



# Chapter Thirteen

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

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Part One:



**Introduction**



# Chapter Focus Questions

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- ✦ 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:

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# **Seneca Falls: Women Reformers Respond to Market Revolution**

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# Seneca Falls

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- ✦ 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

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## **Immigration and Ethnicity**

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# Patterns of Immigration

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ Initial migration started by invitation of William Penn in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century who was impressed by German industriousness
- ✦ 19<sup>th</sup> 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

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- ✦ Many Chinese migrated to California in the early 19<sup>th</sup> 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

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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



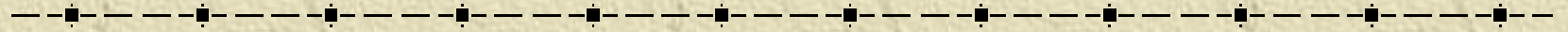
Part Four:



**Urban America**



# The Growth of Cities



✦ Map: American Cities, 1820

✦ Map: American Cities, 1860



# Class Structure and Living Patterns in the Cities

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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:

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**The Labor  
Movement and  
Urban Politics**

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# The Tradition of Artisanal Politics

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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.



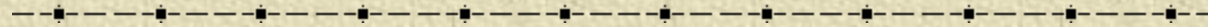
# Big-City Machines

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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

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## ✧ 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

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## ✦ 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:

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**Antislavery and  
Abolitionism**

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# The American Colonization Society

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- ✦ 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

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

# Abolitionists

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- ✦ 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

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- ✦ 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:

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## **The Women's Rights Movement**

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# Women and Reform

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- ✦ 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:

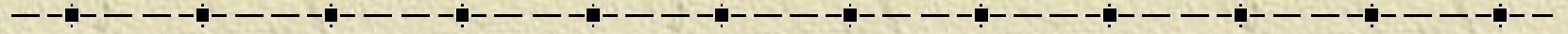


**Conclusion**





# Coming to Terms with the New Age



## ✦ Media: Chronology