English 3P Research Synthesis Essay

Directions: The prompt that follows is based on the seven accompanying sources. This essay requires you to integrate at least five of these sources into a well-written research essay. At least two of the sources you use must be books. Refer to the sources using direct quotations, paraphrase or summary and correct parenthetical citation. You must also include your commentary on the information that you integrate from the sources. Finally, complete a Works Cited to document the sources you use and attach it as the last page of your essay.

Introduction: After the passage of the 19th amendment in 1920 giving women the right to vote, the female role in society began to change. Flappers began to dress and act in a vastly different way than did the "Gibson girl" of the previous era. These "new women" expanded women's freedom and changed society's view of what it meant to be female in the 1920's.

Assignment: Read the following sources carefully. Then in an essay that synthesizes at least four of the sources for support, discuss the origins of the Flapper movement, the main characteristics and values of the Flappers that set them apart from women of the past, and the effect these new women had on American society in the 1920s. In your conclusion, include a comment regarding how the Flapper movement has affected current society, especially in terms of the feminine role in society.

Source A

Source A

NORTH CAROLINA
MUSEUM OF HISTORY

A New Woman Emerges

By Louise Benner

From *Tar Heel Junior Historian* 43:2 (spring 2004).

A woman of 1920 would be surprised to know that she would be remembered as a "new woman." Many changes would enter her life in the next ten years. Significant changes for women took place in politics, the home, the workplace, and in education. Some were the results of laws passed, many resulted from newly developed technologies, and all had to do with changing attitudes toward the place of women in society.

The most far-reaching change was political. Many women believed that it was their right and duty to take a serious part in politics. They recognized, too, that political decisions affected their daily lives. When passed in 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote. Surprisingly, some women didn't want the vote. A widespread attitude was that women's roles and men's roles did not overlap. This idea of "separate spheres" held that women should concern themselves with home, children, and religion, while men took care of business and politics. North Carolina opponents of woman suffrage, or voting, claimed that "women are not the equal of men mentally" and being able to vote "would take them out of their proper sphere of life."

Though slow to use their newly won voting rights, by the end of the decade, women were represented on local, state, and national political committees and were influencing the political agenda of the federal government. More emphasis began to be put on social improvement, such as protective laws for child labor and prison reform. Women active in politics in 1929 still had little power, but they had begun the journey to actual political equality.

With regard to education, North Carolina's female high school students seldom expected to go to college. If they did, they usually attended a private college or Woman's College in Greensboro (now UNC-G), where there were no male students. Most of the Woman's College students became teachers or nurses, as these were considered suitable professions for women. North Carolina State College (now NCSU) enrolled its first woman student in 1921, but it was not until 1926 that N.C. State decreed, "A woman who completes work for a degree offered by the institution [can] be graduated." In 1928 only twenty-one women were enrolled there.

The University of North Carolina opened housing to female graduate students in 1921, but they were not made welcome. The student newspaper headlined, "Women Not Wanted Here." Few North Carolina women earned degrees during the 1920s. But times were changing, and each year more women earned college degrees.

At the beginning of the decade, most North Carolina women lived in rural areas without electricity. Imagine trying to keep food fresh without a refrigerator, ironing (no drip-dry

clothing then) with an iron that had to be reheated constantly, cooking on a woodstove, going to an outside well for water, and always visiting an outhouse instead of a bathroom. Rural electrification did not reach many North Carolina homes until the 1940s.

Urban women found that electricity and plumbing made housework different, and often easier, with electrically run · acuum cleaners, irons, and washing machines. Electricity meant that people could stay up later at night, because electric lights were more efficient than kerosene lamps and candles. Indoor plumbing brought water inside and introduced a new room to clean—the bathroom.

In the United States in the 1920s, only about 15 percent of white and 30 percent of black married women with wage-earning husbands held paying jobs. Most Americans believed that women should not work outside the home if their husbands held jobs. As a result of this attitude, wives seldom worked at outside jobs. However, some married women in desperate need took jobs in textile mills.

By 1922 North Carolina was a leading manufacturing state, and the mills were hiring female floor workers. Cotton mills also employed a few nurses, teachers, and social workers to staff social and educational programs. These mills did not hire black women, however, because of segregation. As a consequence, white millworkers often hired black women as domestic and child-care workers. Fewer jobs were available in tobacco factories because most of their 1920s machinery was automated. The largest North Carolina tobacco manufacturers did employ both black and white women, but strictly separated workers by race and gender.

At the same time, public acceptance of wage-earning jobs for young unmarried women was growing. No longer being limited to work as "mill girls" or domestics, these women began to perform clerical work in offices and retail work in shops and department stores. It became acceptable for working girls to live away from their families. Some young married women worked until they had children. Working for wages gave women independence, and by 1930 one in four women held a paying job.

Despite increasing opportunities in employment and education, and the expanding concept of a "woman's place," marriage remained the goal of most young women. Magazine articles and movies encouraged women to believe that their economic security and social status depended on a successful marriage. The majority worked only until they married.

Working women became consumers of popular products and fashions. Women who would never tolerate the strong smells and stains of chewing tobacco or cigars began to smoke the new, and relatively clean, mild cigarettes. Cigarettes were advertised to women as a sign of modern sophistication, and the 1920s "flapper" is usually pictured with a cigarette in her hand.

Today the easily recognized image of the flapper symbolizes the 1920s for many people. The flapper—with her short skirts, short hair, noticeable makeup, and fun-loving

Source A

attitude—represented a new freedom for women. The old restrictions on dress and behavior were being overthrown. Highly publicized flappers shortened their skirts, drank illegal alcohol, smoked, and otherwise defied society's expectations of proper conduct for young women.

Is this glamorous and rebellious image of the flapper a true representation of the 1920s woman? Not entirely. In order to be a flapper, a woman had to have enough money and free time to play the part. College girls, unmarried girls living at home, and independent office workers most frequently presented themselves as flappers. However, the average woman did wear the fashions made popular by flappers. As often happens, unconventional clothing was gradually integrated into fashion and adopted at all income levels. Sears, Roebuck, and Company claimed that nine million families made purchases from its catalogs in 1925. The clothing sold through catalogs was based on high-fashion styles from Paris.

Flappers popularized slender, boyish fashions. Figures were flattened with undergarments. Hemlines, straight or uneven, gradually crept up, and waistlines dropped. High-fashion evening wear in tubular, sleeveless styles featured beading and fringe. Day dresses copied the evening lines, if not the trims. Short skirts were complemented by flesh-colored stockings worn with decorative shoes. Hair was cut close to the head and covered outdoors by the close-fitting cloche hat. It became respectable to wear makeup. Between 1920 and 1930, women's appearance changed completely.

Women found their lives changed in more than appearance, however. Society now accepted that women could be independent and make choices for themselves in education, jobs, marital status, and careers. Women's spheres had broadened to include public as well as home life. The "new woman" was on her way.

At the time of this article's publication, Louise Benner worked as a curator of costume and textiles at the North Carolina Museum of History.

Stop music: SQUARE button.
Play music: ARROW button.

"Flapper Jane"

by Bruce Bliven
Published in *New Republic*, September 9, 1925.


1920s flapper ad

Jane's a flapper. That is a quaint, old-fashioned term, but I hope you remember its meaning. As you can tell by her appellation, Jane is 19. If she were 29, she would be Dorothy; 39, Doris; 49, Elaine; 59, Jane again--and so on around. This Jane, being 19, is a flapper, though she urgently denies that she is a member of the younger generation. The younger generation, she will tell you, is aged 15 to 17; and she professes to be decidedly shocked at the things they do and say. That is a fact which would interest her minister, if he knew it--poor man, he knows so little! For he regards Jane as a perfectly horrible example of wild youth--paint, cigarettes, cocktails, petting parties--oooh! Yet if the younger generation shocks her as she says, query: how wild is Jane?

Before we come to this exciting question, let us take a look at the young person as she strolls across the lawn of her parents' suburban home, having just put the car away after driving sixty miles in two hours. She is, for one thing, a very pretty girl. Beauty is the fashion in 1925. She is frankly, heavily made up, not to imitate nature, but for an altogether artificial effect--pallor mortis, poisonously scarlet lips, richly ringed eyes--the latter looking not so much debauched (which is the intention) as diabetic. Her walk duplicates the swagger supposed by innocent America to go with the female half of a Paris Apache dance. And there are, finally, her clothes.

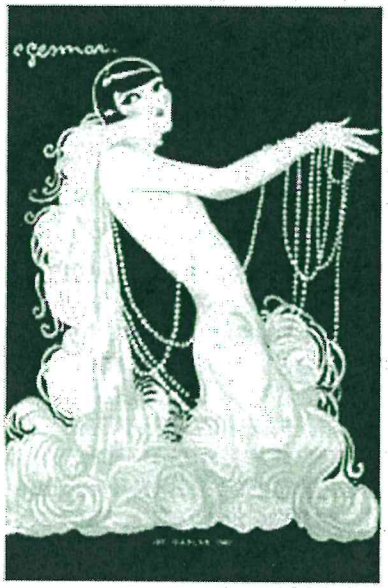
These were estimated the other day by some statistician to weigh two pounds. Probably a libel; I doubt they come within half a pound of such bulk. Jane isn't wearing much, this summer. If you'd like to know exactly, it is: one dress, one step-in, two stockings, two shoes.

A step-in, if you are 99 and 44/1OOths percent ignorant, is underwear--one piece, light, exceedingly brief but roomy. Her dress, as you can't possibly help knowing if you have even one good eye, and get around at all outside the Old People's Home, is also brief. It is cut low where it might be high, and vice versa. The skirt comes just an inch below her knees, overlapping by a faint fraction her rolled and twisted stockings. The idea is that when she walks in a bit of a breeze, you shall now and then observe the knee (which is not rouged--that's just newspaper talk) but always in an accidental, Venus-surprised-at-the-bath sort of way. This is a bit of coyness which hardly fits in with Jane general character.

Jane's haircut is also abbreviated. She wears of course the very newest thing in bobs, even closer than last year's shingle. It leaves her just about no hair at all in the back, and 20 percent more than that in the front--about as much as is being worn this season by a cellist (male); less than a pianist; and much, much less than a violinist. Because of this new style, one can confirm a rumor heard last year: Jane has ears.

The corset is as dead as the dodo's grandfather; no feeble publicity pipings by the manufacturers,

or calling it a "clasp around" will enable it, as Jane says, to "do a Lazarus." The petticoat is even more defunct. Not even a snicker can be raised by telling Jane that once the nation was shattered to its foundations by the shadow-skirt. The brassiere has been abandoned, since 1924. While stockings are usually worn, they are not a sine-qua-nothing-doing. In hot weather Jane reserves the right to discard them, just as all the chorus girls did in 1923. As stockings are only a frantic, successful attempt to duplicate the color and texture of Jane's own sunburned slim legs, few but expert boulevardiers can tell the difference.



1920s ad for necklaces

These which I have described are Jane's clothes, but they are not merely a flapper uniform. They are The Style, Summer of 1925 Eastern Seaboard. These things and none other are being worn by all of Jane's sisters and her cousins and her aunts. They are being worn by ladies who are three times Jane's age, and look ten years older; by those twice her age who look a hundred years older. Their use is so universal that in our larger cities the baggage transfer companies one and all declare they are being forced into bankruptcy. Ladies who used to go away for the summer with six trunks can now pack twenty dainty costumes in a bag.

Not since 1820 has feminine apparel been so frankly abbreviated as at present; and never, on this side of the Atlantic, until you go back to the little summer frocks of Pocahontas. This year's styles have gone quite a long step toward genuine nudity. Nor is this merely the sensible half of the population dressing as everyone ought to, in hot weather. Last winter's styles weren't so dissimilar, except that they were covered up by fur coats and you got the full effect only indoors. And improper costumes never have their full force unless worn on the street. Next year's styles, from all one hears, will be, as they already are on the continent, even More So.

Our great mentor has failed us: you will see none of the really up-to-date styles in the movies. For old-fashioned, conservative and dowdy dressing, go and watch the latest production featuring Bebe, Gloria or Pola. Under vigilant father Hays the ensilvered screen daren't reveal a costume equal to scores on Fifth Avenue, Broadway--or Wall Street.

Wall Street, by the way, is the one spot in which the New Nakedness seems most appropriate.

Where men's simple passions have the lowest boiling point; where the lust for possession is most frankly, brazenly revealed and indeed dominates the whole diurnal round--in such a place there is a high appropriateness in the fact that the priestesses in the temple of Mammon, though their service be no more than file clerk or stenographer, should be thus Dionysiac in apparelling themselves for their daily tasks.

Source B

Where will it all end? do you ask, thumbing the page ahead in an effort to know the worst. Apologetically I reply that no one can say where it will end. Nudity has been the custom of many countries and over long periods of time. No one who has read history can be very firm in saying that It Never Can Happen Again. We may of course mutter, in feeble tones of hope, that our climate is not propitious.

Few any more are so naive as not to realize that there are fashions in morals and that these have a limitless capacity for modification. Costume, of course, is A Moral. You can get a rough measure of our movement if you look at the history of the theatre and see how the tidemark of tolerance has risen. For instance:

- 1904--Performance of *Mrs. Warren's Profession* is halted by police.
- 1919--*Mrs. Warren* O.K. Town roused to frenzy by *Aphrodite*, in which one chorus girl is exposed for one minute in dim light and a union suit.
- 1923--Union suit O.K. Self-appointed censors have conniption fits over chorus girls naked from the waist up.
- 1925--Nudity from waist up taken for granted. Excitement caused by show in which girls wear only fig leaves.

Plotting the curve of tolerance and projecting it into the future, it is thus easy to see that complete nudity in the theatre will be reached on March 12, 1927. Just what will the appalling consequences be?

Perhaps about what they have been in the theatres of several European capitals, where such displays have long been familiar. Those who are interested in that sort of thing will go. Others will abstain.

At this point Billy Sunday, discussing this theme, would certainly drop into anecdotage. Were we to do the same, we might see Jane on the sun porch talking to a mixed group of her mother's week-end guests. "Jane," says one, "I hear you cut yourself in bathing."

"I'll say I did," comes crisply back. "Look!" She lifts her skirt three or four inches, revealing both brown knees, and above one of them a half-healed deep scratch. Proper murmurs of sympathy. From one quarter a chilly silence which draws our attention to the enpurpled countenance of a lady guest in the throes of what Eddie Cantor calls "the sex complex." Jane's knees have thrown her all a-twitter; and mistaking the character of her emotion she thinks it is justified indignation. She is glad to display it openly for the reproof thereby administered.

"Well, damn it," says Jane, in a subsequent private moment, "anybody who can't stand a knee or two, nowadays, might as well quit. And besides, she goes to the beaches and never turns a hair."

"The Flapper," *Life* magazine cover, 1922

Here is a real point. The recent history of the Great Disrobing Movement can be checked up in another way by looking at the bathing costumes which have been accepted without question at successive intervals. There are still a few beaches near New York City which insist on more clothes than anyone can safely swim in, and thereby help to drown several young women each year. But in most places- -universally in the West--a girl is now compelled to wear no more than is a man. The enpurpled one, to be consistent, ought to have apoplexy every time she goes to the shore. But as Jane observes, she doesn't.

"Jane," say I, "I am a reporter representing American inquisitiveness. Why do all of you dress the way you do?"

"I don't know," says Jane. This reply means nothing: it is just the device by which the younger generation gains time to think. Almost at once she adds:

"The old girls are doing it because youth is in. Everybody wants to be young, now--though they want all us young people to be something else. Funny, isn't it?

"In a way," says Jane, "it's just l onesty. Women have come down off the pedestal lately. They are tired of this mysterious-feminine-charm stuff. Maybe it goes with independence, earning your own living and voting and all that. There was always a bit of the harem in that cover up-your-arms-and-legs business, don't you think?

"Women still want to be loved," goes on Jane, warming to her theme, "but they want it on a 50-50 basis, which includes being admired for the qualities they really possess. Dragging in this strange-allurement stuff doesn't seem sporting. It's like cheating in games, or lying."

"Ask me, did the War start all this?" says Jane helpfully.

"The answer is, how do I know ? How does anybody know?

"I read this book whaddaya-call-it by Rose Macaulay, and she showed where they'd been excited about wild youth for three generations anyhow--since 1870. I have a hunch maybe they've always been excited.

"Somebody wrote in a magazine how the War had upset the balance of the sexes in Europe and the girls over there were wearing the new styles as part of the competition for husbands. Sounds like the bunk to me. If you wanted to nail a man for life I think you'd do better to go in for the old-fashioned line: 'March' me to the altar, esteemed sir, before you learn whether I have limbs or not.'

"Of course, not so many girls are looking for a life meal ticket nowadays. Lots of them prefer to earn their own living and omit the home-and-baby act. Well, anyhow, postpone it years and years. They think a bachelor girl can and should do everything a bachelor man does."

"It's funny," says Jane, "that just when women's clothes are getting scanty, men's should be going the other way. Look at the Oxford trousers!--as though a man had been caught by the ankles in a flannel quicksand."

Do the morals go with the clothes? Or the clothes with the morals? Or are they independent? These are questions I have not ventured to put to Jane, knowing that her answer would be "so's your old man." Generally speaking, however, it is safe to say that as regards the wildness of youth there is a good deal more smoke than fire. Anyhow, the new Era of Undressing, as already suggested, has spread far beyond the boundaries of Jane's group. The fashion is followed by hordes of unquestionably monogamous matrons, including many who join heartily in the general ululations as to what young people are coming to. Attempts to link the new freedom with prohibition, with the automobile, the decline of Fundamentalism, are certainly without foundation. These may be accessory, and indeed almost certainly are, but only after the fact.

That fact is, as Jane says, that women to-day are shaking off the shreds and patches of their age-old servitude. "Feminism" has won a victory so nearly complete that we have even forgotten the fierce challenge which once inhered in the very word. Women have highly resolved that they are just as good as men, and intend to be treated so. They don't mean to have any more unwanted children. They don't intend to be debarred from any profession or occupation which they choose to enter. They clearly mean (even though not all of them yet realize it) that in the great game of sexual selection they shall no longer be forced to play the role, simulated or real, of helpless quarry. If they want to wear their heads shaven, as a symbol of defiance against the former fate which for three millenia forced them to dress their heavy locks according to male decrees, they will have their way. If they should elect to go naked nothing is more certain than that naked they will go, while from the sidelines to which he has been relegated mere man is vouchsafed permission only to pipe a feeble Hurrah!

Hurrah!

Click the REFRESH/RELOAD button (above) to re-play the music.

Related Web Pages:

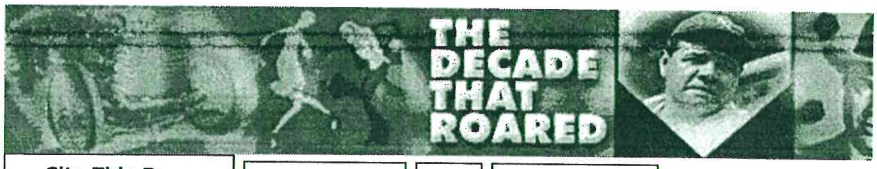
Does Jazz Put the Sin in Syncopation?
J.A. Rogers' 'Jazz at Home'
A Flapper's Appeal to Parents
Jazz Poetry: 1920s-30s
Jazz/Blues: 1920s-30s
Jazz Age Literature/Culture

File last updated: 8/12/2008
E-mail comments/suggestions: knichols

Source C

U.S. History *Pre-Columbian to the New Millennium*

d. Flappers



46d. Flappers

The battle for suffrage was finally over. After a 72-year struggle, women had won the precious right to vote. The generations of suffragists that had fought for so long proudly entered the political world. Carrie Chapman Catt carried the struggle into voting awareness with the founding of the League of Women Voters. Alice Paul vowed to fight until an **EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT** was added to the Constitution. **MARGARET SANGER** declared that female independence could be accomplished only with proper **BIRTH CONTROL** methods. To their dismay, the daughters of this generation seemed uninterested in these grand causes. As the 1920s roared along, many young women of the age wanted to have fun.

Life

More than any other illustrato Held Jr.'s comic art captured style and exuberant tenor of "Decade that Roared."

Life of the Flappers

FLAPPERS were northern, urban, single, young, middle-class women. Many steady jobs in the changing American economy. The clerking jobs that blossomed in the Gilded Age were more numerous than ever. Increasing phone usage required more and more operators. The consumer-oriented economy of the 1920s saw a burgeoning number of department stores. Women were needed on the sales floor to relate to the most precious customers — other women. But the flapper was not all work and no play.

By night, flappers engaged in the active city nightlife. They frequented jazz

Suggest a Link

ON THE WEB

Flapper Culture and Style: Louise Brooks and the Jazz Age
Louise Brooks, silent movie star, is the subject of an enormous website devoted to her life and career. This page looks at the times "Lulu" helped influence.
Report broken link

John Held, Jr.
Check out this biographical sketch of John Held, Jr., the young artist of the 1920s whose style defined the "Roaring Twenties" and immortalized the flapper look. Lots of illustrations, of course.
Report broken link

Women wearing makeup and not wearing stockings? The flappers' dress revolution was more shocking in its day than the bra-burning of the 1960's!
Learn More...
Report broken link

Jazz Age Slang
This list is swell. Once you know your onions, you'll be able to punch the bag with any cake-eater or Jane.
Report broken link

Source C

clubs and vaudeville shows. Speakeasies were a common destination, as new woman of the twenties adopted the same carefree attitude toward prohibition as her male counterpart. Ironically, more young women consumed alcohol in the decade it was illegal than ever before. Smoking, another activity previously reserved for men, became popular among flappers. With the political field leveled by the Nineteenth Amendment, women sought eliminate social double standards. Consequently, the flapper was less hesitant to experiment sexually than previous generations. **SIGMUND FREUD**'s declaration that the libido was one of the most natural of human needs seemed to the green light to explore.

The Flapper Look

The flapper had an unmistakable look. The long locks of Victorian women on the floors of beauty parlors as young women cut their hair to shoulder length. Hemlines of dresses rose dramatically to the knee. The cosmetics industry flowered as women used make-up in large numbers. Flappers bound their chests and wore high heels. **CLARA BOW**, Hollywood's "It" Girl, captured the flapper image for the nation to see.

Many women celebrated the age of the flapper as a female declaration of independence. Experimentation with new looks, jobs, and lifestyles seemed liberating compared with the socially silenced woman in the Victorian Age The flappers chose activities to please themselves, not a father or husband But critics were quick to elucidate the shortcomings of flapperism. The political agenda embraced by the previous generation was largely ignored until the feminist revival of the 1960s. Many wondered if flappers were expressing themselves or acting like men. Smoking, drinking, and sexual experimentation were characteristic of the modern young woman. Short hair and bound chests added to the effect. One thing was certain: Despite the potential political and social gains or losses, the flappers of the 1920s s managed to have a good time.

BACK HOME NEXT

Source D

AMERICAN DECADES

1920-1929

Matthew J. Bruccoli and Richard Layman, *Editorial Directors*

Karen L. Rood, *Senior Editor*

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TOPICS IN THE NEWS

WOMEN'S FASHION

Radical Changes. Women's fashions in the 1920s reflected radical changes affecting many areas of post–World War I American society. In the first year of the decade the Nineteenth Amendment had given these women the vote, which, in turn, tended to color their expectations for their lives. Many of them rejected, at least temporarily, the traditional roles of wife and mother and instead entered the workforce of the thriving businesses of the period or enrolled in colleges and universities, which were also experiencing rapidly increasing enrollments. The working girl and the coed were typically young, simultaneously more liberated and more apparently frivolous than their mothers, and intoxicated by the attention lavished on them by the popular press. "Is the Younger Generation in Peril?" asked a long 1921 *Literary Digest* article. Typical of journalism investigating youth during the decade, it focused almost exclusively upon young women's fashions in dress and cosmetics.

Licentious or Merely Sensible? Articles of this kind inevitably linked short skirts, the rejection of the corset, and bobbed or shingled hair with "licentious" behavior — smoking, drinking bootleg whiskey, listening to jazz, dancing the Charleston or Black Bottom, necking, and petting. However, other assessments struck a calmer note. Writing at opposite ends of the decade, Frances Mathilda Abbott in a 1920 issue of *North American Review* and Fannie Hurst in a 1929 issue of the *New Republic* defended contemporary women's fashions for their utility and good sense. Short skirts, Abbott and Hurst argued, were more hygienic than skirts that dragged in the dirt. Knee-length dresses with loosely fitted bodices made it easier for women to drive automobiles, engage in sports, and function in their jobs, on their campuses, and in their homes. The replacement of torturous corsets by less constricting undergarments benefited women's health and increased their comfort. As Hurst claimed, these styles reflected the "new psychological, sociological, economic and political status" of the young woman of the 1920s. In so doing, the styles proved both shocking and appealing to her more conservative mother.

French Couture, American Enterprise. During the 1920s women's fashion largely originated in Paris, though couture styles were most often adapted for the American market. Only the most affluent Americans were fitted by the famous dress designers — Madeleine Vionnet, Coco Chanel, Paul Poiret, Jean Patou — in their Paris fashion houses (*Literary Digest* cites a "millionairess" who spent a mere $8,000 on her couturier-designed wardrobe in 1923, compared to her normal $20,000). More commonly, American designers and buyers from such firms as Bergdorf Goodman, Lord & Taylor, and John Wanamaker would attend the spring and fall Paris shows, where they would purchase couturier designs. (Less-scrupulous observers would simply sketch the dresses as they were being shown and thus steal the designs, a practice against which couturiers had little defense.) "Models," legitimately or illegitimately obtained, would then be brought to the United States, where they would be reproduced or redesigned for wealthy consumers or adapted for the substantially less pricey ready-to-wear trade. In December 1925 B. Altman

COUNTING CALORIES

Dr. Lulu Hunt Peters's *Diet and Health with Key to the Calories* was a runaway best-seller during the figure-conscious 1920s. The book provided calorie-counting menus, advice on exercise and health in general, dialogues involving such characters as Mrs. Ima Gobbler and Mrs. Knott Little, line drawings purportedly by the author's young nephew, and Dr. Peters's personal confessions: "It is not in vain that all my life I have had to fight the too, too solid. Why, I can remember when I was a child I was always being consoled by being told that I would outgrow it, and that when I matured I would have some shape. Never can I tell pathetically 'when I was married I weighed only one hundred eighteen, and look at me now.' No, I was a delicate slip of one hundred sixty-five when I was taken."

Source: Lulu Hunt Peters, *Diet and Health with Key to the Calories* (Chicago: Reilly & Britton, 1918).

Patou and his six American models en route to Paris

advertised "Exact Copies of Vionnet Gowns" for $125 to $225 ($1,250 to $2,250 in 1995 figures); well-made ready-to-wear dresses of less-distinguished pedigree could be purchased for $8.98 to $13.95. The thriving American fashion magazines *Vogue* (which also published French and British editions) and *Harper's Bazaar* publicized the latest fashion trends, which in turn were picked up by fashion columns or advertisements in such general-interest magazines as *Collier's* and the *Saturday Evening Post* and in newspapers. The 1927 Sears, Roebuck catalogue offered a "Paul Poiret Model" fur-trimmed wool coat for $39.75 and an all-wool "Poiret Sheen" dress for $9.95. McCall's patterns provided simplified French styles to the American home seamstress who wanted to achieve the latest look in fashion at the lowest possible price.

Garçonne. Women's fashion in the 1920s was most fully embodied in the "garçonne" — or "little boy" — look. Adopted by the young, emancipated flappers in Europe and the United States, the style deemphasized the mature female form by flattening the breasts, dropping waists to the hipline, and, in 1925, shortening skirts to just below the knee. The look was basically "tubular," as it emphasized a straight line from shoulder to hem. Because in its most extreme form it exposed both the lower legs and the arms, the garçonne look required remarkable slenderness, and calorie counting became an obsession for women who adopted the style.

Garçonne Variations. Yet the look could be both more classic and "softer" than is suggested by the popular illustrations of John Held Jr. In the 1920s Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel, who is often credited with originating the boyish style, introduced her slightly bloused "little black dress" and her classic suit: a soft pleated or straight skirt topped by a short open jacket with edges bound in ribbon or braid. Chanel's preferred fabrics were jerseys and tweeds, which emphasized her taste for simplicity and understatement. Madeleine Vionnet, another great couturiere of the period, also softened the garçonne look by using the bias cut, often with delicate crepe fabrics, to produce a draped effect. Furthermore, the radical knee-length skirts were most popular between 1925 and 1927, with calf-length, frequently uneven hemlines dominating the earlier and later years of the decade.

Evening Wear. Women's evening fashion was typically elaborate — sewn, for example, in exquisite lamé and beaded chiffon fabrics and often accompanied by capes. Most formal wear was floor length, though the low-cut cocktail dress — introduced around 1926 and associated with nightclubs in Europe and speakeasies in the United States — might feature a shorter, irregular "handkerchief," or petal-shaped, hem. Backless evening dresses, which remained popular throughout the 1920s, sometimes accentuated their effect with long strings of beads cast over the shoulder and down the back. Hats were generally abandoned in the evening, though jeweled

THE NIGHT THE HEMS DROPPED

"... all the houses sent their hem lines plummeting, though it is pretty generally conceded, particularly by those associated with him, that it was Patou who fired the first gun. He fired it, so the story goes, after staring across a room at a group of women clad by Mademoiselle Chanel, and, because of the brevity of their skirts, seeing a good deal more of the ladies than is mandatory in the drawing room. His own dresses were equally scant, but his regurgitation of disgust was caused, fortuitously, by another. Suddenly desperate, he turned to his able lieutenant, Georges Bernard, and cried out, 'My God, my old, I can no more,' and, rushing to his workroom, started feverishly designing frocks that swept the ground and waists that embraced the middle. He was in love with his inspiration until the evening his new collection was to be shown for the first time, when suddenly he was as terrified as any stage star on opening night who wonders why, in heaven's name, he ever went into the theater when fine, cozy jobs in Macy's basement are at hand. Patou didn't dare go out into the salons as the mannequins paraded. He sent Georges to face the music while he paced restlessly in his own office. About a quarter of the way through the ordeal Bernard returned. Patou grabbed him by the lapels. 'Well, what about it?' Bernard broke into a broad grin. 'It marches. All the women are squirming about in their chairs tugging at their skirts. Already they feel *démodée*!'"

Source: Edna Woolman Chase and Ilka Chase, *Always in Vogue* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1954).

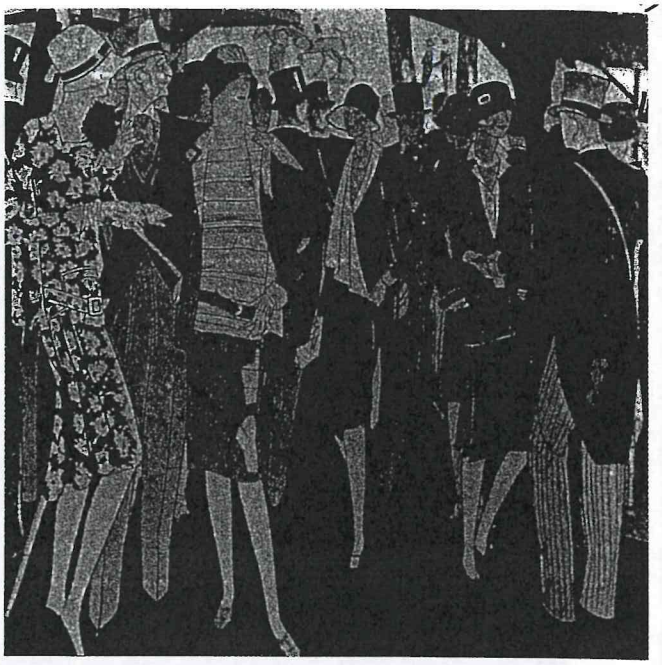


Illustration of gentlemen in daytime formal wear and ladies in Chanel-inspired dresses or suits, complete with cloche hats

combs or even ostrich-plume headdresses were occasionally worn.

Accessories. During the 1920s hats were a necessity for daytime wear, and the hat that prevailed through much of the decade was the cloche. Drawing its name from the French word for *bell,* which accurately described its shape, this small, deep-crowned hat fit snugly over its wearer's short hair and in the front reached almost to her eyebrows. Usually made of felt, the cloche might be decorated by a small jeweled pin at the side or front or by a wide ribbon band. For driving in open cars some women early in the decade adopted leather helmets with goggles, headgear worn with leather jackets or coats and with brightly colored long scarves thrown around the neck, a style inspired by World War I aviators. Shoes of the period tended to have pointed toes, some sort of strap — usually a T-strap — across the top of the foot, and thick, moderately high heels. Other accessories — jewelry, handbags, cigarette cases — often reflected the various fads, fancies, or cultural influences of the time. For example, the excavation of King Tutankhamen's tomb in 1922 caused an explosion of "Egyptian"-motif scarves, compacts, earrings, and necklaces; the presence of avant-garde artists in Paris prompted Art Deco, Cubist, and Surrealist designs in fabrics and jewelry; Josephine Baker and the "Revue Nègre" sparked an interest in thick ivory African bracelets. And through it all, Chanel promoted fake jewelry, including long strings of cultured pearls.

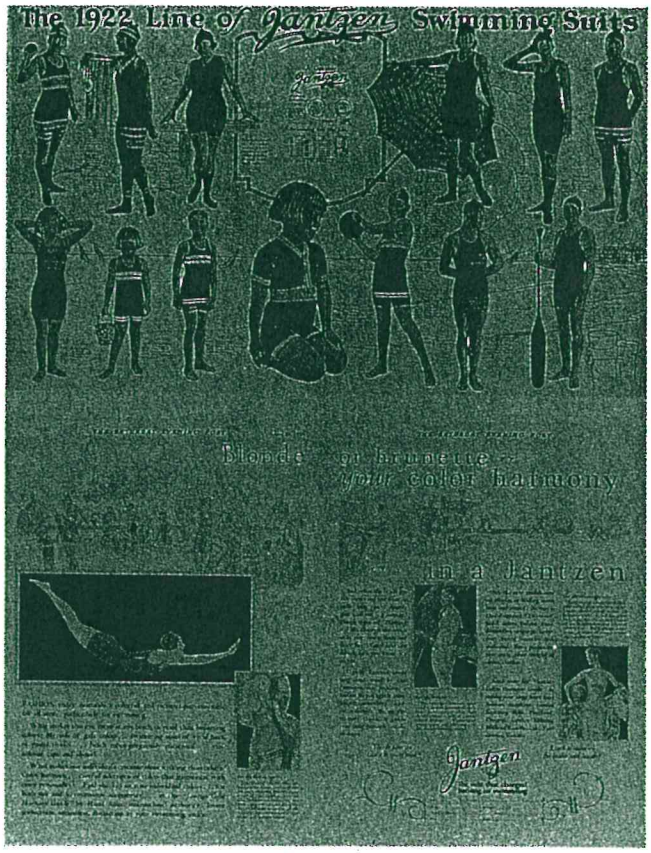
Hair, Cosmetics, Perfume. As the decade began, bobbed hair, cut a bit shorter than shoulder length and often marcelled into deep, horizontal waves, was the standard in fashion. This style was later replaced, among the young or the daring, by the extremely short, slicked-down shingle or Eton cut, which featured a single curl pulled forward from each ear onto the cheek and which was totally hidden — except for the curl — by the cloche. In the 1920s cosmetics became respectable (for decades they had been associated with women of easy virtue), and by 1924 many women were wearing redrawn plucked eyebrows, heavy powder, dramatic rouge, scarlet lipstick that formed cupid-bow lips, and dark kohl eyeliner, the latter popularized by movie stars Pola Negri and Theda Bara. One source reports that in 1929 American women bought on average one pound of powder and eight rouge compacts each per year and that a skilled cosmetologist could earn sixty dollars a week plus tips. Around 1925 both heavily tanned skin and face creams were in vogue, and such designer perfumes as Chanel No. 5, Patou's Joy, and Jeanne Lanvin's Arpège were either available or about to be introduced.

Lingerie. Flappers allegedly "parked their corsets" in the ladies' room before joining their dates on the dance

BRASSIERE HISTORY

Caresse Crosby, who with her poet husband Harry founded the Black Sun Press in Paris during the 1920s, claimed to have invented the brassiere when she was still New York debutante Mary Phelps "Polly" Jacob, a young rebel who hated the heavy corsetry of the time. She patented her creation — a simple garment made from two silk handkerchiefs and pink ribbon — in 1914 and a few years later sold the rights for $1,500 to Warner Brothers Corset Company. In the meanwhile Russian émigré Ida Cohen Rosenthal, who ran a women's dress shop in New York City, became convinced during the early 1920s that her full-figured customers would look better in their flapper dresses if they had a little "support." She therefore designed a brassiere with cups, substantial straps, and snap fasteners in the back. At first Rosenthal gave away the bras with dress sales, but the garments proved so popular that in 1923 she and her husband founded the Maiden Form Brassiere Company, later renamed Maidenform. During the 1920s and later, Warner and Maidenform turned this simple lingerie item into a multimillion-dollar industry.

Source: Ethlie Ann Vare and Greg Ptacek, *Mothers of Invention: From the Bra to the Bomb: Forgotten Women & Their Unforgettable Ideas* (New York: Morrow, 1988), pp. 54–60.



Bathing suit advertisements from 1922 and 1928

floor. Whatever the truth of this story, during the 1920s women's undergarments became progressively lighter in fabric and design. Torso-length corsets worn with linen or heavy cotton camisoles and long panties were replaced by lightweight rubber girdles and silk or rayon brassieres and cami-knickers, a combination of camisole and mid-thigh-length panties. During the 1920s the brassiere was used to flatten, not support, the breasts, though Ida Cohen Rosenthal invented the modern uplift bra during the same period. In 1923 rayon (then called "artificial silk") stockings became widely available, and women wore these flesh-colored hose supported by garter belts or rolled over garters above the knee.

Sports Clothes. Because during the 1920s women increasingly engaged in sports — golf, tennis, boating, swimming — designers were quick to provide them with fashionable outfits for these activities. Chanel created loose-fitting bell-bottom trousers to be worn while boating, and these pants quickly evolved into beach pajamas to be pulled over bathing suits on the Riviera or at Palm Beach. Women's swimsuits during the decade began as thigh-covering tight knit shorts topped either with sleeveless vests or with fitted knit tank tops, often striped at the breast or decorated with Cubist designs. In the later 1920s, knit maillots — similar to present-day one-piece suits but extended several inches down the thigh — became extremely popular. Often worn with a belt and rolled stockings or beach booties, these daring suits tended to stir outrage from the guardians of American public morality. Typical tennis and golf wear for women was pleated, knee-length skirts with sleeveless cardigans for tennis and sleeved cardigans for golf. White was the only acceptable color for tennis clothes.

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CHAPTER 4

Culture and Entertainment

AMERICA'S DECADES

Women Enjoy a New Morality

Frederick Lewis Allen

One of the most powerful changes that emerged from the 1920s was the increased freedom enjoyed by females. Instead of being confined to the home, American women joined the labor force and experimented with ways of behavior that would have been unthinkable a few years before.

In this excerpt from his book, *Only Yesterday: An Informed History of the Nineteen-Twenties*, Frederick Lewis Allen describes the vast change in lifestyle for the nation's females.

A first-class revolt against the accepted American order was certainly taking place during those early years of the Post-war Decade, but it was one with which [Russian leader] Nikolai Lenin had nothing whatever to do. The shock troops of the rebellion were not alien agitators, but the sons and daughters of well-to-do American families, who knew little about Bolshevism and cared distinctly less, and their defiance was expressed not in obscure radical publications or in soap-box speeches, but right across the family breakfast table into the horrified ears of conservative fathers and mothers. Men and women were still shivering at the Red Menace when they awoke to the no less alarming Problem of the Younger Generation, and realized that if the Constitution were not in danger, the moral code of the country certainly was.

This code, as it currently concerned young people, might

have been roughly summarized as follows: Women were the guardians of morality; they were made of finer stuff than men and were expected to act accordingly. Young girls must look forward in innocence (tempered perhaps with a modicum of physiological instruction) to a romantic love match which would lead them to the altar and to living-happily-ever-after; and until the "right man" came along they must allow no male to kiss them. It was expected that some men would succumb to the temptations of sex, but only with a special class of outlawed women; girls of respectable families were supposed to have no such temptations. Boys and girls were permitted large freedom to work and play together, with decreasing and well-nigh nominal chaperonage, but only because the code worked so well on the whole that a sort of honor system was supplanting supervision by their elders; it was taken for granted that if they had been well brought up they would never take advantage of this freedom. And although the attitude toward smoking and drinking by girls differed widely in different strata of society and different parts of the country, majority opinion held that it was morally wrong for them to smoke and could hardly imagine them showing the effects of alcohol.

The war had not long been over when cries of alarm from parents, teachers, and moral preceptors began to rend the air. For the boys and girls just growing out of adolescence were making mincemeat of this code.

Females Shatter Previous Standards of Behavior

The dresses that the girls—and for that matter most of the older women—were wearing seemed alarming enough. In July, 1920, a fashion-writer reported in the *New York Times* that "the American woman . . . has lifted her skirts far beyond any modest limitation," which was another way of saying that the hem was now all of nine inches above the ground. It was freely predicted that skirts would come down again in the winter of 1920–21, but instead they climbed a few scandalous inches farther. The flappers

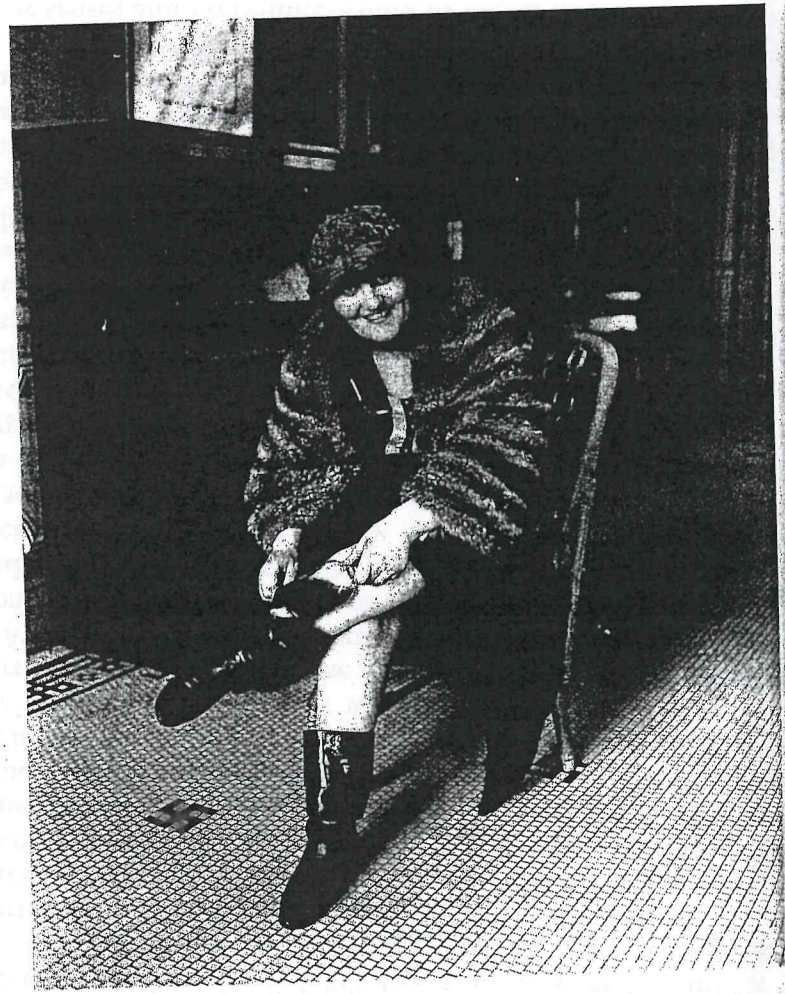
wore thin dresses, short-sleeved and occasionally (in the evening) sleeveless; some of the wilder young things rolled their stockings below their knees, revealing to the shocked eyes of virtue a fleeting glance of shin-bones and knee-cap; and many of them were visibly using cosmetics. . . .

The current mode in dancing created still more consternation. Not the romantic violin but the barbaric saxophone now dominated the orchestra, and to its passionate crooning and wailing the fox-trotters moved in what the editor of the Hobart College *Herald* disgustedly called a "syncopated embrace." No longer did even an inch of space separate them; they danced as if glued together, body to body, cheek to cheek. Cried the *Catholic Telegraph* of Cincinnati in righteous indignation, "The music is sensuous, the embracing of partners—the female only half dressed—is absolutely indecent; and the motions—they are such as may not be described, with any respect for propriety, in a family newspaper. Suffice it to say that there are certain houses appropriate for such dances; but those houses have been closed by law."

Supposedly "nice" girls were smoking cigarettes—openly and defiantly, if often rather awkwardly and self-consciously. They were drinking—somewhat less openly but often all too efficaciously. There were stories of daughters of the most exemplary parents getting drunk—"blotto," as their companions cheerfully put it—on the contents of the hip-flasks of the new prohibition régime, and going out joyriding with men at four in the morning. And worst of all, even at well-regulated dances they were said to retire where the eye of the most sharp-sighted chaperon could not follow, and in darkened rooms or in parked cars to engage in the unspeakable practice of petting and necking.

It was not until F. Scott Fitzgerald, who had hardly graduated from Princeton and ought to know what his generation were doing brought out *This Side of Paradise* in April, 1920, that fathers and mothers realized fully what was afoot and how long it had been going on. Apparently the "petting party" had been current as early as 1916, and was

now widely established as an indoor sport. "None of the Victorian mothers—and most of the mothers were Victorian—had any idea how casually their daughters were accustomed to be kissed," wrote Mr. Fitzgerald. ". . . Amory saw girls doing things that even in his memory would have been impossible: eating three-o'clock, after-dance suppers



Prohibition, coupled with the younger generation's more rebellious attitude, led to a new moral standard during the 1920s. Here, a flapper reveals her secret hiding place for illegal liquor—an ankle flask.

Source E

in impossible cafés, talking of every side of life with an air half of earnestness, half of mockery, yet with a furtive excitement that Amory considered stood for a real moral letdown. But he never realized how widespread it was until he saw the cities between New York and Chicago as one vast juvenile intrigue." The book caused a shudder to run down the national spine; did not Mr. Fitzgerald represent one of his well-nurtured heroines as brazenly confessing, "I've kissed dozens of men. I suppose I'll kiss dozens more"; and another heroine as saying to a young man (*to a young man!*), "Oh, just one person in fifty has any glimmer of what sex is. I'm hipped on Freud and all that, but it's rotten that every bit of real love in the world is ninety-nine per cent passion and one little *soupçon* of jealousy"?

It was incredible. It was abominable. What did it all mean? Was every decent standard being thrown over? Mothers read the scarlet words and wondered if they themselves "had any idea how often their daughters were accustomed to be kissed.". . .

The forces of morality rallied to the attack. Dr. Francis E. Clark, the founder and president of the Christian Endeavor Society, declared that the modern "indecent dance" was "an offense against womanly purity, the very fountainhead of our family and civil life." The new style of dancing was denounced in religious journals as "impure, polluting, corrupting, debasing, destroying spirituality, increasing carnality," and the mothers and sisters and church members of the land were called upon to admonish and instruct and raise the spiritual tone of these dreadful young people. President Murphy of the University of Florida cried out with true Southern warmth, "The low-cut gowns, the rolled hose and short skirts are born of the Devil and his angels, and are carrying the present and future generations to chaos and destruction.". . .

Not content with example and reproof, legislators in several states introduced bills to reform feminine dress once and for all. The *New York American* reported in 1921 that a bill was pending in Utah providing fine and imprisonment

for those who wore on the streets "skirts higher than three inches above the ankle." A bill was laid before the Virginia legislature which would forbid any woman from wearing shirtwaists or evening gowns which displayed "more than three inches of her throat." In Ohio the proposed limit of decolletage was two inches; the bill introduced in the Ohio legislature aimed also to prevent the sale of any "garment which unduly displays or accentuates the lines of the female figure," and to prohibit any "female over fourteen years of age" from wearing "a skirt which does not reach to that part of the foot known as the instep."

Meanwhile innumerable families were torn with dissension over cigarettes and gin and all-night automobile rides. Fathers and mothers lay awake asking themselves whether their children were not utterly lost; sons and daughters evaded questions, lied miserably and unhappily, or flared up to reply rudely that at least they were not dirty-minded hypocrites, that they saw no harm in what they were doing and proposed to go right on doing it. From those liberal clergymen and teachers who prided themselves on keeping step with all that was new, came a chorus of reassurance: these young people were at least franker and more honest than their elders had been; having experimented for themselves, would they not soon find out which standards were outworn and which represented the accumulated moral wisdom of the race? Hearing such hopeful words, many good people took heart again. Perhaps this flare-up of youthful passion was a flash in the pan, after all. Perhaps in another year or two the boys and girls would come to their senses and everything would be all right again.

They were wrong, however. For the revolt of the younger generation was only the beginning of a revolution in manners and morals that was already beginning to affect men and women of every age in every part of the country.

War's Impact Reaches Society

A number of forces were working together and interacting upon one another to make this revolution inevitable.

Source E

First of all was the state of mind brought about by the war [World War I] and its conclusion. A whole generation had been infected by the eat-drink-and-be-merry-for-tomorrow-we-die spirit which accompanied the departure of the soldiers to the training camps and the fighting front. There had been an epidemic not only of abrupt war marriages, but of less conventional liaisons. In France, two million men had found themselves very close to filth and annihilation and very far from the American moral code and its defenders; prostitution had followed the flag and willing mademoiselles from Armentières had been plentiful; American girls sent over as nurses and war workers had come under the influence of continental manners and standards without being subject to the rigid protections thrown about their continental sisters of the respectable classes; and there had been a very widespread and very natural breakdown of traditional restraints and reticences and taboos. It was impossible for this generation to return unchanged when the ordeal was over. Some of them had acquired under the pressure of war-time conditions a new code which seemed to them quite defensible; millions of them had been provided with an emotional stimulant from which it was not easy to taper off. Their torn nerves craved the anodynes of speed, excitement, and passion. They found themselves expected to settle down into the humdrum routine of American life as if nothing had happened, to accept the moral dicta of elders who seemed to them still to be living in a Pollyanna land of rosy ideals which the war had killed for them. They couldn't do it, and they very disrespectfully said so.

"The older generation had certainly pretty well ruined this world before passing it on to us," wrote one of them (John F. Carter in the *Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1920), expressing accurately the sentiments of innumerable contemporaries. "They give us this thing, knocked to pieces, leaky, red-hot, threatening to blow up; and then they are surprised that we don't accept it with the same attitude of pretty, decorous enthusiasm with which they received it, way back in the 'eighties.". . .

Source E

Freedom from the Household

The revolution was accelerated also by the growing independence of the American woman. She won the suffrage [right to vote] in 1920. She seemed, it is true, to be very little interested in it once she had it; she voted, but mostly as the unregenerate men about her did, despite the efforts of women's clubs and the League of Women Voters to awaken her to womanhood's civic opportunity; feminine candidates for office were few, and some of them—such as Governor Ma Ferguson of Texas—scarcely seemed to represent the starry-eyed spiritual influence which, it had been promised, would presently ennoble public life. Few of the younger women could rouse themselves to even a passing interest in politics: to them it was a sordid and futile business, without flavor and without hope. Nevertheless, the winning of the suffrage had its effect. It consolidated woman's position as man's equal.

Even more marked was the effect of woman's growing independence of the drudgeries of housekeeping. Smaller houses were being built, and they were easier to look after. Families were moving into apartments, and these made even less claim upon the housekeeper's time and energy. Women were learning how to make lighter work of the preparation of meals. Sales of canned foods were growing, the number of delicatessen stores had increased three times as fast as the population during the decade 1910–20, the output of bakeries increased by 60 per cent during the decade 1914–24. Much of what had once been housework was now either moving out of the home entirely or being simplified by machinery. The use of commercial laundries, for instance, increased by 57 per cent between 1914 and 1924. . . .

Up to this time girls of the middle classes who had wanted to "do something" had been largely restricted to school-teaching, social-service work, nursing, stenography, and clerical work in business houses. But now they poured out of the schools and colleges into all manner of new occupations. They besieged the offices of publishers and advertisers; they went into tearoom management until there

threatened to be more purveyors than consumers of chicken patties and cinnamon toast; they sold antiques, sold real estate, opened smart little shops, and finally invaded the department stores. . . .

With the feeling of economic independence came a slackening of husbandry and parental authority. Maiden aunts and unmarried daughters were leaving the shelter of the family roof to install themselves in kitchenette apartments of their own. For city-dwellers the home was steadily becoming less of a shrine, more of a dormitory—a place of casual shelter where one stopped overnight on the way from the restaurant and the movie theater to the office. . . .

The Sexual Revolution

Like all revolutions, this one was stimulated by foreign propaganda. It came, however, not from Moscow, but from Vienna. Sigmund Freud had published his first book on psychoanalysis at the end of the nineteenth century, and he and Jung had lectured to American psychologists as early as 1909, but it was not until after the war that the Freudian gospel began to circulate to a marked extent among the American lay public. The one great intellectual force which had not suffered disrepute as a result of the war was science; the more-or-less educated public was now absorbing a quantity of popularized information about biology and anthropology which gave a general impression that men and women were merely animals of a rather intricate variety, and that moral codes had no universal validity and were often based on curious superstitions. A fertile ground was ready for the seeds of Freudianism, and presently one began to hear even from the lips of flappers that "science taught" new and disturbing things about sex. Sex, it appeared, was the central and pervasive force which moved mankind. Almost every human motive was attributable to it: if you were patriotic or liked the violin, you were in the grip of sex—in a sublimated form. The first requirement of mental health was to have an uninhibited sex life. If you would be well and happy, you must obey your libido. Such

was the Freudian gospel as it imbedded itself in the American mind after being filtered through the successive minds of interpreters and popularizers and guileless readers and people who had heard guileless readers talk about it. . . .

The principal remaining forces which accelerated the revolution in manners and morals were all 100 per cent American. They were prohibition, the automobile, the confession and sex magazines, and the movies.

When the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified, prohibition seemed, as we have already noted, to have an almost united country behind it. Evasion of the law began immediately, however, and strenuous and sincere opposition to it—especially in the large cities of the North and East—quickly gathered force. The results were the bootlegger, the speakeasy, and a spirit of deliberate revolt which in many communities made drinking "the thing to do." From these facts in turn flowed further results: the increased popularity of distilled as against fermented liquors, the use of the hip-flask, the cocktail party, and the general transformation of drinking from a masculine prerogative to one shared by both sexes together. The old-time saloon had been overwhelmingly masculine; the speakeasy usually catered to both men and women. As [reporter] Elmer Davis put it, "The old days when father spent his evenings at Cassidy's bar with the rest of the boys are gone, and probably gone forever; Cassidy may still be in business at the old stand and father may still go down there of evenings, but since prohibition mother goes down with him." Under the new régime not only the drinks were mixed, but the company as well.

Meanwhile a new sort of freedom was being made possible by the enormous increase in the use of the automobile, and particularly of the closed car. (In 1919 hardly more than 10 per cent of the cars produced in the United States were closed; by 1924 the percentage had jumped to 43, by 1927 it had reached 82.8.) The automobile offered an almost universally available means of escaping temporarily from the supervision of parents and chaperons, or from the influence of neighborhood opinion. Boys and girls now thought nothing, as the Lynds [prominent sociologists and authors] pointed out in *Middletown,* of jumping into a car and driving off at a moment's notice—without asking anybody's permission—to a dance in another town twenty miles away, where they were strangers and enjoyed a freedom impossible among their neighbors. The closed car, moreover, was in effect a room protected from the weather which could be occupied at any time of the day or night and could be moved at will into a darkened byway or a country lane. The Lynds quoted the judge of the juvenile court in "Middletown" as declaring that the automobile had become a "house of prostitution on wheels," and cited the fact that of thirty girls brought before his court in a year on charges of sex crimes, for whom the place where the offense had occurred was recorded, nineteen were listed as having committed it in an automobile.

Source E

Finally, as the revolution began, its influence fertilized a bumper crop of sex magazines, confession magazines, and lurid motion pictures, and these in turn had their effect on a class of readers and movie-goers who had never heard and never would hear of Freud and the libido. The publishers of the sex adventure magazines, offering stories with such titles as "What I Told My Daughter the Night Before Her Marriage," "Indolent Kisses," and "Watch Your Step-Ins," learned to a nicety the gentle art of arousing the reader without arousing the censor. The publishers of the confession magazines, while always instructing their authors to provide a moral ending and to utter pious sentiments, concentrated on the description of what they euphemistically called "missteps." Most of their fiction was faked to order by hack writers who could write one day "The Confessions of a Chorus Girl" and the next day recount, again in the first person, the temptations which made it easy for the taxi-driver to go wrong. Both classes of magazines became astonishingly numerous and successful. Bernarr McFadden's *True-Story,* launched as late as 1919, had over 300,000 readers by 1923; 848,000 by 1924; over a million and a half by 1925; and almost two

million by 1926—a record of rapid growth probably unparalleled in magazine publishing.

Crowding the news stands along with the sex and confession magazines were motion-picture magazines which depicted "seven movie kisses" with such captions as "Do you recognize your little friend, Mae Busch? She's had lots of kisses, but she never seems to grow *blasé*. At least you'll agree that she's giving a good imitation of a person enjoying this one." The movies themselves, drawing millions to their doors every day and every night, played incessantly upon the same lucrative theme. The producers of one picture advertised "brilliant men, beautiful jazz babies, champagne baths, midnight revels, petting parties in the purple dawn, all ending in one terrific smashing climax that makes you gasp"; the venders of another promised "neckers, petters, white kisses, red kisses, pleasure-mad daughters, sensation-craving mothers, . . . the truth—bold, naked, sensational." Seldom did the films offer as much as these advertisements promised, but there was enough in some of them to cause a sixteen-year-old girl (quoted by Alice Miller Mitchell) to testify, "Those pictures with hot love-making in them, they make girls and boys sitting together want to get up and walk out, go off somewhere, you know. Once I walked out with a boy before the picture was even over. We took a ride. But my friend, she all the time had to get up and go out with her boy friend.". . .

Each of these diverse influences—the post-war disillusion, the new status of women, the Freudian gospel, the automobile, prohibition, the sex and confession magazines, and the movies—had its part in bringing about the revolution. Each of them, as an influence, was played upon by all the others; none of them could alone have changed to any great degree the folkways of America; together their force was irresistible.

Source E

The Growth of Black Pride

Geoffrey Perrett

Though African Americans constantly fought bigotry and prejudice throughout the decade, important advances occurred. Black artists and writers spurred a rebirth of culture in New York City, while thousands of other African Americans poured into northern states in search of better jobs. Geoffrey Perrett has written many respected histories in his career. In this excerpt, he describes African American achievements in the 1920s.

On the streets of a dozen American cities a nation in exile was being formed, flaunting its existence in a tangible, visible reality. It sported titles and decorations, and strutting at its head, beneath a hat with white plumes, wearing a uniform in the purple, black, and green colors of the new nation, was its provisional president, Marcus Garvey.

West Indian blacks, such as Garvey, were as a rule more self-reliant and better businessmen than American-born blacks, who scorned them as people lacking in soul. Garvey was typical: assertive, articulate, and ambitious. The West Indians had grown up oppressed by poverty and racism. Yet, discrimination in the West Indies was subtler than in Alabama or even in New York and opportunities correspondingly greater. Harlemites grudgingly accepted them as the "shock troops" in the struggle to open the job market wider for urban blacks.