

The 1960s were a period when long-held values and norms of behavior seemed to break down, particularly among the young. Many college-age men and women became political activists and were the driving force behind the civil rights and antiwar movements. Other young people simply “dropped out” and separated themselves from mainstream culture through their appearance and lifestyle. Attitudes toward sexuality appeared to loosen, and women began to openly protest the traditional roles of housewife and mother that society had assigned to them.

The **Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)**, was an organization which criticized the lack of individual freedom and the power of bureaucracy in government, universities, and corporations and called for participatory democracy. At the University of California at Berkeley in the fall of 1964, the **Free Speech Movement** was formed. The tactics the Berkeley students used at the time — sit-ins and taking over college buildings — became common forms of antiwar protest. In the spring of 1965, SDS supported a nationwide campaign against the draft. On campuses, demonstrations included draft card burnings, confrontations with military recruiters, and sit-ins to protest ROTC programs. The SDS soon splintered, with its more radical elements, such as the Weathermen, openly espousing confrontational politics. The best known off-campus violent episode involving the student protesters occurred in Chicago at the 1968 Democratic National Convention when police brutally confronted antiwar demonstrators from the **Youth International Party (Yippies)**.



1. Explain the difference between the youth of the 1950s and the youth of the 1960s. Give examples from the text to back up your answer.

2. Explain the reasons and tacks that students used to protest during the 1960s. Give examples from the text to back up your answer.

Hippies. Like the members of the New Left, the Hippies were mostly middle-class whites but without the political drive. Their hallmarks were a particular style of dress that included jeans, tie-dyed shirts, sandals, beards, long hair, and a lifestyle that embraced sexual promiscuity and recreational drugs, including marijuana and the hallucinogenic LSD. The sex and drug culture were reflected in the rock music of the time by such groups as Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead and performers like Jim Morrison and Janis Joplin. Although some young people established communes in the countryside, hippies were primarily an urban phenomenon. The Haight-Ashbury section of San Francisco and the East Village in New York were the focal points of the counterculture for a brief period from 1965 to 1967.

A landmark counterculture event was the Woodstock Festival, held in upstate New York in August 1969. Billed as “three days of peace, music, and love,” the promoters expected a large crowd but not the 300,000 to 400,000 people who actually attended. In spite of the large numbers, there were no serious problems; adequate medical care was available — mainly for drug-related emergencies — and the police decided not to try to enforce drug laws.

The Feminist Movement began with the 1963 publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, which argued that women should be allowed to find their own identity, an identity not necessarily limited to the traditional roles of wife and mother. The number of women attending college skyrocketed during the 1960s, and many became involved with both the New Left and the civil rights movement. In 1966, the **National Organization for Women (NOW)** was formed to address such issues as allotting federal aid for day-care centers for working mothers, eliminating gender-based job discrimination, and ensuring equal pay for equal work.

