
CHAPTER 3**The 1920s****Chapter Outline**

- 3.1 EMERGENCE OF MODERN POPULAR CULTURE**
 - 3.2 THE RISE OF MASS PRODUCTION AND NEW TECHNOLOGY**
 - 3.3 AMERICA AND THE AUTOMOBILE**
 - 3.4 A CONSUMER ECONOMY**
 - 3.5 HARDING AND COOLIDGE**
 - 3.6 THE FIRST RED SCARE**
 - 3.7 PROHIBITION**
 - 3.8 THE SCOPES TRIAL OF 1925**
 - 3.9 NATIVE AMERICANS AND THE UNITED STATES**
 - 3.10 THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE**
 - 3.11 THE "LOST GENERATION"**
 - 3.12 WOMEN OF THE 1920'S AND CHANGING SOCIAL ROLES**
 - 3.13 THE RISE OF CELEBRITY AND POPULAR CULTURE**
 - 3.14 UNIQUE SOUNDS OF MUSIC EMERGE IN TENNESSEE**
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Describe how the battle between traditionalism and modernism manifested itself in the major historical trends and events after World War I and throughout the 1920s.

US.31 ... Describe the growth and effects of radio and movies and their role in the worldwide diffusion of popular culture. (C, G)

US.32 ... Describe the rise of mass production techniques and the impact of new technologies, including the advent of airplane travel, spread of electricity, popularity of labor saving appliances, and innovations in food processing and food purchasing (Clarence Saunders). (E, G, H, TN)

US.33 ... Using multiple sources and diverse formats, summarize the impact of the mass production and widespread availability of automobiles on the American economy and society. (C, E, H, G)

US.34 ... Analyze the changes in the economy and culture of the United States as a result of expansion of credit, consumerism, and financial speculation. (E, H, C)

US.35 ... Describe the significant ideas and events of the administrations of Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge, including the "return to normalcy," Teapot Dome, and laissez faire politics. (E, H, P)

US.36 ... Analyze the attacks on civil liberties and racial and ethnic tensions, including the Palmer Raids, the immigration quota acts of the 1920's, the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, the efforts of Ida B. Wells and Randolph Miller, the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti, the emergence of Garveyism, and the rise of the NAACP. (C, H, P, TN)

US.37 ... Explain the background of the Temperance Movement, the passage of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution and the Volstead Act; the impact of Prohibition on American society and its successes and failures,

including the rise of organized crime, bootlegging and speakeasies, and repeal by the 21st Amendment. (E, C, H, P)

US.38 ... Describe the Scopes Trial of 1925, including the major figures, the two sides of the controversy, its outcome, and its legacy. (C, P, H, TN)

US.39 ... Describe the changing conditions for American Indians during this period, including the extension of suffrage and the restoration of tribal identities and way of life. (C, G, P)

US.40 ... Describe the Harlem Renaissance, its impact, and its important figures, including an examination of literary and informational text of or about Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Weldon Johnson, Duke Ellington, and Louis Armstrong. (C) **US.41** Analyze the emergence of the “Lost Generation” in American literature, including the impact of Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald. (C)

U S.42 ... Describe changes in the social and economic status of women, including the work of Margaret Sanger, flappers, clerical and office jobs, and rise of women’s colleges. (C, E, P)

US.43 ... Analyze the rise of celebrities as icons of popular culture, including Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Jack Dempsey, Red Grange, Bessie Smith, Billy Sunday, and Charles Lindbergh. (C)

US.44 ... Examine the growth and popularity of Blues Music in Memphis and the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, including W.C. Handy, and WSM. (C, TN)

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: excerpts from *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald; selected poetry and essays of Langston Hughes; excerpts from *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells*, Ida B. Wells

3.1 Emergence of Modern Popular Culture

RADIO FEVER



FIGURE 3.1

David Sarnoff was the first president of RCA and helped revolutionize radio.

COMMERCIAL RADIO in America had humble beginnings. **FRANK CONRAD**, an engineer for Westinghouse, set up an amateur radio station above his garage in a Pittsburgh suburb. Since the wireless technology was developed by **GUGLIELMO MARCONI** in the late 19th century, thousands of enthusiasts across the world experimented with the new toy. After World War I, Conrad began broadcasting a variety of programming from his "station." High school music groups performed, phonograph records were played, and news and baseball scores were reported. Conrad had dramatically improved the **TRANSMITTER**, and soon hundreds of people in the Pittsburgh area were sending requests for air time. The bosses of Westinghouse knew that Conrad was on to something and convinced him to make his hobby commercially profitable.

KDKA on the Air

On the night of November 2, 1920, Conrad and his Westinghouse associates announced that **WARREN G. HARDING** had defeated **JAMES COX** to become the next President. The message was heard as far north as New Hampshire and as far south as Louisiana. The federal government granted the call letters KDKA to the Pittsburgh station and a new industry was born. For nearly a year, KDKA monopolized the airwaves. But competition came fast and furious; by the end of 1922, there were over 500 such stations across the United States. The federal government exercised no regulation over the nascent enterprise, and the result was complete chaos. Stations fought over call letters and frequencies, each trying to out broadcast the closest competitor. Finally in 1927, Congress created the **FEDERAL RADIO COMMISSION** to restore order.



FIGURE 3.2

Sports broadcasts helped boost the popularity of radio.

Ad Time



FIGURE 3.3

RCA Radiola Senior and the Radiola Jr. The Junior was a Crystal set, and the Senior was a one tube radio. These radios were made in 1922.

One of the great attractions to the radio listener was that once the cost of the original equipment was covered, radio was free. Stations made money by selling airtime to advertisers. The possibility of reaching millions of listeners at once had advertising executives scrambling to take advantage. By the end of the decade advertisers paid over \$10,000 for an hour of premium time.

The **RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA** created a new dimension to the venture in 1926. By licensing telephone lines, RCA created America's first radio network and called it the **NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY**. For the first time, citizens of California and New York could listen to the same programming simultaneously. Regional differences began to dissolve as the influence of network broadcasting ballooned. Americans listened to the same sporting events and took up the same fads. Baseball games and boxing matches could now reach those far away from the stadiums and arenas. A mass national entertainment culture was flowering.

NEW FADS



FIGURE 3.4

New American hero, Charles Lindbergh, is honored with a ticker-tape parade in New York City on June 13, 1927, after returning from the world's first solo transatlantic flight in the *Spirit of St. Louis*.

The Roaring Twenties was a time of great change. As exciting as dynamic times may seem, such turmoil generates uncertainty. Sometimes, in an effort to obscure tensions, people seek outlets of escape. **FADS** — sometimes entertaining, sometimes senseless — swept the nation.

The radio created the conditions for national fads. Without such a method of live and immediate communication, fads could amount only to local crazes. Roaring Twenties fads ranged from the athletic to the ludicrous. One of the most popular trends of the decade was the dance marathon. New dance steps such as **THE CHARLESTON** swept the nation's dance halls, and young Americans were eager to prove their agility. In a typical dance marathon, contestants would dance for forty-five minutes and rest for fifteen. The longest marathons lasted thirty-six hours or more. Beauty pageants came into vogue. The first **MISS AMERICA PAGEANT** was staged in Atlantic City in 1921. One of the most bizarre fads was **FLAGPOLE SITTING**. The object was simple: be the person who could sit atop the local flagpole for the longest period of time. Fifteen-year-old **AVON FOREMAN** of Baltimore set the amateur standard — ten days, ten hours, ten minutes, and ten seconds.

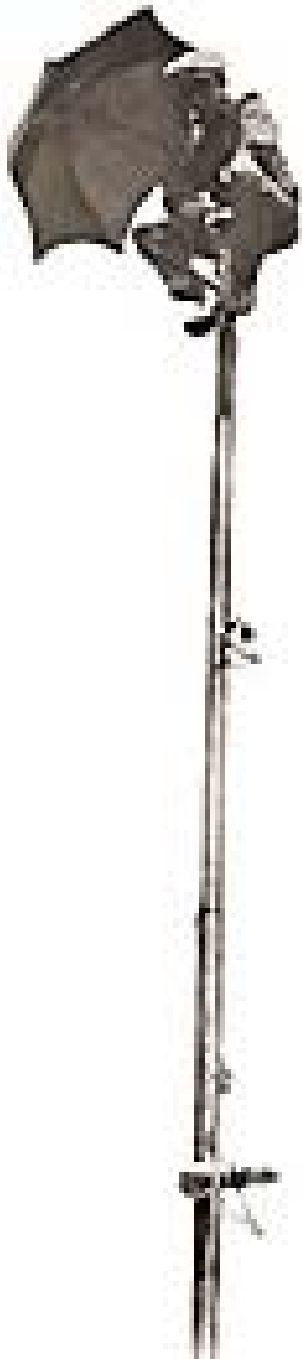


FIGURE 3.5

Flagpole sitting was a popular fad of the 1920s and was definitely the thing to do!

RADIO CHANGES ADVERTISING

Fueling consumer demand were new techniques in advertising. This was not a new business, but in the increasingly competitive marketplace, manufacturers looked to more and more aggressive advertising campaigns. One major trend of the decade was to use pop psychology methods to convince Americans that the product was needed. The classic example was the campaign for Listerine. Using a seldom heard term for bad breath — halitosis — Listerine convinced thousands of Americans to buy their product. Consumers might not have known what halitosis was, but they surely knew they did not want it.

Advertisers were no longer simply responding to demand; they were creating demand. Radio became an important

new means of communicating a business message. Testimonials from Hollywood film stars sold products in record numbers.

The advertising business created demand for the gadgets and appliances being manufactured by American factories.

- [America in the 1920s: Radio](#)

THE MOVIES

The U.S. movie industry began to locate in the Hollywood neighborhood of Los Angeles, California, in the 1920s, and movies soon grew into a popular recreation. In 1922, about 40 million people were going to the movies each week and that number jumped to about 100 million people by the end of the decade. This number was larger than the number of people that attended church weekly. Movie stars such as Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, and Charlie Chaplin became iconic images around the world. New technology increased movies' appeal. Between 1922 and 1927, the technicolor corporation developed a means of producing movies in color. This process along with sound, made movies even more realistic and exciting.

The development of the automobile, radio, and the movies changed the popular culture of the United States. Programs such as *Amos 'n' Andy* affected the nation's habits; people stopped what they were doing twice a week to listen to the program. In the case of movies such as *The Birth of a Nation*, a fictionalized account of the founding of the Ku Klux Klan, Klan membership grew as a result.

There were eight major (and minor) studios that dominated the industry. They were the ones that had most successfully consolidated and integrated all aspects of a film's development. By 1929, the film-making firms that were to rule and monopolize Hollywood for the next half-century were the giants, sometimes labeled The Big Five. The Big Five studios were Warner Bros., RKO, Paramount, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and Fox Film Corporation. They produced more than 90 percent of the fiction films in America and distributed their films both nationally and internationally. Each studio somewhat differentiated its products from other studios.

In 1925, electrical recording, one of the greatest advances in sound recording became available for commercially issued phonograph records. Hollywood boomed, producing a new form of entertainment that shut down the old vaudeville. Watching a movie was cheap and accessible; crowds surged into new downtown movie palaces and neighborhood theaters. Even greater marvels emerged like sound appearing at the end of the decade. Sound synchronized motion pictures, or "talkies", were quickly replacing silent films between 1927 and 1929.

While the written page marked a quest for intellectual insight, the **MOVIE INDUSTRY** catered to mass audiences. Every town seemed to have at least one theater for the new craze. The early decade saw millions flock to the screens to see silent action films and slapstick comedies by the likes of **CHARLIE CHAPLIN**. Sex appeal reigned supreme as American women swooned for **RUDOLPH VALENTINO** and American men yearned for the all-American beauty **MARY PICKFORD**. To keep standards of morality high in the film industry, the **HAYS OFFICE** stifled artistic license by censoring objectionable scenes. Because of soaring profits, studios sought quantity rather than quality. Therefore the decade saw few pictures of merit. The first talking picture, *THE JAZZ SINGER*, appeared in 1927. **WALT DISNEY** introduced **MICKEY MOUSE** to the American public the following year in *STEAMBOAT WILLIE*. By the end of the decade over 100 million viewers attended movie houses each week, more than the number of weekly churchgoers.

- [America in the 1920s: Movies](#)

3.2 The Rise of Mass Production and New Technology

RISE OF MASS PRODUCTION AND NEW TECHNOLOGY

Mass production made technology affordable to the middle class. During the 1920s, a class of Americans emerged with surplus money and a desire to spend more, spurring the demand for consumer goods, including the automobile.

The auto industry was of chief importance, and throughout the 1920s, the United States automobile industry began an extraordinary period of growth. Before the war, cars were a luxury, but in the 1920s, mass-produced vehicles became common throughout the U.S. By the use of the [assembly line](#) in manufacturing, entrepreneurs such as [Henry Ford](#) were able to increase productivity. In turn these innovations significantly reduced the cost of Automobiles. The automobile industry's effects were widespread, contributing to such industries as highway building, motels, service stations, used car dealerships, and new housing all outside the range of [mass transit](#). Cars began to alter the American lifestyle, and in 1929, one out of every five Americans had a car. The idea of "homes on wheels" was created around this time, as Americans packed up food and camping equipment in order to get away for a little while.

Industries related to the manufacturing and use of automobiles also grew: petroleum, steel, and glass were in high demand, leading to growth and profitability in related sectors. In 1920, the United States produced sixty-five percent of the world's oil. State governments began to build roads and highways in rural areas. Gasoline stations were installed across the country, evidence of the sudden and continued growth of the petroleum industry. Furthermore, automobile dealers introduced the installment plan, a financing concept that was adopted in many other parts of business.

- [America in the 1920s: Machine Age](#)
- [America in the 1920s: Factory](#)
- [America in the 1920s: Automobile](#)

ADVENT OF AIRPLANE TRAVEL

- [Air Transport](#)
- [The Wright Brothers | The Aerial Age Begins](#)
- [America in the 1920s: Airplane](#)

THE SPREAD OF ELECTRICITY

Electrification, having slowed during the war, progressed greatly as more of the U.S. was added to the electric grid. Most industries switched from coal power to electricity, and new power plants were constructed. Telephone lines were being strung across the continent, and indoor plumbing and modern sewer systems were installed for the first time in many regions. These infrastructure programs were mostly left to the local governments in the United States, many of which went deeply into debt under the assumption that an investment in such infrastructure would pay off in the future - a plan that later caused major problems during the Great Depression.

Electricity had a slow start, but boomed in the 1920's.

- The lightbulb was invented in 1879 by Thomas Edison
- The first central power plant—Pearl Street Station in lower Manhattan—began generating electricity on September 4, 1882.



FIGURE 3.6

- In 1920 only 34.7 percent of American dwellings had electricity; by 1930 67.9 percent had electric power.
- in cities, the boom was even faster: 84.8 percent of all urban homes by 1930, compared to only 47.4 percent in 1920
- huge drop in the cost of electricity: an average of 16.2 cents per kilowatt-hour in 1902 changed to 2.3 cents in 1964.

The sudden spread of electricity coevolved with the spread of new electrical appliances that improved the standard of living.

- refrigerators
 - stoves
 - irons
 - washing machines
 - improved electric lamps
 - radios
-
- [The 1920s \(1920-1929\)](#)
 - [People Who Change History](#)
 - [1- Early Years](#)
 - [Electric Power Transmission History](#)

LABOR SAVING TECHNOLOGIES

The 1920s was a decade of increasing conveniences for the middle class. New products made household chores easier and led to more leisure time. Products previously too expensive became affordable.

Changing Housework

By the end of the 1920s, HOUSEHOLD WORK was revolutionized. A typical work week for a housewife before the twenties involved many tedious chores. All the furniture was moved off the carpets, which were rolled up and dragged outside to beat out the week's dirt and dust. The ice in the icebox was replaced and the waterpan that lay beneath was repeatedly changed. The clothes were scrubbed in a washing tub on a washboard. An iron was heated on the stove to smooth out the wrinkles. Women typically spent the summer months canning food for the long winter. Clothes were made from patterns, and bread was made from scratch. Very few of these practices were necessary by the end of the decade. Vacuum cleaners displaced the carpet beater. Electric refrigerators, washing machines, and irons saved hours of extra work. New methods of canning and freezing made store-bought food cheap and effective enough to eliminate this chore. Off-the-rack clothing became more and more widespread. Even large bakeries were supplying bread to the new SUPERMARKETS . The hours saved in household work were countless.

- [1920's Appliances](#)
- [A Science Odyssey: People and Discoveries: Electric ...](#)
- [household technology](#)

INNOVATIONS IN FOOD PROCESSING AND FOOD PURCHASING

Clarence Saunders

- [Clarence Saunders](#)
- [Clarence Saunders](#)
- [Clarence Saunders Had Self-Service in Store WithHis ...](#)
- [About Us](#)

3.3 America and the Automobile

AMERICA AND THE AUTOMOBILE



FIGURE 3.7

Cruising in automobiles such as the Duesenberg pictured above was popular in America, but this typically Sunday afternoon family past time was largely discontinued during the depression.

Perhaps no invention affected American everyday life in the 20th century more than the automobile.

Although the technology for the **AUTOMOBILE** existed in the 19th century, it took **HENRY FORD** to make the useful gadget accessible to the American public. Ford used the idea of the **ASSEMBLY LINE** for automobile manufacturing. He paid his workers an unprecedented \$5 a day when most laborers were bringing home two, hoping that it would increase their productivity. Furthermore, they might use their higher earnings to purchase a new car.

Ford reduced options, even stating that the public could choose whatever color car they wanted — so long as it was black. The **MODEL T** sold for \$490 in 1914, about one quarter the cost of the previous decade. By 1920, there were over 8 million registrations. The 1920s saw tremendous growth in automobile ownership, with the number of registered drivers almost tripling to 23 million by the end of the decade.

Economic Spin-offs



FIGURE 3.8

The famous 'Ford 999' racer from 1902. Although it is not the first race car ever built, it is certainly the first car to rise to the status of legend.

The growth of the **AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY** caused an economic revolution across the United States. Dozens of spin-off industries blossomed. Of course the demand for vulcanized rubber skyrocketed. Road construction

created thousands of new jobs, as state and local governments began funding highway design.

Even the federal government became involved with the **FEDERAL HIGHWAY ACT OF 1921**. **GAS STATIONS** began to dot the land, and mechanics began to earn a living fixing the inevitable problems. Oil and steel were two well-established industries that received a serious boost by the demand for automobiles. Travelers on the road needed shelter on long trips, so **MOTELS** began to line the major long-distance routes.

Even cuisine was transformed by the automobile. The quintessential American foods — hamburgers, french fries, milk shakes, and apple pies — were hallmarks of the new roadside **DINER**. Drivers wanted cheap, relatively fast food so they could be on their way in a hurry. Unfortunately, as new businesses flourished, old ones decayed. When America opted for the automobile, the nation's rails began to be neglected. As European nations were strengthening mass transit systems, individualistic Americans invested in the automobile infrastructure.

Effects of the Automobile

The social effects of the automobile were as great. Freedom of choice encouraged many family vacations to places previously impossible. Urban dwellers had the opportunity to rediscover pristine landscapes, just as rural dwellers were able to shop in towns and cities. Teenagers gained more and more independence with driving freedom. Dating couples found a portable place to be alone as the automobile helped to facilitate relaxed sexual attitudes.

Americans experienced **TRAFFIC JAMS** for the first time, as well as traffic accidents and fatalities. Soon demands were made for licensure and safety regulation on the state level. Despite the drawbacks, Americans loved their cars. As more and more were purchased, drivers saw their worlds grow much larger.

THE INVENTION OF THE AMERICAN TEENAGER



FIGURE 3.9

The automobile was monumental in the evolution of courtship. High speed and moonlight drives inspired a spirit of reckless abandon.

In the 19th century, the American world consisted of children and adults. Most Americans tried their best to allow their children to enjoy their youth while they were slowly prepared for the trials and tribulations of adulthood. Although child labor practices still existed, more and more states were passing restrictions against such exploitation. The average number of years spent in school for young Americans was also on the rise. Parents were waiting longer to goad their youngsters into marriage rather than pairing them off at the tender age of sixteen or seventeen. In short, it soon became apparent that a new stage of life — the **TEENAGE** phase — was becoming a reality in America. American adolescents were displaying traits unknown among children and adults. Although the word teenager did not come into use until decades later, the teenage mindset dawned in the 1920s.

From Courtship to Dating

The single greatest factor that led to the emergence of the independent teenager was the automobile. Teens enjoyed a freedom from parental supervision unknown to previous generations. The courtship process rapidly evolved into dating. In earlier times, young boys and girls spent their first dates at home. The boy would meet the girl's parents, they would have a sitting in the parlor, followed by dinner with the entire family. Later in the evening, the couple might enjoy a few moments alone on the front porch. After several meetings, they could be lucky enough to be granted permission for an unchaperoned walk through town. The automobile simply shattered these old-fashioned

**FIGURE 3.10**

These young women probably raised the eyebrows of a number of their fellow sunbathers. But only a few years later, young people would be smoking, drinking and dancing with an abandon never seen before in America.

traditions. Dating was removed from the watchful eyes of anxious parents. Teenagers were given privacy, and a sexual revolution swept America. Experimentation with sexual behaviors before marriage became increasingly common. Young Americans were now able to look beyond their own small towns at an enlarged dating pool.

Impact of the Automobile

Automobile technology led directly to the other major factor that fostered a teenage culture: the consolidated **HIGH SCHOOL**. Buses could now transport students farther from their homes, leading to the decline of the one-room schoolhouse. Furthermore, Americans were realizing the potential of a longer education, and states were adding more years to their compulsory schooling laws. As a result, a larger number of teenagers were thrown into a common space than ever before. It was only natural that discussions about commonalities would occur. Before long, schools developed their own cultural patterns, completely unlike the childhood or adult experience. School athletics and extracurricular activities only enhanced this nascent culture. The American teenager was born.

- [Automobiles - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com](#)
- [Automobile and the Environment in American History](#)
- [America on the Move | Introduction](#)
- [America in the 1920s: Automobile](#)

3.4 A Consumer Economy

A CONSUMER ECONOMY



FIGURE 3.11

Santa waves to children outside a department store during a Thanksgiving Day Parade.

The 1920s was a decade of increasing conveniences for the middle class. New products made household chores easier and led to more leisure time. Products previously too expensive became affordable. New forms of financing allowed every family to spend beyond their current means. **ADVERTISING** capitalized on people's hopes and fears to sell more and more goods.



FIGURE 3.12

The Regent Theater, America's First Movie Palace

Buying on Credit

"**BUY NOW, PAY LATER**" became the credo of many middle class Americans of the **ROARING TWENTIES**. For the single-income family, all these new conveniences were impossible to afford at once. But retailers wanted the consumer to have it all. **DEPARTMENT STORES** opened up generous **LINES OF CREDIT** for those who could not pay up front but could demonstrate the ability to pay in the future. Similar **INSTALLMENT PLANS**

were offered to buyers who could not afford the lump sum, but could afford "twelve easy payments." Over half of the nation's automobiles were sold on **CREDIT** by the end of the decade. America's consumers could indeed have it all, if they had an iron stomach for debt. Consumer debt more than doubled between 1920 and 1930.

Advertising

Fueling consumer demand were new techniques in advertising. This was not a new business, but in the increasingly competitive marketplace, manufacturers looked to more and more aggressive advertising campaigns. One major trend of the decade was to use pop psychology methods to convince Americans that the product was needed. The classic example was the campaign for Listerine. Using a seldom heard term for bad breath — halitosis — Listerine convinced thousands of Americans to buy their product. Consumers might not have known what halitosis was, but they surely knew they did not want it.

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- [The Consumer Economy and Mass Entertainment](#)
 - [Prosperity and Thrift: The Coolidge Era and the Consumer ...](#)
 - [American Economy in the 1920s: Consumerism, Stock Market](#)
 - [Consumerism](#)
-

3.5 Harding and Coolidge

ADMINISTRATIONS OF HARDING AND COOLIDGE

Despite all the verve of the American social scene in the 1920s, the Presidential leadership of the decade was quite unremarkable. **WARREN HARDING** won his bid for the White House in 1920 with the campaign slogan "**RETURN TO NORMALCY** ." Republicans believed Americans had grown weary of the turmoil caused by World War I and promised tranquility. Harding found himself mired in scandals unknown in America since the Grant Administration. Although Harding himself was above the graft, his friends were more than willing to dip into the public treasury. Fraud and bribery plagued the Veterans Bureau and the Justice Department. The **TEAPOT DOME SCANDAL** exposed Secretary of the Interior **ALBERT FALL** for accepting bribes for allowing private oil companies to lease public lands. Harding fell ill in 1923 and died shortly thereafter.

The Progressives

CALVIN COOLIDGE brought no significant change to Harding's laissez faire, pro-business style. Progressives bemoaned the end of activist Presidents protecting the public good, prompting **FIGHTING BOB LAFOLLETTE** to launch an unsuccessful run for the Presidency under the Progressive Party banner in 1924. The only successful progressive reforms occurred on the state and local levels. Politics became interesting in the election year of 1928. The Democrats nominated **AL SMITH** , the first Catholic ever to earn the nomination of a major party. Smith raised eyebrows with an open opposition to the Prohibition amendment. As a result, the South broke with a long tradition of supporting Democrats and helped Herbert Hoover to continue Republican domination of the Presidency.

The International Scene

On the international scene, two themes dominated American diplomacy. The first was to take steps to avoid the mistakes that led to World War I. To this end, President Harding convened the **WASHINGTON NAVAL ARMS CONFERENCE** in 1921. The United States, Great Britain, and Japan agreed to a ten-year freeze on the construction of battleships and to maintain a capital ship ratio of 5:5:3. They also agreed to uphold the **OPEN DOOR POLICY** and to respect each other's holdings in the Pacific. In 1928, the United States and France led an initiative called the **KELLOGG-BRIAND PACT** , in which 62 nations agreed to outlaw war. These two measures showed the degree to which Americans hoped to forestall another disastrous war. The second priority dealt with outstanding international debt. While practicing political isolation, the United States was completely entangled with Europe economically. The Allies owed the United States an enormous sum of money from World War I. Lacking the resources to reimburse America, the Allies relied on German reparations. The German economy was so debased by the Treaty of Versailles provisions that they relied on loans from American banks for support. In essence, American banks were funding the repayment of the foreign debt. As Germany slipped further and further into depression, the United States intervened again. The **DAWES PLAN** allowed Germany to extend their payments on more generous terms. In the end, when the **GREAT DEPRESSION** struck, only Finland was able to make good on its debt to the United States.

**FIGURE 3.13**

Warren G. Harding

WARREN HARDING

Corruption

After Harding's election, friends and colleagues from the Ohio area moved to Washington, D.C. and made their headquarters in a green house on K Street. Eventually known as the "Ohio Gang," the financial and political scandals caused by these men - in addition to Harding's own personal controversies - severely damaged President Harding's personal reputation and eclipsed his presidential accomplishments.

There were several scandals during the Harding administration, one being that Harding had an affair with an Ohio [merchant](#)'s wife and fathered a child. Additionally Charles Forbes, head of the Veterans Bureau, was convicted of fraud and bribery in connection with government contracts. Attorney General Harry Daugherty was involved with an illegal liquor scheme. Graft and corruption charges permeated Harding's Department of Justice; bootleggers confiscated tens of thousands of cases of whiskey through bribery and kickbacks.

The most damaging of these scandals was the infamous Teapot Dome Scandal, a bribery incident that took place in the United States in 1922–1923. Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall leased Navy petroleum reserves at Teapot Dome and two other locations to private oil companies at low rates. Fall leased the oil production rights at Teapot Dome without competitive bidding, with lease terms which were very favorable to the oil companies. In compensation, Fall received gifts totaling over \$400,000. In 1927 the Supreme Court ruled that the oil leases had been fraudulently obtained. Albert Fall was found guilty of bribery in 1929; he was fined \$100,000 and sentenced to one year in prison, making him the first Presidential cabinet member to go to prison for his actions in office .

Origins of the scandal date back to the popular conservation legislation of presidents Teddy Roosevelt, William Taft and [Woodrow Wilson](#) , specifically as to the creation of naval petroleum reserves in Wyoming and California. Three naval oil fields, Elk Hills and Buena Vista Hills in California and Teapot Dome in Wyoming, were tracts of public land that were reserved by previous presidents to be emergency underground supplies to be used by the navy only when the regular oil supplies diminished. The scandal revealed the problem of natural resource scarcity and the need to protect for the future against the depletion of resources in a time of emergency.

The concentrated attention on the scandal made it the first true symbol of government corruption in America. Before the [Watergate](#) scandal, Teapot Dome was regarded as the "greatest and most sensational scandal in the history of American politics. " The scandal also was a key factor in further destroying the public reputation of the Harding administration, which was already unpopular due to its poor handling of the Great Railroad Strike of 1922 and the President's veto of the Bonus Bill in 1922. The Teapot Dome scandal became a major issue in the presidential election of 1924, but neither party could claim full credit for divulging the wrongdoing.



FIGURE 3.14

Detail from “The Home Stretch!” by the New Process Electro Corporation in 1920 and 1921. Harding’s campaign for a “return to normalcy” struck a chord with voters who were exhausted by World War I and disillusioned by global politics. He defeated Cox in a landslide on November 2, 1920.

- [Return to Normalcy](#)
- [Return to Normalcy](#)

CALVIN COOLIDGE



FIGURE 3.15

President Calvin Coolidge

Peace and Prosperity Abroad

After the war, many manufacturing companies faced hard times as they attempted to convert from wartime production of weapons and planes to peacetime manufacturing of goods. However, the pro-business policies put in place by President Harding and then by President Coolidge fostered the growth of businesses, and business soon flourished, partially due to the raising of tariff rates from 27% to 41% under the [Underwood-Simmons Tariff](#) .

Many major companies moved overseas. Just as these companies had started to do before the war, they set up shop in a variety of countries based around available resources. Meat packers went to Argentina; fruit growers went to Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala; sugar [plantation](#) owners went to Cuba; rubber plantation owners to the Philippines, Sumatra, and Malaya; copper corporations to Chile; and oil companies to Mexico and Venezuela. Unfortunately economic inequalities within the world’s system of economic policies served to exploit these regions

for the economic growth of the United States. Thus began an era of economic neo-colonialism in which natural resources were, and continue to be, extracted from developing countries in the Global South for the prosperity of wealthy countries in the Global North.

Although not an [isolationist](#) , Coolidge was reluctant to enter into foreign alliances. Coolidge saw the landslide [Republican](#) victory of 1920 as a rejection of the Wilsonian idea that the United States should join the League of Nations . While not completely opposed to the idea himself, Coolidge believed the League, as then constituted, did not serve American interests, and he did not advocate membership in it. He spoke in favor of the United States joining the Permanent Court of International Justice, provided that the nation would not be bound by advisory decisions. The Senate eventually approved joining the Court, with reservations, in 1926. The League of Nations accepted the reservations, but suggested some modifications of their own. The Senate failed to act and the United States never joined the World Court.

Coolidge's best-known [initiative](#) was the Kellogg–Briand Pact of 1928, named for Coolidge's Secretary of State, Frank B. Kellogg, and French foreign minister Aristide Briand. The treaty, ratified in 1929, committed signatories including the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan to "renounce war, as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another . " The treaty provided the founding principle for [international law](#) after World War II.

Coolidge did not recognize the Soviet Union, continuing the policy of the previous administration. He also continued the United States' support for the elected government of Mexico against rebels, lifting the arms [embargo](#) on that country. He sent his close friend Dwight Morrow to Mexico as the American ambassador. Coolidge represented the at the Pan American Conference in Havana, Cuba, making him the only sitting United States President to visit the country. The United States' occupation of Nicaragua and Haiti continued under his administration, but Coolidge withdrew American troops from the Dominican Republic in 1924.

- [Coolidge Inaugural Address](#)
-

3.6 The First Red Scare

The Red Scare



FIGURE 3.16

The conviction of anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti sparked protests throughout the world.

World War I was over, but the hysteria lingered. The Eastern front had not gone well for Russia. The pressures of their losing effort forced the Russian czar to abdicate. The new government had not fared much better. Finally in November 1917, LENIN led a successful revolution of the Bolshevik workers. The ideas of Karl Marx had been known since 1848, but nowhere in the world until now had a successful communist revolution occurred. Once the war against Germany was over, the Western powers focused their energies at restoring CZAR NICHOLAS. Even the United States sent troops to Russia hoping the WHITE RUSSIANS could oust the communist REDS. All this effort was in vain. The Bolsheviks murdered the entire royal family and slowly secured control of the entire nation.

The Communist Party Forms

Back in the United States, veterans were returning home. Workers who avoided striking during the war were now demanding wage increases to keep pace with spiraling inflation. Over 3,300 postwar strikes swept the land. A small group of radicals formed the COMMUNIST LABOR PARTY in 1919. Progressive and conservative Americans believed that labor activism was a menace to American society and must be squelched. The hatchetman against American radicals was President Wilson's Attorney General, A. MITCHELL PALMER. Palmer was determined that no Bolshevik Revolution would happen in the United States.

Palmer's Efforts

From 1919 to 1920, Palmer conducted a series of raids on individuals he believed were dangerous to American security. He deported 249 RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS without just cause. The so-called "SOVIET ARK" was sent back to Mother Russia. With Palmer's sponsorship, the Federal Bureau of Investigation was created under the leadership of J. Edgar Hoover. In January of 1920, federal agents broke into the homes of suspected anarchists without search warrants, jailed labor leaders, and held about 5,000 citizens without respecting their right to legal counsel. Palmer felt that American civil liberties were less important than rooting out potential wrongdoers. Eventually most of the detainees were released, but some were deported.



FIGURE 3.17A. Mitchell Palmer

The climate set by Palmer and Hoover could not be contained. Still agitated by wartime propaganda, members of the American public took matters into their own hands.

AMERICAN LEGIONNAIRES in CENTRALIA, WASHINGTON attacked members of the Wobblies. Twelve radicals were arrested; one of them was beaten, castrated, and then shot. The New York State Legislature expelled five Socialist representatives from their ranks. Twenty-eight states banned the public display of red flags. It seemed as though the witch hunt would never end. Responsible Americans began to speak out against Palmer's raids and demand that American civil liberties be respected. By the summer of 1920, the worst of the furor had subsided.

INTOLERANCE



FIGURE 3.18

As people from other nations began to pour into the United States, some Americans began to resent their presence and blame them for economic and social problems

Sometimes the battle got ugly. Old versus new was not a conscious topic to be discussed calmly at the nation's dinner tables. In an effort to preserve so-called true American values, the forces against change sometimes displayed intolerance ranging from restrictive legislation to outright violence. Immigrants from areas outside Northern and Western Europe became targets of narrow-mindedness. African Americans faced new threats from a resurgent Ku Klux Klan. Socialists, anarchists, and atheists beware! The message was simple and clear. Conform or else.

Restricting Immigration

Since the 1880s, America's shores were flooded with immigrants primarily from Southern and Eastern Europe. The old nativist arguments grew louder in the first two decades of the 20th century. Critics of an open immigration policy cried that America's racial stock was being overrun by undesirable ethnicities. Protestant fundamentalists worried as the numbers of Jewish and Catholic Americans grew larger. Labor leaders claimed that immigration lowered wages. As a result, Congress slowly built walls against the newcomers. The first line of defense was a literacy test, passed in 1917. The results were not as encouraging as the nativists had hoped. About 1.25 million immigrants still entered America in the first two years of the twenties. An outright cap on immigrant numbers was enacted in 1921. Ethnic nationalists claimed that these conditions favored Southern and Eastern immigrants too favorably. The result was the **NATIONAL ORIGINS ACT OF 1924**. This law based admission to America on nationality. Immigrants from Northern and Western Europe were granted higher quotas than from other parts of the world. Asian immigration was banned completely. As a sign of pan-Americanism, there were no restrictions placed on immigrants from the western hemisphere.

Resurgence of the KKK

By 1915, the **KU KLUX KLAN** was almost dead. **WILLIAM SIMMONS** of Atlanta, a history teacher at Lanier College, summoned a secret gathering on **STONE MOUNTAIN** on Thanksgiving Day. As the sun set, the participants massed around a burning cross and pledged once again to reassert white supremacy. The Klan grew slowly, boasting only about five thousand members in 1920. That year, **ELIZABETH TYLER** and **EDWARD Y. CLARKE** used their professional fundraising experience to boost the Klan's numbers. They raised membership dues and sold a great variety of Klan merchandise, including the infamous hoods and robes. Simmons is credited with much of the Klan terminology. Local chapters were called **KLAVERNS**, songs were called Klodes, and the leader was called the **IMPERIAL WIZARD**. By the middle of the decade there were an estimated 5 million Klansmen, with a significant women's auxiliary. This new Klan was national, particularly strong in the Midwest and South but powerful as far west as Oregon. The targets of this group went beyond African Americans. Catholics, Jews, and "non-Nordic" immigrants were victimized by the new reign of terror. Toward the end of the decade, corruption and sex scandals among the national leadership discredited the high and mighty message the Klan was trying to promote, and membership numbers sharply dropped.



FIGURE 3.19

Membership in the white supremacist group the Ku Klux Klan peaked in 1924. Here, the Klan holds a rally in Williamson, West Virginia

"Back to Africa" Movement

The environment of intolerance and a new KKK prompted a drastic response by **MARCUS GARVEY**. Garvey believed that equality for African Americans could never be achieved in the United States. He formed the **UNITED NEGRO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION** to promote economic cooperation among black businesses. Garvey made fiery speeches and created uniforms and flags to symbolize a new black pride. The ultimate goal for blacks across the world should be to return to the "Motherland." Only in Africa could a strong nation dedicated to promotion of black culture flourish. After amassing about 80,000 followers, Garvey founded the Black Star Steamship Company to begin transporting African Americans "**BACK TO AFRICA**." Closely watched by government officials,

Garvey was convicted of mail fraud in 1923 and deported to Jamaica.

THE SACCO-VANZETTI CASE

On April 15, 1921, two employees of a shoe warehouse in South Braintree, Massachusetts, were murdered during a robbery. The police investigating the crime arrested two Italian immigrants named **NICOLA SACCO AND BARTOLOMEO VANZETTI**.

Sacco and Vanzetti maintained their innocence, but they already had a strike against them: they were **ANARCHISTS** and socialists. Just a little over two weeks after their arrest, they were found guilty.

Many people, particularly fellow socialists, protested the verdict, saying the two men were convicted more on political and ethnic prejudice than on any real evidence. Indeed, four years later, another man said he had committed the crime with a local gang.

Despite appeals, Sacco and Vanzetti were never granted a retrial. When they were sentenced to death on April 9, 1927, protests erupted around the country. But to no avail — the men were executed on Aug. 23, 1927. They claimed they were innocent until the moment of their deaths.

Scholars still debate the guilt and innocence of Sacco and Vanzetti, but there is little question that the trial was biased against them.

The **INTOLERANCE** of the decade is embodied in the murder trial of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. From the start, it was clear their trial was not about the murders, but about their backgrounds and beliefs. The judge violated all semblance of impartiality by criticizing their political views in court. Their guilt or innocence remains uncertain, and the circumstantial evidence on which they were convicted was murky. The jury found them guilty, and after six years of delay, Sacco and Vanzetti were silenced permanently by the electric chair.

- [Sacco and Vanzetti](#)
- [Rise of the KKK](#)

IDA B. WELLS



FIGURE 3.20

Ida B. Wells

Ida Bell Wells-Barnett was an African American journalist, newspaper editor, and with her husband, newspaper owner Ferdinand L. Barnett, an early leader in the civil rights movement. She documented lynching in the United States, showing how it was used to control or punish blacks who competed with whites. She was active in the women's rights and women's **suffrage** movements, establishing several notable women's organizations. Wells was a skilled and persuasive rhetorician and traveled internationally on lecture tours.

Ida B. Wells was born in Holly Springs, Mississippi, in 1862 before President Abraham Lincoln issued the [Emancipation Proclamation](#). Both parents were enslaved until freed under the Proclamation, one year after she was born. Wells attended a school for freed people called Shaw University, now Rust College, in Holly Springs. She was expelled from the college for her rebellious behavior and temper after confronting the president of the college. In 1878 at the age of 16, she lost both her parents and her 10-month old brother, Stanley to a [yellow fever](#) epidemic that swept through the South with many fatalities.

Following the funerals, friends and relatives decided that the six remaining Wells children should be sent to various foster homes. Wells resisted this solution. To keep her younger siblings together as a family, she dropped out of Rust College and found work as a teacher in a black elementary school. She resented that white teachers were paid \$80 a month in public schools when she was paid only \$30 a month. This discrimination made her more interested in the politics of race and improving the education of blacks.

In 1883, a train conductor ordered Wells to give up her seat and move to the smoking car, which was already crowded. The year before, the Supreme Court had struck down the federal [Civil Rights Act](#) of 1875, which banned racial discrimination in public accommodations. Several railroad companies continued illegal racial segregation of their passengers, especially when traveling in the South.

Wells refused to give up her seat, 71 years before the activist [Rosa Parks](#) showed similar resistance on a bus. The conductor and two men dragged Wells out of the car. When she returned to Memphis, she hired an African-American attorney to sue the railroad. Wells became a public figure in Memphis when she wrote a newspaper article for *The Living Way*, a black church weekly, about her treatment on the train. She won her case on December 24, 1884, when the local circuit court granted her a \$500 settlement. The railroad company appealed the decision and the court reversed the ruling in 1887. It concluded, "We think it is evident that the purpose of the defendant in error was to harass with a view to this suit, and that her persistence was not in good faith to obtain a comfortable seat for the short ride."

In March 1892, racial tensions were rising in Memphis. Violence was becoming the norm. Three of her friends, Thomas Moss, Calvin McDowell, and Henry Stewart, owned the People's Grocery Company. It was doing well and was seen as competitive with a white-owned grocery store across the street. While Wells was out of town in Natchez, Mississippi, a white mob invaded her friends' store. During the altercation, three white men were shot and injured. Moss, McDowell, and Stewart were arrested and jailed. A large lynch mob stormed the jail cells and killed the three men.

After the lynching of her friends, Wells wrote in *Free Speech and Headlight*, urging blacks to leave Memphis. The murder also drove Wells to research and document lynchings and their causes. She began investigative journalism, looking at the charges given for the murders and raised more than \$500 to investigate lynchings and publish her results. Wells found that blacks were lynched for such reasons as failing to pay debts, not appearing to give way to whites, competing with whites economically, and being drunk in public.

The pamphlets "Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases" and "A Red Record" documented her research on a lynching. Having examined many accounts of lynching based on alleged "rape of white women," she concluded that Southerners concocted rape as an excuse to hide their real reason for lynchings: black economic progress, which threatened not only white Southerners' pocketbooks, but also their ideas about black inferiority. She wrote an article that suggested that, unlike the myth that white women were sexually at risk of attacks by black men, most liaisons between black men and white women were consensual.

One hundred pages long, "A Red Record" launched Wells's anti-lynching campaign with the charge that "ten thousand Negroes have been killed in cold blood, without the formality of judicial trial and legal execution." It also documented the status of black Americans since Emancipation.

- [The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow. Jim Crow Stories . Ida B . . .](#)
- [Ida B. Wells](#)
- [Ida B. Wells](#)

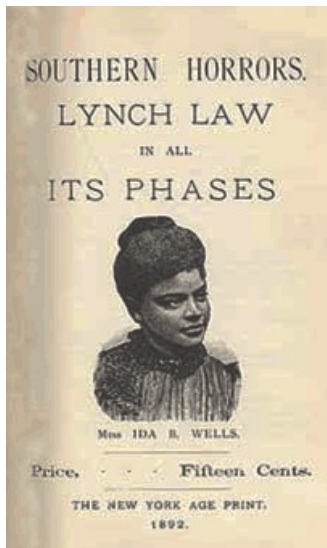


FIGURE 3.21

Ida B. Wells - pamphlet

RANDOLPH MILLER

- [Randolph Miller](#)
- [Chattanooga Blade](#)

RISE OF THE NAACP



FIGURE 3.22

NAACP LOGO

When, in 1913, Democrats gained control of Congress and the White House for the first time since the mid-1890s, southern Members of the party were tempted to expand segregation into areas of federal jurisdiction.¹⁰⁹ In the first two Congresses of the Woodrow Wilson administration (the 63rd and 64th, 1913–1917), southern Members introduced bills to segregate the federal civil service, the military, and public transportation in Washington, DC. Others introduced bills to repeal the 15th Amendment. Though Congress enacted none of these measures, the significance of these proposals lay in the fact that they were entertained at all. Having solidified absolute control over race issues in the South, southern Members of Congress were sufficiently emboldened to prod Congress to endorse a nationalized racial apartheid.

Political power brokers in the Capitol and in the Wilson administration harbored segregationist sympathies even if they were unable to promote them by imparting the full weight of federal legislative sanction. In 1913, President Wilson acceded to the wishes of several Cabinet members, who quickly segregated various executive departments.

Soon, dining facilities and restrooms throughout the federal government were racially segregated, although not uniformly. Wilson issued no formal executive order, and no laws were enacted, but segregation was tacitly encouraged and widely practiced. Congress, which had the responsibility of administering the nation's capital, did much to promote the practice of segregation in Washington. From 1913 to 1921 and after 1933, southerners largely controlled the panels that appropriated funds and those that dealt with the administrative details of city government. In places where Congress could have overturned Jim Crow practices—in public parks, at Union Station, in theaters, restaurants, and innumerable other locations—it did nothing. Instead, its record in managing the District of Columbia was “profoundly segregationist.”¹¹²

In part, the emergence of African-American public advocacy groups such as the NAACP—founded by Mary White Ovington and Oswald Garrison Villard, descendants of prominent abolitionists—counterbalanced efforts to introduce federal segregation laws. Although its original organizers were largely white, the NAACP included black intellectuals such as W. E. B. Du Bois, anti-lynching reformer Ida Wells-Barnett, and women's rights leader Mary Church Terrell, establishing its headquarters in New York City under the leadership of Moorefield Storey, a former president of the American Bar Association. Du Bois soon began publishing *The Crisis*, the organization's journal, which served as an outlet for reformers and literary contributors and as a tool to inform the American public about issues critical to African Americans. The NAACP quickly experienced a growth spurt: During World War I, membership swelled 900 percent to include more than 90,000 individuals in 300 cities and towns nationwide. In the 1910s it began a methodical apprenticeship, learning to lobby Congress and to organize national public opinion campaigns.



FIGURE 3.23

ANTI-LYNCHING LEGISLATION RENEWED

The passage of anti-lynching legislation became one of the NAACP's central goals. Slow to join the cause of pursuing legislation to remedy lynching because of the leadership's concerns about the constitutionality of such an undertaking, the NAACP eventually embraced the movement, using it to educate the often ambivalent American public so as to jar it into substantive action.

Statistics supported the NAACP's increased urgency in the anti-lynching campaign. Between 1901 and 1929, more than 1,200 blacks were lynched in the South. Forty-one percent of these lynchings occurred in two exceptionally violent states: Georgia (250) and Mississippi (245). The NAACP report, *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889–1919*, created momentum for congressional action. The anti-lynching effort provided the NAACP valuable experience waging a mass public relations campaign and mastering the art of congressional relations. In the 1920s, through the organizational leadership and diverse talents of its secretary, James Weldon Johnson,

the NAACP became a significant vehicle for marshaling public opinion. Johnson's biographer describes him as "truly the 'Renaissance man' of the Harlem Renaissance"—a poet, composer, writer, and activist. Acting as the group's chief congressional lobbyist, he pushed for the reduction scheme during the larger congressional debate over reapportionment and decisively shaped the NAACP's campaign against lynching. Of his anti-lynching lobbying experience, Johnson recalled, "I tramped the corridors of the Capitol and the two office buildings so constantly that toward the end, I could, I think, have been able to find my way about blindfolded."

Pushed vigorously by Johnson and NAACP assistant executive secretary Walter White (a civil rights activist from Atlanta), anti-lynching reform awaited only a legislative entrepreneur in Congress and, regrettably, a triggering event. Activists found Representative Leonidas C. Dyer to be a willing ally. Dyer, a Spanish-American War veteran and a former aide to Missouri Governor Herbert S. Hadley, represented a thin sliver of the southern and eastern sections of St. Louis. Heavily industrialized, part of the district hugged the Mississippi River and included growing African-American neighborhoods. Since his election to the House in 1911, Dyer had demonstrated a disposition toward advocating for the black community.

Dyer had a front-row seat to some of the nation's most virulent wartime race violence. In the summer of 1917, just across the Mississippi River from his district, a riot in East St. Louis, Illinois, drew national attention and widespread condemnation. A hub for southern blacks migrating northward, East St. Louis had seen its black population triple in the first decade of the 20th century. Its racial tensions, stoked by competition for jobs and prejudice, struck a chord among many white northerners apprehensive about black migration. On July 1, 1917, white assailants drove through a black neighborhood, firing indiscriminately. Two plainclothes police officers sent to investigate the disturbance arrived in a vehicle similar to the one driven by the shooters. Fearful residents mistakenly opened fire on the policemen, both of whom were killed. White residents' attempt to retaliate on July 2 flared into a merciless episode of mob sadism. The death toll climbed to 47 persons, including 38 African-American men, women, and children. Much of the black population fled the city. On the House Floor, Dyer decried the event as one of "the most dastardly and most criminal outrages ever perpetrated in this country." Large numbers of refugees flowed across the river and into his district, compelling Dyer to tackle the problem of lynching and mob violence.

The rash of wartime mob violence nationwide provided new impetus for legislative action. After months of consultation with legal experts and the NAACP, Representative Dyer introduced H.R. 11279 on April 18, 1918, "to protect citizens of the United States against lynching in default of protection by the States." Dyer's bill, which provided the blueprint for all subsequent NAACP-backed anti-lynching measures, sought to charge lynch mobs with capital murder charges and to try lynching cases in federal court. It levied on each county where a lynching occurred, a fine of between \$5,000 and \$10,000 that would be paid to the victim's immediate family or, if none existed, to the U.S. government to facilitate prosecution of the case. The Dyer Bill also mandated jail time and imposed a fine of up to \$5,000 on state and local law enforcement officials who refused to make a reasonable effort to prevent a lynching or surrendered a prisoner in their custody to a lynch mob. Finally, the bill sought to establish guidelines for fair courtroom proceedings by excluding lynch mob participants and supporters from juries.

Dyer's rationale was elegantly simple: Lynching—and states' refusal to prosecute the perpetrators—violated victims' 14th Amendment rights. Anticipating that Members would object to the bill because it involved federal control over social policy, he cited the slate of child labor laws the chamber had enacted and Congress's December 1917 passage of the 18th Amendment, which forbade the production, transportation, or sale of alcohol within the United States: "If Congress has felt its duty to do these things, why should it not also assume jurisdiction and enact laws to protect the lives of citizens of the United States against lynch law and mob violence? Are the rights of property, or what a citizen shall drink, or the ages and conditions under which children shall work, any more important to the Nation than life itself?" In the Democrat-controlled 65th Congress (1917–1919), however, the measure remained stuck in the Judiciary Committee.

But advocates' hope was renewed when Republicans gained majorities in the House and Senate at the start of the 66th Congress in 1919. In early 1921, James Weldon Johnson paid his first visit to Representative Dyer's office, recognizing that the St. Louis Representative was a valuable contact. Throughout this process, the NAACP played a significant role in keeping the issue alive in Congress, and at several junctures, Johnson bolstered Dyer, urging him not to accept compromises to attain passage of legislation and encouraging him to resist pressure from the

Republican Conference to abandon legislation many of his colleagues felt was unpopular.

Under the NAACP's intense lobbying pressure, the House began to move toward consideration of a bill derived from Dyer's earlier efforts—first adopting a rule for consideration and then, in early January 1922 commencing consideration on the legislation. Southern opponents attempted to impede debate several times, refusing to come to the House Chamber so as to prevent a quorum. On such occasions Speaker Frederick H. Gillett of Massachusetts ordered the chamber doors locked and dispatched the Sergeant at Arms to search for errant Members. The debate came to a head on January 25 and 26, 1922, when the House considered a bill that contained many of the essentials of Dyer's original measure. Though the provision seeking to ensure an impartial jury had been removed, the bill sought to levy a \$10,000 fine on counties where lynchings occurred—as well as on counties through which victims were transported.

Southern Democrats rebuffed the measure, mustering familiar practical and constitutional defenses. Hatton W. Sumners of Texas, a Dallas attorney who later served 16 years as chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, led the defense. In two lengthy debates, Sumners compared the bill to an act of legislative “mob” violence and suggested Congress let southern states resolve the lynching issue on their own. “I say to you that you cannot pass this bill unless you pass it under the influence of the same spirit which this bill denounces, viz., the mob spirit,” Sumners said to laughter and applause on the House Floor. “You say that the folks down in the South are not doing this thing fast enough, and the folks in the South say the officers are not doing this thing fast enough, and you each get ropes and they go after the criminal and you go after the Constitution.”

African Americans packed the House Gallery, intensely monitoring the debate, and on several occasions they cheered loudly, in violation of gallery rules. Some traded derogatory barbs with southern House Members below on the floor, whose speeches repeatedly referred to NAACP activists as “race agitators.” The glare of publicity pushed cautious House leaders to move swiftly for a vote. In the end, the Dyer Bill passed the Republican-controlled chamber on January 26, 1922, by a vote of 231 to 119, with four Members voting “present” and 74 others not voting.¹³⁹ Among the 119 who voted “no” were four future Speakers of the House, each a southern Democrat who eventually presided over the chamber after Democrats assumed control of the House in 1931: John Nance Garner of Texas, Joseph Byrns of Tennessee, William Bankhead of Alabama, and Sam Rayburn of Texas.

In the Senate, a combination of ambivalent Republican backing and spirited southern opposition doomed the Dyer Bill to legislative limbo. It withered in the Judiciary Committee under the unsympathetic oversight of Chairman William Borah of Idaho, who doubted its constitutionality. Nevertheless, Borah pledged not to block consideration of the measure if a majority of his colleagues assented. The measure passed out of the committee 8 to 6 in the summer of 1922—with Borah dissenting. The NAACP proceeded to engage in a formidable public campaign, increasing direct pressure on Majority Leader Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts (who faced re-election that fall). Lodge, who had authored the Federal Elections Bill in 1890, had greatly moderated his previously progressive stance on federal oversight of black civil rights. He reluctantly brought the measure to the Senate Floor in September, but his choice of a manager to shepherd the bill through debate—Samuel Shortridge, California's junior Senator and a relative novice—suggested he had little enthusiasm for the endeavor. Byron (Pat) Harrison of Mississippi swiftly upstaged Shortridge by gaining control of the debate. Further consideration was forestalled until after the November 1922 elections, relieving Senators of electoral pressure.

When the bill came up for consideration in late November after the elections, southern Members again halted Shortridge with parliamentary maneuvers. As he had with the reduction issue two decades earlier, Alabama's Oscar Underwood, now Senate Minority Leader, played a key role in killing the Dyer measure. Underwood threatened Lodge and the Republicans with a filibuster that would shut down end-of-session business in the Senate. Fearful they would be unable to secure a ship subsidy bill desired by the Harding administration, the members of the Senate Republican Conference voted to abandon the Dyer Bill. Though Representative Dyer reintroduced the measure in each new Congress in the 1920s, it failed to gain significant political traction. However, the public awareness campaign relentlessly pushed by the NAACP likely contributed to a general decline in lynching after the 1920s. It would be 15 years before Congress would seriously consider the subject again. In the words of historian Robert Zangrando, anti-lynching legislation was “displaced by the indifference of its friends and the strategy of its enemies.”

- [The National Association for the Advancement of Colored ...](#)
 - [NAACP: 100 Years of History](#)
 - [Lesson 1: NAACP's Anti-Lynching Campaign in the 1920s](#)
-

3.7 Prohibition

THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT



FIGURE 3.24

Prohibition was a major reform movement that began in the 1840s and existed into the 1920s. The movement was sponsored by evangelical Protestant churches. The Women's Christian **Temperance** Union, founded in 1874, and the Prohibition Party were major players until the early 20th century, when the movement was taken over by the Anti-Saloon League.

By using pressure politics on legislators, the Anti-Saloon League achieved the goal of nationwide prohibition during World War I, emphasizing the need to destroy the political corruption of the saloons, the political power of the German-based **brewing** industry, and the need to reduce **domestic** violence in the home.

- [Prohibition: Roots of Prohibition | PBS](#)
- [Temperance Movement Groups and Leaders in the US](#)
- [Temperance Movement](#)

THE FIGHT AGAINST “DEMON RUM”

Saloons were closed, bottles were smashed, and kegs were split wide open. When the states ratified the **EIGHTEENTH AMENDMENT** in 1919, the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcoholic beverages was outlawed.


FIGURE 3.25

Prohibition Political cartoons, both for and against, sprouted up during the 1920s

Protestant ministers and progressive politicians rejoiced and proclaimed a holier and safer America. It was predicted that worker productivity would increase, families would grow closer, and urban slums would disappear. Yet for all its promise, prohibition was repealed fourteen years later, after being deemed a dismal failure.

Advantages to Prohibition

In fairness, there were advantages to prohibition. Social scientists are certain that actual consumption of alcohol actually decreased during the decade. Estimates indicate that during the first few years of prohibition, alcohol consumption declined to a mere third of its prewar level. Although no polls or surveys would be accurate, health records indicate a decrease in alcoholism and alcohol-related diseases such as cirrhosis of the liver. Family savings did increase during the decade, but it was difficult to determine whether the increase was due to decreased alcohol consumption or a robust economy.

Disadvantages to Prohibition

The minuses seemed to outweigh the pluses. First, federal allocation of funds to enforce prohibition were woefully inadequate. Gaping loopholes in the **VOLSTEAD ACT**, the law implemented to enforce the Eighteenth Amendment, encouraged abuse. Alcohol possession was permitted for medical purposes, and production of small amounts was permitted for home use. The manufacturing of **NEAR BEER** — regular beer without the alcohol — was also permitted. The problem was that to make near beer, it was first necessary to brew the real variety, so illegal breweries could insist their product was scheduled to have the alcohol removed. Soon a climate of lawlessness swept the nation, as Americans everywhere began to partake in illegal drink. Every city had countless **SPEAKEASIES**, which were not-so-secret bars hidden from public view.

While the number of drinkers may have decreased, the strength of the beverages increased. People drank as much as they could as fast as they could to avoid detection. Because alcoholic production was illegal, there could be no regulation. Desperate individuals and heartless profiteers distilled anything imaginable, often with disastrous results. Some alcohol sold on the black market caused nerve damage, blindness, and even death. While women of the previous generation campaigned to ban alcohol, the young women of the twenties consumed it with a passion.

Organized Crime

The group that profited most from the illegal market was **ORGANIZED CRIME**. City crime bosses such as **AL CAPONE** of Chicago sold their products to willing buyers and even intimidated unwilling customers to purchase their illicit wares. Crime involving turf wars among mobsters was epidemic. Soon the mobs forced legitimate businessmen to buy protection, tainting those who tried to make an honest living. Even city police took booze and

cash from the likes of Al Capone. After several years of trying to connect Capone to **BOOTLEGGING**, federal prosecutors were able to convict him for income tax evasion.



FIGURE 3.26

The jury took nine hours to find Capone guilty on five counts of income tax evasion.

On March 22, 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt signed an amendment to the Volstead Act known as the Cullen-Harrison Act, allowing the manufacture and sale of "3.2 beer" and light wines. Upon signing the amendment, Roosevelt made his famous remark: "I think this would be a good time for a beer." On December 5, 1933, the ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment repealed the Eighteenth Amendment. As Prohibition ended, some of its supporters, including John D. Rockefeller, openly admitted its failure. ??

The Eighteenth Amendment was different from all previous changes to the Constitution. It was the first experiment at social engineering. Critics pointed out that it was the only amendment to date that restricted rather than increased individual rights. Civil liberties advocates considered prohibition an abomination. In the end, economics doomed prohibition. The costs of ineffectively policing the nation were simply too high.

- [The Prohibition Movement](#)
- [An Overview of the Prohibition Era](#)

3.8 The Scopes Trial of 1925

THE MONKEY TRIAL



FIGURE 3.27

Legendary defense lawyer Clarence Darrow faces off against William Jennings Bryan in the Dayton, Tennessee trial of schoolteacher John Scopes. Bryan died in Dayton five days after the trial ended.

When Darwin announced his theory that humans had descended from apes, he sent shock waves through the Western world.

In the years that followed his 1859 declaration, America's churches hotly debated whether to accept the findings of modern science or continue to follow the teachings of ancient scripture. By the 1920s, most of the urban churches of America had been able to reconcile Darwin's theory with the Bible, but rural preachers preferred a stricter interpretation.

Amid the dizzying changes brought by the roaring decade, religious fundamentalists saw the Bible as the only salvation from a materialistic civilization in decline.

Darwin Banned

In 1925, the Tennessee legislature passed the **BUTLER LAW**, which forbade the teaching of Darwin's theory of evolution in any public school or university. Other Southern states followed suit.

The Butler Law

PUBLIC ACTS OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE PASSED BY THE SIXTY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
1925

CHAPTER NO. 27

House Bill No. 185

(By Mr. Butler)

AN ACT prohibiting the teaching of the Evolution Theory in all the Universities, Normals and all other public schools of Tennessee, which are supported in whole or in part by the public school funds of the State, and to provide penalties for the violations thereof.

Section 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee*, That it shall be unlawful for any teacher in any of the Universities, Normals and all other public schools of the State which are supported in whole or in part by the public school funds of the State, to teach any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.

Section 2. *Be it further enacted*, That any teacher found guilty of the violation of this Act, Shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction, shall be fined not less than One Hundred \$ (100.00) Dollars nor more than Five Hundred (\$ 500.00) Dollars for each offense.

Section 3. *Be it further enacted*, That this Act take effect from and after its passage, the public welfare requiring it.

Passed March 13, 1925

W.F. Barry,

Speaker of the House of Representatives

L.D. Hill,

Speaker of the Senate

Approved March 21, 1925.

Austin Peay,

Governor.

The **AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION** led the charge of evolution's supporters. It offered to fund the legal defense of any Tennessee teacher willing to fight the law in court. Another showdown between modernity and tradition was unfolding.

The man who accepted the challenge was **JOHN T. SCOPES**, a science teacher and football coach in Dayton, Tennessee. In the spring of 1925, he walked into his classroom and read, from Dayton's Tennessee-approved textbook *HUNTER'S CIVIC BIOLOGY*, part of a chapter on the evolution of humankind and Darwin's theory of natural selection. His arrest soon followed, and a trial date was set.

Darrow versus Bryan

Representing Scopes was the famed trial lawyer **CLARENCE DARROW**. Slick and sophisticated, Darrow epitomized the urban society in which he lived.

The prosecution was led by William Jennings Bryan, three-time presidential candidate and former secretary of state. The "Great Commoner" was the perfect representative of the rural values he dedicated his life to defend.

Bryan was a Christian who lobbied for a constitutional amendment banning the teaching of evolution throughout the nation.



[3] He's Always Seeing Things. (Orr in the *Chicago Tribune*)

FIGURE 3.28

This political cartoon appeared during the Scopes monkey trial. Bryan is portrayed as Don Quixote, tilting at the windmill of evolution. The caption reads: "He's Always Seeing Things."



FIGURE 3.29

Although Fundamentalist minister Billy Sunday drew thousands of listeners to his radio program, he was also well known for his flamboyant on-stage style that included wild-eyed denunciations of alcohol and its users.

A Media Circus — with Monkeys

The trial turned into a media circus. When the case was opened on July 14, journalists from across the land descended upon the mountain hamlet of Dayton. Preachers and fortune seekers filled the streets. Entrepreneurs sold everything from food to Bibles to stuffed monkeys. The trial became the first ever to be broadcast on radio.

Scopes himself played a rather small role in the case: the trial was reduced to a verbal contest between Darrow and Bryan. When Judge John Raulston refused to admit expert testimony on the validity of evolutionary theory, Darrow lost his best defense.

He decided that if he was not permitted to validate Darwin, his best shot was to attack the literal interpretation of the Bible. The climax of the trial came when Darrow asked Bryan to take the stand as an expert on the Bible. Darrow hammered Bryan with tough questions on his strict acceptance of several Bible's stories from the creation of Eve

from Adam's rib to the swallowing of Jonah by a whale.

In the following famous excerpt from the trial transcript, Darrow questions Bryan about the flood described in the Bible's book of Genesis.

TABLE 3.1:

DARROW: *But what do you think that the Bible itself says? Do you know how that estimate (of the year the flood occurred) was arrived at?*

BRYAN: *I never made a calculation.*

DARROW: *A calculation from what?*

BRYAN: *I could not say.*

DARROW: *From the generations of man?*

BRYAN: *I would not want to say that.*

DARROW: *What do you think?*

BRYAN: *I could not say.*

DARROW: *From the generations of man?*

BRYAN: *I would not want to say that.*

DARROW: *What do you think?*

BRYAN: *I do not think about things I don't think about.*

DARROW: *Do you think about things you do think about?*

BRYAN: *Well, sometimes.*

WHO MADE WHO LOOK LIKE A MONKEY

While on the witness stand, William Jennings Bryan frustrated Darrow by not directly answering the defense attorney's questions. Bryan was a Christian, but he did not necessarily interpret the Bible literally. He would not give in, however, to Darrow on the subject of miracles. Bryan believed that miracles happen, though he could not explain how.

The "Great Commoner" felt it important for an articulate defender of the Bible to speak on its behalf. At one point in the testimony, Bryan claimed that the defense had "no other purpose than ridiculing every Christian who believes in the Bible."

Bryan was not opposed to science. He was well regarded in some scientific circles and belonged to several national science organizations.

Darrow's Defense

The key to Clarence Darrow's defense strategy was to have scientists testify. On the trial's sixth day, **JUDGE RAULSTON** stated, "It is not within the province of the court under these issues to decide and determine which is true, the story of divine creation as taught in the Bible, or the story of the creation of man as taught by evolution." In short, no experts were needed to understand the simple language of the Butler law. Darrow's scientific experts were barred from testifying. By day's end, the sardonic Darrow had been charged with contempt of court.

The trial's seventh day featured charged exchanges between Darrow and Bryan, who was on the stand. But on the trial's eighth day, Judge Raulston ruled that Bryan's testimony would not be allowed to stand on the record.

It was clear to Darrow that all was lost in this courtroom. In order to appeal the case to a higher court, Darrow asked the jury to find his client guilty. On July 21, 1925, it did.

It is interesting to speculate how history would have played out had Bryan been able to examine Darrow on the witness stand, which was Bryan's intention. But the trial concluded before Bryan had the chance.

Neither lawyer came out looking like a monkey.

The jury sided with the law. Clearly, Scopes was in violation of Tennessee statute by teaching that humans descended

from monkeys. He was fined \$100 and released. But the battle that played out before the nation proved a victory for supporters of evolutionary theory. A later court dismissed the fine imposed on Scopes, though in the short term, the antievolution law was upheld.

Fundamental Christians were down but not out. Through the radio airwaves, ministers such as **BILLY SUNDAY** reached audiences of thousands. **AIMEE SEMPLE MCPHERSON** of California preached her fundamentalist message over loudspeakers to arena-sized crowds. At one point, she used a giant electric sports scoreboard to illustrate the triumph of good over evil, foreshadowing generations of televangelists who would follow her lead.

Clearly, the 1920s did not see the end to these conflicts or the answers to their major questions.

- [The 1925 Scopes "Monkey Trial"](#)
 - [Famous Trials in American History: TN v. Scopes](#)
-

3.9 Native Americans and the United States

Congress Grants Citizenship to All Native Americans Born in the U.S. - June 2, 1924

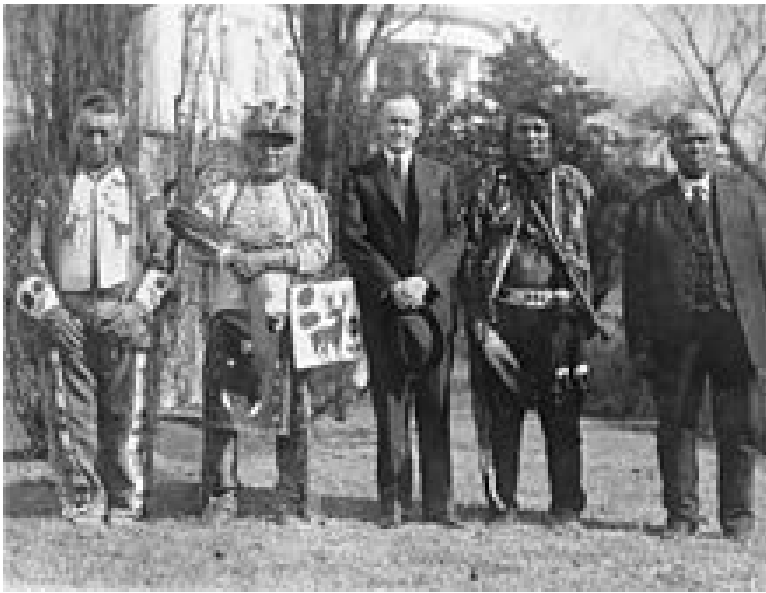


FIGURE 3.30

U.S. President Calvin Coolidge with four Osage Indians after Coolidge signed the bill granting Indians full citizenship.

Native Americans have long struggled to retain their culture. Until 1924, Native Americans were not citizens of the United States. Many Native Americans had, and still have, separate nations within the U.S. on designated reservation land. But on June 2, 1924, Congress granted citizenship to all Native Americans born in the U.S. Yet even after the Indian Citizenship Act, some Native Americans weren't allowed to vote because the right to vote was governed by state law. Until 1957, some states barred Native Americans from voting.

At the time of the Indian Citizenship Act, an act called the Dawes Severalty Act shaped U.S. Indian policy. Since 1887, the government had encouraged Native Americans to become more like mainstream America. Hoping to turn Indians into farmers, the federal government gave out tribal lands to individuals in 160-acre parcels. Unclaimed or "surplus" land was sold, and the money was used to establish Indian schools. In them, Native American children learned reading, writing, and social habits of mainstream America. By 1932, the sale of unclaimed land and allotted land resulted in the loss of two-thirds of the 138 million acres Native Americans had held prior to the Act.

A 1928 study known as the Meriam Report assessed the problems of Native Americans. The report revealed to the government that its policies had oppressed Native Americans and destroyed their culture and society. The people suffered from poverty, exploitation and discrimination. This study spurred the passage of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act. This Act returned some of the surplus land to Native Americans and urged tribes to engage in active self-government. The U.S. government invested in the development of health care, education and community structure. Quality of life on Indian lands improved. Today some Native Americans run successful businesses, while others still live in poverty.

- [Native American Citizenship](#)
- [Native Americans, 1920s](#)
- [A New Deal for Native Americans](#)

- [Home Movies: Native Americans \(1920s, Kodacolor\)](#)
 - [Voters - Native Americans - Elections the American Way](#)
 - [Cultural Survival vs. Forced Assimilation: the renewed war](#)
 - [Assimilation Through Education: Indian Boarding Schools in ...](#)
-

3.10 The Harlem Renaissance

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE



FIGURE 3.31

The Savoy Ballroom in Harlem in 1926 was The Place and Lindy Hop was The Dance!

It was time for a cultural celebration. African Americans had endured centuries of slavery and the struggle for abolition. The end of bondage had not brought the promised land many had envisioned. Instead, **WHITE SUPREMACY** was quickly, legally, and violently restored to the New South, where ninety percent of African Americans lived. Starting in about 1890, African Americans migrated to the North in great numbers. This **GREAT MIGRATION** eventually relocated hundreds of thousands of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North. Many discovered they had shared common experiences in their past histories and their uncertain present circumstances. Instead of wallowing in self-pity, the recently dispossessed ignited an explosion of cultural pride. Indeed, African American culture was reborn in the **HARLEM RENAISSANCE**.

The Great Migration

The Great Migration began because of a "push" and a "pull." Disenfranchisement and Jim Crow laws led many African Americans to hope for a new life up north. Hate groups and hate crimes cast alarm among African American families of the Deep South. The promise of owning land had not materialized. Most blacks toiled as sharecroppers trapped in an endless cycle of debt. In the 1890s, a boll weevil blight damaged the cotton crop throughout the region, increasing the despair. All these factors served to push African Americans to seek better lives. The booming northern economy forged the pull. Industrial jobs were numerous, and factory owners looked near and far for sources of cheap labor.

Unfortunately, northerners did not welcome African Americans with open arms. While the legal systems of the

northern states were not as obstructionist toward African American rights, the prejudice among the populace was as acrimonious. White laborers complained that African Americans were flooding the employment market and lowering wages. Most new migrants found themselves segregated by practice in run down urban slums. The largest of these was Harlem. Writers, actors, artists, and musicians glorified African American traditions, and at the same time created new ones.

Writers and Actors

The most prolific writer of the Harlem Renaissance was **LANGSTON HUGHES**. Hughes cast off the influences of white poets and wrote with the rhythmic meter of blues and jazz. **CLAUDE MCKAY** urged African Americans to stand up for their rights in his powerful verses. **JEAN TOOMER** wrote plays and short stories, as well as poems, to capture the spirit of his times. Book publishers soon took notice and patronized many of these talents. **ZORA NEALE HURSTON** was noticed quickly with her moving novel, *THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD*. Music met prose in the form of musical comedy. The 1921 production of *SHUFFLE ALONG* is sometimes credited with initiating the movement. Actor **PAUL ROBESON** electrified audiences with his memorable stage performances.

Musicians

No aspect of the Harlem Renaissance shaped America and the entire world as much as jazz. **JAZZ** flouted many musical conventions with its syncopated rhythms and improvised instrumental solos. Thousands of city dwellers flocked night after night to see the same performers. **IMPROVISATION** meant that no two performances would ever be the same. Harlem's **COTTON CLUB** boasted the talents of **DUKE ELLINGTON**. Singers such as **BESSIE SMITH** and **BILLIE HOLIDAY** popularized blues and jazz vocals. **JELLY ROLL MORTON** and **LOUIS ARMSTRONG** drew huge audiences as white Americans as well as African Americans caught jazz fever.

The continuing hardships faced by African Americans in the Deep South and the urban North were severe. It took the environment of the new American city to bring in close proximity some of the greatest minds of the day. Harlem brought notice to great works that might otherwise have been lost or never produced. The results were phenomenal. The artists of the Harlem Renaissance undoubtedly transformed African American culture. But the impact on all American culture was equally strong. For the first time, white America could not look away.

- [The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow . Jim Crow Stories . The Harlem](#)
- [Harlem Renaissance - Black History - HISTORY.com](#)
- [Harlem Renaissance - Literature](#)
- [A Brief Guide to the Harlem Renaissance](#)
- [The American Novel . Literary Timeline . Movements . Harlem](#)

LANGSTON HUGHES

- [Langston Hughes](#)
- [Langston Hughes](#)
- [Harlem Project Langston Hughes](#)
- [Langston Hughes](#)

ZORA NEALE HURSTON

- [Zora Neale Hurston and the Harlem Renaissance](#)
- [The Harlem Renaissance: Zora Neale Hurston's First Story](#)
- [Zora Neale Hurston, pre-eminent Harlem Renaissance author](#)



FIGURE 3.32

Langston Hughes



FIGURE 3.33

Zora Neale Hurston Holding the Book "American Stuff"

- [Zora Neale Hurston](#)

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON



FIGURE 3.34

James Weldon Johnson

- [James Weldon Johnson's Life and Career](#)
- [NAACP History: James Weldon Johnson](#)
- [James Weldon Johnson](#)
- [James Weldon Johnson](#)

DUKE ELLINGTON

- [Duke Ellington](#)
- [Duke Ellington](#)
- [Duke Ellington](#)
- [Duke Ellington - It don't mean a thing \(1943\)](#)
- [PBS - JAZZ A Film By Ken Burns: Selected Artist Biography ...](#)



FIGURE 3.35

Duke Ellington

LOUIS ARMSTRONG



FIGURE 3.36

Louis Armstrong

- [PBS - JAZZ A Film By Ken Burns: Selected Artist Biography ...](#)
- [Louis Armstrong - New Orleans Jazz National Historical ...](#)
- [What a wonderful world - LOUIS ARMSTRONG.](#)
- [Louis Armstrong - Savoy Blues \(1927\)](#)
- [Louis Armstrong: A Cultural Legacy](#)

3.11 The "Lost Generation"

BOOKS

They were called the **LOST GENERATION**. America's most talented writers of the 1920s were completely disillusioned by the world and alienated by the changes in modern America. The ghastly horrors of trench warfare were a testament to human inhumanity. The ability of the human race to destroy itself had never been more evident. The materialism sparked by the Roaring Twenties left many intellectuals empty. Surely there was more to life than middle-class conformity, they pined. Intolerance toward immigrants and socialists led many writers to see America as grossly provincial. Thus the literature of the decade was that of disaffection and withdrawal, and many of America's greatest talents expatriated to Europe in despair.

The Writers



FIGURE 3.37

Typical of the writing of the age were the desolate landscapes of Ernest Hemingway

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD wrote about the excesses of the **JAZZ AGE**. He and his wife **ZELDA** operated among the social elite in New York, Paris, and on the French Riviera. ***THE GREAT GATSBY***, his most famous novel, highlights the opulence of American materialism while harshly criticizing its morality. **ERNEST HEMINGWAY** wrote of disillusioned youths wandering Europe in the wake of World War I in search of meaning in ***THE SUN ALSO RISES***. **T.S. ELIOT** commented on the emptiness of American life in his epic poem ***THE WASTE LAND***. American theater earned worldwide acclaim in the 1920s. The foremost playwright of this newly respected American genre was **EUGENE O'NEILL**, noted for ***DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS*** and ***A LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT***. The sharpest critic of American middle-class lifestyle was **SINCLAIR LEWIS**. In ***MAIN STREET***, he takes aim on small-town American life. ***BABBITT*** denounced the emptiness of middle-class life in the city. After a string of successful novels, Lewis brought honor to American writers by becoming the first to win a **PULITZER PRIZE** for literature.

- [The American Novel . Literary Timeline . Movements . Lost](#)

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

- [Ernest Hemingway](#)
- [Hemingway on War and Its Aftermath](#)

- [Ernest Hemingway - Biographical](#)

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD



FIGURE 3.38

F. Scott Fitzgerald

- [F. Scott Fitzgerald](#)
 - [Biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald](#)
 - [F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Age of Excess](#)
 - [F. Scott Fitzgerald - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com](#)
 - [F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby](#)
-

3.12 Women of the 1920's and Changing Social Roles

CHANGING SOCIAL ROLES



FIGURE 3.39

Flappers

The 1920s were a period of significant change for women. The 19th amendment was passed in 1920, giving women the right to vote, and women pursued not only family life but careers of their own as well. Young women began to attend large state colleges and universities, and also to stake a claim in their own bodies.

This was the age of the flapper: a new breed of young women in the 1920s who wore short skirts, bobbed their hair, listened to jazz, and flaunted their disdain for socially acceptable behavior by wearing makeup, smoking, driving automobiles, and flouting sexual norms. Flapper fashion was both a trend and a social statement, a deliberate parting of ways with rigid Victorian gender roles, which emphasized plain living, hard work, and religion, to embrace **consumerism** and personal choice.

MARGARET SANGER

In 1913, Sanger worked as a nurse in New York's Lower East Side, often with poor women who were suffering due to frequent **childbirth** and self-induced abortions. Searching for something that would help these women, Sanger visited public libraries, but was unable to find information on contraception. These problems were epitomized in a story that Sanger would later recount in her speeches: while Sanger was working as a nurse, she was called to Sadie Sachs' apartment after Sachs had become extremely ill due to a self-induced abortion. Afterward, Sadie begged the attending doctor to tell her how she could prevent this from happening again, to which the doctor simply gave the advice to remain abstinent. A few months later, Sanger was once again called back to the Sachs' apartment, only this time, Sadie was found dead after yet another self-induced abortion. Sanger would sometimes end the story by

**FIGURE 3.40**

Margaret Sanger

saying, "I threw my nursing bag in the corner and announced...that I would never take another case until I had made it possible for working women in America to have the knowledge to control birth. "

The Woman Rebel

In 1914, Sanger launched "The Woman Rebel," an eight-page monthly newsletter which promoted contraception using the slogan "No Gods, No Masters. " Sanger, collaborating with anarchist friends, coined the term birth control as a more candid alternative to euphemisms such as family limitation. In the early years of Sanger's activism, she viewed birth control as a free speech issue, and when she started publishing "The Woman Rebel," one of her goals was to provoke a legal challenge to the federal [anti-obscenity laws](#) which banned dissemination of information about contraception. Her goal was fulfilled when she was indicted in August 1914, but the prosecutors focused their attention on "The Woman Rebel" articles Sanger had written on assassination and marriage, rather than contraception. Afraid that she might be sent to prison without an opportunity to argue for birth control in court, she fled to England under the alias "Bertha Watson" to avoid arrest. While she was in Europe, Sanger's husband distributed a copy of her pamphlet "Family Limitation," to an undercover postal worker, resulting in a 30 day jail sentence. During her absence, a groundswell of support grew in the United States, and Margaret returned to the United States in October 1915. Noted attorney [Clarence Darrow](#) offered to defend Sanger free of charge, but, bowing to public pressure, the government dropped the charges in early 1916.

On October 16, 1916, Sanger opened a family planning and birth control clinic in Brooklyn, the first of its kind in the United States. Nine days after the clinic opened, Sanger was arrested for breaking a New York state law that prohibited distribution of contraceptives, and went to trial in January 1917. Sanger was convicted; the trial judge held that women did not have "the right to copulate with a feeling of security that there will be no resulting conception. " Sanger was sentenced to 30 days in a workhouse. An initial appeal was rejected, but in a subsequent court proceeding in 1918, the birth control movement won a victory when the New York Court of Appeals issued a ruling which allowed doctors to prescribe contraception.

American Birth Control League

In 1921, Sanger founded the American Birth Control League (ABCL) to enlarge her base of supporters to include the middle class. The founding principles of the ABCL were as follows: We hold that children should be (1) Conceived in love; (2) Born of the mother's conscious desire; (3) And only begotten under conditions which render possible the heritage of health. Therefore we hold that every woman must possess the power and freedom to prevent conception except when these conditions can be satisfied.

Upon learning that physicians were exempt from the law that prohibited the distribution of contraceptive information to women—provided it was prescribed for medical reasons—Sanger established the Clinical Research Bureau (CRB) in 1923 to exploit this loophole. The CRB was the first legal birth control clinic in the United States, and it was staffed entirely by female doctors and social workers. The clinic received funding from the Rockefeller family, which continued to make donations to Sanger’s causes in future decades, but generally made them anonymously to avoid public exposure of the family name.



FIGURE 3.41

Margaret Sanger - flyer

In 1946, Sanger helped found the International Committee on Planned Parenthood, which evolved into the International Planned Parenthood Federation in 1952, and soon became the world’s largest non-governmental international family planning organization. Sanger was the organization’s first president and served in that role until she was 80 years old. Sanger died in 1966, about a year after the event that marked the climax of her 50-year career: the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which legalized birth control in the United States.

- [American Experience | The Pill | People & Events](#)
- [Margaret Sanger](#)
- [The Margaret Sanger Papers Project](#)

FLAPPERS

The battle for suffrage was finally over. After a 72-year struggle, women had won the precious right to vote. The generations of suffragists that had fought for so long proudly entered the political world. Carrie Chapman Catt carried the struggle into voting awareness with the founding of the League of Women Voters. Alice Paul vowed to fight until an **EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT** was added to the Constitution. **MARGARET SANGER** declared that female independence could be accomplished only with proper **BIRTH CONTROL** methods. To their dismay, the daughters of this generation seemed uninterested in these grand causes. As the 1920s roared along, many young women of the age wanted to have fun.

Life of the Flappers

FLAPPERS were northern, urban, single, young, middle-class women. Many held steady jobs in the changing American economy. The clerking jobs that blossomed in the Gilded Age were more numerous than ever. Increasing phone usage required more and more operators. The consumer-oriented economy of the 1920s saw a burgeoning

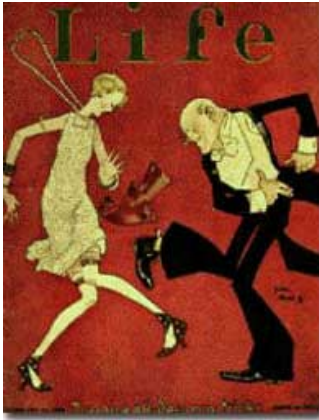


FIGURE 3.42

More than any other illustrator, John Held Jr.'s comic art captured the style and exuberant tenor of the "Decade that Roared."

number of department stores. Women were needed on the sales floor to relate to the most precious customers — other women. But the flapper was not all work and no play.

By night, flappers engaged in the active city nightlife. They frequented jazz clubs and vaudeville shows. Speakeasies were a common destination, as the new woman of the twenties adopted the same carefree attitude toward prohibition as her male counterpart. Ironically, more young women consumed alcohol in the decade it was illegal than ever before. Smoking, another activity previously reserved for men, became popular among flappers. With the political field leveled by the Nineteenth Amendment, women sought to eliminate social double standards. Consequently, the flapper was less hesitant to experiment sexually than previous generations. **SIGMUND FREUD**'s declaration that the libido was one of the most natural of human needs seemed to give the green light to explore.

The Flapper Look

The flapper had an unmistakable look. The long locks of Victorian women lay on the floors of beauty parlors as young women cut their hair to shoulder length. Hemlines of dresses rose dramatically to the knee. The cosmetics industry flowered as women used make-up in large numbers. Flappers bound their chests and wore high heels. **CLARA BOW**, Hollywood's "It" Girl, captured the flapper image for the nation to see.

Many women celebrated the age of the flapper as a female declaration of independence. Experimentation with new looks, jobs, and lifestyles seemed liberating compared with the socially silenced woman in the Victorian Age. The flappers chose activities to please themselves, not a father or husband. But critics were quick to elucidate the shortcomings of flapperism. The political agenda embraced by the previous generation was largely ignored until the feminist revival of the 1960s. Many wondered if flappers were expressing themselves or acting like men. Smoking, drinking, and sexual experimentation were characteristic of the modern young woman. Short hair and bound chests added to the effect. One thing was certain: Despite the potential political and social gains or losses, the flappers of the 1920s sure managed to have a good time.

- [The 1920s Woman](#)
- [The History of the Flapper, Part 1: A Call for Freedom](#)

CHANGING ROLES OF WOMEN IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

- [New Women](#)
- [Decade by Decade: 1920s - Women of the Century](#)
- [Working and Voting — Women in the 1920s](#)
- [The New Woman and the Politics of the 1920s](#)

3.13 The Rise of Celebrity and Popular Culture

NEW HEROES

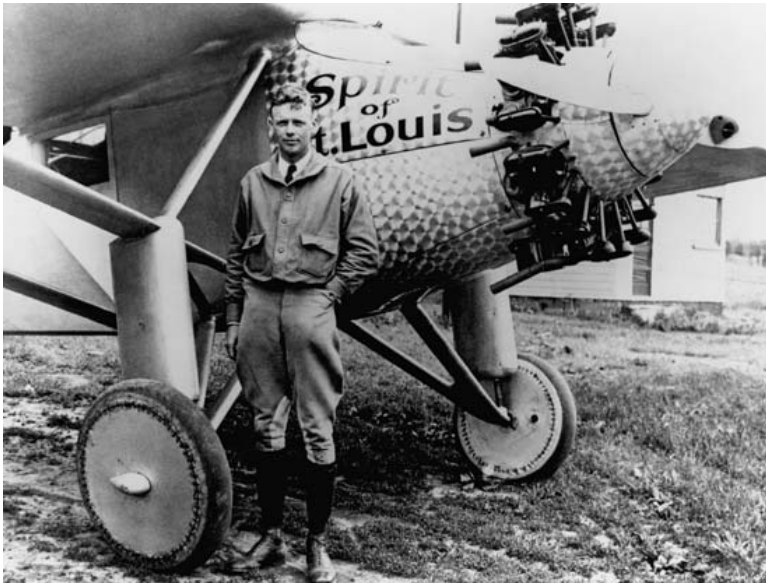


FIGURE 3.43

Lindbergh and the "Spirit of St. Louis"

The Roaring Twenties was a time of great change. As exciting as dynamic times may seem, such turmoil generates uncertainty. Sometimes, in an effort to obscure tensions, people seek outlets of escape. A coping strategy in a time of great uncertainty is to find role models who embody tried and true values. National heroes heretofore unknown to peacetime America began to dominate American consciousness.

No individual personified the All-American hero more than **CHARLES LINDBERGH**. His courage was displayed to the nation when he flew his *SPIRIT OF ST. LOUIS* from New York to Paris, becoming the first man to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. National and international news was hidden in the back pages of the major newspapers while Lindbergh stole the front pages. Confetti flew and bugles sounded in New York City when he returned successfully, and President Coolidge hosted a gala celebration. There was more to Lindbergh's appeal than his bravery. Throughout the ordeal, Lindbergh maintained a hometown modesty. He declined dozens of endorsement opportunities, ever refusing to sell out. Spectator sports provided opportunities for others to grab the limelight. **TY COBB** and **BABE RUTH** were role models for hundreds of thousands of American boys. Fortunately, Cobb's outward racism and Ruth's penchant for drinking and womanizing were shielded from admiring youngsters. Football had **RED GRANGE**, and boxing had **JACK DEMPSEY**. **GERTRUDE EDERLE** impressed Americans by becoming the first woman to swim the English Channel. These heroes gave Americans, anxious about the uncertain future and rapidly fading past, a much needed sense of stability.

BABE RUTH

- [Babe Ruth](#)
- [New York Yankees announce purchase of Babe Ruth](#)
- [Babe Ruth Biography - Facts, Birthday, Life Story](#)



FIGURE 3.44

George Herman Ruth - "the Babe"

- [VIDEO: Rare footage of Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig from 1925](#)

LOU GEHRIG



FIGURE 3.45

Lou Gehrig

- [Lou Gehrig](#)
- [Lou Gehrig Biography - Facts, Birthday, Life Story](#)
- [What is ALS?](#)
- [Greatest Sports Legends](#)

JACK DEMPSEY

- [Jack Dempsey Biography - Facts, Birthday, Life Story](#)
- [The Official Site of Jack Dempsey](#)
- [Jack Dempsey and Jess Willard- The Worst Beating in ...](#)
- [Iconic Dempsey exemplified the Roaring '20s](#)

RED GRANGE

- [Red Grange Biography - Facts, Birthday, Life Story](#)
- [Harold "Red" Grange](#)
- ["Red" Grange](#)
- [Red Grange Becomes a Football Legend](#)



FIGURE 3.46

Jack Dempsey



FIGURE 3.47

Red Grange

BESSIE SMITH



FIGURE 3.48

Bessie Smith

- [Bessie Smith Biography - Facts, Birthday, Life Story](#)

- [PBS - JAZZ A Film By Ken Burns: Selected Artist Biography ...](#)
- [Bessie Smith \(Nobody Knows You When You're Down And ...](#)
- [Bessie Smith](#)
- [Bessie Smith](#)
- [Blues singer Bessie Smith, killed in Mississippi car wreck, is ...](#)

BILLY SUNDAY



FIGURE 3.49

Billy Sunday

- [Billy Sunday Warns America \(1929\)](#)
- [Billy Sunday On-line](#)
- [Billy Sunday](#)
- [Hitting a Home Run for Jesus](#)

CHARLES LINDBERGH



FIGURE 3.50

Charles Lindbergh

- [Charles Lindbergh Biography - Facts, Birthday, Life Story](#)
- [Charles Lindbergh - Historic Missourians](#)

- [The Lindbergh Story](#)
 - [May 21, 1927 | Charles Lindbergh Flies Solo Across the ...](#)
-

3.14 Unique Sounds of Music Emerge in Tennessee

BLUES MUSIC IN MEMPHIS



FIGURE 3.51

Memphis, TN

- [Historic Memphis Beale Street and The Blues](#)
- [The Blues . Blues Road Trip . Memphis and St. Louis | PBS](#)
- [Memphis Blues](#)
- ["Walking in Memphis"](#)

THE GRAND OLE OPRY

- [Grand Ole Opry History](#)
- [The Grand Ole Opry begins broadcasting](#)
- [Grande Ole Opry](#)
- [Grand Ole Opry](#)

W.C. HANDY

- [WC Handy Biography - Facts, Birthday, Life Story](#)
- [WC Handy - Memphis Blues](#)
- [WC Handy](#)
- [WC Handy, Father of The Blues](#)



FIGURE 3.52

The Grand Ole Opry



FIGURE 3.53

'In Memory of W.C. Handy, Father of the Blues' Beale Street Memphis (TN)

WSM

- [WSM Radio](#)
- [About :: WSM 650AM "The Legend"](#)
- [WSM Radio](#)
- [WSM](#)



FIGURE 3.54
Hank Williams and WSM Radio
