

Backbreaking to Beautiful

The Transformation and Romanticism of the American West

Arguments

- Henry Nash Smith and Robert Athearn
- West is an idea or symbol, not a place
- Morphed into an idea, it was a place

Cowboys and Homesteaders

- Portrayed images of freedom and success across America
- Cowboys
 - Open country
 - Personal work
- Homesteaders
 - Personal work and open country
 - Owned property
- Hard work

Technology and Industry

- Cowboys
 - Railroads, trucks and roads
- Homesteaders
 - Mechanical plows
 - More competition

Romanticized View

- Why are so many cowboys and homesteaders arriving in cities?
 - Corporations
- Experience of the west
 - Biased opinions
- “I want to be a cowboy” “I want to be a homesteader”
 - New criteria