

A wide-angle photograph of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., during a large public gathering. The memorial's neoclassical facade, featuring a row of tall columns, is the central focus. In front of it, a massive crowd of people fills the plaza. A large reflecting pool in the middle ground reflects the memorial and the sky. The foreground is dominated by a dense crowd of people, many wearing red, white, and blue clothing, suggesting a patriotic event. The background shows the city skyline and green hills under a clear sky. Overlaid on the center of the image is the text "The American Political Landscape" in a large, bold, yellow-green font with a black outline.

The American Political Landscape

The American Political Landscape



- A Land of Diversity
- Where We Live
- Who We Are
- Unity in a Land of Diversity

A Land of Diversity

- Most nations consist of groups of people who have lived together for centuries and who speak the same language, embrace the same religious beliefs, and share a common history.
- Several elements of our diversity have political significance.

A Land of Diversity

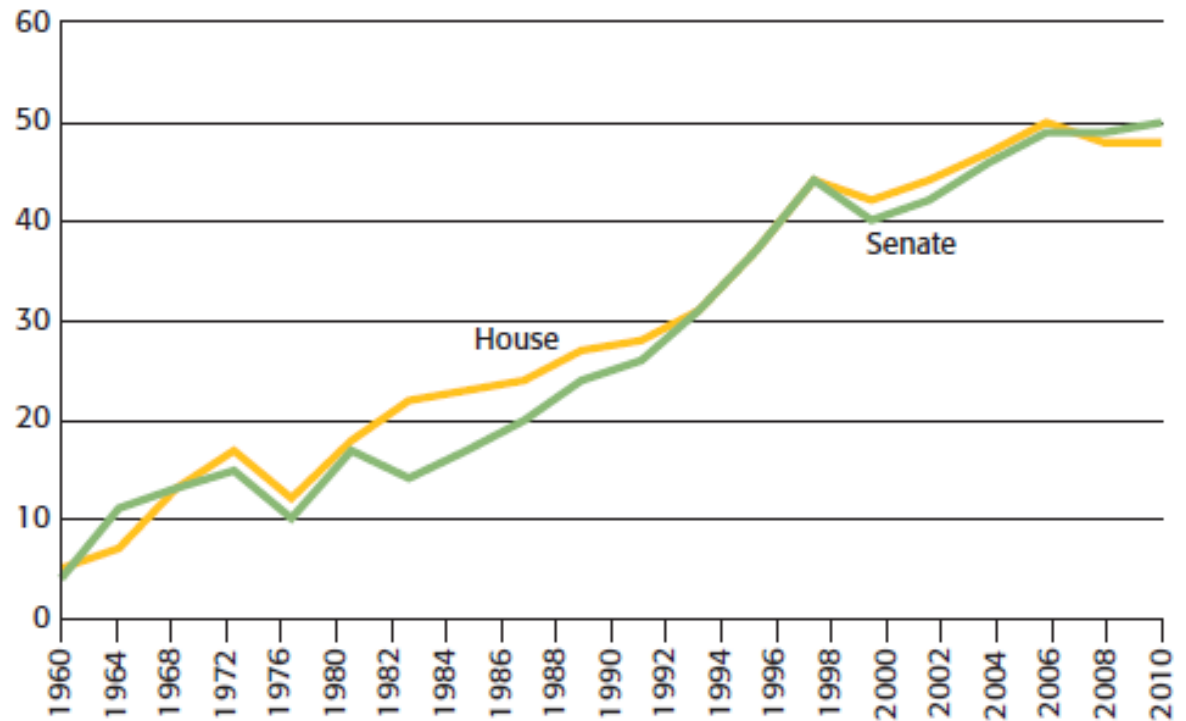
- The United States is a geographically large and historically isolated country.
- Size also confers an advantage.
- The United States is also a land of abundant natural resources.
- Our isolation, relative wealth, prosperity, and sense of destiny have fostered a view that the United States is different from the world.
- Geography also helps explain our diversity.

Where We Live

- Regional Differences
- State and Local Identity
- Urban and Rural Populations

FIGURE 5-1 Republican Share of State Legislators in the Former Confederate States.

SOURCE: CQ Voting and Election Database; Todd Edwards, Council of State Governments, Southern Office, personal communication, December 22, 2000; Doris Smith, Council of State Governments, Southern Office, personal communication, November 10, 2004; and National Conference of State Legislatures, State Vote 2008, <http://www.ncsl.org/statevote/StateVote2008.htm> (accessed November 10, 2008).



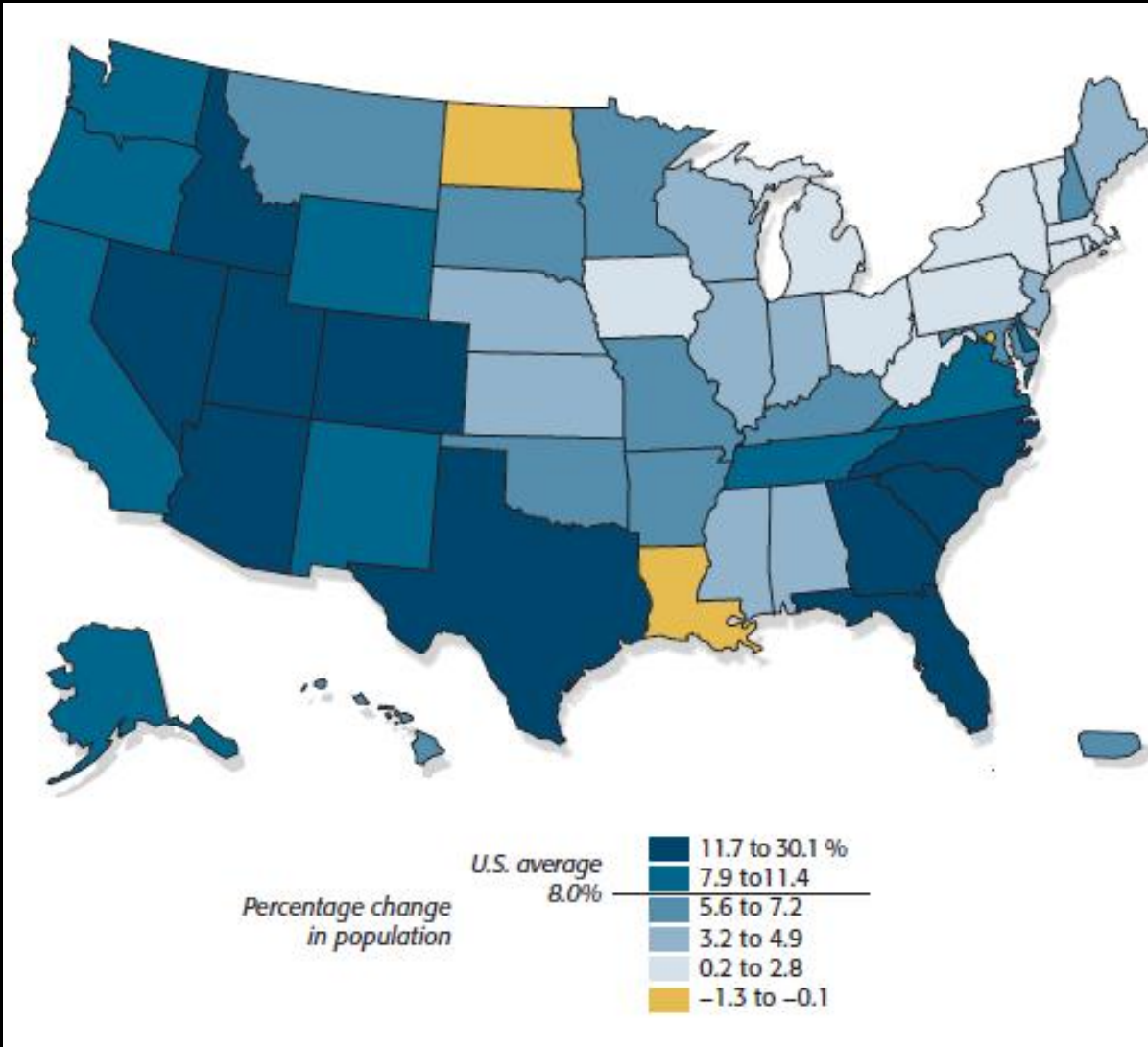


FIGURE 5-2 Percentage Change in Resident Population, 2000–2008.

Which states saw the greatest shifts in population, and how might you account for some of those changes?

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2010* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2009), p. 19.

Who We Are

- Sectional distinctions, which separate populations by geography and regions, less prominently distinguish us from one another in the United States today than they did a century or even a half-century ago.

Who We Are

Race and Ethnicity

- Native Americans
- African Americans
- Hispanics
- Asian Americans

TABLE

5-1

Cities with Populations of 100,000 or More That Are at Least 50 Percent African American, 2008

City	Population 2008	Percent African American 2008
Detroit, Mich.	808,398	83.0
Memphis, Tenn.	643,329	62.6
Baltimore, Md.	639,343	62.6
Washington, D.C.	588,373	54.4
Atlanta, Ga.	445,709	55.8
Newark, N.J.	262,313	53.6
New Orleans, La.	270,245	60.5
Birmingham, Ala.	209,639	74.1
Richmond, Va.	200,158	51.5
Jackson, Miss.	175,731	76.4
Savannah, Ga.	127,840	57.0

■ *How might having a high percentage of minority residents affect the kinds of public policies enacted in a city?*

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey: 2008*.

Who We Are

The Ties of Ethnicity

- Except for Native Americans and the descendants of slaves, all U.S. citizens have immigrant ancestors who chose to come to the American continent.
- Large numbers of immigrants can pose challenges to any political and social system.

Who We Are

- Religion
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation

L.O. 5.3 Figure 5-4 Gender and the Vote for President.

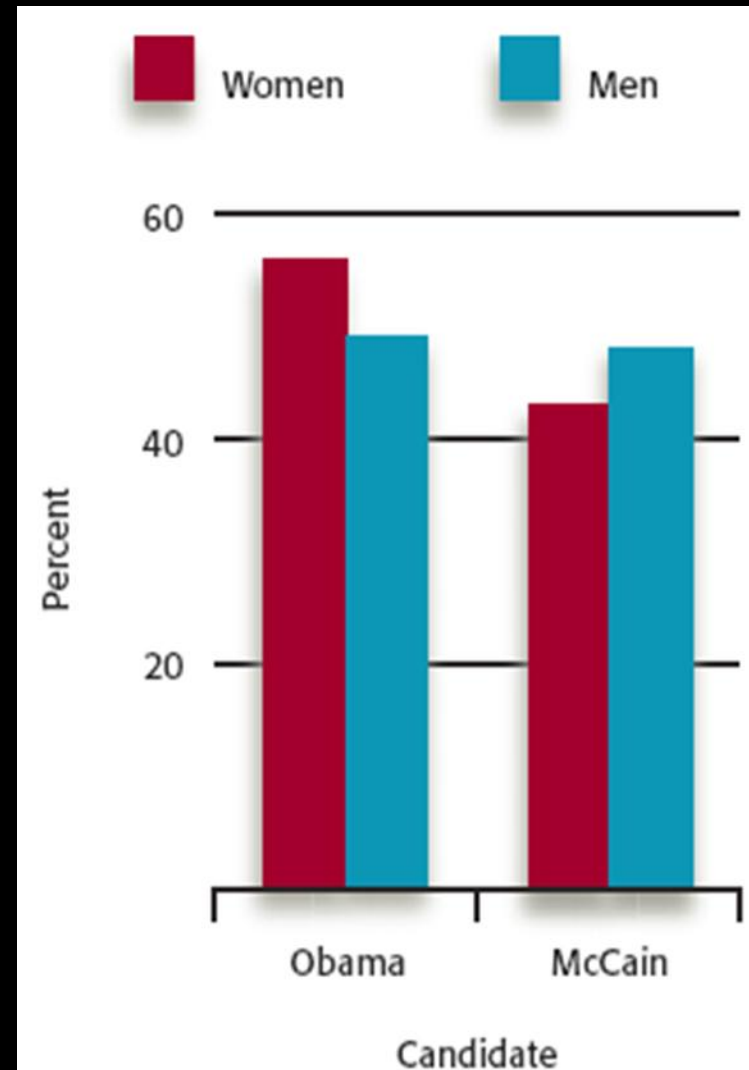


FIGURE 5-4 Gender and the Vote for President.

SOURCE: 2008 CNN Exit Polls, <http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/results/polls/> (accessed November 5, 2008).

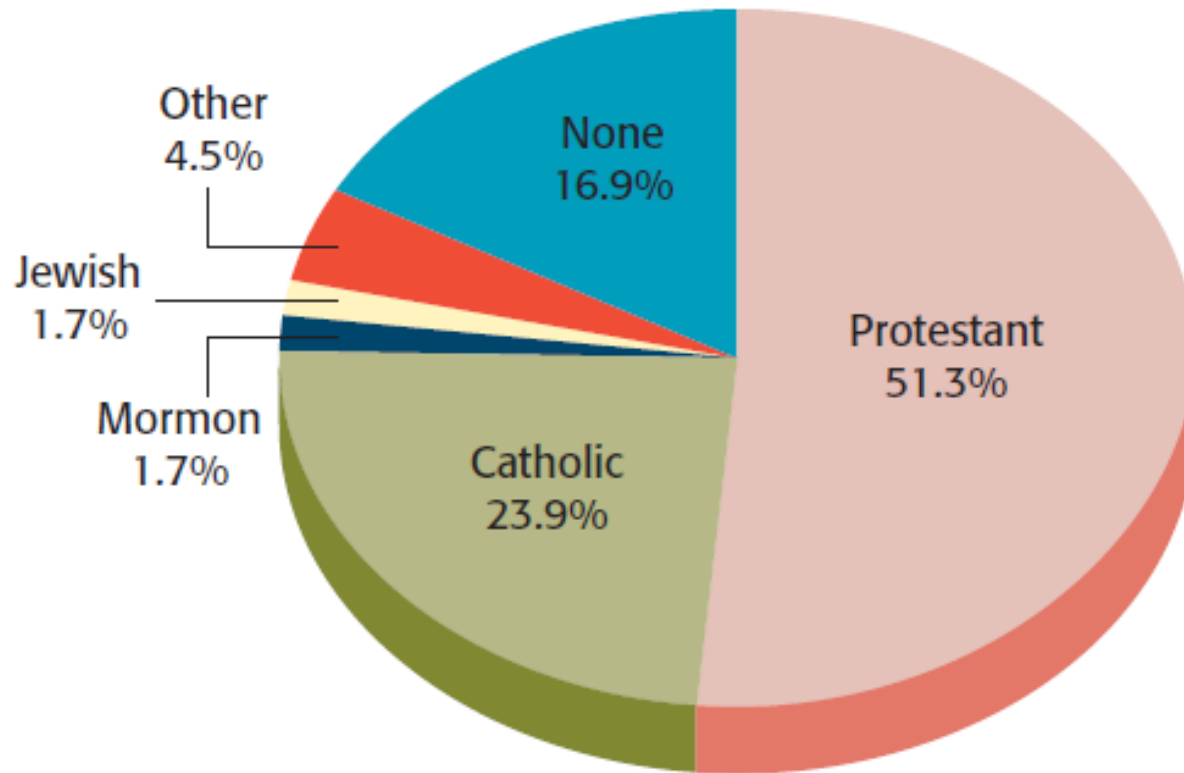


FIGURE 5-3 Religious Groups in the United States.

Three-fourths of Americans describe themselves as Christian.

■ *In what areas of public policy do we see this playing a role? How important should religion be as a factor in making political decisions?*

SOURCE: U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, <http://religions.pewforum.org>. Copyright 2008 Pew Research Center.

Who We Are

- Family Structure
- Education
- Wealth and Income
- Occupation
- Social Class
- Age

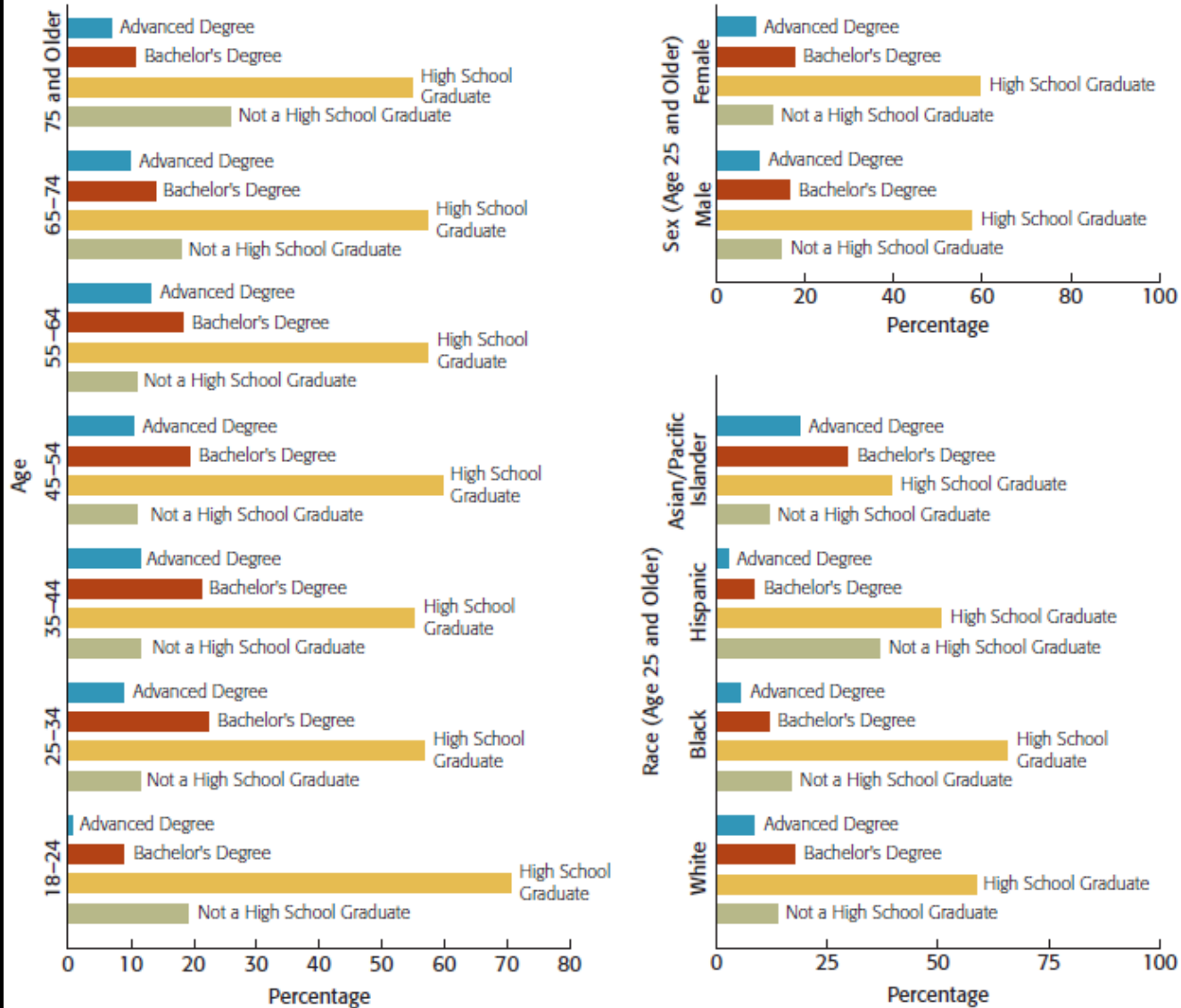


FIGURE 5-5 Educational Attainment in the United States.

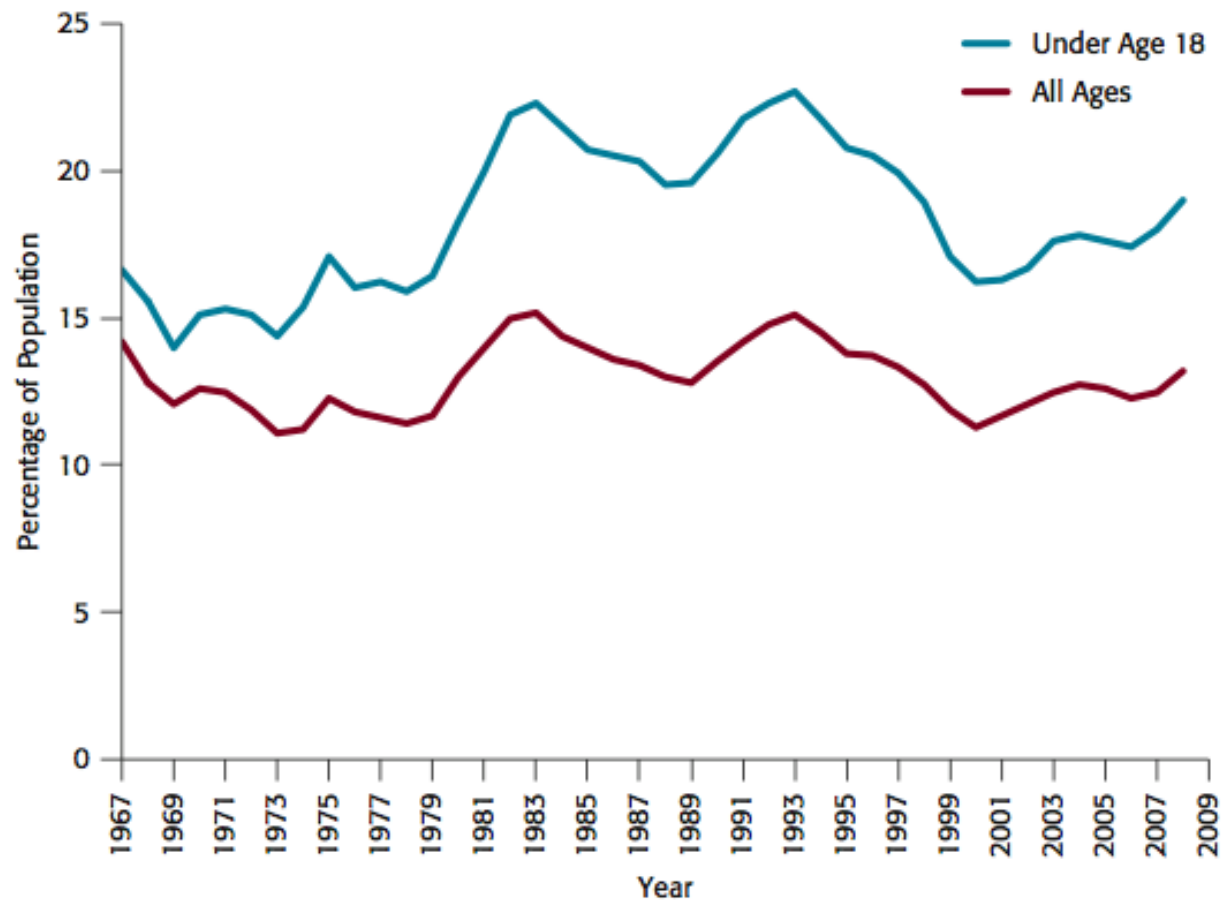
Based on the percentages of Americans who are high schools graduates in each age bracket, what assumptions might you make about how the educational system and culture in America has changed?

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, *Educational Attainment in the United States: 2009*, www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/education/cps2009.html.

FIGURE 5-6 Percentage of Americans Living in Poverty, by Age, 1967-2009.

In 2008-2009, a poor economy and high unemployment contributed to a rise in the poverty rate. ■ *What other factors could influence the percentage of Americans classified as living in poverty at any given time?*

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, "Table 3—Poverty Status, by Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin," <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/histpov/perindex.html> (accessed September 29, 2009); and U.S. Census Bureau, "Table 2—Poverty Status by Family Relationships, Race, and Hispanic Origin," <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/histpov/perindex.html> (accessed September 29, 2009).



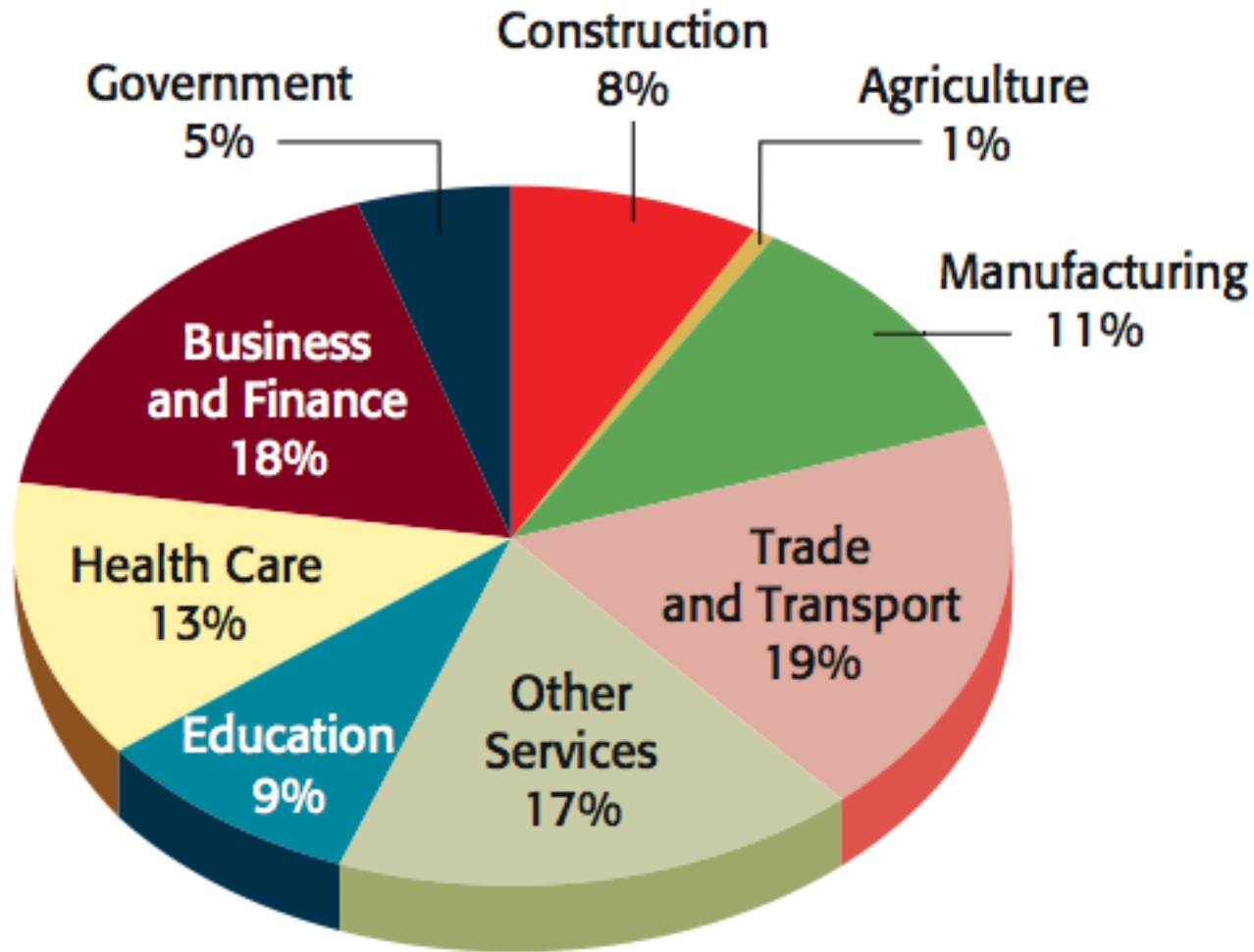


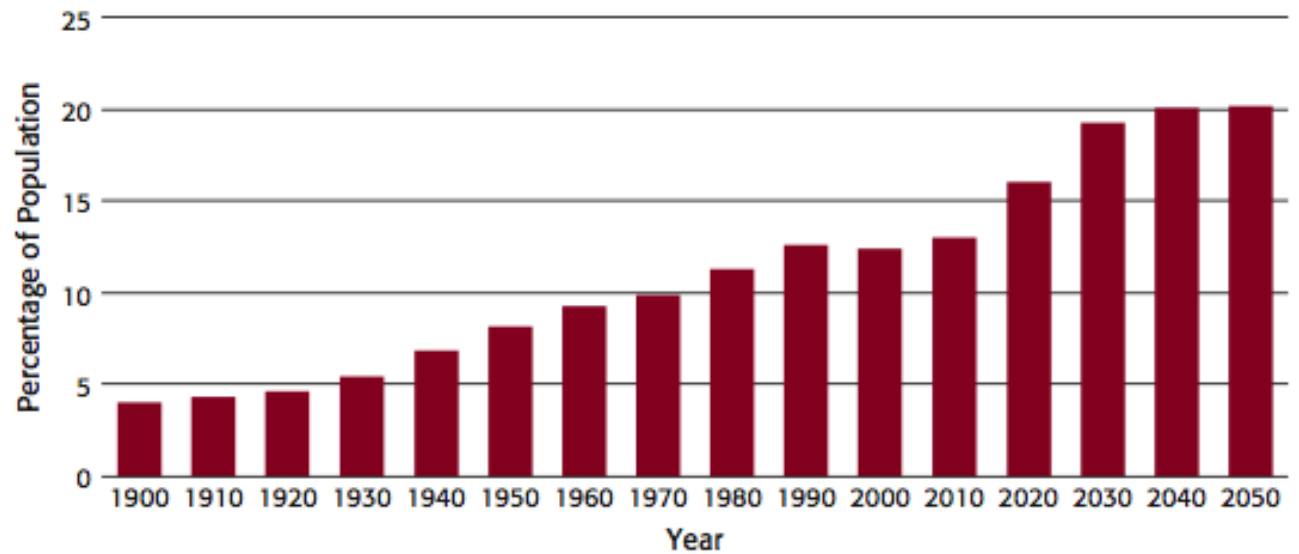
FIGURE 5–7 Employment by Occupational Groups, 2008.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2010* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2010), p. 392.

FIGURE 5–8 Percentage of Population Over the Age of 65, 1900–2050.

■ How will the population 30 years from now compare to that of today? In what areas of politics and society might that difference have an impact?

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau; U.S. Census Bureau, http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/population/estimates_and_projections_by_age_sex_raceethnicity.htm; and U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2010* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2010), p. 12.



Unity in a Land of Diversity

- We are united by our shared commitment to democratic values, economic opportunity, work ethic, and the American dream.