

American Art & Literature

The Hudson River School: 1820s-1870

- Nature was the best source of wisdom & fulfillment.
- Art is the agent of moral & spiritual transformation.
 - a. Grand, scenic vistas.
 - b. Humans are an insignificant [even non-existent] part of the picture.
 - c. Experiment with effects of light on water and sky.
 - d. Symbol of the school → a broken tree stump
- Thomas Cole, Thomas Doughty

In Nature's Wonderland
Thomas Doughty, 1835



View of the Catskills, Early Autumn
Thomas Cole, 1837



View from Mt. Holyoke: The Oxbow
Thomas Cole, 1836



Romanticism

- The creation of United States has been considered an expression of romantic thought so this is a pivotal movement.
- James Fenimore Cooper is considered the "Father of the American novel" because he created the first American adventure story -- *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826)
- Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Dickinson

Patriotic Art and Histories

- Washington

Irving American- *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and *Rip Van Winkle*, and a biography of George Washington



The Landing of the Pilgrims Unknown Artist, 1830s



Washington Crossing the Delaware
Emmanuel Gottlieb Leutze, 1851



Transcendentalists

- Literary, religious, and philosophical movement originating in New England in the mid-1830s to the 1860s.
- The philosophy behind transcendentalism was a mix of romanticism, anti-puritanism, the ability to transcend the physical world.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson- *Nature* (1832), *Self-Reliance* (1841)
- Henry David Thoreau- *Resistance to Civil Disobedience* (1849), *Walden* (1854)

Transcendentalist Critics



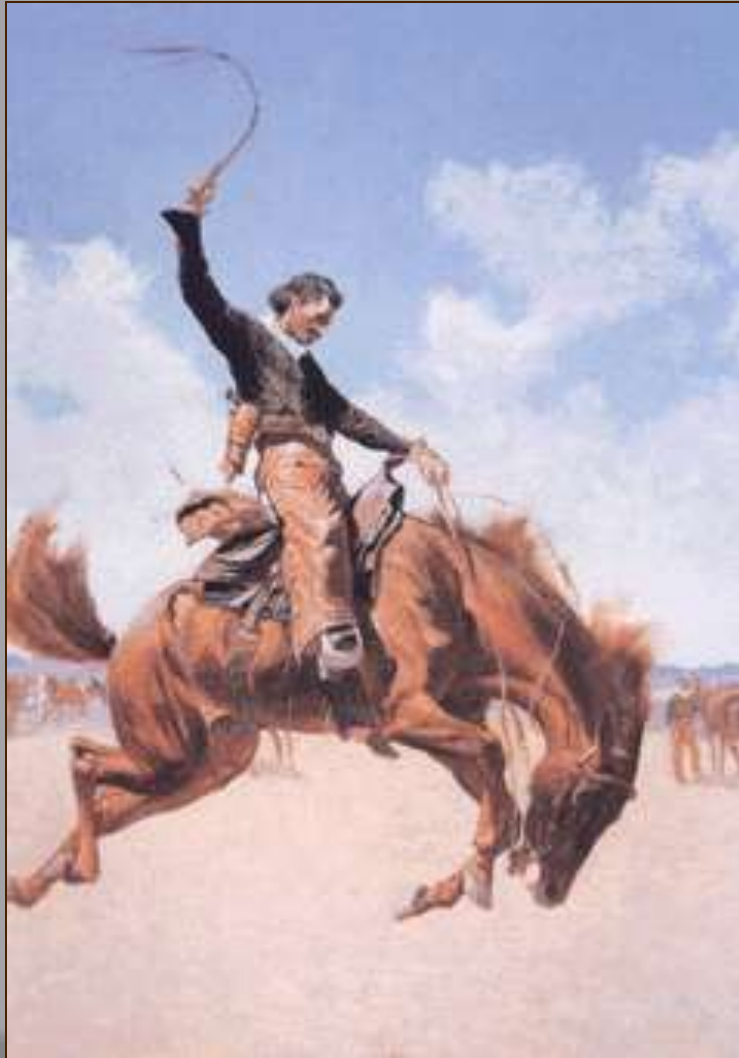
- Transcendentalist pursuit of the ideal led to a distorted view of human nature and possibilities.
- One should accept the world as an imperfect place-
- Nathaniel Hawthorne- *Scarlet Letter*
- Herman Melville- *Moby Dick*

Rocky Mountain School of Art

- Artists who painted the West in a reverential spirit similar to that adopted by the Hudson River School.
- Romantic vision of the West and cowboys.
- Albert Bierstadt- *Storm in the Rocky Mountains*, 1886

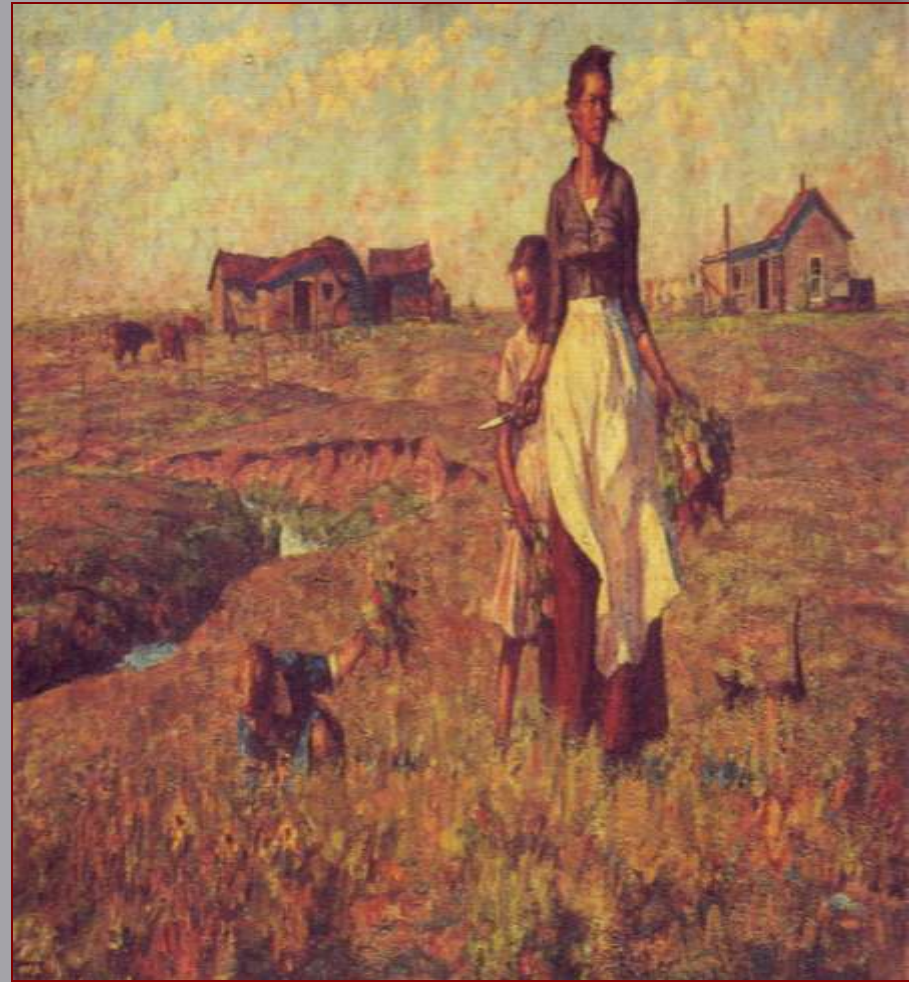


The Bronc Buster by Frederick Remington



The Romantic Vision of Life in the West

- The Western-
 - Owen Wister *The Virginian*
- Frontier Life-
 - Willa Cather *O Pioneers!*



Growing Cultural Movements

- The **Lyceum** movement dominated politics and education before the Civil War.
- The **Chautauqua** movement, was launched in 1874 and included public lectures by famous writers and at-home studies.



Industrialization and Reactions to it.

● Horatio Alger

- Dime novels that promoted the idea of the “self-made” man
- “Pulling yourself up by your bootstraps”



The Plight of the Urban Poor



- Jacob Riis
 - *How the Other Half Lives*
(1890)
- Theodore Dreiser
 - *Sister Carrie*
(1900)

Muckrakers

- Writers of exposes who investigated and published truthful reports on a variety of social issues.
- Upton Sinclair- *The Jungle*
- Lincoln Steffens- *The Shame of the Cities*
- Ida Tarbell- *The History of The Standard Oil Company*

- **Louis Sullivan** worked on skyscrapers (first appearing in Chicago in 1885).



- The Chicago School of Architecture
- Form follows function!

- **Frank Lloyd Wright**

- “Prairie House”
School of Architecture
- Function follows form!



Realism- Gilded Era to 1920s

Nighthawk by
Edward
Hopper



- The realist writer sought to represent experiences that are usual or typical rather than extraordinary or exotic.
- Mark Twain- Huck Finn
- Frank Norris- The Octopus

Realism as a critique

- Sinclair Lewis- *Main Street* (1920) a withering satire on the dullness and lack of culture that exist in a "typical" American small town.
- *Babbitt* (1922) describes the futile attempt of its central character to break loose from the confining life of a "solid American citizen"

The Lost Generation- Post WW1

- A disillusioned postwar generation characterized by lost values, lost belief in the idea of human progress, and despair leading to hedonism.
- Ernest Hemingway *The Sun Also Rises*, (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) – portray Americans disillusioned by war.
- F. Scott Fitzgerald, (1896-1940), was the leading writer of America's Jazz Age.
- *The Great Gatsby* (1925)



Harlem Renaissance

- The first major movement of African-American literature, beginning around 1923 and flourishing until the depression.
- The Harlem Renaissance included ideas of racial pride that could challenge the pervading racism and stereotypes
- Personified by writers such as Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Countee Cullen.
- Jazz music is considered part of this movement as well.



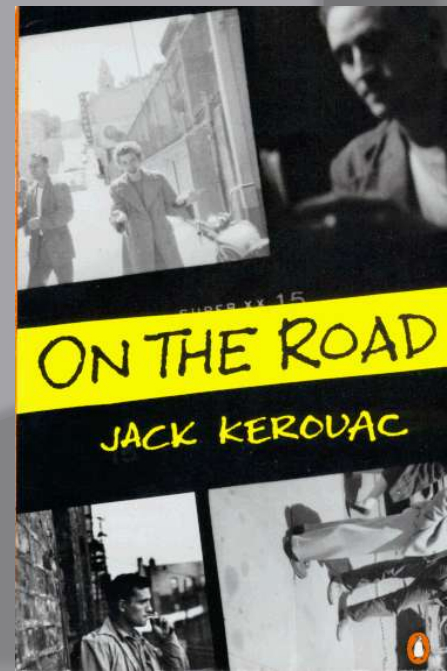
Depression Era Arts

- Reflected the gritty reality of life during the Depression.
- Literature- John Steinbeck - *The Grapes of Wrath*
- Photography- the WPA sponsored photographers like Dorothea Lange.



Beat Generation- 50s

- Echoed the growing dissatisfaction of youth in the late 1950s.
- A rebellion to the conformity of the era.
- Jack Kerouac's "On the Road" (1957)
- Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" (1956)
- Inspiration for the counter-culture of the 1960s.



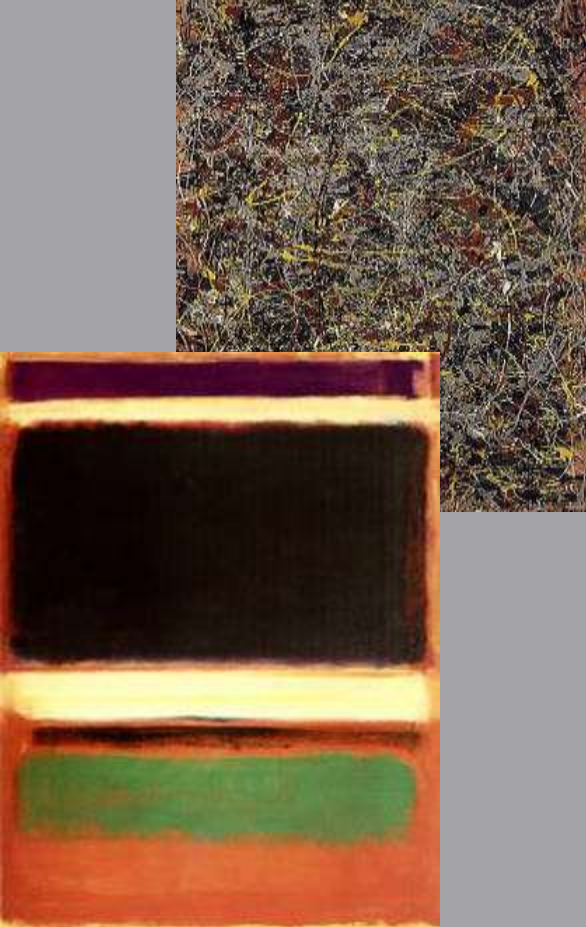
Rock-and-roll – 50s

- Late 1940s and early 1950s, primarily from a combination of the blues, country music, and jazz.
- The new music rage, despite strong parental censure. (black music, loosens morals)
- Elvis Presley, Bill Haley and the Comets, Chuck Berry



Abstract or Modern Art Post-WW2

- Jackson Pollack
- Mark Rothko
- Rebelling against conformity.
- It was the first specifically American movement to achieve worldwide influence and put NYC at the center of the western art world



• Artists like Jasper Johns will bridge the gap between Pop Art and Abstract Art.

Pop Art-60s



- Subjects were pop culture and the ordinary.
- Andy Warhol- founded his studio, known as The Factory.
- “What's great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest consumers buy essentially the same things as the poorest. You...know that the President drinks Coca-Cola, Liz Taylor drinks Coca-Cola, and just think, you can drink Coca-Cola, too. ”
- Roy Lichtenstein- comic style