



The Outdoor Industry in American History

Dr. Rachel Gross

Dr. Rachel Gross is an assistant professor of history at CU Denver. Before arriving at CU Denver, she was a Research Fellow at the Rachel Carson Center and a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Montana. Her book, *Selling Nature: The Outdoor Industry in American History*, is forthcoming from Yale University Press in fall 2023.

Friday, November 11, 3:30pm-4:45pm, North Classroom 1130

In this talk, Dr. Gross will discuss the basis and research for her book, *Selling Nature*. Over the last 150 years, the American outdoor sector has grown from a small collection of outfitters to an industry that contributes more than 2 percent of Gross Domestic Product. *Selling Nature* argues that Americans' efforts to commune with nature to escape economic and commercial forces drove the evolution of the industry from its infancy in the late 1800s to its contemporary existence as an economic and commercial force. The industry succeeded because it was predicated not just on creating functional equipment, but on selling an outdoor identity and authenticity. Shopping for the woods was about being—or becoming—the right kind of person. From the turn of the twentieth century onward, the industry perpetuated the link between buying gear and being an expert. Outdoor enthusiasts did acquire new technical skills, of course, but *Selling Nature* shows that most consumers conformed with evolving outdoor archetypes by dressing the part.



Following the seminar, a social hour (4:45pm-6:00pm) will take place at the Tivoli Tap House patio on campus to continue the discussions. Please join us!