**POLITICS IN THE GILDED AGE**

**POLITICAL MACHINES**

•During late 1800's, many cities run by a Political machine.

•This was an organized group, headed by a city boss that controlled activities of a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in a city.

•Offered services to voters & businesses in exchange for political or financial support.

**Many Political Bosses were Corrupt... How? GRAFT**

•Many Bosses got rich through GRAFT-the use of political influence for personal gain.

•To win elections, some filled the list of eligible voters w/names of dogs, children, & the dead.

**BOSS TWEED & TAMMANY HALL**

•William Marcy Tweed, a.k.a. "Boss Tweed', one of the most powerful political bosses.

•Became head of , New York City's most powerful Democratic machine.

**Boss Tweed**

•The record for brassiness goes to Boss William Tweed, who swindled New York out of a fortune when he headed NY's Tammany Hall in the 1860s and 1870s.

•Tweed's masterpiece of graft was a chunky three-story courthouse in Lower Manhattan originally budgeted at $250,000. When Tweed was through, the city had spent more than $13 million -and the building was still not finished.

**Thomas Nast Brings Down Boss Tweed and Tammany Hall... The Power ofthe Political Cartoon William Marcy Tweed known as "Boss" Tweed 1823-1878**

• Boss Tweed was an American politician who, with his "Tweed ring" cronies, systematically plundered New York City of sums estimated at between $30 million and $200 million.

* (that would be worth between $365 million and $2.4 billion today)

**Thomas Nast 1840-1902**

•American cartoonist, best known for his attack on the political machine of William M. Tweed in New York City in the 1870s.

•Many of Nast's most effective cartoons were virulent attacks-on Tammany Hall, led by " " Tweed. His cartoons were probably one of the chief factors in the machine's downfall. Nast's caricature of the fleeing political boss led to Tweed's identification and arrest.

**The Tweed Ring**

• In 1852, Tweed was elected to a term in Congress. He gradually strengthened his POSItion in Tammany Hall (the executive committee of New York City's Democratic Party organization), and held other important positions in the city government.

• Meanwhile he managed to have his cronies named to other key city and county posts, thus establishing what became the \_

**Political Control**

• By 1860 Tweed controlled the Democratic Party's nominations to all city positions. He became a state senator in 1868. Tweed dominated the Democratic Party in both the city and state and had his candidates elected mayor of New York City, governor, and speaker ofthe state assembly.

**Fraud!**

• By 1870, the Tweed ring was able to milk the city through such devices as faked leases, padded bills, false vouchers, unnecessary repairs, and overpriced goods and services bought from suppliers controlled by the ring.

* Examples ofthe flagrant abuse of the public's money were:
	+ I) 40 old chairs and three tables: $179,792.60 (about $2 million today)
	+ 2) Repairing fixtures: $1,149,874.50 (about $14 million today)
	+ 3) A plasterer's wages during a nine month period: $2,870,464.06 (about $34 million today)
	+ 4) 30 months of advertising paid to a Tweed-controlled printing company: $7,168,212.23 (about $87 million today)

•After the disclosure of some of the financial scandals, Tweed and his gang were hopeful that things would boil down. Nast made sure this would not happen when he drew: "A Group of Vultures Waiting For The Storm to 'Blow Over'"

**Tweed Tries to Bribe Nast**

• Tweed decided to buy off Nast, and sent someone to inform ast that some admirers of his work wanted to send him to Europe to study art. When ast, suspicious, replied that he could not possibly afford to leave his work at Harper's, the reply was that $100,000 was set aside for him. ast responded it would take more than that to make it worth his while. When the figure was raised to half a million, Nast said he'd rather see Tweed and his gang in jail first. "Be careful Mr. Nast," his caller replied, "that you do not find yourself in a coffin first." Not long after that, suspicious looking characters were seen outside of Nast's home in Manhattan, so he moved his family to suburban Morristown, New Jersey.

**Tweed Tries to Influence Nast's Publisher**

•With the unsuccessful campaign to bribe ast, next Tweed tried to intimidate Harper's Brothers by threatening to have the Board of Education throw out all Harper textbooks and never buy any more. This would be a severe blow to the publisher; the board of directors voted to stand by their artist and the battle with Tweed continued.

•Then followed a barrage of cartoons depicting Tweed and his gang as many thieves.

•One emphasized the difference between "Wholesale and Retail Thievery."

•On the eve of the municipal elections in New York City in November 1871, there appeared in Harper's Weekly "The Tammany Tiger Loose-What Are You Going to Do About It?" considered to be one of the most powerful political cartoons of all time.

**Conclusion**

•The Tweed Ring was swept from power by angry voters. The young artist, Thomas ast, was given the major credit.

•All of the Tammany Ring were convicted and sent to prison, but Tweed escaped to Spain. He was later recognized, thanks to a Nast cartoon. The cartoon was one Nast drew earlier showing Tweed in prison garb apprehending two small culprits while his crimes went unpunished. The Spanish police interpreted the cartoon to mean that Tweed was wanted for kidnapping and the word "REWARD" caught their eye. Tweed was extradited to the United States and re-imprisoned.