EPISODE

ISSUES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
The War on Terrorism 1100

Iraq: Confronting a Dictatorship 1104

The Debate over Immigration 1106

Crime and Public Safety 1108

Issues in Education 1110

The Communications Revolution 1112

Curing the Health Care System 1114

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty 1116

Tough Choices About Social Security 1118

Women in the Work Force 1120

The Conservation Controversy 1122
On the morning of September 11, 2001, two airliners crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and a third smashed into a section of the Pentagon, across the river from Washington, D.C. A fourth airliner crashed in a field in the Pennsylvania countryside. Nineteen Arab terrorists had hijacked the four planes and used them as missiles in an attempt to destroy predetermined targets. The first three planes hit their intended targets. In the fourth plane, passengers fought the hijackers and the plane went down short of its target.

Explosions and raging fire severely weakened the twin towers. Within two hours after the attacks, both skyscrapers had crumbled to the ground. One wing of the Pentagon was extensively damaged. About 3,000 people were killed in the attacks—the most destructive acts of terrorism in modern history.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Terrorism is the use of violence against people or property to extort changes in societies or governments. Throughout history, individuals and groups have used terror tactics to achieve political or social goals. In recent decades, however, terrorist groups have carried out more and increasingly destructive attacks. The U.S. National Counterterrorism Center recorded over 14,000 terrorist incidents worldwide in 2006 alone.

Modern international terrorism gained world attention during the 1972 Summer Olympic Games in Munich, Germany. Members of a Palestinian group killed two Israeli athletes and took nine others hostage, later killing them. Five of the terrorists and a police officer were killed during a rescue attempt.

Since then, terrorist activities have occurred across the globe. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) used terrorist tactics for decades to oppose British control of Northern Ireland. The IRA officially renounced violence in 2005. In South America, a group known as the Shining Path terrorized the residents of Peru throughout the late 20th century. The group sought to overthrow the government and establish a Communist state. In 2004, Islamic radicals killed and injured nearly 2,000 people with a series of bombs exploded on the Madrid subways.

Groups belonging to the al-Qaeda terrorist organization operate in many countries. Officials have linked several major attacks against U.S. facilities in Africa to al-Qaeda, including bombings at the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Jemaah Islamiah, an Islamic revolutionary group linked to al-Qaeda, has organized numerous attacks throughout Southeast Asia.

**TACTICS AND MOTIVES**

Most terrorists target high-profile events or crowded places such as subway stations, restaurants, or shopping malls. Terrorists choose these spots carefully to gain the most

The twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York burn after the September 11 attacks.
After the first few days, the work at “ground zero,” the World Trade Center disaster site, shifted to recovering bodies and removing the massive amount of debris. The destroyed twin towers accounted for an estimated 2 billion pounds of rubble.

Once the area was cleared, plans to rebuild the site were proposed. In February 2003, a development committee chose a design for a new building complex that would rise taller than the World Trade Center towers. The complex, which officials estimated would take about 10 years to build, would include a memorial park with pools, a cultural center, and a 1,776-foot spire.

**IMPACT OF 9/11**

The attacks of September 11 dramatically altered the way Americans looked at life. For the first time, many Americans became afraid that terrorism could happen in their own country at any time.

This sense of vulnerability was intensified when another wave of attacks hit the United States a few days after September 11. Letters containing anthrax spores were sent to people in the news media.

The attacks of September 11 dramatically altered the way Americans looked at life. For the first time, many Americans became afraid that terrorism could happen in their own country at any time.

This sense of vulnerability was intensified when another wave of attacks hit the United States a few days after September 11. Letters containing anthrax spores were sent to people in the news media.

**RESCUE AND REBUILDING**

On September 11, the weapons the terrorists used were planes loaded with fuel. The planes became destructive missiles when they crashed into their targets.

Amidst the brutal destruction at the World Trade Center, the courage, selflessness, and noble actions of New York City’s firefighters, police officers, and rescue workers stood as a testament. Many of the first firefighters at the scene disappeared into the burning buildings to help those inside and never came out again. Entire squads were lost.

Firefighters worked around the clock trying to find survivors in the wreckage. They had to contend with shifting rubble and smoky, ash-filled air. Medical workers from the area rushed to staff the city’s trauma centers. But after the first wave of injured were rescued, there were few survivors to treat.

A flood of volunteers assisted rescue workers. From around the country, people sent generous donations of blood, food, and money to New York City.

A flag flies over the rubble of the World Trade Center while firefighters and rescue workers search for survivors.
and to members of Congress in Washington, D.C. When inhaled, these spores could damage the lungs and cause death. Five people died after inhaling the spores in tainted letters. Two were postal workers.

Some investigators believed that the letters were sent by a lone terrorist and not by a terrorist group. No link between the letters and the September 11 attacks was ever found. The anthrax letters increased Americans’ fear of terrorism.

**THE UNITED STATES RESPONDS**

After conducting a massive investigation, the U.S. government determined that Osama bin Laden, a Saudi Arabian millionaire, had directed the terrorists responsible for the September 11 attacks. The terrorists were part of the al-Qaeda network. The home base for al-Qaeda was Afghanistan, ruled by a strict Islamic regime called the Taliban. The Taliban supported the terrorist group. In return, bin Laden provided fighters to the Taliban.

The United States, led by President George W. Bush, built an international coalition, or alliance, to fight terrorism and the al-Qaeda network. Great Britain played a prominent role in this coalition. After the Taliban refused to turn over bin Laden, coalition forces led by the United States began military action in Afghanistan.

In October 2001, the United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom. The military began bombing Taliban air defenses, airfields, and command centers, as well as al-Qaeda training camps. Within two months, U.S. special forces and marines and fighters from the Northern Alliance, a coalition of anti-Taliban Afghan troops, drove the Taliban from power. However, the fight to destroy al-Qaeda continued. Bin Laden was not captured, and his fate remained unknown. Meanwhile, the United Nations worked with the Northern Alliance and other Afghan groups to establish an interim government to replace the Taliban. Later, in 2003, Afghan leaders adopted a constitution, and in 2004, Hamid Karzai was elected president of Afghanistan. Peace, however, was elusive. Since 2005, insurgent attacks by Taliban and al-Qaeda militants have posed a continuing threat.

In 2002, President Bush called for a commission to investigate whether the September attacks could have been prevented and how to prevent future attacks. In 2004, the 9/11 Commission issued a report that stressed the need for greater cooperation and coordination within the government. It also recommended the creation of a new Cabinet post—that of national intelligence director. On April 21, 2005, the U.S. Senate confirmed John Negroponte’s appointment to that position.

**USA PATRIOT ACT**

To give the government the power to conduct search and surveillance of suspected terrorists, the USA Patriot Act was signed into law on October 26, 2001. This law allowed the government to:

- detain foreigners suspected of terrorism for seven days without charging them with a crime. In some cases, prisoners were held indefinitely.
- tap all phones used by suspects and monitor their e-mail and Internet use.
- make search warrants valid across states.
- order U.S. banks to investigate sources of large foreign accounts.
- prosecute terrorist crimes without any time restrictions or limitations.

---

Tom Ridge, the first to hold the position of Secretary of Department of Homeland Security, introduces the color-coded threat advisory system.

**History of Terrorist Attacks Against the United States**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Theodore Kaczynski, the Unabomber, uses mail bombs to kill 3 people over 17 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Shi’ites explode a truck near U.S. military barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, killing 241 Marines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Libyan terrorists explode a bomb in an airplane, causing it to crash in Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Suspected al-Qaeda terrorists explode bombs in the World Trade Center in New York City, killing 6 and injuring at least 1,040.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Timothy McVeigh uses a truck to destroy the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
People who opposed the law claimed that it violated the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Amendments. In 2005 it was revealed that President Bush had ordered the National Security Agency (NSA) to spy on American citizens’ international telephone calls and e-mails without obtaining warrants.

**ANTITERRORIST ACTIONS**

To combat terrorism on the home front, the Bush administration created the Department of Homeland Security in 2002, initially headed by former Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge. This executive department was designed to analyze threats, guard the nation’s borders, seaports, and airports, and coordinate the country’s response to attacks. To help share information about the risk of terrorist attacks with the American people, the department created the Homeland Security Advisory System. This system used a set of “Threat Conditions” to advise the public about the level of terrorist threats and provided guidelines for response during a period of heightened alert.

The Department of Homeland Security also searched for terrorists in the United States. The government soon discovered that the al-Qaeda network had used “sleepers” to carry out its terrorist attacks. Sleepers are agents who enter a country, blend into a community, and when called upon, secretly prepare for and commit terrorist acts. An intensive search began for any al-Qaeda terrorists, including sleepers, that remained in the United States. U.S. officials detained and questioned Arabs and other Muslims who behaved suspiciously or who violated immigration regulations. Many suspects were held in a prison camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The United States faced mounting criticism both at home and abroad regarding its treatment of detainees. Critics claimed that detaining these people without charging them and without access to attorneys violated their civil rights. The government argued that limiting civil liberties in wartime to protect national security was not unusual. U.S. officials used the same argument to try some terrorist suspects in military tribunals rather than in criminal courts.

**AVIATION SECURITY**

The federal government’s role in aviation security also increased. National Guard troops began patrolling airports, and sky marshals were assigned to airplanes. In addition, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had bars installed on cockpit doors to prevent hijackers from entering cockpits.

In November 2001, President Bush signed into law the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, which made airport security the responsibility of the federal government. Previously, individual airports had been responsible for their own security. Because of this new law, a agency called the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) was created to inspect airline passengers, baggage, and cargo, as well as non-citizens training to be pilots. The TSA is also responsible for safety on railroads, buses, and mass transit systems. Security operations at airports created several major concerns, including long delays and possible invasion of passengers’ privacy. As the United States fought terrorism and tried to balance national security with civil rights, the public debate over security measures continued.
Since 1979, Saddam Hussein’s regime in Iraq had brutally repressed opposition. The Iraqi dictator had ruled without regard for the welfare of his people or for world opinion. During his State of the Union address in January 2003, President George W. Bush declared Hussein too great a threat to ignore in an age of increased terrorism. He promised to do everything possible to prevent Iraq from launching a terrorist attack on the United States.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

In August 1990, the Iraqi army had invaded Kuwait, a small country that shares Iraq’s southwestern border. Saddam Hussein wanted Kuwait’s huge oil reserves. The United Nations (UN) condemned the occupation and approved the use of force to end it.

On January 16, 1991, the Persian Gulf War began. Coalition forces led by the United States drove Iraq’s army out of Kuwait within six weeks. A cease-fire agreement with the UN prohibited Iraq from producing chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons.

The United Nations periodically sent arms inspectors to Iraq to make sure Hussein was complying with the cease-fire agreement. However, the Iraqi dictator refused to cooperate fully with the inspectors. Because of this, the United States and Great Britain declared in 1998 that they supported the removal of Hussein from his office and the ending of his regime. In response, Hussein barred arms inspectors from entering his country.

**STEPS TOWARD WAR**

After the attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States called for a renewal of the arms inspections in Iraq. In November 2002, the UN Security Council passed a resolution designed to force Iraq to give up all weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Arms inspections resumed, but Hussein again refused to cooperate fully. Soon, the United States and Great Britain cut off diplomatic relations with Iraq.

In early February 2003, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell gave a presentation to the UN Security Council, maintaining that Iraq was hiding WMD. Soon thereafter, the United States and Great Britain pressed the UN to pass a resolution that authorized the use of military force against Iraq. As an alternative, France, Germany, and Russia presented a plan that called for intensifying the inspections.

The United States and Great Britain countered by claiming that a new UN resolution was not necessary since Iraq was in violation of the old agreement. They also claimed that Iraq’s violation justified the use of military force to overturn Hussein’s regime.

Meanwhile, protests against a possible war in Iraq increased at home and abroad. Antiwar protesters participated in more than 600 rallies around the globe on a single day in February. An estimated 750,000 protesters turned out in London—the largest demonstration ever in the British capital. Most demonstrations were peaceful.

**WAR IN IRAQ**

In March 2003, the United States and Great Britain launched Operation Iraqi Freedom. The war began with massive air raids; sec-
found. This led many in the United States and Great Britain to question the necessity for the war. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair responded by claiming that they had based their decision on intelligence later proved to have been faulty. In May 2005, a top-secret memo known as the Downing Street memo became public. It suggested that the Bush administration had planned to invade Iraq as early as July 2002. As a result, 560,000 Americans signed a letter by U.S. Representative Conyers to President Bush asking for the truth about the decision to invade Iraq. In June, as U.S. casualties continued to rise, a majority of polled Americans supported withdrawal from Iraq.

**IRAQ AFTER HUSSEIN**

On October 15, 2005, Iraqi voters narrowly accepted a new constitution. In December, Iraq held elections to choose a permanent parliament. The Shiites captured a majority of seats, but not enough to control the government. Sunni and Kurdish legislators rejected the Shiites’ first candidate for prime minister. In April 2006, the National Assembly approved a compromise candidate, Nuri al-Maliki, as the new prime minister.

Despite this progress, violence between Sunnis and Shiites continued to plague Iraq. Militants also attacked U.S. troops. In response, President Bush announced a plan in January 2007 to send 20,000 more U.S. combat troops to Iraq. Many Americans opposed the plan, but it went into effect later that year.

**SEARCH FOR WMD**

The case for going to war against Iraq was based on assertions by the U.S. and British governments that Saddam Hussein had WMD. Once major combat ended on May 1, U.S. forces began an extensive search for these weapons. Movable biological laboratories containing sophisticated equipment were located, but by mid-2005, no WMD had been found. In March, the United States and Great Britain launch Operation Iraqi Freedom. Major combat ends in May, and Hussein is overthrown.

**Epilogue**

Do you think the U.S.-led strike against Iraq will result in similar wars against other dangerous regimes?

**RESEARCH LINKS**

Visit the links for the Epilogue to find out more about Iraq: Confronting a Dictatorship.
For hundreds of years, immigrants working for their dreams have shaped the United States. Latino ranchers developed many of the tools and skills of the American cowboy. Chinese laborers laid the tracks of the transcontinental railroad. African Americans, though not voluntary immigrants, labored to develop the agriculture of the South and the industry of the North. Farmers and workers of every origin built the nation we know today.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
But immigration has been argued throughout American history. In the 1700s, Benjamin Franklin worried about the number of Germans immigrating to Pennsylvania. Sharp anti-immigration sentiment spurred the nativist movement that developed in the 1830s and the “America First” campaign of the 1920s.

Americans today are divided on the issue. Some agree with former New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani that immigrants “challenge us with new ideas and new perspectives.” Others side with Dan Stein of the Federation for American Immigration Reform, who has said that “large-scale immigration is not serving the needs and interests of the country.”

RISING NUMBERS
From 1900 into the 1940s, economic troubles and rapid population growth spurred more than 16 million Europeans to move to the United States. The same pressures have recently hit Asia and Latin America, with the same effect on the United States. Between 1989 and 2004, more than 15 million new immigrants came to the United States.

ILLEGAL ENTRY
Complicating the debate has been the issue of illegal immigrants. By 2005, the number of illegal immigrants living in the United States was estimated at about 10 million. A 2004 report by the Center for Immigration Studies stated that households headed by illegal immigrants received approximately $10 billion more in government services than they paid in taxes.

In 1994, California’s voters approved Proposition 187, denying illegal immigrants access to public education and state-funded health care. A federal court later ruled that law unconstitutional. In 1996, Congress passed a law that toughened measures to bar illegal entry into the United States.

In February 2005, President Bush proposed a new immigration policy. Stating that “America’s immigration system is . . . unsuited to the needs of our economy and the values of our country,” the president endorsed a guest worker program. The program would allow foreigners to work in the United States for up to six years, after which they would be required to return to their own countries. Alternate programs also were being considered.

ECONOMIC DEBATE
Those who favor limits claim that immigrants take jobs from Americans. However, data suggest that immigration has not hurt the economy and may have helped fuel its growth. At the same time that millions of immigrant workers—including some undocumented workers—were joining the work...
that at 12 percent of the population, foreigners are too numerous in America. Historian David Kennedy points out that in 1910 the percentage was even higher—14.7 percent.

Those who favor limits claim that new immigrants do not mix with other groups, forming ethnic neighborhoods that divide society. Others believe that immigrants enrich American cultural life.

MORAL ISSUES
The issue of asylum—providing a safe place for people fleeing oppression—has been the toughest of all. While immigration is allowed for political asylum, those who flee famine or poverty are turned away. Are such choices fair?

Some rules allow relatives of immigrants to enter the country. Representative Lamar Smith of Texas believes that these rules admit immigrants who “have no marketable skills and end up on welfare.” Yet, social scientist Nathan Glazer says that concern about the number of immigrants conflicts with sympathy for those “trying to bring in wives, children, parents, brothers, and sisters.”

Alan Simpson, a former U.S. senator, believes that there are simply too many immigrants. Slow immigration for five years, he proposed. But in Gallup polls taken at the turn of this century, 43 percent of those polled favored Simpson’s idea, while 54 percent agreed that immigration should either be kept at its present level or increased.

force, unemployment fell from 7.1 percent in 1980 to 4.3 percent in March 2001, the lowest rate in 30 years. Although the rate had risen to 5.1 percent by May 2005, it was still relatively low.

Another argument focuses on wages. Economists agree that immigrants tend to work for lower wages than native-born workers. Harvard University economists estimated that one-third of the gap between low-paid and high-paid workers results from higher numbers of immigrants. But they also reported that other factors—foreign trade, declining union membership, and new technology—play a greater role in lowering wages.

Immigrants fill skilled, high-paying jobs as well. Current law limits the number of immigrants who may enter the United States within specific employment categories, or preferences. The 2004 limit was set at 204,422. However, only 155,330 immigrants entered under these categories during 2004.

CITIZENSHIP RESPONSIBILITY
Some people are concerned that many immigrants never become citizens and so fail to completely participate in U.S. life. Statistics show that the percentage of immigrants gaining citizenship declined from 64 percent in 1970 to 38 percent in 2005, one of the lowest rates in a century. Experts attribute the drop to a variety of factors, including rising numbers of illegal immigrants, a backlog of applications, and a presumed lack of interest among many immigrants. The oath of U.S. citizenship carries with it such responsibilities as voting, serving on juries, and, in some cases, military service.

CULTURAL CONCERNS
The diversity of the U.S. population has raised concerns that America has no common culture. Some say...
Crime and Public Safety

Will tougher gun control laws reduce the incidence of crime?

On an early March day in 2001, Alicia Zimmer, a student at Santana High School outside San Diego, found herself in the middle of gunfire in the hallways. A 15-year-old boy had brought a gun to school and had begun firing at his fellow students. “I was probably about 10 feet away from some of the victims,” Zimmer said, adding that she saw “a boy laying on the floor with his face down,” and a girl with “blood all over her arm.” Before the shooter was apprehended, two people were killed and 13 were injured. School shootings have become more common in the United States and are just one reason why, despite an overall decrease in crime during the 1990s and into the 21st century, Americans continue to express concerns over public safety.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
In 1968, opinion polls reported that for the first time, Americans called crime the nation’s single worst problem. Since then, crime has remained high on the list of national problems.

Crime rates generally increased during the 1970s, due in part to rising unemployment and inflation, increased drug use, civil unrest, and protests against the Vietnam War. But in the 1980s, the spread of crack cocaine abuse fueled a major jump in crime. From 1986 to the early 1990s, the rates of violent crimes and car thefts increased by more than 20 percent.

Beginning in 1992, however, these rates began to drop and continued declining throughout the decade. The FBI announced that in 2003 violent crime had dipped to a 20-year low and was a third lower than in 1994. In 2000 the murder rate also reached a 20-year low and was relatively stable for the next 6 years.

RECENT SUCCESS
Experts have identified a few causes for falling crime rates:

- There are fewer males aged 15 to 29, the group most likely to commit crimes.
- The trade in crack cocaine slowed.
- The unemployment rate gradually decreased throughout the 1990s. Generally, when more people have jobs, crime rates fall.

Perhaps the biggest factor has been new policing efforts. Police departments have taken officers out of patrol cars and put them back on the streets. Police have also taken a more active role in their neighborhoods. Crime prevention methods now focus on an intense effort to
intervene with troubled youth before they commit a crime.

**CONTINUING EFFORTS**

Despite what appears to be a safer nation, however, many Americans continue to worry about crime. For one thing, gun violence is extremely high. According to the FBI, guns were used in nearly 67 percent of all homicides in 2003. In addition, some social scientists contend that with a slumping economy a new crime wave is just over the horizon. Even though the overall murder rate has declined since 1990, crime continues to command public attention. Experts are split over two issues related to reducing crime further: gun control and tougher sentencing.

**GUN CONTROL**

In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the Brady Act, which called for states to place a five-day waiting period on the sale of handguns. During that period, police check the potential buyer’s background. If they find a criminal record, a gun permit is denied. However, four years later, in June 1997, the Brady Act was substantially weakened when the Supreme Court ruled that the federal government could not force state or local officials to run background checks on potential buyers of handguns.

At the center of the gun-control issue lies a long-standing constitutional debate. The Second Amendment to the Constitution states this: “A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.” The National Rifle Association (NRA), which is opposed to tougher gun-control laws, argues that gun-control laws violate this right to bear arms. Others contend that the amendment was not intended to guarantee a right to personal weapons. Rather, its purpose is to protect the state’s right to maintain military units.

**TOUGHER SENTENCES**

In addition to looking at hand gun laws, Americans have sought to battle crime by putting more people in prison. The federal government and many states recently passed “three strikes” laws. Under these laws, any person found guilty of two previous crimes receives a stiff sentence of twenty to thirty years after conviction for a third.

While many applaud this get-tough policy, others claim that it suffers from a serious problem: racial bias. Blacks represent just 12 percent of the U.S. population and about 13 percent of those who reported using illegal drugs on a monthly basis. Yet three-quarters of all prison sentences for possession of drugs involve African Americans. Many civil rights groups say that such differential treatment must end.

**NEW CHALLENGES**

As the 21st century begins, Americans face a number of new challenges. Deadly school shootings have brought attention to the issue of youth violence, and violent crime in America’s cities remains a national concern. But the greatest challenge to public safety may be the renewed threat of terrorism. During the mid-1990s, a series of bombings signaled a disturbing new era of terrorism in America. The bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, and the bombing at Atlanta’s Centennial Park in 1996 all contributed to a growing sense of public vulnerability.

Following the events of September 11, 2001, in October President Bush signed into law new anti-terrorism measures. These laws greatly increased the authority of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to obtain and to share information about anyone living in the United States, but drew severe criticism for intruding on personal privacy.

It now appears that Americans will be struggling to balance the need for domestic security against its costs—in terms of privacy, convenience, and dollars—well into the 21st century.
Issues in Education
How can a country guarantee equal education for all?

In the winter of 2001, Paul Vallas, former head of the Chicago public school system, received some discouraging news. A three-year study found “little significant change” in the city’s ailing public high schools—despite six years of intense reform efforts. “The issue is that the problem is tougher than we thought it was,” the study reported, “and we have to find more intense ways of improving what we’ve been doing.” In response to the study, Vallas echoed those sentiments. “We still have a long way to go,” he said. The plight of Chicago’s public schools highlights the nation’s ongoing struggle to improve education.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
From the earliest days of the nation, American leaders have stressed the importance of education. In the 19th century, reformers helped establish a system of government-supported public schools. By 1900, almost three-quarters of all eight- to fourteen-year-olds attended school. Even with these advances, some groups suffered. Public secondary education failed to reach most African Americans in the early 20th century. Not until 1954, with the Supreme Court decision Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, did federal court decisions call for an end to separate—and usually inferior—schools for African Americans.

By the 1960s, the nation’s schools wrestled with the problem of a rising discrepancy between suburban schools and inner-city schools. Many students in inner cities attended schools that were housed in decaying buildings and that had dated instructional materials. On the other hand, students in the suburbs enjoyed new facilities and equipment. In both the inner city and the suburbs, violence and drugs have raised issues of safety.

KEY ISSUES
The debate over public education has focused on three key issues. First is the question of how to change schools to improve the quality of education. Second is the issue of school financing. Should different school systems in a state receive equal funding? The third issue has to do with affirmative action—programs intended to remedy past discrimination.

From the earliest days of the nation, American leaders have stressed the importance of education.

IMPROVING QUALITY
People have offered many ideas on how to improve schools. Some critics say that lack of discipline is a major problem. Others point to the disparity in technology between wealthy and poor schools. During his presidency, Bill Clinton called for all schools in the country to be connected to the Internet and its vast supply of information.

Another reform receiving support is the creation of charter schools. In this plan, certain schools receive a charter, or contract, from a local school district, a state education department, or a university. Charter schools promise innovations in education. In return for freedom to operate as they choose, charter schools promise to increase students’ achievement levels. By April 2005, about 3,400 such schools were in place in approximately 40 states.

Some school reformers favor the voucher system, in which states issue a certificate to parents, who then use it to pay for their child’s education at a school of their choice. The school exchanges the voucher for payment from the government. Supporters of the voucher system believe that parents will seek schools that provide higher-quality education. Public schools will then be forced to compete with private and parochial schools, and with one another. The competition should increase the overall quality of education, supporters argue.
During his run for office in 2000, President George W. Bush voiced support for vouchers. “I don’t know whether or not the voucher system is a panacea,” he said, “but I’m willing to give it a shot to determine whether it makes sense.”

**FINANCING EDUCATION**

In most states, school funding relies on local property taxes—taxes paid on the value of real estate in a town or city. When schools are funded primarily by property taxes, however, schools in poorer areas receive less money than those in wealthier communities. According to the magazine *Washington Monthly*, one New Jersey town spends $13,394 per pupil on schooling. Another town just five miles away spends only $7,889. Court cases have raised legal challenges to unequal school funding in more than 20 states.

In 1993, Michigan voters approved a plan that abandoned reliance on local property taxes as the basis of school funding. Now schools get their money from a smaller state-controlled property tax, an increased sales tax on consumer purchases, and increased taxes on purchases of such items as cigarettes and alcohol. Because the state sets property tax rates and monitors its school systems’ budgets, it can even out inequalities.

**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

Many Americans support the idea of programs that give women and minorities greater educational and workplace opportunities. At the same time, a large majority disapprove of quotas, the setting aside of a certain number of jobs or college admissions for members of these groups.

This point became the focus of a court case challenging affirmative action. In the 1970s, Allan Bakke had twice been rejected by the medical school at the University of California, Davis, which instead admitted a number of minority students who had lower grades and test scores. Bakke argued that his rights had been denied. The Supreme Court, in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978), ruled that the school had to admit Bakke—

but also said that institutions could use race as one factor among others in determining admission to a college.

On January 8, 2002, President Bush signed into law his education program, No Child Left Behind. A cornerstone of the program is accountability for student performance with national annual reading and math assessments in grades 3 through 8. The law required states to report how many students performed at each of four levels: failure, basic, proficient, and advanced. Schools that failed to show enough progress could lose students to other schools, be forced to change staff, or even be closed down.

In 2006, the Center for Education Policy studied the law’s effects. The study reported that achievement on state tests was rising. Critics claimed that schools were neglecting subjects other than math and reading and that teachers spent too much time on test preparation instead of fully teaching their subjects. Clearly, debate over education reform will continue.

**PREDICTING EFFECTS**

What do you think will be the most important education issue the country will face in the coming years? Why?

**RESEARCH LINKS**

Visit the links for the Epilogue to find out more about Issues in Education.
Many observers credit computer technology with driving the nation’s astonishing economic growth during the 1990s.

Many observers credit computer technology with driving the nation’s astonishing economic growth during the 1990s. The numbers alone demonstrate the influence of computer technology on modern life. By 2007, nearly 70 percent of Americans were logging onto the Internet either at home or at work, and close to 66 percent of U.S. households owned at least one personal computer. What’s more, nearly every business in the nation, from hospitals to accounting firms and airports, has implemented computer systems to handle many of its daily operations.

Many observers credit computer technology with driving the nation’s astonishing economic growth during the 1990s. With computers allowing employees in nearly every field to perform their jobs more quickly and easily, worker productivity and output increased—a major reason for the decade-long boom.
EVERYDAY USES
Computer technology not only has improved how Americans work, but also has dramatically altered how they live. Millions of citizens now buy everything from flowers to books to stock online. In 2005, the nation spent over $93 billion in electronic transactions, also known as e-commerce.

While Americans once communicated strictly by phone or letter, they now talk to each other more and more through their computers. Many teenagers spend several hours a day on “social networking” websites. Computers have also affected the way Americans learn. In 2002, 92 percent of public school classrooms had Internet access, up 15 percent from 2000. A growing number of universities offer classes and even complete degree programs wholly over the Internet.

HIGH-TECH CHALLENGES
For all the benefits and opportunities it has brought, computer technology also has created its own set of challenges. There are few laws and regulations governing the Internet. Thus, while it is a treasure trove of useful information, the World Wide Web also has become a center for the dissemination of pornographic and hate material.

The growth of computers also has led to the growth of “cybercrime.” Computer vandals, known commonly as hackers, engage in everything from the theft of social security numbers and other vital personal information to the disabling of entire computer systems. The Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that cybercrime costs Americans more than $10 billion a year. What concerns officials even more is the growing possibility of “cyberterrorism”—hackers stealing or altering vital military information such as nuclear missile codes.

Meanwhile, a large number of Americans worry about the growing “digital divide,” the notion that computer technology remains out of reach for many of the nation’s poor. According to recent statistics, nearly 92 percent of households earning $75,000 or more owned a computer, compared with only about 42 percent of households earning between $15,000 and $25,000. Many fear that poor families unable to purchase computers are falling even further behind in a country where computer skills are fast becoming a necessity.

CLOSING THE GAP
Actually, the nation is working to close the gap. In San José, California, for example, officials were able to invest $90,000 in a program to teach computer skills to welfare recipients and homeless people. In LaGrange, Georgia, the mayor helped the local cable company by endorsing a deal to give free Internet access for one year to all the town’s residents who sign up for basic cable. Meanwhile, libraries, schools, and senior centers provide free access. A number of proposals to provide people with greater access to computers and training are working their way through the federal and various state governments.

THE FUTURE
As the 21st century begins, the computer revolution shows no sign of slowing. The digital technology that has so transformed the nation continues to improve. As the computer age rolls on, Americans and the rest of the world most likely will face exciting new opportunities.

PREDICTING EFFECTS
What do you think will be a new breakthrough and a new challenge for Americans in the next decade of the Computer Age?

RESEARCH LINKS
CLASSZONE.COM Visit the links for the Epilogue to find out more about The Communications Revolution.
To pay for the medicine she needs, 79-year-old Winifred Skinner walks the streets of Des Moines every day collecting cans. “I don’t want to ask for handouts. I want to earn it,” she insists. The soaring cost of prescription drugs—especially among the elderly—is just one of the key issues facing American health care today.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
National health insurance for Americans was first proposed by President Harry S. Truman in 1949, but Congress failed to approve it. It took the legislative skill of President Lyndon B. Johnson to enact Medicare in 1965. The program covered most of the cost of medical care for people age 65 and above.

By the 1990s, Medicare was taking an increasing share of federal spending. In hopes of controlling costs and providing universal coverage, President Clinton proposed a complex plan. However, lobbying by doctors and private insurers and the public’s mistrust of big government caused Congress to defeat Clinton’s plan in 1994.

Meanwhile, many Americans were afraid they would be denied health insurance because of pre-existing conditions—medical conditions that are present when a person applies for coverage. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, passed in 1996, removed that concern. It required insurers to provide coverage to all new employees who had had health insurance before changing jobs.

HEALTH CARE REFORM
Health care continued to be a hot topic during the 2000 presidential campaign and beyond. One of the issues up for debate was the need for prescription-drug coverage for the elderly, a reform many thought should be addressed as part of an overhaul of the Medicare system. Also high on the agenda were the need to protect patients’ rights and the need to expand health coverage to the ranks of the uninsured.

SOARING DRUG COSTS
When Medicare began in 1965, the cost of prescription drugs was small compared with that of hospital stays and doctors’ visits. But with the development of new medicines and treatments for heart disease, arthritis, and other chronic conditions, drugs became the fastest-growing component of health-care spending. About 40 percent of people on Medicare were without

History of Health Care in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Truman introduces a bill for national health insurance that is ultimately rejected by Congress (page 845).</td>
<td>Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is established.</td>
<td>President Johnson and Congress enact Medicare and Medicaid into law (page 896).</td>
<td>President Nixon increases funding for Medicare and Medicaid (pages 1001-1002).</td>
<td>AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is first identified (page 1046).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
prescription-drug coverage. Many elderly citizens were paying well over $1,000 a year out of pocket for medicine—or else did without.

During the 2000 campaign, the Democrats proposed a drug benefit through Medicare, while Republicans wanted to give seniors the option to choose their own insurance plans, subsidized by the federal government. Following President George W. Bush’s election, Congress passed the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA). The law provided access to drug coverage for elderly and disabled people on Medicare, beginning in 2006.

Meanwhile, looming large on the horizon was one of the toughest questions facing policymakers in the early 21st century: whether the government should reform Medicare as a whole.

THE FATE OF MEDICARE
If nothing changes, Medicare will start running out of money by 2010 and is expected to go bankrupt in 2025. The reasons are rising costs and demographic changes.

Americans are living longer now than they were in 1965—about seven years longer on average. As a result, seniors form a greater proportion of the population than before. While rising numbers of elderly drive up the cost of Medicare, the revenues targeted to pay for it are expected to go down. As the population ages, fewer people will work and pay the taxes that fund Medicare. Additionally, elderly persons as a group tend to have higher medical costs. For instance, the elderly make up 9% of Medicaid recipients but account for 26% of its medical costs.

Today, more than three workers pay taxes for every person who receives Medicare, while in 2035, only two workers will be available to do the job. Workers’ taxes will go up—especially if health costs rise. Meanwhile, according to one estimate, Medicare pays less than half of its beneficiaries’ medical expenses.

What is to be done? Among the approaches that have been proposed are placing more restrictions on Medicare benefits, raising the age of eligibility, or increasing the share to be paid by the elderly. Michael Tanner of the Cato Institute favors raising the age rather than the premium: “premiums already represent a significant burden for many elderly Americans. . . . Any major increase . . . risk[s] pushing many of the elderly into poverty.”

THE UNINSURED MILLIONS
The number of people without health insurance continues to be extensive, totaling 15.7 percent of Americans in 2004.

Some 8 million of the uninsured are children. In 1997, the federal government developed the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). SCHIP provides funding to states so that they can offer health coverage to children of low-income people who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid (which covers the cost of medical care for the poor). By the end of 2003, more than 4 million children had benefited from the program. However, financial stress led a number of states to restrict Medicaid and SCHIP enrollment.

In 2003, Congress established Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) as part of the MMA legislation. HSAs were created to help Americans save for medical expenses. To be eligible, individuals were required to have a high-deductible health insurance plan.

In the first session of the 110th Congress, about a dozen health care reform bills were introduced. Proposals included plans to

• create a government-administered national health insurance
• provide government funding for universal health insurance through private companies
• reauthorize and expand SCHIP.

The legislation also proposed a variety of new or increased taxes to support these plans. Still unknown is whether Congress and the public will be willing to accept these costs.
Jim, a 55-year-old painter by trade, retreats each night to a Boston homeless shelter. He spends his days engaging in any work he can find—but it’s never enough to provide him with a roof over his head. Too many of the jobs available, he says, “pay only the minimum wage or a bit higher, and they cannot cover the rent and other bills.” Jim, who says his dream is to “get a steady job, find an apartment, and settle down,” insists that he never imagined he would find himself homeless. “I never thought it could happen to me,” he says. Jim is just one of more than 32 million citizens considered poor in a nation that continues to cope with the challenge of eradicating poverty.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**
Some part of the American population has faced poverty since the “starving time” at Jamestown during the winter of 1609–1610. In the 20th century, poverty was most widespread during the Great Depression of the 1930s. That economic disaster led to several new government programs such as the 1935 Social Security Act, which created a pension fund for retired people over age 65 and offered government aid to poor people for the first time.

Though the Depression ended with World War II, postwar prosperity did not last. In the 1960s, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared “unconditional war on poverty” as his administration expanded education, training, and financial aid for the poor. The proportion of people living below the poverty level—the minimum income necessary to provide basic living standards—fell from 20 percent in 1962 to only 11 percent in 1973. However, economic hard times reappeared in the early 1980s and the poverty rate began to rise. In 2003, 35.9 million Americans lived below the poverty line—which that year was marked by an annual income of $18,810 or less for a family of four.

**AMERICANS IN POVERTY**
Many Americans who live in poverty are employed. Known as the working poor, they hold low-wage jobs with few benefits and almost never any health insurance. Children also account for a major share of the poor, and their numbers are growing rapidly for many ethnic groups. The poverty rate among children in the United States is higher than that in any other Western industrialized nation.

Like Jim in Boston, many of the poor are homeless. During the 1980s, cuts in welfare and food stamp benefits brought the problem of homelessness to national attention. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), about 750,000 Americans are without shelter on any given night.

Many experts on the homeless believe that the lack of housing is simply a symptom of larger problems. These include unemployment, low-wage jobs, and high housing costs, and in some cases, personal problems such as substance abuse or mental illness.

**SOME CAUSES OF POVERTY**
Experts agree that there are numerous causes of poverty. Lack of skills keeps many welfare recipients from finding or keeping jobs. They need more than job training, many observers insist, they also need training in work habits.

Another factor that holds back increased employment is limited access to child care. Economist David Gordon related the results of a study of mothers who received

### History of the Cycle of Poverty in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1894</th>
<th>1935</th>
<th>1962</th>
<th>1964</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High unemployment in the wake of the panic of 1893 leaves thousands homeless (pages 427–428).</td>
<td>Social Security Act is passed; government gives aid to poor for first time (pages 698, 707).</td>
<td>Michael Harrington’s <em>The Other America</em> shocks the nation by revealing extent of poverty (page 888).</td>
<td>President Johnson announces War on Poverty (page 894).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another factor contributing to poverty has been discrimination against racial minorities. Current statistics highlight how much more prevalent poverty is among minorities. In 2003, the poverty rate among whites was 8.2 percent, while among Hispanics and African Americans it was 22.5 percent and 24.4 percent, respectively.

**FEDERAL WELFARE REFORM**

As the nation continued to struggle with poverty and homelessness, the cry for welfare reform grew louder. Critics of the system argued that providing financial aid to the poor gave them little incentive to better their lives and thus helped to create a culture of poverty. In 1996, the Republican Congress and President Clinton signed a bill—the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act—that cut more than $55 billion in welfare spending over six years and put a five-year limit on how long people could receive welfare payments. In addition, the bill cut benefits to recipients who had not found a job within two years.

Supporters cheered the reforms, claiming that they transformed a system from one that fosters dependence to one that encourages self-reliance. Opponents of the law accused the federal government of turning its back on the poor—especially children.

Both proponents and critics of the bill agreed on one thing: the law’s success depended on putting welfare recipients to work. The federal government offered three incentives to encourage businesses to hire people from the welfare rolls: tax credits for employers who hire welfare recipients, wage subsidies, and establishment of enterprise zones, which provide tax breaks to companies that locate in economically depressed areas.

The 2002 welfare reauthorization bill enacted President Bush’s calls for funding religious and other volunteer organizations to assume more responsibility for the needy, time limits on welfare benefits, and increased work requirements. Five years later, it appeared that it would still be some years before anyone can say whether or not the president’s or other proposed welfare reforms break the cycle of poverty.

**PREDICTING EFFECTS**

What can be done to provide affordable child care to help the working poor?

**RESEARCH LINKS**

Visit the links for the Epilogue to find out more about Breaking the Cycle of Poverty.
Economist Lester Thurow gives new meaning to the term *generation gap*. “In the years ahead, class warfare is apt to be redefined as the young against the old, rather than the poor against the rich,” he warns. Economics may become a major issue dividing generations, as young workers shoulder the costs of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—the three major entitlement programs funded by the federal government.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

In the 1935 Social Security Act, or FICA, the government promised to pay a pension to older Americans, funded by a tax on workers and employers. At that time, President Franklin D. Roosevelt said that Social Security was not intended to provide all of an individual’s retirement income, but it was a base on which workers would be able to build with private pension funds.

In 1965, new laws extended Social Security support. In addition, the government assumed most health care costs for the elderly through the Medicare program and for the poor through Medicaid. These programs are called entitlements because the recipients are entitled by law to the benefits.

Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid have received a lot of attention because the United States population is aging. This aging population will put a severe financial strain on these programs.

**SOCIAL SECURITY FUNDING**

Social Security’s problem can be attributed to a few important factors. First, when the baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) retire, their huge numbers—about 70 million by the year 2020—may overburden the entitlement programs. Second, Americans now live longer, so an individual’s share of benefits from the program is greater than in the past. Third, the number of workers paying into Social Security per beneficiary will drop when the boomers start retiring.

Currently, Social Security collects more in taxes than it pays in benefits. The extra goes into a “trust fund” that is invested. Around the year 2017 the program will begin paying out more to beneficiaries than it takes in from the payroll tax. The program will begin to rely on the Social Security trust fund to pay retirees. If that trend continues, after about the year 2052, the fund will dwindle.

---

**History of Entitlements in the United States**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>President Roosevelt signs Social Security Act (page 707).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Changes to Social Security allow reduced benefits at early retirement—age 62.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>President Johnson signs Medicare and Medicaid into law (page 896).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>President Nixon increases Social Security payments (pages 901–902).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
pay retirees only 75 percent of the benefits due to them.

Most experts recommend reform, and Americans have listened. One poll found that 81 percent of Americans under 40 believe that the Social Security program needs to be changed to guarantee its financial stability.

**OPTIONS FOR CHANGE**

A number of plans for reforming Social Security have been proposed. These different views have become the main options being debated in Congress and around the country.

- **Raise Social Security Taxes**
  Some people have suggested small tax hikes, arguing that since people’s incomes are expected to rise, they will be able to afford an increase. As of 2005, only the first $90,000 of any individual’s income is subject to FICA tax. Some people have suggested that those with higher incomes are not paying their fair share.

- **Cut Benefits**
  Some argue that benefits should be reduced by ending automatic cost-of-living adjustments or lowering payments made to retirees who earn over a certain amount of money each year. These wealthier people, they say, do not need to receive higher payments.

- **Raise the Retirement Age**
  Because people can now work productively later in life than they used to, some propose raising the retirement age. That will reduce the payments made and increase tax receipts. Currently, the retirement age is set to increase to age 66 by 2009 and then to age 67 by 2027.

Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid have received much attention because the U.S. population is aging.

- **Invest Funds in the Stock Market**
  Some people suggest that the government should invest some of Social Security money in the stock market. They assume that stocks will rise, making the system healthier.

- **Allow Individual Investing**
  Others agree with allowing the funds to be invested but want individuals to control where their own funds are invested.

**THE FUTURE OF THE FUNDS**

During the 2000 presidential election, exit polls found that some 57 percent of Americans supported the “privatization” approach outlined by President Bush during his campaign: allow workers to divert a portion of their Social Security taxes into individual stock-market accounts. During the 2004 election campaign and following the election, President Bush continued his attempts to persuade Americans to support his privatization plan.

Meanwhile, the proposal drew its share of critics. Among them were advocates for disabled workers and their families—a group that in 2003 made up 12 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries. According to a report from the General Accounting Office, under President Bush’s plan a worker who became disabled and retired at the age of 45, for example, would receive 4 percent to 18 percent less in benefits.

Some women’s groups also opposed privatization. They said it would jeopardize the guarantee of lifetime, inflation-adjusted benefits that the current Social Security system provides. Because women earn less than men, they would have less to invest, and their returns would be lower.

Still others were concerned about the risk involved in relying on a volatile stock market. They questioned whether the funds in which people would invest their Social Security taxes would be secure.

In the end, Bush could not garner enough support for his plan: Congress did not want to take on the risk of changing something that so many people depended on and that had worked so well for so long. So the funding problem remains unsolved.
Women in the Work Force

Will the American workplace grant men and women equal opportunities?

In the academic world, women are better represented than ever before. In 2002–2003, women received a record number—nearly 47 percent—of all doctorate degrees issued by universities. Women earned an even higher percentage—58—of all degrees.

For many women, job success involved getting the right credentials and targeting a growth industry. A 2000 survey by the women’s advocacy group Catalyst found that 91 percent of women with MBA degrees working in information technology reported high satisfaction with their current jobs, compared with only 82 percent of their male counterparts. “This translates into opportunity for women in this growing industry,” said Sheila Wellington, president of Catalyst.

Money and Upward Mobility

Despite these positive signs, the key issues of unequal pay and unequal representation remain. Women are still making less than their male counterparts—averaging only 80 cents for every dollar.

Some women who pursue careers in business, government, or other organizations feel that a glass ceiling limits their progress. It is said to be glass because it is an invisible barrier that keeps women and minorities from attaining promotion above a certain level. Its invisibility makes it difficult to combat.

Positive Trends

Women have made great strides in recent decades. In 2002, they filled half of all jobs in managerial and professional specialty areas. Women have also been entering new fields, including construction work and equipment repair.

In the academic world, women are better represented than ever before. In 2002–2003, women received a record number—nearly 47 percent—of all doctorate degrees issued by universities. Women earned an even higher percentage—58—of all degrees.

For many women, job success involved getting the right credentials and targeting a growth industry. A 2000 survey by the women’s advocacy group Catalyst found that 91 percent of women with MBA degrees working in information technology reported high satisfaction with their current jobs, compared with only 82 percent of their male counterparts. “This translates into opportunity for women in this growing industry,” said Sheila Wellington, president of Catalyst.

Money and Upward Mobility

Despite these positive signs, the key issues of unequal pay and unequal representation remain. Women are still making less than their male counterparts—averaging only 80 cents for every dollar earned by men. According to the National Committee on Pay Equity, there are a variety of reasons for this discrepancy: women are often socialized to aim toward lower-paying jobs, often have limited expectations about

**History of Women at Work in the United States**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>Women working in Lowell, Massachusetts, textile mills strike (pages 213, 450–451).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>1 out of 10 single white women works outside the home, earning half the pay of men (pages 442, 450).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Average pay for women workers is $269 a year, compared with $498 for men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>One out of five women works outside the home (pages 519–520).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920s</td>
<td>Women enter new professions but battle unequal wages (page 648).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
firms. Notes Dixie Junk, owner of Junk Architects in Kansas City, “It’s more than having a business—you get to create the culture you want.”

IT PAYS TO BE FLEXIBLE
Another area of change affecting women in the work force has been an increasing number of options for flexible work arrangements, such as part-time work and telecommuting opportunities. In 2004, 71 percent of companies surveyed had formal policies or guidelines for some type of flexible work arrangement.

A Catalyst study of 24 women who first used flexible work arrangements more than a decade ago found that all of them now held mid- and senior-level positions, and more than half had been promoted in the last 10 years. Says Marcia Brumit Kropf, vice-president of research and information services, “Findings from this report suggest that even though working mothers may reduce career involvement for a period of time—with the support of the right company—career advancement does not have to get sidelined.”

In general, women still have the primary responsibility for child care in U.S. society. Women without flexible work arrangements must find others to care for their children at least part of the day. About 65 percent of mothers with children under the age of 6 and 80 percent of mothers with children between the ages of 6 and 13 work. Many people believe that the government should subsidize child-care costs.

their leadership potential, and may have conflicts between the demands of work and family life.

In the nation’s most top-level jobs, men continue to vastly outnumber women. As of 2006, women headed only ten Fortune 500 companies. Very few women who became corporate officers held line positions, jobs with profit-and-loss responsibility. In 2005, women held only 10.6 percent of line positions, while in contrast, men held 89.4 percent of them.

Why are women underrepresented in the top jobs? In one Catalyst poll of women executives, blame was placed on three factors: male stereotyping and preconceptions of women, women’s exclusion from informal networks of communication, and women’s lack of significant management experience.

On the other hand, the respondents suggested some approaches that had helped them succeed in the corporate world: consistently exceed expectations, develop a style with which managers are comfortable, seek out difficult assignments, and have an influential mentor.

STRIKING OUT ON THEIR OWN
Many women who are frustrated by the corporate environment at their existing companies are choosing to start their own business. According to the center for Women’s Business Research, in 2004 10.6 million firms were at least 50 percent owned by women—and constituted the fastest-growing sector of all U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Commission on the Status of Women reports: women are paid less than men (page 983).</td>
<td>20 states begin adjusting pay scales to equalize pay (page 1049).</td>
<td>Women earn 76 cents for every dollar a man earns.</td>
<td>Women-owned businesses are the fastest-growing sector of the U.S. economy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Conservation Controversy

Can the nation balance conservation with economic progress?

In 1990, Oregon logger Bill Haire hung a new ornament on the mirror of his truck: a tiny owl with an arrow through its head. The trinket represented the spotted owl as well as Haire’s feelings about the federal government’s decision to declare millions of acres of forest off limits to the logging industry in order to protect this endangered species of bird.

“If it comes down to my family or that bird,” said Haire, “that bird’s going to suffer.” The battle between loggers and environmentalists over the fate of the spotted owl is just one example of the nation’s ongoing struggle to balance conservation with industrial progress.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Conservation, the management and protection of the earth’s resources, began as a national movement in the United States during the early 1900s. In the wake of the country’s industrial revolution, the federal government enacted numerous measures to protect the nation’s natural surroundings. President Theodore Roosevelt expressed a particular interest in preserving America’s forestlands. “Like other men who had thought about the national future at all,” he once remarked, “I had been growing more and more concerned over the destruction of the forests.” Roosevelt established the first wildlife refuge in Florida and added more than 150 million acres to the nation’s forest preserves.

The 1960s and 1970s witnessed a resurgence of the conservation movement. In 1962, marine biologist Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, which warned of the destructive effects of pesticides. The book awakened Americans to the damage they were inflicting on the environment. In the two decades that followed, Congress created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and enacted such measures as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act—all in an effort to restore the health of the country’s natural resources. And, since 1970, the country nearly tripled the size of its national park space.