



New World Coming: The 1920s and the Making of Modern America

Nathan Miller

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"To an astonishing extent, the 1920s resemble our own era, at the turn of the twenty-first century; in many ways that decade was a precursor of modern excesses....Much of what we consider contemporary actually began in the Twenties."

-- from the Introduction

The images of the 1920s have been indelibly imprinted on the American imagination: jazz, bootleggers, flappers, talkies, the Model T Ford, Babe Ruth, Charles Lindbergh's history-making flight over the Atlantic.

But it was also the era of the hard-won vote for women, racial injustice, censorship, widespread social conflict, and the birth of organized crime. Bookended by the easy living of the Jazz Age, when the booze and money flowed seemingly without end, and the crash of '29 that led to breadlines and a level of human suffering not seen since World War I, *New World Coming* is a lively, entertaining, and all-encompassing chronological account of an age that defined America. Chronicling what he views as the most consequential decade of the past century, Nathan Miller -- an award-winning journalist and five-time Pulitzer nominee -- paints a vivid portrait of the 1920s, focusing on the men and women who shaped that extraordinary time, including, ironically, three of America's most conservative presidents: Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover.

In the Twenties, the American people soared higher and fell lower than they ever had before. As unprecedented economic prosperity and sweeping social change dazzled the public, the sensibilities and restrictions of the nineteenth century vanished, and many of the institutions, ideas, and preoccupations of our own age emerged. With scandal, sex, and crime the lifeblood of the tabloids, the contemporary culture of celebrity and sensationalism took root and journalism became popular entertainment. By discarding Victorian idealism and embracing twentieth-century skepticism, America became, for the first time, thoroughly modernized. There is hardly a dimension of our present world, from government to popular culture, that doesn't trace its roots to the 1920s, and few decades are more intriguing or significant today.

The first comprehensive view of the era since *Only Yesterday*, Frederick Lewis Allen's 1931 classic, *New World Coming* reveals this remarkable age from the vantage point of nearly a century later. It's all here -- the images and the icons, the celebrities and the legends -- in a book that will resonate with history readers, 1920s aficionados, and Americans everywhere.

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