

The Generation Gap The large population of baby boomers and their emerging influence emphasized the growing divide between the younger and older generations. In the 1960s and 1970s, many parents and their children had little in common apart from their genes. Parents of boomer children were heavily influenced by the two major events of their own childhoods, the Depression and World War II. Boomers' parents had learned to live frugally through years of rationing during the Depression and war.

As teens, they had listened to big-band music. They generally valued loyalty and authority, and respected the military and veterans. Many also married at a young age, choosing to take on the responsibilities of a family. As a result, many in this so-called "silent generation," sought stability by conforming.

Their baby-boomer children on the other hand rejected tradition and authority in favor of individuality. "Do your own thing!" became the catchphrase of the young. Boomers did not want to fit in; they wanted to stand out. With the economic difficulties of the 1930s and 40s a distant memory, boomers grew up in a time of prosperity for much of the nation. Many embraced political activism and opposed the Vietnam War. The boomer generation also expressed a distrust of tradition and authority, which was expressed in popular magazines like *MAD*. Rock-and-roll music shaped their worldview and set them apart from their parents, who had grown up in a very different world.

✔ **IDENTIFY SUPPORTING DETAILS** What accounts for the generational differences between baby boomers and their parents?