

A Clash of Values

Guide to Reading

Connection

In the previous chapter, you learned how World War I affected the United States. In this section, you will discover how modern and traditional values clashed and changed society.

Main Idea

- During the 1920s, anti-immigrant and racist feelings increased. (p. 407)
- Fearing new immigrants, the federal government enacted several laws to limit immigration. (p. 408)
- An emphasis on youth and personal freedom led to a more relaxed moral attitude. p. (p. 410)

- Fundamentalists promoted the authority of the Bible and defended the Protestant faith. (p. 411)
- Congress passed the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act to prohibit alcohol, but the laws largely failed to create positive social change. (p. 412)

Content Vocabulary

anarchist, eugenics, flapper, evolution, creationism, police powers, speakeasy

Academic Vocabulary

source, aspect, ethic

People and Terms to Identify

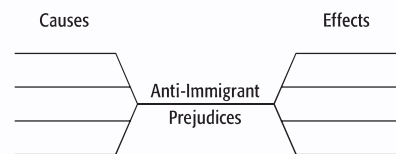
Ku Klux Klan, Emergency Quota Act, Fundamentalism

Reading Objectives

- **Explain** the rise of racism and nativism in the 1920s.
- **Describe** the clash of values in the 1920s and the changing status of women.

Reading Strategy

Organizing As you read about Americans' reactions to immigrants in the 1920s, complete a graphic organizer similar to the one below by filling in the causes and effects of anti-immigrant prejudices.



Preview of Events



The following are the main History–Social Science Standards covered in this section.

11.2.3 Trace the effect of the Americanization movement.

11.3.3 Cite incidences of religious intolerance in the United States (e.g., persecution of Mormons, anti-Catholic sentiment, anti-Semitism).

11.5.2 Analyze the international and domestic events, interests, and philosophies that prompted attacks on civil liberties, including the Palmer Raids, Marcus Garvey's "back-to-Africa" movement, the Ku Klux Klan, immigration quotas and the responses of organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Anti-Defamation League to those attacks.

11.5.3 Examine the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution and the Volstead Act (Prohibition).

People react to periods of breathtaking social and cultural change in different ways. The 1920s began with an increase in anti-immigrant and racist feelings, fueled by an economic recession and the influx of immigrants. In response, Congress passed several laws limiting immigration. Many women and young people adopted a more relaxed moral attitude that conflicted with traditional roles, values, and morals. Fundamentalists tried to combat these new attitudes by promoting a literal interpretation of the Bible and by defending the Protestant faith. The Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act prohibited alcohol but did not stop the new moral attitude as many had hoped.

11.5.4 Analyze the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment and the changing role of women in society.

The Big Idea

Nativism Resurges

Main Idea During the 1920s, anti-immigrant and racist feelings increased.

Reading Connection Describe a time when you traveled to another school, state, or country. How were people and their way of life different? Read on to learn about the tensions that caused a resurgence of nativism in the United States.

As the 1920s opened, an economic recession, an influx of immigrants, and racial and cultural tensions combined to create an atmosphere of disillusionment and intolerance. The fear and prejudice many felt toward Germans and Communists expanded to include all immigrants. This triggered a general rise in racism and in nativism, the desire to protect the interests of native-born Americans against those of immigrants.

During World War I, immigration to the United States dropped sharply. By 1921, however, it had returned to prewar levels, with the majority of immigrants at this time coming from southern and eastern Europe. Many Americans saw immigrants as a threat to stability and order. The arrival of millions of immigrants also seemed to pose a threat to the four million recently demobilized military men and women searching for work in an economy with soaring unemployment and rising prices.

★ An American Story ★

In 1911 Alfred Levitt left a small town in Russia to immigrate to New York City. Like many immigrants before and since, he had big ambitions, despite his poor English and lack of education. He wanted to forget his Russian heritage and become a successful American:

“My conscious drive when I got here was to escape the rigors of poverty, to become somebody of importance. This I don’t mean economically, but someone who can justify his presence on the planet. I wonder: Who am I? What am I here for? At seventeen years, the first question for me, though, was: What was I going to do? What will I become? . . . I made up my mind, as young as I was, that I’m going to amount to something in the world, and I’m not going to continue being one of those who starve.”

—quoted in *Centenarians: The Story of the Twentieth Century by the Americans Who Lived It*

Levitt did indeed “amount to something.” A successful artist, he lived the rest of his life in New York City. Twenty of his paintings are part of the permanent collection of the city’s Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Not all immigrants, many of whom were unskilled workers, fared so well. As they sought to enter the workforce and establish a foothold in American life, many of them encountered ethnic and religious prejudices. The experience of two Italian immigrants, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, exemplified the prejudices and fears of the period.

The Sacco-Vanzetti Case Shortly after 3:00 P.M. on April 15, 1920, two men shot and killed two employees of the Slater & Morrill Shoe Company in South Braintree, Massachusetts, and robbed the company of its \$15,000 payroll. Police subsequently arrested Nicola Sacco, a shoemaker, and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, a fish peddler.

The Sacco and Vanzetti case created a furor, as newspapers around the country revealed that the two immigrants were **anarchists**, or people who oppose all forms of government. They also discovered that Sacco owned a gun similar to the murder weapon and that the bullets used in the murders matched those in Sacco’s gun. Although no one at the time knew if Sacco and Vanzetti were guilty, many people leaped to that conclusion because the two men were Italian immigrants and anarchists. Others viewed the case as an example of prejudice against people based on their ethnic origin and political beliefs.

On July 14, 1921, a jury found Sacco and Vanzetti guilty, and the judge sentenced them to death. Many Americans, caught up in the antiforeign fever of the



▲ Alfred Levitt (standing)

time, applauded the verdict and the penalty. Over the next six years, lawyers filed numerous appeals for a new trial, but all were denied. In April 1927, a special Massachusetts commission studied the case and upheld the verdict. Four months later, on August 23, 1927, Sacco and Vanzetti were executed, proclaiming their innocence all the while. 📖 (See *You're the Historian* on pages 416–417 for more information on *Sacco and Vanzetti*.)

Pseudo-Scientific Racism Nativist and racist feelings in the 1920s were reinforced by the beliefs of the eugenics movement. **Eugenics** is a pseudo-science (or false science) that deals with improving hereditary traits. Developed in Europe in the early 1900s, eugenics emphasized that human inequalities were inherited and warned against breeding the “unfit” or “inferior.” Eugenics fueled the nativists’ argument for the superiority of the “original” American stock—white Protestants of northern European descent. Political, intellectual, and cultural figures like Woodrow Wilson and Henry Cabot Lodge embraced eugenics. By doing so, they lent authority to racist theories, which reinvigorated the nativist argument for strict immigration control.

Return of the Ku Klux Klan At the forefront of the movement to restrict immigration was the **Ku Klux Klan**, or KKK. The old KKK had flourished in the South after the Civil War and used threats

and violence to intimidate newly freed African Americans. The new Klan had other targets as well—Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and other groups believed to represent “un-American” values.

William J. Simmons founded the new Ku Klux Klan in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1915. A former circuit riding Methodist preacher, Simmons pledged to preserve America’s white, Protestant civilization. In the 1920s, Klan publicity claimed that the organization was fighting for “Americanism.”

The Klan attracted few members until 1920, when Simmons hired public relations entrepreneurs Edward Young Clarke and Elizabeth Tyler, paying them a commission of \$8 of every \$10 initiation fee for a new Klan recruit. Clarke and Tyler divided the nation into regions and paid more than 1,000 “salespeople” to promote the Klan. As a result of their strategy, membership in the Ku Klux Klan exploded, reaching nearly 4 million by 1924 as it spread beyond the South and into Northern cities.

Following the membership boom, the Klan began to decline largely as a result of scandals and power struggles involving its leaders. Membership shrank, and politicians whom the Klan supported were voted out of office. The sharp reduction in immigrants due to new immigration laws further disabled the Klan, depriving it of a major issue. The Klan never again had a major impact on national politics.

✔ **Reading Check** **Explaining** How did eugenics reinforce nativist ideals?

Analyzing *Political Cartoons*

New Immigrants This cartoon portrays the feelings of many Americans who were opposed to immigration. **What comment does the cartoon make about immigrants?**



Controlling Immigration

Now Also Fearing new immigrants, the federal government enacted several laws to limit immigration.

Reading Connection Discuss quotas you are aware of, such as class size or the number of students allowed on a team, and compare them to the immigration quotas set by the government. Read on to discover how the United States limited immigration during the 1920s.

After World War I, American immigration policies changed in response to the postwar recession and nativist pleas to “Keep America American.” Even big business, which previously favored unrestricted immigration as a source of cheap labor, now feared the new immigrants as radicals.

In 1921 President Harding signed the **Emergency Quota Act**, which established a temporary quota system, limiting immigration. According to this act, only three percent of the total number of foreign-born people of a nationality already living in the United States, as indicated in the 1910 census, could be admitted in a single year. This theoretically restricted the number of immigrants from all countries, but in practice it discriminated heavily against people from southern and eastern Europe. Ethnic identity and national origin thus determined admission to the United States.

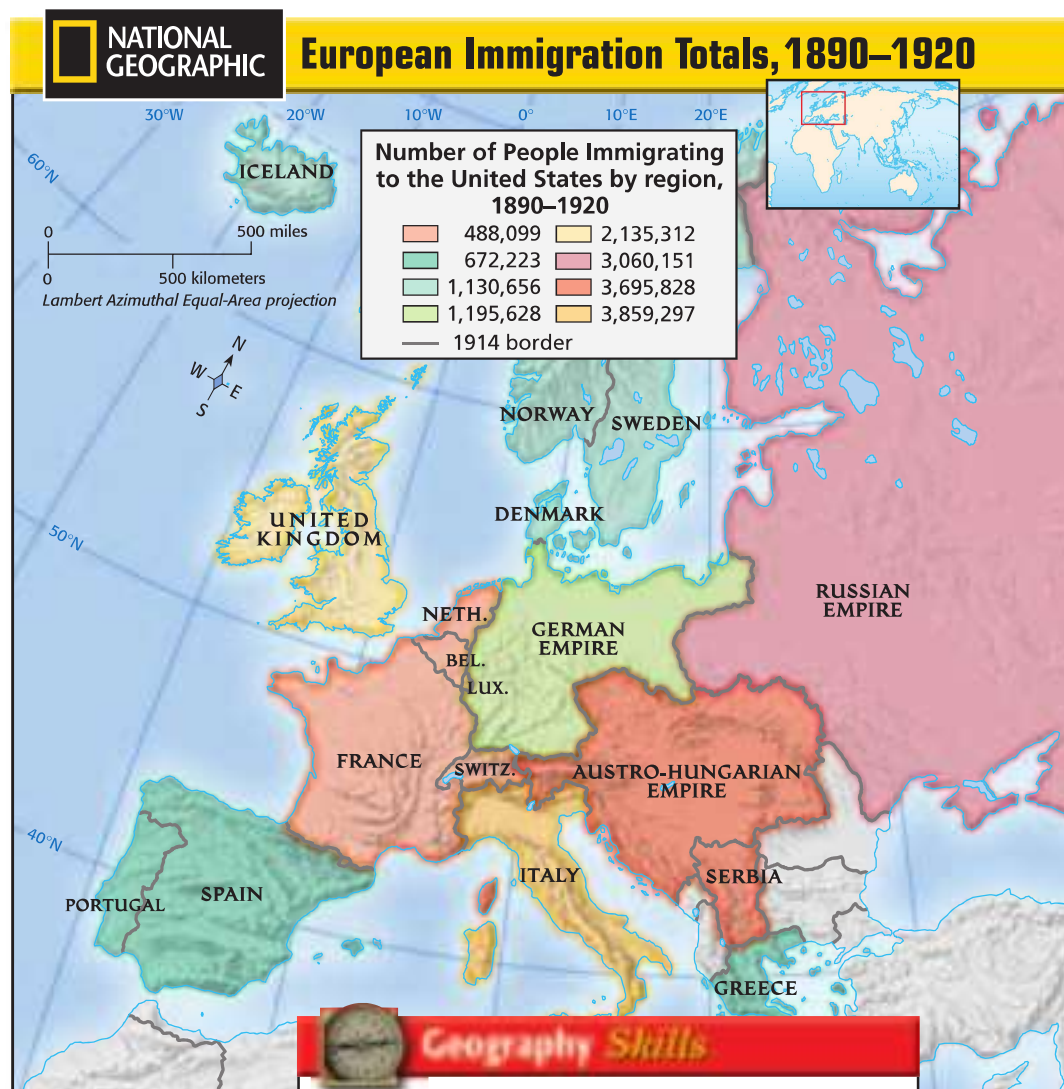
Henry Curran, the commissioner of Ellis Island from 1922 to 1926, commented on the heartbreak caused by the Emergency Quota Act:

“The hardest quota cases were those that separated families. When part of the family had been born in a country with a quota still open, while the other part had been born in a country whose quota was exhausted, the law let in the first part and deported the other part. Mothers were torn from children, husbands from wives. The law came down like a sword between them.”

—quoted in *Ellis Island: Echoes from a Nation's Past*

The National Origins Act of 1924 In 1924 the National Origins Act made immigrant restriction a permanent policy. The law also tightened the quota system, setting quotas at two percent of each national group residing in the country in 1890. By moving back the year to 1890, an even larger proportion of the quotas were allotted to immigrants from northwestern Europe.

A second part of the act, which took effect in 1929, replaced the 1924 quotas with a limit of 150,000 immigrants admitted per year. In addition, the percentage allotted to each nationality would now be based on the total percentage of each nationality



Geography Skills

- Interpreting Maps** Between 1890 and 1920, what European regions sent more than three million immigrants to the United States?
- Applying Geography Skills** Why were so many people willing to leave their homelands to come to the United States?

within the entire American population according to the 1920 census. This resulted in an unequal balance of immigrants from northwestern European countries, which accounted for 87 percent of the total immigration quota.

Hispanic Immigration to the United States

The immigration acts of 1921 and 1924 reduced the available labor pool in the United States. While workers and unions rejoiced at the reduction in competition for jobs, employers desperately needed laborers for agriculture, mining, and railroad work. Mexican immigrants helped to fill this need.

The first wave of Mexican immigration to the United States followed the passage of the Newlands Reclamation Act of 1902, which provided funds for irrigation projects in the arid Southwest. Factory farms soon dominated the landscape, and they needed large numbers of agricultural laborers. By 1914 more than 70,000 Mexican immigrants had poured into the United States, many of them fleeing the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

More than 600,000 Mexicans arrived in the United States between 1914 and the end of the 1920s. The National Origins Act of 1924 exempted natives of the Western Hemisphere from the quota system. As the demand for cheap farm labor in California and the Southwest steadily increased, Mexican immigrants crossed the border in record numbers.

✓ Reading Check **Explaining** What was the result of the National Origins Act exemption on Western Hemisphere nations?

The New Morality

Main Idea An emphasis on youth and personal freedom led to a more relaxed moral attitude.

Reading Connection How do you think older generations view your generation? Read on to find out about the changes in morality in the United States during the 1920s.

Many groups that wanted to restrict immigration also wanted to preserve what they considered to be traditional values. They feared that a “new morality”

▼ *Dr. Florence Sabin*



was taking over the nation. Challenging traditional ways of seeing and thinking, the new morality glorified youth and personal freedom and influenced various **aspects** of American society.

The New Morality Ideals of the loving family and personal satisfaction—views popularized in magazines and other media—influenced popular views on relationships. As the loving and emotional aspects of marriage grew in importance, the ideas of romance, pleasure, and friendship became linked to successful marriages. Advice books in the 1920s dispensed such hints as, “Have lots of pleasure that both husband and wife enjoy . . . and above all, be good friends.”

Women in the workforce also began to define the new morality. Many single, working-class women held jobs simply because they needed the wages for themselves or for their families. For some young, single women, work was a way to break away from parental authority and establish a personal identity. Work also provided the wages that allowed women to participate in the consumer culture.

Women who attended college in the 1920s often found support for their emerging sense of independence. Women’s colleges, in particular, encouraged their students to pursue careers and to challenge traditional ideas about the nature of women and their role in society.

The automobile also played a role in encouraging the new morality. The nation’s youth loved cars because cars made them more independent and allowed them to escape the careful watch of their parents. Instead of socializing at home with the family, many youths could now use cars to seek new forms of entertainment with their friends and to find privacy.

Women in the 1920s Fashion took on a modern look during the 1920s, as women “bobbed,” or shortened, their hair and wore flesh-colored silk stockings. It also emphasized the youthful appearance of glamorous stage and screen stars. In this new culture, the carefree, chic “flapper” played a prominent role.

Though hardly typical of American women at the time, the **flapper**—a young, dramatic, stylish, and unconventional woman—personified women’s changing behavior in the 1920s. The flapper smoked cigarettes, drank prohibited liquor, and dressed in attire considered too revealing by previous generations.

While flappers pursued social freedoms, other women sought financial independence by entering the workforce, many of them as salesclerks,

secretaries, or telephone operators. There were a few women who made contributions in science, medicine, law, or literature. In science, Florence Sabin's medical research led to a dramatic drop in death rates from tuberculosis. In literature, Edith Wharton received the Pulitzer Prize for her novel *The Age of Innocence*. Public health nurse Margaret Sanger, believing that the standard of living could be improved if families limited the number of children they had, founded the American Birth Control League in 1921. This organization became Planned Parenthood in the 1940s. In 1928 Margaret Mead, one of the first female anthropologists, published the highly regarded study, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, which described life in a Pacific island culture.

Reading Check **Identifying** What political, social, and economic contributions did women make to American society in the 1920s?

The Fundamentalist Movement

Main Idea Fundamentalists promoted the authority of the Bible and defended the Protestant faith.

Reading Connection What are some issues that you feel strongly about? Read on to learn how people who followed the beliefs of Fundamentalism tried to prevent what they saw as moral decline.

While many Americans embraced the new morality, millions more feared that the country was losing its traditional values. To these Americans, the modern consumer culture, relaxed **ethics**, and growing urbanism symbolized the nation's moral decline. Many of these people, especially those in small rural towns, responded by joining a religious movement known as **Fundamentalism**—a name derived from a series of pamphlets titled *The Fundamentals*, published by oil millionaire Lyman Stewart.

Fundamentalist Beliefs Fundamentalists believed that the Bible was literally true and without error. They defended the Protestant faith against ideas that implied that human beings derived their moral behavior from society and nature, not God. In particular, Fundamentalists rejected Charles Darwin's theory of **evolution**, which said that human beings had developed from lower forms of life over the course of millions of years. Instead, they believed in **creationism**—the belief that God created the world as described in the Bible.



▲ *View of Scopes Trial*

Two popular evangelical preachers, Billy Sunday and Aimee Semple McPherson, stirred Fundamentalists' passions by preaching traditional religious and moral values in very nontraditional ways. A former professional baseball player, Sunday drew huge crowds with his rapid-fire sermons and on-stage showmanship. McPherson conducted her revivals and faith healings in Los Angeles in a flamboyant theatrical style, using stage sets and costumes that expressed the themes of her highly emotional sermons.

The Scopes Trial Evolutionists and creationists eventually clashed in a historic trial. In 1925 Tennessee passed the Butler Act, which outlawed any teaching that denied "the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible," and taught instead that "man descended from a lower order of animals." The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) advertised for a teacher who would be willing to be arrested for teaching evolution. John T. Scopes, a high school biology teacher in Dayton, Tennessee, volunteered to be the test case. He taught evolution and was subsequently arrested and put on trial.

The trial took place in the summer of 1925. William Jennings Bryan, a three-time Democratic presidential candidate, was the prosecutor and represented the creationists. Clarence Darrow, one of the country's most celebrated trial lawyers, defended Scopes. After eight days of trial, Scopes was found guilty and the judge fined him \$100, although the conviction was later overturned by the Tennessee Supreme Court on a technicality. In Tennessee at the time of the trial, judges could not issue fines, only juries could issue fines. Parts of the trial had been broadcast over the radio, and Darrow's blistering cross-examination of Bryan did little for the Fundamentalist cause. Increasingly, Fundamentalists found themselves isolated from mainstream Protestantism, and their commitment to political activism declined.

Reading Check **Explaining** What were the major beliefs of Fundamentalists?

Prohibition

Main Idea Congress passed the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act to prohibit alcohol, but the laws largely failed to create positive social change.

Reading Connection Do you think the government should try to regulate the moral behavior of its citizens? Read on to learn about efforts during the 1920s to eliminate social problems brought on by drinking alcohol.

The movement to ban alcohol had been building throughout the late 1800s. By the early 1900s, many progressives and traditionalists supported prohibition. Many people believed the prohibition of alcohol would help reduce unemployment, domestic violence, and poverty. Their support helped pass the Eighteenth Amendment, which took effect in January 1920.



▼ A group of men destroy bottles of alcohol by throwing them against the side of a building. Onlookers cheer the destruction as empty crates litter the street.



▲ **Prohibition in Action** Federal revenue agents carried out the laws of Prohibition by destroying barrels of alcohol. Here an agent uses an axe to bust open barrels and drain alcohol down the storm sewer. [How successful were their enforcement efforts?](#)

In an effort to enforce the amendment, Congress passed the National Prohibition Act, also known as the Volstead Act. Enforcing Prohibition now became the responsibility of the U.S. Treasury Department. While treasury agents had enforced federal tax laws for many years, **police powers**—a government’s power to control people and property in the interest of public safety, health, welfare, and morals—had generally been reserved for the state governments. The Eighteenth Amendment granted federal and state governments the power to enforce Prohibition, marking a dramatic increase in federal police powers.

The Treasury Department’s new Prohibition Unit struggled to enforce Prohibition. During the 1920s, treasury agents made more than 540,000 arrests, but Americans were not deterred by the arrests and persisted in blatantly ignoring the law. People flocked to secret bars called **speakeasies**, where they could purchase illegal alcohol. In New York City alone, an estimated 32,000 such bars sold liquor illegally. Liquor also was readily available in rural America, where bootlegging—the illegal production and distribution of liquor—was common.

Organized crime specialized in supplying and often running these speakeasies, which popped up all over the country. The huge profits that could be made supplying liquor encouraged some people to become smugglers, bringing liquor into the United States from Canada and the Caribbean. Smuggling and the consumption of liquor by millions helped create an illegal billion-dollar industry for gangsters. More than 70 federal agents were killed while enforcing Prohibition in the 1920s.

Crime became big business, and some gangsters had enough money to corrupt local politicians. Al Capone, one of the most successful and violent gangsters of the era, had many police officers, judges, and other officials on his payroll. Capone dominated organized crime in Chicago, where he ran bootlegging and other criminal rackets. Eliot Ness, the leader of a special Treasury Department task force, and nine agents he selected, were assigned the task of bringing Capone to justice. To achieve this goal, Ness and his group worked to shut down breweries where Capone illegally manufactured liquor. The press called Ness and his men “The Untouchables” because they would not take bribes. Capone was finally convicted of tax evasion and sentenced to 11 years in prison.

The battle to repeal Prohibition began almost as soon as the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified. Supporters of repeal believed Prohibition was excessive and prudish and associated it with “priggish fanaticism.” The ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment in 1933 repealed the Eighteenth Amendment and ended federally-mandated Prohibition. It was a defeat for the supporters of traditional values and those who favored the use of federal police powers to achieve moral reform.

 **Reading Check Analyzing** Analyze the reasons for the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment.

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT


Checking for Understanding

- Vocabulary** Define: anarchist, eugenics, source, aspect, flapper, ethic, evolution, creationism, police powers, speakeasy.
- People and Terms** Identify: Ku Klux Klan, Emergency Quota Act, Fundamentalism.
- Explain** why the Eighteenth Amendment was repealed.

Reviewing Big Ideas

- Examining** How did the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act change the federal government’s role?

Critical Thinking

-  **Synthesizing** Why were immigrants from Mexico not included in the quota system set by the immigration acts? **CA HI.4**
- Categorizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list the provisions of the immigration acts passed in the 1920s.

Act	Provisions

Analyzing Visuals

- Analyzing Photographs** Study the image on page 412 of the federal agent destroying barrels of alcohol. Why do you think the barrels were destroyed in public with a crowd watching?

Writing About History

- Persuasive Writing** Imagine it is the 1920s. Write a letter to your senator to persuade him or her to either continue to support Prohibition or to work for its repeal. **CA 11WA2.4a**

HISTORY  **Study Central**
Online

For help with the concepts in this section of *American Vision: Modern Times* go to tav.mt.glencoe.com and click on **Study Central**.

What *Life* Was Like...

Flappers

Perhaps no other symbol of the 1920s captured the spirit of the time like the flapper. Psychologist G. Stanley Hall wrote his observation of a typical flapper:

“She wore a knitted hat, with hardly any brim, of a flame or bonfire hue; a henna scarf; two strings of Betty beads, of different colors, twisted together; an open short coat, with ample pockets; a skirt with vertical stripes. . . . Her stockings were woolen and of brilliant hue. But most noticeable of all were her high overshoes, or galoshes. One seemed to be turned down at the top and entirely unbuckled, while the other was fastened below and flapped about her trim ankle in a way that compelled attention.”

—quoted in *We, the American Women*



Flapper Hairstyle

Actress Colleen Moore wears a pageboy haircut that was popular in the 1920s.



New Forms of Expression

Rebelling against older, more formal dancing styles, these Charleston dancers perform steps that one observer described as “knock-kneed and pigeon-toed.”



Charleston

The Charleston, named after the city of Charleston, South Carolina, was the dance craze of the 1920s. Women who did the Charleston were called flappers, perhaps because of the way they flapped their arms while doing the dance.



Modern Clothing

Women's clothing changed significantly in the 1920s. Hemlines were much shorter and showed more of the body. Stylish new hats also emphasized bold colors and a freer design.

UNDERSTANDING THE TIME

Checking for Understanding

1. **Identifying** How did women's clothing change in the 1920s?

Critical Thinking

2. **Evaluating** How would you describe the connection of flappers to the roles of women in society during the 1920s?

You're *the* Historian



Painting supporting the accused

The Sacco-Vanzetti Case

On April 15, 1920, in South Braintree, Massachusetts, armed robbers murdered two factory employees during a payroll holdup. Police arrested two Italian immigrants and anarchists—Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti—as suspects. After a court found the two men guilty, defense attorneys fought for six years for a new trial. The attorneys believed the trial had shown signs of prejudice, intimidation, and dishonesty. Did Sacco and Vanzetti receive a fair trial, or were they victims of the troubled atmosphere in the United States at the time? You're the historian.

Read the following excerpts from testimony and evidence. Then complete the questions and activities that follow.

From trial testimony

The defense produced several people who supported the defendants' alibis. When arrested, Nicola Sacco had been carrying a pistol. The prosecuting attorney questioned Captain Proctor, a Massachusetts State Police ballistics expert, about the gun.

Q. Captain Proctor, have you an opinion as to whether bullet three was fired from the Colt automatic which is in evidence [Sacco's pistol]?

A. I have.

Q. And what is your opinion?

A. My opinion is that it is consistent with being fired by that pistol.

Defense experts, however, testified that in their judgment, bullet three had not been fired from Sacco's gun. The defense called on Sacco to testify, which gave the prosecution an opportunity to ask Sacco about his political beliefs.

Q. Did you say yesterday you love a free country?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you love this country in the month of May 1917? [At this time, Sacco had gone to Mexico to escape military service.]

A. If you can, Mr. Katzman, if you give me that, —I could explain.

Q. There are two words you can use, Mr. Sacco, yes or no.

A. Yes.

[later]

Q. What did you mean when you said yesterday you loved a free country?

A. . . . When I came to this country I saw there was not what I was thinking before. . . . I could see the best men, intelligent, education, they been arrested and sent to prison and died in prison . . . and Debs, one of the great men in his country, he is in prison . . . because he is a socialist. He wanted the laboring class

to have better conditions . . . but they put him in prison. . . . They want the working class to be low all the times.

The jury returned a verdict of guilty. In the sentencing phase, Bartolomeo Vanzetti was asked to explain why he should not be sentenced to death.

I am suffering because I am a radical, and indeed I am a radical. I have suffered because I am an Italian, and indeed I am an Italian. I have suffered more for my family and for my beloved than for myself, but I am so convinced to be right that if you could execute me two times, and if I could be reborn two other times, I would live again to do what I have done already. . . . You know I am innocent. That is the same words I pronounced seven years ago. You condemn two innocent men.