

# 7 Ways that Studying US History 1877 to Modern Times History Shapes the Way You Think About **The Effects of Technological Development**

## 1. How the development of technology helped the United States during the period of reconstruction following the Civil War.

Aug. 28th, Why 1877?



*Mulberry St., New York, N.Y.* New York , N.Y. . Detroit Publishing Co.  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/det1994006130/PP>

This picture shows a bustling New York City in the year 1900. During the Reconstruction Era, there were many different technological advancements that helped the southern economy to recover after the loss of their main source of labor when slavery was abolished. One of the main examples of this is the increased development of trains and the American railroad system. This permitted the growth of factories and industry in the north, and allowed for more manufactured products to be transported to the rural south. It also helped to make the south's economy less dependent on agriculture. With less economic dependency on agriculture, more people more southern men and women moved to the factories of the north on trains and the growing roadway system.

**Crash Course #22: Reconstruction and 1876**

**Crash Course #25: Growth, Cities, and Immigration**

**Joseph T. Finnerty, The Decline of the Independent Craftsman, 1882**

## 2. The Industrialization Era of America was fueled by the development of new technologies.

Sept. 6th, Industrialization



Detroit Publishing Co. "Solvay Process Co.'s Works, Syracuse [I.e. Solvary]." *Home*, 1 Jan. 1890, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2016801688/>.

There were many different ways that the development of America's economy was brought on by advancing technologies. Examples of these advancements include factories, automobiles, steel, and more. The photo above shows factories in Syracuse, NY, where there was a very large increase in the number of factories and other industrial workplaces. With so many different factories being created, there were many independent craftsman who could no longer support their families because products made by companies, in factories, were usually cheaper. Developments like the assembly line made it far easier for factories to produce goods efficiently. The Industrial heartland on the United States was in the Great Lakes region where the most populated cities were located, including New York and Chicago. This is because they had the most potential employees to work in the factories. The industrial revolution caused the United States to develop into one of the most economically flourishing companies in the world. By 1913 the United States produced  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the world's industrial output.

Crash Course # 23: The Industrial Economy

Industrialization, Sept. 6th, 2019

Joseph T. Finnerty, *The Decline of the Independent Craftsman*, 1882

### 3. The development of inventions such as radio and movies changed the way Americans got information and lived their lives during the 1920s.

Sept. 23rd, The “Modern” 1920s



“The shut-in’s Sunday service,” March 28, 1923, Clark Music Co, “*MACHINE.*” *Radio, America in the 1920s, Primary Sources for Teachers, America in Class, National Humanities Center,*  
<http://americainclass.org/sources/becomingmodern/machine/text5/text5.htm>.

New technologies were developed in America during the 1920s changing our entire culture and way of life. Inventions such as the radio and television allowed Americans to receive news and information on a more frequent and consistent basis. The picture above shows a woman listening to a radio even though she is too ill to leave home. This greater connectivity, enhanced communication in rural areas, and the opportunity for simple enjoyment was a key reason people were so eager to purchase the new product. People being more informed about current events created a more connected society. A primary impact of radios was an extreme increase in advertising. This led to many more leisure products being purchased by people. The radio also allowed people to listen to music whenever they felt the urge and movies permitted people to see moving images of famous people and far away places. The 1920s was generally a decade of having a good time and learning more about the broader world beyond rural areas, and the new inventions of this decade played a significant role in the growth of urban areas.

[The Modern 1920s, Oct, 23, 2019](#)

[Crash Course #32: The Roaring 20s](#)

[University of California, Advertisements of the 1920s, 1985](#)

#### **4. The improvement of industrial technologies provided more jobs, in locations such as factories, which helped to fuel the Suffrage Movement in the early 20th Century.**

Sept. 25th, Women's Suffrage



“Women Workers at Colt Factory,” *Digital History 511: Theory & Practice*, accessed December 9, 2019, <http://library.ccsu.edu/dighistFall16/items/show/47>.

One of the driving factors of the women's suffrage movement was the fact that many more opportunities and jobs were becoming available for women. One of the primary forms of employment that women were taking were factory jobs. The reasons that there were so many industrial jobs opening up were because of the improving technologies in factories and because of the increasing number of new products that were being created. In addition, with war and other demands for male laborers there were less men available for factory jobs. Also, the many new products created a pressing need for new workers to create them. Women working jobs much more often led to them voicing their displeasures with how they were being seen in society. An example of this would be a document written in 1926, by Margaret Sanger, where she described the ways that marriages were changing by women becoming more independent and earning money. This is just another example of how the developments of technology can have a large impact on the events of history.

**Crash Course #31: Women's Suffrage**

**Women's Suffrage, Sept. 25, 2019**

**Margaret Sanger, Happiness in Marriage, 1926**

## 5. Improving our technologies during WWII helped us to win the war.

Oct. 2nd, World War II



Larkins, Bill. *A-17 Aircraft at Rest*. San Francisco, California.

[https://ww2db.com/image.php?image\\_id=24100](https://ww2db.com/image.php?image_id=24100)

There were many different ways that we developed our war technologies during World War II (WWII) to help us win the war. Examples of this include the jet engine, the nuclear bomb, and sonar. Another key reason that we were able to win WWII was our ability to consistently push out as many war materials as our soldiers needed no matter what. We were able to do this because of our capacity for mass production and our more efficient industrial technology. The WWII propaganda poster, titled “Give ‘em stuff to fight with”, shows that our government had nearly our entire country aiding in the war effort. Another reason we were finally able to end the war was because of the U.S. military dropping the atomic bomb. Without it, the Japanese may have never surrendered because it is in the Japanese culture to kill yourself before surrendering. This is why it was such a significant development for the nuclear bomb to be created by the United States first, and we were also able to show the world the destructive capabilities of the atomic bomb and why it should never be used again.

[Crash Course #35: World War II Part 1](#)

[WWII, Oct. 2nd, 2019](#)

[Sarra Valentino, WWII Poster, “Give ‘em the stuff to fight with”, 1942](#)

## 6. Following WWII, our development of technology allowed us to experience an economic boom which helped us to grow into a world superpower.

Oct. 9th, The Postwar Boom



*East Flagler Street 20 minutes after surrender - Miami, Florida. 1945. Black & white photonegative. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. Accessed 9 Dec. 2019.<<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/12023>>.*

During WWII, America was creating an amazing number of products in support of the war effort. However, after the war there was no longer markets for all of the products. This meant that industries were able to shift their focus to the production of items once considered luxury products. American citizens were often purchasing products to simply not look cheap and communist, which was important during that time period. It was often seen by many that the more you buy, the more American you were. The suburbs were also greatly developed during this economic boom. Levittown was essentially the mass production of homes and this was made possible by the development of technologies that made these homes more uniform and simple. With more people spreading out, this caused a very large increase in the number of children being born, which was known as the “Baby Boom”.

**Crash Course #39: Civil Rights and the 1950s**

**The Postwar Boom, Oct. 9th, 2019**

**Laura A. Belmonte, A Journalist Describes Levittown, 1948**

**7. The globalization of American economy and culture, which has been a negative for some foreigners, came from the improvement of our technologies.**

Nov. 20th, Globalization



Frysinger, Galen. *McDonalds in Shanghai*, 2005, [www.galenfrysinger.com/nanjing\\_road\\_shanghai\\_china.htm](http://www.galenfrysinger.com/nanjing_road_shanghai_china.htm). Accessed 9 Dec. 2019.

Improving technologies during the 1970s and 1980s allowed America's economy and culture to spread around the world. This picture shows a McDonald's location in China which is an example of American companies expanding out into other nations. The forms of technology that allowed this include advancements in computers, transportation, and media. With American business spreading all over the world there were many countries who did not like this. They claimed that America was taking over their culture and trying to destroy their historic traditions. This has caused people in some nations, particularly fundamentalist nations such as Iran, to fight back in terroristic ways. This includes events such as 9/11 when two commercial airplanes were flown into the world trade center and one commercial airplane was flown into the pentagon.

Friedman and Mandelbaum, *America on Top of its Game*

**Crash Course #46: Terrorism, War, and Bush**

N.R. Kleinfield, *Getting Here from There*, Sept. 8th, 2011