

## Lecture 2.8: Progressive Era Reform, 1880s-1920s

- Lot of reforms start during the gilded age, so we can't just start at the 1900s

### Progressivism:

- Into early 20<sup>th</sup> century, this develops as a movement
- Not a single, unified movement
  - Decentralized, diffused
- People trying to fix social problems of the Gilded Age
  - Whatever they see as a crisis is what they will focus on
  - Definitions differ, don't have the same agenda
  - Different groups focus on different issues
- To do this: need time, which you can have if you have more money
  - People in this movement tend to be White, Protestant, educated, and middle/upper class
- Some are motivated by altruism
  - Believe they have Moral imperative to reform for humanities' sake, goodness of their hearts
  - They say this just isn't right
- Some are motivated by anxiety
  - Want to preserve social status (usually middle class people)
  - Fearing a working class revolution → will do anything to prevent it
- Whatever the motivation, progressives need clean, efficient government
  - Central tenant
  - Gov that is devising regulation
    - Get involved, regulate things
  - Gov that is appropriate funding to those causes
  - Inspecting work places
    - Check to make sure things are safe
  - Enforcement
    - Have to actually enforce what their regulations are
- Shift in how the gov was involved during the gilded age
- Want more gov involvement
- America ran "decently and properly"

### Political Machines:

- One of the big motivators for progressives is corrupt political machines on the local level
- Local branches of city gov
  - Like dem party of seattle
- Had a boss or head, but he's reliant on party loyalists organized through city gov
  - Local representatives part of the system, but one boss running things
  - Not always in public
- How do they work?
  - Poor people in cities

- Set themselves as welfare institution → will find housing and job for you, in return, you vote for me in the next election
- Other element is alliances with businesses
  - Need money for social welfare
  - Bosses go to head of businesses → make sure she gets the permits, etc, as long as I get a cut of the profit
  - Done with organized crime as well
- Keep political machines in power
  - Got voters, businesses supporting me
- Doesn't always work out
  - Elections are very narrow, political machines are not afraid to turn to fraud when they're worried about elections
    - Voter fraud used
    - They would take names off of headstones in the graves and enter them in the votes that they got
- "Graft"
  - Corruption
  - Skimming off of public funds
  - Local gov has allotted x money to build a new city hall, I might just scrape off 25k of that money for my own use
  - Use insider info to make a profit → like a stockbroker basically

Start with reforming federal gov:

- Want federal gov to expand role to fix problems
- Need good gov: honest, responsive, and expert
- Actually knows what its doing → not just random person in a position
- Congress passes 1883 Civil Service Act in response to Garfield's assassination (shooter wanted a gov position, Garfield didn't give him it):
  - Reserves 10% of gov positions have to be appointed by the person demonstrating merit by passing civil service exam
  - Before, there was no qualification requirement
  - Not just a thing that you get bc you are loyal to somebody
  - Developed since then: now, 90% of gov jobs are like this (but take 100+ years to get there)
- Need someone to create, administer, grade exams
- Need people, which means you need money → taxes!
- 70 years without any amendment, then CV amendments, now 2 in one year
- 16<sup>th</sup> amendment passed in 1913: establishes federal income tax → gov needs money to do things, so we have to tax people
- 17<sup>th</sup> amendment (also 1913): only reason why we get to elect senators to congress
  - Before, state legislatures appointed senators
  - Voters couldn't pick beforehand, they voted for state legislatures
  - Getting to pick your own senator means federal gov is more accountable to the people → voters now have more control over who's in gov
    - You might vote them out in the next election, senators are now interested in holding to people's wants, otherwise, they only have to worry about SLs

State and local level reforming:

- Progressives borrow a lot of ideas from populist party
- Pushed referenda
  - Where state legislatures instead of passing law themselves, they create the law and send it out to voters for them to vote on it
  - Gives voters more of a say in the laws that are passed
- Recalls
  - Can vote someone out of office before their term is over
  - if enough people want someone out of office, there can be an election to keep/stay
- ballot initiatives:
  - legislatures mainly make laws
  - ballot initiative means voters can say we want to put this on the ballot and vote on it
  - don't have to wait for state legislatures to do it
  - if we have enough people who want it, we don't need the SL we can put it on the ballot we can do it ourselves
- making gov more responsive to the people and what they want
- scientific management shows up in gov too
  - progressives encourage gov to adopt SM management techniques
    - account for all costs, tracing it methodically, have to see exactly where the money is going to
    - by creating SM management (emphasis on management), we have to create layers of accountability/checks in gov happenings
- minimizing/taking away power from mayors of cities by making city councils
  - minimizing political machines
  - not just one person deciding everything
  - greater accountability

Conservation or Preservation convo (land management):

- about land management
- no more empty land → closing of the frontier
- so what do we do about the land? ← this is the convo
- where people start making national parks
  - Yellowstone, Rainier, etc
- Two stances here:
  - Conservationists
    - Represented by Gifford Pinchot
    - Believe that the goal of the US is to manage natural resources for the benefit of mankind
    - Need to use it for benefit of humans
    - Collect goal, cut down trees, etc to develop society
  - Preservationists
    - John Muir/Sierra club
    - Whole idea is to keep "wild lands" wild
    - Nature is sacred that needs to be kept unspoiled

- People don't fit in nature, including NA
- Ignore, or actively erase NA presence on lands they considered "wild"
- Moving NA tribe to create a national park
- Indigenous removal, even if there was a treaty with them
- Earliest stages about environmental movement
- Start of the concept of wilderness
- Both of these groups consider themselves progressives

#### Conservation under teddy:

- Leading conservationist pres
- What it looks like in action:
  - Newlands Act, 1902
    - Sells federal land for irrigation projects
  - Inland waterways commission, 1907
    - Job is to study rivers, soil, etc
    - How to develop water transport and water power
    - How can we harness water
  - US forest service, 1905
    - Puts Gifford in charge (major conservationist)
    - Put under department of agriculture
    - Thinking about forest development like its farming
    - Harvest the forest, use the forest, etc
- Also does set aside 125 million acres for national parks
- When congress says slow down, he says fine ill just make lots of national monuments

#### Women as reformers:

- Women still can't vote in federal gov and in most states
- But one of main driving forces behind P reforms
  - Most of the reforms are couched as extension of the "women's sphere"
  - Protecting homes, families → that's our job as women
  - Kind of justification they use for all kinds of things
- One of the leading people was Jane Addams
  - She started the Hull House (settlement house) in city slums
  - So impoverished women + families could get childcare, places to play, somewhere to go if you don't have a home, community centers
- Women are also consumers
  - Use their role as consumers to push for better conditions in factories, safety in food and medicine
  - Driving force for what gets passed as pure food and drug act, 1905
  - Which sets up the FDA
    - Regulate food and medicine in the country

#### Temperance Movement:

- Moderate alcohol consumption
- Major org associated: Women's Christian Temperance Union, 1874
- Goal is to limit alcohol for a few reason

- Domestic abuse stemming from alcoholism
  - Alcohol is expensive!! Don't want people spending on it
  - Crime associated with alcohol
  - These overlap both altruism and anxiety
- more radical version of this movement: Carry Nation, "hatchetation"
  - goes around just smashing saloons
- WCTU under Frances Willard → Shifts movement from temperance (moderation) to prohibition
  - Expands WCTU beyond alcohol → involved in other social issues

Eventually is successful, in Prohibition, 1919-1933:

- 1919 → WCTU gets Congress to pass 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment
  - Bans manufacturing, selling, transporting, or import/export of alcohol
  - Enough members of congress agreed on this, and enough states agreed for it to become part of constitution
  - But this is really unpopular → protests, songs
- Law-breaking:
  - Underground illegal bars → speakeasies
  - 30k + in NY
  - Half a million arrests made
  - Bootlegging → creation of liquor illegally
  - Organized crime
    - Al Capone → gangsters who killed many people
- Repeal campaigns start immediately
  - Only amendment appealed until the 21<sup>st</sup> amendment

Women's Suffrage Movement:

- Actually called woman suffrage, but whatever
- Women are engaged as reformers in all areas of life at this point → look around and go, if we're making all these changes, how come we can't vote on these things?
- Want to push politicians to represent their progressive reforms
- Split around how to enforce this: either state by state (states pass laws over voting) or constitutional amendment (legal for entire country)
- Women get the right to vote in the west more than anywhere else
  - Women expected to do a lot more in that area
  - Doesn't mean you could vote in presidential election if you can vote in your state
- State by state
  - National American woman suffrage association, 1869
  - Support state-by-state
  - Color within the lines
    - Let's do things within the system
    - Support male candidates who support women voting
    - Conventions
    - Pro-suffrage candidates
    - Don't want to rock the boat
- Constitutional

- Congressional union for woman suffrage → turn into national women's party, 1913
- Younger, more militant, pushing for amendment
- "splashy" tactics → picketing, get arrested, hunger strikes (and then force fed), parades
- Not going to color in the lines
- Work against party in power to prove that women had influence
- Not playing nice
- College suffrage leagues → get together and use modern marketing tactics (auto tours, promotional giveaways, etc)
- Huge debate over which tactics worked better → not a settled convo
- Both groups generally represent white women (not that there aren't POC, but generally)

#### Suffragists of Color:

- Have two reasons why they can vote
  - They are women, and also they can work towards making life better for people in their larger category as well (advocate for black rights)
- Black women's associations
  - Ida B. Wells-Barnett → prominent woman in this
  - These exist in the south, but they have to be much more quiet about it
  - Fighting against discrimination
- Indigenous women
  - If we want NA policy to change, we need right to vote to prove it
- Latina women
  - To protect property rights (white people taking away their land)
  - Language rights (Spanish in school, or just English?)
- Chinese women are small, but they are still fighting
  - Mabel Ping-Hua Lee
- Women of all backgrounds fighting for right to vote, but people don't recognize that there are more than just the two groups (white women)
- very few suffrage groups are integrated

#### 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment:

- from 1896-1910 → no suffrage victories
- for women to do this, they need to convince men (ones who change laws)
  - in order for that, they have to persuade men in their lives, in their government
  - are actually male pro-suffrage groups (they have male allies)
- Wilson is president 1913 they pressure him using moral diplomacy
  - Make it more democratic here in America first rather than in other place of the world
  - Huge PR nightmare on his hands, these protests are not good for his image
- Combined with this and the flashy other tactics, he comes out in support of an amendment
- 1919 this is passed, 1920 this is ratified
- White women are given the right to vote

- Chinese women cannot, as there are laws restricting citizenship of Asian women
- Indigenous people are often blocked by state laws