
Walt Whitman's View of the American Glory

Creation On Many Levels

America is made up of hard-working, dedicated individuals who enjoy doing what they do. Walt Whitman's *I Hear America Singing* focuses on the glory America holds when its people work and when they work doing what they love, which encompasses the idea of a country built on hard-work. What makes this poem effective in portraying this idea is the fact that Whitman mentions people who contribute to the structure of America in many ways. He mentions carpenters and masons, who built America physically, and he mentions boatmen and shoemakers, who build America's economy. One person he mentions, however, builds America in an entirely different way: emotionally. Whitman mentions that a mother, or young wife, is singing and that this singing can be found delicious. Regardless of who it is, it can be assumed that each person enjoys what they do, and that this joy is expressed in song. Whitman mentions that a carpenter and mason are singing while they work, implying that they are content and joyous with their work. The carpenter, "singing as he measures his plank," (4) and the mason, "singing as he makes ready for work," (6) show that these two are joyous at work and express this joy through singing. This contributes to the theme of joy through creation because while the carpenter and mason work, creating civilization, they are completely satisfied with it.

Another two people that Whitman mentions are those that build the economy of America. The shoemaker and the boatman both create the economy because they there to be a variety of goods available. This relates to the theme of construction on many levels because, similar to the mason and carpenter, the shoemaker and boatman create the foundation for America and they, too, are satisfied and happy while they do it. The last person that Whitman mentions in the poem is entirely different from the former because what carpenters, masons, boatmen, and shoemakers do for America is tangible and is apparent nationwide. Unlike these four, a mother, or young wife as Whitman would say, creates the emotional and ideological structure of America. The process of doing so is also different from the other four examples because it is also a nationwide effort to develop ideas in America. This is an example of creation on many levels because a wife or mother isn't working with any hardware when creating ideas through the minds of her children, yet her children will one day be important because they will eventually inherit the country, so to speak. The themes of creation on many levels and joy through creation in *I Hear America Singing*, although not apprentice with every person mentioned, are important to the poem because they show that although what some people do for their country may not be as hard for everyone, the results of their actions could still be crucial to the structure of

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