

Research paper on how did the cold war affect us culture in the 1980s

[War](#), [Cold War](#)



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Introduction

To answer the abovementioned question comprehensively, it is appropriate to understand the cold war and the American culture. After which, one can relate them.

The Cold War was a time of pressure and antagonism between the United States of America and the Soviet Union from the mid-40s to the late 80s. It began with the conclusion of the Second World War. It was called the Cold War because there was no active war between the two nations, which was probably due to the fright of nuclear increase. There were numerous oblique conflicts for example the Vietnam and Korea wars. There was also the Cuban missile predicament in 1962, which was the closest the planet ever came to a nuclear war.

Even though the Soviet Union and China started as partners in 1949 there come out a rift between them, which was skilfully exploited by the Americans. The US formed a coalition with China in 1971 to contain the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union attacked Afghanistan in 1980, which resulted in the United States and its partners boycotting the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow. In retaliation, the Soviet Union and its partners boycotted the 1984

Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. The US sponsored and equipped the Afghan guerrillas to battle the Soviet troops. This War was a prime factor in bankrupting the Soviet Union (Engelhardt 12).

In the ' 80s the US President, Ronald Reagan hailed the Soviet Union as an "evil empire" and foresaw that it would be consigned to the ash heap of history. He publicised a major weapons expansion and the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI)also nicknamed as " Star Wars". The Soviet Union was too economically constrained to reply in kind. In the year 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev was made the leader of the Soviet Union. He adopted an appeasing attitude towards the Americans and many arms reduction pacts were signed. In 1989, the soviet withdrew from Afghanistan and in 1990, the Soviets decided to the reunify Germany. Movements alongside communist governments in Eastern Europe followed suit. The Soviet Union ended in 1991 marking the end of the Cold War.

That all persons are equal and deserve equal opportunities in life Therefore, should all be treated fairly and with the same level of respect. This is one among the most essential principles of American philosophy. That every person is free to be an individual. Americans do not consider in conforming to a common ideology or conduct. individualism and the will to express one's self is encouraged. Competition brings out the best in individuals and in trade. Competition is also a basic principle of American philosophy. That you are responsible for your own life and you determining your own future.

Americans do not believe in fate or luck they are proud of their individual accomplishments. That change is good and important It brings about growth and development. Tradition is not as appreciated in America as it is in other

continents. It is best to be honest and direct. In many societies, it is considered ill mannered to speak too openly or directly about a topic. Americans have a preference to speak openly, even when discussing a negative opinion or conveying bad news. That being rational is more important than being emotional when making a decision. Americans are most likely interested in " the bottom line." In short, the best decision is the one that has the most creative outcome, usually measured in currency. American culture is a western culture, mainly rooted in British culture with pressures from other components of Europe, the indigenous American individuals, African Americans and to a less significant degree Asian Americans and other youthful factions of immigrants. Owing to the degree of American culture, there are many incorporated nevertheless distinctive subcultures inside the U. S. The influential years of the United States were the late 18th century when the nation was established and an enormous deal of U. S. culture is implied on the principles of The Enlightenment. The Declaration's operation statement about securing life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; the French revolution's principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity; and the state motto of E pluribus Unum¹ replicate the country's values and societal expansion. Another principal influence on American culture is the invariable stream of new immigrants, many of whom had fled discrimination or tyranny in their home countries, and were looking for freedom² and economic opportunity, resulting in them declining dictatorial practices. Americans value the principles of personal liberty, individuality, independence, humanity, parity, Judeo-Christian morals, free markets, a republican form of government, democratic system, populism,

pluralism, feminism, and patriotism³.

In addition, the United States is recognized around the world for the movies, shows, and musical concerts that it manufactures. The principal hubs of popular American culture are New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Florida, and Las Vegas. lesser venues for example Branson, Missouri and Nashville have turned out to be popular, but most cities host travelling fabrications of popular Broadway shows. New technology and gadgets also frequently interest Americans. Many of the novel technical innovations in the contemporary world were either initially invented in the United States or initially extensively adopted by Americans. Instances are automobiles, private computers, the Internet, online shopping, and the iPod. There are also numerous inside the United States that distribute the approach that via technology many of the wickedness in the society can be cured.

In order to answer the question about how the Cold War affected America, it is apparent to try, contrast, and compare American culture and society in the 1950s, at the start of the Cold War and in the 1990s at the conclusion of the Cold War. By observing the disparities between America in the 1950s and in the 1990s one can establish plans of how Americans have transformed as a society and culture in the preceding fifty years. One can then try to establish how many and how much of these transformations are as a result of the Cold War. However, some of these social and cultural changes may have little to do with the Cold War and a lot more to do with other significant issues facing the United States in the last fifty years. However, by comparing and contrasting America at the beginning and the end of the Cold War, one can better comprehend some of the probable impacts of the Cold War on

American culture (Goldman 110).

Exploring the American culture and society in the 1950s, how would one exemplify that culture and society? Americans were more hopeful about their culture and society in the 1950s. They assumed that we were a prosperous, plentiful, and affluent society. Americans thought that because of their wealth and achievement, the American Dream was open to anybody, no matter whom they were or where they came from. They thought that with hard work, education, devotion, and assurance, they could add to and have an effect in their society. As a result, they would be remunerated with the fruits of the American Dream: a nice house, a secure well family, contented and triumphant children, a high-quality life, and the aptitude to give their children a better life.

Americans thought that in the future they would work less, have more free time, and enjoy their lives more. Via science and technology, America would be capable of solving whatever social and economic difficulties it encounter. They believed that education would be all the time more open to everybody, and that all Americans with could make the most of this education and training to progress their lives and standards of living (Hendrickson 344).. They also thought that they would have escalating admission to health care that would offer them with longer, improved, and happier lives. They trusted their administration and politicians to defend their interests and develop their lives and society. Most believed in their government and their leaders. They had confidence in their democratic institutions and their democratic society. With America's escalating wealth, opportunity, autonomy, and development, they believed that they would have more authority over their

lives, live longer, more contented lives, and that their culture would carry on improving and progressing, creating ever superior levels of prosperity, profusion, autonomy, and opportunity. Americans also decided on what America's larger responsibility in the world was: to defend and extend freedom and democracy and bring their social and economic establishments to individuals all over the world. However, in addition, to this buoyant optimism in (Hendrickson 344) American society and its future. Americans in the 1950s were frightened of nuclear war and vanishing in a nuclear war that could annihilate their society and civilization. Additionally, Americans were concerned about being called communists, frightened that their lives, professions, and families could be destroyed by being linked with the threatening worldwide communist conspiracy. Therefore, American buoyancy in the 1950s was distracted by fears about nuclear war and about communism.

America in the 1990s was a changed society and culture than it was in the 1950s. Americans in the 1990s were much less positive about their future and the development of their society. Americans still had confidence in science and technology, but that faith was not as immense as it was in the 1950s. Americans in the 1990s did not trust their administration or their politicians. Americans had very little confidence in their democratic establishments and in their democracy. Americans did not trust their government and politicians to defend their interests and the larger interests of American society (Hendrickson 344). Most did not concur on what should be America's larger responsibility in the world after the Cold War. Some Americans thought that the United States might even create a threat to

democracy and freedom in the world. In the 1990s, many Americans had lost their devotion in the American Dream and their future. Many Americans, particularly younger generation, question whether hard work, education, devotion, and commitment would reimburse with the rewards promised by the American Dream. It was more and more difficult for Americans to buy homes, to support their families, raise thriving, happy children, and provide a better life for their children than they had for themselves. At present, Many Americans are troubled with the decline in the quality of education. Many are concerned that access to higher education is gradually more shut off to them because of rising costs. However, additionally, even with a college degree, many Americans fear that they will not be able to find a job that will allow them to be as successful as their parents. Americans in the 1990s are not frightened of being called communists or that their lives will be destroyed if they do not match to conventional political attitudes and moral values.

Certainly, since the 1970s, many Americans have retrospect to the 1950s as a time when American society and culture prevailed (Hendrickson 344).

What does one make of the disparities involving American culture and society in the 1950s and in the 1990s? How much of these transformations are founded by the United States' participation in the Cold War? Currently since the Cold War is over will America be capable of addressing many of these difficulties and grounds for negativity about their society and future? Did America merely use a larger worldwide and national mission for example the Cold War? What will substitute the Cold War to unite Americans? Why, if the United States triumphed in the Cold War, are Americans so negative, nervous, and miserable? What were the larger prices of winning the Cold

War? These are merely some of the queries one can start to answer by evaluating America in the 1950s and 1990s and asking the larger question: How did the Cold War affect American culture (Brands 233)

The Cold War became a principal influence on many features of American society for much of the second half of the 20th century. It rose owing to antagonist values amid the United States, demonstrating democracy and capitalism, and the Soviet Union, signifying communism and totalitarianism. Being the two principal world powers after WWII, controversy amid the Americans and Soviets became a worldwide conflict. The Cold War varied from most wars because it was as a great deal of a propaganda war than a war with military involvements. The Korean and Vietnam conflicts are significant instances of military intrusion by the Americans for the sake of impeding communist expansionism. Conversely, these wars did not have the decades-long influence on American domestic and foreign policy that the cultural, political, and economic battles of the Cold War had.

Cultural battles amid the then two superpowers had as a good deal, or more, of an influence on the daily lives of many American nationals than any other feature of the Cold War. As a propaganda instrument, national security bureaus supported Hollywood to create anticommunist movies and recommended that movie scripts be distorted to eliminate references to less-than-praiseworthy features of American history (Brands 851). This directed to a litany of movies that assisted in sparking patriotism, that nevertheless they as well raised suspicion of communist activity in America. These anticommunist attitudes became unmanageable and ended up functioning against Hollywood for the period of the House Un-American Activities

Committee (HUAC) trials against alleged communists in Hollywood. Whereas some communists were eradicated, many more lives were destroyed rooted in weak proof, unconfirmed allegations, and peoples' rejection in taking part in the trials or respond to questions. Anticommunist fever dripped down to have local influences as well. For instance, the Better American League of southern California collected the names of virtually 2 million supposed subversives in the region (Brands 864). Many of these individuals were laid off, blacklisted, and had their civil rights desecrated rooted in these alleges. Not all features of the cultural conflicts of the Cold War were unconstructive. One of the nastiest stains on American culture of the period was racial disparity. In spite of being untied from slavery roughly 80 years prior to the conclusion of WWII, African Americans were still regarded as second-class nationals in the South and discrimination was rampant in varying forms virtually everywhere. While transformation for blacks and other marginal groups came gradually, it did ultimately come. President Truman illustrated that if the United States were to give the individuals of the world an option of liberty or enslavement it ought to be accurate that the residual flaws in our exercise of democracy (Adler 857). Starting in the early 1950s states commenced instituting just employment commissions, they approved laws banning inequity, and black voter registration started to increase (Adler 856). In 1954, the Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* cemented the way for integration in all community schools. as well, it disengaged the separate but equal doctrine founded by an 1896 case, *Plessey v. Fergusson*, which facilitated much of the institutional prejudice to continue in the South (Adler 903-904). President Johnson not just hated

inequality; he comprehended the international consequences that came together with America's professed insincerity. Consecutively, he aided in passing The Civil Rights Act of 1964 that barred discrimination in community and many private housings. While it would not be precise to articulate that the civil rights progress occurred because of the Cold War, the background of the Cold War facilitated individuals to comprehend that features of American society were in contradiction of the values Americans were acknowledging to abide and transformations were required. While cultural consequences of the Cold War were principally domestic, political clashes linking the Soviet Union and the United States were mainly fought on a global stage.

Politically, the United States and the Soviet Union were extreme opposites at the conclusion of WWII. Decolonization by European countries and the extraction of Axis forces of engaged lands left a void of power in Europe and around the globe (Boyer 234). Both the Americans and the Soviets wanted to control new governments in these countries with the Americans being the world's leading advocates of democratic representative administration, and the Soviets the world's leading advocates of dictatorial communism (Boyer 234). At the conclusion of WWII, Soviet military engaged much of Eastern Europe and they sought to inhabit those lands to create a barrier zone in opposition to additional incursions. The United States was reluctant to execute military forces to eradicate the Soviets consequently Eastern Europe fell in hand of the Soviets for the next 45 years. Simultaneously, the Soviets were wrecked after WWII and did not desire to risk war with the U. S. therefore; they left Western Europe to fall in U. S. control. Consecutively, the U. S. created official alliances with Western Europe with the North Atlantic

Treaty Organization, and in return, the Soviets created the Warsaw Pact with its Eastern European partners. While apprehensions between the two sides were elevated, these apprehensions coupled with reciprocated fear have prohibited extensive war in Europe since WWII.

U. S. and Soviet Union Political battles were not restricted to Europe. The U. S. assumed a strategy called containment, consistent with which the United States dedicated itself to thwarting any additional extension of Soviet power (Blum 842). While a political principle, containment gave rise to American military interference all over the globe. Most conspicuously, the Korean and Vietnam Wars were fought to discontinue the extension of communism in Asia and each initiated the demises of many American soldiers. The U. S. was so devoted to its containment policy that it sporadically discarded its principles of self-determination (part of the U. S. Culture) and supported vicious dictators, for example General Augusto Pinochet in Chile, on condition that they were not communists (Blum 965). Nationally, the Cold War resulted in the election of anti-communist presidents for example Truman, Kennedy, Nixon, and Reagan. As well as fighting the Soviets politically and culturally, these presidents employed economic combat with the Soviet Union.

Economically, the Soviets and the Americans were as unlike throughout the Cold War as they were politically. The Americans supported free market capitalism while the Soviets encouraged communism. Both sides advertised the advantages of their structure and the insufficiencies of the other while maintaining bigger liberty for their citizens. For the Americans, this denoted campaigning for the novelty and prosperity that capitalism brought; while

associating communism with repression. On the contrary, the Soviets advocated for egalitarianism among all citizens and depicted the West as being insatiable and materialistic. In the beginning of the Cold War, Americans thought that it was their patriotic responsibility to purchase consumer goods to facilitate the growth of the economy. Sequentially, the U. S. became the world's principal economic power. This consumer culture established the dominance of the American lifestyle to communism and practically redefined the country's momentous mission to expand freedom to other countries (Blum 878). The United States employed its economic strength as a weapon in opposition to the Soviets in the Cold War. In the 1980s, President Reagan assisted in arousing enormous economic growth with his tax cuts and deregulation.

Conclusion

The Cold War was a significant influence on nearly all features of American society. Cultural resentment involving the United States and Soviet Union had both constructive and unconstructive consequences. Reciprocated fear amid the two countries resulted in political conflicts; some of which almost brought about world war. Contradictory economic philosophies led to opposite assertions of what freedom denoted, and economic antagonism led to enormous military expenditure by both countries. Owing to its broad influence, the Cold War was the defining event of the second half of the 20th century and impacted, to varying extents, almost all American foreign and domestic policy decisions, thus affecting the U. S culture in the 1980s.

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