

Romanticism

A reaction to Rationalism;
a period in art, music, and
literature

The Romantic Sensibility

- Not necessarily referring to romantic love
- Valuing feeling and intuition over reason
- Viewing life as we would like it to be, rather than how it really is

Characteristics of Romanticism

- Praises the power of the imagination
- Seeks the beauty of unspoiled nature
- Glorifies youthful innocence
- Promotes individual freedom
- Depicts:
 - beauty in exotic locales,
 - the supernatural,
 - the mystical
- Incorporates myth, legend, and folk culture

American Romanticism

~1830-1865

- Protagonist as the lone wanderer
- Often these journeys took him into the wild
- Gothic themes, settings, etc.
- Filled with allusions to history, religion, mythology, etc.
- Rejection of traditional notions of beauty

Allegory in American Romanticism

- Allegory is conveying ideas through symbolic characters and situations
- Retelling of archetypal narratives
- Promotes a message or commentary:
 - Poe's "Ligeia" and the rejection of traditional beauty and rational thought
 - Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" and the loss or struggle with faith
 - Irving's "The Devil and Tom Walker" and the classic Faustian tale

American Romanticism- Short Fiction

- Washington Irving
- Nathaniel Hawthorne
- Herman Melville
- James Fenimore Cooper
- Edgar Allen Poe

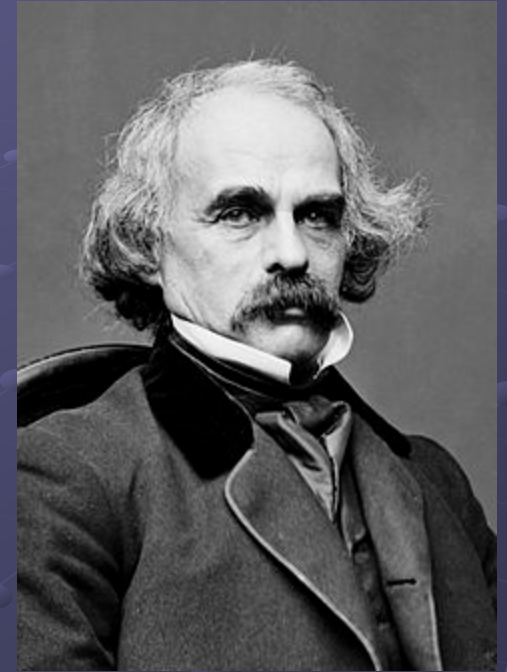
Washington Irving

- Local- Tarrytown, NY
- 1st successful American author
- *The Sketchbook*
 - “Rip Van Winkle”
 - “Legend of Sleepy Hollow”
- Irving was instrumental in establishing copyright law
- *Tales of a Traveller*



Nathaniel Hawthorne

- Born in Salem, MA
- Descendent of Judge John Hathorne of Salem witch trial fame
- Ashamed of his Puritan roots
- Many of his works deal with his explorations into the Seven Deadly Sins
- *Twice-told Tales* and *Tanglewood Tales*
- *The Scarlet Letter*



PRIDE (vanity)

ENVY

WRATH

GLUTTONY

AVARICE (greed)

LUST

SLOTH

PEWGALS: The Seven Deadly Sins



The
Seven
Deadly
Sins



James Fenimore Cooper

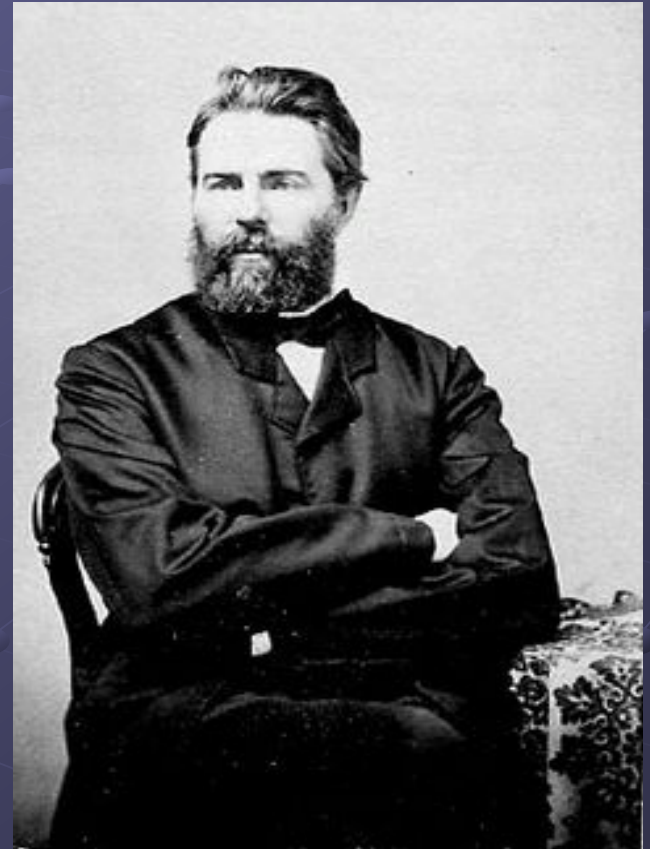
- Cooperstown was founded by his father
- Much of his work is allegorical in nature
- Scathing political pieces--he offended many
- Early environmentalist
- Mostly wrote novels

Leatherstocking Tales:
Last of the Mohicans &
Deerslayer



Herman Melville

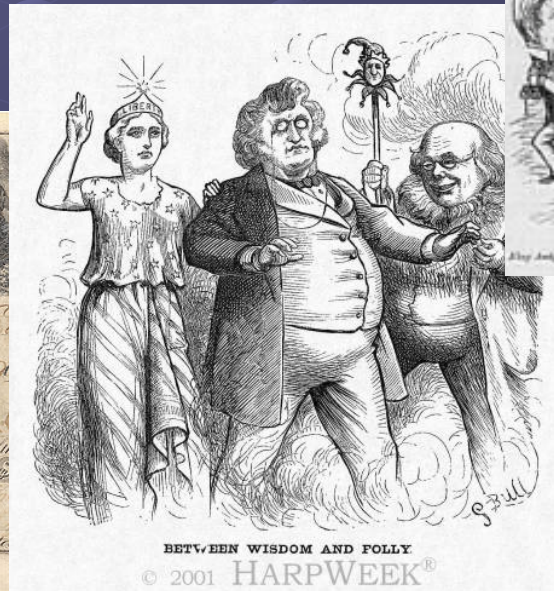
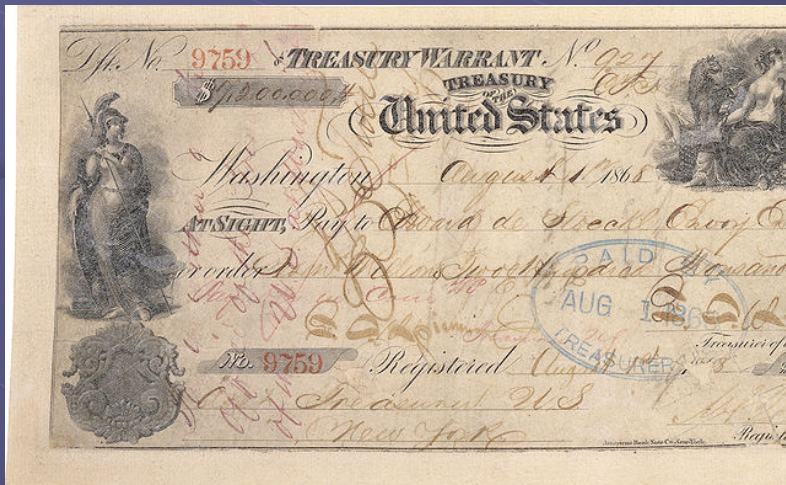
- Born in NYC and raised there and in Albany
- Abandoned a whaling ship in South Pacific and lived among islanders for three weeks
- Opposed Hawaiian conversion to Christianity by missionaries
- Died in anonymity- Melville revival in 1920s & again in 60s with “Bartleby the Scrivener”
- *Moby Dick; The Piazza Tales*



Cooper vs. Seward

- Environmentalist vs. Expansionist
- Homesteaders vs. Land Investment Interests
- Pristine Nature vs. Exploitation
- Persuasion vs. Demagoguery

“Seward’s Folly”



Acroceraunian Mountains

---a coastal mountain range in southwestern Albania. The name is derived from the Ancient Greek meaning "thunder-split peaks"



“Acroceraunian Hills”

---most likely a reference to hills east of the Albany area, where Melville spent much of his youth. The Rod-Man mentions the Taconics and Hoosics (Berkshires). He romanticizes his story through this allusion to the real mountains of Greek myth.

