

HOW LIFE CHANGED IN AMERICA AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

Regarding Government

- The war settled the question of the permanence of the union of the United States.
- Political thinking moved away from regionalism and toward nationalism.
- The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the US Constitution redefined and extended civil rights.
- The seeds of the Civil Rights Movement were sown.
- The federal government exercised broader jurisdiction and powers than before the war.
- The Freedmen's Bureau – the first national agency for social welfare – was established.
- The jurisdiction of the federal courts expanded.
- Although twenty-one-year-old African American and European American males could vote, Native Americans could not.
- Federal lawmakers moved away from regulation to encourage new industries.

Regarding Economics

- The country moved increasingly away from an agrarian toward an industrial base.
- The economy of the South collapsed.
- A national currency and a banking system were established during the war.
- Cotton lost its prominence in the economy.
- Trade unions gained numbers and influence.

Regarding Race

- More than 4 million former slaves became citizens of the United States.
- Southern states enacted Black Codes and Jim Crow laws.
- Confederate veterans formed the Ku Klux Klan to restore white supremacy.

Regarding Communications

- The Transcontinental Railroad further united the country.
- The number of newspapers increased.
- Journalistic standards moved toward investigative journalism.

Regarding Society

- Families faced the emotional traumas of losing family members to the war.
- Families and employers had to deal with men who returned from the war maimed and injured.
- Veterans groups arose and a mania for erecting monuments emerged.
- Women's reform movements – especially the suffrage movement – steadily gained strength and acceptance.
- Women entered the medical professions – both as nurses and doctors.
- The generation following that which fought the Civil War grew up believing their challenges and accomplishments would never equal those of their parents' generation.