

Labor in the *Age of Big Business*

“It’s a hard knock life, for us...”

--worked very long hours.



10-12 hour days

--worked long work weeks.

6-7 days a week.



--Did monotonous work.



- Mechanization results in an UNSKILLED labor force.
- New machinery often resulted in Technical unemployment.

--worked in unsafe conditions.





--had little job security.

-influx of farmers and immigrants to cities created a highly competitive labor market. Workers became expendable.

“He gotanudda horse.”

-Yanek

--worked at a tireless pace.

-no breaks.



Again with the mechanization, new machinery and competitive labor market.

--received very low wages.

- 12 cents per hour.

- \$500 a year.

Competition among laborers and a series of Economic depressions drove wages down.

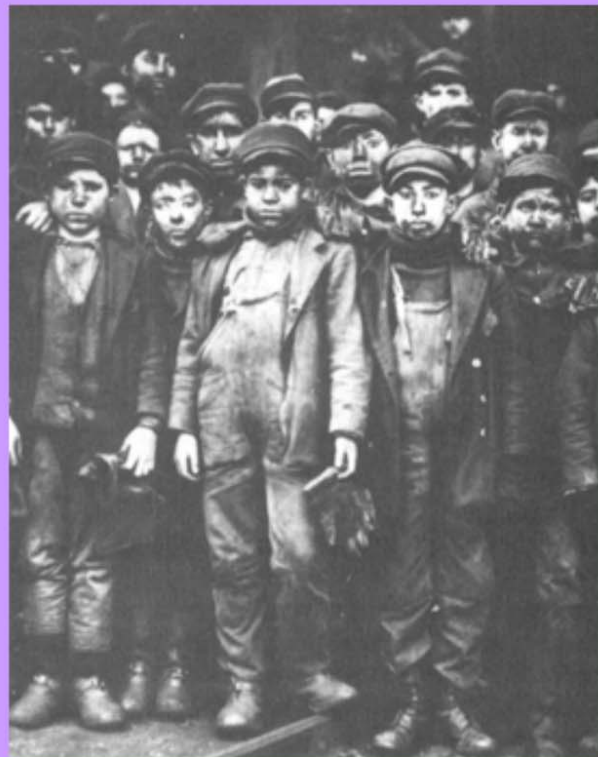
(It took about \$600 a year to make ends meet. THIS is known as the poverty level.)

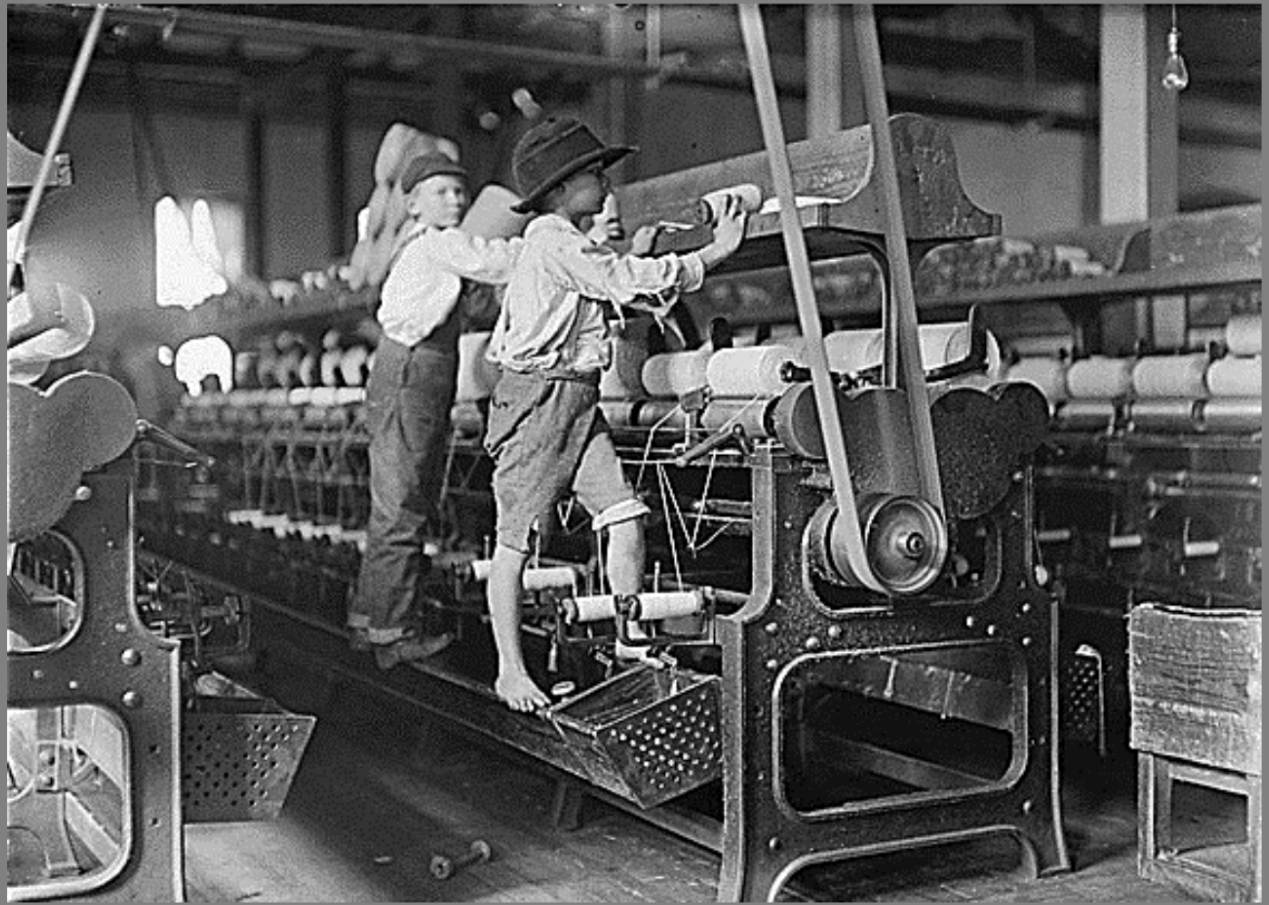
Poverty level in 2010 = \$23,000 for a family of four.

--worked as a child (Child Labor)

-1.7 million kids under 12 worked in 1900.

-made 1/3 the amount of adults.













And now for cause #2

Both as workers and consumers, the waves of immigrants built our industrial economy and drove its growth, without reaping an abundance of rewards from it.

Urban centers as Symbols of the Gilded Age

Urban centers

"What a marvel!" "What a life!" "What a country!"

Urban centers

"Some marvel!" "Some life!" "Some country!"

choose the 3 things you think would have been the worst to deal with.

For each of these three complaints write down an acceptable solution you would seek if you were an industrial worker.

For example,

10-12 hour day - 8 hours plus overtime



The Progressive Era

An Era of American history in which attempts were made to reform (change) many of the problems in our society that had made us so Gilded.

GOALS of the Progressive Era:

1. Improve the morality in America.
2. Improve the economic conditions.
3. Improve the function of government.
4. Improve the well-being of average citizens.