

Analyze the ways in which THREE of the following indicated the tension between conservative and liberal views in American society during the 1920s.

Prohibition

The Scopes Trial

Flappers

The Red Scare

Thesis

- Flappers, prohibition, and the scope trials were are examples of political struggles between conservatism. The ever-changing social movements ignited the liberal vs conservative rivalry in the 1920s

Prohibition

- Prohibition of alcohol, often referred to simply as prohibition, is the legal act of prohibiting the manufacture, transportation and sale of alcohol and alcoholic beverages
- Prohibition in the United States focused on the manufacture and sale of alcohol. Drinking itself was never illegal, and there were exceptions for medicinal and religious uses.

- Prohibition was sponsored by evangelical Protestant Churches and the Women's Christian Temperance Union.
- Most supporters lived in urban areas while opposers lived in rural areas (typically the south)
- The movement had support from both parties but people from both parties disobeyed the law. Woodrow Wilson and Warren G. Harding drank during prohibition.
- George Cassiday, told how he had bootlegged for ten years for Congress. He estimated that eighty percent of congressmen and senators drank, even though these same people were the ones passing dry laws

- Prohibition increased political tensions because almost everyone had an opinion on the matter, and it affected everyone, directly or indirectly.

THE SCOPES TRIAL

- The Scopes "monkey trial" of 1925 was a great oratory between eminent rivals (Conservative vs Liberal), and it put the debate over teaching evolution on front pages across the country. The trial was about challenging a newly passed Tennessee state law against teaching evolution or any other theory denying the biblical account of the creation of man. John Scopes the 24-year-old defendant, taught in the public high school in Dayton, Tennessee and included evolution in his curriculum. He agreed to be the focus of a test case attacking the new law, and was arrested for teaching evolution and tried with the American Civil Liberties Union backing his defense. His lawyer was the legendary Clarence Darrow, who, besides being a renowned defense attorney for labor and other radical figures, was an agnostic (One who is skeptical about the existence of God but does not profess true atheism) in religious matters. The state's attorney was William Jennings Bryan, a Christian, pacifist, and former candidate for the U.S. presidency. He agreed to take the case because he believed that evolution theory led to dangerous social movements. And he believed the Bible should be interpreted literally. The jury found Scopes guilty of violating the law and fined him . Bryan and the anti-evolutionists claimed victory, and the Tennessee law would stand for another 42 years. But Clarence Darrow and the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) had succeeded in publicizing scientific evidence for evolution, and the press reported that though Bryan had won the case, he had lost the argument. The verdict did have a chilling effect on teaching evolution in the classroom, however, and not until the 1960s did it reappear in schoolbooks.



Flappers

- In the 1920s, a new woman was born. She smoked, drank, danced, and voted. She cut her hair, wore make-up, and went to parties. She was giddy and took risks. She was a flapper.
- During the war, the boys had fought against both the enemy and death in far away lands; the girls had bought into the patriotic fervor and aggressively entered the workforce. During the war, both the boys and the girls of this generation had broken out of society's structure; they found it very difficult to return.
- Because they were doing things that had never been done and were breaking traditions they were adding on to these conflicts between liberals vs conservatives, by the liberal behavior they were displaying

Conclusion

- The constant struggle between conservatism and liberalism in the 1920s, namely flappers, the scopes trial, and prohibition were social issues that were at the center of the increasing tension.