

1920 The Year That Made The Decade Roar

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the american decade known as the roaring twenties continues to hold our collective fascination but how did this surge of innovation and cultural milestones emerge from the ashes of the great war eric burns examines the crucial year of 1920 the first full year of armistice from prohibition to immigration the vote for women the birth of jazz the rise of expatriate literature and the original ponzi scheme 1920 was a year like no other

this book presents a comprehensive overview of the events and everyday life that occurred within the united states during the 1920s

seminar paper from the year 2007 in the subject american studies literature grade 2 0 martin luther university language english abstract the lost generation is a term which encompasses a broad range of american authors who were born around 1900 amongst those litterateurs are many who are said to be among the most influential and important writers in the history of american letters this term paper shall examine what historical circumstances constituted the common adventures and common attitudes of that generation as reflected in fitzgerald s novel the great gatsby the term the lost generation was given by gertrude stein an authoress of note and contemporary of both fitzgerald and hemingway who used her quotation you are all a lost generation as the epigraph for his novel the sun also rises what is meant by the attribute lost why was this dismal term applied to the young adults of the 1920s an era of prosperity and freedom in america how did fitzgerald depict this lost world in the great gatsby with respect to material abundance on the one hand versus spiritual poverty on the other the zeitgeist of an era inevitably shapes the human beings who live in it how they act what they look like and what they think the meaning of their lives in particular and humanity in general might be therefore it is necessary to explore the 1920s in america in order to understand fully the meaning fitzgerald communicates in the great gatsby this paper will therefore investigate several characteristics of the decade which are relevant for the interpretation of the novel the parameters to be surveyed are society in general the materialism wealth and industrialization which created that society prohibition as one of the most

significant elements of the 20s the faltering faith in god as but one example of the failure of institutions that were supposed to be a refuge for human beings and the loss of faith in the american dream and other treasured ideals these issues will be analyzed in consideration of the great gatsby and the question of how fitzgerald uses them as tropes for his social criticism of the so called jazz age the paper will be based on a number of monographs and anthologies dealing with the major american writers and literature of the 1920s as well as the historical context that shaped their literary vision the particular focus will be on fitzgerald s seminal novel the great gatsby as it incorporates and inflects the major historical and literary themes of its time

idema brings a psychoanalytic perspective to his analysis of religion and culture the heart of idema s argument following freud is that secularization ushered into western culture an increase of neurosis idema s theory of secularization is applied to each of the authors he has selected to illustrate three principal effects of the decline of religion

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the cartoons in this collection capture the flavor of american life in the 20s but while the cartoons reflect the tenor of the times they are not a mirror image but a refraction an image distorted by the attitudes of the times toward contemporary events women for instance are not depicted as responsible citizens newly enfranchised instead they seem vain fickle trivial and wholly incapable of rational thought or practical enterprise this is not an accurate portrayal of women at the time but a reflection of the times women are ridiculed and made to seem silly precisely because they were suddenly more visible in society as new arrivals they are held up to examination the stereotypes

of ages are juxtaposed against this new visibility and the comedy arises because the stereotypes are so obviously unsuited for the new social role women had taken on this collection also represents the state of magazine cartooning in the early 20s although many cartoons were chosen because they reflect their times others were included because of their timeless humor and still others because their satirical thrust tackling issues such as the environment and censorship makes them astonishingly contemporary still

retrospective look at the events of the 20th century

charged with the pep of changing times it was an era of real heroes and reckless daredevils with guys and gals kicking up their heels all for a good time

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