

not trust anyone else. We had to trust each other and we did.” They *belonged* to a movement, and to a new generation that was seizing the moral leadership of the nation, that was confronting cold war culture.

That feeling was exhilarating for the first wave of activists in the early sixties. “In this brief moment of time,” Tom Hayden wrote, “the sixties generation entered its age of innocence, overflowing with hope.” While the enthusiasm of some activists had been broken in the South, the generation as a whole seemed to have unlimited potential. As Howard Zinn wrote in 1964: these “young people are the nation’s most vivid reminder that there is an unquenchable spirit alive in the world today, beyond race, beyond nationality, beyond class. It is a spirit which seeks to embrace all people everywhere.”

For the generation, then, the early sixties was an era of expanding optimism, and that spirit often stayed with activists for the rest of their lives. Casey Hayden reminisced twenty-five years later that the movement “was everything: home and family, food and work, love and a reason to live. . . . It was outrageous, really. Exciting, liberating, spicy, when we were young and in the South. The movement—sometimes I have longed for it so profoundly. . . . It was a holy time.” It was an era when ordinary people felt that they were doing their own small part to brighten the future of America.³⁵ “I know that I exaggerate the importance of that summer, and especially my role in it,” said a Mississippi volunteer years later. “But those memories have served me well. The . . . purest moment of my life was in that little church in Hattiesburg, sweating like a pig and crying like a baby, singing, ‘This Little Light of Mine.’ Do you know the words? One part goes:

The light that shines is the light of love,
lights the darkness from above.
It shines on me and it shines on you,
shows what the power of love can do.
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

TWO

The Movement and the Sixties Generation

This is the winter of our discontent . . . and although we have been quiet in the past, now we are beginning to stir. For we are angry, and there is a point beyond we will not be pushed.

Roger Ebert, *University of Illinois Daily Illini*, January 1965

This civil rights movement is evolving from a protest movement into a full-fledged social movement.

Bayard Rustin, 1965

“Last summer I went to Mississippi to join the struggle there for civil rights,” said Berkeley student Mario Savio in 1964. “This fall I am engaged in another phase of the same struggle, this time in Berkeley. In Mississippi an autocratic and powerful minority rules, through organized violence, to suppress the vast, virtually powerless majority. In California, the privileged minority manipulates the university bureaucracy to suppress the students’ political expression.”

That expression had been curtailed by the University of California as students arrived on the Berkeley campus for fall semester in September. As was typical for university officials during the cold war era, a dean simply informed all student organizations that from now on they were no longer permitted to set up tables on campus to promote “off-campus” causes such as civil rights, and this ban applied to the traditional area for such endeavors, a small strip of property at the campus’s main entrance where Telegraph Avenue met Bancroft Way.¹

Activism had long since arrived in Berkeley. In 1958 students organized Towards an Active Student Community, which later became SLATE, and a few dozen began discussing civil rights, capital punishment, and nuclear disarmament. “For us,” student Michael Rossman later wrote, “the discovery was of each other. We began to realize we were not alone.”

In spring 1960 they acted, holding silent vigils at San Quentin to protest the execution of Caryl Chessman and picketing the House Un-American Activities Committee investigation of Communist activities in the Bay Area, a demonstration that led to Black Friday. Activism increased, and by the 1963–64 academic year hundreds of students had become involved in civil rights demonstrations, picketing hotels, automobile dealerships, restaurants, and other businesses that had discriminatory employment practices. At Lucky food stores, activists held “shop-ins,” filling grocery carts with food, and after going through the checkout line, saying, “Sorry, I forgot my money. If you would hire some Negroes I would remember it next time.” They picketed the Oakland *Tribune*, whose conservative owner was on the university’s board of regents, and in March the local campaign reached a crescendo when 2000 violated a court order restricting the number of protesters in front of the Sheraton Palace Hotel; police arrested 800.

Political debate also was mounting. The Republican convention was held during June 1964 in San Francisco and the candidacy of conservative Barry Goldwater inspired discussion as he faced Lyndon Johnson in the upcoming elections. Then, in August, just weeks before students returned to classes, President Johnson declared that North Vietnam had attacked U.S. ships in the Gulf of Tonkin. He asked for and received from Congress the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which stimulated more student debate about America’s role in South Vietnam. And as fall semester began in September approximately fifty students returned from volunteer work during Mississippi Summer. At Berkeley and at other universities many of these students were welcomed back to campus as “civil rights heroes.”

The university administration apparently was under pressure by conservatives in the state, community, and on the board of regents to curb activism when they issued the political ban. The students’ response was dramatic. On September 21 campus organizations of all political persuasions united—from the Young Socialist Alliance to Youth for Goldwater—and they violated the ban. Two hundred students picketed on campus with signs such as “UC Manufactures Safe Minds,” “Ban Political Birth Control,” and “Bomb the Ban.” To most, the issue was freedom of speech. “We’re allowed to say why we think something is good or bad,” said activist Jackie Goldberg, “but we’re not allowed to distribute information as to what to do about it. Inaction is the rule, rather than the exception, in our society and on this campus.” The movement gained support, and a week later some students set up political tables. Administrators took down names, and ordered civil rights veteran Jack Weinberg to appear in front of a dean. He did the next day, but he was followed by 500 supporters who packed into the administration building, Sproul Hall, and stayed un-

til early the next morning. University of California president Clark Kerr suspended eight activists, but that did not stifle dissent as it would have in the 1950s. It only increased ill will and resulted in more protest. “A student who has been chased by the KKK in Mississippi,” said student Roger Sandall, “is not easily scared by academic bureaucrats.”

The Free Speech Movement it was called, and along with the civil rights protests the previous spring it demonstrated the emergence of a new generation. “How proud I felt,” wrote Berkeley student Sara Davidson. “I belonged to a great new body of students who cared about the problems of the world. No longer would youth be apathetic. That was the fifties. We were *committed*.”²

Ever since, Berkeley has been synonymous with student protest and campus rebellion in the 1960s. Historians have described the rise of student power by examining the events at Berkeley in 1964 and then those at Columbia University in 1968 as if little happened during those years on other campuses. Sociologists and psychologists have written a library of articles and books postulating numerous theories of why students were challenging the system—family affluence, permissive child rearing, developmental stress, the impending collapse of capitalism, and even that young male students were plagued with castration complexes.³ These interpretations are misleading. During the mid-1960s the rise of student power was a national phenomenon concerning many more issues than just free speech on one prominent campus. Furthermore, social science theories might explain the behavior of some individuals, but will not account for the rise of campus turmoil. Instead, one must examine the massive new generation—the sixties generation—as a sizable percentage arrived on campuses, and then discovered that university administrators restricted their personal behavior and constitutional rights.

In 1964 and 1965 the first babies born after World War II were coming of age; they were celebrating their eighteenth birthdays. The enormous postwar birth rate lasted eighteen years, from 1946 to 1964, and it resulted in the largest generation in our history, over 70 million, the baby boomers. Their sheer numbers changed the face of the nation. In 1960, because of the low birth rate during depression and war, America had grown middle-aged; there were only 16 million youths, 18- to 24-year-olds. The baby boom, however, brought about a dramatic shift. By 1970, the number of youth soared to about 25 million. Suddenly, the nation was young. The “sixties generation” included baby boomers who were born in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and the generation also comprised older siblings, those born during World War II who became the “first wave” of activists in the early 1960s. Consequently the sixties generation could be defined to include anyone who turned eighteen during the era from 1960 to 1972. The oldest was born in 1942 and turned 30 in 1972, and the youngest

was born in 1954 and turned 18 in 1972. This generation numbered over 45 million, about 33 million who also were part of the baby boom, and this group felt special, especially after the traumatic events of the decade. A 1969 survey revealed that 80 percent of youth felt part of "my generation."

America seemed young, and in mid-decade being part of the sixties generation was suddenly important. Businesses cashed in on youth as Ford Motor Company developed a car for kids, the Mustang, and as a soft drink company proclaimed the arrival of the "Pepsi Generation." To explain, exploit, or cater to the young became an obsession, and the number of commercials soared while articles on youth tripled during the decade. The Associated Press declared that youth "made more headlines than anybody. . . . 1964 would have to go down as the Year of the Kids." In 1965 *Newsweek* claimed that "America's future has always belonged to its youth but never before have the young staked out so large a claim to America's present." And *Time* proclaimed, "For the Man of the Year 1966 is a generation: the man—and woman—of 25 and under."

Furthermore, and because of postwar affluence, the sixties generation had an opportunity missed by their parents' depression generation. The children could spend years at college, even travel, before they "had to settle down." This increased the probability of a "generation gap" between parents and kids. The years between the late teens and early twenties usually are stressful, rebellious, as individuals search for themselves, a mate, a career. The decade was destined to be more rambunctious than earlier eras as baby boomers passed through growing pains. The large number of kids also meant that throughout the decade there always would be an abundant supply of young faces entering college, being drafted, or being examined by academics and journalists.

Yet in the mid-1960s what it meant to be part of the sixties generation was uncertain. Journalists labeled some youth "committed," but they named most the "explosive," "aloof" and especially the "cool" generation. Taking the term from jazz and the beatniks, the media declared that this generation felt that it was "cool" to be young.

The nation seemed flooded with the cool generation, and they began exhibiting youthful forms of rebellion as they dominated the American scene. Spring breaks at Fort Lauderdale became an annual pilgrimage for boys participating in the great hunt for "beach, broads and booze," while at Daytona Beach they searched for "sex, sand, suds and sun." On Easter weekend some 75,000 collegians held a huge bash at Daytona Beach. All was rather serene until one girl, who was being tossed on a blanket, lost her swimsuit. The riot was on. A Michigan State sophomore boasted, "I just came to have me some fun and get drunk," as police arrested almost 2000 for public promiscuity and drinking.

Labor Day weekend the party moved to Hampton Beach, New Hampshire. Some 10,000 teens arrived at the quiet seashore resort which prohibited beer and the new fad, "bundling," sleeping together on the beach. Kids naturally broke the law and a riot ensued. Police attempted to disperse the crowd with fire hoses, tear gas and dogs, but eventually the governor had to call in the National Guard. The ruckus lasted two nights, and the authorities drove the crowd three miles, literally across the state line and into Massachusetts. Those who did not get out of town were arrested, and the judge showed the older generations' displeasure by handing out stiff sentences of up to nine months in jail and \$1000 fines. While the governor stated that the beach riot was a "symptom of the moral sickness in American youth," the kids disagreed. To many in the sixties generation, the decade was becoming one long party.

Meanwhile in California: Surf's Up! Golden girls and flexing boys apparently surfed an endless wave or played a continual game of volleyball before pizzas, nightly parties, and some heavy panting. Young love was celebrated in numerous movies between 1963 and 1965: *Beach Party*, *Muscle Beach Party*, *Bikini Beach*, *Beach Blanket Bingo*. By all appearances, the girls and guys of the "Mickey Mouse Club" had graduated from the show and were having a wonderful time, wiggling and giggling, bulging out of their swimsuits. It appeared that everyone was eager to learn "How to Stuff a Wild Bikini." As The Beach Boys sang "Surfin U.S.A." and drove their "Little Deuce Coupe," tanned "California Girls" exclaimed, "Life's so bitchin'!"

It was more than that, for the sixties generation was getting its first taste of the sexual revolution. Birth control pills became available for married women, and by mid-decade single coeds were flocking to family planning clinics, wearing a friend's wedding ring, and getting their monthly prescriptions of "the pill." Along with the diaphragm, the pill dramatically increased a woman's feeling of independence as it placed birth control in her hands and liberated her from the dreaded fear of getting pregnant. The press began writing about sexual mores of the young, and *Newsweek* explained to the older generation the new definition of a "technical virgin," a "boy or girl who has experienced almost all varieties of heterosexual sex—except intercourse."

Men made new demands on their girlfriends, turning up the pressure to "do it." A "boy used to date two girls simultaneously, a nice girl and a not-so-nice girl," a Michigan coed explained. "Now he wants two girls in one. The nice girl who doesn't want to go along has a problem." A Bennington female stated, "If a girl reaches 20 and she's still a virgin, she begins to wonder whether there's anything wrong with her," and a Vassar coed added, "It's a load off my mind, losing my virginity."

The older generation was shocked. "Morals don't mean a thing to

them,” a beach hotel manager said about the kids during spring break in Florida. In Darien, Connecticut, a suburban community that prided itself on wholesome children, church attendance, and propriety, parents were alarmed by reports of high school pregnancies, heavy drinking, and “sexual activity going on at the drive-in-theater of every kind and degree.”

The kids were beginning to express values of their own generation. “We’ve discarded the idea that the loss of virginity is related to degeneracy,” an Ohio State senior explained. “Premarital sex doesn’t mean the down fall of society, at least not the kind of society that we’re going to build.”⁴

That society was becoming increasingly sexy as the sixties generation dominated the media. In fashion, the girls of the 1950s had grown out of their bobby sox and pedal-pushers and in 1964 began wearing mini-skirts. Hemlines never had revealed so much leg, and many older women quickly adopted the new fad, even Jackie Kennedy. Coeds, meanwhile, were taking off one-piece bathing suits and wearing smaller and smaller “itsy bitsy teenie weenie yellow polka dot” bikinis, while some models created a sensation by wearing topless swimsuits. Teenagers bought what parents called “a dirty magazine,” *Playboy*. Hugh Hefner’s sexual values were merged with the 1950s can-do masculinity and presented on film in numerous James Bond movies. Sean Connery became the John Wayne to the sixties generation as he merged technology and sex to pursue “Pussy Galore” in *Goldfinger*.

“Most of all,” the Associated Press wrote about 1964, “it was the year of the Beatles.” The Beatles did not just come to America; they invaded. In February the rock group arrived at Kennedy International Airport and were met by 3000 screaming fans, mostly teenage girls. The Fabulous Four could not get through the crowd without the help of 200 policemen. For a month the group performed to shrieking, squealing audiences, and when they made their American TV debut on the Ed Sullivan Show, the program received the highest ratings in history: 72 percent of the New York audience tuned in. Beatlemania was an instant fad, and soon many of the sixties generation were abandoning crew cuts for long bangs and black boots.

The Beatles’ sound and lyrics were similar to American popular music at that time; it was as adolescent as the baby boomers. Top hits of the era included Leslie Gore whining “It’s my party and I’ll cry if I want to,” the Angels sneering, “My Boyfriend’s back and you’re gonna be in trouble,” the Kingsmen slurring, “Louie, Louie,” or the Temptations talking about “My Girl,” my girl. Most popular, however, were surfer groups such as Jan and Dean and the Beach Boys, or the Motown sound of the Supremes. Between summer 1963 and 1965 the Beach Boys had nine songs in the top ten and the themes were “I Get Around,” “Surfer Girl,” and

“Do You Wanna Dance.” While Jan and Dean were squealing around “Dead Man’s Curve” en route to “Surf City,” the Supremes sang “Baby Love” and wondered “Where Did Our Love Go?” The Beatles had the answer: “I Want to Hold Your Hand,” “All My Loving,” “And I Love Her.” If it was “A Hard Day’s Night” for the Beatles, it was not for the Beach Boys, who just had “Fun, Fun, Fun,” telling the generation to “Dance, Dance, Dance.” Kids agreed, and performed what one reporter labeled, “touch-less, wildly tribalistic dances like the ‘frug’ and the ‘swim’ and the ‘mashed potato.’” Everyone was having “good, good, good, good vibrations.”

Yet the Beatles were having more impact than other bands. They were part of the British Invasion which included many English bands and which demonstrated that rock and roll—although a uniquely American invention—was becoming the music of the international postwar baby boom: The sixties would not just be an American phenomenon. Also, the Beatles looked and acted differently than clean-cut American performers. After the crew-cut 1950s, the “Fab Four” had relatively long, shaggy hair. After an era of learning “to respect your elders,” they seemed irreverent, even joking about the Queen of England. The Beatles movie in 1965, *A Hard Day’s Night*, was “almost all joy,” a student critic wrote, because “all the dreary old adults are mocked and brushed aside.” To many young Americans, these musicians symbolized rejection of 1950s morality, a revolt against authority, and estrangement from parents. “My mother hates them, my father hates them, my teacher hates them,” said a young fan. “Can you think of three better reasons why I love them?”

A subtle revolt was under way, a generational conflict in which many youth felt different from their parents. As adolescents sprouted into adulthood they realized that their values were unique; they were more idealistic and tolerant, less concerned with Communism. A third of these high school graduates headed off to college, three times the percentage as during their parents’ generation, and that naturally began to create tensions between moms and dads and their collegiate sons and daughters. “We sent them to a university,” parents would say, “that’s more than we ever had. What more could they want?” The generation gap was becoming evident by 1965, and The Who expressed it in song:

People try to put us down,
Just because we get around,
Things they do look awful cold
I hope I die before I get old. . . .
Why don’t you all fade away
Don’t try to dig what we all say.

That alienation naturally appeared on campus. *Newsweek* noted, "The young successfully 'Beatle-ized' the nation, and many think they may be about to 'Berkeley-ize' it as well."⁵

On campuses and in coffeehouses a growing number of students had been listening to young folk singers declaring the dawn of a new era. The cover blurb on Peter, Paul and Mary's debut album in 1962 proclaimed that the record "is bright with enthusiasm. No gimmicks. There is just something *Good* about it all. . . . One thing is for sure in any case: Honesty is back. Tell your neighbor." Many did, and soon the generation was singing out with Phil Ochs, Joan Baez, Tom Paxton, Judy Collins, Leonard Cohen, the Chad Mitchell Trio, and the Brothers Four.

The folk musicians' message was popular; it stated the emerging values of the sixties generation. ABC began a show in 1963 that featured folk singers, "Hootenanny," and soon ten million watched each week. At the same time Bob Dylan produced *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, which sold 200,000 copies in two months, a remarkable number then for a folk-singer. The album featured the first popular protest song about the military-industrial complex, "Masters of War," and one about nuclear apocalypse, "A Hard Rain's a Gonna Fall," and it questioned the older generation in "Blowin' in the Wind." Later that year Peter, Paul and Mary released a single of "Blowin' in the Wind" and it sold over 300,000 copies in less than two weeks, eventually over a million, making it the first protest song to make the hit parade.

Many folk songs concerned the most important issue of the day in the first half of the 1960s—civil rights. The Chad Mitchell Trio sang a satirical tune about segregation at the University of Mississippi entitled "Alma Mater"; Tom Paxton skewered segregationists in his "Dogs of Alabama"; and Phil Ochs decried the southern way of life in "Talking Birmingham Jam" and "Here's to the State of Mississippi." Peter, Paul and Mary sang "If I Had a Hammer," proclaiming that they did have a hammer, a bell, and a song: "It's the hammer of Justice, It's the bell of freedom, It's the song about love between my brothers and my sisters, all over this land." And in "Blowin' in the Wind" Dylan posed a moral choice to his generation:

How many roads must a man walk, before you call him a man?
Yes, 'n' how many times can a man turn his head
Pretending he just doesn't see?
The answer my friend is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

"The first way to answer these questions," said Dylan, "is by asking them. . . . I still say that some of the biggest criminals are those that

turn their heads away when they see wrong and know it's wrong."⁶ Folk-singers felt a warm wind of change blowing from the southern struggle, a breeze carrying new values, and in 1965 Dylan warned mothers and fathers:

Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command
Your old road is rapidly aging.
Please get out of the new one
If you can't lend a hand
For the times they are a'changin'

Times were changing on campus as the first baby boomers began flooding classrooms in mid-decade. In the past, higher education had been reserved for wealthy Americans usually enrolled in private colleges. Before World War II more students attended private than public institutions, but that changed after the conflict. The government awarded veterans the GI Bill, which paid their tuition; a strong postwar economy meant that many more families could help their children enroll in state universities; and then, in 1957, the Soviets challenged America—the Russians launched Sputnik. The race for space was on! Parents in the suburbs began wondering if Little Ivan was smarter than Little Terry. Congress responded by passing the National Defense Education Act, which granted scholarships and some loans to science and engineering students, and in 1965 President Johnson dramatically enlarged the student loan program as part of his Great Society.

Education had been democratized. If the mind was willing, virtually anyone could enroll at a university. "Of course I went to college," said a baby boomer. "That was assumed." By the end of the 1960s three-quarters of university students were enrolled at public institutions and almost half of all kids 18 to 21 were attending college. Enrollments soared. In 1960 there were three million college students, but in autumn 1964 the first baby boomers hit campus and by the next year there were five million and that doubled to ten million by 1973. This meant the rise of a new form of higher education, the large public university. Before World War II there was not one university with over 15,000 students, yet by 1970 over fifty institutions had that enrollment and eight campuses were stuffed with over 30,000. Between 1958 and 1970, for example, the approximate number of students at North Carolina (Chapel Hill), Georgia (Athens), and LSU (Baton Rouge) almost tripled to about 17,000. Washington (Seattle) and Texas (Austin) expanded from about 15,000 to almost 27,000, while Michigan (Ann Arbor) and Ohio State (Columbus) each grew by 50 percent to about 34,000. Minnesota doubled to over 40,000, and Wisconsin soared from 14,000 to 35,000. In just the first five years of the

1960s Berkeley's enrollment increased 50 percent to over 27,000. The stunning increase in enrollment, the massive numbers at college, meant that if students became active then the media would quickly focus its attention on the campus. The national and local press would see any student activism as "a potential Berkeley."

As the size of the university increased, so did its functions. The university became the "generator of knowledge," the arena for analysis and data which would help America not only compete with other nations but win the cold war. "Experts" would save the day, and the "best" ideas apparently came from the "brightest" professors. Besides teaching and research, professors attended conferences, workshops, symposia, and they consulted government, industry, and business. Besides educating, colleges began competing with each other for the most distinguished faculty and for prestige. Some that had been "colleges" for generations, even centuries, changed their names to "universities." But that was not enough. "Multiversities," President Kerr labeled these institutions. They were a "prime instrument of national purpose . . . the focal point for national growth . . . at the center of the knowledge process." Competition became more intense, and administrators of multiversities fought for federal grants, research funds, endowment gifts, and organizational support. This called for a growing corps of officials, more deans and their assistants, all expanding at a faster pace than the professoriat. "Educational administrators," wrote professor Andrew Hacker in 1965, "are adept at discovering new services they can perform, new committees they can create, new reports they can write." Quantity became the new equation for prestige: students \times deans \times programs \times research dollars. Bureaucracies expanded until administrators searching for funds became more important than professors teaching Aristotle.⁷

The quality of students arriving on campus each fall also improved. Suburban schools were meeting the cold war challenge and sending better educated kids to college. In June 1963 *Life* surveyed deans at twenty college campuses, from Yale to UCLA, from Miami to Denver, and then editorialized: "'63 is probably the best prepared, stablest and most promising college class in U.S. history. Instead of preaching to it, let's listen."

Yet that was the problem—university administrators were not listening. "Universities as a rule are less interested in what students are complaining about," wrote Yale chaplain William Sloane Coffin, Jr., in 1965, "than in how to stop their complaining." During the early years of the decade, University of California administrator William McGill admitted, "We were so involved with our own work and our own ambitions that at first we did not hear what students were trying to tell us."

Students had a lot on their minds. Each fall semester they found themselves in long lines at registration and in enormous classes, the "mass-

class." Four and five hundred students in a massclass became common at state universities. At Texas some 700 sat in freshman geology, but that was small compared with Minnesota, where almost 2000 students were enrolled in Psychology 2. The class was taught by one professor and a team of harried graduate students, who in fact were conducting most entry-level classes at research universities. At Berkeley, two-thirds of the smaller classes were taught by graduate students in 1965, and at Texas inexperienced teaching assistants, who had an average of only one semester classroom experience, taught 90 percent of all freshman classes in math and English and 70 percent of those courses in French and Italian. At Illinois an army of 130 graduate assistants taught almost all sections of first-year English.

College administrators responded to exploding enrollments by increasing class size and by relying on technology. Classes were televised; students were computerized. At Minnesota, 400 freshmen sat in an auditorium waiting for the bell. Then a dozen televisions went on, the professor appeared on screen and began the lesson in Sociology 101. Students never knew for the entire term if the man on TV was alive, for they never saw him in person. "Registration was accomplished with IBM cards," Sara Davidson recalled about Berkeley, "and papers frequently were returned bearing a grade and no comments, as if they had been read by a machine." The *Daily Californian* informed new students, "Welcome to lines, bureaucracy and crowds. The incoming freshman has much to learn—perhaps lesson number one is not to fold, spindle or mutilate his IBM card."

"The multiversity is a confusing place for the student," admitted Clark Kerr, and while the massclass has become standard since, it was frustrating then to a generation of students who had been raised in relative affluence and showered with parental attention. "They always seem to be wanting to make me into a number," said a Syracuse student. "I won't let them. I have a name and am important enough to be known by it. . . . I'll join any movement that comes along to help me."

To many students sitting in an auditorium listening to someone with a microphone, the university seemed like a service station, a factory where one matriculated before heading off to automated America. The multiversity became the "screwnaversity." The "rapid spread of conflict through other campuses was not like an army mobilizing under central command," noted Michael Rossman, "but like mushrooms after a fall rain: Today one, tomorrow a thousand, because conditions are similar and ripe everywhere."⁸

The condition that most irritated students in the first half of the decade was not only overcrowding, frustrating but understandable, but the way that colleges set rules and regulations for its students. *In loco parentis* was

a term meaning "in the place of the parents." Historically, it gave academic officials authorization to act as the students' parents and issue discipline during college years. Philosophically, it meant that daddies and deans would continue to tell college kids how to behave, smiling and saying, "It's for your own good." Legally, it meant that unlike regular citizens, students between kindergarten and graduate school could be tried by civil and university authorities, and they could be found guilty, not just of breaking laws, but also of violating campus regulations. Thus, an underaged student who drank alcohol, smoked dope, or even had a traffic ticket could be fined or jailed by the judge and expelled by the dean. During the mid-1960s campus activists began raising the question: Are students full citizens, ones protected by the Constitution?

"No," said American society. In the 1640s Harvard College informed its students that they shall not speak "lies and uncertain rumors . . . bitter scoffing, frothy wanton words," or display "offensive gestures." For the next three centuries university administrators had not changed many rules—they set regulations which governed virtually all student behavior. Dorms were segregated by sex and visitation restricted. During spring semester 1964 a heated debate at Harvard was over the number of hours men and women could visit, and Earlham College revoked Sunday visiting privileges because too many dorm doors were being closed. Just how wide those doors had to be opened was discussed endlessly. Administrations usually stated the "width of a book," while students often interpreted that as a "book of matches." While newspapers ran racy headlines—"Collegiate Capers Behind Closed Doors Cause Chorus of Comment"—university administrators attempted to, as they called it, "hold the line" against sexual activity. The president of Vassar, Miss Sarah Blanding, was blunt, suggesting that girls who had engaged in sexual intercourse should not apply.

Students had curfews, especially the coeds, for the idea was, "If the girls are in, the boys will be too." The University of Illinois was similar to most colleges: at 10:30 p.m. on weekday nights, and 1 a.m. on weekends, women's dorm doors were shut and locked. In dry detail, college handbooks spelled out how to fill out white cards, blue cards, or yellow cards so one could stay until midnight at the library or go home for the weekend. The University of Massachusetts Student Handbook in 1964-65 listed penalties for females arriving late at her dorm: Five "minutes means loss of the next Friday night," ten eliminated Saturday night, and fifteen sent the wayward gal to women's judiciary. After all, the handbook stated, "Every woman student shall conduct herself at all times, in all places, so as to uphold her own good name and that of the University."

Rules bordered on the absurd. During dorm visitation hours at Barnard College, a man could visit a coed, but three of their four feet had to be

on the floor at all times. The "three foot rule" also applied at Illinois dorms, but not just for rooms, also for the lounge. While with their dates in the lounge, coeds were prohibited from wearing raincoats which supposedly insured that they were not nude under their coats while snuggling with their dates. To maintain propriety during dorm closing, no couples were allowed to kiss goodnight while leaning up against the building, preventing couples from bumping and grinding. "The university campus is an urban community with a rural ethic," reported a journalist in 1965, "one of the final homes of the Puritan code."

Administrators treated students as if they were children. At Texas, coeds had to live on campus until they were 21 and had 90 semester hours. If they then applied for apartment residency, the dean of women would review the "total record of the girl" and decide whether off-campus living was appropriate for the applicant. To control expanding enrollments at Illinois, all freshmen had to take what was commonly known as a "flunk out class," Rhetoric 101. Three spelling or punctuation errors on one paper meant an automatic C for the semester, more resulted in a fail, and by the end of the first year a third of the new class had flunked out. At Michigan State the students' grades were not even their own. The administration sent grades for all students under 21 directly to parents, and also irritated students with petty harassment. Since drinking was not allowed on campus, students liked to blow off steam at the end of the week by having "grassers," keg parties in fields or backyards. Police would hold raids to stop the practice, and they would charge not only all under 21 with drinking as a minor, but anyone over age in the vicinity with contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Regulations were even stricter at colleges affiliated with religions, at small institutions, and at those in the South. When two students at St. John's University were married in a civil ceremony in 1962, they were expelled for violating Roman Catholic law. Catholic colleges had dress codes that prohibited males from wearing T-shirts, shorts, sweatshirts, or jeans, and stricter rules for coeds, even limiting places where females could smoke. At Brigham Young University the same dress codes applied, and other rules for men mandated no beards or long hair. For females, strapless dresses, sleeveless shirts, and the "no bra look is unacceptable at B.Y.U." The student manual for one of the largest Catholic universities warned that if student conduct or attitudes did not conform to university standards then the administration was the "sole judge" for expulsion. As late as 1971, Sam Houston State University in Texas still enforced an 11 p.m. curfew for its coeds and compulsory class attendance, and closer to Houston, regulations at San Jacinto Junior College limited the length of students' sideburns and prohibited peace symbols.

Furthermore, students had virtually no say at the university which they

supported with tuition. Administrators dictated course offerings, degree curriculums, and almost everything else on campus—dorm assignment, speakers, types of intramural sports, semester length and final exam dates. Faculty advisers acted as censors of most university student newspapers. Rules prohibited drinking, smoking, drugs, gambling, sex or public display of affection, and mandated class attendance, dress codes, dorm assignments, and for male students at most public institutions, Reserve Officer Training, ROTC. It was a “barracks culture,” Tom Hayden recalled of the University of Michigan, “thirteen hundred young men were cramped into my sterile quad, arbitrarily assigned to roommates, whether we preferred each other’s company or not.”⁹

The role of the university in the first half of the 1960s, then, was not only to train students but to tame them to be conventional adults. To fit in, to become their parents. Students who did not play the game often were expelled or left in disgust; professors who did not teach the game usually were fired. Journalism major Phil Ochs at Ohio State was slated to become editor of the school paper, *The Lantern*, but faculty advisers rejected him because his views were “too controversial.” He quit in his last year and became a folksinger. Illinois professor Leo Koch wrote in the *Daily Illini* that in his opinion premarital sex was all right for mature unmarried college students. The university president found the views “offensive and repugnant . . . contrary to the accepted standards of morality,” and he fired Koch. For similar reasons St. John’s University fired two dozen faculty members in 1966—none even received a hearing, for according to university rules the board of trustees could give or take away tenure at any time without explanation. *Newsweek* editorialized that “college must not abdicate its role in conserving, transmitting, and helping to mold both moral and intellectual values” of its students.

Yet many students by the mid-1960s had little desire to “be molded.” This generation was different from older brothers and sisters who had been cowed by McCarthyism. That campaign was ancient history to them, hardly remembered and not taken seriously. Furthermore, these students had learned from the struggle. “If there is any one reason for increased student protest,” a University of Utah journalist wrote, “it would probably be the civil rights movement. The movement . . . convinced many of them that non-violent demonstrations could be an effective device on the campus. It also served to make them more sensitive of their own civil rights.”¹⁰ Problems in society had to be confronted and resolved, not blamed on imaginary subversives or outside agitators, and that called for student activism.

The reasons for student power were stated by the activists themselves in their campus papers and in new student undergrounds. This generation felt *in loco parentis* rules were absurd. Texas student Jeff Shero com-

plained that campus regulations were “aimed at maintaining a ‘proper image’ for the University, rather than protecting girls.” The young editor of *The Paper* declared “Michigan State is the Mississippi of American universities,” protesting the administration’s “closed-mindedness, intolerance and back-woods McCarthyism.” The *New Orleans Freedom Press* proclaimed that student discontent resulted from “administrative restrictions on student autonomy,” while University of Florida activists were blunt in their campus underground, *Freedom Forum*: “The American university campus has become a ghetto. Like all ghettos, it has its managers (the administration), its Uncle Toms (the intimidated, status-berserk faculty), its raw natural resources processed for outside exploitation and consumption (the students).” Their demand highlighted the reasons for student power: “NO RESTRICTIONS MAY BE PLACED ON STUDENT DRINKING, GAMBLING, SEXUAL ACTIVITY, OR ANY SUCH PRIVATE MORAL DECISION.”

The sixties generation began to confront its university administrations in 1964, politely demanding to be heard. During spring semester the administration at Brandeis consulted no one and then instituted new, stricter dorm visitation rules. That prompted several hundred students to stage a two-day demonstration, and the campus newspaper declared that such regulations “makes impossible any meaningful relationship between boy and girl.” That fall semester, Syracuse University students approached their administrators with a simple request—they felt that holiday break, which began on December 23, was too close to Christmas. A few dozen students asked for more travel time to get home by Christmas Eve. After officials turned down all petitions, the students called a rally in December, and they were surprised when 2000 appeared. They demanded a speech from the chancellor, and he gave a short address, again saying no. As he ended his talk, some students jeered and booed, which shocked elders. “The students were supposed to show proper respect,” a journalist wrote, “to know their place and keep it.” Student activists, however, had a different interpretation. They wanted some role in the university. “If today’s demonstration proves nothing else,” the student paper editorialized, “we are not ones to be ignored or taken lightly.”¹¹

Students at Berkeley certainly were not going to be taken lightly—they again challenged the ban on disseminating literature. On October 1, Jack Weinberg and others set up a few tables outside the administration building on Sproul Plaza and began passing out civil rights and political flyers. Before noon two university deans and a policeman approached Weinberg. “Are you prepared to remove yourself and the table from university property?” asked the dean. “I am not,” replied Weinberg. After a brief discussion the official informed Weinberg of his arrest, and at this point several hundred students who were gathering for a free speech rally startled the

officials by shouting, "Take us all, take us all!" Policemen drove a car onto the plaza and placed Weinberg inside, but suddenly someone shouted, "Sit down!" "I'm around the police car," recalled Michael Rossman. "I'm the first person to sit down. You will hear five hundred others who say that, and everyone is telling the truth." Students either laid or sat down around the car. They refused to move. The police could not drive their prisoner to jail as the crowd swelled to 3000. Mario Savio and many others climbed on top of the car and gave speeches, and later the crowd sang civil rights songs. They remained on the plaza all night. The next morning the area looked like a campsite, filled with sleeping bags, blankets, and even a pup tent. The crowd increased to 4000 that afternoon and President Kerr realized that the free speech issue was not going to disappear. After a thirty-hour sit-in, university administrators finally agreed to meet the activists.¹²

To university officials, and to most citizens after the law and order 1950s, Berkeley had been reduced to chaos. Although campus rebellion would become common later in the decade, this was the first major eruption, and administrators responded forcefully. Under pressure from conservatives in the community and state government, they allowed 500 police officers to appear on campus minutes before they met activists. The police were armed with nightsticks, and the sight shocked students who never could remember a police army on campus and who felt that the incident was novel in American educational history. As police stood by, civil rights veterans taught nonviolent arrest tactics and urged those with police records or children to leave. Administrators had the support of California Governor Edmund G. Brown, a Democrat who stated that the demonstration was "not a matter of freedom of speech" but was an attempt by the students to use the campus illegally. "This will not be tolerated." He continued, "We must have—and will continue to have—law and order on our campuses."

Negotiations with Kerr continued for two hours, and then Savio and other students emerged from Sproul Hall. Savio climbed on the police car and announced that an agreement had been reached. A student-faculty committee would examine the free speech issue and make recommendations to the president. The university would not press charges against Weinberg or FSM leaders, and the eight students suspended earlier would have their case reviewed. Kerr seemed to support establishing a small free speech area at the campus's main entrance where Telegraph Avenue met Bancroft Way.

The October 2 agreement collapsed by November. The administration filled the committee with their own supporters, and then stalled for weeks. Meanwhile, Kerr took the issue to the press. Under pressure from conservative regents and politicians, the president attacked activists by raising

the old bugaboos: "Reds on Campus," Kerr told the *San Francisco Examiner*. The article reported that the president "declared flatly that a hard core of 'Castro-Mao-Tse-tung line' Communists were in the crowd of demonstrators." The president then rejected political activity, provoking students to petition the regents and to set up tables on Sproul Plaza. The regents refused to hear the case, and on November 29 Kerr surprised students by announcing that the university was going to press new charges against FSM leaders Art Goldberg and Savio for their actions during the October 1 demonstrations. Charges included "entrapping a police car," "packing in" Sproul Hall, and, against Savio alone, biting a policeman "on the left thigh, breaking the skin and causing bruises."

The administration's behavior only alienated more students, irritated many professors, and fueled more protest as students and faculty began to feel that the university all along had been negotiating in bad faith. "The Administration sees the free speech protest as a simple problem of disobedience," proclaimed an FSM steering committee statement. "By again arbitrarily singling out students for punishment, the Administration avoids facing the real issues. . . . We demand that these new charges be dropped." Thousands of activists took those demands to Sproul Plaza on December 2, and Savio voiced the students' frustration by telling the crowd: "There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part; you can't even tacitly take part, and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus and you've got to make it stop."

"We Shall Overcome," sang Joan Baez, and others joined in as they moved toward Sproul Hall. "We'll walk hand in hand," for "the truth will make us free." The activists shut down the university administration—again they confronted the establishment.

Governor Brown responded immediately: "We're not going to have anarchy in California." He informed Kerr that force must be used to oust the students and ordered police to arrest activists who refused to leave the administration building. At about 4 a.m. some 600 policemen entered Sproul Hall and began arresting students, eventually about 770, in the largest mass arrest in California history. Some 7000 students remained on the plaza, and that morning they began picketing all entrances to the campus, handing out flyers:

IT IS HAPPENING NOW!

In the middle of the night, the police began dragging 800 of your fellow students from Sproul Hall. Sproul Hall was turned into a book-station; the University has become an armed camp—armed against its own students! . . .

Now the police take over.

Instead of recognizing the legitimacy of the students' demands, the administration is attempting to destroy the FSM. . . . The administration position is clear. It is saying "We decide what is acceptable freedom of speech on this campus. Those who disagree will be ignored; when they can no longer be ignored, they will be destroyed.

We have not been defeated by the University's troops! Our protest will continue until the justice of our cause is acknowledged. You must take a stand now! No longer can the faculty attempt to mediate from the outskirts of the crowd. No longer can students on this campus afford to accept humbly administrative fiat. Raise your voice now!

WE SHALL OVERCOME.

The faculty met, and after a long and heated discussion in their senate, they declared their position: Professors overwhelmingly voted to condemn the use of police on campus and to support the FSM. As faculty left the meeting, students cheered, and on December 4 both students and faculty held a huge rally on Sproul Plaza. Arrested activists had been released on bail, many wore a large white "V" on black shirts, and they and several professors criticized Governor Brown, the regents, and President Kerr. Students declared a strike, and that week half the classes were canceled.¹³

With business as usual disrupted, Kerr called a special meeting for December 7 at the Greek Theater. About 16,000 students, faculty, and staff gathered, and the president condemned the sit-in but offered clemency for all acts of civil disobedience before December 2 and stated that the university would abide by "new and liberalized political action rules" then being developed by the faculty senate. The speech sounded conciliatory, and as the president left the podium Savio began walking across the stage apparently to make an announcement. Before he reached the microphone, campus police astonished the crowd by grabbing the activist and dragging him backstage. When other activists attempted to help, the police wrestled them off the stage.

"The crowd was stunned," wrote participant Bettina Aptheker, "then there was pandemonium." Students cried out "We Want Mario! We Want Mario!" Kerr, realizing that the police were ruining his efforts to reach an understanding, quickly agreed to let Savio make his announcement—a rally would be held at noon. Nevertheless, most spectators remembered the incident and its inescapable symbolism: authorities physically preventing a student committed to free speech from speaking on his own campus. As Aptheker later wrote: "That episode more than any other single event revolutionized the *thinking* of many thousands of students."

The next day the faculty met and overwhelmingly passed a motion affirming that "speech or advocacy should not be restricted by the university." While the administration and regents discussed the motion during

the next two weeks, the FSM invited CORE national director James Farmer to address a rally on December 15. The administration was conciliatory, informing students that Farmer could talk on campus, but FSM activists decided to hold a legal rally off campus as a token of good faith. Farmer told the crowd that the "battle for free speech" could not be lost, for that would "turn off the faucet of the civil rights movement." When someone charged that he was an "outside agitator," he replied, "Every housewife knows the value of an agitator. It's the instrument inside the washing machine that bangs around and gets out all the dirt."

The administration eventually decided to accept the faculty's liberalized political rules. On January 4, 1965, the Free Speech Movement held its first legal rally on Sproul Plaza. The FSM was a success, Savio told the crowd, because "it was so obvious to everybody that it was right."

The FSM raised a philosophical debate that divided many students and administrators: What is the nature of a public university? While Kerr thought of himself as a liberal and had been praised for his stand favoring academic freedom, he stated the usual reasoning of cold war culture. The "university is an educational institution that has been given to the regents as a trust to administer for educational reasons, and not to be used for direct political actions." FSM advocates and many professors disagreed, arguing that the mission of higher education was much broader. "The university is the place where people begin seriously to question the conditions of their existence and raise the issue of whether they can be committed to the society they have been born into," wrote Savio. At a public institution supported by all taxpayers, activists felt that discussion should not be reserved only for campus issues but should be open to all concerns of the Republic.¹⁴ Art Goldberg advocated making Berkeley "a marketplace of ideas" where citizens would be exposed to "new and creative solutions to the problems that every American realizes are facing this society in the mid-60s."

That idea was not original in 1964, for actually students had initiated free speech movements earlier at a few other campuses, including Ohio State and Indiana University. In March 1963 three students at Indiana, officers of the Young Socialist Alliance, sponsored a speech by a black socialist on the civil rights movement. In May, the county prosecuting attorney charged the students with violating the Indiana Anti-Communist Act, meeting with the purpose of "advocating the violent overthrow" of the governments of Indiana and the United States. The prosecutor also demanded that the university drop its recognition of YSA. "We may all be ten years away from Senator McCarthy," wrote one professor, "but I am ten blocks away from the office of the Prosecuting Attorney." Supporters of the three established the Committee to Aid the Bloomington Students, which eventually received assistance from 50 colleges in 15 states.

Over 140 faculty members signed a statement that the indictment was not "motivated by zeal for law enforcement, but by a desire to dictate to Indiana University that it shall not permit the use of University facilities for the expression of ideas repugnant to the Prosecutor." The university president agreed, and state courts found the law unconstitutional: The faculty continued supporting the students and broadly defined the university as a community where "debate, disagreement and the sharp confrontation of opposing ideas is a vital part of the attempt to come closer to the truth."¹⁵

The free speech episode at Indiana differed from that at Berkeley. The Indiana administration viewed the conservative attack as a threat to the institution, and eventually the president supported the First Amendment. If Berkeley administrators had subscribed to such views, the sit-in of Sproul Hall probably would have been avoided. Flexible officials could avoid most confrontations on campus—a point remembered by hundreds of successful university presidents throughout the 1960s.

Kerr and the regents could not overcome their authoritarian 1950s mentality. They treated the students like subordinates, gave orders to tuition-payers, which only increased resentment toward authority. Activists felt that "liberal" administrators, the "power elites" who ran the university in Berkeley, seemed more interested in maintaining the status quo than changing rules, even if those regulations denied rights guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Looking back, Kerr's position was indefensible. During the 1950s he had supported academic freedom for professors, yet in 1964 his administration curtailed freedom of speech for students. Many students wondered, if they could not hand out political statements, if freedom of speech did not exist on a public campus, then where did it exist in the land of the free?

The administration brought on the crisis, handled it poorly, and lost to students. As in the civil rights struggle, the FSM students put another dent in the idea that those in charge should be in charge, that the older generation had some monopoly on determining the proper path for the present and future in America. "Don't trust anyone over thirty," said Jack Weinberg and others, meaning that the generation who grew up in the 1950s had a different view of the world than their parents. During cold war culture the older generation "told the truth" to students, but in the 1960s students were "discovering the truth" for themselves, and their younger siblings would continue the process throughout the decade. At Berkeley, the young began to realize that the older generation had no monopoly on truth or on virtue. Once students began to raise their voices and question policy, Michael Rossman wrote, then "the emperor had no clothes." President Kerr's decision to uphold an untenable regulation at Berkeley could be just as wrong as Chief of Police Bull Connor's enforcement of segregation rules in Birmingham.

The FSM was significant for many other reasons. Activists adopted a political style that reflected the ideas of the new left and some of the practices of SNCC. Unlike traditional organizations or political parties, Berkeley students "worked through direct personal involvement in small autonomous interest groups. Our groups were ad hoc," Rossman recalled, "problem-orientated, flexible. They strove to govern themselves by participatory democracy, and to come to consensus on decisions." They also were pragmatic. "We were experimental social scientists, placing practice before theory. . . . We also were cheerful and funny, and made art as we went."

Campus issues increased personal awareness as students focused on themselves, on their status at their college, and then decided to watch or to get involved—the personal again became the political. Like Freedom Summer participants, student activists began to feel part of a movement, a new generation. Bettina Aptheker remembered at Berkeley the "intense moment of connection between us which infused a spirit of overwhelming and enduring love." The experience became emotional as campus activity and turmoil unleashed a restless questioning of mainstream society. "For me personally it was a heavy turning, a rebeginning," wrote Rossman as he and others questioned their parents' generation. There was "born among us a new vision of community and of culture," a "vision of social justice that . . . moved us to action in the New Left. During the rest of that decade, in the Movement and the counterculture, we saw millions of young people moved by their versions of these visions."¹⁶

Most student activists at mid-decade had similar visions, backgrounds, and personality characteristics. Social scientists conducted many surveys and found that participants generally were bright and articulate, concerned about campus and national issues. At Berkeley, the university's ban shifted their concern from civil rights to their own freedom of speech. While the administration and local conservatives attempted to smear the activists as the weaker, less serious students, the opposite was the case. The activists' grades were above average and on personality tests they scored high on independence, maturity, and flexibility. Most considered themselves either political independents or Democrats and the vast majority were students of the liberal arts and humanities. Few were studying business, engineering, or agriculture, and of the 770 arrested for the sit-in of Sproul Hall, not one was a business administration major. Most of these students lived independently in apartments while only a few were in fraternities and sororities.

These generalizations held true for activists at other universities, and so did the fact that student activists always were a minority on every campus and concerning every issue throughout the decade. While organizing civil rights activities, Cleveland Sellers complained about his colleagues at

Howard University—how most were primarily interested in maintaining the Howard image, the impression that they were the well-dressed black elite. “My roommate was typical,” Sellers recalled. Asked if he didn’t feel some responsibility to improve racial conditions, the roommate responded, “Fuck it, man. . . . Don’t confront me with that Martin Luther King shit. Everybody’s gotta go for himself and I’m going for me. If niggas down South don’t like the way they’re being treated, they oughtta leave. I’m not going to join no picket lines and get the shit beat outta me by them crazy-ass Ku Klux-ers! I’m interested in four things. A degree, a good job, a good woman and a good living. That’s all.”¹⁷ At Berkeley there were many such white students. Approximately a thousand participated actively in FSM, about 4 percent of student enrollment. Polls demonstrated that about a third of the students supported both tactics and aims of the movement while about two-thirds supported only the goal of free speech. At the largest rally on December 2 about 11,000 showed up out of over 27,500 students, and so at no time did a majority of students demonstrate for FSM.

Many were indifferent—a student silent majority—while a number opposed FSM for various reasons. About a third disagreed with disruptive tactics. After the October 1 incident on Sproul Plaza, the *Daily Californian* editorialized that the “demonstrations have dissolved into a morass of distorted goals. . . . We urge the students to think by themselves—not by the group.” Charles Powell, the student body president, stated that the real target should not be university policy but state law, for “the only rational and proper action . . . is to seek changes in the law. Those opportunities are not here on the campus—but in the houses of the State Legislature.” The University Young Republicans withdrew from the FSM during the December 2 sit-in of Sproul Hall, and a few conservative activists carried signs: “Throw the Bums Out.” Conservatives also organized University Students for Law and Order, who handed out flyers condemning demonstrations, advocated taking the free speech issue to the courts, and asked of the FSM: “Where will their *putsch* end? WHAT VICTORY WILL BE GAINED BY THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR UNIVERSITY?”

Conservative students across the nation agreed, and some of them had joined the Young Americans for Freedom. During the late 1950s and the first half of the 1960s the National Student Association was the largest student organization, and many conservatives felt that it was too liberal, including Senator Barry Goldwater. In 1960 he published a book that was widely circulated on campuses, *The Conscience of a Conservative*, and he suggested an organization for young conservatives. William F. Buckley agreed, and in September he held a conference at his estate in Sharon, Connecticut. The Sharon Statement and their magazine, *New Guard*,

attacked NSA. “You, Too, Can STOP NSA!” wrote young conservative Tom Huston, for “NSA is great at brainwashing student government leaders” with its “misrepresentations, half-truths, and vague generalities.” Other articles noted that the greatest threat to American political liberties and free enterprise was international Communism, and that the United States should “stress victory over, rather than coexistence with, this menace.” Conservative activists held a rally at Madison Square Garden in 1962 and 18,000 attended to hear Brent Bozell, editor of the *National Review*, call on the U.S. to tear down the Berlin Wall and immediately invade Communist Cuba.

YAF boosted an image of being “sensibly clean people,” said one, “not liberal and dirty people.” They opposed Kennedy and the “ludicrous array of bearded University of Chicago beatniks, self-righteous and militant pacifists and solemn-toned members of the corn-and-hog country intelligentsia” who fostered the Peace Corps, which they referred to as “A Spree de Corps . . . a grand exercise in self-denial and altruism, paid for by the American taxpayers and administered by the United Nations.” The protests at Berkeley, YAF editorialized, were conducted by a filthy crowd of beatniks and liberals who had been raised and coddled by Communists. “Behind Campus, Youth Turmoil: The Red Diaper Babies Grow Up,” proclaimed *New Guard*: It “seems to us that what the ‘Free Speech’ advocates are really demanding is that the administration allow students to run the university.”¹⁸

A year after the Berkeley protests, YAF boasted a membership of 20,000 with 250 chapters across the nation; in 1970 they claimed twice as many chapters and 60,000 members. Their sponsors included John Wayne, Ronald Reagan, Senator Strom Thurmond, and the national board of directors included two students who would have an impact later during the Nixon and Reagan administrations—Tom Huston and Richard Allen. Throughout the decade YAF usually counted more members than SDS or SNCC, but membership figures never were a reliable measure of an organization’s significance. During the free speech movement, for example, there were few or no YAF or SDS members at Berkeley. The issue of free speech—not an organization, not a leader—generated the activism, and that remained true throughout the sixties.

Americans today look back at the decade as a radical era but often forget that there was activism on both sides of the political spectrum. Like all generations, the one that came of age in the sixties was not a monolith. Coming out of cold war culture, the left naturally generated more media interest and received more press. The youthful revolt against the establishment—at lunch counters, on campuses, or in the streets—was dramatic, perfect for television news. Conservative students rarely took

shocking action and instead remained on the defensive, responding to the leftists by writing articles or letters in campus papers or by initiating legal challenges.

Older, conservative newspaper editors responded quickly to the FSM, putting it on page one and making it the first student protest that was covered intensely by the media. While a few papers attempted to present all sides of the issue, such as the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*, most editors demonstrated that while they might support black ministers peacefully asking for civil rights, they could not see any parallels with college students shouting for free speech. To many, it appeared that the older generation was losing control to unruly kids. "Who Runs the University of California?" asked the *San Francisco Examiner*. The paper declared that the FSM challenge was "intolerable and insufferable," that "UC Rebels" should be expelled, and that non-student activists should be somehow permanently barred from the campus. The *Oakland Tribune* wrote that the students really aimed to make Berkeley a radical campus to train revolutionaries and terrorists, like the University of Havana which schooled Fidel Castro, and the *U.S. News and World Report* proclaimed: "A Campus Uproar That Is Blamed on Reds." Berkeley had attracted members of the "beatnik generation" and the campus was under the specter of "educational anarchy."

Reading such articles, or watching the drama on the evening news, would convince many older Californians that in the future they should vote for "law and order" candidates who would uphold conventional values. "Observe the rules or get out," proclaimed conservative Ronald Reagan, and as he ran for governor in 1966 he proclaimed that "Beatniks, radicals and filthy speech advocates have brought shame on a great university." He promised to "clean up the mess at Berkeley," where he claimed were "sexual orgies so vile I cannot describe them." Many parents were horrified by what they considered was shocking behavior and appalling dress of the activists, and one wrote to FSM: "Go to Hell, all you Rotten Beatniks!"¹⁹

Such comments and especially the establishment's articles had a different impact on many youth. They began to realize that they could not count on the media to present their side of the story, their values, or news about their generation. Consequently, Art Kunkin began publishing an "underground" newspaper, the *Faire Free Press*, which eventually became the *Los Angeles Free Press*. In Berkeley, the FSM spawned temporary magazines such as *Spider*, *Wooden Shoe*, and *Root and Branch*. In San Francisco a "counter" to mainstream culture appeared in occasional issues of *Renaissance*, *Notes from the Underground*, and *Open City Press* as the Haight-Ashbury district began emerging as a "hip" enclave.

The first issues of these undergrounds usually presented cultural news

for the young generation. During the early months of 1965, for example, *Free Press* printed articles on films, dance, and music: Ravi Shankar; An Evening with Lenny Bruce; Blues '65 Concert featuring Chuck Berry and Big Mama Thornton. But by March, the youth culture, civil rights, and student issues were merging. "I wanted the *Free Press* to build a local movement base," said Kunkin, and when the struggle was aflame in Selma, Alabama, he began reporting on protests in Los Angeles in which over 6000 marched to the federal building demanding "government action against racist violence and intimidation in the South." In Berkeley, *Open City Press* covered the arrest of local poet John Thompson. University officials claimed that Thompson had outraged public decency by carrying a sign on campus with his one-word poem: "FUCK." Thompson responded that he was protesting against hypocrisy: "I could walk around this campus for weeks with a sign that said MURDER or SHOOT or KILL and no one would pay the least attention. I write this one little word and BAM, into jail I go." University officials and older journalists were appalled, dubbing the incident the "filthy speech movement," but the writer for *Open City Press* took a different approach that demonstrated new values. He described how a few creative students had began the "Phuque Defense Fund."

During the remainder of the year others began undergrounds, such as the *Berkeley Barb*, and in New York City, the *East Village Other*, *Free Student*, and *Partisan*. In Detroit, teenager Harvey Ovshinsky offered a substitute to the so-called fourth estate of the press with his *Fifth Estate*, and a 21-year-old student at Michigan State established its first campus underground, *The Paper*, to present "an independent alternative to the 'established' news media of the university community."

The publication of these first undergrounds was a subtle but significant event. It demonstrated that a youth culture was emerging within the sixties generation. Some young Americans had different values from their parents, and that began to appear during Freedom Summer and as the movement spread into 1965. *Free Press* ran ads for the subculture, "girls to share housekeeping with lonely studs." And on campus, Sara Davidson wrote that Berkeley was "an enclave where things happened first, where the rules of middle-class society did not apply." Gerald Rosenfield recalled that Free Speech was "a swinging movement. The F.S.M., with its open mass meetings, its guitars and songs, its beards, and its long-haired chicks, made the aloofness and reserve of the administration . . . the formality of the coat and tie world, seem lifeless and dull in comparison." Authorities dressed like authorities, and styles began to make a statement. "Yes, my hair is long, and I haven't shaved in days," sang a folksinger at Berkeley, "But fighting for my freedom, while clean-cut kids just look the other way."

Cold war culture was over for many white students. "The Long Sleep Ends," proclaimed *Free Student* in spring 1965. Like the sit-ins in the South in 1960, the publicized events at Berkeley aroused other students to organize, to become part of a vague movement. "Student activists across the nation were shown by the Berkeley blow-up," declared a student in the *Daily Texan*, "that they could organize, protest, rally, sit-in, and strike—and get results. . . . And this means student power."²⁰

That power appeared on many campuses during spring semester. In January, activists at Michigan State University formed the Committee for Student Rights to confront the administration concerning *in loco parentis* regulations. MSU approved or rejected student organizations, even distribution of all printed materials handed out on campus or in the dorms. All single students had to live in resident halls and abide by restrictive hours and regulations, even if they were over 21. Dorm officers enforced dress codes for evening meals: dresses for coeds, and for men, dress shirt and slacks, and no "denims, Levis, Bermudas, fatigues, knickers or beach-combers. . . . Corduroy pants may be worn only with a matching coat." The CSR maintained that regulations in some cases "superseded a student's civil rights," and as one activist proclaimed: "If Michigan State University . . . is anything more than a prison of the mind, we must move now to allow for individual freedom and dignity." In February, CSR distributed its pamphlet in dorms without approval, calling for more liberal housing regulations and the end of discriminatory rules against female students. The appeal struck a chord. A week later over 4200 students had signed an CSR petition, and they presented the 80-foot document to the director of student activities. He refused to accept the petition, which created hard feelings and more pressure. By April, the administration gave in, agreeing that students should "assume an increasing measure of responsibility" for their own behavior. Officials liberalized regulations concerning housing, dorm visitation, alcoholic beverages, and reduced punishments of students who had violated civil law. As the campus paper proclaimed, "The times must be a-changing."

They were at Ohio State, where free speech had been an issue since 1951 when the chairman of the board, a retired general, proclaimed, "As long as I'm a member of the Board of Trustees no Communist, fellow traveler, Fascist, or Nazi is going to have an invitation to speak here." In fact, the university established a gag rule and censored the appearance of numerous speakers during the next dozen years, including anyone who had publicly criticized the House Un-American Activities Committee. Students accepted this until spring semester 1962 when the president banned three speakers, one an alumnus of the university. With faculty assistance, activists formed the Students for Liberal Action and filed suit against the university in November. The response from the board was

typical, as one trustee declared, "It is my personal feeling that the students who are trying to run the university rather than get an education had better move on." They remained, and for the next three years SLA continued to invite controversial speakers to campus and the president continued to ban them. After events in Berkeley, OSU students decided to take direct action. During spring semester they formed the Free Speech Front and in April held two rallies. About 450 students surrounded the administration building, and when attempts to talk with a vice president failed to produce any results, 270 began a sit-in, the first in the history of OSU. They eventually left without an arrest. Faculty members joined the fray by asking Communist Herbert Aptheker (father of Bettina), to speak on campus, which the administration quickly rejected. In May a hundred professors picketed a meeting of the trustees and four times that number petitioned the president to end the rule. Aptheker arrived on campus on May 21. He sat silently on the stage while professors read excerpts from his books to a crowd of almost 3000. The "non-speech" received national attention. While *Time* commented on "the futility of the ban," the *Cleveland Press* charged that the trustees could "blame themselves for the campus ruckus," and the *Toledo Blade* editorialized that the board had "ruled out reason and invited rebellion. It is our hope that a Berkeley can be avoided at OSU."

Like Berkeley, OSU's rule was unsupportable; unlike Berkeley, OSU students never had to break one university regulation or state law. They focused attention on a ridiculous rule, and that shifted public and political opinion behind them. Eventually, students, faculty, politicians, and judges called for reform, and the administration avoided a serious confrontation by abolishing the gag rule, which ended the free speech controversy and boosted student power at Ohio State.

A 1964-65 survey of 850 colleges, including the 50 largest public universities, demonstrated that students felt the most important issues on campus were various *in loco parentis* rules—dorm, dress, and living regulations, followed by free speech and food service. Like their parents, students stated that the most important off-campus issue was civil rights.²¹

That part of the movement was in the news almost daily during spring semester. In January, activists decided that it was time to provoke the nation again, to pressure the Johnson administration and Congress to pass a voting rights bill. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his assistants decided the venue was Selma, Alabama.

Selma epitomized white resistance to the struggle. Selma was the Black Belt. The city had a majority of black citizens, and Dallas County, Alabama, was almost 60 percent black, but less than 1 percent were registered to vote. In the two adjoining counties, Lowndes and Wilcox, not one black had the vote. Although SNCC activists had been attempting to

register voters since 1963, little had been accomplished because the sheriff, Jim Clark, had allowed his men or local residents to intimidate black citizens. King wrote in the *New York Times*, "Selma has succeeded in limiting Negro registration to the snail's pace of about 145 persons a year. At this rate, it would take 103 years to register the 15,000 eligible Negro voters in Dallas County."

King and his colleagues realized that they had to repeat their tactics employed at Birmingham. SCLC activists had to provoke Sheriff Clark or local residents to unleash violence against them which would prick America's conscience, demand federal intervention, and result in a voting rights law. In January, King announced in Selma, "We are not asking, we are demanding the ballot," and then he led marches to the courthouse where blacks attempted to register. Clark responded by arresting King, briefly putting him in jail, and during the next month the sheriff arrested over 3000 demonstrators. White businessmen responded by firing black employees who attempted to register, eventually depriving 150 of their jobs.²²

SCLC's tactic was not very successful. With the national press in Selma, the sheriff had lost his temper only a few times and had restrained his men from committing any shocking acts of violence. But that was not the case about thirty miles away in the small town of Marion. On February 17 a few hundred blacks held an evening church rally and decided to march around the courthouse to protest the arrest of one of their companions. As they began, local police reinforced by state troopers "turned out all the lights, shot the lights out, and they beat people at random," Albert Turner remembered. Willie Bolden saw one demonstrator run into the cops "and they hit him in the head, and it just bust his head wide open. Blood spewed all over." When Bolden tried to help the man, the sheriff pulled him away, and "stuck a .38 snubnose right in my mouth. . . . He cocked the hammer back, and he said, 'What I really need to do is blow your goddamn brains out, nigger.' Of course, I didn't say nothin'. I was scared to death, and all I could see was those rounds in that chamber." The police beat them bloody, and they shot Jimmie Lee Jackson. Several days later Jackson died, and local activists came up with a plan. As Turner recalled, "We had to do something else to point out to the nation the evils of the system. So we decided that we would walk all the way to Montgomery to protest. . . . Our first plan was to go to Montgomery with Jimmie Jackson, take his body and put it on the steps of the capitol."

King had other ideas. He was under pressure from the Johnson administration to abandon further demonstrations in Selma while the president attempted to pass social legislation, much of it aimed to help poor Ameri-

cans. King left for Atlanta, but local activists decided to go ahead and march the 54 miles from Selma to Montgomery one week after Jackson's funeral. Governor Wallace stated that such a demonstration would not be tolerated, "not conducive to the orderly flow of traffic and commerce," but nevertheless on Sunday, March 7, almost 600 chanting and singing activists left Brown Chapel and began their trek, approaching Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge, the gateway to Montgomery.

Sheriff Clark was ready. A hundred deputies lined the bridge, and another hundred state troopers, some on horseback, blocked the opposite end. The demonstrators walked across the bridge and stopped in front of a blue line of troops. An officer shouted that "for public safety" the crowd had two minutes to turn around and return to their chapel, but shortly thereafter the troops charged from all sides, swinging nightsticks and throwing tear gas canisters. "I saw those horsemen coming toward me and they had those awful masks on; they rode right through the cloud of tear gas," remembered young Sheyann Webb. "Some of them had clubs, others had ropes, or whips, which they swung about them like they were driving cattle." White spectators whooped approval as blacks panicked and fled in terror. Sheriff Clark yelled, "Get those god-damned niggers!" The troops did. "I saw a posse man raise his club," recalled J. L. Chestnut, Jr., "and smash it down on a woman's head as if he were splitting a watermelon." Police whipped and chased marchers all the way back to the chapel. "They even came up in the yard of the church, hittin' on folk," Willie Bolden recalled. "Ladies, men, babies, children—they didn't give a damn who they were."

Blacks labeled the day "Bloody Sunday," and that evening the nation saw it all on television. George Leonard and his wife watched from their living room in San Francisco:

A shrill cry of terror, unlike any sound that had passed through a TV set, rose up as the troopers lumbered forward, stumbling sometimes on fallen bodies. The scene cut to charging horses, their hoofs flashing over the fallen. Another quick cut: a cloud of tear gas billowed over the highway. Periodically the top of a helmeted head emerged from the cloud, followed by a club on the upswing. The club and the head would disappear into the cloud of gas and another club would bob up and down. *Unhuman*. No other word can describe the motions. . . . It was at this point that my wife, sobbing, turned and walked away, saying, "I can't look any more."

"The news from Selma," the *Washington Post* wrote, "will shock and alarm the whole nation." Leonard left his home that evening, drove to the San Francisco airport, and boarded a plane for Alabama. Other con-

cerned citizens were aboard—a lawyer from Palo Alto, a psychiatrist from Los Angeles, a young couple from Berkeley, and numerous black and white clergymen from the Bay Area. Civil rights organizations and individual activists placed calls to kindred souls throughout the nation. “It was informal,” Robert Calvert remembered. A graduate student at the University of Texas, Calvert had volunteered to teach voter registration procedures for SCLC in Montgomery over Christmas break, and after he received the call, “Four of us piled into a car and headed for Selma. We arrived the next evening, and as we entered the city limits a local cop stopped our car, asked what we were doing in his town, told us that our tail light was out and suggested that we leave. That, of course, was aimed at keeping anyone sympathetic to the struggle, ‘outside agitators,’ out of Selma.” Alabama troopers gave out tickets to whites with out-of-state license plates, even for “running red lights on an open highway where no such lights existed,” reported law student Greg Lipscomb. “There were no citizens’ rights or even states’ rights. There were only Alabama white rights.”²³

Harassment did not stop the movement. The next morning Calvert and his friends returned to Selma and found a city filled with policemen, state troopers, and hundreds of activists. Black sharecroppers, ministers, and students mingled with white professors, doctors, and some 400 clergymen and nuns. Other Americans besieged the White House and Congress with calls and mail, and 4000 hurried to the nation’s capital to demonstrate their support for voting rights. Across the nation, 10,000 joined sympathy marches.

While activists were arriving, SCLC planned a second march from Selma to Montgomery, but a judge issued an injunction that upheld the governor’s ban on the march, and President Johnson quietly demanded that the activists cool off. LBJ’s envoy and King met in Selma. Although King proclaimed to his followers, “We have the right to walk the highways, and we have the right to walk to Montgomery if our feet will get us there,” he nevertheless agreed to a compromise.

Yet King did not tell the marchers, and many were eager for action after Bloody Sunday. SNCC members had rushed to Selma. “We were angry,” wrote Cleveland Sellers. “And we wanted to show Governor Wallace, the Alabama State Highway Patrol, Sheriff Clark, Selma’s whites, the federal government and poor Southern blacks in other Selmas that we didn’t intend to take any more shit.” On Tuesday, March 9, King led 3000 across Edmund Pettus Bridge as they sang “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round.” State troopers again blocked the route, but suddenly they moved off the road, clearing the highway to Montgomery. King knelt down and prayed, and then surprised the crowd by ordering them to turn around and return to the city. They did, ironically singing the same song

back to the chapel. Militants were outraged, and quickly labeled the affair the “Tuesday turnaround.” As for King, his biographer wrote, a “decisive turning point in his relations with the militants had now been reached.”

The Selma struggle had intensified conflicts between SNCC and SCLC that had been growing since the 1964 Democratic convention. The Democratic party’s rejection of the Mississippi Freedom Democrats at the convention “was to the civil rights movement what the Civil War was to American history,” recalled activist Cleveland Sellers; “afterward, things could never be the same. Never again were we lulled into believing that our task was exposing injustices so that the ‘good’ people of America could eliminate them. We left Atlantic City with the knowledge that . . . our struggle was not for civil rights, but for liberation.” SCLC disagreed, and again favored another dramatic demonstration calculated to spark national attention and pass liberal legislation. SNCC leaders voted not to be involved as an organization but to allow their members to participate as individuals.

One of those SNCC participants was John Lewis. Along with SCLC’s Hosea Williams, Lewis walked in the front line across the bridge on Bloody Sunday. The police knocked Lewis to the ground and gave him a brain concussion. SCLC then ran an advertisement in the *New York Times*, picturing Lewis being hit and asking supporters to send money to SCLC. That “just burned us up,” Julian Bond remembered, “SCLC was hoggin’ all the publicity and all the money and doing very little to deserve it.”

SNCC militants called SCLC “slick.” King was losing control of young militant activists who had suffered at the hands of the Bull Connors and Jim Clarks. SNCC members were growing tired of nonviolent activism, and organizational jealousy was seething in Selma.

Again, white violence unified the groups, and sparked national attention. Local thugs attacked three northern white ministers, beating them with baseball bats. James Reeb, a Unitarian cleric from Boston, suffered multiple head wounds, and as he laid dying, nuns from St. Louis and local high school students led marches. When he died two days later, Sheyann Webb recalled that she and a friend “knelt down . . . and we prayed to ourselves for awhile. I didn’t cry. I kept thinking how even though he had been white, he had been one of us, too.”²⁴

The death renewed demands for federal action. Thousands demonstrated across the nation and sent telegrams to Washington, and a dozen students held a sit-in at the White House. LBJ watched the reruns of the Selma confrontation on television and felt a deep outrage. He sent yellow roses to Mrs. Reeb, discussed the situation with Governor Wallace at the White House, and on March 15 addressed a joint session of Congress and asked for the passage of a voting rights bill:

What happened in Selma is part of a far larger movement which reaches into every section and state of America. It is the effort of American Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessings of American life. This cause must be our cause too. It is not just Negroes, but all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice. And we *shall* overcome.

A week later the movement blossomed in Selma. On March 21 over 3000 white and black activists began the pilgrimage from Selma to Montgomery. LBJ informed Governor Wallace that citizens would be able to march on public highways, and for protection he federalized the Alabama National Guard. Accompanying a host of civil rights leaders was the president of the New York City Council, the Manhattan borough president, labor leader Walter Reuther, historians John Hope Franklin and William E. Leuchtenburg, and Jimmie Lee Jackson's grandfather, along with numerous ministers, rabbis, and a bishop from California. Most marchers were students, many of them eager to renew their commitment to the movement. They walked along U.S. 80, ironically known as Jeff Davis Highway, and averaged about ten miles a day, sometimes in heavy rain. They sang and talked, and camped out each night in tents on fields of supporters. A few whites heckled, and some waved Confederate flags or held up signs: "Nigger Lover," "Martin Luther Coon," "Yankee Trash Go Home." While "the march was incredibly disorganized," Robert Calvert recalled, "the mood was very upbeat, optimistic. The last two days were almost festive." The fourth day they were led by Jim Letherer, a white laborer and an amputee from Michigan, who made the entire walk on crutches. On his left and right were two young men, one black and the other white, each carrying the American flag, and behind them marched a black with his head bandaged in the style of 1776, playing on his fife "Yankee Doodle." The pilgrims spent their last night camped three miles outside of Montgomery, and there they intermingled with a platoon of celebrities: Leonard Bernstein, Floyd Patterson, Shelley Winters, Nina Simone, Tony Bennett, Sidney Poitier, Paul Newman, Harry Belafonte, Sammy Davis, Jr. The next day they were joined by thousands for the final procession to the state capital. The crowd cheered Dick Gregory, and they sang and walked along with the Chad Mitchell Trio, Mahalia Jackson, Ella Fitzgerald, Joan Baez, and Peter, Paul and Mary, who sang: "How many roads must a man walk, before you call him a man?"

The crowd swelled to 30,000, and on the speakers' platform assembled many of the most important civil rights figures since the 1963 March on Washington—Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, John Lewis of SNCC, and Whitney Young of the National Urban League, along with A. Philip Randolph, Ralph Bunche, Bayard Rustin, and Rosa Parks. King took the

podium, and looking over toward Mrs. Parks recalled an episode from the Montgomery bus boycott a decade earlier. Sister Pollard, he said, was walking to work when a man asked her if she needed a ride. "No," she responded proudly, and then the person asked, "Well, aren't you tired?" King reminded the audience of Pollard's ungrammatical profundity: "My feets is tired, but my soul is rested."

"We are on the move now," King proclaimed. "Like an idea whose time has come, not even the marching of mighty armies can halt us. We are moving to the land of freedom."

While a hundred SNCC members in the audience thought they were moving much too slowly, thousands in the crowd and millions at home and on campus agreed with King. SCLC's tactic paid handsome dividends. "Let us march on ballot boxes," King continued, and they did. In August, LBJ signed the Voting Rights Act. The law placed federal examiners in states with a history of discrimination, eventually abolished the remnants of literacy tests and poll taxes, resulting in black voter registration. Two weeks later over 60 percent of blacks in Selma had registered to vote. By the 1966 elections over half of adult blacks in the South were registered, and they began electing their own officials. Selma transformed southern politics.

"Selma has become a shining monument in the conscience of man," King added as most of the audience started for home or back to campus for the remainder of spring semester. "We felt hopeful," Calvert recalled as he returned to the University of Texas. Most students of the sixties generation agreed. The few who had become active during the year could look back at successes in the South and on their campuses—they could make a difference.

Selma also provoked other students into action, not only at larger universities but also at smaller colleges. Approximately 150 activists from Beloit College in Wisconsin marched 50 miles to Madison to protest police brutality in Selma. In Minneapolis, Macalester College students formed Action Against Apartheid and raised money to rebuild destroyed freedom schools in Mississippi, and half the enrollment of Augsburg College marched to the state capital to protest events in Selma. At DePauw University in Indiana, Mary Ann Wynkoop and a few other students held a sympathy march; from then on she wore a button that proclaimed "I am an activist."

The day after Bloody Sunday, March 8, activists at the University of Kansas marched into the administration building and sat outside the office of Chancellor W. Clarke Wescoe. They demanded change. At that time, sororities and fraternities were segregated, dorms had de facto segregation, and not one black was employed as either a faculty member or administrator. The city of Lawrence did not have a municipal swimming pool,

and some private clubs did not admit blacks. Wescoe had condemned exclusion, but stated that integration must come voluntarily. Activists, however, were tired of waiting for volunteers. They listed demands—end discrimination in housing, fraternities, and sororities, and change the advertising policy of the school paper, *University Daily Kansan*, so that it no longer accepted ads from businesses that practiced discrimination. After six hours, a dean informed the students that the office would be closed at 5 p.m., and those remaining would be arrested for trespassing. The police arrived at that time, and peacefully arrested over a hundred students. In a show of goodwill, the chancellor arranged for bond and bail money, writing a personal check.²⁵

Before this incident, most K.U. students had been apathetic, but the episode sparked interest in civil rights. Thirty students volunteered to spend their spring break registering black voters in Louisiana, while others again took their demands to the chancellor, demonstrating in front of his home and office. Wescoe agreed to discussion, and within a month dropped all charges against the demonstrators; by autumn the regents prohibited all forms of discrimination at K.U.

During that spring semester another issue began to concern some students—United States' role in South Vietnam.

America's involvement there was logical. Americans had convinced themselves that Communism was monolithic, even though Yugoslavia had split from the Soviet bloc in the late 1940s and China was squabbling with Russia in the early 1960s. Aberrations, politicians said, another commie plot. The U.S. government continued expressing the view that all Communists wanted the same thing—world domination—and that our nemesis, Moscow, controlled “puppets” such as Mao Tse-tung in China, Fidel Castro in Cuba, and Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam. Third-world nations were pawns, “dominoes,” and they would fall to Communism unless the bulwark of the “free world,” the USA, stood firm. “Furthermore,” declared Admiral U.S. Grant Sharp, “our stand in Vietnam will affect our other commitments all over the world—in NATO, Japan, Korea and Thailand.” Vietnam, the argument went, was “a test of our reliability. We cannot back out of Vietnam without invalidating our position as a world leader.” American troops had stopped the communist advance in Korea, so a decade later the question was: Would we make a commitment to the non-Communist government in Saigon in its attempt to prevent a victory by Communist forces of Ho Chi Minh? Would America stand up for South Vietnam?

The United States, supposedly, had little choice. “If we don't stop the Reds in South Vietnam,” declared LBJ, “tomorrow they will be in Hawaii, and next week they will be in San Francisco.” We must fight there, he said privately, or the United States “might as well give up every-

where else—pull out of Berlin, Japan, South America.” At home or on campus, most Americans supported the president's views. A Kentucky farmer stated, “All Asia's at stake out there. I don't believe in looking down when you know you are right,” and a West Virginia carpenter added, “If we don't stand up for people oppressed by Communism, we'll soon be oppressed ourselves.” The first Harris survey on the conflict in 1963 found that by a two to one margin Americans felt that if the Communist threat to South Vietnam grew worse, then they would favor sending U.S. troops on a large scale.²⁶ After all, it was better to fight the commies on the Mekong than on the Mississippi.

The conflict started subtly—no declaration of war, no mass mobilization, no fanfare. For years the United States had been involved in Vietnam. In 1950 the Truman administration began supporting France's attempts to hold on to their colony of Indochina, and by 1954 the U.S. government was paying 80 percent of France's total military costs in their war against Ho's army. French troops had become our mercenaries. Massive American aid could not stave off military defeat, however, and that year Ho's forces annihilated the colonialist army at Dienbienphu. The world powers met at Geneva and the subsequent accords separated the colony into North and South Vietnam. National elections were to unite Vietnam under one government in 1956, but the ruler in the south, Ngo Dinh Diem, refused to participate since he would have lost overwhelmingly to the popular northern leader, Ho Chi Minh. Even Eisenhower admitted later that if elections were held in 1956, Ho would have won 80 percent of the vote.

“We the people,” the democratic process, somehow did not seem important during cold war culture. Eisenhower did not force Diem to hold elections and the American government of the majority supported South Vietnam's government of the minority. The nation that had championed free elections against Soviet tyranny throughout the cold war now simply declared Diem “father of his country,” while others joined in and proclaimed him the “Asian Liberator” and the “Winston Churchill of Southeast Asia.” Consequently, Ho and his allies in the south, the Vietcong, began a guerrilla war to force unification. The U.S. responded by becoming the main benefactor of the Saigon regime. The president eventually sent about 700 advisers to train the Army of the Republic of South Vietnam (ARVN). To boost the economy, and to influence Vietnamese to support Diem, the administration pumped over a billion dollars into South Vietnam, even paying the salaries of ARVN. The economy improved, but by 1960 the little nation had become our welfare child.

Kennedy increased aid. A decade earlier the Republicans had won the presidency partly by asking “Who lost China?,” and the Democratic president did not want to be blamed for losing Indochina. Although the

Vietnamese had no background or interest in democracy, the best and brightest declared that South Vietnam was America's "testing ground" to build democratic governments in developing nations and to stop the flow of Communism. South Vietnam, JFK declared earlier, was the "cornerstone of the Free World in Southeast Asia, the Keystone to the arch, the finger in the dike." Furthermore, the Soviets had built the Berlin Wall and the American-sponsored invasion of the Bay of Pigs had been a fiasco. Now, the young president told a reporter, "we have a problem in trying to make our power credible, and Vietnam looks like the place."²⁷ Kennedy sent helicopters and more advisers, including the Green Berets.

By 1963 the U.S. had about 16,000 advisers in South Vietnam. But they were not able to stop the Vietcong or strengthen the regime of Diem, a ruler whose "harsh and thoughtless rule," the CIA secretly reported, had alienated most South Vietnamese. By August the CIA chief in Saigon cabled the State Department: "Situation here has reached the point of no return." JFK then approved a plot to overthrow Diem, and in November, South Vietnamese generals conducted the coup d'état. The conspirators killed Diem. Saigon officials called the murder an "accidental suicide" as the sixties became the era of euphemisms.

ARVN generals, however, were no better democrats than Diem, and during the Johnson administration they fought over who would be the president of South Vietnam. For the next three years military governments came and went in Saigon. In one fourteen-month period there were seven different governments, so many coups d'état that the Texan president exclaimed, "I'm tired of hearing about this coup shit." Instability in Saigon meant that ARVN was not able to take the offensive against the Vietcong, leaving the task to the Americans. Finally, in 1967, two generals emerged as the cornerstones of democracy in Saigon, President Nguyen Chanh Thieu and Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky.

Meanwhile, in August 1964, North Vietnamese patrol boats attacked an American destroyer, the USS *Maddox*, in the Tonkin Gulf. The *Maddox* was helping ARVN conduct sabotage missions in the north, but LBJ kept that from the public. Instead, the president declared that our ship had been attacked in international waters, and that he was retaliating by ordering air strikes on naval installations in North Vietnam. The president then asked Congress to pass the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, a vague charter that apparently gave him Constitutional authority to help our South Vietnam ally. "It's like Grandmother's shirt," press secretary George Reedy said privately, "it covers everything."

The nation rallied around the flag. The *New York Times* declared that the attack on the *Maddox* was the "beginning of a mad adventure by the North Vietnamese Communists" that the U.S. must "assure the independence of South Vietnam," and the *Washington Post* applauded LBJ's

"careful and effective handling of the Viet-Nam crisis." The president's approval rating soared to over 70 percent, and Congress passed the resolution overwhelmingly. Two-thirds of the public supported the resolution, including at least that percentage of college students. A typical collegiate response was that of the *Michigan State News*, writing that LBJ "could hardly have chosen any other course of action. . . . Our announced intentions to defend southeast Asia from communist aggression would have rung pitifully false if we had patted North Vietnam's leaders on the head for launching an unprovoked attack on our ships."

LBJ assured the public that he had no intention of expanding America's role in the war. It "ought to be fought by the boys of Asia to help protect their own land," he said during the 1964 presidential campaign, continuing that the issue is "who can keep the peace." Johnson pledged moderation, and if Americans ever desired to become involved in a major war in Asia—or to declare war on North Vietnam—then they had a clear choice at the polls that November: Republican Senator Barry Goldwater. Instead, voters rejected the senator's hawkish stance and elected Johnson with the highest margin of victory in American history.

The Vietcong were not concerned about who occupied the White House and they continued attacking ARVN and its 20,000 U.S. advisers during winter 1964 and spring 1965. Although the American public was not aware of it, the South Vietnamese regime was on the verge of collapse; the enemy sensed victory. In December the VC conducted scattered attacks in Saigon, and by February they were bold enough to strike the U.S. Special Forces camp at Pleiku.

The attacks prompted LBJ to take action. He could not rely on the United Nations to become involved and stop the fighting, he said, because the organization "couldn't pour piss out of a boot if the instructions were printed on the heel." Johnson was convinced that if the U.S. did not send additional troops, then South Vietnam would be lost to Communism. "I'm not going to be the first president to lose a war," said LBJ, and he ordered Operation Rolling Thunder—the bombing of North Vietnam. During the ides of March the Texan decided that the only way to prevent a defeat was to change American policy. Shortly thereafter he sent the Marines, began increasing U.S. forces, and gave them new orders—they not only would advise ARVN but also could conduct combat missions with their ally in an attempt to search out and destroy the enemy. As the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said, "No one ever won a battle sitting on his ass."

Significantly, the administration also attempted to conceal the escalation and downplay involvement in Vietnam. LBJ was more concerned with civil rights and passing his Great Society legislation, and he did not want to provoke the Soviets, Chinese, or the Americans. A national

security memorandum declared that the "President desires that . . . publicity be avoided by all possible precautions" and that subordinates should minimize any appearance that the U.S. was enlarging its commitment. The president, said one adviser, wanted to "go to war without arousing the public ire."

Americans either supported the president or knew little about the administration's policy. That spring, while events in Selma and the president's voting rights address dominated the evening news, opinion polls demonstrated that about 80 percent supported bombing North Vietnam. Surveys earlier revealed that two-thirds of the public had either not followed or had no opinion of LBJ's policy; a fourth did not even know that U.S. troops were fighting in Vietnam.²⁸

Yet the bombing that spring also provoked some peace organizations, professors, and a few students to question American aims in Southeast Asia. Various liberal and peace groups began confronting congressmen and writing the White House, including Americans for Democratic Action, American Friends Service Committee, Students for a Democratic Society, and SANE. In February, over 300 activists in Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and Women Strike for Peace assembled at the Capitol for the "Mother's Lobby," an attempt to pressure congressmen to support a negotiated settlement in Vietnam. SDS called for an Easter Day peace march in Washington, and a handful of politicians expressed doubts about LBJ's policy. In New York, some 3000 activists protested the bombing at the United Nations Plaza.

During the winter months some students had conducted a few dozen small demonstrations, most of them organized locally, but the campus antiwar movement first received national attention when almost fifty professors decided to hold a "teach-in" at the University of Michigan. Inspired by civil rights sit-ins and freedom schools, and just days after the Selma march, 200 professors took out an ad in the *Michigan Daily* appealing to students to join them in a teach-in in an attempt to "search for a better policy." Throughout the night of March 24-25 more than 3000 students and faculty participated in lectures, debates, and discussions. As Professor Marc Pilisuk described it, "One honors student later told me that this was her first educational experience provided by the university during four year's attendance. . . . Some who had hardly ever spoken in class before argued for an hour in the halls with white-haired full professors." The next morning 600 remained, and they held a rally in front of the library. Like those who had participated in Mississippi Summer or the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley, Michigan activists noted that participating in the teach-in changed their lives, and they remembered a night when "people who really cared talked of things that really mattered."

The movement was growing, and it spread to other campuses. That

spring teach-ins were held at about 35 universities, including Columbia, Illinois, Harvard, Michigan State, Rutgers, and even at usually sedate campuses such as Carleton in Minnesota, Marist College in New York, and Flint Junior College in Michigan. Berkeley held the largest and longest teach-in; 20,000 participated for 36 hours. At Wisconsin, a civil rights activist said the evening was not really a teach-in but the university's "first freedom school," for which he received a standing ovation. At Oregon, the teach-in was the first sign of social activism there since the 1930s. Some 3000 jammed into the student union and listened to speakers, poets, and folksingers, while they devoured hundreds of sandwiches and sixty gallons of coffee. One pretty coed wore a homemade card pinned to her sweater, "Let's make love, not war." "Raw freshmen argued fearlessly with senior professors," reported a journalist. "Never had the pleasant, placid campus of the University of Oregon been through anything like this."

In April, the peace movement arrived in the nation's capital. During the first half of the 1960s, peace groups had held annual disarmament marches on Easter Sunday. A few thousand usually appeared, but this year students passed out flyers: "The trip will be a great opportunity for all of us to get together to discuss ways of engaging in social action on many issues," wrote students at Carleton College. Bused in from campuses all over the country, some 20,000 appeared on that warm, beautiful Sunday. They picketed the White House and then began marching to the Washington Monument. "The times they are a-changin'," sang Judy Collins, and she was joined with songs by Joan Baez and Phil Ochs. Journalist I. F. Stone spoke, as did historian Staughton Lynd and civil rights activist Bob Moses before Senator Ernest Gruening called for an immediate bombing halt and peace negotiations. SDS president Paul Potter gave an inspired speech, calling for a "massive social movement" to change America. Activists waved signs: "Get Out of Saigon and into Selma," "Freedom Now in Vietnam," "War on Poverty Not on People."

A SNCC trio, the Freedom Voices, led the crowd in "We Shall Overcome" as the demonstrators marched down the Mall and to the Capitol where they presented Congress with a petition: "The problems of America cry out for attention, and our entanglement in South Vietnam postpones the confrontation of these issues while prolonging the misery of the people of that war-torn land. You must act now to reverse this sorry state of affairs. We call on you to end, not extend, the war in Vietnam."

A surge of energy from white and black activists appeared that spring, and it signaled that the struggle, student power, and now a small antiwar crusade could merge to become what civil rights advocate Bayard Rustin called a "full-fledged *social movement*." The teach-ins and various peace protests demonstrated that some Americans were going to question U.S.

foreign policy, even march against it, while a few other students began examining the role of their universities in the Vietnam War. In May, a hundred students at Hofstra held perhaps the first demonstration of the era against ROTC. Finally, protests and teach-ins identified a number of intellectuals who would challenge national policy. Over the years the professors would become important as alternative experts, an academic counterculture to the best and brightest in Washington.

But more important, the antiwar demonstrations that spring were significant because of what did not happen—the Johnson administration did not change policy in Vietnam. In fact, most Americans considered peace marchers beatniks, kooks, or Communists, and the demonstrators received little press and had little impact. On March 16 an elderly member of Women Strike for Peace, Alice Herz, protested the war in a sensational way—she set herself aflame on a Detroit street. Although she left a note protesting the bombing of North Vietnam, the administration made no statement on the suicide and the public showed little interest. In June, 17,000 activists attended an antiwar rally at Madison Square Garden that included speeches by Senator Wayne Morse, Bayard Rustin, Dr. Benjamin Spock, and even Coretta Scott King, who announced that she was a member of Women Strike for Peace. After the rally about 2000 followed Dr. Spock in a nighttime procession to the United Nations. The press neglected the affair. As a historian of the antiwar movement wrote, “it was clear that the administration had the support of the country’s major opinion-shaping agencies. Antiwar activists quickly realized their limited effectiveness.”²⁹

Americans supported LBJ. When thirty activists at Kent State protested the bombing, an angry crowd five times larger pelted them with rocks. A teach-in at Wisconsin resulted in 6000 students signing a letter supporting the president’s policy, and a fourth of the student body did the same thing at Yale. Some Michigan State professors condemned the teach-in on their campus as “deliberately one-sided,” a “rally for indoctrination,” and with the aid of students in Young Democrats and Young Americans for Freedom collected almost 16,000 signatures supporting U.S. policy. After twenty members of the Student Peace Union at Kansas demonstrated with signs that read “Negotiate not escalate!,” the campus paper editorialized that the “SPU must surely be motivated by sincere feelings, but so was Chamberlain at the infamous Munich conference.” A survey of student opinion demonstrated that only a quarter supported negotiations or withdrawal from Vietnam, and in January 1966 the *New York Times* reported that almost three-quarters of students at the University of Wisconsin supported LBJ’s policies in Southeast Asia.

The spring teach-ins were a “short-lived phenomenon,” a historian has concluded. Few American altered their views about LBJ’s Vietnam poli-

cies, and few felt that Vietcong peasants or the North Vietnamese Army would be a match for the “greatest nation on earth.” Faced with an army of John Waynes, the enemy would give up quickly. How could we lose? Furthermore, LBJ had assured the public that the nation should not get involved in an Asian land war and that he was not going to send “American boys to do the job that Asian boys should do” for themselves. The president announced in March and April that he was prepared to “go anywhere at any time” to talk peace, that he supported “unconditional negotiations” with Hanoi, and his subordinates added that while the administration shared the same goals as the dissidents, they had “secret information” that justified their policy.

By summer, as many of the sixties generation left their dorms and headed off to the beach, a survey demonstrated that most students felt that Vietnam would not be their concern. Almost all U.S. troops assigned to that country were volunteers, professional soldiers acting as advisers. It was a tiny nation, halfway around the world. When a teacher announced in David Christian’s class that another coup d’état had taken place in that country, “We looked at each other and said, ‘Where the hell is South Vietnam?’” Almost no one then would have thought that a few years later Christian would be leading men into battle in South Vietnam and Cambodia.³⁰

Nevertheless, by the end of spring semester 1965 the climate on campus had shifted dramatically from the 1950s and early 1960s. “An End to Panty Raids,” wrote a student at Kansas. The most important issues were civil and student rights; another continued that his generation was “fed up with their elders over such things as mass faceless education. . . . Students want to feel a sense of participation.” With successes in the South and on their campuses, many students were optimistic about change, and as they became involved many began to think of themselves as part of a movement. “The thing for me right now is the movement,” said Steven Block, an activist at Williams College. “That’s an interesting word, if you think about it—movement. Because it is people in motion. It’s not an end; it’s not static. That’s a very apt word for what we are doing.”

The silent generation was history. *College Press Service* in December declared, “1964 Is Year of Protest on Nation’s Campuses,” and Professor Andrew Hacker called 1964–65 the “Year of the Demonstration.” It was when compared with any time in memory.

But, more important, Hacker then placed the activists in context of the larger sixties generation. “Certainly, this year’s protesters and demonstrators were not representative of their classmates, and it is instructive how quickly their ranks have tended to dwindle away after the first flamboyant outbursts. So long as a school will give an undergraduate his passport into the upper-middle-class without demanding more than . . . 15 weekly

hours of studying, few are going to complain.” Few indeed. Two years later, in 1967, professors Seymour Lipset and Philip Altbach flatly declared that it “should be made clear that . . . the scope of the American student ‘revolution’ has been greatly exaggerated by the mass media.”

Newsweek confirmed such sentiments during spring 1965 when it conducted interviews and a poll of over 800 students at numerous universities. Over 90 percent expressed confidence in higher education, big corporations, and the federal government, while over 80 percent were satisfied with college and had positive views about the armed forces, organized religion, and the United Nations. When asked what students thought their lives would be like in fifteen years, most of them mimicked their older brothers: “I’ll be secure, financially, married, have children, at least three,” said one. Another aimed to be “upper middle class,” and a third predicted, “I’ll be living in a Long Island suburb.” A journalist labeled the students “Flaming Moderates.”³¹

In mid-decade only a few students were activists while the larger sixties generation was comfortably moderate. A conservative student at the University of Miami wrote about the “deadly infection called student apathy” and referred to his campus as a “hotbed of apathy.” Fraternities and sororities still dominated campus life, and a coed at Kansas as late as 1967 admitted that the biggest craze on her campus was “to get your boyfriend’s fraternity sweater.” Most college papers were similar to the *Daily Illini*, printing regular features like “The Party Line” which announced lavalierings, pinnings, engagements, and marriages. “I have respect for the ones who went to Mississippi or joined the Peace Corps, who committed themselves,” said an English professor at Illinois in 1965, “but there are very, very few of them. Very few on this campus.”

While some students had been provoked out of apathy by campus issues and civil rights, most of the sixties generation sitting in crowded classes during spring semester of 1965 were optimistic and comfortable—still best defined as the cool generation—mildly alienated from their parents’ values and eager to sing along and “let the good times roll.” *Time* surveyed the generation then and reported conformity: “Almost everywhere boys dress in madras shirts and chinos, or perhaps green Levis, all trim and neat. The standard for girls is sweaters and skirts dyed to match, or shirt-waists and jumpers plus blazers, Weejun loafers, and knee socks or stockings.” At that time no one would have predicted that just two years away were the Summer of Love and the March on the Pentagon. Campus life that spring semester was cool, the good life. As the student body president of University of Texas said, “We haven’t really been tested by war or depression. We live very much in the present because we don’t have to be overly concerned about the future.”³²

“There was that little conflict in Vietnam,” Bob Calvert remembered,

“but most of us in the movement felt optimistic during the summer of 1965.” Indeed, most Americans felt that the nation was moving forward, and that mood was glowing in August when LBJ signed the Voting Rights Act. The president asked civil rights leaders to be present, and the signing ceremony included Bayard Rustin, Roy Wilkins, A. Philip Randolph, and Martin Luther King, Jr. LBJ had met with King the previous day and they discussed the remarkable advances during 1964 and 1965, not only in civil rights but also in the War on Poverty and Great Society programs—massive federal aid to education and job training, Headstart, Medicare, and Medicaid. King spoke of the president’s “amazing sensitivity to the difficult problems that Negro Americans face in the stride toward freedom,” and at the signing celebration the president declared, “Today is a triumph for freedom as huge as any victory that’s ever been won on any battlefield.” The civil rights leaders proclaimed LBJ the “greatest President” for blacks, even surpassing Abraham Lincoln.

“There was a religiosity about the meeting,” recalled a presidential aide, “which was warm with emotion—a final celebration of an act so long desired and so long in achieving.” Now liberals could sit back in their easy chairs and relax. In spring 1964 a new president had made his pledge, had declared his vision of the future. “This nation, this people, this generation, has man’s first chance to create a Great Society: a society of success without squalor, beauty without barrenness, works of genius without the wretchedness of poverty. We can open the doors of learning. We can open the doors of fruitful labor and rewarding leisure, of open opportunity and close community—not just to the privileged few, but, thank God, we can open those doors to *everyone*.” Now, just fifteen months later, it seemed that the liberals were delivering. The civil and voting rights acts had outlawed racial discrimination in public accommodations, employment, and the vote, and social programs were beginning to help the poor—white and black—to share the American Dream. On that day in August, liberalism reached its zenith in the 1960s.

Then, during the next two years, President Johnson gave the sixties generation a reason to be concerned about the future—he massively escalated America’s role in the Vietnam War. The cool generation became history.

What would have happened to the sixties generation without the experience of Vietnam? Certainly, many would have continued to support and some would have demonstrated for civil rights. Five years of the struggle meant that it had become part of the generation’s consciousness, and students began demanding classes on black literature and history at universities such as Stanford, Cornell, and San Francisco State. The “movement” would have been remembered as the civil rights struggle and the rise of student power. Increasing enrollments meant that the university was going

to continue evolving in size and in substance, and that students would continue demanding and supporting change. In spring 1966 Stanford activist David Harris won election as student body president by calling for student control of regulations, equal policies for men and women, option of pass-fail grades, legalization of marijuana, elimination of the board of trustees, and the end of all university cooperation with the Vietnam War. The next year students challenged campus rules and regulations at Brown, Cornell, Oregon, Washington, and administrators at the best institutions were moving toward adopting the suggestion of a committee at Wisconsin that advocated “withdrawal by the University from its *in loco parentis* activities.” By mid-decade it also was clear that 1950s morality was cracking and that the younger generation was revolting against the values of Ma and Pa. Most of this quest would be superficial, beer bashes and bundling at the beach as the sixties became a party decade. But for a few others, the questioning of morals would lead them to substantial changes as they became part of an emerging counterculture. Finally, the massive size of the generation alone meant that it would have modified society, and thus would have made an impact.³³

What would have been remembered as the “sixties” without Vietnam? The Johnson administration would have continued civil rights legislation and Great Society programs, and along with the significant rulings of the Supreme Court of Chief Justice Earl Warren, the decade would have been taught today as another major reform era in American history.

Without the war, however, one wonders if the decade would have been as dramatic—would have been remembered as “the sixties.” The decade had been a turning point for blacks since Greensboro in 1960. For white students and their parents the decade began to take shape in 1964 and 1965 as the young began to exhibit their new values and make demands on their campus administrators. Then, between autumn 1965 and the end of 1967, the Johnson administration escalated American involvement in Vietnam—and for the entire nation the decade became “the sixties.”

Days of Decision

1966 shall be remembered as the year we left our imposed status as Negroes and became Black Men . . . 1966 is the year of the concept of Black Power.

Floyd McKissick, 1966

A new concert of human relations being developed within the youthful underground must emerge, become conscious, and be shared so that a revolution of form can be filled with a Renaissance of compassion, awareness and love . . .

Human Be-In announcement, 1967

Everything now revolves around Vietnam. . . . It's no longer a distant, bloodied, tedious spot half across the planet. Vietnam is here.

Dave McReynolds, 1967

During 1965 Phil Ochs sang to his generation:

There's a change in the wind,
a split in the road,
You can do what is right
or you can do what you're told,
But the price of victory
will belong to the bold,
For these are the days of decision.

The days of decision were between autumn 1965 and the end of 1967. During that time the major issues that defined the first wave of the movement and the sixties—race and war—dominated the evening news. A more militant form of civil rights, an expanding conflict in Southeast Asia, and an emerging “counter” to mainstream culture all provoked