AGE OF REFORM

1. Antebellum—1820 to 1860
   • Romantic age
     • Reformers pointed out the inequality in society
     • Primarily a Northern movement
       • Southerners refused reforms to protect slavery
   • Educated society through
     • newspapers & meetings
     • Areas to reform:
       • Slavery
       • Industrialization
       • Male domination
       • War
       • Women’s rights
       • Public school
       • Temperance (alcohol)
       • Prison reform

The 2nd Great Awakening
Second Great Awakening

- As a result of the Second Great Awakening (a series of revivals in the 1790s-early 1800s), the dominant form of Christianity in America became Evangelical Protestantism.
  - Membership in the major Protestant churches soared.
  - By 1840 an estimated half of the adult population was connected to some church, with the Methodists emerging as the largest denomination in both the North & the South.

Revivalism and the Social Order

- Society during the Jacksonian era was undergoing deep & rapid change.
  - The revolution in markets brought both economic expansion and periodic depressions.
- To combat this uncertainty reformers sought stability and order in religion.
  - Religion provided a means of social control in a disordered society.
  - Churchgoers embraced the values of hard work, punctuality, and sobriety.
  - Revivals brought unity & strength & a sense of peace.
The Mormons
(The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints)

- 1823 → Golden Tablets
- 1830 → Book of Mormon
- 1844 → Murdered in Carthage, IL

Joseph Smith
(1805-1844)

The Mormons
(The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints)

- Deseret community
- Salt Lake City, Utah

Brigham Young
(1801-1877)

Utopian Communities

- The Oneida Community
- Brook Farm
- New Harmony
- Transcendentalists
- Robert Owen
  → Created Utopian Socialism
The Oneida Community
New York, 1848

- Millenarianism -- the 2nd coming of Christ had already occurred
- Humans were no longer obliged to follow the moral rules of the past
  * all residents married to each other - carefully regulated “free love” or complex marriages
  * No private property

John Humphrey Noyes
(1811-1886)

Transcendentalist Thinking

- Man must acknowledge a body of moral truths that were intuitive and must TRANSCEND more sensational proof:
- Give freedom to the slave.
- Give well-being to the poor & the miserable.
- Give learning to the ignorant.
- Give health to the sick.
- Give peace & justice to society.
- They instinctively rejected all secular authority & the authority of organized churches & the Scriptures
- Man is just as divine as God

A Transcendentalist Critic:
Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864)

- Their pursuit of the ideal led to a distorted view of human nature & possibilities:
  * The Blithedale Romance (1852)
- One should accept the world as an imperfect place:
  * Scarlet Letter
  * House of the Seven Gables
The Rise of African American Churches

- Revivalism also spread to the African American community
- The Second Great Awakening has been called the “central & defining event in the development of Afro-Christianity”
- During these revivals Baptists & Methodists converted large numbers of blacks

This led to the formation of all-black Methodist & Baptist churches, primarily in the North
- African Methodist Episcopal (A. M. E.) had over 17,000 members by 1846

The Shakers

- Ann Lee – 1774
- The Shakers used dancing as a worship practice
- Shakers practiced celibacy, separating the sexes as far as practical
- Shakers worked hard, lived simply (built furniture), & impressed outsiders with their cleanliness and order
- Lacking any natural increase, membership began to decline after 1850, from a peak of about 6000 members
Temperance Movement

- The most significant reform movements of the period sought not to withdraw from society but to change it directly.
- **Temperance Movement** — undertook to eliminate social problems by curbing drinking.
  - Led largely by clergy, the movement at first focused on drunkenness & did not oppose moderate drinking.
  - In 1826 the *American Temperance Society* was founded, taking voluntary abstinence as its goal.

The Drunkard’s Progress

*From the first glass to the grave, 1846*

The Asylum Movement (orphanages, jails, hospitals)

- Asylums isolated and separated the criminal, the insane, the ill, and the dependent from outside society.
- "Rehabilitation" — The goal of care in asylums, which had focused on confinement, shifted to the reform of personal character.
The Asylum Movement

- Dorothea Dix, a Boston schoolteacher, took the lead in advocating state supported asylums for the mentally ill.
- She attracted much attention to the movement by her report detailing the horrors to which the mentally ill were subjected—being chained, kept in cages and closets, and beaten with rods.
- In response to her efforts, 28 states maintained mental institutions by 1860.

Educational Reform

In 1800 Massachusetts was the only state requiring free public schools supported by community funds.

- Middle-class reformers called for tax-supported education, arguing to business leaders that the new economic order needed educated workers.

Horace Mann (1796-1859)

- "Father of American Education"
- Children were clay in the hands of teachers and school officials.
- Children should be "molded" into a state of perfection.
- Discouraged corporal punishment.
- Established state teacher-training programs.
Under Horace Mann’s leadership in the 1830s, Massachusetts created a state board of education and adopted a minimum-length school year.

Provided for training of teachers, and expanded the curriculum to include subjects such as history and geography.

Educational Reform

- By the 1850s the number of schools, attendance figures, and school budgets had all increased sharply.
- School reformers enjoyed their greatest success in the Northeast and the least in the South.
  - Southern planters opposed paying taxes to educate poorer white children.
  - Educational opportunities for women also expanded.
- In 1833 Oberlin College in Ohio became the first coeducational college.
- Four years later the first all-female college was founded — Mount Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Early 19c Women

1. Unable to vote
2. Legal status of a minor
3. Single → could own her own property
4. Married → no control over her property or her children
5. Could not initiate divorce
6. Couldn't make wills, sign a contract, or bring suit in court without her husband’s permission.
Women Educators

- Troy, NY Female Seminary
- Curriculum: Math, physics, history, geography.
- Train female teachers

- Emma Willard (1787-1870)
- Mary Lyon (1797-1849)

- 1837 established Mt. Holyoke as the first college for women.

The first Woman’s rights movement was in Seneca Falls, New York in 1849......

- Educational and professional opportunities
- Property rights
- Legal equality
- Repeal of laws awarding the father custody of the children in divorce.
- Suffrage rights

- Lucretia Mott
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Abolitionism

- William Lloyd Garrison, publisher of the The Liberator, first appeared in 1831 and sent shock waves across the entire country.
  - He repudiated gradual emancipation and embraced immediate end to slavery at once.
  - He advocated racial equality and argued that slaveholders should not be compensated for freeing slaves.
Abolitionism

- Free blacks, such as Frederick Douglass, who had escaped from slavery in Maryland, also joined the abolitionist movement.
- To abolitionists, slavery was a moral, not an economic question.
- But most of all, abolitionists denounced slavery as contrary to Christian teaching.
- 1845 -> The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
- 1847 -> "The North Star"

1837 - Gag rule was passed in Congress which stated that slavery could not be discussed.
- Renewed in 1839.
- In 1840 the House passed an even stricter rule, which refused to accept all anti-slavery petition.
- On December 3, 1844, the gag rule was repealed.

Harriet Tubman
(1820-1913)

- Helped over 300 slaves to freedom.
- $40,000 bounty on her head.
- Served as a Union spy during the Civil War.
Leading Escaping Slaves Along the Underground Railroad

The Underground Railroad

GROWTH OF SLAVERY

Slave population, 1820