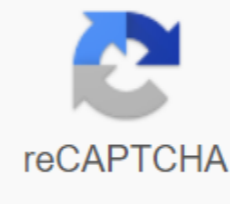




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## History of the social gospel movement

Social Gospel and Progressive Era Bradley W. Bateman Provost and Dennison University Economics Professor ©The Washington Gladden National Center for Humanities When Washington Gladden received the call to the pulpit of the Parish Church in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1875, members of his congregation had no reason to expect their call to the 39-year-old pastor would mark the beginning of a new era in American prosthetics. Gladden was a distinguished pastor who held positions in New York and North Adams, Massachusetts, and served as editor of the New York Independent, but there was no reason to suspect that he would push the boundaries of American Protestantism beyond its well-understood borders. Within a year, however, Gladden will cross one of the most respected boundaries for the Protestant office in America and support workers' rights to form labor unions. Throughout the 19th century, Protestant American ministers were enthusiastic supporters of Liz-Pierre. Ministers such as Francis Wisland and John McVicar wrote extensive collogiation textbooks in economics praising the virtues of uninterrupted capitalism and the rights of capitalists to the fruits of their jobs. Their texts, however, were written before the Civil War so they wrote about the kind of mercantile capitalism in which farmers and small shopkeepers made up the majority of financiers. When the Civil War began, less than half of Americans worked for someone else who earned wages for their jobs, and these were often young men who worked as agricultural embryos before starting their own farms. The economic world that developed after the Civil War, however, was very different from what americans knew during the same period. When America industrialized, millions of Americans would flood factories to make wages. The population of the city of Chicago 1840 5,000 1850 30,000 1870 300,000 1890 1,100,000 so, the vertical integration of American industry in the last three decades of the 19th century created monumental changes in the structure of American industry and culture. When giant companies like U.S. Steel and Standard Oil grew to dominate their industries, American cities began to grow rapidly, too. Chicago was a city of 5,000 in 1840 and 30,000 in 1850; By 1870, Chicago had 300,000, and in 1890 there were 1.1 million Chicagoans. This rapid population growth was achieved in part by removing people from rural areas, where 40% of American towns experienced population contraction between 1880 and 1890. But the rapid growth of urban areas was also the result of large-scale migration from southern and central Europe. Each time, America became more industry, more urban and more ethnically diverse. Jacob Reyes The Rapid Growth of America's Cities Its urban population was outlined for an increase in seism and poverty that shocked many people. One of America's first photographers, Jacob Rice, an immigrant from Denmark, made his name by posting pictures of the living conditions of the urban poor. Rice was best known for a book called How the Other Half Lived (1890), which included some of his most disgraceful photographs. When Washington Gladden took his stall in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1875, he found himself unexpectedly pushed into the rapidly changing world of industrial America. During his first year in Springfield, there was a strike by workers at the shoe factories. When Gladden went to visit the pioneers, he found himself sympathetic to their plight. When he invited them to attend his church, however, they told him it was unlikely since the people who owned and ran the factories they were striking were present at his church. Gladden did not flinch and a year later put his journalistic skills to work and published a book that supported the right of workers to organize unions, workers and their employers (1876). Gladden's book brought him fame and notoriety, and many saw it as the beginning of a new era in American Christianity. However, the story of the social gospel movement consists of far more than one person or book. The industries and problems they created were also the only concern of those who founded the social gospel movement. During the early decades of the 19th century, when the second great awakening swept the nation, social reform became an important dimension of American Protestantism. While the first great awakening focused mainly on the realization of the souls of individual sinners, the second great awakening focused on both individuals' souls and social problems such as drinking, prostitution and slavery. The revival of the second great awakening became a seed for social reform and helped spawn both the gift movement and the repeal movement. This focus on social problems in the world of progress undoubtedly affected the sense of purpose of post-Civil War ministers, such as Gladden, who wanted Protestant churches to address the problems seen emerging from the rapidly changing capitalism of the late 19th century. One of the institutional structures that emerged from the second great awakening, the Home Mission Societies, was also responsible for helping shape the social gospel movement. In the world of responsiveness, home mission companies were international, Protestant organizations that sent people to the western border and south to try to establish new churches and address pressing social problems. For instance, the American Home Mission Association, a joint operation of the Parish and Parasbyarian churches sent young people into the new western territories before the Civil War to set up churches and push for gifts and non-abolition. After the Civil War, when Reconstruction failed to secure the rights of the freed, many of those people who had previously worked to abolish slavery became passionate advocates for the rights of the liberated. Although Washington Gladden was not involved in a domestic mission, he would eventually support the rights of African-Americans and help establish the N.A.A.C.P. Therefore, although the social gospel movement will always sympathize with the response to the rapidly evolving industries of the late 19th century, it is also the case that many supporters of the social gospel were also concerned about race relations and african-Americans' right. None of these concerns made it easier to preach the social gospel in the late 1800s. The collapse of rehabilitation did not lead to great national outrage; In fact, reconstruction failed because white Americans found themselves unwilling or unable to cope with the new social and cultural landscape created by the end of slavery. The few voices brave enough to protect lynchings from the pulpit of white Protestant churches over the past two decades of the century have not raised a major social backlash against the infringement of african-American rights. Likewise, the political response to the plight of working Americans who had no disability insurance, no rights to socialize, and no protection of jobs was limited. Although William Jennings Bryan did not identify with the leaders of the social gospel movement, he campaigned during his two presidential bids in the 1890s, calling for improved lives for working Americans. He lost both of his races in what is, in retrospect, a conservative time. Walter Raushanbush, the great theologian of the social gospel, Walter Raushanbush, later referred to 1890 as a dark period for those who supported the social gospel. Times obviously seemed dark because those who preached seemed not to reach many of the people who sat in the bleachers. After the Civil War, American Protestantism began to diverge into what Martin Marti called the protestantism of both parties, made up of a private party and a public party. Each of these parties has escaped the power and energy of the second great awakening. The private party focused on saving individual souls; in regeneration in rapidly expanding cities, they tried to get people to stay away from their sins and embrace personal salvation. The public party focused on the sins of society, such as poverty and inequality, and asked people to seek salvation by building the kingdom of God on earth. The private party was ahead of the public party in popularity and Appeal. Each group was evangelical, meaning they drew their message from the Bible, and each focused on redemption. But their very concern was very different. So are their sources of inspiration. In many ways, the private party has returned to the traditional themes of the first great awakening. Although the first great awakening was driven in part by concern about how Christian worship could be sustained if future generations did not embrace their parents' faith, the solution depended solely on ensuring the redemption of the people who invented this ritual. If people could understand their sin and answer, their salvation would ensure their membership in Christian worship. Like these Protestants in the 18th century, supporters of the private party saw their work as focused on the redemption of individual souls. The partisans of the public party, however, built on the reform elements of the second great awakening, drawing on other new ideas of the 19th century to build a new understanding of society and the Church. In particular, they were influenced by the higher criticism from Germany and the origin of charles darwin's species (1859). In the mid-19th century, there was still no postgraduate education in the United States, so most serious scholars left for Germany if they wanted to continue their postgraduate work. Many of the young men who travelled to Germany discovered the high criticism while they were there, a method of biblical interpretation that literally claimed against the Bible as truth. The scholars of high criticism believed that the stories in the Bible might contain insights into the nature of the Christian God, but they believed that understanding that nature would require a careful explanation of the complex narratives of the Bible. In this thesis, there was no easy verbal truth in reading the Bible. Along with Darwin's ideas, the high criticism opened up a new and unfamiliar self-understanding for Protestants already shaken by the changes in rural agricultural society they knew before the Civil War. For those who embraced both the high criticism and Darwin's work, there seemed to be the possibility of building a new world that dispelled the dislodges of new industrial capitalism. However, Darwin's work was also adopted by some late 19th-century American academics, such as William Graham Sumner, as an explanation and justification for the results of the new industrialist. When these conservative academics looked at widespread poverty and the high levels of disease and infant mortality, they saw the work of natural selection. This so-called social Darwinism offered an argument that allowed some people to see the sprains of industries as a necessary dinoche of the weak and as unfit Evolved into a newer and more emerging form of social organization. Supporters of the social gospel, however, saw things in a very different light. Instead of seeing the dislocatedness caused by the industries as inevitable or desirable, the social gospel saw them as the result of greed and the collective failure to protect people. Social gospel leaders like George Heron saw the terrible living conditions of workers and their families in urban areas as evidence of the beginning of a new millennium in which Christians were called upon to build the kingdom of God. Not making an effort to build this kingdom in the face of such human suffering would be a social sin in the eyes of the social gospel. Therefore, despite the fact that the people in the bleachers were not often motivated during the last decades of the 19th century to act on the new message of the social gospel, the theologians of the social gospel were forced to continue preaching their unpopular message. On the one hand, they were driven by the incorporation of their ideas with the most current trends in higher education to believe they were true in what they believed; On the other hand, they were motivated by their evangelical enthusiasm to try to help people in need. It wasn't until the first decade of the 20th century that the social gospel message began to draw people to the bleachers. One reason for the change in public opinion was that the disintegration created by the industrialist did not dissipate themselves. It also helped that as poverty, inequality and industrial injuries continued to grow, journalists began to report on this grim reality. Jacob Rice's photographs and writing were just the beginning of America's exposure to the reality of industrialism. Like Rice, many of the leading crackers were proponents of the social gospel who are motivated by their faith to try to show Americans the problems of the new industrial order. Just as protestant revivalists have believed since the 18th century that if people faced their sins they might repent and seek salvation, the social gospel believed that if American society saw the sins of industrialists, they would regret and building a more just social order. If social gospel preachers were unable to do so themselves in the 1880s and 1890s, the crackers could eventually help inspire people to understand a new set of responsibilities that befell them as followers of Jesus Christ. The heckle of social gospel and scalping journalism helped generate the popular support that understanged the early progressive movement. Early reform politicians like Theodore Roosevelt depended on socially conscious Christians for most of their support. The true power of this support became clear within the churches in 1907 and 1908 when the social belief of Adopted by almost all the main Protestant churches. In 1907, the company announced numerous measures to ease conditions created by the new industrial workplace, for example, easing Sunday hours, eliminating child labor and creating disability insurance for workers affected by factories. A year later, the National Council of Churches was founded as part of an effort to get the other Protestant churches to accept the social faith. Walter Raushanbush also published his classic social gospel christianity and social crisis in 1907, and it had a profound effect on Protestants of all stripes. While 19th-century interns turned their backs mainly on social problems caused by economic development, they have now adopted the call to address them. For theologs like Raushanbush, it felt like a new moment in human history and the beginning of a new American awakening. More recently, economic historian and Nobel Laureate Robert Vogel called this moment in American history the third great awakening. The role of social gospel in the progressive era was magnified by the close relationship between the social gospel and the emergence of professional social sciences in the late 19th century. During the last three decades of the 19th century, economics, political science and sociology

all appeared in American universities as a result of the influence of social gospel. The leaders in all three fields were social Christians who saw their work as central to showing the truth about American society and the need for reform. This often led them to grief because there were no guarantees of tenure and academic freedom in the 19th century, and many academic careers were destroyed by trustees and college presidents, who fired social gospel advocates from their faculties; But with the emergence of the progressive movement in the first decade of the 20th century, many shrieking careers and voices of silence were revived and social scientists became central to progressives' political work. This influence was perhaps most obvious in the social polling movement. The social survey emerged as a method of social inquiry in the late 1800s. Americans began using the social survey extensively in the 1990s. Social surveyors would scour urban neighborhoods and make meticulous maps of every building and what happened there. Typically, there will be a set of maps of the same neighborhoods, each built to show different characteristics of the neighborhood. One map will show the nationality of the occupants of each residence, color-coded to show the diversity and origin of the people in the neighborhood. Another map will map employment places and more View the location of churches, taverns and brothels. The maps were designed to show some things, not least the places where there were no Protestant churches and places where they were most needed. So did Jane Adams, one of the founders of The House of God, and W.E.B. DuBois, the great black social activist, was active in social polling in the 1990s. But the social survey had its biggest moment in the first two decades of the 20th century. Economists like Richard T. Alley and John R. Commons were active in the movement, as were international leaders like Josiah Strong. Over these two decades, the social survey became an important tool of Protestant renewal; Large-scale social surveys will be carried out in the months leading up to the revival, so that the information gathered can be used during a revival to challenge people to work through their churches to try to digest the bad social conditions in their neighborhood. One of progressives' leading magazines was The Survey, a monthly magazine that combined Christian issues and practical advice on conducting social surveys. One of the best examples of the amalgamation of the Protestant social survey and revival occurred in 1910 and 1911 with the human and religious movement ahead. During the period, the movement was the largest evangelical effort in American history, and covered the revival in 88 cities over several months. A central committee organized the work of the social survey in each city before the revival, and a separate advertising committee circulated the results of the social survey in the weeks before evangelicals were brought in to conduct the revival. The organizers were interested in trying to increase attendance at the male church and they saw this method as the best way to get men interested in the church as a way to improve their congested communities. The movement was considered a great success and re-updated the resurrection landscape. President Woodrow Wilson's the pinnacle of Protestant influence in the Progressive Era was in the first half of the second decade of the 20th century. Progressive social Christians were especially important in the 1912 and 1916 national elections. Woodrow Wilson studied under social gospel leader (and economist) Richard T. Ollie at Johns Hopkins in the 1880s, and he represented the sensitivity of mainstream Protestant churches in his approach to reform. In 1917, Wilson arranged to send one of the most radical fire brands of the 1990s social gospel as his personal envoy to Lenin after the Russian Revolution. George Heron preached an evolving form of Christian socialism in the 1890s before seeking exile in Italy in the first decade of the new century. As a former socialist and supporter of Eugene Debs' 1904 presidential candidacy, Haroon seems Lenin's perfect ambassador. Until the middle of the second decade of the second decade In the 18th century, the progressive movement began to become more diverse in its sources and participants. In turn, this change led to new self-understanding among progressives. On the one hand, in the second decade of the century, some people began to become skeptical about the possibility of any kind of fundamental change in human nature. While they were still plagued by the kinds of social displacement caused by industrialists, they were less likely to see the possibility for their assimilation through any fundamental change in human nature. The ethical improvement preached by the social gospel as a necessary part of social reform did not, of course, occur on a large scale. On the other hand, not all progressives would have been Christians in the second decade of the century. Two of the leading progressive writers who came out after 1910, for example, were Jews: Herbert Crawley and Walter Lippman. Both Crawley and Lippman offered a vision of political change that was based much more clearly on technical expertise and the possibility of gaining control over social problems through the application of harsh critical analysis to social problems. This led to the early popularity of Frederick Taylor's time and movement studies, which were seen as a means to make the industrial system more efficient and therefore provide greater output that could be used to treat more people. After 1918, many Christian social scientists like John R. Commons deliberately added their rhetoric to make it more convenient for christians and more in line with the new movement for secular expertise as a basis for social control. But for better or worse, the social gospel itself became so popular that until America entered World War I that its message began to be adulterous by Protestant ministers more interested in the idea of America as the kingdom of God than in helping working people achieve a better and safer life. These more conservative preachers saw the potential of social gospel as a tool for nationality, rather than a tool for reform. These people, who are the nods to President Wilson's argument about the need to enter World War I to make the world safe for democracy, have often used their flight to support the war. Ray Abrams (1933) documented the violent calls of many social gospel supporters for young people to join the Channel War in Europe and defeat the Germans. After the war, when the American public heard about the horrific nature of the Channel War and understood what the young men were called upon to do, protestant ministers who used their blood to help recruit young men to fight in the war lost their credibility. This loss of credibility was part of a greater public disillusionment with the ideas that understanged progressive Although there was already some disillusionment before the war with ideas of social gospel for improvement in human nature, this disillusionment became a postwar abandonment of hope. Even progressives like Lippman who were trying to develop a more technical rationale for improving industrial society were now having trouble gaining a serious audience. Even the assumption that people might be so broadly motivated to want to more fairly distribute the increased industrial output was seen as naïve, if not bizarre. The end of World War I was often seen as the end of the Progressive Era, and it was the end of a widespread appeal of the social gospel to people in the pews of America's Protestant churches. The loss of hope at the possibility of easily building a better world by appealing to people's outrage over social inequality and inequality marked the end of an era in American politics and america's Protestant churches. However, the impact of the social gospel in American life is not over. As Conrad Cherry (1995) showed, when the social gospel did not find favor in the trees of the main churches, its influence continued in the schools of Protestant deity. He remained a vital force there even in the second half of the 20th century. When young Martin Luther King Jr. came to Boston University in the 1950s to study theology, he found the social gospel tradition alive and well. He then used the theology of the social gospel to build the foundations of his arguments for black people's civil rights. King was assassinated as he began turning his attention to questions of economic justice, but like his predecessors in the late 1800s, he also combined a theological passion for America's black freedom and the fair treatment of America's workers. Bradley Bateman is president and senior vice president at Dennison University. He began his teaching career at Simmons College and then spent 20 years on the faculty at Grintel College. His interests are the history of economic thought, the monetary/macroeconomic economy and the natural resources economy. Bateman has an international reputation as a student of economic thought for John Maynard Keynes and is the author of Keynes's Uncertain Revolution and co-editor of Cambridge accompanying Keynes (with Roger A. Beckschouse) and Keynes and Philosophy: Essays on the Origin of Keynes' Mind (with J.B. Davis). In 2007, he became president of Denison University. Address comments or questions to Professor Bateman through TeacherServe Comments and Questions. Illustration credits reference bibliography to quote this article: Bateman, Bradley W. Social Gospel and progressive era. Indicator of America, teacher©. National Humanities Center. Date you accessed the article.

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