Chapter 12: Religion & Reform 1820-1860
A. Emerson and Transcendentalism

1. Ralph Waldo Emerson was the leader of an intellectual movement rooted in the religious atmosphere of New England.

2. Romantic thinkers, such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who challenged the rational traditions of the Enlightenment, influenced transcendentalists.

3. Transcendentalists hoped to "transcend," or go beyond the world of the senses and achieve a deeper level of understanding of the universe.

4. Emerson advocated the individuals discovery of his or her "original relationship" with nature.
Section 1 Individualism

5. Emerson took an ambivalent stance toward industrial society.
   a. He criticized the numbing routine of factory life, which dulled human creativity.
   b. He applauded advances in technology and human innovation.

6. Emerson carried his ideas to middle-class America through a series of popular lectures between 1833 and 1860.

B. Emerson's Literary Influence

1. Emerson influenced a young New England intellectual, Henry David Thoreau.
Section 1 Individualism

- Thoreau’s *Walden* urged readers to probe the deeper, spiritual meanings of their lives.
- Thoreau became a voice for independent thinking, nonconformity, and civil disobedience.
- 2. Margaret Fuller argued that Emerson's ideas concerning a deeper mystical relationship with God equally applied to *women and* provided them with identity and dignity.
- 3. Walt Whitman celebrated the uniqueness of the individual in *Leaves of Grass*.
- 4. Other American writers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville explored darker themes focusing on the conflicting demands of individuality and social responsibility.
Section 1 Individualism

C. The Brook Farm Experiment

1. Transcendentalists established a number of Utopian communities to escape the constraints of industrial society. The most important of these communities was the Brook Farm Community founded in Roxbury, Massachusetts.

2. Brook Farmers organized themselves to remain largely self-sufficient.
Communal Settlements in the United States 1810-1860
A. The Shakers

1. In 1770 an illiterate Manchester factory worker, Ann Lee Stanley, (Mother Ann) claimed to have visions in which God revealed that Adam & Eve had been banished from the Garden of Eden because of sexual lust.

2. Stanley moved to Albany, New York, & established the first of several Shaker communities.

3. To the Shakers, sin was the product of a society that put obstacles in the way of a chaste & self-denying life.

4. Shakers abstained from marriage, ownership of private property, interest in war or politics, and the use of alcohol and tobacco.

5. Shaker communities, with their economic prosperity and sexual equality, attracted a large number of converts between the 1780s & the 1840s.

6. Dependence on converts and young orphans to replenish their numbers eventually caused the decline of the movement.

B. The Fourierist Movement

1. Utopian Socialist Charles Fourier advocated the creation of self-supporting communities known as *Phalanxes*.

2. Arthur Brisbane, an American disciple of Fourier, suggested that Fourier's movement offered an opportunity to continue the great political movement of 1776.
Section 2 Communalism contd.

3. Brisbane and his followers founded over 100 cooperative communities in the United States, most of which ended in failure.

4. The Fourierist movement illustrated the social discontent fostered by economic depression.

C. Noyes and Oneida Community

I. John Humphrey Noyes established a community that redefined traditional sexuality and gender roles.

2. Noyes advocated "perfectionism," or the belief that the second coming of Christ had already occurred and that people could achieve freedom from sin.

3. Unlike Shakers, who advocated celibacy, Noyes embraced "complex marriage" wherein all members of the community were married to one another.

4. Noyes and his followers initially settled in Putney, Vermont. After local opposition to the practice of complex marriage, the group finally settled in Oneida, New York.

5. The significance of Noyes' and other Utopian communities lies in their rejection of 19th century American social and class norms.
The Mormons

If we were of the world, I believe that the people... would love us well enough to let us remain somewhere in the state. But they hate us, despise us, and persecute us, and when they kill us they verily think they do God's service.

Elizabeth Haven Barlow
D. The Mormons

1. In 1830, John Smith published *The Book of Mormon*, which he claimed was a translation from gold plates shown to him by the angel Moroni.

2. Smith incorporated his religious views in his newly formed Church of Latter-Day Saints.

3. Smith promoted capitalistic values such as hard work, risk taking, & saving within a communal framework, hoping to create a "New Jerusalem."
4. Smith was forced to move his followers several times to avoid persecution before settling in Nauvoo, Illinois. The Nauvoo community grew into the largest Utopian community in the country, with 30,000 inhabitants by the 1840s.
• 5. Smith's growing economic and political power fueled resentment among the local Illinois population.
• 6. Smith continued to proclaim new revelations, one of which justified polygamy.
• 7. An anti-Mormon mob, incensed by charges of treason against Smith, murdered Smith & his brother in 1844.
8. **Brigham Young**, an early convert to the church, assumed Smiths role as church leader. In 1846, Young began a phased move across the great plains into what is now the state of Utah.

9. Mormons continued to face resistance & possible armed attack from an American government that disapproved of Mormon marriage practices.

10. The Mormons succeeded where other Utopian communities failed by combining an entrepreneurial spirit with highly disciplined patriarchal communities.
Why were Joseph Smith and his followers forced to move several times?

- Forced to move due to religious persecution.
  - Communal organization
  - Controversial teaching of polygamy
- Joseph Smith, the leader and founder of the Church of Latter Day Saints.
  - Smith Dies at the hands of violent mob.
  - Brigham Young leads the group from Illinois to Utah.
An example of mob violence against Mormons is shown in this 1844 lithograph by G.N. Fasel called *Martyrdom of Joseph & Hiram Smith*. 
Where did Brigham Young move the Mormons and why?

- The Great Salt lake in Utah
- Mexican Territory
  - Avoid persecution of the United States
  - No one would bother them in the desert.
- Used Irrigation to control the water supply in the semi-arid regions of the far west.
Salt Lake City was founded on July 26, 1847, when Brigham Young jabbed his cane into the parched earth of the Great Salt Lake Valley and said, "Here will be the Temple of our God." A week later, the Saints laid out their city around this Temple Square. Within ten years it would be the second largest city in the West.
III. The Women's Movement

A. New Social Roles for Women

1. Middle-class women gradually achieved greater authority within their families by joining religious organizations and by becoming guardians of morality.

2. Many women began to move beyond domestic life & branch out into public and professional roles.

3. Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* not only advocated the abolition of slavery, but also argued the moral superiority of women.

4. Women in NY formed the Female Moral Reform Society to concentrate on moral reform, which by 1837 maintained 15,000 members in 250 chapters.

5. Female reformers also focused on improving social institutions and education.

6. Catharine Beecher argued that "energetic & benevolent women" were best qualified to instruct the young.
Section 3 The Women’s Movement contd.

- 2. Antislavery advocates Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Lucretia Mott outlined a program for women's equality at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. The Seneca Falls convention repudiated the idea of separate spheres for men & women as the natural order of society.

- 3. Feminist reformers worked to change property and custody laws and, most important, initiated a coordinated drive to win female suffrage.

- 4. New leaders, such as Susan B. Anthony, created local networks to lobby state legislators & collect signatures for petitions supporting reform.

- 5. Anthony's efforts led New York State to pass a new law in 1860 granting women the right to control their own wages, bring suit in court, & if widowed, control property they had brought into the marriage.

[Images of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony]
Section 3 The Women’s Movement contd.

B. The Influence of Abolitionism

1. During the Revolution, Quaker women had established schools for freed slaves.
2. Many Baptist and Methodist women endorsed religious arguments against slavery.
3. Angelina and Sarah Grimke used Enlightenment ideals to promote civil equality for women within the abolitionist movement.
4. In 1840 William Lloyd Garrison caused abolitionists to split between those who wanted to limit the movement to the abolition of slavery and those who wanted to include equality for women.
5. In the 1840s and 1850s, women increasingly focused on the horrors of slavery for women.
6. Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* described the anguish of life under cruel masters.

C. The Program of Seneca Falls

1. In the 1840s, women worked to strengthen their legal rights, particularly property rights. These initiatives won support from many men who wished to protect their wives & daughters from a volatile economy and dissolute son-in-laws.
Section 4 Abolitionism

IV. Abolitionism

A. African Colonization

1. By 1820, most northern states had abolished slavery & provided for emancipation.
2. The problem remained of how to deal with slavery in the "slave societies" of the South.

The American Colonization Society believed the answer was to free southern slaves & relocate them in Africa.

a. Most free blacks rejected the idea of African resettlement on the grounds that America was their new home.
b. The few blacks who supported resettlement founded the colony of Liberia on the west coast of Africa.

B. Slave Rebellion

1. Free blacks continued to work for emancipation, founding newspapers & publishing antislavery pamphlets.
2. David Walker’s "Appeal... to the Colored Citizens of the World" ridiculed the religious pretensions of slaveholders & justified slave rebellion.
3. Walker and other African American activists called for a national convention in 1830.

a. The Philadelphia convention urged free blacks to use every legal means at their disposal to improve the condition of enslaved African-Americans
b. The Convention also worked to establish a safe haven for blacks in Canada.

5. Turner's revolt galvanized proslavery leaders to pass new harsher laws dealing with slaves.

C. Evangelical Abolitionism

1. Frightened by the prospect of a bloody racial conflict, evangelical northern whites began a crusade to end slavery in the South.

2. Massachusetts-born printer William Lloyd Garrison became the most uncompromising abolitionist leader. In addition to the emancipation of slaves, Garrison argued for the equality of women & the repudiation of all govts.

3. Theodore Dwight Weld, in collaboration with the Grimke sisters, collected evidence against slavery in *American Slavery as It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses* in 1839.


5. Abolitionists advocated a three-pronged attack against slavery.
   a. They appealed to public opinion using large rallies and stirring speakers.
   b. Local leaders spread antislavery manifestos.
   c. Modern printing presses and mail campaigns spread antislavery pamphlets.

6. Whites and African Americans in the South established an "underground railroad" to help slaves escape to the North.
D. Opposition and Disunity

1. Most northern men feared the abolitionist crusade would evolve into a general assault on private property rights.

2. White wage earners feared that freed slaves willing to work for subsistence wages would flood the northern job market with cheap labor.

3. During the 1830s and 1840s several northern states changed laws that permitted free blacks to vote or restricted voting rights to those who owned significant property.

4. Anti-abolitionist agitation led to acts of violence against abolitionists such as William Garrison and Arthur Tappan.

5. Supporters of slavery began to describe slavery not as "a necessary evil" but as a "positive good," arguing that slavery actually civilized and improved the lives of African-Americans.

6. Internally, abolitionists split between those who wanted a broad range of reforms, including equality for women, and more conservative reformers who wished to focus on antislavery measures alone.

7. Though they achieved notable success, abolitionists aroused the hostility of a majority of the white population, who feared that abolitionists advocated the destruction of traditional values and social norms.

8. Despite initial hostility to abolitionism, by the 1850 most white Northerners began to question the moral ramifications of slavery.