

## I Like Ike

Former General Dwight D. Eisenhower ran for the Presidency in 1952 as a Republican and won a landslide victory. Criticizing the Democrats about how they were handling the Korean War and the many spies that had been caught in the government, “Ike” as he was

called, won 39 states. Eisenhower’s Presidency was a time of great prosperity. The American economy was booming with jobs being created because of expanding suburbs, highways and families. Overseas, Eisenhower continued the policy of stopping the spread of communism by increasing our nuclear supply and refusing to trade with the Communists. Overall, many Americans remember Eisenhower’s time in office as a time of stability. Ike steered clear of controversy and turmoil and returned America to peace and prosperity.



“The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office.”

*Dwight D. Eisenhower*

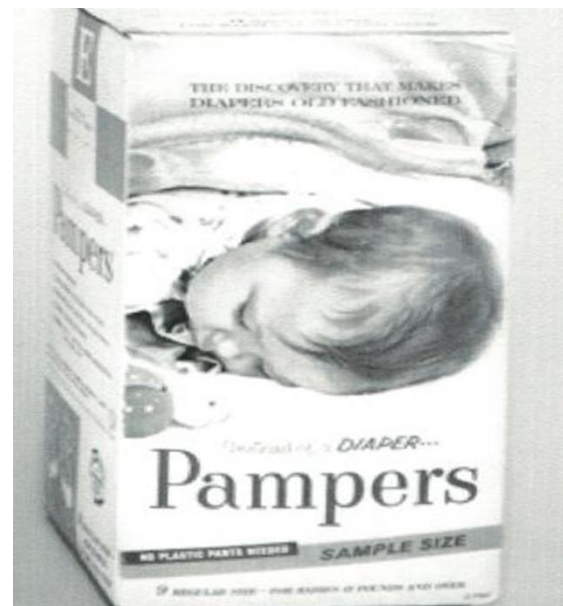
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## The Baby Boom

During both the Great Depression and World War II, many American families had made the decision not to have children. Now, after the war and with the return of prosperity, a Baby Boom occurred. From 1946 to 1964 the average woman had 4 children (up from 2

children before). This surge in the birthrate was a wonderful thing for the American economy. Jobs were created to make everything from diapers to cribs to schools for the millions of new children being born annually. Additionally, these extra family members caused a boost in spending on things like food and services like medical care and teaching. Unfortunately, the one drawback to the Baby Boom is the danger it presents to Social Security. All of the “Boomers” will be retiring in the next 20 years and the fear is that there won’t be enough Social Security money to support them all.





## Television

During the decade of the 1950's, television increased greatly in popularity. Prices of television sets fell throughout the decade allowing regular folks the opportunity to purchase one.

Television immediately had a positive impact on the American economy. Jobs were created to make, ship, sell, and repair the sets. Also, many flocked to Hollywood to enter the acting, producing or directing fields. T.V. also encouraged spending in America through the many commercials shown daily. Shows such as Father Knows Best and Leave it to Beaver dominated to airwaves during the 1950's.

Shows such as this presented an "ideal" middle class white family who really didn't face many big problems at all.





## The Growth of Suburbs

At the end of World War II a law was passed with the purpose of helping our returning soldiers adjust to life back in the United States.

The G.I. Bill of Rights provided returning soldiers with money to get an education start a business or build a home. With the passage of the G.I. Bill, millions of veterans began buying land and building homes in suburbs across the country. So many homes were being constructed that at one point 36 homes were being built each day! This boom in construction created thousands of construction jobs building the homes and supplying them with electricity and water. Roads needed to be built to connect the communities and service jobs like firemen, police, nurses, doctors and teachers needed to be hired in these communities. Additionally, businesses such as malls, grocery stores, drive-in theatres, and restaurants (McDonalds was founded in 1955) began to pop up in the new communities.





## The Economy

What the decade of the 1950's is probably most known for is the prosperity we experienced. Many Americans worried that we were going to return to the Great

Depression after the soldiers came home but nothing could be further from the truth. High paying jobs were plentiful and easy to find. The construction boom meant that literally millions of homes would need to be built, furnished, and serviced. The Baby Boom created spending on everything imaginable from bottles to cribs to toys. Military equipment, automobiles and highways were being built at record rates. Also in the 1950's American families spent more money than ever before. This increased spending created jobs all over America in restaurants, vacation spots, malls, stores and entertainment sites.



The new 1954 Chevrolet Deluxe Coupe. With four great reasons Chevrolet offers the most beautiful choice of models in a class.

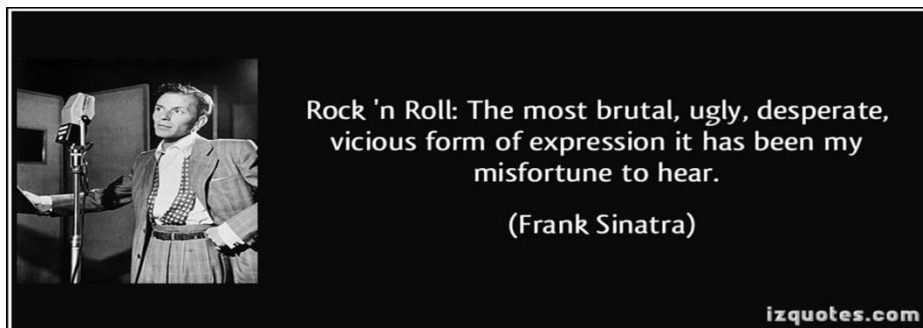
Four good reasons why new Chevrolet families are "having a wonderful time" . . .



## Rock and Roll

During the decade of the 1950's, much like the 1920's, youth and its culture were celebrated. One of the most controversial parts of 1950's youth culture was the emergence of Rock and Roll. Owing its history to

Southern Rhythm and Blues, this guitar heavy, fast moving new style of music was loved by kids and teens and absolutely hated by parents and adults. Listening to Rock and Roll became a symbol of rebelliousness and was insanely popular almost immediately. Early star Elvis Presley did little to help Rock and Roll's popularity with adults as well. Often singing to crowds of screaming teenage girls, Presley was criticized for both his suggestive lyrics and also his sometimes controversial dancing style. Whatever the criticisms, Rock and Roll proved it was here to stay and is still one of our most popular forms of music.



Rock 'n Roll: The most brutal, ugly, desperate, vicious form of expression it has been my misfortune to hear.

(Frank Sinatra)

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## Civil Rights Movement



In America in the 1950's, segregation of the races was still legal. Many African Americans returning from Europe and Asia after serving in the military began to call

for an end to this policy. The law stated that blacks and whites could be kept separate as long as the facilities were equal. As anyone could plainly see, facilities in the United States, especially in the South, were nowhere near equal. So, throughout the 1950's leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and the NAACP won many court battles that declared segregation illegal. Unfortunately, even though battles were won in court, true equality still did not come. Thousands of beatings, lynchings, and murders continued in the South and economic equality in the form of equal job hiring and pay was still not happening. By the end of the 1950's some African Americans began to look to more violent leaders because of these frustrations.

