

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: A TURBULENT DECADE: THE TWENTIES

READING AND STUDY GUIDE

- I. Cars and Planes: The Promise of the Twenties
 - A. The Car Culture
 - B. On the Road
 - C. Welfare Capitalism and Consumer Culture
 - D. The Age of Flight: Charles A. Lindbergh

- II. Cultural Unrest
 - A. The Lost Generation
 - B. Prohibition
 - C. The First Red Scare and Immigration Restrictions
 - D. Fundamentalism

- III. Racial Violence and Civil Rights
 - A. Lynching, Racial Rioting, and the Ku Klux Klan
 - B. Marcus Garvey
 - C. The Harlem Renaissance

- IV. The New Woman
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With their short skirts, bobbed hair, and heel-kicking dance steps, flappers displayed a carefree lifestyle that defied the stricter morals embraced by their mothers' generation. 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 trustbusting 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.

Learning Objectives

After a careful examination of Chapter 21, students should be able to do the following:

1. Define the term *oligopoly* and explain its significance to American corporate development during the 1920s.
2. Define the terms *open shop*, *yellow-dog contract*, and *welfare capitalism* and explain their relevance to corporate treatment of labor during the 1920s.
3. Explain the impact of mechanization and the deteriorating status of labor unions on the conditions of industrial labor during the 1920s.
4. Identify and describe the conditions of the "sick" industries of the 1920s.
5. Name two of the more accomplished members of Warren Harding's cabinet and describe the roles they played in his administration.
6. Name three political scandals that occurred during the Harding administration.
7. Explain the means used by the Coolidge administration to establish "Coolidge prosperity."
8. Identify the candidates and indicate the outcome of the presidential election of 1924.
9. List the factors that contributed to a general decline of political interest in women's issues during the 1920s.
10. Identify the major factors leading to the Great Black Migration of the 1920s.
11. Identify Marcus Garvey and explain the role of the Universal Negro Improvement Association.

12. Explain the term *Harlem Renaissance* and identify the key black writers associated with this movement.
13. Define the term *barrio* and briefly describe the living conditions among Hispanic immigrants in urban areas during the 1920s.
14. Briefly describe the impact of the automobile on the suburbanization of middle-class Americans.
15. Describe some of the methods used by advertisers to promote consumerism, and identify the key markets targeted by 1920s advertisers.
16. Explain the term *Jazz Age* and why it is often used to describe the 1920s.
17. Explain the term *The New Morality* and identify the factors that contributed to its emergence.
18. Identify what is meant by the Lost Generation and connect the term to the major American literary figures of the 1920s.
19. Compare and contrast the impact of immigration restriction on the Japanese and Filipinos.
20. Distinguish the modern Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s from its Reconstruction predecessor.
21. Briefly identify the factors leading to poor enforcement of the Volstead Act. Explain why increasing numbers of Americans began to question prohibition during the 1920s.
22. Define the term *fundamentalism* and explain its significance to the Scopes trial. Identify the prosecuting and defending attorneys in the Scopes trial and indicate the outcome of the trial.
23. Offer two examples of international agreements signed during the 1920s that rejected the principles of war.

Key Terms & Definitions:

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 co-operation 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)

Study Questions:

What qualities define the women in the photo as flappers? (624)

How did cars transform urban and rural lifestyles? (626)

What messages did the architecture of roadside gas stations convey? (627)

How did ethnic profiling and welfare capitalism promise to help industrialists run their factories more efficiently? (628)

What job could you have gotten in this factory? (629)

How did a mass popular culture emerge in the twenties? (630)

Why did Americans celebrate Lindbergh's solo flight to Paris? (631)

What critique did the Lost Generation offer of American society? (632)

Why did Americans eventually conclude that national prohibition was a failed experiment? (633)

Why did the nation enact strict immigration restrictions in the twenties? (634)

What competing visions over radicalism emerged during the Sacco-Vanzetti trial? (635)

Why did fundamentalists object to teaching evolution in public schools? (636)

What cultural and religious tensions were exposed during the Scopes Trial? (637)

What does this souvenir postcard reveal about the ritual of lynching? (638)

Why did membership in the Ku Klux Klan surge in the twenties? (639)

Why did Garvey elicit such strong emotions among both followers and critics? (640)

How did Garvey and Du Bois link the U.S. Civil Rights Movement to international politics? (641)

In these poems how do responses to racism vary? (642)

What competing views arose over the purpose of art during the Harlem Renaissance? (643)

What different strategies did women develop to improve their lives in the twenties? (644)

How did the popular media define "the new woman"? (645)

What arguments did Sanger make to support her campaign for legal contraception? (646)

How did Harding's foreign policy vision differ from Wilson's? (647)

What benefits and drawbacks did the Washington Conference agreements offer the United States? (648)

Did the Kellogg-Briand Pact represent a new path in American foreign policy? (649)

How did lingering financial issues from World War I shape relations between the United States and Europe? (650)

Why did the United States intervene to settle European financial crises in the 1920s? (651)