

Gilded Age

Coined by the great American writer Mark Twain, the Gilded Age was a very short period of time yet it had a massive influence on the direction of our great nation. The Gilded Age saw great economic growth particularly in the North and West as the South was still in great disrepair after the Civil War. Workers received much higher wages than their European counterparts and jobs were easy to find, but the conditions that those workers found themselves in were extremely dangerous as the business men of that time focused in on profit over safety and fair work hours. The South's economy was still recovering from the Civil War and while African Americans were now free, they were subject to an extremely harsh environment that curtailed most of their civil rights, political power, education, and forced them into a severe economic disadvantage. As jobs and wages were now on the rise in the United States, immigrants from Europe and Asia traveled to America in search of a better life but were met with resentment by America's home grown work force.

This class will look at all the gold and glitz of this exciting time period, but will delve past its gold lining to look at the issues of race, immigration, and labor. While this is a historical class, many of the topics in this course relate directly to issues that are going on in our country today.

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