Caroline Byrd

Progressive Political Timeline

9/7/2012

March 1915 – DeWitt’s *The Progressive Movement*

In March 1915, Benjamin P. DeWitt, an English and political science professor at New York University, published *The Progressive Movement: a Non-Partisan, Comprehensive Discussion of Current Tendencies in American Politics*. It would go on to be his only published work. This book is important to the political context of the Progressive time period because it provides a comprehensive overview of American political tendencies and trends during the Progressive Era. Within the book, DeWitt attempts to give an unbiased history of the Democratic, Republican, Socialist, and Prohibition Party during the Progressive Era. DeWitt examines progressive politics on all levels, including national, state, and city level.[[1]](#footnote-1)

In his book DeWitt writes that all progressive reformers regardless of party affiliation wanted to improve “six elements of the city: the natural physical characteristics of the city (there was a need for reform in the structure of the city in order to create a sophisticated city), the means of communication between the city and other cities, the means of communication within the city, the housing problem, the health of the cities inhabitants, and the need to provide recreation.”[[2]](#footnote-2) He pinpoints the city as the center of democracy and therefor it is seen as the one thing at progressive politicians seek to reform. His book did receive public interest but it was not widely read or received until political periods following the end of the Progressive Era.

The complete text and primary source can be found at DeWitt, Benjamin. The Progressive Movement: a Non-Partisan, Comprehensive Discussion of Current Tendencies in American Politics. New York, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915. http://archive.org/stream/progressivemovem00dewi#page/n7/mode/2up

1. DeWitt, Benjamin. The Progressive Movement: a Non-Partisan, Comprehensive Discussion of Current Tendencies in American Politics. New York, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915. http://archive.org/stream/progressivemovem00dewi#page/n7/mode/2up [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid, 343. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)