

CHAPTER

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Section 1

AMERICAN LIVES

Jackie Robinson

Driven to Break Barriers

"There were [in 1949] other blacks in baseball—and we suffered much abuse ourselves—but [Jackie] was still the man who integrated baseball, and he lived under more pressure than any human being I met in my life (and that includes Martin Luther King, Jr.)."—former Dodger teammate Don Newcombe (1994)

All his life, Jackie Robinson struggled to break down racial barriers. In 1947, he did so in a spectacular way by becoming the first African American to play major-league baseball. His will to win baseball games made him one of the top stars of the sport.

Robinson (1919–1972) was a star athlete in high school and college, where he excelled in seven sports. When World War II broke out, he entered the army. He applied for officer training school but was refused because of his race. Robinson protested the injustice and won: he and other African Americans were admitted to the school. Later in his army career, he refused to move to the back of a bus simply because he was black. He was court-martialed but acquitted.

After the war, Robinson began to play professional baseball. However, he played for a team in the Negro Leagues, because regular major-league baseball had a ban on African-American players. At about this time, though, Branch Rickey, co-owner of the Brooklyn Dodgers, decided to end that ban, and he started looking for just the right African-American ballplayer to break the color line. He had to be talented, with a background beyond criticism—including smoking and drinking. He had to have unshakable self-control. He had to have a “must-win” attitude. Rickey felt that Jackie Robinson would be ideal—if he would take the responsibility.

Rickey asked for a meeting with Robinson. To test Robinson’s response to what he would hear from fans and opposing players, Rickey heaped verbal abuse and confrontations on him for nearly three hours. Robinson finally asked Rickey if he wanted “a ballplayer who’s afraid to fight back.” Rickey answered, “I want a player with guts enough not to fight back.” Robinson accepted the terms and promised there would be no incidents. Rickey then signed him to play second base for the 1946 season with the Montreal Royals, a Dodgers team in the International League.

Robinson’s performance in the minor leagues was sensational. He had the highest batting average

in the league and led his team to the Junior World Series Championship.

In 1947, Robinson joined the Dodgers. Throughout the season, he endured hate mail and threats from strangers; foul names and taunts from fans, and close pitches and hard slides from opponents. Remembering his promise, he responded simply by outplaying his opponents. With timely hitting, bold baserunning, and steady fielding, he became a leader. Some of his teammates were reluctant to play with him at first. However, his talents changed their minds. As one recalled, he was accepted “because everybody wanted to win.” Win they did. Robinson helped lead the Dodgers to a National League pennant in 1947 and won baseball’s award as rookie of the year.

Robinson continued to play winning baseball. Daring baserunning was his trademark. Nineteen times he stole home, a difficult feat. In ten years, he led the Dodgers to six league pennants and a world championship.

Robinson retired in 1957, and in 1962 he was voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. He died from complications of high blood pressure and diabetes at age 53, a few weeks after his uniform number was retired by the Dodgers, now based in Los Angeles. As a tribute for the 50th anniversary of his milestone, major-league baseball dedicated its 1997 season to Robinson. All players and umpires wore a “Breaking Barriers” arm patch, and all teams used special baseballs with the commemorative logo in their home openers.

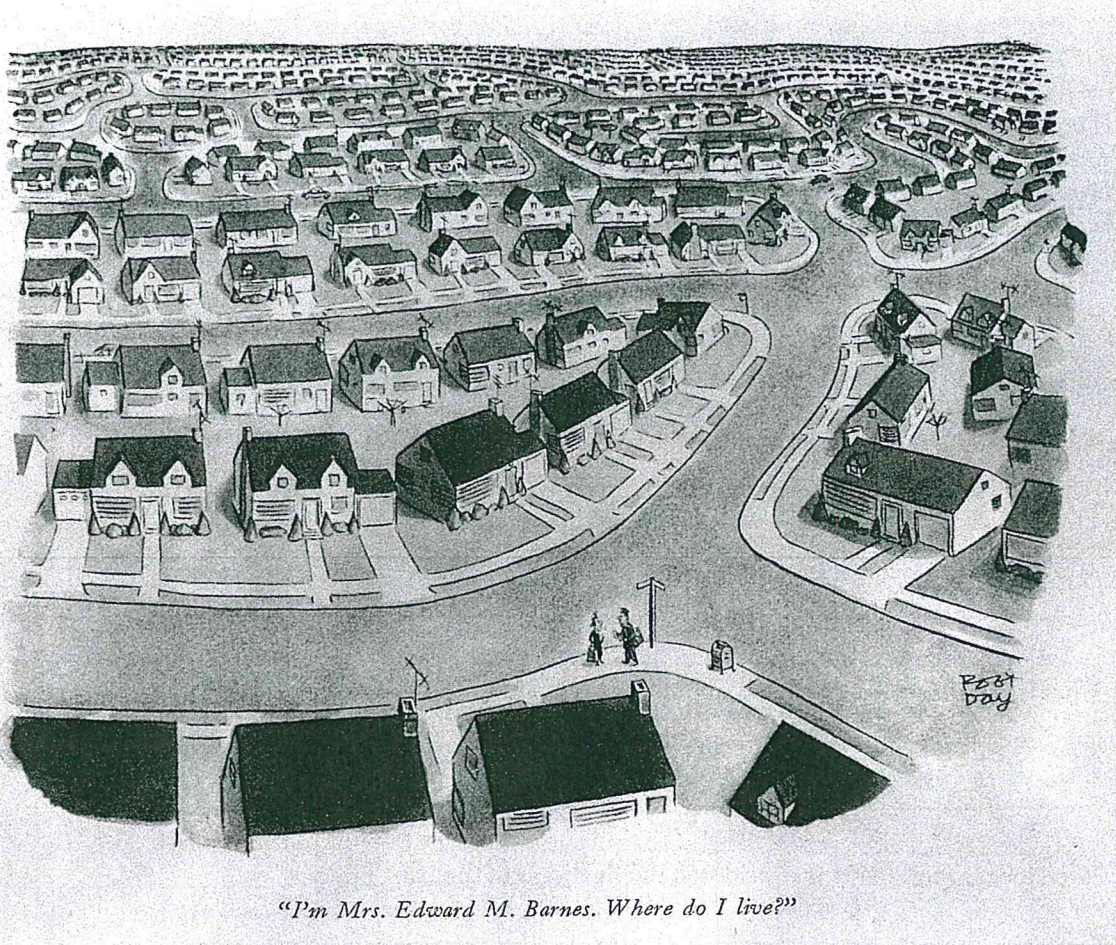
Questions

1. Many people agree that Robinson was not the best player in the Negro League in the mid-1940s. If so, why did Rickey choose him?
2. Do you think professional sports would be the same today if it had not been for Robinson?
3. Do you think Robinson’s success with the Dodgers had any impact beyond sports?

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Section 1

PRIMARY SOURCE **Cartoon**

This cartoon spoofs the housing developments of the 1950s that gave Americans the cookie-cutter homes and neighborhoods they craved. According to the cartoon, what was one negative aspect of postwar suburban developments?



Copyright © 1954 Drawing by Robert Day/New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

Discussion Questions

1. What words or phrases would you use to describe the housing development depicted in this cartoon?
2. How do you think the woman in the cartoon, Mrs. Edward M. Barnes, feels about living in a suburban development?
3. Why do you think Americans in the 1950s wanted to live in a housing development like this one? Cite evidence from your textbook to support your opinion.

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GEOGRAPHY APPLICATION: HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION

The Baby Boom

Section 2

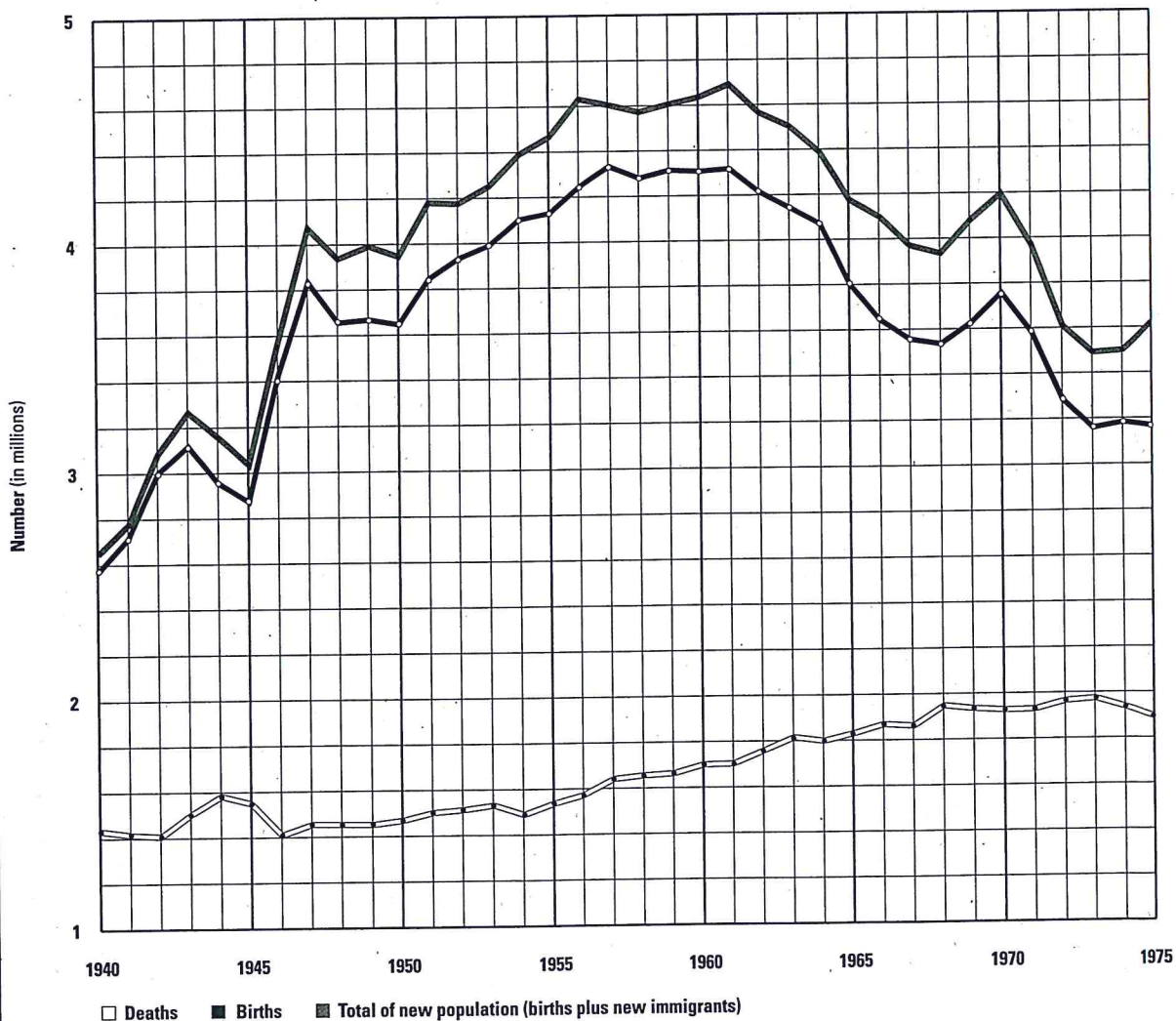
Directions: Read the paragraphs below and study the graph carefully. Then answer the questions that follow.

The term *baby boom* refers to the years 1946 to 1964 when the population of the United States soared due to a dramatic postwar increase in the annual birthrate. The birthrate had been declining fairly steadily for decades, falling below 20 births per 1,000 people for the first time in 1931. In 1941, however, the birthrate edged back up over 20 and stayed above that figure through 1964.

At the height of the baby boom, from 1954 to

1961, more than 4 million babies were born in the United States every year. Many women who might have stayed childless at other times decided to have children. One sociologist wrote about the "pro-child social values" that characterized the period: "Those who didn't want children were an embarrassed and embattled minority. It [not having children] was almost evidence of a physical or mental deficiency."

The U.S. Baby Boom in Perspective, 1940–1975



Interpreting Text and Visuals

1. What happened to the number of births in the two years prior to 1946? _____

2. What was probably the major cause of the beginning of the baby boom? _____

3. Look at the graph's 1959 totals. What does the 4.30 level indicate? _____

What does the level of 4.60 indicate? _____

What does the level of 1.66 indicate? _____

By how much did the U.S. population increase in that year? _____

4. Nearly 60,000 more people immigrated to the United States in 1965 than in 1964.

Why then does the top line in the graph dip down between those years? _____

5. What is significant about the number of births in 1972? (Hint: Look at the number of births for the first year of the baby boom.) _____

Why do you think 1964 is considered the final year of the baby boom? _____

6. Contrast the patterns of births and deaths during the years 1940–1975. _____

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Section 2

PRIMARY SOURCE *from The Organization Man*

Through the "looking glass" of the typical suburban community of Park Forest, Illinois, William H. Whyte, Jr., examined 1950s beliefs and values. As you read this excerpt from Whyte's study, think about his concept of the organization man.

This book is about the organization man. If the term is vague, it is because I can think of no other way to describe the people I am talking about. They are not the workers, nor are they the white-collar people in the usual, clerk sense of the word. These people only work for The Organization. The ones I am talking about *belong* to it as well. They are the ones of our middle class who have left home, spiritually as well as physically, to take the vows of organization life, and it is they who are the mind and soul of our great self-perpetuating institutions. Only a few are top managers or ever will be. In a system that makes such hazy terminology as "junior executive" psychologically necessary, they are of the staff as much as the line, and most are destined to live poised in a middle area that still awaits satisfactory euphemism. . . .

The corporation man is the most conspicuous example, but he is only one, for the collectivization so visible in the corporation has affected almost every field of work. Blood brother to the business trainee off to join Du Pont is the seminary student who will end up in the church hierarchy, the doctor headed for the corporate clinic, the physics Ph.D. in a government laboratory, the intellectual on the foundation-sponsored team project, the engineering graduate in the huge drafting room at Lockheed, the young apprentice in a Wall Street law factory.

They are all, as they so often put it, in the same boat. Listen to them talk to each other over the front lawns of their suburbia and you cannot help but be struck by how well they grasp the common denominators which bind them. Whatever the differences in their organization ties, it is the common problems of collective work that dominate their attentions, and when the Du Pont man talks to the research chemist or the chemist to the army man, it is these problems that are uppermost. The word *collective* most of them can't bring themselves to use—except to describe foreign countries or organizations they don't work for—but they are keenly aware of how much more deeply beholden they are to organization than were their elders. They are wry about it, to be sure; they talk of the "treadmill," the "rat race," of the inability to control one's direction. But they have no

great sense of plight; between themselves and organization they believe they see an ultimate harmony. . . .

[My concern in this book] is the principle impact that organization life has had on the individuals within it. A collision has been taking place—indeed, hundreds of thousands of them, and in the aggregate they have been producing what I believe is a major shift in American ideology.

Officially, we are a people who hold to the Protestant Ethic. . . . [T]here is almost always the thought that pursuit of individual salvation through hard work, thrift, and competitive struggle is the heart of the American achievement.

But the harsh facts of organization life simply do not jibe with these precepts. This conflict is certainly not a peculiarly American development. . . .

It is in America, however, that the contrast between the old ethic and current reality has been most apparent—and most poignant. Of all peoples it is we who have led in the public worship of individualism. . . . We kept on, and as late as the twenties, when big organization was long since a fact, affirmed the old faith as if nothing had really changed at all.

Today many still try, and it is the members of the kind of organization most responsible for the change, the corporation, who try the hardest. It is the corporation man [who] . . . honestly wants to believe he follows the tenets he extols, and if he extols them so frequently it is, perhaps, to shut out a nagging suspicion that he, too, the last defender of the faith, is no longer pure. Only by using the language of individualism to describe the collective can he stave off the thought that he himself is in a collective.

from William H. Whyte, Jr., The Organization Man (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956), 3–5.

Discussion Questions

1. What characteristics defined an organization man?
2. What conflict does Whyte see between the American value of individualism and the fact of organization life?
3. Do you think the conflict Whyte identifies for the 1950s still exists today? Explain.

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Section 3

SKILLBUILDER PRACTICE *Primary and Secondary Sources*

How did mainstream America in the 1950s react to rock 'n' roll? One way to find out is to look at the media reports of the time. Read this excerpt from a Time magazine article, then answer the questions at the bottom of the page. (See Skillbuilder Handbook, p. R22.)

In Boston, Roman Catholic leaders urged that the offensive music be boycotted. In Hartford, city officials considered revoking the State Theater's license after several audiences got too rowdy during a musical stage show. In Washington the police chief recommended banning such shows from the National Guard Armory after brawls in which several people were injured. In Minneapolis a theater manager withdrew a film featuring the music after a gang of youngsters left the theater, snake-danced around town and smashed windows. In Birmingham champions of white supremacy decried it as part of a Negro plot against the whites. At a wild concert in Atlanta's baseball park one night, fists and beer bottles were thrown, four youngsters were arrested.

The object of all this attention is a musical style known as "rock 'n' roll," which has captivated U.S. adolescents as swing captivated prewar teen-agers and ragtime vibrated those of the '20s. It does for music what a motorcycle club at full throttle does for a quiet Sunday afternoon.

Rock 'n' roll is based on Negro blues, but in a self-conscious style which underlines the primitive qualities of the blues with malice aforethought.

Characteristics: An unrelenting, socking syncopation that sounds like a bull whip; a choleric saxophone honking mating-call sounds; an electric guitar turned up so loud that its sound shatters and splits; a vocal group that shudders and exercises violently to the beat while roughly chanting either a near-nonsense phrase or a moronic lyric in hillbilly idiom.

Sample:

*Long tall Sally has a lot on the ball
Nobody cares if she's long and tall
Oh, Baby! Yeh-heh-heh-hes, Baby
Whoo-oo-oo-oo, Baby! I'm havin' me
some fun tonight, yeah. . . .*

Does rock-'n'-roll music itself encourage any form of juvenile delinquency? . . . Pop Record Maker Mitch Miller, no rock 'n' roller, sums up for the defense: "You can't call any music immoral. If anything is wrong with rock 'n' roll, it is that it makes a virtue out of monotony." For the prosecution, the best comment comes indirectly from Actress Judy Holliday in *Born Yesterday*: It's just not couth, that's all.

from *Time* (June 18, 1956), 54.

1. What is the source of this information? _____
2. Is the source qualified to report on this subject? Explain. _____

3. What is the tone of the article? _____

4. Are there more statements of fact or of opinion? Underline all statements of opinion in the article.

5. Would this be a good source of information about attitudes toward rock 'n' roll in the '50s? Explain.

CHAPTER
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RETEACHING ACTIVITY *Popular Culture*

Section 3

A. Matching

Match the description in the second column with the person in the first column. Write the appropriate letter next to the word.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. Allen Ginsburg | a. called television a "vast wasteland" |
| _____ 2. Miles Davis | b. unofficial "King of Rock 'n' Roll" |
| _____ 3. Jack Kerouac | c. prominent beat poet |
| _____ 4. James Dean | d. innovative jazz artist |
| _____ 5. Elvis Presley | e. popular fifties movie star |
| _____ 6. Newton Minow | f. wrote beat novel <i>On the Road</i> |

B. Completion

Complete each sentence with the appropriate term or name.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| television | beats |
| racism | African Americans |
| western | conformity |
| Asian Americans | poverty |

- For the most part, television in the 1950s omitted references to controversial issues, such as _____ and _____.
- Rock 'n' roll owes much of its sound to earlier music performed by _____.
- By 1960, a _____ could be found in nearly 90 percent of American homes.
- Members of the beat movement rebelled against what they viewed as too much _____ in America.
- One popular genre of the early television was the _____.

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Section 4

PRIMARY SOURCE *from The Other America*

Sociologist Michael Harrington studied the plight of the "invisible" poor. His shocking report spurred Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson to fight the War on Poverty. As you read this excerpt from Harrington's study, compare "other" Americans with those who realized the American dream in the 1950s.

There is a familiar America. It is celebrated in speeches and advertised on television and in the magazines. It has the highest mass standard of living the world has ever known.

In the 1950s this America worried about itself, yet even its anxieties were products of abundance. The title of a brilliant book [John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society*] was widely misinterpreted, and the familiar America began to call itself "the affluent society." There was introspection about Madison Avenue and tail fins; there was discussion of the emotional suffering taking place in the suburbs. In all this, there was an implicit assumption that the basic grinding economic problems had been solved in the United States. In this theory the nation's problems were no longer a matter of basic human needs, of food, shelter, and clothing. Now they were seen as qualitative, a question of learning to live decently amid luxury.

While this discussion was carried on, there existed another America. In it dwelt somewhere between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000 citizens of this land. They were poor. They still are.

To be sure, the other America is not impoverished in the same sense as those poor nations where millions cling to hunger as a defense against starvation. This country has escaped such extremes. That does not change the fact that tens of millions of Americans are, at this very moment, maimed in body and spirit, existing at levels beneath those necessary for human decency. If these people are not starving, they are hungry, and sometimes fat with hunger, for that is what cheap foods do. They are without adequate housing and education and medical care.

The Government has documented what this means to the bodies of the poor, and the figures will be cited throughout this book. But even more basic, this poverty twists and deforms the spirit. The American poor are pessimistic and defeated, and they are victimized by mental suffering to a degree unknown in Suburbia.

This book is a description of the world in which these people live; it is about the other America.

Here are the unskilled workers, the migrant farm workers, the aged, the minorities, and all the others who live in the economic underworld of American life. In all this, there will be statistics, and that offers the opportunity for disagreement among honest and sincere men. I would ask the reader to respond critically to every assertion, but not to allow statistical quibbling to obscure the huge, enormous, and intolerable fact of poverty in America. For, when all is said and done, that fact is unmistakable, whatever its exact dimensions, and the truly human reaction can only be outrage. . . .

There are perennial reasons that make the other America an invisible land.

Poverty is often off the beaten track. It always has been. The ordinary tourist never left the main highway, and today he rides interstate turnpikes. He does not go into the valleys of Pennsylvania where the towns look like the movie sets of Wales in the thirties. He does not see the company houses in rows, the rutted roads (the poor always have bad roads whether they live in the city, in towns, or on farms), and everything is black and dirty. And even if he were to pass through such a place by accident, the tourist would not meet the unemployed men in the bar or the women coming home from a run-away sweatshop.

from Michael Harrington, The Other America: Poverty in the United States (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962), 9–11.

Research Options

1. According to Harrington's study, 40 to 50 million Americans were poor in the 1950s. Use a resource such as *The World Almanac and Book of Facts* to find out how many Americans are poor today. Has the number of poor people in the United States increased or decreased since the 1950s?
2. Research the government programs that were initiated under the Kennedy and Johnson administrations to help the poor in the United States. Then make a chart to share your findings.

CHAPTER
19**RETEACHING ACTIVITY** *The Other America***Section 4****Reading Comprehension**

Choose the best answer for each item. Write the letter of your answer in the blank.

- _____ 1. "White flight" involved the mass exodus of white Americans from the nation's
- cities.
 - suburbs.
 - farms.
 - coast lines.
- _____ 2. The author of the influential book *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* was
- James Dean.
 - Jack Kerouac.
 - Michael Harrington.
 - Felix Longoria.
- _____ 3. *Braceros* were workers who came to the United States from
- Europe.
 - Asia.
 - Mexico.
 - Africa.
- _____ 4. The Longoria incident involved the refusal by town officials to provide funeral services for a World War II veteran because he was
- African American.
 - Mexican-American.
 - Japanese-American.
 - Native American.
- _____ 5. The unsuccessful effort to assimilate Native Americans by moving them off their reservations and into the nation's cities was known as the
- termination policy.
 - Dawes Act.
 - bracero* program.
 - Indian Reorganization Act.
- _____ 6. The nation's poor in the 1950s were found in large numbers in every group except
- the elderly.
 - single women.
 - minorities.
 - suburban residents.

CHAPTER
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BUILDING VOCABULARY *The Postwar Boom*

A. Matching Match the description in the second column with term in the first column. Write the appropriate letter next to the word.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. braceros | a. attempt to improve a nation's inner cities |
| _____ 2. Fair Deal | b. Southern Democrats opposed to Truman |
| _____ 3. baby boom | c. company with many locations |
| _____ 4. consumerism | d. devised polio vaccine |
| _____ 5. Dr. Jonas Salk | e. Mexican hired hands in America |
| _____ 6. franchise | f. Truman's domestic program |
| _____ 7. Dixiecrats | g. rapid population growth after World War II |
| _____ 8. urban renewal | h. demand for material goods |

B. Evaluating Write *T* in the blank if the statement is true. If the statement is false, write *F* in the blank and then write the corrected statement on the line below.

- _____ 1. Under the termination policy, the federal government took greater responsibility for Native American tribes.

- _____ 2. The GI Bill of Rights provided free education and other forms of help to returning veterans.

- _____ 3. A conglomerate is a major corporation that includes a number of smaller companies in unrelated industries.

- _____ 4. The Federal Communications Commission was charged with regulating and licensing the travel industry.

- _____ 5. The communities that surrounding the nation's cities are called suburbs.

C. Writing Write a paragraph describing the emergence of a youth subculture in the 1950s using the following terms.

Post War Boom Review

Section 1:

G.I. Bill of Rights

Suburb

Fair Deal

Know the Following

What happened to prices of goods after the Office of Price Administration ended price controls?

Who took over as President after Franklin D. Roosevelt died in 1945?

Who took over for President after Harry S. Truman?

Section 2:

Conglomerate

Franchise

Baby Boom

Consumerism

Planned Obsolescence

Interstate Highway Act

Know the Following

What was the name of the doctor who created a vaccine for poliomyelitis, also known as polio?

Section 3:

Mass Media

Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

Rock 'n' Roll

Jazz

Know the Following

Section 4:

Urban Renewal

Bracero

Termination Policy

Know the Following:

What was the white flight?