

# Progressive era through the great depression persuasive essay

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Progressive Era through the Great Depression  
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Progressive Era through the Great Depression There were many key historical turning points in the period of Progressive Era through the Great Depression. With the turn of the twentieth century Progressivism began with a specific agenda which was to clean up the nation's cities. Social and political movement grew from this era, including reforms on state and national levels with efforts to diminish poverty, introduce labor reform, and improve the unsatisfactory conditions of urban housing.

Many reform groups were established for the rights of Americans; including religion, state political reform, and woman's progressiveness. During this time Roosevelt enacted the New Deal which was designed to regulate the economy and provide for national recovery. This initiative addressed political, economic, and social demands all at once. Women's Reform During the Progressive era woman organized many major reforms, but despite all of this they were still denied the right to vote.

Two women's groups were created to promote women's suffrage (1) the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), founded in 1890, and (2) the National Women's Party (NWP), founded in 1913. (Shultz, 2012) The combined efforts of these two groups led to victory and the women won the right to vote in 1920, just after the end of World War I when the Nineteenth Amendment was passed. Although they won the right to vote in 1920, women of the west had earned the right to vote before those in southern states.

After reading several articles and websites I believe women earned the right to vote in the frontier states of the West before eastern and southern states for reasons as stated in the article " Why Did Colorado Suffragists Fail to Win the Right to Vote in 1877, but Succeed in 1893? " In this article it is speculated the " West was a place where freedom, independence, and democracy reigned. " To encourage women settlers to move to the western states and territories they were enticed with such things from the political leaders as being granted women's suffrage, which could include the right to vote.

During the Progressive Era women were considered the " moral guardians" and protectors of the home. (Reforming Their World, 2007) Women stood up for the rights of their family; protecting them at home and in the public, by fighting for their rights. Many things we take for granted today, they fought for in the Progressive Era as luxuries, including hot lunches at schools, community playgrounds, fire codes for office buildings, and public libraries. Working women fought for improved working conditions and wage increases. Black American woman also fought against the " war" on racism.

Together both the white and black women worked for equal, improved and fair rights for women and children. Roosevelt - The New Deal Roosevelt was elected to his first term in 1932, with a jobless rate of 24% in America. (Shlaes, 2009) Immediately upon entering office he made several positive moves to improve the economy including creating the New Deal and reassuring seniors by creating Social Security. With his aggressiveness the unemployment rate had dropped 10% by 1936 when he was running for re-

election. The New Deal was designed to regulate the economy, provide for national recovery.

This initiative addressed political, economic, and social demands all at once. Through this initiative he created several programs. The Emergency Banking Relief Act, which was established to have federal control over banks and, if necessary, rescued them from disaster with government loans. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) creates economic programs that would employ the unemployed. National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) instituted programs to regulate industry, establish labor rights, and improve working conditions.

All which were effective in restoring economic recovery. With the help of Roosevelt, through The New Deal, farmers were given help with a new reform proposal called the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA). The AAA attempted to address the great problem of agriculture and offered farmers cash subsidies to not grow crops. (Shultz, 2012) Although, Americans wanted to believe in Roosevelt's New Deal plan, his budget spending was getting more out of control and becoming more erratic. During his first term the federal budget rose from 6% to 9% of the nation's GDP.

He had many critics on both democratic and republican sides. On the democratic side, some feared his programs increased the power of the government while others saw it as an overextension of federal power. Republicans believed the best option for the depression was to " let market forces take their course, knowing that, in time, there would be a new era of growth and recovery. " (Shultz, 2012) Several pieces of legislation were

passed during the Roosevelt-Taft-Wilson progressive era that is still influential to the way businesses are conducting.

The sixteenth amendment was passed during Taft's time in office, authorizing income taxes. He was also very active in supporting courts against unfair trade practices by corporations. (Devine, 2010) During Wilson's term in office he was successful in passing the Federal Reserve Act, which centralized banking and created the Federal Reserve Board. This act is still very influential in helping to regulate interest rates and the money supply. At this time the Federal Trade Commission was also enacted.

**Spanish American War** The Spanish-American War of 1898 transformed the United States into a major overseas power. The war concerned American politicians, especially when American business interests might be compromised, because of the geographical location of countries like Cuba and the Philippines who the Spanish were fighting against. The victory over Cuba and the Philippines prompted a treaty which resulted in the U. S. annexing Hawaii and Spain relinquishing most of its overseas possessions to the U. S. including Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam, in exchange for \$20 million. (Shultz, 2012) **Roaring Twenties** During the roaring twenties the economy was healthy. Production was up in the steel and automotive industry. Consumerism was up. People could suddenly afford to purchase clothes and property and cars. Many people had electricity in their homes, and were purchasing televisions, refrigerators, radios, washing machines, and vacuums. Banks were extending credit to people and they were investing in the stock market.

Congress passed prohibition laws were passed and the Volstead Act (1919), which handed down strict punishments for individuals violating this amendment. Women won the right to vote with the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment. All of these affected the federal government's involvement in the national economy. (Shultz, 2012) References Devine, Robert A (2010) America Past and Present, AP Edition, Pearson, New York City, NY Retrieved November 11, 2012 from [http://wps.ablongman.com/long\\_divine\\_appap\\_7/23/5931/1518407.cw/index.html](http://wps.ablongman.com/long_divine_appap_7/23/5931/1518407.cw/index.html) Reforming Their World: Women in the Progressive Era (2007). Retrieved November 10, 2012 from National Women's History Museum: <http://www.nwhm.org/online-exhibits/progressiveera/home.html> Shultz, Kevin M. (2012) HIST, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, Boston, Massachusetts: Wadsworth Why Did Colorado Suffragists Fail to Win the Right to Vote in 1877, but Succeed in 1893? Retrieved November 11, 2012 from <http://womhist.alexanderstreet.com/colosuff/intro.htm> Shlaes, A. (2009). Deal or No Deal? (Cover story). Time, 173(26), 38-42.