

Class Meetings

**TUESDAYS 5-8 PM
SULLIVAN 320**



**READINGS AND SOURCES
PAGE 2**



**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES / GRADING
PAGE 3**



**COURSE CALENDAR AND POLICIES
PAGE 4**

THE GILDED AGE / AGE OF REFORM



About the Course

This research seminar considers the fraught and turbulent period from the end of the Civil War to the early twentieth century (1865 - 1920) — an era of rising American industrial and military fortunes; dramatic social change; stunning racial, gender, and economic inequality; and blossoming American multicultural arts and literature. The class welcomes both graduate and upper-level undergraduate students.

**This semester:
Learn what lies
under the surface
sheen of the
Gilded Age**

Readings and Sources

There are abundant sources for studying almost any aspect of this era, and I welcome the chance to work with you on finding appropriate materials to explore in your research. Everyone will have access to our class resource lists of primary sources, digital collections, and a curated digital reader of articles. Fortunately, many works published during the Gilded Age are in the public domain, making online access to them possible in multiple formats. And don't overlook multimedia and material culture sources too (maps, audio recordings, photographs, film, textiles, buildings, objects, and machines, to name just a few possibilities).

Early in the semester each person will choose and read a full monograph from this list. Make your own arrangements to borrow, rent, or purchase your book of choice by the first day of class. They will not be available in the university bookstore.

Alan Axelrod, *The Gilded Age, 1876-1912: Overture to the American Century* (Sterling, 2017) ISBN 978-1454925750

Rebecca Edwards, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age, 1865-1905* (Oxford, 2015, orig. pub 2006) ISBN 0190217170

Leon Fink, *The Long Gilded Age: American Capitalism and the Lesson of a New World Order* (Oxford 2015), ISBN 978-0812246889

T. J. Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: the Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (HarperCollins, 2009), ISBN 978-0060747497

Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (Oxford, 2005), ISBN 978-0195183658

Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: A Grassroots History of the Progressive Era, 1877-1919* (Norton, 2008) ISBN 780-393331929

Heather Cox Richardson, *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901* (Harvard, 2004), ISBN 978-0674013667

Manisha Sinha, *The Rise and Fall of the Second American Republic: Reconstruction, 1860-1920* (Norton, 2024) ISBN 978-1631498442

Richard White, *The Republic For Which it Stands: The US During Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865-1896* (Oxford, 2017) ISBN 9780199735815

*What puts the
“progress” in
“Progressive”?*



Course Instructor:

Dr. Tona Hangen
Sullivan 327-D

Office: 508-929-8688

Voicemail / Text:
617-506-9440

thangen@worcester.edu

See Blackboard for office
hours information



Course Learning Outcomes

Learners will ...

... expand their knowledge and articulate the historical significance of the period from 1865 to 1920.

... design and conduct an original research inquiry that involves primary, secondary, and reference resources.

... demonstrate proficiency with historical research methods (e.g. locating, evaluating, analyzing, and summarizing appropriate sources).

... situate their research within existing scholarly discourses and historiographical debates, applying theory where relevant.

... employ critical thinking and nuance when using their research findings as evidence.

... effectively communicate research findings both orally and in writing.

Grading Breakdown	
Attendance and Participation	25
Monograph Introduction	5
Research Proposal	10
Oral Presentations	20
Bibliography and Outline Draft	15
Finalized Research Paper	20
Course Reflection	5
TOTAL	100



Course Calendar

Subject to change; check Blackboard for any updates

Week #	Date	What's the Plan	What's Due - by class time unless otherwise specified
0	Wed Sept 4	<i>Online intros, Getting Started Module No class meeting this week</i>	Book choice, Flip Hello
1	Tues Sept 10	Periodizing and defining GA-PE	Introduce Your Monograph
2	Tues Sept 17	Monograph Discussion 2	
3	Tues Sept 24	Monograph Discussion 3 + Lecture 1	
4	Tues Oct 1	SHGAPE and Research Tools	Initial Exploration by Oct 6
5	Tues Oct 8	Articles Discussion 1 + Library Session	
6	Tues Oct 15	Articles Discussion 2	Research Proposal by Oct 20
7	Tues Oct 22	Articles Discussion 3	
8	Tues Oct 29	Initial Findings and Curiosities	Source Presentation
9	Tues Nov 5	Lecture 2	Bibliography, Intro and Outline
10	Tues Nov 12	Writing Conferences	
11	Tues Nov 19	Peer Review	Paper Draft
12	Tues Nov 26	<i>No class meeting - Work OYO</i>	
13	Tues Dec 3	Work in Progress Update + Course Wrap-up	Research Presentation Course Reflection
14	Tues Dec 10	<i>No class meeting</i>	Finalized Research Paper / All remaining coursework

Course Policies

CLASS ETIQUETTE: Laptops or tablets are welcome for in-class use. Please stay on task with your devices, refraining from websurfing or social media use. No cell phone use during class. I don't mind drinks or snacks (however please alert me if there are serious allergies we should all respect to make a safe environment for everyone). We will take a 15-minute break midway through class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: All papers and other assignments for this class must be your own work in your own words. When and where you employ the work of others, cite your sources. Papers that are clear cases of plagiarism – not inadvertent errors in citation or footnoting – are a serious academic offense. Some examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: using others' work without attribution or generating a paper's text using AI. Plagiarism results in a failing course grade.

ACCESSIBILITY: Accommodations requested through Student Accessibility Services will be honored. If you see ways the course could be more inclusive, please let me know. I am committed to providing a learning environment in which all students can succeed.