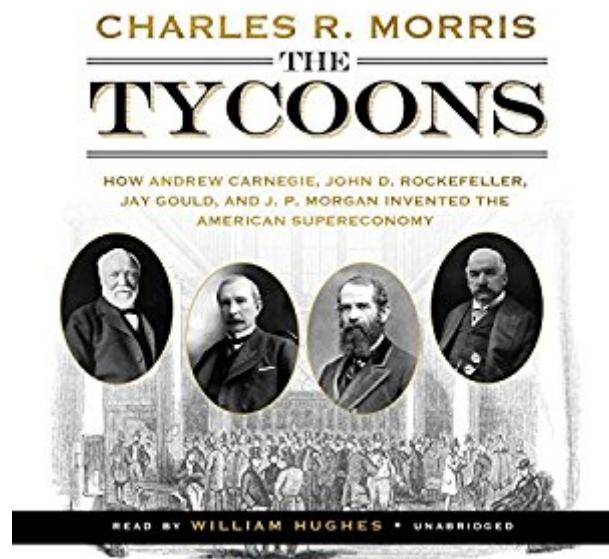


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# The Tycoons: How Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Jay Gould, And J. P. Morgan Invented The American Supereconomy



## **Synopsis**

The modern American economy was the creation of four men: Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Jay Gould, and J. P. Morgan. They were the giants of the Gilded Age, a moment of riotous growth that established America as the richest, most inventive, and most productive country on the planet. Acclaimed author Charles R. Morris vividly brings these men and their times to life. The ruthlessly competitive Carnegie, the imperial Rockefeller, and the provocateur Gould were obsessed with progress, experiment, and speed. They were balanced by Morgan, the gentleman businessman, who fought, instead, for a global trust in American business. Through their antagonism and verve, they built an industrial behemoth - and a country of middle-class consumers. The Tycoons tells the incredible story of how these four determined men wrenched the economy into the modern age, inventing a nation of full economic participation that could not have been imagined only a few decades earlier.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Since I got my Kindle, I have developed a taste for American history, in particular that for the years of the Revolution and then the absolutely transformative 19th Century. These four tycoons seem to me unique in that while the Industrial Revolution was in progress on both sides of the Atlantic, no comparable group of men appeared in Europe. Three of them virtually invented our modern industrial world, with their empires of railroads, oil, and steel, and the fourth, Morgan, presided over its financing. In forty years we went from Antietam to Standard Oil. The only flaw in the book is the author's digression into the technological problem of manufacturing interchangeable parts,

presumably to use notes left over from his previous book on the subject. I recommend this to anyone interested in the wheels and pulleys hidden behind the cycloramas of flags and battles and preening generals we usually think of as History.

The thing that makes this book especially useful is that the author weaves their stories into a general analysis of the dramatic changes that took place in the US economy, particularly in the second half of the 19th century. After the Civil War the US became a leading manufacturer, surpassing anything to be found in Europe, and these men had important roles in this process. Three of the four came from humble origins, while JP Morgan's father had already become an important figure in the banking industry. Jay Gould, who was primarily a railroad man, was able to outsmart Cornelius Vanderbilt, the US' first tycoon and not covered in the book,, at times when the latter was being helped by Morgan. These are key players in forming the United States into what it became in the 20th century. A very interesting read!!

This is a very interesting book full of meaningful facts and interesting anecdotes, unfortunately the organization of presentation is less than would be ideal. There are ,for example too many instances where you have an understanding of a situation that could have been possible earlier in the narrative had the information been related in a more suitable sequence. Overall I liked the book and feel it gave me a good overview of the subjects.

Definitely not as good as I had hoped. Author has gone way off track - lost focus on the main characters.

Superior scholarship went into the writing of this book. Too often the Reconstruction Era is reduced to the social evils visited upon the ex-slaves in a post-war South. Reconstruction includes the plight of blacks in the South, but also the rise of capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, organized labor, and the ingenuity of American inventors which hastened the country's progress into the Gilded Age. We cannot ignore the conquering of the West / final solution for Native Americans, and the solidification of the power of the central / Federal government ( both legislative and executive branches) over state governments. It can be argued that in the Jim Crow South States rights primacy lingered on into the 20th century, however the story of this book is the story of steel, oil, banking, and railroad industries all converging into making America very much feared by foreign competitors in Europe. Carnegie, Rockefeller, Gould, and JP Morgan were ruthless tycoons, yes,

and the average worker and small business person concerns were often crushed by their monopolistic practices, including blatant market and currency manipulations. The passage of Interstate Commerce legislation and Sherman Anti-Trust Act, and the progressive anti-monopoly rhetoric of Prez Teddy Roosevelt are not part of this story (that was later) but those subjects are worth looking into. Some of this book's contents are technical when it comes to marketing ploys and manipulations: I can't pretend I understood all the maneuvers by the tycoons but that is likely a strong testament to their success. Lastly we need to remember that these tycoons were guided by the Darwinistic "survival of the fittest" mentality of that period. WHATEVER it took to succeed warranted the actions taken, the tycoons argued. Were the tycoons alive today they would still insist their actions were for the betterment of American progress in a ruthless late 19th century world. (Rockefeller was purportedly a devout Christian). And ultimately the American worker benefited by the actions of the tycoons, they themselves would contend. Many of us today would conclude the carnage the tycoons wreaked for their own individual profit resulted in American global primacy before, during, and in the aftermath of WWI. In other words, you have to view history in the long term, not just the immediate cause and effect. The debate, in many ways, continues today. Read this book. It's good. RH

This book is about 3 famous Americans who helped transform the US from an agrarian society to a manufacturing society. It gives a biography of each as well as a look at their areas of business. My only complaint was the author tended to over explore areas related to the business, such as labor unions and beginning of the middle class. It tended to go too far away from Carnegie, Rockefeller and Morgan.

I purchased the book, The Tycoons, because I have been fascinated with each of the 4 detailed in this surprisingly interesting book. The author goes into great detail how each worked his magic, but the really interesting part for me is that he thoroughly paints for the reader all of the small details of that period that made the advancement of the 4 possible. His descriptions of the background information is so very thorough and is an easy read with much substance. Interestingly, comparisons of then and now are very real and make the time of the tycoons quite a contrast with our current political and economic environment. I have read the extensive histories of Vanderbilt, Rockefeller and others. This book puts them in a context that is very understandable. A very surprising and enjoyable read. I'm even getting my wife to consider the read even tho she's not so much a history buff.

Good history and great read. I previously read "The Titan" about JD Rockefeller and appreciated this book to fill in the blanks about the various men addressed in the Rockefeller story. What a history we have here in the USA!

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