

The 1950s
Politics & Economics

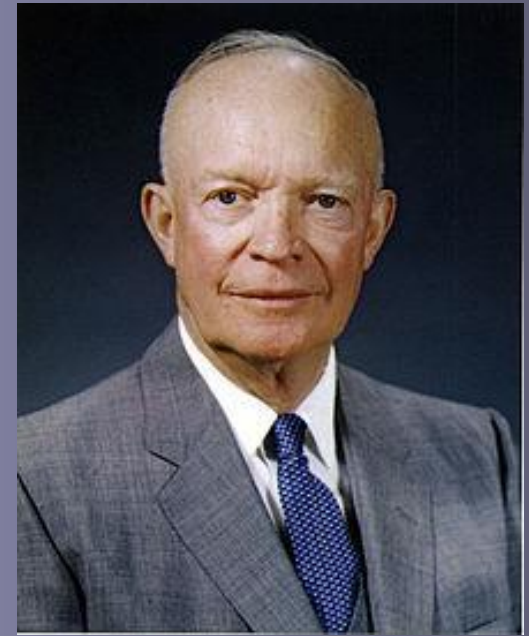


President Harry S. Truman

- Civil Rights advocate
 - Integrated U.S. Army
- Dixiecrats emerge
 - Oppose civil rights
- 1948 presidential upset
 - “Give ‘em hell Harry”
- Manufacturing jobs decline, inflation, decreased wages
- Threatened to draft striking mine and rail workers and order them to work
- Fair Deal-Minimum wage

President Dwight Eisenhower

1952-1960



- Defeats Truman in 1952 election
- Popularity from war
- Red scare and McCarthyism
- Stalemate of Korean War
- “Ike” middle of the roader
 - Government should be “conservative when it comes to money and liberal when it comes to human beings”
- Richard Nixon Vice President
 - “Checkers” scandal

Changes in the life of the Avg. American

- Rise of the Middle Class
- T.V.
- Suburban homes
- Highways and Automobiles
- First wave of Baby Boom become teenagers



G.I. BILL OF RIGHTS

- 8 MILLION TO COLLEGE
- LOW-INTEREST LOANS
- UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE



An Economic Boom



- Median family income up by 75%
- Homeownership up by 35%
- GDP up by 75%
- Birth of “suburbs”

Mass Media in the 1950s

- Federal Communications Commission
 - Regulation of TV [control of the airwaves]
- Beat Movement
 - Nonconformist poets, writers, artists [Jack Kerouac – “On the Road”]
 - Centered in cities [San Francisco, L.A., NYC’s Greenwich Village]
- Popularity of Jazz [Miles Davis]
- Rock-n-Roll – originated with African American Rhythm and blues [DJ Allen Freed]

The Beats

- Artists and poets
- Expressing alienation from commercial, conformist America
- Mostly centered in large cities: NYC, LA, San Francisco



- Allen Ginsberg
 - “Howl”
- Jack Kerouac
 - “On the Road”

Legacy of Korean War

- China Enters the War
 - Pushes U.N. forces back
- McGarther openly criticizes president for not attacking China – Truman fires him
- Truce talks begin at the suggestion of U.S.S.R. in 1951
- 1953 armistice at 38th parallel

