

“Jazz Age Dance Halls Viewed by Many as Menace to Society”

Materials

- Article: “Jazz Age Dance Halls Viewed by Many as Menace to Society,” *The Pantagraph*, Aug. 17, 2008.
- Primary Document(s):
 - Photograph: Dance Hall at Funk’s Grove, 1928 (p. 115 in Kemp)
 - Photograph: Couple dancing
 - Song: “Let’s Misbehave” (music and lyrics by Cole Porter)

Procedure (approximately fifteen minutes—in three five-minute increments)

- Students will begin by reading the article, and could be encouraged to annotate/highlight if appropriate.
- After they have been given approximately five minutes to read the article, hand out the song lyrics for students to read. The teacher could play the song for students while they read, if the YouTube link to the song is available or if they have access to the song in other forms.
- When students are finished reading the lyrics and listening to the song, teachers will engage the students in a brief discussion over the connections students made between the content of the article and the lyrics (e.g., the suggestive nature of the song’s lyrics and its title reveal traces of modernity in popular culture feared by some in the community), with the intent of connecting the article and song to larger issues of American culture in the 1920s.

Standards

Illinois State Standards

18.A.4 Analyze the influence of cultural factors including customs, traditions, language, media, art and architecture in developing pluralistic societies.

NCSS (National Council for Social Studies)

Culture and Cultural Diversity (Thematic Standard)

Individual Development and Identity (Thematic Standard)

- Help learners to appreciate and describe the influence of cultures, past and present, upon the daily lives of individuals.

Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

NCHE Vital Themes & Narratives

Civilization, cultural diffusion, and innovation

Values, beliefs, political ideas, and institutions

Bibliography

Dumenil, Lynn. *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1995.

Additional Materials

- Object from McLean County Museum of History collection: Prohibition-era doll with built-in flask
<http://mcleancounty.pastperfect-online.com/33102cgi/mweb.exe?request=record;id=95C3AA6D-336E-4C85-94D7-793425513710;type=101>
- Avis, Caroline. "One Way with Dance-Halls." *The Woman Citizen*, April 1926.
- "County's Dances are Cleanest in Illinois, Sheriff." *Daily Bulletin*, August 2, 1925.
- Dance advertisements. *Pantagraph*, April 17, 1929.

Glossary:

Gallivanting: Go around from one place to another in the pursuit of pleasure or entertainment.

Contaminated: Make (something) impure by exposure to or addition of a poisonous or polluting substance.

Illicit: Forbidden by law, rules, or custom

Convergence: Moving toward union or uniformity

Pathological: Being such to a degree that is extreme, excessive, or abnormal

Unincorporated area: A region of land that is not governed by its own local municipal corporation which is instead administered as part of larger administrative divisions, such as a township, parish, borough, county, canton, state, province or country.

Supplanted: To replace (one thing) by something else.