

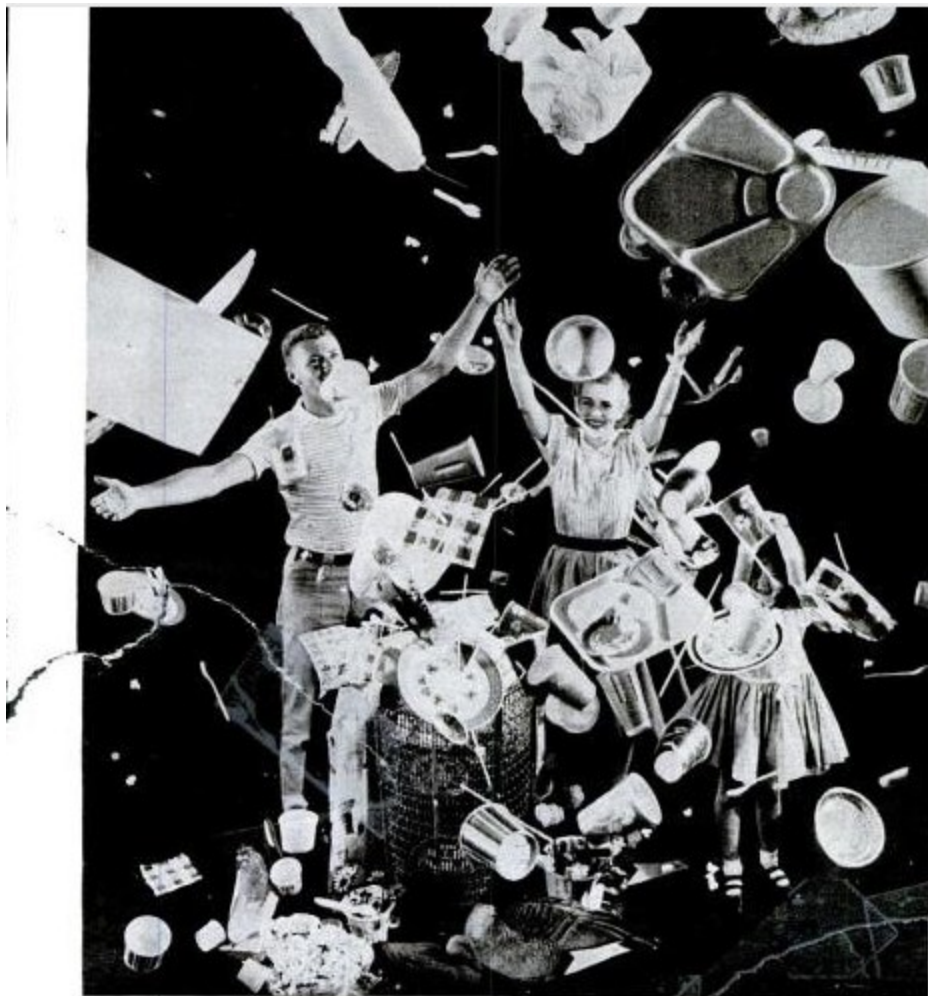
The 1960s — An Era of Questioning and Change

Here are SOME of the things that went on:

- **The Baby Boom:** After the Second World War, people returned home to a country full of hope (strong economy, peaceful, many jobs), Men and women wanted to have families, touching off a "baby boom" — increasing Canada's population by 50% between 1946-1961.
- **Throwaway Society:** On August 1st, 1955, *Life* magazine published an article titled "Throwaway Living." This article is often cited as the beginning of a "Throwaway Society" culture in North America.

What have the consequences of such a culture been for our world?

(read the article on the back of this sheet)



Throwaway Living

Throwaway Living

DISPOSABLE ITEMS CUT DOWN HOUSEHOLD CHORES

The objects flying through the air in this picture would take 40 hours to clean—except that no housewife need bother. They are all meant to be thrown away after use. Many are new; others, such as paper plates and towels, have been around a long time but are now being made more attractive.

At the bottom of the picture, to the left of a New York City Department of Sanitation trash can, are some throwaway vases and flowers, popcorn that pops in its own pan. Moving clockwise around the photograph come assorted frozen food containers,

a checkered paper napkin, a disposable diaper (seriously suggested as one reason for a rise in the U.S. birth rate) and, behind it, a baby's bib. At top are throwaway water wings, foil pans, paper tablecloth, guest towels and a sectional plate. At right is an all-purpose bucket and, scattered throughout the picture, paper cups for beer and highballs. In the basket are throwaway draperies, ash trays, garbage bags, hot pads, mats and a feeding dish for dogs. At the base of the basket are two items for hunters to throw away: disposable goose and duck decoys.

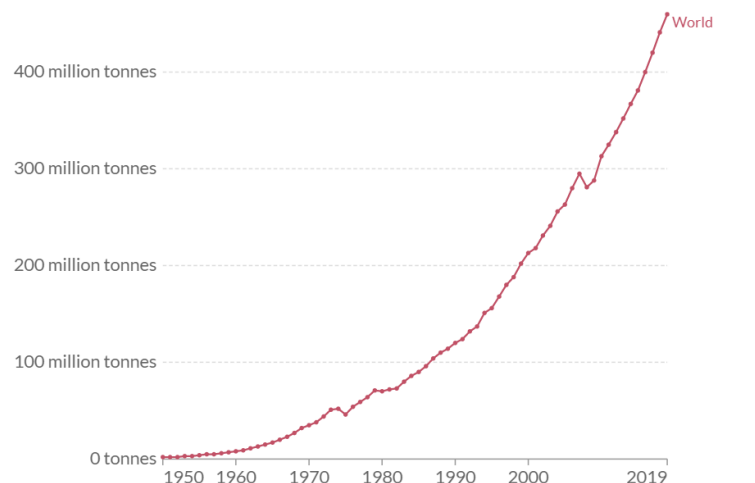
Brief History of Plastic:¹

- In 1907 Leo Baekeland invented Bakelite, the first fully synthetic plastic, meaning it contained no molecules found in nature.
- The Second World War triggered a huge expansion of the plastics industry. The need to preserve scarce natural resources made the production of synthetic alternatives a priority and plastics provided those substitutes.
- Following the War, plastic becomes the primary material used to create cheaper, more disposable products. (example: In 1947 the first plastic bottle was put into commercial use. By 1973 the first plastic bottle able to withstand the pressure of carbonized liquids was put into commercial use).

- By the 1960s people begin to observe plastic waste in the world's oceans.
- Try and find something in the classroom that is not made from oil (or plastic).
- Watch Tedx [A Brief History of Plastic](#).

Global plastics production

Plastic production refers to the annual production of polymer resin and fibers.



Source: Our World in Data based on Geyer et al. (2017) and the OECD Global Plastics Outlook
OurWorldInData.org/plastic-pollution • CC BY

¹ "History and Future of Plastics," Science History Institute, November 20, 2019, <https://www.sciencehistory.org/the-history-and-future-of-plastics>.

THE STORY OF PLASTIC | PLASTIC BOTTLES

Engineer Nathaniel Wyeth patented polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles in 1973. The first plastic bottles able to withstand the pressure of carbonated liquids, they were a much cheaper alternative to glass bottles.



It takes at least
450 years
for a plastic bottle to completely degrade.



1,000,000

Usage

Globally, more than a million plastic bottles are sold every single minute.



Recycling

In the U.S., only 30% of these bottles are recycled; Norway recycles 97%.



x2,000

Did You Know?

Bottled water requires up to 2,000 times the energy used to produce tap water.

- **Suburbs and Urbanization:** With the increase in population, communities across Canada grew in size, middle-class people wanting to live outside of the cities moved to the surrounding communities (or suburbs). **See page 137 in *The Extraordinary History of Waterdown* for more information.**
- **Television:** With a solid economy and plentiful jobs, Canadians were able to spend more money. Television became widespread in Canada during the 1950s (many Canadians bought their first TV to watch the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953), Television allowed the rapid transmission of information directly into the homes of its viewers.
- **Civil Rights:** The children of baby boomers (many of whom were the first in their family to attend college or university) found themselves questioning the society that was created following the Second World War. These questions quickly turned into the demand for the recognition of rights, including:

- Treaty Rights of Indigenous Peoples (challenging such systems as the Indian Act, Residential School System, as well as Canada’s deliberate erosion of Crown-Indigenous Relationships).
- Equal Rights of Women (building on the gains of previous generations, including the **Suffragette Movement**).
- Equal Rights of, and the elimination of Racism toward, Racialized People in Canadian Society (challenging racism and prejudice endured by different communities across the country).
- Equal Rights of, and the elimination of discrimination toward, the LGBTQ+ community.

*Remember that individuals can find themselves in two or more of the above groups of people.

- In 1947, Saskatchewan passed the *Acts to Protect Certain Civil Rights* — the first bill of rights in Canada. It protected freedoms of conscience, expression, association, freedom from arbitrary detention, and rights to elections, employment, education and property. It also barred citizens from discriminatory restrictions, such as keeping people of a certain “race, colour, creed, religion or nationality” from using a service or establishment.
- The Federal Government passed the *Canadian Bill of Rights* in 1960. This law was surpassed by the 1982 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Summary: The 1950s and 1960s were marked by questioning and change.

A new prosperity (more jobs & money, largely concentrated within the middle-class) brought financial security to some people across Canada as the country moved away from being a rural, farming nation, to a highly industrialized and commercialized state.

This prosperity created a generation of people – largely from an emerging “youth culture” – that believed all traditional systems within society could be challenged. Watch this section of Noam Chomsky’s [Requiem for the American Dream \(until 12:25\)](#).

Question:

Name:

This section appears on page 167 in *The Extraordinary History of Flamborough*. **What does the existence of this entry (detailing an event in Waterdown that took place 60 years after the 1960s) tell us about some of realities of Canada’s journey toward the elimination of Racism toward People of Colour in Canadian Society? (explain your thoughts)**

The Waterdown Solidarity March

This is a revolution now. I feel people finally want things to be changed.

- Camille Abreu

On June 13th, 2020, 1,000 residents gathered in Memorial Park in response to the murder of George Floyd, a Black American man killed by a Minneapolis police officer. Organized by local teenagers Camille Abreu, Layla Rahimpour, and Minister Ryk Brown from St. James United Church, the Waterdown Solidarity March was part of the wider Black Lives Matter movement demanding an end to anti-Black racism in American and Canadian societies. It was likely the community’s first organized civil rights protest.

Beginning in Memorial Park, marchers traveled down Main Street, turning east on Dundas before heading back to the park using Hamilton Street. Supporters of the march lined the route echoing the cries of “K(no)w justice, k(no)w peace” and “Black Lives Matter.”

Racism within Waterdown and Flamborough were discussed in the days leading up to, and following, the protest educating people of the everyday experiences of many residents.

After some residents posted on social media that “racism didn’t exist in Waterdown” many Black and Brown folks had to respond and explain the day-to-day experiences of racism that they had experienced in the community.