

# Progressive era essay sample

[Business](#), [Industries](#)



The period between 1900 and 1918 was known as the “ Progressive Era” in the American history. This was a positive tide of events for America. It was during this brief time that America was completing its quick change from an agrarian to an urban society. For most Americans of this generation, early 20th-century America was the start to a relationship between a democratic government and its masses. So this had a very positive impact on them and the whole nation. The progressives as they called themselves worked for a revival in the working conditions in factories and argued for better living conditions in the labor class. This era brought about great economic progress, which has transcended the country into an economic super power today. Industrialization in America was liberalized and distinct industries from distinctive sectors thrived. This was in addition to the already existing businesses prior to this period. The skilled labor was provided by the mass immigrants from the European countries. During this time, the major growth industry was the automobile industry. Federal regulation in several industries were stamped in by the U. S. Congress in the form of new laws. These laws affected those industries in particular that catered to the general population such as pharmaceuticals, meat-packing and the railroad network. These laws were instrumental in controlling the prices of commodities and services, established government control over banks and even labor laws that enhanced working conditions. The progressive era also saw the passing of four crucial Constitutional Amendments namely, the Sixteenth Amendment for income tax, the Seventeenth Amendment for the direct election of senators, the Nineteenth Amendment that brought voting rights for women and the Twenty-First Amendment that prohibited the production and

distribution of alcoholic beverages. This helped to improve the incomes of the working class, which drastically changed the way they lived thereafter. Nevertheless, the difference in doing business in the progressive era was the absence of autocratic rule in organizations (Mintz & McNeil, “ Digital History”).

The changes to the legislation, which really came at the end of the progressive era known as the " Age of Reform" were the results of a strong communal and political struggle which changed the expectations in the people of America which in turn changed the role of the government in the American society. By the democratic ideals and social justice, the people who supported the progressive era made themselves the men or women of a " new" America in which the ideals of the founding fathers could find a place in the nation's changing society. There was not only economic growth but the pre-era social evils were also put to rest. Exploitation of child labor, corruption in city governments, the horror of lynching, and the ruthless business practices employed by businessmen, like John D. Rockefeller were nearly abolished. The antecedence of the progressive era helped a considerable deal during the Great Depression as the nation was economically well prepared to withstand the unfortunate fall for a period until the restoration began. Reformers fought for the rights of the neglected in the society. The poor, needy and the sick were their targets. They made sure that everyone was treated equally well and need to have equal rights. They attempted to restore democracy by limiting big businesses' domination, " Americanizing" the immigrants, and restricting the political high-handedness. A large number of immigrants from Eastern and Southern

Europe, including the African Americans were benefited during this time. The progressives just didn't want to have the benefits to themselves. They wanted to spread this around the world and create a movement. This not only remained in America but had a good influence around the world. During the First World War, the progressive spirit turned to global apprehensions. Encompassing their democratic responsiveness and sense of moral duty to the state of affairs in Europe, the pro-war reformists move toward the pre-World War I with the same principles. Under Woodrow Wilson's guidance, America arrived in WWI in the direction to extend egalitarianism and spread its ideals beyond its own borders, which actually wasn't a major success. All in all, this was a beginning of an economic revolution which in addition helped revive the society, bringing in equality and also had an international influence in their own societies and economies. Therefore I think the progressive era was a positive one for our nation (Library of Congress, "Progressive Era to New Era").

## **Cited Works**

" Progressive Era to New Era". Library of Congress. 2015. Web. 22 June 2015.

Mintz, S., & McNeil, S. Digital History. 2013. Web. 29 June 2015.