Chapter Outline

7.1 Happy Days
7.2 Post World War II and the Baby Boom
7.3 Advances in Medicine, Technology, and the Interstate Highway System
7.4 Television and America: A Love Affair Begins
7.5 A Youth Culture Emerges
7.6 Labor Unions
7.7 Kennedy’s New Frontier
7.8 The Courts and Civil Rights
7.9 Important Advocates of Civil Rights
7.10 Opponents of Civil Rights
7.11 Significant Events of the Civil Rights Movement
7.12 Writings of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X
7.13 Civil Rights and Voting Rights Legislation
7.14 The Chicano, American Indian, and Feminist Movements
7.15 Johnson’s Great Society
7.16 Voices Against Conformity and the Counterculture
7.17 Nixon and the “Silent Majority”
7.18 Nixon and the Watergate Scandal
7.19 Energy Crisis of the 1970’s
7.20 Alex Haley
7.21 Emergence of Environmentalism
7.22 The Jimmy Carter Administration
7.23 References

Students analyze the economic boom and social transformation of post–World War II America. Students examine the origins, goals, key events, and accomplishments of Civil Rights movement in the United States, and important events and trends in the 1960s and 1970s.

US.82 ... Analyze the impact of prosperity and consumerism in the 1950s, including the growth of white-collar jobs, the suburban ideal, the impact of the G.I. Bill, and increased reliance on foreign oil. (C, E, G)

US.83 ... Examine multiple sources presented in different media and formats to explain the impact of the baby boom generation on the American economy and culture. (C, E, G, P)

US.84 ... Describe the effects of technological developments, including advances in medicine, improvements in agricultural technology such as pesticides and fertilizers, the environmental impact of these advances, and the
development of the interstate highway system. (C, E, G)

US.85 ... Analyze the increasing impact of television and mass media on the American home, American politics, and the American economy. (C, E, P)

US.86 ... Describe the emergence of a youth culture, including beatniks and the progression of popular music from swing to rhythm and blues to rock ’n roll and the significance of Tennessee, including Sun Studios, Stax Records, and Elvis Presley. (C, E, TN)

US.87 ... Explain the events related to labor unions, including the merger of the AFL-CIO, the Taft-Hartley Act, and the roles played by Estes Kefauver, Robert Kennedy, and Jimmy Hoffa. (E, H, P, TN)

US.88 ... Describe President Kennedy’s New Frontier programs to improve education, end racial discrimination, create the Peace Corps, and propel the United States to superiority in the Space Race. (C, E, H, P)

US.89 ... Examine court cases in the evolution of civil rights, including Brown v. Board of Education and Regents of the University of California v. Bakke. (C, H, P)

US.90 ... Examine the roles of civil rights advocates, including the following: (C, H, P, TN)

- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Malcolm X
- Thurgood Marshall
- Rosa Parks
- Stokely Carmichael
- President John Kennedy
- Robert Kennedy
- President Lyndon Johnson
- James Meredith
- Jim Lawson

US.91 ... Examine the roles of civil rights opponents, including Strom Thurmond, George Wallace, Orval Faubus, Bull Connor, and the KKK. (C, H, P)

US.92 ... Describe significant events in the struggle to secure civil rights for African Americans, including the following: (C, H, P, TN)

- Columbia Race Riots
- Tent Cities of Haywood and Fayette Counties
- Influence of the Highlander Folk School and civil rights advocacy groups, including the SCLC, SNCC, and CORE
- Integration of Central High School in Little Rock and Clinton High School in Clinton, Tennessee
- Montgomery Bus Boycott
- Birmingham bombings 1963
- Freedom Rides, including the opposition of Bull Connor and George Wallace
- March on Washington
- Sit-ins, marches, demonstrations, boycotts, Nashville Sit-ins, Diane Nash
- Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

US.93 ... Cite textual evidence, determine the central meaning, and evaluate the explanations offered for various events by examining excerpts from the following texts: Martin Luther King, Jr. (“Letter from a Birmingham Jail”
and “I Have a Dream” speech) and Malcolm X (“The Ballot or the Bullet”). (C, P)

**US.94** ... Analyze the civil rights and voting rights legislation, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Civil Rights Act of 1968, and the 24th Amendment. (C, E, H, P)

**US.95** ... Describe the Chicano Movement, the American Indian Movement, and Feminist Movement and their purposes and goals. (C, E, P)

**US.96** ... Evaluate the impact of Johnson’s Great Society programs, including Medicare, urban renewal, and the War on Poverty. (C, P)

**US.97** ... Interpret different points of view that reflect the rise of social activism and the counterculture, hippies, generation gap, and Woodstock. (C, P)

**US.98** ... Identify and explain significant achievements of the Nixon administration, including his appeal to the “silent majority” and his successes in foreign affairs. (E, H, P)

**US.99** ... Analyze the Watergate scandal, including the background of the break-in, the importance of the court case United States v. Nixon, the changing role of media and journalism, the controversy surrounding Ford’s pardon of Nixon, and the legacy of distrust left in its wake. (H, P)

**US.100** ... Describe the causes and outcomes of the energy crisis of the 1970’s. (E, P)

**US.101** ... Investigate the life and works of Alex Haley and his influence on American Culture, including The Autobiography of Malcolm X and Roots: The Saga of An American Family. (C, TN)

**US.102** ... Explain the emergence of environmentalism, including the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring, and disasters such as Love Canal, Three Mile Island, and the Exxon Valdez. (G, C, P)

**US.103** ... Identify and explain significant events of the Carter administration, including the Camp David Accords, the Panama Canal Treaty, poor economy, SALT treaties, and the Iran Hostage Crisis. (G, H, P)

**Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read:** excerpts from “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” and the “I Have a Dream” speech, Martin Luther King, Jr.; excerpts from “The Ballot or the Bullet” speech, Malcolm X; excerpts from Silent Spring, Rachel Carson; excerpts from Feminine Mystique; excerpts from The Autobiography of Malcolm X and Roots: The Saga of An American Family, Alex Haley; speeches by Cesar Chavez

**Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Consider:** Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Civil Rights Act of 1968, and the 24th Amendment; excerpts from “The Great Silent Majority” speech, Richard Nixon
1950s: HAPPY DAYS

**Happy Days**, theme song

*Gonna cruise her round the town, Show everybody what I’ve found Rock-‘n’-roll with all my friends Hopin’ the music never ends. These happy days are yours and mine.*

-FIGURE 7.1

It didn’t start airing until 1974, but the television show Happy Days portrayed the carefree ’50s through the antics of characters named Potsie, Chachi, and Fonzie (left).

In American memory, the postwar 1950s have acquired an idyllic luster. Reruns of 1950s TV shows such as *Leave It to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best* leave today’s viewers with an impression of unadulterated family bliss. The baby boomers look back nostalgically to these years that marked their early childhood experiences.

The president for many of these years was war hero DWIGHT EISENHOWER. Ike, as he was nicknamed, walked a middle road between the two major parties. This strategy, called MODERN REPUBLICANISM, simultaneously restrained Democrats from expanding the New Deal while stopping conservative Republicans from reversing popular programs such as Social Security. As a result, no major reform initiatives emerged from a decade many would describe as politically dead. Perhaps freedom from controversy was the prize most American voters were seeking after World War II and the Korean War.

**LIVING IN A MATERIAL WORLD**

A booming economy helped shape the blissful retrospective view of the 1950s. A rebuilding Europe was hungry for American goods, fueling the consumer-oriented sector of the American economy. Conveniences that had been toys for the upper classes such as fancy refrigerators, range-top ovens, convertible automobiles, and televisions became middle-class staples.

The pent-up demand for consumer goods unleashed after the Great Depression and World War II sustained itself through the 1950s. Homes became affordable to many apartment dwellers for the first time. Consequently, the population of the SUBURBS exploded. The huge youth market had a music all of its own called rock and roll, complete with parent-detested icons such as Elvis Presley.
FIGURE 7.2
Dwight D. "Ike" Eisenhower's campaign slogan "I Like Ike" epitomized the swell spirit that defined American culture in the 1950s.

HAPPY DAYS - BUT NOT FOR ALL

Of course, not everything was as rosy as it seemed. Beneath the pristine exterior, a small group of critics and nonconformists pointed out the flaws in a suburbia they believed had no soul, a government they believed was growing dangerously powerful, and a lifestyle they believed was fundamentally repressed. And much of America was still segregated.

Nevertheless, the notion of the 1950s as happy days lived on. Perhaps when measured against the Great Depression of the 1930s, the world war of the 1940s, the strife of the 1960s, and the malaise of the 1970s, the 1950s were indeed fabulous.

THE SUBURBAN IDEAL

FIGURE 7.3
Convenience and color were two hallmarks of the 1950s kitchen. Pink refrigerators and new pre-sweetened cereals such as Sugar Pops were introduced to America early in the decade.

For many generations and many decades, the AMERICAN DREAM has promised an EGALITARIAN society and material prosperity. For many, the notion of prosperity remained just a dream. But for millions of Americans in the 1950s, the American Dream became a reality. Within their reach was the chance to have a house on their own land, a car, a dog, and 2.3 kids.

POSTWAR AFFLUENCE redefined the American Dream. Gone was the poverty borne of the Great Depression, and the years of wartime sacrifice were over.

Automobiles once again rolled off the assembly lines of the Big Three: Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler. The Interstate Highway Act authorized the construction of thousands of miles of high-speed roads that made living farther from work a possibility. Families that had delayed having additional children for years no longer waited, and the nation enjoyed a postwar BABY BOOM.
Racial fears, affordable housing, and the desire to leave decaying cities were all factors that prompted many white Americans to flee to SUBURBIA. And no individual promoted suburban growth more than WILLIAM LEVITT.

Contracted by the federal government during the war to quickly build housing for military personnel, Levitt applied the techniques of mass production to construction. In 1947, he set out to erect the largest planned-living community in the United States on farmland he had purchased on Long Island, New York. Levitt identified 27 different steps to build a house. Therefore, 27 different teams of builders were hired to construct the homes.

Each house had two bedrooms, one bathroom, and no basement. The kitchen was situated near the back of the house so mothers could keep an eye on their children in the backyard. Within one year, Levitt was building 36 houses per day. His assembly-line approach made the houses extremely affordable. At first, the homes were available only to veterans. Eventually, though, LEVITTOWN was open to others as well.

Because little variety was expressed in the construction, homeowners struggled to keep their communities looking uniform. Residents had to pledge to mow their lawns on a weekly basis. African Americans were excluded by practice. The irrational need to "keep up with the Joneses" was born in the American suburb.

Despite such criticism, a generation of Americans loved the chance to avoid rent and the dirtiness of the city to live in their own homes on their own land. Soon, shopping centers and fast food restaurants added to the convenience of
As suburbia grew, fast food restaurants began to pop up all over the country. Ray Kroc bought a single burger joint called McDonald's and paved the way for the fast food giant. Pictured above is Kroc's first new restaurant, which opened in 1955.

suburban life. Thousands and thousands migrated to suburbia. America and the American Dream would never be the same.

IMPACT OF THE G.I. BILL

When President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, few people had any inkling of the profound impact it would have on American higher education and on society as a whole.

The GI Bill of Rights, as it became known, provided unemployment benefits, home loans, and, most important, financial support for veterans returning from World War II to attend college or take vocational training. (The term “GI” referred to “government issue” and became synonymous with “soldier.”)

In the 1940s, little more than 20 percent of American military forces had secondary school diplomas, and only 3 percent had college degrees. Prior to the GI Bill, colleges were predominately private, elitist, liberal arts, and often highly discriminatory.

The GI Bill changed all that. As scholar Milton Greenberg points out: “Today, American universities are now overwhelmingly public (80 percent of enrollments); focused heavily on occupational, technical, and scientific education; huge, urban-oriented, suitable for commuter attendance; and highly democratic.”

No one anticipated the enormous enthusiasm with which returning veterans embraced the opportunity for a college education, especially when the bill paid tuition and living expenses for any school to which a veteran could gain admittance. In 1940, 160,000 people earned college degrees; by 1950, that number had leapt to 500,000. Veterans studying under the GI Bill totaled almost half of all college students in the late 1940s.

In addition to the 2.2 million veterans who attended college under this historic legislation, another 3.5 million took vocational training courses. By the time the initial GI Bill expired in 1956, the United States, according to Greenberg, had gained 450,000 trained engineers; 240,000 accountants; 238,000 teachers; 91,000 scientists; 67,000
Doctors; 22,000 dentists; and more than 1 million other college-educated individuals.

Equally significant, GI Bill educational and home loan benefits created a large, skilled, upwardly mobile American middle class that would sustain the nation’s growth and development for decades to come. The GI Bill also lifted the educational expectations of the children of these veterans and established a strong belief in the value of learning as a lifelong pursuit.

Later versions of the GI Bill have continued to provide educational benefits for veterans, whether they served in peacetime or during conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq.
7.2 Post World War II and the Baby Boom

IMPACT OF POST WWII BABY BOOM

- Baby Boomers Retire
- Impact of Baby Boomers on US Travel, 1969 to 2009
- Baby Boomers - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com
- Baby Boom Generation Fast Facts

FIGURE 7.9
Baby Boom Generation

[Image of a bar graph showing U.S. Birth Rate: 1940-1980 (Baby Boomer Generation in Red)]

 MEDIA
Click image to the left or use the URL below.
URL: http://www.ck12.org/flx/render/embeddedobject/136246

 MEDIA
Click image to the left or use the URL below.
URL: http://www.ck12.org/flx/render/embeddedobject/136250
7.3 Advances in Medicine, Technology, and the Interstate Highway System

ADVANCEMENT IN REPRODUCTIVE MEDICINE

The consequences of sexual relations between women and men simply were not fair. An old double standard dictated that men were rewarded for sexual prowess and women suffered a damaged reputation. Males were encouraged to "sow a few wild oats" while women were told "good girls don’t."

Most of all, if a relationship resulted in pregnancy, it was the woman who was left with the responsibility. For decades, pioneers like MARGARET SANGER fought for CONTRACEPTIVES that women would control. With the introduction of the BIRTH CONTROL PILL to the market in 1960, women could for the first time deter pregnancy by their own choice.

The fight for reproductive freedoms was intense. Organized religions such as the Roman Catholic Church stood firm on their principles that artificial contraceptives were sinful. Many states in the early 1960s prohibited the sale of contraceptives — even to married couples.

In a landmark decision, GRISWOLD V. CONNECTICUT (1965), the Supreme Court ruled such laws were unconstitutional. Setting a precedent, the Court determined that a fundamental right to privacy exists between the lines of the Constitution. Laws prohibiting contraceptive choice violated this sacred right. The ban of prohibitive laws was
extended to unmarried couples in EISENSTADT V. BAIRD (1972). A federal judge imparted the right to purchase contraceptives to unmarried minors in 1974.

The pill made it finally possible for American women to separate sexuality and childbearing. MASTERS AND JOHNSON, a pioneering research team in the field of human sexuality, challenged entrenched beliefs that women did not enjoy sex and were merely passive partners.

Reports of premarital sex increased dramatically as the "SEXUAL REVOLUTION" spread across America. Young couples began COHABITING — living together before marriage — in greater and greater numbers. Critics denounced the tremendous change in lifestyle.

Inevitably the reproductive struggle took aim at laws that restricted ABORTION. Throughout the 1960s, there was no national standard on abortion regulations, and many states had outlawed the practice. Feminist groups claimed that illegality led many women to seek black market abortions by unlicensed physicians or to brutally perform the procedure on themselves.

In 1973, the Supreme Court heard the case of the anonymous Jane Roe, an unmarried Texas mother who claimed the state violated her constitutional rights by banning the practice. By a 7-2 vote, the Court agreed. Since ROE V. WADE, the battle lines have been drawn between pro-choice supporters of abortion rights and pro-life opponents who seek to chisel away at the Roe decision.

- The Pharmaceutical Century - 1950s
- The Pharmaceutical Century - 1960s

POLIO VACCINE

FIGURE 7.12
Jonas Salk

- Polio Vaccines: Then and Now
- Whatever Happened to Polio?
- Salk Announces Polio Vaccine
- History of Vaccines - Polio

ENVIRONMENTAL REFORM

It was time to save the earth. A century of full-fledged industrialism in America had taken its toll on the environment. Concerned citizens began to appeal in earnest to protect more of the nation’s wilderness areas. Emissions into the atmosphere were creating smoggy haze rings above many metropolitan centers. Trash was piling up. Many Americans felt free to deposit waste from their increasingly disposable society along the sides of the roads. In the climate of social activism, the 1960s also became a decade of earth action.

RACHEL CARSON sent a wake-up call to America with her 1962 book SILENT SPRING. Carson wrote of the horrors of DDT, a popular pesticide used on many American farms. DDT wrought havoc on the nation’s bird
population. The pesticide, when ingested by birds, proved poisonous. Carson then witnessed a spring where birds did not return to farms.

The book created a firestorm of concern for the environment. Many students involved in the peace and civil rights movements also embraced the call for environmental awareness. President Johnson responded with the WILDERNESS PROTECTION ACT, the WATER QUALITY ACT, and the AIR QUALITY ACT. An activist organization named GREENPEACE formed in 1969.

Inspired by SENATOR GAYLORD NELSON and created by students, the nation celebrated its first EARTH DAY on April 22, 1970. President Nixon, despite his overall lack of sympathy for the earth movement, could not resist supporting popular environmentalist measures.

In 1970, he signed legislation creating the ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, a federal watchdog dedicated to proper care of the planet. He also stiffened standards for emissions and waste with the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. The Endangered Species Act also provided much needed protection to wildlife on the brink of annihilation.

For years, the environmentalists had two major factions. Conservationists such as THEODORE ROOSEVELT believed that the nation’s natural heritage could be maintained through wise, efficient use of resources.

Preservationists such as JOHN MUIR and the SIERRA CLUB celebrated the majesty of the landscape and preferred protection of wilderness areas. The 1960s ushered in the ecologists, who studied the relationships between living organisms and their environments. Pollution was destroying this delicate balance, and the result could be health problems, extinction of species, or even planetary destruction.

Young Americans learned ecology in elementary school as a nationwide awareness campaign attempted to raise consciousness. WOODSY THE OWL advised youngsters to "never be a dirty bird." Thousands felt their heartstrings tugged as they viewed television advertisements depicting mountains of trash culminating with a pensive Native American shedding a single, mournful tear.

The 1970s brought growing concerns with the NUCLEAR POWER INDUSTRY. Fission plants produced hazardous
As a founder of the Sierra Club in 1892, John Muir served as an inspiration to environmental reformers of the 1960s.

by-products that were difficult to dispose of safely. An accident at a nuclear power plant at THREE MILE ISLAND near Harrisburg nearly released a lethal bubble of radioactive gas into the atmosphere in 1979. Pressure groups mounted protests against nuclear testing by the United States. President Carter announced a bold initiative to develop renewable sources of energy.

Although many environmentalists were disappointed that all goals were not reached, substantive changes did improve the quality of American air and water, and the nation had its eyes open to the need to preserve the planet.

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

By the late 1930s, the “good roads” of the 1920s were no longer enough to handle the traffic of American commerce and tourism. President Franklin Roosevelt believed that a network of transcontinental superhighways would create jobs for people out of work, and Congress funded a study. But with America on the verge of joining the war under way in Europe, the time for a massive highway program had not arrived.

Planning for postwar highways continued, and the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944 authorized the construction of a 65,000-km (about 40,000 miles) “National System of Interstate Highways,” designed to meet traffic needs twenty years after the date of construction, and

... so located as to connect by routes, as direct as practicable, the principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers, to serve the national defense, and to connect at suitable border points with routes of continental importance in the Dominion of Canada and the Republic of Mexico.

Construction of the interstate system moved slowly. Many states wanted to use their federal highway funds for local roads. Others complained that the standards of construction were too high. Also, by July 1950, the United States was again at war, this time in Korea, and the focus of the highway program shifted from civilian to military needs. When President Dwight D. Eisenhower took office in January 1953, the states had completed only about 6,500 miles of system improvements at a cost of $955 million — half of which came from the federal government. Only a quarter of interstate roadways could handle even present traffic, let alone the increase expected over the next twenty years.

Long before taking office, Eisenhower had recognized the importance of highways. He first realized the value of good highways in 1919, when he participated in the U.S. Army’s first transcontinental motor convoy from Washington, D.C., to San Francisco. On the way west, the convoy experienced all the woes known to motorists and then some — an endless series of mechanical difficulties, vehicles stuck in mud or sand, trucks and other equipment crashing through wooden bridges, roads as slippery as ice or dusty or the consistency of “gumbo,” and extremes of weather from desert heat to Rocky Mountain freezing.
During World War II, General Eisenhower saw the advantages Germany enjoyed because of the autobahn network. He also noted the enhanced mobility of the Allies when they fought their way into Germany.

As president, Eisenhower considered it important to “protect the vital interest of every citizen in a safe and adequate highway system.” What was needed, the president believed, was a grand plan for a properly articulated system of highways. The president wanted a method of financing that would avoid debt. He wanted a cooperative alliance between state and federal officials to accomplish the federal part of the grand plan. And he wanted the federal government to cooperate with the states to develop a modern state highway system.

Congress defeated the president’s initial proposals. On Jan. 5, 1956, in his State of the Union Address, the president renewed his call for a “modern, interstate highway system.” That same month, Rep. George H. Fallon of Baltimore, Md., chairman of the Subcommittee on Roads in the House Committee on Public Works, introduced the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956. It provided for a 66,000-km national system of interstate and defense highways to be built over thirteen years. This time, the federal government would pay 90 percent of the cost — $25 billion.

The 1956 act called for uniform interstate design standards to accommodate traffic forecast for 1975. Access would be limited to interchanges (on- and off-ramps). Service stations and other commercial establishments were prohibited from the interstate right-of-way, in contrast to the franchise system used on toll roads. Toll roads, bridges, and tunnels could be included in the system if they met system standards and their inclusion promoted development of an integrated system. Two-lane segments, as well as at-grade intersections — intersections where a stop sign or traffic light would be appropriate — were permitted on lightly traveled segments. However, legislation passed in 1966 required all parts of the interstate highway system to be at least four lanes with no at-grade intersections regardless of traffic volume.

Eisenhower considered the Interstate Highway System his favorite domestic program. In his memoir, he wrote,

*More than any single action by the government since the end of the war, this one would change the face of America… Its impact on the American economy — the jobs it would produce in manufacturing and construction, the rural areas it would open up — was beyond calculation.*

The next 50 years would be filled with unexpected engineering challenges, unanticipated controversies, and unforeseen funding difficulties. Nevertheless, the president’s view would prove correct. The interstate system, and the federal-state partnership that built it, changed the face of America.

- Eisenhower Interstate Highway System - History
- Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956: Creating the Interstate System
- The Interstate Highway System - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com
- History and cultural impact of the Interstate Highway system
• Interstate Highway System
IMPACT OF TELEVISION ON AMERICAN LIFE

Figure 7.17

As the price of television sets dropped, the number of viewers grew. 1952 saw the arrival of the Viking Console, a Canadian set, which was popular all over North America.

Perhaps no phenomenon shaped American life in the 1950s more than TELEVISION. At the end of World War II, the television was a toy for only a few thousand wealthy Americans. Just 10 years later, nearly two-thirds of American households had a television.

The biggest-selling periodical of the decade was TV GUIDE. In a nation once marked by strong regional differences, network television programming blurred these distinctions and helped forge a national popular culture.

Television forever changed politics. The first president to be televised was Harry Truman. When Estes Kefauver prosecuted mob boss Frank Costello on television, the Tennessee senator became a national hero and a vice presidential candidate.

Figure 7.18

The first coast-to-coast color broadcast came on January 1, 1954, when NBC beamed the Tournament of Roses Parade across America.

It did not take long for political advertisers to understand the power of the new medium. Dwight Eisenhower’s campaign staff generated sound bites — short, powerful statements from a candidate — rather than air an entire
speech.

**AMERICA LOVES LUCY**

![Figure 7.19](image)

**FIGURE 7.19**

Lucille Ball’s new baby brought 44 million viewers to the show and graced the cover of the first national issue of TV Guide in 1953. TV Guide soon became the most popular periodical in the country.

Americans loved situation comedies — sitcoms. In the 1950s, I LOVE LUCY topped the ratings charts. The show broke new ground by including a Cuban American character (Ricky Ricardo, played by bandleader DESI ARNAZ) and dealing with LUCILLE BALL’s pregnancy, though Lucy was never filmed from the waist down while she was pregnant. Forty-four million Americans tuned in to welcome her newborn son to the show.

Through shows such as Leave It to Beaver, THE DONNA REED SHOW, and Father Knows Best, television created an idyllic view of what the perfect family life should look like, though few actual families could live up to the ideal.

Television’s idea of a perfect family was a briefcase-toting professional father who left daily for work, and a pearls-wearing, nurturing housewife who raised their mischievous boys and obedient girls. With rare exceptions (such as Desi Arnaz) members of minorities rarely appeared on television in the 1950s.

**THE WILD WEST**

America’s fascination with the Wild West was nothing new, but television brought Western heroes into American homes and turned that fascination into a love affair. Cowboys and lawmen such as HOPALONG CASSIDY, WYATT EARP, and the CISCO KID galloped across televisions every night.

THE ROY ROGERS SHOW and RIN TIN TIN brought the West to children on Saturday mornings, and DAVY CROCKETT coonskin caps became popular fashion items. Long running horse operas, such as BONANZA and RAWHIDE, attracted viewers week after week.

One Western, GUNSMOKE, ran for 20 years — longer than any other prime-time drama in television history. At the decade’s close, 30 Westerns aired on prime time each week, and Westerns occupied 7 spots in the Nielsen Top-10.

Westerns reinforced the ’50s notion that everything was OK in America. Like THE LONE RANGER and ZORRO, most programs of the early 1950s drew a clear line between the good guys and the bad guys. There was very little danger of injury or death, and good always triumphed in the end.

By the late ’50s, though, the genre had become more complicated and the lines between good and evil was blurred.
FIGURE 7.20
The Lone Ranger was one of the earliest TV Westerns, making the jump from radio in 1941. The Lone Ranger and other Westerns geared toward children aired on Saturday mornings. Adult Westerns, such as Gunsmoke and Wyatt Earp aired during prime-time.

America entered the more turbulent ’60s with heroes such as the black-clad mercenary Paladin and the gambling Maverick brothers who would do anything to earn a buck.

NIXON AND CHECKERS
Richard Nixon was both helped and hindered by TV. His televised CHECKERS SPEECH (Checkers was his dog) successfully appealed to the public for support when financial scandals threatened to boot him from the Republican ticket. But in the 1960 televised presidential debates against John F. Kennedy, Nixon came off as sweaty and somewhat sinister.

VARIETY SHOWS: VAUDEVILLE IN AMERICAN LIVING ROOMS

FIGURE 7.21
Ed Sullivan’s variety show provided entertainment ranging from the rock and roll of the Rolling Stones to the goofy hijinks of trained animals.

Because most early television was live, the producers of major networks found their talent among people already had experience with live performance: vaudeville. Television and vaudeville combined to created the form of entertainment known as the variety show. VARIETY SHOWS were made up of short acts — musical numbers, comedy sketches, animal tricks, etc. — usually centered around an engaging host. Former vaudevillians BOB HOPE, MILTON BERLE, and Ed Wynn all hosted popular programs. The influence of vaudeville on television was
so strong that television critics called the shows "Vaudeo."

Sid Caesar had two popular variety programs in '50s, Your Show of Shows and Caesar's Hour. These shows featured the writing talents of CARL REINER, MEL BROOKS, LARRY GELBART, and WOODY ALLEN. NAT "KING" COLE became the first African American host of a television series when his variety show appeared in 1956.

But perhaps no variety program had a greater effect on American culture than THE ED SULLIVAN SHOW, which ran for 23 years beginning in 1948 and was for a while America’s most popular show. Combining highbrow and popular entertainment, Sullivan’s "really big shew" became a major stop for both established performers and young, up-and-coming artists. Although Elvis Presley had appeared on other shows in the past, it was his performance on The Ed Sullivan Show that grabbed the headlines. By securing rock-and-roll acts, Sullivan won the adolescent market, truly making the variety show a whole-family event.

COMMERCIALS: SELLING THROUGH THE SCREEN

With more and more American families owning televisions, manufacturers now had a new way to sell their products, and the TELEVISION COMMERCIAL was born. By late 1948, over 900 companies had bought television broadcast time for advertising. By 1950, sponsors were leaving radio for television at an unstoppable rate.

Television sponsors ranged from greeting cards to automobiles, but perhaps the most advertised product was tobacco. TV Guide voted Lucky Strike’s "Be Happy, Go Lucky" ad commercial of the year for 1950, and Phillip Morris sponsored I Love Lucy for years, inserting cartoon cigarette packs in the show’s opening animation. Cartoon characters were common in '50s commercials, representing everything from lightbulbs to beer. In 1950, Coca-Cola launched its first television ad campaign using a combination of animation and celebrity endorsement.

By 1954, television commercials were the leading advertising medium in America. The life of the American consumer would never be the same.

THE NEW NEWS

Edward R. Murrow’s incisive journalism exposed the folly behind Senator McCarthy’s rabid attacks on so-called communists, effectively ruining McCarthy’s career.
Most Americans still got their news from newspapers in the 1950s, but the foundations for the modern television newscast were established as early as 1951 with EDWARD R. MURROW’s SEE IT NOW, the first coast-to-coast live show. Many consider Murrow’s 1953 PERSON TO PERSON interview with Joseph McCarthy to be a major step toward McCarthy’s downfall.

While Murrow reported on CBS, DAVID BRINKLEY and CHET HUNTLEY were revolutionizing news broadcasting with the NBC Nightly News. Brinkley and Huntley were the first anchormen to report from two cities simultaneously, and Brinkley’s simple declarative sentences became the basis for television news writing for several decades.

Two major developments in the 1950s that set up television as the news medium of the future were the establishment of coaxial cable linking the East and West coasts, which enabled footage to be moved electronically instead of physically, and the invention of videotape, which allowed the use of prerecorded footage (such as studio interviews).

But when television is bad, nothing is worse. I invite you to sit down in front of your television set when your station goes on the air and stay there without a book, magazine, newspaper, profit-and-loss sheet or rating book to distract you — and keep your eyes glued to that set until the station signs off. I can assure you that you will observe a vast wasteland. You will see a procession of game shows, violence, audience participation shows, formula comedies about totally unbelievable families, blood and thunder, mayhem, violence, sadism, murder, western bad men, western good men, private eyes, gangsters, more violence and cartoons. And, endlessly, commercials — many screaming, cajoling and offending. And most of all, boredom.

– Newton Minow, Chairman of the FCC and 1950s television viewer (1961)

CHILDREN’S PROGRAMMING

Understanding that the population of children was in greater numbers than in previous generations, television producers developed a host of children’s programs. Shows such as THE MICKEY MOUSE CLUB and HOWDY DOODY, entertained millions of American tykes.

During the 1950s, few households owned more than one television, so viewing became a shared family event. Even the American diet was transformed with the advent of the TV dinner, first introduced in 1954.
A YOUTH CULTURE EMERGES

FIGURE 7.25
The prosperity of the '50s allowed teenagers to spend money on records by their favorite bands and singers.

ROCK AND ROLL was everything the suburban 1950s were not. While parents of the decade were listening to FRANK SINATRA, PERRY COMO, and BIG BANDS, their children were moving to a new beat.

In fact, to the horror of the older generation, their children were twisting, thrusting, bumping, and grinding to the sounds of rock and roll.

This generation of youth was much larger than any in recent memory, and the prosperity of the era gave them money to spend on records and phonographs. By the end of the decade, the phenomenon of rock and roll helped define the difference between youth and adulthood.

THE ROOTS OF ROCK

FIGURE 7.26
Alan Freed, the Cleveland disc jockey credited with coining the phrase "rock and roll," was the master of ceremonies at many of the first rock concerts, including his 1955 Easter Jubilee.

The roots of rock and roll lay in African American BLUES and GOSPEL. As the Great Migration brought many African Americans to the cities of the north, the sounds of RHYTHM AND BLUES attracted suburban teens. Due to segregation and racist attitudes, however, none of the greatest artists of the genre could get much airplay.
Disc jockey Alan Freed began a rhythm-and-blues show on a Cleveland radio station. Soon the audience grew and grew, and Freed coined the term "rock and roll."

Early attempts by white artists to cover R&B songs resulted in weaker renditions that bled the heart and soul out of the originals. Record producers saw the market potential and began to search for a white artist who could capture the African American sound.

**FIGURE 7.27**
Chuck Berry's songs about girls and cars hit a nerve with American teens and sent his star rising high in the early days of rock and roll.

**SAM PHILLIPS**, a Memphis record producer, found the answer in Elvis Presley. With a deep Southern sound, pouty lips, and gyrating hips, Elvis took an old style and made it his own.

From Memphis, the sound spread to other cities, and demand for Elvis records skyrocketed. Within two years, Elvis was the most popular name in the entertainment business.

After the door to rock and roll acceptance was opened, African American performers such as Chuck Berry, **FATS DOMINO**, and **LITTLE RICHARD** began to enjoy broad success, as well. White performers such as Buddy Holly and Jerry Lee Lewis also found artistic freedom and commercial success.

**SATAN’S MUSIC**

**FIGURE 7.28**
Elvis Presley brought rock-and-roll music to the masses during the 1950s with hits such as "Love Me Tender" and "Heartbreak Hotel."

Rock and roll sent shockwaves across America. A generation of young teenagers collectively rebelled against the music their parents loved. In general, the older generation loathed rock and roll. Appalled by the new styles of dance the movement evoked, churches proclaimed it Satan’s music.
Because rock and roll originated among the lower classes and a segregated ethnic group, many middle-class whites thought it was tasteless. Rock and roll records were banned from many radio stations and hundreds of schools.

But the masses spoke louder. When Elvis appeared on TV’s The Ed Sullivan Show, the show’s ratings soared.

Rock and roll is the most brutal, ugly, degenerate, vicious form of expression — lewd, sly, in plain fact, dirty — a rancid-smelling aphrodisiac and the martial music of every side-burned delinquent on the face of the earth.

– Frank Sinatra (1957)

The commercial possibilities were limitless. As a generation of young adults finished military service, bought houses in suburbia, and longed for stability and conformity, their children seemed to take comfort for granted. They wanted to release the tensions that bubbled beneath the smooth surface of postwar America.

Above all, they wanted to shake, rattle, and roll.

THE BEAT GENERATION

In the artistic world, dozens of beat writers reviled middle-class materialism, racism, and uniformity. Other intellectuals were able to detach themselves enough from the American mainstream to review it critically.

The writers of the BEAT GENERATION refused to submit to the conformity of the 1950s. GREENWICH VILLAGE in New York City was the center of the beat universe. Epitomized by such Columbia University students such JACK KEROUAC and ALLEN GINSBERG, the beats lived a bohemian lifestyle.

While mainstream America seemed to ignore African American culture, the beats celebrated it by frequenting jazz clubs and romanticizing their poverty. The use of alcohol and drugs foreshadowed the counterculture of the following decade. Believing that American society was unspeakably repressed, the beats experimented with new sexual lifestyles.

In ON THE ROAD, Kerouac’s hero travels around the nation, delving into America’s fast-living underside. In "HOWL," Allen Ginsberg assails materialism and conformity and calls for the unleashing of basic human needs and desires.
As the media helped create a single notion of an idyllic American lifestyle, a vocal minority of social critics registered their dissenting voices. The notion of the white-collar, executive-track, male employee was condemned in fiction in SLOAN WILSON’s *THE MAN IN THE GRAY FLANNEL SUIT* and in commentary in WILLIAM WHYTE’s *THE ORGANIZATION MAN*.

The booming postwar defense industry came under fire in C. WRIGHT MILLS’ *THE POWER ELITE*. Mills feared that an alliance between military leaders and munitions manufacturers held an unhealthy proportion of power that could ultimately endanger American democracy — a sentiment echoed in PRESIDENT EISENHOWER’S FAREWELL ADDRESS.

And teen alienation and the neurosis of coming-of-age in postwar America was examined in J.D. SALINGER’s *THE CATCHER IN THE RYE*.

If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you’ll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don’t feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth. In the first place, that stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty personal about them. They’re nice and all — I’m not saying that — but they’re also touchy as hell.

– Holden Caulfield, from *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger (1951)

- **They Were Hipsters Not Beatniks**

**FIGURE 7.30**
Real, live Beats: Larry Rivers, Jack Kerouac, David Amram, Allen Ginsberg, and Gregory Corso (in the hat) at a coffee shop in the 1950s.

**ROCK AND ROLL IN TENNESSEE**

**Sun Studio**

- **Sun Studio**
Sam Phillips

- Sam Phillips Sun Records

Stax Records

- Stax
- History » Stax Museum
- Stax Records

Elvis Presley and Graceland

- Elvis Presley’s Graceland
7.5. A Youth Culture Emerges

• Elvis Presley
LABOR UNIONS, THE AFL-CIO, AND THE TAFT-HARTLEY ACT

The end of World War II brought a series of challenges to Harry Truman. The entire economy had to be converted from a wartime economy to a consumer economy. Strikes that had been delayed during the war erupted with a frenzy across America. Inflation threatened as millions of Americans planned to spend wealth they had not enjoyed since 1929. As the soldiers returned home, they wanted their old jobs back, creating a huge labor surplus. Truman, distracted by new threats overseas, was faced with additional crises at home.

Although Truman maintained wartime price controls for over a year after the war, he was pressured to end them by the Republican Congress in 1947. Inflation skyrocketed and workers immediately demanded pay increases. Strikes soon spread across America involving millions of American workers.

Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act, which allowed the President to declare a "cooling-off" period if a strike were to erupt. Union leaders became liable for damages in lawsuits and were required to sign noncommunist oaths. The ability of unions to contribute to political campaigns was limited. Truman vetoed this measure, but it was passed by the Congress nonetheless.

THE TAFT-HARTLEY ACT

The Taft-Hartley Act made major changes to the Wagner Act. Although Section 7 was retained intact in the revised law, new language was added to provide that employees had the right to refrain from participating in union or mutual aid activities except that they could be required to become members in a union as a condition of employment.

Taft-Hartley defined six additional unfair labor practices, reflecting Congress’ perception that some union conduct also needed correction. The Act was amended to protect employees’ rights from these unfair practices by unions.

The amendments protected employees’ Section 7 rights from restraint or coercion by unions, and said that unions could not cause an employer to discriminate against an employee for exercising Section 7 rights. They declared the closed shop illegal, but provided that employers could sign a union shop agreement under which employees could be required to join the union on or after the 30th day of employment.

The amendments also imposed on unions the same obligation to bargain in good faith that the Wagner Act placed on employers. They prohibited secondary boycotts, making it unlawful for a union that has a primary dispute with one employer to pressure a neutral employer to stop doing business with the first employer.

Unions were prohibited from charging excessive dues or initiation fees, and from "featherbedding," or causing an employer to pay for work not performed. The new law contained a "free speech clause," providing that the expression of views, arguments, or opinions shall not be evidence of an unfair labor practice absent the threat of reprisal or promise of benefit.

Several significant changes were made for representation elections. Supervisors were excluded from bargaining units, and the Board had to give special treatment to professional employees, craftsmen and plant guards in determining bargaining units.

Congress also added four new types of elections. The first permitted employers faced with a union’s demand for recognition to seek a Board-conducted election. The other three enabled employees to obtain elections to determine whether to oust incumbent unions, whether to grant to unions authority to enter into a union shop agreement, or
whether to withdraw union shop authorization previously granted. (The provisions authorizing the union shop elections were repealed in 1951).


AFL-CIO

- AFL-CIO - Our History

ESTES KEFAUVER

In April 1950, the body of a Kansas City gambling kingpin was found in a Democratic clubhouse, slumped beneath a large portrait of President Harry S. Truman. His assassination intensified national concerns about the post-World War II growth of powerful crime syndicates and the resulting gang warfare in the nation’s larger cities.

On May 3, 1950, the Senate established a five-member Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce. Sensitive to the desire of several standing committees to conduct the investigation, Senate party leaders selected the special committee’s members from the committees on Interstate Commerce and the Judiciary, including each panel’s senior Republican. As chairman, the Democratic majority designated an ambitious freshman—Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver.

The committee visited 14 major cities in 15 months, just as increasing numbers of Americans were purchasing their first television sets. When the panel reached New Orleans in January 1951, a local television station requested permission to televise an hour of testimony, perhaps to compete with a radio station that was carrying the entire proceedings. As the committee moved on to Detroit, a television station in that city preempted the popular children’s show, Howdy Doody, to broadcast senators grilling mobsters.

Like a theater company doing previews on the road, the committee headed for Broadway, where the independent television station of the New York Daily News provided live feed to the networks. When the notorious gambler Frank Costello refused to testify on camera, the committee ordered the TV not to show his face. The cameras instead focused on the witness’ nervously agitated hands, unexpectedly making riveting viewing. As the Associated Press explained, "Something big, unbelievably big and emphatic, smashed into the homes of millions of Americans last week when television cameras, cold-eyed and relentless, were trained on the Kefauver Crime hearings."

Television forever changed politics. The first president to be televised was Harry Truman. When Estes Kefauver prosecuted mob boss Frank Costello on television, the Tennessee senator became a national hero and a vice presidential candidate.

The Committee received 250,000 pieces of mail from a viewing audience estimated at 30 million. Although the hearings boosted Chairman Kefauver’s political prospects, they helped to end the 12-year Senate career of Democratic Majority Leader Scott Lucas. In a tight 1950 reelection race against former Illinois Representative Everett Dirksen, Lucas urged Kefauver to keep his investigation away from an emerging Chicago police scandal until after election day. Kefauver refused. Election-eve publication of stolen secret committee documents hurt the Democratic Party in Cook County, cost Lucas the election, and gave Dirksen national prominence as the man who defeated the Senate majority leader.

- Kefauver Committee
- The Kefauver Hearings

ROBERT KENNEDY AND JIMMY HOFFA

- Robert F. Kennedy - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com
- Jimmy Hoffa
In 1950, Senator Estes Kefauver (center) held a series of high-profile televised hearings. The hearings were designed to examine the impact of organized crime in the United States.

FIGURE 7.37
RFK Jimmy Hoffa at a Congressional Investigation, September 17, 1958

- The People vs. Jimmy Hoffa (Part1)
- The People vs. Jimmy Hoffa, Part2
Kennedy's New Frontier

They called it Camelot. Like King Arthur and Guinevere, a dynamic young leader and his beautiful bride led the nation. The White House was their home, America their kingdom. They were John F. and Jacqueline Kennedy.

After squeaking by Richard Nixon in the election of 1960, John F. Kennedy set forth new challenges for the United States. In his inauguration speech, he challenged his fellow Americans to "Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country."

Proclaiming that the "torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans," Kennedy, young and good-looking, boldly and proudly assumed office with a bravado. Many Americans responded to his call by joining the newly formed Peace Corps or volunteering in America to work toward social justice. The nation was united, positive, and forward-looking. No frontier was too distant.

The newest frontier was space. In 1957, the Soviet Union shocked Americans by launching Sputnik, the first satellite to be placed in orbit. Congress responded by creating the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) under President Eisenhower. When Kennedy took office, the United Space fell farther behind. The Soviets had already placed a dog in space ("mutnik," to the press), and in Kennedy’s first year, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human being to orbit the earth.

Kennedy challenged the American people and government to put a man on the moon by the end of the decade. Congress responded enthusiastically by appropriating billions of dollars for the effort. During Kennedy’s administration Alan Shepard became the first American to enter space, and John Glenn became the first American to orbit the earth. In 1969, many thought of President Kennedy’s challenge when Neil Armstrong became the first human being to set foot on the moon.
Domestically, Kennedy continued in the tradition of liberal Democrats Roosevelt and Truman to some extent. He signed legislation raising the minimum wage and increasing Social Security benefits. He raised money for research into mental illness and allocated funds to develop impoverished rural areas. He showed approval for the civil rights movement by supporting James Meredith’s attempt to enroll at the University of Mississippi and by ordering his Attorney General, brother Robert Kennedy, to protect the freedom riders in the South.

However, most of Kennedy’s more revolutionary proposals languished in the conservative Congress. He wished to protect millions of acres of wilderness lands from developments, but the Congress refused. His efforts to provide federal funds to elementary and secondary schools were denied. His Medicare plan to provide health insurance for the nation’s elderly failed to achieve the necessary support. Congress was dominated by a coalition of Republicans and conservative Southern Democrats who refused to expand the New Deal any further.

In his abbreviated Presidency, Kennedy failed to accomplish all he wanted domestically. But the ideas and proposals he supported survived his assassination. Medicare, federal support for education, and wilderness protection all became part of Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society.

Lee Harvey Oswald assassinated Kennedy in November, 1963. His death provided a popular mandate for these important programs. In the tumultuous years that followed, many yearned for the happy Kennedy years — a return to Camelot.
JFK AND THE PEACE CORP

On October 14, 1960, at 2 a.m., Senator John F. Kennedy spoke to a crowd of 10,000 cheering students at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor during a presidential campaign speech. In his improvised speech, Kennedy asked, "How many of you, who are going to be doctors, are willing to spend your days in Ghana? Technicians or engineers, how many of you are willing to work in the Foreign Service and spend your lives traveling around the world?" His young audience responded to this speech with a petition signed by 1,000 students willing to serve abroad. Senator Kennedy’s challenge to these students—to live and work in developing countries around the world; to dedicate themselves to the cause of peace and development—inspired the beginning of the Peace Corps.

Just two weeks later, in his November 2, 1960, speech at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, Kennedy proposed "a peace corps of talented men and women" who would dedicate themselves to the progress and peace of developing countries. Encouraged by more than 25,000 letters responding to his call, Kennedy took immediate action as president to make the campaign promise a reality.

THE COLD WAR AND THE PEACE CORPS

The Peace Corps program was an outgrowth of the Cold War. President Kennedy pointed out that the Soviet Union "had hundreds of men and women, scientists, physicists, teachers, engineers, doctors, and nurses . . . prepared to spend their lives abroad in the service of world communism." The United States had no such program, and Kennedy wanted to involve Americans more actively in the cause of global democracy, peace, development, and freedom.

A few days after he took office, Kennedy asked his brother-in-law, R. Sargent Shriver, to direct a Peace Corps Task Force. Shriver was known for his ability to identify and motivate creative, visionary leaders, and he led the group to quickly shape the organization. After a month of intense dialogue and debate among task force members, Shriver outlined seven steps to forming the Peace Corps in a memorandum to Kennedy in February 1961.

The Peace Corps was established by executive order on March 1, 1961, and a reluctant Shriver accepted the president’s request to officially lead the organization. Shriver recruited and energized a talented staff to implement the task force’s recommendations. On his first trip abroad as director, he received invitations from leaders in India, Ghana, and Burma to place Peace Corps volunteers in their countries.
Tanganyika and Ghana were the first countries to participate in the program. President Kennedy welcomed the inaugural group of volunteers at the White House on August 28, 1961, to give them a personal farewell before their departure to Africa. Congress approved the Peace Corps as a permanent federal agency within the State Department, and Kennedy signed the legislation on September 22, 1961. In 1981, the Peace Corps was made an independent agency.

In the 1960s, the Peace Corps was very popular with recent college graduates. But in the 1970s, the Vietnam War and Watergate eroded many Americans’ faith in their government. Interest in the Peace Corps began to decline and government funding was cut. In the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan tried to broaden the Peace Corps’ traditional concern with education and agriculture to include more current fields such as computer literacy and business-related education. For the first time, a rising number of conservative and Republican volunteers joined the largely progressive Peace Corps contingent overseas. Peace Corps membership and funding increased after the opening of Eastern Europe in 1990.

THE PEACE CORPS PROGRAM

To participate in the Peace Corps program, countries must meet certain requirements:

- A country must invite the Peace Corps
- Based on its limited budget, the Peace Corps decides which countries it can be active in and prioritizes each country’s needs
- Peace Corps volunteers must be safe

Once these requirements are met, the Peace Corps begins working with the foreign government. Countries seeking help from the Peace Corps propose areas that could benefit from the skills of volunteers. The Peace Corps then matches assignments within foreign nations to applicants with the appropriate skills.

Life as a Peace Corps volunteer is not easy and volunteers face many challenges, from language barriers to poor living conditions. There is no salary. Volunteers receive a monthly stipend for room, board, and few essen-
Kennedy’s New Frontier

Volunteers—“enough to be at a level sufficient only to maintain health and basic needs. Men and women will be expected to work and live alongside the nationals of the country in which they are stationed—doing the same work, eating the same food, talking the same language.”

Culturally, volunteers work to build trust within their communities and share their skills to solve challenges that face developing communities. Volunteers work in many different fields, including education, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS training, agriculture, business, community development, forestry, and environmental protection. Since the inception of the Peace Corps, some 200,000 volunteers have served in 139 countries. They have learned more than 200 languages and dialects.

THE PEACE CORPS TODAY

The Peace Corps is always adapting to the times and to an ever-changing world, but has never wavered from its three original goals:

- To help the people of interested countries and areas in meeting their needs for trained workers
- To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served
- To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

The program continues to reflect the evolving priorities of the U.S. government and changes in the population of the United States. Today, on average, volunteers are older than their predecessors and more experienced in specialized fields.

After almost five decades of service, the Peace Corps is more vital than ever and still growing. From John F. Kennedy’s inspiration came an agency devoted to world peace and friendship and volunteers who continue to help individuals build a better life for themselves, their children, their community, and their country.

MEDIA

Click image to the left or use the URL below.

URL: http://www.ck12.org/flx/render/embeddedobject/136327

- Peace Corps
- Kennedy Establishes the Peace Corps
- Civil Rights Movement - John F. Kennedy Library and Museum
- John F. Kennedy on Civil Rights
- John F. Kennedy on Education
7.8 The Courts and Civil Rights

COURT CASES IN THE EVOLUTION OF CIVIL RIGHTS

- Key Supreme Court Cases for Civil Rights
- The Supreme Court: Expanding Civil Rights: Landmark Cases | PBS

BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

During the first half of the 20th century, the United States existed as two nations in one.

The Supreme Court ruling in Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) decreed that the legislation of two separate societies — one black and one white — was permitted as long as the two were equal.

States across the North and South passed laws creating schools and public facilities for each race. These regulations, known as Jim Crow laws, reestablished white authority after it had diminished during the Reconstruction era. Across the land, blacks and whites dined at separate restaurants, bathed in separate swimming pools, and drank from separate water fountains.

The United States had established an American brand of apartheid.
In the aftermath of World War II, America sought to demonstrate to the world the merit of free democracies over communist dictatorships. But its segregation system exposed fundamental hypocrisy. Change began brewing in the late 1940s. President Harry Truman ordered the end of segregation in the armed services, and Jackie Robinson became the first African American to play Major League Baseball. But the wall built by Jim Crow legislation seemed insurmountable.

The first major battleground was in the schools. It was very clear by mid-century that southern states had expertly enacted separate educational systems. These schools, however, were never equal. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), led by attorney Thurgood Marshall, sued public schools across the South, insisting that the "separate but equal" clause had been violated.

In no state where distinct racial education laws existed was there equality in public spending. Teachers in white schools were paid better wages, school buildings for white students were maintained more carefully, and funds for educational materials flowed more liberally into white schools. States normally spent 10 to 20 times on the education of white students as they spent on African American students. The Supreme Court finally decided to rule on this subject in 1954 in the landmark Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka case.

The verdict was unanimous against segregation. "Separate facilities are inherently unequal," read Chief Justice Earl Warren’s opinion. Warren worked tirelessly to achieve a 9-0 ruling. He feared any dissent might provide a legal argument for the forces against integration. The United States Supreme Court sent a clear message: schools had to integrate.

The North and the border states quickly complied with the ruling, but the Brown decision fell on deaf ears in the South. The Court had stopped short of insisting on immediate integration, instead asking local governments to proceed "with all deliberate speed" in complying.

Ten years after Brown, fewer than ten percent of Southern public schools had integrated. Some areas achieved a zero percent compliance rate. The ruling did not address separate restrooms, bus seats, or hotel rooms, so Jim Crow laws remained intact. But cautious first steps toward an equal society had been taken.

It would take a decade of protest, legislation, and bloodshed before America neared a truer equality.

• Lesson/Activity Brown v. Board of Education Re-Enactment
FIGURE 7.50
NAACP lawyers congratulate each other on the decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954). Attorney Thurgood Marshall, center, was later named the first African American justice of the Supreme Court.

- Brown v. Board of Education
- History of Brown v. Board of Education
- Documents Related to Brown v. Board of Education
- Brown v. Board of Education
- The Supreme Court . Expanding Civil Rights . Landmark Cases

REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA v. BAKKE

- Regents of University of California Bakke
- The Supreme Court . Expanding Civil Rights . Landmark Cases
- Regents of the University of California v. Bakke
- Regents of the U. of California v. Bakke
- Civil Rights: Demanding Equality
7.9 Important Advocates of Civil Rights

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

As the unquestioned leader of the peaceful Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was at the same time one of the most beloved and one of the most hated men of his time. From his involvement in the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955 until his untimely death in 1968, King’s message of change through peaceful means added to the movement’s numbers and gave it its moral strength. The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. is embodied in these two simple words: equality and nonviolence.

King was raised in an activist family. His father was deeply influenced by Marcus Garvey’s Back to Africa Movement in the 1920s. His mother was the daughter of one of Atlanta’s most influential African American ministers. As a student, King excelled. He easily moved through grade levels and entered Morehouse College, his father’s alma mater, at the age of fifteen. Next, he attended Crozer Theological Seminary, where he received a Bachelor of Divinity degree. While he was pursuing his doctorate at Boston University, he met and married Coretta Scott. After receiving his Ph.D. in 1955, King accepted an appointment to the Dexter Street Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

After his organization of the bus boycott, King formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which dedicated itself to the advancement of rights for African Americans. In April 1963, King organized a protest in...
Birmingham, Alabama, a city King called "the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States." Since the end of World War II, there had been 60 unsolved bombings of African American churches and homes. Boycotts, sit-ins and marches were conducted. When Bull Connor, head of the Birmingham police department, used fire hoses and dogs on the demonstrators, millions saw the images on television. King was arrested. But support came from around the nation and the world for King and his family. Later in 1963, he delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech to thousands in Washington, D.C.

![FIGURE 7.53](http://www.ck12.org/flx/render/embeddedobject/136343)

In March 1965, Dr. King led protestors on a 50-mile, voting-rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. It took three attempts for the protestors to complete the march, battling tear gas, cattle prods, and police batons, but the national attention drawn by their efforts ultimately led to the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

After the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, King turned his efforts to registering African American voters in the South. In 1965, he led a march in Selma, Alabama, to increase the percentage of African American voters in Alabama. Again, King was arrested. Again, the marchers faced attacks by the police. Tear gas, cattle prods, and billy clubs fell on the peaceful demonstrators. Public opinion weighed predominantly on the side of King and the protesters. Finally, President Johnson ordered the National Guard to protect the demonstrators from attack, and King was able to complete the long march from Selma to the state capital of Montgomery. The action in Selma led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Early in the morning of April 4, 1968, King was shot by James Earl Ray. Spontaneous violence spread through urban areas as mourners unleashed their rage at the loss of their leader. Rioting burst forth in many American cities.

**RFK on MLK**

But the world never forgot his contributions. Time magazine had named him "Man of the Year" in 1963. In 1964, he won the Nobel Peace Prize and was described as "the first person in the Western world to have shown us that a struggle can be waged without violence." In 1977, he was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest award a civilian American can earn. In the 1980s, his birthday became a national holiday, creating an annual opportunity for Americans to reflect on the two values he dedicated his life to advancing: equality and nonviolence.

**MALCOLM X**

When Malcolm Little was growing up in Lansing, Michigan, he developed a mistrust for white Americans. Ku Klux Klan terrorists burned his house, and his father was later murdered — an act young Malcolm attributed to local whites. After moving to Harlem, Malcolm turned to crime. Soon he was arrested and sent to jail.
The prison experience was eye-opening for the young man, and he soon made some decisions that altered the course of his life. He began to read and educate himself. Influenced by other inmates, he converted to Islam. Upon his release, he was a changed man with a new identity. Believing his true lineage to be lost when his ancestors were forced into slavery, he took the last name of a variable: X.

Wallace Fard founded the Nation of Islam in the 1930s. Christianity was the white man’s religion, declared Fard. It was forced on African Americans during the slave experience. Islam was closer to African roots and identity. Members of the Nation of Islam read the Koran, worship Allah as their God, and accept Mohammed as their chief prophet. Mixed with the religious tenets of Islam were black pride and black nationalism. The followers of Fard became known as Black Muslims.

When Fard mysteriously disappeared, Elijah Muhammad became the leader of the movement. The Nation of Islam attracted many followers, especially in prisons, where lost African Americans most looked for guidance. They preached adherence to a strict moral code and reliance on other African Americans. Integration was not a goal. Rather, the Nation of Islam wanted blacks to set up their own schools, churches, and support networks. When Malcolm X made his personal conversion, Elijah Muhammad soon recognized his talents and made him a leading spokesperson for the Black Muslims.
Martin and Malcolm

Although their philosophies may have differed radically, Malcolm X believed that he and Martin Luther King Jr. were working toward the same goal and that given the state of race relations in the 1960s, both would most likely meet a fatal end. This excerpt is taken from The Autobiography of Malcolm X, which was cowritten with famed Roots author Alex Haley.

The goal has always been the same, with the approaches to it as different as mine and Dr. Martin Luther King’s non-violent marching, that dramatizes the brutality and the evil of the white man against defenseless blacks. And in the racial climate of this country today, it is anybody’s guess which of the "extremes" in approach to the black man’s problems might personally meet a fatal catastrophe first — "non-violent" Dr. King, or so-called "violent" me.

As Martin Luther King preached his gospel of peaceful change and integration in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Malcolm X delivered a different message: whites were not to be trusted. He called on African Americans to be proud of their heritage and to set up strong communities without the help of white Americans. He promoted the establishment of a separate state for African Americans in which they could rely on themselves to provide solutions to their own problems. Violence was not the only answer, but violence was justified in self-defense. Blacks should achieve what was rightfully theirs "by any means necessary."

Malcolm X electrified urban audiences with his eloquent prose and inspirational style. In 1963, he split with the Nation of Islam; in 1964, he made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Later that year, he showed signs of softening his stand on violence and even met with Martin Luther King Jr. to exchange remarks. What direction he might have ultimately taken is lost to a history that can never be written. As Malcolm X led a mass rally in Harlem on February 21, 1965, rival Black Muslims gunned him down. Although his life was ended, the ideas he preached lived on in the Black Power Movement.

Thurgood Marshall

- Thurgood Marshall
- The Supreme Court - Expanding Civil Rights - Biographies
- Thurgood Marshall - Black History - HISTORY.com
- Thurgood Marshall - OYEZ

Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

On a cold December evening in 1955, ROSA PARKS quietly incited a revolution — by just sitting down. She was tired after spending the day at work as a department store seamstress. She stepped onto the bus for the ride home and sat in the fifth row — the first row of the "COLORED SECTION."
In Montgomery, Alabama, when a bus became full, the seats nearer the front were given to white passengers. Montgomery bus driver JAMES BLAKE ordered Parks and three other African Americans seated nearby to move ("Move y’all, I want those two seats,") to the back of the bus.

Three riders complied; Parks did not.

**TABLE 7.1:** The following excerpt of what happened next is from Douglas Brinkley's 2000 Rosa Park's biography.

> "Are you going to stand up?" the driver demanded. Rosa Parks looked straight at him and said: "No." Flustered, and not quite sure what to do, Blake retorted, "Well, I’m going to have you arrested." And Parks, still sitting next to the window, replied softly, "You may do that."

After Parks refused to move, she was arrested and fined $10. The chain of events triggered by her arrest changed the United States.

**KING, ABERNATHY, BOYCOTT, AND THE SCLC**

In 1955, a little-known minister named MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. led the DEXTER AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH in Montgomery.

Born and educated in Atlanta, King studied the writings and practices of Henry David Thoreau and MOHANDAS GANDHI. Their teaching advocated civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance to social injustice.
Don’t Ride the Bus

In 1955, the Women’s Political Council issued a leaflet calling for a boycott of Montgomery buses. Don’t ride the bus to work, to town, to school, or any place Monday, December 5. Another Negro Woman has been arrested and put in jail because she refused to give up her bus seat. Don’t ride the buses to work to town, to school, or any where on Monday. If you work, take a cab, or share a ride, or walk. Come to a mass meeting, Monday at 7:00 P.M. at the Holt Street Baptist Church for further instruction.

Montgomery officials stopped at nothing in attempting to sabotage the boycott. King and Abernathy were arrested. Violence began during the action and continued after its conclusion. Four churches — as well as the homes of King and Abernathy — were bombed. But the boycott continued.

King and Abernathy’s organization, the MONTGOMERY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION (MIA), had hoped for a 50 percent support rate among African Americans. To their surprise and delight, 99 percent of the city’s African Americans refused to ride the buses. People walked to work or rode their bikes, and carpools were established to help the elderly. The bus company suffered thousands of dollars in lost revenue.

Finally, on November 23, 1956, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the MIA. SEGREGATED BUSING was declared unconstitutional. City officials reluctantly agreed to comply with the Court Ruling. The black community of Montgomery had held firm in their resolve.

The Montgomery bus boycott triggered a firestorm in the South. Across the region, blacks resisted "moving to the back of the bus." Similar actions flared up in other cities. The boycott put Martin Luther King Jr. in the national spotlight. He became the acknowledged leader of the nascent CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT.

With Ralph Abernathy, King formed the SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (SCLC). This organization was dedicated to fighting Jim Crow segregation. African Americans boldly declared to the rest of the country that their movement would be peaceful, organized, and determined. To modern eyes, getting a seat on a bus may not seem like a great feat. But in 1955, sitting down marked the first step in a revolution.

- Rosa Parks: Mother of the Civil Rights Movement
- Rosa Parks - Black History - HISTORY.com
FIGURE 7.61
During the October 16, 1968 awards ceremony at the Mexico City Olympics, U.S. gold and bronze medallists John Carlos and Tommie Smith raise their arms and fists in a Black Power salute.

STOKELY CARMICHAEL AND THE BLACK POWER MOVEMENT

On June 5, 1966, James Meredith was shot in an ambush as he attempted to complete a peaceful march from Memphis, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi. Meredith had already made national headlines in 1962 by becoming the first African American to enroll at the University of Mississippi.

Civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr., Floyd McKissick of CORE, and Stokely Carmichael of SNCC rushed to Meredith’s hospital bed. They determined that his march must be completed. As Carmichael and McKissick walked through Mississippi, they observed that little had changed despite federal legislation. Local townspeople harassed the marchers while the police turned a blind eye or arrested the activists as troublemakers.

FIGURE 7.62
The “Black Panther Party for Self Defense” was formed to protect Black individuals and neighborhoods from police brutality. This 1966 photo features the six original members of the Black Panthers.

At a mass rally, Carmichael uttered the simple statement: "What we need is black power." Crowds chanted the phrase as a slogan, and a movement began to flower.

Carmichael and McKissick were heavily influenced by the words of Malcolm X, and rejected integration as a short-term goal. Carmichael felt that blacks needed to feel a sense of racial pride and self-respect before any meaningful gains could be achieved. He encouraged the strengthening of African American communities without the help of whites.

Chapters of SNCC and CORE — both integrated organizations — began to reject white membership as Carmichael abandoned peaceful resistance. Martin Luther King Jr. and the NAACP denounced black power as the proper forward path. But black power was a powerful message in the streets of urban America, where resentment boiled and tempers flared.

Soon, African American students began to celebrate African American culture boldly and publicly. Colleges teemed with young blacks wearing traditional African colors and clothes. Soul singer James Brown had his audience chanting "Say it loud, I’m black and I’m proud." Hairstyles unique to African Americans became popular and
youths proclaimed, "Black is beautiful!"

That same year, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale took Carmichael’s advice one step further. They formed the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California. Openly brandishing weapons, the Panthers decided to take control of their own neighborhoods to aid their communities and to resist police brutality. Soon the Panthers spread across the nation. The Black Panther Party borrowed many tenets from socialist movements, including Mao Zedong’s famous creed "Political power comes through the barrel of a gun." The Panthers and the police exchanged gunshots on American streets as white Americans viewed the growing militancy with increasing alarm.

PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

• Civil Rights Movement
• John F. Kennedy on Civil Rights
7.9. Important Advocates of Civil Rights

FIGURE 7.64
JFK meets with unhappy NAACP leaders
- July 12, 1961

ROBERT KENNEDY

- Robert Kennedy on civil rights, 1963
- Kennedy, Robert Francis (1925-1968)
- Robert F. Kennedy - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com
- Robert F. Kennedy

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON

- Lyndon Johnson on Civil Rights

JAMES MEREDITH

- The Integration of Ole Miss - Black History - HISTORY.com
- Integrating Ole Miss
- Meredith, James Howard (1933- )

JIM LAWSON

- Lawson, James M. (1928- )
- "A Totally Moral Man": The Life of Nonviolent Organizer Rev. James ...
FIGURE 7.65
Robert Kennedy Speaks to Civil Rights Demonstrators at Justice Department
7.9. Important Advocates of Civil Rights

FIGURE 7.66
President Lyndon Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. Martin Luther King, Jr. is among those looking on.

FIGURE 7.67
James Meredith
FIGURE 7.68
James Lawson and Martin Luther King during the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike.
7.10 Opponents of Civil Rights

STROM THURMOND

- Strom Thurmond
- The Southern Manifesto
- Strom Thurmond was the principal instigator behind

FIGURE 7.69
Senator Strom Thurmond after his Filibuster, 8/29/57

GEORGE WALLACE

- George Wallace Stood in a Doorway at the University of Alabama 50
- George Wallace Opposes Integration Video - Civil Rights Movement
- Speech by George C. Wallace The Civil Rights Movement fraud

FIGURE 7.70
Alabama Governor George C. Wallace

ORVAL FAUBUS

- Orval Faubus Interview for Eyes on the Prize - Washington . . .
- Faubus, Orval Eugene, 1910-1994
- Orval Faubus Blocks Little Rock High School Integration Video . . .
- Civil Rights: The Little Rock School Integration Crisis
FIGURE 7.71
Governor Faubus meets President Eisenhower in D.C., 9/14

FIGURE 7.72
Bull Connor

FIGURE 7.73
City Commissioner T. Eugene "Bull" Connor used police dogs and fire hoses against non-violent black activists during protests, infuriating the nation and resulting in pressures on the Federal government to resolve the situation.

BULL CONNOR
- Segregation at All Costs: Bull Connor and the Civil Rights Movement
- Connor, Theophilus Eugene “Bull” (1897-1973)

KKK
- The Civil Rights-era Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi
- Ku Klux Klan in the Sixties
7.10. Opponents of Civil Rights

FIGURE 7.74
Child Protester in KKK garb, 1956
7.11 Significant Events of the Civil Rights Movement

COLUMBIA RACE RIOTS

- Columbia Race Riots
- Tennessee riot of 1946 part of hidden civil rights history
- Race riots in Columbia, TN
- Columbia

TENT CITIES OF HAYWOOD AND FAYETTE COUNTIES

- Tent Cities of Fayette and Haywood Counties
7.11. Significant Events of the Civil Rights Movement

- Fayette County, TN, African Americans form tent city for US voting …
- Tent City Timeline: The Civil Rights Struggle in Fayette County
- Tent City
- Tent City
- Power of the Vote

INFLUENCE OF THE HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL

![Highlander Folk School Historic Marker](image)

- Highlander Folk School
- Highlander Folk School
- Highlander Folk School 25th Anniversary
- Highlander Folk School (Monteagle, TN)
- Highland Folk School is a Civil Rights Landmark

INTEGRATION OF CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL IN LITTLE ROCK, AR AND CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL IN CLINTON, TN

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL - LITTLE ROCK, AR

![LIFE Magazine Cover](image)

President Eisenhower sent the 101st Airborne to Little Rock, Arkansas, to ensure the integration of Central High School in 1957.

Three years after the Supreme Court declared race-based segregation illegal, a military showdown took place in LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS. On September 3, 1957, nine black students attempted to attend the all-white Central High School.
Under the pretext of maintaining order, Arkansas Governor ORVAL FAUBUS mobilized the ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD to prevent the students, known as the LITTLE ROCK NINE, from entering the school. After a federal judge declared the action illegal, Faubus removed the troops. When the students tried to enter again on September 24, they were taken into the school through a back door. Word of this spread throughout the community, and a thousand irate citizens stormed the school grounds. The police desperately tried to keep the angry crowd under control as concerned onlookers whisked the students to safety.

The nation watched all of this on television. President Eisenhower was compelled to act.

Eisenhower was not a strong proponent of civil rights. He feared that the Brown decision could lead to an impasse between the federal government and the states. Now that very stalemate had come. The rest of the country seemed to side with the black students, and the Arkansas state government was defying a federal decree. The situation hearkened back to the dangerous federal-state conflicts of the 19th century that followed the end of the Civil War.

On September 25, Eisenhower ordered the troops of the 101st Airborne Division into Little Rock, marking the first time United States troops were dispatched to the South since Reconstruction. He federalized the Arkansas National Guard in order to remove the soldiers from Faubus’s control. For the next few months, the African American students attended school under armed supervision.

Can You Meet the Challenge?

This editorial by JANE EMERY appeared in Central High student newspaper, The Tiger, on September 19, 1957. You are being watched! Today the world is watching you, the students of Central High. They want to know what your reactions, behavior, and impulses will be concerning a matter now before us. After all, as we see it, it settles now to a matter of interpretation of law and order.

Will you be stubborn, obstinate, or refuse to listen to both sides of the question? Will your knowledge of science help you determine your action or will you let customs, superstition, or tradition determine the decision for you? This is the chance that the youth of America has been waiting for. Through an open mind, broad outlook, wise thinking, and a careful choice you can prove that America’s youth has not "gone to the dogs" that their moral, spiritual, and educational standards are not being lowered.

This is the opportunity for you as citizens of Arkansas and students of Little Rock Central High to show the world that Arkansas is a progressive thriving state of wide-awake alert people. It is a state that is rapidly growing and improving its social, health, and educational facilities. That it is a state with friendly, happy, and conscientious citizens who love and cherish their freedom.

It has been said that life is just a chain of problems. If this is true, then this experience in making up your own mind and determining right from wrong will be of great value to you in life.

The challenge is yours, as future adults of America, to prove your maturity, intelligence, and ability to make decisions by how you react, behave, and conduct yourself in this controversial question. What is your answer to this challenge?
The following year, Little Rock officials closed the schools to prevent integration. But in 1959, the schools were open again. Both black and white children were in attendance.

The tide was slowly turning in favor of those advocating civil rights for African Americans. An astonished America watched footage of brutish, white southerners mercilessly harassing clean-cut, respectful African American children trying to get an education. Television swayed public opinion toward integration.

In 1959, Congress passed the CIVIL RIGHTS ACT, the first such measure since Reconstruction. The law created a permanent civil rights commission to assist black suffrage. The measure had little teeth and proved ineffective, but it paved the way for more powerful legislation in the years to come. Buses and schools had come under attack. Next on the menu: a luncheonette counter.

- Little Rock School Desegregation (1957)
- Integration of Central High School - Black History - HISTORY.com

CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL - CLINTON, TN

FIGURE 7.80
The Twelve Clinton students were invited to a workshop at Highland Center and met with Rosa Parks in December 1956.

MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT

FIGURE 7.81
The National City Lines bus, No. 2857, on which Rosa Parks was riding before she was arrested, is now a museum exhibit at the Henry Ford Museum.

Rosa Parks would later say of the day that changed her life: “The only tired I was was tired of giving in.” A secondary-school graduate at a time when diplomas were hard to come by for blacks in the South, Parks was active in her local NAACP, a registered voter (another privilege held by few southern blacks), and a respected figure in Montgomery, Alabama. In the summer of 1955, she attended an interracial leadership conference at the Highlander Folk School, a Tennessee institution that trained labor organizers and desegregation advocates. Parks thus knew of efforts to improve the lot of African Americans and that she was well-suited to provide a test case should the occasion arise.
On December 1, 1955, Parks was employed as a seamstress at a local department store. When she rode home from work that afternoon, she sat in the first row of the “colored section” of seats between the “white” and “black” rows. When the white seats filled, the driver ordered Parks to give up her seat when another white person boarded the bus. Parks refused. She was arrested, jailed, and ultimately fined $10, plus $4 in court costs. Parks was 42 years old; she had crossed the line into direct political action.

An outraged black community formed the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) to organize a boycott of the city bus system. Partly to forestall rivalries among local community leaders, citizens turned to a recent arrival to Montgomery, the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. The newly-installed pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, King was just 26 years old but he had been born to leadership: His father, the Reverend Martin Luther King Sr., headed the influential Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, was active in the Georgia chapter of the NAACP, and had since the 1920s refused to ride Atlanta’s segregated bus system.

In his first speech to MIA, the younger King told the group:

*We have no alternative but to protest. For many years we have shown an amazing patience. We have sometimes given our white brothers the feeling that we liked the way we were being treated. But we come here tonight to be saved from that patience that makes us patient with anything less than freedom and justice.*

Under King’s leadership, boycotters organized carpools, while black taxi drivers charged boycotters the same fare — 10 cents — they would have paid on the bus. By auto, by horse-and-buggy, and even simply by walking, direct, nonviolent political action forced the city to pay a heavy economic price for its segregationist ways.

It also made a national figure of King, whose powerful presence and unsurpassed oratorical skills drew publicity for the movement and attracted support from sympathetic whites, especially those in the North. King,

Even after his house was attacked and King himself, along with more than 100 boycotters, was arrested for “hindering a bus,” his continued grace and adherence to nonviolent tactics earned respect for the movement and discredited the segregationists of Montgomery. When an explosion shook King’s house with his wife and baby daughter inside, it briefly appeared that a riot would ensue. But King calmed the crowd:

*We want to love our enemies — be good to them. This is what we must live by, we must meet hate with love. We must love our white brothers no matter what they do to us.*

A white Montgomery policeman later told a journalist: “I’ll be honest with you, I was terrified. I owe my life to that… preacher, and so do all the other white people who were there.”

In the end, the desegregation of the Montgomery bus system required not only Rosa Parks’s personal initiative and bravery and King’s political leadership, but also an NAACP-style legal effort. As the boycotters braved segregationist opposition, desegregationist attorneys cited the precedent of Brown v. Board of Education in their court challenge to the Montgomery bus ordinance. In November 1956, the Supreme Court of the United States rejected the city’s final appeal, and the segregation of Montgomery buses ended. Thus fortified, the civil rights movement moved on to new battles.

**BIRMINGHAM BOMBING, 1963**
7.11. Significant Events of the Civil Rights Movement

FIGURE 7.82
The original Sixteenth Street Baptist Church.

FIGURE 7.83
16th Street Baptist Church after the bombing, Birmingham, AL

MEDIA
Click image to the left or use the URL below.
URL: http://www.ck12.org/flx/render/embeddedobject/136359

MEDIA
Click image to the left or use the URL below.
URL: http://www.ck12.org/flx/render/embeddedobject/136357

- Birmingham Church Bombing - Black History - HISTORY.com
- About the 1963 Birmingham Bombing
MARCH ON WASHINGTON

On August 28, 1963, more than 250,000 demonstrators descended upon the nation’s capital to participate in the “March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.” Not only was it the largest demonstration for human rights in United States history, but it also occasioned a rare display of unity among the various civil rights organizations. The event began with a rally at the Washington Monument featuring several celebrities and musicians. Participants then marched the mile-long National Mall to the Memorial. The three-hour long program at the Lincoln Memorial included speeches from prominent civil rights and religious leaders. The day ended with a meeting between the march leaders and President John F. Kennedy at the White House.

The day’s highlight was Martin Luther King’s “I have a Dream” speech, which has been called the greatest speech in American history. You can watch the speech below.

**MEDIA**

Click image to the left or use the URL below.

**MEDIA**

Click image to the left or use the URL below.

THE SIT-IN MOVEMENT AND FREEDOM RIDES

By 1960, the Civil Rights Movement had gained strong momentum. The nonviolent measures employed by Martin Luther King Jr. helped African American activists win supporters across the country and throughout the world.

On February 1, 1960, a new tactic was added to the peaceful activists’ strategy. Four African American college students walked up to a whites-only lunch counter at the local Woolworth’s store in Greensboro, North Carolina, and asked for coffee. When service was refused, the students sat patiently. Despite threats and intimidation, the students sat quietly and waited to be served.

The civil rights sit-in was born. No one participated in a sit-in of this sort without seriousness of purpose. The instructions were simple: sit quietly and wait to be served. Often the participants would be jeered and threatened.
Students from across the country came together to form the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and organize sit-ins at counters throughout the South. This front page is from the North Carolina AT University student newspaper.

FIGURE 7.85
By sitting in protest at an all-white lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, four college students sparked national interest in the push for civil rights.

Sit-in organizers believed that if the violence were only on the part of the white community, the world would see the righteousness of their cause. Before the end of the school year, over 1500 black demonstrators were arrested. But their sacrifice brought results. Slowly, but surely, restaurants throughout the South began to abandon their policies of segregation.

In April 1960, Martin Luther King Jr. sponsored a conference to discuss strategy. Students from the North and the South came together and formed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Early leaders included Stokely Carmichael and Fannie Lou Hamer. The Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) was a northern group of students led by James Farmer, which also endorsed direct action. These groups became the grassroots organizers of future sit-ins at lunch counters, wade-ins at segregated swimming pools, and pray-ins at white-only churches.

Bolstered by the success of direct action, CORE activists planned the first freedom ride in 1961. To challenge laws mandating segregated interstate transportation, busloads of integrated black and white students rode through the South. The first freedom riders left Washington, D.C., in May 1961 en route to New Orleans. Several participants were arrested in bus stations. When the buses reached Anniston, Alabama, an angry mob slashed the tires on one bus and set it aflame. The riders on the other bus were violently attacked, and the freedom riders had to complete their journey by plane.

New Attorney General Robert Kennedy ordered federal marshals to protect future freedom rides. Bowing to political and public pressure, the Interstate Commerce Commission soon banned segregation on interstate travel. Progress
FIGURE 7.86

To challenge laws that kept interstate bus trips segregated, black and white students organized freedom rides through the South. The first such ride was interrupted when an angry mob attacked riders and destroyed their bus during a stop in Alabama.

was slow indeed, but the wall between the races was gradually being eroded.

- **Sit-ins**

**The Freedom Riders**

Some of the young Nashville sit-in leaders joined up with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which in 1961 helped to launch the “Freedom Rides.” Back in 1946, Thurgood Marshall’s NAACP lawyers had obtained a **Supreme Court ruling** that barred segregation in interstate bus travel. (Under the U.S. federal system of government, it is easier for the national government to regulate commerce that crosses state lines.) In the 1960s, it was widely understood that any African American who exercised his or her constitutional right to sit at the front of an interstate bus or use the previously whites-only facilities at a southern bus terminal would meet with a violent response. Understanding this, an interracial group of 13, including Congress On Racial Equality (CORE), National Director James Farmer, departed Washington, D.C., by bus. Farmer and his companions planned to make several stops en route to New Orleans. “If there is arrest, we will accept that arrest,” Farmer said. “And if there is violence, we are willing to receive that violence without responding in kind.”

Farmer was right to anticipate violence. Perhaps the worst of it occurred near Anniston, Alabama. Departing Atlanta, the Freedom Riders had split into two groups, one riding in a Greyhound bus, the other in a Trailways bus. When the Greyhound bus reached Anniston, the sidewalks, unusually, were lined with people. The reason soon became clear. When the bus reached the station parking lot, a mob set upon it, using rocks and brass knuckles to shatter some of the bus windows. Two white highway patrolmen in the bus, assigned to spy on the Riders, sealed the door and prevented the Ku Klux Klan-led mob from entering.

When the local police finally arrived, they bantered with the crowd, made no arrests, and escorted the bus to the city limits. The mob, by some accounts now about 200 strong, followed close behind in cars and pickup trucks. About 10 kilometers outside Anniston, flat tires brought the bus to a halt. A crowd of white men attempted to board the bus, and one threw a fire bomb through a bus window. As the historian Raymond Arsenault writes: “The Freedom Riders had been all but doomed until an exploding fuel tank convinced the mob that the whole bus was about to explode.”

The bus was consumed by the blaze; the fleeing Freedom Riders, reported the Associated Press, “took a brief but bloody beating.” The second group of Freedom Riders shared their Trailways bus with a group of Klansmen who boarded at Atlanta. When the black Freedom Riders refused to sit at the back of the bus, more beatings ensued. The white Freedom Riders, among them 61-year-old educator Walter Bergman, were attacked with particular savagery. All of the Freedom Riders held to their Ghandian training; none fought back. When the bus at last arrived in Birmingham, matters only grew worse. CBS News commentator Howard K. Smith offered an eyewitness account: “When the bus arrived, the toughs grabbed the passengers into alleys and corridors, pounding them with pipes, with key rings, and with fists.” Inside the segregated bus station, the Freedom Riders hesitated momentarily, then entered the whites-only waiting room. They, too, were beaten, some unconscious, while Birmingham’s police chief, Eugene “Bull” Connor, refused to restrain the Klansmen and their supporters.

Still, the Riders were determined to continue. In Washington, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy asked Alabama...
7.11. Significant Events of the Civil Rights Movement

FIGURE 7.87
James Farmer was one of the founders of the Congress on Racial Equality.

Governor John Patterson to guarantee safe passage through his state. Patterson declined: “The citizens of the state are so enraged I cannot guarantee protection for this bunch of rabble-rousers.” A member of Alabama’s congressional delegation, Representative George Huddleston Jr., deemed the Freedom Riders “self-anointed merchants of racial hatred.” He said the firebombed Greyhound group “got just what they asked for.”

In Nashville, Diane Nash feared the political consequences. “If the Freedom Ride had been stopped as a result of violence,” she later said, “I strongly felt that the future of the movement was going to be just cut short because the impression would have been given that whenever a movement starts, that all that has to be done is that you attack it with massive violence and the blacks would stop.” With reinforcements from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC, pronounced “snick”) and other black and white activists supplementing the original Freedom Riders, a new effort was launched.

On May 20, a group of Freedom Riders boarded a Birmingham-to-Montgomery, Alabama, Greyhound. Their bus was met by a mob estimated at 1,000 “within an instant” of pulling into the station, the Associated Press reported. Among the injured were John Seigenthaler, an assistant to Attorney General Kennedy. Kennedy dispatched 400 federal marshals to Montgomery to enforce order, while the Congress of Racial Equality promised to continue the Freedom Ride, pressing on to Jackson, Mississippi, and then to New Orleans. “Many students are standing by in other cities to serve as volunteers if needed,” James Farmer told the New York Times. And some 450 Americans did step forward, boarding the buses and then filling the jails, notably in Jackson, when Farmer and others refused to pay fines imposed for “breaching the peace.”

On May 29, Attorney General Kennedy directed the Interstate Commerce Commission to adopt stiff regulations to enforce the integration of interstate transportation. The agency did so. With this sustained federal effort, Jim Crow faltered in bus terminals, on buses, and on trains, at least those that crossed state lines.

The Freedom Riders’ victory set the tone for the great civil rights campaigns that followed. Not for the first time during these climactic years, a free press forced Americans to take a cold, hard look at the reality of racial oppression. The Birmingham mob beat Tommy Langston, a photographer for the local Post-Herald newspaper, and smashed his camera. But they forgot to remove the film, and the newspaper’s front page subsequently displayed his picture of the savage beating of a black bystander. Each arrest and each beating attracted more media and more coverage. And while many of those accounts still referred to “Negro militants,” the contrast between rabid white mobs and the calm, dignified, biracial Freedom Riders forced Americans to decide, or at this point at least begin deciding: Who best represented American values?

White religious leaders were prominent among those who lauded the bravery of the Freedom Riders and the justice
of their cause. The Reverend Billy Graham called for prosecution of their attackers and declared it “deplorable when certain people in any society have been treated as second-class citizens.” Rabbi Bernard J. Bamberger denounced white segregationist violence as “utterly indefensible in terms of morality and law” and criticized whites who urged civil rights activists to “go slow.” And always there were the righteous: Raymond Arsenault writes that while the Greyhound bus burned outside Anniston, “one little girl, 12-year-old Janie Miller, supplied the choking victims with water, filling and refilling a five-gallon [19-liter] bucket while braving the insults and taunts of Klansmen.”

- A Founder of CORE Recalls Freedom Rides
- "Freedom Rides Brought More Than Violence"
- Freedom Rides
- Freedom Riders
- Freedom Rides - History.com

**NASHVILLE SIT-INS**

A group of black college student sit-in demonstrators are passing out literature to the public in front of The Krystal lunch counter on Fifth Ave. N. downtown Nashville, Tenn. on Nov. 12, 1960. The students reported employees at The Krystal lunch counter used water hoses, cleaning powder, wet brooms and insect spray to disrupt a sit-in by the students, a couple of days earlier.
7.11. Significant Events of the Civil Rights Movement

- Nashville
- Nashville students sit-in for US civil rights, 1960
- Nashville Sit-Ins
- Nashville Sit-Ins
- Nashville — We were Warriors

DIANE NASH

![Diane Nash](http://www.ck12.org/flx/render/embeddedobject/136364)

- Nash, Diane (1938- )
- Years after change, activist lives her convictions
- Diane Nash -PBS

GAINS AND PAIN - MARCHES

Civil rights activists in the early 1960s teemed with enthusiasm. The courts and the federal government seemed to be on their side, and the movement was winning the battle for public opinion. Under the protection of federal troops, in 1962 James Meredith became the first African American to attend the University of Mississippi.

As sit-ins and freedom rides spread across the South, African American leaders set a new, ambitious goal: a federal law banning racial discrimination in all public accommodations and in employment. In the summer of 1963, President Kennedy indicated he would support such a measure, and thousands marched on Washington to support the bill.

Blacks and whites sang "We Shall Overcome" and listened to Martin Luther King Jr. deliver his "I Have a Dream" speech. The Civil Rights Movement seemed on the brink of triumph.

As equality advocates notched more and more successes, the forces against change grew more active as well. Groups such the Ku Klux Klan increased hate crimes. Earlier in 1963, the nation watched the Birmingham police force under the direction of Bull Connor unleash dogs, tear gas, and fire hoses on peaceful demonstrators.
Over 250,000 individuals flooded Washington, D.C., in August 1963 to protest the treatment of African American citizens throughout the United States.

16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, served as a meeting place for many participants of the civil rights movement. Tragedy struck the church in 1963 when a bomb exploded there, killing four young girls and injuring 22 others.

NAACP leader Medgar Evers was murdered in cold blood that summer in Mississippi as he tried to enter his home. Church burnings and bombings increased. Four young girls were killed in one such bombing in Birmingham as they attended Sunday school lessons.

Many who had looked to John F. Kennedy as a sympathetic leader were crushed when he fell victim to assassination in November 1963. But Kennedy’s death did not derail the Civil Rights Act.

President Lyndon Johnson signed the bill into law in July 1964. As of that day, it became illegal to refuse employment to an individual on the basis of race. Segregation at any public facility in America was now against the law.

Martin Luther King Jr. began his address at the March on Washington by saying “I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.”

The passage of that act led to a new focus. Many African Americans had been robbed of the right to vote since southern states enacted discriminatory poll taxes and literacy tests. Only five percent of African Americans eligible to vote were registered in Mississippi in 1965. The 24th Amendment banned the poll tax in 1964. A new landmark law, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, banned the literacy test and other such measures designed to keep blacks from voting. It also placed federal registrars in the South to ensure black suffrage. By 1965, few legal barriers to racial
equality remained.
But centuries of racism could not be erased with the pen. Many African Americans continued to languish in the bottom economic strata. Civil rights activists fought on to achieve economic as well as legal equality. It is a fight that continues to this day.

In the Words of Martin Luther King Jr.:

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."
I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood.
I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, a state sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.
I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.

ASSASSINATION OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

April 4, 1968 - Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot and killed as he stood on the balcony outside his room at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee.

BOYCOTTS

FIGURE 7.94
The Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955 - Using financial leverage to win important concessions for African-Americans, the bus boycott was a major Civil Rights victory and it brought national prominence to Martin Luther King, Jr. as the leader of the new movement.

ASSASSINATION OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

April 4, 1968 - Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot and killed as he stood on the balcony outside his room at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee.

• Dr. King is assassinated
• A. James Earl Ray Fired One Shot at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the . . .
• Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. (4 April 1968)
• A Photographer’s Story
• The Aftermath of Martin Luther King’s Assassination

BOYCOTTS

• New Orleans citizens boycott for US civil rights, 1960-61
• Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-1956)
• The First Civil Rights Bus Boycott

ASSASSINATION OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

April 4, 1968 - Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot and killed as he stood on the balcony outside his room at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee.

• Dr. King is assassinated
• A. James Earl Ray Fired One Shot at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the . . .
• Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. (4 April 1968)
• A Photographer’s Story
• The Aftermath of Martin Luther King’s Assassination

BOYCOTTS

• New Orleans citizens boycott for US civil rights, 1960-61
• Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-1956)
• The First Civil Rights Bus Boycott
FIGURE 7.95
Dr. King Associates on the balcony before the shooting

FIGURE 7.96
King's associates point toward the direction of the shot
7.12 Writings of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X

“LETTER FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL”

FIGURE 7.97
Martin Luther King Jr. being arrested in Birmingham, AL

• King’s Letter from Birmingham Jail: Lesson Plan

“I HAVE A DREAM”

FIGURE 7.98
Martin Luther King, Jr. - “I Have A Dream”

• Text to Text | ‘I Have a Dream’ and ‘The Lasting Power of Dr. King’s I Have A Dream Speech

“THE BALLOT OR THE BULLET”

• Lesson 2: Black Separatism or the Beloved Community? Malcolm X
• A Common Core lesson on Malcolm X
• Lesson Plan: King & Malcolm X: A Common Solution?
• The Bullet or the Ballot
FIGURE 7.99
Malcolm X
7.13 Civil Rights and Voting Rights Legislation

THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

For nearly a century, many states had managed to escape the obvious mandate of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Court decisions such as Brown v. Board of Education and the many others won by Thurgood Marshall and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People finally established that government, even state governments in the Deep South, could not discriminate against African Americans or anyone else. Civil rights activists like the Freedom Riders risked their lives, but at least there was no doubt that the law was on their side and that those who attacked them were lawbreakers.

But the owners of a movie theater or a department store lunch counter were not the government. As a result, the civil rights movement was obliged to wage battles one city and one business at a time. While Rosa Parks’s brave refusal to move to the back of the bus led to the desegregation of public transportation in Montgomery, Alabama, hundreds or even thousands more Rosa Parks — and Martin Luther Kings — would be needed to desegregate fully the South.

Plainly, legislation was needed to prohibit acts of private discrimination in public places. Such a law would represent a dramatic expansion of federal authority. The American Constitution explains what the federal — and, in the post-Civil War amendments the state governments — may and may not do. It does not speak of Woolworth’s lunch counter.

In the end, proponents of what became the Civil Rights Act of 1964 would assert, and the courts subsequently would accept, that Congress possessed the authority to ban discrimination in employment, public accommodations,
and other aspects of life. They pointed to the constitutional provision (Article I, Section 8) authorizing Congress “to regulate Commerce among the several States.” By the mid-20th century, nearly every economic transaction involved some form of interstate commerce, were one to look closely enough. In 1969, for instance, the Supreme Court, in Daniel v. Paul, rejected a discriminatory “entertainment club’s” claim that its lack of interstate activity exempted it from the Civil Rights Act. Among the Court’s findings: The snack bar served hamburgers and hot dogs on rolls, and the “principal ingredients going into the bread were produced and processed in other States.”

President Johnson’s introduction of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provoked one of the nation’s great political contests. The act prevailed because much of the nation had looked hard into Bull Connor’s eyes and had not liked what it saw. But passage also would require all of Johnson’s formidable skills. It was understood that majorities of Republicans and northern Democrats would support the bill, but that Johnson would have to engineer a two-thirds Senate majority to overcome the inevitable filibuster by southern Democrats.

Johnson, in his first State of the Union Address on January 8, 1964, urged Congress to “let this session... be known as the session which did more for civil rights than the last hundred sessions combined.” The months that followed saw intense congressional fact-finding and debate over the act. The House of Representatives held more than 70 days of public hearings, during which some 275 witnesses offered nearly 6,000 pages of testimony. At the end of this process, the House passed the bill by a vote of 290 to 130.

The Senate filibuster would last for 57 days, during which time the Senate conducted virtually no other business. As the speeches continued (one senator carried a 1,500-page speech onto the floor), President Johnson subjected many a senator to “The Treatment,” and a variety of labor, religious, and civil rights groups lobbied for cloture and a final vote. Finally, on June 10, 1964, the Senate voted 71 to 29 to end debate — the first time cloture had ever been successfully invoked in a civil rights matter. A week later, the Senate passed its version of the civil rights bill. On July 2, 1964, the House of Representatives agreed to the Senate version, sending the bill to the White House.

President Johnson affixed his signature that evening, in the course of a nationally televised address. “Americans of every race and color have died in battle to protect our freedom,” he told the nation. He continued,

**Americans of every race and color have worked to build a nation of widening opportunities. Now our generation of Americans has been called on to continue the unending search for justice within our own borders.**

**We believe that all men are created equal. Yet many are denied equal treatment.**

**We believe that all men have certain unalienable rights. Yet many Americans do not enjoy those rights.**

**We believe that all men are entitled to the blessings of liberty. Yet millions are being deprived of those blessings — not because of their own failures, but because of the color of their skin.**

**The reasons are deeply imbedded in history and tradition and the nature of man. We can understand — without rancor or hatred — how this all happened.**

**But it cannot continue. Our Constitution, the foundation of our Republic, forbids it. ... The purpose of the law is simple.**

**It does not restrict the freedom of any American, so long as he respects the rights of others.**
It does not give special treatment to any citizen.

It does say the only limit to a man’s hope for happiness, and for the future of his children, shall be his own ability.

It does say that there are those who are equal before God shall now also be equal in the polling booths, in the classrooms, in the factories . . .

My fellow citizens, we have come now to a time of testing. We must not fail.

Let us close the springs of racial poison. Let us pray for wise and understanding hearts. Let us lay aside irrelevant differences and make our nation whole. Let us hasten that day when our unmeasured strength and our unbounded spirit will be free.

- The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Employment Opportunity
- Civil Rights Act Lesson Plan
- Civil Rights: An Investigation
- Teacher’s Guide

VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965

Five months after the Selma-to-Montgomery March, the Congress passed and President Johnson signed into law the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Shortly before noon on August 6, 1965, Johnson drove to the U.S. Capitol building. Waiting for him were the leaders of Congress and of the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King Jr. and John Lewis among them. In signing the act into law, Johnson told the nation:

The central fact of American civilization. . . is that freedom and justice and the dignity of man are not just words to us. We believe in them. Under all the growth, and the tumult, and abundance, we believe. And so, as long as some among us are oppressed and we are part of that oppression, it must blunt our faith and sap the strength of our high purpose.

Thus this is a victory for the freedom of the American Negro, but it is also a victory for the freedom of the American nation. And every family across this great entire searching land will live stronger in liberty, will live more splendid in expectation, and will be prouder to be American because of the act that you have passed that I will sign today.

The Fifteenth Amendment already barred racial discrimination in voting rights, so the problem was not that African Americans lacked the legal right to vote. It was that some state and local officials had systematically deprived blacks of those rights. The Voting Rights Act accordingly authorized the federal government to assume control of the voter registration process in any state or voting district that had in 1964 employed a literacy or other qualifying test and in which fewer than half of voting age residents had either registered or voted. Six entire southern states were thus “covered,” as were a number of counties in several other states. Covered jurisdictions were prohibited from modifying their voting rules and regulations without first affording federal officials the opportunity to review the change for discriminatory intent or effect. Other provisions barred the future use of literacy tests and directed the attorney general of the United States to commence legal action to end the use of poll taxes in state elections. (The Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in January 1964, already barred the poll tax in elections for federal office.)

The introduction of federal “examiners” ended the mass intimidation of potential minority voters. The results were dramatic. By the end of 1965, the five states of the Deep South alone registered 160,000 new African-American voters. By 2000, African-American registration rates trailed that of whites by only 2 percent. In the South, where in 1965 only two African Americans served either in the U.S. Congress or a state legislature, the number in December 2008 was 160.

The Voting Rights Act was originally enacted for a five-year period, but it has been both extended and expanded to introduce new requirements, such as the provision of bilingual election materials.
In 1982, President Ronald Reagan signed a 25-year extension: “The right to vote is the crown jewel of American liberties,” he said, “and we will not see its luster diminished.” President George W. Bush signed another 25-year extension in 2006.

- Lesson Plans: Congress Protects the Right to Vote: The Voting
- The Voting Rights Act, 1965 and beyond
- The Voting Rights Act of 1965

CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1968

![Figure 7.102: LBJ signing the Civil Rights Act of 1968](image)

- Fair Housing Act of 1968
- Title VIII: Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity - HUD
- On This Day: The Civil Rights Act of 1968

24TH AMENDMENT

- Amendment 24
- The Injustice of the Poll Tax and Why It Took a Constitutional...
- The 24th Amendment Ended the Poll Tax - America’s Library
- The 24th Amendment - House of Representatives
The 1960s broadened the traditional definition of civil rights, as the politics of identity exploded in the United States. As African Americans and women demanded much needed reforms, other groups who felt on the margins of American society organized as well. The climate was conducive to change, and many felt the need to seize the moment. Latino Americans, Native Americans, and gay Americans demanded fair treatment and inclusion under the banner of civil rights.

Mexican Americans, or Chicanos, were steadily growing in population in the American Southwest throughout the twentieth century. In 1965, Cesar Chavez led a strike on behalf of the migrant farm workers in California. Chavez used the strategies of Martin Luther King to reach his goals of higher pay and better working conditions. In addition to the strike, he organized the United Farm Workers union and enacted a nationwide boycott of grapes to support his cause. Responding to the mistreatment of union membership in the fields, Chavez commenced a three-week hunger strike to receive national attention. When the grape growers recognized his union in 1970, his deeds were vindicated.

Not all Mexican American activism followed King’s approach. A group known as the Brown Berets, who modeled themselves after the Black Panthers, strove to take control of the streets of Chicano neighborhoods. They battled the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and chanted "Brown Power" in the same spirit that Stokely Carmichael chanted "Black Power."

As politics became more radicalized, a "Red Power" movement emerged in Native American communities. In urban Native American ghettos across the Midwest, the American Indian Movement (AIM) took shape. Members of AIM were tired of working through a system they believed was the primary reason many Native Americans lived in dire poverty. They chose attention-grabbing stunts as the means to draw attention to their cause.

In 1969, members of AIM seized Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. AIM members offered the United States government the equivalent amount of trinkets that Peter Minuit paid to the inhabitants of Manhattan Island in 1626. For 18 months the occupation forces held firm. In 1972, AIM protesters occupied the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Washington, DC. The final battle of the war for the Great Plains was re-enacted in 1973 when members of AIM seized Wounded Knee in South Dakota. After a 71 day holdout, the siege collapsed.

Although the fight for societal acceptance rages on, the many civil rights movements were born in the cauldron of
The American Indian Movement grabbed America’s attention through brash stunts. One such action was the seizure of Alcatraz Island and the subsequent offer to the U.S. government to buy back the land for the same small sum that settlers offered to Native Americans for Manhattan Island in 1626.

The protest movements of the turbulent 1960s.

THE WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

The women’s rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s grew out of the turbulent social upheaval that characterized those decades of American history. This movement is often called “second wave feminism” to differentiate it from the suffrage movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (or “first wave feminism”). Feminists sought to achieve equality for women by challenging unfair labor practices and discriminatory laws. They provided women with educational material about sex and reproduction and fought to legalize all forms of birth control. They established political organizations and wrote books, articles, and essays challenging sexism in society.

But to obtain equality, women needed to change the way society thought of, spoke about, and treated women. This was more than simply changing laws — this required a fundamental shift in all aspects American society so that women and men would be considered equal. Feminists’ chief goal in the 1960s and 1970s was to overturn the pervasive belief that because women were biologically different from men, they were intellectually inferior, more emotional, and better suited to domestic life than to politics or careers. Women’s awareness that they are, and should be, equal was called feminist consciousness.

Equal pay for equal work

One of the most significant events that contributed to the rise of feminist consciousness among American women was the publication of a report by the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women in 1963. Chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, the commission reassessed women’s place in the economy, the family, and the legal system. The commission’s final report documented discrimination in employment, unequal pay, lack of social services such as child care, and continuing legal inequality for women. It raised awareness that women’s inequality was systemic, not isolated or individual.

President John F. Kennedy responded by ordering federal agencies to hire for career positions “solely on the basis of ability to meet the requirements of the position, and without regard to sex.” The same year, Congress passed the Equal Pay Act, which made it illegal to have different rates of pay for women and men who did equal work. For the first time, the federal government restricted discrimination against women by private employers.

Importantly, though, the Equal Pay Act did not require that private businesses give women and men the same consideration for hiring. Employers often refused to hire women for jobs they considered better suited to men. Feminists challenged this practice through court cases and petitions to Congress. In 1968, Congress extended civil rights legislation, which prohibited discrimination in the workplace on the basis of race, to ban gender bias as well.
The Feminine Mystique

Another major work that inspired the Women’s Rights Movement was Betty Friedan’s book *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963. Friedan defined the “feminine mystique” as the idea that a woman’s happiness and identity, indeed what made her complete, required sublimating her own desires and interests to those of her husband and children. By being a selfless wife and mother, a woman would achieve happiness. Friedan came to the realization that this was not true. Women, like men, needed to have an identity that was uniquely their own. They had desires and dreams that could not be met by being a wife and mother because these roles required the woman to stop being “herself.” Friedan argued that women should work in professions and that through education and meaningful employment outside of the home, women would regain a sense of self-worth, individuality, and individual accomplishment, denied them in the home. Friedan’s book sold nearly three million copies in its first three years in print.

The National Organization for Women

Betty Friedan joined with other women’s rights activists in 1966 to form the National Organization for Women. Chapters of NOW were formed in cities and towns all over America. The goal of NOW was to overturn the sexist attitudes prevalent in American society by challenging regressive laws, suing business for discrimination, and educating American men and women about the need for women’s equality.

NOW’s mission statement said,

*We believe that a true partnership between the sexes demands a different concept of marriage, an equitable sharing of the responsibilities of home and children and of the economic burdens of their support. We believe that proper recognition should be given to the economic and social values of homemaking and child care.*

NOW’s founders promised to “protest and endeavor to change the false image of women now prevalent in the mass media and in the texts, ceremonies, laws and practices of major social institutions... church, state, college, factor or office which in the guise of protectiveness... foster in women self denigration, dependence, and evasion of responsibility, undermine their confidence in their own abilities, and foster contempt for women.”

In 1967, the organization added to its Bill of Rights for Women the “right of women to control their own reproductive lives” and set a goal to challenge restrictive abortion laws and expanding access to contraception. In 1967, NOW also included to its agenda paid maternity leave, educational aid, job training, and tax deductions for child care.

The Equal Rights Amendment

The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), an amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing equality for women under the law, was first introduced at a women’s rights convention in 1923. The proposed amendment stated simply, “Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction.” That same year, the amendment was introduced, and defeated, in Congress.

During World War II, women were asked to do “men’s work” in factories to support the war effort, and women’s equality again became a political issue. The Republican and Democratic parties added support of the Equal Rights Amendment to their platforms. In 1943, Alice Paul, a suffragist and women’s rights activist, rewrote the ERA to read “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.” This more limited version of the ERA, sometimes called the “Alice Paul amendment,” was introduced and defeated in every session of Congress from 1943 until the 1960s.

In the 1960s, women’s rights organizations made passage of the ERA a key goal of the women’s movement. By 1972, organized labor and an increasing number of mainstream groups joined the call for the ERA. The Equal Rights Amendment passed the Senate and the House of Representative, and on March 22, 1972, it was sent to the states for ratification. The amendment was written to require ratification by the states within seven years. Despite the
work of activists, only 35 states of the 38 required ratified the amendment before that deadline. (North Carolina’s legislature voted against the amendment.)

In 1982, Senator Ted Kennedy reintroduced the ERA, and continued to do so in every session of Congress until his death in 2009. The ERA has never become a part of the U.S. Constitution, although many state constitutions now guarantee equal rights for women under the law.

**Birth control**

Prior to 1873, most forms of birth control were legal in the United States, as was educational material about contraception. Condoms were available, though not widely used. Abortion was legal in many states until the fourth month of pregnancy — the time of “quickening,” when the pregnant women felt the baby move. Before ultrasound technology allowed people to see inside the body, most people believed that life began at quickening. As a result, abortions were widely available. Women could induce abortion by ingesting chemicals or herbs, and midwives and doctors knew how to agitate the uterus in order to expel the fetus.

In 1873, Congress passed the “Comstock laws,” which prohibited using the U.S. mail to ship contraceptives or material for sexual education. Abortions were also criminalized. From the 1870s until the 1960s, it was difficult to gain access to birth control of any kind, and a woman could obtain an abortion only if her health was at risk or if she was determined to be mentally ill. Some states made an exception for victims of rape and incest, but in most states abortion was illegal even under these circumstances.

In 1960, the first oral contraceptives were approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), but were made available only to married women. Married women responded enthusiastically, and “the pill” quickly became the most popular form of birth control in the United States. For the first time, women had a reliable method of preventing pregnancy that they could control and that no one else need know about. Women could now plan pregnancies around work, schooling, and other life goals, or they could make the decision to never have children at all. In several states where contraceptives of any kind were illegal, though, even married women had difficulty obtaining the pill.

Women’s rights activists believed that all women, married or single, needed to be able to control their reproductive lives in order to achieve equality with men. They challenged laws that restricted use of contraceptives to married couples and worked to end state restrictions on contraceptives.

Two important legal cases helped liberalize access to birth control in the United States. In the first, *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), the Supreme Court overturned a doctor’s conviction for prescribing contraceptives. The doctor’s lawyers argued that married couples had a right to privacy under the Constitution, and the Supreme Court agreed. The court ruled that citizens’ right to privacy meant that married persons should be able to practice contraception and that doctors must be permitted to prescribe contraceptives.

The Ninth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states: “The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.” Although the word privacy does not appear in the Constitution, those other rights have been widely interpreted to include a right to privacy.

In the second case, *Massachusetts v. Baird* (1972), William Baird appealed his conviction for distributing condoms to unmarried women. The Supreme Court overturned his conviction, ruling that the right of privacy also extended to unmarried women.

In *Roe v. Wade* (1973), the Supreme Court extended this right to privacy to include abortions. Not only feminist organizations but physicians argued that abortion should be made legal. Even in states where abortion was illegal, women still had them, often in dangerous circumstances that risked their health. Every year thousands of women ended up in emergency rooms from botched abortions, and some women died. The medical community argued that abortions must be supervised by trained medical professionals, and that the only way to ensure this was to legalize the procedure.

In *Row v. Wade*, the Supreme Court struck down federal and state laws banning abortion. The court argued that its decision did not create a new law, but simply overturned laws that were unconstitutional. “The restrictive criminal
abortion laws in effect in a majority of States today,” the justices wrote, “are of relatively recent vintage. Those laws, generally proscribing abortion or its attempt at any time during pregnancy except when necessary to preserve the pregnant woman’s life, are not of ancient or even of common-law origin. Instead, they derive from statutory changes effected, for the most part, in the latter half of the 19th century.”

**Divisions in the feminist movement**

By the 1970s, many different organizations and voices influenced the women’s movement. Not all women, for example, agreed with NOW’s agenda. Many argued that NOW was too white and middle class to address problems faced by poor women and racial minorities. African-American feminists felt left out of the women’s movement because they believed that organizations such as NOW were dominated by white, middle-class women. African-American feminists argued that black women were oppressed not only because of their gender but because of their race. They believed that although black and white feminists had some common goals, African American women needed separate organizations to deal with this dual discrimination.

Others wanted feminism to be more radical. One radical group of feminists was the Redstockings, organized in 1969. In their manifesto, the Redstockings insisted that women were “an oppressed class... exploited as sex objects, breeders, domestic servants, and cheap labor... considered inferior beings whose only purpose is to enhance men’s lives... We take the woman’s side in everything.” Redstockings used blunt anti-male rhetoric: “All men receive economic, sexual, and sociological benefits from male supremacy. All men have oppressed women” and were “male chauvinist pigs.”

Some radical feminists called on women “to isolate themselves from men in order to come to terms with what it means to be female.” They argued that heterosexual relationships were doomed and that same-sex relationships were the only way for women to have equal partnerships. This, of course, was not the answer that most straight women were looking for, and most feminists thought that there should be a way to be a feminist and still have relationships with men.

Lesbian feminists, by contrast, had become frustrated with mainstream feminists’ assumptions that all feminists were straight and were therefore interested in issues of marriage, divorce, child care, and reproduction. NOW was silent about homophobia and discrimination against lesbians.

Ultimately, the message of feminism was expanded to include all ways in which women are oppressed and to recognize that women of different class, race, and sexual orientation are commonly discriminated against because they are first and foremost women.

**THE 1970S AND BEYOND**

By the early 1980s, most of the major legal battles of the women’s rights movement had been won. Women were accepted to colleges on an equal bases with men, it was illegal to discriminate against women in the work place, and women’s access to birth control and abortion was protected by the courts. Many women felt that they were living in a post-feminist age, one in which men and women were equals, and they were no longer interested in being active participants in a women’s movement.

But activists caution that there is still work to be done. Women are frequently paid less than men for the same work even when they have the same education. Corporate executives and legislators are still overwhelmingly men. Women and single mothers make up a majority of the poor in America. Battles over abortion and access to birth control continue. Feminists also argue that while women have achieved legal equality, there are social and cultural limitations that must be overturned before women achieve full equality.
Lyndon Baines Johnson moved quickly to establish himself in the office of the Presidency. Despite his conservative voting record in the Senate, Johnson soon reacquainted himself with his liberal roots. LBJ sponsored the largest reform agenda since Roosevelt’s New Deal.

The aftershock of Kennedy’s assassination provided a climate for Johnson to complete the unfinished work of JFK’s New Frontier. He had eleven months before the election of 1964 to prove to American voters that he deserved a chance to be President in his own right.

Two very important pieces of legislation were passed. First, the Civil Rights Bill that JFK promised to sign was passed into law. The Civil Rights Act banned discrimination based on race and gender in employment and ending segregation in all public facilities.

Johnson also signed the omnibus Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The law created the Office of Economic Opportunity aimed at attacking the roots of American poverty. A Job Corps was established to provide valuable vocational training.

Head Start, a preschool program designed to help disadvantaged students arrive at kindergarten ready to learn was put into place. The Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) was set up as a domestic Peace Corps. Schools in impoverished American regions would now receive volunteer teaching attention. Federal funds were sent to struggling communities to attack unemployment and illiteracy.

As he campaigned in 1964, Johnson declared a "war on poverty." He challenged Americans to build a "Great Society" that eliminated the troubles of the poor. Johnson won a decisive victory over his arch conservative Republican
opponent Barry Goldwater of Arizona.

Events of the Johnson Administration:

- The Wilderness Protection Act saved 9.1 million acres of forestland from industrial development.
- The Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided major funding for American public schools.
- The Voting Rights Act banned literacy tests and other discriminatory methods of denying suffrage to African Americans.
- Medicare was created to offset the costs of health care for the nation’s elderly.
- The National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities used public money to fund artists and galleries.
- The Immigration Act ended discriminatory quotas based on ethnic origin.
- An Omnibus Housing Act provided funds to construct low-income housing.
- Congress tightened pollution controls with stronger Air and Water Quality Acts.
- Standards were raised for safety in consumer products.

Johnson was an accomplished legislator and used his connections in Congress and forceful personality to pass his agenda.

By 1966, Johnson was pleased with the progress he had made. But soon events in Southeast Asia began to overshadow his domestic achievements. Funds he had envisioned to fight his war on poverty were now diverted to the war in Vietnam. He found himself maligned by conservatives for his domestic policies and by liberals for his hawkish stance on Vietnam. By 1968, his hopes of leaving a legacy of domestic reform were in serious jeopardy.

- The 1965 Medicare Amendment to the Social Security Act
Many in the 1950s strove for the comfort and conformity depicted on such TV shows as Father Knows Best and Leave It to Beaver. But despite the emerging affluence of the new American middle class, there was a poverty, racism, and alienation in America that was rarely depicted on TV.

Minorities seemed to be shut out from the emerging American Dream. Poverty rates for African Americans were typically double those of their white counterparts. Segregation in the schools, the lack of a political voice, and longstanding racial prejudices stifled the economic advancement of many African Americans. In 1952, Ralph Ellison penned Invisible Man, which pinpointed American indifference to the plight of African Americans. "I am an invisible man," he wrote. "I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me ..."

Latino Americans languished in urban American barrios, and the Eisenhower Administration responded with a program — derisively named Operation Wetback — designed to deport millions of Mexican Americans.

Reservation poverty increased with the Eisenhower policy of "termination," designed to end federal support for tribes. Incentives such as relocation assistance and job placement were offered to Native Americans who were willing to venture off the reservations and into the cities. Unfortunately, the government excelled at relocation but struggled with job placement, leading to the creation of Native American ghettos in many western cities.

Ethnic minorities — Jews, Italians, Asians, and many groups — all struggled to find their place in the American quilt.
Painting Against the Tide

Jackson Pollock’s 1950 painting Lavender Mist typifies “Action painting,” in which he fixed his canvas to the floor, then dripped paint all over it. Pollock’s unorthodox methods were heavily criticized (he was labeled “Jack the Dripper”), but his novel painting style proved that American artists were on par with their European counterparts.

American painters also took shots at conformity. Edward Hopper who had made a name for himself in earlier decades, combated the blissful images of television by showing an America full of loneliness and alienation.

In New York City, painters broke with the conventions of Western art to create abstract expressionism, widely regarded as the most significant artistic movement ever to come out of America. Abstract expressionists, such as Willem de Kooning, Hans Hoffman, Mark Rothko, and Jackson Pollock, sought to express their subconscious and their dissatisfaction with postwar life through unique and innovative paintings. The physical act of painting was almost as important as the work itself. Jackson Pollock gained fame through "action painting" — pouring, dripping, and splattering the paint onto the canvas. Rothko covered his canvas with large rectangles, which he believed conveyed "basic human emotions."

Big Screen Rebels

"Rebel without a Cause," a story of anguished middle-class juvenile delinquents, was an instant sensation when released in 1955. The film was particularly scandalous because the main characters "came from good families." James Dean played the main character, Jim Stark.

While the 1950s silver screen lit up mostly with the typical Hollywood fare of Westerns and romances, a handful of films shocked audiences by uncovering the dark side of America’s youth. Marlon Brando played the leather-clad leader of a motorcycle gang that ransacks a small town. In 1953’s The Wild One. The film terrified adults but fascinated kids, who emulated Brando’s style. 1955 saw the release of Blackboard Jungle, a film about juvenile delinquency in an urban high school. It was the first major release to use a rock-and-roll soundtrack and was banned in many areas both for its violent take on high school life and its use of multiracial cast of lead actors.

Perhaps the most controversial and influential of these films is 1955’s Rebel without a Cause. Another film about teenage delinquency (the main characters meet at the police station) Rebel is not amid urban decay, but rather in
an affluent suburb. "And they both come from 'good' families!" the film’s tagline screamed. Ironically, the film made it clear that the failure of those very families was to blame for the main characters’ troubles. Juvenile delinquency was no longer a problem for the lower classes; it was lurking in the supposedly perfect suburbs. Once again parents were outraged, but the message could no longer be ignored. The film earned three Academy Award nominations and propelled James Dean to posthumous but eternal stardom.

Despite the clear presence of poverty, alternative literature, and social criticism, Americans on the whole turned away and enjoyed happy days during the 1950s. But happy days values were soon about to make way for the 1960s. "You say you want a revolution?"

**STUDENT ACTIVISM**

In June 1962, the founding members of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) ratified the Port Huron Statement. The Huron Statement was a manifesto, largely written by a young student named Tom Hayden, condemning middle-class materialism, racism, conformity, and anti-communism.

Strongly influenced by C. Wright Mills’ *The Power Elite*, SDS members feared that the Cold War was undermining American democracy. A military-industrial complex seemed to be driving the United States. Military leaders justified huge budgets by involvement in foreign wars. The expenditures led to major defense contracts for industrialists and millions of jobs across America. The liberal establishment of Kennedy and Johnson accepted the trend for fear of losing powerful supporters and thousands of votes from working Americans. The results, they claimed led to unjust involvement in foreign conflicts. Hayden called for "participatory democracy," — grassroots organizations where the true voices of Americans could be heard.

SDS became the leaders of the antiwar movement in America. Drawing support from the civil rights movement, SDS chapters organized local demonstrations on college campuses and marches to the steps of the Capitol Building. They worked in inner cities to provide free lunches and participated in voter drives to turn out the African American electorate in the Deep South. In addition to these causes, the movement was concerned with student rights. Many universities required a dress code, curfews, and restrictions on free speech. As SDS advocated a freer society, they pointed their arguments to their deans as well as their political representatives.

With the growth of SDS, the New Left flourished in America. Student leaders labeled the Old Left the Socialists of a bygone era. The Old Left was concerned with the problems brought by poverty, while the New Left criticized the suburban conformity and career materialism spawned by postwar affluence as well. They were critical of their left-leaning national politicians. SDS leaders did not believe Kennedy and Johnson were sincere in their support of civil rights. In the wake of McCarthyism, taking a soft stand on communism was unthinkable to Washington
Voices Against Conformity and the Counterculture

C. Wright Mills’ 1956 book The Power Elite contended that a small group of Americans — including members of government, titans of industry and military leaders — were responsible for the fate of the Nation. His theories provided inspiration for the student activists of the 1960s who sought to return this power to ordinary citizens.

politicians. While the New Left did not glorify the Soviet system, they were willing to blame both the United States and the Soviet Union for escalating the Cold War.

As the decade came to a close, SDS fragmented into moderate and radical factions much like most other movements. Although most SDS members were dedicated to peaceful protest, some did go beyond marches to the occupation of buildings and confrontations with the police. An extreme branch of SDS splintered off to form the Weathermen in 1970. This group was a terrorist organization openly committed to a violent overthrow of the government. FBI scrutiny forced many Weathermen underground before long.

COUNTERCULTURE

Make love, not war. Don’t trust anyone over 30. Turn on, tune in, and drop out. I am a human being — please do not fold, bend spindle, or mutilate.

These and many more became slogans for emerging youth culture — a counterculture — in the 1960s. The baby boom was entering its teen years, and in sheer numbers they represented a larger force than any prior generation in the history of the United States. As more and more children of middle-class Americans entered college, many rejected the suburban conformity designed by their parents.

Never more than a minority movement, the so-called "hippie" lifestyle became synonymous with American youth of the 1960s. Displaying frank new attitudes about drugs and sex, communal lifestyles, and innovations in food, fashion, and music, the counterculture youth of America broke profoundly with almost all values their parents held dear.

The sexual revolution was in full swing on American college campuses. Birth control and a rejection of traditional views of sexuality led to a more casual attitude toward sex. Displays of public nudity became commonplace. Living together outside marriage shattered old norms.

In addition to changes in sexual attitudes, many youths experimented with drugs. Marijuana and LSD were used most commonly, but experimentation with mushrooms and pills was common as well. A Harvard professor named Timothy Leary made headlines by openly promoting the use of LSD. There was a price to be paid for these new attitudes. With the new freedom came an upsurge of venereal diseases, bad trips, and drug addictions.
Like the utopian societies of the 1840s, over 2000 rural communes formed during these turbulent times. Completely rejecting the capitalist system, many communes rotated duties, made their own laws, and elected their own leaders. Some were philosophically based, but others were influenced by new religions. Earth-centered religions, astrological beliefs, and Eastern faiths proliferated across American campuses. Some scholars labeled this trend as the Third Great Awakening.

Most communes, however, faced fates similar to their 19th century forebears. A charismatic leader would leave or the funds would become exhausted, and the commune would gradually dissolve.

One lasting change from the countercultural movement was in American diet. Health food stores sold wheat germ, yogurt, and granola, products completely foreign to the 1950s America. Vegetarianism became popular among many youths. Changes in fashion proved more fleeting. Long hair on young men was standard, as were Afros. Women often wore flowers in their hair. Ethnic or peasant clothing was celebrated. Beads, bellbottom jeans, and tie-dyed shirts became the rage, as each person tried to celebrate his or her own sense of individuality.

The common bond among many youths of the time was music. Centered in the Haight-Ashbury section of San Francisco, a new wave of psychedelic rock and roll became the music of choice. Bands like the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, and the Doors created new sounds with electrically enhanced guitars, subversive lyrics, and association with drugs.

Folk music was fused with rock, embodied by the best-known solo artist of the decade, Bob Dylan. When the popular Beatles went psychedelic with their landmark album Sgt Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band, counterculture music became mainstream.

It is important to note that the counterculture was probably no more than ten percent of the American youth population. Contrary to common belief, most young Americans sought careers and lifestyles similar to their
parents. Young educated people actually supported the war in Vietnam in greater numbers than older, uneducated Americans. The counterculture was simply so outrageous that the media made their numbers seem larger than in reality. Nevertheless, this lifestyle made an indelible cultural impact on America for decades to come.

What happened to the ideals of the counterculture? Why weren’t they able to sustain their utopian views? In part their views were subsumed by the greater culture. Moreover, it’s one thing to say you want a revolution, quite another to try to affect one.

- Ask Steve: Generation Gap Video - The 1960s - HISTORY.com
- Woodstock
7.17 Nixon and the "Silent Majority"

RICHARD NIXON’S APPEAL TO THE “SILENT MAJORITY”

Unlike his predecessor, RICHARD NIXON longed to be known for his expertise in FOREIGN POLICY. Although occupied with the Vietnam War, Nixon also initiated several new trends in American diplomatic relations. Nixon contended that the communist world consisted of two rival powers — the Soviet Union and China. Given the long history of animosity between those two nations, Nixon and his adviser HENRY KISSINGER, decided to exploit that rivalry to win advantages for the United States. That policy became known as triangular diplomacy.

The United States had much to offer China. Since Mao Zedong’s takeover in 1949, the United States had refused recognition to the communist government. Instead, the Americans pledged support to the Chinese Nationalist government in Taiwan. China was blocked from admission to the United Nations by the American veto, and Taiwan held China’s seat on the Security Council.

In June 1971 Kissinger traveled secretly to China to make preparations for a Presidential visit. After Kissinger’s return, Nixon surprised everyone by announcing that he would travel to China and meet with Mao Zedong. In February 1972, Nixon toured the Great Wall and drank toasts with Chinese leaders. Soon after, the United States dropped its opposition to Chinese entry in the United Nations and groundwork was laid for the eventual establishment of diplomatic relations.

As expected, this maneuver caused concern in the Soviet Union. Nixon hoped to establish a DÉTENTE, or an easing of tensions, with the USSR. In May 1972, Nixon made an equally significant trip to Moscow to support a nuclear arms agreement. The product of this visit was the STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TREATY (SALT I).
As part of the Cold War's temporary thaw during the 1970s, Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev agreed to import American wheat into the Soviet Union. The two countries would also agree to a joint space exploration program dubbed Apollo-Soyuz.

The United States and the Soviet Union pledged to limit the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles each side would build, and to prevent the development of anti-ballistic missile systems.

Nixon and his Soviet counterpart, LEONID BREZHNEV also agreed to a trade deal involving American wheat being shipped to the USSR. The two nations entered into a joint venture in space exploration known as APOLLO-SOYUZ.

Arguably, Nixon may have been the only president who could have accomplished this arrangement. Anti Communism was raging in the United States. Americans would view with great suspicion any attempts to make peace with either the Soviet Union or China. No one would challenge Nixon’s anti communist credentials, given his reputation as a staunch red-baiter in his early career. His overtures were chiefly accepted by the American public. Although the Cold War still burned hotly across the globe, the efforts of Nixon and Kissinger led to a temporary thaw.
NIXON AND THE WATERGATE SCANDAL

On June 17, 1972, five men were arrested after breaking into the headquarters of the DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE located in the WATERGATE HOTEL in Washington, D.C. The burglars were not ordinary thieves. They carried wiretaps to install on telephones. They carried cameras to photograph documents. Four of the five criminals were anti-Castro Cubans who had been previously hired by the CIA. The fifth was JAMES MCCORD, the security adviser for Nixon’s campaign staff known as the COMMITTEE TO RE-ELECT THE PRESIDENT, or CREEP. Although the incident failed to make the front pages of the major newspapers, it would soon become the most notorious political scandal in American history.

In the heated climate of the late 1960s and early 1970s, President Nixon believed strongly that a war was being fought between "us" and "them." To Nixon, "us" meant the conservative, middle- and working-class, church-going Americans, who believed the United States was in danger of crumbling. "Them" meant the young, defiant, free love, antiwar, liberal counterculture figures who sought to transform American values.

Nixon would stop at nothing to win this war of hearts and minds, even if it meant breaking the law. In 1971, a White House group known as the "PLUMBERS" was established to eliminate administration leaks to the press. Their first target was DANIEL ELLSBERG who had worked on the PENTAGON PAPERS, a highly critical study of America’s Vietnam policy. Ellsberg leaked the Pentagon Papers — intended to be used internally by the government
— to the New York Times. The Plumbers vandalized the office of Ellsberg’s psychiatrist, hoping to find discrediting information on Ellsberg to release to the public.

Later that year, Attorney General JOHN MITCHELL resigned to head CREEP. The campaign raised millions of dollars in illegal contributions and laundered several hundred thousand for plumbing activities. A White House adviser named G. GORDON LIDDY suggested that the Democratic headquarters be bugged and that other funds should be used to bribe, threaten, or smear Nixon’s opponents. After the arrest of the burglars, Nixon suggested the payments of hush money to avoid a connection between Watergate and the White House. He suggested that the FBI cease any investigation of the break-in. He recommended that staffers perjure themselves if subpoenaed in court.

![Figure 7.121](image)

Richard Nixon delivers his trademark "V" sign with both arms as he prepares to leave the White House for the last time on August 9, 1974.

The Watergate cover-up was initially successful. Despite a headline story in THE WASHINGTON POST by BOB WOODWARD AND CARL BERNSTEIN suggesting White House involvement, Nixon went on to win 49 of 50 states in the November 1972 Presidential election against GEORGE MCGOVERN.

When the burglars were tried in January 1973, JAMES MCCORD admitted in a letter that members of the Nixon Administration ordered the Watergate break-in. A Senate committee was appointed to investigate, and Nixon succumbed to public pressure and appointed Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox to scrutinize the matter.

Complicitous in the cover-up, many high-level White House officials resigned including Nixon’s Chief of Staff, BOB HALDEMAN, and his Adviser on Domestic Affairs, JOHN EHRLICHMAN. In an unrelated case, Vice-President SPIRO AGNEW resigned facing charges of bribery and tax evasion. Nixon’s own personal counsel JOHN DEAN, agreed to cooperate with the Senate and testified about Nixon’s involvement in the cover-up. In a televised speech, Nixon assuredly told the American public “I am not a crook.” It seemed like a matter of Nixon’s word against Dean’s until a low-level aide told the committee that Nixon had been in the practice of taping every conversation held in the Oval Office.

Nixon flatly refused to submit the tapes to the committee. When ARCHIBALD COX demanded the surrender of the tapes, Nixon had him fired. Public outcry pressed Nixon to agree to release typewritten transcripts of his tapes, but Americans were not satisfied. The tape transcripts further damaged Nixon. On the tapes he swore like a sailor and behaved like a bully. Then there was the matter of 17 crucial minutes missing from one of the tapes.

Finally, in U.S. v. Nixon, the Supreme Court declared that executive privilege did not apply in this case, and Nixon was ordered to give the evidence to the Congress.

By this time, the HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE had already drawn up ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT, and Nixon knew he did not have the votes in the Senate to save his Presidency.

On August 8, 1974, Nixon resigned the office, becoming the first President to do so. His successor, Gerald Ford, promptly awarded Nixon a full pardon for any crimes he may have committed while in office. The press and the public cried foul, but Ford defended his decision by insisting the nation was better served by ending the long, national nightmare.
FIGURE 7.122
Though Richard Nixon will forever be remembered for the Watergate scandal, his foreign policy accomplishments are worth noting. Here, Nixon reviews troops during his historic visit to China that helped lessen diplomatic tensions.

During his years in office, Nixon had brought a controversial end to the Vietnam War, opened communication with Red China, watched NASA put astronauts on the moon, and presided over a healing period in American history in the early 1970s. Despite these many accomplishments, Watergate’s shadow occludes Nixon’s legacy.

- Watergate Scandal - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com
- Watergate
- Watergate Scandal Timeline
- Watergate Revisited
- The Woodward and Bernstein Watergate Papers
- Watergate Case Study
- 3Qs: How Watergate changed journalism — and the nation
- Watergate Lesson Plan

UNITED STATES v. NIXON (1974)

FIGURE 7.123
Nixon and Haldeman, c. 1972

- United States v. Nixon
- United States v. Nixon - Streetlaw

WOODWARD, BERNSTEIN, AND THE ROLE OF JOURNALISM

Media coverage during 1972 was influential in keeping the Watergate story in the news, and in establishing the connection between the burglary and the Committee to Re-Elect the President. The most notable coverage came
from *Time*, *The New York Times*, and especially from *The Washington Post*. Opinions vary, but the publicity these media outlets gave to Watergate likely resulted in more consequential political repercussions from the Congressional investigation. Most famous is the story of how *Washington Post* Reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein relied heavily on anonymous sources to reveal that knowledge of the break-in and subsequent attempt to cover it up had connections deep in the Justice Department, the FBI, the CIA, and even the White House.

Woodward and Bernstein’s most famous source was an individual they had nicknamed Deep Throat, a reference to a controversial pornography film of the time. Woodward claimed in his 1974 book, *All The President’s Men*, that the two would meet secretly at an underground parking garage just over the Key Bridge in Rosslyn, usually at 2:00 am, where Deep Throat helped him make the connections. Throughout the protracted investigation, Woodward would signal his source that he desired a meeting by placing a flowerpot with a red flag on the balcony of his apartment. If Deep Throat wanted a meeting, he would make special marks on page twenty of Woodward’s copy of *The New York Times*. The first meeting took place on June 20, 1972, only 3 days after the break-in. The identity of Deep Throat was the subject of intense speculation for more than 30 years before he was revealed to be the FBI’s #2, Mark Felt.

THE AFTERMATH

By May 9, 1974, the House Judiciary Committee began hearings on articles of impeachment. Judge Sirica turned over to the committee evidence gleaned against Nixon by the grand jury. Meanwhile, Jaworski appealed to the Supreme Court to force Nixon to surrender more tapes. On July 24, the Court handed down an 8-0 decision, laying bare the president’s last line of defense.

In late July, the House committee drafted three articles of impeachment against Nixon:

- Obstructing the Watergate investigation
- Misuse of power and violating his oath of office
- Failure to comply with House subpoenas

This bold move, combined with the decision of the Supreme Court, forced Nixon’s hand. On Monday, August 5, he released tapes of three conversations between himself and Haldeman recorded six days after the break-in. The text showed the president obstructing justice by ordering the FBI to end its investigation of the break-in. At the Cabinet meeting the next day, Vice President Ford stated that, as “a party in interest,” he would have no further public comments on the issue.

Nixon’s remaining support in the House and Senate crumbled. With impeachment certain in the House and the outcome of a trial in the Senate in little doubt, three leading Republicans paid Nixon a visit at the White House. They told him of his dwindling chances on the Hill. “You all agree that it looks bad,” Nixon asked. Each concurred. “I’m going to make up my mind very shortly,” he told them. The following day, August 8, Nixon announced in a broadcast to the nation his decision to resign the presidency at noon the next day. His terse letter of resignation was delivered to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at 11:53 AM on August 9.

At noon on August 9, in an East Room ceremony in the White House, Gerald Ford was sworn in as the nation’s 38th president. In taking the oath of office, Ford spoke words of relief and assurance. “My fellow Americans, our long
national nightmare is over. Our Constitution works; our great Republic is a Government of laws and not of men. Here the people rule."

The new president faced many difficulties. Besides having to handle the continuing legal and political concerns surrounding Richard Nixon, domestic and international challenges thrived. Also, the war in Vietnam lingered and the selection of a vice president demanded attention. With the need to put the Nixon ordeal behind him, and to give his full attention to the grave economic and foreign policy matters, Ford reached a decision. In a surprise announcement made to the nation on September 8, Ford granted the former president a “full, free and absolute” pardon for “all offenses against the United States” committed between January 20, 1969 and August 9, 1974.

Although his pardon of Richard Nixon was very controversial and probably was a factor leading to his loss in the 1976 presidential election, Gerald Ford never second-guessed his decision to grant it. Acting as his conscience dictated, he did not worry about political consequences. Although the initial reaction to the pardon was overwhelmingly negative, in recent years many original opponents of the pardon have reconsidered Ford’s decision. On May 21, 2001, President Ford received the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award at the Kennedy Library. Speaking on this occasion, Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg said of President Ford, “As President, he made a controversial decision of conscience to pardon former President Nixon and end the trauma of Watergate. In doing so, he placed his love of country ahead of his own political future.”
During the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, Arab members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) imposed an embargo against the United States in retaliation for the U.S. decision to re-supply the Israeli military and to gain leverage in the post-war peace negotiations. Arab OPEC members also extended the embargo to other countries that supported Israel including the Netherlands, Portugal, and South Africa. The embargo both banned petroleum exports to the targeted nations and introduced cuts in oil production. Several years of negotiations between oil-producing nations and oil companies had already destabilized a decades-old pricing system, which exacerbated the embargo’s effects.

The 1973 Oil Embargo acutely strained a U.S. economy that had grown increasingly dependent on foreign oil. The efforts of President Richard M. Nixon’s administration to end the embargo signaled a complex shift in the global financial balance of power to oil-producing states and triggered a slew of U.S. attempts to address the foreign policy challenges emanating from long-term dependence on foreign oil.

By 1973, OPEC had demanded that foreign oil corporations increase prices and cede greater shares of revenue to their local subsidiaries. In April, the Nixon administration announced a new energy strategy to boost domestic production to reduce U.S. vulnerability to oil imports and ease the strain of nationwide fuel shortages. That vulnerability would become overtly clear in the fall of that year.

The onset of the embargo contributed to an upward spiral in oil prices with global implications. The price of oil per barrel first doubled, then quadrupled, imposing skyrocketing costs on consumers and structural challenges to the stability of whole national economies. Since the embargo coincided with a devaluation of the dollar, a global recession seemed imminent. U.S. allies in Europe and Japan had stockpiled oil supplies, and thereby secured for themselves a short-term cushion, but the long-term possibility of high oil prices and recession precipitated a rift within the Atlantic Alliance. European nations and Japan found themselves in the uncomfortable position of needing U.S. assistance to secure energy sources, even as they sought to disassociate themselves from U.S. Middle East policy. The United States, which faced a growing dependence on oil consumption and dwindling domestic reserves, found itself more reliant on imported oil than ever before, having to negotiate an end to the embargo under harsh domestic economic circumstances that served to diminish its international leverage. To complicate matters, the embargo’s organizers linked its end to successful U.S. efforts to bring about peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Partly in response to these developments, on November 7 the Nixon administration announced Project Independence to promote domestic energy independence. It also engaged in intensive diplomatic efforts among its allies, promoting a consumers’ union that would provide strategic depth and a consumers’ cartel to control oil pricing. Both of these efforts were only partially successful.
President Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger recognized the constraints inherent in peace talks to end the war that were coupled with negotiations with Arab OPEC members to end the embargo and increase production. But they also recognized the linkage between the issues in the minds of Arab leaders. The Nixon administration began parallel negotiations with key oil producers to end the embargo, and with Egypt, Syria, and Israel to arrange an Israeli pullout from the Sinai and the Golan Heights. Initial discussions between Kissinger and Arab leaders began in November 1973 and culminated with the First Egyptian-Israeli Disengagement Agreement on January 18, 1974. Though a finalized peace deal failed to materialize, the prospect of a negotiated end to hostilities between Israel and Syria proved sufficient to convince the relevant parties to lift the embargo in March 1974.

The embargo laid bare one of the foremost challenges confronting U.S. policy in the Middle East, that of balancing the contradictory demands of unflinching support for Israel and the preservation of close ties to the Arab oil-producing monarchies. The strains on U.S. bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia revealed the difficulty of reconciling those demands. The U.S. response to the events of 1973–1974 also clarified the need to reconcile U.S. support for Israel to counterbalance Soviet influence in the Arab world with both foreign and domestic economic policies.

The full impact of the embargo, including high inflation and stagnation in oil importers, resulted from a complex set of factors beyond the proximate actions taken by the Arab members of OPEC. The declining leverage of the U.S. and European oil corporations (the “Seven Sisters”) that had hitherto stabilized the global oil market, the erosion of excess capacity of East Texas oil fields, and the recent decision to allow the U.S. dollar to float freely in the international exchange all played a role in exacerbating the crisis. Once the broader impact of these factors set in throughout the United States, it triggered new measures beyond the April and November 1973 efforts that focused on energy conservation and development of domestic energy sources. These measures included the creation of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, a national 55-mile-per-hour speed limit on U.S. highways, and later, President Gerald R. Ford’s administration’s imposition of fuel economy standards. It also prompted the creation of the International Energy Agency proposed by Kissinger.

**A SICKENED ECONOMY**

Malaise is defined as an indefinite feeling of debility or lack of health or a vague sense of mental or moral ill-being. People can feel malaise. Nations can feel malaise. Economies can feel malaise. In the mid-1970s much of America suffered a collective MALAISE.

Nothing fuels a strong case of malaise like a sputtering economy. The United States had grown accustomed to steady economic growth since the end of World War II. Recessions were short and were followed by robust economic
growth. For the first time since the Great Depression, Americans faced an economy that could result in a lower standard of living for their children.

Inflation, which crept along at one to three percent for the previous two decades, exploded into double digits. Full employment, defined as five percent or less, had been achieved in most years since 1945. Now the unemployment rate was nearing the dangerous ten percent line. Americans asked the question: what went wrong?

Economists had long held that inflation and unemployment were polar forces. High inflation meant a great deal of spending; therefore, many jobs would be created. Unemployment created jobless Americans with less money to spend; therefore, prices would stay the same or fall. Surprisingly, the United States experienced high unemployment and high inflation simultaneously in the 1970s — a phenomenon called stagflation. Experts and commoners debated the roots of this problem with differing opinions.

One possibility was the price of oil. When Israel defeated its Arab neighbors in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, Arab oil producers retaliated against Israel’s allies by leading the ORGANIZATION OF PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES (OPEC) to enact an embargo. Oil prices skyrocketed immediately in the United States as the demand outran the supply. Automobiles and drivers sat in long gas lines at service stations.

The price of oil is independent of other factors such as falling worker productivity and foreign competition, which led to greater unemployment. Oil prices also influence the prices of all consumer goods. Products that require oil to produce would now cost more. Any commodity shipped by truck or airplane would pass its new expenses off to the consumer. As the decade progressed, the embargo was lifted, but OPEC steadily raised prices each year. The price of a gallon of gasoline more than tripled from the 1970 to 1980.

Richard Nixon tried to fight inflation first by cutting government spending, but ultimately by imposing wage and price controls on the entire nation. GERALD FORD watched the inflation rate soar above 11 percent in 1974. He enacted a huge propaganda campaign called WHIP INFLATION NOW (WIN), which asked Americans to voluntarily control spending, wage demands, and price increases. The economy, along with Watergate disillusionment, led Ford to suffer defeat at the hands of JIMMY CARTER in the 1976 Presidential election.

Carter tried tax and spending cuts, but the annual inflation rate topped 18 percent under his watch in the summer of 1980. At the same time, the unemployment rate fluctuated between 6 and 8 percent. Economic woes may well have been the decisive factor in Carter’s defeat to Ronald Reagan in the election of 1980.
- Energy Crisis (1970s) - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com
- 70's
- Powering A Generation: Power History #4 (main frame-set)
7.20 Alex Haley

ALEX HALEY

- Alex Haley
- Alex Haley - History.com
- Random House for High School Teachers | Catalog | Autobiography
- Alex Haley, author of Roots, was born in 1921.
- Alex Haley

From the Autobiography of Malcolm X

- Kunta Kinte - Alex Haley
Emergence of Environmentalism

ENVIRONMENTALISM

It was time to save the earth. A century of full-fledged industrialism in America had taken its toll on the environment. Concerned citizens began to appeal in earnest to protect more of the nation’s wilderness areas. Emissions into the atmosphere were creating smoggy haze rings above many metropolitan centers. Trash was piling up. Many Americans felt free to deposit waste from their increasingly disposable society along the sides of the roads. In the climate of social activism, the 1960s also became a decade of earth action.

RACHEL CARSON sent a wake-up call to America with her 1962 book SILENT SPRING. Carson wrote of the horrors of DDT, a popular pesticide used on many American farms. DDT wrought havoc on the nation’s bird population. The pesticide, when ingested by birds, proved poisonous. Carson then witnessed a spring where birds did not return to farms.

The book created a firestorm of concern for the environment. Many students involved in the peace and civil rights movements also embraced the call for environmental awareness. President Johnson responded with the WILDERNESS PROTECTION ACT, the W ATER QUALITY ACT, and the AIR QUALITY ACT. An activist organization named GREENPEACE formed in 1969.

Inspired by SENATOR GAYLORD NELSON and created by students, the nation celebrated its first EARTH DAY on April 22, 1970. President Nixon, despite his overall lack of sympathy for the earth movement, could not resist supporting popular environmentalist measures.

In 1970, he signed legislation creating the ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, a federal watchdog dedicated to proper care of the planet. He also stiffened standards for emissions and waste with the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. The Endangered Species Act also provided much needed protection to wildlife on the brink of annihilation.

For years, the environmentalists had two major factions. Conservationists such as THEODORE ROOSEVELT believed that the nation’s natural heritage could be maintained through wise, efficient use of resources. Preservationists such as JOHN MUIR and the SIERRA CLUB celebrated the majesty of the landscape and preferred protection of wilderness areas. The 1960s ushered in the ecologists, who studied the relationships between living organisms and their environments. Pollution was destroying this delicate balance, and the result could be health problems, extinction of species, or even planetary destruction.

Young Americans learned ecology in elementary school as a nationwide awareness campaign attempted to raise consciousness. WOODSY THE OWL advised youngsters to “never be a dirty bird.” Thousands felt their heartstrings tugged as they viewed television advertisements depicting mountains of trash culminating with a pensive Native American shedding a single, mournful tear.

The 1970s brought growing concerns with the NUCLEAR POWER INDUSTRY. Fission plants produced hazardous by-products that were difficult to dispose of safely. An accident at a nuclear power plant at THREE MILE ISLAND near Harrisburg nearly released a lethal bubble of radioactive gas into the atmosphere in 1979. Pressure groups mounted protests against nuclear testing by the United States. President Carter announced a bold initiative to develop renewable sources of energy.

Although many environmentalists were disappointed that all goals were not reached, substantive changes did improve the quality of American air and water, and the nation had its eyes open to the need to preserve the planet.
LOVE CANAL DISASTER

One of the most famous and important examples of groundwater pollution in the U.S. is the Love Canal tragedy in Niagara Falls, New York. It is important because the pollution disaster at Love Canal, along with similar pollution calamities at that time (Times Beach, Missouri and Valley of Drums, Kentucky), helped to create Superfund, a federal program instituted in 1980 and designed to identify and clean up the worst of the hazardous chemical waste sites in the U.S.

Love Canal is a neighborhood in Niagara Falls named after a large ditch (approximately 15 m wide, 3–12 m deep, and 1600 m long) that was dug in the 1890s for hydroelectric power. The ditch was abandoned before it actually generated any power and went mostly unused for decades, except for swimming by local residents. In the 1920s Niagara Falls began dumping urban waste into Love Canal, and in the 1940s the U.S. Army dumped waste from World War II there, including waste from the frantic effort to build a nuclear bomb. Hooker Chemical purchased the land in 1942 and lined it with clay. Then, the company put into Love Canal an estimated 21,000 tons of hazardous chemical waste, including the carcinogens benzene, dioxin, and PCBs in large metal barrels and covered them with more clay. In 1953, Hooker sold the land to the Niagara Falls school board for $1, and included a clause in the sales contract that both described the land use (filled with chemical waste) and absolved them from any future damage claims from the buried waste. The school board promptly built a public school on the site and sold the surrounding land for a housing project that built 200 or so homes along the canal banks and another 1,000 in the neighborhood. During construction, the canal’s clay cap and walls were breached, damaging some of the metal barrels.

Eventually, the chemical waste seeped into people’s basements, and the metal barrels worked their way to the surface. Trees and gardens began to die; bicycle tires and the rubber soles of children’s shoes disintegrated in noxious puddles. From the 1950s to the late 1970s, residents repeatedly complained of strange odors and substances that surfaced in their yards. City officials investigated the area, but did not act to solve the problem. Local residents allegedly experienced major health problems including high rates of miscarriages, birth defects, and chromosome damage, but studies by the New York State Health Department disputed that. Finally, in 1978 President Carter declared a state of emergency at Love Canal, making it the first human-caused environmental problem to be designated that way. The Love Canal incident became a symbol of improperly stored chemical waste. Clean up of Love Canal, which was funded by Superfund and completely finished in 2004, involved removing contaminated soil, installing drainage pipes to capture contaminated groundwater for treatment, and covering it with clay and plastic. In 1995, Occidental Chemical (the modern name for Hooker Chemical) paid $102 million to Superfund for cleanup and $27 million to Federal Emergency Management Association for the relocation of more than 1,000 families. New York State paid $98 million to EPA and the US government paid $8 million for pollution by the Army. The total clean up cost was estimated to be $275 million. The only good thing about the Love Canal tragedy is that it helped to create
Superfund, which has analyzed tens of thousands of hazardous waste sites in the U.S. and cleaned up hundreds of the worst ones. Nevertheless, over 1,000 major hazardous waste sites with a significant risk to human health or the environment are still in the process of being cleaned.

- The Love Canal Tragedy
- Love Canal
- Love Canal :: Start of a Movement
- Love Canal

THREE MILE ISLAND ACCIDENT

The accident began about 4 a.m. on Wednesday, March 28, 1979, when the plant experienced a failure in the secondary, non-nuclear section of the plant (one of two reactors on the site). Either a mechanical or electrical failure prevented the main feedwater pumps from sending water to the steam generators that remove heat from the reactor core. This caused the plant’s turbine-generator and then the reactor itself to automatically shut down. Immediately, the pressure in the primary system (the nuclear portion of the plant) began to increase. In order to control that pressure, the pilot-operated relief valve (a valve located at the top of the pressurizer) opened. The valve should have closed when the pressure fell to proper levels, but it became stuck open. Instruments in the control room, however, indicated to the plant staff that the valve was closed. As a result, the plant staff was unaware that cooling water was pouring out of the stuck-open valve.

As coolant flowed from the primary system through the valve, other instruments available to reactor operators provided inadequate information. There was no instrument that showed how much water covered the core. As a result, plant staff assumed that as long as the pressurizer water level was high, the core was properly covered with water. As alarms rang and warning lights flashed, the operators did not realize that the plant was experiencing a loss-of-coolant accident. They took a series of actions that made conditions worse. The water escaping through the stuck valve reduced primary system pressure so much that the reactor coolant pumps had to be turned off to prevent dangerous vibrations. To prevent the pressurizer from filling up completely, the staff reduced how much emergency cooling water was being pumped in to the primary system. These actions starved the reactor core of coolant, causing it to overheat.

Without the proper water flow, the nuclear fuel overheated to the point at which the zirconium cladding (the long metal tubes that hold the nuclear fuel pellets) ruptured and the fuel pellets began to melt. It was later found that about half of the core melted during the early stages of the accident. Although TMI-2 suffered a severe core meltdown, the most dangerous kind of nuclear power accident, consequences outside the plant were minimal. Unlike the Chernobyl and Fukushima accidents, TMI-2’s containment building remained intact and held almost all of the accident’s radioactive material.

Federal and state authorities were initially concerned about the small releases of radioactive gases that were measured off-site by the late morning of March 28 and even more concerned about the potential threat that the reactor posed to the surrounding population. They did not know that the core had melted, but they immediately took steps to try to gain control of the reactor and ensure adequate cooling to the core. The NRC’s regional office in King of Prussia, Pa., was notified at 7:45 a.m. on March 28. By 8 a.m., NRC Headquarters in Washington, D.C., was alerted and
the NRC Operations Center in Bethesda, Md., was activated. The regional office promptly dispatched the first team of inspectors to the site and other agencies, such as the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency, also mobilized their response teams. Helicopters hired by TMI’s owner, General Public Utilities Nuclear, and the Department of Energy were sampling radioactivity in the atmosphere above the plant by midday. A team from the Brookhaven National Laboratory was also sent to assist in radiation monitoring. At 9:15 a.m., the White House was notified and at 11 a.m., all non-essential personnel were ordered off the plant’s premises.

By the evening of March 28, the core appeared to be adequately cooled and the reactor appeared to be stable. But new concerns arose by the morning of Friday, March 30. A significant release of radiation from the plant’s auxiliary building, performed to relieve pressure on the primary system and avoid curtailing the flow of coolant to the core, caused a great deal of confusion and consternation. In an atmosphere of growing uncertainty about the condition of the plant, the governor of Pennsylvania, Richard L. Thornburgh, consulted with the NRC about evacuating the population near the plant. Eventually, he and NRC Chairman Joseph Hendrie agreed that it would be prudent for those members of society most vulnerable to radiation to evacuate the area. Thornburgh announced that he was advising pregnant women and pre-school-age children within a five-mile radius of the plant to leave the area.

Within a short time, chemical reactions in the melting fuel created a large hydrogen bubble in the dome of the pressure vessel, the container that holds the reactor core. NRC officials worried the hydrogen bubble might burn or even explode and rupture the pressure vessel. In that event, the core would fall into the containment building and perhaps cause a breach of containment. The hydrogen bubble was a source of intense scrutiny and great anxiety, both among government authorities and the population, throughout the day on Saturday, March 31. The crisis ended when experts determined on Sunday, April 1, that the bubble could not burn or explode because of the absence of oxygen in the pressure vessel. Further, by that time, the utility had succeeded in greatly reducing the size of the bubble.

- Backgrounder on the Three Mile Island Accident
- Three Mile Island Accident.
- American Experience . Meltdown at Three Mile Island | PBS
- Three Mile Island
- NMAH | Three Mile Island: The Inside Story

EXXON VALDEZ SPILL

On March 24, 1989, shortly after midnight, the oil tanker Exxon Valdez struck Bligh Reef in Prince William Sound, Alaska, spilling more than 11 million gallons of crude oil. The spill was the largest in U.S. history and tested the abilities of local, national, and industrial organizations to prepare for, and respond to, a disaster of such magnitude. Many factors complicated the cleanup efforts following the spill. The size of the spill and its remote location, accessible only by helicopter and boat, made government and industry efforts difficult and tested existing plans for dealing with such an event.

The spill posed threats to the delicate food chain that supports Prince William Sound’s commercial fishing industry. Also in danger were ten million migratory shore birds and waterfowl, hundreds of sea otters, dozens of other species, such as harbor porpoises and sea lions, and several varieties of whales.
Since the incident occurred in open navigable waters, the U.S. Coast Guard’s On-Scene Coordinator had authority for all activities related to the cleanup effort. His first action was to immediately close the Port of Valdez to all traffic. A U.S. Coast Guard at USCG investigator, along with a representative from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, visited the scene of the incident to assess the damage. By noon on Friday, March 25, the Alaska Regional Response Team was brought together by teleconference, and the National Response Team was activated soon thereafter.

Alyeska, the association that represents seven oil companies who operate in Valdez, including Exxon, first assumed responsibility for the cleanup, in accordance with the area’s contingency planning. Alyeska opened an emergency communications center in Valdez shortly after the spill was reported and set up a second operations center in Anchorage, Alaska.

The Coast Guard quickly expanded its presence on the scene, and personnel from other Federal agencies also arrived to help. EPA specialists in the use of experimental bioremediation technologies assisted in the spill cleanup and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration at NOAA was involved in providing weather forecasts for Prince William Sound, allowing the cleanup team to adapt their methods to changing weather conditions. Specialists from the Hubbs Marine Institute in San Diego, California, set up a facility to clean oil from otters, and the International Bird Research Center of Berkeley, California, established a center to clean and rehabilitate oiled waterfowl.

Three methods were tried in the effort to clean up the spill:

- Burning
- Mechanical Cleanup
- Chemical Dispersants

A trial burn was conducted during the early stages of the spill. A fire-resistant boom was placed on tow lines, and two ends of the boom were each attached to a ship. The two ships with the boom between them moved slowly throughout the main portion of the slick until the boom was full of oil. The two ships then towed the boom away from the slick and the oil was ignited. The fire did not endanger the main slick or the Exxon Valdez because of the distance separating them. Because of unfavorable weather, however, no additional burning was attempted in this cleanup effort.

Shortly after the spill, mechanical cleanup was started using booms and skimmers. However, skimmers were not readily available during the first 24 hours following the spill. Thick oil and heavy kelp tended to clog the equipment.
Repairs to damaged skimmers were time consuming. Transferring oil from temporary storage vessels into more permanent containers was also difficult because of the oil’s weight and thickness. Continued bad weather slowed down the recovery efforts.

In addition, a trial application of dispersants was performed. The use of dispersants proved to be controversial. Alyeska had less than 4,000 gallons of dispersant available in its terminal in Valdez, and no application equipment or aircraft. A private company applied dispersants on March 24, with a helicopter and dispersant bucket. Because there was not enough wave action to mix the dispersant with the oil in the water, the Coast Guard representatives at the site concluded that the dispersants were not working and so their use was discontinued.

Efforts to save sensitive areas were begun early in the cleanup. Sensitive environments were identified, defined according to degree of cleanup, and then ranked for their priority for cleanup. Seal pupping locations and fish hatcheries were given the highest importance, and for these areas special cleaning techniques were approved. Despite the identification of sensitive areas and the rapid start-up of shoreline cleaning, however, wildlife rescue was slow. Adequate resources for this task did not reach the accident scene quickly enough. Through direct contact with oil or because of a loss of food resources, many birds and mammals died.

In the aftermath of the Exxon Valdez incident, Congress passed the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which required the Coast Guard to strengthen its regulations on oil tank vessels and oil tank owners and operators. Today, tank hulls provide better protection against spills resulting from a similar accident, and communications between vessel captains and vessel traffic centers have improved to make for safer sailing.

- Exxon Valdez Spill Profile
- A Brief History of the Exxon Valdez Disaster
- Spill prevention and response
Jimmy Carter, former Democratic governor of Georgia, won the presidency in 1976. Portraying himself during the campaign as an outsider to Washington politics, he promised a fresh approach to governing, but his lack of experience at the national level complicated his tenure from the start. A naval officer and engineer by training, he often appeared to be a technocrat, when Americans wanted someone more visionary to lead them through troubled times.

In economic affairs, Carter at first permitted a policy of deficit spending. Inflation rose to 10 percent a year when the Federal Reserve Board, responsible for setting monetary policy, increased the money supply to cover deficits. Carter responded by cutting the budget, but cuts affected social programs at the heart of Democratic domestic policy. In mid-1979, anger in the financial community practically forced him to appoint Paul Volcker as chairman of the Federal Reserve. Volcker was an “inflation hawk” who increased interest rates in an attempt to halt price increases, at the cost of negative consequences for the economy.

Carter also faced criticism for his failure to secure passage of an effective energy policy. He presented a comprehensive program, aimed at reducing dependence on foreign oil, that he called the “moral equivalent of war.” Opponents thwarted it in Congress.

Though Carter called himself a populist, his political priorities were never wholly clear. He endorsed government’s protective role, but then began the process of deregulation, the removal of governmental controls in economic life. Arguing that some restrictions over the course of the past century limited competition and increased consumer costs, he favored decontrol in the oil, airline, railroad, and trucking industries.

Carter’s political efforts failed to gain either public or congressional support. By the end of his term, his disapproval rating reached 77 percent, and Americans began to look toward the Republican Party again.

Carter’s greatest foreign policy accomplishment was the negotiation of a peace settlement between Egypt, under President Anwar al-Sadat, and Israel, under Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Acting as both mediator and participant, he persuaded the two leaders to end a 30-year state of war. The subsequent peace treaty was signed at the
White House in March 1979.

After protracted and often emotional debate, Carter also secured Senate ratification of treaties ceding the Panama Canal to Panama by the year 2000. Going a step farther than Nixon, he extended formal diplomatic recognition to the People’s Republic of China.

But Carter enjoyed less success with the Soviet Union. Though he assumed office with detente at high tide and declared that the United States had escaped its “inordinate fear of Communism,” his insistence that “our commitment to human rights must be absolute” antagonized the Soviet government. A SALT II agreement further limiting nuclear stockpiles was signed, but not ratified by the U.S. Senate, many of whose members felt the treaty was unbalanced. The 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan killed the treaty and triggered a Carter defense buildup that paved the way for the huge expenditures of the 1980s.

Carter’s most serious foreign policy challenge came in Iran. After an Islamic fundamentalist revolution led by Shiite Muslim leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini replaced a corrupt but friendly regime, Carter admitted the deposed shah to the United States for medical treatment. Angry Iranian militants, supported by the Islamic regime, seized the American embassy in Tehran and held 53 American hostages for more than a year. The long-running hostage crisis dominated the final year of his presidency and greatly damaged his chances for re-election.

CAMP DAVID ACCORDS AND THE ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE PROCESS

The Camp David Accords, signed by President Jimmy Carter, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in September 1978, established a framework for a historic peace treaty concluded between Israel and Egypt in March 1979. President Carter and the U.S. Government played leading roles in creating the opportunity for this agreement to occur. From the start of his administration, Carter and his Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, pursued intensive negotiations with Arab and Israeli leaders, hoping to reconvene the Geneva Conference, which had been established in December 1973 to seek an end to the Arab-Israeli dispute.

As Carter and Vance met with individual leaders from Arab countries and Israel during the spring of 1977, negotiations for a return to Geneva appeared to gain some momentum. On May 17, 1977, an Israeli election upset stunned the Carter administration as the moderate Israeli Labor Party lost for the first time in Israel’s history. Menachem Begin, the leader of the conservative Likud Party and the new Israeli Prime Minister, appeared intractable on the issue
of exchanging land for peace. His party’s commitment to “greater Israel” left Carter with an even more challenging situation during the summer of 1977.

In addition to the new reality of a Likud government in Israel, long-standing rivalries among Arab leaders also played a role in blocking substantive progress in negotiations for a Geneva conference. By early November, Egyptian President Sadat found himself frustrated by the lack of movement and made a dramatic move, announcing on November 9 that he would be willing to go to Jerusalem. This move stunned the world. Sadat would attempt to break the deadlock and to engage the Israelis directly for a Middle East settlement, eschewing any talk of returning to the Geneva Conference. Sadat’s visit led to direct talks between Egypt and Israel that December, but these talks did not generate substantive progress. By January 1978, the United States returned to a more prominent negotiation role.

During the spring and early summer of 1978, the United States attempted to find common ground with regard to Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai, West Bank, and Gaza. Egypt insisted on an Israeli withdrawal to June 4, 1967 borders in exchange for security arrangements and minor border modifications. Israel rejected Egypt’s insistence on withdrawal, especially from the West Bank and Gaza. It argued instead for some form of Palestinian autonomy during a five-year interim period followed by the possibility of sovereignty after the interim period expired. The impasse over the West Bank and Gaza led Carter to intercede directly in an attempt to resolve the deadlock.

By July 30, as Sadat expressed disappointment over the progress of negotiations and a desire to cut direct contacts off with the Israelis, Carter decided to call for a summit meeting. This meeting would bring Sadat, Begin, and Carter together at the presidential retreat in Maryland at Camp David. On August 8, the White House spokesman formally announced the meeting, which both Begin and Sadat agreed to attend in September.

The Camp David Summit, held from September 5–17, 1978, was a pivotal moment both in the history of the Arab-Israeli dispute and U.S. diplomacy. Rarely had a U.S. President devoted as much sustained attention to a single foreign policy issue as Carter did over the summit’s two-week duration. Carter’s ambitious goals for the talks included breaking the negotiating deadlock and hammering out a detailed Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement. To this end, U.S. Middle East experts produced a draft treaty text, which served as the basis for the negotiations and would be revised numerous times during the Summit. The talks proved extremely challenging, especially when the trilateral format became impossible to sustain. Instead, Carter and Vance met with the Egyptian and Israeli delegations individually over the course of the next twelve days.

The talks ranged over a number of issues, including the future of Israeli settlements and airbases in the Sinai Peninsula, but it was Gaza and the West Bank that continued to pose the most difficulty. Specifically, the delegations were divided over the applicability of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 to a long-term agreement in the territories, as well as the status of Israel’s settlements during projected negotiations on Palestinian autonomy that would follow a peace treaty. In the end, while the Summit did not produce a formal peace agreement, it successfully produced the basis for an Egyptian-Israeli peace, in the form of two “Framework” documents, which laid out the principles of a bilateral peace agreement as well as a formula for Palestinian self-government in Gaza and the West Bank.

While the conclusion of the Camp David Accords represented significant progress, the process of translating the Framework documents into a formal peace treaty proved daunting. As with the Summit, Carter’s hopes for rapid progress were high, and the President hoped that a treaty text would be concluded in a matter of days. However, the controversy that developed between the Carter administration and the Begin government over the duration of an agreed freeze in the construction of Israeli settlements was quickly followed by the administration’s failure to win support from Jordan or Saudi Arabia for the Accords. Beginning in October, a series of talks in Washington broke down as a result of Israeli concerns over the timing of their withdrawal and Egyptian reservations regarding the impact of a peace treaty on its obligations to other Arab states. Other regional developments, especially the Iranian Revolution, distracted U.S. policymakers and raised Israeli concerns about its oil supply, resulting in an impasse during the winter of 1978–1979. After Begin’s visit to the White House in early March failed to break the stalemate, Carter traveled to Israel on March 10. Having previously secured Sadat’s consent to negotiate on behalf of Egypt, the President engaged in three days of intensive talks with the Israelis. As a result of a series of compromises, notably a U.S. guarantee of Israel’s oil supply, omitting references to a “special role” for Egypt in Gaza, and Israeli agreement
to make a number of unilateral gestures to the Palestinians, the U.S. and Israeli delegations agreed to a treaty text on March 13. Sadat quickly assented to the agreement and the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty was formally signed on March 26.

Although a landmark event, the successful conclusion of the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty represented the high-water mark for the Peace Process during the Carter Presidency. After March 1979, the issue would not receive the same level of U.S. attention due to the competing demands of crises, especially those in Iran and Afghanistan, as well as Carter’s desire to reduce his personal involvement in the next round of negotiations devoted to Palestinian autonomy. For those talks, Carter appointed a “special negotiator” to represent the United States; former Special Trade Representative Robert Strauss served in this role briefly before being replaced in the fall of 1979 by Sol Linowitz, who had previously helped negotiate the Panama Canal treaty. The talks failed to produce much as Palestinian representatives refused to participate, and the gap between Egyptian and Israeli positions on Palestinian self-government, not to mention their respective stances on Israeli settlements in Gaza and the West Bank and the legal status of East Jerusalem, proved unbridgeable.

THE PANAMA CANAL AND TORRIJOS-CARTER TREATIES

One of President Jimmy Carter’s greatest accomplishments was negotiating the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, which were ratified by the U.S. Senate in 1978. These treaties gave the nation of Panama eventual control of the Panama Canal.

The United States acquired the rights to build and operate the Panama Canal during the first years of the 20th century. The Hay-Herrán Treaty, negotiated with the nation of Colombia in 1903, allowed the United States rights to the land surrounding the planned canal. The Colombian Senate refused to ratify the treaty, but Panama was in the process of seceding from Colombia. President Theodore Roosevelt therefore supported the cause of Panamanian independence with the Canal in mind. His support paid off, and on November 18, 1903, the United States signed the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty, establishing permanent U.S. rights to a Panama Canal Zone that stretched across the isthmus. Phillippe-Jean Bunau-Varilla, the Panamanian representative, entered the negotiations without formal consent from the Panamanian government, and had not lived in Panama for seventeen years. The Canal opened in 1914, but many Panamanians questioned the validity of the treaty.

As the 20th century progressed, tensions between the United States and Panama over U.S. control of the Canal grew. In 1964, a riot between U.S. residents and Panamanians, sparked over the right to fly the Panamanian flag in the Canal Zone, led to a brief interruption of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Within months, ties were re-established and both sides recognized the importance of negotiating a new agreement concerning the Canal. In 1967, the United States and Panama reached agreement on three treaties regarding the status of the Canal, however, Panamanian president Marco Robles was defeated by Arnulfo Arias Madrid in the 1968 Panamanian elections. Eleven days into Arias’s term, a coup led by Colonel Omar Torrijos deposed Arias and established a new government. Because of the political uncertainty, the negotiations suffered a major setback.

Torrijos, like his predecessors, wished to reach an agreement with the United States. U.S. officials wanted a treaty as well. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger set forth his reasoning in a meeting with President Ford in 1975: “If these [Canal] negotiations fail, we will be beaten to death in every international forum and there will be riots all over Latin America.” In 1973, the Nixon administration appointed Ellsworth Bunker, a seasoned U.S. diplomat, to
lead the U.S. delegation. Bunker focused on ensuring perpetual U.S. use of the Panama Canal, rather than perpetual U.S. control of the Panama Canal Zone. Between the years of 1973 and 1976, Bunker and his team were able to conclude a series of draft agreements with the government of Panama that formed the foundation of the eventual Torrijos-Carter Treaties.

The 1976 presidential elections proved to be a perilous time for the negotiations. While President Ford supported a Canal treaty, his primary opponent, Ronald Reagan, did not. The Democratic nominee for president, Jimmy Carter, also seemed to oppose a treaty. In an October debate with Ford, Carter vowed that he would not surrender “practical control of the Panama Canal Zone any time in the foreseeable future.”

In the weeks after his electoral victory, President-elect Carter’s views on the Canal began to change. One of his closest advisors, Sol Linowitz, supported a treaty, as did Secretary of State-designate Cyrus Vance. The two men were able to convince Carter of the importance of a new treaty, and when he took office, Carter made concluding negotiations with Panama a priority and named Linowitz co-negotiator with Bunker.

Despite the fact that both Carter and Torrijos were eager to conclude a treaty, many obstacles remained. A treaty must be ratified by the Senate with at least a two-thirds majority in order to take effect. Many Senators were opposed to giving Panama control over the Canal Zone. Most notable of these critics was Strom Thurmond (R–SC). Thurmond, who was born twelve years before the Canal was built, had a different perspective than the Carter administration. “The loss of this canal would contribute to the encirclement of the United States,” he stated in a 1978 debate. Thurmond and other conservatives also distrusted Torrijos, whom they considered to be pro-communist. Because of the strong opposition in the Senate, Carter’s consultations with Congress amounted to a second set of treaty negotiations.

The Carter administration formulated a strategy to conclude debate over the Canal and to gain Senate ratification. Carter officials worked on selling the treaty to the public, holding hundreds of forums where policymakers explained the administration’s rationale for completing a treaty. Torrijos hosted U.S. Senators in Panama, where he stressed that he was neither an enemy of the United States nor a communist. Actor John Wayne, both a conservative and a friend of Torrijos, also endorsed the negotiations. The negotiators decided that their best chance for ratification was to submit two treaties to the U.S. Senate. The first, called The Treaty Concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal, or the Neutrality Treaty, stated that the United States could use its military to defend the Panama Canal against any threat to its neutrality, thus allowing perpetual U.S. usage of the Canal. The second, called The Panama Canal Treaty, stated that the Panama Canal Zone would cease to exist on October 1, 1979, and the Canal itself would be turned over to the Panamanians on December 31, 1999. These two treaties were signed on September 7, 1977.

It took more than six months before the Senate voted. Many Senators who opposed the treaties tried to add amendments that would make it harder for other Senators to vote in favor of them. In the end, the Carter administration succeeded—but just barely. The Senate ratified the Neutrality Treaty on March 16, 1978 by a vote of 68 to 32. On April 18, they ratified The Panama Canal Treaty by an identical margin. The Carter administration revisited many of these issues with Congress when it negotiated the implementation legislation for the Torrijos-Carter Treaties. Carter signed the implementation legislation into law on September 27, 1979.

The Torrijos-Carter Treaties allowed the United States to defend itself from charges of imperialism made by Soviet-aligned states. While the treaties represented a great moment of cooperation between the United States and Panama, relations between the two countries grew contentious after the death of Torrijos in 1981. In December of 1989, President George H.W. Bush ordered an invasion of Panama to remove Panamanian leader Manuel Noreiga from power. By 1999, however, relations had grown more peaceful and the Canal was turned over to the Panamanians who have administered it ever since.

- The Camp David Accords
- Camp David Accords
- Panama Canal Treaty of 1977
- President Jimmy Carter Signed the Panama Canal Treaty
- Carter and Brezhnev sign the SALT-II treaty
The Camp David Accords - One of the highlights of the Carter Presidency was the establishment of a permanent peace between Israel and Egypt.

President Carter and Secretary Brezhnev sign the SALT II Treaty.

Some of the hostages taken during the hostage crisis.
- Jimmy Carter SALT II Treaty signing June 18 1979 archival footage
- Iran Hostage Crisis - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com
- The Hostage Crisis in Iran
7.23 References

5. Jimmy Emerson, DVM.