

# Flappers in the 1920s



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Arguably, the flappers of the 1920s were kind of a beginning of another change in the life of women. There was a surplus of women in Britain; this was caused by the loss of many men to the war. In this era women was done with their old way of lifestyle. They went for more beauty modern things and ditched what they believed to be a conservative way of life. They changed the way of clothing, styles of their dresses as well as their hairstyle. Change in life is believed to be very important, at the begging of change most people see it as being negative. This is because they are used to the old things they use to see. It takes time in a conservatism world for change to be effective and have impact on the people (Sagert 6). What is in the mind of many people is how the flappers in the 1920s was an important factor in the revolution of women way of living and lifestyle, furthermore does the flappers way of life have an impact on the lifestyle of the contemporary women.

The term flapper didn't exist until after the First World War. The roaring twenties discovered that there were many changes. The women at that moment voted hence they had a new feeling of independence and lots of feminism ideas developed. The fight to prohibition of this triggered the flappers to fight for their freedom (Perrett 65). It came up for the first time in Great Britain. In this region it was used to bring out the characteristics of a generation of young girls. Many authors gave different descriptions to the flappers to some they viewed it as an expensive and lovely lifestyle. It was associated with girls about nineteen. Fashion of high quality was seen to only be for the rich women. The flapper's dresses were simple and less sophisticated hence it was easier to produce them. Since then different

definition and description of flappers have been used. Flappers opened doors to good things that were to come to the world of women. Women started exploration of the field of art that was untouched. Cultural practices and social norms changed. The fields to be explored by the flappers include completely new opinions, the dress code, the attitudes of individuals and the actions of women in society. The all scenario of flappers opened the eyes of women to make a wonderful new world where they would express themselves in public without any fear.

The behaviors of flappers were viewed to be outlandish at that moment. The roles of women in society changed to a different direction in which women had the freedom to choose what they wanted and did things at will. The flappers possessed different characters, they were young girls of approximately nineteen of age . They went to jazz clubs; this was because the flappers had good taste on jazz music and dance(Perrett 80). During the night clubs the flappers danced in a provocative manner they were trying to break the chains of conservatism and been put in a cage by men. The flappers had powers to choose freely they dated in freestyle many; there were no conditions to dating. They dated different men without discriminating them. The women of this type were given a clear description on their general behaviors, many saw them as been risk takers and adventurous. The flappers' way of looking was so different as compared to women in the past Sex was just like any other casual activities. Women in this group were heavy drinkers of alcohol, as this they did during the prohibition time. During drinking time they accompanied with smoking of cigarettes and also using cocaine. In 1920s this women also stated riding

bicycles, furthermore they drove in cars. All this behavior was not accessible to the women in the past.

Flappers also entered into petting; therefore they attended more petting parties. In some cases they carried out the petting at the back seat of their cars. The game became very popular than in the past. It started becoming more and interesting to pet. Flappers changed their duties, they were no longer the women who stayed indoors the way there predecessors did. They began to move away from home and face the world. They pursued lots of challenges to the past roles of women in the society. They believed that women had been oppressed and it was high time women fought for their rights in the society. The flappers pushed for the women rights as well as their voting rights. With time flappers were a big threat to the Victorian traditional duties. The gender roles included devotion to an empty life with no fun, working hard yet in the long run they achieve very little and finally follow religious believes. According to a flapper that was not the way to go. They were against rigid ideas which oppressed women and d old activities. They pushed for freedom to choose what an individual wants and also to embrace consumerism. They were alway in war with the old and primitive way of life. The fight beard fruits, women were a lot to vote in the US in 1920.

In the world that we live in, appearance is an important factor in describing an individual. In rhetoric way appearance is perceived to have a meaning. In most cases appearance is not the reality. Flappers in the 1920s changed their looks; they made themselves unique by introducing their new style. Before 1920s women were characterized with long hair, furthermore they

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had long gowns. Flappers decided to introduce a boyish look, they did this by cutting their hair short which only bobbed (Steele 340). They seemed to like their legs so much, therefore they showed their legs by putting on very short skirts they did this especially during dancing. Makeup was what they knew best. They used a lot of makeup. The makeup on the eyes and lips gave a clear distinction between flappers and the rest of the women. The flappers also had accessories in their wardrobe this included newsboy caps, necklaces and horn-rimmed glasses. The high heels shoes also were introduced into the fashion; this went hand in hand with the short skirts. They matched well and they were too provocative especially during dancing (Sagert 8). The whole issue of appearance that people associated to flappers did not find its way into the public until 1926. Despite all the barriers and challenges that flappers faced on their appearance, they still looked very beautiful. Respectable women started dressing and appearing like flappers in public. The stockings became a fashion of the day, this was hot fashion in the 1920s, and the embroidery was around the ankles and also up to the knees. The flappers changed from black stockings to stockings that had patterns on it. On their feet were cobby boots and the gladiator sandals.

Lingerie also changed in the 1920s, they rejected corsets and went for the step-in panties. Flappers wore bodices so that during dance their chest remained held. To make their hips soft flappers and good looking, they wore very soft corsets; this helped them in their appearance. The clothing made them look straight up (Steele 343). Symington side lacer was introduced and became the other of the day. Other women could not stand the way the flappers' chest appeared. They went for the same.

All these changes in the world of women happened when there was economic growth and prosperity. The roaring twenties was a good time for changes. At this era there was a very huge growth in the market of consumer goods. The economy of US adapted so fast after the war. The economy bloomed and peace also prevailed, some sectors which were stagnant were not of importance to the flappers (Baldwin 13). The soldiers returned from the war with lots of wages and new goodies. The writers also in the United States popularized the flappers lifestyle, people started to view flappers in a different perspective, some of the characteristics given included how attractive it was, reckless and also independence.

The flappers had their own way of referring to things that they come across. For example; alcohol, marriage and sex. The slang scenario is believed to have been started by the flappers. For example flappers referred marriage as a "handcuff". Most of their slang was reference to what they liked most and what they hate. In the US today some of these words are still in use. In fact most of the terminologies found its way to American English. In addition the slang scenario have been used by gangsters to eliminate strangers from understanding what they are talking about. The flappers in most cases insisted in driving cars, cars at that moment were moving fast and it was too risk. This was what flappers wanted.

The flappers life was not to last for long at that era. Some of the characters and appearance of flappers became respectable in the community. The old and young were into the culture and behavior of flappers. Women continued to cut off their hair. In late 1920s the world faced difficult moments in the economy. The markets went to great depression, flappers were not

exceptional. Life had to be adjusted to fit the economic crisis. Despite all this difficulties the changes that had been developed by flappers remained (Page 508). As the lifestyle of a flipper was very expensive and luxurious, the situation left no option for them in the times of depression, the best option was to leave the expensive lifestyle. They believed that there was a new generation of women. This generation was characterized by new and modern things.

In conclusion the flapper despite its downfall it did not completely disappear. In the contemporary world we can clearly say that the characters, culture and the lifestyle of o flapper still exist. Today women are still in the race of fighting for their rights. This includes social, political and economic rights. They want their freedom, women activists are everywhere in the world. Nowday's women enjoy the same rights that men enjoy. When it comes to the rule of law there is no discrimination in terms of gender. The contemporary women in most of the countries have rights to vote for anyone of their choice, furthermore they can also be voted for. Women are good drivers, they are free to own cars of there choice, drive at any speed so long as it is within the speed limit recommended by the law. In the workplace women go for same posts just like men. In the field of politics too women are the big players, in some countries there are women presidents. The flappers used cosmetics to make herself beauty, currently women use different types of cosmetics to bring up there beauty. The clothes have even become shorter and sophisticated.

Dating is all casual, women want to enjoy their freedom in a relationship, and furthermore sex is that casual too. All this changes that we see now was

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fought for in 1920s by the flapper. She worked to change the stereotype and rhetoric typical view of women. What she worked for were women to feel the sweetness of freedom they had never experienced in the past. All what she fought for opened doors for all the changes that today's woman is enjoying. Change is always inevitable and continuous; therefore our society will never stop changing. There is a continuous battle between the old cultures and modern cultures. The society should always be ready to accept change. Just like the way technology changes, human beings should welcome change, analyse then choose between good and bad. What is new and superior today, by the next day it will be old and inferior.