
How The Second Revival Brought Changes In America And To The Segregated Minority

DBQ REFORMS IN THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING

Americans wanted to improve the character of ordinary citizens and make them more upright, god-fearing, and literate. As the young Republic grew, increasing numbers of Americans poured their energies into religious revivals and reform movements. Some Americans were disappointed by the realities of democratic politics. Reformers promoted better public schools and rights for women. Societies were formed against slavery and alcohol. Religion became more liberal, as religious reforms transformed the place of religion in American life and sent believers out to perfect the world. The Second Great Awakening sparked innovative reform movements that expanded democratic ideals socially and politically.

The education reform, led by Horace Mann, was an attempt to create public education available to all children so they would have the same chance at knowledge and success. Horace Mann (1796-1859) was the leading advocate of the common (public) school movement for tax-supported school. Horace in 1846 put forth effort to make sure that all children can be educated without cost. And, it was the “duty of the every government that the means of education is provided for all” (doc 3). This is because in the 19th century majority of children who could attend school were white middle class boys. Girls were often perceived as not bright enough to need schooling and slave children were needed on the plantation. Some poor boys attended school. Often they would have to leave class and rush home to help their parents, or sometimes go with their fathers to work and not even attend school at all. Due to the efforts of Horace and other reformers free public schools for Children of all classes were established payed for by the state taxes. Similar to the educational reform, rehabilitation reform, a movement lead by Dorothea Dix, fought for the improved treatment and care for the mentally handicapped in asylums and for better rehabilitation programs for those who spent time in the federal penitentiaries. This is because people in mental hospital tended to be restrained in “strait-waist coat...fastened with chains to the upper parts of the bedstead...and feet fastened with iron leg locks and chains” (doc 5). This deplorable conditions that the mentally ill were forced to live under is very inhumane and unconstitutional. Followers of Dix fought for more humane action in the care for the mentally disabled and because of their movements, new and improved asylums were built across the country that allowed for better treatment of the patients. Prisons and rehabilitation programs were also forms to help convicts transition back into society because of the rehabilitation movement.

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The suffrage movement was aided by the abolition movement because slavery gave women a reason to unite for a separate cause. However they began to experience oppression from male abolitionists even though they both fought for the same cause. This prompted women to fight for their own democratic ideals leading to the rise of many prominent suffragists such as Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The second blow to the suffrage movement came in 1840 with the World Anti-Slavery Convention which the female abolitionists were barred from attending. This paved the way for the Seneca Falls Convention, a women's rights convention held in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848 to raise awareness for women's rights. It was at this convention Elizabeth Cady Stanton drafted the Declaration of Sentiments, which called for the establishment of democratic rights for women like the Declaration of Independence did for Americans. In this declaration she directed "we hold these truths to be self evident that all men and women are created equally" (doc 6) towards the United States Government. This is because it was the responsibility of the government to protect people's rights instead of watching women getting denied of their natural rights. Women during this time period were denied of many of the natural rights because during this time period society had this perception that "women could not work as much as a man" (doc 7). Therefore, girl women during the 19th century were treated differently than men as men were expected to live a public life, whether it was working in a factory or socializing with like-minded men in public places, like clubs, meetings, or bars. While women were usually expected to live their lives largely homebound, taking care of the cooking, cleaning, and child rearing. Free time for women was not supposed to be spent socializing but doing other things related to the maintenance of the family, from sewing socks to laundry.

Largely due to these traditional expectations for women prior to the 19th century, very few women had the same opportunities for education as men. Indeed, educating women was often seen as subversive, a possible perversion of the correct social order. Women were also entirely shut out of political activity as they weren't allowed to vote. The women's rights movement had a great success overall, though it was not achieved until 1920 when the 19th amendment was passed. The 19th amendment prohibits any United States citizen to be denied the right to vote based on sex. It was ratified on August 18th, 1920. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were not alive to see the amendment they had first drafted be ratified, but that did not change the fact that the decades of dedication they put into the movement had been rewarded. The effect of the Women's Rights Movement was that women were no longer viewed as an "inferior race" but instead as a equal to males politically and socially. The women's rights movement, was closely intertwined to the Temperance movement in the 19th century because as women started to gain more rights they fought closely together with organizations, such as The American Society for the Promotion of Temperance to help abolish alcoholism. As they believed alcohol caused poverty, crime, and death among other things (doc 4). Eventually this group and others came to the government asking it to prevent the sale of alcohol. Alcoholism was also believed to be connected to destruction of family structure as drunkenness led to

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increasing amounts of household abuses. These people therefore wanted to push across a sweeping law prohibiting alcohol in all parts of society, although many did not want this.

Primarily due to the Second Great Awakening, many people led a powerful movement against slavery called the abolitionist movement. This movement, one of the most widely supported of the era, had many influential leaders such as William Garrison, editor of the abolition paper 'The Liberator' and Fredrick Douglass. These men, among others lead a passionate fight for the immediate and unconditional emancipation of all slaves in the United States and the banning of slavery in the new American territories. William Lloyd Garrison for instance is a very religious man who believed that he was obligated to abolish slavery as it is inhumane. In the Declaration of the National Anti-Slavery Convention of 1833 Garrison pointed out many important issues such as the fact that African Americans are treated like "marketable commodities" (doc 1). This treatment of slavery is inhumane as slaves who worked and lived on plantations were the most frequently punished. Punishment could be administered by the plantation owner or master, his wife, children (white males) or (most often) the overseer or driver. Slave overseers were authorized to whip and punish slaves. Though abolition was not achieved, the issue of slavery and the views presented by the abolition movement would stay prominent through the Civil War. Thus, many of the reform movements that gained popularity from 1825 to 1850 championed the idea of spreading America's democratic principles.

The Second Great Awakening led to an era of change for America and its minority groups. Women, children, slaves, and criminals were given an opportunity to have their opinions publicly announced. Support for different movements was provided through social and political involvement, which offered the minority group's representation and democratic rights. Americans began to see equality as a human characteristic that had to be strived for. With the help of prominent individuals, society began to demand change and equality for the minority groups in America, thus expanding the democratic ideals. One similar reform to the ones above is child labor reform of the 20th century. The National Child Labor Committee coordinated a movement to address the exploitation of children. By 1910, many states had enacted legislation establishing the minimum legal age when children could work (between 12 and 16) and the maximum length of a workday or week.

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