

# Female reformers in the progressive era

[Sociology](#), [Human Rights](#)



The Progressive Era began in 1890 and ended in 1920. Females played a very important role during this time. Many women joined national organizations such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association, National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage and National Association of Colored Women.

All women chose to join no matter their diversity. Being rich, poor, white, black, or immigrants did not separate them from joining. Women were considered leaders in the social and political movements from 1890 to 1920. Women participating in public and political movements was highly discouraged. The main goal of these female reformers was to end political corruption and improve the lives of the people. Female reformers took normal social roles and turned them into public roles and because of this, they began to win increasing support for women's votes.

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Women very quickly became leaders in many different social and political movements as they were arguing for their rights. Reformers in the progressive era had intentions to end the uprising and help to make the lives of the people improve as well as protect their citizens. Female reformers in the progressive era began groups such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association, The National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, and The National Association of Colored Women. Women were allowed to participate no matter their skin color, race, religion, or economic status; every woman was welcome. The Woman's Christian Temperance Movement is greatly known as the attempt to make alcohol illegal in which became

successful in 1919. The suffrage movement was a very important part of the progressive era.

### Legacies of Women Reformers

Jane Addams is known as a settlement house founder and a peace activist. She established the Hull-House in Chicago. The Hull House was a settlement house that provided education and needed services to local immigrants. Her quote Action indeed is the sole medium of expression for ethics is a great representation of the reason why women were fighting for their freedom.

Ida B. Wells-Barnett is described as a very famous journalist, activist, and researcher. Growing up, she dealt with many forms of discrimination and violence. She is known for leading a campaign against the killing of African Americans. Her famous quote, The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them is important as it represents the fight to earn voting rights for women.

Abigail Scott Duniway is referred to as Oregon's Mother of Equal Suffrage and The Pioneer Woman Suffragist of the great Northwest. She was the Veteran Equal Suffrage Leader of the Pacific Northwest. She was a lecturer, writer, and editor who spent forty years fighting for women's rights. Abigail helped pass a law in Oregon that gave women the right to vote. Her quote She flies with her own wings shows us that in order for women to obtain the freedom they had to do it themselves. The fight was not an easy task and each woman had to use their own voice to make it effective.

Susan B Anthony played a very key role in issues regarding temperance, abolition, the rights of labor, and equal pay for work. She was one of the most known people in the progressive era. Susan was arrested for voting illegally in the presidential election in 1872; She went through trial and was fined \$100 for the crime. She gave her entire life to fighting for women's rights. Her famous quote There will never be complete equality until women themselves help to make the laws and elect the lawmakers is a perfect example of the struggle that women went through in order to obtain equality in society.

Margaret Sanger is known for founding the first birth control movement and trying to prove that it could improve family life. Margaret believed that in order to control family size, birth control was beneficial and it was a way to end poverty among women. Sanger founded her own feminist publication in 1914 with hopes of spreading the news about birth control but was charged with violating laws. She is famous for many quotes but one, in particular, stands out. The quote reads When motherhood becomes the fruit of a deep yearning, not the result of ignorance or accident, its children will become the foundation of a new race. This quote can be perceived in a variety of different ways but the meaning behind it is the simple fact that when a woman had the desire to become a mother and chose to become one, that their children would become the new race of people who did not discriminate like the current day people did.

Charlotte Hawkins Brown is known for fighting to allow black children to obtain a good education. She was a teacher and founder of the Palmer

Memorial Institute. Charlotte fought against the Jim Crow Laws in hopes to gain more educational rights for colored children. Charlotte's famous quote I must sing my song. There may be other songs more beautiful than mine, but I must sing the song God gave me to sing, and I must sing it until death shows a true representation of the way that people thought during this time frame. Charlotte's quote states that no matter the situation, you have to keep going and do your part even if things disagree. She states that even though everyone disagreed with the progressive era and colored children gaining educational rights that she would continue to speak out and fight for equality.

Florence Kelley was known for dedicating her life to social change. She fought to have laws that protected women while at work. Kelley also worked with child labor laws. She helped to create the Women's International League for Peace. Kelley is known for her quote stating This position is untenable, and there can be no pause in the agitation for full political power and responsibility until these are granted to all the women of the nation. Kelley was very unhappy with the lack of women's rights and fought a very long time in hopes of gaining the right to vote for all women.

When reflecting on the issues that women fought for and observing the achievements made, we remember problems with public health and safety, child labor, and women's work. Issues with public health and safety enforced things such as the Factory Inspection Act, the first heat detector, the Pure, and Drug Act, the FDA, the Federal Meat Inspection Act, and the United States Department of Labor. Issues with child labor enforced things such as

the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Keating Owen Act in order to prevent children from working in dangerous conditions while a minor.

Each of these reformers devoted a very large portion of their lives to fighting women's rights and the issues regarding public health and safety, child labor, and women's work. They used the idea of taking women's everyday social aspects and making them public and political. The focus on topics appealing to women helped to promote awareness upon the level of injustice towards them. Even though women did not have the right to vote, they discovered new ways to build arguments about the issues. In return, these women won more and more support for women's voting. Each of these outstanding women is known for a quote that was documented at one point in the progressive era and although they are all different, they all address the same issue and that was women's rights and equality.