**IMPACT OF MEDIA:**

**Cinema 1920s:**

* By 1917 cinema was the biggest entertainment media in the USA.
* *Jazz Singer* (1927) 🡪 first ever film with pre recorded sound, revolutionising the industry as actors that only looked good were fired for not being able to meet the new demands of the media as they also needed a good voice.
* Post WW1, movie production boomed especially in ‘Roaring Twenties’.

**Cinema 1930s & 40s:**

* 1941 - nearly 10,500,000 movie theatre seats (one for every 12.5 people in America).
* Going to movies was a full experience with cartoons, trailers, B Movies and newsreels.
* Movie theatres originated in the major cities but eventually expanded out to smaller cities and towns.
* Magazines like *Photoplay* reviewed movies and documented lives of the stars 🡪 around 20 magazines with an audience of around 200,000 to 1 million in 1930s.
* Gossip columnists in these magazines such as Hedda Hopper had a massive influence over the movie studios and society. Hopper named suspected communists during the McCarthy era.
* Genre movies gave movie goers escapism. Clara Bow was a star known for her sex appeal - specialised in ‘flapper’ roles + influenced fashion+ behaviour in young women.
* One of the first male icons was Clark Gable.

**Influence of stars**

* Movie stars tied and contracted to a particular studio and had to make a lot of movies. In 1925 Clara Bow made 15 movies. Clark Gable made 12 in 1931.
* Stars expected to behave in a way that matched their onscreen persona. ‘Handsome bachelors’ could not marry + admitting to homosexuality was unthinkable. Some stars challenged this pressure.
* Big stars could earn a vast fortune. Shirley Temple was earning $5,000 a week in the 1930s (the average yearly wage was $2,000).
* Ordinary actors earned very little. Stars could boost income by advertising products.
* Studios had sponsors; MGM (film studio) had a $500,000 deal with Coca Cola. The stars contracted to MGM would have to drink coke on set during breaks and during magazine interviews.
* Being ‘blacklisted’ by a studio meant that it was impossible to gain work. This happened during the red scare.

**Regulating the movies**

* The impact on society was huge, but not completely positive. Towards the end of the 1920s there were many complaints about the movie industry.
* Portrayal of women –too poorly dressed, drank and smoked. *Gangster* genre was criticised for glamorising violence.
* The Motion Picture Code (Hays Code) introduced in 1929-30. From 1930-36 all films had to conform to this code. Code stated that movies should improve society by being morally improving. This was hard for studios to follow.
* Studios began to build a ‘morality clause’ into their contracts with actors.

**The Studio System**

* Movies were an expensive venture but were extremely profitable.
* In 1930s & 40s – 90% of all film production was in Hollywood.
* It was the studios not the actors that had the real power. The 8 Hollywood studios (including Paramount & Warner Bros) had absolute control over the industry. They set budgets, ratings and schedules.
* Cheapest films were B Movies 🡪 no recognisable stars + cost around $50,000 to $100,000 but made up about half of major studios’ output.
* After the Depression, star studded feature films cost $200,000 to $500,000 to make.

**The Social impact of popular music 1917-45**

* 1920s + 1930s 🡪 people still listened to old music and songs that had been popular before and during WW1.
* Jazz was having a huge impact in the cities of the USA. Record players help to spread the sound of jazz across the country.
* Jazz considered morally careless by conservative members of society in 1920s. Jazz dances such as the ‘Charleston’ and the ‘Black Bottom’ were very sexually suggestive.
* Jazz + swing bands had black band members 🡪 racist Americans found inappropriate.
* By 1929 almost 50% of homes had a gramophone, accordingly the record industry was booming. In 1929 $75 million worth of records was sold.
* 1935 🡪 sales dropped considerably as radio had really taken off in America. Radios played popular music for free and during the great depression records became a luxury that many couldn’t afford.

**The Social impact of radio 1917-45**

* 1920s + 1930s 🡪 radio ownership grew quickly. First commercial radio station was KDKA which began broadcasting in November 1920, broadcasting the election results before newspapers could even print them.
* 1924 🡪 600 commercial stations. Independent + free to play whatever they wanted over the air however advertising money soon took over with the first radio advertisement being broadcast in August 1922. Shows and stations were soon owned or heavily influenced by their sponsors.
* 1926 🡪 first national radio station NBC opened+ broadcasted an American football game.
* Radio Act set up in 1927 to regulate airwaves – federal licensing needed to ensure a fair share of the broadcast frequencies.
* Politicians and religious speakers used this medium to message the nation. Father Coughlin was an outspoken critic of the KKK and used radio to share his views and by 1930 he had 40 million listeners. During the depression, he criticised bankers and supported Roosevelt. However when FDR didn't go far enough he criticised the president and cost him some support.
* Mass production and hire purchase meant that radio ownership rose rapidly. Radio brought, drama, sport and debate into people’s homes. Radio made America a smaller country uniting a nation under a common culture.