

Tom Frasier

NEH Summer Institute: “Shifting Power on the Plains”

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Lesson Plan: AP English Language and Composition/American Literature/U.S. History

“The Frontier Thesis” and American Mythology

Introduction

In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner presented his essay “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” to the annual meeting of the American Historical Association that coincided with the Columbian Exposition. To a large extent, historians of the American West still focus their work, implicitly or explicitly, on supporting or attacking Turner’s “Frontier Thesis”--his assertion that the frontier was the defining and controlling element of American culture and history and a positive element in the development of the national character. In Turner’s narrative, the displacement of Native peoples—and the inherent dissolution of their culture--was an inevitable corollary to the scheme of Manifest Destiny.

Perhaps no figure in American history more fully embodies the violent clash between Native and Euro-American cultures in the West than George Armstrong Custer. The youngest general in American military history, Custer and the 7th Cavalry had dealt the deciding blow against Southern Cheyenne sovereignty in a devastating raid on the band of Black Kettle (earlier, victims of the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864) along the Washita River in present-day Oklahoma in 1869. Custer’s activities in the Northern Plains included leading the expedition to the Black Hills in 1874 that discovered gold and set off the rush into lands considered sacred by the Lakota and Cheyenne. On 25 June 1876, Custer attempted to recreate his success at the Washita, attacking a camp of Lakota and Northern Cheyenne in present-day Montana; he and the 262 men under his direct command died at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. .

The United States government was quick to extract vengeance for the defeat of Custer. The following November, the Northern Cheyenne under Dull Knife and Little Wolf were attacked at their camp in the Big Horn Mountains, their supplies and equipment burned. By May of 1877, 370 of the survivors had made their way to Fort Robinson, Nebraska and surrendered. Forced onto a reservation in Indian Territory that summer, 41 died in the winter of 1877 and more were on the verge of starvation. On September 9, 1878, nearly 300 Northern Cheyenne left

the reservation with Dull Knife and Little Wolf, determined to make their way home. The tragic—though ultimately successful—story of this odyssey is told here in the voices of their decedents, who now occupy the homeland so many suffered and died to reclaim.

Defined here as narratives which claim the authority to hold explanatory power, mythology is grounded in popular imagination. If the story of the West is the story of America, as Turner claimed, it is appropriate to turn to the movies to examine the manifestation of this story in the century that followed. No practitioners of the Western have had more profound effects on this myth than John Ford and John Wayne. In *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, these two giants of the American cinema explicitly collided with the Turner thesis.

Essential Questions

- **What effect do the elements of the rhetorical square have on a text?**
- **What is close reading?**
- **How does diction affect the tone of a text?**
- **What is the difference between assertion and summary?**
- **What are the essential elements of visual rhetoric?**
- **How does analysis become synthesis?**

Objectives

- **Students interpret and analyze primary documents**
- **Students problematize definitions, terms, and interpretations**
- **Students prepare and utilize notes to formulate analyses**
- **Students recognize elements of rhetoric in written and visual texts**
- **Students recognize the complexity of historical narratives**
- **Students compose a synthesis essay**

Preparing to Teach this Lesson

It's safe to say that no figure dominates the historiography of his field in the way Turner does the American West; Turner's essay is in the public domain and easily accessible on the internet. A complete bibliography of Turner and his critics is beyond the scope of this lesson plan, but for some of the best contemporary response to Turner see Patricia Limerick's *Legacy of Conquest*, Richard White's *It's Your Misfortune and None of my Own*, and Elliot West's *The Way West*. The literature on Custer is perhaps even more voluminous; the excerpt from his memoir is used to introduce key elements in analysis: juxtaposition, irony, and apparent hypocrisy. For engaging discussions of the importance of Custer and the Battle of the Little Big Horn on the popular imagination see Michael A. Elliott's *Custerology: The Enduring Legacy of*

the Indian Wars and George Armstrong and Jerome A Greene's *Striken Field*. The most comprehensive work on the Cheyenne Outbreak is John H. Monnett's *Tell Them We Are Going Home: The Odyssey of the Northern Cheyennes*. Solomon Butcher's remarkable photographs can be viewed in their entirety on the Library of Congress *American Memory* website. The original holder of these works, the Nebraska State Historical Society, has digitized some of these images (including the one used here) to enhance the detail not apparent to the naked eye. Becker's print of a painting by Cassily Adams of the Battle of the Little Big Horn entered America's consciousness through barrooms across the country, distributed by the Anheuser Busch Brewing Company. Kicking Bear, a Lakota who had fought at the Battle, composed his painting in 1898 at the request of artist Frederic Remington. Kicking Bear was a central figure in the Ghost Dance movement in 1890, bringing news of the practice to Sitting Bull on the Standing Rock reservation. He was imprisoned for his involvement but released in order to join Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show

Suggested Activities

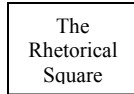
1. Although the written texts are assigned as homework, analyze these pieces in class. The questions associated with each text are designed as assessments intended to precipitate class discussions. Collect student responses to ascertain their level of understanding and involvement and to pace your movement through the texts.
2. Require students to prepare discursive notes (two column, e.g. "Cornell Notes") in which they move from noticing details to commenting upon their effect. The pay off for diligent note taking is the realization by the students that, if done properly, these notes become the core of their essay.
3. Small group discussion (especially utilizing text protocols) is appropriate at any point in the analysis of these texts. The day before the timed writing, allow students to discuss the governing assertions one might make about these texts.
4. Preparing students for dealing with timed writing exams based on class work is a valid use of class time in light of the importance of "Blue Book" exams in college. Take time to discuss the annotation of texts and organization of notes
5. After the timed writing, take a class period to allow students to work on peer revision.

Writing a Synthesis Essay: Entering Discourse as a Public Intellectual¹

Before writing:

1. Close reading
 - a. Move from comprehension to details (e.g., the effect of **diction on tone**)
 - b. Annotate the text for easy reference.

2. Analysis



- **Argument:** What is the author's² claim? evidence? warrant (assumptions)?
- What **persona** has the author adopted?
- What is the rhetorical **purpose** of the text?
- What is the effect of the text on the intended **audience**?
- What **exigency** moved the author to their utterance?

3. Generalization

- a. What contribution will you make to this discussion?
 - i. This does not mean that you must respond to *every* issue raised by the texts.
 - ii. Do not oversimplify the issue; privilege critical thinking; resist knee jerk reactions; honor **ambiguity**.³
 - iii. Do not develop the fallacy of the **straw man**—**develop an honest response**.

While writing:

4. Entering the Conversation

- a. How does *your* point relate to EACH source?
- b. Imagine a dialogue between yourself and the author of the text.

5. "Refine and enlarge"

- a. How do the points you've made about each source lead to a central proposition?
 - i. Compose a governing assertion⁴ that clearly states your position, and present it early in your essay

6. Argument

- a. Embody pieces of each text to make support your position
 - i. This requires you to incorporate the conversation you've developed with the sources into your assertion.⁵

¹ Adapted from David Jolliffe, AP English Language and Composition Institute

² This includes the composers of photographs, artifacts, graphs, advertisements, etc.

³ E.G.: Tempting as it may be to see Madison as adopting an elitist persona in *Federalist* #10, consider the effect of special interest groups ("factions") on American politics.

⁴ I.E., an argument that you can apply to the sources as a whole.

⁵ E.G.: "While Madison's attack on "factions" in *Federalist* #10 is justified, my position on the dangers of his argument is justified by the bill of sale he received from Jefferson."

“Imagining . . . new arrangements becomes a kind of storytelling. People are inspired to compose a fresh account of themselves that explains, literally, who in the world they are. These overarching stories describe how a people fit into their surroundings and what their purposes have become . . . Almost invariably they justify possession. When people look back, the stories become proof to them that they have been summoned by fate or history or God into their rightful homes.”⁶

“The Frontier Thesis” and American Mythology: Timed Writing

(Suggested writing time-40 minutes)

Directions: The following prompt is based on nine sources including Turner’s essay, Custer’s memoir, Sheridan’s report on the Cheyenne Outbreak, testimony given to a Board of Officers convened at Fort Robinson, and some of the images we reviewed in class: Solomon Butcher’s photograph of the Rawding family, Kicking Bear’s depiction of the Battle of the Little Big Horn, F. Otto Becker’s lithograph of “Custer’s Last Fight,” and Jimmy Stewart as Ransom Stoddard and Carleton Young as Maxwell Scott in John Ford’s *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, 1962.

This question requires you to synthesize these sources into a coherent, well written essay. When you synthesize sources you refer to them to develop your position and cite them accurately. *Your argument should be central; the sources should support this argument. Avoid merely summarizing sources.*

Remember to attribute both direct and indirect citations.

Introduction

In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner presented his essay “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” to the annual meeting of the American Historical Association that coincided with the Columbian Exposition. To a large extent, historians of the American West still focus their work, implicitly or explicitly, on supporting or attacking Turner’s “Frontier Thesis.”

⁶ Elliot West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998) xxiii.

Assignment

Consider the following sources carefully. **Then write an essay which you develop a position on Turner’s assertion that the frontier was the defining and controlling element of American culture and history and a positive element in the development of the national character. Synthesize at least three of these sources for support; you must utilize two print texts and one visual text.**

You may refer to these sources by their titles (“Source A,” etc.) or by the last name of the author/artist:

Source A: Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” 1893 (excerpt)

Source B: George Armstrong Custer, *My Life on the Plains*, 1874 (excerpt)

Source C: *We, The Northern Cheyenne People*, “Coming Home,” pp. 23-33

Source D: General Philip Sheridan et al, *Information in Relation to the Escape of the Cheyenne Indians from Fort Robinson*, 1879 (excerpt)

Source E: *Proceeding of a Board of Officers*, 1879 (excerpt)

Source F: Solomon D. Butcher, “Sylvester Rawding and Family,” 1886

Source G: F. Otto Becker, *Custer’s Last Fight*, 1889

Source H: [“Soldiers Falling into Camp”], Kicking Bear (*Mato Wanahtaka*), c.1898

Source I: “Newspaper Office Scene,” *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, John Ford, Director, 1962

Source A
Frederick Jackson Turner “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” 1893 [excerpt]

This brief official statement marks the closing of a great historic movement. Up to our own day American history has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward explain American development. Behind institutions, behind constitutional forms and modifications lie the vital forces that call these organs into life and shape them to meet changing conditions. Now the peculiarity of American institutions is the fact that they have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changes of an expanding people -- to the changes involved in crossing a continent, in winning a wilderness, and in developing at each area of this progress out of the primitive economic and political conditions of the frontier into the complexity of city life.

Said Calhoun in 1817, "We are great, and rapidly -- I was about to say fearfully -- growing!" So saying, he touched the distinguishing feature of American life. All peoples show development: the germ theory of politics has been sufficiently emphasized. In the case of most nations, however, the development has occurred in a limited area; and if the nation has expanded, it has met other growing peoples whom it has conquered. But in the case of the United States we have a different phenomenon.

Limiting our attention to the Atlantic Coast, we have the familiar phenomenon of the evolution of institutions in a limited area, such as the rise of representative government; the differentiation of simple colonial governments into complex organs; the progress from primitive industrial society, without division of labor, up to manufacturing civilization. But we have in addition to this a *recurrence of the process of evolution in each western area reached in the process of expansion*. Thus American development has exhibited not merely advance along a single line but a return to primitive conditions on a continually advancing frontier line, and a new development for that area.

American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character. The true point of view in the history of this nation is not the Atlantic Coast, it is the Great West. Even the slavery struggle, which is made so exclusive an object of attention by writers like Professor von Holst, occupies its important place in American history because of its relation to westward expansion.

In this advance, the frontier is the outer edge of the wave -- the meeting point between savagery and civilization. Much has been written about the frontier from the point of view of border warfare and the chase, but as a field for the serious study of the economist and the historian it has been neglected.

What is the frontier? It is not the European frontier -- a fortified boundary line running through dense populations. The most significant thing about it is that it lies at the hither edge of free land. In the census reports it is treated as the margin of that settlement which has a density of two or more to the square mile. The term is an elastic one, and for our purposes does not need sharp definition. We shall consider the whole frontier belt, including the Indian country and the outer margin of the "settled area" of the census reports. This paper will make no attempt to treat the subject exhaustively; its aim is simply to call attention to the frontier as a fertile field for investigation, and to suggest some of the problems which arise in connection with it.

In the settlement of America we have to observe how European life entered the continent, and how America modified and developed that life and reacted on Europe. Our early history is the study of European germs developing in an American environment. Too exclusive attention has been paid by institutional students to the Germanic origins, too little to the American factors.

Now, the frontier is the line of most rapid and effective Americanization. The wilderness masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries, tools, modes of travel, and thought. It takes him from the railroad car and puts him in the birch canoe. It strips off the garments of civilization and arrays him in the hunting shirt and the moccasin. It puts him in the log cabin of the Cherokee and Iroquois and runs an Indian palisade around him. Before long he has gone to planting Indian corn and plowing with a sharp stick; he shouts the war cry and takes the scalp in orthodox Indian fashion. In short, at the frontier the environment is at first too strong for the man. He must accept the conditions which it furnishes or perish, and so he fits himself into the Indian clearings and follows the Indian trails.

Little by little he transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe, not simply the development of Germanic germs, anymore than the first phenomenon was a case of reversion to the Germanic mark. The fact is, that here is a new product that is American. At first, the frontier was the Atlantic coast. It was the frontier of Europe in a very real sense. Moving westward, the frontier became more and more American. *As successive terminal moraines result from successive glaciations, so each frontier leaves its traces behind it, and when it becomes a settled area the region still partakes of the frontier characteristics.* Thus the advance of the frontier has meant a steady movement away from the influence of Europe, a steady growth of independence on American lines. And to study this advance, the men who grew up under these conditions, and the political, economic, and social results of it, is to study the really American part of our history.

In the course of the seventeenth century the frontier was advanced up the Atlantic river courses, just beyond the "fall line," and the tidewater region became the settled area. In the first half of the eighteenth century, another advance occurred. Traders followed the Delaware and Shawnees Indians to the Ohio as early as the end of the first quarter of the century. Governor Spotswood, of Virginia, made an expedition in 1714 across the Blue Ridge. The end of the first quarter of the century saw the advance of the Scotch-Irish and the Palatine Germans up the Shenandoah Valley into the western part of Virginia, and along the Piedmont region of the Carolinas. The Germans in New York pushed the frontier of settlement up the Mohawk to German Flats. . .

In these successive frontiers we find natural boundary lines which have served to mark and to affect the characteristics of the frontiers, namely: The "fall line;" the Allegheny Mountains; the Mississippi; the Missouri where its direction approximates north and south; the line of the arid lands, approximately the ninety-ninth meridian; and the Rocky Mountains. The fall line marked the frontier of the seventeenth century; the Alleghenies that of the eighteenth; the Mississippi that of the first quarter of the nineteenth; the Missouri that of the middle of this century (omitting the California movement); and the belt of the Rocky Mountains and the arid tract, the present frontier. Each was won by a series of Indian wars. . .

The United States lies like a huge page in the history of society. Line by line as we read from west to east we find the record of social evolution.

It begins with the Indian and the hunter; it goes on to tell of the disintegration of savagery by the entrance of the trader, the pathfinder of civilization; we read the annals of the pastoral stage in ranch life; the exploitation of the soil by the raising of unrotated crops of corn and wheat in sparsely settled farming communities; the intensive culture of the denser farm settlement; and finally the manufacturing organization with city and factory system. This page is familiar to the student of census statistics, but how

little of it has been used by our historians. Each of these areas has had an influence in our economic and political history; the evolution of each into a higher stage has worked political transformations. But what constitutional historian has made any adequate attempt to interpret political facts by the light of these social areas and changes?

. . . Thus civilization in America has followed the arteries made by geology, pouring an ever richer tide through them, until at last the slender paths of aboriginal intercourse have been broadened and interwoven into the complex mazes of modern commercial lines; the wilderness has been interpenetrated by lines of civilization growing ever more numerous. It is like the steady growth of a complex nervous system for the originally simple, inert continent. If one would understand why we are to-day one nation, rather than a collection of isolated states, he must study this economic and social consolidation of the country. In this progress from savage conditions lie topics for the evolutionist.

The effect of the Indian frontier as a consolidating agent in our history is important. From the close of the seventeenth century various intercolonial congresses have been called to treat with Indians and establish common measures of defense. Particularism was strongest in colonies with no Indian frontier. This frontier stretched along the western border like a cord of union. The Indian was a common danger, demanding united action. Most celebrated of these conferences was the Albany congress of 1754, called to treat with the Six Nations, and to consider plans of union. Even a cursory reading of the plan proposed by the congress reveals the importance of the frontier. The powers of the general council and the officers were, chiefly, the determination of peace and war with the Indians, the regulation of Indian trade, the purchase of Indian lands, and the creation and government of new settlements as a security against the Indians.

It is evident that the unifying tendencies of the Revolutionary period were facilitated by the previous cooperation in the regulation of the frontier. In this connection may be mentioned the importance of the frontier, from that day to this, as a military training school, keeping alive the power of resistance to aggression, and developing the stalwart and rugged qualities of the frontiersman. . .

. . . Having now roughly outlined the various kinds of frontiers and their modes of advance, chiefly from the point of view of the frontier itself, we may next inquire what were the influences on the East and on the Old World. A rapid enumeration of some of the more noteworthy effects is all that I have time for.

First, we note that the frontier promoted the formation of a composite nationality for the American people. The coast was preponderantly English, but the later tides of continental immigration flowed across to the free lands. This was the case from the early colonial days. The Scotch-Irish and the Palatine Germans, or " Pennsylvania Dutch," furnished the dominant element in the stock of the colonial frontier. With these peoples were also the freed indentured servants, or redemptioners, who at the expiration of their time of service passed to the frontier. Governor Spotswood of Virginia writes in 1717, "The inhabitants of our frontiers are composed generally of such as have been transported hither as servants, and, being out of their time, settle themselves where land is to be taken up and that will produce the necessaries of life with little labor." Very generally these redemptioners were of non-English stock.

In the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics. The process has gone on from the early days to our own. Burke and other writers in the middle of the eighteenth century believed that Pennsylvania was "threatened with the danger of being wholly foreign in language, manners, and perhaps even inclinations." The German and Scotch-Irish elements in the frontier of the South were only less great. In the middle of the present century the German element in Wisconsin was already so considerable that leading publicists looked to the creation of a German state out of the commonwealth by concentrating

their colonization. Such examples teach us to beware of misinterpreting the fact that there is a common English speech in America into a belief that the stock is also English.

Before long the frontier created a demand for merchants. As it retreated from the coast it became less and less possible for England to bring her supplies directly to the consumer's wharfs and carry away staple crops, and staple crops began to give way to diversified agriculture for a time. The effect of this phase of the frontier action upon the northern section is perceived when we realize how the advance of the frontier aroused seaboard cities like Boston, New York, and Baltimore, to engage in rivalry for what Washington called "the extensive and valuable trade of a rising empire."

The legislation which most developed the powers of the national government, and played the largest part in its activity, was conditioned on the frontier. . .

So long as free land exists, the opportunity for a competency exists, and economic power secures political power. But the democracy born of free land, strong in selfishness and individualism, intolerant of administrative experience and education, and pressing individual liberty beyond its proper bounds, has its dangers as well as its benefits. Individualism in America has allowed a laxity in regard to governmental affairs which has rendered possible the spoils system and all the manifest evils that follow from the lack of a highly developed civic spirit. . .

From the conditions of frontier life came intellectual traits of profound importance. The works of travelers along each frontier from colonial days onward describe certain common traits, and these traits have, while softening down, still persisted as survivals in the place of their origin, even when a higher social organization succeeded. The result is that, to the frontier, the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness, that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients, that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends, that restless, nervous energy, that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom -- these are traits of the frontier, or traits called out elsewhere because of the existence of the frontier.

Since the days when the fleet of Columbus sailed into the waters of the New World, America has been another name for opportunity, and the people of the United States have taken their tone from the incessant expansion which has not only been open but has even been forced upon them. He would be a rash prophet who should assert that the expansive character of American life has now entirely ceased. Movement has been its dominant fact, and, unless this training has no effect upon a people, the American energy will continually demand a wider field for its exercise. But never again will such gifts of free land offer themselves.

For a moment, at the frontier, the bonds of custom are broken and unrestraint is triumphant. There is not *tabula rasa*. The stubborn American environment is there with its imperious summons to accept its conditions; the inherited ways of doing things are also there; and yet, in spite of environment, and in spite of custom, each frontier did indeed furnish a new field of opportunity, a gate of escape from the bondage of the past; and freshness, and confidence, and scorn of older society, impatience of its restraints and its ideas, and indifference to its lessons, have accompanied the frontier.

What the Mediterranean Sea was to the Greeks, breaking the bond of custom, offering new experiences, calling out new institutions and activities, that, and more, the ever retreating frontier has been to the United States directly, and to the nations of Europe more remotely. And now, four centuries from the discovery of America, at the end of a hundred years of life under the Constitution, the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history.

1. How did Turner attempt to apply “science” to history?
2. Why did Turner see the frontier as an important area for study?
3. What major American intellectual trait did Turner credit to the existence of free land?
4. According to Turner, how did the frontier forge American nationalism?

Source B

George Armstrong Custer, *My Life on the Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962) 22-23.

“If I were an Indian, I often think I would greatly prefer to cast my lot among those of my people adhered to the free open plains rather than submit to the confined limits of a reservation, there to be the recipient of the blessed benefits of civilization, with its vices thrown in without stint or measure. The Indian can never be permitted to view the question in this deliberate way. He is neither a luxury nor necessary of life. He can hunt, roam, and camp when and wheresoever he pleases, provided always that in so doing he does not run contrary to the requirements of civilization in its advancing tread. When the soil which he has claimed and hunted over for so long a time is demanded by this to him insatiable monster, there is no appeal; he must yield, or, like the car of Juggernaut, it will roll mercilessly over him, destroying as it advances. Destiny seems to have so willed it, and the world looks on and nods its approval. At best the history of our Indian tribes, no matter from what standpoint it is regarded, affords a melancholy picture of loss of life. Two hundred years ago it required millions to express in numbers the Indian population, while at the present time less than half the number of thousands will suffice for the purpose. Where and why have they gone? Ask the Saxon race, since whose introduction into and occupation of the country these vast changes have been effected.

But little idea can be formed of the terrible inroads which diseases before unknown to them have made upon their numbers. War has contributed its share, it is true, but disease alone has done much to depopulate many of the Indian tribes. It is stated that the smallpox was first introduced among them by the white man in 1837, and that in the short space of one month six tribes lost by this disease alone twelve thousand persons.⁷

Confusion sometimes arises from the division of the Indians into nations, tribes, and bands. A nation is generally a confederation of tribes which have sprung from a common stock or origin. The tribe is intended to embrace all bands and villages claiming a common name and is presided over by a head chief, while each band or village is presided over by one or more subordinate chiefs, but all acknowledging a certain allegiance to the head or main village. This division cannot always be accounted for. It arises sometimes from necessity, when the entire tribe is a

⁷ Modern historians like Robert Utley support claims that the American Fur Company deliberately introduced small pox infected blankets among the tribes on the Upper Missouri to consolidate their hold on the fur trade.

large one, and it is difficult to procure game and grazing in one locality sufficient for all. In such cases the various bands are not usually separated by any great distance, but regulate their movements so as to be able to act in each other's behalf. Sometimes a chief more warlike than the others, who favors war and conquest at all times and refuses to make peace even when his tribe assents to it, will separate himself, with those who choose to unite their fortunes with his, from the remainder of the tribe, and act for the time independently. Such a character produces endless trouble; his village becomes a shelter and rendezvous for all the restless spirits of the tribe. While the latter is or pretends to be at peace, this band continues to make war, yet when pressed or pursued avails itself of the protection of those who are supposed to be peaceable."

1. What is ironic about this excerpt?
2. Analyze Custer's diction in this passage using the following formula:

⇒ Custer (The author's name)
..... ⇒ plus an **adjective** (e.g.: sophisticated, varied, inventive, sparkling, mundane, colloquial, formal, artificially elevated, folksy, etc.)
⇒ the term: "diction"
⇒ a strong verb (e.g.: emphasizes, demonstrates, creates, generates, fulfills)
⇒ the function of the word choices (e.g.: **effect** those choices have on the **tone** of the piece)
⇒ two examples from the text

E.G.: (analyzing the essay "The Lobotomized Weasel School of Writing")
Crispin Sartwell's caustic diction underscores his disdain for secondary education in his choices of "boulders" and "weasels" to describe students and teachers.

Source C

We, The Northern Cheyenne People: Our Land, Our History, Our Culture, Chapter 2: "Coming Home" (Lame Deer, MT: Chief Dull Knife College, 2008). This text has been made available for free, on-line by the Montana State Library at <http://www.archive.org/details/wenortherncheyen2008amblrich>

1. The introduction occupies a privileged rhetorical position in the argument of a chapter or essay. What arguments are the authors working to present and/or counter?
2. How do Little Wolf's comments to Agent Miles conform or dissent from Turner's view of the West?
3. Is the Cheyenne perspective of the settled areas of the frontier in Kansas ironic?
4. How does the conclusion work to form the purpose of this chapter?

Source D

<p style="text-align: center;">45TH CONGRESS, } SENATE, } Mrs. Doc. 3d Session, } } No. 64.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LETTER</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FROM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THE SECRETARY OF WAR,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COMMUNICATING</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Information in relation to the escape of the Cheyenne Indians from Fort Robinson.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">FEBRUARY 18, 1879.—Ordered to be printed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WAR DEPARTMENT, Washington City, January 29, 1879.</p> <p>SIR: In reply to your letter of the 17th instant, including Senate resolution of the 15th instant, inquiring "into the circumstances which led to the recent escape of the Cheyenne Indians from Fort Robinson and their subsequent slaughter by the United States forces who were charged with their custody," I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of reports and such correspondence on the subject as are of record in this department.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Very respectfully, your obedient servant, GEO. W. McCRAERY, Secretary of War.</p> <p>Hon. W. B. ALLISON, Chairman Committee on Indian Affairs, United States Senate.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COPY OF CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED TO THE RECENT ESCAPE OF CHEYENNES FROM FORT ROBINSON, NEBRASKA, ETC.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, Washington, January 29, 1879.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Official copy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E. D. TOWNSEND, Adjutant-General.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Telegram.]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, Washington, January 18, 1879.</p> <p>Lieut. Gen. P. H. SHERIDAN, Commanding Division Missouri, Chicago, Illinois:</p> <p>The General desires you to cause an immediate authentic report of the arrest and confinement of the Cheyennes at Fort Robinson, the circum-</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 ESCAPE OF CHEYENNE INDIANS FROM FORT ROBINSON.</p> <p>stances which led to their recent escape, and the subsequent action of the military authorities based thereon.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">E. D. TOWNSEND, Adjutant-General.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI, Chicago, Ill., January 22, 1879.</p> <p>SIR: In compliance with telegraphic instructions from the General of the Army, of the 18th instant, I have the honor to forward herewith a brief of dispatches which have been received at and sent from these headquarters, in order of date, which furnish a concise history of the circumstances attending the capture, confinement, and escape of the Cheyenne prisoners.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Very respectfully, your obedient servant, P. H. SHERIDAN, Lieutenant-General, Commanding.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ADJUTANT-GENERAL OF THE ARMY, Washington, D. C.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRIEFS.</p> <p>General Crook telegraphic, October 26, 1878, that Lieutenant Johnson, at Camp (Fort) Robinson, Neb., reports information received from Capt. J. B. Johnson, Third Cavalry, that he had captured 60 of the hostile Cheyennes on the Niobrara River, and that he was in pursuit of another party of them. (See paper marked 7327, A. G. O. 1878, accompanying.)</p> <p>General Crook reports, October 28, 1878, telegram from Capt. J. B. Johnson, dated near Starbuck Creek, Nebraska, October 24, reporting his arrival there the night before, in a violent snow-storm, with 150 Cheyenne prisoners and 140 head of stock; that he had dispersed and dismounted the Indians and sent the stock to Camp Robinson. (See paper marked 7327, A. G. O. 1878, accompanying.)</p> <p>In telegram to General Crook, October 28, 1878, acknowledging receipt of foregoing telegram, Lieutenant-General Sheridan says the balance of the Cheyennes must be in the hills, and that there cannot be many more. He expresses same opinion in telegram to Adjutant-General of the Army, October 29.</p> <p>General Crook telegraphic, October 26, 1878, that Maj. C. H. Carlton, Third Cavalry, reports he learns from the Indians captured that they were not aware of the removal of the stock agencies from Camp Robinson and Sheridan, and that they intended to go to the latter agency; and that he intends to look for the trail of those still out near Little Wolf. (See paper marked 7322, A. G. O. 1878.)</p> <p>General Crook telegraphic, October 25, 1878, that Maj. C. H. Carlton reports the Cheyenne prisoners are now confined in a set of quarters at Camp Robinson; that they gave considerable trouble before arriving, saying they would rather die than return to the Indian Territory. General Crook asks what disposition shall be made of them. (See paper marked 7322, A. G. O. 1878.)</p> <p>In repeating this telegram to the Adjutant-General of the Army, October 29, Lieutenant-General Sheridan expresses his belief that these Indians were encouraged to come north, and that the whole reservation system will be endangered unless all these Indians are taken back and compelled to stay, except the ring-brothers, whom he recommends to send to Florida.</p> <p>General Crook, October 31, 1878, telegraphic dispatch from Maj. C. H. Carlton, at Camp Robinson, Neb., reporting disposition made of troops to capture Cheyennes still out, and stating that if prisoners are to go south, it will be necessary to go and hunt them, and recommending they be not informed of present or they will give trouble, as he has but few men to spare to guard them. (These dispatches not received at War Department.)</p> <p>In acknowledging receipt of this telegram, Lieutenant-General Sheridan says it would be well to send more men to Camp Robinson to guard prisoners; that the post is more important than Fort Laramie and other posts in the department, and should have a fair sized garrison this winter. General Crook replies, November 1, 1878, that this matter has been attended to.</p>
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ESCAPE OF CHEYENNE INDIANS FROM FORT ROBINSON. 3

General Crook forwards, November 1, 1878, telegram from Maj. C. H. Carlson, stating that Red Cloud requests that the knives of the prisoners be taken from them, as they will kill themselves, if necessary, to prevent returning work; also that those who conducted outrages have escaped north; that three captured had avoided surrounding outrages; and Major Carlson believes that Red Cloud's opinion is correct. (See paper marked 726, A. G. O., 1878.)

Lieutenant-General Sheridan, in forwarding this to the Adjutant-General of the Army, November 5, 1878, says it looks as if there was an unnecessary amount of cruelty in the Department for the Plains for these Indians and suspects they were encouraged to come north. He sympathizes with Indians, but says that to encourage them to oppose the policy of the government is doubtful propriety; that unless these Indians are sent back, the reservation system is a mere mockery which will endanger the stability. If Indians can leave without punishment, they will not stay on the reservations. (Not received at War Department.)

Lieutenant-General Sheridan telegraphs, November 8, 1878, the Adjutant-General of the Army, stating that some disposition be made of the Cheyenne prisoners now at Camp Robinson, they being a source of great inconvenience and expense, situated as at present. (See paper marked 763, A. G. O., 1878.)

Lieutenant-General Sheridan, November 13, 1878, telegraphs General Sheridan that the hostile Cheyennes captured had to be kept at Camp Robinson in order to have a secure place for them and sufficient force to guard them, and advises that the decision of the government in their case be kept from them until all arrangements are completed for carrying it out. (See paper marked 738, A. G. O., 1878.)

Consisting general Department of Dakota forwards, November 5, 1878, report of Capt. P. V. Voss, (Fall Cavalry, of scout by his command) to Major C. H. Carlson, Cheyennes. (See paper marked 738, A. G. O., 1878.)

General Crook forwards, November 6, 1878, official reports of Maj. C. H. Carlson and Capt. J. B. Johnson, giving details of the capture of the Cheyennes. Major Carlson states that when, after their capture, he ordered the Indians to get ready to move to Camp Robinson, they decided, after several hours' talk, they would rather die where they were than return to the Indian Territory. Seeing that going to Camp Robinson was a step in that direction, they began to dig rifle-pits and constructed breast-works opposite each detachment of troops by whom they were surrounded. During the night two pieces of artillery arrived, seeing which the Indians consented to move, and were taken to Fort Robinson. (See paper marked 737, A. G. O., 1878.)

The governor of Kansas, in letter November 10, 1878, states that those Cheyenne Indians, on their passage through Kansas, committed crimes resulting in their capture, more than fifty men were captured and taken to Fort Robinson, and were then murdered. States that an Indian lieutenant on recruiting in the Indian details demands the abolition of Cheyenne insurance to prevent a recurrence, and calls upon the Secretary of War for the authority of the principal chiefs, Bull-Kettle, Old Crow, Hog, Little Wolf, and others whose identity can be established in the names of number and names traveling. Requests that additional troops be stationed at Fort Hill and Reno to protect settlers. (See papers marked 831, A. G. O., 1878.)

In letter November 13, 1878, forwarding above, Lieutenant-General Sheridan says the question is, can we send more troops to the points designated. As the troops in this division are being placed when the danger is in Kansas, suggests that Eighteenth Infantry be ordered to Department of the Missouri, and that if the six companies Fourth Cavalry in Texas can be spared, that they be sent to Fort Wallace, Kan. Suggests that the Cheyennes at Fort Reno, Ind. T., strike north to some point where they would take place. We have not half enough soldiers, and it is unadvisable to give orders to an inadequate force to engage an enemy whose annihilation is the result of defeat, to say nothing of the responsibility which the military is held for the number of delinquent soldiers. (See papers marked 810, A. G. O., 1878.)

General Crook reports November 15, 1878, that he prevails against contingencies and will receive in mail in the Missouri, he has received about 2000 prisoners at each of the posts Fort Wallace and Dodge, Kan., and asks approval, which was given in letter of November 23, 1878. (See received at War Department.)

General Crook reports, December 18, 1878, of telegram from Maj. C. H. Carlson, commanding troops near Camp Robinson, stating that after diligent search through march the Cheyennes still out have not been discovered. General Crook thinks that as long as Major Carlson's command is out the Indians will manage to evade it. Will withdraw this command and if any of the Cheyennes are held for the purpose of Robinson to arrest them. (Not received at War Department.)

General Sheridan refers December 5, 1878, copy of letter from Secretary Interior November 22, 1878, that Lieutenant-General Sheridan reports that the Cheyenne prisoners be taken to Fort Wallace or other post in Kansas, with a view to identification of such as committed outrages and be tried by civil authorities, and that the remainder be sent to their agency in Indian Territory. General Sheridan says if the

4 ESCAPE OF CHEYENNE INDIANS FROM FORT ROBINSON.

captives march towards their reservation, Fort Wallace will be a good place for the purpose, but if they are sent by rail Fort Leavenworth is a better place. (See paper marked 830 and 870, A. G. O., 1878.)

Copy of this communication was sent December 30, confidentially, to General Crook, with directions to send the prisoners under guard, by rail, to Fort Leavenworth. Crook also writes to General Pope, with directions that upon arrival of the prisoners at Fort Leavenworth, a number of them be retained for identification, and the rest returned to Cheyenne agent at Fort Reno, Ind. T. The governor of Kansas also writes to General Pope, with directions that upon arrival of the prisoners at Fort Leavenworth, a number of them be retained for identification, and the rest returned to Cheyenne agent at Fort Reno, Ind. T. The governor of Kansas also writes to General Pope, with directions that upon arrival of the prisoners at Fort Leavenworth, a number of them be retained for identification, and the rest returned to Cheyenne agent at Fort Reno, Ind. T. (See paper marked 830, A. G. O., 1878.)

General Crook telegraphs December 23, 1878, that the Cheyenne prisoners are much in need of clothing, and asks that clothing be issued them by Indian Bureau from annuity goods on hand at Red Cloud or Special Mail Agency, to be charged to the appropriation for support of Cheyennes in Indian Territory. (See paper marked 830, A. G. O., 1878.)

General Pope reports information December 23, 1878, as to when Cheyennes would arrive at Leavenworth, as he wished to communicate with the governor of Kansas in order to have persons present who could identify them. (Not received at War Department.)

Lieutenant-General Sheridan telegraphs General Crook December 24, 1878, for this information.

General Crook acknowledges by telegram, December 24, 1878, receipt of instructions sent him on December 19 relative to disposition of prisoners, and says it would be extremely rare that any were necessary to accompany them to their agency, and that the men will have to be furnished. (Not received at War Department.)

Lieutenant-General Sheridan in reply telegraphs General Crook December 24, 1878, that he desired the Cheyennes served as soon as it was right and proper to do so, and that such success as was necessary to accomplish this be adopted. The subject of supplying clothing had been again referred to Washington.

January 6, 1879, General Crook repeats telegram received from commanding officer Camp (Fort) Robinson, asking if he should issue clothing to the prisoners—40 men, 25 women, and 45 children. The Indians say they will die before returning to the Indian Territory, and he has to increase but to take their food and fuel away. Drill Kettle is inclined to give up, but the young men won't let him. He offered to lead the children, but the Indians would not allow it. General Crook says he had to ask the military to perform this disagreeable duty. Asks if the Indian Department can send some one as is anticipated the movement, the military deputy to furnish the men. (See paper marked 85, A. G. O., 1879.)

The Lieutenant-General, in repeating this telegram to the Adjutant-General of the Army on January 7, and the weather has been so extremely cold since the order was given for the prisoners, that an article could be taken, especially as they are without clothing, and no reply has been received to appeal made for it on December 30. To General Crook, on the same day, the Lieutenant-General telegraphed, saying he had forwarded him 4000 of the clothing, and cannot see how the Indians can be served without warm clothing during this cold period.

General Crook, January 3, 1879, repeats telegram from commanding officer Fort Robinson, stating that the Indians refuse to move; but, if not interfered with, he will get them away; has been holding a large crowd to take them to the railroad, and thinks they should move as quickly as possible; that Commissioner Hay is telegraphing about clothing for the Indians. General Crook asks authority to issue clothing from the Quartermaster's Department, if the Indian Bureau Department is unable to do so. (See paper marked 84, A. G. O., 1879.)

Adjutant-General of the Army telegraphs, January 10, 1879, that the Indian Office has been authorized by the Secretary of the Interior to purchase in open market for the Cheyenne prisoners such clothing as might be needed for them, to an amount not exceeding \$200. (See paper marked 100, A. G. O., 1879.)

Adjutant-General of the Army, January 7, 1879, refers to Lieutenant-General Sheridan with directions to hold the prisoners for further orders. Copy of letter from Interior Department, recommending that the remainder of the Cheyenne prisoners, not included in the list to be turned over to the civil authorities, be held at Fort Wallace, in order to consider the propriety of selecting officers to be sent to Santa Fe, N. M. (See paper marked 908, A. G. O., 1879.)

This was referred to the commanding general Department of the Missouri, January 10, for proper action when the Cheyenne prisoners reach Fort Leavenworth.

January 10, General Crook forwards telegram from Captain Wessels, commanding Camp (Fort) Robinson, stating that the Cheyennes, at 10 p. m. (1878), broke out from their building, about 30 killed, and surrendered, making 85 in our hands, including Hog, Crow, and Left-Hand, these leaders; will have many more before dark. Five companies are out in pursuit. (See paper marked 114, A. G. O., 1879.)

ESCAPE OF CHEYENNE INDIANS FROM FORT ROBINSON. 5

General Crook repeats telegram received from commanding officer Camp (Fort) Robinson, January 11, stating that Indians commenced outbreak by firing upon the guard, killing one and wounding four; they continued firing during their flight, evidently having arms and ammunition. No far 7 soldiers have been killed and 7 wounded; also that Captain Wessels left only that morning (11th) in pursuit. (Not received at War Department.)

January 12, the Lieutenant-General telegraphs General Crook, asking if he could get any further information of affairs at Fort Robinson. To this General Crook replied that he has not been able to obtain a detailed report, so he sent Lieutenant Schuyler, of his staff, to Robinson to investigate and report. (Not received at War Department.)

January 13, General Crook repeats telegram received from commanding officer Fort Robinson (Captain Wessels) stating that the Indians were so well armed and supplied with such ammunition as any Indians that ever went on the war-path. They had pistols and cartridges in quantities, and used them to great advantage. He fought them all day on the 11th, 12 miles from the post and left them extrajured after dark. Will forward a written report of the whole affair on the 13th. Says great care was taken not to hurt women or children from the commencement of the end of the affair, and that others not seen were as humane and tender with children and women as any people could be. (See paper marked 126, A. G. O., 1879.)

In telegram to General Crook, of January 15, the Lieutenant-General says Captain Wessels should not allow the Cheyennes to escape, but in doing this his operations should be governed by the highest regard for humanity. If they have cartridges, they must have been served for long in the camp where they first made a stand. (See paper marked 126, A. G. O., 1879.)

To the adjutant-general of the Army on the same day, the Lieutenant-General telegraphed the substance of the foregoing dispatch from Captain Wessels.

January 15, General Crook repeats telegram from Captain Wessels of that date, stating that Lieutenant Simpson struck the Indians that morning and had a corporal killed, and later, near that Creek road, another man wounded; that he sent Vienna out at once, and at 4 a. m. tomorrow (14th) starts himself with two companies; also that his command has been skirmishing with the Indians since 10 o'clock on the night of the 13th, and have had 3 killed and 8 wounded. (Not received at War Department.)

In acknowledging receipt of this telegram on the 16th, the Lieutenant-General says it is to be hoped the Cheyennes will be captured, and asks General Crook to give such orders as will accomplish it.

January 14, General Crook repeats telegram from Captain Wessels at Fort Robinson of that date, stating that the day before they fired 40 rounds of shell and shot into the rifle-pits of the Indians, who were entrenched 30 miles away from the post, on the Flat Creek road, without injuring any of them, and in the night the Indians got away; that his command is over set, but he will try them again with two other companies. (See papers marked 224, A. G. O., 1879.)

January 15, General Crook telegraphs that he ordered the commanding officers of Fort Robinson and Laramie to take up the Cheyenne trail and follow it until the Indians are captured; and that he expects to hear from Lieutenant Schuyler that day. (Not received at War Department.)

In acknowledging receipt of this telegram, on the 15th the Lieutenant-General says the pursuit so far after these Cheyennes is well justified, and that it seems strange how often or treaty outrages, with twenty-five or thirty agencies and villages, could get away from five companies of cavalry or even two companies of infantry.

January 15, General Crook repeats telegram from Lieutenant Schuyler at Fort Robinson of that date, stating that after full investigation of affairs there he finds that on the 26 instant the breakers were notified that they were to get back; that after consultation, "Hog" as spokesman, the next day, said they would rather die than go back, and the attempt to storm and burn their tent was the only alternative. On the 26th instant it was decided to arrest "Hog" as the leading opposer, and he was killed, but not before a struggle in which a soldier was killed; the Indians in the prison immediately barricaded the doors, saw up the boxes, and constructed rifle pits in contact all the windows. From this time the prison was a den of lions. At the making, but it was supposed the Indians had no arms other than a few knives. At ten minutes before ten o'clock (on the 31st) four shots were fired from the west end of the prison, killing two of the sentinels, and a third was fired from a point within the guard-towers, wounding a corporal. Simultaneously a rush was made through all the windows, the Indian relying on speed to kill and be killed like Malays running amok. The guard saw where the Cheyennes were, and the Indians moved toward the tower, the squares were driven to a body ahead of the tent, at least five of the latter keeping up an incessant fire; it was in returning this fire that several women and children were killed. No woman or child was intentionally injured, and women and children showed great daring in trying to save their lives. No Indians were killed who could have been captured. That when the Indians were first cap-

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tured they were but partially disarmed, and several guns and pistols were taken from them after they entered the prison, so they had ample time to prepare arms under the floor. The prison has been so guarded that arms could not have been introduced, but events proved that they had 45 guns in addition to the 3 obtained from the dead sentinels, and some few revolvers; that the women and the men saved (having if they returned north, and in this affair all excepted to die. The casualties up to this are 3 soldiers killed and 7 wounded, 26 Indians killed and 71 captured. (See paper marked 134, A. G. O., 1879.)

January 16, General Crook repeats telegram from Lieutenant Schuyler, at Fort Robinson, stating that of the escaped Cheyennes there are fully 45 not accounted for by death or capture of these 23 men; that Captain Wessels started out with a company that morning, leaving Captain Wessels in command of the post. (See paper marked 137, A. G. O., 1879.)

January 16, General Crook repeats telegram from Lieutenant Schuyler, stating that he intercepted Hog, Crow, and Left-Hand, who say that all the young men, including some 35 of their party, who were lately in prison at Fort Robinson, were actively engaged in the Kansas outrages; that Hog and Crow repeated emphatically that the Cheyennes would never have been gotten out of their prison alive after they knew that the trail to go south; that cutting down their rationaries made them more desperate, and that the arms used have been concealed in their clothing when first captured; also, that if any of the fugitives escape the troops they will probably join Little Wolf, whom they believe to be in the vicinity of the Powder. (See paper marked 138, A. G. O., 1879.)

January 16, General Crook telegraphs that the Cheyennes were found 22 miles distant from where they were last seen. Says a band of horses were taken from a herd on the Hilkey road, it was supposed by some of Little Wolf's band; that he has ordered troops from Fort Reno after them. (See paper marked 138, A. G. O., 1879.)

Agent from Pine Ridge reports the Sioux were scattered over the Cheyenne lands. January 19, General Crook telegraphs that Agent Irwin, now at Robinson, says that he telegraphed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to have vessels and children of Cheyennes freed now in confinement there turned over to the Red Cloud Indians, who should be in positive sense; that Irwin regards this as a measure of great importance, and his own belief is that if report is granted it will do good. (Not received at War Department.)

January 19, the General of the Army telegraphs that the Secretary of War wishes the commanding officer of Camp (Fort) Robinson instructed, in case he sees any Red Cloud's vessels, to do so with the view of securing the surrender of the escaped Cheyennes rather than for the purpose of fighting them. (See paper marked 131, A. G. O., 1879.)

Reported to General Crook same day. In acknowledging receipt of this telegram, the Lieutenant-General says he has no official information of any intention to use Red Cloud's vessels, and that he feels somewhat disquieted at the manner in which the whole business at Fort Robinson has been conducted.

HEADQUARTERS BATTALION THIRD CAVALRY,
Camp near Camp Robinson, Nebr., October 27, 1878.

SIR: I have the honor to state that on the morning of the 25th October Dull Knife's band Cheyenne Indians were camped in the thicket under a guard from this command. As they had been brought in in a blinding snow-storm their numbers were variously estimated. Their ponies had been taken away from them, and such few arms as could be found under the circumstances.

When I directed them to get ready to move to Camp Robinson, they had a talk of several hours, with the decision that they would die where they were in preference to returning to Indian Territory, and seemed to think Camp Robinson a step in that direction.

As it was a matter of indifference which way we moved, I offered to take them to Camp Sheridan, but they declined, evidently did not believe me, and seemed to think they would be killed the moment they left the thicket, and were therefore desperate. As it was then too late to go to either post, had they been willing, I camped the troops directly around the thicket, on open ground and in easy range. From the moment they heard they were going to Robinson they set to work digging pits, and when the troops camped, constructed breastworks opposite each detachment of troops; also indulged in some war songs. Two companies of Seventh Cavalry were at the time marching from Sheridan toward me. Major Tilford, hearing of the condition of affairs, very kindly, and without request from me, ordered them to continue their march and report to me. Captain Manshan very kindly sent out a howitzer, obtaining an escort for it from Major Tilford. Lieutenant Chase, Third Cavalry, under orders to join, very thoughtfully (but without orders) brought a brass piece with him.

These detachments were arriving during the night, and were evidently observed by the Indians, for after their arrival they sent out word that they would be ready to go to Sheridan in the morning. In the morning they were shown the numbers and position of the troops, and informed that they had been allowed a choice as to direction, and declined it. Now they must go to Robinson, and would have nothing to eat until they arrived there, and must decide at once. They decided to go, and arrived here at ten o'clock at night. After arrival here their breech-loaders were taken from them. The few arms taken from them at camp on Chadron were muzzle-loaders or unserviceable.

The position of the troops seemed to me a delicate one. An assault would probably have resulted in killing the majority of men and women. It might have been considered that after the Indians had surrendered and had given up their horses and arms, the troops then murdered them. Lone Bear and Two Lance (Sioux) staid in the Indian camp during the night to see that none escaped.

I promised (and gave) Two Lance his daughter (who was married to a Cheyenne) and her children, whenever the Cheyennes were once started on the road to Robinson. I promised to treat them as prisoners of war until they should arrive at Camp Robinson, but persistently urged upon them that I would make no promise as to their future disposition or punishment, and I think they understood it.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. H. CARLTON,
Major Third Cavalry, Commanding.

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL,
Department of the Platte, Omaha Barracks, Nebr.

7966, A. G. O., 1878.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,
Chicago, November 5, 1878.

Respectfully forwarded to the Adjutant-General of the Army:

It looks to me as if there was an unnecessary amount of sympathy in the Department of the Platte for these Cheyenne prisoners, and I wish to state also that I have had my suspicions that these Indians had some encouragement to come up before they even started. I sympathize with the Indians as much as any one, but I think that to encourage Indians in opposition to the policy of the government is a matter of doubtful propriety. The condition of these Indians is pitiable, but it is my opinion that unless they are sent back to where they came from the whole reservation system will receive a shock which will endanger its stability. Most of the reservation Indians are dissatisfied, and if they can leave without punishment or fear of being sent back, they will not stay long. These Indians certainly should be sent back to their reservation, or those at the reservation should be permitted to come north.

P. H. SHERIDAN,
Lieutenant-General.

1. How does the stance toward the Cheyenne taken by field officers like Crook and Carlton differ from the stance taken by Sheridan?
2. Sheridan's publically stated opinion towards Indians seems to have shifted from the time when he openly advocated outright genocide. Why do you suppose this has happened?

Source E
Proceeding of a Board of Officers
Fort Robinson, Nebraska, 25 January 1879
[Excerpt]

Although **Wild Hog's** questioning is cut off in the end since he seemed "sullen and reluctant," when asked if the Cheyenne believed they would starve death, answered "yes." When asked if he would rather stay in prison than go south "he answered affirmatively." (3-4)

Pumpkin Seed (13 year old Cheyenne male) testifies that "They did not want to be taken back, would rather die, were afraid of being sent to Florida." (9)

Pvt. Louis Young (guard) Co. E, 3rd Cavalry "I heard Lieutenant Chase tell Captain Wessels that Hog said that they were going to try to escape that night. Did not hear Captain Wessels reply. This was in the presence of about fifty (50) men." (19)

Second Lieutenant George F. Chase, 3rd Cavalry, testifies that “From the first they vowed they would die before they would go south.” (31)

Captain J.B. Johnson, 3rd Cavalry, Asked to testify “particularly in reference to the temper of the Indians and the manner of disarming them,” testifies that during the trip to Ft. Robinson “there was a great deal of rambling talk . . . but stating all through that they would rather die than go back where they came from. That they would not go” (59-62)

Capt. P.D. Vroom, 3rd Cavalry

“Captain Wessels notified the Indians they would have to go south . . . there were five Indians present. They said they would not go, that this was their country, that they were born and raised here and that their children were born here.” (89)

When asked by the Board “Why the Indians broke out of prison room to almost certain death”? Vroom: “Because I think they preferred death to going south, I have heard the young men were afraid of being hanged for the Kansas outrages, but I do not know where that story comes from, I do know that they said they would rather die than return south.” (90-91)

First Lieutenant James Simpson “I have heard them say they would die before they would go back.” (94)

James Roland, “Half-breed Interpreter” [he had travelled south with the Cheyenne] relates that Wild Hog had told Wessels that he was going to break out.

First Lieutenant James Simpson “I did hear a civilian say that he had shot a wounded squaw through the head with a pistol but that he did not kill her . . . to the best of my belief he was Mr. Edward Cook, Division Superintendent of the Sidney and Black Hills stage line.”

Question “You mentioned the fact of seeing two men driving in a buckboard among the bodies. Did you hear any of their conversation?”

“I did. There were three men in the buckboard. I saw them search the bodies of dead Indians in the bluffs one man said ‘I got a pipe, that’s what I’ve been looking for,’ one man remained with the horses and the other two searched the bodies of the Indians.” (94-105)

Henry Clifford, a civilian who lived just east of the barracks and had been employed as an interpreter during the confinement, testifies that “I understand that I have been reported and even in the papers as having killed and scalped Indians that night. But that is not true, I saw the day I road (sic) over the field that at least six women who had been indecently exposed, I saw three Indians who had been scalped, one twice.” (154-155)

Second Lieutenant J.F. Cummings, 3rd Cavalry, Post Adjutant, testifies that he received permission from Captain Wessels to begin collecting Northern Cheyenne casualties. “I packed the bodies as I found them and when I got a wagon load I sent it back to the saw mill, I arranged the bodies in rows, men in one row and women and children in another. I don’t remember how many of the bodies this side of bluffs were scalped but all of those in bluffs were scalped, From appearance of the bodies I don’t think the scalps had been taken off only 10 or 15 minutes

before. On arriving near the bluffs I saw two citizens mounted up among the bodies and while I was getting the body of a man out of a bluff they shouted to me . . . one man name Clifford told me he had captured this man in a hole . . . Clifford used words to this effect ‘I saw he wasn’t armed and didn’t know whether to shoot him or not but I saw you coming and thought I’d wait till you came up.’ I then told him that no Indians were to be killed unless absolutely necessary and I wanted him to remember that.” Following the trail into the bluffs collecting more dead bodies, Cummings found “The bodies of the women were exposed, their clothing being drawn up over their heads. The two citizens had left me before this, but before I first encountered them, I had seen them moving about the ground where the bodies were subsequently found. It is most decidedly my opinion that these two citizens were the men who had exposed and mutilated these bodies.” (157-159)

Summary of the Board:

- That although certain individuals may be “recognized by Whites as the Chiefs, they had in point of fact little authority” in making all decisions. (191)
- After two of their leaders, Wild Hog and Old Crow, were “ironed” (put into shackles and removed to another location) “This seemed to the Indians an indication that they authorities were about to resort to extreme measures.” (192)
- Considering the conduct of the Northern Cheyenne warriors, pointed out that the escape “was covered by the rear guard, not over a half-dozen in number, who showing the most devoted heroism met death in the performance of their duty.” (194)
- Considering the circumstances of their banishment to Oklahoma, the Northern Cheyenne were “unanimous in their complaint of hardship and ill treatment. It is very easy to imagine that they were quite justified in their flight.” (200)
- The Board questions if “the dignity of the Government require[d] the forcible removal of these people back to the Indian Territory, at any rate prior to a full investigation into their complaints? It is neither the province nor the desire of this Board to criticize its superiors; but it is convinced that the return of the Indians to the South could only have been accomplished through bloodshed.” (201)
- “The recourse to measures of starvation bears too strong an analogy to the ancient, but now exploded, practice of torture applied to a person to compel confession, not to startle the supporters of modern leniency.” (201)
- In closing “attaches no blame to anyone in the Military service, and in view of all of this unfortunate business; of the manifest fact that collision with the Indians and consequent loss of life was unavoidable; of the evident desire of everyone concerned to carry out the orders of the Government in the most effective and yet humane manner; and of the probability that no one else--of equal experience or judgment—could have done any better, respectfully recommends that no further action be taken.” (204)

- 1. Make a conjecture on the willingness of 3rd Cavalry soldiers to relate the comments of the Cheyenne on their captivity.**
- 2. How does the evidence of atrocities conform to or erode Turner’s vision of the West?**
- 3. How does the Board’s summary complicate the story of violent conflict on the frontier?**

Source F

Solomon D. Butcher "Sylvester Rawding Family," 1886



1. What do the details in this image tell you about life on the homestead frontier?
2. What does this picture tell you about Butcher's point of view toward his subject?
3. Butcher's subjects often went to great lengths to choose what to include in their portraits. Identify some of Rawding's choices and then make an assertion about what he seemed to value.

Source G

Otto Becker, "Custer's Last Fight," 1889



1. Consider the prominent figures in the foreground. What does this imply about the popular view of mixed bloods in this time period?
2. Describe Custer's physical appearance and how it relates to Turner's view of the function of the frontier.

Source H

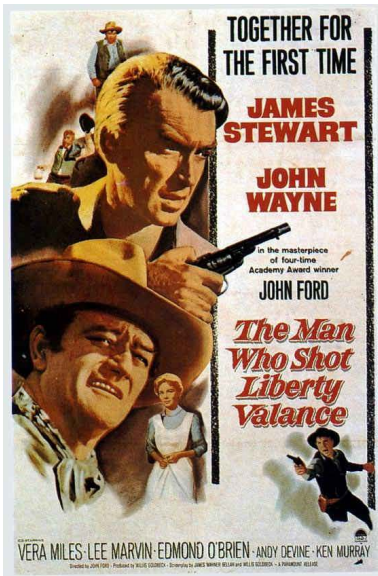
[“Soldiers Falling into Camp”], Kicking Bear (Mato Wanartaka), c.1898



1. How does the composition of Kicking Bear’s Work differ from Becker’s of the same scene?
2. How does this differing point of view illustrate the differing visions of the artists?
3. What are the potential audiences for these pieces? How would each piece be effective or not?

Source I

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance” John Ford, Director, 1962 (film clip)



1. Consider the following speech from the film clip at the close of the movie:

Ransom Stoddard: You're not going to use the story, Mr. Scott?

Maxwell Scott: No, sir. This is the West, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend

How does this speech confirm or reject the thrust of Turner’s view of the role of the frontier in America?