

Analyze the role of consumer culture in shaping the political, economic, and social dynamics of the 1920s and the 1950s. In your essay, discuss how advertising, mass production, and the growth of consumer credit influenced the daily lives of Americans and the broader societal trends in each decade. 1

Thesis: The consumer culture of the '20s & '50s played largely the same role in shaping social & economic dynamics.

Context: WWI & WW2 led to increases in manufacturing facilitated by govt. spending

Social

Topic sentence: Consumer culture had majorly the same influence on American society during the 1920s and 1950s.

Evidence 1: The spread of nation wide popular culture.

- 20s: Radio & ~60% Americans bought
- 50s: Television & ~85% Americans used
- These new mass communication methods became popular due to the wide spread consumerism of the 1920s and 1950s
- They led to American unity and popular culture.

Evidence 2: The increase of auto and house sales:

- These led to the American ideas of the nuclear household becoming more popular
- ^{100-95%} _{cars} growth than pop. ^{10x faster} _{cars} growth
- led to more population growth due to people settling down and starting families

analysis

Zoe, Yusuf, Bryce, Sahana, Akshay

Economic

Topic sentence: Consumer culture had majorly the same influence on the American economy during the 1920s and 1950s.

↑
schools, housing,
veteran benefits,
etc.

EV1: Consumer culture led to debt

culture b/c Americans were willing to go into debt to support a lavish lifestyle.

- As a result, borrowing money was widespread in the 20s and present in the 50s, taken out on credit

EV 2: Consumer culture led to economic booms in both the 1920s and 1950s.

Post-war production was at an all time high.

• Consumers in 20s and 50s bought the manufactured goods, fostering the American economy

1920s: 42% ↑

1950s: 37% ↑

analysis

2. Impact of Gender Roles 1920s Vs 1950s

Thesis: In the 1920s, both social advocacy for women's independence and economic opportunities were more impactful in comparison to the 1950s.

ECONOMIC

In the 1920s there were more economic opportunities and work available for women than in the 1950s.

EVIDENCE 1: Labor Saving Devices (1920s)

- New technology (vacuums, washing machines, etc) led to less time spent cleaning houses & other chores

Analysis 1

- More women had ^{the} option to work outside of the house as a result of having less to do ~~around~~ around the house
- Impact of more women joining the workforce in the 1920s

EVIDENCE 2: Cold War Domestic Ideals (1950s)

- Married women were expected to stay home and take care of the children, leading to decline in the workforce

Analysis 2

- Less women taking advantage of economic opportunities in the 50s in comparison to the 20s

SOCIAL

Social advocacy for independence for women was more prominent in the 1920s compared to the era of the 1950s.

(1920s)

EVIDENCE 1: Birth Control & Women's Independence

- Margaret Sanger: illegally imported contraceptives from Germany and Poland
- More advocacy for birth control and divorce

ANALYSIS 1: Ultimately led to higher divorce rates and lower birth rates during the 1920s (more freedom)

EVIDENCE 2: Emphasis on Female Domestincity (1950s)

- Families that broke societal norms were seen as suspicious
- higher birth rates and less divorces

ANALYSIS 2: Resulted in less freedom and less social advocacy for women in the 1950s.

Prompt #5

Investigate the impact of scientific and technological innovations on the political, economic, and social development of the United States during the 1920s + 50s. Discuss the ways in which breakthroughs transformed American society and shaped the course of the 20th century.

Context

- The 1920s are post-WWI
- The 1950s are post WW2

During both periods, the country was geared towards manufacturing / efficiency

THESIS

Although the 1920s and 1950s had similar economic developments, ultimately, the social differences between the two time periods mark them as two distinct eras with regards to scientific and technological innovations.

SOCIAL

TOPIC SENTENCE: The social impacts of technological developments in communication differed between the 1920s and 1950s.

EVIDENCE 1: Radio in 1920s

- Households with radios increased from 260k in 1922 to 6.5 million in 1927.

ANALYSIS: Radio transformed the way Americans communicated and the way news spread.

EVIDENCE 2: Television in 1950s

- By 1950, Americans owned 7.3 million TV sets.
- TV ads had corporate sponsorships and catchy jingles.

ANALYSIS: Changed how Americans consumed media + goods, and the way they spent their leisure time.

\$\$ ECONOMIC \$\$

TOPIC SENTENCE: The 1920s and the 1950s both prompted similar technological economic developments in transportation.

EVIDENCE 1: Automobile Industry in 20s

- In 1929, U.S. spent 2.58 billion dollars on automobiles

ANALYSIS: This shows how the automobile industry prompted an economic growth in America.

EVIDENCE 2: Automobile industry in 1950s

- The rise of suburbs prompted a population move out of the big cities
- Cars were now a necessity to get to work
- Planned obsolescence - prompted consumers to buy new cars every few years

ANALYSIS: This shows how America stayed the same economically as the Automobile industry stayed a major industry in both eras.

3. Minorities in the 1920's vs. 1950's

Intro:

Context -

Both decades were after major wars & foreign involvement

The aftermath of these world wars involved significant domestic change.

1. WW1 → 1920s

2. WW2 → 1950s

Thesis - Minorities faced but ultimately succeeded against discrimination in the political and social realities in the 1920s and the 1950s, which boosted the developments of the Civil Rights movement.

Political

Topic Sentence: - Minorities faced succeeded against discrimination in political realities in the 1920s and the 1950s, but ultimately boosted developments of the civil rights movements through acts.

Evidence: National Origins Act of 1924 :-

2 Quota Acts :- restricted immigration to previous year such as 1890 census count of foreign born.

Reasoning: - This act was a function of nativism and contributed to the mistreatment of foreign people in America and other injustices which led to the civil rights movement.

Evidence: *Shelley v. Kraemer* was a case in the Supreme Court which outlawed ~~racism~~ discriminatory housing by the ~~Supreme Court~~.

Reasoning: - This act politically improved the challenges faced by minority groups in the US, whereas 30 years before minority groups were restricted in even entering the US they now were given protective rights over housing, which was an ultimate goal of the Civil Rights movement.

Social

Topic sentence: African Americans experienced but had victories in regards to discrimination faced, through social events.

Evidence: Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s

Analysis: Harlem Renaissance inspired African Americans to publish works about their experiences, ideas about ~~the future~~ spreading gains rights.

Evidence: Brown Decision (1954)

Analysis: Desegregated schools, one of the successes of the Civil Rights Movement.

1920's VS 1950's U.S Foreign Policy

Prompt 4
Thesis: The US' political & economic foreign policy shifted from isolationism in the 1920s to globalism in the 1950s.

POLITICAL: 🇺🇸 vs. 🌍

TS: The US' political foreign policy shifted from isolationism in the 1920s to globalism in the 1950s.

- 1920's
- Withdrawal from the League of nations
 - Hawley-Smoot Tariff: tax on European goods
 - ↳ isolationist move from Congress to keep the US out of foreign affairs
 - Refusing to join the World Court established by the Treaty of Paris
 - ↳ isolationist move because America refused to arbitrate world affairs

- 1950's
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) formed to create alliances and prevent communism from spreading
 - ↳ Globalist because America got involved in world affairs and formed international alliances

- Truman Doctrine was Truman's policy to support nations being threatened by Soviets and Communism, fearing the Domino Effect spread of communism
 - Korean War to stop spread of communism
 - ↳ Globalist because the US intervened directly in the political affairs of other nations

Domestic (20's): reflects desire of American public to stay out of world affairs

Domestic (50's): reflects Red Scare and McCarthyism

ECONOMIC:

TS: The US' economic foreign policy shifted from isolationism in the 1920s to globalism in the 1950s.

CONTEXT: (but) disillusioned
1920s: Post-WW1 America & Soviets w/ economic & political aftermath
1950s: Post-WW2 Americans & Soviets engaged in Cold War

- 1920's
- Hawley-Smoot Tariff: tax on European goods
 - ↳ which backfired, negatively affecting the US economy
 - ↳ protect American industries from other countries by having a high tax, consumers would be urged to only "BUY AMERICAN"
 - Dawes-Plan: \$ flow plan to assist other countries to quickly pay back war debt owed to America.
 - ↳ Isolationist because wants to remove economic ties with other nations (spurs G.D.)

- 1950's
- International Monetary Fund (IMF): created to promote international monetary cooperation, trade, + econ. growth.
 - ↳ Globalist b/c promotes free trade amongst various countries & improved econ. relations
 - Marshall Plan: counter communism by sanctioning funds to countries that fight it.
 - ↳ Strengthening foreign nations' economies to fight against a common issue: communism.

Domestic (20's): acts contract economy

Domestic (50's): acts expand economy