

American gothic essay

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



This painting will allow viewers to expand their imagination. The American Gothic painted by Grant Wood in August of 1930 demonstrates expressionism used in the man and woman's face, the house shown in the background, and the way of life they portray. When looking at this painting, we see a man and woman carrying the same non-expressive facial expression. As the man is staring directly at the viewer, his expression in his eyes show he is stern. As opposed to the woman, she is not looking directly at the viewer but somewhere off the distance to the left. She appears to be furrowing her eyebrows when looking in the distance, presenting herself as distracted, uninterested, or annoyed. In the early nineteenth century, having to paint a picture consumed a great amount of time; therefore they kept a neutral face to make it easier on themselves and for the artists as well. Their neutral expressions can also be taken as an expression of the great depression and the hardships on the farms during the time period.

The man's demeanor and the woman's disturbed expression leads to the explanation that although their farm is in trouble, they are willing to face what is to come in the hardships. Besides the expression given from both the man and woman, the house is another main focus to the painting. The design of the house is based on an American Gothic style, hence the title of the painting.

Originated from Europe, the Gothic style caught Wood's attention by the design of the window shown on the house. With its medieval structure, it presents the house with a timeless manner of the nineteenth century.

Another factor to the house is the colors used to paint the picture. The colors

are dull and not particularly bright and sharp. Presenting it to be old with the lack of bright colors emphasizes the factors in the mood of the painting.

In the painting the colors set the mood content and casual, yet it makes it twisted and dark due to the expression they show. The colors can also be considered drab and simple which could be taken as one more symbol of the basic lives that people were forced to live in, in the early sass's. Looking over the shoulder of the woman shows a pot full of flowers, assuming they are very well kept, hard working people that like a little bit of color in their life. Although this may seem as an ordinary painting at a quick glance, it is a remarkably insightful painting to come by. It is loved by many people for countless numbers of interpretations. As well as its ability to stimulate the imagination. Along with the farmhouse and barn that is seen, the understanding of how their life is portrayed will give more of an understanding on the lifestyle they live in. The man on the right is holding a pitchfork while wearing a pair of overalls and what seems to be a blazer.

With these two bits of symbolism we can assume he is a hard working and a well-kept man. The pitchfork resembles the hard work and time that is put onto his land. As a man who works hard to keep his farm in good shape, he can also be presented as a well-kept, educated, and mannered gentleman.

The appearance that a person shows can tell us more about the person than just their expression; such as the way he presents himself with good hygiene and the knowledge of functioning a farm. In conclusion, the idea of expressionism, the characteristics of the farmhouse and barn, and the life the man and women portray can all be demonstrated in many ways. We could

also postulate Wood's intention was to show that there were still people in the farming community that were surviving through the hardships.

This American Gothic is one of the most noticeable and recognizable paintings in the history of pop and culture. What can be a mystery behind this painting are the thoughts we have about it and what questions can be asked. There are many questions that could be answered within this painting, but is it the answer what we really want to know or is it better to let our imagination roam.