

英语类



高等师范院校教材

美国文学简史与作品选读

*A BRIEF HISTORY AND THE SELECTED READINGS
OF AMERICAN LITERATURE*

主编 何木英 杜 平

四川大学出版社



英语类



美国文学简史与作品选读

***A BRIEF HISTORY AND THE SELECTED READINGS
OF AMERICAN LITERATURE***

主编 何木英 杜 平



四川大学出版社





高等师范院校教材

美国文学简史与作品选读

总策划: 陈国弟 张晓舟

责任编辑: 张 晶

责任校对: 孟庆发

封面设计: 罗 光

责任印制: 杨丽贤

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

美国文学简史与作品选读 = A Brief History and the
Selected Readings of American Literature / 何木英, 杜
平主编. — 成都: 四川大学出版社, 2004. 12

ISBN 7 - 5614 - 2989 - 4

I. 美... II. ①何...②杜... III. ①英语 - 师范大
学 - 教材②文学史 - 美国 - 英文③文学 - 作品综合集 -
美国 - 英文 IV. H31

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2005)第011416号

书 名 美国文学简史与作品选读

主 编 何木英 杜 平

出 版 四川大学出版社

地 址 成都市一环路南一段24号 (610065)

发 行 四川大学出版社

印 刷 华西医科大学印刷厂

开 本 787mm × 960mm 1/16

印 张 26.25

字 数 470千字

版 次 2004年12月第1版

印 次 2004年12月第1次印刷

印 数 0 001 ~ 4 000册

定 价 35.00元

◆版权所有 侵权必究

此书无本社防伪标识一律不准销售

◆读者邮购本书, 请与本社发行科联系。

◆电 话: 85408408 85401670 85408023

◆邮政编码: 610065

◆本社图书如有印装质量问题, 请寄回出版社调换。

◆网址: www.scupress.com.cn

四川省高等师范院校教材建设指导委员会

主 任: 高林远 余正松

副主任: (按姓氏拼音字母次序排列)

陈国弟 黄开国 靳 客 景志明 李 培 梁国平

凌 立 刘美驹 孟兆怀 欧天相 吴达德 杨胜宽

秘书组: 陈建明 张晓舟 李川娜

四川省高等师范院校外语类教材编委会

主 任: 孙恺祥

副主任: 杜 平 唐健禾

委 员: (按姓氏拼音字母次序排列)

邓 刚 黄 毅 李 刚 廖荣柱 罗再香 蒙兴灿

任明崇 杨 勇 张云祥 曾令富

前 言

美国文学是世界上最年轻的文学之一。尽管美国文学历史不长，但从19世纪开始，她便以自己浓厚的民族气息和独特的风格崛起于世界文学之林。在中国，美国文学的译介、学习和研究越来越受到重视，大专院校英语专业普遍都开设有美国文学课程。

《美国文学史与作品选读》是以高校英语专业学生和具有一定英语基础的文学爱好者为对象编写的。该书将文学史与文学作品结合在一起，旨在帮助学习者获得美国文学史的一个基本轮廓，同时帮助学习者把握各个时期重要作家、作品内容、写作风格、文学流派，培养学生文学欣赏和文学分析的基本能力。

全书分八个章节介绍了从美国殖民时期到当代的重要作家和他们的代表作，第七章和第八章为美国黑人文学和戏剧两个专题。每章包括背景知识介绍、作家介绍、作品介绍、作品选读和思考问题。何木英和杜平负责本书的设计及统稿。各章具体分工如下：

- 第一章 简国儒
- 第二章 何木英
- 第三章 李小云
- 第四章 李小云
- 第五章 蒋 花 杜 平
- 第六章 杜 平
- 第七章 刘长江
- 第八章 简国儒

在本书编写过程中，加拿大籍专家韩松（Todd Hanson）先生对全书进行了修改和润色，并对编写提出了许多宝贵建议。四川大学出版社给予了热情的帮助。对此，我们一并表示衷心的感谢。

由于我们水平有限，本书一定存在不少缺点和不足，恳请广大读者及同行专家批评指正。

Contents

Part I	American Literature During the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods	(1)
	Early Native American Literature	(1)
	Literature of Colonial American	(3)
	American Revolutionary Literature	(9)
Part II	Literature of American Romanticism	(13)
	Washington Irving	(18)
	<i>The Legend of Sleepy Hollow</i>	(19)
	James Fenimore Cooper	(28)
	<i>The Last of the Mohicans</i>	(29)
	Ralph Waldo Emerson	(38)
	<i>Self-Reliance</i>	(39)
	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	(51)
	<i>My Lost Youth</i>	(53)
	Walt Whitman	(58)
	<i>Song of Myself</i>	(61)
	<i>I Hear America Singing</i>	(65)
	Emily Dickinson	(67)
	<i>I Heard a Fly Buzz—When I Died</i>	(68)
	Edgar Allen Poe	(71)
	<i>The Raven</i>	(73)
	<i>The Fall of the House of Usher</i>	(79)

	Nathaniel Hawthorne	(87)
	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i>	(88)
	Herman Melville	(99)
	<i>Moby Dick</i>	(100)
Part III	The Age of Realism	(108)
	Mark Twain	(114)
	<i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	(116)
	Henry James	(128)
	<i>Paste</i>	(130)
Part IV	The Age of American Naturalism	(150)
	Stephen Crane	(158)
	<i>The Red Badge of Courage</i>	(159)
	Theodore Dreiser	(166)
	<i>Sister Carrie</i>	(168)
Part V	American Literature Between the World Wars ...	(182)
	Ezra Pound	(191)
	<i>In a Station of the Metro</i>	(192)
	<i>A Pact</i>	(193)
	Robert Frost	(195)
	<i>The Road Not Taken</i>	(196)
	<i>After Apple-Picking</i>	(198)
	T. S. Eliot	(200)
	<i>The Waste Land</i>	(201)
	Ernest Hemingway	(206)
	<i>The Old Man and the Sea</i>	(208)
	F. Scott Fitzgerald	(232)
	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	(234)
	William Faulkner	(251)
	<i>A Rose for Emily</i>	(254)

John Steinbeck	(266)
<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>	(268)
Part VI American Literture after World War II	(276)
Saul Bellow	(283)
<i>Seize the Day</i>	(285)
J. D. Salinger	(296)
<i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>	(297)
Joseph Heller	(306)
<i>Catch-22</i>	(307)
Part VII Black American Literature	(321)
Langston Hughes	(325)
<i>The Negro Speaks of Rivers</i>	(326)
<i>Dreams</i>	(327)
Ralph Ellison	(329)
<i>Invisible Man</i>	(330)
James Baldwin	(334)
<i>Going to Meet the Man</i>	(336)
Toni Morrison	(339)
<i>Beloved</i>	(342)
Part VIII American Drama	(351)
Eugene Gladstone O'Neill	(357)
<i>Long Day's Journey into Night</i>	(359)
Arthur Asher Miller	(379)
<i>Death of a Salesman</i>	(381)
Works Cited	(406)

21 高等师范院校教材

美国文学简史与作品选读

Part I American Literature During the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods

Early Native American Literature

Before the New World called “America” existed, the large area of land was home to many groups of people of different cultures. Several thousand years before Christopher Columbus (1451 – 1506), many groups of people had already come to this area from Asia. These people were the first “natives” on the American continent.

The first “Americans” were following animals across Siberia. They probably crossed over into what is now known as Alaska. Walking on the ice, they came looking for more food and greener pastures. Nobody is sure, but the first group probably came to the Americas about fifteen thousand years ago. Some of these people stayed in the North, and people know them today as Inuit. A few groups moved further south into the middle of the continent. Some of these groups stayed in the woods, like the Iroquois in the northeast woodlands of America and

Canada. There were some who lived on the plains, like the Cheyenne in the middle of North America. Others stayed in the Southwest and built cities on the mountainsides, like the Pueblo Indians. More groups moved even farther south into present-day Mexico and South America. The Aztecs lived in Mexico, the Maya in Central America, and the Inca in South America. These groups, the first "Americans", lived here long before the Europeans came to take the land from them. They also had a very advanced civilization. There were at least five hundred, and as many as two thousand, different spoken languages among the different groups of people, many of them very sophisticated. The Inuit language, for example, has several dozen words for the one English word "snow." There were several written languages as well. The Maya (of Mexico) had a picture system of writing. They also had a yearly calendar far more advanced than anything used in Europe at that time. The Indians were much more than just farmers and hunters. We need to start any study of American literature with a look at the literature of the Indians.

Most of these older cultures, however, had only an oral literature. Though we can learn a little about the history of these Indians groups, there is very little of their written literature to study. Most of their history was preserved in tales and songs. When family and friends gathered for the harvest, or before they went hunting, they repeated these stories. Virtually all Indian tribes had a rich store of oral literature in the forms of songs, prayers, spells, charms, omens, riddles, and stories. Their stories range from origin myths through trickster and hero tales to prophecy. From the little recorded literature that remains, we have learned that the Indians thought deeply about Nature. An important virtue of the Indian is courage. Life in the freezing north and the burning south is not easy. People have to be courageous. In one poem (by an Ojibwa Indian) the writer speaks of dying in a strange land. The poet says "thunder and wind are the same wherever we go. / We do not need to be afraid of dying in a strange land. / In the nature that surrounds us, / we can always find something familiar. / We are never alone." It is interesting that this is the same idea that would be learned hundreds of years later by different groups of Americans. When we look at the literature of the Puritans, the Transcendentalists, the Naturalists, and even the Moderns, when we read

Anne Bradstreet (c. 1612 – 1672), Emily Dickinson (1830 – 1886), Stephen Crane (1871 – 1900), and Ernest Hemingway (1899 – 1961), we find similar themes.

We do not know what became of many Indian civilizations, but they had a well-established culture before the Europeans came, and that should be considered the beginning of American culture and Native American Literature. We can only imagine from the remaining literature what those first native American writers were like. As Daniel B. Shea states, “The native voice in American literature is indispensable. There is no true literary history of the United States without it.”

Literature of Colonial American

Early Settlers

European explorers came to the vast American continental area to seek a fortune and a new paradise. The earliest settlers were Dutch, Swedish, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian.

It was not until early in the seventeenth century that the English began their settlement of the North American continent. There were three important groups who came to the New World from Europe at first. These groups have helped establish this place we call “America.”

The first group of Europeans to come to America were business people. They were hoping that they could establish companies in the New World. These companies would send food and wood products back to Europe. In 1606, three ships left England sponsored by the London Company. These first travelers intended to settle some place north of a Spanish settlement in Florida and south of a French settlement in Canada. In April 1607, they came to Chesapeake Bay, at the mouth of a river. They named the river James for the king who sponsored their ships. This was the beginning of Jamestown Colony (1607), the first English settlement in the New World, a settlement established not for religious but for commercial purposes. It was a dangerous undertaking. Thirty-nine of the original

144 people died even before they arrived in the New World, and within two years there were only thirty-eight left in the little settlement.

Several years later, another group of settlers also arrived in the New World. This group was looking for the Jamestown settlement. However, because of bad navigation, they landed at Plymouth (1620), Salem (1628), and Massachusetts Bay (1630). They were also coming to the New World with dreams of success, but their goal was different from those in the Jamestown settlement. This group wanted to start a new world governed by the Bible. They were called Puritans because they wanted to live a better life by making themselves pure. These two groups, those with commercial interests and those with a religious purpose, have important differences. Essentially, one group was in America for business, the other for religion. These two groups have affected the growth of the entire New World. These two groups are opposites in many ways. Their ideals, their lifestyles, and their cultures are completely different. The differences in these two groups can still be seen today in the northern and southern parts of America.

A third group of settlers also began to develop, mainly made up of people who could not, or did not want to join the two original groups in the South and North. From these two groups the Middle Colonies emerged in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware. We can clearly see these three groups today: strength in education is found in the North, well established agriculture in the South, and highly developed commerce in the Middle States. The names of different towns in the colonies tell of their origins. New York was founded by people from York, New Hampshire by those from Hampshire. The whole northern part of the East Coast is known as New England. This means, of course, that everyone was originally from England. Other town and state names tell us who started them in the past, and almost all are from other countries.

These settlers formed the earliest colonial forces. They wrote about their voyage to the new land, about adapting themselves to unfamiliar climates and crops, about dealing with Indians. They wrote in diaries and in journals. They wrote letters and contracts. John Smith (1580 - 1631), one of their leaders, understood the hardships they would have in the new land, and he wrote about many of the difficulties in *True Relation of Virginia* (1608), and *Description of*

New England (1616). However, his writing was more like an advertisement than a warning. As Bode states, "The first American literature was neither American nor really literature. It was not American because it was the work mainly of immigrants from England. It was not literature as we know it—in the form of poetry, essay, or fiction—but rather an interesting mixture of travel accounts and religious writings."

Puritanism and its Literary Forms

The first settlers came to America for various reasons: some to escape from religious and political oppression and persecution, others because of the desire for greater economic opportunity, for more land, and for adventure. Those who felt that the Church had become too complicated and believed in a simpler church, simpler ways of life, and simpler forms of literature were called "Puritans," so named because they wished to "purify" the rituals, the religious practice of the church and to lessen the authority of bishops. To them, religion had the highest priority and man should live, think, and act in a way which tended to the glory of God. However, the Puritan's cleaning efforts were not well received by the Church of England and the Puritans were severely oppressed. They were forced to escape to a new land to avoid facing increasing persecution in England. Finally, they arrived on the Mayflower and settled in Plymouth with a promising hope of creating a new paradise. They soon established their own religious and moral principles. Over the years in the new homeland the Puritans built a way of life that stressed hard work, thrift, piety, and sobriety. They were practical idealists. This is the group we usually think about when we talk about the "first Americans." These enthusiastic advocates of highly religious and moral principles brought with them beliefs that were to become known as American Puritanism, which became a dominant factor in American life and one of the most enduring influences in American thought and American literature. Without some understanding of Puritanism, there can be no real understanding of America and its literature.

Literature of the Early Settlements

The most important type of literature from the Puritans has an interesting

background. Their literature was based on a myth, the Biblical myth of the Garden of Eden. So American literature grew out of commonplace origins. Diaries, biographies, histories, journals, letters, travel books, sermons, autobiographies, and poems occupy a major position in the literature of the early colonial period. The Puritans believed that they should spend all their free time studying the Bible. They thought that because they should be studying the Bible, other forms of enjoyment were unacceptable. Even though they enjoyed dancing and singing, people often considered poetry to be an inferior form of writing and not totally acceptable to Puritan thinking. Poetry did not allow man to think about God. Therefore, many poems written during this time were hidden. We do not know how many poems have been lost because the people who wrote them often did not want other people to read them. Although early poems such as *The Bay Psalm Book* (1640), *The Day of Doom* (1662), and *New England Primer* (1683) were all clumsily religious, they were kept. Early poets like Anne Bradstreet and Edward Taylor were in fact servants of God. The poetry of colonial America shows a rich variety in type and manner. But for writing with a plain style, which is fresh, simple and direct, without unnecessary ornament and without references, the best example was the sermon.

Edward Taylor (1645 – 1729), for example, was unknown in his day. He was discovered in the 1930s. He hid all the poems he wrote because he felt writing poetry was not acceptable for a Puritan teacher and considered writing his poems just as a mental exercise. His finest poems, filled with vivid imagery, were found many years later and the book, *The Poems of Edward Taylor* was published in 1961. He was a meditative poet, a Puritan poet, concerned about how his images speak for God. The following poem, “Huswifery” is a good example as Taylor describes a simple daily incident and uses a lot of metaphors.

Huswifery

Make me, O Lord, thy spinning wheel complete.
Thy holy word my distaff make for me.
Make mine affections thy swift flyers neat,
And make my soul thy holy spool to be.

My conversation make to be thy reel,
And real the yarn thereon spun of thy wheel.

Anne Bradstreet (c. 1612 – 1672) was one of the most significant poets of this period. Fortunately, women were considered different from men at that time, so she could write ponderous verses on personal subjects. Her book of poetry, *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up In America* (1650), which was the first book of New World poems published in England, reflects the concerns of women who came to settle in the colonies. It was her brother-in-law John Woodbridge who brought Ann's manuscripts to England and published it without Ann's permission. Bradstreet used the plain style of writing that is typical of many early Puritan writers. Her poems are about simple living and about faith in the Puritan way of life. Many of her poems are personal in subject, often pondering on domestic topics from a religious point of view, and about her family. One poem talks about the love she had for her husband and his love for her. Another Bradstreet poem tells of an accident on July 10, 1666, the burning of her house. In all her poems, however, she shows her strong belief in God. Her talent and skill to capture the colonial experience in poetry set her in place as one of America's most outstanding early writers and as an important woman poet in the first two hundred years of American literature.

To My Dear and Loving Husband

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me, ye women, if you can.
I prize thy love more than whole mines of gold,
Or all the riches that the east doth hold.
My love is such that rivers cannot quench,
Nor aught* but love from thee give recompense.
Thy love is such I can no way repay,

* aught = anything

The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.
Then while we live, in love let's so persevere, *
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

Another important form of writing from this period is histories. These books are important because they tell us about life at the time of the Puritans. The stories help us understand a little about what life must have been like for those new settlers. The clearest history of the Puritans' journey to the New World is found in *History of Plymouth Plantation* by William Bradford (c. 1590 – 1657). This book tells of the Puritans' difficulties with the Indians, the first deadly winter when half the people died, and then about their initial successes. The history is written in the Puritan's "plain style" of writing. The language is often difficult for us to read today, but it is still much easier than the "ornate style" used by most officials then. Though the plain style was only used by the earliest Puritans, it has survived in other American writers: Benjamin Franklin (1706 – 1790), Emily Dickinson (1830 – 1886), Mark Twain (1835 – 1910), and Ernest Hemingway (1899 – 1961), among others, have all used this style of writing in their work.

The Puritans had several kinds of literature. By far the most common form is writing related to Biblical teachings, or sermons, that the church leaders wrote. The Puritans believed that they were in the New World because God had brought them there for a special purpose. The Puritans went to church regularly to study the Bible so that they could learn more about this way of life. The church leaders would speak about the meaning of life in the New World and would give an interpretation from the Bible. Some of their sermons have survived to this day. The most celebrated one is by Jonathan Edwards (1703 – 1758), *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* (1733). In this sermon, Edwards talks about God's kindness even though He has a right to be angry with man.

* persevere = persevere (It was read [pəsevə] at that time to rhyme with "ever".)

American Revolutionary Literature

A War of Words

At the end of the eighteenth century the English government began demanding more from the colonies. These demands came in the form of taxes. The war of words began in 1763 with the introduction of the *Stamp Act*. When the Americans complained and demonstrated about the Stamp Act, the English stopped the tax. Then the English started a new tax, the *Townshend Acts* in 1767. After several years and more angry words, the English government sent eight hundred soldiers into Boston on March 4, 1770. Five people were killed in what became known as the Boston Massacre. Another tax in 1773, this time on tea, prompted the people of Boston to throw their English tea into the harbor. This was called the Boston Tea Party. During the years before the actual fighting and killing began, there was a constant flow of words across the ocean, and written statements of protest continued from the American colonists. Among the most renowned is the work of Thomas Paine (1737 - 1809). *Common Sense*, a forty-seven page pamphlet by Paine, appeared on January 10, 1776. The pamphlet helped complete the debate that resulted in America's separation from England. One of the most famous lines in the war of words comes from another Thomas Paine pamphlet called *Crisis* (1776), and talks of the difficult situation the American colonies were experiencing: "These are the times that try men's souls." Another oft-quoted line from this period of American history has been attributed to Patrick Henry (1736 - 1799), a politician from Virginia. In one speech, he said, "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" His meaning is clear, Americans wanted to gain freedom from England or to die trying.

Though many people died fighting in the American Revolution, it was really a war of words. The most important document from this period was a single sheet of paper called *The Declaration of Independence*, written mainly by Thomas Jefferson (1743 - 1826). Even though the content of the Declaration is not