

Labour Rights

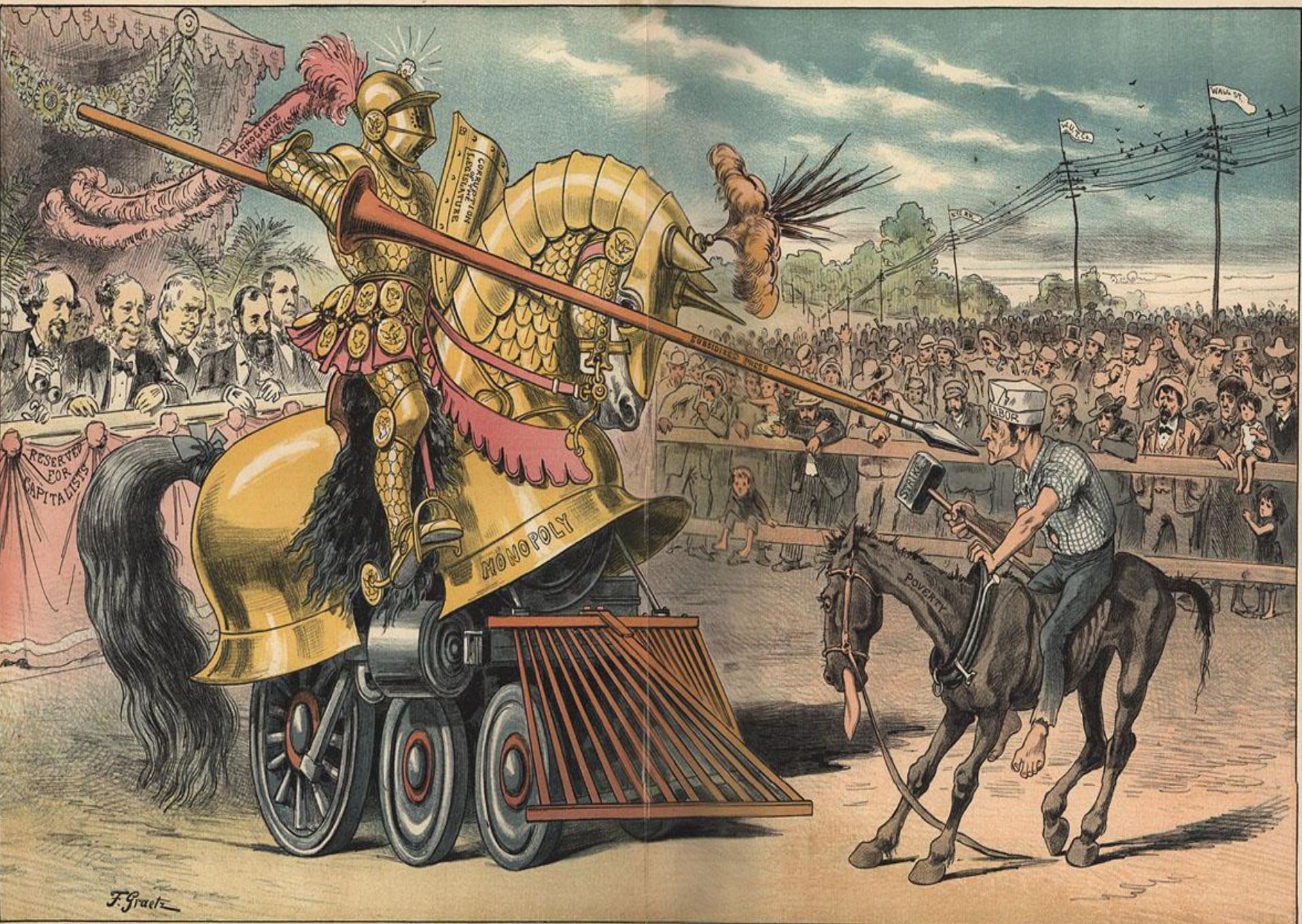
Look through the cartoons.

I want you to identify the main issues that we can expect to be looking at in this section of the course based upon the things shown in the images.

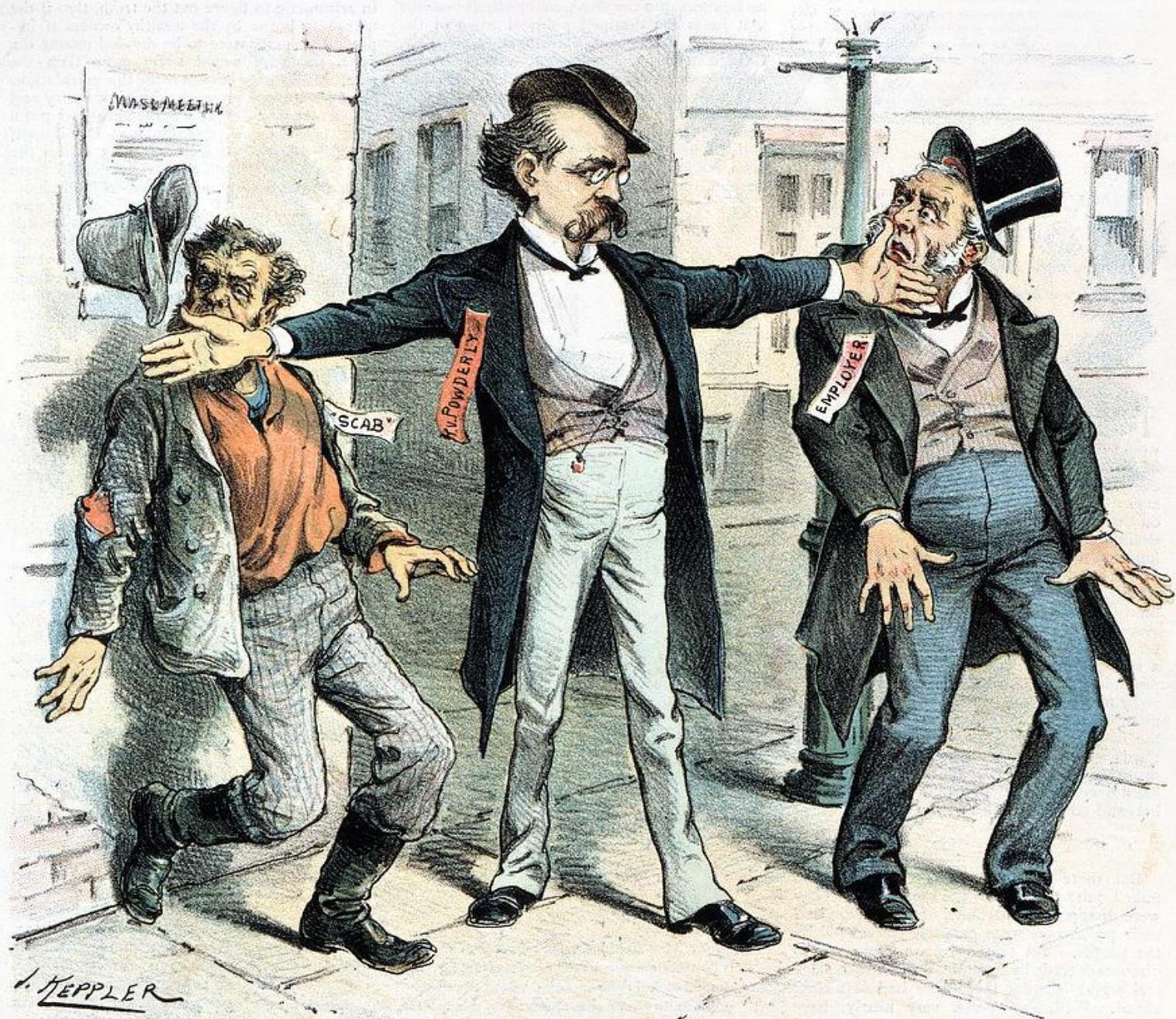
SOCIALIST
NEWS-PAPER
UNION
ST. LOUIS



THE CONDITION OF THE LABORING MAN AT PULLMAN.

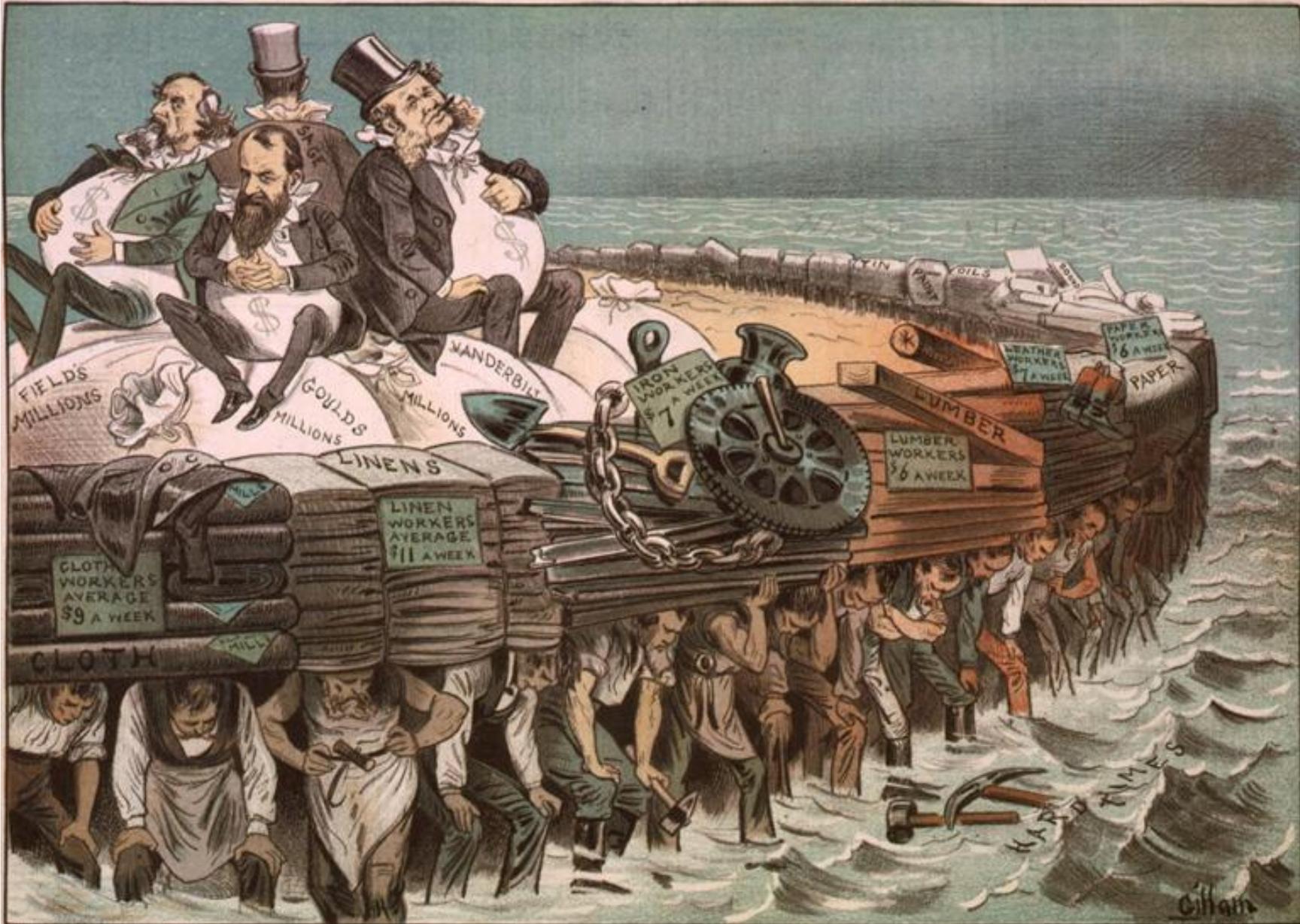


THE TOURNAMENT OF TODAY.—A SET-TO BETWEEN LABOR AND MONOPOLY.



THE GOSPEL OF THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR.

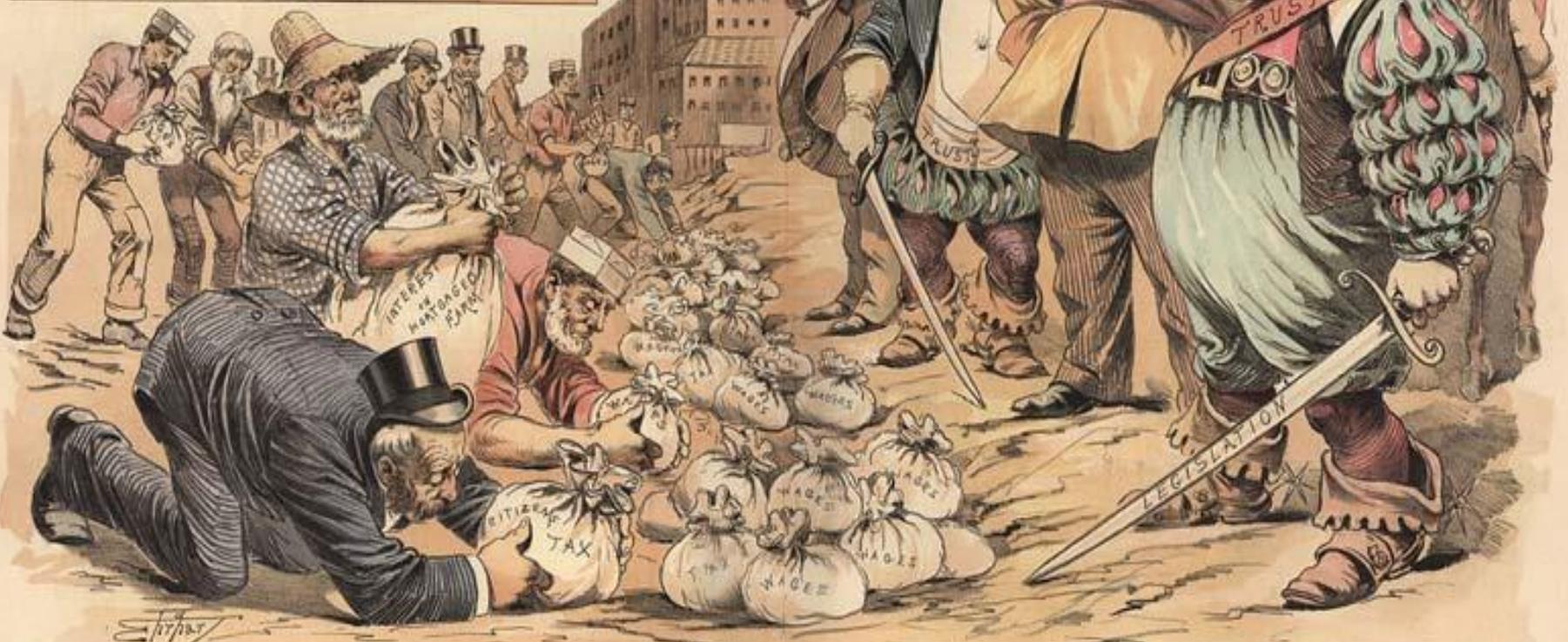
"We work not selfishly for ourselves alone, but extend the hand of fellowship to all mankind."—*Mr. Powderly, at Richmond.*



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WATER WORKS & OTHERS CO. ST. LOUIS MO. WARREN ST. NY

THE PROTECTORS OF OUR INDUSTRIES.



HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF. — THE ROBBER BARONS OF THE MIDDLE AGES, AND THE ROBBER BARONS OF TO-DAY.

Opper Project, The Ohio State University, Cartoon Research Library



BETWEEN TWO OF A KIND.

THE CONSUMER SUFFERS WHEN THESE TWO TRUSTS FALL OUT.



C.J. Taylor

THE NEW SLAVERY AND THE NEW SLAVE-DRIVER.

Labour Rights

This section of the course deals with the changes in the status, role and importance of organised labour in delivering rights and benefits to the working classes.

What is a union?

What is collective bargaining?

What is skilled labour?

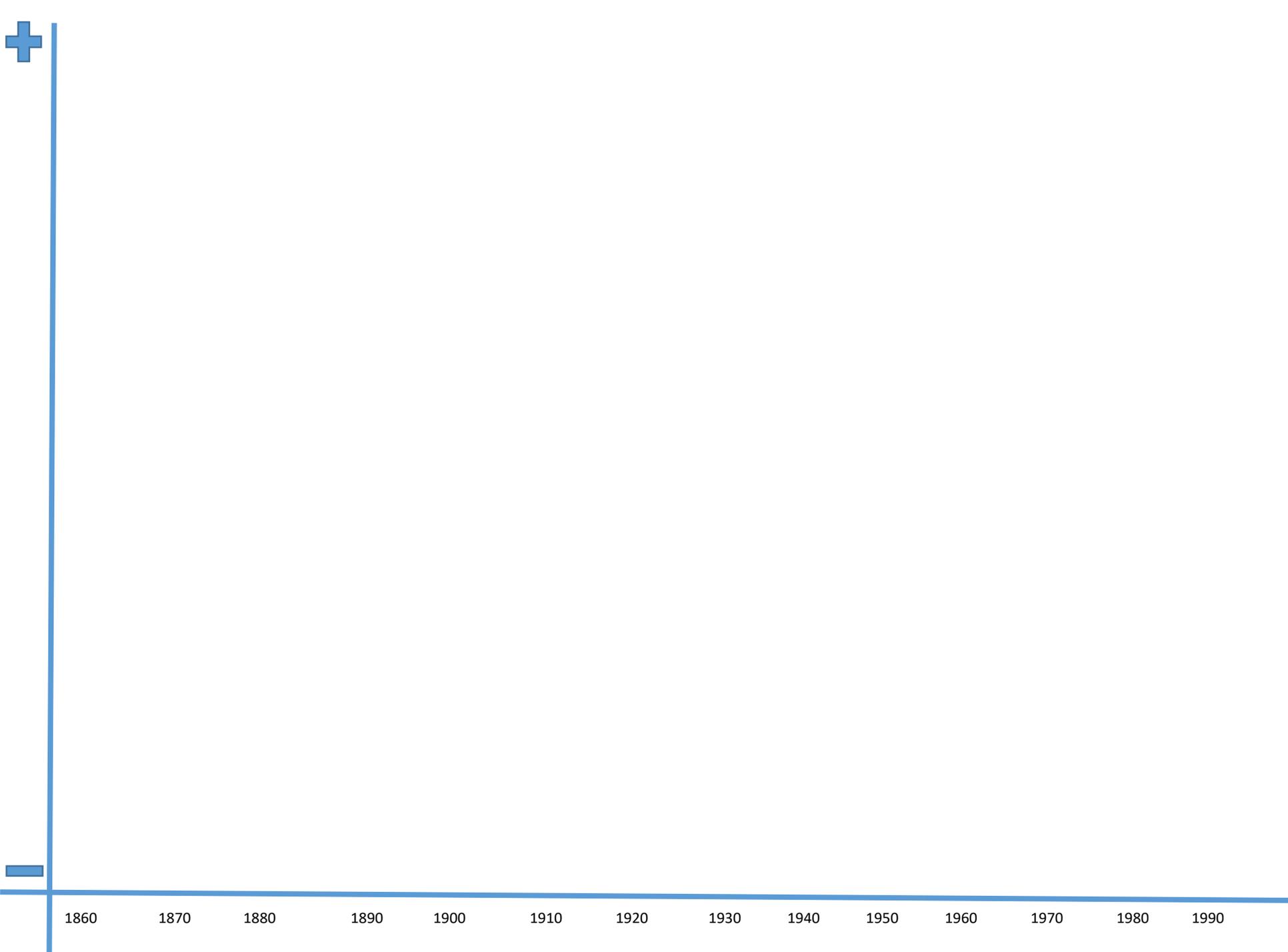
What is unskilled labour?

What are industrial relations?

Creating synthesis

In front of you is a transcript of an interview. We're going to be picking out the key TRENDS in the history of the labour movement.

Read through the interview and identify KEY TURNING POINTS, SIGNIFICANT EVENTS and KEY FIGURES. I also want you to try and plot the success of the labour movement over the whole period.



How and why did the
civil rights of the
working classes in
America change
between 1865 and
1992?

On Palm Sunday April 9 1865, Lee donned a crisp dress uniform and met the mud-spattered Grant in the parlour of the McLean home Appomattox to tender his surrender. Grant, at Lee's request, let the Confederate officers keep their side arms and permitted soldiers to keep their own horses and mules. Three days later the Confederate troops formed ranks for the last time as they prepared for the formal surrender. Deeply moved by the sight of such solemn splendour, Joshua Chamberlain, the Union general in charge, ordered his men to salute their foes as they paraded past. His Confederate counterpart signalled his troops to do likewise. General Chamberlain remembered that there was not a sound – no trumpets or drums, no cheers or jeers, simply 'an awed stillness...as if it were passing of the dead.' On April 18 Johnston surrendered his forces to Sherman near Durham, North Carolina.

- 630,000 of a total population of 31.4 million Americans died in the conflict of 1861-65, 50% more than in WW2. The United States had survived. American nationalism emerged triumphant and 4 million slaves emerged 'free'.
- 50,000 veterans returned home with amputations. Disease killed twice as many men as those killed in battle.
- The civil war was a total war, fought not just by professional men but by whole societies: farms became battlefields, cities were transformed into armed encampments and homes were commandeered for field hospitals.

For each point, identify how and why it would be an obstacle to trade unions and workers' rights.

Read through the information about the post-Civil War economic conditions.

How would the North and South differ for workers as a result of the Civil War?

North

Positive conditions

Negative conditions

South

Positive conditions

Negative conditions

Using your notes **ONLY**,
complete the key vocabulary
grid.

Provide a definition of what the
term means, why the person
was significant or what the
group did.

Role	Labour needed	What conditions would this employer offer, and why?
Northern factory owner		
Central Pacific railway constructor		
Southern plantation owner		
Cotton mill owner		

Former Slave

Before the Civil War you were born into slavery and worked throughout your childhood and adult life. You are proud to be a free American but you are realistic and all too aware of southern culture and attitudes. Despite the prejudice you face you will not let white bigots drive you either out of your home or into the ground. You only have experience and training in agricultural manual labour. Trade unions will not open their doors to you as you are both unskilled and black. Given the voting, housing and work restriction informally placed on African Americans you are desperate for work.

Unskilled White Northerner

After four years service in the Union Army you returned to your job in a cotton mill. However due the destruction of the Southern cotton crop the mill is not in full operation, you do not have a formal contract and you cannot get the hours necessary to support your family. Lay-offs are made at the mill and overnight you are now working excessive hours to make up for lost workers, you are still earning less than you did in the army. Surrounding mills have been sacking all white workers and replacing all workers with former slaves who are willing to work for less pay.

Skilled craftsmen

You were opposed to slavery and opposed the Civil War even more. Initially the war was good for your work, you received many orders to make parts for guns. However, as the war escalated the government took control of your industry and demanded that you produce a certain output each work. Production was regulated but conditions were not, you worked 12 hour days. Over the course of the war factories perfected machines which could produce the weapon parts which you make. You are largely replaced by machines and the production line, you lose work and pay. After the war, your craft is obsolete – not only are you more expensive than a machine but there is less demand for gun parts.

Railway construction owner

The mass movement of supplies and troops during the war meant that the expansion of the railway network was vital for both sides, your business boomed. Despite fearing a decline in business after the war, the reconstruction era has brought even more opportunities; the north and south continue to compete and expand westward in order to exert control over new territories, the damaged south also needs rebuilding – both tasks require the railway. Given the amount of work available you do not wish to waste opportunities by granting days off or shortening hours. With the slaves freed, there is always someone to fill a job if an employee asks for too much. You view trade unions as the enemy of progress and anti-capitalist. Initially you were opposed to the recent growing wave of new immigration from Italy, Russia, Greece and Austria however once you understood that they were not allowed in unions and that your current workers' wage was far more than they earned in Europe, you were convinced. When Chinese immigration began swelling you were quick to beat the competition to this new source of cheap labour.

New Immigrant (Italy, Russia, Greece, Austria)

You have fled war a religious prejudice in your European homeland. Like many Europeans you view America as a free and welcoming refuge, and after the turmoil of the Civil War you are aware of the growing job opportunities. The Irish and the Germans have emigrated to America throughout the century, you are therefore following a well-trodden path. However, you feel the animosity and suspicion immediately upon arrival; in New York an entire island (Ellis Island) has been set aside for vetting and controlling your entry to the country. On Ellis island you are given a new surname, pointed in the direction of two mills and a factory and told which slums to stay away from. All your savings were spent on the voyage to your new home therefore your entire family must work. There is no space in the local school for you children and they have struggled to learn the new language, and they are therefore best put to use working. You are already discriminated against and do not want to cause further trouble by demanding changes to a job which pays well. Despite being denied entry into unions, many members of your family believe America to be too conservative and wish to introduce their European socialist values to their US colleagues.

Look at the types of workers that the different industries in the post-War South.

For the workers, identify which industries they would work in, where, and why.

For the business owners, which of the workers would you hire, and why?

The Granger Movement began in 1867, led by Oliver Hudson Kelley.

Kelley was amazed by the enslavement of southern farmers and believed an organization that would bring farmers together to study and solve the problems that they faced would be extremely beneficial.

By the Panic of 1873, there were granges in every state but four. Their primary target was the monopolistic pricing of railroads.

Soon railroads started charging high prices for services, so the Granger Movement linked together with 'Farmers' Alliances'. They tried taking cooperative ownership of equipment and mills to address their problems.

Kelley's movement won 'Granger Laws' which established policies such as price caps for shipping and grain-storage facilities.

The Granger cases occurred when the railroads attempted to fight back. Eventually the Granger Law was overturned in the Wabash Case, where the federal government had jurisdiction over interstate commerce, not the states.



What would be the consequences of large scale immigration and internal migration on the position of the working classes in America?

What did you decide?

What impact do you
imagine this would have
on the skilled workers'
unions?

Sherman Anti-Trust Act	Closed shop	Teamsters	William H Sylvis	Professional	Haymarket Affair
Knights of Labor	Samuel Gompers	Solidarity	Employer negligence	Mediation	Manufacturing
Molly Maguires	Unskilled labour	Granger laws	Terence V. Powderley	Semi-skilled labour	Haymarket Affair
Industrialisation	American Federation of Labor	International Brotherhood of Teamsters	Contract system	Immigration	Wabash Railroad case
Homestead Strike	Sickness clubs	Uriah Smith Stephens	Skilled labour	Conciliation	Laissez-faire

Go through the grid.

Decide, on balance, whether each thing was positive, negative or neutral.

Go through the grid.

Decide, on balance, whether each thing was positive, negative or neutral.

Now further categorise the + and – points into SOCIAL, ECONOMIC or POLITICAL (or other themes if you'd prefer)

To what extent was the period between 1865-1914 positive for American workers?

We are going to be planning this together throughout the lesson. Write an initial thesis in response to the question based on what you've read in previous lessons.

READING

**Complete and take notes from
Chapter 7 (p119-134).**

Due: Thursday

To what extent was the period between 1865-1914 positive for American workers?

Look at the pack of statements in front of you.

Organise these into three categories: supports the statement, challenges the statement, and could be used in both arguments.

By the 1880s most industrialists used the **contract system** to hire unskilled labourers. This meant that workers were employed on the condition that they could be laid off in slack periods.

The contract system led to a swell in workers moving from city to city and industry to industry looking for work.

Paterson et al. Civil Rights in the USA, 2009

With the advent of mechanisation and mass jobs, the number of US industrial workers jumped from 885,000 in 1860 to 3.2 million in 1900.

The small craft unions of the mid-19th century drew their strength from **closed shop** policies. The growth of an industrial workforce undermined this union movement. Not only were the new unskilled workers denied entry from the closed shop unions but the idea that strength was derived from number was not popular.

William H. Sylvis was a workers' leader who championed working-class solidarity. As president of the Iron Moulders' International Union, Sylvis called for a leaders convention. From this 1866 meeting the National Labour Union was born, the NLU campaigned for an eight hour day, currency reform, a federal labour department and immigration restrictions.

Sylvis and the NLU promoted the cause of working women and encouraged African-Americans to form unions (but not to join the NLU).

The nervousness, violence, disunity and growing membership of trade unions in the 1870s and 1880s was largely a result of a slump in the economy that hurt wages, prices and levels of production. Despite the boom of industry and oil the US economy was volatile. A crash on the Wall Street Stock Exchange in 1873 meant that companies were forced to make cuts.

Unions had no legal clout, there was no national body for collective bargaining. Therefore each industry sprouted its own union. This meant that there was a proliferation of unions, in turn this led to less union influence at a national level.

In the 1870s bricklayers earned \$3.00 a day but unskilled labourers earned just \$1.30. Only southern millworkers, on \$0.84, earned less.

Due to the nature of the industrial work injury and death from accidents increased. Employers avoided the additional costs of health and safety regulations. In 1889, 2,000 railway workers were killed as a result of accidents.

The Haymarket Affair

On May 4, 1886, a labour protest rally near Chicago's Haymarket Square turned into a riot after someone threw a bomb at police. At least eight people died as a result of the violence that day. Despite a lack of evidence against them, eight radical labour activists were convicted in connection with the bombing. The Haymarket Riot was viewed a setback for the organized labour movement in America, which was fighting for such rights as the eight-hour workday. At the same time, the men convicted in connection with the riot were viewed by many in the labour movement as martyrs.

The riot set off a national wave of xenophobia, as scores of foreign-born radicals and labour organisers were rounded up by the police in Chicago and elsewhere. In August 1886, eight men, labelled as anarchists, were convicted in a sensational and controversial trial in which the jury was considered to be biased and no solid evidence was presented linking the defendants to the bombing. Judge Joseph E. Gary imposed the death sentence on seven of the men, and the eighth was sentenced to 15 years in prison. On November 11, 1887, four of the men were hanged.

The **Molly Maguires** were an ethnoreligious (Irish) terrorist force active from the 1860s to the 1870s. Their role as a labour force is disputable, depending entirely on perception. It was within this period that the Pennsylvania anthracite coal regions saw a level of violence eclipsing the west's gunslingers.

The conception of the Molly Maguires occurred at a time long before child labour laws, a minimum wage, suitable standards on working conditions, or any organized form of labour union; the first geographically encompassing the Pennsylvania coal region was the shabbily organized, often squabbling, General Council of the Workingmen's Associations of the Anthracite Coal Fields founded on March 17, 1869. Long before this organization came into existence, the Molly Maguires were an active labour force, although lacking in focused goals for the working class. They did intimidate, beat, bash, cripple, and often murder mine owners, supervisors put in charge for owners in absentia, police, and anyone who spoke out against them.

**To what extent was the period
between 1865-1914 positive for
American workers?**

Write up and summarise the evidence on the sheet. Make sure that you use specifics and write a sentence about how you would use it in the argument.

To what extent was the period between 1865-1914 positive for American workers?



1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

4.

4.

5.

5.

1. During the late 19th century, the average American worker was jobless for three or four months a year due to illness, inclement weather, or seasonal unemployment.

4. **Mechanization allowed many industries to substitute semi-skilled and unskilled labourers for skilled craft workers. A massive influx of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe saturated labour markets, slowing the growth of working-class incomes.**

7. It took decades of industrial strife, economic upheaval, and political battles to establish the right of workers to unionize and have some say in work rules. It would not be until the 1930s that the United States adopted laws that guaranteed the right of workers to bargain collectively.

2. **In the late 19th century, the average income of an urban worker was only about \$400 or \$500 a year, a sum insufficient to support a family. The remainder was made up by wives and especially by older children.**

5. Echoing earlier debates over slavery, many working men and women feared that the great industrialists were imposing a new form of feudalism in America, which was reducing "freemen" to "wage slaves." They demanded "a fair day's wages for a fair day's work" and an eight-hour work day.

8. **The old immigrants included English-speaking immigrants from Ireland and Britain, northern European immigrants from Germany and Scandinavia. The new immigrants, were mostly Hungarians, Italians, Jews, and Slavs. Employers often hired workers from different ethnic groups to work in the same plant in order to make unionization more difficult.**

3. After the Civil War many American workers feared that their status was rapidly eroding. The expanding size of factories made relations between labour and management increasingly impersonal.

6. **Some of the earliest labour organizations called for a "cooperative" rather than a corporate economy, built around worker-controlled producer cooperatives.**

9. In contrast to Europe, where the working class had to struggle to win the vote, universal manhood suffrage was the practice in the United States. Further, American workers enjoyed a much higher standard of living than their European counterpart and had a much greater chance to rise into the middle class.

**To what extent was the period
between 1865-1914 positive for
American workers?**

Plan your essay.

*You need to ensure that you approach
it thematically.*

NO ONE IS TO DO A 'BINARY' ESSAY!

**To what extent was the period
between 1865-1914 positive for
American workers?**

Write the introduction, ensuring that
you cover all of the things that you
need in an introduction.

To what extent was the period between 1865-1914 positive for American workers?

Swap your introduction with the person next to you.

*They should be able to identify your **line of argument**, the **themes** that you are going to discuss, your overall **judgement** and **why you reached it**.*

**We have talked about the
'Gilded Age' before.**

***What does 'Gilded'
actually mean? What
does that suggest about
the period?***

Which of the following viewpoints is more convincing? Why?

Mark Twain called the late 19th century the "Gilded Age." By this, he meant that the period was glittering on the surface but corrupt underneath. In the popular view, the late 19th century was a period of greed and guile: of rapacious Robber Barons, unscrupulous speculators, and corporate buccaneers, of shady business practices, scandal-plagued politics, and vulgar display.

It is easy to caricature the Gilded Age as an era of corruption, conspicuous consumption, and unfettered capitalism. But it is more useful to think of this as modern America's formative period, when an agrarian society of small producers were transformed into an urban society dominated by industrial corporations. The late 19th century saw the creation of a modern industrial economy.

The interpretation questions require you to pull apart two different interpretations, identifying similarities and differences.

Write an interpretation that explains the thinking behind the point of view. It doesn't have to contain a great deal of evidence, but instead a line of argument.

Pair up with someone from the other side of the room.

Now you have your interpretations, I want you to do the planning process together in response to this question:

Evaluate the interpretations in both of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the impact of the Gilded Age upon American workers.

Evaluate the interpretations in both of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the impact of the Gilded Age upon American workers.

Plan your answer together.

Why are both convincing?

Where do they agree?

Where do they disagree?

Why is one more convincing than the other (based upon your knowledge of the period)?

**How might a
particular strike
gain significance?**

- *Causes a change in the attitude of the government*
- *Causes a change in the attitude of the workers*
- *Causes a decline in the standing and influence of trade unions*
- *Causes an increase in the standing and influence of trade unions*
- *Demonstrates the support of the government to workers and unions*
- *Demonstrates the hostility of the government to workers and unions*
- *Causes a change in legislation / application of laws*
- *Provides a precedent for union action*
- *Provides a precedent for how to respond to union action*
- *Anything else?*

Haymarket Affair

Pullman Strike

Homestead Strike

Homestead
Strike, 1892

Causes a change in the attitude of the workers

Causes a decline in the standing and influence of trade unions

Causes an increase in the standing and influence of trade unions

Demonstrates the support of the government to workers and unions

Demonstrates the hostility of the government to workers and unions

Provides a precedent for union action / government response to union action

Causes a change in legislation / application of laws

Causes a change in the attitude of the government

Haymarket
Affair, 1886

Causes a change in the attitude of the workers

Causes a decline in the standing and influence of trade unions

Causes an increase in the standing and influence of trade unions

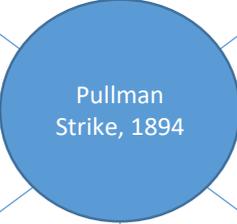
Demonstrates the support of the government to workers and unions

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Provides a precedent for union action / government response to union action

Causes a change in legislation / application of laws

Causes a change in the attitude of the government



Causes a change in the attitude of the government

Causes a change in the attitude of the workers

Causes a decline in the standing and influence of trade unions

Causes an increase in the standing and influence of trade unions

Demonstrates the support of the government to workers and unions

Demonstrates the hostility of the government to workers and unions

Provides a precedent for union action / government response to union action

Causes a change in legislation / application of laws

How would these features of 20th century warfare impact upon the rights of workers in America?

- *Increased role of the state in industry to ensure that the war effort is supported*
- *Significant increases in the number of men joining the armed forces*
- *Challenges to international travel*
- *Industrial production becomes a national security concern rather than simply an economic concern*
- *Increased requirement for governments to mobilise popular sentiment*
- *Increased expectation that their war efforts will create a positive, lasting legacy*

Read through the information about the Independent War Industries Board and answer the following questions:

- 1. Why did the government intervene in business by creating the WIB?***
- 2. Why didn't Wilson fully centralise war industries?***
- 3. How did the WIB ensure that businesses worked with the government?***
- 4. Why was the WIB disbanded so quickly at the end of the war?***
- 5. What was the significance of the WIB for future government involvement in the economy?***

Why might the War Industries Board be significant in the long term?

The National War Labor Board was established in April 1918 to mediate between union groups and business.



The decisions of the NWLB generally supported and strengthened the position of labour. Although it opposed the disruption of war production by strikes, it supported an eight-hour day for workers, equal pay for women, and the right to organize unions and bargain collectively. Although the NWLB did not have any coercive enforcement power, Wilson generally ensured compliance with its decisions.

Union membership almost doubled after the formation of the NWLB. Of note, the AFL membership rose from 2 million in 1916 to 3.2 million in 1919. By the end of the decade, 15 percent of the non-agricultural work force was unionised.

In groups of six, you will be finding specific evidence from a summary article explaining the impact of the First World War on organised labour.

Each person will be assigned a page. You need to read through your page and identify any evidence and arguments that could be used to support each of the lines of enquiry presented.

You will then feed this back to the rest of your group.

<p>WW1 led to an increasingly dynamic union movement, improved workers' representation and working conditions. Full employment undermined any labour discontent.</p>	<p>WW1 demonstrated the potential for positive changes for the workers, but this was only temporary and thus left organised labour disillusioned and disappointed.</p>	<p>WW1 failed to change things for the better. Workers' position in the USA remained fraught and the increased militancy after the war exemplified how much change was still required.</p>
<p>P4</p>		
<p>P5</p>		
<p>P6</p>		
<p>P7</p>		
<p>P8</p>		
<p>P9-10</p>		

READING

Complete and take notes from the article regarding the impact of the First World War on the American labour movement.

**To what extent did the
First World War improve
the position of labour in
America, and why?**

Discuss in your groups.

