

**Library of Congress and National Archives**

- [Hispano Music of the Northern Rio Grande](#)—Library of Congress (LoC): *American Memory* online exhibit of a multi-format [ethnographic field collection](#) from 1940, documenting religious and secular music of Spanish-speaking residents of rural Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado.
- [The Charters of Freedom](#)—National Archives and Records Administration (NARA): Online exhibit of the important documents in the creation of the United States.

**Historical Sources**

- John Winthrop, [A Model of Christian Charity](#) (1630)  
 Herbert Hoover, [Rugged Individualism Speech](#) (1928)  
 Frederick Jackson Turner, [The Frontier in American History](#) (1920)

**Law:** Common Law: [Blackstone's Commentaries](#) (1765 – 1769)

**Supreme Court**

- [Thornhill v. Alabama](#) (1940)  
[Miranda v. Arizona](#) (1969)  
[Regents of the University of California v. Bakke](#) (1978)

**General Fiction and Non-Fiction**

- Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Young Goodman Brown* (1835)  
 Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (vol. II; Book II) (1840)  
 Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (1952)  
 Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (1841)  
 Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961)  
 Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone" (1995)  
 Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852)  
 Thornton Wilder, *Our Town* (1938)

**Poetry:** Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself" (1855).

**Children's Literature:** Marcia Brown, *Stone Soup* (1947)

**Young Adult Literature**

- Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876)  
 Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House* series (1932 – 1943)

**Web Resources**

- [Going Back to Iowa: The World of Grant Wood](#)—X-Roads Project: University of Virginia, American Studies. An interdisciplinary look at the art, life and ideas of Grant Wood, and his often-ironic paintings of small town, Midwestern life.
- [Andrew Carnegie](#)—PBS: The *American Experience* site accompanies the documentary about the self-made immigrant who became the king of steel who stood behind the brutal suppression of the Homestead Strike (1892) and subsequently became America's foremost philanthropist.

**Mass Moments**

Mass Moments is an online compendium of stories from Massachusetts history, including the following ones that touch on the topic of *Individual and Community*.

[African Meeting House Opens: On December 4, 1806](#), the Reverend Thomas Paul was installed as pastor of the new African Meeting House in Boston.

[Alcott Family Arrives at Fruitlands: On June 1, 1843](#), a group of three adults and five children made its way from Concord to the town of Harvard. The Transcendentalist philosophers Bronson Alcott and Charles Lane were bringing their families to start a utopian community they would call "Fruitlands."

[Town Meeting Auctions Poor Woman to Lowest Bidder: On October 18, 1786](#), Malden's selectmen put up for "vendue" Mary Degresha, who was unable to support herself. For two centuries, Massachusetts towns were responsible for supporting those who could not support themselves.

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**massHUMANITIES****Picturing America****VII. INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY**

Clockwise from top:

- Grant Wood, *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere*, 1931 (3-A)  
 Emanuel Leutze, *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, 1851 (4-A)  
 George Caleb Bingham, *The County Election*, 1852 (7-B)  
 Black Hawk, 'Sans Arc Lakota', *Ledger Book*, 1880-1881 (8-B)  
 Winslow Homer, *The Veteran in a New Field*, 1865 (9-A)  
 Quilts: 19<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries (10-B)  
 Romare Bearden, *The Dove*, 1964 (17-B)  
 Thomas Hart Benton, *The Sources of Country Music*, 1975 (18-A)  
 Norman Rockwell, *Freedom of Speech, The Saturday Evening Post*, 1943 (19-A)

Picturing America, a program of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association, brings high quality reproductions of masterpieces of American art into classrooms and libraries nationwide. This brochure was produced by

**massHUMANITIES**

## VII. INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY

In the 1830s, French visitor Alexis de Tocqueville wrote about Americans' widespread interest in forming associations and collective enterprises to achieve common ends. His observations were acute: United States history is full of successful community efforts to move the nation forward. Yet Americans also regularly celebrate and promote the idea of "rugged individualism" and encourage individual achievement. These images invite viewers to consider some of the ways in which art has reflected, created and sustained ideas about the relationship or tension between individual and community in American art, and think about how it may have changed over time.

### Taking Inventory

Place these images into groups that highlight: 1) the individual, and 2) the community/the communal. What is it that makes you place a work in one or another category? Are they all easy to place in one category? Which ones are the most easily categorized? Why? Does *The Sources of Country Music* depict a country music community or a set of individuals creating country music? What about *The Dove*? Is a set of individuals occupying the same space a community? Why might *Veteran in a New Field* fit into both categories?

The title of a painting like *Washington Crossing the Delaware* suggests a celebration of one individual's success. Upon closer inspection, however, the painting has a lot to say about the relationship between the single person and the larger purpose of the community or nation:

- Look at the figures: what do they look like and wear? What are they doing? How do they appear in size, placement, and relationship to each other? Note that below, Washington (literally, keeping him from drowning in the icy river) sit a dozen men straining at the oars. Notice the colors of the rowers' clothes and the way they echo those Washington wears. Does it appear to you that linking Washington's individual triumphs to a larger group effort is one of the objectives of the painter, or is it an unintentional byproduct of the scene he chose to paint?

- Now look at *Freedom of Speech* and consider it in light of *Washington Crossing the Delaware*. How does this artist set the standing figure apart here? How does he link this individual to the group around him?
- Finally, consider *Quilts*. Are these the result of individual achievement or communal effort? Compare them to the paintings and ask: how was the technique learned? Where did the materials come from? Might all art be considered communal? How do artists show the relationship between individuals and communities?

What signals group or community membership? What are the boundaries of community in the United States?

- *Sans Arc Lakota* depicts the social and cultural life of both the Crow (8B-1) and the Lakota (8B-2) people. Among other things, Black Hawk has depicted the unique way in which each cultural group wore their hair. Describe the differences between the two images. How do such attributes create communities?

- Now look at *The County Election*. Based on the title, how might this group of Americans define "community"? Are all those who live in a county community? What makes them a community as a county? Who is here/isn't here? How are they here? Is everyone voting? How do artists differentiate between a group of people and a community?

### A community of viewers

- In what various ways does *Midnight Ride of Paul Revere* address the issue of the relationship between the individual and community? Think of visual representation, the story behind the painting, and the larger context of that story. How did you find out all these things? Who would and who would not know about them?

### A Closer Look

Is there such a thing as an "American Community"? If so, how would you depict it visually?

### Children's Activity

#### Picturing "Belonging"

You belong to many communities. But you are also a unique individual unlike anyone else in the world. So are the people pictured in the art here.

Look at *Washington Crossing the Delaware* and choose one of the people in the painting to focus on.

Your project is to make a list of at least two ways that your person is LIKE the other people in the painting, and two ways in which he or she is UNLIKE the other people in the painting. For example, if your person had a green polka-dot hat on, you might fill in the chart this way:

LIKE the others	UNLIKE the others
<i>Wearing a hat</i>	<i>Hat is green with polka dots</i>