

Assessing Political Machines

The Parts and People of Political Machines

Cities around 1900 were divided up into parts called **districts** or **wards**.

The Parts	Description of job/role
Party Boss	Ran the machine, controlled finances, appointed machine members to political office, appointed and supervised district/ward and election captains. Often held public office (often positions that were not in the public eye).
District/Ward captains	Controlled each district or ward. Ensured positive results on election day (through legal and illegal means). Provided services and aid such as jobs, food, and spots on community teams/groups in exchange for party loyalty and votes.
Party Loyalists	Often poor or immigrants. Needed help to survive and advance in urban society. Exchanged party loyalty and votes for needed supplies and services such as food, employment, and a place to belong.

Political machines often gained most of their support from these groups:

1. Poor/immigrants

2. Big business owners in search of government jobs/contracts

List three examples of notable political machines and party bosses in US history:
1. Tammany Hall – Boss Tweed
2. Philadelphia – James McManes (Gas Trust), William Stokley (Building commission)
3. Chicago – controlled banks and companies that provided needed services for the city. Remained in power throughout the 20 th century.