**Chapter 24: The Great Depression** Expanded Timeline

1933 Unemployment rises to highest level

Joblessness peaked in the months between Roosevelt's election and his inauguration, reaching an estimated unemployment rate of 20 to 25 percent.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt becomes president

FDR took office at the deepest point of the depression. His vigorous action and reassuring

manner helped restore a measure of hope to the American people, but they did not end the depression.

Birth rate drops to lowest level due to depression

Reflecting the increased support for and availability of contraception, as well as the economic crisis, the birth rate dropped 14 percent in the years between 1930 and 1933 and remained low for the rest of the decade.

The Marx Brothers in *Duck Soup*

The irreverent Marx Brothers made fun of virtually everybody, but they reached the height of their popularity by skewering the pretensions of rich, corrupt politicians, the military, and almost all other authority figures.

1934 Southern Tenant Farmers Union founded

As the agricultural depression deepened in the South, black and white tenant farmers organized the STFU in an attempt to protest what they saw as oppressive conditions.

*It Happened One Night* sweeps Oscars

This sophisticated "screwball comedy" epitomized the new type of Hollywood films that followed the studio's adoption of self-censorship in 1934.

1935 National Youth Administration created

The NYA gave part-time employment to millions of students and out-of-work youths.

Harlem race riot

Rumors of police brutality led to an explosion of violence in Harlem against what was seen as a pervasive system of exploitation of the black community by white store owners.

1936 Student Strike against War

Disillusionment over World War I led thousands of college students to sign the "Oxford Pledge,"promising never to support a war in which the United States was involved. Several hundred thousand students participated in the 1936 action.

Margaret Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind*

This nostalgic look at the Civil War South, with its not always accurate recounting of

Reconstruction, was a best-selling novel during the depression. It was made into a movie in 1939.

Birth control legalized

The federal court's decision in *United States v. One Package of Japanese Pessaries* struck

down all federal laws against distributing information about birth control. Massachusetts and Connecticut banned contraception by state law until the 1960s.

1939 John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

Steinbeck expanded a series of articles he had written on the migration of the Okies to

California into a novel that quickly achieved the status of a classic.

Frank Capra, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* : Italian immigrant Capra directed this 1939 film in which a virtuous small-town hero defeats corrupt politicians whose schemes subverted the nation's ide