

Tutorial 6 - WWI and Democracy

Readings are in the WORKBIN

- From the Foner reading, (p 144-161), critically evaluate the new definition of American freedom and modernity. (please concentrate on pages 147-151)

- consumer society (progressive error)
 - proliferation of factories and industries providing mass produced, cheap goods, cars, electric goods.
 - "promise of mass consumption became foundation for a new definition of freedom to supplant the now obsolete ideal of economic autonomy".
 - freedom enjoyed in the market place, not workplace.
 - consumption a central element of freedom, entitlement of citizenship.
 - freedom available to women & men.

- * Abandonment of other foundations of freedom (active pol. participation) vs. passive citizenship
 - exclusion from mass consumption seen almost as great a denial of citizenship rights to vote.
 - linked to wages, workers' rights, unions.

4. Gilded Age → economic progress leading to both extreme wealth & poverty.

- mass consumption an "antidote" to class warfare, improving lives of people who had poor SOL.
- market liberty & justice promised by socialists - personal fulfillment, economic equality, free world.
- SOL a "sacred acquisition"
- widespread advertising and motion pictures.

* Leisure activities > concern of politics

- voter turnout
- 1920 universal suffrage → hardly any individual political wants left?

- mass consumption eliminated desire for "want" → everything more accessible.

bought about
by mass
consumption.

having choices
in the purchase
of goods

consumer goods
an equalizer.

→ mass consumption
possible
access similar
commercial goods.
of slaves made
white men equal.

(mass production, industrialization.
- progress in technology.

loss of decision
making power;
diverted by
materialist desires

economic participation/
freedom disguising the
loss of pol. participation/
freedom. (un)consciously
giving the latter
up.

people
becoming
more difficult
ap. fic.

Gregory
 breaking point of Wilson's shift from neutrality.
 German submarine warfare on American merchant ships.
 → national prestige did not matter who was sinking the American ships, but that America was a "push over".

anti-German sentiments
 - of Lafollette.
 - issue of nationality as opposed to system of rule.

Coogan.
 For the Paterson reading, please concentrate on pp 50-71. Please consider

- The Zimmermann Telegram
- Wilson's war message
- R Lafollette's Dissent
- How do the Gregory and Coogan readings differ in their interpretation of Woodrow Wilson's neutrality?

both mention that Wilson not neutral.

breaking point where neutrality is abandoned.

Zimmermann Telegram.

- U-boat war to keep America neutral, sinking ships.
- luring Mexico with promises to ally with Germany against US.
- German confidence of forcing England to sue for peace.

Wilson's message.

- special session of Congress to make decision which Wilson felt would be unconstitutional (cf. executive power) if he made the decision himself.
- informing/reminding of Zimmermann Telegram.
- submarine attacks with no warning, even on civilian vessels; disregard of US' wishes.
- loss of lives > loss of property, submarine warfare against commerce = warfare on humanity.
- rights of people, ships etc. ; utility of armed neutrality/neutrality in general against aggression.
- not fault of German people, but government.
- partnership of democratic nations (Allies, Lon?) to maintain peace, League of Nations.
- presence of spies in communities & government.
- "war must be made safe for democracy"
- "it is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war". rule.
- fight for democracy, liberties of small nations, people who submit authority to government for wice

act of war against US, Wilson asking Congress to go to war, Total War, full mobilisation etc.

Lafollette's Dissent.

- critical of Wilson's war message.
- questions honesty/hypocrisy of saying never fights with Russian autocracy, yet helping allied with Britain, with hereditary monarchy/inter/elites, restricted suffrage, poor industrial conditions.
- argues none of the other nations have done much for their people wrt municipal fires/social & industrial reforms as Germany.
- → criticizing rhetoric to of fighting for democracy.
- criticizing US citizens don't have choice in mobilisation for war (ie cannot vote, Congress voting), comparing to Germans' going to war w/o previous knowledge or approval.
- wars forced on people.
- argues ~~entering~~ entering into war has no popular, American support.
- claims different military bills meant to ~~ensure the people to enter~~ ensure people to build sufficient army force.