

# Leisure time essay



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After World War II ended, the postwar began and Americans life changed drastically in a radical way. This brought new innovations to the United States, which led people have more leisure time than ever before. At that time, leisure was an activity people wanted to do because it didn't implicate working, due to all the hard work during World War II. Leisure time flourished, largely due to technological innovations. In the early 1950s, the American population was in real need of entertainment and leisure time. This need was accompanied by some new changes in the way we entertain ourselves.

Big changes like television, movies, new music genres, and mass broadcast radio opened the doors to entertainers, who were able to use to their advantage the available media and surface as part of the American culture. By 1950's, when young men were arriving from war, they had an idea that every young man should marry a young woman and have children. They will live in a beautiful house in the suburbs with a little white fence, beautiful kitchen and a gorgeous backyard. During the late 1940's and through the early 1960's the birthrate in the US soared, especially in 1957.

Every seven seconds a child was born, starting the largest generation in the US history, known as the Baby Boom. During war, men were fighting for their nation while women were working in factories and industries assuming a role in the world. When the war finished, soldiers were arriving from war and starting to work again while lots of women were going back to their houses taking the homemaker and mother role, which was glorified in popular magazines, movies and television beginning the leisure time to all those women who worked.

Those women who still worked were finding job opportunities such as nursing, teaching and office supporters earning far less money than men did. As leisure began, Americans started to experience a new way of living. They attended to television, movies, new music genres, radio, different activities and most importantly, bowling. The cause of leisure time was the appearance of new products, appliances, electronics and other household goods. This cause brought less work, more vacations and leisure time to Americans for entertainment.

Later on, due to this free time, the credit cards appeared and the Americans debt increased a lot. By 1953, single Americans spent about \$30 billion dollars on leisure, which became a multi-billion dollar industry. When the mass media began, communications reached large audiences making changes on every people life and giving them more free time to watch television, dance and relax. At the beginning of television, everyone thought that all competing forms of entertainment would eclipse, but it didn't, the radio and movies survived, Hollywood did not crumble and blow away. Movies had advantages over television because of their differences in size, color and stereophonic. In 1948, Televisions had reached the 9% of American homes and by 1954, 55% of Americans had television (Danzer 1999). Early televisions were small boxes with round screen and broadcasts were in black and white. This period of rapid television expansion was called the “Golden Age”. One veteran radio broadcaster was Edward R. Murrow, who introduced two television programs, “See It Now” and “Person to Person”.

By 1950, the mass media found an audience in mostly white popular culture. In San Francisco, New York and LA, began the beat movement that

expressed the social and literary nonconformity of poets and artists. The Beatniks were their followers, they cared little for material goods and lived nonconformist lives. They used the jazz musician vocabulary and dressed differently. Men wore sandals and beards, while women didn't wear lipstick and wore black leotards. While the beatniks expressed themselves, musicians added electronic instruments to traditional blues.

Alan Freed was among the first ones to play this kind of music, which was produced by African-American musicians. The white audience responded enthusiastically to this new genre called “ Rock n' Roll”. Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Elvis Presley, Bill Haley and The Comets were among the singers that brought Rock n' Roll to be a popular music. For many adults this led the teenage delinquency and immorality. Some cities prohibited rock n' roll, concerts were banned and citizens even tried to keep records out of store to stop the rock n' roll music. Most performers in the 1950's were African-Americans.

Singers and actors like Nat King Cole, Lena Horne, Harry Belafonte, Sidney Potier and others, were the minority representation in the white-dominated fields. African-Americans stations were part of radio's attempt to counter the mass popularity of television by targeting specialized audiences. The beginning of the 1950's, declared the transformation in the film industry. As young people wanted new and exiting symbols of rebellion, Hollywood responded to audience demands with the rise of stars like Marlon Brando, James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, Ava Gardner and Paul Newman.

The best films made in the 1950's were Harvey that was made in the 1950, An Affair To Remember(1957) and The Silver Chalice(1954)(Dirk 1995). As the thirst for leisure began, changes and people way of living, thinking and viewing things started to change and give a new beginning to new genres, movies and movements including in the way people dressed. This movement made people see and believe the reality of things and how we can change our world with a simple touch, like the movement of rock n' roll.