

Inquiry into the Jazz Age and the Culture of Prohibition

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This course explores the era known as “The Jazz Age,” a period beginning with “The Roaring Twenties” and extending into the Depression of the mid-1930s. This glitzy decade, for all its prosperity, was still an epoch haunted by the First World War, xenophobic in its inception of the “Red Scare” and struggling with religious and moral issues in cases such as the Scopes Trial and the Temperance Movement. The rise of the middle class and a new managerial workforce are tempered by the consolidation of wealth into ever-larger corporations. Women win the right to vote. Lindberg flies the Atlantic. The St. Valentine’s Day massacre stuns the nation. Youth Culture explodes along with the new music, new fashion and new styles of dance, as the younger generation embraces modernity while the older generation clings desperately to the values of the past—all this as looming economic disaster silently approaches.