

History 3356, Gilded Age
Dr. Moneyhon
Spring Term, 2018

Office Hours by appointment
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Course Outline

Description: History 3356 examines the emergence of modern American society in the period known as the Gilded Age, roughly the years 1875-1900. Lectures and readings will examine the emergence of basic institutions within the United States and specifically the development of the modern urban-industrial society.

Requirements: Your grade in this class will be based on two examinations and five short reports. Each of the examinations will be worth thirty percent of your course grade. Each report will be worth eight percent. Please note, this means that not turning in a report will result in the loss of eight points from your final average, virtually a letter grade. Reports are due on the date assigned because they are intended to serve as the basis for class discussion. Any late report will be reduced by a letter grade. Basic requirements for the course may be changed but any such changes will be announced to the class.

Exams: The examinations will be essay in nature. Each will consist of three questions taken from the attached lists of questions. You will be required to write on two of them.

Reports: The reports will be on readings assigned in the following course schedule. The basic format for these papers is described at the end of the syllabus. Reports are due on the day assigned. Since they are the basis for discussion on that date, any late paper will be reduced a letter grade. If for some you reason you are unable to be in class on the day of the discussion you must get a copy of your paper to me the day prior to class to avoid the grade penalty.

Attendance: In accordance with new concerns of the university and also my own for your success, I will be taking attendance. Frequent absences invariably lead to poor performance in class and should be avoided at all class. Further, if you miss three consecutive classes without explanation you will be dropped from this class.

Texts: There is one text that will be used in the course and it may be purchased at the book store. There are also other readings that will be used for reports and discussion. They will be available on BlackBoard.

Charles W. Calhoun, ed., The Gilded Age: Perspectives on the origins of Modern America (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007). Second edition.

Tentative Course Schedule:

January	16	Introduction to the Course
	18	Interpretations of the Gilded Age. The Gilded Age is a period that has attracted extensive historical examination. How do you explain that? What have been the major trends?

Part I. The Changing Economy—Readings: Glenn Porter, "Industrialization and the Rise of Big Business," GA, pp. 11-28; W. Bernard Carlson, "Technology and America as a Consumer Society, 1870-1900," GA, 29-52.

23	Expansion of the American Economy. At least part of the process of economic expansion that took place in the United States during the post-Reconstruction era has to do with the development of the railroads. Describe this phenomenon and explain its role producing overall economic growth at this time.
25	Another major component in the development of the economy during the Gilded Age was industrial development. What was this development and how can it be accounted for?

30	The Robber Barons. In history, phenomena may be explained in part by major forces at
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work in a society. On the other hand, individuals ultimately have to direct these forces into the particular direction that they take. Looking at the entrepreneurs of the Gilded Age, what particular characteristics appear among them and may help to explain their successes in transforming the American economy?

- February
- 1 The Emergence of "Big" Business. Describe and discuss the reasons behind the emergence of big business and corporate monopoly during the Gilded Age. (Summers pp. 97-104). ***Report 1—Article:** “Alfred D. Chandler, “The Beginnings of ‘Big Business’ in American Industry,” *Business History Review*, XXXIII (Spring 1959), 1-31.

- 6 Workers in the New Economy--Labor Organization. Examining the material on unionization in your text, discuss the condition of American workers during the Gilded Age and the analysis they used to explain their situation. To what degree do you believe their assessment was accurate?
- 8 Organized Labor’s Impact on the New Economy. In an assessment of the basic development of organized labor within the United States during the Gilded Age, discuss the degree whether or not the movement’s efforts may be considered successful or unsuccessful.

Part II. The South in the Industrial Nation—Readings: Leslie H. Fishel, Jr., "The African-American Experience," GA, 143-166.

- 13 The New South in the Industrial Nation. Many contemporaries believed that the Gilded Age produced an end to the sectional crisis that had beset the nation in mid-century and that the South was becoming integrated economically into the industrial society. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this idea?
- 15 The Plight of African-Americans in the South. Some have suggested that the price of peace after the Civil War was the North’s ultimate agreement to allow Southern whites to handle racial issues in their own way. Examining the history of African-Americans in the South during the Gilded Age would you agree or disagree with this statement?

- 20 In many respects the reintegration of the South into the nation came at the expense of a major reinterpretation of the immediate American past and particularly events related to the American Civil War. This new outlook constituted what has been called the "Myth of the Lost Cause." What was this myth, how did it develop, and what function did it serve? **Report 2—Article:** Lloyd A. Hunter, "The Immortal Confederacy: Another Look at Lost Cause Religion," in Garry W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, eds., *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), pp. 185-218.

Part III. Urbanization---Readings: Robert G. Barrows, "Urbanizing America," GA, 101-118.

- 22 Metropolis. Among the major trends of the Gilded Age was the development of the modern industrial metropolis. Discuss the character of urban growth during this period and explain the forces behind it.

- 27 The Modern Metropolis and Technology. Discuss the importance of industrial technology in the emergence of modern American cities during the Gilded Age.
- March
- 1 **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

Part IV. A New Society---Readings: Roger Daniels, "The Immigrant Experience in the Gilded Age," GA, 75-100; Stacy A. Cordery, "Women in Industrializing America," GA, 119-142; Edmund J. Danziger, Jr., "Native American Resistance and Accommodation during the Late Nineteenth Century," GA, 167-186.

- 6 Urban society in the Gilded Age saw the emergence of considerable discrepancies in wealth and the emergence not only of new and wealthy elite but also an impoverished lower class. Why did this polarization not produce greater social conflict? **Report 3-- Article:** Stephen Thernstrom, "Urbanization, Migration and Social Mobility in Late Nineteenth-Century America," in Barton J. Bernstein, *"Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History"* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968), 158-175

8 **NO CLASS**

- 13 Society in the City—The Middle Class culture. A new "Middle Class" emerges in this era. Describe that class and its culture. What changes appear to account for the emergence of this class and its unique culture?

- 15 Society in the City—One of the major changes that occurred with the emergence of the new "Middle Class" was a shift in gender roles. Describe this shift and explain what possibly brought it about.

20 **SPRING BREAK**

22

- 27 Society in the City--The Immigrant. American culture in the late nineteenth century has been described as a cultural melting pot. Examining the experience of immigrants to America, do you agree or disagree with this assessment?

Part V. The Changing Cultural and Ideological Landscape---Readings: Ellen M. Litwicki, "The Influence of Commerce, Technology, and Race on Popular Culture in the Gilded Age," GA, 187-210; Ruth C. Crocker, "Cultural and Intellectual Life in the Gilded Age," GA, 211-238.

- 29 Ellen Litwicki has suggested that American popular culture changed as other aspects of American life did during the Gilded Age. What forms did popular culture take during this period? What does their appearance seem to reflect in American life at this time? Do you see influences other than those demonstrated by Litwicki

April

- 3 Many Americans believed the American intellectual and cultural life had reached a Golden Age in the late nineteenth century. In describing the basic outlines of this world of thought and art, do you agree or disagree with the conclusions of so many Americans?

- 5 As Americans viewed the changes that were taking place in their world, no particular component of intellectual thought drew the focus of individuals than that concerning the rules that govern a society. What form did this debate take? What schools of thought emerged? Who were the protagonists? What was the long-term impact of this debate?

Part VI. The Changing Political Landscape---Readings: Charles W. Calhoun, "the Political Culture: Public Life and the Conduct of Politics," GA, 239-264; Lewis L. Gould, "Party Conflict: Republicans versus Democrats, 1877-1901," GA, 265-282; Ballard C. Campbell, "Public Policy and State Government," GA, 353-372; Worth Robert Miller, "Farmers and Third-Party Politics," GA, 283-306.

- 10 The British ambassador to the United States described American politics in the Gilded Age as like two bottles of wine, each had a different label, each was empty. How

successful do you believe national politicians were in addressing the problems of the late nineteenth century in the United States?

- 12 State and local governments had a particularly bad reputation in the Gilded Age. One pundit said of the Pennsylvania legislature, that John D. Rockefeller had done everything to it but refine it. Examining state and local governments during the period how do you assess their effectiveness in responding to the problems of this era.

- 17 Agrarian Protest in the 1880s. Discuss farm problems in the 1880s and account for the development of agrarian protest at this time. Did the various protest movements realistically address these problems?

- 19 End of a Political Era and the Election of 1896. Ultimately most scholars believe that the politics of the late 19th century ended in a major realignment of political forces. Discuss this realignment and explain what appears to have brought it about.

Report 4--Article: Paul Kleppner, "The Political Revolution of the 1890s: A Behavioral Interpretation," in David Brody, ed., *Essays on the Age of Enterprise: 1870-1900* (Hindsdale, Illinois: The Dryden Press, 1974), 277-87.

Part VIII: American Foreign Affairs—Readings: Joseph A. Fry, "Phases of Empire: Late Nineteenth Century U.S. Foreign Relations," GA, 307-332.

- 24 American Expansionism. Discuss and explain the development of American foreign policy in the 1880s and early 1890s. What were the major trends and what seems to be behind them?

- 26 The War with Spain. Why did the United States go to war with Spain? Foreign Empire. Explain the decision following the Spanish-American War on the part of the United States to maintain control over parts of the old Spanish Empire.

May 1 **CONSULTATION DAY--No Class--Any makeup examinations will be given on this day.**

8 **FINAL EXAMINATION -- 8 - 10 a.m.**

ARTICLE REPORTS:

Your written reports should demonstrate your ability to read history analytically. They should not be more than 3-4 pages in length. In doing an historical analysis, rather than simply summarizing the contents of the article, you should provide a *critical* commentary on the article. To that end, please consider the following questions to be answered as essential parts of any review.

1. What is the topic? This does not mean simply the specific historical subject, but also the literature that has been written about it before. Remember, there are few topics that have not been considered before. Why does this author think something else needs to be written?

2. What is the thesis? It is important to distinguish the topic from the thesis. The topic is the subject matter, which may include the historical discussion of an item. The thesis is the author's distinctive *argument* about the topic, in other words his interpretation.

3. How does the author argue his thesis or try to convince you it is valid? In dealing with this issue you may desire to discuss the author's organization of the article and the author's use of evidence (what type of evidence is used).

4. Finally, are there any reasons to believe that the author has a hidden bias or possesses some other point of view that may influence the conclusions? To draw conclusions on this you should try to find something out about the author. Information on when an article was written, where the author attended school, and with whom they worked are all important aspects of discovering an author's agenda. Sometimes clues may be found in the first several footnotes to an article.

Reports are assigned for a particular class in the expectation that you will be prepared to participate in class discussion. Late papers obviously do not allow you to participate. Late papers will be penalized a letter grade.

ESSAY EXAMINATIONS:

Good History Essays

A Good Essay Has:

1. An introductory paragraph that contains your *thesis statement*. The Thesis statement is the point you will argue in your essay. The thesis statement might simply reword the essay question into a statement. Your introductory paragraph **MUST** state the people, places, and historical era (usually through a reference to specific dates or centuries) that your essay will discuss.
2. A *series* of paragraphs that develop and explain your ideas. Each paragraph should be organized around one major idea you will argue. Each paragraph should advance your thesis. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence that moves your argument forward. The body of each paragraph should be composed of sentences that have rich historical detail.
3. A concluding paragraph will summarize your findings based on the historical evidence you have used to support your ideas. This paragraph should in some way refer to your introduction.

A Good History Essay Supports Your Ideas with Historical Evidence

1. A good history essay is **ALWAYS** supported with relevant historical evidence collected from class lectures and readings. By historical evidence, historians mean the specific names, dates, places, events, terms, and concepts that are pertinent to the historical problem investigated (i.e., the essay question). The content of your essay will consist of this historical evidence. This information should be accurate. You must explain all specific terms you use.

Example of supporting sentence:

“The victorious Republican party clearly desired the central government to play a greater role in the nation’s economic development. Congress’s passage, in 1862, of a transcontinental railroad bill, its Homestead Act, and the National Banking Act all showed the nationalistic and centralizing tendencies of the party’s leadership.”

2. The information should always be relevant to the essay question. The point is not to write down every piece of historical information you have learned, but to select only the evidence that clearly supports your thesis. Irrelevant information will not count. You are responsible for explaining in your essay how each piece of information relates to the question. Your essay should be persuasive through your mastery of the historical evidence.

A Good Essay Is Attentive to Complexity in the Human Experience

1. Human life is complex. The information you use in your essay becomes relevant when you connect people to people, events to events, and so forth.
2. Think about continuity and change, causes and effects, and the interdependence of peoples and groups. How does one event connect to others? In time? Through individuals and groups? From one geographic area to another? Your essay should make these connections.

Other tips:

1. Use the past tense when writing.
2. Locate the people and events in time and place. Each paragraph should normally have a few specific dates in it to mark the time and sequence of events significant to the question.

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

Academic Integrity:

All of your work must reflect your own thoughts, words, opinions, and efforts. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and reflect on your personal character and professionalism. All sources, including information gathered on the Internet, must be correctly cited in weekly assignments, papers, and essays. You should include footnotes and a bibliography in Chicago Manual of Style Humanities format in all History Department papers unless instructed otherwise. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand the definition of plagiarism, and that you avoid it. Not knowing the definition of plagiarism is not an acceptable excuse for plagiarizing. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this class, and you will receive a zero for a plagiarized assignment. If you are unclear about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please ask me, and look at section VI of the UALR student handbook.

Attendance Policy:

Because of the amount of state and federal funding received by the university and our students, the university is required to document student attendance. Attendance will be taken at each class and excessive absences will factor into your final grade. If you experience an illness or other crisis that prevents you from coming to class you **must** notify me within 48 hours of the first missed class. Attendance in class is essential to doing well in the course. Arrive at class on time, turn cell phones to silent and place them out of sight so that our class time is not distracted by personal matters.

Classroom Civility:

The classroom is a place for the free interchange of ideas. Keep this in mind in your interactions with fellow students and faculty. You should turn off cell phones or electronic devices when in class. You may use a computer to take notes, but not to coast the Internet while in class. The use of any such devices is considered a disruption of class. Any disruptive behavior will result in a warning. Subsequent disruptions will lead to being dropped from the class.

Written Work:

Keep all graded written assignments until the end of the semester and you have received your grade to ensure that you have the grade that is warranted.

Critical Dates:

February 1	First Report	10 percent
February 20	Second Report	10 percent
March 1	Midterm Examination	30 percent
March 6	Third Report	10 percent
April 19	Fourth Report	10 percent
May 8	Final Examination	30 percent

Students with Disabilities:

Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to have a disability documented), and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible, so that we can discuss with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. The DRC offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s) and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact me and/or the DRC, at 501-569-3143 (V/TTY) or 501-683-7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the DRC website at www.ualr.edu/disability.