

Unit 5

MASCULINE HEROES

American Expansion, 1820–1900

Authors and Works

Featured in the Video:

James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers* and *The Last of the Mohicans* (novels)

John Rollin Ridge (Yellow Bird), *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta* (novel)

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, *Drum-Taps* (poetry), Preface to *Leaves of Grass* (literary criticism)

Discussed in This Unit:

Catharine Maria Sedgwick, “Cacoethes Scribendi” and “A Reminiscence of Federalism” (short stories), *Hope Leslie* (novel)

Cherokee Memorials, “Note on the Accompanying Memorials,” “Memorial of the Cherokee Council,” and “Memorial of the Cherokee Citizens” (political petitions)

Corridos (Mexican and Mexican American musical tradition)

Caroline Stansbury Kirkland, *A New Home—Who’ll Follow?* (literary sketches)

Louise Amelia Smith Clappe, “California, in 1851 and 1852” (letters)

Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, *The Squatter and the Don* (novel)

Nat Love, *The Life and Adventures of Nat Love* (autobiography)

Overview Questions

■ How did racial tensions complicate and challenge the expansionist goals articulated in many American texts of the nineteenth century?

■ How did gender impact immigrants’ experiences and opportunities in the American West?

■ How do texts by African American, Native American, and Latino writers expand and transform

concepts of American citizenship, identity, and masculinity?

■ What are the distinguishing characteristics of the epic? How do writers in Unit 5 draw on and transform the tradition of the epic?

■ What characterizes the historical novel? What historical periods or events did nineteenth-century historical novelists see as appropriate subjects for their books? Why were historical novels so popular among nineteenth-century American readers?

■ What genres count as literature? How do letters, memoirs, and songs challenge the traditional borders of “the literary”?

■ What is a “frontier”? How have American ideas about the frontier changed over time?

■ What kinds of attitudes toward nature and the environment were prevalent in nineteenth-century American culture?

■ How did the concept of Manifest Destiny impact nineteenth-century American political policies and literary aesthetics?

■ What kinds of ideals and values do corridos advocate? How did corridos influence the development of Chicano literature?

■ What are the distinguishing characteristics of free verse? How did Whitman’s development of free verse influence subsequent American poetry?

■ What ideals of masculinity helped shape the nineteenth-century figure of the American hero?

■ How were symbols and language usually associated with Anglo-American “patriotism” borrowed, appropriated, and transformed by African American, Native American, and Latino writers and artists?

■ How have American attitudes toward landscape and the environment changed over time?

■ How were the figures of the bandit and the outlaw represented in popular texts of the mid- to late nineteenth century? What kinds of myths came to surround these figures?

Learning Objectives

After students have viewed the video, read the headnotes and literary selections in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, and explored related archival materials on the *American Passages* Web site, they should be able to

1. understand the conflicts and tensions inherent in the American concept of the “frontier”;
2. discuss the importance of gender in shaping the experiences and opportunities of immigrants and inhabitants of the American West;
3. discuss the importance of race and ethnicity in shaping the experiences and opportunities of immigrants and inhabitants of the American West;
4. understand nineteenth-century American debates about the relationship between humans and the natural environment and explain the impact of those debates on the development of American literature.

Instructor Overview

In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner delivered a paper entitled “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” at the World’s Columbian Exhibition in Chicago. Looking back over the course of American history, Turner concluded that the presence of unexplored land—“free land,” as he termed it—gave a unique dynamism to American culture. For Turner, the frontier was “the meeting point between savagery and civilization.” Ever since Turner made this famous pronouncement, Americans have been debating the definition and significance of the “frontier.” As many scholars have pointed out, “frontier” is a term used by conquerors. It masks a reality of imperial invasion and colonialism under a veil of innocence and exceptionalism. That is, the idea of “free land” does not take into account the many other peoples who were displaced—sometimes violently—to make way for European-American expansion. As historian Patricia Nelson Limerick puts it, “the term ‘frontier’ blurs the fact of conquest.”

To combat this problem, scholars have suggested other ways of thinking about the lands and histori-

cal events we have traditionally associated with the “frontier.” Along these lines, we might think of the frontier as a permeable zone where distinct cultures struggle and mix, or as a space of contact and contest among diverse groups. The Spanish word “la frontera,” which describes the borderlands between Mexico and the United States, is perhaps a more useful term than “frontier.” Because the concept of a border does not contain a fantasy of “free land” or uninhabited space, it is a more realistic way to describe a place where cultures meet and where trade, violence, and cultural exchange shape a variety of individual experiences.

Whatever term we adopt, there are no simple ways to define or conceptualize nineteenth-century American expansion, a problem faced by all of the writers featured in Unit 5, “Masculine Heroes: American Expansion, 1820–1900.” As they recorded and commented on the difficult issues that arose as European-Americans moved west and north, the writers in Unit 5 also struggled with related issues of gender and race and their role in the formation of American identity. This unit explores representations of gender and American expansion in a wide variety of nineteenth-century works, including the musical corridos that developed in the southwestern borderlands and texts composed by James Fenimore Cooper, Catharine Maria Sedgwick, the Cherokee Memorialists, Caroline Stansbury Kirkland, John Rollin Ridge, Louise Amelia Smith Clappe, Walt Whitman, Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, and Nat Love. By focusing on these diverse authors, Unit 5 also traces the geographic movement of Anglo-American expansion, from the push into upstate New York and the “northwest territories” of Illinois and Ohio, to the colonization of California. Unit 5 provides contextual background and classroom materials designed to explore the way these writers both celebrated and challenged American ideals of masculinity and expansion. The video for Unit 5 focuses on three influential creators of masculine heroes: James Fenimore Cooper, John Rollin Ridge, and Walt Whitman. Cooper wrote the *Leather-Stocking Tales* about Natty Bumppo, a man who lives on the border between Native American and white culture and articulates tensions between “civilization” and “nature.” John Rollin Ridge voiced his outrage at the atrocities committed by white Americans in California with his tale of the Mexican outlaw hero Joaquin Murieta. More sanguine about

expansion, Walt Whitman used his innovative free-verse poetry to glorify the vastness of America's territories while adopting a tolerant, inclusive attitude toward all of its diverse inhabitants and to celebrate the poet as American hero. All of these writers created innovative literary styles and enduring themes that continue to influence American ideas about land, gender, and race.

In its coverage of these writers and texts, the video for Unit 5 introduces students to the complexities of the concept of the "frontier" and foregrounds the relationship between expansion and constructions of masculinity. How do these texts represent the violence and exploitation that were part of American expansion? How do they figure the expulsion of indigenous people from their traditional lands? How do they reconcile American ideals of democracy, equality, and freedom with the reality of conquest? How does race intersect with gender in the formation of American identity? What new literary forms emerge from the tensions of representing American expansion? Unit 5 helps answer these questions by offering suggestions on how to connect these writers to their cultural contexts, to other units in the series, and to other key writers of the era. The curriculum materials help fill in the video's introduction to territorial expansion and gender by exploring writers who articulated other, diverse experiences, such as the Cherokee Memorialists (who protested the federal government's decision to move them off their traditional homelands), Louise Clappe (a woman who lived in the predominantly male community of a Gold Rush camp), and Nat Love (an African American cowboy).

The video, the archive, and the curriculum materials situate these writers within several of the historical contexts and artistic movements that shaped their texts: (1) the transcontinental railroad and "Manifest Destiny"; (2) the California Gold Rush as a site of cultural exchange and conflict; (3) the social identity of the bachelor; (4) the use of American flag imagery in Native American Art; and (5) the aesthetic developed by the Hudson River School landscape painters.

The archive and the curriculum materials in Unit 5 suggest how these authors and texts relate to those covered in other *American Passages* units: How have American concepts of masculinity and heroism evolved over time? How have nineteenth-century

ideas about landscape shaped contemporary aesthetics? How did Walt Whitman's development of free verse influence modern American poetry? How did the historical novel shape subsequent literary traditions? How have American ideas about the relationship between humans and their natural environment changed over time? How have notions of the "frontier" shaped American culture and politics?

Student Overview

In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner delivered a paper entitled "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" at the World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago. Looking back over the course of American history, Turner concluded that the presence of unexplored land—"free land," as he termed it—gave a unique dynamism to American culture. For Turner, the frontier was "the meeting point between savagery and civilization." Ever since Turner made this famous pronouncement, Americans have been debating the definition and significance of the "frontier." As many scholars have pointed out, "frontier" is a term used by conquerors. It masks a reality of imperial invasion and colonialism under a veil of innocence and exceptionalism. That is, the idea of "free land" does not take into account the many other peoples who were displaced—sometimes violently—to make way for European-American expansion. As historian Patricia Nelson Limerick puts it, "the term 'frontier' blurs the fact of conquest."

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Video Overview

- **Authors covered:** James Fenimore Cooper, John Rollin Ridge (Yellow Bird), Walt Whitman
- **Who’s interviewed:** Sherman Alexie, author and filmmaker; Blake Almendinger, professor of English (University of California, Los Angeles); Ramon Saldivar, professor of American literature (Stanford University); April Selley, associate professor of English (College of Saint Rose); Richard Slotkin, professor of American studies (Wesleyan University)
- **Points covered:**
 - Introduction to nineteenth-century American ideas about expansion, immigration, and the movement west. Westward expansion created new identities and conflicts over who and what was American. Writers responded by creating masculine heroes who both challenged and celebrated the idea of the “frontier.”
 - James Fenimore Cooper invented the language for subsequent literature about American expansion with his *Leather-Stocking Tales*, which focus on the adventures of Natty Bumppo. A man living on the border between “wilderness” and “civilization” and between

Native American and European culture, Natty challenges notions about American identity. Cooper’s adoption of feminine imagery to describe the American landscape and his romantic yet ultimately dismissive view of Native Americans problematizes the role of gender and race in the construction of American identity.

- John Rollin Ridge, a Cherokee journalist, moved racial minorities from the sidelines of American literature into the spotlight with his creation of Joaquin Murieta, a Mexican outlaw who heroically fights the atrocities and injustices perpetrated by white American invaders in California. Ridge’s own divided ethnicity (he had both European and Cherokee heritage) may have influenced his exploration of racial tensions in his novel.
- Walt Whitman was more celebratory of American expansion than either Cooper or Ridge, but also more inclusive and tolerant of diversity. Heeding Emerson’s call for a national poet and a “true American voice,” Whitman wanted his epic poetry collection *Leaves of*

Video Overview (continued)

Grass to express the plurality of voices that constitute America. His innovative style and development of free verse was foundational for modern American poetry.

- These authors constructed ideals of American masculinity and American expansion that are marked by tensions and contradictions. Celebrating Manifest Destiny and industrialization while also writing nostalgically about the people and cultures destroyed by American expansion, they created a complex portrait of the American frontier and the American hero that continues to shape popular culture in this country.

PREVIEW

- **Preview the video:** In the nineteenth century, the United States acquired vast new territories as a result of exploration, wars, treaties, and land purchases. As people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds began moving into these territories, tensions developed over who and what should be considered “American.” Writers responded by creating a literature centered on masculine heroes who both celebrate and question the ideals of American expansion. James Fenimore Cooper wrote the *Leather-Stocking Tales*, a series of five historical novels about the adventures of Natty Bumppo. A man who lives on the border between Native American and white culture, Natty articulates tensions between “civilization” and “nature.” John Rollin Ridge voiced his outrage at the atrocities committed by white Americans in California with his tale of the Mexican outlaw hero Joaquin Murieta.

More sanguine about expansion, Walt Whitman glorified the vastness of America’s territories while adopting a tolerant, inclusive attitude toward all of its diverse inhabitants. All of these writers created innovative literary styles and enduring themes that continue to influence American ideas about land and about masculinity.

- **What to think about while watching:** How do these authors both celebrate and challenge nineteenth-century American expansionist goals? What racial and ethnic groups inhabited the American West? How did racial tensions shape the American movement west? How do the writers and texts explored in the video create new American heroes and new ideals of masculinity? How have their efforts influenced American culture and literature?
- **Tying the video to the unit content:** Unit 5 expands on the issues outlined in the video to further explore the contradictions and tensions inherent in American ideas about the “frontier” and about borderlands. The curriculum materials offer background on Native American, Mexican, Mexican American, African American, and European-American writers and texts not featured in the video. Introducing literature by women into the discussion of the movement west, the curriculum materials build on the video’s examination of the construction of masculinity and gender norms. Unit 5 offers contextual background to expand on the video’s introduction to the political issues, historical events, and literary styles that shaped the literature of masculinity and western expansion in the United States.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE VIDEO			
	How do place and time shape the authors' works and our understanding of them?	What is an American? How does American literature create conceptions of the American experience and identity?	How are American myths created, challenged, and reimagined through this literature?
Compre- hension Questions	Why did thousands of people go to California in the 1840s and 1850s?	What different groups inhabited the American West in the nineteenth century?	What is "Manifest Destiny"? Who was excluded from the America that nineteenth-century proponents of Manifest Destiny envisioned?
Context Questions	What was the difference between Ridge's and Whitman's views of the railroad and the people who worked on it? What role did the railroad play in American expansion?	Why did Cooper use female body imagery to describe the American landscape? What role did women play in American expansion? How did this role conform to and deviate from nineteenth-century ideals of femininity and domesticity?	What is the relationship between Joaquin Murieta, the outlaw hero, and Natty Bumppo, the woodsman who lives on the border between Native American and white culture? How do these characters challenge the societies they live in? How are they implicated in the very systems they oppose?
Exploratory Questions	How did Cooper bring American history into his works? What events did he see as appropriate for his historical novels? How did his use of American history affect subsequent American literature?	How did Ridge critique U.S. policy in California in his novel <i>The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta</i> ? How did his creation of a bandit hero affect American mythology and the development of later American literary heroes?	How did Walt Whitman's ideals of inclusiveness shape American literature and American poetry?

TIMELINE		
	Texts	Contexts
1820s	James Fenimore Cooper, <i>Precaution: A Novel</i> (1820), <i>The Spy: A Tale of the Neutral Ground</i> (1821), <i>The Pioneers</i> , <i>The Pilot: A Tale of the Sea</i> (1823), <i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> (1826), <i>The Red Rover</i> (1828) Catharine Maria Sedgwick, <i>A New-England Tale</i> (1822), <i>Redwood</i> (1824), <i>Hope Leslie</i> (1827)	Missouri Compromise (1820) Slave rebellion suppressed in Charleston, South Carolina (1822) Bureau of Indian Affairs established (1824) John Adams and Thomas Jefferson both die on July 4, the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence (1826) Democratic Party formed (1828)
1830s	Catharine Maria Sedgwick, "Cacoethes Scribendi" (1830) Caroline Stansbury Kirkland, <i>A New Home—Who'll Follow?</i> (1839)	Indian Removal Act (1830) Anti-Slavery Society founded (1833) Texas gains its independence from Mexico (1836) U.S. troops force the removal of Cherokee Indians (1838)

TIMELINE (continued)

	Texts	Contexts
1840s	Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Poet" (1844)	Migration to Oregon over the Oregon Trail begins (1843) U.S.-Mexican War; annexations include California (1846–48) Seneca Falls convention on universal suffrage (1848) California Gold Rush begins (1849)
1850s	John Rollin Ridge, <i>The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta, the Celebrated California Bandit</i> (1854) Louise Amelia Smith Clappe, "California in 1851, 1852. Residence in the Mines" (1854) Walt Whitman, <i>Leaves of Grass</i> (1855)	Compromise of 1850 strengthens Fugitive Slave Act while admitting California as a free state and abolishing slave trade in the District of Columbia (1850) Sioux Indians give up land in Iowa and Minnesota to U.S. government (1851)
1860s	Walt Whitman, <i>Drum-Taps</i> (1865)	Transcontinental telegraph service established between New York and San Francisco (1861) American Civil War (1861–65) Homestead Act (1862) Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads meet at Promontory Point, Utah (1869)
1870s	Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, <i>Who Would Have Thought It?</i> (1872)	Battle of Little Bighorn ("Custer's Last Stand") (1876)
1880s	Walt Whitman, <i>Specimen Days</i> (1882) Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, <i>The Squatter and the Don</i> (1885)	President James Garfield assassinated (1881) Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)
1890s		Massacre at Wounded Knee, South Dakota (1890)
1900s	Nat Love, <i>The Life and Adventures of Nat Love</i> (1907)	Orville and Wilbur Wright achieve first powered flight, Kitty Hawk, North Carolina (1908) Ford Model T goes into production (1908)

AUTHOR/TEXT REVIEW

James Fenimore Cooper (1789–1851)

At the height of his fame in the early nineteenth century, James Fenimore Cooper was America's foremost novelist and one of the most successful writers in the world. Judgments on his stature as a novelist have been less generous since that time, but few would dispute the cultural significance of his innovative tales. Building on the example of the British novelist Sir Walter Scott, Cooper wrote the first American historical novels and in the process made subjects such as Native Americans, the western wilderness, and the democratic political system compelling and popular topics for fiction.

Cooper was raised in Cooperstown, the village his father founded in the forests of upstate New York. His third novel, *The Pioneers*, is closely based on his memories of growing up in this frontier community. Cooper was sent to Yale as an adolescent, but was quickly expelled for his poor academic performance and his habit of playing pranks. In need of a career, he enlisted in the merchant marines and the navy, experiences he would later draw on in his popular seafaring novels, including *The Pilot* and *The Red Rover*. Cooper inherited a substantial estate from his father in 1810, left the navy, and married Susan De Lancey, a woman from a wealthy New York family. Expecting to live as a privileged landowner, he was distressed when the following years brought financial setbacks, debt, and the loss of much of his inherited land.

In 1820, Cooper changed the course of his life when he wrote his first work of fiction, *Precaution*, a conventional novel of manners set in England. According to legend, Cooper wrote the book only because his wife challenged him to make good on his boast that he could write a better novel than the one she was reading. Despite his initial offhand attitude toward writing, Cooper took the American Revolution as the subject for his second book and composed the first important American historical novel, *The Spy* (1821). It met with enormous critical and financial success. In 1822 he moved his family to New York City to pursue his new career in earnest. Cooper founded the “Bread and Cheese” in the city, a social club for men committed to nurturing American culture. Through the club, Cooper associated with leading New York merchants, professionals, and artists, including many of the Hudson River School painters, whose depictions of nature are so frequently associated with Cooper's literary descriptions of the American wilderness. In 1823 Cooper published *The Pioneers*, the first of his five *Leather-Stocking* novels and the most autobiographical of his books. In it he introduced Natty Bumppo (known as the “Leather-Stocking”), who seized the American imagination as the independent backwoods hunter and friend to the Indians. Figured as a sort of personification of the American wilderness, Natty helped construct the mythology of the **frontier** and fuel American nostalgia for an idealized past before “civilization” intruded into the woods. Cooper followed *The Pioneers* with other successful novels, including *The Last of the Mohicans*, which chronicles Natty's adventures in upstate New York during the French and Indian War of 1754–63.



[1161] John Wesley Jarvis, *James Fenimore Cooper* (1822), courtesy of the New York State Historical Association.

At the peak of his success, Cooper took his family on a grand tour of Europe, where they were introduced to prominent political figures and artists. He continued writing and publishing novels from abroad, but many of these works were poorly received by the American press. Bitter at what he perceived as the American public's betrayal of him, Cooper announced in 1834 that he was going to give up novel writing and retire in seclusion to Cooperstown. From that point on he had a vexed relationship with his American audience, a problem exacerbated by his frequent involvement in petty lawsuits and his increasingly conservative harangues about the sociopolitical state of the country. Despite his threat to stop writing, Cooper actually wrote prolifically until his death, producing a total of thirty-two novels, along with several political tracts, works of history, and biographies.

TEACHING TIPS

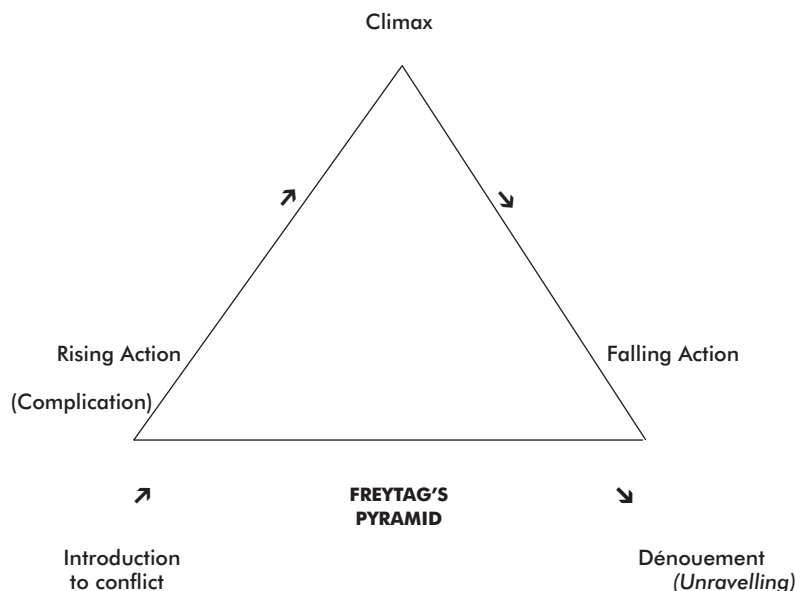
■ Because it was set in England and featured only English characters, Cooper's first novel, *Precaution* (which he published anonymously), was assumed to be the work of a British citizen. Reviewers also concluded that the author was a woman because the novel centered on domestic scenes and social manners. Perhaps distressed by this misreading of his nationality and gender, Cooper focused many of his subsequent novels on American subjects and masculine heroes. After you give your students this background information, ask them to think about the strategies Cooper uses to identify his work as both "manly" and "American." What does Cooper see as appropriate behavior for a man and for an American? Which characters represent his ideals of American masculinity? How might his books respond to the notion, current in nineteenth-century America, that novel reading was a frivolous and feminine pursuit?

■ Although Cooper features prominent Native American characters and describes tribal customs in detail in his most famous novels, he was not personally familiar with Native American culture. In fact, even though many of his American readers took him to be an expert, Cooper's knowledge of Indian culture came largely from books, legends, and stereotypes. Ask your students to think about how Indians are portrayed in Cooper's novels, especially in *The Pioneers* and/or *The Last of the Mohicans*. You might have them pay special attention to the way he creates two separate versions of Native American character, celebrating "noble savages" like Uncas and Chingachgook while portraying other Native Americans as ferocious, barbarous, and inhumane. How does the Mohicans' doomed fate work to make them sympathetic and nonthreatening to Cooper's white audience? What kinds of prejudices do Cooper's negative depictions of the Mingo tribe appeal to? How are Cooper's stereotypes similar to or different from twentieth-century stereotypes depicted in Westerns, comic books, and other popular media?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Settings in works of fiction are often invented to symbolize or encapsulate the conflicts that will be developed in the story. How does Cooper describe the frontier community of Templeton in *The Pioneers*? How does the town function as a contact point between “civilization” and the wilderness? What kinds of hardships do the townspeople face? What is their vision of “progress”?

Comprehension: In 1863, German critic Gustav Freytag argued that the typical plot of a five-act play had a pyramidal shape. This pyramid consists of five stages: an introduction to the conflict, rising action (complication), climax, falling action, and a dénouement (unraveling). Although this pattern, known today as Freytag’s pyramid, originally referred to drama, critics have applied the concept to fiction as well. How might we use Freytag’s pyramid to analyze the plot development of *The Pioneers*? In what stage of the pyramid would the chapters “The Judge’s History of the Settlement” and “The Slaughter of the Pigeons” fall? What is the nature of the conflict between Judge Temple and Natty Bumppo? How are their values opposed?



Context: Catharine Maria Sedgwick drew upon Cooper’s development of the American historical novel when she wrote *Hope Leslie* in 1827. How does *Hope Leslie* compare to *The Pioneers*? Why do you think Sedgwick chose to write about the Puritans rather than the French and Indian War and post-Revolutionary period that Cooper chronicled? How does each book narrate the settlement of new territory by European-Americans? How are the novels’ portraits of Native American characters similar? How are they different?

COOPER WEB ARCHIVE

[1161] John Wesley Jarvis, *James Fenimore Cooper* (1822), courtesy of the New York State Historical Association. Cooper is best known for his frontier novels of white-Indian relations. *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), *The Prairie* (1827), *The Pathfinder* (1840), and *The Deerslayer* (1841) are known collectively as the *Leatherstocking Tales*.

[6974] Matthew Brady Studio, *James Fenimore Cooper* (c. 1850), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration. Brady photographed a number of famous Americans around 1850. This portrait of Cooper was taken shortly before the author’s death in 1851.

[7314] Thomas Cole, Landscape Scene from *The Last of the Mohicans* (1827), courtesy of the New York State Historical Association. A founder of the Hudson River School, Cole painted several scenes from James Fenimore Cooper’s novels. Cole was concerned that such industrial developments as the railroad would spoil the beauty of the Catskills.

[7734] Blake Allmendinger, Interview: “Male Bonding/Homo-Eroticism in Cooper’s Novels” (2001), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Blake Allmendinger, professor of English at UCLA and author of *The Cowboy: Representations of Labor in American Work Culture* and *Ten Most Wanted: The New Western Literature*, discusses male bonding and homo-eroticism in Cooper’s novels.

[7735] Richard Slotkin, Interview: “Cooper’s Critical American Hero, Relationship to Indians” (2001), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Richard Slotkin, professor of American Studies at Wesleyan University, discusses Cooper’s hero and his relationship with Native Americans. Slotkin’s trilogy on the myth of the frontier in America includes *Regeneration through Violence*, *The Fatal Environment*, and *Gunfighter Nation*.

[7530] F. O. C. Darley, *The Watch* [from the *Cooper Vignettes*] (1862), courtesy of Reed College. Cooper established a pattern in American literature of different races relating outside the bounds of society. In the example of Natty Bumppo and Chingachgook, white masculinity is developed through an ethnic “other” in the American wilderness.

Context: Cooper was an enthusiastic admirer of the paintings of the Hudson River School artists. In a review of one of Thomas Cole's paintings, Cooper asserted that the picture was "the work of the highest genius this country has ever produced" and "one of the noblest works of art that has ever been wrought." Cole, in return, was an admirer of Cooper's prose and painted several scenes based on Cooper's descriptions of the landscape in *The Last of the Mohicans*. Why do you think Cooper and Cole were so interested in and enthusiastic about one another's work? How are their interests and subject matters similar? What do their attitudes toward land and landscape have in common?

Exploration: In both "The Judge's History of the Settlement" and "The Slaughter of the Pigeons," Cooper describes the way "settlement" and "civilization" exploit and disrupt the natural abundance of the wilderness. While the Judge tends to view this process as "improvement," Natty condemns it as destructive and wasteful. What is Cooper's position, on the environmental impact of European-American settlement? In what respects does he seem to side with the Judge's position, and in what respects does he seem to side with Natty? How does *The Pioneers* raise environmental issues that still concern us today? How do contemporary debates about issues such as logging old-growth forests, salmon fishing, and drilling for oil in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge grow out of some of the same controversies raised in *The Pioneers*?

Exploration: In 1895 Mark Twain published "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences," a hilarious indictment of Cooper's unrealistic dialogue and heavy-handed plots. What, in Twain's view, are Cooper's biggest "offences" against "literary art"? Why do you think Twain singled out Cooper? How did the development of both realism and regionalism (styles with which Twain is associated) represent a break with Cooper's style?

Exploration: Natty Bumppo has been described as the "first American hero" in U.S. national literature. What qualities make Natty heroic? How does he deal with the tensions between "wilderness" and "civilization" that structure life in and around Templeton? How does he deal with his existence on the border between Native American and Euro-American culture? How did Cooper's creation of Natty influence American literature? What subsequent literary heroes share some of Natty's qualities?

Exploration: In her article "'I Have Been, and Ever Shall Be, Your Friend': *Star Trek*, *The Deerslayer* and the American Romance," critic April Selley argues that the male-male bonding between Natty and his Native American sidekick Chingachgook laid the groundwork for later American heroes and their ethnic sidekicks (*Journal of Popular Culture* 20.1 [Summer 1986]: 89–104). These ethnic sidekicks, Selley argues, tend to be more effeminate, and thus enhance the masculinity of the European-American hero. Two famous examples of European-American heroes and ethnic sidekicks are the Lone Ranger and Tonto, and Captain Kirk and Spock. Do you agree

with Selley's reading of Cooper's characters? Can you think of other examples that fit this model?

Catharine Maria Sedgwick (1789–1867)

Catharine Maria Sedgwick was one of the leading figures in early-nineteenth-century American literary culture. Although she is less well known today, she set a pattern for the development of both domestic novels and historical novels in this country. Male writers such as James Fenimore Cooper and William Cullen Bryant respected Sedgwick as a peer, while female authors such as Lydia Maria Child and Harriet Beecher Stowe regarded her as a literary role model. Born into a wealthy Massachusetts Federalist family, Sedgwick was the sixth of seven children. Her father, a prominent politician who occupied the position of Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives during Washington's administration, took an interest in her education and provided her with a background in literature that would inspire her later development as a writer.

Sedgwick never married, choosing instead to devote herself to her writing and to caring for her parents and brothers. She spent time living in the homes of several of her brothers, and their unflagging support for her was a source of both private comfort and professional help and encouragement. Like many of her siblings, she renounced her parents' strict Calvinist faith for the tolerance and religious freedoms of the Unitarian Church, which she joined in 1821. Sedgwick's conversion was the impetus behind her first novel, *A New-England Tale*, which exposes the harshness of Calvinist theology. She hoped the novel would help convert readers who had not yet "escaped from the thralldom of orthodox despotism," as she put it. While her subsequent novels were more tempered in their critiques of orthodox religion, many of these later works were infused by Unitarian values.

Sedgwick's most celebrated novel is *Hope Leslie*, which takes the sixteenth-century Puritan colony in Massachusetts as its setting. Portraying Native American characters in a positive light, the novel advocates interracial friendships and recasts the Pequot War as an act of unfounded aggression against the Indians. While *Hope Leslie* considers the possibility of interracial marriage, it ultimately remains ambivalent about intimate relationships between Europeans and Indians. Sedgwick wrote several other novels and also produced many pieces of shorter fiction, which she published in collected editions and in magazines and literary journals.

Although she was sympathetic to causes such as abolitionism, Indian rights, and women's rights, Sedgwick never took an active role in these movements. Unlike many other nineteenth-century women writers, she was uncomfortable with overt political activism and tended to be conservative in her political commitments. In her posthumously published autobiography, she claimed that "an excessive love of approbation" made her reluctant to challenge social conventions. Although her legacy is perhaps less radical and her works less didactic,



[5519] A. B. Durand, *Catharine M. Sedgwick* (c. 1832), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-113381].

SEDGWICK ARCHIVE

[1210] John Underhill, *The Figure of the Indians' Fort or Palizado in New England and the Manner of the Destroying It By Captayne Underhill and Captayne Mason* (1638), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-32055]. In 1636, English settlers engaged in a genocidal campaign to wipe out the Pequot tribe native to New England. Captain John Underhill included this sketch of the Puritans and their Narragansett allies destroying a Pequot village in his *News from America* (1638).

[1363] Anonymous, *John Winthrop* (c. 1640s), courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society. John Winthrop was the first governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony. His somber-colored clothing marks him as a Puritan, while his ornate neck ruff indicates his wealth and social status.

[5519] A. B. Durand, *Catharine M. Sedgwick* (c. 1832), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-113381]. Sedgwick's novel *Hope Leslie* is notable for its positive depiction of Native Americans, its presentation of the Pequot War as an act of European aggression, and its depiction of interracial marriage.

cally political than those of the many female authors she inspired, Sedgwick was a pioneer among women writers and an important and insightful analyst of American society.

TEACHING TIPS

■ In an 1824 book review, a literary critic mistakenly attributed Sedgwick's second novel, *Redwood* (which she published anonymously), to James Fenimore Cooper. Sedgwick found the mistake amusing, commenting, "It is to be hoped that Mr. C's self-complacency will not be wounded by this mortifying news." Ask students to think about the assumptions about gender and authorship that underwrite Sedgwick's witty comment. Why might the reviewer have made the mistake he did? What does Sedgwick's work have in common with Cooper's?

■ Writing twenty-five years before Hawthorne's famous indictment of that "d—d mob of scribbling women," Sedgwick offered a satiric portrait of the phenomenon of female authorship in her short story "Cacoethes Scribendi." Ask students to consider the nature of Sedgwick's critique. How does the story question the quality of nineteenth-century women's writing? How does the title—which translates as "writer's itch"—mock women writers' pretensions and productivity? What was Sedgwick's own position within the culture of women writers that she satirizes? How might she have defended her own work from the criticisms she levels at other women writers in the story?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What separates the "opposed and contending parties" Sedgwick chronicles in her story "A Reminiscence of Federalism"? How do national party politics divide the small settlement of Carrington, Vermont? What is the narrator's attitude toward the characters' devotion to their political parties?

Comprehension: How does Sedgwick characterize the three women who compete for Everell Fletcher's affections in *Hope Leslie*? How does the novel deal with his relationship with Magawisca, the Pequot woman? What is Magawisca's fate?

Context: The "secluded and quiet village of H.," which is the setting for "Cacoethes Scribendi," is populated almost solely by women. How does the dominance of women affect the community? What is the women's relationship to the few men in the area? How does Sedgwick's description of this female village compare with other writers' accounts of western communities populated almost exclusively by men (works by Love, Clappe, or Ridge, for example)?

Context: How do the Native American characters in *Hope Leslie* articulate their attachment to their traditional lands? How do their attitudes toward their land and their culture compare with those expressed by the Cherokee memorialists?

Exploration: How does Sedgwick's portrait of the Pequot War in *Hope Leslie* undermine or challenge historical accounts of that event written by Puritans? How do Nelema and Magawisca's moving descrip-

tions of the slaughter of the Pequots compare to John Underhill's account of the war? Or William Bradford's?

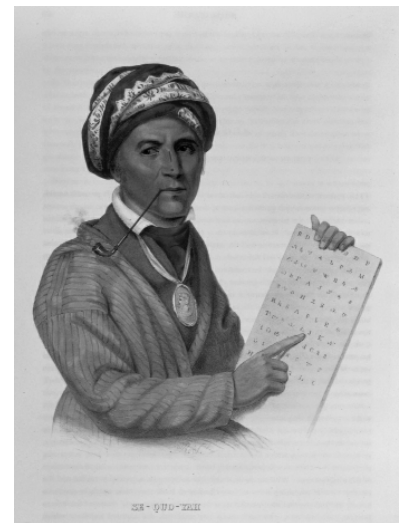
Exploration: Sedgwick's brother felt that his sister's first novel, *A New-England Tale*, had alienated some of its readers by its "unfavorable representation of the New England character." In response, Sedgwick determined to provide less hostile descriptions of Puritans and their descendants in her subsequent work. How does she portray the Puritan community in *Hope Leslie*? Which Puritans are sympathetic? How does she portray John Winthrop? How does her representation of Winthrop compare to his authorial persona in his *Journal*?

Cherokee Memorials

At the end of the eighteenth century, the Cherokee tribe was living in the mountain areas of northern Georgia and western North Carolina, on land guaranteed to them by the United States in the 1785 Treaty of Hopewell and the 1791 Holston Treaty. The Cherokee Nation had its own government, governing council, and by 1827 its own constitution, making it an independent sovereign nation. Increasingly, however, white settlers refused to respect Cherokee sovereignty and began encroaching on Cherokee land—especially when gold was discovered there in 1829. These illegal incursions by white settlers and prospectors were the basis for a series of ongoing disputes among the Cherokee Nation, the state of Georgia, and the federal government of the United States. In 1830 the United States Congress, with the support of President Andrew Jackson, attempted to legislate a permanent solution to the dispute by passing the **Indian Removal Act** by a narrow margin. The act stipulated that the government could forcibly relocate Native Americans living within their traditional lands in eastern states to areas west of the Mississippi designated as "Indian Territory." With this stroke, the federal government officially sanctioned the prevalent racist view that Native Americans had no valid claims to their homelands and should be moved westward to make way for white settlers and white culture.

During the debates over the Indian Removal Act, many Cherokee writers penned impassioned letters, pamphlets, and editorials to defend their tribe's right to its sovereignty and its land. Drawing on a long tradition of eloquence and a high rate of literacy and fluency in English among tribe members, the Cherokee produced articulate and compelling defenses of their position. In some cases they appealed to Congress and the courts directly with their letters and **memorials**—the nineteenth-century equivalent of petitions. The Cherokee Council, which was the official leadership body of the tribe, composed its own memorial to send to Congress, while also submitting twelve other memorials written by Cherokee citizens who, as the council put it, "wish to speak of their wishes and determination . . . themselves."

John Ridge (the father of John Rollin Ridge), who held the position of council clerk, probably authored the Council's official memorial with the help of the other council members. The document uses for-



[6823] F. W. Greenough, Se-Quo-Yah [Sequoia] (c. 1836), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZC4-4815].

mal, polished, legalistic language to articulate its claim that the forced removal of the Cherokee would be unnecessary, contrary to established agreements, and immoral. In its efforts to appeal to its white audience, the memorial stresses the Cherokees' commitment to "civilization" and their wish to "pursue agriculture and to educate their sons and daughters in the sciences," thus implying that the Cherokees' willingness to assimilate with white culture should strengthen their claim of sovereignty. At the same time, the memorial also insists on the Cherokees' separateness from the United States and on their historical claim to their land—a claim that long predates the arrival of Europeans in America. Perhaps most powerfully, the memorial skillfully employs American republican ideals of independence, natural rights, and self-government to point out the hypocrisy of nineteenth-century American policy and to support the Cherokees' claims. The citizens' memorials use many of the same rhetorical strategies, but are generally characterized by less formal language than the document composed by the council. The Cherokee memorials provided a model of rhetoric for subsequent Native American protest literature, such as William Apess's "An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man" (featured in Unit 4).

Tragically, for all their eloquence, the memorials were not effective. The state of Georgia, backed up by the federal government, continued to exert pressure upon the tribe to remove. Eventually, Ridge and some other leaders came to believe that resistance was futile and signed the Treaty of New Echota, agreeing to cede Cherokee lands to the state of Georgia. Most of the tribe, however, did not agree with the treaty and did not want to vacate their lands. In 1838, the United States government enforced the treaty by sending in federal troops and private contractors to compel the Cherokee to move west to what is now Oklahoma. One-third of the tribe died on the forced westward march, along what came to be known as the Trail of Tears.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Scholars have noted that the official memorial of the Cherokee Council employs pointed, though unstated, references to the language and logic of the Declaration of Independence. Most powerfully, by appealing to the ideals of independence and of natural human rights, the official memorial effectively points out the disjunction between American rhetoric of freedom and equality and the government's despotic treatment of the Cherokee. Ask students to consider the relationship between the Cherokee memorials and foundational American documents such as the Declaration of Independence. You might have students examine the Cherokee syllabary, and then discuss the way the Cherokee might be considered a culture in transition between oral and written expression. The Cherokee were the first tribe in the United States to develop a complete syllabary—that is, a written script that included characters for the vowel and consonant sounds of their language, thus enabling them to write in Cherokee.

■ In its opening paragraphs, the "Memorial of the Cherokee

Citizens” uses less formal language than the “Memorial of the Cherokee Council.” It is sometimes characterized as reflecting traditional Cherokee oratorical practices in its rhetoric and language, while the Council’s memorial is written in the conventional style of eighteenth-century government documents. Yet, by its closing, the Memorial of the Cherokee Citizens adopts more formal, legalistic language and sounds quite similar to the memorial of the Council. Ask students to consider the shift in tone and language in the Memorial of the Cherokee Citizens. Why might the memorialists have chosen to close their petition on a more formal note? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two different styles at work in the memorial?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: How are the “Memorial of the Cherokee Council” and the “Memorial of the Cherokee Citizens” different from one another? Why do you think the Cherokee chose to submit multiple memorials from different groups in the tribe rather than a single memorial?

Context: The Cherokee Council’s memorial points out that, historically, the “phraseology, composition, etc.” of treaties between the United States and the Cherokee were “always written by the Commissioners, on the part of the United States . . . as the Cherokees were unacquainted with letters.” Given the council’s awareness of this problem, what is the significance of the memorials’ status as written texts? How does the Cherokees’ “unlettered” history impact their written presentation of their situation?

Context: What kinds of attitudes toward land and land ownership do the Cherokee memorials endorse? How do their feelings about their relationship to their land compare to nineteenth-century white writers’ attitudes toward land (in works by Cooper, Clappe, or Kirkland, for example)?

Exploration: How do the Cherokee memorials compare to early national documents proclaiming American sovereignty (such as the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution)? How do the Cherokee memorials exploit traditional American rhetoric of freedom and natural rights to their own ends?

Exploration: How does William Apess draw upon the rhetorical strategies and language developed by the Cherokee memorialists in his “Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man”? How do Apess’s reform goals compare to the memorialists’ goal of retaining possession of their homeland?

Exploration: In *The Return of the Native: American Indian Political Resurgence*, sociologist and political scientist Stephen Cornell traces three basic stages in American Indian political resurgence. Cornell argues that while in the early contact period, Native American groups were able to maintain authority and status by playing European colonial powers off one another, in the years following the American Revolution, American Indian nations suffered a loss of land, social cohesion, and economic independence as

CHEROKEE MEMORIALS WEB ARCHIVE

[5595] Gales and Seaton’s Register, Register of Debates, House of Representatives, 23rd Congress, 2nd Session, Pages 1007 through 1008, Cherokee Memorial (1835), courtesy of the Library of Congress. This is a record of Congress’s reception of the Cherokee Council Memorial. Despite their petitions and appropriation of the republican ideals of natural rights and independence, the Cherokee people were forced off their lands in 1838.

[5916] John Ross to Abraham Lincoln, September 16, 1862 [Re: Relations between the U.S. and the Cherokee Nation] (1862), courtesy of the Library of Congress. During the early nineteenth century, Cherokee politics were highly factionalized. Author John Rollin Ridge’s grandfather, Major Ridge, argued that it was useless to resist the U.S. government and hence supported removal. John Ross led the opposing faction, which urged complete resistance.

[6823] F. W. Greenough, *Se-Quo-Yah* [Sequoiah] (c. 1836), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZC4-4815]. Half-length portrait of Sequoyah holding a tablet that shows the Cherokee alphabet. Sequoyah developed a Cherokee syllabary that enabled his people to write in their own language.

[8688] Arch C. Gerlach, editor, *Map of Early Indian Tribes, Culture Areas, and Linguistic Stocks* [from *The National Atlas of the United States*, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Geological Survey] (1970), courtesy of the General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin. The Cherokee Nation originally lived in the southeastern part of what is now the United States, but after the unsuccessful petitions of the Cherokee memorials, the Cherokee people were removed to present-day Oklahoma.

America expanded westward. This dislocation and disempowerment was in turn followed by militant activism in the 1960s and 1970s. Where do the Cherokee memorials fit into this continuum and what resistance strategies do they use? How do their resistance strategies compare to those of the Sioux during the Ghost Dance (Unit 1), or the Costanoans during the revolt against the Franciscan missionaries (Unit 7)?

Corridos

The **corrido**, a narrative ballad usually sung or spoken to music, was the most important literary genre of the southwestern **border** region, where it achieved its greatest popularity between the 1830s and the 1930s. Developed by Mexicans and Mexican Americans living in the former Mexican province of Nuevo Santander (currently Texas, New

Mexico, Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas), corridos drew upon traditional Spanish ballad forms to articulate singers' experiences of cultural conflict in the borderlands. The word "corrido" is derived from the Spanish *correr* ("to run"), signaling the rapid tempo and brisk narrative pace that usually characterize these songs. Corridos do not have refrains or choruses; rather, the lyrics move the listener through the narrative quickly and without digression. Often composed within a short musical range of less than a single octave, corridos enable the performer to sing at high volume. Singers are often accompanied by guitar or the bajo sexto, a twelve-string guitar popular in Texas and New Mexico.

Corridos were usually composed to record political and social conflicts, current events, and extraordinary occurrences. While they were sometimes printed and distributed as broadsides, their primary mode of circulation was through oral performance. Some of the most famous of these broadsides were illustrated by Mexican artist José Guadalupe Posada on topics such as the Ku Klux Klan, the American "mosquito" (invaders), and episodes of violence in the Southwest. In this way, Latinos' borderland experiences—and political protests—were recorded in the memories and artistic expression of the people who learned the corridos. Many nineteenth-century corridos are still sung and recorded, and Mexicans and Mexican Americans continue to compose new corridos: popular musicians who use the

corrido form include Los Tigres del Norte and the late singer Selena. Today, as then, corridos function as a kind of "musical newspaper" of the poor and oppressed; as musician and author Elijah Wald exposes in *Narcocorrido: A Journey into the Music of Drugs, Guns, and*



[7354] José Guadalupe Posada, *Verdaderos Versos de Macario Romero* [The Truth about Macario Romero] (1912), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-DIG-ppmsc-04557].

Guerrillas, contemporary corridos record the stories of drug traffickers, government corruption, bloody battles in Chiapas, and immigrant hardship in the United States.

Traditional corridos were a product of the dynamic culture within the border communities, where Mexicans, European Americans, and Native Americans vied for land rights, employment opportunities, and political authority. Expressing intercultural conflict from a Mexican point of view, the ballads often focus on an “outlaw” hero who defends his rights—as well as those of other Mexicans—against the unjust authority of Anglo *rinches* (“rangers”) or other officials empowered by the American government after its annexation of Texas. The *rinches* were the Texas Rangers, who are sometimes celebrated outside of the corrido tradition as proponents of law and order in the Southwest. In reality, the Rangers were part of the European-American colonization movement and were partially responsible for the enormous number of lynchings of Mexicans and Chicanos in Texas and other areas of the Southwest.

Corridos serve as records of these and other injustices. Most corrido heroes are driven to crime only as a last resort or out of an honorable desire to avenge wrongs that have been perpetrated against them. For example, Gregorio Cortez kills two Texas sheriffs after they shoot his brother, and Rito Garcia shoots Anglo officers after they invade his home without a warrant. Corridos also celebrate figures who challenge political boundaries through their labor, such as *vaqueros* (“cowboys”) and smugglers. “Kiansis,” a corrido that asserts the *vaqueros*’ superiority to Anglo cowboys, chronicles the Mexican cattlehands’ drive into the American territory of Kansas. These songs provide an important counter story to western novelist Owen Wister’s famous racist claim that only Anglos make good cowboys. Wister is the author of *The Virginian*, an early cowboy novel, and was a classmate of President Theodore Roosevelt (a popular target of early corridos’ fury), who led the Rough Riders.

Some corridos close with their heroes’ triumphant return to the Mexican community, while others narrate their capture, imprisonment, or execution. Whatever their fate, the men who are the subject of corridos are always celebrated as heroes because they defend their rights courageously and skillfully. Effectively translating political ideals of protest and resistance into a popular form, corridos functioned as powerful expressions of Mexican and Mexican American cultural pride. Today, they are recognized as one of the most important foundations for the rich Chicano literary tradition that developed in the twentieth century.

TEACHING TIPS

■ After your students read the featured corridos in their English translations (located in the archive), ask them to look at the Spanish lyrics as you play a recording of a corrido being performed. Even if they do not understand Spanish, they can focus on the rhythm and repetition of sounds in the original corrido through the lyrics. Ask

CORRIDOS WEB ARCHIVE

[5615] Anonymous, *Disturnell Map of Mexico* (c. 1850), courtesy of the Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas at Austin. Although the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo officially ended the Mexican-American War in 1848, disputes continued between the Mexican and U.S. governments concerning, among other issues, the border of Texas.

[5936] José Guadalupe Posada, *Corrido: Fusilamiento Bruno Martinez* (1920s), courtesy of Davidson Galleries. Political and social statements figured importantly in Posada’s art. This Revolutionary-era print shows a *charro* bravely facing a group of onrushing *federales*. The title translates as *The Execution of Bruno Martinez*.

[6318] Lee Russell, *Backyards of Mexican Homes. Alamo, Texas* (1939), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC USF34-032141-D]. Corridos grew out of the experience of the borderlands of the Southwest. As an oral history of a people, they document the everyday lives of the people who live in the lands that were once part of Mexico.

[6392] Mrs. Henry Krausse, *Corrido de los Rangers (Ballad of the Rangers)* (1939), courtesy of the Library of Congress. Corridos often expressed discontent with the oppression of Chicanos in the borderlands. This corrido tells of the 1912 feud between Texas Rangers and Brownsville officials.

[7354] José Guadalupe Posada, *Verdaderos Versos de Macario Romero* [*The Truth about Macario Romero*] (1912), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-DIG-ppmsc-04557]. Handbills printed with the lyrics to popular corridos were often sold to audiences for a small fee. This broadside features an illustration by José Guadalupe Posada.

[7505] Anonymous, *Music in Mexican Insurrecto Camp* (1911), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-115488]. This photo emphasizes the close relationship between music and politics in the borderlands as musicians and armed men pose in a Revolutionary camp during the Mexican Civil War.

[9064] Anonymous, *El Corrido de Gregorio Cortez* (c. 1910), courtesy of Pedro Rocha and Lupe Martínez. This corrido takes as its subject the murder of an Anglo-Texan sheriff by a Texas Mexican, Gregorio Cortez, and the ensuing chase, capture, and imprisonment of Cortez. It formed the basis for Americo Paredes' novel, *With a Pistol in His Hand*.

them to think about how the music influences the effect of the ballad and what is lost in the English translation. Since this musical genre will be unfamiliar to many students, it might also be useful to play some political protest music that may be more familiar to them—sixties folk songs, for example. You can also ask students to compare the corrido in form and content to English-language ballads from the same region and era, for example, “The Dying Cowboy” and “The Dying Ranger.” What rhetorical strategies does each use to develop sympathy (*pathos*) and to emphasize the moral character (*ethos*) of the protagonist?

■ Traditionally, corridos are composed by men, performed by men, and written about men. Ask students to consider how ideals of masculinity inform the corridos in the archive. What makes the male subject a hero? How does he deal with adversity, capture, or defeat? How is masculinity tied to ethnicity in these corridos? Ask your students to pay attention not only to the corridos' portraits of the courageous deeds of their heroes, but also to their descriptions of men who cry and men who complain.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What motivates the heroes of the corridos in the archive? What kinds of values do they espouse? How do they compare to their Anglo adversaries and rivals?

Context: Compare the corrido about Gregorio Cortez to John Ridge's novel, *Joaquin Murieta*. What do these title characters have in common? How do they interact with Anglo authority figures? How do their stories end? How does the corrido as a genre impact the portrait of Gregorio Cortez? How would Ridge's account of Murieta's life be different if it had been written as a corrido?

Exploration: While corridos were most popular between 1830 and 1930, they are still composed and sung today. Late-twentieth-century corridos include the “Recordado al Presidente,” about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Texas, and the “Corrido de Cesar Chavez,” about Chavez's organization of the United Farm Workers and their successful protest for better working conditions. How do the lyrics of these later corridos compare to the earlier corridos? What kinds of shifts in values do you see? How are the heroes of these later ballads different from heroes like Gregorio Cortez or Jacinto Trevino? How are they similar?

Exploration: Sandra Cisneros's *House on Mango Street* consists of a series of vignettes, each of which revolves around the young heroine, Esperanza. What analogies do you see between the structure of characterization used in the corridos and in Cisneros's novel?

Caroline Stansbury Kirkland (1801–1864)

Appearing well before either “regionalism” or “realism” had established themselves as literary movements, Caroline Kirkland’s early writings anticipate these developments to such a degree that many critics now consider her to be among their founders. Born to a literary, middle-class family in New York, Caroline Stansbury received a good education at a series of distinguished schools and academies. In 1828, she married William Kirkland and moved to Geneva, New York, where the couple had four children and founded and ran a girls’ school. In 1835, the Kirklands moved to Detroit, in the Michigan Territory, where William accepted a job as principal of the Detroit Female Seminary. He soon began purchasing large parcels of land in the Michigan backcountry and eventually moved his family to the frontier village of Pinckney, which he hoped would grow and thus increase the value of his land. The move into the backcountry inspired Kirkland to write her first work, a collection of realistic and often humorous sketches of frontier life called *A New Home—Who’ll Follow?*, written under the pseudonym of “Mrs. Mary Clavers.”

In 1843, after William lost the family’s landholdings and capital to a swindling land agent, the family was forced to return to New York. There, Kirkland taught school and continued her writing career, publishing pieces in magazines and literary journals. In 1846, William died suddenly, leaving Kirkland to support herself and their children. Building on her literary connections, Kirkland took a job as the editor of the *Union Magazine of Literature and Art*, a position she held until 1851. Under her guidance, the magazine maintained a commitment to supporting both literary realism and women’s writing. She also successfully compiled and sold several popular “gift books” (expensively printed books containing stories, essays, and poems, often given as gifts in the nineteenth century). Her literary celebrity enabled her to generate popular support for social reforms as well as for philanthropic work supporting the Union soldiers during the Civil War.

Today Kirkland is remembered chiefly for her innovative, realistic descriptions of western pioneer life in *A New Home*. Explicitly reacting against other writers’ romanticized visions of the West, Kirkland was committed to providing her readers with an honest description of both the hardships and the joys of frontier life. Kirkland was also unique in offering a portrait of the West from something other than a masculinized point of view; rather than focusing on heroic tales of cowboys, outlaws, and dangerous adventures in the wilds of nature, Kirkland took as her subject the everyday experiences of hardworking women. Her witty, insightful commentary on problems of baking and ironing and getting along with one’s neighbors is filtered through the persona of her narrator—an educated, middle-class woman who takes women’s concerns seriously. Although her narrator in *A New Home* sometimes seems snobbish and overly invested in class distinctions by



[4340] Thomas Cole, *Home in the Woods* (1847), courtesy of Reynolda House, Museum of American Art.

KIRKLAND WEB ARCHIVE

[4340] Thomas Cole, *Home in the Woods* (1847), courtesy of Reynolda House, Museum of American Art. Painted just before the artist died in 1848, Thomas Cole's *Home in the Woods* depicts the pastoral bliss of a settler family amidst the destructive effect of human intrusion and settlement on wilderness.

[4423] Anonymous, *The First Step [Godey's Lady's Book]* (June 1858), courtesy of Hope Greenberg, University of Vermont. During the nineteenth century, a parlor was perceived as a necessary room in every home. Even Americans who lacked room for a formal parlor adorned their living spaces with decorative objects, such as the paintings and bureau-top items in this drawing.

[5806] J. F. Queen, *Home Sweet Home II* (1871), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-2056]. Homesteading was often romanticized in American literature and decorative arts, as in this popular pastoral print of a woman feeding sheep.

[8703] Arch C. Gerlach, ed., *Map of Territorial Growth—1830* [from *The National Atlas of the United States*, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Geological Survey] (1970), courtesy of the General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin. Spurred by the belief in Manifest Destiny and the search for a Northwest Passage, the United States acquired new land through wars, treaties, and purchase.

today's standards, Kirkland's voice marks an important innovation in descriptions of the West.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Kirkland describes in detail many of the domestic commodities that circulate within her frontier community, both to complain about her ungrateful neighbors' habit of borrowing her possessions and to poke fun at pioneer women's pretensions in owning such luxuries as "silver tea-pots" and fancy dresses. Ask students to think about the role of commodities in Kirkland's narrative. How does she feel when she is accused of "introducing luxury" into the community when she displays her parlor carpet? How do commodities function to distinguish one "class" of women from another within the village? What kind of symbolic importance do the women in Pinckney attach to their furniture and household goods? How does gender structure the people of Pinckney's attitudes toward domestic objects, both decorative and useful? You might refer students to the contextual material on parlors featured in Unit 8.

■ Realism is usually thought of as a post-Civil War development in American literature, probably because male writers did not adopt it until the 1860s and 1870s. Kirkland's work provides clear evidence of an earlier incarnation of realism, yet she has never received the kind of critical attention afforded to the male writers who are seen as realism's "pioneers"—writers like Mark Twain and William Dean Howells. Ask students to think about the assumptions that inform our categorization and canonization of particular American writers. How does gender impact writers' reputations? How do we decide what constitutes a "school" or "movement" within American literature?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: How do men and women experience frontier life differently, according to Kirkland's analysis in *A New Home*? What distinct problems and anxieties do women encounter in their new homes in the West?

Comprehension: Chapter 36 is titled "Classes of Emigrants." What characterizes the different "classes" that Kirkland describes? Which classes does Kirkland respect? Which does she condemn? How do issues of class structure Kirkland's portrait of life in the village of Pinckney?

Context: In many ways, Kirkland's sketches of frontier life read like letters home or journal entries. How does her project in *A New Home* compare to Louise Clappe's descriptive letters about life in the mines in California? How are the narrative personae that these writers develop similar? In what respects do they differ? What kind of audience does each writer assume?

Exploration: *A New Home—Who'll Follow?* sold well and received favorable notices from important reviewers such as William Cullen Bryant and Edgar Allan Poe. Yet Kirkland's book marks a distinct

shift from previous popular descriptions of frontier life—it is neither romanticized nor sentimental nor filled with tales of masculine heroism and adventure. Why do you think Kirkland's work appealed to nineteenth-century readers? Do you think she appealed to the same kind of audience that read Cooper and Nat Love?

Louise Amelia Smith Clappe (1819–1906)

Born in New Jersey and educated at female academies in New England, Louise Clappe had an unusual background for a participant in and chronicler of the Gold Rush. She was raised by her father, a mathematics professor, after her mother's early death, and then by a guardian after she was orphaned in 1837. Her thorough education left her with a well-rounded knowledge of arts and literature.

In 1848, Louise Smith married Fayette Clapp, a young medical apprentice (Smith would later change the spelling of her married name to "Clappe"). Infected with "gold fever," he moved with his new wife to San Francisco in 1849 at the beginning of the Gold Rush. From San Francisco, the couple moved on to the mining camps springing up throughout northern California, where Fayette hoped to establish a profitable medical practice. In 1851 and 1852, the Clapps lived in Rich Bar and nearby Indian Bar, two boomtowns on the East Fork of the Feather River. The mining camps were makeshift and primitive, presenting their inhabitants with difficult living conditions, especially during the rainy winter. Clappe was one of relatively few women to live among the miners and prospectors—the first California census of 1850 indicates that the population of the state was over 90 percent male—but as Clappe's letters make clear, more women were immigrating to California along the Oregon Trail as the decade progressed.

While living in the mining camps, Clappe began writing descriptive letters about her experiences to her sister, Molly, who lived in Massachusetts. Drawing on traditions of literary letter writing begun by Caroline Kirkland and by Margaret Fuller in her *Summer on the Lakes, in 1843* (published in 1844), Clappe produced articulate epistles about her encounters. Witty, keenly observant, and often filled with literary references, Clappe's letters paint a vivid picture of the diversity and dynamism of the social world created by the Gold Rush. Clappe's perspective is surprisingly unconstrained by her status as a "proper lady"—she records everything she witnesses in the camps, from specialized mining techniques to incidents of mob justice to the prospectors' drunken gambling sprees. Her delight in the natural beauty of northern California also permeates her letters.

Left with an unsuccessful medical practice when the gold in the area was exhausted, Fayette Clapp moved his wife back to San Francisco in 1852. Soon after, the couple separated: while Fayette sailed to Hawaii and eventually returned to the Atlantic coast, Louise



[7357] Sarony and Major, *View of San Francisco, Taken from the Western Hill at the Foot of Telegraph Hill, Looking Toward Rincón Point and Mission Valley* [detail] (c. 1851), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1716].

CLAPPE WEB ARCHIVE

[1303] Francis Samuel Marryat, *The Winter of 1849* (1855), courtesy of Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. This illustration of residents trying to navigate San Francisco's flooded streets shows how rapidly growing cities and towns suffered from poor planning and local weather conditions.

[5228] Anonymous, *Montgomery Street, San Francisco, 1852* (n.d.), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-55762]. Rapid, primarily Euro-American immigration during the Gold Rush brought California to statehood in 1850, as a "free state" that forbade slavery. Yet demand for land and forced labor caused a genocidal-scale population decline among California Indians.

[5841] Currier and Ives, *Gold Mining in California* (c.1871), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1755]. This Currier and Ives lithograph presents a romantic and sanitized portrayal of life in the gold fields. In actuality, the mining process took an incredible toll on both miners and the surrounding environment.

[5599] Louise Amelia Smith Clappe, letter from *The Pioneer, Letters from the Mines* (1851), courtesy of the California History Room, California State Library. A well-educated woman from New Jersey, Louise Clappe wrote numerous letters to her sister about her experiences in the mining camps of California. In 1850 less than 10 percent of California's inhabitants were female.

[7357] Sarony and Major, *View of San Francisco, Taken from the Western Hill at the Foot of Telegraph Hill, Looking Toward Ringon Point and Mission Valley* [detail] (c. 1851), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1716]. Less than two years after the Gold Rush began, San Francisco had become a sprawling boom town that drew people from all over the world. This illustration shows both a busy city and a very active harbor crowded with ships.

Clappe remained in San Francisco and found work as a schoolteacher. In 1856, she formally filed for divorce and changed the spelling of her name from "Clapp" to "Clappe." In 1878, she retired from schoolteaching and moved back to New England, where she lived until her death.

Louise Clappe eventually published the letters she had written to her sister from the mining camps, using the title "California, in 1851 and 1852. Residence in the Mines." The letters appeared serially between 1854 and 1855 in the San Francisco magazine *The Pioneer*, where they became known as the "Shirley Letters" because Clappe signed them with the pseudonym "Shirley" or "Dame Shirley." If Clappe hoped to gain fame or fortune from her writings, she published a little too late, for public excitement over the Gold Rush had waned by 1854. Nonetheless, her letters have been important to historians for their unique perspective on life in the California mining camps, and her work is now recognized as an important literary accomplishment.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Clappe frequently employs literary allusions, referencing Shakespeare, Greek mythology, Romantic poets, and British writers such as Charles Dickens who would have been her contemporaries. Ask your students to consider the function of these self-conscious assertions of "literariness" in Clappe's letters. How do they affect the tone and voice of the letters? Why might Clappe have been interested in including these allusions in her work?

■ In Letter 12, Clappe tells her sister that she is committed to giving her a "true picture" of life in the mining camps. Ask your students to think about this "documentary" goal in Clappe's letters. Why does she feel bound to report everything that she observes, even the "disagreeable subjects"? In many ways, the letters read more like a diary than correspondence between two people—Clappe rarely asks about her sister or even specifically addresses her. Ask your students whether they believe Clappe envisioned another, wider audience for her writing, or whether she might have revised the letters before publishing them.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Based on Clappe's letters, what kind of role do you think women occupied within the mining camps (which were populated mainly by men)? What kinds of challenges would life in a mining town pose for women? What is Clappe's attitude toward the other women whom she encounters in Rich Bar? How do issues of class seem to color Clappe's descriptions of women?

Context: Compare Clappe's account of life in Rich Bar with Caroline Kirkland's narrative of life in the Michigan Territory. What do the two women have in common? How are their accounts of "settling" in new territory different? How do the different regional characteristics of the Midwest and California shape their narratives in different ways? How does each attempt to create a "true picture" of her life as a settler?

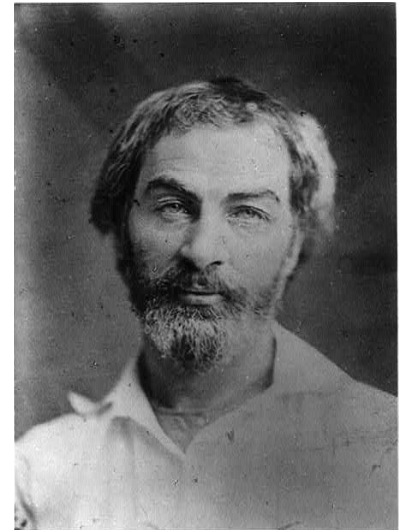
Context: Examine the illustration entitled *The Winter of 1849* featured in the archive. How does the artist's depiction of life in a mining town compare to Clappe's account of her experiences?

Exploration: Scholars have noted that Bret Harte borrowed heavily from Clappe's letters in his stories "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" and "The Luck of Roaring Camp." Some scholars have also asserted that Mark Twain may have been inspired by an episode in Clappe's letters when he wrote "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." What does Clappe have in common with these writers of literary regionalism? Why do you think they achieved greater fame and financial profit than she did?

Walt Whitman (1819–1892)

Walt Whitman's publication of *Leaves of Grass* in July 1855 represented nothing short of a radical shift in American poetry. Written in **free verse**—that is, having no regular meter or rhyme but instead relying on repetition and irregular stresses to achieve poetic effects—Whitman's poems flouted formal conventions in favor of an expansive, irregular, and often colloquial expression of poetic voice. Whitman unified his poems through the use of repetition of key opening words and ideas, parallelism between lines, and lists to bridge together the diversity he found around him. Critics have tended to see this mode of verse-making as more democratic, as it allows for both autonomy and unity in a startling new way. Whitman also flouted convention in his choice of subject matter: in his efforts to tell the epic story of American democracy in all its diversity, he excluded almost nothing from his focus and emphasized the body as much as the soul, the rude as much as the refined. Figuring himself and his poetry as the visionary representation of the American body politic, Whitman constructed an inclusive, all-embracing identity that could, as he characterized it, "contain multitudes." In the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* (which he printed himself), he did not include his name on the title page. Instead, he presented his readers with a picture of himself, dressed in casual working man's clothes, as the representative of the American collective self. Challenging tradition and shocking readers, Whitman's book was a revolutionary manifesto advocating a new style and a new purpose for American literature, as well as a new identity for the American poet.

No one could have predicted from Whitman's upbringing that he would emerge as a revolutionary poet. Born to a working-class family in New York, Walter Whitman received only six years of formal education before going to work at the age of eleven. He started out as an office boy and later became a printer's apprentice, a journalist, a teacher, and finally an editor. Over the course of his career, he edited or contributed to more than a dozen newspapers and magazines in the New York area, as well as working briefly in 1848 in New Orleans as an editor for the *New Orleans Crescent*. As a newspaperman, he was exposed to and participated in the important political debates of his time, usually affiliating himself with the radical Democrats.



[5513] Anonymous, *Walt Whitman* (1854), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-79942].

By 1850 Whitman had largely withdrawn from his journalistic work in order to read literature and concentrate on his poetry. Given the ambition of the project—Whitman intended *Leaves of Grass* to be an American **epic**, that is, a narration of national identity on a grand, all-encompassing scale—it is perhaps unsurprising that he continued revising, rearranging, and expanding this collection for the rest of his life. Between 1855 and 1881 he published six different editions of *Leaves of Grass*. Many literary critics were shocked by Whitman's convention-defying style, reviewing the work as “reckless and indecent” and “a mass of stupid filth.” Ralph Waldo Emerson, however, praised the book in a private letter to Whitman as “the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom that America has yet produced.” Elated by this generous praise, Whitman immediately circulated Emerson's letter and supplemented it by anonymously writing and publishing several enthusiastic reviews of his own book.

In subsequent editions of *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman caused more controversy with his inclusion of a number of sexually explicit poems. The cluster titled *Enfans d'Adam* (Children of Adam) in the 1860 edition focuses on the “amative” love between man and woman, while *Calamus* celebrates the “adhesive” love that erotically links man and man. While many nineteenth-century critics do not seem to have grasped the homoerotic import of Whitman's “Calamus” poems, the sensuality and explicitness of all the “sex” poems made the collection extremely controversial.

With the onset of the Civil War, Whitman threw himself into nursing wounded soldiers in the hospital wards of Washington. His collection *Drum-Taps*, including his moving elegy on the death of Abraham Lincoln, records his struggle to come to terms with the violence and devastation of the war. Whitman remained in Washington after the war, serving as a clerk in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Dismissed as a result of his controversial poetry, he found another government job in the Attorney General's office in 1865. Whitman suffered two severe blows in 1873 when he had a paralytic stroke and then lost his mother to heart disease. Devastated, he moved to Camden, New Jersey, to be near his brother. Although he was physically weakened, Whitman continued working on his poetry, meeting with influential artists and intellectuals of the time, and even making several journeys to the American West to see first-hand the expansive landscape he lovingly chronicled in his work. In 1881, he composed his final edition of *Leaves of Grass*, and in 1882, he published a prose companion to his poetry entitled *Specimen Days*.

WHITMAN WEB ARCHIVE

[5130] Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Brooklyn, 1855), courtesy of the Library of Congress. Frontispiece and title page to the first edition, first issue of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman became a new kind of American hero, writing exuberantly about the exploits of Americans and their beautiful land.

[5513] Anonymous, *Walt Whitman, Washington, D.C. 1863*, courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-98624]. Whitman spent much of the Civil War working in Washington hospitals, tending to the needs of wounded soldiers. His view of war and life would be forever changed by this experience.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Although students will probably pick up on the homoerotic imagery of many of Whitman's poems with little difficulty, it is worth reminding them that the male-male eroticism was not so clear to nineteenth-century readers, who were far more scandalized by his explicit descriptions of heterosexual sex. You might point out that the term “homosexual” did not exist in 1860, so Whitman's poems were

struggling to construct a new sexual identity and create a new language for erotic love between men. Ask your students to analyze stanzas VII and VIII of *Live Oak, with Moss* and/or the “Twenty-eight Bathers” section in *Song of Myself* in this context. Why does Whitman adopt a feminine persona in his narration of the “Twenty-eight Bathers”? How does Whitman struggle with his commitment to being a “public,” national poet and his desire to record his private erotic feelings in *Live Oak, with Moss*? How does he describe his love for men, given that a vocabulary for homosexuality was unavailable to him?

■ Although the early editions of *Leaves of Grass* contain many eloquent celebrations of the vastness and grandeur of the American continent, Whitman had actually done very little traveling when he wrote them (his trip to New Orleans was his only significant travel experience until late in life). Ask students to think about why cities and landscapes Whitman could only imagine affected him so deeply. To what kinds of cultural myths and ideals was he responding? How might Whitman’s lyrical descriptions of America’s geographic expanse and demographic diversity have impacted his readers’ ideas about the landscape and the nation?

■ When he wrote “The Poet” in 1844, Ralph Waldo Emerson proclaimed that “Poets are liberating gods . . . they are free, and they make free.” He wished for the emergence of a poet “without impediment, who sees and handles that which others dream of, traverses the whole scale of experience, and is representative of man.” Have students read Emerson’s essay and stage a debate whether Whitman has indeed answered this passionate plea for a truly *American* poet.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Critics have called Whitman’s 1855 Preface to *Leaves of Grass* a literary declaration of independence. What does Whitman call for in a national literature? Why does he feel America needs one? What kind of role does he envision for the new American poet?

Comprehension: In *Song of Myself*, Whitman attempts to reconcile and bring into harmony all the diverse people, ideas, and values that make up the American nation. Which groups of people does he choose to focus on particularly? How does he describe people of different races, social classes, genders, ages, and professions?

Context: Whitman was the most photographed American writer of the nineteenth century (there are 130 extant photographs of him). He frequently sent pictures of himself to friends and admirers and included portraits of himself in his editions of *Leaves of Grass*. Consider how Whitman presents himself in the portraits featured in the archive. How does he manipulate clothing and expression to achieve different effects? How does his self-presentation change over time? Why do you think Whitman might have been so interested in circulating photographs of himself?

Exploration: Why do you think Whitman’s poetry was so controversial in the mid-nineteenth century? (Consider both his poems’ for-

[5758] Thomas Eakins, “Naked Series”—*Old Man, Seven Photographs* (c. 1880), courtesy of the Getty Museum. The model in these photographs looks strikingly like Walt Whitman. Debate continues as to whether or not the image is indeed of the poet “undisguised and naked.”

[6242] Phillips & Taylor, *Walt Whitman, Half-Length Portrait, Seated, Facing Left, Wearing Hat and Sweater, Holding Butterfly* (1873), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-77082]. Eve Sedgwick has noted that during the nineteenth century, before the term “homosexual” was invented, Whitman’s writings, image, and name came to function as a code for men to communicate their homosexual identity and their homoerotic attractions to one another. Whitman was often photographed and liked to present himself in a variety of personae.

[6287] Frank Pearsall, *Walt Whitman, Half-Length Portrait, Seated, Facing Left, Left Hand under Chin* (1869), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-89947]. Modernist poet Hart Crane considered himself an artist in Whitman’s tradition of optimism and exuberance. Both tried to represent America and modernity.

[8267] Blake Allmendinger, Interview: “Whitman’s Celebration of Expansion” (2001), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Blake Allmendinger, professor of English at UCLA and author of *The Cowboy: Representations of Labor in an American Work Culture* and *Ten Most Wanted: The New Western Literature*, discusses Whitman’s celebration of expansion.

[8912] Allen Ginsberg, excerpt from “A Supermarket in California,” a dramatic reading from *American Passages: A Literary Survey*, Episode 15: “Poetry of Liberation” (2002), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Walt Whitman had a tremendous influence on generations of free-verse poets, including Allen Ginsberg. This is a dramatic reading of an excerpt from Ginsberg’s poem “A Supermarket in California,” in which he addresses Whitman.

mal qualities and their subject matter as you answer this question.) Do his poems still seem controversial? In what ways? Where do you see Whitman's influence in later developments in American poetry? (Do you see echoes of Whitman in Allen Ginsberg's *Howl*, for example?)

Exploration: What is "epic" about *Song of Myself*? Can you think of other American texts that might be described as epic? What do these texts have in common? What defines an epic?



[1190] Anonymous, *Joaquin, the Mountain Robber* (c. 1848), courtesy of the California State Library.

John Rollin Ridge (Yellow Bird) (1827–1867)

John Rollin Ridge was born in the Cherokee Nation (present-day Georgia) into a prominent Native American family. Both his father and his grandfather were Cherokee chiefs, landowners, and slave-owners. During Ridge's youth, the tribe was troubled by white settlers' increasing encroachment on its lands and by mounting pressure from the United States government to relocate to less desirable lands in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). A rift developed in the tribe between those who were determined to defend their homeland against white incursions and those who advocated compliance with white demands. The Ridge family led the faction that wished to accommodate U.S. federal policy and was instrumental in signing the treaty that led to the infamous Trail of Tears migration (1838–39). More than one-third of the Cherokee who made the forced march to Oklahoma died in the process, leaving many members of the tribe bitterly angry at leaders like the Ridges, who were viewed as traitors for having advocated the disastrous treaty. In 1839 three members of the Ridge family were assassinated, presumably for the role they had played in agreeing to the migration. John Ridge, just twelve years old at the time, determined to avenge his father's death and to reassert his family's leadership of the tribe.

Despite his commitment to Cherokee politics, Ridge also identified with his white mother's cultural heritage. He frequently wrote about the need for Native Americans to assimilate to white culture and become "civilized." He believed that Native Americans risked extinction unless they acculturated themselves to white values and customs. Sent to school in New England for a time, he received a classical education and showed an early love for literature, writing his first poems around the age of ten.

Ridge's life was radically disrupted in 1849 when he shot and killed a man during a brawl. Rather than face prosecution for the crime, he fled first to Missouri and then joined a Gold Rush party headed for California. There he worked briefly as a miner, but found the labor strenuous and unprofitable. He soon found work as a writer, journalist, and editor in the newspapers and literary journals springing up in the boomtowns of northern California.

In 1854, Ridge published *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta, the Celebrated California Bandit*, which is considered the first novel written in California and the first novel published by a Native American. His editor used Ridge's Cherokee name, "Yellow Bird," on

the title page of the original edition, perhaps to highlight the novelty of the author's ethnicity. The work is a fictionalized account of the experiences of a legendary Mexican bandit who, though fundamentally a noble person, is driven to a life of crime by the persecution he suffers at the hands of Anglos. After having his profits stolen, his land seized, his brother unfairly executed, and his mistress raped before his eyes, Joaquin Murieta vows revenge and embarks on a crime spree, targeting the authorities of the Anglo establishment. While Ridge's story of Murieta is loosely based on a series of actual robberies and raids carried out by Mexican outlaws in California in the early 1850s, the tale is not modeled strictly on fact. Ridge's hero is a composite of several shadowy bandit figures about whom little historical information is known—though at least three of them do seem to have shared the first name “Joaquin.” Despite its fictional status, Ridge's account of the adventures of Joaquin Murieta quickly came to be accepted as fact (by the 1880s, respected historians were citing details from his novel in the footnotes of their books on California history). As it gained currency, Ridge's story was also widely pirated and embellished by other novelists, playwrights, and screenwriters. Although Ridge's literary endeavors did not make very much money—he had received no profit from his novel by the time he died in California in 1867—he did create an enduring California legend and folk hero.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Some critics have claimed that the story of Joaquin Murieta appealed to Ridge because it shares some important similarities with his own life. Ask students to consider this theory. How does the disruption of Murieta's life by sudden violence compare to Ridge's early history? How does Murieta's obsession with revenge resonate with Ridge's own experiences? You might also ask students to consider the more general similarities between the Cherokees' forced migration from their traditional lands in Georgia to less desirable land in Oklahoma and the dispossession of Mexican miners and ranchers in California in the mid-nineteenth century.

■ Ridge concludes his novel by citing its “lesson” for his readers: “There is nothing so dangerous in its consequences as *injustice to individuals*—whether it arise from prejudice of color or from any other source . . . a wrong done to one man is a wrong to society and the world.” Ask students to contemplate this moral and its applicability to the story of Joaquin Murieta. How does the novel justify this moral? How does Ridge use his narrative to generate sympathy for Murieta?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What drives Joaquin Murieta to a life of crime? What groups are the targets of his criminal activity? What groups and individuals does he spare? What kind of code does he live by?

Context: Compare Ridge's portrait of Joaquin Murieta to the corridos' descriptions of Latino bandits living on the border between Texas

RIDGE WEB ARCHIVE

[1184] Anonymous, *John Rollin Ridge and Daughter Alice* (c. 1860), courtesy of Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries. John Rollin Ridge was born into an important Cherokee family in Georgia. His father was assassinated for signing the treaty that led to the Trail of Tears. Ridge later married a white woman and rejoined the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma. Issues of assimilation and resistance resonate in his literary works as in his life.

[1190] Anonymous, *Joaquin, the Mountain Robber* (c. 1848), courtesy of the California State Library. The fact that no verifiable portrait of Murieta exists only enhances the legend of the California outlaw. Murieta's exploits were often exaggerated, and many acts committed by other bandits were erroneously attributed to him.

[4246] John Rollin Ridge, First page of *Joaquin Murieta* (c. 1854), courtesy of University of Oklahoma Press. This sensational novel tells the story of a Mexican American outlaw who seeks revenge on marauding Anglo American miners during the California Gold Rush. The work was originally attributed to “Yellow Bird,” Ridge's Cherokee name.

[4249] John Rollin Ridge, Title page of *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta, The Celebrated California Bandit* (1955), courtesy of University of Oklahoma Press. This is considered both the first novel written in California and the first novel written by a Native American. Its publishers identified author John Rollin Ridge by his Cherokee name, “Yellow Bird.”

[5832] Charles Christian Nahl, *Joaquin Murieta* (1859), courtesy of Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley. Charles Christian Nahl and John Rollin Ridge are two of the many artists inspired by the legend of Joaquin Murieta. Here Murieta is depicted as a Spanish American-style hero.

[6403] McKenney & Hall, *John Ridge, a Cherokee* (c. 1838), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-3157]. Author John Rollin Ridge was born into a prominent Cherokee family. His father, John Ridge, was educated in New England and married a white woman.

The family favored assimilation and accommodation.

[8277] John Rollin Ridge, Excerpt from *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta, the Celebrated California Bandit*.

and Mexico. How do these texts participate in similar traditions? How do their descriptions of outlaws differ? How do these different kinds of texts (novels and ballads) use different strategies to shape their readers' attitudes toward the outlaws and border cultures that they portray?

Exploration: In 1967, Chicano activist Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales published an epic poem which took the life of Joaquin Murieta as its subject. Compare Gonzales's *I Am Joaquín—Yo Soy Joaquín* with Ridge's earlier novelistic account. How does Gonzales's position as a late-twentieth-century activist and as a Chicano shape his portrait of Murieta?

Exploration: Although Ridge's narrative of Joaquin Murieta's life owes more to fiction than to fact, it was quickly accepted by many readers and even some professional historians as an accurate historical account. Why do you think the figure of Joaquin Murieta (or at least Ridge's description of him) was so appealing that people were anxious to believe in his reality? Why has the story of his life become such an important myth within California history? Can you think of other outlaw figures who occupy similarly important positions within the mythology of other regions of the United States?

Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton (c. 1832–1895)

Maria Amparo Ruiz was born into an aristocratic Latino family on the Baja peninsula in Mexico. Her grandfather, Don Jose Manuel Ruiz, owned a vast tract of land around Ensenada and served as the governor of Baja. The family's control of the area came to an end during the Mexican-American War (1845–48), when the American army occupied Baja and forced the surrender of its citizens. It was during this period that Maria Ruiz met Captain Henry S. Burton, an army officer from New England, and began a romantic relationship with him. At the close of the war, she took advantage of the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo to move to Alta California with her mother, where the two became American citizens. In 1849, Maria Ruiz married Henry Burton in Monterey, California. Embarking on a new life within a social circle made up of both native Latino Californio landholders and Anglos, she soon mastered the English language and gained a reputation for her beauty and her air of "true aristocracy," as one admirer put it. In 1853, the Burtons purchased the Jamul Ranch, a large parcel of land near San Diego, solidifying their position within California society.

In 1859, Henry Burton received military orders to return east and the family moved to the Atlantic coast. He was soon promoted, first to major and then to brigadier-general in the Union Army. Her husband's high-ranking position within the army enabled Ruiz de Burton to circulate in elite East Coast society and to see the inner workings of U.S. political and military life first-hand, experiences she would later draw upon in her novels. Henry Burton died of malarial fever in 1869, leaving Ruiz de Burton a thirty-seven-year-old widow with two children.

Ruiz de Burton returned to California after her husband's death,

undertaking a variety of land and business ventures in an attempt to secure her family's financial situation. She started a cement plant, a commercial-scale castor bean factory, and a water reservoir on her Jamul property, but turned little profit through these enterprises. Ruiz de Burton also found herself involved in a number of complicated legal battles over land titles, attempting both to safeguard her legal right to the Jamul Ranch and to claim her grandfather's Ensenada tract in Baja. When she died in Chicago, she was in the midst of raising political and financial support for her claim to the Mexican land.

Despite her financial and legal entanglements, Ruiz de Burton found time to begin a literary career in the 1870s, publishing two novels for an English-speaking audience. Both books critique the dominant Anglo society and express Ruiz de Burton's resentment over the discrimination and racism experienced by many Latinos residing within the United States. Her first novel, *Who Would Have Thought It?* (1872), which denounces what she viewed as the hypocritical sanctimoniousness of New England culture, was published anonymously, probably because its biting satire of Congregationalist religion, of abolitionism, and even of President Lincoln made it controversial. In 1885, Ruiz de Burton turned her attention to the situation in California in *The Squatter and the Don*, a fictional account of the land struggles experienced by many Californio families after U.S. annexation. The book is a historical novel about the relationship between Mercedes Alamar, the beautiful daughter of an aristocratic Californio family, and Clarence Darrell, an American who is affiliated with the Anglo squatters trying to claim the Alamar family's land. Chronicling the demise of the feudal Spanish rancho system in California, the novel questions whether the imposition of American monopoly capitalism (depicted in a scathing critique of the railroad industry) is an improvement over the old way of life. Because Ruiz de Burton writes from the perspective of the conquered Californio population, her work serves as an important corrective to Anglo writers' often celebratory, imperialist narratives of western expansion. Although Ruiz de Burton's work is not free from racist stereotypes—she portrays poor white squatters, Jews, African Americans, Indians, and the Chinese in racist terms—it does provide a unique perspective on crucial issues of race, class, gender, and power in nineteenth-century America.

TEACHING TIPS

■ *The Squatter and the Don* was originally published under the pseudonym “C. Loyal,” shorthand for the term “Cuidado Leal” (Loyal Citizen), a conventional closing used in official government correspondence in nineteenth-century Mexico. Ask students to think about why Ruiz de Burton might have adopted this pen name. How does it resonate with her novel's critique of American political structures? Does



[7359] Fanny F. Palmer, *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way* (1868), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-3757].

RUIZ DE BURTON WEB ARCHIVE

[1891] Rand McNally and Co., *New and Enlarged Scale Railroad and County Map of California Showing Every Railroad Station and Post Office in the State* (1883), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division [LC Railroad maps, 189]. The expansion of railroads plays a key role in the overturning of Californio culture in Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton's novel *The Squatter and the Don*. Later maps like this one redefined territory through industrial transportation, political units,

and government communications outposts, guiding investment and commerce.

[5240] Helen Hunt Jackson, *Ramona* manuscript page (c. 1883), courtesy of Colorado College, Tutt Library Special Collections. Jackson wrote *Ramona* hoping that the novel would call attention to the mistreatment of California's Indians much as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had to the plight of slaves.

[5761] N. Currier, *The Battle of Sacramento* (1847), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1966]. Americans charge against Mexicans during the battle near Rancho Sacramento, just north of Chihuahua, Mexico, on February 28, 1847. The heroism of the American soldiers contrasts with the limpness of the Mexican forces and reflects American biases.

[6856] Oriana Day, *Mission San Gabriel Arcangel* [Oil on canvas 20 x 30 in.] (late 19th century), courtesy of Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; gift of Mrs. Eleanor Martin, 37556. As Ruiz de Burton makes clear, Mexican society was well established in California before the era of the Gold Rush. Missions often maintained large herds of cattle to provide their residents with a reliable source of meat.

[7264] William S. Smith, *The New Ship "Mechanic's Own," Built for the Mechanics' Mining Association by Messrs. Bishop & Simonson, Sailed from New York, Augt. 14th, 1849, for California* (1849), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-114923]. Ships like the *Mechanic's Own* provided the crucial link between the United States and the western territories of California and Oregon. Writers such as Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, John Rollin Ridge, and Louise Amelia Smith Clappe wrote of the arrival of Euro-Americans in what had been Mexican American territory.

[7359] Fanny F. Palmer, *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way* (1868), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-3757]. Less than two years after the Gold Rush began, San Francisco had become a sprawling boom town that drew people from all over the world. This illustration shows both a busy city and a very active harbor crowded with ships.

this pseudonym suggest that she continued to see herself as a Mexican citizen even after her decision to become an American? Or was she reformulating the Mexican ideal of "loyal citizenship" within an American context?

■ Ruiz de Burton wrote and published both of her novels in English even though many of her central characters were Latino. Given this information, ask students to consider what kind of audience Ruiz de Burton envisioned for her novels. To whom was she addressing her critiques of American society? Why might she have chosen this audience? How did she work to make her stories—and her political points—appealing to English-speaking readers?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What is a "squatter"? What is a "Don"? Who is the novel's hero and what qualities does he embody?

Comprehension: What kinds of discrimination do the resident Californios face in *The Squatter and the Don*? How do the squatters jeopardize their claims to their ranches? What kinds of tactics do the Californios adopt in their efforts to maintain their land?

Context: How does Ruiz de Burton portray the railroad industry in *The Squatter and the Don*? How do the railroad monopolies impact the San Diego community in the novel? What does the railroad come to symbolize in the novel?

Exploration: Both Ruiz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don* and Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* are sentimental novels about ethnically diverse people living in the rapidly changing culture of nineteenth-century California. (See Unit 7 for an explanation and discussion of the sentimental novel.) How do these two texts share similar concerns? How are they different? How do their portraits of Native American characters compare? How does their treatment of interracial marriage compare?

Nat Love (1854–1921)

Born into slavery in Tennessee, Nat Love eventually found fame as "Deadwood Dick," the cowboy celebrated in western lore, dime novels, and his own autobiography, *The Life and Adventures of Nat Love* (1907). Because of Love's tendency toward hyperbole, his account of his life is sometimes understood as part of the western "tall tale" tradition. But his story also reflects the important reality of African American participation in the culture of the American West and functions as a crucial corrective to the stereotype of the "Old West" as the exclusive dominion of white men. In fact, at least five thousand African American men worked as cowboys, while countless others traveled through and settled in western lands in the nineteenth century.

Freed from slavery as a boy at the close of the Civil War, Love soon moved west to seek adventure and employment. He quickly found work as a ranch hand, cattle rustler, and "brand reader" (the skilled

hand who sorts cattle in mixed herds) in Texas, Arizona, and throughout the West. As Love's narrative demonstrates, the life of a nineteenth-century cowboy was a difficult one, demanding specialized knowledge and skills. Responsible for driving herds of cattle from the western ranches to the northern stockyards over hundreds of miles of arduous terrain, cowboys spent months at a time on the trail. Love was deservedly proud of his survival skills on the trail and his mastery of cattle-driving techniques. His talents at roping livestock and his skill on a horse earned him the moniker "Deadwood Dick"—a nickname he retained all his life—when he won a rodeo competition in Deadwood, South Dakota. Love's narrative indicates that he found a deep satisfaction in western life, celebrating the freedom of the open range and the "brotherhood of men" which bound cowboys to one another. Aside from his opening chapters, which critique the institution of slavery, Love does not often address issues of race except to express contempt for Native Americans and Mexicans. It seems clear that his solidarity with other cowboys and his pride in his individual accomplishments are more central to his narrative than a critical analysis of interracial relationships and tensions on the frontier. For Love, the frontier seemed to function as a place where he could be valued for his skills rather than his skin color.

By 1890, the Old West of open land and extensive cattle ranching that Love celebrates in his autobiography had changed dramatically. Railroads had made long cattle drives unnecessary, and the increasing settlement and fencing off of land had blocked the old cowboy trails. With his occupation outmoded by technology, Love responded by finding new employment and new challenges as a "Pullman Porter" on the Pullman rail line, a service job occupied almost exclusively by black men. Although the color line barred him from becoming a more highly paid manager or mechanic on the railroad, Love does not record dissatisfaction or resentment over his relegation to a service position. Rather, as his descriptions of his exciting adventures on the range give way to tame accounts of customer service and rail line procedure, Love insists on the gratification he finds in his role as a porter. For him, riding the railroad provided an opportunity to travel extensively, come in contact with a variety of people, and "justly appreciate the grandeur of our country."

TEACHING TIPS

■ During both his career as a cowboy and his stint as a railroad worker, Love records his feelings of awe for the natural beauty and vast expanses of the United States. Ask students to think about his relationship to the western landscape and to America as a nation. At the close of Chapter XX, after detailing the beauties of the land, Love exhorts his reader to "let your chest swell with pride that you are an American." He goes on to proclaim, "I have seen a large part of America, and am still seeing it . . . America, I love thee, Sweet land of Liberty, home of the brave and the free." How does the landscape contribute to Love's sense of pride in his country? How does Love's status



[5307] Anonymous, *Deadwood Dick (Nat Love) in My Fighting Clothes* (c. 1870–90), courtesy of Duke University, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library.

LOVE WEB ARCHIVE

[1012] Anonymous, *Devil's Gate on the Sweetwater* (1880), courtesy of the Denver Public Library. This classic view of Devil's Gate and the Sweetwater River in Natrona County, Wyoming, lay along the route of the Oregon Trail. This is the type of landscape that was ranched and tamed by men like Nat Love.

[1052] S. J. Morrow, *Deadwood in 1876: General View of the Dakota Hillside Above* (1876), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Still Pictures Branch. Rapidly growing settlements sprang up as merchants supplied goods and services to miners. Saloons and gambling halls added to the largely lawless conditions found in boomtowns such as Deadwood, South Dakota.

[5296] *Better Known in the Cattle Country as Deadwood Dick*, by Himself (1907), courtesy of Academic Affairs Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Nat Love, who was also known as Deadwood Dick, wrote a 1907 autobiography that recounted his post-slavery experiences as both a cowboy and a railroad worker in the Old West.

[5306] Anonymous, *Nat Love (Deadwood Dick) in Pullman Porter Uniform* (c. 1890s), courtesy of Academic Affairs Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. This photograph of Love was taken shortly after he began his career as a railroad porter in 1890. The image of the wild, long-haired, gun-toting cowboy was replaced with that of the clean-cut, uniform-wearing company man.

[5307] Anonymous, *Deadwood Dick (Nat Love), In My Fighting Clothes* (c.1870–90), courtesy of Duke University, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library. This photo of Nat Love is from *The Life and Adventures of Nat Love Better Known in the Cattle Country as Deadwood Dick by Himself*. Love was one of thousands of ex-slaves who sought a new life in the West following the Civil War.

as a former slave complicate his celebration of the “liberty” and “freedom” of the United States? You might ask students to look at images of Yosemite or the Grand Canyon as they think about this issue.

■ When Love is taken captive by the Native Americans he calls “Yellow Dog’s Tribe,” he attributes their generosity in sparing his life both to his own bravery and to the fact that he is black, since, as he puts it, the tribe “was composed largely of half breeds, and there was a large percentage of colored blood in the tribe.” Despite this acknowledgment of shared racial heritage, Love conspicuously distances himself from the Native Americans who adopt him. Ask students to consider the racial politics of this scene. How does Love respond to his captivity? How does he portray his Native American/African American captors? What seems to be his role within the tribe’s social hierarchy and how might it be influenced by race? How and why does he escape?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What kinds of labor does Love perform over the course of his life? How does he make his career choices? What motivates his transition from one job to another?

Context: Readers might expect Love to be somewhat bitter about the development of the railroad since it led to the demise of his cowboy lifestyle, yet he embraces his career as a Pullman Porter. What does Love find appealing about the railroad? Does his attitude reflect a typically American attitude toward technological change? What insights do his discussions of rail line procedure give us into the corporate structure and philosophy of the Pullman Company in the nineteenth century? What is Love’s attitude toward the management of the railroad? How does his portrait of the railroad compare to Ruiz de Burton’s?

Context: Examine the photographs of Nat Love featured in the archive, particularly the image of him in his cowboy gear and the image of him wearing his Pullman Porter uniform. In what kinds of conventions of portraiture do these photographs engage? How do Love’s different “costumes” impact viewers’ understanding of his identity in these pictures? Where are there points of overlap between these photographs of two very different stages in Love’s life?

Context: In 1880, George M. Pullman, the president and founder of the Pullman Palace Car Company, began to transform the prairies south of Chicago into a model town for his railroad-car production workers. By creating the town Pullman hoped to improve the morale and health of his workers, while simultaneously increasing productivity and decreasing strikes and labor unrest. This model extended to the other workers for the Pullman Company, such as porters like Love. Compare Love’s view of working for the Pullman Company to Pullman’s philosophy.

Exploration: Why do you think pop cultural representations of the “Old West” usually portray both cowboys and pioneers as Anglo-

Americans? How does Nat Love's autobiography challenge traditional images of cowboy life? Does Love's narrative also participate in certain stereotypes?

Exploration: Compare Nat Love's depiction of African American–Native American relations to those in Briton Hammon's "Narrative" (Unit 7). How does each author respond to his captors? To what extent can each of the captivities be read on a spiritual or symbolic level? To what extent does race affect the nature of their captivities?

Suggested Author Pairings

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER, CATHARINE MARIA SEDGWICK, AND THE CHEROKEE MEMORIALISTS

Writing in the first half of the nineteenth century, these authors explored issues of Euro-American incursions into traditional Native American lands in the eastern United States. Cooper and Sedgwick both worked in the tradition of the historical novel. Though they focused on different time periods and geographic settings in their most famous works—Sedgwick set *Hope Leslie* in the Puritan community in seventeenth-century Massachusetts, while Cooper set his *Leather-Stocking* novels in the Great Lakes region in the eighteenth century—they both grappled with the questions of the evolving American character and the racial tensions that complicated Native American and Euro-American relations. Although Cooper and Sedgwick are sympathetic to many of their Native American characters, they still rely on stereotypical depictions and often present Native American culture as anachronistic and untenable in the modern world. The Cherokee memorials contrast interestingly with the works of Cooper and Sedgwick because the memorialists insist so forcefully on the living, vibrant, and evolving nature of Native American societies.

MARIA AMPARO RUIZ DE BURTON, LOUISE AMELIA SMITH CLAPPE, AND JOHN ROLLIN RIDGE

Burton, Clappe, and Ridge all write eloquently about the enormous economic and cultural changes shaping California at the end of the nineteenth century. Because they write from very different points of view—Ruiz de Burton as a Latina woman interested in the plight of displaced Latinos, Clappe as a white woman living in a Gold Rush boomtown, and Ridge as a Cherokee émigré to California who identifies with embattled Latinos—they supplement each other to create a rich picture of the diverse culture of California during the Gold Rush and railroad booms. Ridge's masculinist depiction of Joaquin Murieta as an outlaw hero makes an interesting contrast to Ruiz de Burton's explorations of powerful female characters and to Clappe's depiction of her own position as a woman in an environment dominated by male miners.

WALT WHITMAN AND THE CORRIDOS

Both Whitman's work and the corridos can be characterized as poetry that seeks to define a new kind of American hero. While the corridos adhere to formal conventions and metrical structure in a way that Whitman's poetry does not, they use their lyrics to question boundaries and celebrate resistance to rules and dominant conventions. These two poetic forms have had a lasting and ongoing influence on American verse and music—Whitman's development of free verse transformed American poetry, while the spirit of the corridos continues to live in contemporary Latino verse and song.

CAROLINE STANSBURY KIRKLAND AND NAT LOVE

Though they come from very different backgrounds and espoused extremely different values, Kirkland and Love both employed an autobiographical mode to narrate their impressions of life on what they considered the "frontier." Kirkland's interest in "domesticating" the West makes an effective contrast to Love's celebration of his time roaming the plains as a cowherd with no permanent home. (The extent to which Kirkland's model won out might be gauged by the fact that Love soon found the cowboy life untenable and took to the more domestic position of porter on the railroads.) Kirkland's female perspective is reflected in her chronicles of everyday experiences of hardworking women, an aspect of western life that usually went unreported. Love, on the other hand, is much more interested in constructing himself as a masculine hero and turns to "tall tales" and accounts of exciting adventures more often than realistic description to narrate his adventures in the West.

CORE CONTEXTS

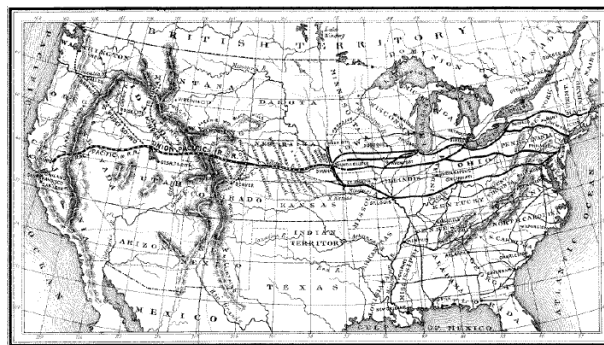
America Unbridled: The Iron Horse and Manifest Destiny

The development of the railroad system transformed American culture, physically binding the country together and enabling people to travel long distances in short periods of time and in relative comfort. The railroad broke traditional geographic barriers that had restricted trade, commodity flow, and immigration, thus speeding the process of American expansion and producing unprecedented economic opportunities. In their early stages of development at the beginning of the nineteenth century, railroads were constructed mainly to link urban, metropolitan areas in the East. But with the ascension of the concept of **Manifest Destiny** over the course of the nineteenth century, Americans' desire for a transcontinental railroad intensified. A moral justification for expansion, Manifest Destiny refers to the popular belief that American control of the land that stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific was inevitable and divinely sanctioned. Because of this culturally arrogant conviction of the

United States's "right" to western lands, American policy makers had few scruples about displacing Native Americans, Mexicans, and other groups who already inhabited the land from the Great Plains to California.

The transcontinental railroad seemed symbolic of America's destiny to stretch "from sea to shining sea," so public interest in and support for the railroads increased over the century. The nation's total mileage of track multiplied from 9,000 in 1850 to 30,000 in 1860. By 1870 there were 94,000 miles of railroad track in the United States, and by 1900 there were 199,000. While some of this construction filled out the urban eastern network, much of it went into the grand project of building the transcontinental lines that ran across the sparsely settled plains and through the rugged mountains and canyons of the West. Railways were also important to the development of National Parks. As Joshua Scott Johns points out in the online exhibit "All Aboard: The Role of the Railroads in Protecting, Promoting, and Selling Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks," "From the earliest days of discovery to the crucial National Park Act of 1916, the process of park development was shaped by needs of the railroads—from acquiring investors to selling mass-market tourism, they modified their advertising strategies to win the patronage of new passengers with the promise of fulfilling their expectations of the West in 'America's playgrounds.'"

Although the railroads were the first "big business" enterprise in the United States and created enormous profits for the tycoons that ran them, the transcontinental project was largely fueled by government grants. Issuing both federal land and cash grants, the government subsidized the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific railroads' work of laying track from Omaha to Sacramento. The dubious financial practices of the men who ran the railroads—they controlled every aspect of the rail system from real estate to construction and thus found it easy to engage in profiteering—earned them the pejorative title "robber barons." Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton offers a searing critique of the robber barons' monopolistic business practices in her novel *The Squatter and the Don*. Featuring the four men who headed the California railroad monopoly (known as the "Big Four") as characters in her book, she indicts their immoral business manipulations and unfair control over the economic resources of the state. In the novel, the Big Four, in collusion with Congress, ensure the failure of a proposed rail line, interfere with the prosperity of San Diego, and create financial hardships for honest working people. As Ruiz de Burton so vividly demon-



[7363] Union Pacific Railroad, Map of the Union Pacific Rail Road and Its Connections (1868), courtesy of the University of Michigan and the Making of America Project.



[1768] Anonymous, Poster circulated in Philadelphia in 1839 to discourage the coming of the railroad (1839), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Still Pictures Branch.

strates in her portrait of the fate of San Diego, exclusion from the rail line could spell doom for a town.

While the railroad could have an enormously stimulating effect on local economies, promoting growth through easy immigration and the efficient transport of commodities, it could also lead to the failure of certain economies and the destruction of certain ways of life. By expediting the immigration of European American settlers, the railroad hastened Native Americans' expulsion from much of their traditional western land. The railroad famously led to the demise of the culture of the cowboys, making long-distance cattle herding obsolete because livestock could be transported more efficiently by rail car. Nat Love's career as a cowboy came to an end with the growth of the rail system, a setback he responded to by simply taking a job as a porter on the railroad. The expansion of the railroad also enabled the destruction of natural resources: the ease with which lumber could be shipped led to the demise of the white pine in the Great Lakes region. While buffalo herds were already endangered by wasteful European Amer-

ican hunting practices long before the completion of the transcontinental railroads, the trains sealed their doom by allowing passengers to shoot defenseless animals from inside the cars. As the train approached a herd, passengers opened the windows, pointed their rifles, and fired at random. The animals they killed were usually left to rot where they fell.

Nor was the railroad without physical dangers for its human passengers and employees. In its early years, travel by rail was a somewhat risky enterprise, as fires and derailments were common. But the dangers of riding in a train could not begin to compare to the hazards of laying track and building the rail line. The Union Pacific and Central Pacific exploited inexpensive labor, hiring primarily African

Americans and Irish and Chinese immigrants to do the difficult work of constructing the transcontinental line. The Chinese workers (referred to as "coolies") who manned the Central Pacific crews, in particular, faced extremely dangerous working conditions as they graded and hauled the road through the rugged Sierra mountains. Many Chinese men died in the process of laying the transcontinental railroad. While the completion of the transcontinental line in May of 1869 was a much-celebrated national event—a golden spike was installed where the railroads met at Promontory, Utah—it is important to remember that this industrial feat came at the high price of many human lives.

Railroad companies also relied on exploitative labor practices to provide service to passengers within the cars. The porter positions on the Pullman Palace Car Company, for instance, were occupied almost exclusively by African American men who were not eligible for better-paying jobs as engineers or mechanics. Judging from his autobiography, Nat Love apparently found satisfaction in his career as a Pullman



[7358] Anonymous, *Joining the Tracks for the First Transcontinental Railroad, Promontory, Utah Territory, 1869*, courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Still Pictures Branch.

Porter, but perhaps he did not feel comfortable recording any resentment or disappointment he might have felt. Eventually, labor dissatisfaction came to a head in the railroad industry. In 1893, railroad employees banded together to form the American Railway Union. A large-scale strike known as the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 crippled rail transit, and the Pullman employees went on strike in 1894. While none of these early attempts at labor organization resulted in significant reforms, they did lay the groundwork for later, more successful protests.

In the American imagination, railroads were symbols of optimism and democracy, creating economic opportunity and connecting the vast expanses of the country. And in important ways, the railroads really did function like this. People were able to travel through the country with new ease and speed and many Americans felt their country to be more unified as a result. In their development of efficient timetables, the railroads even created the Standard Time Zones that put citizens on the same schedules, a phenomenon that was originally known as “railroad time.” Whatever its potential as an agent of democracy and unity, however, the railroad also enabled monopolies, natural destruction, and human exploitation.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What is the concept of Manifest Destiny?

Comprehension: What was the transcontinental railroad? How was it constructed? Why was it so important to nineteenth-century Americans?

Comprehension: Read the anti-railroad broadside featured in the archive. This piece of propaganda was part of a campaign to curtail railroad expansion in the urban areas of the East. What are the writer’s objections to the railroad? What kinds of dangers does the railroad pose to the community?

Context: How does Walt Whitman describe the railroad in his poetry? Why might it have been an important symbol for him?

Context: Consider why Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton featured the California railroad tycoons in her novel. Why did she use their real names? What risks did she take in doing so? What is the effect of the insertion of these “real people” into a piece of historical fiction?

Context: What was Nat Love’s position on the Pullman line? Why do you think he included photographs of his experience working for the railroad in his autobiography? What do the photographs tell you about the nature of his work? What kind of satisfaction did he find in his job?

Exploration: Why do you think escaping slaves adopted the symbolic term “railroad” to describe their support system? What did the Underground Railroad have in common with a real railroad? Why might this symbol have appealed to abolitionists and runaways?

Exploration: Rail travel is no longer the primary mode most Americans use for long-distance travel. What kinds of transportation have replaced the railroad? Do they occupy a similar position

“AMERICA UNBRIDLED” WEB ARCHIVE

[1768] Anonymous, Poster circulated in Philadelphia in 1839 to discourage the coming of the railroad (1839), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Still Pictures Branch. This poster cites public safety, local commerce, and even the city’s self-identity as potential casualties of a new railroad running through Philadelphia.

[2020] Anonymous, *President Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir at Yosemite National Park* (1903), courtesy of the National Park Service. Concerns about preserving wilderness increased as the frontier disappeared. John Muir and President Roosevelt helped ensure the success of early conservation efforts. Railroads played a crucial role in establishing and maintaining national parks.

[3712] Anonymous, *Chinese Man Carrying Buckets (“Utah”)* (c. 1890), courtesy of the Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. Chinese laborers were an indispensable part of the effort to build the western segment of the transcontinental railroad. Bret Harte’s “The Heathen Chinee” can be contrasted with Chinese immigrants’ poems written on the walls of Angel Island, the Ellis Island of the West Coast.

[7358] Anonymous, *Joining the Tracks for the First Transcontinental Railroad, Promontory, Utah Territory, 1869*, courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Still Pictures Branch. The ceremonial completion of the transcontinental railroad was signaled by the driving of a golden spike inscribed with the words “May God continue the unity of our Country as this Railroad unites the two great Oceans of the world.”

[7359] Fanny F. Palmer, *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way* (1868), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-3757]. The railroad and telegraph divide civilization and wilderness in this 1868 lithograph. The tension between the crowded settlement and the open landscape hints at both the expansion of America and the abundance of unsettled land.

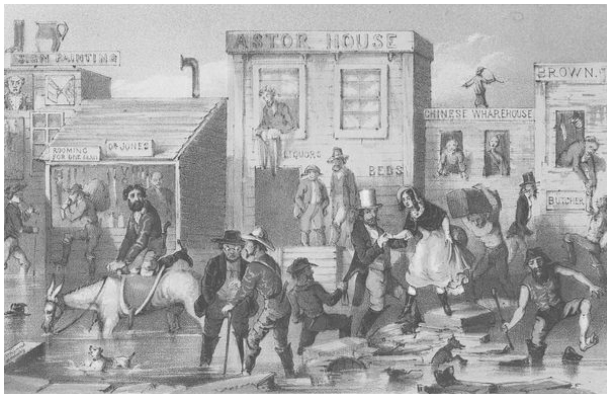
[7363] Union Pacific Railroad, *Map of*

the *Union Pacific Rail Road and Its Connections* (1868), courtesy of the University of Michigan and the *Making of America* project. This map shows the route of the transcontinental railroad from the Atlantic to the Pacific; it was completed in 1869 after just seven years of construction. Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroad companies worked from Sacramento, California, and Omaha, Nebraska, respectively, to meet at the midpoint of Promontory, Utah.

in the popular imagination? Can you think of any industrial or technological developments of the twentieth century that have created the same kind of national excitement that the transcontinental railroad did in the nineteenth century?

Exploration: In “The Virgin and the Dynamo” (*The Education of Henry Adams*), Henry Adams claims that “his historical neck [was] broken by the sudden irruption of forces totally new” when he viewed the dynamo and steam engines at the Gallery of Machines at the Great Exposition of 1900. What was so revolutionary about turn-of-the-century technology that it would have this impact on Adams? What place did the railroads take in this technological revolution?

Competing Claims: The California Gold Rush

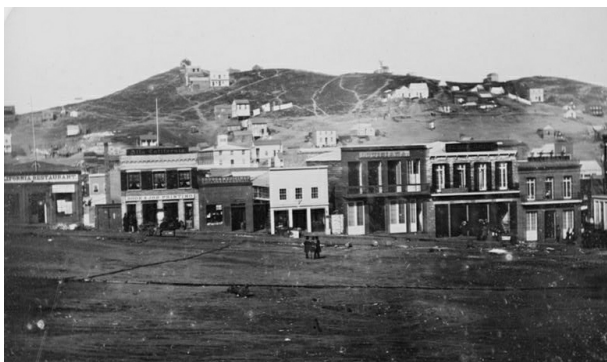


[1303] Francis Samuel Marryat, *The Winter of 1849* (1855), courtesy of Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

On January 24, 1848, gold was discovered in California at Sutter’s Mill in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The find sparked a national and international craze as people from all over the world were seized by “gold fever” and headed to California to “strike it rich.” Known as “Forty-niners” or “Argonauts” after the adventurers in Greek mythology who hunted the Golden Fleece, the immigrants contributed to an unprecedented population explosion in the American West. Over the course of a few months San Francisco was transformed from a village of 459 people to a city with more than 20,000 residents. The Gold Rush

immigrants were overwhelmingly male, but beyond their sex they did not have much in common: the mines drew white Americans from the East Coast and the South, African Americans (both slaves and freemen), Europeans, South Americans, Australians, and Mexicans. In California, these diverse groups encountered the Hispanic and Native American populations that already inhabited the area. The many nations, colors, classes, and creeds represented in the gold fields made nineteenth-century California a place where access to resources, distributions of power, and notions of social order were debated and contested. Adding to the instability, few of the Gold Rush immigrants were interested in permanently settling in California; instead, they intended to amass a fortune quickly and then return home.

In reality, few people found the riches that the legends, stories, and promotional brochures promised. To the miners’ disappointment, the streets of



[7407] Anonymous, *Portsmouth Square, San Francisco, California* (c. 1851), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-7422].

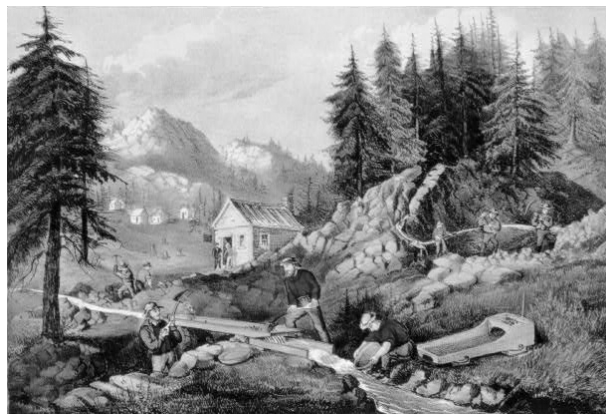
California were not paved in gold. Mining was dirty, frustrating, tiring work. Individual “placer” miners used picks to chip gold from rock deposits and pans and “sluice boxes” to sift gold from the dirt and gravel of riverbeds. Most miners lived in primitive, makeshift camps

where diseases such as cholera and scurvy were rampant and mob violence was common. Many men found that their mining work produced only what Louise Clappe, in her descriptions of life in the mining camps, called “wages”—enough to live on from day to day but not enough to save. Commodities in the boomtowns were extremely expensive since high demand and scarce resources allowed merchants to charge steep “gold rush prices.” Gambling halls, saloons, and brothels set up shop around the mining camps, selling alcohol and entertainment to the miners in their leisure time. A cycle of boom and bust ensured that many miners left California as poor as they had been when they arrived.

People who had the foresight to set up businesses outfitting the miners and supplying them with necessities made more stable fortunes. Companies in the East sold camp equipment, mining tools, and guidebooks to men planning to head to the gold fields. Merchants and entrepreneurs followed the miners to areas where strikes had been made and set up boarding houses, grocery stores, saloons, brothels, and other service businesses. Chinese immigrants, who often faced systematic discrimination and harassment in the mines, sometimes opened washhouses providing laundry services for miners. According to the Museum of the City of San Francisco, by 1876 there were 151,000 Chinese in the United States, of whom 116,000 were in the state of California. Their experiences did not go unrecorded: as literary critic Xiao-huang Yin recounts in *Chinese American Literature since the 1850s*, early Chinese immigrants recorded their experiences in numerous forms, ranging from newspaper stories, to autobiographical texts, to writings on the walls of Angel Island by detainees (Angel Island was a point of entry for many Asian American immigrants), to educational writings by students and scholars who came to America to complete their studies. These early testimonials provide an important counterpoint to other writings from the gold camps, writings that were often negative in their portrayals of Chinese immigrants. This alternative vision of life in early California becomes the setting for twentieth-century author Maxine Hong Kingston’s novel *China Men* (1980).

The rags-to-riches stories of Mexican women making fortunes selling tortillas and white women turning enormous profits selling biscuits also speak to the extraordinary business opportunities in the mining camps. Many of these businesses were short-lived—boomtowns tended to disappear almost as quickly as they sprang up—but some entrepreneurs turned sizeable profits and were able to follow the miners to the next strike.

Sometimes, the cultural and racial diversity of the gold fields led to harmonious and mutually beneficial interaction: miners successfully shared tents, food, domestic labor, and economic partnerships with people of other ethnicities and language groups. But tension, conflict, and hostility could also characterize intercultural encounters in the



[5841] Currier and Ives, *Gold Mining in California* (c. 1871), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1755].

“COMPETING CLAIMS” WEB ARCHIVE

[1303] Francis Samuel Marryat, *The Winter of 1849* (1855), courtesy of Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. This illustration of residents trying to navigate San Francisco’s flooded streets shows how rapidly growing boom towns and cities on the West Coast suffered from poor planning and local weather conditions during periods of expansion.

[3721] Anonymous, *Panning at the Junction of the Eldorado and Bonanza Creeks, Klondike* (c. 1900), courtesy of the Denver Public Library. Although gold miners were primarily men, some women, like those pictured here, took part. Contrary to what most expected, mining was dirty, tiring work that led only a few to wealth.

[3725] Anonymous, *Hanging of Gilbert and Rosengrants at Leadville* (1881), courtesy of the Denver Public Library. Frontier justice was often swift and pub-

lic. Here, residents of Leadville, Colorado, turn out in large numbers to watch the hanging of two men in 1881. **[5228]** Anonymous, *Montgomery Street, San Francisco, 1852* (n.d.), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-55762]. Rapid, primarily white immigration during the Gold Rush brought California to statehood in 1850, as a “free state” that forbade slavery. Yet, demand for land and forced labor caused a genocidal-scale population decline among California Indians.

[5240] Helen Hunt Jackson, *Ramona* manuscript page (c. 1883), courtesy of Colorado College, Tutt Library Special Collections. Helen Hunt Jackson wrote *Ramona* hoping to call attention to the mistreatment of California’s Indians, much as Harriet Beecher Stowe had to the plight of slaves with *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

[5841] Currier and Ives, *Gold Mining in California* (c. 1871), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1755]. This Currier & Ives lithograph presents a romantic and sanitized portrayal of life in the gold fields. In actuality, the mining process exacted an incredible toll on both miners and the surrounding environment.

[7407] Anonymous, *Portsmouth Square, San Francisco, California* (c. 1851), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-7422]. In July 1846, just two months after the start of the U.S.-Mexican War, John B. Montgomery, captain of the U.S.S. *Portsmouth*, raised the American flag in San Francisco for the first time. Days later the U.S. army took all of Upper California, though the war raged on for two more years. It was the first and by far the easiest victory for the United States.

[8597] State of California, *Chinese Immigration* (1877), courtesy of Vincent Voice Library, Michigan State University. The California Chinese Exclusion Act of 1877 was the result of growing anti-Chinese sentiment and a shaky labor market. Chinese workers came to the region in large numbers during the 1850s, drawn by the prospect of work from the Gold Rush and railroads. Many white laborers resented the Chinese taking jobs in an overcrowded market.

mining camps. Because few mining towns had established police forces or stable systems of justice, miners could often get away with using violence and intimidation to harass their competition and force rival “placers” from their claims. Eventually, official United States policy formalized discrimination toward non-American miners with the passage of the Foreign Miners’ Tax Laws of 1850 and 1852. Levying a steep licensing tax on all non-citizen miners, the Foreign Miners’ Tax was aimed first at French- and Spanish-speaking miners and eventually at Chinese immigrants to the gold fields. The tax laws were controversial, drawing protests from both the affected miners and the merchants and entrepreneurs who made a living by supplying those miners. John Rollin Ridge’s account of Joaquin Murieta chronicles the abuses and harassment suffered by Mexican miners—harassment that seemed particularly unjust since many Latinos had settled in the California territory long before Anglos arrived. Murieta is forced off his mining claim and his farm by unfair land laws and strong-arm tactics. After enduring a variety of other outrages, he is driven to a life of crime to avenge the injustices he and his fellow Mexicans have suffered. Ridge’s novel thus mounts a subversive critique of official American policy toward the many non-Anglo miners who lived in California in the nineteenth century.

Eventually, gold became scarcer, European Americans solidified their dominance in California, and corporate, industrialized mining replaced the labor of the individual “placer” miners. New strikes in Nevada, Colorado, the Dakotas, and Montana briefly revived “gold fever” at various points later in the nineteenth century, but the peak of the dynamic, diverse, vibrant culture that characterized the California Gold Rush communities had passed by the mid-1850s.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What was a “placer” miner?

Comprehension: What different groups came to California during the Gold Rush? What did they have in common? What kinds of tensions and conflicts arose between groups?

Context: Compare Louise Clappe’s descriptions of life in Rich Bar with the photograph of Deadwood, South Dakota, and the illustration of a California mining camp in the winter of 1849 featured in the archive. How does Clappe react to the makeshift quality of mining town buildings and the coarseness of mining town society?

Context: How does Louise Clappe’s gender structure her narrative of her experiences in Rich Bar? What roles and opportunities are available to women in the camp community? How does she describe her interactions with other women?

Exploration: Many Americans’ notions of the Gold Rush come from theme park reenactments and popular culture references. What references to the Gold Rush have you encountered in popular culture? How is the Gold Rush portrayed? Why do you think the Gold Rush occupies such an important place in the American national imagination?

Exploration: Can you think of other moments in American history that have spurred the same kind of immigration, development, and/or excitement that the Gold Rush inspired (such as the late-twentieth-century “dot.com” boom, for example)? How do these periods of tremendous economic opportunities challenge the status quo? How do they enable new social formations?

Paradise of Bachelors: The Social World of Men in Nineteenth-Century America

Although both “bachelor” and “spinster” refer to unmarried individuals, the titles were far from equivalent in nineteenth-century American culture. While “old maids” were often perceived as socially undesirable, bachelors found social acceptance and even encouragement for their unmarried state. All-male social clubs flourished, with fraternities, professional clubs, service clubs, and “mystical orders” such as the Masons enjoying enormous growth in membership over the course of the nineteenth century. Often involving elaborate initiation ceremonies intended to create intimate bonds between members, these organizations took over some of the traditional functions of the family and provided sanctioned social outlets for men to interact with other men without the presence of women.

The work of westward expansion also created social formations in which men frequently lived without women and came to depend on other men for domestic comforts, economic assistance, and companionship. While Native American groups in the western United States continued to live in communities with roughly equal numbers of men and women, African American, Chinese, Latino, European, and Anglo-American immigrants for the most part lived and worked in communities with radically skewed sex ratios. The 1850 census in California, for example, revealed that more than 90 percent of the state’s population was male. Certain professions, such as cattle herding and mining, attracted a high proportion of unmarried or unattached men because the labor was strenuous, time-consuming, and often necessitated living in primitive and makeshift camps—a lifestyle that was perceived as inappropriate or even dangerous for women. Nat Love’s account of his life as a cowboy stresses the masculine values and codes of loyalty that bound cowboys together as a “brotherhood of men.” Sharing physical hardships, economic concerns, and domestic chores, the cowboys in Love’s narrative develop an intense camaraderie out of their interdependence.

Miners in the Gold Rush camps of California, too, found themselves surrounded by other single men hoping to “strike it rich.” As historian Susan Lee Johnson observes, the scarcity of women led to “drastically altered divisions of labor in which men took on tasks that womenfolk



[1092] William J. Carpenter, *Life on the Plains* (1915), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-99804].

would have performed back home.” The most common type of household in the mining camps was a tent or cabin inhabited by two to five men who constituted an interdependent economic unit. They usually worked together at mining their claim, performed domestic chores for one another, and put their earnings in a common fund which was divided evenly among members of the household. Men who had never before cooked learned to prepare stew, bread, beans, and pies; and men who had never before done laundry learned to wash and mend clothes. Some men, disillusioned with the often futile search for gold, set up businesses performing chores normally associated with women, making a living by cooking food and doing laundry for the miners. These experiences with domesticity could exacerbate racial tensions—more than one miner commented negatively on the strange food and outlandish domestic practices of the different ethnic groups that he encountered in the camps—but the household intimacy inherent in camp life could also transcend racial difference. White men amicably shared tents, food, and economic responsibilities with Chinese,

African American, and Latino miners. Critics have often been puzzled by the fact that Nat Love, who was African American, rarely mentions issues of race in his account of his life on the open range. But it seems clear that, in Love’s experience at least, race was often secondary or irrelevant in the face of the economic and social interdependence that united the cowboys.

Without the presence of women, the always unstable line dividing the **homosocial** from the **homosexual**—that is, dividing non-sexual male bonding activities from sexual contact between men—became even more blurred. As traditional notions of “normal” gender roles were challenged and unsettled, men could display both subtly and

openly the erotic connections they felt for other men. When the miners at Angel Camp in southern California held dances, half of the men danced the part of women, wearing patches over the crotches of their pants to signal their “feminine” role. Men routinely shared beds in mining communities and on the range, and cowboys and miners settled into partnerships that other men recognized (and sometimes referred to) as “bachelor marriages.”

It is difficult to find unambiguous references to homosexual relationships in nineteenth-century American writings, partly because there was no vocabulary to express such relationships at the time (the term “homosexual” did not exist until the late nineteenth century). Walt Whitman, who had several intimate relationships with men, struggled with this absence of language in his poetic efforts to describe and record his passionate same-sex relationships. In his *Calamus* poems and the “Twenty-eight Bathers” section of *Song of Myself*, for example, Whitman produced moving, evocative portraits of male homosexual love. But he often felt compelled to “shade and hide [his] thoughts,” as he put it, because he was unable to speak as explicitly



[3889] Thomas Eakins, *The Swimming Hole* (1884), courtesy of the Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas.

as he might have liked. Interestingly, Whitman's descriptions of heterosexual encounters caused more public outrage than his "Calamus" poems did, perhaps because his homoerotic imagery was new and innovative, and thus unfamiliar to much of his audience. Still, the implications of Whitman's poetry certainly reached some of his readers. Eve Sedgwick has noted that Whitman's writings, Whitman's image, and Whitman's name came to function as a kind of code for men to communicate their homosexual identity and their homoerotic attractions to one another: "Photographs of Whitman, gifts of Whitman's books, specimens of his handwriting, news of Whitman, admiring references to 'Whitman' which seem to have functioned as badges of homosexual recognition, were the currency of a new community that saw itself as created in Whitman's image." While certainly not all bachelors had homosexual experiences, the creation and legitimization of new social spheres made up of single men defined and enabled a variety of masculine identities and same-sex relationships.

QUESTIONS

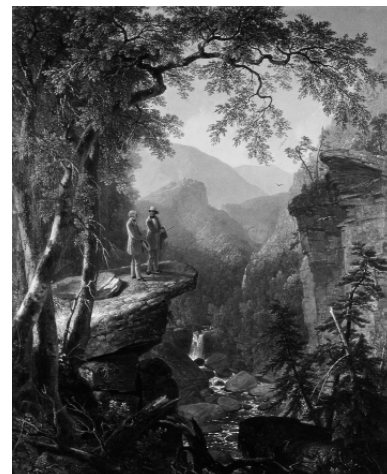
Comprehension: How did all-male social clubs and communities both replicate and challenge more traditional family structures?

Comprehension: What kinds of domestic tasks did men perform on the range and in the mining camps? How did they usually divide up the labor?

Comprehension: Examine the photographs and illustrations of mining camps featured in the archive. What different ethnic groups do you see represented? How did these groups interact within mining communities?

Context: Walt Whitman had photographs taken of himself with several of his young male companions. Some of his friends were scandalized or upset by the pictures, calling them everything from "silly-idiotic" to "sickly." Other friends and acquaintances of Whitman admired the photos and requested copies. Whitman never distributed these pictures widely, instead keeping them to himself or sharing them only with a limited circle of friends. But in Section VII of *Live Oak, with Moss*, Whitman wrote that he hoped some future reader would "Publish my name and hang up my picture as that of the tenderest lover; The friend, the lover's portrait, of whom his friend, his lover, was fondest. . . ." What does Whitman mean in this poetic request to have his portrait hung? By what kind of portrait do you think he would like to be remembered? Why do you think he might have felt compelled to have his picture taken with his male companions? What do Whitman's friends' reactions to the photographs tell you about the social lives of nineteenth-century men?

Context: In her story "Cacoethes Scribendi" Catharine Maria Sedgwick (who herself remained unmarried all her life) describes a community populated almost solely by single women and widows. Does she have the same celebratory view of same-sex communities that writers like Whitman or Nat Love seemed to have? What kind



[2061] Asher B. Durand, *Kindred Spirits* (1849), courtesy of the New York Public Library.

"PARADISE OF BACHELORS" WEB ARCHIVE

[1092] William J. Carpenter, *Life on the Plains* (1915), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-99804]. Navajo and cowboy playing cards. These cards show the type of interethnic male-male bonding that we see in James Fenimore Cooper's novels. This type of interaction largely died out when white males started to bring their families to settle in the West.

[2027] Anonymous, *Theodore Roosevelt, full-length portrait, standing alongside horse, facing left; wearing cowboy outfit* (1910), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-91139]. With his infamous motto "Walk softly and carry a big stick," President Theodore Roosevelt is remembered as a trustbuster, one who worked to strengthen U.S. foreign policy, and one who was committed to the conservation of frontier land.

[2061] Asher B. Durand, *Kindred Spirits* (1849), courtesy of the New York Public Library. Durand's painting depicts Hudson River School founder Thomas Cole, left, and poet William Cullen Bryant in the Kaaterskill Clove. Both Cole and Bryant used the interaction between humans and nature as the primary theme for their work.

[3717] Charles D. Kirkland, *Cow Boy* (c. 1880), courtesy of the Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. As the nation's focus shifted to the West, the cowboy replaced the frontiersman of the eastern woodlands as the popular icon of American independence and self-sufficiency.

[3889] Thomas Eakins, *The Swimming Hole* (1884), courtesy of Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas. The homosocial nature of nineteenth-century male relations is reflected in this painting, which shows a group of students swimming while their headmaster (Eakins) swims nearby.

[6242] Phillips and Taylor, *Walt Whitman, half-length portrait, seated, facing left, wearing hat and sweater, holding butterfly* (1873), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-77082]. Eve Sedgwick has noted that even before the term "homosexual" was invented, Walt Whitman's writings, image, and name functioned as a code for men to communicate their homosexual identity to one another.

of camaraderie binds the women together in her story? What divides them?

Context: Examine Louise Clappe's descriptions of life in the mining town of Rich Bar in her "Shirley Letters." How does Clappe's position as a woman in a mostly male community shape her letters? What is her sense of the male-male relationships that bind together the community? How does she describe the roles of other women in the town?

Context: Look at Thomas Eakins's painting *Swimming Hole* (1884), featured in the archive. Is this a homoerotic picture? How do you think nineteenth-century viewers would have responded to it?

Exploration: In his poetic celebrations of homoerotic love Whitman sometimes felt compelled to "shade and hide" his meanings. Can you think of other American writers who sometimes seem to hint at homosexual relationships but do not describe them explicitly? Hemingway, Dickinson, or Melville (especially in the "Counterpane" chapter of *Moby Dick*) might be appropriate figures to think about in this regard. What kinds of imagery and language do these writers rely on to convey their meanings?

Exploration: How did social reactions to unmarried men differ from social reactions to unmarried women in the nineteenth century? Did single women enjoy the same kinds of opportunities that single men did? How do you think cultural ideas about unmarried individuals (both men and women) have changed over time in America?

Exploration: How does Melville play on the construction of "the bachelor" in his short story "The Paradise of Bachelors and The Tartarus of Maids"? How do the opportunities available to bachelors compare to those open to single women in the story?

Exploration: Eve Sedgwick has argued that portraits and records of Whitman acted as a kind of code for men to convey homoerotic feelings to one another. Why do you think they chose Whitman to represent their identity? Can you think of any groups that use images or personalities in a similar way today? What kinds of material objects circulate as "code" today?

EXTENDED CONTEXTS

Star Spangled Moccasins: The American Flag in Native American Culture

In a circa 1874 drawing, the Oglala warrior Sitting Bull depicted a Native American warrior proudly flying the stars and stripes of an American flag as he rides into battle. In many ways, this is a puzzling, even paradoxical, image. Why would the Oglala—who resisted U.S. encroachment on their lands—engage in a seemingly zealous show of American patriotism? Why would they embrace the flag of a country that they had historically perceived as hostile and oppressive? In fact,

at the end of the nineteenth century, many Native Americans from many different tribes used flag imagery as a design element in their art, clothing, and crafts. While some of these objects were produced for sale or exchange with European Americans (the tourist trade was a growing component of many tribal economies), there is compelling evidence that many of these artifacts were used, worn, and treasured by Native Americans themselves. Not always literal or exact representations, Native American flag images often modify or abstract the pattern of the American flag, enlarging or shrinking the blue field, omitting stripes, or substituting other shapes for stars. But however the image is refashioned and transformed in Native American art, it is nonetheless recognizable as the American flag. These representations are a testament to the creativity and inventiveness of the Native American artisans who appropriated this symbol of European American power and dominance and adapted it to their own complex and diverse uses.

Many of the Great Plains tribes held the traditional belief that flags captured in battle were imbued with the power of the enemy, a belief probably reinforced by the fact that U.S. troops used the flag as a battle emblem when they attacked Native Americans. Upon capture, Native Americans believed that the flag transferred its power to its new owner; thus endowing him with the strength of his adversary. In this context, Sitting Bull's drawing of the Oglala warrior carrying the American flag into combat can be interpreted as a testament to the warrior's prowess and triumph in battle. Similarly, the Lakota tradition of decorating children's clothing with American flags can be understood as a method for ensuring their protection and safety through the flag's talismanic power. One of the few Lakota survivors of the massacre at Wounded Knee was a little girl who was found in the snow, wearing a bonnet beaded with American flag patterns.

Native Americans may also have adopted the flag on occasion as an expedient way to make their traditional practices seem less threatening to Reservation authorities. When U.S. authorities banned the Lakota summer Sun Dance ceremony because they saw it as pagan and subversive, the Lakota adapted parts of the ceremony into a sanctioned Fourth of July celebration. Because the traditional sacred colors of the Sun Dance are red and blue, the insertion of American flag imagery did not disrupt the spiritual significance of the ceremony. Native American art also frequently introduces traditional sacred symbols into the representation of the flag pattern itself. Substituting the usual five-pointed stars with four-armed Morning Stars and crosses, Native American artisans transformed the flag into a representation of their own religious and cultural traditions. The varied examples of flag imagery in Native American art point out the multivalence of this sym-



[7414] William Henry Taylor, *Juanita, Wife of Navajo Chief Manuelito* (c. 1873), courtesy of Smithsonian Institution, National Anthropological Archives.



[7418] Anonymous, *Boys' moccasins, Lakota* (n.d.), courtesy of the New York State Historical Association, Thaw Collection.

**"STAR-SPANGLED
MOCCASINS" WEB ARCHIVE**

[1086] Lehman and Duval Lithrs., *View of the Great Treaty Held at Prairie [sic] Du Chien, September 1825* (1835), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-510]. As the United States pushed west, conflict between native tribes increased due to territorial disputes. The treaty of 1825 sought to end intertribal fighting by establishing fixed tribal boundaries between the Great Lakes and the Missouri River.

[1087] Frank Bennett Fiske, *Shooting the Last Arrow* (n.d.), courtesy of the Library of Congress, American Memory. A group of Indians at a ceremony on a government reservation shoot the last arrow toward the sky to symbolize a new peace agreement and a new way of life.

[7411] Juanita, Curio loom with unfinished weavings (c. 1874), courtesy of Smithsonian Institution, Museum of Natural History. Juanita, the wife of chief Manuelito, came to Washington, DC, as part of a Navajo delegation seeking to resolve a land dispute in the Southwest. This small American flag rug, which she most likely wove herself, was donated to the Smithsonian Institution in 1875.

[7414] William Henry Taylor, *Juanita, Wife of Navajo Chief Manuelito* (c. 1873), courtesy of Smithsonian Institution, National Anthropological Archives. This is the earliest known image of the American flag motif being used in Navajo rug weaving.

[7416] Anonymous, Tray, Apache, San Carlos, Arizona (n.d.), courtesy of the New York State Historical Association, Thaw Collection. Starting in the late 1800s, many Native Americans began incorporating the American flag as a decorative motif in their arts and crafts. An example can be seen in the crossed flags that are woven into the design of this Apache basket.

[7418] Anonymous, Boys' moccasins, Lakota (n.d.), courtesy of the New York State Historical Association, Thaw Collection. Reservation period (post-1880) beadwork on these dress moccasins shows how the American flag motif was incorporated into Native American design.

bol. For some artists, the representation of the American flag may have been a means to signify assimilation with the dominant culture, while for others, redesigned images of the flag probably served as a means of proclaiming their cultural independence.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Look at the artifacts produced by Native American artisans featured in the archive. How do these representations of the American flag modify its usual design?

Context: Critics have noted that the Cherokee memorialists invoke some of the language and ideas of the American Declaration of Independence to argue their case to the U.S. Congress. How does their rhetorical strategy compare to the Native American artisans' use of the American flag in the items featured in the archive? Should these deployments of important American symbols be understood as simply "patriotic"?

Exploration: Think about moments when flags and flag imagery proliferate in American culture, such as on the Fourth of July, during a war, or in the wake of a tragedy like the attack on New York's World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Why do Americans turn to the flag so often at these moments? Even though the display of the flag seems to be a symbol of national unity, how might the flag hold different meanings for different Americans at these times?

Picturing America: The Hudson River School Painters

In 1816 Governor Clinton of New York addressed the American Academy of Fine Arts, urging artists to create new movements and styles that would reflect the superiority of American morals and the grandeur of American scenery:

For can there be a country in the world better calculated than ours to exercise and to exalt the imagination—to call into activity the creative powers of the mind, and to afford just views of the beautiful, the wonderful, and the sublime? Here Nature has conducted her operations on a magnificent scale: extensive and elevated mountains, . . . rivers of prodigious magnitude . . . , and boundless forests filled with wild beasts and savage men, and covered with the towering oak.

By the 1820s, artists had responded to his call. Thomas Cole caused a sensation in the New York art world with his large-scale paintings of the vast panoramas, rugged peaks, steep precipices, rushing waters, and dramatic light effects of the Hudson River Valley. Cole celebrated the primeval, unspoiled quality of the American wilderness, believing that it represented a perfect spiritual state and was a direct reflection of the divine work of the Creator. Cole's powerful landscapes and innovative ideas soon influenced other artists, including Asher Durand,

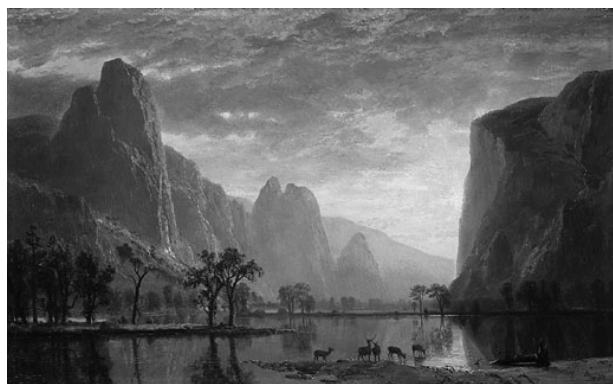
Frederic Church, Albert Bierstadt, and Martin Johnson Heade. Originally known as simply “American” or “Native” painters, this group of artists is usually referred to as the **Hudson River School** today, in reference to their early focus on the landscape of the Hudson River Valley, which was the “frontier” of the late eighteenth century.

The Hudson River School artists were interested in highlighting the awesome, monumental quality of the American wilderness by juxtaposing it against the minuteness of the human body: many of their paintings feature tiny human figures who are dwarfed by the vastness of the landscapes that surround them. But rather than conveying a sense of alienation or human insignificance, these pictures instead celebrate an ideal of harmony between people and nature. Fundamentally optimistic in their view of American expansion and the promise of democracy, the Hudson River School artists presented images of human industry coexisting in and even complementing the beauty of nature. In Asher Durand’s *Progress* (1853), for example, a small city nestles within a stunning landscape, sending rail lines, telegraph poles, roads, and steamboats out into the wilderness. A group of Native Americans looks out over the scene in awe-struck admiration and happiness. This romanticized vision of industrialization was part of the Hudson River School’s aesthetic philosophy, which saw beauty in the contrast between primeval landscapes and pastoral scenes of towns and farms—an attitude in keeping with much of the prose and poetry of nineteenth-century America, from James Fenimore Cooper to Walt Whitman.

The Hudson River School was also noted for its commitment to an almost scientific attention to detail and clarity in the presentation of natural landscapes. Artists usually did their preliminary sketching out of doors, in the midst of the dramatic scenery that inspired them, then returned to their studios to paint the final canvas. While they were intent on faithfully reproducing the natural effects they observed, the Hudson River artists were not afraid to literally move mountains when it suited their sense of aesthetics. “Composing” landscapes by combining elements from different geographical locations, exaggerating heights and expanses, and playing with lighting, these artists created dramatic panoramas that they believed were faithful to the spirit, if not the reality, of the American landscape. After reading Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans*, Cole even painted fictional scenes from the novel because it accorded so closely with his sense of America’s identity and character. In their quest for new and spectacular effects, the Hudson River artists had journeyed far beyond the Hudson River by the mid-nineteenth century, traveling to Niagara



[7404] Asher B. Durand, *Progress (The Advance of Civilization)* (1853), courtesy of Gulf States Paper Corporation, Warner Collection.



[1181] Albert Bierstadt, *Valley of the Yosemite* (1864), courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; gift of Martha C. Karolik for the M. and M. Karolik Collection of American Paintings, 1815–1865.

"PICTURING AMERICA" WEB ARCHIVE

[1181] Albert Bierstadt, *Valley of the Yosemite* (1864), courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; gift of Martha C. Karolik for the M. and M. Karolik Collection of American Paintings, 1815–1865. The romantic grandeur and luminism of Albert Bierstadt's western landscapes reflect Hudson River School influences. Realist writers like Bret Harte sought to imbue the same landscapes with the gritty realities of frontier life.

[1616] Albert Bierstadt, *Thunderstorm in the Rocky Mountains* (1859), courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. American painter Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902) created some of the most famous landscapes in American painting, presenting the West as a pristine and idyllic wilderness.

[1695] Albert Bierstadt, *Sunrise in the Sierras* (c.1872), courtesy of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Bierstadt's peaceful and idyllic landscapes belied the indelible mark that railroads, ranches, mines, and settlements were leaving on the West.

[2061] Asher B. Durand, *Kindred Spirits* (1849), courtesy of the New York Public Library. Durand's painting depicts Hudson River School founder Thomas Cole, left, and poet William Cullen Bryant in the Kaaterskill Clove. Both Cole and Bryant used the interaction between humans and nature as the primary theme for their work.

[2068] Albert Bierstadt, *Emigrants Crossing the Plains* (1867), courtesy of the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, Oklahoma City. The romantic and spiritual tones of this painting by Bierstadt mirror the concept of Manifest Destiny, which held that American expansion across the continent was both inevitable and divinely sanctioned.

[3694] Thomas Cole, *The Falls of the Kaaterskill* (1826), courtesy of Warner Collection of the Gulf States Paper Corporation. Thomas Cole (1801–1848) was one of the first American landscape artists and a founder of the Hudson River School of painting. Romantic depictions of wilder-

Falls, the Rocky Mountains, California, and even South America to record the expanse and grandeur of the continent.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: How do the Hudson River artists usually depict human figures? What is the significance of the figures' size in relation to the vast landscapes?

Comprehension: How does Asher B. Durand portray Native Americans in his 1853 painting *Progress*? What assumptions underwrite his treatment of their response to "progress"? Why are they situated on a precipice overlooking the town?

Context: Read some of Cooper's descriptions of the view from the overlook he calls "Mt. Vision" in *The Pioneers*. How do these literary descriptions of the upstate New York landscape compare with the Hudson River School paintings? Why do you think Hudson River School paintings are frequently chosen as the cover illustrations for editions of Cooper's novels?

Context: How do Whitman's celebrations of the diversity—the "multitudes"—that make up the American body politic compare with the Hudson River School aesthetic? Which of Whitman's descriptions of American landscapes and cityscapes might fit within the ideals of the Hudson River School? What parts of America does Whitman celebrate that would probably fall outside of the scope of the Hudson River aesthetic?

Exploration: Many Hudson River School paintings present an idealized vision of harmony between humans and nature, between industrialization and the wilderness. Do you think Americans still subscribe to this optimistic view of the relationship between people and nature? How has the environmentalist movement complicated our understanding of "progress"?

Exploration: Art historians have pointed out that the Hudson River School painters developed a very "masculine" aesthetic. By picturing rugged, remote terrain, these artists interpolate the viewer as an active and intrepid explorer of the wilderness. How might the Hudson River artists compare to the figure of the explorer/hero in the literature of exploration?

ASSIGNMENTS

Personal and Creative Responses

1. *Journal:* Imagine that you live next door to Caroline Kirkland in the village of Pinckney, Michigan. Write a letter to a friend who is curious about your experience in Michigan. Include a description of how you feel about Kirkland and her family. Do you see her as an asset to the community? How do you feel about the descriptions of Pinckney that appear in the book she published?

2. *Journal*: Imagine that you are a miner in Rich Bar, California. Write a letter to a friend in which you detail your day-to-day life in the mining camp. You might also include a description of Louise Clappe. How do you and the rest of the miners in the community view her?
3. *Poet's Corner*: Using the translations of the corridos in the archive as models, write your own corrido about a contemporary person whom you view as a hero. Whom did you choose as the subject of your corrido? How did you use rhythm and repetition in your corrido? What problems did you encounter in fitting your subject into the corrido form?
4. *Poet's Corner*: Find a short poem that you like that uses conventional forms of meter and rhyme. Drawing inspiration from Whitman's poetry, translate the poem into free verse. How does the absence of rhyme and meter affect the poem? What problems did you encounter in translating the poem from one form to another?
5. *Artist's Workshop*: After looking at the Native American flag art in the archive, draw a design for a piece of clothing or other object on which you will put your own version of the American flag. Feel free to abstract or modify the patterns and designs of the flag. Explain the significance of the artifact you've designed and how your representation of the flag reflects your vision.
6. *Multimedia*: Referring to himself as the embodiment of America in "Song of Myself," Walt Whitman proclaimed, "I contain multitudes." What do you think he meant? What kinds of "multitudes" made up nineteenth-century American culture? Using the *American Passages* archive and slide-show software, create a multimedia presentation showing the diversity of American culture in the nineteenth century. Include captions that explain and interpret the images you choose.

ness became popular as the United States continued its westward expansion.

[5931] Worthington Whittredge, *The Old Hunting Grounds* (1864), courtesy of Reynolda House, Museum of American Art. The decaying Indian canoe among birch trees symbolizes the sentimental death of Native American culture found in James Fenimore Cooper's work and other frontier literature. After ten years of artistic training in Europe, Worthington Whittredge returned to America in 1859, impressed with the vast wilderness that still existed in his homeland.

[7404] Asher B. Durand, *Progress (The Advance of Civilization)* (1853), courtesy of Gulf States Paper Corporation, Warner Collection. The Native Americans in the lower left-hand corner of this painting observe the steady approach of American progress and settlement. Depictions of westward expansion such as this one helped publicize and legitimize what was seen as American progress, an ideology that began to be questioned only in the twentieth century.

Problem-Based Learning Projects

1. You are a lawyer hired by the Cherokee tribe to help them fight the Indian Removal Act, which they believe is unjust and should be overturned. You need to make your case convincing to the political authorities who can overturn the act. What courts or government agencies will you petition? How will you argue your position? What kind of evidence will you use? What kind of testimony will you solicit?
2. You are a Mexican or Chinese miner forced off your claim by the Foreign Miners' Tax, which you cannot afford to pay. Prepare a petition to the California legislature in which you argue for your right to continue mining even though you are not a citizen of the United States. Be sure to address the issue of how your presence—and the presence of other "foreign" immigrants—affects the economy, culture, and environment in California.
3. You have been asked to design an amusement park with a "frontier" theme. While your goal is to make the park fun, engaging, and accessible to children and families, you are also concerned that

your representation of the “frontier” be accurate. How will you interpret the idea of the frontier? What will you call your park? How will you portray the history of American expansion and westward migration? What activities and exhibits will you provide for visitors to the park?

GLOSSARY

border Sometimes used as a replacement for the culturally insensitive term “frontier.” Borders are places where cultures meet, and where trade, violence, and cultural exchange shape a variety of individual experiences.

corrido A narrative ballad usually sung or spoken to music, the corrido was the most important literary genre of the southwestern border region, where it was popular between the 1830s and the 1930s. Developed by Mexicans and Mexican Americans, the corridos drew upon traditional Spanish ballad forms to articulate singers’ experiences of cultural conflict in the borderlands. Characterized by a rapid tempo and brisk narrative pace, these ballads often focus on an “out-law” hero who defends his rights—as well as those of other Mexicans—against the unjust authority of American officials.

epic A long narrative poem celebrating the adventures and accomplishments of a hero. More generally, the term “epic” has come to be applied to any narration of national or cultural identity that has a broad, all-encompassing scope.

free verse Poetry that does not adhere to conventional metrical patterns and has either irregular rhyme or no rhyme at all. Walt Whitman pioneered the use of free verse in American poetry, and his “Song of Myself” is a classic example.

frontier Traditionally, the term Americans have used to describe the unexplored or contested land to the west of the eastern settlements on the Atlantic coast. Scholars have pointed out that the term “blurs the facts of conquest” and does not take into account the many other peoples who were displaced—sometimes violently—to make way for U.S. expansion.

homosocial/homosexual continuum The relationship between non-sexual same-sex bonding activities and sexual contact between people of the same sex. While American culture has traditionally insisted that homosexuality is distinct from non-sexual same-sex relationships, scholars and theorists argue that the division between the two is always unstable.

Hudson River School A group of landscape painters originally known as simply “American” or “Native” painters, the Hudson River School acquired its present name because of its early focus on the dramatic landscape of the Hudson River Valley in New York. While Thomas Cole is usually considered the “father” of the Hudson River tradition, other important painters including Asher Durand, Frederic Church, Albert Bierstadt, and Martin Johnson Heade contributed to

the development of this movement. Highlighting the awesome, monumental quality of the American landscape, these artists were fundamentally optimistic about westward expansion and the promise of democracy. In their quest for new and spectacular effects, the Hudson River artists journeyed far beyond the Hudson River by the mid-nineteenth century, traveling to the Rocky Mountains, California, and even South America to record the expanse and grandeur of the continents.

Indian Removal Act of 1830 In 1830 the United States Congress, with the support of President Andrew Jackson, attempted to legislate a permanent solution to their land disputes with eastern Native American tribes by passing the Indian Removal Act. Passed by a narrow margin, the Act stipulated that the government could forcibly relocate Native Americans living within their traditional lands in eastern states to areas west of the Mississippi designated as “Indian Territory” (much of this land was in present-day Oklahoma). With this stroke, the federal government sanctioned the racist view that Native Americans had no valid claims to their homelands and should be moved westward to make way for white settlers and white culture. The Indian Removal Act enabled the tragic “Trail of Tears” migration, in which a third of the population of the Cherokee tribe died.

Manifest Destiny The belief that American control of the land that stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific was inevitable and divinely sanctioned. Because of this culturally arrogant conviction, American policy makers had few scruples about displacing Native Americans, Mexicans, and other groups inhabiting the land from the Great Plains to California.

memorial A direct appeal to Congress, the courts, or another official federal body, a “memorial” was the nineteenth-century equivalent of a petition. The Cherokee tribe produced articulate and compelling memorials asking the United States Congress to allow them to stay in their traditional homelands east of the Mississippi. The Cherokee Council, which was the official leadership body of the tribe, composed its own memorial to send to Congress, while also submitting twelve other memorials written by Cherokee citizens. Despite their eloquence, the Cherokee memorials were not effective and the tribe was relocated in 1838.

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