



American Decades Primary Sources: 1920-1929

Cynthia Rose

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The Roaring Twenties was a roaring decade indeed. The passage of the Volstead Act prohibited the sale and consumption of alcohol and spawned a black market network of smuggling and speakeasies. Gangsters like Al Capone captured the public's imagination. Fashionable, fun-loving women wore short skirts and even shorter hair. They, and a growing number of the public, danced to jazz music, and the popular Cotton Club in Chicago was open to both African Americans and whites. Business was booming in many industries and, for the first time, people were buying on credit. Speculation in the stock market was at an all-time high as a get rich quick mentality took hold, but the artificially inflated bubble burst on October 24, 1929. The stock market crash closed out the 1920s with a bang. The following documents are just a sampling of the offerings available in this volume: New York Dada first and only issue of Dadaist magazine by Man Ray Maidenform Brassiere Patent drawings and documentation, text facsimile Alfred E. Smith's speech on Religious Bigotry Reports and memos by J. Edgar Hoover, both as a special agent and Justice Department Attorney, on the activities of black nationalist Marcus Garvey The Four Horsemen of Notre Dame football: article by Grantland Rice and photograph of the players Far From Well, book review by author and poet Dorothy Parker Plan-Isometric and Elevation of a Minimum Dymaxion home and patent applicat by R. Buckminster Fuller Handbook for Guardians of Camp Fire Girls, 1924 Open Letter to the Pullman Company, by A. Philip Randolph, founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters Journal entry of May 5, 1926, by Robert Goddard documenting the launch of the first liquid-fuel rocket Daily Worker editorial cartoons covering the trial, sentencing, and execution of Sacco and Vanzetti Photograph of American Indian Chiefs Frank Seelatsé and Jimmy Noah Saluskin The Care and Feeding of Children, a guidebook for new parents

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