

America's History, Chapter 11: Religion and Reform, 1800–1860

Key Concept: While Americans embraced a new national culture, various groups developed distinctive cultures of their own.

Individualism: The Ethic of the Middle Class

Ralph Waldo Emerson and Transcendentalism (p. 346-347)

1. Explain how Emerson's ideas illustrate "the transcendentalist message of individual self-realization."

2. Why did the individualist ethos appeal particularly to middle-class Americans?

3. Why did the transcendentalists' communal experiment at Brook Farm fail?

After its failure, what causes did the Emersonians turn to?

Emerson's Literary Influence (p. 347-349)

4. In his essay *The American Scholar*, what did Emerson urge American authors to do?

5. Explain how Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* embodies transcendentalist ideals.

6. How did Margaret Fuller extend transcendentalist principles?

7. "I celebrate myself, and sing myself." Who wrote this?

How did he apply Emerson's ideas to communities?

8. Which two novelists of this era expressed doubts about the individualism embodied in transcendentalism?

Rural Communalism and Urban Popular Culture

The Utopian Impulse (p. 349-352)

9. Identify four distinctive beliefs or practices of the Shakers.

10. Explain Oneida community's practice of "complex marriage."

Joseph Smith and the Mormon Experience (p. 352-354)

11. What "new revelation" received by Latter-day Saints founder Joseph Smith led to controversy and conflict?

12. How was Mormon resistance to federal authority resolved in 1858?

Urban Popular Culture (p. 354-357)

13. Identify two examples of how "commercialized sex" was part of urban culture in mid-19th century cities.

14. How did minstrel shows combine racist caricature with social criticism?

15. Cite evidence of both the growth of immigrant influence and nativist reaction in Northeast cities.

Abolitionism

Black Social Thought: Uplift, Race Equality, and Rebellion (p. 360-361)

16. What was David Walker's warning to white Americans?

17. What was the impact of Nat Turner’s Revolt in 1831 on the laws in southern states?

Evangelical Abolitionism (p. 361-363)

18. Identify and summarize the main publications associated with the abolitionist movement.

Abolitionist writer	Publication	Argument for abolition
William Lloyd Garrison		
Theodore Weld		
Weld and the Grimké sisters		

19. From which states did most fugitive slaves escape using the “Underground Railroad?” (see map on p. 363)

Where did those who escaped the South find refuge?

Approximately how many slaves reached freedom each year through the Underground Railroad?

Opposition and Internal Conflict (p. 363-366)

20. Why did each of the following groups oppose abolition?

- Wealthy men -
- Conservative clergymen-
- Northern wage earners -
- Merchants and textile manufacturers -

21. Give one example of the use or threat of violence against abolitionists.

22. How did southern postmasters and the U.S. Congress restrict abolitionists’ freedom of expression and right to petition?

23. What issue split the abolitionist movement into separate organizations in 1840?

The Women's Rights Movement

Origin of the Women's Movement (p. 366-367)

24. Explain the concept of “separate spheres” for men and women.

25. Summarize the mid-19th century moral reform efforts of the following:

Female Moral Reform Society -

Dorothea Dix -

Horace Mann -

Catherine Beecher -

From Black Rights to Women's Rights (p. 367-373)

26. How did women's involvement in the abolitionist movement lead many to assert their own right to equality?

27. How were married women's property rights strengthened in some states by the late 1840s?

28. Summarize the message of the Seneca Falls Declaration of 1848.

29. Identify 3 elements of the program of action that came out of the first national women's rights convention in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1850.

SUMMARY: Use the chapter summary on p. 373 to fill in the blanks.

In this chapter, we examined four major cultural movements of the mid-nineteenth century _____ reform, communalism, _____, and _____ rights — as well as the new popular culture in New York City. Our discussion of the transcendentalists highlighted the influence of _____ on the great literary figures of the era and linked transcendentalism to the rise of _____ and the character of _____ American culture.

Our analysis of _____ experiments probed their members' efforts to devise new rules for _____ behavior, _____ relationships, and _____. We saw that successful communal experiments, such as _____, required a _____ leader or a religious foundation and endured if they developed strong, even _____, institutions.

We also traced the personal and ideological factors that linked the _____ and _____ movements. Lucretia _____, Elizabeth Cady _____, and the _____ sisters began as _____ advocates, but, denied access to lecture platforms by _____ abolitionists and conservative clergy, they became _____ of women's rights. This transition was a logical one: both _____ and _____ were "_____” by men, either as _____ or as their legal _____. Consequently, the efforts to abolish the legal prerogatives of _____ were as controversial as those to end the legal property rights of _____. As reformers took aim at such deeply rooted institutions and customs, many Americans feared that their _____ would not _____ society but destroy it.