Chapter 25
*America Moves to the City, 1865–1900*

Presented by:
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I. The Urban Frontier

- Growth of American metropolises was spectacular—Size:
  - In 1860 no city in U.S.A. had a million inhabitants
  - New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia past million mark by 1890
  - 1900 New York, with 3.5 million, was second largest city in world outranked only by London
  - Between 1850 and 1900 world cities doubled or tripled
    - London, Paris, Berlin, Tokyo, Moscow, Mexico City, Calcutta and Shanghai (see Map 25.1)
I. The Urban Frontier (cont.)

– American cities grew both up and out:
  • Skyscrapers allowed more people and workplaces to be packed onto a parcel of land
    – First as a ten-story building in Chicago in 1885, skyscraper made usable by perfecting electric elevator
    – Louis Sullivan (1856-1924) contributed to future of skyscraper with famous principle that “form follows function”
    – New steel-skeleton high-rises made urban Americans modern cliff dwellers

– Americans becoming commuters:
  • Carted daily between home and work on mass-transit lines running from central cities to surrounding suburbs
  • Electric trolleys propelled city limits outward
  • By end of century, nation’s first subway opened in Boston
  • Compact and communal “walking city” — boundaries set by leg-power shifted to immense and impersonal megalopolis:
    – Carved into distinctly different districts for business, industry, and residential neighborhoods—aggregated by race, ethnicity, class
I. The Urban Frontier (cont.)
– Rural life could not compete with siren song of city (see Figure 2.1)
  • Industrial jobs drew people from farms as well as abroad, and into factory centers
  • Urban life held powerful attractions:
    – Late-night glitter of city lights—alluring to young people yearning for independence
    – Electricity, indoor plumbing, and telephone made life in city enticing
    – Engineering marvels of skyscrapers and New York’s Brooklyn Bridge added to seductive glamour of gleaming cities

– Cavernous department stores such as Macy’s in New York and Marshall Field’s in Chicago:
  » Attracted urban middle-class shoppers
  » Provided urban working-class jobs, many for women
  » Bustling emporiums heralded dawning era of consumerism:
    » Accentuated widening class divisions
    » Theodore Dreiser’s Sister Carrie (1900) told story of young woman moving to city life of Chicago

• Move to city introduced Americans to new way of living:
  » As opposed to rural life, goods in cities came in throw-away bottles, boxes, bags, and cans
I. The Urban Frontier (cont.)

– Cheap ready-to-wear clothing and swift-changing fashions pushed old suits and dresses out of closet and onto trash heap
– Waste disposal an issue new to American life
– Mountains of waste urbanites generated testified to cultural shift from virtues of thrift to conveniences of consumerism
– Criminals flourished in teeming asphalt jungles
– Sanitary facilities could not keep pace with mushrooming population explosion
– Impure water, uncollected garbage, unwashed bodies, and animal droppings enveloped cities in satanic stench
– Baltimore described as smelling like a billion polecats

I. The Urban Frontier (cont.)

– Cities were monuments of contradiction:
  • Represented “humanity compressed”
  • Harbored merchant princes and miserable paupers
    – stately banks and sooty factories
    – green-grassed suburbs and treeless ghettos
    – towering skyscrapers and stinking tenements
  • Worst of all were human pigsties known as slums:
    – Seemed to grow ever more crowded
    – More filthy and rat-infested
    – Especially after perfection in 1879 of “dumbbell” tenement (see Figure 25.2)
I. The Urban Frontier (cont.)

"Dumbbell" tenement:
- Named because of outline of floor plan
- Usually seven or eight stories high, with shallow, sunless, and stinking air shafts providing minimal ventilation
- Several families crammed onto each floor of barracks-like structures; they shared a malodorous toilet in hall
- In New York's "Lung Block" hundreds of unfortunate urbanites coughed away their lives
- "Flophouses" abounded where half-starved and unemployed might sleep for a few cents on verminous mattresses
- Small wonder slum dwellers strove mightily to escape their wretched surroundings—as many did

II. The Urban Frontier (cont.)

Cities dangerous for everyone:
- 1871: 2/3 of downtown Chicago burned in raging fire:
  - Left ninety thousand people homeless
  - Destroyed more than fifteen thousand buildings
- Closely packed wooden structures fed insatiable flames
  - Prompted Chicago and other wary cities to require stone and iron building downtown
  - Wealthy began to leave risky cities for semirural suburbs
  - Leafy "bedroom communities" ringed brick-and-concrete cities with greenbelt of affluence

II. The New Immigration

- Powerful pull of America's urban magnets felt in faraway Europe:
  - Seemingly endless stream of immigrants poured in from old "mother continent":
    - 1850s-1870s: more than 2 million migrants stepped onto America's shores
    - 1880s: more than 5 million cascaded in
    - New high for single year reached in 1882, when 788,992 arrived—or more than 2,100 a day (see Figure 25.3)
II. The New Immigration (cont.)

– Until 1880s most immigrants came from:
  • British Isles and western Europe, chiefly Germany and Ireland
  • Significant were more than 300,000 Chinese immigrants
  • Many Chinese and Irish immigrants faced nativism
  • Chinese legally excluded in 1882 (see Chap. 23)
  • By end of last decades of century, “old” immigrants
    adjusted well to American life:
    – Built supportive ethnic organizations
    – Melded into established farm communities/urban life

II. The New Immigration (cont.)

– Many still lived, worked, and worshiped among their own
  – Largely accepted as “American” by native-born

– In 1880s, character of immigrant stream changed drastically (see Figure 25.4)
II. The New Immigration (cont.)

- So-called **New Immigrants**:
  - Came from southern and eastern Europe
  - Italians, Jews, Croats, Slovaks, Greeks, and Poles
  - Came from countries with little history of democratic government
  - These new people totaled only 19% of immigrants (1880s)
  - By first decade of twentieth century, they constituted 66% of total inflow
  - Hived together in cities like New York and Chicago in “Little Italys” and “Little Polands”
II. The New Immigration (cont.)

- Why did new immigrants come?
  - Left because Europe seemed to have no room for them:
    - Population of Old World growing vigorously
    - It doubled after 1800 due to abundant supplies of fish and grain from America
    - And widespread cultivation in Europe of American transplant, the potato
    - American food imports and pace of Europe industrialization created vast footloose army of unemployed

II. The New Immigration (cont.)

- Europeans by millions drained out of countryside and into European cities:
  - About sixty million Europeans abandoned Old Continent in 19th and 20th centuries
    - European diaspora, dominated by immigration to U.S.A. simply a by-product of urbanization of Europe
    - “America fever” proved highly contagious in Europe
    - “American letters” sent by friends and relatives portrayed America as land of fabulous opportunity
II. The New Immigration (cont.)
– Profit-seeking Americans trumpeted throughout Europe the attractions of new promised land:
  • Industrialists wanted low-wage labor
  • Railroads wanted buyers for land grants
  • States wanted more population
  • Steamship lines wanted more human cargo
  • Ease and cheapness of steam-powered shipping accelerated transoceanic surge
– Savage persecutions of minorities in Europe drove many shattered souls to American shores

II. The New Immigration (cont.)
• In 1880s Russians turned violent against Jews, chiefly in Polish areas:
  – Many made way to cities of Atlantic Coast, notably New York
  – Their experience of city life in Europe made them unique among New Immigrants
  – Many brought their urban skills
  – Given frosty reception by German Jews who had immigrated earlier
• Many new immigrants never intended to become Americans:
  – Many were single men who immigrated with intention of returning with hard-earned dollars

II. The New Immigration (cont.)
– 25% of nearly twenty million who arrived between 1820 and 1900 were “birds of paradise” who eventually returned to country of origin
– Those who stayed struggled to preserve traditional culture:
  » Catholics expanded parochial-school systems
  » Jews established Hebrew schools
  » Foreign-language newspapers abounded
  » Yiddish theaters, kosher-food stores, etc. all attested to desire to keep old ways alive
  » Children of immigrants grew up speaking fluent English
  » They often rejected Old Country’s manners in desire to plunge into mainstream of American life
III. Parties and Social Reformers Reach Out

- Assimilation of immigrants into U.S. society:
  - United States government did virtually nothing
  - State governments, dominated by rural representatives, did even less
  - City governments, overwhelmed, proved inadequate to task
  - By default, business of ministering to immigrants’ needs fell to unofficial “governments” of urban political machines—led by “bosses” like New York’s notorious Boss Tweed
III. Parties and Social Reformers Reach Out (cont.)

- Taking care of immigrants was big business:
  - Trading jobs and services for votes, a powerful boss might claim loyalty of thousands of followers
  - In return for support at polls, the boss
    - Provided jobs on city's payroll
    - Found housing for new arrivals
    - Tided over needy with gifts of food and clothing
    - Patched up minor scrapes with law
    - Helped get schools, parks, and hospitals built for immigrants
  - Reformers gagged at exploitation of immigrant vote, but political boss gave valuable assistance forthcoming from no other source

III. Parties and Social Reformers Reach Out (cont.)

- Nation's conscience awakened to plight of cities and immigrants
  - Protestant clergymen applied lessons of Christianity to slums and factories:
    - Walter Rauschenbusch (German Baptist pastor, New York City) and Washington Gladden (Congregational Church, Columbus, Ohio)
    - Both preached "social gospel"—insisted that church tackle burning social issues
    - Helped prepare path for progressive reform movement
III. Parties and Social Reformers
Reach Out (cont.)

- Jane Addams (1860-1935) dedicated to helping urban masses
  - Reformer who condemned poverty and war
  - Won Nobel Peace Prize in 1931
  - Her pacifism won enmity of some Americans, including Daughters of the American Revolution
  - Hull House (a settlement house, located in immigrant neighborhood of Chicago) founded in 1889, offered:
    - Instruction in English
    - Counseling to help newcomers cope with big-city life
    - Child-care services for working mothers
    - Cultural activities for neighborhood residents

- Women founded settlement houses in other cities
  - Lillian Wald’s Henry Street Settlement, New York, in 1893
  - Became centers of women’s activism and social reform
    - Hull House’s women successfully lobbied for Illinois anti-sweatshop law that protected women workers and prohibited child labor—led by Florence Kelley
    - For female reformers and other women, city offered new kind of opportunity

IV. Narrowing the Welcome Mat

- “Nativists”:
  - Viewed eastern and southern Europeans as culturally and religiously exotic hordes
    - Gave them rude reception
    - Alarmed because new immigrants had high birthrate, and thus might outbreed or mongrelize Anglo-Saxon stock
    - Blamed newcomers for corruption of city government
    - Unionists assailed them because new immigrants willing to work for “starvation” wages
IV. Narrowing the Welcome Mat (cont.)

- Nativists claimed immigrants imported dangerous ideas of socialism, communism, and anarchism
- Antiforeign organizations revived
  - Notorious was American Protective Association (APA):
    - Urged voting against Roman Catholics
    - Sponsored publication of lust fantasies about runaway nuns
  - Wage-depressed immigrants hard to unionize because of language barrier

IV. Narrowing the Welcome Mat (cont.)

- Congress nailed up partial bars:
  - In 1882, restrictive law banged gate shut on paupers, criminals, convicts:
    - Had to be returned by shippers to country of origin
  - 1885, Congress banned import of foreign workers under contract—usually for substandard wages
  - Other federal laws lengthened list of undesirables:
    - Included insane, polygamists, prostitutes, alcoholics, anarchists, and people carrying contagious diseases
IV. Narrowing the Welcome Mat (cont.)

• A proposed literacy test met vigorous opposition:
  – Not enacted until 1917 after three presidents vetoed it on grounds that literacy more a measure of opportunity than of intelligence
  – 1886: Statue of Liberty arose in New York harbor, a gift from French
  – New immigrants became American citizens the hard way
  – Republic owed much to these latecomers—for brawn, brains, courage, and diversity brought to American society

V. Churches Confront the Urban Challenge

• Challenges to American churches:
  – Protestant churches suffered from shift to city:
    • In city, traditional doctrines and pastoral approaches irrelevant
    • Some churches becoming merely sacred diversions or amusements
    • Many old-line churches distressingly slow to raise voices against social and economic vices
    • Some worried that age-old struggle between God and Devil, the Wicked One registering gains
V. Churches Confront the Urban Challenge (cont.)

- Too many devotees worshiped at altar of avarice:
  - Money was measure of achievement
  - New gospel of wealth proclaimed God caused righteous to prosper
- Into vacuum, stepped new generation of liberal Protestants:
  - Rooted in Unitarian revolt against orthodox Calvinism
  - between 1875 and 1925 involved in bitter controversies with fundamentalists
  - Entrenched in leadership/seminaries, they adapted religious ideas to modern culture

- Attempted to reconcile Christianity with new scientific and economic doctrines
- Rejected biblical literalism; stressed ethical teachings of Bible
- Allied with reform-oriented “social gospel” movement and urban revivalists—Dwight Lyman Moody
- Had optimistic trust in community fellowship
- Focused on earthly salvation and personal growth
- Helped Protestants reconcile religious faith with modern, cosmopolitan ways of thinking
- Simultaneously Roman Catholic and Jewish faiths gained strength from New Immigration
V. Churches Confront the Urban Challenge (cont.)

- By 1900, Catholic Church, largest single denomination in U.S.A.:
  - Numbered nine million communicants
  - Cardinal James Gibbons (1834-1921):
    » Popular with Catholics and Protestants alike
    » Acquainted with every President from A. Johnson to Harding
    » Used his liberal sympathies to assist labor movement
- By 1890, 150 denominations to choose from, two of them brand new:
  - Salvation Army—focused on poor did much practical good, esp. with free soup

VI. Darwin Disrupts the Churches

- Old-time religion received many blows:
  - Charles Darwin:
    » His theory—that higher forms of life slowly evolved from lower forms, through random biological mutation and adaptation
    » New ground—"natural selection":
      » Nature blindly selected organisms for survival or death based on random, inheritable variations they happened to possess
      » Some traits conferred advantages in struggle for life, and hence better odds of passing them along to offspring
VI. Darwin Disrupts the Churches (cont.)

- Darwin’s theory rejected “dogma of special creations”:
  - Which ascribed design of each fixed species to divine agency
  - Harvard’s Louis Agassiz held fast to old doctrine of “special creations”
  - By 1875 most scientists embraced theory of organic evolution, though not all endorsed natural selection as agent
  - Clergymen and theologians’ responses:
    - Initially most joined scientists in rejecting Darwin’s ideas outright

VI. Darwin Disrupts the Churches (cont.)

- After 1875, when scientists embraced evolution, religious community split into two camps:
  - Conservative minority:
    - Stood firmly behind Scripture as infallible Word of God
    - Condemned what they thought was “bestial hypothesis” of Darwinians
    - Their rejection of scientific consensus spawned a muscular view of biblical authority that gave rise to fundamentalism in twentieth century

VI. Darwin Disrupts the Churches (cont.)

- Modern and liberal majority:
  - Refused to accept Bible in its entirety as either history or science
  - Feared hostility toward evolution would alienate educated believers
  - Over time liberal thinkers reconciled Darwinism with Christianity
  - Heralded the revolutionary theory as newer and grander revelation of ways of the Almighty
VI. Darwin Disrupts the Churches (cont.)

- Darwinism did much to loosen religious moorings and to promote skepticism
- Liberal efforts at compromises relegated religious teaching to matters of personal faith, private conduct, and family life
- Commentators of nature and society increasingly refrained from adding religious perspective to discussion

VII. The Lust for Learning

- Public education continued upward climb:
  - Ideal of tax-supported elementary schools gathered strength:
    - 1870 onward more states made grade-school education compulsory
      - Helped check frightful abuses of child labor
  - High schools expanded between 1880s and 1890s:
    - Before Civil War, tax-supported high schools rare
    - High-school education increasingly seen as birthright of every citizen

VII. The Lust for Learning (cont.)

- By 1900, six thousand high schools
- Textbooks also paid for by taxpayers
- Other trends:
  - Teacher-training schools, called “normal schools,” experienced striking increase
    - 1860 there were 12; 1910 over 300
  - Kindergartens, borrowed from Germany, gained support
  - New strength to private Catholic parochial schools
  - Chautauqua movement of public lectures and home study courses provided education to many adults
VII. The Lust for Learning (cont.)
– Cities provided better educational facilities than rural schools:
  • Illiteracy rate fell from 20% (1870) to 10.7% (1900)
  • Americans developed profound faith in formal education as sovereign remedy for various ills

VIII. Booker T. Washington and Education for Black People
• 44% of nonwhite southerners illiterate in 1900:
  – Booker T. Washington championed black education
    • Classic autobiography: *Up from Slavery* (1900)
    • Headed black normal and industrial school at Tuskegee, Alabama:
      – Taught useful trades to gain self-respect and economic security
      – Self-help approach to solving nation’s racial problems labeled “accommodationist”
        » Because stopped short of directly challenging white supremacy
        » Avoided issue of social equality

[Image]
VIII. Booker T. Washington and Education for Black People (cont.)

- Acquiesced in segregation in return for right to develop economic and educational resources of black community
- Economic independence would be ticket to black political and civil rights

- Training young blacks in agriculture and trades guided curriculum at Tuskegee Institute:
  - Ideal place for George Washington Carver to teach and research
  - Became internationally famous agricultural chemist
  - Discovered hundreds of new uses for peanut, sweet potato, and soybean

VIII. Booker T. Washington and Education for Black People (cont.)

- Dr. W. E. B. DuBois:
  - Saw Washington as condemning blacks to manual labor and perpetual inferiority
  - Earned Ph.D. at Harvard, the first black to do so
  - Demanded complete equality, incl. social and economic
  - Helped found National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909
  - Rejected Washington’s gradualism and separatism
  - Argued for “talented tenth” of black community to be given full and immediate access to mainstream of American life

- Washington and DuBois reflected different life experiences between blacks in South and in North
IX. The Hallowed Halls of Ivy

- Colleges and universities after Civil War:
  - College education seemed indispensable in scramble for success (see Table 25.1)
  - Women and African Americans found new opportunities in higher education:
    - Women’s colleges (e.g., Vassar) gained ground
    - Universities opened to both genders, esp. in Midwest
    - By 1880 every third college graduate a woman
    - Black institutes and academies grew into southern black colleges

IX. The Hallowed Halls of Ivy (cont.)

- Howard University, Hampton Institute, and Atlanta University were key black colleges until civil rights movement of 1960s made attendance at white institutions possible
- Morrill Act of 1862:
  - Granted public lands to states for support of education
  - Land-grant colleges—later state universities, provided certain services, such as military training
  - Hatch Act of 1887 extended Morrill Act
    - Provided funds for establishment of agricultural experiment stations at land-grant colleges

Table 25.1

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage of 17-Year-Old Population Completing High School Graduating from Any High School in the U.S.</th>
<th>Percentage of High School Students Completing 4-Year College Graduating from Any College in the U.S.</th>
<th>Median Number of School Years Completed</th>
<th>Median Number of School Years Completed</th>
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Table 25.1 (cont.)
IX. The Hallowed Halls of Ivy (cont.)

- Two acts spawned more than 100 colleges and universities:
  - University of California (1868); Ohio State University (1870); and Texas A & M (1876)

- Private philanthropy supplemented government grants to higher education:
  - Industrial millionaires donated $150 million between 1878 and 1898
  - New private universities founded:
    - Cornell (1865), Leland Stanford Junior (1891)—latter in memory of deceased only child of a builder of Central Pacific Railroad

IX. The Hallowed Halls of Ivy (cont.)

- University of Chicago (1892) helped immensely by John D. Rockefeller's oil millions
  - By his death, Rockefeller had given away $500 million

- Sharp increase in professional and technical schools with modern laboratories:
  - Johns Hopkins University (1876) maintained nation's first quality graduate school
  - Dr. Woodrow Wilson earned Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins

IX. The Hallowed Halls of Ivy (cont.)

- Influences of modern American university:
  - Antebellum colleges stressed "unity of truth"—that knowledge and morality existed in single system
  - Religious instruction in moral philosophy and natural theology were pillars of classical curriculum
  - University reformers struggled to reconcile new scientific ideas with religion
  - University educators abandoned moral instruction and divorced "facts" from "values"
  - Other developments also doomed classical curriculum
IX. The Hallowed Halls of Ivy (cont.)

- New industrialization insisted on “practical” courses and specialized vocational training in sciences
- New emphasis on fields of concentration for a profession
- Specialization became primary goal of university education
- Elective system gained popularity
- Reformer Dr. Charles Eliot became president of Harvard—he changed Harvard’s motto from Christo et Ecclesiae (For Christ and Church) to Veritas (Truth)

IX. The Hallowed Halls of Ivy (cont.)

- Medical schools and medical science:
  - New scientific gains reflected in improved public health and health-promoting precautions
    - Principles of Psychology (1890) helped establish modern discipline of behavioral psychology
    - The Will to Believe (1897) and Varieties of Religious Experience (1902) explored philosophy and psychology of religion
    - His most famous work Pragmatism (1907) pronounced that the truth of an idea was to be tested by its practical consequences
    - He thereby made America’s greatest contribution to the history of philosophy—concept of pragmatism
X. The Appeal of the Press

- Books a major source of edification and enjoyment:
  - Well-stocked public libraries—poor person’s university—made encouraging progress
    - Especially Boston and New York Libraries
  - Library of Congress (1897)—13 acres of floor space—largest and costliest edifice of kind in world
  - Andrew Carnegie contributed $60 million to build 1,700 public libraries across U.S.A.
  - 9,000 free circulating libraries in America, each with over 300 books, by 1900

X. The Appeal of the Press (cont.)

- Newspapers:
  - Spurred by invention of Linotype (1885)
  - However, because of growing fear of offending advertisers and subscribers:
    - Fewer bare-knuckled editorials
    - Supplanted by feature articles and non-controversial syndicated material
    - Day of slashing journalistic giants like Horace Greeley passing
X. The Appeal of the Press (cont.)

– Sensationalism captured public taste
– Journalistic tycoons:
  • Joseph Pulitzer:
    – Leader in techniques of sensationalism, owner of St. Louis Post-Dispatch and New York World
    – Use of colored comic supplements featuring “Yellow Kid” gave name yellow journalism to his lurid sheets
  • William Randolph Hearst:
    – Drew on his father’s mining millions
    – Built powerful chain of newspapers, beginning with San Francisco Examiner in 1887

X. The Appeal of the Press (cont.)

• Overall influence of Pulitzer and Hearst not altogether wholesome:
  – Although they championed worthy causes, both prostituted press in struggle for increased circulation
  – Both “stooped, snooped, and scooped to conquer”
  – Their flair for scandal and sensational rumor offset by
    – Introduction of syndicated material
    – Strengthening of news-gathering Associated Press (1840)

XI. Apostles of Reform

• Magazines partially satisfied public appetite for good reading:
  • East Coast standbys: Harper’s, Atlantic Monthly, and Scribner’s Monthly
  • New entrants, e.g., California-based Overland Monthly
• Possibly most influential journal:
  – Liberal and highly intellectual New York Nation
  – Read largely by professors, preachers, and publicists
  – Launched in 1865 by Edwin L. Godkin, a merciless critic
  – Crusaded militantly for civil-service reform, honesty in government, and a moderate tariff
XI. Apostles of Reform (cont.)

– Henry George—journalist-author:
  • Classic treatise *Progress and Poverty*:
    – Undertook to solve “great enigma of our times,” the “association of progress with poverty”
    – A single 100% tax on windfall profits from property would eliminate unfair inequities and stimulate economic growth
    – His single-tax horrified propertied classes
    – Book became best-seller

XI. Apostles of Reform (cont.)

– Edward Bellamy—journalist-reformer:
    – Hero awakes in 2000; “looks backward” to find social and economic injustices of 1887 melted away under idyllic government
    – Idyllic government nationalized big business to serve public interest
    – Appealed to those who feared trusts
    – Bellamy Clubs sprang up to discuss mild utopian socialism
    – Heavily influenced reform movements near end of century

XII. The New Morality

– Victoria Woodhull, tireless feminist propagandist:
  • Shook pillars of conventional morality when she publicly proclaimed belief in free love (1871)
  • Published periodical, *Woodhull and Clafin’s Weekly*
    – Charged famous preacher Henry Ward Beecher of carrying on adulterous affair for years
  • Pure-minded Americans resisted these affronts to moral principles:
    • Anthony Comstock, champion of lifelong war on the “immoral”—self-appointed defender of sexual purity
XII. The New Morality (cont.)
- Armed with "Comstock Law"—he boasted that he had confiscated numerous impure things
- Proudly claimed he had driven fifteen people to suicide
- Woodhull sisters and Comstock exposed debate over sexual attitudes and place of women in late 1800s
- Young working women headed to dance halls and nightclubs when work day done—
  - Enjoyed new freedom in cities
- "New morality" reflected in soaring divorce rates, spreading practice of birth control, and increasingly frank discussion of sexual topics
XIII. Families and Women in the City

– New urban environment hard on families:
  • Crowded cities emotionally isolating places
  • Urban families had to go it alone, separated from clan
  • “Divorce revolution” transformed social landscape in 20th century (see Table 25.2)
  • Urban life changed work habits and family size:
    – Fathers and now mothers worked, and even children
    – Birth rate dropped; family size shrank
    – Marriages delayed; more couples used birth control
    – Women became more independent in cities
    – Heard voice of feminist Charlotte Perkins Gilman

– Gilman published Woman and Economics (1898): a classic of feminist literature
– She shunned traditional feminine frills and devoted herself physical exercise and philosophical meditation
– In 1898 she called on women to abandon dependent status and contribute economically
– Rejected all claims that biology gave women fundamentally different character from men

• Women and work force:
  – more than one million joined work force in 1890s
  – Social codes prescribed which women might work and what jobs they might hold
  – Work for wives and mothers considered taboo

Table 25.2 Marriages and Divorces, 1890–2011
XIII. Families and Women in the City (cont.)

- Vast majority of working women single
- Jobs available shaped by race, ethnicity, and class
- Black women had few opportunities beyond domestic service
- Native-born white women could work as social workers, secretaries, department store clerks, telephone operators
- Immigrant women clustered in particular industries
- Jobs brought economic and social independence
- Women contributed large percentage of wages to their family but might have some left for themselves

- Fiery feminists continued to insist on ballot:
  - Some temporarily shelved cause of female suffrage to work for black voting rights

- Militant suffragists formed National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1890:
  - Founders included aging pioneers like:
    - Elizabeth Cady Stanton—organized first women’s rights convention in 1848
    - Susan B. Anthony—courted jail by trying to cast a ballot in 1872 presidential election
  - By 1900 a new generation of women had taken command of suffrage battle:
    - Carrie Chapman Catt, pragmatic reformer
    - Deemphasized argument that women deserved vote as a matter of right because they were equals of men

- Catt stressed desirability of giving women the vote to continue their traditional duties
- By linking ballot to traditional definition of women’s role, suffragists registered gains
- Women increasingly permitted to vote in local elections, particularly on school issues
- Wyoming Territory—“the Equality State”—granted first unrestricted suffrage to women in 1869
- Many western states followed (see Map 25.2)
- By 1890 states passed laws to permit wives to own or control property after marriage
- City life fostered growth of women’s organizations
XIII. Families and Women in the City (cont.)

– Reborn suffrage movement and women’s organizations largely excluded black women:
  • Feared an integrated campaign would compromise effort to get vote
  • National American Suffrage Association limited membership to whites
  • Black women created their own associations
  • Ida B. Wells inspired black women to mount a nationwide anti-lynching crusade

  – Helped launch black women’s club movement; culminated in National Association of Colored Women (1896)
XIV. Prohibiting Alcohol and Promoting Reform

- Alarming gains by Demon Rum:
  - Spurred temperance reformers to redoubled zeal
  - Especially obnoxious were shutter-doored corner saloons called “the poor man’s club”
  - Barroom kept both the man and his family poor
  - Liquor use increased during Civil War
  - Immigrant groups hostile to restraint
  - National Prohibition party (1869) polled a sprinkling of votes in presidential elections

XIV. Prohibiting Alcohol and Promoting Reform (cont.)

- Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU):
  - White ribbon its symbol of purity
  - Saintly Frances E. Willard—its leading spirit
  - Less saintly was “Kansas Cyclone” Carrie A. Nation:
    - First husband died of alcoholism
    - With her hatchet smashed saloon bottles and bars
    - Her “hatchetations” brought disrepute to prohibition movement because of violence of her one-woman crusade

- Potent Anti-Saloon League formed (1893):
  - Swept various states into “dry” column
XIV. Prohibiting Alcohol and Promoting Reform (cont.)

— Great triumph—but only a temporary one—came in 1919:
  • When national prohibition amendment (Eighteenth) attached to Constitution.

— Other social crusaders:
  • 1866: American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) whose founder had witnessed brutality to horses in Russia
  • American Red Cross (1881) by Clara Barton, the “angel” of Civil War battlefields

XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High

— Post-Civil War Americans devoured millions of “dime novels:”
  • Depicted wilds of woolly West
  • King of dime novelists was Harlan P. Halsey
  • General Lew Wallace tried to combat Darwinian skepticism with Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ (1880)
    — The Uncle Tom's Cabin of anti-Darwinists
  • Horatio Alger, a Puritan-reared New Englander:
    — In 1866 forsook pulpit for pen
    — “Holy Horatio” wrote survival of the purest stories
XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High (cont.)

— Literature and arts not immune to era's sweeping changes:
  • Writers forsook romantic sentimentality and generated three interrelated currents:
    — Realism
    — Naturalism
    — Regionalism
  • Three movements responded to Gilded Age's urban industrial transformation

XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High (cont.)

• Realism: writers found subjects in world around them:
  • William Dean Howells (1837-1920)
    — Celebrated "father of American realism"
    — Emerged as era's preeminent advocate of unsentimental literature
    — Wrote about contemporary and sometimes controversial social themes
    — Most famous novel: The Rise of Silas Lapham (1885)
    — Dealt with taboo subjects: divorce, reformers, strikers, and socialists of Gilded Age New York

XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High (cont.)

• Mark Twain (1835-1910):
  — Typified new breed of American writers in revolt against elegant refinements of old New England school of writing
  — Christened Samuel Langhorne Clemens, but took pen name Mark Twain
  — Roughing It (1872) described his trip west to Nevada and California—with mixture of truth and tall tales
  — In 1873 teamed with Charles Dudley Warner to write The Gilded Age—satire on post-Civil War political corruption and speculative greed
  — Made most enduring contribution in capturing frontier realism and colloquial humor in authentic American dialect
XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High (cont.)

• Henry James (1843-1916):
  – Dominant theme—confrontation of innocent Americans with subtle Europeans
  – His *The Bostonians* (1881) one of first novels about rising feminist movement
  – He experimented with point of view and interior monologue
  – Frequently made women his central characters:
    ▶ Explored their inner actions to complex situations with a deftness that marked him as master of “psychological realism”

• Edith Wharton (1862-1937):
  – Took magnifying glass to inner psychological turmoil and moral shortcomings of post-Civil War high society
  – *The House of Mirth* (1905) and *The Age of Innocence* (1920) exposed futile struggles and interior costs of striking characters stuck on social ladder
  – Her portrayal of upper-crust social strife verged on naturalism

• Naturalism:
  – More intense literary response than mainstream realism to social dislocations and scientific tumult of late-19th century America
XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High (cont.)

– Naturalist writers applied scientific objectivity to study of human beings—or “human beasts”:
  • Placed lower-class, marginal characters in extreme or sordid environments, including urban jungle
  • Subjected them to cruel operations of brute instinct, degenerate heredity, and pessimistic determinism
  • Stephen Crane (1871-1900):
    – Maggie: A Girl of the Streets (1893) exposed seamy underside of life in urban, industrial America
    – Rose to prominence with The Red Badge of Courage (1895), stirring story of a bloodied young Civil War recruit

XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High (cont.)

– Candid, naturalistic portrayals of contemporary life and social problems:
  • Jack London (1876-1916):
    – The Call of the Wild (1903)
    – The Iron Heel (1907) depicted a future fascist revolution
    – Showed his socialist leanings
  • Frank Norris (1870-1902):
    – The Octopus (1902) an earthy tale of stranglehold by railroads and corrupt politicians on California’s wheat ranchers
    – The Pit (1903) dealt with making and breaking of speculators on Chicago’s wheat exchange

XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High (cont.)

– Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945):
  – Sister Carrie graphic narrative of poor working girl adapting to urban life in Chicago and New York
  – Carrie’s disregard for moral standards offended Dreiser’s publisher, but work reemerged as American classic
  – Regionalism:
    • Chronicle peculiarities of local ways of life before coming wave of industrial standardization
    • At first blush, regionalist writers:
      – Accentuated difference among still-distant American locales
      – Indulged in provincial nostalgia
XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High (cont.)

• Their works demystified regional differences, esp. among national audiences bent on postwar reunification
• Twain, London, and Bret Harte:
  – Popularized (and often debunked) lusty legends of Old West
• Bret Harte (1836-1902):
  – Struck it rich in California with gold-rush stories
  – "The Luck of Roaring Camp" (1868)
  – "The Outcast of Poker Flat" (1869)
  – After these two stories, he never again matched their excellence or their popularity

– Local-color writing about South:
  • Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906):
    – Brought distinctive voice to late-19th century literature
    – His poetry—particularly his *Lyrics of Lowly Life* (1896)
  • Charles W. Chesnutt (1858-1932):
    – His fiction and short stories in Howells' *Atlantic Monthly*
    – *The Conjure Woman* (1899) embraced use of black dialect and folklore to capture spontaneity and richness of Southern black culture

– Pioneering women contributed to post-Civil War southern literary scene:
  • Kate Chopin (1851-1904):
    – Wrote candidly about adultery, suicide, and women's ambitions in *The Awakening* (1899)
    – Largely ignored after her death, Chopin rediscovered by later readers
    » Cited her work as suggestive of feminist yearnings that stirred beneath surface "respectability" in Gilded Age
XV. Postwar Fiction, Lowbrow and High (cont.)

– Some important authors defied categorization:

- Henry Adams (1838-1918):
  - Turned unrivaled family connections into prolific career as historian, novelist, and critic
  - His nine-volume History of the United States During the Administration of Jefferson and Madison (1889-1891):
    » Defended his patrician heritage from posthumous attack
  - The Education of Henry Adams (1907):
    » Best-known work an autobiographical account of his failure to come to grips with chaotic forces of turn-of-the-century life

XVI. Artistic Triumphs

– Realism and regionalism (more than naturalism) energized American art:

- Thomas Elkins (1844-1916):
  - Created veritable artistic catalogue of his hometown’s social, scientific, and sporting life at end of 19th century

- Winslow Homer (1836-1910):
  - Brought a mastery to pastoral farms and swelling seas of Northeast
  - Reveled in rugged realism and boldness of conception
  - Striking oil canvases of sea and its fisherfolk
  - Probably no American artist has excelled him in portraying awesome power of ocean
XVI. Artistic Triumphs (cont.)

• James Whistler (1834-1903):
  – Did much of his work, including celebrated portrait of his mother, in England

• John Singer Sargent (1856-1925):
  – Gifted portrait painter; self-exiled in England
  – His flattering superficial likeness of British nobility and America’s nouveau riche were highly prized

• Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907):
  – Most gifted sculptor produced by America
  – National urge to commemorate Civil War brought him a number of commissions
  – Robert Gould Shaw Memorial, erected on Boston Common in 1897, depicted Colonel Shaw leading his black troops

XVI. Artistic Triumphs (cont.)

• Music gained popularity:
  – America produced high quality symphony orchestras, notably in Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia
  – Famed Metropolitan Opera House of New York erected in 1883
  – New strains of homegrown American music sprouted in South, another outgrowth of regionalist trend
  – Black folk traditions like spirituals and “ragged music” evolved into blues, ragtime, and jazz, which transformed popular music in 20th century

XVI. Artistic Triumphs (cont.)

– Marvelous invention was reproduction of music by mechanical means:
  • Phonograph, invented by deaf Edison, reached over 150,000 homes by 1900
  • Americans rapidly doused with “canned music” as “sitting room” piano increasingly gathered dust

– Architects and planners tried to reshape American cities with City Beautiful movement:
  • Proponents wanted city to not only look beautiful but to convey sense of harmony, order, monumentality
XVI. Artistic Triumphs
(cont.)

• Copied European styles and planning ideas from master builder of Paris, Baron Georges-Eugene Haussmann:
  – Recast City of Light with grand boulevards, parks, and public buildings
• They constructed grandiose urban landmarks such as New York’s Grand Central Terminal (1913)
• City planners like Daniel Burnham redesigned Chicago and Washington, D.C.
• Architect Frederick Law Olmstead:
  – Sought to foster virtue and egalitarian values
    » New York’s Central Park (1873)
    » Boston’s “Emerald Necklace” (1896)

XVI. Artistic Triumphs
(cont.)

– Burnham’s first major project to symbolize City Beautiful movement was World’s Columbian Exposition held in Chicago, 1893
  » Impressing landscape of pavilions and fountains honored 400th anniversary of Columbus’s first voyage
  » 27 million visited the so-called dream of loveliness
  » Chicago exposition did much to raise American artistic standards and promote city planning
XVII. The Business of Amusement

– Varied diversions of entertainment beckoned:

• Legitimate stage still flourished:
  – Vaudeville continued to be immensely popular 1880s-1890s
  – Shows in South had performances by black singers and dancers
• The circus:
  – High-tented and multiringed; emerged full-blown
  – Phineas T. Barnum, master showman, joined with James A. Bailey (1881) to stage the "Greatest Show on Earth"
• Colorful "Wild West" shows (1883)
  – William F. ("Buffalo Bill") Cody
  – Annie Oakley
XVII. The Business of Amusement (cont.)

• Baseball:
  – League of professional players formed in 1870s.
  – In 1888 an all-star baseball team toured world.

• Basketball:
  – Invented in 1891 by James Naismith.
  – Designed as an active indoor sport that could be played in winter.

• Gladiatorial trend toward spectator sports, rather than participative sports, exemplified by football.
  – 1889, Walter C. Camp chose his first “All American” team.
  – Yale-Princeton game of 1893 drew 50,000 fans while foreigners jeered that nation was getting sports “on the brain.”

XVII. The Business of Amusement (cont.)

– Boxing:
  • Pugilism, long background of bareknuckle brutality, gained new and gloved respectability in 1892.

– Race and ethnicity assigned urban Americans to distinctive neighborhoods and workplace.

– But Americans shared a common culture—playing, reading, shopping, and talking alike.