also instituted federal inspections to safeguard the public against adulterated foods and medicines. Together with the 1906 Meat Inspection Act, this law was a major victory for advocates of national consumer protection legislation. Foes of federal food and drug regulation ranged from wealthy meatpacking corporations to small manufacturers of "patent medicines," secret formulas that claimed a wide variety of curative powers but often contained harmful ingredients such as turpentine or mercury.

Pressure for Congressional action had been building for many years. Women's groups, in particular the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, which was concerned about products containing alcohol and opium, had long advocated food and drug legislation. During the Spanish-American War in 1898, the public had responded with outrage when tainted provisions (called "embalmed beef") caused sickness and death among American soldiers. Crusading journalists known as muckrakers stimulated demand for reform by publishing exposés about poisonous and addictive ingredients in the nation's food and drug supply.

One key figure in the reform movement was Harvey W. Wiley, chief chemist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, who used his position to campaign for tough consumer protections. Another important influence was author Samuel Hopkins Adams, whose 1905 exposé in Colliers Weekly, "The Great American Fraud," alerted Congress to the dangers of patent medicines. In 1906, Upton Sinclair published his novel The Jungle, horrifying readers with his depiction of unsanitary conditions in the meatpacking industry. The book inspired a public outcry that motivated President Theodore Roosevelt to throw his support behind the Pure Food and Drugs Act.

In addition to being a landmark in the history of public health law, the legislation also served as a model for alcohol prohibition in the 1920s and the "war on drugs" at the end of the 20th century.

SEE ALSO
Health, public; Muckrakers; Reform movements; Roosevelt, Theodore; Sinclair, Upton Beall

FURTHER READING

Race relations

SCIENTISTS TODAY largely agree that all human beings on earth belong to a single biological species. Variations within that species have traditionally been called races. Thus the term "race" can be used to distinguish among human populations or geographic groups or physical types. Observed differences between humans include skin color, facial features, and ancestry, as
well as traits that carry genetic markers, such as a predisposition to resist or succumb to certain diseases. While today’s scientists do not rank differences between races in any particular order, late 19th-century Americans firmly believed in the reality of a racial hierarchy, or the superiority of one human group over another. Their attitudes about these differences shaped the period’s race relations and influenced many aspects of social life and the law.

In the late 1800s, laypeople and scientists alike assumed that skin color, head or eye shape, and hair texture were indicators of racial superiority or inferiority. They also assumed that races coincided with places of national origin. White Americans, for example, thought that Anglo-Saxons (generally people from Germany and Great Britain) and people of Nordic origins were racially superior to other white-skinned peoples, including those of Celtic (the Irish) and Mediterranean origins (the Spanish, Greeks, and Portuguese), as well as Poles, eastern Europeans, and Jews. According to 19th-century race theory in the United States, Native Americans were a distinct race, as were African Americans, the Chinese and Japanese, and Latin Americans. In addition, many Americans subscribed to a theory called Social Darwinism, a belief that different races or societies of people evolved at different rates. According to this belief, white western societies—Northern European and North American—had evolved further than others and were therefore justified in treating other societies as inferior.

These almost universally held assumptions about racial hierarchies meant that race relations in the United States around the turn of the 20th century were far from harmonious. Americans treated some white-skinned Europeans as inferior but treated African Americans, Native Americans, and Asians much worse.

In the South, white supremacy was rampant. Between 1890 and 1920, legalized segregation became entrenched as every southern state passed Jim Crow laws that enforced separate accommodations in all public areas, including schools. Ku Klux Klan terrorism increased the incidence of lynching. Throughout the South, black voters found themselves thoroughly and systematically disfranchised.

Widespread intimidation and mistreatment of African Americans occurred in other parts of the country as well. Even in the North and West, which lacked Jim Crow laws, whites denied African Americans good jobs and decent housing, and kept them as much at a distance as possible. In those days, most white Americans opposed race mixing and interracial marriage. This opposition did not prevent white men, northern or southern, from routinely exploiting black women as prostitutes, however.

Not surprisingly, African Americans resisted categorization as inferior and the racist mistreatment that deprived them of civil rights and economic security. Educator Booker T. Washington urged African Americans to prove themselves equal to whites
without challenging the segregated status quo. Other leaders, such as civil rights activists W. E. B. DuBois, and William Monroe Trotter, and Ida B. Wells, fought lynching and demanded the enforcement of equality under the law. They founded several organizations, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (1909) and the National Urban League (1910), to combat discrimination and press for civil rights and economic opportunities for African Americans. Despite the best efforts of these groups, changes were slow in coming, and poverty, discrimination, and segregation remained a part of African American life.

Asian immigrants also suffered from discrimination. The Chinese had come to the United States during the gold rush of 1849 and stayed on to build railroads and run service businesses in western cities. Prejudices against the Chinese grew out of language and cultural differences and a fear that Chinese laborers were competing for scarce jobs. In 1882, Congress enacted the first of several Chinese Exclusion Acts, which effectively stopped Chinese immigration.

A less formal arrangement in 1907, the Gentleman's Agreement between President Theodore Roosevelt and Japanese diplomats, brought an end to the immigration of Japanese laborers, though it did allow spouses to join those already in America. After the Spanish-American War and the annexation of the Philippines, Filipinos became U.S. nation-als, a status that enabled them to travel to the United States at will. They were hardly more welcome than the Chinese and Japanese, however.

Race relations with American Indians were never good. From colonial times, whites had broken treaties, stolen land, and fought wars against Native American tribes. By the end of the 19th century, following the last Indian resistance at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, in 1890, the U.S. government had pushed almost all Native Americans onto reservations. The Dawes Severalty Act (1887) sought to convert them into farmers, offering U.S. citizenship in return for abandoning tribal customs. Within their reserved lands, tribes retained some independence, but the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs interfered actively in reservation life and sought to make Indian children more like whites by educating them in boarding schools.

The fear and ignorance that governed white attitudes toward people of different skin colors and varied national origins produced a eugenics movement in the early 20th century. Eugenics is the science of controlled human breeding based on notions of desirable and undesirable traits. Fearing that "undesirable" people from the "inferior races" would reproduce at a high rate and overwhelm the desirable population, authorities, including President Theodore Roosevelt, encouraged people of white Anglo-Saxon descent to have many children. Although the American eugenics movement remained small, it nevertheless promoted the forced sterilization of the mentally disabled and laws against mixed marriages.

SEE ALSO
African Americans; Asian Americans; DuBois, William Edward Burghardt (W. E. B.); Chinese Exclusion Act (1882); Civil
Race riots

BETWEEN THE 1890s and the mid-1920s, a pattern of mob violence known as the race riot emerged in the United States. They occurred in urban areas in both the North and the South, but more predominantly in the North, where the migration of thousands of southern African Americans to industrial cities before and during World War I exacerbated white fears about job loss and neighborhood integration.

Race riots in the North started with competition over jobs, disputes over segregated recreation areas, personal attacks, or even rumors of such attacks. In the South, riots broke out following accusations of rape of white women, or when long-smoldering resentment among black citizens about disfranchisement and segregation erupted into violence. Typically, during the riots, white mobs invaded black neighborhoods, beat and killed African Americans, and destroyed their property. When African Americans fought to defend themselves, both sides experienced casualties, though the majority of those killed were black.

The six most serious race riots in this period occurred in Wilmington, North Carolina (1898); Atlanta (1906); Springfield, Illinois (1908); East St. Louis, Illinois (1917); Chicago (1919); and Tulsa, Oklahoma (1921). Most of the fighting took place in the hot summer months, when people were outside of their homes at all hours and often feeling frustrated from the heat. In the summer of 1919 alone, there were 26 race riots all over the country, including the Chicago riot, which was the largest and most damaging. Hundreds of African Americans died during these upheavals. Rampaging rioters injured hundreds more.

This Atlanta newspaper justified the antiblack violence of a 1906 race riot by citing recent episodes of "unbridled crime" allegedly committed by black men against white women.