

A close-up portrait of a man with a mustache and glasses, wearing a suit and tie. The man has a serious expression and is looking directly at the camera. The background is dark and out of focus.

# Racing to the 20th Century



Chapter 1

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# Big Business

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In the years leading to the 20th Century, America's economy exploded with the robber barons of big business. There are questions about the methods used to amass their tremendous fortunes.

## Big Business

From the ashes of the American Civil War sprung an economic powerhouse.

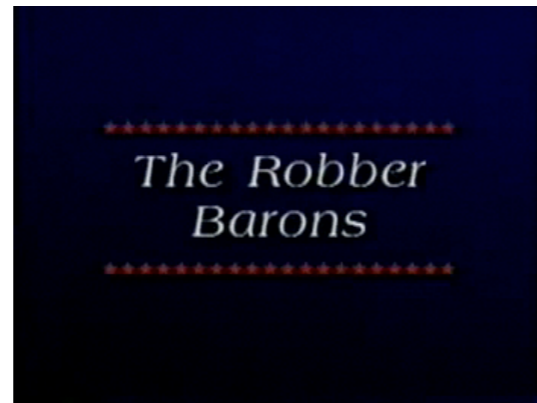
The factories built by the Union to defeat the Confederacy were not shut down at the war's end. Now that the fighting was done, these factories were converted to peacetime purposes. Although industry had existed prior to the war, farming was still the most significant portion of the American economy.

After the war, beginning with the railroads, small businesses grew larger and larger. By the century's end, the nation's economy was dominated by a few, very powerful individuals.

New technologies and new ways of organizing business led a few individuals to the top. The competition was ruthless. Those who could not provide the best product at the cheapest price were simply driven into bankruptcy or bought out.

The so-called captains of industry became household names: John D. Rockefeller of Standard Oil, Andrew Carnegie of Carnegie Steel, and J. Pierpont Morgan, the powerful banker who controlled a great many industries. Their tactics were not always fair, but there were few laws regulating business conduct at that time.

### Movie 1.1 The Robber Barons



The prosperity of America certainly did not reach everyone. Amid the fabulous wealth of a few there was tremendous poverty. This disparity in wealth led Mark Twain to coin the phrase "Gilded Age" to describe the time period after the Civil War leading up to the 20th Century. The term is intended to mock how American society had serious problems that were hidden by a thin coating of gold.

How did some manage to be so successful while others struggled to put food on the table? Americans wrestled with this great question as new attitudes of wealth began to emerge.

### A Case Study in Big Business - Andrew Carnegie

Many different commodities were needed for the 'Gilded Age' to be possible. Steel was one of these commodities and would be the building block for the modern city. The railroads needed steel for their rails and cars, the navy needed steel for its new naval fleet, and cities needed steel to build skyscrapers. Every factory in America needed steel for their machinery. Andrew Carnegie saw this demand and seized the moment.

#### *Humble Roots*

Andrew Carnegie was not born wealthy. When he was 13, his family came to the United States from Scotland, fleeing poverty. They settled in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, a small town near Pittsburgh. His first job was in a cotton mill, where he earned \$1.20 per week. His talents were soon recognized and Carnegie found himself promoted to the bookkeeping side of the business. An avid reader, Carnegie spent his Saturdays in the homes of wealthy citizens who were kind enough to allow him access to their private libraries. After becoming a telegrapher for a short while he met and became an assistant to Thomas A. Scott - President of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

During the Civil War, Scott was sent to Washington to operate transportation for the Union Army. Carnegie spent his war days helping the soldiers get where they needed to be and by helping the wounded get to hospitals. By this time, he had amassed a small sum of money, which he quickly invested. Soon iron and steel caught his

attention, and he was on his way to creating the largest steel company in the world.

Carnegie was able to take advantage of a new way to make steel, which enabled steelmakers to convert iron to steel cheaply and efficiently. It was called the Bessemer process, and it allowed for large batches of steel to be made, where before steel could only be made in small batches. Many industries took advantage of cheap steel, and the steel industry grew. Carnegie wisely jumped on this new technology and brought it to the United States.

#### *Vertical Integration: Moving “Upward and Onward”*

Carnegie became a tycoon because of shrewd business tactics. Carnegie used the tactic of vertical integration. He bought railroad companies, shipping boats, coal and iron ore mines. In other words, he owned every company necessary to make steel from the raw materials to shipping and sale of the final product. By owning the modes of transportation and the mines, he could reduce his costs and produce cheaper steel.

These tactics made the Carnegie Steel Company a multi-million dollar corporation. On his way to the top, Carnegie and his business faced a big challenge of how to deal with the unions in his factories. The turmoil that existed between some of the union workers and Carnegie came to a critical point during the Homestead Strike. In 1901, he sold his interests to J.P. Morgan, who paid him 500 million dollars to create U.S. Steel, making Carnegie the richest man in the world at that time.

#### PRIMARY SOURCE - QUESTIONS

1. Who wrote each piece? What is his/her perspective?
2. How might Frick’s description & his language differ from Goldman’s?
3. (Consider the date: July 8 – two days after the actual violence). How could this have played a role in what Frick would say?
4. In each piece, what words or phrases stand out?
5. Is there any evidence, Frick is trying to sound reasonable or logical? What is his motive?
6. Why did the Homestead Strike turn violent?
7. What are the differences between the two accounts?
8. Which account do you find more believable?
9. Can we ever know what happened?
10. What other materials would you want to look at in order to try to figure out what happened at Homestead?

### Source #1 Emma Goldman (edited)

It was May 1892. Trouble had broken out between the Carnegie Steel Company and its workers, organized in the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. Amalgamated Association was one of the biggest and most efficient unions in the country, consisting mostly of strong Americans, men of decision and grit, who stood up for their rights. The Carnegie Company, on the other hand, was a powerful corporation. Andrew Carnegie, its president, had turned over management to Henry Clay Frick, a man known for his hatred of unions and workers.

The Carnegie Company enjoyed great wealth and prosperity. Wages were arranged between the company and the union, according to a sliding scale based on the current market price of steel products.

Andrew Carnegie decided to abolish the sliding scale. The company would make no more agreements with the Amalgamated Association. In fact, he would not recognize the union at all. Then, he closed the mills. It was an open declaration of war.

The steel-workers declared that they were ready to take up the challenge of Frick: they would insist on their right to organize and to deal collectively with their employers. Their tone was manly, ringing with the spirit of their rebellious forebears of the Revolutionary War.

Then the news flashed across the country of the slaughter of steelworkers by Pinkertons. In the dead of night, Frick sent a boat packed with strike-breakers and heavily armed Pinkerton thugs to the mill. The workers stationed themselves along the shore, determined to drive back Frick's hirelings. When the boat got within range, the Pinkertons had opened fire, without warning, killing a number of Homestead men on the shore, among them a little boy, and wounding scores of others.

*Source: Emma Goldman was a political activist and radical who strongly supported workers' rights. This information comes from her autobiography, written in 1931, where she recounts the Homestead crisis that happened 39 years earlier.*

adapted from: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/99/>

### Source #2 Henry Clay Frick (edited)

I can say as clearly as possible that under no circumstances will we have any further dealings with the Amalgamated Association as an organization. This is final.

The workmen in the Amalgamated Association work under what is known as a sliding scale. As the price of steel rises, the earnings of the men also rise; as the prices fall, their wages also fall. The wages are not allowed to fall below a certain amount, which is called the minimum. Until now, the minimum has been \$25 per ton of steel produced. We have recently changed the minimum to \$23 instead of \$25. We believe this is reasonable because the Carnegie Company has spent a lot of money on new machinery that allows workers to increase their daily output, and therefore increase their earnings. The Amalgamated Association was unwilling to consider a minimum below \$24, even though the improved machinery would enable workers to earn more. We found it impossible to arrive at any agreement with the Amalgamated Association, so we decided to close our works at Homestead.

The Amalgamated men surrounded our property and blocked all of the entrances and all roads leading to Homestead. We felt that for the safety of our property, it was necessary for us to hire our own guards to assist the sheriff.

We brought our guards here as quietly as possible; had them taken to Homestead at an hour of the night when we hoped to have them enter without any interference whatever and without meeting anybody. All our efforts were to prevent the possibilities of a confrontation between the Amalgamated Association and our guards.

We have investigated and learned that the Amalgamated men and their friends fired on our guards for twenty-five minutes before they reached our property, and then again after they had reached our property. Our guards did not return the fire until after the boats had touched the shore, and after three of our guards had been wounded, one fatally.

*Source: In this newspaper interview in the Pittsburgh Post on July 8, 1892, Frick explains his argument against the Union.*

adapted from: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5349/>

## Homestead Strike Timeline

**Where:** Homestead, Pennsylvania

**Union:** Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers

**Company:** Carnegie Steel Company

**1876:**

Amalgamated Association, union for iron and steel workers created.

**1881:**

Carnegie puts Frick in charge of the Homestead factory.

**1882 and 1889:**

Amalgamated Association won two big strikes against the Carnegie Company. After 1889, the union became very powerful and organized. They had a very strong union contract.

**February 1892:**

Amalgamated Association asked for a wage increase. Frick responds with a wage decrease.

**June 29, 1892:**

The old contract expired without the two sides reaching an agreement. Frick locked the workers out of the plant, using a high fence topped with barbed wire.

**June 30, 1892:**

Workers decided to strike and they surrounded the plant to make sure that no scab workers would enter.

**July 6, 1892:**

After the local sheriff was unable to control the strikers, Frick hired guards from the National Pinkerton Detective Agency to secure the factory so that strikebreakers could enter.

The Pinkertons arrived by boat in the middle of the night, hoping to surround the factory unnoticed.

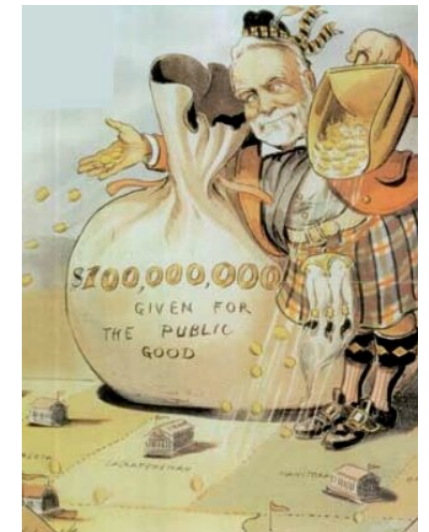
The strikers knew they were coming. Shots were fired and people killed on both sides.

*\*Dates & events used from Wikipedia: Homestead Strike; Amalgamated Association.*

Figure 1.1

### Giving Back

Retirement did not take Carnegie out of public life. Before his death he donated more than \$350 million dollars to public foundations. Remembering the difficulty of finding good books as a youth, he helped build three thousand libraries. He helped build three thousand libraries. He built schools for public uses such as Carnegie Mellon University, gave his money for artistic pursuits such as Carnegie Hall in New York and created the Carnegie Foundations which is still in operation and funds various projects for the public.



Carnegie was criticized during his time for not spending some of his millions on the workers in his factories. But Carnegie believed that competition was the best thing for business and society as a whole.

## Document 1.1 -Gospel of Wealth Document 1.2 Buffett Letter

Andrew Carnegie: The Gospel of Wealth, 1889 (edited)

The problem of our age is the administration of wealth, so that the ties of brotherhood may still bind together the rich and poor in harmonious relationship. The conditions of human life have not only been changed, but revolutionized, within the past few hundred years. In former days there was little difference between the dwelling, dress, food, and environment of the chief and those around him. . . . The contrast between the palace of the millionaire and the cottage of the laborer with us today measures the change which has come with civilization.

The question then arises. . . . What is the proper mode of administering wealth after the sleep upon which civilization is founded have thrown it into the hands of the few? . . . There are but three modes in which surplus wealth can be disposed of: it can be left to the families of the decedents; or it can be bequeathed for public purposes; or, finally, it can be administered during their lives by its possessors. . . .

Why should men leave great fortunes to their children? If this is done from affection, is it not misguiding affection? . . . great sums bequeathed often work more for the injury than for the good of the recipients.

As to the second mode, that of leaving wealth at death for public uses, which is true, many people, including . . . the great to say . . . my dear children, get rich and then give to the poor and children to help them. . . .

This, then, is held to be the duty of the man of Wealth: First, to set an example of modest, unostentatious living, shunning display or extravagance; to provide moderately for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him; and after doing so to consider all surplus revenues which come to him simply as trust funds, which he is called upon to administer, and strictly bound as a matter of duty to administer in the manner which, in his judgment, is best calculated to produce the most beneficial result for the community—the man of wealth thus becoming the safe agent and trustee for his poorer brethren, bringing to their service his superior wisdom, experience, and ability to administer—doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves.

Thomas Andrew Carnegie, a poor immigrant from Scotland, built a huge personal fortune in the steel industry. Before he died, he gave most of his hundreds of millions of dollars away in his "Gospel of Wealth." He proved his rationale on reasoning.

Adapted from: <http://www.bnf.com/edu/humanities/1889/gospelofwealth.asp>

Warren Buffett

My Philanthropic Pledge

In 2006, I made a commitment to gradually give all my Berkshire Hathaway stock to philanthropic foundations. I would like to report on that decision.

Now Bill and Melinda Gates and I are asking hundreds of rich Americans to pledge at least 1% of their wealth to charity. We think it is a worthy goal because we believe that it will help to solve some of the world's most important problems.

First, my pledge. More than 90% of my wealth will go to philanthropy during my lifetime or at death. My second pledge, this commitment to give to the community more through more individuals who want to share my view.

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Regardless, he helped build an empire that led the United States to world power status.

## Captains of Industry; Robber Barons too?

### *John D. Rockefeller*

John D. Rockefeller was America's first billionaire. Coming from humble beginnings, Rockefeller had the vision and the drive to become the richest person in America. At the turn of the century, when the average worker earned \$8 to \$10 per week, Rockefeller was worth millions.

What was his secret to success? Like Carnegie, Rockefeller was not born into a wealthy family. He was born into a devout baptist family in western New York. His father practiced herbal medicine, professing to cure patients with remedies he had created from plants in the area. After graduating from high school in 1855, the family sent him to a Cleveland business school.

John Rockefeller's first job was as a clerk in a Cleveland shipping firm. There he saved enough money to start his own business in produce sales. When the Civil War came, the demand for his goods increased dramatically, and Rockefeller found himself making a lot of money.

He took advantage of the loophole in the Union draft law by purchasing a substitute to avoid military service. When Edwin Drake discovered oil in 1859 in Titusville, Pennsylvania, Rockefeller saw the future. He slowly sold off his other interests and became convinced that refining oil would bring him great wealth.

Rockefeller (like Carnegie in the steel industry) completely changed the oil industry. In the mid-19th century, the chief demand was for kerosene. In the refining process, there are many by-products (or left over products) when crude oil is converted to kerosene. What others saw as waste, Rockefeller saw as gold. He sold one byproduct paraffin to candlemakers and another byproduct petroleum jelly to medical supply companies. He even sold off other "waste" as paving materials

for roads. He shipped so many goods that railroad companies desperately wanted his business.

Rockefeller demanded rebates, or discounted rates, from the railroads. He used all these methods to reduce the price of oil to his consumers. His profits soared and his competitors were crushed one by one. Rockefeller believed competition within a market was wasteful. He folded smaller oil companies into his Standard Oil Trust, creating a monopoly of the oil industry.

Standard Oil was a trust. A trust is a combination of firms formed by legal agreement. Trusts often reduce fair business competition. As a result of Rockefeller's shrewd business practices, his large corporation, the Standard Oil Company, became enormously wealthy. Even after the company was broken up by the government as a monopoly, Rockefeller's shares in the newly created companies continued to bring him huge profit.

As the country modernized towards the turn of the century, Rockefeller's investments continued to grow. With consumers starting to buy more and more automobiles, gasoline replaced kerosene as the number one petroleum product. Rockefeller was a bona fide billionaire. Critics charged that his labor practices were unfair. Employees pointed out that he could have paid his workers a better wage and settled for being a half-billionaire.

Before his death in 1937, Rockefeller gave away nearly half of his fortune. Churches, medical foundations, universities, and centers for the arts received hefty sums of oil money. Whether he was driven by

**Figure 1.2**



Standard Oil — a Trust-worthy Company?

good will, conscience, or his devout faith in God is unknown. Regardless, he became a hero to many enterprising Americans

## Morgan

Not all of the tycoons of the Gilded Age were rags-to-riches stories. J. Pierpont Morgan was born into a family of great wealth. His father had already made a name for himself in the banking industry. With Morgan's family resources, he enjoyed the finest business education money could buy. He did not scratch and claw his way to the top of any corporate ladder. His father arranged for an executive track position at one of New York's finest banks. Regardless of his family's advantages, Morgan had a great mind of his own and set out to conquer the financial world.

Morgan's first business ventures were in banking. He understood the power of investing in other companies to make money. During the Civil War, he paid the legally allowed fee to purchase a substitute soldier and avoided military service. Instead, he made large profits during the war by providing war materials to the government. One of his enterprises sold defective rifles to the Union army. Upon later investigations, he was cleared of any wrongdoing as to the poor quality of his guns. After the war, he set out to make money by investing in the nation's financial markets.

**Figure 1.3**



Morgan the banker

**Figure 1.4**



J.P. Morgan was one of the organizers of the World Fair held in Chicago in 1893.

Despite being labelled as a robber baron, Morgan felt his investments helped America. His railroad dealings helped consolidate many smaller, mismanaged firms, resulting in shorter trips and more dependable service. Two times during financial panics he allowed the federal government to purchase his vast gold supplies to stop a market meltdown.

His most famous purchase was in 1901, when he bought the Carnegie Steel Company for \$500 million to create U.S. Steel. Within ten years U.S. Steel was worth over a billion dollars.

Morgan's actions marked a shift in thinking among American industrialists. He proved that it was not necessary to be a builder to be successful. Smart investment could also earn large profits. Young entrepreneurs shifted their goals to banking in the hopes of copying Morgan's success.

For all of Morgan's accomplishments, he was harshly criticized. The first decade of the twentieth century was difficult for Morgan. His Northern Securities Railroad company was deemed illegal under federal antitrust law, the first such action by the national government. He was investigated by Congress for his control of the financial mar-



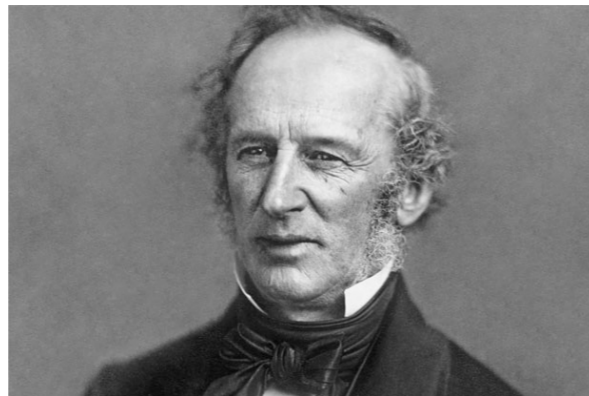
kets. Even U.S. Steel was forced to give up its Monopoly of the steel market.

Attacked publicly by criticism, Morgan moved to Europe, where he lived his final days. He was a villain to some who believed he stole money from the poor but admired by bankers who wanted to follow in his footsteps.

### *Vanderbilt*

Cornelius “Commodore” Vanderbilt started working at age 11 as a deck hand on his father’s ferry boat on the Hudson River. He eventually became owner of his own boat and was soon engaged in the lucrative Hudson River traffic between New York and Albany. With the profits he made from his boat business he began to invest in railroads in the 1830s, eventually owning a number of lines that merged into the Grand Central Railroad, which operated between New York City and Chicago. He too was a Captain of Industry in the railroad business.

**Figure 1.5**



*Click link to explore the Newport summer homes of some of the big business tycoons of the time.*

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/carnegie/sfeature/tour.html>

### **American Views on Wealth During the Gilded Age**

Not everybody was getting rich. The new wealthy class was still rather small. People soon began to ask important questions. How did one get rich in America? Was it because of a combination of hard

work and intelligence? Was it because of family connections? Did education and skill play a role? Or was it simply luck?

### *Survival of the Fittest*

The idea of "Survival of the Fittest" grew out of Charles Darwin's idea of the process of natural selection in the wild. Social Darwinists believed that the humans who were the most fit became the most successful. Whatever people had the necessary skills to prosper — perhaps talent, brains, or hard work — would be the ones who would rise to the top. Why were some people poor? To the Social Darwinist, the answer was obvious. They simply did not have the talent, brains, or hard work to make something of themselves.

Social Darwinists, however, went even further. Darwin stated that the weaker members of a species in nature would die and that over time only the stronger genes would be passed on. Social Darwinists believed the same should happen with humans. They opposed government handouts, or safety regulations, or laws restricting child labor. Such actions would only enable the weak, and the unfit would be allowed to survive.

### *Gospel of Wealth*

Some Americans tried to combine their Christian beliefs with Social Darwinism. Andrew Carnegie and John Rockefeller both agreed that the most successful people were the ones with the necessary skills. But they each believed that God played a role in deciding who got the skills. Because God granted a select few with the talent to be successful, Christian virtue demanded that some of that money be shared. Carnegie and Rockefeller became philanthropists — wealthy citizens who donated large sums of money for the public good.

## Horatio Alger's American Dream

A third influence of American thinking was Horatio Alger. Alger was not an intellectual; rather, he wrote Dime Novels for the immigrant masses rushing to America's shores. Although he penned many stories, each book answered the question of how to get rich in America. Alger believed that a combination of hard work and good fortune — pluck and luck, in his words — was the key.

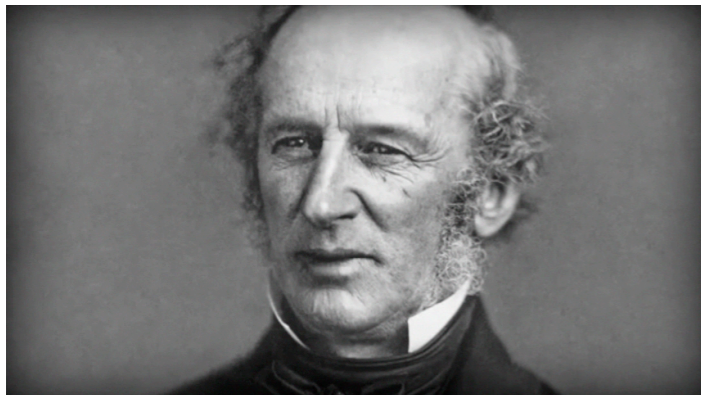
A typical Alger story would revolve around a hardworking immigrant who served on the bottom rung of the corporate ladder, perhaps as a stock boy. One day he would be walking down the street and see a safe falling from a tall building. Our hero would bravely push aside the hapless young woman walking below and save her life. Of course, she was the boss's daughter. The two would get married, and he would become vice-president of the corporation.

This is what the masses wished to believe, that anyone who worked hard could make it in America if they caught a lucky break. This idea is the basis for the "American Dream."

### Stop and Think 1.1

Does society today still believe in Social Darwinism? The American Dream? Explain.

### Movie 1.2



As a helpful review watch this short U.S. History Crash Course Video on the Industrial Economy at the turn of the 20th Century.

## Links to Modern Big Business Case Studies

<http://www.tms.tolland.k12.ct.us/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=19822659>

<http://www.tms.tolland.k12.ct.us/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=19822688>

<http://www.tms.tolland.k12.ct.us/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=19822693>

<http://www.tms.tolland.k12.ct.us/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=19822696>

# Big Business Terms

*As we study about the Robber Barons, you will need to know some of these economic terms. For each word, you should also understand the situation or scenario that matches that concept.*

rebate	drawback	tariff	bribery
trust	monopoly	merger	

1. You are a manufacturer of horseshoes. You buy all your competitors' businesses. You are now the only manufacturer of horseshoes in the country.
2. You need a court decision to go your way, so you pay the judge to make the "right" decision.
3. You pay the full price of \$2000 to ship your oil from Cleveland to New York. The railroad secretly gives you back half of what you paid.
4. This particular railroad also pays you a fee each time it ships your competitor's oil.
5. You want to expand your ice cream business. You combine with a rival ice cream company to form a new, much bigger company.
6. Your ladder company joins in an arrangement with other ladder companies to control the national market for ladders.
7. You import picture frames from France to the United States. You pay a tax on these imported goods to the United States government.

# Immigration

At the turn of the century, more and more people came to America seeking opportunity and a better life. These immigrants faced many challenges, but eventually weaved themselves into the fabric of our country.



Immigration at the turn of the 20th Century was nothing new to America. Except for Native Americans, all United States citizens have some connection to immigrants, whether they were brought to America by force or came to America by choice. Immigration to the United States reached its peak from 1880-1920. Previous immigrants had come largely from Ireland and Germany. This time, although those groups would continue to come, "New Immigrants" were largely coming from Southern and Eastern Europe, and some would come from as far away as Asia. These immigrants experienced unique challenges as they attempted to become a part of America.

Earlier immigrants had much in common with American life. Most had some experience with representative democracy. With the exception of the Irish, most were protestant. Many were able to read, and some possessed a fair degree of wealth.

The new immigrants arriving by the boatload in the Gilded Age did not share these similarities with Americans. Their nationalities included Greek, Italian, Polish, Slovak, Serb, Russian, Croat, and others. Until cut off by federal decree, Japanese and Chinese settlers relocated to the American West Coast. None of these groups practiced the Protestant religion. Instead, most were Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox. However, due to increased persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe, many Jewish immigrants sought freedom as well. Very few newcomers spoke any English, and large numbers were even unable to read in their native tongues. None of these groups were coming from democracies. The American form of government was as foreign as its culture.

The new American cities became the destination of many of the poorest immigrants. Letters from America from friends and family beckoned new immigrants to sections of the cities such as Chinatown, Greektown, or Little Italy. This led to an urban ethnic patchwork, with people from the same background living together and little integration. Most of these immigrants lived in tenements and worked long

hours in factories until enough money could be saved for a better apartment or improved living conditions.

Despite the horrors of tenement housing and factory work, many agreed that the wages they could earn and the food they could eat in America was better than what they had in their former countries. Still, as many as 25% of the European immigrants of this time never intended to become American citizens. These so-called "birds of passage" simply earned enough income to send to their families and returned to their former lives.

### Resistance to Immigration

Not all Americans welcomed the new immigrants with open arms. While factory owners were happy with the rush of cheap labor, workers often treated their new competition with hostility. Many religious leaders were awestruck at the increase of non-Protestant believers.

Gradually, these "nativists" lobbied successfully to restrict the flow of immigration. In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, barring this ethnic group entirely from immigrating to the United States. Twenty-five years later, Japanese immigration was restricted as well. These two Asian groups were the only ethnicities to be completely excluded from America.

Criminals, contract workers, the mentally ill, anarchists, and alcoholics were among groups to be gradually

**Figure 2.1**



Political cartoons sometimes played on Americans' fears of immigrants. This one, which appeared in a 1896 edition of the *Ram's Horn*, depicts an immigrant carrying his baggage of poverty, disease, anarchy and sabbath desecration, approaching Uncle Sam.

barred from entry by Congress. In 1917, Congress required immigrants to pass a literacy test before coming to America. Finally, in 1924, the door was shut to millions by placing an limits on new immigrants coming to America based on ethnicity.

But millions had already come. During the age when the Statue of Liberty beckoned the world's "huddled masses yearning to breathe free," American diversity grew. Each brought pieces of an old culture and made contributions to a new one. Although many former Europeans swore to their deaths to maintain their old ways of life, their children did not agree. Most enjoyed a higher standard of living than their parents, learned English easily, and sought American lifestyles. At least to that extent, America was a melting pot.

### Movie 2.1 The Statue of Liberty



**DIRECTIONS:** Read Emma Lazarus's famous poem, *The New Colossus*. Compare the pictures of the Greek Colossus of Rhodes and the Statue of Liberty as you read.

**Figure 2.2** The Statue of Liberty



**Figure 2.3** The Colossus of Rhodes



### The New Colossus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,  
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;  
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand  
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name  
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand  
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.  
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she  
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

*DIRECTIONS:* Read other perspectives on immigration in the following poems below:

*Unguarded Gates* - 1895 - by Thomas Bailey Aldrich

...Wide open and unguarded stand our gates,  
And through them presses a wild motley throng—  
Men from the Volga and the Tartar steppes,  
Featureless figures of the Hoang-Ho,  
Malayan, Scythian, Teuton, Kelt, and Slav  
Flying the Old World's poverty and scorn;

These bringing with them unknown gods and rites,—  
Those, tiger passions, here to stretch their claws.  
In street and alley what strange tongues are loud,  
Accents of menace alien to our air,  
Voices that once the Tower of Babel knew!

O Liberty, white Goddess! is it well  
To leave the gates unguarded? On thy breast  
Fold Sorrow's children, soothe the hurts of fate,  
Lift the down-trodden, but with hand of steel  
Stay those who to thy sacred portals come

To waste the gifts of freedom. Have a care  
Lest from thy brow the clustered stars be torn  
And trampled in the dust. For so of old  
The thronging Goth and Vandal trampled Rome,  
And where the temples of the Cæsars stood

The lean wolf unmolested made her lair.

---

*The Alien in the Melting Pot* - 1908 - by Frederick J. Haskin  
I am the immigrant.

Since the dawn of creation my restless feet have beaten new paths  
across the earth.  
My uneasy bark has tossed on all seas.  
My wanderlust was born of the craving for more liberty and a better  
wage for the sweat of my face.  
I looked towards the United States with eyes kindled by the fire of am-  
bition and heart quickened with new-born hope.  
I approached its gates with great expectation.  
I entered in with fine hopes.  
I have shouldered my burden as the American man of all work.  
I contribute eighty-five per cent. of all the labour in the slaughtering  
and meat-packing industries.  
I do seven-tenths of the bituminous coal mining.  
I do seventy-eight per cent. of all the work in the woollen mills.  
I contribute nine-tenths of all the labour in the cotton mills.  
I make nine-twentieths of all the clothing.  
I manufacture more than half the shoes.  
I build four-fifths of all the furniture.  
I make half of the collars, cuffs, and shirts.  
I turn out four-fifths of all the leather.  
I make half the gloves.  
I refine nearly nineteen-twentieths of the sugar.  
I make half of the tobacco and cigars.  
And yet, I am the great American problem.  
When I pour out my blood on your altar of labour, and lay down my  
life as a sacrifice to your god of toil, men make no more comment  
than at the fall of a sparrow.  
But my brawn is woven into the warp and woof of the fabric of your  
national being.  
My children shall be your children and your land shall be my land be-  
cause my sweat and my blood will cement the foundations of the  
America of To-Morrow.  
If I can be fused into the body politic, the Melting-Pot will have stood  
the supreme test.

---

*Prospective Immigrants Please Note* - 1962 -by Adrienne Rich

Either you will  
go through this door  
or you will not go through.

If you go through  
there is always the risk  
of remembering your name.

Things look at you doubly  
and you must look back  
and let them happen.

If you do not go through  
it is possible  
to live worthily

to maintain your attitudes  
to hold your position  
to die bravely

but much will blind you,  
much will evade you,  
at what cost who knows?

The door itself  
makes no promises.  
It is only a door.

---


*Angel Island* - poetry collected by Barrak Walls

Detained in this wooden house for several tens of days,  
It is all because of the Mexican exclusion law which implicates me.

It's a pity heroes have no way of exercising their prowess.  
I can only await the word so that I can snap Zu's whip.  
From now on, I am departing far from this building  
All of my fellow villagers are rejoicing with me.  
Don't say that everything within is Western styled.  
Even if it is built of jade, it has turned into a cage.  
– From the walls of Angel Island Immigration Station, author un-  
known, Poem 69 from *Island*, p. 134.

Imprisoned in the wooden building day after day,  
My freedom is withheld; how can I bear to talk about it?  
I look to see who is happy but they only sit quietly.  
I am anxious and depressed and cannot fall asleep.  
The days are long and bottle constantly empty;  
My sad mood even so is not dispelled.  
Nights are long and the pillow cold; who can pity my loneliness?  
After experiencing such loneliness and sorrow,  
Why not just return home and learn to plow the fields?  
– From the walls of Angel Island Immigration Station, author un-  
known, Poem 32 from *Island*, p. 68.

[Links to Further Inquiry](#)



**Interactive 2.1** Political Cartoons

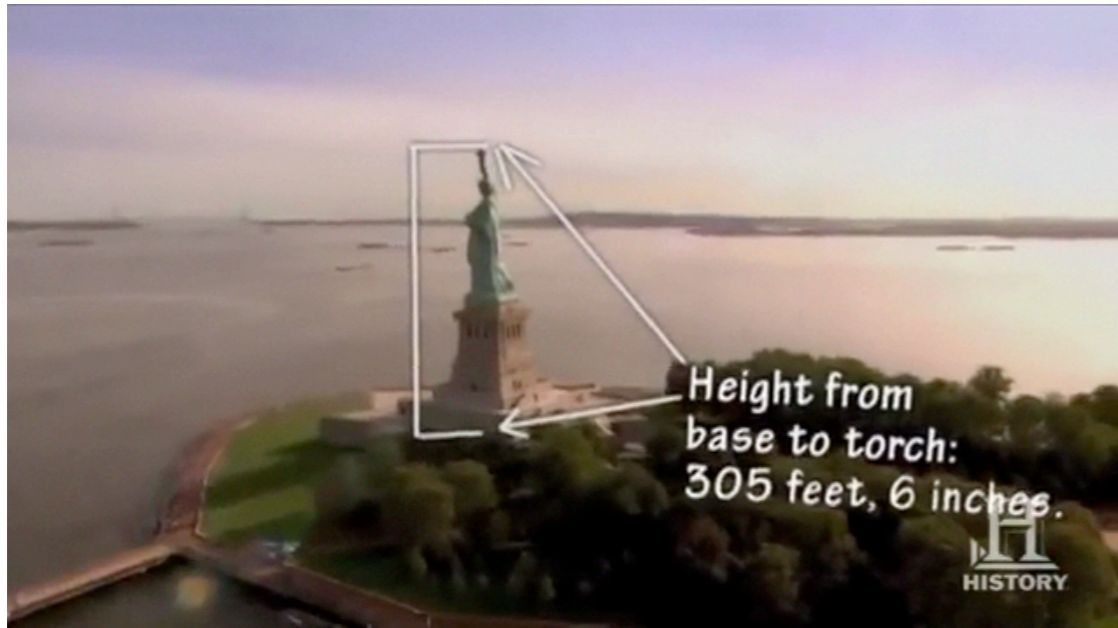
Turn of the Century  
Immigration

Analyzing Political Cartoons



More about the Statue of Liberty -

## Movie 2.2 Deconstructing the Statue of Liberty



<http://www.nps.gov/stli/historyculture/index.htm>

More about Ellis Island -

<http://www.nps.gov/elis/historyculture/index.htm>

Interactive tour of Ellis Island

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/tour/>

Virtual Field Trip Ellis Island

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/webcast.htm>

Explore Immigration Data

[http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/immigration\\_data/](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/immigration_data/)

Immigrant Stories

<http://www.immigrantjourneys.com/stories.html>

## Tenements

The immigrant poor in cities lived in overcrowded, unsanitary, and unsafe housing. Many lived in tenements, dumbbell-shaped brick apartment buildings, four to six stories in height. In 1900, two-thirds of Manhattan's residents lived in tenements.

In one New York tenement, up to eighteen people lived in each apartment. Each apartment had a wood-burning stove and a concrete bathtub in the kitchen, which, when covered with planks, served as a dining table. Before 1901, residents used rear-yard outhouses. Afterward, two common toilets were installed on each floor. In the summer, children sometimes slept on the fire escape. Tenants typically paid \$10 a month rent.

In tenements, many apartments were dark and airless because interior windows faced narrow light shafts, if there were interior windows at all. With a series of newspaper articles and then a book entitled *How the Other Half Lives*, published in 1889, Jacob Riis turned tenement reform into a crusade.

*Excerpts from How the Other Half Lives by Jacob Riis*

Bottle Alley is around the corner in Baxter Street; but it is a fair specimen of its kind, wherever found. Look into any of these houses, everywhere the same piles of rags, of malodorous bones and musty paper, all of which the sanitary police flatter themselves they have banished to the dumps and the warehouses. Here is a "flat" of "parlor" and two pitch-dark coops called bedrooms. Truly, the bed is all there is room for. The family tea-kettle is on the stove, doing duty for the time being as a wash-boiler. By night it will have returned to its proper use again, a practical illustration of how poverty in "the Bend" makes both ends meet. One, two, three beds are there, if the old boxes and

heaps of foul straw can be called by that name; a broken stove with crazy pipe from which the smoke leaks at every joint, a table of rough boards propped up on boxes, piles of rubbish in the corner. The closeness and smell are appalling. How many people sleep here? The woman with the red bandanna shakes her head sullenly, but the bare-legged girl with the bright face counts on her fingers—five, six! “Six, sir!” Six grown people and five children. “Only five,” she says with a smile, swathing the little one on her lap in its cruel bandage. There is another in the cradle—actually a cradle. And how much the rent? Nine and a half, and “please, sir! he won’t put the paper on.” “He” is the landlord. The “paper” hangs in musty shreds on the wall.

Well do I recollect the visit of a health inspector to one of these tenements on a July day when the thermometer outside was climbing high in the nineties; but inside, in that awful room, with half a dozen persons washing, cooking, and sorting rags, lay the dying baby alongside the stove, where the doctor’s thermometer ran up to 115°!

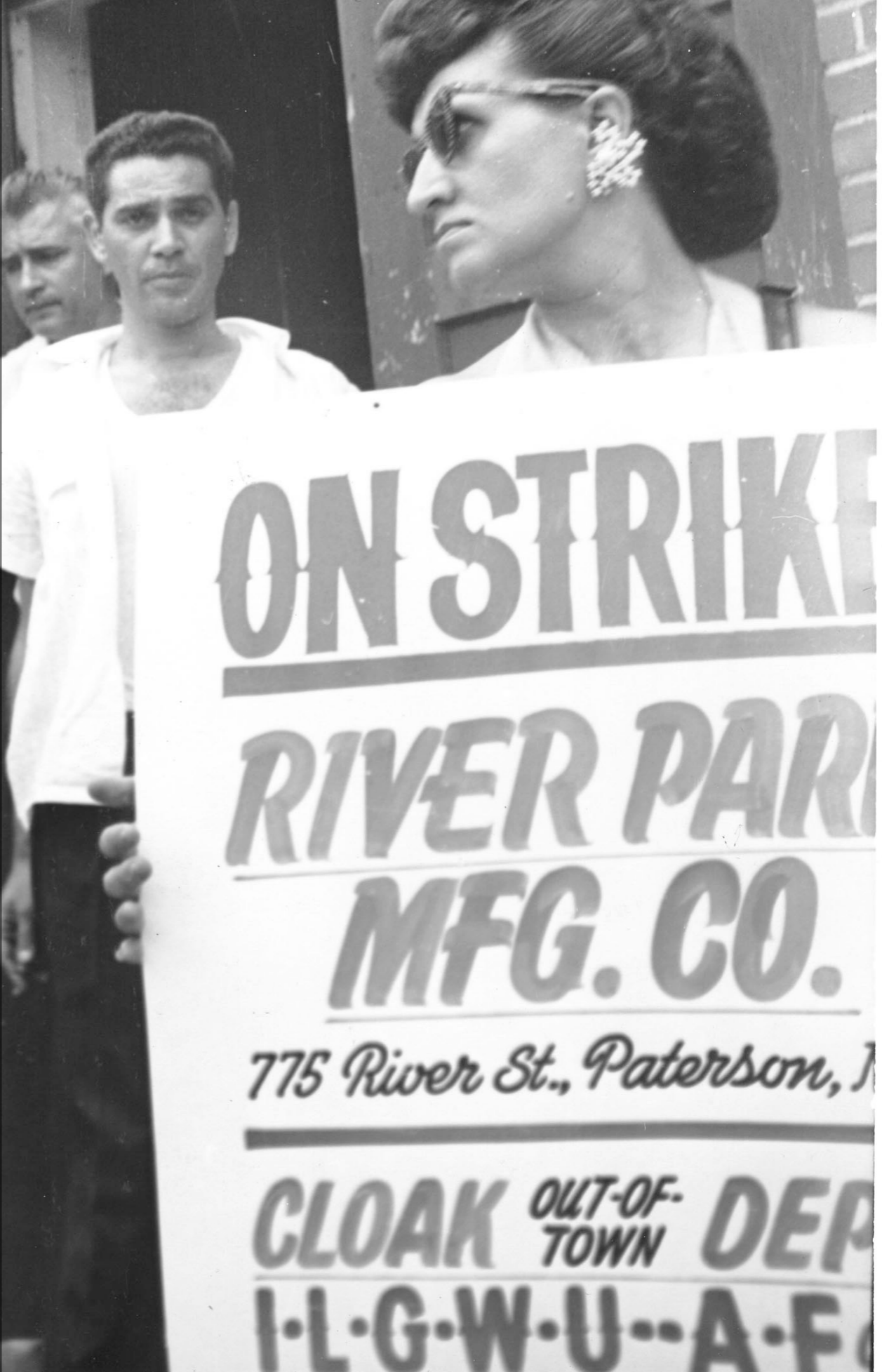
DIRECTIONS: Explore the photographs in the PowerPoint below. Imagine living in these conditions.

### Interactive 2.2

The image shows a screenshot of a PowerPoint presentation. The slide has a white background with a dark teal circular graphic on the left side. The title "Investigating Tenements" is centered at the top in a teal font, underlined. Below the title, there is a video player icon (a square with a play button) and the text "Photographs from Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine". At the bottom of the slide, there is a dark grey navigation bar with left and right arrows and the text "1/11".

# The Rise of Unions

The rise in big business led to workers uniting for better working conditions. While unions worked to bring about change, it took a tragedy to bring about new laws. There are many issues still being debated between management and labor today.



## Factory Conditions

In the 1800s, the vast majority of American work was still done on the farm. By the turn of the 20th century (1900), the United States economy revolved around the factory.

Most Americans living in the Gilded Age knew nothing of the millions of Rockefeller, Carnegie and Morgan. They worked 10 hour shifts, 6 days a week, for wages barely enough to survive. Children as young as eight years old worked hours that kept them out of school. Men and women worked until their bodies could stand no more, only to be released from employment without retirement benefits. Medical coverage did not exist. Women who became pregnant were often fired. Compensation for being hurt while on the job was zero.

Click link to view case study of child labor and factory conditions in glass factories in American.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/search/?q=LOT%207478&fi=number&op=PHRASE&va=exact&co!=coll&sg=true&st=ga>

## Unions - Come Together

Laborers realized that to bring change to working conditions, they must unite. Even though they lacked money, education, or political power, they knew one critical thing. There were simply more workers than there were owners.

The battle lines were clearly drawn. People were either workers or bosses, and with that strong identity often came an equally strong dislike for those who were on the other side. As the number of self-employed Americans dwindled in the Gilded Age, workers began to feel strength in their numbers and ask greater and greater demands of their bosses. When those demands were rejected, they used other techniques to attempt to get their way.

The most frequently employed technique of workers was the strike. Withholding labor from management would, in theory, force the com-

pany to suffer a great enough loss of money that they would agree to improve working conditions to get strikers working again. Strikes have been known in America since the colonial age, but their numbers grew larger in the Gilded Age.

It took time for Unions to emerge. The workers often could not agree on common goals. Some workers followed more extreme ideas like Marxism. Others simply wanted a nickel more per hour. Fights erupted over whether or not to admit women or African Americans. Immigrants were often viewed with hostility. Most did agree on one major issue — the eight-hour day. But even that agreement was often not strong enough glue to hold the group together.

All in all, organized labor has brought positive change to working Americans. Many workers today enjoy higher wages, better hours, and safer working conditions because of the work of organized labor.

## Haymarket Riot

On May 1, 1886, thousands of people in Chicago began demonstrations in behalf of an eight-hour workday. The marchers' slogan was, "Eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, eight hours for what we will."

On May 4, 1886, a deadly confrontation between police and protesters erupted at Chicago's Haymarket Square. A labor strike was in progress at the McCormick farm equipment works, and police and Pinkerton security guards had shot several workers.

A public demonstration had been called to protest police violence. Eyewitnesses later described a "peaceful gathering of upwards of 1,000 people listening to speeches and singing songs when authorities began to move in and disperse the crowd." Suddenly a bomb exploded, followed by pandemonium and an exchange of gunfire. Eleven people were killed including seven police officers. More than a hundred were injured.

The Chicago Tribune railed against "the McCormick insurrectionists." Authorities hurriedly rounded up 31 suspects. Eventually, eight men, "all with foreign sounding names" as one newspaper put it, were indicted on charges of conspiracy and murder.

No evidence tied the accused to the explosion of the bomb. Several of the suspects had not attended the rally. But all were convicted and sentenced to death. Four were quickly hanged and a fifth committed suicide in his cell. Then, Illinois Governor, Richard Ogelsby, who had privately expressed doubts "that any of the men were guilty of the crime," commuted the remaining men's death sentences to life in prison.

Because of this riot, a wave of anti-labor feeling swept the nation. Many Americans became distrustful of unions for a period of time. However, they would quickly re-emerge to continue to fight for better working conditions.

### **Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire**

It took a terrible tragedy to bring about significant change in factory conditions. At 4:40 p.m., Saturday March 25, 1911, a fire broke out at the Triangle Waist Company, a clothing manufacturer. Within 15 minutes, 146 of the factory's workers were dead. The victims included at least include one 11-year-old, two 14-year-olds, three 15-year-olds, sixteen 16-year-olds, and fourteen 17-year-olds.

All but one of the owners and office staff, who worked on the building's tenth floor, escaped, climbing on the roof of an adjacent building. But many of the seamstresses, mainly teenage girls from the Austro-Hungarian empire, Italy, and Russia who earned \$7 a week, found themselves trapped on the building's eighth and ninth floors. The door to one staircase and another exit was blocked by smoke and flames. A fire escape collapsed under the weight of women trying to escape. Thirty women died when they jumped down an elevator shaft.

The ladders on the horse-drawn fire trucks only reached the six floor. To escape the suffocating smoke, some 70 girls jumped out of windows (some holding hands), 100 feet above the ground. Firefighters tried to catch them with ten-foot nets, but the force of the fall was too great.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire was a turning point moment in America in regard to working conditions. No longer could Americans ignore the plight of workers in the factories.

Read the New York Times Article on the fire from March 26th, 1911. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/primary-resources/triangle-nyt/>

### **Movie 3.1** The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire



## Chapter 4

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# Lifestyle Changes in the New Century: A Chapter of Inquiry

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The culture of America at the turn of the century was changing quickly. New inventions and entertainment options along with more free time added to the excitement of the new age.



**DIRECTIONS:** Click through the powerpoint to learn about more of the important changes in America during this time period.

### Interactive 4.1



The late 19th century witnessed the birth of modern America. These years saw the advent of new technologies of communication, including the phonograph, the telephone, and radio. They also saw the rise of the mass media: of mass-circulation newspapers and magazines, best-selling novels, million dollar national advertising campaigns. These years witnessed the rise of commercialized entertainment, including the amusement park, the urban nightclub, the dance hall, and first motion pictures. Many modern sports, including basketball, bicycling, football, and golf were introduced to the United States, as were new transportation technologies, such as the automobile, electric

trains and trolleys, and, in 1903, the airplane. The modern university was also born.

### Case Study on Inventors - Thomas Edison

He was hailed as "The Wizard of Menlo Park." The New York World, in 1901, called him "Our Greatest Living American, The Foremost Creative and Constructive Mind of This Country, Our True National Genius." He had 1,093 patents to his name and paved the way for many electricity based technologies years before the physics of electricity was understood. His inventions include the dictating machine, the electric light, the electrified railroad, the fluorescent lamp, the mimeograph machine, the movie camera, the phonograph, Portland cement, and wax paper. But his greatest invention was none of these--it was the development of the modern research laboratory and a research team.

Born in rural Ohio in 1847, Thomas Edison rose from humble origins to become the most famous inventor in the world. He had little formal schooling. He was practical, optimistic, and suspicious of intellectuals. By the age of 10, he had a small chemical laboratory in his cellar and was operating a home-made telegraph.

He was partially deaf, and was made fun of by other students. He never completed grade school. When a teacher pronounced his mind "addled," his mother took him out of school and taught him herself. His second wife would tap out conversations in Morse code on his knee. In later years, he said that his lack of hearing saved him from many distractions.

He often worked 24 hours straight, except for five-minute naps. "Genius," he said, "was one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration."

When he announced the phonograph in 1877, a Yale University professor told the New York Sun that "The idea of a talking machine is ridicu-

lous." After he announced that he had made an incandescent lamp, a board of inquiry convened by the British Parliament concluded that his claim was impossible and "unworthy of the attention of practical or scientific men."

Contrary to popular belief, he did not invent the light bulb. Rather, he figured out how to make it a durable and inexpensive consumer item. He promised to make bulbs "so cheap that only the wealthy can afford to burn candles." The key was to find a long-lasting filament. He tested over 6,000 different materials.

Far from being a solitary genius, Edison created the first modern research laboratory. He employed as many as 200 laboratory assistants and machinists at his facilities in Menlo Park and West Orange, N.J. His West Orange factory had 10,000 employees in the mid-1910s. Edison demonstrated that it was possible to produce a steady stream of new inventions and technologies. Early in his career he said that his goal was "a minor invention every ten days and a big thing every six months or so."

Explore more inventors and inventions of the Gilded Age in the links below -

<http://www.shmoop.com/great-inventions/timeline.html>

<http://www.ideafinder.com/history/timeline/the1900s.htm>

<http://gilbertm.hubpages.com/hub/inventions20century>

black inventors:

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/inventors/>

## Culture

Of all the differences between the 19th and 20th centuries (1800's and 1900's), one of the biggest differences involved the rapid growth of commercialized entertainment. For much of the 19th century, commercial amusements were looked down upon. American Victorians

tended to think that theaters, dance halls, circuses, and organized sports were just as bad as gambling, swearing, and drinking. In the late 19th century, however, a new outlook--which welcomed leisure and play--began to challenge these Victorian ideas.

During the first 20 years of the 20th century, attendance at professional baseball games doubled. Vaudeville, too, increased in popularity, featuring singing, dancing, skits, comics, acrobats, and magicians. Amusement parks, penny arcades, dance halls, and other commercial amusements flourished. As early as 1910, when there were 10,000 movie theaters, the movies had become the nation's most popular form of commercial entertainment.

Coney Island, maybe most of all, symbolized this new leisure culture, emphasizing excitement, glamour, fashion, and romance. Coney Island became the nation's first modern amusement park, complete with ferris wheels, restaurants, and concert halls. Its sheer excitement attracted people of every class.

If Coney Island offered an escape from the world, the new motion picture industry would offer an even less expensive, more convenient escape. During the early 20th century, it quickly developed into the country's most popular and influential form of art and entertainment.



# American Imperialism and the Spanish-American War

As America grew as a world power, conflicts over land and influence were inevitable.



## American Imperialism

America was not only changing at home but also in its relationship with other nations and its place in the world. As the west began to close in the late 1800s, Americans were looking elsewhere to expand the country and the economy. The United States became more imperialistic. Imperialism is defined as the a policy or practice by which a country increases its power by gaining control over other areas of the world. Beginning in the 1890s, the United States practiced some of the same imperialistic policies for which it had previously criticized major European powers. Spurred on by sugar planters, America expanded its influence in Hawaii and in 1896 annexed the islands. Americans also pushed for an "Open Door" trading policy in China.

There were opponents to imperialism as well who felt it was wrong to take control over other areas of the world. Overall, however, the turn of the 20th Century was a time of expansion and imperialism for the United States.

*America's Purchase of Alaska - Seward's Folly*

### Movie 5.1



## The Annexation of Hawaii

In 1893, a small group of sugar and pineapple-growing businessmen, aided by the American minister to Hawaii and backed by heavily armed U.S. soldiers and marines, deposed Hawaii's queen. They imprisoned the queen and seized 1.75 million acres of land and conspired to annex the islands to the United States.

On January 17, 1893, the conspirators announced the overthrow of the queen's government. To avoid bloodshed, Queen Lydia Kamaeaha Liliuokalani gave up her queenship to save her people. The U.S. government refused to help her regain her throne. When she died in 1917, Hawaii was an American territory. In 1959, Hawaii became the 50th state after a vote showed 90 percent of the islanders supported statehood.

In 1993, a joint Congressional resolution, signed by President Bill Clinton, apologized for the U.S. role in the overthrow. The House approved the resolution. The Senate passed it 65 to 34 votes.

## The Spanish American War

The role of America on the world stage was still in question when Cubans began to fight for their independence from Spain in 1895. Americans were sympathetic to Cuba's struggle for independence, but were divided about how to help. The Republican speaker of the House did not want "to spill American blood," unless American interests were directly threatened. Others, however, like Theodore Roosevelt, the Republican assistant secretary of the Navy, pushed for war against Spain.

Early on President William McKinley was firmly against going to war against Spain. The last president to have served in the Civil War, McKinley said he had seen too much death and destruction at battles

like Antietam to want to go to war with Spain. "I've been through one war. I have seen the dead bodies piled up like wood, and I do not want to see another."

Ultimately, however, the pressure of public opinion forced McKinley into the war that made the United States an international power. Newspaper publishers like William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer helped sway public opinion towards the war with reports of Spanish atrocities against Cuban rebels. In a search to gain readers, these papers engaged in Yellow Journalism (often sensationalizing, exaggerating, or making up facts to add interest). Then, Hearst's New York Journal published a leaked letter in which the chief Spanish diplomat in Washington, Enrique Doby de Lome, described President McKinley as "weak" and a "petty politician." Hearst publicized the DeLome letter under the screaming headline: "WORST INSULT TO THE UNITED STATES IN ITS HISTORY."

Days later an explosion sank the U.S.S. Maine in Cuba's Havana harbor. A naval court of inquiry blamed the explosion on a mine, leading the public to believe that Spain had blown up the Maine. Then a respected U.S. Senator, Redfield Proctor, after returning from a visit to Cuba, announced that he had reversed his position from isolationism to intervention "because of the spectacle of a million and a half people, the entire native population of Cuba, struggling for freedom and deliverance."

Figure 5.1



After ten days of debate, Congress declared war, but only after adopting the Teller Amendment. The amendment made it clear that the United States would not acquire Cuba as part of its territory at the end of the war. European leaders were shocked by the declaration of war. Britain's Queen Victoria called on the European power to "unite...against such unheard [of] conduct," since the United States might in the future declare Ireland and other colonies independent. In what became known as a "Splendid Little War" the United States defeated Spain in less than four months. The U.S. acquired the land of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines from Cuba. While the U.S. never did take Cuba, it did pass the Platt Amendment which gave the United States the right to intervene in Cuba to protect "life, property, and individual liberties." The U.S. often used the Platt Amendment as an excuse to involve the nation in Cuban affairs.

### The Philippines

The 20th century began with the United States engaged in a bloody, but largely forgotten, war in the Philippines that cost hundreds of thousands of lives. Fighting in the Philippines, which claimed 250,000 lives, had Americans fighting overseas from February 1899 to July 1902. It also helped establish the United States as a power in the Pacific. In many ways this was a sequel to what occurred in Cuba and was a natural extension of the U.S. wanting to become an imperialistic world power.

On May 1, 1898 at the start of the Spanish American War, Commodore George Dewey entered Manila Bay and destroyed the outdated Spanish fleet. In December, Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States for \$20 million.

On June 12, 1898, a young Filipino, General Emilio Aguinaldo, proclaimed Philippine independence and established Asia's first republic. But pressure on President William McKinley to annex the Philippines was intense. After originally declaring that it would "be criminal ag-

gression" for the United States to annex the Philippines, he reversed his stance, partly out of fear that another power would seize the Philippines. McKinley said that American occupation was necessary to "uplift and Christianize" the Filipinos. The Filipino people felt betrayed and now sought to fight the United States for their freedom. On February 4, 1899, fighting erupted between American and Filipino soldiers, leaving 59 Americans and approximately 3,000 Filipinos dead. American commanders hoped for a short conflict, but in the end, more than 70,000 would fight. Unable to defeat the United States in conventional warfare, the Filipinos adopted guerrilla tactics. To stop the Filipinos, villages were forcibly relocated or burned. Non-combatant civilians were imprisoned or killed. Cruel torture techniques were used on suspected rebels, such as the water cure, in which a suspect was made to lie face up while water was poured onto his face. One general declared: "It may be necessary to kill half of the Filipinos in order that the remaining half of the population may be advanced to a higher plane of life than their present semi-barbarous state affords."

The most notorious incident of the war took place on Samar Island. In retaliation for a Filipino raid on an American garrison in which American troops had been massacred, General Jacob W. Smith told his men to turn the island into a "howling wilderness" so that "even birds could not live there." He directed a marine major to kill "all persons...capable of bearing arms." He meant everyone over the age of 10. In the end General Smith was court-martialed for his treatment of the Filipino people.

Rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo was captured by a raid on the Filipino leader's hideout in March 1901. The war was officially declared over in July 1902, but fighting continued for several years. The Philippine war convinced the United States not to seize further overseas territory. More than 4,000 American soldiers and about 20,000 Filipino fighters died. An estimated 200,000 Filipino civilians died during the war, mainly of disease or hunger. Reports of American atrocities led the

United States to turn internal control over the Philippines to Filipinos in 1907. The U.S. pledged to eventually give the Philippines their independence. Racist attitudes in America continued to strain the relations between the two cultures. President William Howard Taft, who had served as governor-general of the Philippines, called the Filipinos "our little brown brothers."

U.S. leaders tried to transform the country into a showcase of American-style democracy. However, resentment over U.S. occupation remained in the Philippines for decades. The Philippine Islands were finally granted independence in 1946 after the U.S. had spent a massive amount of energy defending it during WWII.

*Spanish-American War: Primary Source Documents*

<http://www.tms.tolland.k12.ct.us/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=19468491>

<http://www.tms.tolland.k12.ct.us/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=3205757>

<http://www.tms.tolland.k12.ct.us/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=19468508>

<http://www.tms.tolland.k12.ct.us/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=19468523>

<http://www.tms.tolland.k12.ct.us/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=19468530>

# The Progressive Era

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Reform and change come about at the turn of the century to clean up corruption in government and deal with health hazards to the public. Progressives, like Teddy Roosevelt, felt government should be the instrument to bring about solutions in new ways.

The  
Jungle



## Muckrakers

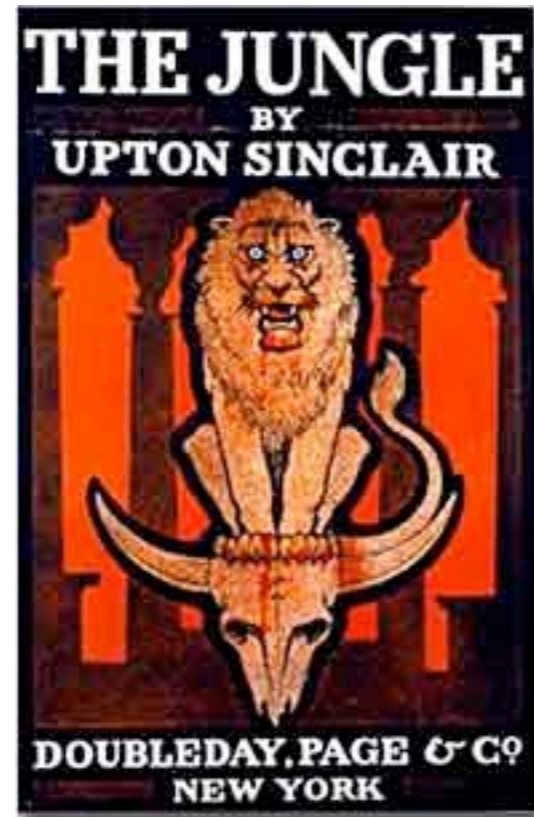
The late 19th Century saw a rise in mass-media and the circulation of newspapers and magazines. What appeared in print was now more powerful than ever. Writing to Congress in hopes of correcting abuses was slow and often produced zero results. Publishing a series of articles had a much more immediate impact. Collectively called muckrakers, a new group of reporters exposed injustices in American society so awful they made the blood of the average American run cold.

## The Meatpacking Jungle

Perhaps no muckraker caused as great a stir as Upton Sinclair. As a Socialist, Sinclair hoped to illustrate the horrible effects of capitalism on workers in the Chicago meatpacking industry. His bone-chilling account, *The Jungle*, detailed workers sacrificing their fingers and nails by working with acid, losing limbs, catching diseases, and toiling long hours in cold, cramped conditions. He hoped the public outcry would be so fierce that reforms would soon follow.

The outrage that followed throughout America was not, however, a response to the workers' conditions. Sinclair also uncovered the contents of the products being sold to the general public. Spoiled meat was covered with chemicals to hide the smell. Skin, hair, stomach, ears, and nose were ground up and packaged as head

Figure 6.1



cheese. Rats climbed over warehouse meat, leaving piles of excrement behind.

Sinclair said that he aimed for America's heart and instead hit its stomach. President Roosevelt was propelled to act. Within months, Congress passed the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act to curb these sickening abuses.

Upton Sinclair published *The Jungle* in 1905 to expose labor abuses in the meat packing industry. But it was food, not labor, that most concerned the public. Sinclair's horrific descriptions of the industry led to the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act, not to labor legislation.

## Progressives

The legislation brought about by Sinclair's book is just one example of the changes occurring in American society at the time.

The turn of the 20th century was an age of reform. America in 1900 looked nothing like America in 1850, yet those in power had been applying the same old strategies to complex new problems. The Progressive Movement offered a new way of thinking about and solving some of the more complex problems in American. Progressives believed that people and government had the power to correct problems and abuses in society. By the beginning of the twentieth century, muckraking journalists were calling attention to child labor, corruption in city governments, the horror of lynching, and the ruthless business practices employed by businessmen like John D. Rockefeller. Progressives worked to try to solve some of these problems in society through enacting new laws. The results were astonishing. Seemingly every aspect of society was touched by progressive reform including regulating child labor and sweatshops, scientifically managing natural resources, ensuring safe food, and controlling the practice of big business. Four constitutional amendments were adopted during

the Progressive era, which authorized an income tax, provided for the direct election of senators by the people, extended the vote to women, and prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages.

It was more of a movement than a political party, and there were progressives in each major party. There were three progressive presidents — Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson. Roosevelt and Taft were Republicans and Wilson was a Democrat. What united the movement was the belief that the government must act to solve problems within society.

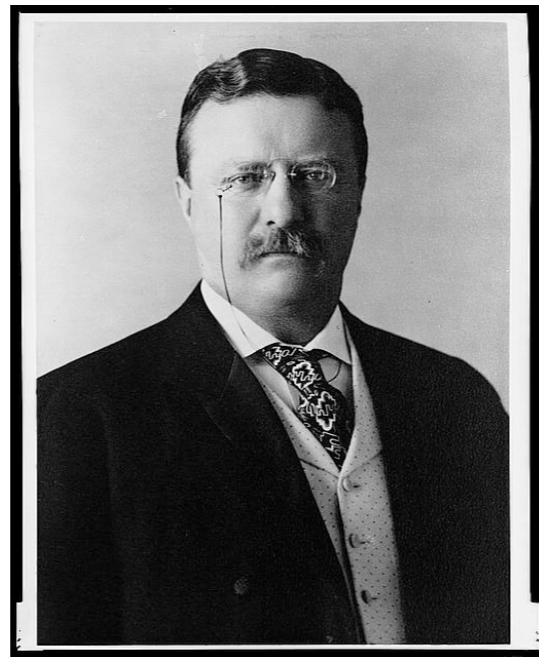
When the United States became involved in the First World War, attention was taken away from domestic issues and progressivism went into decline. While unable to solve the problems of every American, the Progressive Era set the stage for the 20th century trend of government trying to assist its people.

### **A Case Study of a Progressive President - Teddy Roosevelt: The Rough Rider in the White House**

There had never been a President like him. He was only forty-two years old when he was catapulted into the presidency by William McKinley's assassination. Roosevelt was the youngest President to take office.

Roosevelt graduated with the highest honors from Harvard, wrote 23 books, and was considered the world's foremost authority on North American

**Figure 6.2**



wildlife. He was a prizefighting championship finalist, leader of the Rough Riders, a cowboy, a socialite, a police commissioner, a governor, and a Vice-President. All this was accomplished before he entered the White House. His energy was contagious, and the whole country was electrified by their new leader.

### *Early Obstacles*

Roosevelt was born in to one of the twenty wealthiest families in America, but he was anything but the model physical specimen. As a child he was small and weak. His eyesight was poor. He wore thick glasses his entire life. He suffered headaches, fevers, and stomach pains. He was so frail and asthmatic that he could not blow out a bedside candle.

Taking his father's advice, he dedicated himself to physical fitness. His hard work paid off, and as he entered Harvard with a muscular frame, his condition bothered him less and less.

Soon he met Alice Hathaway Lee. Although he believed her to be “out of his league”, he was determined to marry her. Again, he was successful, but his life with Alice was short-lived. In 1884, four years after his graduation, Alice delivered a daughter. Alice died in childbirth on the very same day as the death of his mother.

### *A Rising Star*

Devastated, he withdrew to North Dakota Territory, but could not live without the New York pace for long. Returning to New York in 1886, Roosevelt remarried and dedicated his life to public service. By 1898, he compiled an impressive resumé including:

- Member of the Civil Service Commission
- Police Commissioner of New York City
- Assistant Secretary to the Navy.

When the Spanish-American War erupted, he helped form a volunteer regiment called the Rough Riders. His success in the war led to the governor's office and then the Vice-Presidency.

Up to this point, the Vice-President had little power, and few had gone on to the White House unless a tragedy befell the President. Many Republican leaders supported Roosevelt in the number-two job for this very reason. They feared his headstrong style and maverick attitude and thought of the vice-presidency as a place to keep him away from power. At the Republican convention in 1900, a senator warned his colleagues not to make Theodore Roosevelt their vice presidential nominee: "Don't any of you realize that there's only one life between this madman and the presidency?" Their greatest fears were realized when a bullet ended President McKinley's life on September 13, 1901.

#### *A New Kind of President*

In office, Roosevelt greatly expanded the powers of the presidency. A bold and forceful leader, he viewed the White House as a "bully pulpit" from which he could preach his ideas about the need for a progressive government and an active American presence in foreign policy. He broke up trusts that controlled the corporate world and regulated big business. He created the Departments of Commerce and Labor and the U.S. Forest Service. He supported a revolt in a province of Colombia that allowed the United States to build the Panama Canal. He sent a Great White Fleet on an around-the-world voyage to symbolize America's rise to world power. He made a dramatic public statement about race when he invited Booker T. Washington to dine at the White House.

Roosevelt pushed legislation through Congress, authorizing and establishing the authority of the Interstate Commerce Commission to set railroad rates. In 1904, he won reelection by the largest popular majority up to that time.

Apart from his philosophy of an active, interventionist government, Roosevelt's most lasting legacy is that he became the model for a new kind of president: a charismatic, heroic leader, who sought to improve every aspect of society. He made the presidency as large as the problems created by industrialization and urbanization.

#### *More About the Panama Canal*

##### **Movie 6.1**



##### **Movie 6.2**



#### *More About the Teddy Roosevelt*

<http://www.nps.gov/history/TR/>