and for a time, worked as a labourer at Silver King Mine in a dilapidated Calico. In the 1920s, as a tenant farmer in Buena Park, Knott experimented in berry farming, at first selling berries on a roadside stand, before his family forged a successful agricultural business and restaurant in the thirties. For Knott, the West proved a testing

agricultural environment to work with, but one that rewarded sacrifice and toil. Rather than a 'Wild West' of six-guns and Indians, Knott's West revolved around farming crops and growing a family. His 'frontier' proved a peaceful, laborious affair, and embodied the best of rural life. His restaurant business spoke exactly to these experiences, selling to customers the promise of fresh local produce, home cooking, old-fashioned values, and family dining.

Knott's vision of the Old West was nonetheless anchored in childhood memories of his grandmother, Rosamond Dougherty, who sat before a young Walt and his brother, relaying stories of the 'Wild West.' Knott's grandmother told tall stories of frontier adventure. Knott inherited his grandmother's sense of the West as a grandiose story to tell. Childhood nostalgia fuelled Walter Knott's desire for his own Ghost Town as both a memorial to his grandmother and as a fun attraction.

Early work at the town focused on fulfilling Knott's personal vision of the West. One of the first commissioned pieces, a cyclorama titled the Covered Wagon Show, told of his own family's historic journey west. Inspired by the cycloramas he witnessed at the 1915 San Francisco World's Fair, along with a visit to Gold Gulch in San Diego in 1935, Knott envisaged an epic painting of wagon trains travelling west while recordings of pioneer voices played, and lighting changed. Artist Fritz Seelig initially started the piece, before Paul von Klieben finished the painting. The highly individual attraction underlined the park's status as a passion project and provided an early motif for the town.

Knott emphasised within the piece his own sense of the frontier as about farming, tradition, and perseverance. As Knott's park publication *Ghost Town News* explained, the cyclorama depicted the family journey 'over the trails to the promising land of the West.'[6] It asserted Knott's idea of the West as an exercise in home-making. The story of wagon trains travelling in the 1840s spoke to many Americans, but for Knott, it specifically celebrated the life of his grandmother. The attraction reconstituted his grandmother's stories, 'it was the heroic Rosamond Dougherty come to life' (Holmes 1956, 123). Linking his journey with hers, the attraction highlighted themes of hard labour and sacrifice crucial to Knott's own survival on his desert homestead, battling dry land, in the 1910s. More than any attraction at the Ghost Town, the Covered Wagon Show revealed Knott's personal sense of frontier nostalgia and marked the park as his own distinctive version of the West.

Guests visited the cyclorama by means of the Gold Trail Hotel, originally built in Prescott, Arizona, in 1868 and transplanted to the park in 1940.[7] Writing in the 1950s, Knott biographer Roger Holmes described the cyclorama, opened in February 1942, as 'a giant-size painting, circular in shape, and depicting the early wagon migration of the Knott forebears into the then wild and savage wilderness' (Holmes 1956, 13–4). Dubbed 'a "mini-Western" which depicts some of the hardships faced by his regular pioneer forebears,' the cyclorama promised an almost film-like level of immersion for visitors.[8] The Covered Wagon Show proved initially popular with clientele. Holmes noted how, 'With soft and changing lights, it had a soporific and dream-conjuring effect upon its viewers' (Holmes 1956, 13–4). The attraction encouraged visitors to be caught in their own Westerly dreams based upon Knott's own choice of frontier symbols. Positive reaction inspired Knott to soon extend his vision outwards. As Holmes relates, 'Encouraged by such enthusiastic acceptance of his nostalgic urge to re-create the atmosphere of his pioneer ancestors, Walter now began the project' (Holmes 1956, 14).

As the amusement project expanded, and new attractions arose, Knott's Ghost Town shifted from detailing the specifics of Knott's own story of pioneer farming towards something more populist and general. As the downtown Main Street took form, the agricultural tale morphed into a gunfighter tale, and with it, a more reckless and violent sensibility took hold. The farming West gave way to the gunfighter West. While less formative than his childhood, Knott used his time labouring at Calico in the 1910s, where 'he would walk about the ghostly ruins of Calico and try to imagine the ghost town in its heyday' as key reference. Holmes argues that even in the 1910s, 'Walter reasoned, America would look back in nostalgic pride at such a place' (Holmes 1956, 72), with his own park becoming a public outlet for such nostalgia. The addition of gambling saloons and adult entertainment to Knott's Ghost Town, while true to the stereotypical image of the West, nonetheless clashed with his own Christian teetotaller family values. The classic image of the frontier town, populated by gartered ladies and alcohol bottles, appeared at odds with Knott's religious devotion and erstwhile commitment to prohibition. Knott in practice idealised more a mild West than a Wild West, at least in terms of conduct. As a compromise, the Silver Dollar Saloon at Knott's sold only non-alcoholic beverages, with a sign in the bar 'All Nations Welcome Except Carrie' referring to temperance activist Carrie Nation. As park newsletter *The Knotty Post* explained, the Ghost Town was, 'like "rough and tumble" towns but without alcohol.'[9] The 'wildness' of the West existed, but within Knott's own comfort boundaries.

Knott meanwhile increasingly used the park, and with it, frontier nostalgia, to fund and promote his politics and values. Despite benefiting from the U.S. government in the form of a 160-acre homestead in the 1910s and the assistance of George Darrow from the U.S. Department of Agriculture over initial boysenberry plants, Knott proved an ardent anti-federalist, and singularly blamed the government for the Great Depression. Knott feared that modern Americans, when faced with challenge, might 'lose that self-reliance and independence' rooted in frontier times.[10] Within his own nostalgia for the frontier lurked a fear of Americans becoming weak. For Knott, the Ghost Town signified an opportunity to celebrate good old-fashioned Western values and re-install traditional American bravado. Articles in the *Ghost Town News* and *The Knotty Post* mixed frontier nostalgia with conservative politics, with articles on saloon restoration and pictures of the steak house positioned next to pieces preaching 'the Nonsense of Karl Marx.'[11] As profits amassed in the 1950s, Knott extended his support for regional groups, including the Christian Anti-Communist School and the California Free Enterprise Association. As Lisa McGirr claims, 'No one played a more pivotal role in fostering grassroots conservative revival than Walter Knott' in the period (McGirr 2015, 98). In the process, the old frontier became both smokescreen and canvas for political activities. The reactionary, retrospective elements of nostalgia translated into an 'ideological tool of the right' (Sayers 2020, 39), with the frontier myth tailored to suit contemporary notions of free enterprise, restrictive social mores, and harsh justice for criminals. Knott moulded the frontier myth to suit his purpose, choosing what symbols to preserve and how they should be read. Knott's Ghost Town thus played its part in a broader repurposing of the West as a conservative political weapon.

Knott's vision for his Ghost Town further paralleled the ideas of other conservatives working in the California entertainment business. In many ways, the relationship between Walter Knott and his Ghost Town resembled that of Walt Disney and

Frontierland. Both men shared a sense of nostalgia for the frontier. As Richard Francaviglia contends, 'for a generation of political conservatives like Walter Knott, creator of Knott's Berry Farm, and Walt Elias Disney, and most Americans, there was simply no argument about its significance: to them, the frontier defined the American experience and synergistically shaped the American character and spirit' (Francaviglia 1999, 167). Disney visited Knott's Berry Farm throughout the 1950s, in 1951, purchasing handblown glass in the Ghost Town for a Disney production. Early ideas for Disneyland resembled, 'a sort of combination of Knott's Berry Farm, with its rustic American setting, and a kiddieland with rides' (Gabler 2006, 1001).

For Disney and Knott alike, their parks reflected passion projects, driven by a deeply sentimental and nostalgic view of their childhood past: for Disney, his time growing up in Marceline, Missouri, for Knott, his formative years in Pomona, California. Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm alike reflected a desire by their inventors to forge something home-like, familial, comforting and memorial, yet also fantasy-like and there for the masses to enjoy. Both middle-aged men, looking backward as well as forwards, committed unbridled energy to their creations as personal legacies, exhibiting obsessive drives to make something that would last, sometimes to their detriment. Humorously described as his 'chief hobby,' Knott's Ghost Town came across as an indulgent sideline, while Disney's grand ideas for a theme park also drew criticism.[12] As the parks developed, both Knott and Disney watched over their creations, walking amongst the crowds to check traffic flows and clientele smiles, while privately planning 'new additions.'[13]

Knott's Ghost Town thus stemmed from one man's nostalgia for the West forged from personal memories. As the *Los Angeles Times* noted, Knott was foremost 'a western romanticist,' caught up in the pioneer dream of a prior century.[14] However, Knott's love for the West linked him with so many others in the 1940s, a generation of Americans who, on some level, had similarly lived through the frontier. By putting his own personal nostalgia for the West on public show, he invited others to join him.

Preservationist Nostalgia and the Old School House

Revisiting family memories of westerly pioneering encouraged a broader reflection on the loss of the frontier in the 1940s and 1950s. Entertainers, politicians, and scholars had for some time explored the greater meanings of westward expansion and engaged in their own forms of nostalgic response. Buffalo Bill entertained the masses with colourful re-enactments of 'Wild West' action, Frederick Jackson Turner offered the historical significance of 'the frontier' and lamented its end, and President Theodore Roosevelt, himself owning a ranch in North Dakota in the 1880s and strongly nostalgic for the frontier, signed in national parks that sought to protect and preserve vast swathes of westerly wilderness (Slotkin 1981). The loss of the frontier spawned significant acts of memorialising and historic preservation.

As decades passed, and old lifestyles receded, fears grew over the 'golden age' of the frontier being permanently lost. As Scottish-Californian John Muir feared the ruin of Yosemite to industrial civilisation in the late nineteenth century and set about its preservation, individuals like Walter Knott lamented the disappearance of frontier life and committed to saving the last landscapes of pioneering. Knott exhibited a keen sense of anxiety over losing the frontier from public memory, and particularly fretted over the

demise of old buildings and architectural relics. The *Ghost Town News* highlighted the fast-disappearing ghost towns across the West, and with them, the extinguishing of frontier history. The publication suggested the failure of existing institutions to preserve historic landscapes, in particular criticising the 'crumbling Western States Promotion Council' for not acting quickly.[15]

With the Ghost Town, Knott initially aimed to preserve the frontier little different from preserving boysenberry jam in glass jars in the kitchen. As 'he saved a giant berry from extinction and gave it to the world,' Knott's confidence in preservation turned to the West.[16] However, he encountered a far hardier subject. A random, almost opportunist, approach drove early efforts. Knott and his friends drove to collect objects and buildings, but they lacked an overall plan for the park. If buildings could be saved, then all the better for it. Preservation took on a practical but reactive quality.

However, as the project grew, so did its sense of meaning and purpose. Driven by a desire to 'save' Western history, Knott conceptualised the Ghost Town as a worthwhile experiment to maintain a link to the past. Knott claimed, the 'Ghost Town represents roots in time, a stake in history,' a place where 'the old life that is being preserved' (Kooiman 1973, 105). What started out as one man's 'hobby' became a larger crusade to save the old frontier. Svetlana Boym defines 'restorative nostalgia' as driven by a combination of anxiety and truth that 'proposes to rebuild the lost home and patch up the memory gaps . . . in total reconstructions of the past' (Boym 2001, 41). Knott's Ghost Town transformed into a quest beyond personal whimsy and daydream (or merely 'reflective nostalgia', Boym 2001, 41) to instead construct 'a truly authentic tableau' (Kooiman 1973, 101), and a 'monument to these good people' of the frontier.[17] Knott hoped to freeze the frontier for future generations.

Knott shrewdly connected his project with a larger movement dedicated to saving frontier history. He worked with a range of amateur historians, collectors, antique dealers, and craftspeople to locate or fabricate objects for the Ghost Town. His work at the Farm revealed a broader community all driven by a nostalgic desire to preserve as much of Western heritage as possible. Marion Speer, a collector of Western relics, threw his weight behind the project, as well as relocating his own Western Trails Museum of 30,000 pieces to the park in 1956. The *Ghost Town News* highlighted the sense of teamwork and volunteerism behind the scenes at Knott's, of 'a great California institution' at work.[18]

Knott hoped that his Ghost Town might serve as gateway to other 'authentically' Western spaces such as frontier-themed hotels and sites of history. His park magazine published long lists of Western attractions from old-fashioned motels to dude ranches, with Knott yearning to kickstart a greater exploration of the West's historic sites, to 'inspire visitors here to visit some of the old towns for themselves.'[19] Rather than a great exception, the Ghost Town was offered as part of a much larger nostalgic landscape.

New projects at the Town encouraged visitors to both protect and celebrate the nineteenth-century frontier. Knott hoped to 'present the youth of the land a composite picture of the old West' at his Farm, open to all teachers and students, to help them understand frontier heritage.[20] He, 'wanted Ghost Town to be an educational feature as well as a place of entertainment.'[21] In 1952, Knott secured at auction an 'Old School House' originally built by Iowa farmers in 1875 to highlight how Americans used to be taught in frontier times, and 'preserve the ways of schooling in the past.'[22] He dismantled

the building and transported it by truck from Beloit, Kansas, and added a range of educational instruments, including old chalk and a dunce stool, to promote a conversation over forms of teaching. As with all buildings at Knott's, carefully positioned relics added to the frontier experience, with the idea that each artefact told its own unique history. Knott employee Marlene Schick promoted the school as part of her tour of the Ghost Town, relating how, 'the nostalgia value for the older people is inestimable. Those who actually attended such a school as this one in their childhood, can become downright misty-eyed over the memories and momentoes of a by-gone era.'[23] The historical attraction equally targeted younger visitors, partly to highlight how 'easy' they had it, and partly to entertain them with the novelty of frontier learning. On a wider level, Knott's project appeared driven by 'thinking that these pioneers had something to teach us,' with the Ghost Town offered as a poignant reminder of better days (Kooiman 1973, 101).

The success of Knott's Berry Farm in the 1940s and 1950s revealed not just an appetite for fried chicken in the region, but a genuine desire to walk amongst the relics of the frontier. Visitors to the Ghost Town marvelled at the detail of the facsimile, basking in the nostalgia on offer, and widely embraced Knott's choice of frontier symbols and messages. Visiting in 1957, a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* found the 'early West skillfully preserved' at Knott's, the park existing as an 'amazing monument to the old West' and a realm where you can 'turn the pages of time,' while the *Los Angeles Examiner* lauded the Ghost Town as 'authentic in every detail,' and declared the 'West REBORN.'[24] In contrast to the cartoonish fantasy of Disney's Frontierland, Knott's Berry Farm offered period charm and authenticity. *Spout* magazine enthused how Knott's 'preserved an almost forgotten era. Unearthed from abandoned towns in the West and Southwest, priceless relics and heirlooms are incorporated as a nostalgic reminder of American heritage.'[25]

However, historic authenticity at Knott's Berry Farm Ghost Town ultimately proved a fluid concept. Given the scale of Walter Knott's ambition, the mission to preserve the historic West naturally threw up a range of challenges. The contours of the Ghost Town reflected arbitrary choices over what buildings to preserve, what relics to facsimile, and what stories to discard. Walter Knott chose what to protect of Western heritage and what to nostalgize, constructing a frontier playground rich in white conservative values, but flawed in terms of historic realism and ethnic inclusivity. Most obviously, the park failed to cater to multiple perspectives on the West. The degree to which Knott's Berry Farm accurately captured the historic West also seemed constrained by a competing desire to entertain. Knott himself openly admitted, 'we can preserve the picture as well as make it,' highlighting a duality unlikely to gain acceptance at real museums.[26] On a more fundamental level, the heritage project revolved chiefly around architectural preservation and creating a frontier 'mood,' and neglected real-life peoples of the West and their individual stories. What seemed to matter most at Knott's was neither heritage nor history, but evoking a form of popular nostalgia. If an object seemed entertaining or representative, it likely passed the litmus test. As the *Ghost Town News* explained, 'Ghost Town is, to Walter Knott, the same kind of hobby as Dearborn village is to Henry Ford but where Mr. Ford collects actual old buildings, the Californian hobbyist reproduces them, in an atmospheric setting, that gives visitors the "feel" of the past.'[27]

Symbolic Nostalgia and Our Little Chapel by the Lake

In the late 1980s, French philosopher Jean Baudrillard described the United States as a landscape of images, an evocative symbolic realm manufactured in the movies. For Baudrillard, 'the desert you pass through is like the set of a Western, the city a screen of signs and formulas' (Baudrillard 1988, 56). Following earlier work by the likes of James Fenimore Cooper, Buffalo Bill, and countless dime novelists, in the 1940s and 1950s, entertainment culture translated frontier nostalgia into a range of 'signs and formulas,' planted into the American consciousness via movie reels, radio broadcasts, Davy Crockett fur hats and pistol toy guns. Hollywood directors such as John Ford produced a cinematic landscape rich in nostalgia, with the white cowboy cast as national hero. Frontier nostalgia and visual culture coalesced, even merged. The 'West' increasingly functioned as a fixed range of symbols that elevated national pride, captured the American spirit, and spoke to contemporary sensibilities. John F. Kennedy conjured a New Frontier framed around the appeal of the old one, while the 'Wild West' framed the Cold War conflict with the Soviet Union. Frontier symbols reflected deliberate choices over what to include and exclude about the Westerly experience, what to emphasise and to delete.[28]

At Knott's Berry Farm, Knott rebuilt the pioneer West as an intensely symbolic landscape. Behind the quest to 'reconstruct a typical ghost town' – the architectural realism and the woodcraft – Knott injected his creation with a series of potent symbols, reflective of his politics, and the wider frontier myth.[29] As with his restaurant, Knott's Ghost Town oozed sentimentality, old-fashioned values, a 'homey' feel, and extolled American tradition. The restaurant and Ghost Town side by side symbolised the ethics and rewards of the American Dream. Attractions such as the Covered Wagon Show projected a landscape heavily loaded with Knott's own symbols.

One attraction more than any other highlighted the frontier symbolism at work at Knott's Berry. In the early 1940s, Paul von Klieben crafted a Christian-inspired attraction at the town. With a background in World's Fairs and Hollywood, Klieben proved a capable artist, producing a fluorescent portrait of Jesus on glass that he called 'The Transfiguration.' His father a preacher, Knott welcomed the piece of religious iconography. A building to house the painting followed. Visitors to Our Little Chapel by the Lake in the 1940s were met by Klieben's artwork, recorded voice narration, and Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata playing soothingly in the background. Dark light on the painting as the chapel's doors opened made it seem as though Christ's eyes shined on each visitor. The narrator told how: 'The people of the Old West were a deeply religious people,' and that 'after they were settled in their new lands and had built their cabins and a school, they would come together to build a place of worship.'[30] The chapel encouraged visitors to take communion with the Godly frontier. One guest described their experience as 'an island of tranquility in a sea of activity.'[31] In contrast to the action, noise and hubbub outside, the chapel elicited a sense of welcome peace and tranquillity. It projected the West in a different light, as a religiously sanctioned mission.

Outside the Little Chapel, Knott's Ghost Town reworked other frontier symbols. Overseen by art director (and former cartoonist) Paul Schwartz, the hotchpotch town resembled a Western film set with its false fronts, dead-end streets, and cowboy actors. Women role-played sassy prostitutes and dancers, presenting a women's west starkly

different from Knott's own experience. Men enacted frontier justice with their pistols, propelling a gunfighter mystique. The wood-carved life-size Sad Eye Joe (dating to 1941) reprimanded visitors approaching the downtown jail, warning people 'to mend their ways,' while wooden 'Chinaman' laundry master Wing Lee, declared 'No tickee, no shirtee,' to any who approached his shop. Racist frontier stereotypes abounded, with Wing Lee, despite his recorded voice, a passive object for white visitors to rebuke and laugh at. The Ghost Town dummies showed a park landscape seamlessly shifting between the real and the fake, or a history lesson and a movie scene. One period cartoon related, 'After seeing our Chinaman, the Barber Shop dummies, and hearing our Jail Bird call 'em by name, our visitors are so "confused", they just don't know who's a dummy and who ain't.'[32]

The popularity of the Ghost Town in the 1950s indicated that Knott had guessed right over mid-century nostalgia for the West. From the Covered Wagon exalting a pioneer ethic to the gun fighter enacting frontier justice, his choice of frontier symbols positively entertained. Visitors flocked to the Ghost Town because, on some level, the nostalgic landscape spoke to them. Holmes claims that the park succeeded because 'it met and satisfied a then unrecognized inner hunger gnawing at America,' of striving for a greater path, and that Walter Knott 're-created the [American] dream, and by so doing had struck a chord' (Holmes 1956, 15). As Eva Dake from San Diego told, 'This is America – our hope and pride. We glimpsed the past in old Ghost Town.'[33] Knott's Ghost Town equally appealed because it offered a collage of the West based around simple stereotypes, humorous quips and action scenes that resonated with the audience. It played to an increasing simplification of the West in popular culture. In the 1990s, Frederic Jameson coined 'nostalgia mode' to describe how film depicts the past more by cliches and stereotypes than any historical understanding, highlighting nostalgia as an increasingly superficial and surface engagement. At Knott's Ghost Town, the simplest symbols of the West appealed most. People gravitated not towards the history lessons, but to the nonsense-talking wooden figures, setting things up nicely for Disney's (similarly history-light) Frontierland.

Performative Nostalgia and Panning for Gold

The idea of 'performing' the West predates Knott's Ghost Town by at least a half-century. As the frontier closed in 1890, Wild West shows dramatised the West as a narrative to act out and keep alive as a performative tradition. As the memory of the West weakened, and decades passed, the act of 'performance' increasingly took on a nostalgic resonance, as well as a more distant lens. By the 1950s, nostalgia about the 'Wild West' primarily filtered through a domestic television set, in the guise of *Gunsmoke* and *Bonanza*, rather than by any practical, physical engagement. The Ghost Town at Knott's Berry Farm represented a shift to more visceral action again, and a welcome contrast to armchair consumption of Western imagery. Journalists welcomed the shift. As the *Los Angeles Times* surmised, 'The printed word, still pictures, motion pictures and television all have helped keep alive the American frontier – but participation in this colorful pageant of yesterday is better yet.'[34] Knott's Berry Farm offered a fresh sense of immersion in a classic American story.

The Knott family had already tapped the power of immersion in their restaurant business. Auditory, olfactory, and tactile experiences helped forge the restaurant's success. The sensory experience of cooked food – the juiciness of berries, the smell of freshly baked pies, the taste of fried chicken – actively drew the crowds. With its old-fashioned atmosphere, service, and smiles, eating inside the restaurant evoked all kinds of pleasures. This sensory dynamic extended to outside the restaurant, encompassing plans for the Ghost Town.

Knott moulded the Ghost Town into a fully sensory experience. Attractions included animatronic-style talking figures such as Sad Eye Joe and the gravity-defying Haunted Shack (1954) that tested balance and perspective. The sense of 'being' in an active, living, breathing frontier town relied on a variety of immersive mechanisms. As if caught in a Disney animated movie, Schick described the noise of the blacksmiths, 'pounding that is so rhythmic, it sounds almost like music.'[35] The *Los Angeles Times* described how, 'Indians, dancing girls and tarot readers, as well as crusty prospectors and their burros roamed the streets.'[36] Hand-written frontier signs directed attention, banjo and piano music played, and cowboys approached visitors with bluster. Gun fights extended the adrenalin of frontier life to modern audiences. Frontier atmosphere, realistic architecture, and an absence of modern technology all strengthened the illusion. As the park shifted towards a more ride-based focus in the early 1960s, the concept of 'performance' expanded to include 'on the rails' thrill-rides. The West as a 'ride' to enjoy transmuted from sitting aloft a dusty burro idling into town to jostling aboard a fast-moving mine-train. New media and technology kept the frontier nostalgia fresh (Sayers 2020, 27).

Knott encouraged his visitors to perform an active role in the drama playing out. The attraction 'Panning for Gold' opened in 1947 and emblematised this interactive, sensory approach to frontier nostalgia. Tourists gathered by a watered ravine close to Knott's replica volcano, welcomed by local gold-diggers and mining bosses. Once there, they actively 'panned for gold', using metal pans, sand, and water. With hands dirty and sleeves rolled up, some guests worked the ravine for hours. Knott added real gold dust to the water each season, adding a tangible, realistic property to the process, and incentivising the search. Knott described the attraction as a once in a lifetime experience, providing people with 'their only chance to get at least an inkling of the excitement that the old-timers must have felt when they sowed the glittering, golden flakes.'[37] Panning for gold also signified the visitor 'doing work' on the frontier. True to Knott's personal vision of the West as a landscape of labour, guests freely contributed their own toil to the frontier endeavour.

Through such mechanisms as 'Panning for Gold,' live shows, and gun fight re-enactments, Knott employees and paying guests alike 'performed' the West as if on a giant theatre stage. Working at the Bird Cage Theatre, first opened in 1954, and a replica of a Tombstone original, Schwartz applauded putting 'Western theater here on the place where the drama of the days of old might be reproduced,' however, in reality, the whole town seemed like an open stage.[38] Built around audience participation in a constantly unfolding illusion, the nostalgic world of Knott's served as a prototype for other West-themed nostalgia landscapes, from Disney's Frontierland to HBO's televisual series *Westworld* (2016+).

In the 1930s, Johan Huizinga theorised 'play' as an activity caught within an invisible 'magic circle' boasting its own distinct set of rules and sequences that separated it from

the outside world (Huizinga 1938). Knott's Berry Farm provided its own magic circle of the 'Wild West' thanks to its immersive architecture and choreographed performance. For older visitors, the Town provided a vivid trip down memory lane. For the younger audience, a visit to the Farm represented a journey into fantasy and myth, a chance to play 'Cowboys and Indians' that years later would become their own form of Western nostalgia and memory. Guests performed a frontier fantasy in front of each other, a collective endeavour. In the 1940s, a radio production attempted to capture the 'magic circle' of Knott's Wild West in sound recordings. 'Even before turning the first corner into Main Street of Ghost Town you seem to be transplanted into the past,' told the radio broadcaster live from Knott's, before embarking on an aural tour of the park. The radio show described nooses swinging in the wind, the quiet still of Deadwood Dick's grave, the clattering noise of the blacksmith's, the banter of 'old timers and prospectors', lively music from Fandango dance hall, the cry of a medicine man, and the rumble of the railroad.[39]

On a deeper level, the sensory performance at Knott's promised the return of the Old West, to bring a Ghost Town to life and resuscitate its dead, and most of all, protect a 'living segment of authentic Americana' for believers (Kooiman 1973, 101). As one narrator for a documentary in the 1950s promoting Knott's enthused, 'a lot of the old West is still alive right here at Knott's Berry Farm.'[40]

However, subsumed in the Wild West fantasy, few noticed the missing or misrepresented performers in the show. Knott's preserved 'a little' of 'the old West' remarkably well but came across as ill-considered when it tackled women and ethnic minorities. In stark contrast to the presentation of women as subservient domestic waitresses at the restaurant, itself deeply problematic, Knott's Ghost Town instead presented its female pioneers as chiefly dancers and prostitutes, with Goldie's Parlour notably housing 'ladies of the night.' Native American performers graced the park, largely to perform a white reading of their culture, and enacting heavily stereotyped roles sketched out in Wild West shows and Hollywood Westerns. In 1948, the grandson of Geronimo opened the Indian Room at Knott's, suggestive of good relations, but most 'Indians' at Knott's performed to expectations on request. They pandered to white sensibilities and stories of conquest (Kamper 2005).

Problems equally surrounded the constitution of the crowd who actively performed the nostalgia alongside the actors. Widely reflective of Orange County's demographic profile, a white middle class majority flocked to Knott's Berry Farm in the 1940s and 1950s for its cheap cuisine and lively entertainments. Photographs depicted chromed Chryslers and wooden Oldsmobiles parked just off the freeway in a long line, with white middle-class families waiting in orderly queues to enter the premises, sometimes their numbers stretching for over one hundred yards. White dairy vans pulling up to the restaurant with white shirted workmen, with white napkins and white flour in the kitchen, underlined the singular colour of the landscape. Promotional postcards depicted white cowboys in checked shirts toting their guns downtown, underlining white superiority on the frontier, and contributing to a broader whitewashing of the cowboy figure in American culture. At the restaurant, an exclusively white clientele sat down to dine, with Knott's Ghost Town next door boasting a similar audience. The patrons that roamed the 'Wild West' of Knott's sported 1950′s department store clothes and suburban values. The world of white picket fences thus invaded the old frontier town. In turn, daily, repetitive

performances by actors and spectators alike projected 'the frontier West' as very much an Anglo-Saxon project, an overwhelmingly white frontier performed and celebrated as automated routine.

In 1947, black civil rights activist Charlotta Bass and her two sisters visited the Ghost Town, posing for pictures in the Pitchur's Gallery (first opened in 1940). Bass sat heading up a wagon, a powerful image, and a poignant reminder of the multicultural frontier that Knott himself seemed to sideline. A 1954 photograph similarly depicted African American women having fun in the park, posing this time next to two sculpted cowboys, Handsome Brady and Whiskey Bill, on a bench outside Gold Trail Hotel.[41] Such inclusive imagery nonetheless proved the exception. Reflective of Knott's own conservative rhetoric and ties to racist conservatives such as local Congressman James Utt, by the early sixties, Knott's Berry Farm seemed increasingly partisan. In 1963, *The Traveller's Green Book*, a magazine that published safe destinations for African American travel (or 'vacation without aggravation'), listed Disneyland, but noticeably not Knott's Berry Farm, as 'safe' to visit in Orange County.[42] Knott's West in practice amounted to a white-washed frontier for local suburbanites. The absence of a truly multi-cultural West inside the park not only preached the wrong kind of history lesson, it potentially exacerbated racial tensions outside.

Nostalgia Capitalism and the Frontier Gift Store

While the overriding image of Orange County's most famous Ghost Town in the 1940s and 1950s was one of a hobby and a passion project, Knott's Wild West was always driven by money. Like many others, Knott recognised an opportunity to profit from frontier nostalgia. Alongside Frontierland at Disneyland, the Ghost Town at Knott's showcased the making of new tourist-friendly landscapes in the 1950s based around selling the frontier myth to the American public. As Marguerite Shaffer notes, 'The intersection of imperialist nostalgia and the mechanisms of the emerging consumer culture recast Turner's mythical frontier into a real place – the tourist's West' (Shaffer 2004, 377).

By the early 1940s, the Knott family had already proven effective entrepreneurs, thanks to their wise investment in the boysenberry, considerable work ethic, 'assembly-line operation in the kitchen,' and focus on customer service (Merritt and Lynxwiler 2015, 24). Knott's roadside restaurant perfectly suited the rise of gasoline-fuelled leisure, as one banker related to Knott, 'This is the automotive age. People like driving out on the road. They like to visit unique and out-of-the-way places' (Holmes 1956, 115). Knott closely kept track of his business, with restaurant success calculated in terms of chickens gutted, pies eaten, and biscuits used.[43] Building on the success of prior jam and jellies, daughter Virginia Knott opened her own merchandise store at Knott's in the late 1930s. By 1942, the store had moved far beyond jams, with its upmarket wares including 'fancy dishes, glass and silverware, pottery, greeting cards, novelties.'[44]

The addition of a Ghost Town at Knott's met a period desire for Western nostalgia and a market for home-cooked food and souvenirs. The frontier-framed tourist landscape afforded a range of opportunities for money-making. *Sales Management* magazine documented Walter Knott's commercial mindset in 'A Salesman Builds a Ghost Town.'[45] Like Disneyland's Main Street, the frontier facade of Knott's downtown disguised a range of money-making ventures. The Pitchur Gallery operated as a paid photo

booth with frontier props and a professional photographer on hand, while visitor Ethel Taylor wrote into the *Ghost Town News*, 'If you're a woman, it will probably take you a half hour to get through the gift store alone' on Main Street.[46]

The townscape grew rapidly due to a symbiotic relationship between frontier nostalgia and monetary profit. Initially a piece of diversionary entertainment to placate queues, the *Ghost Town News* related the 'rapidity with which new things are being created,' and 'new entertainment and interest' growing at the Ghost Town.[47] New stores that opened included a knife maker, a candle-maker, Indian gifts, and an antiques store. The Ghost Town highlighted the potential for Western-themed commercial amusements some ten years prior to the New Frontier hotel and casino opening at Las Vegas and Frontierland receiving its first guests at Disneyland.

Faced with competition from Disneyland in the mid-fifties, Knott vigorously responded with an array of new entertainments designed to bolster business and overcome what he saw as 'complacency' in the park (Kooiman 1973, 158). Knott thanked Disneyland for forcing his business to become more competitive, highlighting the value in the 'whole American free-enterprise system.'[48] While the primacy of entertainment over history had always been there, new attractions in the fifties diversified the frontier scene, including the Haunted Shack, an Animal Ghost Town (1956), complete with 'bar tending goat,' and a beauty contest at the Bird Cage Theatre.[49] The attraction Mott's Miniatures (1958) featured six model houses moving across timeframes similar to Disney's Carousel of Progress in its depiction of domestic progress. Starting with a Pilgrim's House in 1623, the attraction ended with a 'future' house of 1959 featuring an 'ultra-mod home' complete with 'a 2 inch working television set.'[50] Commercial outlets exploited frontier nostalgia in the form of a wide variety of Western mementos to take home. Knott's downtown advertised '40 specialty shops where unique remembrances can be purchased,' including a pet shop, leather store, and model train seller.[51] A Christmas advertisement even presented the Ghost Town as a competitor to Santa's Workshop, with socks, woodcraft, men's goods, toys, candy, as well as guns, all on sale.[52]

The Meaning of Nostalgia at Knott's Berry Farm

Nostalgia for the 'Wild West' began even before the closure of the historic frontier. As Richard Slotkin explains, a longing for the Old West gave Buffalo Bill 'his first success' in the 1880s, with his Wild West shows gradually morphing into 'a new form of the sentiment . . . a nostalgia not for the reality, but for the myth' (Slotkin 1992, 87). Earl Pomeroy talks of the 'commemorative and nostalgic spirit' central to novels by Owen Wister in the early 1900s (Pomeroy 1957, 108), while Nanna Verhoeff asserts the significance of 'instant nostalgia' captured in the first Hollywood Westerns (Verhoeff 2006, 149). In the 1940s and 1950s, the nostalgia project took on a new dimensionality and scale. Tourists took to national parks in their masses, celebrating frontier wilderness, they watched Westerns at home and at the movie theatre, and they toured ghost towns accessible from the freeway.

The Ghost Town project at Knott's can easily be seen as just one example of a period fascination with the meaning, history, and legacy of the West. Knott's Ghost Town seems not that different from historic sites such as Dodge City, itself going through a tourist bonanza in the period. Knott's Berry Farm coincides with a range of Western-themed

amusement parks opening in the 1950s, including Frontierland at Disneyland in 1955, Wild West City in Stanhope, New Jersey in 1957, and Frontier City in Oklahoma in 1958. As one guest exclaimed on a visit to Knott's Ghost Town, 'Does this place have any connection with Disneyland?' (Holmes 1956, 134). Knott's Berry Farm's Ghost Town strikes as one of many mass experiences of Western nostalgia in the mid-century.

The huge popularity of Knott's Berry Farm in the 1940s and 1950s reflected a generational longing for the frontier. While neither Walter Knott or Walt Disney had practically experienced the frontier, both men felt emotionally connected with it, imagining the old West as a place of innocence, simplicity, hard work, and Christian worship. Knott and Disney superimposed their own values and experiences onto a period of history far more complex. Marginalising minorities and women, they actively contributed to a form of 'nostalgia for an America that belongs in the cultural imaginary' (Sayers 2020, 2). They employed frontier nostalgia to push their own agenda, knitting the myth of the old frontier to mid-century conservative ideology. As Sayers explains, nostalgia often involves casting an eye backwards while conceptualising the present in negative terms (Sayers 2020, 25). Knott's Berry Farm cast the old West as simple and good compared to the complexities and dangers of contemporary America. As one park advertisement in the 1950s explained, 'The more complex the world becomes, the more people turn to the past and the simple things in life. Here at the Farm and Ghost Town we have tried to give them some of these simple things' (Kooiman 1973, 95). Amanda Tewes argues that,'-theme parks [such as Knott's] propagate a particular myth of "the West"' amounting to 'a political statement as much as a place of leisure' (Tewes 2017). In the 1950s, both Ghost Town and Frontierland met with success because they melded politics and leisure together. Frontier storytelling aligned with the values of the suburban middle classes of Orange County and beyond, nostalgia for the West becoming a bulwark of conservative white America.[53]

In 1952, a *Christian Science Monitor* journalist visiting Knott's Berry Farm declared it 'a little jaunt into the history of the early West.'[54] For Knott, his park simply captured the 'romance of the good old days.'[55] Such simple claims belie the damage done by endless rehearsals of a white frontier fantasy by guests and performers across multiple decades. Scholars claim that the limits of Knott's frontier experiment revolve around this singular act of looking backwards, that his park offered little positive for the future and had little to say of lasting meaning. Michael Steiner locates Knott's Berry Farm as almost redundant on opening, part of the 'raucous wigwam motels, dinosaur parks, corn palaces, reptile gardens, snake pits, honkey tonks, hitching post saloons, and other western roadside wonders' of the period, a 'messy West' soon to be cleaned up and replaced by Disney (Steiner 1998, 12). Francaviglia meanwhile describes Knott's nostalgia-heavy strategy as his chief error, that unlike his competitor Walt Disney, who gazed into the future with optimism, Walter Knott seemed a man trapped in the past. Francaviglia details how Disney 'refined Walter Knott's tenet about the frontier West, but with a twist in the plot line,' and 'elected not to recreate a decrepit ghost town in Frontierland because this would imply failure. Rather, Disney went one step further than Knott and recreated a vigorous West in its period of booming growth' (Francaviglia 1999, 169).

Such scholarship services a false exceptionalism surrounding Walt Disney, especially given Walter Knott's knowledge of World's Fairs, his expertise, and his experimental theming. Statements by Knott such as 'Here we look back to the lessons of history and

try to build a better tomorrow,' imply a side to Knott far more in tune with Disney than first considered (Kooiman 1973, 105). Like Disneyland, modern commerce, innovative technology, and political rhetoric shaped the frontier woodwork of Knott's Berry Farm. It is similarly easy to see the common faults in both men's projects and their re-envisioning of history. Scholarship also fails to account for the popularity and endurance of Knott's Westerly experiment. The Ghost Town succeeded exactly because it presented the West as pure unadulterated nostalgia. While Disney employed Frontierland as a springboard to other worlds, a cartoonish facsimile, Knott presented his guests with an all-encompassing realm of frontier reminiscence far stronger and authentic. Like a carpenter working on a pioneer homestead, Knott initially constructed a few basic buildings in the early 1940s as homage to the frontier. His Ghost Town developed into an elaborate entertainment landscape marked by play, performance, and sensory experience. Far more than Frontierland, the park provided a true sense of escape to the 'old West.' Visitors embraced the frontier nostalgia as an escape from Cold War realities, they welcomed the Ghost Town as it evoked 'simpler times.' As amateur poet H.Y. Low wrote on Knott's, 'Everything, everyone. Formerly Used. Keeping Vast Crowds. Of We Moderns Amused.'[56] Just like his restaurant next-door, Knott's Ghost Town sated a mid-century desire for old-fashioned Americana. Knott's frontier park fulfilled that enduring want of the West as the history-equivalent of comfort food, a filling frontier dish served alongside Mrs. Knott's hot chicken dinner.

Notes

1. Earlier attempts to present the 'Wild West' as an amusement theme include Wild West shows, sometimes held at dedicated amusement sites such as Coney Island, and Gold Gulch mining town as part of the California Pacific International Exposition in San Diego in 1935–6. With its curious mix of relics, replicas, actors and carvings, Knott might best be seen as a transitional realm between traditional historic sites like Dodge City and the new fantasy world of Disney's Frontierland.
2. *Ghost Town News* (February 1942), Vol.1, No.3, 4, all copies archived at the Huntington Library, San Marino.
3. Celebratory accounts of Walter Knott and Knott's Berry include Holmes (1956), Kooiman (1973), Jennings (2009), and Merritt and Lynxwiler (2015), while McGirr (2015) takes a more critical line on Knott, offering him as an example of conservative lobbying in California; The design of the park is little mentioned in park scholarship such as Adams (1991)). It is briefly mentioned as inspiration for Disney's Frontierland, see Steiner (1998) and Francaviglia (1999).
4. Knott's creation of the park is frequently referred to as a 'hobby,' see for example, the *Ghost Town News*, Souvenir Edition (undated), 19, and 'Old West continues to live in Man's Ghost Town *Hobby.' Grit* 29 August 1943, republished in 'The Story of Knott's Berry Place' (1943), 26, Box 8, Folder 1 (8.1) Orange County Archives (henceforth OCA).
5. My ideas around nostalgia are chiefly informed by work by Jameson (1992) and Sayers (2020).
6. *Ghost Town News* (1944) Souvenir Edition, 3.
7. Knott was fond of the hotel due to its year of construction being the same year as his family's trip to California. See Marlene Schick, 'Ghost Town Notes.' (undated), 10, 7.21, OCA. The Notes are scripted as a tour of the Ghost Town.
8. Schick, 'Ghost Town Notes.' (undated), 10, 7.21, OCA. The Wagon is now seen in a different light, a journalist for the *Los Angeles Times* noting in the 1990s, 'It's an oddly affecting slice of Americana, but a special effects extravaganza it's not.' Rick Vanderknyff, 'New Fangled

Effects and Old-Fashioned Storytelling Create an Attraction with a Message,' *Los Angeles Times*, 26 May 1994.
9. Schick, 'Ghost Town Notes.'
10. Interview of Walter Knott, by Donald J. Schippers (1965), 129, Oral History Program, UCLA Library.
11. For example, *The Knotty Post* (July 1952), 6. All copies archived at OCA.
12. *Ghost Town News* (1944) Souvenir Edition, 19.
13. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 3.
14. Del Schrader, 'Lively Ghost Town at Knott's Daily Plays Host to Thousands,' *Los Angeles Times*, 14 July 1957.
15. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 6.
16. 'Knott's Berry Farm "Come and Get It",' TV documentary produced by Bill Webb (undated), OCA. Also available at: https://archive.org/details/castaoca_000117.
17. *Ghost Town News* (February 1942), Vol.1, No.3, 2.
18. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 2.
19. *Ghost Town News* (February 1942), Vol.1, No.3, 2.
20. *Ghost Town News* (February 1942), Vol.1, No.3, 2.
21. Interview of Walter Knott, 76.
22. Kelley Family History excerpt (undated), 7.1, OCA; 'Ghost Town History and Reference' (undated), 7.21, OCA.
23. Schick, 'Ghost Town Notes.'
24. Del Shrader, 'Early West Skillfully Preserved at Knott's Berry Ghost Town,' *Los Angeles Times*, 17 February 1957; 'Old West Reborn,' *Los Angeles Examiner*, 18 January 1953.
25. *Spout* magazine, 16 September 1959, Press Clippings 1945–1977 box, OCA.
26. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 5.
27. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 5.
28. Smith (1950) explores the sense of the frontier a series of potent symbols and images propagated across dime novels and other fiction.
29. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 5.
30. Schick, 'Ghost Town Notes.'
31. Schick, 'Ghost Town Notes.'
32. *Ghost Town News* (February 1942), Vol.1, No.3, 30 (back cover).
33. Poem published in *The Knotty Post* (May 1951), 12.
34. Shrader, 'Early West Skillfully Preserved.'
35. Schick, 'Ghost Town Notes.'
36. Shrader, 'Early West Skillfully Preserved.'
37. Schick, 'Ghost Town Notes.'
38. Schwartz quoted in *Ghost Town News* (February 1942), Vol.1, No.3, 2.
39. 'A Trip Thru Knott's Berry Farm Ghost Town,' souvenir LP recording (undated), OCA. Also available at: https://archive.org/details/castaoca_000110/castaoca_000110_b_access.mp3.
40. 'Knott's Berry Farm "Come and Get it."'
41. 'Charlotta Bass and her two sisters, Victorine Kinloch and Lillian Carter, at Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park, 1947,' 13 June 1947, Miriam Matthews Photograph Collection, Special Collections, UCLA; 'Women Sitting on Benches with Statues at Knott's Berry Farm, 1954,' Atlanta-Rome District CMW Church Collection, Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library.
42. *The Traveller's Green Book* (1963–4) International Edition, 10, New York Public Library. Also, see Gustavo Arellano, 'During the 1960s, Disneyland was considered the only place in OC safe for Black Tourists,' *OC Weekly*, 16 September 2016.
43. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 29. For example, on Mother's Day 1941, 1,970 chickens used, 784 pies made, and 29,500 biscuits used.
44. On the 75th anniversary of Knott's, park publicity claimed Virginia's Gift Shop as America's 'first souvenir theme park shop,' see 'Knott's Notables: 75 Years of "Firsts"' Press Release (undated), 8.10, OCA.

45. 'A Salesman Builds A Ghost Town,' *Sales Management*, 15 August 1941, reprinted in 'The Story of Knott's Berry Place' (1943), 30.
46. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 27.
47. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 3.
48. Interview of Walter Knott, 82.
49. *The Knotty Post* (June 1956), 5; *The Knotty Post* (May 1958), 7.
50. Schick, 'Ghost Town Notes.'
51. *Spout* magazine (September 1959), 16.
52. Full page advertisement for Knott's in *Los Angeles Times*, 4 December 1960, archived in 9.36, OCA.
53. Reactionary and oppositional, 'The Knott's like other American romantics mourned this tragedy in the name of progress,' seeing the West as lost, and offered their park as refuge from the vices of the period (Holmes 1956, 150).
54. Elizabeth Williams, 'Ghost Town Revives Stirring Gold-Rush Era,' *Christian Science Monitor*, 12 February 1952.
55. *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 5.
56. H.Y. Low, 'A Salute' in *Ghost Town News* (1941), Vol.1, No.2, 15.

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