

1 This nation, turning 100 years old, had no *Odyssey*, no St. George slaying the
 2 dragon, no Prometheus. The emerging American genius for making a lot of money
 3 was a poor substitute for King Arthur and his knights¹ (although the Horatio Alger
 4 myth of rags to riches was good for a lot of mileage). Without a mythology and set
 5 of ancient heroes to call its own, America had to manufacture its heroes. So the
 6 mythmaking machinery of nineteenth-century American media created a suitable
 7 heroic archetype in the cowboys of the Wild West. The image was of the undaunted
 8 cattle drivers² living a life of reckless individualism, braving the elements, staving
 9 off brutal Indian³ attacks. Or of heroic lawmen dueling with six-guns in the streets
 10 at high noon. This artificial Wild West became America's *Iliad*.

¹ one² two

³ ln:one ¶ ln:two

⁵ en:one7 en:two³ whow
