Chapter 15

The Ferment of Reform and Culture, 1790–1860
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1747</td>
<td>Shaker movement founded in Manchester, England</td>
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<tr>
<td>1770s</td>
<td>First Shaker communities established in New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>Thomas Paine publishes <em>The Age of Reason</em></td>
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<td>1795</td>
<td>University of North Carolina founded</td>
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<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>Second Great Awakening begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>1819</td>
<td>Jefferson founds University of Virginia</td>
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<td>1819–1820</td>
<td>Irving publishes <em>The Sketch Book</em></td>
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<td>1821</td>
<td>Emma Willard establishes Troy (New York) Female Seminary</td>
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<td>1828</td>
<td>American Temperance Society founded</td>
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<td>1826</td>
<td>American Peace Society founded</td>
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<td>1828</td>
<td>Noah Webster publishes dictionary</td>
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<td>1829</td>
<td>American Peace Society founded</td>
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<td>1830</td>
<td>Joseph Smith founds Mormon Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>1830–1831</td>
<td>Godey's <em>Lady's Book</em> first published</td>
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<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>Lyceum movement flourishes</td>
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<td>1836</td>
<td>Cole’s <em>The Oxbow</em> debuts</td>
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<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td>Oberlin College admits female students</td>
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<td>1837</td>
<td>Mary Lyon establishes Mount Holyoke Seminary</td>
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<td>1837</td>
<td>Emerson delivers “The American Scholar” address</td>
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<td>1840</td>
<td>London antislavery convention refuses to recognize female delegates</td>
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<td>1841</td>
<td>Brook Farm commune established</td>
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<td>1843</td>
<td>Dorothea Dix petitions Massachusetts legislature on behalf of the insane</td>
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<td>1845</td>
<td>Poe publishes “The Raven”</td>
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<td>1846–1847</td>
<td>Mormon migration to Utah</td>
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<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>Seneca Falls Woman’s Rights Convention held</td>
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<td>1848</td>
<td>Oneida Community established</td>
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<td>1848</td>
<td>Foster’s “Oh! Susanna” debuts</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Hawthorne publishes <em>The Scarlet Letter</em></td>
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<td>1851</td>
<td>Melville publishes <em>Moby Dick</em></td>
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<td>1851</td>
<td>Maine passes first law prohibiting liquor</td>
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<td>1854</td>
<td>Thoreau publishes <em>Walden</em></td>
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<td>1855</td>
<td>Whitman publishes <em>Leaves of Grass</em></td>
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CHAPTER 15: The Ferment of Reform and Culture, 1790–1860

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. How did Deism, the Second Great Awakening, continued denominational fragmentation, and Mormons shape American religious life?
2. What educational developments occurred in the first half of the nineteenth century?
3. Who led the various reform movements in the early half of the nineteenth century?
4. How did Americans contribute to the advance of science during this time?
5. Who were America’s foremost artistic and literary figures in the first half of the nineteenth century?
6. What were the significant changes in American art and literature in the first half of the nineteenth century?

CHAPTER THEMES

Theme: The spectacular religious revivals of the Second Great Awakening reversed a trend toward secular rationalism in American culture and helped to fuel a spirit of social reform. In the process, religion was increasingly feminized, while women, in turn, took the lead in movements of reform, including those designed to improve their own condition.

Theme: The attempt to improve Americans’ faith, morals, and character affected nearly all areas of American life and culture, including education, the family, literature, and the arts—culminating in the great crusade against slavery.

Theme: Intellectual and cultural development in America was less prolific than in Europe, but they did earn some international recognition and became more distinctly American, especially after the War of 1812.
Monumental Changes

- **The Second Great Awakening**, liberal social ideas from abroad, and Romantic beliefs in human perfectibility fostered the rise of voluntary organizations to promote religious and secular reforms, including abolition and women’s rights.
- Various groups of American Indians, women, and religious followers developed cultures reflecting their interests and experiences, as did regional groups and an emerging urban middle class.

New Ideas

- **DEISM**
  - Less revelation, more reliance on reason
  - Less Bible, more science
  - Still they believe in God
  - Gave human beings capacity for moral behavior

- **UNITARIANISM**
  - Spinoff from less extreme Puritanism of the past
  - Humans have free will and the possibility of salvation by good works
  - God not as stern Creator, but loving father
  - Contrast with hellfire doctrines of Calvinism
  - Reject Predestination and human wickedness

Second Great Awakening

- Concern over lack of religious zeal
- Ideas of Deism and Unitarianism spread across the country
- Frontier “camp meetings”
- Charles Finney — revival preacher who leads revivals in New York area in 1830s
  - Against slavery and alcohol
- Numerous citizens converted
  - “Born again Christians”
  - Boosted church attendance
- New religious sect formed Methodists and Baptists huge increase in numbers
- Stressed personal conversion (not predestination)
- Democratic control of church affairs
- Emotionalism in worship

Second Great Awakening (con’t)

- Increase in evangelicalism inspire reform efforts
  - Age of Reform
  - Prison Reform
  - Temperance
  - Women’s movement
  - Anti-slavery
- Key part of Second Great Awakening was the key role of women in religion
  - Majority of new church members
  - Women role of bringing family back to God
  - Inspired involvement in various other reform efforts

Mormons

- **Joseph Smith**
  - Creates Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
  - Travels to Illinois
  - Murdered in 1844
- Brigham Young leads the followers to **Utah** in 1846-47
  - Develops a separate community (“New Zion”)
  - Prosperous cooperative frontier community
  - Settlement increases by birthrate and immigrants from abroad (Missionary)
  - Will not be admitted into the union until 1896
  - Issue of polygamy

Age of Reform

- Dorothy Dix
  - Worked tirelessly to reform mental health treatment
  - Traveled the country to document the problem
  - Leads to professional treatment for the mentally ill
Ch 15 - Big Take Aways

**Education Reform**
- Tax supported schools were rare in early years of the republic
- Benefits of Public Education
  - Instill republican values
  - Instill values: discipline, hard work, etc.
  - Americanize immigrants
- **Horace Mann** – Secretary of Mass. Board of Education
  - Longer school terms – Compulsory attendance
  - Expanded curriculum
  - More schools
- North benefitted far more from education reforms
  - Illegal for black slaves to learn to read and write

**Temperance Movement**
- **Drinking Problems**
  - Factory system needed efficient labor
  - Family life
  - Seen as immigrant issue (Irish and Germany drinking)
- **American Temperance Society** created in 1826
  - Urged members to stop drinking
  - Created propaganda to spread their "dry" message
  - Move from temperance to legal prohibition
- **Maine Law of 1851**
  - Prohibited the manufacture and sale of liquor
  - Nationwide with 18th Amendment (repealed by the 21st)

**Women Resist**
- Women treated like second class citizens
  - Democratization did not apply to women
- “Age of Common Man”
- “Cult of domesticity” the home was a woman’s special sphere
- Idea of “republican motherhood” – Mothers should raise children to be good citizens

(HINT: modern war will change this)

**Women Resist (con’t)**
- **Women Reformers:**
  - Inspired by Second Great Awakening
  - Demand rights for women, temperance movement, and the abolition of slavery
  - Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton both advocated for suffrage for women
  - **Women’s Rights:** Seneca Falls Convention (1848)
  - Stanton read “Declaration of Sentiments” – “All men and women are created equal”
    - Demand right to vote for women
    - Launched the modern women’s rights movement

**Transcendentalism**
- Truth, “transcends” the senses
  - Not just found by observation alone
- Every person possess an inner light that can illuminate the highest truth
- **Ralph Waldo Emerson**– “The American Scholar” in 1837 at Harvard challenged Americans to make their own art and culture
  - “On the Duty of Civil Disobedience” (1849) & “Walden” (1854)
  - Plays a key role in Civil Rights Movement (as an inspiration)

**Utopian Communities**
- Various movements to move away from conventional society and create a utopian community.
- Mormons: religious communal effort
- Brook Farm: communal transcendentalist experiment in Mass.
  - Secular, humanistic
- **New Harmony**: create a socialist type community that would be an answer to the problems presented by industrialization.
I. Reviving Religion

• Religion in the 1790-1860:
  – Church attendance was still a regular ritual with \( \frac{3}{4} \) of the 23 million Americans in 1850
    – Alexis de Tocqueville declared there was “no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America.”
  – Yet religion of these years was not the old-time religion of colonial days:
    • Austere Calvinism was seeping out of the American churches
I. Reviving Religion (cont.)

• The rationalist ideas of the French Revolutionary era soften the older orthodoxy
  – Thomas Paine’s *The Age of Reason* (1794) declared that all churches were
    “set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.”
  – Many Founding Fathers, including Jefferson and Franklin, embraced the liberal doctrines of **Deism** that was promoted by Paine
I. Reviving Religion (cont.)

• Deism:
  • Relied on reason rather than revelation
  • On science rather than the Bible
  • Rejected the concept of original sin
  • Denied Christ’s divinity
  • Yet Deists believed:
    – in a Supreme Being who had created knowable universe
    – who endowed human beings with a capacity for moral behavior
I. Reviving Religion (cont.)

– Deism helped to inspire spinoffs from the severe Puritanism of the past:
  
  • The **Unitarian** faith in New England, end of the eighteenth century:

    – Held that God existed in only one person, not in the orthodox Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit)

    – Although denying the deity of Jesus, Unitarians stressed the essential goodness of human nature rather than its vileness

    – They proclaimed their belief in free will and the possibility of salvation through good works

    – They pictured God not as stern Creator but a loving Father.
I. Reviving Religion (cont.)

– Embraced by many leading thinkers (including Ralph Waldo Emerson):
  – The Unitarian movement appealed mostly to intellectuals whose rationalism and optimism contrasted sharply with the hellfire doctrines of Calvinism, especially predestination and human depravity.

• A growing reaction against the growing liberalism in religion set in about 1800:
  – The Second Great Awakening:
    • Fresh wave of revivals starting on the southern frontier, than to the cities of the Northeast
I. Reviving Religion (cont.)

• The Second Awakening was one of the most momentous episodes in the history of American religion:
  – Left countless converted souls
  – Many shattered and reorganized churches
  – And numerous new sects
  – It encouraged an effervescent evangelicalism in many areas of American life:
    » Prison reform, the temperance cause, the women’s movement, and the crusade to abolish slavery.
I. Reviving Religion (cont.)

– The Second Great Awakening was spread to the masses on the frontier by huge “camp meetings”:
  • 25,000 people would gather for encampment of several days
  • Served by itinerant preacher
  • Thousands of spiritually starved souls “got religion”
  • Many of the “saved” soon backslid into their former sinful ways
  • But the revivals boosted church attendance
I. Reviving Religion (cont.)

- Stimulated a variety of humanitarian reforms
- Evangelistic missionary work in the West with Indians, in Hawaii and in Asia
- Methodist and Baptists reaped the most abundant harvest of souls
  - Both sects stressed personal conversion (contrary to predestination), a relatively democratic control of church affairs, and a rousing emotionalism.

- **Peter Cartwright** (1785-1872) was the best known of the Methodist “circuit riders” or traveling frontier preachers.
Charles Grandison Finney was the greatest of the revival preachers:

- Had a deeply moving conversion experience
- Led massive revivals in Rochester and New York City in 1830 and 1831
- He preached a version of the old-time religion, but he was also an innovator:
  - He devised the “anxious bench” where repentant sinners could sit in full view of the congregation
  - He encouraged women to pray aloud in public
I. Reviving Religion (cont.)

– He denounced both alcohol and slavery
– He served as president of Oberlin College in Ohio, where he helped to make a hotbed of revivalist activity and abolitionism.

• A key feature of the Second Great Awakening was the feminization of religion, both in church membership and theology:
  – Middle-class women were the first and most fervent enthusiasts of religious revivalism
I. Reviving Religion (cont.)

• They made up the majority of new church members
• They were mostly to stay within the fold
• Evangelicals preached a gospel of female spiritual worth
  
  Offered women an active role in bringing their husbands and families back to God

• Many women turned to saving the rest of society
• They formed a host of benevolent and charitable organizations
• They spearheaded crusades for most of the era’s ambitious reforms.
II. Denominational Diversity

• Revivals furthered the fragmentation of religious faiths:
  – Western New York was so blistered by sermonizers preaching “hellfire and damnation” that it came to be known as the **Burned-Over-District**: Millerites, or Adventists, rose from the Burned-Over-District soil in the 1830s.
    – Named after William Miller
II. Denominational Diversity (cont.)

- They interpreted the Bible to mean that Christ would return to earth on October 22, 1844
- The failure of Jesus to descend on schedule dampened but did not destroy the movement.

• Like the First Great Awakening, the Second tended to widen the lines between classes and regions
  - The most prosperous and conservative denominations in the East were little touched
  - Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Unitarians tended to come from the wealthier, better-educated
  - Methodists, Baptist, and other sects tended to come from less prosperous, less “learned” communities in the rural South and West.
II. Denominational Diversity (cont.)

- Religious diversity reflected social cleavages facing the slavery issue:
  - By 1844-45 the southern Baptists and southern Methodists split with their northern brethren
  - In 1857 the Presbyterians, North and South parted company
  - The secession of the southern churches foreshadowed the secession of southern states
  - First the churches split, then the political parties split, and then the Union split.
III. A Desert Zion in Utah

• **Mormons:**
  - Joseph Smith received the golden plates, which constituted the Book of Mormon
  - Another name: *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*
  - Established a religious oligarchy, Smith went first to Ohio and Missouri and Illinois
    - The Mormons antagonized rank-and-file Americans, who were individualistic and dedicated to free enterprise
    - They aroused further anger by voting in a unit
    - And by openly drilling their militia for defensive purpose.
III. A Desert Zion in Utah (cont.)

– In 1844 Joseph Smith and his brother were murdered and mangled by a mob in Carthage, Ill.

– Brigham Young took over leadership
  • He proved to be an aggressive leader
  • An eloquent preacher
  • A gifted administrator

  • Determined to escape further persecution, he led the oppressed and despoiled Latter-Day Saints to Utah in 1846-47
III. A Desert Zion in Utah (cont.)

• The Mormons soon made the desert bloom by means of ingenious and cooperative methods of irrigation:
  – The crop of 1848, threatened by crickets, were saved by a flock of gulls (A monument to the seagulls stands in Salt Lake City today).
• Semiarid Utah grew remarkably
• By the end of 1848, 50,000 settlers had arrived (see Map 15.1)
III. A Desert Zion in Utah (cont.)

– In 1850s many dedicated Mormons made the 1300 mile trek across the plains pulling two-wheeled carts

• Under Young’s rigid disciplined management the community became a prosperous frontier theocracy and a cooperative commonwealth

• Young married as many as 27 women—and begot 56 children

• The population grew by thousands of immigrants from Europe—where the Mormons had a flourishing missionary movement.
III. A Desert Zion in Utah (cont.)

• A crisis developed:
  – when the Washington government was unable to control the hierarchy of Brigham Young, who had been made territorial governor in 1850
  – Federal troops marched in 1857 against the Mormons
  – Fortunately the quarrel was finally adjusted without serious bloodshed
III. A Desert Zion in Utah (cont.)

- The Mormon had problems with the anti-polygamy laws passed by Congress in 1862 and 1882.
  - Their unique marital customs delayed statehood for Utah until 1896.
IV. Free Schools for a Free People

- Tax-supported primary schools were scarce in the early years of the Republic:
  - They were primarily to educate the children of the poor—thus so-called ragged schools
  - Advocates of “free” public education met stiff opposition
  - Taxation for education was an insurance premium that the wealthy paid for stability and democracy.
IV. Free Schools for a Free People (cont.)

• Tax-supported public education lagged in the slavery-cursed South, triumphed between 1825 and 1850
  – The gaining of manhood suffrage for whites helped
  – A free vote cried aloud for free education

• The famed little red schoolhouse became the shrine of American democracy.
• Early schools:
  – Stayed open only a few months of the year
  – Schoolteachers, mainly men, were ill-trained, ill-tempered, and ill-paid
  – Put more stress on “lickin’” than on “larnin’”
  – They usually taught the “three Rs”—“readin’, ‘ritin’, and ‘rithmetic”
  – To many rugged Americans, suspicious of “book larnin’,” this was enough.
IV. Free Schools for a Free People (cont.)

• **Horace Mann** (1796-1859):  
  – As secretary of the **Massachusetts Board of Education**, he championed:  
    – For more and better schoolhouses  
    – Longer school terms  
    – Higher pay for teachers  
    – And an expanded curriculum.  

• His influence radiated out to other states and impressive improvement were made.  

• Yet education remained an expensive luxury for many communities.
IV. Free Schools for a Free People (cont.)

• By 1860 the nation counted only 100 public secondary schools—and nearly a million white adult illiterates.

• Black slaves in the South were legally forbidden to receive instruction in reading and writing.

• Blacks in both the North and the South were usually excluded from the schools.
IV. Free Schools for a Free People (cont.)

• Educational advances:
  – Aided by improved textbooks
  – Notable those of Noah Webster (1758-1843)
    • His reading books were partly designed to promote patriotism
    • Webster devoted twenty years to his famous dictionary
      – Published in 1828
      – Helped to standardize the American language.
IV. Free Schools for a Free People (cont.)

William H. McGuffey:

- A teacher-preacher of rare power
- His grade-school readers, first published in the 1830s, sold 122 million
- *McGuffey’s Readers* hammered home lasting lessons in morality, patriotism, and idealism.
V. Higher Goals for Higher Learning

• Higher education:
  – The Second Great Awakening planted many small, denominational, liberal arts colleges: 
    • Chiefly in the South and West.
  – The new colleges offered a narrow, traditional curriculum of Latin, Greek, mathematics, and moral philosophy
  – The first state-supported universities were in North Carolina in 1795.
V. Higher Goals for Higher Learning (cont.)

- University of Virginia (1819):
  - Brain child of Thomas Jefferson, who designed its beautiful architecture
  - He dedicated the university to freedom from religion or political shackles
  - Modern languages and the sciences received emphasis.
V. Higher Goals for Higher Learning (cont.)

- Women’s higher education:
  - Frowned upon in the early decade of the nineteenth century
  - Women’s education was to be in the home
  - Coeducation was regarded as frivolous
  - Prejudices prevailed that too much learning injured the brain, undermined health, and rendered a young lady unfit for marriage.
    - Susan B. Anthony’s teacher refused to instruct her in long division.
V. Higher Goals for Higher Learning (cont.)

• Adult learning:
  • Was satisfied at private subscription libraries or increasingly at public libraries
  • House-to-house peddlers helped feed the public appetite for culture
  • Traveling lecturers carried learning to the masses through the Lyceum lecture associations
  • They provided platform for speakers in science, literature, and moral philosophy
  • Magazines flourished in the pre-Civil War years, but most of them withered after a short life.
VI. An Age of Reform

• Reformers:
  • Most were intelligent, inspired idealists, touched by evangelical religion
  • **Women were prominent in these reform crusades, especially for suffrage**
  • Resulted from their desire to reaffirm traditional values
  • Naïve single-minded reformers applied conventional virtue to refurbishing an older order
  • Impressionment for debt continued to be a nightmare
VI. An Age of Reform (cont.)

• Criminal codes in the states were being softened
  – The number of capital offenses were reduced
  – Brutal punishments were being slowly eliminated
  – Idea that prisons should reform as well as punish—hence “reformatories,” “house of correction,” and “penitentiaries” (for penance)
  – Sufferers of insanity were still being treated with incredible cruelty; many chained in jails, or poor house

• Dorothy Dix (1802-1887):
  – Possessed infinite compassion and will-power
  – Travel 60,000 miles in 8 years to document firsthand observation of insanity and asylums.
VI. An Age of Reform (cont.)

• Her classic petition of 1843 to Mass. legislature describes her visits
• Her persistent prodding resulted in improved conditions

– Agitation for peace:
  • The American Peace Society (1828) was formed:
    – With ringing declaration of war on war
    – It was making progress by midcentury, but suffered a setback with the Crimean War in Europe and the Civil War in America.
VII. Demon Rum—The “Old Deluder”

• The ever-present drink problem attracted dedicated reformers:
  – The **American Temperance Society** (1826)
    • Formed in Boston
    • They implored drinkers to sign the temperance pledge
    • Organized children’s clubs—“Cold Water Army”
    • Temperance crusaders used pictures, pamphlets, and lurid lectures to convey their messages.
VII. Demon Rum—The “Old Deluder” (cont.)

– The most popular anti-alcohol tract was T.S. Arthur’s *Ten Nights in a Barroom and What I Saw There* (1854)

– Early foes of Demon Drink adopted two lines:
  
  • To stiffen the individual’s will to resist the wiles of the little brown jug; thus stressed “temperance” rather than “teetotalism,” or total elimination
  
  • To elimination of intoxicants by legislation; leader Neal S. Dow, “Father of Prohibition,” sponsored the *Maine Law of 1851*
VII. Demon Rum—The “Old Deluder” (cont.)

• Maine Law of 1851—
  – the “law of Heaven” Americanized, prohibited the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor
  • Others states followed Maine’s example
  • 1857 a dozen states passed various prohibition laws
  • It was clearly impossible to legislate the thirst for alcohol out of existence
  • Yet, on the eve of the Civil War, prohibitionists had registered inspiriting gains
  • Less drinking among women
VIII. Women in Revolt

• Women in America:
  • Nineteenth century was still a man’s world
  • Women in American had it better than in Europe
  • Women were still “the submerged sex” in America
  • Women now avoided marriage—10% of adult women remained “spinsters” at the time of the Civil War

• Gender differences were strongly emphasized in 1800s America:
  – Because the burgeoning market economy separated women and men into distinct economic roles.
VIII. Women in Revolt (cont.)

• The home was a woman’s special sphere, the centerpiece of the “cult of domesticity.”

– Clamorous female reformers:
  • Demanding rights for women, they also campaigned for temperance and the abolition of slavery
  • Like men they had been touched by the evangelical spirit
  • The women’s right movement was mothered by:
    – Lucretia Mott, a sprightly Quaker
    – Elizabeth Cady Stanton insisted on leaving “obey” out of the marriage ceremony, and advocated suffrage for women
VIII. Women in Revolt (cont.)

– Quaker-raised Susan B. Anthony, a militant lecturer for woman’s rights
– Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell was the first female graduate of a medical college
– The talented Grimke sisters, Sarah and Angelina, championed antislavery
– Lucy Stone retained her maiden name after marriage—hence the latter-day “Lucy Stoners”
– Amelia Bloomer revolted against the current “street sweeping” female attire by donning a short skirt with Turkish trousers—“bloomers”
VIII. Women in Revolt (cont.)

• **Woman’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York in 1848:**
  – Stanton read a “**Declaration of Sentiments**”:
    – Read in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence—“that all men and women are created equal”
    – One resolution formally demanded the ballot for women
    – The Seneca Falls meeting launched the modern women’s rights movement.

– The crusade for women’s rights was eclipsed by the campaign against slavery.
Women in Revolt (cont.)

• Any white male over the age of 21 could vote, while no woman could.
• Yet women were being admitted to colleges.
• And some states, like Mississippi in 1839, permitted wives to own property after marriage.
IX. Wilderness Utopias

• Utopias:
  
  – 40 communities of a cooperative, communistic, or “communitarian” nature were set up:
    
    • Robert Owen founded in 1825 a communal society of a thousand people at **New Harmony**, Indiana
    
    • **Brook Farm**, Mass. 200 acres was started in 1841 with the brotherly and sisterly cooperation of about 20 intellectuals committed to the philosophy of transcendentalism (see p. 327):
      
      – Destroyed by fire, the whole adventure in “plain living and high thinking” collapsed in debt.
IX. Wilderness Utopias (cont.)

• **Oneida Community** (1848), founded in New York:
  – It practiced free love (“complex marriage”), birth control through “male continence” and the eugenic selection of parents to produce superior offspring
  – Flourished for 30 years, largely because its artisans made superior steel traps and Oneida Community (silver); see “Makers of America: The Oneida Community,” pp. 322-323.

• **Shakers:**
  – Longest-lived sect, founded in England (1774) by Mother Ann Lee
  – Attained a membership of 6000 in 1840
  – But since their monastic customs prohibited both marriage and sexual relations, they were virtually extinct by 1940.
X. The Dawn of Scientific Achievement

• Scientific talent:
  – Professor Benjamin Silliman (1779-1864) most influential American scientist
    • A pioneer chemist and geologist taught at Yale College for 50 years
  – Professor Louis Agassiz (1807-1873):
    • Served for a quarter century at Harvard College
    • A path-breaking student of biology, he insisted on original research and deplored the reigning over-emphasis on memory work
X. The Dawn of Scientific Achievement (cont.)

- **Professor Asa Gray** (1810-1888) of Harvard College:
  - Published over 350 books, monographs, and papers
  - His textbooks set new standards for clarity and interest

- French-descended naturalists **John J. Audubon** (1785-1851):
  - Painted wildfowl in their natural habitat
  - His magnificently illustrated *Birds of America*
  - The Audubon Society for the protection of birds.
X. The Dawn of Scientific Achievement (cont.)

• Medicine in America:
  – Conditions:
    • Very primitive by modern standards
    • People everywhere complained of ill health
    • Self-prescribed patent medicines were common
    • Fad diets were popular
    • The use of medicine by regular doctors was often harmful
    • Victims of surgical operations were tied down
    • Medical progress came in the early 1840s
XI. Artistic Achievements

– Flush with political independence, Americans strained to achieve cultural autonomy and create a national art worthy of their aspirations.

• Architecture:
  – American chose to imitate Old World styles rather than create indigenous ones
  – **Federal Style:**
    • it was architecture that borrowed from classical Greek and Roman examples and emphasized symmetry, balance, and restraint.
XI. Artistic Achievements (cont.)

• Public buildings incorporated a neoclassical vocabulary of columns, domes, and pediments
• Charles Bulfinch’s design of the Mass. State House
• Benjamin Latrobe’s early-nineteenth-century additions to the U.S. Capitol and President’s House, (now White House) showcase neoclassicism.

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Greek Revival:

• Between 1820 and 1850
• By midcentury medieval Gothic forms with emphasis on arches, sloped roofs, and large, stained-glass windows.
XI. Artistic Achievement (cont.)

– Palladian style
  • Thomas Jefferson’s Virginia hilltop home, Monticello
  • Jefferson modeled Richmond’s new capitol on an ancient Roman temple
  • Jefferson’s creation—the University of Virginia at Charlottesville—finest example of neoclassicism

– Distinctive national style:
  • America exported artists and imported art
  • Painting suffered Puritan prejudice—art was a sinful waste of time
XI. Artistic Achievements (cont.)

- **Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828):**
  - Produced several portraits of Washington
- **Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827):**
  - Painted some sixty portraits of Washington, who patiently sat for fourteen of them
- **John Trumbull (1756-1843):**
  - Fought in the Revolutionary War, recaptured its heroic scenes and spirit on scores of striking canvasses
– After the War of 1812, American painters turned from human portraits and history paintings to pastoral mirrorings of local landscapes.

– The **Hudson River school: 1820s and 1830s**
  
  • Thomas Cole and Asher Durand celebrated the raw sublimity and grand divinity of nature
    
    – Cole’s *The Oxbow* (1836) portrayed the ecological threat of human encroachment on once pristine environments
    
    – His masterpiece five-part series *The Course of Empire* (1833-1836) depicted the cyclical rise and fall of human civilization—an analogy of industrialization and expansion.
XI. Artistic Achievements (cont.)

• Music:
  • Was slowly shaking off the restraints of colonial days, when Puritans frowned upon nonreligious singing
  • Rhythmic and nostalgic “dardy” tunes were popular
  • American minstrel shows were very unique (see “Examining the Evidence: The Jazz Singer, 1927,” p. 717)
  • “Dixie,” Confederates battle hymn (1859)
  • Stephen Foster (1826-1864)—most famous southern songs “Camptown Races” (1850) “Old Folks at Home” (1851) “Oh! Susanna” (1848)
XII. The Blossoming of a National Literature

• Busy conquering a continent, Americans poured their creative efforts into practical outlets:
  - Political essays: *The Federalist* (1787-1788) by Jay, Hamilton, and Madison
  - Pamphlets: Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* (1776)
  - Political orations: Masterpieces of Daniel Webster
  - Benjamin Franklin’s *Autobiography* (1818)
XII. The Blooming of a National Literature (cont.)

• **Romanticism:**
  - Conceived as a reaction against the hyper-rational Enlightenment
  - **Romanticism originated in the revolutionary era of continental Europe and England**
  - It emphasized imagination over reason, nature over civilization, intuition over calculation, and the self over society
  - It celebrated human potential and prized the heroic genius of the individual artists
XII. The Blossoming of a National Literature (cont.)

• American artists:
  – **Washington Irving** (1783-1859) first to win international recognition as a literary figure
  – **James Fenimore Cooper** (1789-1851) gained world fame making New World themes respectable
  – William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878) wrote poetry, set a model for journalism that was dignified, liberal, and conscientious
XIII. Trumpeters of Transcendentalism

• **Transcendentalism**: It resulted from a liberalizing of the straight-laced Puritan theology.

• They rejected the prevailing empiricist theory of John Locke—that all knowledge comes to the mind through the senses.

  • Truth, rather, “transcends” the senses; it cannot be found by observation alone.

• Every person possesses an inner light that can illuminate the highest truth, and indirectly touch God.
XIII. Trumpeters of Transcendentalism (cont.)

• Beliefs of transcendentalism:
  – A stiff-backed individualism in matters of religion as well as social
  – A commitment to self-reliance, self-culture, and self-discipline
  • Breed hostility to authority and formal institutions of any kind as well to all conventional wisdom
  • A romantic exaltation of the dignity of the individual, whether black or white—the mainspring of a whole array of humanitarian reforms
XIII. Trumpeters of Transcendentalism (cont.)

• Best known transcendentalist was Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882):
  – His most thrilling effort was “The American Scholar”:
    • Delivered at Harvard College in 1837
    • Intellectual declaration of independence
    • Urged American writers to throw off European traditions and delve into the riches of their own backyards.
Emerson stressed self-reliance, self-improvement, self-confidence, optimism and freedom.

– Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862):
  • Condemning a government that supported slavery, he refused to pay his Mass. poll tax
  • *Walden: Or Life in the Woods* (1854):
    – His two year life on the edge of Walden Pond
    – It epitomized the romantic quest for isolation from society’s corruptions.
XIII. Trumpeters of Transcendentalism (cont.)

– Henry David Thoreau:
  • His essay “On the Duty of Civil Disobedience” (1849)
  • His writing influenced Mahatma Gandhi to resist British rule in India
  • And also influenced Martin Luther King, Jr.’s thinking about nonviolence.

– Margaret Fuller (1810-1850):
  • Edited the movement’s journal, The Dial
  • Her series of “Conservations” were to promote scholarly dialogue among local elite women.
XIII. Trumpeters of Transcendentalism (cont.)

– Margaret Fuller:
  - *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845) a powerful critique of gender roles and an iconic statement of the budding feminist movement.

– Walt Whitman (1819-1892):
  - His famous collection of poems *Leaves of Grass* (1855) highly emotional and unconventional, he dispensed with titles, stanzas, rhymes, and at times regular meter.
  - He located divinity in commonplace natural objects as well as the human body.
"Louise Alcott"
THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND.
XIV. Glowing Literary Lights

- **Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882):**
  - One of the most popular poets produced in America
  - Some of his most admired narrative poems—*Evangeline* (1847), *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855), *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858)
  - He was the first American to be enshrined in the Poet’s Corner of Westminster Abbey.

- **John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892):**
  - Was the uncrowned poet laureate of the antislavery crusade
XIV. Glowing Literary Lights (cont.)

– John Greenleaf Whittier (cont.):
  • He was vastly more important in influencing social action
  • Helped arouse a callous America on the slavery issue.

– James Russell Lowell (1819-1891):
  • Ranks as one of America’s best poets
  • He was also a distinguished essayist, literary critic, and diplomat as well as editor
  • He is remembered as a political satirist in his *Biglow Papers* (1846-1848).
XIV. Glowing Literary Lights (cont.)

– Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888):
  • *Little Women* (1868).

– Emily Dickinson (1830-1886):
  • Lived as a recluse—an extreme example of the romantic artist’s desire for social remove
  • In deceptive spare language and simple rhyme schemes she explored universal theses of nature, love, death, and immortality
  • She hesitated to publish her poems, but after her death nearly 2000 were found and published.
XIV. Glowing Literary Lights (cont.)

– William Gilmore Stuart (1806-1870):
  • Most noteworthy literary figure produced by the South
  • 82 books flowed from his pen, winning the title: “the Cooper of the South”
  • His favorite themes, captured in titles like *The Yamasee* (1835) and *The Cassique of Kiawah* (1859) dealing with the South during the Revolutionary War.
  • His national and international reputation suffered after the Civil War, no doubt due to his overt proslavery and secessionist sentiments.
XV. Literary Individualists and Dissenters

• Not all writers believed in human goodness and social progress.
  – Edgar Allen Poe (1809-1849):
    • He was a gifted poet, as the mesmerizing rhythms of “The Raven” (1845) attest
    • He excelled in the short story, especially Gothic horror type
    • He was fascinated by the ghostly and ghastly, as in “The Fall of the House of Usher.”
XV. Literary Individuals and Dissenters (cont.)

• Two writers reflected the continuing Calvinist obsession with original sin and with the never-ending struggle between good and evil:
  
  – Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864):
    • His masterpiece was *The Scarlet Letter* (1850); describes the practice of forcing an adulteress to wear a scarlet “A” on her clothing
    • In *The Marble Faun* he explores the concepts of the omnipresence of evil
Herman Melville (1819-1891):
- His masterpiece, *Moby Dick* (1851), a complex allegory of good and evil
- It had to wait until the twentieth century for readers and for proper recognition
XVI. Portrayers of the Past

- **George Bancroft (1800-1891):**
  - Deservedly received the title “Father of American History”
  - He published a spirited, super patriotic history of the United States in ten volumes.

- **William H. Prescott (1796-1859):**
  - Published classic account of the conquest of Mexico (1843) and Peru (1847).
Francis Parkman (1823-1893):

- Penned a brilliant series of volumes beginning in 1851
- He chronicled the struggle between France and Britain in colonial times for the mastery of North America.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1747</td>
<td>Shaker movement founded in Manchester, England</td>
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<tr>
<td>1770s</td>
<td>First Shaker communities established in New York</td>
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<td>1794</td>
<td>Thomas Paine publishes <em>The Age of Reason</em></td>
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<td>1795</td>
<td>University of North Carolina founded</td>
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<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>Second Great Awakening begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>1819</td>
<td>Jefferson founds University of Virginia</td>
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<td>1819-1820</td>
<td>Irving publishes <em>The Sketch Book</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>Emma Willard establishes Troy (New York) Female Seminary</td>
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<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>New Harmony commune established</td>
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<td>1826</td>
<td>American Temperance Society founded</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cooper publishes <em>The Last of the Mohicans</em></td>
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<td>1830</td>
<td>Joseph Smith founds Mormon Church</td>
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<td><em>Godey’s Lady’s Book</em> first published</td>
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<td>1835-1831</td>
<td>Finney conducts revivals in eastern cities</td>
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<td>1835</td>
<td>Lyceum movement flourishes</td>
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<td>1836</td>
<td>Cole’s <em>The Oxbow</em> debuts</td>
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<td>1837</td>
<td>Oberlin College admits female students</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mary Lyon establishes Mount Holyoke Seminary</td>
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<td>Emerson delivers “The American Scholar” address</td>
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<td>1840</td>
<td>London antislavery convention refuses to recognize female delegates</td>
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<td>1841</td>
<td>Brook Farm commune established</td>
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<td>1843</td>
<td>Dorothea Dix petitions Massachusetts legislature on behalf of the insane</td>
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<td>1845</td>
<td>Poe publishes “The Raven”</td>
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<td>1846-1847</td>
<td>Mormon migration to Utah</td>
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<td>1848</td>
<td>Seneca Falls Woman’s Rights Convention held</td>
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<td>Oneida Community established</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Foster’s “Oh! Susanna” debuts</td>
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<td>1850</td>
<td>Hawthorne publishes <em>The Scarlet Letter</em></td>
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<td>1851</td>
<td>Melville publishes <em>Moby Dick</em></td>
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<td>Maine passes first law prohibiting liquor</td>
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<td>1854</td>
<td>Thoreau publishes <em>Walden</em></td>
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<td>Whitman publishes <em>Leaves of Grass</em></td>
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