



AP[®] United States History 2002 Sample Student Responses

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Many people and reformers wanted to expand multiple ideals to make ~~the American Society~~ a ~~perfect~~ perfect one. ~~Religion~~ Slavery, Religion and Society are some references related to the reform movements in the United States between 1825-1850.

~~MM~~ In and around 1830's many ~~people~~ ^{Abolitionists} were trying to abolish slavery. One such person was Abraham Lincoln, yet he attempted to make up civil rights; he wouldn't abolish it if he didn't have to. There was also debate on whether to consider slaves as property, such as what happened in the Dred Scott case. The Supreme Court were led by democrats who felt slaves were property.

Religion played another big part in expanding democratic ideals which is what made up reform movements to expand those ideas. ~~MM~~ Around the mid-1830's reforms believed that people will be "awakened and reformed, ... and will go through stages of conviction, repentance, and reformation." These were ideas related to the 2nd great Awakening. This was mainly made up of women who believed in such ideals.

~~The third was the society itself.~~ The third, to expand ideals of democrats and government was in the Society between 1825-1850. Many reformers tried to make up new ideals to make up a perfect society. One way was what to do with criminals for example. "There must be justice as people see it fit but they must be punished either way, the emigrants as well and

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naturalization and to make them like the American society. and a way ~~for~~ for this would be a "naturalization law..." but many wanted equal rights such as the Germans, and the Shanty Irish. Poverty was a big thing in society to deal with. There was a society made called "Brook farm" to attempt to have social organization and equality where everyone ~~was~~ would be equal but of course it failed. Many reformers demand for a new government to change and to have a government ~~with~~ that believed in equal rights.

~~In conclusion the democratic ideals weren't~~

~~always agreed with by many reformers~~

In conclusion not all democratic ideals were accepted by reformers and politics. Slavery, religion and society were ~~the~~ some references to the reform movements to expand democratic ideals between 1825 ~~to~~ through 1850

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During the years 1825-1850, reforms were made or attempted in several areas, including education, church, and human rights. Although not all attempts at reform were immediately successful, an ~~idea~~ underlying theme to all reform attempts was the expansion of democratic ideals.

The area of education was one that saw several reforms. The growing United States of America began to put more importance on ~~allowing~~ expanding the opportunity to learn to all children, rather than only the rich and elite. Among the reformers was William H. McGuffey, who published a series of Readers. McGuffey's Readers contained both lessons in grammar and morals to mostly poor children. One of the Readers states, "The poor, if they are but good, may be very happy." McGuffey's Readers allowed poor children to learn reading, grammar, and morals without having to pay for an expensive education. In addition, the stereotypical "little red schoolhouses" began to appear, providing an opportunity for children to be educated for free. The increased opportunity for education led to increased opportunities in life, where every man had the right to the pursuit of happiness, an essential part of a democratic society.

Reforms also took place in the churches. According to Charles G. Finney, "When the churches are...awakened and reformed, the reformation ~~of~~ and salvation of sinners will follow," and "Harlots, ^{and} drunkards, and infidels, and all sorts of abandoned characters are awakened and converted." Reforms were made in churches, and even society's outcasts and "untouchables" had the opportunity to be "awakened." ~~More~~ More people were accepted by the churches, ~~and~~ and the conversion of drunkards and infidels led to increased opportunity and a more democratic society.

Reforms were attempted in the field of individual rights but not all were successful. An 1835 engraving by Patrick Reason portrays a black slave woman in

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chains, crying out to God "Am I not a Woman and a Sister?" Also, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a reformer in the field of women's rights, declared "We are assembled to protest against a form of government... - to declare our right to be free as man is free," and demanded the right to vote for women. Although slavery did not end until after the Civil War and women did not get the right to vote until the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, reform was attempted in both these fields in the early-to-mid-19th century. These reforms focused on equality and freedom for all people, characteristic of a democratic society.

Opportunities were expanded through reforms in other areas as well. The Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents published a report in 1829 declaring that juvenile delinquents should not be put in prison because there they will only learn "the ways of the wicked." Instead, the juvenile delinquents should be reformed so they become "valuable members of society." This way, ~~delinquent~~ opportunities are left open to the former delinquents, and they may follow in the pursuit of happiness in a more democratic society.

With the Second Great Awakening, people began to realize the need for a more democratic society. Although there were a few conservative dissenters, including Orestes A. Brownson who condemned the "quack reformers" and advocated a return to the less democratic past, the majority of Americans felt that democracy needed to be expanded. As a result, reforms took place that broadened the horizons of opportunity to more and more Americans, and even unsuccessful reforms had the same focus. The expanding of opportunities ~~to the poor~~ to the poor in addition to the rich led to a more democratic America. Overall, "Reform movements in the United States sought to expand democratic ideals."

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The Age of Jackson was a time of tremendous reform within American society and the political establishment. ~~Andrew Jackson's~~ Andrew Jackson's tenure as President lasted only from 1829-1837, but the fact that many historians have attached his name to the period between 1820 and 1850 indicates the tremendous expanse of his spirit of reform. During this period, ~~the~~ social and political reform movements dominated the American landscape. Undercurrents of conservatism did persist, but the period was one in which the democratic ideals of America came to greater fruition than ever before.

The impulse of reform that provided the Jacksonian era with its foundation was a political one. Before the early nineteenth century, American males could not vote unless they had sufficient property. Beginning in 1815, however, many states accorded propertyless white males the right to vote; by 1850, all but one had done so. The result was an influx of popular candidates into local and national posts. Most prominently, Andrew Jackson was elected president in 1828, having previously received an electoral plurality but lost in the "corrupt bargain" of ~~1824~~ 1824. Jackson was a man of the people. A hero of the Indian Wars and the Battle of New Orleans, he bowed to the people at his Inauguration and invited them to the White House. Critics saw him as a mobocrat, but Jackson represented a new wave of ~~the~~ truly democratic politics.

Moreover, this political reform carried over into the American social establishment. As writers like Horatio Alger and William H. McGuffey (Doc. E) indicated, common Americans — especially

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youths— could expect to rise to a respectable standard through industry and good behavior— what Alger called "pluck and luck." Millions of poor Americans reveled in this new democratic ideal of success.

Furthermore, reform movements addressed a bevy of specific social issues. One of the most prominent was the penitentiary movement. Led by Quaker societies, reformers attacked the old penal system as useless and needlessly brutal. ~~It~~ In its Fourth Annual Report of 1829 (Doc. A), the Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents in the City of New York wrote that ~~the~~ ^{the traditional} system was "as little reconcilable with justice as humanity." The reformers established new institutions that became known as penitentiaries, in which "by religious and moral instruction, by imparting to [prisoners] useful knowledge, and by giving them industrious and orderly habits," reformers could "rescue" them from vice and render them valuable members of society." (Doc. A) Such institutions as the Auburn penitentiary in New York and the Eastern State Penitentiary in New Jersey embodied this democratic reform movement.

An outgrowth of the penitentiary movement was a drive to reform the treatment of the mentally ill. Traditional forms of treatment included publicly humiliating the insane or drilling holes in their heads to release "evil spirits." But reformers like Dorothea Dix and Benjamin Rush, the father of American psychology, advocated reforms that would institute a system to help the mentally ill, not persecute them.

Another prominent movement of reform was that of

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temperance. Since the establishment of the American colonies, the consumption of alcohol had become widespread — largely because fermented beverages were more sanitary than water supplies. In the 1820s, however, reformers began to attack drunkenness as corrupting and harmful to society. ~~Doc. B~~
In 1834, Charles G. Finney wrote that through religion and moral teaching, drunkards could be "awakened and converted" (Doc. B) to more socially responsible behavior. Finney was representative of the religious side of the movement, but other organizations like the American Temperance Society, founded in the 1840s — sought simply to expose the evils of drink to a wide audience. They accomplished their goals through cartoons like "The Drunkard's Progress" in 1846, ^(Doc. B) which showed the gradual deterioration and downfall of a tippler. Literature like Timothy Shay Arthur's ~~Doc. B~~ Ten Nights in a Barroom and What I Saw There furthered the movement's goals to empower democratic society through substantive reform.

Another reform movement, ~~Doc. B~~ and one that shows even clearer democratic impulse, was the movement to abolish slavery. ~~Doc. B~~ Because of the moral support for slavery in the South, this movement was rooted in the North. In 1831, William Lloyd Garrison founded the New England Antislavery Society and began publishing The Liberator, an abolitionist journal. In 1833, he established the American Antislavery Society. Soon, the movement spread rapidly through local chapters in the North, and these local organizations ~~Doc. B~~ created the

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Underground Railroad network to convey slaves to freedom from Southern plantations. The abolitionist movement struck at the core principles of American morality and democracy. An 1835 engraving by Patrick Reason (Doc. C) shows a bound slave woman appealing, "Am I not a Woman and a Sister?" The abolition movement did not come to real success until the Civil War, but it is another article of evidence for the democratic impulses of the age of reform.

Many reformers addressed not only social ills, but the very framework of American Society. George Rapp and Ann Lee founded, respectively, the Rappite and Shaker systems of social order — forms of religious communism in which all co-religionists in a particular colony contributed equally to the general good. Religious utopians, like John Humphrey Noyes, founded colonies like Noyes's Oneida village, with aims similar to those of the religious communists. And utopian socialists like Charles Fourier established communities in which all property was held communally and applied for the general good. Fourier's Brook Farm was one of the most prominent examples. The Constitution of the Brook Farm Association (Doc. F), published in 1841, states the aim of the settlement as "to apply the principles of justice and love to our social organization, [and] to guarantee to each other forever the means of physical support, and of spiritual progress." These movements to reform societal order show clear support for the highest expression of American democracy.

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Women were the organizers and supporters of many of the reform movements, particularly for temperance and abolition. But they did not neglect their own aspirations in American society. Propertyless males gained the right to vote in the Jacksonian Age, but women were left without political representation. Reformers like Margaret Fuller, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and others attempted to change that. Many women, including Fuller, Fanny Fern, and Sarah Hale, began to publish weekly "ladies' books" for ~~the female audience~~ the female audience. And in 1848, the most prominent members of the movement met in the "burned-over district" of New York—a hotbed of reform—in the Seneca Falls Convention. In the declaration of the conference, published August 2, 1848 (Doc I), Stanton writes: "[W]e are assembled to protest against a form of government, existing with out the consent of the governed.... [W]e now demand our right to vote according to the declaration of the government under which we live." The women's rights movement, although its real success came in the ~~early~~ early to mid-19th century, is another important component of Jacksonian democratic reform.

Despite the general prominence of reform measures, American society retained undercurrents of conservatism. Many Americans, including members of the Know-Nothing Party, objected vigorously to the influx of immigrants, from Ireland and Germany. They clearly favored only a limited democratic ideal; Samuel F. B. Morse wrote in 1835 ^(Pop. D.) of a "conspiracy" for immigrants to destroy the foundation of the country and declared "that no

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foreigner who comes into the country... shall ever be allowed the right of suffrage." And in an address at Wesleyan College on August 7, 1844 (Doc. G), Drestes A. Bronson ~~also~~ argued that "[t]he effort to cut loose from the past and to create an entirely new social and industrial order... is the species of quackery practiced by our professed social reformers." Bronson appealed to Americans' sense of history: "[t]his past... has made us what we are." And Americans did recognize their past. But they also looked to a brighter future in which democracy would be the true embodiment of the American ideal, and this is the overwhelming significance of the nineteenth-century reform movements.