

30

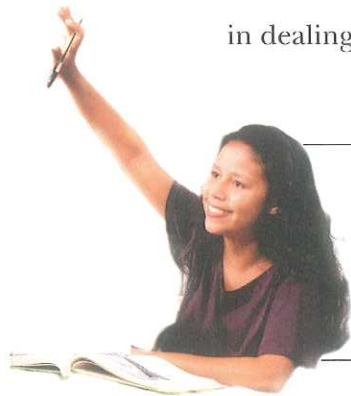
THE REAGAN REVOLUTION AND A CHANGING WORLD

1981–1992



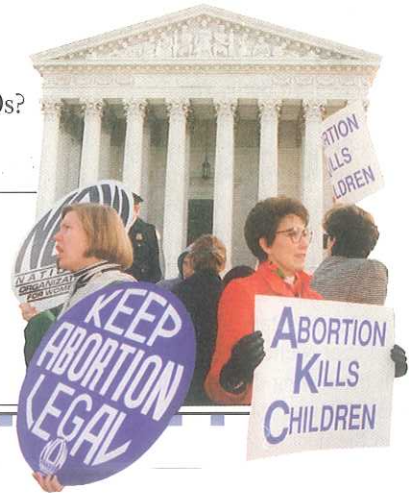
WHAT ECONOMIC
and social changes occurred
during the Reagan administration?

WHAT foreign policy measures
did Ronald Reagan employ
in dealing with the Soviet Union
and the Middle East?



HOW DID America's
population change in the 1980s?

WHAT WERE the culture wars?

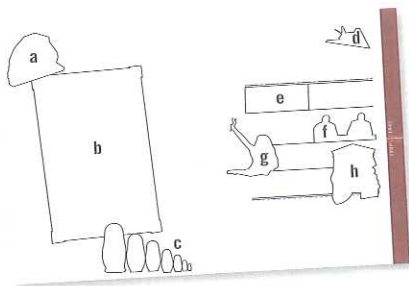


1992
1981



IMAGE KEY

for pages 790–791



- a. A piece of the fallen Berlin Wall.
- b. President Ronald Reagan and First Lady Nancy Reagan dance at his first inaugural at the Smithsonian on January 21, 1981.
- c. Nesting dolls of Communist or Russian leaders Boris Yeltsin, Mikhail Gorbachev, Leonid Brezhnev, Nikita Khrushchev, Joseph Stalin, Vladimir Lenin, and Czar Nicholas II.
- d. The black flying wing design of the stealth bomber resembles a bat.
- e. Traders on the floor of the new York Stock Exchange work frantically as panic selling swept Wall Street, Monday, October 19, 1987. The Dow Jones Industrial average plunged more than 500 points for the biggest one-day loss in history.
- f. Mikhail Gorbachev and Reagan sign INF treaty at the White House.
- g. Hispanic female student raises her hand in class.
- h. Abortion rights advocate Inga Coulter stands next to pro life protester Elizabeth McGee during clashing demonstrations outside the Supreme Court building.

The Khmer Rouge marched into the city [Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia], dressed in black. . . . Young Khmer Rouge [Marxist revolutionary] soldiers, eight or ten years old, were dragging their rifles, which were taller than them. . . . The whole city, more than two million people was forced out of their homes into the streets. My family walked until we reached Mao Tse-Tung Boulevard, the main boulevard in Phnom Penh. All the population of the city was gathered there. The Khmer Rouge were telling everyone to leave the city.

Although my two middle children were safe in France, my oldest and youngest daughters were close beside me. Parika was only seven. Mealy, who was nineteen, carried her infant son. I kept my children huddled together. As soon as a parent let go, a child would be lost in the huge crowd. . . . And the Khmer Rouge kept ordering everybody, "You must go forward." They shot their guns in the air. Even during the middle of the night the procession was endless. The Khmer Rouge kept shooting and we kept moving forward. . . .

Recently I saw the movie Doctor Zhivago, about the Russian Revolution. If you compare that to what happened in Phnom Penh, the movie is only on a very small scale. Even Killing Fields only gives you part of the idea of what happened in Cambodia. The reality was much more incredible. . . .

Each night, when we came back to the village from working in the fields, Mom would say, "Children, let's all go to sleep." She would quietly warn me that the wood had eyes and ears. She'd say, "It's nine o'clock now. Go to sleep. . . . There is nothing else to do but work. All the men are gone in our family." Mom was actually saying for the Khmer Rouge spies to hear, "They are only girls. Don't kill them. We are the only members left of the family." . . . We were lying to them about our identity. It was a horrible game.

If you hid your identity, that meant you wanted your past forgotten. We had changed from people who were intellectual, who used to think independently. . . . You became humiliated, allowed to live only as a slave. . . . We were accepted into the United States thanks to my husband's military service. . . . My daughters and I flew to the United States on July 4, 1979. . . . As we landed, I thought, "This is real freedom." . . .

I've found that America is a country where people have come from all over the world. You do your job, you get paid like anybody else, and you're accepted. But Cambodians I know in France, like my sister, feel differently. People are not accepted if they are not French. But in America you're part of the melting pot. . . . In 1983, I came to Los Angeles for my daughter Monie's wedding. I decided to stay. . . . Long Beach has the largest concentration of Cambodians in the country. I called the community center in Long Beach. They said they had no job openings. So I decided to get involved in running a store. . . . Donut shops are very American. . . .

All that refugees have is our work, our dreams. Do I still hurt from what happened in the past? When I opened my mouth to tell you my story, I don't know where my tears came from. . . . My daughters don't like to talk



about the past in Cambodia. They want to forget and think about their future. They ask me why I would talk about the past with anybody. I said, "The past cannot be erased from my memory."

Celia Noup in Al Santoli, *New Americans: An Oral History* (New York, 1988).

CELIA NOUP taught school for twenty years in Cambodia, which borders on South Vietnam. In 1975, after a long civil war, the Communist Khmer Rouge insurgents took over Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, and forced its inhabitants into the countryside to work in the fields. Four years later, Noup managed to make her way to a refugee camp in neighboring Thailand and then to the United States. Here she joined hundreds of thousands of other refugees who arrived in the later 1970s and 1980s from war-devastated nations such as Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan. Within a decade, she was working from 5:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. in her own donut shop near Los Angeles airport and worrying about helping her children buy houses.

Celia Noup's life shows some of the ways that new waves of immigration from Asia, Latin America, and Africa have changed the United States over the last generation. Immigrants fueled economic growth in the 1980s and 1990s with their labor and their drive to succeed in business. They revitalized older neighborhoods in cities from coast to coast and changed the ethnic mix of major cities. And they created new racial tensions that found their way into national political debates about immigration and into open conflict in places such as Miami and Los Angeles.

Noup's story is also a reminder of the drawn-out consequences of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam and the long shadow of the Cold War. The Cambodian civil war was fueled by the Vietnamese war and the American invasion of Cambodia in 1969. American refugee policy was humanitarian, but also political, opening the door to people fleeing Communist regimes but holding it shut against refugees from right-wing dictatorships. In Washington, foreign policy decisions in the 1980s started with the desire of a new administration to reaffirm American toughness after failures in Vietnam and ended with the astonishing evaporation of the Cold War.

By the end of Ronald Reagan's presidency (1981–89), new rules governed domestic affairs as well as international relations. Since World War II, politics had followed a well-thumbed script. Lessons about full employment and social services that were accepted in 1948 still applied in 1968 or 1972. In the 1980s, however, Americans decided to reverse the growth of federal government responsibilities that had marked both Republican and Democratic administrations since the 1930s. By the 1990s, the center of U.S. politics had shifted substantially to the right, and even a "liberal" Democrat like Bill Clinton would sound like an Eisenhower Republican. The backdrop to the political changes was massive readjustments in the American economy that began in the 1970s with the decline of heavy industry and then continued to shift employment from factory jobs to service jobs in the 1980s. The ideology of unregulated markets celebrated economic success and made "yuppies" or young urban professionals the center of media attention. But behind the lifestyle stories was a troubling reality: a widening gap between the rich and poor. The result by 1992 was a nation that was much more secure in the world than it had been in 1980, but also more divided against itself.

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1973 Roe v. Wade: Supreme Court struck down state laws banning abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy.</p> <p>1980 Ronald Reagan is elected president.</p> <p>1981 Economic Recovery and Tax Act, reducing personal income tax rates, is passed.
Reagan breaks strike by air traffic controllers.
AIDS is recognized as a new disease</p> <p>1982 Nuclear freeze movement peaks.
United States begins to finance Contra rebels against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.
Equal Rights Amendment fails to achieve ratification.</p> <p>1983 241 Marines are killed by a terrorist bomb in Beirut, Lebanon.
Strategic Defense Initiative introduced.
U.S. invades Grenada.</p> <p>1984 Reagan wins reelection.</p> <p>1985 Mikhail Gorbachev initiates economic and political reforms in the Soviet Union.</p> <p>1986 Tax Reform Act is adopted.</p> | <p>1987 Congress holds hearings on the Iran-Contra scandal. Reagan and Gorbachev sign the Intermediate Nuclear Force treaty.</p> <p>1988 George Bush is elected president.</p> <p>1989 Communist regimes in eastern Europe collapse; Germans tear down Berlin Wall.
Financial crisis forces federal bailout of many savings and loans.
United States invades Panama to capture General Manuel Noriega.</p> <p>1990 Iraq invades Kuwait; and United States sends forces to the Persian Gulf.
West Germany and East Germany reunite.
Americans with Disabilities Act is adopted.</p> <p>1991 Persian Gulf War: Operation Desert Storm drives the Iraqis from Kuwait.
Soviet Union dissolves into independent nations.
Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) is signed.</p> <p>1992 Acquittal of officers accused of beating Rodney King triggers Los Angeles riots.</p> |
|--|---|

mental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, were choking their businesses in red tape.

The key to Reagan's reforms, however, was disaffected blue-collar and middle-class voters who deserted the Democrats. Reagan's campaign hammered on the question; "Are you better off than you were four years ago?" Many white blue-collar voters were alienated by affirmative action and busing for school integration. They also worried about inflation and blamed their difficulties on runaway government spending.

Reagan also made the Republicans seem exciting. In the mid 1980s young people in their twenties and early thirties saw the Republicans as the party of energy and new ideas, leaving the Democrats to the middle-aged and elderly.

In the election of 1984, Democrats sealed their fate by nominating Walter Mondale, who had been vice president under Carter. Mondale was earnest, honest, and dull. Reagan ran on the theme, "It's Morning in America," with the message that a new age of pride and prosperity had begun. He won reelection with 98 percent of the electoral votes. His election confirmed that the American public found conservative ideas increasingly attractive.

THE NEW CONSERVATISM

Reagan's approach to public policy drew on conservative intellectuals who offered a critique of the New Deal-New Frontier approach to American government. Some of the leading figures were journalists and academics who feared that the antiwar movement had undermined the anti-Communist stance and that social changes were corrupting mainstream values. *Commentary* and *The Public Interest* magazines became platforms for these neoconservative arguments.

Edward Banfield's radical ideas about the failures of the Great Society set the tone of the neoconservative analysis. In *The Unheavenly City* (1968), he argued that



30-1

Ronald Reagan, First Inaugural Address (1981)



Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy celebrate Reagan's inauguration as president.

Corbis-Bettman

QUICK REVIEW

The Conservative Critique

- ◆ Free markets work better than government programs.
- ◆ Government intervention does more harm than good.
- ◆ Government assistance saps the initiative of the poor.

liberal programs failed because inequality is based on human character and rooted in the basic structure of society; government action can solve only the problems that require better engineering, such as pollution control, better highways, or the delivery of explosives to military targets. Government's job was to preserve public order, not to right wrongs or encourage unrealistic expectations.

Other conservative writers elaborated Banfield's ideas. Charles Murray's 1984 book, *Losing Ground*, argued that welfare assistance encouraged dependency and discouraged individual efforts at self-improvement. The editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal* became a national forum for outspoken versions of neoconservatism.

The common themes of the conservative critique were simple: Free markets work better than government programs; government intervention does more harm than good; government assistance may be acceptable for property owners, but it saps the initiative of the poor. In 1964, three-quarters of Americans had trusted Washington "to do what is right." By 1980, three-quarters were convinced that the federal government wasted tax money. The neoconservatives offered the details to support Reagan's own summary: "Government is not the solution to our problems; government is the problem." The cumulative effect of the neoconservative arguments was to trash the word "liberal" and convince many Americans that labor unions and minorities were "special interests" but that oil tycoons, defense contractors, and other members of Reagan's coalition were not.

The conservative cause found support in new "think tanks" and political lobbying organizations, such as the Manhattan Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the American Enterprise Institute, where conservative analysts could develop policy proposals and opinion pieces for newspapers. The cumulative effect shifted political discussion in a conservative direction between 1975 and 1990.

Conservatives promoted their ideology with new political tactics. Targeted mailings raised funds and mobilized voters. Radio talk shows spread the conservative message.

REAGANOMICS: DEFICITS AND DEREGULATION

The heart of the 1980s revolution was the **Economic Recovery and Tax Act of 1981 (ERTA)**, which reduced personal income tax rates by 25 percent over three years. The explicit goal was to stimulate business activity by lowering taxes overall and slashing rates for the rich. Cutting the government's total income by \$747 billion over five years, ERTA meant less money for federal programs and more money in the hands of consumers and investors to stimulate economic growth.

Reagan's first budget director, David Stockman, later revealed a second goal. Because defense spending and Social Security were politically untouchable, Congress would find it impossible to create and fund new programs without cutting old ones. The first year's tax reductions were accompanied by cuts of \$40 billion in federal aid to mass transit, school lunches, and similar programs. If Americans still wanted social programs, they could enact them at the local or state level.

The second part of the economic agenda was to free eager capitalists from government regulations to increase business initiative, innovation, and efficiency. The **deregulation** revolution built on a head start from the 1970s. A federal antitrust case had split the unified Bell System of AT&T and its subsidiaries into seven regional telephone companies and opened long-distance service to competition.



30-2

Ronald Reagan, Speech to the House of Commons (1982)

Economic Recovery and Tax Act of 1981 (ERTA) A major revision of the federal income tax system.

Deregulation Reduction or removal of government regulations and encouragement of direct competition in many important industries and economic sectors.



Congress also deregulated air travel in 1978. The result has been cheaper and more frequent air service for major hubs and poorer and more expensive service for small cities. The transformation of telecommunications similarly meant more choices for sophisticated consumers but higher prices for basic phone service.

Corporate America used the Reagan administration to attack environmental legislation as “strangulation by regulation.” Vice President George Bush headed the White House Task Force on Regulatory Relief, which delayed or blocked regulations on hazardous wastes, automobile emissions, and exposure of workers to chemicals on the job.

Most attention, however, went to the instantly controversial appointment of Colorado lawyer James Watt as Secretary of the Interior. He was sympathetic to a Western movement known as the **Sagebrush Rebellion**, which wanted the vast federal land holdings in the West transferred to the states for more rapid economic use. He blamed air pollution on natural emissions from trees and compared environmentalists to both Nazis and Bolsheviks. Federal resource agencies sold trees to timber companies at a loss to the Treasury, expanded offshore oil drilling, and expedited exploration for minerals.

The early 1980s also transformed American financial markets. Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), a creation of the 1981 tax act, made millions of households into new investors. Dollars poured from savings accounts into higher-paying money market funds. Savings and loans had traditionally been conservative financial institutions that funneled individual savings into safe home mortgages. Under new rules, they began to compete for deposits by offering high interest rates and reinvested the money in much riskier commercial real estate. By 1990, the result would be a financial crisis in which bad loans destroyed hundreds of S&Ls, especially in the Southwest.

Corporate raiders snapped up “cash cows,” profitable and cash-rich companies that could be milked of profits and assets. Dealmakers brought together often mismatched companies into huge conglomerates. They raised money with “junk bonds,” high-interest, high-risk securities that could be paid off only in favorable conditions. The merger mania channeled capital into paper transactions rather than investments in new equipment and products. Another effect was to damage the economies of small and middle-sized communities by transferring control of local companies to outside managers.

CRISIS FOR ORGANIZED LABOR

The flip side of the economic boom was another round in the Republican offensive against labor unions. Reagan set the tone when he fired more than eleven thousand members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization for violating a no-strike clause in their hiring agreements. He claimed to be enforcing the letter of the law, but the message to organized labor was clear. Over the next eight years, the National Labor Relations Board and other federal agencies also weakened the power of collective bargaining.

As union membership declined and unions struggled to cope with the changing economy, corporations demanded wage rollbacks and concessions on working conditions as trade-offs for continued employment. Workers faced the threat that employers might move a factory overseas or sell out to a new owner, who could close a plant, and reopen without a union contract.

Another cause for shrinking union membership was the decline of blue-collar jobs, from 36 percent of the American work force in 1960 to roughly 25 percent at the end of the 1990s. Although unions made up part of the loss from manufacturing by recruiting government workers, such as police officers, teachers,

QUICK REVIEW

Key Components of Reagonomics

- ◆ Lower personal income tax rates.
- ◆ Increase defense spending.
- ◆ Deregulate industry.

Sagebrush Rebellion Political movement in the Western states in the early 1980s that called for easing of regulations on the economic issue of federal lands and the transfer of some or all of those lands to state ownership.



and bus drivers, many white-collar jobs in the private sector were in small firms and offices that were difficult to organize.

The corporate merger mania of the 1980s added to unions' woes. Takeover specialists loaded old companies with new debt, triggering efforts to cut labor costs, sell off plants, or raid pension funds for cash to pay the interest. Manufacturing employment in the 1980s declined by nearly 2 million jobs, with the expansion of high-tech manufacturing concealing much higher losses in traditional industries. In sum, while corporate merger specialists steered their BMWs along the fast lane to success, displaced mill hands drove battered pickups along potholed roads to nowhere.

AN ACQUISITIVE SOCIETY

The national media in the early 1980s discovered “yuppies,” or young urban professionals, who were both a marketing category and a symbol of social change. These upwardly mobile professionals supposedly defined themselves by elitist consumerism and flocked to such upscale retailers as Neiman-Marcus and Bloomingdale's.

Far richer than yuppies were wheeler-dealers who made themselves into media stars of finance capitalism. *Forbes* magazine began to publish an annual list of the nation's 400 richest people. Before he admitted to violating the law against profiting from insider information, the corporate-merger expert Ivan Boesky had told a business-school audience; “Greed is all right. . . . You shouldn't feel guilty,” epitomizing an era of big business takeovers driven by paper profits rather than underlying economic fundamentals. The superficial glamour of this era of acquisitiveness and corporate greed had its underside of loneliness and despair. Young novelists in the 1980s like Bret Easton Ellis and Jay McInerney explored the emptiness of life among the privileged. Tom Wolfe's bestselling novel *The Bonfire of the Vanities* (1987), depicted a New York where the art dealers and stockbrokers of glitzy Manhattan meet the poor of the devastated South Bronx only through an automobile accident to their mutual incomprehension and ruin.

New movements in popular music reacted to the acquisitive 1980s. Punk rock lashed out at the emptiness of 1970s disco sounds and the commercialization of youth culture. Grunge bands expressed alienation from consumerism. Hip-Hop originated among African Americans and Latinos in New York, soon adding the angry and often violent lyrics of rap. Rap during the 1980s was about personal power and sex, but it also dealt with social inequities and deprivation and tapped some of the same anger and frustration that had motivated black power advocates in the 1960s. It crossed into the mainstream culture with the help of MTV, which had begun broadcasting in 1981, but its hard-edged “attitude” undercut any sense of complacency about an inclusive American society.

QUICK REVIEW

Greed is Good

- ◆ Yuppies: young urban professionals.
- ◆ Corporate dealmakers made themselves into media stars.
- ◆ New movements in music emerged in response to the acquisitive 1980s.

POVERTY AMID PROSPERITY

Federal tax and budget changes had different effects on the rich and poor. (see Figure 30.1) The 1981 tax cuts came with sharp increases in the Social Security tax, which hit lower-income workers the hardest. The tax changes meant that the average annual income of households in the bottom 20 percent declined and that many actually paid higher taxes, while those in the top fifth increased their share of after-tax income at the expense of everyone else.

Cities and their residents absorbed approximately two-thirds of the cuts in the 1981–1982 federal budget. Provisions for accelerated depreciation (tax write-offs) of factories and equipment in the 1981 tax act encouraged the abandon-

ment of center-city factories in favor of new facilities in the suburbs. One result was a growing jobs-housing mismatch. There were often plenty of jobs in the suburbs, but the poorer people who most needed the jobs were marooned in city slums and dependent on public transit that seldom served suburban employers.

Federal tax and spending policies in the 1980s decreased the security of middle-class families. As the economy continued to struggle through deindustrialization, average wage rates fell in the 1980s when measured in real purchasing. The squeeze put pressure on traditional family patterns and pushed into the workforce women who might otherwise have stayed home. Even with two incomes, many families found it hard to buy a house because of skyrocketing prices in urban markets and sky-high interest rates. The national home ownership rate actually fell for the first time in almost fifty years, from 66 to 64 percent of American households. Many Americans no longer expected to surpass their parents' standard of living.

Corporate downsizing and white-collar jobs. Corporate “downsizing” meant that lower-paying office jobs fell under the same pressures as factory jobs. Companies increasingly computerized and automated their operations and replaced full-time employees with “temps” who shifted from job to job and were not eligible for company benefits. Takeovers sometimes eliminated even more white-collar jobs. A targeted company could lose its entire management and support staff. The expectation for a college graduate who joined a large corporation of a “job for life” (often true in the 1950s and 1960s) became dubious.

The chill of corporate “downsizing” hit white-collar families most heavily toward the end of the 1980s. Big business consolidations delivered improved profits by squeezing the ranks of middle managers as well as assembly-line workers. With fewer workers to supervise and with new technologies to collect and distribute information, companies could complete their cost cutting by trimming administrators. Takeovers sometimes meant the elimination of the entire management and support staff of target companies. In the 1950s, a college graduate could sign on with a large corporation like IBM or General Motors, advance through the ranks, and expect to retire from the same company. Now the expectation of a “job for life” looked dubious; AT&T, for one example, eliminated 76,000 jobs— one-fifth of its total— between 1985 and 1989. Those white-collar workers whose jobs survived clung to them more firmly than ever. The combined result was to clog the ladder of economic opportunity for college graduates, making the cab-driving Ph.D. and the *barrista* with the B.A. popular clichés.

Increase in the poverty rate. At the lower end of the economic ladder, the proportion of Americans living in poverty increased. After declining steadily from 1960 to a low of 11 percent in 1973, the poverty rate climbed back to the 13 to 15 percent range. Although the economy in the 1980s created lots of new jobs, half of them paid less than poverty-level wages. Conservative critics began to talk about an underclass of Americans permanently outside the mainstream economy because

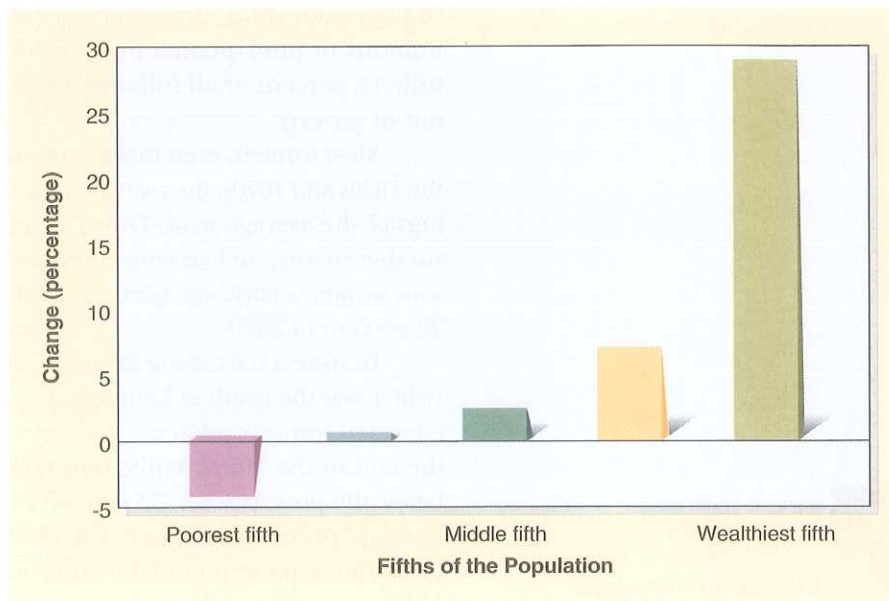


FIGURE 30.1
Changes in Real Family Income,
1980–1990

In the 1980s, the poor got poorer, the middle class made slight gains, and the most affluent 20 percent of the American people did very well. Tax changes that helped well-off households were one factor. Another factor was the erosion of “family-wage jobs” in manufacturing.



of poor education, drug abuse, or sheer laziness. In fact, most of the nation's millions of poor people lived in households with employed adults. In 1992, fully 18 percent of all full-time jobs did not pay enough to lift a family of four out of poverty.

Most women, even those working full time, did not earn as much as men. In the 1960s and 1970s, the average working woman earned just 60 percent of the earnings of the average man. Only part of the wage gap could be explained by measurable factors, such as education or experience. The gap narrowed in the 1980s, with women's earnings rising to 74 percent of men's by 1996 but falling back to 72 percent in 2000.

Despite a narrowing of the income gap between working men and women (which was the result of both a decline in men's earnings and the success of better-educated younger women), women constituted nearly two-thirds of poor adults at the end of the 1980s. While only 6 percent of married-couple households were below the poverty level, 32 percent of households headed by a woman without a husband present were poor. The feminization of poverty and American reliance on private support for child rearing also meant that children had a higher chance of living in poverty than adults and that poor American children were worse off than their peers in other advanced nations.

Falling below even the working poor were growing numbers of homeless Americans. In the 1980s, a new approach to the treatment of the mentally ill reduced the population of mental hospitals from 540,000 in 1960 to only 140,000 in 1980. Deinstitutionalized patients were supposed to receive community-based treatment, but many ended up on the streets and in overnight shelters. New forms of self-destructive drug abuse, such as crack addiction, joined alcoholism. A boom in downtown real estate destroyed old skid-row districts with their bars, missions, and dollar-a-night hotels.

These factors tripled the number of permanently homeless people during the early and middle 1980s, from 200,000 to somewhere between 500,000 to 700,000. For every person in a shelter on a given night, two people were sleeping on sidewalks, in parks, in cars, and in abandoned buildings.

CONSOLIDATING THE REVOLUTION: GEORGE H.W. BUSH

In 1988 George H.W. Bush, Reagan's vice president for eight years, won the presidential election with 56 percent of the popular vote and 40 out of 50 states. As someone who had survived twenty years of bureaucratic infighting, his watchword was prudence. Using a comparison from baseball, Bush described himself as the sort of guy who would play the averages and "bunt 'em over" rather than go for the big inning.

Michael Dukakis, the Democratic nominee in 1988, was a dry, by-the-numbers manager who offered the American people "competence." The Bush campaign director, Lee Atwater, looked for "hot-button" issues and found that Dukakis as governor of Massachusetts had delayed cleanup of Massachusetts Bay, favored gun control, and had vetoed a bill requiring schoolchildren to recite the Pledge of Allegiance (arguing correctly that it would be overturned in the courts). Even more damaging, Massachusetts officials had allowed a murderer named Willie Horton a weekend furlough from prison, during which he had committed a brutal rape. Pro-Bush advertisements tapped into real worries among the voters—fear of crime, racial tension (Horton was black), worry about eroding social values. George Bush,



WHERE TO LEARN MORE

The Causes of Homelessness in America
http://www.stanford.edu/class/e297c/poverty_prejudice/soc_sec/hcauses.htm



despite his background in prep schools and country clubs, came out looking tough as nails, while the Democrats looked inept.

The ads locked Bush into a rhetorical war on crime and drugs. Americans had good cause to be worried about public safety, but most were generally unaware that the likelihood of becoming the target of a violent crime had leveled off and would continue to fall in the 1990s or that crime was far worse in minority communities than elsewhere.

The Bush administration stepped up the fight against illegal drugs. By 1990, 50 percent of federal prison inmates were in jail for drug offenses.

Bush believed that Americans wanted government to leave them alone. The major legislation from his administration was a transportation bill that shifted federal priorities from highway building toward mass transit and the **Americans with Disabilities Act** (1990) to prevent discrimination against people with physical handicaps. In the areas of crime and health care, however, Bush's lack of leadership left continuing problems.

The same attitude produced weak economic policies. The massive budget deficits of the 1980s combined with growing trade deficits swelled the national debt and turned the United States from an international creditor to a debtor nation. Despite pledging "no new taxes" in his campaign, Bush backed into a tax increase in 1990. Voters found it hard to forget the president's waffling and attempts to downplay the importance of this decision.

The "Rodney King riot" of April 1992 in Los Angeles was a reminder of the nation's inattention to the problems of race and poverty. Rodney King was a black motorist who had been savagely beaten by police officers while being arrested after a car chase on March 3, 1991. A nearby resident captured the beating on

An affluent family pedals by a group of homeless people in Santa Barbara, California. In the 1980s a combination of rising housing prices and the closure of most mental hospitals pushed increasing numbers of Americans onto the streets. Estimates of the number of homeless Americans in the late 1980s ranged from 300,000 to 3 million, depending on the definition of homelessness and the political goals of the estimator.

P. F. Bentley, Time Magazine © TimePix

Americans with Disabilities Act Legislation in 1992 that banned discrimination against physically handicapped persons in employment, transportation, and public accommodations.



videotape from his apartment. Within two days, the tape was on national television. It confirmed the worst black fears about police behavior. Early the next year, the four officers stood trial for unjustified use of force before a suburban jury. The unexpected verdict of not guilty on April 29 stirred deep anger that escalated into four days of rioting that left fifty-eight people dead, mostly African Americans and Latinos.

The disorder was far more complex than the Watts outbreak of 1965. Central American and Mexican immigrants accounted for about one-third of the 12,000 arrests. As in 1965, some targets were white passers-by and symbols of white authority. But angry black people also targeted hundreds of Korean-owned and Vietnamese-owned shops as symbols of economic discrimination.

THE SECOND (SHORT) COLD WAR

Ronald Reagan considered the Soviet Union not a coequal nation with legitimate world interests but an “evil empire,” like something from the *Star Wars* movies. After the era of détente, global tensions had started to mount in the late 1970s. They were soon higher than they had been since the 1960s.

CONFRONTING THE USSR

Who renewed the Cold War after Nixon’s diplomacy of détente and Carter’s early efforts at negotiation? The Soviets had pursued military expansion in the 1970s, and in 1980 were supporting Marxist regimes in civil wars in Angola, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and especially Afghanistan. Given the aging Soviet leadership and the economic weaknesses revealed in the late 1980s, however, it makes more sense to see the Soviets as muddling along rather than executing a well-planned global strategy.

The new Reagan administration reemphasized central Europe as the focus of superpower rivalry. To counter improved Soviet armaments, the United States began to place cruise missiles and midrange Pershing II missiles in Europe in 1983. NATO governments approved the action, but it frightened millions of their citizens.

The controversy over the new missile systems was part of new thinking about nuclear weaponry. Multiple warheads on U.S. missiles already allowed Washington to target 25,000 separate places in the Soviet Union. National Security Directive D-13 (1981) stated that a nuclear war might be winnable, despite its enormous costs. All Americans needed for survival, said one administration official, were “enough shovels” to dig fallout shelters.

The nuclear freeze campaign caught the imagination of many Americans in 1981 and 1982. Drawing on the experience of the antiwar movement, it sought to halt the manufacture and deployment of new atomic weapons by the great powers. The movement gained urgency when a group of distinguished scientists argued that the smoke and dust thrown up by an atomic war would devastate the ecology of the entire globe by triggering “nuclear winter.” Nearly a million people turned out for a nuclear freeze rally in New York in 1982.

In response, Reagan announced the **Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)** or “Star Wars” program in March 1983. SDI would deploy new defenses that could intercept and destroy ballistic missiles as they rose from the ground and arced through space. Ideas included superlasers, killer satellites, and clouds of projectiles to rip missiles to shreds before they neared their targets. Few scientists thought that SDI could work. Nevertheless, President Reagan found SDI appealing, for it offered a way around the balance of terror.

WHAT FOREIGN policy measures did Reagan employ in dealing with the Soviet Union and the Middle East?

QUICK REVIEW

The New Arms Race

- ◆ The Reagan administration reemphasized central Europe as the focus of superpower rivalry.
- ◆ Pershing II missiles were placed in Europe in 1983.
- ◆ A National Security Directive stated that the U.S. might be able to win a nuclear war.

Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)

President Reagan’s program, announced in 1983, to defend the United States against nuclear missile attack with untested weapons systems and sophisticated technologies.



RISKY BUSINESS: FOREIGN POLICY ADVENTURES

Reagan kept the United States out of a major war and backed off in the face of serious trouble. Foreign interventions were designed to achieve symbolic victories rather than the global balance of power. The exception was the Caribbean and Central America.

Lebanon was the model for Reagan's small-scale military interventions. Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 to clear Palestinian guerrillas from its borders. The Israeli army found itself bogged down in civil war. Reagan sent U.S. Marines to preserve the semblance of a Lebanese state and provide a face-saving exit for Israel. But the Marines were on an ill-defined "presence mission" that angered Arabs. In October 1983, a car bomb killed 241 Marines. The remainder were soon gone, confirming the Syrian observation that Americans were "short of breath" when it came to Middle East politics.

The administration had already found an easier target. Only days after the disaster in Beirut, U.S. troops invaded the small independent Caribbean island of Grenada. A left-leaning government had invited Cuban help in building an airfield, which the U.S. feared would turn into a Cuban military base. Two thousand American troops overcame Cuban soldiers who were thinly disguised as construction workers, "rescued" American medical students, and put a more sympathetic and locally popular government in power.

The Caribbean was also the focus of a secret foreign policy operated by the CIA and then by National Security Council staff. The target was Nicaragua, the Central American country where leftist Sandinista rebels had overthrown the Somoza dictatorship in 1979. Reagan and his people were determined to prevent Nicaragua from becoming "another Cuba," especially when Sandinistas helped left-wing insurgents in neighboring El Salvador. The CIA organized perhaps ten thousand "Contras" from remnants of Somoza's national guard. From bases in Honduras, they harassed the Sandinistas with sabotage and raids. Reagan called the Contras "freedom fighters."

Constitutional trouble started when an unsympathetic Congress blocked U.S. funding for the Contras. Under the direction of CIA director William Casey, Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North flouted the law by organizing aid from private donors while serving on the staff of the National Security Council.

Even shadier were arms-for-hostages negotiations with Iran. The United States in 1985 joined Israel in selling five hundred antitank missiles to Iran. The deal followed stern public pronouncements that the United States would never negotiate with terrorists, and it violated this nation's official trade embargo against Iran. Iran helped in securing the release of several Americans held hostage in Lebanon by pro-Iranian radicals, but other hostages were soon taken. Colonel North funneled proceeds from the arms sales to the Contras, in a double evasion of the law.

Like Watergate, the Iran-Contra affair was a two-sided scandal. First was the blatant misjudgment of operating a secret and bumbling foreign policy that depended on international arms dealers and ousted Nicaraguan military officers. Second was a concerted effort to cover up the actions. North shredded relevant documents and lied to Congress. In his final report in 1994, Special Prosecutor Lawrence Walsh found that President Reagan and Vice President Bush participated in efforts to withhold information and mislead Congress.

American policy in Asia was a refreshing contrast with Central America and the Middle East. In the Philippines, American diplomats helped push corrupt President Ferdinand Marcos out and opened the way for a popular uprising to put Corazon Aquino in office. Secretary of State George Shultz made sure that the

QUICK REVIEW

Small-scale Military Intervention

- ◆ Marines were sent into Lebanon to help stabilize the Lebanese state and allow the Israelis to withdraw.
- ◆ The U.S. invaded Grenada to prevent the possible creation of a Cuban military base.
- ◆ Nicaragua and El Salvador were the targets of secret foreign policy operated by the CIA and later the National Security Council staff.



United States supported popular democracy while reassuring the Philippine military. In South Korea, the United States similarly helped ease out an unpopular dictator by firmly supporting democratic elections that brought in a more popular but still pro-U.S. government.

EMBRACING PERESTROIKA

Thaw in the Cold War started in Moscow. Mikhail Gorbachev became general secretary of the Communist party in 1985. Gorbachev was the picture of vigor compared to his three sick or elderly predecessors, Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, and Constantin Chernenko. He was a master of public relations who charmed western Europe's leaders and public. Gorbachev startled Soviet citizens by urging *glasnost*, or political openness and free discussion of issues. He followed by setting the goal of *perestroika*, or restructuring of the painfully bureaucratic Soviet economy.

Gorbachev also decided that he needed to reduce the crushing burden of Soviet defense spending if the USSR was to have any chance of modernizing. During Reagan's second term, the Soviets offered one concession after another in a relentless drive for arms control.

Reagan cast off decades of belief in the dangers of Soviet Communism and took Gorbachev seriously. He was willing to abandon many of his most fervent supporters. He frightened his own staff when he met Gorbachev in Iceland in the summer of 1986 and accepted the principle of deep cuts in strategic forces. Reagan explained that when he railed against the "evil empire," he had been talking about Brezhnev and the bad old days; Gorbachev and *glasnost* were different.

In the end, Reagan negotiated the **Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF)** agreement over the strong objections of the CIA and the Defense Department but with the support of Secretary of State Shultz. Previous treaties had only slowed the growth of nuclear weapons. The new pact matched Soviet SS-20s with American cruise missiles as an entire class of weapons that would be destroyed, with on-site inspections for verification.

CRISIS AND DEMOCRACY IN EASTERN EUROPE

As a believer in personal diplomacy, George Bush based much of his foreign policy on his changing attitudes toward Mikhail Gorbachev. He started lukewarm, talking tough to please the Republican right wing. Before 1989 was over, however, the president had decided that Gorbachev was OK. For the next two years, the United States pushed reform in Europe while being careful not to damage Gorbachev's position at home.

The people of eastern Europe overcame both American and Soviet caution. Gorbachev had urged his eastern European allies to emulate *perestroika*. Poland and Hungary were the first satellite nations to eject their Communist leadership in favor of democracy in mid-1989. When East Germans began to flee westward through Hungary, the East German regime bowed to mounting pressure and opened the Berlin Wall on November 9. By the end of 1989, there were new governments in Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, and East Germany. These largely peaceful revolutions destroyed the military and economic agreements that had harnessed the satellites to the Soviet economy. The USSR swallowed hard, accepted the loss of its satellites, and slowly withdrew its army from eastern Europe.

Events in eastern Europe left German reunification as a point of possible conflict. West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl removed one obstacle when he reassured Poland and Russia that Germany would seek no changes in the boundaries drawn after World War II. By July 1990, the United States and USSR had agreed that a reunited Germany would belong to NATO. The decision satisfied France and Britain



WHERE TO LEARN MORE

★ The Intermediate Nuclear Force Agreement (INF)
<http://www.state.gov/www/global/arms/treaties/inf.html>

Glasnost Russian for "openness" applied to Mikhail Gorbachev's encouragement of new ideas and easing of political repression in the Soviet Union.

Perestroika Russian for "restructuring," applied to Mikhail Gorbachev's efforts to make the Soviet economic and political systems more modern, flexible, and innovative.

Intermediate Nuclear Force Agreement (INF) Disarmament agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union under which an entire class of missiles would be removed and destroyed and on-site inspections would be permitted.



WHERE TO LEARN MORE

A Concrete Curtain: The Life and Death of the Berlin Wall
<http://www.wall-berlin.org/gb/berlin.htm>



that a stronger Germany would still be under the influence of the Western allies. In October, the two Germanies completed their political unification, although it would be years before their mismatched economies functioned as one.

Throughout these events, the Bush administration proceeded cautiously. Bush tried not to push the Soviet Union too hard and infuriate Russian hardliners. “I don’t want to do something that would inadvertently set back the progress,” he said.

The final act in the transformation of the USSR began with an attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev in August, 1991 of old-line Communist bureaucrats. But they turned out to be bumbling and drunk who hadn’t secured military support and even failed to take over radio and television stations. Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Republic, organized the resistance. Within three days, the plotters themselves were under arrest.

Before the month was out, the Soviet parliament banned the Communist party. By December, Gorbachev had resigned, and all of the fifteen component republics of the Soviet Union had declared their independence. The superpower Union of Soviet Socialist Republics ceased to exist. Russia remained the largest and strongest of the new states followed by Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

Analysts agree that the relentless pressure of American defense spending helped bankrupt and undermine the USSR. It is an open question whether this same American defense spending also weakened the United States’ economy and its ability to compete in the world marketplace. Some scholars see the demise of the Soviet empire as ultimate justification for forty years of Cold War. Dissenters argue the opposite—that the collapse of European Communism shows that American leaders had magnified its threat.

A more definitive answer may lie in what scholars learn about Soviet Cold War policy when they explore the Russian archives.

THE FIRST PERSIAN GULF WAR

On August 2, 1990, President Saddam Hussein of Iraq seized the neighboring country of Kuwait. The conquest gave Iraq control of 20 percent of the world’s oil production and reserves. Bush demanded unconditional withdrawal, enlisted European and Arab allies in an anti-Iraq coalition, and persuaded Saudi Arabia to accept substantial U.S. forces for its protection against Iraqi invasion. Within weeks, the Saudis were host to tens of thousands of U.S. soldiers and hundreds of aircraft.

Iraq was a dictatorship that had just emerged from an eight-year war with Iran. Saddam Hussein had depended on help from the United States and Arab nations in this war, but Iraq was now economically exhausted. Kuwait itself was a small, rich nation whose ruling dynasty enjoyed huge oil royalties. The U.S. State Department had signaled earlier in 1990 that it might support some concessions by Kuwait to Iraq. Saddam Hussein read the signal as an open invitation to do what he wanted.

The Iraqis gave Bush a golden opportunity to assert America’s world influence. The importance of Middle Eastern oil helped enlist France and Britain as military allies and secure billions of dollars from Germany and Japan. A short-term oil glut also meant that the industrial nations could boycott Iraqi production. The collapse of Soviet power and Gorbachev’s interest in cooperating with the United States meant that the Soviets would not interfere with U.S. plans.

President Bush and his advisers offered a series of justifications for American actions. First and most basic were the desire to punish armed aggression and the need to protect Iraq’s other neighbors, although there was scant evidence of Iraqi preparations against Saudi Arabia. Sanctions and diplomatic pressure might also have brought withdrawal from most or all of Kuwait. However, additional

QUICK REVIEW

The Fall of Gorbachev and the Soviet Union

- ◆ August 1991: old-line communists attempt a coup against Gorbachev.
- ◆ Boris Yeltsin organized the successful resistance to the plotters.
- ◆ Gorbachev resigned and all fifteen Soviet republics declared their independence.



30-3

George Bush, Address to the Nation Announcing Allied Military Action in the Persian Gulf (1991)

First Persian Gulf War War (1991) between Iraq and a U.S.-led coalition that followed Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait and resulted in the expulsion of Iraqi forces from that country.



WHERE TO LEARN MORE

The Gulf War
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/gulf/>

American objectives—to destroy Iraq’s capacity to create atomic weapons and to topple Saddam’s regime— would require direct military action.

The Persian Gulf itself offered an equally golden opportunity to the American and allied armed forces. The United States could try out the tactics of armored maneuver and close land-air cooperation that the Pentagon had devised to protect Germany against Soviet invasion.

In October, Bush decided to increase the number of American troops in Saudi Arabia to 580,000. The United States also secured a series of increasingly tough United Nations resolutions that culminated in November 1990 with Security Council Resolution 678, authorizing “all necessary means” to liberate Kuwait. The president convinced Congress to agree to military action under the umbrella of the U.N.

War began one day after the U.N.’s January 15 deadline for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. **Operation Desert Storm** opened with massive air attacks on command centers, transportation facilities, and Iraqi forward positions. The air war also seriously hurt Iraqi civilians by disrupting utilities and food supplies.

Americans watched CNN’s live transmission of Baghdad under bombardment in fascination. The forty-day rain of bombs was the prelude to a ground attack. On February 24, 1991, U.S. and allied forces swept into Iraq and advanced directly to liberate Kuwait. A cease-fire came one hundred hours after the start of the ground war. Allied forces suffered only 240 deaths in action, compared to perhaps 100,000 for the Iraqis. Militarily, overwhelming the Iraqis turned out to be easy.

The United States hoped to replace Saddam Hussein without disrupting Iraqi society. Instead, the hundred-hour war incited armed rebellions against Saddam by Shi’ite Muslims in southern Iraq and by Kurds in the north. Since Bush and his advisers were unwilling to get embroiled in a civil war, they stood by while Saddam crushed the uprisings. Saddam Hussein became a hero to many in the Islamic world simply by remaining in power. But Bush had accomplished exactly what he wanted—the restoration of the status quo.

In 2003, however, his son, President George W. Bush, was to launch the second Gulf War with the explicit purpose of toppling Saddam’s regime (see Chapter 31).

Operation Desert Storm Code name for the successful offensive against Iraq by the United States and its allies in the Persian Gulf War (1991).

HOW DID America’s population change in the 1980s?

GROWTH IN THE SUNBELT

The rise in the military and defense spending from the late 1970s through the early 1990s and the Persian Gulf War, were two of the most powerful sources of growth in the **Sunbelt**, the Southern and Western regions of the United States. Americans had discovered this “new” region in the 1970s. Kevin Phillips’s book *The Emerging Republican Majority* (1969) first popularized the term “Sunbelt.” Phillips pointed out that people and economic activity had been flowing southward and westward since World War II, shifting the balance of power away from the Northeast.

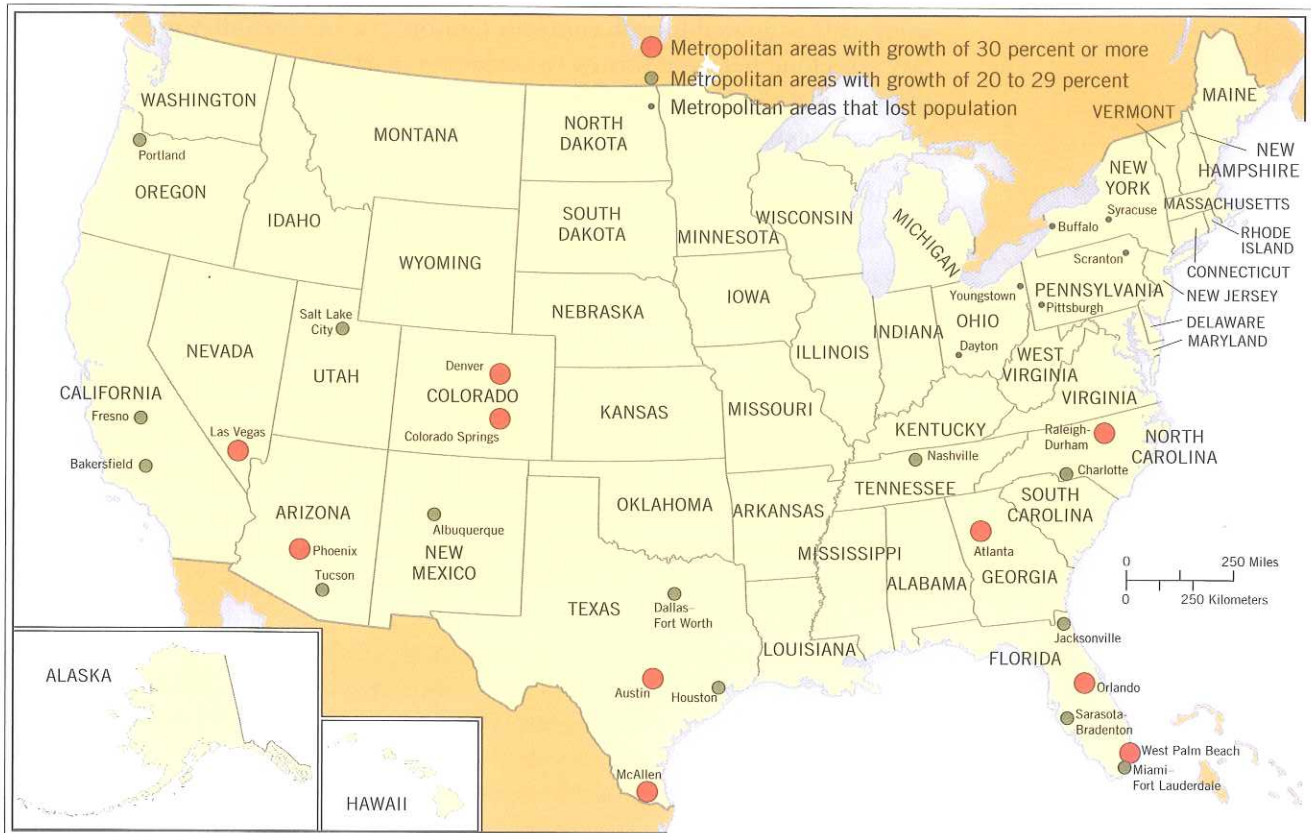
The Sunbelt was a region of conservative voting habits where Republicans solidified their status as a majority party, a process continuing to the present. In the 1990s, the region’s economic power was reflected in a conservative tone in both the Republican and Democratic parties and in the prominence of Southern political leaders. (see Map 30–2).

The rise of the Sunbelt, which is anchored by Florida, Texas, and California, reflected the leading economic trends of the 1970s and 1980s, including military spending, immigration from Asia and Latin America, and recreation and retirement spending. Corporations liked the business climate of the South, which had weak labor laws, low taxes, and lower costs of living and doing business.

Sunbelt The states of the American South and Southwest.

MAP EXPLORATION

To explore an interactive version of this map, go to <http://www.prenhall.com/goldfield2/map30.2>



MAP 30-2

Fast-Growing and Shrinking Metropolitan Areas, 1900–2000 In the 1990s, boom cities were found in the Southeast, Southwest, and on the West Coast. In contrast, all of the large metropolitan areas that lost population were in Ohio, New York, or Pennsylvania, the area hardest hit by the decline of jobs in established manufacturing industries.

WHAT ECONOMIC forces contributed to the growth of some cities and the decline of others?

THE DEFENSE BOOM

The Vietnam buildup and reinvestment in the military during the Carter (1977–1981) and Reagan (1981–1989) administrations fueled the growth of the Sunbelt. Over the forty years from the Korean conflict to the first Persian Gulf War, the United States made itself the mightiest military power ever known. Military bases and defense contractors remolded the economic landscape, as mild winters and clear skies for training and operations helped the South and West attract more than 75 percent of military payrolls.

Big cities and small depended on defense spending. Southern California thrived on more than 500,000 jobs in the aircraft industry. Visitors to Colorado Springs could drive past sprawling Fort Carson and visit the new Air Force Academy, opened in 1958. Sunk deep from view was the North American Air Defense command post beneath Cheyenne Mountain. Malmstrom Air Force Base transformed Great Falls, Montana, from a manufacturing and transportation center into a coordinating center for Minuteman missiles targeted at Moscow and Beijing.

Defense spending underwrote the expansion of American science and technology. Nearly one-third of all engineers worked on military projects. Large



universities, such as MIT, Michigan, CalTech, and Stanford, were leading defense contractors. The modern electronics business started in New York, Boston and the San Francisco Bay Area with research and development for military uses, such as guided-missile controls. California's Silicon Valley grew with military sales long before it turned to consumer markets. The space component of the aerospace industry was equally reliant on the defense economy. NASA's centers were scattered across the South from Florida to Houston.

NEW AMERICANS

The **Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965**, transformed the ethnic mix of the United States and helped to stimulate the Sunbelt boom. It abolished the national quota system in effect since 1924 that had favored immigrants from western Europe and limited those from other parts of the world. The old law's racial bias contradicted the self-proclaimed role of the United States as a defender of freedom. The new law gave preference to family reunification and welcomed immigrants from all nations. The United States also accepted refugees from communism outside the annual limits.

Immigration reform opened the doors to Mediterranean Europe, Latin America, and Asia. Legal migration to the United States surged from 1.1 million in 1960–1964 to nearly 4 million for 1990–1994. Nonlegal immigrants may have doubled the total number of newcomers in the 1970s and early 1980s. Meanwhile, over 2 million nonlegal immigrants had taken advantage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 to legalize their presence in the United States.

Immigration changed the nation's ethnic mix. Members of officially defined ethnic and racial minorities accounted for 30 percent in 2000. Asians and Hispanics were the fastest growing group. (See Table 30.1)

The largest single group of new Americans came from Mexico. Mexican Americans are the largest minority group in many Southwestern and Western states. They were also transforming neighborhoods in Chicago and other midwestern cities and changing everything from politics to the Catholic church.

The East Coast has meanwhile welcomed migrants from the West Indies and Central America. Many Puerto Ricans, who hold U.S. citizenship, came to Philadelphia and New York in the 1950s and 1960s. Other countries sending large numbers of immigrants include Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Jamaica. Cuban refugees from Castro's regime concentrated in Miami and in major cities such as Chicago and New York.

Another great immigration has occurred eastward across the Pacific. Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans, Samoans, and other Asians and Pacific Islanders constituted only 6 percent of newcomers to the United States in 1965, but nearly half of all arrivals in 1990. The numbers of ethnic Chinese in the United States jumped from a quarter of a million in 1965 to 1,645,000 in 1990.—

The most publicized Asian immigrants were refugees from Indochina after Communist victories in 1975. Many settled on the West Coast. The San Francisco Bay area, for example, had more than a dozen Vietnamese-language newspapers, magazines, and cable television programs.

Recent immigrants have found both economic possibilities and problems. On the negative side, immigration has added to the numbers of nonunion workers. But immigrants also added to the pool of talent and ambition in the expanding economy of the mid-1980s and 1990s. The 130,000 Vietnamese immigrants of 1975 now have an average adjusted income above the national average. Asians and Pacific islanders by 2000 constituted 22 percent of students in California's public universities. Many newcomers have opened groceries, restaurants, and other businesses. Juan Fernandez found it easier to set up a successful car repair

QUICK REVIEW

Immigration

- ◆ Immigration changed the country's ethnic mix.
- ◆ The single largest group of new Americans came from Mexico.
- ◆ In 1990 nearly half of all new arrivals were Asians and Pacific islanders.

Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 Federal legislation that replaced the national quota system for immigration with new limits for each hemisphere.



TABLE 30.1
Major Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the United States

1960 Population (in millions)	Percentage of total	2000 Population (in millions)	Percentage of total
American Indians	0.5	0.3	2.5 0.9
Asians and Pacific Islanders	1.1	0.6	10.6 3.7
African Americans	18.9	10.5	34.7 12.3
Hispanics	Not available		35.3 12.5

shop in Gary, Indiana, than in Guadalajara, Mexico, because his fellow immigrants prefer a Spanish-speaking mechanic. Asian-born business owners have filled retail vacuums in central city neighborhoods abandoned by chain stores.

OLD GATEWAYS AND NEW

The new immigration had its most striking effects in coastal and border cities. New York again became a great mixing bowl of the American population. By 1990, some 28 percent of the population of New York City was foreign-born, compared to 42 percent at the height of European immigration in 1910. ZIP code 11373 in North Queens was reportedly the most diverse neighborhood in the world.

Southern and Western cities became gateways for immigrants from Latin America and Asia. Los Angeles emerged as “the new Ellis Island.” As *Time* magazine put it in 1983, the arrival of more than 2 million immigrants altered “the collective beat and bop of L.A.” In 1960, a mere 1 percent of the Los Angeles County population was Asian and 11 percent was Hispanic. By 2000, the figures for a population of 9.5 million were 12 percent Asian and 45 percent Hispanic. The sprawling neighborhoods of East Los Angeles make up the second-largest Mexican city in the world. One hundred languages are spoken among students entering Los Angeles schools.

New York and Los Angeles are world cities as well as immigrant destinations. Like London and Tokyo, they are capitals of world trade and finance, with international banks and headquarters of multinational corporations. The deregulation of international finance and the explosive spread of instant electronic communication in the 1980s confirmed their importance as global decision centers.

Similar factors turned Miami into the economic capital of the Caribbean. Half a million Cuban businessmen, white-collar workers, and their families moved to the United States between 1959 and 1980 to escape Castro’s government. Most of the newcomers stayed in South Florida. Their success in business made Miami and helped to attract two million Latin American tourists and shoppers during the 1980s. Miami also has hundreds of offices for corporations engaged in U.S.-Latin American trade.

Cross-border communities in the Southwest, such as El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Mexico, or San Diego, California and Tijuana, Mexico, are “Siamese twins joined at the cash register.” Employees with work permits commute from Mexico to the United States. American popular culture flows southward. Bargain hunters and tourists pass in both directions.

Both nations have promoted the cross-border economy. The Mexican government in the mid-1960s began to encourage a “platform economy” by allowing companies on the Mexican side of the border to import components and inputs duty-free as long as 80 percent of the items were reexported and 90 percent of the workers were Mexicans. The intent is to encourage American corporations to locate assembly plants south



of the border. Such *maquila* industries can employ lower-wage workers and avoid strict antipollution laws (leading to serious threats to public health on both sides of the border). From the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean, eighteen hundred *maquiladora* plants employed half a million workers. North of the border, U.S. factories supplied components under laws that meshed with the Mexican regulations.

THE GRAYING OF AMERICA

Retirees were another factor contributing to the growth of the Sunbelt. Between 1965 and 2000, the number of Americans aged 65 and over jumped from 18.2 million to 35 million, or 12.4 percent of the population. For the first time, most Americans could expect to survive into old age. The “young old” are people in their sixties and seventies who remain sharp, vigorous, and financially secure because of better private pensions, Social Security, and Medicare. The “old old” are the 9 million people in their eighties and nineties who often require daily assistance, although data show that improved medical services have made such Americans healthier and more self-sufficient than they were ten or twenty years ago.

Older Americans have become a powerful voice in public affairs. They tend to vote against local taxes but fight efforts to slow the growth of Social Security, even though growing numbers of the elderly are being supported by a relatively smaller proportion of working men and women. By the 1990s, observers noted increasing resentment among younger Americans, who fear that public policy is biased against the needs of men and women in their productive years. In turn, the elderly fiercely defend the programs of the 1960s and 1970s that have kept many of them from poverty. Protecting Medicare and Social Security was one of the Democrats’ best campaign issues in 1996 and 2000, after Republicans suggested cuts in spending growth.

Retired Americans changed the social geography of the United States. Much growth in the South and Southwest has been financed by money earned in the Northeast and Midwest and transferred by retirees. Florida in the 1980s absorbed nearly 1 million new residents aged sixty or older. California, Arizona, Texas, the Carolinas, and the Ozark Mountains of Missouri and Arkansas have all attracted retirees, many of them in age-segregated communities such as Sun City near Phoenix.

VALUES IN COLLISION

In 1988, two very different religious leaders sought a presidential nomination. Pat Robertson’s campaign for the Republican nomination tapped deep discontent with the changes in American society since the 1960s. A television evangelist, Robertson used the mailing list from his 700 Club program to mobilize conservative Christians and pushed the Republican Party further to the right on family and social issues. Jesse Jackson, a civil-rights leader and minister from Chicago, mounted a grassroots campaign with the opposite goal of moving the Democratic Party to the left on social and economic policy. Drawing on his experience in the black civil-rights movement, he assembled a “Rainbow Coalition” that included labor unionists, feminists, and others whom Robertson’s followers feared. Both Jackson and Robertson used their powerful personalities and religious convictions to inspire support from local churches and churchgoers.

In diagnosing social ills, Robertson pointed to the problems of individual indulgence, while Jackson pointed to racism and economic inequality. Their sharp divergence expressed differences in basic values that divided Americans in the 1980s and beyond. In substantial measure, the conflicts were rooted in the social and cultural changes of the 1960s and 1970s that had altered traditional institu-



tions, especially the 1950s ideal of a “Ward and June Cleaver” family. Changes in roles and expectations among women and new openness about gay and lesbian sexuality were particularly powerful in dividing American churches and politics.

In *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* (1971), the U.S. Supreme Court held that crosstown busing was an acceptable solution to de facto segregation that resulted from residential patterns within a single school district. When school officials failed to achieve racial balance, federal judges ordered their own busing plans. For many Americans, the image of busing for racial integration was fixed in 1975 when white people in Boston reacted with violence against black students who were bused to largely white high schools in the South Boston and Charlestown neighborhoods. The goal of equal opportunity clashed with equally strong values of neighborhood, community, and ethnic solidarity.

Busing was self-defeating, for it caused white families to move out of the integrating school district or to place their children in private academies, as happened frequently in the South. Busing also caused suburbanites to defend their political independence fiercely.

Zoning was another powerful tool of suburban self-defense. Restrictive building codes, requirements for large lots, and expensive subdivision fees could price all but the rich out of the local housing market. Many suburbs refused to zone land for apartments. As one Connecticut suburbanite put it, for a moderate-income family to hope to move into one of the state’s most exclusive suburbs was “like going into Tiffany and demanding a ring for \$12.50. Tiffany doesn’t have any rings for \$12.50. Well, Greenwich is like Tiffany.”

However, as continued decentralization pushed the suburban share of the U.S. population toward 50 percent in the 1990s, most suburban rings displayed the full range of American society with the same economic, traffic, and pollution problems as the central cities.

NEW MEANINGS FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES

The political and social changes of the 1960s altered the patterns and meaning of family life. Americans began to rethink ideas about families and to emphasize personal identities in addition to traditional family roles. Women redefined themselves as individuals and workers as well as wives and mothers. Gays and lesbians asserted that their sexual orientations were not aberrations from “normal” family patterns but were valid in their own right. As average life spans lengthened, older Americans found personal satisfaction and political influence as members of their own communities and interest groups.

If one result of changing family patterns was new political groupings and new policies, another was deep confusion. In 1992, Vice President Dan Quayle earned headlines, and some derision, by criticizing the television comedy *Murphy Brown* for a positive and unrealistic portrayal of its lead character as a single mother. In the same year, however, 98 percent of Americans agreed that the label “family” applied to a married couple living with their children and 81 percent also applied “family” to the *Murphy Brown* scenario of an unwed mother living with her child. More than a quarter were even comfortable using “family” for two lesbian women or two gay men living together and raising children.

THE FEMINIST CRITIQUE

The growing dissatisfaction of many women with the domestic role expected of them in the 1950s helped set the stage for a revived feminism. Important steps in this revival included the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women in 1961;

WHAT WERE the culture wars?



the addition of gender as one of the categories protected by the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and creation of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966.

Throughout the 1970s, activists battled to open one job category after another to women who proved that they could indeed use tools, run computers, or pick stocks on Wall Street. They also battled for equal pay for everyone with equal qualifications and responsibilities.

Changes in sexual behavior paralleled efforts to equalize treatment in the workplace. More reliable methods of contraception, especially birth control pills introduced in the early 1960s, gave women greater control over child-bearing. In some ways a replay of ideas from the 1920s, a new sexual revolution eroded the double standard that expected chastity of women but tolerated promiscuity among men. One consequence was a singles culture that accepted sexual activity between unmarried men and women.

Feminist radicals caught the attention of the national media with a demonstration against the 1968 Miss America pageant. Protesters crowned a sheep as Miss America and set out barrels for women who wanted to make a statement by tossing their bras and makeup in the trash.

Women's liberation took off as a social and political movement in 1970 and 1971. Within a few years, millions of women had recognized events and patterns in their lives as discrimination based on gender.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND PUBLIC POLICY

Congress wrote key goals of the feminist movement into law in the early 1970s. Title IX of the Educational Amendments (1972) to the Civil Rights Act prohibited discrimination by sex in any educational program receiving federal aid. In the same year, Congress sent the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the states for ratification. The amendment read, "Equal rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." More than twenty states ratified quickly in the first few months and another dozen after increasingly tough battles in state legislatures. The ERA then stalled, three states short, when the time limit for ratification expired in 1982.

In January 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court expanded the debate about women's rights with the case of *Roe v. Wade*. Voting 7 to 2, the Court struck down state laws forbidding abortion in the first three months of pregnancy and set guidelines for abortion during the remaining months. Drawing on the earlier decision of *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which dealt with access to information about birth control, the justices held that the Fourteenth Amendment includes a right to privacy that blocks states from interfering with a woman's right to terminate pregnancy.

The feminist movement and specific policy measures related to it put equal rights and the fight against sexism (a word no one knew before 1965) on the national agenda and gradually changed how Americans thought about the relationships between men and women. Feminists focused attention on rape as a crime of violence, calling attention to the burdens the legal system placed on rape victims. In the 1980s and 1990s, they also challenged sexual harassment in the workplace, gradually refining the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

These changes came in the context of increasingly sharp conflict over the feminist agenda. Both the ERA and *Roe* stirred impassioned support and equally passionate opposition. Opponents of the ERA worried about unisex restrooms (not a problem on commercial airliners) and women in the military (not a problem in the Persian Gulf War). Also fueling the debate was a deep split between the mainstream feminist view of women as fully equal individuals and the contrary belief that women had a special role as anchors of families, an updating of the nineteenth-century idea of separate spheres.

Roe v. Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision (1973) that disallowed state laws prohibiting abortion during the first three months (trimester) of pregnancy and established guidelines for abortion in the second and third trimesters.

The most sweeping change in the lives of American women did not come from federal legislation or court cases but from the growing likelihood that a married woman would work outside the home. In 1960, some 32 percent of married women were in the labor force; forty years later, 69 percent were working or looking for work (along with 69 percent of single women). Federal and state governments slowly responded to the changing demands of work and family with new policies such as a federal child care tax credit.

One reason for more working women was inflation in the 1970s and declining wages in the 1980s, both of which eroded the ability of families to live comfortably on one income. Between 1979 and 1986, fully 80 percent of married households saw the husband's income fall in constant dollars. The result, headlined the *Wall Street Journal* in 1994: "More Women Take Low-Wage Jobs Just So Their Families Can Get By." One young woman juggled community college courses and full-time work as an insurance company clerk, earning more than her husband brought home as a heavy equipment operator. Another worked at the drive-up window of a shopping center bank and cleaned offices on Saturdays to help pay the mortgage on a house purchased before her husband's employer imposed pay cuts.

A second reason for the increase in working women from 29 million in 1970 to 66 million in 2000 was increasing need for "women's jobs" like data entry clerks, reservation agents, and nurses. Indeed, the American economy still divides job categories by sex. Despite some movement toward gender-neutral hiring in the 1970s job types were more segregated by sex than by race in the early 1990s.

COMING OUT

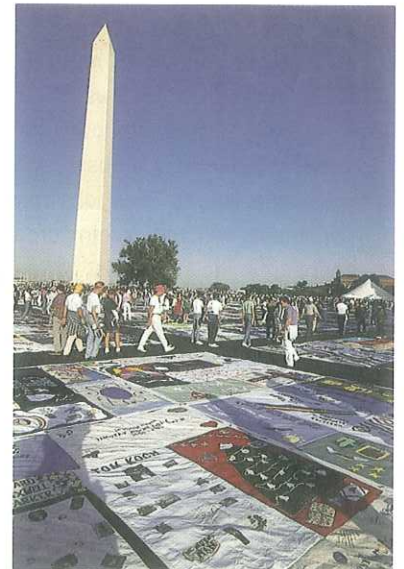
New militancy among gay men and lesbians drew on several of the social changes of the late 1960s and 1970s. Willingness to acknowledge nonstandard sexual behavior was part of a change in public values. Tactics of political pressure came from the antiwar and civil rights movements. The timing, with a series of key events from 1969 to 1974, coincided with that of women's liberation.

Gay activism spread from the biggest cities to smaller communities, from the coasts to Middle America. New York police had long harassed gay bars and their customers. When police raided Manhattan's Stonewall Inn in June 1969, patrons fought back in a weekend of disorder. The "**Stonewall Rebellion**" was a catalyst for homosexuals to assert themselves as a political force. San Francisco also became a center of gay life. By the late 1970s, the city had more than three hundred business and social gathering places identified as gay and lesbian.

With New Yorkers and San Franciscans as examples, more and more gay men and lesbians "came out," or went public about their sexual orientation. They published newspapers, organized churches, and lobbied politicians for protection of basic civil rights such as equal access to employment, housing, and public accommodations. They staged "gay pride" days and marches. In 1974, the American Psychiatric Association eliminated homosexuality from its official list of mental disorders.

Life in gay communities took an abrupt turn in the 1980s when a new worldwide epidemic began to affect the United States. Scientists first identified a new disease pattern, **acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS)**, in 1981. The name described the symptoms resulting from the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which destroys the body's ability to resist disease. HIV is transferred through blood and semen. In the 1980s, the most frequent American victims were gay men and intravenous drug users.

A decade later, it was clear that HIV/AIDS was a national and even global problem. By the end of 1998, AIDS had been responsible for 411,000 deaths in the United States, transmission to heterosexual women was increasing, and HIV infection had spread to every American community.



AIDS quilt, Washington, D.C.,
October, 1992

Lisa Quinones/Black Star

Stonewall Rebellion On June 27, 1969, patrons fought back when police raided the gay Stonewall Inn in New York.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) A complex of deadly pathologies resulting from infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).



FROM THEN TO NOW

Women and Work in American Offices

At the end of the twentieth century, women filled the majority of America's office-based jobs. More women than men worked as office managers, receptionists, library administrators, bank tellers, travel agents, administrative assistants, insurance agents, bookkeepers, and other desk-and-computer occupations.

In 1997, women made up 46 percent of the American labor force. Seven out of ten of these women worked in professional, managerial, technical, administrative support, and sales positions. They ranged from corporate CEOs and college professors to clerks in state motor vehicle offices and the voices that take your orders and reservations when you dial 800.

This employment pattern, which most Americans now take for granted, is the product of 140 years of gradual change that began with, and was triggered by, the Civil War. Before the Civil War, American women found employment as domestic servants, sometimes as mill operatives, and increasingly as schoolteachers, but not as office workers. Clerks were men—sometimes settled into lower-status white-collar careers and sometimes learning a business from the inside before rising into management. Their jobs consisted of copying letters and documents by hand, tracing orders and correspondence, and keeping financial records.

The Civil War, however, sharply increased the flow of government paperwork while diverting young men into military service. The U.S. Treasury Department in Washington responded in 1862 by hiring women to sort and package federal bonds and currency. Treasury officials fretted about the moral

implications of mixing men and women in offices but overcame these concerns when they found that women were both cheap and reliable workers. By 1870, several hundred women worked in Washington's federal offices, enough for a character in a novel about the Hayes administration (1877–1881) to comment that he could learn from a glance to “single out the young woman who supported her family upon her salary and the young woman who bought her ribbons with it; the widow who fed half-a-dozen children.”

As the national economy grew in the late nineteenth century, it generated ever-increasing flows of information. New technologies such as telephones and typewriters routinized clerical work. These trends increased the need for desk workers, a need largely filled by middle-class women, whose literacy was often guaranteed by the high school diplomas that went disproportionately to women in the later nineteenth century. As women workers filled new downtown skyscrapers, the central districts of large cities lost some of their rough edges and grew more respectable as centers of shopping and entertainment.

By 1900, the division of labor that would characterize the first half of the twentieth century was in place. Women comprised 76 percent of the nation's stenographers and typists and 29 percent of its cashiers, bookkeepers, and accountants. For the most part, however, they occupied the lower echelons of the office hierarchy. It was men who determined what was to be said; women who transcribed, transmitted, recorded, and filed their messages. Only in recent decades have women begun successfully to challenge that established order.

By the 1990s, Americans were accustomed to open discussion of gay sexuality, if not always accepting of its reality. Television stars and other entertainers could “come out” and retain their popularity. So could politicians in selected districts. On the issue of gays in the military, however, Congress and the Pentagon were more cautious, accepting a policy that made engaging in homosexual acts, though not sexual orientation itself, grounds for discharge.

CHURCHES IN CHANGE

Americans take their search for spiritual grounding much more seriously than do citizens of other industrial nations. Roughly half of privately organized social activity (such as charity work) is church related. In the mid-1970s, 56 percent of Americans said that religion was “very important” to them, compared to only 27 percent of Europeans.

However, mainline Protestant denominations that traditionally defined the center of American belief struggled after 1970. The United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., the United Church of Christ, and the Episcopal Church battled internally over the morality of U.S. foreign policy, the role of women in the ministry, and the reception of gay and lesbian members. While they were strengthened by the ecumenical impulse, which united denominational branches that had been divided by ethnicity or regionalism, they gradually lost their predominant position among American churches, perhaps because ecumenism diluted the certainty of their message.

By contrast, evangelical Protestant churches have benefited from the direct appeal of their message and from strong roots in the booming Sunbelt. Members of evangelical churches (25 percent of white Americans) now outnumber the members of mainline Protestant churches (20 percent). Major evangelical denominations include Baptists, the Church of the Nazarene, and the Assemblies of God. Fundamentalists, defined by a belief in the literal truth of the Bible, are a subset of evangelicals. So are 8 to 10 million Pentecostals and charismatics, who accept "gifts of the spirit," such as healing by faith and speaking in tongues.

Outsiders know evangelical Christianity through "televangelists." Spending on religious television programming rose from \$50 to \$600 million by 1980. By the 1970s, it reached 20 percent of American households. (See American Views, "The Religious Imperative in Politics.")

Behind the glitz and hype of the television pulpit, evangelical churches emphasized religion as an individual experience focused on personal salvation. They also offered communities of faith to stabilize fragmented lives in a changing society.

Another important change in national religious life has been the continuing "Americanization" of the Roman Catholic church following the Second Vatican Council in 1965, in which church leaders sought to respond to postwar industrial society. In the United States, Roman Catholicism moved toward the center of American life, while Asian and Latino immigrants brought new vigor to many parishes and many inner-city churches have been centers for social action. Yet, modernization also sparked a conservative backlash in the church and Catholics disagree about whether priests should be allowed to marry and other adaptations to American culture.

CULTURE WARS

In the 1950s and 1960s, Americans argued most often over foreign policy, racial justice, and the economy. Since the 1980s, they have also quarreled over beliefs and values, especially as the patterns of family life have become more varied. In these quarrels, religious belief has heavily influenced politics as individuals and groups try to shape America around their particular, and often conflicting, ideas of the godly society. Americans who are undogmatic in religion are often liberal in politics as well, while religious and political conservatism also tend to go together.

The division on social issues is related to theological differences within Protestantism. The "conservative" emphasis on personal salvation and the literal truth of the Bible also expresses itself in a desire to restore "traditional" social patterns. Conservatives worry that social disorder occurs when people follow personal impulses and pleasures. In contrast, the "liberal" or "modern" emphasis on the universality of the Christian message restates the Social Gospel with its call to build the Kingdom of God through social justice and may recognize divergent pathways toward truth. Liberals worry that greed in the unregulated marketplace creates disorder and injustice.

The cultural conflict also transcends the historic three-way division of Americans among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. Catholic reformers, liberal Protestants, and Reform Jews may agree on issues of cultural values. The same may be true of conservative Catholics, fundamentalist Protestants, and Orthodox Jews.



◆ AMERICAN VIEWS ◆

THE RELIGIOUS IMPERATIVE IN POLITICS

The strong religious faith of many Americans can drive them to different stands on political issues. The letter below written by Jerry Falwell in 1987 to potential supporters of the Moral Majority, reflects the politically conservative outlook of many evangelical Christians. Falwell is pastor of the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. He founded the Moral Majority, a conservative religious lobbying and educational organization, in 1979 and served as its president until 1987. The second document, from an open letter issued by the Southside United Presbyterian Church in Tucson in 1982, expresses the conviction of other believers that God may sometimes require civil disobedience to oppose oppressive government actions. The letter explains the church's reasons for violating immigration law to offer sanctuary to refugees from repressive Central American regimes supported by the United States.

HOW DO Falwell and the Southside Presbyterian Church define the problems that demand a religious response? Are there any points of agreement? How does each statement balance the claims of God and government?

From the Reverend Jerry Falwell:
I believe that the overwhelming majority of Americans are sick and tired of the way that amoral liberals are trying to corrupt our nation from its commitment to freedom, democracy, traditional morality, and the free enterprise system.

And I believe that the majority of Americans agree on the basic moral values which this nation was founded upon over 200 years ago.

Today we face four burning crises as we continue in this Decade of Destiny the 1980s loss of our freedom by giving in to the Communists; the destruction of the family unit; the deterioration of the free enterprise system; and the crumbling of basic moral principles which has resulted in the legalizing of abortion, widespread pornography, and a drug problem of epidemic proportions.

That is why I went to Washington, D.C., in June of 1979, and started a new organization The Moral Majority.

Right now you may be wondering: "But I thought Jerry Falwell was the preacher on the Old-Time Gospel Hour television program?"

You are right. For over twenty-four years I have been calling the nation back to God from the pulpit on radio and television.

But in recent months I have been led to do more than just preach. I have been compelled to take action.

I have made the commitment to go right into the halls of Congress and fight for laws that will save America. . . .

I will still be preaching every Sunday on the Old-Time Gospel Hour and I still must be a husband and father to my precious family in Lynchburg, Virginia.

But as God gives me the strength, I must do more. I must go into the halls of Congress and fight for laws that will protect the grand old flag . . . for the sake of our children and grandchildren.

From Southside United Presbyterian Church.

We are writing to inform you that Southside Presbyterian Church will publicly violate the Immigration and Nationality Act, Section 274 (A). . . .

We take this action because we believe the current policy and practice of the United States Government with regard to Central American refugees is illegal and immoral. We believe our government is in violation of the 1980 Refugee Act and international law by continuing to arrest, detain, and forcibly return refugees to the terror, persecution, and murder in El Salvador and Guatemala.

We believe that justice and mercy require the people of conscience actively assert our God-given right to aid anyone fleeing from persecution and murder. . . .

We beg of you, in the name of God, to do justice and love mercy in the administration of your office. We ask that "extended voluntary departure" be granted to refugees from Central America and that current deportation proceedings against these victims be stopped.

Until such time, we will not cease to extend the sanctuary of the church. . . . Obedience to God requires this of us all.

Sources: Gary E. McCuen, ed., *The Religious Right* (G. E. McCuen Publishers, 1989); Ann Crittenden, *Sanctuary* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988).

Conservatives have initiated the culture wars, trying to stabilize what they fear is an American society spinning out of control because of sexual indulgence. In fact, the evidence on the sexual revolution is mixed. Growing numbers of teenagers reported being sexually active in the 1970s, but the rate of increase tapered off in the 1980s. The divorce rate began to drop after 1980. Births to teenagers dropped after 1990, and the number of two-parent families increased. Most adults remain monogamous, according to data from 1994.

There was, however, an astonishing eagerness to talk about sex in the 1990s and this set the stage for religiously rooted battles over two sets of issues. One cluster revolves around so-called family values, questioning the morality of access to abortion, the acceptability of homosexuality, and the roles and rights of women. A second set of concerns has focused on the supposed role of public schools in undermining morality through sex education, unrestricted reading matter, nonbiblical science, and the absence of prayer. Opinion polls show clear differences among religious denominations on issues such as censorship of library books, acceptability of racially segregated neighborhoods, freedom of choice in terminating pregnancy, and homosexuality, and efforts to restrict legal access to abortion mobilized thousands of “right to life” advocates in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

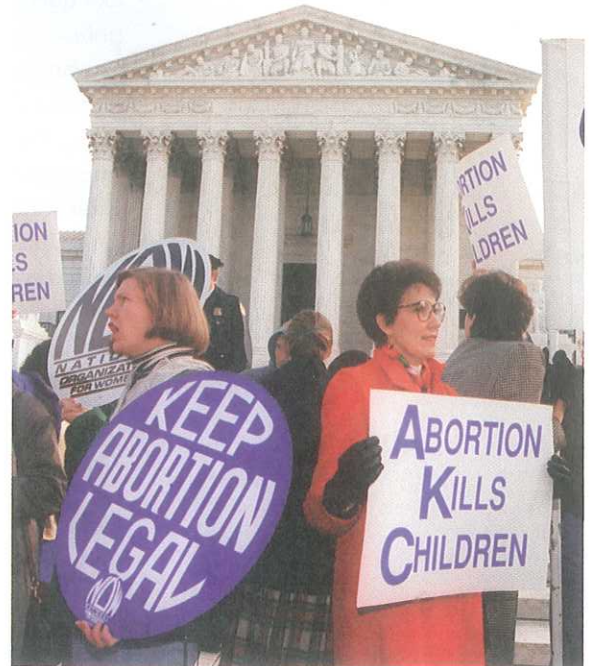
A culturally conservative issue with great popular appeal in the early 1990s was an effort to prevent states and localities from protecting homosexuals against discrimination. Under the slogan “No special rights,” antigay measures passed in Cincinnati, Colorado, and Oregon in 1993 and 1994, only to have the Supreme Court overturn the Colorado law in *Romer v. Evans* (1996). Public support for lesbian and gay civil rights varies with different issues (strong support for equal employment opportunity, much less for granting marriage rights to same-sex couples) and whether the issues are framed in terms of specified rights for gays or in terms of the right of everyone, including gays, to be free from government interference with personal decisions, such as living arrangements and sexual choices.

CONCLUSION

Americans entered the 1980s searching for stability. The 1970s had brought unexpected and uncomfortable change. America’s global post-war dominance seemed to recede even as traditional values appeared under siege in the U.S. itself. Ronald Reagan’s presidential campaign played to these insecurities by promising to revitalize the older ways of life and restore the United States to its former influence.

Taken as a whole, it is fair to call the years from 1981 through 1992 the era of the Reagan revolution. The astonishing collapse of the Soviet Union ended forty years of Cold War. The fifty-year expansion of federal government programs to deal with economic and social inequities was reversed. Prosperity alternated with recessions that shifted the balance between regions. Economic inequality increased after narrowing for a generation at the same time that more and more leaders proclaimed that unregulated markets could best meet social needs. Middle-class Latinos and African Americans made substantial gains while many other minority Americans sank deeper into poverty.

Every revolution has its precursors. Intellectuals had been clarifying the justifications for Reagan administration actions since the 1960s. The Reagan-Bush years



In December 1993, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on whether states could require protesters to remain a certain distance from abortion clinics. These anti-abortion and pro-abortion protesters revealed the deep divisions over this and other issues in the culture wars.

AP/Wide World Photos



extended changes that had begun in the 1970s, particularly the conservative economic policies and military buildup of the troubled Carter administration. In retrospect, the growing weakness of the USSR should also have been apparent in the same decade, had not the United States been blinded by its fear of communist power. Intervention in the Persian Gulf amplified American policies that had been in place since the CIA intervened in Iran in 1953. The outbreak of violence in Los Angeles after the Rodney King verdict showed that race relations were as tense as they had been in the 1960s.

In 1992, the United States was the undisputed world power. Its economy was poised for a surge of growth. It was the leader in scientific research and the development of new technologies. Its military capacities far surpassed those of any rival and seemed to offer a free hand in shaping the world—capacities that would be tested and utilized in the new century.



SUMMARY

Reagan's Domestic Revolution Political change began in 1980, when Ronald Reagan and his running mate George H.W. Bush, rode American discontent to a decisive victory in the presidential election. Building on a neoconservative critique of American public policies and issues from the Carter administration, Reagan presided over revolutionary changes in American government and policies. The consequences of his two terms included an altered role for government, powerful but selected economic growth, and a shift of domestic policy toward lifestyle concerns. Reaganomics and a new prosperity contrasted with corporate “downsizing” and an increase in the poverty rate.

The Second (Short) Cold War Reagan regarded the Soviet Union as an “evil empire.” By the end of 1991 the Soviet Union was gone, Communist regimes had ended in Eastern Europe, and the Berlin Wall had come down. The Cold War had finally ended with the help of the relentless pressure of American spending on defense helping bankrupt the Soviet Union. Reagan's foreign policy was marked by the invasion of Granada, the overthrowing of a Panamanian strong man, assistance to Nicaraguan Contras, and the revelation of the Iran-Contra affair. In 1991, President George H.W. Bush intervened in the Persian Gulf in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; the war fascinated millions who watched it live on television; America won the war but not the peace.

Growth in the Sunbelt The emergence of the Sunbelt as a center of population and source of conservative voting strength, the immigration “boom,” the demographic and ethnic changes in American cities, and the graying of America are all characteristics of America since 1981. Much of the Sunbelt growth has come from retired Americans and new job seekers. Older Americans have now become a powerful voice in public affairs. Immigration has significantly changed the American ethnic mix; while the largest single group of immigrants is Hispanic, immigrants from Asia, Russia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East are reflected in the 10.4 percent of the population that is foreign-born.

Values in Collision In the 1950s and 1960s Americans argued most often about foreign policy, racial injustice, and the economy. Since that time, they have also quarreled over beliefs and values, especially as patterns in family life have become more varied. In substantial measure these conflicts were rooted in the social and cultural changes of the 1960s and 1970s that had altered traditional institutions. Changes in roles and expectations among women and new openness about gay and lesbian sexuality were particularly powerful in dividing American churches and politics. Abortion rights and the conservative backlash, the increase of women in the work force, and the new “culture wars” were part of modern America.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Was there a Reagan revolution in American politics? Did Reagan's presidency change the economic environment for workers and business corporations?
 2. How did American ideas about the proper role of government change during the 1980s?
 3. What caused the breakup of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War?
 4. How did immigration from other nations affect different regions in America?
 5. What changes in family roles and sexual behavior became divisive political issues?
-

KEY TERMS

Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) (p. 813)
Americans with Disabilities Act (p. 801)
Deregulation (p. 796)
Economic Recovery and Tax Act of 1981 (ERTA) (p. 796)

Glasnost (p. 804)
Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (p. 808)
Intermediate Nuclear Force Agreement (p. 804)
Operation Desert Storm (p. 806)
First Persian Gulf War (p. 805)

Perestroika (p. 804)
Roe v. Wade (p. 812)
Sagebrush Rebellion (p. 797)
Stonewall Rebellion (p. 813)
Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) (p. 802)
Sunbelt (p. 806)

WHERE TO LEARN MORE

- 📖 **Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home, Dixon, Illinois.** The home where Reagan lived from 1920 to 1923 tells relatively little about Reagan himself but a great deal about the small-town context that shaped his ideas.
- 📖 **The Causes of Homelessness in America.** Social and political policies since the 1980s that have contributed to the gap between rich and poor and the rise of homelessness. http://www.stanford.edu/class/e297c/poverty_prejudice/soc_sec/bcauses.htm
- 📖 **The Intermediate Nuclear Force Agreement (INF).** The full text document of the INF agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, the first true nuclear disarmament treaty. <http://www.state.gov/www/global/arms/treaties/inf.html>
- 📖 **The Gulf War.** Read about the Persian Gulf War commanders, see testimony of American combat soldiers, and learn about the events leading up to the invasion. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/gulf/>
- 📖 **A Concrete Curtain: The Life and Death of the Berlin Wall.** Traces the wall from creation in the 1960s to its destruction after the collapse of communist East Germany. <http://www.wall-berlin.org/gb/berlin.htm>



For additional study resources for this chapter, go to:
www.prenhall.com/goldfield/chapter30

*. . . the looks on the faces of the people
coming out of the city that day will haunt me forever . . .
everyone was the same color . . . dust white . . .
women crying . . . men crying . . . we must never forget
the men and women that died that day . . .*

http://w



Black smoke billows through lower Manhattan during the collapse of the World Trade Center.

