

## PEOPLE: Who Is Changing the U.S.

# America Looks Back: 100 Years of Reforms

Across the U.S., 1900

Slowly, the U.S. is becoming a better place to live, thanks to **reforms** [changes for the better].

In its first 100 years, the U.S. grew so fast, it made mistakes. In the last 100 years, reformers have been trying to correct these mistakes.

Reformers are trying to correct mistakes made in three areas:

- Government—**political reform**.
- Business—**economic reform**.
- People and society—**social reform**.

Social reforms have affected the most people in the last 100 years. The people affected:

- Blacks—got freedom from slavery and equal rights.
- Workers—got better pay, shorter work hours, and safer places to work.
- Women—got the right to go to school, to vote, and to hold office.
- Children—got free schools with better buildings and trained teachers.
- Criminals—got kinder treatment in prison.
- The mentally ill—got hospitals for their care.

### Top 7 Social Reforms

1. Women's Rights

2. Mental Illness

3. Education

4. Temperance

5. Prison

6. Black Rights

7. Labor and Working  
Conditions

## 100 Years of Change

Over the past 100 years, there have been changes for the better in the lives of blacks, women, children, families, prisoners, and the mentally ill. Here's a look at some of these social reforms.

**1808: Slave trade ends.** No more slaves can be brought into the U.S. But people can still own slaves.

**1814: The first high school for girls is opened.** Before this, girls could go to school for only eight grades.

**1820: Slavery is banned from Northern states.** The Missouri Compromise says no slavery is allowed north of Missouri.

**1821: The first free public high school opens in Boston, Massachusetts.**

**1821: Taxes pay for grammar schools.** The New York state legislature passes a law saying all New York towns must pay for their grammar schools with tax money. Then children can go to school for free.



Horace Mann—  
Education Reform



Lucretia Mott—  
Women's Rights Reform

## Utopia:

### Looking for the Perfect Life

Across America, 1874

Some Americans are not trying to reform American life. They are running away from it.

Some Americans are starting new communities. They are trying to make these communities **utopian societies** [perfect communities].

In a utopia, people often:

- Share belongings.
- Share the work.
- Live as one family.

There are about 58 utopian societies in the U.S. But many are failing. It takes hard work to make a community perfect.

Utopias give Americans ideas for reform, however. Many Americans are using utopian ideas to solve U.S. problems.

**1827: Free high schools are started.** Massachusetts is the first state to pass a law saying towns with 500 or more families must give children a free high school education.

**1833: People who want to end slavery organize.** William Lloyd Garrison forms the American Anti-Slavery Society to fight against slavery.

**1833: New college gives every-**

## PEOPLE: Reformers



Woman suffrage supporters march in a parade.

one an equal chance to enroll. Oberlin College in Ohio is the first private college to admit women and blacks as well as men.

**1833:** The temperance movement spreads across the U.S. after a convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The temperance movement wants to stop or limit the use of alcohol. Temperance reformers think drinking alcohol causes problems in families and communities.

**1834:** Congress bans whites from selling alcohol to Indians. Some settlers have been tricking Indians out of treaty rights after giving them alcohol to drink.

**1835:** All Northern states have laws against slavery.

**1836:** There are about 500 groups working to do away with slavery in the U.S.

**1837:** Horace Mann reforms education in Massachusetts. He believes a democracy cannot work unless all the people are educated. As Massachusetts Secretary of Education, Mann is improving:

- School buildings. He gets Massachusetts towns to vote tax money to build better schools.
- Teachers' training. He sets up the first teachers' training school paid for by tax money.



Carrie Chapman Catt—  
Women's Rights Reform



Frances Willard—  
Temperance Reform



Dorothea Dix—  
Mental Illness Reform



Susan B. Anthony—  
Women's Rights Reform

■ Course work. He has all schools teach the same subjects.

**1841-1851:** Dorothea Dix changes the way the mentally ill are



Elizabeth Cady Stanton—  
Women's Rights Reform

treated. Here's how:

■ Mentally ill people are kept in prisons. They are cold and hungry. They are in chains. They

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## NATION: 100 Years of Reform

### Some Reforms Move Backward, Stand Still

#### Carrie Nation: Temperance Reform Too Slow

Kansas, 1890s

Carrie Nation is angry. The sale and use of alcohol is against the law in Kansas. But people still drink alcohol in saloons [places that sell alcohol].

But if the law cannot put an end to drinking in Kansas, Carrie Nation will put an end to it herself. Carrie Nation is going into saloons all over Kansas—breaking bottles and glasses and smashing furniture with a hatchet [ax].

are whipped. Dix wants to get them out of prisons. She wants hospitals for the mentally ill.

- Dix gives the Massachusetts state legislature a paper. It tells how the mentally ill people are treated in Massachusetts. The legislature passes laws against cruel treatment for the mentally ill. The legislature has a hospital set up just for the mentally ill.

- Dix goes to states all over the U.S. She gets them to pass laws bettering the care of the mentally ill.

- Dix goes to Europe to get countries there to reform the ways they take care of the mentally ill.

**1846:** One state bans alcohol. Maine passes a law against selling and drinking alcohol.

**1848:** The women's rights movement spreads across the U.S. Longtime women's rights leaders Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott call a convention at Seneca Falls, New York. Both men and women come to the convention. They write the Declaration of Sentiments. This paper says that "All men and women are created equal."

**1848:** The first medical school for women opens in Boston, Massachusetts.

**1849:** The U.S. has its first woman doctor. Elizabeth Blackwell graduates from Geneva Medical College for men.

**1850s:** Prison reforms have brought kinder treatment to criminals. Thanks to Dorothea Dix and others:

- People no longer are put in jail if they cannot pay their debts.

- Most states no longer allow the whipping of prisoners.

- Fewer crimes are punished by death.

- Men and women are kept in separate prison cells.

- The mentally ill are kept apart from criminals. Some are put in hospitals where they can be helped.

- Many prisons are trying to change prisoners, not punish them.

**1850s:** Northern states have free education for most white children. Education reforms are slower in the West and South.

**1854:** The movement to win rights for married women grows. The law says a woman's husband gets all her money and property. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony work to change this law. Anthony travels from town to town get-

ting people to sign a petition. The petition asks to have laws change so married women can have money and own property.

**1856:** The University of Iowa is the first public college to admit women.

**1865:** 13th Amendment to the Constitution abolishes [does away with] slavery in the U.S.

**1867:** The first union of farmers forms. Oliver Kelley starts the Grange so farmers can solve their problems together instead of alone.

**1868:** Blacks get the same civil rights as whites by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. This amendment says blacks are citizens of the U.S. And all citizens have the rights given to them by the Bill of Rights.

**1868:** Government laborers and mechanics get an eight-hour workday by law of Congress.

**1869:** First labor union forms. Uriah Stephens starts the Knights of Labor union to try for shorter hours and more pay for workers.

**1869:** Women fight for the right to vote.

- Elizabeth Cady Stanton and

Reforms brought shorter working hours, better pay, and safer working conditions to factories.



## NATION: The Reform Movement to 1900



Left: Jane Addams, founder of Hull House (above).

Susan B. Anthony starts the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA). [Suffrage is the right to vote.] This group wants women given the vote by an amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

■ Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell start the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA). This group wants women given the vote by amendments to state constitutions.

■ The Territory of Wyoming gives women the right to vote.

1870: Blacks are guaranteed the right to vote by the 15th Amendment. This amendment says no state can take away a man's right to vote because of his race or because he was once a slave.

1872: Susan B. Anthony is arrested for voting in a presidential election.

1874: Women and children get a 10-hour working day in Massachusetts.

1879: Women band together to stop the use of alcohol. Frances Willard heads the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). This group tries to stop people from drinking, making, or selling alcohol. The WCTU is also working for women's suf-

frage and labor unions for workers.

1880s and 1890s: Women have their choice of more and better jobs. They can work as secretaries, sales clerks, typists, and even doctors and lawyers.

1886: Small unions come together in one big union, The American Federation of Labor (A F of L). Because it is so big, the A F of L will have more power than smaller unions to push through shorter hours and higher pay for workers.

1889: Jane Addams tries to make life better for the poor in Chicago. She opens Hull House as a place where poor from the slums can get away from their ugly houses, learn new skills, and have fun.

1890: AWSA and NWSA join to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA).

1892: Congress sets an eight-hour workday for all government workers.

1892: Farmers try to solve their problems with a third political party: The Populist Party. The Populists want:

■ More currency [money].

### Supreme Court: Blacks and Whites Can Be Separate But Equal

Supreme Court,  
Washington, D.C., 1896

In the case of *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court says whites can make blacks ride in separate railroad cars as long as cars for blacks are as good as cars for whites.

This Supreme Court ruling means that most other "Jim Crow" laws are constitutional. ["Jim Crow" is a nickname for blacks.]

"Jim Crow" laws were first passed in 1875 in Tennessee. All Southern states now have them. Whites use "Jim Crow" laws to keep blacks down. These laws say blacks cannot have anything to do with whites. Blacks and whites cannot use the same schools, bus seats, hotels, parks, railroad cars, bathrooms, or even prisons.

Keeping people of different races apart is called **segregation**. Now the Supreme Court says segregation is all right. Whites and blacks can have separate facilities as long as the facilities are equal.

■ Government ownership of telephones, telegraphs, and railroads.

■ Storehouses for farmers' crops.

■ An income tax where the rich pay more than the poor.

■ Direct election of senators, secret ballot; referendum; and recall.

■ A limit on immigration.

Some factory workers join the Populist Party because factory workers want many of the same reforms that farmers want.

1893: Colorado gives women the vote.

1896: Utah and Idaho give women the vote.

1900: Carrie Chapman Catt follows Susan B. Anthony as head of NAWSA. Catt talks women into working for women's suffrage by getting both political parties to push through a women's suffrage amendment to the Constitution.