

Chapter 21: The 1920's

A. Prosperity

- In 1920, Republican, Warren G. Harding, was elected President
- Campaigned on the Slogan, a "return to normalcy"
- The 1920s was characterized by Fun rather than Reform
- F. Scott Fitzgerald, called the 1920s "The Jazz Age" (all hip and cool. Alcohol, cocaine. all for fun)

B. The Move to Modernism

- Modern thought, modern character, and practice
- Modern technology, modern homes, modern marriage, modern women
- Modern America reaffirmed that women were not equal to men and Blacks, Mexicans, Eastern European immigrants were inferior to Anglo-Saxon

C. A Consumer Society

- Consumer Goods such as Household appliances: electric irons, radios, and vacuum
- Cleaners known as durable goods
- Refrigeration and packaging technology
- Consumer Durable: Consumer good that was meant to last, such as a washing machine or radios
- People Capitalism: An egalitarian capitalism in which all Americans could participate and enjoy the consumer goods that U.S. industry had made available
- While some enjoyed the affluence of this age, the lower middle-class and lower income families had to work harder to afford these new amenities
- The automobile moved from being a luxury to becoming a necessity and a source of pleasure (FORD)
- The installment plan was developed to allow lower middle-class and lower income wage earners an opportunity to purchase these goods via installment payments

D. Advertising and Mass Marketing

- General Motors developed the concept of the annual model change to compete with the standard models of Ford Motors
- Professional advertisement became the new mechanism used to communicate with the public
- Print media advocated youthful, beautiful, handsome, and sexually active
- New beauty products and tobacco products were also developed and promoted
- Flappers: Rebellious middle-class young women who signaled their desire for independence and equality through style and personality rather than politics

E. The Age of Celebrity (media, radio, newspaper)

- Charles A Lindbergh: First individual to fly solo across the Atlantic (1927) and the greatest celebrity of the 1920s. The airplane he flew was called the Spirit of St. Louis.
- The Man that Nobody Knows: Bruce Barton's best selling 1925 book depicting Jesus as a business executive.

F. A Consumer Society

- Increase in number of Americans who owned stock; was associated with consumer credit
- Rising wages and steady income for many workers was gradually realized during the first half of the decade (save it or invest in stock)

G. Women and Work

- Women were discriminated against in the industrial sector
- They were not allowed in the skilled crafts and semi-skilled positions or unions (working in labor)
- In white collar jobs women were denied positions as managers, accountants, or lower level managers
- They were encouraged to work in traditional
- Women's positions such as teachers, secretaries, typist, filing clerks, bank tellers, and department store clerks
- Educated women were working in the teaching professions, social workers, or librarianship

H. The Women's Movement

- Women entering colleges increased by 50% during the 1920s
- Some of these women went to work for women's magazines and journals
- Some were so good they were allowed to work for mainstream newspapers and magazines
- The 19th amendment became law in 1920: this gave women right to vote
- Women brought renewed sense of importance to the voting process
- They concentrated their efforts on cleansing politics of corruption
- As a whole, other than the flappers, women
- The Sheppard Act: A Major social welfare program providing federal funds for prenatal and child health
- The League of Women Voters: Successor to National American Woman Suffrage Association, It promoted women's role in politics and dedicated itself to educating
- Alice Paul: President of the National Woman's Party began to lobby congress to support the Equal Rights Amendment. Their platform stated "Men and Women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place of its jurisdiction."
- They had some success at the state level. More at state level than national level

I. Warren G. Harding

- Became president in 1920, he was a republican
- Teapot Dome Scandal: Secretary of Interior Albert Fall allowed oil tycoons access to government oil reserves in exchange for 400,000 in bribes
- Want small government and big business @ public expense
- More scandal rocked Harding's presidential administration when his head of Veterans' Bureau, Charles Forbes, was sent to the State Penitentiary at Leavenworth Kansas for swindling the government out of 200 million in hospital supplies
- Two of his associates committed suicide

J. Calvin Coolidge

- Became president in 1923 after Harding died in office
- He was none as an individual who stood firm against labor radicals. When he was governor of Massachusetts he broke the powerful Boston Police Union.
- His tax reduction policies are believed to be a major reason for the subsequent crash of 1929
- The Revenue Act of 1926 reduced estate and income taxes on the richest Americans
- He vetoes McNary- Haugen: which would have compelled the government to pay subsidies to farmers when domestic prices fell below a certain level.
- He reduced the size of the federal trade commission which was responsible for regulating big businesses
- He also supported a supreme court decision that rolled back Progressive Era laws that strengthened organized labor and protected women and children against child labor exploitation

K. Herbert Hoover

- Serves as the Secretary of Commerce under Harding and Coolidge before become President in 1929.
- Associationalism: Herbert Hoover's approach to managing the economy. Firms and organizations in each economic sector would be asked to cooperate with each other in the pursuit of efficiency, profit, and the public good.

L. The Politics of Business Abroad

- Five-Power Treaty: 1922 treaty in which the United States, Britain, Japan, France, and Italy agreed to scrap more than 2 million tons of their Warships.
- This was one of the first major arms limitation treaties of the modern era.
- Dawes Plan: 1924 U.S. backed agreement to reduce German reparation payments by more than half. The plan also called on banks to invest 200 million in the German Economy.
- The Kellogg-Briand Pact: signed between France, America and 11 other countries in europe to outlaw war.