

Chapter Summary

Urban America, 1865–1896

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Why do people migrate? How is urban life different from rural life?

This chapter describes immigration in America and the growing pains of the nation at the end of the nineteenth century.

Immigration

- The increase of industrial jobs encouraged large numbers of European immigrants to settle in cities in the Northeast.
- Chinese settled mainly in the West, working on railroads until immigration was halted for 10 years.
- American nativism along with prejudice and violence began to rise in the United States.

Urbanization

- As the population of cities grew, urban areas offered jobs and entertainment, but crime and disease became serious problems.
- New industrial technology, such as skyscrapers, elevators, and trolley cars, helped cities expand.
- Political machines, such as Tammany Hall, with their corrupt practices, emerged.
- A distinct class system developed where lifestyles of the wealthy were in stark contrast to the middle and working classes.

Social Darwinism and Social Reform

- Social Darwinism, the idea of the survival of the fittest, emerged.
- Ongoing social problems, with the reformers wanting the government to solve society's problems, led to a change in views of government.

- Hayes and Cleveland became important social reformers.
- Reformers developed new ideas to help the urban poor with the government taking more of a role in helping those in need.
- Congress imposed multiple reforms and tariffs and political parties split.
- Saloons, sports, amusement parks, vaudeville, and ragtime are important parts of popular culture.
- New forms of realist and naturalist art and literature evolve.

Politics of the Gilded Age

- Industrialization and new technology increased farm production and made shipping farm products easier.
- To increase political power farmers founded the Grange, the Alliance, and the Populist Party, when huge surpluses drove down food prices.
- To end patronage and limit terms, civil service reform was promoted.

The Rise of Segregation

- African Americans' rights were lost when states added polling taxes, or required literacy tests, and passed Jim Crow laws.
- *Plessy v. Ferguson* upheld segregation laws.
- Education and civil rights became the primary goals of African American leaders.