

Modern America

1980-2015

Learning Targets

- Describe the goals of the new conservative movement in America
- Assess the impact of Evangelical Christianity on American Politics, including the role of the “moral majority.”
- Analyze the causes and consequences of the increasing political partisanship in American politics.
- Describe the impact that the decline of manufacturing has had on life in America, including how people live, where people live, and what people now do for a living.

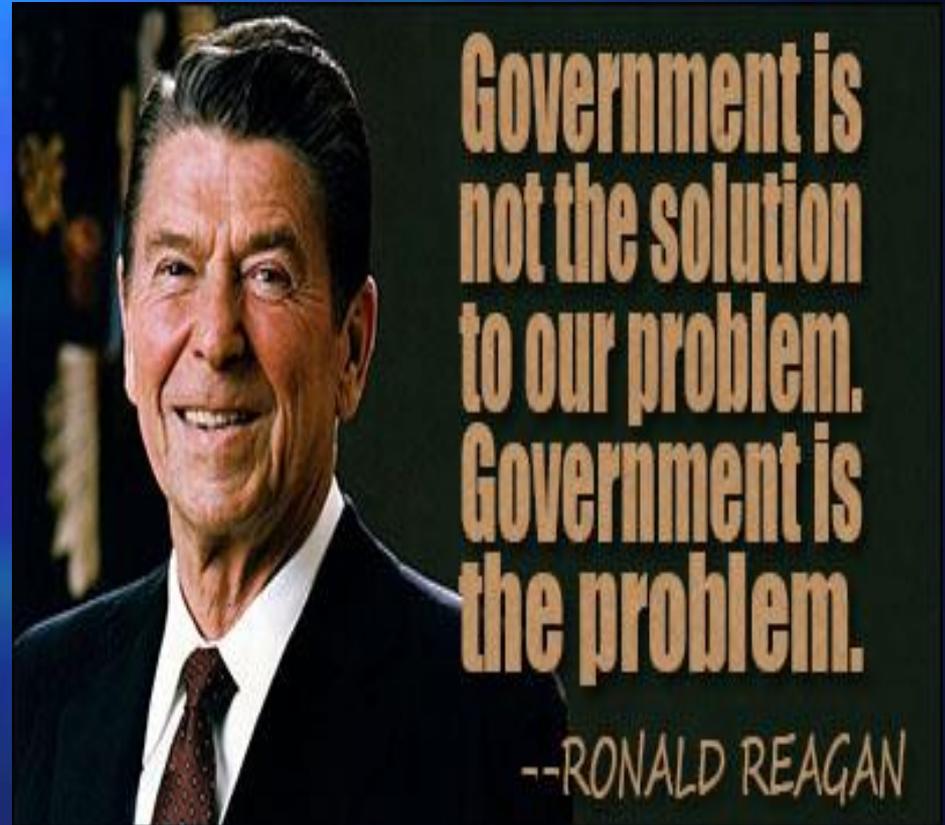
The Conservative Movement

- New Right
- The Conservative Coalition
- The “Moral Majority”
- Reactions to:
 - Entitlement Programs
 - Abortion
 - Affirmative Action and Busing
 - 60s Counterculture



Ronald Reagan

- Former Actor and Governor of California.
- Charming and relaxed, in contrast to the economic problems and hostage crisis of Carter.
- Wins in a landslide.



Reaganomics

- A return to “trickle-down” economics of the 20s, Reagan focused on cutting taxes, cutting spending on social programs, and increasing defense spending. (Now known as Supply-Side economics.)
- Kept most programs aimed at middle class (social security) but gutted most programs aimed at the poor (Great Society.)
- Dramatically reduced Capital gains tax and cut top income tax brackets in half.

More Learning Targets

- Explain the economic plan known as “Reaganomics,” and discuss its impact on modern America. (Specifically consider budget cuts, tax cuts, increased defense spending, recession and recovery, and the national debt.
- Compare the Supreme Court today with the Warren Court of the 1960s.
- Explain the logic (and describe the impact) of economic deregulation.

Still More

- Describe each of the following issues, and explain how each changed America:
- AIDS
- Drug abuse (particularly the rise in popularity of crack cocaine)
- Education
- Urban Decline
- Continued equal rights struggles.

Impact of Reaganomics

- Initially there was a pretty bad recession, hitting northern cities the hardest.
- Doubles the national debt in his first term alone.
- Increases overall wealth in America, but also inequality of wealth.

Deregulation

- Reagan wanted to reduce the size and power of the Federal Government. He fought to remove regulations and restrictions in industries such as:
 - The EPA, banks and S&Ls, airlines, health and safety rules for nursing homes, protections for unions,
- Sometimes helped consumers when competition lowered prices, and sometimes allowed industries to dangerously cut corners.

Changes to the Judiciary

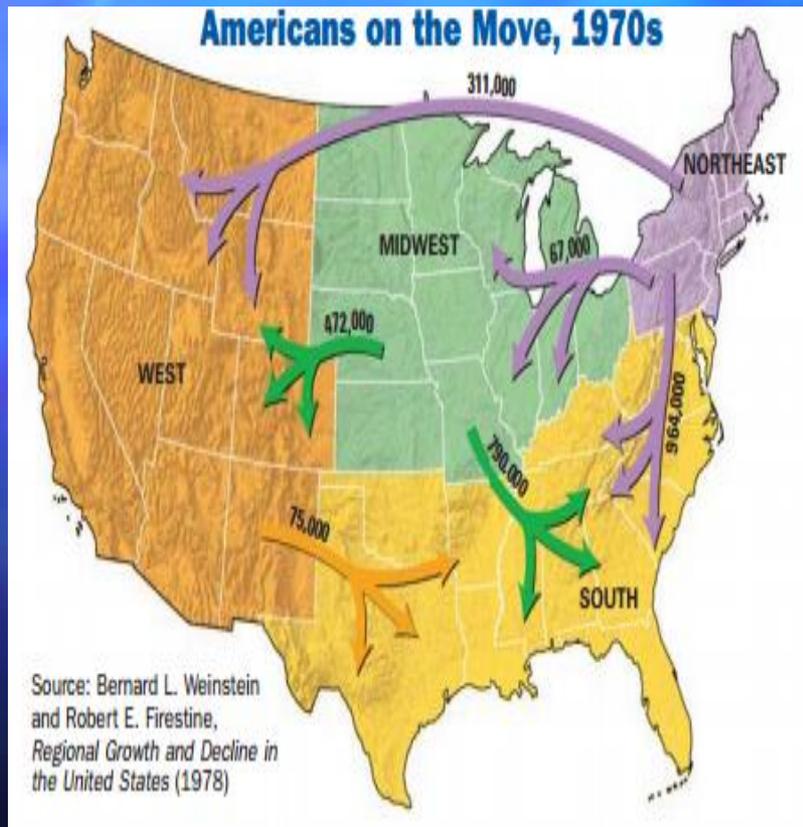
- Reagan and Bush replace the liberal trend begun under FDR with conservative judges.
- Reagan appoints the first female Justice, but replaces Thurgood Marshall with Clarence Thomas.



Social Issues of the 80s

- AIDS-
- Abortion-
- Drug Abuse-
 - Crack
 - “Just Say No!”
- Education-
- Gay Rights Movement-
- Urban Decline-
 - Manufacturing Decline
 - Cuts in federal and state spending.

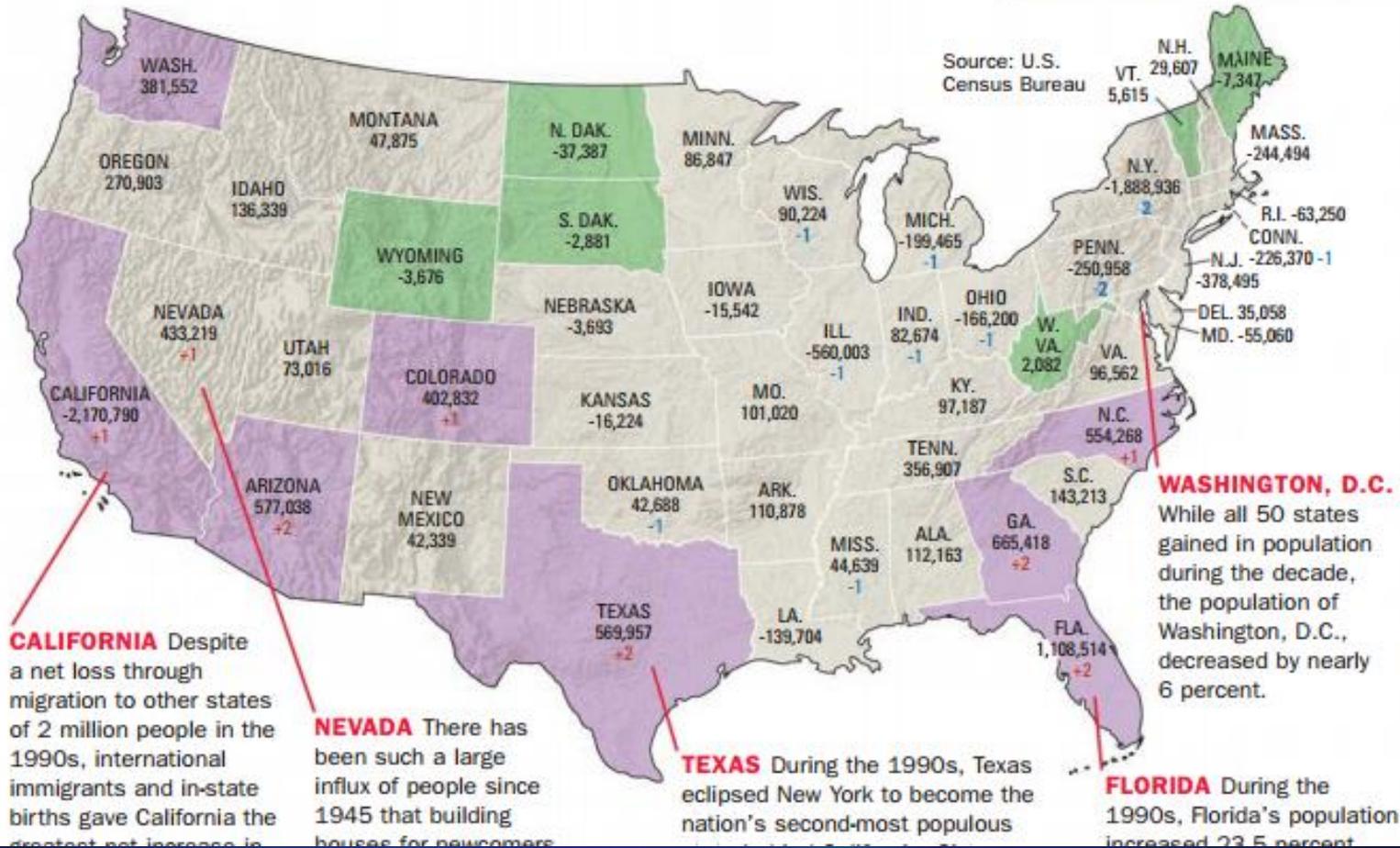
Demographic Changes



- What's causing these changes?
- How will they affect American life in the 21st century?

Americans on the Move, 1990–2000

Between 1990 and 2000, our country's population grew by a record 32.7 million people to 281.4 million. For the first time in the 20th century, all 50 states gained people between census years. But because of internal migration (see graph on page 846) and other factors, 10 states lost and 8 states gained seats in the 2000 Congressional apportionment.



Learning Targets

End o' the Cold War

- Arms Race continues with significant increases in defense spending. (No more detente)
- Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI, or "star wars") adds a new dimension to the arms race.

End of the Cold War

- The decades begin with new Soviet aggression, but quickly changes.
- Mikhail Gorbachev-
 - Takes over USSR in 85.
 - Brings policies of Glasnost (“openness”) and perestroika (“economic restructuring”)
 - Signs INF Treaty with the US.

End of the Cold War

- By '87, the USSR had loosened its grip on the Satellite Nations of Eastern Europe.
- Nov '89: The Berlin Wall comes down.
- By Dec '91: USSR becomes Russia and a bunch of other countries.
- By Feb '92: Formally end Cold War
- Jan '93: START II Treaty cuts nuclear arsenals by 2/3.

End of the Rest

- Communist governments collapse all across Europe.
- Yugoslavia dissolves into ethnic violence.
- China crushes uprisings and the communist gov't remains.

