

New York City College of Technology

Hippie Movement

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## **Leading causes to 1960 hippie movement**

The 1960s American hippie movement is often attributed to the many domestic and international struggles that defined the previous decade. The 1950s was far from a peaceful era, with major events such as the Korean War (1950-1953) and the hydrogen bomb test in 1954 marking the beginning of the decade. The Korean War, which resulted in an estimated 2.5 million deaths, had a profound impact on the American psyche. Meanwhile, the hydrogen bomb test was groundbreaking and terrifying, as it was the first time a thermonuclear device was detonated.

In the middle of the decade, the African-American Civil Rights Movement began and led to significant events like Brown V. Board (1954) and the integration of Little Rock Central High School in 1957. The Civil Rights Movement was a monumental turning point in American history, as African-Americans fought for their rights and equality in a society deeply divided by race. The 1950s were also marked by rapid technological advancements, with the Soviet launch of Sputnik I in 1957 sparking a billion-dollar space race between the United States and the Soviet Union. The space race created significant tension between the two superpowers, as both countries strove to demonstrate their technological superiority.

Despite popular beliefs, the 1950s were not a perfect post-war paradise and were as turbulent as the 1960s. These events helped give rise to the hippie movement, which rejected mainstream values, embraced counter-culture, and promoted peace, love, and freedom. The hippie movement was a direct response to the social, political, and cultural tensions of the 1950s and helped shape the culture of the 1960s and beyond.

## **Hippie Culture**

In the 1960s, a movement known as the hippie culture emerged. It was comprised of predominantly white, middle-class teenagers and young adults from the baby boomer generation. They felt alienated from mainstream society, which they believed was consumed by materialism and oppression. As a result, they pursued an unconventional lifestyle that provided them with a sense of marginality and belonging to a community of like-minded individuals, (Britannic,2024). The hippies' unique fashion sense was also a notable feature. They favored long hair, casual and unconventional clothing, and vivid "psychedelic" colors. Beards were popular among men, while both men and women wore sandals and beads. Flowing "granny dresses" and rimless glasses were also popular among women and men alike.

Hippies generally rejected traditional society and did not pursue conventional careers, although some established small businesses that catered to other hippies. Critics noted that their ability to "opt-out" of society was a privilege that not everyone had, and that their involvement in the civil rights movement was inconsistent with their overall lifestyle. Despite this, the hippie movement had a significant impact on American culture and paved the way for many social and political changes that followed in the subsequent decades, (Britannic,2024)

## **Blue Jeans**

The 1960s proved to be a pivotal period in American culture, marked by the rise of the hippie movement. Blue jeans became the iconic clothing of this era, embodying the free love movement and representing a significant shift in societal norms. More than just a fashion statement, blue jeans symbolized freedom and anti-establishment sentiment for the hippies. Individuality was emphasized during this time, and people frequently decorated their jeans with embroidery, rhinestones, patches, and other embellishments. These customizations helped to express each wearer's unique personality and style.

## Short Story

Growing up in a conservative town in California not far from your famous Hollywood actors in Los Angeles, a young woman named Savanna was a free spirit young lady who was always told what to do by everyone around her, she stayed in school, she followed her parents dress code and was her parents joy. As she got older she began to realize she wanted to do things on her own, dress on her own, have her own beliefs and own practices. She soon began to develop an idea of rebellion. A rebel who rejected the conservative values of her community. She longed for a way to express her individuality and to challenge the status quo.

One day, while browsing in a thrift store, Savanna came across a pair of blue jeans. They were unlike any she had ever seen before. They were made of a sturdy denim fabric and had a rough, worn-in look. She knew immediately that she had to have them. When Savanna got home she ran to her room to hide the garment from her parents. Knowing that they would never approve of them she continued to hide them and only wear them out on the weekends with her friends. Her style soon began to change from preppy to hippy in a matter of weeks. Her favorite outfit fit as her iconic bell bottom low rise jeans and a denim vest with her favorite vibrant accessories.

As she walked through the streets wearing her new jeans, Savanna felt a sense of empowerment. She knew that wearing jeans was considered rebellious and that it went against the dress code of her conservative community. But she didn't care. The jeans made her feel like she was part of a movement, one that challenged the norms and values of her society.

Before long, Savanna's friends began to notice her jeans. They too were inspired by the idea of wearing something that symbolized rebellion and individuality. Soon, the local thrift stores were selling out of jeans, and young people throughout the town were wearing them proudly. The trend caught on quickly, spreading to nearby towns and cities. Before long, jeans became a symbol of rebellion and individuality across the country. The hippie movement embraced jeans as a symbol of counter-culture, freedom, and anti-establishment values. As Savanna looked around at the sea of denim that surrounded her, she knew that she had started something special. She had helped create a movement that challenged the status quo and encouraged people to express their individuality. And she did it all with a simple pair of blue jeans.

## References

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