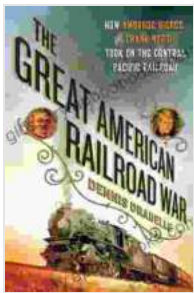


# Ambrose Bierce and Frank Norris: The Literary Mavericks Who Took on the Notorious Central Pacific

Ambrose Bierce and Frank Norris were two of the most influential writers of the late 19th century. They were also two of the most outspoken critics of the Central Pacific Railroad, a powerful and corrupt corporation that had a stranglehold on the American West.



## The Great American Railroad War: How Ambrose Bierce and Frank Norris Took On the Notorious Central Pacific

**Railroad** by Dennis Drabelle

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2241 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 319 pages



In their writings, Bierce and Norris exposed the Central Pacific's greed, corruption, and environmental destruction. They also championed the rights of the working class and the poor, who were often the victims of the railroad's abuses.

## Ambrose Bierce: The Devil's Dictionary

Ambrose Bierce was born in Ohio in 1842. He fought in the Civil War, and after the war he worked as a journalist in San Francisco. In 1872, he published *The Devil's Dictionary*, a satirical lexicon that defined words in a way that was often critical of the status quo.

In *The Devil's Dictionary*, Bierce defined the Central Pacific Railroad as "a public highway for the transportation of property and persons, but chiefly of the former." He also wrote that the railroad was "a great moral force, teaching the virtues of patience, humility, and resignation."



### **Frank Norris: McTeague**

Frank Norris was born in Chicago in 1870. He studied at Harvard University, and after graduating he worked as a journalist in San Francisco. In 1899, he published *McTeague*, a novel about a dentist who is driven to madness by his greed and lust.

In *McTeague*, Norris depicted the Central Pacific Railroad as a symbol of the corrupting power of money. He also wrote about the devastating effects of the railroad's construction on the environment.



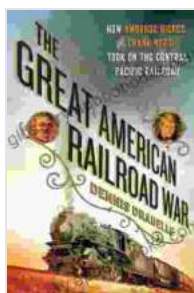
Frank Norris, c. 1900

## **The Legacy of Bierce and Norris**

Ambrose Bierce and Frank Norris were two of the most important writers of the American West. Their work helped to expose the corruption and greed of the Central Pacific Railroad, and it also championed the rights of the working class and the poor. Their writings continue to be read and studied today, and they remain an inspiration to those who fight for justice and equality.

## Further Reading

- The Ambrose Bierce Project
- The Frank Norris Society
- The Central Pacific Railroad



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