

10/10: Presentation/Discussion: National Parks, National Forests, and the Rise of Industrial Capitalism

- Research papers will be back soon; some writing tips in general...
 - be clear
 - be convincing
 - be creative

- Environmental Movement
 - direct response to *industrial capitalism & consumerism* (intertwined relationship between the two)
 - mass production created a democratization of consumption

- Historical Background
 - U.S. in 1870s - dawn of industrial capitalism...
 - Population centers in the East - only a few large cities
 - Industrialization and urbanization go together
 - Importance of geography - identity as tied to 5 mi around you (your town, your family, your church, etc)
 - 85% of workforce was men
 - Only 60% of Americans had any education

 - America explodes from 1875-1900
 - Manufacturing and capital investment rises 600%
 - Railroad mileage increases 400%
 - Steel production expands rapidly
 - What is post-Civil War America going to be like?
 - America moves from local, small space economy to national industrial economy
 - Solving problem with economy and currency by moving to *monopolies* (each industry becomes dominated by one company)
 - Then: how will we lower unit cost and how will we deal with labor?

- Railroads are the first major industry in the United States
 - Importance of *location* - for construction and for profit
 - Railroads finally connect places and make transportation more efficient
 - Railroads were *the engine of the economy* and helped expand multiple industries, including coal & iron, timber, etc.
 - steel
 - wood
 - oil
 - tools
 - gravel (for track bed)
 - glass (for windows)
 - cloth (for seats)
 - explosives
 - (and all of these things need labor; use of cash, this spawns further industries)
 - saloons
 - restaurants
 - housing
 - etc.
 - Railroads then shipped people and cargo, shrinking time and space
 - Railroads created “*time*” (standardized time ensured safe and efficient traffic)
 - Although the government gave aid, *private* companies are in charge of this new model of the development of industry
 - Civil War veterans go the railroad business because they have important experience for managing tasks, building
 - Massive amounts of capital needed:

- stocks - buying part of a company, selling stock, profits to stockholders; bonds - buying a company or government's debt
 - J.P. Morgan and invention of financial capital (bank operates loans)
 - from entrepreneurial system → private & public relationship with railroads → financial capital
- Industrial Capitalism in Late 19th–Early 20th Century America
 - mass production → lowers unit costs (higher profit)
 - need to create constant demand for this system (marketing)
 - use of newspaper advertising (fairly local and doesn't last)
 - creation of magazines (vehicles for advertising, for every single interest/industry)
 - Production (in 1920s: automobiles become the new engine of the economy)
 - car itself (rubber)
 - roads (tar)
 - fuel (oil)
 - new spaces (suburbs - solves housing issues)
 - Consumption
 - assembly line lowered unit cost and made it affordable for almost everyone
 - companies come up with new ways to maintain consumerism
 - radio as the new technological innovation - invents new forms of advertising

{invention of transportation networks + consumption and consumerism = profit}
- Environmentalism's response...
 - industrialization wreaked havoc on the natural world

- railroads
- factories
- overhunting
- pollution
- Consumption creates waste...
- Americans started to think about the environment differently
- “Conversation” v. “preservation”
- *How does the environmental movement have some “success”?*

10/12: Discussion: Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass Part One

- Braiding Sweetgrass
 - thoughts from the class:
 - the book has lessons within lessons (environmental or ecological stories often have deeper historical/personal messages)
 - one of the largest *themes*: seeing things through multiple perspectives, beyond Western science
 - shows the importance of a liberal arts education and having diverse perspectives about natural world
 - shows our negative bias about humans and the environment
 - underscores how Western thinking is rooted in historical, religious ideas; contrasts with Indigenous philosophy (especially ideas about our relationship with the world, ownership of the land, etc.)
 - great depth and description about natural processes
 - realization that all of our actions have environmental, ecological consequences (big and small)
 - shows the importance of “gratitude”, self-awareness

- book has lessons about language and culture (Western/European/English traditions v. Native American ways of life)
 - book emphasizes how we can change our relationship with the world and make it more positive; it also questions or threatens Western assumptions (that things will stay the same, that things “*progress*” over time)
 - concept of natural “unity” and nature’s biochemical reactions (trees “talking to one another”)
- Looking further at Kimmerer’s essays in groups...
 - “The Council of Pecans” (nature’s process)
 - “The Gift of Strawberries” (origin stories; earth belongs to itself; possibility of a “gift economy”)
 - “Asters and Goldenrod” (how our experiences with nature impact our beliefs; relationships and reciprocity)
 - “Maple Sugar Moon” (importance of hard work and “tending”)
 - “Allegiance to Gratitude” (being thankful of things we don't normally think about)
- Some takeaways:
 - Further expansion of industrialization, urbanization, infrastructure (particularly after the Second World War) - people saw the natural world start to disappear, see consumption’s effects on society
 - This is the launch of the *environmental movement*...