"Bookending" the Twentieth Century

Total Population, 1900–2000

Between the years 1900 and 1000, we experienced the largest population increase in US history.

During the twentieth century, the American population nearly quadrupled in size.

How did this population growth affect American society?

Population by State, 1900

In 1900, nearly half the states had fewer than 1 million people. By 2000, only 7 states (and the District of Columbia) had a population under 1 million.

Geographic distribution of population changed too. Between 1900 and 1900, the most common of the US population moved about 500 miles west and about 100 miles south. What did a shift in population to the south and west mean for the distribution of political power in the country?

Population by State, 2000

During the twentieth century, the US population grew much larger.

The population age 65 and older increased more than 10 times over the course of the century, from 11% of the population to 14%.

What impact has the aging population had on American politics and society?

Median Age, 1900–2000

During the last two decades of the twentieth century, the American population became much more diverse.

How does the increasing diversity of American society influence the country's politics and culture?

Population by Race, 1990

Population by Race, 2000

Average Household Size, 1900–2000

Average household size declined for two people per household during the twentieth century.

One-person households increased throughout the century, while households with 5 or more people decreased significantly.

What factors contributed to the decline in average household size?