



Politics of the 1920s

Three Republican Presidents (in a row)



Warren G. Harding
President 1920-23



Calvin Coolidge
President 1923-1928



Herbert Hoover
President 1928-1932

all promoted “a return to normalcy” after WWI

Washington Conference 1922

post-WWI, America is very isolationist
(doesn't want to get involved in what's going on in other countries)

a conference is held in Washington, DC with 8 other nations

US and other nations agree to limit their militaries
(men, arms, ships)



Japan had taken land from China, so we told them they could only have 3 ships for every 5 of ours
(?)



Politics of the 1920s

The Red Scare

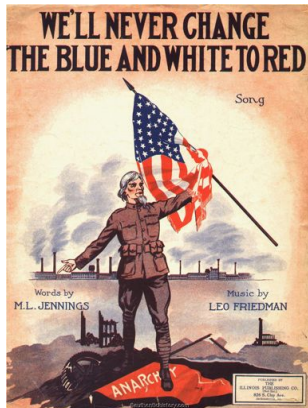
a fear of foreigners and communism emerged

natives were worried that immigrants would take their jobs

natives didn't like immigrants' differences: religion, dress, food, etc.

Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer

arrested about 6,000 people; some were deported
(sent out of the country)



*he slowed down a bit on
the arrests and
deportations after
someone threw a bomb
that blew up his house*



Politics of the 1920s

Restricting Immigration



Emergency Quota Act of 1921

cut the number of people admitted to the US to 3% of the total number of people in any group already living in the US in 1910

Immigration Act of 1924

cut down to 2% of a group's U.S. population in 1890: New Immigrants v. Old Immigrants

Politics of the 1920s

The Prohibition “Experiment”

came about from anti-foreign sentiment and religious crusading against the so-called “demon rum”

in 1919, the **18th Amendment** was passed prohibiting **alcohol**

positive results: bank savings **increased** and absences at work **decreased**



Politics of the 1920s

The “Golden Age” of Gangsterism

prohibition created a new industry for organized crime: **illegal alcohol distribution**

gangs were born and staked out territories for selling alcohol



bars were called
speakeasies
guests of a speakeasy
had to know a
password
to enter



Chicago had the greatest number and strongest gangs

“**Scarface**” Al Capone was the biggest and baddest of all the crime bosses

the “G-men” (**government** men = federal police)

named him “ **Public Enemy** Number One”

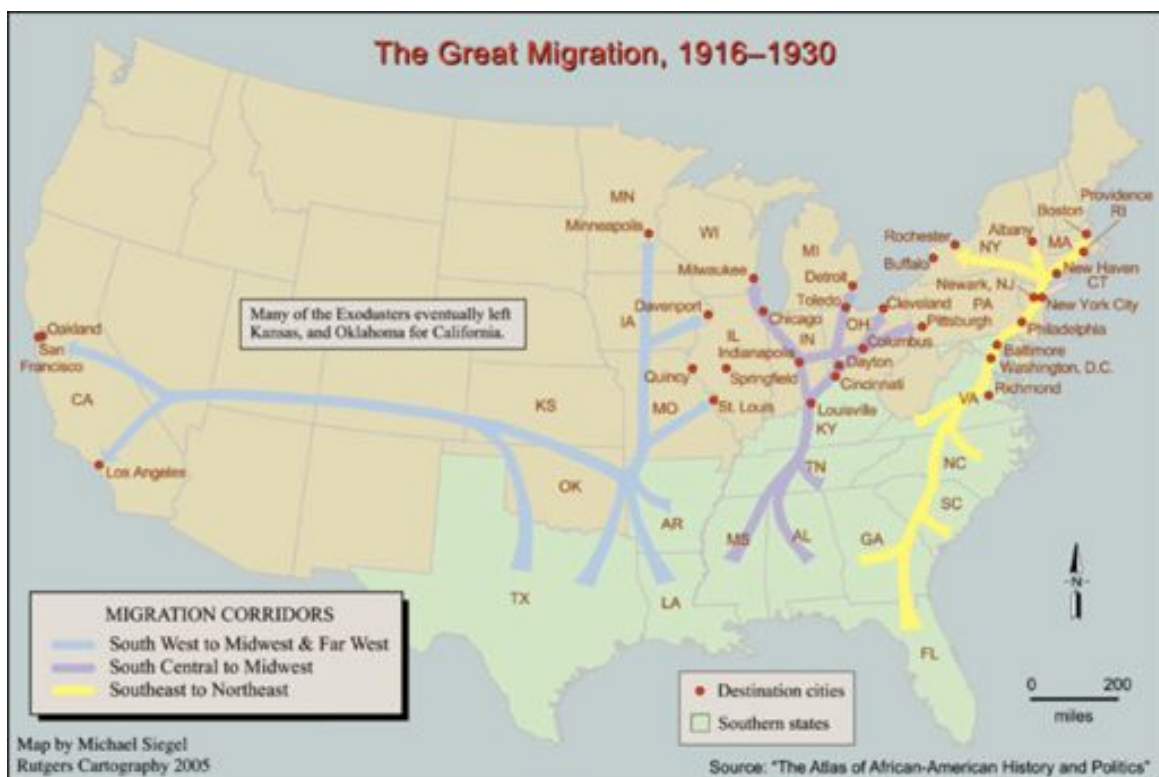
although never convicted of mob-related activities, he was put in jail for **tax evasion**

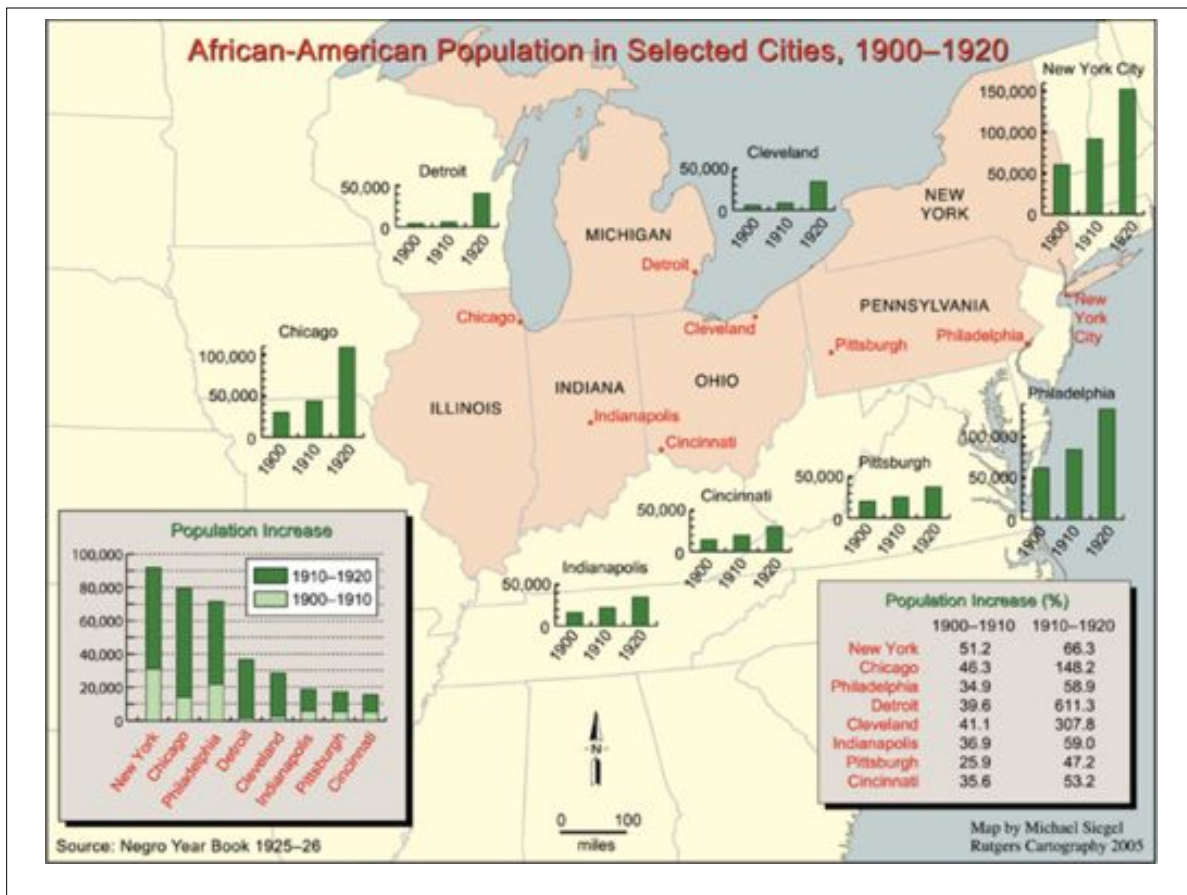
Flappers



young modern women in the 20's
visited speakeasies, drank alcohol, dressed
in short dresses, “bobbed” their hair

danced to the Charleston





Culture of the 1920s

The Harlem Renaissance

The African-American arts movement (writing, arts, music) in the 1920s centered in Harlem, NYC



Notable Harlem Renaissance Artists:

Langston Hughes, Author
Louis Armstrong, Jazz Musician
Duke Ellington, Jazz Musician
Marian Anderson, Singer
Billie Holiday, Singer



Langston Hughes



In his many poems and novels of the 1920s, Langston Hughes creatively suggested the idea that black culture should be celebrated.



The Weary Blues (1925)

Droning a drowsy syncopated tune,
Rocking back and forth to a mellow croon,
I heard a Negro play.
Down on Lenox Avenue the other night
By the pale dull pallor of an old gas light
He did a lazy sway . . .
He did a lazy sway . . .
To the tune o' those Weary Blues.
With his ebony hands on each ivory key
He made that poor piano moan with melody.
O Blues!
Swaying to and fro on his rickety stool
He played that sad raggy tune like a musical fool.
Sweet Blues!
Coming from a black man's soul.
O Blues!
In a deep song voice with a melancholy tone
I heard that Negro sing, that old piano moan—
"Ain't got nobody in all this world,
Ain't got nobody but ma self.
I's gwine to quit ma frownin'
And put ma troubles on the shelf."
Thump, thump, thump, went his foot on the floor.
He played a few chords then he sang some more—
"I got the Weary Blues
And I can't be satisfied.
Got the Weary Blues
And can't be satisfied—
I ain't happy no mo'
And I wish that I had died."
And far into the night he crooned that tune.
The stars went out and so did the moon.
The singer stopped playing and went to bed
While the Weary Blues echoed through his head.
He slept like a rock or a man that's dead.



New Orleans native Louis Armstrong moved to New York City in 1924, where he played the clubs and on Broadway, helping to spread the sound of jazz to a larger audience.

By forming a band, moving to New York City in the early 1920s and playing at exclusively white clubs like the Cotton Club, Duke Ellington impacted the way that Jazz developed as an artform during the Harlem Renaissance.





Songstress Marian Anderson made her contralto voice heard as an opera singer who performed at Carnegie Hall in 1928 and at the New York Metropolitan Opera House in the 1930s, the first black performer to ever do so.

Billie Holiday moved her career forward into becoming one of the most influential jazz singers in history after performing in the Apollo Theater in Harlem.



Culture of the 1920s

The KKK

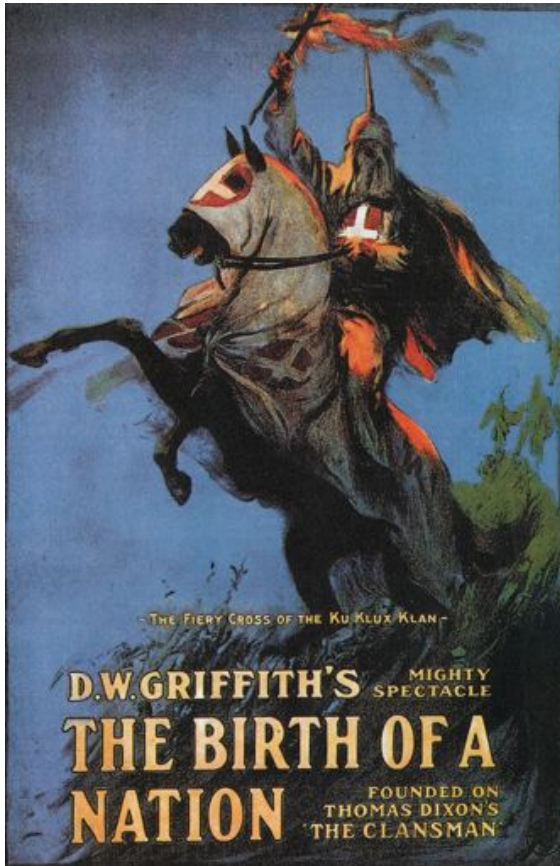


although started as a racist group (anti-black), in the 20's the KKK was also opposed to **Catholics**, Jews, pacifists, communists, internationalists, revolutionists, and bootleggers as well as gambling, adultery, and the use of birth control

basically, the KKK was pro-white Anglo-Saxon Protestant - "WASP"- and anti-everything else

KKK membership reached its peak during the 20's to about **5 million** members
total US population in 1920 was 106,021,537

they used fear, intimidation, and **lynching** to gain and keep their power



Birth of a Nation

1915 silent film
 directed by D. W. Griffith
 based on the novel and play
The Clansman, by Thomas Dixon, Jr.

many Americans believed it was true, including

President Wilson !

Birth of a Nation Excerpt



The first daylight Ku Klux Klan parade in the US and the first Klan parade in New England took place in Milo, ME on September 3, 1923.

In the 1920s the Klan had as many as 20,000 members throughout Maine.



Ku Klux Klan procession, Portland, ca. 1923

The Ku Klux Klan impacted Maine politics in 1923 when over 7,000 of their number rallied to change the Portland city government structure from having an elected mayor to hiring a city manager.

The Klan had a huge headquarters complex on Forest Avenue. The Klan's Maine director, F. Eugene "Doc" Farnsworth, spoke against Catholics, Jews and immigrants.



A Ku Klux Klansman and horse in full regalia lead a motorcade of members to the Brownville Centennial Pageant Grounds in 1924.

Civic leaders had put up \$500 to celebrate 100 years as a town. The Piscataquis County community of 1,743 people was experiencing divisive labor problems and some residents struck out at arriving Catholic Franco-Americans.

Americans Take to the Air



Planes were used a little in WWI -
for spying, dog fighting each other, and
bombing

After WWI planes were used for air mail -
transcontinental airmail started from New
York to San Francisco in 1920



in 1927

Charles Lindbergh

was the first person to
fly solo across the Atlantic

his plane was called the

The Spirit of St. Louis

he flew from
NYC to Paris
in 33 1/2 hours



Technology of the 1920s

The Automobile Revolution

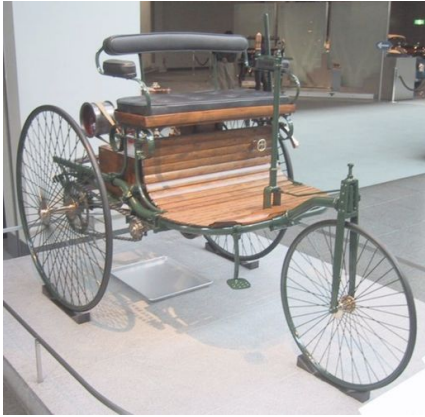


Henry Ford's
assembly line produced
a new car every 10 seconds
by 1929, there were
26 million registered cars

1 for every 4.9 people America
(now it's 1 for every 3 people)

cars created 6 million new jobs:
making cars and gas stations,
roads, etc.





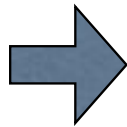
Replica of the Benz Patent Motorwagen (1886)



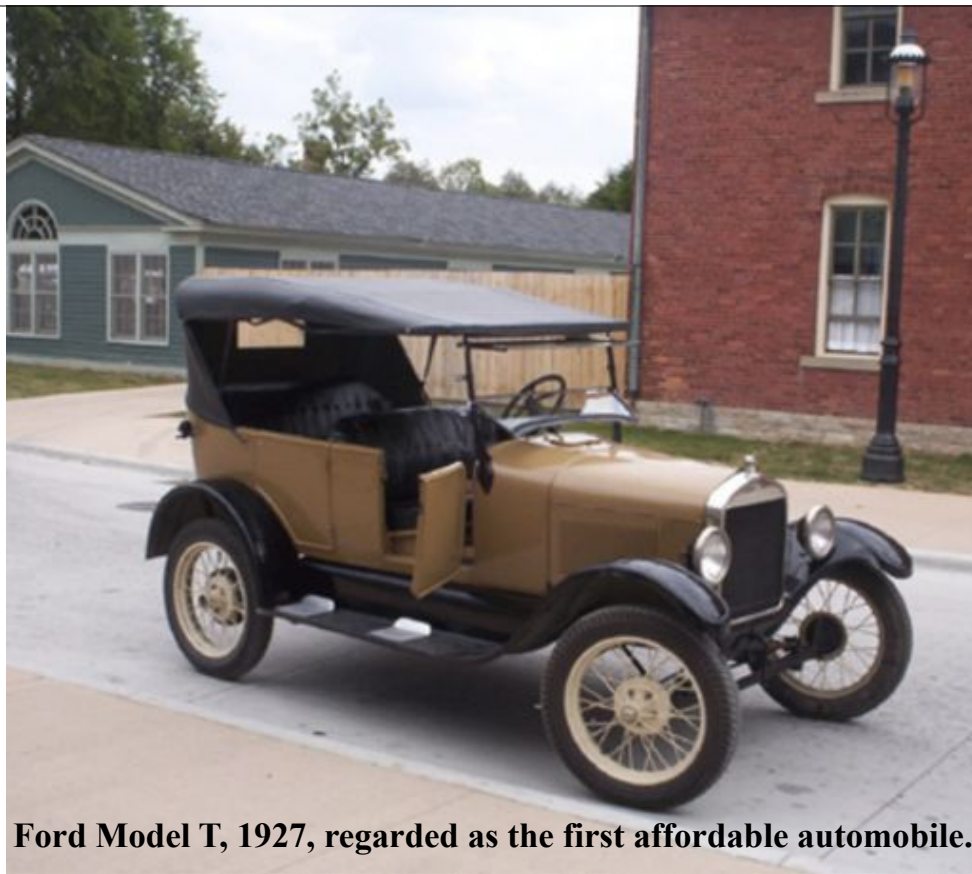
France, Germany, Austria (1890s)

internal combustion engine: expanding power of
burning gas to drive pistons

Karl Benz's "Velo" model (1894)
entered the first automobile race



The original Ford Model A, also called the Fordmobile, was the first car
produced by Ford Motor Company,
beginning production in 1903.



Ford Model T, 1927, regarded as the first affordable automobile.



Ford's Model T and Model A cars were **affordable** for almost everyone (\$300 in 1925; average income \$1400/yr)

cars brought **independence** to young people who "dated" in them

America began to reshape itself by spreading out into **suburbs**



Some of the Many Other American Events and People of the Roaring 20s

1920

First Commercial Radio Broadcast Aired
League of Nations Established
Women Granted the Right to Vote in US

1921

Lie Detector Invented

1922

Insulin Discovered
The Reader's Digest Published

1923

Time Magazine Founded

1924

First Olympic Winter Games
J. Edgar Hoover Appointed FBI Director

1925

Flapper Dresses in Style
The Scopes (Monkey) Trial

1926

A.A. Milne Publishes Winnie-the-Pooh
Houdini Dies After Being Punched

1927

Babe Ruth Makes Home-Run Record
The First Talking Movie, *The Jazz Singer*
Lindbergh Flies Solo Across the Atlantic
Sacco and Venzetti Executed

1928

Bubble Gum Invented
First Mickey Mouse Cartoon
First Oxford English Dictionary Published
Kellogg-Briand Treaty Outlaws War
Penicillin Discovered
Sliced Bread Invented

1929

Car Radio Invented
First Academy Awards
The Great Depression Begins
Stock Market Crashes