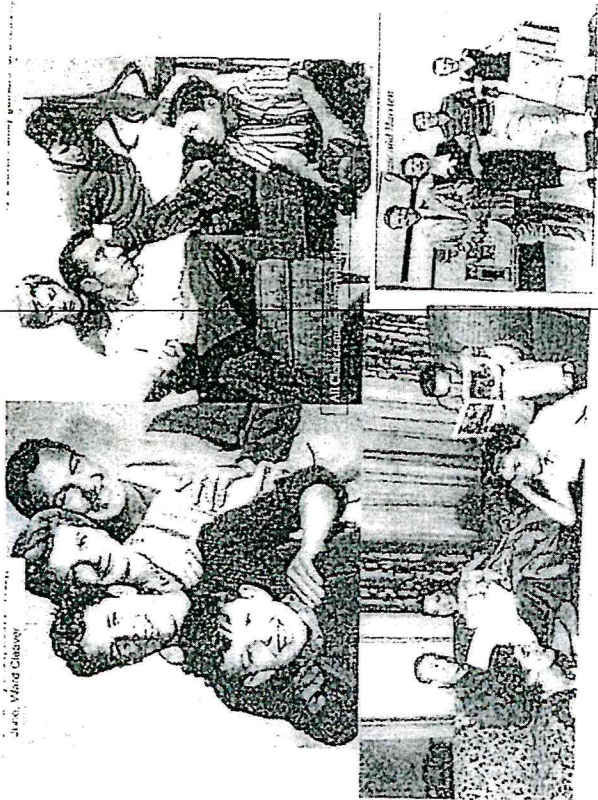


Read the passage below found on page 39 of Stephanie Coontz book, *The Way We Really Are: Coming to Terms with America's Changing Families*.

...the 1950s sitcoms were aimed at young couples who had married in haste, when men were reeling from new freedoms during World War II and given up their jobs with regret, veterans whose children resented their attempts to reassert paternal authority, and individuals disturbed by the changing race and ethnic mix of postwar America. The message was clear: Buy these ranch houses, Hopalong on Sunday afternoons, organize your dinners like this, get a new car to wash with your wife, appliances, and child-raising basics, relate to your spouse like this, get a new car to wash with your wife on Sunday afternoons, organize your dinners like this—and you too can escape from the conflicts of race, class, and political witch-hunts into harmonious families where father knows best, mothers are never bored or irritated, and teenagers rush to the dinner table each night, eager to get their latest dose of parental wisdom. Many families found it possible to put together of this way of living during the 1950s and 1960s. Couples were often able to restrain marriages that were more and more harmonious than those in which they had grown up, and to devote far more time to their children. Even when marriages were deeply unhappy, as many were, the new stability, economic security, and educational advantages parents were able to offer their kids counted for a lot in people's assessment of their life satisfaction. And in some matters, ignorance could be bliss: The lack of media coverage of problems such as abuse or incest was terribly hard on the casualties, but it protected more fortunate families from knowledge and fear of many social ills.

I can critically read and analyze a document

- 1. Who were the TV shows aimed at? (don't list them all, summarize)
- 2. What was the message?
- 3. Even if they were not the sitcom marriages, what were couples able to "construct?"
- 4. Even if unhappy in marriage, how was their still a sense of satisfaction?
- 5. How do TV shows that show families today accurately illustrate reality?



I can make predictions based on pictures from an era

- 1. How are these families shown in these pictures?
- 2. What model is it setting for families in the 1950's?
- 3. Does it mirror today's families? Why or why not?
- 4. Do these family images appeal to you? Explain