

The American Yawp

VOLUME II: since 1877

Discussion Questions

16. Capital and Labor

- How did industrialization remake the American economy?
- How did industrialization affect American workers?
- How did Social Darwinism shape many Americans' attitudes toward inequality?
- How did American workers attempt to improve their condition?
- How did workers' and farmers' movements shape American politics?

17. The West

- How would you describe the changes in the American West after Reconstruction?
- What obstacles confronted independent Native Americans after Reconstruction?
- What caused the so-called "Indian Wars?"
- How did technology shape the West?
- What can the Turner thesis teach us about the late nineteenth century United States?

18. Life in Industrial America

- How did Chicago represent industrial America?
- How did the era of industrialization transform American culture?
- How did immigrant communities form and support themselves?
- What was the "New South?"
- How did the era of industrialization affect ideas about gender and sexuality?

19. American Empire

- How did American foreign policy change in the late-nineteenth century?
- What arguments did Americans make to support interventions abroad?
- How was the question of immigration tied up with American imperialism?
- How did nativism shape American immigration?
- What role did American women play in imperialism?

20. The Progressive Era

- What ideas animated American progressives?
- What major reforms did American progressives pursue?

- How did American women shape the progressive movement?
- How did Jim Crow influence life for both white and black Americans?
- How do the similarities and differences between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois capture major currents in African American thought?

21. WWI and Its Aftermath

- Why did the United States enter World War I?
- How did World War I transform American culture?
- How did World War I change American race relations?
- How did Americans' ideas about postwar international relations differ from one another?
- How did the influenza pandemic affect American life?

22. The New Era

- Were the 1920s a “return to normalcy,” as Warren G. Harding had advocated?
- Is it reasonable to describe the 1920s as a time of “culture war?”
- How did changes in consumption shape American culture?
- Why was the Second Ku Klux Klan prove so popular in the United States?
- What is the significance of the Harlem Renaissance?

23. The Great Depression

- What economic factors contributed to the Great Depression?
- How did the Hoover administration respond to the Depression?
- How did the Depression shape migration and immigration?
- How did the New Deal reorient Americans' relationship to government?
- Why did some Americans criticize the New Deal?

24. WWII

- World War II is often called “The Good War.” Was it?
- How did World War II affect the American economy?
- What did internment reveal about American life?
- How did World War II transform America's standing in the world?
- How did World War II shape American race relations?

25. The Cold War

- What were the origins of the Cold War?
- What foreign policy developments shaped American approaches to the Cold War?

- How did the Cold War shape American politics?
- How did the red scare influence American life?
- How did decolonization movements shape the Cold War?

26. The Affluent Society

- What factors contributed to America's postwar economic boom?
- How did the baby boom shape postwar American understandings of gender?
- How did postwar economic boom shape American politics?
- How did American race relations shape housing, education, and employment?
- What factors contributed to the rise of the civil rights movement?

27. The Sixties

- How did Cold War tensions lead to the Cuban missile crisis and the Vietnam War?
- How did the African American civil rights movement evolve in the early 1960s?
- What were the legislative achievements of the civil rights movement?
- How did youth culture change in the 1960s?
- How did political activism expand in the late 1960s?

28. The Unraveling

- Why did the United States lose the Vietnam War?
- How did deindustrialization shape American life?
- How did Richard Nixon appeal to American voters?
- Is "unraveling" a proper way to describe this time period?
- How did sexual politics evolve during the 1970s?

29. The Triumph of the Right

- What factors contributed to the rise of the New Right?
- How did Ronald Reagan and the New Right shift political discourse in the United States?
- How did American race relations evolve in the 1980s?
- What cultural developments shaped the 1980s?
- Did the New Right accomplish its policy goals?

30. The Recent Past

- How did the Bush Doctrine change American foreign policy?
- How has American immigration changed in recent decades?
- What are some major shifts in recent American political history?
- How have social media and personal technology shaped American life?

- What has animated major protest movements in recent American history?

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