
US History/Roaring Twenties and Prohibition

Health and Life Expectancy

During the "Roaring Twenties" people began to become more aware of nutrition, and the existence of vitamins in food. Between 1915 and 1930 nutritionists began to emphasize to the public the need for consumption of certain foods, that contain certain nutrients and vitamins, on a daily basis. This is also the time where food companies began marketing their products on how their products contain certain amounts of your daily vitamins and are healthy. These companies were able to say almost anything they wanted due to the lack of knowledge about vitamins, for example Welch's Grape Juice marketing their product having many good nutrients and daily vitamins but failed to inform the people of the large amount of sugars used in their product as well. This emphasis of hygiene made Americans overall healthier and in turn increased the average life expectancy. During this time the life expectancy at birth in the United States also increased from fifty-four to sixty percent, and infant mortality rate decreased by one-third. However this was not the case for nonwhites, mortality rate for nonwhite children was about fifty to one hundred times that of whites during this era. Accident fatalities however increased by roughly 150 percent due to the advancement of the speed of automobiles.

Automobile

In the 1920s, the United States automobile industry began an extraordinary period of growth. By the use of the assembly line in manufacturing, entrepreneurs such as Henry Ford were able to increase productivity. In turn these innovations significantly reduced the cost of Automobiles. For the first time average American citizens were able to purchase cars.

Cars began to alter the American lifestyle. In 1929, one out of every five Americans had a car. They began using their own automobiles instead of the street cars. They also replaced horses with cars. This made the streets cleaner because there wasn't as much horse manure all over. The idea of "homes on wheels" was also created around this time. Americans were packing up food and camping equipment in order to get away for a little while.^[1] By the 1920s most automobiles were enclosed; offered private space for courtship and sex. Women also gained from the automobile revolution. Women who learned to drive achieved newfound independence, taking touring trips with female friends, conquering muddy roads and making repairs when their vehicles broke down. There were 108 automobile manufacturers in 1923 and colors allowed owners to express personal tastes. Due to all the driving, there was extensive road construction and an abundance of fuel. In 1920, the United States produced sixty-five percent of the World's oil. The first timed stop-and-go traffic light was in 1924.^[2] The car was the ultimate social equalizer. One writer said in 1924 "It is hard to convince Steve Popovich, or Antonio Branca, or plain John Smith that he is being ground into the dust by capital when at will he may drive the same highways, view the same scenery, and get as much enjoyment from his trip as the modern Midas".

Industries related to the manufacturing and use of automobiles also grew; petroleum, steel, and glass were in high demand, leading to growth and profitability in related sectors. State governments began to build roads and highways in rural areas. Gasoline stations were installed across the country, evidence of the sudden and continued growth of the petroleum industry. Furthermore, automobile dealers introduced the installment plan, a financing concept that was adopted in many other parts of business. Thus, the automobile industry's growth had repercussions throughout the nation.

With a perfected design of Henry Ford's assembly line automobiles began to be more affordable for the common US citizens all over the country. This brought work to many because the amount of work needed to build an automobile on the assembly line was high, and so was the demand for car factory laborers.

Social Values

During this time period, new social values emerged. With the finding of new fabric's and chemical dyes, cloth became a means of identity and social expression. It was difficult to determine what was socially acceptable or not with the abundance of smoking, drinking, and now openness about sex. Also during this time birth control became widely used within the socially respectable groups of society. Movies, radio, magazines, and newspapers became much more "expressive" in terms of sexuality. Also during this some forced education came into play, children were not longer influenced mainly by their parents but their classmates. Schools activities such as sports and clubs now brought children together rather than being integrated with adults and people of much older age. During this time parents began relying less on traditional ways of raising their children and began reading and listening to what "experts" had to say on the issue. The interaction between males and females also went through a drastic change in this era. The term "dating" without adult supervision began, this way of interacting spread between all levels of society, from the lowest working class to the highest rich upper class. The youth began becoming more liberal due to new freedoms and opportunities the urban life now offered. Also with the advancement of the automobile, it made dating even more popular among the youth.

Radio

An invention, which soon after became a popular fad, is the radio. During the twenties television had not been invented, the radio was their television, it really did do pretty much everything the TV does for us today. If you tuned in at the right time, you could catch comedy shows, news, live events, jazz, variety shows, drama, opera, the radio had it all. Discovered in the 1920's were penicillin and discovery of insulin for diabetic people. This decade had some major breakthroughs in medicine and science. Radio broadcasting became feasible with the increasing electrification of the United States and advances in circuitry. The first broadcasting station in the world was KDKA, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1920; other stations started in every state, and in 1924, the first U.S. radio network, the National Broadcasting Company, began operations between New York and Boston. Commercials had also become a big deal in about 1922. An AT&T-run station in New York City broadcasted recurring advertisements and after that other stations began to air commercials.^[1] In 1927, the Columbia Broadcasting System began to broadcast. People tuned into the radio to listen to jazz music, sports and live events. People enjoyed listening to the "King of Jazz", Louie Armstrong. At first the federal government didn't want to regulate the airwaves, but they eventually did because everyone involved in the radio asked for their help. The Federal Radio Commission was set up in 1926; the Radio Act of 1927 organized the Federal Radio Commission.

Movies

The U.S. movie industry began to locate in the Hollywood neighborhood of Los Angeles, California, in the 1920s, and movies also grew into a popular recreation. Almost every community now had a theatre in town. In 1922, about 40 million people were going to the theatres each week and that number jumped to about 100 million people by the end of the decade. This number was larger than the number of people that attended church weekly.^[1] Movie stars such as Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, and Charlie Chaplin became iconic images around the world. New technology increased movies' appeal. Between 1922 and 1927, the technicolor corporation developed a means of producing movies in color. This process along with sound, made movies even more more realistic and exciting.

The development of the automobile, radio, and the movies changed the popular culture of the United States. Programs such as *Amos 'n' Andy* affected the nation's habits; people stopped what they were doing twice a week to listen to the program. In the case of movies such as *The Birth of a Nation*, a fictionalized account of the founding of the Ku Klux Klan, Klan membership grew as a result.

There were eight major (and minor) studios that dominated the industry. They were the ones that had most successfully consolidated and integrated all aspects of a film's development. By 1929, the film-making firms that

were to rule and monopolize Hollywood for the next half-century were the giants or the majors, sometimes dubbed The Big Five. The Big Five studios were Warner Bros., RKO, Paramount, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and Fox Film Corporation. They produced more than 90 percent of the fiction films in America and distributed their films both nationally and internationally. Each studio somewhat differentiated its products from other studios.

Prohibition

Originally, the concept of Prohibition (the banning of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors) was based on religious ideology. During the Second Great Awakening in the 1840s, crusades against drinking were common among evangelical Protestants. In 1851, the state of Maine passed a law banning the production and sale of intoxicating liquors. Twelve more states followed by 1855. During the Civil War, however, the movement to prohibit alcohol was stalled. Saloons, which focused on the sale of alcohol, sprang up across the country. However, many viewed saloons as immoral. Several groups in opposition to the consumption or sale of alcoholic beverages grew prominent in political discourse, such as the Prohibition Party (founded in 1869, making it the oldest existing third party in the United States) and lobbying organizations such as the Anti-Saloon League (formed in 1893) and the Women's Christian Temperance Union (formed in 1874). These groups were instrumental in shifting the argument for Prohibition away from the immorality of drunkenness and towards the alleged link between drinking and poor productivity, domestic violence, and poverty. By 1916, almost half the states had banned saloons. The election of that year focused on Prohibition.

The Congress that assembled in 1917 overwhelmingly passed the Eighteenth Amendment, which enacted Prohibition. By 1919, the requisite number of states had ratified the Amendment. The Amendment actually came into effect, under its own terms, one year after ratification. On January 16, 1920, the National Prohibition Act, also known as the Volstead Act, came into effect which banned drinks with alcohol content above 3.2%.

Although total alcohol consumption halved, many people blatantly disregarded Prohibition. *Bootleggers* illegally manufactured and sold liquors at unlawful saloons called *speakeasies*. Gangs prospered due to profits from illegal alcohol. Some felt that Prohibition was too harsh and that it made a criminal out of the average American. Nonetheless, Prohibition remained law until 1933, when the Twenty-first Amendment repealed the Eighteenth Amendment. The most famous of the bootleggers was Al Capone, he smuggled alcohol all over the Midwest. He was the leader of one of the largest crime rings in the Chicago land area. Capone committed the many crimes of booze and drug smuggling, murder but was eventually arrested for tax evasion.

Prohibition was a time that offered many rewarding types of jobs, but with the jobs came a great risk. Many people began to be alcohol smugglers and would make a lot of money smuggling booze to hidden taverns and speakeasies where liquor was highly valued because of its scarcity at the time.

Gangs and Violence

The 18th Amendment had banned the sale, transportation and manufacture of alcohol in America. But it was clear to some, that millions neither wanted this law nor would respect it. There was obviously a huge market for what in the 1920's was an illegal commodity. It was the gangsters who dominated various cities who provided this commodity. Each major city had its gangster element but the most famous was Chicago with Al Capone.

Capone was "Public Enemy Number 1". He had moved to Chicago in 1920 where he worked for Johnny Torrio the city's leading figure in the underworld. Capone was given the task of intimidating Torrio's rivals within the city so that they would give up and hand over to Torrio their territory. Capone also had to convince speakeasy operators to buy illegal alcohol from Torrio.

Capone was very good at what he did. In 1925, Torrio was nearly killed by a rival gang and he decided to get out of the criminal world while he was still alive. Torrio handed over to Capone his 'business'.

Within 2 years, Capone was earning \$60 million a year from alcohol sales alone. Other rackets earned him an extra \$45 million a year.

Capone managed to bribe both the police and the important politicians of Chicago. He spent \$75 million on such ventures but considered it a good investment of his huge fortune. His armed thugs patrolled election booths to ensure that Capone's politicians were returned to office. The city's mayor after 1927 was Big Bill Thompson - one of Capone's men. Thompson said "We'll not only reopen places these people have closed, but we'll open 10,000 new ones (speakeasies).

For all his power, Capone still had enemies from other surviving gangs in the city. He drove everywhere in an armour plated limousine and wherever he went, so did his armed bodyguards. Violence was a daily occurrence in Chicago. 227 gangsters were killed in the space of 4 years and on St Valentine's Day, 1929, 7 members of the O'Banion gang were shot dead by gangsters dressed as police officers.

In 1931, the law finally caught up with Capone and he was charged with tax evasion. He got 11 years in jail. In prison, his health went and when he was released, he retired to his Florida mansion no longer the feared man he was from 1925 to 1931.

Bonnie and Clyde

Bonnie and Clyde were also a famous pair of murderers and thieves in the 1920's during the prohibition era with their gang. Clyde Champion Barrow and his companion, Bonnie Parker, were shot to death by officers in an ambush near Sailes, Bienville Parish, Louisiana on May 23, 1934, after one of the most colorful and spectacular manhunts the nation had seen up to that time. Barrow was suspected of numerous killings and was wanted for murder, robbery, and state charges of kidnapping.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), then called the Bureau of Investigation, became interested in Barrow and his paramour late in December 1932 through a singular bit of evidence. A Ford automobile, which had been stolen in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, was found abandoned near Jackson, Michigan in September of that year. At Pawhuska, it was learned another Ford car had been abandoned there which had been stolen in Illinois. A search of this car revealed it had been occupied by a man and a woman, indicated by abandoned articles therein. In this car was found a prescription bottle, which led special agents to a drug store in Nacogdoches, Texas, where investigation disclosed the woman for whom the prescription had been filled was Clyde Barrow's aunt.

Further investigation revealed that the woman who obtained the prescription had been visited recently by Clyde Barrow, Bonnie Parker, and Clyde's brother, L. C. Barrow. It also was learned that these three were driving a Ford car, identified as the one stolen in Illinois. It was further shown that L. C. Barrow had secured the empty prescription bottle from a son of the woman who had originally obtained it.

On May 20, 1933, the United States Commissioner at Dallas, Texas, issued a warrant against Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, charging them with the interstate transportation, from Dallas, to Oklahoma, of the automobile stolen in Illinois. The FBI then started its hunt for this elusive pair.

Politics and Government

A symbol of governments goodwill towards business was Warren G. Harding elected in 1920. His administration helped streamline federal spending with the Budgeting and Accounting Act of 1921, supported anti lynching legislation (rejected by Congress), and approved bills assisting farm cooperatives and liberalizing farm credit. There were some scandals in the Harding administration though; one being that he had an affair with an Ohio merchant's wife. He had a daughter from this affair and never acknowledged his illegitimate offspring. He had also appointed some cronies who saw office as an invitation to personal gain. One of those men was Charles Forbes; head of the Veterans Bureau. He went to prison and was convicted of fraud and bribery in connection with government contracts. Another crony was Attorney General Harry Daugherty. He was involved with an illegal liquor scheme.

The only way he escaped prosecution was by refusing to testify against himself. Lastly, the Secretary of the Interior, Albert Fall, accepted bribes to lease government property to private oil companies. This was known as the infamous Teapot Dome Scandal. Origins of the scandal date back to the popular conservation legislation of presidents Teddy Roosevelt, William Taft and Woodrow Wilson, specifically as to the creation of naval petroleum reserves in Wyoming and California. Three naval oil fields, Elk Hills and Buena Vista Hills in California and Teapot Dome in Wyoming, were tracts of public land that were reserved by previous presidents to be emergency underground supplies to be used by the navy only when the regular oil supplies diminished. The Teapot Dome oil field received its name because of a rock resembling a teapot that was located above the oil-bearing land. Many politicians and private oil interests had opposed the restrictions placed on the oil fields claiming that the reserves were unnecessary and that the American oil companies could provide for the U.S. Navy.^{[3] [4]}

Consequences on the Involved: Lasting throughout the 1920's were a series of civil and criminal suits related to the scandal. Finally in 1927 the Supreme Court ruled that the oil leases had been corruptly obtained and invalidated the Elk Hills lease in February of that year and the Teapot lease in October of the same year. The navy did regain control of the Teapot Dome and Elk Hills reserves in regards to the courts decision. Albert Fall was found guilty of bribery in 1929, fined \$100,000 and sentenced to one year in prison. Harry Sinclair who refused to cooperate with the government investigators was charged with contempt and received a short sentence for tampering with the jury. Edward Doheny was acquitted in 1930 of attempted to bribe Fall. Results of the Scandal: The Teapot Dome scandal was a victory for neither political party in the 1920's, it did become a major issue in the presidential election of 1924 but neither party could claim full credit for divulging the wrongdoing. The concentrated attention on the scandal made it the first true symbol of government corruption in America. The scandal did reveal the problem of natural resource scarcity and the need to protect for the future against the depletion of resources in a time of emergency. Calvin Coolidge, who assumed the presidency after Harding's death, handled the problem very systematically and his administration avoided any damage to their reputation. Overall the Teapot Dome scandal came to represent the corruption of American politics which has become more prevalent over the decades since the scandal.

Scopes Trial

In 1925 a teacher by the name of John Thomas Scopes was tried and convicted for teaching evolution in his public school classroom as an explanation to where man originated from, rather than Adam and Eve that is what the law at the time stated. This was a major dispute and caught the attention of many popular government officials such as William Jennings Bryan, who spoke on behalf of the prosecution. Although the modernists defending Scopes lost, they still were proud to have been able to put into question the illogical thinking behind the law enforcing the belief that no one can teach alternative methods for the origin of man, they were also proud that this trial and conviction didn't affect the expansion of fundamentalist ideals. The Southern Baptist Convention a protestant group was even one of the fastest growing denominations after the trial showing that it may have even gave popularity to the religious denomination. The beliefs of these groups resulted in the creation of an independent subculture within the U.S. and with their own schools, radio programs, and missionary societies.

Religious Revivalism

With economic insecurity religion, faith became more popular through out the United States. The new revivalism condemned the new socially acceptable movies, dress styles, and dancing. Many religious organizations supported the prohibition movement, thinking drinking was a sinful unclean act.

Jazz

Jazz is an American musical art form which originated around the beginning of the 20th century in African American communities in the Southern United States from a confluence of African and European music traditions. It was originated from African Americans. The "hometown" of jazz is considered to be in New Orleans. Early jazz musicians would called New Orleans their home even if they have never been there. Jazz music started the whole jazz revolution from poetry, fashion, and industry. Jazz spread through America very quickly^[5]. The style's West African pedigree is evident in its use of blue notes, call-and-response, improvisation, polyrhythms, syncopation, and the swung note of ragtime. Beginning in 1922, Gennett Records began recording jazz groups performing in Chicago. The first group they recorded was the New Orleans Rhythm Kings, followed in 1923 by King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band with Louis Armstrong. Another indie company in Chicago, Paramount Records, was competing with Gennett and Okeh for jazz talent.^[6]

Fashion

Young, rebellious, middle-class women, began wearing clothing that showed their arms and legs off. These women became known as "flappers". "Flappers" were care free women who smoked, drank, and treated sex in a casual manner. The hairstyle of the decade was a chin-length bob, of which there were several popular variations. Cosmetics, which until the 1920s was not typically accepted in American society because of its association with prostitution became, for the first time, extremely popular. Hats wear also a big trend in the 1920s and popular styles included the Newsboy cap and Cloche hat. Directly after the Great War America was in economic control because Germany was put in charge for repairing all of the war damages. With the United States not in a recession many people had extra money to spend on fashionable clothes. This spending opened up job opportunities for store owners and for fashion designers aswell.

Advertising

Advertising played a major role in the rapid social growth during the twenties. During this time is when people began to consider that people's tastes and interests could be manipulated, people that believed this are known as Advertising Theorists. Their confidence in this new idea allowed for it to spread, which led for more money to be spent in 1929 on advertising for material goods such as automobiles and also services than ever before. This was when advertising was sought to manipulate the society, and used my marketers to achieve their financial goals. Marketers during the "Roaring Twenties" started what we call today endorsements. Some entrepreneurs such as Madame Walker, Max Factor, and Helena Rubenstein used movie stars and other famous sports athletes in order to sell their product.

Business Overseas

After the war, many manufacturing companies faced hard times as they attempted to convert from wartime production of weapons and planes to what they had traditionally produced before the war. However, the pro-business policies put in place first by Harding, then Coolidge, allowed business to flourish. While business did well at home- the raising of tariff rates from 27% (under the Underwood-Simmons Tariff) to 41% certainly helped in this regard- many major companies did quite well overseas. Just as these companies had started to do before the war, they set up shop in a variety of countries based around the resources located there. Meat packers, like Gustavus Swift, went to

Argentina, fruit growers went to Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala, sugar plantation owners went to Cuba, rubber plantation owners to the Philippines, Sumatra, and Malaya, copper corporations to Chile, and oil companies to Mexico and Venezuela (which remains today a great source for oil).

Organized Labor

The Organized labor force during the 1920's suffered a great deal. During this time the country was fearful of the spread of communism in America, because of this widespread fear public opinion was against any worker who attempted to disrupt the order of the working class. The public was so anti-labor union that in 1922 the Harding administration was able to get a court injunction to destroy a railroad workers strike that was about 400,000 strong. Also in 1922 the government took part in putting to an end a nationwide miners strike that consisted of about 650,000 miners. The federal and state level of government had no toleration for strikes, and allowed for businesses to sue the unions for any damages done during a strike.

Major Cases and Laws

Several laws came into play during the 1920's because of things such as prohibition, voting rights, and women's rights. Our country has progressed a great deal since the 1920's, and of the laws that come into play dealt with what our country was going through at the time. On January 16, 1920 it was illegal to sell, make, or transport any type of alcoholic beverage with more than one and a half percent of alcohol. Also, the 19th Amendment was another monumental law passed during the 1920's.

Sacco-Vanzetti Trial, Leopold and Loeb, Scopes "Monkey" Trial, and Black Sox Trail were all significant court cases during the 1920's. Each of these courts cases were unique and monumental in their own right, and set a precedent for the years to come especially in court looking back on these cases. The 1920's was a very monumental time for the law and courts of the United States.

Women and Equal Rights

Politically active women still remained excluded from local and national power structures. Their voluntary organizations used tactics that advanced modern pressure-group politics. Issues ranged from birth control, peace, education, Indian Affairs, or opposition to lynching. Women in these associations lobbied legislators to support their causes. At the state level women achieved rights such as the ability to serve on juries.^[7]

Before the Nineteenth Amendment, most states only granted men the right to vote. Suffragettes - those who campaigned for a woman's right to vote - were successful in 1920, when the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, mainly due to women's manufacturing and production efforts during wartime. Encouraged women campaigned for women's rights. Several women's organizations requested an Amendment that guaranteed Equal Rights. (Congress actually proposed the Equal Rights Amendment in 1872, but it expired under its own terms in 1882 since three-fourths of the states had not ratified it.) However, after gaining suffrage, women lost most battles for equality. When it came to women having jobs there was a 2 million increase since the war had ended. Although more women were becoming a part of the work force, jobs were still sex segregated which meant that women would take jobs as teachers or nurses or other jobs that men rarely wanted.^[8]

Women because of this high demand for equal rights altered their style during the Twenties. The popularity of the new styles the "Flapper" which symbolized new women independence and sexual freedoms. This new style consisted of women wearing short skirts and bobbed hair. Many women were beginning to assert themselves as socially equal to men.

Minority Women

During the 1920's there were almost double the amount of nonwhite women than white in the workforce. Women, especially minorities, who held factory jobs held the least desirable and lowest paying jobs in factories. African American women mostly held domestic jobs such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry. There were many openings for educated African women in the social work, teaching, and nursing fields during this time, however they faced much discrimination. The Economic needs of the family brought thousands of minority women into having to work. Mexican women, mainly in the Southwest worked as domestic servants, operatives in garment factories, and as agricultural laborers. This was looked down upon because the Mexican culture traditionally was against women labor. Next to African women, Japanese women were the most likely to hold low paying jobs in the work force, they worked in the lowest paying jobs; they faced very strong racial biases and discrimination on a regular basis as well.

African-Americans and the Ku Klux Klan

Southern states segregated public facilities (like buses). In half the South fewer than 10% of the blacks were allowed to vote. Another factor that ignited more hatred towards blacks was the Great Migration. During the 1920s blacks began to move from rural areas in the South to large cities. More than 1.5 million African Americans migrated to cities such as New York, Chicago, Detroit and the black population even grew in Western cities such as Los Angeles and San Diego. Although most of the migrants were poor and lived in cheap urban housing, some were able to afford better housing in white neighborhoods. This migration of African Americans created unrest within the white community as blacks began to buy and rent property in white neighborhoods. The Great Migration ended in even more discrimination and violence against blacks. To fight the increasing discrimination many black movement groups began to form. The Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) was formed Marcus Garvey, an immigrant from Jamaica living in Harlem. Garvey preached a message of equality that many, including other black leaders, considered radical. Garvey helped start companies and news papers directed towards the African American community. Along the way he gained a substantial amount of followers around the US, especially in urban cities. Some estimate that Garvey and the UNIA had over half a million followers. Although Garvey created more racial unity and inspired the black community to stand up, many disagreed with his radical approach. W.E.B. Du Bois, a prominent black figure, considered Garvey's approach extreme and believed that it would only backfire in the movement for equal rights. With the help up of other black leaders, Du Bois petitioned the attorney general and had Garvey deported back to Jamaica. Garvey is still considered by many as a successful figure in the fight for civil rights. His message to fight back for equality lived on long after he was deported and he was one of the early inspirations of 1960's civil rights leader Malcolm X.

The Ku Klux Klan flourished 1921-26 with a membership of millions of Protestants. Not only was the Ku Klux Klan big in the south, but it now fanned out to places such as Oregon and Indiana. Indiana's governor and an Oregon mayor were both members of the KKK. Along with the men in this group, there were now women too. The women consisted of about a half-million members.^[1] Klansmen argued for a purified nation and denounced African-Americans, Catholics, and Jews, as well as bootleggers and adulterers. They gained new support from nativists who had detested the mass immigration to the Northeast in the early 1900s.

The return of the Klan caused a split in the Democratic Party which allowed Calvin Coolidge, a conservative Republican, to take office in 1924.

In most cities, the only way blacks could relieve the pressure of crowding that resulted from increasing migration was to expand residential borders into surrounding previously white neighborhoods, a process that often resulted in harassment and attacked by white residents whose intolerant attitudes were intensified by fears that black neighbors would cause property values to decline. Moreover the increased presence of African Americans in cities, North and South, as well as their competition with whites for housing, jobs, and political influence sparked a series of race riots. In 1898 white citizens of Wilmington, North Carolina, resenting African Americans' involvement in local government and incensed by an editorial in an African American newspaper accusing white women of loose sexual

behavior, rioted and killed dozens of blacks. In the fury's wake, white supremacists overthrew the city government, expelling black and white office holders, and instituted restrictions to prevent blacks from voting. In Atlanta in 1906, newspaper accounts alleging attacks by black men on white women provoked an outburst of shooting and killing that left twelve blacks dead and seventy injured. An influx of unskilled black strikebreakers into East St Louis, Illinois, heightened racial tensions in 1917. Rumors that blacks were arming themselves for an attack on whites resulted in numerous attacks by white mobs on black neighborhoods. On July 1, blacks fired back at a car whose occupants they believed had shot into their homes and mistakenly killed two policemen riding in a car. The next day, a full scaled riot erupted which ended only after nine whites and thirty-nine blacks had been killed and over three hundred buildings were destroyed.

Although African Americans were widely persecuted by the Ku Klux Klan they were not the only group of people that the KKK targeted because they believed in "Native, white, Protestant supremacy." They also targeted groups like Mexicans, Catholics and Jews. The Ku Klux Klan would also try and bring justice into their own hands when it came to dealing with bootleggers, wife beaters and adulterers. ^[9]

Elderly Americans and Retirement

With the increase of the elderly, the interest in pensions and other forms of old age assistance began to be put into effect. Although European countries had established state-supported pension systems, in 1923 the Chamber of Commerce in Pennsylvania. Stated that old-age assistance was "un-American & socialistic". During the "Roaring Twenties" one third of Americans sixty-five and older depended financially on someone else. Resistance to pension plans broke at the state level during the 1920's. Isaac Max Rubinow and Abraham Epstein were the first to try and persuade associations such as labor unions, and legislators to endorse old-age assistance. It wasn't until 1933 that almost every state minimal support to needy elderly.

Stock Market Crash of 1929

On October 24, 1929, today known as Black Thursday, the stock market began its downhill drop. After the first hour, the prices had gone down at an amazing speed. Some people thought that after that day, the prices would rise again just as it had done before. But it didn't. Prices kept dropping, and on October 29, 1929, Black Tuesday, more than 16 million shares were sold, but by the end of the day, most stocks ended below their previous value, and some stocks became totally worthless. Because of that, some people became homeless and penniless, all because of the Stock Market Crash. By November 13, the prices had hit rock bottom. The stock AT&T had gone from 304 dollars to 197. America had celebrated for eight years, but now, everything was wasted in just a few weeks, by the Stock Market. It was a sad ending to this glorious decade.

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