Aditya Patel

APUSH

Period 4

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Semester 1 Final

**Chapters 1-3**

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The earliest explorers and colonizers of America came for two main reasons: to search for economic opportunities and to escape religious persecution. The political and religious climate in Europe was the most influential in the latter. The Protestant Reformation in the 1500s divided the previously Catholic rule, especially taking influence in England. However, England was no haven for Protestantism, with the more political English Reformation and, a few years later, allegiance to the Catholic Church creating uncertainty for many Protestants. The Puritans, the most zealous Protestants, became increasingly discontent, and eventually, large quantities of them were first to colonize the Northern British Colonies in America. These people came with their family, and due to their religious beliefs, were highly devoted and hardworking. These Puritans, and the Quakers and other religious groups following them, became the majorities in multiple northern colonies, and unlike the commercially interested Southern colonists, intended to create a permanent home for themselves and their families. Many of the Northern Colonies quickly became stable states, with family farming becoming a thriving sustenance. Their religious intentions and motivations made a significant difference in their home and colonies, which quickly became democratic. They often didn’t follow their ideals, and believed natives to be subhuman, despite receiving much help from them. I believe that this movement of Puritans to escape religious persecution is very similar to my grandparents, who very devout Hindus in a majority Muslim part of India in the late 60s. As violence increased between the religions, they picked up their family and moved to a burgeoning city, where they, at least in part motivated by their religion, were able to move up into the upper-middle class and become financially stable. However, their move wasn’t just to escape their violence, but their hatred, fear, and racism towards Muslims were also a large motivator in making them move. Seeing these connections between people hundreds of years ago and my grandparents helps humanize the Puritans.

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**Chapters 10-12**

Immigration is and always has been a huge part of the American experience. However, alongside this, racism towards the next group of immigration has also been near universal. The economic and religious conditions that promoted English and Western European immigration had largely waned by this time, and the early 1800s was a period of little immigration. The American population grew naturally in that period, and as America industrialized in the 1800s, a huge wave of immigration supported its growing labor needs. This wave of immigration was much more diverse, as people arrived on America’s shores from Southern and Western Europe, along with South America, Canada, and Asia. The largest of these groups was the Irish and Germans. The Irish were often much poorer, and arrived in huge numbers as unskilled workers in cities. These Irish filled jobs in the industrializing factories, which themselves were taking the business of artisans and previously American-held trades. Some Americans supported this immigration, which did lower costs and prices for goods, however, a significant portion of the population grew to despise these new immigrants. They formed societies such as the “Native American” Party, who hoped to ban foreign-born citizens or Catholics from holding office. This was blatant xenophobia and did gain a significant share of votes in states in the North East. These ideas are very similar to political parties and views of many Americans today. When I first immigrated to Arkansas in 2010, the people around me were very welcoming, and I was quickly integrated into the schools and community quickly. However, more recently, immigrants have been more demonized and alienated by portions of the populace, who believe that their jobs are being stolen. This is eerily similar to the sentiments felt by those during industrialization. Politicians have been using this anti-immigrant rhetoric for centuries now, which has proven to be effective in the last few years.

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**Chapters 13-15**

The Manifest Destiny had been a part of America since the early 1800s, fueled by ideas of racial superiority of Americans and ideas of American exceptionalism. However, despite wars and battle fought over Americans gaining land on the West coast, westward expansion did not really pick up until the 1840s. Previously, Americans had come westward towards Texas and central America to continue to farm, but popular legend of the American desert stopped many. Starting the 1840s, hundreds of thousands of Americans, along with immigrants from Asia, moved to the west coast in order to find new opportunities. These early migrators were mostly already prosperous families but starting from the California Gold Rush in 1849 alone, more poor, single men began to move in search of economic opportunity and the hope of striking gold. They traversed the arduous Oregon Trail and went through much hardship to do this. However, when they arrived at their destinations, reality was waiting for them, with some of them growing incredibly rich, and others getting trapped in cycles of poverty. My family, along with countless others since the 1800s, went through this same movement as well, traveling thousands of miles, albeit by plane, to get new economic opportunities in the Bay. This immigration has been very unique among countries, and America has been successfully attracting people from across the globe for centuries now. Historically, this has greatly benefited America in the long term, by attracting skilled minds and people from other countries. The “gold rush” that brought my family and I here was the tech boom, which provided plenty of economic opportunity for immigration, and greatly boosted the American economy. America has historically been one of the only countries to have such hysteria about opportunity, and where people are attracted from across the world, which played a significant position in its economy.

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**Chapters 16-20**

Despite being essential members of society for centuries, at the start of the twentieth century, most women had never been given the right to vote. Ignited by the Seneca Falls Convention, the increasing influence of women in politics and their connection to progressivism allowed them to take their rights in 1920. This Suffrage Movement was only possible by decades of activism towards all levels of government, from the local saloon to the National Mall. This movement, powered by a new class of educated women, not dependent on men, had an enormous impact on the United States, and movements such as it have great potential. The leaders such as Alice Paul and Susan B. Anthony changed so much by organizing and campaigning for their rights. The Civil Rights movement in the 1960s was very similar to the women’s suffrage movement. They adopted the peaceful petitioning from the Suffrage movement and others. Their well-educated speakers, such as Martin Luther King Jr, were able to influence hundreds of thousands not by declaring war for their cause, and even received the support of the president, and succeeded in their cause. This is personal to me, not only due to the end of segregation, but because of how many people changed their outlook due to this campaigning. The US Citizenship Act, a bill introduced to Congress yesterday and one that would give my family a quicker path to a green card, has the support of a large percentage of Americans, however, only by petitioning can it gain enough support to pass through both houses of Congress. The women’s suffrage movement gives hope to all those today that want to create change in society and in laws, and is an important reminder that American society has progressed a long way from where it started almost three hundred years ago.

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