

Religion in U.S. History

Theme: Ideas, Beliefs, and Culture

- In what ways and to what extent did moral, philosophical, and cultural values affect the creation of the United States?
- In what ways and to what extent have changes in moral, philosophical, and cultural values affected U.S. history?

Period 1: 1491-1607

1. European attempts to change American Indian beliefs and worldviews on basic social issues such as religion, gender roles and the family, and the relationship of people with the natural environment led to American Indian resistance and conflict.
2. In spite of slavery, Africans' cultural and linguistic adaptations to the Western Hemisphere resulted in varying degrees of cultural preservation and autonomy.
3. Spanish Mission System
4. African American Colonial Religion

Period 2: 1607-1754

5. The New England colonies, founded primarily by Puritans seeking to establish a community of like-minded religious believers, developed a close-knit, homogeneous society and — aided by favorable environmental conditions — a thriving mixed economy of agriculture and commerce.
6. Several factors promoted Anglicization in the British colonies: the growth of autonomous political communities based on English models, the development of commercial ties and legal structures, the emergence of a trans-Atlantic print culture, Protestant evangelism, religious toleration, and the spread of European Enlightenment ideas.
7. Resistance to imperial control in the British colonies drew on colonial experiences of self-government, evolving local ideas of liberty, the political thought of the Enlightenment, greater religious independence and diversity, and an ideology critical of perceived corruption in the imperial system.
8. Puritans
 - Calvinism
 - Great Migration
 - City upon a Hill
 - Community of Saints
 - Congregationalists
 - Halfway Covenant
 - John Winthrop
 - Harvard, 1639
 - Salem Witch Trials, 1692

9. Roger Williams and Providence, Rhode Island

10. Quakers

- Inner Light
- Society of Friends
- William Penn
- Pennsylvania, 1681
- Holy Experiment

11. Anglicans

- established church

12. Catholics

- Maryland Toleration Act, 1649

13. Great Awakening, 1730s-1760s

- George Whitefield
- Jonathan Edwards
- Old Lights / New Lights

Period 3: 1754-1800

14. During the 18th century, new ideas about politics and society led to debates about religion and governance, and ultimately inspired experiments with new governmental structures.

15. Protestant evangelical religious fervor strengthened many British colonists' understandings of themselves as a chosen people blessed with liberty, while Enlightenment philosophers and ideas inspired many American political thinkers to emphasize individual talent over hereditary privilege.

16. The Enlightenment

17. Deism

Period 4: 1800-1848

18. The Second Great Awakening, liberal social ideas from abroad, and Romantic beliefs in human perfectibility fostered the rise of voluntary organizations to promote religious and secular reforms, including abolition and women's rights.

19. Various groups of American Indians, women, and religious followers also developed cultures reflecting their interests and experiences, as did regional groups and an emerging urban middle class.

20. Second Great Awakening, early 1800s

21. Charles Finney

22. Reform Movements (stemming from the Second Great Awakening)

- public education (Horace Mann)
- prison reform (Dorthea Dix)

- Utopian Socialism (Brooke Farm, Onieda Community, New Harmony)
- women's rights
- temperance
- abolition of slavery

Period 5: 1844-1877

23. Asian, African American, and white peoples sought new economic opportunities or religious refuge in the West, efforts that were boosted during and after the Civil War with the passage of new legislation promoting national economic development.
24. Substantial numbers of new international migrants — who often lived in ethnic communities and retained their religion, language, and customs — entered the country prior to the Civil War, giving rise to a major, often violent nativist movement that was strongly anti-Catholic and aimed at limiting immigrants' cultural influence and political and economic power.
25. Mormons
- Joseph Smith
 - Brigham Young
 - Utah Territory, 1850
26. Anti-Catholic Nativism
27. American Party (Know Nothings)

Period 6: 1865-1898

28. A number of critics challenged the dominant corporate ethic in the United States and sometimes capitalism itself, offering alternate visions of the good society through utopianism and the Social Gospel.
29. Social Gospel
30. Salvation Army
31. Josiah Strong, *Our Country*, 1885
32. Charles Sheldon, *In His Steps*, 1897

Period 7: 1890-1945

33. Technological change, modernization, and changing demographics led to increased political and cultural conflict on several fronts: tradition versus innovation, urban versus rural, fundamentalist Christianity versus scientific modernism, management versus labor, native-born versus new immigrants, white versus black, and idealism versus disillusionment.
34. Fundamentalism vs. Modernism
35. Scopes trial, 1925
36. Charles Coughlin (radio priest)

Period 8: 1945-1980

37. Nation of Islam

- Elijah Muhammad
- Malcolm X

38. The New Right

- Right-to-Life Movement
- Phyllis Schlafly

Period 9: 1980 to the Present

39. Reduced public faith in the government's ability to solve social and economic problems, the growth of religious fundamentalism, and the dissemination of neoconservative thought all combined to invigorate conservatism.

40. The rapid and substantial growth of evangelical and fundamentalist Christian churches and organizations, as well as increased political participation by some of those groups, encouraged significant opposition to liberal social and political trends.

41. Rise of the Religious Right

- Moral Majority
- Focus on the Family