

Chapter 30
***American Life in the
 "Roaring Twenties,"
 1920–1929***

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I. Seeing Red

- **Bolshevik Revolution (1919):** coming of Communism to Russia
 - Effects on United States:
 - Small Communist Party emerged
 - Blamed for some labor strikes (Seattle, 1919)
 - Big **red scare** of 1919-1920:
 - Nationwide crusade against left-wingers whose Americanism was suspect
 - Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer “saw red” too easily
 - “Fighting Quaker” rounded up 6,000 suspects
 - Number doubled in June 1919 when a bomb shattered both the nerves and the home of Palmer

I. Seeing Red (cont.)

- Other events highlighted red scare:
 - December 1919: shipload of 249 alleged alien radicals deported on *Buford* (the “Soviet Ark”) to Russia
 - September 1920, still-unexplained bomb blast on Wall Street killed 38 people and wounded a hundred others
- State legislatures 1919-1920 joined outcry; passed **criminal syndicalism laws**:
 - Anti-red statutes made unlawful mere *advocacy* of violence to secure social change
 - Critics protested that mere words not criminal deeds
 - Violence done to freedom of speech as IWW members and other radicals vigorously prosecuted



I. Seeing Red (cont.)

- In 1920 five New York state legislators, all lawfully elected, denied seats because they were Socialists
- Conservatives used red scare to break fledgling unions
 - Unions called for “closed” or all-union shop; this was denounced as “Sovietism in disguise”
 - Employers hailed their antiunion campaign for “open” shop as **American plan**
- Anti-redism and antiforeignism reflected in notorious case—regarded by liberals as “judicial lynching”
 - Nicola Sacco and Bartholomeo Vanzetti convicted in 1921 of murder of a Mass. Paymaster and his guard

I. Seeing Red (cont.)

- Jury and judge prejudiced against defenders because they were Italians, atheists, anarchists, and draft dodgers
- Liberals and radicals the world over rallied to their defense
- Case dragged on for over six years until 1917 when condemned men electrocuted
- Communists and radicals had two martyrs in “class struggle”

II. Hooded Hoodlums of the KKK

- **New Ku Klux Klan:**
 - Resembled antifoiegn “nativist” movement of 1850s rather than antiblack nightriders of 1860s:
 - Antifoiegn, anti-Catholic, antiblack, anti-Jewish, antipacifists, anti-Communist, anti-internationalist, anti-evolutionist, antibootlegger, antigambling, anti-adultery, and anti-birth control
 - Pro-Anglo-Saxon, pro-“native” American, pro-Protestant

II. Hooded Hoodlums of the KKK (cont.)

- Klan betokened extremist, ultraconservative uprising against:
 - Forces of diversity and modernity transforming American culture
 - Spread rapidly in Midwest and **Bible Belt** South where Protestant Fundamentalism thrived
 - Mid-1920s peak had five million dues-paying members and wielded potent political influence
 - “Knights of the Invisible Empire” included among officials Imperial Wizards, Grand Goblins, King Kleagles, and other horrendous “kreatures”

II. Hooded Hoodlums of the KKK (cont.)

- Things of KKK:
 - Impressive “konclaves,” huge flag-waving parades
 - Chief warning was blazing cross
 - Principle weapon bloodied lash, supplemented by tar and feathers
 - Rallying songs and brutal slogan



II. Hooded Hoodlums of the KKK (cont.)

- Collapsed in late 1920s in part because of corruption
 - \$10 initiation fee, of which \$4 a kickback to local organization as incentive to recruit
 - KKK a manifestation of intolerance and prejudice against pace of social change in 1920s
 - Civil rights activists fought in vain for legislation making lynching a federal crime

III. Stemming the Foreign Flood

- Isolationist America (1920s), ingrown and provincial, had little use for immigrants:
 - 800,000 came in 1920-1921
 - 2/3 from southern and eastern Europe
 - Americans recoiled at these “New Immigrants”
 - Congress passed Emergency Quota Act 1921
 - Newcomers from Europe restricted to a quota
 - **Immigration Act of 1924** replaced Emergency Act
 - Quota cut from 3% to 2%
 - National origins base shifted from census of 1910 to 1890

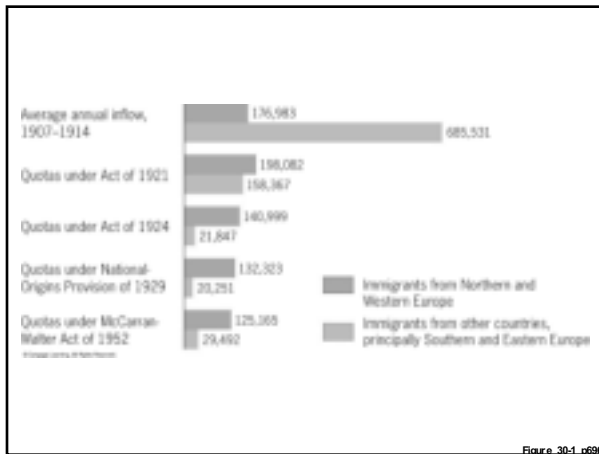
III. Stemming the Foreign Flood (cont.)

- Southern Europeans bitterly denounced device as discriminatory
- Purpose was to freeze America's existing racial composition, which was largely northern Europeans
- Slammed door absolutely against Japanese immigrants
 - » "Hate America" rallies erupted in Japan
- Exempt from quota system were Canadian and Latin Americans—
 - » Easy to attract for jobs when times good
 - » Easy to send home when times bad
- Effected pivotal departure in American policy
 - Claimed nation was filling up—"No Vacancy" sign
 - By 1931 more foreigners left than arrived



III. Stemming the Foreign Flood (cont.)

- Quotas caused America to sacrifice some of its tradition of freedom and opportunity
 - As well as its future ethnic diversity (see Figure 30.1)
- Immigration Act of 1924 marked end of era—
 - Virtually unrestricted immigration had brought some 35 million newcomers, mostly from Europe
 - Immigrant tide now cut off
 - Left on American shores a patchwork of ethnic communities separated by language, religion, and customs
 - "Cultural pluralists" opposed immigration restriction because they celebrated ethnic identity and cultural cross-fertilization



IV. The Prohibition “Experiment”

- Prohibition—
 - Last cause of progressive reform movement
 - **Eighteenth Amendment:** (1919): authorized prohibition (See Appendix)
 - Implemented by **Volsstead Act** passed by Congress in 1919
 - Made world “safe for hypocrisy”
 - Legal abolition of alcohol especially popular in South and West



IV. The Prohibition “Experiment” (cont.)

- In West, prohibition an attack on vices associated with western saloons (public drunkenness, prostitution, etc.)
- Strong opposition to “dry” amendment in larger eastern cities
 - Especially for “wet” foreign-born people
 - Sociability built around drinking
- Most Americans assumed prohibition had come to stay
- Prohibitionists naïve:
 - Overlooked tenacious American tradition of strong drink
 - Overlooked weak control by central government, especially over private lives





IV. The Prohibition “Experiment” (cont.)

- Federal government had never satisfactorily enforced a law that majority of people or strong minority rejected
- Lawmakers could not legislate away thirst
- Peculiar conditions hampered enforcement:
 - Wisdom of further self-denial after war
 - Slaking thirst became cherished personal liberty
 - Wets believed way to repeal was to violate law on large scale
 - Soldiers complained prohibition “put over” on them while they were “over there”
 - Workers bemoaned loss of cheap beer

IV. The Prohibition “Experiment” (cont.)

- Flaming youth thought it “smart” to swill bootleg liquor
- Millions of older citizens found forbidden fruit fascinating as they engaged in “bar hunts”
- Might have been more successful if there had been large army of enforcement officials
 - Federal agencies understaffed
 - Underpaid snoopers susceptible to bribery
- Prohibition simply did not prohibit:
 - “Men only” corner saloons replaced by “speakeasies”
 - Hard liquor drunk by men and women
 - Zeal of American prohibition agents strained relations with Canada

IV. The Prohibition “Experience” (cont.)

- Worst of homemade “rotgut” produced blindness, even death
 - » Bootlegger worked in partnership with undertaker
- Yet “noble experiment” not entirely a failure:
 - Bank savings increased
 - Absenteeism in industry decreased
 - Death from alcoholism and cirrhosis declined
 - Less alcohol consumed than in days before prohibition

V. The Golden Age of Gangsterism

- Prohibition spawned shocking crimes:
 - Profits of illegal alcohol led to bribery of police
 - Violent wars in big cities between rival gangs
 - Rival triggerman “erased” bootlegging competitors
 - Chicago (1920s): 500 mobsters murdered
 - Arrests few and convictions fewer
 - Chicago most spectacular example of lawlessness:
 - 1925 “Scarface” Al Capone began six years of gang warfare
 - Zoomed through streets in armor-plated car with bulletproof windows



V. The Golden Age of Gangsterism (cont.)

- “Public Enemy Number One,” could not be convicted of massacre on St. Valentine’s Day 1929
 - » Of seven unarmed members of rival gang
 - » After serving 11 years for income tax evasion, Capone released as syphilitic wreck
- Gangsters moved into other profitable and illicit activities:
 - Prostitution, gambling, narcotics
 - Honest merchants forced to pay “protection money”
 - **Racketeers** invaded ranks of local labor unions as organizers and promoters
 - Organized crime came to be one of nation’s biggest businesses

V. The Golden Age of Gangsterism (cont.)

- By 1930, annual “take” of underworld \$12 to \$18 billion
- Criminal callousness sank to new depths in 1923:
 - Kidnapping for ransom and eventual murder of infant son of aviator-hero Charles A Lindbergh
 - Congress passed Lindbergh Law: making interstate abduction in certain circumstances a death-penalty offense

VI. Monkey Business in Tennessee

- Educational strides in 1920s:
 - More states required students to remain in school until age 16 or 18, or until graduation
 - High school graduation rates doubled in 1920s
- Change in educational theory by John Dewey
 - Principles of “learning by doing”
 - So-called progressive education with its greater “permissiveness”
 - Believed workbench as essential as blackboard
 - “Education for life” should be primary goal of teacher

VI. Monkey Business in Tennessee (cont.)

- Science made advancements:
 - Health programs, launched by Rockefeller Foundation in South in 1909, wiped out hookworm by 1920s
 - Better nutrition and health care increased life expectancy of newborns (from 50 years in 1901 to 59 years in 1929)
 - Science and progressive education faced unfriendly fire of newly organized Fundamentalists
 - Numerous attempts made to secure laws prohibiting teaching of evolution
 - Tennessee, heart of so-called Bible Belt South, where spirit of evangelical religion robust

VI. Monkey Business in Tennessee (cont.)

- “Monkey Trial”:
 - In 1925, Dayton high-school biology teacher John T. Scopes indicted for teaching evolution
 - Defended by nationally renowned attorneys
 - William Jennings Bryan made to appear foolish by famed criminal lawyer Clarence Darrow
 - Five days after trial, Bryan died of stroke



VI. Monkey Business in Tennessee (cont.)

- Historic clash between theology and biology proved inconclusive:
 - Scopes found guilty and fined \$100
 - Tennessee supreme court upheld law, but set aside fine on technicality
 - Fundamentalists won only hollow victory
 - **Fundamentalism** (emphasis on literal reading of Bible)
 - Remained vibrant force in American spiritual life
 - Strong in Baptist Church and rapidly growing Churches of Christ, organized in 1906

VII. The Mass-Consumption Economy

- Prosperity put “roar” into twenties:
 - Recent war and Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon's tax policies:
 - Favored rapid expansion of capital investment
 - New machinery increased productivity
 - Assembly-line production reached perfection by Henry Ford's factories where a finished automobile emerged every ten seconds
 - New industries sprouted

VII. The Mass-Consumption Economy (cont.)

- Automobile:
 - Now became carriage of common citizen
 - By 1930 Americans owned almost 30 million cars
 - Created shift in character of economy:
 - American manufacturers
 - Mastered problems of production
 - Shifted focus to consumption
 - Could they find mass markets for goods?
 - New arm of American commerce came into being:

VII. The Mass-Consumption Economy (cont.)

- Advertising
 - Bruce Barton published best seller: *The Man Nobody Knows*:
 - Provocative thesis: Jesus Christ greatest adman of all time
 - “Every advertising man ought to study the parables of Jesus”
 - “Marvelously condensed, as all good advertising should be”
 - Christ's executive ability: “He picked up twelve men from the bottom ranks of business and forged them into an organization that conquered the world”

VII. The Mass-Consumption Economy (cont.)

– Sports:

- Became big business in consumption economy
- Heroes like George H. (“Babe”) Ruth far better known than most statesmen
- Yankee Stadium became “house that Ruth built”
- In 1921 heavyweight champion, Jack Dempsey, knocked out light heavyweight George Carpentier
 - Jersey City crowd paid more than a million dollars
 - First in series of million-dollar “games” in 1920s



VII. The Mass-Consumption Economy (cont.)

– Buying on credit; another innovation of postwar economy:

- “Possess today and pay tomorrow” was message
- People went into debt to own all kinds of new marvels—refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, cars and radios—*now*
- Prosperity accumulated an overhanging cloud of debt
- Economy became increasingly vulnerable to disruptions of credit structure

VIII. Putting America on Rubber Tires

- Machinery was new messiah—and automobile its principal prophet
 - Automobile
 - New industrial system:
 - Assembly-line methods
 - Mass-production techniques
 - Americans adapted rather than invented gasoline engine:
 - Europeans can claim original honor
 - 1890s—daring American inventors and promoters
 - Henry Ford and Ransom E. Olds developed infant automotive industry



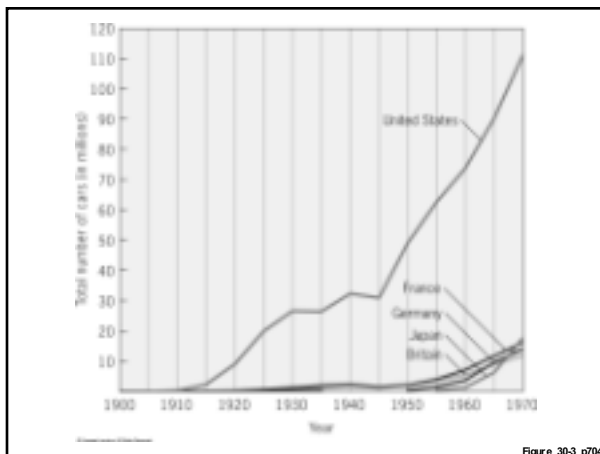
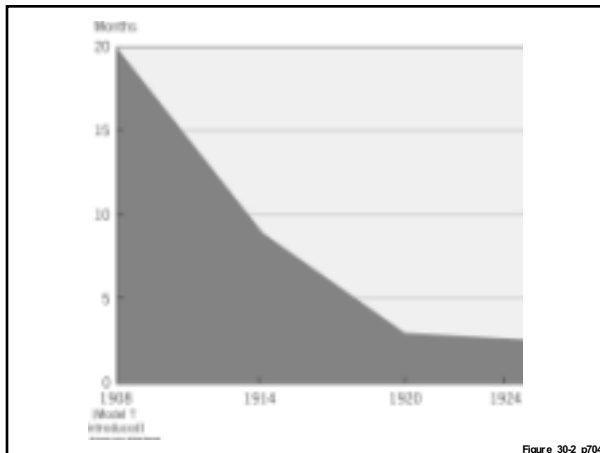
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VIII. Putting America on Rubber Tires (cont.)

- By 1910 sixty-nine car companies rolled out total annual production of 181,000 units
- Detroit became motorcar capital of America
- **Scientific Management:**
 - Stopwatch efficiency techniques of Frederick W. Taylor
 - Eliminate wasted motion
- Henry Ford:
 - More than any other individual, put America on rubber tires
 - His Model T ("Tin Lizzie")
 - » Cheap, rugged, and reasonably reliable, though rough and clattering
 - » Parts highly standardized

VIII. Putting America on Rubber (cont.)

- Devoted himself to gospel of standardization
- Grasped and applied technique of moving assembly line—**Fordism**
- Sold Ford roadster for \$260 (see Figure 30.2)
- Fordism caught fire outside United States
- Flood of Fords phenomenal:
 - » In 1914 “Automobile Wizard” turned out his 500,000th Model T
 - » By 1930 total had risen to 20 million
 - » By 1929, 26 million motor vehicles registered—one for every 4.9 American (see Figure 30.3)



IX. The Advent of the Gasoline Age

- Impact of self-propelled carriage tremendous:

- Gigantic new industry emerged
- Employed directly or indirectly 6 million people
- 1,000s of new jobs created by supporting industries
 - Rubber, glass, and fabrics
 - Highway construction, service stations and garages
 - America's standard of living rose to enviable level
- Petroleum business expanded:
 - Oil derricks shot up in California, Texas, Oklahoma
 - Railroads hard hit by competition with passenger cars, buses, and trucks



IX. The Advent of the Gasoline Age (cont.)

- Speedy marketing of perishable foodstuffs accelerated
 - New prosperity enriched outlying farms
 - Countless new hard-surfaced roads constructed
 - Thanks to installment-plans, countless Americans acquired habit of riding
- Zooming motorcars agents of social change:
- At first a luxury, rapidly became a necessity
 - Became badge of freedom and equality
 - Ostentation seemed more important than transportation
 - Leisure hours could now be spent more pleasurably

IX. The Advent of the Gasoline Age (cont.)

- Women further freed from dependence on men
- Suburbs spread further from urban core
- Isolation among sections declined
- Autobuses made possible consolidation of schools, and to some extent churches
- By 1951, a million Americans had died in motor vehicle accidents
- Virtuous home life partially broke down as people abandoned parlor for highway
- Morals of youth sagged correspondingly
- Crime wave of 1920s and 1930s aided by motorcar



IX. The Advent of the Gasoline Age (cont.)

- Air and environmental quality improved with less horse use
- Automobile brought more convenience, pleasure, and excitement into more people's lives than almost any other single invention

X. Humans Develop Wings

- Gasoline engines provided power that enabled humans to achieve flight
 - Wright brothers, Orville and Wilbur, performed “miracle at Kitty Hawk,” N.C. on Dec. 17, 1903
 - Orville stayed airborne for 12 seconds and 120 feet
 - Air age launched by 2 obscure Ohio bicycle repairmen
 - Airplanes—“flying coffins” used for:
 - Various purposes during Great War, 1914-1918
 - Private companies operated passenger lines and transported mail

X. Human Develop Wings (cont.)

- 1927 Charles A. Lindbergh—“Flyin' Fool;” first solo flight across Atlantic
 - Piloted single-engine plane, *Spirit of St. Louis* from New York to Paris in grueling 33 hours and 39 minutes
 - Achievement did much to dramatize and popularize flying, while giving boost to infant aviation industry
- Impact of airship tremendous:
 - Provided American spirit with another dimension
 - Gave birth to giant new industry



X. Human Develop Wings (cont.)

- Unfortunately, initial accident rate high
- By 1920s and 1930s, travel by air on regularly scheduled airlines significantly safer
- Humanity's new wings increased tempo of already breathless civilization
 - Railroads further hurt by loss of passengers and mail
 - Lethal new weapon given to war with use of bombs
 - Isolation behind oceans becoming bygone dream as world slowly shrinks

XI. The Radio Revolution

- Speed of airplane far eclipsed by speed of radio waves:
 - Guglielmo Marconi, an Italian, invented wireless telegraph in 1890s
 - Used for long-range communication during World War I
 - Next came voice-carrying radio:
 - Red-letter day in November 1920 when Pittsburgh radio station broadcast news of Harding's landslide victory

XI. The Radio Revolution (cont.)

- Later miracles achieved in transatlantic wireless phonographs, radio, telephones, and television
- Earliest radio programs reached only local audiences
 - By late 1920s technological improvements made long-distance broadcasting possible
 - National commercial networks drowned out local programming
 - Advertising "commercials" made radio another vehicle for American free enterprise, as contrasted to government-owned systems of Europe

XI. The Radio Revolution (cont.)

- Radio drew people back home and knitted nation together
 - Programs sponsored by manufacturers and distributors of brand-name products helped make radio-touted labels household words and purchases
- Sports further stimulated
- Politicians adjusted speaking techniques to new medium
- Host of listeners heard their favorite newscaster
- Music of famous artists and orchestras beamed into countless homes



XII. Hollywood's Filmland Fantasies

- Flickering movie fruit of numerous geniuses:
 - 1903: birth of first story sequence on screen:
 - *The Great Train Robbery* –in five-cent theaters, popularly called “nickelodeons”
 - First full-length classic was D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* (1915):
 - » Glorified Ku Klux Klan of Reconstruction days and defamed blacks and Northern carpetbaggers
 - Hollywood became movie capital of world

XII. Hollywood's Filmland Fantasies (cont.)

- Used in World War I as engine of anti-German propaganda:
 - “Hang the kaiser” films helped sell war bonds and boost morale
- 1927—success of first “talkie” —*The Jazz Singer*:
 - “Silents” ushered out as theaters “wired for sound”
 - Early color films produced

XII. Hollywood's Filmland Fantasies (cont.)

- Phenomenal growth in popularity of films
 - Movie “stars” commanded much higher salaries than president of United States
 - \$100,000 for single film
 - Many actors and actresses more popular than nation's political leaders
 - Critics bemoaned vulgarization of popular tastes with films and radio

XII. Hollywood's Filmland Fantasies (cont.)

- Effects of new mass media not all negative:
 - Insularity of ethnic communities eroded as immigrants' children took to public media
 - Some diversity of immigrants' Old Country culture lost, but:
 - Standardization of tastes and language hastened entrance into American mainstream
 - Set stage for working-class political coalition that would overcome divisive ethnic differences of past



XIII. The Dynamic Decade

– Changes in lifestyles and values:

- More lived in urban areas than in countryside by 1920
- Women continued to find employment in cities
- Organized birth control movement:
 - Led by fiery feminist Margaret Sanger, who openly championed contraceptives
- Campaign for Equal Rights Amendment
 - By Alice Paul's National Woman's party
- Churches affected:
 - Fundamentalists lost ground to Modernists
 - Some churches tried to fight devil with worldly weapons



XIII. The Dynamic Decade (cont.)

- Turned to new entertainment
- Some even included moving pictures for youth
- Chimes “struck sex o’clock in America”:
 - Advertisers exploited sexual allure to sell everything
 - Young women’s clothing and styles changed
 - “Flapper” symbolized more independent lifestyle
 - Adventurous females shocked elders when they sported new one-piece bathing suits
 - Justification for new sexual frankness found in writings of Dr. Sigmund Freud



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XIII. The Dynamic Decade (cont.)

- Many taboos flew out window
- Sexual freedom became more prevalent
- Flapper as goddess of “era of wonderful nonsense,” and jazz its sacred music:
 - Moved up from New Orleans with migrating blacks
 - Wailing saxophone became trumpet of new era
 - W.C. Handy, “Jelly Roll” Morton, Louis Armstrong, and Joe “King” Oliver gave birth to jazz



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XIII. The Dynamic Decade (cont.)

- New racial pride blossomed in northern black communities:
 - Harlem in NYC—130,000 African American residents in 1920s
 - » One of largest black communities in world
 - Culture nurtured by poets like Langston Hughes
 - » *The Weary Blues* (1926)
 - Harlem spawned charismatic political leader, Marcus Garvey
 - » Founded **United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)** to promote resettlement of blacks in “African homeland”
 - » Sponsored black businesses to keep money in black pockets
 - » Helped newcomers to northern cities gain self-confidence and self-reliance
 - » Example proved important to founding of Nation of Islam (Black Muslim) movement



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XIV. Cultural Liberation

- Literature and the arts:
 - Most of earlier genteel writers had died by 1920s
 - New Yorker Edith Wharton and Virginia-born Willa Cather continued to be popular
 - Now new modernists becoming popular (see Thinking Globally section)
 - **Modernism** questioned social conventions and traditional authorities, considered outmoded by accelerating changes of 20th century life

XIV. Cultural Liberation (cont.)

- H.L. Mencken best personified this iconoclasm:
 - Known as “Bad Boy of Baltimore”
 - Promoted modernist causes in politics and literature
 - Assailed marriage, patriotism, democracy, prohibition, Rotarians, and other sacred icons of middle-class American “booboisie”
 - He dismissed South as “Sahara of the Bozart”
 - Attacked hypocritical do-gooders as “Puritans”
 - Puritanism, he jibed, was “haunting fear that someone, somewhere, might be happy”

XIV. Cultural Liberation (cont.)

- Young writers jolted by WWI out of complacency about traditional values and literary standards
 - Probed for new codes of morals and understanding, as well as fresh forms of expression
 - F. Scott Fitzgerald—*This Side of Paradise* (1920)
 - “He found all gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken”
 - *The Great Gatsby* (1925) brilliant commentary on illusory American ideal of self-made man
 - » James Gatz reinvented himself as tycoon Jay Gatsby only to be destroyed by those with wealth and social standing



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XIV. Cultural Liberation (cont.)

- Theodore Dreiser's masterpiece *An American Tragedy* (1925) explored pitfalls of social striving
- Ernest Hemingway:
 - Among writers most affected by WWI
 - His hard-boiled realism typified postwar writing
 - *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) told of disillusioned, spiritually numb American expatriates in Europe
 - In *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) he turned his own war story into one of finest novels about the war
 - His literary successes and flamboyant personal life made him one of most famous writers in world
 - Won Nobel Prize in literature in 1954

XIV. Cultural Liberation (cont.)

- “Lost Generation”:
 - Hemingway, Fitzgerald and other American writers and painters formed artistic cadre:
 - As expatriates in postwar Europe
 - Found shelter and inspiration in Paris salon of Gertrude Stein:
 - Studied under William James at Harvard and her early works applied his theory of “stream of consciousness”
 - Friends with Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse, she wrote radically experimental poetry and prose
 - Joined fellow American poets Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot in vanguard of modernist literary innovation

XIV. Cultural Liberation (cont.)

- “High modernists”:
 - Experimented with breakdown of traditional literary forms
 - Exposed losses associated with modernity
 - Wrote in self-consciously internationalist mode
 - Haughtily rejected parochialism they found at home
 - Pound rejected old civilization and proclaimed doctrine: “Make It New;” he strongly influenced Eliot
 - Eliot in *The Waste Land* (1922) produced one of most impenetrable but influential poems of century
 - E.E. Cummings used unorthodox diction and peculiar typesetting to produce startling poetic effects

XIV. Cultural Liberation (cont.)

- Not all American writers radical:
 - Many continued familiar regionalist style
 - Robert Frost wrote hauntingly about nature and folkways of his adopted New England
 - Carl Sandburg extolled working classes of Chicago in strong, simple cadence
 - Sherwood Anderson in *Winesburg, Ohio* dissected various fictional personalities, finding them warped by their cramped psychological surroundings

XIV. Cultural Liberation (cont.)

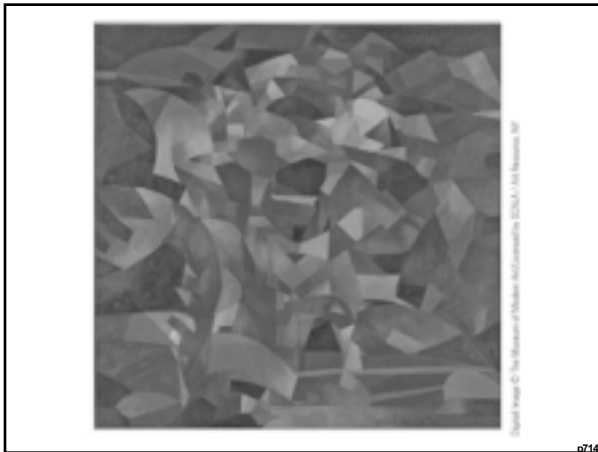
- Sinclair Lewis:
 - *Main Street* (1920) best-selling story of one woman's unsuccessful revolt against provincialism
 - In *Babbitt* (1922) he affectionately pilloried George F. Babbitt, who slavishly conforms to respectable materialism of his group
- William Faulkner:
 - Focused on displacement of agrarian Old South by rising industrial order
 - His work offered fictional chronicle of an imaginary, history-rich Deep South county
 - In powerful books: *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) and *As I Lay Dying* (1930) he peeled back layers of time and consciousness from constricted souls of his ingrown southern characters

XIV. Cultural Liberation (cont.)

- Faulkner experimented with multiple narrators, complex structure, and “stream of consciousness” techniques
- His extended meditation culminated in what some consider his greatest work: *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936)
- American composers and playwrights made valuable contributions:
 - Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein's *Show Boat* (1927) was America's first “musical play”
 - Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude* (1928) laid bare Freudian notions of sex and subconscious in succession of dramatic soliloquies
 - Garnered Nobel Prize in literature (1936)

XIV. Cultural Liberation (cont.)

- **Harlem Renaissance:**
 - Black cultural renaissance in uptown Harlem:
 - Led by writers Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, and Zora Neale Hurston
 - And jazz artists Louis Armstrong and Eubie Blake
 - Argued for “New Negro” who was a full citizen and social equal to whites
 - Adopted modernist techniques, Hughes and Hurston captured oral and improvisational traditions of contemporary blacks in dialect-filled poetry and prose



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XV. Wall Street's Big Bull Market

- Economic conditions of 1920s:
 - Several hundred banks failed annually
 - Florida boom: numerous underwater plots sold to eager purchasers for preposterous sums
 - Stocks provided even greater sensations:
 - Speculation ran wild
 - Boom-or-bust trading pushed market to dizzy peaks
 - Stock market became veritable gambling den

XV. Wall Street's Big Bull Market (cont.)

- In 1920s many bought stocks “on margin”
 - Intoxicated by lure of quick profits, few heeded warnings that this kind of prosperity could not last
 - Little done by Washington to curb speculators
 - 1921 Congress moved toward budget sanity by creating Bureau of the Budget:
 - Assisted president in preparing estimates of receipts and expenditures to be submitted to Congress as annual budget



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XV. Wall Street's Big Bull Market (cont.)

- Burdensome taxes from war distasteful to Secretary of Treasury Mellon
 - Argued high taxes forced rich to invest in tax-exempt securities rather than in factories that provided payrolls
 - Argued high taxes not only:
 - Discouraged business, but
 - Brought in smaller return to Treasury than moderate taxes
 - Mellon helped engineer series of tax reductions from 1921 to 1926

XV. Wall Street's Big Bull Market (cont.)

- Congress:
 - Repealed excess-profit tax
 - Abolished gift tax
 - Reduced excise taxes, the surtax, the income tax, and estate taxes
- Mellon's spare-the-rich policies shifted tax burden from wealthy to middle-income groups
- Mellon, lionized by conservatives as “greatest secretary of Treasury since Hamilton” remains controversial figure:
 - Reduced national debt by \$10 billion
 - Accused of indirectly encouraging bull market



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CHRONOLOGY

1900	Wright brothers fly first airplane First story-sequenced motion picture	1926	Investigation Act of 1924
1908	Henry Ford introduces Model T	1925	Sacco trial Florida real estate boom Fitzgerald publishes <i>The Great Gatsby</i> Dorothy publishes <i>An American Tragedy</i>
1914	W. C. Handy's "St. Louis Blues" debuts	1926	Hughes publishes <i>The Wreck of the Elmer Fisk</i> Hemingway publishes <i>The Sun Also Rises</i>
1917	Bolshevik Revolution in Russia	1927	Lincolnshire Blue sets across Atlantic First talking motion picture, <i>The Jazz Singer</i> Show Boat opens on Broadway Sacco and Vanzetti executed
1919	Eighteenth Amendment (prohibition) Volstead Act Scott's general strike Anderson publishes <i>Winning</i> , Ohio	1928	Eugene O'Neill's <i>Strange Interlude</i> debuts on Broadway
1919-1920	"Red scare"	1929	Faulkner publishes <i>The Sound and the Fury</i> Hemingway publishes <i>A Farewell to Arms</i>
1920	Radio broadcasting begins Fitzgerald publishes <i>This Side of Paradise</i> Lewis publishes <i>Main Street</i>	1932	Al Capone imprisoned
1921	Sacco-Vanzetti trial Emergency Quota Act Bureau of the Budget created		
1922	Lewis publishes <i>Harold</i> Elliot publishes <i>The Waste Land</i>		
1923	Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) proposed		

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