Roots of Progressivism
The Progressive Era

The period from about 1890 to 1920 when many believed a solution to social problems in the nation lay in a more active role by the government.
Key Characteristics

1) Government should play an active role in solving society’s problems

2) Government needed to be more efficient

3) New inventions and new cures (improvements in science) can help society

4) The people should have more say in their government

5) Women should have the right to vote

Progressives believed that by applying scientific principals to solving social problems, the result would be new inventions and innovations that would improve the lives of everyone.
Journalists who practiced what today is called "investigative journalism" in order to spotlight corruption in society

Jacob Riis
Upton Sinclair
Ida Tarbell
Journalist whose book “How the Other Half Lives” led to calls for government assistance to help the urban poor.

His books gave a vivid look at the life for ethnic groups of New York City living in the tenement slums.
New York City tenement buildings in the early 1900s
In 1906, Upton Sinclair wrote *The Jungle* to describe the conditions in the meatpacking industry. Sinclair wanted to highlight the plight of the working class. Instead, the book raised fears of what was in the meat that people were eating.
HOUSEWIVES' ALLIANCE
DEMANDS
PROPER INSPECTION
OF MEAT

EAT NO MEAT
BUY NO MEAT
EAT FRESH VEGETABLES
265 Splitting backbones and final inspection — hogs ready for cooler, Swift & Co., Chicago, U.S.A. Copyright 1908 by H. O. White Co.
Impact of *The Jungle*

**Meat Inspection Act**

Required federal inspection of meat and required the Agricultural Department (USDA) to set standards of cleanliness in meatpacking plants.

**Pure Food and Drug Act**

Banned the sale of impure or falsely labeled food or drugs.
Ida Tarbell

• **One of the leading "muckrakers" of her day**

• **Wrote many notable magazine series and biographies.**

• **Best-known for her 1904 book “The History of the Standard Oil Company”**
During the Progressive Era, reformers wanted to rid city government of political influence and make local government more efficient. To do so, many city’s hired an outside expert to manage the city. This person was called a city manager.
During the Progressive Era, many reformers felt the people needed to have more control of the government. Politicians like Wisconsin Governor Robert LaFollette, above, wanted to get power out of the hands of party leaders and into the hands of the people.
The direct primary gave voters power to choose the candidates in an election. This reform led to Wisconsin becoming known as the “laboratory of democracy.”

Other voting changes brought on by Progressives included the initiative, the referendum and the recall.

Another Progressive reform called for the direct election of U.S. Senators, which led to the passage of the 17th Amendment.
Initiative and Referendum

Allows a group of citizens to introduce legislation (a law) in their state government and require the legislature to vote on it.

Allows proposed legislation (a law) to be voted on directly by the people instead of just its state legislature.
The 17th Amendment

In 1913, Congress amended the U.S. Constitution. Senators were now to be chosen by a direct election of the people of a state, not by the state governments.
The fight for women’s voting rights (suffrage) began in the mid-1800s at the Seneca Falls Convention.

By the 1900s, the leader of the suffrage movement was Susan B. Anthony, left.
Anthony, a Quaker, organized numerous marches and gave numerous speeches in the fight for suffrage.
WE WERE VOTERS OUT WEST! WHY DENY OUR RIGHTS IN THE EAST?
Following Susan B. Anthony’s death in 1906, radical suffragists formed the National Women’s Party. The group, led by Alice Paul, protested the president to get laws changed.
In 1919, the Senate passed the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote. It was ratified by the states in 1920.
Roosevelt and Progressivism
In the presidential election of 1900, President William McKinley choose as his vice-presidential candidate someone who was a hero from the Spanish-American War, someone who had strong ties to the Northeast (New York), and someone who was a Progressive – Theodore Roosevelt.
Roosevelt takes over

McKinley was assassinated in 1901

Teddy Roosevelt – at the age of 42 – suddenly became the youngest president in U.S. history
Roosevelt’s “Square Deal”

Teddy Roosevelt was a progressive president

Roosevelt pushed through laws to:
1) break up big business monopolies (trusts)
2) protect the environment and public health
3) improve working conditions for factory workers
Roosevelt saw the need for government to regulate large corporations. While he believed that large corporations were an important part of the nation’s prosperity, he also believed that these corporations were hurting workers.
Roosevelt and the government sued Northern Securities, a trust made up of two large railroads.

The Supreme Court rules that Northern Securities was a monopoly and in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act.
The victory was important because it:

- Established Roosevelt as a “trust-buster”
- Increased the power of the presidency
- Showed the executive branch was even more powerful than the nation's most powerful business institutions.

The case set the precedent for declaring a trust unconstitutional and against the law.
Roosevelt put his stamp on the presidency most clearly in the area of environmental conservation. Roosevelt declared millions of acres of land as protected national forests and urged Americans to conserve their natural resources.
T.R. and Conservation

Authorized by Teddy Roosevelt
- 150 national forests
- 51 federal bird reserves
- 4 national game preserves
- 5 national parks
- 18 national monuments
- 24 reclamation projects
Roosevelt also worked to preserve the nation’s forests. He declared millions of acres of land as protected national forests and started the National Parks System to watch over the lands.

Places like Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona and Big Bend National Park in Texas were established under Roosevelt’s presidency.
National Parks started by Teddy Roosevelt

KEY
- National park
(Date became a national park)
- (★Date became a national monument; later became a national park)
Roosevelt secures passage of the Newlands Reclamation Act, an unprecedented law authorizing federal construction of dams and reservoirs in the West funded by public land sales.

Bureau of Reclamation

- Established in 1902
- Constructed dams, power plants, and canals in 17 western states
- Sells water wholesale
- Provides irrigation to the farmland that produces 60 percent of the vegetables in the U.S.
- 58 power plants provide electricity to six million homes
Roosevelt felt that one of his jobs was to stop job conflicts between different groups in the nation. When the United Mine Workers went on strike in 1902, Roosevelt intervened in the strike and got the union and the owners to agree to arbitration.
Hepburn Act of 1906

Roosevelt wanted the government to be able to regulate railroad rates to insure fairness.

The Hepburn Act gave the Interstate Commerce Commission the power to set railroad rates to make sure that companies did not compete unfairly with each other.
Progressivism under Taft and Wilson
Teddy Roosevelt did not run for President in 1908. Instead, he hand-picked his successor in tabbing William Howard Taft.
Taft defeats William Jennings Bryan

1908

ELECTORAL VOTE
TOTAL: 483

POPULAR VOTE
TOTAL: 14,889,138

Republican (Taft)

Democratic (Bryan)
Problems with Taft

Although he was hand-picked by TR, Taft was not popular with Progressives

1) Taft was not the politician that Roosevelt was and lacked the energy and personal magnetism of his mentor

2) Taft fired the popular Gifford Pinchot as Chief of the United States Forest Service

3) Taft signed the Payne-Aldrich Tariff into law.
The Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act was the law that called for lower tariff (taxes on imports). The tariff was supposed to provide American industrialists with cheap raw materials. Because of compromises in Congress, it did not.
Payne-Aldrich Tariff

The Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act upset both proponents and opponents tariffs. The bill greatly angered Progressives.

Because it increased the duty, the publishing industry viciously criticized Taft, further tarnishing his image.
Because Taft had not followed through with many Progressive reforms, in 1912 Roosevelt challenged Taft for the Republican nomination. This caused a split in the Republican Party.
Election of 1912

The split between the Republicans opened the door for the Democratic candidate – Woodrow Wilson – to win the election.
Election of 1912

POPULAR VOTE
- Wilson: 3,484,980
- Roosevelt: 4,119,539
- Taft: 6,293,454
- MINOR: 1,135,697

TOTAL: 15,033,669

ELECTORAL VOTE
- Wilson: 435
- Roosevelt: 88
- Taft: 0

TOTAL: 531
Impact of Third Parties

Third-party candidates can greatly affect an election
Upset with the direction that Taft had taken the country, in 1912 Roosevelt ran for an unprecedented third term as President.

When it became clear that the Republican party was not going to nominate him, TR left the convention and formed the Progressive Party, also known as the Bull Moose Party.
Lafollette made his first run for president in 1912, running as a Progressive. He would run again in 1924.

Lafollette lost the nomination to Teddy Roosevelt in 1912 and ran in 1924 as the Labor Party.
Debs believed the role of the government was to protect the workers from greedy business owners. To do this, the government needed to take control of big business.

Debs ran for president 4 times; he received over 1 million votes in 1912.
Underwood Tariff

- Passed in 1914
- Established Income Tax
- 1% up to $20,000
- 7% for incomes above $500,000
- Cut tariff rate by the largest percentage in decades

The first major reduction in tariffs.

The average tariffs was decreased from 41 percent to 27 percent.

To replace the lost income, a graduated income tax was imposed.
The 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution created a national income tax. It gave the federal government the power to directly tax its citizens.
To restore people’s confidence in banks, Wilson created the Federal Reserve system. Under this system, banks would keep a portion of their deposits in a regional reserve bank as a cushion in case of a crisis. During those times, many people lost their savings when small banks collapsed and closed, taking people’s savings along with them.
Wilson also wanted to restore competition in the economy. He wanted to break up monopolies. However, once he became president, Wilson realized it would unrealistic to be break up large companies.

In 1914, Wilson asked Congress to create the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to regulate American business. But, the commission did not have the power order companies to stop unfair trade practices.
Clayton Antitrust Act

To strengthen the federal government’s ability to break up trusts, the Clayton Antitrust Act was passed. The law gave unions significantly more power because it legalized unions, strikes, boycotts, and pickets.
Birth of the N.A.A.C.P.

One issue the Progressive Movement did not address was the issue of equal rights African Americans.

In response, W.E.B. Du Bois helped to form the NAACP in 1909.
Some progressives believed that a lot of the nation’s problems were tied in with the consumption and sale of alcohol. The movement to rid the nation of alcohol was known as the temperance movement. Three groups led the call for temperance: women’s groups, business owners and Christians.
Temperance Movement

Women led the call for temperance because alcoholism led to abusive men and loss of jobs.

The leader of the movement was an hatchet wielding woman by the name of Carrie Nation.
THE DRUNKARDS PROGRESS.
FROM THE FIRST GLASS TO THE GRAVE.

STEP 1. A glass with a friend.
STEP 2. A glass to keep the cold out.
STEP 3. A glass too much.
STEP 4. Drunk and riots.
STEP 6. Poverty and disease.
STEP 7. Forsaken by friends.
STEP 8. Desperation and crimes.
The 18th Amendment made the sale or consumption of alcohol illegal throughout the United States.
Disputes between William Howard Taft and Teddy Roosevelt led to a split of the Republican Party.

Third party candidates had an impact in elections in the early 1900s.

The federal government became more powerful following passage of the Underwood Tariff, the Clayton Antitrust Act, the Federal Reserve Act and the 16th Amendment.

The temperance movement led to the passage of the 18th Amendment.