

## References

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# "It is here the romance of my life began": The Construction of Frontier Masculinity in Late-Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century America

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"It is here the romance of my life began," wrote Theodore Roosevelt in reference to the American West (qtd. in Jenkinson 5)[1]. The West certainly has held a special place in American history, especially for men. As the nineteenth century transitioned into the twentieth century, a variety of historical developments, including industrialization, immigration, and the close of the frontier, all contributed to a sense of anxiety felt by many white, American men about their manhood. As such, this period, specifically 1880 to 1910, serves as a useful place to investigate frontier masculinity. I argue that a series of lionized cultural products—including a promotional poster for Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, a bronze sculpture by Frederic Remington, and a political speech given by Theodore Roosevelt—all conveyed a popular portrayal of the ideal, white American frontiersman [2]. This ideal representation was defined by a man's horsemanship, his shooting ability, and his toilsome, yet fulfilling labor. However, other expressions of masculinity existed on the frontier. From Theodore Roosevelt's journal recordings, Henry Flipper's accomplishments as a black frontiersman, and Owen Wister's homoerotic references in *The Virginian*, I construct a counter-archive that challenges the dominant portrayal of the ideal frontiersman [3].

The archive and counter-archive I have constructed for the purposes of this paper are not

intended as fixed categories of frontier masculinity. Instead, they demonstrate that masculinity was constantly negotiable at the turn of the nineteenth century. At times, the examples in each archive appear paradoxical, which further demonstrates that western masculinity defied rigid classifications. Furthermore, the archive and counter-archive created here are not intended to be an exhaustive portrayal of western masculinity. Instead, they seek to highlight various representations of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century masculinity, in order to promote dialogue on the subject, not only for scholars, but also for the general public.

In order to enhance the legibility and navigability of this analysis, I have divided the paper into five main sections: Part I explains the methodology and theory used throughout this paper along with the selection criteria used to determine the cultural products present in this study. Part II illuminates the historical context surrounding American men's understanding of their masculinity at the turn of the century. Part III introduces the three cultural products in my archive, while Part IV presents the three examples in the counter-archive. Part V articulates the conclusions of this analysis.

## PART I: Methodology

My thesis relies on an interdisciplinary approach to interpret cultural and historical artifacts. Three disciplines, in particular, influenced my research: "new western history," gender studies, and performance theory. First, new western history emerged in the late 1990s and challenged the dominant narrative of white men conquering native savages. It investigated the experiences of other westerners, especially women and people of color (Butler and Lansing 7). Similarly, I investigate the excluded representations of frontier masculinity and compare them to dominant portrayals of the ideal westerner.

Second, I draw on gender studies to examine how men constructed their masculine identities. For the context of this work, gender is not an inherent feature of the body (Rico 11). Instead, gender is always constructed (Rico 11). As Judith Butler states, "gender is always a doing" (qtd. in Rico 11). Judith Kegan Gardiner believes that the construction of a masculine identity is a "nostalgic formation, always missing, lost, or about to be lost, its ideal form located in a past that advances with each generation in order to recede just beyond its grasp" (qtd. in Rico 12). Michael Kimmel elaborates on Gardiner's claim, writing, "we tend to search for the

timeless and eternal during moments of crisis, those points of transition when the old definitions no longer work and the new definitions are yet to be firmly established" (Kimmel 4). The cultural products investigated in the archive and counter-archive reflect the efforts of American men to construct their masculine identity, in particular, during a time of social change.

As a constructed identity, American manhood is influenced by a variety of factors, including race, class, ethnicity, age, sexuality, and region of the country (Kimmel 4). As such, many forms of masculinity exist. Yet, as Kimmel explains, "all American men must also contend with a singular vision of masculinity, a particular definition that is held up as a model against which we all measure ourselves" (4). My work demonstrates a singular version of frontier masculinity in the archive and then illustrates alternative versions of masculinity in the counter-archive.

The single, ideal version of masculinity described by Kimmel relates to the construction of "hegemonic masculinity," which is at play throughout my archive and counter-archive. This form of manhood often referred to men, typically white, Protestant, and wealthy, who "assumed they were entitled to the labor and resources of others: women, nonwhites, and working people. Hegemony, moreover, entailed 'the ability to impose a particular definition on other kinds of masculinity'" (qtd. in Rico 11). However, "hegemonic masculinity, like other gender constructions, can never be completely secure" (Rico 12). The words, images, and gestures used to articulate one's gender are "always vulnerable to contestation" and can be constantly "appropriated, reworked, and challenged" (Rico, 12). The constant appropriation of masculinity constituted a type of performance.

Third, my study relies on performance theory to understand how men enacted their masculinity. The social construction of gender, the insecurity of masculinity, and the tension between the ideal and non-ideal forms of manhood all implied the necessity of performance to assert one's manhood. According to Schechner, men could "make belief" through everyday performances that "create[d] the social realities they enact[ed]" (Schechner 35) [4]. For many American men, the West provided a stage on which to assert their masculinity and "make belief" in response to a period where industrialization, immigration, and other historical developments challenged their understanding of themselves. The performance, notably through a "rich vocabulary of gestures, objects, sayings, clothing, and

images," allowed these men to craft a story of masculine triumph over nature and Native Americans (Rico 4).

The three cultural products that create the first archive demonstrate the normative and hegemonic performance of white, frontier masculinity. First, I examine Theodore Roosevelt's speech, "The Strenuous Life" (1899). Then, I analyze Frederic Remington's sculpture, *The Broncho Buster* (1895), and finally I interpret a promotional poster from Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show (1894). These artifacts portray the dominant image of the ideal, white American frontiersman, whose physicality was defined by his horsemanship, his shooting ability, and his toilsome, yet fulfilling labor. In each case, the artifacts that comprise this archive have been selected because they were culturally pervasive at their time [5].

Roosevelt was a member of the "Eastern Establishment," which consisted of a series of institutions—the boarding school, the Ivy League university, the college club, the metropolitan men's club, and the *Social Register* (G. White 6). Members of the Eastern Establishment possessed significant cultural capital and attempted to maintain power, traditions, and values through these private, elite institutions. Roosevelt wielded this cultural capital. As a result, his extensive writings about the West reached a wide audience and thus informed the American public's perceptions of the region and definitions of manhood. Likewise, his presidency further solidified his pervasiveness as a cultural arbiter.

Like Roosevelt, Remington was a member of the Eastern Establishment, and as the nation's leading illustrator and one of its most popular painters, he possessed a significant ability to visually shape perceptions of the West (G. White 7) [6]. In four years, over four hundred of his illustrations appeared in influential magazines such as *Harper's*, *Outing*, and *Century Magazine* (Etulain 54). As his work gained attention in various publications, Remington then began to win official recognition as a great artist by receiving awards and showing his work in various exhibitions (G. White 101) [7]. The *Dial* praised Remington as "the delineator par excellence of the Indian, the cowboy and the greaser" and believed that his illustrations would influence generations of Americans long after the cowboys of the open West vanished (qtd. in G. White 192). As a result of his work and fame, Remington created a market for his subject matter and "made the careers of half-a-dozen artists who followed him" (Murdoch 73). In total, he produced over 2,750 paintings

and drawings and cast twenty five bronze sculptures before his premature death in 1909 (Murdoch 71). Remington's prevalence as a visual artist influenced how Americans envisioned the West.

Like Remington, William Frederick Cody, better known as "Buffalo Bill," became a highly influential figure in late-nineteenth century America. In fact, his Wild West Show "did more than any other attraction to popularize the West as a wild frontier" (Etulain xix). Indeed, Cody's popularity and influence remain undeniable. Beginning in 1883, he toured extensively in the United States and Europe for over thirty consecutive years ("Cody's Last Stand" 53). Even at the beginning of his career as a showman, Cody attracted large crowds. Over 40,000 people saw his 1884 show in Chicago; the following year, one million spectators attended the performance in its five month tour (Murdoch 42). By 1886 he had a permanent venue on Staten Island and during the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, six million people visited his nearby fairgrounds (42). Millions of Americans (and foreigners) understood the West through Buffalo Bill's interpretation of the region and its key figures.

Whereas the examples in the archive have been selected due to their cultural pervasiveness, the examples in the counter-archive have been selected to highlight non-normative constructions of masculinity on the frontier. To reiterate, these examples offer a counterpoint to the artifacts contained in the archive, but ultimately demonstrate how the construction of frontier masculinity was constantly negotiable and sometimes paradoxical. First, I examine Theodore Roosevelt's consumption of an elephant heart during a hunting trip throughout Africa in 1909. Then, I analyze the experiences of black frontiersman Henry Ossian Flipper. Finally, I interpret instances of homoeroticism in Owen Wister's novel *The Virginian*.

Roosevelt's consumption of the elephant heart is antithetical to the portrayal of the ideal, white frontiersman demonstrated in the archive. Although the former president helped establish the conventional image of the ideal frontiersman, his gustatory act reflects another performance to assert his masculinity, which needed constant reinforcement. However, this consumption referenced the "savage Eucharist," in which some Native Americans consumed human or animal flesh for rejuvenation or strength (Rico 210; Slotkin 90-91). A similar act by Roosevelt separated him from the image of the ideal frontiersman because it threatened to de-civilize him.

Henry Flipper deviated from the dominant

image because he was black. He also possessed an alternative type of masculinity, which relied on his ingenuity rather than on his physical prowess. In many cases, previous scholars—predominantly educated, white, middle-class males—retold the achievements of white frontiersmen, ultimately neglecting the complexity and diversity of the frontier (Butler and Lansing 7-8). As such, Flipper has been largely excluded from the canon of western figures despite his accomplishments. One scholar also suggests that black civil rights activists dismissed Flipper's story because he failed to use his position in Washington to actively promote racial equality (Cusic 165; 189).

While Flipper was excluded due to his skin color, the principle male characters in Wister's *The Virginian* deviate from the ideal frontiersman because of their homoerotic desires. Cowboys, typically admired for their rugged individualism, hard work, and fearlessness, often engaged in homosocial fraternizing that has not been highlighted by the dominant western narrative. In his book *Queer Cowboys: And Other Erotic Male Friendships in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*, Chris Packard decodes unspoken, homoerotic expressions in literature that have "until now" remained "unrealized" messages (Packard 11).

## PART II: Historical Context

With the methodological and theoretical framework established, an investigation of late-nineteenth and early twentieth century historical trends is needed in order to contextualize the cultural products and experiences highlighted in the archive and counter-archive. As Kimmel explains, a variety of factors, including industrialization, immigration, and the close of the frontier, all contributed to a feeling of uncertainty about American masculinity at the time (Kimmel 57). As such, a thorough analysis of influential historical factors proves necessary before moving forward to the archive and counter-archive.

The late nineteenth century marked a period of immense industrial growth in the United States. From 1870 to 1900, U.S. industrial output increased 500 percent (Kimmel 61). This development represented the "incorporation of America," defined by fewer farmers and more factory laborers (61). Thus, American men increasingly lost their means of production and instead became human machines inside factories, which challenged their traditional notions of manhood (62). Urbanization accompanied the rapid industrialization and the decrease of Americans employed in farming.

American cities began to grow as people sought work. In 1830, about one in fifteen Americans lived in a city of over eight thousand, but “by 1900 one-third of Americans lived in cities of at least eight thousand people; and by 1910 one-half lived there” (Kimmel 62). Giant cities shunted men into tiny apartments and factories, symbolizing a loss of outdoor space where men had traditionally proven their masculinity through physical labor.

In conjunction with industrialization and urbanization, the migration of foreign immigrants and freed blacks challenged native-born white men and their sense of masculinity because racial inferiors were sometimes perceived as more sexually potent than white men (Kimmel 96). Between 1880 and 1900, “a total of nine million immigrants came to the United States” including Europeans, such as Irish and Germans, but also Asians, specifically Chinese and Japanese (Kimmel 64). Native-born white men feared that these new immigrants would be unassimilable (Murdoch 64). In addition, the population of African Americans began to grow in northern cities: “Between 1870 and 1890, 156,000 [African Americans] came north, and another 185,000 came north in the 1890s” (64). The changing demographics of these densely-packed cities raised white fears about miscegenation.

In addition to all these forces, the first wave of the women’s movement successfully emerged in the late nineteenth century, “with concurrent campaigns for entry into the workplace, university, and voting booth” (Kimmel 64). The establishment of women’s colleges, such as Vassar, Wellesley, and Bryn Mawr, provided new educational opportunities to young women (65). Likewise, women gained greater access to the workforce, with the number of female workers increasing from 1.8 million in 1870 to 5.3 million in 1900 (65). The consolidation of the women’s movement intensified men’s anxieties about their virility and social standing.

Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis, presented in 1893, further complicated the conception of American masculinity. The perceived elimination of the American frontier in 1890 caused considerable anxiety among men who believed the proving ground for masculinity slowly dissolved with the close of the frontier (Turner 2). Cities and machines, defined as feminine, did not require the physical effort men used on the frontier, which in turn demonstrated their masculinity (R. White 2). As the cities expanded and the frontier closed, American men lost a clear sense of their manhood.

In the face of all these threatening developments, two pseudoscientific phenomena—Social Darwinism and Neurasthenia—emerged in the nineteenth century and responded to concerns surrounding white manhood. Charles Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, published in 1859, led a variety of social thinkers “to apply his theories of natural selection and survival of the fittest to human societies—something Darwin himself had been hesitant to do” (Kimmel 67). Such attempts manifested themselves in the belief that men existed at a higher stage of Darwinian evolution than women. As such, white men often equated minority men with women or children, which emasculated them by suggesting that they existed on a lower evolutionary level than Anglo-Saxons (Kimmel 68). Such theories sometimes generated actual tests to measure inferiority; by the 1880s and 1890s, the weighing of brains to determine innate intelligence became a big business. One anatomist “proved” conclusively that black men “have a brain scarcely heavier than that of white women” (qtd. in Kimmel 68-69). Comparing black men and immigrants to women and children emasculated them, but a contradictory stereotype simultaneously prevailed. Racial inferiors were sometimes considered more manly, especially more sexually voracious and potent, than white men (Kimmel 69). As a result, some Social Darwinists placed these marginalized men alongside primitive beasts on the evolutionary ladder. By comparing minority men to women, children, and animals, white men could assert their racial superiority and their masculinity in a period where they felt threatened and emasculated by social changes.

Neurasthenia pathologized men’s fear about their masculinity. In *American Nervousness* (1881) and *Sexual Neurasthenia* (1884; revised 1902), George Beard described Neurasthenia as a disorder resulting from “overcivilization” (qtd. in Kimmel 99). In essence, steam power, the telegraph, and other technological innovations quickened the pace of life, preventing people from keeping up despite their tireless effort (Kimmel 99). Symptoms, including insomnia, hysteria, hypochondria, asthma, headaches, and skin rashes, sapped a man’s vital energy (99). To recover, Beard prescribed “cold baths, outdoor exercise, wearing a urethral ring, sleeping on a hair mattress with little covering of the genitals, and avoiding all erotic novels or dalliances with women of compromised virtue” (99). In addition, he encouraged men to venture West in order to revitalize their masculinity by riding, hunting, and living outdoors (100).



With masculinity destabilized in the late nineteenth century, American men “ran away to the frontier, to the West, to start over, to make their fortunes and thus remake themselves, to escape the civilizing constraints of domestic life represented by the Victorian woman” (Kimmel 32). One commentator compared two men in a magazine essay, writing “Let one remain in a quiet city . . . leading to an unambitious namby-pamby life, . . . while the other goes out on the frontier, runs his chance in encounters with wild animals, finds that to make his way he must take his life in his hands, and assert his rights, if necessary with deadly weapons” (qtd. in Kimmel 66). The writer clearly characterized the city man as inferior. As another commentator noted, “The wilderness will take hold of you. It will give you good red blood; it will turn you from a weakling into a man” (qtd. in Kimmel 66). The West, then, offered a viable option for men to assert their masculinity. In particular, men such as Theodore Roosevelt, Frederic Remington, and Owen Wister, journeyed West “to find a cure for their insufficient manhood” and each returned East, trumpeting the restorative value of the strenuous life (Kimmel 100).

Industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and the women’s movement all challenged white men’s understanding of their manhood. Neurasthenia justified these anxieties under a scientific guise, which pushed some men West to restore their masculinity. The West, then, acquired a unique identity, perceived by American men as a space to recapture lost or depleted energy. The dynamic between East and West at this time also influenced the public’s understanding of masculinity. In particular, the Eastern Establishment had a tremendous impact on the formation of the western masculine identity.

The societal changes of the late nineteenth century elicited a response from the upper class, especially the Eastern Establishment. A series of institutions—the boarding school, the Ivy League university [8], the college club, the metropolitan men’s club [9], and the Social Register—all “formed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century” or “changed their shape to meet the demands of industrialism” (G. White 6). These institutions grew in prestige throughout this period and ultimately served to consolidate “power in the hands of a relatively small number of individuals and families” (6). They also acculturated future generations into an environment steeped in upper-class traditions and values (20). These institutions delineated the line between inclusion and exclusion. For example, Ivy

League universities and elite, metropolitan men’s clubs all represented “islands of homogeneity in an ever-diversifying urban ocean” (G. White 27). Similarly, the Social Register, founded in 1887 by Louis Keller, an ex-gunsmith from New Jersey, selected those notable families worthy of recognition in society’s upper echelon (G. White 28). The formal criterion for qualification lacked strict definition, but the Social Register Association once described “family descent,” “social standing,” and “other qualifications” as factors for deciding eligibility (qtd. in G. White 27).

Unsurprisingly, the wealthy and homogenous Eastern Establishment wielded significant cultural influence, primarily because its members often held positions of national power. As such, they “set the styles in arts and letters, in the universities, in sports” and in “popular culture which governs the aspirations and values of the masses” (qtd. in G. White 11). Members of the Eastern Establishment, such as Roosevelt and Remington, served as influential cultural arbiters. Their representations of hegemonic masculinity in art and writing pervaded throughout American culture and imposed a particular definition of manhood over other forms of masculinity. The cultural products in the archive represent this control of power by the Eastern Establishment and their ability to market a version of the ideal, white frontiersman that permeated throughout American culture, especially the East. For example, Roosevelt and Remington represented powerful cultural arbiters, but together their collaboration succeeded in offering the public a uniform image of the ideal, white frontiersman. Remington illustrated Roosevelt’s book *Ranch Life and the Hunting-Trail*, so their words and drawings literally came together in one work to portray a particular version of western masculinity (Etulain 54). As a war artist in Cuba during the Spanish American War, Remington produced two paintings [10], both of which cast Roosevelt as a national hero before his first term as President (Murdoch 71). Likewise, the politician praised Remington, writing that Americans “owe him a debt of gratitude” for making “the most interesting features of our national life” permanent (qtd. in G. White 197-198). Their friendship, collaboration, and shared viewpoints demonstrate the cohesiveness of the Eastern Establishment and their ability to construct and perpetuate a particular image of the West.

### PART III: Archive

Let us now consider, in detail, the archive. One of Buffalo Bill’s 1894 promotional posters, entitled

"Buffalo Bill to the Rescue," demonstrates the showman's physicality, specifically his coordination, as he charges into a group of Indians on horseback (Fig. 1).

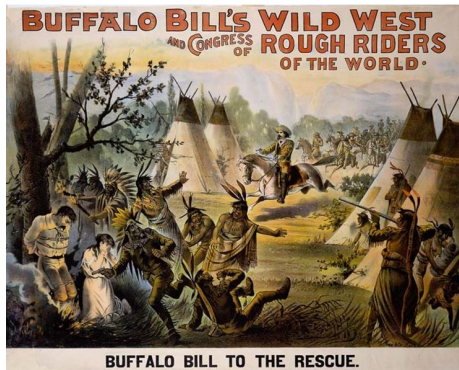


Figure 1: A. Hoen Co., Baltimore

Buffalo Bill to the Rescue

1894

Colored Lithograph Poster

Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Cody, WY: Gift of the Coe Foundation,

1.69.108

Wielding two pistols, Buffalo Bill effortlessly maneuvers his horse, depicted at mid-stride in the poster. He physically commands attention at the center of the poster, especially in contrast to the fleeing bunch of frightened Indians. His rescue demonstrates his masculine power, not only because he defeated the Indians, but because he fought on horseback. To be on foot signified failure because "to be unhorsed was to be unmanned" ("Cody's Last Stand" 58). A man's masculinity was closely linked with the virility and power of his stallion ("Cody's Last Stand" 58).

In addition to asserting a physically dominant position in the poster, Buffalo Bill displays his masculinity through a heroic act. He represents a savior as he fearlessly charges into a group of Indians to save the captured white couple shown in the lower left corner. Rescuing white families served both as a means to demonstrate physical masculinity and as a means to assert the superiority of the white race by depicting white victims terrorized by savage Indians. The liberation of this white couple alludes to similar rescue scenes that featured prominently in Buffalo Bill's shows: typically in these performances, Buffalo Bill and his compatriots would save a white family whose house was under attack by ruthless Indians. The assault enabled Buffalo Bill to assert his masculinity by defeating the Native American attackers. The scene also defined manhood because the male protector could restore the household to safety and therefore reinforce

the women's domestic role. ("Cody's Last Stand" 57). Women who chose to leave the home were a perceived threat to masculinity:

The presence of gun-toting [Annie] Oakley and other female sharpshooters, cowgirls, and trick riders highlighted these concerns. The willingness of white women to combat established notions of home and domesticity in this way left them open to accusations of weakening the white race and the culture. ("Cody's Last Stand" 57)

The rescue scenes allowed Buffalo Bill and his Congress of Rough Riders to define their masculinity in contrast to violent Indians and domestic women. Buffalo Bill's show not only demonstrated "civilization trouncing savagery," it portrayed "settlement triumphing over mobility and nomadism," showing white "domesticity as the culmination of American history" ("Cody's Last Stand" 59). The representations of the home and attacking Indians were both equally important to reflect white superiority and masculinity.

A fine line existed between masculinity and hyper-masculinity, commonly associated with racial inferiors. In the summer of 1876, General Custer became a "martyr" in the fight against Native Americans ("Cody's Last Stand" 51). Seeking revenge, Buffalo Bill "scalped a Cheyenne sub-chief named Yellow Hair" (51). Such a display of brutality, however, would not have appeared on Buffalo Bill's stage because in order for the show to succeed, the content needed to be suitable for middle-class men, women, and their families (59). Hyper-masculinity, defined by brutal violence, was considered inappropriate for general audiences, in part because it created anxiety about race. Considering the popularity of Social Darwinism in that era, a hyper-masculine man might be compared to an animal and therefore be relegated to a lower rung on the evolutionary ladder. Controlling hyper-masculinity, then, proved essential in order to distinguish between white, civilized men and savage Indians as well as blacks in postbellum America. As Louis Warren maintains, "the presence of white women allowed white men to 'tame' their savage natures, an option Indians, Mexicans, and others ostensibly did not have" (60). In other words, white men were not savages because their hyper-masculinity could be controlled, primarily by the presence of women. Buffalo Bill carefully balanced displays of masculinity with scenes of domesticity in order to maintain white civility in his show.

The "Buffalo Bill to the Rescue" poster outlines

a nuanced understanding of race. As Audrey Smedley argues, the “myth of Anglo-Saxonism” was defined by a sense of English superiority and uniqueness, which was then imported from Great Britain to the United States by colonists (694). As a result, Americans became deeply consciousness about race (Smedley 694). Smedley maintains that “by the mid-nineteenth century virtually all Americans had been conditioned to this arbitrary ranking of the American peoples” (695). Indians were typically viewed as the savage aggressors against white victims, which the poster represents by showing the white couple tied up (R. White 34). Brutal treatment towards the Indian aggressor was justified because they threatened white people.

Like Buffalo Bill, Remington similarly depicted images of the ideal, white frontiersman. The artist’s experiences in the West as a young man informed his portrayal of backwoodsmen. In August 1881, Remington made his first journey West to Montana, and by 1883 he decided to become a sheep rancher in Peabody, Kansas (G. White 57; 59) [11]. Remington believed that western men had “all the rude virtues,” such as “perfect courage,” strength, “moral fiber,” and of course, self-reliance (qtd. in G. White 106) [12]. He knew the “wild riders” and the “vacant land” were quickly vanishing, so he began to record the “facts” around him (qtd. in Murdoch 71-72). Remington’s work, however, depicts a West constructed by his imagination rather than purely based on fact (Murdoch 72). His success taught him to paint what the public wanted to see (Murdoch 73). He knew that he was marketing a product: in a letter to Owen Wister, Remington wrote, “I am as you know working on a big picture book—of the West and I want you to write a preface . . . telling the d— public that this is the real old thing—set up and buy a copy—last chance—ain’t going to be any more West etc.” (qtd. in Murdoch 73).

Remington’s sculpture, *The Broncho Buster*, completed in 1895, embodies the masculine qualities he imagined after spending time in the West (Fig. 2).



Figure 2: Frederic Remington

*The Broncho Buster*

1895

Bronze

Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth

Acc. no. 1961.6

The rider’s masculinity is intimately tied with his physicality as he rides the bucking bronco. Most noticeably, the rider’s hat brim is pinned backwards. His ruffled shirt and flailing chaps indicate the forcefulness of the horse’s rearing. As a result of the horse’s powerful bucking, the rider’s right foot has slipped out of the stirrup, which demonstrates the physical interaction between horse and rider. Lastly, the misalignment of the rider’s shoulders demonstrates his twisting upper body to compensate for the horse’s movement.

The physicality of breaking in the horse emphasizes the interaction as a man’s job where the rider can prove his masculinity. The frontier, as a proving ground for manhood, eroded as the nation industrialized. The cities and machines that replaced the frontier emasculated men (R. White 49); as the artist Charlie Russell wrote:

A lady with manicured fingers can drive an automobile with out [sic] maring [sic] her polished nails. But to sit behind six range bred horses with both hands full of ribbons these are God made animals and have branes [sic]. To drive these over a mountain road takes both hands feet and head its [sic] no lady’s job. (R. White 49)

Remington’s sculpture is representative of this description, as the rider and horse vie for physical control. Regardless of who wins, the job of busting the bronco resides with men, not women, because of the physical demand.

The rider also displays the virtues of white superiority in Remington’s sculpture. Although the rider is not explicitly white because the sculpture is bronze, he “reads” white because visual corollaries connect him with other depictions of white cowboys (Fig. 3) [13].



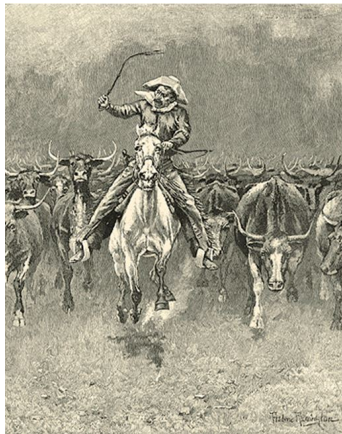


Figure 3: Frederic Remington

In a Stampede

1888

His clothing helps clarify his complexion. The rider's shirt, chaps, spurs, riding boots, and hat distinguish him from stereotypical Indian garb, such as a feather headdress, beads, moccasins, and revealing clothing. Hair is another indicator of his whiteness. His close cropped haircut and full mustache resemble that of a typical cowboy. By contrast, Indian men were typically drawn with long hair and no facial hair. His riding style also demonstrates his difference from Indians because he uses reins, a saddle, and stirrups whereas Indians usually rode bareback.

The rider's whiteness is also made clear in light of Remington's own racial attitudes. As Louis Warren explains, Remington's "fantasies verged on ethnic cleansing" (Warren 214). The artist's oft-quoted remark reads, "Jews, Injuns, Chinamen, Italians, Huns—the rubbish of the Earth I hate—I've got some Winchesters and when the massacring begins, I can get my share of 'em" (qtd. in G. White 109). His images were "suffused with a sense that white American racial strengths were frontier virtues, and that they were about to be lost amid rapidly multiplying and unmanly immigrants" (Warren 214). Remington's sculpture therefore reads as the ideal frontiersman: white, male, and capable of breaking in a horse.

While posters and sculptures visually depict an image of an ideal white man, Theodore Roosevelt's speech, "The Strenuous Life," verbally asserts a parallel image as those produced by Buffalo Bill and Remington. In 1899, Roosevelt, as the governor of New York, addressed an audience at the Hamilton Club in Chicago in which he extolled the strenuous life insofar as it would bring "the highest form of success," not to the lazy man, "but to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship or from bitter toil" (Roosevelt). Using words like

"toil," "effort," and "labor," Roosevelt clearly valued the importance of physical work. He claimed that a "man must be glad to do a man's work, to dare and endure and to labor" and protect and provide for his family (Roosevelt). Conversely, the mother must be fearless, wise, and bear children (Roosevelt). These virtues not only represented domestic rules, but acted as defenses against civilization decline. Roosevelt echoed his fear of gender disorder and racial decline in a letter to his close friend, Cecil Spring Rice, a British diplomat. Roosevelt, "characterized population decline as 'evil' and worried about 'the Slavs' defeating 'us . . . in the warfare of the cradle.' When women chose not to bear as many children as they humanly could, they were traitors to their country" (qtd. in Rico 187).

Likewise, Roosevelt believed men had a duty first to their home and then to the nation, both of which demanded men's respect. Indeed, Roosevelt insisted on the development and expansion of the army and navy, which relates to his belief in a dominant white race. Roosevelt regarded the armed forces as America's "sword and shield," which the country "must carry if she is to do her duty among the nations of the earth" (Roosevelt). In order for the United States to become powerful, Roosevelt believed that "we must grasp the points of vantage which will enable us to have our say in deciding the destiny of the oceans of the East and the West" (Roosevelt). In order to achieve these vantage points, the army and navy would play a crucial role in conquering other people. In essence, Roosevelt wanted to reopen the American frontier on an international scale. His motivation to conquer foreigners resembles similar arguments used to justify the conquest of Native Americans, namely to advance the vanguard of civilization. For example, Roosevelt believed Filipinos were "utterly unfit for self-government, and show[ed] no signs of becoming fit" (Roosevelt). All these sentiments expressed in Roosevelt's speech are confirmed by historian Walter LaFeber, who wrote, Roosevelt "personally exemplified central themes of post-1890 U.S. foreign policy—a responsibility to guarantee stability in Latin America and Asia, and a belief that Anglo-Saxon values and successes gave Americans a right to conduct such foreign policy" (LaFeber 235).

The examples in the archive, including Buffalo Bill's promotional poster, Remington's *The Broncho Buster*, and Roosevelt's speech, "The Strenuous Life," all portray an image of the ideal, white frontiersman, defined against femininity, characterized by his physical labor, and undeniably portrayed as white. These cultural



products permeated widely throughout American society, but they did not represent the only form of masculine identity in the West.

#### PART IV: Counter-Archive

The counter-archive provides three examples that challenge the conventional image of the ideal frontiersman. The first example in this collection is Roosevelt's consumption of an elephant heart in Africa. Although this account centers on Roosevelt's experience in Africa instead of the United States, it nevertheless represents an extension of the American West. According to Turner, the American frontier closed in 1890, which implied the elimination of a proving ground for masculinity (Turner 2). However, military conquest allowed men to prove their manhood through acts of valor, while simultaneously expanding the borders of the frontier in foreign nations (Kimmel 83). Roosevelt's comments in "The Strenuous Life" speech demonstrate his desire to reopen the American frontier on an international scale. He enacted this desire by fighting as a Rough Rider in the Spanish American War of 1898 [14]. As a result of Spain's defeat in the war, the United States expanded its empire, gaining temporary control of Cuba and indefinite colonial authority over Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines (Jenkinson 77).

Similar to the early American frontier, Africa represented a primordial state that whites could civilize. Roosevelt's hunting safari across the country's terrain symbolized "a movement from the dawn of civilization to the modern day, a recapitulation that echoed the evolution of humanity itself as well as of individual men as they grew from boyhood to manhood" (Rico 198). At that time, many believed that the same social-evolutionary stages had played out on the American West as pioneers once advanced the vanguard of civilization across the land. In fact, Roosevelt encouraged a similar brand of white settlement in East Africa. He believed the "prime need" was 'to build up a large, healthy population of true settlers, white home-makers, who shall take the land as an inheritance for their children's children.' In other words, East Africa could be, and should be, settled as the American West was settled, by white people intent on making it into a home" (qtd. in Rico 199).

In addition to military and colonial opportunities in Africa, the continent served as a logical extension of the American West because Roosevelt actually envisioned himself there as he rode on horseback

across the African expanse. He wrote, "I might have been on the plains anywhere, from Texas to Montana" (qtd. in Rico 200). His experience in Africa, then, serves as an extension of the American West and therefore remains suitable for analysis here.

Roosevelt's primary goal in Africa was to hunt big game. He recorded one particular kill in his book *African Game Trails*, which recounted his trip throughout the continent (Rico 165). As the hulking grey elephant revealed itself in Roosevelt's crosshairs, he squeezed the trigger twice, killing the animal (Fig. 4).



Figure 4: Kermit Roosevelt  
Col. Roosevelt and a bull elephant shot at Meru  
Published c. May 14, 1919  
Photographic Print  
Library of Congress, Washington, DC  
LC-USZ62-998

In order to preserve the skin for later exhibition, the native guides, porters, and gun-bearers began "chattering like monkeys" as they delicately skinned the animal (qtd. in Rico 209). "One of the trackers took off his blanket and squatted stark naked inside the carcass the better to use his knife" (qtd. in Rico 209). As night fell and men huddled around the campfire, the ex-president of the United States "toasted slices of elephant's heart on a pronged stick before the fire" (qtd. in Rico 209). "It [was] delicious," he wrote, "for I was hungry, and the night was cold" (qtd. in Rico 209).

The scene itself evokes a fine line between civility and savagery. Roosevelt with his gun, an emblem of technology, kills the elephant from a distance with precision, efficiency, and with little bloodshed (Rico 209). By contrast, the native guides, covered in blood and compared to animals themselves, must cut the flesh with their hands (209). As this scene demonstrates, a man's style of hunting could categorize him as a particular type of man, either noble or savage. Prior to the 1820s, hunting in America often represented the nation's savage past (173). Only afterward in the throes of industrialization, immigration, and urbanization did the

practice become a means for American men to escape “the urbanized routine of their lives” (173). The creation of hunting clubs and strict guidelines for killing animals separated the noble sportsman, who hunted for sport, from the savage hunter, who depended on wild game for survival (173-174) [15].

Although the sportsman’s hunting code assuaged some fear about hunting’s primitive nature, the act of stalking an animal threatened to de-civilize the huntsman as he himself became animalistic: his sensory perception heightened, he moved on all fours over harsh terrain, and he feasted on his kills (Rico 179). In order to reconcile this primitive act, sportsmen erected hunting trophies in their houses, thereby separating the wilderness from civilization, while also demonstrating their ability to kill but also to resurrect (Rico 179).

The act of hunting signified a delicate balance between civility and savagery. Roosevelt’s consumption of the elephant heart symbolizes a personal “moment of triumphant savagery,” and threatens to cast him as a savage inferior. His gustatory act also relates to the “savage Eucharist,” a term which denotes some Native Americans’ consumption of human or animal flesh for rejuvenation or strength (Rico 210; Slotkin 90-91). Nathaniel Saltonstall recounts this practice in a scene from his book, *The Present State of New England*, in which one Native American sucks out the heart-blood of an executed enemy (Slotkin 90). Describing the motive behind this action, the Indian states, “Me stronger than I was before, me be so strong as me and he too, he be ver strong Man fore he die” (qtd. in Slotkin 90). By drinking the heart-blood of another man, the Native American believed he acquired the strength of his enemy (Slotkin 90). Similarly, an American Indian might consume a raw piece of a just-killed bear or wolf in order to obtain the bear’s strength or the wolf’s cunning (90). Although Saltonstall’s account dates from the seventeenth century, it undoubtedly added to sportsmen’s fear about hunting’s primitive nature. Roosevelt’s consumption of the elephant heart, therefore, seems to be flirting dangerously close with the line delineating white, masculine huntsman and dark, violent savage.

Around the same time Roosevelt ate the elephant heart, a debate about meat consumption gained momentum in America. Some turn-of-the-century reformers discouraged meat consumption for fear that it stimulated animal passions, but others believed a meat-heavy diet prevented the development of feminized manhood (Kimmel 101). According to popular medical

belief, “one needs blood to make blood, muscle to make muscle” and eating large amounts of barely cooked beef could maintain a person’s health (101). Therefore, by eating red meat, men could literally consume manhood (101). Roosevelt’s consumption of the elephant heart, therefore, represents an attempt to assert his masculinity. Although Roosevelt perpetuated the image of the ideal frontiersman, this gustatory act defies the dominant portrayal of masculinity. Constructions of masculinity required constant definition because they were never secure. As such, one could over-exert his masculinity and cast himself as a racial inferior. Roosevelt’s consumption of the heart demonstrates an attempt to assert his masculinity, even if it simultaneously threatened to cast him as a violent savage who partook in the wilderness Eucharist. His gustatory act coincides with a list of other activities he performed, mostly in the American West, to legitimate his manhood. Roosevelt “made belief,” or created the social realities that he enacted (Schechner 35). Regarding the West, he articulated this principle clearly when he wrote, “There were all kinds of things I was afraid of at first, ranging from grizzly bears to ‘mean’ horses and gun-fighters; but by acting as if I was not afraid I gradually ceased to be afraid” (qtd. in Jenkinson 5; emphasis mine). He reiterated his desire to become a westerner in a letter to his elder sister: “I have been fulfilling a boyish ambition of mine, playing at frontier hunter in good earnest” (qtd. in G. White 83; emphasis mine).

Roosevelt not only articulated his performance in words, he also expressed his western fantasy through a carefully constructed costume. For this young member of the Eastern elite in the Dakota Badlands, the buckskin shirt represented the ultimate symbol of the rugged backwoodsman (Jenkinson 41). In the summer of 1884, Roosevelt traveled to Sand Creek, Dakota, where an acquaintance, Mrs. Maddox, measured him for the quintessential American tunic (41). When he returned to New York that winter, he wore the buckskin shirt for a staged photo shoot (Fig. 5).



Figure 5: George Grantham Bain

Theodore Roosevelt, full-length portrait, standing, facing right, in deer skin hunting suit, holding rifle

1885

Photographic Print

Library of Congress, Washington, DC

Bain Collection, LC-USZ62-41723

The painted background, theatrical rocks, and imitation grass, which barely concealed the rug, dramatized Roosevelt's performance (G. White 84). The studio photo demonstrates Roosevelt's attempt to consciously cast himself as an "authentic" westerner who possessed manly characteristics.

Henry Ossian Flipper also departed from the ideal image of the frontiersman, but in different ways. Born into slavery on March 21, 1856, in Thomasville, Georgia, Flipper has been excluded from the dominant western narrative despite his success as the first black graduate of West Point to be commissioned as a second lieutenant in the regular army (Harris 84) (Fig. 6).



Figure 6: Kennedy

Lt. Henry O. Flipper

ca. 1877

Photographic Print

Records of the US House of Representatives, 1789-2011; Series:

Committee Papers, compiled 1822-1946; Congress, Record Group 233;

National Archives, Washington, DC

Other black figures, such as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, gained prominence in Flipper's lifetime, but they resided in the East where they could fight for black equality. Even when Flipper did move East to work for the U.S. government, he failed to gain widespread attention, perhaps because he did not use his position to actively promote civil rights like others involved with the NAACP or the Urban League (Cusic 165). For this reason, the civil rights leaders of the 1960s seem to have dismissed Flipper and his accomplishments (Cusic 189).

Flipper's race separated him from the idealized white frontiersman. He also differs due to his alternative masculine identity. As a military officer, he certainly engaged in acts that reinforced the physicality of western manhood, such as exercise [16] and military combat [17]. After Flipper's military discharge, he wanted to re-enlist, especially once the Spanish American War began in 1898. Ultimately, however, Flipper's definition of manhood relied more heavily on the strength of individual character rather than physical prowess (Cusic 28). He wrote, "To stoop to retaliation is not compatible with true dignity, nor is vindictiveness manly" (qtd. in Cusic 29). In all matters, he attempted to display honor and integrity.

The examples in the archive demonstrated a masculinity defined by physicality. By contrast, Flipper tended to assert his manhood through ingenuity in the field. While stationed at Fort Still, Flipper demonstrated his skill through reason and negotiation. One day, Lt. S.R. Whitall, an infantry officer, attempted to arrest a local Indian. Flipper reported that Whitall, "a mean, brutal, overbearing fellow," failed to complete the arrest once the Native American began to fire his gun (qtd. in Cusic 41). Flipper then set out to finish the job. He travelled with ten soldiers in a covered wagon, but approached the Indian camp alone. Through sign language, Flipper negotiated the arrest of the Native American. When he arrived back to the base with prisoner in hand, Whitall appeared "dumfounded [sic], surly and discourteous" (qtd. in Cusic 41). Flipper's strategy and negotiating skills proved more effective than the technique employed by his white counterpart.

Also at Fort Sill, Flipper accomplished one of his best-known achievements, referred to as "Flipper's ditch" (Harris 88). Since the fort's founding in 1869, malaria had plagued soldiers, sometimes leading to death. As such, a white engineering officer was commissioned to solve the problem, but he failed (88). In 1879, a young Lieutenant Flipper successfully



designed a drainage system that eradicated malaria at Fort Sill (88). In fact, in 1977 it won official recognition as a National Historic Landmark and it still controls floods and erosion today (88). Flipper's ingenuity, then, proved a better indicator of his masculinity than his physical prowess.

While Flipper deviated from the normative western narrative due to his skin color and performance of masculinity through mental and strategic ingenuity, the male characters in Owen Wister's novel, *The Virginian* (1902), differ from the ideal white frontiersman because of their homosocial fraternizing. Wister, like Roosevelt and Remington, was a member of the Eastern Establishment and is often considered to be another cultural arbiter who portrayed an idealized image of the West (Murdoch 74; 80). Indeed, his famous novel circulated widely. It underwent fifteen reprints in eight months and has been adapted multiple times for the stage and the screen (74). Wister's work, therefore, could easily appear in the archive, but his writing also hints at another aspect of cowboy life that receives little attention and is therefore included in this counter-archive: homoeroticism.

Chris Packard's book *Queer Cowboy* adds to the body of scholarship called new western history by questioning the dominant western narrative in order to decode the "unspoken and, until now, unrealized message" of homoeroticism in American literature (Packard 11). While the protagonist in Wister's *The Virginian* represents a rugged frontiersman, Packard uncovers several instances that display intense moments of homoeroticism. As such, the Virginian defies the conception of the ideal, white frontiersman. Here, the male narrator, an easterner visiting Wyoming for the first time, becomes enamored with the Virginian, "a slim young giant, more beautiful than pictures" (qtd. in Packard 44). The narrator's fascination with the Virginian focuses on the physique: "the undulations of a tiger, smooth and easy, as if all his muscles flowed beneath his skin" (qtd. in Packard 44). After overhearing the Virginian talk about failed marriage attempts, the narrator states, "Had I been the bride, I should have taken the giant, dust and all" (qtd. in Packard 44). Later, the narrator remarks, "had I been a woman, it would have made me do what he please with on the spot" in response to the Virginian's lusty smile (qtd. in Packard 44). According to Packard, the narrator "wants to marry this cowboy in all senses of the word" (Packard 44). Wister used the language of marriage to express the narrator's homoerotic desires.

A year after their first hunting excursion, the narrator and the Virginian meet again, this time for an elk hunting trip (Packard 48). During this expedition, their relationship intensifies, moving from casual talk about sex to a more intimate physical experience. While camped on an island in the Snake River, the two men strip naked for a private swim together (48). The phrase "cool, slow, deep" in this context heightens the eroticism of their skinny-dipping (48). As they emerge from the water, each man remains naked, drying by the fire while cooking a meal. In conversation the Virginian states, "'Yu' might say the whole year's strength flows hearty in every waggle of your thumb'" (qtd. in Packard 49). As Packard notes, "Since the partners are still naked at this point, it would be difficult to believe that their thumbs are the only appendages wagging" (Packard 49). Packard's observation strengthens considering the men swam together in the Snake River, which serves as another euphemism for their genitals. Although the Virginian eventually marries Molly Stark Wood, a schoolmarm, their lack of intimacy stands in stark contrast to the homoerotic affection shared between the Virginian and the narrator (Packard 54). During their honeymoon, the bride and groom also retreat to a private island, but they dress in separate tents and bathe on opposite ends of the island. In fact, the cowboy will not allow Molly to see him naked.

In contrast to heterosexual unions, homosocial friendship and eroticism on the frontier allowed men similar forms of safety, consolation, and support, but without the problems associated with reproduction (Packard 3). Children hindered the cowboy's spontaneous life and his ability to ride freely on the open range (Packard 3). Likewise, same-sex relationships quelled the fear of miscegenation in this period where racial mixing created panic for many Americans (Packard 6).

The presence of homoeroticism in *The Virginian* presents a non-normative image of masculinity that actually existed in late-nineteenth century America, even if the dominant western narrative failed to address it. As Packard notes, "Prior to the invention of the 'homosexual' illness, U.S. culture tolerated a great deal of same-sex erotic touching, kissing, bed sharing, and bathing, whether in East Coast cities or in Western prairies" (Packard 56). For example, men danced intimately together in the "Stag Dance," a common pastime on the frontier (72) (Fig. 7).



Figure 7: Erwin E. Smith

Dancing, seemingly not hampered by lack of women  
1908-1912

Gelatin dry plate negative

Erwin E. Smith Collection of the Library of Congress on Deposit at the  
Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, TX  
Acc. no. LC.S6.058

In another instance, cowboys at the W.D. Boice Cattle Company, slept outside together in pairs under the same blankets (42).

## PART V: Conclusion

The archive—comprised of a promotional poster from Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, Remington's sculpture *The Broncho Buster*, and Roosevelt's speech "The Strenuous Life"—demonstrated various portrayals of the ideal, white frontiersman. The counter-archive, which included Roosevelt's consumption of an elephant heart, Flipper's experience as a black frontiersman, and homoeroticism in Wister's novel *The Virginian*, challenged the representation of the conventional western man presented in the archive.

The creation of these two archives is not intended to authenticate one version of the West over the other. Each body of historical information demonstrates that frontier masculinity was not fixed, but constantly negotiable. The aim of this project has been to highlight an unconventional western narrative alongside the dominant version, and in doing so to present a more complete depiction of masculinity in the West. Future work in the field should focus on a cultural and historiographical analysis of the popular image's formation and investigate how and why it persists today.

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Bain, George Grantham. Theodore Roosevelt, full-length portrait, standing, facing right, in deer skin hunting suit, holding rifle. 1885. Photographic print. Library of Congress, Washington DC.

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Smith, Erwin E. Dancing, seemingly not hampered by lack of women. 1908-1912. Gelatin dry plate negative. Erwin E. Smith Collection of the Library of Congress on Deposit at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas.

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[1] Throughout this paper, the “West” refers to territory within the continental United States that falls west of the Mississippi River.

[2] In this analysis, the term “frontiersman” refers to men who lived or traveled extensively throughout the West. It does not distinguish between different figures of the frontier, such as the miner or the cowboy, but instead seeks to capture all these men.

[3] Unfortunately, the experience of western women is beyond the scope of this paper. However, a study related to the non-normative performances of femininity would complement the analysis given here. Hannah Duston’s violent escape from her Native American captors in the 1690s serves as one example that defies traditional notions of domestic femininity.

[4] Schechner distinguishes between “make belief” and “make believe.” He writes, “In ‘make believe’ performances, the distinction between what’s real and what’s pretended is kept clear” (Schechner 35).

[5] A number of men, including writer Henry James, artist Thomas Hart, musician Charles Ives, and architect Louis Sullivan, railed against the perception of a feminized world in favor of a strong masculine aesthetic,

which they portrayed in their work (Kimmel 87, 108-109).

The three works in my archive similarly present the image of manly figures. I have selected these cultural artifacts because they originated from the most notable and influential cultural arbiters of their time.

[6] A number of other painters did, in fact, depict non-normative views of the West, especially those in the Taos and Santa Fe art colonies, but Remington’s fame and pervasiveness overshadowed their representations of the West (Etulain 69).

[7] By 1888, Remington had exhibited his work in the American Water Color Society and the National Academy of Design (G. White 101). In the same year, his painting, ‘Return of a Blackfoot War Party,’ won the Hallgarten and the Clarke prizes (101). The American Water Color Society exhibited him again, and his fame continued to grow, especially as more magazines began to request his illustrations (101-102).

[8] Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and the University of Pennsylvania represent the most important Ivy League universities for the Eastern Establishment (G. White 20).

[9] Examples include the Union in Boston, the Knickerbocker in New York, and the Rittenhouse in Philadelphia (G. White 27).

[10] The Scream of Shrapnel at San Juan Hill and The Charge of the Rough Riders at San Juan Hill, both by Remington, depicted Roosevelt during his campaign in Cuba as a Rough Rider in the Spanish American War (Murdoch 71).

[11] Remington’s decision to open the sheep ranch signaled an impulsive attempt to associate himself with the West and assert his masculinity, even if doing so threatened him with bankruptcy (G. White 94).

[12] In order to retain these masculine qualities, Remington suggested “that a man should for one month of the year live on the roots of the grass, in order to understand for the eleven following that so-called necessities are in reality luxuries” (qtd. in G. White 107).

[13] The rider in Remington’s *The Broncho Buster* “reads” white and interestingly resembles the artist’s friend and fellow member of the Eastern Establishment, Theodore Roosevelt. In fact, the ex-President appeared several times in the artist’s work, such as *The Scream of Shrapnel at San Juan Hill* and *The Charge of the Rough Riders at San Juan Hill* (Murdoch 71). Even more striking, Remington illustrated Roosevelt in a cattle stampede, which appeared in the future president’s book, *Ranch Life and the Hunting-Trail* (1888) (Jenkinson 49). The similarity between this drawing and *The Broncho Buster* is undeniable.



[14] Years after the Spanish American war, Roosevelt expressed regret: "I have always been unhappy, most unhappy, that I was not severely wounded in Cuba . . . in some striking and disfiguring way" (qtd. in Jenkinson 77).

[15] Roosevelt codified this hunting ethic in the Boone and Crockett club, which he co-founded with naturalist George Bird Grinnell in December 1887 (Jenkinson 75). Among other requirements and qualifications needed to gain acceptance into the club, "members were sworn to maintain a strict code of honor—always to engage in a 'fair chase,' never to lie about a kill, and always to maintain a focus on natural history as well as hunting" (Jenkinson 75). Clubs such as this one also maintained a level of dignity by drawing on the rugged glamor of pioneers such as Daniel Boone and by sourcing inspiration from the refined hunting culture in Great Britain (Rico 173).

[16] Flipper believed that daily exercise routines called "plebe drill" transformed the "most crooked, distorted creature" into "an erect, noble, and manly being" (qtd. in Cusic 22).

[17] Flipper did see active combat in the Indian Wars (1866-1891). Flipper and his troop pursued the Apache chieftain Victorio and his war party (Cusic 45). In one skirmish, several soldiers were wounded and nineteen Indians were killed. Flipper recorded later, "This was the first and only time I was under fire, but escaped without a scratch" (49).

## Hester Prynne's Individuality in a Puritanical Community

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During the nineteenth century, the theme of the individual in opposition to the community was prolific in politics, culture, and literature. In Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Hester Prynne, the bearer of the scarlet letter, struggles with her community's ostracization of her because she commits adultery, resulting in a pregnancy. Although the isolation is difficult for her, she maintains her dignity through her sustaining strength. Although the community solely blames Hester for the sin because she is the mother of her illegitimate child, Pearl, Hester is not the only one who suffers as

the individual excluded from the community. As one of the reverends in the community, Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale's unresolved guilt isolates him from his parish. The community isolates Pearl because she has an irrevocable connection to her mother and her mother's sin. Community is a singular thing, but it is made up of individuals. As soon as an individual rebels from the group, as Hester does, the entire group must denounce the individual because she mars their image as a whole, and as individuals. When it comes to religion, a community must disapprove wholeheartedly, especially of Hester's deviant sin. Ignoring the sin implies acceptance and therefore approval. The community needs to show God and its church that it condemns the sin and the sinner and are more devout Puritans than the individual.

Hester's punishment, assigned by her magistrates, is to stand on a scaffold for three hours with her shameful baby, and from that point on, to wear a scarlet letter A on her chest to signify her sin. The purpose of the A is solely to differentiate between the sinner and the innocents. When walking through town, visitors will know that Hester is somehow unlike the rest of the community without even knowing her story. By requiring her to openly display her difference, the community forces Hester into exclusion. The entire community gathered around the scaffold to show their solidarity against her and her sin, and to scoff and ridicule the sinner. An older woman, clearly influential among peers, disapproves of this punishment because she does not think it is harsh enough. She said that the church, the community, and Hester would benefit if the women, "being of mature age and church-members in good repute, should have the handling of such malefactresses as Hester" (Hawthorne, 48). These "self-constituted judges" are harder on Hester than they may be otherwise because they are her elders and are upstanding members of the church (Hawthorne, 49). They need to assert their authority over the younger woman in order to further elevate their standing in the church and the community. Not only is there an age gap between Hester and the older women, but she also separates herself further by committing adultery. The "shame" Hester brought to the church further inflames their hatred of her (Hawthorne, 49). In order to move that shame from the community to the individual, they must isolate the sinner. According to the elder women, since the magistrates' punishment was not harsh enough, they will have no one to blame but themselves when "their own wives and daughters go astray"