

## American History Chapter 6 Urban America

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### Immigration Section 1

Discusses the reasons why millions of immigrants settled in the United States after the Civil War. Of the fourteen million immigrants that arrived in the United States between 1860 and 1900, most came from Asia and eastern and southern

Europe. Although the reasons why they immigrated varied, many Europeans came to avoid religious persecution and forced military service, or to break free of Europe's class system. Chinese immigrants wanted to escape China's unemploy-

ment, poverty, and political unrest. Most Europeans endured a difficult voyage to the United States aboard a steamship and disembarked at Ellis Island—an immigrant processing center. Many of the immigrants from Japan and China who arrived on the West Coast during the late 1800s disembarked at Angel Island. Most immigrants settled in cities and formed ethnically separated groups. Economic concerns and religious and ethnic prejudices led many Americans to discriminate against immigrants. They treated immigrants poorly and pushed for laws restricting immigration.



Immigrants crossed this gangway from the pier to Ellis Island.



## STUCK ON ELLIS ISLAND

My name is Seymour Rechtzeit and I was eight years old in 1920, when we left our home in Poland and journeyed to America. My family decided that I should come to America, where there would be more opportunities for me. World War I had just ended, and it was a bad time in Europe. I had an uncle in America, and he sent two tickets for my father and me. The rest of

my family stayed in Poland. The plan was that my father and I would make enough money to bring them to America, too.

I stayed on Ellis Island for a few days, until I was feeling better. I had no toys with me. I didn't know of such things. But there were other sick boys to keep me company. Some of them spoke Yiddish, my language. We ate in a huge dining room. The food was different—it was American style. But it was

good, especially the milk.

There was a long gate that led to the boats that took people off the island, across New York Harbor, to the city. Every day, we boys would walk to the gate and look out over the water. We wanted to see America. It was like being in a jail. We felt sad and wondered if we would ever get through that gate and onto a boat for that final journey to our new country, the United States.

### Reading Checks

- How did immigration affect demographics in the United States?
- Why did Chinese immigrants come to the United States?
- Why did the federal government pass the Chinese Exclusion Act?

## Urbanization Section 2

**Section 2** looks at the urbanization of the United States. In the years following the Civil War, the number of American cities greatly expanded, and urban populations grew rapid-



Americans migrate to the cities

ly. Immigrants and farmers poured into the cities, creating almost unbearable congestion. New technologies paved the way for skyscrapers, suspension bridges, and new methods of mass transit. Distinct neighborhoods emerged, separating the cities' social classes. The majority of urban dwellers were the working class who suffered deplorable living conditions in dark and crowded tenements. The problems of rapidly growing cities included threats of crime, violence, fire, disease, and pollution. Political machines, controlled by party bosses, addressed urban problems by providing essential city services in return for the loyalty of urban immigrant groups. Corruption plagued political machines, however, since party bosses also controlled cities' finances.

### Reading Checks

- What new technologies helped people in the late 1800's get to and from work?
- Who was in the middle class in the late 1800's? Where did they live?

## "BOSS TWEED" AND THE TAMMANY HALL

From the Wilson readings, it is natural to think of big city "political machines" and negative connotation like "sewers." The ward based, patronage driven form of local government is commonly thought of in criminal terms and, in that sense, so are Boss Tweed and Tammany Hall in New York City.

There is little question that the Tweed Ring were outright thieves and that Tammany Hall did have a series of reoccurring scandals. An estimated 75 to 200 million dollars were swindled from the City between 1865 and 1871. Yet, there is more to the story than a confrontation of the machine form of city government and the ideology of reformer exhortations. Tammany represented a form of organization that wedded the Democratic Party and the Society of St. Tammany (started in 1789 for patriotic and fraternal purposes) into an interchangeable exchange. The weave of city politics was the triangulation of the Mayor's office, the Democratic Party and the social club organization. During the Civil War era, the Society of St. Tammany became the Democratic Party equivalent to the Union League Club and the Republicans. The difference is that the Democrats won control of New York City and "The Big Apple" was, perhaps, the most important government structure in the United States for more than seventy years.

The success of Tammany Hall to control

City politics and persist in power until the years of the Great Depression is better appreciated by understanding Samuel Tilden George Washington Plunkett.

George Plunkett was made famous by writer William Riordan who described Tammany Hall as "a series of very plain talk on very practical politics delivered by Tammany philosopher from his rostrum-the New York County Courthouse bootblack stand."

When we remember Ellis Island was in New York harbor (with the Statue of Liberty) and it is estimated that two fifths of the American population have relatives that were processed through that in migration site, the Plunkett "plain talk" starts to make sense. "Think what the people of New York are. On half, more than one half, are of foreign birth. They do not speak our language, they do not know our laws, they are the raw material with which we have to build up the state....there is no denying the service that Tammany has rendered the Republic. There is no other organization for taking hold of untrained, friendless men and converting them into citizens. Who else in the city would do it? There is not a mugwump who would shake their hand."

For that city context Plunkett advises those concerned with local governing; "Don't go to college and stuff your head with rubbish; get out with your neighbors and rela-

tives and round up a few votes you can call your own. Study human nature and make government warm and personal." For the way the political machine routinely operates, Plunkett states, "What reformers call 'machine' we call organization. In New York City the smallest unit is the election district committee, headed by a captain. The election districts overlap with the assembly districts headed by leaders who, in turn, constitute the county executive committee. Assembly leaders are elected in primaries and elect their own party chairmen." Author Riordan points out that the New York City Democratic organization in the 1920's numbered 32,000 committee men spread over five counties. The amount of patronage in 1888 (when Woodrow Wilson was publishing his famous piece) for just the city county containing Manhattan and a slice of the Bronx was 12,000 municipal jobs and a payroll of twelve million dollars. At the time this was a bigger resource distribution than the Andrew Carnegie iron and steel works.

## Big Business Section 3



**Section 3** follows the rise of large corporations and how they came to dominate American business. During the late 1800s, corporations developed new technologies and built large manufacturing facilities. Because corporations increased manufacturing productivity and decreased production costs, they were able to operate even in poor economic times. Small companies who could not compete were forced out of business, and by the 1870s many industries were dominated by a few large corporations. Shrewd corporate leaders used company mergers to

build huge empires. Laws designed to prevent monopolies did not address trusts or holding companies, and corporations grew even larger. New methods of selling introduced consumers to the products of American industrialization.

## Reading Checks

- What factors led to the rise of big business in the United States?
- What techniques did corporations use to consolidate their industries?

## EXTRA CREDIT

## Column 2

|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Pierre L'Enfant | Henry Clay    |
| Old Ironsides   | Clipper ship  |
| Telegraph       | Doctrine      |
| Lake Erie       | Mad Anthony   |
| Lewis and Clark | Steam Boat    |
| Andrew Jackson  | Francis S Key |

## Column 3

|                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Fallen Timbers      | Washington DC         |
| John C Calhoun      | Battle of New Orleans |
| Naval Battle        | Flying Cloud          |
| Morse Code          | Western Hemisphere    |
| Isaac Hull          | Star spangled banner  |
| Louisiana Territory | Claremont             |

## Column 1

1. Fort McHenry
2. January 8, 1815
3. Capital of U.S.
4. 1804 -1806
5. "War Hawks"
6. James Monroe
7. Samuel Morse
8. Robert Fulton
9. Donald McKay
10. General A. Wayne
11. Oliver H. Perry
12. "Constitution"

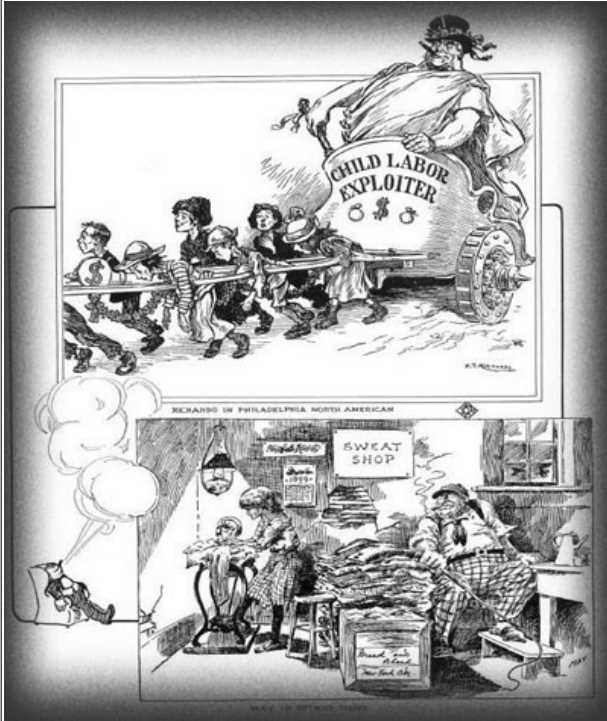
## Column 2

Francis S. Key

## Column 3

[illegible]

*What we allow we Promote!!!*



## Chapter 5 Daily Plan

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*Monday Oct 10th, Tuesday Oct 11th*

*Read 5-1 page 182-187 Notes and WKS Groups  
will make foldable for the bulletin board*

*Wednesday Oct 12th , Thursday Oct 13th*

*Read 5-2 page 188-193 Notes and WKS Quiz  
over section 1.*

*Monday Oct 17th, Tuesday Oct 18th*

*Read 5-3 page 194-199 Notes and WKS Tuesday  
review for the test*

*Tuesday after school Review for test in my room.*

*Wednesday Oct 19th, Thursday Oct 20th. Test*

## The Disgrace of Child Labor

"The worst conditions," according to Harold Faulkner," prevailed in manufacturing in which about 16% of the child workers were engaged. The picture of children kept awake during the long night in a Southern mill by having cold water dashed on their faces, of little girls in canning factories 'snipping' sixteen or more hours a day or capping forty cans a minute in an effort to keep pace with a never exhausted machine, of little ten-year-old breaker boys crouched for ten hours a day over a dusty coal chute to pick sharp slate out of the fast moving coal, of boys imported from orphan asylums and reformatories to wreck their bodies in the slavery of a glass factory, or a four-year old baby toiling until midnight over artificial flowers in a New York tenement-these were conditions which might well shame a civilized people into action."

For years labor leaders had inveighed against the use of child workers, emphasizing that such exploitation was

largely due to the unwillingness of employers to pay adults adequate wages. Humanitarian arguments were stressed, but trade unionists could not help but be alarmed by the growing displacement of adults by youngsters and the lowering of wage scales in the industries employing them.

So far as employers were concerned, child labor was a blessing in disguise. Instilling the work ethic in youngsters was good for their character and kept them out of mischief. Besides, as Charles Harding, president of the Merchants Woolen Company, told a Congressional committee: "There is a certain class of labor in the mills where there is not as much muscular exercise required as a child would put forth in play, and a child can do it about as well as a grown person....There is such a thing as too much education for working people sometimes. I have seen cases where young people are spoiled for labor by.....too much refinement."

One textile employer wrote lyrically about the pleasures of child labor: "They seem to be always cheerful and alert, taking pleasure in the light play of their muscles; enjoying the mobility natural to their age. It was delightful to observe the nimbleness with which they pieced the broken ends as the mule-carriage (textile mill machine) began to recede from the fixed roller beam, and to see them at leisure after a few seconds' exercise of their tiny fingers, to amuse themselves in any attitude they chose till the stretching and winding-on were once more completed. The work of these lively elves seemed to resemble a sport in which habit gave them a pleasing dexterity."

To the right are a couple political cartoons of the time, noting employer attitudes toward child labor in the early 1900's