

# THE RADICAL 60s

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An Overview

# 60s Radicalism a Product of a Variety of Forces

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- A large generation of young, affluent and idealistic people (The “baby boomers”)
- Civil Rights
- Vietnam
- JFK
- Pop Culture voices, especially the Beatles and Bob Dylan

# Maybe Dylan best sums it up

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- *Come mothers and fathers throughout the land/and don't criticize what you can't understand/your sons and your daughters are beyond your command/your old road is rapidly agin'/Please get out of the new one if you can't lend a hand/For the times they are a changin'*

# Two labels/groups

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- **THE NEW LEFT:** tends to involve campus activities
- **THE COUNTERCULTURE:** rebels who looked to drop out of mainstream culture.

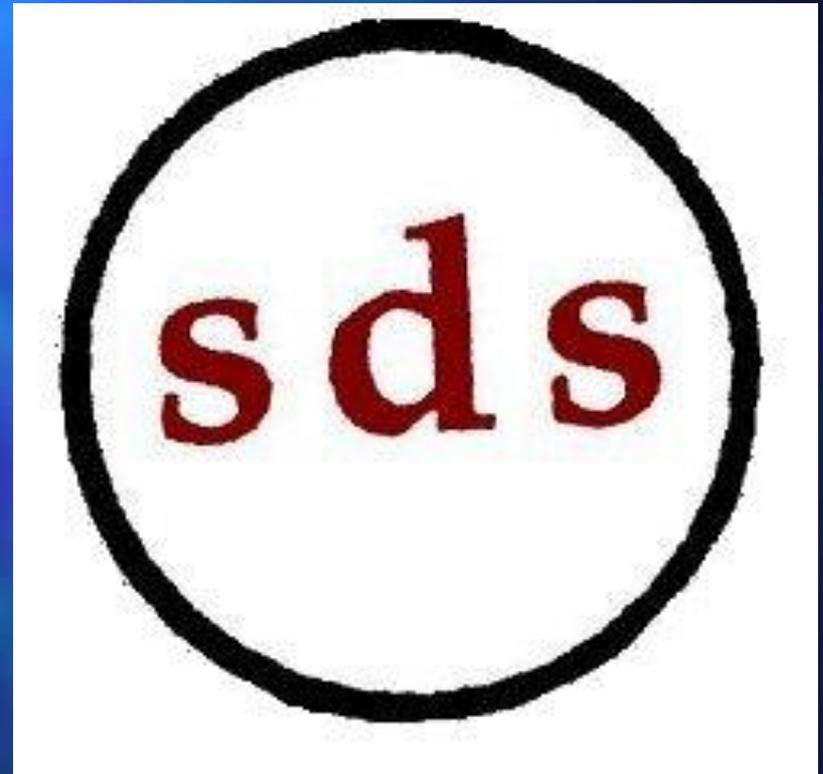
# Campus Radicalism

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- Much of 60's counterculture comes from the campuses where affluent youth challenged the prevailing ideals
- New Left groups rise in popularity

# STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY (SDS)

- Formed at University of Michigan—1962
- Disliked parents materialism, wanted participatory democracy
- Formed chapters at many universities



# SDS PORT HURON STATEMENT (excerpts)

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- We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit.
- The bridge to political power, though, will be built through genuine cooperation, locally, nationally, and internationally, between a new left of young people, and an awakening community of allies. In each community we must look within the university and act with confidence that we can be powerful, but we must look outwards to the less exotic but more lasting struggles for justice.

# Free Speech Movement



- Starts at Cal-Berkley
- Demonstration for right to exercise political speech
- Mario Savio's speech becomes a landmark

# Mario Savio—Free Speech Movement

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- 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 passively 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. And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all!

# THE COUNTERCULTURE

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# Some General Characteristics

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- Resistance to middle class values/materialism
- Experimentation with alternative lifestyles
  - Communal Living
  - Free Love/Sex
  - Drugs
- Tended to Reject traditional politics

# Ken Kesey and The Merry Pranksters

- Spiritual heirs of the Beats
- Took Day-Glo bus across USA
- Pioneered the Acid Tests
- Profiled in *The Electric Koolaid Acid Test* by Tom Wolfe



# Hippies, Haight-Ashbury and the Summer of Love

- San Francisco Neighborhood is center of counterculture
- Grateful Dead unofficial mayors
- Free Store, Psychedelic Shop, Acid Tests, Ballrooms etc.



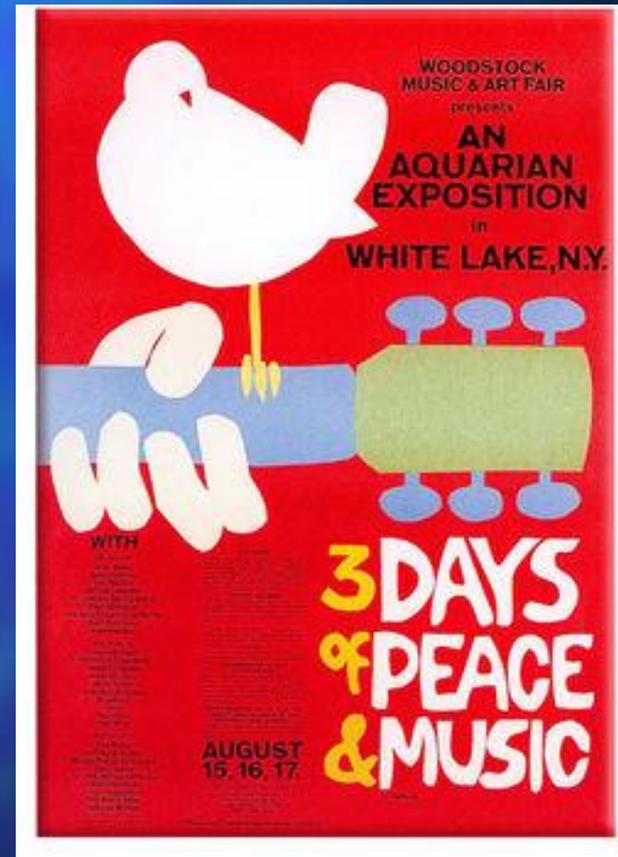
# The Heights and Limits of the Counterculture

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Two scenes from 1969

# Woodstock August 1969

- 500k young people celebrate counterculture values of peace and love
- Made a mess, but generally peaceful, cooperative



# Altamont: December 1969

- 500k fans for Free Rolling Stones show
- Little Peace or Love
- Hell's Angels provide "security"
- Fights, bands attacked, one fan murdered in front of stage
- Literally and symbolically the end of the 60s



1968

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The Year America Almost  
Came Apart

# January 31: Tet Offensive

- Convinces America that we're not winning
- "Anti-War" becomes majority
- Major waves of protests



# Images from the Tet Offensive



# March 31: LBJ announces he won't run for reelection

- Stunning decision—given his popularity in 64
- Facing serious threat from RFK
- Essentially, his presidency becomes a victim of the war



# APRIL 4

- Martin Luther King assassinated
- Largest wave of Race Riots in American history result
- One voice for peace, reason is gone



# June 4



- Robert Kennedy assassinated
- Likely would have won Dem. Nomination and the presidency
- Two down—is there anybody left?
- Hard to be optimistic when they keep killing the leaders.

# August: Riots at the Democratic National Convention



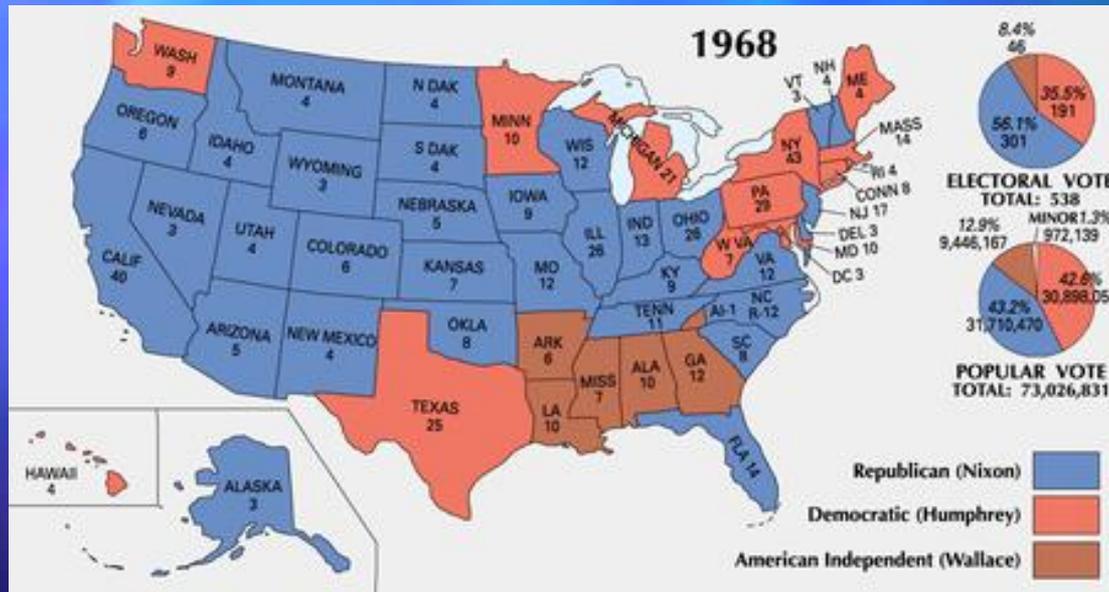
- Protesters come to razz the democrats
- Police, National guard play out battle in the streets of Chicago.
- “The whole world is watching” (and frankly, they’re pretty shocked by what they see.)

# ELECTION OF 1968

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- Hubert Humphrey (D): LBJ's VP—represents the status quo.
- Richard Nixon (Rep) “Secret Plan to Win the War”; “He can bring us together”; represents the “Silent Majority”

# November: NIXON ELECTED



- The first nail in the 60's Coffin
- Runs as law and order guy—and as a Uniter not a divider. (Isn't that ironic)

# OTHER RADICAL CHANGES

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1. The Supreme Court
2. The Environment
3. Consumer Protection

# The Supreme Court



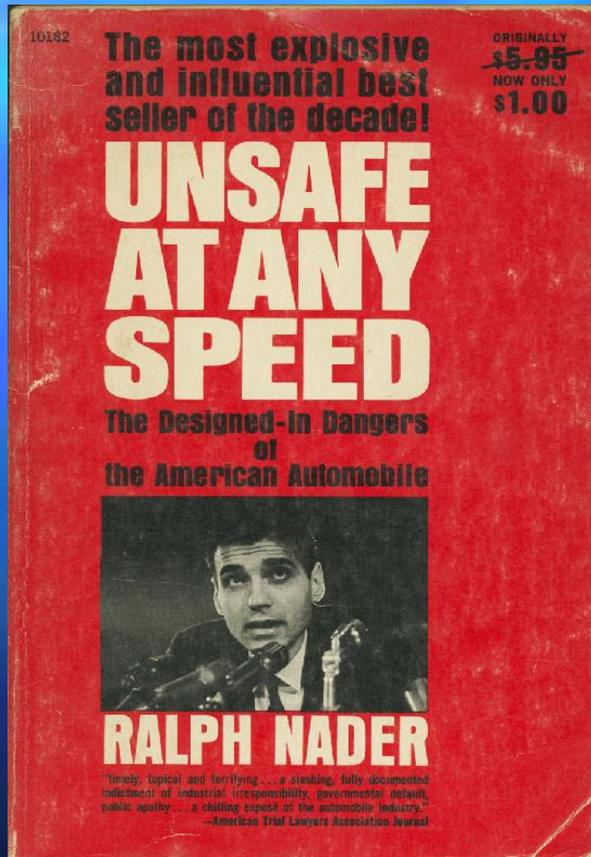
- Under Chief Justice Earl Warren the Court made several controversial decisions.
- Rights of those accused of crimes
  - Gideon v. Wainwright
  - Escobedo v. Illinois
  - MIRANDA v. ARIZONA

# The Environment

- Rachel Carson:  
SILENT SPRING
- Many new  
government actions
  - Clean Air Act



# CONSUMER PROTECTION



## Ralph Nader

- Crusading lawyer
- Wrote "Unsafe at Any Speed"
- Leads to more government regulation

# TITLE IX

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- An addition to the Federal Education Code.
- Said “no discrimination on the basis of gender in educational programs”
- We most notice it in Girls Sports
  - Creation of the ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY