

中国科学院规划教材

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# 英美文学教程

(美国卷)



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英美大學生課程

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# 英美文学教程(美国卷)

**A Course of British and American Literature  
(American Literature)**

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## 内 容 简 介

本书运用学界最新的研究成果和观点,吸纳现代教学理论和方法,结合现当代文学批评理论,将美国文学史、作品选读和文学知识纳入一体。本书分为四大部分,沿时间发展脉络介绍各时期的主要作家及其代表作品:第一部分是17世纪的美国文学。这是美国文学的孕育期,作品类别有限,此时的文学受清教主义影响较深,但也不乏浓郁人情味的世俗文学作品。第二部分是18世纪美国文学。此时期美国政治上的独立唤醒了民族意识,催生了民族文学的萌芽。第三部分是19世纪浪漫主义文学。此时期产生了美国真正的民族文学,标志着美国文学和文化的独立,同时现实主义文学的成就也达到了巅峰。19世纪末20世纪初的自然主义文学是现实主义文学的延伸和发展。第四部分是20世纪美国文学。美国步入现代时期,美国文学也迎来了又一次繁荣。诗歌、小说以及戏剧都有了突飞猛进的发展,成为世界文学中不可小觑的力量。

本书可作为高等院校或者自学考试英语专业学生的教材,也可供英语专业研究生和广大英语爱好者阅读参考。

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# 前言

近几十年来,中国的高等教育迅猛发展,英语专业的发展势如破竹,发展之快如雨后春笋。全国近千所大学都设有英语系,与此同时,与英语有关的,或者说,脱胎于英语专业而另图发展、更直接为社会经济发展服务的翻译专业或翻译方向以及商务英语专业也如火如荼。英语教学在中国的发展大有“前无古人,后无来者”之势。

近年来,相关部门和专家对高等教育的专业建设和课程建设进行了调查,发现高校的英语专业建立和英语专业建设之间仍存在着差距。某些学校没有完全按教育部英语专业教学大纲的规定开设必需的专业知识必修课,如语言学和英美文学。有的削减文学必修课的课时、简化课程,有的甚至不开设这些课程。一些学校的英语专业负责人认为:美国的历史太短,没有必要学习美国文学。实际上,这些现象都暴露了英美文学师资的短缺,师资短缺其严重影响了课程建设和专业建设。

英美文学教学历来是我国英语教学的重要组成部分。过去,许多大学有“外文系”,而不是“外语系”,更不是现在统称的“外国语学院”。“外文系”这一名称充分体现了对文学的重视,至今,复旦大学仍保留“外文系”。有些学校的英语专业还开设欧洲文学或欧洲文学史,开设亚非文学讲座、中国文学与文化大讲堂以及世界文学简史。我国老一辈英语专家们都是通过阅读文学原著掌握语言的精髓,都是在中西文学王国自由“徜徉”的学者。今天,我们要追逐前辈之伟大,恐极为不易,但我们应当掌握基本的文学知识。这是培养合格外语人才和建设者所必需的。因为文学作品呈现了人类最美好的语言,呈现了丰富多彩的世界,呈现了多样的人文素养。这也是英语专业教学大纲中要求的重要板块。

可喜的是,越来越多的专家学者充分认识到英美文学课的重要性,呼吁并正在实现英语专业建设中传统课程的回归。我们欣喜地看到,翻译专业和商务英语两个新建专业都把英美文学课程列入其中。这说明,无论英语专业、翻译专业,还是商务英语专业,都意识到在培养合格专业人才中“文学”的基础作用和高级功能。

近年来,英美文学教材建设也取得了巨大成就,其成果丰硕,甚至出现了细化到讲解英语诗歌知识的教材,如高等教育出版社出版的《英语诗歌教程》,还出版了各种诗歌注释和选读读本,各种戏剧选读读本和小说选读读本也纷纷涌现。据悉,英语散文方面的教材也即将问世。英美文学教材真是异彩纷呈,为学生学习英美文学提供了丰富的菜单和自由的选择。然而,由于学时有限,各地办学条件不一,学生经济承受能力有别等原因,大量购买阅读英美文学图书是不现实的。因此,编者研究后推出本书,旨在让学生们在有限的学时内和经济能力能承受的范围内学习英美文学。编者把文学史、作品选读和文学知识纳入同一本书,文学

史部分和作家生平介绍部分文字浅显、易读易懂,学生可以自己读,教师亦可以作适当讲解,并重点讲解作品部分。本书所选作品如多于教学学时所要求的数量,教师可以从众多作品中挑选自己认为最应该让学生学习的,学生也可以自学一些作品,而无须另外买书。

在设计编写时,本书还吸收了一些现代教学理论和教学方法。编者建议书中的部分内容可以以各种形式布置给学生去读,有一些教师应重点讲解,有一些应该在课堂上加强互动,有一些可以在课下掌握。编者还倡导拓宽视野,包括同一国家的作家之间的比较,也倡导广大师生在使用本书时加强英美作家与世界作家的比较与分析。任何一个国家的文学,只有放在世界文学范围内才能独显其魅力,才能显示各国文学之间的相互交流、发展与繁荣。

美国文学的历史虽然较短,但是发展迅速。最初的殖民者带着强烈的使命感,以“上帝的选民”的身份到达美洲,不仅要建立新的伊甸园,而且要建立独立的文学。这种意识在独立战争之后更加清晰和强烈,政治上的独立为文化和文学的独立创造了条件,新生国家的全新经历为文学提供了肥沃的土壤,为独立的民族文学打下了基础。在19世纪,随着浪漫主义文学的兴起和发展,美国产生了一批具有民族特色的作家和作品,超验主义标志着这场运动的高潮,很多作家或多或少地受其影响,惠特曼和迪金森是其中的杰出代表。浪漫主义时期是美国文学史上第一次文学的复兴时期,形成百花齐放、各种流派竞展英姿的局面。内战的爆发击碎了美国人民的浪漫和乐观情绪,使人们更加关注现实问题,从此文学的表现形式进入现实主义时期。19世纪的早期现实主义还延续了一些乐观的情绪,但是随着社会经济的发展,美国的贫富分化加剧,社会问题凸显,到19世纪末20世纪初,自然主义登上历史舞台,作家越来越关注以及试图揭露社会的阴暗面。所以,美国文学的发展过程也是美国梦产生、发展、逐渐破碎的过程。人们对社会的彻底失望源于20世纪第一次世界大战之后,这种失望突出表现在战后“迷惘的一代”的作品中。因此,美国历史上的几次战争可以作为文学发展阶段的分水岭;18世纪的独立战争的胜利使美国文学朝着独立的方向飞跃,进入了繁荣的浪漫主义时期;19世纪的内战则把美国文学带入了现实主义时期;20世纪的第一次世界大战导致人们信念的缺失,文学进入了现代主义时期;第二次世界大战后,全世界朝着多元化方向发展,文学作为反映生活的工具,不断推陈出新,反映新的时代、新的主题。所以美国文学历史虽短,但是作品数量可观,气象万千。战后的美国文学在题材和手法上和欧洲文学一样都有所创新,成为世界现代文学中的先锋力量,庞德的意象诗歌运动是杰出代表。美国文学从诞生之日起就朝着独立的目标前进,然而到了现代,又呈现和世界文学融合的趋势。

本书把美国文学史按时间划分为四个阶段,对各个阶段的文学总体特征的介绍以及重点作家作品的选读,可以使学习本门课程的学生在有限的篇幅之内对美国文学的发展梗概有个总体的把握,为进一步研究美国文学打下良好的基础,并希望为提高英语专业学生及美国文学爱好者的文学素养起到抛砖引玉的作用。

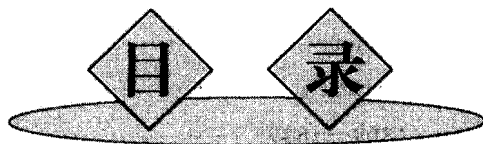
本书是学校统一规划教材,与科学出版社共同开发建设。它既是学校规划教材系列的重要组成部分,也是英美文学与文化教学团队的成果之一,同时,还是对河北省级精品课程“英美诗歌欣赏”的重要补充。《英美文学教程》由李正栓统一协调负责,英国卷由李正栓、姬生雷、冯梅主编,美国卷由冯梅、李正栓、姬生雷主编。在编写过程中,吸收了华北地区山西和内蒙古几所高校的教师参加编写,壮大了学术力量。

本书的编写得到了科学出版社的大力支持,并且,在本书的编写过程中,编者参考网上一些资料和一些学者的同类书籍以及一些学术观点,在此一并致谢。

编者力求做到尽善尽美、恰到好处,但是囿于编者水平,书中疏漏和不妥之处在所难免,敬请广大读者批评指正。

编 者

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# **Part One    The 17th Century**

# Chapter 1 American Puritanism

American literature in the 17th century mostly consists of Puritan literature. As a matter of fact, American Puritanism is an influential element not only in the early period, but also in the long years after. It is not only a kind of religion or a philosophy, but a cultural heritage or a state of mind. Without understanding it, it is almost impossible to understand American culture and literature. Its influence is comparable to that of Confucianism to Chinese culture.

Puritanism is the practice and belief of the Puritans. Puritans were original members of a division of the Protestant Church, who came into existence in the reigns of Elizabeth and King James I. The first settlers who became the foundering fathers of the American nation were quite a few of the Puritans. They came to America out of various reasons, but it should be remembered that they were a group of serious, religious people, advocating highly religious and moral principles. As the word itself hints, Puritans wanted to purify their religious beliefs and practices. They felt that the Church of England was too close to the Church of Rome in doctrine form of worship, and organization of authority. The American Puritans, like their brothers back in England, were idealists, believing that the Church should be restored to complete "purity".

The 17th century American puritans included two parts: one part of them were the creators of the Plymouth Colony, they came by taking aboard the Mayflower in 1620. They were called "Separatists"—they were so suppressed by the Church of England that they sought to escape. They had gone to extreme. Unlike the majority of Puritans, they saw no hope of reforming the Church of England from within. They felt that the influences of politics and the court had led to corruptions within the Church. They wish to break free from and to separate completely from the Church of England, since general reform would be useless. They wish to follow Calvin's model, and to set up "particular" churches. William Bradford was one of the Separatists. He wrote a sort of history of Plymouth Bay colony after he was elected its governor—*Of Plymouth Plantation*. Retold by historians and by writers as Hawthorn and Longfellow, his records of the Puritan Pilgrims became an effective part of the American myth.

The other part were the Englishmen at the Massachusetts Bay Colony, which was founded in 1630. Though they came later than those of Plymouth Colony, they were richer and better-educated. They devoted themselves to the reform of the Church of England and meant to clear away the rituals of the Roman Catholic Church. In fact, the majority of the people in the colonies were not Puritans, but the colony was rigidly controlled by the long-

time governor, John Winthrop, the Puritan clergy. Theocracy ruled.

The Puritan viewpoints were ably enunciated by John Cotton, one of the many powerful Puritan clerics in New England. His *The Way of Life* follows the five points of John Calvin, a French theologian:

1. Total Depravity—through Adam and Eve's fall, every person is born sinful—concept of Original Sin.

2. Unconditional Election—God “saves” those he wishes—only a few are selected for salvation—concept of predestination.

3. Limited Atonement—Jesus died for the chosen only, not for everyone.

4. Irresistible Grace—God's grace is freely given, it cannot be earned or denied. Grace is defined as the saving and transfiguring power of God.

5. Perseverance of the “saints”—those elected by God has full power to interpret the will of God, and to live uprightly. If anyone rejects grace after feeling its power in his life, he will be going against the will of God—something impossible in Puritanism.

The puritans had some additional beliefs:

1. Typology: The belief that God's intentions are present in human action and in natural phenomenon. Failure to understand these intentions is human limitation. Puritans believed in cyclical or repetitive history; they use “types”—Moses prefigures Jesus, Jonah's patience is reflected in Jesus' ordeal on the cross, and Moses' journey out of Egypt is played out in the Pilgrims' crossing of the Atlantic. God's wrath and reward are also present in natural phenomena like flooding, bountiful harvest, the invasion of locusts, and the lightening striking a home.

2. Manifest Destiny: The concept of manifest destiny is as old as the first New England settlements. Without using the words, John Winthrop articulated the concept in his famous sermon, the Arbella Covenant (1630), when he said, “...for we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us ...” Winthrop exhorts his listeners to carry on God's mission and to set a shining example for the rest of the world. From the beginning, the concept has had religious, social, economic, and political consequences. The phrase manifest destiny was first used by editor John L. O'Sullivan in 1845.

3. Backsliding: The belief that “saved” believers, those with visible signs of grace, can fall into temptation and become sinners. To prevent this, believers were expected not to become smug, do constant soul-searching, be introspective, and pray constantly. Satan was particularly interested in snaring such believers.

The main doctrine of Calvinism Puritans believed in “total depravity”, they believed in the “original sin” in which the first man Adam sinned and which led to the conclusion that in Adam's fall, we sinned all. They considered that man was born sinful; man was a sinner and could not redeem his original sinfulness. Moreover, they could not save themselves. No human had the capability to achieve his own salvation. Puritans underscored that man

would be chosen by God unconditionally. They thought that God occupied a dominant position. He could save part of the people willfully, made rise to heaven after death, and could also destroy some other part of people wantonly, and made them fall into hell after death. Therefore, determinism took firm root in their minds. They believed in man's destiny, everything of man was disposed in the hands of God, only God knew who were "chosen people". Man himself could not master his own destiny. They thought that God willfully granted people the favor that man could neither strive to gain, nor refuse to accept. The obtaining of the God's special kindness or God's providence for him meant his "rebirth" or "being sainted". In this sense, they strive to become saints while they were still alive. Man did not know whether they could be God's chosen people, but they should live a saint-like life according to God's will. The Holy Bible was the guidebook to man's behaviors. Puritans' lives were extremely disciplined and hard. People's life was only the course of moral training and that of his struggle between God and devils. People had an austere and rigid way of life governed by the church. They tended to suspect joy and laughter as symptoms of sin; they did not dance, they did not go to the theatre, but sang chant in church.

However, in the grim struggle for survival that followed immediately after their arrival in America, they became more and more practical, as indeed they had to be. Puritanism encouraged people to struggle in their careers. If one's business was booming, it proved that he had gained God's providence. Over the years, Puritans built a way of life that was in harmony with their somber religion, one that stressed hard work, thrift, piety, and sobriety. They drove out of their settlers all those opinions that seemed dangerous to them, and history has criticized their actions. Yet in the persecution of what they considered error, the Puritans did have a profound influence on the early American mind.

American Puritanism also had an enduring influence on American culture. It had become, to some extent, so much a state of mind, so much a part of the national cultural atmosphere, rather than a set of tenets. The Puritan heritage and its variations are:

1. Rigid Morality. Certainly until World War I, the United States proved to be the most Puritanical nation of Western society, finding Walt Whitman "indecent" and Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1899) and others "obscene". Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* never describes the sin of adultery but only dwells on the consequence of the sin. Even today the American small town is religiously conservative.

2. Material Success. The Puritans insist on thrift and hard work, their wealth was regarded as divine favor. The world has properly extended the term "Yankee" from New Englanders to all Americans, who pursue riches with all the tenacity and the integrity of the early Puritans.

3. Self-Reliance. Long before Emerson enunciated it, self-reliance was a deep-seated New England attribute.

4. Democratic Liberty. From the early Puritans came men like Thomas Hooker

(1586—1647) to trumpet the American desire for equality and for freedom. Thus American Revolution first flared up in New England. The town meeting of New England remains perhaps the most democratic institution of the nation.

5. Learning. With Bible reading as a necessity of each Puritan, education became the driving force which still remains in America. In the westward movement, the United States staked out university sites in the wilderness and often started schools in the West before the post-office arrived.

6. A Messianic Complex. The Puritans regarded themselves as the few elect, chosen by God, and sent by God to America to build a New Garden of Eden. The sense of mission and sense of superiority are strong in the national character.

7. Conscience Stirrings. Worshipping progress and success, the American in word and in his heart insists that they are inadequate goals. He works hard, and also plays hard. When he indulged himself in pleasure, he has a suspicion that he is sinning. He is plagued by dissatisfaction and longings. He always finds his Puritan conscience looking over his shoulder.

As to the influence of Puritanism on American literature, we shall see more clearly in the discussion of later chapters. Roughly they are: the spirit of optimism bustles out the pages of many authors; symbolism as a technique has become a common practice in the writing of many American writers; simplicity has left an indelible imprint on American writing.

The literature of this period is often termed as “colonial literature”. The religious and cultural background of the Puritan writers was responsible for two essential characteristics of the early American literature: their religious subject and imitation of English literary traditions.

Firstly, Most of the writers were born in Britain. Some were explorers, some immigrants, and some colonialists. As their circumstances were hard and their life was difficult, the newcomers were very busy. Relying mainly on physical labor, they were not professional writers and did not mean to create a national literature, they wrote only because the life of the new world was inspiring and encouraging.

Secondly, the time when American literature was born was just the period when the Modern English developed and took shape. The early American literary works, therefore, was not so difficult to understand as the early English literary works. Certainly, it had some distinctions from present-day English, particularly in the spelling and pronunciation of some words such as the article “ye” and the suffix “eth” in *maketh*, *holdth*. The English of this period had long and loose sentences as well as a lot of conversions such as verbs used as nouns, adjectives as adverbs, and in many cases double negation was used.

Thirdly, the principal ideological trend of this period was Puritanism besides the ideological influence of the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, etc.

Moreover, in early Puritan writer's works, English literary traditions were faithfully

imitated and transplanted. The American poets of the 17th century adopted the styles of established European poets. In addition, in the categories of literary works, there were "travel" diary and poem, etc., among which poetry and prose gained most achievements in this period.

American literature is the newest literature of great nations, yet it is original in many aspects. Besides the religious content, it mirrors the history of America, and epitomizes the development of political, economic, social, and psychological institutions. Captain John Smith, who led the first group of immigrants in 1607, wrote *The General History of Virginia*. William Bradford, who led the Mayflower in 1620 and established the Plymouth Colony, wrote *Of Plymouth Plantation*. John Winthrop, who led first group of Puritans in the Great Immigration in 1630 and the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, wrote *A model of Christian Charity*. But in the sense of literature, the greatest achievement in this period lies in poetry. Anna Bradstreet wrote poems of both religious experience and domestic intimacy. Edward Taylor was another important writer in this period.

### **For study and Discussion**

1. Discuss the American Puritanism and its influence on American literature.
2. What are the characteristics of literature in the 17th century America?



## Chapter 2 Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672)

Anne Bradstreet was one of the most important figures in the history of American literature. She was considered by many to be the first American poet, and her first collection of poems, *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung up in America*, was the first book written by a woman to be published in the United States. Her work also served as a document of the struggles of a Puritan wife against the hardships of New England colonial life, and in some way was a testament to plight of the women of the age.



Bradstreet was born in England, 1612. She was the daughter of a steward of the Earl of Lincoln. Due to her family's position she grew up in cultured circumstances and was an unusually well-educated woman for her time, being tutored in history, several languages, and literature. At the age of sixteen she married Simon Bradstreet. Both Anne's father and husband were later to serve as governors of the Massachusetts, but Ann kept working as a housewife.

Having previously been afflicted with smallpox, Anne would once again fall prey to illness as paralysis took over her joints; however, she did not let her predicament dim her passion for living, and created a home and family with her husband. Despite her poor health, she had eight children and achieved a comfortable social standing.

Tragedy struck one night in 1666 when the Bradstreet home was engulfed in flames: a devastating fire that left the family homeless and devoid of personal belongings for a time. By then, Anne Bradstreet's health was failing slowly. She suffered from tuberculosis and had to deal with the loss of her daughter Dorothy to illness as well. But her will remained strong, and perhaps, as a reflection of her religious devotion and her knowledge of Biblical scriptures, she found peace in the firm belief that her daughter was in heaven.

Anne Bradstreet died on September 16, 1672, in Andover, Massachusetts, at the age of 60.

Bradstreet's education allowed her to write with authority about politics, history, medicine, and theology. Her personal library of books was said to have numbered over 800, many of which were destroyed when her home burned down on July 10, 1666.

Much of Bradstreet's poetry was based on observation of the world around her,