



The Immigrant Experience

American Immigration from 1865-1920

Statue of Liberty

- Gift from France
- Designed by Frédéric Bartholdi and dedicated on 28 October 1886
- Bartholdi completed the head and the torch-bearing arm before the statue was fully designed, and these pieces were exhibited for publicity at international expositions



Emma Lazarus "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
Glows 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!"*

Coming to America

In the 5+ decades following the Civil War (1865-1920) a flood of immigrants came to America



- ▶ U.S. population in 1860 was 31.5m people
- ▶ Between 1865 and 1920, close to 30m *additional* people entered the country

The U.S. experienced four major waves of immigration

1st Wave

-Began in 1600s with first colonists
-Majority of immigrants from England

2nd Wave

-1820s-1870s
- Mostly from Northern and Western Europe
- 1/3 Irish, 1/3 German

3rd Wave

-1881-1920
- Approx 23.5 million immigrants
-Mostly from Eastern and Southern Europe

4th Wave

-Begins in 1965
- Built upon new immigration law reform

Push/Pull Migration Factors

Push Factors

- Poverty: new agricultural techniques → unemployment
- Religious persecution (e.g. Jews)
- Political tyranny
- War/Compulsory military service
- Lack of social mobility
- Emigration laws allow migration

Pull Factors

- Economic opportunity: work or land
- Civil liberties
- Democracy
- Social mobility
- Loose immigration laws (think industrialization leading to a demand for labor)
- Better standard of living

Transportation to America

Passage often cost a life's savings

-Families would save enough money to send one or two family members to America and hoped those family members could earn enough to bring over the rest of the family (“Birds of Passage”)



From
Europe:
1 week

From
Asia:
3 weeks

- The steerage deck was usually overcrowded
- Below deck was crowded, dark, and damp
 - Lack of air
 - Low food rations
 - Contagious disease



“During the twelve days in the steerage I lived... in surroundings that offended every sense. Only a fresh breeze from the sea overcame the sickening odors. Everything was dirty, sticky, and disagreeable to the touch”

Ellis Island

In 1890, Congress designated a three-acre island in NY Bay as an immigration station (open from 1892-1954)



**By 1910, 6
million
immigrants
had come
through Ellis
Island**



Many immigrants had their names changed by the inspectors because they didn't have the time or patience to struggle with foreign spellings

Immigrants then faced a medical inspection

-If evidence was found of a communicable disease, they could be immediately deported back to their home country

-Could be placed into quarantine for an indefinite period of time



The immigration inspection process could be a humiliating and dehumanizing experience

Asian Immigrants

During the mid-1800s, Chinese and Japanese immigrants began to arrive on the West Coast



Processed at “Angel Island”

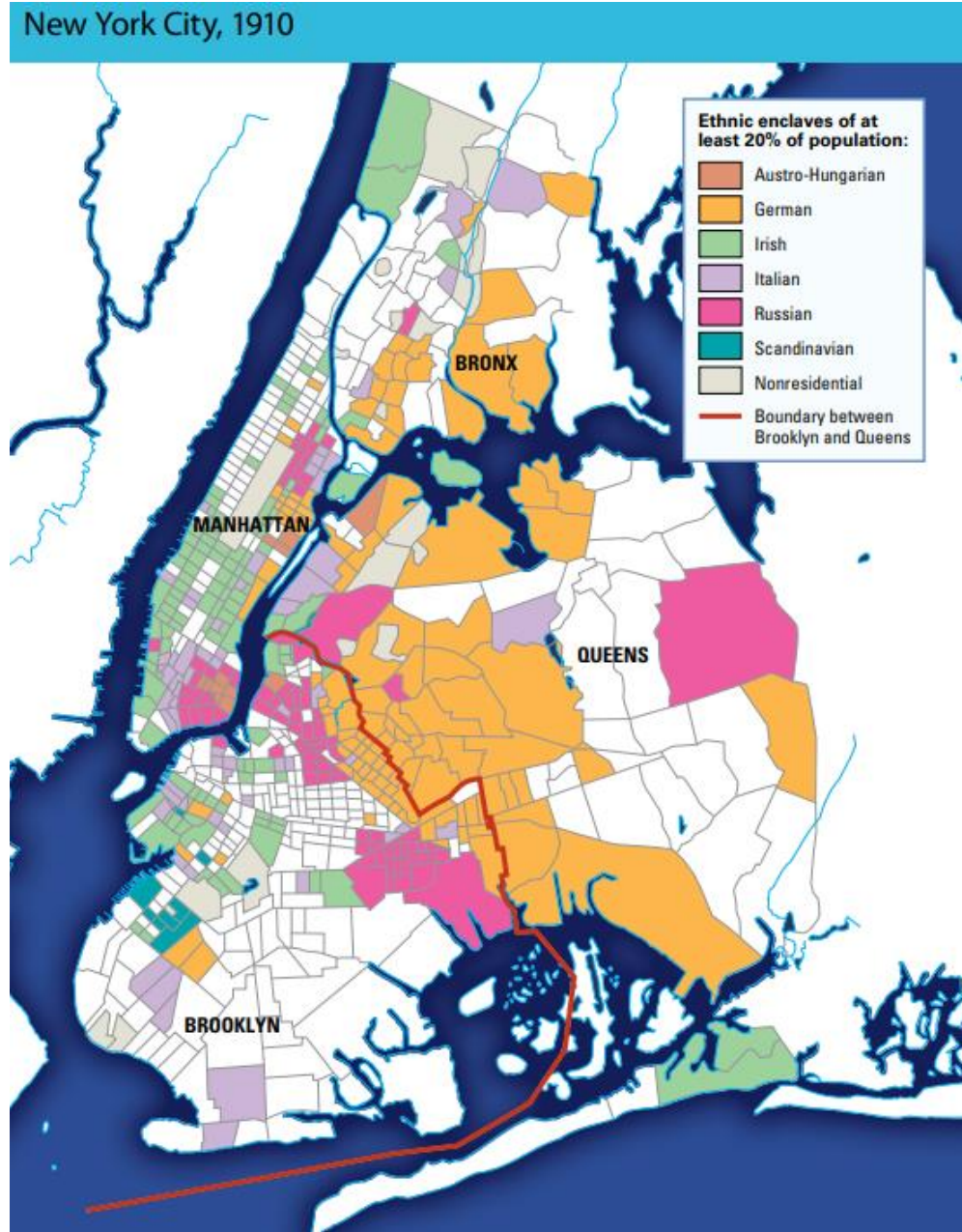
- Located in CA
- Very slow process, sometimes taking months to clear immigration hearings

Ethnic Cities

The majority of immigrants settled in big cities where factory jobs were available

-Many immigrants lived in areas with people of similar ethnic backgrounds

-Neighborhoods provided a sense of community and support but slowed assimilation into American culture



Nativism

Increased waves of immigration led to increased feelings of nativism:

- An extreme dislike for immigrants by *native-born people and a desire to limit immigration
- WASPS (White, Anglo-Saxon Protestants)
 - Disliked unfamiliar customs and languages
 - Viewed immigrants as a threat to American way of life

Anti-immigration Societies Grow

American Protective Association: anti-Catholic and foreigners

Workingman's Party of California: goal aimed at limiting/ending Chinese immigration

“Old Immigrants”

- Northern or Western Europe
- Protestant
- Literate and “skilled”
- Quick to assimilate
- Came from more democratic countries
- Came with an amount of wealth

“New Immigrants”

- Southern or Eastern Europe
- Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish
- Illiterate and “unskilled”
- Settled into ethnic neighborhoods
- Less democratic countries
- Arrived poorer

THE “NEW IMMIGRANTS”

- Unlimited immigration kept wages low:
 - Worked in factories, coal mines, or became farmers because of the Homestead Act
 - Most immigrants avoided the South



CLOSE THE GATE.

Impact of Anti-Immigrant

Movement

Prejudice
against
immigrants
stimulated
new federal
laws

1882: Chinese
Exclusion Act-
barred Chinese
immigrants for 10
years
-Chinese already in
country were
denied citizenship

1882
Immigration
Act: banned
convicts,
paupers, and
the mentally
disabled from
immigrating
with a 50-
cent tax on
every person
coming into
the country



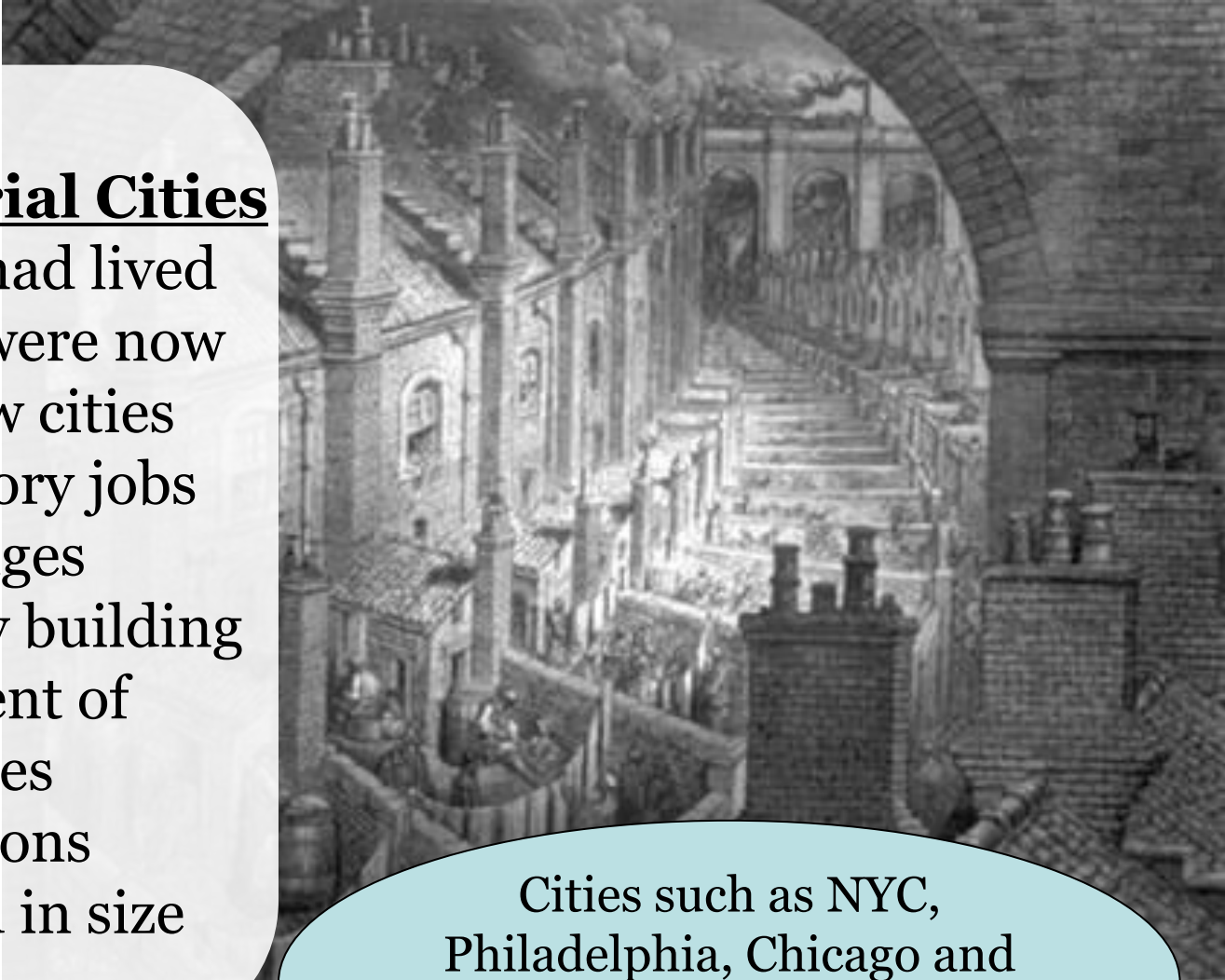
The Rise of Large Cities

Growth of Industrial Cities

- Most Americans had lived in rural areas, but were now moving to the new cities
- Searching for factory jobs and higher wages

Urbanization: city building

- and the movement of people to cities
- City populations doubled or tripled in size



Cities such as NYC, Philadelphia, Chicago and Boston grew into industrial hubs

Construction

- Brooklyn Bridge (1883)— 14 years to build
- Skyscrapers—invention of elevators and development of internal steel skeleton them to be built
 - Louis Sullivan designed the 10-story Wainwright Building in St. Louis
 - Daniel Burnham designed the Flatiron building in 1902
 - Frederick Law Olmsted started planned urban parks—Central Park in New York



Living Conditions

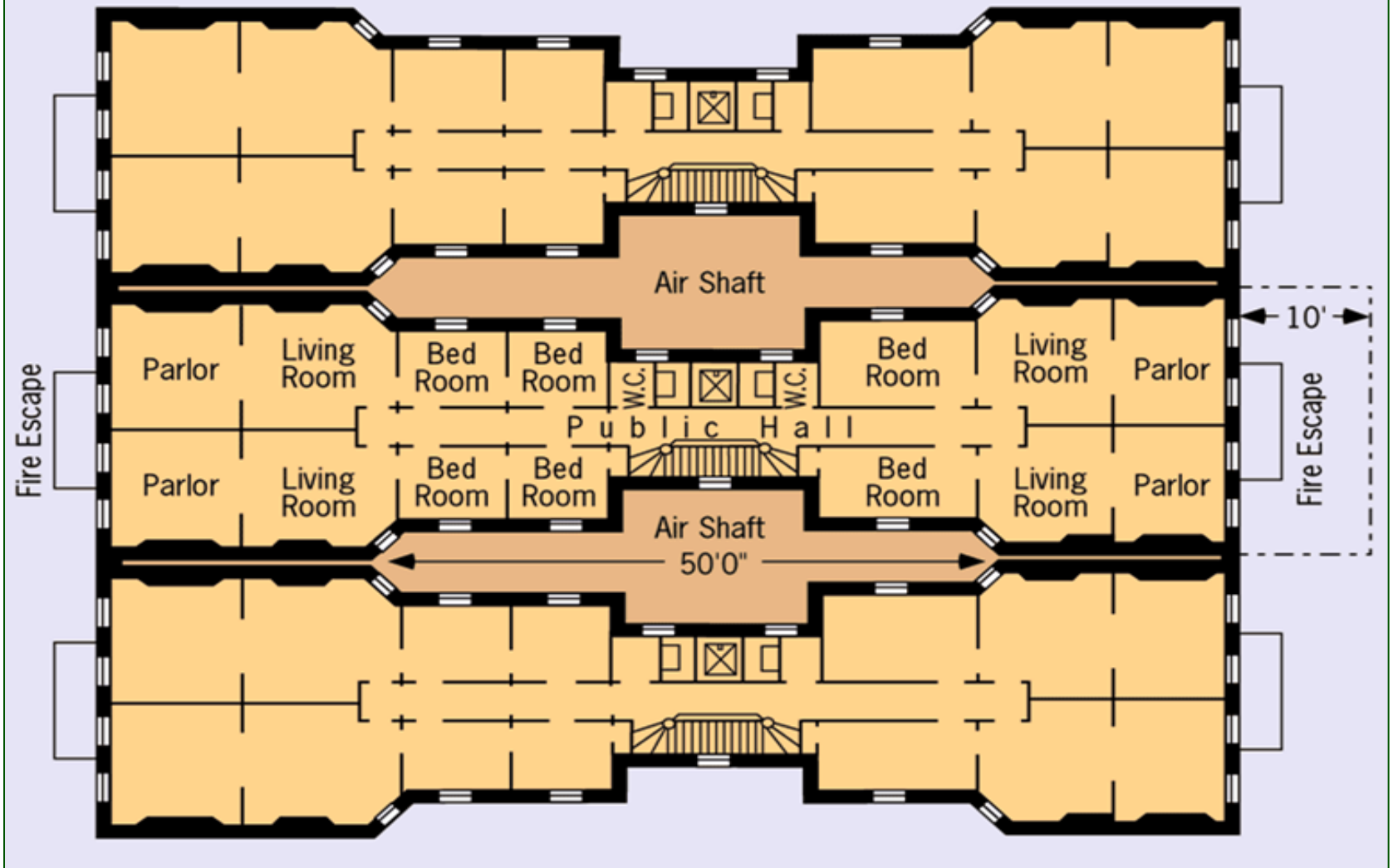


No building codes
No sanitation codes





- Lacked adequate amount of housing
- Little opportunity for education
- Very little police protection
- Most of the unpaved streets had no drains, and collected heaps of garbage
- Human waste disposal went unchecked
- Crime rate skyrocketed
- Workers in the city had average life span of 17 yrs.
in rural areas: 38 yrs.



- In 1878, a publication offered \$500 to the architect who could provide the best design for mass housing
- Most cost-efficient: “**Dumbbell Tenements**”, which were unsafe and crowded
- Poorly ventilated
- Massively overcrowded
- Disease was widespread

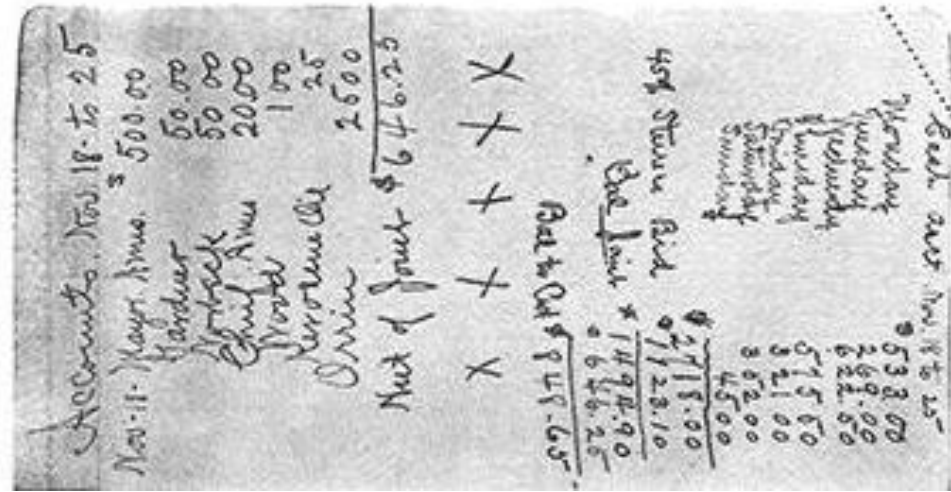
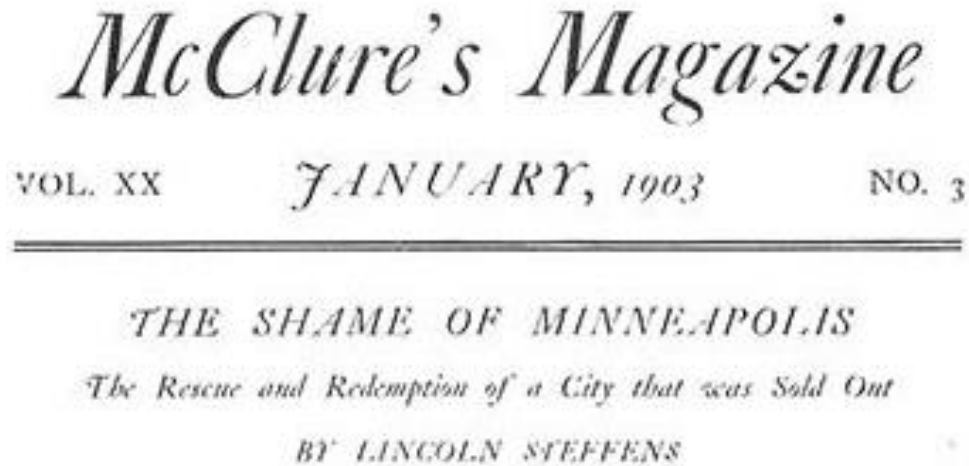
“New Immigrants” settled into what would become known as **ghettos**

- Cholera (1832 worldwide) and Yellow-fever epidemics swept through the slums on a regular basis
- Tuberculosis was most prevalent and fatal; infants suffered most (25% of infants would die before the age of 1)

Other common diseases: smallpox, typhoid, malaria



Muckraker Lincoln Steffens' "Shame of the Cities"

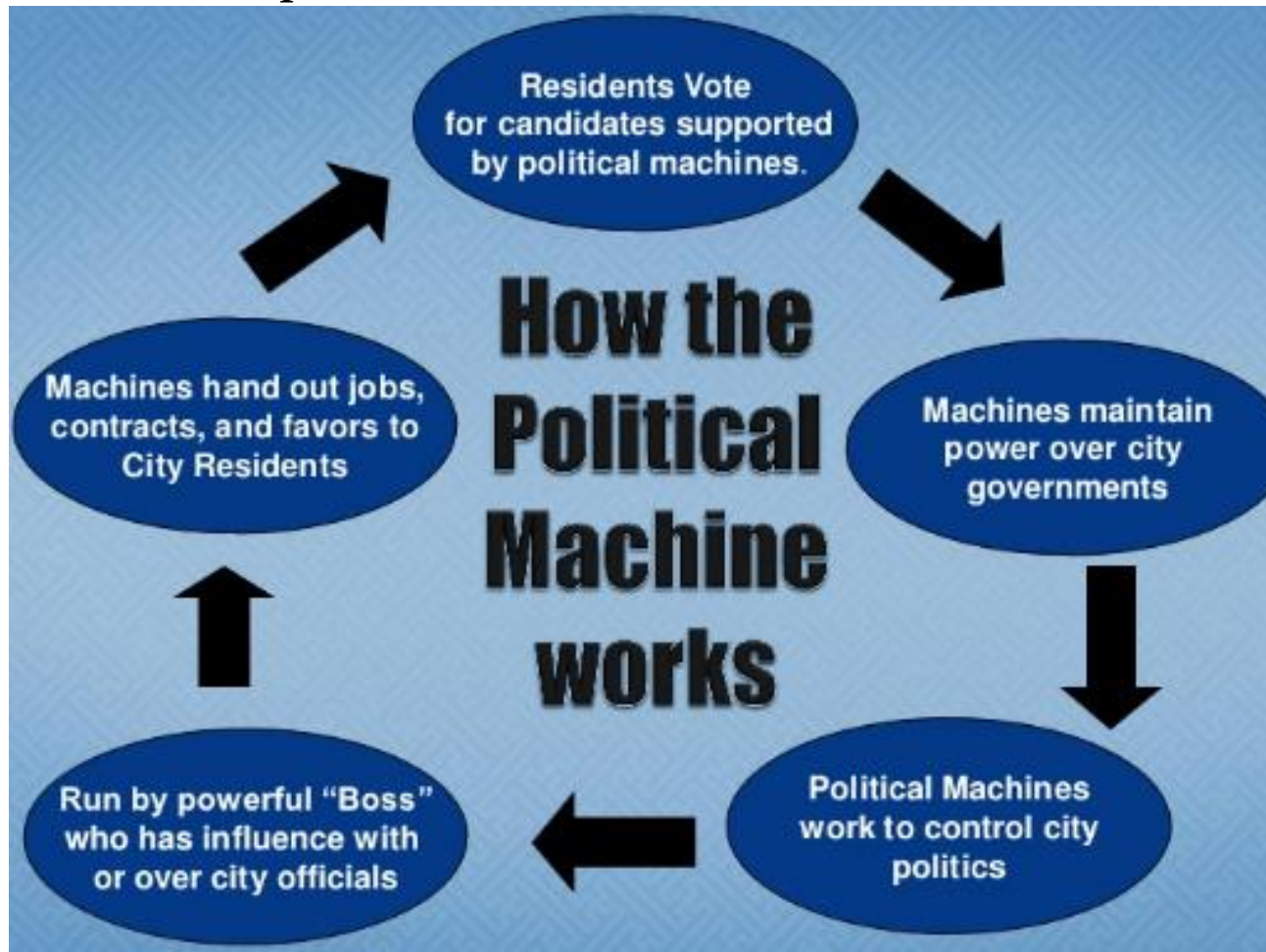


-Articles exposed corruption in local governments; led to a series being printed as a book

-A "muckraker" was a journalist who sought out and exposed corruption and made it known through sensationalist writing

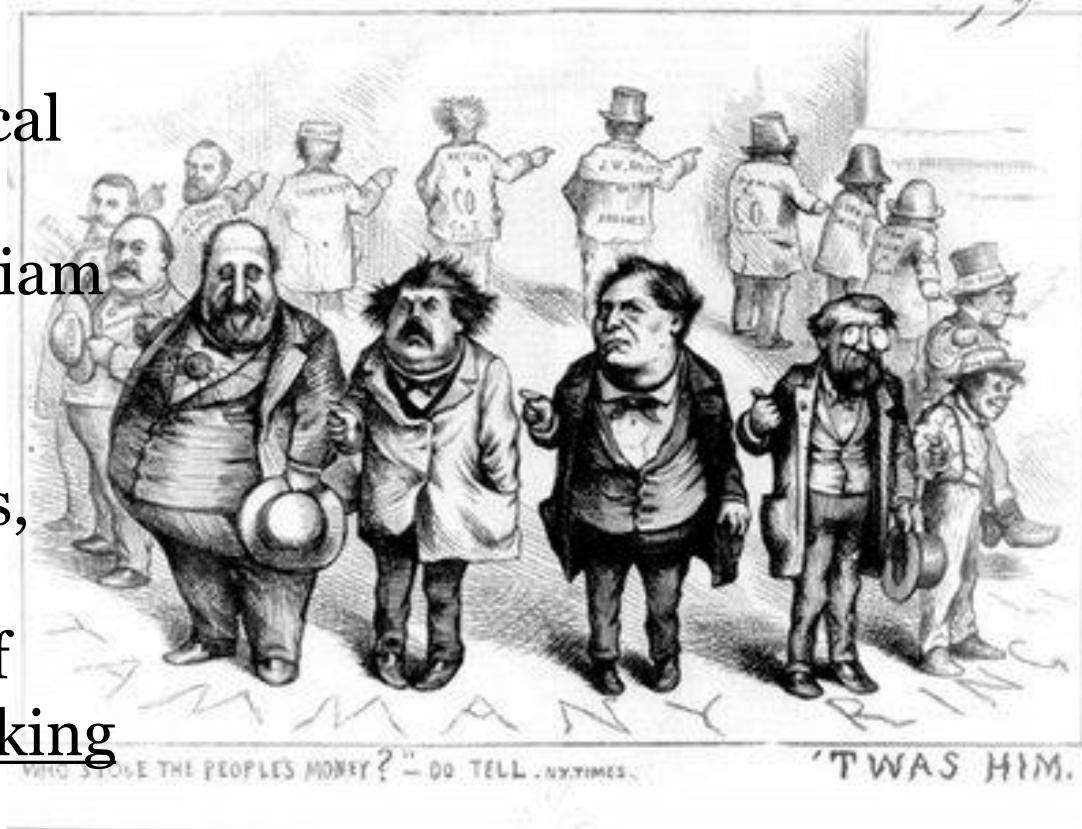
POLITICAL MACHINES

- Corrupt local and state politics
- Organized by a “boss” who:
 - Picks who will run for office
 - Uses fraud and intimidation to get people elected
 - Siphons off tax money for profit
 - Stays in the “good graces” of the local immigrant/poor communities through small favors and public works



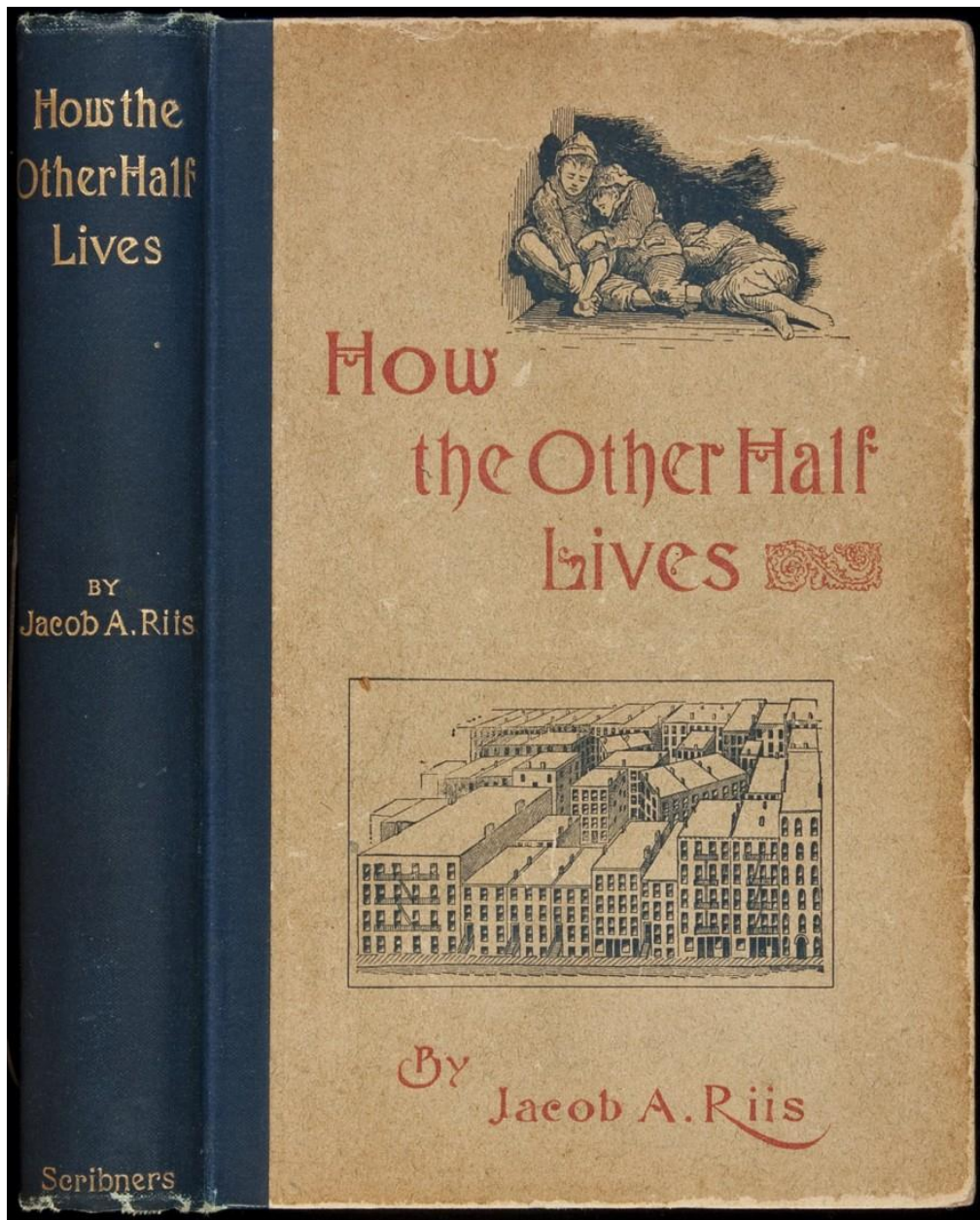
Tammany Hall

- Most infamous NYC political machine
- Led by **Boss Tweed** (William Macy Tweed)
- Stole millions through patronage, bribes, kickbacks, and fraudulent contracts
- Exposed by the cartoons of **Thomas Nast** and muckraking newspapers
- Investigated, brought to trial, and found guilty by Governor Samuel Tilden (who would win the 1876 election and lose out in the Compromise of 1877)
- Tammany Hall was then taken over by the Irish



Graft—illegal use of political influence for private gain. (e.g., helping someone find a job on construction project for the city)

Muckraker Jacob Riis' *How the Other Half Lives*



-Exposed the parts of the city that the rich never see through photographs and interviews with those living around the Five Points and in the tenements

Reform

- “Social Gospel Movement”—preached salvation through service of the poor
- “Settlement Houses”—community centers in poor neighborhoods that provided assistance; especially immigrants
- Hull House – one of the most famous settlement houses founded by Jane Addams and located in Chicago



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[1892]

Triangle Shirtwaist Factory (25 March 1911)



- Both owners were acquitted of negligence or manslaughter charges
- Sullivan-Hoey Fire Prevention Law passed that October
- NY Democratic party took up the cause of the worker and became known as a reform party



“Operators Wanted. Inquire Ninth Floor.”

