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Social Darwinism and Social Gospel

Chapter 3, Section 4

I) Question 14. Social Darwinists were seeking to explain and fix certain social problems. What social problems did they attempt to solve? How did they attempt fix these problems?

A. What were the social problems? Attempted to explain poverty, justify class distinctions and business forms

- Catchphrase of the theory was “survival of the fittest”
- Success that one achieved in society and in wealth was due to their genetic background. Those who were successful were “fit” and those who weren’t were “unfit.”
- It was morally wrong to assist the poor who were unfit and flawed in genetic material.
- Attempted to explain explorative forms business that rooted from the concept laissez-faire(an economic term that demanded government have no involvement in business).
- Laissez-faire was a system where workers were unpaid and overworked. Working unions were ignored.

B. How would theses problems be fixed? The poor would eventually die out and a superior society of people of greater health and intelligence would remain. The poor would disappear if the government didn’t interfere.

- Those who survived would lessen human suffering and other social ills that would save the societies resources.
- Believed that government shouldn’t interfere with human competition by interfering with the natural evolution of society.
- Examples include regulating the economy and helping the weak members of society. Social Darwinists were against the rich donating money to support the poor
- Were against public schooling because it forced taxpayers to pay for poor children’s education.

Sources:

<http://www.tellmewhyfacts.com/2007/07/what-is-social-darwinism.html>

textbook pages 266 - 267

<http://www.dsusd.k12.ca.us/users/scottsh/Social%20Darwinism.htm>

II) Question 15. Social Gospel Movement: What social problems needed to be fixed? How were they addressed?

A. Social Gospel Beliefs

- Apply protestant teachings to urban life
- Anti-individualism and pro-community

B. Social conflicts addressed

1. Labor reform

- Poor work conditions
- Washington Gladden wrote *Working People and their Employers*, a book supporting workers and a union
- Riis wrote and photographed poor conditions causing an increase in poverty awareness
- Job opportunities for women increased

2. Living Conditions

- Massive immigration in large cities like Chicago and New York
- Poor urban living conditions brought to attention by books and photography
- Welfare
- Supported the black population through the N.A.A.C.P (national association of the advancement of colored people).
- Refuge from poverty: created YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) and Salvation Army
- Settlement houses: created for shelter and refuge, also for women to save as well as advance their cultures

3. Education

- Massive immigration causing spike in church education
- Forced government to provide free public education
- Rich philanthropists created prestigious schools for higher education

Sources:

<http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/the-social-gospel-movement-definition-and-goals-of-urban-reform-movements.html> - lesson

<http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/urban-culture-in-the-late-1800s-activities-literary-movements-artistic-movements.html> - lesson

<http://www.pbs.org/now/society/socialgospel.html>

III) Question 16. Who were the proponents of Social Darwinism?

- Social Darwinism is based off of the theories of Charles Darwin, but applied to human society instead of the animal world.
- Strongly paralleled laissez-faire which was an economy in which the government had absolutely no involvement with business

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

- An English philosopher who founded the idea of Social Darwinism(Darwin

didn't believe his theories applied to human society)

- Argued that wealth and power were signs of fitness
- According to him, mankind benefitted from competition and removal of the "unfit" or of the lower classes/urban poor
- His ideas were more popular among American capitalist leaders and businessmen, but not among those in his home country

William Graham Sumner (1840-1910)

- Yale graduate and political economist who believed strongly in laissez-faire
- Argued against protective tariffs and on government intervention in labor strikes
- Argued that the economy was naturally occurring and didn't need guidance in its evolution
- In 1907, Sumner published his most influential book, *Folkways*, where he argued that customs and morals were the most powerful influences on human behavior, even when irrational.

Sources:

<http://www.dsusd.k12.ca.us/users/scottsh/Social%20Darwinism.htm>

<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h843.html>

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IV) Question 17. Who were the proponents of Social Gospelism?

- (Starting in the 1820s) The Social Gospel was a reform movement that integrated christianity to resolve social issues
- Majority of people that were involved were critics of the Industrial society

Billy Sunday (1862-1935)

- Was a leading advocate in the Gospel
- Billy was a former pro baseball player and converted to christianity in 1886
- He left the league to preach at YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association)
- One of his most famous sermons was, "Going to church doesn't make you a Christian anymore than going to a garage makes you an automobile."
- He supported woman suffrage and wanted to call an end to child labor (even preached this in the south)
- He was a big supporter of prohibition and preached about the evilness of alcohol - "To know what the devil will do, find out what the saloon is doing."

Washington Gladden (1836-1918)

- Was a minister in the Gilded Age (1870-1914)
- Became an editor of the *New York Independent*, and wrote about theology and social issues
- Washington spoke about labor, poverty, and race

- He thought that all Christians should dedicate themselves to Jesus Christ
- People who shared these beliefs were known as Progressives (Washington included)
- He encouraged people to spend their Sundays celebrating god and not drinking
- He attempted at making a temperance movement, but failed
- He felt that African Americans needed equality but at the same time he believed that they were still inferior to whites
- Believed immigrants were prone to alcoholism
- Wanted to improve life by ending selfishness of business owners

Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918)

- Pastor at a Baptist Congregation in a place known as Hell's Kitchen (NY)
- Wanted to raise money to make a new place for worship for the poor
- He supported Henry George's "Single Tax" - campaign to abolish all taxes except for the tax on land
- He had troubled hearing and resigned -went on a trip overseas which was paid for by the church
- He wrote a doctrine known as *Kingdom of God* which talked about theology and life work
- He founded the *Brotherhood of the Kingdom* -network of ministers that were committed to transforming the social american society

Sources:

http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Washington_Gladden

<http://washingtongladdensociety.org/biography.html>

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ch/131christians/evangelistsandapologists/sunday.html?st=art=2>

<http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/bce/rauschenbusch.htm>

V) Question 18. Where did these ideologies take root? Why in these sections of the country?

A. Social Darwinism

- Popular in larger cities with high populations and a great number of businesses/industrial life, such as Chicago and New York
- Popular in large cities because there was a high population of wealthy business owners who were strong believers in Social Darwinism and also a high population of urban poor

B. Social Gospel

- Like Social Darwinism, popular in cities with high poverty and immigration populations

- Also popular in religious sections of the country since it was a Protestant movement
- Popular in cities because of the large number of poor communities and immigrants which were the subjects of Social Gospel

Sources:

<http://www.pbs.org/now/society/socialgospel.html>

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/twenty/tkeyinfo/socgospel.htm>

VI) Question 19. Who supported each of these theories?

B. Social Darwinism

1. Wealthy men/Businessmen

- believed in “survival of the fittest”
- wanted a further division of the classes

A. Social Gospel

1. Churches supported it because of the Christian teachings advocated into everyday life

2. Men and women located in urban areas

- Focus on urban life reform
- Focus on labor reforms

Sources:

<http://www.pbs.org/now/society/socialgospel.html>

<http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/urban-culture-in-the-late-1800s-activities-literary-movements-artistic-movements.html - lesson>