

I. Sources of Progressive Reform

- A. Industrialization, with all its increase in productivity and the number of consumer goods, created
 - 1) Unemployment and labor unrest
 - 2) Wasteful use of natural resources
 - 3) Abuses of corporate power
- B. Growing cities magnified problems of poverty, disease, crime, and corruption
- C. Influx of immigrants and rise of new managerial class upset traditional class alignments
- D. Massive depression (1893-1897) convinced many that equal opportunity was out of reach for many Americans.

II. Who Were the Progressives?

- A. New middle class composed of young professionals
 - 1. Sought to apply principles of professions (medicine, law, business, teaching) to problems of society
 - 2. Strong faith in progress and the ability of educated people to overcome problems
 - 3. Rise in volunteer organizations organized to address issues (American Bar Association, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, National Municipal League)
 - 4. Mainly urban in residence and orientation
- B. Muckraking journalists attacked corruption and scandal with a sense of moral outrage
 - 1. Lincoln Steffens exposed city machines in *The Shame of the Cities* (1904)
 - 2. Ida Tarbell exposed Standard Oil Trust abuses
 - 3. Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906) attacked the meat-packing industry
- C. Political reformers (many opposed to traditional party politics)
- D. Socialists--frustrated workers who promised to destroy capitalism. Led by Eugene Debs (who polled 900,000 votes for president in 1912), socialists were rejected by most Progressives as too extreme in their goals and methods

III. Major Progressivism Programs

- A. Education
 - 1. Progressive education--John Dewey-- focused on personal growth, not mastery of body of knowledge, and learning through experience
 - 2. Charles Eliot of Harvard pioneered elective courses and new teaching techniques (such as seminars)
 - 3. Women began attending colleges in large numbers
 - 4. Believing that more education would help bring an enlightened population, Progressives pushed enrollments to record levels (86% of children in schools by 1920) without seriously assessing how schools were doing.
- B. Law—judges' opinions needed to be based on factual information, not just oral arguments and precedents

- C. Settlement houses--Jane Addams and others established group homes in city slums to aid poor urban residents.
 1. Promoted public health reform in cities, chlorinating water and tightening sanitary regulations
 2. Developed education and craft programs for residents
 3. Created neighborhood health clinics and dispensaries
- D. Racial anti-discrimination efforts
 1. Booker T. Washington (Atlanta Compromise) argued for self-help and accommodation on the part of blacks to white society
 2. W.E.B. DuBois (Niagara Movement--1905) urged blacks to assert themselves and agitate for political and economic rights. Formed NAACP to use legal means to end racial discrimination
- E. Women's rights
 1. While the number of employed women stayed constant from 1900-1920 (20%), the type of work switched from domestic labor (servants, cooks) to clerical work (clerks, typists, bookkeepers), factory work, and professionals.
 2. Most women still held the lowest paying and least opportune jobs
 3. Significant Progressive feminists called for greater reform
 - a) Charlotte Perkins Gilman attacked the male monopoly on opportunity
 - b) Margaret Sanger led the movement to provide birth control to prevent unwanted pregnancies among poor women
 - c) Suffragists urged that women be given the franchise, which came on the national level with the 19th Amendment (1919).
- F. Child labor laws--most states passed minimum working age laws and prohibited children from working more than 10 hours per day, but enforcement was difficult to achieve.
- G. Temperance--Anti-Saloon League and Women's Christian Temperance Union fought alcoholism on the state level through blue laws and on the national level with the 18th Amendment which prohibited the manufacture, sale, and transportation of liquor.

IV. Evaluation of Progressivism

- A. Weaknesses of Progressive reform
 1. Material progress of Americans weakened zeal of reformers
 2. Myriad of Progressive goals were often confusing and contradictory
 3. Opposition to Progressivism apparent as initiatives failed and courts struck down Progressive legislation
 4. Government remained mainly under the influence of business and industry
 5. Outbreak of World War I dampened enthusiasm of attempts to use governments to create just societies on earth
- B. Progressive accomplishments
 1. Trust-busting forced industrialists to notice public opinion
 2. Legislation gave federal and state governments the tools to protect consumers.
 3. Income tax helped build government revenues and redistribute wealth
 4. Progressives successfully challenged traditional institutions and approaches to domestic problems.