Reviving Religion

- ¾ of Americans attended church
- Many relied on Deism (reason rather revelation); Deism rejected original sin of man, denied Christ's divinity but believed in a supreme being that created universe with an order
- Unitarian faith begins (New England)
  - Believed God existed in only 1 person, not in the orthodox trinity; stressed goodness of human nature
  - Believed in free will and salvation through good works; pictured God as a loving father
- These perversions of Christianity ignited Christians to "take back their faith" and oppose these new beliefs
- Liberalism in religion started in 1800 spawned the Second Great Awakening, a tidal wave of spiritual fervor that resulted in prison reform, church reform, temperance movement (no alcohol), women's rights movement, abolition of slavery in 1830s
- It spread to the masses through huge "camp meetings"
- The East went to the West to Christianize Indians

Denominational Diversity

- The revival furthered fragmentation of religious faiths
- New York, with its Puritans, preached "hellfire" and was known as the "Burned-Over District"
- Millerites (Adventists) – predicted Christ to return to earth on Oct 22, 1844. When this prophecy failed to materialize, the movement lost credibility.
- The Awakening widened lines between classes the region (like 1st Great Awakening)
- Conservatives were made up of: propertied Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Unitarians
- the less-learned of the South and West (frontier areas) were usually Methodists or Baptists
- Religion further split with the issue of slavery (i.e. the Methodists and Presbyterians split)

Peter Cartwright

- Best known of the Methodist "circuit riders"
- Urged people to repent
- Knocked out people who tried to break up his meetings

Charles Grandison Finney

- Greatest revivalist preacher
  - Trained as a lawyer
  - Held massive revivals in Rochester and NYC
  - Innovator of the "anxious bench"
  - Denounced alcohol and slavery
“Burned-Over District”
- “Burned-Over District” – Western NY, where many descendents of New England Puritans settled
- “hellfire and brimstone” sermons popular

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)

Violence Against Mormons
- Millerites, or Adventists, rose out of the “burned-over district”
- Hundreds of thousands of converts
- Predicted Christ would return on Oct. 22, 1844

2. Transcendentalism
(European Romanticism)
- Liberation from understanding and the cultivation of reasoning.
- “Transcend” the limits of intellect and allow the emotions, the SOUL, to create an original relationship with the Universe.
Transcendentalist Thinking

1. Man must acknowledge a body of moral truths that were intuitive and must transcend more sensational proof:
   1. The infinite benevolence of God.
   2. The infinite benevolence of nature.
   3. The divinity of man.

2. They instinctively rejected all secular authority and the authority of organized churches and the Scriptures, of law, or of conventions

Transcendentalism

(European Romanticism)

- Therefore, if man was divine, it would be wicked that he should be held in slavery, or his soul corrupted by superstition, or his mind clouded by ignorance!

- Thus, the role of the reformer was to restore man to that divinity which God had endowed them.

Transcendentalist Intellectuals/Writers

Concord, MA

- Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Henry David Thoreau

- "The American Scholar" (1837)
- Self-Reliance (1841)
- Walden (1854)
- Resistance to Civil Disobedience (1849)

The Transcendentalist Agenda

- Give freedom to the slave.
- Give well-being to the poor and the miserable.
- Give learning to the ignorant.
- Give health to the sick.
- Give peace and justice to society.

The Second Great Awakening and Transcendentalism

"Spiritual Reform From Within"

(Religious Revival)

Social Reforms & Redefining the Ideal of Equality

- Temperance
- Abolitionism
- Asylum & Penal Reform

Women's Rights

The Blossoming of a National Literature

- Literature was imported or plagiarized from England
- Americans poured literature into practical outlets (i.e. The Federalist Papers, Common Sense (Paine), Ben Franklin's Autobiography, Poor Richard's Almanac)
- Literature was reborn after the War of Independence and especially after War of 1812
- The Knickerbocker group in NY wrote the first truly American literature
- James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851) - 1st US novelist. Leatherstocking Tales (which included The Last of the Mohicans which was popular in Europe)
- William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878) – Thanatopsis, the 1st high quality poetry in U.S.
Wilderness Utopias
- Robert Owen founded New Harmony, IN (1825) though it failed in confusion
- Brook Farm – Massachusetts experiment (1841) where 20 intellectuals committed to Transcendentalism (it lasted until '46)
- Oneida Community — practiced free love, birth control, eugenic selection of parents to produce superior offspring; it survived ironically as a capitalistic venture, selling baskets and then cutlery.
- Shakers – a communistic community (led by Mother Ann Lee); they couldn’t marry so they became extinct.

3. Utopian Communities

Glowing Literary Lights
- not associated with transcendentalism, but influenced by it
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow - wrote poems popular in Europe such as Evangeline
- John Greenleaf Whittier - poems that cried against injustice, intolerance, inhumanity
- James Russell Lowell - political satirist who wrote Biglow Papers
- Oliver Wendell Holmes - The Last Leaf
- Women writers
  - Louisa May Alcott - with transcendentalism wrote Little Women
  - Emily Dickinson – wrote of the theme of nature in poems
- Southern literary figure – William Gillmore Simms – “the cooper of the south”; wrote many books of life in frontier South during the Revolutionary War

Literary Individualists and Dissenters
- Edgar Allan Poe - wrote "The Raven" and many short stories
- invented modern detective novel and "psychological thriller"
- he was fascinated by the supernatural and reflected a morbid sensibility (more prized by Europe)
- reflections of Calvinist obsession with original sin and struggle between good & evil
- Nathaniel Hawthorne - The Scarlet Letter (psychological effect of sin)
- Herman Melville - Moby Dick, and allegory between good and evil told of a whaling captain

Portrayers of the Past
- George Bancroft – founded the naval academy; published U.S. history book and was known as the "Father of American History"
- William H. Prescott - published on the conquest of Mexico, Peru
- Francis Parkman - published on the struggle between France and England in colonial North America
- Historians were all from New England because they had the most books. Therefore, there became an anti-South bias.

Trumpeters of Transcendentalism
- Literature dawned in the 2nd quarter of 19th century with the transcendentalist movement (circa 1830)
- it stressed individualism, self-reliance, and non-conformity
- Ralph Waldo Emerson was popular since the ideal of the essay reflected the spirit of the U.S.
  - he lectured the Phi Beta Kappa Address "The American Scholar"
  - he urged U.S. writers throw off European tradition
  - influential as practical philosopher (stressed self-government, self-reliance, depending on self)
- most famous for his work, Self Reliance
- Henry David Thoreau
  - He condemned slavery and wrote Walden: Or life in the Woods
  - He also wrote On the Duty of Civil Disobedience, which was influential as practical philosopher (stressed self-government, self-reliance, depending on self)
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An Age of Reform

- reformers opposed tobacco, alcohol, profanity, and many other vices, and came out for women's rights
- women were very important in motivating these reform movements
- reformers were often optimists who sought a perfect society
- some were naive and ignored the problems of factories
- they fought for no imprisonment for debt (the poor were sometimes locked in jail for less than $1 debt); this was gradually abolished
- reformers wanted criminal codes softened and reformatories created
- the mentally insane were treated badly. Dorothea Dix fought for reform of the mentally insane in her classic petition of 1843
- there was agitation for peace (i.e. the American Peace Society) - William Lloyd had some impact until Civil War and Crimean war

Mother Ann Lee (1736-1784)

The Shakers

- If you will take up your crosses against the works of generations, and follow Christ in the regeneration, God will cleanse you from all unrighteousness.
- Remember the cries of those who are in need and trouble, that when you are in trouble, God may hear your cries.
- If you improve in one talent, God will give you more.

4. Penitentiary Reform

Dorothea Dix (1802-1887)

1821 → first penitentiary founded in Auburn, NY

Demon Rum- The “Old Deluder”

- drunkenness was widespread
- The American Temperance Society was formed in Boston (1826) – the “Cold Water Army” (children), signed pledges, made pamphlets, and an anti-alcohol novel emerged called 10 nights in a Barroom and What I Saw There
- Attack on the demon drink adopted 2 major lines attack:
  - stressed temperance (individual will to resist)
  - legislature-removed temptation - Neal S. Dow becomes the “Father of Prohibition”
- sponsored Maine Law of 1851 which prohibited making and sale of liquor (followed by others)

Annual Consumption of Alcohol

- Chart 1.1. ANNUAL CONSUMPTION of DISTILLED SPIRITS (i.e., Rum, Whiskey, Gin, Brandy)
- per CAPITA, in U.S. Gallons
“The Drunkard’s Progress”

From the first glass to the grave, 1846

Higher Goals for Higher Learning
- The 2nd Great Awakening led to the building of small schools in the South and West (mainly for pride)
- The curriculum focused mainly on Latin, Greek, Math, moral philosophy
- The 1st state-supported university was founded in the Tar Heel state, the Univ. of North Carolina, in 1795; Jefferson started the University of Virginia shortly afterwards (UVA was to be independent of religion or politics)
- women were thought to be corrupted if too educated and were therefore excluded
- Emma Willard — established Troy Female Seminary (1821) and Mount Holyoke Seminary (1837) was established by Mary Lyon
- Libraries, public lectures, and magazines flourished

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

Women Educators
- Emma Willard
  - Troy Female Seminary
  - Curriculum: math, physics, history, geography.
  - Train female teachers
- Mary Lyon
  - 1837 established Mt. Holyoke [So. Hadley, MA]

The McGuffey Eclectic

 Readers
- Used religious parables to teach “American values”
- Middle class morality and respect for order.
- Teach 3 Rs - Protestant ethic
- Frugality, hard work, sobriety

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.
7. “Separate Spheres” Concept

“Cult of Domesticity”

A woman’s “sphere” was in the home (it was a refuge from the cruel world outside). Her role was to “civilize” her husband and family.

An 1830s MA minister:

The power of woman is her dependence. A woman who gives up that dependence on man to become a reformer yields the power God has given her for her protection, and her character becomes unnatural!

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What It Would Be Like if Ladies Had Their Own Way!

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The Dawn of Scientific Achievement

- Early Americans were interested in practical science rather than pure science (i.e., Jefferson and his newly designed plow).
- Nathaniel Bowditch – studied practical navigation and oceanography
- Matthew Maury - ocean winds, currents
- Writers were concerned with basic science.
- The most influential U.S. scientists...
  - Benjamin Silliman (1779-1864) - pioneer in chemistry geologist (taught at Yale)
  - Louis Agassiz (1807-1873) - served at Harvard, insisted on original research
  - Asa Gray (1810-1888) Harvard, was the Columbus of botany
  - John Audubon (1785-1851) painted birds with exact detail
- Medicine in the U.S. was primitive (i.e., bleeding used for cure; smallpox, yellow fever though it killed many).
- Life expectancy was unsurprisingly low.
- Self-prescribed patent medicines were common, they were usually mostly alcohol and often as harmful as helpful.
- The local surgeon was usually the local barber or butcher.

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Artistic Achievements

- U.S. had traditionally imitated European styles of art (aristocratic subjects, dark portraits, stormy landscapes)
- 1820-50 was a Greek revival, as they'd won independence from Turks; Gothic forms also gained popularity
- Thomas Jefferson was the most able architect of his generation (Monticello and University of Virginia)
- Artists were viewed as a wasters of time; they suffered from Puritan prejudice of art as sinful pride
- Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827) painted 60 portraits of Washington
- John Trumbull (1756-1843) - captured the Revolutionary War in paint in dramatic fashion
- Hudson River School: an artistic movement that focused on American landscapes
  - A result of the upsurge of nationalism after the War of 1812