

History of the United States from 1877 to 1917: Industrial Revolution Essay

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There are five important things that every American citizen needs to know about the time period from 1877 to 1917:

#5. The 1896 Presidential elections in which William McKinley was elected, marked one of the most important elections of the 19th century since the beginning and the end of Civil War when Abraham Lincoln was the President.

The 1896 elections were highly symbolic in that the victory of McKinley also meant victory for the urban middle-class over the agrarian interests of the West and South. The signing of the Gold Standard Act by McKinley eliminated the economic danger posed by the idea of free silver which would have resulted in inflation and cheap money. The Gold Standard Act stabilized the value of the Dollar to one ounce of Gold (Skrabec 162). The 1896 elections also set the stage for a new-age of politics as the Populist movement lost much of its grip in advocating for less control of the economy by large national corporations

which increases the gap of inequality between the rich and the poor. Though Conservative Republicans would dominate and control the White House for the majority of the next 36 years, Presidents [Theodore Roosevelt](#) and William Taft were republicans who had progressive ideologies. For instance, they believed that the local and state governments had a big role to play in ensuring public welfare by controlling big businesses and corporations. Therefore, the progressive republicans were a more dominant force than conservative republicans (Kazin 460).

#4. While Booker T. Washington's tactics of racial solidarity, peace, and non-confrontation became the foundation of the strategies needed for the success of civil rights mov...

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...s and corruption inside corporations. This in turn greatly influenced public opinion. Consequently, government policies were affected by these revelations and action had to be taken. For instance, when *The Jungle*, by Upton Sinclair exposed the meat-packing industry, the Congress and President Roosevelt responded by ratifying the Meat Inspection and Pure Food and Drug Act. At the local and state level, the Progressive Movement was in the forefront in condemning political and industrial corruption. Because of the Progressive Movement, direct legislation can be proposed by voters and through voting, specific laws can be passed in many states. In addition, voters have the right to recall corrupt officials. The unrelenting efforts of the Progressives helped to punish grafters, regulate public utilities, and terminate uncompetitive monopolies (Halpin and Teixeira).

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