

Period 7: 1890-1945

In a Nutshell

An increasingly pluralistic United States faced profound domestic and global challenges, debated the proper degree of government activism, and sought to define its international role.

Key Concepts

Part 1

- A. Governmental, political, and social organizations struggled to address the effects of large-scale industrialization, economic uncertainty, and related social changes such as urbanization and mass migration.
- B. The continued growth and consolidation of large corporations transformed American society and the nation's economy, promoting urbanization and economic growth, even as business cycle fluctuations became increasingly severe.
- C. Progressive reformers responded to economic instability, social inequality, and political corruption by calling for government intervention in the economy, expanded democracy, greater social justice, and conservation of natural resources.
- D. National, state, and local reformers responded to economic upheavals, laissez-faire capitalism, and the Great Depression by transforming the U.S. into a limited welfare state.

Part 2

- E. A revolution in communications and transportation technology helped to create a new mass culture and spread "modern" values and ideas, even as cultural conflicts between groups increased under the pressure of migration, world wars, and economic distress.
- F. New technologies led to social transformations that improved the standard of living for many, while contributing to increased political and cultural conflicts.
- G. The global ramifications of World War I and wartime patriotism and xenophobia, combined with social tensions created by increased international migration, resulted in legislation restricting immigration from Asia and from southern and eastern Europe.
- H. Economic dislocations, social pressures, and the economic growth spurred by World Wars I and II led to a greater degree of migration within the United States, as well as migration to the United States from elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere.

Part 3

- I. Global conflicts over resources, territories, and ideologies renewed debates over the nation's values and its role in the world, while simultaneously propelling the United States into a dominant international military, political, cultural, and economic position.
- J. Many Americans began to advocate overseas expansionism in the late 19th century, leading to new territorial ambitions and acquisitions in the Western Hemisphere and the Pacific.
- K. World War I and its aftermath intensified debates about the nation's role in the world and how best to achieve national security and pursue American interests.

- L. The involvement of the United States in World War II, while opposed by most Americans prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, vaulted the United States into global political and military prominence, and transformed both American society and the relationship between the United States and the rest of the world.

Significant Topics

1. **Economic Changes in the Late 1800s and Early 1900s**

Large corporations came to dominate the U.S. economy during the late 1800s and early 1900s as businesses increasingly focused on the production of consumer goods, driven by new technologies and manufacturing techniques.

2. **America as a Land of Opportunity**

In its transition from a rural, agricultural society to an urban, industrial society, the U.S. offered new economic opportunities for women, internal migrants, and international migrants who continued to flock to the United States.

3. **Changes in U.S. Foreign Policy in the Late 1800s**

Arguments that Americans were destined to expand their culture and norms to other nations, especially the nonwhite nations of the globe were furthered in the 1890s by the perception that the western frontier was “closed,” economic motives, competition with other European imperialist ventures of the time, and theories about racial differences.

- a. Closing of the Frontier, 1890

- b. Alfred Thayer Mahan

- c. Queen Liliuokalani

4. **Spanish-American War, 1898**

The U.S. went to war with Spain in 1898 ostensibly to help Cuba gain its independence. The American victory in the war led to the U.S. acquisition of island territories (the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico), an expanded economic and military insurrection in the Philippines, and increased involvement in Asia. Cuba became a U.S. protectorate after the war.

- a. yellow journalism

- b. U.S.S. Maine

5. **The United States as a World Power**

Questions about America's role in the world during the late 1800s and early 1900s generated considerable debate, prompting the development of a wide variety of views and arguments between imperialists and anti-imperialists and, later, interventionists and isolationists.

- a. Filipino Rebellion, 1899-1902

- b. Insular Cases, 1901

- c. Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty, 1903

- d. Roosevelt Corollary, 1904

- e. Dollar Diplomacy

- f. Pancho Villa's raid, 1916

6. **Progressive Reform**

In the late 1890s and the early 1900s, journalists and Progressive reformers — largely urban and middle class, and often female — worked to reform existing social and political institutions at the local, state, and federal levels. Progressive reformers promoted federal legislation to regulate abuses of the economy and the environment, and many sought to expand democracy.

- a. Progressive Era, 1901-1917

- b. Social Gospel

- c. muckrakers

- d. Florence Kelly

- e. Square Deal

- f. Northern Securities Company, 1904

- g. Pure Food and Drug Act, 1906

- h. Meat Inspection Act, 1906

- i. Underwood Tariff, 1913

- j. Federal Reserve Act, 1913

- k. Clayton Antitrust Act, 1914

- l. Federal Trade Commission, 1914

- m. Progressive Amendments

7. **World War I and the Abandonment of American Neutrality**

After declaring neutrality at the beginning of World War I, the United States entered the conflict, departing from the U.S. foreign policy tradition of noninvolvement in European affairs. Woodrow Wilson justified the abandonment of neutrality with a call for the defense of humanitarian and democratic principles.

a. US. enters World War War I, 1917

b. American Expeditionary Force (AEF)

8. **Woodrow Wilson and the Formation of a Postwar World**

Although the American Expeditionary Force played a relatively limited role in the war, Wilson was heavily involved in postwar negotiations, resulting in substantial debate within the United States.

a. Fourteen Points, 1918

b. Treaty of Versailles, 1919

9. **World War I and the Great Migration of African Americans**

Although most African Americans remained in the South despite legalized segregation and racial violence, some began a “Great Migration” out of the South to pursue new economic opportunities offered by World War I.

10. **Civil Liberties during World War I**

World War I created a repressive atmosphere for civil liberties in the United States, resulting in official restrictions on freedom of speech.

a. Espionage Act of 1917 and Sedition Act of 1918

b. *Schenck v. United States*, 1919

11. **Postwar Red Scare**

As labor strikes and racial strife disrupted society, the immediate period after World War I witnessed the first American “Red Scare,” which legitimized attacks on radicals and immigrants.

a. Palmer Raids, 1919-1920

b. Sacco and Vanzetti, 1927

12. U.S. Immigration Policy during the 1920s

Several acts of Congress during the 1920s established highly restrictive immigration quotas, while national policies continued to permit unrestricted immigration from nations in the Western Hemisphere, especially Mexico, in order to guarantee an inexpensive supply of labor.

a. National Origins Act, 1924

13. Developments in Technology

New technologies of the late 1800s and early 1900s contributed to improved standards of living, greater personal mobility, and better communications systems.

a. Wright Brothers, 1903

b. Model T Ford introduced, 1908

c. KDKA in Pittsburgh, 1920

d. Charles Lindbergh, 1927

e. *The Jazz Singer*, 1927

14. Political and Cultural Conflict in the Early 1900s

Technological change, modernization, and changing demographics led to increased political and cultural conflict on several fronts: tradition versus innovation, urban versus rural, fundamentalist Christianity versus scientific modernism, management versus labor, native-born versus new immigrants, white versus black, and idealism versus disillusionment.

- a. Election of 1912

- b. New Nationalism

- c. New Freedom

- d. Ku Klan Klan March on Washington, 1925

- e. Fundamentalism vs Modernism

- f. Prohibition

15. Urbanization and Industrialization

The rise of an urban, industrial society encouraged the development of a variety of cultural expressions for migrant, regional, and African American artists (expressed most notably in the Harlem Renaissance movement); it also contributed to national culture by making shared experiences more possible through art, cinema, and the mass media.

- a. Harlem Renaissance

- b. W.E.B. DuBois

- c. jazz

d. Jelly Roll Morton

e. Louis Armstrong

f. Ashcan School

g. Edward Hopper

h. Yiddish Theater

16. The Great Depression, 1929-1941

Even as economic growth continued during the early 1900s, episodes of credit and market instability, most critically the Great Depression, led to calls for the creation of a stronger financial regulatory system.

a. Great Depression

b. Stock Market Crash, 1929

c. Smoot-Hawley Tariff, 1930

d. Reconstruction Finance Corporation, 1932

- e. Bonus March, 1932

17. Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal

The liberalism of Roosevelt's New Deal drew on earlier progressive ideas and represented a multifaceted approach to both the causes and effects of the Great Depression, using government power to provide relief to the poor, stimulate recovery, and reform the American economy.

- a. Roosevelt's New Deal, 1933

- b. New Deal Programs to Stimulate Economic Activity

- c. Glass-Steagall Act, 1933

- d. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), 1933

- e. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), 1934

- f. Wagner Act, 1935

- g. Social Security Act, 1935

- h. Court-Packing Plan, 1937

- i. Roosevelt Recession, 1938

- j. Congress of Industrial Organizations, 1938

18. Political Reaction to the New Deal

Radical, union, and populist movements pushed Roosevelt toward more extensive reforms, even as conservatives in Congress and the Supreme Court sought to limit the New Deal's scope.

- a. Huey Long

- b. Charles Coughlin

19. Significance of the New Deal

Although the New Deal did not completely overcome the Depression, it left a legacy of reforms and agencies that endeavored to make society and individuals more secure, and it helped foster a long-term political realignment in which many ethnic groups, African Americans, and working-class communities identified with the Democratic Party.

- a. New Deal Democratic Coalition

20. American Migration during the Great Depression

Many Americans migrated during the Great Depression, often driven by economic difficulties, and during World Wars I and II, as a result of the need for wartime production labor.

21. Immigration from Mexico

Many Mexicans, drawn to the U.S. by economic opportunities, faced ambivalent government policies in the 1930s and 1940s.

- a. Mexican Repatriation, 1929-1939

- b. Bracero Program, 1942

- c. Luisa Moreno

22. Postwar Isolationism during the 1920s and 1930s

In the years following World War I, the United States pursued a unilateral foreign policy that used international investment, peace treaties, and select military intervention to promote a vision of international order, even while maintaining U.S. isolationism, which continued to the late 1930s.

a. Washington Naval Conference, 1921-1922

b. Stimson Doctrine, 1932

c. Good Neighbor Policy

d. Neutrality Acts, 1935-1939

e. Lend-Lease Act, 1940

f. Atlantic Charter, 1941

g. Pearl Harbor, 1941

23. Allied Victory in World War II

The United States and its allies achieved victory over the Axis powers through a combination of factors, including allied political and military cooperation, industrial production, technological and scientific advances, and popular commitment to advancing democratic ideals.

a. Manhattan Project, 1942

b. Invasion of Normandy (D-Day), 1944

c. Yalta Conference, 1945

d. Hiroshima and Nagasaki, 1945

24. Women and Minorities during World War II

The mass mobilization of American society to supply troops for the war effort and a workforce on the home front ended the Great Depression and provided opportunities for women and minorities to improve their socioeconomic positions. Despite U.S. contributions to the victory over fascism and new opportunities for women and minorities during the war, other wartime experiences, such as the internment of Japanese Americans, challenges to civil liberties, debates over race and segregation, and the decision to drop the atomic bomb raised questions about American values.

a. Rosie the Riveter

b. A. Philip Randolph

c. Congress of Racial Equality, 1942

d. Japanese-American Internment, 1942

e. Zoot Suit Riots, 1943

25. World War II and American Power

The dominant American role in the Allied victory and postwar peace settlements, combined with the war-ravaged condition of Asia and Europe, allowed the United States to emerge from the war as the most powerful nation on earth.

Additional Information

Examples:

1. Development of Sonar

2. Mary McLeod Bethune

Topic Number

#23 – Allied Victory in WW II

#25 – WWI and the Character of the US