

Topic #10 Overview

Main Themes:

1. How American intellectuals developed a national culture committed to the liberation of the human spirit.
2. How this commitment to the liberation of the human spirit led to and reinforced the reform impulse of the period.
3. How the crusade against slavery became the most powerful element in this reform movement.

Objectives: [You should be able to explain each of these in some detail]

1. The two basic impulses that were reflected in the reform movements and examples of groups illustrating each impulse.
2. The contributions of a new group of literary figures (such as James Fennimore Cooper, Walt Whitman, and Edgar Allan Poe) to American cultural nationalism.
3. The transcendentalists and their place in American society.
4. The sources of American religious reform movements, why they originated where they did, their ultimate objectives, and what their leadership had in common.
5. The two distinct sources from which the philosophy of reform arose.
6. American education reform in the antebellum period and the contribution of education to the growth of nationalism.
7. The role of women in American society and the attempts to alter their relationships with men.
8. The origins of the antislavery movement, the sources of its leadership, and the interaction between American antislavery thought and similar movements abroad.
9. The role of abolitionism in the antislavery movement, and the strengths and weaknesses of that part of the movement.

