



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2001 Volume IV: Race and Ethnicity in Contemporary Art and Literature

Debunking the Myth of the American West

Guide for Curriculum Unit 01.04.10
by Dina Secchiaroli

This unit looks into the myth of the American West as we know it and as it has been portrayed in Hollywood, and uncovers the truth of our nation's history. The history of the West is complicated and messy, and the unit begins to make sense of what really happened. Themes covered in the unit are land boundaries, the complexity of this history, conquest, racial convergence, women of the West, uncovering the truth, coming to terms with the past, and closure. This unit covers literature, art, history, and film. I explore history, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* and *Smoke Signals* by Sherman Alexie, the movie *Lonestar*, "Woman Hollering Creek" by Sandra Cisneros, "The Hammon and the Beans" by Americo Paredes, along with a variety of artists. Activities included are a research project, art project, close reading, CAPT practice, and class discussions.

(Recommended for American Literature, U.S. History, American Studies, and Art, grades 7-12.)

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>