

American Cultural History—1910-1919



The Progressive era lasted from 1895 until WWI. The period was restless and reform was needed. Monopolies were present although Theodore Roosevelt made attempts to enforce the Sherman Antitrust Act. During the 1910's, labor unions began to grow even though they were not accepted. Unsafe working

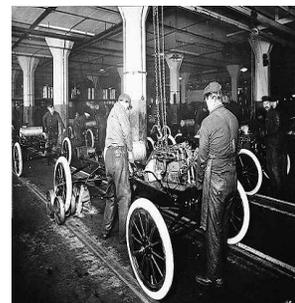
conditions were underscored throughout the US. The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory which killed 145 female workers stood as a signal that reform was needed. Children were hired to work in factories, mills, and mines for long hours in unsafe and unhealthy working conditions. It is believed that 20% of the children living in cities were undernourished. Education took second place to hunger. Less than 10% graduated from high school. Racism worsened throughout the US. Eventually, the KKK would have the highest membership ever. The first suffrage parade took place while the 19th Amendment was ratified in 1919.



WWI would break out in Europe with the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. With the sinking of the Lusitania amongst several reasons, the US would be pulled into the WWI. It was no longer "Over There". General John J. Pershing would lead our beloved troops into the "war to end all wars". The Treaty of Versailles which was written by President Woodrow Wilson would bring Germany's push to take over all of Europe

to an end. Unfortunately, it could also be considered the beginning of WWII.

The country was rapidly becoming a highly industrialized country. Mass production of cars heavily influenced by Henry Ford's Model T and assembly line would provide economic prosperity and social change in the US. The pop



culture shift in the US would be mirrored throughout the world. Dance crazes, jazz music, and fashions of our big cities could be found everywhere. Tobacco became big business for American companies. Immigrants moving to New York City would account for 25% of tobacco purchases. The different points of immigrants would cause for the rise of nativism. Russian immigration with their newly found Communist background would begin the Red Scare.

The sinking of the Titanic and loss of 1500 lives (April 15, 1912) would send shock waves throughout the world. Theodore Roosevelt would start the first National Parks programs. Prohibition would begin in 1919. Native American Jim Thorpe would win many gold medals in the Olympics. By the beginning of the 20's, the US would start to become a world power.

FACTS about this decade. (1900-1910)

- **76,000,000 Americans in 46 states** (by the end of the decade.)
- **Policeman arrests woman for smoking in public**
- **\$46,000,000+ in the U.S. treasury**
- **8,000 cars - 10 miles of paved roads**
- **1900 - Auto deaths 96; lynchings 115**
- **San Francisco Earthquake** took 700 lives and cost over \$4,000,000 in damage.
- **Average worker made \$12.98/week for 59 hours**
- **Life expectancy: 47.3 female, 46.3 male - 33.0 blacks**

• **FACTS about this decade. (1910-1920)**

- • Population: 92,407,000
- • Life Expectancy: Male 48.4 Female: 51.8
- • Average Salary \$750 / year
- • The Ziegfeld girls earned \$75/week.
- • Unemployed 2,150,000
- • National Debt: \$1.15 billion
- • Union Membership: 2.1 million Strikes 1,204
- • Attendance: Movies 30 million per week
- • Lynchings: 76
- • Divorce: 1/1000
- • Vacation: 12 day cruise \$60
- • Whiskey \$3.50 / gallon, Milk \$.32 / gallon
- • Speeds make automobile safety an issue
- • 25,000 performers tour 4,000 U.S. theaters