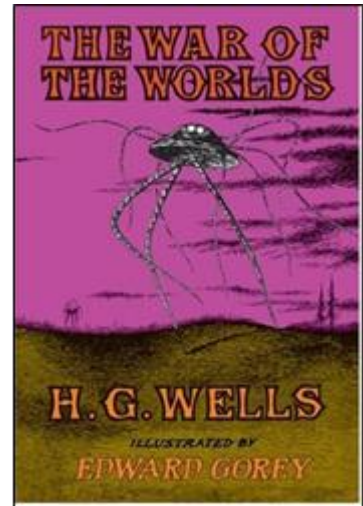


## New Jersey in the 1930s: The Depression and the Media



**Author:** Kaitlyn Mahaffey, Pascack Valley

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Subject:** US History II

**Lesson Overview:** This lesson can be incorporated into any unit about the Great Depression. Several events took place in New Jersey during the 1930s that consumed the American public—the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, the Hindenburg disaster, and *The War of the Worlds* radiobroadcast. For this lesson students will use their historical thinking skills to examine a wide array of primary and secondary resources to draw conclusions about the events that took place in New Jersey. Students will ultimately analyze the overall impact of the media concurrently with the harsh economic conditions of the 1930s.

### Historical Skills:

- Analysis of historical evidence from diverse sources.
- Interpretation and synthesis of primary source documents.
- Contextualization of events.

### Lesson Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify and explain critical events that took place in New Jersey during the 1930s.
- Students will be able to explain the national impact of each of the events—the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, the Hindenburg disaster, and the radio broadcast of Orson Welles adaption of The War of the Worlds.

### New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards:

- 6.1.12.HistoryUP.9.a Analyze the impact of the Great Depression on the American family and ethnic and racial minorities.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPD.16.a Construct a claim to describe how media and technology has impacted civic participation and deliberation.

**Common Core ELA Standards:**

- RH: 9-10.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- RH: 11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- RH: 11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media in order to address a question or solve a problem.

**Materials:**

- New Jersey in the 1930s (Handouts)
- Projector (for PowerPoint)
- Laptop with Internet access

**Resources:** See handouts attached

**Essential Question:** How does the media shape public opinion?

**Background Information:**

- How did the Great Depression develop?
- What was the human impact of the Great Depression?
- How did people in New Jersey experience the Great Depression?

Watch the Video: "It Happened Here: New Jersey—The 1936 State House Occupation, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdbhuB-TNj4>

In 1936, during the height of the Great Depression, a group of people calling themselves the Workers' Alliance banded together and stormed the state house in Trenton. The short video offers a glimpse of what life was like in New Jersey during the Great Depression. Guided questions for the video are listed below:

- What was the New Jersey Relief Administration?
- Identify the Workers' Alliance and briefly explain what it did and why?
- How did the state legislature respond to the Workers' Alliance?
- Identify some of the demands of the Workers' Alliance?

Additional Resource: The primary source article, listed below and attached, provides students with additional information about the bureaucracy associated with relief efforts in New Jersey during the Great Depression.

See Handout 1: "2,000 Needy Storm Jersey Assembly." *The New York Times* n.d.: 1+. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Web. 1 July 2014.

**Procedure and Activities:**

**Hook:** On October 15, 2009, a father and son were hanging out in their backyard. Dad was a storm chaser and was in the process of building a large helium balloon that he would eventually use to track storm patterns. All of a sudden the balloon detached from its holding base and took off. Dad looked around and discovered that his six-year son was missing and concluded that his little boy must be in the balloon. Dad quickly alerted authorities and a media frenzy started that eventually attracted worldwide attention.

Video: "Balloon Boy", "Falcon" Missing Colorado 6 year old Boy in Balloon - Flying Saucer,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISC71V7bUI4>

The video is nine minutes long—you do not have to show the entire video—the first two minutes will suffice. Get students reactions to the video and talk about how the American public was consumed by this story when it happened and the days following. Consider the guided questions listed below:

- What do you think of the video?
- Why do you think the American people were consumed by this story?
- What else was going on in the U.S. at this time? (Checkout the news ticker that scrolls across the bottom of the screen).
- What happened to the "Balloon-Boy"?

## 1. Lindbergh Baby Kidnapping

- a. Have students analyze the ransom note (Handout 2) from the Lindbergh baby kidnapping and answer the following questions that are listed below.
  - What stands out to you in the note?
  - Who do you think this note is for and why?
  - Identify the overall message of the note.
  - What can you infer about the author of this note?
  - Is the note signed?
- b. After a discussion about the ransom note provide students with content information about the Lindbergh baby kidnapping. A short introductory reading is provided as Handout 3: "The Lindbergh Kidnapping", but the teacher should also provide additional content information by telling the story of the actual kidnapping.
  - Where did the kidnapping occur?
    - Hopewell, New Jersey
  - Identify important people and groups involved:
    - Charles Lindbergh, father and famed aviator
    - Betty Gow, Charlie's nurse
    - Violet Sharpe, servant in the home of Mrs. Lindbergh's mother (Mrs. Dwight Morrow), she committed suicide by swallowing poison before she was re-questioned about the kidnapping
    - New Jersey State Police headed by Colonel H. Norman Schwarzkopf
    - The Federal Bureau of Investigation headed by J. Edgar Hoover
    - Dr. John F. Condon aka "Jafsie", retired Bronx principal that offered additional money for the safe return of Baby Charlie that also received ransom notes
  - What happened to Baby Charlie?
    - On May 12, 1932, approximately two months after the kidnapping, a trucker found a partly buried and badly decomposed body 45 feet from the highway. "The head was crushed, there was a hole in the skull and some of the body members were missing" ("The Lindbergh Kidnapping"). The family and nurse identified the body based on the clothes that Baby Charlie had been wearing the night he was kidnapped. The Coroner's examination revealed that he believed Baby Charlie had been dead for two months and most likely died from a blow to the head.
  - What was the outcome of the investigation?
    - Bruno Hauptmann a German immigrant living in New York City was arrested and tried for the kidnapping and murder of Baby Charlie. His trial was held at the Hunterdon County Courthouse in Flemington, New Jersey and began in January of 1935. Evidence against Hauptmann consisted of handwriting samples—his handwriting matched the handwriting on the ransom notes—and the ladder at the crime scene was constructed from the same type of wood that was in Hauptmann's attic. Hauptmann was found guilty of murder in the first degree and was sentenced to death; he received the electric chair and died on April 3, 1936.

- For a summary, watch the video, “It Happened Here: New Jersey—The Lindbergh Bay Kidnapping” at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=xw-aWwNz9Nw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=xw-aWwNz9Nw)
- What was the national impact of the Lindbergh Baby Kidnapping?
  - During the early stages of the Great Depression the American public became consumed by this event—maybe it was a way for the public to keep their minds off of the economy. President Hoover who believed that the “government should not support the people,” insisted that he would “move heaven and earth” to recover the missing child. Ultimately as a result of the Lindbergh baby kidnapping the Federal Kidnapping Act was enacted; this law permits federal authorities to step in and pursue kidnappers once it is believed that they have crossed state lines with their victim. This law was enacted because local law enforcement could not effectively pursue kidnappers across state lines because they were limited by their jurisdiction.

## 2. The Hindenburg Disaster

- Show YouTube video: “Hindenburg disaster” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F54rqDh2mWA> (1:14) and get students initial reactions. (The video shows an aerial disaster in graphic detail but it is not too graphic for high school students.)
- Go over the content information in Handout 4: “The Hindenburg Disaster”.
- Explore possible theories associated with the Hindenburg Disaster
  - Static Electricity Theory
  - Flammable Skin Theory – The Hindenburg burned in less than a minute because of the highly flammable paint that was used to cover the zeppelin.
  - Sabotage Theory – A crew member or passenger did this intentionally because they did not support the Nazi Party in Germany.
  - If you have time check out the MythBusters episode in which they debunk some the theories associated with the Hindenburg disaster. The Discovery Channel created the video and the link is as follows, <https://go.discovery.com/tv-shows/mythbusters/videos/hindenburg-minimyth>
- Picture analysis: “Hindenburg”: over Olympic stadium in Berlin, Germany, 1936
  - What did the Hindenburg symbolize to the German people?
- Primary source analysis: Examine Handout 5, The *New York Times* article, “Roosevelt Sends Hitler Message of Sympathy,” and explore reasons why Roosevelt would send Hitler a sympathy message.
- Other questions to consider:
  - Why do you think this was a big deal?
  - What did you think of how the broadcaster reported the incident?
  - What are other disasters that have been captured on film? How have they been reported?

## 3. War of the Worlds Radio Broadcast

- Listen to the audio clip (you can start at 9:30 minutes into the clip)—Handout 6
  - YouTube Link to audio: Orson Welles – War of The Worlds – Radio Broadcast 1938 – Complete Broadcast, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xs0K4ApWl4g>
    - The YouTube video includes images, do not show any images; the experience is more authentic when you are just listening to the broadcast.
    - The first Martian attack begins around 17 minutes; play at least the first ten minutes of the audio clip and then get student reactions.
    - At 24 minutes is where they start taking about the army of Martians that has invaded the United States.
  - Questions to consider after listening to the broadcast:
    - Where is the reporter?
    - What is he describing?
    - Does the radio broadcast sound authentic?

- b. Primary source analysis: *New York Times*, Radio Listeners Panic, Taking War Drama as Fact (Handouts 7 and 8)
  - Explain how some people responded to the broadcast.
  - How would you have responded if you heard the broadcast?
  - Is Orson Welles an entertainer or a menace?
  - Identify some of the dangers associated with media.
  - How do you think you would feel if you found out it was a hoax?
- c. Content information about the broadcast is provided in the “New Jersey in the 1930s” packet.

#### 4. **Wrap-Up Activity: 3-2-1**

Students should write down three things they learned, two things they have questions about and one comment. Responses can be discussed using the pair and share strategy or the teacher can also collect the responses to formally assess student understanding.

#### **Assessments:**

- There is a worksheet attached (Handout 9) which can be used as an assessment. Teachers can use this assessment to see how well students took notes or it can be used as an additional tool to help special education students with the note taking process.
- **Essay question:** Though these three events—the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, the Hindenburg Disaster, and The War of the Worlds Radio broadcast—caused some form of panic during the 1930s how may they have also provided relief for the American people during the Great Depression? Consider the additional questions listed below to help you organize your response. Please remember that you must use content information and supporting evidence to back up your claim.
  - Identify some of the effects of the Great Depression.
  - What was the national impact of each of the events?
  - Why was America consumed by these three events during the 1930s?
  - What role did the media play in terms of shaping public opinion of these events?



2,000 NEEDY STORM JERSEY ASSEMBLY  
 Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.  
*New York Times* (1923-Current file); Feb 25, 1936;  
 ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2009)  
 pg. 1

## 2,000 NEEDY STORM JERSEY ASSEMBLY

**Legislators Calm Crowd by  
 Allowing a Spokesman to  
 Address the Chamber.**

### STATE TROOPERS ON GUARD

**Young Bill to 'Freeze' Road  
 Funds for Relief Defeated  
 After Attack on Hoffman.**

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

TRENTON, N. J., Feb. 24.—More than 2,000 men and women on relief stormed the State House here tonight while their leader, granted the privilege of addressing the Legislature, warned the members of "trouble" unless they act to provide relief funds after March 1.

The demonstrators were members of a newly formed organization, the Workers Alliance of New Jersey. They were led by Ray Cook, 44-year-old former actor and mem-

ber of the New Jersey Socialist party.

The gathering, here, from all parts of the State of those who are faced with a discontinuance of relief after the first of the year because of a lack of State funds, followed the admission tonight by a leader of the "economy bloc" in the Legislature that a least one-half of the \$36,000,000 needed would have to be obtained from other sources than economies and fund diversions proposed by the Budget Advisory Committee.

#### Young Bill Defeated.

On the heels of this admission, and following a bitter debate in which Governor Hoffman and Mayor Frank Hague of Jersey City were denounced for "playing politics" with relief, the Assembly defeated the Young bill designed to make highway funds available for relief. The vote was 28 to 30.

Shortly after the demonstrators arrived a large cordon of State troopers and Trenton police was thrown around the State House. No attempt was made, however, to break up the meeting. At his request Cook was allowed to speak before the Assembly. In a dramatic talk the former actor, who was said to have been once a member of "White Rats" actors' union, warned the Representatives of the necessity for action.

"It is time for you to 'snap out of it' and stop acting like bureaucrats," he said. "We are not merely asking; we are demanding that you legislators stop fooling around and find a plan to finance relief.

"You think you are going to put us on food orders. But let me tell you that just as soon as you do, you are going to have trouble on your hands.

"We are being put in the class with slaves. We are told what we can buy; we can only buy five-cent cans of beans, third and fourth quality. As American citizens we have a right to spend our money when and where we please.

"You went out and campaigned for these seats," he concluded. "Now get busy and do something."

#### Food Orders Threatened.

The reference to food orders was the result of an announcement last week by the State Emergency Relief Council that because the Legislature had not made funds available those on relief would receive

**Continued on Page Three.**

## 2,000 NEEDY STORM JERSEY ASSEMBLY

Continued From Page One.

no more money and instead would get food.

The admission that about one-half of the money needed for relief would have to come from other than economies or fund diversions was made after Governor Hoffman, a joint committee of the Senate and House and the budget committee had conferred on the proposals, which the latter committee had estimated would make \$27,000,000 available. It was admitted after the conference that not much more than \$18,725,000 would be realized if the recommendations were adopted.

The economy forces insisted, however, that they have not as yet given thought to new taxes.

The Governor suggested at the conference that a "gross receipts tax" might be the solution of the problem. This would, in effect, be a 1 per cent levy on the gross incomes of both business and individuals and would yield an estimated \$29,000,000.

Indiana has such a tax, Mr. Hoffman said, which is assessed against all incomes of more than \$500. He explained that the proposed tax would combine the best features of the sales and income tax. At the same time he pointed out a number of difficulties to be overcome. The tax would be unfair, he cited,

to business concerns having a large turnover but a small profit such as stock dealings, and a means would have to be devised so that State banks would not be unduly hit while national banks escaped the tax.

It was agreed by the Governor to draw at once upon general State funds for \$2,000,000 to be applied to the \$5,415,000 computed as necessary to carry relief until the end of March. This was decided after State Controller Frank Murray said as much as \$3,000,000 could be taken.

The \$2,000,000 would meet commitments only until the end of this week, it was pointed out by Reeve Schley, chairman of the State Relief Council. The other \$1,000,000, if diverted, would last, he said, only until March 10.

The heaviest cutting in the economy and diversion report was with respect to the proposed taking of about \$12,000,000 from highway funds. It was pointed out by the Governor and the anti-diversion group allied with him that moneys already diverted from that source, plus the payment to the sinking fund of \$2,987,000 which the advisory committee has hoped to use, reduced the amount available from that source to about \$1,800,000.

The Advisory Committee's recommendation to reduce the highway debt service by the \$2,987,000 item was dismissed when Controller Murray revealed the money had been paid to the sinking fund Jan. 20. Payment was made under a bill passed early in the current legislative session.

Investigation of the Associated

Gas and Electric Company's activities in New Jersey and of the Utilities Employees Securities Company was proposed to the Legislature tonight in a resolution presented by Senator Elmer King of Morris County. The inquiry, if authorized, would be conducted jointly by the Attorney General, the Public Utility Commission and the Labor Department.

The resolution charged that the Securities Company "has confined its investments to securities of operating and holding companies embraced within the Associated Gas and Electric system." The company, the resolution also alleged, has violated a State law requiring that salaries and wages be paid in "lawful money," as, it is alleged,

the company deducts up to 10 per cent of employees' salaries, for which notes of the Utilities Employees Securities Company are issued and "for which there is no market."

Under suspension of rules, the Senate passed and sent to the Assembly a bill introduced by Senator Frank Durand of Monmouth County to prevent New Jersey corporations from merging with out-of-State corporations.

The Senate also passed the bill of Senator Robert C. Hendrickson of Gloucester County prohibiting photography or use of radio in any New Jersey court during a trial. The measure is intended to avoid in the future criticism such as arose in connection with the Hauptmann trial.

## Handout 2

Dear Sir!

Have 50.000 \$ ready, 25.000 \$ in  
20 \$ bills 15.000 \$ in 10 \$ bills and  
10.000 \$ in 5 \$ bills. After 2-4 days  
we will inform you were to deliver  
the money.

We warn you for making  
anyding public or for notify the Police  
the child is in quite care.

Indication for all letters are  
singnature and 3 holds.

"The Lindbergh Kidnapping." *Famous Cases and Criminals*. FBI, 28 July 2010. Web. 4 March June 2012.

Dear Sir,  
Have 50,000\$ redy 25000\$ in 20\$ bills 15000\$ in 10\$ bills and  
10000\$ in 5\$ bills. After 2-4 days will inform you were to deliver the  
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We warn you for making anyding public or for notify the Polise the  
child is in gut care.

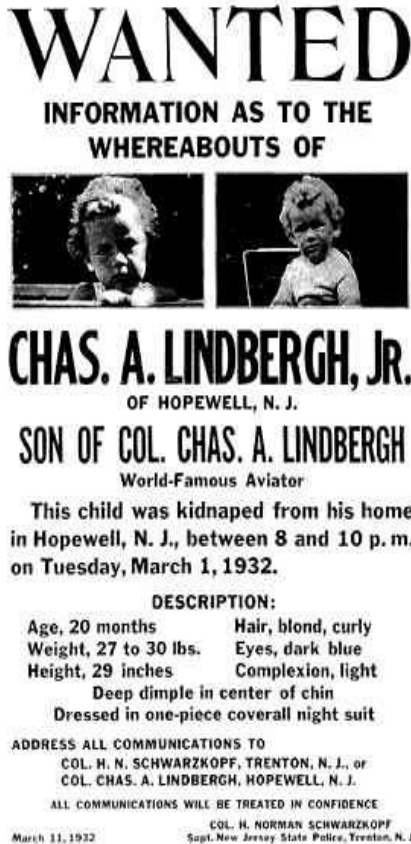
Indication for all letters are singnature and 3 holds.

### Questions:

- What stands out to you in the note?
- Who do you think this note is to and why?
- Identify the overall message of the note.
- What can you infer about the author of this note?
- Is the note signed?



## The Lindbergh Kidnapping



Charles Augustus Lindbergh, Jr. was born on June 22, 1930. The son of Charles Lindbergh, the famed aviator, and Anne Morrow Lindbergh, the daughter of a diplomat, Baby Charlie was destined for fame. But his parents could not have imagined just how famous their baby would become, nor could they have imagined the tragedy that would put him and themselves on the front pages of America's newspapers.

Baby Charlie was suffering from a cold during the last weekend in February, 1932. On Tuesday, March 1, Charles and Anne were spending a quiet evening at home in Hopewell, New Jersey. Betty Gow, Charlie's nurse, rubbed medication on the baby's chest to relieve congestion. At about 7:30, Betty and Anne put Charlie Jr. to bed. Betty and the Lindberghs went on about their separate chores that night. At 10 p.m., Betty Gow made a horrible discovery -- baby Charlie was gone.

Charles Lindbergh later recounted his initial reactions: "...I went upstairs to the child's nursery, opened the door, and immediately noticed a lifted window. A strange-looking envelope lay on the sill. I looked at the crib. It was empty. I ran downstairs, grabbed my rifle, and went out into the night..."

By 10:30 that night, radio news bulletins were announcing the story to the nation. Nearly every newspaper in the country gave the story

prominent placement in their March 2 editions. Soon, sightings of the Lindbergh baby were coming from all quarters: California, Michigan, Mexico. None turned out to be genuine.

Colonel H. Norman Schwarzkopf of the New Jersey State Police was officially in charge of the investigation, but Schwarzkopf, the father of 1991 Gulf War leader U.S. General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, willingly ceded major responsibility for the investigation to Charles Lindbergh. But running a kidnapping investigation was no job for an amateur. Lindbergh's inexperience allowed for major errors -- footprints near the house were trampled and pieces of evidence were handled by a variety of people assembled at the compound. Other blunders would follow.

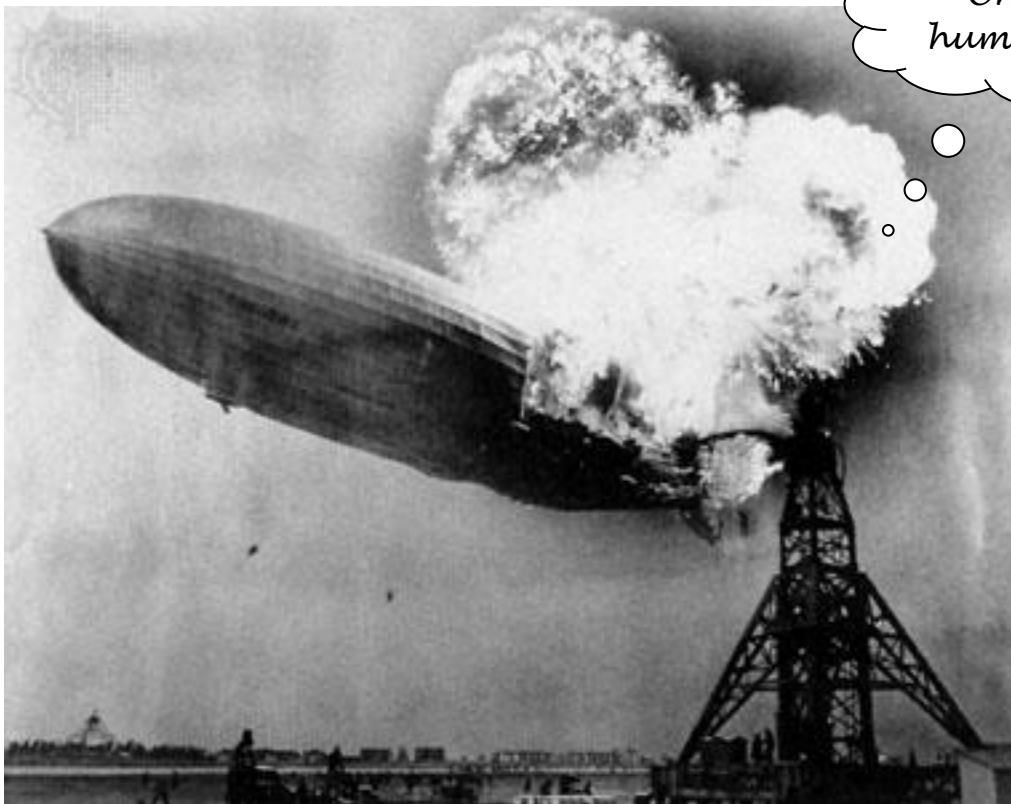
"The Kidnapping." PBS. PBS, n.d. Web. 18 March. 2013.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/lindbergh/sfeature/crime.html>.

### Questions to Consider:

- What happened to Baby Charlie?
- Who was accused of the kidnapping and what evidence was provided?
- How did this case alter how kidnappings are handled?
- How did the Lindbergh baby kidnapping affect America?

# The Hindenburg Disaster



Hindenburg, German dirigible, the largest rigid airship ever constructed. In 1937 it caught fire and was destroyed; 36 people died in the disaster.

The *Hindenburg* was a 245-metre- (804-foot-) long airship of conventional zeppelin design that was launched at Friedrichshafen, Germany in March 1936. It had a maximum speed of 135 km (84 miles) per hour and a cruising speed of 126 km (78 miles) per hour. Though it was designed to be filled with helium gas, the airship was filled with highly flammable hydrogen gas. In 1936 the *Hindenburg* inaugurated commercial air service across the North Atlantic by carrying 1,002 passengers on 10 scheduled round trips between Germany and the United States.

On May 6, 1937, while landing at Lakehurst, New Jersey, on the first of its scheduled 1937 trans-Atlantic crossings, the *Hindenburg* burst into flames and was completely destroyed. Of the 97 persons aboard, 36 were killed. The fire was officially attributed to a discharge of atmospheric electricity in the vicinity of a hydrogen gas leak from the airship, though it was speculated that the dirigible had been the victim of an anti-Nazi act of sabotage. The *Hindenburg* disaster, which was recorded on film and on phonograph disc, marked the end of the use of rigid airships in commercial air transportation.

"Hindenburg." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online Academic Edition*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2013. Web. 02 Apr. 2013. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/266218/Hindenburg>>.

**You Tube:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F54rqDh2mWA>

## Reaction Question:

- What were your initial reactions to hearing the audio and seeing the video?



**"Hindenburg": over Olympic stadium in Berlin, Germany, 1936**

## **Roosevelt Sends Hitler Message of Sympathy**

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

**GALVESTON, Texas, May 6.**— Shocked by the Hindenburg disaster at Lakehurst today, President Roosevelt tonight sent from his yacht *The Potomac* a message of sympathy to Adolf Hitler, the German Chancellor.

His message to Herr Hitler follows:

**"His Excellency, Adolf Hitler, Reich Chancellor, Berlin.**

**"I have just learned of the disaster to the airship Hindenburg and offer you and the German people my deepest sympathy for the tragic loss of life which resulted from this unexpected and unhappy event."**

At the same time, the President issued the following statement:

**"I am distressed to hear of the tragedy of the Hindenburg, and extend my deep sympathy to the families of the passengers, officers and crew who lost their lives."**

Both messages were sent to the temporary White House offices here for transmission, from the yacht on which the President is enjoying a fishing vacation.

### **Roosevelt Sends Hitler Message of Sympathy**

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

*New York Times (1923-Current file); May 7, 1937;*

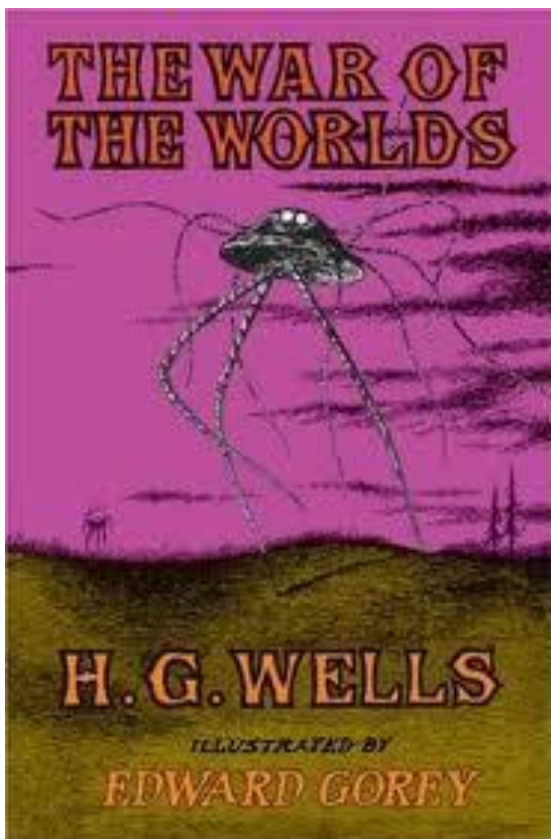
ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2009)

pg. 19

### **Questions:**

- What happened to the Hindenburg?
- What caused the explosion?
- Why would FDR send Hitler a sympathy letter?





## Listen to the Audio Clip

YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xs0K4ApWl4g>

Questions:

- Where is the reporter?
- What is he describing?
- Does the radio broadcast sound authentic?

# The New York Times

## Radio Listeners in Panic, Taking War Drama as Fact

### Many Flee Homes to Escape 'Gas Raid From Mars'--Phone Calls Swamp Police at Broadcast of Wells Fantasy

A wave of mass hysteria seized thousands of radio listeners between 8:15 and 9:30 o'clock last night when a broadcast of a dramatization of H. G. Wells' fantasy, "The War of the Worlds," led thousands to believe that an interplanetary conflict had started with invading Martians spreading wide death and destruction in New Jersey and New York.

In Newark, in a single block at Heddon Terrace and Hawthorne Avenue, more than twenty families rushed out of their houses with wet handkerchiefs and towels over their faces to flee from what they believed was to be a gas raid. Some began moving household furniture.

News bulletins and scene broadcasts followed, reporting, with the technique in which the radio had reported actual events, the landing of a "meteor" near Princeton N. J., "killing" 1,500 persons, the discovery that the "meteor" was a "metal cylinder" containing strange creatures from Mars armed with "death rays" to open hostilities against the inhabitants of the earth.

Harlem was shaken by the "news." Thirty men and women rushed into the West 123d Street police station and twelve into the West 135th Street station saying they had their household goods packed and were all ready to leave Harlem if the police would tell them where to go to be "evacuated." One man insisted he had heard "the President's voice" over the radio advising all citizens to leave the cities.

Thousands of calls came in to Newark Police Headquarters. These were not only from the terror stricken. Hundreds of physicians and nurses, believing the reports to be true, called to volunteer their services to aid the "injured." City officials also called in to make "emergency" arrangements for the population.

One of the radio reports, the statement about the mobilization of 7,000 national guardsmen in New Jersey, caused the armories of the Sussex and Essex troops to be swamped with calls from officers and men seeking information about the mobilization place.

In San Francisco the general impression of listeners seemed to be that an overwhelming force had invaded the United States from the air, was in the process of destroying New York and threatening to move westward. "My God," roared one inquirer into a telephone, "where can I volunteer my services? We've got to stop this awful thing."

A message from Providence, R. I., said: "Weeping and hysterical women swamped the switchboard of The Providence Journal for details of the massacre and destruction at New York, and officials of the electric company received scores of calls urging them to turn off all lights so that the city would be safe from the enemy."

A man in Pittsburgh said he returned home in the midst of the broadcast and found his wife in the bathroom, a bottle of poison in her hand, and screaming: "I'd rather die this way than like that."

"The New York Times." *Radio Listeners in Panic, Taking War Drama as Fact*. N.p., 31 Oct. 1938. Web. 18 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.war-of-the-worlds.org/Radio/Newspapers/Oct31/NYT.html>>.

## Halloween Eve and the Martian Invasion



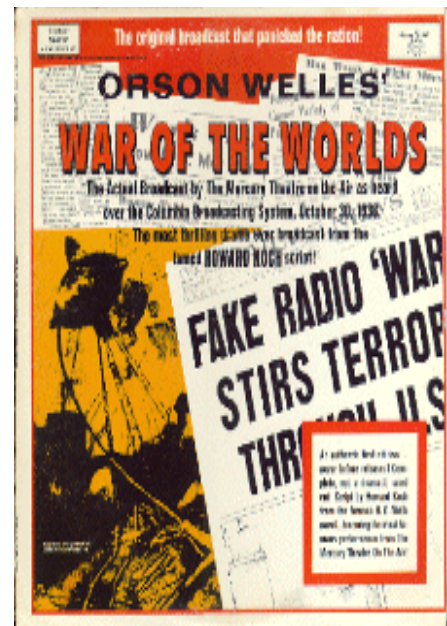
Of the various events that generated waves of mass hysteria in the United States during the 20th century, one of the most remarkable was Orson Welles' *War of the Worlds* radio broadcast of 1938. Although the broadcast was a fictional account of Martians invading the country, millions of listeners who happened upon the program late were convinced that an alien invasion was actually happening.

The broadcast aired on Halloween, October 31, 1938. It was based on H. G. Wells' well-known science fiction novel *War of the Worlds*, in which Martians invade the United States. In Welles's version, however, actors played the roles of newscasters, politicians, and bystanders as fictional Martians landed in Grover's Mill, New Jersey and burned people to death with ray guns. The radio station played several announcements that the broadcast was a fictional drama, but much of the audience missed these explanations and assumed that since the media was announcing an alien invasion, the information must be correct.

Millions of listeners panicked as Welles' actors delivered terrifying news updates on, and descriptions of, the Martians. Across the nation, the program's audience packed their belongings, sought shelter in cellars, or prepared to wage war on the invaders. In an extreme example of public hysteria, some people wrapped their heads in towels to prevent the inhalation of poisonous Martian chemicals. Ironically, the listeners' frenzied reactions perfectly complemented the fictional drama taking place on the air waves across the country.

Legitimate newscasts soon ended the confusion by explaining that no Martian invasion had taken place, replacing Americans' fear with anger that such pandemonium could have been allowed to occur. Although there was a public outcry for preventative controls over the media following the incident, no such restrictions were ever imposed in the United States; instead, Americans simply became increasingly wary of news received through commercial sources.

"*War of the Worlds* Radio Broadcast (1938)." *Pop Culture Universe: Icons, Idols, Ideas*. ABC-CLIO, 2013.  
Web. 18 March. 2013.





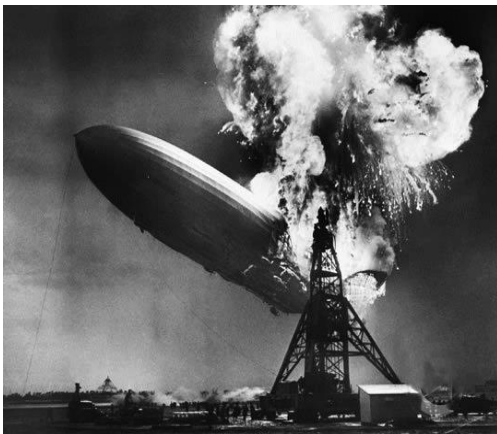
NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## NEW JERSEY IN THE THIRTIES

### The Lindbergh Kidnapping

1. The Lindbergh Kidnapping occurred on (month, date, year): \_\_\_\_\_
2. The child was kidnapped from his home in (city, state): \_\_\_\_\_
3. **TRUE**      **FALSE**      As a result of the ransom note, authorities assumed that the kidnapper was an immigrant.
4. **TRUE**      **FALSE**      Charles Lindbergh reached out to organized crime members, like Al Capone, in attempt to get his child back.
5. Identify the person charged with the kidnapping: \_\_\_\_\_
6. The trial was held in (city, state): \_\_\_\_\_
7. What legislation was ultimately passed as a result of the Lindbergh Baby Kidnapping? Explain.



### The Hindenburg Disaster

8. The Hindenburg Disaster occurred on (month, day, year) \_\_\_\_\_ in (city, state) \_\_\_\_\_. Of the 97 passengers aboard the ship (#) \_\_\_\_\_ died.
9. A picture of the Hindenburg disaster is an album cover for this band: \_\_\_\_\_

10. **TRUE**      **FALSE**      The Hindenburg was filled with the highly flammable gas, helium.
11. **TRUE**      **FALSE**      The Hindenburg was destroyed almost instantly and crashed to the ground in less than a minute.
12. **TRUE**      **FALSE**      The news reporter was praised for how calm and collected he remained during the broadcast.
13. What caused the Hindenburg Disaster? Explain.

### **Halloween Eve and the Martian Invasion**

14. Who was the man responsible for the “Martian Invasion”? \_\_\_\_\_
15. The \_\_\_\_\_ broadcast of the “Martian Invasion” was an adaptation of \_\_\_\_\_ (book title); the book was written by \_\_\_\_\_.
16. The Martians first landed in (city, state): \_\_\_\_\_.
17. **TRUE**      **FALSE**      The director got in trouble for the broadcast because he did not include any disclaimers to inform people that it was a fake broadcast.
18. **TRUE**      **FALSE**      No one listening to the radio actually believed that Martians landed in the United States.
19. The researcher/scientist interviewed about the “Martian Invasion” was from what college in New Jersey?  
\_\_\_\_\_
20. **EXTRA CREDIT:** Bruce Springsteen is from what New Jersey town?  
\_\_\_\_\_