

Name _____

Class _____

Date _____

Teacher _____

PROSPERITY, REBELLION, AND REFORM (1945 - 1980) – LESSON 1

Objective: To examine how America changed in the years immediately following World War II.

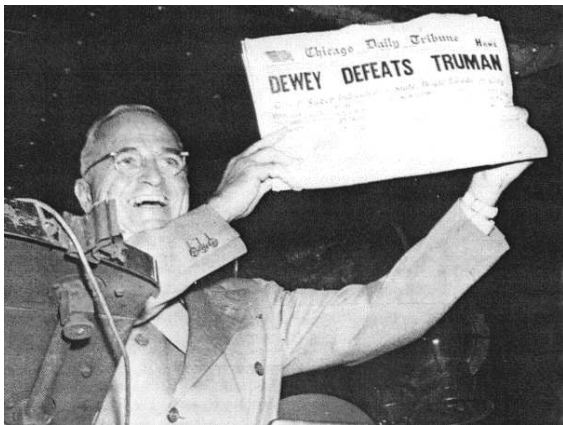
Postwar Leaders

Election of 1948:

- Harry Truman narrowly defeated the Republican Thomas Dewey.

The Fair Deal – a series of reforms proposed by Pres. Truman after the election of 1948

- Minimum wage was raised.
- Social Security covered more people.
- Segregation was ended in the armed forces.



- However, Congress rejected Truman's plan for the government to provide health insurance for all Americans.

Election of 1952:

- Pres. Truman announced that he would not seek reelection.
- Republican General Dwight D. Eisenhower defeated Democrat Adlai Stevenson for the Presidency.



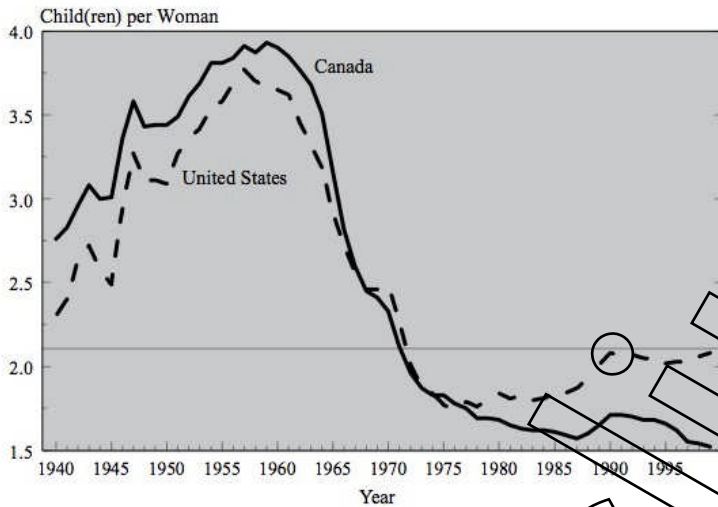
Life in the 1950's:

- In the 1950's, the nation experienced a **baby boom**.

Example:

Decade	U.S. Population Growth
1930's	9 million
1940's	19 million
1950's	29 million

Figure 1. Total Fertility Rate, Canada and United States, 1940-1999

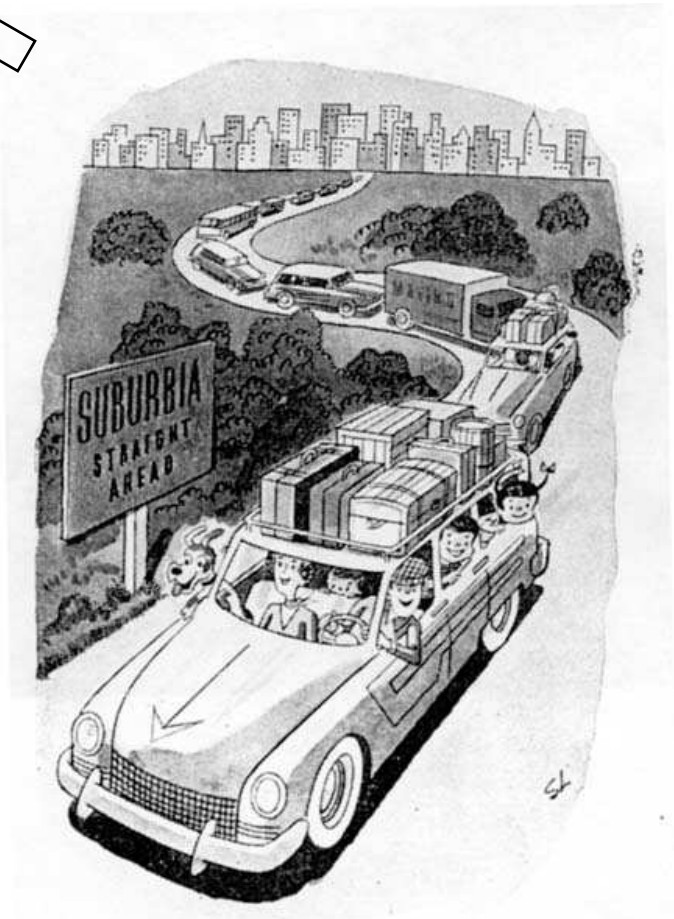


What caused the baby boom?

- The economy was the best it had been since the 1920's
- Many couples waited until after WWII to have children
- Health care improved for pregnant women and newborn infants
- Dr. Jonas Salk created a vaccine against polio.

The suburbs grow:

- As families grew, people began to move out of the cities and into the suburbs.
- William Levitt bought large tracts of land on which he built thousands of identical houses.
- These communities were known as Levittowns, the first of which was built on Long Island in 1947.



Cars and Highways:

- The growth of suburbs caused an increased reliance on cars and the construction of highways. Example: By 1960, 9 out of 10 suburban families owned a car.
- The **Interstate Highway Act** of 1956 built a network of highways across the country linking the nation.

Television:

- In the 1950's, the television replaced the radio as the primary form of home family entertainment.
- Popular shows included *American Bandstand*, *Howdy Doody*, and *I Love Lucy*.

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