

Chapter 16: Life at the Turn of the 20th Century

New technologies improve urban living, and a modern mass culture emerges. Reforms in public education raise literacy rates. African Americans work to end legal discrimination.

Life at the Turn of the 20th Century

Section 1: Science and Urban Life

Section 2: Expanding Public Education

Section 3: Segregation and Discrimination

Section 4: The Dawn of Mass Culture

Section 1: Science and Urban Life

Advances in science and technology help solve urban problems, including overcrowding.

I. Technology and City Life

A. Laying the groundwork for modern America

1. 1890, 58 cities have 50,000 people; 1900, 4 of 10 people in cities
2. Invention of elevators, internal steel skeletons lead to skyscrapers

B. Skyscrapers

1. Louis Sullivan designs Wainwright Building
2. Skyscrapers solve urban problem of limited, expensive space
 - a. Daniel Burnham designs Flatiron Building

C. Electric Transit

1. pre Civil War, horse-drawn streetcars run on iron rails
2. By 1900, electric streetcars (trolleys) run from suburbs to downtown
 - a. Some cities build elevated trains or subways

D. Engineering and Urban Planning

1. Steel-cable suspension bridges link city sections
2. Need for open spaces inspires science of urban planning
 - a. Frederick Law Olmstead spearheads movement for planned urban parks
 - i. 1857, helps design Central Park

E. City Planning

1. Chicago's population growth results in unregulated expansion

2. Daniel Burnham draws plan for city with parks along Lake Michigan
 - a. designs White City for 1893 World's Columbian Exposition

II. New Technologies

A. A Revolution in Printing

1. By 1890, U.S. literacy rate almost 90%
2. Growing demand for newspapers, magazines, books
3. Mills produce cheap paper that withstands high-speed presses
4. Faster production, lower costs make periodicals more affordable

B. Airplanes

1. Orville, Wilbur Wright use engines to fly "heavier-than-air" craft
 - a. first successful flight Dec. 1903
2. By 1920, first transcontinental air mail established

C. Photography Explosion

1. Pre-1880s, photography requires heavy equipment, time
2. George Eastman develops light-weight equipment, studio processing
3. 1888, introduces Kodak camera, easy to operate
 - a. millions use Kodak camera
 - b. helps create field of photojournalism

16 2: Expanding Public Education

Reforms in public education lead to a rise in national literacy and the promotion of public education.

I. Expanding Public Education

A. Most children before CW had no formal schooling

B. Schools for Children

1. 1865-1895, states pass laws requiring school attendance for children
2. Kindergartens—originally childcare for working women—become popular
3. 1880, 62% white children, 34% black children in elementary school

C. The Growth of High Schools

1. Industrial economy demands technical, managerial skills

2. 1900, more than 500k students in high school
3. Expanding education changes American society

D. Racial Discrimination

1. Small percentage of black teenagers attend high school
2. Most attend private schools that get no government support

E. Education for Immigrants

1. encouraged to attend school, be Americanized
2. Some resent suppression of their native languages
3. Many public school systems have readings from Protestant Bible
 - a. Catholics have parochial schools
4. Adults attend night school, some day programs at work
 - a. unionists object to employer programs, arguing that they give undue influence against unions

II. Expanding Higher Education

A. By turn of century, 2.3% of youth attend college

B. Changes in Universities

1. 1880–1920, college enrollment more than quadruples
2. Research universities emerge, offer new curriculum
3. Professional law, medical schools established
4. Private universities have entrance exams
 - a. some state colleges want high school diploma

C. Higher Education for African Americans

1. Not enough black college graduates to meet needs of communities
2. Booker T. Washington—racism will end if blacks get labor skills
 - a. Heads Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, now a university
3. W. E. B. Du Bois, first African American to get Harvard doctorate
 - a. disagrees with Washington
 - b. Founds Niagara Movement to encourage liberal arts study
 - i. believes well-educated future leaders needed

16 3: Segregation and Discrimination

African Americans lead the fight against voting restrictions and Jim Crow laws.

I. African Americans Fight Legal Discrimination

A. For at least 10 years after Reconstruction, Southern blacks can vote

1. Significant representation, at first

B. Voting Restrictions

1. By 1900, all Southern states restrict voting, deny equality in some way

a. Some limit vote to those who can read; officials give literacy tests

b. Some have poll tax that must be paid annually to vote

c. Some add grandfather clause to constitution to let poor whites vote

i. can vote if self, father, grandfather voted before 1867

C. Jim Crow Laws

1. 1870s, 1880s, Supreme Court allows poll tax, grandfather clause

2. Racial segregation laws separate races in private, public places

a. I.e. rail cars, hospitals, parks

3. Segregation laws called Jim Crow laws after old minstrel song

D. Plessy v. Ferguson, 1896

1. Plessy v. Ferguson—segregation legal in public places

2. Allows “separate but equal” doctrine if provide equal service

a. Validates *state* discrimination

II. Turn-of-the-Century Race Relations

A. Racial etiquette

1. informal rules for black–white relations enforce second–class status for blacks

2. Moderate reformers, like Booker T. Washington, get white support

3. W. E. B. Du Bois, Ida B. Wells think problems too urgent to postpone

B. Violence

1. African Americans who do not follow etiquette are punished, lynched
 - a. more than 1,400 killed 1882–1892
 - C. Discrimination in the North
 1. Many blacks migrate North for better paying jobs, social equality
 2. Are forced into segregated neighborhoods
 3. Rejected by labor unions; hired last, fired first by employers
 4. Competition between blacks, working–class whites sometimes violent
- III. Discrimination in the West
- A. Racial tensions reflect diversity of American West
 - B. Mexican Workers
 1. More Mexicans build railroads in Southwest than other ethnic groups
 - a. forced to work for less than other groups
 2. Mexicans major force in Southwest agricultural industries
 3. Some Southwest Mexicans, African Americans forced into debt peonage:
 - a. system of slavery to work off debt to employer
 - b. 1911, Supreme Court declares unconstitutional
 - C. Excluding the Chinese
 1. Whites fear job competition, push Chinese to separate areas, schools
 2. Opposition to Chinese immigration leads to Chinese Exclusion Act

16 4: The Dawn of Mass Culture

As Americans have more time for leisure activities, a modern mass culture emerges.

- I. American Leisure
 - A. Shared experiences enhance an American culture
 - B. Amusement Parks
 1. Cities begin setting aside green space for recreation
 2. Amusement parks built on outskirts with picnic grounds, rides
 - C. Bicycling and Tennis
 1. Early bicycles dangerous; at first, bicycling is male–only sport

2. Safety bicycle increases popularity of sport; women ride too

3. Tennis imported from Britain; becomes popular

D. Spectator Sports

1. Americans become avid fans of spectator sports

2. By turn of century, boxing, baseball become profitable businesses

E. Baseball

1. 1845, Alexander J. Cartwright organizes club, sets down rules

- a. National League forms 1876; American League forms 1900

- b. Discrimination leads to Negro National, Negro American Leagues

II. The Spread of Mass Culture

A. Mass Culture develops from different sources, such as:

1. Increased literacy

2. Increased leisure time

3. New media technology

B. Mass Circulation Newspapers

1. Newspapers use sensational headlines, stories to capture readers

- a. Joseph Pulitzer buys New York World, pioneers popular innovations

- b. William Randolph Hearst—NY, San Francisco papers exaggerate stories

C. Promoting Fine Arts

1. Artists like Thomas Eakins promote realism—portray life as it is

2. Ashcan School paints urban life, working people

3. European abstract art introduced; many find difficult to understand

D. Popular Fiction

1. By 1900, thousands of free circulating libraries in country

2. Most people like dime novels—glorified adventure tales of the West

3. Some want more serious, realistic portrayal of ordinary people, life

4. Novelist, humorist Samuel Langhorne Clemens, or Mark Twain:

- a. rejects high culture yet writes American classics

5. Galleries, libraries try to raise cultural standards

III. New Ways to Sell Goods

A. Culture change also reflected in consumerism

B. Urban Shopping

1. 1890, first shopping center opens in Cleveland—
glass-topped arcade
2. Retail shopping districts form near public
transportation

C. The Department Store

1. 1865, Marshall Field opens first U.S. department store
in Chicago
 - a. stresses personal service
 - b. pioneers bargain basement

D. The Chain Store

1. Chain stores offer same merchandise under same
owners for less
 - a. buy in quantity, limit personal service

E. Advertising

1. Advertising explosion: \$10 million spent 1865, \$95
million 1900
2. Advertising in periodicals, billboards, sides of
buildings

F. Catalogs and RFD

1. Montgomery Ward, Sears Roebuck catalogs bring
goods to small towns
2. Rural free delivery (RFD)—post office delivers direct to
every home