

HIS 320: Topics in US History / The Gilded Age & Progressive Eras

Course Credits: 3

Semester: Fall 2014

Prerequisites: Two semesters of History / Political Science Survey

Dr. Jennifer M. Black

Course Description:

A lecture and discussion approach to the study of special themes in history. On request, students may take this course more than once if the theme they are studying differs.

Introduction

The Gilded Age and Progressive Era (GAPE) has often been referred to as the founding moment of “modern” American society. As industry boomed, an increasing gap between the “haves” and “have-nots” emerged, pushing reformers to debate how they might tackle problems such as immigration, urban slums, public education, and the “threat” of mass entertainment and consumer culture. This course will examine some of these major themes and problems of American society between 1876 and 1920. By the end of the course, students should be able to identify major trends in historical scholarship regarding this period, and use those sources to create their own arguments about the significance of the GAPE for the development of American society in the twentieth century.

Course Goals / Objectives:

- ❖ This course contributes to the following University Learning Goals:
 3. Consider ethical issues and values and make reasoned judgments about them.
 4. Think independently and creatively, analyze information critically, and solve problems.
 5. Respect and understand cultural differences.
 6. Understand global perspectives.
 7. Communicate and interact effectively.

- ❖ This course contributes to the following Departmental Goals and Objectives:
 1. Identify major events in local, national, and international history
 2. Identify different historical perspectives
 3. Analyze primary and secondary sources
 4. Use historic evidence to make an argument

*These goals will be assessed through exams, a written research paper, and class participation.

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Required Texts:

Link, William A. & Susannah J. Link, eds. *The Gilded Age and Progressive Era: A Documentary Reader*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. ISBN: 978-1-4443-3139-4
Painter, Nell. *Standing at Armageddon: A Grassroots History of the Progressive Era*. New York: WW Norton, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-393-33192-9
Kasson, John. *Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1978. ISBN: 978-0809001330
*Additional readings on the Blackboard

Course Assignments & Evaluation:

The final course grade will be comprised of the following:

Mid-Term exam:	25%
Final Exam:	30%
Term Paper:	20%
Participation / Discussion lead:	25%

Details about the exams and term paper will follow. Throughout the term, we will move thematically through the material, taking a seminar-style approach to our weekly meetings. Regular attendance at course meetings is required, as is your active participation in the course. Active participation includes coming to class prepared (having completed the reading and formulated any questions or comments you might have), participating in the online discussion board, listening to the material presented and thoughtfully engaging classmates with your own observations or analyses.

In addition, each student will be required to lead the week's discussion at least once throughout the term. This includes preparing brief summaries (no more than ½ page) of each of the readings, 5-10 potential questions to generate discussion, and / or other presentation tools. Detailed instructions will follow. There will be an opportunity to sign-up for this role during the first two weeks of class.

Grading Scale for Course Grades:

A = 93-100%	B = 83-86%	C = 73-76%	F = 64% and below
A- = 90-92%	B- = 80-82%	C- = 70-72%	
B+= 87-89%	C+ = 77-79%	D = 65-69%	

Weekly Schedule

Items with an asterisk () are available electronically on the Blackboard.*

- Week 1 (8/28) Introduction**
Readings: Link, p11-15
Painter, xiii-xl, 1-15
- Week 2 (9/4) The West**
Readings: Link, p54-64
Painter, 163
*Frederick Jackson Turner, "Frontier Thesis" [chapter 1](#)
* Joy Kasson, "Staking a Claim to History," in Schwartz & Przyblyski, *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 276-286.
- Week 3 (9/11) Big Business**
Readings: Link, p70-76
Painter, p15-38, 72-80, 90-95, 175-189
* Wm. G. Sumner on Social Darwinism (ca. 1880), in Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom* 4th ed. vol. 2 (New York: WW Norton, 2014), 31-35.
*Andrew Carnegie, on [Success](#) (1885)
- Week 4 (9/18) Workers, Farmers, & Labor**
Readings: Link, p120-124, 141-146, 227-31
Painter, p39-71, 95-114
- Week 5 (9/25) Immigrants**
Readings: Link, p147-162
* Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (1890), ed. Lorenzo Dominguez (New York: Chelanzo Ink, 2012), 1-16, 114-121, 140-146, 259-268 (Riis: intro+ chapters 1-2, 13, 15, photos)
- Week 6 (10/2) Jim Crow**
Readings: Link, p201-222
Painter, chapter 7 (17pp)
*DuBois on double-consciousness ([Souls of Black Folk](#), ch1, 1903)
- Week 7 (10/9) **NO CLASS, Fall Break**
- Week 8 (10/16) Mid-Term in Class / Consumerism (pt. II)**
Readings: * Wayne Craven, *Gilded Mansions* (New York: WW Norton & Co., 2009), 8-17.

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- Week 9 (10/23)** **Empire Pt. 1**
Readings: Link, p293-299
Painter, chapter 5 (28pp)
* Emilio Aguinaldo on Philippines, in Eric Foner, Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom* 4th ed. vol. 2 (New York: WW Norton, 2014), doc 112
- Week 10 (10/30)** **Empire Pt. 2**
Readings: * Kristin Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2007), 13-56.
- Week 11 (11/6)** **Photography & Reform**
Readings: Link, p31-33, 260-264
* Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2000), 15-51.
* Deborah L. Smith-Shank, "Lewis Hine and His Photo Stories: Visual Culture and Social Reform," *Art Education* 5, no. 2 (2003): 33-37.
- Week 12 (11/13)** **Eugenics & Sexuality**
Readings: Link, p250-256
* Laura Lovett, "'Fitter Families for Future Firesides': Florence Sherbon and Popular Eugenics," *The Public Historian* 29, no. 3 (2007): 69-85.
* George Chauncey, "Christian Brotherhood or Sexual Perversion," article with documents, in Elizabeth Reis, ed., *American Sexual Histories* (New York: Wiley Blackwell, 2012), 198-226.
* John Kasson, *Houdini, Tarzan and the Perfect Man* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 3-20.
* [Buck v. Bell \(1927\)](#)
* [Pace v. Alabama \(1883\)](#)
- Week 13 (11/20)** **World's Fairs & Coney Island**
Readings: Kasson, *Amusing the Million*
- Week 14 (11/25)** **Women's Activism & Suffrage (**NOTE: we meet on Tuesday)**
Readings: Link, p231-239, 278-289
Painter, chapter 8 (22pp)
* Sally Hunter Graham, "Woodrow Wilson, Alice Paul, and the Woman Suffrage Movement," *Political Science Quarterly* 98, no. 4 (1983-84): 665-679.
* Sarah J. Moore, "Making a Spectacle of Suffrage: The National Woman Suffrage Pageant, 1913," *Journal of American Culture* 20, no. 1 (1997): 89-103.
- Week 15 (12/4)** **WWI**
Readings: Link, p306-320
- *Term Paper Due
Week 16 **FINAL EXAM, TBA**