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# CHAPTER 10

# THE MAKING OF

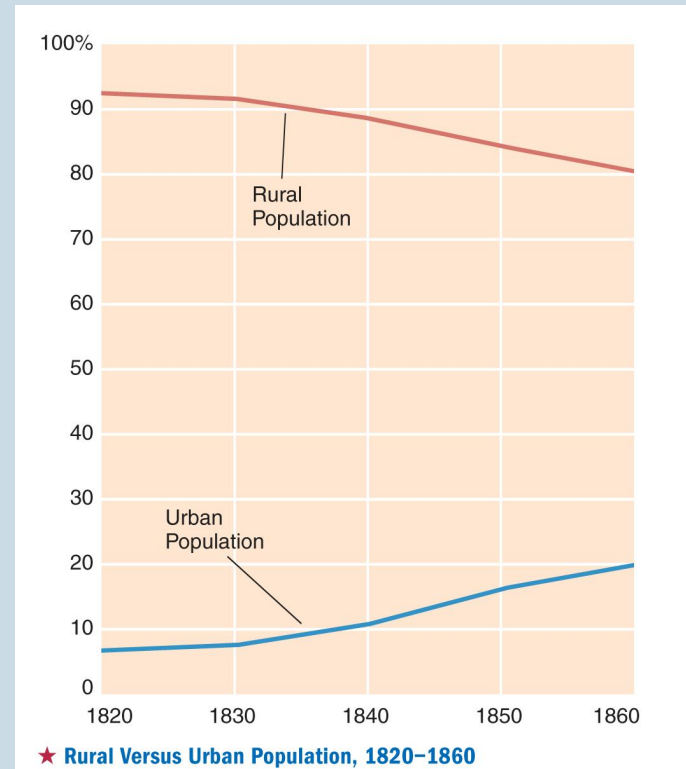
# MIDDLE CLASS

# AMERICA

The American Nation:  
A History of the United States, 13th edition  
Carnes/Garraty

# TOCQUEVILLE: Democracy in America

- May 12, 1831: French aristocrats Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont arrived in New York City
  - Believed Europe was headed from aristocratic past to democratic future and wanted to prepare for change by studying U.S.
  - Wrote *De la Démocratie en Amérique*, which appeared in English as *Democracy in America* in 1836



# TOCQUEVILLE: Democracy in America

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- *Democracy in America*: “No novelty in the United States struck me more vividly than the equality of conditions.”
  - Inequality not supported by institutions or public opinion and paled when compared to Europe

## Reality

- 1830s and 1840s: wide and growing gap between rich and poor in cities
  - 1828 Richest 4% in NYC controlled 50% of wealth
  - By 1845 controlled 67%
- Tocqueville failed to see poor
- Little interest in effects of industrialization and urbanization
  - Did note wages higher than Europe and cost of living lower
- Most of contact was with elite

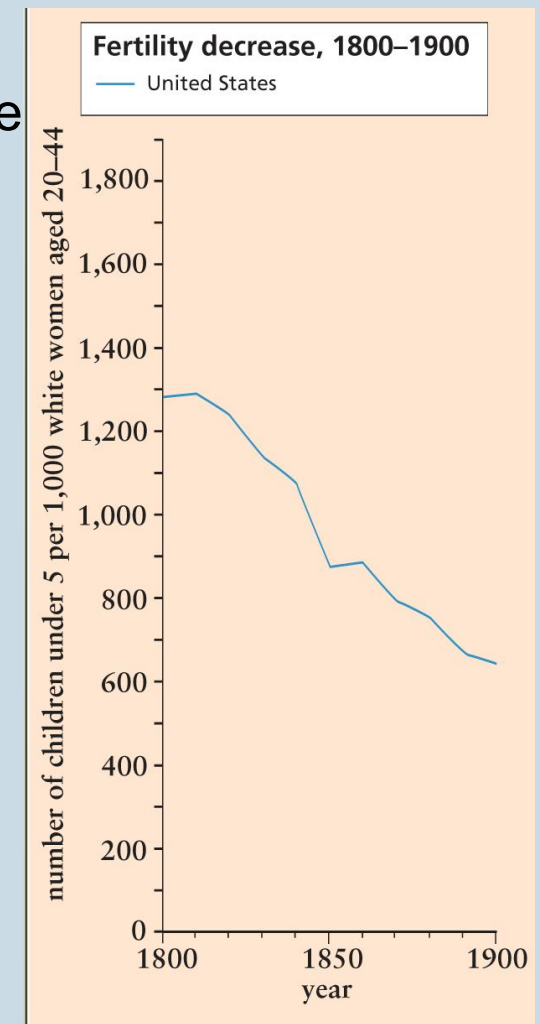
# THE FAMILY RECAST

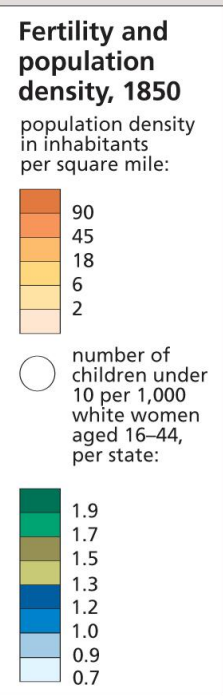
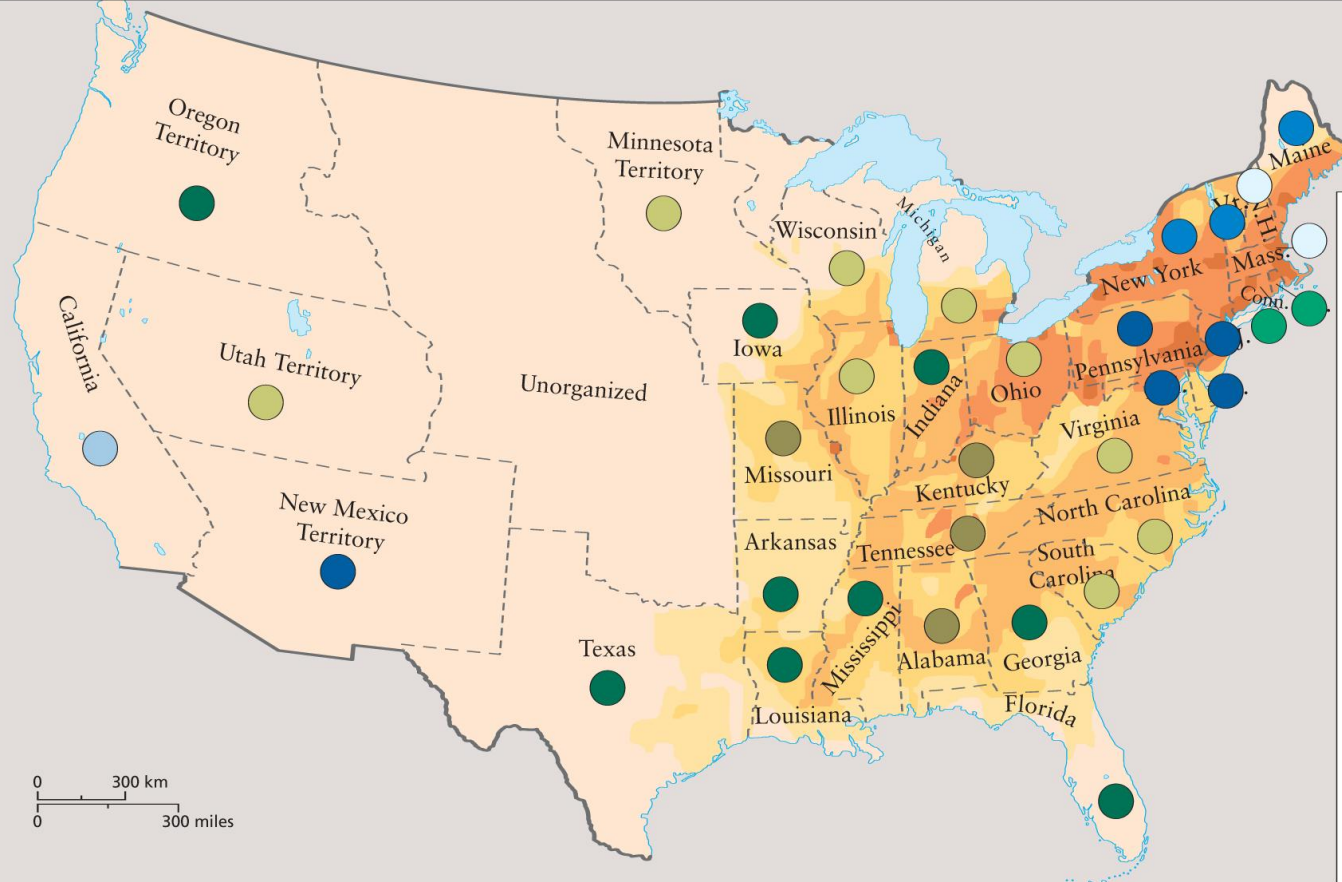
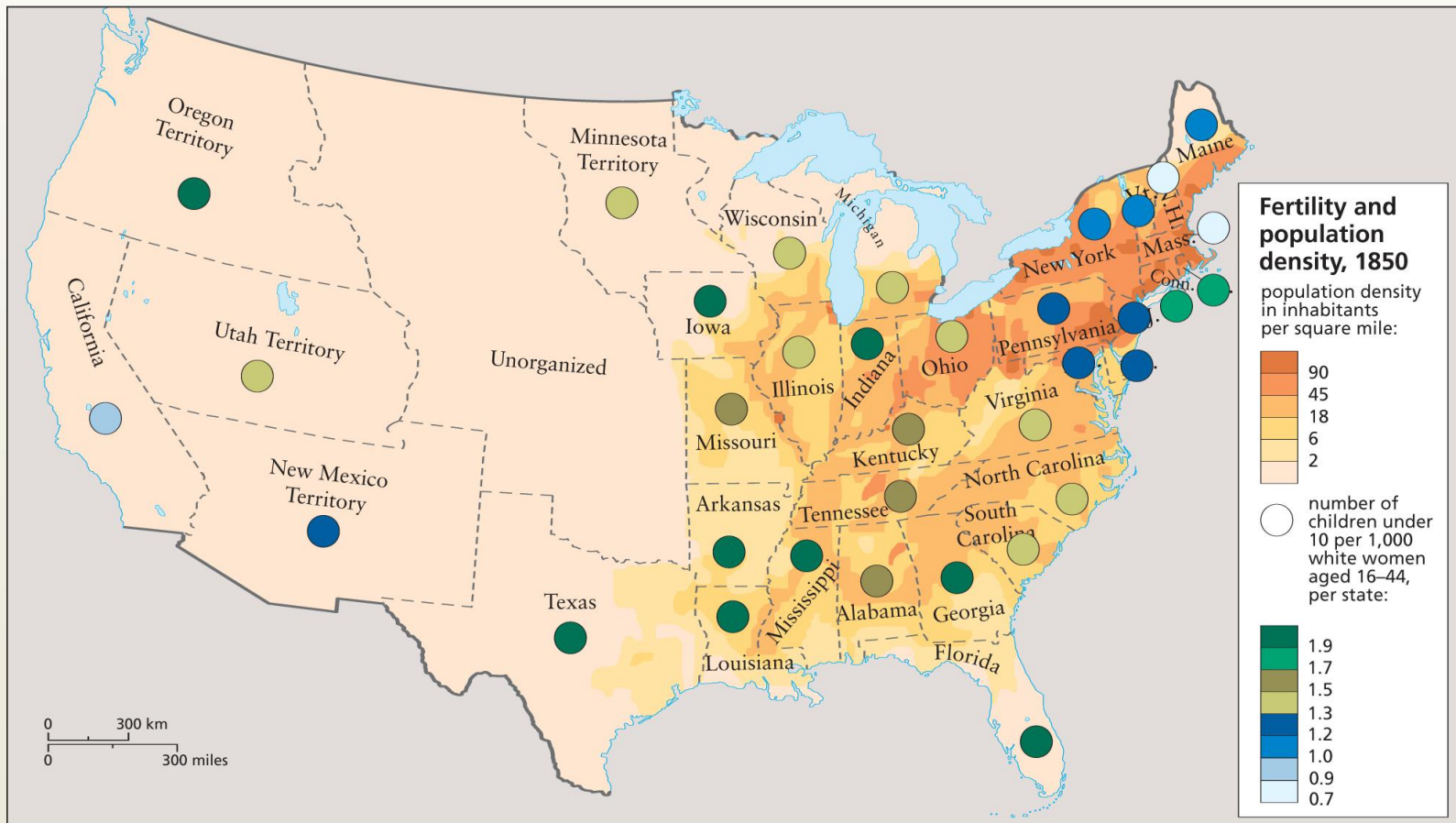
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- Growth of cities undermined the family as a unit of economic production
  - Those with jobs were removed from the house during working hours 6 days a week
  - Paid in cash
- Husband had to surrender control of home to wife because he was gone so much
- Gains and losses for women
  - More power in domestic sphere
  - At cost of exclusion outside of house
  - Trend also widened gap between middle and lower classes since “ladies” were supposed to stay at home yet lower class women had to work to feed family

# THE FAMILY RECAST

- Objections to Cult of True Womanhood
  - Some said no one could live up to image
  - Some escaped restrictions by forming close friendships with other women
- Another reason for shift in power was women were having fewer children
  - Married later
  - Had children two or three years later than their mothers and stopped having children two or three years sooner
  - Many middle-class couples made a conscious effort to limit the number of children



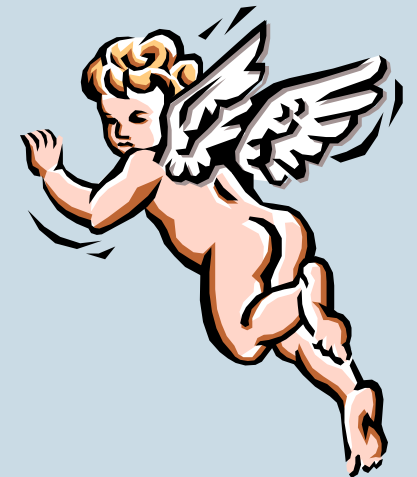
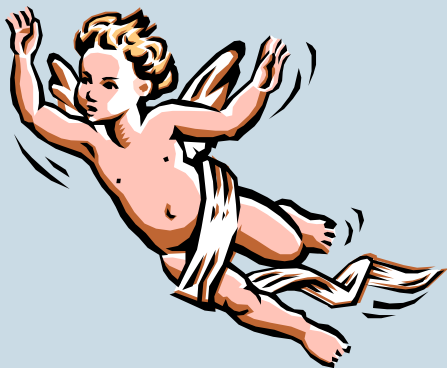


# THE FAMILY RECAST

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## Effects of smaller families

- More attention paid to children
- Mothers oversaw children's education
- Families became more caring and intimate
- Children no longer came from the devil and needed their wills broken but now were angels from heaven



# THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING

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- Questioning not only of infant damnation but of predestination
- New revivalism as counteroffensive to deistic thinking and other forms of “infidelity”
  - Stress now not on God’s arbitrary power but on his mercy and “disinterested benevolence”
  - Timothy Dwight and Reverend Lyman Beecher



# THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING

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- More pronounced attack from charismatic revivalists like Charles Grandison Finney
  - “Burned Over” district 1826-1831
  - People could control their fates
  - Salvation was available to anyone
  - Calvinism was a “theological fiction”
- Effects
  - Rochester, NY: church membership doubled in 6 months
  - In 1831: church membership grew by 100,000
- Successful because entertaining as well as edifying

# THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING

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- Economic reasons for revival
  - Young men, uprooted by growth of industry and commerce and disappearance of undeveloped farmland, found themselves alone and uncertain in the cities where revivals offered comfort
- Effects on women
  - Responsible for the moral education of children, women increasingly used this authority to move into moral reform areas outside the home
  - In the process they both supported the revivals and challenged the authority of the paternalistic, authoritarian churches they embraced

# THE ERA OF ASSOCIATIONS

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- Three pillars of the emerging American middle class: 1) recast family; 2) “revolutionized” church; 3) voluntary associations
- Associations were uniquely American
  - Leaders tended to be ministers, doctors, or merchants
  - Rank and file were tradesmen, foremen, clerks and their wives
- Different formations and durations:
  - Local cause—often dissolved with completion of objective
  - National affiliation to combat national evil such as drunkenness—longer lasting
    - American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions was founded in 1810 and by 1860 had sent 1,250 missionaries to the “heathens”

# THE ERA OF ASSOCIATIONS

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- Associations performed functions previously performed in families
  - Caring for old people
  - Providing moral guidance for the young
- Lacking paternalistic discipline of old way, they formed a “benevolent empire”

# BACKWOODS UTOPIAS

- Communitarian point of view aimed at creating a social revolution by starting with a sample community
- First groups were religious
  - Shakers: Ann Lee; 1774; Albany, New York
    - Celibacy
    - Communal property
    - Equality of labor and reward
    - Much singing and dancing
    - Virtue of simplicity
  - Amana Community: New York and Iowa; 1840s and 1850s
  - Oneida Community: John Humphrey Noyes; complex marriage



*Shakers near Lebanon state of New York, [ca. 1830]. Prints and Photographs Division. LC-U.S.Z62-13659 (b&w film copy neg.)*

# BACKWOODS UTOPIAS

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## MORMONS

- Most important religious communitarians
  - Joseph Smith founded in New York in 1820s
  - Based on Book of Mormon about a lost group of Israelites who populated America from biblical times until their destruction in 400A.D.
  - Established community in Ohio in 1831
  - Due to their beliefs and insularity, forced to move to Missouri then to Illinois where they founded Nauvoo in 1839
  - By 1844, was largest city in state with population of 15,000
- Joseph Smith authorized polygamy, among other things, for the top leaders and Mormons quarreled amongst themselves
  - Created a paramilitary organization

# BACKWOODS UTOPIAS



## MORMONS

- Result was concern among local non-Mormons resulting in Smith's arrest then lynching
- Under Brigham Young, Mormons moved west in 1847 and established new home at Salt Lake in Utah
- There they prospered and by the time it became part of Utah Territory in 1850, more than 11,000 people lived there

# BACKWOODS UTOPIAS

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## Social utopians

- New Harmony: Robert Owen; Indiana
  - Believed in economic and political equality
  - Advocated free love and enlightened atheism
  - Costly failure
- American followers of Charles Fourier
  - Wanted to organize society in cooperative units called phalanxes
  - Several dozen colonies established in northern and western states in 1840s
  - Members worked at whatever tasks they wished and only as much as they wished
  - Payment based on “repulsiveness” of tasks performed



# THE AGE OF REFORM

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- Thomas Gallaudet: educating the deaf
- Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe: educating blind; also interested in trying to educate mentally defective and in abolition
- Reformers emphasized establishing special institutions for dealing with social problems
  - Previously, people in need of “help” or punishment remained part of community
  - Now these people were seen as shaped by their environment so needed to be separated and placed in specialized institutions where they could be trained or rehabilitated
    - Almshouses, orphanages, reformatories, prisons and lunatic asylums

# THE AGE OF REFORM

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- Scientific rationale
- Humane motivation
- Actuality
  - Philadelphia Penitentiary: complete isolation
  - Auburn Prison, NY: absolute silence and flogging for infractions
- Dorothea Dix sought to reform insane asylums
- In the end, many places that aimed at reform simply became places where people could be locked away

# “DEMON RUM”

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- Colonial Americans consumed rum and hard apple cider and doctor's recommended regular consumption as healthy
- In early years of the republic cheap corn and rye whiskey added to mix
- 1820s: per capita consumption of hard liquor = 5 gallons (twice today's figures)
  - Most of drinking by men at taverns
  - Artisans and common laborers received twice daily “dram” of whiskey as part of wages
  - 1829: estimated that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of laborers drank at least 4oz of hard liquor a day

# “DEMON RUM”

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- American Temperance Union (1826)
  - Employed lectures, pamphlets, rallies, essay contests and other techniques to encourage people to “sign the pledge” not to drink
  - Primitive sociological studies showed link between crime and alcohol
- Washingtonian Society (1840)
  - Society of reformed alcoholics set out to save other alcoholics
- Ministers argued alcohol was one of the great barriers to conversion

# “DEMON RUM”

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- Employers signed on and pledged their businesses would be “cold water” enterprises
- Temperance movement soon claimed 1 million members, many of them women
- Opposition (especially to complete prohibition)
  - Irish and Germans
  - Members of Protestant sects who used wine in religious services
- By early 1840s many states had strict licensing system and heavy liquor taxes
  - Local option laws allowed total bans on alcohol
- By 1855, following Maine, a dozen states had prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcohol
  - Per capita consumption dropped below 2 gallons a year

# THE ABOLITIONIST CRU.S.ADE

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- Humanitarians were outraged by master's whip and the practice of disrupting families
- Democrats protested denial of political and civil rights to slaves
- Perfectionists objected to fact slaves had no opportunity to improve themselves
- Nonetheless, into 1820s, few people were abolitionists because there remained the problem of what to do with freed slaves
- Many people believed slavery was not subject to federal control

# THE ABOLITIONIST CRU.S.ADE

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Anti-slavery Northerners:

- Slavery was wrong and would not be tolerated in their communities
- But Constitution obliged them to tolerate it elsewhere so felt no responsibility to fight it
- People who advocated forced abolition were considered irresponsible
- Most confined themselves to advocating “colonization” or persuading slave owners to treat their property humanely

# THE ABOLITIONIST CRU.S.ADE

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- William Lloyd Garrison, Massachusetts
  - 1831: established *Liberator*
  - Demanded “immediate” abolition
  - 1831: organized New England Anti-Slavery Society
- Garrison insisted that slaves be freed, be treated as equals, refused colonization or compensation and refused to engage in political activity with government that countenanced slavery
  - Often faced mobs
  - 1837: Elijah Lovejoy, follower of Garrison, had his press destroyed and was then murdered



# THE ABOLITIONIST CRU.S.ADE

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- Arthur and Lewis Tappan, originally backers of Garrison, turned to Theodore Dwight Weld who talked of “immediate” emancipation “gradually” achieved and was willing to engage in political activity to accomplish
  - 1840 broke with Garrison over issue of involvement in politics and participation of female abolitionists as public lecturers
  - Founded Liberty Party

# THE ABOLITIONIST CRU.S.ADE

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- African-American abolitionists
  - 1830: 50 black antislavery societies existed
  - Generally associated with Garrisonian stance
- David Walker, who was born free, wrote *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (1829), which is considered one of the roots of the modern black nationalist movement
- Frederick Douglass, former slave who escaped from Maryland
  - Agent of Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society
  - *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
  - After late 1840s fought slavery from within the constitutional system

# WOMEN'S RIGHTS

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- Women's rights tied to abolition because when women spoke out against slavery encountered resistance against women speaking in public
- In order to follow their conscience, they had to argue for women's rights
- Also, the use abolitionists made of the Declaration of Independence radicalized many women with regard to their own place in society
- Many women came to see themselves as at least as badly off as slaves, perhaps worse since their system of oppression was couched in terms of romantic love

# WOMEN'S RIGHTS

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- Margaret Fuller, *Women in the Nineteenth Century* (1844)
  - Frontal assault on all forms of sexual oppression
- Angelina and Sarah Grimké, South Carolina
  - Began advocating against slavery
  - Moved to advocating for women's rights
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott
  - Became advocates of women's rights after the World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840 refused to let women participate

# WOMEN'S RIGHTS

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- Some women rejected idea that should confine themselves to the house and be denied both political voice and legal existence
  - Could not vote
  - Could not own property or make a will if married
- Attack on women's subordination resulted from
  - Belief in progress
  - Sense of personal responsibility
  - Conviction that institutions could be changed and the time for changing them was limited

# WOMEN'S RIGHTS

- Seneca Falls Convention (July 1848)
  - Drafted Declaration of Sentiments patterned on Declaration of Independence
- 1850s: series of national conventions was held and increasing numbers of reformers joined the cause
  - Most influential was Susan B. Anthony, who saw need for thorough organization



*The life & age of woman.* Kelloggs & Comstock. Between 1848 and 1850. Prints and Photographs Division. LC-U.S.ZC4-3651

# THE ROMANTIC VIEW OF LIFE

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- Romantics believed that change and growth were the essence of life for both individuals and institutions
  - Valued feeling and intuition over pure thought
  - Stressed the differences between individuals and societies rather than the similarities
  - Had an ardent love of country
  - Ascribed to individualism, optimism, ingenuousness, and emotion
  - Children were innately good

# EMERSON AND THOREAU

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## TRANSCENDENTALISM

- New England creation
- Emphasized indefinable and unknowable
- Mystical intuitive way of looking at life that subordinated facts to feelings
- Human beings were truly divine because they were part of nature which was the essence of divinity
- Could “transcend” reason by having faith in themselves and in the fundamental benevolence of the universe
- Complete individualists who did not believe in institutions



# EMERSON AND THOREAU

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- Ralph Waldo Emerson (b.1803) was the leading transcendentalist thinker
  - Philosophy was buoyantly optimistic and rigorously intellectual, self-confident and conscientious
  - Wanted people to seek inspiration in their immediate surroundings
  - Disturbed by industrial society
  - Disliked powerful governments but believed in strong leadership

# EMERSON AND THOREAU



## Henry David Thoreau

- Disliked scramble for wealth
- Objected to society's restrictions on the individual
- 1845 built a cabin on Walden Pond and lived there alone for two years
  - Resulted in *Walden* which was published in 1854
  - Book was indictment of social behavior of average American, attack on unthinking conformity
- Refused to pay Massachusetts poll tax to protest Mexican-American war and was jailed for a night (until aunt paid tax)
  - Wrote "Civil Disobedience"
- Did not participate in practical reform movements

# EDGAR ALLEN POE

- Born in Boston in 1809, died at age 40
  - Neurotic, an alcoholic and occasional user of drugs who married a child of 13
  - Obsessed with death and haunted by melancholia and hallucinations
- An excellent magazine editor, a penetrating critic, a poet of unique talents, and a fine short story writer
  - Stories abound with examples of wild imagination and fascination with mystery, fright, and the occult
  - Perfected the detective story, one of first to deal with science fiction themes, and master of horror stories



E.A. Poe

# NATHANIAL HAWTHORNE

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- Born in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1804
- Hawthorne's early stories were brought together in *Twice-told Tales* (1837)
  - Made excellent use of New England history though chiefly concerned with the struggles of individuals with sin, guilt, and pride and isolation
- His greatest works were *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *The House of Seven Gables* (1851)
- Made a modest living from writing but considered America too prosaic to inspire good literature



# HERMAN MELVILLE

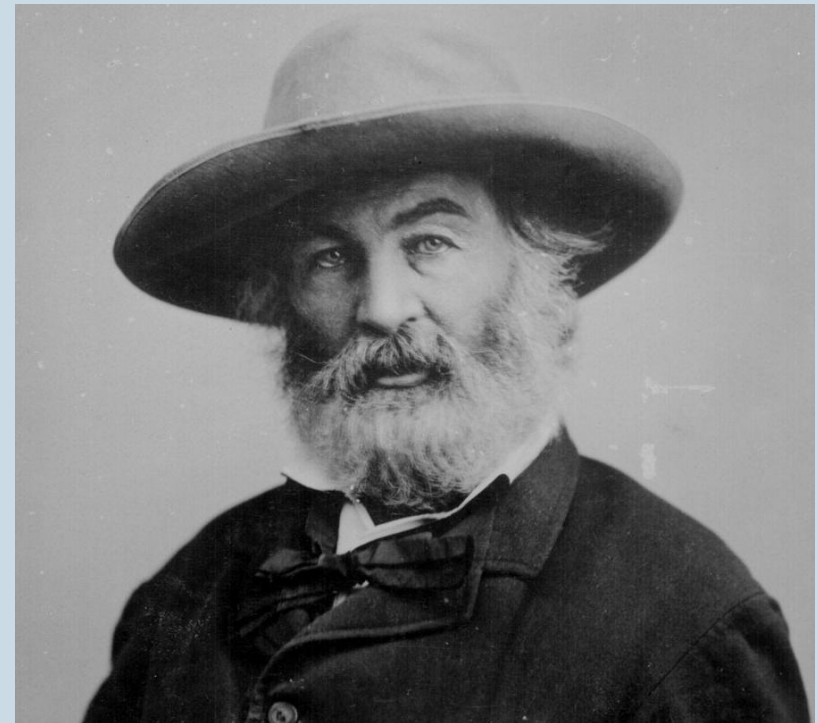
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- Born 1819 in New York, went to sea for several years as a youth, living for a while on various Pacific islands
  - *Typee* (1846): account of life in Marquesas and sequel, *Omoo* (1847)
- Had a dark view of human nature which culminated in *Moby Dick* (1851)
- As work became more profound, both average readers and critics missed the point



# WALT WHITMAN

- Born on Long Island in 1819
- Most romantic and distinctly American writer of his age
- Inspired by Emerson to write poems without rigid structure
  - *Leaves of Grass* (1855)—a preface and 12 rambling, free verse poems
- Loved to use foreign words and to pose as a rough character despite his sensitive nature
- Work more authentically American than that of any of his contemporaries



# READING AND THE DISSEMINATION OF CULTURE

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- As population grew and became more concentrated and was permeated by “middle class” point of view, popular concern for “culture” increased
- New machines of industrialization tended to make the artifacts of culture more stereotyped
- Cost of books, magazines, and newspapers decreased
  - Penny newspapers started in 1833 with *New York Sun*
  - Depended on sensation, crime stories, and society gossip

# READING AND THE DISSEMINATION OF CULTURE

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- 1850s: moralistic and sentimental “domestic” novel entered its prime
  - Most successful writers were women such as Susan Warner: *The Wide, Wide World* (1850)
- Religious literature also had a big market
  - 1840: American Tract Society distributed 3 million copies of its publications
  - 1855: distributed 12 million
- Mechanics’ libraries sprang up everywhere
  - Following Massachusetts, several states encouraged local communities to found tax-supported libraries



# READING AND THE DISSEMINATION OF CULTURE

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- Mutual improvement societies—lyceums
  - Began in Great Britain
  - Josiah Holbrook founded first in U.S. in 1826
  - Within 5 years over 1,000
  - Conducted discussions, established libraries, lobbied for better schools, sponsored lectures



# EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

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- Except in the South and on the frontier, most children between the ages of 5 and 10 attended school for at least a couple of months of the year
  - Schools were privately run and charged fees
  - Attendance was spotty and teachers were young men waiting for something better to come along
- School attendance changed with the rise of the common school movement
  - Belief that a government based on democratic rule must diffuse knowledge throughout people
  - Led to free, tax-supported schools which all students were expected to attend
  - Educational system came to be administered on a statewide basis
  - Teaching became a profession that required formal training

# EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

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- Two most effective leaders of common school movement were Henry Barnard and Horace Mann
  - Shared unquenchable faith in the improvability of human race through education
  - Mann drafted 1837 Massachusetts law creating a state school board and then carried common schools to every corner of the land
- Mann encouraged young women to become teachers while commending them to local school boards by claiming they could get along on lower salaries than men
  - By 1860 women comprised 78 percent of common school teachers in Massachusetts
  - Invigorated common schools and brought sense of missionary zeal

# EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

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- By the 1850s every state outside the South provided free elementary schools and supported institutions for training teachers
- Many built high schools; Michigan and Iowa even established publicly supported colleges
- Success?
  - Provide trained and well disciplined workers
  - Designed to “Americanize” immigrant workers
  - Reformers favored public elementary schools on the theory they would instill the values of hard work, punctuality, and submissiveness to authority in children of the laboring classes
  - They brought Americans of different economic circumstances and ethnic backgrounds into early and mutual contact

# THE STATE OF THE COLLEGES

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## Private Colleges

- Too many of them
- Many short lived
- Too few students
  - Charged too much for average family
  - Accepted students as young as 11 and 12 and as old as 30
- Grades were not given, class work was considered unimportant, and discipline was lax
- Curriculum was heavy with Latin and Greek and had little practical relevance except for ministers

# THE STATE OF THE COLLEGES

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- Move to revamp curriculum
  - More courses in science, economics, modern history, and applied mathematics
- Yale established separate school of science in 1847
- Harvard started using grades
- Colleges in West and South began offering mechanical and agricultural subjects
- Women
  - Oberlin enrolled 4 female students in 1837
  - Georgia Female College opened in 1839

# MILESTONES

1774	Mother Ann Lee founds first Shaker community	1837	Illinois abolitionist Elijah Lovejoy is murdered
1784	Dr. Benjamin Rush's <i>Inquiry into the Effects of Ardent Spirits</i> questions alcohol's benefits		Ralph Waldo Emerson delivers "The American Scholar" at Harvard
1826	American Temperance Union begins campaign against drunkenness		Horace Mann and Henry Barnard call for common schools
1829	Black abolitionist David Walker publishes <i>Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World</i>	1843	Dorothea Dix exposes treatment of the insane in <i>Memorial to the Legislature of Massachusetts</i>
1830s	Second Great Awakening stresses promise of salvation	1844	Margaret Fuller condemns sexual discrimination in <i>Women in the Nineteenth Century</i>
	Prison reformers debate Auburn versus Philadelphia system		Nauvoo mob murders Joseph Smith
1830–1850	Utopian communities flourish	1845	Frederick Douglass describes slave life in <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i>
1830	Joseph Smith shares his "vision" in <i>Book of Mormon</i>	1847	Brigham Young leads Mormon migration to Great Salt Lake
1831	Abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison founds <i>The Liberator</i> and New England Anti-Slavery Society	1848	Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott organize Seneca Falls Convention and draft Declaration of Sentiments
1831–1832	Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont tour America	1850	Nathaniel Hawthorne publishes <i>The Scarlet Letter</i>
1832	Perkins Institution for the Blind opens in Boston	1851	Maine bans alcoholic beverages
1837	Illinois abolitionist Elijah Lovejoy is murdered		Herman Melville publishes <i>Moby Dick</i>
	Ralph Waldo Emerson delivers "The American Scholar" at Harvard	1854–1855	Susan B. Anthony leads petition campaign against New York property and divorce laws
	Horace Mann and Henry Barnard call for common schools	1854	Henry David Thoreau attacks conformity in <i>Walden</i>
		1855–1892	Walt Whitman publishes <i>Leaves of Grass</i>

# WEBSITES

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- The Alexis de Tocqueville Tour: Exploring Democracy in America

<http://www.tocqueville.org>

- History of the Suffrage Movement

<http://www.rochester.edu/SBA/suffragehistory.html>

- Votes for Women: Selections from the National Women Suffrage Association Collection, 1848-1921

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/naw/nawshome.html>

- By Popular Demand: “Votes for Women” Suffrage Pictures, 1850-1922

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/vfwhtml/vfwhome.html>

- Influence of Prominent Abolitionists

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam006.html>



# WEBSITES

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- Pioneering the Upper Midwest: Books from Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, ca. 1820-1910

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/umhtml/umhome.html>

- America's First Look into the Camera: Daguerreotype Portraits and Views, 1839-1862

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/daghtml/daghome.html>

- Edgar Allen Poe

<http://www.eapoe.org/index.html>

- Eastern State Penitentiary Official Homepage

<http://www.easternstate.com/index.html>