

Malloreay Blake, Jaclyn Bates, Danielle Reagan
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Professor M. Swanson
Urban America Final Project

History of San Francisco

<http://www.sanfrancisco.com/history/>

<http://www.sfhistory.org/>

<http://www.history.com/topics/san-francisco> (good videos on this site!)

<http://geography.about.com/od/unitedstatesofamerica/a/Alcatraz-Prison-Facts.htm>

Prehistory

- 3,000 BC: first inhabitants of San Francisco
- 16th century: Yelamu tribe lives here
- 1769: Westerners part of the Portola expedition stumble upon the bay
- 1786: Juan Bautista de Anza leaves San Diego to start a Spanish settlement in San Fran
- 1808: Mission San Francisco de Asis is the center of spiritual life for local tribes

Leading to the American takeover

- 1821: Mexico wins independence from Spain which leads to the downfall of the mission in San Fran
- 1835: American William Richardson becomes first settler of Yerba Buena (original name of San Fran)
- 1840s: Americans come to the upper part of California where San Fran is to fight for their independence
- 1847: Yerba Buena is renamed to San Francisco
- 1946: US Navy sailor James B. Montgomery came ashore Yerba Buena (today Portsmouth Square) and raised the American flag

The Gold Rush Causes Rapid Growth in Population

- 1848: First gold found in the California Foothills at Sutter's Fort
- 1849: Population increases by 24,000 people because San Fran is the central port and depot of the Gold Rush
 - "forty-niners" caused the huge increase
- 1849-1851: Residents of the city go wild and prostitution and gambling increases
 - 6 major fires occur
- 1859: Increase of population again because of Nevada's Comstock Lode filling the city's dock. And construction for the Central Pacific Railroad begins which draws thousands of workers from all over the world – especially China.
 - The increase in Chinese residents creates a thriving Chinatown and the second (only to Asia) largest Chinese settlement

- 1887: 1,000 acres on the Pacific side of the peninsula are carved out to create the Golden Gate Park. And cable cars become prominent.

San Fran's Downfall

- 1906: An earthquake measured at 7.8 on the Richter scale erupts due to the slipping of the San Andreas Fault
 - the tremors broke water mains which caused fires that raged for 4 days straight and killed thousands of people, destroying thousands of buildings, and leaving hundreds of thousands of people homeless
- 1915: San Fran is able to host the Panama International Exposition because over the course of those 9 years, the residents of San Fran did nothing but rebuild and improve their city
- 1930s: The Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco Bay Bridge are constructed and lead to population growth

Aiding in Wars

- San Fran became one of the biggest arms production center during World War II
 - the war caused an increase in African Americans because the Japanese populated many of the neighborhoods but when they were forced into internment camps, African Americans moved into their neighborhoods
- San Fran played a role in the Cold War because this is where the UN Charter was drafted in 1945

History of Important Features in San Fran

Alcatraz

- considered "the prison of American prisons"
- 1775: Juan Manuel de Ayala chartered La Isla de los Alcatrazes (San Francisco Bay)
- It is 22 acres of desolation – no vegetation or habitation
- English speakers began to call it Alcatraz
- Fort Alcatraz
 - 1850: reserved for military use under President Millard Fillmore
 - 1859: deemed "Fort Alcatraz" after a fortress was built around the land and 100 cannons were installed making it the most heavily armed entity on the West Coast
 - It never actually fired any of its weapons because it didn't need to, so it turned into an island of detention rather than its original purpose as an island of defense
- 1860s: people arrested for treason during the Civil War were sent here
 - It was designed to house up to 500 men, but during its existence as a detention center it only reached up to 300 never filling its full capacity
- The Rock
 - 1906: A huge earthquake devastates San Francisco and causes all inmates of surrounding prisons to be sent to Alcatraz
 - It got nicknamed The Rock
 - It served as an army disciplinary barracks until 1933
 - Prisoners received military training and education and vocational training

- 20th century: It is a minimum security prison and allowed prisoners to work outside doing things like gardening and even babysitting some for some of the officers. Even a baseball field was built so that they could have fun on their free time. They also had boxing matches for fun, which became known as “Alcatraz Fights”

- Federal Penitentiary

- Known as “Uncle Sam’s Devil’s Island”

- 1934: becomes America’s first maximum security prison for civilians

- It was specifically for the worst criminals that other prisons would not be able to handle. The dangerous terrain and water surrounding the area made it an ideal place to house these horrible criminals because it would be impossible to escape without dying

- Over 29 years, the prison housed over 1,500 prisoners

- The only rights given to prisoners were food, shelter, clothing, and medical attention

- Punishments included hard labor, solitary confinement with only bread and water, and having a 15 pound ball chained to the leg

- There were 14 escape attempts but no one was ever reported as succeeding

- Closing Alcatraz

- 1963: Alcatraz is closed because of the great expense of shipping supplies like food and fresh water over by boat

- 1972: It becomes a national park part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area

- 1973: It opens to the public with more than one million tourists each year

Culture

- Diverse in terms of art, music, cuisine, festivities, museums, and architecture!
- Attracts a diverse amount of people from all over the world!

Museums

- San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA)
- 20th Century to contemporary pieces
- The Palace of Fine Arts
- Museum of popular science
- Asian Art Museum of San Francisco
- San Francisco Zoo
- Cares of over 250 species!
- Contemporary Jewish Museum
- Museum of African Diaspora
- Cartoon Art Museum
- Ripley’s Believe It Or Not! Museum
- The Tattoo Art Museum
- The Wax Museum
- The UFO, Bigfoot, and Loch Ness Monster Museum

Performing Arts

- Popular Classical and Opera venues include the San Francisco Symphony, The San Francisco Opera House, and The San Francisco Ballet
- All of these are performed at The San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center, which are some of the oldest performing arts companies in America.

Music

- San Francisco was the birth of many trends in rock music in the 1960s.
- The two most influential bands of the era were the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane
- More bands include Journey, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Metallica, and Santana

Parades and Festivals

- San Francisco is the home of many unique and famous street parties, parades, and festivities!
- Some of these include...
- San Francisco Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Parade
- The Chinese New Year Parade
- Folsom Street Fair
- Running marathons Bay to Breakers and the San Francisco Marathon

The part of the project that I was responsible for was looking at parts of San Francisco through the eyes of Jane Jacobs. I did not focus heavily on Jacobs, but instead used her as a guide in order to explore and capture certain areas of San Francisco. I looked at Golden Gate Park as an example of a large park which offers the public and surrounding neighbors many different uses. I looked at Fisherman's Warf as generator of diversity because of its aged buildings and atmosphere that offers many different restaurants and culture. Finally, I looked at a low income area of San Francisco that could be considered the "slums" that is undergoing renovation to "un-slum."

1. Golden Gate Park

"Generalized parks can and do add great attraction to neighborhoods that people find attractive for a great variety of other uses" (Jacobs 111).

Golden Gate Park: Blend of gardens, museum culture, and recreational places.

Jacobs asserts that parks need to have "real uses" not "mythological uses" (Jacobs 91).

Uses of the Park:

San Francisco Botanical Garden Society

Golden Gate Mother's Playground

Conservatory of Flowers

Koret Children's playground

Baseball field

Kezar Stadium

Tennis Complex
Horseshoe Pits
Little Rec Soccer fields
Stow Lake, as well as many other lakes
Golden Gate Park Golf Course
Golden Gate Polo Field
San Francisco Bicycle Route
Equestrian Center

The park also includes a full website stating events for every month and attractions.

The park is not just “a walk through the park” type of park. There are roads and places to drive through it. It contains recreational places, museums, botanical gardens, playgrounds, and much more. However, at night it becomes a very dark dangerous place.

Quick mention of other parks in San Francisco: McKinley Square, Presidio, Alamo Square, Alta Plaza, Aquatic Park, Argonne Playground, Mission Park, Baker Beach State Park, Balboa Park, Mount Coppin Square

Neighborhood of Golden Gate Park and surrounding community: “The more successfully a city mingles everyday diversity of uses and users in its everyday streets, the more successfully, casually (and economically) its people thereby enliven and support well-located parks that can thus give back grace and delight to their neighborhoods instead of vacuity” (Jacobs 111)

Surrounding Golden Gate Park:

Rectangular like park with three sides open to residential houses and small businesses (Fulton St, Lincoln Way, and Stanyan St)

The final side of the park opens to the beach

In these surrounding neighborhoods of the park there are elementary schools, playgrounds, high schools and churches.

The median household income, according to city data, for this park is \$106,250. In surrounding areas of the park the median income is between \$50,000-\$70,000.

2. Generator of Diversity:

“The district must mingle buildings that vary in age and condition, including a good proportion of old ones” – Jane Jacobs

An example of this in San Francisco is historic Fisherman's Wharf: a waterfront community founded in 1946, that contains many old buildings and offers diverse foods and culture. (<http://www.fishermanswharf.org>)

[Different Restaurants located on Fisherman's Wharf:](#)

[Alioto's family owned seafood restaurant](#)

[Annie's Hot Dogs and Pretzels \(since 1983\)](#)

[Bistro Boudin](#)

[Bubba Gump Shrimp](#)

[Japanese Grill and Sushi Bar](#)

[King of Thai Noodle House](#)

[Along with many more!](#)

3. Slums and Un-Slumming:

"Slums and their populations are the victims (and the perpetrators) of seemingly endless troubles that reinforce each other. Slums operate as vicious circles" (270)

The Huffington Post recorded, "A recent study by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco found that, over the past decade, poverty in the Bay Area has shifted out of the cities and into the suburbs. From 2005 to 2009, the percentage of people living in poverty in the suburbs grew by 16 percent, compared with a 7 percent increase in urban areas."

Some of Jacobs' reasons for the vicious circles of slums are:

require great amounts of money

people move out too fast—hinging upon people living in these areas wanting to make a difference in this area or wanting to move out

This neighborhood near the Bay View Area shows a median household income of \$17,083. Many people are being pushed further and further away from the city. The Huffington Post asserts, "funding cuts to the city's affordable housing programs have increasingly made San Francisco unaffordable to people on the lower rungs of the economic ladder". This high cost of living has prompted people, most importantly families, into "east Bay cities like Berkeley and Oakland"

Hunter's Point: an area of San Francisco becoming "un-slummed"

Pictures in powerpoint shows both the older and newer housing on Donahue St in Hunter's Point.

