



CHAPTER 7

The Progressive Era

- SS.912.A.3.2** Examine the social, political, and economic causes, course, and consequences of the Second Industrial Revolution that began in the late 19th century.
- SS.912.A.3.6** Analyze changes that occurred as the United States shifted from an agrarian to an industrial society.
- SS.912.A.3.8** Examine the importance of social change and reform in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (class system, migration from farms to cities, Social Gospel movement, role of settlement houses and churches in providing services to the poor).
- SS.912.A.3.10** Review different economic and philosophic ideologies.
- SS.912.A.3.11** Analyze the impact of political machines in United States cities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- SS.912.A.3.12** Compare how different nongovernmental organizations and progressives worked to shape public policy, restore economic opportunities, and correct injustices in American life.
- SS.912.A.3.13** Examine key events and peoples in Florida history as they relate to United States history.

Names and Terms You Should Know

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|------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Progressives | National Woman Suffrage Association | 17th Amendment | William Howard Taft |
| Social Gospel Movement | Municipal reform | Women's Suffrage | 16th Amendment |
| Salvation Army | Political machines | Child labor | Woodrow Wilson |
| Temperance Movement | City manager | Susan B. Anthony | Graduated income tax |
| Consumers | Robert La Follette | Alice Paul | Federal Reserve Act |
| Muckrakers | Secret ballot | Theodore Roosevelt | Clayton Antitrust Act |
| Ida Tarbell | Initiative | Government regulation | Federal Trade Commission |
| Upton Sinclair | Referendum | "Square Deal" | Everglades |
| Jacob Riis | Recall | Coal Strike of 1902 | Governor Broward |
| Settlement house | Direct primary | Meat Inspection Act | |
| Eleanor Addams | | Pure Food and Drug Act | |

Florida “Keys” to Learning

1. The Progressive Movement flourished from 1890 until the outbreak of World War I. Its aim was to remedy the political and economic injustices that had resulted from America’s rapid industrialization. Progressives believed in using government power to correct these abuses.

2. Progressivism had multiple roots: (1) the appearance of the new problems of an industrial society, such as brutal working conditions, urban crowding, the need for more public services, and political corruption; (2) the American reform tradition; (3) the Populist Party; (4) the “Social Gospel” movement—Protestant ministers who helped the poor out of a sense of moral responsibility based on Christian teachings; (5) new forms of journalism—“muckrakers” exposed the abuses and corruption of industrial society; (6) rising consumer consciousness; and (7) the support of women reformers and organized labor.

3. In contrast to the Populists, the Progressives were middle class and urban. Progressive leaders were generally members of the professional classes: professors, lawyers, doctors, religious ministers, and writers. Their followers were members of the lower-middle classes: technicians, clerical workers, small business owners, and service personnel.

4. Through their writings in magazines and newspapers, “muckrakers” like Ida Tarbell and Upton Sinclair exposed many evils and stimulated a public outcry for reform. Social Reformers like Jane Addams established “settlement houses” for immigrants and the poor. They also formed associations such as the National Woman Suffrage Association, the NAACP, and the Anti-Defamation League.

5. Municipal reformers attacked the political machines and created new forms of municipal government such as by city manager. At the state level, Progressives elected governors and state legislators such as Robert La Follette of Wisconsin and Napoleon Broward of Florida. They also introduced several reforms to reduce corruption in state government, including the secret ballot, initiative, referendum, recall, direct primary, direct election of U.S. Senators, and women’s suffrage in many states. Many of these political reforms were first suggested by the Populists. Progressives also introduced social and economic reforms at the state level, including child labor laws, laws regulating conditions in urban housing, laws regulating safety and health in factories, laws limiting the number of hours that women could work in factories, and workman’s compensation for work-related injuries.

6. A series of Progressive Presidents brought Progressivism to the federal government. Theodore Roosevelt saw himself as the steward of the people’s interest. His efforts were meant to give Americans a “square deal.” He tried to break up “bad” trusts; introduced federal regulation of meat, food and drugs; intervened to end the 1902 coal strike; and took steps to conserve the nation’s natural resources and wildlife. William Howard Taft largely followed Roosevelt’s policies. When Roosevelt became critical of Taft and ran as an independent in the 1912 election, the Republicans lost to the Democrats. Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson was in fact another Progressive. He attacked the “triple wall of privilege”—banks, tariffs, and trusts. Wilson lowered tariffs, introduced the graduated income tax, created the Federal Reserve System, and strengthened antitrust legislation with the Clayton Antitrust Act.

The Progressive Era took place in the decades between 1890 and the outbreak of the First World War. The primary aim of the Progressives was to remedy the political and economic injustices that had resulted from America's rapid industrialization. Progressives were given their name for their belief in human "progress." They did not oppose industrialization, but they wanted to use the power

of government to correct its abuses so that Americans could enjoy better lives. In order to achieve this, they felt they had to reform government itself, which had been corrupted by Big Business and political bosses. Progressive reforms moved Americans from a *laissez-faire* economy to one in which government regulations prevented the worst abuses of economic power.

Roots of the Progressive Movement

Why did the Progressive Movement suddenly emerge at this time? Historians look at several factors to explain the rise of Progressivism.

The Reform Tradition

Reform has been a continuing process in American history. Reform movements, such as abolitionism and Progressivism, are based on the belief that society can be improved or made better. Americans have experienced periodic demands for reform, especially when they are beset with special difficulties or social injustices.

The Legacy of Populism

Progressives borrowed many ideas from the earlier Populists and often received strong rural support.

The Problems of Industrial Society

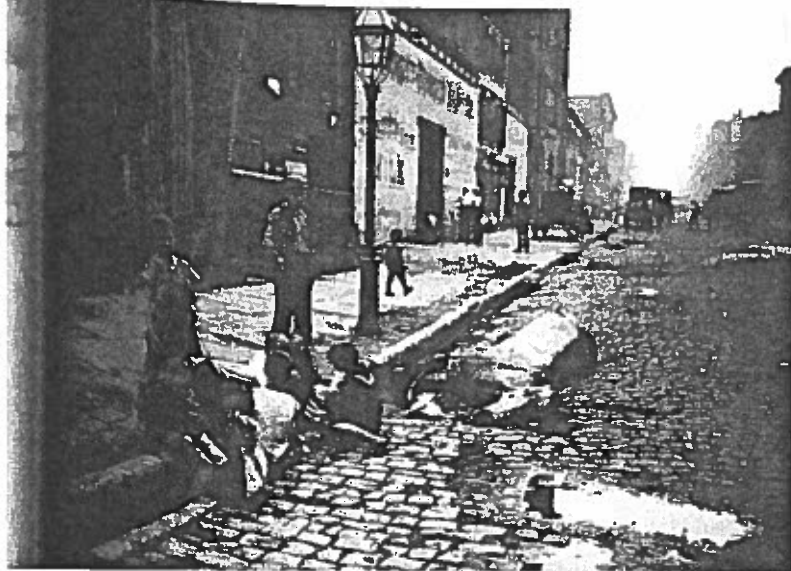
The rise of industry was accompanied by grave new social problems: brutal working conditions, child labor, political corruption, urban overcrowding,

exploitation of the environment, extreme inequalities of wealth, and the sale of misleading, defective or even dangerous products. *Laissez-faire* policies were not very successful in curbing these evils. The Progressives called for limited government intervention to stop abuses and overcome these problems. Through moderate reform, the Progressives hoped to avoid the worst abuses of the new industrial age while still preserving the benefits of free enterprise.

The Influence of the Middle Class

Populism was largely rural and appealed mostly to the South and West. In contrast, Progressivism, writes historian Richard Hofstadter, "was urban, middle-class and nationwide." Members of the professional classes—college professors, lawyers, doctors, religious ministers, and writers—provided its core leadership; members of the lower middle-classes—technicians, clerical workers, small business owners, and service personnel—provided its mass support. Hofstadter notes that while Populists protested against worsening economic conditions, Progressives generally acted in times of prosperity. They felt psychologically challenged by the rise of industrial society: the rise of industrialists of vast wealth made ordinary professional men and women feel almost insignificant.

Children playing in a dirty urban environment, near open sewers and a dead horse. Such scenes prompted reformers to campaign for better sanitation in U.S. cities.



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Another historian, Robert Wiebe, provides a more optimistic viewpoint. Wiebe argues that Progressivism was a middle-class “revolution in values.” It represented the rise of new professional classes with modern views, who admired “continuity and regularity, functionality and rationality, administration and management.” As America changed from a nation of small, independent, rural communities to an urban society subject to vast impersonal forces, the Progressives called for greater social organization and regulation. They felt professionals of all kinds could help both business and government run more smoothly and efficiently according to scientific principles.

In general, the Progressives felt that the rise of Big Business, organized labor, and political machines had closed the door to individual opportunity. Such large concentrations of economic and political power failed to engage in fair business practices or to allow equal competition. In short, both business and government had become corrupt. The Progressives therefore aimed at removing this corruption and regulating business and government practices so that the average American would have more of a chance to compete on a fair basis.

The “Social Gospel” Movement

Middle-class Progressives often acted out of a sense of moral responsibility derived from religion. Towards the end of the 19th century, many Protestant ministers grew concerned at the plight of the poor in the new industrial society. They were disgusted by living conditions in the slums, by child labor, by poor schools, by the horrendous working conditions of industrial laborers, and by the selfishness of the wealthy business owners. Some believed that God would not return to Earth for the “Second Coming” until people made greater efforts to eliminate these social evils. Many Protestant ministers called for social reform, including safer working conditions, better public schools, and the abolition of child labor; some even called for a form of “Christian Socialism” in place of indifference to the sufferings of others. Groups like the Salvation

Army emphasized the Christian duty to help the less fortunate. Methodists in Colorado established a free hospital, night schools for adults, and a free summer camp for children. Others began “settlement houses” to help immigrants (see below). All of these efforts became known as the “Social Gospel” movement. The Social Gospel movement called on governments, churches and private charities to work together to help people in need. They especially wanted to educate the poor and downtrodden to help themselves. Members of the movement also promoted **temperance**, calling for a ban on alcoholic drinks, which they saw as one of the chief causes of many of these social problems.

New Forms of Journalism

With the expansion of cities, newspapers and magazines reached larger audiences than ever before. Advertisers were the major source of revenue for these newspapers and magazines, but publishers needed to attract more readers to attract advertisers. Readers liked human-interest stories, often focusing on the rich, the poor, and the corrupt. Investigative reporting gave widespread exposure to the abuses of industrial society and stimulated the desire for reform.

Rising Consumer Consciousness

With the growth of modern industries, most products were no longer produced locally. Americans began buying mass-produced goods manufactured by large, impersonal companies. The Progressives realized it was in the interests of American consumers that these goods should be safe to use, and that manufacturers not misrepresent their products. Progressives believed that government intervention was needed to police the market and to protect the public interest.

Socialism, Anarchism, Communism

The abuses of industrial capitalism led some critics in Europe and America to demand an end to capitalism itself. American Socialists, led by union-organizer Eugene Debs, believed that government should take over basic industries. Anar-

chists desired that the country should break up into self-governing communities. Communists believed that workers should seize control of the means of production through violent revolution and abolish private property. Progressives rejected all of these schemes. However, they felt that some moderate reforms were necessary if a more radical social revolution were to be avoided.

The Support of Women and Workers

Many Progressives favored women's suffrage. Since they believed women were more "virtuous" than men, they thought women voters would create a more civilized and kinder society. Women and industrial workers tended to support the Progressives because they favored social reform and more regulation of Big Business.

Historian's Apprentice

- ▶ Create a chart showing the different influences that came together in the Progressive Movement.
- ▶ Use the Internet or your school library to learn more about the Social Gospel Movement and make an oral report or PowerPoint presentation to your class.
- ▶ Write a paragraph comparing the views of Richard Hofstadter and Robert Wiebe on the role of the middle classes in the Progressive Movement. In your conclusion, be sure to state your own views.
- ▶ Create your own chart or Venn diagram comparing the Populists and Progressives.

The Early Progressives

Progressivism was a diverse movement, operating at many levels of society and government. **Non-governmental organizations**—such as churches, settlement houses, and newspaper organizations—often played as important a role in the Progressive Movement as governments.

The Muckrakers

The first influential Progressives were journalists, writers and social scientists who exposed the abuses and corruption of industrial society. These writers became known as "**muckrakers**" because they "raked" through the muck (*moist dirt or filth*) of American life, exposing some of the most ugly problems of the new industrial society.

The muckrakers wrote for magazines like *McClure's* and *American Magazine*. These magazines put money and research assistance at the disposal of muckraking

journalists, enabling them to uncover the "inside story." The muckrakers examined the rise of industry and the abuses and corruption that had led to the accumulation of large fortunes. They also examined business practices affecting consumers, and the lives of the very poor and wretched, eliciting sympathy in their readers. They wrote in a graphic style that appealed to a wide readership. The muckrakers exposed many evils and stimulated a public outcry for reform. In so doing, they set a model for investigative journalism that is still at work today. Newspaper, magazine, television, and online journalists now act as watchdogs over government. They expose problems, inform the public, and stimulate debate.



Writer	Book	What it Did
Jacob Riis	<i>How the Other Half Lives</i>	Examined the conditions of the urban poor.
Ida Tarbell	<i>History of the Standard Oil Company</i>	Tarbell's investigative journalism revealed how Rockefeller's success was largely based on ruthless business practices.
Lincoln Steffens	<i>The Shame of the Cities</i>	Looked at corruption in city governments.
Ray Stannard Baker	<i>Following the Color Line</i>	Reported on the conditions of African Americans in both the South and North.
Frank Norris	<i>The Octopus</i>	A popular novel that depicted the stranglehold of railroads over California farmers.
Upton Sinclair	<i>The Jungle</i>	A novel about poverty-stricken immigrants in Chicago. It included a description of the harmful practices in the meatpacking industry, such as putting dead rats and rat poison in sausage meat.

Ida Tarbell studied public documents from court cases and interviewed many of Rockefeller's associates to piece together an accurate history of John D. Rockefeller and his company. She then published a

series of 19 articles in *McClure's Magazine*, which were eagerly read by a large audience. These articles later became the basis for her book, *History of the Standard Oil Company*.



"The strides the firm of Rockefeller and Andrews made . . . were attributed for three or four years mainly to his extraordinary capacity for bargaining and borrowing. Then its chief competitors began to suspect something. John Rockefeller might get his oil cheaper now and then, they said, but he could not do it often. He might make close contracts for which they had neither the patience nor the stomach. He might have an unusual mechanical and practical genius in his partner. But these things could not explain all. They believed they bought, on the whole, almost as cheaply as he, and they knew they made as good oil and with as great, or nearly as great, economy. He could sell at no better price than they. Where was his advantage? There was but one place where it could be, and that was in transportation. He must be getting better rates from the railroads than they were.

—Ida Tarbell (1904)

The Historian's Apprentice

- ▶ What made the publication of Tarbell's *History of Standard Oil* so important?
- ▶ According to Tarbell, what was one of the most important advantages that Rockefeller had?
- ▶ Tarbell's father was a small oil producer whose business was ruined by Rockefeller. How might this have shaped her views?
- ▶ Use the Internet or your school library to examine the writings of at least one other muckraker listed in the table above. Write a paragraph describing your reactions.

The Social Reformers



Some Progressives were so outraged at the injustices of industrial society that they made their own individual efforts at social reform. **Jane Addams** ran a “settlement house” in Chicago known as **Hull House**. **Settlement houses** were usually situated in “slum” neighborhoods and provided services to immigrants and the urban poor, such as classes, English lessons, childcare, nursing of the sick, and help in obtaining naturalization. Some settlement houses had dining halls, gymnasiums, auditoriums, nurseries and classrooms. The middle-class, educated women who ran these settlement houses often lived in them alongside the immigrant poor who used them. They also went out into the community and campaigned for better trash collection and sewers, hospitals, and other public services. At one time there were more than 400 settlement houses operating in the United States.

Other Progressives formed associations to promote social change and professional responsibility. Progressives organized charities, clubs, and other associations. The American Bar Association, the National Woman Suffrage Association, the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), and the Anti-Defamation League (which opposed anti-Semitism and religious prejudice generally) were all founded or active during the Progressive period.

Municipal Reform

Progressives “clean up” city government

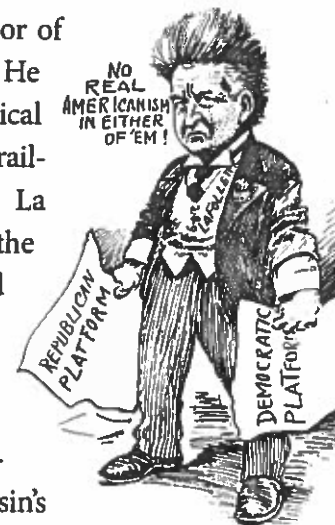
In the last chapter you learned how cities had mushroomed so fast in the late 19th century that they were incapable of dealing with many of their problems. “Municipal” refers to the town or city level of government. Municipal government in many large cities had come to be dominated by a political machine, like Tammany Hall in New York City. The machine, in turn, used its control over city government to make a fortune out of lucrative public contracts. To work for the city, each contractor had to promise to pay a share of his receipts secretly to the machine. This graft made

city government overly expensive and inefficient. Progressives mobilized the votes of citizens who were tired of corruption. They exposed corruption through the efforts of muckrakers in newspapers, magazines, and books like Lincoln Steffens’ *The Shame of the Cities*. Progressive reformers replaced the rule of “bosses” and political machines with public-minded Progressive mayors. Progressive reformers expanded city services to take care of urban overcrowding, fire hazards, inadequate sanitation, and the lack of public services. In some cases, cities acquired direct control of utilities like water, electricity, and gas.

In many cities, Progressives actually introduced new forms of city government to discourage corruption, such as the use of a **city commission** or a **city manager**. In government by commission, the city was governed by a panel of experts, each of whom directed a department delivering an essential city service. In government by city manager, an elected board of citizens appointed a specially-trained “manager” to run the city government more efficiently. The city manager had to answer to the board and therefore was far weaker than a traditional mayor. In this way, the Progressives hoped to make city government more democratic and transparent, and less open to corruption.

The Reforms by State Governments

Progressives also elected state legislators and officials to promote reform at the state level. Progressives were found in both parties—Democratic and Republican. The leading Progressive Governor was **Robert La Follette**, Governor of Wisconsin from 1900 to 1906. He broke the power of local political bosses and the influence of the railroads over the state legislature. La Follette began taxing railroads at the same rate as other property, and he set up a special commission to regulate railroad rates. He started other regulatory commissions to regulate public utilities and acted to conserve Wisconsin’s



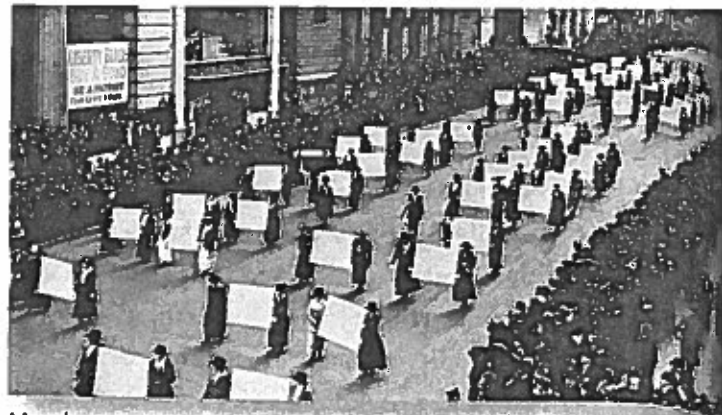
forests and waters against industrial exploitation and pollution. To carry out his policies, he relied heavily on advice from professors at the University of Wisconsin, reflecting the Progressives' faith in solving problems more scientifically.

Other important Progressive Governors were Theodore Roosevelt and Charles Evans Hughes in New York, Hiram Johnson in California, and Woodrow Wilson in New Jersey. These states acted as laboratories for political and social reforms. Many of the measures they took were later adopted at the federal level.

Political Reforms

Progressives took special steps to free state government from corruption and the influence of "Big Business." Innovative reforms, some borrowed from the Populists, were designed to make government more responsive to the people:

- ▶ **Secret Ballot**—Voters marked their ballots in private instead of voting openly, making them less subject to pressure and intimidation.
- ▶ **Initiative**—Voters could directly introduce bills into the state legislature.
- ▶ **Referendum**—Voters could repeal a law already passed by the legislature through a special election known as a "referendum."
- ▶ **Recall**—Elected officials could be "recalled" (*dismissed from office*) by voters in a special election.
- ▶ **Direct Primary**—Party members voted in a special election to indicate their preferences for their party's nominees. Up until this time, party leaders generally chose their party's candidates.
- ▶ **Direct Election of Senators**—The Constitution originally gave state legislatures the power to select U.S. Senators. The 17th Amendment (1913) changed the Constitution itself, giving voters the power to directly elect their Senators.
- ▶ **Women's Suffrage**—"Suffrage" refers to the right to vote in elections. The **National Woman Suffrage Association** was founded in 1869. It



Marchers supporting women's suffrage parade down Fifth Avenue in New York City.

represented millions of women and was active during the Progressive Era in the struggle to achieve voting rights for women. Under the U.S. Constitution, individual states actually control the requirements for voting, even in federal elections. During the Progressive Era, many states, especially in the West, gave the vote to women.

Social and Economic Reforms

States also enacted new laws to deal with some of the worst social and economic effects of industrialism. These included laws regulating conditions in urban housing; laws against the employment of young children; laws regulating safety and health conditions in factories; laws limiting the number of hours that women could work; laws forcing employers to give compensation to workers injured on the job ("workmen's compensation"); laws regulating railroads and public utilities; laws conserving natural resources and wildlife preserves; and laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol (the Temperance Movement).

For example, in 1911, a fire at the **Triangle Shirtwaist Factory** in New York City led to the deaths of 146 female workers because its doors were bolted and there were no adequate fire escapes. Striking workers had previously protested against these conditions but the owners had refused to make any changes. The fire led to widespread public sympathy for the garment workers and the passage of new state laws providing fire safety codes for factories.



The actions of state reformers, however, were severely limited by the U.S. Supreme Court. In *Lochner v. New York* (1905), the Court held that a New York State law limiting the working hours of bakers to 60 hours a week was unconstitutional. The Court believed that New York's regulation of hours took away the freedom of employers and employees to

negotiate their own contracts and working conditions. On the other hand, in *Muller v. Oregon* (1908), the Supreme Court upheld an Oregon law limiting the working hours of women, on the grounds that special circumstances justified state intervention. The Court feared that long hours of hard labor was endangering women's health.

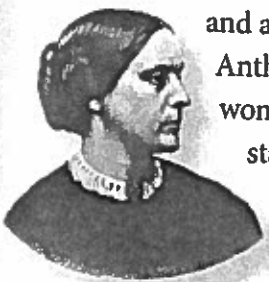
The Historian's Apprentice

- ▶ Which of the political reforms introduced by Progressives at the state level (such as initiative, referendum, recall, direct primaries) would you consider as most important? Explain your answer.
- ▶ Imagine you are a muckraker in 1900. Write a short article exposing one injustice in society that you would like to remedy.
- ▶ Use the Internet or your school library to conduct research on Progressive Era reforms in one state. Then prepare a written or oral report to share your findings.
- ▶ Imagine you were an attorney arguing before the Supreme Court in *Lochner v. New York*. Write an opening statement explaining why a state government should, or should not, be able to limit the hours of private workers.

Four Women Reformers

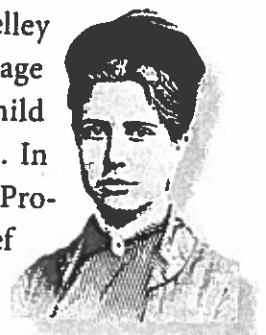
In the late 19th century and early 20th centuries, women faced many obstacles to participation in public life. They could not vote, few attended high school or college, and they could not enter most professions. Women were still considered intellectually inferior to men. Despite these obstacles, some women managed to become active reformers. Four of the most important were Susan B. Anthony, Florence Kelley, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Alice Paul.

Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906) grew up in a Quaker family in Massachusetts. She began her reform activities in support of the temperance movement and as an abolitionist. After the Civil War, Anthony believed the time had come for women to have the right to vote. She started publishing *The Revolution*, a weekly journal for women's rights, and co-founded the National



Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA). Anthony voted in the Presidential election of 1872 on the basis of the 14th Amendment, but the court ruled that these rights of citizenship did not extend to women. For the next 28 years, she was a tireless fighter for women's rights. Although she did not live to see passage of a constitutional amendment for women's suffrage, she predicted it would soon come.

Florence Kelley (1859–1932) was a prominent social reformer. She studied at Cornell University and in Switzerland. From 1891 to 1899, she lived in Hull House in Chicago. Kelley fought to establish a minimum wage and the 8-hour day, and against child labor and conditions in sweatshops. In 1893, the Governor of Illinois, a Progressive, made Kelley the state's chief factory inspector. Kelley worked



on the brief that persuaded the Supreme Court to limit women's workday hours in *Muller v. Oregon*. In 1909, she became one of the founders of the NAACP.



Carrie Chapman Catt (1859–1947) became active in Iowa's suffrage movement and developed a close friendship with Susan B. Anthony. Catt succeeded Anthony as President of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1900. In 1920, Catt founded the League of Women's Voters. Catt also fought for women's rights overseas and for international peace. In the 1930s, she was one of the first to protest against the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany (see Chapter 12, pages 253, 265–266).

Alice Paul (1885–1977) was the daughter of wealthy Quakers. She attended Swarthmore College and later obtained both a Ph.D. and a law degree. She visited England, where she became active in the suffrage movement. Paul brought back knowledge of their more militant tactics when she returned to America. Paul organized a march in Washington D.C. on behalf of women's suffrage in 1913, the day before President Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. In 1916, Paul formed her own more militant group. They picketed the White House and were arrested in 1917. Alice Paul went on a hunger strike and had to be force-fed. Her tactics helped persuade President Wilson that the time had come for an amendment giving women the right to vote. In 1923, Alice Paul then proposed the "Equal Rights Amendment" (see Chapter 15, page 355).



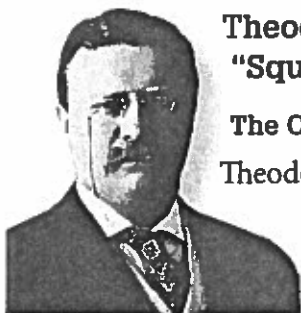
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The Historian's Apprentice

- ▶ Your teacher should select four students to represent these four reformers. Then hold a press conference with the four reformers at the front of the room. The rest of the class should act as reporters asking questions.
- ▶ What role did family and educational background play in the work of these reformers?
- ▶ Make a chart comparing the backgrounds, views and accomplishments of these four reformers.

The Progressive Presidents

The Progressive Movement spread from municipal and state governments to the federal government itself. From 1901 to 1919, a remarkable trio of Progressive Presidents sat in the White House: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson.

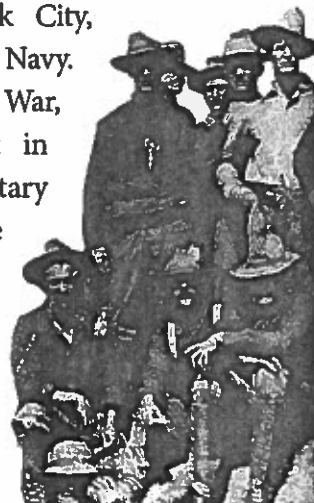


Theodore Roosevelt and the "Square Deal," 1901–1909

The Character of the President

Theodore Roosevelt came from a wealthy New York family. Sickly as a child, he built up his strength through rigorous exercise and sports such as box-

ing and big game hunting. For a brief time, Roosevelt tried his hand at ranching in the Dakotas. Afterwards, he was Civil Service Commissioner, Police Commissioner of New York City, and Assistant Secretary of the Navy. During the Spanish-American War, Roosevelt resigned his post in Washington to form a voluntary cavalry regiment known as the "Rough Riders," which he led on a famous charge up San Juan Hill in Cuba. Roosevelt became so popular from his



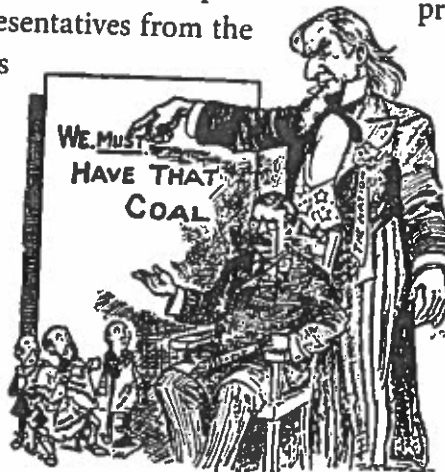
war exploits that Republican Party bosses chose him to become Governor of New York in 1899. When they were unable to block his efforts to uncover corruption in state government, party bosses tried to remove him from New York by making him Republican candidate for Vice-President (in those days, a less active office than today). Then in 1901, President McKinley was assassinated. Roosevelt, only 42 years old, suddenly became the youngest person ever to be raised to the Presidency.

Roosevelt's Conception of the Presidency

In the late 19th century, American Presidents had left the conduct of public affairs mainly to Congress. Roosevelt reversed this trend. He saw the President as the one individual who represented all Americans, and therefore he believed that the President should act vigorously in the public interest. His personal popularity encouraged him to expand the powers of the Presidency. According to Roosevelt's "stewardship" theory, the President acted as the "steward" (or *manager*) of the people's interests. Above all, Roosevelt believed in taking action. He promised Americans a "Square Deal," by which he meant fair play and equality of opportunity—especially conservation of natural resources, control of corporations and the protection of consumers.

Roosevelt and the Coal Strike of 1902

Roosevelt's views on the Presidency were quickly put to the test when coal miners went on strike in 1902 and the nation was threatened with a winter without coal. Roosevelt acted quickly to protect the public interest. He brought the representatives from the unions and the mine owners to the White House. When the mine owners refused to negotiate, Roosevelt threatened to seize their mines and operate them with the army. This finally convinced the mine owners to submit to arbitration. Roosevelt formed a special commission



to resolve the dispute. The final outcome was a compromise: the coal miners wanted a 20% pay raise and got 10%; they also wanted an eight-hour work day and were given a nine-hour one. The main victory went to Roosevelt, who showed that he meant to protect the public interest.

Roosevelt as "Trust-Buster"

Roosevelt revived the use of the Sherman Anti-trust Act against large business consolidations. He did not attack all monopolies or trusts (see the top of page 93 for an explanation of trusts, a form of business organization). What Roosevelt stood for was "fair play." He therefore distinguished between "good trusts" and "bad trusts." Bad trusts were those business combinations that acted against the public interest.

In 1902, Roosevelt filed an antitrust lawsuit against Northern Securities Company, a holding company controlled by the financier J. P. Morgan. It was the first time the government had challenged a major industrialist. Thus, Roosevelt reassured the public that even Big Business was subject to the law. In a later antitrust suit, Roosevelt challenged Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company, which controlled 90% of all oil refining in the country. After Roosevelt left office, the Supreme Court affirmed the decision to break up Standard Oil. The Supreme Court even borrowed Roosevelt's distinction between good and bad trusts by applying the Sherman Antitrust Act to "unreasonable" trusts—those trusts that harmed the public interest by such unfair business practices as price-fixing or "cutthroat" competition.

Roosevelt did not actually break up many trusts, and in fact more new trusts were formed during his Presidency. But he established the principle that the federal government could break up harmful trusts, thereby earning his reputation as "trust buster." Under Roosevelt, the federal government had shifted away from unquestioned support of Big Business and towards consumers.

Government Regulation of Meat, Food and Drugs

As part of his “Square Deal,” Roosevelt launched new laws to protect consumers. Roosevelt had been shocked by Upton Sinclair’s account of the meat-packing industry in *The Jungle*. Roosevelt pushed the **Meat Inspection Act** through Congress in

1906, establishing govern-

ment inspection of meat shipped between states.

The **Pure Food and Drug Act**, also passed in 1906, prohibited the adulteration of foods or the use of poisons as preservatives. Medicine containers were required to bear labels indicating their contents.



Meat inspectors

Regulation of Railways

Under Roosevelt, Congress passed new laws strengthening the Interstate Commerce Act. In 1906, a new law permitted the Interstate Commerce Commission to set its own “just and reasonable” rates for railroads. Shortly after Roosevelt left office, the **government regulation** of communications (telephone and telegraph) was also placed under the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Conservation of Natural Resources

Roosevelt was a great outdoorsman. As President, he drew the nation’s attention to the need to conserve forests, wildlife, and natural resources. The Newlands Reclamation Act of 1902 provided funds for irrigation projects and dams to reclaim wastelands. Roosevelt also appointed noted conservationists, such as **Gifford Pinchot**, who became head of the national forestry service. In 1903, Roosevelt spent three days camping in Yosemite with naturalist John Muir. Before his Presidency, the federal government had been selling off public lands for development. Roosevelt withdrew 1.5 million acres from public sale. He created five new national parks—doubling their number. Roosevelt was unable to obtain the approval

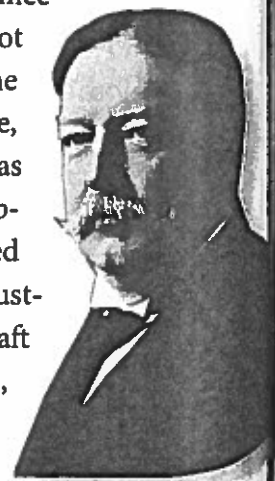


President Roosevelt with John Muir above Yosemite Valley

of Congress to create national parks for the Devils Tower in Wyoming and the Petrified Forest and Grand Canyon in Arizona. So he protected these natural landmarks by using his power as President instead to designate them as “national monuments,” under a new law passed in 1906. Roosevelt also called together the White House Conservation Commission in 1908, which led to the formation of the **National Conservation Commission**. It prepared a detailed report of American natural resources.

The Presidency of William Howard Taft, 1909–1913

Although still young, Roosevelt left office in 1909 because of a public pledge not to run for a third term. In his place, he promoted a conservative Progressive, his close friend William Taft. Taft was elected on the basis of Roosevelt’s popularity. Once in office, Taft continued many of Roosevelt’s policies, such as trust-busting and civil service reform. Taft opposed restrictions on immigration, and he met with Booker T. Washington and other African-American leaders.



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He prevented railroad companies from raising their rates unreasonably and pushed a workman's compensation bill for railroad employees through Congress. He proposed the first corporate income taxes as well as the 16th Amendment, which permits the federal government to collect income taxes on individuals.

However, Taft was a clumsy politician who alienated many Progressive Republicans. He often went forward with his own ideas without bothering with delicate political negotiations or considering the views of other members of his party. For example, he promised a lower tariff but did not get the promised reductions through Congress. He returned to public sale some of the wildlife areas that Roosevelt had withdrawn, and he dismissed Gifford Pinchot.

The Election of 1912 and the "Bull Moose" Party

Roosevelt became unhappy with Taft's policies and decided to challenge him for the Republican nomination in 1912. Although Roosevelt enjoyed greater popular support, Taft controlled the Republican Convention and won the nomination. Roosevelt then decided to accept the nomination of a new third party, the "Progressive Party," formed by Progressive Republicans in 1911. After Roosevelt accepted its nomination, the party became popularly known as the "Bull Moose" Party, since Roosevelt had announced he felt as strong as a bull moose. Roosevelt actively campaigned for further Progressive reforms, including the direct election of U.S. Senators; adoption of the initiative, referendum, and recall in all states; women's suffrage; and an eight-hour work day.

The division of the Republican Party between Taft and Roosevelt helped the Democrats to capture the White House. The Democrats had also nominated a Progressive candidate: Woodrow Wilson. The 1912 election thus marked the high water mark of Progressivism. All four candidates—Wilson, Roosevelt, Taft and the Socialist candidate, Eugene Debs—shared Progressive beliefs of varying degrees.

Woodrow Wilson and the "New Freedom," 1913–1920

Born in Virginia, Woodrow Wilson was the son of a Presbyterian Minister and the first Southerner in the White House since Andrew Johnson. Wilson had been a college professor, President of Princeton University, and Governor of New Jersey before his election as President.



Where Roosevelt had been emotional and enthusiastic, Wilson was cool and logical. Wilson was an excellent public speaker and revived the practice of personally delivering the annual "State of Union" address to Congress. He frequently made appeals directly to the public to build support for his programs. Wilson received African-American support in the election of 1912, but as a Southerner he practiced racial discrimination. He encouraged racial segregation in many government departments and made it harder for African Americans to enter government service.

In the campaign of 1912, Wilson had promised Americans a "New Freedom." Like other Progressives, Wilson wanted to tame Big Business by opening the way for greater competition. He planned to do this by attacking what he called the "triple wall of privilege"—the tariff, the banking system, and the trusts. Roosevelt had drawn public attention to the power of the Presidency by introducing government regulation to protect consumers from the worst abuses of industrial society; Wilson went even further by passing a whole series of major legislative reforms, reshaping American society in ways that still affect us today.

The Underwood Tariff of 1913.

Since the Civil War, high tariffs had protected American manufacturers. Even though many American manufacturers were already extremely wealthy, tariffs let them keep their prices artificially high by keeping out cheaper foreign goods. Wilson believed that high tariffs only benefitted rich monopolists at the expense of the average American, so he lowered tariff duties by 25%.

A graduated income tax is a direct tax on incomes in which wealthier people are taxed at higher rates than others—that is, rich people pay a higher percentage of their income in tax than poorer people do. Progressives believed it was fair to tax people on the basis of their ability to pay.

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The Graduated Income Tax

At the same time that Wilson reduced tariff duties, he introduced the graduated income tax.

Wilson was able to introduce federal income tax because Taft had pushed through the 16th Amendment. Ratified in 1913, it gave Congress the power to tax personal incomes directly. Today, the income tax is the chief source of revenue for the federal government.

The Federal Reserve Act

This important act, passed in 1913, solved many of the nation's longstanding banking problems. The act created a more elastic currency that could expand or contract according to the nation's needs. The new system was a compromise between private and government control of the nation's banking system.

The act created the Federal Reserve System (or the "Fed"). The Federal Reserve System regulates banks and serves as a "bank to the banks." It also sets U.S. monetary policy.

The Federal Reserve is able to expand or contract (*reduce*) the money supply in three ways:

1. The Federal Reserve sets a "reserve requirement" for all banks. Banks are required to hold a certain percentage of their deposits on reserve with their regional Federal Reserve Bank. They can then lend the rest of their deposits to borrowers. If a bank has \$1,000 on deposit and the reserve requirement is 10%, the bank can lend out \$900, but it must keep \$100 on reserve. A higher reserve requirement means that banks can lend out less money. This reduces the amount of money in circulation. A lower reserve requirement means they can lend out more and expands the money supply.
2. The Federal Reserve sets the interest rate (or "discount rate") that it charges to other banks to lend them money. A higher interest rate means these banks charge higher interest to their own customers. People are able to borrow less, reducing the amount of money in circulation. A lower interest rate makes it easier to borrow and increases money supply.
3. The Federal Reserve buys and sells U.S. government securities (bonds and bills) in its "open market operations." When it sells government bonds to banks and businesses, it removes money from circulation. This reduces the money supply. When it buys government securities, it returns money into the economy and increases money supply.

PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE ENACTS CURRENCY LAW

Wilson Declares It the First of Series of Constructive Acts to Aid Business.



Makes Speech to Group of Democratic Leaders.

Conference Report Adopted Senate by Vote of 43 to 2

Banks All Over the Country Hasten to Enter Federal Reserve System

Gov.-Elect Walsh Calls Passage of A Fine Christmas Present

WILSON SEES DAWN OF NEW ERA IN BUSINESS

HOME VIEWS OF FOUR PENS ON CURRENCY ACT BY PRESIDENT

Plans to Make Prosperity Free to Have Unimpeded Momentum.

Monetary policy determines the amount of money (known as "money supply") circulating in an economy. Monetary policy generally aims at promoting economic growth while controlling inflation.

The Clayton Antitrust Act

In 1914, Wilson strengthened the Sherman Antitrust Act by proposing the **Clayton Antitrust Act** and the **Federal Trade Commission Act**. The Clayton Antitrust Act prohibited certain unfair business practices. It also stated that the antitrust laws could not be used against labor unions or farmers cooperatives. Courts could only issue orders (injunctions) against strikes where permanent damage to property was threatened. The Federal Trade Commission Act established the **Federal Trade Commission**—a regulatory agency with powers to investigate corporate activities and to issue orders forcing a corporation to discontinue

a business practice until its fairness was decided in court. The Federal Trade Commission was created to put “teeth” into antitrust legislation.

Later Reforms

In 1916, Wilson sponsored a final series of reforms, including federal aid to vocational education, limiting the workday of railroad workers to 8 hours, and a national law against the sale of goods produced by child labor. By then his attention was mainly focused on foreign affairs, since war had broken out in Europe in 1914. The Supreme Court later held that Wilson’s prohibition of child labor was unconstitutional.

Historian’s Apprentice

- ▶ Make a Venn diagram comparing the policies of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson as Presidents.
- ▶ Imagine you are a citizen living in Florida in November 1912. Decide which candidate you would vote for in the Presidential election: Taft, Roosevelt, Wilson or Debs? Then write a letter to a friend explaining your choice.
- ▶ Hold a class debate on this proposition:
Resolved: Woodrow Wilson achieved more for the Progressive Movement than Theodore Roosevelt did.
- ▶ In what way did the Progressives offer an alternative to socialism, anarchism or Communism?
- ▶ Look at a recent newspaper for articles about the Federal Reserve. Then read and summarize one article. Which of the powers of the Federal Reserve does the article discuss?

The Progressive Era Reaches an End

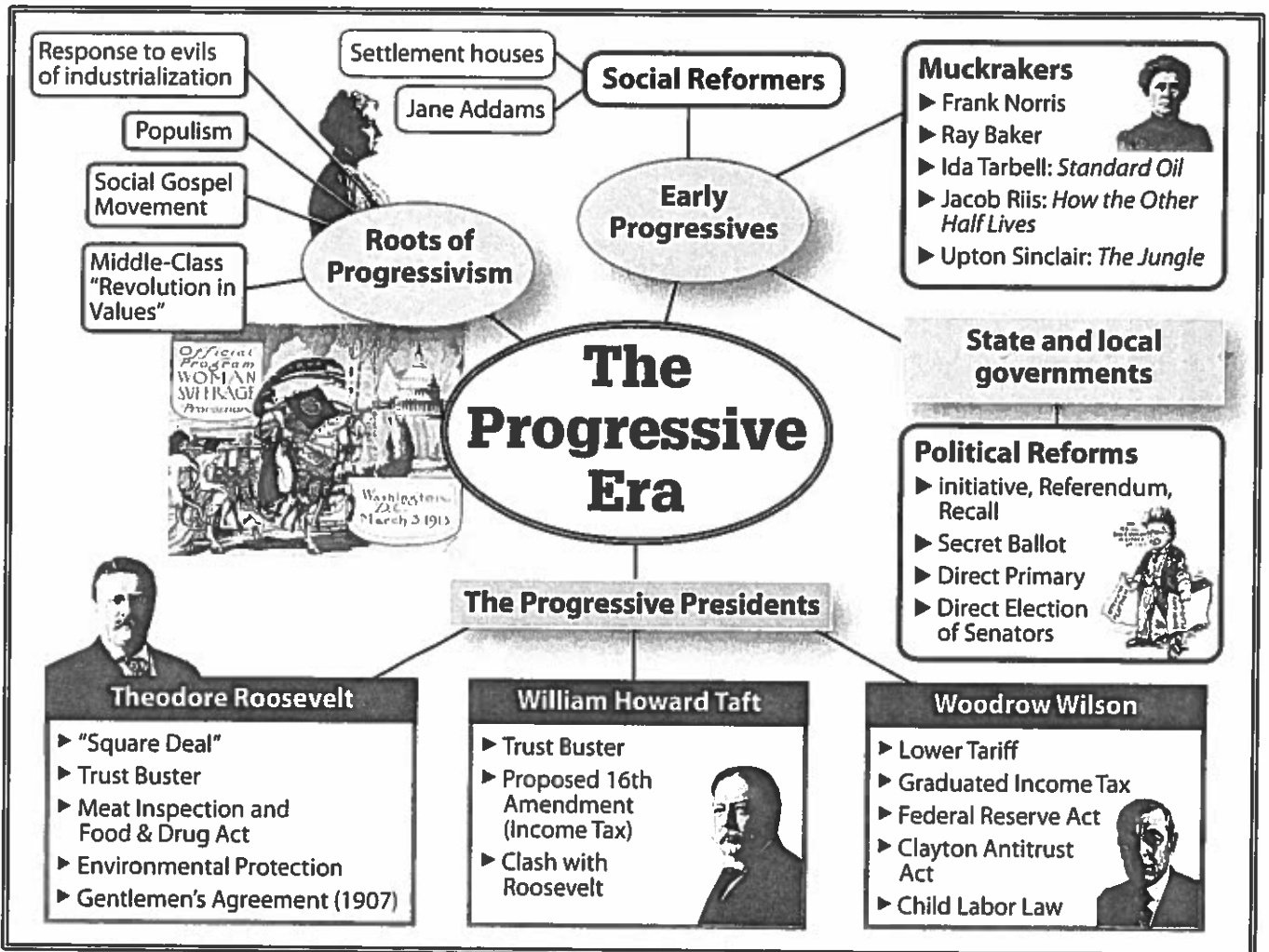
In 1917, Americans entered a world war with a reforming impulse. Many saw the war as a crusade “to make the world safe for democracy.” After the war, many Americans became disillusioned. By then, the Progressive Movement had lost much of its appeal. Nevertheless, both women’s suffrage

and Prohibition were passed at the very end of the war—as the final reforms of the Progressive Era. A few historians even claim that Progressivism actually continued throughout the 1920s, although most would disagree. You will learn more about these events later in this book.

Focus on Florida

The Progressive Movement that swept through the entire country affected Florida as well. **William Sherman Jennings**, Governor of Florida from 1901 to 1905, struck one of the first blows against Big Business by reclaiming land from the railroad barons to whom Florida had generously given vast expanses of land in the late 19th century. Jennings greatly increased the power of the Florida Railroad Commission in regulating the practices of the state's railroads. His wife, **May Mann Jennings**, (1872–1963) was a pivotal figure in promoting reforms. She championed women's suffrage, child labor laws, public education, and better treatment of the Seminole Indians. Her early efforts in nature conservation later led to the creation of the Everglades National Park in 1947.

Another prominent reformer in Florida during the Progressive Era was **Napoleon Bonaparte Broward**, Governor from 1905 to 1909. Broward stood up for farmers and small businesses. Although he foolishly had parts of the Everglades drained to create land for agriculture, he generally advocated conservation of forests, fish, and game. He spoke against the exploitation of child labor. Broward built roads to improve trade for farmers and supported social welfare programs, prison reform, and public education. In fact, many historians refer to the Progressive Era in Florida as the "Broward Era." Little was done during the Progressive Era, however, to improve conditions for the state's minority populations. Indeed, African Americans continued to suffer from racism and segregation.



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The Progressive Movement

- ▶ Progressivism flourished from 1890 until the outbreak of World War I.
- ▶ The aim of Progressivism was to remedy the political and economic injustices that had resulted from America's rapid industrialization.
- ▶ Progressives believed in using government power to reform and to correct these abuses.

Roots of Progressivism

1. Many new problems created by industrial society needed to be addressed:
 - ▶ Brutal working conditions
 - ▶ Urban overcrowding
 - ▶ Child labor
 - ▶ Political corruption
 - ▶ Environmental exploitation
 - ▶ Extreme inequalities of wealth
 - ▶ Defective, substandard consumer products.
2. The Reform Tradition: Reform has been a continuing process in American history, based on the belief that society can be made better.
3. The legacy of the Populists: Progressives adopted many of their ideas.
4. The influence of the middle class:
 - ▶ Progressivism was middle class, urban, and nationwide in contrast to Populism, which was rural and had its main support in the South and West.
 - ▶ Progressive leaders were generally members of the professional classes: professors, lawyers, doctors, religious ministers, and writers. They were supported by the lower middle-classes: technicians, clerical workers, small business owners, and service personnel.
 - ▶ The middle classes saw Progressive reform as preferable to socialism, Communism or anarchy.
5. The "Social Gospel" movement: Progressives often acted out of a sense of moral responsibility based on religion. Protestant ministers of the Social Gospel movement inspired the Progressives.
6. New forms of journalism: The "Muckrakers" gave widespread exposure to the abuses of industrial society and stimulated the desire for reform.
7. Rising consumer consciousness: Progressives believed that government intervention was needed to control the market and ensure that mass-produced goods were safe.
8. Progressives favored women's suffrage, social reform, and better regulation of Big Business. Women reformers and organized labor supported the Progressives.

The Early Progressives

- ▶ Muckrakers published articles in magazines and newspapers exposing abuses and corruption and stimulating a public outcry for reform. For example, *Ida Tarbell* exposed the unfair business practices of Rockefeller in her *History of the Standard Oil Company*. *Upton Sinclair* exposed the unhealthy practices of the meat-packing industry in *The Jungle*.
- ▶ Social reformers like *Jane Addams* established "settlement houses" for the poor; others formed associations and clubs to promote social change, such as the National Woman Suffrage Association, the NAACP and the Anti-Defamation League.
- ▶ Municipal reformers cleaned up city government by eliminating political machines and introducing new forms of municipal government such as by a commission or a professional city manager.

Progressive Reforms in State Government

Progressives elected state governors and legislators to promote reforms. Examples were Robert La Follette of Wisconsin and Napoleon Broward of Florida.

Progressive Political Reforms

- ▶ **Initiative:** voters could directly introduce bills into the state legislature.
- ▶ **Referendum:** voters could repeal a law passed by the legislature.

- ▶ **Recall:** voters could dismiss elected officials in a special election.
- ▶ **Secret ballot**
- ▶ **Direct primary:** party members voted on candidates to represent their party in running for office.
- ▶ **Direct election of U.S. Senators: 17th Amendment**
- ▶ **Women's suffrage:** many individual states gave women the right to vote.

Progressive Social and Economic Reforms

Many state governments also passed the following:

- ▶ Laws regulating conditions in urban housing
- ▶ Child labor laws
- ▶ Laws regulating safety and health in factories
- ▶ Workman's compensation for work-related injuries
- ▶ Laws limiting the number of hours that women could work in factories
- ▶ Laws conserving natural resources and wild life
- ▶ Laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol (Temperance Movement)

The Progressive Presidents

Theodore Roosevelt (1901–1909)

- ▶ Believed that the President was the steward of the people's interests.
- ▶ Greatly expanded the powers of the Presidency.
- ▶ His efforts were meant to give Americans a "Square Deal," especially in natural resource conservation, control of corporations and protection of the consumers:
 - **Meat Inspection Act and Pure Food and Drug Act**
 - **Trust buster:** "good" vs. "bad" trusts
 - **1902 Coal Strike:** intervened to settle the dispute and get coal to consumers.
 - **Conservation:** appointed Gifford Pinchot; created new national parks and monuments; formed the National Conservation Commission.

William Howard Taft (1909–1913)

- ▶ Continued many of Roosevelt's policies, but was a clumsy politician and later came into conflict with Roosevelt.
- ▶ Introduced **16th Amendment**, making a federal tax on individual incomes possible.
- ▶ **Election of 1912:** Republicans divided between Taft and Roosevelt's new Progressive Party—gave Democrats the election.

Woodrow Wilson (1913–1921)

- ▶ His "New Freedom" attacked the "triple wall of privilege": banks, tariffs and trusts.
- ▶ Lowered tariffs, introduced the **graduated income tax**, created the **Federal Reserve System (1913)**, and strengthened antitrust legislation with the **Clayton Antitrust Act**.
- ▶ Passed a federal law prohibiting **child labor** in 1916, which the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional.
- ▶ Progressive Era came to an end with World War I.