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PGC Greenest Day 9

In my US History class, my teacher touched upon the ghost town of Jerome and the tragic fate that befell the once lively town. However, what she never mentioned was the indigenous communities that were forced out of Jerome due to the Dawes Act in the 1870s. 2000 years ago, the Yavapai was an indigenous tribe that used Jerome as a base for crops, where they would plant crops and then migrate to another area for resources, returning to their farms when the harvest season came. In 1583, Spanish Conquistador Diego Perez de Luzan came to Jerome in search of precious metals. He, however, abandoned the area, deeming it poor because the metals were primarily copper rather than silver. The next year, Antonio de Espejo travelled to Jerome and discovered the rich gold reserves in their mines.

This led to the Yavapai being kicked out of Jerome to be moved to a reservation. Jerome was then transformed into a bustling gold hub, with fancy smelting factories. The Yavapai could no longer live in Jerome even if they hadn't been forced out due to the factory smog and runoff eroding the farmland. Tragically, after the last bits of high-grade gold were mined and the Phelps Dodge Mine shut down, residents began to move out of the area in spades. This dwindled the population down to under 100 people. 10 years after the mines' closures, Jerome was deemed a "ghost town" in 1953.

This story resonates with me because it reminds me of the nostalgic feeling one gets when they explore a place from your childhood that was abandoned a long time ago. For example, in the mall nearby, the stores used to be bustling with people. The fountain's floor was covered in pennies. Now, the mall is almost empty. The kid's playground that I used to play in all the time was a ghost town, just like Jerome. I mourn the times when I was able to play outside with my friends after school every day. Parents have become too paranoid to let their kids outside, which just forces those kids to entertain themselves with devices.



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sophiepoststhings For the [#pgc2023](#) my teammate Orell [@th3_ugly_cookie](#) created a model of Jerome, AZ —originally the home of the nomadic Yavapai. However, they were made to move to a reservation in the 1870s due to the discovery of the land's rich gold mines. The smelter fumes and wildfires from the gold mining industry rendered the land unsuitable for farming. Eventually, Jerome ran out of high-grade ores, which caused people to abandon the town and dwindle its population to under 100. [@turninggreenorg](#) [@pachamamaorg](#) [@jerome_arizona](#)

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Works Cited

<https://www.almadesedona.com/blog/explore-the-history-of-the-west-in-jerome#:~:text=The%20area%20around%20what%20is,%20Tejuna%2C%20Nijoras%20and%20Cruzados.>

<https://jerome.az.gov/jerome-then-and-now>