

Episode #4
Spirit of Nationalism

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<u>Time Code</u>	<u>Audio</u>
01:00:00:00	A/CPB ANNOUNCER
01.00.20.13	NARRATOR: IN THE EARLY YEARS OF A NEW NATION, WRITERS BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND RALPH WALDO EMERSON CALLED FOR A LITERATURE THAT REPRESENTED AMERICA.
01.00.34.06	EMERSON READER: <i>We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe...</i>
01.00.38.18	NARRATOR: TO SOME THEY WERE GODLESS RADICALS, TO OTHERS THEY WERE PROPHETS OF A NEW SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM.
01.00.46.17	EMERSON READER: <i>We will walk with our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak with our own minds!</i>
01.01.19.16	NARRATOR: THE DREAMS OF A YOUNG REPUBLIC ECHOED IN THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC STATES. TOWN ELDERS BUILT ATHENEUMS, LYCEUMS AND LIBRARIES. PLACES WHERE COMMON CITIZENS COULD FIND A BOOK OR LISTEN TO A LECTURE. THE NEO-CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE SYMBOLIZED THE DEMOCRATIC TRADITION OF ANCIENT GREECE. BUILDINGS STOOD AS METAPHORS FOR AMERICAN IDEALS OF EQUALITY AND FREEDOM. SELF IMPROVEMENT BECAME A MEANS TO NATIONAL PROGRESS. IT WAS A TIME TO DEFINE THE NATIONAL CHARACTER: WHAT IS AMERICA? WHO ARE AMERICANS?

01.01.59.20	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: If you go looking for American literature you plunge into one text after another where the question of what we are, individually or collectively, is the front burner question.</p>
01.02.10.05	<p>NARRATOR: THE NEW NATION HAD BEEN WRESTED FROM ITS COLONIAL RULERS, BUT IT NOW NEEDED TO CREATE ITS OWN IDENTITY.</p>
01.02.18.20	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: There was a real problem facing the United States at the time of the revolution as to how we could become something other than a cultural colony, how we could go off on our own.</p>
01.02.30.07	<p>NARRATOR: LEADERS OF THE NEW NATION INCLUDED GENERALS, DIPLOMATS, TRADESMEN AND WRITERS ALL GRAPPLING WITH THIS QUESTION. OVER THE COURSE OF THE NEXT 50 YEARS, MANY WRITERS LIKE THOMAS PAINE, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PHILLIS WHEATLEY, MARGARET FULLER, AND RALPH WALDO EMERSON EXPLORED SUCH QUESTIONS.</p>
01.02.53.23	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: The country was in many ways morally adrift and intellectually adrift. A new culture was going to have to grow up here and go its own way. It could look wistfully towards the Old World but it would be never part of it again.</p>
01.03.11.06	<p>NARRATOR: BETWEEN THE ARRIVAL OF THE PURITANS IN 1620 AND THE LATE 1700'S, THE WORLD HAD CHANGED. GOD-CENTERED THOUGHT HAD SLOWLY MOVED TO MAN-CENTERED THOUGHT. PEOPLE LOOKED TO REASON TO EXPLAIN THE WORLD... AND WRITERS LIKE JOHN LOCKE HAD PLANTED THE IDEA THAT PEOPLE COULD GOVERN THEMSELVES.</p>
01.03.34.06	<p>CARLA MULFORD: It's important to understand that one of the major contributions of the enlightenment was to make people understand they could control their destiny. ...there was an understanding that human psychology could be contained and could be driven toward the control of one's destiny.</p>

01.03.55.26	<p>NARRATOR: THE SHIFT TO ENLIGHTENMENT THINKING AND THE GROWTH OF THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY MADE AMERICANS RECEPTIVE TO THE POWER OF THE MORAL ESSAY. TWO MONTHS AFTER ITS PUBLICATION, THOMAS PAINE'S COMMON SENSE WAS FAMILIAR TO ALMOST EVERY AMERICAN. BUT THE PERSON WHO BEST SYMBOLIZED THE SPIRIT OF ENLIGHTENMENT IN AMERICA WAS BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. HIS PRESUASIVE WRITINGS HELPED TO SHAPE THE CONCEPT OF THE "IDEAL AMERICAN"...</p>
01.04.26.20	<p>CARLA MULFORD: I think Franklin actually is the foundational myth of America. If you take American culture as British-American culture at the time of the new United States, Franklin's conception of himself that if one were sufficiently trained and self-confident, if one were willing to labor with one's hands and one's mind, one could have what has come today to be called the "American dream."</p>
01.04.48.14	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: There was a belief that somehow by just freeing up your mind, looking at the world around you, finding your way into authorities who themselves were both, ah, energetic and humble and unbounded by ideology, you could figure out practically anything. And Franklin practically did that.</p>
01.05.08.10	<p>NARRATOR: BENJAMIN FRANKLIN WAS BORN IN BOSTON IN 1706; THE YOUNGEST OF ELEVEN CHILDREN. HE APPRENTICED AS A PRINTER TO HIS BROTHER FOR FIVE YEARS. AT 17 FRANKLIN RAN AWAY TO START A NEW LIFE IN PHILADELPHIA.</p>
01.05.24.04	<p>FRANKLIN READER: <i>I knew no Soul, nor where to look for Lodging. I was fatigued with traveling, rowing and want of rest. I was very hungry, and my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar and about a shilling of copper.</i></p>
01.05.40.02	<p>CARLA MULFORD: He was what was called then a "leather apron man." That is he had joined a working man's association. ...That in his day represented working</p>

	<p>people-... And he's very proud of that in terms of his own identity and I think that's very important in terms of American culture.</p>
01.05.54.00	<p>NARRATOR: FRANKLIN REJECTED THE PURITAN BELIEF IN ORIGINAL SIN. HE BELIEVED MAN BEGAN LIFE AS A BLANK SLATE AND THAT HE COULD SHAPE HIS OWN DESTINY. THROUGH CLEVERNESS AND HARD WORK, FRANKLIN IMPROVED HIMSELF FROM THE POOR SON OF A CANDLE-MAKER TO A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN, SCIENTIST AND WRITER.</p>
01.06.14.20	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: Benjamin Franklin was a diplomat par excellence, he was a scientist, he was a philosopher. Franklin was an interesting fellow because he seemed to have had his finger in any number of schemes at self-improvement or national self-improvement.</p>
01.06.33.20	<p>NARRATOR: WHEN FRANKLIN SAT DOWN AT AGE 65 TO WRITE HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY... HE PRESENTED HIMSELF AS A ROLE MODEL FOR THE SELF-MADE MAN... HE BELIEVED THAT THE INDIVIDUAL COULD STRIVE FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR THE SAKE OF BETTERING THE COMMUNITY.</p>
01.06.50.00	<p>FRANKLIN READER: <i>I took care not only to be in Reality Industrious and frugal, but to avoid all Appearances of the contrary. I dressed plainly; I was seen at no Places of idle Diversion; I never went out a-fishing or shooting; a Book, indeed, sometimes debauched me from my Work; but that was seldom, snug, and gave no Scandal.</i></p>
01.07.12.08	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: When he starts out life in Philadelphia as a young man, all bets are off, all values are open to question, everything needs to be invented from the start. The question which hangs in the air is, how will he become a citizen of Philadelphia, how will he help this town become a place apart, a place that's distinct. That's an eerily American moment.</p>
01.07.33.25	<p>NARRATOR: BENJAMIN FRANKLIN WAS A DEIST. HE BELIEVED IN A CREATOR, BUT GAVE LITTLE THOUGHT TO ANYTHING THAT COULDN'T</p>

	<p>BE PROVED. COLONIAL WRITERS LIKE CABEZA DE VACA AND MARY ROWLANDSON INTERPRETED THEIR EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE BIBLE WHERE FRANKLIN USED HIS OWN LIFE TO EXAMINE HUMAN CONDUCT.</p>
01.07.53.28	<p>CARLA MULFORD: His 13 virtues are fascinating for sides of Franklin that we might not really think about.</p>
01.07.59.17	<p>FRANKLIN READER: <i>1. Temperance. Eat not to Dullness. Drink not to Elevation. 2. Silence. Speak not but what may benefit others... (trails under)</i></p>
01.08.10.01	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: These virtues, well deployed, will bring you success in America.</p>
01.08.14.27	<p>FRANKLIN READER: <i>(continues) 8. Justice. Wrong none, by doing Injuries or omitting the Benefits that are your duty. 9. Moderation. Avoid Extremes. Forbear resenting Injurie So much as you think they deserve... (trails under)</i></p>
01.08.30.13	<p>MICHAEL COLACURCIO: This is in fact a good model for what they thought of as the rising generation. The generation that many of which was sort of growing up not rootless but without the same powerful religious conviction that previous generations had had.</p> <p>What they recognized in Franklin was somebody who outgrew Puritanism but comes back quickly by his own account to a belief in the necessity of virtue in the world.</p>
01.09.03.28	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: <i>Chastity. Rarely use venery but for health or offspring.</i> Well, what else are you going to use it for? <i>Never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's piece of reputation.</i></p> <p>In other words, if you're going to go on a tear, keep it quiet, be discreet, not "Thou shall not sin," but do it quietly, go to Las Vegas and try to leave no tracks behind you.</p>

01.09.25.03	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: But where he undercuts this list of virtues is 13 with humility, and there's one line that follows. "Imitate Jesus and Socrates." How seriously are we supposed to take that? It's like this little wink-wink, nudge-nudge. You just can't be completely serious, you know. He's straight faced but you can see the corner of his mouth twitching. Imitate Jesus and Socrates.</p>
01.09.53.20	<p>NARRATOR: CLOSE EXAMINATION OF FRANKLIN'S WORK REVEALED NUANCES AND CLEVER DEPTHS NOT SEEN ON THE FIRST READING.</p>
01.10.02.00	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: But what I love about Franklin is that he puts it in so he can make fun of himself is that sort of drive for self-improvement but he can also make fun of it by including it.</p>
01.10.14.19	<p>DANA NELSON: There's a wonderful passage where he's...teaching the quality of modest diffidence and, you know, when students analyze that passage they suddenly realize he's actually being fairly arrogant. But it's this wonderful manipulation of audience to see a certain thing. It's a kind of smoke-and-mirrors game and he... basically tells readers that's what he's doing. ...That's what makes him such an icon in American political and economic history.</p>
01.10.43.26	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: It's sort of like being a good American by numbers... in the Protestant society, the Protestant white male society that was America in the Early National period.</p>
01.10.57.20	<p>NARRATOR: IN FRANKLIN'S TIME THERE WAS A NARROWLY ACCEPTED DEFINITION AS TO WHO COUNTED AS AN AMERICAN... AMERICANS PRACTICED SLAVERY... AND WOMEN HAD FEW LEGAL RIGHTS. FRANKLIN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY INSPIRED LATER WRITERS TO WIDEN THAT DEFINITION.</p>
01.11.16.03	<p>CARLA MULFORD: We find in Frederick Douglas, especially in the first version of his narrative almost mimicking Franklin's autobiography in the opening pages</p>

	<p>where he talks about his education and especially where he, like Franklin, talks about the importance of self-education and what you can do to figure out a way to learn even when learning seems impossible.</p>
01.11.35.00	<p>RAFIA ZAFAR: Ben Franklin is invoked in a 1946 novel by a black woman named Ann Petrie called <i>The Street</i>, and the heroine, the protagonist, Lutie Johnson, who's a single mother struggling in the ghetto—and what is she thinking about at one point—she likens herself to Franklin walking down the street.</p> <p>Franklin could do it. He had no money. He's walking down the street just eating bread cause he had two cents in his pocket and that's all he had. She thinks I can do it too.</p>
01.12.06.28	<p>NARRATOR: THE NOVELIST HERMAN MELVILLE ONCE WROTE THAT BENJAMIN FRANKLIN WAS EVERYTHING EXCEPT A POET...AND THAT HE CARED ONLY ABOUT THE PRACTICAL...BY THE 1820'S, ROMANTIC WRITERS LIKE RALPH WALDO EMERSON WERE CHALLENGING THE PURE RATIONALISM FRANKLIN REPRESENTED, INSISTING LOGIC NEEDED TO BE TEMPERED WITH HUMAN EMOTION. AND THAT INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT WAS NOT SOLELY FOR THE BENEFIT OF A LARGER COMMUNITY.</p>
01.12.34.16	<p>CARLA MULFORD: Emerson wasn't so sure that the community ideal was one he could agree with, and so Emerson instead tried to encourage people to think of their inward selves and to find power in themselves so that they could face a community that in Emerson's view was falling apart.</p>
01.12.56.08	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: Franklin and Emerson both help us create a literary and cultural nationalism, ah, but in very, very different ways.</p> <p>For Emerson, nationhood is something different. The United States is going to have to embrace, celebrate, and feel spiritually the power and the expanse of the American landscape. You don't find Franklin talking about the landscape, other than it is an untapped economic resource and a</p>

	<p>place into which you can scatter your population.</p> <p>For Emerson, the landscape is a place where the nation can achieve a kind of... spiritual power which will energize it politically, elevate it morally, and really...make its destiny something unique on the world.</p>
01.13.46.20	<p>NARRATOR: IN THE 1800'S, EUROPEAN LITERATURE CONTINUED TO DOMINATE THE STYLES AND IDEAS OF AMERICAN WRITERS. RALPH WALDO EMERSON USED A CLARION CALL TO BREAK FREE. "TRUST YOURSELF" HE WROTE "EACH HEART VIBRATES TO THAT IRON STRING". EMERSON'S WORDS WOULD HAVE A GREAT IMPACT ON AMERICAN THINKERS AND WRITERS.</p>
01.14.13.04	<p>MICHAEL COLACURCIO: Emerson's language is endlessly complicated. His rhetoric is elaborately various, even sometimes self-contradictory. It's a dramatization of a person speaking in many different moods. Undergraduates sometimes complain that they should not be reading this because it's not literary. And I answer that it is almost excessively literary.</p>
01.14.43.17	<p>NARRATOR: RALPH WALDO EMERSON WAS BORN IN 1803 IN BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS. LIKE HIS FATHER BEFORE HIM HE ENTERED THE SEMINARY AND BECAME A UNITARIAN MINISTER. THE UNITARIANS DID NOT SHARE THE PURITAN BELIEF IN ORIGINAL SIN OR THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST... EMERSON'S MINISTRY WAS LESS ABOUT SAVING SOULS AND MORE ABOUT OPENING MINDS.</p>
01.15.07.16	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: He knows how to make a sound on the printed page which will have a kind of spiritual power, which will have an evangelical power, even though he's not preaching any kind of faith that anybody's ever read before in...North America. The prose sounds like the kind of prose that people have been hearing in the aisles of churches for a hundred years in the United States. So it's a radical transformation of our intellectual and spiritual life framed in a familiar...in a familiar kind of language.</p>

01.15.42.00	<p>NARRATOR: WHILE THE EARLY 1800'S MARKED A TIME OF OPTIMISM, IT WAS ALSO A DARK PERIOD IN AMERICAN HISTORY WITH THE FORCED REMOVAL OF AMERICAN INDIANS, SLAVERY, THE SUPPRESSION OF WOMEN AND THE WORKING CLASSES, CHOLERA EPIDEMICS, AND AN EXTREMELY VIOLENT POLITICAL CLIMATE.</p> <p>AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, EMERSON'S WRITING MARKED HIM AS A PROPHET OF HOPE AND A LIBERATOR OF AMERICAN ART. DESPITE EMERSON'S OPTIMISM, HIS LIFE WAS STEEPED IN TRAGEDY.</p>
01.16.17.03	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: His first wife died when she was in her teens, only a year or so after they were married. She died of tuberculosis. He lost a son at age five. He lost a brother when he was about 30. He lost his father when Emerson was only about eight years old. Another brother had continuing bouts with madness and nervous breakdowns. How hard it must have been to trust yourself, to trust your intuitions, to try to create an intellectual and moral system out of what rose from within, when you could see that what rose from within could be craziness, could be insanity, could be death itself.</p>
01.17.02.12	<p>NARRATOR: HIS FIRST WIFE'S ESTATE LEFT EMERSON FREE TO PURSUE THE LIFE OF A WRITER AND A PUBLIC SPEAKER. HE TRAVELLED TO EUROPE, WHERE HE MET WITH WRITERS AND PHILOSOPHERS LIKE WILLIAM WORDSWORTH AND THOMAS CARLYLE.</p> <p>WHILE IN PARIS IN THE JARDIN DES PLANTES, EMERSON HAD A REVELATION AS TO THE RELATIONSHIP OF GOD, NATURE AND MAN. HE DECALRED HE WOULD BECOME A "NATURALIST"... WHICH HE MEANT IN A ROMANTIC AND A SPIRITUAL SENSE.</p>

01.17.42.25	<p>EMERSON READER: <i>My book should smell of pines and resound with the hum of insects. The swallow over my window should interweave that thread of straw he carries in his bill into my web also...</i></p>
01.17.55.25	<p>APRIL SELLEY: Emerson talks about the "me" and the "not me," and how they come together when Emerson talks in "Nature" about the transparent eyeball. He says, "...The universal currents flow through me. I am part and particle of God," and you know he becomes one with nature.</p>
01.18.15.15	<p>NARRATOR: LIKE THE PAINTERS OF THE TIME, EMERSON'S EMBRACE OF NATURE REFLECTED EUROPEAN ROMANTICISM AND ITS REACTION AGAINST SCIENCE. EMERSON'S AMERICA WAS FERTILE GROUND FOR SUCH THINKING.</p>
01.18.28.10	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: And here we've got a country which is short on universities and colleges, short on books, and up to its nose in nature. And so it's ...a perfect ecosystem in which this newly imported European idea and sentiment can thrive.</p>
01.18.45.26	<p>NARRATOR: IN 1835 EMERSON MOVED TO RURAL CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS WHERE HE SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH ARTISTS AND WRITERS. HE FORMED A GROUP THAT WAS ACTIVE IN TRANSCENDENTALISM ... THE BELIEF IN THE UNITY OF THE WORLD AND GOD...</p>
01.19.03.22	<p>EMERSON READER; <i>Philosophically considered, the universe is composed of Nature and the Soul. Strictly speaking, therefore, all that is separate from us, all which Philosophy distinguishes as the NOT ME, that is, both nature and art, all other men and my own body, must be ranked under this name, NATURE.</i></p>
01.19.26.23	<p>NARRATOR: EMERSON ARGUED THAT WHILE REASON WAS IMPORTANT, ONE MUST ALSO USE INTUITION, THE INNATE ABILITY TO DEVELOP THE SELF TOWARD ITS FULL POTENTIAL, TOWARD A DIVINE TOTALITY...</p>

	EMERSON INVESTED THE INDIVIDUAL WITH NATURE, PROGRESS, AND AMERICA.
01.19.45.00	<p>JOHN ROWE: And it's actually the task of every person to figure out what that relationship is. Each of us has an obligation, nearly spiritual obligation, to understand that relationship. Not to understand that relationship is not to realize your potential as a human being, not to realize your human nature.</p>
01.20.04.00	<p>NARRATOR: THE POET EMILY DICKINSON EXPRESSED IT THIS WAY: "SOME KEEP THE SABBATH GOING TO CHURCH—I KEEP IT, STAYING AT HOME—WITH A BOBOLINK FOR A CHORISTER—AND AN ORCHARD FOR A DOME"...</p> <p>THIS PHILOSOPHY WAS AT ODDS WITH AN INCREASINGLY INDUSTRIALIZED AMERICA.</p>
01.20.26.19	<p>JOHN ROWE: Emerson and many of his colleagues among the transcendentalists—in fact, most of them, Margaret Fuller and Henry David Thoreau and the Channings and most others—distinguished themselves by criticizing America for greed, for rapid expansion, simply for the sake of profit, for a neglect of the natural world and for a neglect of human nature, the quality of life.</p>
01.20.52.16	<p>NARRATOR: ON AUGUST 31, 1837, EMERSON DELIVERED A LECTURE TO THE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY AT HARVARD COLLEGE. IN HIS SPEECH, ENTITLED "THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR" HE ATTACKED AMERICAN EDUCATION FOR BEING TOO INFLUENCED BY THE OLD WORLD... AND APPEALED TO THINKING PEOPLE EVERYWHERE TO TRUST THEIR OWN INTELLECT.</p>
01.21.15.02	<p>EMERSON READER: <i>When the sluggish intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close.</i></p>

01.21.36.00	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: The American Scholar got Emerson into deep trouble. The Harvard professor was expecting to hear an essay about fidelity to the printed word, ah, reverence for what was in the library. Emerson is...trying to create there a..."declaration of intellectual independence."</p>
01.21.55.14	<p>EMERSON READER: <i>The highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato, and Milton is that they said it not books and traditions and spoke not what men but what they thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the luster of the firmament of bards and sages.</i></p>
01.22.20.26	<p>NARRATOR: EMERSON CHALLENGED AMERICANS TO TRUST THE INTEGRITY OF THEIR OWN MINDS. " WE WERE SOCIALLY AND INTELLECTUALLY MOORED TO ENGLISH THOUGHT," ONE COLLEAGUE WROTE, "TILL EMERSON CUT THE CABLE AND GAVE US A CHANCE AT THE DANGERS AND GLORIES OF BLUE WATER."</p>
01.22.37.16	<p>MICHAEL COLACURCIO: With Emerson, this becomes almost, you might say, a...religion. Franklin says that selfhood is okay. Emerson says with a great deal more mystery, a great deal more profundity, and also a great deal more social danger that selfhood is very...closely related to God-hood.</p>
01.23.09.21	<p>NARRATOR: FOUR YEARS AFTER "THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR", EMERSON WROTE AN ESSAY ENTITLED "SELF-RELIANCE". WRITTEN IN FORCEFUL, POWERFUL LANGUAGE, EMERSON STRIDENTLY DEFENDS INDIVIDUALISM... AN INDIVIDUALISM THAT WAS VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE IDEAS OF FRANKLIN.</p>
01.23.26.26	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: Franklin would define a self-made man in civic terms, in so far as you were beneficial to your town, beneficial to your country you were a success.</p> <p>That's fundamentally different from Emerson's idea of self-reliance where, in some ways, it's the</p>

	<p>public be damned, and nobody need understand you... what you need to achieve somehow is the triumph of your own principles and a reconciliation between what you feel, what you believe and who you are.</p>
01.23.58.11	<p>MICHEAL COLACURCIO: So that if Franklin sort of authenticates ordinary self-development at the practical level, Emerson theorizes it theologically. Nothing can bring you peace, he says, at the end of self-reliance but yourself. But he also says, nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.</p> <p>I think the implication of those two sentences is that the self is principles. So it is the principled self, then, that is the manifestation of God in the world.</p>
01.24.42.18	<p>NARRATOR: EMERSON CHANGED THE DEFINITION OF A PHILOSOPHER. HIS IDEAS CAME FROM THE HEART AS WELL AS THE HEAD. HE WROTE FOR A PUBLIC WHICH WOULD NOT FULLY ACCEPT, AND EVEN REACTED AGAINST, HIS IDEAS.</p>
01.24.56.00	<p>BRUCE MICHELSON: The experience of reading Emerson is the experience of arguing with Emerson. When you tell 'him, that's nonsense, Ralph, you're wrong, Ralph, you're having an "Emersonian" moment. And that's one of the ways in which Emerson attempts to liberate you and make you into his idea of an independent American.</p>
01.25.19.16	<p>NARRATOR: IT IS SAID THAT EMERSON IS THE AMERICAN WRITER WITH WHOM EVERY WRITER HAD TO COME TO TERMS. HERMAN MELVILLE AND NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE WROTE IN REACTION TO HIS IDEAS... WHILE EMILY DICKINSON AND HENRY DAVID THOREAU WERE INSPIRED BY THEM. THE GREAT AMERICAN POET WALT WHITMAN SAID THAT HE WAS SIMMERING, SIMMERING, SIMMERING AND THAT EMERSON BROUGHT HIM TO A BOIL.</p>
01.25.43.08	<p>APRIL SELLEY: You really can see that line of you know visionary American poets, Emerson, Whitman, going to people like Hart Crane, Theodore Roethke. But</p>

	that idea of getting in contact with nature, of having an almost mystical relationship with the people and nature around you is something that very much goes back to Emerson.
01.26.09.00	NARRATOR: BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND RALPH WALDO EMERSON TIRELESSLY CHAMPIONED THE SELF. THEY BROUGHT NEW POWER TO THE GENRES OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND THE MORAL ESSAY. BOTH LIVED THEIR LIVES AS EXAMPLES AND INSPIRED READERS TO LOOK INWARD, TAKE STOCK, AND TRUST THEMSELVES.
01.26.27.15	BRUCE MICHELSON: They quietly imposed the idea that America can be a place apart, a place connected to the world, open to the world, but not dependent upon the world intellectually or spiritually, that out of our own collective experience, we can create what we need in order to be a healthy, coherent, affirmative culture. That's something that Emerson and Franklin both help the American public to learn how to do.
01.26.59.06	END CREDITS
01.27.52.00	OPB
01.27.56.00	ANNENBERG/CPB
01.28.10.00	800 TAG
01.28.25.00	END