



# To the Halls of the Montezumas: The Mexican War in the American Imagination

*Robert W. Johannsen*

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For mid-19th-century Americans, the Mexican War was not only a grand exercise in self-identity, legitimizing the young republics convictions of mission and destiny to a doubting world; it was also the first American conflict to be widely reported in the press and to be waged against an alien foe in a distant and exotic land. It provided a window onto the outside world and promoted an awareness of a people and a land unlike any Americans had known before. This rich cultural history examines the place of the Mexican War in the popular imagination of the era. Drawing on military and travel accounts, newspaper dispatches, and a host of other sources, Johannsen vividly recreates the mood and feeling of the period--its unbounded optimism and patriotic pride--and adds a new dimension to our understanding of both the Mexican War and America itself.

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