

AP US History

Chapter 11 - Cotton, Slavery, and The Old South

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Key Concepts

What are this chapter's key concepts?

- **4.1.II.B** - A culture formed blending national American and European elements with regional sections
- **4.1.II.C** - Romantic and liberal social beliefs influenced literature, art, philosophy, and architecture
- **4.1.II.D** - Enslaved/free Afr. Americans → communities to protect dignity, joining pol. efforts to change status
- **4.1.III.A** - Americans created organizations to improve society thru. reform
- **4.1.III.C** - Women's rights movement developed for gender equality, culminating in Seneca Falls Convention
- **4.3.II.B** - North saw ↑ antislavery while South (despite few owning slaves) saw ↑ slavery as natural way of life

The Romantic Impulse

How did a unique culture develop in American society?

Painting reflected nationalistic ideals through the power of wild natural environments, Northern literature reflecting ideals of independence, liberty, and democracy, Southern literature based either around the wealthy aristocrats or those inhabiting the fringes of society as rural peasants, and the Transcendentalists, focusing on an appreciation of the surrounding world from a personal standpoint, came together to form a unique American literary style. Nature became the focal point of a large part of society, a belief which often manifested itself in utopian societies where inhabitants worked in harmony with their natural environment. These societies, and others, often distorted gender roles by going against social norms to give women significantly more, or different forms of, power. Mormonism attracted those who felt out of touch or increasingly distant from material society, and sought to create an idealistic society based around human perfection.

How did American painting reflect nationalism and romanticism?

- Sydney Smith, English wit, expressed that no one outside of America enjoyed American art; but U.S. enjoyed significantly
- Most popular aimed to show landscapes: not mere countryside, but instead wildest places (w/ "sublime": awe/fear of nature)
 - Frederic Church, Thomas Cole, Thomas Doughty, Asher Durand, all of NY, known as Hudson River School, painted rugged Hudson Valley
 - * Felt nature greatest source of wisdom; stre
 - Many began to travel westward to witness spectacular world of Yosemite Valley, Yellowstone, Rocky Mountains
 - * Thomas Moran, Albert Bierstadt traveled throughout country

American painting, despite not having reached an international audience, appealed greatly to Americans themselves. It generally focused on the idea of "wild nature" and the sublime, initially centered around the Hudson Valley in NY but extending westward.

How did American writers generally emphasize ideas of liberty?

- GB's Sir Walter Scott most popular in early nineteenth century; most common American novels were "sentimental novels" of women
- James Fenimore Cooper stressed ideals of wilderness, adventure, growing up on frontier NY ("Leatherstocking Tales")
 - Represented ideal for true American literature, also depicting central social concerns like fear of disorder, ideal of independence
- Walt Whitman, "poet of American democracy," born in 1819 w/ start as newspaper apprentice
 - Founded and led NY newspaper *Long Islander*
 - Printed first volume of work *Leaves of Grass* in 1855, celebrating democracy/individualism; reflected homosexuality in intolerant society
- Herman Melville sailed world before rooting back in U.S. and publishing *Moby Dick*, portraying Ahab, captain of whaling vessel, seeking violent whale Moby Dick for fulfillment
 - Spirit ultimately -> annihilation
- Edgar Allen Poe, one of few southern writers, created sad stories, with books and famous poem "The Raven," seeking to transcend from intellect, explore emotion; had great effect on other poets

Although British writer Walter Scott was popular, American writers like Cooper, describing the independence of the wilderness, Whitman, stressing individualism and democracy through his poems reflecting his troubled state as a homosexual man in an intolerant society, Melville, whose *Moby Dick* revealed the potential destructive nature of the human spirit, and Poe's sad poems exploring true emotion beyond intellect gradually grew in popularity.

What were the critical ideals of literature in the South?

Antebellum Southern literature was based around defining the American nation, but often contradicted the true state of society.

- Novelists created romances/eulogies describing upper South plantation system
 - Early (1830s) from Richmond, including Beverly Tucker, William Alexander Caruthers, John Pendleton Kennedy
 - Literary capital moved to Charleston in 1840s w/ William Gilmore Simms expressing nationalism initially hoping to transcend regional diffs. but soon defended slavery
- Writers on fringes of plantation society depicted backwoods societies
 - Included Augustus B. Longstreet, Joseph G. Baldwin, Johnson J. Hooper
 - Centered around ordinary, poor people with unique humor; Mark Twain most powerful of group

Southern literature aimed to define the American nation: novelists generally focused on the cavaliers, initially mostly from Richmond but shifting to Charleston. Another group of fringe writers described the impoverished instead of the aristocratic class.

Who were the Transcendentalists?

How did the Transcendentalists defend critical concepts of nature?

- Transcendentalists focused on individualism by distinguishing "reason" (innate ability of all to understand beauty/truth with full expression of emotions) and "understanding" (intellect applied to narrow confines of society)
- Leader was Emerson, lecturer devoted to sharing beliefs, speaking with intellectuals daily
 - Produced some poetry but known for essays/lectures like "Nature" and "Self-Reliance"
 - Nationalist: believed in cultural independence - lecture "American Scholar" argued that European cultural heritage be ignored and instinctive genius be harnessed
- Henry David Thoreau significant, too, arguing repression of society → desperation w/ no one conforming to social pressures
 - Went to Walden Pond in Concord Woods and lived in cabin to live deliberately and simply
 - Resisted slave-allowing govt. by not paying poll tax -> jailed briefly in 1846
 - * Argued in "Resistance to Civil Government" that morality > legal codes

The Transcendentalists argued for individualism through an innate personal understanding of the world over absorption of mere knowledge and its application to narrow fields. Led by Emerson, a lecturer producing powerful essays like "Nature and Self-Reliance" and a nationalist believing in cultural independence and also supported by Henry David Thoreau, who isolated himself in nature and resisted the government's allowance of slavery, the Transcendentalists produced a powerful repertoire of literature.

The Transcendentalists and others felt that nature was not a scientific virtue or an economic stimulus, but instead a place for spirituality and inspiration forming a basic part of humanity. Their work marked the beginning of the environmental movement.

How did several utopian societies emerge?

- Brook Farm: Boston Transcend. George Ripley created equal social organization
 - One of first thinkers to establish leisure as beneficial, restorative practice
 - Manual labor -> gap slowly bridged betw. nature and instinct
 - Realistically, tensions began to rise and large fire finally split up group for good
 - Writhe N. Hawthorne one of original inhabitants, wrote *The Blithedale Romance* to describe terrible consequences to most devout
- Charles Fourier, French philosopher detailing socialist communities known as "phalanxes," inspired numerous communities
- Philanthropist Robert Owen founded New Harmony in Indiana devoted to cooperation; despite economic failure, continued to inspire

Brook Farm, one of the earliest utopian experiments, placed numerous inhabitants together on a farm, required to perform manual labor to appreciate their natural surroundings. Fourier, a French philosopher, inspired multiple communities and Owen, a Scottish philanthropist, created the New Harmony reservation in Indiana. Although nearly all utopian societies failed economically, they continued to inspire countless.

How did changing social philosophies transform gender roles?

- Margaret Fuller, Transcendentalist close to Emerson, shunned domestic female stereotype and encouraged intellectual power and social dominance
- Oneida Community by John Humphrey Noys rejected traditional family ideals with everyone married to each other
 - Sexual activity monitored to prevent rape; children generally raised by multiple parents
 - Believed in ability to limit male desire by removing family bonds
- Shakers, by "Mother" Ann Lee in 1770s, received their peak population in the antebellum period; known for commitment to abstinence
 - Never passed onto children; always voluntary choice
 - Men and women generally segregated but regarded as equal with gender-ambiguous God
 - Women had majority of power
 - Primary goal not for equitable gender roles but for society distinct from chaos of normal life
- Amana Community by 1843 German immigrants began in Iowa

Fuller, a Transcendentalist; the Oneida Community, replacing the notion of marriage with one of universal union; and the Shakers, requiring complete abstinence all pushed for increased women's rights to varying degrees.

Who were the Mormons?

- Mormons (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) aimed to create new ordered society; led by young Joseph Smith with Book of Mormon
 - Smith claimed ancient prophet had written words on golden tablets shown to him by God; he had simply translated
 - Book argued that group of Israelites had formed a fruitful society in America; Jesus resurrected there
 - After early Americans began to stray from righteous beliefs, punished by God with darkened skin, cleared memory as natives
- Smith established sizable following by 1831, but continually persecuted for radical religious beliefs and goal to find isolated community
 - Polygamy, social rigidity, and secrecy damaged reputation
 - Sought human perfection achieved through social organization based around a tight hierarchical structure
- Settled in Nauvoo, IL, but Smith arrested in 1844 and imprisoned and killed by angry mob
- Smith's successor, Brigham Young, led society of 12,000 ppl. across desert to Salt Lake City
 - Majority of converts those who were displaced in modern society/felt lacking control in material world

Mormonism began with Joseph Smith, who claimed to have been shown works detailing the arrival of a group of Israelites to America and the formation of a long-standing, fruitful society. Hoping to recreate this, Smith created a rigid social order based around a polygamous society hoping to reach human perfection. Although Smith was imprisoned and killed during his first true attempt at settlement, his successor, Brigham Young, led 12,000 to Salt Lake City.