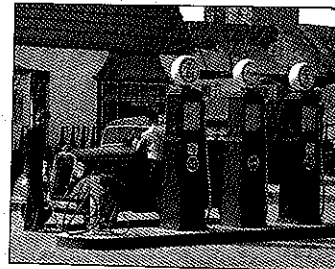


A Turbulent Decade

The Twenties



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Twenties p. 626



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“Was every decent standard being
overthrown?”

Journalist FREDERICK LEWIS ALLEN, commenting
on youthful rebellion in the twenties

On a cold December afternoon in 1926, two young women posed for the camera as they danced on the ledge of a Chicago hotel. With their short skirts, bobbed hair, and heel-kicking dance steps, they displayed a carefree lifestyle that defied the stricter morals embraced by their mothers' generation. The pair embodied the high spirits of a generation ready to put the tragedy of World War I behind them and move forward into the modern era. Novelists and journalists referred to these women as flappers, a decades-old slang term for young girls. Now it was used to describe independent young women who smoked, drank, danced to jazz, and flaunted their sexual liberation by wearing revealing clothes. Rebellious postwar writers made flappers a cultural icon. Their youthful exuberance and daring behavior excited some Americans and created a sense of moral outrage in others.

The flapper controversy was one of many cultural conflicts that turned political in the turbulent twenties. Flappers and the equally controversial birth control movement championed the right of women to take control of their bodies. Other Americans preferred using the government to control behavior. Prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquors became the law of the land, promising to rid the nation of poverty, crime, and disease. To prevent the communist-inspired Russian Revolution from spreading to the United States, the government arrested suspected political radicals and drastically reduced the flow of European immigration. Meanwhile religious Fundamentalists argued that the country was morally adrift and launched a well-publicized crusade against teaching evolution in public schools. African Americans, too, played an important role in changing America's cultural landscape, creating new artistic centers and political movements that challenged the methods of established civil rights leaders.

Putting the Progressive-era faith in trust-busting aside, the government allowed large industrial conglomerates to dominate key industrial sectors, such as steel and automobiles. Still staunchly antiunion, some factory owners nonetheless became more responsive to workers' grievances to reduce labor strife. Mass production, accompanied by mass consumption, spurred the decade's economic prosperity. Cars, suburbs, and asphalt highways soon dotted the American horizon, changing the living habits of millions.

Domestic cultural conflict dominated political discourse in the twenties, yet a distinct foreign policy also took shape during the decade. Despite its refusal to join the League of Nations, the country remained active in world affairs. By exerting rising international influence through diplomacy and foreign aid, Republican presidential administrations offered an alternative way to maintain world peace.

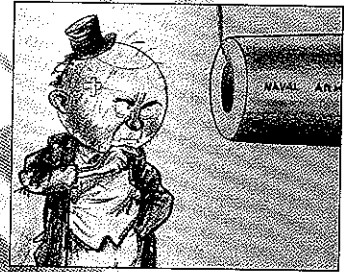
How much of the old order would America jettison or protect as it entered the postwar age? Throughout the twenties Americans held competing visions of what modernity had to offer.



Racial Violence and Civil Rights p. 638

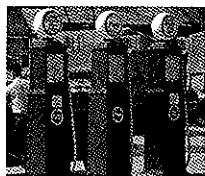


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Cars and Planes: The Promise of the Twenties



During the twenties America became a car culture. Car registration jumped from 9.2 million in 1920 to 26.5 million ten years later. By 1927 the United States contained 80 percent of the world's cars. Conflicting ideas soon emerged, however, over how much car-based commerce should transform the American landscape and whether all Americans could be trusted with the new freedom their cars bestowed.

The push to produce cars and other consumer goods more efficiently caused industrialists to change how they treated their workforce. Competing visions of industrial work culture between industrialists and workers emerged alongside ongoing clashes over wages and hours. Did America's increased reliance on machines render individual skill or initiative irrelevant? When aviator Charles A. Lindbergh made his historic solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean, he became an instant hero to a society needing reassurance that people and machines could coexist harmoniously.

The Car Culture

At the turn of the century, cities were smelly, dirty places. In New York City alone, horses dumped 2.5 million tons of manure and 60,000 gallons of urine on city streets yearly. The car seemed to offer a clean, flexible solution to city transportation problems. Paving the streets with asphalt would remove the dust that often forced dwellers to keep their windows shut. No one foresaw that a fleet of privately owned cars would soon clog city streets, or that their exhaust would become a serious public health hazard.

Although initial expectations focused on the improvements that cars would make in cities, farmers also benefited significantly from the new technology. Tractors made plowing easier,

while trucks transported produce more quickly to market. Whole families piled into cars on Saturday morning to head into town, ending the isolation that had previously characterized farm life.

A car represented a significant purchase for a family. Cars cost between 20 and 45 percent of a non-farm family's annual income, and between 50 and 100 percent of a farm household's yearly earnings. Credit plans required that purchasers pay one-third in cash as a down payment and spread the remaining payments over one year. Most plans also came with hefty interest rates averaging around 16 percent.

Besides enriching automobile manufacturers the explosion in car ownership meant boom times for numerous other industries. To satisfy the unquenchable thirst for gasoline, the petroleum industry underwent a major expansion with new oil wells appearing daily in Texas and California. The building trades saw their business take off when millions took advantage of the mobility that cars afforded and moved to the suburbs. An acute need soon developed for tunnels and bridges to link cities by car to ever-dispersed commuter suburbs. In 1927 the Holland Tunnel, the nation's first underwater motor vehicle tunnel, opened between New York City and New Jersey. On its first day of operation, nearly fifty thousand people paid fifty cents to drive through the tunnel that ran under the Hudson River.

21.1 Cottage Gas Station

Many businessmen built gas stations that looked like country cottages to assure passing motorists that their establishments were safe and clean.



How did cars transform urban and rural lifestyles?

On the Road

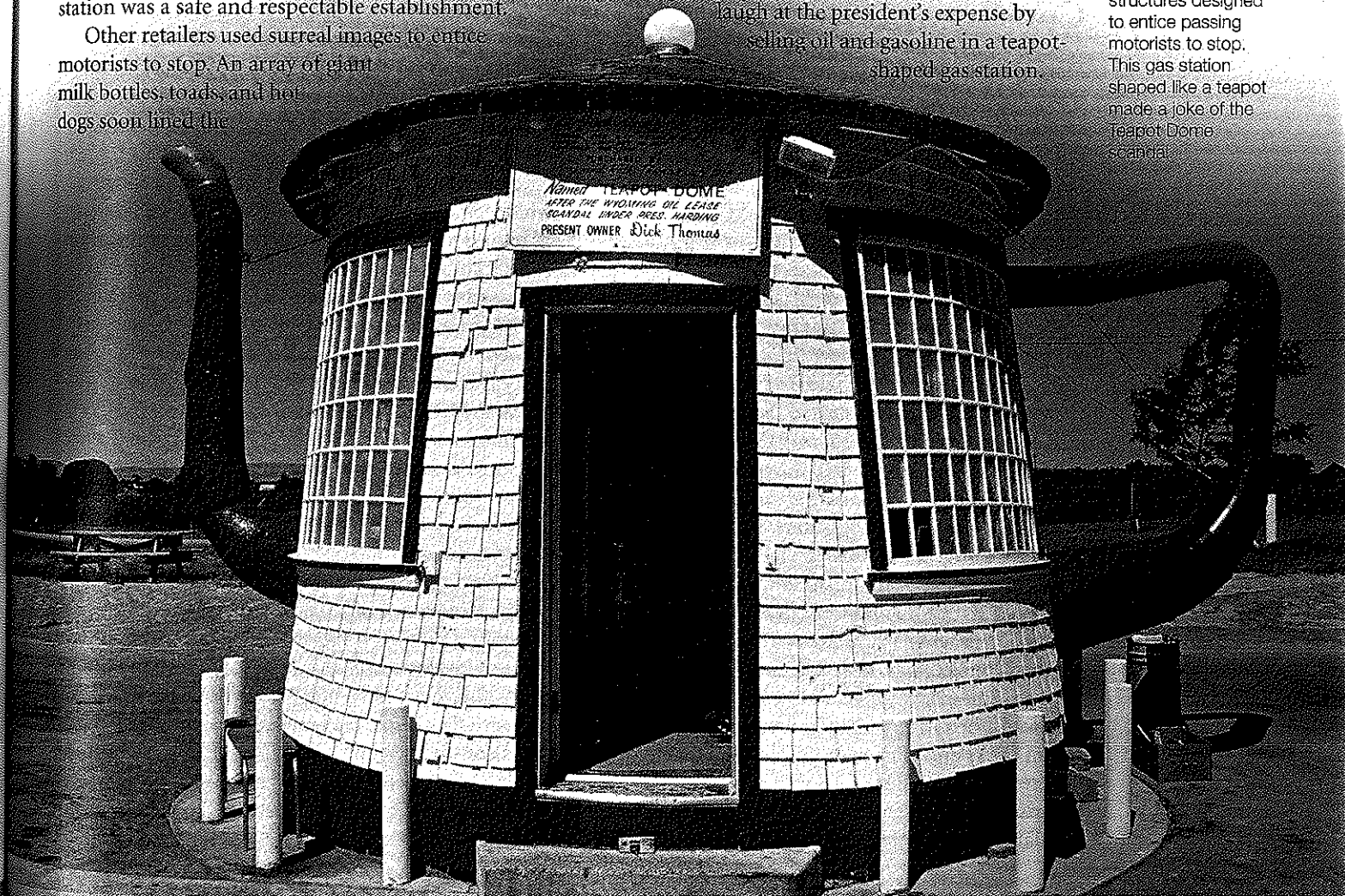
Many Americans took vacations away from home for the first time, and to satisfy their wanderlust, the public demanded good roads through rural areas. The government responded with a massive road-building and paving program. Following the precedents set in the nineteenth century when the federal government had funded canal construction and given railroad companies huge land grants to build railroads (see Chapter 15), the federal government now helped states build a new national highway system.

Car travelers also needed food, lodging, and gas. To entice tourists to stop at their establishments, rural businessmen erected eye-catching signs and buildings. A revolution in commercial roadside architecture was soon underway. Small clusters of cottages where tourists could spend the night on long road trips, forerunners of today's motels, appeared in remote areas. The miniature house (21.1) emerged as the most popular type of commercial roadside building in the twenties, a way to assure passersby that the restaurant, store, or gas station was a safe and respectable establishment.

Other retailers used surreal images to entice motorists to stop. An array of giant milk bottles, toads, and hot dogs soon lined the

highways of America. The Teapot Dome Service Station (21.2), built in 1922 along a highway in Zillah, Washington, humorously reminded patrons of the Teapot Dome political scandal that rocked the Harding White House in the early twenties. The Republicans had selected Warren Harding, an unassuming senator from Ohio, as their 1920 presidential candidate because his easygoing nature and call for "a return to normalcy" presented the electorate with a welcome respite from the sternness of Democrat Woodrow Wilson's wartime leadership. Winning 60 percent of the popular vote, Harding easily defeated Democrat James Cox, who suffered when he stood by Wilson and his failed League of Nations crusade (see Chapter 20). Harding's two years in office (he died of a heart attack in 1923, making his vice president Calvin Coolidge president) were, however, tarnished by scandal. The largest scandal involved Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall, who went to jail for accepting bribes from two wealthy businessmen to lease government-controlled oil reserves in Teapot Dome, Wyoming. The enterprising owner of this service station gave his customers a laugh at the president's expense by selling oil and gasoline in a teapot-shaped gas station.

21.2 Teapot Dome Gas Station, Zillah, Washington
Roadside architecture in the twenties often included whimsical structures designed to entice passing motorists to stop. This gas station shaped like a teapot made a joke of the Teapot Dome scandal.



What messages did the architecture of roadside gas stations convey?

Throughout the twenties Americans embraced conflicting visions of the architectural merits of such buildings. Some celebrated them as a vernacular form of pop art, while others dismissed them as eyesores. The controversy surrounding America's nascent car culture extended beyond competing aesthetic ideals of roadside architecture. Some traditionalists also lamented Americans' changing recreational habits. Ministers complained that instead of spending Sundays in church, many families chose instead to take all day drives. Cars let teenagers take their courting out of the family parlor and into the backseat of the family automobile, to the dismay of parents everywhere. "The best way to keep children home is to make the home atmosphere pleasant—and let air out of the tires," quipped author Dorothy Parker. Automobiles also made it harder for town officials to regulate red-light districts, causing one judge to declare that "the automobile has become a house of prostitution on wheels."

Welfare Capitalism and Consumer Culture

During World War I the government had mandated that industrialists with wartime contracts pay high wages, provide clean and safe working conditions, and allow unions to organize within their factories (see Chapter 20). In return for this official protection, the government demanded a no-strike pledge from unions. When the war ended in 1918, the government abruptly canceled its orders and withdrew from managing worker-industrial relations. The government's hands-off attitude emboldened many industrialists to reinstate low wages, long hours, and blacklists for union members. To protect their wartime gains, unions orchestrated the greatest wave of strikes in American history in 1919. Although they rallied millions of workers to the picket lines, out-matched unions lost this battle.

Industrialists accused unions of following in the footsteps of the recent Russian Revolution and trying to spread communism in the United States. These accusations won industrialists the support of local governments, who once again forcefully broke up many picket lines. Defeated steel, coal, and garment unions, however, did not give up organizing and continued to attract members. In the early 1920s union ranks grew to five million, the largest to date. When faced with the dismal vision of unending labor strife, Progressives had crafted government regulation to rein in business and improve working

conditions (see Chapter 18). In the 1920s industrialists used the guarantee of government noninterference to pursue a different vision.

Throughout the decade the Harding and Coolidge administrations left industrialists free to fashion their own solutions to such labor troubles, adopting an openly pro-business stance. *The Wall Street Journal* exulted that "never before, here or anywhere else, has a government been so completely fused with business," referring to Commerce Department workshops that helped businesses eliminate wasteful practices, a Justice Department that largely stopped enforcing anti-trust laws, and a high protective tariff that made imported goods more expensive than American industrial products.

Progressive-era innovations aimed at improving industrial efficiency, however, remained popular. Scientific management and welfare capitalism gained even more adherents in the twenties. Mirroring how army psychologists had used intelligence tests to rank the aptitudes of different racial and ethnic groups in World War I (see Chapter 20), the Central Tube Company in Pittsburgh devised a chart (21.3) assessing the abilities of various nationalities to perform skilled and unskilled jobs. The new profession of psychology accepted pseudoscientific social Darwinian ideas that "race" determined aptitude, and the factory owner used this "scientific" information to organize and run his business more efficiently. Unsurprisingly, given this racial climate, white Americans topped the list as good at all types of tasks. Jews were considered bad at every job and American blacks were listed as only suited for unskilled jobs. There were some surprises on the chart, however. While social Darwinists usually viewed northern Europeans as superior to southern and eastern Europeans, in the factory's ethnic hierarchy Italians and Poles actually outscored Germans and French as desirable skilled workers.

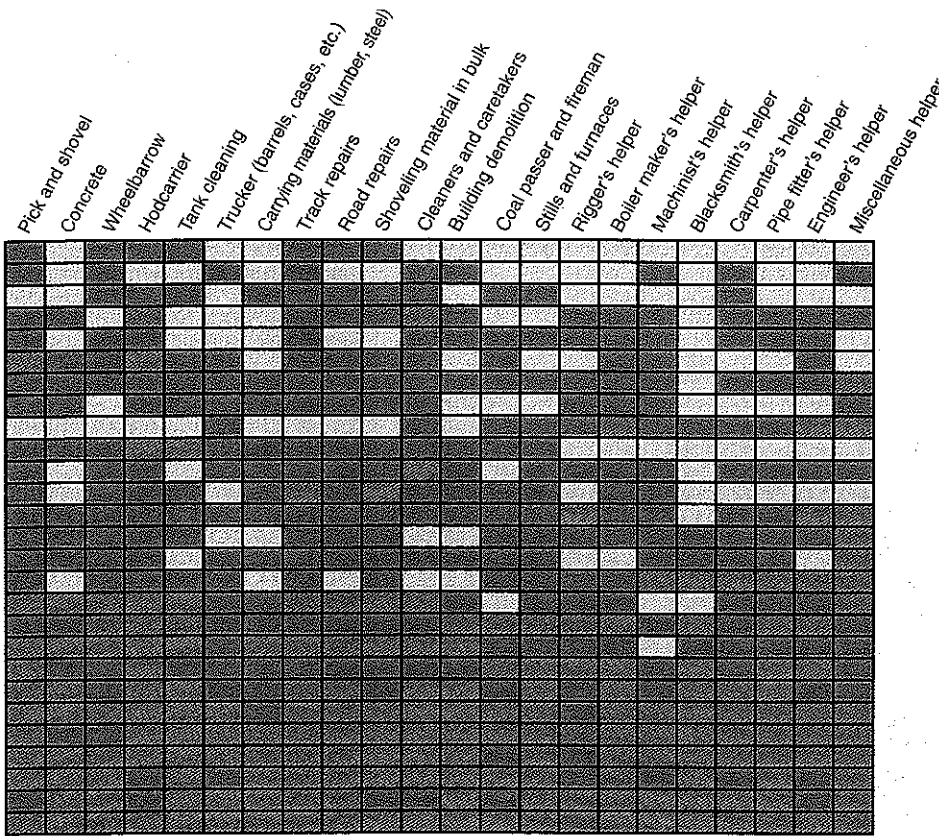
Some innovative industrialists tried to put aside the prevailing idea that the interests of capitalists and workers inevitably clashed. Rather than driving their workers relentlessly to secure a profit, advocates of welfare capitalism suggested that industrialists offer a wide range of benefits such as medical insurance, pensions, and stock ownership plans to create a loyal workforce.

As the vogue for welfare capitalism spread, many industrialists began to change their management practices. To develop a stable, well-trained workforce, industrialists introduced fringe benefits (including paid vacations and sick pay), created industrial committees where workers could air grievances,

Racial Adaptability to Various Types of Plant Work

- ☐ Good
- ▒ Fair
- Poor

- Americans, White
- Irish
- Lithuanians
- Hungarians
- Slovaks
- Finns
- Austrians
- Canadians, Fr.
- Italians
- Canadians, Br.
- Ukrainians
- English
- Russians
- Poles
- Scandinavians
- Americans, Black
- Germans
- Chinese
- French
- Japanese
- Filipinos
- Greeks
- Spaniards
- Portuguese
- Belgians
- Mexicans
- Jews



21.3 Employment Chart of the Central Tube Company, Pittsburgh, 1925
 Social Darwinian ideas about the innate abilities of different racial and ethnic groups determined where individuals could work in this factory.

and offered bonuses for workers who exceeded production quotas. A worker usually needed at least twenty-five years with one company to qualify for a pension, so this policy alone could potentially keep workers from leaving to pursue other job opportunities. Industrialists also experimented with offering employees stock options, hoping to dilute class antagonism by making each worker an investor who would share in the company's profits.

Despite workers' enthusiasm for welfare capitalism, the reality rarely matched the rhetoric. Seasonal lay-offs continued, wage rates fluctuated constantly, and long hours in unhealthy factories persisted. As one worker complained, "we had to wait five years for one week's vacation. And I've seen men work four and one-half years and then get laid off." Industrialists' promises ended up simply whetting workers' appetites for stable well-paid jobs with benefits. During the Great Depression in the 1930s (see Chapter 22), the labor movement would demand that the government fulfill the hopes that industrialists had raised in the twenties.

Increased industrial productivity and efficiency created an unprecedented abundance of affordable goods in the twenties. Blue-collar workers toiling in dead-end jobs in factories staffed with salaried

white-collar employees performing unsatisfying clerical tasks produced these items. Frustrated at work, many working- and middle-class Americans used their growing leisure time and access to material goods to create more fulfilling lives. A modern consumer culture arose that deemphasized traditional Victorian values of thrift and restraint. Americans instead increasingly relied on credit to buy cars, radios, and household appliances.

Radio played a key role in forging a national mass culture. Over 60 percent of American homes acquired radios in the twenties, which until 1924 required headphones. Americans from all walks of life now simultaneously gathered around their radios to learn election results. Baseball fans throughout the nation listened to the play-by-play of the World Series, radio broadcasts that made New York Yankee player Babe Ruth a national sports hero. Farmers closely followed weather reports, and bankers digested the day's financial news. "There is radio music in the air, every night, everywhere," one newspaper observed. Big companies like Walgreen Drugs and Palmolive Soap started sponsoring nationally syndicated radio shows to boost sales of their products. These weekly comedies and dramas, filled with plugs for the sponsor's merchandise,

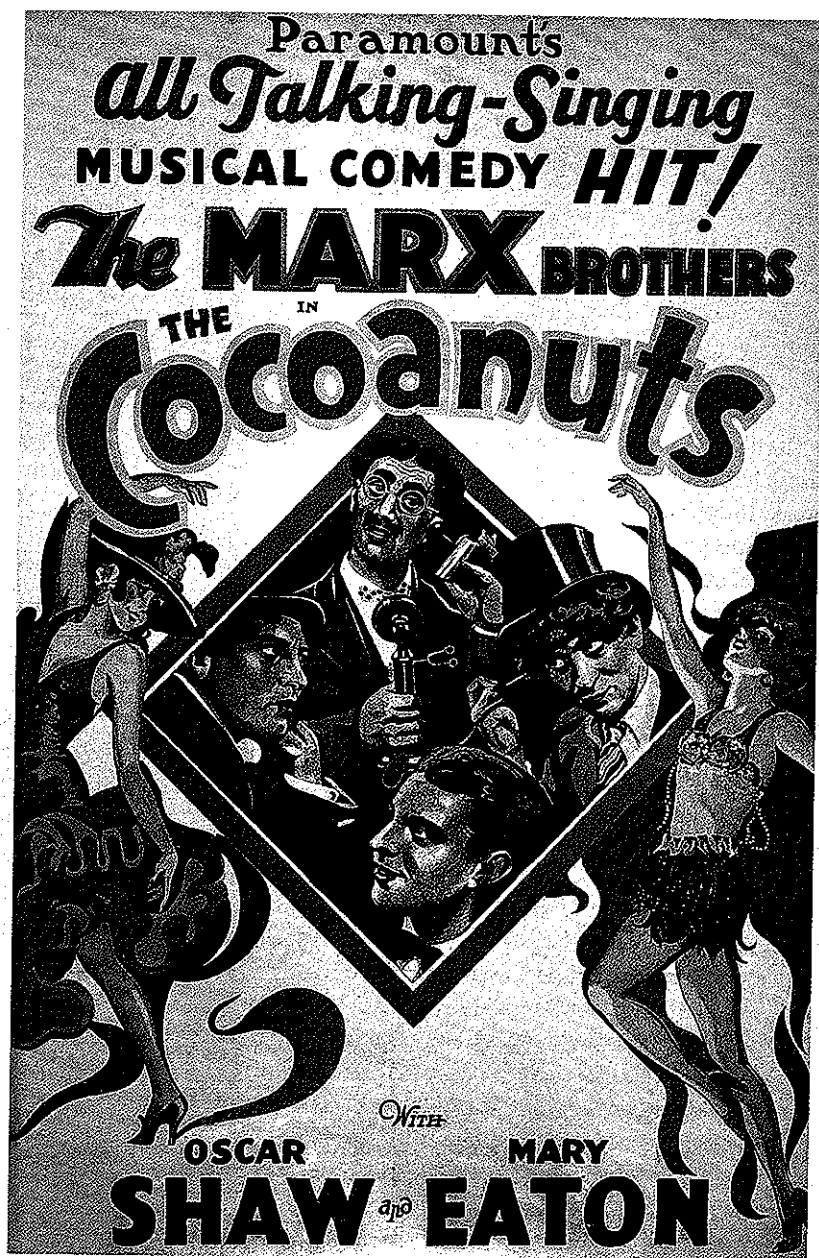
cultivated shared tastes in entertainment and brand-name products. Americans increasingly bought the same brand-name toothpaste at a chain store like Woolworths. Big business was not alone in recognizing the power of radio, however. Local radio shows designed specifically for union members, religious groups, immigrant communities, or African Americans helped strengthen bonds within these subcultures as well.

Movie stars and athletes enjoyed nationwide adulation in the twenties. Silent-film actors like the comedian Charlie Chaplin, the sex symbol Rudolph Valentino, and "America's Sweetheart" Mary Pickford

became household names among a movie-going public that avidly purchased fan magazines filled with glossy photos of their favorite film stars. By the end of the decade Hollywood began producing films with sound, a novelty highlighted in this 1929 poster (21.4) for the Marx Brothers' first film. The verbal repartee of the comedy trio delighted audiences. As silent films disappeared, so did the careers of many silent-film stars whose artistic talents lay in physical, not vocal, expression. Meanwhile professional sports gave rise to a slew of national sports heroes, such as the boxer Jack Dempsey. In an era dominated by cultural heroes, none rose to greater prominence than the pilot Charles A. Lindbergh.

21.4 The End of Silent Films

By the end of the decade Hollywood began advertising "all talking-singing" movies like "Cocoanuts."



The Age of Flight: Charles A. Lindbergh

The feats of pilot Charles A. Lindbergh ushered the nation into the age of flight. Commentators called the sky the new frontier, a label loaded with potent historical significance for Americans. By the late twenties, a time when machines seemed to matter more than people, the image of the lone pilot against the vast blue sky recalled the pioneer spirit of the nineteenth century.

Lindbergh piloted his plane, the *Spirit of St. Louis*, on the first-ever nonstop solo flight from New York to Paris on May 21, 1927. Flying without the radio or radar that help modern pilots navigate, Lindbergh relied on a few navigational instruments and looking out the window to locate his position on a paper map as he flew. Sitting in a wicker chair with sandwiches and water under it, Lindbergh had a rubber raft on board in case he was forced to land in the cold Atlantic and a flashlight to examine his wings for ice.

Lindbergh's flight lasted 33.5 hours, enough time to make him the hero of the decade. This photomontage (a composite photo made by pasting together separately taken images) of the *Spirit of St. Louis* (21.5) passing by the Eiffel Tower combined the signature symbol of Paris with the image of Lindbergh's iconic plane. "Had we searched all America we could not have found a better type than young Lindbergh to represent the spirit and high purpose of our people," the jubilant American ambassador to France wired President Coolidge amid the celebrations that followed Lindbergh's landing in Paris. Lindbergh's triumph assured Americans that individual initiative still mattered and that technological advancement benefited humankind at a time when the recent industrialized

“The *Spirit of St. Louis* is a wonderful plane. It’s like a living creature, gliding along smoothly, happily, as though a successful flight means as much to it as to me.”

CHARLES LINDBERGH, evoking the perfect symmetry between man and machine

slaughter on the Western Front (see Chapter 20) suggested otherwise. The vision of planes serving a peaceful purpose by transporting mail and tourists replaced wartime images of aerial dogfights. Lindbergh toured the nation tirelessly to promote commercial air travel, and also flew flood relief missions in China with his wife, the author Anne Morrow Lindbergh, in 1931 to demonstrate the humanitarian good that planes made possible.

In exalting Lindbergh’s achievement Americans channeled their own conflicting visions of the modern age. Some praised Lindbergh for exhibiting the same adventurous spirit that had propelled American pioneers across the West in the nineteenth century, values that seemed increasingly at risk in a machine-dominated age. “Charles Lindbergh is the heir of all that we like to think is best in America,” opined *Outlook* magazine. Others, including Lindbergh, rejected the idea that his flight epitomized a return to the past. Lindbergh asserted that his flight illustrated the nation’s industrial march forward, “the culmination,” he said, “. . . of all that was practicable and best in American aviation.” Although differing on whether the flight represented the revival of traditional values or the modern ethos of industrial might, Americans agreed that his flight renewed faith in the benefits of technology.

Lindbergh suffered, however, in the public spotlight. The 1933 kidnapping and murder of his firstborn son became the most reported tabloid story of the day. Later in the decade Lindbergh tarnished his image by expressing admiration for Nazi Germany and joining with those who initially argued against American intervention in World War II. After Japan’s bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, Lindbergh changed his position. He went on to fly combat missions against the Japanese, and his reputation recovered when he took a strong anti-communist stand during the Cold War in the 1950s.



21.5 Photo Montage of the *Spirit of St. Louis* Flying Near the Eiffel Tower
In this imagined scene an unnamed photographer celebrated the moment that pilot Charles Lindbergh arrived in Paris by pasting an image of his famous plane flying past Paris’s most recognized monument.

Cultural Unrest



Celebrating Lindbergh's achievement was a unique moment of national unity in a decade dominated by cultural turbulence and strife. During the 1920s Americans initiated a series of societal-wide debates that reflected competing visions over what values the nation should embrace as it entered the modern age. Cultural conflict turned political in the twenties as Americans debated the need for legislation to protect the nation's morals, ethnic purity, and capitalist economy.

The Lost Generation

"I've kissed dozens of men. I suppose I'll kiss dozens more," declared the flapper heroine of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *This Side of Paradise* (1920), announcing a new attitude of living for the moment that defined the era's youth culture. With his wife Zelda by his side, Fitzgerald put this philosophy into practice, moving from party to party in his fast-paced life as an expatriate in Europe. The Paris-based American writer Gertrude Stein coined the term "the Lost Generation" to describe white intellectuals and artists like Fitzgerald who rebelled against Victorian values in the twenties and lived primarily overseas.

Lost Generation writers used Austrian psychologist Sigmund Freud's theories to justify their revolt against "repressive" codes of conduct. Freud believed that subconscious sexual impulses drove human behavior and that repressed desires sometimes found expression in dreams. Fitzgerald was one of a host of writers including Ernest Hemingway, e. e. cummings, and John Dos Passos who championed sexual liberation as one way to escape the sterile and deadly confines of modern life. Men and women "spend their lives going in and out of doors and factories ... they live their lives and find themselves at last facing death and the end of life without having lived at all," asserts a character in Sherwood Anderson's *Many Marriages* (1923) who, in the throes of a passionate extramarital affair, is preparing to end his marriage and leave his job.

The hedonistic lifestyles depicted in many Lost Generation novels, while rarely bestowing lasting happiness on the protagonists, still rankled more traditionally minded Americans. Agreeing that modern culture was flawed, these Americans wanted to bolster, rather than reject, traditional values. These clashing cultural visions had strong political overtones. Alcohol remained central to the Lost Generation ethos of pleasure-seeking, an indulgence that became illegal in the twenties thanks to

temperance reformers who felt that drinking threatened the moral fabric of American society.

Prohibition

Temperance, one of the nation's longest lasting reform movements (see Chapters 17 and 18), took on a new life during World War I. Wartime temperance propaganda claimed that "German brewers in this country have rendered thousands of men inefficient." Organized "wet" opposition to the dry campaign materialized slowly, partly because critics of the temperance movement could not easily counter its emphasis on health, thrift, and morals. Some wets focused on personal freedom. Senator James Wadsworth contended that it seemed unfair to tell exhausted workers at the end of the day "you shall not have a glass of beer." Other critics felt uneasy about increasing the power of the federal government so it could enforce prohibition. Once the debate centered on a possible constitutional amendment prohibiting alcohol, they argued that such an amendment would violate states' rights. The middle-class Anti-Saloon League's highly structured propaganda and lobbying campaign, however, easily overpowered this disjointed wet response on the local, state, and national level.

Evangelical preacher Billy Sunday converted many churchgoers to the temperance cause, delivering impassioned sermons on the evils of alcohol. Sunday, a former professional baseball player turned preacher, littered his sermons with slang, winning a large following among the rural poor and urban working class who flocked to his revival meetings throughout the Midwest. The political elite also embraced the preacher. Sunday often dined at the White House and considered the oil tycoon John D. Rockefeller a friend. In his most famous temperance speech, Sunday urged his listeners in 1908 to "get on the water wagon; get on for the sake of your wife and babies, and hit the booze a blow."

On December 18, 1917, Congress approved the Eighteenth Amendment, which banned the sale, manufacture, and transportation of intoxicating liquors. By January 16, 1919, the required thirty-six states had ratified the amendment. By the time every state had voted, only Rhode Island and Connecticut had rejected it. When prohibition went into effect in 1920, Congress clarified what constituted an intoxicating beverage in the Volstead Act (1919), a law that defined any beverage with more than 0.5 percent alcohol as intoxicating liquor and established criminal penalties for manufacturing, transporting, or possessing alcohol.

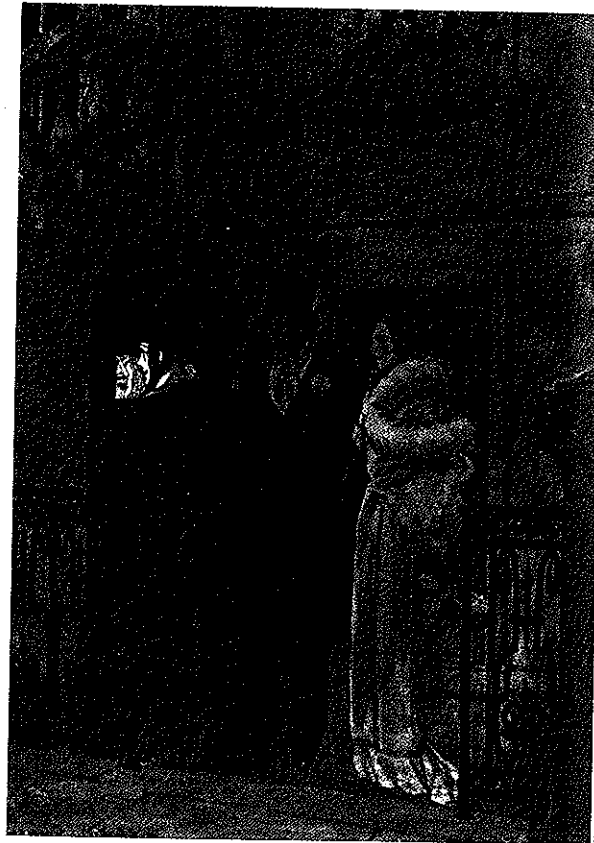
Congress never appropriated enough money for wide-scale enforcement, hampering Justice Department efforts to curb illegal drinking. The police raided working-class neighborhoods to shut down illegal distilleries, but the well-to-do drank their bathtub gin or homebrewed beer without interference. Many reform goals of the temperance movement remained unmet. Belying the expectation that prohibition would create a more virtuous, law-abiding society, prohibition gave birth to a much more insidious form of crime. Organized crime syndicates ran profitable bootlegging operations that financed beer breweries and liquor distilleries, bribed cops, and stocked the shelves of illegal bars throughout major metropolitan areas. Trafficking in forbidden alcohol, the publicity-crazed gangster Al Capone became a powerful figure in the Chicago underworld, a position he maintained with unprecedented violence. In the 1929 St. Valentine's Day Massacre, Capone's men, posing as cops, pretended to arrest rival gang members and then lined them up against a wall and used submachine guns to mow them down. Tabloid papers vividly recounted every detail of Capone's "new technique of wholesale murder" to a shocked American public. Suffering from syphilis that he contracted from a prostitute in one of his own brothels, Capone became increasingly unstable and violent before he went to prison for tax evasion in 1931.

Secret bars called speakeasies proliferated. To demonstrate Americans' widespread disrespect for prohibition, federal agent Izzy Einstein timed how long it took him to find alcohol in most major cities. It took him 21 minutes in Chicago, and only 31 seconds in New Orleans when he asked a taxi driver where he could get a drink and the man replied, "right here," as he pulled out a bottle. Einstein personally shut down over four thousand speakeasies nationwide, prompting bartenders to post his picture with the caption "watch for this man."

Illicit drinking became fashionable among the young urban elite, whose escapades Lost Generation writers helped glamorize. This image of a well-dressed woman barhopping with her male companions (21.6) revealed new social acceptance for public drinking by respectable middle- and upper-class women. Americans had previously viewed saloons as male establishments that only women of low moral character, like prostitutes, dared to enter.

The competing visions of whether illegal drinking was harmless fun or a vice that destroyed families kept the political debate over prohibition alive throughout the 1920s. "Drys" credited prohibition for the prosperous economy. By putting alcohol aside, they claimed, workers had become more productive, could afford to buy cars and furniture, and had more savings. Critics of prohibition argued that the amendment generated disrespect for the law as it became socially acceptable for Americans to commit a crime by purchasing alcohol. States' rights advocates increasingly resented the arrival of federal officials trying to track down local bootleggers. Picking up the Anti-Saloon League's longstanding emphasis on protecting women and children, the wet lobby emphasized the dangers of teenagers drinking contaminated "moon-shine" (a slang term for illicitly manufactured alcohol) in speakeasies run by the mob. Better to have them drink safely in public cafes, the wets argued.

The beginning of the Great Depression in 1929, which thrust the nation into an unprecedented financial crisis, undermined the dry claim that prohibition brought prosperity. Wets made headway with the argument that enforcing the law drained the federal treasury. When Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt entered the White House in 1933, he immediately asked Congress to repeal prohibition. With lightning speed the states ratified the Twenty-First Amendment (1933), which repealed the



21.6 Well-Dressed Trio Entering a Speakeasy
Frequenting speakeasies, which patrons entered by giving a secret password to the doorman, became fashionable for women during prohibition. Gone was the stigma that had stopped respectable women from drinking in public.

Eighteenth Amendment. The temperance vision remained regionally popular, however, especially in Southern and Midwestern rural areas that continued to enforce local prohibition statutes. A few states also passed minimum-age drinking laws in the 1930s to curtail alcohol consumption, but most states did not enact such laws until the 1980s.

The First Red Scare and Immigration Restrictions

The vision of America as the land of opportunity for peoples worldwide came under severe attack in the 1920s. Debates over immigration were not new (see Chapter 17), but for the first time the nativist vision prevailed. In the early twenties the United States underwent a historic shift, changing from a nation that admitted over 1 million immigrants a year in the decade leading up to World War I to one that grudgingly allowed fewer than 200,000 to enter the country annually.

World War I was the catalyst that turned longstanding nativist attacks against immigrants (see Chapter 17) into a mandate for dramatic change. Alarm over German Americans' continued ties to Germany linked concerns about assimilation to the more potent political question of national security. After the war Congress passed the 1921 Emergency Immigration Act. This law temporarily allowed a total of 350,000 European immigrants to enter the country each year and set limits on how many immigrants could come from each European nation. Three years later Congress made these quotas permanent. The Immigration Act of 1924 allowed unrestricted immigration from the Western Hemisphere, curtailed all Asian immigration, and used quotas to control how many immigrants emigrated from individual European nations. The law authorized a total of 165,000 immigrants from Europe, a figure that Congress reduced to 150,000 in 1929 at the start of the Great Depression.

Assumptions about the racial superiority of northern European races strongly influenced the new national quotas portrayed on the "Immigration Act of 1924" chart (21.7). In this new quota system, Germany received the highest quota. If Americans no longer feared German immigrants, then why did the country feel compelled to adopt immigration restrictions? The answer: The Communist-inspired Russian Revolution, a critical wartime event that some Americans envisioned politically radical immigrants from Russia and Eastern Europe recreating in the

United States. To meet this threat the Justice Department arrested and deported alien anarchists and Communists suspected of trying to destroy American democracy and capitalism during the First Red Scare (1919–1920).

Like Communists, anarchists believed that capitalist exploitation of the working class created widespread social suffering. While Communists wanted to create a workers' government that controlled property, anarchists viewed all governments as corrupt. The anarchist movement's most famous spokesperson was Emma Goldman, an eloquent speaker who had emigrated from Russia as a young girl. Anarchism, she wrote, "stands for the liberation of the human mind from the dominion of religion; the liberation of the human body from the dominion of property; liberation from the shackles and restraint of government." Some radical anarchists felt justified using violence to advance their cause (one had assassinated President William McKinley in 1901, see Chapter 18). Goldman, however, disavowed armed conflict and instead tried to popularize the anarchist philosophy through lectures and the magazine that she founded, *Mother Earth*.

In 1919 post office clerk Charles Kaplan helped avert disaster after reading a newspaper account of two anarchist mail-bomb attacks, one against the mayor of Seattle and another against a senator from Georgia, as he rode the subway home. Kaplan realized that the description of the booby-trapped packages matched that of sixteen parcels he had recently set aside for insufficient postage, including one addressed to oil tycoon John D. Rockefeller. Kaplan's discovery triggered a nationwide investigation that netted eighteen more mail bombs.

As anxiety over national security mounted, terrorists exploded dynamite outside the home of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer, the man heading the Justice Department's hunt for Bolshevik and anarchist terrorists. Palmer warned that "on a certain day which we have been advised of," radicals were planning "to rise up and destroy the Government at one fell swoop." To head off this revolutionary uprising, Palmer raided the homes and offices of suspected radicals and deported a few hundred immigrants with ties to radical organizations, including Emma Goldman.

While the government focused on the need to ensure public safety, radicals asserted their right to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly. Without concrete evidence of their participation in any criminal activity, they argued, the government was prosecuting them merely for their beliefs. Coming

Northwest Europe and Scandinavia		Eastern and Southern Europe		Other Countries	
Country	Quota	Country	Quota	Country	Quota
Germany	51,227	Poland	5,982	Africa (other than Egypt)	1,100
Great Britain and Northern Ireland	34,007	Italy	3,845	Armenia	124
Irish Free State (Ireland)	28,567	Czechoslovakia	3,073	Australia	121
Sweden	9,561	Russia	2,248	Palestine	100
Norway	6,453	Yugoslavia	671	Syria	100
France	3,954	Romania	603	Turkey	100
Denmark	2,789	Portugal	503	Egypt	100
Switzerland	2,081	Hungary	473	New Zealand & Pacific Islands	100
Netherlands	1,648	Lithuania	344	All others	1,900
Austria	785	Latvia	142		
Belgium	512	Spain	131		
Finland	471	Estonia	124		
Free City of Danzig	228	Albania	100		
Iceland	100	Bulgaria	100		
Luxembourg	100	Greece	100		
Total (Number)	142,483	Total (Number)	18,439	Total (Number)	3,745
Total (%)	86.5	Total (%)	11.2	Total (%)	2.3

21.7 Immigration Act of 1924

The United States enacted a quota system in the 1920s that allotted most slots for immigrants from northern Europe.

on the heels of wartime arrests under the Espionage and Sedition acts, the government's harassment of radical activists during 1919–1920 made it practically impossible for radical groups to organize, distribute literature, or give public speeches championing their political ideals.

Radicals tried to fight back by taking up the cause of anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two Italian immigrants arrested in Massachusetts for the robbery and murder of a payroll guard in 1920. Poor Italian immigrants and left-leaning union members made numerous small donations to the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee, which sponsored picnics and wrestling matches to raise funds for their defense. Many intellectuals also supported the pair, including Roger Baldwin, who had recently founded the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), an organization dedicated to protecting constitutional liberties. Foreign-born, openly radical, in possession of guns and anarchist pamphlets when arrested: The portrait that prosecutors painted of Sacco and Vanzetti epitomized the terrorist threat many Americans feared. Sacco and Vanzetti's radical and liberal supporters embraced a competing vision, blaming growing xenophobia for the pair's conviction and 1927 electrocution. Recent findings suggest that Sacco and Vanzetti were indeed dedicated anarchists with close connections to those who

planned the spate of 1919 bombings, but no conclusive evidence ties them to the 1920 murder.

The First Red Scare ended quickly. As the anarchist attacks ceased, the press began to poke fun at Palmer's "hallucinations" of a mass uprising and accused him of exaggerating the "revolutionary menace" as part of a failed campaign to win the Democratic Party presidential nomination in 1920. Although the arrests and deportations stopped, the First Red Scare gave credence to the anti-immigration argument that the country needed protection from foreigners who might import dangerous radical political theories.

Other arguments also helped tip the balance in favor of immigration restriction. Urban elites and rural folk worried about protecting the "racial purity" of American stock, while unions and African Americans feared economic competition from immigrant laborers. By the early twenties industrialists had dropped their complaint that immigration restrictions would deprive business of a traditionally inexpensive labor source. Many now believed that machines would increasingly replace unskilled immigrant workers in factories, and felt confident that there were enough African American or Mexican workers readily available to alleviate any labor shortage. With the consensus in the nation moving toward immigration restrictions, immigrant

associations focused their lobbying efforts on ensuring that their nationality received the highest quota possible.

Official quotas, however, do not reveal the exact numbers of immigrants who entered the country. If denied entry under the quota system, which remained intact from 1924 through 1965, determined immigrants found loopholes to exploit. The 1924 law contained two key provisions that have remained staples of American immigration legislation since the 1920s: the principle of family reunification, which let resident immigrants bring in members of their immediate families, and the desirability of certain skills. The law, for example, established exemptions for trades facing worker shortages in the United States, such as domestic service. Other savvy European immigrants simply entered the country illegally, often by way of Mexico or Canada, two nations that still enjoyed unrestricted immigration to the United States.

Fundamentalism

The cultural debates surrounding prohibition and immigration restrictions assumed a decidedly political edge in the 1920s. Christian Fundamentalists added to the decade's cultural turbulence when they initiated a campaign to stop the teaching of biologist Charles Darwin's views on evolution. Religious conservatives felt that Darwin's theories contradicted the Bible's depiction of God creating the world and humankind in seven days. They instead subscribed to the tenets of **fundamentalism**, an evangelical Christian theology that viewed the Bible as an authentic recounting of historical events and the absolute moral word of God. By critiquing Darwin Fundamentalists offered a conservative alternative to **modernism**, a liberal Christian theology embraced in many urban areas that emphasized the ongoing revelation of divine truth. Offering competing religious visions Fundamentalists accepted the Bible as errorless, while Modernists reinterpreted the Bible when confronted with new scientific knowledge (such as fossil evidence of evolution).

Believing that "monkey men mean monkey morals," the World Christian Fundamentals Association lobbied for state laws that prohibited teaching evolutionary ideas in public schools. In 1925 Tennessee passed a law making it a punishable crime to teach "any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower

order of animals." Passed mostly to make sweeping school reforms more palatable to Fundamentalist voters, the state made no effort to enforce the law and even adopted a biology textbook that included an extended discussion of Darwin's ideas.

The ACLU viewed the law as a violation of the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech. Hoping to test the law's constitutionality, the ACLU offered to help any teacher in Tennessee who wanted to challenge the law in court. A group of civic boosters in Dayton, Tennessee, responded to the offer. A trial highlighting the clash between science and religion was bound to attract huge crowds, they reasoned, and by hosting this national extravaganza Dayton expected to draw an influx of visitors with cash to spend. The boosters approached twenty-four-year-old John Scopes, a science teacher and part-time football coach, who agreed to step forward so officials in Dayton could arrest him. The infamous Scopes trial was underway.

Interest in Scopes, the ACLU, and Dayton faded once William Jennings Bryan agreed to prosecute the case and the attorney Clarence Darrow arrived to defend Scopes. Bryan was the former leader of the Democratic Party who had unsuccessfully run for president three times and resigned as secretary of state when President Woodrow Wilson abandoned complete neutrality during World War I. The devout Bryan blamed Germany's embrace of evolutionary notions like "survival of the fittest" for causing the brutal global war. Darrow was an acknowledged agnostic, famous for defending both radical labor leaders, such as the socialist Eugene Debs, and wealthy murderers.

Hundreds of journalists descended on the town to observe the courtroom confrontation between Bryan and Darrow. Their dispatches helped build publicity for the "monkey trial," a reference to evolutionists' claim that humans had descended from apes. Urban-based reporters billed the case as a conclusive struggle between modern America and the ignorant rural masses (few of whom shared in the general prosperity of the 1920s) whose alleged backward thinking threatened to impede the country's progress. In his widely read reports, nationally syndicated columnist H. L. Mencken regularly referred to Fundamentalists as hillbillies and yokels. Fundamentalists fought back. The carnival-like atmosphere outside the courtroom soon included Fundamentalist revival meetings and performances by trained chimpanzees that mocked evolutionists. Vendors did a brisk business selling monkey dolls, like the one held by Lena Ruffner

Dueling newspaper headlines during the Scopes Trial:

“‘They Call Us Bigots When We Refuse to Throw Away Our Bibles,’ Bryan says.”

“We say ‘Keep Your Bible,’ but keep it where it belongs, in the world of your conscience.”

(21.8), who announced her support of Bryan by pinning a sign “they can’t make a monkey out of me” to her dress.

Both Bryan and Darrow argued that they were protecting American democratic institutions. Bryan maintained that the Tennessee legislature had the right to pass any law that the majority wanted; Darrow contended the state had violated the constitution by establishing Christianity as an official religion and limiting freedom of expression. The mainstream press viewed the trial as a showdown between science and religion, with science winning a decisive victory. In their account, the climatic moment came when Darrow called Bryan to the witness stand and trapped him into confessing he did not accept the entire Bible as the literal truth. “We have the purpose of preventing bigots and ignoramuses from controlling the education of the United States,” Darrow declared in court, expressing Modernists’ view of fundamentalism. The national press labeled Bryan a broken man when he passed away in his sleep five days after Scopes was found guilty and fined. The courtroom, however, had burst into applause when during his cross-examination Bryan had thundered, “I am simply trying to protect the word of God against the greatest atheist or agnostic in the United States.” Southern folk songs popularized this competing heroic image of Bryan among his supporters, viewing him as someone who “fought for what was righteous and the battle it was won / Then the Lord called him to heaven for his work on earth was done.”

After Scopes’s conviction the ACLU appealed to the Tennessee Supreme Court, which upheld the law’s constitutionality and then overturned the verdict because the judge rather than the jury had imposed the fine. Scopes’s acquittal meant that the ACLU had to find a new case to take before the U.S. Supreme Court. After the ridicule heaped on Dayton, however, no town or teacher was willing to help the ACLU try again. The Tennessee state

legislature did not repeal the law until 1967. A year later the U.S. Supreme Court declared anti-evolution laws unconstitutional.

Although soon forgotten by mainstream America, throughout the twentieth century Fundamentalists created a thriving minority subculture of churches, schools, universities, publishing houses, radio ministries, and missionary societies. Fundamentalists rejoined the cultural and political mainstream in the 1970s and are generating headlines once again with their challenges to teaching evolution in public schools. In one striking break from the past, Fundamentalists now use Darrow’s line of reasoning to argue that keeping the biblical theory of creation out of high school biology classes violates the constitutional guarantee to freedom of expression.

21.8 Young Woman Holds Monkey Doll during the Scopes Trial
A supporter of prosecutor William Jennings Bryan wears a sign ridiculing the theory of evolution and displays the monkey doll she bought from a vender outside the courthouse.



Racial Violence and Civil Rights



Advocates of prohibition, immigration restrictions, and fundamentalism had varying degrees of success reshaping American society after the war. Throughout the twenties African Americans were also active, employing new strategies to advance their vision of racial equality. Continued lynchings and a resurgent Ku Klux Klan in the South and Midwest exposed the willingness of many whites to use violence to maintain their competing vision of white supremacy. A new generation of black political activists emerged, determined to fight back when whites attacked. Jamaican immigrant Marcus Garvey won both praise and criticism within the African American community by calling for black economic self-sufficiency at home and the creation of a homeland in Africa. The **Harlem Renaissance**, an outpouring of African American artistic expression in the 1920s and 1930s also stirred debate within the African American community over the best way to improve the lives of African Americans.

Lynching, Racial Rioting, and the Ku Klux Klan

Lynch mobs tortured and killed nearly five thousand victims between 1880 and 1930, roughly two per week. The souvenir postcard (21.9) depicting the lynching of Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith is a disturbing relic from this grisly past. Professional photographers often attended lynchings and sold hundreds of picture postcards to perpetrators and

witnesses, who put them in family scrapbooks or sent them to friends and relatives. Besides buying souvenir postcards whites sometimes took other relics from the victim, including hair, clothing, fingers, and ears. Both the existence of this postcard and the scene it depicts raise chilling questions about the ritual of lynching. Rather than viewing their murder as a shameful act or believing that they needed to conceal their identities to avoid prosecution, these participants smile openly for the camera. Local and state police rarely arrested anyone for committing a lynching, preferring instead to claim that the victims died “at the hands of persons unknown.”

Trumped-up accusations that the victim had raped or murdered a white person usually fueled a lynching frenzy. Local police had arrested Shipp and Abram for robbery, murder, and rape. The purpose of lynching, however, went beyond simply administering extralegal justice. Lynching also created a climate of terror that helped whites maintain social control over all blacks, not just the ones killed. James Weldon Johnson, a well-regarded poet who served as director of the National Association for the Advancement of

21.9 Souvenir Postcard, Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith Lynching, Marion, Indiana

After witnessing the lynching of two black men, smiling men and women had their pictures taken as a memento. The two girls to the left clutch pieces of the victims' hair.



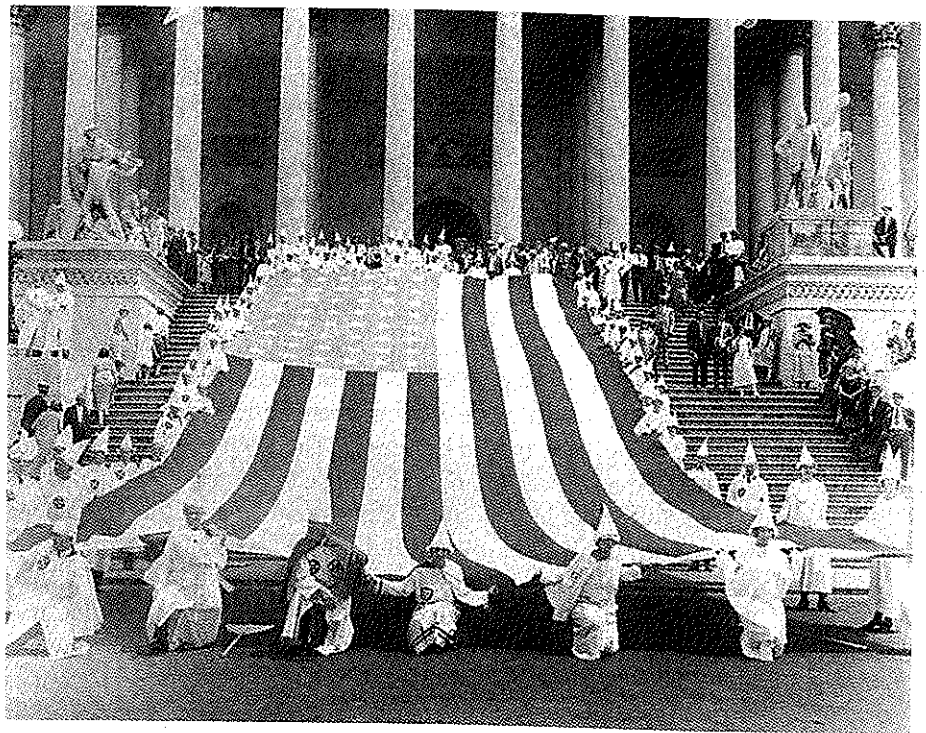
What does this souvenir postcard reveal about the ritual of lynching?

Colored People (NAACP) in the twenties, coined the term "The Red Summer of 1919" to describe the wave of vicious assaults against black communities that left at least forty-three African Americans dead. Some whites also used organized violence to prevent blacks from competing with whites economically. Mobs intentionally attacked thriving black business centers and middle-class homes in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1921, and in Rosewood, Florida, in 1923. A headline in a local Tulsa newspaper even helped mobilize whites by issuing the call "To Lynch A Negro Tonight."

In both the Tulsa and Rosewood race riots, African Americans fought back against their attackers, but enraged white crowds still burned both communities to the ground. Officials in Tulsa declared martial law and imprisoned one-half of the city's black population in internment camps. After gaining their freedom a few weeks later, one thousand families spent the winter in tents before beginning the huge task of rebuilding their community. In 1994 the Florida state government awarded survivors of the Rosewood race riot \$150,000 each in monetary reparations. For the first time African Americans received compensation for past racial injustices, raising the question of whether victims of other racially motivated attacks deserved financial settlements.

With the states unwilling to prosecute the members of lynch mobs, the NAACP lobbied to make lynching a federal crime. Hoping to shock the rest of the nation into supporting an anti-lynching law, the NAACP used graphic images of lynchings in their pamphlets, parades, and posters. Southern congressmen, however, successfully blocked the passage of a federal anti-lynching bill by claiming that it violated the constitutional right of states to police themselves.

The lynching documented by this souvenir postcard reveals another key aspect of racial violence in the twenties. Although most lynchings took place in the South, the attack pictured here actually occurred in Marion, Indiana. Indiana was home to the largest chapter of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s, enrolling nearly one-half of the state's white male population even though only 3 percent of the state's population was black. The federal government had suppressed the original Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction (see



Chapter 15). The Klan revived in the 1910s, and in its second incarnation became a national organization that drew members from all parts of the country with membership fluctuating between three and six million throughout the twenties.

The new Klan organized their call for white Protestant supremacy under the banner of 100 percent Americanism, and their list of enemies included any group that threatened the traditional order. Anxieties aroused by blacks' wartime migration to Northern and Midwestern industrial centers, the Red Scare, women's suffrage, mass immigration, prohibition, and postwar strikes caused many conservative whites to listen sympathetically to Klan outbursts against blacks, Jews, Catholics, immigrants, radicals, feminists, and bootleggers. The 1925 Klan march in Washington, D.C. (21.10), exposed the group's national appeal. City officials required the forty thousand assembled Klan members to march from the White House to the Capitol without their masks. Like lynch mobs these Klan members were unafraid to reveal their identities as they proudly unfurled an American flag that championed the Klan's "patriotic" slogan of "native, white, Protestant supremacy." The march represented the high tide of Klan power in the twenties. As fears of social upheaval diminished, Klan membership rolls also decreased.

21.10 Ku Klux Klan in Washington, D.C., 1925

Klan members unfurl a giant American flag on the steps of the Capitol, equating patriotism with their call for white supremacy.

Marcus Garvey

The African American community had long debated how to end racial attacks and segregation. In the 1890s Booker T. Washington squared off against W. E. B. Du Bois over whether blacks should focus first on improving their economic position or demanding political rights (see Chapter 18). Washington died in 1915 and in the 1920s Jamaican immigrant Marcus Garvey took up Washington's idea of empowering blacks economically. Garvey founded the **Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)** to encourage economic self-sufficiency by creating black-owned businesses. The UNIA organized the **Black Star Line**, a short-lived capitalist venture that sold \$5 stock certificates to finance the world's only black-owned and staffed fleet of steamships. Garvey's working-class followers, native-born African Americans and recently arrived immigrants from the West Indies, purchased stock enthusiastically. Poor management, however, forced the Black Star Line to dissolve in 1922.

Despite their shared message of economic empowerment, the black nationalist Garvey was much more militant than Washington. There was nothing shameful in being black, Garvey told his audiences, criticizing African Americans who used skin lighteners and hair straighteners to make themselves appear more white. God, Garvey said, "made no mistake when he made us black with kinky hair. We have outgrown

slavery, but our minds are still enslaved to the thinking of the Master Race. Now take these kinks out of your mind, instead of out of your hair." Like Washington, Garvey rejected the political goal of dismantling Jim Crow that dominated other civil rights organizations. But unlike Washington, who wanted to improve life for blacks within the United States, Garvey spoke often of acquiring enough economic power to establish an independent African nation that could reunite the world's dispersed black peoples.

Pageantry was a hallmark of the UNIA. The group's meetings often included a uniformed male African Legion dressed in blue and female Black Cross Nurses in white. To give these gatherings an official air, participants waved flags that were "black for our race, red for our blood, and green for our hope," Garvey said. Black middle-class detractors ridiculed Garvey's tendency to appear, as pictured here (21.11), wearing a plumed hat and military regalia. These critics called him "a clown" in a "gaudy uniform" who led "big parades of ignorant people down the street selling pie in the sky." Garvey, however, believed that seeing a black man dressed as an aristocrat inspired confidence among his followers and challenged the stereotype of black subservience perpetuated by white America. The Justice Department took notice of Garvey's theatrics. Worried that his movement was sowing the seeds of a violent black rebellion, government spies monitored his activities.

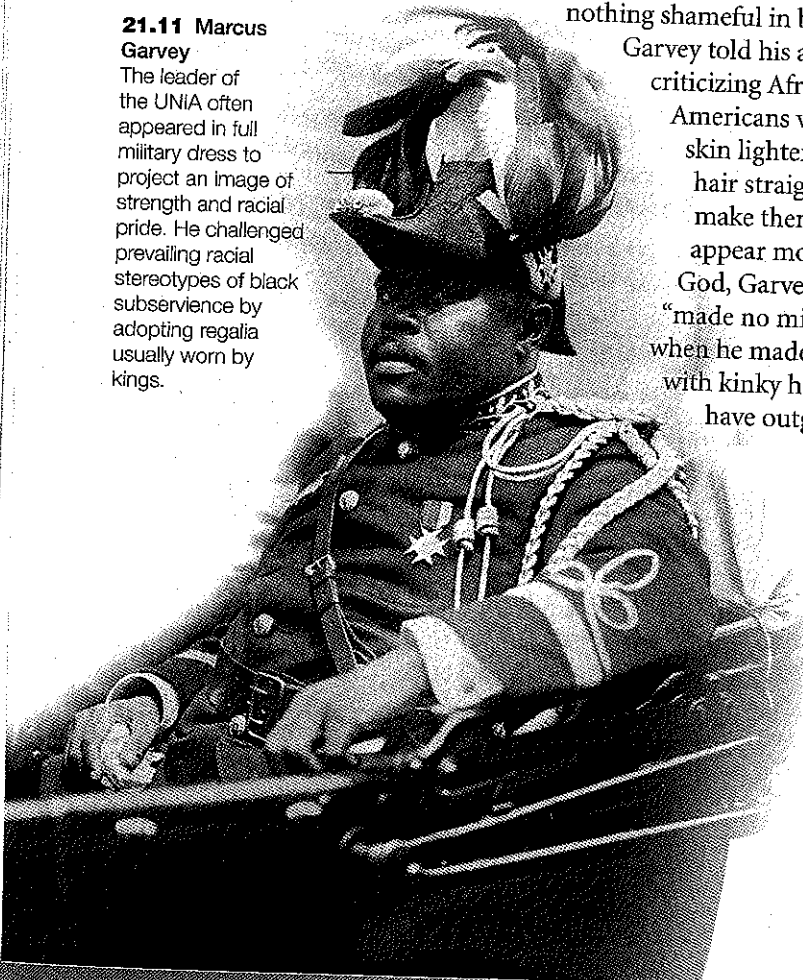
Competing Visions: Debating Garveyism explores Marcus Garvey's vision for black America and the criticism he received from W. E. B. Du Bois, a leader in the NAACP who supported immediate integration. Some of Garvey's other black critics organized a "Garvey Must Go" campaign and helped the government convict him of fraudulent use of the mails in 1923. He served four years in prison and upon his release immigration authorities deported him. Without Garvey the UNIA collapsed. Garveyism, however, offered African Americans an important alternative to the integrationist vision of the NAACP and introduced separatist ideas that Black Power advocates would resurrect in the 1960s (see Chapter 27).

The Harlem Renaissance

Garvey based the UNIA in Harlem, a thriving African American neighborhood in New York City that became the hub of black politics and culture in the 1920s during the Harlem Renaissance. African

21.11 Marcus Garvey

The leader of the UNIA often appeared in full military dress to project an image of strength and racial pride. He challenged prevailing racial stereotypes of black subservience by adopting regalia usually worn by kings.



Why did Garvey elicit such strong emotions among both followers and critics?

Competing Visions

DEBATING GARVEYISM

Many of the traditional civil rights elite despised Marcus Garvey, whom they accused of swindling the poor of their hard-earned money and stirring up racial animosity within the United States. Garvey in turn accused light-skinned African American leaders of racial prejudice, arguing that they could not accept the dark-skinned Garvey as their equal. In the following excerpts Garvey lays out his reasons for urging black Americans to go "Back to Africa," while W. E. B. Du Bois, one of the light-skinned elites Garvey attacked, criticizes Garvey's vision. How does Garvey propose to stop "crimes against the race"? What portrait does Du Bois offer of Garvey?

In "The True Solution of the Negro Problem" (1922)
Marcus Garvey argued that creating a homeland in Africa could solve the problem of racial violence in the United States.

We cannot allow a continuation of these crimes [lynching and disenfranchisement] against our race. As four hundred million men, women and children, worthy of the existence given us by the Divine Creator, we are determined to solve our own problem, by redeeming our Motherland Africa from the hands of alien exploiters and found there a government, a nation of our own, strong enough to lend protection to the members of our race scattered all over the world, and to compel the respect of the nations and races of the earth.

Do they lynch Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans or Japanese? No. And Why? Because these people are represented by great governments, mighty nations and empires ... ever ready to shed the last drop of blood and spend the last penny in the national treasury to protect the honor and integrity of a citizen outraged anywhere. Until the Negro reaches this point of national independence, all he does as a race will count for naught, because the prejudice that will stand out against him even with his ballot in his hand, with his industrial progress to show, will be of such an overwhelming nature as to perpetuate mob violence and mob rule. ...

If the Negro were to live in this Western Hemisphere for another five hundred years he would still be outnumbered by other races who are prejudiced against him. He cannot resort to the government for protection for government will be in the hands of the majority of the people who are prejudiced against him, hence for the Negro to depend on the ballot and his industrial progress alone, will be hopeless as it does not help him when he is lynched, burned, jim-crowed and segregated. The future of the Negro therefore, outside of Africa, spells ruin and disaster.



Button won by Marcus Garvey supporters

In this 1923 biographical sketch, "Marcus Garvey," W. E. B. Du Bois views Garvey as misguided and inept.

Garvey soon developed in America a definite and in many respects original and alluring program. He proposed to establish the "Black Star Line" of steamships under Negro ownership and with Negro money, to trade between the United States, the West Indies, and Africa. He proposed to establish a factories corporation which was going to build factories and manufacture goods both for local consumption of Negroes and for export. ... When Mr. Garvey brought his cohorts to Madison Square Garden, and when, ducking his dark head at the audience, he yelled, "We are going to Africa to tell England, France and Belgium to get out of there," America sat up, listened, laughed, and said here at least is something new. ... Thus the Black Star Line arose and disappeared, and with it went some \$800,000 of the savings of West Indians and a few American Negroes. ...

His African program was made impossible by his own pigheadedness. He proposed to make a start in Liberia with industrial enterprises. From this center he would penetrate all Africa and gradually subdue it. Instead of keeping this plan hidden and working cautiously and intelligently toward it, he yelled and shouted and telegraphed it all over the world. Without consulting the Liberians, he apparently was ready to assume partial charge of their state. ... [H]is talk about conquest and "driving Europe out," aroused European governments. ...

The present generation of Negroes has survived two grave temptations, the greater one, fathered by Booker T. Washington, which said, "Let politics alone, keep in your place, work hard, and do not complain," and which meant perpetual color caste for colored folk by their own cooperation and consent ... and the lesser, fathered by Marcus Garvey, which said, "Give up! Surrender! The struggle is useless; back to Africa and fight the white world."



Claude McKay
 "If We Must Die"
 (1919)

If we must die, let it not be like hogs
 Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
 While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
 Making their mock at our accursed lot.
 If we must die, O let us nobly die,
 So that our precious blood may not be shed
 In vain; then even the monsters we defy
 Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!
 O kinsmen we must meet the common foe!
 Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,
 And for their thousand blows deal one deathblow!
 What though before us lies the open grave?
 Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,
 Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!



Countee Cullen
 "Incident"
 (1924)

Once riding in old Baltimore,
 Heart-filled, head-filled with glee,
 I saw a Baltimorean
 Keep looking straight at me.
 Now I was eight and very small,
 And he was no whit bigger,
 And so I smiled, but he poked out
 His tongue, and called me, "Nigger."
 I saw the whole of Baltimore
 From May until December;
 Of all the things that happened there
 That's all that I remember.

American artists, photographers, musicians, and writers openly celebrated the distinctiveness of black culture. Many writers published their works in black magazines such as *The Crisis* and *The Messenger*. White literary figures like Carl Van Vechten also became patrons of the Harlem Renaissance, helping black writers publish their works with commercial presses that exposed white America to black artistic endeavors for the first time. The African American philosopher Alain Locke captured the creative impulse of the Harlem Renaissance in 1925 when he published *The New Negro*, an anthology of essays and poems by emerging literary voices. According to Locke the New Negro embodied a spirit of black racial pride and militancy that set a younger generation of African American artists and civil rights leaders apart from their predecessors, who had emphasized assimilating into white culture.

Harlem Renaissance writers took up themes previously absent from serious works of literature. Poet Langston Hughes discussed black Americans' aspirations; Jean Toomer's novel *Cane* explored the rhythms of working-class life in the countryside and city; Zora Neale Huston exposed the power of female sexuality in her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; poet Countee Cullen confronted the psychological impact of racism; and Claude McKay celebrated manly violence in his poems and novels. The poems displayed here show how McKay, Cullen, and Hughes protested racial discrimination through their poetry.

The Harlem Renaissance also included the jazz music innovations of trumpeter Louis Armstrong, pianist and arranger Fletcher Henderson, and pianist and composer Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton. Jazz was an original American musical style that melded African American and European musical traditions. White and black patrons flocked to Harlem jazz clubs to listen to black bands at venues like the Cotton Club and the Savoy, while white musicians nationwide formed jazz bands of their own. Thanks to new commercial radio stations and the growing phonographic record industry, jazz became so popular that Americans began calling the twenties "The Jazz Age." Jazz music, the white conductor Leopold Stokowski rejoiced, was "an expression of the times, of the breathless, energetic, superactive times in which we are living."

James Weldon Johnson's poem "The Prodigal Son" highlighted the dangers awaiting new arrivals unschooled in big-city ways, who flocked to Harlem's jazz clubs. In the two-dimensional drawing by African

American artist Aaron Douglas that accompanied the poem (21.12), female dancers surround a young man and gyrate to the music provided by a hovering jazz trombone. The fragments of a dollar, playing card, and gin label evoke the temptations confronting this young man. Johnson's poem echoed the rhythms of sermons that folk preachers delivered to their Southern congregations who might be planning to go to Harlem, warning that these "sweet-sinning women stripped him of his money / And they stripped him of his clothes / And they left him broke and ragged / In the streets of Babylon."

As Johnson's poem suggested African Americans expressed conflicting views about jazz. Many artists celebrated the music's originality and exuberance. Like Southern preachers, however, the urban black middle class viewed jazz as "the devil's music," believing that its syncopated rhythms aroused sexual impulses and encouraged lewd behavior. Jazz clubs often served illegal alcohol purchased from organized crime rings, linking jazz music to the immoral lifestyle that many black middle-class prohibition advocates wanted to eradicate. The middle class



Langston Hughes

"I, Too, Sing
America"
(1925)

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.
Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

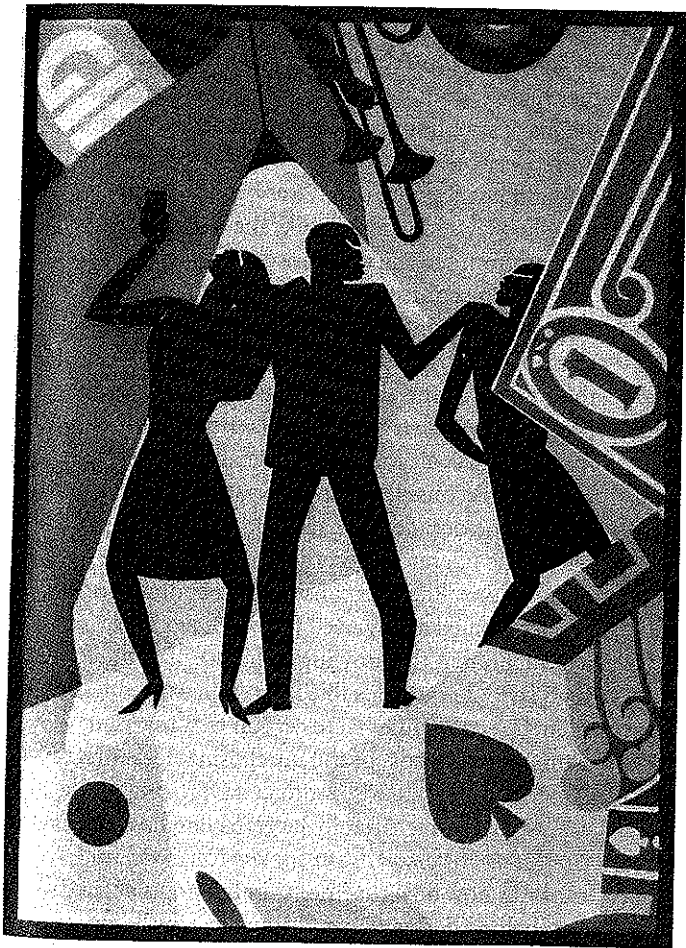
I, too, am America.

preferred religious spirituals, a distinctive African American musical tradition that they felt projected a more respectable image of black culture to mainstream America.

The literature of the Harlem Renaissance drew fire as well. Du Bois criticized novelist Claude McKay for depicting black working-class culture as a collection of pimps, petty criminals, drunks, and whores in his novel *Home to Harlem*. Du Bois lambasted McKay for reinforcing the negative stereotypes that white America held of African American culture, thereby undermining the possibility of using art to challenge the racial status quo. Defending New Negro aesthetics and the principle of artistic freedom, Langston Hughes countered, "We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter. We know we are beautiful."

21.12 Prodigal Son, 1927

Aaron Douglas's innovative angular style evoked the fast pace of modern life in an illustration that both portrayed and epitomized the artistic innovations of the Harlem Renaissance.



The New Woman



Women began the decade with a significant political victory when the Nineteenth Amendment gave them the right to vote in 1920. Female reformers expected newly enfranchised women to care deeply about issues affecting their gender, but the much-anticipated “women’s vote” never materialized. Throughout the twenties Americans offered competing visions of women’s proper place in American society. Former suffragists envisioned modern women playing an active role in politics. Popular culture, however, consistently defined the “new woman” as someone who kept herself thin, pretty, and lively for her husband.

Women in the Twenties

When women got the right to vote nationwide, an aging generation of feminists tried immediately to organize the female vote behind causes that particularly affected women. Black women had actively supported suffrage as a step toward politically empowering the African American community. Throughout the South, however, authorities used poll taxes, literacy tests, and intimidation to stop black women from registering to vote. The League of Women Voters, created by the National American Women Suffrage Association in 1920, drew up a list of issues that it expected to resonate among female voters including child labor, protective legislation for female workers, and cleaning up city politics. This list did not include demanding that the Nineteenth Amendment be enforced for black and white women alike.

Responding to studies that revealed high rates of infant mortality and women dying in childbirth, the League of Women Voters successfully lobbied Congress for the nation’s first major social welfare measure to help impoverished women and children. The Sheppard-Towner Act (1921) offered eight years of matching funds to states for classes that taught poor mothers about nutrition, hygiene, and prenatal care. It also provided visiting nurses for low-income pregnant women and new mothers.

By 1929, however, it became clear that women did not vote as a bloc. Therefore despite evidence of the law’s success, Congress did not renew the program. Rather than rallying to gender-specific causes, the best predictor of how a woman would vote was how her husband voted.

Feminists also failed in their effort to amend the constitution by adding an **Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)**, a proposed constitutional amendment which stated that “equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State

on account of sex.” The radical National Women’s Party, chaired by Alice Paul, argued that such an amendment would eradicate in one fell swoop all the legal barriers that a dizzying array of archaic state legislation created for women. These laws, advocate Elsie Hill noted, denied a woman “control of her children equal to the father’s; they deny her, if married, the right to control her earnings; they punish her for offenses for which men go unpunished,” such as adultery. The moderate Progressive reformers who dominated the League of Women Voters, like future first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, worried that the Equal Rights Amendment might endanger the protective legislation for women that they had so carefully crafted in recent years, such as the maximum hour laws designed to shield mothers from overwork (see Chapter 18). They opposed the amendment, arguing that it was better to remove troubling laws individually, like the ones that prevented women from serving on juries or inheriting property.

Over the course of the decade, younger women displayed little interest in the social movements championed by their elders. Instead many women in their twenties and thirties focused on their economic prospects. Women made up 23.6 percent of the workforce by 1920, although they remained restricted to professions considered appropriate for their gender. During the decade clerical work as secretaries and telephone operators became primarily female occupations. Rapid expansion of corporate bureaucracies created a new need for office workers, a demand that the growing numbers of white female high school graduates filled. Women earned less than men, but companies were certain that married women made most of the purchasing decisions in American households. Product advertising in the 1920s, therefore, carefully targeted female consumers. *Images as History: Advertising the New Woman* explores how advertisements in the popular media also helped define the feminine ideal in the twenties.

Images as History

ADVERTISING THE NEW WOMAN

Popular advertising characterized the "new woman" as an efficient homemaker, devoted mother, high fashion sophisticate, and engaging spouse with the time and energy for a dizzying circle of friends and club activities. Manufacturing discontent about a woman's lifestyle and insecurity about her looks was another advertising strategy designed to get women to purchase products.

Advertisements that featured attractive women to entice potential customers, as in the Fisher car ad pictured here, reflected changing ideas about the ideal

female body type. In the nineteenth century upper-class women proudly displayed their corpulence as evidence of their wealth and health. In the twenties, the popular media depicted the vigorous, alert modern woman as thin. But according to a 1928 study, only 17 percent of American women were both slender and over 5 feet 3 inches tall. How does this Fisher car ad both celebrate the new freedoms that women enjoyed in the twenties and perpetuate traditional stereotypes about women?

The slim Fisher girl appeared liberated from the confines of the home and the physical incapacity caused by too much weight. She seemed to be a modern woman on the move.

This female silhouette more closely resembled the body of an adolescent girl than a mature woman, encouraging a female preoccupation with dieting and self-denial that continues today.

Most ads of the time displayed men with both feet firmly on the ground. This woman's off-balance pose with one knee bent suggested tentativeness and instability, putting limits on her independence and strength.

34 THE SATURDAY EVENING POST November 24, 1928

Of all those who express motor car body preference, .95% Prefer "Body by Fisher".

An investigation made by a disinterested agency and reaching into every county of every state in America, has revealed that the vast majority of motor car proprietors select a car with its body attributes foremost in mind. It also established that 95 per cent of all motor car buyers who are influenced by the body in purchasing a motor car, prefer Body by Fisher.

When the American people—who love motor cars—exhibit such solid and personalized preference for any automotive product, there is only one answer: That product must be essentially superior.

As a matter of fact, the superior quality and super-value of Body by Fisher have been evident from the first. So evident, that Bodies by Fisher were early demanded by the manufacturers of the finest motor car chassis. Inevitably, Fisher thus became associated years ago in the public mind not only with better bodies—but with better motor cars as well.

Note the reader: When General Motors gathered the finest motor car in each price class into one great organization, these better cars were already equipped—had long been equipped—with Body by Fisher. That is one reason why today the emblem "Body by Fisher" is the unerring guide to the better motor car in every price field—a fact which is very plainly apparent when you glance at the list printed below—of cars equipped with Body by Fisher.

CADILLAC • LASALLE • BUICK • OAKLAND • OLDSMOBILE • PONTIAC • CHEVROLET
GENERAL MOTORS

These tall, elongated figurines depicted an ideal female body that was slim and youthful with legs that formed a straight line from toe to thigh, pointed toes, and a giraffe-like neck. These proportions suggested the women were nearly 9 feet tall!

The presence of the maid behind the Fisher girl indicates that she is rich as well as thin—an enviable combination to many women.

Her sleek body, like that of the car being advertised, served mostly as a commodity or decorative object suitable for a modern man.

"Body by Fisher"

Margaret Sanger and the Fight for Birth Control

Advertisers promised that modern electrical appliances would give women more time to spend with their children, and women's popular magazines offered a plethora of articles on how to use this additional time to raise children properly. Birth

"No woman can call herself free who does not own and control her own body."

Birth control advocate MARGARET SANGER

21.13 Margaret Sanger Protests

When officials in Boston refused to let Margaret Sanger speak publicly about birth control, she appeared before a crowd with her mouth bandaged to protest their censorship. Her ploy garnered headlines across the nation, giving the birth control cause a boost.

control advocate and trained nurse Margaret Sanger viewed the mother's plight somewhat differently. Too many children, Sanger argued, ruined women's health and relegated them to the ranks of the poor. In her view providing women with information on safe and reliable contraception was more important than dispensing advice on how to raise children.

In 1916 Sanger opened the nation's first birth control clinic in Brooklyn, New York, where she passed out flyers to advertise the benefits of contraception over illegal and dangerous back-alley abortions. For nine days Sanger dispensed

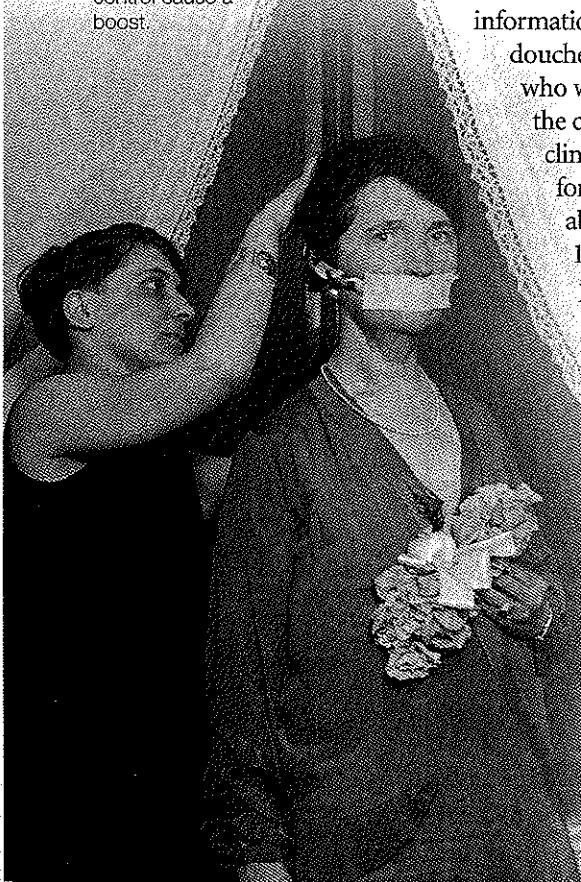
information on diaphragms, condoms, douches, and withdrawal to women who waited in long lines to enter the clinic. The police then shut the clinic down and arrested Sanger for distributing information about birth control. Since 1873 the Comstock Act had prohibited sending information about contraception, abortion, or pornography through the mails, and by 1878 every state except New Mexico banned all means of circulating material about contraception. Sanger served thirty days in jail, one of many unsuccessful attempts to silence her. In 1929, after she spoke on birth control before the Harvard Liberal

Club in Boston, the outraged mayor threatened to revoke the license of any hall that allowed her to speak again. In response Sanger appeared with her mouth bandaged before an audience in Boston's Ford Hall Forum (21.13). Her silent protest won headlines across the nation, helping Sanger publicize her cause even more widely.

By openly discussing birth control, Sanger made public the private contraception practices of middle-class couples. Poor mothers, she said, pleaded for her to share "the secret the rich have." Studies suggested that at least twice in their lifetimes, women living in poverty pulled their shawls over their heads to visit the five-dollar abortionist down the street. Sanger often told the story of Sadie Sachs (whose authenticity was never verified), a woman whom Sanger, as a young nurse, met when she accompanied a physician into the tenements to care for Sadie after she fell ill from a botched self-induced abortion. When Sadie begged the middle-class doctor to give her the information she needed to avoid another pregnancy, he replied, "Tell Jake to sleep on the roof." The next time Sanger saw Sadie, she lay in a coma dying from another abortion. Sanger used the story to personalize the extent of the abortion problem (nearly one million abortions that resulted in fifty thousand female deaths each year) and to dispel the misguided belief that no "decent" woman needed information about contraception.

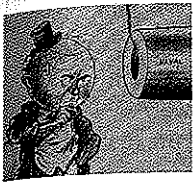
Rather than counseling women to avoid sex, Sanger asserted that women had as much right as men to enjoy sexual intercourse without fearing for their lives. Contraception would not make women more promiscuous, she predicted. Once freed from the constant strain of childbearing, women would become more interesting spouses by developing their intellectual, political, and cultural interests much as popular advertising encouraged them to do.

Through her arrests, clinics, and public lectures, Sanger gradually helped change attitudes toward birth control. Although laws censoring information about birth control remained part of the legal code until the 1970s, enforcement became rarer and rarer. By the late 1920s thirty birth control clinics operated nationwide. Eugenicists, who wanted to improve the human race by controlling its hereditary qualities, also developed a strong interest in birth control. For Eugenicists contraception could prevent those they viewed as "unfit" from reproducing. Under their influence many states authorized compulsory sterilization of the institutionalized mentally handicapped, criminals, and epileptics until the 1960s.



What arguments did Sanger make to support her campaign for legal contraception?

Ensuring Peace: Diplomacy in the Twenties



Leaders in the birth control movement developed close ties with women's right groups in other countries, just one example of the global presence that Americans maintained throughout the twenties. Although the nation focused mostly on domestic concerns, international issues sometimes dominated the headlines. In 1920 the Senate refused to ratify the Versailles Treaty, which officially ended the war with Germany, or to join the League of Nations, which President Woodrow Wilson had championed to protect world peace. Rejection of Wilson's vision of collective security through the league did not signal a withdrawal from world affairs. American presidents Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge tried instead to use disarmament and dollars to prevent armed conflict.

Disarmament

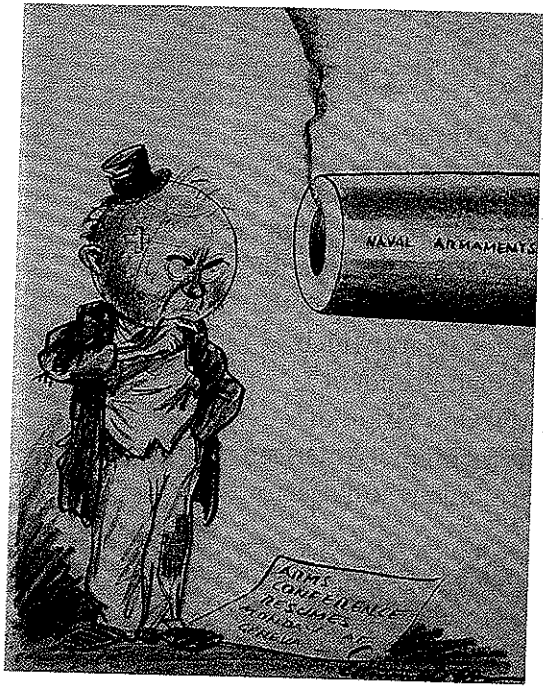
The high point of the disarmament movement came when Republican President Warren Harding convened the Washington Conference (1921–1922) in Washington, D.C., to negotiate a set of agreements that would limit naval arms. The conference also reaffirmed America's Open Door Policy (see Chapter 19) that kept Chinese trade open to all and secured pledges of cooperation among the world's leading military powers, including Britain, Japan, Italy and France.

Through the Washington Conference, Harding reshaped the political vision of his Democratic predecessor, Woodrow Wilson. Harding rejected Wilson's idea of using an open-ended commitment to the League of Nations to ensure world peace. He agreed with other Republicans who felt membership in this world body would unduly restrict America's ability to set its own foreign policy. Harding instead sought to prevent another war by convincing all major powers to disarm and to agree to mediation when disputes arose. Harding knew that Congress's penny-pinching mood meant certain rejection of any administration proposal to maintain a large military or embark on a major shipbuilding campaign. What better way to balance this domestic reality with the need to protect American shores from heavily armed naval competitors than by negotiating multinational disarmament treaties?

The White House and press referred to the meetings in Washington as a "peace conference" to cultivate the image that the negotiations would correct Wilson's blundering in Paris during the Versailles Treaty proceedings (see Chapter 20). The

opening ceremonies underscored the symbolic comparisons that the Harding administration wanted to draw between the two international conferences. Delegates first attended the solemn burial in Arlington National Cemetery of an unidentified American soldier who had fallen on the battlefields of France. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was a memorial to all deceased soldiers who went missing or unidentified during the war. Next, Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes opened the conference with a detailed public statement of his objectives, putting into practice the open diplomacy that Wilson had called for in the Fourteen Points and then quickly abandoned for closed door sessions in Paris.

Japan's 1905 victory in the Russo-Japanese War had signaled its emergence as the premier military power in East Asia. To contain Japan and Britain, which still controlled the world's greatest navy, Hughes proposed scrapping thirty American, twenty-three British, and seventeen Japanese battleships. One thrilled observer noted that Hughes had single-handedly sunk more British battleships "than all the admirals of the world had destroyed in a cycle of centuries." The Japanese, who unlike the British and Americans had only one ocean to patrol, accepted a naval tonnage ratio of 5:5:3 between the United States, Great Britain, and Japan. This meant that for every 5 tons of naval shipping that America and Great Britain maintained, Japan retained 3. Besides arms limitation, negotiations focused on settling potentially explosive issues in the Pacific. There American objectives included curtailing Japanese expansion in East Asia and preserving the Open Door in China. The American delegation met these goals, but at some cost. Japan accepted a smaller navy in



21.14 Looking into the Black Hole of Ruin

This 1927 political cartoon forecasts disaster if the world powers failed to reach a second naval disarmament agreement. In the cartoon the world is in disarray after a naval gun showers it with gun powder.

France and Italy) set a ten-year moratorium on battleship construction and limited the number of guns that ships could carry. The treaty, however, made no mention of limits for submarines, light cruisers, aircraft, or land forces.

The Washington Conference also negotiated an accompanying Four Power Treaty, in which France, the United States, Britain, and Japan agreed to respect one another's Pacific possessions and to consult if any dispute arose. The Nine Power Treaty was the conference's final achievement. In this agreement the above five nations and Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, and China all agreed to respect the Open Door in China, a policy advocated by the United States since the turn of the century (see Chapter 19).

The resulting agreements essentially protected the United States, Britain, and Japan from an aggressive naval attack on their borders. They left Britain in control of the European seas, gave the United States charge of the Americas, and recognized Japanese predominance in East Asia. For the time being, avoiding an arms race and maintaining the status quo served the interests of the world's major powers.

Calvin Coolidge, Harding's successor in the White House, continued the Republican effort to find alternative ways to maintain world peace. Leading powers met again in Geneva in 1927 to broker another disarmament pact. This 1927 political cartoon (21.14) offered support for the proceedings by showing a disheveled world covered with gunpowder from a recently fired naval gun. This time, however, the leading powers failed to

return for a pledge that the others would refrain from improving their naval bases or fortifications in the western Pacific. American naval experts warned that this concession would leave American Pacific possessions vulnerable to a future Japanese attack. Hughes, who doubted that Congress would approve funds to improve naval defenses, accepted the deal. The resulting Five Power Treaty (which included smaller tonnage limits for

reach an agreement. Coolidge's secretary of state Frank Kellogg had more success negotiating the Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928), whose signatories renounced aggressive war as an instrument of national policy and agreed to resolve their disagreements through peaceful means. *Choices and Consequences: Preventing War in Europe* examines why President Coolidge chose to support a multinational treaty that outlawed war.

Wartime Debts

World War I revealed the importance of European trade to American prosperity, but in the twenties the politically sensitive question of securing repayment from Allied nations for American wartime loans threatened to undermine Europe's economic recovery. From 1914 to 1925 the United States had loaned the Allies nearly \$10 billion to finance wartime purchases of American goods and to help rebuild war-torn Europe (21.15). In the 1920s the Allied governments urged the United States to cancel the loans. How, they asked, could America insist on repayment when the Allies had sacrificed a whole generation of men to the joint cause of defeating Germany? Americans had supplied money while the Allies gave their blood, they argued. The United States, the Allies claimed, could easily afford to cancel the loans as the country had profited enormously from the war.

Americans remained vehemently opposed to canceling the debt. "They hired the money, didn't they," retorted President Calvin Coolidge in the mid-twenties, expressing a common American view that Europe had a moral obligation to repay its debts. Coolidge did, however, agree to lower the interest rate on the loans, which reduced the total amount due by 43 percent. Further complicating the debate, the high American tariff enacted in 1922 made it difficult for Allied nations to sell manufactured goods in the United States, revenue that they needed to repay their war loans. Using a high tariff to protect American industries from foreign competition had tremendous domestic appeal and the United States refused to lower it.

The Allies consequently relied on reparation payments from Germany (authorized in the Versailles Treaty) to repay their U.S. war loans. This punitive aspect of the Versailles Treaty troubled many Americans, who viewed the \$33 billion reparation bill imposed on Germany as excessive. The United States denied any connection between war loans and reparation payments, seeing the first

Choices and Consequences:

PREVENTING WAR IN EUROPE

In 1928 France invited the United States to sign a treaty renouncing war between the two nations, hoping to coax the American government into playing a more active peacekeeping role in Europe. President Coolidge faced several choices about how to respond. Americans had conflicting visions of the best way to avoid another war, and vocal supporters backed each option.

Choices

1 Adopt a non-interventionist policy that kept the United States out of European affairs.

2 Sign a nonaggression pact with France as the first step toward creating a formal defensive alliance that rebuilt the pre-WWI balance of power system in Europe.

3 Reject bilateral agreements and instead join the League of Nations.

4 Negotiate a multinational nonaggression pact.

Decision

Coolidge rejected any suggestion that the United States join the League of Nations but knew that the idea of outlawing war had strong appeal at home. Consequently he agreed to let Secretary of State Frank Kellogg meet with French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand to fashion a multinational nonaggression pact. By opening the treaty up to other nations, Coolidge avoided the impression that the United States was allying itself with France. The resulting Kellogg-Briand Pact was eventually signed by sixty-three nations, including Germany and Japan.

Consequences

The Kellogg-Briand Pact proved popular with Americans because its vagueness allowed it to be all things to all people. Non-interventionists saw the pact as insulating the country from ever fighting another war overseas. They liked that the United States resolved to stay peaceful yet made no binding commitments to defend other nations. Internationalists, who wanted the United States to play a more active role in maintaining world peace, saw the treaty as the first step toward creating an American presence in international arbitration bodies like the World Court and the League of Nations.



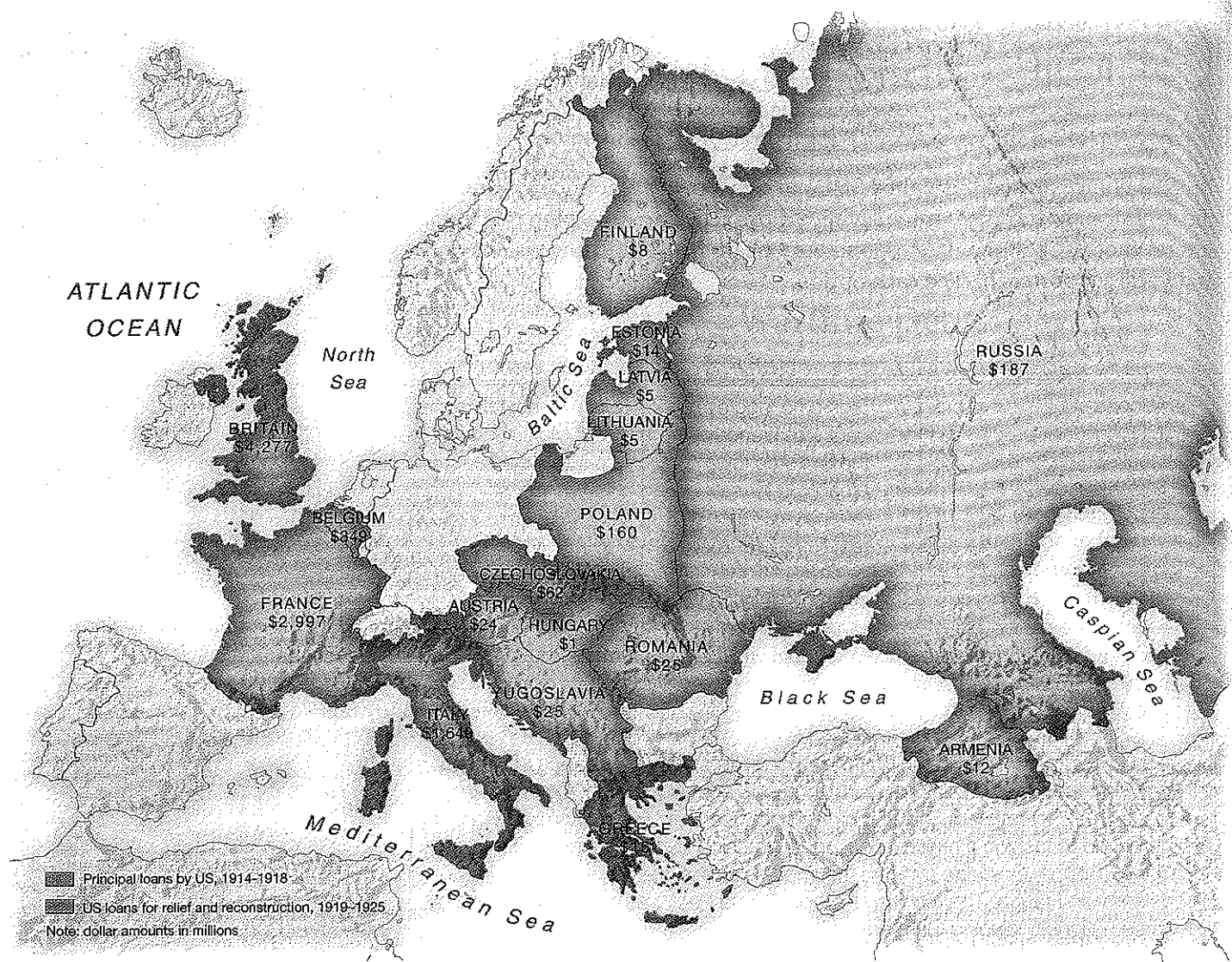
"A Christmas Carol: Peace on Earth, Good Will Towards Man"

Continuing Controversies

What value did the Kellogg-Briand Pact have?

Critics called the treaty a "letter to Santa Claus" and dismissed it as "not worth a postage stamp," pointing out that the world's major powers signed the agreement but continued to arm their nations for war. The Kellogg-Briand agreement still allowed for wars of "self-defense," a slippery term that nations could easily manipulate. As if to prove the

point, when the Senate enthusiastically ratified the treaty with only one dissenting vote, it added a reservation stating that preserving the Monroe Doctrine constituted self-defense. Others acknowledge that the treaty did not prevent World War II but point out that it gave the victorious nations a legal way to punish Nazi officials who were convicted of violating the Kellogg-Briand Pact in postwar war crimes trials.



21.15 American Loans to Europe, 1914-1925

The United States demanded that Europe repay loans given to help nations defeat Germany and rebuild after World War I.

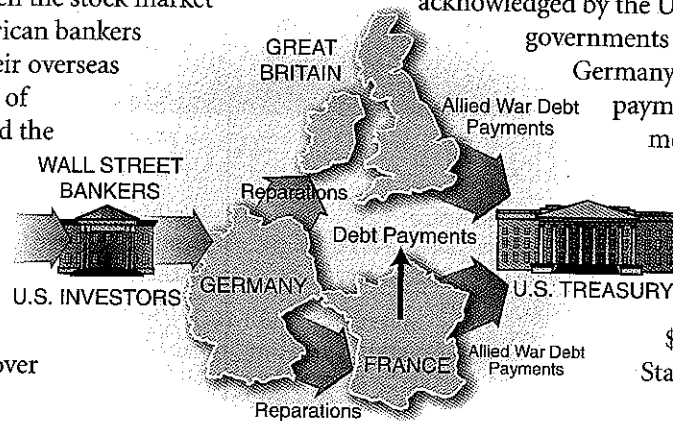
as an honest debt and the latter as blood money. The Allies, however, refused to reduce the reparation bill as long as the United States insisted on collecting Allied war loans.

In 1923 skyrocketing inflation caused Germany to miss a reparation payment, and in retaliation France and Belgium occupied the Ruhr Valley, a German industrial center. This crisis threatened to undermine American economic interests abroad by thrusting Europe into recession. Having ruled out lowering the tariff or canceling Allied war loans as ways to foster Europe's economic recovery from the war, the United States resolved to help Germany make its reparation payments. Twice in the decade international committees of experts convened to discuss reparations. In 1924 Secretary of State Hughes sent Chicago banker General Charles G. Dawes and General Electric Company head Owen D. Young to Europe. The

resulting Dawes Plan (1924) loaned Germany \$200 million in gold to pay a reduced reparation bill and gave Germany more time to meet its debt. Certain that a German recovery was imminent, American bankers eagerly provided half the funds for the Dawes Plan, and made private loans and investments that helped Germany even more. Dawes went on to become vice president during Coolidge's successful reelection bid in 1924 and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1925. In 1929 the Young Plan further reduced Germany's final bill to \$8 billion and restructured the payment schedule once again.

American money kept the whole system afloat. Between 1923 and 1930 American banks loaned \$2.6 billion to Germany; Germany made \$2 billion in reparation payments; and the Allies repaid \$2.6 billion of their American war loans (one-fifth of the amount owed). The "Global Flow of Reparation

Payments" (21.16) details the journey that American money took around the world through Germany, France, and Great Britain until it landed back in American coffers. When the stock market crashed in 1929, American bankers drastically reduced their overseas loans. The withdrawal of American funds caused the whole arrangement to collapse. First Germany, then the Allied governments defaulted on their payments. In 1931 President Herbert Hoover



successfully called for a one-year moratorium on all international debts. With the connection between reparation payments and war loans now formally acknowledged by the United States, the Allied governments canceled most of

Germany's remaining reparation

payments. By 1934 all governments except Finland defaulted on their

wartime American loans. Finland was the only nation that finally repaid its entire debt of

\$8 million to the United States by 1969.

21.16 The Global Flow of Reparation Payments

American capital kept the reparation system created by the Versailles Treaty afloat in the twenties.

Conclusion

The 1920s proved a pivotal decade for the United States, a period when Americans both embraced and resisted modernity. The health of the automobile industry became essential to the country's economy, and cars refashioned daily life, inner cities, and the rural landscape. Welfare capitalism offered the promise of better industrial working conditions. Lindbergh's solo flight across the Atlantic captured the public's imagination and provided evidence of American technological prowess. Meanwhile multinational agreements that limited armaments and outlawed war promised to keep the world peaceful without entangling America in defensive alliances or the League of Nations.

In the twenties Americans embraced conflicting visions over what values should dominate the nation in the modern era. The Fundamentalist-Modernist cultural divide fueled the controversy that surrounded the Scopes Trial over teaching evolution in public schools. Temperance advocates viewed alcohol as a scourge that increased vice and corrupted politics. They led the nation into a thirteen-year experiment with prohibition that ended when the increase in organized crime and widespread flouting of the law convinced Americans that prohibition was unenforceable and misguided.

The birth control movement and Lost Generation writers challenged traditionally accepted notions of female sexuality in the twenties, but a consumer culture focused on improving appearance urged the "new woman" to continue thinking of her husband and children first. Fearing that unchecked immigration would infect American culture with foreign ideologies, especially communist ideals, the nation supported drastic immigration restrictions. Meanwhile the desire to protect a racial status quo based on white, Protestant supremacy fueled a resurgence of lynchings and the Ku Klux Klan. Embodying a new militant spirit, the New Negro clashed with traditional civil rights leaders over whether the solution to breaking down the barrier of racial discrimination lay in demonstrating artistic merit, economic self-help, or leaving the United States altogether.

Blinded by prosperity in the industrial sector, few Americans focused on farmers' difficulties or the growing concentration of wealth at the top in the twenties. All this changed quickly when the stock market crashed in 1929. Suddenly the plight of the common people became the nation's top concern.

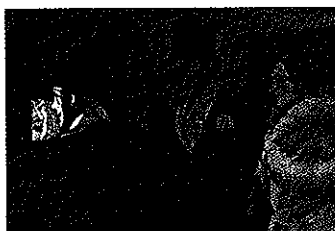


CHAPTER REVIEW



1916

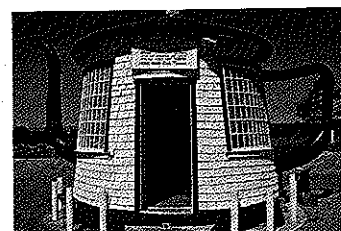
Margaret Sanger opens first birth control clinic
Sanger champions birth control to improve female health and eliminate poverty



1919

First Red Scare
Anti-communist campaign destroys radical political organizations

Eighteenth Amendment ratified
Initiates era of national Prohibition



1921–1922

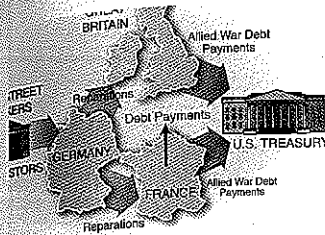
Washington Conference held
Disarmament becomes a major goal of American foreign policy

UNIA Black Star Line founded
Short-lived black-run steamship operation line embodies Marcus Garvey's ideal of economic self-help

Teapot Dome Scandal
Corruption weakens Harding's presidency

Review Questions

1. What features and controversies characterized America's transformation into a car culture in the 1920s? How did lifestyles and labor relations also change during the decade?
2. What symbolic significance did Americans attach to Charles Lindberg's solo flight across the Atlantic?
3. Compare the various manifestations of cultural conflict in the twenties. What similar impulses motivated Americans to enact prohibition, immigration restrictions, and laws prohibiting the teaching of Darwin's theory of evolution? What differing impact did these various reforms have on American society?
4. Why were the Harlem Renaissance and Marcus Garvey controversial?
5. Were the 1920s a time of political, economic, and social liberation for women? What traditional concerns or ideas remained intact?
6. How did the United States fashion a new role for the nation in world affairs in the twenties? What ideals informed American foreign policy in this era?



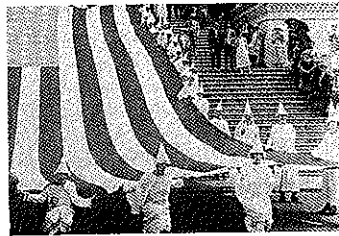
1924

Immigration Act of 1924

Severely reduces immigration and establishes nationality-based quota-system

Dawes Plan

United States uses financial aid to stabilize postwar European economies



1925

Scopes Trial

Highlights cultural conflict between religion and science

Ku Klux Klan marches in Washington, D.C.

White-instigated racial violence surges as the Klan becomes national organization

Publication of *The New Negro*

Harlem Renaissance gives rise to African American artistic outpouring



1927

Charles A. Lindbergh flies nonstop from New York to Paris

Reassures Americans that man and machine can coexist harmoniously



1928

Kellogg-Briand Pact

America uses world influence to secure global pledges of peace

Key Terms

Spirit of St. Louis The plane that Charles Lindbergh piloted on the first-ever nonstop solo flight from New York to Paris on May 21, 1927. 630

Eighteenth Amendment (1919) Constitutional amendment that banned the sale, manufacture, and transportation of intoxicating liquors. 633

Volstead Act (1919) Law that established criminal penalties for manufacturing, transporting, or possessing alcohol. 633

Twenty-First Amendment (1933) Constitutional amendment that repealed the Eighteenth Amendment. 633

Immigration Act of 1924 Law that allowed unrestricted immigration from the Western Hemisphere, curtailed all Asian immigration, and used quotas to control how many immigrants emigrated from individual European nations. 634

First Red Scare (1919–1920) Period when the Justice Department arrested and deported alien anarchists and Communists suspected of trying to destroy American democracy and capitalism. 634

fundamentalism An evangelical Christian theology that viewed the Bible as an authentic

recounting of historical events and the absolute moral word of God. 636

modernism A liberal Christian theology embraced in many urban areas that emphasized the ongoing revelation of divine truth. 636

Harlem Renaissance An outpouring of African American artistic expression in the 1920s and 1930s. 638

Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) Organization founded by Marcus Garvey to spread his message of racial pride, economic self-sufficiency, and returning to Africa. 640

New Negro Spirit of black racial pride and militancy that set a younger generation of African American artists and civil rights leaders apart from their predecessors. 642

The Jazz Age Nickname for the twenties that reflected the popularity of jazz music. 642

Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) A proposed constitutional amendment, which stated that “equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” 644

Eugenicists Those who wanted to improve the human race by controlling its hereditary qualities. 646

Washington Conference (1921–1922) Meeting of world powers that resulted in agreements that limited naval arms, reaffirmed America’s Open Door policy that kept Chinese trade open to all, and secured pledges of cooperation among the world’s leading military powers. 647

Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928) Treaty that renounced aggressive war as an instrument of national policy. 648

Dawes Plan (1924) International agreement that loaned Germany \$200 million in gold to pay a reduced reparation bill and gave Germany more time to meet its debt. 650

