Unit 4 - The 1920s: Conservatism and Change

Key Question:
Are the twenties best described as an era of conservatism or an era of change?

Major Assessments
1. 5 Quizzes (quiz 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 second semester)
2. Advertising project (100 points/minor assignment category, second semester)
3. Multiple choice, short answer and essay exam (100 points, second semester)

* terms are to be defined from lecture - they are not in the book

Section 1 - Politics in the 1920s: Harding Coolidge and a return to Normalcy
Readings:
The Americans, pp. 412 - 414 (to “Limiting immigration”), pp. 419-421
Terms:
Isolationism
Nativism
Communism/Red Scare
Sacco and Vanzetti
Warren G. Harding
The Teapot Dome Scandal
Calvin Coolidge
Albert Fall
Fordney-McCumber Tariff
Palmer Raids
Questions:
1. What is meant by the terms change and conservatism in this unit?
2. What motivated the red scare? What groups were targeted as a result?

Section 2 - Business and prosperity in the 1920s
Readings:
The Americans pp. 422-427
Advertising from the 1920s
Terms:
Henry Ford
The automobile
Urban sprawl
Electric appliances (how did they change life?)
Modern advertising
Buying on credit/installment plans
*Consumer society
*Andrew Mellon
*Sick Industries
Questions:
1. What was the policy of the Harding and Coolidge administrations with regard to big business? How was this policy similar to or different from the policies of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson?
2. Why does the book describe the prosperity during the 1920s as a “superficial prosperity?”

Section 3 - Society in the 1920s
Readings:
The Americans, pp. p 415 (section on the KKK), 434-439, 440-443
Terms:
KKK
Billy Sunday
Aimee Semple McPherson
Fundamentalism
The Scopes Trial
Clarence Darrow
William Jennings Bryan
Prohibition (Amendment XVIII)
Bootleggers and Speakeasies
Organized Crime/Al Capone
Flappers
The League of Women Voters
*The Equal Rights Amendment
*Alice Paul
*Birth control/Margaret Sanger
Questions:
1. What significant demographic development was revealed in the 1920 census? Why was this development significant?
2. What was the connection between prohibition and the rise of organized crime?
3. How did attitudes in small town America differ from attitudes in the big cities? Has this trend continued?
4. How did the social roles of women change in the 1920s?
5. Was the flapper image discussed in your book an advancement for women or not? The trend has continued?

Section 4 - Popular Culture in the 1920s: the rise of the first ‘national culture’
Readings:
The Americans, pp. 446-451
Terms:
Radio
Public education
Sports
Charles Lindbergh
*Rudolph Valentino
Motion Pictures
George Gershwin
Sinclair Lewis
F Scott Fitzgerald
Ernest Hemingway
The Lost Generation
Questions:
1. What factors played a role in the development of a national culture in the 1920s (in other words, what brought Americans together and made them feel like they had something in common regardless of where they lived?)

Section 5 - The Harlem Renaissance
Readings:
The Americans, pp. 452-457
Harlem Renaissance poetry
Terms: (For artists and writers, be able to associate each with their major works)
Zora Neale Hurston
The Great Migration
Race Riots
NAACP
*Bilbo Du Bois
*Fasting/Ida B. Wells
James Weldon Johnson
Marcus Garvey
The Harlem Renaissance
Billie Holiday
Claud McKay
Langston Hughes
Paul Robeson
Louis Armstrong
Duke Ellington
Bessie Smith
Cab Calloway
Countee Cullen
Questions:
1. Why was the Harlem Renaissance significant? Why is it given an entire section of this chapter? Be thoughtful in your answer. This will be discussed in class.
Lecture Outline

I. Change and conservatism

II. Politics in the 1920s
   A. The “Red Scare” and the resurgence of nativism
   B. The Harding administration
   C. The Coolidge administration

III. Business and “prosperity” in the 1920s
   A. New technologies spur growth
   B. Government tax and business policy
   C. Rise of the consumer society
   D. Modern advertising

IV. Society in the 1920s
   A. An urban society
   B. Prohibition and the rise of organized crime
   C. The conflict between modernism and religion
      1. Fundamentalism
      2. The evolution controversy and the Scopes Trial

V. Women in the 1920s
   A. Changing values
   B. The feminist v. The flapper
      1. Feminism
      2. The Flapper

VI. Popular culture in the 1920s
   A. The first national culture
   B. The Rise of the mass media
      1. Motion pictures
      2. Radio
      3. Recorded music
      4. Print media

VII. African Americans struggle for self definition
   A. Race and equality in American Society, 1865-1920
      1. Segregation
      2. Lynching
      3. The New Klan
      4. Racism in popular culture
   B. African American reformers
      1. Booker T. Washington
      2. Ida B Wells
      3. WEB DuBoise
      4. Marcus Garvey
   C. The Great Migration
   D. The Harlem Renaissance