

The Great Depression and World War Two

The Great Depression (GD)

Early Responses to Depression (1929-1932)

- Causes
 - Over-Speculation: investors did not focus on products but on the price of those goods
 - Buying-on-the-Margin: banks loaned money and people invested it in the Stock Market, relying on increasing stock prices to get the return on their loan
 - Excessive Use of Credit: low interest rates and a belief in the economic boom led people to purchase expensive items with money they didn't have
 - Overproduction of Goods: supply > demand
 - Unequal Distribution of Income: top 5% received 33% of nation's income; as demand for products declined → businesses laid off workers
 - Weak farm economy as crop prices remained low and farmers were in debt
- Economic Collapse
 - US gross domestic product fell by half
 - Consumption, construction, investment decreased; banks and business failed
 - Unemployment rose, reaching 25% by 1932
 - Federal Reserve Board wanted to maintain the gold standard, and so little was done to stabilize banks or money supply → Rush on banks as people panicked and went to withdraw their savings
 - Depression reached Europe, which had never fully recovered from WWI
- Hoover's Response
 - Believed prosperity would return quickly and so did not respond to the econ. situation
 - Adherence to the Gold Standard kept the GD long and severe
 - **Smoot-Hawley Tariff**: A high tariff enacted in 1930 during the Great Depression. By taxing imported goods, Congress hoped to stimulate American manufacturing, but the tariff triggered retaliatory tariffs in other countries, which further hindered global trade and led to greater economic contraction.
 - Feared that gov assistance would destroy the self-reliance of Americans
 - Urged business not to cut wages and unions not to strike
 - Encouraged Americans to work harder
 - Realized by 1931 that gov intervention was necessary, but wanted it to come from state/local levels
 - Received \$2 billion from Congress and gave the aid to businesses in hopes that economic stability would "trickle down" to the working man
 - **Reconstruction Finance Corporation**: federally funded, gov owned business to give emergency loans to key businesses; lent too cautiously
 - **Federal Emergency Relief Administration**: provided gov \$ to bail out large corporations and businesses

- Hoover Dam construction
- Federal Farm Board: authorized to help farmers by stabilizing crop prices
- Rising Discontent
 - Farmers' Holiday Assoc cut off supplies to urban areas as protest for low crop prices
 - Violent strikes in urban areas
 - **Bonus Army:** A group of 15,000 unemployed World War I veterans who set up camps near the Capitol building in 1932 to demand immediate payment of pension awards due to be paid in 1945.
 - Hoover ordered it crushed by US Army → decreased Hoover's popularity
- 1932 Election
 - Republican Hoover v. Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt; FDR won

New Deal

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) and the First 100 Days
 - **Fireside chats:** A series of informal radio addresses Franklin Roosevelt made to the nation in which he explained New Deal initiatives → instilled trust and confidence in the public
 - Prohibition repealed
 - **Hundred Days:** first few months of FDR's administration in which Congress enacted fifteen major bills that focused primarily on four problems: banking failures, agricultural overproduction, the business slump, and soaring unemployment.
 - Banking Reform
 - **Bank Holiday:** banks closed for reorganization on a more stable basis
 - Successful, and public deposited its money back into banks
 - **Emergency Banking Act:** closed and restructured banks to stabilize them
 - **Glass-Steagall Act:** A 1933 law that created the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), which insured deposits up to \$2,500; prohibited banks from making risky, unsecured investments with customers' deposits.
 - Removed US Treasury from Gold Standard in 1933
 - **Banking Act of 1935:** authorized President to appoint a new Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System = placed control of interest rates and money market policy under control of federal gov, not private bankers
 - Agriculture and Manufacturing
 - GD → overproduction in Agriculture and underproduction in industry
 - **Agriculture Adjustment Act (1933):** cut agricultural production to raise crop prices and thus farmers' income
 - Provided cash subsidies to farmers who reduced production, though these subsidies went mainly to medium-large scale farms
 - **National Recovery Administration:** Federal agency established in June 1933 to promote industrial recovery during the Great Depression. It encouraged

- industrialists to voluntarily adopt codes that defined fair working conditions, set prices, and minimized competition.
 - Est. self-governing private associations in 600 industries, which regulated itself by agreeing on prices and production quotas
 - Eliminated overproduction and stabilized prices
 - Unemployment Relief
 - **Federal Emergency Relief Admin:** provided federal funds for relief programs
 - **Public Works Admin (PWA):** A New Deal construction program established by Congress in 1933 to allot money to state and local governments. Designed to put people back to work, the PWA built large public works projects
 - **Civilian Construction Corps:** Federal relief program that provided jobs to millions of unemployed young men who built national infrastructure
 - Housing Crisis
 - During 1920s, people purchased houses on credit → fear of foreclosure
 - Home Owners Loan Co.: refinanced mortgages
 - **Federal Housing Admin:** An agency established by the Federal Housing Act of 1934 that refinanced home mortgages for mortgage holders facing possible foreclosure.
 - *Changed mortgage system and set foundation for expansion of home ownership in post-war decades
- New Deal Under Attack
 - Critics on Right
 - **Liberty League:** A group of Republican business leaders and conservative Democrats who banded together to fight what they called the "reckless spending" and "socialist" reforms of the New Deal.
 - **National Association of Manufacturers:** An association of industrialists and business leaders opposed to government regulation. In the era of the New Deal, the group promoted free enterprise and capitalism through a publicity campaign of radio programs, motion pictures, billboards, and direct mail.
 - Conservatives disliked: increased gov spending, the higher tax rates; felt that gov relief gave the poor no incentive to work harder to rise out of poverty
 - Critics on Populist Left
 - Wanted more reforms and gov intervention on behalf of ordinary Americans
 - **Townsend Plan:** A plan proposed by Francis Townsend in 1933 that would give \$200 a month (about \$3,300 today) to citizens over the age of sixty if they retired and yielded their jobs to young people
 - Townsend Clubs sprang up across the country in support of the plan, mobilizing mass support for old-age pensions.
 - Huey Long "Share Our Wealth Society" – super tax the rich to provide for poor
 - Felt that gov policy towards business was too favorable; blamed business practices for the crash and Depression

- **Second New Deal**
 - As attacks on New Deal increased, FDR moved farther to the political left
 - **Welfare State**: A term applied to industrial democracies that adopt various government-guaranteed social-welfare programs. The creation of Social Security and other measures of the Second New Deal fundamentally changed American society and established a national welfare state for the first time.
 - Revenue Act of 1935: substantial tax increases on corporate profits and the wealthy
 - ***1st New Deal = econ recovery; 2nd New Deal = social justice and creation of safety net**
 - **Wagner Act (1935)**: upheld the right of industrial workers to join unions and established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), a federal agency with the authority to protect workers from employer coercion and to guarantee collective bargaining.
 - **Social Security Act (1935)**: old-age pensions for workers; a joint federal-state system of compensation for unemployed workers; and a program of payments to widowed mothers and the blind, deaf, and disabled.
 - **Works Progress Admin**: Federal New Deal program established in 1935 that provided government-funded public works jobs to millions of unemployed Americans during the Great Depression in areas ranging from construction to the arts.
 - Classical Liberalism: political ideology of individual liberty, private property, competitive market economy, free trade, and limited government
 - Championed by late-19th c. liberals who called for elite governance and questioned the advisability of full democratic participation
 - **Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)**: A commission established by Congress in 1934 to regulate the stock market. The commission had broad powers to determine how stocks and bonds were sold to the public, to set rules for margin (credit) transactions, and to prevent stock sales by those with inside information about corporate plans.
 - **New Deal Liberalism**: to preserve individual liberty, gov must assist the needy and guarantee the basic welfare of its citizens
- New Deal and the Arts
 - New Deal admin encouraged artists to create projects interesting to whole community
 - *American artists redefined their relationship to society
 - WPA's Federal Art Project, Federal Music Project, Federal Writers' Project
- 1936 Election
 - New Deal → broader support base of Democratic Party, including: organized labor, MW farmers, African Americans in Northern cities, and middle class families concerned about unemployment and old-age security, and underclass
 - Republican Alfred Landon v. FDR; FDR won easily though his 2nd term = stalemate
- Court Battle
 - SC struck down parts of New Deal legislation, including: Agriculture Adjustment Act, Railroad Retirement Act, and the debt-relief law Frazier-Lemke Act
 - FDR wanted to "pack" the Court with justices sympathetic to his New Deal

- Judicial Reorganization Bill (1937): proposed that the president add a new justice for every member over 70
 - Rejected by Congress who believed FDR was messing with checks and balances
- **Roosevelt Recession:** A recession from 1937 to 1938 that occurred after President Roosevelt cut the federal budget.
- **Keynesian economics:** The theory, developed by British economist John Maynard Keynes in the 1930s, that purposeful government intervention in the economy (through lowering or raising taxes, interest rates, and government spending) can affect the level of overall economic activity and thereby prevent severe depressions and runaway inflation.
 - * won acceptance as WWII defense spending ended the GD
 - *By 1939 the era of change was over as a conservative coalition of S. Democrats, rural Republicans, and industrial interests blocked and impeded social legislation
 - *Shift from Laissez-Faire to Keynesian economics to combat Depression

New Deal's Impact on Society

- Increase in civilians employed by federal gov; deficit and expenditure of fed gov skyrocketed; New Deal inspired democratic visions among ordinary citizens
- Organized Labor
 - Shrunk during 1920s, but increased again during New Deal; membership tripled
 - Alliance with Democratic party
 - *Unions never enrolled a majority of American wageworkers; Anti-Union employer groups still powerful
- Women
 - Policymakers viewed GD as a crisis of male breadwinners, and so New Deal did NOT challenge gender inequalities; women still paid less than men, despite their increased numbers in workforce
 - New Deal measures enhanced women's welfare, but few addressed their specific needs
 - FDR administration did accept women in high ranks of government
 - Eleanor Roosevelt worked to expand positions for women in politics, education, unions
- African Americans
 - FDR was the most popular president among African Americans since Abraham Lincoln, and blacks switched their political alliance in 1936 from Republican to Democrat
 - While blacks did receive some benefits from New Deal relief programs, and the number of African Americans in federal office increased, the New Deal programs still reflected racist attitudes
 - No anti-lynching laws were implemented; lynchings increased as hard times increased racial tensions
 - Agriculture Adjustment Act hurt poor African American farmers
 - CCC segregated and underhired blacks
- Native Americans

- **Indian Reorganization Act:** A 1934 law that reversed the Dawes Act of 1887. Through the law, Indians won a greater degree of religious freedom, and tribal governments regained their status as semi-sovereign dependent nations.
 - John Collier of Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Promoted Indian self-governance through constitutions and democratic tribal councils, though not all tribes benefitted
- Congress continued to interfere with Indian affairs and retained finances of reservations
- West
 - By 1920s agriculture in California was big business, employing transient laborers
 - New Deal did NOT fundamentally improve the migrant farm labor system, but Mexicans joined New Deal Coalition bc of its commitment to ordinary citizens
 - **National Youth Administration:** employed young people from families on relief and sponsored school programs; important in SW cities
 - **Mexican American Movement:** youth-focused organization, received assistance from New Deal
 - Growth of white migrant workers and competition for jobs → racial discrimination and many Mexican-Americans returned to Mexico
 - GD decreased farm prices and racial discrimination excluded Japanese Americans from nonfarm jobs → 20% returned to Japan
 - Chinese Americans worse off than Japanese Americans, and were excluded from most federal programs (including New Deal) bc of Chinese Exclusion Act
 - Filipinos: increasing numbers migrated to America in the '20s to work as laborers on farms, but the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 cut off Filipino immigration

Environment

- FDR'S "**Gospel of Conservation:**" making the land and its natural resources serve human needs
 - National policy stressed scientific land management and ecological balance
- **Dust Bowl:** A series of dust storms from 1930 to 1941 during which a severe drought afflicted the semiarid states of Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Arkansas, and Kansas.
 - Result of farmers destroying the natural ecology of Great Plains and over-farming it
 - Mass exodus of farmers out of Great Plains
- **Tennessee Valley Authority:** An agency funded by Congress in 1933 that integrated flood control, reforestation, electricity generation, and agricultural and industrial development in the Tennessee Valley area.
 - Step towards modernizing the South
 - Effort to keep farmers on the land by enhancing quality of rural life
 - **Rural Electrification Administration:** An agency established in 1935 to promote nonprofit farm cooperatives that offered loans to farmers to install power lines.
- Grand Coulee
 - The West had less people but was the fastest growing region

- New Deal’s attention to environment laid groundwork for Post-WWII expansion of tourism
- Grand Coulee Dam on Columbia River in WA state was completed in 1941 and was the largest electricity producing structure in the world

Legacies of New Deal

- Social Welfare State where people were more dependent on the gov, the gov was more involved in social life, and there was more regulation of business and finance → changed America’s relationship to the federal government
- New Deal was a new form of liberalism with an emphasis on federal activism
- Increased the responsibility of the national gov for the welfare of its ordinary citizens
- Unemployment remained in double digits despite New Deal
- Minorities reaped few or no benefits from the New Deal

New Deal Programs:

Relief	Reform	Recovery
– Civilian Conservation Corps	– Emergency Banking Act	– Agriculture Adjustment Act
– Federal Emergency Relief Admin	– Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	– Tennessee Valley Authority
– Public Works Admin	– Securities and Exchange Commission	– Federal Housing Admin
– Works Progress Admin	– Wagner Act	– Rural Electrification Admin
– Social Security Act		– National Recovery Admin

Foreign Policy Leading up to WWII

- American foreign policy objectives after WWI= promoting and maintaining peace
- **Washington Conference** (1921-1922): 8 world powers agreed to set limits on stockpiling weapons and reaffirmed China’s Open Door Policy
- **Kellogg-Briand Pact** (1928): condemned war as a means of foreign policy; provided no enforcement of its clauses
- **Good Neighbor Policy** (1934): “replaced” America’s interventionist policy in Latin America; repealed Platt Amendment
 - US achieved its foreign policy objectives through economic coercion and support of (sometimes abusive and corrupt) Pro-American leaders in Latin America
- Protectionism: high tariffs to protect domestic industry was implemented by Republican presidents throughout the 1920s
- *FDR used economic leverage as a foreign policy tool
 - **Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act**: president could lower tariffs if he felt it would achieve foreign policy goals

- **Most Favored Nation (MFN) trade status:** foreign policy tool that gave favorable nations the lowest tariff rate
- **Nye Commission:** led by Senator Gerald Nye; its 1936 report repealed unwholesome activities by American weapons manufacturers, many of which had lobbied intensely for entry into WWI, others had bribed foreign officials, and some were supplying Fascist governments with weapons
 - Fueled isolationist sentiment and disenchantment with WWI
 - Congress passed Neutrality Acts (see below) in response

World War Two

- Began in Asia with Japan's 1937 invasion of China, and in Europe with Germany invasion of Poland (Blitzkrieg) in 1939
- FDR and Churchill viewed the war as defense of democratic values; represented a struggle btwn democracy and fascism; war to maintain colonies and overseas influence
- In America, WWII
 - Ended Great Depression
 - Expanded the scope and authority of the government
 - Racial politics and gender roles shifted under wartime migration and labor shortages

Road to War

- GD and Treaty of Versailles led to the appeal of Fascism in Germany and Italy, as both were stripped of their colonial possessions and Germany bankrupt from paying war reparations
- **Fascism:** A governmental system led by a dictator having complete power, forcibly suppressing opposition and criticism, regimenting all industry, commerce, etc., and emphasizing an aggressive nationalism and often racism.
 - Japan
 - Expansionary foreign policy to acquire raw goods and an overseas market for its industrialization
 - 1931 occupied Manchuria, by 1937 invaded China
 - *League of Nations condemned this but did nothing to stop it
 - Italy
 - Benito Mussolini in power 1922
 - 1935 invaded Ethiopia
 - Germany
 - **National Socialist (Nazi) Party:** political party led by Adolf Hitler, who became chancellor of Germany in 1933. The party's ascent was fueled by huge World War I reparation payments, economic depression, fear of communism, labor unrest, and rising unemployment.
 - *Mein Kampf* (1925): political manifesto, "My Struggle", where Hitler announced his plan to take power in Germany, eliminate his German political rivals, condemn and vilify the power and influence of Jews, and outline his plans for world domination.

- 1935 rearmed Germany; 1936 sent troops in Rhineland
 - **Rome-Berlin Axis:** political and military alliance formed 1936 btwn Hitler and Mussolini
 - 1936 Germany signed pact to create a military alliance with Japan against Soviet Union
 - 1939 Hitler signed a nonaggression Pact with Soviet Russia
- War Approaches
 - **Neutrality Act of 1935:** Legislation that sought to avoid entanglement in foreign wars while protecting trade. It imposed an embargo on selling arms to warring countries and declared that Americans travelling on the ships of belligerent nations did so at their own risk.
 - **“Cash-and-Carry:”** if a warring country wanted to purchase nonmilitary goods from US, it had to pay cash and carry the cargo on its own ships
 - Strong Isolationist sentiments in America
 - **Popular Front:** A small but vocal group of Americans who pushed for greater U.S. involvement in Europe. American Communist Party members, African American civil rights activists, and trade unionists, among other members of the Popular Front coalition, encouraged Roosevelt to take a stronger stand against European fascism
 - **Munich Conference:** A conference in Munich held in September 1938 during which Britain and France agreed to allow Germany to annex the Sudetenland (a German-speaking border area of Czechoslovakia) in return for Hitler's pledge to seek no more territory. Effort at “Appeasement”
- Germany Advances
 - Hitler seized Czechoslovakia; Poland in 1939; Denmark and Norway 1940; France
 - **Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies:** A group of interventionists who believed in engaging with, rather than withdrawing from, international developments. Interventionists became increasingly vocal in 1940 as war escalated in Europe.
 - **America First Committee:** formed by Isolationists to keep America out of the war
- America’s Response
 - America began to arm itself despite declared neutrality
 - Increase in defense spending, peacetime draft, National Defense Advisory Commission
 - **Four Freedoms:** Identified by Franklin D. Roosevelt as the most basic human rights: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.
 - The president used these ideas of freedom to justify support for England during WW2, which in turn pulled US into the war.
 - **Lend-Lease Act (1941):** Legislation in 1941 that enabled Britain to obtain arms from the United States without cash but with the promise to reimburse the United States when the war ended. The act reflected Roosevelt's desire to assist Britain in any way possible, short of war.
 - **Arsenal of Democracy:** Expression used by FDR one year before Pearl Harbor to describe the U.S. mission in the war: to produce the weapons and materials the UK would use to defeat Nazi Germany so the U.S. wouldn't have to send its own forces into the war.

- Extended to Soviets in 1941 when Hitler abandoned his pact with Russia
 - *Lend-Lease Act = unofficial entrance of US into WWII
- **Atlantic Charter:** A press released by FDR and Churchill in August 1941 calling for economic cooperation, national self-determination, and guarantees of political stability after the war.
 - Ideological foundation of Western cause
 - Drew upon Wilson's 14 Points and FDR's 4 Freedoms
- **Pearl Harbor:** naval base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, that was attacked by Japanese bombers on December 7, 1941; more than 2,400 Americans were killed. The following day, President Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war against Japan.
 - Germany and Italy then declared war on US; US declared war on them

Organizing for Victory

- Shift from consumer economy to military production
- **War Powers Act (1941):** The law that gave President Roosevelt unprecedented control over all aspects of the war effort during WW2.
 - Marked beginning of the far-reaching use of executive authority that characterized the latter half of the 1900s
- Financing WWII
 - Defense mobilization ended the Great Depression
 - By 1943 2/3 of the economy was directly involved in the war effort
 - **Revenue Act of 1942:** An act that expanded the number of people paying income taxes from 3.9 million to 42.6 million. These taxes on personal incomes and business profits paid half the cost of WW2.
 - Borrowing and War Bonds financed the rest of the war
 - Government subsidies of defense industries to encourage military production
 - War Production Board
 - Oversaw mobilization of industry for war effort
 - War contracts with major enterprises
 - Tax advantages for re-equipping existing factories and building new ones for war production; guaranteed corporations a profit; allowed businesses to keep new mills/factories/shipyards after the war
 - *System of allotting contracts, along with suspension of antitrust prosecutions during war → giant corporate enterprises
 - Form core of nation's "military-industrial" complex of Cold War
 - **Labor Disputes Act of 1943:** allowed gov takeover of businesses deemed necessary to national security; gave gov greater authority to settle labor disputes
- Mobilizing the Fighting Force
 - "Civilian-Soldiers" as WWII witnessed the largest number of its citizens serving in the Armed Forces than any other war
 - **Selective Training and Service Act of 1940:** 1st peacetime draft; provided 10 million soldiers for the war effort

- Lead to the modern Selective Service System, which requires males over 18 to register for the draft
- Army still segregated African Americans, but Mexican Americans and Natives were not
- **Code Talkers:** Native American soldiers trained to use native languages to send out messages in battle during WW2; gave the Allies an advantage as the Axis powers never cracked the codes
- *Military reflected the strengths and weaknesses of a diverse, fractious society
 - Revealed appalling levels of health, fitness, education among military volunteers
→ reformers to call for improved literacy and nutrition
- **Workers and War Effort**
 - Labor shortage as working-age citizens joined military
 - Women and African Americans found higher-paying jobs in positions unavailable to them prior to WWII
 - Women
 - Enlisted in military; nurses
 - Women's Army Corps and Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services
 - Could not serve in combat or command men
 - **Rosie the Riveter** = new image of working woman to encourage women to take jobs in defense industry
 - Women = 36% of workforce in 1945; 24% in 1940
 - *War work did NOT free women from traditional expectations and limitations
 - New opportunities with old constraints
 - After the war women were encouraged to return to home and yield their jobs to returning soldiers, but many refused or could not afford to do so
 - Women's participation in paid labor force contributed to major changes in family life in post-war decades
 - War Time Civil Rights
 - **Double V Campaign:** campaign by black newspapers and civil rights for victory over Nazism abroad and racism at home
 - Black labor activism on rise even before 1940
 - **Executive Order 8802:** prohibited "discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin" and established the Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC).
 - FDR agreed to open federal defense jobs to black workers if A. Phillip Randolph would call off the demonstrations he threatened for fair employment practices by hundreds of thousands of dissatisfied blacks in Washington, D.C. during the war.
 - *War time developments laid groundwork for Civil Rights Revolution of 1960s
 - Membership in NAACP increased
 - **Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)** formed, and was important in the 1960s for its direct action protests

- Organized Labor
 - Unions solidified their position as most powerful voice for workers
 - Extended gains made during New Deal
 - No-strike pledge
 - National War Labor Board: est. wages, hours, and working conditions
 - **Smith-Connally Labor Act of 1943**: allowed president to prohibit strikes in defense industries and forbade political contributions by unions
 - Congressional hostility hampered Union movement in postwar years
 - *Organized labor would emerge from WWII more powerful than at any time in US history, but so would its opponents – business and corporation
- Politics in Wartime
 - FDR called for Second Bill of Rights to extend the New Deal by broadening rights to individual security and welfare
 - **Servicemen's Readjustment Act (1944): GI Bill**; legislation authorizing government to provide WWII veterans with funds for education, housing, health care, as well as loans to start businesses and buy homes

Life on the Home Front

- People at home took on wartime responsibilities, due to patriotism and propaganda
 - Civilian defense committees, rationing, recycling, "victory gardens"
- **Office of War Information**: disseminated news and promoted patriotism
 - Urged advertising agencies to issue patriotic ads
 - Employed Hollywood to create movies for war propaganda
- Shortage of consumer goods → rationing began 1942 and Black Market developed
- Migration and Wartime Cities
 - Families of soldiers moved to training bases
 - Civilians moved to accept high-paying defense jobs
 - California = largest share of wartime migration as it was the center of defense production for Pacific war
 - New mobility loosened authority of traditional institutions
 - Racial Conflict
 - **Detroit Riots**: 1943 Race riots in Detroit over scarce housing and recreational space for the huge influx of black and white workers in Detroit defense plants.
 - **Zoot Suits**: An oversized suit of clothing in fashion in the 1940s, particularly among young male African Americans and Mexican Americans. In June 1943, a group of white sailors and soldiers in Los Angeles, seeking revenge for an earlier skirmish with Mexican American youths, attacked anyone they found wearing a zoot suit. The violence lasted for days and was later known as the zoot suit riots
 - Gay and Lesbian Communities
 - Some cities developed vibrant gay neighborhoods that became center for gay rights movement of 1960s and 1970s

- Relatively “open” wartime atmosphere
- Japanese Removal
 - WWI = harassment of German Americans; WWII = little condemnation of European Americans; Anti-Japanese fears on West Coast
 - **Executive Order 9066**: authorized the War Department to force Japanese Americans from their West Coast homes and hold them in relocation camps for the rest of the war. Prisoners were moved to hastily built camps in desolate areas in California, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, and Arkansas.
 - Due to the agricultural labor shortage, some were released to work
 - *Hirabayashi v. US* (1943) and *Korematsu v. US* (1944)
 - SC allowed internment of Japanese Americans on basis of “military necessity”
 - Avoided ruling on the constitutionality of such an interment
 - *showed the fragility of civil liberties in wartime

Fighting and Winning the War

- Allies’ Disagreements
 - Allies (Russia, US, GB) disagreed over Atlantic Charter, military strategy and timing
 - Soviet Union bore brunt of fighting
 - **Tehran Conference (1943)**: Churchill and FDR agreed to open a Second Front in France in return for Stalin’s promise to join the fight against Japan; planned D-Day; decided to divide Germany into occupation zones after the war
 - "First front" = war in the East between Nazi Germany and Communist Russia.
 - "Second front" = invasion of France by the U.S. and UK. in 1944
- War in Europe
 - Initially Germany was victorious and advanced deeper into Russia
 - By 1944 Stalin’s troops had driven Germany out of Soviet Union
 - Battle of Stalingrad: 1942-43, Turning Point of WWII. as Allies began to win
 - Churchill’s “Soft-Underbelly” Strategy: Allies to attack Italy, but Italy ousted its Fascist regime only to come under Germany’s control; failed and costly strategy
 - **D-Day**: June 6, 1944, the date of the Allied invasion of northern France. D-Day was the largest amphibious assault in world history. The invasion opened a second front against the Germans and moved the Allies closer to victory in Europe.
 - Troops commanded by General Eisenhower
 - By September Germany was driven out of France and Belgium
 - Battle of the Bulge: Fall 1944. Final German offense in Belgium, before being pushed across Rhine and back into Germany by Allies
 - May 7, 1945 Germany surrendered
 - **Holocaust**: Germany's campaign during World War II to exterminate all Jews living in German-controlled lands, along with other groups the Nazis deemed "undesirable." Despite reports of the ongoing genocide, the Allies did almost nothing to interfere. In all, some 11 million people were killed in the Holocaust, most of them Jews.

- US refused to relax its strict immigration laws to allow Jews entry into US. Anti-Semitism, legacy of immigration restrictions of '20s, and isolationist tendencies of '30s contributed to this
- War in Pacific
 - Japanese expanded into S Pacific and then SE Asia, captured Philippines
 - Racial undertones in both America (Anti-Asian sentiment resurfacing) and Japan (who regarded other Asian countries as inferior)
- Atomic Bomb and End of War
 - Harry Truman assumed the presidency after FDR died April 12, 1945
 - **Manhattan Project:** A top-secret project authorized by Franklin Roosevelt in 1942 to develop an atomic bomb ahead of the Germans. The thousands of Americans who worked on the project at Los Alamos, New Mexico (among other highly secretive sites around the country), succeeded in producing a successful atomic bomb by July 1945.
 - Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima on August 6th, and Nagasaki August 9th
 - Japan surrendered unconditionally August 10th
- Effects of WWII
 - Worldwide: more than 50 million civilians and soldiers killed, ~2.5% of global population
 - Economic and political transformations
 - Cities and industries lay in ruins
 - Colonies stirring for independence
 - Veterans would play a central role in national life during the postwar decades
 - WWII shaped families, politics, foreign policy
 - Civil Rights Movement and Gay Rights Movement had foundations in wartime efforts
 - Yalta Conference (1945): meeting of Allied leaders; redrew world map
 - Shortly thereafter, Russia est. Soviet satellites in E. Europe → Iron Curtain

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