

Fashion of roaring twenties and the sixties

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Fashion of the Roaring Twenties and The Sixties Fashion is the style prevalent at a given time. It usually refers to costume or clothing style. Everybody has to wear clothes, making fashion a part of everyday life. The way someone dresses says a lot about his or her personality, age, culture and experience.

At times of economic or social change, fashion often changed. The 1920s and the 1960s are big eras where economic and social change were happening. They are both largely known for their fashion. The 1920s was also known as the Roaring Twenties due to the period's social, artistic, and cultural energy. The twenties were right after the end of World War One and right before the Great Depression. The era was notable for inventions and discoveries, industrial growth, increased consumer demand and significant changes in lifestyle ("roaring twenties"). During the twenties, the economy of the United States evolved from a wartime economy to a peacetime economy.

The Eighteenth Amendment prohibited the manufacture, sale, import and export of alcohol in attempt to help the social problems. Passing the nineteenth amendment gave women the political equality they had been fighting for. The twenties were also known as the Jazz Age because jazz music grew in popularity. "During the 1920s jazz music flourished, the flapper redefined modern womanhood, Art Deco peaked, and the Wall Street Crash of 1929 ended the era, as the Great Depression set in" ("roaring twenties"). The Roaring Twenties were trying to break from traditions of the Victorian way of life. Since the 1920s was a time of celebration, there were

many fads. Young women's fashion of the 1920s was both a trend and a social statement.

They were labeled ' flappers' by the older generations. " Flapper" was a popular slang for a very young prostitute or a lively mid-teenage girl. " The image of flappers were young women who went to jazz clubs at night where they danced provocatively, smoked cigarettes through long holders, and dated freely, perhaps indiscriminately. They rode bicycles, drove cars, and openly drank alcohol, a defiant act in the American period of Prohibition" (" flapper"). They were seen as rude and self-assertive for their behavior. The ' new' woman was less invested in social service than the Progressive generations, and in tune with the capitalistic spirit of the era, she was eager to compete and to find personal fulfillment" (" roaring twenties"). Flappers as a social group were separate from other 1920s groups; their behavior was bizarre at the time.

They challenged women's traditional public roles, supporting voting and women's rights. Some flappers weren't into the politics. " Older suffragettes, who fought for the right for women to vote, viewed flappers as vapid and in some ways unworthy of the enfranchisement they had worked so hard to win" (" flapper"). In addition to their strange behavior, they were known for their style. Flapper style made girls look young and boyish. They had a chin-length bob hairstyle and wore straight waist dresses with a hemline above the knee. The risen hemline allowed flashing of the legs when a girl danced.

They also removed the corset from female fashion. Until the 1920s, cosmetics were not accepted in American society because of its association

with prostitution but flappers made cosmetics popular. High heels also came into style, 2-3 inches high. Writers and illustrators in the United States popularized the flapper look through their works, making flappers appealing and independent. Even though the flapper look and lifestyle were popular at the time, it could not last through the Wall Street Crash or the Great Depression. Another popular era for fashion was the 1960s, more commonly called The Sixties. The sixties was a movement escaping from the conservative ways of the fifties and eventually resulted in revolutionary ways of thinking and real changes in the culture of American life (Goodwin).

The Civil Rights Movement played a major role of changes in society in the 1960s, starting with Martin Luther King Jr. In 1961, John F. Kennedy was elected president, becoming the youngest president to ever hold office. The Vietnam War was a major event in the 1960s that absorbed a lot of national attention. The draft took place followed by anti-war outlook. The National Organization of Women questioned the unequal treatment of women in the society. The hippie movement arose as a result of young people not content with the generation ahead of them.

The sixties was a decade that broke many fashion traditions, mirroring social movements during the period" (" fashion"). The sixties were the age of youth, who wanted change. The changes they were looking for affected education, values, lifestyles, laws and entertainment (Goodwin). There were so many young people in the sixties due to the post-war baby boom. The children had grown up and were becoming teenagers and young

adults. These youths changed the fashion, the fads, and the politics of the decade (Goodwin). They dressed to convey rebellion.

“ The sixties began a decade which may well be recorded as one of the most fashion-conscious periods in recent history, challenging the 1890s and the 1920s” (“ 1960s fashion”). The hippie movement arose during the mid-1960s. Hippies didn’t focus on what others thought, they believed in ‘ equality for all’. Hippie characteristics comprised of listening to rock, accepting sexual revolution and the use of drugs such as marijuana and LSD to explore alternative states of consciousness (“ hippie”). Hippies were pacifists, the belief that any violence is unjustifiable, under any circumstances, and that all arguments should be settled by peaceful means. They participated in civil rights marches and anti-Vietnam War protests. “ The late 1960s produced a style categorized of people whom promoted sexual liberation and favored a type of politics reflecting ‘ peace, love and freedom’” (“ fashion”).

By 1965, hippies had become an established social group in the United States. By 1968, the hippie look was in style. Hippie’s way of dress and grooming was one way of expressing their thought of independence. Both genders wore bell-bottomed jeans, tie-dyed shirts, headbands and sandals. Women often went barefoot and braless. Teenage girls often wore fringed buckskin vests, flowing long dress, Mexican peasant blouses, gypsy-style skirts, scarves, and bangles (“ fashion”). Fabrics frequently consisted of animal or paisley prints.

Both men and women grew their hair out long, including men's facial hair. Further trends included love beads, peace signs, body piercing and tattoo body art. Hippies wore clothes that they felt communicated themselves and their individualism. Hippies repelled the post war ugliness in the world and turned the attention of fashion stalwarts towards as much natural beauty as possible" (Borade). The 1920s and the 1960s style of fashion appears to be very diverse. When observing each era's attire they portray different looks. In the twenties, they wore dark colors opposed to the sixties where they wore very bright colors and patterns.

Flappers wore tight, short dresses while hippies wore loose, floor length dresses. Flappers popularized make-up, wearing very drastic blush and lipstick. Hippies wanted to be natural so they didn't wear any make-up. Although they seemed completely different, their motives behind their eccentric fashion were the same. They were both rebelling against the norm and trying to prove their independence. Fashion is a way of expressing personality and independence. Every person has their own sense of style and they show that through the way they dress.

Everyday people get dressed, choosing clothes that they like and illustrate them best. Clothes are talked about, thought about and worn daily. Each era has a different fashion that shows up in clothes, attitude, personality and behavior.