

The Roaring Life of the 1920s**Section 1**

Changing Ways of Life

Terms and Names

Prohibition The era that prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages

speakeasy Hidden saloons and nightclubs that illegally sold liquor

bootlegger Smugglers who brought alcohol in from Canada and the Caribbean

fundamentalism Religious movement based on the belief that everything written in the Bible was literally true

Clarence Darrow Famous trial lawyer

Scopes trial Trial of John Scopes for teaching evolution

Before You Read

In the last section, you learned about American business in the 1920s. In this section, you will read about new lifestyles and values that emerged in the 1920s.

As You Read

Use a diagram to show how the government attempted to deal with problems thought to stem from alcohol use and with the teaching of evolution.

RURAL AND URBAN DIFFERENCES

(Pages 434–437)

What was Prohibition?

The 1920 census showed a change in America. For the first time, more Americans lived in large towns and cities than in small towns and on farms.

The values that most Americans had grown up with were small-town values. They included conservative social standards, hard work, thriftiness, and close families. People knew their neighbors and followed the teachings of their churches.

By the 1920s, urbanization, or the movement of Americans from rural areas to the cities, had increased. New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia had become huge cities. There were over 65 cities with more than 100,000 people. Two million

people a year left their farms and small towns for the cities.

Urban values began to dominate the nation. Life in big cities was different from in small towns. People with different backgrounds came into contact with one another.

City people were more open to new ideas in art, science, and politics. They went out at night. They were more tolerant of drinking and gambling. Life was fast-paced. Sometimes it was impersonal and lonely. Many people who were new to city life found it hard to adjust.

One clash between small-town and city values led to an era known as **Prohibition**. Prohibition was the ban on alcoholic beverages set forth in the Eighteenth Amendment. It took effect in 1920. Most

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support for prohibition came from religious rural white Protestants.

Even though it was the law, the effort to stop drinking was doomed. The government did not have enough officers to enforce it. People made their own alcohol illegally.

In cities, even respectable middle-class people flocked to **speakeasies**. These were hidden saloons and nightclubs that served liquor illegally.

People also bought liquor from **bootleggers**, or smugglers who brought it in from Canada and the Caribbean. Bootleggers created a chain of corruption by bribing police officers and judges.

Prohibition caused a general disrespect for the law. It also caused a great deal of money to flow out of lawful businesses and into organized crime. Underworld gangs took control of the illegal liquor business. The most famous gang was headed by Chicago's Al Capone. Chicago became known for bloody gang killings.

This rise in crime and violence led many people to demand the repeal of prohibition. By the middle of the decade, only 19 percent of Americans supported it. Prohibition was repealed by the Twenty-first Amendment in 1933.

1. How did prohibition affect the nation?

SCIENCE AND RELIGION CLASH

(Pages 438–439)

What was the Scopes Trial?

During the 1920s, the nation saw the rise of Christian **fundamentalism**. This religious movement was based on the belief that everything written in the Bible was literally true. Fundamentalists rejected the growing trust in science that most

Americans had. They were also against the religious faiths of other people, especially immigrants.

These beliefs led fundamentalists to reject Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. According to that theory, plant and animal species had developed over millions of years.

Fundamentalists believed that the Bible was correct in stating that the world and all its plants and animals were created by God in six days. They did not want evolution taught in schools.

Fundamentalist preachers drew large crowds to religious revivals, especially in the South and West. Fundamentalists also gained political power. In 1925, Tennessee passed a law making it a crime to teach evolution.

Many people opposed this law. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) promised to defend in court any teacher who would challenge the law.

John Scopes, a young biology teacher from Dayton, Tennessee, challenged the law. He openly taught about evolution. He was arrested, and his case went to trial. The ACLU hired **Clarence Darrow**, the most famous trial lawyer in the nation, to defend Scopes. William Jennings Bryan was the prosecutor.

Scopes was guilty because he broke the law. But the trial was really about evolution. It was also about religion in schools. Reporters came from all over the world to cover the **Scopes trial**. Huge crowds gathered.

The highlight of the trial was when William Jennings Bryan took the stand. Darrow questioned Bryan until Bryan said that while the earth was made in six days, they were "not six days of 24 hours." Bryan was admitting that the Bible could be interpreted in different ways.

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Even so, Scopes was found guilty. His conviction was later overturned by the state Supreme Court. But the ban on teaching evolution remained a law in Tennessee.

2. How did fundamentalist beliefs lead to the Scopes trial?

Section 1, *continued*

As you read about how the 1920s reflected conflicts and tensions in American culture, take notes to answer the questions below.

In January 1920, Prohibition went into effect.

<p>1. a. Who tended to be supporters of Prohibition at this time?</p> <p>b. Why did they support it?</p>	<p>2. a. Who tended to be opponents of Prohibition at this time?</p> <p>b. Why did they oppose it?</p>
<p>3. Why was Prohibition repealed?</p>	

In July 1925, Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan faced each other in the Scopes trial.

<p>4. a. Who were Darrow's main supporters?</p> <p>b. Why did they support him?</p>	<p>5. a. Who were Bryan's main supporters?</p> <p>b. Why did they support him?</p>
<p>6. What was the outcome of the case?</p>	