The Progressive Era, Part II
Economic Strains on Society

• The economic growth of the first part of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century in Washington and the U.S. had its benefits
• Technological advancements
• Make goods more affordable to people
• Raises standard of living
• However, strains were real
• Most people barely make enough money to survive (many do not)
• Poverty is high; wages are very low
• There are no workplace safety standards
• Hours are long; few days off
• Wages so low that it often takes multiple family members to survive - women and children in the workforce
• Injuries common at work; death a reality
• No compensation for injuries; no compensation for joblessness
• Working class resents gap between rich and the poor
Capitalism, Socialism, and Communism

- Industrialization began in Europe
- During the Industrial era, new social and economic philosophies emerged: Capitalism, Socialism, and Communism
- Each of these theories is rooted in the Industrial experience
- Principles of 19th century capitalism: Free markets, competition, laissez-faire, elements of social Darwinism, innovation, self-interest
- Principles of 19th century socialism: Utopian thinking; shared access to resources, necessities; communal ownership of industries, land, etc.; growing idea that government must play a role in ensuring economic fairness
- Karl Marx’s Communism: Theory of history; prediction of the future; atheistic; end cycle of exploitation; class struggle; no government necessary; classless society, egalitarian; economy on socialist principles
Organized Labor in Washington

- Organized labor had been developing in US since 1860s
- Comes to the Washington by 1880s
- Mostly in the timber and mining industries
- Union movement in Washington consists of small trade unions and larger national/international organizations
- Two large unions in Washington: AFL (American Federation of Labor) and the IWW (International Workers of the World)
- IWW (nicknamed Wobblies) will be most important large union in Washington
- This group embraced concepts from socialism and communism
- By 1910: There is a strong union presence in Washington
Organized Labor in Washington

- The Organized Labor movement was a battle across the United States
- Same was true in Washington
- Most business owners and industries did not want their workers unionizing
- Unions were about harnessing the collective power of the workers; only worked if workers acted together – power of the strike and work slowdowns/stoppages
- Businesses attempted to prevent the formation of unions in their workplaces; used whatever means necessary – including violence, intimidation, termination
- Unions were also guilty of violence
- Strikes could then be all out wars
- In general, government favored the business owners; government corruption
- Across much of the U.S., public opinion against Unions and Labor
- But in Washington, public is sympathetic towards unions
The Progressive Era

- The Progressive Movement is a term for a reform spirit that swept the United States from c.1900 – 1920
- It was a period of enormous optimism and faith in human capability and ability
- Powered by a sense that society had been changed by Industrialization – needed to be fixed
- Also a belief that in the Industrial era, the function of government and its relationship to society needed to be changed
- Progressive reformers were an eclectic group – union activists, socialists, temperance advocates, women’s suffragists, religious figures, philanthropists, etc.
- Not all agreed on the problems facing society; did not agree on solutions
- Just a general sense that something needed to be done
- First Progressive President was Teddy Roosevelt (right)
# The Progressive Era Reforms

## National Reforms
- Sherman Anti-Trust Act (1890)
- Department of Labor and Commerce
- U.S. Forest Service established (1905)
- Addition of Public Lands
- 16th Amendment (1913)
- 17th Amendment (1913)
- Federal Reserve System (1913)
- Child Labor Act (1914)
- Federal Trade Commission (1914)
- 18th Amendment (1919)
- 19th Amendment (1920)

## Washington Reforms
- Open Primaries (1907)
- Women’s Suffrage (1910)
- Initiative, Referendum, and Recall process (1911); the Oregon System
- Workers’ Compensation system (1911)
- Prohibition (1914)
- In addition, Washington began to develop a public education system
- Efforts to improve access to medical care
- Efforts to alleviate urban poverty