

Causes of American Industrialization



UNITED STATES HISTORY

Unit 2

Industrialization, Immigration, Urbanization, and The Gilded Age:

**America in the latter part
of the 19th Century**

The Expansion of Industry

- Following the Civil War, the U.S. was still primarily an agricultural nation. Over the course of the next 60 years, we will grow into the world's leading industrial giant.
- People and inventions that promoted change:
 - Henry Bessemer- created the Bessemer process which removed carbon and other impurities from molten iron to make better, stronger steel

- **Alexander Graham Bell**- invented the telephone
- **Christopher Sholes**- invented the typewriter
 - Who did this help to bring into the workforce?
 - What other major invention can be credited with bringing even more women into the labor force?
- **Thomas Edison**- perfected the incandescent light bulb and created a system for producing and distributing electrical power
 - Effects on cities:
 - Led to things like electric streetcars which allowed faster movement by people throughout cities
 - Manufacturers could now locate factories anywhere due to the constant energy source (previously built along rivers)

Railroads in the late-19th century

Benefits/
Positives

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An empty white rounded rectangular box with a blue border, intended for a second positive benefit of railroads.

Negatives

An empty white rounded rectangular box with a blue border, intended for a negative aspect of railroads.

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The Age of the Railroads

- Railroads continued to positively impact society:
 - Goods were being transported to all regions of the country
 - Promoted the creation/growth of towns and cities
 - Thousands of new jobs and off-shoot industries were created
- There did continue to be problems as well:
 - Corruption was widespread in railroad companies
 - Farmers and ranchers were upset over shipping costs
 - Railroad companies were selling their extra land to other business rather than desperate farmers

- In response to continued pressure from farmers about railroad corruption and abuses, Congress passed the Interstate Commerce Act- established a five member Interstate Commerce Commission to oversee and supervise railroad activities.

Big Business and Labor

- As the U.S. was rapidly industrializing, several men came up with new business strategies that impacted society. These men were called both captains of industry, as well as robber barons.
 - Andrew Carnegie- founded and built the Carnegie Steel Company (by 1899 produced more steel than all factories in Great Britain). Two of his main strategies:
 - Vertical integration- buying out your suppliers in order to control raw materials and transportation
 - Horizontal integration- buying out or destroying your competition in order to control a market.

– John D. Rockefeller- created Standard Oil Company and gained control over the country's oil market by:

- Under pricing competitors and driving them out of business

– This led to the development of trusts, which later turned into monopolies

**In 1890 the government, concerned that big corporations would smother the free market, passed the Sherman Antitrust Act- made it illegal to form a trust that interfered with free trade.

- Put in different terms, it outlawed monopolies!
- This act proved hard to enforce.

- There were two other important business concepts that developed during this time:
 - Laissez faire- (a hands off philosophy) belief that the business market should not be regulated by the government and should be governed by natural law.
 - This was the way the U.S. operated prior to the onset of business regulation during the late-Gilded Age.
 - Social Darwinism- came from Charles Darwin's theory of biological evolution ("survival of the fittest"); this theory was applied to business and economics
- As businesses grew and, in many cases, merged, workers realized they also needed to do the same.

- Workers began forming labor unions to combat their biggest problems... low wages, long hours, and unsafe working conditions.
- One of the worst tragedies in American history occurred at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in 1911.
- The most powerful labor union was the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and was led by Samuel Gompers. They believed strongly in two concepts:
 - Collective bargaining- negotiations between all labor and management to reach written agreements on wages, hours, and work conditions
 - Use of strikes- refusals to work in order to make management negotiate over issues listed above

- The government saw unions as a threat to our entire capitalist economy. Several events will cause the government even more concern:
 - Haymarket Affair- Workers gathered to protest police brutality and a bomb was tossed into police lines. Police fired into the crowd and a riot ensued. Seven officers were killed, along with several protesters.
 - Homestead Steel Strike- Steelworkers went on strike after wages were cut. Hired detectives were brought in to protect “scabs”(strikebreakers) and strikers overran them gaining control of the plant. (12 dead from this event)
 - Pullman Company Strike- The Pullman Company laid off over half its employees and cut the remainders wages by 25-50% without cutting their housing costs (they lived in rented houses provided by the PC). Employees went on strike and scabs were brought in to work. The strike turned violent and President Cleveland sent in federal troops to end it.

- The 1870s through 1900 are often referred to in U.S. history as the “Gilded Age”. Its called this b/c the population increase was dramatic, as was the wealth of the handful that became wealthy. This gilded, or covered up, many of the problems that existed in the country.
- The biggest reason for our population explosion was immigration, people coming INTO the country.
- Prior to 1890, most immigrants had come from western and northern Europe (old immigrants).
- Beginning in the early 1890s, however, the launch point of European immigrants switched to southern and eastern Europe (new immigrants).

- There was also a great influx of immigrants from China, Japan, Mexico, and the Caribbean.
- Reasons for mass immigration to U.S.:
 - Hope of becoming rich
 - Famine in homeland
 - Land shortages
 - Political/religious persecution
- Most immigrants settled in eastern and mid-western cities where factories/factory jobs could be found.

- Immigrants gained access to the country by passing inspection (both physical and mental) at immigration stations:
 - **Ellis Island**- located in New York Harbor and was the entry point for those crossing the Atlantic Ocean
 - **Angel Island**- located in San Francisco Bay and was the entry point for those crossing the Pacific Ocean
- Native-born Americans viewed the country as a great “melting pot” where immigrants were to blend in and abandon their native language and customs.
- Unfortunately, many immigrants found meshing into American society difficult, and they chose to live in ethnic communities (such as Little Italy). They wanted to preserve as much of their culture as possible.
 - This reality is called the “salad bowl” theory.

- Immigrants refusal to assimilate and their habit of “stealing jobs” from native-born American workers led to the emergence of strong anti-immigrant feelings. Other reasons are...
- This led to the rise/creation of:
 - **Nativism**- hatred of immigrants.
 - **Ku Klux Klan**
 - Legal means of controlling immigration:
 - **Chinese Exclusion Act**- strictly limited Chinese immigration in 1882 and will continue until the early 1940s
 - **Gentleman’s Agreement**- Japan agreed to limit immigration of unskilled workers to the U.S.

The Challenges of Urbanization

- Technological advances in farming, coupled with mass immigration, led to rapid urbanization- growth of cities.
- People were heading to the cities looking for jobs in the growing and expanding factories.

- There were many problems to be found in these fast growing cities:
 - **Housing**- many families lived in tenements- overcrowded and unsanitary multifamily urban dwellings
 - As cities grew and these problems intensified, social welfare reformers worked to relieve urban poverty.
 - **Social Gospel Movement**- preaching that focused on salvation through service to the poor
 - **Settlement houses**- community centers created to provide assistance to needy people
 - » Jane Addams was involved in the creation of the first settlement houses in the United States. She was a committed social activist that worked to improve the lives of people in cities.

- **Transportation**- mass public transit (system to move large numbers of people from place to place) was started with things like street cars, subways, and elevated trains
- **Water**- Few cities had adequate, safe water piped into dwellings. *Filtration and chlorination will be introduced*, but safe water concerns remained into the 20th century.
- **Sanitation**- Many problems like garbage in the streets, open flow sewers, horse manure, and factory pollution constantly challenged urban leaders.
- **Crime**- most city's police forces were too small to impact crime (pickpockets and thieves)
- **Fire**- This was a menace due to limited water supplies, but was improved with full-time fire departments.

Politics in the Gilded Age

- As cities rapidly grew, a new political power structure emerged in them. The new structure was called a **political machine**- organized group that controlled the activities of a political party in a city.
 - The most famous of these was **Tammany Hall**, New York's powerful Democratic machine.
- Each machine was led by a powerful man—the Boss. The boss's main goals were to:
 - gain support among voters;
 - extend influence by whatever means necessary; and,
 - make as much money as possible.
- The most famous, or infamous, boss was William Tweed (aka "Boss" Tweed).

- Political machines and bosses were often very corrupt.
- How did political machines gain office—and the power and wealth that come with it?
 - by helping immigrants!!!!!!!
- The main target of political machines and bosses were immigrants. They helped immigrants become citizens, find jobs, and even by translating if they knew no English. In return, they expected the immigrants to support the machine/boss with **VOTES**. By far, the majority did.
- Political machines were most influential and powerful in urban areas, but they did have their eyes on national politics too. Patronage will become a major issue of concern.

- **Patronage**- the giving of government jobs to people who had helped a candidate get elected (also referred to as the “spoils system”)
- This problem came to head on July 2, 1881, when President James Garfield was shot by Charles Guiteau. Garfield would die soon after and be replaced by his Vice President (now President) Chester A. Arthur.
- This event led to the creation of the **Pendleton Civil Service Act**- appointments to federal jobs are to be awarded through a merit system based on a written examination