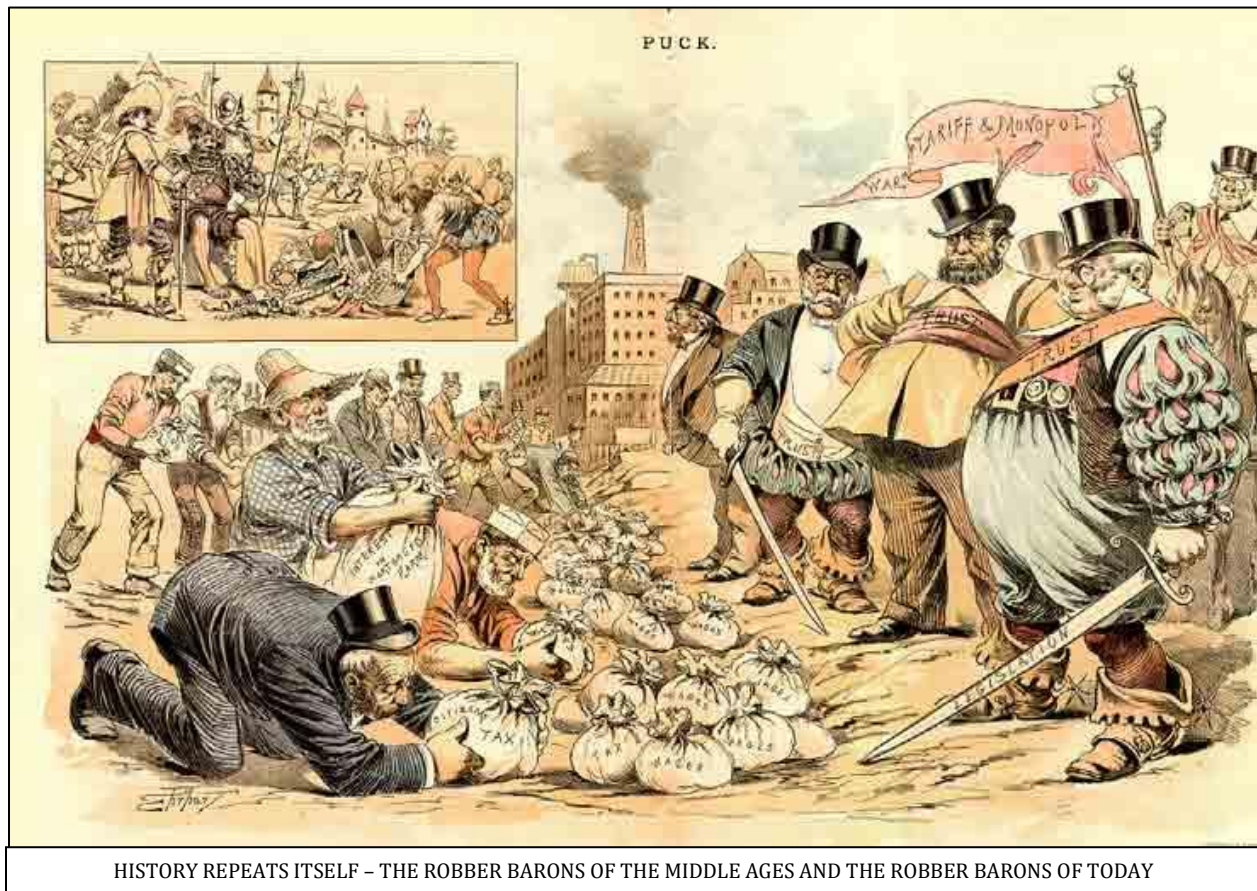


# Warm-Up: Robber Barons



This political cartoon shows the American population giving up everything to the **robber barons** – or wealthy industrialists that profited off of the backs of poor workers. The robber barons' "trust" sashes and the "war, tariff, & monopoly" flag represent what makes these men robbers--they work together through these means in order to strip the public of their wealth. The sword labeled "legislation" suggests that they use the government to attack the American people for their money. The group of people who are being forced to hand over their money is very diverse, indicating that the problem was universal to all but the robber barons, from the reasonably well-off down to the poorest farmer.

The robber barons, on the other hand, all look alike--fat, well-dressed, and commanding--and this small, elite group has control over the entire remainder of the population. The smaller cartoon in the corner relates the robber barons of the gilded age to those from Medieval times. The factory in the background corresponds to the castle of the Medieval barons (like the flag and sashes, suggesting that they are working together to protect their own interests--industry), and the Gilded Age robber barons are even dressed in similar clothes to those of the Middle Ages.

1. Who were the “robber barons”?
2. What does the picture in the corner of the cartoon show? How does it connect to the rest of the political cartoon?
3. According to the cartoon, what types of Americans are handing over money to the “robber barons”?
4. According to the cartoon and the passage, what tools did the “robber barons” use to gain wealth off the people?