

Elon Musk and the oligarchs of the 'Second Gilded Age' can not only sway the public – they can exploit their data, too | The Conversation

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During the Gilded Age of the late 19th century, and the early decades of the 20th century, U.S. captains of industry such as [William Randolph Hearst and Jay Gould](#) used their massive wealth to dominate facets of the economy, including the news media. They were, in many ways, prototype oligarchs – by [the dictionary definition](#), “very rich business leaders with a great deal of political influence.”

Some have argued that the U.S. is in the midst of a [Second Gilded Age](#) defined – like the first – by vast [wealth inequality](#), [hyper-partisanship](#), [xenophobia](#) and a [new crop of oligarchs](#) using their vast wealth to purchase media and political influence.

Which brings us to the announcement on April 25, 2022, that Tesla billionaire [Elon Musk](#) is, barring any last-minute hitches, purchasing the social media platform Twitter. It will put [the wealthiest man on the planet](#) in control of one of the most influential means of communications in world today.

[...]

Source: [Elon Musk and the oligarchs of the 'Second Gilded Age' can not only sway the public — they can exploit their data, too | The Conversation](#)