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Chapter 1: 1920–1924: An Age of Political and Social Tumult

1. Women's Suffrage and Its Immediate Aftermath
   By Sarah Jane Deutsch 33
   In 1920, American women were given the right to vote. Despite early political successes, the failure of women to vote as a unified force prevented them from achieving additional power.

2. The Troubled Harding Administration
   By Fon W. Boardman Jr. 39
   The presidency of Warren G. Harding was brief and marked by few legislative accomplishments. Harding's administration is best known for its scandals, most famously Teapot Dome, which entailed the questionable leasing of federal land to oilmen.

3. A Speakeasy Owner Remembers Prohibition
   By Charles Berns, as told to John Kobler 47
   Speakeasies, or illegal saloons, sprang up throughout the United States during Prohibition. The owner of several speakeasies looks back on his experiences with gangsters, police, and federal agents.

4. Anti-Immigrant Feelings in the Early 1920s
   By Robert K. Murray 55
   American distrust of immigrants, especially those who were sympathetic to socialism and communism, was markedly high in the years immediately following World War I. Anti-immigrant fervor led
to the rise of racist societies such as the Ku Klux Klan that worked to get restrictive immigration laws passed.

5. The Ku Klux Klan Expands Throughout the Nation
By Arnold S. Rice

The Ku Klux Klan, which was founded in the southern United States following the Civil War, gained nationwide popularity during the 1920s. The organization appealed to millions of Americans who disliked immigrants, African Americans, and the looser morals of the decade.

6. The Rapid Rise of Radio
By George H. Douglas

Radio became one of America's fastest growing industries in the early 1920s. Americans turned to radio as a source for news and entertainment and as a way to feel connected to others.

Chapter 2: 1925–1928: Prosperity and Change

1. The Scopes Trial: Fundamentalism Versus Modernism
By Frederick Lewis Allen

The Scopes trial of 1925 brought the debate over evolution to national attention. Those who opposed the teaching of evolution won, but it was a temporary victory.

2. The Life of a Flapper
By Bruce Bliven

Flappers were young women living in the 1920s who were known for their scandalous clothes and behavior. According to one flapper, flappers behaved as they did in order to challenge traditional assumptions about women.

3. The Fundamental Themes of 1920s Literature
By William Goldhurst

The authors who became famous in the 1920s had many common characteristics. Their books empha-
sized personal experiences and the merits of democracy while disdaining popular American values such as the obsessions with happiness and automobiles.

4. Jazz Sweeps the Nation
By Ethan Mordden
In the 1920s, jazz—an impromptu and wild musical genre that developed out of honky-tonk piano music—became popular throughout the United States. It could be heard in operas, on Broadway, and in African American clubs.

5. Lindbergh Remembers His Famous Flight
By Charles A. Lindbergh
Lindbergh, the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean, describes his May 1927 flight from New York to Paris.

6. The 1927 Yankees: One of Baseball's Greatest Teams
By Babe Ruth
A baseball legend describes the 1927 season for the New York Yankees, who many consider the greatest baseball team in history.

7. Prosperity in the 1920s
By Thomas E. Hall and J. David Ferguson
The quality of living improved for many Americans in the 1920s. However, the unprecedented economic boom did not benefit all Americans.

Chapter 3: 1929–1933: Depression and Unrest

1. The Causes and Consequences of the Stock Market Crash
By Sean Dennis Cashman
The stock market crash of late 1929 sent the United States into a depression that lasted more than a decade. The crash was caused by an unstable and weak economic system.
2. **Hoover’s Response to the Great Depression**  
By Stephen Goode 127  
Hoover is often blamed for failing to respond effectively to the Great Depression. However, he did take many steps to improve the economy and help Americans weather the economic hard times.

3. **The Scottsboro Trial**  
By Robert J. Allison 135  
The Scottsboro rape trial, in which nine African American men were convicted of two rapes they most likely did not commit, is an example of the racism that persisted in the South long after the Civil War. Despite support from liberals, Communists, and African American activists, it would take nearly two decades for all the defendants to achieve freedom.

4. **Remembering the Bonus March**  
By Jim Sheridan, as told to Studs Terkel 143  
Veterans marched on Washington, D.C., in 1932 to demand payment of a World War I bonus. A participant in the march recounts the demonstration and the ensuing riot.

5. **The First Two Months of the New Deal**  
By Franklin Delano Roosevelt 149  
Roosevelt pushed for the passage of a number of bills after his inauguration in the hopes that such legislation would end the Great Depression. In a radio address to the nation, he details the accomplishments of the “New Deal.”

6. **The Birth of the Hollywood Musical in the 1930s**  
By Jack C. Ellis 156  
The musical was one of the first film genres to develop after the introduction of sound movies. One of these films was *42nd Street*, whose plot explored elements of the Great Depression.
Chapter 4: 1934–1939: The Turbulence Continues

1. The Dust Bowl
   By T.H. Watkins

   American farmers were economically devastated by drought and dust storms in the 1930s. Some federal initiatives helped repair the land, but many farmers were compelled to migrate to California and other western states in order to find work.

2. Labor Unions in the 1930s
   By Cabell Phillips

   Federal legislation helped labor unions increase their size and power in the 1930s. These newly resurgent unions participated in thousands of violent and successful strikes.

3. A Hobo Recounts His Experiences
   By Steamtrain Maury, as told to Jacqueline K. Schmidt

   A man describes the life he and other hobos led during the Great Depression, traveling illegally on trains in search of jobs. Unlike bums, hobos had good job skills and worked when they could.

4. Jesse Owens's Record-Setting Olympics
   By Timothy Kelley

   Despite international protest against Adolf Hitler's racist and anti-Semitic policies, Germany hosted the 1936 Summer Olympics. Ironically, when African American track star Jesse Owens returned home with four gold medals, he encountered racist attitudes similar to those America had protested.

5. Democracy and Education
   By John Dewey

   In the 1930s, antidemocratic states in Europe used propaganda to spread their political message. Americans need to use their education system to teach important democratic values.
6. The New Deal Prolonged the Great Depression  
By Jim Powell  
President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal policies did not repair America's economy in the 1930s. Instead, these policies increased the unemployment rate and raised the prices of goods and services.

Chapter 5: 1940–1945: America at War

1. The Political Views of the America First Committee  
By Justus D. Doenecke  
The America First Committee (AFC) was a leading isolationist organization active in the early 1940s. According to the AFC, there was no military or economic need for the United States to enter World War II.

2. The Aftermath of Pearl Harbor: America Enters the War  
By Franklin Delano Roosevelt  
In an address delivered two days after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the president explains America's entry into World War II and discusses the sacrifices that the country will have to make.

3. Life in a Japanese Internment Camp  
By Mine Okubo, as told to Deborah Gesensway and Mindy Roseman  
An executive order signed in February 1942 required the evacuation of all Japanese American citizens living on the West Coast. One of the evacuees offers an account of her life in two internment camps.

4. Women and the War Effort  
By Lucille Genz Blanton Teeters, as told to Nancy Baker Wise and Christy Wise  
As American men left the country to fight in World War II, American women enjoyed new economic opportunities. One woman describes her work at an airplane factory.
5. A Firsthand Account of D Day
By Richard L. Strout
The Allied invasion of Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944, was a turning point for World War II. A newspaper reporter stationed on a cruiser describes the attack.

6. American Attitudes Toward the Holocaust
By Deborah Bachrach
American society, from President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the mass media to the average citizen, largely ignored the plight of European Jews during World War II.

By Clayton R. Koppes and Gregory D. Black

8. The Potsdam Conference
By Robert James Maddox
The leaders of the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union held a conference in July 1945 to discuss the terms of Germany's surrender. President Truman's concessions helped the Soviets gain the upper hand.

9. The United States Decides to Drop the Atomic Bomb
By Donald Kagan
Japan was not planning to surrender to the United States in spring 1945. America decided that the only way to stop the Japanese army, which was prepared to keep fighting, was to drop the atomic bombs and thereby force an unconditional surrender.