

# American Culture

Early 19<sup>th</sup> century

# Art and Nature

- Hudson River School
  - “Romantic” American landscapes
- Appreciation for nature reflected in ornithologist John J. Audubon
  - Catalogs American bird species; est. Audubon Society for bird watchers

# Black Culture

- Appropriated by white Americans
- Popularity of black music, slave songs
- Growth of minstrel shows (white performers in blackface)

# American Writers

- Celebrate adventure
  - Washington Irving (Sleepy Hollow), James Fenimore Cooper (Leatherstocking Tales)
- Exploration of dark themes
  - Herman Melville (Moby Dick), Edgar Allen Poe (The Raven, The Tell-tale Heart, The Fall of the House of Usher)
- Few women
  - Louisa May Alcott (Little Women)

# Women and popular culture

- “Sphere of influence” and “cult of domesticity” celebrate traditional women’s roles in the home
- Emphasis on fashion
  - Bloomers
  - Godey’s Lady Book

# Transcendentalism

- Movement that emphasizes the idea that everyone possesses an “inner light” that allows them to speak to God
- Self reliance and self discipline
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman