

Timothy Dwight and a Defense of the Federalist Status Quo in Connecticut From Douglas Craig

Grade Level: 11th

Duration of lesson: 2 classes

Introduction: Timothy Dwight was Yale's 8th president and was called, by his opponents, the Pope of Connecticut because of his religious, social, and political influence. Dwight and the Congregational clergy sought to maintain the status quo in the state- Federalist political leadership and an official Congregational church. Dwight sought to defend the Puritan model of society.

Background knowledge necessary-

- Puritan society- the church, state, community, and family
- Differences between the Federalists and the Democratic Republicans
- Political events of the late 19th/early 20th centuries
- Enlightenment Thought
- Second Great Awakening

Procedure: 1. In groups students read the sources and determine what each source says about what Dwight wants to promote in society. 2. Students create a T-chart dividing positive and negative implications of his position. 3. Individually, students write a paper either defending or criticizing Dwight's model of society.

Assignment: Students will write a paper either defending or criticizing the model of society that Timothy Dwight wanted for Connecticut. Students should use background knowledge to display an understanding of the milieu and to give context to Dwight's word and ideas.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards:

1. Gather ,analyze and reconcile historical information, including contradictory data, from primary and secondary sources
2. Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict
- 3 . Formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources

Document A Berk, Stephen E. The Rise of the Church Militant: Timothy Dwight and the Rise of American Evangelical Protestantism. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1971.

Democracy, I do not conveye that ever God did ordayne as a fit government eyther for church or commonwealth. If the people be governors, who shall be governed? As for monarchy and aristocracy, they are both of them aprooved And directed in Scripture

Document B Dwight, Timothy. *An Address to the Emigrants from Connecticut and from New England Generally in the New Settlements in the United States*. Hartford: Peter B. Gleason and Company, 1817.

“[In a community] every man acts under the public eye, and feels a responsibility, which restrains sinful inclinations, and serves to regulate his daily deportment.” [In the “wilderness”] no public eye sees them. No moral institutions exist. No good habits have established their empire.”

Document C Dwight, Timothy. *Travels in New England and New York*. Vol. 3. London: Charles Wood, 1823
“The Sabbath is observed in New England with a greater degree of sobriety and strictness than in any other part of the world

Document D Dwight, Timothy. *An Address to the Emigrants from Connecticut and from New England Generally in the New Settlements in the United States*. Hartford: Peter B. Gleason and Company, 1817

“[The Sabbath is] the cornerstone, the main pillar of virtue and piety and happiness in a community.”

Document E Dwight, Timothy. *Travels in New England and New York*. Vol. 1. London: Charles Wood, 1823.

[New England] had fewer capital crimes...since its settlement than...any other country on the globe (Scotland perhaps excepted) in proportion to the number of its inhabitants,”

Document F Dwight, *Duty of Americans*

Berk, Stephen. *The Church Militant: Timothy Dwight and the Rise of American Evangelical Protestantism*. Ann Arbor, MIL University Microfilm, 1971.

“shall our sons become the disciples of Voltaire, and the dragoons of Marat, or our daughters of the illuminati?”

Document G Dwight, Timothy. *Travels in New England and New York*. Vol. 4. London, Charles Wood, 1823.

“Men who were before inclined to vice [were] delighted to find [their sins] justified by infidel philosophy.”

Document H Berk, Stephen. *The Church Militant: Timothy Dwight and the Rise of American Evangelical Protestantism*. Ann Arbor, MIL University Microfilm, 1971.

“Grace was the product of a virtuous, Puritan environment, and public happiness the temporal reward for social piety.”

Document I Dwight, Timothy. *Vindication of the Establishment of the Public Worship of God*.

“Morality is merely a branch of religion; and where there is no religion, there is no morality. Moral obligation has its sole ground in the character and government of God. But where God is no worshipped, his character will soon be disintegrated and the obligation founded on it, unfelt and forgotten. No duty, therefore, will be realized or performed”

Document J Dwight, Timothy. *Travels*. Vol. 2. London: Charles Wood, 1823.

On the Connecticut River Valley: “Children are...sent at an early age to school; and being their education almost as soon as they can speak. In consequence of these facts the inhabitants are more educated and more orderly than in most other parts even in New England. There is no tract of the same size in which learning it more, or more uniformly encouraged; or where sobriety or decorum is more generally demanded, or exhibited. Steadiness of character; softness of manners; a disposition to read; respect for the laws ad magistrates; a strong sense of liberty; blended with an equally strong sense of the indispensable importance of energetic government are all extensively predominant in this region”

Document K Dwight, Timothy. *On Means to Secure Public Happiness*.

“Without churches, men will be vicious of course; without schools, they will be ignorant; and ignorance and vice are sufficiently melancholy characteristics of the people in whom they are united”

There are two great means of promoting virtue; Religious education and Public Worship. Religious education prepares the mind to live, attend, and to profit by public worship; and public worship supports and regulates religious education. Without public worship, children would cease to be religiously educated; and without religious education, public worship would cease to be attended.

Document L Dwight, Timothy. *Virtuous Leaders a National Blessing*.

“The first duty of a ruler, and the first concern of a virtuous ruler, is the support of religion”

Document M Dwight, Timothy. *Travels in New England and New York*. Vol. 1. London: Charles Wood, 1823.

“[In Connecticut] the great body of the inhabitants are carried to the church from the cradle and leave it only for the grave. It is believed, that the happy influence of this important fact, in promoting the prosperity of the state, in preventing crimes, and in establishing good order, under a government involving comparatively few restraints upon the personal liberty, is here evinced in the most satisfying manner.

Document N Dwight, Timothy. *An Address to the Emigrants of Connecticut and from New England in General in the Settlements of the United States*. Hartford: Peter B. Gleason and Company, 1817.

“When families are withdrawn...from the nurseries of learning and the temples of religion when they no longer hear the voice of instruction in school, or the sanctuary, there is great danger, that by insensible degrees, they will become indifferent to the value of these blessings.”