

1920's high society

1920's high society was a distinctive and influential segment of American and European culture during the Roaring Twenties. This era, marked by economic prosperity, social change, and cultural dynamism, saw the emergence of a glamorous elite who shaped fashion, entertainment, and social norms. The 1920s high society was characterized by lavish parties, extravagant lifestyles, and a strong emphasis on status and appearance. This article explores the defining features of 1920's high society, including its lifestyle, fashion, influential figures, and cultural impact. Understanding this segment of history provides insight into the social dynamics and cultural shifts of the decade. The following sections will delve into the social structure, lifestyle, notable personalities, and lasting legacy of 1920's high society.

- Social Structure and Class Dynamics
- Lifestyle and Social Activities
- Fashion and Style Trends
- Prominent Figures of 1920's High Society
- Cultural Impact and Legacy

Social Structure and Class Dynamics

The social structure of 1920's high society was deeply influenced by wealth, heritage, and social connections. This class was predominantly composed of old money families, industrial magnates, and newly wealthy entrepreneurs who capitalized on the economic boom following World War I. The aristocratic elite often maintained their status through exclusive clubs, social registers, and carefully curated social events. The concept of "old money" versus "new money" was significant, as established families sometimes viewed the nouveau riche with skepticism despite their wealth.

Old Money vs. New Money

Old money families traced their wealth back several generations and prided themselves on tradition, social etiquette, and philanthropy. In contrast, new money individuals were often self-made businessmen or entertainers who acquired wealth rapidly during the 1920s economic expansion. This division influenced social acceptance and the dynamics within high society circles.

Role of Social Registers and Clubs

Social registers and exclusive clubs played a critical role in maintaining the boundaries of high society. These institutions controlled access to the elite, dictating who was considered socially acceptable. Membership in elite clubs, such as the Knickerbocker Club in New York, was a symbol of status and influence. These venues hosted social events where networking and social positioning occurred.

Lifestyle and Social Activities

The lifestyle of 1920's high society was defined by opulence, leisure, and public display of wealth. Members of this class engaged in extravagant social activities, including lavish parties, horse racing events, and exclusive vacations. The era's economic prosperity allowed for unprecedented spending on luxury goods and entertainment. Social calendars were filled with galas, charity balls, and private gatherings that reinforced social hierarchies.

Lavish Parties and Social Gatherings

One hallmark of 1920's high society was the grand party, often characterized by jazz music, dancing, and elaborate themes. These events were not only social occasions but also opportunities to demonstrate wealth and influence. The parties hosted by individuals such as William K. Vanderbilt and Alva Belmont were legendary, attracting celebrities, artists, and political figures alike.

Leisure and Recreation

Recreational activities popular among the elite included polo, yachting, and golf. Seasonal migration to summer homes in places like Newport, Rhode Island, and Palm Beach, Florida, was common. These retreats served as social hubs where high society mingled away from the public eye.

Typical Social Calendar Events

- Annual society balls and debutante events
- Horse racing events such as the Belmont Stakes
- Charity galas and fundraisers
- Exclusive art exhibitions and theatre openings
- Summer and winter resort gatherings

Fashion and Style Trends

Fashion in 1920's high society was a powerful expression of identity and status. The decade ushered in revolutionary changes in style, reflecting broader social transformations. High society women adopted flapper dresses, cloche hats, and bobbed hairstyles, symbolizing newfound freedom and modernity. Men's fashion also evolved, favoring tailored suits, tuxedos, and bold accessories.

Women's Fashion

Women in 1920's high society embraced styles that broke from Victorian conventions. The flapper dress, often adorned with beads and fringe, became a symbol of youthful rebellion and social liberation. Accessories such as long pearl necklaces, feathered headbands, and silk gloves complemented the ensembles. Makeup, including dark lipstick and kohl-rimmed eyes, was more pronounced, reflecting the decade's exuberance.

Men's Fashion

Men favored classic, elegant attire that emphasized sharp tailoring and sophistication. Pinstriped suits, double-breasted jackets, and two-tone shoes were fashionable among the elite. Ties and pocket squares added color and personality to outfits. Formal occasions required tuxedos and accessories like cufflinks and pocket watches, signifying affluence and attention to detail.

Influence of Designers and Fashion Icons

Renowned designers such as Coco Chanel and Jean Patou influenced the styles embraced by high society. Their innovative designs combined comfort with elegance, appealing to the modern sensibilities of the time. Society figures like Zelda Fitzgerald and the Duchess of Windsor became style icons, inspiring trends across continents.

Prominent Figures of 1920's High Society

Several individuals and families defined the character and visibility of 1920's high society. These figures were not only wealthy but also involved in philanthropy, arts, politics, and cultural movements. Their lifestyles and public personas captured the imagination of the era and continue to be subjects of historical interest.

The Astor Family

The Astors were among America's most prominent old money families, known for their real estate empire and social influence. Members of the family hosted grand events and were patrons of the arts, embodying the elegance and tradition of high society.

Zelda and F. Scott Fitzgerald

The Fitzgeralds symbolized the Jazz Age's glamour and decadence. F. Scott Fitzgerald's novels captured the spirit of the 1920s, while Zelda's flamboyant lifestyle epitomized the flapper image. Their lives intertwined with other members of high society and the artistic community.

Wallis Simpson and the Duke of Windsor

Wallis Simpson, an American socialite, became a figure of intrigue and controversy through her relationship with King Edward VIII. Their story reflects the intersection of high society with royal and political drama, highlighting the international dimension of elite social circles during the 1920s.

Other Notable Names

- William K. Vanderbilt II
- Consuelo Vanderbilt
- Alva Belmont
- Cole Porter
- Josephine Baker

Cultural Impact and Legacy

The influence of 1920's high society extended beyond its immediate social sphere, shaping broader cultural trends and societal attitudes. The era's emphasis on modernity, luxury, and social freedom contributed to lasting changes in fashion, entertainment, and social behavior. High society's patronage of the arts helped foster the Jazz Age and the Harlem Renaissance, enriching cultural history.

Contribution to Arts and Entertainment

Members of 1920's high society supported artists, writers, and musicians, facilitating a vibrant cultural scene. Jazz music flourished in speakeasies and private clubs, while literature and visual arts reflected the complexities of the time. The patronage of high society was instrumental in bringing avant-garde and modernist movements to prominence.

Social Changes and Modernization

The decade's social transformations, including women's suffrage and changing gender roles, were mirrored in high society's evolving norms. The flapper lifestyle challenged traditional expectations, and social mobility increased as new money gained acceptance. These shifts contributed to a more dynamic and open social environment.

Enduring Fascination in Popular Culture

The mystique of 1920's high society continues to capture popular imagination through literature, film, and fashion retrospectives. Iconic portrayals in works such as "The Great Gatsby" have cemented the era's image as a symbol of glamour, excess, and social complexity. This enduring fascination underscores the significant cultural legacy of the decade's elite class.

Frequently Asked Questions

What defined the lifestyle of 1920's high society?

The lifestyle of 1920's high society was defined by opulence, extravagant parties, lavish fashion, and a focus on social status, often characterized by glamorous events such as gala dinners, jazz clubs, and exclusive gatherings.

Who were some prominent figures in 1920's high society?

Prominent figures in 1920's high society included socialites like Zelda and F. Scott Fitzgerald, business magnates like the Vanderbilts and Rockefellers, and cultural icons such as Coco Chanel and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

How did the Roaring Twenties influence high society fashion?

The Roaring Twenties introduced bold fashion changes in high society, including flapper dresses, shorter hemlines, bobbed hair, and lavish accessories, reflecting a shift towards more liberated and expressive styles.

What role did Prohibition play in 1920's high society culture?

Prohibition led to the rise of speakeasies and underground clubs where high society mingled and enjoyed illegal alcohol, fostering a culture of secrecy, rebellion, and extravagant parties despite the ban on alcohol.

How did high society in the 1920s contribute to the arts and culture?

High society in the 1920s were major patrons of the arts, supporting jazz music, literature, and visual arts, often hosting salons and gatherings that promoted the Harlem Renaissance and avant-garde movements.

What impact did the Great Depression have on 1920's high society?

The Great Depression, starting in 1929, drastically affected 1920's high society by diminishing fortunes, leading to a decline in extravagant spending and changing social dynamics as many wealthy families faced financial hardships.

Additional Resources

1. *The Glittering Age*

Set in the roaring 1920s, this novel explores the lives of New York's elite as they navigate opulent parties, secret romances, and looming financial uncertainty. The story centers on a young debutante trying to secure her place in high society while confronting the era's shifting social norms. Rich in historical detail, it captures the glamour and underlying tension of an age defined by excess.

2. *Whispers of the Jazz Ball*

Amid the backdrop of speakeasies and jazz clubs, this tale follows a wealthy socialite who becomes entangled with a mysterious musician. Their forbidden relationship challenges the rigid class structures of the time. The novel delves into the cultural clashes and the intoxicating allure of the Jazz Age's underground world.

3. *Champagne and Secrets*

In this gripping drama, a group of affluent families in 1920s Paris mask their scandals behind lavish soirées and sparkling champagne. As old alliances crumble and new rivalries form, secrets threaten to unravel the carefully crafted facades. The narrative shines a light on the fragility of reputation in an era obsessed with appearances.

4. *The Emerald Heiress*

This story follows an American heiress who arrives in London during the 1920s, eager to claim her place among the British aristocracy. Amidst ballrooms and country estates, she grapples with expectations, forbidden love, and the pressure to maintain her family's legacy. The novel paints a vivid portrait of transatlantic high society and its intricate power dynamics.

5. *Speakeasy Serenade*

Centered on a glamorous flapper who leads a double life as a jazz singer in a secret speakeasy, this novel captures the spirit of rebellion and freedom. Her nights are filled with music and danger, while her days are dominated by societal expectations and family obligations. The story highlights the contrasts between public appearance and private desires in the 1920s.

6. *Gilded Shadows*

This evocative tale delves into the darker side of 1920s high society, where wealth and privilege conceal betrayal, ambition, and moral ambiguity. Following a charismatic socialite who manipulates his way through elite circles, the novel explores themes of power, corruption, and the cost of maintaining a perfect image. The narrative is rich with suspense and period atmosphere.

7. *Moonlight Over Manhattan*

Set against the dazzling skyline of 1920s Manhattan, this romance chronicles the love affair between a newspaper columnist and a wealthy industrialist's daughter. Their relationship defies social conventions and threatens to expose family secrets. The book captures the excitement and contradictions of an era marked by both innovation and tradition.

8. *The Duchess's Diary*

Presented as the personal journal of a British duchess, this book offers an intimate glimpse into aristocratic life during the 1920s. It reveals her struggles with duty, desire, and the rapidly changing world around her. Through candid entries, readers experience the joys and sorrows behind the grand facade of nobility.

9. *Velvet and Vice*

This provocative novel explores the intertwined lives of high society figures indulging in the pleasures and scandals of the Jazz Age. From decadent parties to secret liaisons, the characters confront the limits of morality and the consequences of their choices. The story is a compelling mix of glamour, intrigue, and human vulnerability.

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1920 s high society: The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s Daniel Gorman, 2012-08-20
Chronicling the emergence of an international society in the 1920s, Daniel Gorman describes how the shock of the First World War gave rise to a broad array of overlapping initiatives in international cooperation. Though national rivalries continued to plague world politics, ordinary citizens and state officials found common causes in politics, religion, culture, and sport with peers beyond their borders. The League of Nations, the turn to a less centralized British Empire, the beginning of an international ecumenical movement, international sporting events, and audacious plans for the abolition of war all signaled internationalism's growth. State actors played an important role in these developments and were aided by international voluntary organizations, church groups, and international networks of academics, athletes, women, pacifists, and humanitarian activists. These international networks became the forerunners of international NGOs and global governance.

1920 s high society: American Consumer Culture and Its Society: From F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1920s Modernism to Bret Easton Ellis' 1980s Blank Fiction Johannes Malkmes,

2011-05 Die vorliegende Studie stellt eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der amerikanischen Konsumkultur des 20. Jahrhunderts dar. Dabei wird ein Schwerpunkt auf die historische Entwicklung von der Ständegesellschaft des späten 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhunderts bis hin zur Klassengesellschaft des 20. Jahrhunderts gelegt, da dieser epochale Wandel in bisherigen vergleichbaren literaturwissenschaftlichen Diskussionen zur Konsumkultur trotz seiner themenbezogenen Relevanz keine adäquate Berücksichtigung fand. Der Begriff der Konsumkultur als interdisziplinäres Problem wird nicht als gegeben verstanden und ausführlich definiert. Die soziokulturelle Entwicklung wird im Rahmen von F. Scott Fitzgeralds *The Great Gatsby* (1925) und Bret Easton Elliss *American Psycho* (1991) nachvollzogen, da beide Werke ihre Hauptdarsteller anhand ihrer sozialen Herkunft, ihrer sozialen Milieus und ihres Konsums als stereotypische Vertreter der jeweiligen Epoche charakterisieren und versinnbildlichen. In beiden Werken wird der jeweilige kulturelle Hintergrund – das amerikanische Jazz Age sowie die Reagan Administration mit ihrer Yuppie Kultur – äußerst kritisch abgehandelt. Eine vergleichende Analyse beider Werke in Bezug auf die gravierende Entwicklung ihrer literarischen Darstellung von Konsum im Verlauf des 20. Jahrhunderts unter kritischer Berücksichtigung des jeweiligen volkswirtschaftlichen, politischen und gesellschaftlichen Hintergrunds wurde in dieser Form noch nicht veröffentlicht. Ein Fokus dieser Arbeit betrifft die Zwischenkriegszeit in Jahren von 1920 bis 1930, da diese Dekade maßgebend war für den epochalen Wandel der amerikanischen Klassen- hin zu einer Konsumgesellschaft und des amerikanischen Lebensstils zum Ende der 1980er Jahre. Detailliert betrachtet werden in diesem Zusammenhang konkrete Konsumverstärker wie fortschreitende Technologien, Entwicklungen zu Mode- und Freizeitbranchen, finanzielle Marktentwicklungen und der geografische Wandel. Die Entstehung der World Trade Organisation symbolisiert letztendlich den Sieg von Demokratie und amerikanisierter, globaler Konsumkultur. Anhand der genannten Werke wird nicht nur der Umgang mit Konsum interpretiert, sondern auch dessen Versprechen, die propagierende Darstellung des amerikanischen Traumes, die eine gravierende Veränderung hin zum kapitalistischen Materialismus aufzeigt.

1920 s high society: Death by Flapper: A FREE 1920s Locked Door Murder Mystery

Brittany E. Brinegar, 2024-02-02 Enjoy this FREE historical murder mystery from Brittany E. Brinegar, author of humorous whodunits... In a sea of bachelors, Penelope's dance card is a clue to murder. Dallas 1924 In the wake of her husband's untimely demise, Penelope Van Keesler is coerced into attending a lavish ball by her meddling mother. With their family's fortune teetering on the edge of extinction, Mother is determined to secure a wealthy match for her daughter. Whether she wants it or not. Dallas high society is crawling with eligible bachelors to save a family fortune. But when Penelope's dance partner, a national hero pilot, drops dead outside of the speakeasy, she ignores societal norms and sets out to discover whodunit. The pilot's suspicious death sends shockwaves through Dallas and leaves the police department scratching their heads. Armed with her charm, infectious laughter, and a razor-sharp mind, Penelope ruffles feathers and attempts to solve the puzzling mystery from the shadows. Will Penelope convince the skeptical authorities to accept her aid before the killer vanishes? Or will her stubborn pursuit of justice jeopardize her loved ones and their precarious fortune? ----- Death by Flapper is the first installment in the Heist Society Investigates 1920s cozy mystery series. If you enjoy the glittering world of flappers, secret speakeasies, and glamorous deceit this jazz-age whodunit is for you! Heist Society Investigates Series Order Book 1: Death by Flapper Book 2: Death by Fortune Book 3: Death by Matchmaker Book 4: Death by Railway Book 5: Death by Midnight Book 6: Death by Mistletoe ----- Fans of Sara Rosett, Lee Strauss, and Benedict Brown will love this American spin on a roaring twenties mystery!

1920 s high society: American Cinema of the 1920s Lucy Fischer, 2009-04-15 During the 1920s, sound revolutionized the motion picture industry and cinema continued as one of the most significant and popular forms of mass entertainment in the world. Film studios were transformed into major corporations, hiring a host of craftsmen and technicians including cinematographers, editors, screenwriters, and set designers. The birth of the star system supported the meteoric rise

and celebrity status of actors including Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Joan Crawford, Greta Garbo, and Rudolph Valentino while black performers (relegated to race films) appeared infrequently in mainstream movies. The classic Hollywood film style was perfected and significant film genres were established: the melodrama, western, historical epic, and romantic comedy, along with slapstick, science fiction, and fantasy. In ten original essays, *American Cinema of the 1920s* examines the film industry's continued growth and prosperity while focusing on important themes of the era.

1920 s high society: *The Age of Innocence* Edith Wharton, 2025-05-14 *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton is a profound exploration of the intricacies of social mores and personal desires, set in the upper echelons of New York society during the 1870s. The novel follows Newland Archer, a young lawyer engaged to the beautiful and conventional May Welland. However, Newland's world is upended when he encounters May's cousin, the enigmatic Ellen Olenska, who has returned to New York after a scandalous divorce from her European husband. Wharton masterfully portrays the tension between individual aspirations and societal expectations, illustrating the constraints imposed by a rigid social structure. Newland, initially enamored by the prospect of a stable and respectable life with May, finds himself increasingly drawn to Ellen's free spirit and unconventional lifestyle. As he grapples with his feelings, the narrative delves into themes of love, duty, and the sacrifices required to conform to societal norms. The novel paints a vivid picture of the opulence and hypocrisy of high society, revealing how appearances often mask deeper emotional truths. Wharton's keen observations highlight not only the beauty of New York's elite but also the suffocating nature of its customs. Newland's internal conflict serves as a microcosm of the struggle between tradition and change, illustrating the challenges faced by those who dare to defy convention. As the story progresses, Newland becomes increasingly aware of the limitations imposed by his social class. His relationship with Ellen awakens a longing for authenticity and passion, prompting him to question the values he has been taught to uphold. Yet, the weight of societal expectations looms large, forcing him to confront the sacrifices that come with pursuing true happiness. *The Age of Innocence* is a poignant commentary on the complexities of love and the high price of societal conformity. Wharton masterfully weaves a tale that resonates with the universal struggle for identity and fulfillment, making it a timeless work that continues to captivate readers. Through Newland's journey, the novel invites us to reflect on our own choices and the often conflicting desires for personal freedom and social acceptance. Wharton's elegant prose and nuanced characterizations ensure that this exploration of human emotions remains relevant, inviting readers to ponder the true meaning of innocence in a world bound by tradition.

1920 s high society: *Evelyn Waugh* Michael G. Brennan, 2013-02-14 *Evelyn Waugh: Fictions, Faith and Family* is a wide-ranging survey of the prolific literary career of one of the most popular English writers of the 20th century. Michael G. Brennan here identifies three major themes as central to any understanding of Waugh's work: Catholicism, society and the concept of family. From *Decline and Fall* (published in 1928) to his final writings, this book draws not only on the major novels and short stories but also Waugh's substantial journalistic output, his private journals and correspondences and unpublished draft manuscripts. Through this comprehensive and systematic exploration, Brennan demonstrates the sustained creative importance of Catholicism to Waugh's literary work. In addition, the book goes on to consider how Evelyn Waugh's descendants - his son Auberon and his grandson Alexander Waugh - have echoed and developed these literary concerns in their own writing.

1920 s high society: *Louis Armstrong and Paul Whiteman* Joshua Berrett, 2008-10-01 In *Louis Armstrong and Paul Whiteman* the jazz scholar Joshua Berrett offers a provocative revision of the history of early jazz by focusing on two of its most notable practitioners—Whiteman, legendary in his day, and Armstrong, a legend ever since. Paul Whiteman's fame was unmatched throughout the twenties. Bix Beiderbecke, Bing Crosby, and Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey honed their craft on his bandstand. Celebrated as the "King of Jazz" in 1930 in a Universal Studios feature film, Whiteman's imperium has declined considerably since. The legend of Louis Armstrong, in contrast, grows ever more lustrous: for decades it has been Armstrong, not Whiteman, who has worn the king's crown.

This dual biography explores these diverging legacies in the context of race, commerce, and the history of early jazz. Early jazz, Berrett argues, was not a story of black innovators and white usurpers. In this book, a much richer, more complicated story emerges—a story of cross-influences, sidemen, sundry movers and shakers who were all part of a collective experience that transcended the category of race. In the world of early jazz, Berrett contends, kingdoms had no borders.

1920 s high society: America in the 1920s Edmund Lindop, 2009-09-01 Presents the social, political, economic, and technological changes in the United States during the nineteen twenties.

1920 s high society: Fashion Meets Socialism Jukka Gronow, Sergey Zhuravlev, 2015-08-19 This book presents, above all, a study of the establishment and development of the Soviet organization and system of fashion industry and design as it gradually evolved in the years after the Second World War in the Soviet Union, which was, in the understanding of its leaders, reaching the mature or last stage of socialism when the country was firmly set on the straight trajectory to its final goal, Communism. What was typical of this complex and extensive system of fashion was that it was always loyally subservient to the principles of the planned socialist economy. This did not by any means indicate that everything the designers and other fashion professionals did was dictated entirely from above by the central planning agencies. Neither did it mean that their professional judgment would have been only secondary to ideological and political standards set by the Communist Party and the government of the Soviet Union. On the contrary, as our study shows, the Soviet fashion professionals had a lot of autonomy. They were eager and willing to exercise their own judgment in matters of taste and to set the agenda of beauty and style for Soviet citizens. The present book is the first comprehensive and systematic history of the development of fashion and fashion institutions in the Soviet Union after the Second World War. Our study makes use of rich empirical and historical material that has been made available for the first time for scientific analysis and discussion. The main sources for our study came from the state, party and departmental archives of the former Soviet Union. We also make extensive use of oral history and the writings published in Soviet popular and professional press.

1920 s high society: Modernism and Modernity in British Women's Magazines Alice Wood, 2020-05-12 This book explores responses to the strangeness and pleasures of modernism and modernity in four commercial British women's magazines of the interwar period. Through extensive study of interwar Vogue (UK), Eve, Good Housekeeping (UK), and Harper's Bazaar (UK), Wood uncovers how modernism was received and disseminated by these fashion and domestic periodicals and recovers experimental journalism and fiction within them by an array of canonical and marginalized writers, including Storm Jameson, Rose Macaulay, Gertrude Stein, and Virginia Woolf. The book's analysis is attentive to text and image and to interactions between editorial, feature, and advertising material. Its detailed survey of these largely neglected magazines reveals how they situated radical aesthetics in relation to modernity's broader new challenges, diversions, and opportunities for women, and how they approached high modernist art and literature through discourses of fashion and celebrity. *Modernism and Modernity in British Women's Magazines* extends recent research into modernism's circulation through diverse markets and publication outlets and adds to the substantial body of scholarship concerned with the relationship between modernism and popular culture. It demonstrates that commercial women's magazines subversively disrupted and sustained contemporary hierarchies of high and low culture as well as actively participating in the construction of modernism's public profile.

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discord, and disgruntled clients with hearts scorned. But when Penelope's top suspects all offer ironclad alibis, she finds herself channeling the deductive prowess of Sherlock Holmes to piece together a puzzle that shatters the police department's open and shut case. Will the shadowy figure be unmasked before someone else takes a dagger to the heart? Or will trusting her instincts prove to be Penelope's antidote to heartbreak? ----- Death by Matchmaker is the third installment in the Heist Society Investigates 1920s cozy mystery series. If you enjoy the glittering world of flappers, secret speakeasies, and glamorous deceit this jazz-age whodunit is for you! Heist Society Investigates Series Order Book 1: Death by Flapper Book 2: Death by Fortune Book 3: Death by Matchmaker Book 4: Death by Railway Book 5: Death by Midnight Book 6: Death by Mistletoe ----- Fans of Sara Rosett, Lee Strauss, and Benedict Brown will love this American spin on a roaring twenties mystery!

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Whigham, the rage of the social elite at being pictured so intimately without permission was matched only by the fascination of working class readers, while the relationship of the British press to social, economic and political power was changed forever. Initially pioneered in the metropole, tabloid-style photojournalism soon penetrated the journalistic culture of most of the globe. This in-depth account of its social and cultural history is an invaluable source of new research for historians of photography, journalism, visual culture, media and celebrity studies.

1920 s high society: Self-Made Women in the 1920s United States Matthew Niven Teorey, 2022-05-16 Women of the 1920s led a revolt against the old standards of womanhood that were dominating US culture. Flappers and feminists, they spoke and acted out, inspiring other women to follow. This book analyzes the work of eleven important 1920s female authors who chronicled this revolt: Anzia Yezierska, Anita Loos, Mae West, Josephine Lovett, Nella Larsen, Mourning Dove, Djuna Barnes, Amy Lowell, Gertrude Stein, Bessie Smith, and Dorothy Parker. These trailblazers wrote counter-narratives to the sexism, racism, classism, and homophobia women faced during the Jazz Age. The author brings their novels, poems, plays, film scenarios, and blues lyrics into conversation with each other for the first time to show different approaches female readers could take to become autonomous individuals and full citizens. The works also encouraged readers to maintain supportive relationships with other progressive women. The author argues these works presented female readers with examples of how they could act individually and collectively to attain the political power, social status, economic independence, sexual freedom, and artistic recognition they deserved.

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