The Last Frontier and the New South (1865-1900)

The New South

1. Henry Grady, ed. of Atlanta Constitution: need economic diversity and laizze-faire capitalism to rebuild the south
2. Improvements in Industry and Infrastructure
   1. Birmingham: steel
   2. Memphis: lumber
   3. Richmond: tobacco
   4. Georgia, NC, and SC: overtake New England as largest textile manufacturers
      1. By 1900, 400 mills and over 100,000 workers
   5. Expansion, improvement and standardization of Southern Rail lines
      1. **Standard Gauge Rails**
3. Poverty
   1. Poorest region in the country
      1. Workers earned half the national average and worked longer hours
   2. Agriculture
      1. **Sharecropping** and **crop lien** system is prevalent
         1. Crop lien: farmer takes a loan to be paid at harvest
      2. Between 1870 and 1900 cotton production doubled;
         1. However, increased supply resulted in lower prices and the industry suffered
         2. George Washington Carver: influential in redirecting the south away from cotton
            1. Suggested peanuts, sweet potatoes, and soybeans
      3. Divisions among white and black farmers made it hard for reform to occur
   3. Northern financing owns largest percentages of southern industry (steel and rr’s)
   4. Why was the south impoverished?
      1. Late start
      2. Poorly educated workforce
      3. Little to no capital
4. Segregation
   1. After Hayes-Tilden Compromise of 1877, South left to work out solutions to own social and economic problems
      1. **Redeemers**: Democratic Politicians who came to power after reconstruction
         1. Support from business community and white racists
         2. Often exerted political power from racial fears of whites
   2. Supreme Court
      1. In late 1870’s, SC began striking down civil rights legislation created during reconstruction
         1. Civil Rights Cases of 1883: Congress can’t legislate against discrimination practiced by private citizens
         2. **Plessy v. Ferguson (1896):** “Separate but equal” is not a violation of 14th amendment
         3. Voting Case of 1898: literacy tests are legal
         4. *De facto to De Jure segregation*
      2. De Jure (“legal”) Segregation
         1. Legislation created to bar blacks from voting and to establish a legally segregated society
            1. Grandfather Clauses- could only vote if grandfather had voted before reconstruction
            2. Poll Taxes and Literacy tests
            3. Primaries for whites only
            4. **Jim Crow Laws**

Blacks barred from serving on juries

More severe penalties for convicting crimes

* + - * 1. Lynch Mobs and the KKK
        2. Economic discrimination: lack of blacks admitted into skilled trades or factory jobs
        3. Results in massive decline in black political participation

Ex. 1896 there were 130,000 blacks registered to vote. In 1904, only 1,342.

* + 1. Black Response to Segregation
       1. Ida B. Wells: campaigned against lynching and Jim Crow Laws in Memphis Free Speech (newspaper)
       2. Henry Turner and **International Migration Society** (1894)
          1. To help blacks emigrate to Africa
       3. Booker T. Washington: don’t fight racism, work around it.
          1. Started **Tuskeegee Institute**, a black industrial and agricultural college, to educate and prepare black Americans for the competitive workforce
          2. Economic self-reliance, hard work, and moderation will help blacks rise out of discrimination

The Last Frontier: The West

1. American History as defined by “new” west’s: Frederick Jackson Turner
   1. Atlantic Coast>Appalachian Mountains>Northwest Territory >Louisiana Territory and the Great Plains, and Rocky Mountains>Texas>Mexican Territory>Pacific Coast>Beyond (Alaska and eventually Hawaii)
      1. “*The Significance of Frontier in American History*”
      2. American Frontier mentality helped to shape American culture by promoting independence and individualism, inventive and practical, yet, wasteful and over-consuming as well.
   2. Pre 1860: land between Mississippi R and Pacific = “**The Great American Desert**”
2. The Great Plains
   1. Estimated 15 million bison and 250,000 Natives by 1865
   2. Big rush to move west comes at a cost: near extinction of Bison and removal of Natives
3. The Mining Rush
   1. Gold and silver strikes in Colorado, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Arizona, and South Dakota
      1. 1848 Gold Rush in California
      2. 1859 Discovery at Pikes Peak, Co.
      3. Comstock Lode in Nevada
   2. Shift over time from simple prospecting ventures with “placer mining” (wash pans and shovels) to deep-shaft mining (much more costly, both economically and environmentally)
      1. Leads to the creation of “boom towns” – some of which became permanent towns or cities, and others became ghost towns.
   3. Controversy over foreign workers
      1. Companies employed experienced workers from Europe, Latin America, and China
         1. Native born settlers resented Chinese workers
      2. **Chinese Exclusion Act 1882**: prohibited further immigration to the US by Chinese Laborers
         1. The first major act of Congress to restrict immigration based on race and/or nationality
   4. Impacts of the mining boom
      1. Increased supply of Gold and Silver leads to bitter political debates over currency
      2. Environmental issues
      3. American Indians pushed out of lands
   5. The Cattle Boom
      1. Vast land area for sustaining cattle culture (from Texas to Canada)
      2. 1860’s: 5 million wild cattle roamed freely over grassland
         1. Business was a free market to enter for speculators
      3. Early ranchers in Mexico employed small-scale system of Vaqueros (**Cowboy**) rounding up livestock for slaughter
      4. Large-Scale Round Ups began after the expansion of the RR’s into Kansas
         1. Cowboys (mostly black or Mexican) would push massive herds of cattle toward “cow towns” where they would be rounded up and put on trains to be sent elsewhere (such as Chicago)
         2. Texas Long Horn – breed of large, wild cattle
         3. Long Cattle Drive came to an end in 1880’s due to overgrazing and arrival of Homesteaders
            1. Signaled the end of the open range
         4. Invention of the **Refrigerated Car** enabled cattle owners to slaughter on site and ship meat across the country without spoil
   6. The Farming Boom
      1. **Homestead Act of 1862**:
         1. Encouraged farming on the Great Plains by offering 160 acres of public land free to any family willing to settle for 5 years
            1. About 500,000 families in all used this
            2. RR’s and Speculators manipulated the system to get free land to sell or use for their own purposes
      2. Pioneer Family Life on the Great Plains
         1. Dry, treeless plains with swarms of locusts and extreme weather patterns. Extremely lonely.
         2. Water scarce and wood even more scarce.
            1. Barbed wire invention (Joseph Glidden, 1874) helped farmers fence in land
            2. Deep windmill wells helped to pump water
         3. Many homesteaders failed due to the extremes, as well as falling crop prices.
            1. Ex. Western Kansas lost half of population between 1888 and 1892.
         4. Learned that Wheat was a great plant for the region
         5. Also, Dry farming and new irrigation techniques helped to save farming on the plains
      3. Farming Issues by the early 20th century
         1. Farms became increasingly commercialized after the Civil War
            1. Became more dependent on expensive farm machinery

Steam engines, seeders, mechanical reaper

* + - 1. Falling prices
         1. Increased supply of wheat, cotton and other crops caused dramatic declines in prices
         2. Deflation also added to farmers problems

Increased value of money, but decreased value of goods

People could buy more for less; good for consumers, bad for producers

* + - * 1. As prices fell, farmers had to produce more, which decreased prices more.

Coupled with lower and lower prices, high interest rates, many farmers driven out of business or forced to become tenant farmers

* + - 1. Rising Costs
         1. Increased prices from monopolistic or “trust” corporate entities for manufacturing increased costs
         2. Expensive RR costs
         3. High taxes on land and property
      2. Working toward Change
         1. **National Grange Movement** (National Grange of Patrons and Husbandry 1868)

At first, social and educational organization created to help farmers and their families

Over time, becomes active in political and economic sphere’s to help its members

Cooperatives

Farming businesses owned and run by a group of farmers to save costs

Lobbied to get laws passed to regulate big businesses (such as rail roads)

**Munn v Illinois** (1877)

US gov has the right to regulate businesses of public nature (such as rail roads)

* + - * 1. **Farmers’ Alliances**

State and regional groups helped educate farmers and organize politically

National Farmers Alliance meets to form a platform, almost becomes a political party (1890)

Supports:

Direct election of Senators, lower tariffs, progressive income tax, new federal banking system, federal farm subsidies, and changes to the monetary system

Doesn’t become a national party, but will set the precedent for the eventual formation of the **Populist Party**

* + - * 1. **Interstate Commerce Act** (1886)

Federal legislation created to regulate rail roads

Spawned from SC Case **Wabash v. Illinois**

Individual states could not regulate interstate commerce

**Interstate Commerce Commission** (ICC) created

First federal agency of the executive branch

Created to investigate discriminatory practices of big business

* 1. **Closing of the Frontier**
     1. The Last Push: Oklahoma
        1. Originally set aside for American Indians
        2. Opened for settlement in 1889
        3. 1890 marked the Census Bureau’s declaration that the entire west had been settled.
     2. **Frederick Jackson Turner** and the closing of the West
        1. He viewed the closing of the west as an issue… what happens next?
        2. Next movements: toward cities, away from rural life.
  2. American Indians
     1. By 1865,
        1. New Mexico and Arizona Region: Hopi and Zuni (Pueblos)
           1. Permanent villages
        2. Southwest: Navajo and Apache
           1. Nomadic hunter-gatherers, who eventually adapted to crops and livestock
        3. Pacific Northwest: Chinook and Shasta
           1. Fishing and hunting
        4. **Great Plains: Sioux, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Crow, and Comanche**
           1. Nomadic buffalo hunters

Adapted with the introduction of the horse

* + - * 1. 2/3 of western natives were found in the great plains
    1. 1830’s – Andrew Jackson Indian Removal Act based on the belief that the Western US would remain Indian Country
    2. 1851 – negotiations to create “reservations”
    3. Indian Wars
       1. Settlement of miners, ranchers, homesteaders, RR’s and oil companies led to disputes between Natives and settlers
       2. **Indian Appropriation Act of 1871**:
          1. Ends recognition of tribes as independent nations and nullifies previous treaties
       3. **Sioux War**- US Army wiped out in Fetterman Massacre
       4. Second Sioux War-
          1. Led by Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse
          2. General Custer’s defeat at **Little Big Horn** (1876)
       5. **Nez Perce**
          1. Chief Joseph effort to lead a band of his people from eastern Oregon to Canada ended in defeat at Bear Paw Mountain (1877)
       6. **Wounded Knee (1890)**
          1. *Considered the END of the Indian Wars*
          2. The “**Ghost Dance**” religious movement inspired Natives to resist US Government control with a promise to return the natives to prosperity
          3. Sitting Bull (instigator of Ghost Dance movement) is killed during an arrest
          4. US Army *massacres* 200 American Indian’s (including women and children) at Wounded Knee
       7. In addition, the massive buffalo hunts by Americans equally doomed plains natives as their primary source of food was hunted to near extinction
    4. **Assimilation** of Natives
       1. Movement to end Indian culture through formal education, job training, and conversion to Christianity
       2. *A Century of Dishonor* (1881)
          1. Book by **Helen Hunt Jackson** which created sympathy for American Indians because of the injustices done to Natives
          2. The book ends up creating support for assimilation, as Native culture gets the blame for the problems
       3. **Carlisle School**
          1. Boarding school in Pennsylvania to segregate American Indian children and teach them white culture
       4. **Dawes Severalty Act** (1887)
          1. Legislation created to break up tribal organizations and land
          2. Divided tribal lands into plots of 160 acres

US citizenship could be granted to those who stayed on land for 25 years and adopted American values

* + - * 1. Not until Indian Reorganization Act (1934) are natives granted the right to reestablish tribal land and culture
  1. Conservation Movements
     1. Movement to preserve the natural beauty of western lands
     2. **Yosemite Valley** becomes California State park in 1864 and a national park in 1890
     3. **Yellowstone** becomes the first national park in 1872
     4. Carl Schurz, Secretary of the Interior in 1880s
        1. Promoted the creation of forest reserves and a federal forest service to protect federal lands
     5. President’s Benjamin Harrison and Grover Cleveland reserved 33 million acres of national timber
        1. Forest Reserve Act of 1891 and Forest Management Act of 1897
     6. Conversationalists v. preservationists
        1. Conservationist: regulated use of natural resources
        2. Preservationists: preserve natural resources and land from human interference
           1. John Muir – founded **Sierra Club** in 1892