Roaring 20s for Canada

Canada in the 1920s
Strengthening Economy

- Early 20s recession, mid 20s start to improve
- Era of mass production (consumption), in the US
  - cars and radio

1931 Radio
Woman Driver Amazes Seattle Crowd

"Mrs. F. E. Griff, driving an Oldsmobile DeLuxe Coach, surely 'showed 'em' what a skillful woman of 14 years of experience, and a good judge of distance can do with a car that can spurt, brake quickly, steer easily and turn 'on the edge of a dime.' In one of three obstacle races, . . . . the one in which cars of 110 to 125-inch wheelbase contested in Seattle, the length of a long block, Mrs. Griff amazed the crowd during the one minute and 36 seconds in which she won. Boxes, barrels, packing
▪ Growth of natural resources and manufacturing (pulp and paper)

▪ Mining industry booms
  ▪ Copper and zinc needed for electronic appliances

▪ US-Canadian trade increases
  ▪ invests in Canadian mining and lumber
  ▪ **Branch plants** created to access a wider market
  ▪ Canada = primary industries/ US = secondary

▪ American tourism into Canada increases

**Strengthening Economy**

Paper machine, September 11, 1926
Strengthening Economy

“In 1995, when the National Income was $558 billion, investment income payments to foreigners totalled $49 billion.”
(Canadian Encyclopedia)
Prohibition (of alcohol)

- Started during WWI to ration for soldiers (PEI the earliest in 1901)
- Not as strict as US prohibition
  - Beer could still be produced and sold to other countries, just couldn’t be sold in Canada
- Consumption was illegal (buying or drinking it)
THE WAR ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Liquor Traffic.—With these weapons I’m as deadly as ever, and I’ll show you no mercy!

Grip, Toronto, 6 June 1885
10. It is un-British, because it is untruthful. It is a “fake” counterfeit Act. Although called a Prohibition Act, there is nothing like Prohibition in the entire Bill. It means liquor everywhere, but at a high price.

EVERY MAN WITH BRITISH BLOOD IN HIS VEINS WILL VOTE “NO”

SPECIMEN BALLOT

Are you in favor of bringing the “British Columbia Prohibition Act” into force?

Yes.  
No.  X

READ THE ACT!  MARK YOUR BALLOT HERE

The B. C. Prohibition Act is Un-British

BECAUSE!
BOOZE

How am I to cast my vote?
I am a voter in this Province, and it is up to me to decide.
Am I for Booze or the Water-Wagon?

*The Winnipeg Evening Tribune, 4 March 1916*
HERE'S TO YOU BOYS

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.

Prohibition & Women

- Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) pushes to ban alcohol
- Canadians are in support of prohibition because they see alcohol as corrupting society
Sunday School Group
Hillhurst Presbyterian Sunday school group, Calgary, c 1912-16
Prohibition and Bootlegging

- By 1921 all provinces voted it down
  - Quebec never had prohibition and their economy boomed with tourists
  - Prohibition in the US continued to 1933
    - “rum-running” became big business in Canada
Prohibition and Bootlegging

(Volstead Act, formally National Prohibition Act)
Yessir! I'm here on a little 'booziness' trip!
Rum Running was not illegal for Canadians, only Americans.

Most of the trading was done out of Windsor, Ontario.
Is there a modern equivalent to prohibition?
Urbanization

- Movement of population towards cities where businesses and industries are located
  - leads to less sanitary conditions
  - Poorer people move into the cities to find jobs
  - Affluent people live outside the cities

Granville and Hastings 1922
History Fun Fact!

1918
Increased Mobility

- Cars became more affordable and available to the masses
  - The affluent could then live outside the city and drive to the city to work

Ford High Body Model T 1919
- Model T is the first *mass produced* car
- 1914 one Model T produced every 24 seconds
- First Model T 1908 for $850
- 1919 price approximately $300
Increased Mobility

- People living in cities will use the inter-urban rail lines to travel.
- Lower Mainland’s interurban rail eventually ran from Steveston all the way to Chilliwack (1950s).
Increased Mobility

- Planes were becoming more widely used for research and access to remote areas
  - But not used by the masses as often

Aerial view of Montreal, 1920
Is there a boom in mobility or have we peaked?
Communications

- Telephones becoming more common place (rotary in 1919)
Communications

▪ Widespread use of radio to communicate to different communities
▪ Radio entertainment increases
  ▪ More accessible than movies
▪ Radio+Car= increased consumption
Are we in a communication boom today?
Art

- **Group of Seven** = government funded answer to the growing US influence on Canadian culture
  - Held an exhibition in Toronto 1920
- Tried to create a unique Canadian style/identity
- More contemporary depictions of Canada

Members of the Group of Seven at the Arts & Letters Club in Toronto, clockwise from the left: A.Y. Jackson, Fred Varley, Lawren Harris, Barker Fairley, Franz Johnston, Arthur Lismer and J.E.H. MacDonald
Art

Lawren Harris

Franklin Carmichael

A.J. Casson
Group of Seven and Thomson paintings found at garage sale

Vancouver shopper paid $100 for works by Frederick Varley, Tom Thomson

The painting by Tom Thomson has been conservatively valued at $150,000 to $200,000. (CBC)
Is art a reflection of a booming economy? Does that exist today?
Sports and Popular Entertainment

- Culture of celebrity idolization begins
- Baseball cards, NHL (1917)
- Athletes begin to participate as Canadians in the Olympics

Babe Ruth - 1920

First Olympic Hockey Gold Medalists – Winnipeg Falcons
How big is sports and entertainment in our lives?

Why is it so popular?
The Charleston