# Big Business and Labor Unions

## Vocabulary

- Monopoly complete control of a product or service by
- Trust a group of separate companies that are placed under the control of a single managing board
- **Robber Baron** business leaders who made their fortune from "stealing" from the public
- Captain of Industry business leaders who served their nation in a positive way
- · Social Darwinism
- Gospel of Wealth duty of wealthy to share their wealth w/ people who are working hard to better themselves

## **Big Business**

#### Pros

- · National economic growth
- Abundance of goods
- Improved standard of
- Employed skilled and unskilled workers
- Development of philanthropic endeavors

#### Cons

- Eliminated competition
- Monopolies and trust
- Many held unfair influence over government
- Increased gap between rich and poor

## Other Robber Barons/Captains of Industry

- Cornelius Vanderbilt
- Controlled the railroads
- Net worth \$105 Million
- Not known for his philanthropy, but gave \$ 1 million to Vanderbilt University
- John D. Rockefeller
- Controlled the oil industry
- Used horizontal consolidation
- Net worth \$340 Billion



- · John P. Morgan
- · Banker, who refinanced the railroads and loaned the United States government \$65 million in gold in 1895
- Net worth \$41.5 Billion

# **Mass Production**

- Consumer goods
- More diverse goods
- Increased production





# Dangerous Working Conditions

- Extremely low wages about \$1 a day
- Everyone had to work; seven days a week
- Many children under 15 worked full time.
- Up to 12 or more hours a day.
- Work was repetitive and dangerous
- Hazardous working conditions
- No helmets or safety goggles Toxic gases and dust lung disease was common
- Sharp blades with no protection
- No vacation time, sick leave or money for injuries on the job.
  - Injuries were very common.
  - In 1882, 675 people on average were killed in work related accidents EACH WEEK!

## **Labor Unions**

- <u>Developed out of</u> <u>unsafe working</u> <u>conditions and low</u> <u>wages</u>
  - Contributed to poor living and social conditions
- Unions provided strength in numbers by threatening to strike
- Protect workers interest



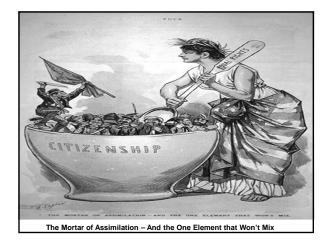
#### Labor Unions Cont.

- · Some only included skilled workers
- Others allowed more diversity in skill and political ideals
- <u>Not widely accepted by the</u> government or the general public

# Labor Unions 1870-1900s Confedent Unions 1870-1900s Confedent Union Un

#### Chinese Exclusion Act

- Barred Chinese immigration for 10 years
- Prevent Chinese already in the US from becoming citizens
- · Caused by:
  - Fear of cheap labor
  - Nativist sentiments
    - European Immigrants were more willing to assimilate into the American Culture



# Activity

- Look at the chart labeled 4. Big Business and Government. Use the information in the chart to create a line graph on the blank graph titled 4. Big Business and Government
- Look at the chart labeled 5. The Gilded Age. Use the information in the chart to create a bar graph on the blank graph titled 5. The Gilded Age