** Gilded Age Photo Essay Project**

US History   
Miss Natalie

To help us answer the last essential question in this unit (What positive and negative results did industrialization and urbanization have on the country as a whole and on individual citizens?), we are going to complete an assignment inspired by Jacob Riis that has us reflect on some positive and negative results in our own surroundings and compare it to the US in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

**Who is Jacob Riis?**

*Jacob Riis, the third of fifteen children, was born in [Ribe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ribe),*[*Denmark*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denmark)*, on 3rd May, 1849. He worked as a carpenter in*[*Copenhagen*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copenhagen)*before emigrating to the United States in 1870. Unable to find work, he was often forced to spend the night in police station lodging houses.*

*Riis did a variety of menial jobs before finding work with a news bureau in*[*New York City*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City)*in 1873. The following year he was recruited by the South Brooklyn News. In 1877 Riis became a police reporter for the*[*New York Tribune*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_Tribune)*. Aware of what it was like to live in poverty, Riis was determined to use this opportunity to employ his journalistic skills to communicate this to the public. He constantly argued that the "poor were the victims rather than the makers of their fate".*

*In 1888 Riis was employed as a photo-journalist by the*[*New York Evening Sun*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sun_(New_York))*. Riis was among the first photographers to use flash powder, which enabled him to photograph interiors and exteriors of the slums at night. He also became associated with what later became known as muckraking journalism.*

*In December, 1889, an account of city life, illustrated by photographs, appeared in*[*Scribner's Magazine*](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAscribners.htm)*. This created a great deal of interest and the following year, a full-length version,*[*How the Other Half Lives*](http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Jacob+Riis&x=13&y=20)*, was published. The book was seen by*[*Theodore Roosevelt*](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USArooseveltT.htm)*, the New York Police Commissioner, and he had the city police lodging houses that were featured in the book closed down.*

**YOUR TASK:**

Lately with the local elections going on in Kosova you’ve been hearing many promises from politicians on how they want to improve their cities and the country overall for the citizens. Hopefully those elected will be able to fulfill those promises. But I am more interested in what **you** want to improve in your city or country and how you might do this.

**You will be creating a photo essay composed of at least 4 photographs** that you have taken on the subject of what you want to change in your society.These photographs can be on a single topic or each be on a different subject. **For each photograph you need to write a caption explaining the issue or problem that you are documenting, and suggest a way you might start to solve or improve it.**

I want you to print your photographs and either write or type your captions so we can display them in the hallway and classroom. This will be a **20 point project- 5 points for each photograph and caption.** Your photo essay will be **due on Wednesday November 13th.**

Once we all have our photo essays completed, we will have a class discussion on what you want to change, and comparing these problems or issues to the US during the Gilded Age.