

THE ROARING TWENTIES



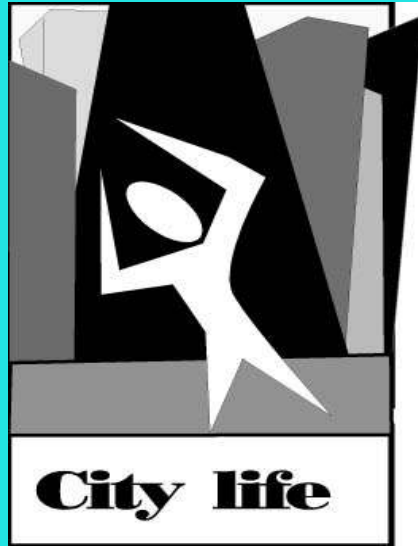
LIFE & CULTURE
IN AMERICA IN
THE 1920S

CHANGING WAYS OF LIFE

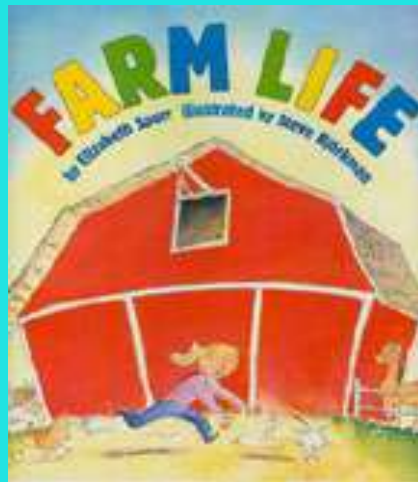
- ❑ During the 1920s, **urbanization** continued to accelerate
- ❑ For the first time, more Americans lived in cities than in rural areas
- ❑ New York City was home to over 5 million people in 1920
- ❑ Chicago had nearly 3 million



URBAN VS. RURAL



Cities were impersonal

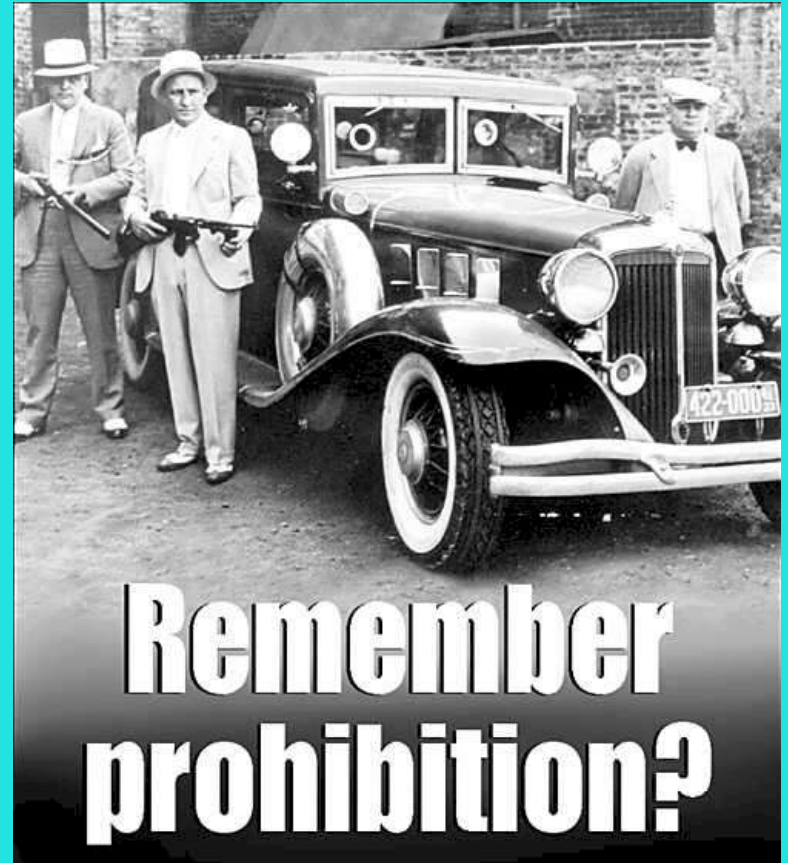


Farms were innocent

- ❑ Throughout the 1920s, Americans found themselves caught between urban and rural cultures
- ❑ Urban life was considered a world of anonymous crowds, **strangers**, moneymakers, and pleasure seekers
- ❑ Rural life was considered to be safe, with close personal ties, hard work and **morals**

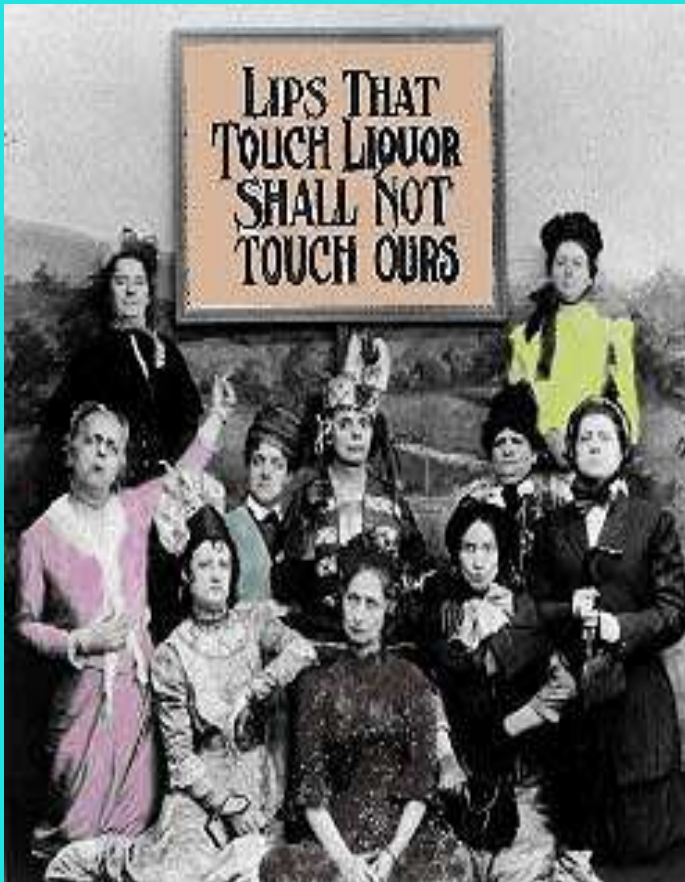
PROHIBITION

- ❑ One example of the clash between city & farm was the passage of the 18th Amendment in 1920
- ❑ This Amendment launched the era known as **Prohibition**
- ❑ The new law made it illegal to make, sell or transport liquor



Prohibition lasted from 1920 to 1933 when it was repealed by the 21st Amendment

SUPPORT FOR PROHIBITION



- ❑ Reformers had long believed alcohol led to crime, child & wife abuse, and accidents
- ❑ Supporters were largely from the rural south and west
- ❑ The church affiliated Anti-Saloon League and the Women's Christian Temperance Union helped push the 18th Amendment through

HELP ME to keep Him
PURE



**PLEASE
VOTE**

**“AGAINST THE SALE
OF LIQUORS”**

*Poster
supporting
prohibition*

SPEAKEASIES AND BOOTLEGGERS

- ❑ Many Americans did not believe drinking was a sin
- ❑ Most immigrant groups were not willing to give up drinking
- ❑ To obtain liquor illegally, drinkers went underground to hidden saloons known as **speakeasies**
- ❑ People also bought liquor from **bootleggers** who smuggled it in from Canada, Cuba and the West Indies



ORGANIZED CRIME



Al Capone was finally convicted on tax evasion charges in 1931

- ❑ Prohibition contributed to the growth of organized crime in every major city
- ❑ Chicago became notorious as the home of **Al Capone – a famous bootlegger**
- ❑ Capone took control of the Chicago liquor business by killing off his competition



GOVERNMENT FAILS TO CONTROL LIQUOR

- ❑ Eventually, Prohibition's fate was sealed by the government, which failed to budget enough money to enforce the law
- ❑ The task of enforcing Prohibition fell to 1,500 poorly paid federal agents --- clearly an impossible task



Federal agents pour wine down a sewer

SUPPORT FADES, PROHIBITION REPEALED

- ❑ By the mid-1920s, only 19% of Americans supported Prohibition
- ❑ Many felt Prohibition caused more problems than it solved
- ❑ The 21st Amendment finally **repealed Prohibition in 1933**

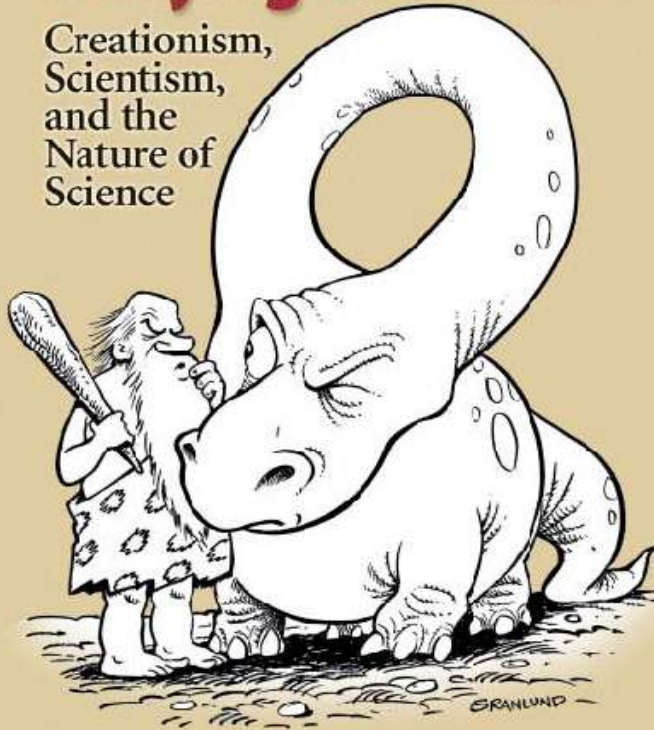


SCIENCE AND RELIGION CLASH



Denying Evolution

Creationism,
Scientism,
and the
Nature of
Science



Massimo Pigliucci

- ❑ Another battleground during the 1920s was between **fundamentalist religious groups** and secular thinkers over the truths of science
- ❑ The Protestant movement grounded in the literal interpretation of the bible is known as fundamentalism
- ❑ Fundamentalists **found all truth in the bible** – including science & evolution

SCOPES TRIAL



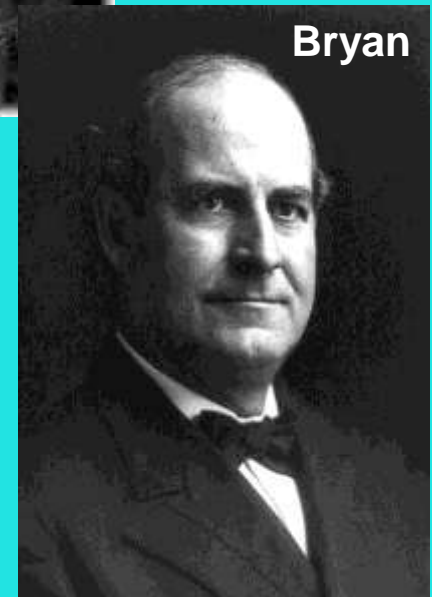
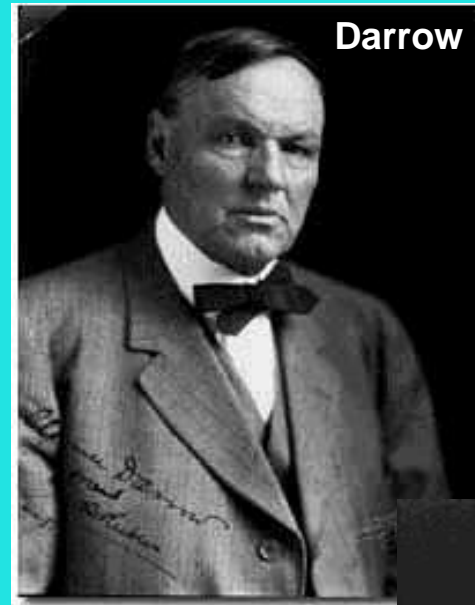
Scopes was a biology teacher who dared to teach his students that man derived from lower species

- ❑ In March 1925, Tennessee passed the nation's first law that made it a crime to teach evolution
- ❑ The ACLU promised to defend any teacher willing to challenge the law – **John Scopes** did



SCOPES TRIAL

- The ACLU hired Clarence Darrow, the most famous trial lawyer of the era, to defend Scopes
- The prosecution countered with William Jennings Bryan, the three-time Democratic presidential nominee



SCOPES TRIAL

- ❑ Trial opened on July 10, 1925 and became a national sensation
- ❑ In an unusual move, **Darrow called Bryan to the stand** as an expert on the bible – key question: *Should the bible be interpreted literally?*
- ❑ Under intense questioning, Darrow got Bryan to admit that the bible can be interpreted in different ways
- ❑ Nonetheless, Scopes was found guilty and fined \$100





[10] "Papa!" (Thomas in the *Detroit News*)



Despite the guilty verdict, Darrow got the upperhand during his questioning of Bryan

SECTION 2: THE TWENTIES WOMAN



- ❑ After World War I, Americans were looking for a little fun in the 1920s
- ❑ Women were becoming more independent and achieving greater freedoms (right to vote, more employment, freedom of the auto)

THE FLAPPER



- During the 1920s, a new ideal emerged for some women: the Flapper
- A Flapper was an **emancipated young woman** who embraced the new fashions and urban attitudes



NEW ROLES FOR WOMEN



Early 20th Century teachers

- ❑ The fast-changing world of the 1920s produced new roles for women
- ❑ **Many women entered the workplace** as nurses, teachers, librarians, & secretaries
- ❑ However, **women earned less than men** and were kept out of many traditional male jobs (management) and faced discrimination

THE CHANGING FAMILY



Margaret Sanger and other
founders of the American Birth
Control League - 1921

- ❑ **American birthrates declined** for several decades before the 1920s
- ❑ During the 1920s that trend increased as birth control information became widely available
- ❑ **Birth control clinics** opened and the American Birth Control League was founded in 1921

MODERN FAMILY EMERGES



□ As the 1920s unfolded, many features of the **modern family** emerged

□ Marriage was based on **romantic love**, women managed the household and finances, and children were not considered laborers/ wage earners but rather developing children who needed **nurturing and education**



SECTION 3: EDUCATION AND POPULAR CULTURE

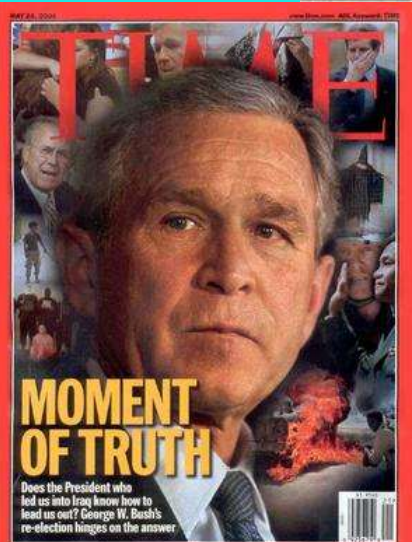


- ❑ During the 1920s, developments in education had a powerful impact on the nation
- ❑ **Enrollment in high schools quadrupled** between 1914 and 1926
- ❑ Public schools met the challenge of educating millions of immigrants

EXPANDING NEWS COVERAGE



□ As literacy increased, **newspaper** circulation rose and **mass-circulation magazines flourished**

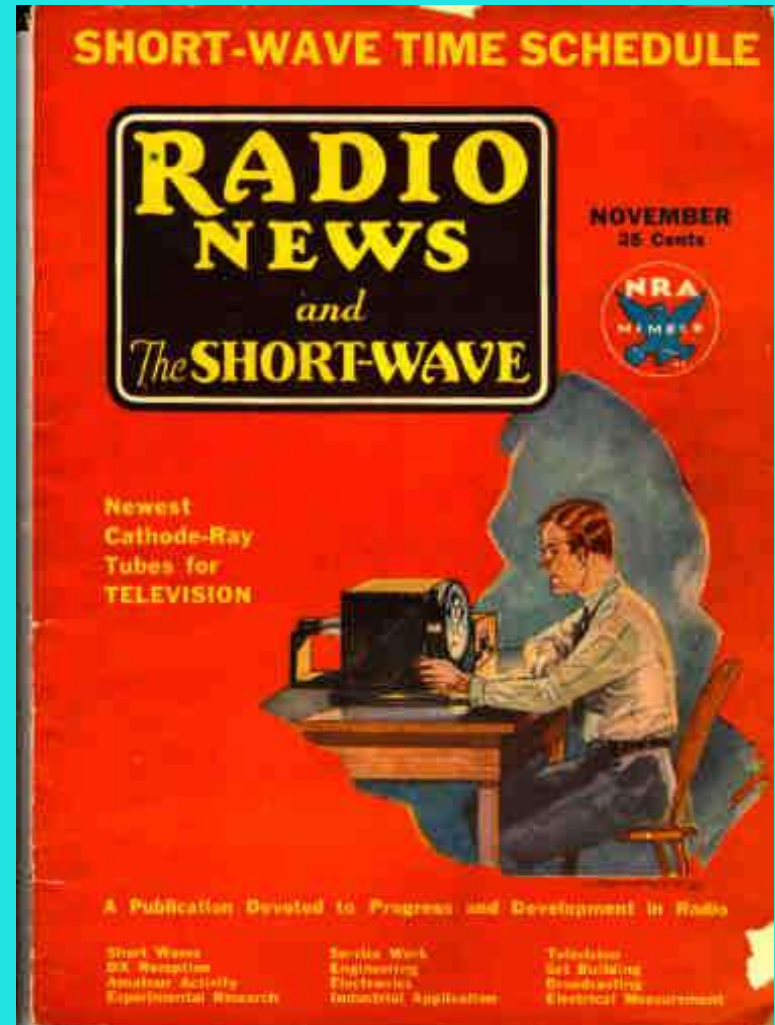


□ By the end of the 1920s, ten American magazines -- including *Reader's Digest* and *Time* -- boasted circulations of over 2 million

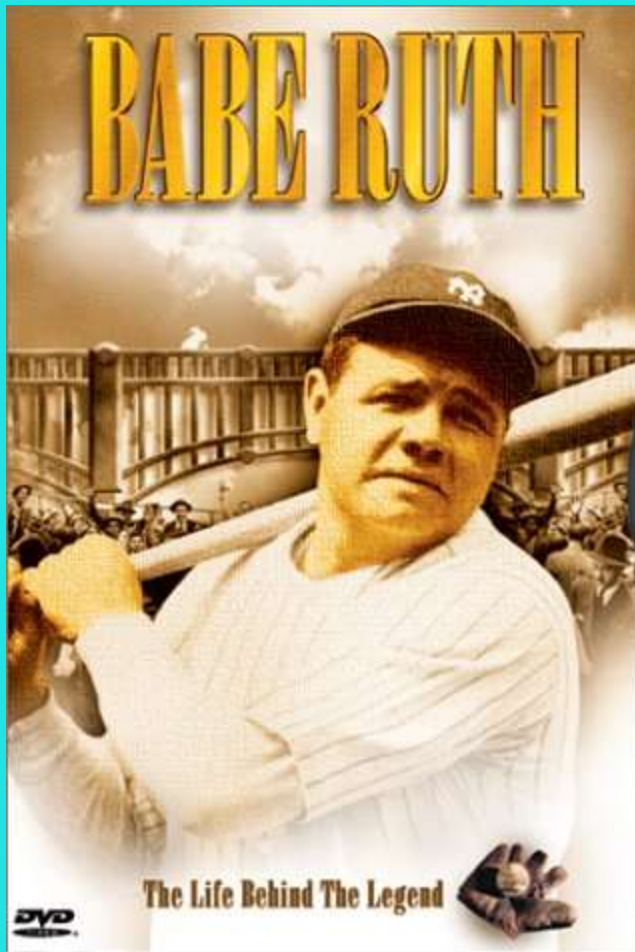
RADIO COMES OF AGE



- ❑ Although print media was popular, radio was the most powerful communications medium to emerge in the 1920s
- ❑ News was delivered faster and to a larger audience
- ❑ Americans could hear the voice of the president or listen to the World Series live



AMERICAN HEROES OF THE 20s

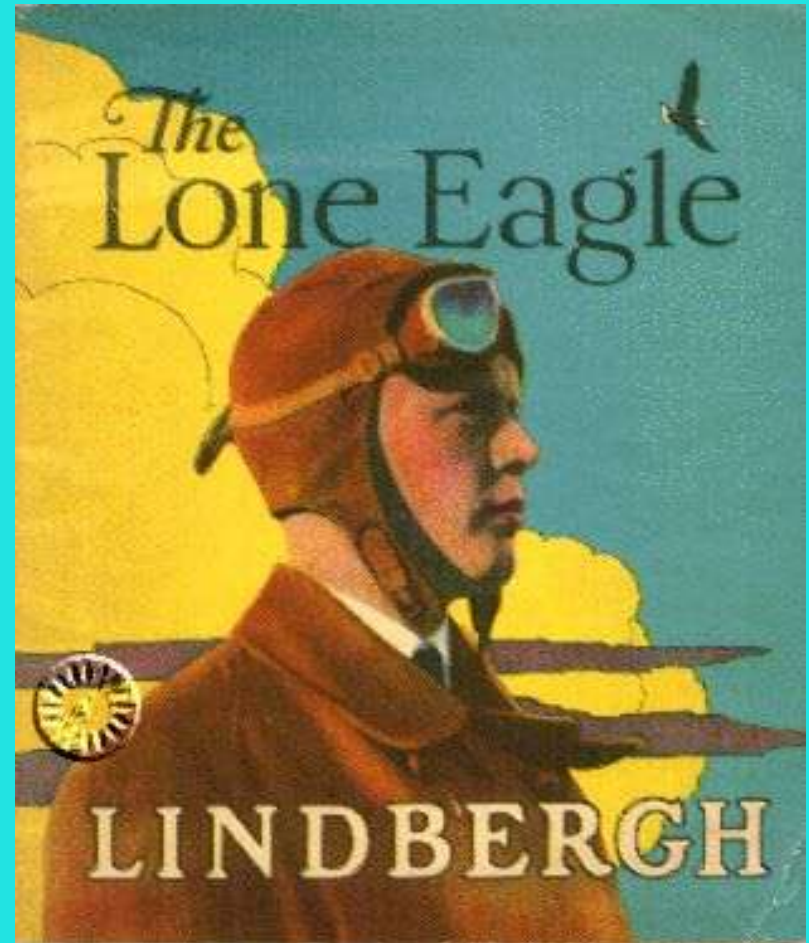


- ❑ In 1929, Americans spent \$4.5 billion on entertainment (includes sports)
- ❑ People crowded into baseball games to see their heroes
- ❑ **Babe Ruth** was a larger than life **American hero** who played for Yankees
- ❑ He hit 60 homers in 1927

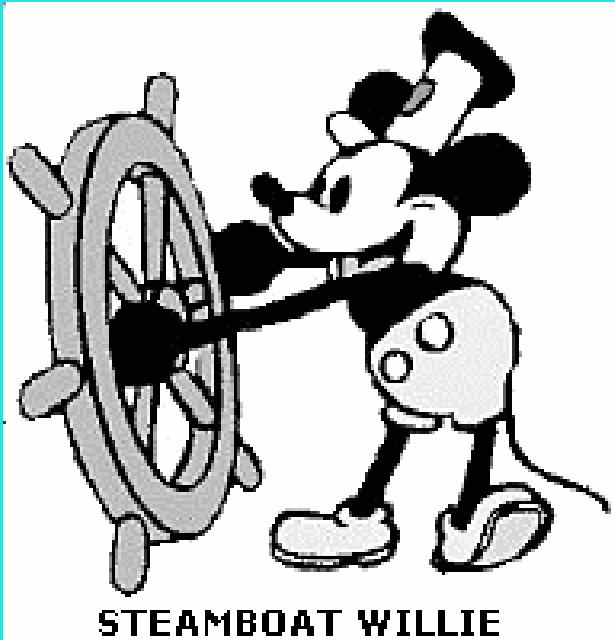
LINDBERGH'S FLIGHT



- ❑ America's most beloved hero of the time wasn't an athlete but a small-town pilot named **Charles Lindbergh**
- ❑ Lindbergh made the first nonstop solo transatlantic flight
- ❑ He took off from NYC in the ***Spirit of St. Louis*** and arrived in Paris 33 hours later to a hero's welcome



ENTERTAINMENT AND ARTS



Walt Disney's animated *Steamboat Willie* marked the debut of Mickey Mouse. It was a seven minute long black and white cartoon.

- ❑ Even before sound, movies offered a means of escape through romance and comedy
- ❑ First sound movies: *Jazz Singer* (1927)
- ❑ First animated with sound: *Steamboat Willie* (1928)
- ❑ By 1930 millions of Americans went to the movies each week

MUSIC AND ART

- ❑ Famed composer **George Gershwin** merged traditional elements with American Jazz
- ❑ Painters like **Edward Hopper** depicted the loneliness of American life
- ❑ **Georgia O'Keeffe** captured the grandeur of New York using intensely colored canvases



Gershwin



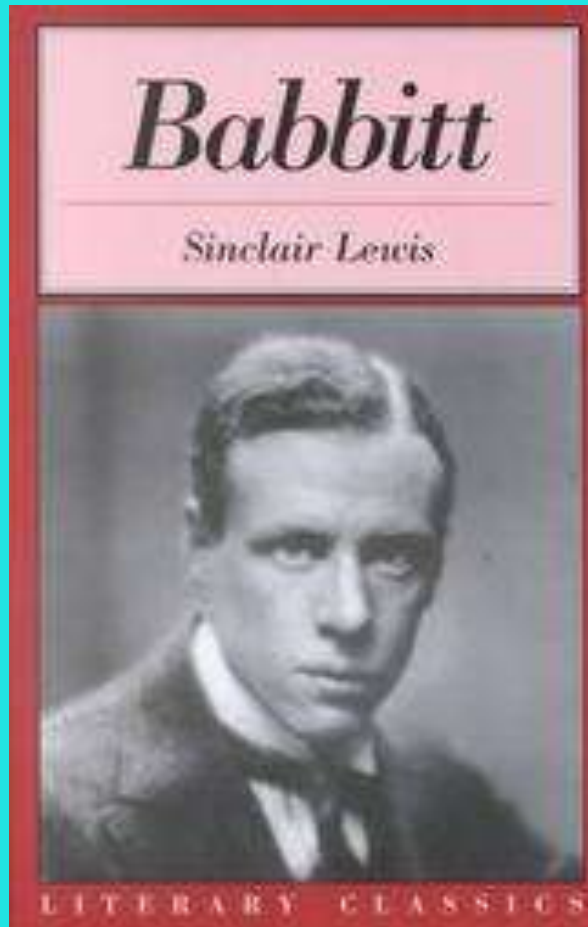
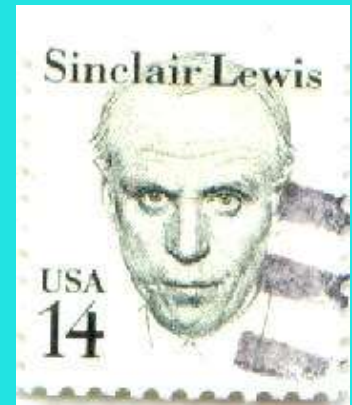
*Radiator Building,
Night, New York , 1927*

Georgia O'Keeffe



Hopper's famous "Nighthawks"

WRITERS OF THE 1920S

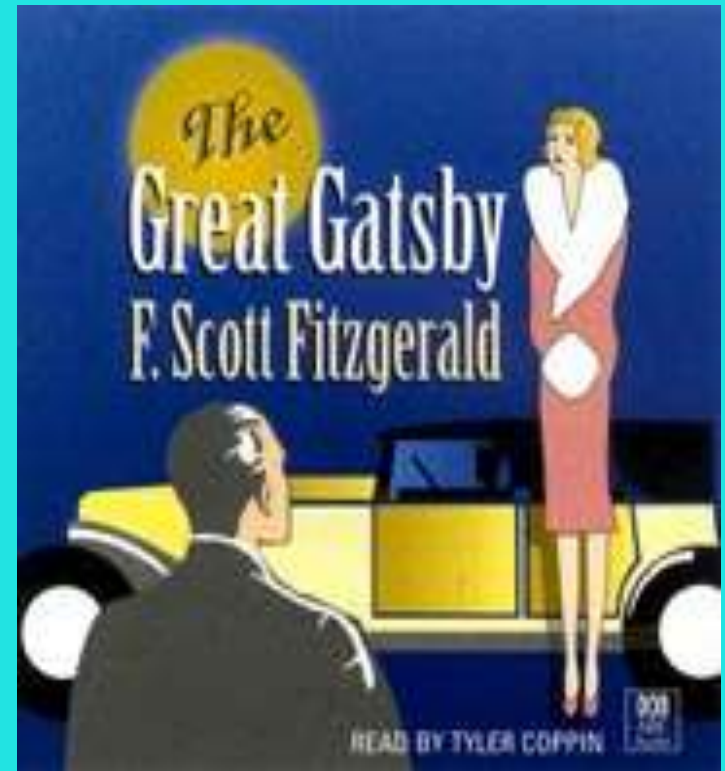


- ❑ The 1920s was one of the greatest literary eras in American history
- ❑ **Sinclair Lewis**, the first American to win the Nobel Prize in literature, wrote the novel, *Babbitt*
- ❑ In *Babbitt* the main character ridicules American conformity and materialism

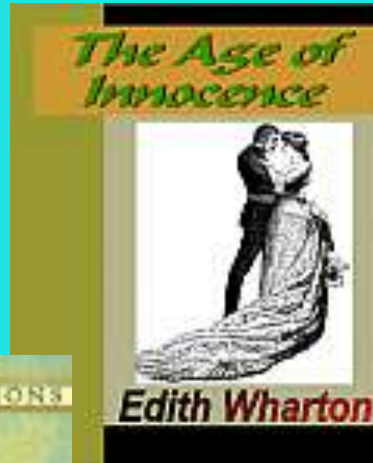


WRITERS OF THE 1920s

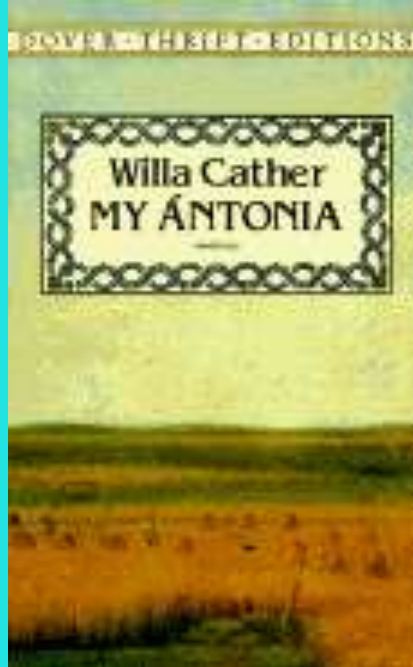
- ❑ **Writer F. Scott Fitzgerald** coined the phrase “Jazz Age” to describe the 1920s
- ❑ Fitzgerald wrote *Paradise Lost* and *The Great Gatsby*
- ❑ *The Great Gatsby* reflected the emptiness of New York elite society



WRITERS OF THE 1920S

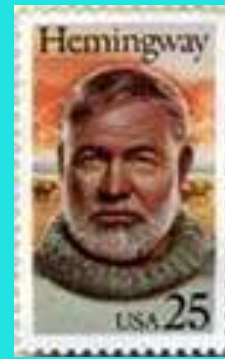


□ Edith Wharton's *Age of Innocence* dramatized the clash between traditional and modern values



□ Willa Cather celebrated the simple, dignified lives of immigrant farmers in Nebraska in *My Antonia*

WRITERS OF THE 1920



- ❑ Ernest Hemingway, wounded in World War I, became one of the best-known authors of the era
- ❑ In his novels, *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*, he criticized the glorification of war
- ❑ His simple, straightforward style of writing set the literary standard

THE LOST GENERATION

- ❑ Some writers such as Hemingway and **John Dos Passos** were so soured by American culture that they chose to settle in Europe
- ❑ In Paris they formed a group that one writer called, **“The Lost Generation”**



John Dos Passos self – portrait.
He was a good amateur painter.

SECTION 4: THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE



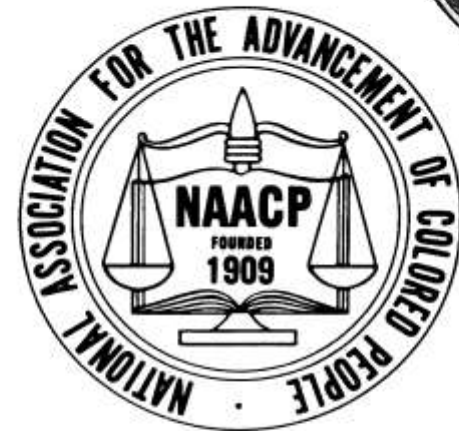
Migration of the Negro by
Jacob Lawrence

- Between 1910 and 1920, the **Great Migration** saw hundreds of thousands of African Americans move north to **big cities**
- By 1920 over 5 million of the nation's 12 million blacks (over 40%) lived in cities

AFRICAN AMERICAN GOALS

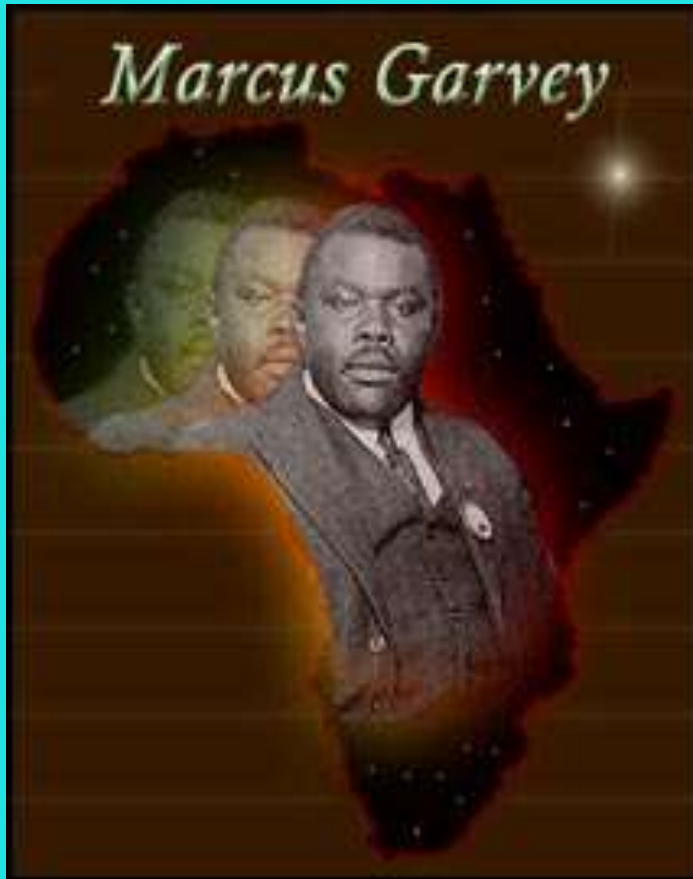
❑ Founded in 1909, the **NAACP** urged African Americans to protest racial violence

❑ **W.E.B Dubois**, a founding member, led a march of 10,000 black men in NY to protest violence



NAACP

MARCUS GARVEY - UNIA



Garvey represented a more radical approach

- ❑ Marcus Garvey believed that African Americans should build a separate society (Africa)
- ❑ In 1914, Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association
- ❑ Garvey claimed a million members by the mid-1920s
- ❑ He left a **powerful legacy of black pride**, economic independence and Pan-Africanism

HARLEM, NEW YORK

- ❑ Harlem, NY became the **largest black urban community**
- ❑ Harlem suffered from overcrowding, unemployment and **poverty**
- ❑ However, in the 1920s it was home to a literary and artistic **revival** known as the Harlem Renaissance

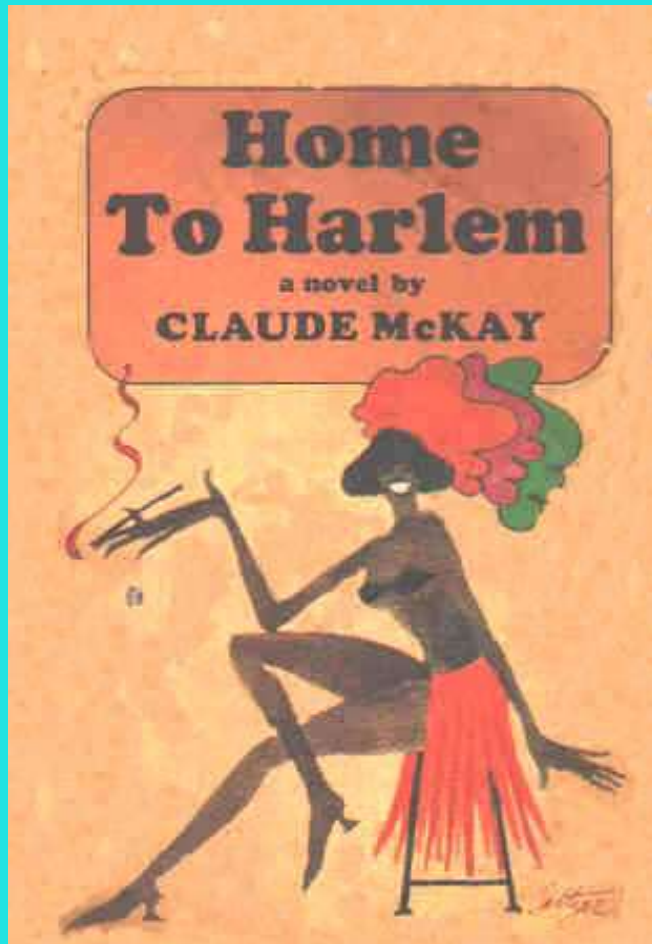
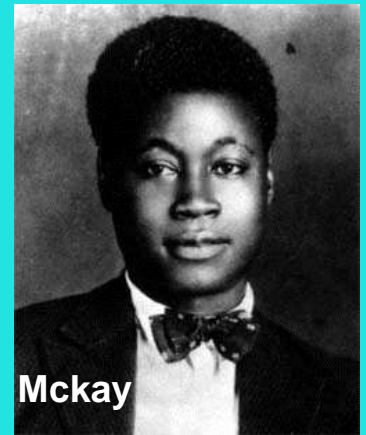




THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE



AFRICAN AMERICAN WRITERS



- The Harlem Renaissance was primarily a literary movement
- Led by well-educated blacks with a new sense of pride in the African-American experience
- Claude McKay's** poems expressed the pain of life in the ghetto



LANGSTON HUGHES

- ❑ Missouri-born **Langston Hughes** was the movement's best known poet
- ❑ Many of his poems described the **difficult lives of working-class blacks**
- ❑ Some of his poems were **put to music**, especially jazz and blues



ZORA NEALE HURSTON

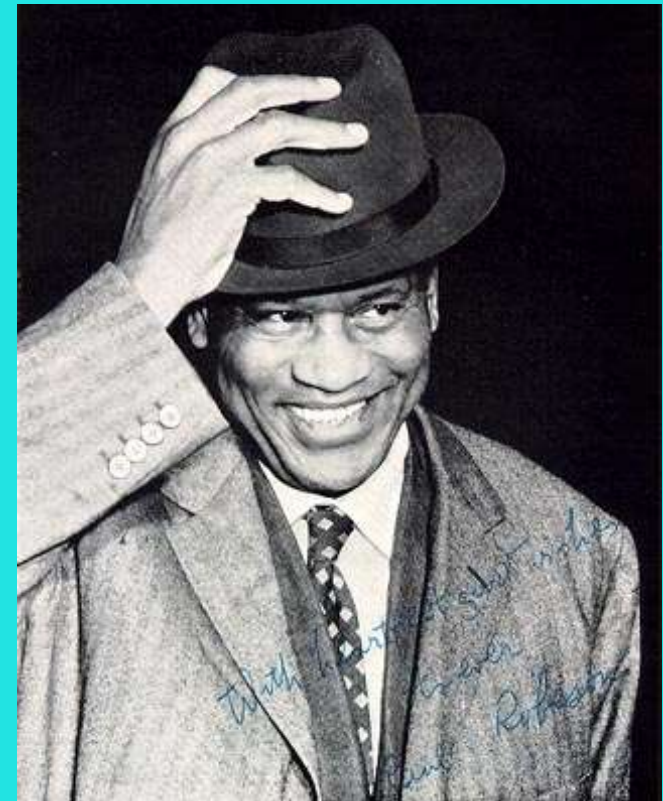


- Zora Neale **Hurston** wrote novels, short stories and poems
- She often **wrote about the lives of poor, unschooled Southern blacks**
- She focused on the culture of the people—their **folkways and values**

AFRICAN-AMERICAN PERFORMERS



- ❑ During the 1920s, black performers won large followings
- ❑ Paul Robeson, son of a slave, became a major **dramatic actor**
- ❑ His performance in ***Othello*** was widely praised



LOUIS ARMSTRONG



- ❑ Jazz was born in the early 20th century
- ❑ In 1922, a young trumpet player named **Louis Armstrong** joined the Creole Jazz Band
- ❑ Later he joined Fletcher Henderson's band in NYC
- ❑ Armstrong is considered the **most important and influential musician** in the history of jazz



EDWARD KENNEDY “DUKE” ELLINGTON

- ❑ In the late 1920s, Duke Ellington, a **jazz pianist** and composer, led his ten-piece orchestra at the famous **Cotton Club**
- ❑ Ellington won renown as one of **America’s greatest composers**



BESSIE SMITH



- Bessie Smith, blues singer, was perhaps the **most outstanding vocalist** of the decade
- She achieved enormous popularity and by 1927 she became the **highest-paid black artist in the world**