

Evolution of teenagers after world war 2

War



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The evolution of teenagers is a very unique concept that is difficult to cover. To examine and go over what exactly made teenagers however, is very interesting. So, a teenager is a human being that is between the ages of 13-19. It makes sense as well, they have the word "teen" in every one of those numbers. The question is; How did economic and social conditions after World War 2 help shape teenagers as their own separate cultural group. Teenagers change day to day and year to year, but some basics will never ever change. Some conditions and things happening around this time that helped teenagers shape themselves are the music of that time, the opportunities given to them and the curious nature of this generation which makes them experiment with things and create sub-cultural groups. What is a teenager you may ask, well they are people that are neither adults or children. Teenagers were people that were between the ages of 13-19. They felt as they were different, as if they can not be treated as children and that they can not be like adults yet either. They were simply both too young and too old to be something. The teenager age is really important to how someone is in your adulthood, with your family and your job, so being a teenager is important and really stressful at times. Teenagers are people that are rather different from society. They has their own style, looks, thoughts and decisions.

First, I want to talk about the opportunities that were given to these teenagers was really critical to the shaping of this cultural groups. These teenagers were given opportunities like sporting events, dances, and drive-in theatres. Sports started to become pretty popular around this time which aloud parents to go watch them either live, in person or on their televisions

that got popular at this time as well. So when it came to going to games alone without family but with friends, it gave this age group more time and space to do what they want and give them the freedom they want. Dances allowed these teenagers to express their feelings even more to their favourite music, then again, giving them the freedom that they want. At dances they were allowed to be with their friends and to socialize people that they don't always talk to. This made them talk to the other gender as well that may have led them to the teenagers love life idea. Also, drive-in movie theatres really helped this a lot as well, since the car was getting more and more popular at this time. They would go into movies with their friends and the special people that they meant at the dances, this let the teenagers feelings to come out and turn into the romantic, rebellious and socially evolved teenagers that we have in this time today as well. This made teenagers feel different because kids younger than them weren't usually allowed to go out of their house by themselves, and adults that are older than them are more mature and less adventurous. This all made them feel different and slowly make them feel as their own unique cultural group different from many other cultural groups and people of different ages.

“ Being grown up isn't an all of a sudden thing. Teenagers are now being given more freedom than ever before in a world more unsure of itself than ever before.” This quotation proves the theory that “ teenagers“ are not ordinary and normal, they feel unique and different and it makes sense because they are neither adults or young children. They have their own beliefs, thoughts, feelings, relations and goals. At this time, where teenagers were a fairly new idea to society, they are feeling left out and out of place.

Now teenagers usually feel normal because we already have the idea of this cultural group in our era. But they would feel much differently. Teenagers of this age were then one of the first to be forced to go to high school. This is because the war had just ended and the great depression, parents thought that it was mandatory to get good education for a well paying job, just in case history were to repeat itself, so that in this case they would still be successful and support their families.

Secondly, trends have a big link with teenagers and how they are during certain eras. The biggest trend that still carries onto the teenagers of this generation is music, but not the same music. When teenagers were first named as their own cultural group, rock n' roll was the type of music in control. Rock n' roll music that related to teenagers and their lifestyle was listened to the most by them. It was just recently introduced at that time. Elvis Presley was really famous for teenagers around that age. A popular song by him was Jailhouse Rock, that some people still listen to today. But music has really changed for teenagers, right now it's hip hop music that allows teenagers to make new and more creative dance moves all the time. Back to Elvis Presley, he was named "The King of Rock n` Roll" which is still very accurate. The first every teenagers were in love with the rock and roll music genre and Elvis Presley himself. Schools, at times, would ban students to watch, listen and go to concerts of rock and roll, especially if it includes Elvis. They believed that it was a distraction to the students and that it fries their brains. Along with the teachers, parents were really worried about the impact Elvis had to their children and the music that the parents did not enjoy. One teenager of this time said, "It's funny but the things parents

don't like about Elvis are exactly what we like most about him." This expresses the feeling teenagers have with their parents and how they once again feel different to society making them feel like their own cultural group. Even Elvis at this time believed that the children are growing up and that they feel different, and if he can provide that feel, it's not bad. We can tell that music makes teenagers feel different and special. They tend to listen and enjoy music that other age groups do not enjoy. Young kids and children back then did not enjoy Elvis, and neither did parents and elders. Rock and roll was most enjoyed and possibly meant for the teens of that time. Also when no one else liked the same music they do, they feel different and like they are their own people, and not being able to be classified as a child or an adult.

Music is the way teenagers express themselves and express themselves, and if no other cultural age group felt the same way they did, they have the full right to feel different and unique. If adults and children can't like their same music, that means that they are different themselves and no other age groups feel the same way they do. Teenagers also feel different because they tend to enjoy and feel things in a different way, so when other cultural age groups don't show the same interests and feelings, they feel out of place and different. Neither adults or children. This social condition was really important to shape this age into their own cultural group, because of the way they felt with pop culture and how they express themselves and feel differently with it.

Lastly, we will evaluate the curious form of teenagers and how economy put forward somethings that allows this age group to explore more and

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experiment with these things that may end up very good or very bad. One thing that teenagers tend to experiment now as well as back then is clothing and fashion, this is a very big trendsetter thing as well. New clothing and fashion was introduced post-war which got teenagers curious and start to buy these clothing items. Most older teenagers at this time had some of their own jobs, so they would have their own money. This allows the teenagers to spend their own money on items and clothing that they prefer and like, making it lesser of the parents choice.

Nowadays teenagers are more acceptable and are able to wear the fashion they like. Like if a teenage female wanted to wear male clothing they could, while male teenagers aren't like this and do not wear the opposite genders clothing. After the war, teenagers would only wear the clothing that is specific to their gender. So females only wear female clothing and males only wear male clothing. In the 1950s, boys typically wore jeans, while girls wore dresses, skirts and more things like that. This is also pretty different from nowadays because teenagers now wear more casual clothing. But these are still the same teenagers because they are wearing different style, clothing and fashion which is different from the rest of society, like children and adults. This teenage time also allows the experimenting of friends to also start. This make sub-cultural groups of the large cultural groups of teenagers. This is really big because these separate groups allows teenagers to experiment with things further, we still see this all very frequently nowadays. Even at schools their are your different groups, that you see very clearly. When teenagers were first created as their own cultural group, the largest group that basically all teens sort of fit into is the hippie group. Some

examples of these sub-cultural groups would be the Jocks, the Nerds, the Gossip Girls, the Normals, Goody Toe Shoes and more. When teenagers are in these separate groups, they tend to experiment in their own things with their friends who are similar to them. The hippies started the teenagers off on a bad wheel with the experimenting of drug use and sexual activity. Drugs were more popular because it is associated with the Rock music that was very popular at that time like we have covered before. So here music has another influence on teenagers. This all also allows teenagers to feel different from other groups that makes them feel like their own cultural group.

In conclusion, economic and social conditions after World War 2 were all very important to make teenagers feel like their own cultural group. They didn't feel like adults yet, and they felt way to free to be a child. Therefore, the freedom that they got with their opportunities, the music that was really popular and influencing at that time, and the curious experimenting side of teenagers which was all given towards them really helped teenagers to become their own cultural group. This is all possible because of the conditions after war that allowed the economy and the social world to show them their differences with the rest of society.