

Senior Seminar-History of Chicago

Reading Guide: City of Big Shoulders, Chapter 5; Chicago: 1850-1900 Life in a City on the Make

Use this guide to take notes as you read the chapter. You should be able to address the following thematic questions...

Major Themes:

1. Chicago's economic growth fueled a corresponding growth in population between 1850 and the end of the century. Whereas America would become a great melting pot of ethnicities and races, Chicago would hold onto its distinct communities for many reasons. What factors would prove most important to Chicago becoming a city of neighborhoods?
2. How would politics and the political agendas of successful mayors' change between 1850 and the end of the nineteenth century? Compare and contrast the political agendas of "Long John" Wentworth versus Carter Harrison.
3. Chicago would experience alternating battles with Cholera that would often kill 10-20% of its population. How would Chicago alter nature to make the city habitable? What other methods would it employ to enhance the livability of the City?
4. Recreational activities were often segregated by ethnic background or social status. Describe the typical recreational activity of each social group; was there an activity where all could participate?

The text describes a situation where ethnicity often framed political action. What would be one example of a law passed based on ethnic discrimination?

Prohibition of alcohol consumption on Sunday; reflects the moralistic view of the anglo-protestant power elite versus the immigrant working class who desired less restrictive policies.

How would a 1-year mayoral term lead to political volatility and how was the problem resolved? What is the term of office for mayor in Chicago today?

Price of saloon licenses as a barrier to operating bars and serving alcohol

Political power changed frequently leading to a chaotic political landscape with 1-year terms; extended to 2-years and is currently 4-years.

How would you describe the ethnic make-up of Chicago in the second half of the 1800's?

1850-54% foreign born; 1890-80% foreign born or children of immigrants. German, Irish, Bohemian, Scandinavians, Italian, Polish, and Jews

What did the multitude of foreign language newspapers suggest about the process of assimilation in Chicago?

That the ethnic communities retained their ethnic heritage and focus rather than attempt to become part of a homogeneous group.

Why would ethnocultural issues also be described as "class" issues? Who was on

Anglo-protestants formed the elite, controlling more than half of the city's wealth. 74% of immigrant households owned no land or

top in society, who was on the bottom?

What was the “Know-nothing party?”

What does the term *nativism* mean?

What political action was taken by Levi D. Boone when the party rose to power in Chicago?

The Sunday-closing law led to what conflict and result?

How did the Civil War reinforce Chicago as the principal commercial hub in the Midwest?

How did the civil war conflict increase tensions between the various ethnic populations in Chicago?

What happened to change attitudes regarding foreigners from being untrustworthy to being true patriots?

Was this change applied to all foreigners?

How does the following quote distinguish between the characteristics of the Republican party compared to the Democratic Party in post civil war politics in Chicago; “*A republican is a man who wants you to go to church every Sunday,*” “*A Democrat says that if a man wants a beer on Sunday, he can have it*”?

Did local politics revolve around the two party systems?

What distinguished Carter Harrison as Chicago’s mayor?

commercial wealth.

An Anglo-protestant based political party that worked to stop immigration and were particularly opposed to Catholics and the Irish

Nativism: a policy of favoring native inhabitants as opposed to immigrants.

Banned liquor sales on Sunday; increased license fees—indirect war on immigrants.

Lager Beer Riot of 1855; marked the end of the Know-nothing party. Boone was ousted as mayor and replaced by Thomas Dyer, followed by “Long John” Wentworth.

1. St. Louis & Cincinnati had southern commercial interests that were lost during the war
2. Chicago was untouched by the war.
3. Chicago’s manufacturers and war related work supplied the Union army

Anglo Americans were typically Unionists; Immigrants were typically antiwar copperheads.

Immigrants did the fighting; the wealthy could buy their way out of service.

Their service in the civil war, opposing native-born Americans who were false to the flag.

No, the Irish remained distrusted.

Republican Party: moral reformers, Anglo-American, businessmen, Christian social activists.

Democratic Party: personal liberty, appealed to immigrants, working class and liberal.

No, typically politics centered around special interests, personality, vice, beer, and social control laws-not party affiliation.

He was successful because he managed vice, rather than try to eliminate it. He allowed Chicagoans to make money (support from business) and spend it any way they liked

	(beer, prostitution, gambling).
What three area Universities were founded in the later half of the nineteenth century?	Northwestern, University of Chicago and Loyola
What urban services were necessary in order for Chicago to continue to grow?	1. a full-time fire department
What was Chicago forced to do in order to find a source of clean drinking water?	2. city school system
	3. sewers and drinking water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. built a 2-mile tunnel into Lake Michigan b. reversed the flow of the Chicago river c. Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal
How did developers take advantage of the sanitary problems and unsafe drinking water of Chicago?	Created and sold new suburban developments, such as Riverside, becoming a status symbol for the well-to-do.
What was the name of one of the first Chicago sports teams and which sport did it play?	Chicago White Stockings; baseball
What was it about the sports parks that were socially significant?	All spectators met without regard to class or ethnic status sharing a common experience.
What was the most popular sport of the day?	Horse racing
What Chicago University beat Michigan to win the Big Ten championship in 1905?	University of Chicago
What two theological (religious) trends emerged in Chicago?	1. liberal Protestantism—Swing and Thomas rejected the doctrine of biblical inerrancy; fostered inclusion, rather than exclusion
	2. hotbed for evangelical protestants—Moody (Moody bible college and the YMCA). Billy Sunday—fire & brimstone
What “disability” did Myra Bradwell face as the first women lawyer in Illinois?	...married condition; inability to enter into contracts.
What did George Pullman raise out of the mud?	Chicago’s buildings
What story is Theodore Dreiser known for writing?	<i>Sister Carrie</i> ; launching the Chicago school of literature.

Where does the title of this book come from... "City of Big Shoulders"

Carl Sandburg's poem "Chicago"

Activity for Chapter #5

1. Go to the Carl Sandburg Chicago Poems web site--<http://www.carl-sandburg.com/>
2. At the top menu select "Chicago Poems-Table of Contents"
3. From the table of contents (left column on page), browse the poems and select the one you believe best describes Chicago today. (Don't worry most are short and VERY GOOD)
4. Write a brief (approximately two paragraphs) synopsis of why you believe this poem is the best description of Chicago. You must choose a poem other than "Chicago."

CHICAGO-Carl Sandburg

HOG Butcher for the World,

Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's
Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them,
for I have seen your painted women under
the gas lamps luring the farm boys.

And they tell me you are crooked and I answer:
Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill
and go free to kill again.

And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is:
On the faces of women and children I have
seen the marks of wanton hunger.

And having answered so I turn once more to
those who sneer at this my city, and I give
them back the sneer and say to them:

Come and show me another city with lifted head
singing so proud to be alive and coarse and
strong and cunning.

Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling
job on job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid
against the little soft cities;

Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action,
cunning as a savage pitted against the
wilderness,

Bareheaded,
Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,

Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth,
laughing with white teeth,

Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a
young man laughs,

Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who
has never lost a battle,

Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the
pulse. and under his ribs the heart of the
people, Laughing!

Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of
Youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be
Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and Freight Handler to
the Nation.