

Chapter 13

Postwar Social Change (1920–1929)

America: Pathways to the Present

Chapter 13: Postwar Social Change (1920–1929)

Section 1: Society in the 1920s

Section 2: Mass Media and the Jazz Age

Section 3: Cultural Conflicts

Society in the 1920s

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 1

- **How were women's roles changing during the 1920s?**
- **How were the nation's cities and suburbs affected by Americans on the move from rural areas?**
- **Who were some American heroes of the 1920s? What made them popular with the American public?**



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Women's Changing Roles

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 1

The Flapper Image

- The flapper, a type of bold, fun-loving young woman, came to symbolize a revolution in manners and morals that took place in the 1920s.
- **Flappers** challenged conventions of dress, hairstyle, and behavior.
- Many Americans disapproved of flappers' free manners as well as the departure from traditional morals that they represented.

Women Working and Voting

- Although many women held jobs in the 1920s, businesses remained prejudiced against women seeking professional positions.
- The Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote in all elections beginning in 1920. At first, many women did not exercise their right to vote. It took time for women's votes to make an impact.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Americans on the Move

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 1

Rural-Urban Split

- Although the economy in the cities expanded in the 1920s, many farmers found themselves economically stressed. This resulted in a migration from rural to urban areas.
- Rural and urban Americans were also split over cultural issues. While many in the cities were abandoning some traditional values, rural populations generally wanted to preserve these values.

Growth of the Suburbs

- While cities continued to grow, many Americans moved from cities to suburbs.
- Improvements in transportation made travel between the cities and suburbs increasingly easy.
- This shift in population was one example of changing **demographics**, or statistics that describe a group of people, during the 1920s.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Waves of Migration

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Chapter 13, Section 1

- During the Great Migration, which lasted through World War I, many African Americans had moved from the rural South to take jobs in northern cities. Industrial expansion during the 1920s also encouraged African American migration to the North. However, they often faced discrimination in both the North and the South.
- After World War I, masses of refugees applied for entry into the United States. Immigration from China, Japan, and southern and eastern Europe was limited; however, many immigrants from Mexico and Canada filled low-paying jobs in the United States.
- Certain areas became magnets for immigrants. A barrio, or Spanish-speaking neighborhood, developed in Los Angeles, California; New York also attracted numerous Spanish-speaking immigrants.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



American Heroes

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 1

American Heroes in the 1920s

Charles Lindbergh

As the first to fly nonstop from New York to Paris, aviator Charles Lindbergh was hailed as an American hero and a champion of traditional values.

Amelia Earhart

Amelia Earhart set records as the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic and the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to California. She and her navigator mysteriously disappeared while attempting to fly around the world in 1937.

Sports Heroes

Champions in wrestling, football, baseball, and swimming became American heroes. Perhaps the most famous sports figure was baseball's George Herman "Babe" Ruth, whose record number of home runs remained unbroken for 40 years.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Society in the 1920s—Assessment

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 1

Why were some Americans opposed to flappers?

- (A) Flappers opposed the Nineteenth Amendment.
- (B) Flappers challenged traditional values.
- (C) Americans preferred sports heroes.
- (D) Americans thought that flappers encouraged immigration.

Which of the following was a migration pattern in the 1920s?

- (A) From cities to suburbs
- (B) From suburbs to cities
- (C) From suburbs to rural areas
- (D) From the United States to Canada and Mexico

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MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



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PRENTICE HALL

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Want to link to the Pathways Internet activity for this chapter? [Click here!](#)



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Mass Media and the Jazz Age

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 2

- How did the mass media help create common cultural experiences?
- Why are the 1920s called the Jazz Age, and how did the jazz spirit affect the arts?
- How did the writers of the Lost Generation respond to the popular culture?
- What subjects did the Harlem Renaissance writers explore?



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



The Mass Media

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 2

- Growth of the **mass media**, instruments for communicating with large numbers of people, helped form a common American popular culture during the 1920s.
- The popularity of motion pictures grew throughout the 1920s; “talkies,” or movies with sound, were introduced in 1927.
- Newspapers grew in both size and circulation. Tabloids, compact papers which replaced serious news with entertainment, became popular. Magazines also became widely read.
- Although radio barely existed as a mass medium until the 1920s, it soon enjoyed tremendous growth. Networks linked many stations together, sending the same music, news, and commercials to Americans around the country.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



The Jazz Age

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 2

- Jazz, a style of music that grew out of the African American music of the South, became highly popular during the 1920s. Characterized by improvisation and syncopation, jazz became so strongly linked to the culture of the 1920s that the decade came to be known as the **Jazz Age**.
- Harlem, a district in Manhattan, New York, became a center of jazz music. Flappers and others heard jazz in clubs and dance halls; the Charleston, considered by some to be a wild and reckless dance, embodied the Jazz Age.
- Jazz pioneers Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong made important contributions to jazz music.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



The Jazz Spirit

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 2

Other Art Inspired by Jazz

Painting

Like jazz musicians, painters in the 1920s took the pulse of American life. Painters such as Edward Hopper and Rockwell Kent showed the nation's rougher side; Georgia O'Keeffe's paintings of natural objects suggested something larger than themselves.

Literature

Novelist Sinclair Lewis attacked American society with savage irony; playwright Eugene O'Neill proved that American plays could hold their own against those from Europe.

The Lost Generation

Gertrude Stein remarked to Ernest Hemingway that he and other American writers were all a **"Lost Generation,"** a group of people disconnected from their country and its values. Soon, this term was taken up by the flappers as well.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



The Harlem Renaissance

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 2

- In addition to being a center of jazz, Harlem emerged as an overall cultural center for African Americans. A literary awakening took place in Harlem in the 1920s that was known as the **Harlem Renaissance**.
- Expressing the joys and challenges of being African American, writers such as James Weldon Johnson, Zora Neale Hurston, and Langston Hughes enriched African American culture as well as American culture as a whole.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Mass Media and the Jazz Age—Assessment

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 2

Which of these best describes how the growth of mass media affected American culture?

- (A) It allowed local cultural traditions to flourish.
- (B) It made learning the Charleston easier.
- (C) It spread the work of Lost Generation writers.
- (D) It helped create a common American popular culture.

What was the Harlem Renaissance?

- (A) A style of jazz music
- (B) An African American literary awakening
- (C) An increase in the popularity of newspapers and magazines
- (D) A type of jazz club found in Harlem

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MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



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Want to link to the Pathways Internet activity for this chapter? [Click here!](#)



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Cultural Conflicts

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 3

- What were the effects of Prohibition on society?
- What issues of religion were at the core of the Scopes trial?
- How did racial tensions change after World War I?



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Prohibition

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 3

- The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which took effect on January 16, 1920, made the manufacture, sale, and transport of liquor, beer, and wine illegal.
- As a result, many Americans turned to **bootleggers**, or suppliers of illegal alcohol. Bars that operated illegally, known as **speakeasies**, were either disguised as legitimate businesses or hidden in some way, often behind heavy gates.
- Prohibition sharpened the contrast between rural and urban areas, since urban areas were more likely to ignore the law. Additionally, it increased the number of liquor-serving establishments in some major cities to far above pre-Prohibition levels.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Organized Crime

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 3

- The tremendous profit resulting from the sale of illegal liquor, as well as the complex organization involved, helped lead to the development of organized crime.
- Successful bootlegging organizations often moved into other illegal activities as well, including gambling, prostitution, and racketeering. As rival groups fought for control in some American cities, gang wars and murders became commonplace.
- One of the most notorious criminals of this time was Al Capone, nicknamed “Scarface,” a gangster who rose to the top of Chicago’s organized crime network. Capone proved talented at avoiding jail but was finally imprisoned in 1931.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Issues of Religion

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 3

Fundamentalism

- As science, technology, modern social issues, and new Biblical scholarship challenged traditional religious beliefs, a religious movement called fundamentalism gained popularity.
- **Fundamentalism** supported traditional Christian ideas and argued for a literal interpretation of the Bible.
- Billy Sunday and other famous fundamentalist preachers drew large audiences.

Evolution and the Scopes Trail

- Fundamentalists worked to pass laws against teaching the theory of evolution in public schools. A science teacher named John T. Scopes agreed to challenge such a law in Tennessee. His arrest led to what was called the **Scopes trial**.
- The Scopes trial became the first trial to be broadcast over American radio.
- The case became a public debate between fundamentalists and modernists.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Racial Tensions

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 3

Violence Against African Americans

- Mob violence between white and black Americans erupted in about 25 cities during the summer of 1919.
- The worst of these race riots occurred in Chicago, where the African American population had doubled since 1910. A white man threw a rock at a black teenager swimming in Lake Michigan, and the boy drowned. The incident touched off riots that lasted several days, destroyed many homes, killed several people and wounded many more.

Revival of the Klan

- Although it had been largely eliminated during Reconstruction, the Ku Klux Klan regained power during the 1920s and greatly increased its membership outside the South.
- The Klan's focus shifted to include terrorizing not just African Americans but also Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and others.
- After the arrest of a major Klan leader in 1925, Klan membership diminished once again.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Fighting Discrimination

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 3

- During the 1920s, the NAACP fought for anti-lynching laws and worked to promote the voting rights of African Americans. These efforts, however, met with limited success.
- A movement led by Marcus Garvey, an immigrant from Jamaica, became popular with many African Americans. Garvey, who created the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), sought to build up African Americans' self-respect and economic power, encouraging them to buy shares in his Negro Factories Corporation.
- Garvey also encouraged his followers to return to Africa and create a self-governing nation there. Although corruption and mismanagement resulted in the collapse of the UNIA, Garvey's ideas of racial pride and independence would affect future "black pride" movements.



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



Cultural Conflicts—Assessment

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 3

How did Prohibition reinforce the division between urban and rural areas?

- (A) Speakeasies only replaced legal saloons in urban areas.**
- (B) Rural areas were more likely to obey Prohibition.**
- (C) Urban areas were more likely to obey Prohibition.**
- (D) Bootleggers only worked in rural areas.**

Which of the following best describes Marcus Garvey's goals for African Americans?

- (A) Religious fundamentalism and an end to teaching evolution**
- (B) Equality with Catholics, Jews, and immigrants**
- (C) Universal suffrage and an end to lynchings**
- (D) Self-respect, economic power, and independence**

Want to link to the Pathways Internet activity for this chapter? [Click here!](#)



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION



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PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 13, Section 3

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Want to link to the Pathways Internet activity for this chapter? [Click here!](#)



MAIN MENU

1

2

3

SECTION

