

Chapter 1 : SparkNotes: The Gilded Age & the Progressive Era (â€“)

American Politics In The Gilded Age is a great addition to The American History Series published by Harlan Davidson. This book is to be used mainly as a companion or supplement to a main textbook, but it is good to read separately on its own.

A Tale of Today For them, "Gilded Age" was a pejorative term used to describe a time of materialistic excesses combined with extreme poverty. With respect to eras of American history, historical views vary as to when the Gilded Age began, ranging from starting right after the American Civil War ended, , or , or as the Reconstruction Era ended in The nation was rapidly expanding its economy into new areas, especially heavy industry like factories, railroads , and coal mining. In , the First Transcontinental Railroad opened up the far-west mining and ranching regions. Travel from New York to San Francisco now took six days instead of six months. The new track linked formerly isolated areas with larger markets and allowed for the rise of commercial farming, ranching, and mining, creating a truly national marketplace. American steel production rose to surpass the combined totals of Britain, Germany, and France. By , the process of economic concentration had extended into most branches of industryâ€”a few large corporations, called " trusts ", dominated in steel, oil, sugar, meat, and farm machinery. Through vertical integration these trusts were able to control each aspect of the production of a specific good, ensuring that the profits made on the finished product were maximized and prices minimized, and by controlling access to the raw materials, prevented other companies from being able to compete in the marketplace. Frederick Winslow Taylor observed that worker efficiency in steel could be improved through the use of very close observations with a stop watch to eliminate wasted effort. Mechanization made some factories an assemblage of unskilled laborers performing simple and repetitive tasks under the direction of skilled foremen and engineers. Machine shops grew rapidly, and they comprised highly skilled workers and engineers. Both the number of unskilled and skilled workers increased, as their wage rates grew. Railroads invented modern management, with clear chains of command, statistical reporting, and complex bureaucratic systems. They hired young men ages 18â€”21 and promoted them internally until a man reached the status of locomotive engineer, conductor, or station agent at age 40 or so. Career tracks were invented for skilled blue-collar jobs and for white-collar managers, starting in railroads and expanding into finance, manufacturing, and trade. Together with rapid growth of small business, a new middle class was rapidly growing, especially in northern cities. From to , , patents were issued for new inventionsâ€”over ten times the number issued in the previous seventy years. George Westinghouse invented air brakes for trains making them both safer and faster. Electric power delivery spread rapidly across Gilded Age cities. The streets were lighted at night, and electric streetcars allowed for faster commuting to work and easier shopping. The United States dominated the global industry into the s. Kerosene replaced whale oil and candles for lighting homes. Rockefeller founded Standard Oil Company and monopolized the oil industry, which mostly produced kerosene before the automobile created a demand for gasoline in the 20th century. The generation between and was already mortgaged to the railways, and no one knew it better than the generation itself. Shipping freight and passengers[edit] First they provided a highly efficient network for shipping freight and passengers across a large national market. The result was a transforming impact on most sectors of the economy including manufacturing, retail and wholesale, agriculture, and finance. The United States now had an integrated national market practically the size of Europe, with no internal barriers or tariffs, all supported by a common language, and financial system and a common legal system. Construction of railroads was far more expensive than factories. New York by was the dominant financial market. In â€”, they liquidated their American assets to pay for war supplies. Civil engineers became the senior management of railroads. The leading innovators were the Western Railroad of Massachusetts and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in the s, the Erie in the s and the Pennsylvania in the s. Railroading became a lifetime career for young men; women were almost never hired. A typical career path would see a young man hired at age 18 as a shop laborer, be promoted to skilled mechanic at age 24, brakemen at 25, freight conductor at 27, and passenger conductor at age White-collar careers paths likewise were delineated. Educated young men started

in clerical or statistical work and moved up to station agents or bureaucrats at the divisional or central headquarters. They were very hard to replace, and were virtually guaranteed permanent jobs and provided with insurance and medical care. Hiring, firing, and wage rates were set not by foremen, but by central administrators, in order to minimize favoritism and personality conflicts. Everything was done by the book, whereby an increasingly complex set of rules dictated to everyone exactly what should be done in every circumstance, and exactly what their rank and pay would be. By the s the career railroaders were retiring, and pension systems were invented for them. Boosters in every city worked feverishly to make sure the railroad came through, knowing their urban dreams depended upon it. The mechanical size, scope, and efficiency of the railroads made a profound impression; people dressed in their Sunday best to go down to the terminal to watch the train come in. Travel became much easier, cheaper, and more common. Shoppers from small towns could make day trips to big city stores. Hotels, resorts, and tourist attractions were built to accommodate the demand. The realization that anyone could buy a ticket for a thousand-mile trip was empowering. Historians Gary Cross and Rick Szostak argue: Farm children could more easily acquaint themselves with the big city, and easterners could readily visit the West. It is hard to imagine a United States of continental proportions without the railroad. Local merchants and shippers supported the demand and got some " Granger Laws " passed. Business rivals and political reformers accused him of every conceivable evil. Journalists and cartoonists made their reputations by pillorying him Meat packing industry The growth of railroads from s to s made commercial farming much more feasible and profitable. Millions of acres were opened to settlement once the railroad was nearby, and provided a long-distance outlet for wheat, cattle and hogs that reached all the way to Europe. Shipping live animals was slow and expensive. It was more efficient to slaughter them in major packing centers such as Chicago, Kansas City, St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Cincinnati, and then ship dressed meat out in refrigerated freight cars. The cars were cooled by slabs of ice that had been harvested from the northern lakes in wintertime, and stored for summer and fall usage. Chicago, the main railroad center, benefited enormously, with Kansas City a distant second. Historian William Cronon concludes: Because of the Chicago packers, ranchers in Wyoming and feedlot farmers in Iowa regularly found a reliable market for their animals, and on average received better prices for the animals they sold there. At the same time and for the same reason, Americans of all classes found a greater variety of more and better meats on their tables, purchased on average at lower prices than ever before. During the s and s, the U. The corporation became the dominant form of business organization, and a scientific management revolution transformed business operations. Kennedy reports that "U. Stead wrote in , "What is the secret of American success? Wealthy industrialists and financiers such as John D. Morgan , Leland Stanford , Meyer Guggenheim , Jacob Schiff , Charles Crocker , Cornelius Vanderbilt would sometimes be labeled " robber barons " by their critics, who argue their fortunes were made at the expense of the working class , by chicanery and a betrayal of democracy. Private money endowed thousands of colleges, hospitals, museums, academies, schools, opera houses, public libraries, and charities. From to , the U. The economy repeated this period of growth in the s, in which the wealth of the nation grew at an annual rate of 3. He compared wages and the standard of living in Pittsburgh with Birmingham, England, one of the richest industrial cities of Europe. According to Shergold the American advantage grew over time from to , and the perceived higher American wage led to a heavy steady flow of skilled workers from Britain to industrial America. Workers had to put in roughly 60 hours a week to earn this much. King , were concerned that the United States was becoming increasingly in-egalitarian to the point of becoming like old Europe, and "further and further away from its original pioneering ideal. Craft-oriented labor unions, such as carpenters, printers, shoemakers and cigar makers, grew steadily in the industrial cities after These unions used frequent short strikes as a method to attain control over the labor market, and fight off competing unions. The strike and associated riots lasted 45 days and resulted in the deaths of several hundred participants no police or soldiers were killed , several hundred more injuries, and millions in damages to railroad property. Hayes intervened with federal troops. Starting in the mids a new group, the Knights of Labor , grew rapidly. Too rapidly, for it spun out of control and failed to handle the Great Southwest Railroad Strike of The Knights avoided violence, but their reputation collapsed in the wake of the Haymarket Square Riot in Chicago in , when anarchists allegedly bombed the policemen dispersing a meeting. Seven anarchists

went on trial; four were hanged even though no evidence directly linked them to the bombing. By , membership had plummeted to fewer than ,, then faded away. By far the largest number were in the building trades, followed far behind by coal miners. The main goal was control of working conditions and settling which rival union was in control. Most were of very short duration. In times of depression strikes were more violent but less successful, because the company was losing money anyway. They were successful in times of prosperity when the company was losing profits and wanted to settle quickly. Debs and was not supported by the established brotherhoods. The union defied federal court orders to stop blocking the mail trains, so President Cleveland used the U. Army to get the trains moving again. The ARU vanished and the traditional railroad brotherhoods survived, but avoided strikes. The AFL was a coalition of unions, each based on strong local chapters; the AFL coordinated their work in cities and prevented jurisdictional battles. Gompers repudiated socialism and abandoned the violent nature of the earlier unions. The AFL worked to control the local labor market, thereby empowering its locals to obtain higher wages and more control over hiring. As a result, the AFL unions spread to most cities, reaching a peak membership in

Chapter 2 : American Politics in the Gilded Age: - by Robert W. Cherny

Often Gilded-Age politics has been described as devoid of content or accomplishment, a mere spectacle to divert voters from thinking about the real issues of the day.

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Chapter 3 : Gilded Age - Wikipedia

American Politics in the Gilded Age: - / Edition 1 Often Gilded-Age politics has been described as devoid of content or accomplishment, a mere spectacle to divert voters from thinking about the real issues of the day.

Various prohibitionist and nativist movements emerged, especially the American Party, based originally on the secret Know Nothing lodges. It was a moralistic party that appealed to the middle class fear of corruption, which it identified with Catholics, especially the recent Irish immigrants who seemed to bring crime, corruption, poverty and bossism as soon as they arrived. The Republican Party was more driven, in terms of ideology and talent; it surpassed the hapless American Party in By the Republicans controlled majorities in every Northern state, and hence controlled the electoral votes for president in That would give rich slave owners the chance to go anywhere and buy up the best land, thus undercutting the wages of free labor and destroying the foundations of civil society. The Democratic response was to counter crusade in , warning that the election of Republican candidate John C. When President James Buchanan tried to rig politics in Kansas Territory to approve slavery, Douglas broke with him, presaging the split that ruined the party in That year, Northern Democrats nominated Douglas as the candidate of democracy, while the southern wing put up John Breckinridge as the upholder of the rights of property and of states rights, which in this context meant slavery. In the South, ex-Whigs organized an ad-hoc "Constitutional Union" Party, pledging to keep the nation united on the basis of the Constitution, regardless of democracy, states rights, property or liberty. The Republicans played it safe in , passing over better-known radicals in favor of a moderate border state politician known to be an articulate advocate of liberty. Abraham Lincoln made no speeches, letting the party apparatus march the armies to the polls. In the Union, the Republican Party unanimously supported the war effort, finding officers, enlisted men, enlistment bonuses, aid to wives and widows, war supplies, bond purchases, and the enthusiasm that was critical to victory. The Democrats at first supported a war for Union, and in many Democratic politicians became colonels and generals. Announced by Lincoln in September , the Emancipation Proclamation was designed primarily to destroy the economic base of the Slave Power. It initially alienated many northern Democrats and even moderate Republicans. They were reluctant to support a war for the benefit of what they considered an inferior race. In the midterm elections, the Democrats made significant gains, but the Republicans remained in control with the support of the Unionist Party. Success on the battlefield especially the fall of Atlanta significantly bolstered the Republicans in the election of The Democrats attempted to capitalize on negative reactions to the Emancipation, but by , these had faded somewhat due its success in undermining the South. Increasingly the Union Army became the more and more Republican; probably a majority of Democrats who enlisted marched home Republican, including such key leaders as John Logan and Ben Butler. War issues resonated for a quarter century, as Republicans waved the "bloody shirt" of dead union soldiers , and Democrats warned against Black supremacy in the South and plutocracy in the North. The modernizing Republicans who had founded the party in looked askance at the undisguised corruption of Ulysses S. Grant and his war veterans, bolstered by the solid vote of freedmen. In the Democrats won big majorities in Congress, with economic depression a major issue. People asked how much longer the Republicans could use the Army to impose control in the South. After Hayes removed the last federal troops in , the Republican Party in the South sank into oblivion, kept alive only by the crumbs of federal patronage. It would be forty years before a Republican would win a former Confederate state in a presidential election. At the state level moralistic pietists pushed hard for prohibition , and in some states for the elimination of foreign-language schools serving German immigrants. The Bennett Law in Wisconsin produced a bruising ethnocultural battle in Wisconsin in , which the Democrats won. The millions of postwar immigrants divided politically along ethnic and religious lines, with enough Germans moving into the Democratic Party to give the Democrats a national majority in Party loyalties were starting to weaken, as evidenced by the movement back and forth of the German vote and the sudden rise of the Populists. Army-style campaigns of necessity had to be supplemented by "campaigns of education," which focused more on the swing voters. A stunning Republican triumph in nearly wiped out the Democratic Party north of the

Masonâ€™Dixon line. In the election , William Jennings Bryan and the radical silverites seized control of the Democratic Party, denounced their own president, and called for a return to Jeffersonian agrarianism known as Jeffersonian Democracy. Bryan, in his Cross of Gold speech, talked about workers and farmers crucified by big business, evil bankers and the gold standard. With Bryan giving from 5 to 35 speeches a day throughout the Midwest , straw polls showed his crusade forging a lead in the critical Midwest. Then William McKinley and Mark Hanna seized control of the situation; their countercrusade was a campaign of education making lavish use of new advertising techniques. McKinley promised prosperity through strong economic growth based on sound money and business confidence, and an abundance of high-paying industrial jobs. Farmers would benefit by selling to a rich home market. Every racial, ethnic and religious group would prosper, and the government would never be used by one group to attack another. He carried nearly every city of 50,000 population, while Bryan swept the rural South which was off-limits to the Republicans and Mountain states. It no longer mattered as much what the editorial page saidâ€™most newspapers opposed himâ€™as long as his speeches made the front page. Financing likewise changed radically. Under the Second and Third Party Systems, parties financed their campaigns through patronage; now civil service reform was undercutting that revenue, and entirely new, outside sources of funding became critical. Mark Hanna systematically told nervous businessmen and financiers that he had a business plan to win the election, and then billed them for their share of the cost. Party loyalty itself weakened as voters were switching between parties much more often. Because this position was based more on social experiences than any political ideology, nonpartisan activity was generally most effective on the local level. As third-party candidates tried to assert themselves in mainstream politics, however, they were forced to betray the antiparty foundations of the movement by allying with major partisan leaders. These alliances and the factionalism they engendered discouraged nonpartisan supporters and undermined the third-party movement by the end of the nineteenth century. Many reformers and nonpartisans subsequently lent support to the Republican Party, which promised to attend to issues important to them, such as anti-slavery or prohibition. Fourth Party System The overwhelming Republican victory, repeated in , restored business confidence, began three decades of prosperity for which the Republicans took credit, and swept away the issues and personalities of the Third Party System. Most voting blocs continued unchanged, but others realigned themselves, giving a strong Republican dominance in the industrial Northeast, though the way was clear for the Progressive Era to impose a new way of thinking and a new agenda for politics. New laws and constitutional amendments weakened the party bosses by installing primaries and directly electing senators. Theodore Roosevelt shared the growing concern with business influence on government. When William Howard Taft appeared to be too cozy with pro-business conservatives in terms of tariff and conservation issues, Roosevelt broke with his old friend and his old party. After losing the Republican nomination to Taft, he founded a new " Bull Moose " Progressive Party and ran as a third candidate. Although he outpolled Taft who won only two states in both the popular vote and the electoral college, the Republican split elected Woodrow Wilson and made pro-business conservatives the dominant force in the Republican Party.

Chapter 4 : [PDF] American Politics in the Gilded Age: - Full Colection - Video Dailymotion

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Politics of the Gilded Age Impeachment trial ticket The Gilded Age will be remembered for the accomplishments of thousands of American thinkers, inventors, entrepreneurs, writers, and promoters of social justice. Few politicians had an impact on the tremendous change transforming America. The Presidency was at an all-time low in power and influence, and the Congress was rife with corruption. State and city leaders shared in the graft, and the public was kept largely unaware. Much like in the colonial days, Americans were not taking their orders from the top; rather, they were building a new society from its foundation. The American Presidents who resided in the White House from the end of the Civil War until the s are sometimes called "the forgettable Presidents. Andrew Johnson was so hated he was impeached and would have been removed from office were it not for a single Senate vote. Grant was a war hero but was unprepared for public office. He had not held a single elected office prior to the Presidency and was totally naive to the workings of Washington. He relied heavily on the advice of insiders who were stealing public money. His secretary of war sold Indian land to investors and pocketed public money. His private secretary worked with officials in the Treasury Department to steal money raised from the tax on whiskey. Grant himself seemed above these scandals, but lacked the political skill to control his staff or replace them with officers of integrity. Electoral Woes Rutherford B. Hayes was elected in by a margin of one electoral vote. His successor was Rutherford B. Hayes himself had tremendous integrity, but his Presidency was weakened by the means of his election. After the electoral votes were counted, his opponent, Samuel Tilden, already claimed a majority of the popular vote and needed just one electoral vote to win. Precisely twenty electoral votes were in dispute because the states submitted double returns – one proclaiming Hayes the victor, the other Tilden. A Republican-biased electoral commission awarded all 20 electoral votes to the Republican Hayes, and he won by just one electoral vote. While he was able to claim the White House, many considered his election a fraud, and his power to rule was diminished. Assassination James Garfield succeeded Hayes to the Presidency. Charles Guiteau, the killer, was so upset with Garfield for overlooking him for a political job that he shot the President in cold blood on the platform of the Baltimore and Potomac train station. Garfield Vice-President Chester Arthur became the next leader. Although his political history was largely composed of appointments of friends, the tragedy that befell his predecessor led him to believe that the system had gone bad. He signed into law the Pendleton Civil Service Act, which opened many jobs to competitive exam rather than political connections. The Republican Party rewarded him by refusing his nomination for the Presidency in One President impeached, one President drowning in corruption, one President elected by possible fraud, one President assassinated, and one disgraced by his own party for doing what he thought was right. Clearly this was not a good time in Presidential history. Congressional Supremacy This was an era of Congressional supremacy. The Republican party dominated the Presidency and the Congress for most of these years. Both houses of Congress were full of representatives owned by big business. Laws regulating campaigns were minimal and big money bought a government that would not interfere. Similar conditions existed in the states. City governments were dominated by political machines. Members of a small network gained power and used the public treasury to stay in power – and grow fabulously rich in the process. Not until the dawn of the 20th century would serious attempts be made to correct the abuses of Gilded Age government.

Chapter 5 : American Politics in the Gilded Age : Robert W. Cherny :

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Chapter 6 : Politics of the Gilded Age [blog.quintoapp.com]

Gilded Age: the period in American history during which materialism, a quest for personal gain, and corruption dominated both politics and society Grange: a farmers' organization, launched in , which grew to over million members in less than a decade.

Chapter 7 : Gilded Age Bibliography

The Vampire Diaries After Show Season 6 Episode 17 "A Bird in a Gilded Cage".

Chapter 8 : American Politics in the Gilded Age PDF

With the latest scholarship in mind, this book provides a deft and highly readable analysis that is certain to help readers better understand the characteristics and important products of Gilded-Age.

Chapter 9 : Third Party System - Wikipedia

A system, prevalent during the Gilded Age, in which political parties granted jobs and favors to party regulars who delivered votes on election day. Patronage was both an essential wellspring of support for both parties and a source of conflict within the Republican policies.