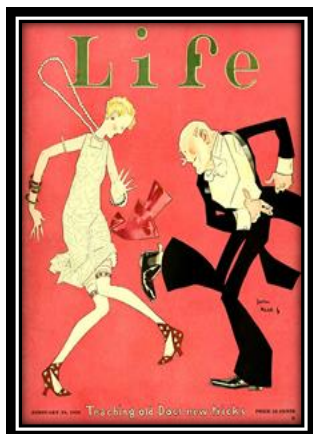


THE ROARING TWENTIES: A WEBQUEST



THE ROARING TWENTIES

American Culture in the Era of The Great Gatsby

Before we begin reading The Great Gatsby, you will complete research regarding the *Roaring Twenties* to help give you context and understand the events in the novel. Begin your research by starting at the following site:

http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=2&psid=3380

Scroll down and click on *The Jazz Age: The American 1920s...*

The Great Gatsby takes place during the summer of 1922. Fitzgerald coined the phrase, “the Jazz Age” that same year to describe the flamboyant—“anything goes”—era that emerged in America after World War I. Find out more about the popular culture and historical events that shaped and defined the 1920s.

AN OVERVIEW:

The popular image of the 1920s, as a decade of _____ and _____ living and of bootleggers and _____, flappers and hot jazz, flagpole sitters, and marathon dancers, is indelibly etched in the American psyche. But this image is also profoundly misleading. The 1920s was a decade of deep _____ conflict. The pre-Civil War decades had fundamental conflicts in American society that involved geographic regions. Conversely, the conflicts of the 1920s were primarily cultural, pitting a more cosmopolitan, _____, urban culture against a more provincial, _____, rural culture.

What were 5 cultural battles in American society during the 1920's? _____

What were the most obvious signs of signs of change? _____

Sexual mores, _____ roles, hair styles, and _____ all changed profoundly during the 1920s. Many Americans regarded these changes as _____ from

the country's _____ past. But for others, _____ seemed to be decaying, and the United States seemed to be changing in undesirable ways. The result was a thinly veiled "cultural civil war."

POSTWAR LABOUR TENSIONS:

The years following the end of World War I were a period of deep _____ tensions, aggravated by high wartime _____. Food prices more than _____ between 1915 and 1920; clothing costs more than _____. A steel strike that began in Chicago in _____ became much more than a simple dispute between labor and management. The Steel Strike of 1919 became the focal point for profound social _____, especially fears of _____.

- During the war unions won recognition. How long were workdays before? _____
- How many workers joined strikes in 1919? _____
- What did industrialists fear during the steel strike in America considering what was happening around the world? _____

- What was the outcome of the strike? _____

During the 1920s, many of labour's _____ during World War I and the _____ era were rolled back. Membership in labour unions fell from _____ million to _____ million. The U.S. Supreme Court outlawed _____, overturned national child _____ laws, and abolished minimum wage laws for _____.

PROHIBITION:

At midnight, January 16, 1920, the United States went dry; _____, distilleries, and saloons were _____ to close their doors.

- Which two groups led this ban? _____
- What did women believe alcohol was linked to? _____
- What were industrialists concerned about? _____
- Before the 18th amendment was ratified, what percentage of the country already banned booze? _____

In December 1917, Congress passed the 18th Amendment. A month later, President _____ instituted partial prohibition to conserve grain for the _____. Beer was limited to _____ percent alcohol content and production was held to 70 percent of the previous year's production. In September, the president _____ on the wartime production of beer.

_____ was defended as a war measure. The amendment's proponents argued that grain should be made into bread for fighting men and not for making liquor. Anti-German sentiment aided Prohibition's approval. The Anti-Saloon League called Milwaukee's brewers "the worst of all our German enemies," and dubbed their beer "_____." Unsuccessfully, the brewing industry argued that _____ on liquor were paying more for the war effort than were _____. Yet even after Prohibition was enacted, many ethnic Americans viewed beer or wine drinking as an integral part of their _____, not as a vice.

Prohibition quickly produced _____, _____, moonshine, bathtub gin, and _____ smuggling supplies of alcohol

across state lines. In 1927, there were an estimated _____ illegal speakeasies--twice the number of legal bars before Prohibition.

Popular culture glamorized bootleggers like _____. These symbols served as the model for the central characters in such films as Little Caesar and Scarface. In rural areas, moonshiners became _____. The fashion of the _____, dancing the Charleston in a short skirt, was incomplete without a hip flask. Organized crime increased, _____ increased in many cities, partly as a result of gang wars, but also because of an increase in drunkenness.

THE CONSUMER ECONOMY AND MASS ENTERTAINMENT:

The growth of exciting new opportunities to buy _____, _____, and stylish clothing made the country's _____ seem less significant.

What were Americans the first to do? _____

Cars _____ the American way of life. Enthusiasts claimed that the automobile promoted _____ through evening rides, picnics, and weekend _____. Worst of all, charged critics, automobiles gave young people freedom and privacy, serving as “_____” that couples could take anywhere.

The automobile also transformed the American landscape, quickly obliterating all traces of the _____. During the 1920s, the country _____ its system of roads and highways. The car also brought pollution, congestion, and nearly _____ traffic deaths a year.

_____ soared during the 1920s. Banks offered the country's first home _____. Manufacturers of everything—from cars to irons—allowed consumers to pay “_____” About _____ percent of all furniture and

_____ of all _____ were purchased on instalment plans. In contrast to a _____ society that had placed a high premium on _____ and _____, the new consumer society emphasized _____ and _____.

How did the radio draw the nation together? _____

How many households had a radio by 1929? _____

Who was the first person to fly nonstop across the Atlantic? _____

Who wrote the first extended Jazz composition? _____

What did Louis Armstrong popularize? _____

Who was the “Mother of the Blue”? _____

What was the movie attendance in 1920 and 1929 respectively? _____

Name 2 famous movie stars of the 1920s _____

List 5 facts regarding the Golden Age of Sports: _____

