



Chapter Thirteen

**Coming to Terms With the
New Age, 1820s—1850s**



Part One:



Introduction



Chapter Focus Questions

- ✦ What new social problems accompanied urbanization and immigration?
- ✦ How did reformers respond to social problems?
- ✦ What were the origins and political effects of the abolitionist movement?
- ✦ What was the involvement of women in reform efforts?



Part Two:

Seneca Falls: Women Reformers Respond to Market Revolution

Seneca Falls

- ✦ In 1848, almost 300 reformers gathered for the Seneca Falls women's rights convention.
- ✦ The participants passed resolutions calling for a wide range of rights for women, including the right to vote.
- ✦ Women's rights was just one of many reform movements of the time that emerged to respond to societal issues raised by the dislocations of the market revolution.



Part Three

Immigration and Ethnicity

Patterns of Immigration

- ✦ Map: Distribution of Foreign-Born residents of the United States in 1860
- ✦ Immigration was a key part of urban growth.
- ✦ Beginning in 1830 immigration soared, particularly in the North.
- ✦ Immigrants came largely from Ireland, Germany, and China.

Irish Immigration

- ✦ First major immigrant wave to test American cities
- ✦ Reason for immigration: Potato Famine of 1845-49
- ✦ Lacking money to go inland to farm, most lived in cities under horrible conditions
- ✦ Largest number of Irish came to New York, but Boston, being smaller in size and more homogenous, was overwhelmed by the influx

German Immigration

- ✦ Initial migration started by invitation of William Penn in the late 18th century who was impressed by German industriousness
- ✦ 19th century began later than Irish, but by 1854 had surpassed them
- ✦ Reasons for migration: potato blight in mid 1840s and dislodging effects of market forces
- ✦ German settlement was relatively dispersed, settling in most regions except northeastern cities and the South

Chinese Immigration

- ✦ Many Chinese migrated to California in the early 19th century to reap benefits of Gold Rush
- ✦ By the mid 1860s Chinese workers made up 90 percent of laborers building the Central Pacific Railroad
- ✦ The Chinese tended to settle in ethnic enclaves in many of America's cities

Irish and German Immigrant Employment in New York City ,1855

- ✦ Chart: “Participation of Irish and German Immigrants”
- ✦ Irish immigrants were clustered in laborer and domestic jobs.
- ✦ German immigrants were clustered in skilled trades.

Ethnic Neighborhoods and Urban Popular Culture

- ✦ Irish and German immigrants created ethnic enclaves to maintain cultural tradition and institutions.
- ✦ A new urban popular culture emerged that challenged middle class respectability centering around:
 - ◆ the tavern
 - ◆ theaters
 - ◆ the penny press



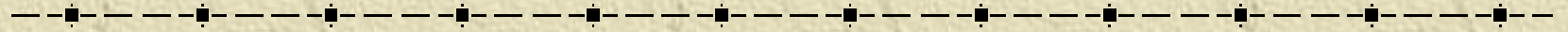
Part Four:



Urban America



The Growth of Cities



✦ Map: American Cities, 1820

✦ Map: American Cities, 1860

Class Structure and Living Patterns in the Cities

- ✦ The gap between rich and poor grew rapidly.
- ✦ Economic class was reflected by residence as:
 - ◆ poor people (nearly 70 percent of the city) lived in cheap rented housing
 - ◆ middle-class residents (25-30 percent) lived in more comfortable homes
 - ◆ very rich (about 3 percent) built mansions and large town houses.

Civic Order

- ✦ Americans grew concerned that the cities would become centers of disorder. Prosperous classes were frightened by the urban poor and by working-class rowdyism.
- ✦ Cities began to hire more city watchmen and to create police forces to keep order.
- ✦ Urban riots did break out, frequently against Catholics and African Americans.

The Urban Life of Free African Americans

- ✦ About half of the nation's free African Americans lived in the North, mainly in cities, where they encountered:
 - ◆ residential segregation
 - ◆ job discrimination
 - ◆ segregated public schools
 - ◆ limits on their civil rights
- ✦ Free African Americans formed community support networks, newspapers, and churches.
- ✦ The economic prospects of African-American men deteriorated.
- ✦ Free African Americans engaged in antislavery activities, but were frequent targets of urban violence.



Part Four:

**The Labor
Movement and
Urban Politics**

The Tradition of Artisanal Politics

- ✦ American cities had long been centers of organized artisans and skilled workers.
- ✦ Worker associations, parades and celebrations were parts of the urban community.
- ✦ By the 1830s, the skilled craft workers were being undercut by industrialization.
- ✦ Workers' associations became increasingly class-conscious turning to fellow laborers for support.
- ✦ Initially, urban worker protest against change focused on party politics, including the short-lived Workingmen's Party.
- ✦ Both major parties tried to woo the votes of organized workers.

The Union Movement

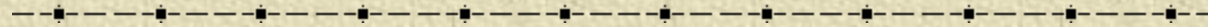
- ✦ Workers organized trade unions and formed city-wide “General Trades Unions.”
- ✦ The local groups then organized the National Trades Union.
- ✦ The trade union movement was met with hostility and most collapsed during the Panic of 1837.
- ✦ Early unions included only skilled white workers.

Big-City Machines

- ✦ Competition for the votes of workers shaped urban politics.
- ✦ Big-city machines arose reflecting the class structure of the fat-growing cities.
- ✦ The machines cultivated feelings of community by:
 - ◆ appealing directly for working-class votes through mass organizational activities
 - ◆ creating organizations that met basic needs of the urban poor
- ✦ The machines also had a tight organizational structure headed by bosses who traded loyalty and votes for political jobs and services, leading to charges of corruption.



Part Five:



Social Reform Movements



Evangelism, Reform and Social Control

- ✦ Middle-class Americans responded to the dislocations of the market revolution by promoting various reform campaigns.
- ✦ Evangelical religion drove the reform spirit forward.
- ✦ Reformers recognized that:
 - ◆ traditional small-scale methods of reform no longer worked
 - ◆ the need was for larger-scale institutions
- ✦ The doctrine of perfectionism combined with a basic belief in the goodness of people and moralistic dogmatism characterized reform.
- ✦ Regional and national reform organizations emerged from local projects to deal with various social problems.
- ✦ Reformers mixed political and social activities and tended to seek to use the power of the state to promote their ends.

Education and Women Teachers

- ✦ Educational reformers changed the traditional ways of educating children by:
 - ◆ no longer viewing children as sinners whose wills had to be broken
 - ◆ seeing children as innocents who needed gentle nurturing.
- ✦ The work of Horace Mann and others led to tax-supported compulsory public schools.
- ✦ Women were seen as more nurturing and encouraged to become teachers, creating the first real career opportunity for women.

Temperance

- ✦ Middle-class reformers sought to change Americans' drinking of alcohol habits. Temperance was seen as a panacea for all social problems.
- ✦ Prompted by the Panic of 1837, the working class joined the temperance crusade.
- ✦ By the mid-1840s alcohol consumption had been cut in half.
- ✦ Chart: Per Capita Consumption of Alcohol

Moral Reform, Asylums, and Prisons

- ✦ Reformers also attacked prostitution by organizing charity for poor women and through tougher criminal penalties but had little success.
- ✦ The asylum movement promoted humane treatment of the insane and criminals, but prison often failed to meet their purposes.

Reform Movements in the Burned-Over District

- ✦ The region of New York most changed by the Erie Canal was a fertile ground for religious and reform movements, earning the name Burned-Over District.
- ✦ Map: Reform Movements in the Burned-Over District
- ✦ The reform movements originating or thriving there included:
 - ◆ the Mormon Church
 - ◆ utopian groups like the Millerites and Fourierites
 - ◆ antislavery sentiment
 - ◆ the women's rights movement

Utopianism and Mormonism

✧ Utopianism:

- ✧ Religious utopians like the Millerites and Shakers saw an apocalyptic end of history. The Shakers also practiced celibacy amid a fellowship of equality.
- ✧ Conversely, John Humphrey Noyes's Oneida Community practiced "complex marriage."
- ✧ New Harmony and the various Fourier-inspired communities unsuccessfully attempted a kind of socialism.

Utopianism and Mormonism

✦ Mormonism:

- ✦ Founded by Joseph Smith in 1830
- ✦ Close cooperation and hard work made the Mormon community the most successful communitarian movement
- ✦ They migrated to Utah in 1846 under the leadership of Brigham Young due to much harassment over their practice of polygamy
- ✦ [Map: Mormon Migration](#)



Part Six:

**Antislavery and
Abolitionism**

The American Colonization Society

- ✦ Various antislavery steps had been taken prior to the 1820s.
- ✦ But they had not addressed the continuing reality of southern slavery.
- ✦ The ineffective American Colonization Society resettled a small number of free African Americans in Africa where they founded Liberia.

African Americans' Fight Against Slavery

- ✦ Free African Americans rejected colonization.
- ✦ They founded abolitionist societies that:
 - ◆ demanded equal treatment
 - ◆ demanded an end to slavery
 - ◆ encouraged slave rebellions.

Abolitionists

- ✦ William Lloyd Garrison headed the best-known group of antislavery reformers.
- ✦ Garrison denounced all compromise (including political action and the Constitution) and called for immediate emancipation on moral grounds.
- ✦ The American Anti-Slavery Society drew on the style of religious revivalists as they tried to confront slaveholders and lead them to repentance.
- ✦ Abolitionists mailed over a million pieces of propaganda that led to a crackdown by southern states and a stifling of dissent.
- ✦ Several abolitionists were violently attacked and one was killed.

Abolitionism and Politics

- ✦ Abolition began as a social movement but soon became a national political issue. Abolitionists inundated Congress with petitions calling for abolition in the District of Columbia.
- ✦ Congress imposed a “gag rule” tabling all such petitions, but it was repealed in 1844.
- ✦ Abolitionist unity splintered along racial and political lines.
- ✦ White abolitionists (other than Garrisonians) founded the Liberty Party.



Part Seven:

The Women's Rights Movement

Women and Reform

- ✦ Women were active members of all reform societies and even formed their own antislavery organizations.
- ✦ Sarah and Angelina Grimke left their South Carolina home and traveled north to denounce slavery, becoming the first female public speakers in American history.
- ✦ Two decades of activity culminated with the Seneca Falls women's rights convention in 1848 and the beginnings of the women's rights movement.
- ✦ Historians have only recently acknowledged the central role women played in the various reform movements of this era.



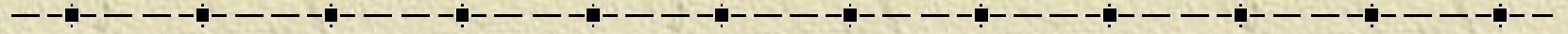
Part Eight:



Conclusion



Coming to Terms with the New Age



✦ Media: Chronology