Gilded Age
1870-1900
Presidents of the Gilded Age

- U.S. Grant 1869-1877
- Rutherford B. Hayes 1877-1881
- James Garfield 1881
- Chester A. Arthur 1881-1885
- Grover Cleveland 1885-1889 and 1893-1897
- Benjamin Harrison 1889-1893
- William McKinley 1897-1901
Gilded Age-origin

- **Gilded Age** - Period when corruption existed in society but was overshadowed by the wealth of the period ("gilded" is when something is golden/beautiful on the surface but is really cheap/worthless underneath.

- Abuses in business and government caused problems for immigrants, laborers, and farmers.

- Term comes from a book written about the time period by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner in 1873 *The Gilded Age*.

View Intro to America's Industrial Revolution
Inventors/Inventions

► **Thomas Edison**
  - Perfected the light bulb in 1880, and motion picture
  - Organized power plants
  - Established first research lab

► **Alexander Graham Bell**
  - **Telephone (1876)**

► **Henry Ford**
  - **Assembly Line**

► **George Eastman**
  - Camera (1885)

► **Samuel Morse**
  - Telegraph (1837)

► **Wright Brothers**
  - Airplane (1903)

► **Christopher Sholes**
  - Typewriter (1867)

► **Guglielmo Marconi**
  - Radio
The Steel Industry’s Impact on America

► Bessemer Process-developed around 1850 injected air into molten iron to remove impurities and make steel-a lighter, more flexible, rust resistant metal

► Steel is used in railroads, farm equipment, canned goods

► Engineers use steel to create skyscrapers and longer bridges (Brooklyn Bridge)
Impact of Railroads on America during the Gilded Age

► Benefits
- Stimulated growth of other industries (steel, iron, coal, lumber, glass)
- Helped cities grow
- Helped increase westward expansion of America
- Standard time zones were created to get everyone on correct time

► Corruption
- Charged much higher rates to western farmers
- Credit Mobilier Scandal 1868
  ➤ Union Pacific
  ➤ Fake construction company
  ➤ Bribed members of Congress
  ➤ Represented corruption of period

[View Corruption in Railroads]
Standard Oil Cartoon based on Ida B. Tarbell’s book- *The History of Standard Oil*
The Rise of Big Business

► **Andrew Carnegie**
  - Industrialists who made a fortune in steel in the late 1800’s, as a *philanthropists*, he gave away some $350 million.

► **John D. Rockefeller**
  - Industrialists who made a fortune in the oil refining industry
  - **U.S. Standard Oil**
The Rise of Big Business

► **J.P. Morgan**
  - Industrialists who started U.S. Steel from Carnegie Steel and other companies. Became 1\textsuperscript{st} Billion dollar Corporation.
  - Bailed out the U.S. economy on more than one occasion.
The Rise of Big Business

► Vertical Integration
  ▪ A process in which a company buys out all of the suppliers. (Ex. coal and iron mines, ore freighters, rr lines)

► Horizontal Consolidation
  - A process in which a company buys out or merges with all competing companies (JP Morgan bought out Carnegie steel and other companies)
The Rise of Big Business

- **Trusts** - A group of separate companies placed under the control of a single managing board

- Critics called these practices unfair and the business leaders “Robber Barons”
The Rise of Big Business

► Social Darwinism
  - Used Darwin’s theory to explain business
  - Natural Selection, Survival of the Fittest
  - Govt. should not interfere
  - Laissez-faire - policy that US had followed since inception to not allow govt. to interfere with business

► Captains of Industry
  - A positive idea that industrial leaders worked hard and deserved their wealth
The Rise of Big Business

- **Gospel of Wealth** - belief that the wealthy are “chosen by God” to be successful and were therefore responsible to look out for the well being of those less fortunate. Many Industrialists shared wealth although rarely through direct welfare. Started museums, etc.

- **Monopoly** - complete control of a product or service
The Rise of Big Business

► **Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890**
  - Law outlawing a combination of companies that restrained interstate trade or commerce; important to prevent monopolies. Not initially enforced properly.

“What can I do when both Parties insist on kicking”
Poor Working Conditions in the Late 1800’s

► Most factory workers worked 12 hour days, 6 days a week
► Steel mills often demanded 7 days a week
► No vacations, sick leave, unemployment compensation, or workers compensation for injuries on the job
► Children as young as 5 often worked as much as 12 or sometimes 14 hours a day, for as little as $.27 a day.
The Rise of Labor Unions

► The Purpose of a labor union was “strength in numbers.” Attempted to gain better working conditions and pay.

► The Knights of Labor
  - Was the first union to accept workers of all races and gender. Pushed for 8 hour workday, equal pay for women, accepted skilled and unskilled workers
The Rise of Labor Unions

- The American Federation of Labor (AFL)- Accepted only skilled white males, won higher wages and shorter work weeks for its members

- Head of AFL was Samuel Gompers
The Rise of Labor Unions

- **Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) or Wobblies**
  - Created in 1905, was a radical group of mostly unskilled workers who believed in socialism
  - **Socialism** - an economic or political philosophy that favors public (or social) control of property and income.
Palmist: "There is a Man Following You With a Bludgeon."
Capitalist: "Yes, Yes! What Else Do You See?"
Palmist: "Nothing But Your Finish!"
Setbacks for Labor Unions

Great Railroad Strike of 1877
- RR workers strike to protest wage cut
- Violence erupted in many cities for a week
- President Rutherford B. Hayes sends in Federal Troops to put down strike
- Scab – worker called in by an employer to replace strikers
- Courts and Federal govt. often sided with business during Gilded Age
Setbacks for Labor Unions

Haymarket Riot 1886

- Workers protesting and holding demonstrations in Haymarket Square Chicago
- Speakers are socialist and anarchist (no govt.)
- Police arrive and bomb is thrown at police killing some and causing riot
- Public blames labor unions and views them as radical, violent, and mostly foreigners
Setbacks for Labor Unions

► **Homestead Strike-1892**
- Workers strike against Carnegie Steel plant
- Henry Frick was anti-union leader of plant

► **Pullman Strike 1894**
- Railroad industry strike in which 120,000 striking railroad workers were stopped only by the intervention of the federal government
The New Immigrants

- New Immigrants - Between 1870 and 1920, 20 million Europeans mostly from Southern and Eastern Europe came to America - (Jews/Catholics)
- Hundreds of thousands more came from Mexico, Caribbean, and China
- Looked and sounded different than natives
- Nativism - Movement to ensure that native-born Americans received better treatment than immigrants
1888 Puck Magazine cartoon about American businessmen encouraging immigration for cheap labor which hurts Americans.
The New Immigrants

- **Ellis Island**: In New York harbor where most European immigrants came to get processed.
- **Angel Island**: In San Francisco where most Asians entered US.
- **Culture Shock**
- **Melting Pot**
The New Immigrants

► 1882-Chinese Exclusion Act- prohibited Chinese laborers from entering the country. Was not lifted until 1943.

► Gentlemen’s Agreement 1907– was reached between U.S. and Japan in which Japan agreed to restrict immigration to the U.S.
"The Chinamen were terribly taxed by the county authorities; but they always came up promptly, and without a word of complaint paid what was demanded of them.... Let me here say that I never, during all my years of intercourse with this people, saw a single drunken Chinaman. I never saw a Chinese beggar. I never saw a lazy Chinaman." — Joaquin Miller.

"The Chinamen. They are not strikers, rioters, and burners of cities.... No; the Creator of us all opened the Golden Gate to the whole wide world, let no man attempt to shut it in the face of our fellow-man." — Joaquin Miller.

**EQUAL RIGHTS TO ALL MEN. THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR REPUBLIC.**

**BLAINE LANGUAGE.**

Tramp Nye. "Can this be? We are ruined by Chinese labor."

Truthful James (G. Blaine). "Which is why I remark,

    And my language is plain,
    That for ways that are dark,
    And tricks that are vain,
    The heathen Chinee is peculiar.
    Which the same I am free to maintain."

© 1999 HarpWeek®
Political Cartoon depicting how Chinese immigrants workers lived and regular American workers lived.  Rats, Yummy!
E PLURIBUS UNUM (EXCEPT THE CHINESE).
“Honors are easy.”
Now both parties have something to hang on.

© 1999 HarpWeek®
Problems of Rapid Urbanization

► **Urbanization** - growth of cities

► 3 reasons cities grew in late 1800’s and early 1900’s
  - New immigrants arrived in cities for work
  - As farm machines replaced farmers they moved to cities
  - African Americans left South after Civil War and came to Northern cities.

View Rise of NYC video
Problems in Cities

1. Housing shortages - Tenement crowded apartment building with poor standards of sanitation, safety, and comfort

2. Transportation - struggled to keep up with growth

3. Clean water - was difficult to produce and transport

4. Waste and garbage removal was a challenge and often neglected

5. Fires were very common
   - Great Chicago Fire - 1871
   - San Francisco Earthquake 1906

6. Crime rose with urbanization

A trip down Market Street video
Early Reforms to fix problems of Urbanization

- **Settlement House** – Community center organized to provide various services to urban poor
- **Hull House** - 1889 – most famous settlement house established by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr
- **Social Gospel Movement** – social reform movement that sought to fix social problems in the name of Jesus
The Rise of Political Machines

- **Political Machines** – an organized group of people that controlled the activities of a political party
  - By giving voters services they needed, the machine won their vote and controlled city government

- **City Boss** was head of Political Machines
  - Controlled
    - Jobs in police, fire, and sanitation departments
    - Agencies that granted licenses to businesses
    - Money to fund large construction projects

“All Politics center around the Boss”
Political Machines

- Political machines loved immigrants, WHY?
  - Never voted, tried to sway votes by bribery, intimidation, and other means

- Political machines used power to
  - Rig elections
  - Become wealthy from kickbacks-illegal payments
  - Control police force to stay out of trouble
“Boss Tweed” and Thomas Nast

► **William “Boss” Tweed**
City Boss of Tammany Hall - Democratic Political Machine in New York City

► **Thomas Nast** – political cartoonist who was critical of machines and Tweed
Corruption in Government

- Patronage or Spoils System - giving government jobs to loyal party workers or friends
  - Were not qualified
  - Used position to get money from government (graft)
- President James Garfield is assassinated by disappointed office seeker favoring Spoils System
- President Chester Arthur signs Pendleton Civil Service Act of 1883
Pendleton Civil Service Act 1883

- Attempted to end Patronage/Spoils System
- 1. Creating the Civil Service Commission which required appointed govt. officials to pass the Civil Service Exam to base jobs on merit instead of friendship
- 2. Federal employees did not have to contribute to campaign funds
- 3. Federal employees could not be fired for political reasons