

Negative aspects and myths essay

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

To begin with, a cowboy is a man who believes in God, country, family, and horse, which are all core American values. He is also a sharp shooter, who will answer your question the way he feels you should hear it rather than observe political correctness. He'll call things the way he sees them rather than exaggerate, because he knows deep inside what is true and what is not true which makes him incredibly honest. He is still extremely chivalrous, and deeply respects our legal system, police officers, teachers, and members of the church, because they are usually just as honest as he is. He performed his duties with relatively little pay and usually did the job since it was an honor and they wanted to make the world a better place. They were characterized as the "ideal men" such as being rugged, which made them popular among women even though that was not always true. Most importantly, cowboys see themselves as simple men, which was highly respected back then.

The mixture of compassion, honesty, integrity, and bluntness that they displayed cause people to view them with honor which in turn is most likely responsible for their popularity. The qualities of a cowboy (however real they might actually be) are important to America as a nation because they symbolize what most people believe are the traits of the true American spirit—strength, independence, and self-reliance. In essence, it tells us that ideally we want to possess these qualities just like a cowboy since they were sort of the fundamental principals that the country was founded on. The days of the Wild West are over, however the spirit does live on through the legend of the cowboy who can be viewed as the great American hero. While the idealization of the American cowboy began all the way back in the 1800s with

dime novels and Wild West shows, it wasn't until Hollywood came about that the cowboy became a definite icon of manliness.

The Western has been a popular genre of film since the very beginning of film, and several filmmakers have used the “ Wild West” as a setting to explore the social issues of their times. Film often glorifies the West as a simpler time when good guys wore white and the bad ones wore black. In *Unforgiven*, Clint Eastwood shines a light on the dark, violent, and morally ambiguous aspects of life in frontier America. Clint Eastwood plays William Munny, a dormant killer who has become just a quiet and tired farmer and a devoted father still mourning his dead wife. But Will's old life comes back to haunt him when he is called upon to do a hit on a cowboy who slashed the face of a prostitute. This movie portrays the negative aspects of a cowboy as well as the positive. It sort of shows the real cowboy rather than a fictional one.

In the movie, the local sheriff did not allow people to have guns yet Munny carried one just like the real cowboy. He was also idealized like a rugged man even though he was not necessarily admired. In the movie, Munny traveled long distances (from Kansas to Wyoming) just like a real cowboy even though it was to find a criminal. He was also extremely chivalrous to the prostitutes and kept his word to find the man who committed the crime. Thus, he fits the cowboy archetype really well even though the movie itself did address some negative aspects and myths of the old west.