

18-4

The New Immigrants

Objectives

I. A Fresh Start

- 1865–1915 – 25 Million immigrants entered the US
- This was more than entire population in 1850.

A. Reasons for Migration

- Farmland in Europe was shrinking and population was increasing.
- Saw US as a land of opportunity - a place for jobs and land
- Others came seeking religious freedom
- Some were leaving political unrest
- Freedom was also a big draw.

B. The New Immigrants

- Most were Jewish or Catholic
- Few spoke English

II. Starting a New Life

Difficult decision to leave home, family and friends.

A. Coming to America

- Passage by boat was awful
- Placed in steerage (large cattle compartments)
- Many got diseases in there
- If arrived in New York - went to Ellis Island (Europeans)
- If arrived in San Francisco - went to Angel Island (Asians)
- Had to go through vigorous physical exam

B. Immigrant Neighborhoods

- $\frac{2}{3}$ settled in Ethnic neighborhoods
- This made them feel less isolated
- Spoke same language
- Celebrated same holidays
- Made same foods

III. Becoming American

Immigrant neighborhoods acted as springboard – gave clothes, housing, language lessons

A. Assimilation

- Worked hard to assimilate (process of becoming part of another culture.)
- Children assimilated more quickly
- Parents felt pride that their children were going to be better educated than they were and pain they were losing culture of homeland.

B. Contributions of Immigrants

- Immigrants took any job that was available even if hard or dangerous
- Saved money and started small businesses
- A few famous immigrants: Carnegie, Bell, Goldwyn, Mayer, Toscani, and Baekeland

IV. A New Wave of Nativism

- Led to Nativism (preserving US for Native Born Americans)
- Argued immigrants could not assimilate and took away jobs
- Called many anarchists (a person who opposes all forms of government)
- Chinese Exclusion Act(1882) - first law limiting immigration based on race
-act was repealed in 1943
- 1917 - Congress passed law that denied entry to immigrants who could not read their own language - made it hard for poor to come to US