

History 353
1920s America
***A WVU Ecampus Course**
Dr. Carletta Bush, instructor

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Home Phone: (304) 432-8126. Unless it is during campus office hours, please call me at home. If I am not home, leave a message, and I will return your call as soon as possible.

I am online on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Description:

From bootleggers and baseball players to fundamentalists and flappers, the 1920s had it all. 1920 was the first decade in American history when more people lived in urban centers than rural areas. Record numbers of Americans were driving, women were shortening their skirts and smoking, the number of youth graduating from high school and going onto college, and movies were no longer silent. As a result, historians have pointed to the 1920s as the first truly, modern decade in American history.

The Roaring Twenties did possess many of the features of modern American society. The decade saw the emergence of radio, films, cars, the family-comic strip in daily newspapers, a fascination with sports heroes and movie stars, and the rise of a national culture based on consumerism. Many of these features should be recognizable and familiar to Americans at the end of the twentieth century. But the 1920s was also a decade where traditionalists worried about the impact of these and other new facets of American life on the moral and cultural fabric of the nation.

Tensions emerged across the social, political, and cultural landscape of the 1920s between those comfortable with the forces of modernization and those anxious about it. In the battles over prohibition and teaching evolution in the public schools, in the debates over women's suffrage, closing off immigration, and the Sacco and Vanzetti trial, in the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan and fundamentalist religious revivals, traditionalists and moderns battled each other for control of the direction of the nation. In many ways these conflicts reveal a decade with one foot in the nineteenth and one in the twentieth century. In retrospect the victory of the moderns in most of these contests appears inevitable. We will be discussing two key questions in this class:

- Were the Roaring Twenties more profoundly traditional and conservative or they were more radical and modern?
- For whom did the decade roar? For whom did they whimper? Why?

By coming to a complicated understanding of the forces at play shaping this turbulent and dynamic decade we will come to a better understanding of the forces which shaped modern America.

Learning Outcomes:

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate their understanding of the significant transformations in American politics, society, and culture created by World War I, an increasingly heterogeneous society, and technological innovations in the manufacture of consumer goods, technology, and transportation through class discussions, written essays, and exams.
2. Apply methodologies that historians use to analyze the past in order to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of varying historical interpretations of the era.
3. Create their own works of historical scholarship by reading primary sources, collecting oral histories, analyzing their meanings, and situating them in historical context.

Readings:

Required Textbooks:

1. Lynn Dumenil, *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s*
2. David Lewis, *When Harlem Was in Vogue*
3. Paula S. Fass *The Beautiful and the Damned: American Youth in the 1920's*
4. David J. Goldberg, *Discontented America: The United States in the 1920s*
- *5. Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*
*You must have this book. Please purchase the most current edition.

Articles and Essays:

A few of your reading assignments are in the form of articles and essays. These items will be preceded by an

- ❖ located in the Resources Folder.

Electronic Reserve Readings & Films:

We will be discussing several films this semester. These films are located on electronic reserve at <http://www.ereserves.lib.wvu.edu>

An ● indicates that the reading or film can be found on electronic reserve.

****You will need a high speed internet connection to view these films****

Other films can be checked out from the WVU libraries, most public libraries, and local video rental stores. They can also be rented online from Blockbuster and Netflix.

Internet Sources:

We will be making use of several internet sites during the semester. Links to these sites are located in the weekly modules.

Requirements: All students are expected to complete the readings and participate in discussion boards and post responses to journal topics. Students are responsible for:

- 1) Two exams, a midterm and final (100 points each)
- 2) Research Paper Proposal (50 points)
- 3) Footnote & Mountainlynx Assignment (50 points)
- 4) Research paper (100 points)
- 5) Weekly discussion board participation (10-15 points each)
- 6) Journal entries (5 points each)

Two Exams. 100 points each. The class will take one midterm and one final exam. The midterm will cover the material from the first half of the course, and the final exam will cover all material covered during the second half of the class.

If I am to continue to offer them online, without the use of proctors, you must abide by the honor system and complete the exams without the aid of books, notes, or additional web sites. You will be using the **Respondus Lock-Down Browser to take the exams. Make sure that you have downloaded the necessary software and understand how to use this browser before the exam.**

Research Paper Proposal: 50 points. You will be writing a paper proposal that will include a preliminary thesis statement and bibliography. Instructions are forthcoming.

Footnote & Mountainlynx Assignment: 50 pts. You will be demonstrating your ability to use the WVU Libraries Mountainlynx online catalog and insert footnotes in a portion of a sample research paper using the guidelines given in the Rampolla book. Make sure that you have this book by the first week of class. Instruction on using Mountainlynx can be found in hand-out “Advanced Mountainlynx Search” in the Additional Resources folder.

Research Paper: 100 points. You will be researching and writing a paper on life in your community, county, or the nearest large city during the 1920s. The purpose of this paper is to determine whether your community roared or whimpered through this decade and why. Your information must consist of both primary and secondary sources. The length is to be 10-12 pages in addition to any images that you may want to insert at the end. Historians use Chicago Manual Style when citing sources, and this is what I expect you to do as well.

Discussion Boards. 10 points per board. Participation in the class bulletin board is mandatory. The instructor expects each student to compose an average of two substantial postings to the each discussion board topic (your initial post and at least one response to the work of a classmate.) To qualify as "substantial," a post must reflect a grasp of specific issues or questions raised by the assigned readings. Total points: 150

To receive 100 percent credit for a board, students must post at least one reply to another student's work in addition to the initial, lengthier post.
Example: If the board is worth 10 points, the initial post will be worth 8 points and the reply will be worth 2 points.

Due Dates: The boards are always open. However, I strongly suggest that you post your initial response to a board by Wednesday night. This way, you will have ample time to return to the board to check for responses and questions and respond to your peers' work before the topic officially closes on Sunday night. I check into the board at various times during the week to see how the discussion is going, but I usually grade on Monday.

Journal Entries. 5 points each. We will be discussing the progress of your research and writing of your research paper throughout the semester through 5 journal entries. Total points: 25.

Grading Scale:

A= 522-580
B= 464-521
C= 406-463
D=348-405
F= 347

This scale may be modified at the semester's end, if there are any changes in assignments or assessments.

Email: Send all email to me through the class email system.

Make-Up Exams and Late Papers: Make-up exams and acceptance of late papers are possible only when you have presented me with a legitimate excuse **before** the scheduled time for the exam or due date. Failure to do so will result in an automatic F.

You are responsible for keeping track of due dates, individual assignment topics when applicable, and if your assignments were submitted.

Cheating: Cheating, regardless of the form it may assume (including plagiarism), will be prosecuted according to the established university procedures. A thorough discussion of the university's definition of plagiarism and its consequences can be found at <http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html>

Class Environment and Student Needs:

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veterans status, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Disability Services (304-293-6700).

Week 1: We're Gonna Buy Our Way into the Middle Class

❖ **Readings:** Lizabeth Cohen, "Encountering Mass Culture"

- "Jazz: The Gift" film on E-Reserve at <http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/reserves/>
- "A Job at Ford" film on E-Reserve at <http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/reserves/>

Discussion Board: There will be 3 topics this week.

Introductions (no credit)
1920s Slang
Life in the 20s (discussion of films)

Journal: Your research paper will focus on life in your hometown, county, or the nearest city during the 1920s. Did the decade roar or whimper for its residents? Why?

For this week's journal assignment, tell me a bit about your hometown and county, possible primary and secondary sources, and what you already know about life there during this decade.

Assignment: Footnote/ Mountainlynx Assignment

Week 2: The Great War Comes to a Close: Power and Politics, at Home and Abroad

Readings: Goldberg, 1-26, 37-39, 57-65; Ch. 3
Dumenil, Ch.1

Discussion Board: War & Change

Journal: None

Week 3: The Real World of Work

Readings: Dumenil, Ch. 2;

❖ Cohen, "Contested Loyalty at the Workplace"

- "The Crowd" film on E-Reserve at <http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/reserves/>

Discussion Board: Life at Home & Work

Journal: None

Assignment: Research Paper Proposal

Week 4: Prohibition: Moonshine, Bootleggers, and Speakeasies

Readings:

- ❖ Comte, “Let the Federal Men Raid”
 - Prohibition series, Episodes 2 and 3

Discussion Board: Speak Your Piece

Journal: none

Submit a list of (at least 5) primary and (at least 5) secondary sources that you have located so far, along with any questions that you have in regards to the assignment and/or sources

Week 5: Other Voices: Pluralism and Community

Readings: ;

- ❖ Jones, “To Get Out of This Land of Suffering: Black Women Migrants to the North, 1900-1930”

Discussion Board: Letters Home

Journal: None

Week 6: The Klan

Readings: Goldberg, Ch. 6;

- ❖ Kathleen Blee, “Women in the 1920s Klan”

Discussion Board: Local Klan News

Journal: None

Week 7: Americanization: Homogenization and Patriotism

Readings: Goldberg, Ch. 4 and. 7

Discussion Board: Radio Campaign for 1924 Immigration Restriction Act

Journal: Project Update

Submit your current rough draft and any questions that you have concerning your project.

Week 8: Midterm Exam

Readings: None

Discussion Board: Midterm Exam Review (No credit)

Journal: None

Assessment: Midterm Exam. The exam is not open book, and you will be using the Respondus Lock-down Browser to take the exam.

Week 9: When Harlem Was in Vogue: The Rise

Readings: Lewis,

Chapter 1: All

Chapter 2: All

Chapter 3: All

Chapter 4: Read pages 89-113.

Discussion Boards: There will be 3 boards this week, but you will only contribute to 2 of them in order to receive your points for this week (up to 10 points per board). The

choice is yours, however, you do need to read the posts to all three boards. This will further your understanding of the book and take notes for the week. If you comment on the posts of the third board, you will not receive points for doing so.

- The Road to the Ballot Box and Jobs
- Harlem Renaissance & Literature
- Negrotarians

Assignment: 2 DBs. Once you choose your boards, please submit the names of your boards through the assignment box. This will help me with my records.

Journal: None

Week 10: When Harlem Was in Vogue: The Fall

Readings: Lewis,

Chapter 5: All

Chapter 6: 156-165;169 - end;

Chapter 7: 208-213; 215-219; 221-227;

Chapter 8: 240-244.

Chapter 9: 305-307.

Discussion Board: Critique of Lewis' *When Harlem Was in Vogue*

Journal: Project Update

Submit any questions that you have concerning your project.

Week 11: Life on the Far: Ag Policy and Farm Families

- ❖ **Readings:** Hoffman and Libecap, "Institutional Choice and the Development of U.S. Agricultural Policies in the 1920s," pages 397-98 and 404-411;
- ❖ Shirley C. Eagan, "Women's Work Never Done": West Virginia Farm Women, 1880s-1920s"

Discussion Board: The American Farm: Problems and Solutions

Journal: Project Update

Submit any questions that you have concerning your project.

Week 12: The Plastic Age

Readings: Fass, Part I

Chapter 1: 3-16; 20-29; 40-49;

Chapter 2: 63-75; 83; 93-95;

Chapter 3: 119-168;

Chapter 4: 168-210;

- "The Great Gatsby" film on E-Reserve at <http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/reserves/>

Discussion Board: The Great Gatsby & the Lost Generation

Journal: None

Extra Credit Discussion Board: College and University Life in the 1920s

Week 13: Flappers & Philosophers

Readings: Fass, Part II
Chapter 5: 225-245;
Chapter 6: All
Chapter 7: 291-324

Discussion Board: The New Woman

Extra Credit Discussion Board: College and University Life in the 1920s

Week 13 continued

Journal: None

Week 14: The New Era and the Presidential Election of 1928

Readings: Goldberg, Ch. 8.

Discussion Board: Brought to You by the League of Women Voters

Journal: Last Minute Questions. Submit questions concerning your research paper to the journal. If you do not have any questions, let me know this as well.

Assignment: None

Week 15: Project Presentations

Readings: Research papers

Discussion Board: Presentations & Discussion

Journal: None

Assignment: Your paper is due by Monday morning at 11:00. The papers will be transferred to the Student Papers Folder by Monday evening. Choose three research papers to comment upon. Formulate questions for the writers. You will be using this in this week's discussion board.

Week 16: Final Exam Week

Readings: None

Discussion Board: Final Exam Review (No credit)

Journal: None

Assignment: Final Exam Essays. Your exams are due by Thursday night. You will submit them as one assignment.

Assessment: The final exam will be available from Wednesday morning at 6 a.m. to Thursday night at 11 p.m. You will have two hours to take the exam. The exam is not open book, and you will be using the Respondus Lock-down Browser to take the exam.