

Good example of women in 1950's essay

[Health & Medicine](#), [Beauty](#)



Fresh from actively taking the place of the men during the second world war, women during the 50s have to revert back into the traditional role that society has for them. Despite wanting the women to be educated, they are encouraged by societal ideals to get married at an early age, thus most of them are married and starting a family by the age of nineteen. The American culture, then wanted to portray their women being content and happy homemakers. However, the stereotype attached to American women and the conservative times of the 50s was challenged as people became enchanted with popular icons such as Miss America, Barbie and Marilyn Monroe.

Little did the promoters of the Miss America in 1921 knew that this advertising ploy conceived by Atlantic businessmen to grab the attention of tourists would become the defining model of American women. Miss America and other beauty pageants hold the image of the ideal woman in the mind of the public, a manifestation of the hopes and standards society has on what the American woman should be. Despite the conservative ideas of that period, beauty pageants became well accepted, and the acceptance can be associated with the fact that the participants emulated how America wanted her women to be. During that time, the image of the Miss America is one that is wholesome and pure, a picture of the regular girl-next door. During the 50s, there were some who challenged the role of the women, but Miss America continued to exude the image of an ideal woman. She is adorned with elegance, beauty and brains, but one who will also put forth the interest of the of the husband and family before her own. There are people, however, who believed that the pageant did not represent the actual situation in the United States during that time. For one, the beauty pageant became one of

the pictures of racism in the country as the contest was exclusive only to white American women. It was only during the 70s when women of color were allowed to join the Miss American pageant.

Barbie is another 50s icon that has invaded the American culture's perception of the ideal woman. The doll's image is a reflection not only of how the society teaches young girls to act feminine, but of how an American woman should look, that is, a mature western woman should have long limbs, tiny waist and a firm, round breast. The Barbie doll remains to be popular during the 50s because it became a way to teach the values of the time. For example, it teaches young girls about the wardrobe trends and other fashion developments. Moreover, it teaches the girls about class as Barbie is depicted as rich, beautiful and independent, a revelation of how the American woman should be during adulthood.

It was Marilyn Monroe, a movie icon whose career shoots up during the 50s who represented the sexual revolution of her time. How she remained popular despite the conservative times in the 1950s may be due to the fact that change is already needed by the society then. Women cannot be confined at home, and most are seeking equality with men. Marilyn came out to represent the sexual revolution, her popularized image created an enduring impression on the minds of the Americans. Marilyn defied the rules, despite being depicted as a dumb blonde, she fought her way to prove that she is more than how the movie industry wanted her to be portrayed. She was popular but was given roles that she thought were less rewarding; in order to prove her worth, she took more mature roles that demonstrate her capability as a good actress. She broke the traditional notion of an obedient

woman, someone who can demand how she wanted to be treated. Marilyn Monroe is an icon that showed that women should not settle for the category given by society, and as such she encouraged women to stand up for themselves.