

# US U.S. History End-of-Course

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TOOLS FOR EXPLOSIVE LEARNING

## 1877-1898: Growth, Transformation, and Gilded Age

### INDUSTRIALIZATION, TECHNOLOGY, AND LABOR

**Gilded Age:** late 19<sup>th</sup> century U.S.; wealth of few hid poverty, corruption  
**technological (second industrial) revolution:** based on steel, railroads, electricity, petroleum (oil)-based products; propelled by many factors:

- **geography:** plentiful raw materials (crude oil, iron ore, coal, timber)
- **government:** courts, Congress supported free enterprise or laissez-faire capitalism (non-interference in business) and patent protection
- **technology:** inventions created new or larger business opportunities

**Examples:** Bessemer process ↑ steel output, ↓ cost (cities grew up rather than out); crude oil refined into cheap illuminants, fuels; electricity powered cities (Edison, Tesla/Westinghouse); telephone (Bell, Edison) sped long-distance communication (aided big companies); light bulb (Edison) "lengthened" daytime, ↑ productivity; ↑ patents

• **entrepreneurship:** ambitious business leaders took risks, innovated, integrated, adopted technologies (↓ production costs) → **monopolies**  
- **pros:** big businesses were efficient; ↑ access to infrastructure, goods, services at stable prices (e.g., cross-country train travel in days, not months; low-cost kerosene, not whale oil; telephone service)  
- **cons:** big businesses used schemes to crush competition; work was unsafe/tedious with ↑ hours/↓ wages; **broke up unions/strikes**

### Entrepreneur Integration Type Used Initially to Beat Competition

**Carnegie/vertical:** controlled all levels of production for 1 steel product: mines, mills, fabrication (rails), transport  
**Rockefeller/horizontal:** controlled 1 level of production for entire industry: ~90% of U.S. refining capacity

**Example: Andrew Carnegie's mills** made low-cost steel, aiding growth. As a philanthropist, he funded educational and cultural projects. His book, *Gospel of Wealth* (1889), inspired philanthropy. In *Homestead* (1892) strike, his steelworkers and miners fought a deadly gun battle. The National Guard (govt.) helped crush the union. A 12-hour workday and lower wages Carnegie wrote, "... we are [back] at work selling steel once again."

<b>K of U</b>	skilled-unskilled union; ↓ popularity after Homestead
<b>AFL</b>	skilled craft union; Samuel Gompers led; used boycotts; pursued collective bargaining; union-only shops
<b>IWW</b>	unskilled union; "Wobblies"; industrial unionism; strikes
<b>ARU</b>	unskilled railroad industry; Pullman (1894) strikers; federal force

### WESTWARD MIGRATION AND THE HOUSTON ACT

**westward migration:** demographic shift; 19% (1870) → 33% (1900) of population; closed frontier (no land left); key causes:  
• **Homestead Act:** 1862 law encouraged settlement west via 160-acre grants of public land (free) after 5 years of improvement  
• **Transcontinental Railroad:** east/west coast; lines connected distant areas; enabled cattle industry from Texas  
• **human, physical geography:** drought, hunger, ↑ prices

**Example 1:** Great Plains were forded; moved and finished goods were sold; surplus grain; cheap land attracted settlers, even to drought-stricken areas (rain followed the plow).  
**Example 2:** Newspaper "gold fever" (Canada, Alaska) caused the famous massive 1896 gold rush. Most miners left broke.

Plains Indians; Whites' beliefs drove policies/acts.

### Private Actions vs. U.S. Government Policy

Private Actions: ... U.S. Government Policy: ...

### FARM ISSUES AND POLICY

Poor economic conditions for western (ex-Union) grain southerners (black/white) led to chronic debt.  
• **costs:** high-cost plows and reapers were vital; land and grain elevator had monopolies; sellers, not farmers  
• **revenue:** ↓; over-production, global competition (cotton)  
• **deflation:** tight money supply caused value of dollar to ↓ year (good for lenders, wage-earners, and rich, but bad for farmers)

**Populists:** third party political movement to address farmers' needs; won national election, but much of its platform eventually abandoned

**William Jennings Bryan:** 1896 Democratic presidential nominee; "Gold" speech co-opted Populist idea of free coinage of silver to combat deflation/keep farmers' vote; gold vs. silver split Democrats → McKinley won

### URBANIZATION, NEW IMMIGRATION, AND CITY LIFE

U.S. urbanized as rural migrants and immigrants sought work in cities:

- **push factors:** war, persecution, economic crisis, or poverty at home
- **pull factors:** industrialization created unskilled workers; "American Dream" stories exaggerated opportunities; many believed in Europe

**Example:** NYC grew in mass from 0.9 million (1800) → 5.6 (1920)  
**new immigration:** shift from Irish, Irish-American to southern/eastern European immigrants (Polish, Russian, Polish), from 1880-1920

**city life:** crowded, unsanitary, disease-prone (used poor sanitation/disease)  
• **social:** ethnic enclaves formed; men, women, kids lived on "factory time"; minorities faced discrimination; led to slums  
• **political:** "political machines" (bosses) used for vote-buying

**Example:** In *How the Other Half Lives*, Jacob Riis documented Jewish immigrants in New York's crowded Jewtown tenement. "In the East, Europe to escape persecution." English was "practical" unknown language. "He wrote that there means the hardest kind of work almost from the cradle." "China concentrated Chinese immigrants and 'narrow purists' led effort to restrict immigration restrictions (Chinese Exclusion Act (1882))"

### SOCIAL REFORM AND AMERICANIZATION OF IMMIGRANTS

**social reform:** Progressive Era philosophy; an duty to fix society's ills; moral crusades in cities

**reform:** campaigns against corrupt political machines (e.g., NYC Tammany Hall); lasting reform difficult; favors for helped poor; in 1883, Pendleton Civil Service Act passed after Garfield's assassination; upset spoils-seeker; some states then adopted civil service exams

**immigration:** free schools Americanized immigrants (taught culture); many Catholic schools formed to resist; literacy rates grew; classes, child care, social events helped and Americanized nearby immigrants (e.g., *Jane Addams'* Hull House, Chicago)  
**reform:** against child labor, for living wage, 8-hr. workday, unions  
**temperance:** *Wendell Phillips*'s campaign, "Do Everything" for women/children, fought alcohol with prayer, education, lobbying

### 1898-1920: Progressive Era and Rise of World Power

#### AMERICAN EXPANSIONISM AND SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

**expansionism:** support for a stronger U.S. role in international affairs  
• **economic growth:** over-production of food, goods caused financial panics, depressions (drove down prices); U.S. needed new markets

**security:** in *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783* (1890), **Alfred T. Mahan** argued for a strong U.S. navy, new bases to protect foreign markets (and investments) from rival nations (Eur./Jap.)

**mission work:** missionaries felt duty to spread Christian religion and western culture (language, law, capitalism) to "heathen masses"

**Example:** Americans invested in Hawaiian sugar plantations after 1875 free trade treaty, which also gave U.S. land for Pearl Harbor naval base. In 1892, businessmen, missionaries, and U.S. Marines overthrew monarchy and chose **Sanford B. Dole** as president. He pursued annexation to U.S. (approved in 1898), citing "American effort ... in building up the Christian civilization," its "geographical position," and "profitable reciprocal commercial interests."

• **vitality:** **Henry Cabot Lodge** and **Theodore Roosevelt (T.R.)** believed new frontiers would energize American spirit, keep U.S. competitive  
**Expansionism, yellow journalism** (sensational) and Proctor report on Spain's brutality in Cuba, de Lôme letter, and U.S.S. *Maine* explosion fueled pro-war view. **Spanish-American War** was turning point for U.S.;

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**Example:** Sanitation plan (netting, no standing water) and quinine were critical to defeat/fight mosquito-borne yellow fever/malaria among labor.

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