

Summer 8-2016

"A Land of Picture": Novelized Art and Visual Literature in Cole, Cooper, and Hawthorne, 1826-1860

Ellen H. Ryan

Follow this and additional works at: <https://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Ryan, Ellen H., "A Land of Picture": Novelized Art and Visual Literature in Cole, Cooper, and Hawthorne, 1826-1860" (2016). *Theses and Dissertations (All)*. 1394.

<https://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/1394>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact cclouser@iup.edu, sara.parme@iup.edu.

STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

“A LAND OF PICTURE”: NOVELIZED ART AND VISUAL LITERATURE
IN COLE, COOPER, AND HAWTHORNE, 1826 - 1860

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Ellen Hallstrom Ryan

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

August 2016

© 2016 Ellen Hallstrom Ryan

All Rights Reserved

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of English

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Ellen Hallstrom Ryan

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Todd Thompson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English, Advisor

David Downing, Ph.D.
Professor of English

Christopher Orchard, D.Phil.
Professor of English

ACCEPTED

Randy L. Martin, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: "A Land of Picture": Novelized Art and Visual Literature in Cole, Cooper, and Hawthorne, 1826-1860

Author: Ellen Hallstrom Ryan

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Todd Thompson

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. David Downing
Dr. Christopher Orchard

In this study, I use a blended-genre approach to reading canonical literature and art in the United States during the antebellum period. Acknowledging that the mediums of art and literature are both narrative-driven and dependent upon techniques of visualization, I examine works that show marked hybridity of form, identifying artists and writers practiced in synthesizing media and genres to create hybridized texts. I suggest that reframing the aesthetic canon to include a blended-genre paradigm provides an alternative mode of analysis for understanding the cultural work of American Romanticism.

I focus my study on canonical American Romantic art and literature for its powerful narrative voice in the construction of national identity, locating convergent practices in three major works: *The Course of Empire* paintings by Thomas Cole, *The Crater* by James Fenimore Cooper, and *The Marble Faun* by Nathaniel Hawthorne. I also identify blended-genre practice in Cole's poetry and prose, Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, and selected short stories by Hawthorne. I consider how convergences circulated from one text to another and recover a submerged discourse of the time period.

Connecting Cole, Cooper, and Hawthorne through *The Course of Empire*, I suggest their use of the cyclical theory of history as a foundation narrative for the establishment of American identity, and Cole's paintings as an influence used to explore the projected fate of the United States. I also suggest that an unexpected outcome of antebellum American Romantic art and

literature was the suppression of a unique American national identity even as Cole, Cooper, and Hawthorne eagerly sought to provide a national art and literature for the emergent nation.

I consider the interdiscursivity of blended-genre practices and its production of discourses that challenged a “master narrative” of Manifest Destiny during the antebellum period. Reading beyond traditional genre boundaries, I re-envision the cultural work of writers and artists of American Romanticism, illuminate submerged discourses, and provide a new understanding of historical and cultural conditions within which art and text were created.