

Big Question: What has changed in our decade for women and what has stayed the same?
(For the 1950's in western society)

Thesis: Women's professional lives changed but their private lives stayed the same.

- a) 5-10 Minute Presentation
- b) Innovative poster design
- c) Everyone should speak

Summarizes your understanding of the texts you researched to support your thesis

- Explains the relevance of the texts you researched to the project as a whole
- Chooses different formats and styles of texts to research
- Connects researched texts' ideas together

Shows consideration of who created the texts researched and for what purpose

- Links your understanding of the purpose and audience of the texts to the meaning and impact of the texts researched

Compares the continuities and changes for women across assigned time period in the Twentieth Century

- Contrasts the continuities and changes for women across assigned time period in the Twentieth Century
- Reaches a conclusion about both continuity and change for women in the Twentieth Century, during your assigned time period, for their lives and conditions of their lives

Outline:

a) Intro

- Thesis: Women's professional lives changed but their private lives stayed the same.

b) **What are the customs in the time period for marriage/ courtship? property and ownership? - Kai**

The customs for marriage and courtship actively Millions of men joined the armed forces, women took on an active role in World War II and took on many paid jobs that previously had been held by men.

The constant for women's lives in the 1950s was a as always was as dreary as ever, and even more complicated. The strong gender roles of the 1940s persisted — and in some ways, were deeper than ever as women were forced out of the factories and back into the home.

The 1950's hit sitcom Leave it to Beaver, epitomizes women's role in marriage and ownership. June, the wife and mother, plays a stereotypical woman for the time period.

She is a stay at home mom, dedicated to cleaning and most importantly, cooking. The show emphasizes the role of a wife in the kitchen. Women were expected to be housewives and not pursue high education in the 1950s. - This idea of women being owned by men and having to be caretakers has stayed continuous throughout history - in the Taming of the Shrew, Petruchio often describes Katherina as his property and aims to tame her into the perfect housewife stereotype - this degraded the CONDITION of women's lives as it reduced their freedom

American society in the 1950s was geared toward the family. Marriage and children were part of the national agenda. - This held economic value as people were creating a greater workforce - similar to how we discussed in Elizabethan times the church wanted more children to be born so there would be more followers of the church

c) How were women educated and employed? - Emily

- Early 20th century and long before - The role of the women is the caretaker
- Some were employed in areas branching off of this such as servants, dressmakers, teachers, seamstresses, tailors, housekeepers, launderers (as we saw with Delia who was a launderer in "Sweat" by Zora Neale Hurston), milliners and saleswomen but their key role was as the caretaker for the family
- Even when women pursued education beyond public schooling it was often to learn social and domestic skills for their homes rather than to pursue a career
- "Women teachers, paid less than men, were kept in the lower ranks and were supervised by male administrators. They were mainly young women, who left or were let go when they married and who rarely gained seniority or administrative responsibility." (Gaskell, 2014)
- But then left for WW2 leaving a job void
- Because of this - "employers hired single and then married women to do men's jobs, once again for lower wages. Incentives, eg, free government nurseries and income-tax concessions, were provided to attract married women into the labour force. At the end of the war the incentives were withdrawn and married women were again encouraged

and in some cases regulated out of the labour force.” (Connelly, 2006) - Continuously over time it has been monetary incentives from large organizations which has shaped change or prevented it but unfortunately degraded the CONDITION of women’s working lives

- Although the men returned women had made a mark on the workforce and some chose to stay
- “In 1957, 70% of working women held clerical positions, assembly lines or service jobs. 12% held a profession and 6% held management positions.” (Stoneham, n.d.) - Their professional lives changed as now they were holding higher paying, more advanced careers and there were more women in the workforce - the shape and CONDITION of their life was improving
- But the change wasn’t fully welcomed
- “Men feared that the cheap labour of large numbers of women would undercut their wages; employers and moral reformers were concerned that work would impair the femininity and high moral standards of women and distract them from their true calling as wives and mothers.” (Connelly, 2006) - Men have continuously feared women changing their societal roles (in changing of the Shrew we can see with Katherina, being a Shrew, being shunned) and this degrades the CONDITION of women’s lives as they are not easily allowed to change their domestic obligations
- A Societal commentator thought that “Women were in fact endangering the family by not being there for their children and husbands” if they were working too much or spending too much time at school - With their professional change, men did not want this to change their private lives + these comments were likely created by men to scare men and women into making sure traditional feminine roles were followed and perpetuated the continuity of the feminine domestic stereotype

- Between 1951 - 1994 married women percentage grew from 11% to 57.6% - Domestic lives were not having the opportunity to change due to male fears and the new prominence of marriage
- Advertisements and TV shows perpetuated the female stereotypes of stay at home mothers who were dedicated to their families and nothing else which helped this stereotypical domestic life continue on - these texts were created by organizations for the monetary reasons because women being the main ones to purchase home care products - Kind of like how it worked Petruchio to get involved with Katherina for the monetary gain of her dowry
- Society also says husbands are more important than college degrees for women - This stayed continuous throughout the 1950's as mothers were needed
- Many women weren't just forced to stay at home but wanted to because this was the desired and trendy lifestyle - one that was filled with idyllic imagery of gardens and peaceful suburbs
- For example, a poem at the time by William Jay Smith titled "The World Below the window" describes a beautiful life in a house with a well-tended to garden - Texts like these were likely created by men living in suburbia to merely express romantic household ideals period but unknowingly impacted women to maintain them
- College female enrolment dropped in the 50's because of this
- Those who went to college were encouraged to do so to learn how to be house wives:
- Lynn White, president of Mills College said that "the curriculum for female students should prepare women to foster the intellectual and emotional life of her family and community" (White, 1950) (Educating Our Daughters by Lynn White) - Once again, keeping the CONDITION stereotypical domestic lives continuous - Text created by a women for

other women to help them make sure their daughters succeeded in societal norms and likely sparked a domestic path for many young girls, continuing on the stereotypical gender role

- So women although we're making changes in their professional lives stayed the same in their domestic lives

d) What were the expectations for women's clothing - personal appearance, and the standards of beauty? - Kai

In the 1950s, economic gains created a new consumer-driven society and enabled a family to live quite comfortably on one income. Women who had taken factory work during World War II quit or were fired. As people strove for a conservative simplicity, the housewife became the feminine ideal of the day.

e) What did women think? What did women write? - Alex

f) What historically significant event occurred during this time period for women? - Adlih

WW2 was a significant event that sparked change in women's professional lives
The British Army enrolled 460,000 women into the army during WW2, 300,000 women served in US military uniform

Laws against married women joining the army became eased

With many young men gone women's sports leagues became introduced (but closed after the war)

Many women began to become employed and entered the workforce as organizations offered monetary and childcare incentives

But despite these outward professional changes, behind closed doors some inequalities for women stayed consistent

After the war, many of the plants that women were working at closed and any jobs left were given to returning veterans/ men who had priority - Men continuously stayed first

"The working-class woman during this time was earning substantially less money than a man doing the same job." (Please ask Adlih as to where this quote came from)

- And when they protested these inequalities:

“These women were protesting for equal wages while getting laid off, beaten and scrutinized while doing so.”

- Despite changing their professional lives moving into the spotlight of the workforce they still faced the continuous evil of sexism in private

g) Legal - Alex

h) Conclusion

- Recap all points and use them to prove the thesis (restated in different words)