

HUGH HEČLO

The Sixties' False Dawn: Awakenings, Movements, and Postmodern Policy-making

Writing in 1978 about the 1960s, William McLoughlin saw America in the midst of the fourth Great Awakening in our history.¹ Awakenings are "periods of cultural revitalization that begin in a general crisis of beliefs and values and extend over a generation or so, during which time a profound reorientation in beliefs and values takes place. Revivals alter the lives of individuals; awakenings alter the world view of a whole people or culture."² To put it another way, awakenings are revelatory times when large numbers of people anguish over and eventually search out new self-understandings as individuals and as a society. They are like a convulsive quickening in the cultural womb.

The Sixties surely appear to have had much in common with other soul-questioning times of awakening in our history. Many individuals who had once seen themselves leading ordinary lives became caught up in "causes" that would retrospectively identify them as civil rights workers, student activists, feminists, war protesters, consumer advocates, environmentalists, and all the other labels the Sixties brought into vogue. A society that was enjoying a complacent affluence became caught up in what seemed inexplicable turmoil and self-criticism.

Historically, people experiencing an awakening (often called New Lights to distinguish them from the Old Lights of the status quo) embarked on journeys of personal liberation as well as political action. Their visions of building a "redemptive community" united images of both personal and collective rebirth, dreams of a new self in a new society living in wholeness and authenticity.³ Thus out of feelings of cultural confusion and purposelessness came quests that were at once spiritual and political. Those awakened became aware that ultimate values were at

stake, that something decisive was happening in their lives and their society.⁴

McLoughlin appears correct. The 1960s—a plastic term reaching backward to the mid-1950s and forward to the mid-1970s—did have the historic lineaments of a "great awakening."⁵ And yet if the life cycle of other awakenings had been followed, we should now, thirty years later, be reaching the final productive stage when there is a generational turnover of cultural controls. By now we should be settling down with transformed and newly legitimized institutions in a coherent, revitalized, and self-confident culture. Historically, awakenings have produced results that are "therapeutic and cathartic, not pathological. They restore our cultural verve and our self-confidence. . . . Through awakenings a nation grows in wisdom, in respect for itself, and into more harmonious relations."⁶

These are not words many people would use to describe the 1990s. While most Americans remain optimistic about their personal prospects and the American dream of individual opportunity, distrust and cynicism with regard to their institutions and culture have reached massive proportions. This appears especially true of the nation's political institutions, where confidence as measured by opinion surveys had declined steadily and precipitously from the mid-1960s.⁷ Less quantifiable but perhaps no less real is a widespread sense of deepening factionalism and mean-spiritedness, a system of public affairs that alienates and sickens vast numbers of Americans.⁸ To ask what happened to the awakening of the 1960s is to inquire how public policy history is embedded in cultural history.

Awakening in Modernity

However one dates the earlier three periods of intense cultural confusion and the awakenings associated with them, this much seems clear: they occurred in an America that was not yet a thoroughly "modern" society. This was still true during the most recent upheaval—the third Great Awakening that racked American society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During these decades traditional understandings were deeply shaken by discoveries in evolutionary science, by the poverty and social unrest associated with urbanization and immigration, and by industrial concentrations of private economic power reshaping the lives of farmers and town-dwellers alike.

At the dawn of this century, however, the responses to these challenges were still rooted in a predominately religious outlook on public life. To

the horror of Pentecostals, Evangelicals, and other Old Light "fundamentalists," the central body of American Protestants—the political and cultural leadership of the country—engaged with and adjusted to these forces for change.⁹ Theistic evolutionists expounded the harmony of religion and science, finding God's omnipresent power evident in nature's newly discovered laws of development. The Social Question of poverty amid industrial affluence activated a bewildering array of social-reform commitments understood as applied Christianity—from systematized charity, moral uplift and good government campaigns, to Social Gospelers in the streets and founders of the young social sciences in the new research universities. The New Lights of Liberal Protestantism dominated the early years of a revitalization that would come to be known as the Progressive impulse. In later years Christian and secular reformers, ministers and social scientists, moralists and government reorganizers, would part company. But at least in the pre-World War I years, theirs were only minor differences in the common project of bringing social practice into closer alignment with what were believed to be transcendentally real ideals. In the same people, the nation's most cosmopolitan, scientifically, and philosophically advanced thinking went hand in hand with the most religious and spiritual public doctrines. For this "clerisy" of national public moralists, standards of both personal virtue and social justice were seen to be fixed by higher moral laws, not decided by what are today termed individual value judgments.¹⁰ The same thinking applied to Americans' providential destiny in the world, to the foundations of their republican political institutions, and to the ethic of free, responsible individuals pursuing a maximum of personal opportunities.

All in all, the cultural transformation of this Third Great Awakening was still grounded in the widespread faith that there was a coherent moral order spanning natural and supernatural spheres and commanding appropriate behavior throughout public and private life. Although the seeds were surely being sown,¹¹ the country was not yet in the grip of modernity.

Mid-twentieth-century America was. Modernity refers here to those characteristic ways of living and thinking associated with a technologically advanced, commercially-oriented society, a society that has gone through the now familiar processes of industrialization and urbanization.¹² Everyday life becomes "structurally differentiated" into specialized spheres of work and home, production and consumption, education and entertainment, and so on. Densely layered social bonds in self-contained communities with well-fixed traditions are gradually supplanted. They are replaced by transient, functionally separated relationships of isolated individuals in fluid groupings whose antitraditionalist tolerance tends toward relativism.

New impersonal "systems" of rational organization and contract are self-consciously designed to coordinate economic, social, and political activities. And most important for present purposes, modernity brings with it a secularization of public life and thought. This does not mean that people become personally less religious. The secularization in view here refers to the relegation of religion to the distinctly private sphere of personal beliefs and choice, a refuge of psychological peace and communitarian warmth with no widely accepted authority over the utility-oriented public spheres of polity and economy.¹³ With the coming of modernity, science and rational calculation gradually expel any transcendent divinity from the natural and social world, what Max Weber famously described as "the disenchantment of the world."

By the 1960s America exhibited all these signs of modernity to an extent that would have seemed incomprehensible to people only sixty or seventy years earlier. Automobile transportation and suburban/urban housing patterns, vast corporate organizations and the full flowering of a mass consumer market, the development of massive educational systems as a separate sphere for youth—these were merely some of the outward signs of the deeper forces of modernity. Sixty years earlier, education (or if one prefers, indoctrination) in the godly order of nature, history, the economy, and society had infused everything from first readers to university curricula.¹⁴ By the Sixties it was secular science that held center stage, not least of all a triumphant behavioralism in the social sciences that had much to say about the relation of processes to outcomes and little at all to say about the moral worth of any particular outcome. By self-report to pollsters and church attendance rates, Americans were still a remarkably religious people in the 1950s. But it was what many theologians themselves called a "secular Christianity" of private belief outside the public arena.¹⁵ Religiosity was a personal matter, one of many self-attributes in a socially fragmented and historically conditioned world that was deconsecrated of sacred or ultimate significance. "Multiculturalism" had not yet been affirmed. But the once robust socio-cultural-political reality of the Protestant establishment was becoming little more than a vaguely surviving mood of morally neutral civility.¹⁶

By mid-century, the American public arena carried all the modern hallmarks of a rationalized sociopolitical order. It displayed the maturing form of what later leftist critics would call "corporate liberalism" and others would call "Cold War liberalism" or interest-group liberalism. What were some central characteristics of that policy-political framework? Despite its many setbacks, the Progressive impulse had successfully enshrined notions of nonpartisan expertise in newly erected bureaucracies

of the administrative state, corporate enterprises, and professional associations.¹⁷ The once threatening Social Question had been resolved into something like an implicit social contract:¹⁸ a middle-class welfare state of social insurance for (mainly) male breadwinners, government-business cooperation to stabilize employment, and rationalized management of an ever-expanding consumer market. Chastened by their earlier experiences with the Left and the threat of McCarthyism, liberals were Cold War and social-reform "realists." Public affairs was an arena for tough-minded, analytic problem-solving, appropriately dominated by those with the necessary expertise and presumably tough minds. Policy problems were discrete issues where fact-finding, technical competence, and rational analysis had everything to offer, and ideology was an unproductive distraction. Descendants of a now thoroughly secularized Progressive impulse, mid-century liberals were the elite vanguard of modernity.

This Cold War liberalism was never as consistent and monolithic as its critics would later contend, but it did offer the central organizing principles for a stable political society in the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s. It embraced the modern system of large-scale, hierarchical organizations in business, labor, education, marketing, mainstream religious denominationism, and government. It celebrated both the Realpolitik of pragmatic group politics and the use of dispassionate reason for problem-solving. Through public policy-making—a term increasingly in vogue—society could be rationally understood and steered. Ideological debates about the role of government or the meaning of social justice were considered a distracting echo from an early industrializing era misguided by class conflict and emotional bombast. The dominant view assumed a national government that would be actively devoted to (1) assuring a favorable business climate for the commercial culture of mass consumption, (2) projecting overwhelming anticommunist force abroad, and (3) marshaling the expertise to confront particular problems of domestic policy as these arose at home. From time to time the mid-century consensus could be heard mouthing the old sounds of transcendent idealism and providential exceptionalism. But the real voice was that of modernity speaking in the soothing, moderate tones of a consumer democracy.

As the 1950s turned into the 1960s, Cold War liberalism marched onward in its policy-making work. Fiscal policy gradually evolved from what had been generally perceived to be a "moral" issue of balancing the budget to a political-technocratic management tool of economic science.¹⁹ To deal with what were perceived to be pressing national problems, liberal reformers, policy experts, and mainstream interest groups struggled over what was coming to be known as the "national agenda."

From this largely intramural activity within Washington political and policy circles, federal policy initiatives were gestated for the 1960s. Slowly, moderately, "nonideologically," a liberal agenda emerged for new national commitments to regional economic development, aid to education, health insurance for the elderly, environmental protection, and "moderate" civil rights legislation. To help implement this agenda, a stream of tough-minded, Cold War "action intellectuals" followed John Kennedy to Washington in 1960. With Lyndon Johnson the stream became a river of policy experts, task forces, and new ventures in federal domestic policy.²⁰ While the overweening optimism about the capacity of experts for social engineering would soon fade, the forces of modernity pressed onward in American politics and society. Meanwhile, like a second great tectonic plate surfacing and grating alongside, there came a surge of personal discontent and social self-questioning that would constitute the Great Awakening of the 1960s.

The Awakening as Movement Culture

It would be foolish to try to pinpoint a date when large numbers of mid-century Americans began to lose faith in the prevailing norms, institutions, and leadership authority of the liberal consensus. But clearly something happened. If an average American had been asked in 1955 what he or she thought about "the movement," the only plausible reference would have been to the communist movement of recent McCarthyite fame. Asked the same question twenty years later in 1975, one's only plausible answer would have to be "which movement: women's, civil rights, environmental, student, consumer, farm workers, gay rights . . . ?" Intellectuals and reformers, whose job it is to be dissatisfied with the status quo, were important in preparing the argumentative groundwork for these movements, but they were not the Awakening upheaval itself.²¹ That occurred only as large numbers of ordinary people felt profoundly distressed and disoriented by a sense of prevailing disorder.

In particular, youths coming of age in the 1960s were well primed for such distress, quite apart from the remarkable events of assassination, war, and official deceit that would afflict their coming of age in the Sixties. If only because of its sheer size, this generation commanded special attention as it moved from birth toward adulthood. As youths raised in a culture of intense parenting and self-satisfied affluence, their age cohort was possibly the first group of children in history to be treated as a separate, specially privileged part of the population. Many, but by no

means all, were conditioned to expect much—and to demand much—when the world did not live up to their expectations. As always, active engagement would be a minority taste. The numbers who became directly and indirectly involved “in the Sixties” were significant, but so too were the numbers of young Americans opposed or indifferent. Something less than a fifth of those under twenty in 1959 appear to have participated in organized protests associated with the social causes of the Sixties, but no doubt many others were affected by a faith-shaking cultural confusion. In the years 1965–68 two to three percent of U.S. students considered themselves “activists,” although 20 percent said they had participated in at least one protest demonstration. Likewise we should recall that in 1968 Richard Nixon beat Hubert Humphrey by a 49 percent to 39 percent margin among those under twenty-five, and in 1972, among eighteen- to twenty-nine-year-old voters, George McGovern won by a 53 percent to 47 percent margin.²²

As youths and other people searched for a transformative understanding of themselves and their society, their searches often congealed to manifest the Awakening as social movements—“organized, non-governmental efforts of large numbers of people to attain significant social and personal change.”²³ More than anything else, it was this movement-referenced yearning for personal and social rebirth, expressed through political action and policy demands, that turned the mere decade of the 1960s into the larger historic moment that would become known as the Sixties.

There is no opportunity here to examine the immense literature that exists on social movements in general and on the movements of the Sixties in particular.²⁴ For present purposes it is the commonalities across the Sixties movements that seem most important for understanding what happened. The emergence of powerful new groups and movements are signs that major social, economic, and cultural forces are not being accommodated by the existing institutional framework. They voice the disillusionments of people perceiving themselves to be excluded and marginalized in a world that increasingly does not make sense to them.

As seems true of other historic awakenings, the tremors of cultural confusion appeared as anxieties first registering with traditionalist forces. Why should this be so? Perhaps because traditionalists believe they have the materials at hand to offer authority and certainty to people growing anxious about the future. The materials in question called people to the revered, already-known ways of the past. Thus by the 1950s conservative intellectuals were denouncing progressive education, the Welfare State, and godless higher education; they decried the loss of ethical discipline,

social hierarchy, and traditional religious faith in public and private spheres.²⁵ At the same time, revivalism stirred at the mass level with the new evangelical warnings led by Billy Graham, Fulton J. Sheen, and Norman Vincent Peale, among others. Indeed, at the outset of the 1960s the general perception was one of a growing conservatism, not leftist radicalism, across the country. Barry Goldwater's 1960 book and message were being warmly received on college campuses and elsewhere.²⁶ All of this would bear fruit in 1964 with Goldwater's nomination and the near religious fervor with which his supporters rejected the nonideological moderation of the Republican mainstream (itself a branch of what we are calling Cold War liberalism). But by then the momentum was shifting elsewhere, to movements of other marginalized Americans for whom going back to traditional forms of authority was no answer at all.

The archetypal movements of the 1960s defined themselves against, attacked, and rejected not conservatives but the liberal consensus and its institutional structures. First among blacks and white liberals awakening to the civil rights cause, and then in widening circles, the New Lights of this awakening—who came to be called “activists”—perceived intolerable gaps between the espoused norms and the lived realities of the liberal system. Looking back from the 1990s, former activists who defend and those who regret their actions both agree that it was basically the working arrangements of the entrenched liberal administrative state and society that they were attacking.²⁷

For the early civil rights activists, it was the liberal order of “moderate,” go-slow accommodation to state-sanctioned racial segregation in the Democratically controlled South. For the student New Left it was the interlocking liberal hegemony of corporate capitalism, state militarism, and antidemocratic bureaucratic structures of a consumerist society. For the emerging feminist movement the object of resistance was the dominant institutional-cultural paradigm of male privilege and female oppression, including, it turned out, within the New Left movement itself.²⁸ For environmentalists or consumer advocates, the offending system was an unholy partnership of corporate power-holders pursuing profits with reckless abandon and captured bureaucracies failing to protect the public interest. The list could be extended for pages. In all manner of awakening activism, new struggles were deemed necessary to free people from isolated, oppressed lives lived under the spell of coercive elites in a bureaucratized, mass society.²⁹

Defenders of the liberal system (who vicissitudes of political labeling would later rename as neoconservatives) eventually perceived, quite accu-

rately, that they were living amid a massive groundswell of opposition to virtually all forms of institutional authority. As one prominent spokesman for the Old Light of the liberal establishment put it:

In one form or another, this challenge manifested itself in the family, the university, the governmental bureaucracy, and the military services. People no longer felt the same compulsion to obey those whom they had previously considered superior to themselves in age, rank, status, expertise, character or talents. . . . Authority based on hierarchy, expertise, and wealth all, obviously, ran counter to the democratic and egalitarian temper of the times, and during the 1960s, all three came under heavy attack.³⁰

Although each of the Sixties movements had its own history, they were also interconnected, sometimes by overlapping memberships, but most especially by activists' mutual inspiration and critical motifs. Therefore as reinforcing forces, the Sixties movements and their activists had a cumulative impact well beyond any particular issue of the moment. The liberal system's gradualist, anti-idealistic acceptance of "things as they are" was rejected in favor of a visionary and fundamental restructuring of society. Essentially there were three interrelated motifs.

1. *Liberation.* The Sixties movements saw themselves as freedom struggles. Rights to personal autonomy had to be reasserted against the oppressions of the inherited order. To be truly free was to be able to find self-fulfillment in one's own way, to grow, find meaning, and express one's true self. The movement, with its resources and arena for direct action, was the instrument for organizing against one's own oppression to achieve personal liberation. The liberation in question ranged from freedom defined against the oppression of racial segregation to freedom from limits on self-realization imposed by gender roles, consumerism, conventional morality—anything restricting the "range of alternatives for identity."³¹ From the stately Rosa Parks to counterculture dropouts at Woodstock, New Lights of all sorts awakened to their own power to overcome their oppression.

2. *Egalitarian Inclusiveness.* The Sixties movements shared the basal presupposition that all people are to be equally included in society, since all are equal in their right to liberation. Thus despite their avant-garde pretensions, movement activists unknowingly restated the iron bond between liberation and equality captured by John Milton's question three centuries earlier: ". . . for inferior who is free?"³² The inherited, hierarchical pecking orders of race, gender, wealth, and political power generally

had to be supplanted by a community of equals where none would be marginalized.

Again, different branches of movement culture had their own particular versions of this common theme. For civil rights activists the issue was as plain as the equal inclusion promised but never delivered by the Constitution's Civil War amendments. The National Organization for Women's founding statement held out the promise of "a fully equal partnership of the sexes," and the SDS's well-known Port Huron statement ordained that "human brotherhood must be willed as the more appropriate form of social relations."³³ Likewise, environmentalists and consumer advocates insisted they spoke for all those excluded and left voiceless in the liberal regime of interest-group politics and corporate-bureaucratic deal-making. Not least of all, each movement within itself was seen as embodying the ideal of a fraternal commonwealth (an expectation that led to much discord about those movement leaders becoming "media stars").

3. *Participatory openness.* If conditions of unfreedom are to be overcome for a community of equals, it follows that the closed structures of establishment power must be opened up so that all can share in the decisions affecting their lives. Activists saw themselves as part of what would be termed later in another context as prodemocracy movements. The liberated are not simply set free as individuals; they are empowered by virtue of being thoroughly embedded in participatory political and economic decision-making processes. In one sense this part of movement culture simply reflected a democratic vision rooted in American experience, a restatement of the Tocquevillian vision of large-spirited individualists who become such by being actively engaged in deliberating and managing their collective affairs.

Something more, however, was at work than good citizenship and participatory democracy. Institutional structures had to be opened and subjected to participatory scrutiny because they could not be trusted. Their spurious and elitist claims to disinterested knowledge and benevolent intentions created the conditions that made liberation necessary in the first place. Whatever the movement in question, activists saw elites of the "organized system" as self-serving establishments that had to be disestablished, something that could happen only through open access to decision-making processes. From university governance to the congressional committee process, from administrative implementation of the law to local zoning for trash dumps—all was to be opened to participatory democracy. And since the authority of even reformed institutions could not be trusted (given the ever-present tendency for oppression by the modern managerial technocracy/racist culture/sexist paradigm and so on),

it would have to be activists themselves who used democratized procedures to pursue the just cause in question. Thus for many movement activists the real aim was not participation, which could simply mean co-optation by the process.³⁴ The real aim was for your side, seen as the people's side, to win.

These, or at least something like them, seem to have been the common motifs of the awakened movement culture of the Sixties. For many of the participants, the movements represented "free spaces" between purely private lives and large-scale institutions.³⁵ They were public environments of civil society where people voluntarily came together around visions of a new self and a new society. They were identity-breeding spaces in which people could create solidarity and break down the conventional oppositions of public and private, individual and community. Unlike conservatives' view of voluntary "mediating structures" as protectors of the social status quo, activists presented their movements as open, evolving forces for generating fundamental democratic change to "get back our country."³⁶

Reform Without Revitalization

The Awakening and associated movements of the Sixties helped to produce important changes in the policies, processes, and very tone of American politics. To inventory those changes would be to undertake a description, broadly speaking, of the contemporary American state and civil society. However, it would be difficult to argue that the result of the changes ushered in by the Sixties was any sense of self-confident renewal or regained centeredness in American public life such as William McLoughlin saw following other historic awakenings. There were reforms in abundance, but a generation later, unlike the payoff of earlier upheavals, these seemed to add up to greater public distress and cultural confusion rather than to catharsis and revitalization.

At base the problem was that allegiances to cultural and political traditions were being dissolved with no replacement in sight. While aggressively and often successfully attacking the inherited moral authority of "the system," the New Lights had no coherent alternative to put in its place.³⁷ Apart from the first phase of the civil rights mobilization, movement activists were thoroughly modern in their dismissal of a transcendent moral order and cultural tradition against which to weigh one's personal preferences and yearning for authenticity.³⁸ This is not to say, obviously, that the New Light reformers were lacking in idealism. Movement culture was

awash with moral indignation against the injustices and hypocrisy of the established system. As always, the gap between ideals and practice was profoundly disturbing. But with consciences awakened and disturbed, the question remained: What in the modern era could provide authoritative standards for constructive revitalization? What was the source of authority for the Truth claims made by the reformers?

As the 1960s progressed it became clear that any justifying warrant to legitimate reform demands was entirely self-referential. Ideals and aspirations prompting social action emerged out of the movement's own analysis and understanding of the liberation and change that was required. The righteousness in play was quite literally self-righteousness, based not on self-denying allegiance to a higher law but on personal conviction about the correctness of one's analysis of the situation. Activists did not see themselves awakening penitently to a revived version of the nation's religious tradition or the established truths of its culture. They awakened to values and commitments they found personally fulfilling. To be free was to be able to live out one's subjectivity as a growing, self-realizing creator of meaning in one's life. The relevant guiding authority was the self-willed commitment to personal liberation and fulfillment in the world. Correspondingly, the rupture with the past was simply a healthy break with traditions of oppression. The long-standing national narrative of America's providential and benevolent moral mission in the world—a grounding component of earlier awakenings—became widely regarded by activists as little more than a conceit masking the country's failures and hypocrisy.³⁹

Herein lay a crucial though generally unacknowledged passage out of premodern and modern perspectives into what would increasingly become a postmodern sensibility. The concept of "pretending" in a *premodern* worldview could be invested with positive connotations of making believe—of claiming and behaving "as if" in order that the pretence might serve as an aspiration leading to the real, as yet unseen, thing.⁴⁰ To the rationalistic *modern* perspective, pretending was an irrational, misleading escape inherently inferior to objective observation of the concrete, empirical facts. In contrast to both these views, the evolving *postmodern* sensibility attracted its audiences by showing the invariable falseness that underlay pretending. Pretence is only the disguise for the real thing, the system's way of concealing what the movement's critical powers had to continually unmask if liberation were to occur. Unmasking, the revealing of hidden agendas and unworthy motives of the powers that be, became a leitmotiv of movement culture. Perceptive observers sympathetic to the Sixties movements would later recognize that this rejection rather than

engagement with normative tradition opened a dangerous gap between activists and the bulk of ordinary Americans' cultural understandings of patriotism and religion.⁴¹

Many activists of the various movements of the Sixties displayed deep earnestness in the search for personal and social rebirth. But unlike pre-modern awakenings, this restlessness did not recall America to a central religious-historical understanding of itself based on transcendent truths. Awakening in modernity called the nation to a plurality of authenticities. It proclaimed fulfillment to be the promise of self-fulfillment, the good to be what one freely chooses for one's own without the hegemonic pressure of institutions. Disparate ecological, feminist, liberationist, and other spiritualities took the place of what in an earlier time would indeed have been a hegemonic (though highly denominationalized) Protestant revivalism. Now there was to be no broadly accepted, culturally-centering worldview connected religion, politics, and social change. American pluralism was to be truly pluralistic, with external authority rejected in favor of each person's right to satisfy his or her own perceived needs for fulfillment. Historically, the revitalization produced by awakenings followed upon repentance. The New Light of the Sixties suggested an inversion: the self as aggrieved rather than repentant, a subject of history to be glorified through liberation rather than surrendered under a higher law. It was a secular version of what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called "cheap grace," the forgiving grace we bestow on ourselves.⁴² With "sin" passé, self-blame was out and system-blame was in. Postmodern sensibility would develop as a fervent search for answers based on the conviction that there are no "real" answers outside the self.

In this regard, the culture of movement activists both reflected and promoted trends in the larger society toward the celebration of personal autonomy and a "what works for me" approach to de-institutionalized attachments. Or as a character in the 1971 movie *Harold and Maude* put it, "You can do what you want."⁴³ Fittingly enough, three popular theological books appeared virtually simultaneously at the outset of the Sixties, each expressing in its own way deep misgivings about this trend. H. Richard Niebuhr's *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture* reasserted the traditional premise of Western religion in a single transcendent center of value against which all subjectivity is to be judged. The Jesuit John Courtney Murray in *We Hold These Truths* argued against a crumbling public consensus regarding the fundamental principles of American society based on God-given natural law. And at the same time, Martin Marty saw the 1950s growth of mere "interest" in religion as portending the end

of the long Protestant Pietist age initiated by the first Great Awakening and the beginnings of a "post-Protestant" era of religious and nonreligious pluralism.⁴⁴ Within three years their premonitions had been symbolically confirmed in Supreme Court decisions banning mandatory prayer or devotional Bible reading in public schools.

Thus the Awakening and social movements in the Sixties offered a paradoxical invitation. Choices in life—from one's personal identity to forms of social interaction and organization—were to be vastly expanded for all Americans, while the standards for making any given choice were being thoroughly relativized. This in turn raised a difficult question: who would have the moral, intellectual, political, or any other type of authority to teach, much less enforce, codes of collective behavior? Movement culture energized people to write, speak, and act out their beliefs in liberation and social justice. But modernist New Lights no longer had a theory of why anyone should listen to them.

For some in the movements, the personalized, self-referential basis of awakened faith soon made it fairly easy to give up on sociopolitical action and to concentrate on "doing one's own thing" to get on in life. As one of the founders of the student movement later described some in the New Left:

A generation giddy about easy victories was too easily crushed by defeats, too easily placated by private satisfactions. . . . The premium the movement placed on the glories and agonies of pure existential will ill-equipped many of us to slog away.⁴⁵

This stands in striking contrast with the early civil rights movement's traditionalist faith in the transcendent strength available for eventual victory. As the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. put it in his letter from the Birmingham jail: ". . . The opposition we face will surely fail. We will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands."⁴⁶

As the Sixties wore on, some activists counted on the revolutionary intensity and militancy of their convictions to intimidate opponents. Radical breakaway groups formed and re-formed on the student Left, in feminist and environmental circles, and in the black community. Generally these groups soon faded away, either into the mists of counterculture spontaneity and mind-trips or into the bomb smoke of vulgar Marxist anarchism.

In their central thrust, however, the Sixties movements eventually

sought to advance their claims by nonrevolutionary confrontations of power with power, organization with counterorganization. What Harvey Cox said in *The Secular City* in 1965 could be applied to any number of other activists and causes: "The Negro revolt is not aimed at winning friends but at winning freedom, not at interpersonal warmth but institutional justice."⁴⁷ From routinized civil disobedience and protests to other, more conventional forms of group organizing, the work at hand was not so much to revitalize the nation's self-understanding as directly to confront and defeat the oppressive forces of the opposition.

In many ways, the civil rights movement was the exemplary model for other movements. Activists for a variety of causes were not only inspired by its righteous confrontation with the forces of segregation but also were educated by its grassroots mobilizing strategy and effective use of the media to dramatize its case.⁴⁸ But at a deeper level, the twists and turns in the development of the civil rights movement after the mid-1950s rehearsed in miniature the developmental trend we have been sketching from premodern awakenings to secular movements and policy lobbies.

Clearly the initial driving force in civil rights lay in black church culture.⁴⁹ For a people cut off from the rest of "mainstream" society, the black church offered not only a rich institutional base of organizational, financial, communication, and leadership resources. It also embodied a vibrant spiritual and moral tradition harkening back to the nineteenth century. With its empowering devotions and integrated community life, the early crusade for what would become the civil rights legislation of 1964–65 bore a direct family resemblance to the centuries' earlier awakenings of a biblical community uniting around this world as well as supernatural hopes, a "yearning to cross Jordan into freedom as well as to reach heaven."⁵⁰ At the same time, the early thrust in civil rights was grounded on faith in liberal institutions. It was the faith that, with appropriate litigation and legislation produced by mobilized pressure on elected representatives, racial progress would be assured.

By the mid-1960s the center of agitation had shifted. More radical and secular critiques were prompted as many activists grew disillusioned and frustrated by the resisting power of mainstream institutions.⁵¹ Although small groups of self-described revolutionaries would develop, the civil rights movement by the end of the 1960s was settling into more permanently organized forms to promote and protect preferred policies for racial justice. Martin Luther King Jr. would not live to see the interracial social-democratic alliance he envisioned, but by 1968 he had realized that civil rights had to take on a more organizational than movement-style of politics:

It was not necessary to build a widespread organization in order to win legislative victories. . . . But corrective legislation requires organization to bring it to life. Laws only declare rights; they do not deliver them. . . . We will have to build far-flung, workmanlike and experienced organizations in the future if the legislation we create and the agreements we forge are to be ably and zealously superintended. Moreover, to move to higher levels of progress we will have to emerge from crises with more than agreements and laws. We shall have to have people tied together in a long-term relationship instead of evanescent enthusiasts who lose their experience, spirit and unity because they have no mechanism that directs them to new tasks.⁵²

By the end of the 1960s what King saw coming for civil rights activists was broadly true for other movements as well: moral fervor had to be organized into modernity's secular template for the public arena, that is, into "mechanisms." For those who chose to stay engaged in their causes, and for others who joined, to be a movement activist increasingly meant to have expert (if uncredentialed) knowledge about particular public issues, to be organizationally sophisticated (not least in foundation fundraising and horizontal "networking" skills), and to understand the folkways of orchestrating media attention for your policy agenda. But notice too, participation in public deliberation was not simply a question of interest-group inclusion—getting one's voice heard. It was a strategic matter of constructing, defending, and advancing the "issues" that infused one's group identity against the designs of adversaries contesting for control of a social field. What some called the long march through the institutions had begun.

We should pause, for it was easy to lose the larger implications in the ferment of the times. The social movements gaining force after mid-century were not the work of preexisting solidaristic communities engaged in a struggle against modernization. Movements took on the organizational logic of their times, and for more than one hundred years modernity had been a developing environment that selected for (or privileged) certain characteristics and not for others.⁵³ Street demonstration or insider lobbying, it did not matter. Collective action, as King so well explained, implied careful organization, strategic-instrumental calculation, and a permanent mobilization of resources along the rationalistic lines of a managerial society. To this extent, one might say that interest-group liberalism was reproducing itself in the oppositional movements to interest-group liberalism.

And yet something central is missing if we think that the social move-

ments of the Sixties simply crystallized into conventional meat-and-potatoes interest groups. In general, the movements were not responses to economic crises or material breakdowns in society. On the contrary, everything about Cold War liberalism was proceeding *too* smoothly to suit thousands of movement activists. The deep-running issue was, to put it rather grandly, one of "meaning"—what people thought they were to make of themselves, individually and as a society. In an era of secular modernity, the raw materials of social life—identities, solidarities, and meanings—could not be considered as givens; they were constructions to be labored over and achieved by people increasingly aware of themselves as the creators and contenders for power involved in these constructive processes. Domains of social life once shielded by tradition and transcendent fixities—from procreation to death and all the production of culture in between—were unmasked and exposed to technocratic agendas of control as well as alternative "democratic" projects to control the newly opened domains. Thus the Sixties social movements would take on the modern organizational logic of rational resource mobilization, but they would also point toward a postmodern quest for the human design of meaning and identity, which is to say, toward the contests of a reflexive society self-consciously making itself. Historic awakenings had propelled social reform out of the recovered energy of ancient creeds and truths, "strong evaluations" whose validity was widely perceived to be outside a person's will or opinion.⁵⁴ The Sixties symbolized movement into a different country.

Postmodern Policy-making

The Awakening of the Sixties created a central paradox. Institutional authority was challenged throughout American society at the same time as demands and expectations on government were multiplied. For a great many activists, the federal government was part of the "establishment" that had to be attacked. And yet it was also the resource that lay most readily at hand to pursue the social reformations urged by the New Lights movements.

The turn to public policy and to the national government in particular was understandable, perhaps even inevitable, for several reasons. The New Deal and World War II did much to raise general expectations about the capacities of Washington to undertake major tasks of historic proportions. Well before the 1960s began, the federal government had in fact acquired powerful new administrative abilities to penetrate society, ex-

tract resources, and sell its programs to the public.⁵⁵ Then too, it was important that the Sixties movements almost invariably framed their reform claims in terms of rights. Long-delayed civil rights for blacks became the model for protesting the unprotected rights of other minorities, of women, of workers in unsafe workplaces, of welfare recipients subject to variable state rules, of consumers, of disadvantaged children, of everyone plagued by dirty air and dirty water. The point is, a right could not exist in one corner of America and not in another. Rights talk not only invited, it virtually compelled the nationalization of public policy. This was especially true given what the civil rights movement taught everyone concerning the noncommitment of state governments to rights protection. Finally, policy activists' turn to the federal government seemed to answer the unanswerable question raised by a secularized awakening: In a world of self-referential standards, what authority was there for establishing codes of collective behavior?

National policy legislation and rule-making would by definition be the supreme, authoritative law of the land. But the implicit theory behind so much of the new civil rights, environmental, and other legislation promoted by activists went well beyond that simple fact. After all, Progressives in the earlier part of this century had also eventually turned to the national government for major policy reforms, ranging from Temperance to the New Deal's massive regional development plans. Progressives and their descendants of the Liberal consensus demonstrated abided faith in the benevolent power of large-scale, centrally rationalized organization, of scientific and management expertise, of executive-led government in the public interest. To be sure, America's premodern institutional structure, particularly Congress and localist power centers, did not give Progressives the full helping of rational organization they wanted, but the faith in good government by good people remained alive into mid-century. Then came the Sixties.

The paradox of policy expectations and institutional suspicion seemed to yield an answer. Federal policy powers could be vigorously increased so long as they were sufficiently distrusted and controlled by activists. Policy activists working for women's rights, environmental protection, and all the other causes might trust in each others' goodwill within the movement, but certainly not in that of government or anyone else outside the movement. In part, of course, this reflected the long-standing American doubts about any concentrations of power. But the ethos of these new times went beyond residual mistrust to active distrust. The energetic use of national policy for transforming American society had to be accompanied by an equally vigorous suspicion of that power and whoever might

exercise it. In ways large and small, experience had taught the hard lessons of distrust to the Sixties generation of reformers. For civil rights activists, that distrust grew out of the semilegal dodges and subterfuges that had been used for decades by state and local governments to exclude blacks from American public life. Mississippi's once hopeful Freedom Democratic Party delegates learned that when they were excluded from the 1964 Democratic Party convention in Atlantic City. Others in the 1960s could point to the "credibility gap" produced by the public deceitfulness of national leaders, or by official efforts to subvert movement organizations, or by cheap conspiracies between big business and government regulators.⁵⁶ These and many other particulars fed the generalized distrust toward all institutional authority. To be a movement activist was to have internalized this distrust and be part of the celebration of pluralistic personal liberation that lay at the heart of Sixties postmodernism. Anyone espousing Progressive, liberal trust in government as a public servant or in society's leaders as people of goodwill was *ipso facto* to be considered as simply naive or, worse, "co-opted" (a favorite epithet of the time) by the system. Progressive liberals had stressed the pragmatic, knowledge-based, compromise-seeking character of public policy-making. Activists of the Sixties movements taught Americans to see policy in terms of personal and group causes, to see policy-making as enacted power games "all the way down" (as deconstructionist language would later put it).

As the Awakening and social movements organized into various networks of activists and policy lobbies, the old faiths were clearly on the wane. To be a reformer was to be pro-activist, but also in a certain sense to be antigovernment. Federal policy held out both the prospect of social reformation and the threat of bureaucratic subversion. Postmodern policy-making meant that all assertions of a collective American interest or moral purpose were not only disputable but suspect. Government responsibilities were to be vastly expanded, while government autonomy had to be restricted at every turn. Distrust required opening up policy-making to public view and assuring access for formerly marginalized groups. Confidence in administrative discretion, expertise, and professional independence had to be replaced by continuous public scrutiny, hard-nosed advocacy, strict timetables, and stringent standards for prosecuting the policy cause in question. In one field of public affairs after another, policy-making became a permanent campaign of competing activists warring over the carcass of legitimate government power. What one perceptive participant-observer has called "the thirty years' wars" were under way.⁵⁷

It is worth pausing over the oddity of what was happening. As Martha Derthick shows so well in this volume, the range of policy responsibilities

being pushed and pulled toward Washington was truly astonishing. No less astonishing, these fundamental changes in federalism occurred with little principled debate of any seriousness; federalism had become understood largely as an intramural game of strategy defined in terms of cost-shifting. At the same time, however, the Sixties set in motion a massive public debate questioning and to a large extent undermining faith in the familiar, simple national narratives of patriotism and American goodness. Here was an ominous conjuncture of powerful trends, both nationalization and de-nationalism racing along in parallel.

The impact of the Sixties on public policy was pervasive, profound but also often indirect and therefore difficult to gauge. Actual changes typically depended on intermediary forces—politicians, bureaucrats, lobbyists, the media—operating unmindful of a political environment and policy culture that the movements were doing so much to shape. But the monuments to postmodern policy making soon lay all around. A few examples will have to suffice.

- Old line agencies once proud of their professionally insulated independence became the targets of suspicion, attack, and extensive outside supervision. The common theme in all recent administrative histories—the Social Security Administration, the FBI, the IRS, the Atomic Energy Commission, the Forest Service, and so on—is the withdrawal of deference for administrative expertise and the replacement of discretion with instructions and hostile scrutiny.⁵⁸

- A system of administrative law that once protected business from government encroachments was transformed into a surrogate political process ensuring representation for advocacy groups throughout the administrative process. More generally, entire new regulatory regimes were enacted through legislation and court decisions. The common characteristics of these new policy regimes read like an engineer's specifications of the Sixties movements' design requirements—liberation from inherited institutional power, inclusiveness of the marginalized, openness to participation in the people's interest. These common specifications have been: (1) more specific statutory mandates to restrict regulators' discretion, (2) new legal procedures expanding access for preregulation advocacy groups to agency decision-making; and (3) active use of the federal courts to fortify advocacy groups and scrutinize agency decisions for "public interest" outcomes.⁵⁹

- Just as political scientists of the new behavioral persuasion came to understand the federal budget process in the early 1960s, it began disintegrating into what a quarter century later would be called "the new politics

of the budgetary process."⁶⁰ The closed world of budgeting by institutional process managers was transformed into an open politics of competing groups in and outside Congress. Old assumptions that every significant interest had representation and that one should judge budget outcomes in terms of adherence to appropriate process were overturned. "Minorities, consumers, women, environmentalists and many more enlisted in the 'pluralistic chorus' . . . enlarging the scope of political conflict and adding to the burdens on the federal budget. . . . The newly empowered did not stop with breaking in and changing some of the rules; they kept their eyes on the prize which was, for all major groups, defined in terms of policies and objectives . . . politics turned away from process to outcomes."⁶¹

- Comparable tendencies have been at work in making and confirming presidential appointments to the federal government. In a pre-Sixties era of "inside politics," institutionalized deference to presidential selections may have allowed inoffensive mediocrity occasionally to suffice as a qualification for high office. But it also shielded the appointment process from public campaigns of outright political manipulation. Since the 1960s, however, the new "outside politics" of confirmation finds coalitions of groups and policy activists in opposing camps skillful at seizing any opportunity the more (and televised) personnel process offers. Media campaigns to demonize policy opponents through negative imagery and distorted information—"borking"—have become standard practice. Again, outcomes are what matter. For most participants the outcome of winning out over one's policy enemies takes precedence over any higher values of fairness in process or interpersonal decency.⁶²

Such manifestations of postmodern policy-making could be extended at length, adding up to something like a political history of our times. What they all suggest is that following the Sixties Awakening we have been bequeathed a policy system with at least four characteristic features.

1. *Postmodern policy-making is radically pluralistic.* The most obvious sign is the proliferation of policy activists in groups of all shapes and sizes. Various dynamics have been at work. Once-dormant existing groups became energized on national policy issues (e.g., the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society). New groups were formed as movement insurgency became organized into policy lobbies (e.g., Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, congressional caucuses of all types). Liberation ideology encouraged break-away groups to reconstitute themselves out of larger umbrella organizations (e.g., feminist groups out of the New Left, minority feminist groups

out of the feminists). New federal policies encouraged the formation of new client groups (e.g., state and local associations of Air Pollution Program Controllers) as well as the splintering of existing group along new lines of differential policy impacts (e.g., hospitals from doctors, insurers from hospitals and doctors, big from little insurers). Coalitions and networks of activists have formed and re-formed around particular issues of the day, producing every incentive for threatened interests to countermobilize. The result ranges from reorganized business lobbies "mobilized against Ralph Nader"⁶³ to the unending domestic wars over affirmative action, abortion, and all the rest. Pushing deeper to see all these developments as a whole and in light of our historical reform tradition, one can say that postmodern radical pluralism is radical precisely because it offers no overarching norms or transcendent narrative to legitimate action, only the secular purity of one's intentions in the policy struggle itself.

2. *Postmodern policy-making is rights-based group conflict.* Clearly, rights discourse in American politics is older than the Republic itself. The 1950s mobilization of the civil rights movement was framed and fully comprehensible within that powerful historical tradition. It was a tradition that conceived rights as preexisting attributes of human worth and dignity that each individual already possessed. This understanding of rights subtly changed in the aftermath of the 1960s. It did so less as a matter of philosophical argument and more as a growing convention of political dispute. Rights took the center of the policy debate not so much as *a priori* endowments but as unfulfilled entitlements for oppressed groups of people, to whom public policy was to offer redress. Rights were identity-enhancing claims that had to be actualized in the relations of one group against another through the medium of governmental policy. Activists found a profusion of unrealized rights for a host of group causes: women, the disabled, persons in polluted environments, those without health insurance, schoolchildren in tax-poor districts. But rights-based group conflict was ecumenical. From right to left across the political spectrum, activists translated policy problems and disagreements into a denial of rights demanding compensatory public-policy actions to put things "right." Thus those in taxpayer revolts had more in common with minority rights, women's rights, and all the other rights advocates than they knew. The right of nonbelievers to a prayerless public school environment was really a kindred spirit with Believers' rights to have Creationism taught as an alternative theory to evolution. On the economic Left, government could be held responsible for the maldistribution of wealth that courts should correct by finding a right to a minimum income;

on the economic Right, government could be asked to actualize property rights by compensating businesses and landowners for any noticeable loss in potential property values produced by government regulation in the public interest.⁶⁴ Rights-based policy debates have held a rhetorical attraction for judges, activists, and politicians alike: policy claims can sound as if they are based on principles of moral judgment without anyone having to agree on “premodern” moral philosophies or theologies contending that there are knowable principles of right and wrong, cultural agreement as to where rights come from or how they are attached to responsibilities.⁶⁵

3. *Postmodern policy-making is fundamentally confrontational.* Policy claims framed in terms of rights are not easily compromised. Adding to the potential acrimony is the Sixties' legacy of distrust in institutional authority and activists' identification with self-righteous policy causes. Policy disputes are likely to begin with presumptions, not of good-faith bargaining in a search for agreement, but of confrontation with adversaries who are hostile to one's cause. Thus even under fairly ideal conditions—when opposing groups agree to drop their adversarial stance and to negotiate in an open, cooperative manner—the results are fragile at best. Having to mobilize members and contributions around threats to the cause, group leaders are hypersensitive to negotiating anything that could appear as a sellout offensive to any substantial portion of their membership. Moreover, one or two groups (concerned with turf protection, ideological purity, membership recruitment, and so on) can effectively veto agreements when others in the larger coalition do not wish to alienate traditional allies.⁶⁶ In the end, it appears that a great deal of postmodern policy-making is not really concerned with “making policy” in the sense of finding a settled course of public action that people can live with. It is aimed at crusading for a cause by confronting power with power. Media-based policy debates on welfare reform, affirmative action, abortion, crime, business deregulation, and environmental crises are only the tip of the iceberg.

4. *Postmodern policy-making is a multiplier of conflict.* Despite the final efforts of Martin Luther King Jr. as well as organizers in the New Left and SNCC, the movements of the Sixties could never coalesce into a single cross-race, cross-class party of the progressive left. Absent the coherence potentially available through such a party, the multiplication of conflict begins with the proliferation and countermobilization of activists' groups and policy lobbies since the 1950s.

It does not end there, however. What was noted earlier about the old and the new politics of budgeting applies more generally. When existing institutions and their procedural rules are trusted and the scope of representation considered acceptable, conflict can be readily contained; this is

because outcomes can be judged by adherence to process (what some critics in the Sixties dubbed “procedural liberalism”). The enduring mentality of the Sixties has tended to reject this view of the world. Outcomes and processes are to be judged by outcomes, that is, the budget results, policies, and objectives one's group is fighting for. But as in budgeting, to work smoothly, such outcome-based politics and thinking require “nothing less than a theory stating what the government ought to do.”⁶⁷ Lacking such a widely accepted theory, we acquire instead a recipe for the endless expansion of conflict. Paradoxically, as process becomes less valued for its own sake, process becomes more important as a source of interminable efforts and delays to achieve desired policy ends.

Since individuals can be grouped in any number of different ways to claim redress for unfulfilled rights, and since few are likely to agree when, if ever, equal rights are fully realized, the agenda for conflict is inherently expansionist. In the end, the liberation quest for rights of the unencumbered self challenges all distinctions between public and private life. For activists on the left, right, and middle of the political spectrum, the personal is indeed the political. This in turn can mean only that everything is political and a potential policy dispute before the nation, from the shape of sidewalk curbs to sexual innuendo in the office. Postmodern policy-making presents the specter of a political society locked in a continuous Cold War with itself. And of course our own effort here to define the history of the 1960s is one part of that power struggle in the thirty years' wars.

Recessional

The Awakening of the Sixties was transformative, for better or worse. It created an unprecedented openness of institutions to critical public view and correction. It established a presumption for an inclusive social union of equals beyond anything ever attempted by a nation-state. It nationalized policy-making on issues touching virtually every aspect of one's daily life. It drove a fundamental pluralism into the very heart of America's narrative understanding of itself. And it soon energized political forces that claimed to speak for the “true America's” religious and cultural traditions.

At the same time, a dangerous dissociation among government, policy politics, and the public was set in motion. Despite the forms of greater democratic openness in the system (in fact often because of them), policy-making in the postmodern era revolves around contending bodies of activists who are largely detached from the bulk of ordinary citizens.⁶⁸ This is

one thread that runs through our entire policy process broadly understood, from the focus-group consultants' framing of issues and the professional management of election campaigns to the details of the latest court hearing on agency regulations. The gap between policy activists and what have been called those with a commitment to everyday life is an equal-opportunity destroyer of public confidence, applying to the right and left of the political spectrum. It reflects something more than the familiar fact that serious political activity is a minority taste. The dissociation is structured in a post-Sixties policy culture that has institutionalized the distrust of institutions and their normative authority, whether in the public or private sector. The faithful activists of both right and left carry the antinomian banner.

For example, even on such a highly charged matter as the so-called culture wars over the public schools, the vast bulk of Americans are not preoccupied by concerns about multiculturalism and sex education. And traditional Christian parents (i.e., regular churchgoers who consider themselves born-again or biblical literalists) share most of the same concerns and support the same solutions for the public schools as do other Americans.⁶⁹ On this and the host of other issues crowding the policy agenda, activists confront each other and do battle over competing claims to rights-victimhood, all sides claiming the moral right (and fund-raising necessity) to demonize their policy opponents. Huge expectations are invested in public-policy solutions to dire domestic problems, both by those who would have government do more and by those who would have it do much less, or nothing. But none of this adds up to a process or public philosophy that could provide ordinary citizens with a sense of coherent meaning to what is happening in their collective affairs. Everyday Americans find their lives entangled in a regime of activist government and activist antigovernment politics that they can little understand, much less sense they are controlling.

By the mid-1990s the Sixties were regnant. The now-adult, divided, radically pluralistic Sixties generation was taking over the reins of power. More than that, they were leading an inchoate debate on what political vision of the world could have authority over the nation. In effect, the search was on for a higher public moral order in a policy culture denying there could be any such thing. Here was a situation ripe with possibilities for demagoguery and for citizens' mounting disgust with the politics to which they were onlookers. Such are the perils of a basically religious people awakening in modernity.

George Mason University

Notes

1. William G. McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform* (Chicago, 1978), 169.
2. *Ibid.*, xiii.
3. "SNCC: Founding Statement," in Judith C. Albert and Stewart E. Albert, *The Sixties Papers: Documents of a Rebellious Decade* (New York, 1984), 113. More generally, see Stewart Burns, *Social Movements of the 1960s: Searching for Democracy* (Boston, 1990), 188ff.; Edward P. Morgan, *The 60s Experience* (Philadelphia, 1991), 37.
4. For information on the spiritual/political quests of those who came of age in the 1960s, see Wade Clark Roof, *A Generation of Seekers* (San Francisco, 1993); Doug McAdam, *Freedom Summer* (New York, 1988); and Philip Hammond, *Religion and Personal Autonomy* (Columbia, S.C., 1992).
5. Others have occasionally and rather unsystematically applied the concept of an "awakening" to the 1960s. For example: Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981); Walter Anderson, *The Upstart Spring: Esalen and the American Awakening* (Reading, Mass., 1983); Richard Ellwood, *The 60s Spiritual Awakening* (New Brunswick, 1994); Morgan, *The 60s Experience*, chap. 7, "A New Awakening?" Characteristically enough, Sixties activists may remember their movement participation as "a holy time," or a discovery time of letting their "light shine." Quoted in Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties* (New York, 1995), 86.
6. McLoughlin, *Revivals*, p.2.
7. In 1994 the Louis Harris poll reported the lowest level of confidence in government institutions since the question began to be asked in 1966. Other polls show those trusting the government to do what is right all or most of the time declined from 76 percent in 1964 to 19 percent in 1994. Those seeing government run by a few big interests looking out for themselves rather than run for the benefit of all the people had risen from 29 percent in 1964 to 80 percent in 1992. S. M. Lipset, "American Democracy in Comparative Perspective" (reproduced), 3 November 1994.
8. E. J. Dionne Jr., *Why Americans Hate Politics*, 2d ed. (New York, 1992).
9. Kenneth Cauthen, *The Impact of Religious Liberalism* (New York, 1962); Allen Davis, *Spearheads for Reform* (New York, 1967); B. M. G. Reardon, *Liberal Protestantism* (Stanford, 1968). It was in this turn-of-the-century intra-Protestant conflict that the term "fundamentalist" was itself coined to identify those supposedly antimodernist forces determined to do battle for the fundamentals of the faith and its worldview. Nancy T. Ammerman, "North American Protestant Fundamentalism," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, *Fundamentalisms Observed* (Chicago, 1991), 2-27.
10. Eldon J. Eisenach, *The Lost Promise of Progressivism* (Lawrence, Kan., 1994), 45-46; and more generally, Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The De-Moralization of Society* (New York, 1994). This in turn recalled the spiritual quest of social reformers from the prior Great Awakening before the civil war, when New Lights were confident that "that is the only true church organization, when heads and hearts united in working for the welfare of the human-race." Lydia Maria Child quoted in Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination* (New York, 1994), 229.
11. Surely among the more portentous seeds was the young Oliver Wendell Holmes and his war-induced skepticism toward all causes based on claims of morality or justice. His later judicial support for Progressive economic and social legislation would be grounded in acknowledging no higher law than the democratic community's demands for action, antipating what others would embrace as interest-group liberalism. G. Edward White, *Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes: Law and the Inner Self* (New York, 1995). However, for a vivid account of how at the nonelite level America was still functioning as an "ought culture" in the 1930s, see David Gelernter, 1939: *The Lost World of the Fair* (New York, 1995).
12. The focus here is on modernity in terms of socioeconomic changes and popular thought, not on the richer philosophical discussion of modernity, modernism, and postmod-

ernism among intellectuals and artists. Modernity in its Enlightenment guise of secular rationalism encompasses its own romantic reactions throughout the last two centuries, and these have profound relevance to the 1960s. A useful overview of the terms is in Philip Selznick, *The Moral Commonwealth* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1992), 3–16. Philosophical accounts of modernity in the American context are reviewed in John P. Diggins, *The Promise of Pragmatism* (Chicago, 1994), and the inner conflicts are discussed with great subtlety in Thelma Levine, "American Philosophy, Socialism, and the Contradictions of Modernity," in John Stuhr, ed., *Philosophy and the Construction of Culture* (New York, 1992), and idem, "America and the Contestations of Modernity," in Herman Saatkamp, ed., *Pragmatism and Rorty* (Vanderbilt, Tenn., 1995).

13. Robert Booth Fowler, *Unconventional Partners: Religion and Liberal Culture in the United States* (Grand Rapids, 1989), chaps. 1–3.

14. See, for example, Ruth Elson, *Guardians of Tradition* (Lincoln, 1964); Sara Goodman Zimet, *What Children Read in School* (New York, 1972); George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University* (New York, 1994). The claim here runs to the presumptive self-confidence in a culture asserting such authority, not that college students have morally changed much over the centuries. Cf. Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (New York, 1994).

15. Ellwood, *The 60s Spiritual Awakening*, chap. 3, 104–75. Writing in 1955, Will Herberg described being Protestant, Catholic, or Jew as "the alternative ways of being an American," with the underlying culture-religion represented by "the American way of life." *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (Garden City, N.Y., 1960).

16. Peter Berger, "Religion in Post-Protestant America," *Commentary*, May 1986.

17. Morton Keller, *Regulating a New Economy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990), and *Regulating a New Society* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994).

18. Richard Flacks, *Making History: The American Left and the American Mind* (New York, 1988), 53–67. For an account of how the liberal consensus emerged in the give-and-take of New Deal policy-making, see Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York, 1995).

19. James L. Sundquist, *Politics and Policy* (Washington, D.C., 1968), 46–54. For typically self-confident expositions of the national agenda, see Kermit Gordon, ed., *Agenda for the Nation* (Washington, D.C., 1968), as well as the Nixon administration version: Report of the National Goals Research Staff, *Toward Balanced Growth: Quantity with Quality* (Washington, D.C., 1970).

20. Robert C. Wood, *Whatever Possessed the President? Academic Experts and Presidential Policy, 1960–1988* (Amherst, 1993).

21. Andre Jamison, *Seeds of the Sixties* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994); John Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (New York, 1994).

22. *Washington Post*, 4 July 1994, C5. A 1969 poll found 13 percent of college students identifying with the "new left," compared to 3 percent of noncollege youth. The largest U.S. college protest was occasioned by the 1970 Kent State shootings, and it engaged 2 million of the some 8 million students in the nation. The nonstudent, general population was even less supportive of what would become known as "sixties-type people." After the spring 1970 U.S. invasion of Cambodia, surveys showed that three-fourths of Americans opposed protests against the government and would support restricting basic freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights to that end. Survey analysis in the late 1980s suggested that the ethics of about 30 million Americans were altered in a meaningful way (a quintessential Sixties term) by the 1960s events, particularly civil rights, women's liberation, and the Vietnam War. Some 16 million also stated that the counterculture of the time resulted in personal changes in their lives. Cf. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties*, xvi–xx, 351, 422.

23. Burns, *Social Movements of the 1960s*, xii. For a rich evocation of this distressed

passage of 1960s youth, see Susan Cheever, *A Woman's Life* (New York, 1994). Estimates of protest participation are from a 1989 Gallup poll of thirty- to forty-nine-year-olds, *Washington Post*, 24 July 1994, C5.

24. A good survey of recent thinking on social movements generally is Jean L. Cohen, ed., "Social Movements" (Special Issue), *Social Research* 52:4 (Winter 1985). For the Sixties, see Rebecca Jackson, *The 1960s: An Annotated Bibliography of Social and Political Movements in the United States* (Westport, Conn., 1992).

25. Peter Viereck, *Conservatism Revisited* (London, 1950); William F. Buckley, *God and Man at Yale* (Chicago, 1951); Russell Kirk, *The Conservative Mind* (Chicago, 1953). In 1959 the first working chapters of the John Birch Society were formed, named after a young Baptist missionary turned volunteer soldier who was killed by the Chinese Communists in 1945. Circulating in the lively if nascent conservative movement of the late 1950s was a "Hymn to the Welfare State":

The Government is my shepherd/ Therefore I need not work./ It alloweth me to lie down on a good job./ It leadeth me beside still factories./ It destroyeth my initiative./ It leadeth me in the path of a parasite for politic's sake./ Yea, though I walk through the valley of laziness and deficit-spending,/ I will fear no evil, for the Government is with me./ It prepareth an economic Utopia for me, by appropriating the earnings of my own grandchildren./ It fillet my head with false security./ My inefficiency runneth over./ Surely the Government should care for me for all the days of my life!!/ And I shall dwell in a fool's paradise for ever.

26. Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (Shepherdsville, Ky., 1960). The sense of conservative momentum is nicely captured in the cover story in *Time*, 10 April 1960, and "The Great Debate of the Year: Does America's Best Hope for the Future Lie in Political Conservatism?" (a printed debate between Senators Barry Goldwater and Jacob Javits), in Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer J. Adler, eds., *The Great Ideas Today 1962* (Chicago, 1962).

27. Peter Collier and David Horowitz, *Destructive Generation* (New York, 1989) 262; Morgan, *The 60s Experience*, 273.

28. Sara Evans, *Personal Politics* (New York, 1980).

29. A representative summary of the indictment in keeping with the spirit of the times is the series of articles in *The New Yorker*, appearing later in Richard N. Goodwin's, *The American Condition* (New York, 1974).

30. Michael J. Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington, and Joji Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy* (New York, 1975), 74–76.

31. Flacks, *Making History*, 186.

32. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book IX, line 825. Eve is pondering the reason why not to give Adam the forbidden fruit she has eaten: "But keep the odds of Knowledge in my power without Copartner? So to add what is wanting in Female Sex, the more to draw his Love, and render me more equal, and perhaps, a thing not undesirable, sometime Superior: for inferior who is free?"

33. Burns, *Social Movements of the 1960s*, 199.

34. David Vogel, "The Public-Interest Movement and the American Reform Tradition," *Political Science Quarterly* 95 (Winter 1980–81); and Benjamin Ginsberg, *The Captive Public* (New York, 1986).

35. Andrew Arato and Jean L. Cohen, "Social Movements, Civil Society, and the Problem of Sovereignty," *Praxis International* 4 (October 1984): 266–83. The concept is argued far more fully in Sara M. Evans and Harry C. Boyte, *Free Spaces: The Sources of Democratic Change in America* (New York, 1986).

36. The same rhetoric would be repeated in the 1990s by conservatives such as presidential candidate Pat Buchanan (e.g., in his celebrated speech at the 1992 Republican convention). But in this place and time, the idea and phrase came from one of the precursors and inspirations for the Sixties' Left, Paul Goodman: "How is it possible to have more meaning

and honor in work? To put wealth to some real use? To have a high standard of living of whose quality we are not ashamed? To get social justice for those who have been shamefully left out . . . ? If 10 thousand people in all walks of life will stand up on their two feet and talk out and insist, we shall get back our country." *Growing Up Absurd* (New York, 1956), x-xvi.

37. Some did try to fashion a "rational, humanist moral code" to replace traditional standards. See Michael Harrington, *The Twilight of Capitalism* (New York, 1976). For a bittersweet account of his life in a self-described movement of "historic failure," see Michael Harrington, *The Long-Distance Runner: An Autobiography* (New York, 1989).

38. Thus there was virtually no Sixties "activism" at traditional religiously-based universities such as Baylor and Brigham Young; by contrast, social activism was strongly emphasized by the radical theologians of the time in their freer and more flexible "new morality," publicized most vividly in the "death of God" writings. Ronald B. Flowers, *Religion in Strange Times: The 1960s and 1970s* (Macon, Ga., 1984); a lively account is in Ellwood, *The 60s Spiritual Awakening*, 122-42.

39. Tom Engelhardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation* (New York, 1994).

40. This claim takes classic form in the American narrative with Lincoln's defense of the "unreal" pretending embodied in the Declaration of Independence's lofty phrases. Stephen Douglas's modernist critique and Lincoln's premodern counter are highlighted in their sixth debate, on 13 October 1858.

41. Ronald Fraser, ed., 1968: *A Student Generation in Revolt* (New York, 1988); Burns, *Social Movements of the 1960s*, 184-85.

42. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York, 1963), 46-47.

43. Steven Tipton, *Getting Saved from the Sixties* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1982); Phillip Hammond, *Religion and Personal Autonomy* (Columbia, S.C., 1992). According to Wade Roof's study, more than two in every three Baby Boomers raised in a religious tradition stopped attending church or synagogue during their teens or early twenties; of those, one in four would return, generally when having children of their own, only to drop out again as child-rearing ended and the already weak institutional attachments faded. Wade Clark Roof, *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation* (San Francisco, 1993).

44. H. Richard Niebuhr, *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture* (New York, 1960); John Courtney Murray, *We Hold These Truths* (New York, 1960); Martin E. Marty, *The New Shape of American Religion* (New York, 1959).

45. Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York, 1987).

46. Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from the Birmingham Jail," in Michael B. Levy, ed., *Political Thought in America*, 2d ed. (Prospect Heights, Ill., 1988), 458.

47. Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York, 1965).

48. Sara Evans, *Personal Politics*, 61; Sidney Milkis and Richard Harris, *The Politics of Regulatory Change* (Oxford, 1989), 62-81.

49. Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York, 1984).

50. Ellwood, *The 60s Spiritual Awakening*, 80.

51. Doug McAdam, *Freedom Summer* (New York, 1988); James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (Washington, D.C., 1985); Howell Raines, *My Soul Is Rested* (Harmondsworth, 1983).

52. Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* (Boston, 1968), 158-59.

53. Charles Tilly et al., *The Rebellious Century: 1830-1930* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975); and idem, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, Mass., 1978). Subsequent points about the identity orientation in collective action draw upon Alain Touraine, *The Voice and the Eye* (New York, 1982), and "An Introduction to the Study of Social Movements," in Cohen, "Social Movements."

54. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989); for applications to the American legal and constitutional system, see Hadley Arkes, *Beyond the Constitution* (Princeton, 1990), and Thomas C. Grey, "Do We Have an Unwritten Constitution?" 27 *Stanford Law Review* 703 (February 1975).

55. By the 1950s, for example, the Social Security Administration had established 15,000 local offices to promote its programs; the number of federal income taxpayers had risen from 7 million in 1940 to almost 50 million by the 1950s. *Historic Statistics of the United States*, Series Y, 402-11.

56. Bruce Ladd, *Crisis in Credibility* (New York, 1968); Robert J. Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America from 1870 to the Present* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), chap. 11.

57. Andrew Kopkind, *The Thirty Years' Wars: Dispatches and Diversions of a Radical Journalist, 1965-1994* (New York, 1995).

58. Martha Derthick, *Agency Under Stress* (Washington, D.C., 1990); James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy* (New York, 1989), chap. 10; Constance Ewing Cook, *Nuclear Power and Legal Advocacy* (Lexington, Mass., 1980); Michael Lacey, ed., *Government and Environmental Politics* (Washington, D.C., 1989).

59. Richard Stewart, "The Reformation of American Administrative Law," *Harvard Law Review* 88 (1975); R. Shep Melnick, *Regulation and the Courts* (Washington, D.C., 1983), and *Between the Lines* (Washington, D.C., 1994); Sidney Milkis and Richard Harris, *The Politics of Regulatory Change* (New York, 1989); George Hoberg, *Pluralism by Design* (New York, 1992).

60. Allen Schick, "From the Old Politics of Budgeting to the New," in Naomi Caiden and Joseph White, *Budgeting, Policy, Politics* (New Brunswick, 1995).

61. *Ibid.*, 137.

62. Stephen L. Carter, *The Confirmation Mess* (New York, 1994).

63. Kim McQuaid, *Uneasy Partners: Big Business in American Politics, 1945-1990* (Baltimore, 1994).

64. Peter Edelman, "The Next Century of Our Constitution," *Hastings Law Journal* (November 1987); and *The Republican Contract with America*, (November 1994), both reported on the same page in the *Washington Post*, 18 December 1994, C7.

65. Arkes, *Beyond the Constitution*.

66. Andrew S. McFarland, *Cooperative Pluralism: The National Coal Policy Experiment* (Lawrence, Kan., 1993).

67. Aaron Wildavsky, *The Politics of the Budgetary Process* (Boston, 1964), 129.

68. Disparities between activists and nonactivists are surveyed in Sidney Verba et al., "Citizen Activity: Who Participates? What Do They Say?" *American Political Science Review* 87:2 (June 1993): 303-18.

69. Jean Johnson and John Immerwahr, *First Things First: What Americans Expect from the Public Schools* (New York, 1994).

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