

## Progressives and their Reforms

**What is a progressive?** People who tried to reform the problems of society caused by industrialization and urbanization

### **Progressives' beliefs:**

- Focused on the ability and knowledgeable experts to analyze and solve problems.
- Believed that crime, alcoholism and political corruption could be solved by experts.

### **Progressive Reforms:**

#### **Political reforms**

- Initiatives – citizens could introduce a bill to their local/state government to be voted on the legislature.
- Referendum – voters cast ballots to decide if a bill should become a law
- Recall – voters could remove an elected official from office before the official's term is up
- Suffrage – right to vote; women received right to vote in 1920 (19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the US Constitution)

#### **Political Reformers:**

1. Charles Beard – Professor (Columbia Univ.) used knowledge of history to reform corrupt politicians
2. Mary Ritter Beard – Fought for women's rights

#### **Economic reforms**

- Commissions – government offices to make sure businesses were fair to consumers (ex: railroad commissions, power/gas companies)
- Workers' Compensation – if a worker is injured on the job they are entitled to get paid for the time they missed due to the injury
- Work day reduced – laws passed to only allow people to work certain # of hours

#### **Economic Reformers:**

1. Florence Kelley – fought against child labor and dangerous working conditions
2. Upton Sinclair – wrote about hardships of workers in meat-packing plants (called a **Muckraker**)
3. Ida Tarbell – wrote about the evils of the Standard Oil Company; took advantage of workers (considered a **Muckraker**)

#### **Social and Moral reform**

- Juvenile Court System – more sensitive to the needs of those under 18 yrs of age
- Public Education – mandatory schooling expanded across the US
- Rights for Women – voting rights, prison reform, temperance movement (restricting or prohibiting use of alcohol)

#### **Social and Moral Reformers:**

1. Jane Addams – founded Hull House in Chicago (for women and orphans); cared for the poor
2. Ida Wells – fought for rights of African-Americans
3. Walter Rauschenbusch- minister from New York City; leader of social gospel movement; desired to help those who were homeless, jobless