World War I arose from widespread social, political, cultural, and economic upheavals that were reshaping the world. How did the Great War accelerate those changes and transform private and public life in the United States?

"This is the end and the beginning of an age."
–H.G. Wells, 1916

The postwar era became known as the Jazz Age—perhaps because the musical form embodied the innovations, complexities, and contradictions of a world that seemed so suddenly modern.
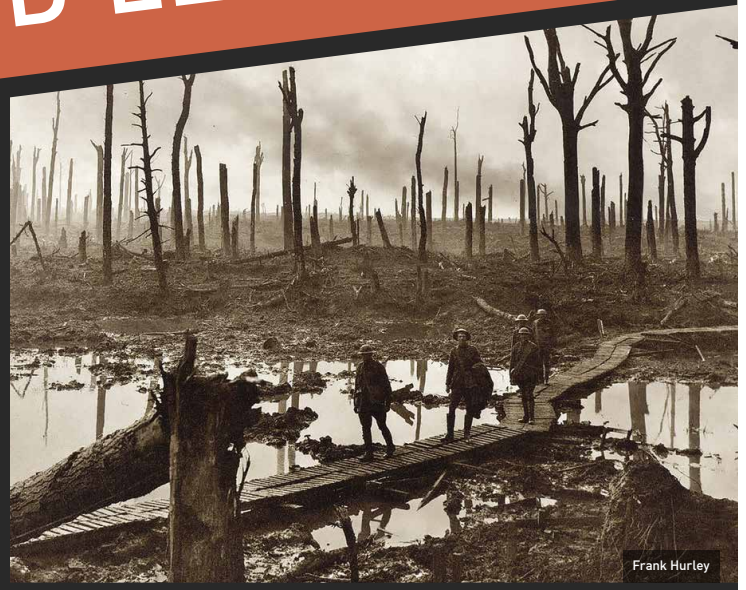
Le Tumulte Noir/Jazz Band by Paul Colin. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution © 2017 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris
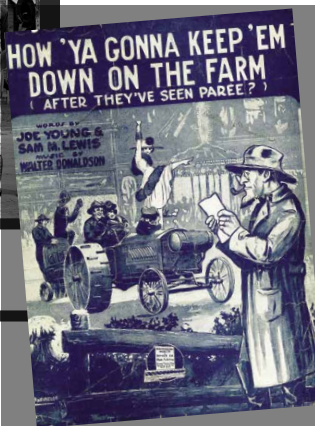
WORLD WAR I: LESSONS AND LEGACIES

In 1914, war erupted in Europe. Rival nations around the globe took sides: The Central Powers—Germany, Austria-Hungary, and others—united against the Allies that included Britain, France, Canada, Australia, France, Italy, Japan, and Russia. After three years of ferocious fighting, both sides were dug in and deadlocked. The United States entered the war on April 6, 1917, broke the impasse, and helped bring the war to an end on November 11, 1918.

Frank Hurley

Brown Brothers, Sterling, Pa.

More than 116,000 Americans died in service. But unlike other nations caught up in the Great War, the United States did not suffer the overwhelming loss of life that left an estimated 10 million soldiers and 6 million civilians dead. Nor did the United States experience the utter destruction of its built and natural environments.

HOW 'YA GONNA KEEP 'EM DOWN ON THE FARM (AFTER THEY'VE SEEN PAREE?)
WORDS BY JOE YOUNG & SAM M. LEWIS
MUSIC BY WALTER DONALDSON
Library of Congress

World War I changed life in the United States in ways that continue to reverberate today.