

DIKTAT KULIAH
CULTURE & SOCIETY IN NORTH AMERICA



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Kata Pengantar

Puji syukur penulis ucapkan kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa atas rahmat-Nya yang telah tercurah, sehingga penulis bisa menyelesaikan Diktat Kuliah Culture and Society in North America ini. Adapun tujuan dari disusunnya diktat ini adalah supaya para mahasiswa dapat mengetahui kultur dan masyarakat Amerika lebih baik.

Tersusunnya diktat ini tentu bukan dari usaha penulis seorang. Dukungan moral dan material dari berbagai pihak sangatlah membantu tersusunnya diktat ini. Untuk itu, penulis ucapkan terima kasih kepada keluarga, sahabat, rekan-rekan, dan pihak-pihak lainnya yang membantu secara moral dan material bagi tersusunnya diktat ini.

Diktat yang tersusun sekian lama ini tentu masih jauh dari kata sempurna. Untuk itu, kritik dan saran yang membangun sangat diperlukan agar diktat ini bisa lebih baik nantinya.

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Penulis

CONTENTS

| | | |
|--------------|---|-----|
| Chapter I | Introduction | 3 |
| Chapter II | History of The United States | 6 |
| Chapter III | Independence and Expansion | 10 |
| Chapter IV | American Melting Pot | 20 |
| Chapter V | The Rise & Fall of The American “Melting Pot” | 27 |
| Chapter VI | The U.S Political System | 32 |
| Chapter VII | Economic Systems | 44 |
| Chapter VIII | The Transformation of Economic System | 55 |
| Chapter IX | American Traditions and Customs | 70 |
| Chapter X | United States Holidays and Festivals | 76 |
| Chapter XI | American Literature (17 TH & 18 TH Century) | 80 |
| Chapter XII | The 19 TH Century American Literature | 87 |
| Chapter XIII | The 20 TH Century American Literature | 101 |
| Chapter XIV | American Literature after World War II | 114 |
| Chapter XV | Music of The United States | 134 |
| Chapter XVI | Lifestyle in U.S.A | 148 |
| References | | |

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The United States of America (USA), commonly known as the United States (U.S. or US) or America, is a country mostly located in central North America, between Canada and Mexico. It consists of 50 states, a federal district, five major self-governing territories, and various possessions. At 3.8 million square miles (9.8 million km²), it is the world's third-or fourth-largest country by total area. With a 2019 estimated population of over 328 million, the U.S. is the third most populous country in the world. Americans are a racially and ethnically diverse population that has been shaped through centuries of immigration. The capital is Washington, D.C., and the most populous city is New York City.

Paleo-Indians migrated from Siberia to the North American mainland at least 12,000 years ago, and European colonization began in the 16th century. The United States emerged from the thirteen British colonies established along the East Coast. Numerous disputes between Great Britain and the colonies led to the American Revolutionary War lasting between 1775 and 1783, leading to independence. Beginning in the late 18th century, the United States vigorously expanded across North America, gradually acquiring new territories, killing and displacing Native Americans, and admitting new states. By 1848, the United States spanned the continent.¹ Slavery was legal in much of the United States until the second half of the 19th century, when the American Civil War led to its abolition.

The Spanish–American War and World War I established the U.S. as a world power, a status confirmed by the outcome of World War II. It was the first country to develop nuclear weapons and is the only country to have used them in warfare. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union competed in the Space Race, culminating with the 1969 Apollo 11 mission, the spaceflight that first landed humans on the Moon. The end of the Cold War and collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 left the United States as the world's sole superpower.

The United States is a federal republic and a representative democracy. It is a founding member of the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Organization of American States (OAS), NATO, and other international organizations. It is a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

A highly developed country, the United States is the world's largest economy and accounts for approximately a quarter of global gross domestic product (GDP). The United States is the world's largest importer and the second-largest exporter of goods, by value. Although its population is only 4.3% of the world total, it holds 29.4% of the total wealth in the world, the largest share held by any country. Despite income and wealth disparities, the United States continues to rank high in measures of socioeconomic performance, including average wage, median income, median wealth, human development, per capita GDP, and worker productivity. It is the foremost military power in the world, making up more than a third of global military spending, and is a leading political, cultural, and scientific force internationally.

The first known use of the name "America" dates back to 1507, when it appeared on a world map created by the German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller. On this map, the name applied to South America in honor of the Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci. After returning from his expeditions, Vespucci first postulated that the West Indies did not represent Asia's eastern limit, as initially thought by Christopher Columbus, but instead were part of an entirely separate landmass thus far unknown to the Europeans. In 1538, the Flemish cartographer Gerardus Mercator used the name "America" on his own world map, applying it to the entire Western Hemisphere.

The first documentary evidence of the phrase "United States of America" dates from a January 2, 1776 letter written by Stephen Moylan, Esq., to Lt. Col. Joseph Reed, George Washington's aide-de-camp and Muster-Master General of the Continental Army. Moylan expressed his wish to go "with full and ample powers from the United States of America to Spain" to seek assistance in the revolutionary war effort. The first known publication of the phrase "United

States of America" was in an anonymous essay in *The Virginia Gazette* newspaper in Williamsburg, Virginia, on April 6, 1776.

The second draft of the Articles of Confederation, prepared by John Dickinson and completed no later than June 17, 1776, declared "The name of this Confederation shall be the 'United States of America'". The final version of the Articles sent to the states for ratification in late 1777 contains the sentence "The Stile of this Confederacy shall be 'The United States of America'". In June 1776, Thomas Jefferson wrote the phrase "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" in all capitalized letters in the headline of his "original Rough draught" of the Declaration of Independence. This draft of the document did not surface until June 21, 1776, and it is unclear whether it was written before or after Dickinson used the term in his June 17 draft of the Articles of Confederation.

The short form "United States" is also standard. Other common forms are the "U.S.," the "USA," and "America." Colloquial names are the "U.S. of A." and, internationally, the "States." "Columbia," a name popular in American poetry and songs of the late 18th century, derives its origin from Christopher Columbus; it appears in the name "District of Columbia." Many landmarks and institutions in the Western Hemisphere bear his name, including the country of Colombia.

The phrase "United States" was originally plural, a description of a collection of independent states—e.g., "the United States are"—including in the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, ratified in 1865. The singular form—e.g., "the United States is"—became popular after the end of the Civil War. The singular form is now standard; the plural form is retained in the idiom "these United States." The difference is more significant than usage; it is a difference between a collection of states and a unit.

A citizen of the United States is an "American." "United States," "American" and "U.S." refer to the country adjectivally ("American values," "U.S. forces"). In English, the word "American" rarely refers to topics or subjects not directly connected with the United States.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

Indigenous peoples and pre-Columbian history

It has been generally accepted that the first inhabitants of North America migrated from Siberia by way of the Bering land bridge and arrived at least 12,000 years ago; however, increasing evidence suggests an even earlier arrival. After crossing the land bridge, the Paleo-Indians moved southward along the Pacific coast and through an interior ice-free corridor. The Clovis culture, which appeared around 11,000 BC, was initially believed to represent the first wave of human settlement of the Americas. It is likely these represent the first of three major waves of migration into North America.

Over time, indigenous cultures in North America grew increasingly complex, and some, such as the pre-Columbian Mississippian culture in the southeast, developed advanced agriculture, grand architecture, and state-level societies. The Mississippian culture flourished in the south from 800 to 1600 AD, extending from the Mexican border down through Florida. Its city state Cahokia is the largest, most complex pre-Columbian archaeological site in the modern-day United States. In the Four Corners region, Ancestral Puebloan culture developed from centuries of agricultural experimentation.

Three UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the United States are credited to the Pueblos: Mesa Verde National Park, Chaco Culture National Historical Park, and Taos Pueblo. The earthworks constructed by Native Americans of the Poverty Point culture have also been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. In the southern Great Lakes region, the Iroquois Confederacy was established at some point between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. Most prominent along the Atlantic coast were the Algonquian tribes, who practiced hunting and trapping, along with limited cultivation.

Effects on and interaction with native populations

With the progress of European colonization in the territories of the contemporary United States, the Native Americans were often conquered and displaced. The native population of America declined after European arrival for various reasons, primarily diseases such as smallpox and measles.

Estimating the native population of North America at the time of European contact is difficult. Douglas H. Ubelaker of the Smithsonian Institution estimated that there was a population of 92,916 in the south Atlantic states and a population of 473,616 in the Gulf states, but most academics regard this figure as too low. Anthropologist Henry F. Dobyns believed the populations were much higher, suggesting 1,100,000 along the shores of the gulf of Mexico, 2,211,000 people living between Florida and Massachusetts, 5,250,000 in the Mississippi Valley and tributaries and 697,000 people in the Florida peninsula.

In the early days of colonization, many European settlers were subject to food shortages, disease, and attacks from Native Americans. Native Americans were also often at war with neighboring tribes and allied with Europeans in their colonial wars. In many cases, however, natives and settlers came to depend on each other. Settlers traded for food and animal pelts; natives for guns, ammunition and other European goods. Natives taught many settlers to cultivate corn, beans, and squash. European missionaries and others felt it was important to "civilize" the Native Americans and urged them to adopt European agricultural techniques and lifestyles.

European settlements

With the advancement of European colonization in North America, the Native Americans were often conquered and displaced. The first Europeans to arrive in the contiguous United States were Spanish conquistadors such as Juan Ponce de León, who made his first visit to Florida in 1513. Even earlier, Christopher Columbus landed in Puerto Rico on his 1493 voyage. The Spanish set up the first settlements in Florida and New Mexico such as Saint

Augustine and Santa Fe. The French established their own as well along the Mississippi River. Successful English settlement on the eastern coast of North America began with the Virginia Colony in 1607 at Jamestown and with the Pilgrims' Plymouth Colony in 1620. Many settlers were dissenting Christian groups who came seeking religious freedom. The continent's first elected legislative assembly, Virginia's House of Burgesses, was created in 1619. The Mayflower Compact, signed by the Pilgrims before disembarking, and the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, established precedents for the pattern of representative self-government and constitutionalism that would develop throughout the American colonies.

Most settlers in every colony were small farmers, though other industries were formed. Cash crops included tobacco, rice, and wheat. Extraction industries grew up in furs, fishing and lumber. Manufacturers produced rum and ships, and by the late colonial period, Americans were producing one-seventh of the world's iron supply. Cities eventually dotted the coast to support local economies and serve as trade hubs. English colonists were supplemented by waves of Scotch-Irish immigrants and other groups. As coastal land grew more expensive, freed indentured servants claimed lands further west.

A large-scale slave trade with English privateers began. Because of less disease and better food and treatment, the life expectancy of slaves was much higher in North America than further south, leading to a rapid increase in the numbers of slaves. Colonial society was largely divided over the religious and moral implications of slavery, and colonies passed acts for and against the practice. But by the turn of the 18th century, African slaves were replacing indentured servants for cash crop labor, especially in the South.

With the establishment of the Province of Georgia in 1732, the 13 colonies that would become the United States of America were administered by the British as overseas dependencies. All nonetheless had local governments with elections open to most free men. With extremely high birth rates, low death rates, and steady settlement, the colonial population grew rapidly. Relatively small Native American populations were eclipsed. The Christian revivalist movement

of the 1730s and 1740s known as the Great Awakening fueled interest both in religion and in religious liberty.

During the Seven Years' War (known in the United States as the French and Indian War), British forces seized Canada from the French, but the francophone population remained politically isolated from the southern colonies. Excluding the Native Americans, who were being conquered and displaced, the 13 British colonies had a population of over 2.1 million in 1770, about a third that of Britain. Despite continuing, new arrivals, the rate of natural increase was such that by the 1770s only a small minority of Americans had been born overseas. The colonies' distance from Britain had allowed the development of self-government, but their unprecedented success motivated monarchs to periodically seek to reassert royal authority.

In 1774, the Spanish Navy ship *Santiago*, under Juan Pérez, entered and anchored in an inlet of Nootka Sound, Vancouver Island, in present-day British Columbia. Although the Spanish did not land, natives paddled to the ship to trade furs for abalone shells from California. At the time, the Spanish were able to monopolize the trade between Asia and North America, granting limited licenses to the Portuguese. When the Russians began establishing a growing fur trading system in Alaska, the Spanish began to challenge the Russians, with Pérez's voyage being the first of many to the Pacific Northwest.

During his third and final voyage, Captain James Cook became the first European to begin formal contact with Hawaii. Captain Cook's last voyage included sailing along the coast of North America and Alaska searching for a Northwest Passage for approximately nine months.

CHAPTER III

INDEPENDENCE AND EXPANSION

Independence and expansion (1776–1865)

The American Revolutionary War was the first successful colonial war of independence against a European power. Americans had developed an ideology of "republicanism" asserting that government rested on the will of the people as expressed in their local legislatures. They demanded their rights as Englishmen and "no taxation without representation". The British insisted on administering the empire through Parliament, and the conflict escalated into war.

The Second Continental Congress unanimously adopted the Declaration of Independence, which asserted that Great Britain was not protecting Americans' unalienable rights. July 4 is celebrated annually as Independence Day. In 1777, the Articles of Confederation established a decentralized government that operated until 1789.

Following the decisive Franco-American victory at Yorktown in 1781, Britain signed the peace treaty of 1783, and American sovereignty was internationally recognized and the country was granted all lands east of the Mississippi River. Nationalists led the Philadelphia Convention of 1787 in writing the United States Constitution, ratified in state conventions in 1788. The federal government was reorganized into three branches, on the principle of creating salutary checks and balances, in 1789. George Washington, who had led the Continental Army to victory, was the first president elected under the new constitution. The Bill of Rights, forbidding federal restriction of personal freedoms and guaranteeing a range of legal protections, was adopted in 1791.

Although the federal government criminalized the international slave trade in 1808, after 1820, cultivation of the highly profitable cotton crop exploded in the Deep South, and along with it, the slave population. The Second Great Awakening, especially 1800–1840, converted millions to evangelical Protestantism. In the North, it energized multiple social reform

movements, including abolitionism; in the South, Methodists and Baptists proselytized among slave populations.

Americans' eagerness to expand westward prompted a long series of American Indian Wars. The Louisiana Purchase of French-claimed territory in 1803 almost doubled the nation's area. The War of 1812, declared against Britain over various grievances and fought to a draw, strengthened U.S. nationalism. A series of military incursions into Florida led Spain to cede it and other Gulf Coast territory in 1819. The expansion was aided by steam power, when steamboats began traveling along America's large water systems, many of which were connected by new canals, such as the Erie and the I&M; then, even faster railroads began their stretch across the nation's land.

From 1820 to 1850, Jacksonian democracy began a set of reforms which included wider white male suffrage; it led to the rise of the Second Party System of Democrats and Whigs as the dominant parties from 1828 to 1854. The Trail of Tears in the 1830s exemplified the Indian removal policy that forcibly resettled Indians into the west on Indian reservations. The U.S. annexed the Republic of Texas in 1845 during a period of expansionist Manifest destiny. The 1846 Oregon Treaty with Britain led to U.S. control of the present-day American Northwest. Victory in the Mexican–American War resulted in the 1848 Mexican Cession of California and much of the present-day American Southwest. The California Gold Rush of 1848–49 spurred migration to the Pacific coast, which led to the California Genocide and the creation of additional western states. After the Civil War, new transcontinental railways made relocation easier for settlers, expanded internal trade and increased conflicts with Native Americans. In 1869, a new Peace Policy nominally promised to protect Native Americans from abuses, avoid further war, and secure their eventual U.S. citizenship. Nonetheless, large-scale conflicts continued throughout the West into the 1900s.

Civil War and Reconstruction era

President Abraham Lincoln in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, November 19, 1863.

Irreconcilable sectional conflict regarding the slavery of Africans and African Americans ultimately led to the American Civil War. Initially, states entering the Union had alternated between slave and free states, keeping a sectional balance in the Senate, while free states outstripped slave states in population and in the House of Representatives. But with additional western territory and more free-soil states, tensions between slave and free states mounted with arguments over federalism and disposition of the territories, as well as whether to expand or restrict slavery.

With the 1860 election of Republican Abraham Lincoln, conventions in thirteen slave states ultimately declared secession and formed the Confederate States of America (the "South" or the "Confederacy"), while the federal government (the "Union") maintained that secession was illegal. In order to bring about this secession, military action was initiated by the secessionists, and the Union responded in kind. The ensuing war would become the deadliest military conflict in American history, resulting in the deaths of approximately 618,000 soldiers as well as many civilians. The Union initially simply fought to keep the country united. Nevertheless, as casualties mounted after 1863 and Lincoln delivered his Emancipation Proclamation, the main purpose of the war from the Union's viewpoint became the abolition of slavery. Indeed, when the Union ultimately won the war in April 1865, each of the states in the defeated South was required to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which prohibited slavery.

The government enacted three constitutional amendments in the years after the war: the aforementioned Thirteenth as well as the Fourteenth Amendment providing citizenship to the nearly four million African Americans who had been slaves, and the Fifteenth Amendment ensuring in theory that African Americans had the right to vote. The war and its resolution led to a substantial increase in federal power aimed at reintegrating and rebuilding the South while guaranteeing the rights of the newly freed slaves.

Reconstruction began in earnest following the war. While President Lincoln attempted to foster friendship and forgiveness between the Union and the former Confederacy, his assassination on April 14, 1865, drove a wedge between North and South again. Republicans in the federal government made it their goal to oversee the rebuilding of the South and to ensure the rights of African Americans. They persisted until the Compromise of 1877 when the Republicans agreed to cease protecting the rights of African Americans in the South in order for Democrats to concede the presidential election of 1876.

Southern white Democrats, calling themselves "Redeemers," took control of the South after the end of Reconstruction. From 1890 to 1910 the Redeemers established so-called Jim Crow laws, disenfranchising most blacks and some poor whites throughout the region. Blacks faced racial segregation, especially in the South. They also occasionally experienced vigilante violence, including lynching.

Further immigration, expansion, and industrialization

In the North, urbanization and an unprecedented influx of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe supplied a surplus of labor for the country's industrialization and transformed its culture. National infrastructure including telegraph and transcontinental railroads spurred economic growth and greater settlement and development of the American Old West. The later invention of electric light and the telephone would also affect communication and urban life.

The United States fought Indian Wars west of the Mississippi River from 1810 to at least 1890. Most of these conflicts ended with the cession of Native American territory and their confinement to Indian reservations. This further expanded acreage under mechanical cultivation, increasing surpluses for international markets. Mainland expansion also included the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867. In 1893, pro-American elements in Hawaii overthrew the monarchy and formed the Republic of Hawaii, which the U.S. annexed in 1898. Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines were ceded by

Spain in the same year, following the Spanish–American War. American Samoa was acquired by the United States in 1900 after the end of the Second Samoan Civil War. The U.S. Virgin Islands were purchased from Denmark in 1917.

Rapid economic development during the late 19th and early 20th centuries fostered the rise of many prominent industrialists. Tycoons like Cornelius Vanderbilt, John D. Rockefeller, and Andrew Carnegie led the nation's progress in railroad, petroleum, and steel industries. Banking became a major part of the economy, with J. P. Morgan playing a notable role. The American economy boomed, becoming the world's largest, and the United States achieved great power status. These dramatic changes were accompanied by social unrest and the rise of populist, socialist, and anarchist movements. This period eventually ended with the advent of the Progressive Era, which saw significant reforms including women's suffrage, alcohol prohibition, regulation of consumer goods, greater antitrust measures to ensure competition and attention to worker conditions.

World War I, Great Depression, and World War II

The United States remained neutral from the outbreak of World War I in 1914 until 1917, when it joined the war as an "associated power," alongside the formal Allies of World War I, helping to turn the tide against the Central Powers. In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson took a leading diplomatic role at the Paris Peace Conference and advocated strongly for the U.S. to join the League of Nations. However, the Senate refused to approve this and did not ratify the Treaty of Versailles that established the League of Nations.

In 1920, the women's rights movement won passage of a constitutional amendment granting women's suffrage. The 1920s and 1930s saw the rise of radio for mass communication and the invention of early television. The prosperity of the Roaring Twenties ended with the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and the onset of the Great Depression. After his election as president in 1932, Franklin

D. Roosevelt responded with the New Deal. The Great Migration of millions of African Americans out of the American South began before World War I and extended through the 1960s; whereas the Dust Bowl of the mid-1930s impoverished many farming communities and spurred a new wave of western migration.

At first effectively neutral during World War II, the United States began supplying materiel to the Allies in March 1941 through the Lend-Lease program. On December 7, 1941, the Empire of Japan launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, prompting the United States to join the Allies against the Axis powers. Although Japan attacked the United States first, the U.S. nonetheless pursued a "Europe first" defense policy. The United States thus left its vast Asian colony, the Philippines, isolated and fighting a losing struggle against Japanese invasion and occupation, as military resources were devoted to the European theater. During the war, the United States was referred to as one of the "Four Policemen" of Allies power who met to plan the postwar world, along with Britain, the Soviet Union and China. Although the nation lost around 400,000 military personnel, it emerged relatively undamaged from the war with even greater economic and military influence.

Trinity test of the Manhattan Project's nuclear weapon

The United States played a leading role in the Bretton Woods and Yalta conferences with the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and other Allies, which signed agreements on new international financial institutions and Europe's postwar reorganization. As an Allied victory was won in Europe, a 1945 international conference held in San Francisco produced the United Nations Charter, which became active after the war. The United States and Japan then fought each other in the largest naval battle in history, the Battle of Leyte Gulf.^{[153][154]} The United States eventually developed the first nuclear weapons and used them on Japan in the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the Japanese surrendered on September 2, ending World War II.

Cold War and civil rights era

Martin Luther King, Jr. gives his famous "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington, 1963.

After World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union competed for power, influence, and prestige during what became known as the Cold War, driven by an ideological divide between capitalism and communism. They dominated the military affairs of Europe, with the U.S. and its NATO allies on one side and the USSR and its Warsaw Pact allies on the other. The U.S. developed a policy of containment towards the expansion of communist influence. While the U.S. and Soviet Union engaged in proxy wars and developed powerful nuclear arsenals, the two countries avoided direct military conflict.

The United States often opposed Third World movements that it viewed as Soviet-sponsored, and occasionally pursued direct action for regime change against left-wing governments, even supporting right-wing authoritarian governments at times. American troops fought communist Chinese and North Korean forces in the Korean War of 1950–53. The Soviet Union's 1957 launch of the first artificial satellite and its 1961 launch of the first manned spaceflight initiated a "Space Race" in which the United States became the first nation to land a man on the moon in 1969. A proxy war in Southeast Asia eventually evolved into full American participation, as the Vietnam War.

At home, the U.S. experienced sustained economic expansion and a rapid growth of its population and middle class. Construction of an Interstate Highway System transformed the nation's infrastructure over the following decades. Millions moved from farms and inner cities to large suburban housing developments. In 1959 Hawaii became the 50th and last U.S. state added to the country. The growing Civil Rights Movement used nonviolence to confront segregation and discrimination, with Martin Luther King Jr. becoming a prominent leader and figurehead. A combination of court decisions and legislation, culminating in the Civil Rights Act of 1968, sought to end racial

discrimination. Meanwhile, a counterculture movement grew which was fueled by opposition to the Vietnam war, black nationalism, and the sexual revolution.

U.S. president Ronald Reagan (left) and Soviet general secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in Geneva, 1985.

The launch of a "War on Poverty" expanded entitlements and welfare spending, including the creation of Medicare and Medicaid, two programs that provide health coverage to the elderly and poor, respectively, and the means-tested Food Stamp Program and Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

The 1970s and early 1980s saw the onset of stagflation. After his election in 1980, President Ronald Reagan responded to economic stagnation with free-market oriented reforms. Following the collapse of détente, he abandoned "containment" and initiated the more aggressive "rollback" strategy towards the USSR. After a surge in female labor participation over the previous decade, by 1985 the majority of women aged 16 and over were employed.

The late 1980s brought a "thaw" in relations with the USSR, and its collapse in 1991 finally ended the Cold War. This brought about unipolarity with the U.S. unchallenged as the world's dominant superpower. The concept of Pax Americana, which had appeared in the post-World War II period, gained wide popularity as a term for the post-Cold War new world order.

Contemporary history

The World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan during the September 11 terrorist attacks by the Islamic terrorist group Al-Qaeda in 2001

After the Cold War, the conflict in the Middle East triggered a crisis in 1990, when Iraq under Saddam Hussein invaded and attempted to annex Kuwait, an ally of the United States. Fearing the instability would spread to other regions, President George H. W. Bush launched Operation Desert Shield, a defensive force buildup in Saudi Arabia, and Operation Desert Storm, in a staging titled the Gulf War; waged by coalition forces from 34 nations, led by the United States against

Iraq ending in the expulsion of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and restoration of the monarchy.

Originating within U.S. military defense networks, the Internet spread to international academic platforms and then to the public in the 1990s, greatly affecting the global economy, society, and culture. Due to the dot-com boom, stable monetary policy, and reduced social welfare spending, the 1990s saw the longest economic expansion in modern U.S. history. Beginning in 1994, the U.S. entered into the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), prompting trade among the U.S., Canada, and Mexico to soar.

On September 11, 2001, Al-Qaeda terrorists struck the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon near Washington, D.C., killing nearly 3,000 people. In response, the United States launched the War on Terror, which included a war in Afghanistan and the 2003–11 Iraq War.

Government policy designed to promote affordable housing, widespread failures in corporate and regulatory governance, and historically low interest rates set by the Federal Reserve led to the mid-2000s housing bubble, which culminated with the 2008 financial crisis, the nation's largest economic contraction since the Great Depression. Barack Obama, the first African-American and multiracial president, was elected in 2008 amid the crisis,^[191] and subsequently passed stimulus measures and the Dodd–Frank Act in an attempt to mitigate its negative effects and ensure there would not be a repeat of the crisis. In 2010, the Obama administration passed the Affordable Care Act, which made the most sweeping reforms to the nation's healthcare system in nearly five decades, including mandates, subsidies and insurance exchanges.

American forces in Iraq were withdrawn in large numbers in 2009 and 2010, and the war in the region was declared formally over in December 2011. But months earlier, Operation Neptune Spear led to the death of the leader of Al-Qaeda in Pakistan. In the presidential election of 2016, Republican Donald Trump was elected as the 45th president of the United States. On January 20, 2020, the first case of COVID-19 in the United States was confirmed. As of August 2020, the United States has over 4.5 million COVID-19 cases and over

150,000 deaths. The United States is, by far, the country with the most cases of COVID-19 since April 11, 2020.

CHAPTER IV

AMERICAN MELTING POT

The melting pot is a monocultural metaphor for a heterogeneous society becoming more homogeneous, the different elements "melting together" with a common culture, or vice versa, for a homogeneous society becoming more heterogeneous through the influx of foreign elements with different cultural backgrounds, possessing the potential to create disharmony within the previous culture. Historically, it is often used to describe the cultural integration of immigrants to the United States.

The melting-together metaphor was in use by the 1780s. The exact term "melting pot" came into general usage in the United States after it was used as a metaphor describing a fusion of nationalities, cultures and ethnicities in the 1908 play of the same name.

The desirability of assimilation and the melting pot model has been rejected by proponents of multiculturalism, who have suggested alternative metaphors to describe the current American society, such as a *mosaic*, *salad bowl*, or *kaleidoscope*, in which different cultures mix, but remain distinct in some aspects. The melting pot continues to be used as an assimilation model in vernacular and political discourse along with more inclusive models of assimilation in the academic debates on identity, adaptation and integration of immigrants into various political, social and economic spheres.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the metaphor of a "crucible" or "smelting pot" was used to describe the fusion of different nationalities, ethnicities and cultures. It was used together with concepts of the United States as an ideal republic and a "city upon a hill" or new promised land. It was a metaphor for the idealized process of immigration and colonization by which different nationalities, cultures and "races" (a term that could encompass nationality, ethnicity and racist views of humanity) were to blend into a new, virtuous community, and it was connected to utopian visions of the emergence of an American "new man". While "melting" was in common use the exact term

"melting pot" came into general usage in 1908, after the premiere of the play *The Melting Pot* by Israel Zangwill.

The first use in American literature of the concept of immigrants "melting" into the receiving culture are found in the writings of J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur. In his *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782) Crevecoeur writes, in response to his own question, "What then is the American, this new man?" that the American is one who "leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great Alma Mater. Here individuals of all nations are *melted* into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world."

...whence came all these people? They are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes... What, then, is the American, this new man? He is either an European or the descendant of an European; hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds.... The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared.

— *J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, Letters from an American Farmer*

In 1845, Ralph Waldo Emerson, alluding to the development of European civilization out of the medieval Dark Ages, wrote in his private journal of America as the Utopian product of a culturally and racially mixed "smelting pot", but only in 1912 were his remarks first published. In his writing, Emerson explicitly welcomed the racial intermixing of whites and non-whites, a highly controversial view during his lifetime.

A magazine article in 1876 used the metaphor explicitly:

The fusing process goes on as in a blast-furnace; one generation, a single year even—transforms the English, the German, the Irish emigrant into an American. Uniform institutions, ideas, language, the influence of the majority, bring us soon to a similar complexion; the individuality of the immigrant, almost even his traits of race and religion, fuse down in the democratic alembic like chips of brass thrown into the melting pot.

In 1893, historian Frederick Jackson Turner also used the metaphor of immigrants melting into one American culture. In his essay *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, he referred to the "composite nationality" of the American people, arguing that the frontier had functioned as a "crucible" where "the immigrants were Americanized, liberated and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics".

In his 1905 travel narrative *The American Scene*, Henry James discusses cultural intermixing in New York City as a "fusion, as of elements in solution in a vast hot pot".

The exact term "melting pot" came into general usage in the United States after it was used as a metaphor describing a fusion of nationalities, cultures and ethnicities in the 1908 play of the same name, first performed in Washington, D.C., where the immigrant protagonist declared:

Understand that America is God's Crucible, the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and re-forming! Here you stand, good folk, think I, when I see them at Ellis Island, here you stand in your fifty groups, your fifty languages, and histories, and your fifty blood hatreds and rivalries. But you won't be long like that, brothers, for these are the fires of God you've come to—these are fires of God. A fig for your feuds and vendettas! Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians—into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American.

What Is the "American Melting Pot?"

In sociology, the "melting pot" is a concept referring to a heterogeneous society becoming more homogeneous with the different elements "melting together" into a harmonious whole with a common culture.

The melting pot concept is most commonly used to describe the assimilation of immigrants to the United States, though it can be used in any context where a new culture comes to co-exist with another. In recent times, refugees from the Middle East have created melting pots throughout Europe and the Americas.

This term is often challenged, however, by those who assert that cultural differences within a society are valuable and should be preserved. An alternative metaphor, therefore, is salad bowl or mosaic, describing how different cultures mix, but still remain distinct.

The Great American Melting Pot

The United States of America was founded upon the concept of opportunity for every immigrant, and to this day this right to immigrate to the U.S. is defended in its highest courts. The term first originated in the U.S. around 1788 to describe the cultures of many European, Asian, and African nationalities merging together in the newfound culture of the new United States.

This idea of melting cultures together lasted through much of the 19th and 20th centuries, culminating in the 1908 play "The Melting Pot," which further perpetuated the American ideal of a homogenous society of many cultures.

However, as the world was overtaken in global warfare in the 1910s, 20s, and again in the 30s and 40s, Americans began to establish an anti-globalist approach to American values, and a large contingent of citizens started calling for banning immigrants from certain countries based on their cultures and religions.

The Great American Mosaic

Due perhaps to an overwhelming sense of patriotism among older-generation Americans, the idea of preserving the "American culture from foreign influence" has taken center stage in recent elections in the United States.

For this reason, progressives and civil rights activists arguing on behalf of allowing immigration of refugees and impoverished peoples have renamed the concept to be more of a mosaic, where the elements of different cultures sharing one new nation cohesively form a mural of all beliefs working side by side.

As idealistic as this seems, it works in many instances. Sweden, for instance, has seen no change in crime despite allowing in a large swathe of Syrian refugees in 2016 and 2017. Instead, the refugees, respecting the culture of the land they've been welcomed to, work side by side with their allies to build better communities. (Ashley Crossman, Ashley. 2019)

Melting pot and cultural pluralism

The concept of multiculturalism was preceded by the concept of cultural pluralism, which was first developed in the 1910s and 1920s, and became widely popular during the 1940s. The concept of cultural pluralism first emerged in the 1910s and 1920s among intellectual circles out of the debates in the United States over how to approach issues of immigration and national identity.

The First World War and the Russian Revolution caused a "Red Scare" in the US, which also fanned feelings of xenophobia. During and immediately after the First World War, the concept of the melting pot was equated by Nativists with complete cultural assimilation towards an Anglo-American norm ("Anglo-conformity") on the part of immigrants, and immigrants who opposed such assimilation were accused of disloyalty to the United States.

The newly popularized concept of the melting pot was frequently equated with "Americanization", meaning cultural assimilation, by many "old stock" Americans. In Henry Ford's Ford English School (established in 1914), the graduation ceremony for immigrant employees involved symbolically stepping off an immigrant ship and passing through *the melting pot*, entering at one end in costumes designating their nationality and emerging at the other end in identical suits and waving American flags.

Opposition to the absorption of millions of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe was especially strong among popular writers such as Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard, who believed in the "racial" superiority of

Americans of Northern European descent as member of the "Nordic race", and therefore demanded immigration restrictions to stop a "degeneration" of America's white racial "stock". They believed that complete cultural assimilation of the immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe was not a solution to the problem of immigration because intermarriage with these immigrants would endanger the racial purity of Anglo-America. The controversy over immigration faded away after immigration restrictions were put in place with the enactment of the Johnson-Reed Act in 1924.

In response to the pressure exerted on immigrants to culturally assimilate and also as a reaction against the denigration of the culture of non-Anglo white immigrants by Nativists, intellectuals on the left, such as Horace Kallen in *Democracy Versus the Melting-Pot* (1915), and Randolph Bourne in *Trans-National America* (1916), laid the foundations for the concept of cultural pluralism. This term was coined by Kallen. Randolph Bourne, who objected to Kallen's emphasis on the inherent value of ethnic and cultural difference, envisioned a "trans-national" and cosmopolitan America. The concept of cultural pluralism was popularized in the 1940s by John Dewey.

In the United States, where the term melting pot is still commonly used, the ideas of cultural pluralism and multiculturalism have, in some circles, taken precedence over the idea of assimilation. Alternate models where immigrants retain their native cultures such as the "salad bowl" or the "symphony" are more often used by sociologists to describe how cultures and ethnicities mix in the United States. Nonetheless, the term assimilation is still used to describe the ways in which immigrants and their descendants adapt, such as by increasingly using the national language of the host society as their first language.

Since the 1960s, much research in Sociology and History has disregarded the melting pot theory for describing interethnic relations in the United States and other countries. The theory of multiculturalism offers alternative analogies for ethnic interaction including *salad bowl theory*, or, as it is known in Canada, the *cultural mosaic*. In the 1990s, political correctness in the United States emphasized that each ethnic and national group has the right to maintain and

preserve its cultural distinction and integrity, and that one does not need to assimilate or abandon one's heritage in order to blend in or merge into the majority Anglo-American society. In the 21st century, most second and third-generation descendants of immigrants in the United States continue to assimilate into broader American culture, while American culture itself increasingly incorporates food and music influences of foreign cultures. Similar patterns of integration can be found in Western Europe, particularly among black citizens of countries such as Britain, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, and Germany.

Nevertheless, some prominent scholars, such as Samuel P. Huntington in *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, have expressed the view that the most accurate explanation for modern-day United States culture and inter-ethnic relations can be found somewhere in a fusion of some of the concepts and ideas contained in the melting pot, assimilation, and Anglo-conformity models. Under this theory, it is asserted that the United States has one of the most homogeneous cultures of any nation in the world. This line of thought holds that this American national culture derived most of its traits and characteristics from early colonial settlers from Britain, Ireland, and Germany. When more recent immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe brought their various cultures to America at the beginning of the 20th century, they changed the American cultural landscape just very slightly and, for the most part, assimilated into America's pre-existing culture, which had its origins in Northwestern Europe.

The decision of whether to support a melting-pot or multicultural approach has developed into an issue of much debate within some countries. For example, the French and British governments and populace are currently debating whether Islamic cultural practices and dress conflict with their attempts to form culturally unified countries.

CHAPTER V

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE AMERICAN “MELTING POT”

In 1908, British writer Israel Zangwill wrote a stage play, the title of which popularized a term that came to be used as a metaphor for America itself: *The Melting Pot*. Debuting before U.S. audiences in 1909, Zangwill’s play told the story of David Quixano, a fictional Russian-Jewish immigrant who is intent on moving to the United States after his family dies in a violent anti-Semitic riot in Russia. For Quixano (and many actual immigrants at the time), America, in all of its culturally “blended” glory, stood as a beacon of light visible from the darkest and most oppressed corners of the world, offering promise, possibility, and maybe even acceptance.

Well before Zangwill put the “melting pot” label into the global lexicon, the United States had already earned a reputation as an immigrant haven. New England’s first immigrant settlers, the Puritans and the Pilgrims, left their native England in the early 1600s in order to practice their respective religions more freely, without antagonistic meddling from the Church of England. In the early 1800s, the French Revolution saw thousands of rural Europeans flee to America, to escape the war-torn countryside and a government in shambles. As a result of the great famine that struck Ireland in the first half of the nineteenth century, millions of Irish Catholic immigrants crossed the Atlantic, settling into various pockets of the East Coast. The next wave came from Asia, with Chinese and Japanese immigrants arriving to California in droves, working throughout the West as the Gold Rush and the railroad stirred dreams of vast riches.

The arrival of these immigrants, and with them their varied cultural backgrounds, was essential in molding America’s public identity. And it fed into America’s self-history, enshrining the United States as a refuge for all those suffering persecution for political or personal beliefs; a shelter that accepts a wide variety of faiths and ideologies.

This widely publicized version of America as a wholly inclusive land was not in touch with reality, with a widespread desire to strip immigrants of their individual customs, and force them into a version of whiteness that permeates society to this, lurking right beneath the surface. There is a rich American tradition of rejecting immigrants and refugees, and those who do make it through often face calls to assimilate and deny their cultural roots.

Prior to the late 1800s, the federal government did little to control the flow of immigration. Naturalization guidelines were put in place in the late eighteenth century, and starting in 1819, immigrants were required to report their arrival to the U.S. government. The weak enforcement of this provision allowed for a high number of undocumented immigrants. State governments attempted to pass their own immigration laws, and the chaos that ensued across state borders finally led the federal government to take control of the issue in the late 1800s. With anti-immigration heightening throughout the native-born public, immigration laws were introduced as a means of placating an upset public.

Nativist partisans have a long history in America, but began to emerge as a major national political force in the 1850s, becoming major opponents to immigration as they stressed the importance of pure “American values.” Though Irish immigrants adapted easily to many facets of American life, for example, nativists denounced their Catholic religion as un-American, put up store-window signs reading “No Irish Need Apply” blocking them from prospective jobs, and tried to stem the flow of immigration from Ireland. Many immigrants — especially those with Italian and Irish roots — were plainly seen as inferior, and depicted as ape-like in media from the era. For these immigrants, gaining acceptance often required them to ostracize the next wave of immigrants; you became white by opposing those who weren’t.

This dynamic contributed to the demonization of Asian immigrants in the 1870s and 1880s. The Page Act of 1875 specifically targeted Asian laborers, convicts, and prostitutes by denying them entry to the United States, though its primary mission was to make immigration harder for all Asians. The Chinese Exclusion Act followed in 1882, and effectively banned Chinese immigrants from

entry into the United States. Though these laws were specific to Asian immigrants, broader immigration laws soon succeeded them, enacted with the intention of tightening border security and making it harder for immigrants to enter legally.

Despite these new laws and bouts of anti-immigrant fervor, foreigners continued to flock to America. The third major wave of immigration in the United States occurred around the turn of the twentieth century, and brought with it immigrants from previously unrepresented regions (Eastern Europe and Russia, among others). The cycle — immigrate, and then turn against those who come after — began anew, and a new assimilation movement arose.

The government and the public encouraged newly minted American citizens to absorb a new culture almost immediately upon arrival, a process dubbed “Americanization.” In an oft-quoted passage, President Teddy Roosevelt called for assimilation, exclaiming, “We have room for but one language here [in America], and that is the English language.” Citizenship programs were established across the country, and free English lessons were available in most major cities and towns. The Ford Motor Company, among other major businesses, kept immigrant laborers after working hours for mandatory courses to teach them English and instill American values. The Young Men’s Christian Association also offered classes that taught immigrants the “American way,” educating them on American hobbies, hygiene practices, family life, and more.

Zangwill’s play debuted just as the Americanization movement took off, receiving mixed reviews from both the public and critics. In his article, “How The Melting Pot Stirred America,” author Joe Kraus notes that fans of the play saw it as a “powerful articulation of the promise of America.” Those who disliked the production, however, saw it as a representation of the mounting cultural hierarchy in America. “The Melting Pot, which celebrated America’s capacity to accommodate difference,” writes Kraus, “appeared on the scene at a moment when the American theater world ceased to accept heterogeneity in its productions and, more subtly, ceased to accommodate difference in its audience.” Thus, The Melting Pot, for all of its insistence that America was a joyful marriage of diverse cultures, actually symbolized the end of cultural acceptance in the United States.

Even so, many immigrants continued viewing America in something like the spirit of Zangwill's *Quixano*: "America is God's Crucible, the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming ... Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians — into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American."

Despite its shortcomings, the great melting pot was the face of America for decades after Zangwill's play. Even as Asian immigrants were forced into Chinatowns (the first of which was formed in response to rising racial tensions), Japanese-Americans were interned, and Jim Crow reigned, America proudly viewed itself as a cornucopia of ideas and ethnicities. In the mid-twentieth century, however, the melting pot concept began receiving more critical examination, just as a fourth wave of immigration crested in the United States.

Unlike the episodes of major immigration that came before it, the fourth wave was comprised predominantly of Spanish-speaking immigrants from Central and South America. Like many of their predecessors, they were met with distrust and dislike by the American public. Though many tried to assimilate into American daily life, they were seen as cultural and economic threats. Nonetheless, aspects of Hispanic culture leaked into American life.

With so many ethnic groups a part of twentieth century America, calls for assimilation began to see opposition in the form of multiculturalism, a school of thought that stresses the importance of recognizing individual ethnicities. It's in direct contrast to the concept of a melting pot, and has earned catchphrase metaphors of its own, like "salad bowl" and "cultural mosaic." With the introduction of this ideology, Zangwill's grand melting pot theory was aggressively called into question.

Even now, multiculturalism is but one of the terms used in an ongoing debate of how best to describe America's diverse and growing population. Though Zangwill's play advocated for America as the great equalizer, the melting pot was no more than a myth, albeit one cherished by many Americans. The great number of ethnic backgrounds that dwell in the United States make it difficult to

assign but one name to the country, and one that adequately describes the mixture of many at that. (Higgins, Julia).

CHAPTER VI

THE U.S. POLITICAL SYSTEM

The United States is a representative federal democracy driven by elections in which citizens' and lobbyists' diverse interests compete.

The U.S. federal government is composed of three distinct branches—legislative, executive, and judicial—whose powers are vested by the U.S. Constitution in the Congress, the President, and the federal courts, including the Supreme Court, respectively.

The United States is a representative democracy. Citizens elect representatives to national, state, and local government; those representatives create the laws that govern U.S. society. Although nothing in U.S. law requires it, in practice, the political system is dominated by political parties. With rare exceptions, elections are decided between the two major parties: Democrats and Republicans. Although citizens vote for individual candidates, most candidates are affiliated with one part or another. Therefore, much of U.S. politics boils down to party politics.

The United States is also a diverse society, and citizens' competing interests are reflected in politics. Citizens may have different voting preferences depending on their family backgrounds, the types of jobs they have, their race or age, whether they have children, and so on. To understand the electoral process, we must understand how different interests come into play.

Individual citizens are not the only players in U.S. politics. Although individual citizens are the only ones who can cast votes, special interest groups and lobbyists may influence elections and law-making with money and other resources. At times, this influence has grown so noticeable that some have called into question whether the U.S. is truly a democracy of the people or something more like an oligarchy of special interest groups. The media also play an important role in politics by influencing public sentiment and acting as an information filter.

Political Parties and Elections

Political parties seek to influence government policy by nominating select candidates to hold seats in political offices.

Typically, a political party is a political organization seeking to influence government policy by nominating its own select candidates to hold seats in political office, via the process of electoral campaigning. Parties often espouse an expressed ideology or vision, bolstered by a written platform with specific goals that form a coalition among disparate interests.

The type of electoral system is a major factor in determining the type of party political system. In countries with a simple plurality voting system there can be as few as two parties elected in any given jurisdiction. In countries that have a proportional representation voting system, as exists throughout Europe, or a preferential voting system, such as in Australia or Ireland, three or more parties are often elected to parliament in significant proportions, allowing more access to public office. In a nonpartisan system, no official political parties exist, sometimes due to legal restrictions on political parties. In nonpartisan elections, each candidate is eligible for office on his or her own merits. In nonpartisan legislatures, no formal party alignments within the legislature is common.

In two-party systems, such as in Jamaica and Ghana, the two political parties dominate to such an extent that electoral success under the banner of any other party is virtually impossible. Multi-party systems are systems in which more than two parties are represented and elected to public office. Australia, Canada, Pakistan, India, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Norway are examples of countries with two strong main parties, along with smaller or “third” parties that have also obtained representation. The smaller parties may form part of a coalition government together with one of the larger parties, or act independently.

Political parties, still called factions by some, are lobbied vigorously by organizations, businesses and special interest groups such as trades unions. Money and gifts-in-kind to a party, or its leading members, may be offered as incentives. Such donations are the traditional source of funding for all right-of-center cadre

parties. In the late 19th century, these parties faced opposition by the newly founded left-of-center workers' parties, who formed a new party type—the mass membership party—and a new source of political fundraising—membership dues.

Voting Behavior

Voter turnout depends on socioeconomic factors such as education, income, gender, age, and race.

Voter Turnout

Voter turnout is the percentage of eligible voters who cast a ballot in an election. “Eligible voters” are defined differently in different countries, and the term should not be confused with the total adult population. After increasing for many decades, there has been a trend of decreasing voter turnout in most established democracies since the 1960s. In general, low turnout may be due to disenchantment, indifference, or contentment. Low turnout is often considered to be undesirable, and there is much debate over the factors that affect turnout and how to increase it. In spite of significant study devoted to the issue, scholars are divided on reasons for the decline. The causes of decreasing turnout have been attributed to a wide array of economic, demographic, cultural, technological, and institutional factors. There have been many efforts to increase turnout and encourage voting.

In each nation, some parts of society are more likely to vote than others. In high-turnout nations, these differences tend to be limited: as turnout approaches 90 percent, it becomes difficult to find differences of much significance between voters and nonvoters. In low turnout nations, however, the differences between voters and non-voters can be quite marked. Socioeconomic factors significantly affect whether or not individuals voting tendencies. The most important socioeconomic factor in voter turnout is education. The more educated a person is, the more likely he or she is to vote, even when controlling for other factors such as income and class that are closely associated with education level.

Gender, Age, Ethnicity, Race, Income

There is some debate over the effects of ethnicity, race, and gender on voter turnout. While women are generally as likely as men to vote in developed countries, women are underrepresented in political positions. Women make up a very small percentage of elected officials, both at local and national levels. In the U.S., for instance, in the 109th Congress (2005-2007) there were only 14 female Senators (out of 100) and 70 Congressional Representatives (out of 435).

Age is another crucial factor determining voter turnout. Young people are much less likely to vote than are older people, and they are less likely to be politicians. The lower voting rates of young people in the U.S. help explain why things like Medicare and Social Security in the U.S. are facing looming crises: the elderly will retain many of the benefits of these programs and are unwilling to allow them to be changed even though young people will be the ones to suffer the consequences of these crises.

Generally, racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to vote in elections and are also underrepresented in political positions. If blacks were represented in proportion to their numbers in the U.S., there should be 12 Senators and 52 Members of the House. In 2009, there was 1 black Senator (Roland Burris) and 39 Members of the House. In 2010, the number in the House increased slightly to 41 (7.8 percent), but remained at just 1 percent of the Senate.

Political power is also stratified through income and education. Wealthier and more educated people are more likely to vote. Additionally, wealthier and more educated people are more likely to hold political positions. In the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election, the candidates, John Kerry, and George W. Bush, were both Yale University alumni. John Kerry was a lawyer and George W. Bush had an MBA from Harvard. Both were white, worth millions of dollars, and came from families involved in politics.

Lobbyists and Special Interest Groups

Lobbying describes paid activity in which special interest groups argue for specific legislation in decision-making bodies

Lobbying in the United States describes paid activity in which special interests hire well-connected professional advocates, often lawyers, to argue for specific legislation in decision-making bodies such as the United States Congress. It is a highly controversial phenomenon, often seen in a negative light by journalists and the American public, and frequently misunderstood. The current pattern suggests much lobbying is done by corporations although a wide variety of coalitions representing diverse groups are possible. Lobbying happens at every level of government, including federal, state, county, municipal, and even local governments.

Lobbyists are intermediaries between client organizations and lawmakers: They explain to legislators what their organizations want, and they explain to their clients what obstacles elected officials face. Many lobbyists work in lobbying firms or law firms, some of which retain clients outside of lobbying. Others work for advocacy groups, trade associations, companies, and state and local governments. Lobbyists can also be one type of government official, such as a governor of a state, who presses officials in Washington for specific legislation.

While the bulk of lobbying happens by business and professional interests who hire paid professionals, some lobbyists represent non-profits and work pro bono for issues in which they are personally interested. Pro bono clients offer activities like fundraisers and awards ceremonies on neutral territory to meet and socialize with local legislators.

Corporations which lobby actively tend to be large corporations, few in number, and often they sell to the government. Most corporations do not hire lobbyists. One study found that the actual number of firms which do lobbying regularly is fewer than 300, and that the percent of firms engaged in lobbying was 10 percent from 1998-2006. Corporations considering lobbying run into substantial barriers to entry: Corporations have to research the relevant laws about

lobbying, hire lobbying firms, and cultivate influential people and make connections. For example, when an issue regarding a change in immigration policy arose, large corporations that were currently lobbying switched focus somewhat to take account of the new regulatory world, but new corporations—even ones likely to be affected by any possible rulings on immigration—stayed out of the lobbying fray, according to the study.

African Americans as a Political Force

Collectively, African Americans are more involved in the American political process than other minority groups.

Collectively, African Americans are more involved in the American political process than other minority groups, indicated by the highest level of voter registration and participation in elections among these groups in 2004. African Americans collectively attain higher levels of education than immigrants to the United States. African Americans also have the highest level of Congressional representation of any minority group in the U.S, though this doesn't extend to the senate.

The large majority of African Americans support the Democratic Party. In the 2004 Presidential Election, Democrat John Kerry received 88 percent of the African American vote, compared to 11 percent for Republican George W. Bush. Although there is an African American lobby in foreign policy, it has not had the impact that African American organizations have had in domestic policy.

Historically, African Americans were supporters of the Republican Party because it was Republican President Abraham Lincoln who granted freedom to American slaves; at the time, the Republicans and Democrats represented the sectional interests of the North and South, respectively, rather than any specific ideology—both right and left were represented equally in both parties.

The African American trend of voting for Democrats can be traced back to the 1930s during the Great Depression, when Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program provided economic relief for African Americans. Roosevelt's New Deal

coalition turned the Democratic Party into an organization of the working class and their liberal allies, regardless of region. The African American vote became even more solidly Democratic when Democratic presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson pushed for civil rights legislation during the 1960s.

African Americans tend to hold far more conservative opinions on abortion, extramarital sex, and raising children out of wedlock than Democrats as a whole. On financial issues, they are in line with Democrats, generally supporting a more progressive tax structure to provide more services and reduce injustice and as well as more government spending on social services.

Hispanics as a Political Force

Hispanics have the ability to be an influential force in politics, a fact that is especially true in areas with high Hispanic populations.

The term Hispanic, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget, is used in the United States to identify people with origins in Spanish-speaking countries, like Mexico, Peru, Cuba, or Costa Rica.

Hispanic Party Affiliation

Depending on their location and background, Hispanics differ on their political views. While Hispanics have a diversity of views, they disproportionately identify themselves as Democratic and/or support Democratic candidates. Only 23% of Hispanics identify as Republicans. For example, in the 2010 midterm elections, in spite of general Republican victories, 60% of Hispanics voted Democratic, while only 38% voted Republican. In 2008, 67% of Hispanics supported Obama. In 2006, 69% of Hispanic voters supported Democratic candidates in congressional races, while only 30% supported Republican candidates.

Demographic Trends

Due to the homogeneity among Hispanic voters, they have the ability to be an influential force in American politics. This is especially true in areas with high Hispanic populations. Statistics indicate that the American Hispanic population is increasing and will continue to do so steadily over the ensuing decades of the 21st century. A 2012 study, conducted by the Center for Immigration Studies, projected that in November 2012, Hispanics would comprise 17.2% of the total U.S. population. The same study showed that, in the United States, Hispanics now constitute 15% of adults, 11.2% of adult citizens, and 8.9% of actual voters. In comparison, the same study showed that in 2012, non-Hispanic whites were expected to constitute 73.4% of the national vote. Non-Hispanic blacks were only expected to represent 12.2% of the national vote.

Political Differences in the Hispanic Community

Hispanics are often classified as a unitary voting bloc, but there are differences in political preferences within this community. For example, Cuban Americans and Colombian Americans tend to favor conservative political ideologies and to support the Republican Party. Mexican Americans, Puerto Rican Americans, and Dominican Americans, on the other hand, tend to favor liberal views and to support the Democratic party. That being said, because the latter groups are far more numerous (Mexican Americans account for 64% of Hispanics in the U.S.) the Democratic Party is considered to be in a far stronger position with Hispanics overall.

The Role of the Media

Media are means of transmitting information, which is important for a democracy in which citizens must make their own informed decisions.

In communications, media are the storage and transmission channels or tools used to store and deliver information or data. Media are often referred to as

synonymous with mass media or news media, but may refer to a single medium used to communicate any data for any purpose. Media of the United States consist of several different types of communications media: television, radio, cinema, newspapers, magazines, and Internet-based Web sites. American media conglomerates tend to be leading global players, generating large revenues, as well as large opposition in many parts of the world.

A central method in which the media influences the U.S. political system is through gatekeeping, a process through which information is filtered for dissemination, be it publication, broadcasting, the Internet, or some other type of communication. Gatekeeping occurs at all levels of the media structure, from a reporter deciding which sources are included in a story to editors deciding which stories are printed or covered, and includes media outlet owners and even advertisers. This, in turn, determines to a great extent which issues will be important to Americans and on the agendas of their elected officials.

The Internet has provided a means for newspapers and other media organizations to deliver news and, significantly, the means to look up old news. Some organizations only make limited amounts of their output available for free, and charge for access to the rest. Other organizations allow their archives to be freely browsed. It is possible that the latter type obtain more influence, as they are true to the spirit of freedom of information by virtue of making it free. Anyone who has followed external links only to be confronted with a pay-to-view banner might attest that the reputations of organizations that charge is not enhanced by their charging policy, particularly when the same information is available from sources that don't charge.

Age and Politics

Age is an important factor in U.S. politics because there is a correlation between age and rates of political participation and because it is a determining factor in the issues people care about.

Young people are much less likely to vote than are older people and are less likely to be politicians. The lower voting rates of young people in the U.S. help explain why things like Medicare and Social Security in the U.S. are facing looming crises—the elderly will retain many of the benefits of these programs and are unwilling to allow them to be changed even though young people will be the ones to suffer the consequences of these crises. Older people are also more organized, through organizations like the AARP, and they are more likely to vote as a block on issues that affect them directly. As a result, older individuals in the U.S. are seen as having more political power than younger people.

War and Terrorism

War is an organized, armed, and often prolonged conflict that is carried on between states, nations, or other parties.

War is an organized, armed, and often prolonged conflict that is carried on between states, nations, or other parties typified by extreme aggression, social disruption, and usually high mortality. War should be understood as an actual, intentional, and widespread armed conflict between political communities, and it is defined as a form of political violence.

War entails confrontation with weapons, military technology, or equipment used by armed forces who employ military tactics and operational art within the broad categories of military strategy and military logistics. War studies by military theorists have sought to identify the philosophy of war and to reduce it to a military science. Conventional warfare is an attempt to reduce an opponent's military capability through open battle. Conventional war is declared between existing states in which nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons are not used, or they only see limited deployment in support of conventional military goals and maneuvers. Nuclear warfare is warfare in which nuclear weapons are the primary method of coercing the capitulation of the other side, as opposed to the supporting role nuclear weaponry might take in a more conventional war.

The political and economic circumstances of peace following a war are highly situational—post-war political and economic realities can not be forecasted.

When evenly adversaries decide that a conflict has resulted in a stalemate, they may cease hostilities to avoid further loss of life and property. They may decide to restore the pre-war territorial boundaries, redraw boundaries at the line of military control, or negotiate to keep or exchange captured territory. Negotiations between parties involved at the end of a war often result in treaties, such as the Treaty of Versailles of 1919, which ended the First World War.

Some hostilities, such as insurgency or civil war, may persist for long periods of time with a low level of military activity. In some cases a treaty is never reached, but fighting may trail off and eventually stop after the political demands of the belligerent groups have been reconciled, a political settlement has been negotiated, the combatants are gradually killed or decide the conflict is futile, or the belligerents cease active military engagement but still threaten each other.

Terrorism is an act of violence intended to create fear, which is then leveraged in order to achieve goals.

Terrorism is the systematic use of terror, especially as a means of coercion. Although the term lacks a universal definition, common definitions of terrorism refer to violent acts intended to create fear (terror). These acts are perpetrated for a religious, political, or ideological goal, and deliberately target or disregard the safety of non-combatants (civilians).

Terrorism has been practiced by a broad array of political organizations for furthering their objectives. It has been practiced by right-wing and left-wing political parties, nationalistic groups, religious groups, revolutionaries, and ruling governments. An abiding characteristic is the indiscriminate use of violence against noncombatants to gain publicity for a group, cause or individual. Therefore, the power of terrorism comes from its ability to leverage human fear to help achieve these goals.

The terms “terrorism” and “terrorist” carry strong negative connotations. These terms are often used as political labels to condemn such violence as immoral, indiscriminate, or unjustified or to condemn an entire segment of a population. However, some groups, when involved in a liberation struggle, have

been called terrorists by the Western governments or media. In some liberation struggles, these same persons can become the leaders or statesman of these liberated nations. Thus, the perpetrators of terrorism can widely vary; terrorists can be individuals, groups or states. According to some definitions, clandestine or semi-clandestine state actors may also carry out terrorist acts outside the framework of a state of war.

Religious terrorism is performed by groups or individuals, the motivation of which is typically rooted in faith-based tenets. Terrorist acts throughout the centuries have been performed on religious grounds with the hope to either spread or enforce a system of belief, viewpoint or opinion. Religious terrorism does not in itself necessarily define a specific religious standpoint or view, but instead usually defines an individual or group interpretation of that belief system 's teachings.

CHAPTER VII

ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

In the most simple of terms, economies consist of producing goods and exchanging them. Economies can be divided into formal economies and informal economies. A formal economy is the legal economy of a nation-state, as measured by a government's gross national product (GNP), or the market value of all products and services produced by a country's companies in a given year. Informal economies are frequently less institutionalized and include all economic practices that are neither taxed nor monitored by a government.

Economies are fundamentally social systems. They require exchanges or transactions; it is impossible for an individual to participate in an economy entirely independent of others. One cannot think of economies as discrete entities; economic systems necessarily interact with social and political systems.

A market is a central space of exchange through which people are able to buy and sell goods and services. In a capitalist economy, the prices of goods and services is mainly controlled through the principles of supply and demand and competition. "Supply and demand" refers to the balancing of the amount of a good or service produced and the amount available for sale. Prices rise when demand exceeds supply and fall when supply exceeds demand. The market coordinates itself through pricing until a new equilibrium price and quantity is reached. Competition arises when many producers are trying to sell the same or similar kinds of products to the same buyers.

Though the market is encouraged to act on its own, in any capitalist economy, the government is intimately involved in regulating the economy. This can be done through anti-trust laws or minimum wage laws. On a far more basic level, the government allows individuals to own private property and individuals to work where they please. The government generally allows businesses to set wages and prices for products without much interference. The government is responsible for issuing money, supervising public utilities, and enforcing private

contracts. Laws protect competition and prohibit unfair business practices. Government agencies regulate the standards of service in many industries, such as airlines and broadcasting, and they finance a wide range of programs. Additionally, the government regulates the flow of capital and uses methods such as interest rates to control factors such as inflation and unemployment. Though the government in capitalist nations largely adheres to the basic principles of economic interference, it largely engages with the economy.

Capitalism functions in distinction from socialism, or various theories of economic organization that advocate public or direct worker ownership and administration of the means of production. Socialism calls for public allocation of resources, creating a society characterized by equal access to resources for all individuals with a method of compensation based on the amount of labor expended. Many socialists criticize capitalism for unfairly concentrating power and wealth among a small segment of society that controls capital and derives its wealth through the exploitation of lower classes.

An informal economy is economic activity that is neither taxed nor monitored by a government. Although the informal economy is often associated with developing countries, all economic systems contain an informal economy in some proportion. Informal economic activity is a dynamic process which includes many aspects of economic and social theory: exchange, regulation, and enforcement. By its nature, the informal economy is difficult to observe, study, define, and measure. The terms “under the table” and “off the books” typically refer to this type of economy, and there are various examples for this type of economic activity, including the sale and distribution of illegal drugs or unreported payments for house cleaning or baby sitting, among others.

Capitalism

Capitalism is a system that includes private ownership of the means of production, creation of goods for profit, competitive markets, etc.

Capitalism is generally considered by scholars to be an economic system that includes private ownership of the means of production, creation of goods or services for profit or income, the accumulation of capital, competitive markets, voluntary exchange, and wage labor. The designation is applied to a variety of historical cases, which vary in time, geography, politics, and culture.

Economists, political economists and historians have taken different perspectives on the analysis of capitalism. Economists usually focus on the degree that government does not have control over markets (*laissez-faire* economics), and on property rights. Most political economists emphasize private property, power relations, wage labor, class and capitalism's as a unique historical formation. Capitalism is generally viewed as encouraging economic growth. The differing extents to which different markets are free, as well as the rules defining private property, are a matter of politics and policy, and many states have what are termed mixed economies. A number of political ideologies have emerged in support of various types of capitalism, the most prominent being economic liberalism.

The relationship between the state, its formal mechanisms, and capitalist societies has been debated in many fields of social and political theory, with active discussion since the 19th century. Hernando de Soto is a contemporary economist who has argued that an important characteristic of capitalism is the functioning state protection of property rights in a formal property system where ownership and transactions are clearly recorded.

The relationship between democracy and capitalism is a contentious area in theory and popular political movements. The extension of universal adult male suffrage in 19th century Britain occurred along with the development of industrial capitalism, and democracy became widespread at the same time as capitalism, leading many theorists to posit a causal relationship between them—claiming each affects the other. However, in the 20th century, capitalism also accompanied a variety of political formations quite distinct from liberal democracies, including fascist regimes, absolute monarchies, and single-party states.

The Marxist Critique of Capitalism

Capitalism has been the subject of criticism from many perspectives during its history. Criticisms range from people who disagree with the principles of capitalism in its entirety, to those who disagree with particular outcomes of capitalism. Among those wishing to replace capitalism with a different method of production and social organization, a distinction can be made between those believing that capitalism can only be overcome with revolution (e.g., revolutionary socialism) and those believing that structural change can come slowly through political reforms to capitalism (e.g., classic social democracy).

Karl Marx saw capitalism as a progressive historical stage that would eventually stagnate due to internal contradictions and be followed by socialism. Marxists define capital as “a social, economic relation” between people (rather than between people and things). In this sense they seek to abolish capital. They believe that private ownership of the means of production enriches capitalists (owners of capital) at the expense of workers. In brief, they argue that the owners of the means of production exploit the workforce.

In Karl Marx’s view, the dynamic of capital would eventually impoverish the working class and thereby create the social conditions for a revolution. Private ownership over the means of production and distribution is seen as creating a dependence of non-owning classes on the ruling class, and ultimately as a source of restriction of human freedom.

Marxists have offered various related lines of argument claiming that capitalism is a contradiction-laden system characterized by recurring crises that have a tendency towards increasing severity. They have argued that this tendency of the system to unravel, combined with a socialization process that links workers in a worldwide market, create the objective conditions for revolutionary change. Capitalism is seen as just one stage in the evolution of the economic system.

Normative Marxism advocates for a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism that would lead to socialism, before eventually transforming into communism after class antagonisms and the state cease to exist. Marxism influenced social

democratic and labor parties as well as some moderate democratic socialists, who seek change through existing democratic channels instead of revolution, and believe that capitalism should be regulated rather than abolished.

Socialism

Socialism is an economic system in which the means of production are socially owned and used to meet human needs instead of to create profits. The means of production refers to the tools, technology, buildings, and other materials used to make the goods or services in an economy. Social ownership of the means of production can take many forms. It could refer to cooperative enterprises, common ownership, direct public ownership, or autonomous state enterprises. Social ownership contrasts with capitalist ownership, in which the means of production are used to create a profit. In a socialist economic system, the means of production would instead be used to directly satisfy economic demands and human needs. Accounting would be based on physical quantities or a direct measure of labor-time instead of on profits and expenses.

Although socialism is often associated with Karl Marx, it has evolved to take a variety of forms. As a political movement, socialism includes a diverse array of political philosophies, ranging from reformism to revolutionary socialism, from a planned economy to market socialism. In a planned economy, the means of production are publicly owned and the government is in charge of coordinating and distributing production. By contrast, in market socialism, the means of production may be publicly or cooperatively owned, but they operate in a market economy. That is, market socialism uses the market and monetary prices to allocate and account for the means of production and the products they create. Just like in capitalism, the means of production generate profit; however, that profit would be used to remunerate employees or finance public institutions, not to benefit private owners.

Socialists critique capitalism, arguing that it derives wealth from a system of labor exploitation and then concentrates wealth and power within a small

segment of society that controls the means of production. As a result, society is stratified, split into classes according to who owns the means of production and who is forced to sell their labor; as a result, individuals do not all have the same opportunity to maximize their potential. A capitalist society, they argue, does not utilize available technology and resources to their maximum potential in the interests of the public. Instead, it focuses on satisfying market-induced wants as opposed to human needs. Socialists argue that socialism would allow for wealth to be distributed based on how much one contributes to society, as opposed to how much capital one owns. A primary goal of socialism is social equality and a distribution of wealth based on one's contribution to society, and an economic arrangement that would serve the interests of society as a whole.

The Capitalist Critique of Socialism

Criticism of socialism refers to a critique of socialist models of economic organization, efficiency, and feasibility, as well as the political and social implications of such a system. Some of these criticisms are not directed toward socialism as a system, but directed toward the socialist movement, socialist political parties, or existing socialist states. Some critics consider socialism to be a purely theoretical concept that should be criticized on theoretical grounds; others hold that certain historical examples exist, making it possible to criticize on practical grounds.

Economic liberals, pro-capitalist libertarians, and some classical liberals view private enterprise, private ownership of the means of production, and the market exchange as central to conceptions of freedom and liberty. Milton Friedman, an economist, argued that socialism—which he defined as state ownership over the means of production—impedes technological progress due to stifled competition. He pointed to the U.S. to see where socialism fails, observing that the most technologically backward areas are those where government owns the means of production. Some critics of socialism argue that income sharing reduces individual incentives to work; incomes should be individualized as much

as possible. Critics of socialism have argued that in any society where everyone holds equal wealth there can be no material incentive to work because one does not receive rewards for a work well done.

The philosopher Friedrich Hayek argued in his book *The Road to Serfdom* that the more even distribution of wealth through the nationalization of the means of production advocated by certain socialists cannot be achieved without a loss of political, economic, and human rights. According to Hayek, to achieve control over means of production and distribution of wealth, it is necessary for such socialists to acquire significant powers of coercion. He argued that the road to socialism leads society to totalitarianism, and that fascism and Nazism were the inevitable outcome of socialist trends in Italy and Germany during the preceding period.

Milton Friedman argued that the absence of voluntary economic activity makes it too easy for repressive political leaders to grant themselves coercive powers. Friedman's view was shared by Friedrich Hayek and John Maynard Keynes, both of whom believed that capitalism is vital for freedom to survive and thrive.

Democratic Socialism

Democratic socialism combines the political philosophy of democracy with the economic philosophy of socialism. The term can refer to a range of political and economic organizational schemes. On one end, democratic socialism may combine a democratic national political system with a national economy based on socialist principles. On the other end, democratic socialism may refer to a system that uses democratic principles to organize workers in a firm or community (for example, in worker cooperatives).

The term is used by socialist movements and organizations to emphasize the democratic character of their political orientation. Democratic socialism contrasts with political movements that resort to authoritarian means to achieve a transition to socialism. Rather than focus on central planning, democratic

socialism advocates the immediate creation of decentralized economic democracy from the grassroots level—undertaken by and for the working class itself. Specifically, it is a term used to distinguish between socialists who favor a grassroots-level, spontaneous revolution (referred to as gradualism) from those socialists who favor Leninism (organized revolution instigated and directed by an overarching vanguard party that operates on the basis of democratic centralism).

Informal Economy

The informal economy consists of economic activity that is neither taxed nor regulated by a government.

The informal economy consists of economic activity that is neither taxed nor regulated by a government. This is in contrast to the formal economy; a formal economy includes economic activity that is legal according to national law. Formal economy goods may be taxed and are included in the calculation of a government's gross national product (GNP), which is the market value of all products and services produced by a country's companies in a given year. Informal economies are frequently less institutionalized and include all economic practices that are not included in the calculation of GNP. Informal economies therefore include such disparate practices as the drug trade and babysitting—anything that isn't reported to the government or factored into the nation's GNP. All economies have informal elements.

The original use of the term 'informal sector' is attributed to the economic development model put forward by W. Arthur Lewis, used to describe employment or livelihood creation and sustainability primarily within the developing world. It was used to describe a type of employment that was viewed as falling outside of the modern industrial sector. Participation in the informal economy may result from lack of other options (e.g. people may buy goods on the black market because these goods are unavailable through conventional means). Participation may also be driven by a wish to avoid regulation or taxation. This

may manifest as unreported employment, hidden from the state for tax, social security or labor law purposes, but legal in all other aspects.

The growth of the informal economy is often attributed to changing social or economic environments. For example, with the adoption of more technologically intensive forms of production, many workers have been forced out of formal sector work and into informal employment. Arguably the most influential book on informal economy is Hernando de Soto's *The Other Path*. De Soto and his team argue that excessive regulation in the Peruvian (and other Latin American) economies force a large part of the economy into informality and thus prevent economic development. In a widely cited experiment, his team tried to legally register a small garment factory in Lima. This took more than one hundred administrative steps and almost a year of full-time work. Whereas de Soto's work is popular with policymakers and champions of free market policies, many scholars of the informal economy have criticized it both for methodological flaws and normative bias.

The informal economy accounts for about 15 percent of employment in developed countries such as the United States. By contrast, it makes up 48 percent of non-agricultural employment in North Africa, 51 percent in Latin America, 65 percent in Asia, and 72 percent in sub-Saharan Africa. If agricultural employment is included, the percentages rise—beyond 90 percent in places like India and many sub-Saharan African countries.

Welfare State Capitalism

Welfare capitalism refers to a welfare state in a capitalist economic system or to businesses providing welfare-like services to employees.

Welfare capitalism refers either to the combination of a capitalist economic system with a welfare state or, in the American context, to the practice of private businesses providing welfare-like services to employees. In this second form of welfare capitalism, also known as industrial paternalism, companies have a two-fold interest in providing these services. First, the companies act in a

paternalistic manner, giving employees what managers think is best for them. Second, the companies recognize that providing workers with some minor benefits can forestall complaints about larger structural issues, such as unsafe conditions and long hours.

Following this logic, in the nineteenth century, some manufacturing companies began offering new benefits for their employees. Companies sponsored sports teams, established social clubs, and provided educational and cultural activities for workers. Some companies even provided housing, such as the boarding houses provided for female employees of textile manufacturers in Lowell, Massachusetts. The mid-twentieth century marked the height of business provisions for employees, including benefits such as more generous retirement packages and health care.

However, even at the peak of this form of welfare capitalism, not all workers enjoyed the same benefits. Business-led welfare capitalism was only common in American industries that employed skilled labor. Not all companies freely choose to provide even minor benefits to workers. As workers became frustrated with meager or nonexistent benefits, they appealed to government for help, giving rise to the first form of welfare capitalism: welfare provisions provided by the state within the context of a capitalist economy. In the United States, workers formed labor unions to gain greater collective bargaining power. In addition to directly challenging businesses, they lobbied the government to enact basic standards of labor. In the United States, the first two decades of the twentieth century—the Progressive Era—saw an increase in the number of protections the government was able to extend to workers. Yet by mid-century, many of these protections had been pushed back through the court system.

Today, the government provides very basic standards by which employers must abide, such as minimum wage standards. Anything above the minimum required by the government is at the employer's discretion. Recently, companies have begun to invest even more in the perks provided by the business in an effort to satisfy employees. Companies have found that employees make fewer demands

and are more productive when they are happier, so companies such as Google have spent millions of dollars making their businesses enjoyable places to work.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRANSFORMATION OF ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

Pre-industrial societies are societies that existed before the Industrial Revolution, which took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some remote societies today may share characteristics with these historical societies, and may, therefore, also be referred to as pre-industrial. In general, pre-industrial societies share certain social attributes and forms of political and cultural organization, including limited production, a predominantly agricultural economy, limited division of labor, limited variation of social class, and parochialism at large. While pre-industrial societies share these characteristics in common, they may otherwise take on very different forms. Two specific forms of pre-industrial society are hunter-gatherer societies and feudal societies.

A hunter-gatherer society is one in which most or all food is obtained by gathering wild plants and hunting wild animals, in contrast to agricultural societies which rely mainly on domesticated species. Hunter-gatherer societies tend to be very mobile, following their food sources. They tend to have relatively non-hierarchical, egalitarian social structures, often including a high degree of gender equality. Full-time leaders, bureaucrats, or artisans are rarely supported by these societies. Hunter-gatherer group membership is often based on kinship and band (or tribe) membership. Following the invention of agriculture, hunter-gatherers in most parts of the world were displaced by farming or pastoral groups who staked out land and settled it, cultivating it or turning it into pasture for livestock. Only a few contemporary societies are classified as hunter-gatherers, and many supplement their foraging activity with farming or raising domesticated animals.

Feudalism was a set of legal and military customs in medieval Europe that flourished between the nineteenth and fifteenth centuries. Broadly speaking, feudalism structured society around relationships based on land ownership. Feudal lords were landowners; in exchange for access to land for living and farming, serfs offered lords their service or labor. This arrangement (land access in

exchange for labor) is sometimes called “manorialism,” an organizing principle of rural economy that originated in the villa system of the Late Roman Empire. Manorialism was widely practiced in medieval western and parts of central Europe, until it was slowly replaced by the advent of a money-based market economy and new forms of agrarian contract.

Industrial Societies: The Birth of the Machine

During the Industrial Revolution (roughly 1750 to 1850) changes in technology had a profound effect on social and economic conditions.

The Industrial Revolution was a period from 1750 to 1850 where changes in agriculture, manufacturing, mining, transportation, and technology had a profound effect on the social, economic and cultural conditions of the times. It began in the United Kingdom, and then subsequently spread throughout Western Europe, North America, Japan, and eventually the rest of the world. The Industrial Revolution marks a major turning point in history; almost every aspect of daily life was influenced in some way. Most notably, average income and population began to exhibit unprecedented sustained growth. In the two centuries following 1800, the world’s average per capita income increased more than tenfold, while the world’s population increased over sixfold.

The First Industrial Revolution, which began in the 18th century, merged into the Second Industrial Revolution around 1850, when technological and economic progress gained momentum with the development of steam-powered ships, railways, and later in the 19th century with the internal combustion engine and electrical power generation. The period of time covered by the Industrial Revolution varies with different historians. Eric Hobsbawm held that it “broke out” in Britain in the 1780s and was not fully felt until the 1830s or 1840s, while T. S. Ashton held that it occurred roughly between 1760 and 1830.

Great Britain provided the legal and cultural foundations that enabled entrepreneurs to pioneer the Industrial Revolution. Starting in the later part of the 18th century, there began a transition in parts of Great Britain’s previously manual

labor and draft-animal-based economy toward machine-based manufacturing. It started with the mechanization of the textile industries, the development of iron-making techniques and the increased use of refined coal. Trade expansion was enabled by the introduction of canals, improved roads and railways. With the transition away from an agricultural-based economy and toward machine-based manufacturing came a great influx of population from the countryside and into the towns and cities, which swelled in population.

The introduction of steam power fuelled primarily by coal, wider utilization of water wheels, and powered machinery—mainly in textile manufacturing—underpinned the dramatic increases in production capacity. The development of all-metal machine tools in the first two decades of the 19th century facilitated the manufacturing of more production machines for manufacturing in other industries. The effects spread throughout Western Europe and North America during the 19th century, eventually affecting most of the world, a process that continues as industrialization today. The impact of this change on society was enormous.

Postindustrial Societies: The Birth of the Information Age

In the “Information Age,” individuals can transfer and have instant access to information, leading to a profound economic transformation.

The Information Age is a concept that characterizes the current age by the ability of individuals to transfer information freely and have instant access to information that would have been difficult or impossible to access in the past. The idea is linked to the concept of a digital age or digital revolution, as most of this information is instantaneously available online. It carries with it the ramifications of a shift from an industrialized economy to an economy based on the manipulation of information, or an information society.

The Information Age formed by capitalizing on computer microminiaturization advances. The transition spans from the advent of the personal computer in the late 1970s to the Internet reaching a critical mass in the

early 1990s, with the public's adoption of the Internet in the two decades following 1990. The Information Age has allowed rapid global communications and networking to shape modern society due to the fast evolution of technology use in daily life.

Though the Internet itself has existed since 1969, it was the invention of the World Wide Web in 1989 by British scientist Tim Berners-Lee and its implementation in 1991 that allowed the Internet to truly become a global network. Today, the Internet has become the ultimate platform for accelerating the flow of information and is the fastest-growing form of media.

Concurrently, during the 1980s and 1990s in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Western Europe, there was a steady trend away from people holding Industrial Age manufacturing jobs. An increasing number of people held jobs as clerks in stores, office workers, teachers, nurses, etc. Many argue that jobs traditionally associated with the middle class (assembly line workers, data processors, foremen, and supervisors) are beginning to disappear, either through outsourcing or automation. Individuals who lose their jobs must either move up, joining a group of "mind workers" (engineers, attorneys, scientists, professors, executives, journalists, consultants, etc.), or settle for low-skill, low-wage service jobs.

Capitalism in a Global Economy

The term "world economy" refers to the economic situation of all of the world's countries. It is common to limit discussion of world economy exclusively to human economic activity. World economy is typically judged in monetary terms, even in cases in which there is no efficient market to help value certain goods or services, or in cases in which a lack of independent research or government cooperation makes establishing figures difficult.

The global financial system is the financial system consisting of institutions and regulators that act on the international level, as opposed to those that act on a national or regional level. The main players are global institutions,

such as International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and the Bank for International Settlements; national agencies and government departments (e.g., central banks and finance ministries); private institutions acting on the global scale (e.g., banks, hedge funds), and regional institutions such as the Eurozone.

Although international trade has always existed, some thinkers argue that a number of trends associated with globalization have caused an increase in the mobility of people and capital since the last quarter of the 20th century. Today, these trends have bolstered the argument that capitalism should now be viewed as a true world system, given that all national economies trade with capitalist states and are therefore influenced by capitalist policies.

Globalization refers to the increasing global relationships of culture, people, and economic activity. It is generally used to refer to economic globalization: the global distribution of the production of goods and services, through reduction of barriers to international trade such as tariffs, export fees, and import quotas; and the reduction of restrictions on the movement of capital and on investment. Globalization may contribute to economic growth in developed and developing countries through increased specialization and the principle of comparative advantage.

Global Trade: Inequalities and Conflict

Global trade is the exchange of money, goods, and services across international borders. As transportation has improved, global trade has increased, and businesses have pressured governments to relax restrictions on trade. In most countries, global trade now accounts for many of the goods and services bought or sold, and many companies earn profits from global trade.

For centuries, governments restricted international trade based on the principles of mercantilism, which maintained that countries were all competing to maximize their stores of gold. Accordingly, governments imposed high tariffs to limit imports and promoted exports in order to sell their goods in exchange for

more gold. But in the nineteenth century, especially in the United Kingdom, mercantilism gradually gave way to a belief in free trade.

Free Trade: Economist Milton Friedman explains the importance of free trade.

Following a free trade orientation, governments do not discriminate against imports by imposing tariffs or promoting exports with subsidies. Since the mid-twentieth century, nations have increasingly reduced tariff barriers and currency restrictions on international trade. But even though many countries have moved toward free trade, other trade barriers remain in place: import quotas, taxes, and diverse means of subsidizing domestic industries can all hinder trade.

As global trade has grown, governments have faced the problem of regulating trade that originates or ends outside their jurisdiction. Traditionally, governments regulated international trade through bilateral treaties that were negotiated between two nations. But as trade has become more global and more complex, trade negotiations have expanded to include more countries. Now, trade is regulated in part by worldwide agreements, such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), a multilateral agreement that went into effect in 1948. In 1995, GATT was replaced by the World Trade Organization (WTO), an international body that supervises global trade.

Most countries in the world are members of the WTO, which limits in certain ways but does not eliminate tariffs and other trade barriers. Most countries are also members of regional free trade areas that lower trade barriers among participating countries. Trade agreements are negotiated by independent nations with their own interests and values in mind, which often include values and interests other than maximum global output. As a consequence, some level of protectionism is used by almost every nation, in the form of subsidies or tariffs to protect industries a nation considers essential, such as food and steel production.

Economic arguments against free trade criticize the assumptions or conclusions of economic theories. Critics note that free trade may exacerbate inequality among countries and within them. Free trade may favor developing nations in certain areas, may benefit only the wealthy within countries, may

increase offshoring, and may destabilize financial markets. Sociopolitical arguments against free trade cite social and political effects that economic arguments do not capture, such as political stability, national security, human rights, and environmental protection. Critics note that free trade undermines cultural diversity, causes dislocation and pain, and undermines national security. In response, fair trade, or an economic system that emphasizes living wages for the producers of goods, has developed as an alternative to free trade in the last several years.

Microfinance

In microfinance, financial services are provided to micro-entrepreneurs and small businesses, many of whom lack access to banking services because of the high transaction costs associated with serving these types of clients. There are two main mechanisms for delivering microfinance services. Relationship-based banking deals with individual entrepreneurs and individual businesses. In group-based models, several entrepreneurs unite to apply for loans and services as a group.

Microcredit

Microfinance is a broad category of services that includes microcredit. Microcredit is the provision of credit services to poor clients. Although microcredit is only one type of microfinance, conflation of the two terms is endemic in public discourse. Critics often attack microcredit while referring to it indiscriminately as either ‘microcredit’ or ‘microfinance’. Due to the broad range of microfinance services, some argue that it is difficult to objectively assess its impact. Very few studies have tried to assess its full impact, although there have been several studies that examined particular cases.

Criticisms of Microfinance

Most criticisms of microfinance are actually just criticisms of microcredit. Other microfinance services, like savings, remittances, payments and insurance, are rarely criticized. For example, many people have criticized the high interest rates microfinance charges to borrowers. In 2006, in a sample of 704 microfinance institutions that voluntarily submitted reports to the MicroBanking Bulletin, the real average portfolio yield was 22.3% annually. That being said, the annual rates charged to clients were higher, because these rates included local inflation and the bad debt expenses of the microfinance institution. Recently, Muhammad Yunus has tried to react to this point. In his latest book, he argues that microfinance institutions should face penalties if they are found to be charging more than 15% above their long-term operating costs.

The Changing Face of the Workplace

The Information Age has impacted the workforce in several ways. First, it has created a situation in which workers who perform easily automated tasks are being forced to find work that is less automated. Secondly, workers are being forced to compete in a global job market. Thirdly, workers are being replaced by computers that can do the job more effectively and faster. This poses problems for workers in industrial societies which are still to be solved. Solutions that involve having the workers work less hours are usually met with high resistance from the workers.

Jobs traditionally associated with the middle class (assembly line workers, data processors, foremen, and supervisors) are beginning to disappear, either through outsourcing or automation. Individuals who lose their jobs must either move up— joining a group of “mind workers” (engineers, attorneys, scientists, professors, executives, journalists, consultants)— or settle for low-skill, low-wage service jobs. The “mind workers” form about 20 percent of the workforce. They are able to compete successfully in the world market and command higher wages. Conversely, production workers and service workers in industrialized nations are

unable to compete with workers in developing countries. They either lose their jobs through outsourcing or are forced to accept wage cuts.

There is another way in which the Information Age has impacted the workforce: automation and computerization have resulted in higher productivity. In the United States for example, from Jan 1972 to August 2010, the number of people employed in manufacturing jobs fell from 17,500,000 to 11,500,000 *but* manufacturing value rose 270 percent. It initially appeared that job loss in the industrial sector might be partially offset by the rapid growth of jobs in the IT sector. However, after the recession of March 2001, the number of jobs in the IT sector dropped sharply and continued to drop until 2003. Even the IT sector is not immune to this problem.

Industry is becoming more information-intensive and less labor and capital-intensive. This trend has important implications for the workforce; workers are becoming increasingly productive as the value of their labor decreases. However, there are also important implications for capitalism itself. Not only is the value of labor decreased, the value of capital is also diminished. In the classical model, investments in human capital and financial capital are important predictors of the performance of a new venture.

The polarization of jobs into relatively high-skill, high wage jobs and low-skill, low-wage jobs has led to a growing disparity between incomes of the rich and poor. The United States seems to have been more impacted than most countries with income inequality beginning to rise in the late 1970s, and the rate of disparity continuing to rise sharply in the twenty-first century.

Deindustrialization

Deindustrialization occurs when a country or region loses industrial capacity, especially heavy industry or manufacturing industry. This process is often attributed to off-shoring, which is itself a consequence of increased global free trade. Deindustrialization is, in a sense, the opposite of industrialization, and, like industrialization, deindustrialization may have far-reaching economic and

social consequences. The term “deindustrialization crisis” has been used to describe the decline of manufacturing in a number of countries, including the U.S., which have lost large numbers of urban manufacturing jobs since the 1970s.

American Deindustrialization

The city of Detroit, and the U.S. automobile industry, are regarded as the prototypical examples of deindustrialization’s negative effects, but Detroit is not an isolated example. The population of the United States has nearly doubled since the 1950s, adding approximately 150 million people. However, during this same period (1950–2007), the population of the great American manufacturing cities declined significantly. Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Buffalo have all lost half their population or more in the past half-century. Baltimore lost almost a third of its population, and Philadelphia lost nearly a quarter of its own.

Regional Deindustrialization

In the United States, the deindustrialization of Midwestern and Northeastern cities has occurred in response to shifting patterns in the geography of production. Just as many American companies have moved their manufacturing operations to developing nations, where they can hire workers for far lower wages, so too have manufacturers in the United States relocated from the heavily unionized Northeast and Midwest toward the Southeast and Southwest. In these areas, right-to-work states limit the power of unions to raise wages. Additionally, the high supply of workers forces those workers who are employed to accept low wages.

The Impact of Technology

In order to save costs, manufacturers have done more than merely relocate. They have also eliminated jobs, as technological innovation has reduced the demand for manual labor. Though total industrial employment has been relatively stable over the past forty years, the overall U.S. labor force has increased

dramatically, resulting in a massive reduction in the percent of the labor force that is engaged in industry. While 35% of workers were involved in industry in the late 1960s, under 20% are today. Manufacturing is thus less prominent in American life and the American economy now than it has been at any other point for hundreds of years.

Corporations

The word corporation is widely used to describe incorporated entities, especially those that have a large number of shareholders. Despite not being natural persons, the law recognizes corporations as having rights and responsibilities like natural persons. Corporations can exercise human rights against real individuals and the state, they can be responsible for human rights violations, and they can even be convicted of criminal offenses, such as fraud and manslaughter. Once incorporated, a corporation has artificial personhood everywhere it operates, until the corporation is dissolved. Often, a corporation is legally a citizen of the state (or other jurisdiction) in which it is incorporated.

Multinational and Transnational Corporations

A multinational corporation (MNC) is a corporation that either manages production or delivers services in more than one country. Some multinational corporations are very large, with revenues that exceed some nation's national revenues. Multinational corporations can have a powerful influence on both local economies and the world economy. They play an important role in international relations and globalization. A transnational corporation (TNC) differs from a traditional MNC in that it does not identify itself with a single national home. While traditional MNCs are national companies with foreign subsidiaries, TNCs spread out their operations in many countries. This allows them to sustain high levels of local responsiveness.

The rapid rise of multinational corporations has been a topic of concern among intellectuals, activists and laymen, who perceive it as a threat to basic civil

rights like privacy. Scholars have pointed out that multinationals have had a long history of interference in the policies of sovereign nation states. Anti-corporate advocates express the commonly held view that corporations answer only to shareholders, and give little consideration to human rights, environmental concerns, or other cultural issues.

Corporations and Governments

Multinational corporations are important factors in the processes of globalization. National and local governments often compete against one another to attract MNC facilities, with the expectation of increased tax revenue, employment, and economic activity. To compete, political entities may offer MNCs incentives such as tax breaks, governmental assistance, subsidies, or lax environmental and labor regulations. Because of their size, multinationals can have a significant impact on government policy, primarily through the threat of market withdrawal. Confrontations between corporations and governments have occurred when governments have tried to force MNCs to make their intellectual property public. This is a state effort to transfer technology to local entrepreneurs.

Industry in the Information Age

In general, industry is becoming more information-intensive, less labor-intensive, and less capital-intensive. These trends have led observers to call the modern era the information age. The trend toward an information-based economy has important implications for the workforce. While productivity stands to increase dramatically, unemployment is also rising, and jobs are increasingly polarized into the following two categories: high-skill, high-wage jobs, and low-skill, low-wage jobs. Additionally, for the first time, workers are being forced to compete in a global job market, in which jobs tend to be attracted by countries with lower wages.

The Disappearance of Manufacturing Jobs

As technology advances, workers are becoming increasingly productive, but the value of labor, and the demand for labor, are both decreasing. Workers who perform easily automated tasks are being replaced by technology that can do the work faster, cheaper, and more efficiently. As a result, automation and computerization have led to both higher productivity and a net job loss. In the United States, from January, 1972 to August, 2010, the number of people employed in manufacturing jobs fell from 17,500,000 to 11,500,000. During the same time period, the value of production from manufacturing increased 270%.

In general, jobs that are traditionally associated with the middle class (assembly line workers, data processors, foremen, and supervisors) are beginning to disappear due to automation. They are also disappearing because of outsourcing, which has become more common in an era of global free trade. Production and service workers in industrialized nations are unable to compete with workers in developing countries, who are willing to tolerate much lower wages. As a result, in industrialized nations like the U.S., those working in production have either lost their jobs or been forced to accept wage cuts.

Colonialism, Decolonization, and Neo-Colonialism

When speaking of colonialism, most people imagine the European colonization of Africa. Historically, the period of colonization tends to refer to the era from the sixteenth century until the mid-twentieth century, during which ships from Europe were actively seeking out new territories, new peoples, and new markets to acquire. However, colonialism has been practiced throughout history and all over the world. In general, colonialism occurs when people from one territory establish or acquire, maintain, and expand colonies in another territory. In colonialism, the metropole or colonizing power claims sovereignty over the colony.

Often, colonization is driven by a desire for economic expansion. In the sixteenth century, European colonization of Africa contributed significantly to European economic development. European colonization intensified because Europeans had just developed galleons or ships that could navigate more easily all the way to Africa. Easier access to foreign lands encouraged European nobles and merchants to seek out new territories in an effort to acquire raw materials and develop new markets. Extracting raw materials from foreign lands provided the fuel for the Industrial Revolution, and the practice of slavery provided Europeans with a new source of labor power.

At the same time that colonialism benefited European economies, it had devastating consequences for African economies. Colonized territories were forced to depend on colonizers for trade. Local institutions and political structures were dismantled and replaced with ones imposed by colonial powers.

After World War II, colonial systems were dismantled in a process referred to as decolonization. Decolonization refers to the undoing of colonialism, or the claim of a formerly colonized people for independence and self-determination. In part, decolonization was the result of independence movements in colonized territories. In part, it was also the result of an calculated economic decision made by colonial powers. The cost of maintaining colonial empires had begun to exceed their value for the European powers.

Decolonization has had a significant impact on the economies of the newly formed states. First and foremost, newly independent African states had to develop an economic system. Moreover, even though the former colonies were now formally independent, they were still rather dependent on the West for assistance in developing economic and political structures. Thus, Western corporations still had a significant amount of control over the new states. Newly independent states borrowed money from the West in order to fund their own development, resulting in a new system of debt. For decades, this debt has been politically impossible for many countries to pay off and still exists.

Although decolonization ended formal colonialism, unequal economic relationships between the developed West and newly independent states had set up a system referred to as neocolonialism. Neocolonialism is the practice of using capitalism, globalization, and cultural forces to control a country in lieu of direct military or political control. External forces exert power in Africa in two ways. First, multinational corporations (MNCs), or companies with operations in multiple countries, apply pressure for certain political behaviors to suit their own interests. For example, if an American company wants to farm in Ethiopia, the company can apply pressure on the Ethiopian government to grant them certain conditions in exchange for the investment in the land. This function operates because of the dependency principle. In other words, many African countries are so desperate to bring in revenue to support their domestic agendas that it is in their interests to accept unsavory conditions from foreign companies. In this way, foreign companies exert significant influence over post-colonial states. The combination of the degree of the influence and the dependency principle creates a situation that in many ways mirrors colonialism. Second, foreign countries can exert influence over post-colonial states by only offering loans under certain conditions. This, again, invokes the dependency principle and mirrors colonialism.

CHAPTER IX

AMERICAN TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

American culture encompasses the customs and traditions of the United States. "Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones, and a million other things," said Cristina De Rossi, an anthropologist at Barnet and Southgate College in London.

The United States is the third largest country in the world with a population of more than 325 million, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. A child is born every 8 seconds, and a person dies every 12 seconds.

In addition to Native Americans who were already living on the continent, the population of the United States was built on immigration from other countries. Despite recent moves to close the U.S. borders to new immigrants and refugees, a new immigrant moves to the United States every 33 seconds, according to the Census Bureau.

Because of this, the United States is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. Nearly every region of the world has influenced American culture, most notably the English who colonized the country beginning in the early 1600s. U.S. culture has also been shaped by the cultures of Native Americans, Latin Americans, Africans and Asians.

The United States is sometimes described as a "melting pot" in which different cultures have contributed their own distinct "flavors" to American culture. Just as cultures from around the world have influenced American culture, today American culture influences the world. The term Western culture often refers broadly to the cultures of the United States and Europe.

The way people "melt" in the United States differs. "Different groups of immigrants integrate in different ways," De Rossi told Live Science. "For example,

in the United States, Catholic Spanish-speaking communities might keep their language and other cultural family traditions, but are integrated in the urban community and have embraced the American way of life in many other ways."

The Northeast, South, Midwest, Southeast and Western regions of the United States all have distinct traditions and customs. Here is a brief overview of the culture of the United States.

Language

There is no official language of the United States, according to the U.S. government. While almost every language in the world is spoken in the United States, the most frequently spoken non-English languages are Spanish, Chinese, French and German. Ninety percent of the U.S. population speaks and understands at least some English, and most official business is conducted in English. Some states have official or preferred languages. For example, English and Hawaiian are the official languages in Hawaii.

The Census Bureau estimates that more than 300 languages are spoken in the United States. The bureau divides those languages into four categories: Spanish; other Indo-European languages, which includes German, Yiddish, Swedish, French, Italian, Russian, Polish, Hindi, Punjabi, Greek and several others; Asian and Pacific Island languages, including Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Thai, Tamil and more; and "all other languages," which is a category for languages that didn't fit into the first three categories, such as Hungarian, Arabic, Hebrew, languages of Africa and languages of native people of North, Central and South America.

Religion

Nearly every known religion is practiced in the United States, which was founded on the basis of religious freedom. About 71% of Americans identify themselves as Christians, according to information gathered by the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan research group, in 2017. The research also found that about

23% had no religious affiliation at all and around 6% of the population is made up non-Christian religions.

The number of people who identify with no religion seems to be decreasing. According to the Pew Research Center, this category is expected to drop from 16% in 2015 to 13% in 2060.

American style

Clothing styles vary by social status, region, occupation and climate. Jeans, sneakers, baseball caps, cowboy hats and boots are some items of clothing that are closely associated with Americans. Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, Michael Kors and Victoria Secret are some well-known American brands.

American fashion is widely influenced by celebrities and the media, and fashion sales equal around \$200 billion per year, according to a paper published by Harvard University in 2007. More and more Americans are buying fashion, electronics and more online. According to the Census Bureau, U.S. retail e-commerce sales for the first quarter of 2017 totaled around \$98.1 billion.

American food

American cuisine was influenced by Europeans and Native Americans in its early history. Today, there are a number of foods that are commonly identified as American, such as hamburgers, hot dogs, potato chips, macaroni and cheese, and meat loaf. "As American as apple pie" has come to mean something that is authentically American.

There are also styles of cooking and types of foods that are specific to a region. Southern-style cooking is often called "American comfort food" and includes dishes such as fried chicken, collard greens, black-eyed peas and corn bread. Tex-Mex, popular in Texas and the Southwest, is a blend of Spanish and

Mexican cooking styles and includes items such as chili and burritos, and relies heavily on shredded cheese and beans.

Jerky, dried meats that are served as snacks, is also a food that was created in the United States, according to NPR.

The arts

The United States is widely known around the world as a leader in mass media production, including television and movies. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, the United States comprises one-third of the worldwide media and entertainment industry.

The television broadcasting industry took hold in the United States in the early 1950s, and American television programs are now shown around the world. The United States also has a vibrant movie industry, centered in Hollywood, California, and American movies are popular worldwide. The U.S. film industry earned \$31 billion in revenues in 2013, and is expected to reach \$771 billion by 2019, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The United States' arts culture extends beyond movies and television shows, though. New York is home to Broadway, and Americans have a rich theatrical history. American folk art is an artistic style and is identified with quilts and other hand-crafted items. American music is very diverse with many, many styles, including rhythm and blues, jazz, gospel, country and western, bluegrass, rock 'n' roll and hip hop.

Sports

The United States is a sports-minded country, with millions of fans who follow football, baseball, basketball and hockey, among other sports. Baseball, which was developed in colonial America and became an organized sport in the

mid-1800s, is known as America's favorite pastime, although its popularity has been eclipsed by football for the past three decades, according to the Harris Poll.

American holidays

Many holidays are celebrated only in the United States. Americans celebrate their independence from Britain on July 4. Memorial Day, celebrated on the last Monday in May, honors those who have died in military service. Labor Day, observed on the first Monday in September, celebrates the country's workforce. Thanksgiving, another distinctive American holiday, falls on the fourth Thursday in November and dates back to colonial times to celebrate the harvest. Presidents' Day, marking the birthdays of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, is a federal holiday that occurs on the third Monday in February. The contributions of veterans are honored on Veterans' Day, observed on Nov. 11. The contributions of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. are remembered on the third Monday in January. (Zimmermann, Kim Ann. 2017)

CHAPTER X

UNITED STATES HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS

Across the United States each region is home to its own festivals or events, but there are some that are ubiquitous for all. Independence Day celebrates the separation of America from British colonial power. Thanksgiving is another traditional United States holiday, commemorating the European arrival at Plymouth Rock with family feasts. On most of these national days, the majority of stores and businesses are closed.

New Year's Eve

The US celebrates the outgoing of the old year and incoming of the New Year quite dramatically. Every state boasts its own parties to ring in the New Year, but none is more extravagant than New York's Time Square, which sees people overflowing into the neighboring restaurants, bars, parks, beaches, and neighborhoods.

Super Bowl Sunday

The world's most watched sporting event and one of the highest grossing TV days of the year, Superbowl Sunday is a spectacular extravaganza. Held the first Sunday in February, the Superbowl is the final playoff game between the NFL's top two teams. The venue rotates every year around America, yet the local parties seem to remain. Pubs, bars and restaurants are great places to enjoy the Superbowl or locals throw their own parties with different variations of betting.

St Patrick's Day

March 17 celebrates the US's large Irish population. Many cities around the country boast boisterous parades and Irish-themed parties, especially New York and Chicago, where the river is dyed green. Be wary of the drunkenness that dominates as this is definitely a party-day.

Memorial Day

Memorial Day is an important holiday throughout the United States, but not for crazy festivities. Parades commemorating wartime heroes are often held and the day is also the ‘unofficial’ start of summer. Most visitors follow the crowds to parks and beaches, which are capped off with informal BBQs.

Independence Day

Also known as the Fourth of July, Independence Day celebrates the US’s break from the British during the 18th century. Barbecues, street parties, beach trips, and weekend getaways are commonplace to appreciate freedom.

Independence Day is the national holiday of the United States, and possibly the main holiday of the year for most of the population. The former fact becomes very obvious in the face of the sea of red, white, and blue you will find yourself in on July 4th.

Americans often celebrate this day with their families and friends, enjoying the many Independence Day parades and outdoor celebrations. The weather permitting, barbecues are the main attraction of the day, closely followed in terms of popularity by fireworks, which are traditionally displayed in the evening. Despite being the national holiday, Independence Day is less formal than other holidays.

Thanksgiving

On the fourth Thursday in November, Thanksgiving is held in almost every home in the US. Tourists will have a hard time finding anything to do as the country essentially shuts down in observation. A typical Thanksgiving meal

consists of turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie commemorating the original Pilgrim's feast at Plymouth Rock.

Thanksgiving is said to have its origins in 1621, when the first colonists in New England and Native Americans came together to enjoy a large feast at the end of the first harvest. Although historians doubt the accuracy of this story, it is the official version most Americans accept as fact. This holiday also marks the end of the harvest season, which used to be very important in the formerly agrarian society of the US.

Thanksgiving is usually celebrated with the extended family and occasionally also with very close friends. Even family members who live far away from their relatives come home for this holiday to spend time with their loved ones. Traditionally, turkey, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, and other foods of the season are served for a huge dinner. The day leading up to the dinner is often spent cooking and watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade or a football game on TV.

Christmas

On December 25, Christians celebrate Christmas as the pinnacle of their calendar by attending church and opening gifts from Santa Claus. Almost everything shuts down to promote family togetherness. The northern regions hope to experience a "white Christmas," with trees and festive lights blanketed by snow.

Although this Christian festival is, of course, celebrated in many countries around the globe, Americans did come up with a number of original holiday traditions. On Christmas Eve, many American families like hanging stockings over the fireplace, often with their names on them. Homes are decorated with mistletoes, holly, a Christmas tree, and other seasonal decorations. Outdoor decorations – such as fairy lights or Santa Claus figures – have become very popular as well.

Children often leave milk and cookies by the fireplace for Santa Claus, who will slide down the chimney at midnight and bring gifts for everybody. The main celebration takes place on Christmas day, often with a big family dinner.

As we have pointed out elsewhere in this expat guide, the US is home to a highly diverse populace. Christmas is only one of a number of festivals taking place towards the end of the year; others include Hanukkah and Kwanzaa, for example.

However, although public institutions, people working in retail, and some employers usually try to keep the festive season nondenominational and all-inclusive (e.g. wishing people “Happy Holidays” instead of “Merry Christmas”), Christmas does have an inescapable quality to it. Walking through your neighborhood or your local mall or browsing the online retailers for gifts, you will soon notice that Christmas is the main focus of the season.

Valentine’s Day

While Valentine’s Day is historically not an American holiday, the contemporary version popularized around the world draws heavily from the American tradition. On this day, couples proclaim their love to each other, giving each other roses, candy, or other gifts, some of which can be rather upscale.

Sending one another Valentine’s greetings is also a common practice on this day. Please do not mistake them for signals of romantic interest. Most of the time, they are just friendly reminders that someone holds you dear and is thinking of you.

As the holiday has been heavily commercialized for decades, it is not without its detractors. Not everyone is willing to extend or receive Valentine’s greetings. It might be a good idea to just wait until your first Valentine’s Day in the US and see how the people around you celebrate, rather than rushing head first into (possibly unwanted or frowned upon) displays of affection.

Halloween

Halloween is a fun holiday on October 31 for all generations to dress up in costumes and relive their youth. Children walk around the neighborhood trick-or-treating for candy, while adults attend parties. Other seasonal events include haunted houses, pumpkin farms and carving, and corn mazes.

Although Halloween is not a federal holiday, it is very popular throughout the entire country. It was brought to the US by Irish immigrants, who used to celebrate the evening before the Catholic festival of All Saints' Day. Once, it was all about remembering the souls that had not made it up to heaven and keeping the transience of earthly existence in mind. It was probably this *memento mori* aspect that introduced the widespread use of skulls as the representative symbol, which was ultimately extended to include other symbols of death and decay.

Today, the main focus is in dressing up in scary - or at least creative - costumes and attending parties. Carved pumpkins, so-called jack-o-lanterns, are an omnipresent sight on Halloween, adorning doorsteps, window sills, and virtually any other location around the house. Children go out to "trick-or-treat", which means going from door to door collecting candy. Whoever refuses to give any is in for some pranks.

CHAPTER XI
AMERICAN LITERATURE
(17th and 18th Century)

Like other national literatures, American literature was shaped by the history of the country that produced it. For almost a century and a half, America was merely a group of colonies scattered along the eastern seaboard of the North American continent—colonies from which a few hardy souls tentatively ventured westward. After a successful rebellion against the motherland, America became the United States, a nation. By the end of the 19th century this nation extended southward to the Gulf of Mexico, northward to the 49th parallel, and westward to the Pacific. By the end of the 19th century, too, it had taken its place among the powers of the world—its fortunes so interrelated with those of other nations that inevitably it became involved in two world wars and, following these conflicts, with the problems of Europe and East Asia. Meanwhile, the rise of science and industry, as well as changes in ways of thinking and feeling, wrought many modifications in people's lives. All these factors in the development of the United States molded the literature of the country.

The 17th Century

This history of American literature begins with the arrival of English-speaking Europeans in what would become the United States. At first American literature was naturally a colonial literature, by authors who were Englishmen and who thought and wrote as such. John Smith, a soldier of fortune, is credited with initiating American literature. His chief books included *A True Relation of...Virginia...* (1608) and *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624). Although these volumes often glorified their author, they were avowedly written to explain colonizing opportunities to Englishmen. In time, each colony was similarly described: Daniel Denton's *Brief Description of New York* (1670), William Penn's *Brief Account of the Province of*

Pennsylvania (1682), and Thomas Ashe's *Carolina* (1682) were only a few of many works praising America as a land of economic promise.

Such writers acknowledged British allegiance, but others stressed the differences of opinion that spurred the colonists to leave their homeland. More important, they argued questions of government involving the relationship between church and state. The attitude that most authors attacked was jauntily set forth by Nathaniel Ward of Massachusetts Bay in *The Simple Cobler of Aggawam in America* (1647). Ward amusingly defended the status quo and railed at colonists who sponsored newfangled notions. A variety of counterarguments to such a conservative view were published. John Winthrop's *Journal* (written 1630–49) told sympathetically of the attempt of Massachusetts Bay Colony to form a theocracy—a state with God at its head and with its laws based upon the Bible. Later defenders of the theocratic ideal were Increase Mather and his son Cotton. William Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation* (through 1646) showed how his pilgrim Separatists broke completely with Anglicanism. Even more radical than Bradford was Roger Williams, who, in a series of controversial pamphlets, advocated not only the separation of church and state but also the vesting of power in the people and the tolerance of different religious beliefs.

The utilitarian writings of the 17th century included biographies, treatises, accounts of voyages, and sermons. There were few achievements in drama or fiction, since there was a widespread prejudice against these forms. Bad but popular poetry appeared in the *Bay Psalm Book* of 1640 and in Michael Wigglesworth's summary in doggerel verse of Calvinistic belief, *The Day of Doom* (1662). There was some poetry, at least, of a higher order. Anne Bradstreet of Massachusetts wrote some lyrics published in *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America* (1650), which movingly conveyed her feelings concerning religion and her family. Ranked still higher by modern critics is a poet whose works were not discovered and published until 1939: Edward Taylor, an English-born minister and physician who lived in Boston and Westfield,

Massachusetts. Less touched by gloom than the typical Puritan, Taylor wrote lyrics that showed his delight in Christian belief and experience.

All 17th-century American writings were in the manner of British writings of the same period. John Smith wrote in the tradition of geographic literature, Bradford echoed the cadences of the King James Bible, while the Mathers and Roger Williams wrote bejeweled prose typical of the day. Anne Bradstreet's poetic style derived from a long line of British poets, including Spenser and Sidney, while Taylor was in the tradition of such Metaphysical poets as George Herbert and John Donne. Both the content and form of the literature of this first century in America were thus markedly English.

The 18th Century

In America in the early years of the 18th century, some writers, such as Cotton Mather, carried on the older traditions. His huge history and biography of Puritan New England, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, in 1702, and his vigorous *Manuductio ad Ministerium*, or introduction to the ministry, in 1726, were defenses of ancient Puritan convictions. Jonathan Edwards, initiator of the Great Awakening, a religious revival that stirred the eastern seacoast for many years, eloquently defended his burning belief in Calvinistic doctrine—of the concept that man, born totally depraved, could attain virtue and salvation only through God's grace—in his powerful sermons and most notably in the philosophical treatise *Freedom of Will* (1754). He supported his claims by relating them to a complex metaphysical system and by reasoning brilliantly in clear and often beautiful prose.

But Mather and Edwards were defending a doomed cause. Liberal New England ministers such as John Wise and Jonathan Mayhew moved toward a less rigid religion. Samuel Sewall heralded other changes in his amusing *Diary*, covering the years 1673–1729. Though sincerely religious, he showed in daily records how commercial life in New England replaced rigid Puritanism with more

worldly attitudes. The *Journal* of Mme Sara Kemble Knight comically detailed a journey that lady took to New York in 1704. She wrote vividly of what she saw and commented upon it from the standpoint of an orthodox believer, but a quality of levity in her witty writings showed that she was much less fervent than the Pilgrim founders had been. In the South, William Byrd of Virginia, an aristocratic plantation owner, contrasted sharply with gloomier predecessors. His record of a surveying trip in 1728, *The History of the Dividing Line*, and his account of a visit to his frontier properties in 1733, *A Journey to the Land of Eden*, were his chief works. Years in England, on the Continent, and among the gentry of the South had created gaiety and grace of expression, and, although a devout Anglican, Byrd was as playful as the Restoration wits whose works he clearly admired.

The wrench of the American Revolution emphasized differences that had been growing between American and British political concepts. As the colonists moved to the belief that rebellion was inevitable, fought the bitter war, and worked to found the new nation's government, they were influenced by a number of very effective political writers, such as Samuel Adams and John Dickinson, both of whom favoured the colonists, and loyalist Joseph Galloway. But two figures loomed above these—Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Paine.

Franklin, born in 1706, had started to publish his writings in his brother's newspaper, the *New England Courant*, as early as 1722. This newspaper championed the cause of the "Leather Apron" man and the farmer and appealed by using easily understood language and practical arguments. The idea that common sense was a good guide was clear in both the popular *Poor Richard's* almanac, which Franklin edited between 1732 and 1757 and filled with prudent and witty aphorisms purportedly written by uneducated but experienced Richard Saunders, and in the author's *Autobiography*, written between 1771 and 1788, a record of his rise from humble circumstances that offered worldly wise suggestions for future success.

Franklin's self-attained culture, deep and wide, gave substance and skill to varied articles, pamphlets, and reports that he wrote concerning the dispute with Great Britain, many of them extremely effective in stating and shaping the colonists' cause.

Thomas Paine went from his native England to Philadelphia and became a magazine editor and then, about 14 months later, the most effective propagandist for the colonial cause. His pamphlet *Common Sense* (January 1776) did much to influence the colonists to declare their independence. *The American Crisis* papers (December 1776–December 1783) spurred Americans to fight on through the blackest years of the war. Based upon Paine's simple deistic beliefs, they showed the conflict as a stirring melodrama with the angelic colonists against the forces of evil. Such white and black picturings were highly effective propaganda. Another reason for Paine's success was his poetic fervour, which found expression in impassioned words and phrases long to be remembered and quoted.

The new nation

In the postwar period some of these eloquent men were no longer able to win a hearing. Thomas Paine and Samuel Adams lacked the constructive ideas that appealed to those interested in forming a new government. Others fared better—for example, Franklin, whose tolerance and sense showed in addresses to the constitutional convention. A different group of authors, however, became leaders in the new period—Thomas Jefferson and the talented writers of the Federalist papers, a series of 85 essays published in 1787 and 1788 urging the virtues of the proposed new constitution. They were written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay. More distinguished for insight into problems of government and cool logic than for eloquence, these works became a classic statement of American governmental, and more generally of republican, theory. At the time they were highly effective in influencing legislators who voted on the new constitution. Hamilton, who wrote perhaps 51 of the Federalist papers,

became a leader of the Federalist Party and, as first secretary of the treasury (1789–95), wrote messages that were influential in increasing the power of national government at the expense of the state governments.

Thomas Jefferson was an influential political writer during and after the war. The merits of his great summary, the Declaration of Independence, consisted, as Madison pointed out, “in a lucid communication of human rights...in a style and tone appropriate to the great occasion, and to the spirit of the American people.” After the war he formulated the exact tenets of his faith in various papers but most richly in his letters and inaugural addresses, in which he urged individual freedom and local autonomy—a theory of decentralization differing from Hamilton’s belief in strong federal government. Though he held that all men are created equal, Jefferson thought that “a natural aristocracy” of “virtues and talents” should hold high governmental positions.

Poets and poetry

Poetry became a weapon during the American Revolution, with both loyalists and Continentals urging their forces on, stating their arguments, and celebrating their heroes in verse and songs such as “Yankee Doodle,” “Nathan Hale,” and “The Epilogue,” mostly set to popular British melodies and in manner resembling other British poems of the period.

The most memorable American poet of the period was Philip Freneau, whose first well-known poems, Revolutionary War satires, served as effective propaganda; later he turned to various aspects of the American scene. Although he wrote much in the stilted manner of the Neoclassicists, such poems as “The Indian Burying Ground,” “The Wild Honey Suckle,” “To a Caty-did,” and “On a Honey Bee” were romantic lyrics of real grace and feeling that were forerunners of a literary movement destined to be important in the 19th century.

Drama and the novel

In the years toward the close of the 18th century, both dramas and novels of some historical importance were produced. Though theatrical groups had long been active in America, the first American comedy presented professionally was Royall Tyler's *Contrast* (1787). This drama was full of echoes of Goldsmith and Sheridan, but it contained a Yankee character (the predecessor of many such in years to follow) who brought something native to the stage.

William Hill Brown wrote the first American novel, *The Power of Sympathy* (1789), which showed authors how to overcome ancient prejudices against this form by following the sentimental novel form invented by Samuel Richardson. A flood of sentimental novels followed to the end of the 19th century. Hugh Henry Brackenridge succeeded Cervantes's *Don Quixote* and Henry Fielding with some popular success in *Modern Chivalry* (1792–1815), an amusing satire on democracy and an interesting portrayal of frontier life. Gothic thrillers were to some extent nationalized in Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* (1798), *Arthur Mervyn* (1799–1800), and *Edgar Huntly* (1799).

CHAPTER XII
THE 19TH CENTURY
AMERICAN LITERATURE

Early 19th-century literature

After the American Revolution, and increasingly after the War of 1812, American writers were exhorted to produce a literature that was truly native. As if in response, four authors of very respectable stature appeared. William Cullen Bryant, Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, and Edgar Allan Poe initiated a great half century of literary development.

Bryant, a New Englander by birth, attracted attention in his 23rd year when the first version of his poem “Thanatopsis” (1817) appeared. This, as well as some later poems, was written under the influence of English 18th-century poets. Still later, however, under the influence of Wordsworth and other Romantics, he wrote nature lyrics that vividly represented the New England scene. Turning to journalism, he had a long career as a fighting liberal editor of *The Evening Post*. He himself was overshadowed, in renown at least, by a native-born New Yorker, Washington Irving.

Irving, the youngest member of a prosperous merchant family, joined with ebullient young men of the town in producing the *Salmagundi* papers (1807–08), which satirized the foibles of Manhattan’s citizenry. This was followed by *A History of New York* (1809), by “Diedrich Knickerbocker,” a burlesque history that mocked pedantic scholarship and sniped at the old Dutch families. Irving’s models in these works were obviously Neoclassical English satirists, from whom he had learned to write in a polished, bright style. Later, having met Sir Walter Scott and having become acquainted with imaginative German literature, he

introduced a new Romantic note in *The Sketch Book* (1819–20), *Bracebridge Hall* (1822), and other works. He was the first American writer to win the ungrudging (if somewhat surprised) respect of British critics.

James Fenimore Cooper won even wider fame. Following the pattern of Sir Walter Scott's "Waverley" novels, he did his best work in the "Leatherstocking" tales (1823–41), a five-volume series celebrating the career of a great frontiersman named Natty Bumppo. His skill in weaving history into inventive plots and in characterizing his compatriots brought him acclaim not only in America and England but on the continent of Europe as well.

Edgar Allan Poe, reared in the South, lived and worked as an author and editor in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Richmond, and New York City. His work was shaped largely by analytical skill that showed clearly in his role as an editor: time after time he gauged the taste of readers so accurately that circulation figures of magazines under his direction soared impressively. It showed itself in his critical essays, wherein he lucidly explained and logically applied his criteria. His gothic tales of terror were written in accordance with his findings when he studied the most popular magazines of the day. His masterpieces of terror—"The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839), "The Masque of the Red Death" (1842), "The Cask of Amontillado" (1846), and others—were written according to a carefully worked out psychological method. So were his detective stories, such as "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), which historians credited as the first of the genre. As a poet, he achieved fame with "The Raven" (1845). His work, especially his critical writings and carefully crafted poems, had perhaps a greater influence in France, where they were translated by Charles Baudelaire, than in his own country.

Two Southern novelists were also outstanding in the earlier part of the century: John Pendleton Kennedy and William Gilmore Simms. In *Swallow Barn* (1832), Kennedy wrote delightfully of life on the plantations. Simms's forte was the writing of historical novels like those of Scott and Cooper, which treated

the history of the frontier and his native South Carolina. *The Yemassee* (1835) and Revolutionary romances show him at his best.

American Renaissance

The authors who began to come to prominence in the 1830s and were active until about the end of the Civil War—the humorists, the classic New Englanders, Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, and others—did their work in a new spirit, and their achievements were of a new sort. In part this was because they were in some way influenced by the broadening democratic concepts that in 1829 triumphed in Andrew Jackson's inauguration as president. In part it was because, in this Romantic period of emphasis upon native scenes and characters in many literatures, they put much of America into their books.

Particularly full of vivid touches were the writings of two groups of American humorists whose works appeared between 1830 and 1867. One group created several down-east Yankee characters who used commonsense arguments to comment upon the political and social scene. The most important of this group were Seba Smith, James Russell Lowell, and Benjamin P. Shillaber. These authors caught the talk and character of New England at that time as no one else had done. In the old Southwest, meanwhile, such writers as Davy Crockett, Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, Johnson J. Hooper, Thomas Bangs Thorpe, Joseph G. Baldwin, and George Washington Harris drew lively pictures of the ebullient frontier and showed the interest in the common man that was a part of Jacksonian democracy.

New England Brahmins

Although Lowell for a time was one of these writers of rather earthy humour, his lifelong ties were to a group of New England writers associated with Harvard and Cambridge, Massachusetts—the Brahmins, as they came to be called—at an opposite extreme. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell

Holmes, and Lowell were all aristocrats, all steeped in foreign culture, all professors at Harvard. Longfellow adapted European methods of storytelling and versifying to narrative poems dealing with American history, and a few of his less didactic lyrics perfectly married technique and subject matter. Holmes, in occasional poems and his “Breakfast Table” series (1858–91), brought touches of urbanity and jocosity to a perhaps oversober polite literature. Lowell, in poems descriptive of the out-of-doors in America, put much of his homeland into verse. His odes—particularly the “Harvard Commemoration Ode” (1865)—gave fine expression to noble sentiments.

The Transcendentalists

Concord, Massachusetts, a village not far from Cambridge, was the home of leaders of another important New England group. The way for this group had been prepared by the rise of a theological system, Unitarianism, which early in the 19th century had replaced Calvinism as the faith of a large share of the New Englanders. Ralph Waldo Emerson, most famous of the Concord philosophers, started as a Unitarian minister but found even that liberal doctrine too confining for his broad beliefs. He became a Transcendentalist who, like other ancient and modern Platonists, trusted to insights transcending logic and experience for revelations of the deepest truths. His scheme of things ranged from the lowest objects and most practical chores to soaring flights of imagination and inspired beliefs. His *Essays* (1841–44), *Representative Men* (1850), and *English Traits* (1856) were thoughtful and poetic explanations of his beliefs; and his rough-hewn lyrics, packed with thought and feeling, were as close to 17th-century Metaphysical poems as any produced in his own time.

An associate of Emerson with a salty personality of his own and an individual way of thinking, Henry David Thoreau, a sometime surveyor, labourer, and naturalist, was closer to the earthy and the practical than even Emerson was. He also was more of a humorist—a dry Yankee commentator with a flair for

paradoxical phrases and sentences. Finally, he was a learned man, widely read in Western classics and books of the Orient. These qualities gave distinction to *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849) and to *Walden* (1854). The latter was a record of his experiences and ponderings during the time he lived in a hut by Walden Pond—a defense of his belief that modern man should simplify his demands if need be to “suck out all the marrow of life.” In his essay “Civil Disobedience” (1849; originally titled “Resistance to Civil Government”), Thoreau expounded his anarchistic views of government, insisting that if an injustice of government is “of such a nature that it requires injustice to another (you should) break the law (and) let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine.”

New England reformers and historians

A worldwide movement for change that exploded in the revolutions of 1848 naturally attracted numerous Americans. Reform was in the air, particularly in New England. At times even Brahmins and Transcendentalists took part. William Lloyd Garrison, ascetic and fanatical, was a moving spirit in the fight against slavery; his weekly newspaper, *The Liberator* (1831–65), despite a small circulation, was its most influential organ. A contributor to the newspaper—probably the greatest writer associated with the movement—was John Greenleaf Whittier. His simple but emotional poems on behalf of abolition were collected in such volumes as *Poems Written During the Progress of the Abolition Question...*(1837), *Voices of Freedom* (1846), and *Songs of Labor, and Other Poems* (1850). The outstanding novelist of the movement—so far as effect was concerned—was Harriet Beecher Stowe. Her *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852) combined the elements of contemporary humour and sentimental fiction in such a powerful manner that it, according to some, helped to precipitate the Civil War.

One other group of writers—and a great novelist—contributed to the literature of New England in this period of its greatest glory. The group consisted of several historians who combined scholarly methods learned abroad with vivid

and dramatic narration. These included George Bancroft, author of *History of the United States* (completed in 12 volumes in 1882), and John Lothrop Motley, who traced the history of the Dutch Republic and the United Netherlands in nine fascinating volumes (1856–74). The leading member of the group was Francis Parkman, who, in a series of books (1851–92), wrote as a historian of the fierce contests between France and England that marked the advance of the American frontier and vividly recorded his own Western travels in *The Oregon Trail* (1849).

Hawthorne, Melville, and Whitman

History also figured in tales and romances of Nathaniel Hawthorne, the leading New England fictionist of the period. Many tales and longer works—for example, his masterpiece, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)—were set against a background of colonial America with emphasis upon its distance in time from 19th-century New England. Others, such as *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), dealt with the past as well as the present. Still others, such as *The Marble Faun* (1860), were set in distant countries. Remote though they were at times from what Hawthorne called “the light of common day,” they showed deep psychological insight and probed into complex ethical problems.

Another great American fiction writer, for a time a neighbour and associate of Hawthorne, was Herman Melville. After relatively little schooling, Melville went to sea; a whaling ship, as he put it, was his “Yale College and his Harvard.” His first books were fiction in the guise of factual writing based upon experiences as a sailor—*Typee* (1846) and *Omoo* (1847); so were such later works as *Redburn* (1849) and *White-Jacket* (1850). Between 1846 and 1851, however, Melville’s reading in philosophy and literary classics, as well as in Hawthorne’s allegorical and symbolic writings, gave him new interests and aims. The first sign of this interest was *Mardi* (1849), an uneven and disjointed transitional book that used allegory after the model of Rabelais to comment upon ideas afloat in the period—about nations, politics, institutions, literature, and religion. The new

techniques came to fruition in *Moby Dick; or, The Whale* (1851), a richly symbolic work, complex but brilliantly integrated. Only in short stories, *Benito Cereno*—a masterpiece of its genre—and others, in the psychological novel *Pierre* (1852), and in the novelette *Billy Budd* (written 1890?) was Melville later to show sporadic flashes of the genius that created *Moby Dick*.

An ardent singer of the praise of Manhattan, Walt Whitman saw less of the dark side of life than Melville did. He was a believer in Jacksonian democracy, in the splendour of the common man. Inspired by the Romantic concept of a poet as prophet and also by the Transcendental philosophy of Emerson, Whitman in 1855 published the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*. As years passed, nine revised and expanded editions of this work were published. This autobiography in verse was intended to show the ideas, beliefs, emotions, and experiences of the common man in a great period of American individualism. Whitman had a hard time winning a following because he was frank and unconventional in his Transcendental thinking, because he used free verse rather than rhymed or regularly metred verse, and because his poems were not conventionally organized. Nevertheless, he steadily gained the approval of critics and in time came to be recognized as one of the great poets of America.

From the Civil War to 1914

Like the Revolution and the election of Andrew Jackson, the Civil War was a turning point in U.S. history and a beginning of new ways of living. Industry became increasingly important, factories rose and cities grew, and agrarian preeminence declined. The frontier, which before had always been an important factor in the economic scheme, moved steadily westward and, toward the end of the 19th century, vanished. The rise of modern America was accompanied, naturally, by important mutations in literature.

Literary comedians

Although they continued to employ some devices of the older American humorists, a group of comic writers that rose to prominence was different in important ways from the older group. Charles Farrar Browne, David Ross Locke, Charles Henry Smith, Henry Wheeler Shaw, and Edgar Wilson Nye wrote, respectively, as Artemus Ward, Petroleum V. (for Vesuvius) Nasby, Bill Arp, Josh Billings, and Bill Nye. Appealing to a national audience, these authors forsook the sectional characterizations of earlier humorists and assumed the roles of less individualized literary comedians. The nature of the humour thus shifted from character portrayal to verbal devices such as poor grammar, bad spelling, and slang, incongruously combined with Latinate words and learned allusions. Most that they wrote wore badly, but thousands of Americans in their time and some in later times found these authors vastly amusing.

Fiction and local colourists

The first group of fiction writers to become popular—the local colourists—took over to some extent the task of portraying sectional groups that had been abandoned by writers of the new humour. Bret Harte, first of these writers to achieve wide success, admitted an indebtedness to prewar sectional humorists, as did some others; and all showed resemblances to the earlier group. Within a brief period, books by pioneers in the movement appeared: Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Oldtown Folks* (1869) and *Sam Lawson's Oldtown Fireside Stories* (1871), delightful vignettes of New England; Harte's *Luck of Roaring Camp, and Other Sketches* (1870), humorous and sentimental tales of California mining camp life; and Edward Eggleston's *Hoosier Schoolmaster* (1871), a novel of the early days of the settlement of Indiana. Down into the 20th century, short stories (and a relatively small number of novels) in patterns set by these three continued to appear. In time, practically every corner of the country had been portrayed in local-colour fiction. Additional writings were

the depictions of Louisiana Creoles by George W. Cable, of Virginia Blacks by Thomas Nelson Page, of Georgia Blacks by Joel Chandler Harris, of Tennessee mountaineers by Mary Noailles Murfree (Charles Egbert Craddock), of tight-lipped folk of New England by Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, of people of New York City by Henry Cuyler Bunner and William Sydney Porter (“O. Henry”). The avowed aim of some of these writers was to portray realistically the lives of various sections and thus to promote understanding in a united nation. The stories as a rule were only partially realistic, however, since the authors tended nostalgically to revisit the past instead of portraying their own time, to winnow out less glamorous aspects of life, or to develop their stories with sentiment or humour. Touched by romance though they were, these fictional works were transitional to realism, for they did portray common folk sympathetically; they did concern themselves with dialect and mores; and some at least avoided older sentimental or romantic formulas.

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain) was allied with literary comedians and local colourists. As a printer’s apprentice, he knew and emulated the prewar sectional humorists. He rose to prominence in days when Artemus Ward, Bret Harte, and their followers were idols of the public. His first books, *The Innocents Abroad* (1869) and *Roughing It* (1872), like several of later periods, were travel books in which affiliations with postwar professional humorists were clearest. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), his best works, which re-created the life of the Mississippi valley in the past, were closest to the work of older humorists and local colourists. Despite his flaws, he was one of America’s greatest writers. He was a very funny man. He had more skill than his teachers in selecting evocative details, and he had a genius for characterization.

Born and raised in Ohio, William Dean Howells was an effective advocate of a new realistic mode of fiction writing. At the start, Howells conceived of realism as a truthful portrayal of ordinary facets of life—with some limitations; he

preferred comedy to tragedy, and he tended to be reticent to the point of prudishness. The formula was displayed at its best in *Their Wedding Journey* (1872), *A Modern Instance* (1882), and *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885). Howells preferred novels he wrote after he encountered Tolstoy's writings and was persuaded by them, as he said, to "set art forever below humanity." In such later novels as *Annie Kilburn* (1888) and *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890), he chose characters not only because they were commonplace but also because the stories he told about them were commentaries upon society, government, and economics.

The naturalists

Other American writers toward the close of the 19th century moved toward naturalism, a more advanced stage of realism. Hamlin Garland's writings exemplified some aspects of this development when he made short stories and novels vehicles for philosophical and social preachments and was franker than Howells in stressing the harsher details of the farmer's struggles and in treating the subject of sex. *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891) and *Rose of Dutcher's Coolly* (1895) displayed Garland's particular talents. These and a critical manifesto for the new fiction, *Crumbling Idols* (1894), were influential contributions to a developing movement.

Other American authors of the same period or slightly later were avowed followers of French naturalists led by Émile Zola. Theodore Dreiser, for instance, treated subjects that had seemed too daring to earlier realists and, like other Naturalists, illustrated his own beliefs by his depictions of characters and unfolding of plots. Holding that men's deeds were "chemical compulsions," he showed characters unable to direct their actions. Holding also that "the race was to the swift and the battle to the strong," he showed characters defeated by stronger and more ruthless opponents. His major books included *Sister*

Carrie (1900), *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911), *The Financier* (1912), *The Titan* (1914), and—much later—*An American Tragedy* (1925).

Dreiser did not bother with—or did not care for—niceties of style or elaborate symbolism such as were found in French naturalistic works; but Stephen Crane and Frank Norris were attentive to such matters. In short novels, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893) and *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895), and in some of his short stories, Crane was an impressionist who made his details and his setting forth of them embody a conception of man overwhelmed by circumstance and environment. Frank Norris, who admired Crane's "aptitude for making phrases—sparks that cast a momentary gleam upon whole phases of life," himself tried to make phrases, scenes, and whole narratives cast such gleams in *McTeague* (1899), *The Octopus* (1901), and *The Pit* (1903). Both Crane and Norris died young, their full abilities undeveloped but their experiments foreshadowing later achievements in the 20th-century novel.

Henry James

In the books of Henry James, born in New York but later an expatriate in England, fiction took a different pathway. Like realists and naturalists of his time, he thought that fiction should reproduce reality. He conceived of reality, however, as twice translated—first, through the author's peculiar experiencing of it and, second, through his unique depicting of it. Deep insight and thorough experience were no more important, therefore, than the complicated and delicate task of the artist. *The Art of Fiction* (1884), essays on novelists, and brilliant prefaces to his collected works showed him struggling thoroughly and consciously with the problems of his craft. Together, they formed an important body of discussion of fictional artistry.

An excellent short-story writer, James nevertheless was chiefly important for novels in which his doctrines found concrete embodiment. Outstanding were *The American* (1877), *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), *The Spoils of*

Poynton (1897), *What Maisie Knew* (1897), *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), and *The Golden Bowl* (1904). The earliest of these were international novels wherein conflicts arose from relationships between Americans and Europeans—each group with its own characteristics and morals. As time passed, he became increasingly interested in the psychological processes of his characters and in a subtle rendering of their limited insights, their perceptions, and their emotions.

Critics of the gilded age

Writers of many types of works contributed to a great body of literature that flourished between the Civil War and 1914—literature of social revolt. Novels attacked the growing power of business and the growing corruption of government, and some novelists outlined utopias. Political corruption and inefficiency figured in Henry Adams's novel *Democracy* (1880). Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888) was both an indictment of the capitalistic system and an imaginative picturing of a utopia achieved by a collectivist society in the year 2000. Howells's *Traveler from Altruria* (1894) pleaded for an equalitarian state in which the government regimented men's lives. The year 1906 saw the publication of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, first of many works by him that criticized U.S. economic and political life and urged socialism as the remedy.

Two poets embodied criticisms in songs. Edwin Markham's "Man with the Hoe" (1899) was a protest against the exploitation of labour and vaguely threatened revolution; it immediately stimulated nationwide interest. A year later William Vaughn Moody's "Ode in Time of Hesitation" denounced growing U.S. imperialism as a desertion of earlier principles; his "On a Soldier Fallen in the Philippines" (1901) developed the same theme even more effectively.

With the rise of journalistic magazines, a group of journalists became notable as critics of America—the group dubbed "the muckrakers" by Theodore Roosevelt. Ida M. Tarbell's *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904)

and Lincoln Steffens's *The Shame of the Cities* (1904) were typical contributions by two members of a large group of journalistic crusaders.

Henry Adams

One of the most devastating and most literate attacks on modern life was an autobiography of a scion of an ancient New England family, the Adamses. Educated at Harvard and abroad, Henry Adams was a great teacher and historian (*History of the United States* (1889–91) and *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* [1904]). *The Education of Henry Adams* (printed privately 1906; published 1918), however, complained that a lifelong hunt for some sort of order in the world, some sort of faith for man, left him completely baffled. The quiet, urbane style served well to underline, in an ironic way, the message of this pessimistic book.

Poets of the era

The later 19th century and early years of the 20th century were a poor period for American poetry; yet (in addition to William Vaughn Moody) two poets of distinction wrote songs that survived long after scores of minor poets had been forgotten. One was Southern-born Sidney Lanier, a talented musician who utilized the rhythms of music and the thematic developments of symphonies in such fine songs as “Corn” (1875), “The Symphony” (1875), and “The Marshes of Glynn” (1878). Distressed, like many of his contemporaries, by changes in American life, he wove his doubts, fears, and suggestions into his richest poems.

The other poet was a New Englander, Emily Dickinson. A shy, playful, odd personality, she allowed practically none of her writings to be published during her lifetime. Not until 1890, four years after her death, was the first book of her poems published, to be followed at intervals by other collections. Later poets were to be influenced by her individual techniques—use of imperfect, or eye, rhymes, avoidance of regular rhythms, and a tendency to pack brief stanzas

with cryptic meanings. Like Lanier, she rediscovered the value of conceits for setting forth her thoughts and feelings. Such poems as “The Snake,” “I Like to See It Lap the Miles,” “The Chariot,” “Farther in Summer than the Birds,” and “There’s a Certain Slant of Light” represented her unusual talent at its best.

CHAPTER XIII

THE 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE

Writing from 1914 to 1945

Important movements in drama, poetry, fiction, and criticism took shape in the years before, during, and after World War I. The eventful period that followed the war left its imprint upon books of all kinds. Literary forms of the period were extraordinarily varied, and in drama, poetry, and fiction the leading authors tended toward radical technical experiments.

Experiments in drama

Although drama had not been a major art form in the 19th century, no type of writing was more experimental than a new drama that arose in rebellion against the glib commercial stage. In the early years of the 20th century, Americans traveling in Europe encountered a vital, flourishing theatre; returning home, some of them became active in founding the Little Theatre movement throughout the country. Freed from commercial limitations, playwrights experimented with dramatic forms and methods of production, and in time producers, actors, and dramatists appeared who had been trained in college classrooms and community playhouses. Some Little Theatre groups became commercial producers—for example, the Washington Square Players, founded in 1915, which became the Theatre Guild (first production in 1919). The resulting drama was marked by a spirit of innovation and by a new seriousness and maturity.

Eugene O'Neill, the most admired dramatist of the period, was a product of this movement. He worked with the Provincetown Players before his plays were commercially produced. His dramas were remarkable for their range. *Beyond the Horizon* (first performed 1920), *Anna Christie* (1921), *Desire Under the Elms* (1924), and *The Iceman Cometh* (1946) were naturalistic works, while *The Emperor Jones* (1920) and *The Hairy Ape* (1922) made use of

the Expressionistic techniques developed in German drama in the period 1914–24. He also employed a stream-of-consciousness form of psychological monologue in *Strange Interlude* (1928) and produced a work that combined myth, family drama, and psychological analysis in *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931).

No other dramatist was as generally praised as O'Neill, but many others wrote plays that reflected the growth of a serious and varied drama, including Maxwell Anderson, whose verse dramas have dated badly, and Robert E. Sherwood, a Broadway professional who wrote both comedy (*Reunion in Vienna* (1931) and tragedy (*There Shall Be No Night* (1940)). Marc Connelly wrote touching fantasy in an African American folk biblical play, *The Green Pastures* (1930). Like O'Neill, Elmer Rice made use of both Expressionistic techniques (*The Adding Machine* [1923]) and naturalism (*Street Scene* [1929]). Lillian Hellman wrote powerful, well-crafted melodramas in *The Children's Hour* (1934) and *The Little Foxes* (1939). Radical theatre experiments included Marc Blitzstein's savagely satiric musical *The Cradle Will Rock* (1937) and the work of Orson Welles and John Houseman for the government-sponsored Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Theatre Project. The premier radical theatre of the decade was the Group Theatre (1931–41) under Harold Clurman and Lee Strasberg, which became best known for presenting the work of Clifford Odets. In *Waiting for Lefty* (1935), a stirring plea for labour unionism, Odets roused the audience to an intense pitch of fervour, and in *Awake and Sing* (1935), perhaps the best play of the decade, he created a lyrical work of family conflict and youthful yearning. Other important plays by Odets for the Group Theatre were *Paradise Lost* (1935), *Golden Boy* (1937), and *Rocket to the Moon* (1938). Thornton Wilder used stylized settings and poetic dialogue in *Our Town* (1938) and turned to fantasy in *The Skin of Our Teeth* (1942). William Saroyan shifted his lighthearted, anarchic vision from fiction to drama with *My Heart's in the Highlands* and *The Time of Your Life* (both 1939).

The new poetry

Poetry ranged between traditional types of verse and experimental writing that departed radically from the established forms of the 19th century. Two New England poets, Edwin Arlington Robinson and Robert Frost, who were not noted for technical experimentation, won both critical and popular acclaim in this period. Robinson, whose first book appeared in 1896, did his best work in sonnets, ballad stanzas, and blank verse. In the 1920s he won three Pulitzer Prizes—for his *Collected Poems* (published 1921), *The Man Who Died Twice* (1925), and *Tristram* (1927). Like Robinson, Frost used traditional stanzas and blank verse in volumes such as *A Boy's Will* (1913), his first book, and *North of Boston* (1914), *New Hampshire* (1923), *A Further Range* (1936), and *A Masque of Reason* (1945). The best-known poet of his generation, Frost, like Robinson, saw and commented upon the tragic aspects of life in poems such as “Design,” “Directive,” and “Provide, Provide.” Frost memorably crafted the language of common speech into traditional poetic form, with epigrammatic effect.

Just as modern American drama had its beginnings in little theatres, modern American poetry took form in little magazines. Particularly important was *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, founded by Harriet Monroe in Chicago in 1912. The surrounding region soon became prominent as the home of three poets: Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, and Edgar Lee Masters. Lindsay's blend of legendary lore and native oratory in irregular odelike forms was well adapted to oral presentation, and his lively readings from his works contributed to the success of such books as *General William Booth Enters into Heaven, and Other Poems* (1913) and *The Congo, and Other Poems* (1914). Sandburg wrote of life on the prairies and in Midwestern cities in Whitmanesque free verse in such volumes as *Chicago Poems* (1916) and *The People, Yes* (1936). Masters's very popular *Spoon River Anthology* (1915) consisted of free-verse monologues by village men and women, most of whom spoke bitterly of their frustrated lives.

Writing traditional sonnets and brief, personal lyrics, Edna St. Vincent Millay and Sara Teasdale were innovative in being unusually frank (according to the standard of their time) for women poets. Amy Lowell, on the other hand, experimented with free verse and focused on the image and the descriptive detail. Three fine Black poets—James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, and Countee Cullen—found old molds satisfactory for dealing with new subjects, specifically the problems of racism in America. The deceptively simple colloquial language of Hughes’s poetry has proved especially appealing to later readers. While Conrad Aiken experimented with poetical imitations of symphonic forms often mingled with stream-of-consciousness techniques, E.E. Cummings used typographical novelties to produce poems that had surprisingly fresh impact. Marianne Moore invented and brilliantly employed a kind of free verse that was marked by a wonderfully sharp and idiosyncratic focus on objects and details. Robinson Jeffers used violent imagery and modified free or blank verse to express perhaps the most bitter views voiced by a major poet in this period.

Except for a period after World War II, when he was confined in St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington, D.C., Ezra Pound lived outside the United States after 1908. He had, nevertheless, a profound influence on 20th-century writing in English, both as a practitioner of verse and as a patron and impresario of other writers. His most controversial work remained *The Cantos*, the first installment of which appeared in 1926 and the latest in 1959 (*Thrones: 96–109 de los cantares*), with a fragmentary addendum in 1968 (*Drafts & Fragments of Cantos CX–CXVII*).

Like Pound, to whom he was much indebted, T.S. Eliot lived abroad most of his life, becoming a British subject in 1927. His first volume, *Prufrock and Other Observations*, was published in 1917. In 1922 appeared *The Waste Land*, the poem by which he first became famous. Filled with fragments, competing voices, learned allusions, and deeply buried personal details, the poem was read as a dark diagnosis of a disillusioned generation and of the modern world. As a poet

and critic, Eliot exercised a strong influence, especially in the period between World Wars I and II. In what some critics regard as his finest work, *The Four Quartets* (1943), Eliot explored through images of great beauty and haunting power his own past, the past of the human race, and the meaning of human history.

Eliot was an acknowledged master of a varied group of poets whose work was indebted to 17th-century English Metaphysical poets, especially to John Donne. Eliot's influence was clear in the writings of Archibald MacLeish, whose earlier poems showed resemblances to *The Waste Land*. A number of Southern poets (who were also critics) were influenced by Eliot—John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson, and Allen Tate. Younger American Metaphysicals who emerged later included Louise Bogan, Léonie Adams, Muriel Rukeyser, Delmore Schwartz, and Karl Shapiro. But there were several major poets strongly opposed to Eliot's influence. Their style and subjects tended to be romantic and visionary. These included Hart Crane, whose long poem *The Bridge* (1930) aimed to create a Whitmanesque American epic, and Wallace Stevens, a lush and sensuous writer who made an astonishing literary debut with the poems collected in *Harmonium* (1923). Another opponent of Eliot was William Carlos Williams, who invested his experimental prose and magically simple lyrics—in works such as *Spring and All* (1923)—with the mundane details of American life and wrote about American myth and cultural history with great sweep in *In the American Grain* (1925).

Fiction

The little magazines that helped the growth of the poetry of the era also contributed to a development of its fiction. They printed daring or unconventional short stories and published attacks upon established writers. *The Dial* (1880–1929), *Little Review* (1914–29), *Seven Arts* (1916–17), and others encouraged Modernist innovation. More potent were two magazines edited by the ferociously funny journalist-critic H.L. Mencken—*The Smart Set* (editorship 1914–23)

and *American Mercury* (which he coedited between 1924 and 1933). A powerful influence and a scathing critic of puritanism, Mencken helped launch the new fiction.

Mencken's major enthusiasms included the fiction of Joseph Conrad and Theodore Dreiser, but he also promoted minor writers for their attacks on gentility, such as James Branch Cabell, or for their revolt against the narrow, frustrated quality of life in rural communities, including Zona Gale and Ruth Suckow. The most distinguished of these writers was Sherwood Anderson. His *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919) and *The Triumph of the Egg* (1921) were collections of short stories that showed villagers suffering from all sorts of phobias and suppressions. Anderson in time wrote several novels, the best being *Poor White* (1920).

In 1920 critics noticed that a new school of fiction had risen to prominence with the success of books such as F. Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* and Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*, fictions that tended to be frankly psychological or modern in their unsparing portrayals of contemporary life. Novels of the 1920s were often not only lyrical and personal but also, in the despairing mood that followed World War I, apt to express the pervasive disillusionment of the postwar generation. Novels of the 1930s inclined toward radical social criticism in response to the miseries of the Great Depression, though some of the best, by writers such as Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, Henry Roth, and Nathanael West, continued to explore the Modernist vein of the previous decade.

Critics of society

F. Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* (1920) showed the disillusionment and moral disintegration experienced by so many in the United States after World War I. The book initiated a career of great promise that found fruition in *The Great Gatsby* (1925), a spare but poignant novel about the promise

and failure of the American Dream. Fitzgerald was to live out this theme himself. Though damaged by drink and by a failing marriage, he went on to do some of his best work in the 1930s, including numerous stories and essays as well as his most ambitious novel, *Tender Is the Night* (1934). Unlike Fitzgerald, who was a lyric writer with real emotional intensity, Sinclair Lewis was best as a social critic. His onslaughts against the “village virus” (*Main Street*, 1920), average businessmen (*Babbitt*, 1922), materialistic scientists (*Arrowsmith*, 1925), and the racially prejudiced (*Kingsblood Royal*, 1947) were satirically sharp and thoroughly documented, though *Babbitt* is his only book that still stands up brilliantly at the beginning of the 21st century. Similar careful documentation, though little satire, characterized James T. Farrell’s naturalistic *Studs Lonigan* trilogy (1932–35), which described the stifling effects of growing up in a lower-middle-class family and a street-corner milieu in the Chicago of the 1920s.

The ironies of racial identity dominate the stories and novels produced by writers of the Harlem Renaissance, including harsh portraits of the Black middle class in Nella Larsen’s *Quicksand* (1928) and *Passing* (1929) and the powerful stories of Langston Hughes in *The Ways of White Folks* (1934), as well as the varied literary materials—poetry, fiction, and drama—collected in Jean Toomer’s *Cane* (1923). Richard Wright’s books, including *Uncle Tom’s Children* (1938), *Native Son* (1940), and *Black Boy* (1945), were works of burning social protest, Dostoyevskian in their intensity, that dealt boldly with the plight of American Blacks in both the old South and the Northern urban ghetto. Zora Neale Hurston’s training in anthropology and folklore contributed to *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), her powerful feminist novel about the all-Black Florida town in which she had grown up.

A number of authors wrote proletarian novels attacking capitalist exploitation, as in several novels based on a 1929 strike in the textile mills in Gastonia, N.C., such as Fielding Burke’s *Call Home the Heart* and Grace Lumpkin’s *To Make My Bread* (both 1932). Other notable proletarian novels included Jack Conroy’s *The Disinherited* (1933), Robert Cantwell’s *The Land of*

Plenty (1934), and Albert Halper's *Union Square* (1933), *The Foundry* (1934), and *The Chute* (1937), as well as some grim evocations of the drifters and "bottom dogs" of the Depression era, such as Edward Anderson's *Hungry Men* and Tom Kromer's *Waiting for Nothing* (both 1935). The radical movement, combined with a nascent feminism, encouraged the talent of several politically committed women writers whose work was rediscovered later; they included Tillie Olsen, Meridel Le Sueur, and Josephine Herbst.

Particularly admired as a protest writer was John Dos Passos, who first attracted attention with an anti-World War I novel, *Three Soldiers* (1921). His most sweeping indictments of the modern social and economic system, *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) and the U.S.A. trilogy (*The 42nd Parallel, 1919*, and *The Big Money* (1930–36)), employed various narrative innovations such as the "camera eye" and "newsreel," along with a large cast of characters, to attack society from the left. Nathanael West's novels, including *Miss Lonelyhearts* (1933), *A Cool Million* (1934), and *The Day of the Locust* (1939), used black comedy to create a bitter vision of an inhuman and brutal world and its depressing effects on his sensitive but ineffectual protagonists. West evoked the tawdry but rich materials of mass culture and popular fantasy to mock the pathos of the American Dream, a frequent target during the Depression year.

Hemingway, Faulkner, and Steinbeck

Three authors whose writings showed a shift from disillusionment were Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, and John Steinbeck. Hemingway's early short stories and his first novels, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), were full of the existential disillusionment of the Lost Generation expatriates. The Spanish Civil War, however, led him to espouse the possibility of collective action to solve social problems, and his less-effective novels, including *To Have and Have Not* (1937) and *For Whom the Bell*

Tolls (1940), embodied this new belief. He regained some of his form in *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) and his posthumously published memoir of Paris between the wars, *A Moveable Feast* (1964). Hemingway's writing was influenced by his background in journalism and by the spare manner and flat sentence rhythms of Gertrude Stein, his Paris friend and a pioneer Modernist, especially in such works of hers as *Three Lives* (1909). His own great impact on other writers came from his deceptively simple, stripped-down prose, full of unspoken implication, and from his tough but vulnerable masculinity, which created a myth that imprisoned the author and haunted the World War II generation.

Hemingway's great rival as a stylist and mythmaker was William Faulkner, whose writing was as baroque as Hemingway's was spare. Influenced by Sherwood Anderson, Herman Melville, and especially James Joyce, Faulkner combined stream-of-consciousness techniques with rich social history. Works such as *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *As I Lay Dying* (1930), *Light in August* (1932), *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936), and *The Hamlet* (1940) were parts of the unfolding history of Yoknapatawpha County, a mythical Mississippi community, which depicted the transformation and the decadence of the South. Faulkner's work was dominated by a sense of guilt going back to the American Civil War and the appropriation of Indian lands. Though often comic, his work pictured the disintegration of the leading families and, in later books such as *Go Down, Moses* (1942) and *Intruder in the Dust* (1948), showed a growing concern with the troubled role of race in Southern life.

Steinbeck's career, marked by uneven achievements, began with a historical novel, *Cup of Gold* (1929), in which he voiced a distrust of society and glorified the anarchistic individualist typical of the rebellious 1920s. He showed his affinity for colourful outcasts, such as the *paisanos* of the Monterey area, in the short novels *Tortilla Flat* (1935), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), and *Cannery Row* (1945). His best books were inspired by the social struggles of migrant farm workers during the Great Depression, including the simply written but ambiguous strike novel *In Dubious Battle* (1936) and his flawed

masterpiece, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). The latter, a protest novel punctuated by prose-poem interludes, tells the story of the migration of the Joads, an Oklahoma Dust Bowl family, to California. During their almost biblical journey, they learn the necessity for collective action among the poor and downtrodden to prevent them from being destroyed individually.

Lyric fictionists

An interesting development in fiction, abetted by Modernism, was a shift from naturalistic to poetic writing. There was an increased tendency to select details and endow them with symbolic meaning, to set down the thought processes and emotions of the characters, and to make use of rhythmic prose. In varied ways Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Cabell, Dos Passos, Hemingway, Steinbeck, and Faulkner all showed evidence of this—in passages, in short stories, and even in entire novels. Faulkner showed the tendency at its worst in *A Fable* (1954), which, ironically, won a Pulitzer Prize.

Lyricism was especially prominent in the writings of Willa Cather. *O Pioneers!* (1913), *The Song of the Lark* (1915), and *My Ántonia* (1918) contained poetic passages about the disappearing frontier and the creative efforts of frontier folk. *A Lost Lady* (1923) and *The Professor's House* (1925) were elegiac and spare in style, though they also depicted historic social transformations, and *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927) was an exaltation of the past and of spiritual pioneering. Katherine Anne Porter, whose works took the form primarily of novelettes and stories, wrote more in the style of the Metaphysical poets, though she also wrote one long, ambitious novel, *A Ship of Fools* (1962). Her use of the stream-of-consciousness method in *Flowering Judas* (1930) as well as in *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* (1939) had the complexity, the irony, and the symbolic sophistication characteristic of these poets, whose work the Modernists had brought into fashion.

Two of the most intensely lyrical works of the 1930s were autobiographical novels set in the Jewish ghetto of New York City's Lower East Side before World War I: Michael Gold's harsh *Jews Without Money* (1930) and Henry Roth's Proustian *Call It Sleep* (1934), one of the greatest novels of the decade. They followed in the footsteps of Anzia Yeziarska, a prolific writer of the 1920s whose passionate books about immigrant Jews, especially *Bread Givers* (1925), have been rediscovered by contemporary feminists.

Another lyrical and autobiographical writer, whose books have faded badly, was Thomas Wolfe, who put all his strivings, thoughts, and feelings into works such as *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929) and *Of Time and the River* (1935) before his early death in 1938. These Whitmanesque books, as well as posthumously edited ones such as *The Web and the Rock* (1939) and *You Can't Go Home Again* (1940), dealt with a figure much like Wolfe, echoing the author's youth in the South, young manhood in the North, and eternal search to fulfill a vision. Though grandiose, they influenced many young writers, including Jack Kerouac.

Literary criticism

Some historians, looking back over the first half of the 20th century, were inclined to think that it was particularly noteworthy for its literary criticism. Beyond doubt, criticism thrived as it had not for several generations. It was an important influence on literature itself, and it shaped the perceptions of readers in the face of difficult new writing.

The period began with a battle between two literary groups, one that called its movement New Humanism and stood for older values in judging literature and another group that urged that old standards be overthrown and new ones adopted. The New Humanists, such as Irving Babbitt, a Harvard University professor, and Paul Elmer More, were moralists whose work found an echo in neotraditionalist writers such as T.S. Eliot, who shared their dislike of naturalism,

Romanticism, and the liberal faith in progress. The leader of the opposition, hardly a liberal himself, was the pugnacious H.L. Mencken, who insisted that the duty of writers was to present “the unvarnished truth” about life. His magazine articles and reviews gathered in *A Book of Prefaces* (1917) and the six volumes of *Prejudices* (1919–27) ushered in the iconoclasm of the 1920s, preparing the ground for satiric writers such as Sinclair Lewis. Mencken was a tireless enthusiast for the work of Joseph Conrad and Theodore Dreiser, among other modern writers. With his dislike of cant and hypocrisy, Mencken helped liberate American literature from its moralistic framework.

Socio-literary critics

In this period of social change, it was natural for critics to consider literature in relationship to society and politics, as most 19th-century critics had done. The work of Van Wyck Brooks and Vernon L. Parrington illustrated two of the main approaches. In *America's Coming-of-Age* (1915), *Letters and Leadership* (1918), and *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* (1920), Brooks scolded the American public and attacked the philistinism, materialism, and provinciality of the Gilded Age. But he retreated from his critical position in the popular *Makers and Finders* series, which included *The Flowering of New England* (1936), *New England: Indian Summer* (1940), *The World of Washington Irving* (1944), *The Times of Melville and Whitman* (1947), and *The Confident Years* (1952). These books wove an elaborate cultural tapestry of the major and minor figures in American literature. In *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927–30), Parrington, a progressive, reevaluated American literature in terms of its adherence to the tenets of Jeffersonian democracy.

The growth of Marxian influence upon thinking in the 1920s and '30s manifested itself in several critical works by V.F. Calverton, Granville Hicks, Malcolm Cowley, and Bernard Smith, as well as numerous articles in journals such as *Modern Quarterly*, *New Masses*, *Partisan Review*, and *The New Republic*. Though the enthusiasm for communism waned, Marxism contributed to

the historical approach of outstanding critics such as Edmund Wilson and Kenneth Burke and to the entire school of New York intellectuals that formed around *Partisan Review* and included critics such as Lionel Trilling and Philip Rahv.

Moral-aesthetic critics

Wilson and Burke, like Cowley, Morton D. Zabel, Newton Arvin, and F.O. Matthiessen, tried to strike a balance between aesthetic concerns and social or moral issues. They were interested both in analyzing and in evaluating literary creations—i.e., they were eager to see in detail how a literary work was constructed yet also to place it in a larger social or moral framework. Their work, like that of all critics of the period, showed the influence of T.S. Eliot. In essays and books such as *The Sacred Wood* (1920) and *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (1933), Eliot drew close attention to the language of literature yet also made sweeping judgments and large cultural generalizations. His main impact was on close readers of poetry—e.g., I.A. Richards, William Empson, and F.R. Leavis in England and the critics of the New Criticism movement in the United States, many of whom were also poets besides being political and cultural conservatives. Along with Eliot, they rewrote the map of literary history, challenged the dominance of Romantic forms and styles, promoted and analyzed difficult Modernist writing, and greatly advanced ways of discussing literary structure. Major examples of their style of close reading can be found in R.P. Blackmur's *The Double Agent* (1935), Allen Tate's *Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideas* (1936), John Crowe Ransom's *The World's Body* (1938), Yvor Winters's *Maule's Curse* (1938), and Cleanth Brooks's *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947). Though they were later attacked for their formalism and for avoiding the social context of writing, the New Critics did much to further the understanding and appreciation of literature.

CHAPTER XIV
AMERICAN LITERATURE,
AFTER WORLD WAR II

The literary historian Malcolm Cowley described the years between the two world wars as a “second flowering” of American writing. Certainly American literature attained a new maturity and a rich diversity in the 1920s and '30s, and significant works by several major figures from those decades were published after 1945. Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck, and Katherine Anne Porter wrote memorable fiction, though not up to their prewar standard; and Frost, Eliot, Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore, E.E. Cummings, William Carlos Williams, and Gwendolyn Brooks published important poetry. Eugene O'Neill's most distinguished play, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, appeared posthumously in 1956. Before and after World War II, Robert Penn Warren published influential fiction, poetry, and criticism. His *All the King's Men*, one of the best American political novels, won the 1947 Pulitzer Prize. Mary McCarthy became a widely read social satirist and essayist. When it first appeared in the United States in the 1960s, Henry Miller's fiction was influential primarily because of its frank exploration of sexuality. But its loose, picaresque, quasi-autobiographical form also meshed well with post-1960s fiction. Impressive new novelists, poets, and playwrights emerged after the war. There was, in fact, a gradual changing of the guard.

Not only did a new generation come out of the war, but its ethnic, regional, and social character was quite different from that of the preceding one. Among the younger writers were children of immigrants, many of them Jews; African Americans, only a few generations away from slavery; and, eventually, women, who, with the rise of feminism, were to speak in a new voice. Though the social climate of the postwar years was conservative, even conformist, some of the most hotly discussed writers were homosexuals or bisexuals, including Tennessee Williams, Truman Capote, Paul Bowles, Gore Vidal, and James Baldwin, whose

dark themes and experimental methods cleared a path for Beat writers such as Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, and Jack Kerouac.

Realism and “metafiction”

Two distinct groups of novelists responded to the cultural impact, and especially the technological horror, of World War II. Norman Mailer’s *The Naked and the Dead* (1948) and Irwin Shaw’s *The Young Lions* (1948) were realistic war novels, though Mailer’s book was also a novel of ideas, exploring fascist thinking and an obsession with power as elements of the military mind. James Jones, amassing a staggering quantity of closely observed detail, documented the war’s human cost in an ambitious trilogy (*From Here to Eternity* (1951), *The Thin Red Line* 1962, and *Whistle* 1978) that centred on loners who resisted adapting to military discipline. Younger novelists, profoundly shaken by the bombing of Hiroshima and the real threat of human annihilation, found the conventions of realism inadequate for treating the war’s nightmarish implications. In *Catch-22* (1961), Joseph Heller satirized the military mentality with surreal black comedy but also injected a sense of Kafkaesque horror. A sequel, *Closing Time* (1994), was an elegy for the World War II generation. Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., in *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969), described the Allied firebombing of the German city of Dresden with a mixture of dark fantasy and numb, loopy humour. Later this method was applied brilliantly to the portrayal of the Vietnam War—a conflict that seemed in itself surreal—by Tim O’Brien in *Going After Cacciato* (1978) and the short-story collection *The Things They Carried* (1990).

In part because of the atomic bomb, American writers turned increasingly to black humour and absurdist fantasy. Many found the naturalistic approach incapable of communicating the rapid pace and the sheer implausibility of contemporary life. A highly self-conscious fiction emerged, laying bare its own literary devices, questioning the nature of representation, and often imitating or parodying earlier fiction rather than social reality. Russian-born Vladimir Nabokov and the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges were strong influences on

this new “metafiction.” Nabokov, who became a U.S. citizen in 1945, produced a body of exquisitely wrought fiction distinguished by linguistic and formal innovation. Despite their artificiality, his best novels written in English—including *Lolita* (1955), *Pnin* (1957), and *Pale Fire* (1962)—are highly personal books that have a strong emotional thread running through them.

In an important essay, “The Literature of Exhaustion” (1967), John Barth declared himself an American disciple of Nabokov and Borges. After dismissing realism as a “used up” tradition, Barth described his own work as “novels which imitate the form of the novel, by an author who imitates the role of Author.” In fact, Barth’s earliest fiction, *The Floating Opera* (1956) and *The End of the Road* (1958), fell partly within the realistic tradition, but in later, more-ambitious works he simultaneously imitated and parodied conventional forms—the historical novel in *The Sot-Weed Factor* (1960), Greek and Christian myths in *Giles Goat-Boy* (1966), and the epistolary novel in *LETTERS* (1979). Similarly, Donald Barthelme mocked the fairy tale in *Snow White* (1967) and Freudian fiction in *The Dead Father* (1975). Barthelme was most successful in his short stories and parodies that solemnly caricatured contemporary styles, especially the richly suggestive pieces collected in *Unspeakable Practices, Unnatural Acts* (1968), *City Life* (1970), and *Guilty Pleasures* (1974).

Thomas Pynchon emerged as the major American practitioner of the absurdist fable. His novels and stories were elaborately plotted mixtures of historical information, comic-book fantasy, and countercultural suspicion. Using paranoia as a structuring device as well as a cast of mind, Pynchon worked out elaborate “conspiracies” in *V.* (1963), *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966), and *Gravity’s Rainbow* (1973). The underlying assumption of Pynchon’s fiction was the inevitability of entropy—i.e., the disintegration of physical and moral energy. Pynchon’s technique was later to influence writers as different as Don DeLillo and Paul Auster. In *The Naked Lunch* (1959) and other novels, William S. Burroughs, abandoning plot and coherent characterization, used a drug

addict's consciousness to depict a hideous modern landscape. Vonnegut, Terry Southern, and John Hawkes were also major practitioners of black humour and the absurdist fable.

Other influential portraits of outsider figures included the Beat characters in Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957), *The Dharma Bums* (1958), *Desolation Angels* (1965), and *Visions of Cody* (1972); the young Rabbit Angstrom in John Updike's *Rabbit, Run* (1960) and *Rabbit Redux* (1971); Holden Caulfield in J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951); and the troubling madman in Richard Yates's powerful novel of suburban life, *Revolutionary Road* (1961).

Though writers such as Barth, Barthelme, and Pynchon rejected the novel's traditional function as a mirror reflecting society, a significant number of contemporary novelists were reluctant to abandon Social Realism, which they pursued in much more personal terms. In novels such as *The Victim* (1947), *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953), *Herzog* (1964), *Mr. Sammler's Planet* (1970), and *Humboldt's Gift* (1975), Saul Bellow tapped into the buoyant, manic energy and picaresque structure of black humour while proclaiming the necessity of "being human." Though few contemporary writers saw the ugliness of urban life more clearly than Bellow, his central characters rejected the "Wasteland outlook" that he associated with Modernism. A spiritual vision, derived from sources as diverse as Judaism, Transcendentalism, and Rudolph Steiner's cultish theosophy, found its way into Bellow's later novels, but he also wrote darker fictions such as the novella *Seize the Day* (1956), a study in failure and blocked emotion that was perhaps his best work. With the publication of *Ravelstein* (2000), his fictional portrait of the scholar-writer Allan Bloom, and of *Collected Stories* (2001), Bellow was acclaimed as a portraitist and a poet of memory.

Four other major Jewish writers—Bernard Malamud, Grace Paley, Philip Roth, and Isaac Bashevis Singer—treated the human condition with humour and forgiveness. Malamud's gift for dark comedy and Hawthornean fable was especially evident in his short-story collections *The Magic Barrel* (1958) and *Idiots First* (1963). His first three novels, *The Natural* (1952), *The*

Assistant (1957), and *A New Life* (1961), were also impressive works of fiction; *The Assistant* had the bleak moral intensity of his best stories. Paley's stories combined an offbeat, whimsically poetic manner with a wry understanding of the ironies of family life and progressive politics. While Roth was known best for the wild satire and sexual high jinks of *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969), a hilarious stand-up routine about ethnic stereotypes, his most-lasting achievement may be his later novels built around the misadventures of a controversial Jewish novelist named Zuckerman, especially *The Ghost Writer* (1979), *The Anatomy Lesson* (1983), and, above all, *The Counterlife* (1987). Like many of his later works, from *My Life as a Man* (1974) to *Operation Shylock* (1993), *The Counterlife* plays ingeniously on the relationship between autobiography and fiction. His best later work was his bitter, deliberately offensive story of a self-destructive artist, *Sabbath's Theater* (1995). Returning to realism, but without his former self-absorption, Roth won new readers with his trilogy on 20th-century American history—*American Pastoral* (1997), *I Married a Communist* (1998), and *The Human Stain* (2000)—and with *The Plot Against America* (2004), a counter-historical novel about the coming of fascism in the United States during World War II. The Polish-born Singer won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1978 for his stories, written originally in Yiddish. They evolved from fantastic tales of demons and angels to realistic fictions set in New York City's Upper West Side, often dealing with the haunted lives of Holocaust survivors. These works showed him to be one of the great storytellers of modern times.

Another great storyteller, John Cheever, long associated with *The New Yorker* magazine, created in his short stories and novels a gallery of memorable eccentrics. He documented the anxieties of upper-middle-class New Yorkers and suburbanites in the relatively tranquil years after World War II. The sexual and moral confusion of the American middle class was the focus of the work of J.D. Salinger and Richard Yates, as well as of John Updike's Rabbit series (four novels from *Rabbit, Run* (1960) to *Rabbit at Rest* 1990), *Couples* (1968), and *Too Far to Go* (1979), a sequence of tales about the quiet disintegration of a civilized marriage, a subject Updike revisited in a

retrospective work, *Villages* (2004). In sharp contrast, Nelson Algren (*The Man with the Golden Arm* 1949) and Hubert Selby, Jr. (*Last Exit to Brooklyn* (1964), documented lower-class urban life with brutal frankness. Similarly, John Rechy portrayed America's urban homosexual subculture in *City of Night* (1963). As literary and social mores were liberalized, Cheever himself dealt with homosexuality in his prison novel *Falconer* (1977) and even more explicitly in his personal journals, published posthumously in 1991.

Southern fiction

Post-World War II Southern writers inherited Faulkner's rich legacy. Three women—Eudora Welty, Flannery O'Connor, and Carson McCullers, specialists in the grotesque—contributed greatly to Southern fiction. O'Connor, writing as a Roman Catholic in the Protestant South, created a high comedy of moral incongruity in her incomparable short stories. Welty, always a brilliant stylist, first came to prominence with her collections of short fiction *A Curtain of Green* (1941) and *The Wide Net, and Other Stories* (1943). Her career culminated with a large family novel, *Losing Battles* (1970), and a fine novella, *The Optimist's Daughter* (1972), which was awarded the 1973 Pulitzer Prize. McCullers is best remembered for her first book, *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* (1940), an intricate gothic novel set in a small town in the Deep South. She also published *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1941), *The Member of the Wedding* (1946), and *The Ballad of the Sad Café* (1951), all later adapted to the stage or screen. Other fine storytellers in the Southern tradition include Elizabeth Spencer, whose short fiction was collected in *The Southern Woman* (2001), and Reynolds Price, whose best novels were *A Long and Happy Life* (1961) and *Kate Vaiden* (1986). Initially known for his lyrical portraits of Southern eccentrics (*Other Voices, Other Rooms* (1948), Truman Capote later published *In Cold Blood* (1965), a cold but impressive piece of documentary realism that contributed, along with the work of Tom

Wolfe and Norman Mailer, to the emergence of a “new journalism” that used many of the techniques of fiction.

William Styron’s overripe first novel, *Lie Down in Darkness* (1951), clearly revealed the influence of Faulkner. In two controversial later works, Styron fictionalized the dark side of modern history: *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (1967) depicted an antebellum slave revolt, and *Sophie’s Choice* (1979) unsuccessfully sought to capture the full horror of the Holocaust. Inspired by Faulkner and Mark Twain, William Humphrey wrote two powerful novels set in Texas, *Home from the Hill* (1958) and *The Ordways* (1965). *The Moviegoer* (1961) and *The Last Gentleman* (1966) established Walker Percy as an important voice in Southern fiction. Their musing philosophical style broke sharply with the Southern gothic tradition and influenced later writers such as Richard Ford in *The Sportswriter* (1986) and its moving sequel, *Independence Day* (1995). Equally impressive were the novels and stories of Peter Taylor, an impeccable Social Realist, raconteur, and genial novelist of manners who recalled a bygone world in works such as *The Old Forest* (1985) and *A Summons to Memphis* (1986).

African American literature

Black writers of this period found alternatives to the Richard Wright tradition of angry social protest. James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison, both protégés of Wright, wrote polemical essays calling for a literature that reflected the full complexity of Black life in the United States. In his first and best novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953), Baldwin portrayed the Harlem world and the Black church through his own adolescent religious experiences. Drawing on rural folktale, absurdist humour, and a picaresque realism, Ralph Ellison wrote a deeply resonant comic novel that dealt with the full range of Black experience—rural sharecropping, segregated education, northward migration, ghetto hustling, and the lure of such competing ideologies as nationalism and communism. Many considered his novel *Invisible Man* (1952) the best novel of the postwar years.

Later two African American women published some of the most important post-World War II American fiction. In *The Bluest Eye* (1970), *Sula* (1973), *Song of Solomon* (1977), *Beloved* (1987), *Jazz* (1992), and *Paradise* (1998), Toni Morrison created a strikingly original fiction that sounded different notes from lyrical recollection to magic realism. Like Ellison, Morrison drew on diverse literary and folk influences and dealt with important phases of Black history—i.e., slavery in *Beloved* and the Harlem Renaissance in *Jazz*. She was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993. Alice Walker, after writing several volumes of poetry and a novel dealing with the civil rights movement (*Meridian*, 1976), received the Pulitzer Prize for her Black feminist novel *The Color Purple* (1982). African American men whose work gained attention during this period included Ishmael Reed, whose wild comic techniques resembled Ellison's; James Alan McPherson, a subtle short-story writer in the mold of Ellison and Baldwin; Charles Johnson, whose novels, such as *The Oxherding Tale* (1982) and *The Middle Passage* (1990), showed a masterful historical imagination; Randall Kenan, a gay writer with a strong folk imagination whose style also descended from both Ellison and Baldwin; and Colson Whitehead, who used experimental techniques and folk traditions in *The Intuitionist* (1999) and *John Henry Days* (2001).

New fictional modes

The horrors of World War II, the Cold War and the atomic bomb, the bizarre feast of consumer culture, and the cultural clashes of the 1960s prompted many writers to argue that reality had grown inaccessible, undermining the traditional social role of fiction. Writers of novels and short stories therefore were under unprecedented pressure to discover, or invent, new and viable kinds of fiction. One response was the postmodern novel of William Gaddis, John Barth, John Hawkes, Donald Barthelme, Thomas Pynchon, Robert Coover, Paul Auster, and Don DeLillo—technically sophisticated and highly self-conscious about the construction of fiction and the fictive nature of “reality” itself. These

writers dealt with themes such as imposture and paranoia; their novels drew attention to themselves as artifacts and often used realistic techniques ironically. Other responses involved a heightening of realism by means of intensifying violence, amassing documentation, or resorting to fantasy. A brief discussion of writers as different as Norman Mailer and Joyce Carol Oates may serve to illustrate these new directions.

In his World War II novel, *The Naked and the Dead* (1948), Mailer wrote in the Dos Passos tradition of social protest. Feeling its limitations, he developed his own brand of surreal fantasy in fables such as *An American Dream* (1965) and *Why Are We in Vietnam?* (1967). As with many of the postmodern novelists, his subject was the nature of power, personal as well as political. However, it was only when he turned to “nonfiction fiction” or “fiction as history” in *The Armies of the Night* and *Miami and the Siege of Chicago* (both 1968) that Mailer discovered his true voice—grandiose yet personal, comic yet shrewdly intellectual. He refined this approach into a new objectivity in the Pulitzer Prize-winning “true life novel” *The Executioner’s Song* (1979). When he returned to fiction, his most effective work was *Harlot’s Ghost* (1991), about the Central Intelligence Agency. His final novels took Jesus Christ (*The Gospel According to the Son* (1997) and Adolf Hitler (*The Castle in the Forest* (2007) as their subjects.

In her early work, especially *A Garden of Earthly Delights* (1967) and *them* (1969), Joyce Carol Oates worked naturalistically with violent urban materials, such as the Detroit riots. Incredibly prolific, she later experimented with Surrealism in *Wonderland* (1971) and Gothic fantasy in *Bellefleur* (1980) before returning in works such as *Marya* (1986) to the bleak blue-collar world of her youth in upstate New York. Among her later works was *Blonde: A Novel* (2000), a fictional biography of Marilyn Monroe. While Mailer and Oates refused to surrender the novel’s gift for capturing reality, both were compelled to search out new fictional modes to tap that power.

The surge of feminism in the 1970s gave impetus to many new women writers, such as Erica Jong, author of the sexy and funny *Fear of Flying* (1974),

and Rita Mae Brown, who explored lesbian life in *Rubyfruit Jungle* (1973). Other significant works of fiction by women in the 1970s included Ann Beattie's account of the post-1960s generation in *Chilly Scenes of Winter* (1976) and many short stories, Gail Godwin's highly civilized *The Odd Woman* (1974), Mary Gordon's portraits of Irish Catholic life in *Final Payments* (1978), and the many social comedies of Alison Lurie and Anne Tyler.

The influence of Raymond Carver

Perhaps the most influential fiction writer to emerge in the 1970s was Raymond Carver. He was another realist who dealt with blue-collar life, usually in the Pacific Northwest, in powerful collections of stories such as *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love* (1981) and *Cathedral* (1983). His self-destructive characters were life's losers, and his style, influenced by Hemingway and Samuel Beckett, was spare and flat but powerfully suggestive. It was imitated, often badly, by minimalists such as Frederick Barthelme, Mary Robison, and Amy Hempel. More-talented writers whose novels reflected the influence of Carver in their evocation of the downbeat world of the blue-collar male included Richard Ford (*Rock Springs*, 1987), Russell Banks (*Continental Drift*, 1984) and *Affliction*, 1989), and Tobias Wolff (*The Barracks Thief*, 1984) and *This Boy's Life*, 1989). Another strong male-oriented writer in a realist mode who emerged from the 1960s counterculture was Robert Stone. His *Dog Soldiers* (1974) was a grimly downbeat portrayal of the drugs-and-Vietnam generation, and *A Flag for Sunrise* (1981) was a bleak, Conradian political novel set in Central America. Stone focused more on the spiritual malaise of his characters than on their ordinary lives. He wrote a lean, furious Hollywood novel in *Children of Light* (1986) and captured some of the feverish, apocalyptic atmosphere of the Holy Land in *Damascus Gate* (1998). In leisurely, good-humoured, minutely detailed novels, Richard Russo dealt with blue-collar losers living in decaying Northeastern towns in *The Risk Pool* (1988), *Nobody's Fool* (1993), and *Empire Falls* (2001), but he also published a satiric novel about academia, *Straight*

Man (1997). Some women writers were especially impressive in dealing with male characters, including E. Annie Proulx in *The Shipping News* (1993) and *Close Range: Wyoming Stories* (1999) and Andrea Barrett in *Ship Fever* (1996). Others focused on relationships between women, including Mary Gaitskill in her witty satiric novel *Two Girls, Fat and Thin* (1991), written under the influences of Nabokov and Mary McCarthy. Lorrie Moore published rich, idiosyncratic stories as densely textured as novels. Deborah Eisenberg, Amy Bloom, Antonya Nelson, and Thom Jones also helped make the last years of the 20th century a fertile period for short fiction.

Multicultural writing

The dramatic loosening of immigration restrictions in the mid-1960s set the stage for the rich multicultural writing of the last quarter of the 20th century. New Jewish voices were heard in the fiction of E.L. Doctorow, noted for his mingling of the historical with the fictional in novels such as *Ragtime* (1975) and *The Waterworks* (1994) and in the work of Cynthia Ozick, whose best story, *Envy; or, Yiddish in America* (1969), has characters modeled on leading figures in Yiddish literature. Her story *The Shawl* (1980) concerns the murder of a baby in a Nazi concentration camp. David Leavitt introduced homosexual themes into his portrayal of middle-class life in *Family Dancing* (1984). At the turn of the 21st century, younger Jewish writers from the former Soviet Union such as Gary Shteyngart and Lara Vapnyar dealt impressively with the experience of immigrants in the United States.

Novels such as N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1969, James Welch's *Winter in the Blood* (1974) and *Fools Crow* (1986), Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* (1977), and Louise Erdrich's *Love Medicine* (1984), *The Beet Queen* (1986), and *The Antelope Wife* (1998) were powerful and ambiguous explorations of Native American history and identity. Mexican Americans were represented by works such

as Rudolfo A. Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima* (1972), Richard Rodriguez's autobiographical *Hunger for Memory* (1981), and Sandra Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street* (1983) and her collection *Woman Hollering Creek, and Other Stories* (1991).

Some of the best immigrant writers, while thoroughly assimilated, nonetheless had a subtle understanding of both the old and the new culture. These included the Cuban American writers Oscar Hijuelos (*The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love* (1989) and Cristina Garcia (*Dreaming in Cuban* (1992) and *The Agüero Sisters*, 1997); the Antigua-born Jamaica Kincaid, author of *Annie John* (1984), *Lucy* (1990), the AIDS memoir *My Brother* (1997), and *See Now Then* (2013); the Dominican-born Junot Díaz, who won acclaim for *Drown* (1996), a collection of stories, and whose novel *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007) won a Pulitzer Prize; and the Bosnian immigrant Aleksandar Hemon, who wrote *The Question of Bruno* (2000) and *Nowhere Man* (2002). Chinese Americans found an extraordinary voice in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* (1976) and *China Men* (1980), which blended old Chinese lore with fascinating family history. Her first novel, *Tripmaster Monkey: His Fake Book* (1989), was set in the bohemian world of the San Francisco Bay area during the 1960s. Other important Asian American writers included Gish Jen, whose *Typical American* (1991) dealt with immigrant striving and frustration; the Korean American Chang-rae Lee, who focused on family life, political awakening, and generational differences in *Native Speaker* (1995) and *A Gesture Life* (1999); and Ha Jin, whose *Waiting* (1999; National Book Award), set in rural China during and after the Cultural Revolution, was a powerful tale of timidity, repression, and botched love, contrasting the mores of the old China and the new. Bharati Mukherjee beautifully explored contrasting lives in India and North America in *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988), *Jasmine* (1989), *Desirable Daughters* (2002), and *The Tree Bride* (2004). While many multicultural works were merely representative of their cultural milieu, books such as these made remarkable contributions to a changing American literature.

During the 1990s some of the best energies of fiction writers went into autobiography, in works such as Mary Karr's *The Liar's Club* (1995), about growing up in a loving but dysfunctional family on the Texas Gulf Coast; Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes* (1996), a vivid portrayal of a Dickensian childhood amid the grinding conditions of Irish slum life; Anne Roiphe's bittersweet recollections of her rich but cold-hearted parents and her brother's death from AIDS in *1185 Park Avenue* (1999); and Dave Eggers's *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* (2000), a painful but comic tour de force, half tongue-in-cheek, about a young man raising his brother after the death of their parents.

The memoir vogue did not prevent writers from publishing huge, ambitious novels, including David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest* (1996), an encyclopaedic mixture of arcane lore, social fiction, and postmodern irony; Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections* (2001, National Book Award) and *Freedom* (2010), both family portraits; and Don DeLillo's *Underworld* (1997), a brooding, resonant, oblique account of the Cold War era as seen through the eyes of both fictional characters and historical figures. All three novels testify to a belated convergence of Social Realism and Pynchonesque invention. Pynchon himself returned to form with sprawling, picaresque historical novels: *Mason & Dixon* (1997), about two famous 18th-century surveyors who explored and mapped the American colonies, and *Against the Day* (2006), set at the turn of the 20th century.

Poetry

The post-World War II years produced an abundance of strong poetry but no individual poet as dominant and accomplished as T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens, Robert Frost, or William Carlos Williams, whose long careers were coming to an end. The major poetry from 1945 to 1960 was Modernist in its ironic texture yet formal in its insistence on regular rhyme and metre. Beginning in the late 1950s, however, there were a variety of poets and

schools who rebelled against these constraints and experimented with more-open forms and more-colloquial styles.

Formal poets

The leading figure of the late 1940s was Robert Lowell, who, influenced by Eliot and such Metaphysical poets as John Donne and Gerard Manley Hopkins, explored his spiritual torments and family history in *Lord Weary's Castle* (1946). Other impressive formal poets included Theodore Roethke, who, influenced by William Butler Yeats, revealed a genius for ironic lyricism and a profound empathy for the processes of nature in *The Lost Son and Other Poems* (1948); the masterfully elegant Richard Wilbur (*Things of This World*, 1956); two war poets, Karl Shapiro (*V-Letter and Other Poems*, 1944) and Randall Jarrell (*Losses*, 1948); and a group of young poets influenced by W.H. Auden, including James Merrill, W.S. Merwin, James Wright, Adrienne Rich, and John Hollander. Although they displayed brilliant technical skill, they lacked Auden's strong personal voice.

Experimentation and Beat poetry

By the mid-1950s, however, a strong reaction had developed. Poets began to turn away from Eliot and Metaphysical poetry to more-romantic or more-prosaic models such as Walt Whitman, William Carlos Williams, Hart Crane, and D.H. Lawrence. A group of poets associated with Black Mountain College in western North Carolina, including Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, Edward Dorn, and Denise Levertov, treated the poem as an unfolding process rather than a containing form. Olson's *Maximus Poems* (1953–68) showed a clear affinity with the jagged line and uneven flow of Pound's *Cantos* and Williams's *Paterson*. Allen Ginsberg's incantatory, prophetic "Howl" (1956) and his moving elegy for his mother, "Kaddish" (1961), gave powerful impetus to the Beat movement. Written with extraordinary intensity,

these works were inspired by writers as diverse as Whitman, the biblical prophets, and English poets William Blake and Christopher Smart, as well as by the dream-logic of the French Surrealists and the spontaneous jazz aesthetic of Ginsberg's friend the novelist Jack Kerouac. Other Beat poets included Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Gregory Corso, and Gary Snyder, a student of Eastern religion who, in *Turtle Island* (1974), continued the American tradition of nature poetry.

The openness of Beat poetry and the prosaic directness of Williams encouraged Lowell to develop a new autobiographical style in the laconic poetry and prose of *Life Studies* (1959) and *For the Union Dead* (1964). Lowell's new work influenced nearly all American poets but especially a group of "confessional" writers, including Anne Sexton in *To Bedlam and Part Way Back* (1960) and *All My Pretty Ones* (1962) and Sylvia Plath in the posthumously published *Ariel* (1965). In her poetry Plath joined an icy sarcasm to white-hot emotional intensity. Another poet influenced by Lowell was John Berryman, whose *Dream Songs* (1964, 1968) combined autobiographical fragments with minstrel-show motifs to create a zany style of self-projection and comic-tragic lament. Deeply troubled figures, Sexton, Plath, and Berryman all took their own lives. Lowell's influence can still be discerned in the elegant quatrains and casually brutal details of Frederick Seidel's *Life on Earth* (2001), as in the crisp elegiac poems of his award-winning *Sunrise* (1980).

"Deep image" poets

Through his personal charisma and his magazine *The Fifties* (later *The Sixties* and *The Seventies*), Robert Bly encouraged a number of poets to shift their work toward the individual voice and open form; they included Galway Kinnell, James Wright, David Ignatow, and, less directly, Louis Simpson, James Dickey, and Donald Hall. Sometimes called the "deep image" poets, Bly and his friends sought spiritual intensity and transcendence of the self rather than confessional

immediacy. Their work was influenced by the poetry of Spanish and Latin American writers such as Federico García Lorca, Juan Ramón Jiménez, César Vallejo, and Pablo Neruda, especially their surreal association of images, as well as by the “greenhouse poems” (1946–48) and the later meditative poetry of Roethke, with their deep feeling for nature as a vehicle of spiritual transformation. Yet, like their Hispanic models, they were also political poets, instrumental in organizing protest and writing poems against the Vietnam War. Kinnell was a Lawrentian poet who, in poems such as “The Porcupine” and “The Bear,” gave the brutality of nature the power of myth. His vatic sequence, *The Book of Nightmares* (1971), and the quieter poems in *Mortal Acts, Mortal Words* (1980) are among the most rhetorically effective works in contemporary poetry.

New directions

James Wright’s style changed dramatically in the early 1960s. He abandoned his stiffly formal verse for the stripped-down, meditative lyricism of *The Branch Will Not Break* (1963) and *Shall We Gather at the River* (1968), which were more dependent on the emotional tenor of image than on metre, poetic diction, or rhyme. In books such as *Figures of the Human* (1964) and *Rescue the Dead* (1968), David Ignatow wrote brief but razor-sharp poems that made their effect through swiftness, deceptive simplicity, paradox, and personal immediacy. Another poet whose work ran the gamut from prosaic simplicity to Emersonian transcendence was A.R. Ammons. His short poems in *Briefings* (1971) were close to autobiographical jottings, small glimpses, and observations, but, like his longer poems, they turned the natural world into a source of vision. Like Ignatow, he made it a virtue to seem unliterary and found illumination in the pedestrian and the ordinary.

Both daily life and an exposure to French Surrealism helped inspire a group of New York poets, among them Frank O’Hara, Kenneth Koch, James Schuyler, and John Ashbery. Whether O’Hara was jotting down a sequence of ordinary moments or paying tribute to film stars, his poems had a breathless

immediacy that was distinctive and unique. Koch's comic voice swung effortlessly from the trivial to the fantastic. Strongly influenced by Wallace Stevens, Ashbery's ruminative poems can seem random, discursive, and enigmatic. Avoiding poetic colour, they do their work by suggestion and association, exploring the interface between experience and perception.

Other impressive poets of the postwar years included Elizabeth Bishop, whose precise, loving attention to objects was reminiscent of her early mentor, Marianne Moore. Though she avoided the confessional mode of her friend Lowell, her sense of place, her heartbreaking decorum, and her keen powers of observation gave her work a strong personal cast. In *The Changing Light at Sandover* (1982), James Merrill, previously a polished lyric poet, made his mandarin style the vehicle of a lighthearted personal epic, in which he, with the help of a Ouija board, called up the shades of all his dead friends, including the poet Auden. In a prolific career highlighted by such poems as *Reflections on Espionage* (1976), "Blue Wine" (1979), and *Powers of Thirteen* (1983), John Hollander, like Merrill, displayed enormous technical virtuosity. Richard Howard imagined witty monologues and dialogues for famous people of the past in poems collected in *Untitled Subjects* (1969) and *Two-Part Inventions* (1974).

Autobiographical approaches

With the autobiographical knots and parables of *Reasons for Moving* (1968) and *Darker* (1970), Mark Strand's paradoxical language achieved a resonant simplicity. He enhanced his reputation with *Dark Harbor* (1993) and *Blizzard of One* (1998). Other strongly autobiographical poets working with subtle technique and intelligence in a variety of forms included Philip Levine, Charles Simic, Robert Pinsky, Gerald Stern, Louise Glück, and Sharon Olds. Levine's background in working-class Detroit gave his work a unique cast, while Glück and Olds brought a terrific emotional intensity to their poems. Pinsky's poems were collected in *The Figured Wheel* (1996). He became a tireless and effective advocate for poetry during his tenure as poet laureate from 1997 to

2000. With the sinuous sentences and long flowing lines of *Tar* (1983) and *Flesh and Blood* (1987), C.K. Williams perfected a narrative technique founded on distinctive voice, sharply etched emotion, and cleanly observed detail. He received the Pulitzer Prize for *Repair* (2000). Adrienne Rich's work gained a burning immediacy from her lesbian feminism. *The Will to Change* (1971) and *Diving into the Wreck* (1973) were turning points for women's poetry in the wake of the 1960s.

That decade also enabled some older poets to become more loosely autobiographical and freshly imaginative, among them Stanley Kunitz, Robert Penn Warren, and W.S. Merwin. The 1960s invigorated gifted Black poets such as Robert Hayden, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Michael S. Harper. It formed the background for the work of the young poets of the 1980s, such as Edward Hirsch, Alan Shapiro, Jorie Graham, Cathy Song, and Rita Dove, whose sequence about her grandparents, *Thomas and Beulah*, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1987. Graham's increasingly abstract and elusive work culminated in *The Dream of the Unified Field* (1995), selected from five previous volumes. The AIDS crisis inspired *My Alexandria* (1993) by Mark Doty, *The Man with Night Sweats* (1992) by Thom Gunn, and a superb memoir, *Borrowed Time* (1988), and a cycle of poems, *Love Alone* (1988), by the poet Paul Monette. With razor-sharp images and finely honed descriptive touches, Louisiana-born Yusef Komunyakaa emerged as an impressive African American voice in the 1990s. He wrote about his time as a soldier and war correspondent in Vietnam in *Dien Cai Dau* (1988) and received the Pulitzer Prize in 1994 for his volume of new and selected poems *Neon Vernacular* (1993). His poems were collected in *Pleasure Dome* (2001). Billy Collins found a huge audience for his engagingly witty and conversational poetry, especially that collected in *Sailing Alone Around the Room* (2001), published the year he became poet laureate.

Drama

Miller, Williams, and Albee

Two post-World War II playwrights established reputations comparable to Eugene O'Neill's. Arthur Miller wrote eloquent essays defending his modern, democratic concept of tragedy; despite its abstract, allegorical quality and portentous language, *Death of a Salesman* (1949) came close to vindicating his views. Miller's intense family dramas were rooted in the problem dramas of Henrik Ibsen and the works of the socially conscious ethnic dramatists of the 1930s, especially Clifford Odets, but Miller gave them a metaphysical turn. From *All My Sons* (1947) to *The Price* (1968), his work was at its strongest when he dealt with father-son relationships, anchored in the harsh realities of the Great Depression. Yet Miller could also be an effective protest writer, as in *The Crucible* (1953), which used the Salem witch trials to attack the witch-hunting of the McCarthy era.

Though his work was uneven, Tennessee Williams at his best was a more powerful and effective playwright than Miller. Creating stellar roles for actors, especially women, Williams brought a passionate lyricism and a tragic Southern vision to such plays as *The Glass Menagerie* (1944), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955), and *The Night of the Iguana* (1961). He empathized with his characters' dreams and illusions and with the frustrations and defeats of their lives, and he wrote about his own dreams and disappointments in his beautifully etched short fiction, from which his plays were often adapted.

Miller and Williams dominated the post-World War II theatre until the 1960s, and few other playwrights emerged to challenge them. Then, in 1962, Edward Albee's reputation, based on short plays such as *The Zoo Story* (1959) and *The American Dream* (1960), was secured by the stunning power of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* A master of absurdist theatre who assimilated the influence of European playwrights such as Samuel Beckett and Eugène Ionesco, Albee established himself as a major figure in

American drama. His reputation with critics and audiences, however, began to decline with enigmatic plays such as *Tiny Alice* (1964) and *A Delicate Balance* (1966), but, like O'Neill, he eventually returned to favour with a complex autobiographical drama, *Three Tall Women* (1994).

CHAPTER XV

MUSIC OF THE UNITED STATES

The music of the United States reflects the country's pluri-ethnic population through a diverse array of styles. It is a mixture of music influenced by music of the United Kingdom, West African, Irish, Latin American, and mainland European cultures among others. The country's most internationally renowned genres are jazz, blues, country, bluegrass, rock, rock and roll, R&B, soul, gospel, ragtime, funk, hip hop, doo wop, pop, techno, house, folk music, americana, disco, boogaloo, reggaeton, and salsa. American music is heard around the world. Since the beginning of the 20th century, some forms of American popular music have gained a near-global audience.

Native Americans were the earliest inhabitants of the land that is today known as the United States and played its first music. Beginning in the 17th century, immigrants from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Spain, Germany, and France began arriving in large numbers, bringing with them new styles and instruments. African slaves brought their own musical traditions, and each subsequent wave of immigrants contributed to a melting pot.

Much of modern popular music has roots in the emergence in the late 19th century of African American blues and the growth of gospel music in the 1920s. The African American basis for popular music used elements derived from European and indigenous musics. There are also strong African roots in the music tradition of the original white settlers, such as country and bluegrass. The United States has also seen documented folk music and recorded popular music produced in the ethnic styles of the Ukrainian, Irish, Scottish, Polish, Hispanic, and Jewish communities, among others.

Many American cities and towns have vibrant music scenes which, in turn, support a number of regional musical styles. With musical centers such as Boston, Philadelphia, Seattle, Portland, New York, San Francisco, New Orleans, Detroit, Houston, Minneapolis, Chicago, Miami, Atlanta, San Juan, Nashville, Austin,

Washington D.C., Los Angeles, and smaller cities such as Asbury Park, New Jersey, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Asheville, North Carolina, Oakland, Honolulu, the Research Triangle, Boulder, Colorado, Madison, Wisconsin, and Burlington, Vermont have all have produced and contributed to the many distinctive styles of music from the country. The Cajun and Creole traditions in Louisiana music, the folk and popular styles of Hawaiian music, and the bluegrass and old time music of the Southeastern states are a few examples of diversity in American music.

The music of the United States can be characterized by the use of syncopation and asymmetrical rhythms, long, irregular melodies, which are said to "reflect the wide open geography of (the American landscape)" and the "sense of personal freedom characteristic of American life". Some distinct aspects of American music, like the call-and-response format, are derived from African techniques and instruments.

Throughout the later part of American history, and into modern times, the relationship between American and European music has been a discussed topic among scholars of American music. Some have urged for the adoption of more purely European techniques and styles, which are sometimes perceived as more refined or elegant, while others have pushed for a sense of musical nationalism that celebrates distinctively American styles. Modern classical music scholar John Warthen Struble has contrasted American and European, concluding that the music of the United States is inherently distinct because the United States has not had centuries of musical evolution as a nation. Instead, the music of the United States is that of dozens or hundreds of indigenous and immigrant groups, all of which developed largely in regional isolation until the American Civil War, when people from across the country were brought together in army units, trading musical styles and practices. Struble deemed the ballads of the Civil War "the first American folk music with discernible features that can be considered unique to America: the first 'American' sounding music, as distinct from any regional style derived from another country."

The Civil War, and the period following it, saw a general flowering of American art, literature and music. Amateur musical ensembles of this era can be seen as the birth of American popular music. Music author David Ewen describes these early amateur bands as combining "the depth and drama of the classics with undemanding technique, eschewing complexity in favor of direct expression. If it was vocal music, the words would be in English, despite the snobs who declared English an unsingable language. In a way, it was part of the entire awakening of America that happened after the Civil War, a time in which American painters, writers, and 'serious' composers addressed specifically American themes." During this period the roots of blues, gospel, jazz, and country music took shape; in the 20th century, these became the core of American popular music, which further evolved into the styles like rhythm and blues, rock and roll, and hip hop music.

Music intertwines with aspects of American social and cultural identity, including through social class, race and ethnicity, geography, religion, language, gender, and sexuality. The relationship between music and race is perhaps the most potent determiner of musical meaning in the United States. The development of an African American musical identity, out of disparate sources from Africa and Europe, has been a constant theme in the music history of the United States. Little documentation exists of colonial-era African American music, when styles, songs, and instruments from across West Africa commingled with European styles and instruments in the melting pot of slavery. By the mid-19th century, a distinctly African American folk tradition was well-known and widespread, and African American musical techniques, instruments, and images became a part of mainstream American music through spirituals, minstrel shows, and slave songs.[5] African American musical styles became an integral part of American popular music through blues, jazz, rhythm and blues, and then rock and roll, soul, and hip hop; all of these styles were consumed by Americans of all races, but were created in African American styles and idioms before eventually becoming common in performance and consumption across racial lines. In contrast, country

music derives from both African and European, as well as Native American and Hawaiian, traditions and has long been perceived as a form of white music.

Economic and social classes separates American music through the creation and consumption of music, such as the upper-class patronage of symphony-goers, and the generally poor performers of rural and ethnic folk musics. Musical divisions based on class are not absolute, however, and are sometimes as much perceived as actual; popular American country music, for example, is a commercial genre designed to "appeal to a working-class identity, whether or not its listeners are actually working class". Country music is also intertwined with geographic identity, and is specifically rural in origin and function; other genres, like R&B and hip hop, are perceived as inherently urban. For much of American history, music-making has been a "feminized activity". In the 19th century, amateur piano and singing were considered proper for middle- and upper-class women. Women were also a major part of early popular music performance, though recorded traditions quickly become more dominated by men. Most male-dominated genres of popular music include female performers as well, often in a niche appealing primarily to women; these include gangsta rap and heavy metal.

The United States is often said to be a cultural melting pot, taking in influences from across the world and creating distinctively new methods of cultural expression. Though aspects of American music can be traced back to specific origins, claiming any particular original culture for a musical element is inherently problematic, due to the constant evolution of American music through transplanting and hybridizing techniques, instruments and genres. Elements of foreign musics arrived in the United States both through the formal sponsorship of educational and outreach events by individuals and groups, and through informal processes, as in the incidental transplantation of West African music through slavery, and Irish music through immigration. The most distinctly American musics are a result of cross-cultural hybridization through close contact. Slavery, for example, mixed persons from numerous tribes in tight living quarters,

resulting in a shared musical tradition that was enriched through further hybridizing with elements of indigenous, Latin, and European music. American ethnic, religious, and racial diversity has also produced such intermingled genres as the French-African music of the Louisiana Creoles, the Native, Mexican and European fusion Tejano music, and the thoroughly hybridized slack-key guitar and other styles of modern Hawaiian music.

The process of transplanting music between cultures is not without criticism. The folk revival of the mid-20th century, for example, appropriated the musics of various rural peoples, in part to promote certain political causes, which has caused some to question whether the process caused the "commercial commodification of other peoples' songs ... and the inevitable dilution of mean" in the appropriated musics. The use of African American musical techniques, images, and conceits in popular music largely by and for white Americans has been widespread since at least the mid-19th century songs of Stephen Foster and the rise of minstrel shows. The American music industry has actively attempted to popularize white performers of African American music because they are more palatable to mainstream and middle-class Americans. This process has been related to the rise of stars as varied as Benny Goodman, Eminem, and Elvis Presley, as well as popular styles like blue-eyed soul and rockabilly.

Classical Music

Classical music was brought to the United States with some of the first colonists. European classical music is rooted in the traditions of European art, ecclesiastical and concert music. The central norms of this tradition developed between 1550 and 1825, centering on what is known as the common practice period. Many American classical composers attempted to work entirely within European models until late in the 19th century. When Antonín Dvořák, a prominent Czech composer, visited the United States from 1892 to 1895, he iterated the idea that American classical music needed its own models instead of imitating European composers; he helped to inspire subsequent composers to

make a distinctly American style of classical music. By the beginning of the 20th century, many American composers were incorporating disparate elements into their work, ranging from jazz and blues to Native American music.

20th century

The New York classical music scene included Charles Griffes, originally from Elmira, New York, who began publishing his most innovative material in 1914. His early collaborations were attempts to use non-Western musical themes. The best-known New York composer was George Gershwin. Gershwin was a songwriter with Tin Pan Alley and the Broadway theatres, and his works were strongly influenced by jazz, or rather the precursors to jazz that were extant during his time. Gershwin's work made American classical music more focused, and attracted an unheard of amount of international attention. Following Gershwin, the first major composer was Aaron Copland from Brooklyn, who used elements of American folk music, though it remained European in technique and form. Later, he turned to the ballet and then serial music. Charles Ives was one of the earliest American classical composers of enduring international significance, producing music in a uniquely American style, though his music was mostly unknown until after his death in 1954.

Many of the later 20th-century composers, such as John Cage, John Corigliano, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, John Adams, and Miguel del Aguila, used modernist and minimalist techniques. Reich discovered a technique known as phasing, in which two musical activities begin simultaneously and are repeated, gradually drifting out of sync, creating a natural sense of development. Reich was also very interested in non-Western music, incorporating African rhythmic techniques in his compositions. Recent composers and performers are strongly influenced by the minimalist works of Philip Glass, a Baltimore native based out of New York, Meredith Monk, and others.

Popular music

The United States has produced many popular musicians and composers in the modern world. Beginning with the birth of recorded music, American performers have continued to lead the field of popular music, which out of "all the contributions made by Americans to world culture... has been taken to heart by the entire world". Most histories of popular music start with American ragtime or Tin Pan Alley; others, however, trace popular music to the Renaissance and through broadsheets, ballads, and other popular traditions. Other authors typically look at popular sheet music, tracing American popular music to spirituals, minstrel shows, vaudeville, and the patriotic songs of the Civil War.

Blues and gospel

The blues is a genre of African American folk music that is the basis for much of modern American popular music. Blues can be seen as part of a continuum of musical styles like country, jazz, ragtime, and gospel; though each genre evolved into distinct forms, their origins were often indistinct. Early forms of the blues evolved in and around the Mississippi Delta in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The earliest blues music was primarily call and response vocal music, without harmony or accompaniment and without any formal musical structure. Slaves and their descendants created the blues by adapting the field shouts and hollers, turning them into passionate solo songs. When mixed with the Christian spiritual songs of African American churches and revival meetings, blues became the basis of gospel music. Modern gospel began in African American churches in the 1920s, in the form of worshipers proclaiming their faith in an improvised, often musical manner (testifying). Composers like Thomas A. Dorsey composed gospel works that used elements of blues and jazz in traditional hymns and spiritual songs.

Blues became a part of American popular music in the 1920s, when classic female blues singers like Bessie Smith grew popular. At the same time, record companies launched the field of race music, which was mostly blues targeted at

African American audiences. The most famous of these acts went on to inspire much of the later popular development of the blues and blues-derived genres, including the legendary delta blues musician Robert Johnson and Piedmont blues musician Blind Willie McTell. By the end of the 1940s, however, pure blues was only a minor part of popular music, having been subsumed by offshoots like rhythm & blues and the nascent rock and roll style. Some styles of electric, piano-driven blues, like boogie-woogie, retained a large audience. A bluesy style of gospel also became popular in mainstream America in the 1950s, led by singer Mahalia Jackson. The blues genre experienced major revivals in the 1950s with Chicago blues musicians such as Muddy Waters and Little Walter, as well as in the 1960s in the British Invasion and American folk music revival when country blues musicians like Mississippi John Hurt and Reverend Gary Davis were rediscovered. The seminal blues musicians of these periods had tremendous influence on rock musicians such as Chuck Berry in the 1950s, as well as on the British blues and blues rock scenes of the 1960s and 1970s, including Eric Clapton in Britain and Johnny Winter in Texas.

Jazz

Jazz is a kind of music characterized by swung and blue notes, call and response vocals, polyrhythms and improvisation. Though originally a kind of dance music, jazz has been a major part of popular music, and has also become a major element of Western classical music. Jazz has roots in West African cultural and musical expression, and in African American music traditions including blues and ragtime, as well as European military band music. Early jazz was closely related to ragtime, with which it could be distinguished by the use of more intricate rhythmic improvisation. The earliest jazz bands adopted much of the vocabulary of the blues, including bent and blue notes and instrumental "growls" and smears otherwise not used on European instruments. Jazz's roots come from the city of New Orleans, Louisiana, populated by Cajuns and black Creoles, who combined the French-Canadian culture of the Cajuns with their own styles of music in the 19th century. Large Creole bands that played for funerals and parades

became a major basis for early jazz, which spread from New Orleans to Chicago and other northern urban centers.

Jazz influenced many performers of all the major styles of later popular music, though jazz itself never again became such a major part of American popular music as during the swing era. The later 20th-century American jazz scene did, however, produce some popular crossover stars, such as Miles Davis. In the middle of the 20th century, jazz evolved into a variety of subgenres, beginning with bebop. Bebop is a form of jazz characterized by fast tempos, improvisation based on harmonic structure rather than melody, and use of the flatted fifth. Bebop was developed in the early and mid-1940s, later evolving into styles like hard bop and free jazz. Innovators of the style included Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, who arose from small jazz clubs in New York City.

Country music

Country music is primarily a fusion of African American blues and spirituals with Appalachian folk music, adapted for pop audiences and popularized beginning in the 1920s. The origins of country are in rural Southern folk music, which was primarily Irish and British, with African and continental European musics. Anglo-Celtic tunes, dance music, and balladry were the earliest predecessors of modern country, then known as hillbilly music. Early hillbilly also borrowed elements of the blues and drew upon more aspects of 19th-century pop songs as hillbilly music evolved into a commercial genre eventually known as country and western and then simply country. The earliest country instrumentation revolved around the European-derived fiddle and the African-derived banjo, with the guitar later added. String instruments like the ukulele and steel guitar became commonplace due to the popularity of Hawaiian musical groups in the early 20th century.

The roots of commercial country music are generally traced to 1927, when music talent scout Ralph Peer recorded Jimmie Rodgers and The Carter Family. Popular success was very limited, though a small demand spurred some

commercial recording. After World War II, there was increased interest in specialty styles like country music, producing a few major pop stars. The most influential country musician of the era was Hank Williams, a bluesy country singer from Alabama. He remains renowned as one of country music's greatest songwriters and performers, viewed as a "folk poet" with a "honky-tonk swagger" and "working-class sympathies". Throughout the decade the roughness of honky-tonk gradually eroded as the Nashville sound grew more pop-oriented. Producers like Chet Atkins created the Nashville sound by stripping the hillbilly elements of the instrumentation and using smooth instrumentation and advanced production techniques. Eventually, most records from Nashville were in this style, which began to incorporate strings and vocal choirs.

Soul, R&B and Pop

R&B, an abbreviation for rhythm and blues, is a style that arose in the 1930s and 1940s. Early R&B consisted of large rhythm units "smashing away behind screaming blues singers (who) had to shout to be heard above the clanging and strumming of the various electrified instruments and the churning rhythm sections". R&B was not extensively recorded and promoted because record companies felt that it was not suited for most audiences, especially middle-class whites, because of the suggestive lyrics and driving rhythms. Bandleaders like Louis Jordan innovated the sound of early R&B, using a band with a small horn section and prominent rhythm instrumentation. By the end of the 1940s, he had had several hits, and helped pave the way for contemporaries like Wynonie Harris and John Lee Hooker. Many of the most popular R&B songs were not performed in the rollicking style of Jordan and his contemporaries; instead they were performed by white musicians like Pat Boone in a more palatable mainstream style, which turned into pop hits. By the end of the 1950s, however, there was a wave of popular black blues rock and country-influenced R&B performers like Chuck Berry gaining unprecedented fame among white listeners.

The first contemporary R&B stars arose in the 1980s, with the dance-pop star Michael Jackson, funk-influenced singer Prince, and a wave of female vocalists like Tina Turner and Whitney Houston. Michael Jackson and Prince have been described as the most influential figures in contemporary R&B and popular music because of their eclectic use of elements from a variety of genres. Prince was largely responsible for creating the Minneapolis sound: "a blend of horns, guitars, and electronic synthesizers supported by a steady, bouncing rhythm." Jackson's work focused on smooth balladry or disco-influenced dance music; as an artist, he "pulled dance music out of the disco doldrums with his 1979 adult solo debut, *Off the Wall*, merged R&B with rock on *Thriller*, and introduced stylized steps such as the robot and moonwalk over the course of his career." Jackson is often recognized as the "King of Pop" for his achievements.

Rock, metal, and punk

Rock and roll developed out of country, blues, and R&B. Rock's exact origins and early influences have been hotly debated, and are the subjects of much scholarship. Though squarely in the blues tradition, rock took elements from Afro-Caribbean and Latin musical techniques. Rock was an urban style, formed in the areas where diverse populations resulted in the mixtures of African American, Latin and European genres ranging from the blues and country to polka and zydeco. Rock and roll first entered popular music through a style called rockabilly, which fused the nascent sound with elements of country music. Black-performed rock and roll had previously had limited mainstream success, but it was the white performer Elvis Presley who first appealed to mainstream audiences with a black style of music, becoming one of the best-selling musicians in history, and brought rock and roll to audiences across the world.

The 1960s saw several important changes in popular music, especially rock. Many of these changes took place through the British Invasion where bands such as The Beatles, The Who, and The Rolling Stones, became immensely popular and had a profound effect on American culture and music. These changes

included the move from professionally composed songs to the singer-songwriter, and the understanding of popular music as an art, rather than a form of commerce or pure entertainment. These changes led to the rise of musical movements connected to political goals, such as the American Civil Rights Movement and the opposition to the Vietnam War. Rock was at the forefront of this change.

Following the turbulent political, social and musical changes of the 1960s and early 1970s, rock music diversified. What was formerly a discrete genre known as rock and roll evolved into a catchall category called simply rock music, which came to include diverse styles like heavy metal and punk rock. During the 1970s most of these styles were evolving in the underground music scene, while mainstream audiences began the decade with a wave of singer-songwriters who drew on the deeply emotional and personal lyrics of 1960s folk rock. The same period saw the rise of bombastic arena rock bands, bluesy Southern rock groups and mellow soft rock stars. Beginning in the later 1970s, the rock singer and songwriter Bruce Springsteen became a major star, with anthemic songs and dense, inscrutable lyrics that celebrated the poor and working class.

Punk was a form of rebellious rock that began in the 1970s, and was loud, aggressive, and often very simple. Punk began as a reaction against the popular music of the period, especially disco and arena rock. American bands in the field included, most famously, The Ramones and Talking Heads, the latter playing a more avant-garde style that was closely associated with punk before evolving into mainstream new wave. Other major acts include Blondie, Patti Smith, and Television. In the 1980s some punk fans and bands became disillusioned with the growing popularity of the style, resulting in an even more aggressive style called hardcore punk. Hardcore was a form of sparse punk, consisting of short, fast, intense songs that spoke to disaffected youth, with such influential bands as Bad Religion, Bad Brains, Black Flag, Dead Kennedys, and Minor Threat. Hardcore began in metropolises like Washington, D.C., though most major American cities had their own local scenes in the 1980s.

Hip hop

Hip hop is a cultural movement, of which music is a part. Hip hop music for the most part is itself composed of two parts: rapping, the delivery of swift, highly rhythmic and lyrical vocals; and DJing and/or producing, the production of instrumentation through sampling, instrumentation, turntablism, or beatboxing, the production of musical sounds through vocalized tones. Hip hop arose in the early 1970s in The Bronx, New York City. Jamaican immigrant DJ Kool Herc is widely regarded as the progenitor of hip hop; he brought with him from Jamaica the practice of toasting over the rhythms of popular songs. Emcees originally arose to introduce the soul, funk, and R&B songs that the DJs played, and to keep the crowd excited and dancing; over time, the DJs began isolating the percussion break of songs (when the rhythm climaxes), producing a repeated beat that the emcees rapped over.

Unlike Motown which predicated its mainstream success on the class appeal of its acts that rendered racial identity irrelevant, hip hop of 1980s, particularly hip hop that crossed over to rock-and-roll, was predicated on its (implicit but emphatic) primary identification with black identity. By the beginning of the 1980s, there were popular hip hop songs, and the celebrities of the scene, like LL Cool J, gained mainstream renown. Other performers experimented with politicized lyrics and social awareness, or fused hip hop with jazz, heavy metal, techno, funk and soul. New styles appeared in the latter part of the 1980s, like alternative hip hop and the closely related jazz rap fusion, pioneered by rappers like De La Soul.

Gangsta rap is a kind of hip hop, most importantly characterized by a lyrical focus on macho sexuality, physicality, and a dangerous criminal image. Though the origins of gangsta rap can be traced back to the mid-1980s style of Philadelphia's Schoolly D and the West Coast's Ice-T, the style broadened and came to apply to many different regions in the country, to rappers from New York, such as Notorious B.I.G. and influential hip hop group Wu-Tang Clan, and to

rappers on the West Coast, such as Too Short and N.W.A. A distinctive West Coast rap scene spawned the early 1990s G-funk sound, which paired gangsta rap lyrics with a thick and hazy sound, often from 1970s funk samples; the best-known proponents were the rappers 2Pac, Dr. Dre, Ice Cube, and Snoop Dogg. Gangsta rap continued to exert a major presence in American popular music through the end of the 1990s and early into the 21st century.

The dominance of gangsta rap in mainstream hip-hop was supplanted in the late-2000s, largely due to the mainstream success of hip-hop artists such as Kanye West. The outcome of a highly publicized sales competition between the simultaneous release of his and gangsta rapper 50 Cent's third studio albums, *Graduation* and *Curtis* respectively, has since been accredited to the decline. The competition resulted in record-breaking sales performances by both albums and West outsold 50 Cent, selling nearly a million copies of *Graduation* in the first week alone. Industry observers remark that West's victory over 50 Cent proved that rap music did not have to conform to gangsta-rap conventions in order to be commercially successful. West effectively paved the way for a new wave of hip-hop artists, including Drake, Kendrick Lamar and J. Cole, who did not follow the hardcore-gangster mold and became platinum-selling artists.

CHAPTER XVI

LIFESTYLE IN USA

Marriage and Family in USA

The family remains central to US society, and more than half of unmarried adults between the ages of 18 and 24 still live with their parents. Even so, the American family has changed considerably in recent decades. Today only about one-quarter of all households consist of a traditional nuclear family, and more than half of all households have no children. One out of every four children is born out of wedlock, and there has been a large increase in the number of single-parent families

A major percentage of all working Americans are women. In many households where both the husband and wife work outside the home, men are expected to share household duties. Men have also been playing an increasing role in raising their children. With both parents working, the use of, and need for, day care facilities are increasing; this is especially true for single-parent families. Among the growing proportion of the elderly population, many prefer to live in their own homes and maintain their independence. Those who cannot care for themselves may live in retirement communities or other institutions, or with their adult children. However, extended families are not common in the US. The US family is more mobile than in many other societies. It is common to move from one region of the country to another for education, employment, or simply a change of climate and scenery. Some people may move 15 times or more during a lifetime. Although many couples choose to live together before, or instead of, marriage, the marriage rate is one of the highest in western societies-but the divorce rate is also the world's highest. Weddings vary in style according to religion, region, ethnic origins, and wealth. Both religious and secular people may be legally authorized to perform weddings. The average age for marriage is 26 for men and 24 for women.

The American family today

Family life is changing. Two-parent households are on the decline in the United States as divorce, remarriage and cohabitation are on the rise. And families are smaller now, both due to the growth of single-parent households and the drop in fertility. Not only are Americans having fewer children, but the circumstances surrounding parenthood have changed. While in the early 1960s babies typically arrived within a marriage, today fully four-in-ten births occur to women who are single or living with a non-marital partner. At the same time that family structures have transformed, so has the role of mothers in the workplace – and in the home. As more moms have entered the labor force, more have become breadwinners – in many cases, primary breadwinners – in their families.

As a result of these changes, there is no longer one dominant family form in the U.S. Parents today are raising their children against a backdrop of increasingly diverse and, for many, constantly evolving family forms. By contrast, in 1960, the height of the post-World War II baby boom, there was one dominant family form. At that time 73% of all children were living in a family with two married parents in their first marriage. By 1980, 61% of children were living in this type of family, and today less than half (46%) are. The declining share of children living in what is often deemed a “traditional” family has been largely supplanted by the rising shares of children living with single or cohabiting parents.

Not only has the diversity in family living arrangements increased since the early 1960s, but so has the fluidity of the family. Non-marital cohabitation and divorce, along with the prevalence of remarriage and (non-marital) recoupling in the U.S., make for family structures that in many cases continue to evolve throughout a child’s life. While in the past a child born to a married couple – as most children were – was very likely to grow up in a home with those two parents, this is much less common today, as a child’s living arrangement changes with each adjustment in the relationship status of their parents. For example, one study found that over a three-year period, about three-in-ten (31%) children younger

than 6 had experienced a major change in their family or household structure, in the form of parental divorce, separation, marriage, cohabitation or death.

The growing complexity and diversity of families

The share of children living in a two-parent household is at the lowest point in more than half a century: 69% are in this type of family arrangement today, compared with 73% in 2000 and 87% in 1960. And even children living with two parents are more likely to be experiencing a variety of family arrangements due to increases in divorce, remarriage and cohabitation.³ Today, fully 62% of children live with two married parents – an all-time low. Some 15% are living with parents in a remarriage and 7% are living with parents who are cohabiting.⁴ Conversely, the share of children living with one parent stands at 26%, up from 22% in 2000 and just 9% in 1960.

These changes have been driven in part by the fact that Americans today are exiting marriage at higher rates than in the past. Now, about two-thirds (67%) of people younger than 50 who had ever married are still in their first marriage. In comparison, that share was 83% in 1960.⁵ And while among men about 76% of first marriages that began in the late 1980s were still intact 10 years later, fully 88% of marriages that began in the late 1950s lasted as long, according to analyses of Census Bureau data.⁶

The rise of single-parent families, and changes in two-parent families

Despite the decline over the past half century in children residing with two parents, a majority of kids are still growing up in this type of living arrangement. However, less than half—46%—are living with two parents who are both in their first marriage. This share is down from 61% in 1980⁸ and 73% in 1960.

An additional 15% of children are living with two parents, at least one of whom has been married before. This share has remained relatively stable for decades.

In the remainder of two-parent families, the parents are cohabiting but are not married. Today 7% of children are living with cohabiting parents; however a far larger share will experience this kind of living arrangement at some point during their childhood. For instance, estimates suggest that about 39% of children will have had a mother in a cohabiting relationship by the time they turn 12; and by the time they turn 16, almost half (46%) will have experience with their mother cohabiting. In some cases, this will happen because a never-married mother enters into a cohabiting relationship; in other cases, a mother may enter into a cohabiting relationship after a marital breakup.

The decline in children living in two-parent families has been offset by an almost threefold increase in those living with just one parent—typically the mother. Fully one-fourth (26%) of children younger than age 18 are now living with a single parent, up from just 9% in 1960 and 22% in 2000. The share of children living without either parent stands at 5%; most of these children are being raised by grandparents.

The majority of white, Hispanic and Asian children are living in two-parent households, while less than half of black children are living in this type of arrangement. Furthermore, at least half of Asian and white children are living with two parents both in their first marriage. The shares of Hispanic and black children living with two parents in their first marriage are much lower.

Asian children are the most likely to be living with both parents—fully 84% are, including 71% who are living with parents who are both in their first marriage. Some 13% of Asian kids are living in a single-parent household, while 11% are living with remarried parents, and just 3% are living with parents who are cohabiting.

Roughly eight-in-ten (78%) white children are living with two parents, including about half (52%) with parents who are both in their first marriage and 19% with two parents in a remarriage; 6% have parents who are cohabiting. About one-in-five (19%) white children are living with a single parent.

Among Hispanic children, two-thirds live with two parents. All told, 43% live with two parents in their first marriage, while 12% are living with parents in a

remarriage, and 11% are living with parents who are cohabiting. Some 29% of Hispanic children live with a single parent.

The living arrangements of black children stand in stark contrast to the other major racial and ethnic groups. The majority – 54% – are living with a single parent. Just 38% are living with two parents, including 22% who are living with two parents who are both in their first marriage. Some 9% are living with remarried parents, and 7% are residing with parents who are cohabiting.

Children with at least one college-educated parent are far more likely to be living in a two-parent household, and to be living with two parents in a first marriage, than are kids whose parents are less educated. Fully 88% of children who have at least one parent with a bachelor's degree or more are living in a two-parent household, including 67% who are living with two parents in their first marriage.

In comparison, some 68% of children who have a parent with some college experience are living in a two-parent household, and just 40% are living with parents who are both in a first marriage. About six-in-ten (59%) children who have a parent with a high school diploma are in a two-parent household, including 33% who are living with parents in their first marriage. Meanwhile, just over half (54%) of children whose parents lack a high school diploma are living in a two-parent household, including 33% whose parents are in their first marriage.

Blended families

According to the most recent data, 16% of children are living in what the Census Bureau terms “blended families” – a household with a stepparent, stepsibling or half-sibling. This share has remained stable since the early 1990s, when reliable data first became available. At that time 15% of kids lived in blended family households. All told, about 8% are living with a stepparent, and 12% are living with stepsiblings or half-siblings.

Many, but not all, remarriages involve blended families. According to data from the National Center for Health Statistics, six-in-ten (63%) women in remarriages are in blended families, and about half of these remarriages involve stepchildren who live with the remarried couple.

Hispanic, black and white children are equally likely to live in a blended family. About 17% of Hispanic and black kids are living with a stepparent, stepsibling or a half-sibling, as are 15% of white kids. Among Asian children, however, 7% – a far smaller share – are living in blended families. This low share is consistent with the finding that Asian children are more likely than others to be living with two married parents, both of whom are in their first marriage.

The shrinking American family

Fertility in the U.S. has been on the decline since the end of the post-World War II baby boom, resulting in smaller families. In the mid-1970s, a 40% plurality of mothers who had reached the end of their childbearing years had given birth to four or more children.¹⁴ Now, a similar share (41%) of mothers at the end of their childbearing years has had two children, and just 14% have had four or more children.

At the same time, the share of mothers ages 40 to 44 who have had only one child has doubled, from 11% in 1976 to 22% today. The share of mothers with three children has remained virtually unchanged at about a quarter. Women's increasing educational attainment and labor force participation, and improvements in contraception, not to mention the retreat from marriage, have all likely played a role in shrinking family size.

Family size varies markedly across races and ethnicities. Asian moms have the lowest fertility, and Hispanic mothers have the highest. About 27% of Asian mothers and one-third of white mothers near the end of their childbearing years have had three or more children. Among black mothers at the end of their childbearing years, four-in-ten have had three or more children, as have fully half (50%) of Hispanic mothers.

Similarly, a gap in fertility exists among women with different levels of educational attainment, despite recent increases in the fertility of highly educated women. For example, just 27% of mothers ages 40 to 44 with a post-graduate degree such as a master's, professional or doctorate degree have borne three or more children, as have 32% of those with a bachelor's degree. Among mothers in the same age group with a high school diploma or some college, 38% have had three or more kids, while among moms who lack a high school diploma, the majority – 55% – have had three or more children.

The rise of births to unmarried women and multi-partner fertility

Not only are women having fewer children today, but they are having them under different circumstances than in the past. While at one time virtually all births occurred within marriage, these two life events are now far less intertwined. And while people were much more likely to “mate for life” in the past, today a sizable share have children with more than one partner – sometimes within marriage, and sometimes outside of it.

Births to unmarried women

In 1960, just 5% of all births occurred outside of marriage. By 1970, this share had doubled to 11%, and by 2000 fully one-third of births occurred to unmarried women. Non-marital births continued to rise until the mid-2000s, when the share of births to unmarried women stabilized at around 40%.

Not all babies born outside of a marriage are necessarily living with just one parent, however. The majority of these births now occur to women who are living with a romantic partner, according to analyses of the National Survey of Family Growth. In fact, over the past 20 years, virtually all of the growth in births outside of marriage has been driven by increases in births to cohabiting women.

Researchers have found that, while marriages are less stable than they once were, they remain more stable than cohabiting unions. Past analysis indicates

that about one-in-five children born within a marriage will experience the breakup of that marriage by age 9. In comparison, fully half of children born within a cohabiting union will experience the breakup of their parents by the same age. At the same time, children born into cohabiting unions are more likely than those born to single moms to someday live with two married parents. Estimates suggest that 66% will have done so by the time they are 12, compared with 45% of those who were born to unmarried non-cohabiting moms.

The share of births occurring outside of marriage varies markedly across racial and ethnic groups. Among black women, 71% of births are now non-marital, as are about half (53%) of births to Hispanic women. In contrast, 29% of births to white women occur outside of a marriage.

Racial differences in educational attainment explain some, but not all, of the differences in non-marital birth rates.

New mothers who are college-educated are far more likely than less educated moms to be married. In 2014 just 11% of women with a college degree or more who had a baby in the prior year were unmarried. In comparison, this share was about four times as high (43%) for new mothers with some college but no college degree. About half (54%) of those with only a high school diploma were unmarried when they gave birth, as were about six-in-ten (59%) new mothers who lacked a high school diploma.

Multi-partner fertility

Related to non-marital births is what researchers call “multi-partner fertility.” This measure reflects the share of people who have had biological children with more than one partner, either within or outside of marriage. The increase in divorces, separations, remarriages and serial cohabitations has likely contributed to an increase in multi-partner fertility. Estimates vary, given data limitations, but analysis of longitudinal data indicates that almost 20% of women near the end of their childbearing years have had children by more than one

partner, as have about three-in-ten (28%) of those with two or more children. Research indicates that multi-partner fertility is particularly common among blacks, Hispanics, and the less educated.

Parents today: older and better educated

While parents today are far less likely to be married than they were in the past, they are more likely to be older and to have more education.

In 1970, the average new mother was 21 years old. Since that time, that age has risen to 26 years. The rise in maternal age has been driven largely by declines in teen births. Today, 7% of all births occur to women under the age of 20; as recently as 1990, the share was almost twice as high (13%).

While age at first birth has increased across all major race and ethnic groups, substantial variation persists across these groups. The average first-time mom among whites is now 27 years old. The average age at first birth among blacks and Hispanics is quite a bit younger – 24 years – driven in part by the prevalence of teen pregnancy in these groups. Just 5% of births to whites take place prior to age 20, while this share reaches 11% for non-Hispanic blacks and 10% for Hispanics. On the other end of the spectrum, fully 45% of births to whites are to women ages 30 or older, versus just 31% among blacks and 36% among Hispanics.

Mothers today are also far better educated than they were in the past. While in 1960 just 18% of mothers with infants at home had any college experience, today that share stands at 67%. This trend is driven in large part by dramatic increases in educational attainment for all women. While about half (49%) of women ages 15 to 44 in 1960 lacked a high school diploma, today the largest share of women (61%) has at least some college experience, and just 19% lack a high school diploma.

Mothers moving into the workforce

In addition to the changes in family structure that have occurred over the past several decades, family life has been greatly affected by the movement of more and more mothers into the workforce. This increase in labor force participation is a continuation of a century-long trend; rates of labor force participation among married women, particularly married white women, have been on the rise since at least the turn of the 20th century. While the labor force participation rates of mothers have more or less leveled off since about 2000, they remain far higher than they were four decades ago.

In 1975, the first year for which data on the labor force participation of mothers are available, less than half of mothers (47%) with children younger than 18 were in the labor force, and about a third of those with children younger than 3 years old were working outside of the home. Those numbers changed rapidly, and, by 2000, 73% of moms were in the labor force. Labor force participation today stands at 70% among all mothers of children younger than 18, and 64% of moms with preschool-aged children. About three-fourths of all employed moms are working full time.

Among mothers with children younger than 18, blacks are the most likely to be in the labor force –about three-fourths are. In comparison, this share is 70% among white mothers. Some 64% of Asian mothers and 62% of Hispanic mother are in the workforce. The relatively high proportions of immigrants in these groups likely contribute to their lower labor force involvement – foreign-born moms are much less likely to be working than their U.S.-born counterparts.

The more education a mother has, the more likely she is to be in the labor force. While about half (49%) of moms who lack a high school diploma are working, this share jumps to 65% for those with a high school diploma. Fully 75% of mothers with some college are working, as are 79% of those with a college degree or more.

Along with their movement into the labor force, women, even more than men, have been attaining higher and higher levels of education. In fact, among

married couples today, it is more common for the wife to have more education than the husband, a reversal of previous patterns. These changes, along with the increasing share of single-parent families, mean that more than ever, mothers are playing the role of breadwinner—often the primary breadwinner—within their families.

Today, 40% of families with children under 18 at home include mothers who earn the majority of the family income. This share is up from 11% in 1960 and 34% in 2000. The bulk of these breadwinner moms—8.3 million—are either unmarried or are married and living apart from their spouse. The remaining 4.9 million, who are married and living with their spouse, earn more than their husbands. While families with married breadwinner moms tend to have higher median incomes than married-parent families where the father earns more (\$88,000 vs. \$84,500), families headed by unmarried mothers have incomes far lower than unmarried father families. In 2014, the median annual income for unmarried mother families was just \$24,000.

Breadwinner moms are particularly common in black families, spurred by very high rates of single motherhood. About three-fourths (74%) of black moms are breadwinner moms. Most are unmarried or living apart from their spouse (61%), and the remainder (13%) earn more than their spouse. Among Hispanic moms, 44% are the primary breadwinner; 31% are unmarried, while 12% are married and making more than their husbands. For white mothers, 38% are the primary breadwinners—20% are unmarried moms, and 18% are married and have income higher than that of their spouses. Asian families are less likely to have a woman as the main breadwinner in their families, presumably due to their extremely low rates of single motherhood. Just 11% of Asian moms are unmarried. The share who earn more than their husbands—20%— is somewhat higher than for the other racial and ethnic groups.

The flip side of the movement of mothers into the labor force has been a dramatic decline in the share of mothers who are now stay-at-home moms. Some 29% of all mothers living with children younger than 18 are at home with their children. This marks a modest increase since 1999, when 23% of moms were

home with their children, but a long-term decline of about 20 percentage points since the late 1960s when about half of moms were at home.

While the image of “stay-at-home mom” may conjure images of “Leave It to Beaver” or the highly affluent “opt-out mom”, the reality of stay-at-home motherhood today is quite different for a large share of families. In roughly three-in-ten of stay-at-home-mom families, either the father is not working or the mother is single or cohabiting. As such, stay-at-home mothers are generally less well off than working mothers in terms of education and income. Some 49% of stay-at-home mothers have at most a high-school diploma compared with 30% among working mothers. And the median household income for families with a stay-at-home mom and a full-time working dad was \$55,000 in 2014, roughly half the median income for families in which both parents work full-time (\$102,400).

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