

Most important changes created modern america

[Business](#)



Abstract The United States has one of the most fascinating histories in the world encompassing events and leaders who significantly had direct or indirect impact to the entire world.

From George Washington to Barrack Obama, America has continued to witness a series of transformations in almost every sphere of life. There is a lot that has been achieved and at the same time lost through these diverse historical and breath-taking events. Even as many rejoice the current American success, it is worth noting that the journey to this destination was bumpy, challenging and sometimes discouraging. Among all these significant moments and events was the Civil War. With every impact it had on America, many analysts have attributed Modern American's success to Civil War which ended mid 1860's.

Did the Civil War shape America in any way? Would America be what it is today if there was no Civil War? These are some of the questions which emerge in analyzing post Civil War life in America. This research analysis explores the five most important changes since the Civil War that have created the " modern America" we know today? Introduction There are several wars which have been experienced in America throughout history. These were caused by varying factors some which would have been avoided. Regardless of the cause of war, warfare results have never been enjoyable. A lot of danger is usually associated with any form of war including but not limited to loss of innocent lives and destruction of property.

Most of these effects of war are interrelated with some of them resulting into worse experiences than others. For instance, the loss people through death

leads to a drop in population, reduced workforce, disintegrated families among others. Notably, war has the power to shape the future lives of people in an either positive or negative way. Similarly, manifold changes have taken place in the United States since the end of the Civil War. America has experienced numerous changes ranging from political, industrial, economical and sociological transformation (Berkin et al, n. d).

These changes have been regarded as key players in the making of the Modern America which enjoys peak levels of weaponry, information technology, scientific and industrial advancement. It is believed that a lot of industrial and technological development has been realized as a result of industrial revolution which existed during Civil War. Both parties, the North and South made good use the developments in the transport sector to push for their demands. There was significant technological development in the Union compared to associate states. The Union optimally utilized the advancements which were being realized in various sectors like medicine, transport and military far better than the manner in which the Confederacy did. In fact, many historians argue that the Northern victory was associated to the industrial progress among Union States.

Although there are immense technological achievements in the Modern America and other parts of the world, many researchers agree that there had been no modern war until the onset of Civil War. It was during this warfare that technological and industrial developments played key roles with each side proving its strength. However, the level of development between the two sides distinguished them denoting their economic status and lifestyle (Berkin et al, n. d). There was mixed economy in the Northern Part which was <https://assignbuster.com/most-important-changes-created-modern-america/>

quickly becoming industrialized and sprouting of factories in the region at the beginning of the 19th century together with enough housing for the accommodation of workers.

These factories employed very many people especially women as laborers. It is believed that expansion and improvement of transport sector took place just moments before the onset of the war. Main transport systems experienced growth including the Erie Canal which was constructed in 1825 to connect New York City to several great lakes. Railroads and steamboats further improved the system with these two turning out to be quite significant during the war (Berkin et al, n. d).

These developments fostered trade in the entire country but hampered government regulation. Statement of need According to this research, there have been countless discussions concerning the impact of Civil War in America. Many believe that a lot of change resulted from this war shaping the nation into what it is today. As a result, the research is aimed at finding out major changes which have taken place and how they have helped in shaping modern America. Research question What are the 5 most important changes since the Civil War that have created the “ modern America” we know today? Literature Review Civil War is among the most discussed history topics throughout the world. This is mainly because of the role the war played in shaping the modern America.

Countless researches have been done, articles written and books written exploring the entire war together with post Civil War life which is still experienced today. Many authors and historians have invested their time

and resources in gathering and compiling relevant materials to cover this topic. These materials have for a very long time remained to be sources of information for scholars and other individuals interested in the topic. This research mainly utilized online resources like books, journal articles and website in discovering the major changes which have taken place since Civil War which define the current United States. According to many if not all history experts, industrialization is one of the major changes which have transformed America into what it is today.

Although there were a number of industries before the Civil War, most of them were developed into better productive factories and manufacturing firms this would provide employment to millions of jobless Americans. Nevertheless, industrialization cannot be discussed as an independent entity, but within the context of social, political and economic factors. These are boundaries within which all technological discoveries and developments have their total impact on economical progress. It is quite cumbersome to expound the concept of industrialization after the Civil War without considering several factors which contributed to these advancements. An independent explanation of industrialization would not clearly give an informative explanation in terms of the interrelationship between different transformations. Industrialization is a complex phenomenon which has made the 21st century into what it is.

Our every day life is made possible because of the industrialization most of which began after the Civil War. It would have been impossible to have an industrialized society without the understanding of very important managerial practices which have gone a mile a head in creating the current <https://assignbuster.com/most-important-changes-created-modern-america/>

capitalistic system (Bensel, 2000). It has fostered the realization of world economic system of which the United States is considered splendid. There is no doubt that the United States experienced quick and intensive urbanization and industrialization immediately after the Civil War in 1865. How would war be excluded in the entire process of industrialization? No war can be successful without a stable economy to support various warfare activities.

America needed Steel and Iron industry which was not only existing but flourishing in order to fully serve the urgent need that was at hand. This industry was also to continue existing even after the war. The nation experienced technological development together with a variety of materials contributing to rapid growth throughout the nation with transformation of the economy. One important factor to consider is that industrial development which took place after the Civil War occurred in an accommodating capitalist environment that did have many restrictions. This environment was created by capitalistic relations which existed and not through artificial manipulation of systems. Due to lack of economic relationships, the system was engulfed with corrupt activities and misuse of available labor.

Economic liberalism was pushed to allow people to gain something from the conditions which were prevailing. Many personalities like Adam Smith came out clearly in explaining the need of having the freedom to pursue personal interests whose success would also imply the growth of the entire society (Bensel, 2000). This allowed minimum interruption from government organs. Industrial development in Post Civil War was immensely affected by the philosophies of people like Adam Smith which were characterized by greed.

<https://assignbuster.com/most-important-changes-created-modern-america/>

This greed did not lead to the growth of the economy of the entire society but favored a few individuals.

As a result, the period after Civil War saw the emergence of corporate giants dominating the industrial sector leading to the collapse of several small businesses in the United States which were overpowered by competition. Due to lack of efficient business regulations in the industries, there were numerous corrupt activities which created other social problems instead of generating solutions to existing problems. The industrial change undoubtedly brought into play the existence of a huge working class as compared to a minor representation of capitalists. As a result, there was an increase in the social gap between the classes of Americans in a new industrialized society. Another important change was the development of the railway network at the onset of industrialization.

This encouraged settlement in other parts of the nation like the West and stimulated trade and expansion of small business due to the introduction of new managerial practices which were to foster growth in the business world. The U. S government saw investment opportunities in the West which would only be exploited through the expansion of railway network. It therefore boosted railway construction by promising expansion support to railway companies through addition of twenty square miles for every mile laid. This resulted into exponential railway growth between 1865 and 1900 with railroad lines reaching 192, 000 up from 35, 000.

This increase was far more than the total number of railroad lines in the entire Europe. The construction of the first Transcontinental Railroad was

finished just four years after the Civil War indicating future significant growth in railway transport (Industrial America at the End of the Civil War). This had direct impact to the economy of the nation through improved transportation of raw materials like iron, coal and oil which were needed in other parts of the nation. Many railway companies settled alongside rail tracks for the purpose of capturing future customers who wished to use railway services. These companies grew at a faster rate because of the existing need for transport services to various destinations.

Due to the expansion and significance growth of these companies, their influence to state governments became evident. Many owners of these companies ventured into intense business activities with some of them introducing the selling of stocks in order to gain capital which was necessary in the expansion of the companies and in the establishment of other businesses (Richardson, 2007). Some of these practices were adopted by other companies following the footsteps of railway companies. Similarly, demographic changes which took place after Civil War had significant impact in shaping the US into what it is today. There was slow population growth immediately after the war although the nation witnessed a faster growth between 1870 and 1890. The population continued to decline especially during the first quarter of the 20th century with the number of foreign immigrants going down.

These changes in population affected other aspects of development among them being urbanization and availability of labor which was on high demand as a result of expansion of industries. Post Civil War further led to growth in agricultural production. There was due to an increase in good farms which

<https://assignbuster.com/most-important-changes-created-modern-america/>

were to be used for both domestic and industrial production. The value of most farms increased together with livestock value which rose to \$1, 243, 724 in 1900 (Industrial America at the End of the Civil War). Agricultural growth further led to expansion of commercial activities. There were significant manufacturing establishments which played a mega role in improvement of living standards.

They offered employment to thousands of Americans through hiring of labor. There was general expansion of the market with the number of retail stores increasing throughout the country. Although the population of the nation did not grow exponentially, the number of schools and teachers rose in the U. S, setting pace for social development. Several high schools were established across the country with an aim of lowering the level of illiteracy which was significantly high (Richardson, 2007). Due to the increase in high schools, there was need for the establishment of higher learning institutions like colleges and universities which promoted education standards making it rise to a nation with highly ranked institutions of higher learning.

Additionally, there was increase in the number of churches and religious groups. The Methodist Church took the lead in growth having five churches in the entire country by 1940 with a membership of over 2, 500 followers. Other denominations similarly expanded their operations and domain with twelve denominations being recognized in the U. S by 1940 with more than thirty churches. It is worth noting that the church population grew steadily with those in Catholic, Episcopalians and Christian Science Society members not being included in the church figures (Davis, 2009). We can therefore attribute the current expanded church operations in the U.

<https://assignbuster.com/most-important-changes-created-modern-america/>

S to these developments which began several years ago after the Civil War. Reconstruction period also contributed to the shaping of America into what it is today. Although the period ended in 1877, it had impact in shaping democracy in the nation. It was a time when America tasted an interracial democratic system. Reconstruction was to define the status of slaves after Civil War who was key players in the war. The issue of reconstruction is still considered quite relevant in the current America because most of the issues it addressed like the protection of human rights by the federal government have never been solved.

Although the fate of slaves of the Union was to be determined by the Northern victory, it exposed the nation to many other problems. The nation was in a dilemma of choosing the best way of reuniting the nation which had been destroyed by war. Together with this, a just labor system was needed to replace slavery. With the status of former slaves being unknown, it was not easy to make overall decisions. Many slaves pushed for reconstruction because they expected full freedom and respect of human rights as full citizens of the United States of America (Richardson, 2007). Many Africans were on the fore front in pushing for reconstruction and ensuring that they are not oppressed by actions of White people.

The push for equality was further augmented by the Republican Congress after they rejected the plan suggested by President Andrew Johnson. The enactment of Amendments and laws which gave the federal government all the necessary powers to ensure equal rights among American citizens including voting rights and holding of office by the Southern Blacks. However, many leaders were not committed to protecting the rights of black

<https://assignbuster.com/most-important-changes-created-modern-america/>

people causing the end of reconstruction. Many anti-reconstruction Americans argued that the idea was not the best for the nation since it promoted corruption among Blacks who were allowed to hold office and participate in politics. This misinterpretation led to widespread segregation and denial of voting rights in the South up to 1960's. Despite this resistance, reconstruction is currently viewed as the best approach towards equality and genuine progress.

It is clear that the events which took place after the Civil War has a significant role in shaping the Modern America. These events which included economic, industrial, agricultural and social developments were a stepping stone towards the realization of a stable economy, improved social services and democratic leadership that recognizes the rights of every person regardless of their skin color or originality.