

History



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History Progressivism in the United States of America was a broad reform movement that culminated at the beginning of the twentieth century. This movement is generally viewed as reformist and middle class in nature. In fact it was a response to the drastic changes modernization had brought. Rapid growth of railroads, big corporations, industrialization, urbanization and growing corruption engendered by crony capitalism practices were affecting deeply previously isolated protestant “island communities” of the Gilded Age America. Suffering from the “dislocation and bewilderment” lots of Americans needed their homeland to be put in order and the cleverest of Americans were beating about for the ways to put their country in order. It is no wonder that hardly the first serious book on Progressive Era history was *The Search for Order*. Its author, Robert Wiebe, viewed this search as replacing such mores and values of small town community life as promptness, frugality, efficiency and foresight” with such assumptions of bureaucracy as rationality and functionality, management and administration, regularity and continuity. According to Wiebe Americans traded the values that had been regulating individual relationships for those oriented towards bureaucratic order because new interconnected industrial economy needed to be centralized and professionalized. As a result Americans have assumed bureaucratic *Weltanschauung*. Wiebe argues that such a worldview allowed for giving adequate responses to complicated problems unlike previous era narrow-minded, community-centered moralistic mind. As Wiebe puts it the Progressivism in fact was ambition of the new born middle class to realize its predestination through the means of bureaucracy

Work Cited Wiebe, Robert. *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*. New York: Hill & Wang, 1967. Print.