

# Essay on how the us changed in terms of economics politics and social structures

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



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## **Industrialism**

The United States was the first country to industrialize outside Europe. Industrialism began in the late eighteenth century. It started with the construction of various industries such as shipbuilding, iron manufacturing, textile industry, and development of machines and machine tools. These innovations led to increase in production—farming methods improved and so were the outputs. Inventions in the transport and communication sectors such as the steam engine and railroad improved the transport of raw materials and finished goods. Improvements in transport also boosted the agricultural and mining industries. It also led to ease of the labor movement and more people migrated from the rural areas to take up the new employment opportunities created in the new industries. By the late nineteenth century, the United States had developed into the biggest and very competitive industrial country in the world<sup>1</sup>.

Industrialism led to a rapid increase in population especially in urban areas. Laborers got better wages, the working hours were reduced, and the working

conditions improved greatly. The standards of living of the workers also improved immensely, and the traditional way of life was destroyed. New businesses came up, and banks came up which financed various business ventures and investments. These included mining of petroleum and coal, manufacturing of automobiles, industrial machineries, steel, and garments. One of major outcomes of the industrialism included the growth of the business activities centered in cities. As the people migrated to cities, they increased rapidly. Many citizens accumulated vast wealth from the business boom, whereas some others languished in excessive poverty. The wide gaps between the wealthy and the underprivileged and other eventually led to widespread discontent. The disgruntlement caused development reform movements, which advocated for actions to help the poor and control influence of the massive businesses<sup>2</sup>.

The role and influence of United States foreign affairs also changed because of industrialism. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the country gained its military strength and eventually rose to be a world power. The rising global influence led to many people migrating from other parts of the world to America. It is estimated that over twenty five million migrants came to the United States between 1870 and 1916. The migration and the normal population increase have resulted to the more than doubling of the American population during the same phase; the population has grown from about forty million to about hundred million people. The increase in the population further boosted the economy by expanding the markets by increasing the number of consumers, and providing additional workforce

required for the employment opportunities resulting from new business activities<sup>3</sup>.

## **Urbanization**

The early inhabitants of United States mainly lived in the countryside. Statistics from the 1790 census indicate that a significant majority of Americans, 90 percent compared to 5 percent lived in urban areas. The Industrialism led to en masse migration of people to urban areas.

With the growth of towns, various social upheavals started to be witnessed; in the pre-urbanization era, murder and violent crimes were rare in the nation. Urbanization led to rise in the rates of these crimes in cities. Burglary and robbery were routine, and prostitution thrived more candidly than before. Low-priced publication overstated the crime figures with thrilling stories. Specialized law enforcement forces were formed in the late nineteenth century to maintain law, order and protect property. Organized gangs of criminals sprouted and trade in illegal substances such as illegal alcohol increased in the cities. Money extortion was rampant and the monetary resources raised were used to broaden the influence of organized crime into illegal activities such as prostitution, narcotics, gambling and some legal businesses.

Corruption slowly cropped in, and cases of police and judges were reported. The increase of crime rates led to the police force professionalization and increased trials of criminals in the 1950s and 1960s aided in weakening organized crime. Urbanization resulted in increase specialization of city law

enforcement, including sophisticated weapons, improved training, and upper educational requirements for police recruits. Creation of employment opportunities in the late 1990s have drastically reduced crime rate<sup>4</sup>.

In the modern times, urbanization has resulted in increased traffic jams, in cities and suburbs, and citizens waste more and more of their time travelling to their jobs, shopping, learning facilities, and social events. Consequently, there are more road traffic and accidents. By the end of 1990s, traffic congestions during rush hours have increased greatly. Traffic is always parked in all directions, equally to and from the cities as well as between uptown locations. Suburban commercial centers need massive parking lots since workers have to drive; there are not many buses or trains, or trolley to take spread out workers to their work places. Currently, the anticipation of lesser congestion in the suburbs are yet to be achieved; time-consuming commutes and traffic congestion are found everywhere

## **Westward Expansion**

Westward expansion refers to acquisition and annexation of various territories and states by the Americans from other nations. There were many economic effects of westward expansion; population increased as America was becoming an attractive land for millions of people throughout Europe. America annexed new areas where she laid agricultural bases that supported the industrial revolution, which took place during and after the Civil War. Raw materials were being discovered which added considerably to her wealth and became a factor in later expansion. The developing west influenced America's thinking concerning the question of tariffs;

protectionists argued that the agricultural west would feed the industrial east and the cotton south, while textiles clothed the east and west; and the east sent consumer goods to the west and south. Revenue from tariffs could be used to improve east-west communications. There was also clamor for capital from the west, and much money was spent on improving communications<sup>5</sup>.

Politically, the effect of westward expansion was that it affected the union. The union was no longer a political balance between north and south. Now there was a third force in politics, with five states having come into the union since 1812. Historians claim, and rightly, that moving frontier helped mould the American character; as it moved west it was moving away from European culture, and moving away from the traditional framework of society. Under the same sun and in the same strange territory, everyone began from scratch in the economic race; the frontiersman had a tangible goal - to make good, to make its own laws, and solve its own problems. This led to the emergence of the rugged individualism, assertiveness, democratic spirit, the disrespect for traditional law and order, the measuring of success in terms of hard work and wealth<sup>6</sup>.

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