

Study Guide



Chapter 8, Section 3

For use with textbook pages 278–282

REFORMING SOCIETY

KEY TERMS AND NAMES

Dorothea Dix a reformer who worked to improve conditions for the mentally ill (page 278)

Lyman Beecher a minister who preached the power of individuals to improve themselves and society (page 279)

benevolent society organization that focused on spreading God’s word and solving social problems (page 279)

temperance moderation in the consumption of alcohol (page 279)

penitentiary name given to prisons during the prison reform movement (page 280)

Horace Mann a leader of the public education movement (page 280)

Elizabeth Cady Stanton woman reformer in the antislavery movement who organized the first women’s rights convention (page 282)

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

What aspects of your school or community do you think need improvement? In what ways can you work for these improvements?

The last section discussed the cultural changes that the United States experienced in the 1800s. This section discusses the reforms that some Americans worked for at that time.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the chart below to help you take notes. In the early 1800s, many people worked to reform different aspects of society. List the reform that each person listed below worked for.

Reformer	Type of Reform
Dorothea Dix	1.
Horace Mann	2.
Emma Willard	3.
Mary Lyon	4.
Lucretia Mott	5.
Elizabeth Cady Stanton	6.

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READ TO LEARN

- **The Reform Spirit** (page 278)

Many people in the mid-1800s worked to reform various aspects of American society. **Dorothea Dix** worked to improve conditions for the mentally ill, who were often locked up in prisons.

Lyman Beecher, a revivalist minister, preached the idea of individuals, rather than government, working to build a better society. He and other religious leaders helped start organizations known as **benevolent societies**. These organizations focused on spreading God's word and on solving social problems.

Many women participated in the reform movements in the United States. They focused on aspects of American society that they believed needed change. Many believed that excessive use of alcohol caused social problems such as crime and poverty. Alcoholism was widespread during the early 1800s. Reformers stepped up their campaign for **temperance**, or moderation in the consumption of alcohol. Temperance groups formed all across the country. Several groups joined together to form the American Temperance Union. Temperance groups also worked for laws to prohibit the sale of liquor.

Some reformers worked to improve prison conditions. In the 1800s, criminals of all kinds and the mentally ill were often crowded together in prisons. Many states began building new facilities to provide better conditions for prisoners. Some people also worked for programs to help prisoners rehabilitate themselves rather than simply locking them up. The new prisons, called **penitentiaries**, were meant to be places where prisoners would learn remorse.

Many reformers began to push for public education, in which government-funded schools were open to all citizens. These reformers believed that a democracy could survive only if the people who voted were educated and informed. One of the leaders of the public education movement was **Horace Mann**. As a Massachusetts legislator, he pushed for more public education and a bill that created a state board of education in Massachusetts. Mann became secretary of the new board. He opened more high schools and started schools for teacher training. Massachusetts passed the first mandatory school attendance law. By the 1850s, many Northeastern states included tax-supported elementary schools. Tax-supported schools soon spread to the rest of the country.

When most people talked about educating voters, they were talking about educating men. Some women worked to create educational opportunities for women. Emma Willard opened a girls' boarding school that taught subjects such as math and literature, which were rarely taught to girls. Mary Lyon opened the first institution of higher education for women only. Elizabeth Blackwell became the first woman to earn a medical degree in the United States or Europe.

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7. What reforms did the temperance movement work toward?

- **The Early Women’s Movement** (page 281)

In the 1800s, people began dividing their lives into two activities—the home and the workplace. Men now often left home to go to work, while women took care of the house and children. Many people believed that the home was the proper place for women. The idea that women should be homemakers and be responsible for the development of their children came to be known as “true womanhood.” Many women believed that as wives they were partners with their husbands, and therefore, should be treated equally.

Margaret Fuller believed that many injustices in society would end if men and women were treated equally. In 1848 Lucretia Mott and **Elizabeth Cady Stanton** organized the Seneca Falls Convention. This was a gathering of women and the start of an organized women’s movement. The convention declared that all men and women are created equal. Stanton also proposed that women focus on gaining the right to vote.

8. Why was the Seneca Falls Convention significant?
