

REGIONALISTS

AMERICAN REALISM & NATURALISM 1865 ~ 1914

From End of Civil War to Beginning of World War One

The Two Major Forces of this Era: (1) Industrialism & (2) Darwinism

Industrialization

The Passing of the Frontier

- Railroads connecting cities
- Cattle drives ceasing
- Buffalo destroyed
- Western Indians subjugated

The Coming of Modern Transportation

- Railroad
- Automobile
- Airplane



Difficulties within the Nation

- Reconstruction after Civil War
- Political & Financial Scandals

The Increased New Technology and Abundant Resources

Results

- Population shifts from the country to the cities
- Mass immigration from abroad
- Huge businesses (monopolies)
- Desire for individual wealth



Darwinism

Charles Darwin's basic statement: An animal species is able to transform into a different animal species. Animals are not fixed as unchangeable species.

- The Bible in Genesis 1:25: and God made the animals after their own kind

Accepted by the scientific community

- They wanted to throw out the Biblical account of creation and they called it a myth
- They wanted to rest on Man's Reason
- They abandoned the principle of the Scientific Method which is to observe and test theories before accepting them as scientific facts
 - Observable Science does NOT support evolution
 - Observable Science DOES support Natural Selection
 - Natural Selection is NOT the same thing as Evolution

Evolutionary thinking was extended into every other discipline

The religious community capitulated to Darwinism. Rather than defend God's Word, they began to reason away the literal sense of God's Word.

Impact of the Two Major Forces on Christianity

Agnostics - We cannot know if there is a God & it doesn't really matter

Atheists - Believe there is no God

Liberals & Modernists - Denied the foundational truths of Christianity while trying to keep some sort of religion

- Created what amounted to a new religion with these tenets:
 - God is the Father of all men
 - All men are brothers
 - All religions are true (They believe that all religions essentially point to the same god)
 - Man is not a sinner
 - The Bible is not inspired (Bible is just a work of classic literature)
 - Christ is not the Son of God (Jesus was a really great guy! Good philosopher like Confucius or Aristotle)
 - Salvation is not an individual matter but a communal one
 - Society is the Source of Evil (Transcendentalism won this battle)

The "New Religion" gave rise to the Social Gospel Movement - Change society to improve mankind, ignoring man's sin nature

Impact of the Two Major Forces on American Literature

Dominated by Realism - presenting the world as you believe it is and NOT as you wish it would be or as it once was

Regionalists - transitions between Romantics & Realists

Master Realists - wrote about what they saw in the world

- One's view of what is "real" depends on your view of the world

Naturalists - applied Darwinism to literature

BRET HARTE

The Father of the Modern Short Story - in particular the **Western** Short Story
Techniques: Surprise Endings, Humor, Unexpected Turns, Dialects
The Boom in the Calaveras Clarion



AMBROSE BIERCE

Lesser known **Western** writer who emphasized pessimism, bleakness, disillusionment, and death
First writer of "Black Humor" (things never turn out right)
An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge



SIDNEY LANIER

The **Southern** Poet - His poetry is more Romantic than Realistic
In the Civil War, served as a Confederate & imprisoned by the union where he contracted tuberculosis
The Revenge of Hamish
The Song of the Chattahoochee
A Ballad of the Trees and the Master



HAMLIN GARLAND

Midwest Short Story Writer

Realistic view of farm life rather than Idealistic - showed harsh realities and hard work of farm life

- Veritism - the term he used for his style of Realism - truthful and realistic yet hopeful
 - Veritas = Latin word for Truth
- He rejected the pessimistic realism of many writers

The Return of a Private



JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

A Poet of the **Midwest** - Very Famous!

He was famous for being a prankster! :-D

Called: *The Poet of the Common People *The Hoosier Poet *The Children's Poet

Known for Hoosier dialect of his home state of Indiana

Cheerful, witty, folksy, happy, simple virtues

When the Frost is on the Punkin



SARAH ORNE JEWETT

Short Story writer & novelist of **New England** - Maine

Strongly Influenced by her father

Focused on Character Development rather than Plot or Setting

A White Heron



EMILY DICKINSON

New England Poet

Wrote 2,000 poems - only seven published during her lifetime

Known for her eccentric behavior:

- wore white exclusively after unknown traumatic event
- talked with friends while sitting behind door

Had nervous breakdown, became confined to bed, and died after two years

Regional, yet Universal style

Dickinson's influence signals beginning of Modern American Poetry

Her poems have encouraged Modern Poets to:

- Experiment with language and form
- Express their doubt, irreverence, bitterness, and even outright rebellion



EMILY DICKINSON

Poems Dealing with the Poet's Self

Prologue

I'm Nobody! Who Are You?

Much Madness Is Divinest Sense

Success

Aspiration

I Never Saw a Moor

The Power of Imagination

A Word

To Make a Prairie It Takes a Clover

Hope

A Book

The Railway Train

Glimpses of Nature

She Sweeps with Many-Colored Brooms

The Snake

Simplicity

The Poet & Death

I Never Lost as Much but Twice

Presentiment Is That Long Shadow...

The Bustle in the House