CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE
THE TWENTIES, 1920–1929

CHAPTER OVERVIEW
This chapter covers the many changes in American life in the 1920s. After the war, Presidents Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover continued to encourage a foreign policy that would enhance American capitalism. A second industrial revolution based on electrical power, consumer goods and new management methods took place. The auto age made profound changes in American life and housing patterns. Some areas such as agriculture, railroads, coal mining and textile manufacturing did not share in the post-war prosperity. A new mass culture defined by radio, movies, music, newspapers and advertising encouraged a kind of national community. Some groups resisted the changes to modernity and met with mixed results. The postponement of democratic promise continued to stir reaction in women’s groups, in Mexican Americans and the “New Negro.” Intellectuals tried to put into writing the alienation and doubts connected to headlong pursuit of material prosperity.

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES
After reading the chapter and following the study suggestions given, students should be able to:

1. Describe the structural changes in the American economy that developed in the 1920s and the effects those changes had on American life.
2. Explain how Hollywood movies and other vehicles of mass culture created a new national community.
3. Describe how the new media of communication reshaped American culture in the 1920s.
4. Summarize the continuities of the administrations of Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover in domestic and foreign affairs.
5. Summarize the areas of resistance to the major cultural changes of the 1920s.
6. Outline the efforts of various reform groups, ethnic groups and intellectuals to redefine their missions, reshape their strategies and reexamine the material direction of modern American society.
7. Making Connections: Chapters Twenty-Two and Twenty-Three: discuss the various connections between mobilization techniques of World War I and the experiences of the decade of the 1920s.

CRITICAL THINKING/READING SKILLS

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES: THE MOVIE AUDIENCE AND HOLLYWOOD: Mass Culture creates a New National Community: How did movies and radio create a new type of community? What was the cult of celebrity? What did Hollywood represent to millions of Americans?

POSTWAR PROSPERITY AND ITS PRICE: What was the price of prosperity? What Americans were the most prosperous? The least prosperous? What crucial changes took place?
The Second Industrial Revolution: What was the second industrial revolution and how did it affect American industry? What was the shift from producer-durable goods to consumer-durable goods? What caused the boom in the housing industry?

The Modern Corporation: What were the characteristics of the modern corporation and its leaders? What three key areas brought success? What companies were the most successful and in what areas? What new trend developed in corporate policy making?

Welfare Capitalism: What was the concept of welfare capitalism and how well did it work? Where did they fail?

The Auto Age: What were the various effects the auto age had on America? What did Robert and Helen Lynd find in their study of the Middletown community? From 1913 to 1925 what were the time rate changes for producing one car on a Ford assembly line? When did Henry Ford introduce a more generous wage scale? What other changes did he make? What tactic did General Motors introduce? What was the ripple effect of the auto on other industries and on the economy in general?

Cities and Suburbs: What changes developed in cities and suburbs in the 1920s? What was continuing with the Great Migration? How did cities grow and what were major examples of each? How did the automobile suburbs differ from earlier suburbs?

Exceptions: Agriculture, Ailing Industries: What were the exceptions to the post war prosperity and why was this the case? What areas of agriculture thrived and why? Why did the textile industry move South?

THE NEW MASS CULTURE: What was the new mass culture that developed and what were the specific elements of it? What effect did mass media have on American life?

Movie-Made America: How common were movies by 1924? What expansion occurred when they moved to Hollywood? What was the studio system based on? What did Hollywood emphasize and how did it expand themes in the 1920s? What did Will Hays say about movies and the consumer culture?

Radio Broadcasting: How did radio broadcasting start and how did it expand? Who paid for radio programs at first and how did it change? What shows did the radio-created national community listen to? How many families heard radio by 1930?

New Forms of Journalism: What new forms of journalism developed in this period? What effect did tabloids have on advertising? What was the significance of chains such as Hearst, Gannett, and Scripps-Howard?

Advertising Modernity: What new techniques affected advertising? What connection did the changes have to World War I? How did psychology affect advertising? What was the key shift in advertising and what are some product examples? What do your authors mean by calling advertising therapeutic?

The Phonograph and the Recording Industry: How popular was the phonograph and what effect did it have on cylinders and sheet music? How good were annual record sales in 1921? How did records transform American popular culture? What regional markets were developed?

Sport and Celebrity: What was the significance of sport and celebrity in the 1920s? Who was George Herman Ruth and how did he exemplify this trend? How did Ruth affect the game of baseball? How did the Supreme Court affect baseball?

A New Morality: What were the components of the new morality? What was the image of the flapper and what was she in reality? In what way was she a continuation from an
earlier period and in what way was she new? What sources were responsible for a more open treatment of sexuality in the 1920s? What do sociological surveys from the time suggest?

THE STATE, THE ECONOMY, AND BUSINESS: What continuities were there between state and business in the 1920s? What administrations supported this continuity?

Harding and Coolidge: What types of presidents were Harding and Coolidge? What types of scandals were there in the Harding administration and how was he involved in them? Who was Andrew Mellon and what policies prevailed under his leadership?

Herbert Hoover and the Associative State: What were the experiences and principles of Herbert Hoover and what was his idea of the “associative state?” What effect did Hoover’s policies have on the concentration of wealth?

War Debts, Reparations, Keeping the Peace: What was the issue and linkage between war debts, reparations and keeping the peace? Financially how did America emerge from the war? What was the Dawes Plan and how successful was it? Who was Charles Evan Hughes and what were his policies? What involvement did the U.S. have in the world affairs even though it was not a member of the League of Nations?

Commerce and Foreign Policy: How did Republicans connect commerce and foreign policy? What was the role of Charles Evans Hughes? What countries were invested in? What companies went overseas? What was the policy of the U.S. in Latin America and what consequences did it have in Nicaragua?

RESISTANCE TO MODERNITY: What groups and/or areas resisted modernity? What forms did this resistance take and how successful were they?

Prohibition: What happened to the long campaign for prohibition by 1920? What was the Volstead Act of 1919? How well was prohibition enforced? What effect did prohibition have on organized crime? How much did drinking decrease and what group increased their drinking?

Immigration Restriction: Why was there a move to restrict immigration and what immigrants were the target of this restriction? How did Madison Grant in his work, The Passing of the Great Race, reinforce anti-immigrant bias? What effect did the war and the Red Scare have on immigration restrictions? What did Henry Ford add to the sensationalist mix? What were the restrictions embodied in the 1921 Immigration Act and the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924? What groups did quota laws exclude?

The Ku Klux Klan: What caused the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan? How did it expand its scope and use new techniques of communication? How did the Klan present itself? Where and when was it the most powerful? What were the various reasons it lost influence?

Religious Fundamentalism: What was the nature of the fundamentalist revival in the 1920s? What was a special target of fundamentalists? What were the issues in the Scopes trial? Who were the major personalities? What was the outcome?

PROMISES POSTPONED: What promises were postponed and what strategies did the groups affected turn to? How successful were they?

Feminism in Transition: Why was feminism in transition after the achievement of suffrage? What splits occurred in the movement? How did the League of Women Voters and the National Woman’s party illustrate this split? What was the ERA and why did
some women’s groups and leaders like Florence Kelley oppose it? How did women’s work change in the 1920s and what were the gains and losses? What was the 1921 Sheppard-Towner Act? What happened to it and why?

**Mexican Immigration:** How extensive was Mexican immigration in the 1920s? What encouraged this influx? What was the difference between this immigration wave and previous Mexican immigrants? Where did most of the new immigrants settle? What ambivalence did Mexicans feel about American citizenship?

**The “New Negro:”** What was the “New Negro” and what did African American writers mean by this phrase? Where was the cultural capital of black America and what did it symbolize? What was the political side to the “New Negro?” What was the significance of Marcus Garvey and his Universal Negro Improvement Association? What was the white connection to Harlem?

**Intellectuals and Alienation:** To what extent were intellectuals of the 1920s alienated? How generally true was this notion? What ideas did Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, H.L. Mencken and Sinclair Lewis express in their writings? In the theater and in poetry, what ideas were discussed and explored by Eugene O’Neill, T. S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound? Who were the Fugitives and what views did they express? What were the views of those who were not alienated such as John Dewey? What were the views of Walter Lippman in his *A Preface to Morals?*

**The Election of 1928:** Why was the election of 1928 a referendum on the Republican “new age?” What were the results and what did it reveal? Who was Al Smith and how did he personify the city and the immigrant? What did Herbert Hoover personify? What was his idea of “spiritual individualism?” Why did Smith himself become the main issue of the campaign? What areas did Hoover carry in the election and what areas did Smith carry? What was the significance of Smith’s area of strength?

CONCLUSION: What was the status of America in the 1920s?

**KEY TERMS/VOCABULARY**
Identify the following terms:

1. Roxy
2. Charlie Chaplin
3. Mark Pickford
4. dream factory
5. second industrial revolution
6. Alfred P. Sloan
7. Owen D. Young
8. oligopolies
9. Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company
10. welfare capitalism
11. American plan
12. open shop
13. union shop
14. closed shop
15. company unions
16. William Green
17. Robert and Helen Lynd
18. Assembly line
19. Henry Ford
20. General Motors
21. Great Migration
22. Empire State Building
23. Ida Watkins
24. Hickman Price
25. McNary-Haugen Bills
26. Gastonia
27. Stretch-out
28. mass media
29. Will Hays
30. Adolph Zukor
31. Samuel Goldwyn
32. William Fox
33. *The Jazz Singer*
34. Roscoe Arbuckle
35. Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association
36. KDKA
37. National Broadcasting System
38. Columbia Broadcasting System
39. Amos ‘n’ Andy
40. tabloids
41. Walter Winchell
42. advertising
STUDY SKILLS ACTIVITIES

1. INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES: If possible, create an interdisciplinary unit with the Language Arts/English department in the school. Require students to read an example of 1920s literature, such as *The Great Gatsby*. Discuss the trends in society at the time. How did writers like Stein, Eliot, Fitzgerald, Hemingway represent the era? Include African-American writers like Langston Hughes and Zora Hurston. Ask students to research the Harlem Renaissance and its contributions to American literature.

2. MASS CULTURE CHART: While reading Chapter Twenty-Three, have students complete the chart on p. 319 comparing the mass culture of America in the 1920s and the mass culture of today. Include movies, radio, advertising, censorship (the Hayes Code), telephones, and other examples. Compare and contrast the 1920s and today.

3. ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY: As a “Brown Bag” lunch activity, movie night, or outside-of-class activity have students watch a video that portrays the 1920s, such as *The Great Gatsby* or *The Untouchables* or *Chaplin*. Some cable stations show original silent movies of the era. These offer opportunity for students to glimpse the 1920s. Ken Burns’ series *Baseball* offers students a cultural history of the time. Have students write a movie critique of the video for enrichment or extra credit.
4. COOPERATIVE LEARNING: Write the following statement on a transparency or on the board: “Immigration to the United States should be stopped.” Then ask students to go to one of four corners of the room, marked Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree, Disagree. Students exchange their opinions and summarize their findings for a presentation to the other three corners.

5. WRITING SKILLS: Use the essay prompt at the end Chapter Twenty-Three for continued essay practice. NOTE TO TEACHERS: At the beginning of the essay students need to identify the forces that promoted change and what groups resisted those changes. This exercise is open-ended in the sense that there are a number of such forces discussed in the chapter, and several groups that resisted those changes. There is no one correct answer to this question. Students could take many directions toward the goal of answering it. After reading the chapter, students might have a class discussion on what forces pushed change and what groups resisted it. Keep the emphasis upon a strong thesis statement and the use of substantial amounts of facts to prove that position.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mass Culture of the 1920s and Today</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movies/Hollywood</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Radio</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Advertising</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Telephones</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Censorship</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Automobiles</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Other consumer Conveniences</strong></td>
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Free Response Essay Prompt:
Compare and contrast the culture of the 1920s and today.
MAP SKILLS/CRITICAL VIEWING ACTIVITIES

   a. What northern cities drew the greatest numbers of African Americans?
   b. How many African Americans were there in the North as compared to the South?
   c. What were the largest southern cities in terms of black population in 1920?

2. Election of 1928
   a. What states did Democratic candidate Al Smith manage to carry?
   b. In what other type of area did he run well?
   c. How effectively did Hoover win?

3. Stock Market Prices, 1921–1932
   a. Study the graph then answer the following.
   b. What was the average price per share of stocks in 1921? In 1929? In 1932?

4. Consumer Debt
   a. When was consumer debt the highest? The lowest?
   b. Compare the information to the graph Stock Market Prices. What correlations can be
      made?
   c. What part did “installment buying” have on consumer debt?

5. Population Composition of Selected Cities, 1920
   a. In which cities did the combined population of the foreign-born and those born of
      foreign parents surpass that of the native-born of native parents?
   b. What inferences can be made by studying the graph?

6. Mexican Immigration to the U.S. in the 1920s
   a. Between 1920–1930, in what year was the number of Mexican immigrants the highest?
   b. As the economy contracted, what happened to the immigration from Mexico?

7. City Activities with Dance Hall—Locate the painting by Thomas Hart Benton at the begin-
   ning of Chapter Twenty-Three
   a. Study the painting
   b. List five activities of the people in the painting.
   c. How is this painting representative of the 1920s?
   d. Research the art of Thomas Hart Benton

8. Sheik with Sheba—Locate the 1925 cartoon in Chapter Twenty-Three
   a. Who is the artist?
   b. What elements of the “Roaring Twenties” are depicted in the cartoon?

READING QUIZ

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. Which one of the following was not part of the Hollywood “dream factory?”
   a. possibility of material success
   b. a chance to remake one’s very identity
   c. the possibility of upward mobility
   d. great social authority
2. Steam was to the first Industrial Revolution as THIS was to the second one:
   a. coal c. oil
   b. electricity d. gasoline

3. The corporate attempt to improve worker well-being and morale in order to challenge the power and appeal of trade unions was known as
   a. American plan. c. welfare capitalism.
   b. associative state. d. oligopoly.

4. Cities like Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, and San Diego all shared this in common in the 1920s:
   a. They were automobile suburbs.
   b. They expanded horizontally as their population grew.
   c. The Great Migration of African Americans concentrated there.
   d. Textile manufacturers from the New England states moved there.

5. Which one of the following was NOT true of farming in the 1920s?
   a. Farmers in citrus, dairy, truck and corporate wheatlands thrived.
   b. Tenant farming decreased as agricultural laborers left for the cities.
   c. Net farm income and land values dropped compared to the war years.
   d. American farmers had stiffer competition from overseas agriculture.

6. Warner Brothers made a huge hit by bringing out the first “talkie,” which was
   a. The Birth of a Nation. c. The Jazz Singer.

7. Walter Winchell typified the 1920s new popularity of
   b. radio announcers. d. sports writers.

8. Advertising of the 1920s paid most attention to THIS aspect:
   a. price of the product c. quality of product
   b. U.S.A. made d. needs of consumer

9. Gene Tunney, Gertrude Ederle, Satchel Paige, and Bill Tilden all illustrate the new celebrity of
   a. sports heroes. c. sports writers.
   b. radio announcers. d. radio stars.

10. The Teapot Dome Scandal involved questionable federal involvement on the part of interior Secretary Albert Fall in leasing
    a. national forests to lumber companies.
    b. navy oil reserves to oil developers.
    c. federal facilities and vehicles to Prohibition violators.
    d. buildings and supplies for the Veterans Bureau.

11. As Secretary of Commerce in the Coolidge Administration, Herbert Hoover worked with Chicago banker Dawes on a plan to aid the recovery of
    a. tenant farmers. c. the German economy.
    b. revolutionary China. d. Central American countries.
12. Although consumption of alcohol per capita did decrease overall during Prohibition, it increased in this group:
   a. Bohemian radicals           c. Lost Generation writers
   b. working class immigrants     d. youth and college students

13. The “new immigrants” from 1890 to 1920 referred to
   a. African Americans migrating from the South to the North.
   b. Mexican laborers, both legal and illegal.
   c. Southern and Eastern Europeans.
   d. Asians from the Philippines and Japan.

14. Which one of the following was NOT a group to which the revived Ku Klux Klan expanded their hostility?
   a. Protestants            c. Catholics
   b. Jews                   d. Darwinists

15. Which one of the following would have been the LEAST likely to promote the idea of politized domesticity?
   a. League of Women Voters   c. Women’s Trade Union League

16. Writers Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Weldon Johnson and others belonged to a 1920s group called the
   a. Lost Generation of expatriate writers.
   b. Fugitives from the South.
   c. New Negro of the Harlem Renaissance.
   d. Ohio gang.

17. Which one of the following groups would have been the LEAST likely to vote for Al Smith in the 1928 election?
   a. American Protective Association
   b. a person against prohibition
   c. Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters
   d. newer immigrant groups

CHRONOLOGY AND MAP QUESTIONS:

18. The Equal Rights Amendment was first introduced to Congress in
   a. 1920. c. 1926.
   b. 1923. d. 1928.

19. Robert and Helen Lynd published their classic community study, Middletown, in
   a. 1923. c. 1927
   b. 1925. d. 1929.

20. Which one of the following did NOT happen in 1927?
   a. Scopes trial proceeds.   c. Lindbergh solos Atlantic.
   b. The Jazz Singer is shown. d. McNary-Haugen Farm bill vetoed.

21. Which one of the following was NOT among the southern cities having the highest African American population in 1920?
   a. New Orleans            c. Miami
   b. Birmingham            d. Atlanta
22. The only area that was a strong showing for Al Smith in the 1928 presidential election was in the
   a. largest cities and the Deep South.
   b. Midwest and Great Plains.
   c. Pacific coast and Northwest.
   d. rural areas of the West.

SHORT ESSAY:

23. What is meant by the term the “Second Industrial Revolution?”
24. How did the automobile affect American society?
25. How did Hollywood “censor itself” in the face of calls for government censorship of the film-making industry?

EXTENDED ESSAY:

27. In what ways did sex and sensuality take a more obvious role in the culture of the 1920s?
28. In what ways was science misused to support the dominant racist theories of the time?
29. Were the twenties really “roaring” for all Americans? Defend your answer with specific examples.