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CHAPTER 31 Summary

TELESCOPING THE TIMES # *An Era of Social Change*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW ***The civil rights movement inspires Latinos, Native Americans, and women to seek equality in American society. At the same time, the nation's young people adopt values that conflict with mainstream culture.***

❶ Latinos and Native Americans Seek Equality

MAIN IDEA *Latinos and Native Americans confronted injustices in the 60s.*

Latinos—Americans with a heritage in Latin American—are a diverse group that tripled to more than 9 million people in the decade of the 1960s. The largest group is Mexican Americans, but about a million Puerto Ricans, hundreds of thousands of Cubans, and tens of thousands of other Hispanics add to these numbers. Many Latinos encounter poor living conditions and discrimination.

In the 1960s Latinos began to demand equal rights—and respect for their culture and heritage. Cesar Chavez organized Mexican American farm workers into a union to boost wages and improve working conditions. By calling for a nationwide boycott of grapes, Chavez pressured grape growers into recognizing his union and granting a new, more favorable, contract.

Responding to calls for greater recognition of Hispanics' culture, Congress passed the Bilingual Education Act in 1968. It funded bilingual and cultural programs for students who didn't speak English. Latinos also organized politically, fielding Hispanic candidates for office.

Native Americans, too, are a diverse group, with hundreds of tribes having unique traditions. Concerned about the high unemployment rate, poor health care, and high death rate common to all these groups, many Native Americans joined together in the 1960s to work for change.

The Eisenhower administration had hoped to solve such problems by relocating Native Americans to cities, but the policy failed—first because urban Native Americans remained poor and second because many Native Americans did not wish to assimilate into American society. They wished to preserve their own cultures. In 1961, representatives from more than 60 Native American groups wrote a Declaration of Indian Purpose. They demanded the right for Native Americans to choose their own way of life.

President Johnson changed government policy toward Native Americans, but many young people wanted that change faster. They formed the American Indian Movement (AIM), which confronted the government in highly public actions that sometimes resulted in violence. Meanwhile, laws and court decisions gave Native Americans greater rights over the education of their children and renewed land rights.

❷ Women Fight for Equality

MAIN IDEA *Through protests and marches, women confronted social and economic barriers in American society.*

Women struggled for decades and finally won the right to vote in 1920. Then, in the 1960s, a reawakened feminist movement expanded the effort for women's rights to urge full social, political, and economic equality.

Contributing to the feminist movement was dissatisfaction over the situation in the workplace. By 1960, about 40 percent of all women worked outside the home. But they found certain jobs closed to them, and they were generally paid much less than men even for the same job. Involvement in the civil rights and antiwar movements also led many women to actively seek improved status for themselves. Betty Friedan's book about the dissatisfaction of women helped inspire many to join together as well.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act included a ban on discrimination based on gender. As a result, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was empowered to oppose job discrimination against women as well as against African Americans. When the EEOC did not pursue women's complaints vigorously, Friedan and others formed the National Organization for Women (NOW) to actively seek equal rights. Responding to pressure from NOW, the EEOC took steps to combat job discrimination against women. It declared that job ads identifying a specific gender were

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illegal and prevented employers from refusing to hire women for traditionally male jobs.

The women's movement included many diverse groups, some of whom pushed for radical goals. Many women were pleased by a 1973 Supreme Court decision, *Roe* v. *Wade,* which granted women the right to choose an abortion. The women's movement failed, however, to win passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The ERA passed Congress and was ratified by many states. However, a coalition of social conservatives and others opposed the ERA, claiming that it would have disruptive effects on society. Though 35 states did approve the amendment, this still wasn't enough to pass it. The ERA died in June of 1982.

The women's movement had nevertheless made great gains. More women were attending law and medical school than before, and colleges offered thousands of courses on women's issues. Many women now viewed their careers in a new light, and more women than ever served in state and national governments.

❸ Culture and Counterculture

MAIN IDEA *The ideals and lifestyle of the counterculture movement challenged the traditional views of Americans.*

During the 1960s, many young people adopted values that differed from those of mainstream culture. This movement, the "counterculture," challenged the dominant American culture but eventually collapsed from a lack of organization and a reliance on drug use.

The counterculture—whose members were called "hippies"—believed that American society had grown too materialistic and aggressive. Many with these beliefs channeled their energies into protesting the war in Vietnam. Hippies chose to show their opposition to society by leaving it. They abandoned school and jobs and went to live with each other, hoping to promote peace and love.

The main characteristics of this new life were rock 'n' roll, colorful clothes, and the use of drugs. Their outrageous costumes and long hair symbolized their rejection of society. Instead of forming traditional families, hippies joined together in group living arrangements called communes.

Two highly publicized incidents of violence involving communes and rock music cast a shadow over the counterculture. Continued drug use caused problems and led to the deaths of two major popular rock stars in 1970. Finally, hippies found that they could not survive outside mainstream society.

While the hippie counterculture collapsed, it had an impact on mainstream culture. The worlds of art and fashion were touched by the rebellious style of the counterculture. Blue jeans—popular among hippies—have become a staple of American wardrobes.

Rock 'n' roll has continued to be a popular form of entertainment, propelled by the British group the Beatles and by a massive outdoor concert called Woodstock held in 1969 in New York state. Attended by more than 400,000 people—far more than expected—Woodstock became a symbol of the counterculture.

While some people embraced the counterculture's "do your own thing" philosophy, millions of mainstream Americans attacked the increasing permissiveness as a sign of moral decay. They believed that campus rebels and other members of the counterculture threatened traditional values. This conservative reaction to the counterculture movement helped Richard M. Nixon win the presidency in 1968 and set the nation on a more politically conservative course.

Review

1. What did Latinos do to fight for equality?
2. What did Native Americans want?
3. Describe the successes and failures of the women's movement in the 1960s.
4. What caused the downfall of the counterculture and what lasting value did it have?

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