

ALBUM FAKING THE AMERICAN WEST

Album Description

Many artists painted, photographed, and wrote about the American West. In doing so they promoted more visitors, settlers, and explorers. They also promoted a fiction of the West. German artist Albert Bierstadt, for example, did not paint in the field. He sketched and then returned to his Massachusetts home where he created lush landscapes that existed nowhere in the American West. For example, this view of Longs Peak in Estes Park, Colorado does not exist.

A worthy read for educators to understand the impact these images had on the modern American West is *Making the White Man's West*. In *Making the White Man's West*, author Jason E. Pierce argues that since the time of the Louisiana Purchase, the American West has been a racially contested space. Using a nuanced theory of historical 'whiteness,' he examines why and how Anglo-Americans dominated the region for a 120-year period. In the early nineteenth century, critics like Zebulon Pike and Washington Irving viewed the West as a 'dumping ground' for free blacks and Native Americans, a place where they could be segregated from the white communities east of the Mississippi River. But as immigrant populations and industrialization took hold in the East, white Americans began to view the West as a 'refuge for real whites.'

How do these 19th and early 20th century depictions of the American West still color not only Americans' impressions of the West and its people, but those of visitors from abroad, and how the American West is taught in school?

9 - 12

13+

professional development

Social Studies/History

American West

SCENES FROM CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT IN BOSTON CYCLORAMA CO.



Teaching Notes:

A cyclorama was a popular attraction in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was a huge painting in the round that a viewer stood, essentially, inside of and was turned by a turntable, or turned themselves in a circle to view.

What does this image say about the Battle of Little Bighorn?

Does the Little Bighorn Battlefield actually have a large river running through it?

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3a03864/>

Image not found

https://sites.msudenver.edu/tpswesternregion/wp-content/uploads/sites/476/2021/11/tps_logo-1.png

Created / Published

- 1889 May 27.

Notes

- - This record contains unverified, old data from caption card, with subsequent revisions. (Copy may have been made from original volume rather than P&P microfilm.)

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Digital Id

- [cph 3a03864 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a03864](https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a03864)

GREAT FALLS OF THE YELLOWSTONE / W.H. JACKSON, PHOTO.



Teaching Notes:

William Henry Jackson was a famed photographer of Yellowstone.

If you lived in New York City and saw this image in a magazine -- what would it tell you about Yellowstone?

Do you think you could get to that spot easily?

What impact does this influencer from 1871 have on today's tourists?

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2020630255/>

Summary

- Photograph taken during F.V. Hayden's 1871 U.S. Geological Survey of the Territories for the Department of the Interior shows waterfalls of Yellowstone River flowing into canyon, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming.

Created / Published

Image not found

https://sites.msudenver.edu/tpswesternregion/wp-content/uploads/sites/476/2021/11/tps_logo-1.png

- [1871]

Genre

- Landscape photographs--1870-1880
- Expedition photographs--1870-1880
- Albumen prints--1870-1880

Notes

- - Title from item.
- - Alternate title from National Park Service.
- - On Department of the Interior's U.S. Geological Survey of the Territories Scenery of the Yellowstone National Park mount.

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Digital Id

- [ppmsca 68716 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.68716](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.68716)

ROCKY MOUNTAINS / ABIERSTADT 1863.



Teaching Notes:

German artist Albert Bierstadt moved to Massachusetts with his family in 1837. He would travel to the American West and sketch landscapes.

This landscape is from Yosemite Valley in northern California.

Look at a US map. Is Yosemite in the Rocky Mountains?

Did the Native Americans from California live in tipis?

How might this image have influenced perceptions of Native Americans and northern California in people who had never been there or might be considering visiting?

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/95513915/>

Summary

- Print shows a Native encampment near lake in the Yosemite Valley of the Rocky Mountains.

Created / Published

- c1866.

Genre

- Landscape prints--1860-1870
- Paintings--1860-1870--Reproductions--1860-1870
- Proofs before letters--1860-1870
- Engravings--1860-1870

Notes

- - Title from item.
- - Signed on plate "ABierstadt 1863" lower right.
- - Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1866, by Edward Bierstadt, in the Clerk's Office of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.
- - Library has two impressions, one proof before letters.
- - Library's proof before letters is signed in pencil "A. Bierstadt" lower right and blind stamped "Estate of Henry Ward Beecher - American Art Association (Sale) 1887" lower left.
- - DCRM(G) example: 2A0-alternative rule "proof before letters."

Repository

- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Digital Id

- pga 02792 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pga.02792>
- pga 03311 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pga.03311>
- cph 3a25130 <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a25130>

THE VANISHING RACE--NAVAHO



Teaching Notes:

Edward Curtis is viewed by many as a great chronicler of the Native Americans in the West. He is viewed by others as one of the artists who created the greatest fictions of the American West.

For this image analyze the Title he gave the photograph. What does it suggest? Is it accurate? How might Dine (Navajo) people today view the image?

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2004672872/>

Summary

- Photograph shows Navajos on horseback riding away from photographer.

Created / Published

- c1904.

Genre

- Book illustrations--1900-1910
- Photogravures--1900-1910

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https://sites.msudenver.edu/tpswesternregion/wp-content/uploads/sites/476/2021/11/tps_logo-1.png

Notes

- - Original photogravure produced in Boston by John Andrew & Son, c1904.
- - Curtis no. 984.
- - Title from item.
- - Also available as a platinum photographic print (Prints & Photographs Division call number: PH - Curtis (E), no. 1).
- - Published in: *The North American Indian* / Edward S. Curtis. [Seattle, Wash.] : Edward S. Curtis, 1907-30, Suppl. v. 1, pl. 1.

Repository

- Library of Congress Rare Book & Special Collections Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Digital Id

- [cph 3a37704 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a37704](https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a37704)

OGLALA WAR PARTY



Teaching Notes:

The Oglala people are one of seven Lakota tribes. They were forced to move onto the Pine Ridge reservation in 1868 under the Treaty of Laramie.

Do you think that in 1907 when this image was taken that they had "war parties?"

In South Dakota, 30 Indian Schools operated from 1819 through 1960, would the people still be allowed to dress like this in 1907?

What impact would this image have had on people in New York City or Boston or Atlanta who might consider visiting South Dakota ?

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/2002719686/>

Summary

- Several Oglala men, many wearing war bonnets, on horseback riding down hill.

Created / Published

- c1907.

Image not found

https://sites.msudenver.edu/tpswesternregion/wp-content/uploads/sites/476/2021/11/tps_logo-1.png

Genre

- Book illustrations--1900-1910
- Photogravures--1900-1910

Notes

- - H104386 U.S. Copyright Office.
- - Curtis no. 2575-07.
- - Forms part of: Edward S. Curtis Collection (Library of Congress).
- - Published in: The North American Indian / Edward S. Curtis. [Seattle, Wash.] : Edward S. Curtis, 1907-30, Suppl., v. 3, pl. 77.

Repository

- Library of Congress Rare Books and Special Collections Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Digital Id

- [cph 3b46977 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b46977](https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b46977)

NATURE'S CATTLE / C.M. RUSSELL.



Teaching Notes:

Artist Charles Russell was an actual ranch hand as well as an artist. He was also an avid reader of "dime novels" considered the trashy fiction of the late 19th century.

How would Charles Russell's drawings have influenced audiences in the East?

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/95520545/>

Summary

- Buffalo and antelope on prairie.

Created / Published

- c1899.

Genre

- Drawings--Reproductions--1890-1900
- Photomechanical prints--1890-1900

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https://sites.msudenver.edu/tpswesternregion/wp-content/uploads/sites/476/2021/11/tps_logo-1.png

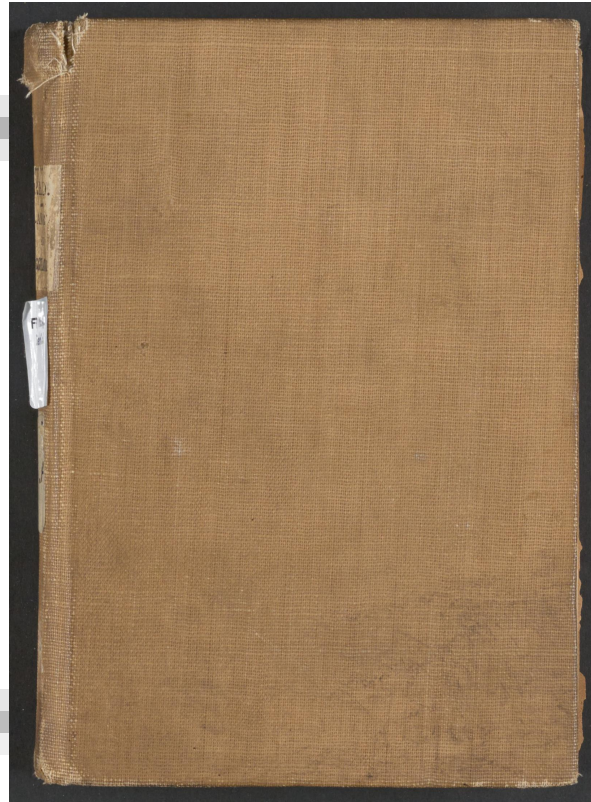
Notes

- - 37411 U.S. Copyright Office.
- - Copyright by W. Ridgley.

Digital Id

- cph 3c15203 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c15203

RANGERS AND REGULATORS. A NOVEL.



Teaching Notes:

This is one of hundreds of inexpensive "dime" novels set in the American West. Novels published in the early 20th century often had very lurid covers.

How would readers in the American East, or in other parts of the world, be influenced by these novels?

What would they think life was like in the West?

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/12037959/>

Created / Published

- New York, G.W. Dillingham, 1892.

Genre

- Western stories

Notes

- - Published by Dillingham as no. 7 in a cheap uniform edition of the "Popular works of Captain Mayne Reid".

Image not found

https://sites.msudenver.edu/tpswesternregion/wp-content/uploads/sites/476/2021/11/tps_logo-1.png

- - Also available in digital form on the Library of Congress Web site.

Digital Id

- <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gdc/gdcscd.00022302504>

TO CALIFORNIA OVER THE SANTA FE TRAIL,



Teaching Notes:

This booklet was meant to give easterners a view of the American West, including such fictions as Montezuma, the ruler of the Aztecs, was born in New Mexico, and that Pueblo peoples were fearful, superstitious pagans.

What impacts would this have had on how the US Government interacted with the Native Americans in New Mexico and Arizona territories?

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/07019583/>

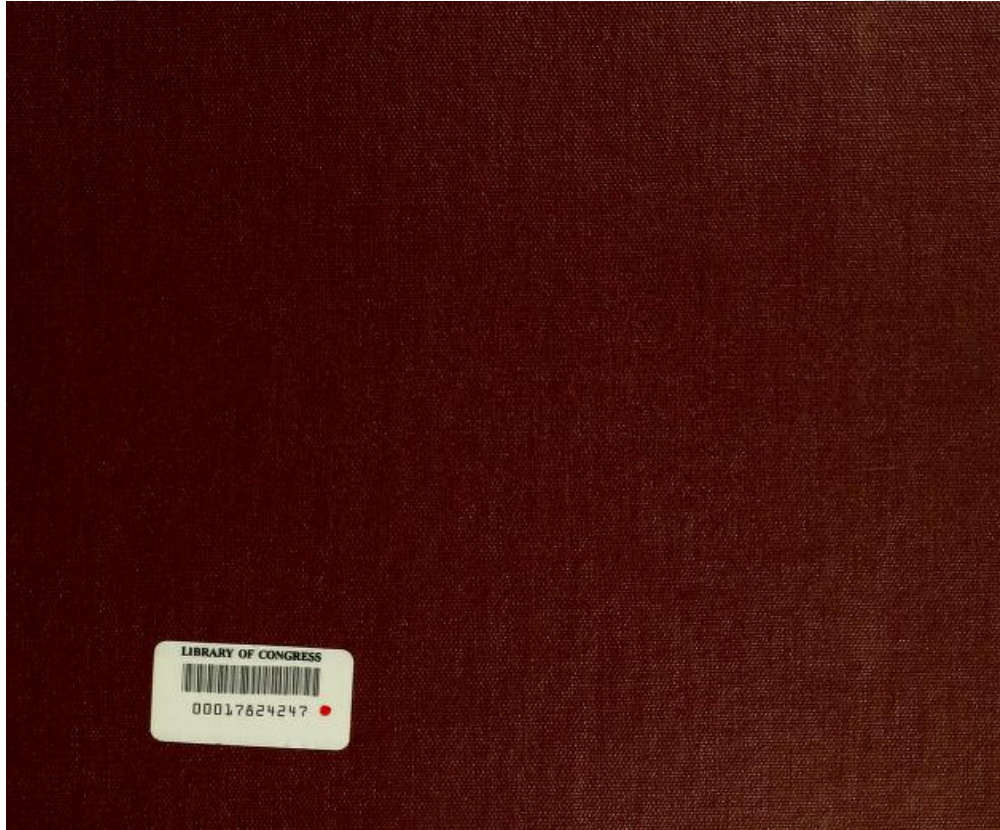
Created / Published

- Chicago, Passenger department, Santa Fe, 1907.

Notes

- - Also available in digital form.

THE COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION ALBUM ... WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION, CHICAGO, 1893.



Teaching Notes:

In 1893, Chicago hosted the World Columbian Exposition.

Chicago was known as "the White City."

Native peoples, including those from Java, Sudan, and America were put on exhibit in the halls of the giant fair. They were to demonstrate their "primitive" traditional ways and wear "traditional" clothing.

What purpose would it have served to exhibit humans in such a way?

Read some of the captions on the pages featuring the human exhibits -- what impact would this have had on the mindsets and opinions of people who viewed the exhibits or the souvenir booklet?

Are many of these points of view still held today?

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/item/05028591/>

Created / Published

Image not found

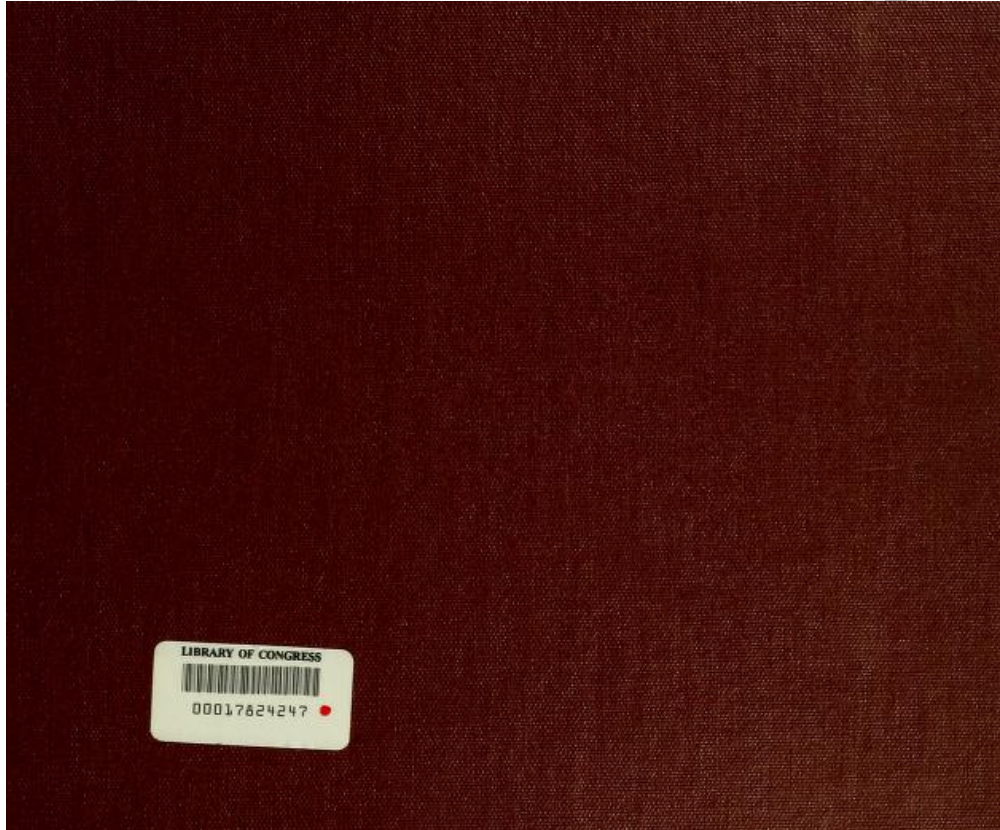
https://sites.msudenver.edu/tpswesternregion/wp-content/uploads/sites/476/2021/11/tps_logo-1.png

- Chicago, Rand, McNally [c1893]

Notes

- - Other editions published 1893-94 with varying titles: Columbian album, The World's fair album, Columbian Exposition photographed, and Das columbische weltansstellungs-album.
- - Also available in digital form.

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