

Contarst 1920- 1950



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In retrospect the 20's and 50's are eerily similar even though they're three decades apart, but what makes them so similar is that both of the decades the nation was faced with the post trauma of fighting in a World war. The roles of woman who had once worked in factories reverted back to being a good housewife once more, only during the 50's were there more of an unrest. There was also an economic boom after each war stimulating the economy, due to the dual income families were able to purchase more than before.

After both world wars it was like women had taken one step forward and then one step back. Women started working in both world wars in factories to make up for all the men leaving to go and fight in the war. Once World War I had ended in 1917 women left the workforce and went back to being Susie homemaker when men started to come back from overseas. Even though they were no longer as predominant in the work force women's voices were still being heard when in 1919 women finally got the right to vote, woman's suffrage had finally started to pay off.

They wanted the government to start imposing new laws such as temperance which ended up getting passed in 1920 as the 18th amendment. Women had started taking on more of a rebellious tone, many of them became flappers wearing shorter dresses and boyish haircuts. They started going against the ideals set upon them before with being this domestic goddess. Just like in the First World War women began working in factories as Rosie the Riveters; once the soldiers came back they were forced to leave the workforce.

The women of the 50s didn't want to return to being a housewife but ultimately did. Unlike in the 20s the submissive stereotype of a housewife returned and the return of the domestic goddess returned. The pillars of womanhood returned and the need to be this perfect wife and mother that catered to everyone's needs swept the nation, sending woman back into the 1800's. Consumerism had a huge upswing in both of these decades postwar. The roaring 20s came about with this boom.

Credit was becoming more popular and with this credit people started buying cars, radios, and the newest technology that was offered. Mass production had come about in the war making things cheaper and produced on a larger scale than ever seen before; this made it easier for the middle class to buy more. This production spread quickly to Europe that had been decimated by the war, soon American made products had taken over the world. Consumerism had a boom in the 50's due to more than one person working in a household, jobs were increasingly easier to find, and wages became higher.

New and expanded federal programs like the the G. I. Bill, helped many young families buy their own houses, often in the rapidly expanding suburbs. The Bill also allowed the soldiers to receive a higher education for free helping them change from the usual " blue collar" jobs and into a " white collar" usually an office worker type job. Americas wanted to start modernizing their lives, buying the newest cars, washer machines, refrigerators and so on; with the men having better paying jobs this became an easier than ever before.

The similarities between the 1920s and the 1950s are in clear definition due to the life changing wars the country had just came out of. Women in both the decades stopped working but in the unlike the 20s the women of the 50s went back to being a trophy wife rather than trying to stay in the workforce. Also in these decades consumerism skyrocketed with large scale productions, and being one of the only places who weren't destroyed in the war process unlike Europe. Spreading across the world American made products became the most popular goods around.