

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The first decade of America's twentieth century hides in the shadow of the monumental events that followed it: women's suffrage, World War I, Prohibition, the Great Depression, and World War II. The milestones of the years 1900-1909 are quieter, often unfamiliar to all but the most serious students of American history. Their influence, however, on our lives in the twenty-first century is remarkable. From this decade emerged the modern federal government—the regulatory state with its far-reaching agencies bolstered by the assertive decisions of ambitious federal courts. That government was prodded into existence by the rise of investigative journalism—known at the time as muckraking—and the agitation of a restless and determined labor movement. It extended its reach across a newly global and colonialist American empire, at odds with America's founding myths but presaging the coming century of American power. The government of Theodore Roosevelt accomplished regime change in Panama, mitigated and mediated conflicts around the globe, and governed territories from the Caribbean to the far edge of the Pacific. It protected natural resources and promoted environmentalism, while American industry simultaneously exploited the land and exploded with transformative innovation. Americans invented new products and technologies at an astonishing pace and uncovered the foundations of modern biology and physics. American life sped up, like the jangle of a ragtime piano, as we began driving cars and watching films, and American individuals pushed back on the forces that constrained them: worker exploitation, racial discrimination, political disenfranchisement, corruption, and environmental hazards.

This is Teddy Roosevelt's decade: thrust into office in 1901 upon the assassination of President William McKinley, he was president for eight of the decade's ten years, passing his chair at the

Theodore Roosevelt Desk (made for him in 1903 and used by more presidents than any but the Resolute desk) to William Howard Taft in 1909. Roosevelt presided over the country's affairs from the brand-new West Wing, which was added to the White House between 1900-1902. To twenty-first-century consciousness, Roosevelt is defined by the contradiction between the naturalist and the hunter—a conservationist who is also a big game hunter seems so odd to us today—but this duality between preservation and exploitation defined the impulse of his presidency: he sought to preserve American natural places and embraced reforms that used the power of the government to protect citizens, physically and economically. But he admired innovation and invention, and American big business flourished despite his regulatory reforms. This tapestry—naturalistic, paternalistic, inventive, and capitalistic—described the ideals of “progress” for the Progressive age.

Roosevelt aggressively pursued the expansion of American territory and influence through imperialist projects like the Panama Canal, the exploitation of the new United States colonies acquired from Spain, and an increased global role as a conflict-mediator. Under his watch, America underwent a crucial metamorphosis from looking inward (exploiting the land through agriculture and resource extraction, largely affecting citizens' lives through dispersed state-level institutions), to looking outward (preserving the land, growing industrial productivity for international trade, and expanding the federal government's diplomatic and military presence internationally). His administration established 150 National Forests, eighteen National Monuments, five National Parks, and the United States Forest Service. The contributions of dedicated conservationists like John Muir, who advocated for the preservation of wilderness, and Gifford Pinchot, the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service and a proponent of “wise use”

management, provided the intellectual and moral support for these governmental measures. These actions reflected not only a growing acknowledgment that the nation's expansive landscapes and rich biodiversity were not inexhaustible, but also a growing acceptance—even insistence—that the federal government was the correct and authorized entity to provide the needed protection. This “protector government” would also address pollution and unsafe work conditions in the nation's cities, as well as the exploitation of labor.

But it would also carve a channel connecting the Atlantic and the Pacific through the environmentally sensitive land of Panama, and establish colonial governments in four new territories acquired from Spain: Cuba, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, as well as Hawaii. Roosevelt would demand competition in railroads and break up trusts. The ripple effect was staggering: innovations in one sector spurred growth in others, and with each advancement, the social landscape was irrevocably altered. Knitted together in a growing web of railroads, telegraph lines, and newly forming roads for automobiles, the country catalyzed advancements in transportation, communication, entertainment, and leisure.

As machines whirred and factories sprang up, a small class of industrial magnates amassed great fortunes, and their mass production of goods led to a surge in employment opportunities that created a mass migration from rural areas to cities. Urban areas swelled so quickly that housing couldn't keep up, giving rise to densely populated slums. These neighborhoods, often cramped, unsanitary, and teeming with poverty, highlighted the stark contrast between the promise of “the American dream,” a new phrase coined in 1900, and the reality for many of its urban dwellers. The majority of workers in America's burgeoning factories lived on meager wages under often hazardous conditions. This disparity gave rise to the term “Gilded Age,” reflecting a society glittering on the surface but made of starker contrasts beneath. The tension between labor and capital would eventually fuel

demands for change and set the scene for the Progressive Era's social movements, which aimed to address these inequities.

The clanging of the factory bell marked not just the start of the workday but also echoed the coming together of workers in solidarity. Labor movements rose in response to the often harsh and unsafe working conditions, seeking fair wages, reasonable hours, and safer environments. Unions became a beacon for workers' rights. Strikes, boycotts, and the gains in benefits and legal protections that such actions won, shifted the balance of power in the workplace and instilled in workers a sense of their own agency. Americans overwhelmingly took their side: the legislature passed pro-labor laws and journalists amplified their voices.

Muckrakers aimed to expose societal ills, including the miserable conditions faced by American workers both on the job and at home, through in-depth investigative reporting. Leaders in this movement, like Ida Tarbell, who uncovered the unethical practices of the Standard Oil Company, and Upton Sinclair, whose novel *The Jungle* revealed appalling conditions in the meatpacking industry, used the power of the written word to inform and mobilize the public to demand reform. These investigative efforts led to substantial changes in public policy, such as the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act of 1906, which laid the groundwork for significant expansions in consumer protections and workplace regulations. Muckraking journalists effectively held powerful corporations and government entities accountable, cultivating an informed citizenry and fostering a more just society. They laid the foundation for modern investigative reporting and the watchdog role media plays in democracy.

While sweeping social reforms, government regulation, and muckraking do typically define the Progressive Era, it was also a period of vibrant cultural innovation. The magic of moving images swept across America as nickelodeons offered

A

Accessory chromosome

Category: Science and Nature

Definition: Scientific discovery in the field of genetics

Occurred: 1902; Chicago, Illinois and Lawrence, Kansas

Clarence Erwin McClung's suggestion that the "accessory," or "X," chromosome determines sex represented a significant contribution to the evolution of a chromosomal theory of inheritance.

BACKGROUND

At the beginning of the twentieth century, scientific researchers were zeroing in on a biological mechanism for sex inheritance. The American zoologist/cytologist Clarence Erwin McClung played an important role in this investigation. Although McClung had a wide range of biological interests—including microtechnique, vertebrate paleontology, and histology—he became interested in the role of the chromosomes when, as a graduate student at the University of Kansas, he spent the summer of 1898 working with William Morton Wheeler at the University of Chicago. Wheeler suggested that McClung study chromosome behavior in sperm production in a species of grasshopper. This introduction directed his attention to the behavior of the chromosomes. The semester McClung spent at Columbia University studying with cytologist Edmund Beecher Wilson cemented his interest.

McClung's studies resulted in a paper titled "A Peculiar Nuclear Element in the Male Reproductive Cells of Insects" (1899). This "nuclear element" had been described in 1891 by Hermann Henking, who followed the behavior of an unusual structure (he did not recognize it as a chromosome) in sperm formation of the fire wasp *Pyrrhocoris*. This structure, described by Henking as a "peculiar chromatin-element" ("X") or an atypical "nucleolus," did not appear to pair up with a partner during meiosis as did the other chromosomes. Henking noted that the male bug had an uneven number of chromosomes and the female an even number. During sperm formation, one-half of the sperm received the "X" body



Clarence Erwin McClung. Photo via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

alcohol on individuals and families. The first public speech Anthony made was at a meeting of the Daughters in 1848. The next year her leadership qualities were recognized when she was voted president of her local branch of the Daughters of Temperance. Though she shone as an inexhaustible leader in her own group, she encountered many obstacles. At a Sons of Temperance meeting held in 1853 in Albany she was refused the right to speak. The Sons instructed her to “listen and learn” instead. That same year she and a friend, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, submitted a petition signed by 28,000 people, asking that the sales of alcohol in New York be limited. Anthony was infuriated by the State Legislature’s response. In their eyes the petition was meaningless because most of those who signed it were women and children.

Anthony’s anger against slavery was most likely a result of the abolitionist meetings held in her family’s home in Rochester. A few dignitaries, such as Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison, were known to attend these particular meetings on occasion. By 1856 Anthony had become a paid agent for the Anti-Slavery Society, working primarily as an organizer and publicist. She was publicly mocked and threatened because of her work, but she was not deterred. In 1861 she organized a speaking campaign against slavery that started in Buffalo and finished in Albany. When the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, was presented to legislators in 1863, Anthony supported it wholeheartedly.

THE WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

In observing the inhumane treatment of those who had been enslaved, many female abolitionists began to notice their own unequal status as women



Susan B. Anthony, c. 1900. Photo via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

in the eyes of the government and society. Anthony, among others, had good reason to protest against the unfair social standing of women. The obstacles she encountered in her temperance work convinced her that women needed to have a voice in government. Her friendship with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a fellow abolitionist and an experienced supporter of women’s rights, influenced Anthony as well. In 1852 the Women’s Rights Convention met for the first time.

Stanton and Anthony became coleaders in the women’s movement, though each seemed to have a different agenda. For example, Stanton, as a married woman, found the cultural mores surrounding marriage particularly exasperating. She resented the fact that a woman was expected to give up her own last name to take on her hus-



William Allen Rogers's 1904 cartoon recreates an episode in *Gulliver's Travels*. Image via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

even as he embraced American global hegemony and believed that America's interests were the world's interest. Roosevelt submitted a dispute with Mexico over the Pious Fund of the Californias to arbitration at the Permanent Court of Arbitration under the Hague Convention, and he attended the Algeciras Conference to mediate peace between France and Germany during the Moroccan Crisis of 1906. Most significantly, he brokered the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905 to end the

Russo-Japanese War, demonstrating his enthusiasm for mediating international conflicts far beyond the Roosevelt Corollary's North and South American geography. His efforts earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906. The Committee's website, in a phrasing that seems contradictory to modern ears, describes him as an "Imperialist and Peace Arbitrator."

Roosevelt's administration sent the 16 battleships of the Atlantic Fleet to circumnavigate the



Believed to be the first coupon ever, this ticket for a free glass of Coca-Cola was first distributed in 1888 to help promote the drink. By 1913, the company had redeemed 8.5 million tickets. Photo via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

plates, and newspaper ads. Early ads primarily targeted businessmen, but by 1895 advertising had shifted to the masses with ads that simply stated “Drink Coca-Cola, Delicious and Refreshing.”

Candler also marketed his product by having the company’s employees and sales representatives distribute complimentary coupons for Coca-Cola. Coupons were mailed directly to potential customers and placed in magazines. The company gave soda fountains free syrup to cover the costs of the free drinks. It is estimated that between 1894 and 1913 one in nine Americans had received a free Coca-Cola, for a total of 8,500,000 free drinks. By 1895, Candler was announcing to his shareholders that Coca-Cola was served in every state in the United States.

In the second half of the decade, Coca-Cola expanded along with the nation, as branch offices and syrup factories were opened in Dallas (1894), Chi-

cago (1895), Los Angeles (1895), and Philadelphia (1897). The popularity of Coca-Cola resulted in the company building a three-story headquarters, constructed in 1898—the first facility devoted exclusively to the manufacture of Coca-Cola syrup and the management of the business. Large-scale bottling of Coca-Cola began in 1899, when Candler signed an exclusive contract with Benjamin F. Thomas and Joseph B. Whitehead of Chattanooga, Tennessee, to open the first bottling plant there. In that year, Coca-Cola sold an estimated thirty-six million drinks. The second bottling plant opened in Atlanta in 1900. Within twenty years, there were more than one thousand bottling plants, 95 percent of which were locally owned and operated.

IMPACT

The growth of the Coca-Cola Company mirrors the development of American capitalism in the last

Schiff died on September 25, 1920, after a short, but not debilitating, illness. He remained head of Kuhn, Loeb, and Co. until his death and was succeeded by his son, Mortimer Schiff.

IMPACT

Schiff, a great philanthropist, supported institutions that mirrored his democratic and religious values, donating at least 10 percent of his personal fortune during his lifetime and leaving more money as bequests after his death. He donated generously to Jewish organizations. He founded Harvard University's Semitic Museum (now the Museum of the Ancient Near East) and the department of Semitic literature at the New York Public Library. A major supporter of Columbia University until it refused to appoint Jews to its board of directors, he shifted that support to Cornell University and Barnard College. Although not a Zionist, he funded farming and education initiatives in Palestine. He also gave support to sectarian and Christian organizations, such as the Knights of Columbus. His friendship with Booker T. Washington resulted in large donations to Tuskegee University. New York City received a great deal of his generosity, and he funded the Bronx Zoo, built parks, supported museums, and created funds for the underprivileged.

—Leslie Neilan

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Jean Schwartz

Category: Biography; Music

Identification: Songwriter

Born: November 4, 1878; Budapest, Hungary

Died: September 30, 1956; Sherman Oaks, California

Jean Schwartz was a prolific songwriter for Tin Pan Alley and the Broadway stage in the early years of the twentieth century.

EARLY LIFE

Jean Schwartz was born in Budapest, Hungary late in 1878. As a child, he received piano instruction from his sister, who had studied under Liszt.

Schwartz was about 13 when his family immigrated to the United States, settling on New York's Lower East Side where they lived in poverty. Jean worked throughout his teenage years, holding down jobs like night cashier in a Turkish bath and pianist on Coney Island. He demonstrated popular songs in the first sheet-music department of a New York department store (Siegel-Cooper), and ultimately was staff pianist and song plugger for the Tin Pan Alley publishing firm of Shapiro-Bernstein.

Schwartz's first publication was a piano cakewalk, *Dusky Dudes*, issued in 1899. Two years later

lishment candidates can potentially win a party's nomination.

—Patrick Fisher

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Society of Wisconsin, 1968. Analyzes the rise and fall of the Wisconsin Progressive movement. Asserts that La Follette's abilities as a director were responsible for Wisconsin's reputation as the pioneer Progressive state and a showcase for the Progressive movement.

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The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

Category: Literature

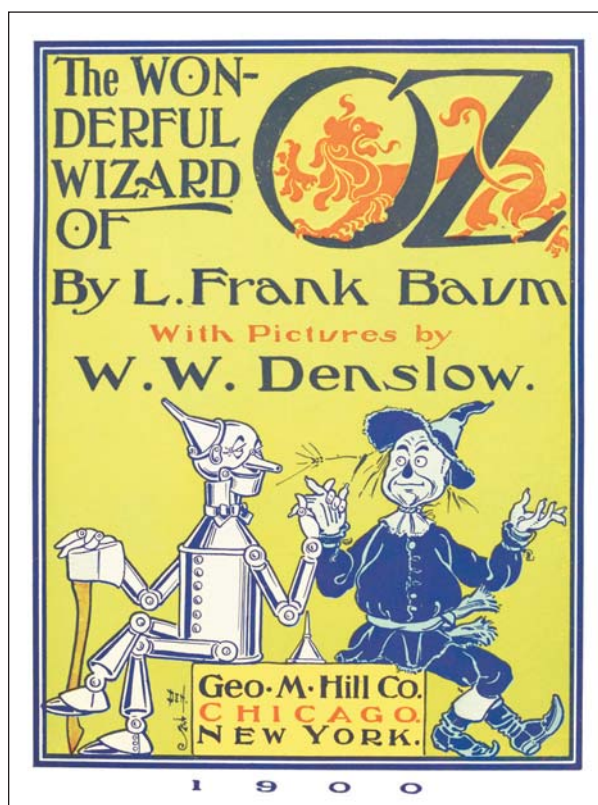
Identification: American children's novel

Author: L. Frank Baum

First Published: May 17, 1900

With its appealing characters, its dreamlike adventures, and its well-constructed story, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, is one of those rare books that can offer pleasure to both children and adults. Due to the famous 1939 film version, the characters are known worldwide, generations after the book was first written.

L. Frank Baum had struggled through a number of careers, working as a department-store buyer and newspaperman among other jobs, before achieving a modest success as a writer of children's verse and stories. The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, though, was the book that established his reputation. It became an immediate best-seller, outselling all other children's books during the 1900 Christmas season. Although it never becomes shallow moralism or mere allegory, it always conveys



The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, original title page, 1900; artwork by W.W. Denslow. Image via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

Z

Ziegfeld Follies

Category: Music; Theater

Definition: Elaborate theatrical productions on Broadway, New York

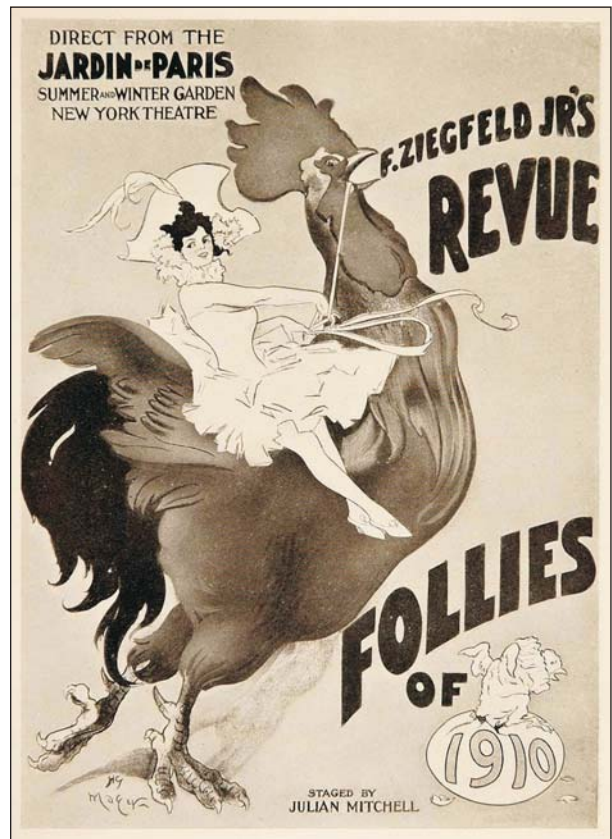
The first decade of the twentieth century was the beginning of the end for the vaudeville stage, witnessing its transition away from the bawdy burlesque of the nineteenth century saloon to the lavish production numbers of the Broadway — and Hollywood — musical, exemplified in this period by the perennially popular Ziegfeld Follies.

BACKGROUND

The turn of the twentieth century marked the beginning of widespread professionalization in popular theater, which had been dominated by ad hoc lowbrow entertainment such as saloon burlesque and the vaudeville review. The professionalization of vaudeville itself helped in this transition: meeting during the mid-1880s, vaudeville impresarios Edward Franklin Albee and Benjamin Franklin Keith shared a common vision of creating and exploiting a mass market by assembling a sufficient variety of acts to appeal to audiences of any type, anywhere. They built theaters that were massive and elegant, designed to give audiences the impression that, for a few hours, they lived in luxury, thus elevating the experience of viewing a vaudeville performance to something more like a formal play.

By 1900, Keith and Albee controlled the eastern and western vaudeville circuits under the Asso-

ciation of Vaudeville Managers of the United States. The association collected a percentage of every performer's salary; performers had to provide their own costumes, sets, casts, and materials. The 1906 creation of the United Booking Office of America gave Keith and Albee virtual control of vaudeville engagements. Attempts at unionization against their management failed, because, despite their controls, aspiring performers were eager to



Promotional artwork for 1910 Ziegfeld Follies. Image via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]