

**Progressive Era:** The Progressive Era (1896–1917) was a direct response to the massive wealth inequality that emerged from the Industrial Revolution. It was a widespread sea-change; multiple movements sought to reform all aspects of American life from government corruption, corporate monopolies, education overhaul, social welfare, racial inequality, and food and medical safety. Using the subversive language of civil housekeeping, women were able to push such reforms as prohibition, women's suffrage, child-saving, public health and sanitation. Progressives were generally against conspicuous consumption, and promoted innovative ideas like “child study” and “scientific mothering.”



**Sanitary Doll:** Martha Chase invented sanitary dolls to be soft and durable, with an impermeable surface that was easy to clean and disinfect. They were neither fragile like porcelain dolls nor easily dirtied and damaged like common rag dolls. They were made of cloth stockinette that had been stiffened with sizing, brushed with oil paint, and varnished. The hands-on jointed elbows and knees painted facial features and hair, and soft bodies stuffed with cotton. They were used to teach mothers and young girls to handle, feed, bathe, diaper, and dress babies.



**Sizing:** Sizing is a resinous substance that is applied to, or incorporated into, other materials—especially papers and textiles—to act as a protective filler or glaze. Sizing solutions have historically been made of modified starches, animal fat, animal gelatin, and eventually acrylic co-polymers. The sizing agent adheres to fibers and forms a film, improving the surface strength, paintability, and water resistance of the material to which it is applied.



**Stockinette:** Stockinette is an absorbent cotton fabric used in the medical industry, knitted to allow stretching and conforming to the body. It often protects a patient's skin under plaster or synthetic casts. It is also used to provide consistent pressure for wound dressings.



Credit: (Top) *The Woman Citizen*, 1917. (Middle) Sanitary Doll Drawing by Jada Gordon, 2023 (Bottom) *The Doll House*, 1986

## A MUSEUM GUIDE TO **MARTHA CHASE:** progressive kindness

January 27th – July 30th 2024



Credit: Martha Chase Logo drawn by Jada Gordon, Student Gallery Host

# Martha Chase & The Progressive Era

Martha Chase was a product of the Progressive Era (1896-1917), a momentous time in American history, marked by significant reform in labor, suffrage, and social science. Emergent leaders such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Alice Paul spread the cause of woman suffrage, drawing in other activists and making the case for a constitutional amendment ensuring a woman's right to vote.

By the time the Era ended, progressives had accomplished many of their goals and changed American life for the better. However, their efforts didn't address every issue prevalent in the early twentieth century. Notably, race relations and minority rights remained largely unaddressed, which stood out as a significant exception to the overall progressive reform.



Woman Devotes Her Time to Gossip and Clothes Because She Has Nothing Else to Talk About. Give Her Broader Interests and She Will Cease to Be Vain and Frijolous.

# Race in the Progressive Era

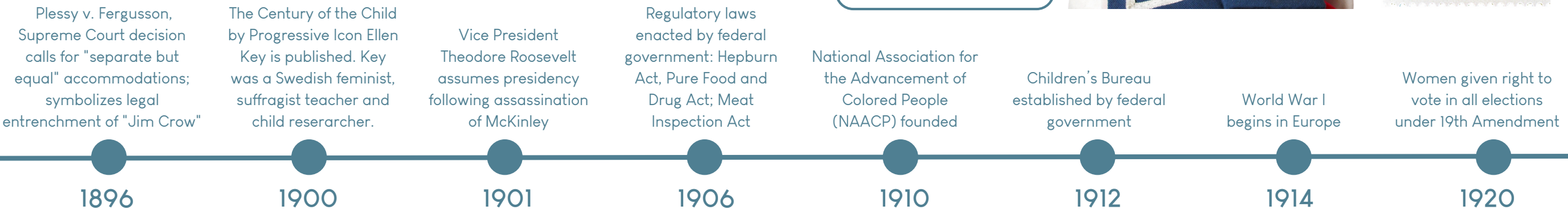
African Americans, led by influential figures like Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois fought for civil rights and equal economic opportunities. Progressive activists paved the way for humanitarian reform in the United States. Martha Chase was deeply involved in these causes.

“Chase created an inclusive doll line to reflect the status of people of her time and for children to see themselves in their playthings. While some of Chase's dolls portrayed “Mammy” characters, these dolls were not stereotypical caricatures with grotesque features made by other dollmakers of that period. They instead represented adult Black (or African American) women dressed in attire suitable for their domestic work roles.”

-Debbie Behan Garrett  
Black-Doll Enthusiast, Author, and Founder of  
DeeBeeGee's Virtual Black Doll Museum  
[virtualblackdollmuseum.com](http://virtualblackdollmuseum.com)

## Discussion

- What did it mean to make these dolls in 1911 versus now?
- Are there current equivalents to those dolls?
- How do they make you feel?





The Barry Art Museum is proud to partner with the Old Dominion University School of Nursing for *Martha Chase: Progressive Kindness*. Today's nurse understands the importance of developing partnerships within the community to provide health care to its constituents. Today's nurse must understand individuals' cultural and genetic differences. Today's nurse must also understand the interdisciplinary nature of the modern healthcare team and learn to work effectively within the team environment. Old Dominion University's Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) is the program for today's nurse. Their values are listed below.



Image of demonstration with Mrs. Chase doll, University of Virginia School of Nursing, ca. 1949



Image of ODU SON students utilizing high-fidelity manikins in simulation-based learning, 2023

**ADVOCACY** is creating positive and impactful change fostering diversity and inclusion to support compassionate awareness of social and health inequities.

**INTEGRITY** encompasses the moral and ethical imperative to promote truthful and transparent interactions that reflect the values of the School of Nursing, the profession, and the community.

**COLLABORATION** is a process of nurturing a climate of respect and civility while working together within and across disciplines for a common purpose with consideration for multiple viewpoints.

**INNOVATION** is divergent thinking to inspire and prepare exceptional nurses to transform healthcare and healthcare systems in partnership with the community.

**EXCELLENCE** is the commitment to provide high-quality, distinctive educational experiences utilizing best practices that exceed the expectations of learners and the community.

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The development of the **School of Nursing** began in **1962** when the Board of Visitors of Old Dominion College approved the establishment of a program of Nursing. Follow our growth through these milestones:

In **1963**, a department of nursing was established within the School of Arts and Sciences.

In **1967**, the first two nursing students graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

In **1968**, the program was granted accreditation approved by the Virginia State Board of Nursing. By this time, the School of Arts and Sciences had separated into two schools: The Department of Nursing remained within the newly designated School of Sciences and Health Professions.

In **1970**, Old Dominion College was renamed Old Dominion University, reflecting the expansion of available academic programs and degrees.

In **1975**, the Department of Nursing sought and was granted accreditation for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program by the National League for Nursing (NLN).

In **1982**, accreditation was expanded to cover the new Master of Science with a concentration in nursing program as well as the baccalaureate program.

In **1986**, the School of Sciences and Health Professions separated into two different colleges; the Department of Nursing became the School of Nursing within the College of Health Sciences.

In **1999**, the School of Nursing was again awarded full accreditation by the NLN, as well as ten-year accreditation by the Commission for Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Since 1999, the school has remained fully accredited by CCNE.

In **2010**, approval to offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree was awarded.

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