

Unit 7. Social Transformations in the United States (1945-1994)

Learning Target 28

Summarize the struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil rights that occurred in the United States in the postwar period.



Following World War II, the United States experienced a struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil rights. African Americans, Mexican Americans, American Indians and women distinguished themselves in the effort to win World War II. Following the war, movements began to secure the same freedoms and opportunities for these Americans that other Americans enjoyed.

African-American organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the National Urban League (NUL) struggled for equal opportunities and to end segregation. They protested and sought remedy to injustices in the courts to change policies and laws. Their efforts resulted in the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act.

Group of Americans	Organization	Actions

Use the graphic organizer to summarize how groups of Americans struggled for equality. Double-click the organizer to enter responses.

Mexican Americans organized through the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) to improve the conditions of migrant workers. They organized to persuade farm owners to treat them more fairly. They believed farm owners denied them equal opportunity for employment, fair wages, safe working conditions, and adequate living facilities.

American Indians organized to improve conditions on reservations, protect land rights and improve opportunities in education and employment. They formed the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the American Indian Movement (AIM).

Many women believed that they were discriminated against in the workplace by being paid less than men for the same jobs. They also believed that there were too few women in elected government offices. Women made progress toward equal opportunities through demonstrations, lawsuits and the National Organization for Women (NOW).

1. Following World War II, what four groups in particular began movements to secure freedoms and opportunities that other Americans enjoyed?

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2. Identify four civil rights groups associated with African Americans' efforts to end *racial segregation*.

1.	2.
3.	4.

3. Identify three legal actions that brought about change as a result of these groups' efforts.

1.
2.
3.

4. What complaints did the *United Farm Workers (UFW)* make on behalf of Mexican American migrant farm workers?

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5. What were the goals of the *National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)* and the *American Indian Movement (AIM)*?

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6. What were some of the complaints women made known through demonstrations, lawsuits and the formation of the *National Organization for Women (NOW)*?

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Learning Target 29

Describe how American life in the postwar period was impacted by the postwar economic boom and by advances in science.



The United States experienced a period of unprecedented prosperity and economic growth following World War II. Increased public demand for goods and services contributed to this economic boom. With the war over, it was no longer necessary to conserve materials needed for the war effort.

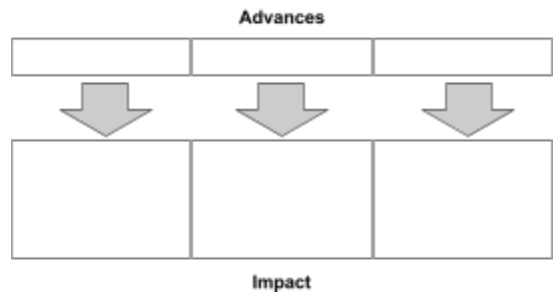
The demand for housing and automobile ownership led to the growth of suburbs, outlying residential areas adjacent to cities. The housing demand resulted from the influx of returning soldiers from the war. As automobile ownership increased, new freeways were built, allowing people to move out of the center city and commute from the suburbs.

Economic opportunities in defense plants and high-tech industries led to the growth of the Sunbelt, a region stretching across the South and Southwest U.S.

The postwar prosperity produced some other "epic changes" in American life. These include the baby boom, increased consumerism, increased mobility via automobiles, pop culture, franchising, and longer life spans.

Advances in science following the war also impacted American life. Examples include new developments in:

- medicine (e.g., polio vaccine, birth control pill, artificial heart valve, open-heart bypass, organ transplant, genetic engineering)
- communication (e.g., transistor, television, computers, Internet, mobile phones)
- nuclear energy (e.g., atomic weapons, nuclear power plants)
- transportation (e.g., passenger jet airplanes, catalytic converters in cars)



Use the graphic organizer to identify the impact of scientific advances in the postwar era. Double-click the organizer to enter responses.

Note: You will not be required to identify the specific examples listed in the examples section of above. Examples listed in the section will be used as multiple-choice options only.

1. What factor contributed to the *postwar economic boom*?

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2. What two factors contributed to the *growth of suburbs*?

1.	2.
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3. Where is the *Sunbelt* and what type(s) of economic opportunities could be found there?

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4. Identify six "epic changes" in American life brought on by *postwar prosperity*.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

5. Identify four major advances in science during this time.

1.
2.
3.
4.

Learning Target 30

Analyze the social and political effects of the continuing population flow from cities to suburbs, the internal migrations from the Rust Belt to the Sun Belt, and the increase in immigration resulting from passage of the 1965 Immigration Act.



The postwar period movement from cities to suburbs had social and political effects. The cities became mainly black and poor, and strongly Democratic. The suburbs were mainly white and leaned Republican. The decaying environment and the low employment opportunities in large cities contributed to urban riots in the 1960s.

The employment opportunities in defense plants and high-tech industries located in the South and California led to the growth of the Sunbelt. This development contributed to a political power shift in the country. In the U.S. House of Representatives, the number of representatives is fixed and divided among states by population. With the population growing more rapidly in Sunbelt states, the congressional districts were reapportioned, giving these states greater political representation and power.

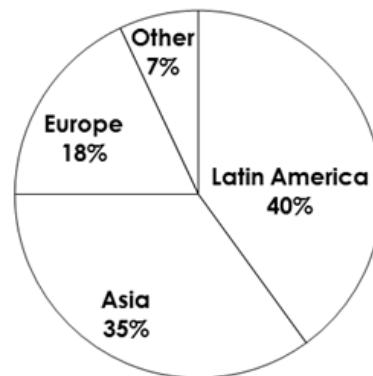
The Immigration Act of 1965 eliminated the quota system based on national origins and replaced it with a set of seven preference categories. The law helped shift immigration patterns away from Europe to other regions. It allowed more individuals from Asia, Africa, and Latin America to enter the U.S. The resulting immigration changed the country's demographic makeup. Hispanics became the fastest growing minority in the U.S. This led to an increase in Spanish language media and funding for bilingual education programs. As these new immigrants became citizens, their voting practices impacted the balance of power between the major political parties.

Note: Questions will be framed in terms of the issues (migrations and voting patterns) presented above.

Immigration to the United States, 1951-1960



Immigration to the United States, 1971-1980



How do the circle graphs reflect the changes that resulted from the Immigration Act of 1965?

1. Describe postwar racial and political differences between the cities and suburbs:

2. Summarize how states in the South and West gained political power.

3. How did the *Immigration Act (1965)* changed immigration patterns?

Learning Target 31

Explain why the government's role in the economy, environmental protection, social welfare, and national security became the topic of political debates between 1945 and 1994.



The role of the federal government expanded greatly in the 1930s and early 1940s as a result of the New Deal and World War II. This expanded role continued to be the focus of political debates in the post-World War II period. Some people favored a more activist role of the government to correct inequities in society. Others believed that the government should be less involved and let the marketplace work. Public opinion on this issue was often influenced by the current state of the economy.

The debate on the government's role to protect the environment in the postwar period increased during this period. This was due to research on the effects of pesticides, pollution and waste disposal and concerns about conservation and global warming. Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, exposed the harmful effects of pesticides and contributed to the rise of the environmental movement. Demands from environmentalists led to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970.

Issue	Debate
Economy	
Environment	
Social Welfare	
National Security	

Use the graphic organizer to summarize debates on economy, environment, social welfare, and national security. Double-click the organizer to enter responses.

The government's role on social welfare issues attracted intense debates, particularly relating to poverty, unemployment and on the idea of a national health insurance. In the 1960s, the debates centered on President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and "war on poverty." During his administration, Head Start, a preschool program for disadvantaged students, was established, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided increased funding to public schools. Medicare was created to provide healthcare for the nation's elderly.

The controversies surrounding the federal government's role in protecting the country re-appeared during times of perceived threats. Fears concerning communist infiltration of the government during the 1940s and 1950s, and anti-war protests during the Vietnam Era, led to debates over national security.

1. How did the role of the *federal government* change in the 1930s and 40s?

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2. How did public opinion differ over the role of the *federal government* and what affected public opinion in this regard the most?

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3. What led to the formation of the *Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*?

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4. Identify three federal programs started under Lyndon Johnson's *Great Society*.

1.
2.
3.

For vocabulary activities, video tutorials, and additional assessment practice for this unit, go to: <http://www.ohiotestprep.com/american-history.html#Unit7>

Unit 7. Checking for Understanding

Use the highlight text tool on the toolbar above to select the correct answers.

1. What perspective held by Hispanic-American agricultural workers led to the creation of the United Farm Workers?
 - A. Farm workers wanted to become owners of the farms on which they worked.
 - B. Small family farms need economic assistance from the Federal government.
 - C. Farm workers needed to organize in order to collectively bargain with farm owners.
 - D. Large farms could be made more efficient by using modern agricultural technology.

2. During the 1950s, increased incomes and easy credit led many Americans to embrace which phenomenon?
 - A. consumerism
 - B. feminism
 - C. progressivism
 - D. socialism

3. Before the 1950s, most immigrants to the United States came from Europe.

What change in immigration policy was reflected in the 1965 Immigration Act?

- A. It set large quotas to encourage European immigration.
 - B. It forced a complete ban on immigration from China.
 - C. It imposed stricter quotas on immigration from every country.
 - D. It allowed more immigrants from Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
4. In the first half of the twentieth century, most immigrants came to the United States from European countries. How did the pattern of migration change between 1950 and 2000?
 - A. Most immigrants came to the United States from Oceania.
 - B. Most immigrants came to the United States from Australia.
 - C. Most immigrants came to the United States from Latin America.
 - D. Most immigrants came to the United States from the Middle East.

5. After World War II, the United States experienced unprecedented prosperity and economic growth.

A. Identify two reasons for this economic prosperity. Move the two reasons into the blank boxes under "Reasons for Prosperity after WW II" heading.

B. Then identify two changes that were created by this prosperity. Move the two changes into the blank boxes under the "Changes in American Life Created by Prosperity" heading.

- You do not need to use all the "Reasons" or "Changes."

Reason for Prosperity after World War II

Demand for automobiles increased

Decrease in birthrate

Creation of New Deal programs

Demand for higher government spending

Demand for housing increased

Changes in American Life Created by Prosperity

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Great Migration

Hawaii Statehood

Sunbelt migrations

Suburbanization