

Historiography of the West

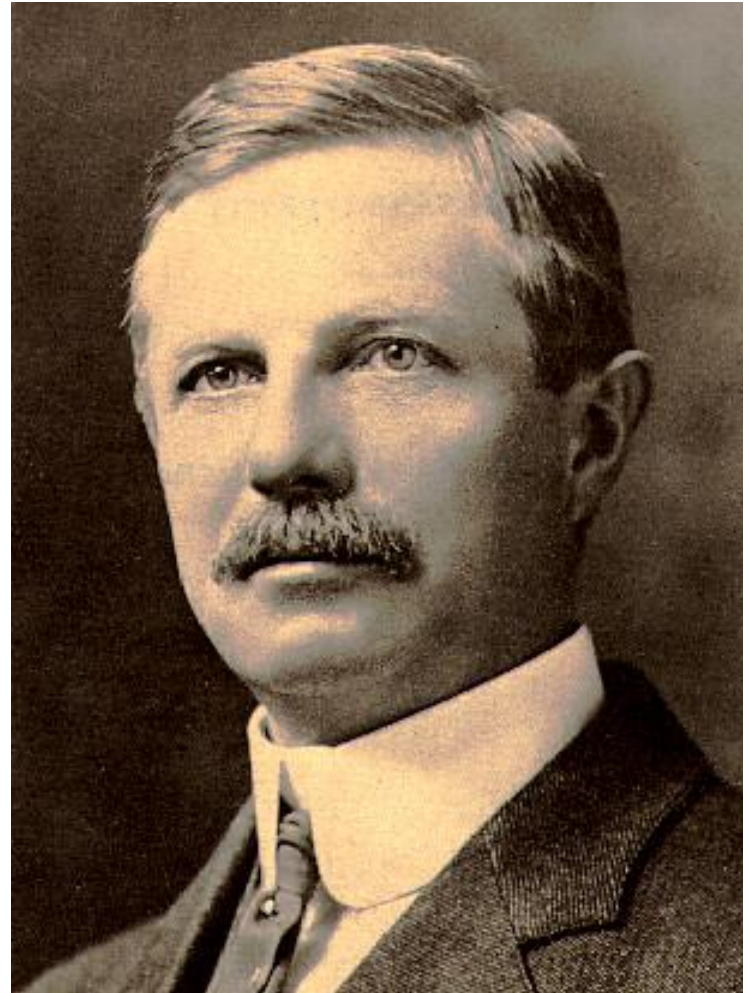
Interpretations of the American
Conquest of the West

What is Historiography

- **Past** = Stuff that happened “back then”
- **History** = Interpreting and Making Meaning of the Past
- **Historiography** = HOW we interpret and make meaning of the past
 - Practices & Methods
 - History of Interpretations

Frederick Jackson Turner

- 1861-1932
- Professional Historian:
Univ of Wisconsin
- Turner Thesis:
 - Speech at Columbian
Exposition (1893)
 - Frontier experience
created a unique
American culture



William Cody

- 1846-1917
- “...done nearly everything a man could do in the west.”
- Showman:
 - Wild West Show



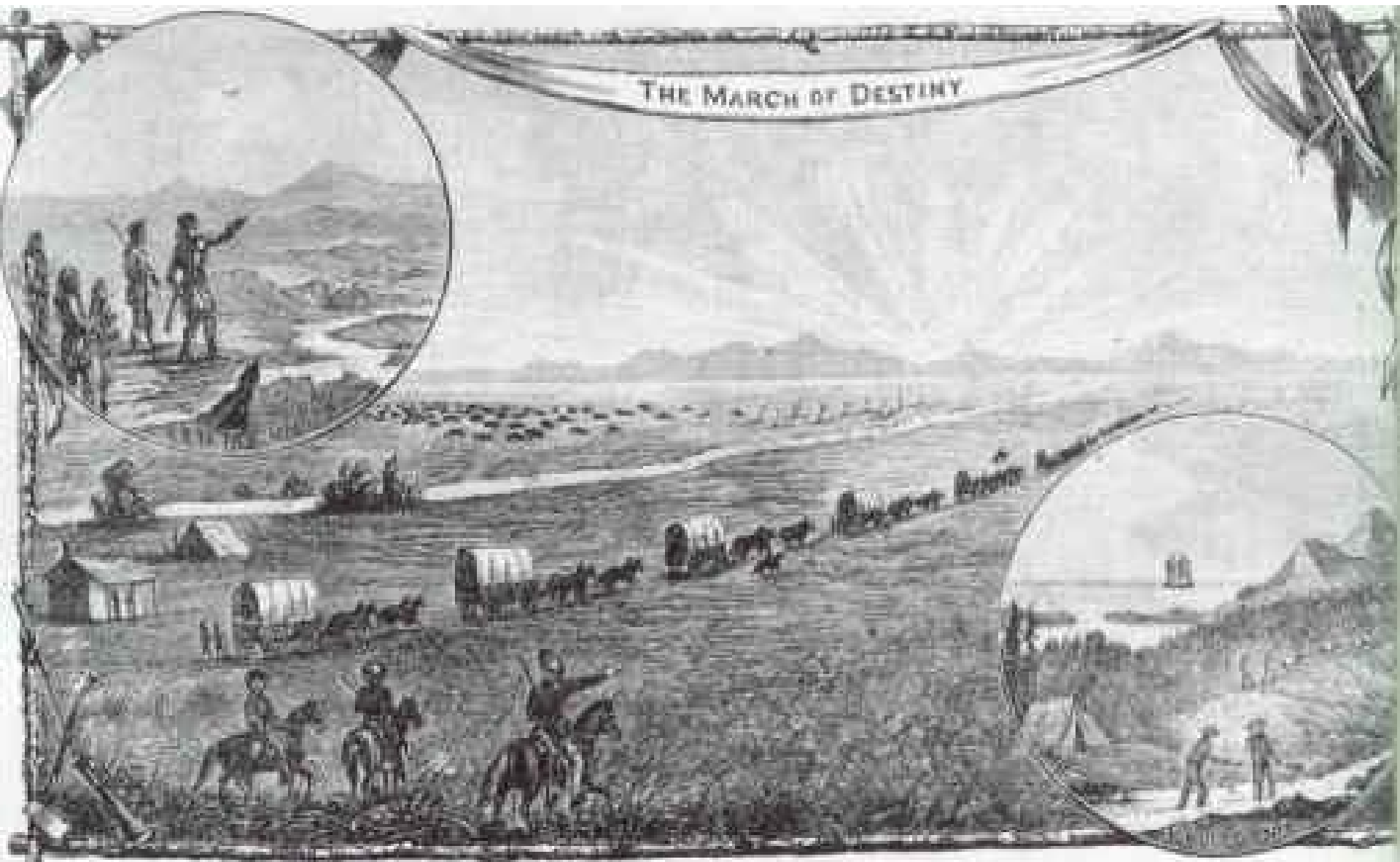
TURNER VISION of the West

- Peaceful conquest of the untamed land
- Bringing civilization to where there was none
- Man vs. Nature
- Progress

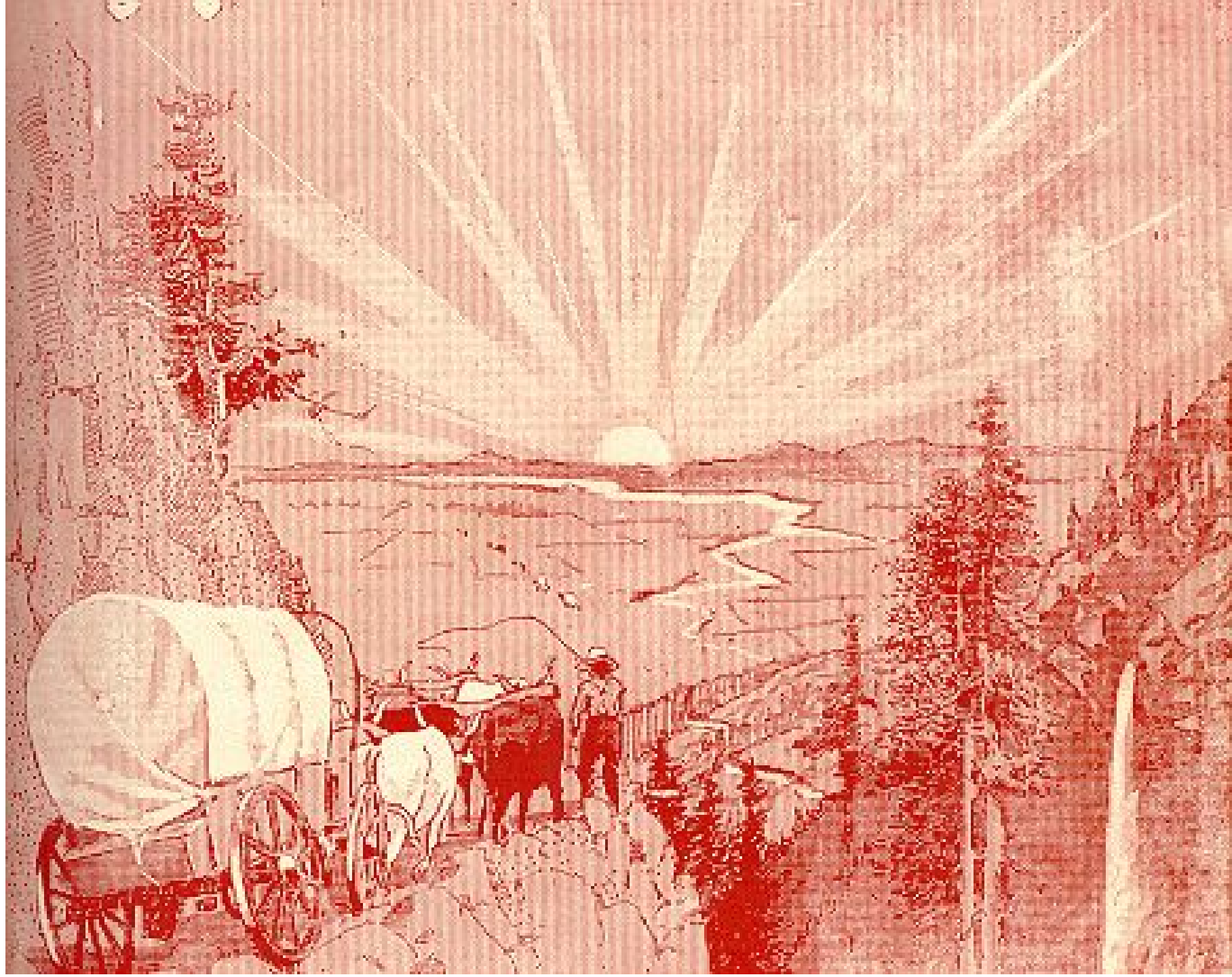


“Across the Continent”

THE MARCH OF DESTINY.









D. W. GODDARD.



MRS. D. W. GODDARD.



THE COTTAGE.



RESIDENCE OF D. W. GODDARD. SCENE VIEW TO RIGHT.

CODY VISION of the West

- American Indians as savages
- Violent “heroic” conquest of savages
- Bringing civilization to savagery
- Man vs. Man conflict

BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST

AND CONGRESS OF ROUGH RIDERS OF THE WORLD.



A CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS, REPRESENTING VARIOUS TRIBES, CHARACTERS AND PECULIARITIES OF THE WILY DUSKY WARRIORS IN SCENES FROM ACTUAL LIFE GIVING THEIR WEIRD WAR DANCES AND PICTURESQUE STYLE OF HORSEMANSHIP.

PAWNEE BILL'S HISTORIC WILD WEST.



PAWNEE BILL

FAMILIAR SCENES IN PAWNEE BILL'S INDIAN CAMP.

BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST **AND CONGRESS OF** **ROUGH RIDERS** **OF THE WORLD.**



Pre-Cody Expression of Cody Vision?

MASSACRE OF BALDWIN'S FAMILY BY THE SAVAGES



American Indian Mythmaking

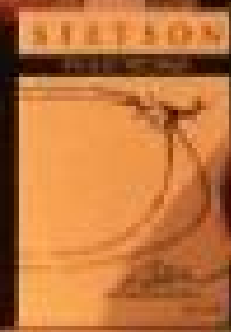






Commoditization of The West

- Cashing in on heroic myth of the west
 - Association of western mythological concepts to commodities (things for sale)





“New Left” Revisionism

- A New Look/Reinterpretation
- “New Left”
 - Movement of 1960s & 70s
 - Criticism of traditional heroic view of American history from the “left” (of the political spectrum
 - Emphasis on “marginalized” people (those left out of traditional history)
 - People of color
 - Women
 - Working Class
 - Homo/Bisexuals

NEW LEFT VISION of the West

- *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown (1970)
- American Indians as:
 - Noble
 - In balance with nature
 - Victims of American expansionism
 - Betrayed
 - Brutalized
 - Targets of Genocide

