*The following excerpt is taken from a January 2019 Carnegie Council podcast entitled “*[*The Crack-Up: Teddy Roosevelt's Complicated Legacy, with Patty O'Toole*](https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/studio/multimedia/20190108-crack-up-teddy-roosevelt-complicated-legacy-patty-o-toole)*.” The podcast is based off* The New York Times *opinion piece “*[*Theodore Roosevelt Cared Deeply About the Sick. Who Knew?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/06/opinion/theodore-roosevelt-health-care-progressive.html)*” written by historian and author* [*Patricia O’Toole*](https://www.simonandschuster.com/authors/Patricia-OToole/1507953)*. This transcript has been edited for classroom use.*

Teddy Roosevelt was a Republican, but he counted himself a progressive Republican. [A] lot of progressives on the Republican side and somewhat in the North on the Democratic side allied themselves with all the social reformers who turned up in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, especially in New York, dealing with the problems of industrialization and the problems of having a huge influx of immigration. So there are all kinds of health challenges, poverty challenges, housing challenges…he was very interested in these reformers.

The one place where [his empathy is] different I think is in foreign policy, and there his mindset was we were on the cusp of becoming a world power after the Spanish-American War. Even though that was a very small scuffle that lasted for only 10 weeks, it kicked Spain out of the New World and gave us some possessions in the Caribbean. We had already made Hawaii a territory, and as a result of the Spanish-American War we acquired Guam and the Philippines. Those things plus when he in 1903 seized Panama away from Colombia—it's without much sympathy for the peoples of those countries. He didn't want to wipe them out by any means, but he was behaving like a great power: "We're taking this territory. We're going to control it, and it's essential to American power. He brings one set of values [to foreign policy]; he was principled about it, but the principles were about national interest and accumulating power, they weren't about "love thy neighbor."

1. Would you consider Teddy Roosevelt’s legacy to be complicated? Why or why not?
2. In what ways did Teddy Roosevelt’s domestic and foreign policies appeal to the Republican and Democratic parties of his time?
3. In today’s political climate, do you think Teddy Roosevelt would be a Democrat or Republican? Explain your reasoning.
4. Could Teddy Roosevelt win an election today? Could he get legislation passed? Explain your reasoning.