

## **AP US History Notes: Period 7 (1890-1945)**

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### **Six Things to Know about Period 7:**

1. The United States continued its transition from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy. In the 1920s, urban areas grew and employment opportunities were on the rise. However, the United States would soon plunge into the Great Depression.
2. Progressives across the country responded to political and economic uncertainty; they called for greater government action regarding social issues such as women's suffrage, the prohibition of alcohol, political corruption, and economic inequality.
3. With new forms of mass media, modern culture was born in an era known as the "Roaring Twenties," also dubbed the "Jazz Age." Americans debated larger social issues such as science, religion, gender roles, race, and immigration.
4. Major changes in migration occurred, as Americans and migrants from Asia and Europe increasingly moved into urban areas. Nativist campaigns succeeded in convincing the government to pass quotas and restrictions on immigration. The "Great Migration" saw African Americans leave the racial violence and segregation of the South and move to the North, where they sought better economic opportunities.
5. In an attempt to end the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt promoted his "New Deal" plan to assist the poor, provide employment, and revitalize a stalling, weak economy. Through the New Deal, Roosevelt helped define modern American liberalism and left a long-lasting legacy of political, social, and economic reform.
6. America fought in three major wars during this period. The United States' victory in the Spanish-American War resulted in increased overseas territory. After a period of relative peace, America entered World War I in 1917. The U.S. then entered a short-lived period of isolationism before World War II.

### **Key Topics-- Period 7 (1890-1945 C.E.)**

Remember that the AP US History exam tests you on the depth of your knowledge, not just your ability to recall facts. While we have provided brief definitions here, you will need to know these terms in even more depth for the AP US History exam, including how terms connect to broader historical themes and understandings.

## The “Forgettable” Administrations

- **Rutherford B. Hayes:** Nineteenth President. Served 1877–1881. While a Civil War veteran and a Republican, he ended Reconstruction as part of the Compromise of 1877 to resolve the disputed 1876 election. Enacted modest civil service reform. Ordered federal troops in to break up the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. Pledged not to run for reelection and returned to Ohio.
- **James Garfield:** Twentieth President. Served from March 4, 1881 until his death on September 19, 1881. He was shot on July 2, 1881, but unsanitary medical treatment caused a fatal infection to take root. Otherwise unnotable. See: Chester A. Arthur.
- **Chester A. Arthur:** Twenty-first President. Served 1881–1885, but only assumed office after President Garfield’s assassination. Mainly remembered for the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act, which encouraged a merit-based system for the civil service. Declined to run for reelection in 1884 due to poor health. He died in November 1886 from a cerebral hemorrhage.
- **Spoils system:** A form of political corruption where a political parties rewards its supporters with favors, often posts to public office. See: political machine, Pendleton Civil Service Act.
- **Gilded Age:** A period from the 1870s to 1900. While marked by massive economic growth due to industrialization, it also led to equally massive economic inequality. Backlash to this period manifested in the reforms of the Progressive Era. See: robber barons.
- **Political machines:** An authoritarian or oligarchical political organization that commands political influence, voting blocs, and corporate influence in such a way that they can decide (or strongly influence) the outcome of elections. Often corrupt and prone to political patronage. Usually active at the city level, but sometimes extends statewide. A target of reform during the Gilded Age. See: direct primaries, Pendleton Civil Service Act, spoils system, Tammany Hall.
- **Stalwarts:** A term for a faction of the Republican Party that supported the party patronage (spoils) system during the Gilded Age.
- **Halfbreeds:** A term for a faction of the Republican Party opposed to the party patronage (spoils) system during the Gilded Age.
- **Mugwumps:** A term for a faction of the Republican Party neutral in regards to party patronage (spoils) system during the Gilded Age, but who still advocated modest reform of it.
- **Grover Cleveland:** Twenty-second and twenty-fourth President. Only president to serve non-consecutive terms, in 1885–1889 and 1893–1897. The first Democratic Party president since before the Civil War. Supported the gold

standard. His second term was defined by the Panic of 1893, which caused a severe depression. Sent federal troops in to break up the Pullman Strike. His resolution of the Venezuelan crisis of 1895 began the reconciliation between the United States and British Empire.

- **Pendleton Civil Service Act of 1881:** A reform which encouraged a merit-based system for the civil service over the then-predominant party patronage (spoils) system. See: Chester A. Arthur.

## **Agrarian Discontent**

- **Benjamin Harrison:** Twenty-third President. Served 1889–1893, and was bookended by Cleveland’s two non-consecutive terms. Harrison supported the passage of the Sherman Antitrust Act but did little to enforce it. His attempt at securing voting rights for African Americans was unsuccessful. Modernized the U.S. Navy with new warships.
- **Farmers’ Alliance:** An alliance of farmers in several states. The Alliance gained membership, successfully seated senators and governors in several midwestern states, and eventually morphed into the Populist Party.
- **Populist Party:** Also known as the People’s Party. Their 1892 policy platform advocated for a silver standard, a graduated income tax, direct election of U.S. senators, and ownership of railroads, telegraph, and telephone lines. While the Populists won five Western states in the 1892 election, the Democrats absorbed their policies thanks to William Jennings Bryan.
- **Panic of 1893:** An economic depression caused by the failure of the Reading Railroad company and by over-speculation artificially inflating the price of stocks. The market did not recover for almost four years. Investors began trading in their silver for more valuable gold, depleting the already dangerously low supply of gold. See: Grover Cleveland.
- **Jacob Coxey:** Also known as General Coxey. He led “Coxey’s Army” into Washington, D.C. in 1894 and 1914 to demand that the Congress create jobs for the unemployed. His ideas would contribute to the development of the Social Security Act.
- **Gold Bugs:** A term for pro-gold standard Democrats, such as Grover Cleveland. See: “Cross of Gold” speech.
- **William Jennings Bryan:** Nicknamed “The Great Commoner.” An outspoken Christian fundamentalist and anti-imperialist, Bryan served as the Democratic Party’s nominee for President on three separate occasions. He saved the party from being overtaken by the insurgent Populist Party by co-opting its progressive

policies and rhetoric. Later served as the prosecutor in the Scopes Monkey Trial. See: ACLU, “Cross of Gold” speech.

- **“Cross of Gold” speech:** A famous speech delivered by William Jennings Bryan at the Democratic National Convention in 1896. In it, Bryan savaged the gold standard in favor of bimetallism. The speech concluded with the line “you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.” It won Bryan, a dark horse, the Democratic nomination for President. Considered one of the greatest works of American rhetoric.
- **William McKinley:** Twenty-fifth President. Served 1897–1901. A proponent of the gold standard and a moderate between business and labor interests, McKinley was assassinated six months into his second term by an anarchist. McKinley oversaw U.S. involvement in the Spanish-American War, as well as the subsequent extension of American control over Cuba and the Philippines. See: Grover Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, Treaty of Paris (1898).

## Origins of Progressivism

- **Theodore Roosevelt:** Twenty-sixth President. Served 1901–1909. A reformist New York governor, Roosevelt was kicked upstairs by party bosses to the vice presidency, which was seen as an unimportant office. After McKinley was assassinated, Roosevelt became president at 42, the youngest ever. He pursued a progressive domestic agenda called the Square Deal. In terms of foreign policy, he forced through construction of the Panama Canal. He brokered an end to the Russo-Japanese War, which secured him the 1906 Nobel Peace Prize. He unsuccessfully attempted to run for a third, non-consecutive term in 1912. See: Bull Moose Party, Rough Riders.
- **Progressive Era:** An era of social and political reform that began with the swearing in of Theodore Roosevelt in 1901 and lasted until the beginning of U.S. involvement in World War I in 1917. Antitrust legislation and labor reform were key aspects of this era, along with support for women’s suffrage, direct election of U.S. senators, and prohibition of alcohol. See: Frederick W. Taylor, Gilded Age, political machines, Social Gospel, Square Deal.
- **Social Gospel:** An influential Protestant social justice movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It stated that Christians had an obligation to improve the lives of those less fortunate, especially the poor. Its leaders encouraged many middle-class Protestants to join reform efforts, such as those calling for laws banning child labor and making school compulsory for children. Essentially, it was the religious wing of the Progressive movement.

- **Joseph Pulitzer:** A pioneer of yellow journalism in the 1880s and rival to William Randolph Hearst. He was associated with the Democratic Party in New York. Today best remembered for establishing the Pulitzer Prize, an award for achievements in journalism.
- **William Randolph Hearst:** A pioneer of yellow journalism in the 1880s and rival to Joseph Pulitzer. Owned a media empire. He was associated with the progressive movement. Today, he is best remembered for helping kick off the Spanish-American War with his news coverage, as well as for the thinly veiled portrayal of his biography in the 1941 classic Citizen Kane.
- **Muckrakers:** A nickname for investigative journalists who seek to spur reform and expose corruption. Originated during the Progressive Era. The term comes from Theodore Roosevelt, who said: “. . . the men with the muck rakes are often indispensable to the well being of society; but only if they know when to stop raking the muck.”

### State, Local, and Presidential Progressivism

- **Robert “Fighting Bob” La Follette:** Governor and later U.S. Senator of Wisconsin. A notable Republican from his party’s progressive wing, he forced the introduction of direct primaries in his state, campaigned for child labor laws, a minimum wage, and women’s suffrage. He opposed U.S. entry into World War I. Ran for president as the Progressive Party candidate in 1924, but won only his home state and roughly 17 percent of the national vote.
- **Direct primaries:** A process by which state voters nominate their own slate of candidates as opposed to selection of the party ticket by the state legislature. While standard in the present day it was first adopted by Wisconsin in 1906. See: Robert “Fighting Bob” La Follette.
- **Seventeenth Amendment:** Progressive Era reform that required the direct election of U.S. senators by the people of their home state. Passed in 1913. Beside the pro-democratic arguments for its passage, state legislatures favored the amendment due to the protracted gridlock that selecting and confirming U.S. senators was increasingly causing them.
- **Square Deal:** A progressive policy platform advocated by President Theodore Roosevelt. It involved breaking up trusts, increasing government regulation of business, pro-labor laws, and promoting environmental conservation. The New Deal took its name from it. See: Hepburn Act, Meat Inspection Act, National Conservation Commission, Northern Securities Company.
- **Northern Securities Company:** An example of progressivism during Theodore Roosevelt’s presidency. The railroad monopoly fought the president by

taking its case all the way to the Supreme Court. The court, however, upheld the president's position. Roosevelt's victory gave him a reputation as a champion "trust buster." See: Elkins Act, Hepburn Act, Square Deal.

- **Elkins Act:** Passed in 1903, it allowed the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to prohibit rail companies from giving rebates and kickbacks to favored customers. See: Square Deal.
- **Hepburn Act:** A 1906 law that allowed the ICC to regulate what rates railroad lines could charge, ending the long-haul/short-haul price gouging that had been the bane of farmers. See: Square Deal.
- **Pure Food and Drug Act:** A 1906 piece of progressive legislation. It ensured the safety and accurate labelling of food and drug products. Inspired in part by Upton Sinclair's 1906 novel *The Jungle*, a story illustrating the poor conditions at a Chicago meatpacking plant.
- **Meat Inspection Act:** A law passed in 1907 to ensure that meat sold in the U.S. is properly preserved, chemically unadulterated, and generally unspoiled. See: Square Deal.
- **National Conservation Commission:** A conservation committee established by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908. See: Square Deal, Turner's "Frontier Thesis."
- **William Howard Taft:** Twenty-seventh President. Served 1909–1913. Tenth Chief Justice (1921–1930). While a trust-busting Republican in Theodore Roosevelt's mold, he also had some sympathies with the party's conservative wing. Split the vote with Roosevelt's Bull Moose Party in the 1912 election, allowing Woodrow Wilson to win the White House. Later appointed to the Supreme Court, becoming the only person to have led both the executive and judicial branches.
- **Mann-Elkins Act:** A law passed in 1910 that placed the regulation of communications directly under the ICC. See: William Howard Taft.
- **Sixteenth Amendment:** Ratified in 1913, it authorized the federal government to collect an income tax. See: Populist Party.
- **Bull Moose Party:** A short-lived third party formed by Theodore Roosevelt to support his 1912 run for President. Officially named the Progressive Party, its common name stems from a quote by Roosevelt that he was still "fit as a bull moose" following an assassination attempt. See: New Nationalism.
- **Woodrow Wilson:** Twenty-eighth President. Served 1913–1921, although a series of near-fatal strokes in late 1919 incapacitated him for the rest of his life, and the remainder of his presidency was essentially run by his wife Edith. The first Southern president since before the Civil War. When healthy, Wilson supported a number of progressive reforms, such as the Federal Reserve Act and

the Clayton Antitrust Act. Implemented segregation throughout the executive branch offices, including the Navy, which had never been segregated. Internationally, he is famous for the Fourteen Points as well as his brainchild, the League of Nations. Died in 1924.

- **New Nationalism:** A policy proposal by Theodore Roosevelt in the election of 1912. In contrast to Wilson's New Freedom agenda, it proposed a smaller federal government with less big business influence. It also sought to support entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- **New Freedom:** A policy proposal by Woodrow Wilson in the election of 1912. In contrast to Roosevelt's New Nationalism agenda, it proposed that the government take a larger role in regulating business. It also sought to grant women voting rights and to support various federal assistance programs.
- **Underwood Tariff Bill:** A 1913 reform that significantly reduced tariff rates and protected consumers by keeping the price of manufactured goods low. To offset the loss of federal revenues from the lower tariff, President Wilson used the power of the Sixteenth Amendment to have Congress enact a graduated income tax.
- **Panic of 1907:** A financial crisis triggered by a stock manipulation scheme involving the copper market, causing a panic and run on the banks. An economic depression was averted by the intervention of banker J. P. Morgan, who essentially bailed out the American banking system. Led to the creation of the Federal Reserve System.
- **Federal Reserve Act:** Passed in 1913 in reaction to the Panic of 1907. It created the Federal Reserve System.
- **Federal Reserve System:** Created in 1913, it consists of 12 regional banks that are publicly controlled by the Federal Reserve Board but privately owned by member banks. The system serves as the "lender of last resort" for all private banks, holds and sells the nation's bonds, and issues Federal Reserve Notes—otherwise known as dollar bills—for consumers to purchase goods and services. See: Second Bank of the United States.
- **Clayton Antitrust Act:** A 1914 law which strengthened provisions for breaking up trusts and protected labor unions from prosecution under the Sherman Antitrust Act. Labor leader Samuel Gompers hailed the bill as labor's "Magna Carta." See: interlocking directorates.
- **Federal Trade Commission:** Created in 1914, the FTC is a regulatory agency that monitors interstate business activities and forces companies who break laws to comply with government's "cease and desist" orders.

## American Business and Consumerism

- **Frederick W. Taylor:** Author of the 1911 book *The Principles of Scientific Management*, an influential book on scientific management (Taylorism). His ideas were adapted by Henry Ford.
- **Henry Ford:** He applied Taylor's principles of scientific management to make factory production faster and more efficient, specifically with his automobile factory assembly lines. This led to the creation and production of the Ford Model T, the first affordable car.
- **Warren G. Harding:** Twenty-ninth President. Served from 1921 until August 2, 1923. Initially popular, various scandals (such as Teapot Dome) uncovered after his death destroyed Harding's reputation. Oversaw the Washington Naval Conference. See: Calvin Coolidge, Ohio Gang.
- **Ohio Gang/Poker Cabinet:** A nickname for President Warren Harding's cabinet, as it was mostly made up of old friends from the president's home state who were knowledgeable in the areas in which they served. Had a well-earned reputation for corruption.
- **Calvin Coolidge:** Thirtieth President. Served 1923–1929. Assumed the presidency following Warren G. Harding's death. Elected in 1924. Nicknamed "Silent Cal" for his tight-lipped nature. He was a small-government conservative and supported laissez-faire economics. Unsuccessfully called on Congress to make lynching a federal crime.
- **Washington Naval Conference:** A 1921–1922 arms control conference that reflected the antiwar mood of the 1920s. It attempted to limit battleships. Belgium, Britain, China, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the United States all attended. The Soviet Union was not invited due to its ongoing ostracization from the international system during this period. Unintentionally contributed to the development and popularization of the aircraft carrier, the key naval weapon of World War II.
- **Dawes Plan:** A loan program crafted by Charles Dawes that enabled Germany to pay its war reparations, thus lessening the financial crisis in Europe. It was successful until the program ended with the U.S. stock market crash in 1929.
- **Herbert Hoover:** Thirty-first President. Served 1929–1933. A Quaker and humanitarian, he famously led famine relief efforts in Europe after World War I, as well as oversaw the response to the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927. However, his response (or lack thereof) to the Great Depression destroyed his popularity. Homeless encampments were dubbed Hoovervilles as a mocking honor. Signed the Smoot–Hawley Act into law and supported Prohibition.



- **Rugged individualism:** A belief articulated by Herbert Hoover, which stated that anyone could become successful in life through hard work. Influenced his response to the Great Depression. See: Horatio Alger.
- **Kellogg-Briand Pact:** A 1928 pact which sought to foster world peace by making offensive wars illegal throughout the world. Unfortunately, the pact did not have any teeth: it did not prohibit defensive warfare or provide for punishment of countries that disobeyed the pact.
- **Good Neighbor Policy:** A foreign policy initiative by FDR. Centered on Latin America, it saw the withdrawal of American forces from Nicaragua and the establishment of normalized relations between the United States and the nations of Latin America. Its non-interference, non-interventionist doctrine lasted until the start of the Cold War. See: Roosevelt Corollary.

## The Great Depression

- **Black Tuesday:** The name for the worst stock market crash in U.S. history, which occurred on October 29, 1929. A common starting point for the Great Depression.
- **Hawley-Smoot Tariff:** An ill-considered 1930 response to the Great Depression. It raised the tariff on imported goods from 30 to 50 percent, sparking a global trade war that worsened the economic crisis. Over a thousand economists signed a petition opposing its passage.
- **Reconstruction Finance Corporation:** A 1932 response to the Great Depression, created by Congress during the Hoover administration. The corporation was eventually given authority to issue loans to assist railroads, banks, and municipalities to prevent them from collapsing. However, the RFC benefited only the wealthy instead of those truly in need.
- **Bonus Army:** A group of World War I veterans, who marched on Washington in 1932 to demand the early release of bonuses Congress had promised to pay in 1945. The Bonus Bill, however, was not passed by Congress. Soldiers used tear gas and tanks on the unarmed protesters. The U.S. Army also burned the encampment, driving away the veterans.
- **Franklin Delano Roosevelt:** Thirty-second President. Served 1933–1945. Elected to four terms, and the only president to do so. FDR oversaw the response to the Great Depression in the New Deal, led the U.S. through most of World War II, approved the Manhattan Project, and laid the groundwork for the postwar international system. Paralyzed after a 1921 bout with polio, FDR carefully hid his disability with the help of the press. Died in office; succeeded by Harry Truman.

See: Atlantic Charter, Big Three, Eleanor Roosevelt, Executive Order 9066, United Nations.

- **Eighteenth Amendment:** The “noble experiment” in banning alcohol in the United States. This period was known as Prohibition. In practice, narrow exemptions were made for medical necessity or for religious rites that required sacramental wine. Took effect in 1920. Repealed by the Twenty-first Amendment in December 1933. See: speakeasies.
- **Eleanor Roosevelt:** First Lady of the United States (1933–1945). United States Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly (1945–1952). First chair of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights (1946–1952) and oversaw the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Wife of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. A vocal supporter of civil rights. Died 1962.
- **Brain Trust:** A group of economists, professors, and politicians that advised FDR on matters of economic and political policy. Comparable to Andrew Jackson’s Kitchen Cabinet.
- **New Deal:** A series of domestic policy initiatives and social welfare programs proposed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It sought to alleviate the suffering of the Great Depression with massive government spending, thus avoiding a potential communist or fascist revolution. See: Great Society, Keynesian theory, Reagan Revolution, Second New Deal, Square Deal.
- **Emergency Banking Relief Act:** Passed on March 3, 1933, it reopened solvent banks after the nationwide Bank Holiday. Announced by FDR in the first of his fireside chats.
- **Fireside chats:** Weekly radio addresses intended to inform and reassure the American public. Started by FDR in 1933, and maintained by all presidents since then. George W. Bush adapted the practice to podcasting. Barack Obama adapted it to streaming-video, a practice continued by Donald Trump.
- **Public Works Administration:** A New Deal program established during the FDR’s first hundred days. The PWA employed thousands of Americans to rebuild the country’s infrastructure.
- **Tennessee Valley Authority:** A program of the First New Deal, the TVA worked to electrify the impoverished Tennessee Valley with hydroelectric power.
- **Second New Deal:** A program of the First New Deal, the TVA worked to electrify the impoverished Tennessee Valley with hydroelectric power.
- **Works Progress Administration:** A program of the Second New Deal, the WPA encouraged more public works projects and the employment of nontraditional workers—artists, writers, and young people—to build bridges, refurbish parks, write plays, and paint murals.

- **Social Security Act:** Passed in 1935, the SSA guaranteed income for retirees, the disabled, and the unemployed. Unfortunately, the law was biased—it did not apply to millions of agricultural and service workers, such as domestics, nannies, and janitors, who were largely African American. A major U.S. social safety net program.
- **Keynesian theory:** An economic policy that states that governments should spend that which it does not have—in other words, resort to deficit spending. By the government increasing spending, it would “prime the pump” by spurring an increase in demand that would eventually increase the need for employees. See: Great Depression, New Deal.

## Organized Labor Gains

- **National Industrial Recovery Act:** Part of the First New Deal, the NIRA was the most proactive legislation to date (circa 1933) in protecting the rights of workers and organized labor. Its board set maximum work hours, minimum wages, and price floors. It was also responsible for setting production quotas and inventories to prevent overproduction or price gouging. Later ruled unconstitutional in 1935. Importantly for organized labor, the NIRA guaranteed labor the right to organize and collectively bargain. In re Debs, See: National Labor Relations Act.
- **National Labor Relations Act:** Also called the Wagner Act, it strengthened the language of the NIRA. It still stands as the foundation of U.S. labor law, and created the National Labor Relations Board.
- **American Federation of Labor:** A group composed mainly of skilled workers who did not agree that unions should protect all workers. Members of the AFL who wished to extend union membership broke away to form the Congress of Industrial Organizations.
- **Congress of Industrial Organizations:** The CIO organized laborers in America’s heavy industrial sector such as steel, automobiles, and mines. By 1938, the CIO was completely independent of the AFL, which it had split from. Led by John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers.
- **Fair Labor Standards Act:** A law passed during the Second New Deal. It established a federal minimum wage and set the maximum hours for workers employed by interstate businesses. It also ensured an end to child labor.
- **United Auto Workers:** Under the protections provided by the Fair Labor Standards Act, the UAW organized a sit-down strike of assembly line employees at General Motors in 1936 and 1937. When the government refused to intervene between labor and management, the companies reluctantly went to the

bargaining table and formally recognized the UAW as an official party with which to negotiate worker contracts.

### **New Deal Support and Criticism**

- **American Liberty League:** A group of anti-FDR Democrats who opposed the New Deal on grounds that it was socialist. They promoted the concerns of big business and advocated for small government. Tried unsuccessfully to unseat FDR during the 1936 election.
- **Huey P. “Kingfish” Long:** Louisiana Senator and demagogue. He advocated for a “Robin Hood” plan to take from the rich and give to the poor called Share Our Wealth. His plan would impose heavy taxes on inheritance and estates to fund a minimum salary of \$2,000 a year for every American. Long argued that the New Deal was not enough to aid the country’s most needy citizens. Assassinated in September 1935.

### **The Great Depression’s Effects on American Society**

- **Great Depression:** The name for a global economic depression that took place from 1929 and lasted until the outbreak of World War II. The massive social and political disruption it caused due to the loss of wealth and a spike in unemployment contributed to instability throughout the world, and led to the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany. See: Black Tuesday, Hawley-Smoot Tariff, Keynesian theory, New Deal, Second New Deal.
- **Dust Bowl:** A severe drought that hit the Great Plains in the 1930s, killing most of its crops. The topsoil turned to a fine, powdery dust that blew away with the hot winds. Many of these farmers and their families flocked to California and earned the pejorative nickname “Okies,” as many came from the panhandle regions of Oklahoma or Texas.
- **Indian Reorganization Act:** A 1934 law that replaced the Dawes Act of 1887, returning lands to the tribes and giving support to American Indians to reestablish self-governance.

### **Women’s Roles and Suffrage**

- **Triangle Shirtwaist Factory:** An infamous sweatshop fire in New York City on March 25, 1911. 146 out of 500 women and girls, some as young as 15, either died in the blaze or from jumping from the top floors in a desperate bid to escape.

While the factor owners were acquitted of any wrongdoing, despite knowing the exits and fire escapes were locked, it led to massive reforms in factory conditions.

- **Mother Jones:** Born Mary Harris Jones. A female labor activist who traveled the country, even after she lost her ability to write and walk unassisted. Coordinated major strikes. Co-founded the Industrial Workers of the World. Died in 1930 at age 93.
- **National American Woman Suffrage Association:** A women's suffrage organization founded in 1890. See: Carrie Chapman Catt, National Woman's Party, Susan B. Anthony.
- **Carrie Chapman Catt:** Became leader of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1900. An outspoken advocate of women's suffrage, she believed that women could only guarantee protections for themselves and their children through voting.
- **Alice Paul:** American suffragist and women's rights activist. In 1920, she founded the National Woman's Party, a splinter group of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), which she led for the next fifty years. Argued for the inclusion of women as a protected category in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. See: Equal Rights Amendment.
- **National Woman's Party:** A splinter group of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, led by Alice Paul. Founded in 1916, disbanded in 1997. It focused on the ratification of a constitutional amendment securing women's suffrage nationwide. Later sought to secure equal rights for women, such as with the Equal Pay Act of 1963.
- **Nineteenth Amendment:** Ratified in 1920, it granted women the right to vote.
- **League of Women Voters:** An organization founded by Carrie Chapman Catt after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. It exists to assist female voters.

## **African Americans at the Turn of the Century**

- **Booker T. Washington:** An African American activist who argued that his people needed the skills necessary to work within the white world. In essence, he argued that blacks needed to make themselves economically successful before they could become equal to whites. This view came to be known as accommodation. Contrast with: W. E. B. Du Bois.
- **W. E. B. Du Bois:** An African American intellectual who believed that his people should demand nothing less than social and political equality with whites; only then would blacks gain economic success. Contrast with: Booker T. Washington. See: Niagara Movement.

- **Niagara Movement:** A 1905 meeting at Niagara Falls organized by W. E. B. Du Bois. It discussed possible forms of protest and formulated a plan of action to advance the cause of African American equality. It is a direct precursor to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.
- **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People:** The NAACP was founded on February 12, 1908. It seeks to end all racial discrimination, segregation, and disenfranchisement. See: Niagara Movement.
- **Great Migration:** A period beginning around 1910 which saw millions of African Americans move from the South to northern cities. This was to take advantage of economic opportunities in the North, often to escape from the exploitation system of sharecropping.

## Modern American Culture

- **Jazz Age/Roaring Twenties:** An era from 1920 to 1929 that experienced a cultural explosion similar to that of the antebellum period. Jazz music became the music of choice for young people and urbanites. As leisure time increased, radio and movies became popular. The “Lost Generation” was made up of authors and poets, such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, reacted to the impact of technology and business by creating realist or early surrealist works that portrayed America without the glitter of consumerism.
- **Harlem Renaissance:** A term for a cultural flowering in the New York City neighborhood of Harlem during the 1920s. Harlem became the center of African American culture during this period. It helped to change the perception of African Americans.
- **American Civil Liberties Union:** Founded in 1920, the ACLU is an organization dedicated to the absolutist protection of Constitutional liberties, especially those of the First Amendment. In the 1920s, they appointed Clarence Darrow as defense in the Scopes Monkey Trial.
- **John Scopes:** A biology teacher in Dayton, Tennessee, arrested and brought to trial in 1925 for teaching the theory of evolution. While he was found guilty and fined \$100, his conviction was overturned on a legal technicality. See: ACLU, Clarence Darrow.
- **Clarence Darrow:** The defense attorney in the Scopes Monkey Trial, in which he represented teacher John Scopes. See: ACLU.
- **Speakeasies:** Secret clubs that served alcohol. Visitors needed to know the password and whisper it, or “speak easy,” to gain entrance. Had the side effect of normalizing women drinking in public establishments, which had been rare prior to Prohibition and seen as immoral.

- **Emergency Quota Act (Immigration Act):** A 1921 law that set a strict limit on individuals from each nation of origin based on the 1910 census. In practice, this biased immigration in favor of northern and western Europeans. Repealed by the Immigration Act of 1965. See: nativists.
- **Flappers:** A type of middle and upper-class woman in the 1920s. So named because they were not unlike baby birds flapping their wings and leaving the nest. Flappers cut their hair into short bobs, wore short skirts, rolled down their stockings to reveal their knees, drank alcohol, and danced the Charleston. While few in number, their behavior was very public and raised concerns among traditionalists.

## New Imperialism

- **Seward's Folly:** Nickname for the 1867 purchase of Alaska from the Russian Empire for a \$7.2 million. So named because Secretary of State William H. Seward brokered the deal for what was then popularly seen as a worthless icebox. Later, gold and oil were discovered in great quantities in Alaska, making the deal a steal. Russia sold Alaska to the United States to keep it out of the hands of its geopolitical rival, Britain, which seemed poised to eventually seize the land.
- **Yellow journalism:** A term for journalism that produced juicy stories, both real and wildly sensationalized, designed to drive newspaper readership, sometimes at the expense of the truth. See: Joseph Pulitzer, muckrakers, Spanish-American War, William Randolph Hearst.
- **Teller Amendment:** Added to the war declaration on Spain, it assured Cuba and the world that the United States intended to grant Cuba its independence once the war ended. This turned out not to be the case. See: Platt Amendment, Spanish-American War.
- **Spanish-American War:** A war between the United States and Spain (April 21, 1898–August 13, 1898). Ostensibly triggered by the alleged sinking of the Maine by Spanish forces, it involved the United States aiding independence efforts in Cuba to protect financial investments there, as well as to safeguard the Gulf Coast from a free Cuba potentially leasing its ports to foreign powers. The United States took control of Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and several other islands. Also led to the Philippine–American War and subsequent Moro Rebellion (1899–1913). See: Fidel Castro, Platt Amendment, Rough Riders, Treaty of Paris (1898), yellow journalism.
- **Rough Riders:** A volunteer force of college students, cowboys, and adventurers led by Theodore Roosevelt during the Spanish-American War. They famously

battled for control of San Juan Hill in Cuba with the heavy assistance of the Fourteenth Regiment Colored.

- **Treaty of Paris of 1898:** The peace treaty that ended the Spanish-American War. It turned Cuba, Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico over to the United States. The treaty also signaled the end of Spain as a world power and the beginning of the United States as a rising one.
- **Insular Cases:** A 1901 court decision which ruled that a citizen in a conquered territory did not necessarily have the protection of the Constitution. It was up to Congress to decide the rights of the peoples in the newly conquered territories. See: Spanish-American War.
- **Platt Amendment:** A 1903 policy issued by the U.S. after the Spanish-American War. Cuba had to have all treaties approved by the United States; the United States had the right to interfere in Cuban affairs both politically and militarily; and the United States would be given access to naval bases on the island.
- **Open Door Policy:** A policy articulated by Secretary of State John Hay, who served in both the McKinley and Roosevelt administrations. It declared that China would be open and free to trade equally with any nation. The policy was wildly popular in the United States, as it kept Chinese markets open to American business while outwardly avoided the taint of imperialism. Unsurprisingly, it was denounced and resisted in China due to it being a thinly veiled justification for violating their sovereignty. Contributed to the outbreak of the Boxer Rebellion.
- **Big stick diplomacy:** A pejorative label for Teddy Roosevelt's foreign policy, especially in Panama, that referenced his repeated threats to use military force while negotiating peacefully.
- **Roosevelt Corollary:** An amendment to the Monroe Doctrine issued by Theodore Roosevelt. It stated that the United States would come to the aid of any Latin American nation experiencing financial trouble. In essence, the United States gained total control of Latin America through the corollary. See: Good Neighbor Policy.

## World War I

- **U-boat:** A term for German submarines, from unterseeboot ("underwater boat"). Upon their introduction, they were seen as a ghastly weapon that violated the gentlemanly rules of warfare. The sinking of several ocean liners, such as the Lusitania, led to the deaths of American citizens and the entry of the United States into World War I. See: Zimmermann Telegram.



- **Zimmerman Telegram:** A diplomatic letter from German Foreign Secretary Zimmermann to the Mexican president, promising him that if his country assisted Germany in a possible war against the United States, Mexico would be given back the territory lost in the Mexican-American War. A contributing factor to U.S. entry into World War I.
- **Fourteen Points speech:** A speech given by President Wilson in 1918. It outlined his vision for the war aims and peace terms of the United States in World War I.
- **War Industries Board:** An agency established by the federal government during World War I. It sought to control production, wages, and the prices of goods.
- **Selective Service Act:** Commonly referred to simply as “The Draft.” It provided for all American males between the ages of 21 to 35 to register for compulsory military service. This was the first time a peacetime military draft had been initiated, signaling that the president’s stance was shifting from isolationism to interventionism.
- **Espionage Act:** A 1917 law aimed at German-Americans and antiwar activists. It prohibited interfering with military recruitment and any support of enemy nations in wartime. Although parts have been repealed over time, the Espionage Act remains in effect, and has been used to prosecute people even in the 2010s. Used against many dissidents, from Eugene V. Debs to Daniel Ellsberg.
- **Sedition Act (1918):** A law passed during World War I that limited the right to free speech. Antiwar activists and socialists, such as Eugene V. Debs, were targeted, arrested, and jailed.
- **League of Nations:** A precursor to the United Nations, proposed by Woodrow Wilson in his Fourteen Points. Article X of the League’s charter called for members to stand at the ready if another member nation’s sovereignty was being threatened. This killed the charter’s chances of ratification in the U.S., as it seemed to promise future wars. See: reservationists, irreconcilables.
- **Reservationists:** A group led Republican senator Henry Cabot Lodge that agreed to ratify the League of Nations treaty only if reservations, such as the ability to leave the League and international acceptance of the Monroe Doctrine, were added to the League’s covenant. See: irreconcilables.
- **Irreconcilables:** A group led by Senators Hiram Johnson and William Borah who refused to ratify the League of Nations treaty under any circumstances. See: reservationists.

## **American Economy and Society after the Great War**

- **Red Scare:** Ran from 1917 through the 1920s. A period of social anxiety and paranoia concerned with communist and anarchist infiltration throughout society. Driven by events such as the nationalism of World War I, labor unrest, nativism, and most especially the 1917 Russian Revolution that established the world's first communist state in the Soviet Union. Led to a series of mass arrests and deportations in 1919–1920 known as the Palmer Raids.

## International Problems and World War II

- **Adolf Hitler:** Führer of Germany (1934–1945). Leader of the Nazi Party. A decorated World War I veteran, he became dictator of Germany and started both European fronts of World War II. A driving force behind the Holocaust, he used Jewish people as a scapegoat for Germany's loss in World War I. His hatred for Bolsheviks and Slavic people led him to formulate a plan to colonize Eastern Europe, enslaving or genociding the people already living there. Hitler committed suicide near the end of the Battle of Berlin, to avoid capture by vengeful Soviet troops.
- **Treaty of Versailles:** The peace treaty that officially ended World War I, but not ratified by the United States, which secured a separate peace in 1921. The treaty's terms were extremely harsh but, as time went on, laxly enforced, resulting in the worst of both worlds. They contributed to Germany's postwar economic turmoil while allowing for the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. See: Dawes Plan, Fourteen Points.
- **Benito Mussolini:** Also known as "Il Duce." Following October 1922's March on Rome, he became Prime Minister of Italy. Formulated the core concepts of fascism, which were embraced leaders like Adolf Hitler. Aimed to create a new Italian Empire, although his reach usually far exceeded the grasp of his abilities. Killed in April 1945 and famously hung on a meat hook.
- **Joseph Stalin:** Longtime dictator of the Soviet Union. After Lenin's 1924 death, Stalin consolidated power and eliminated rivals, ruling with an iron fist until his own death on March 5, 1953. Favored centralization and collectivization. Purged millions through man-made famine, imprisonment in gulags, and executions. He and Hitler struck a surprise non-aggression pact and divided Poland. See: Big Three.
- **Winston Churchill:** British politician and writer. Served as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom twice (1950–1945, 1951–1955). Best remembered in the West for his early opposition to Adolf Hitler and the policy of appeasement, as well as for his leadership of the British Empire during World War II. See: Iron Curtain.

- **Atlantic Charter:** An Anglo-American policy statement issued in August 1941. Negotiated by Roosevelt and Churchill, it declared that free trade and the self-determination of peoples would be the cornerstones of the post-WWII international system. However, the idea of self-determination was not applied evenly to the British Empire, especially India. See: International Monetary Fund, United Nations, World Bank.
- **Pearl Harbor:** A lagoon harbor located on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. Home to a major U.S. Navy base. On December 7, 1941 it was the target of an infamous surprise attack by Japan. 2,403 Americans were killed and several U.S. Navy ships were destroyed. Inflamed a previously lukewarm American public opinion about involvement in World War II.

## World War II: A Two-Front War

- **Big Three:** A label for the leaders of the “Grand Alliance,” the three major Allied powers in World War II: Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin. See: Yalta Conference.
- **Yalta Conference:** A February 1945 meeting of the Big Three. It finalized their plans for postwar Europe, with the division of Germany into four occupied military zones and Stalin agreeing to allow free elections in Eastern Europe. Stalin also agreed to enter the war against Japan within three months of Germany’s surrender. Yalta also yielded the skeleton framework for the United Nations. See: Atlantic Charter, Berlin Airlift, Berlin Wall, Cold War.
- **United Nations:** An intergovernmental organization chartered in October 1945 to mediate disputes between nations. Its headquarters is located in New York City. All recognized nations are granted seats in the General Assembly. However, veto power is reserved to the five permanent members of the Security Council, who represent the victorious world powers of World War II: Nationalist China (now held by the People’s Republic of China), France, the Soviet Union (now held by Russia), the United Kingdom, and the United States. See: Atlantic Charter, Big Three, Eleanor Roosevelt, League of Nations, Yalta Conference.
- **Dwight D. Eisenhower:** A five-star general, Ike acted as Supreme Commander of the Western Allies in Europe. He oversaw the invasion of North Africa and the Normandy landings. Anticipating the rise of Holocaust denialism, he took steps to see Nazi death camps were extensively photographed and recorded on film. This evidence was soon used at the Nuremberg trials. Later served as the 34th President (1953–1961).
- **D-Day:** A common name for the Normandy landings, although it technically only refers to the initial landing operation on June 6, 1944. The Western Allies

invaded along five beachheads, gaining a foothold in Nazi-occupied France. 2,499 Americans died out of 4,414 total Allied fatalities. Often dramatized in movies and video games.

- **Battle of the Bulge:** The last major German offensive on the Western Front. It took place in December 1944, and aimed to encircle the Allied armies, hold them hostage to force a peace treaty, and thus allow Germany to focus its full attention on the Soviets. Despite suffering heavy losses, the Allies were able to recover and continue their push toward Germany.
- **Final Solution:** Formally, the Final Solution to the Jewish Question. The Nazi plan for the extermination of the Jewish people, which resulted in the Holocaust.
- **V-E Day:** Shorthand for “Victory in Europe Day.” Took place on Tuesday, May 8, 1945.
- **Harry S. Truman:** World War I veteran who led an artillery regiment. Missouri Senator (1935–1945) elected with aid of the Pendergast machine. He later gained a reputation for investigating military waste. Vice President from January 20, 1945 to April 12, 1945. Ascended to the presidency upon FDR’s death. He ordered the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japan and oversaw the final phases of both the Western and Pacific Fronts. See: Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- **Hiroshima and Nagasaki:** Japanese cities destroyed in 1945 by atomic bombs. Hiroshima was struck on August 6 by the “Little Boy” bomb dropped by the Enola Gay, killing 80,000 instantly and 135,000 in the long-term total. Nagasaki was struck on August 9 by the “Fat Man” bomb dropped by the Bockscar, killing another 80,000 in total.

## World War II’s Impact on American Society

- **Office of War Information:** The OWI was organized during World War II to produce radio shows and news reels to keep Americans apprised of events overseas. It aimed to keep American morale high and to increase support for the war.
- **Rosie the Riveter:** A piece of American propaganda during World War II that exalted women’s war work See: Office of War Information.
- **Zoot Suit Riots:** A series of California race riots in summer 1943. Sailors roamed the streets of Los Angeles and Long Beach attacking young “zooters”: Mexican-American teens who wore long coats, flashy colors, and long hairstyles. Due to rationing of fabric to support the war effort, the teens were considered unpatriotic for such extravagance. A special commission appointed by Governor Earl Warren found that the riots were not caused by the sailors and the police.

- **Navajo code talkers:** A group of American Indian volunteers during World War II. They translated U.S. documents and orders into their native language so that enemy forces could not decipher their content.
- **Internment camps:** A series of government-run camps on the West Coast where 100,000 Japanese-Americans were imprisoned during World War II. See: Executive Order 9066.
- **Executive Order 9066:** An order issued by President Roosevelt in 1942 in reaction to the paranoia that American citizens of Japanese ancestry might turn against their adopted country to aid Japan in an invasion of the West Coast. The Supreme Court upheld the decision to intern these citizens in the case *Korematsu v. United States* (1944), stating that in times of war, the curbing of civil rights was justified and that the court could not second-guess military decisions.

### **Post-World War II Recovery**

- **GI Bill:** a 1944 law which provided funding for a college education, as well as low-interest home and small business loans. For 15 million soldiers returning from war, the GI Bill provided the opportunity to secure a career and purchase a home. Facilitated the postwar “baby boom.”
- **Taft-Hartley Act:** A 1947 amendment to the National Labor Relations Act that garnered the support of big business. While vetoed by Truman, it was enacted by a congressional override. The act outlawed “closed-shop” workplaces, limited boycotts, and allowed the president to obtain an 80-day injunction against any strike deemed a danger to national health or safety. Under it, organized labor lost much of the ground it had gained during the New Deal.
- **Rust Belt:** A region of the United States centered around the Great Lakes and upper Midwest. The term references the post-World War II economic decline of the country’s former industrial heartland.