



Daily Life in the United States, 1940-1959: Shifting Worlds

Eugenia Kaledin

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Examine the everyday lives of ordinary Americans from the 1940s and 1950s and discover how very different the two decades were. World War II affected Americans and the way they behaved, not only in the 1940s, but also in the years that followed when the depression that preceded the war was replaced with an economic boom. Explore how women's roles and lives changed during these two very distinct decades, how politics and political decisions impacted all walks of life, and what the advent of growing technology, much of it developed during the war, meant to the general population.

What was it like to be a woman suddenly earning her own money while men were off fighting? How did children and teenagers contribute to the war effort? How did housing change in postwar America? What pastimes were popular during these two decades and how did they reflect the times? These questions and others are explored in detail, encouraging students, teachers, and interested readers to recognize the tremendous shift in society between the war years and the atomic age that immediately followed. This text presents the 1940s as a time of social problems that existed alongside community commitment to the war, while the 1950s are presented as a time when exciting social change such as the beginning of the civil rights movement and the building of Levittowns occurred. After the war ordinary people began to question long-accepted ideas. The exploration of these everyday details provides a rich look at two very important decades in our country's history.

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