

Progressives - Radicals and Reformers

In the early 20th Century, people were pushing for reforms in many different areas of society. Today you will learn about reforms in several of these areas:

- I. The Wealth Gap and Industry
- II. Labor
- III. Food Safety
- IV. Politics
- V. The Environment
- VI. Housing

Think about PROBLEMS and SOLUTIONS.

WEALTH and INDUSTRY

Redistribution of Wealth

- 16th amendment = income tax

Regulation of Industry

- **Trusts** = the individual shareholders of many separate corporations agreed to convey their shares to the trust; it ended up entirely owning 14 corporations and also exercised majority control over 26 others.[1] Nine individuals held trust certificates and acted as the trust's board of trustees.[1] One of those trustees was Rockefeller himself, who held 41% of the trust certificates;
 - The Clayton Act extended the power of the Sherman Act and made it harder for trusts to form and to squeeze out competition. For example, the law made it illegal for a company to lower prices in one market but not others to try to force out local competitors.
 - The Clayton Act also protected labor unions from antitrust regulation.
 - Congress also created the Federal Trade Commission in 1914 to enforce the Clayton Act's provisions.
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LABOR

- Whose side is the government on? Growing Socialism and Communism
- Taylorism and the assembly line
- Triangle Fire and Child Labor
- Children
 - By 1912, the National Child Labor Committee, grown from the Hull House workers, had convinced 39 states to pass child labor laws. The NCLC was formed by Addams in 1904 to promote laws restricting or banning child labor.
 - These laws prohibited children under age 14 from working and limited hours for those above
 - More children could get an education, thus creating a demand for more schools. Enrollment boomed
 - Progressives also wanted students to be "Americanized." They believed in pressuring immigrant schoolchildren to give up their cultural traditions and become assimilated into American society.
- Workers
 - Gains and setbacks
 - Russian Revolution = atheist, anti-capitalist, pro-worker
 - The end of World War I was accompanied by a panic over political radicalism. Fear of bombs, Communism, and labor unrest produced a "Red Scare."
 - In Hammond, Ind., a jury took two minutes to acquit the killer of an immigrant who had yelled "To Hell with the United States." At a victory parade in Washington, D.C., a sailor shot a man who refused to stand during the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner, while the crowd clapped and cheered. A clerk in a Waterbury, Conn. clothing store was sentenced to jail for six months for remarking to a customer that the Russian revolutionary Lenin was one of the smartest world leaders.
 - [Photo] Bloody Thursday (July 5th, 1934) street fighting, San Francisco
 - ILWU - Longshoremen. Their demands were simple: a union-controlled hiring hall that would end all forms of discrimination and favoritism in hiring and equalize work opportunities; a coastwise contract, with all

workers on the Pacific Coast receiving the same basic wages and working under the same protected hours and conditions; and a six-hour work day with a fair hourly wage. The shipowners consistently refused each demand, determined to divide and destroy the unions in each port. The members of both longshore and seafaring unions voted to strike in May 1934. In response, the employers mobilized private industry, state and local governments, and police agencies to smash the unions and their picket lines

- IWW
 - IWW opposed WWI = seen as unpatriotic
 - IWW 1900-1930. The Wobblies believed there must be radical changes in American capitalism to improve the oppressive conditions that workers faced. Many I.W.W. members believed in socialist or communist ideology and some advocated whatever means necessary to effect change, including sabotage and violence.
 - IWW was seen as unpatriotic and vocally supported the Russian revolution
 - Centralia
 - In 1918 people destroyed the IWW hall and forced several members to run a gauntlet of business leaders and residents.
 - In November 1919 war veterans attacked an office of the IWW. Four attackers died in a gunfight before townspeople overpowered the IWW members and took them to jail. A mob broke into the jail, seized one of the IWW members, and hanged him from a railroad bridge. Federal officials subsequently prosecuted 165 IWW leaders, who received sentences of up to 25 years in prison..
 - o Bombs were being sent in the mail to rich people like Rockefeller and Morgan, SCJ Oliver Wendall Holmes
 - o By 1916, almost two thirds of the states had **workers' compensation** laws.
 - o 1908 - Muller v. (*Curt Muller, the owner of a laundry business, was convicted of violating Oregon labor laws by making a female employee work more than ten hours in a single day. Muller was fined \$10. Muller appealed*) Muller appealed that states could limit work hours for women. "As healthy mothers are essential to vigorous offspring," the Court ruled, "the physical well-being of woman is an object of public interest."
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FOOD

- o Consumer Protections
- o The Meat Inspection Act required the Department of Agriculture to inspect packaged meat
- o The Pure Food and Drug Act established a new agency, the Food and Drug Administration, to test and approve drugs before they went on the market

POLITICS

Boss William Tweed

- Tammany's power expanded with huge Irish immigration. By 1855, 34 percent of NYCS voter population were Irish immigrants
- Without and social safety net, Tammany stepped in
 - o in the course of one day, Tammany figure George Washington Plunkitt assisted the victims of a house fire; secured the release of six "drunks" by speaking on their behalf to a judge; paid the rent of a poor family to prevent their eviction and gave them money for food; secured employment for four individuals; attended the funerals of two of his constituents (one Italian, the other Jewish); attended a Bar Mitzvah; and attended the wedding of a Jewish couple from his ward
- Favors exchanged for votes
 - o Once bought 300 benches for \$5 each, then sold them to the city for \$600 a pop.
 - o The building of County Hall was a clinic in graft: cost \$178 million in today's dollars, nearly twice as much as the purchase of Alaska in 1867
 - A carpenter was paid \$360,751 (roughly \$4.9 million today) for one month's labor in a building with very little woodwork. A furniture contractor received \$179,729 (\$2.5 million) for three tables and 40 chairs. And the plasterer, got \$133,187 (\$1.82 million) for two days' work; his business acumen earned him the sobriquet "The Prince of Plasterers." Tweed personally profited from a financial interest in a Massachusetts quarry that provided the courthouse's marble. When a committee investigated why it took so long to build the courthouse, it spent \$7,718 (\$105,000) to print its report. The printing company was owned by Tweed. the city was charged \$7,500 for every thermometer, \$41,190 for each broom, and \$5.7 million for furniture and carpets.

- Tweed's illicit profits were said to be in the range of \$200 million, and that was in the 1860s! The law eventually caught up with the Boss, though, and he died in prison in 1878.

Changes

- The people are added as a sort of check and balance
- Secret ballot - In the early 1900s, each party usually printed ballots in its own color, which meant voters' choices were apparent for all to see.
- Direct Primary - voters hold elections to choose candidates. Direct primaries replaced a system in which party leaders picked the candidates.
- Recall - the process by which voters can remove an elected official before his or her term expires
- Initiative – the people can get legislation on the ballot
- Referendum – the people can strike down laws
- 17th Amendment moved election of Senators from state legislatures to direct election
- City Commissioner vs. Mayor
 - A devastating hurricane in Galveston, Texas, in 1900 set the stage for one type of reform. Unable to solve the problems of rebuilding, Galveston's government handed control to a five-person city commission appointed by the governor. Each commissioner was an expert in a field, such as finance or public safety. The positions later became elected offices. The Galveston city commission's work was so successful that by 1913 more than 350 American cities had adopted a city commission form of government.

ENVIRONMENT

- Pollution
 - An acrid yellow smoke huge over the cities
 - Stories of women bringing two pairs of gloves on their walk to church because they would get stained during the walk to and from
 - Fire was very common
 - Fire inside for cooking and heating. Oil lamps, stoves, garbage fires.
 - People could stroll around “fire-watching” because there was always a building on fire somewhere.
 - Into the 1900s, firefighting was done by private businesses in many cities
 - Animals
 - Horses used for all kinds of transportation
 - Horse manure everywhere. People thought that NYC would stop growing by 1910, because of the sheer amount of manure piling up in the streets. “Knee-deep”
 - Horses died in the streets, leaving carcasses behind for days
 - Horses used for all kinds of transportation
 - Horses died in the streets, leaving carcasses behind for days
 - Kids playing in the streets with corpses
 - In Philadelphia, during an epidemic in 1872, 2500 horses died in 3 weeks
 - Sometimes, animals would disappear to be prepared as a diseased meat-feast for dinner
 - Horse refuse and the remains of dead horses littered the streets and provided a breeding ground for (by some estimates) billions of flies a day across the nation. These, in turn, spread diseases, elevating the problem from a nuisance to a public health crisis.
 - *In some of its alleys putrefying rubbish was piled a story and more high; its rotting wooden streets were clogged with manure, decaying garbage, and the bloated corpses of dogs and horses; and its plank-board sidewalks were lined with large uncovered garbage boxes filled to overflowing because of erratic pickup service by city-licensed scavengers.*
- Donald Miller, *City of the Century*, 1996
- Inadequate water and sewers
 - Sewage went in the streets with the horse manure

- Streets were “literally carpeted with a warm, brown matting . . . smelling to heaven.” People called “crossing sweepers” would offer their services to pedestrians, clearing out paths for walking, but when it rained, the streets turned to muck. And when it was dry, wind whipped up the manure dust and choked the citizenry.
- Boston dumped sewage into the harbor. When the tides flowed out so did the sewage, when it came back in
- Rivers filled with sewage - not bad if you’re upstream, but the further downstream....
- The first car was marketed as being a solution to the manure pollution problem

Environmental Regulations

- In 1905, Roosevelt backed the creation of the U.S. Forest Service
- **Preservation**, the protection of wilderness lands from all forms of development.
- **Conservation**, the limited use of resources

HOUSING

- New York
 - At the turn of the century, more Greeks lived in New York than Athens, more Irish than in Dublin.
 - ¼ that passed through Ellis Island rode 15 minute ferry to Manhattan and many never left the island
- Very few parks
- Tenements
 - Lax/no zoning - emphasis on packing in as many people as possible = tenements
 - Four to six stories in height, tenements contained four separate apartments on each floor, measuring 300 to 400 square feet.
 - Apartments contained just three rooms; a windowless bedroom, a kitchen and a front room with windows.
 - Tenement buildings had adjoining walls so interior rooms could not receive natural light or ventilation. Expensive modern conveniences like indoor plumbing and elevators were not included in the cheaply built tenements. Hallway lighting was rare, forcing tenants to climb up flights of stairs in the dark, or climb down in the dark to reach the outdoor toilets located in the back of the lot.
 - At the turn of the century the Lower East Side, populated mostly by Eastern European Jews, reached density levels of 350,000 people per square mile. By 1900, approximately 43,000 New York City tenement buildings housed 1.6 million of the city’s total 2 million person population.
 - Tenement House Act of 1901: a New York State Progressive Era law which outlawed the construction of the dumbbell-shaped style tenement housing and set minimum size requirements for tenement housing. It also mandated the installation of lighting, better ventilation, and indoor bathrooms.
 - Jacob Riis *How the Other Half Lives*

Housing

- Imagine a street with putrefying rubbish was piled a story and more high; its rotting wooden streets were clogged with manure, decaying garbage, and the bloated corpses of dogs and horses.
- Tenements had to have a central courtyard, and a bathroom in each unit.
- By 1900, more than 80,000 tenements had been built in New York City. They housed a population of 2.3 million people, a full two-thirds of the city's total population of around 3.4 million.
- A typical tenement building had five to seven stories and occupied nearly all of the lot upon which it was built (usually 25 feet wide and 100 feet long, according to existing city regulations). Many tenements began as single-family dwellings, and many older structures were converted into tenements by adding floors on top or by building more space in rear-yard areas. With less than a foot of space between buildings, little air and light could get in. In many tenements, only the rooms on the street got any light, and the interior rooms had no ventilation (unless air shafts were built directly into the room).
- Later, speculators began building new tenements, often using cheap materials and construction shortcuts. Even new, this kind of housing was at best uncomfortable and at worst highly unsafe.

Settlement House Movement

- This is where progressive Jane Addams got her start as a reformer.
- Hull House = the 1st settlement

- Founded in Chicago by Jane Addams, Garbage heaps piled in the streets, she wrote, "were the first objects that the toddling children learned to climb." She worried that these conditions promoted the spread of disease in Chicago's poor neighborhoods.
 - Goal of getting the rich and poor in society to live more closely together in an interdependent community.
 - Its main object was the establishment of "settlement houses" in poor urban areas, in which volunteer middle-class "settlement workers" would live, hoping to share knowledge and culture with, and alleviate the poverty of, their low-income neighbors.
 - The "settlement houses" provided services such as daycare, education, and healthcare to improve the lives of the poor in these areas.
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Temperance

- The widespread public support for **prohibition**—a ban on the production and sale of alcoholic beverages—was rooted in the temperance movement dating from the early 1800s. Most advocates were women, and the largest organization had been the Women's Christian Temperance Union.
- 18th Amendment 1919 -1933
- **Carrie Amelia Moore Nation** (first name also spelled **Carry**; November 25, 1846 – June 9, 1911) was an American woman who was a radical member of the temperance movement, which opposed alcohol before the advent of Prohibition. She is particularly noteworthy for attacking alcohol-serving establishments (most often taverns) with a hatchet.
- Hatchetations » Alone or accompanied by hymn-singing women she would march into a bar, and sing and pray while smashing bar fixtures and stock with a hatchet. Her actions often did not include other people, just herself. Between 1900 and 1910, she was arrested some 30 times for "hatchetations", as she came to call them. Nation paid her jail fines from lecture-tour fees and sales of souvenir hatchets.

Suffrage

- After the Triangle Shirtwaist fire a journalist asked a New York machine politician why women factory workers had no fire protection. "That's easy," he replied. "They ain't got no votes!"
- The first victories in the struggle for women's suffrage came at the state level. By 1898, four western states had granted women the right to vote. By 1918, women had voting rights in 15 states. As a result, they began to influence elections. In Montana, they helped elect Jeannette Rankin to the House of Representatives in 1916, four years before women had the right to vote nationwide. Rankin was the first woman to serve in Congress.
- NAWSA and NWP

African Americans

- Lynching
- Great Migration - Jim Crow
- NAACP