



WKH ~~#4~~ 83 v=

**"Conservatism, Complacency,  
and Contentment"**

RU

**"Anxiety, Alienation, and  
Social Unrest" ??**

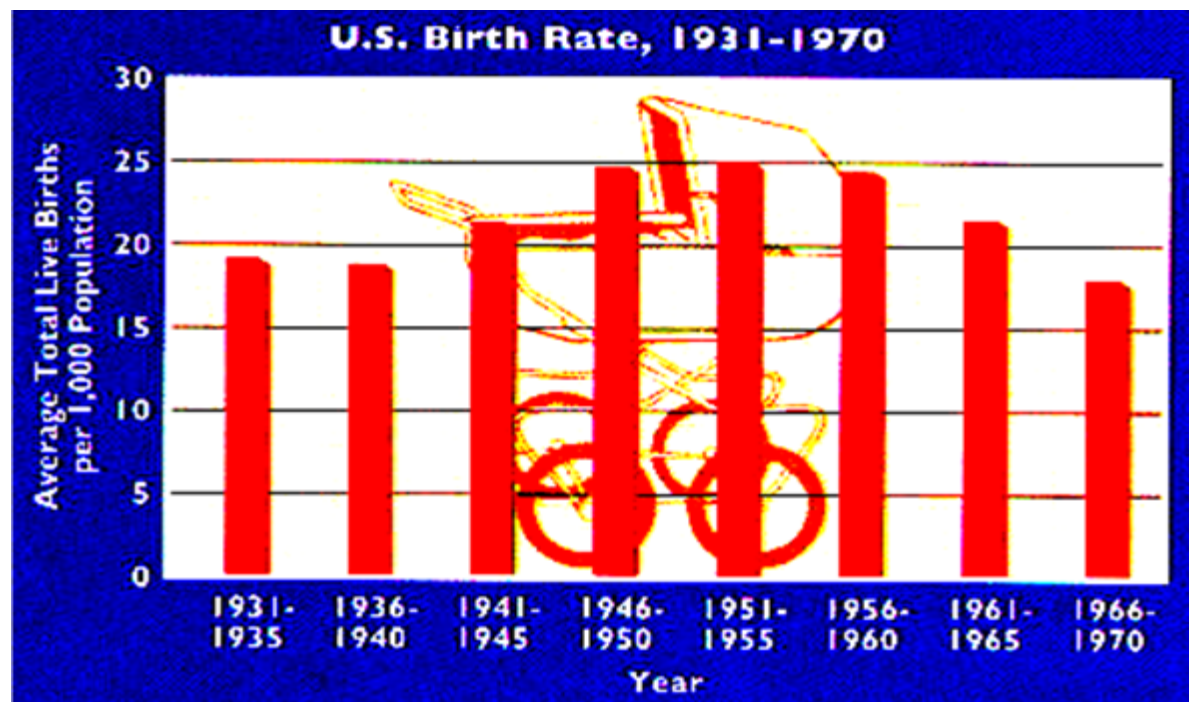




4 #E de | #E rrp

*It seems to me that every other young housewife I see is pregnant.*

-- British visitor to America, 1958



1957 → 1 baby born every 7 seconds

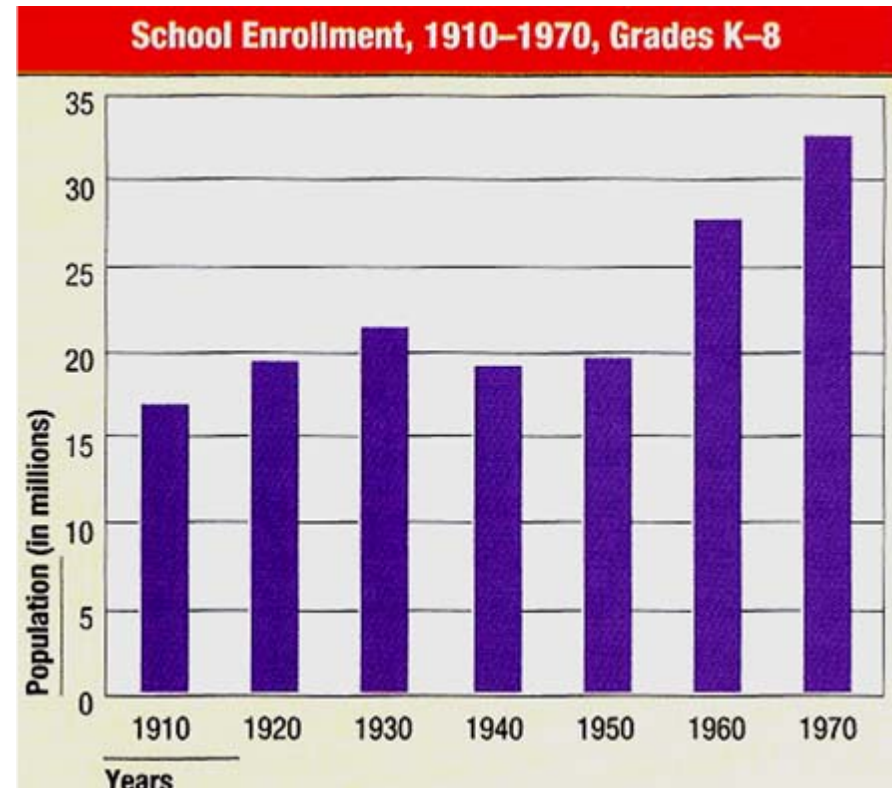




# 4 #E de | #E rrp



**Dr. Benjamin Spock**  
and the Anderson  
Quintuplets







5 D \$ V x e x u e d b # D i y b j

## Levittown, L. I.: "The American Dream"

1949 → William Levitt produced  
150 houses per week.



\$7,990 or \$60/month with no down payment.

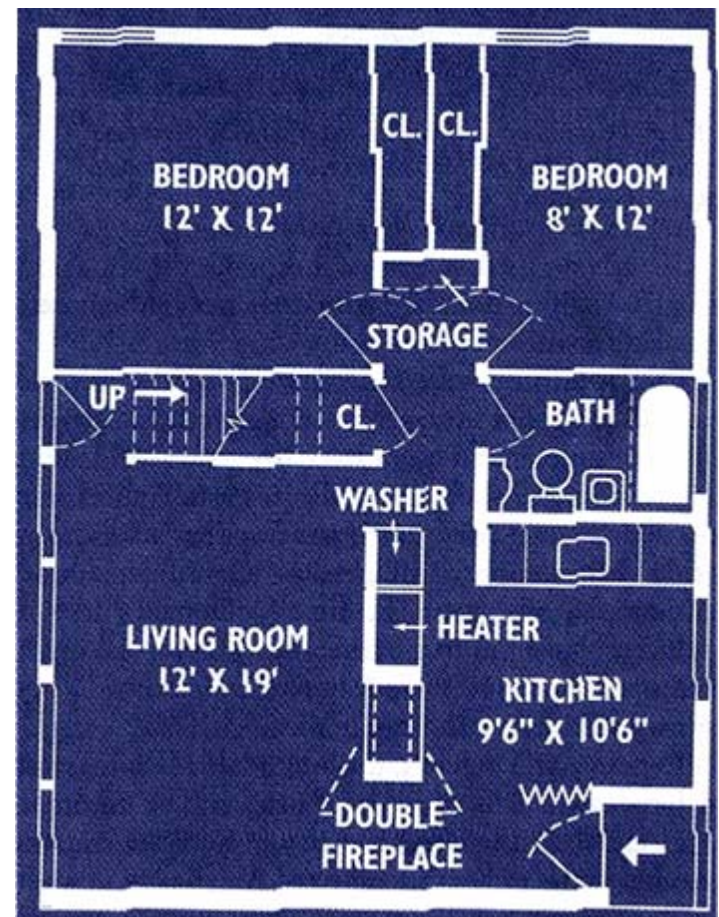




5 D \$V xexuedq#D ybj=  
Wkh#Qhz #Dphulfq#Guhpõ



- k 1 story high
- k 12'x19' living room
- k 2 bedrooms
- k tiled bathroom
- k garage
- k small backyard
- k front lawn



By 1960 → 1/3 of the U. S. population in the suburbs.





# 50 Years of Change

## SHIFTS IN POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, 1940-1970

	<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>
Central Cities	31.6%	32.3%	32.6%	32.0%
Suburbs	19.5%	23.8%	30.7%	41.6%
Rural Areas/ Small Towns	48.9%	43.9%	36.7%	26.4%

U. S. Bureau of the Census.





# 5 f#V xexuecb#D y/bj= Wkh#N | sIfdg#NY #V xexuecb#I dp bhv



*The Donna  
Reed Show*  
1958-1966



*Leave It  
to Beaver*  
1957-1963



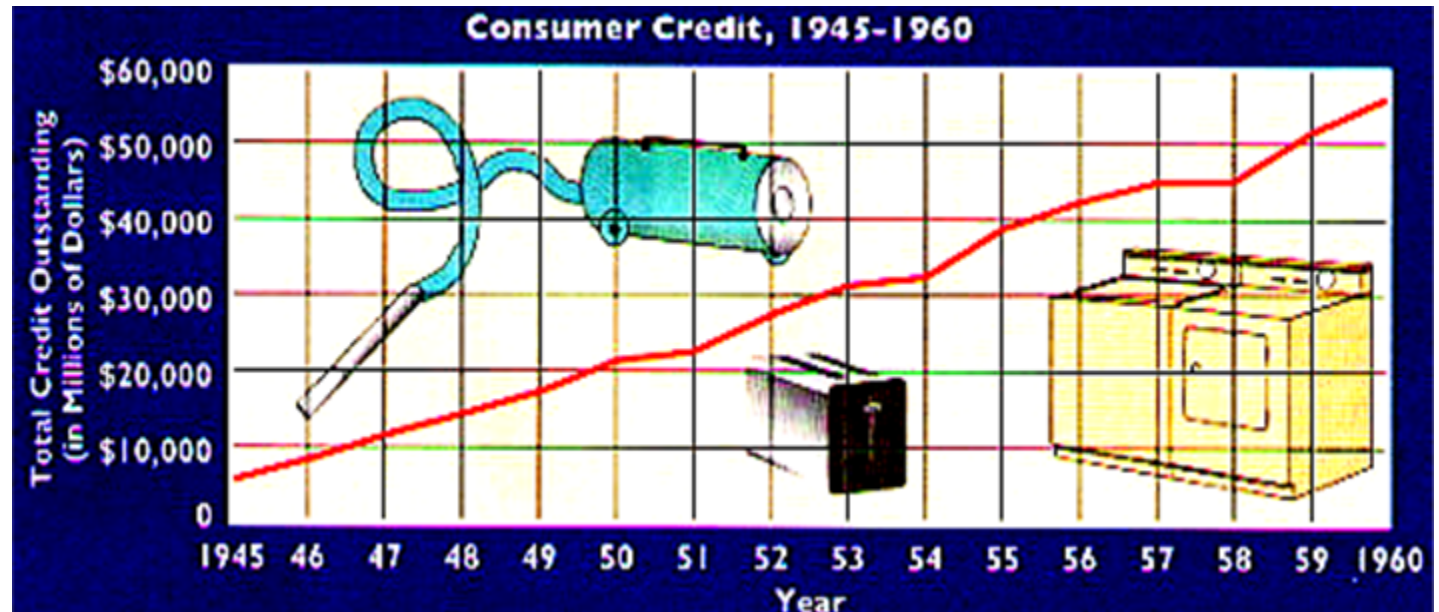
*Father Knows Best*  
1954-1958



*The Ozzie & Harriet Show*  
1952-1966

# 6 d#F rqvxp huiyp

1950 → Introduction of the Diner's Card



*All babies were potential consumers who spearheaded a brand-new market for food, clothing, and shelter.*

-- Life Magazine (May, 1958)





# 6 E #F r q v x p h u i v p





7 D ##D#F'kdbjbj#Z runsofth

## Automation:

1947-1957 → factory workers decreased by 4.3%, eliminating 1.5 million blue-collar jobs.

By 1956 → more white-collar than blue-collar jobs in the U. S.

Computers → **Mark I** (1944). First IBM mainframe computer (1951).

## Corporate Consolidation:

By 1960 → 600 corporations (1/2% of all U. S. companies) accounted for 53% of total corporate income.

**WHY??** Cold War military buildup.

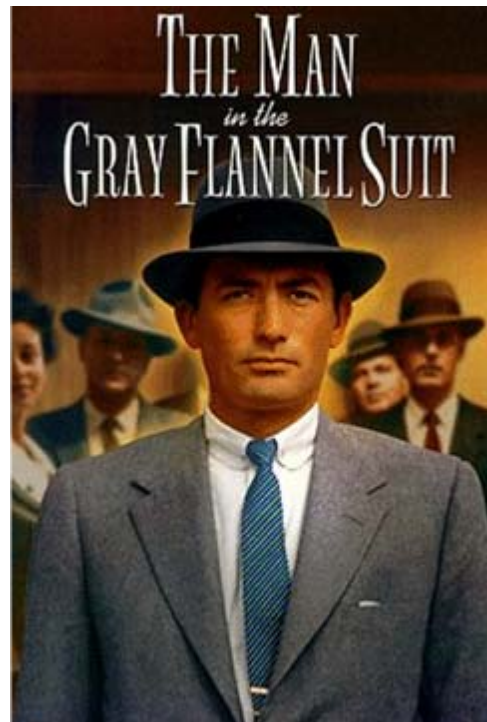




7 E #D#F'kdqj'bj#Z runsofth

New Corporate Culture:  
"The Company Man"

1956 → Sloan Wilson's *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*







# 8 D #Wk#F xowh#r#Wk#F du

Car registrations: 1945 → 25,000,000  
1960 → 60,000,000

2-family cars doubles from 1951-1958



1958 Pink Cadillac



1959 Chevy Corvette

1956 → **Interstate Highway Act** → largest public works project in American history!

*f* Cost \$32 billion.

*f* 41,000 miles of new highways built.



# 8 E #Wk#F xowu#r#k#F du

**America became a more homogeneous nation because of the automobile.**



**First McDonald's  
(1955)**



**Howard  
Johnson's**



**Drive-In  
Movies**





# 8 Weeks x 0.5 = 4

The U. S. population was on the move in the 1950s.

NE & Mid-W → S & SW ("Sunbelt" states)

1955 → Disneyland opened in Southern California.  
(40% of the guests came from outside California, most by car.)



Frontier Land



Main Street



Tomorrow Land





# 9D #WhyTV

1946 → 7,000 TV sets in the U. S.

1950 → 50,000,000 TV sets in the U. S.

*Television is a vast wasteland.* → Newton Minnow, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, 1961

Mass Audience → TV celebrated traditional American values.



*Truth, Justice, and the American way!*





# 9 E #WhyVrq#JWkh#Z hvwhuq



**Davy Crockett**  
*King of the Wild Frontier*



**The Lone Ranger**  
(and his faithful sidekick, Tonto):

*Who is that masked man??*

**Sheriff Matt Dillon, *Gunsmoke***





9 F #WhyVro# I d b | #V krz v

Glossy view of mostly  
middle-class suburban life.



*I Love Lucy*

But...



*The Honeymooners*

*Social Winners?...*

*AND...*

*Losers?*







# : D #Whhg# xowh

In the 1950s → the word “**teenager**” entered the American language.

By 1956 → 13 mil. teens with \$7 bil. to spend a year.

1951 → “**race music**” → “ROCK 'N ROLL”



Elvis Presley → “The King”





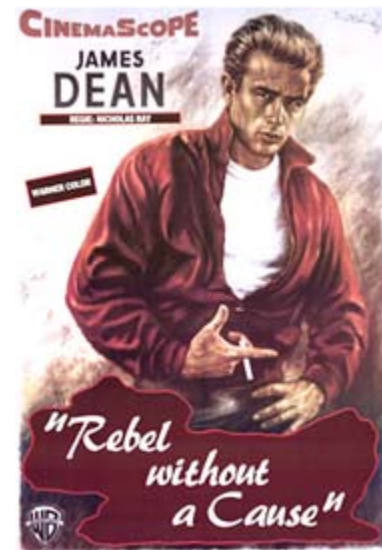
: E ~~Whoh~~ xowh

"Juvenile Delinquency" ???

1951 → J. D. Salinger's  
*A Catcher in the Rye*



Marlon Brando in  
*The Wild One*  
(1953)



James Dean in  
*Rebel Without a Cause* (1955)





: F #Whhg# xowuh

## The "Beat" Generation:

- ( Jack Kerouac → *On The Road*
- ( Allen Ginsberg → poem, "Howl"



"Beatnik"



"Clean" Teen







: G #Whhg# xowuh

## Behavioral Rules of the 1950s:

- 5 Obey Authority.
- 5 Control Your Emotions.
- 5 Don't Make Waves → Fit in with the Group.
- 5 Don't Even Think About Sex!!!



; D ##J hōj lxxv#J hydyo

*Today in the U. S., the Christian faith is back in the center of things.* -- Time magazine, 1954

Church membership: 1940 → 64,000,000  
1960 → 114,000,000

### Television Preachers:

1. Catholic **Bishop Fulton J. Sheen** → "Life is Worth Living"
2. Methodist Minister **Norman Vincent Peale** → *The Power of Positive Thinking*
3. **Reverend Billy Graham** → ecumenical message; warned against the evils of Communism.



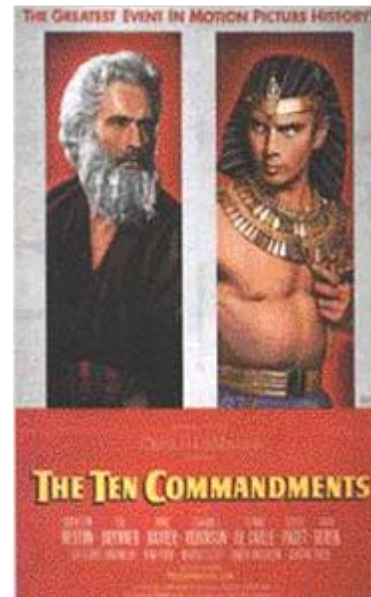


; E #J hōj lrv#J hyzō

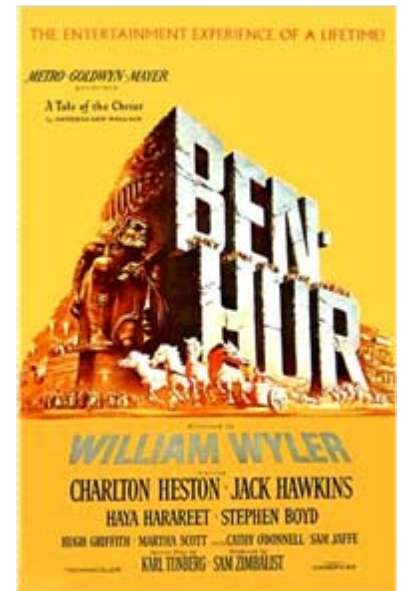
Hollywood: apex of the biblical epics.



*The Robe*  
1953



*The Ten Commandments*  
1956



*Ben Hur*  
1959



*It's un-American to be un-religious!*  
-- *The Christian Century*, 1954





# <D##Z hooGhibhg#Jhghu#J rdv

The *ideal modern woman* married, cooked and cared for her family, and kept herself busy by joining the local PTA and leading a troop of Campfire Girls. She entertained guests in her family's suburban house and worked out on the trampoline to keep her size 12 figure.

-- Life magazine, 1956



Marilyn Monroe

The *ideal 1950s man* was the provider, protector, and the boss of the house. -- Life magazine, 1955



1956 → William H. Whyte, Jr. → *The Organization Man*

P a middle-class, white suburban male is the ideal.



< E ##Z hooGhihg#Jhghu#J rdnv

## Changing Sexual Behavior:

**Alfred Kinsey:**

1948 → *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*

1953 → *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*

- ✓ Premarital sex was common.
- ✓ Extramarital affairs were frequent among married couples.

*Kinsey's results are an assault on the family as a basic unit of society, a negation of moral law, and a celebration of licentiousness.*

-- *Life magazine, early 1950s*



4B D ## \$ urjuhv v#Wkurxjk#V fhqfh

1951 -- First IBM Mainframe Computer

1952 -- Hydrogen Bomb Test

1953 -- DNA Structure Discovered

1954 -- Salk Vaccine Tested for Polio

1957 -- First Commercial U. S. Nuclear Power Plant

1958 -- NASA Created

1959 -- Press Conference of the First 7 American Astronauts





Be \$\$\$ urjuhv#Nkurxjk#V fhqfh

1957 → Russians launch **SPUTNIK I**



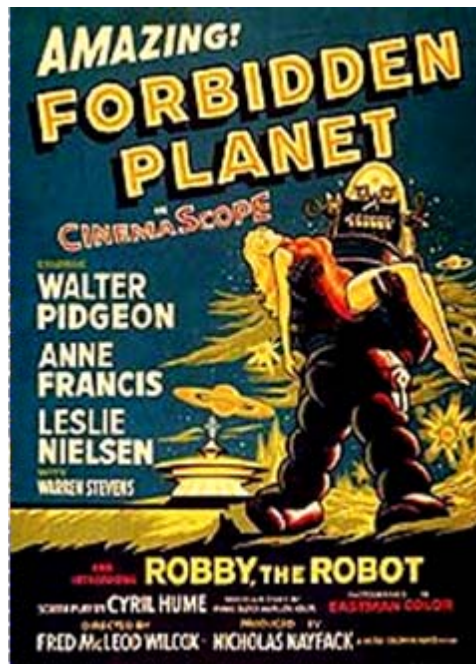
1958 → **National Defense Education Act**





4B F ## \$ urjuhv v#Wkurxjk#V fhqfh

UFO Sightings skyrocketed in the 1950s.



*War of the Worlds*

Hollywood used aliens as a metaphor for whom ??





4B G # \$ urjuhv # Wkurxjk # V fhqfh

## Atomic Anxieties:

☸ "Duck-and-Cover Generation"



## Atomic Testing:

☸ 1946-1962 → U. S. exploded 217 nuclear weapons over the Pacific and in Nevada.





