## Slide 2

#### THE PROGRESSIVE REFORMERS

How should reformers address inequities existing in American society at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

# Instructor will broaden the focus to include the following questions:

- Whose interests were served by progressive reforms?
- Did reforms increase fairness and justice for broader American society?

#### Slide 3



**Discussion Questions**: Instructor asks a series of questions to frame the Americanization debate among Progressives.

- What do you see? What can you read that might help us interpret the cartoon? [Instructor will help audience read anything not visible.]
- 2. What makes Uncle Sam nervous?
- 3. What do immigrants need to be successful in America?
- 4. What does American society need from immigrants? What does America need them to do? [Our focus for next section.]

Content: In the 1890s, new immigrants from Italy, Eastern Europe, and China came to America to fill jobs requiring unskilled labor that emerged following the mechanization of industry. English and Germans often filled skilled positions. Irish controlled lower positions of medium skill. At the bottom were the unskilled laborers from these new locales. For many of these groups, there was no social net except that provided by unions, fraternal organizations, or the city machines / bosses. We will look at this relationship a little later in the lecture.

Slide 4 Rhetorical Sub-questions: Should we accept immigrants as they are and fight for that acceptance or help them become like people already living in America? Which is more realistic? Which is more helpful to our republic? To them? WHAT SHOULD BE REQUIRED OF **IMMIGRANTS TO BE GOOD DEMOCRATIC CITIZENS?** Slide 5 **Discussion Questions:** 1. Who was Jane Addams? 2. What is she most remembered for? We have learned to say that the 3. What does she believe about democracy? [common] good must be extended to all 4. What does Jane Addams think is needed for of society before it can be held secure by any one person or class; but we have not immigrants to become democratic citizens? yet learned to add to that statement, that [Possible response: If society provides skills unless all [people] and all classes contribute to **a good**, we cannot even be and knowledge to assimilate poor and needy sure that it is worth having. immigrant children into American culture, - Jane Addams, "Educational Methods", **Democracy & Social Ethics** they can rise from squalor and become productive citizens.] **Content**: Big picture, Addams believed that action to bring about social change would only result from the education and engagement of the masses, including the most recent of immigrants. Settlement houses, Hull House being the one she's famous for, fulfilled this educational role in industrial society and thereby provided a basis for maintaining **democracy** among uneducated immigrants. Settlement houses offered immigrant families education and opportunities for selfdevelopment such that they could participate in public debate. Education was therefore the basis for transforming society for the better.



## **Discussion Questions:**

- 1. What do you see in the photo?
- 2. What do you think is happening in the photo?
- 3. [Reveal that it is Hull House.] What might an immigrant gain from being a part of Hull House? What do Progressive reformers gain?
- 4. What is the overall message of the photo? How do you know this?

**Content**: Jane Addams founded Hull House in 1880 in Chicago. It provided social, educational, and artistic opportunities for children (orphans) and working class adults (mostly recent Eastern European immigrants). Volunteers taught classes in literature, history, art, domestic activities, held free concerts, and offered free lectures on current issues. Its facilities included a night school for adults; kindergarten classes; clubs for older children; a public kitchen; an art gallery; a coffeehouse; a gymnasium; a girls club; a swimming pool; a book bindery; a music school; a drama group; a library; and laborrelated divisions. Hull-House was well known for its efforts to assimilate immigrants through collective social efforts. Addams viewed individualism as selfishness and described it as a threat to industrial society.

#### **Transition:**

While Addams certainly had compassion for immigrant workers and even made attempts to respect their culture and values, what might have been lost by immigrants' participation settlement houses like Hull House? [Immigrants observed middle-class values and living standards which began to tear them away from their own people and culture.]

Slide 7	Rahel Golub (in Henry Street Settlement, Manhattan):  I was hearing good English, I was reading andI was quickly learning the ways of this country But at home and in the shop life became harder and harder The rooms seemed smaller and dingier than they had beenand there was a general look of hopelessness over everything I saw the years stretching ahead of me, always the same, and I wept bitterly. I had never been so aware of it all.  Source: A Fierce Discontent, p. 103	<ol> <li>Discussion Questions:         <ol> <li>What "ways of this country" do you think Rahel was learning?</li> <li>At the conclusion, what does she mean when she says, "I had never been so aware of it all"?</li> <li>How did Henry Street change Rahel's perspective? How did her experience impact relations with her family? Did she encounter pain or loss?</li> </ol> </li> <li>On balance, did Rahel's experiences at Henry Street benefit her?</li> <li>What are the societal impacts of these settlement houses? Are they good for democracy? [Use as transition to next section on protecting democracy in industrial capitalist age.]</li> </ol>
Slide 8	HOW DO YOU PROTECT DEMOCRACY IN AN INDUSTRIAL-CAPITALIST AGE?	Sub Questions to Consider: How has the economy changed? [contrast with Jeffersonian ideal] - With regard to Corporations? - With regard to Factories? - With regard to Cities?  How might that change influence the democratic process? Who is this new democracy listening to and serving?



Set Up / Context for Clip: Joseph and Shannon immigrants from Ireland (Shannon rich/Protestant, Joseph poor/Catholic). Shannon pays Joseph's way to America for his guardianship. When they arrive in harbor, man who Shannon felt was helping her is shot and she discovers he had stolen her silver spoons. She is left with no money. What are they to do? A boy tells them he can take them to the ward boss – who is the ward boss and how can he help?

## Show Clip.

## **Discussion Questions:**

- 1. How does the system work?
- 2. Who is Mike Kelly?
- 3. What would he help Joseph and Shannon? What is in it for him?
- 4. How does the system benefit Joseph and Shannon?
- 5. To what extent is this form of politics democratic? Is Joseph's voice included in political system?
- 6. In what ways is the ward boss increasing participation in the political process?
- 7. If the purpose of government is to serve the people, is this helping the immigrants?
- 8. Who is helped by this process?
- 9. How would the ward boss defend this form of political organization?

#### Richard Coker of Tammany Hall

 There is no denying the service which Tammany has rendered to the Republic.
 There is no such organization for taking hold of the untrained, friendless man and converting him into a citizen. Who else would do it if we did not? There is not a mugwump in the city who would shake hands with him."

## **Discussion Questions:**

- 1. In what ways did machine politics serve democracy?
- 2. Who are mugwumps?
- 3. What is the immigrant lacking in terms of preparation for democratic life?
- 4. How did the ward boss get the immigrant and laborer's voice incorporated into government?
- 5. What did they do with that power? Whom did they serve?
- 6. What criticisms emerged among Progressives of this political system?

## **Background Content:**

- Political organization of the Democratic Party: provided patronage to immigrants and voters: coal, place to live, a job, speak for someone at a trial, and help gain citizenship.
- Voter owed his vote to the Ward Boss.
- Ward Boss rounded up votes to deliver for the next person higher up the organization, in return for patronage – political position in the bureaucracy, a seat on a political board, a real estate deal, information on an investment, a business (boxing, a bar, etc.)

"Honest Graft" – inside information on a public park, buy that piece of land, and then sell it to the city.

Mugwump – established power elites from old, wealthy families – non-immigrants

## Slide 11



## **Discussion Questions:**

- 1. What do we see in this cartoon? Who is the large fat man in the bottom left? Who are the other men?
- 2. Why are they each pointing to each other?
- 3. What is the slogan?
- 4. What is the message of the cartoon?
- 5. Who does the cartoonist say the machine is serving? What did they do with their power?

## Slide 12

#### Criticism of Machine

 "The big-city machines misused and abused, the immense power it won because its leaders could not envision a more just and more beautiful city than the mean and ugly neighborhoods in which they grew to manhood."

Lincoln Steffens, The Shame of the Cities, 1904.

## **Discussion Questions:**

- What could the progressives do about this problem?
- What about national politics? What was the situational at the national level?

## Slide 13



## **Questions to Guide Image Analysis:**

- 1. What do you see?
- 2. What is the message of the cartoon?
- 3. What would be the remedy?
- 4. Break up monopolies?
- 5. Decrease their influence on politics?
- 6. Do corporations have a right to influence politics?
- 7. How do we balance that with the rights of laborers?
- 8. How could Progressives increase the political voice of the laborer?

## **Response Options to Consider:**

- Do Nothing would lead to less competition
- Socialism would also lead to less competition
- Anti-trust (break them up) increase competition
- Regulate
- Tax them so they contribute to public good

# Discussion Questions to Begin Transition to Poverty:

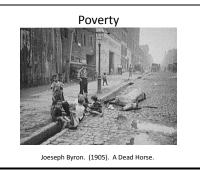
How have average Americans been affected by industrialism (urbanization, factories, etc.)? If we reformed these trusts, does that go far enough to address the problems of the typical American?

Let's look at some issues of poverty in order to explore that question.

## **Transition Statement:**

We've seen how the machine worked at the local level and how industrial capitalists influenced government to their own benefit. Let's turn now to a couple of images that will help us consider whether progressive reformers went far enough – whether reform was needed that went beyond addressing trusts.

Slide 14



## **Discussion Questions:**

- What do you see in the photo?
- What do you think is happening in the photo?
- What is the overall message of the image?
   Why did the photographer take it?
- What would need to be done to address the problems you see?
  - (Assuming responses include a number of sanitation reforms.): Is that enough? Would an average American reap the benefits of reforming the problems in this image? \
  - Are more fundamental changes needed to address problems of poverty?
  - If more fundamental changes are needed to address poverty, what could be done?"

**Background Content**: 9 kids play within a few feet of a dead horse, thought they don't seem

interested in it. The kids talk or play in a deep gutter that might be for runoff or sanitation. Two kids are wearing overalls or other simple clothes. One kid walks alone. Puddles are in the cobble stone road though it doesn't look rainy. Run down wood walls to the left. The image seems to capture an ordinary day. No one seems disturbed. The kids are playing in a gutter where sewer water or runoff flows away from the city. No one seems to be caring for the kids.

If the image does capture an ordinary day in NYC, life for immigrants and their children was filthy, dangerous, unpleasant, and probably short. By photographing this everyday life image, Byron is likely making this problem of poverty known. Byron was a famous muckraking journalist who spent his life highlighting these problems. Jacob Riis is similar in this way.

The photo seems to refute the notion that the reformers were doing enough to solve problems of poverty. Byron and other reformers hoped to use imagery to focus public attention on the greed, neglect, and economic self-interest of the upper class wealthy elites. They argued that political talk was just empty rhetoric that only served to promote the interests of big-business industrial capitalists.

Without progressive intervention, the immigrant population, particularly children, would be left to suffer and die in filthy conditions. Progressive reformers must do more to protect and provide for the poor and needy. The image is a call to act – citizens have to do more to ensure that progressive reforms actually reach those who need it most.



Image: Promotional poster printed in the Industrial Workers of the World bulletin in 1911. The bulletin began in 1909 and sought to be the primary voice for labor in America. It has continued publication virtually uninterrupted since 1909 and is published out of Spokane, Washington. The image here advocates for industrial unionism in its critique of capitalism and is based on a Russian flyer from 1900.

#### **Questions:**

The image raises the question of whether more fundamental change was necessary for 20<sup>th</sup> century inequities to be addressed. Let's explore some of those questions together.

- 1. Should the progressives have fought more for labor?
  - What balance should they have struck? [between business & labor]
  - In breaking up the trusts, are we looking out for the common man?
  - How far do we limit big business to give the common man a fair shake?
- 2. Were political reforms sought by progressives enough? Would they create enough opportunity to address problems of poverty? Did Progressives even want to address problems of poverty?
- 3. Will the work of Progressives accomplish change within the capitalist system? Was socialism needed?
- What reforms could lead to fairness & justice for Americans? [Average Americans vs. Wealthy Elites]