

A.P. U.S. HISTORY NOTES

Chapter 26: "America Moves to the City"

~ 1865 – 1900 ~

I. The Urban Frontier

1. From 1870 to 1900, the American population doubled, and the population in the cities tripled.
2. Cities grew up and out, with such famed architects as **Louis Sullivan** working on and perfecting skyscrapers (first appearing in Chicago in 1885).
 - i. The city grew from a small compact one that people could walk through to get around to a huge metropolis that required commuting in **electric trolleys**.
 - ii. Electricity, indoor plumbing, and telephones made city life more alluring.
3. Department stores like **Macy's** (in New York) and **Marshall Field's** (in Chicago) provided urban working-class jobs and also attracted urban middle-class shoppers.
 - i. **Theodore Dreiser's** *Sister Carrie* told of a woman's escapades in the big city and made cities dazzling and attractive.
 - ii. However, the move to city produced lots of trash, because while farmers always reused everything or fed "trash" to animals, city dwellers, with their mail-order houses like **Sears** and **Montgomery Ward**, which made things cheap and easy to buy, could simply throw away the things that they didn't like anymore.
4. In cities, criminals flourished, and impure water, uncollected garbage, unwashed bodies, and droppings made cities smelly and unsanitary.
 - i. Worst of all were the **slums**, which were crammed with people.
 - ii. The so-called "**dumbbell tenements**" were the worst since they were dark, cramped, had little sanitation or ventilation, and were terrible.
5. To escape, the wealthy of the city-dwellers fled to suburbs.

II. The New Immigration

1. Until the 1880s, most of the immigrants had come from the British Isles and western Europe (Germany and Scandinavia) and were quite literate and accustomed to *some* type of representative government, but afterwards, this shifted to the Baltic and Slavic people of southeastern Europe, who were basically the opposite.
 - i. While the southeastern Europeans accounted for only 19% of immigrants to the U.S. in 1880, by the early 1900s, they were over 60%!

III. Southern Europe Uprooted

1. Many Europeans came to America because there was no room in Europe, nor was there much employment, since industrialization had eliminated many jobs.
 - i. America was also often praised to Europeans, as people boasted of eating everyday and having freedom and much opportunity.
 - ii. Profit-seeking Americans also perhaps exaggerated the benefits of America to Europeans, so that they could get cheap labor and more money.
2. However, it should be noted that many immigrants to America stayed for a short period of time and then returned to America, and even those that remained (including persecuted Jews, who propagated in New York) tried very hard to retain their own culture and customs.
 - i. However, the children of the immigrants sometimes rejected this Old World culture and plunged completely into American life.

IV. Reactions to the New Immigration

1. The federal government did little to help immigrants assimilate into American society, so immigrants were often controlled by powerful “bosses” (such as New York’s Boss Tweed) who provided jobs and shelter in return for political support at the polls (= corruption).
2. Gradually, though, the nation’s conscience awoke to the plight of the slums, and people like **Walter Rauschenbusch** and **Washington Gladden** began preaching the “social gospel,” insisting that churches tackle the burning social issues of the day.
3. Among the people who were deeply dedicated to uplifting the urban masses was **Jane Addams**, who founded **Hull House** in 1889 to teach children and adults the skills and knowledge that they would need to survive and succeed in America.
 - i. She eventually won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931, but her pacifism was looked down upon by groups such as the **Daughters of the American Revolution**, who revoked her membership.
 - ii. Other such settlement houses like Hull House included **Lillian Wald’s Henry Street Settlement** in New York, which opened its doors in 1893.
 - iii. Settlement houses became centers for women’s activism and reform, as females such as **Florence Kelley** fought for protection of women workers and against child labor.
4. The new cities also gave women (mostly single women, since working mothers and wives was considered bad) opportunities to earn money and support themselves better.

V. Narrowing the Welcome Mat

1. The “nativism” and antiforeignism of the 1840s and 50s came back in the 1880s, as the Germans and western Europeans looked down upon the new Slavs and Baltics, fearing that mixing of blood would ruin the fairer Anglo-Saxon races and create inferior offspring.
 - i. The “native” Americans blamed immigrants for the degradation of the urban government; these new bigots had forgotten how they had been scorned when they had arrived in America a few decades before.
 - ii. Trade unionists hated them for their willingness to work for super low wages and for bringing in dangerous doctrines like socialism and communism to the U.S.
2. Anti-foreign organizations like the **American Protective Association (APA)** arose to go against new immigrants, and labor leaders were quick to try to stop new immigration, since immigrants were frequently used as strikebreakers.
3. Finally, in 1882, Congress passed the first restrictive law against immigration, which banned paupers, criminals, and convicts from coming here.
4. In 1885, another law was passed banning the importation of foreign workers under usually substandard contracts.
5. Literacy tests for immigrants were proposed, but were resisted until they finally passed in 1917, but the 1882 immigration law also barred the Chinese from coming.
6. In 1886, the **Statue of Liberty** arrived from France—a gift from the French to America.

VI. Churches Confront the Urban Challenge

1. Since churches had mostly failed to take any stands and rally against the urban poverty, plight, and suffering, many people began to question the ambition of the churches, and began to worry that Satan was winning the battle of good and evil.
 - i. The emphasis on material gains worried many.
2. A new generation of urban revivalists stepped in, including people like **Dwight Lyman Moody**, a man who proclaimed the gospel of kindness and forgiveness and adapted the old-time religion to the facts of city life.

- i. The **Moody Bible Institute** was founded in Chicago in 1889 and continued working well after his 1899 death.
 - 3. Roman Catholic and Jewish faiths were also gaining much by the new immigration.
 - i. **Cardinal Gibbons** was popular with Roman Catholics and Protestants, as he preached American unity.
 - ii. By 1890, Americans could choose from 150 religions, including the new **Salvation Army**, which tried to help the poor and unfortunate.
 - 4. The **Church of Christ, Scientist** (Christian Science), founded by **Mary Baker Eddy**, preached that Christianity heals sickness.
 - 5. **YMCA's** and **YWCA's** also sprouted.
- VII. Darwin Disrupts the Churches
 - 1. In 1859, **Charles Darwin** published his *On the Origin of Species*, which set forth the new doctrine of evolutionism and attracted the ire and fury of fundamentalists.
 - i. “**Modernists**” took a step from the fundamentalists and refused to believe that the Bible was completely accurate and factual.
 - 2. Colonel **Robert G. Ingersoll** was one who denounced creationism, as he had been widely persuaded by the theory of evolution, even though other people put together their own interpretations and basically combined the two theories.
- VIII. The Lust for Learning
 - 1. A new trend began in the creation of more public schools and the provision of free textbooks funded by taxpayers.
 - i. By 1900, there were 6,000 high schools in America; kindergartens also multiplied.
 - 2. Catholic schools also grew in popularity and in number.
 - 3. To partially help adults who couldn't go to school, the **Chautauqua movement**, a successor to the **lyceums**, was launched in 1874, and it included public lectures to many people by famous writers and extensive at-home studies.
 - 4. Americans began to develop a faith in formal education as a solution to poverty.
- IX. Booker T. Washington and Education for Black People
 - 1. The South, war-torn and super poor, lagged far behind in education, especially for Blacks, so **Booker T. Washington**, an ex-slave came to help, starting by heading a black normal and industrial school in Tuskegee, Alabama, and teaching the students their useful skills and trades.
 - i. However, he avoided the issue of *social* equality; he believed in Blacks helping themselves first before gaining more rights.
 - 2. One of Washington's students was **George Washington Carver**, who later discovered hundreds of new uses for peanuts, sweet potatoes, and soybeans.
 - 3. However, **W.E.B. Du Bois**, the first Black to get a Ph.D. from Harvard University, demanded complete equality for Blacks and action now, and he also founded the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People** (NAACP) in 1910.
 - i. Many of Du Bois's differences with Washington reflected the contrasting life experiences of southern and northern Blacks.
- X. The Hallowed Halls of Ivy
 - 1. Colleges and universities sprouted after the **Civil War**, and colleges for women, such as **Vassar**, were gaining ground.
 - i. Also, colleges to both genders also grew, especially in the Midwest, and Black colleges also were established, such as **Howard University** in Washington D.C., **Atlanta University**, and **Hampton Institute in Virginia**.
 - 2. The **Morrill Act** of 1862 had provided a generous grant of the public lands to the states for support of education and was extended by the **Hatch Act** of 1887, which provided

federal funds for the establishment of agricultural experiment stations in connection with the land-grant colleges.

3. Private donations also went toward the establishment of colleges, including **Cornell**, **Leland Stanford Junior**, and the **University of Chicago**, which was funded by **John D. Rockefeller**.
 4. **John Hopkins University** maintained the nation's first high-grade graduate school.
- XI. The March of the Mind
1. The elective system of college was gaining popularity, and it took off especially after **Dr. Charles W. Eliot** became president of Harvard.
 2. Medical schools and science were prospering after the Civil War.
 - i. Discoveries by **Louis Pasteur** and **Joseph Lister** improved medical science and health.
 - ii. The brilliant but sickly **William James** helped establish the discipline of behavioral psychology, and his books *Principles of Psychology* (1890), *The Will to Believe* (1897), and *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902).
 - a. His greatest work was *Pragmatism* (1907), which preached what he believed in: pragmatism (everything has a purpose).
- XII. The Appeal of the Press
1. Libraries such as the **Library of Congress** also opened across America, bringing literature into people's homes.
 2. With the invention of the **Linotype** in 1885, the press more than kept pace, but competition sparked a new brand of journalism called "**yellow journalism**," in which newspapers reported on wild and fantastic stories that often were false or quite exaggerated: sex, scandal, and other human-interest stories.
 3. Two new journalistic tycoons emerged: **Joseph Pulitzer** (New York World) and **William Randolph Hearst** (San Francisco *Examiner*, et al.).
 4. Luckily, the strengthening of the **Associated Press**, which had been established in the 1840s, helped to offset some of the bad journalism.
- XIII. Apostles of Reform
1. Magazines like *Harper's*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, and *Scribner's Monthly* partially satisfied the public appetite for good reading, but perhaps the most influential of all was the **New York Nation**, launched in 1865 by **Edwin L. Godkin**, a merciless critic.
 2. Another enduring journalist-author was **Henry George**, who wrote *Progress and Poverty*, which undertook to solve the association of poverty with progress.
 - i. It was he who came up with the idea of the **graduated income tax**.
 3. **Edward Bellamy** published *Looking Backward* in 1888, in which he criticized the social injustices of the day and pictured a utopian government that had nationalized big business to serve the public good.
- XIV. Postwar Writing
1. After the war, Americans devoured "dime-novels" which depicted the wild West and other romantic adventure settings.
 - i. The king of dime novelists was **Harland F. Halsey**, who made 650 of these novels.
 - ii. General **Lewis Wallace** wrote *Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, which combated the ideas and beliefs of Darwinism and Darwinists.
 2. **Horatio Alger** was even more popular, since his books told that virtue, honesty, and industry were rewarded by success, wealth, and honor.
 3. **Walt Whitman** was one of the old writers who still remained active, publishing revisions of his hardy perennial: *Leaves of Grass*.

4. **Emily Dickinson** was a famed hermit of a poet whose poems were published after her death.
 5. Other lesser poets included **Sidney Lanier**, who was oppressed by poverty and ill health.
- XV. Literary Landmarks
1. Other famous writers:
 - i. **Kate Chopin**, who wrote about adultery, suicide, and women's ambitions in *The Awakening*.
 - ii. **Mark Twain** (Samuel Clemens) wrote many books, including *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (controversial due to its language and subjects), *The Gilded Age* (hence the term given to the era of corruption after the Civil War) and *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*.
 - iii. **Bret Harte** wrote California gold rush stories.
 - iv. **William Dean Howells** became editor in chief of the *Atlantic Monthly* and wrote about ordinary people and sometimes-controversial social themes.
 - v. **Stephen Crane** wrote about the seamy underside of life in urban, industrial America (prostitutes, etc...) in such books like *Maggie: Girl of the Street*.
 - a. He also wrote *The Red Bad of Courage*, a tale about a Civil War soldier.
 - vi. **Henry James** wrote *Daisy Miller* and *Portrait of a Lady*, often making women his central characters in his novels and exploring their personalities.
 - vii. **Jack London** wrote about the wild unexplored regions of wilderness in *The Call of the Wild* and *The Iron Heel*.
 - viii. **Frank Norris's** *The Octopus* exposed the corruption of the railroads.
 - ix. **Paul Laurence Dunbar** and **Charles W. Chesnutt**, two Black writers, used Black dialect and folklore in their poems and stories, respectively.
- XVI. The New Morality
1. **Victoria Woodhull** proclaimed free love, and together with her sister, **Tennessee Claflin**, she wrote *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly*, which shocked readers with exposés of affairs, etc...
 2. **Anthony Comstock** waged a lifelong war on the "immoral."
 3. The "new morality" reflected sexual freedom in the increase of birth control, divorces, and frank discussion of sexual topics.
- XVII. Families and Women in the City
1. Urban life was stressful on families, who often were separated, and everyone had to work—even children as young as ten years old.
 - i. While on farms, more children meant more people to harvest and help, in the cities, more children meant more mouths to feed and a greater chance of poverty.
 2. In 1898, **Charlotte Perkins Gilman** published *Women and Economics*, a classic of feminist literature, in which she called for women to abandon their dependent status and contribute to the larger life of the community through productive involvement in the economy.
 - i. She also advocated day-care centers and centralized nurseries and kitchens.
 3. Feminists also rallied toward suffrage, forming the **National American Woman Suffrage Association** in 1890, an organization led by **Elizabeth Cady Stanton**, the woman who organized the first women's rights convention in 1848, and **Susan B. Anthony**.
 4. By 1900, a new generation of women activists were present, led by **Carrie Chapman Catt**, who stressed the desirability of giving women the vote if they were to continue to discharge their traditional duties and homemakers in the increasingly public world of the city.

- i. The Wyoming Territory was the first to offer women unrestricted suffrage in 1869.
 - ii. The **General Federation of Women's Clubs** also encouraged women's suffrage.
 - 5. **Ida B. Wells** rallied toward better treatment for Blacks as well and formed the **National Association of Colored Women** in 1896.
- XVIII. Prohibition of Alcohol and Social Progress
 - 1. Concern over the popularity (and dangers) of alcohol was also present, marked by the formation of the **National Prohibition Party** in 1869.
 - i. Other organizations like the **Women's Christian Temperance Union** also rallied against alcohol, calling for a national prohibition of the beverage.
 - a. Leaders included **Frances E. Willard** and **Carrie A. Nation**.
 - ii. The **Anti-Saloon League** was formed in 1893.
 - 2. The **American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals** was formed in 1866 to discourage the mistreatment of livestock, and the **American Red Cross**, formed by **Clara Burton**, a Civil War nurse, was formed in 1881.
- XIX. Artistic Triumphs
 - 1. Art was suppressed during the early and mid 1800s and failed to really take flight in America, forcing such men as **James Whistler** and **John Singer Sargent** to go to Europe to learn art.
 - 2. **Mary Cassatt** painted sensitive portraits of women and children, while **George Inness** became America's leading landscapist.
 - 3. **Thomas Eakins** was a great realist painter, while **Winslow Homer** was perhaps the most famous and the greatest of all.
 - 4. Great sculptors included **Augustus Saint-Gaudens**, who made the **Robert Gould Saw memorial**, located in Boston, in 1897.
 - 5. Music reached new heights with the erection of opera houses and the emergence of jazz.
 - 6. **Thomas Edison** invented the phonograph, which allowed the reproduction of sounds that could be heard by listeners.
 - 7. **Henry H. Richardson** was another fine architect whose "Richardsonian" architecture was famed around the country.
 - i. The **Columbian Exposition** in 1893 displayed many architectural triumphs.
- XX. The Business of Amusement
 - 1. In entertainment, **Phineas T. Barnum** and **James A. Bailey** teamed in 1881 to stage the "Greatest Show on Earth" (now the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus).
 - 2. "Wild West" shows, like those of "**Buffalo Bill**" **Cody** (and the markswoman **Annie Oakley**) were ever-popular, and baseball and football became popular as well.
 - 3. Wrestling gained popularity and respectability.
 - 4. In 1891, **James Naismith** invented basketball.