

The failure of the gilded age essay sample

[Politics](#), [Marxism](#)



The lowest point in American politics is considered to be by many the Gilded Age. In this time period, America was in an industrial growth and had to make sure that the laissez - faire type government did not hinder its success. To contribute to having the government not intervenes in the economics of the country was the chain of useless presidents who did insignificant acts in office and because of that are scarcely remembered. These presidents totally ignored social and economic issues which troubled the lower classes and help the upper classes gain more power. With the lack of presidential leadership and the intervention of the government to help big businesses get even bigger the politics of the Gilded Age failed to deal with the real issues.

Since the government would not intervene with most of the economics of this time then that meant that the big businesses had the power to do anything they wanted no matter who it hurt, which was mostly the lower working classes. In Samuel Gompers Forum, " Letter on Labor in industrial Society", he tried to explain how the industries did not care for the lower classes by stating that, " Year by year man's liberties are trampled under foot at the bidding of corporations and trusts, rights are invaded and law perverted." Samuel went on to say, " You [a federal judge] may not know that the labor movement as represented by the trades unions, stands for right, for justice, for liberty," which meant that as the lower classes tried to fight back against the big businesses the government pushed them down to make sure the upper classes had no problems. Knowing all of this, it raises the question on how much of a laissez - faire government was America at that time?

The government would do nothing to help the lower class but whenever the upper class had a problem, the government would use dirty tricks of the law to get there will. In the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 it says, " Section 4. That it shall be unlawful for any common carrier..... to charge or receive any greater compensation in the aggregate for the transportation of passengers..... for a shorter than for a longer distance over the same line..." Is this not making transportation easier for people AND goods? Would that not be making it easier for businesses to sell there goods to bigger markets? Is this not interference from the government?

While the upper class is profiting from all of these boosts from the government, the lower class is getting even farther away from being equal with the upper class. The lower class's conditions worsened because of the bad conditions the upper class gave them to work in. From a testimony of a Physician at the Committee of the Senate it was said that, " I should say it was of such a character as to need mending, so say the least. It needs some radical remedy." A professional physician said that these people who work in the factories every day are so beaten up from this work that there is on way to undo the effects of it. Yet, thanks to all their hard work, the elite business class have nice houses and great lives which the government helped make easier for them to do.

To best summarize the political out views of the two major parties of the time, the Populist Party Platform gives a great description of what the political mood was like, " Neither do they now promise us any substantial reform. They have agreed together to ignore, in the coming campaign, every

issue but one. They propose to drown the outcries of a plundered people with the uproar of a sham battle over the tariff..." The Populist Party always defended the working class and pointed out how the other parties would not even try to debate over the real issues that are bothering America of that time period.

By ignoring big issues such to help the lower classes in the political world, it helped the big businesses have no interference in their world of making money. In fact, by ignoring the big issues, the government was really indirectly helping the economics of the Country.